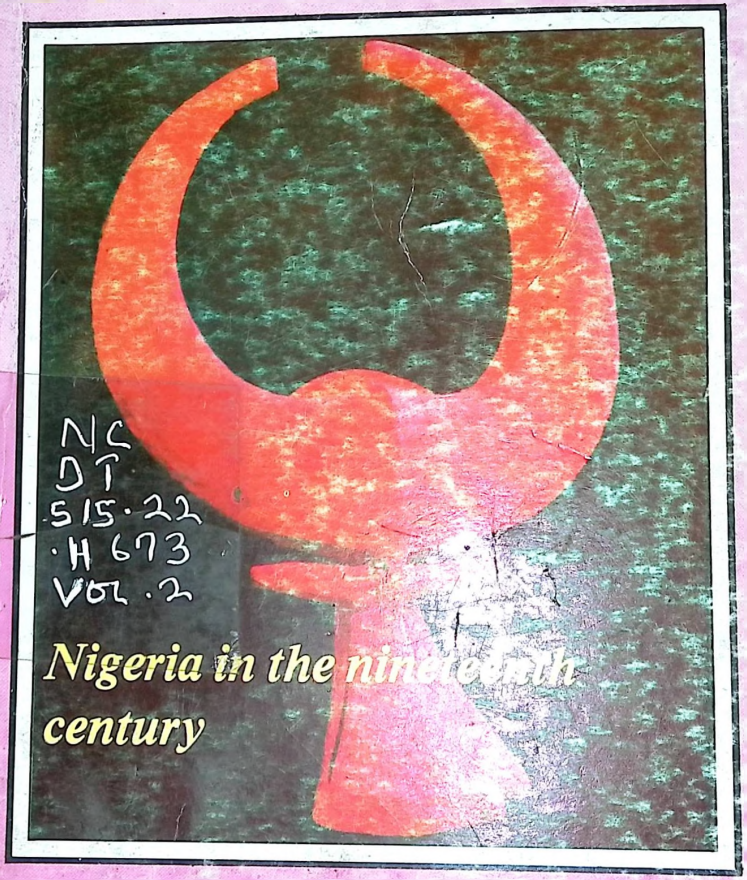
History of NIGERIA 2



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History of Nigeria 2

Nigeria in the nineteenth century

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Preface

History of Nigeria (in three Volumes) is written in response to the changes in the history curriculum for the Senior Secondary Schools and Colleges. These changes derive from a genuine concern that all Nigerians should have a good understanding of their nation's history.

The three books have adequately responded to both the changes in the syllabus and the need to study Nigerian history; They include all the most important themes on Nigerian history, incorporate the major findings of new researches conducted in the last three decades and expose the readers to new interpretations, even on familiar topics.

The demarcation of the three volumes of the series has been designed in such a way that the student progresses naturally in his history studies from the earliest times to the contemporary period:

Book 1 covers Nigerian history up to 1800 AD. It examines the history of centralised and noncentralised communities, the indigenous economy, group relations, as well as contacts with Europe and North Africa.

Book 2 examines Nigeria in the nineteenth century. The emphasis is on the important changes of the period, notably the jihad, military warfare, missionary activities, new commercial developments and British conquest. The impacts of these changes on the different states and peoples involved are discussed.

Book 3 deals with the colonial and post-independence periods. It covers the impact of colonial rule, the decolonisation process, the first and second republics, military rule and the country's relations with other nations.

To have a full view of Nigerian history, it is necessary to read all three books. While the teachers and general readers may read through the books at one go, it is assumed that students will study each book in one year. The summaries and questions at the end of each chapter are also meant for such detailed study by students. More information on any of the topics may be obtained from the **List for Further Reading.**

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Chapter 1 The Sokoto caliphate

Introduction

The Sokoto caliphate was an outcome of a political revolution which started in the first decade of the nineteenth century. This important development was as a result of the conditions which obtained in Hausaland in the eighteenth century. During this period, especially in the second half of the century, Hausaland, particularly the Rima basin or western part of Hausaland, was undergoing dynamic changes which were characterised by latent or open competition, conflicts and tensions. These conflicts were within the ranks of the ruling classes. They included:

(a) dynastic conflicts between the various classes for example, between the *masu sarauta* (rulers) and the *talakawa* (commoners);
(b) between Islam and traditional religions;
(c) between *malaman fada* (court literati) and *malaman kirgi* (pious literati); and
(d) between some states of Hausaland.

These conflicts, which had been developing for a long time, reached a point of crisis by the end of the eighteenth century. It was this situation that culminated in the *jihad* (holywar), which swept across the central Sudan and resulted in the collapse of Hausa and other states in the early part of the nineteenth century.

In this chapter, we shall discuss the various factors which gave rise to the jihad, the role of Islam and Islamic leaders led by Sheikh Utman dan Fodio in bringing together the dissatisfied groups under one umbrella by providing them with ideological, organisational and leadership bases, and the processes and stages of the jihad campaigns. The coming into existence and administration of the caliphate is also discussed. The last part of the chapter deals with the impact of the jihad on the societies of the areas it covered.

The establishment of the caliphate

The Hausa society

By the end of the eighteenth century, the various states of Hausaland had reached important stages of development. The sarauta

(kingship) system had reached its peak of maturity in terms of laws of succession to the throne and appointment to offices, protocol, administrative centralisation, structures, institutions, proliferation of offices and princes and other categories of title holders and officials. Even the collapse of the central governments of Kebbi and Zamfara in the eighteenth century did not diminish the pervasive nature of the sarauta system in their respective states. In fact, it had a multiplying effect as the scattered princes established mini states in various parts of Zamfara. The sarauta system was found at every level of administration in each state — from that of the central government to that of the village. Every occupation also had its hierarchy of officials. This is what made the sarauta system throughout Hausaland very pervasive.

This development was made possible by the very well developed economy of this part of the Nigeria area. A wide range of economic activities had been undertaken throughout Hausaland and by the end of the eighteenth century, it had fully developed, especially in terms of integration between agricultural and livestock production and the manufacturing and processing centres of the economy, thereby leading to the production of large surpluses. This stimulated the development of internal and long distance trade. By the end of the eighteenth century a network of trade had developed here and these were linked to long distance trade routes, the forest regions of the Nigeria area and other parts of West Africa, especially the Volta basin where kolanuts were obtained in large quantities; North Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Along these trade routes were conveyed well-processed and high quality textiles, leather and other goods produced in Hausaland to be exchanged with goods produced in various parts of West and North Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

These advanced political and economic systems greatly promoted cultural development, particularly religion. Both Islam and traditional religion flourished. The former, due to its universality, increasingly had an edge over the latter. By the second half of the eighteenth century, there were large concentrations of members of *malamai* (Islamic scholars) in the *birane* (cities), towns and settlements of Hausaland. The cities of Katsina, Yandoto and Zaria, to mention only a few, were famous for their malamai. Most of these were involved in teaching and in the governmental affairs of the various kingdoms. Many were *Ulama al-su* (venal scholars) who superstitiously claimed to provide solutions to the problems of the members of the society who cared to engage their services. These two types of scholars supported the maintenance of the status quo. An entirely different category of scholars was the *malaman kirgi* (pious

scholars). They, in most cases, shunned the courts and the urban centres and were found mainly in small settlements which were scattered throughout Hausaland, Borno and elsewhere. They were devout Muslims who spent most of their time teaching and preaching. These scholars attracted large numbers of students from different directions.

Another important feature of this period was demographic changes. Climatic, political, economic and cultural developments which were significant during the eighteenth century induced movements and redistribution of population. Occurrences of droughts which were fairly frequent in the eighteenth century led to massive movements of population southwards and southwestwards. Similarly, increase in military activities which led to sacking of cities and towns such as Surame, the capital of Kebbi in the 1720s and Birnin Zamfara in the 1750s, led to large-scale migrations. The rapid increase in economic activities, especially in the area of commerce, also led to population movements. All these resulted in the growth of urban centres in well favoured parts of Hausaland.

The history of Hausaland especially in the latter part of the eighteenth century underwent dynamic changes which were accompanied by different types of conflicts; one of which was dynastic conflicts. One of the most glaring characteristics of the sarauta system was its instability. Thus the dynasties of Hausaland experienced acute succession problems in the eighteenth century. This often led to intrigues, plots, assassinations and wars which caused much tensions in the societies involved. The situation was worsened by the rapid expansion in the number of princes in each of the kingdoms. This was encouraged by the kings' habit of having many wives. Some of the kings are said to have had one thousand wives each. Such situations led to the emergence of many factions in each of the dynasties, thereby promoting the contest for the thrones which led to deep crises in each of the states.

The activities of the *sarakunan yaki* (war chiefs), court *Ulama* and rich merchants who favoured one faction or the other because of their own personal interests did not help matters. The sarakunan yaki were particularly notorious for their roles in their respective states both during war and peace times. During war times, their lawless acts created a state of terror both within their respective territories, and in enemy territories. In peace time, due to military inactivity, some of the sarakunan yaki turned to banditry, looting the property of the talakawa. This state of semi-anarchy was aggravated by the activities of the state of Gobir in the Rima basin and the adjacent regions. The emergence of the dominance of the state of Gobi

in the eighteenth century, caused considerable instability both i itself and the neighbouring kingdoms.

Emergence of Gobir

Gobir emerged as a dominant state in the region in the eighteent century. But as it sought to build its power mainly through militar activities, relations between Gobir and its neighbours deterioratec Its unstable political career was due mainly to economic reasons It's gradual drift from the arid region to the wet regions of the Rim basin was as a result of the quest for fertile and well watered lands Its subsequent military activities against the states of the regior seems to have been caused by its needs for booty. The rulers of Gobi needed enough revenue to sustain their luxurious life styles and to maintain the state. Slaves acquired from wars are said to have been used in exchange for military equipment and horses from Azbin and Borno.

Gobir's military tactics were ruthless and destructive. They included laying waste the country of the enemy and if necessary, mounting very long sieges on towns and settlements. Consequently, this led to the sacking of many cities and towns in several states of Hausaland. In the 1720s, its military activities in conjunction with Zamfara against Kebbi led to the collapse of the capital and the central government of Kebbi. Other cities and towns of the state also broke up, resulting in mass movement of the people to different directions. The result was chaos and insecurity. By the 1750s, Gobir's hostility against the kingdom of Zamfara culminated in the destruction or partial destruction of the latter and the break-up of its central government. The resistance put up by the Zamfarawa against the domination led to continuous military activities in the region. Gobir also maintained similar hostile relationship with the other states, namely, Kwani, Zabarma and Katsina. It even sent long range military expeditions against Kano and Borno. All these caused insecurity and much suffering to the talakawa in many ways to be discussed below.

The ruling classes and the masses

While these senseless military activities were going on, the ruling classes of Gobir and other Hausa states, namely the masu sarauta, the court ulama and the merchants, were busy accumulating considerable wealth. Rich merchants competed with one another in the display of their wealth to the extent that it led to public outcry on the immorality of such exhibitions of wealth in the society. The out-

cry was such, that in Katsina, for example, the kings and malamai were worried that unless it was checked it would lead to *fitna* (calamity) and the killing of one another. In an attempt to prevent this in Katsina, the *sarakunan* (kings) are said to have given money to the malamai who resorted to the use of charms to quell this public outcry. This led to divisions among the malamai as some of them did not approve of this superstitious behaviour. This further increased the tensions in the society.

The life style of the rulers themselves left much to be desired. Their scandalous and highly luxurious life style and that of other privileged classes throughout Hausaland drew a lot of attention and public condemnation especially by the growing community of the *mujahiddun* (jihadists). This life style was built on massive bribery and corruption, and oppression of the talakawa. The oppression took many forms. It included the unlawful behaviour on the part of the ruling class which has already been referred to, collection of numerous taxes and levies, occasional confiscation of peasant property, including animals, corvee or forced labour, forced compulsory military service and enslavement. The talakawa were subjected to all sorts of injustice. The judicial system was so perverted that it was impossible for the talakawa to obtain redress anywhere. In business transactions, the rich merchants and the *yan birni* (sophisticated city dwellers) cheated the rural dwellers. In the markets, traders employed every means to rip-off the buyers. For example, milk was adulterated with water, meat inflated with air, measuring instruments were tempered with in order to cheat, hoarding and middlemanship were rampant.

All these were tolerated if not actively supported by the court ulama. This category of ulama had no choice. They had to continue to associate and support the kings in all of their policies, whether just or unjust because they hoped to enhance their wealth and influence through these kings. They viewed the society of Hausaland as essentially an Islamic community and saw nothing wrong with what was going on. Thus in spite of the fact that, the kings professed to be Muslims, they really were deeply sunk in pagan practices. Even those who were inclined towards the *Sharia* were not free from these unIslamic practices. The rites of the installation of the kings and the attendant ceremonies which lasted for days, were definitely unIslamic. The sarakunan also patronised the worship of *iskoki* (spirits) and other traditional forms of worship. Even some of the learned ulama who were not directly associated with the courts, for example, the *malaman Yandoto*, were involved in practices which were contrary to the teachings of Islam.

All these ills in the society intensified in the second half of the

eighteenth century. They also became particularly more glaring and more intolerable in the Rima basin due to the activities of the Sarakunan of Gobir, especially from the time of Bawa Jan Gwarzo. The military activities of these sarakunan worsened the already intolerable situation. The constant fightings not only led to killings of the people, but also brought untold hardship on them. In order to finance the wars, the rulers of Gobir intensified the collection of taxes, often repeated several times during the same year. Imposition of levies and confiscation of property, including cattle from the fulani also obtained. Conscription into the army and enslavement of people were also intensified. By the opening years of the nineteenth century therefore, the level of dissatisfaction in Hausaland had reached a breaking point. All that was needed was an effective leader who would serve as a rallying point and transform the dissatisfaction into an open revolt. This was found in the person of Uthman dan Fodio. He provided justification for revolt against oppression and injustice.

Uthman dan Fodio

Born in 1754 at Maratta, Uthman dan Fodio had his elementary Islamic education from his parents and relatives. He then travelled to other places, including Agades for his advanced studies. One of his teachers was the famous Jibril b. Umar, who had a remarkable influence on him.

Uthman dan Fodio was extra-ordinarily well read in Arabic literature. A master of the classical tongue which he had learned in his youth. He possessed a vast fund of Quranic knowledge, and was in addition particulary well informed in traditions, laws and rhetorics. He had also studied classical Islamic history. All these enabled him to understand the essence of Islam, embodying the totality of human life that was not just confined to rituals. His writings on diverse subjects showed this. He had a clear vision of an ideal Islamic society.

He was simple, pious and ascetic. He shunned material possessions. This was the fundamental difference between him and most of the other members of the ulama, especially the court ulama, whose greed and quest for material things were their undoing. They undermined their integrity and independence and sold their consclence owing to their close associations with the kings and other leading members of the ruling classes. Hence not only were they party to the prevailing corruption and oppression, but even went as far as manipulating Islamic teachings and Quranic laws to ra-

tionalise the activities of the kings. Thus they were very hostile to what Uthman dan Fodio represented.

Uthman dan Fodio started teaching and preaching in 1774-1775 at the age of about twenty years. He travelled extensively in the Rima basin — Gobir, Zamfara, Kebbi and elsewhere. His return to Degel, his base, from his first tour, was accompanied by large numbers of people joining his rank: His subsequent tours also increased the number of his followers. A time came when he considered it necessary to contact the King of Gobir, Bawa Jan Gwarzo. His discussions with the king pertaining to his activities so increased his prestige in the eyes of the people that even the hostile malaman fada (court ulama) could not help but respect him.

By the time the jihad broke out, Uthman dan Fodio had been teaching and preaching for about thirty years. He adopted various methods at getting his message across to the people. Among these methods were the writing of books and pamphlets in the languages spoken by the people, namely Arabic, Fulfulde and Hausa; and composing poems intended to instruct people on Islamic principles on daily life. This particular method was very effective. His popularity enabled him to attract students from all over the central Sudan. His many friends and relatives helped in the spread of Islam by teaching and preaching in their respective areas.

The extent of the influence or effects of the activities of Uthman dan Fodio and his supporters by the closing years of the eighteenth century is clearly shown in a poem composed in Borno during this period. The poem goes thus:

Verily a cloud has settled on God's earth.
A cloud so dense that escape from it is impossible.
Everywhere between Kordofan and Gobir.
And the cities of the kindin (Tuareg).
Are settlements of the dogs of fellata (Bi la'ila)
Serving God in all their dwelling places
(I swear by the life of the Prophet and his overflowing grace)
In reforming all districts and provinces.
Ready for future bliss
So in the year of 1214 they are following their beneficent theories.
As though it were time to set the world in order by preaching.
Alas! that I know all about the tongue of the fox.

Reactions to dan Fodio's activities

As the activities of Uthman dan Fodio and his supporters increas ed, it became a source of worry to the King of Gobir. At the en=

of the year 1788-1789, he was summoned to magami by the King of Gobir, Bawa Jan Gwarzo, for the *Id al-kabir*. There were also other malamai, numbering about 1,000, at this gathering. All the malamai accepted the traditional gifts from the king, except Uthman dan Fodio. Instead, he demanded five things from the king:

1. To allow me to call people to God in your country;
2. Not to stop anybody who intends to respond to my call;
3. To treat with respect any man with a turban;
4. To free all the (political) prisoners;
5. Not to burden the subjects with taxes.

This bold and selfless request and the positive response to it by the king increased the popularity of Uthman dan Fodio, resulting in more and more people joining his rank. Seeing how numerous his followers had become, and in view of deteriorating situations, he began to consider the possibility of breaking with the established government of the land. He began urging his followers to arm themselves. Uthman then cut himself and his community off from the jurisdiction of the Sultan of Gobir. This action annoyed the king. The king therefore, began to threaten the Islamic community with extermination. The newly appointed King of Gobir, Nafata, began to apply sanctions against the community. He ruled that:

1. No man should become a Muslim unless a Muslim-born;
2. all converts should revert to their original faith;
3. men should no longer wear turban; and women should no more veil themselves;
4. nobody except Uthman himself should preach Islam.

Nafata's proclamation thus reversed the policy of Bawa Jan Gwarzo issued ten years earlier which had virtually made the Islamic community independent of Gobir. This proclamation marked a turning point in the history of Uthman dan Fodio's movement.

Outbreak of war

As a result of the proclamation by the King of Gobir, relations between the Islamic community and the rulers of Gobir began to deteriorate rapidly. This was further compounded by the worsening political situation in the state. Even the ascension of Yunfa, said to have been assisted by Uthman dan Fodio, to the throne of Gobir, did not change the situation. This new ruler is even alleged to have attempted to kill Uthman dan Fodio. It was during this tense situation that Uthman dan Fodio produced a write-up in which he clearly stated the obligations of emigration and jihad against pagan states.

The immediate cause of the quarrel between Yunfa and the Islamic community was the Gimbana incident. This had to do with one of

the senior members of the Islamic community, Abd al-Salam. Frightened by the threat to the existence of the Islamic community, this member of the community, possibly with a few followers, moved from Gobir to Gimbana, a town near Zamfara. While there, Abd al-Salam twice refused to pray for the success of a Gobir military expedition. Due to this refusal on the part of Abd al-Salam, Yunfa meted out a stiff punishment to the Muslim leader by sacking his settlement, Gimbana and taking some of its inhabitants prisoners. These captives were, however, freed by other members of the Islamic community as they were being led to Alkalawa, the capital of Gobir. Sources on the issue of the release of the captives are conflicting. One source has it that the prisoners were released when the *sheikh* protested to Yunfa over their capture. Yunfa is, however, said to have denied giving such a permission. The other source claims that force or threat of force was used in getting the captives freed.

Whatever might have been the correct version, Yunfa responded to the episode by asking Uthman dan Fodio to leave Degel, the settlement of the Islamic community, with his family. This meant that the rest of the community should disperse or be attacked. Uthman refused but later changed his mind and decided to perform the *Hijra*. With the imminent attack from the state of Gobir, many members of the community decided to evacuate their settlement which was in fact too exposed to enemy attack. The Islamic community chose Gudu, a place about 50 kilometres from Degel. The immigration took place in February, 1804.

Meanwhile, the Islamic community led by Uthman dan Fodio continued to attract more and more people. Alarmed by this development, the King of Gobir forbade further emigrations and his forces started to harrass the refugees as well as seizing their property. Attempts at negotiations between the two hostile camps failed to yield fruits. Realising that war was inevitable, the Islamic community prepared their defences and formally elected a leader. This was Uthman dan Fodio who became the *Amir al-muminin* (commander of the faithful). The members of the community then paid their homage to him.

The prelude to the jihad started with minor clashes. A small punitive expedition from Gobir was beaten back by the Islamic community. The community followed this with the capture of settlements, such as Matankari and Konni. Meanwhile, Gobir organised a large military force which included Tuaregs and Fulani and launched a heavy attack on the community's military force commanded by Uthman dan Fodio's brother, Abdullah on 21 June 1804. The battle ground was Kwoto. The community's forces were outnumbered and ill-equipped. But they had the advantage of satisfactory natu

defences and zeal for martyrdom. Thus with superior morale, the community began to charge the enemy. The struggle eventually ended in favour of the community.

The success of the jihad at Kwoto was quite significant for Uthman dan Fodio's movement. Many people, especially those who had hitherto sat on the fence and the oppressed members of the society, joined the mujahiddun (jihadists) in large numbers. By this time the battle line between those who were for Islamic government and those against it had been very clearly drawn. Uthman dan Fodio wrote letters, to the other Kings of Hausaland, such as those of Katsina, Kano and Zazzau calling on them to join the reform movement and accept the establishment of the sharia. Only the King of Zazzau responded favourably. The King of Gobir also sent messengers to the Kings of Hausaland, warning them of the mujahiddun. In response to the King of Gobir, the kings embarked on the harassment of the various groups of the Islamic communities spread throughout Hausaland. This action of the kings resulted in the spread of the jihad from Gobir to other parts of Hausaland.

From 1805 onwards, leaders of various Muslim communities throughout Hausaland, parts of Borno, the Gongola and Benue basins and elsewhere, apart from those who were instructed to return to their areas to launch the jihad, trooped to Uthman dan Fodio to pay their homage and collect flags that authorised them to wage the jihad in their respective areas against the opposing rulers and people.

The organisation of the jihad

Generally, the organisation of the jihad was not clearly mapped out or well defined. There were, however, efforts to coordinate military activities at different levels. The jihad campaigns were carried out at three main levels. At the central level, Uthman dan Fodio appointed Aliyu Jedo as the *Amir al-Jaish* (commander of the armed forces). At this level also, Uthman's junior brother, Abdullah and his son, Muhammad Bello, although not formally conferred with this title, also led very important military expeditions and participated actively in the jihad campaigns. Uthman dan Fodio could not participate in the wars as he was already getting old.

At the regional or emirate level, those who collected flags from Uthman dan Fodio, were also automatically appointed Amir al-Jaish for their respective areas. These included Buba Yaro in the Gongola basin, Modibbo Adama in the Upper Benue basin, Yaqub b. Dati in Bauchi, Moijo in Kebbi, Muhammadu Namoda in Zamfara and Abdullah's son, Muhammad whose main area of campaign was

Nupe. Each of these commanders, especially the regional or provincial commanders, some of whom were also subsequently appointed *amirs* had their deputies, who served as sub-commanders. Modibbo Adama, for example, is said to have given out twenty-four flags to local leaders. The success of the jihad in the Benue valley in fact depended on the local leaders.

Some local leaders, normally Fulani, initiated and fought the jihad in their areas quite independent of both the central and provincial authorities. They were, however, eventually incorporated, sometimes with considerable difficulty, into the larger provincial organisation into which their respective areas fell.

A significant feature of the jihad was the degree of coordination and cooperation which prevailed throughout the period of the jihad. Not only did individual provincial commanders obtain assistance from the neighbouring kingdoms, several commanders with their forces also, often attempted and succeeded in coordinating their military activities. This was particularly very important in campaigns in the border areas and in mop up operations. The best examples, were the various instances of joint military campaigns between the communities of Zamfara, Katsina, Kano, Daura and Zazzau. This was an important factor in the success of the jihad.

The conquest of enemy strongholds needed joint military campaigns. One of the best examples was the joint military operation which was led by Muhammad Bello against the town of Yandoto. This was preceded by a meeting between Muhammad Bello and the community leaders of the eastern part of Hausaland. This meeting in itself was an important milestone in the history of the jihad. The coming together of these leaders enabled them to formally declare their allegiance to Uthman dan Fodio and map out areas of military cooperation between their territories. In addition to joint military operations conducted in their areas and against Yandoto, they also participated in the historic military expedition against the capital of Gobir, Alkalawa.

Although the military operations launched by the Muslim community in the Rima basin were quite successful — suffering only two major defeats, at Tsuntsuwa and Alwassa — they failed to capture Alkalawa. By 1808, however, the Muslim communities had accomplished a substantial part of their military operations in various parts of Hausaland and had also gained considerable experience and enough following to enable them confront Alkalawa. At the beginning of the rainy season of 1808, the call went out to prepare for an expedition against Gobir's capital. After the first harvest of that year, contingents from Gwandu, Zamfara, Katsina and other places, led by seasoned commanders like Muhammad Bello, Aliyu Jedo and

Muhammadu Namoda, surrounded Alkalawa. The city fell on the 3 October 1808. The Sultan was killed.

With the fall of Alkalawa, resistance to the Muslims, at least in Hausaland was broken as the news was spread by the travellers. With this development, the Sokoto caliphate was born. The jihad for the extension of the frontiers of the caliphate, however, continued in the outlying areas such as the Yorubaland and the Benue valley right to the middle of the nineteenth century. The struggle against enclaves of numerous groups in the caliphate and the fugitive Hausa dynasties who established their bases to the north of the caliphate also continued right to the end of the nineteenth century.

Factors responsible for the success of the jihad

In terms of military power, the forces at the disposal of the Kings of Hausaland was by far greater than those at the disposal of the mujahiddun. And in terms of the short time within which the centuries—old dynasties of Hausaland crumbled and the size of the territories which were brought under the control of the Sokoto caliphate — stretching from Macina in the west to Baghirmi in the east; from Adar and Agades in the north to Yorubaland in the south — the performance of Uthman dan Fodio and his mujahiddun was a feat indeed. But this should not come as a surprise in view of the numerous factors in favour of the mujahiddun.

These factors included the role of Uthman dan Fodio. In addition to his excellent leadership qualities, he was also a master strategist. He was, for example, quite calculative in all the steps he took in his dealings with the rulers of Gobir thereby avoiding any intident or error which would have nipped the jihad movement in the bud. Initially, while preparing his followers for the conflict which he seemed to have foreseen and in view of his deep understanding of historical developments, he gave the successive Kings of Gobir the impression that he was not questioning their sovereign authority over their subjects. By the time they realised the implications of Uthman dan Fodio's activities, it was too late. Also, before taking any crucial decision which needed the understanding and support of the community, he normally took pains to prepare their minds, involving among other things, productions of write-ups to enlighten them.

His simplicity and sincerity of purpose endeared him even to those who did not embrace Islam in the course of his preaching tours in Zamfara, Kebbi and Gobir. This was of tremendous benefit in the course of the jihad. In those desperate days, when the community was faced with acute food shortages due to the embargo placed on

trade with the community by the rulers of Gobir, the memory of Uthman's teaching and preaching invoked considerable sympathy among both Muslims and non-Muslims of Zamfara. This and the Zamfarawa's grievances against Gobir which is discussed below, enabled the community to have access to food and foodstuff from Zamfara. Uthman symbolised the ideals of Islam which he preached and this gained for his movement considerable support, even from the non-Muslims who had suffered untold hardship in the hands of the state of Gobir. This state wreaked havoc in the Rima basin. In addition to the central governments of Kebbi and Zamfara, it also terrorised the inhabitants of this region. Therefore, although the Zamfarawa and the Kabawa were largely pagan, they at least initially, supported the mujahiddun in their struggle against Gobir.

Before the establishment of a permanent base at Gwandu in C. 1805, the mujahiddun were a fugitive community. They faced all sorts of problems, including that of food shortages which have been referred to earlier. The sarakunan (kings) of Zamfara came to their aid by sending them traders with food and foodstuff. As Muhammad Bello pointed out, the friendship of these sarakunan of Zamfara was due to their enmity with Gobir rather than to their adherence to Islam. They supported the mujahiddun openly. When the mujahiddun suffered severe defeat at the hands of the Gobirawa at Tsuntsuwa, it was only the Zamfarawa that stood by them. When the mujahiddun were wandering from place to place in search of security and a base, they found allies in the territory of Zamfara. It is also significant that in the military expedition against Kebbi, led by Abdullah and Aliyu Jedo, which was to be significant in the history of the jihad, the Zamfarawa featured prominently.

It is to be noted that the majority of those who fought did not do so because they believed in Islam. It would appear that a significant proportion of them fought because of the oppressive measures under which they suffered and the promise of justice upheld by Islam. The support of the Zamfarawa and other groups was decisive. Had the mujahiddun failed in the Rima basin it would have been difficult if not impossible for the other groups to succeed in other parts of Hausaland and beyond. It could also be noted that the mujahiddun in other parts of Hausaland enjoyed considerable support because of the prevailing oppressive conditions in which they lived.

The uprising throughout Hausaland occurred at the same time. The crushing of such uprising was beyond the experience and capabilities of the various Kings of Hausaland whose military forces were used to dealing with isolated rebellions and regular contests between the various states. It should be noted that it was the ripe

conditions for a revolution that enabled the mujahiddun to achieve success in their endeavour. This point is clearly supported by the historical fact that before the nineteenth century, many scholars had attempted to change the status quo but failed. This included Uthman dan Fodio's famous teacher, Sheikh Jibril.

By the nineteenth century, virtually all the states of Hausaland were in a state of decay. Even Gobir, the most prominent of them, had declined by the time of the outbreak of the jihad. The various ruling houses in Hausaland were divided and factions from these ruling houses, in fact, collaborated either secretly or openly with the mujahiddun, hoping that when their adversaries had been overthrown, they would then be made kings. The ruling kings during the jihad campaigns suffered betrayals through desertions at critical stages of military campaigns which led to their defeats.

There were several other factors in favour of the mujahiddun. They had a powerful weapon, propaganda, the most notable feature of which was the emphasis on the imminent appearance of the Mahdi which would be followed by the end of the world. Some even said that Uthman dan Fodio was the Mahdi. The cause for which they fought was quite clear and for those of them who were religiously inclined, their longing for martyrdom made them fight ferociously. On the other hand, the state armies were fighting defensive wars and those of them who were Muslims had reasons for being half-hearted in their efforts. Besides, the mujahiddun had mastered the terrain of the countryside and by the time of the outbreak of the jihad, their settlements and camps had virtually surrounded the various capital cities of Hausaland. Having dealt with the isolated settlements and towns which they cut off from the capitals, they then conveniently laid sieges to the various capitals which they subsequently captured.

The success of the jihad campaigns in areas outside Hausaland can also be explained in terms of the conditions in such areas. In the Gongola, Benue basin and elsewhere inhabited by numerous, isolated and segmented ethnic groups, many of whom numbered only a few hundreds, the mujahiddun, a conglomeration of various Fulani clans, beefed up by Hausa immigrants, some of whom travelled to these regions to seek their fortunes in the jihad campaigns, easily dealt with their enemies. Some groups sought refuge in the hills and mountains where they were able to maintain their independence throughout the century.

In the centralised kingdoms of Borno, Nupe and Yorubaland, the general decay which facilitated the success of the jihad in Hausaland also had the same effect here. The situation in Borno is treated in the next chapter. In Nupe, intense dynastic crisis enabled mallam

Dendo, who arrived there in about 1810, to establish his rule over the area by 1833. In Yorubaland, the conquest of Ilorin was facilitated by the political tension and divisions which on the eve of the jihad had broken into open revolt in the already unstable Oyo. The revolt of Afonja, the *Are OnaKakanfo* (field-marshall), against the Alaafin of Oyo was a major factor in the success of the jihad there. Like in all the jihad campaigns outside the Rima basin, no organised army was sent by Uthman dan Fodio to Yorubaland to prosecute the jihad. It was the political situation there that produced internal collaborators who allied with the Fulani itinerant preachers that eventually ended with the establishment of the emirate of Ilorin.

The impact of the jihad

The jihad brought about many important changes which had both long and short term effects on the history of a large part of the Nigeria area. The first and immediate impact relates to political changes. The jihad resulted in the collapse of the Hausa states and other polities and communities. These were incorporated into a single political unit known as the Sokoto caliphate. It also led to the collapse of the one-thousand-year sayfawa dynasty and the emergence of a new dynasty, the al-Kanemi dynasty in Borno. Borno also lost a large part of its territory to the caliphate. These included areas which came to be known as Hadejia, Marmar and Misau. In Yorubaland, the jihad accelerated the process of the collapse of Oyo empire and set in motion chains of developments which had profound effects on the history of southwestern Nigeria.

The jihad also had a tremendous effect on the demography of the Nigeria area. The wars led to the dislocation and displacement of the population and the sedentarisation of the Fulani and other momadic groups. These and the establishment of *ribats* (fortresses) all over the caliphate, resulted in the emergence of settlements, towns and cities and the expansions of the old ones. Many of the towns found in the northern part of Nigeria today, for example, Gombe, Yola, Bauchi, Kontagora, and Sokoto, date back to the time of the jihad.

Equally important was the remarkable expansion of the economy of the caliphate and other areas. The expansion in the economy was partly attained through the efforts of the caliphs, but especially Caliph Muhammad Bello. This caliph, through a series of letters, urged the Amirs to take special interest in economic development ranging from provision of security on the trade routes, construction of markets to regulating business transactions. Many other factors, including the size of the caliphate, promoted the development

of the economy in this area during the nineteenth century.

During this period, new forms of economic organisations took place. Production on large *gandaye* (agricultural estates), sometimes covering hundreds of hectares was an important feature of agriculture during this period. This had to do directly with the jihad. The various members of the community wanted a new economic base different from that of the pre-jihad period when the ruling classes derived their wealth solely or mainly from tribute, taxes, and other exploitative means. Since they themselves had condemned this, they had to find other means of maintaining themselves. Fortunately for them they had large numbers of slaves which they derived from the jihad campaigns. Large-scale production of food crops and raw materials for the industrial establishments, resulted in the expansion in the manufacturing and processing industries.

In the nineteenth century, there was a remarkable increase in the degree of integration between the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy. Raw materials were produced to be consumed directly in the industrial establishments. As a result of this, there was a dramatic increase in textile production. Among the most important characteristics of industrial production during this period were the variety, the quantity and quality of the goods which were produced. These developments were accompanied by the growth in specialisation between the various sectors of the economy and even between the Amirates. Zazzau, for example, produced large quantities of cotton because it was assured of market in Kano.

The expansion in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy was made possible by tremendous increase in internal and long distance trade. Here again many factors favoured the development of trade and commerce. The caliphate was a large market which stimulated exchange. The intensity of commercial activity in this part of the Nigeria area is attested to by reports of European travellers who passed through or visited the area in the nineteenth century.

The jihad was also accompanied by cultural changes. There was a remarkable increase in scholarship and other forms of intellectual activities. These showed in the writings of the jihad leaders. Uthman dan Fodio, Abdullah and Muhammad Bello on their own, are said to have produced 258 books and pamphlets, and this is probably not a complete list.

This literary output is particularly noteworthy when it is remembered that a large number of these books were written in the midst of active campaigning. Several other scholars produced such literary works. The period also saw phenomenal increases in the number of schools which were opened. More people were brought into Islam. The religion itself affected all spheres of life of the socie-

ty, from the mode of dressing, marriages, manners to that of economic transactions.

The administration of the caliphate

With the fall of Alkalawa in 1808 there was a need to organise the administration of the caliphate. Before this time the affairs of the community which were dominated by military activities, were run by Uthman dan Fodio, as the Amir al-muminin, his junior brother, Abdullah who acted as *Wazir* (chief minister), his son, Muhammad Bello, who acted as a sort of Minister of Defence and Aliyu Jedo who was the Commander of the army.

Due to the vast nature of the caliphate, it was considered necessary to have it divided into administrative units. The main units were to be supervised by Abdullah and Muhammad Bello. The division was effected in 1812. While Bello used his newly established capital, Sokoto, which he started to build in 1809, Abdullah temporarily used Bodinya as his headquarters before he moved to Gwandu, after Uthman dan Fodio's death in 1817. Abdullah took charge of the western part of the caliphate while Bello was put in charge of the eastern part. The north was given to Aliyu Jedo, while Muhammad Bukhari and Abu Bakr Atiku, also sons of Uthman dan Fodio, shared the south. Both the north and the south came under Sokoto once the capital was moved there.

In order to discharge his duties to the communities of the other parts of the caliphate, Uthman dan Fodio appointed Amirs to their respective localities. The first sets of Amirs were appointed in the period 1805-1806. In their letters of appointment, the Amirs were assigned specific responsibilities. These included the maintenance of mosques, the maintenance of markets and prevention of illegalities. The Sokoto leaders, Uthman dan Fodio, Abdullah and Muhammad Bello were anxious to see that their own standard of Islam was firmly established in the provinces. For this purpose, these leaders wrote letters, pamphlets and books to guide the Amirs in the day-to-day administration of their territories. This standard was achieved in the early years of the caliphate as the first generation of Amirs were primarily scholars. Umar Dallaji of Katsina, Sulaiman b. Aba-Hamma of Kano, Ibrahim Zaki of Katagum, Yaqub of Bauchi, Musa of Zazzau, to mention only a few, were well known for their scholarship.

The Amirs depended on the authority of Uthman dan Fodio for acceptability to at least the leadership of the community. In the early days of the caliphate, the reverence of his authority was vital for

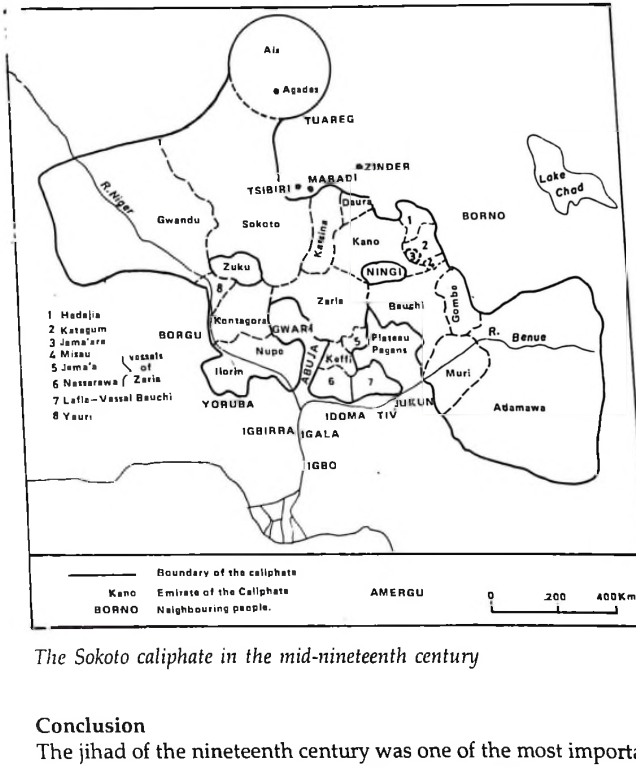
settling disputes among the multitudes of claimants to the Amirship. The dependence of the first Amirs on Uthman dan Fodio's investiture laid a firm foundation of loyalty to the central government based at Sokoto. Any assertion of independence by any province would make the government of that province illegal and would sometimes be a subject of joint military action by other Amirates of the caliphate.

It is to be noted, however, that this loyalty received by Uthman dan Fodio from the various communities was freely given, not imposed. the intellectual, religious and political leadership which the central government continued to provide ensured the maintenance of the loyalty.

The Amirates were supervised by the central government based at Sokoto. The eastern Amirates, for example, were supervised by the Waziri. He was therefore the direct link between the Amirates and the caliph. He was in charge in Kano, Zazzau, Hadejia, Gombe, Katagum, Misau and Adamawa. Other Sokoto officials supervised the other Amirates such as Katsina, Daura, Zamfara and Muri. But the Waziri still had the general supervision even over the eastern Amirates which were not directly under his control. He only delegated his supervisory authority. He was therefore constantly travelling round his Amirates, discharging his responsibilities such as confirming the appointment of Amirs, seeing to the implementation of policies emanating from the caliph, such as the establishment of ribats (fortresses), promotion of all aspects of the economy and establishment of institutions of higher learning.

The Amirates also had their administrative structures which were hierarchically arranged. In Hausaland, the pre-jihad political structures, titles and institutions were maintained with modifications here and there. In the other Amirates, especially the larger ones, such as Adamawa and Zazzau, sub-Amirs enjoyed autonomy. All they needed to do was to ensure that tribute, levies and taxes were sent to the Amirates' headquarters.

The Amirates had a number of obligations to the central government based at Sokoto. One of these was joint military contribution for annual campaigns against the caliphate's enemies, for example Gobir, or for putting down revolts or rebellions within the caliphate. The central government of Sokoto depended on the joint military expeditions as it had no standing army. In view of the numerous enemies which the caliphate had, this aspect of the Amirates' contribution was important. The Amirates also sent tributes and gifts to Sokoto. Each Amirate sent mainly what it was more favourably endowed with. These ranged from slaves and horses, to industrial goods such as textiles materials.



The Sokoto caliphate in the mid-nineteenth century

Conclusion

The jihad of the nineteenth century was one of the most important developments in Nigerian history. The jihad itself was a continuation of earlier efforts made by pious scholars in isolated parts of the central Sudan to reform Islam with the view to establishing a government based on Islamic principles. These efforts were not fruitful. By the second half of the eighteenth century, however, a number of factors coalesced to make Uthman dan Fodio's reform movement a reality. In the caliphate that was established, the jihad leaders attempted to put into practice the ideals which they cherished. In the first three or so decades of the nineteenth century a substantial part of their mission was achieved. But as the century moved on, there was a general trend towards the abandonment of these ideals. Scholarship, at least the Uthman dan Fodio type, which constituted the driving force behind the maintenance of government on Islamic

principles declined and conflicts, especially dynastic conflicts increasingly dominated the political climate of the caliphate. By the end of the century, the situation was increasingly becoming volatile. Changes that would have come about from this situation were forestalled by the British conquest of the caliphate at the end of the century.

Summary

1. By the eighteenth century, Hausaland had attained important stages of political, economic and cultural developments. It also witnessed further dynamic changes, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century. The changes generated tension and conflicts. These were brought about by the activities of the ruling classes through dynastic conflicts, burdensome taxation and levies, and with the collaboration of the malaman fada in the promotion of unIslamic practices. These caused widespread grievances throughout Hausaland.
2. It was these grievances that Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio, a learned and pious scholar, harnessed to overthrow the governments of Hausaland. His aim was the establishment of a just Islamic society based on the Sharia. He spent thirty years teaching and preaching and by the end of the eighteenth century, his fame and influence had spread throughout Hausaland. Due to his growing influence and the threat he and his followers posed to the rulers of Gobir, the latter took panic measures to curb such influence and threat.
3. The ensuing confrontation transformed itself into open hostilities. The resulting struggles between the Islamic community and the King of Gobir led to victory for the former. The jihad spread to other parts of Hausaland and within a relatively short time, the governments of the Hausa states collapsed. This was made possible by the prevailing decaying political and social conditions and the widespread injustice which obtained in the area.
4. The collapse of the governments of the Hausa States was accompanied by the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate, which subsequently brought into its fold large territories which had hitherto not been part of Hausaland. The seat of the caliphate was based at Sokoto and it was from here that the administration of the vast territory of the caliphate was supervised. In the early years of the caliphate, serious attempts were made to ad-

minister it in accordance with the principles of Islam. But in the latter years, many of the caliphs and the emirs tended to concentrate on worldly matters at the expense of Islamic ideals for which Uthman dan Fodio and his companions stood.

5. The jihad itself and the establishment of the caliphate had tremendous impact on the societies of the Nigeria area and beyond. These impacts included political changes, the spread of Islam, the writing of many important articles and books, the development of new forms of economic organisation, and demographic changes.

Questions

Essay

1. Discuss the factors which caused the outbreak of the jihad in Hausaland.
2. Why did the jihad start in the Rima basin rather than in other parts of Hausaland?
3. Why did the various governments of Hausaland collapse within a short time of the declaration of the jihad?
4. Identify and discuss the major effects of the jihad on the societies of the Nigeria area.

Multiple-choice

1. The most warlike state in Hausaland on the eve of the outbreak of the jihad was
   A. Kano
   B. Zamfara
   C. Gobir
   D. Kebbi
2. Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio commanded his followers to launch the jihad in their respective areas in
   A. 1774-1775
   B. 1804
   C. 1805
   D. 1850
3. The Eastern Amirates of the caliphate were supervised by
   A. the Chiroma
   B. the Waziri

C. the Barade
D. the Sultan

4. The three jihad leaders, Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio, Abdullah dan Fodio and Muhammad Bello are said to have produced
A. 300 books and pamphlets
B. 250 books and pamphlets
C. 258 books and pamphlets
D. 298 books and pamphlets

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Chapter 2 Borno under the Shehus

Introduction

Like Hausaland, Borno also witnessed very important developments in the nineteenth century. These developments were ushered in by the jihad movement whose root was traceable to Hausaland.

As indicated in the last chapter, the jihad in Borno resulted in the eventual collapse of the almost one thousand-year-sayfawa dynasty and the take over of power by Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi who is generally referred to as al-Kanemi, and his successors. The new rulers who came to be known as Shehu (a title derived from the Arabic word *sheikh*—learned or leader), manipulated the political situation in Borno to achieve their own objective which was the attainment of power. In the early years of the nineteenth century, in spite of the fact that al-Kanemi had usurped the powers of the sayfawa rulers (the *mais*), and had emerged as the most powerful person in Borno by the 1820s, he could not oust the dynasty completely. This was partly due to the weight of tradition and partly due to the fact that although al-Kanemi had the necessary resources the authority of the sayfawa rulers was still being acknowledged by the people of Borno.

It was not until 1846, when the position of the mais had been weakened and reduced by al-Kanemi and his successors to the point whereby the mais could not perform their duties to the people, that the sayfawa dynasty was abolished. From that year to the end of the nineteenth century, the Shehus became the sole rulers of Borno.

In this chapter, we shall discuss the outbreak of the jihad in Borno; the response of the sayfawa mais to this development; al-Kanemi's intervention in Borno politics and the stages in the seizure of power in Borno; the factors which enabled al-Kanemi and his successors to seize power in Borno; and the nature of administration by the Shehus. We shall also discuss the problems which faced Borno, especially after the death of Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi.

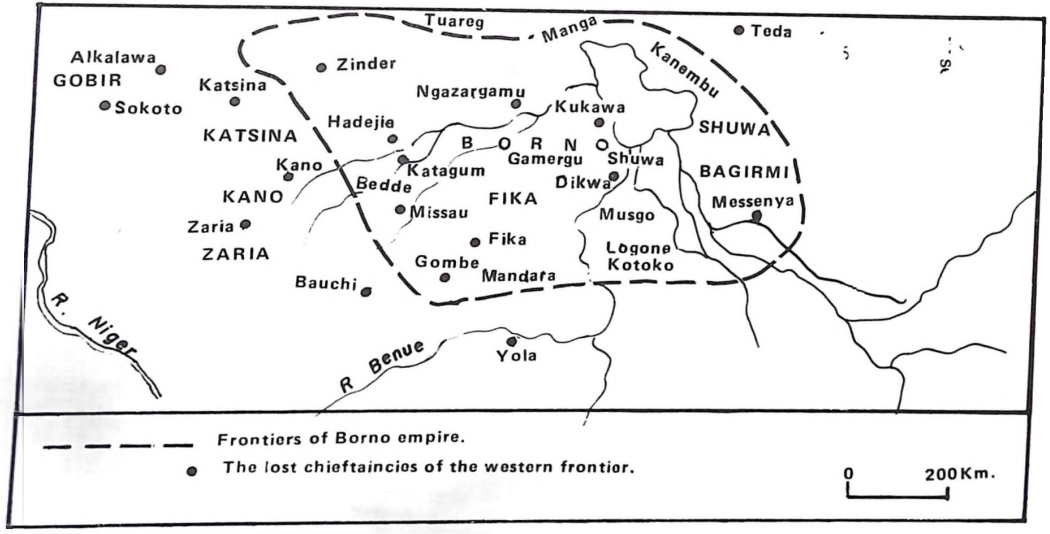
Borno before the outbreak of the jihad

The years preceding the outbreak of the jihad in Borno were marked by several developments some of which constituted real problems to the state and its society. It was the cumulation of such problems that gave rise to the jihad and the collapse of the sayfawa dynasty. One of such problems was the decline of the central government.

The decline of Borno started from about the seventeenth century when, among other things, the mais started the practice of seclusion. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the mais, notably Mai Hajj Handun, were said to have been so engrossed in religious seclusions and devotion that they ceased to participate actively in political and administrative matters. This unhealthy political development resulted in the emergence of powerful courtiers and hangers-on who tried to fill the vacuum. It must be pointed out that by going into seclusion, the mais breached a fundamental Islamic injunction concerning the enormous responsibilities they were duty bound to discharge to their followers on a day-to-day basis. Rulers, according to Islamic teaching, must make themselves available to all categories of people and find solutions to their problems.

The withdrawals of the mais from active participation in government removed their control over powerful officials who consequently abused their positions by engaging in corrupt and oppressive practices. In addition to the princes, princesses, and the Queen mother, the emergence of powerful slave officials, notably the *Kaigama* also partially eclipsed the power of the mais. All this had the effect of weakening Borno politically and militarily. By the last decade of the eighteenth century, this once powerful kingdom received crushing defeats at the hands of its relatively weak neighbours or vassals. The absence of effective leadership with a strong military force allowed the kingdom to break-up into component parts. By the time of the jihad the links between the central government and its provinces as well as its vassals in the north-eastern parts of Hausaland, Baghirmi, Mandara, Kanem and elsewhere were almost gone.

These developments, among other things, also affected the condition of law and order in the kingdom. By the early part of the nineteenth century, the state was no longer in a position to regulate and harmonise relations between different groups of the society, for example, between the nomadic and sedentary population, thereby leading to tension and conflicts. The weakened military position of the kingdom also gave rise to insecurity. Bandits raided and carried



Bornu and its neighbours before the jihad

away people's property, especially livestock, at will. The respon sibility for personal security, defence, law and order were allowe to pass over to provincial and other local rulers, who were actuall not in a position to enforce them. If anything, the local rulers, du to their oppressive and exploitative measures, worsened th situation.

It is remarkable that the jihad in Borno started in these local area which suffered from severe exploitation. These were the south eastern south, and western parts of Borno. In these areas local rule increased greatly the activity of confiscating the livestock of, for ex ample, the nomadic Fulani. But these were not the only areas where corruption was rampant. Several sources speak of the pervasive nature of corruption in Borno during this period. At the mai's court at Gazargamu, for example, were 'multitude of self-seeking, arrogant and corrupt hangers-on'. In the correspondence between al-Kanemi and the Sokoto jihad leaders, the issue of corruption, especially judicial corruption featured prominently. The *Alkali* (judges) were believed to have taken bribes and confiscated the property of orphans. It was also believed that they were oppressive in their judgments.

Equally of great concern to the society was the issue of slave raids. What worsened the matter was that by the later part of the eighteenth century, slave raiding expeditions were launched even into parts of Borno or into areas which had acknowledged Borno's control. In other words, the rulers of Borno were enslaving and selling their own people or people from their vassalage. The quest for slaves and booty led to devastations, insecurity and hardship. It is no wonder therefore that many groups who suffered from such slave raids, for example, the Mandara, the Gamergu and the Marghi, sometimes encouraged by the Fulani, the Shuwa and the Arabs, maintained hostile relations with the rulers of Gazargamu.

In addition to these developments the peasantry was also being devastated by droughts and famine. The occurrence of droughts in Borno went back to early times. But their occurrences seemed to have become more frequent in the eighteenth century. Some of the droughts of this period lasted from seven to ten years at a stretch. The ordinary people suffered terrible hardship as a result of famines caused by such droughts. Many people migrated to Hausaland and other relatively well watered areas to the south. But the mass movements of the Tubus, the Shuwa and the Tuaregs southward into fertile areas of Borno, for example, the areas of Nguru and Machena, put a lot of pressure on the provincial government of the Galadima of Nguru in his attempt to reduce tension created by such immigrations. The effects of the famines on the social and political

spheres were severe and devastating. These could easily be understood from the writings of learned and pious scholars such as Al-Imam Muhammad b. al-Hajj Abd al-Rahman Al-Barnawi and Sheikh Muhammad al-Tahir b. Ibrahim al-Fallati.

While the masses of the people were undergoing such hardship, the mais and their leading officials based at the capital, Gazargamu, not only failed to provide relief for the suffering people, but, on the contrary, intensified their exploitation in order to sustain their luxurious lifestyles. The members of the ruling class, including the court Ulama seemed to have been oblivious to the suffering of the people. The latter in fact showered praises on the mais for their 'generosity'.

However, not all the members of the Ulama, shared this view. There were, as in Hausaland, some pious scholars who detested not only the widespread corruption and oppression but also the irreligious practices which were taking place. This factor was in fact one of the most important reasons for the jihad in Borno. In spite of the fact that Islam had long existed and that Borno was noted throughout the central Sudan and indeed beyond for its scholarship, signs of pre-Islamic practices remained widespread. Even the Sharia was noted for its contradiction between theory and practice. That is to say that the theoretical code of the Sharia was hardly put into practice — in the course of administration of justice.

By the early years of the nineteenth century, the pious members of the Ulama were becoming more and more concerned about the widespread nature of superstitious practices in Borno. According to the jihadists,

> chiefs used to ride out to certain places and make sacrifices there and that they used to pour blood of sacrifice upon the gates of their cities. It is said that they have great houses with snakes and other reptiles in them and that they used to offer sacrifices to the snakes and that they practised ceremonies to their rivers. It is also said that they went out to other feasts at certain seasons but only their chiefs and their priests were present and no one else came but (they).

The jihadists were particularly concerned that the chiefs and the court Ulama did not try to stop these un-Islamic practices. That those practices indeed took place was confirmed by the defender of Borno against the jihadists, al-Kanemi. His argument that although this was sinful but did not constitute unbelief so long as a person's faith remained unbroken even in sin, was challenged by the jihadists. According to Uthman dan Fodio, even though a person 'makes the confession of faith, and prays and fasts and makes the pilgrimage

and does many good works, yet by one act of heathenism he destroys a thousand acts of religion'. In fact, one of the leading Islamic jurists on the question of jihad, Muhammad Abdulkarim al-Maghili, whose works influenced the Sokoto jihadists, sanctioned the jihad against places like Borno.

A related matter which was also significant in the creation of dissatisfaction in the society was the rigid adherence by the ruling class to the inheritance system. It would seem clear that the sayfawa bureaucracy had come to be overwhelmed by the dynastic hereditary principles, thus making entry into the ruling and policy-making levels of government impossible to other members of the society except the relatives of the courtiers in Gazargamu and in other local seats of power throughout the kingdom. Succession to the position of the mai and other important offices came to be based on father-to-son mode.

This meant that even distinguished and pious scholars who possessed vast knowledge in Islamic Sciences and Law and who were actually the right people, according to Islamic injunctions, to run the government, were effectively excluded. Instead, people who might have possessed neither Islamic knowledge nor the virtue of leadership, but who, because their parents were rulers, automatically acquired power on the death of their parents. The likelihood of some of such rulers abusing their power and administering the state unjustly was often very high. Another implication of this policy was that only the Kanuri, by virtue of their being the dominant group and who had earlier succeeded in wrestling power from the other non-Kanuri inhabitants of Borno, had the right to rule and others to serve them. By the end of the eighteenth century, this discriminatory policy against the non-Kanuri was resented, for example, by the Fulani of Borno. These serious lapses not withstanding, the court Ulama kept on insisting that the sayfawa regime governed Borno in accordance with Islamic principles.

In order to understand clearly the problems which undermined the state of Islam in Borno, and its failure to create a just society as embodied in Islamic ideals, it is important to know the roles played by the court and the other categories of Ulama. From the time of the introduction of Islam into Borno in the eleventh century right to the time of the outbreak of the jihad in the early part of the nineteenth century, the mais embarked on a policy of winning over the members of the Ulama by granting them all sorts of privileges. These included exemptions from military service and taxation, granting of tracts of land as 'fiefs', appointment to lucrative positions in government service, receiving subsidies, gifts of horses, clothes and slaves. This policy effectively compromised the position of the

members of the Ulama as the guardian of Islam and conscience of the society. Being part of the privileged groups, they were removed from the reality of the abject conditions of the mass of the people. They also, using their exalted positions, justified all sorts of oppressive state policies. Even when the mais failed to perform their duties to the people, for example, in time of droughts and famines, the court Ulama still showered praises on them. Like in Hausaland, the court Ulama adopted very hostile attitudes towards the pious Ulama, to the extent that the former even encouraged the mais to suppress the latter through violent means.

In spite of this, however, the pious Ulama continually attempted to reform Islam in Borno over the centuries. As in Hausaland, such attempts were often frustrated due to the unripe conditions for the launching of a successful jihad. As early as the fifteenth century, for example, in the time of Mai Ali Gaji, a leading Ulama, Ibn. Ibrahim shook the foundation of the mai's authority by asserting that 'Kingship is founded on force and duress while the religious man is gentle and more contended with a little to live on-not hoping for or scheming for much'. This influenced the attitude of some leading Ulama on the position of the mai, thereby leading to a serious crisis in the state.

In the late sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth centuries, another crisis generated by the preaching of some members of the pious Ulama against Borno government created dissention among the members of the ruling class. As a result of the activities of these pious members of the Ulama, many officers of the government began to withdraw their support from the sayfawa. The mass of the people also began to urge one another to follow the pious Ulama. Using an Islamic ruling, most likely provided by the court Ulama, the then mai, Umar, ordered the execution of the leaders of the reform movement and exiled others. Needless to say, their crime, according to Caliph Muhammad Bello, was that they 'began to restore the right path and elucidate the truth for the people'.

The execution and harassment of the leadership of the pious members of the Ulama did not stop them in their attempt to restore Islam to its proper path and secure justice for the people. In the early part of the eighteenth century, a leading scholar, Al-Imam Muhammed b. Al-Hajj al-Rahman al-Barnawi, already referred to earlier, possibly in addition to other activities, wrote a lengthy poem dealing with contemporary customs in Borno which went against the Islamic code. The poem clearly highlighted the abuses prevalent in the state. Al-Barnawi was thus a forerunner, and of course not the only one of the more thoroughgoing reformist movements of the early nineteenth century in the Sudan. Revolutionary feeling

in his days had not gathered the strength that it was to acquire i the closing years of the eighteenth and opening years of the nine teenth centuries. By the latter period, the whole of the Sudan wa gripped by the jihad fever owing to the activities of scholars lik Sheikh Tahir bin Ibrahim al-Fallati in Borno and Uthman dan Fodi in Hausaland. They drew the attention of the people to the pervasiv ills in the society. A poem written by a Borno scholar at the clos of the eighteenth century, brings out clearly the climate of the jihac movement throughout the Sudan, from Kordofan in the east to the Niger bend in the west. The standard of Islam in both Borno and Hausaland was being seriously questioned.

The outbreak of the jihad movement in Hausaland directly affected developments in Borno. There can be little doubt that the success of Uthman dan Fodio's jihad in Hausaland encouraged unrest in Borno. Afterall most of the conditions which created the jihad in Hausaland were also prevalent in Borno. The local jihad leaders in Borno believed that Borno was a country of unbelievers. Both the local jihadists in Borno and the leadership of the jihad movement in Hausaland were strenghtened in their belief about the Islamic status of Borno as a result of the latter's military assistance to the Hausa states in their wars against Uthman dan Fodio's forces. With the outbreak of the jihad in Hausaland, the Sarakunan (kings) of Kano, Daura, Katsina, etc. sought the assistance of Borno against the jihadists. The Mai of Borno directed the Waziri to offer assistance to the Hausa states. In addition to the charges of unprovoked attack against the jihadists in Hausaland, the offer of assistance to the 'heathen' conclusively proved that Borno was a heathen state. In a correspondence between Caliph Muhammad Bello and al-Kanemi, the former stated, 'In truth you know that everyman who helps the heathen become like them'. It was indeed this involvement of Borno in the jihad in Hausaland that resulted in the immediate outbreak of the jihad in Borno itself

The outbreak of the jihad and Al-Kanemi's intervention

As soon as Borno began preparations to send military contingents in aid of the Sarakunan (kings) of Daura, Kano and Katsina, the jihadists in Borno, mainly Fulani, became alarmed, and evacuated their homes. Those in the southern part of Borno joined Buba Yero in Bauchi and those in the west joined Abdullah. In the western part of Borno, the jihad leadership devolved on Mallam Ibrahim Zaki, a humble scholar who was fairly acquainted with Sheikh

Uthman dan Fodio's teaching. The other two jihad leaders in this region were two brothers, Bi Abdur and Sambo. The latter collected a flag from Uthman dan Fodio for the commencement of the jihad in Borno probably in 1805. The two brothers then embarked on a series of conquests; first they took Hadejia and then Auyo. These activities were a direct affront to the authority of the Galadima of Borno who was incharge of the western part of the kingdom. The Galadima's initial attempt to contain the activities of the jihadists in 1807 resulted in his being driven out from his provincial headquarters, Nguru.

The situation was similar in the south, where the jihad leadership centred at Deya (in the present Gujba Local Government of Borno State) consisted of two scholars, al-Bukhari and Goni Mukhtar. They started the jihad by attacking a newly appointed local ruler, Muhammad Saurima who was apparently corrupt and oppressive. With the death of al-Bukhari, Goni Mukhtar assumed the leadership of the southern jihadists.

The third sector of military activities started in the southeastern part of Borno. This was opened up by one Muhammad Wabi who is said to have been a Fulani leader in the Ngala region. He joined forces with Goni Mukhtar and began a series of attacks presumably on the local rulers there. Unable to cope with the situation, the ruler of Ngala requested al-Kanemi to assume the leadership of a military force to oppose Muhammad Wabi. Al-Kanemi not only scored a victory against the jihadists but also, at his own initiative, entered into correspondence with the southern jihadists, demanding that they justify their aggression against Borno.

Meanwhile, the Mai of Borno, Ahmad, concerned with the hostilities in the western and southern parts of the kingdom, was forced to send several expeditions against his enemies. They were all defeated. In desperation, the mai issued a decree which ordered the killing of anybody of Fulani origin throughout the Borno. As the situation deteriorated, the mai wrote a letter to Uthman dan Fodio, requesting him to instruct the jihadists to cease their fighting. Dissatisfied with dan Fodio's reply that he join the jihadists in the struggle for the cause of the jihad, the mai marched westward with the determination of crushing the rebellion. The first battle was against one of the jihad leaders, Lerlima, who was soundly defeated and subsequently fled. But this was to be reversed when the Borno army met with Bi Abdur who inflicted severe defeat upon the mai, killing several of the Borno leaders, including Galadima Dunama.

After this battle, the jihadists gained the full support of Uthman dan Fodio in their attempt to overthrow what they perceived as a decadent system. Three jihad leaders, Bi Abdur, Goni Mukhtar and

Buba Yero, began to send military expeditions into the heartland of Borno. Only the eastern most parts of Borno remained safe from the activities of the jihadists. Early in 1808, Ibrahim Zaki, the leader of the western jihadists, launched an attack on Birni Gazargamu and nearly sacked the Borno capital before retreating. Later in the same year, Goni Mukhtar, leading an expedition from the southwestern parts of Borno, succeeded in driving Mai Ahmad out of Birnin Gazargamu and occupied the Borno capital. Mai Ahmad was forced to flee to the eastern most part of his kingdom, near Lake Chad.

Meanwhile, both the capital and vast portions of Borno had been overrun and ravaged by the jihadists. The once mighty Borno was in a state of chaos and on the brink of collapse. The mai, by this time quite advanced in age and said to be blind, realised the hopelessness of the situation and decided to abdicate in favour of his son, Dunama, who it was hoped, would be able to redirect the capture of the lost Borno territory. It was at this stage of developments that the new mai, after hearing about al-Kanemi's military success against the jihadists in Ngala and his intellectual argument with the jihadists in southern Borno, summoned him with the objective of requesting him to help in the recapture of Gazargamu.

Al-Kanemi

At this stage, it is pertinent to discuss briefly the career of this Islamic scholar who, together with his descendants eventually established a dynasty which ruled Borno from 1846 to the end of the nineteenth century. Al-Kanemi was a Kanembu (one of the ethnic groups of the Chad basin) who was born in Murzuk. His father, Muhammad Ninka, was a scholar of wide reputation. It was his quest for knowledge that made him leave Kanem for Murzuk in the central Saharan region.

Al-Kanemi spent the early years of his life at Murzuk pursuing the course of study. From here he travelled to other places, including Tripoli, where he studied under various Islamic scholars. In the 1790s, al-Kanemi and his father performed the pilgrimage. After spending about ten years pursuing further religious studies in the holy land, he decided to return to Kanem and Murzuk and subsequently made his way westward via Wadai and Baghirmi. He eventually arrived at Ngala, accompanied by his wife, Yamba, their son Salih and perhaps a slave or two. Here his broad and sound educational background earned him a respectable status in the society. He was consequently able to gain some following which he used

Al-Kanemi

in military activities against the jihadists.

Al-Kanemi's intervention on the side of the mai against th jihadists resulted in victory in favour of the former. The jihadist were driven out of Birnin Gazargamu. But no sooner had the ne mai, Dunama, reoccupied the capital than Ibraham Zaki once agai marched forth from Katagum and the mai was once more force to flee his capital eastward. He again appealed to al-Kanemi fo assistance. Al-Kanemi, together with the mai, marched agains Ibrahim Zaki. By this time Ibrahim Zaki had evacuated the Birnin Soon after, another raid was launched, this time from the southwest, by Muhammad Manga, the son and successor of Goni Mukhtar, on the region of Birnin Gazargamu and Alau (near present day Maiduguri). The mai, with the aid of al-Kanemi, eventually chased away the jihadists beyond Damaturu.

Al-Kanemi's ascendancy to power in Borno

The stages

Al-Kanemi emerged beyond doubt as the most effective military opponent of the jihadists. Consequently, Mai Dunama came to rely upon him for the defence of Borno. For this vital role which he played and was expected to play, al-Kanemi, on his own request, was enthusiastically given a piece of territory by the mai to control and benefit from. He secured this territory in 1809. This was an important development in al-Kanemi's rise to power. He now had a solid base for his political support and ambition. His growing influence over the mai resulted in a crisis which eventually led to the latter's deposition and replacement with a new mai, Muhammad Ngileruma. But this did not check al-Kanemi's growing influence in Borno. The new mai was compelled to rely on al-Kanemi for the maintenance of security in Borno. Within a short time, al-Kanemi and a faction of the Borno ruling class, both of whom were based at Ngurno eroded the basis of support of Mai Ngileruma. By 1813, al-Kanemi was strong enough to bring about the deposition of Mai Ngileruma and the return of the former, Mai Dunama, to the throne. By this act, al-Kanemi became a king maker in Borno. The restored mai became a mere stooge for al-Kanemi's manipulation.

Meanwhile, al-Kanemi took the title of Sheikh; a title which connoted religious and political leadership. It was from this title that the Shehu (Kanuri etc.) was derived. In about 1814 he built a new town which he named Kukawa. It has been suggested that this was part of his grand design to usurp power in Borno. With the founding of Kukawa, al-Kanemi began to adopt an independent attitude

to Mai Dunama. he initiated actions of deep political significance without prior consultation with or permission of the mai. He merely informed him after he had taken action.

These included launching of military expeditions within and outside Borno, conduct of diplomatic relations including the controversial correspondence between him and the Sokoto caliphate leadership as well as Tripoli, appointment of state officials and the striking of his own seal. By 1819 al-Kanemi had a well organised army which included merceneries from North Africa and/or central Sahara. He also employed the services and fire power of some of the European travellers who stayed in Borno during his time.

Al-Kanemi's influence and activities undermined the mai's confidence in himself. He felt indebted to al-Kanemi for his return to the throne and became helpless about al-Kanemi's usurpation of his powers. By the 1820s, al-Kanemi was the most powerful person in Borno.

Every move made by the mai to contain al-Kanemi's influence resulted in the reduction of the former's power and a corresponding increase of that of the latter. The mai's plan to deal with al-Kanemi by striking an alliance with Baghirmi, resulted in the former's death and further strengthening of al-Kanemi's position in Borno. He presided over the installation of the new mai, Ibrahim who was less than twenty years old. Now, more than ever before, al-Kanemi was the virtual ruler of Borno. But, as has already been stated, for reasons of tradition and the fact that the generality of the society still held the institution of the maiship in high esteem, al-Kanemi could not publicly declare himself as mai.

By 1837 when al-Kanemi died, his grip over Borno had become complete. This is clearly shown by the ease with which his son, Umar succeeded him — in accordance with al-Kanemi's wish. The mai wanted to take advantage of al-Kanemi's death to re-assert his power. However, after he had been told by the Shehu's supporters that although al-Kanemi had died, the forces which made and sustained him were still very much around, the mai aborted his plans. He and his courtiers meekly travelled from his capital, Birnin Kafela to Kukawa to offer his allegiance to the new Shehu. But the new Shehu was not impressed. Angered by the hesitancy of the mai to come before him, he set out to punish him by reducing his income, thus making him even more dependent on the new Shehu.

Over the years, this intolerable situation made Mai Ibrahim desperate in finding ways and means of getting rid of the usurpers. The last bid to regain power, which resulted in the demise of the sayfawa dynasty was made in 1846. In this year, Mai Ibrahim entered into a secret alliance with the King of Wadai against their common

enemy, Shehu Umar. When the main body of the Shehu's forces was on an expedition against Zinder in the north-west, the King of Wadai, on the instigation of Mai Ibrahim, invaded Borno. The plan eventually failed miserably. This was followed by a programme of elimination of the sayfawa ruling dynasty and the abolition of the dynasty. From 1846, the al-Kanemi dynasty formally became the sovereign rulers of Borno. Thus within a relatively short period, al-Kanemi, almost a stranger, rose from the obscurity of a village scholar to become a ruler of a vast kingdom.

Factors responsible for the success of Al-Kanemi

A number of factors were responsible for the success of al-kanemi. First were the factors of political, administrative and moral decay from which Borno had suffered even before the jihad uprising. The kingdom was afflicted by a general malaise which made it vulnerable to change. The situation was further aggravated by the activities of the jihadists which resulted in severe political, administrative and economic dislocation. For quite sometime after the sack of the Borno capital, Birnin Gazargamu, Mai Dunama shifted his residence every few months, a development which led to a crisis of confidence in the system not only by the generality of the society but even by the members of the ruling class, especially the courtiers. This and the failure of the mai to contain the activities of the jihadists resulted in further political instability. This was fuelled by the age-old tradition of intrigues and conspiracy among the courtiers and the princes, whose stock-in-trade was the pursuit of self-interest.

It is important to note that al-Kanemi is said to have been deeply involved in these intrigues and conspiracies. His insight into, and quick mastery of Borno politics enabled him to penetrate the system and manipulate it. It is also important to note that al-Kanemi seems to have had a sense of mission to reform, and consequently establish what he perceived as a real Islamic state in Borno. That al-Kanemi was an ambitious individual is no longer open to question and this explains the way he carried on his business methodically and resolutely. Al-Kanemi himself was a major factor in the process of undermining the collapse of the sayfawa dynasty.

Al-Kanemi was an astute politician. He possessed exceptional abilities both as a military and political leader. Probably more than anyone else in Borno during his time, he was aware and constantly made diligent provisions for the more concrete bases of political authority such as training and equipping the military, establishment of military posts in strategic parts of Borno and deployment of

military personnel to sensitive areas so that not only peace and security were established everywhere in the kingdom, but also, that through the dependable channels of communication which were thus created, the will and the decision of the centre would be seriously respected and adhered to.

To further enhance his military capability, al-Kanemi, through diplomatic contacts, was able to secure military detachments from Fezzan for use in his military expeditions. He also secured the cooperation of Fezzan for joint military campaigns against Borno's dependencies such as Baghirmi in 1820. Similarly, he also arranged with Fezzan for occasional raids from that country into Borno, possibly to intimidate his enemies. Merceneries of North African origin and elsewhere were also recruited to fight for him. Even European travellers such as Denham who happened to be around during his time were made use of in his dealings with his enemies. The use of rockets provided by such Europeans terrorised and helped in subduing instransigent groups.

To support these military activities, al-Kanemi cornered a substantial part of the wealth of the kingdom, thereby depriving the mais of revenue which they would have used in the crucial time of Borno's history. His regular income started coming in in 1809 when he secured the 'fief' around Ngurno. This was in addition to the wealth he acquired in the form of gifts received from the mai for services rendered. As from 1814 when he founded Kukawa, he intensified his military activities and his sources of income became varied. As more areas were brought under his direct control, the state revenue also increasingly came under his control. With such resources, he was able to attract large numbers of followers, first at Ngurno and then at Kukawa. Many of these were learned men. Even in the earlier years he was able to found institutions and political structures which resulted in a gradual shift of the centre of power from Birnin Kafela, the seat of the mais, to Kukawa.

Another factor which to this day has continued to exercise considerable influence on the Kanuri of Borno and which played an important role in his acceptance as a leader, is the widespread myths and legends surrounding his person. That al-Kanemi was a learned man is not in doubt. But this has been so much exaggerated that there had been a tendency on the part of some people to attribute to him certain spiritual and magical powers that could make him superhuman. Some of the things that have been said about him actually border on superstition. These have invoked in the minds of people a feeling of awe and reverence which has been important for exercising control over them. All of his military victories were attributed to his religious or supernatural powers. The first victory

which Borno scored against the jihadists, for example, was attributed to al-Kanemi's spiritual power. He is said to have isolated himself for several days in prayer, after which he manufactured a religious charm by writing several Arabic formulae on a small calabash and that it was the result of smashing the calabash by the mai just before Borno's encounter with the jihadists that gave the former its first victory. In another military engagement against an instransigent group in western part of Borno, al-Kanemi was credited with the performance of a miracle which resulted in victory for Borno forces. These and similar stories and his prolonged correspondence with the Sokoto leadership over the question of the jihad in Borno made him famous and sometimes feared.

As has already been indicated the spiritual powers attributed to al-Kanemi were just myths. Borno's first victory against the jihadists was certainly largely due to the mobilisation of Borno resources by the new mai.

The miracle attributed to al-Kanemi concerning his victory over the intransigent group in the western part of Borno was actually a terrifying sound from two rockets, which were set off in the heat of the campaign in Manga territory by the British expeditionary team accompanying al-kanemi. The simmering blast had a damaging effect on the population and stories about this incident spread far and wide. It was the accounts of such ritual symbolism and mechanical devices, designed to give al-Kanemi's rising power the aura of mythical authority that enabled him to gain acquiescence to his authority in Borno. Such myths and legends had long term effects on the people. Al-Kanemi's sons and successors, who were obviously less learned, articulate and energetic continued to enjoy such past glories, to some degrees.

Elements of change in Borno administration under Al-Kanemi

Among the changes which accompanied al-Kanemi's intervention in Borno politics was the centralisation of the administration. This was due to the various military campaigns which led to the subjugation of areas which hitherto enjoyed much autonomy; for example, Deya, Gawa, Dikwa, Marte, Ngala, Kotoko states, etc. as well as the posting of military officers of slave origin to strategic parts of Borno. These slaves were completely loyal to him. His officials, the *Kazallahs* and other policies which are discussed below, played important roles in the centralisation of the administration of the kingdom.

Another important change had to do with the incorporation into the organ of the central government, groups, who until then had been marginalised and had to subsist largely outside the main stream of power. This was followed with the streamlining of the size of the council of state. Instead of the former amorphous and unwieldy council, al-Kanemi instituted only 7—9 persons for the new council of state. Major policies of the state seemed to have been decided upon by al-Kanemi and his close advisers who numbered about six. Since these high officials were leaders of different ethnic groups, they individually or collectively had contacts with large sectors of the population. In an attempt to give the people a sense of belonging, al-Kanemi created certain titles which he conferred on the leaders of some communities. In addition to deliberating on major political and other issues affecting the whole state, al-Kanemi's council of state also functioned as the highest court in the state. It was the only court which could administer capital punishment. It carried out administration of justice in consultation with the Ulama.

The Shehu's regime also differed from that of the mai in terms of recruitment into the state service. The regime emphasised principles of appointment on the basis of merit rather than automatic succession to high office. This explains the preponderance of people of slave origin in key government offices, particularly the military establishment. Traditions suggest that the entire command of the military was put almost entirely in the hands of former slaves. Due to the intensity of military activities in various parts of the kingdom and al-Kanemi's policy of centralisation of the administration, there was increasing reliance on powerful slave officials. These were organised into two main hierarchies. There were first, the officials charged with the responsibility of the defence of the person of al-Kanemi, the palace and the city of Kukawa. There were also the Kazallahs of the spear, the command which was in the hands of leading slaves. This group, especially in the time of al-Kanemi, constituted the main striking force, charged with the responsibility of the defence of the state and conquests. It has been suggested that these Kazallahs were selected from different ethnic groups, especially from the groups who initially opposed al-Kanemi. The objective was to give such groups some sense of belonging and identification with the central government.

They were given territories to administer. This meant that their authority superceded that of the local rulers over whom they were imposed. These slave officials possessed all the symbols of authority, the most conspicuous of which was the use of personal band of singers. Some of the reasons for al-Kanemi's reliance on these slave officials included their loyalty and dedication especially in war

time situation. Even in peace time, he relied a great deal on these slaves. He, however, retained power of life and death over them. This enabled him to concentrate power in his hands.

In order to keep strict surveillance and control over senior officers, he maintained the sayfawa's policy of confining senior officials to the capital. The officials were, however, encouraged to maintain constant contact with the territories assigned to them to administer. They were able to do this by stationing their slaves or clients in such areas. They also built houses for their sojourns in the respective territories. Some members of their families also resided in such houses.

Another development of this period, which may have arisen due to the centralisation of the government, was the annual gathering at the capital of state officials from all parts of the kingdom. During such gathering, notably on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday, the Shehu exacted fealty from, and exerted authority over personnel and territorial units. This was the occasion when tributes brought into the capital were distributed to various officials. This was in addition to various taxes which were collated on a regular basis. The occasion was also used for important trials. These trials, normally of important state officials, were held in public.

Due to the centralisation of the administration of the kingdom, the territorial or provincial rulers came to enjoy less autonomy. The wars of pacification and the appointment of loyal officials to take charge of territorial administration had the additional effect of strengthening the position of the centre vis-a-vis the local administration. Even in the cases of territories controlled by powerful local rulers, al-Kanemi ensured that he reserved the right of appointment, investiture and dismissal over them.

By the time of al-Kanemi's death in 1837, Borno had attained some measure of stability which brought in its wake peace and security.

Developments in Borno after Al-Kanemi

The independent reign of the al-Kanemi dynasty which spanned forty-seven years (1846-1893) was characterised by dynastic conflicts marked by frightening violence, court intrigues, rebellions, economic crisis and a host of other problems. The reasons for these are many. Part of them, however, had to do with the superficial nature of al-Kanemi's solution to Borno's problems. To a large extent, he merely succeeded in sweeping the problems under the carpet. He suppressed opposition but did not find a lasting solution to the deep-seated problems which faced the kingdom. Some of the problems, for example, the economic problems, had to do with al-Kanemi's

failure to initiate sound economic and social policies like those of Caliph Muhammad Bello of the Sokoto caliphate. Instead, the dynasty made more and more demands on the meagre resources of the peasantry, thereby leading to their pauperisation.

Leadership problem was also a major feature of the Shehu's government. Al-Kanemi's son and successor, Umar, who ruled Borno for thirty-four years, was a weak and indecisive leader. He allowed his power and authority to be circumscribed by his slave officials and courtiers. The rapacious activities of his Waziri, al-Hajj Bashir compounded his problems. This resulted in a vicious dynastic and court struggle, which led the dynasty into a period of malaise. Umar's successors, Shehus Bukar, Ibrahim and Hashim were not able to stem the motion of disintegrative process. Taking advantage of the almost perpetual political squables at the centre, which consequently weakened the government, especially its most important agent, the military, some of the provinces, particularly the western borderlands, inhabited by Ngizim, Manga and Kerekere, launched their rebellions. Also taking advantage of this situation, Zinder was able, without opposition from Kukawa, to attack and absorb several of Borno's western provinces, for instance, Gumel and Munio. Meanwhile Kanem was in perpetual civil war in which various warring factions were supported either by Wadai or the Aulad Sulaiman Arabs, both of whom sought to establish their control on the east bank of Lake Chad. The allegiance of Baghirmi was also lost to Wadai. Thus with the removal of al-Kanemi from the Borno political scene and the weakening of Borno military forces, separatist tendencies especially in the second half of the nineteenth century became intense.

These developments and the other related ones such as insecurity, corruption, neglect of the peasantry, slave raiding, interference with the trade routes and environmental problems which produced droughts conditions, imposed considerable strain on the already weak Borno economy. The economy which had been devastated by a series of droughts in the eighteenth century was worsened by the activities of the jihadists in the early part of the nineteenth century. Birnin Gazargamu, for example, was subjected to ravages and plunder. The unsettling conditions in the countryside also affected the economy. In addition to the jihad, a series of devastating raids were made into Borno, apparently at the instigation of al-Kanemi himself, by the authorities of the Fezzan. In the process large parts of Borno were laid waste.

The damage to the economy could have been repaired if the Shehus had clear-cut economic policies. They had none. Reports from nineteenth century European travellers in Borno, notably H.

Barth, are replete with lamentations over the sad state of the economy of Borno.

Even during al-Kanemi's time, there was no serious efforts made to introduce economic policies designed to uplift the life of the generality of the population. The only semblance of economic policy or state interest in economic activity was that relating to Borno's participation in the trans-Saharan trade. This involved exchange of North African luxury goods with slaves and ostrich feathers from Borno and elsewhere in the Sudan. But the trade started to decline from the mid-nineteenth century. This was partly due to the increasing degree of insecurity of the Fezzani — Borno trade routes brought about by raids launched by the Tuaregs and Aulad Sulaiman Arabs. The Tuaregs not only hindered trade, but also made disruptive periodic raids into the heartland of Borno, laying waste numerous villages and carrying off people and property. Also the main article of trade on the route, slaves, were decreasing owing to the activities of the anti-slavery movements undertaken by some Europeans. Over the years, as demand for slaves fell, the resulting loss in income had been partly made up by trade in ostrich plumes and ivory. But during the 1870s and early 1880s, depressive economic conditions in Europe had cut deeply into the demand for these luxury goods, and consequently the volume and value of trans-saharan trade dropped sharply.

By 1870s therefore, Borno's economic crisis had reached its peak. In 1871, for example, Nachtigal, one of the European travellers in Borno, observed that North African traders were becoming more and more unwilling to transact business in Borno, because the rulers had failed to enforce payment of debts and that the typical businessman was dishonest. While the numbers of the ruling classes were expanding fast, the sources of income for the state was dwindling. Normal tax levies and tributes were no longer adequate to supply the wealth which the ruling classes required to maintain their luxurious life-style and state institutions.

By the mid-1880s the situation had become so grave that the then ruling Shehu, Bukar, desperately in need of funds resorted to an extreme measure which is known in Borno history as *Kumoreji*. This involved the taking away of half of the wealth of the peasantry in grain, cattle, horses, etc. In practice much more was seized than one half, even to the extent that peasants' children were held to ransom for the fulfilment of the Kumoreji. European travellers, maybe with some exaggeration, have attested to the numerous villages which were drained of their economic produce by state agents, anxious to increase their income.

The collapse of the Al-Kanemi dynasty

Borno faced its external threat at the opening years of the 1890s. In 1892, Borno's most formidable enemy, Rabeh Zubair, a military adventurer from the Nile valley, after conquering several countries such as Wadai and Baghirmi on the way, was poised on Borno's frontier, prepared to invade the country. The Shehu of Borno at this time, Hashim, adopted an inactive policy of 'let's wait and see'. He failed to aid his neighbours, including his vassal, Baghirmi. This enabled Rabeh to move from one victory to another with minimal resistance. The Shehu hoped that Rabeh would not invade his kingdom. He therefore did nothing to prepare for the invasion. Rabeh, on the other hand, was gathering information on Borno. He was assisted by foreigners, mainly Arabs, who were resident in the capital of Borno, Kukawa. When he was satisfied that Borno could not stand his army, he invaded it in 1893. The first battle near Ngala led to the routing of the Borno army. The second battle near Marte also ended in another resounding defeat of the Borno army. This resulted in a panic and the evacuation of the capital of Borno by the ruling classes. The undefended capital was left at the mercy of the invading forces. It was therefore laid to waste. More than 4000 persons were said to have been taken captive while 3000 were massacred.

The last battle was fought near Gashegar. This came after a regrouping of the Borno forces and changes in the leadership of the country. As a result, Rabeh's positions were overrun and his army was put to flight. But that was only a temporary victory. After regrouping Rabeh's forces routed those of Borno and the new Shehu, who was a courageous man was executed. Rabeh then settled to rule Borno. This ended the sovereignty of the Shehus in Borno.

Meanwhile, the European imperialists, namely, Britain, Germany, and France, were converging on the Chad Basin, trying to acquire colonies. This subsequently resulted in the elimination of Rabeh by the French at Kussiri and the division of Borno into French, British and German spheres of influence. This resulted in the emergence of two Shehus, one in British territory based at Kukawa and subsequently Maiduguri, and the other in German territory based at Dikwa and later Bama. With the defeat of the Germans by the British and French during the first World War (1914-1918), the German territory was shared by the two powers and administered as part of their initial territories as Trusteeship Territories. Since the European

invasion in the early part of the twentieth century, the former Bor no kingdom or empire came to be permanently divided, with its former territories forming parts of the present day Nigeria, Niger and Cameroun Republics.

Conclusion

The intervention of al-Kanemi in the jihad on the side of the mais of Borno resulted in the failure of the jihad there. Although al-Kanemi entered into a lengthy debate with the Sokoto leadership, challenging it over the status of Islam in Borno, he was himself aware that all was not well with the state of Islam in the country. Also in the same correspondence with Sokoto, he accused the leadership of the quest for power and worldliness, and although he tried to emphasise his religious inclination, all indications seem to point to the fact that his moves and actions were politically motivated. There is as yet no evidence to show that he introduced far reaching Islamic reforms in Borno. This is in spite of his alleged claims that his mission to Borno was an Islamic one.

In the political and administrative spheres, al-Kanemi's period witnessed important developments. As an astute politician, he was able to take advantage of the prevailing situation in Borno to carry through his plans and effect some changes. However, due to the great significance of power of the monarchy in Borno, he had to put up with the institution. He did, however, devise ways and means of acquiring power at the expense of the mais without directly challenging their authority.

That al-Kanemi's son and successor, Shehu Umar was able to abolish the sayfawa dynasty in 1846 clearly shows the extent to which the Shehus had undermined the position of the mais by this time. The acquisition of total power in Borno by the Shehus did not end the problems of the kingdom. If anything, the situation in fact tended to degenerate by the end of the century when Borno came under foreign rule. This is because the changes and the tenure of the Shehus were not directed to solving the social and economic problems of the mass of the people.

Summary

1. The emergence of the Shehus as rulers of Borno in the nineteenth century was made possible by developments which started much earlier than this period. The main cause of the changes in the nineteenth century was the activities of the jihadists.

2. The jihadists could not attain their objectives partly because of the intervention of al-Kanemi.
3. In the course of the struggle between the jihadists and the mai and his officials, the weakness of the latter became quite glaring. It was the realisation of this that made al-Kanemi to gradually usurp the powers of the mais. By 1820 he had become the most powerful person in Borno. He was able to manipulate the situation in Borno up to the time of his death in 1837.
4. His son and successor, Umar became sufficiently confident to abolish the Sayfawa dynasty in 1846.
5. Both al-Kanemi and his successors were able to usurp power in Borno due to a number of factors. In an attempt to buttress his acquired power, al-Kanemi introduced a number of changes such as the appointment of slave officials to important positions. This and other measures resulted in the centralisation of the administration.
6. Due to al-Kanemi's able leadership some degree of stability was achieved. After his death, however, forces of disintegration set in. This was mainly due to dynastic conflicts. As the Shehus preoccupied themselves with problems at the capital, they inevitably neglected other much more important affairs of government. Notable among these was the neglect of the economy which resulted in its decline. This and the attempts by the government to increase taxes, tribute and levies intensified the degree of suffering in the society.
7. It was in this weak situation that Borno faced its most vicious enemy, Rabeh who easily conquered the country in 1893.

Questions

Essay

1. Discuss the causes of the jihad in Borno.
2. How did the Shehus gain ascendancy to power in Borno?
3. Discuss the problems which faced Borno after the death of al-Kanemi.
4. Why did Rabeh Zubair find it easy to conquer Borno?

Multiple-choice

1. The Scholar who wrote a lengthy poem dealing with the contemporary customs in Borno was
   A. Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi

B. Sheikh Tahir bin Ibrahim
C. Al-Imam Muhammad b. Al-Hajj
D. Muhammad al-Maghili

2. The ruler of Borno at the time of the outbreak of the jihad was
   A. Mai Muhammad Ngileruma
   B. Mai Ahmad
   C. Mai Dunama
   D. Mai Ibrahim
3. In order to make his council effective, al-Kanemi brought together only
   A. 10 persons
   B. 7–9 persons
   C. 9–10 persons
   D. 19 persons
4. The invasion which brought about the collapse of the al-Kanemi dynasty was that of
   A. the jihadists
   B. Rabeh Zubair
   C. the Germans
   D. the British

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Chapter 3 Central Nigeria in the nineteenth century

Introduction

As was the case with other parts of Nigeria, central Nigeria witnessed remarkable political and economic developments in the nineteenth century. The main cause of these developments was the jihad, which as we have already noted, had far reaching impact in Hausaland, Borno and to some extent, Yorubaland. The extension of the jihad into central Nigeria also resulted in the integration of a substantial part of the area into the Sokoto caliphate. Consequently, more than ever before, it was exposed to external influences, resulting, among other things, in unprecedented economic and cultural activities. The valuable waterways also made it attractive to European adventurers and trading companies, whose activities here during this period formed an important aspect of its history. Competition between European nations became so intense by the last decades of the century that it became the launching pad for the conquest of the Sokoto caliphate and Borno.

In this chapter, we shall discuss the situation in central Nigeria in the latter part of the nineteenth century, taking into account especially developments which had bearing on the jihad such as immigration and migrations within the region and the nature of the political situation on the eve of the jihad. We shall also discuss various aspects of the jihad, including its causes, course and mechanism, the conditions which facilitated its success in terms of military conquest and the establishment of the emirates and the sub-emirates. The discussion of the various aspects of the economy also forms an important aspect of the chapter. The chapter closes with the discussion of European activities, including the conquest of the area.

Situation in the area on the eve of the jihad

Immigration and internal migrations

An important theme in the history of this area, especially in the eighteenth century, deals with immigration and migrations. Different

groups had been arriving in this area from various parts of Nigeria but especially from the Chad basin and Hausaland for centuries Quite a number of reasons could be given for this. First is the location of the area vis-a-vis the other parts of Nigeria. Its location between the Sudan savanna and the forest zone was, from environmental perspectives, important. This was particularly true of its relation with the relatively dry Sudan and Sahel savannas to the north. The continual occurrences of droughts in these regions forced people to move to the south to occupy the fairly well-watered, fertile and almost empty lands. Its attraction became even greater in view of the availability of rich mineral deposits, notably iron ore in the area. In those days, this was central to agricultural production. The area was also quite attractive to the nomadic groups in view of the concentration of rivers and streams in the area. On seasonal and permanent bases, cattle — owning fulani clustered along the valleys of the Niger, Benue, Gongola, Kaduna and other rivers which possessed perennial pasture. Their significance for attracting fishermen from many parts of Nigeria was also great. This was equally so as regards the area's wild life, especially elephants which attracted hunters; as trade in ivory became more and more important in the nineteenth century.

Politically, the area has often been regarded as a place of refuge. Over the centuries, numerous groups from different parts of Nigeria, but particularly from the Chad basin and Hausaland, were forced to move into this area especially during the period of state formation in those areas. But even in later periods, people moved into this region continually to escape from slave raiders and oppressive regimes of the centralised states of the north. Yet others moved into the area in response to the process of making the area an Islamic one. The concentration of hills and mountains here constituted a factor in the arrival of people in the area. They served security purposes.

If the area served as a place of refuge for many, it was equally a land of opportunity for adventurers, especially the multitude and disappointed princes from the centralised states. Once they arrived in this area, they carved out domains for themselves by taking over loosely organised communities. It also offered opportunities for different categories of Muslim scholars especially in the eighteenth century. Many of them arrived here at the invitation of rulers, who patronised them. Others came on their own.

Over the centuries therefore, this area received streams of immigrants from different directions, but especially from the north and the northeast. The frequent occurrences of droughts in the eighteenth century and the deteriorating political situation in the Chad

basin in the same period resulted in large-scale population movement out of the area. Many of them moved into central Nigeria. One of such groups was led by Dunama, possibly the son of Mai Ali bin Hajj Dunama, whose disastrous expedition against the Mandara in the late eighteenth century increased political problems in Borno. The immigrants eventually founded the present town of Lafiya. From here, Dunama and his successors extended their control over several groups such as the Koro, Mama and Gwandara.

For the same reasons, especially as a result of the gathering tension brought about by the activities of the jihadists in Hausaland and Borno in the second half of the eighteenth century, large numbers of Fulani moved into central Nigeria. To be sure, the Fulani had been arriving here since the sixteenth century. But it was in the eighteenth century that numerous Fulani clans moved into the area. By the closing years of the eighteenth century, groups of Fulani settlements were found in many parts of the area. Their concentrations were to be found on the Biu Plateau, the Yedtseram river valley, the Upper Benue valley, including the area where Yola came to be established, in the areas of Numan, Rai, Ngaudere, Konche, Tibati and Bindir. Others were found in Ganjua, Bayak, Zaranda, Yuli and in the Gongola river valley in the present day Bauchi State. There were also Fulani settlements in Keffi, on the 'Plateau' of Kajuru, in Nupe and other parts of the middle Niger. It must be pointed out however, that in terms of numbers, they were relatively few. They constituted only a small minority.

The Fulani and other immigrants established cordial social relations with the various groups among whom they settled. They intermarried freely, for example, with the Nupe, Kilba, Kanakuri, Jukun, Kajuru, Batta and others. Before the jihad, many of the Fulani in fact resided within the settlements of their hosts. It is to be mentioned too that some of them had not embraced Islam and took part in the cultural activities of their hosts. They were therefore being integrated into the societies of this area.

Politically, the situation was different. The demands imposed on the Fulani by the rulers of the various groups, which is discussed in detail below, created much disaffection among the Fulani. Part of their solution to this problem was migration. In the eighteenth century, there were series of internal migrations by the Fulani and other groups, such as the Bassa, the Gbagyi, the Tiv, the Chamba and a host of others.

One of the numerous Fulani internal migrations was that of the Fulbe Kiri who had earlier been inhabiting the lower Gongola valley. This took place at the end of the eighteenth century as a result of violent clashes between them and the Kanakuru chiefs of the area.

For political and security reasons the Fulani split into four migratory groups. Buba Yero moved to the present area of Gombe; Hammadu moved into the Chamba area and subsequently established his group at Tibati in southern Adamawa; Ngura led his group to the Mayo Belwa area and Hammarwa led the group that moved into the middle Benue area via Seushi and Belei in Adamawa.

The Tiv were also massively penetrating the Katsina Ala and the middle Benue valleys in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Similarly, there were series of migrations in the Niger-Benue confluence area and its adjacent regions. Streams of Bassa migrants, for example, arrived from Buga in the northeast and swelled Bassa population in the confluence area. These were followed by the Kuburi Bassa clan who settled at Tawari, northeast of Igu (Koton Karfe). Other migrations from Igala, Opanda, Ganaza and Abuja also feature in the traditions of the area.

Another migration which most seriously affected political developments in central Nigeria in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries was that of the Chamba. Earlier, the Chamba inhabited the area east and west of Yola which was then known as Dindin. Perhaps in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Chamba dispersed from Dindin due to conflicts between them and the Batta and then the Fulani, as well as serious famines which scattered the population. As a result of these catastrophes, the Chamba split into several migratory groups, some moving southwestward towards the middle Benue region, others going southwards towards Tibati only to resurface in the early part of the nineteenth century in the Takum area of the middle Benue region; and yet others moved southeastwards to Bamenda highlands where they were known as Bali. The fourth group moved eastwards to the area of the former eastern Cameroons.

Chamba, Tiv and other migrations in this area before the jihad were essentially characterised by chaos and destruction. This was particularly the case with marauding activities of Damashi, one of the Chamba leaders. His conquests set in motion chains of migrations of other groups, for example, the Wurbo. The conflicts between the Chamba and the Tiv in Katsina Ala valley also forced many groups to move out into other areas. These developments created tension, insecurity and uncertainty which were compounded by other aspects of political situation in the area.

Political developments

One of the effects of immigration into this area, especially from Hausaland and Borno, was the increasing interaction between the area and the highly centralised states of the north. Because of this

interaction, many parts of central Nigeria were regarded as spheres of influences of these centralised states. The kingdom of Zazzau, for example, claimed that its authority, through its vassal states, reached as far south as the banks of the Niger and Benue and the confluence area. Borno, Mandara Katsina, and probably Zamfara and Kebbi laid similar claims to some parts of this area. The significance of the extension of the authority of these states into central Nigeria was the reinforcement of the cultural ties which were already being introduced by the immigrants. Kanuri, Hausa and Mandara titles and political institutions were increasingly being introduced into the area. By the end of the eighteenth century, due to cultural transmissions and responses to slave raiding expeditions from the centralised states, and also the internal developments of the society here, the pace towards political and administrative centralisation was increasing among quite a number of the ethnic groups.

Although ethnic groups such as the Verre and the Batta had by this time not developed into single states the move towards the creation of territorial rulers was fast gaining ground. By the time of the jihad, the Kilba and Batta, among many others, were politically and administratively well organised. The chiefs were also making great efforts to expand their respective territories. During the same period, that is towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Chamba had also established chiefdoms at Binyeri and Dakka. However, the establishment of the Chamba chiefdoms was accompanied by intra-Chamba conflicts which resulted in frequent civil wars and the eventual break-up of the state. The consequence of the latter phenomenon was that it prevented the emergence of large and centralised states in those parts of the middle Benue which came under the Chamba influence.

Further to the west and the southwest, the Igala, the Ebira (Igbirra) and the Nupe were also, although with some setbacks, busy creating centralised political systems. The collapse of Igugbaka kingdom of Ebira resulted in the emergence of the kingdom of Opanda around 1750. Later this kingdom broke up and this resulted in the emergence of the kingdom of Igu (Koton Karfe). The Jukun state of Wukari had reached its territorial limits by the end of the eighteenth century. The rulers of this state introduced administrative innovations which featured creation of autonomous districts. Like other states in the area, the expansion policy of Wukari involved the incorporation of different ethnic groups. By the end of the eighteenth century therefore, central Nigeria had undergone important political developments which culminated in the outbreak of the jihad in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The jihad and the establishment of the emirates

The jihad in central Nigeria had no deep Islamic roots as was the case with those in Hausaland and Borno. The jihads which took place in those areas were preceded by centuries of attempts to reform Islam. In those places Islam was firmly established and by the nineteenth century, Islamic preaching and teaching had become widespread. In central Nigeria, the situation was different. Islamic communities were found only in isolated places, normally among the immigrants such as the Hausa, Kanuri, Mandara and Fulani. By the end of the eighteenth century, a few Islamic preachers and teachers were also found in the area. Some of the peoples of the area had also been converted to Islam.

It is also to be noted that unlike in Hausaland and Borno where the jihad had been completed by the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the jihad in central Nigeria continued in one form or the other right to the end of the century. The jihad campaigns here, especially in the latter period were to a large extent politically and economically motivated. Whereas the earlier jihads were led by the Ulama (scholars) who were, no doubt, motivated by the zeal to promote Islam, the latter jihad campaigns were initiated and led by adventurers and opportunists whose sole ambition was the acquisition of territories and slaves.

It is also to be pointed out that even in the earlier phase of the jihad here, the uprisings were more social than religious. The revolt against the chiefs of the area were broadly based but dominated and led by Fulani cattle owners. Part of the explanation for this situation was that as cattle owners, they were directly and more frequently exposed to the harsh demands of the chiefs of the area.

Causes of the jihad

First and foremost were heavy taxes, tribute, levies and the oppressive policies of the rulers of this area. Throughout central Nigeria, the rulers, even those of the most decentralised societies, had evolved elaborate taxation policies which increasingly became burdensome on the people. The Batta chiefs, for example, established control over all rivers and streams and land, including bush land for which use taxes were collected from fishermen and Fulani herdsmen respectively. Hunters were also taxed. The cattle owners were

particularly burdened with extra taxes. In some of the chiefdoms of the Upper Benue valley, for example, the chiefs imposed weekly levies on the cattle owners. This was in addition to the annual taxes and tribute and grazing dues. Also in cases where the cattle owners wanted to substitute cattle for *Jus Prime noctis* (rights of the first night) which is discussed below, the rulers insisted on taking the best bulls which were highly valued by the cattle owners for breeding. Although this payment was optional many of the cattle owners opted for it in view of the inhuman practice of the *Jus Prime noctis*. It therefore constituted an additional tax on them. The numerous councillors and other officials who were charged with the collection of taxes not only increased the taxes but also chose the best bulls. In addition to this, some of the chiefs, for example, those of Bagale and Demsa in the Upper Benue valley, were actively involved in cattle raids. This practice in fact became an officially organised activity, involving the use of spies to monitor the routes and movements of cattle.

Equally painful especially to the Fulani was the pratice of *Jus Prime noctis*, already mentioned above. This practice was surprisingly widespread in the Gongola and Benue river valleys, for example, among the Lunguda, Batta, Kanakuru and Bachama. This practice involved the cohabitation of the chief or one of the princes with any bride that was married in their respective territory before she did so with her husband. The practice was so hated that it led to serious developments and incidents. In the Lower Gongola valley, it led to violent clashes between the Fulani and the Kanakuru chiefs at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The outcome was the streams of migrations out of this area that we have already referred to. It is also believed that it was the reaction against this practice that led to the outbreak of one of the first jihads in central Nigeria. It is said that Ardo Jobdi, head of the Wolarbe Fulani around Song, slew his daughter rather than yield her up for this barbaric practice, then turned and killed the chieftain.

Thus unjust taxes, frequent cattle raids and confiscations and the practice of *Jus Prime noctis* created a volatile situation especially in the Gongola and Benue valleys. One of the ways in which deep feelings and dissatisfaction was expressed was the creation of new settlements of cattle owners outside the existing towns and villages. The creation of these new and exclusive settlements was designed to save the cattle owners from the grips of the chiefs. But this did not terminate the injustices meted out to them since they still legally resided within the domains of the chiefs. This made a major clash between them increasingly inevitable towards the end of the eighteenth century. It was therefore not surprising that the jihad in cen-

tral Nigeria started in the chiefdoms located within the Upper Benue and the Gongola valleys; the areas of great Fulani concentration. The problems and conflicts which kept on arising played a significant role in the mobilisation of Fulani pastoralists and other oppressed groups on the side of the jihad.

All that was required was someone to provide leadership and an event to ignite the explosive situation and this was provided by the outbreak of the jihad in Hausaland and Borno. It gave the discontented classes not just the inspirations but also clear-cut direction of how to solve the problems at hand.

It is to be pointed out that like in Borno, some of the early leaders of the jihad movements in central Nigeria were either Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio's students or were at least aware of what was going on in Hausaland. These included Yakubu, the first Emir of Bauchi, Buba Yero, the first Emir of Gombe and Modibbo Adama, the first Emir of Adamawa. It was these leaders that brought the news of the success of the jihad in Hausaland to the various local Fulani clan leaders. The news of the success of the jihad in Hausaland and struggles of the jihadists in Borno must have strengthened the resolve of those of central Nigeria. Of course once the jihad broke out in one part of the area, it spread to others for one reason or the other.

The extension of the jihad to the Niger-Benue confluence area, for example, was justified on the grounds of principles of 'hot pursuit'. The kingdoms of Igu and Opanda became involved at a point when its rulers granted political asylum to one of Nupe's deposed rulers, Ilyasa, who died in the capital of Igu, Koton Karfe. The Nupe invaders claimed that unless they acted quickly, they would be attacked.

Similarly, the new rulers of Zaria felt duty bound to launch the jihad into some parts of central Nigeria in view of the fact that the fleeing king of Zazzau established his base at Abuja thus posing a serious threat to the new emirate authorities. They also wanted to actualise Zaria's long-standing claims of control over territories stretching from Zazzau proper to the banks of the Niger and the Benue. By this claim, the areas of Bassa, Doma, Yesku, Igu, Opanda, among several others fell into Zazzau territory. The invasion of these areas seems to have been encouraged by Caliph Muhammad Bello who believed that these areas formed a natural extension of the Sokoto caliphate to the south.

The caliph's encouragement to the Emirs of Zazzau and Nupe to bring the neighbouring territories under control was motivated by economic interest, the need to control the vital trade routes and trade of the Niger-Benue confluence area. This area was also politically

and militarily too strategic to be left alone. It was quite clear to the caliph that whoever controlled the region's trade and the major arteries through which it flowed, the Niger and the Benue, had the advantage of cornering the income of European goods. These goods included strategic weapons such as guns and gunpowder. The control and monopoly of the trade made the difference between rich and powerful states, and poor and weak ones that were raided repeatedly.

The earliest indication of possible economic motive in the invasion of Igu and Opanda were revealed in various interviews which the caliph had with a British traveller, Clapperton in 1823. In these interviews there was mutual agreement on the desirability of establishing regular trading relations between the caliphate and Britain. The caliph wanted to ensure that the trade route was kept safe. This underlined the invasion of Opanda which was reported by another British traveller, Lander in 1825. That the invasion came so quickly after Clapperton's departure is therefore not surprising. While Zazzau was assigned the responsibility of conquering parts of the area, which as we have already pointed out, coincided with the area it claimed, Nupe was encouraged to launch attacks on the same region from another flank.

The Nupe wanted to tap the rich, easily accessible reservoir of captives and equally important, to protect and attract the trade from the north. Among other things, the south offered untapped densely populated areas for slave raiding and access to the main route for the Atlantic slave trade. Nupe needed slaves especially from Yoruba speaking areas because of their skills in weaving and dyeing. The main trade route from Hausaland passed through, and partly ended in Nupe, crossing the territories of 'unruly hostile tribes'. From the north came valuable goods such as cattle, horses, camels, ostriches and minerals such as potash, natron and numerous other precious materials. Nupe, acting as the southern outpost of the Sokoto caliphate, carried its war of expansion into the areas which impeded the flow of trade.

For purposes of emphasis, it must be stated again that many of the jihad campaigns which were launched and prosecuted in central Nigeria especially in the latter periods had nothing to do with the promotion of Islam. The jihad was used as a cover by local Fulani residents, some princes from Sokoto, for example, Ibrahim Nagwamache, and others to carve out territories for themselves. Many of the military expeditions which were launched in the name of jihad were actually designed for the acquisition of captives for sales and domestic work.

The beginning, mechanism and political outcome of the jihad

As in Hausaland, Borno and elsewhere, the early jihad in central Nigeria began with the sending of delegations to Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio to collect flags which provided legitimacy for launching the jihad. The leaders of various groups in the Upper Benue valley, for example, met in Gurin in about 1806. There, they delegated Modibbo Adama to go to Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio to obtain support and recognition for the launching of the jihad in that part of central Nigeria. Like other jihad leaders, Modibbo Adama on his return from Sokoto, distributed the flags to several local leaders He too participated actively in the military campaigns. He started his campaigns by sacking neighbouring Batta towns and settlements of Pema, Turuwa, Tepe etc. He subsequently followed this up by conquering Kilba, Holma, Song, and Marghi areas.

In 1841, he moved his capital to Yola from where he was able to press his campaigns against the Verre and Batta. His lieutenants, for example, Ardo Hamman Joda, extended the frontiers of the conquered territories eastwards by seizing Laro, Konche and Banyo. Other deputies like Ardo Jobdi and Hamman Sambo occupied Tibati and Ngaudere. Meanwhile similar military conquests were going on in many parts of central Nigeria. While Buba Yero was conquering the communities of the Gongola valley, his younger brother, Hamman Ruwa, overran the greater part of the present day emirate of Muri. In Bauchi, Yakubu scored a series of victories over Kan Yallo, Miri, and Gubi. Within a few years he had subdued a wide radius of the whole country, penetrating as far as the Rivers Benue and Gongola, the Wurkum hills, Lafiyan Beriberi and Lere. Similar patterns of conquests also went on in other parts of central Nigeria. In all places, military campaigns went hand in hand with the establishment of political and administrative structures. Each jihad leader established his emirate administration.

Both at emirate and local levels, jihad leaders appear to have conceded to themselves areas which they were to conquer and control. However, serious disputes did arise both over leadership and spheres of influence. The situation in the Upper Benue valley again provides the best example. Here, the disagreement between Modibbo Adama and the other clan leaders was so serious that, in spite of the intervention of Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio, Modibbo Adama's leadership was not accepted by some of the prominent clan leaders such as Ardo Buba of Bindir and Ardo Buba Njidda of Rai. Some of these local leaders even sent embassies to Sokoto. But Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio and later, Caliph Muhammad Bello wisely gave

their unflinching support to the emirs. In order to avert or minimise conflicts, the emirs granted some of the powerful local leaders considerable autonomy, thereby leading to the creation of sub-emirates. In some of the emirates, notably Muri, hostilities between the emirs and the sub-emirs persisted right to the end of the nineteenth century.

Similarly, in the process of extending the frontiers of their emirates, many of the emirs became involved in territorial disputes. These disputes often resulted in very serious military conflicts. These problems again required the intervention of Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio, Caliph Muhammad Bello and the succeeding caliphs. The situation was worsened by adventurers and princes from Sokoto, who, especially in the second half of the century, moved into central Nigeria and launched their military campaigns which were intended to create personal domains. This often resulted in encroachments on the territories of preexisting emirates. These problems also required the intervention of Sokoto, with varying degrees of success.

By the last quarter of the century, many emirates and sub-emirates had been created in central Nigeria. The emirates were Gwandu, Nupe, Ilorin, Kontagora, Lapai, Agaie, Lafiagi, Bauchi, Gombe, Muri and Adamawa (Fombina).

The emirates formed integral part of the Sokoto caliphate and like all emirates of the caliphate, they were accountable to the caliphs at Sokoto. Their allegiance was rendered through payment of annual tribute in the form of slaves, livestock and other commodities; joint annual military expeditions and regular (annual) visits of Sokoto. They were also supervised by some Sokoto officials. The emirates were centralised, with hierarchy of state officials who held titles. The title holders were assigned administrative areas to supervise and benefit from. These were in some cases different from the sub-emirates. These leading officials were, however, confined to the emirate capitals. They administered the territories through their deputies.

The sub-emirates included Keffi, Nasarawa and Jema'a in Zazzau, Song, Zumo, Michika, Mubi, Uba and Moda in Adamawa. Each of the founders of these sub-emirates received the jihad flags from their respective jihad leaders, not direct from Sokoto. Their military successes made them and their descendants the *de facto* rulers of their localities. All that they were required to do after being crowned by the emir was to send in their annual taxes, tributes and other gifts and sometimes military assistance. Unlike the leading emirate officials (title holders), the sub-emirs normally resided in their respective territories.

A few areas, while maintaining some sort of relationship w Adamawa and Bauchi emirates, enjoyed autonomous status. T riverain Batta under the control of one Kokoni and his descendan Lafiya and a section of the Chamba under the control of Nubon Donzomga were among such areas. Lafiya's position may have bee due to its Islamic status; being controlled by Kanuri immigrants was not subjected to the jihad. It did, however, give allegiance t Bauchi at certain times. The riverain Batta and the section of th Chamba under Nubongo Donzomga, attempted to collect flags fro Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio. The Batta chief, Kokoni, is said to hav accompanied Modibbo Adama to Sokoto to collect the flag. For this Kokoni secured the confirmation of his office for himself and hi descendants. He also received the title of Magaji.

As for Nubongo Donzomga, realising the political significance o acquiring the flag, set out to meet Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio in the 1840s. But he did not reach Sokoto. He is said to have stopped at Bauchi, where he aided the Emir, Ibrahim (1847-1879), son of the first Emir of Bauchi, Yakubu. For this, Nubongo Donzomga was given a military contingent and hard-ware, including horses to assist him in establishing the chiefdom of Donga. He was also given a flag and a sword to symbolise his investiture. It would seem that Emir Ibrahim saw in Donzomga a potential agent for the extension of Bauchi's effective area of influence in the south.

Other groups like the Ningawa, numerous others on the Jos Plateau, Tiv, Idoma, Igala, Borgu, some of the Chamba, Bachama, some of the Bassa and Gbagyi, etc. resisted the jihad and maintained their independence throughout the century. They were, of course subjected to continual raids. Their ability to maintain their independence had to do with the inaccessibility of their areas, especially to the cavalry of the emirates, their determination to maintain their independence, the apparent designs of the emirates to leave certain areas as reservoirs of slaves and the internal political problems of the emirates. On the whole, the areas controlled by these groups were small compared to the extensive territories under the control of the emirates and sub-emirates. In this regard, the jihad in central Nigeria was a success. It resulted in the political transformation of central Nigeria.

Factors which facilitated the success of the jihad

The success of the jihad can be attributed to a variety of factors ranging from tyrannical and corrupt policies of the rulers, dynastic

disputes, fragmented nature of most of the political communities, to the determination of the jihadists. The rulers of both the centralised and decentralised states of central Nigeria, like their counterparts in Hausaland and elsewhere practised high-handed, tyrannical and dictatorial rule. According to one tradition, for example, the legal and administrative systems of Kona were so harsh that even some of the Kona princes were prepared to cooperate with the jihadists to overthrow the systems. The system of taxation and tribute were also harsh and oppressive. Many people, especially the subjected communities, transfered their allegiance to the jihadists. There are many cases of collusion and collaboration between the jihadists and the discontented members of the society. Not only were the jihadists provided with military secrets, they were also given provisions. In several instances, many members of the society fought on the side of the jihadists. The jihadists established alliances with the dominated groups.

By the time of the outbreak of the jihad the various authorities in the area had been very seriously weakened by dynastic conflicts. This meant that the centralised states which should have countered the activities of the jihadists had already been undermined from Yawuri, Nupe in the west through Opanda and Igu in the Niger-Benue confluence area to the Jukun states of Kona and Wukari in the east. The problems of dynastic/succession conflicts were the order of the day thus fragmenting them. These not only caused acute political instability but also enabled the jihadists to get allies among the divided members of the ruling classes. These problems facilitated the schemings of people like Mallam Dendo and his descendants in Nupe and the military activities of Nagwamatse in the territories of Kambari which had formed part of Yawuri. Throughout the area, lack of administrative and political cohesion weakened the positions of the various authorities vis-a-vis the jihadists.

The highly fragmented nature of political organisation among most of the communities prevented the possibility of the formation of a common front or the adoption of common strategies by them to meet the challenges from the jihadists. The communities that were organised at the clan level lacked cohesion on the scale that was necessary to save them from incorporation into the emergent emirates. Their position was made even worse by inter-ethnic conflicts. The military activities of the Chamba in the Benue, Katsina Ala and Taraba river valleys equally made matters worse. The activities of the Chamba in these areas brought about such chaotic situations that it made their penetration by the jihadists quite easy.

The presence of the Fulani and other Muslims among the various communities in the area also facilitated the jihad. Being resident in

the area for a long time, they understood the internal politics an psychology of their enemies and manipulated it. The best example in this regard, was the role which Mallam Dendo and his descen dants played in the history of Nupe. From the position of a simpl itinerant Muslim preacher he rose to that of the founder of a ruling dynasty in Nupeland. Also, unlike the other groups, the jihadists were well organised and much better motivated, fighting for a just cause, to liberate themselves and others from injustices perpetrated by the ruling classes. In the Upper Benue valley, for example, the Fulani were already organised on clan basis, with recognised and powerful leaders. These clan-based organisations which were used as the main channel for protecting the political and economic interests of the members were now utilised as fora for mobilisation for the jihad. These were strengthened by their sense of common history, culture and destiny. Their mastery of the terrain of the areas through their pastoral activities, possession of horses and strategic locations of their settlements were used to good advantage. The factor of strategic location was significant both locally and regionally. The jihad leaders were spread throughout the length and breadth of central Nigeria and with the outbreak of the jihad, they opened up numerous sectors of military activities which made it difficult for their enemies to counter. Equally important was the fact that, unlike their enemies, the jihadists coordinated their military campaigns both at the local, emirate and regional levels. The conquest of centralised states like Wukari, for example, involved the joint campaigns from different directions by Muri, Bauchi and Adamawa jihadists. We have also shown the joint involvement of Nupe and Zaria in the conquest of the kingdoms of the Niger-Benue confluence area. In addition to the advantage of being guided in their joint military operations from Sokoto, they also had the might of the Sokoto caliphate behind them. Many of those who fought in the jihad in central Nigeria originated from Hausaland. A substantial part of the military hardware also originated from there and Borno. These important factors and others closely related to the jihads played important roles in the development of trade and commerce, indeed the economy, in the nineteenth century.

The economy

As in other parts of Nigeria, central Nigeria witnessed large-scale economic activities during this period. The jihad and the integration of the region into the larger economies of the rest of the caliphate, Borno, the forest region to the south and beyond played

important roles in the economic development of the area. The creation of large political units, namely the caliphate and the emirates, opened up avenues for economic changes. The jihads here were accompanied by the emergence of urban centres, especially the emirate capitals like Yola, Bauchi, Gombe and Bida. New settlements were also established while the preexisting ones expanded considerably. These became centres of industrial production and commerce. Here and throughout the caliphate, the need for raw materials, slaves, minerals, and other commodities stimulated economic activities. Also important was the role which the jihad played in opening up virtually every nook and corner of central Nigeria during the nineteenth century. A dense network of communication came to be established between the emirates' capitals on the one hand and between the capitals and other towns, villages and settlements on the other. Along these routes were transported, slaves, potash, salt, silk, kolanuts, ivory, cloth etc. These developments stimulated expansion in all sectors of the economy.

Agriculture

In addition to the factors which have already been pointed out, this sector of the economy was also promoted by other developments. The jihad and the establishment of the emirates were accompanied by unprecedented large-scale immigration of seasoned farmers especially from Hausaland. The availability of fertile lands and the changes in the land tenure whereby, in many cases, land in the emirates were now allocated to individuals rather than families were important developments. The jihad also produced large numbers of different categories of ruling classes, from war commanders to emirs and a multitude of their deputies. Many of the war commanders, some of whom came from Hausaland to support, for example, Modibbo Adama, were allocated large tracts of land. In some of the emirates, the emirs encouraged their loyal supporters to settle permanently in their areas and establish large agricultural estates. All important offices had agricultural estates attached to them. In addition, the officials had their private agricultural estates. The aristocracy therefore became predominant in agricultural production. This was mainly due to the fact that they were better placed to procure slaves who constituted the most important sources of labour on the large agricultural estates. Apart from the aristocracy, wealthy artisans and traders also had access to large numbers of slaves for labour on their agricultural estates. Needless to say, these slaves were acquired mainly through the jihad or as part of tribute

and gifts to different categories of officials and other members of the ruling class. While peasant agriculture, based on small family holding continued to be practised, large-scale estate agriculture was an important feature of agricultural production in the nineteenth century.

Animal husbandry

With the success of the jihad and in view of the roles played by cattle owners in its prosecution, animal husbandry became the most important economic activity after farming. The success of the jihad indeed created favourable political and economic conditions for animal husbandry. The new emirate government provided security against cattle raids, confiscation and excessive taxation which had tended to drive away cattle owners from the area before the jihad. The cattle owners also had easy access to labour, especially slave labour. Professional herders were also hired.

For a number of reasons, many people increasingly tried to acquire cattle in large numbers during this period. The number of cattle an individual possessed reflected his status because cattle meant wealth and prestige. It was an asset which most owners kept as a major form of property. Possession of cattle and other categories of livestock such as goats and sheep was also important in agricultural production. Animal droppings, as farm yard manure, played important roles in agricultural production in the savanna regions. Therefore, the more the animals, the better. Indications of attempts by both Fulani and non-Fulani to acquire cattle and other categories of livestock are widespread.

Industrial production

Many of the factors which have already been pointed out, for example, urbanisation and immigration and internal and external trade played important roles in the expansion of industrial production. The expansion in the other sectors of the economy also constituted an important factor in industrial production. The development of large-scale agricultural production, for example, stimulated the blacksmith industry as agricultural implements such as hoes, axes, cutlasses and knives had to be produced in large quantities. The jihad also required military hardware and equipment and some of the emirs, for example, Modibbo Adama, are known to have established colonies of blacksmiths for that purpose. The enormous

forest and mineral resources of central Nigeria also constituted an important factor in the expansion of industrial production in the nineteenth century.

The leading industries were those of blacksmithing, textiles, wood carving, pottery, leather-working, salt mining and processing, and basket making. These industries were not only widespread, they also expanded at a fast rate. It is to be pointed out that the need to meet the requirements of the jihad as well as its roles constituted the single most important factor in the expansion of these and other

Trade

Trade, like the other sectors of the economy, had been of considerable antiquity in central Nigeria long before the nineteenth century. The area is also known to have served as an important area between the savanna and the Sahel to the north and the forest regions to the south. By the end of the eighteenth century, several important trade routes traversed the region. But there is no doubt that the nineteenth century constituted an important era in the expansion of trade within the area and between it and other parts of West and Central Africa. Reports from European travellers, documentary and other pieces of internal evidence on concentration of trade routes, and the frequency and number of people in the caravans do show the intensity of trading activities here during this period. The active participation of men, women and children in the trade also attracted the attention of the European travellers. Some of the traders travelled in groups, consisting of hundreds sometimes thousands of people at a time.

There were many reasons for the large-scale increase in trading and commercial activities here in the nineteenth century. These included urbanisation, military activities, provision of security to traders by the emirate governments and increase in the size of consumers. The establishment of European trading companies also aided the increase in trade. Outside the coastal regions, central Nigeria witnessed the most intensive European activities in the Nigeria area before British occupation.

European activities

European activities in this area started with the exploration of the Benue and the Niger rivers. The explorations were sponsored by

English industrialists, companies and governments for the purpose of seeking outlets for British manufactured goods and raw materials for English manufacturing establishments. The Rivers Niger and Benue which constitute the dominant features of central Nigeria became attractive to the Europeans due to their strategic locations. Following a series of expeditions to the Niger and Benue rivers, several English trading companies were founded here in the 1860s. By the 1870s, the proliferation of English trading companies here degenerated into a commercial war between the companies. The intense competition was brought to an end by the amalgamation of the English trading companies. The amalgamated company came to be known as United Africa Company. The Company was involved in the sales of textiles, utensils, trinkets and arms and ammunition, among other goods. In exchange, it acquired shea butter, cotton, antimony, ivory, hides and skins, etc. Over the years, the company established its trading states along the Niger and Benue rivers. Boats and steamers constituted the main means of transport. They also served as shops.

Due to the importance of the region, other European nations, notably France and Germany also joined the English. Initially, competition was between the English and the French and Nupe was the main area of attraction. French commercial activities on the Niger began in 1878. By 1880, the French had established trading stations in Gbebe, Lokoja, Egga, Shonga and Raba on the Niger, and in Loko and Demsa on the Benue. From 1880, German commercial groups began to develop an ambition for political control over the Niger-Benue basins. In 1881 a German agent, Flegel hoisted his country's flag on the Benue.

The English companies faced a lot of problems from the French and the Germans. Part of the English response to this was to reconstitute the company under the name National African Company. As from this point in time, the English changed their strategy by attempting to acquire political influence with the rulers of central Nigeria and Sokoto caliphate generally. In the process of doing that the English started to interfere with the politics of the various emirates and chiefdoms. They established many trading posts in these emirates and chiefdoms. They showered the rulers with lots of gifts, gave them arms and ammunitions and even assisted them with military contingents in dealing with (the emirs' and chiefs') enemies.

These developments intensified competition between European companies. Realising that the English companies were too entrenched on the Niger, the French concentrated their activities on the Benue. Meanwhile, the attempt by the English to outdo the French

by raising prices of goods was having serious effects on Nigerian traders. Even some of the prosperous ones among them were affected. In order to squeeze the French in the Benue basin, the English embarked on a programme of expansion there. They also tried to sign many treaties with the rulers of the territories along the Niger and the Benue. Internal political problems, external threats and the quest for luxury goods induced the emirs and chiefs to sign treaties with the Europeans. Almost all of them were actually deceived into signing these treaties. While the rulers believed that the treaties were just for friendship and cooperation, the Europeans, notably the English, claimed that they amounted to surrender of sovereignty to the British Queen.

By the 1890s, on realising the deception of the English and the danger they posed to their independence, the Emirs of Ilorin, Muri, Nupe, among others, adopted very hostile attitudes to the English. This was particularly intensified by the influx of European spies who claimed to be explorers and travellers, to the courts of the caliphs, emirs and chiefs towards the end of the nineteenth century. By this time European powers had already partitioned Africa into their spheres of influence and central Nigeria fell into British sphere of influence on the basis of lies and dubious treaties which the English claimed to have signed with the caliphs and emirs and chiefs of central Nigeria. Since the legal basis of the spheres of influence rested on 'effective occupation', meaning military occupation of the areas, the conquest of central Nigeria by the British government was only a question of time. Beginning with Nupe in 1897, the British embarked on the conquest of central Nigeria along with other parts of Nigeria. Throughout the period of conquest, the British encountered stiff resistance especially among the decentralised groups. The resistance continued in one form or the other right into the 1950s.

Conclusion

The dynamic developments which took place in central Nigeria in the nineteenth century was in line with similar developments which were taking place in other parts of Nigeria in the same period. Even before the nineteenth century, however, the area had undergone important political changes as a result of the growing internal conflicts generated by the disaffection in the society. By the end of the eighteenth century the political situation had reached an explosive point in several parts of central Nigeria. All that was required was

an event to set it off. This was precisely the role which the jiha in Hausaland and Borno played. The jihad movements in these area provided the discontented groups in central Nigeria with the ton to mobilise and overthrow the tyrannical rulers. Partly due to th poor understanding of the aims and objectives of Sheikh Uthma dan Fodio's jihad movement and partly because of the dominan political and economic motives in the jihad movement in centra Nigeria, its outcome was the establishment of governments whic in many cases were as oppressive as those which were overthrown. On a different note, the jihad resulted in the emergence of greater numbers of larger and highly centralised political units. It also resulted in the development of large urban centres, large-scale economic activities and the greater integration of the area into the outside world.

Summary

1. Among the most important developments in the central Nigeria area before and after the outbreak of the jihad were immigrations and migrations within the area.
2. Initially the immigrants established cordial relations with their hosts. Cases of intermarriages were recorded. This was important for social integrations.
3. The ruling classes of the area became increasingly exploitative and oppressive.
4. This resulted in the outbreak of the jihad in the early part of the nineteenth century.
5. The jihad campaigns here were largely due to political and economic reasons.
6. In the course of the jihad and after, serious conflicts arose between the jihad leaders. In order to minimise these conflicts, the emirs gave powerful local jihad leaders considerable autonomy thereby leading to the creation of sub-emirates.
7. One of the most important effects of the jihad was the integration of a substantial part of the central Nigeria area into the Sokoto caliphate.
8. Several groups, however, resisted incorporation into the Sokoto caliphate.
9. The success of the jihad in the central Nigeria area could be attributed to a number of factors, such as inhuman policies of the rulers.

10. As in other parts of the Nigeria area, this region also witnessed large-scale expansion in economic activities in this period.
11. This was due to a number of factors, foremost among which was the jihad.
12. Partly as a result of this and also because of the easy communication provided by the Rivers Niger and Benue, the area witnessed an influx of large numbers of Europeans in the nineteenth century.
13. The activities of these Europeans ended with their conquest of the region, the rest of the Sokoto caliphate and Borno.

Questions

Essay

1. Discuss the factors which made central Nigeria attractive to immigrants from early times to the end of the eighteenth century.
2. What were the reasons for the outbreak of the jihad in central Nigeria in the early part of the nineteenth century.
3. Why did the jihad succeed in central Nigeria?
4. Discuss the factors which promoted large-scale economic activities in central Nigeria in the nineteenth century.
5. How did the activities of the Europeans in central Nigeria in the nineteenth century prepare the British conquest of the area?

Multiple-choice

1. The most important period for large-scale immigration of Fulani into central Nigeria was in the
   A. twelfth century
   B. fourteenth century
   C. eighteenth century
   D. nineteenth century
2. The immediate cause of the outbreak of one of the first jihad movements in central Nigeria was
   A. oppression
   B. exploitation
   C. *Jus Prime noctis* (Rights of the first Night)
   D. confiscation of cattle

3. The leader of the *jihad* movement in the Upper Benue valley was
   A. Mallam Dendo
   B. Buba Yero
   C. Modibbo Adama
   D. Ardo Buba
4. The first Europeans to establish trading stations along Niger-Benue waterways were the
   A. French
   B. English
   C. Germans
   D. Portuguese

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Chapter 4 Yorubaland in the nineteenth century

Introduction

The nineteenth century was a century of revolution in Yorubaland. The century began with the political crises that ended in the fall of the Old Oyo empire. After this fall, there were wars by other Yoruba states for political ascendancy. Ibadan, a new city — state founded in the 1820s, emerged as the strongest. She engaged in several wars in the process of building an empire. Other states had to respond to her ambition, thus generating other wars, especially the Sixteen Years War which began in 1877. The British had to intervene to bring about peace; but they also ended up imposing colonial rule on Yorubaland in the last years of the century. Other notable events of the period were the abolition of the slave trade, the introduction of Christianity and the trade in cash crops [see Chapter 8]. This chapter is limited to a discussion of the fall of Oyo, the rise of Ibadan, the peace efforts and the impact of the wars on the Yoruba society.

The collapse of the Old Oyo empire

There were two main reasons for the collapse of the Old Oyo empire:
1. the dissensions between the *Alaafin* and the other chiefs;
2. the outbreak of the jihad (the Muslim rebellion) in 1817.

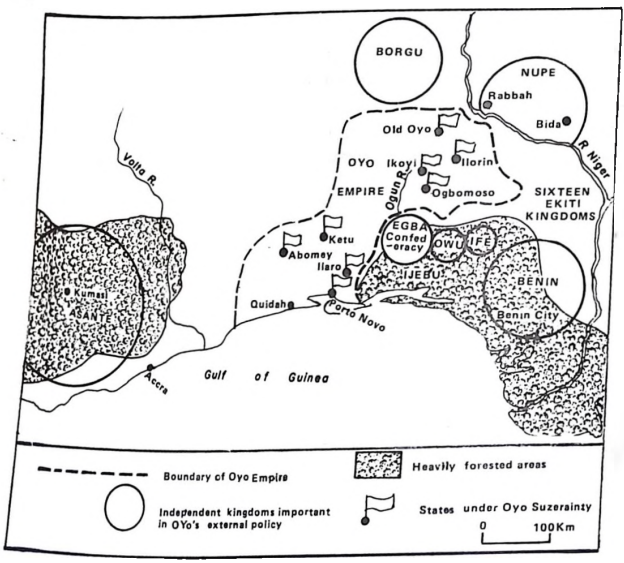
The first was the internal factor, and the second was the external factor. We shall discuss both in turns.

Internal Factor: Old Oyo at the beginning of the century

The empire began its process of collapse in the second half of the eighteenth century. Early in the nineteenth century it had, at least, five major problems which it failed to solve. These were:

a) an inappropriate political formula to check the autocratic tendencies of the ruling class;
b) the failure to find an ideology to unite the masses in the empire;
c) the loss of commercial supremacy;
d) external pressure especially from its northern neighbours; and
e) the revolts of its restive vassals.

All these problems had their roots in the second half of the eighteenth century. The breakdown in the constitution of the empire became glaring in C. 1784 when *Basorun* Gaha, the head of the Oyo Mesi (Council of State) subverted the constitution and ruled for twenty years. He was a despot. He installed and deposed some Alaafin on the basis of his whims and caprices. It was not until 1774 that Alaafin Abiodun was able to find an answer to his excesses, leading to the mass killing of Gaha, the members of his family and associates.



Oyo empire and its neighbours in 1800

The empire attained its greatest power and extent in the 1780s, during the reign of Abiodun. But it was during this same period that the weakening of Oyo's power began, especially as it lost its influence on her northern neighbours of the British and Nupe. By the 1780s, Oyo was already paying tribute to the Nupe. Awole who succeeded Abiodun in 1789 was a weak ruler and had to be overthrown by his chiefs. The overthrow of Awole was yet another indication of the crisis at the centre. The Oyo Mesi reasserted power which it had partially lost under Abiodun: it requested Adesina, Abiodun's *Aremo* (heir) who thought that he should succeed his father, to commit suicide; it drove Abiodun's other children out of Oyo; and chose the weak Awole as the new Alaafin.

But Awole quarrelled with the Oyo Mesi (especially the Basorun, its head) and with one of the senior war generals. While he was able to get away with this, he was foolish enough to extend the quarrel to Afonja, the *Aare Ona Kakanfo* (head of the army), who was also the head of the Ilorin province. Afonja had strong and legitimate connection with the Oyo ruling house and also had the ultimate ambition of becoming the Alaafin. Awole's scheme to destroy Afonja ended in causing more trouble for the empire. In C.1796, Afonja forced Awole to commit suicide because the latter planned to destroy him by ordering him to capture the impregnable city of Iwere Ile within three months. The convention was that if the *Aare* could not win such a war in three months, he had to commit suicide. Rather than attack Iwere Ile, Afonja organised a mutiny and besieged Oyo metropolis. The palace was ransacked and Awole had to commit suicide.

Thereafter, Afonja sought the throne, but the Oyo Mesi would not have such a strong man. It chose Adebo as the new Alaafin. Afonja refused to recognise the new Alaafin Adebo. In addition, he withdrew his allegiance to Oyo and embarked upon the creation of a new kingdom. He succeeded in imposing his own *ajele* (residents) on the Igbomina. The inability of the other principal chiefs to oppose him enabled Afonja to consolidate his position. Outlying dependencies (vassal states) seized the opportunity of the crisis in the centre to rebel. The relations in the northern frontier of the empire deteriorated to the extent that Oyo lost its influence. It also lost its dependencies in the southwest, that is, Dahomey, Egba and Egbado.

The internal political dissension made it difficult to check the rebellions of the vassal states, govern an empire that was very big, and check the tyranny of Oyo's residents and messengers in the provinces. It also made it difficult to control the chiefs whose ambi-

tions were capable of destroying the empire, and withstand the threat posed by the jihad.

External factor: the Muslim rebellion of 1817

The problems of the early nineteenth century were complicated by the spread of the Sokoto jihad to the south. Both the internal problems and the external threat posed by the jihad converged in 1817 when a Muslim rebellion occurred. The principal character in this story was still Afonja. Before 1817, he had succeeded in turning Ilorin into his kingdom; but still he wanted to take more areas out of Oyo. He was yet to fulfil his ambition: to become the Alaafin or create an alternative kingdom. Neither was he free of military attacks from Oyo.

In 1817, Afonja decided to 'invoke a Muslim rebellion in his support'. This choice was possible because of the outbreak of the jihad in 1804 and its subsequent spread to the south. The Fulani constituted a military force which Afonja thought he could manipulate to serve his interest.

There were groups in Oyo who could respond to Afonja's request for a jihad. Firstly, there were the pastoral Fulani who, though indifferent to Islam, would support Muslim Fulani leaders in a war against Oyo. Secondly, there were several slaves of northern origin who were Muslims. A jihad would liberate these people from bondage. Thirdly, there were Oyo converts to Islam. Finally, there were mallams (Muslim scholars) who could provide leadership. A prominent one was Mallam Salih (called Alimi by the Oyo), a Fulani itinerant preacher.

Afonja, the man who wanted to harness these Muslim potentials, was not a convert. He believed in the efficacy of Muslim charms and the military prowess of the jihadists. To achieve his aim, he invited Alimi and his followers to Ilorin. Other Muslims also went to Ilorin.

With the support of Afonja, Alimi proclaimed a jihad against Oyo in 1817. Hundreds of Muslims joined in this campaign. Northern slaves held by Oyo masters also revolted. Islam had provided the opportunity for different groups (Yoruba, Fulani and Hausa; Muslims and non-Muslims) to unite against the Oyo authority. The attack on Oyo, previously limited to the eastern provinces, now extended into the western provinces.

Afonja had, however, miscalculated in thinking that militant Islam would serve his interest. The Muslims and others had constituted themselves into a *jama'a* (community) and moved about in groups,

causing disruptions. The excesses of the jama'a made Afonja very unpopular especially among the Yoruba. To curb their excesses and to conciliate the opinion in Oyo so that he might still secure the throne, Afonja decided in C.1823 to expel the Hausa and Fulani from Ilorin. They refused to leave Ilorin. In addtion, they killed Afonja. Abdul Salami, the son of Mallam Alimi, became the new head. Salami gave his full allegiance to Sokoto and Afonja's followers were now under a Fulani emirate.

After 1823, the aim of Ilorin was to 'dip the Koran into the sea,' that is, to spread the jihad throughout Yorubaland. Though they did not realise this ambitious aim, they succeeded in destroying Oyo after a series of wars from C.1823 to 1836. Several wars were fought, notably the Ogele, Mugbamugba, Kanla and Eleduwe. The last was the Eleduwe war (C.1833 to 1836) where the Alaafin lost his life and the capital was destroyed and deserted.

Ilorin owed its victory to a number of reasons. Firstly, the Ilorin army seemed to have been better disciplined and better trained than that of Oyo. Secondly, the Ilorin army had better horsemen and more access to horses. Firearms were just being introduced to Yorubaland, and were yet to be used in Oyo and Ilorin during this period. Thirdly, the Ilorin army enjoyed a better unity of command. The Oyo forces were badly organised because the central administration had broken down. Finally, the Ilorin made a better use of diplomacy, especially the strategy of divide and rule; Ilorin did not attack all the towns at the same time but took them one after the other.

The immediate impact of the fall: the refugees

From 1817 to 1836 virtually all the major cities of the Old Oyo empire had been destroyed. Ilorin forces pillaged commodities of value and took hundreds as slaves. Many more people lost their lives to disease and famine. The solution was to escape. Waves of refugees accompanied every destruction. These refugees left the north for the south to settle in Ogbomoso, Osogbo, Ile-Ife, Owu and Egbaland. By the third decade, several towns had increased in population because of the refugees. For instance, Ogbomoso had been transformed from a small town to a big town while Osogbo, originally a small Ijesa city, became a big town with an Oyo identity.

There were many problems and consequences associated with the refugees. Firstly, they had security problems. They wanted to avoid places that could still be attacked by the Fulani and they had to de-

fend themselves against other hostile neighbours. They solved their security problems in two ways:

1. refugees became protegees of patrons or chiefs in their new homes;
2. they protected themselves against possible enemies by organising better armies and defence.

The second problem was how to adjust to their new homes. They were able to do this because;

1. they were accepted by their kith and kin with whom they settled in the host towns;
2. their new physical environments did not pose serious problems of adjustment; and
3. the social and political organisations as well as the occupations of the hosts were, to a large extent, identical with those of the refugees.

We can now turn to the consequences. Firstly, the presence and activities of refugees generated conflicts in the southern kingdoms of Owu, Egba and Ijebu. While these kingdoms sympathised with the refugees, they could not withstand the threat posed by their large numbers and lawlessness. Some of these southern kingdoms made economic profits from the events by selling the refugees as slaves. The Ife and Ijebu were accused of selling the Oyo. It became difficult to avoid conflicts.

One of the most significant of these conflicts was the Owu war. The events that led to this war were part of the aftermath of the decline of Oyo. The origin of this war was the shift in the main centre of the Atlantic slave trade from Porto Novo to Lagos. The pressure on Ijebu to supply more slaves to the port of Lagos urged them to incite local slave-raiding in Apomu, a part of the Ife kingdom. Owu attempted to suppress local slave raiding by attacking Apomu and other Ife towns. Ife allied with Ijebu to attack Owu. With new imported European markets, the Ife and Ijebu allied army were able to defeat Owu and lay a long siege on the town until it was destroyed in the 1820s. The Owu war was significant for three main reasons:

1. the total destruction of Owu was the beginning of a total warfare in Yorubaland. Though the Yoruba had fought in the past, they never engaged in complete destruction. Other towns were later to experience similar destructions (e.g. the Egba from 1826 to 1829 and Ijaye in 1862);
2. this was the first war in which a whole army would use firearms as offensive weapons in warfare. The Ijebu soldiers were armed with guns while the Owu used the old weapons of bows, clubs,

arrows and cutlasses. After the Owu war, firearms became a common feature of warfare;

3 the Owu war opened the floodgate of other wars. The allied army of Ijebu and Ife, supported by Oyo refugees, attacked the Egba. The Egba were forced to establish a new homeland at Abeokuta. From here, they too invaded the Ijebu Remo towns and the Egbado country.

The second consequence was that there were conflicts within towns because of competition and rivalries between the hosts and the refugees. In Ogbomoso, the refugees struggled to have political power. In Ile-Ife, the refugees were opposed to being put in servile positions and fought for the creation of an autonomous city called Modakeke. Both Modakeke and Ife engaged in bitter wars during the century.

Thirdly, refugees established new towns of their own. A band of refugees and the armies of Ife and Ijebu founded Ibadan in the late 1920s. Another band from Oyo founded New Oyo under Atiba, while Kurunmi founded Ijaye. In these new places, the refugees tried to integrate hundreds of people to live in heterogenous communities. They also tried to maintain security. For instance in New Oyo Alaafin Atiba was able to found a new dynasty and a palace. He recreated the pomp and splendour as well as the rituals and ceremonies of the Old Oyo. He was able to attract some recognition to Oyo, though he could not develop the military power to build an empire.

Fourthly, in these new towns, new forms of political organisation emerged to replace the civil authority which had broken down. Talented warriors emerged as new leaders. The features of the new forms of government deviated from the pre-1800 system of government. The major forms were:

Military federation in Abeokuta and Oke Odan: Several townships made up Abeokuta. Each of these townships enjoyed a semi-autonomy with its oba, chiefs and elders. Abeokuta became a town with many obas. One preeminent institution was the *Olorogun* (a society of warriors) which drew its membership from among the distinguished warriors of the township. In Oke Odan, refugees from four Egbado towns (Ilaro, Ilobi, Erinja and Eyo) settled there. Each of these (now a ward in the new town) enjoyed a measure of autonomy.

Military republic in Ibadan: Here an attempt was made to involve many prominent warriors in government. There were two lines of chiefs — military and civil — and both were open to many Oyo — Yoruba men of talent. Offices were held on the basis of promotion from the lowest to the highest ranks. The military chiefs had more

power than the civilians, though none of them was allowed to establish a personal ascendancy.

Military autocracy in Ijaye: Aare Kurunmi established a dictatorship in Ijaye. There were no traditional rulers or war chiefs to curb his power. He appointed his chiefs who must obey him, and he controlled all the vassal cities and religious cults. His words were law. He remained the only ruler; Ijaye did not survive his death.

All these and other changes in government arose in response to the political instability and chaos of the century. The military became preeminent simply because of widespread insecurity. Successful warriors became the leading elite. They controlled large households, possessed retainers and slaves who were used for various economic activities. They also used the wars as avenues to make more booty, especially slaves.

The final consequence of the emergence of refugees was the incessant struggle for power among the new states. The aftermath of the fall of Old Oyo was a chain of wars. The main reason for these wars was the desire by the new states to fill the political vacuum created by the demise of Oyo. Others like the Ife and Ijebu tried to expand rapidly. In these wars, Ibadan was the most successful.

The era of Ibadan dominance

Of the new towns, Ibadan attracted more refugees. Hundreds of these refugees were also soldiers. It used these men to build a strong military machine. By 1863, Ibadan had become the most powerful Yoruba state. It used this power to save most of Yorubaland from the conquest of Ilorin. It also used it to establish an empire which covered more Yoruba-speaking peoples than that of Old Oyo. By 1870, the Ibadan empire incorporated Ife, Osun, parts of Igbomina, Akoko, Ekiti and Ijesa, Ibarapa and Oyo, except New Oyo and a few areas conceded to the Alaafin.

Many factors contributed to the rise of Ibadan. Firstly, it had a large army made up of experienced soldiers and men from different parts of Yorubaland. This army was efficient and disciplined. It was actually a combination of several private armies built by talented warriors who relied on their dependants and followers. This army always had the urge to win because soldiers were rewarded with captives and titles.

Secondly, it had a sound economic base. There was a large expanse of fertile land for agriculture. Through its wars, there were hundreds of slaves who were used as labour on the farms. The

leading warriors were at the same time leading farmers. Its crafts industries were equally developed. It supplied large quantities of palm oil and textiles, superior to and cheaper than Manchester cotton. Its location between the coast and the interior made it a major commercial centre. Its markets had goods and traders of different origins: locally produced ones, those from other Yoruba towns, European goods brought from the coast, and those from northern Nigeria.

Thirdly, it was the most populous city in Yorubaland. It drew many advantages from this large population. It had people who could enlist in the army, who could produce and consume goods, and who could engage in leisure. It was able to integrate these diverse people by building a community in which many could unite to pursue common goals. There were also opportunities for people in the town and new migrants to participate in diverse and lucrative economic activities.

Fourthly, its system of government ensured for it the loyalty of men of talent. Power was not attained through hereditary rights. This encouraged adventurous men to stay in, and work for Ibadan, where they hoped to have access to power and promotion. The system of government was also geared towards a state of endless warfare: it emphasised prowess and success in war as criteria for advancement.

Fifthly, the towns attacked by Ibadan failed to come together until it was too late. In the face of the large armies of Ibadan, the small towns, especially those in Ekiti and Ijesa countries, were too easy to defeat.

Finally, Ibadan understood the art of diplomacy. The basic functions of its diplomacy were to monitor subversive activities in the colonies, promote Ibadan's interests in other states and complement the use of the army in achieving its foreign policy goals.

Wars of expansion

The creation of the Ibadan empire involved the use of diplomacy and war. While some towns and villages surrendered themselves to it, others had to be conquered by force. There were two main phases in the wars. The first was between C.1830 and 1850. During this period, Ibadan perfected the use of firearms, bought mostly from the Ijebu, to halt the Ilorin cavalry. By defeating the Ilorin army at Osogbo in 1838, the Ibadan army put an end to the threat posed by Ilorin. By this victory, she became the saviour of the Yoruba. Many Oyo — Yoruba towns and villages became Ibadan vassals, in

the hope that they would receive protection. Using the threat posed by Ilorin as the major excuse, Ibadan reconquered some of the Ekiti states from the Ilorin, imposed its control in several others, and also added several Ijesa and Akoko communities to its empire.

The second phase was between 1860 and 1877. There were two major developments during this phase:

1 the Ijaye war of 1860 to 1862; and
2 the consolidation of Ibadan empire.

The war with Ijaye was to resolve the power tussle between two powerful successor states of Oyo. Kurunmi, the leader of Ijaye, also had an imperial desire. He wanted to expand his domination towards the northwest, an area which also interested Oyo and Ibadan. Earlier in the 1830s, both Ibadan and Ijaye had signed a pact with Alaafin Atiba of Oyo to defend what was left of Oyo country and regain those areas lost to the Fulani. In pursuing these aims, Ibadan was to protect the north and northeast while Ijaye was to take the western provinces. This pact did not produce the solution to the power rivalry between these two states. The first clash between them was in 1845, a war fought to a stalemate and brought to an end by the intervention of Alaafin Atiba.

The final clash occured in 1860. Ibadan posed as the defender of Yoruba unity and Alaafin's authority by accusing Kurunmi of insolence and insurbodination to Oyo. Kurunmi had clashed with Alaafin Atiba for two reasons. Firstly, Atiba challenged his authority in the western province of upper Ogun by collecting tribute. Secondly, Kurunmi protested the choice of Adelu, Atiba's son, as a successor to the Oyo throne. When Adelu was installed in 1859, Kurunmi argued that he should have died with his father according to previous traditions. Part of the truth is that Kurunmi reckoned that Adelu would continue with his father's policy. With the support of Ibadan, Adelu escalated the struggle for the control of upper Ogun, leading to a clash between Oyo and Ijaye in January 1860. In this clash, both captured one another's soldiers. When Ibadan intervened, Oyo released all its captives but Ijaye refused, demanding a heavy ransom. Adelu felt insulted and Ibadan was ready to turn the opportunity into an excuse for war. In March 1850 Ibadan attacked Ijaye with an advertised motive of chastising Kurunmi's arrogance. Ibadan, however, had one main aim: to settle finally the power struggle between her and Ijaye.

The majority of the Oyo — Yoruba towns supported Ibadan while Ijaye relied mainly on the Egba and two others, the Ilorin and Ijebu, who were opposed to the growing power of Ibadan. After many bitter clashes Ibadan won on 17 March 1862, a day when it set Ijaye on fire. Ibadan won because it had a better army, more firearms,

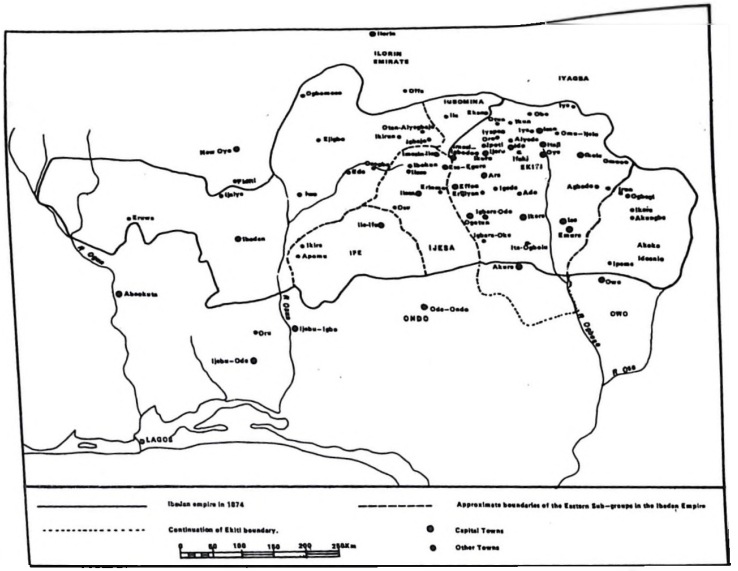
and allies. It also benefitted from the fact that Kurunmi had antagonised several of his chiefs, and his lack of control over his allies, especially the Egba.

With this victory Ibadan became the dominant power in Yorubaland. The major rivals were the Egba and Ijebu who realised that Ibadan's policy was beyond the mere restoration of Yoruba unity. Both the Ijebu and Egba were threatened by the fear of an Ibadan domination. And to check her, they resorted to closing their trade routes and markets from where Ibadan obtained its firearms. The British, who were interested in trade, had to intervene on several occasions in order to maintain a free flow of trade from the hinterland to the port in Lagos. After the Ijaye war, the British maintained an unsigned alliance with Ibadan against the Egba and Ijebu. British forces attacked the Egba army at Ikorodu in 1865, and insisted on the opening of trade routes. The Ijebu retaliated by forbidding all Europeans from entering their country while the Egba expelled European missionaries and pro-British sympathisers in 1867.

After the Ijaye war, Ibadan consolidated its empire. Its armies subdued many places and its economy ensured a large scale production of food and the procurement of guns and gunpowder. It established a colonial administration, known as the Ajele system, on its vassals. The Ajele (residents) were posted to colonies where they supervised the administration of the indigenous rulers, reported all important political activities to the capital, collected the annual tribute, and checked events and people that were opposed to Ibadan's interest. The Ajele in turn reported to the *Babakekere* (patrons), the chiefs of Ibadan who were supposed to control the colonies. The colonies were divided among the chiefs, and each was responsible for administering those allocated to him. He advised on whom to appoint as *oba* and *baale* among the indigenous competitors. The Babakekere appointed the Ajele who in turn saw himself as his representative. The choice of an Ajele was based on ability and loyalty to Ibadan.

The impact of Ibadan dominance and the war to end all wars, 1877—1892

By establishing an empire, Ibadan antagonised the Egba and Ijebu who feared a possible attack and incorporation. Both the Egba and Ijebu regarded Ibadan as a scourge and its leaders as arrogant men, ruffians and outcastes who had no right to lead or dictate to them. They also feared the alliance between Ibadan and the British. Their



The Ibadan empire

strategy up till 1877 was to prevent the sale of firearms to Ibadan. Ilorin, too, was also looking for opportunities to destroy the power of Ibadan.

The vassal states had more grievances. Ibadan was accused of exploitation. It actually did, through reckless demands of food items, livestock and cheep labour. Its Ajele were often callous to people and local feelings, while they engaged in intolerable privileges. The colonies paid tributes and gifts and supplied contingents to the Ibadan army. These were burdens to the peasants who were forced to supply most of these requirements. The Ajele and other officials added to the hardships of the people by making unnecessary demands for palm wine, foodstuff and livestock.

There were other impacts of this domination. Firstly, its conquests often led to the total or partial destruction of towns. Its army pillaged for the main aim of obtaining captives. Secondly, several areas were disturbed by wars and raids. Some were forced to desert their villages and live in bigger towns where they could obtain protection. In the process, several lost their lives and property. Many more experienced hardships from the high handedness and greed of the Ajele and other officials of Ibadan. The impact of Ibadan's domination gave rise to hostile reactions against its rule.

The reactions led to a war in 1877. Known variously as the Sixteen Years War or the Kiriji War, it was the last war among the Yoruba. In 1877, Aare Latosa, the head of Ibadan, calculated that it was better to subdue, once and for all, the Egba and Ijebu who, by controlling trade and restricting the flow of firearms, posed the greatest obstacle to Ibadan. On Monday, 30 July 1877, the Aare declared 'a war to end all wars' on the Egba.

The war began to spread. The Ijebu joined. In 1878 it spread to the east. The Ekiti and Ijesa countries who had become better united under Ibadan domination and whose citizens had also been exposed to warfare came together to challange Ibadan. They formed a confederacy known as the Ekiti-parapo. It comprised the combined forces of the Ijesa and Ekiti, with support from the Ekiti-parapo committee formed in Lagos to fight for the autonomy of their people. The committee sent Schneider rifles, faster loading and superior to the guns used by Ibadan. The Ekiti-parapo army was first led by Fabunmi of Imesi and later by Ogedengbe of Ilesa.

Ibadan now had a string of foes; the Ekiti, Ijesa, Egba and Ijebu. The Ife and Ilorin later joined. Not only did the Ekiti-parapo want independence, the others wanted the end of Ibadan empire, the death of Latosa, and a new political set up for Ibadan, whereby the Egba, the Ijebu and Oyo would establish a joint administration to neutralise its republic of powerful aristocrats.

Ibadan withstood this combined military onslaught. There was a stalemate and the Sixteen Years War was only brought to an end by British intervention. The Sixteen Years War demonstrated the eventual failure of Ibadan to build a lasting empire and provide unity for the Yoruba. There are reasons for this failure:

1. the military alliance against Ibadan was formidable;
2. Ibadan could not command legitimacy and instructive loyalty among other Yoruba states. Its rulers were often regarded as upstarts whose ambition should be curbed. This gave rise to a unanimous opposition against Ibadan.
3. Ibadan's rule tended to be oppressive, with little gains to the colonies. This gave rise to massive hostility against it.

The peace of 1886 and increased British pressure

Several attempts were made to restore the peace. All moves by the Alaafin and missionaries between 1879 and 1885 were abortive. It was the 1886 intervention by the Lagos administration that was successful. Three categories of people intervened: missionaries, chiefs and the British administration in Lagos. The reasons for the failures up to 1885 were that:

1. all combatants thought that they would win the war;
2. it was feared that peace would allow Ibadan to rise again and pose more threat.

There was a better atmosphere for peace in 1885. Firstly, on 31 August 1885 Latosa died. His ambition was partly responsible for the wars. His death removed one major obstacle to peace, since Ibadan's opponents had once requested that he should commit suicide. Secondly, the death of the *Awujale* in June 1885 enabled the warring Ijebu to close their ranks and speak with one voice. Thirdly, the leaders of the Ibadan and the Ekiti-parapo were tired of war. Finally, the attitude of the Lagos government towards the interior changed. This was the era of the scramble and it was feared that the French might attempt to impose their control on parts of Yorubaland.

Early in 1886, the Lagos government employed the services of the C.M.S. missionaries. On 31 May, the envoys and the representatives of the warring parties had agreed on seven terms of peace:

1. the members of the Ekiti-parapo to retain their independence;
2. the contending parties to respect the territorial integrity of one another in the future;
3. the Alaafin's relationship with the Owa of Ilesa to continue as before the war – that of an elder to a younger brother;

Chief Ogedengbe, Commander-in-Chief of the Ekiti-parapo forces

4. the boundaries between the Ekiti-parapo and Ibadan to remain as they stood at the time of the agreement; as for the towns of Otan — Aiyegbaju, Iresi, Ada and Igbajo, those inhabitants who wanted to live with their Ekiti and Ijesa kinsmen could migrate, but the towns to remain in the possession of Ibadan;
5. the Offa issue to be settled later;
6. the Modakeke to leave Ife territory; migrate across the River Osun and resettle on Ibadan territory between the Osun and Oba rivers; those of them who wished to live with the Ife to move into Ile-Ife;
7 the Ijebu and the Ibadan to sign a treaty of peace, and the Ijebu to decamp from Modakeke and go home.

These terms were later drawn up into a formal treaty entitled 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Commerce.'

To execute the terms of the treaty, Lagos sent a Special Commission to the interior in September 1886. On Thursday, 23 September 1886, peace was proclaimed in the middle of the battlefield in the Kiriji war front. The dispersals from the Kiriji camp began soon after. Nevertheless a number of issues were not resolved. These were:

1. the Modakeke's objections to the plan on their evacuation from Ife. They argued that Modakeke was a town and not a war camp, and that they were never conquered by the Ife.
2. the rivalry between Ilorin and Ibadan. Ilorin refused to participate in the negotiations for peace. Both continued to fight at Offa.

These un-resolved issues generated conflicts after 1886. However, peace finally returned to most parts of Yorubaland.

The major issue after 1886 was the rapid spread of British influence leading to the imposition of colonial rule on the whole of Yorubaland. To check the Ijebu and Egba who still believed that they could close trade routes, Lagos sent a military expedition to Ijebu in 1892. It subdued Ijebu Ode and annexed Ikorodu, Ejinrin, Epe and other places which controlled the trade routes through the Ijebu country. So devastating was this attack that other Yoruba states became unwilling to offend the British. Early in 1893, Governor G.T. Carter of Lagos began a tour of Yorubaland. In February, he negotiated a treaty with Oyo, and the Alaafin promised not to go to war without referring all disputes to Lagos. A similar treaty was signed with Ibadan in the same year. The Egba obtained a semi-independent status and Ilorin was forced into submission in 1897.

The treaty with Ibadan marked the beginning of effective British occupation of the Yoruba interior. Captain H.L. Bower was posted to Ibadan in the same year as the 'Resident of Ibadan and Political Officer in charge of the Hinterland of Lagos Colony'. In 1894, Bower established a garrison on the River Oti, between Ikirun and Offa.

After 1893, the British gradually assumed responsibility for the administration of Yorubaland.

The impact of the wars

1. refugees were created;
2. refugees increased the population of host towns;
3. refugees established new towns (e.g. Ibadan, Aiyede, New Oyo, Ijaye);
4. the movements of people altered the demographic pattern of Yorubaland. Years before the fall of Old Oyo, northern Yorubaland was the most thickly populated region. The invasions by Ilorin devastated several of these areas, forcing people to flee. Some went in the direction of Ilorin but several went southwards. While northern Yorubaland became desolate, the south became thickly populated. The forest belt became thickly populated. The forest belt became the home of thousands of people drawn from the open savanna.
5. refugees made innovations to the system of government;
6. the century experienced a large scale mixing of Yoruba peoples. For instance, Ibadan was home to peoples from Ife, Owu, Egba towns, Oyo, Ijebu, Akoko, Iyagba, Ekiti and Ijesa kingdoms. Ekiti and Ijesa towns received a large population of Oyo.
7. bigger towns emerged, as people flocked to places that could provide security.

These were not all. The spread of refugees and the massive interactions of people led to the spread of Oyo culture to new areas where they settled. The establishment of the Ibadan empire further spread the Oyo culture to eastern Yorubaland. Examples of Oyo cultural diffusions include the spread of the narrow male operated, loom, clothed *egungun*, drums slung from the shoulder, and the royal cult of Sango. Islam also spread because of the Oyo diaspora. Oyo refugees and migrants contributed a lot to the spread of Islam to other parts of Yorubaland. The Oyo, too, were influenced by the culture of others. For instance, the *Ogboni* cult, previously non existent in Oyo, spread to Ibadan, New Oyo, Ogbomoso and Ijaye.

However not all was positive. The dislocation and suffering of the war years was too much. There were several examples of massive dislocations: the destruction of several Oyo towns and villages; the total destruction of Owu and Ijaye; the flight of hundreds of people; the enslaved; and the dispossessed. The traditions of several Yoruba towns contain details of unpleasant events. For instance, when Ibadan attacked the Ekiti town of Ikoro in 1854, its citizens

experienced starvation which forced them to eat roots and banana stems. When the town fell in 1855, its men killed their children and wives and immolated themselves by setting fire on their houses. Another example can be taken from the eastern Yoruba country, described by the Rev. J.B. Wood who travelled through it in the 1880s:

> It is hardly possible to think of the sufferings which have been endured by the Ondos without a feeling of deepest pity and sympathy. The sufferings of the Ijeshas have been greater than those of the Ondos, and still they continue. Town after town in the Ijesha country is passed which has but the merest handful of a population, as compared with what it was formerly.

Hundreds of people died in the wars. When Dahomey attacked Abeokuta in 1851, more than a thousand corpses were counted along the walls after a day's fighting. During the Ijaye war, forty to sixty persons were wounded daily, and *Balogun* Ogunmola of Ibadan lost 1800 soldier slaves. Several others lost their lives to famine. Those who escaped death became captives. Some of these were imprisoned; some were put to death; and some were released. Several of the captives were, however enslaved. Enslavement was a common feature, so common that thousands became slaves. Before the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade several of these slaves were sold overseas. After the abolition of slave trade, they were used to satisfy local demands which had increased because of 'legitimate' trade.

There were changes in several aspects of warfare. Firearms became the most important weapons replacing the old weapons of spears, clubs, cutlasses, arrows, etc. The military was more specialised, as it became necessary to learn the use of firearms, different strategies, and the art of diplomacy.

Finally, it was a century of heroism and reforming spirit. On heroism (and fidelity) there were several instances of the display of courage which led to victory in wars. Several of these brave men (e.g. Oluyole, Ogunmola and Ibikunle of Ibadan; Onafowokan of Ijebu, Ogedengbe of Ilesa etc.) have become local heroes who today are referred to as inspirations to young men. On reforming spirit, there is evidence of rulers who were opposed to enslavement (e.g. King Adebia of Ketu), and corruption (e.g. Ogunmola of Ibadan) and those who encouraged the spread of new ideas and religion. Christianity for instance was able to spread, partly because of the reforming spirit of the century. We have also made reference to the development of great cities and creative innovations in govern-

ment. Peoples in areas not directly affected by the major battles continued with the age — old occupations.

Summary

1. The decline and fall of the Old Oyo empire were caused by a constitutional crisis which led to power struggle among the principal officers of the empire. The jihad became the external factor that completed the process. The internal crisis reached its climax in 1817 when Afonja rebelled in order to carve out a new empire. Afonja made use of Hausa slaves and Malam Alimi, a Fulani itinerant preacher. Alimi and the Muslims not only helped Afonja to defeat Oyo, but they turned around to kill him in 1823, took over Ilorin and destroyed Oyo. The Ilorin army attacked several Oyo towns until the capital itself was destroyed in 1836.
2. Ilorin won because it had a better army, and made better use of diplomacy. Oyo forces were not well organised.
3. Refugees emerged. They settled in new places and founded new towns of Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijaye and New Oyo.
4. The fall of Oyo also generated other wars, notably the Owu war which was significant because the town was completely destroyed. Firearms were used and several other wars followed.
5. The several other wars were caused by the political desire to fill the political vacuum created by the fall of Oyo. Other states, too, wanted to expand.
6. Ibadan became the most powerful state in Yorubaland. This was made possible by the military weakness of other states, the military might of Ibadan, its system of government which was geared towards war, and its viable economy.
7. Ibadan's dominance was resisted by the Egba and Ijebu who saw it as a threat; Ilorin, its traditional rival and the Ekiti and Ijesa who had suffered from the impact of its conquests. In 1877, the war to end all wars began. There was a stalemate because no one could defeat the other.
8. The Lagos administration made use of C.M.S. missionaries to bring peace in 1886. Thereafter the British imposed colonial rule on Yorubaland.
9. The wars had much impact. Some of these were:

1. Social and Cultural

a) Emergence of refugees who had to grapple with the problems of living in new environments.

b) Increasing search for and the use of slaves.
c) The diffusion of culture over a wide region.
d) Increasing urbanisation and heterogeneity.
e) Dislocations and sufferings by those who were attacked by soldiers.

2. Economic

a) More attention was paid to coastal trade.
b) Participation in 'legitimate' trade partly in order to have resources to finance the war.
c) Occasional distruptions to trade routes and agriculture.

Political

a) The emergence of Ibadan as an empire.
b) New innovations in political systems leading to a fêderal system in Abeokuta and Oke-Odan, a dictatorship in Ijaye and a military republicanism in Ibadan.

Questions

Essay

1. Examine the reasons for the fall of Old Oyo empire.
2. Examine the causes and consequences of the 1817 Muslim rebellion in Oyo.
3. What were the impacts of the refugees on Yoruba social and political institutions in the first half of the nineteenth century?
4. Account for the rise of Ibadan as a Yoruba power.
5. What were the causes of the Yoruba wars of the nineteenth century?
6. What were the impacts of the nineteenth century wars on Yoruba Society?
7. How did the Yoruba wars come to an end?

Multiple-choice

1. When would it be right to say the constitutional crisis in the Old Oyo began?
   A. In the late nineteenth century

B. In the mid-nineteenth century
C. In the late eighteenth century
D. In the early twentieth century
E. In the mid-twentieth century.

2. Who was the despot among the following leaders of Old Oyo in the late eighteenth century?
   A. Alaafin Abiodun
   B. Alaafin Awole
   C. Basorun Gaha
   D. Alaafin Maku
   E. Alaafin Adebo.
3. The competing groups for power in early nineteenth century Oyo were
   A. the Alaafin, Oyo Mesi and war chiefs
   B. the traders and peasants
   C. the peasants and chiefs
   D. traders and soldiers
   E. traders, soldiers and peasants.
4. The Head of Ilorin before C.1823 was
   A. Alimi
   B. Solagberu
   C. Afonja
   D. Salami
   E. Ojo.
5. One of the following was the most prominent figure in the events that led to the fall of Old Oyo
   A. Alimi
   B. Solagberu
   C. Afonja
   D. Salami
   E. Ojo
6. When did the Muslim rebellion take place in Oyo?
   A. 1817
   B. 1717
   C. 1917
   D. 1827
   E. 1837
7. Two of the following were very prominent in the Muslim rebellion of 1817.
   A. Afonja and Alimi
   B. Afonja and Ojo
   C. Alimi and Ojo
   D. Afonja and Iwere
   E. Alimi and Iwere

8. Which town destroyed Oyo after 1823?
   A. Ilorin
   B. Ibadan
   C. Borgu
   D. Nupe
   E. Sokoto
9. The *Ijebu* army was famous for using one of the following in the war against Owu:
   A. firearms
   B. horses
   C. bomb
   D. knives
   E. clubs
10. Which of the following Yoruba states established an empire during the nineteenth century?
   A. Ibadan
   B. Ilesa
   C. Ado Ekiti
   D. Owu
   E. Lagos
11. Which states employed the use of trade routes as political strategy during the century?
   A. Ibadan and Oyo
   B. Egba and Ijebu
   C. Ilorin and Ilesa
   D. Ondo and Akure
   E. Ibadan and Ijebu
12. Which of the following two groups were members of the Ekiti-parapo confederacy:
   A. Ibadan and Lagos
   B. Ekiti and Ijesa
   C. Ilorin and Igbomina
   D. Ilorin and Ibadan
   E. Ijesa and Ibadan.
13. When was the treaty of peace signed in Yorubaland?
   A. September 1886
   B. September 1786
   C. September 1896
   D. September 1876
   E. September 1866
14. Which of the following was not one of the impact of the wars:
   A. the emergence of refugees
   B. the emergence of new towns
   C. the massive migration to northern Yorubaland

D. the diffusion of culture
E. the destruction of villages and towns

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Chapter 5 Bini in the nineteenth century

Introduction

Bini, one of the states of the forest region of West Africa, reached the peak of power and achievement in the seventeenth century. It entered the period of decline in the eighteenth century and collapsed, primarily because of British imperial conquest, by the end of the nineteenth century. This chapter is mainly concerned with the developments which led to the decline and ultimate collapse of Bini. To understand the factors which affected the developments, an awareness of the situation in Bini on the eve of the nineteenth century is necessary since it indeed constitutes the immediate background to those developments.

Bini on the eve of the nineteenth century

As mentioned above, the Bini empire started to decline at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Indeed, by the end of that century, the empire had been so drastically reduced that effective power was exercised only in the kingdom, that is, the Edo speaking land area made up of the Bini, Ishan and Afenmai. Thus, the Bini empire which stretched from the Niger to Lagos and from the Kukuruku area to the Niger Delta had shrunk to an area that corresponded to what later became known as Benin Division. Similarly, its hold over places like Lagos, Itsekiriland, Urhoboland and parts of western Niger Igbo areas was very thin.

Both internal and external factors contributed to the decline of the empire. Among the internal factors were those related to the struggle for leadership or struggle for power. The fact was that rivalry among aspirants to the Obaship caused succession disputes and at-

tendant civil wars which had adverse impact on stability. Agreed, this was not new in Bini's political life, having been so for most of the previous three centuries, yet since the last decade of the seventeenth century the disputes and civil wars had caused a level of decay which became too overwhelming. As it happened, by the end of the eighteenth century, the decay was at its very peak, thereby resulting in the weakening of the central administration.

Closely related to this was the fact that Bini's vassal states intensified their struggles for independence, taking advantage of the strife generated by succession disputes and civil wars. This was the situation which helped Lagos and Warri to win their independence, thereby contributing to the decline of the empire.

The slave trade contributed its own quota to the decline of Bini. Wars and raids for slaves caused much destruction, resulting not only in depopulation but also in a weakening of the administrative arrangements which promoted stability in the state. Insecurity increased and as a result many citizens fled and their houses crumbled thereafter because of lack of care.

Finally, decline was accelerated by adverse economic circumstances due mainly to external factors. These external factors had some connection with increasing European interaction with the Nigerian coastal and immediate hinterland groups who shared neighbourhood with Bini. One factor was the drastic reduction in European use of Bini as a commercial base because alternative bases were established at Fernando Po and Sao Tome. The other was connected with the rise of the Oyo empire which resulted in the use of Lagos and Badagry instead of Bini in trade between Yorubaland and the coast.

Obviously, all these were adverse circumstances and they explain why Bini was in a state of decline at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As the century drew on, the circumstances became more overwhelming with complications for the Bini's economic and political developments. The discussion in the section below will make this clearer.

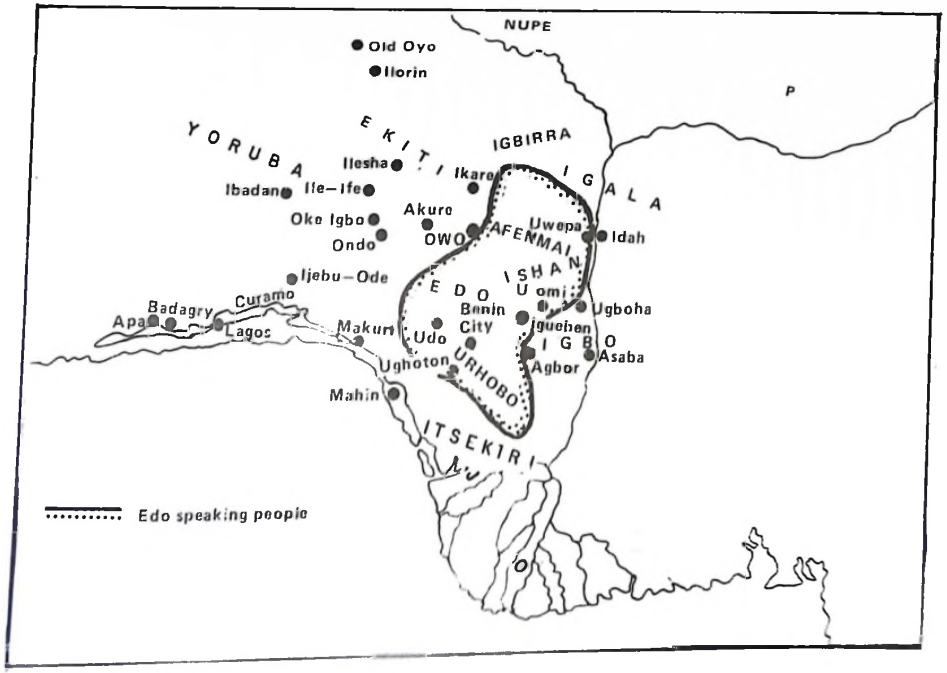
Political Situation

Politically, Bini was at an advanced stage of decline at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As already stated, for example, her position as an imperial power was considerably reduced, being limited to the Edo speaking area where it continued to exercise effective power. However, it must be stressed that the decline did not

result in automatic or total collapse. It took quite some time before the collapse came. What this means is that the political situation described in the preceding paragraph did not result in the collapse of either the Bini kingdom or of the monarchy. Thus, though power struggle with attendant instability was a key feature of political life in Bini at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the kingdom as well as the Obaship survived. In fact, they remained the prize which contenders for power sought throughout the nineteenth century.

Also the structures, ideas and institutions which supported Bini political system in times past were still intact. As in previous centuries, the Oba was still at the centre of power and authority in the administration of the kingdom. He was still assisted by three categories of title-holders, some of whom were important officers of the kingdom. The three categories of title-holders were the *Uzama* chiefs, the Palace Chiefs and the Town Chiefs. The Uzama were still important and indeed crucial in the administration despite the fact that they had lost some of their privileges and rights since the reign of Oba Ewedo in the thirteenth century. For example, their right to elect or select an Oba was cancelled. Yet, they were a kind of consultative council for the Oba. Their opinion and advice made administration easier and more effective and every Oba worked hard to retain the loyalty and support of the Uzama chiefs. Similarly, the Palace chiefs were involved in the palace organisation under the headship of Uwangue, the chief-in-charge of the *Iwebo* or the palace association that took care of the Oba's regalia including his throne and ceremonial wardrobe. Town chiefs were of two orders, holding titles that were given by the Oba except that of the *Ologbose* which was hereditary. Their titles were four by the twelfth century, rose to five by the end of the seventeenth century and to thirteen between the eighteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century. Prominent among the title holders were the *Iyase* or the Prime Minister; the *Ebohon* who took charge of External Relations and the *Ologbose* who served as the Commander in Chief of the Army.

Clearly, as mentioned earlier, the survival of these institutions and structures was a great asset to the Bini political system in general and to the Oba in particular. At the same time they acted as constraints or checks on an Oba's power and authority. The result was that to a great extent, an Oba's power was dependent on his personal ability to manipulate the persons associated with the respective institutions. In particular, he manipulated to his advantage the Palace and Town Chiefs. Manipulation was of various kinds. He appointed persons to vacant titles more or less as patronage for expected support and loyalty. The Oba also created new titles and moved persons from one order to another. For instance, men who



The Bini kingdom in the nineteenth century

did not belong to the *Ekaiwe* association (Composed mainly of descendants of the Oba's daughters) were at times moved into the order purely on the Oba's own choice.

Similarly, men who had achieved success or wealth through enterprise or industry (as in trade, farming, or crafts) were given titles. Infact, quite often men of Edo origin who had engaged in these enterprises at the borders or even beyond the kingdom were given the title of Iyase. The involvement of such men in the administration served as a check on the capacity of Town Chiefs to plot intrigues against the Oba. Another aspect of the political arrangement which should be noted is that Bini had provincial states, namely, Ishan and Afenmai. These were each under a governor with the title 'Enogie', and they were appointed by the Oba. Each had a representative title-holder in the royal court.

Our description of the main features of the political system in Bini in the nineteenth century indicates that there was constant fear of intrigue and opposition by rival groups within the kingdom. That fear was well founded because nearly all the rulers of Bini throughout the century experienced intense opposition from rivals or contenders for power. Consequently, for most of the nineteenth century, despite the survival of the remarkable political system whose features we have drawn attention to, Bini's political evolution was one characterised either by civil wars, due in large measure to succession disputes, or by dictatorial administration as Obas sought to fight down their opponents. Our examination of developments during the reigns of some of the Obas during the century illustrates the point clearly.

Oba Obanosa (1804-1816)

We begin with Oba Obanosa who came to the throne in 1804 when his father, Akenegbuda, died, having reigned for fifty-four long years. Obanosa was already very old before he became an Oba. Infact, Obanosa, whose original name was Osifo, was reported to have sent his grey hair to his father at some regular intervals to remind his father that it was time he (Obanosa) took over office. His heart's desire was met when his father died in 1804. But this was after a civil war caused by succession dispute. The point was that Obanosa had a rival, Osopakharha of Ugbague, who stood against his assuming office. After a civil uprising in which about a thousand persons were killed, Obanosa had increased the empire by conquering Ute, a town in Owo division. Thus both internally and externally, Bini under Obanosa experienced war. Even his death provided oppor-

tunity for his sons to engage in serious struggle for power thereby plunging Bini into civil war.

The two sons were Eredia-uwa and Ogbebo. Ogbebo declared Eredi-uwa who fled to Ishan. Ogbebo, however, proclaimed himself Oba without the usual ceremonies and forced the chiefs to take the oath of allegiance to him. Despite the fact that Eredie-uwa had fled to Ishan leaving the throne for him, Ogbebo was not satisfied and so sent agents to Ishan to get Eredie-uwa murdered. The agents' mission failed. Instead some of them were killed on the way, being victims of a successful ambush. Ogbebo quickly collected soldiers from his maternal home but in the fighting which ensued he lost to Eredia-uwa's men. Fully aware of the future, Ogbebo after destroying the treasures in the palace, had it burnt and then hanged himself to death, having spent only eight months on the throne.

Oba Osemwede (1816–1847)

With Ogbebo dead, the Bini sent for Eredia-uwa, the rightful heir to the throne, and promptly crowned him as Oba with the title 'Osemwede', meaning 'My time has come'. Oba Osemwede had a long and relatively successful reign, having to fight only wars of expansion. He enjoyed immense popularity among the Ishan who harboured him during his struggles with Ogbebo. Infact, the Ishan supported him in his campaigns against Akure and Ekiti which were compelled to accept the leadership of the Oba. Osemwede made keen efforts to revive the Bini empire but his efforts did not produce lasting results because of the instability which characterised the internal politics of the kingdom itself. Indeed, the civil war which followed his death was the evidence of that instability which destroyed his imperial achievements.

Oba Adolo (1848–1888)

Following Osemwede's death, Adolo succeeded him in 1848. Adolo, like his predecessors, had to face a civil war caused by his rival and brother, Ogbewekon. Ogbewekon, who operated from his maternal home at Ishan, organised expeditions against Bini thereby disturbing the peace of the empire. States under Bini control used the occasion to declare their independence. For example, Ibadan which had emerged as a new power in Yorubaland was able to extend her control over Ilesa and Ekiti which were previously under Bini's control. The rebellions instigated by Ogbewekon were, however, suppressed in 1853 and 1854. Thereafter, Adolo's reign showed signs

of relative order or stability. This was mainly because Adolo was not vindictive towards his enemies or opponents. Infact, when he was informed in 1880 that Ogbewekon, his enemy had died, the Oba replied thus: 'Do not say that Ogbewekon was my enemy. He was no enemy to me at all, but was my real brother. We were born on the same day. If he is dead it is an indication that my own death is also approaching'. The years after 1854 showed that Oba Adolo was kind-hearted, prudent, wise and just. He was rich and industrious; encouraged commerce and established various markets, one of which was Ekiadolo. He reigned for forty years. He died in 1888, leaving behind four sons and four daughters.

Oba Ovonramwen and the British

Oba Adolo's successor was his eldest son who took the title Oba Ovonramwen though his original name was Idugbowa. He did not fight for the throne. At the same time he had some enemies who were actively against him. Among them were his brother, Orokhorho, and some chiefs, including Obaraye, Obazelu, Osia and Eribo. To strengthen his position, Oba Ovonramwen executed all these chiefs. Civil war did not follow. But there was fear as well as intrigue in court, leading to a fall in the level of stability needed for effective administration and planning.

Oba Ovonramwen's real problem arose from the European presence in Bini and adjacent territories like Itsekiriland. Why was this so? The fact was that Oba Ovonramwen came to power at a time when the European scramble for Africa was at its peak. As is well known, one of the means used by the British to establish influence over Nigerian territories was the signing of treaties with the people through their leaders or representatives. The British signed such a treaty with the Itsekiri, Bini's neighbour, in 1884. The then Consul, Hewett, sought and obtained permissions to visit Bini and negotiate a similar treaty. He then sent his assistant, Blair, for the purpose. But the mission proved ill-fated because Blair died of fever on his way to Bini. Even so, the absence of a treaty with Bini did not prevent Britain from seeing the Bini kingdom as part of her area of influence during the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885.

Thus when the conference recognised the British protectorate of the Oil Rivers, Bini was regarded as part of it. Britain's resolve after the conference was to ensure that Bini was really brought under British control. In the attempt to achieve this objective, the British took steps which generally resulted in unauthorised enchroachment on Bini's sovereignty. Obviously, Oba Ovonramwen did not feel comfortable about them and did not cooperate with the British. Lit-

tle did he realise that in the age of the scramble, the British, like other European powers in Africa, were eager to use might to achieve their objectives since the balanced relations which previously existed had been overturned since the first decade of the nineteenth century to the advantage of the Europeans. Developments in the next few years soon brought the truth of this situation home to Oba Ovonramwen and his people.

In this connection, it should be noted that by the 1890s, Bini was the only state in the hinterland of the Bight of Benin that had not collapsed to British imperial forces. Lagos and most of the Yoruba hinterland had been successfully invaded between the 1860s and 1880s. The same was true of most of the states of the western Delta including Akassa and Itsekiriland, some of which collapsed in the 1890s. Obviously, Bini's independence was unacceptable to the British and could not be tolerated for too long. Oba Ovonramwen appeared to have realised the deadly threat British presence constituted to the kingdom. Consequently his relations with the British were marked by serious suspicions and mistrust of British intentions.

This was the state of affairs when Britain in 1892 took the first formal step to bring Bini under her control. In that year, the British Vice-Consul on the Bini river, Gallwey; decided to visit Bini. He had three main reasons for that decision. Firstly, he wanted to ask the Oba to lift the ban he had imposed on trade and on some commodities between Bini and Europeans. Secondly, he wanted to remove the disgrace which the Oba meted out to his predecessor, Annesley, in 1890. The disgrace was that the Oba, because of reasons that had to do with Bini culture, refused to receive or grant audience to Consul Annesley who visited Bini. Gallwey wanted the Oba to sign a treaty of protection with Britain. After due exchange of messages, Gallwey made his visit to Bini and got a treaty signed by him and some Bini chiefs. Though the Oba declined to sign, it was still binding on Bini. Contrary to what the Bini signatories believed, the treaty allowed for British intervention in the social, economic and political affairs of their kingdom. In other words, it was an instrument which the British could use as a pretext for the formal invasion and conquest of Bini, an event that did not take too long after 1892.

Oba Ovonramwen's failure to sign the treaty marked him out as a dangerous threat to British efforts to bring Bini under control. His continuation of measures including trade bans with the British or their 'local agents' such as the Itsekiri strengthened British determination to deal with him. But a suitable pretext or opportunity had to be found. That came in 1897 when armed with the allegation that in 1896 all the markets on the Bini River were closed, the acting

Consul-General of the Niger Coast Protectorate decided to visit Bini Oba Ovonramwen at the time could not receive any one who was not an Edo. He was engaged in the religious rites and ceremonies associated with the well known Agwe (Ague) festival which usually involved some human sacrifice.

Because of the festival, therefore, the Oba advised Phillips to postpone his proposed visit by one month. Given the mistrust between the British and the Oba, it is not surprising that Consul Phillips found it difficult to believe the Oba's excuses. Consequently, despite advice to the contrary by Itsekiri chiefs who knew the Oba and Bini customs well, Phillips proceeded with the visit. Phillips and his men arrived at Ughoton, the port of Bini, on January 3 1897. They were ordered back by the Oba's messengers who were on ambush but Phillips refused to obey. A dispute ensued between both parties and resulted in fighting. Phillips and most of his men were killed. This killing is what is referred to in some books as the Bini Massacre of 1897.

Expectedly, the British used this development as the excuse for the conquest of Bini and its absorption into the British empire. Oba Ovonramwen himself anticipated the British reprisal and carried out human sacrifices to win the support of the gods. Despite this, however, the British invasion which lasted from February 10-17 (1897) resulted in total victory for the invaders though the defence or resistance was heroic. The result was adverse for Bini. She was burnt down, captured, looted and Oba Ovonramwen after six months of hiding, surrendered himself to the British, and was given a trial in September, convicted and deported to Calabar. He was to die there in 1914. Bini's political independence ended though the dynasty which produced Obas continued. Therefore, despite internal problems the real collapse of Bini by the end of the nineteenth century was caused principally by British imperial onslaught. It also explains why Oba Ovonramwen was the last ruler of an independent Bini.

Economic situation

As with the political situation, Bini's economic development during most of the nineteenth century was uncomfortable in a number of ways. But to appreciate the adverse circumstances, we have to follow events as they happened because it took some time before certain features assumed final forms. The first point to mention in this connection is the well known fact that the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade and attendant promotion of legitimate trade (in

products like palm oil and palm kernels) had significant impact on economic development in southern Nigeria, including Bini during the nineteenth century.

Bini's economy was dependent in varying degrees on agriculture, crafts and trade. Trade was both internal and external. External trading relations existed between Bini and her neighbours, notably, the Yoruba, the Itsekiri and the Nupe. Additionally, Bini, both directly and indirectly, engaged in commercial relations with the Europeans, with the British occupying the dominant position by the nineteenth century. Though other aspects of the economy were important, yet by the beginning of the nineteenth century, commerce had occupied a central position in Bini's development. This was particularly true of commercial relations with Bini's neighbours and the Europeans. These relations were characterised by difficulties as the nineteenth century drew on. These difficulties were partly responsible for the decline in Bini's economic development in the century.

Briefly, the difficulties experienced by Bini were among others the adverse effects the Yoruba wars had on the economy of Bini. Initially Bini gained from the war situation in Yorubaland by selling arms and ammunition to some of the parties or groups. But with time, the total impact of the Yoruba wars was adverse on Bini economic development. This was because the insecurity which came with the wars made on-going trade between the Yoruba and the Bini uninviting. The overland route between Bini and the Yoruba country was unsafe resulting in fewer people engaging in business on the route. Trade through the route thus diminished. Both the people and their monarch as a result were deprived of the revenue usually derived from the trade. A notable decline was, for instance, noticed in Bini's trade in cloth which usually came from the Ijebu country.

Furthermore, the rise of Ibadan was to result in the reduction of territory under Bini control. Ibadan, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, established control over such territory which included Owo, Akure and Ekiti. Again, this meant loss of revenue for the monarchy.

The point about Nupe was that as a result of the jihad in the northern parts of Nigeria there was a disruption in her trade with Bini. Also, in seeking to carry the jihad to the southern parts of Nigeria, the Nupe carried out attacks on territories that used to be under Bini control. In this way, Nupe contributed to the shrinking of the Bini empire and attendant loss of revenue to the monarchy.

The Itsekiri portion of Bini's economic problems is closely connected with issues arising from the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade and new trends in commercial relations between Britain and

Nigeria. But before we discuss the situation any further, some important points deserve attention. Firstly, as the discussion already made in preceding paragraphs of this chapter would show, slaves were just one brand of commodity in the commercial relations between Britain or indeed Europe and Nigeria. Therefore the abolition of the slave trade did not have an automatic adverse impact on the economy of Bini.

Secondly, even abolition in practice was not automatic either. For about two decades, the trade continued on a small scale, particularly as it was always possible to evade the British anti-slave trade squadron through the several creeks of the Niger Delta.

Finally, there was the fact that the Bini did not respond to changing times passively. Quite early in the century, the Bini began to engage in legitimate trade, importing goods like guns and gun powder, salt and cloth. These were exchanged for palm oil and palm kernels, ivory and vegetable gums. To take meaningful part in this trade, the Bini traders grouped themselves into trading associations. These associations controlled trade in the hinterland and each operated in a different direction. Since the Oba was a member of each association, he protected their respective interests.

But these redeeming features could not save Bini from the adverse economic situation in which she found herself during the nineteenth century. Attention had already been drawn to some of the major causes of this economic adversity. Important as these factors were, perhaps the real factor which had overwhelming impact on Bini's economic fortunes in the century, particularly during the second-half, was the suppression of the overseas slave trade. The fact was that the measures and conditions resulting from the suppression of slave trade imposed harder economic constraints on Bini. In the light of the other constraints it is not surprising that Bini was unable to survive economically. Hence, though decline was gradual, it is right to talk of the nineteenth century as one in which Bini did not experience economic prosperity.

What part then did the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade play in Bini's economic decline? Firstly, Bini lost her favoured position in the trade between the hinterland and the coast to the Itsekiri and Urhobo. One way by which Britain attempted to achieve abolition was the stationing of a naval squadron along the coast. The squadron captured slavers and their ships and freed the slaves. The presence of the naval squadron in the coast of Nigeria resulted in a shift by European traders from the Forcados River to the Bini River which did not have the problem of shallow bars associated with the former. Ughoton, the port of Bini was too far from the mouth of Bini River and so became unattractive to ships. This, in practice, meant that

Bini trade suffered decline. Infact, it had to go all the way to the Bini River which was controlled by the Itsekiri. Thus the Oba of Bini was no longer in a position to dictate the terms of trade as he was able to do at Ughoton.

In addition, there was the movement of the Itsekiri trade to the Bini River which further helped to reduce the commercial value of Ughoton. Overall, Bini was too far from the new highway of commerce so that its involvement in trade meant reduced profits. There was also the fact that Bini could no longer receive duties that used to accrue to her from Ughoton. We can thus see that the situation which arose because of the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade contributed much to the economic decline in nineteenth century Bini. Yet, it must be clear from all that has been said so far that Bini's economic decline in the period was not due only to factors resulting from the suppression of the slave trade. There were two sides to the economic decline. There were internal factors such as those resulting from internal disturbances and external ones like those from Bini's neighbours and the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade.

Generally, therefore, the point made at the beginning of this chapter is confirmed by the developments narrated. It is the fact that the nineteenth century was one in which Bini experienced both economic and political decline and ultimately collapsed to an external aggressor, that is, the British.

Summary

1. Though Bini collapsed in the nineteenth century, evidence of decay was already clear by the end of the eighteenth century. That is, on the eve of the nineteenth century, Bini was already at an advanced stage of decline.
2. Some of the political causes of decline in the eighteenth century were
   a) intense struggle for succession to the Obaship
   b) civil wars due to succession disputes
   c) rebellion by vassal states seeking to gain back lost independence
   d) instability and weakening of the administration because of slave wars and raids.
3. Among the economic causes of decline in the eighteenth century Bini were
   a) the succession and slave wars which disrupted economic activities

b) the shrinking of the empire which caused loss of revenue
c) depopulation caused by the wars
d) the reduction in European use of Bini as a commercial base in preference to Fernando Po and Sao Tome
e) and the rise of Oyo which resulted in the use of Lagos and Badagry instead of Bini in trade between Yorubaland and the coast.

4. Because of the reasons stated in points 2 and 3 of this summary, Bini entered the nineteenth century in a very declining condition, both politically and economically.
5. But decline was not automatic and Bini's political system still existed at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
6. The survival of the political institutions and structures was useful to Bini largely because they helped the kingdom to exist despite the problems of the time.
7. On the other hand, their survival was a problem because they became the prize which all contenders to power sought and thus contributed to civil wars.
8. Four Obas ruled Bini between 1804 and 1897, namely,
   a) Oba Obanosa, 1804-1816.
   b) Oba Osemwede, 1816-1842
   c) Oba Adolo, 1848-1888
   d) Oba Ovonramwen 1888-1897
9. Oba Obanosa reigned for thirteen years and is usually remembered for
   a) sending his grey hair to his father to remind him that it was time he became the Oba
   b) defeating his rival, Osokpakharha of Ugbagwe
   c) increasing the empire by conquering Ute in Owo division.
10. Oba Osemwede came to power after defeating his brother and rival, Ogbebo, who had assumed office for eight months. Among the major achievements of Osemwede were
    a) the bringing of Akure and Ekiti under Bini control
    b) the efforts to revive the glory of Bini
    c) and the promotion of friendship with Ishan.
11. One important point about Oba Adolo is the fact that he was tolerant towards his opponents. He was industrious and promoted the development of markets.
12. Oba Ovonramwen succeeded Oba Adolo. His period was notable for
    a) he did not fight his way to office though he had enemies whom he killed

b) he was Bini's Oba during the age of the scramble. Because he refused to yield to British economic and political pressures, his kingdom was invaded in 1897
c) Britain's pretext for the invasion of Bini was the so-called Bini Massacre.

13. Just as Bini had political problems, she also had economic ones due to internal and external factors. But the greatest source of economic decline came from the British in their attempts to consolidate their economic hold in that part of Nigeria. The methods the British used to achieve this purpose put Bini at a disadvantage which she was unable to evercome.
14. Therefore, Bini did not experience prosperity in the nineteenth century both politically and economically. She lost her independence to the British in 1897.

Questions

Essay

1. Account for the decline of Bini by the beginning of the nineteenth century.
2. Describe Bini's political organisation in the nineteenth century.
3. Account for the nature and effects of political developments in Bini during the nineteenth century.
4. What were the political and economic effects of the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade on nineteenth century Bini?
5. Why and how did Britain conquer Bini towards the end of the nineteenth century?

Multiple-choice

1. The Oba who first ruled Bini in the nineenth century was
   A. Ewuare the Great
   B. Osemwede
   C. Adolo
   D. Obanosa
   C. Ogbebo
2. A major cause of political instability in nineteenth century Bini was the
   A. long reign of rulers
   B. failure to appease the gods

C. Nupe raids
D. succession disputes
E. autocracy of rulers

3. One of the chief effects of the abolition of the slave trade on Bini was
   A. depopulation
   B. downfall of Ughoton as a commercial centre
   C. automatic collapse of the empire
   D. Bini's control of the palm oil trade
   E. increase in Bini's coastal trade
4. The British invaded Bini in 1897 because they wanted
   A. to end human sacrifice
   B. to control the trade of the hinterland
   C. Ovonramwen to learn the art of government
   D. to avenge Consul Phillips death
   E. to prove that Bini was a backward kingdom
5. The ruler of Bini at the time of the British invasion was
   A. killed
   B. deported
   C. detained
   D. pardoned
   E. given a hero's burial

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Chapter 6 The Niger Delta states in the nineteenth century

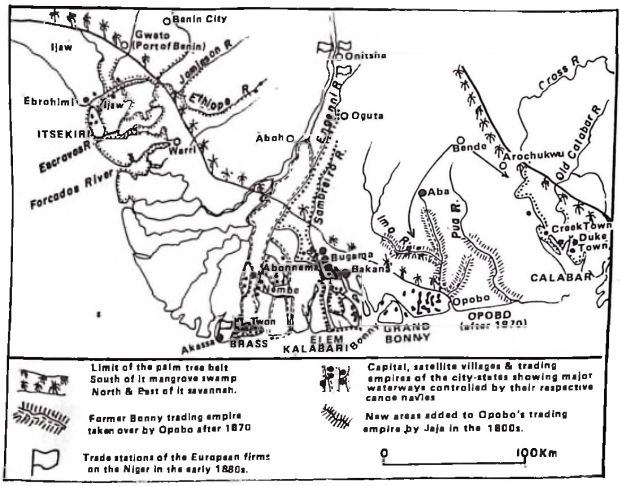
Introduction

The nineteenth century ushered in a significant change in the social, economic and political development of the Niger Delta states. This chapter discusses how this came about. It indicates how new pressures resulting mainly from the abolition of the slave trade and subsequent introduction of 'legitimate' or palm oil trade affected the Niger Delta societies during the century. In this sense, the factors of change in the Niger Delta during the nineteenth century were basically similar to those in Bini in the same period. In order to place the discussion in proper perspective, the following background information on the Niger Delta states is necessary.

Organisation of the Niger Delta states

Geographically, the Niger Delta states lie in the area between the estuaries of the Bini River to the west and of the Cross River east of the Niger. They occupy a land area of over 28,000 square kilometres with much of it made up of saltwater swamps while the rest comprise freshwater swamps. As at 1800, the first year of the nineteenth century, five city-states were at the centre of developments in the Niger Delta. They were Itsekiri to the west; Brass, Elem Kalabari and Grand Bonny to the east and also Calabar at the mouth of the Cross and Calabar Rivers. Later in the century, Opobo at the mouth of the Imo River also became an important centre of development.

Because of their location at the coast, the Niger Delta states were the first places to have contact with European visitors from the late fifteenth century onwards. Consequently, they acted as the middlemen between European traders and Nigerian groups in the



The Niger Delta in the mid-nineteenth century

hinterland both before and during the nineteenth century. It was in this way that the Niger Delta region became a major slave trading area such that by the eighteenth century it had become the largest slave exporting centre in West Africa with Bonny in the lead. In addition to linking the peoples of the Niger Delta with Europeans, the slave trade also linked them with Nigerian peoples in the hinterland, particularly the Igbo whom they exploited to promote their wealth and power.

The slave trade had both socio-economic and political impacts on the Delta states. The ruler or the king - the *Amanyanabo* of Bonny for instance - became richer and more powerful. He derived much revenue from customs duties paid by Europeans. Socially the ethnic make-up of the Delta area became mixed up as some of the slaves were not exported to Europe. They were retained for domestic purposes and ultimately increased the population of the Delta states.

In this way, and also in response to their environment, city-states emerged of which the notable ones were Warri, Sapele, Brass, Akassa, Twon, Nembe, Buguma, Abonnema, Bakana, Bonny, Creek Town, Henshaw Town and Duke Town. It is also important to stress that the growth in population was strengthened by persons from the hinterland who migrated (voluntarily) to the Delta area. This fact of voluntary migration did not however affect the pattern of contact either between the coastal peoples and the Europeans on the one hand or between both of them and the hinterland peoples on the other. Throughout the period before the nineteenth century, the coastal peoples retained their middlemen role in the trade between the hinterland peoples and the Europeans. Thus there was no direct dealing between those two. That is, slaves were passed on to the coastal people from the hinterland for sale to the Europeans. Similarly, European goods reached the hinterland peoples through the coastal peoples. There was no breach of this pattern either by the coastal peoples or by the Europeans.

Generally, there was much interdependence in the relations between both parties such that the rulers of the Niger Delta provided protection for the European visitors. What this pattern of relations shows is that Euro-Nigerian relations in the Delta area prior to the nineteenth century did not destroy the political sovereignty of the states in the area. By the beginning of that century, the rulers of the Delta states were very much in control of their states despite the European contacts. In short, the relations between both parties remained largely even.

The House system

Although the rulers of the Delta states were very much in control of their states by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the European presence had some significant political impact on the area. This impact, was however, very much dependent on the peoples initiative. It was not imposed by visitors. It was rather borne out of the peoples response to the challenges posed by the slave trade. The fact was that the addition of new members in the Delta states demanded some adjustment in the preexisting method of administration. This was a major reason for the emergence of the House system in the Delta area. What was this system and how did it operate? Only the main features are highlighted here to provide some background for an appreciation of the change that came in the nineteenth century.

The House system was the basis of social and political organisation in the Delta city-states. It developed largely as a response of the Delta states, especially those between the Niger Delta proper and the estuary of the Cross River, to exploit the slave trade effectively. Each city-state developed Houses. Each House was a trading or business organisation and still served as a unit of political organisation. As a social organisation its primary emphasis was ability in trade and politics. Yet one could be a member due to birth. One could also join voluntarily. A very common method of recruitment was, however, through enslavement. Even when a slave was conscripted into a House, he was so thoroughly assimilated that he could, if he had the energy and business talent, rise to become the head of the House.

Heads of Houses formed the Advisory Council which was presided over by the king of the city-state. Each head of a House maintained law and order in his area of jurisdiction. All heads of Houses, as members of the Advisory Council, acted as a check on the king of the city-state. But the king exercised diverse powers over the Houses and in this way had them under control. The powers included settling disputes between Houses; the confirmation of the election of new heads of Houses; the control of foreign affairs like war, peace and commercial relations such as that with the Europeans. Each House had its trading empire where its citizens enjoyed a monopoly of trade. The trading empire was made up of all the hinterland markets under the House's control. The prestige of a House depended upon the number of war canoes it could put at the disposal of the city-state at war time. Each House had at least one war canoe. In fact, most Houses in Bonny had ten or more canoes each.

While each House had a head, every city-state had a royal family such as the Pepples of Bonny, the Amakiris of Kalabari and the Mingis of Brass. Just as each House had a three-layer social structure so was the city-state made up of three sections. The House consisted of the royal princes at the top, freeborn commoners and those slaves who could not be sold outside the House were in the middle, while slaves who could be sold out where at the bottom. For the city-state there was the capital from which the state derived its name. Then there was a cluster of towns and villages which included the ports, like Ifoko in the case of Kalabari. Thirdly, there was the trading empire which usually extended along navigable rivers.

From this section, we can see that the House system was at the centre of social, economic and political organisation in the Niger Delta states at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As we will further see in the subsequent paragraphs, the system like other

aspects of the Delta society, came under severe stress during the nineteenth century primarily because of issues that had to do with the abolition of the slave trade, the promotion of 'legitimate' trade and resultant British pressures. Overall, the nineteenth century was to introduce major economic and political changes in the Delta states and by the end of the century the states had, like Bini, collapsed to British invaders.

The palm oil trade

In 1807, the slave trade was abolished. Britain replaced it with the legitimate trade which in the Delta was mainly the palm oil trade. Naturally, the rulers and merchants of the Delta states did not take to the new trade. In the first place, they were not party to the British decision to end the slave trade. Secondly, the future of the palm oil trade was uncertain. Thirdly, the new trade required facilities which they lacked—they needed capital for example. They also lacked adequate canoes and other means of transportation as well as manpower. In the face of these difficulties and also because other Europeans continued to engage in the slave trade, the palm oil trade existed side by side with the slave trade up to the 1830s and 1840s in most of the Delta states. In fact, up to the 1850s, a few slavers still visited the Delta region.

The British reacted to these situations in various ways. To tackle the issue of capital, the palm oil trade depended on the trust or credit system which involved European or British merchants in advancing goods on trust to House heads. These in turn gave the goods out to their buying agents in the hinterland of the Delta area. While the system served to lessen the problem of lack of capital it raised other problems for all those concerned with the palm oil trade in the Delta states. It enabled the British (and other European) merchants to attempt trade monopoly by getting the Delta traders too indebted to seek alternative avenues for their oil. It also stimulated unhealthy rivalry among the Delta traders as they struggled to establish their credit worthiness. Furthermore, there were disagreements over prices between the British merchants and the Delta traders. While the former bargained prices according to the prevailing situation in Europe the Delta did so in keeping with their own circumstances. Despite these limitations, both parties depended on the trust system to organise the palm oil trade.

On the issue of continuing slave trading, the British answer was the stationing of a naval squadron which intercepted slavers and their ships and had slaves freed.

The developments described here indicate that the efforts to establish the Delta area as an effective region for palm oil trade had consequences for the evolution and character of the Delta society. These consequences are subsequently examined under the following headings.

The phenomenon of commercial rivalry, 1807-1856

The trust system did not only stimulate friction it also sustained commercial rivalry. This was one reason why it was not given up by any of the parties involved in the palm oil trade. For example, when a new firm arrived and found that all House heads were under trust to the old firms, it usually broke the monopoly by offering better prices or more liberal terms of trust. The older firms usually intervened and forcibly seized the oil bought by the new firms. The Delta king then declared a trade boycott until the dispute was settled.

In the period between 1830 and 1850, when twelve Liverpool firms bought oil in Bonny, the demand and price of oil were on steady increase. Thereafter the situation changed because of two factors. The regular steamship service which started in 1852 increased the number of European traders so much that some could not afford to own their own ships. There was the entry of Lagos, Brass and Itsekiri as major exporters to the existing centres in Bonny, Kalabari and Calabar. And as if these were not enough to cause price falls, the city-states continued to expand their trading empires and thus incurred more costs at a time prices were on the decline.

In these circumstances, commercial rivalry was bitter at various levels: among African Houses; between city-states over trading empires; between Delta Houses and European firms; and between European firms themselves. In 1855 and 1857 respectively the attempt by the Efik of Calabar to ship their oil directly to Europe (that is, without passing through the English middlemen) was thwarted by threats of bombardment by the British naval unit. Internally, Nembe traders who expanded northeastwards in the Oguta lake region and into the Ọrashi River clashed with traders from the state of Elem Kalabari. Elem Kalabari also clashed with Bonny as both engaged in expansion in the southern section of this trade area. Then in the western Delta, commercial rivalry was in part responsible for the hostile relations which developed between Bini and the Itsekiri since the fortunes of the trade in palm oil went more to the Itsekiri than to Bini. Also in 1870, the establishment of Opobo by Jaja stirred up commercial rivalry between that state and Bonny, resulting in serious economic or commercial decline for the latter.

The rise of 'new men' and the crisis in the Delta states

Another crucial feature of the palm oil trade was the fact that it created circumstances which encouraged the rise of 'new men' or indeed the slaves and the commoners in the Delta society. As is well known, the slave trade was in many ways the trade of the ruling classes. Palm oil trade in this regard was different. Its emphasis on talent in trade meant that social upliftment could take place without reliance on royalty or descent. As the trade developed, it was the slaves who became the greatest trading agents. Therefore heads of Houses in the Delta had to depend much on the trading abilities of their slaves. By the 1840s, a good number of the slaves had become very wealthy and were seeking social status commensurate with their wealth. While this was the case, it is also true that it was still easier for the sons of the rich men to rise in the Delta society both in terms of wealth and power. Therefore as a group, the slaves still faced their age old prejudices in the Delta society. They were the ones who could be victims of human sacrifice for various purposes. But they had become more incorporated in the society and had acquired new wealth to such a level that it was no longer easy to neglect their feelings about the ordering of the Delta states without bitter consequences. Therefore, the slaves had emerged as 'new men' in the Delta society. This brought some crises in places like Calabar, Bonny, Kalabari and Warri.

Crisis in Calabar

Calabar, even before 1807, had begun to organise for the trade in palm oil by establishing plantations. The slaves who worked on the plantations had acquired some wealth yet they were still victims of human sacrifice and oppression by the ruling sections of the Ekpe society. They thus desired social justice and not political power. This was their situation when the missionaries came to Calabar in 1846, preaching against human sacrifice and making the leading rulers of the Efik society, namely, Eyamba V and King Eyo Honesty II, sign agreements to that purpose.

In response to this development, the slaves formed a movement designated the Order of Blood Men, with the undertaking to resist human sacrifice and other forms of oppression. Though the emergence of the movement was in some degree made possible by the presence of the missionaries, yet, the signing of the anti-human sacrifice agreement by Eyamba V and Honesty II as well as their accommodation of the Order of Blood Men confirms that developments associated with the palm oil trade were already af-

fecting the powers and authority of the rulers of the Delta states. A few of the actions of the Order of Blood Men in the 1850s confirm this. In 1851 when the Ekpe society arrested some slaves, thousands of Blood Men rose and threatened to destroy Calabar. At the death of King Archibong I in 1852, the Blood Men rose to prevent the use of their type for funeral rites. Then in 1857 when a freeborn killed his slave, the Blood Men succeeded in getting the offender delivered up to justice. The social revolution involved in all these developments is quite obvious. It was in general an attempt to compel the nobility to govern for the welfare of all groups or classes in Calabar.

Crisis in Bonny

Bonny was ruled by Opubu the Great from 1792 to 1830. He was able to keep Bonny united. He was succeeded by a minor, William Dappa Pepple. So, a regent, Madu, who was a slave of the royal House as well as head of the Anna Pepple House to which Opubu belonged, was appointed. But Madu died, to be succeeded as regent by his own son, Alali, in 1833. In 1835, William Dappa Pepple became king, having attained maturity. The new king was resentful of the prominent position the slave class occupied. He was thus anxious to have full powers for himself. So when in 1836, the British navy violated Bonny's territorial waters by seizing a Spanish slave ship without authorisation, an opportunity arose. Alali, the ex-regent, ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Tyron, captain of the British gunboat, and other British subjects. The British faced with this challenge, threatened with more gunboats and also got the support of Dappa Pepple who in his bid to do away with Alali and his supporters, successfully persuaded the British to get Alali to sign his own deposition in addition to other agreements which virtually made the British the overlords in Bonny. But Dappa Pepple had misfired because his subsequent attempts to build up his power at the expense of both the British and Alali failed. Alali continued to grow in political power and absorbed more Houses into the Anna Pepple group.

In 1854, the cooperation between Britain and Dappa Pepple crashed because the latter seized a British merchant ship in lieu of payments owed him. Dappa Pepple was deposed and deported by a proclamation signed by Alali and his supporters on the one hand and the British consul on the other. Civil war followed between Alali's supporters and those of the deported king. Alali won and so became the real power in Grand Bonny.

But the British who were aware that Alali resented their privileged position in Bonny did not support his rule- Instead they stood for a regency of four. This was clearly against the wishes of the people. Confusion and chaos followed and the British merchants called for the return of Dappa Pepple.

Dappa Pepple returned in 1861 but only as a shadow of his father, Opubu the Great. The British needed a king with absolute powers over his subjects and who would do their will. Meanwhile, the civil war which followed the return of Dappa had shown that the real centres of power in Bonny lay with Anna Pepple House under Alali and Manilla Pepple House under Oko)umbo. "Significantly, the two men belonged to the 'new men' class created by the palm oil trade. However, having failed in his bid to prevent the return of Dappa Pepple, Alali fled from Bonny and died shortly after. He was succeeded in the leadership of his group by another of the 'new men , the reputed Jaja who indeed was a purchased lgbo slave. The division and tension continued so much that in 1869, Jaja and his supporters left Bonny and established at Opobo the following year. Opobo emerged a great factor in the decline of Bonny in the subsequent years. But Jaja was later to fall out with the Br.'ish as he sought to protect the trade and sovereignty of Opobo.

The point to stress here is that the 'new men', creatures of situations associated with the palm oil trade, had by the end of the nineteenth century become crucial factors of social and even political change in the Delta states.

Collapse of the Niger Delta states

The ultimate consequence of the palm oil trade on the Delta states was fatal- All the states fell to the British imperial forces by the end of the nineteenth century. The collapse of the states followed a number of stages and certain internal circumstances which the British duly exploited. These circumstances are examined under the following headings.

Commercial penetration

The interest to establish commerce in 'legitimate' trade meant that commercial penetration prepared the way for the conquest of the Delta city-states. This was the background to what some books call the 'commercial wars, 1856-1886' in the Delta area. But even before

this, one significant step taken by the British to control and promote their commercial presence in the Delta-city states was the appointment of consuls. The consuls were appointed in response to complaints from British and other European firms in the region. As the British attempted to push the frontiers of commerce into the area, various problems arose over subjects like the trust system, disagreements over prices, quarrels between the visitors and the Delta rulers, and even the calibre of the European merchants. All these made the appointment of consuls necessary from the point of view of the British. The first of such consuls was John Beecroft who was appointed in 1849 for the Bights of Benin and Biafra. He supervised British trading concerns in the area. For all practical purposes, the consuls were the forerunners of the leaders of the military expeditions that overran the Delta city-states later in the nineteenth century.

Courts of Equity

There was a quasi-judicial approach to the consolidation of British commercial penetration in the Niger Delta states. The outward expression of this by way of an institution was the establishment of the so-called Courts of Equity. On the surface the Courts of Equity were to settle disputes between European and African traders or between Europeans themselves. The consul was the chairman of the court and the first to be established was at Bonny in 1854. Other such courts were established in subsequent years like that of Calabar in 1856 and others at Akassa, Old Calabar, Brass, Bini River and Opobo much later. Much has been said on the advantages and disadvantages of the courts with reference to both the British and the Delta peoples. For example, it is stated that those who contravened the courts regulations were fined; offenders who refused to pay their fines were subjected to trade boycott and that they helped in the regulation of the payment of 'comey' to the Delta rulers.

While these might be true, it must be stressed that the courts were established primarily to help provide conditions that would promote British commercial penetration of the Delta city-states. It was infact not a court of justice which was why a man like Alali refused to attend it or even to honour its orders. The Courts of Equity constituted in the nineteenth century another means of engaging in commercial war with the Delta states.

Commercial war (1856-1886)

One other result of the palm oil trade was that the British intensified their efforts to reach the hinterland of Nigeria. This was the

main reason for the zeal with which the exploration to discover how the Niger entered the sea was carried out. The attempts yielded fruit in 1830 when the Lander brothers 'discovered' that the Delta was the mouth of the River Niger. Indeed, following on the 'discovery' and related efforts, the British established trading stations in the hinterland of the Delta, primarily in areas around the Niger. Some of these areas were Aboh, Onitsha and Lokoja which lay behind the trading empire of Brass. Gradually but intensely by 1878, four British firms were trading on the Niger.

Firms previously in the Delta began to transfer to the Niger because of the relatively cheaper price of oil there. By this time the ground was already set for the commercial war for the control of the hinterland trade. In fact on the Niger there was a price war between the British and French firms, African traders from Lagos and Freetown, and Brass and Kalabari traders. It was in these circumstances that an Englishman, George Goldie, amalgamated the British firms as the United Africa Company and secured about one hundred trading stations, manned by gun boats. Soon the French firms were priced out so that only Lagos and Brass traders remained to challenge the monopoly which the Royal Charter of 1868 gave to the company which also was renamed, the Royal Niger Company. Clearly, by the late 1880s, the Delta city-states had lost the control of the hinterland trade to the British and were increasingly even losing that of their own states. Their refusal to, as it were, accept this economic suicide meant that the British were to take more steps to establish their commercial hegemony in the area. This, of course, implied complete subjugation of the states over which the British had declared the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1885.

Trade Treaties and eventual collapse

British last attempts to establish control over the Delta states were influenced markedly by the atmosphere of the Age of Scramble in the 1880s. Like other European powers, Britain was eager in these years to establish firm control over her areas of 'effective occupation'. One of the measures taken to make this possible was the signing of treaties with the rulers of African states. These so-called Trade Treaties or Treaties of Protection invariably contained provisions or clauses that later caused disagreements between both parties and thus became ready pretexts for British invasion and colonisation of the territories.

In the Delta area, the state of Calabar signed such a treaty with the British in 1889. This meant that from that date the Efik formally became part of the Niger Coast or Oil Rivers Protectorate. Calabar

also became the headquarters of the Niger Coast Protectorate. The background to this event had been indicated and so the fall of Calabar in the 1880s was not a total surprise. Calabar's efforts to amend the treaty was an indication that the rulers did not quite realise that they were signing off their sovereignty.

The situation in Jaja's Opobo was, however, more violent. Jaja signed the Treaty of Protection in 1884, excluding the clause on free trade. Jaja also resisted attempts by the British to secure a trade monopoly in the area. It was clear that only force could decide whose will would prevail in the area under Jaja's influence. In 1887, the consul invited Jaja to a meeting with an assurance that he was safe. Jaja attended the meeting, but the consul threatened to bombard Opobo if Jaja returned to it. Jaja did not. Instead he left with the consul for Accra where he was said to have been 'tried' and then deported to the West Indies. Jaja died in 1891. He was given a hero's burial with the corpse buried within the palace. The British take over of yet another Delta state was thus accomplished.

The defeat of Jaja meant that the British had removed their real major worry in the eastern Delta. In the next few years, they took Bonny and Kalabari, both of which prefered not to give the type of resistance Opobo under Jaja had given. In the rest of the eastern Delta, only Brass whose trading empire came under serious attacks by the agents of the Royal Niger Company took firm and violent steps to resist British hegemony. The Brassmen undertook a raid of the Company's station at Akassa in 1895. A naval force of the Niger Coast Protectorate was despatched and Brass fell, after fierce fighting, to the British. The fall of the eastern Delta states was thus complete.

Meanwhile, earlier in 1894, the British had invaded Itsekiriland where Nana was the leader of the anti-British movement. In 1885 Nana signed the Treaty of Protection with the British though he rejected the clause which was to allow the British traders to do business anywhere in his empire. Fully aware of Jaja's experience, Nana refused to attend to an invitation from the British consul. In 1894, Ebrohimi, Nana's capital, was successfully bombarded. The resistance was stiff but the British had arms advantage and so had the victory. Nana surrendered to the British and was deported to Accra. He lived there till 1906 when he returned, only to die ten years later.

In general, it is clear that the Niger Delta states faced severe economic and political changes in the nineteenth century due mainly to British efforts to replace the slave trade with trade in palm oil. This effort provoked both internal and external pressures that even-

tually made it possible for the British to make the states part of their empire by the end of the nineteenth century.

At this point it is necessary to briefly talk about three persons whose lives reflect some of the key features raised in the history of the Delta, and who also played distinguished roles in the developments discussed in the chapter. They are John Beecroft, a British consul; Jaja of Opobo and Nana Olomu of Itsekiriland, both heroes of the resistance to foreign intervention and control.

John Beecroft

John Beecroft, appointed British consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra in 1849 and who was born in 1790, was not new to West Africa. His career in the sub-region began in 1827 at Fernando Po which was then occupied by the British for anti-slave trade naval operations. He was appointed Governor of the Island in 1843 by the Spanish. He was well travelled in the west coast, including the Niger up to Idah, Bini River and Nupe, all in Nigeria. It is thus evident that Beecroft was already very familiar with issues in European or indeed British relations with Nigeria before his appointment. Furthermore, his character was such that suited the appointment. He was a firm believer in the use of force or the threat of it for the furtherance of British interests. He was determined to promote the cause of his fellow traders. In brief, he was a full believer in what came to be called 'Gunboat Politics' which meant that where the people could not be persuaded to do the British bidding, then they should be forced to do so. He was indeed a typical example of the then new British attitude which emphasised from about 1808 that 'might is right'. It was a man with these sentiments that Nigerian coastal peoples had to deal with as consul from the 1850s onwards.

Beecroft understood his mission very clearly and proceeded to extend British influence in the coast and hinterland in a number of ways. His first and foremost duty was to protect British traders even if this demanded intervention in the internal affairs of Nigerian states. Bonny provided him his first opportunity. Following the complaints of some traders to him to the effect that the king had stopped all trade as a consequence of the non-payment of compensation promised him, Beecroft promptly visited Bonny in a man-of-war and ordered the king to go on board to settle the trouble between him and the European traders. Though the king, Pepple did not succumb to the order, Beecroft was actually trying to show that the authority was with him and not with the king.

Also, when King Archibong of Old Calabar died in 1852, Beecroft presided over the election of a successor. Generally, he pursued a

policy of removing rulers who had the guts to try to protect the sovereignty and independence of their states. Victims of this policy included William Dappa Pepple of Bonny; Kosoko of Lagos and Oritsetsaninomi of Bobi in Itsekiriland.

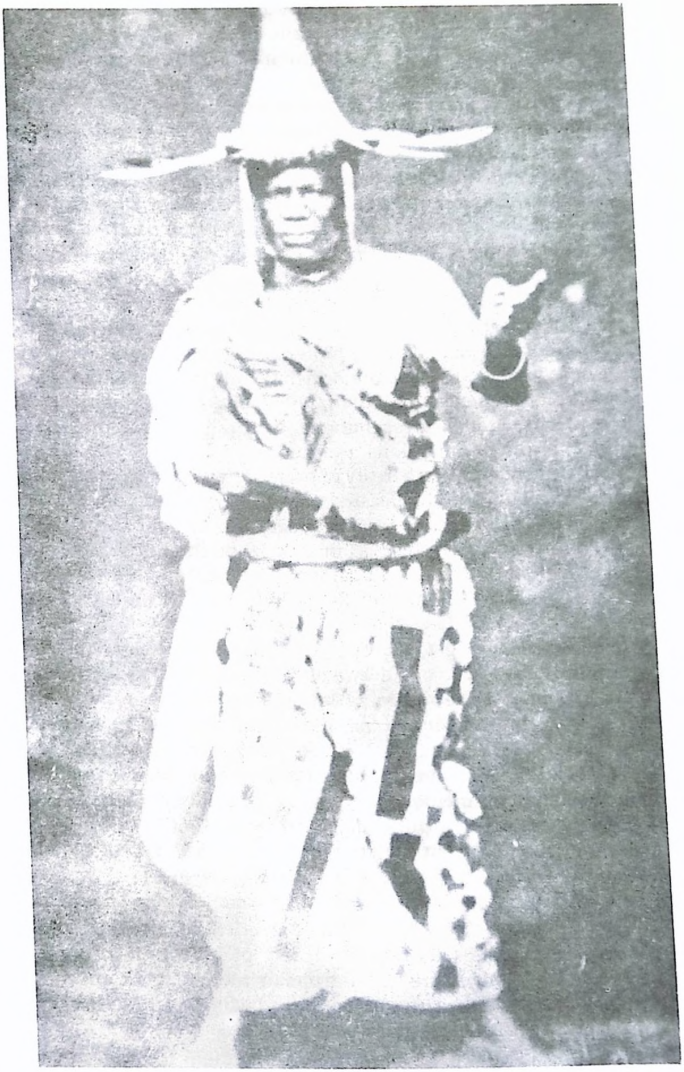
He dealt with those he considered threats to British penetration of the coast in two ways. He applied judicial measures against them since he was also the chairman of the Court of Equity. He also used the gunboat to establish that 'might is right' in that phase of Anglo-Nigerian relations.

By these measures he prepared the ground for British penetration of the Delta states and their hinterland. He gave the people of the Delta a foretaste of what a colonial governor was like. By his multifaceted role as trader, explorer and empire-builder, Beecroft was indeed the one who pushed British influence into the Delta districts to a level that in subsequent decades helped Britain to asset the right of 'effective occupation' over the territory and its neighbourhood. This forerunner of British rule in Nigeria died in 1854.

Jaja of Opobo

Jaja who came to found Opobo was a slave boy sold to a Bonny chief trader. His family home or place of birth was Amaigbo in the Orlu area of Igboland. He was born in 1821. Details of how he became a slave differ much. What is certain is that he finally got to Bonny as a slave from outside. Slaves in this category usually constituted the lowest section of Bonny society. Jaja who has been described as 'head strong' was soon to find that the Bonny society was one in which slave status did not constitute a permanent social handicap especially for the hardworking. With this it became possible for Jaja to win high regard in Bonny society as he proved a talented and successful trader. The regard was so much that in 1863 when the headship of the Anna Pepple House to which he was attached became vacant, he was unanimously elected to it. This was how Jaja the slave-boy became a crucial factor in Bonny politics. This was the first dramatic achievement of his life in Bonny.

The Bonny society had for long been characterised by intense rivalries. Indeed, shortly after Jaja became head of the Anna Pepple House, the rivalry turned into a conflict between Jaja's House and the Manilla Pepple House led by Oko Jumbo, another able and ruthless politician who had the support of the then declining family of the Amanyanabo of Bonny. The conflict resulted in a civil war in 1869. Jaja was not ready to fight. With his supporters he withdrew to the Andoni area to found Opobo named after king Opubu.



Jaja of Opobo

Jaja's Opobo soon controlled the major part of the hinterland markets thereby reducing drastically Bonny's trading area. Jaja's business talent proved very helpful in this. But equally important was the fact that he used his familiarity with the mainly Igbo speaking hinterland to good advantage and had good relations with Ibibio and Annang oil suppliers. The result was that he soon exercised considerable monopoly of trade in the hinterland of what was then called the Oil Rivers Protectorate. As a person, he became the wealthiest African trader in the area while Opobo rather than Bonny became the centre for European coastal trade in palm oil. In short, Jaja and Opobo became so firmly established and also commercially important to the British that on 4 January 1873, the British Government recognised Jaja as the King of Opobo.

But the recognition did not mean that Jaja supported British ambitions in the Delta and in the hinterland. In fact, the ambitions of Jaja ran counter to those of the British. While Jaja wanted to control and direct commercial activity in Opobo and in the hinterland, the British desired to take over that role. Naturally, therefore, Jaja was suspect of British intentions and hence for long refused, despite British demands, to sign a treaty of protection with the British. When he eventually did so, he insisted on a full explanation of the term 'protection' and stressed that the treaty did not imply the loss of Opobo's sovereignty. This was in 1884 when the European scramble for African territories had gathered momentum and was being executed with little regard for the will of the African leaders and peoples.

Jaja, not belonging to Europe, was unaware of this situation. However, he was all along aware of the fact that the British would want to take over the control of commercial activity in his area of authority. This was why he insisted on his own interpretation of the Treaty of 1884. But the British for economic reasons and also because of the fear of other European powers (notably the Germans in neighbouring Cameroon) were ready for a decisive action in the Oil Rivers area which included Jaja's area of operation. Understandably therefore, when in 1885 the British declared a 'protectorate' over the Oil Rivers, they took measures to overcome Jaja's opposition to what they called 'free trade' but which in practice meant British commercial intervention in Jaja's area. As Jaja had suspected, the British began to claim that the Treaty of 1884 implied that he (Jaja) could no longer prevent European merchants from doing business directly with African traders in Jaja's Opobo and in the hinterland.

Jaja's opposition to British efforts to implement this interpretation of the Treaty was resolute. The British then began full anti-Jaja

tactics including character assassination. British traders and Harry Johnston, the acting consul, accused Jaja of terrorism against his people and of plotting to sell his territory to the French. But Jaja continued to enjoy the loyalty of his people. Britain then employed treachery and force. This was done by Harry Johnston who in 1887 wrote to Jaja inviting him to the British warship with the promise that he would not be detained. Jaja who still thought that there was honour in his relations with the British attended the meeting. The treachery was successful. In the warship he was asked to choose between his deportation and the bombardment of Opobo. He chose deportation. The British deported him to the West Indies.

The demand for his return remained active in Opobo just as his pressures against the oppressors continued even while in exile. When in 1891 the British decided to bring him back to Opobo, and began to do so, Jaja who must have been exhausted died on the way home. His corpse was returned. In the words of one historian, 'his people showed their love for him by paying the cost of having his body repatriated, and by giving him a royal funeral'. Clearly, Jaja, the victim of British imperial activities in the Delta and in the hinterland in the age of the scramble, deserved the honour.

Nana Olomu

Nana, son of Olomu, was born in Itsekiriland at a place called Jakpa in the northwestern extremity of the Niger Delta in 1852. He was born only four years after 1848 when the king or *Olu* of the Itsekiri died and the kingdom entered a period of interregnum which lasted up to 1936. His father, Olomu, was a wealthy trader who was the Governor of the Bini River from 1879 to 1883 when he died. Olomu left his whole wealth to his son, Nana. His failure to divide his wealth among all his sons, as was the custom, created enemies for Nana especially among other Itsekiri traders. Contributory to this was also the fact that Nana practised near monopoly of trade in the Ethiope and Warri Rivers.

Nana having inherited both his father's wealth and power took further steps to strengthen them. The Itsekiri capital, Ebrohimi, where he lived was well fortified. This was a reflection of the fact that in the time when he lived, wealth and power went very much together. Wealth was then measured in terms of war canoes and slaves. Nana was infact believed to be the most powerful Itsekiri of his day. What this indicates is that he had an uncommon armoury and a fleet of fighters. A rather exaggerated source claims that Nana could gather together 20,000 war canoes and over 200 trade canoes. Briefly we shall just say that Nana had enormous power to defend

his wealth. His power made it possible for him to exercise monopoly of trade in the Ethiope and Warri Rivers.

But the crucial thing to note is that Nana was not the type that would allow outsiders or foreigners dictate the ordering of affairs for his people. In this he very much reflected the will of his people. This was why despite grumblings against monopoly of trade, he became a rallying point for their opposition to British incursions during the 1880s. Therefore, the impression left in some European writings that Nana was attacked because of alleged terrorism against his people can only be seen as a pretext for conquering not just Nana but also Itsekiriland.

Indeed, like Jaja, Nana's power was an obstacle to British expansion into the western Delta and the hinterland. And, it must be stressed that he became Governor of the Bini River at an extremely difficult time. This was the time of the scramble when European powers tried to carve out spheres of influence in Africa. The problems which Nana faced were primarily determined by the factor of the scramble. The British interference in the internal affairs of the Delta increased after 1884 just because of the scramble. Nana encounted problems, bombardment and exile because he resented the British interference.

Nana actually signed a treaty with the British in 1884. But again like Jaja, he and his people refused to accept an article which provided for 'free trade' or the right of the citizens of all countries to trade where they pleased. Nana's refusal was natural and justified. Back home in Britain, the British were not doing business on terms which empowered 'the citizens of all countries to trade where they pleased'. The invention of this particular commercial spirit in the Delta, including Nana's territory, was clearly fraudulent and mischievous. Nana recognised this fact and opposed the British. The result was a worsening relations between British traders and authorities and Nana. He was accused of the usual offences: opposition to free trade; terrorism and promotion of slave trade.

Nana took measures to promote honourable relations with the ·itish but the British were eager to do away with his middleman ole in the commerce of the western Delta. The British decision to get Nana removed was final. He was summoned to a meeting which he refused to attend, fully aware of Jaja's fate in a similar meeting with the British. Ebrohimi, his capital, was attacked. Nana and his men gave gallant resistance. His opponents represented in Dogho and other areas, sided with the British, giving them much needed information as well as men and materials to facilitate the expedition against Nana. This fact and Britain's military superiority enabled the British to defeat Nana. That was in 1894. Nana was deported

first to Calabar and later to Accra. He lived in exile till 1906 when he returned and died ten years later. Nana, like Jaja, was clearly a great name in the efforts of the Delta people to stop the march of British imperialism into his territory and its hinterland in the age of the scramble.

Summary

1. The Niger Delta states at the beginning of the nineteenth century still held very much unto the social, economic and political institutions which sustained their communities over the previous decades.
2. Britain's decision to stop the slave trade from 1807 onwards raised problems which destabilised the Delta states so much that by the end of the century they were all victims of British imperial onslaught.
3. British measures to abolish the slave trade produced some social and economic consequences on the Delta states. Among them were the
   a) rise of the 'new men' who influenced developments
   b) struggle for influence and authority between the 'new men' and the ruling houses
   c) intensification of British efforts to penetrate the commerce of the hinterland
   d) conflict between Europeans and Nigerians over matters relating to trade
   e) increasing contact between Nigerians and Europeans resulting in clash of social values and practices.
4. Some of the political consequences of the abolition of slave trade on the Delta people were the
   a unauthorised use of British naval force on Nigerian waters
   b fact that might replaced right in relations between the people and the British
   c intervention in the people's judicial process as through the Courts of Equity
   d) forceful efforts by British merchants and officials to decide the political and economic life of the communities
   e) struggle for control of territories between Delta leaders and the British resulting in the military subjugation of the former.
5. One of the first ways in which the British tried to secure their presence in the Delta and the entire coast of Nigeria was the appointment of a consul.
6. Among the leaders who opposed British efforts to control the

trade of the Delta and hinterland in the nineteenth century were Jaja of Opobo and Nana of Itsekiriland.

7. By the 1880s, the British were completely resolved to establish their control over the Delta states and the hinterland. This was in keeping with the demand of the Age of Scramble. Therefore, the various excuses they gave for invading the Delta leaders and their states were mere pretexts.
8. The continuing effort to replace the slave trade with the palm oil trade throughout the century was also a reflection of British determination to achieve commercial penetration in the Delta and in the hinterland.
9. Therefore, the collapse of the Niger Delta states by the end of the nineteenth century was due principally to pressures arising from Britain's desire to establish their influence in the area.

Questions

Essay

1. Describe the social and political situation in the Niger Delta states at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
2. How did the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade affect economic and political development in nineteenth century Itsekiriland?
3. Account for the rise and fall of Jaja of Opobo.
4. What factors, both internal and external, contributed to the collapse of Bonny in the nineteenth century?
5. Write short notes on Nana Olomu and John Beecroft.

Multiple-choice

1. The House system in the Niger Delta states promoted the
   A. slave trade
   B. British economic penetration
   C. social and political development
   D. political ambitions of freed slaves
   E. mutual relations with Europeans
2. Britain abolished the slave trade in 1807 in order to
   A. end the evil associated with it
   B. engage in palm oil trade
   C. respond to humanitarian appeals
   D. have a free hand to fight local dealers
   E. allow for Christian missionary activities

3. An important consequence of the introduction of legitimate trade on nineteenth century Niger Delta states was the
   A. total abolition of domestic slavery
   B. appreciation of humane virtues by the people
   C. gradual British penetration of the region
   D. expulsion of exploitation in economic relations
   E. acceptance of foreign rule by the people
4. Which of these was the leader of the resistance to British invasion of the western Delta?
   A. Nana Olomu
   B. William Dappa Pepple
   C. Jaja of Opobo
   D. Oko Jumbo
   E. Eyo Honesty II
5. The major reason for the collapse of the Niger Delta states in the nineteenth century was the
   A. dictatorship of the rulers
   B. docile attitude of the people
   C. British gun-boat tactics
   D. lack of realism on the part of the rulers
   E. division among the states

Further reading

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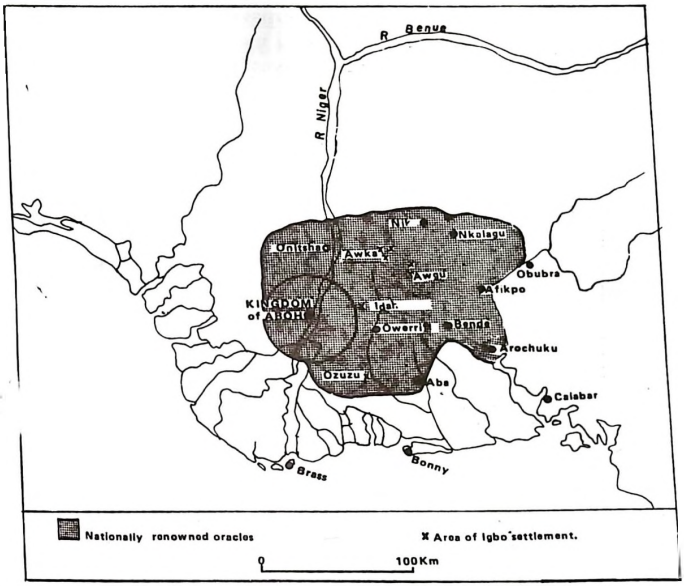
Chapter 7 Igboland in the nineteenth century

Introduction

In this chapter, we shall examine some of the main aspects of life in Igboland in the nineteenth century. They are warfare; the place of the Aro, and European penetration. The examination would show the extent to which internal and external factors affected historical developments in Igboland during the century. Igboland is that part of Nigeria inhabited by the Igbo-speaking people. It is in the forest belt area and lies between the Cross River east of the Niger and Bini west of the Niger, and between the Igala in the north and the Niger Delta states in the south. At the time of writing, the majority of the inhabitants (or the Igbo) are in the Anambra and Imo states of Nigeria. The rest live in Ahoada area of the Rivers state and the Asaba, Ika, Ukwuani (Kwale) and Aboh areas of Bendel state. They are among the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, having an estimated population of fifteen million. The exact date or dates of Igbo settlement in the areas they inhabit is uncertain. Yet, it is certain that the settlement had been on thousands of years before the nineteenth century. For instance, archaeological evidence, notably that of Thurstan Shaw, confirms that settlement was already on by the ninth century A.D.

Warfare

In traditions relating to the nineteenth century Igboland, we find that warfare is very prominent, thus giving the impression that peace eluded the Igbo communities for most of the period. But as we shall soon discover in a subsequent paragraph, this was not the case. It is, however, true that the society had more extensive wars during the period probably because of increased use of firearms. It has also been rightly suggested that the wars of the century are the best remembered, being the last before the British invasion and rule. Furthermore, wars are usually dramatic events and tend to endure for



Igboland in the nineteenth century

long in people's memories. Continuous references to them without comparable references to other humane activities often give an exaggerated picture of warfare in society. This is what the traditions have done to Igboland in the nineteenth century. Then there was the fact of British invasion and subsequent rule. The British officials and other persons who carried out the conquest of Igboland had, for various reasons, helped to perpetuate the exaggerated picture of warfare. Among other reasons they did so in order to justify their conquest of the land. With these remarks in mind, we now go on with the examination of the causes, organisation and results or effects of warfare in Igboland during the nineteenth century.

Causes of warfare

The circumstances which caused war in Igboland in the nineteenth century were very much like those which did so in earlier centuries.

Thus, as in the past, some wars were due to economic factors. For example, the failure or refusal of groups or individuals to pay their debts led the creditors to use forceful means to recover the debts. A notable measure in this connection was 'panyarring' or the seizure or kidnapping of the relation or relations of the debtors by the creditor. Victims of 'panyarring' were promptly sold unless their relations took equally prompt steps to redeem them by paying the debts. Quite often, the relations of the victims also took quick action by invading the territory of the creditor. In this way, what was originally inter-personal crisis developed into inter-group crisis and ultimately war.

Land disputes also caused warfare in Igboland though the degree varied. Indeed as the nineteenth century drew on and population pressures increased, land disputes became more regular causes of warfare in the society. The case of Obibi in the Owerri area which is already recorded was typical of most of Igboland in the period.

Furthermore, some wars were due to commercial disagreements between persons from opposing groups or communities. The point was that such disagreements at times led to fatal scuffles between the parties concerned. Relations of the victim usually rose to the occasion by attacking the group or community to which the other party belonged. The outcome usually was war between the two or more communities. This was how commercial disagreements caused war in nineteenth century Igboland.

Religion also caused war in Igboland. Each Igbo village community was associated with a divinity or god which saw to its welfare and security. Thus the divinities were believed to be the 'soul' of the respective villages. Consequently, there was a shrine or place of worship for each divinity. Any desecration of the shrines by raiders from the neighbouring villages usually created serious tension in relations. The first expectation was that the raiders would perform the necessary ritual for the appeasement of the gods. Where the raider failed to do so, the village whose shrine was desecrated usually took action against the village of the raiders. Given the kinship factor in the Igbo communities, the resulting war usually became an affair of the villages concerned. There were such wars in parts of Etiti and Mbano in the Okigwe area in the nineteenth century.

Marriage was another cause of war in the Igbo society. Disagreements arising from disturbed or unstable marriages often created circumstances which led whole communities to engage in wars against themselves. For instance, if a woman involved in serious quarrels with her husband ran back permanently to her maiden home, custom demanded that the affected husband should be com-

pensated for any material loss he might have suffered. If this custom was not respected by those concerned, the other party usually resorted to the use of violent means to make up for their loss. The result was war between the villages to which both the man and the woman belonged.

Slave raids also caused war in the Igbo society. Communities which derived some wealth from slave trading often engaged in wars as a means of obtaining slaves. Wars due to this cause were carried out by the Aro of Arondizuogu against their neighbours. The Osomari of the Anambra valley also engaged in such wars up to the late nineteenth century.

Finally, we note that 'wars caused wars' in nineteenth century Igboland. This was because refugees from war-torn areas were expected to enjoy absolute immunity from harm in the villages in which they sojourned. Quite often, agents of the opposing party succeeded in harming or even killing such refugees in the places they settled. Once the village so humiliated identified the source of harm or murder, they usually went to war against the village in question. Thus, villages which were hitherto at peace with one another often went to war against themselves because of problems arising from the immunity due to war refugees.

Organisation of warfare

The first point to note is that there was no pan-Igbo military unit. Similarly, there was no standing or regular army in Igbo communities. Soldiers or troops were raised whenever the need arose. Though entry into the army was voluntary, every community at war expected all able-bodied male adults to take part in the fighting. Since all wars were seen as wars of survival for the respective villages, qualified persons who declined joining the army were seen as saboteurs of the common will to survive. Generally, therefore, though in theory enlistment in the army was voluntary, in practice, it was compulsory even though conscription was not part of the military organisation.

Since there was no regular army, there was no regular village or community armoury. Similarly, military training was largely ad hoc, involving mainly training in accurate marksmanship. There was also a religious or magical aspect of the training or preparation for war. The fighters or soldiers of each village at war usually engaged the services of reputed *dibia* or medicinemen who gave them protective charms. Such charms were to achieve effects like rendering the enemy mentally disordered; making the enemy's aim off-target; and

preventing bullets from enemy guns from reaching the soldier. Also the priests offered necessary sacrifices to the gods for their support. A celebrated example was the case of one Item village group which invited a whole clan of distinguished dibia from Okposi to live with them and offer their services during wars. As it happened, the group became permanently assimilated in the village group.

The actual fighting was directed by leaders who had various dialectical titles in Igboland. Respective leaders of respective fighting units coordinated their activities. Fighting involved constant ambushes and close range attacks. The element of surprise featured so much in the attacks that on the surface, the fighting looked very much like guerrilla warfare. Usually, fighting took place during the day but night sessions also obtained.

Weapons of war included those derived from stone and wood which were probably the earliest weapons to be used in Igbo society. Among the weapons derived from wood were clubs, bows and arrows, shield, and wooden spikes. There were also weapons derived from metal such as knives or machetes, spears, guns and spikes which were generally manufactured in Igboland, particularly at Awka.

By the 1890s, Schneider rifles and revolvers were in use. They came mainly from European firms and their agents. It should, however, be noted that the spread of guns was limited. Guns were expensive and so only those who had the means could buy them. Thus, though an increasing number of people continued to own guns as the nineteenth century progressed, machetes and the other weapons were still the predominant ones in Igbo warfare throughout the century. In addition, the distribution of weapons, especially the guns, was not even. Groups like the Abam, Edda and Ohaffia as well as the Awka had more of them than other Igbo groups. Even so, the distribution was still restricted so that the larger section of their population still relied on weapons other than the gun in their warfare.

Warfare in Igboland was not seen as a fight to a finish. Generally, there were deliberate efforts on the part of warring parties to reduce the casualty rate, particularly because one usual condition for ending wars was that the number of heads must be equal for the parties. Also, women and children were not harmed and quite often played key roles in efforts to end wars among communities. The point being stressed is that the sanctity of human life was still respected even during wars in nineteenth century Igboland. However, there were two factors which made it difficult to achieve the respect for human life during war. One had to do with the war culture which regarded fighters who returned with enemy skulls

as heroes. The 'enemy skull' was thus a kind of trophy which proved the fighter's valour and won for him different types of honour. This culture was remarkably encouraged among the Cross River communities. The other was the fact that some Igbo groups developed an uncommon love for military glory and so encouraged their fighters to return with enemy heads. The Ohaffia, Abam and Edda groups had this attitude to war. This was a major reason why the Aro easily made use of them in some of their wars. In fact, Edda's attacks on Aguleri in 1891 and 1892 were examples of warfare carried out for the sake of military glory. The Ezza, Izzi and Ikwo of northeastern Igboland also engaged in similar wars.

While these exceptions were real, it is still important to stress that generally the Igbo exercised great restraint during wars so that the casualty rate was kept as low as possible. In fact, other Igbo communities saw the situation in places like Ohaffia, Edda, Abam and Ezza as departures from what was expected during wars between groups.

During wars, neighbouring villages usually mediated to bring back peace between those concerned. Operating through the priests, dibia, wives (especially daughters from the villages at war) and sons-in-law, the mediators quite often succeeded in their mission. In some cases, the parties were made to enter into blood covenants agreeing to keep to peaceful relations thereafter. It is crucial to stress that hardly were peace settlements broken by any of the parties.

Finally, it should be noted that warfare did not mean a break in the commercial, marital and other relations between the warring groups. The relations persisted. Commercial relations were on whenever hostilities were halted, both day and night. Each group respected the market and religious festival days of the other. On the whole, therefore, the organisation of warfare in nineteenth century Igboland rested on strong codes which were very much respected by all parties concerned.

Effects of warfare

Warfare in nineteenth century Igboland did not produce a state of anarchy or lawlessness. The main reason for this was the spirit of warfare. In the first place, warfare was not organised on an extensive scale or for very long periods. Thus, the social and political institutions which made for law and order in Igbo communities were able to sustain the society despite the wars. Also, since there was considerable restraint in the killing of enemies, the wars did not mean attempts to subdue opponents to non-existence.

Consequently, though the wars caused loss of life and property, destruction of farms, disruption of commercial activities and promotion of unhealthy tensions among communities, these adverse effects did not produce extremely disastrous impact on political stability in the land by the end of the nineteenth century. For example, they did not result in any widespread use of the gun in Igbo communities. Similarly, militarism did not become an important factor of social and political change in Igboland at any time throughout the century. On the whole, the emphasis in the Igbo society was more on peaceful and nonviolent relations than on the opposite during the nineteenth century. It is largely because Igbo communities still enjoyed considerable stability despite warfare in the period that they were able in general to give protected and very stiff resistance to the British invaders in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

The Aro

The Aro are the Igbo group whose homeland or state is called Arochukwu. They inhabit the extreme southeast of Igboland and occupy a prominent place in Igbo history, both before and during the nineteenth century. Aro's prominence in Igbo history is well deserved. The Aro in fact exercised considerable 'hegemony' or 'influence' over the rest of Igboland even before and during the nineteenth century. We shall examine the main features of Aro influence in the period. Also, we shall see how the Aro began to experience decline and ultimate collapse from the second half of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth.

Firstly the area of Aro influence. It was extensive, covering the whole of Igboland and Ibibioland as well as parts of Igala, Idoma and Tiv territories; the Cameroon border and the Niger Delta coastal states. The influence, however, was more intensive; thorough and direct in Igboland and Ibibioland. In all places, Aro influence or hegemony was in varying degrees, commercial, religious and somewhat judicial. The political influence was not important since the Aro did not establish an empire and so had no administrative and other structures for exercising any meaningful political control of the area over which they exercised influence.

The religious and judicial influence was due to the Aro ownership of the famous oracle called *Ibini Ukpabi* (popularised as the Long Juju by Europeans) of Arochukwu. The oracle was seen by the other Igbo as Chukwu or supreme deity. In places in Igboland and

Ibibioland where Aro traders were physically involved in trading and slaving activities, the influence of Ibini Ukpabi was very intensive. In these places and beyond, the oracle was reputed for its impartiality and supernatural knowledge of events. The reputation was well deserved since the agents of the oracle were Aro traders who resided in the communities that consulted the oracle. These agents recommended the oracle to persons or groups (communities or villages) that were in dispute, guided them to Arochukwu and even provided them with accommodation. Furthermore, they also secretly provided the priests of the oracle with necessary background information on the disputes in question. Consequently, the oracle's pronouncements or decisions often showed intimate knowledge of the issues at stake. Thus the parties concerned believed in the supernatural capacity of the oracle and acclaimed its impartiality. Of course, because of this, Aro influence was so intensive that the privileged position of Aro traders who served as the oracle's agents was preserved in the Ibibio and Igbo communities. As it thus happened, the Ibini Ukpabi became the 'court of appeal to which serious internal and inter-group disputes were referred'.

Other factors also contributed to the strengthening of the oracle's influence. One was the use of military force or fines by the Aro to ensure that the parties carried out the oracle's decisions. In the case of military force, the Aro employed the services of the military units from Abam and Ohaffia. The fine involved the giving of slaves which were believed to be sacrificed to the oracle but which in actual fact were sold. The other factor had to do with the people's view of the oracle. It was seen as a supernatural agency that helped barren women to become fertile and also as the one that helped them to discuss with their loved ancestors. This view of the oracle greatly enhanced its hold on Igboland and the rest of the former eastern Nigeria.

Commercial or trading influence

So far, we have discussed the extent of Aro religious and judicial influence which centred principally on the oracle or Ibini Ukpabi. In this section, we shall examine the commercial or trading influence of the Aro. In this connection, it should be noted that Aro trading influence covered the whole area mentioned earlier — the rest of Igboland, Ibibioland, parts of Igala, Idoma and Tiv territories; the Cameroon border and the coastal states of the Niger Delta. However, the influence varied in intensity.

The point must, however, be stressed that the Aro established a trading system or network which pervaded mainly most of Igboland and Ibibioland and still had commercial connections with other places.

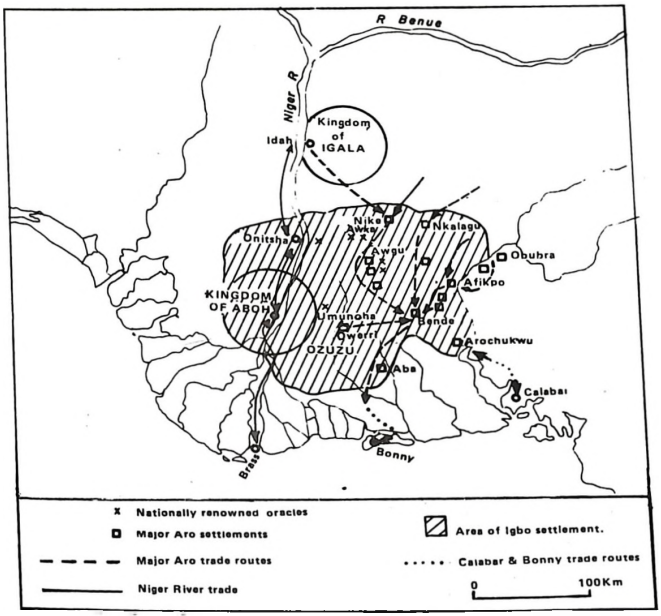
Before and during the nineteenth century, the Aro held a monopoly of the sale of slaves to traders of the Delta city-states, particularly of Bonny and Calabar. They received firearms from the coast and used the firearms to equip the military units from Abam and Ohaffia who served the Aro more or less as paid soldiers or soldiers of fortune. Their involvement in the slave trade was so thorough or pervasive that their commercial regime has been described as the Aro slaving oligarchy. To sustain this oligarchy, the Aro depended very much on the protection offered by their Abam and Ohaffia soldiers of fortune.

Furthermore, they engaged in extensive movements into other places, establishing trading colonies or settlements which numbered about ninety-eight. They followed three trade routes to the north, all of which converged at Bende where there was a central market. From this central market, slaves were marched to the city-states of the Niger Delta especially Bonny which became the largest slave trading centre on the coast. The colonies helped them to win local agents for their trade and oracle. In this way they were able to dominate the trade of the local markets, playing a central role in the procurring of slaves and the distribution of imports from the coast.

There is also the fact that the oracle played a key role in the development of Aro commercial hegemony in another way. Though the majority of slaves were not recruited through the trade routes, yet the fact that the Aro were associated with the oracle increased the safety and freedom which they enjoyed in the areas in which they operated. In this way, the oracle played a crucial role in the Aro trading or commercial system.

Another source of strength for Aro commercial hegemony had to do with the diplomatic and overall public relations which the Aro planted in their host communities. They maintained excellent relations with host communities and were not too exclusive. For instance, energetic and enterprising non-Aro were allowed to participate in the trade for and on behalf of the Aro. The result was that the Aro hardly took any direct part in slave raiding.

Similarly, the Aro did not intrude too much in the political or governmental affairs of their host communities. They did not seek to establish any political empire. Their involvement in the politics or administration of the communities was only to the extent that they found desirable for the promotion of their trade. Their lack of



Trading systems of nineteenth century Igboland

involvement in the politics of these communities meant that they were saved from the strife and war such an involvement would have caused. With political stability, their commercial hegemony was able to endure.

Closely related to the above was the fact that the Aro, both at home (Arochukwu) and abroad, were united so that the necessary cooperation that made trading possible was exploited to the advantage of Aro commercial hegemony. Throughout their interaction with other peoples, the Aro never engaged in any internal rivalry or competition. The result was that ambitious persons or groups in their host communities had no way of dividing the Aro against themselves. Instead they cooperated with them almost on their (Aro) terms in the commercial relations.

Finally, we add that perhaps the greatest support for the Aro trading system was their regular monthly trade fairs. The Aro succeeded in getting permission for such fairs at Bende (up to 1896 when

it was transferred to Uzoakoli), Uburu and Okposi. From these fairs which the Aro controlled, they were able to maintain easy flow of commerce, (notably, trade in slaves) with Igbo and other groups in southeastern Nigeria.

All these were the main aspects of Aro commercial hegemony in nineteenth century Igboland. One of the effects of this commercial hegemony on the people was that slaving encouraged insecurity since raids and kidnapping were on the increase. Secondly, new commodities and firearms were introduced in Igboland and elsewhere. These features and effects remained stiff in Aro commercial activity in southeastern Nigeria before and during most of the nineteenth century.

Decline of Aro influence

By the end of the nineteenth century, Aro influence faced serious attack and experienced decline. The decline became prominent from about the 1850s onwards while collapse came as a result of the British invasion of Arochukwu between 1901 and 1902. The background to this situation dates back to 1807 when Britain abolished the slave trade. Initially, because of her location, Arochukwu was not all that affected by the activities of the naval squadron which the British employed to attack slavers in the coastal areas of Nigeria. Even, the fact of abolition only meant a reduction in the number of slaves sold out to Europe or America. While this increased the population of domestic slaves in Igboland and Niger Delta states, it also, with time, meant a reduction in the wealth realised from the wasteful trade. Then there was the fact of the palm oil trade which replaced the trade in slaves, as approved by the British. As shown in chapter six, the attempt to promote the palm oil trade created circumstances which the British utilised to invade Nigerian communities, including Jaja's Opobo.

Following the fall of Opobo, the British decided to get further into the hinterland. That hinterland was Igboland and the immediate Igbo group were the Aro of Arochukwu. For long, the British had erroneously believed that the Aro exercised political and other controls over the rest of Igboland. It was therefore their hope that if Arochukwu was conquered then the rest of Igboland would just collapse to British control. So from the late 1890s, they became determined to invade Arochukwu. Approaches to the Aro showed that the Aro were not ready to tolerate or accept British meddling in their affairs. For instance, in 1896 two British officials visited Bende to discuss 'free trade and the abolition of slavery' with Aro represen-

tatives. The discussion broke down because the interpreter had asked the Aro delegates to remove their hats as a sign of respect for the British officials. The Aro saw this as an insult, refused and one of them spoke their collective feeling when he declared:

> The white men may have come by the sun, they may have come by the moon, or they may have come through the clouds, but the sooner they went back from where they had come and remained there, the better.

The message was clear enough and the British concluded that the only answer to Aro opposition to British penetration of Igboland was military invasion. Therefore, before the revocation of the charter of the Royal Niger Company in 1899, it was decided that such an invasion should be carried out.

After adequate preparations and the invasion of places like Obohia and Ohuru, the British carried out the invasion and conquest of Arochukwu between November 1901 and March 1902. Aro resistance was stubborn and torturing to the British but as elsewhere in the territories between the coast and Arochukwu, the Aro did not have adequate answer to British superior weaponry. The result was victory for the British and defeat for Arochukwu including the destruction of the Ibini Ukpabi shrine. This was how the Aro commercial influence was destroyed following the decline which set in about the 1850s. It should, however, be stressed that the oracle was not, from the point of view of the people, destroyed because it was supernatural. Even so, the Aro never again enjoyed the kind of religious and commercial ascendancy which they had previously enjoyed. Obviously, by 1901-1902, the Aro slaving oligarchy had collapsed because of the circumstance indicated in this chapter.

European penetration of Igboland

The next major issue in Igbo history in the nineteenth century is the penetration of Igboland by the Europeans. In this section we shall discuss the causes, extent and results of the penetration. The immediate reason for penetration had to do with Britain's efforts to expand legitimate commerce to the hinterland of the Delta following the abolition of the slave trade. It was for this reason that Britain sponsored explorations to discover the course and mouth of the River Niger. This was achieved in 1830 through the successful exploration of Richard and John Lander in that year. Commercial and missionary agents soon began to penetrate the hinterland of

the Delta to which Igboland belongs. Even so and because of their earlier presence in the Nigerian coastal districts, the Europeans had three frontiers or points from which they approached Igboland, namely, the Cross River, the Delta and the Niger. Though they came in different capacities -- traders, missionaries and later invaders -- quite often they came together in the same ships carrying out common expeditions. But for clarity and easier appreciation of what happened, we will discuss penetration according to the respective groups, viz: missionary, commercial and imperial.

Missionary penetration

Two groups of reasons made missionary advance into Igboland necessary. One was due mainly to circumstances or developments in Europe. At that period in time there was a spirit of religious awakening with a corresponding zeal to spread the Christian gospel to Asia and Africa starting from the late eighteenth century to the nineteenth. This was the well known evangelical movement. At the humanitarian and moral level, the movement was against the slave trade. Thus the zeal to spread Christianity was seen as part of the effort to end the slave trade and spread civilisation. In addition, the missionaries were able to make necessary journeys because of the financial and technical (in terms of ships) support they had from European commercial firms who were eager to penetrate the hinterland of the Nigerian coast in order to promote commerce. These circumstances which applied to the whole of West Africa also applied to Igboland.

These constitute the first group of reasons for missionary advance in Igboland particularly after the expedition of the Lander Brothers. The other was due mainly to internal circumstances. The missions had been eager to enter Igboland from the sea coast but like their commercial colleagues they had encountered opposition from the Delta and Cross River middlemen. Furthermore, Igbo freed slaves in places like Sierra Leone had been pressing for the expansion of Christianity to Igboland. Thus we see that, from both the European and African angles, the desire to spread Christianity to Igboland was high.

Despite this desire, it was not a very easy affair for Christianity to enter Igboland. From both the Cross River and Delta frontiers, there was no significant entry of Christianity into Igboland for most of the nineteenth century. In effect, it was only from the Niger area that the first significant efforts to advance Christianity into Igboland

were made. The first effort was made in 1841 through the Niger Expedition which included two CMS Missionaries, namely, Rev. J.F. Schon and Samual Ajayi Crowther. Though the expedition did not result in the establishment of any mission station in Igboland, it was valuable for subsequent efforts. In the first place the treaty between representatives of the British Government and the then Chief of Aboh — Obi Ossai — granted freedom of worship to the representatives.

Secondly, Crowther used the occasion of the expedition to visit parts of the Niger bank territories and concluded that the area was conducive for evangelisation. In particular, Crowther noted the interest which Igbo residents at Fernando Po expressed over expanding Christianity to Igboland. But since the missions had to rely on the commercial firms to make their trips, it took quite sometime before the rewards of the information gathered in 1841 could be reaped.

Indeed, the next effort after 1841 to spread Christianity into Igboland was not made until 1857. It was by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) which established a mission station at Onitsha in that year. As in 1841, Crowther was a member of the expedition which came in the ship called the *Dayspring* in 1857. He was accompanied by Rev. J.C. Taylor (an Igbo freed slave who was previously ordained in Sierra Leone). The Onitsha station was placed under the charge of Rev. Taylor. In addition to building mission houses, Taylor also built a Boys' School and a Girls' School in Onitsha in 1858 and 1859 respectively. Crowther was appointed Bishop in 1864. This was evidence that the mission was growing.

One major advantage which the mission had at these initial years was the use of local persons in the evangelisation process. By the 1870s, therefore, additional mission stations were established at Osomari, Asaba and Alenson, all towns on the Niger. Also Onitsha Christians expanded Christianity to Obosi.

Though the CMS was the first to be established in the Igbo area around the Niger, they were not the only Christian group or mission to operate in the area and the rest of Igboland. Among the others were two Catholic congregations, namely, the Society of African Missions who operated on the west bank with headquarters at Asaba and the Holy Ghost Fathers in the east, with headquarters at Onitsha. Though the Holy Ghost Fathers came to Onitsha in 1865, it was from December 1885 when Father Lutz arrived that solid foundation was laid for the Catholic Mission in the town. In that year, a catholic station was built on land donated by the then ruling Obi of Onitsha. Thereafter, the Catholic mission set up stations at Nkwelle in 1888 and in Aguleri in 1890.

Like the CMS, the Catholic mission did not go far beyond the Niger areas before the end of the nineteenth century. And, the entry of the Presbyterians who had been at Calabar since 1846 did not go beyond Unwana in the Afikpo area where they established a station in 1888. The other point to mention is that the CMS Niger Mission was taken over in 1892 by the Evangelicals but this did not change their area of occupation of Igboland. We can conclude therefore, that missionary presence in Igboland by the end of the nineteenth century was not very extensive, though the beginnings made in the period were very useful for the more rapid expansion that later took place in the twentieth century.

Effects of the missionary penetration

Many indigenes took to the Christian faith. While some were nominal Christians or christians who still continued to practise the new faith with the preexisting indigenous religion, a few were not. These few 'complete' or 'total' Christians quite often included those who suffered social injustice under indigenous conditions. Also some took to the Christian faith for mundane reasons, like establishing friendship with Europeans for the purpose of commerce. On the other hand, some were so involved in the new faith that they denounced indigenous practices like polygamy. A notable example was Chief Idigo of Aguleri who in 1890 dismissed all his wives except one and got baptised. Another result of Christian missionary work in nineteenth century Igboland was that it sowed the seeds of division between the new converts to Christianity and the adherents of traditional or indigenous religion. There was also the rivalry between European members of the Church hierarchy and their African or Nigerian counterparts. All these led to some confusion in religious ideas and practice in Igboland. On the whole though, the impact of Christianity in nineteenth century Igboland was far reaching, not only religiously but also socially and politically.

Commercial penetration

As was the case with the missionary activity, commercial penetration into Igboland did not follow directly after the exploration of the Lander Brothers. Some reasons explain this. There was the opposition of the Delta and coastal middlemen to European penetration of Igboland. The middlemen feared that such a penetration would lead to the loss of the profits which they made from the commercial relations between the Europeans at the coast and the Igbo

of the hinterland. This opposition made the Europeans take slow and cautious steps in their penetration programme. They carried out penetration at a pace in which their relationship with the coastal and Delta rulers was left intact in the interest of trade. Furthermore, just as the Europeans did not consider penetration commercially rewarding until about the 1870s so also did some Igbo find it financially difficult to take part. In the circumstances, penetration was delayed.

The first trading stations by European firms were not established in the Niger area until 1857 or twenty-seven years after the voyage of the Lander Brothers. The establishment which was sponsored by a Birkenhead ship builder called Macgregor Laird resulted in having trading factories or stations at Onitsha, Aboh and Oguta. Trading went on though slowly especially in the period up to the early 1870s. One cause of the slow development of trade was the death of Macgregor Laird. Another was the fact that trade in other com modities was low. However, by 1878, the situation had changed principally because European trading firms were compelled to focus more on the Nigerian trade in order to get goods (like cotton) which could not be got from America which was then involved in a civil war. The result was the expansion of commercial stations to include six other Niger Igbo towns including Oko, Asaba and Osomari. The British also entered into commercial treaties with rulers of the towns in which they did business.

Just as commercial penetration was delayed in the Niger Igbo area, so it was in southern Igboland or that part of Igboland sharing boundary with the Delta and other coastal peoples. The reasons for the delay were similar to those which caused the penetration to be delayed elsewhere in Igboland. For example, there was opposition from the Delta and coastal middlemen and there was uncertainty about profits to be derived on the part of the European firms. However, as is already stated in chapter six, by the 1880s, the European scramble for African territories had reached its peak. Respective Europeans were thus eager to establish their influence in different parts of the continent.

In the case of West Africa, the Nigeria area to which Igboland belongs was largely under British influence but the French and Germans were each seeking to establish and control the area. It was largely to prevent the French and German threats that the British began in the 1880s to sign protective and commercial treaties with Nigerian leaders and their communities. Hence, the Niger Igbo towns were made to sign such treaties from 1884 onwards. For similar reasons, the British wanted to penetrate Igboland also from the Delta. To achieve this, they first engaged in activities which led

to the fall of Jaja of Opobo in 1887. From Opobo they embarked on the commercial penetration of southern Igboland. As in the Niger Igbo area, they signed the so-called trade and protective treaties with some twenty-five Igbo towns in the area between Opobo and Aba including Obette and places near the Orashi River.

Further advance by the British into southern Igboland, however, received the stern opposition of the Aro. By an undertaking of 1899, the Aro were reported to have agreed to keep the peace which in practice meant that they had agreed to permit British commercial penetration and control of their area of influence. Later events showed that the Aro did not understand the undertaking in the way the British interpreted it. As already indicated in this chapter, the fact is that the Aro had become the main suppliers of palm produce to the coast and were making profits which they were not ready to lose. Hence, their opposition to the commercial penetration. Given the threat from other Europeans and British determination to establish firmly in the area, the use of force to settle the disagreement became an obvious choice for the British. Meanwhile, the Aro did not quite grasp this fact and since the British had also signed commercial treaties with other southern Igbo Chiefs, notably those of Ndoki, Ukwa and Ngwaland, Aro commercial hold of the area was fast slipping off to the British.

By the end of the nineteenth century, European (particularly British) commercial control of Igboland had gone very far. The effects were equally far reaching. Increasingly, Igboland became part of Britain. During the Berlin conference of 1884-1885, she claimed the area as one where she exercised effective occupation. Also, the commercial and overall economic orientation of Igboland came to depend very much on the products which European markets needed. This meant that products that had internal demand began to lose in value as the situation favoured those needed in the external trade with Europe. Furthermore, Britain's commercial penetration created situations of uneven commercial relations which were exactly to the disadvantage of the Igbo communities. The Igbo like their Niger Delta counterparts began to lose the control which they had previously exercised over commercial activities in their land. Finally, commercial penetration was the excuse the British had for signing treaties over which they and the Igbo chiefs disagreed very much over their meanings in later years. The disagreements themselves, provided the excuse for British invasion of Igboland in the last years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth century. Therefore, the ultimate effect of the commercial penetration was that it resulted in the successful conquest and annexation of Igboland by the British.

Invasion of Igboland

All through the nineteenth century, the Igbo, like other Nigerian peoples, were opposed to European take over of the control of the social, economic and political affairs of their land. Yet all that had taken place in terms of missionary and commercial penetration constituted clear European intervention in the ordering of affairs in their land.

By the late nineteenth century, because of reasons already mentioned in this chapter, the British were convinced that the use of force was necessary for them to achieve effective control of Igboland. This was why they carried out the invasion of various Igbo communities.

In southern Igboland, the first victim of this invasion was Arochukwu (1901-1902). Thereafter and indeed up to about 1918, various southern Igbo towns were invaded. Among them were Obegu, Umunneoha, Akwette, Ovoro, Bende and Owerri. Other military encounters resulting in the conquest of Igboland also took place in Udi, Okigwe, Afikpo and Abakaliki. The territories of the Niger Igbo towns were not spared. Asaba, Onitsha, Oguta, Osomari and Ogwashiuku were all invaded in the same period. Generally by 1904 most of Igboland had come under British control as a result of the successful military action by the British.

Resistance to the invasion

The Igbo, like their Niger Delta neigbours, resisted British invasion in various ways. Though they were ultimately defeated, they gave a stubborn and protracted resistance. Here, we identify the main features of the resistance.

Some Igbo towns resisted the British by meeting force with force. Among those who responded to the British invasion by fighting back with guns were the Aro, the Owerri, Udi, Abakaliki, Asaba and Agbor.

The Ekumeku movement of Asaba and the rest of western Igboland which lasted from 1898 to 1910 deserves special mention in this connection. It was a unique movement which involved several communities that were previously disunited. It was somewhat a 'mysterious' movement which relied very much on secret powers known only to the resisters. Their resistance involved guerilla tactics. The movement's resistance was both stiff and protracted. It tortured the British a great deal.

There were Igbo groups who did not resist militarily. Instead they tried to use diplomacy and tact to manipulate the British to their own advantage. Notable in this group were the Awka, Orlu and

Onitsha. Some also relied on the intervention of their gods and fervently hoped that the gods would ultimately drive the British away. Examples of these existed in parts of Bende and Okigwe divisions.

By the early period of the twentieth century, the British had succeeded in overrunning Igboland. The Igbo had problems which they could not overcome and which helped the British to succeed. There was no pan-Igbo resistance since all the Igbo peoples were never under one central authority. Closely related to this was the fact that each village or community put up resistance the way it thought fit, little realising that they were all being overrun piecemeal. There was also the fact of military inadequacy. That is, both in terms of arms and tactics the Igbo had no adequate answer to the British. This really was the greatest problem because it was solely responsible for the successful occupation of Igboland by the British. For instance, it was the main cause of the fall of the Aro of the western Igbo communities who operated under the banner of the Ekumeku movement.

Thus we see that the last major event in Igbo history in the nineteenth century was the European penetration and eventual occupation of the land. The nineteenth century was the century of Igboland's loss of sovereignty to an external force. Even so, it is clear from this chapter that the factors which determined social, economic and political developments in nineteenth century Igboland were both internal and external, peaceful and violent.

Summary

1. Warfare was a major issue in the development of Igboland in the nineteenth century
2. Two other major issues in nineteenth century Igboland were the Aro influence and the penetration of the Europeans.
3. Warfare had been on before the nineteenth century and was caused by commercial, social, economic and political factors.
4. Among the economic causes of warfare were land disputes, slave raids and disagreements over debts and prices.
5. The Aro of Arochukwu exercised considerable hegemony in Igboland during the nineteenth century. The hegemony was mainly commercial, religious and judicial.
6. To exercise their hegemony the Aro depended mainly on:
   a) their trading colonies

b) their good relations with host communities
c) their oracle and
d their unity.

7. Aro decline set in during the second half of the nineteenth century largely because of British measures to abolish the slave trade and introduce the so-called legitimate trade.
8. The Niger Igbo area covering places like Aboh and Onitsha was the first part of Igboland to experience European commercial and missionary penetration in the nineteenth century.
9. Both missionary and commercial penetration contributed to the eventual British invasion of Igboland between the late nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century.
10. Therefore, the nineteenth century was the century when increasing British influence in Igboland resulted in the invasion and annexation of the land by Britain.

Questions

Essay

1. Outline the causes and effects of warfare in nineteenth century Igboland.
2. Describe the technology and organisation of warfare in Igboland during the nineteenth century.
3. What were the effects of European missionary and commercial penetration of Igboland by the end of the nineteenth century.
4. Why and how did Arochukwu become part of the British empire?
5. Account for the failure of Igbo resistance to British invasion.

Multiple-choice

1. The Igbo engaged in warfare during the nineteenth century because of
   A. their usual love for military glory
   B. disputes over social, economic and political issues
   C. their lack of unity
   D. the fact that most adults were armed
2. One of the effects of warfare on Igbo society during the nineteenth century was

A. the establishment of Aro commercial and political hegemony
B. anarchy
C. the destruction of life and farms
D. the emergence of Abam and Ohaffia as strong military states

3. The first centre of missionary enterprise in Igboland in the nineteenth century was
A. Awka
B. Aguleri
C. Onitsha
D. Ogwashiukwu

4. Which was the first mission group to establish in nineteenth century Igboland?
A. Catholic mission
B. CMS.
C. Presbyterian
D. Methodists

5. The leader of Aboh when the Niger Expedition of 1841 took place was
A. Obi Okagbue
B. Obi Ossai
C. Chief Idigo
D. Obi Odisi

Britain's invasion of Arochukwu in 1901—1902 was aimed at
A. stopping the slave trade
B. promoting Christianity
C. putting an end to human sacrifice
D. imposing British control over the area

7. The Igbo lost to the British invaders largely because
A. they relied on their gods
B. Europeans cannot be conquered by Africans
C. they lacked the will to fight
D. of their inadequate military resources

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Chapter 8 Nigerian-European relations: explorers and missionaries

Introduction

There is a considerable amount of historical evidence to show that those who have inhabited Nigeria have had active relations with Europeans and others from abroad from earliest times. These contacts have taken political, economic, and social forms.

A particularly significant increase in relations between Nigeria and Europeans occurred during the nineteenth century when, as a result of internal changes, Europeans moved inland into Nigerian interior states and communities. Here they engaged in a more direct form of trade than had been practised earlier, thus diminishing to a great extent the prominent role middleman traders had enjoyed previously. It was not long before these foreign visitors began to influence the political lives of those they met in these new, interior locations.

Generally speaking, Europeans who came to Nigeria during the nineteenth century may be divided into three separate groups – explorers, missionaries, and traders.

The important European explorers — notably Mungo Park, Clapperton, and Henriech Barth — came mainly from Britain. Unlike their Portuguese predecessors who were content to limit their explorations to coastal regions of West Africa, these English adventurers focused on the Nigerian interior, especially along the Niger and Benue Rivers.

European missionaries enjoyed little success in the coastal regions of Nigeria during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The nineteenth century, however, marked an important turning point in religious crusading, when the missionaries began to widen their territory and move into the interior, creating an atmosphere of flourishing missionary work. These interior religious activities came in the wake of a Christian re-organisation which had occurred on the European and American continents during the

period immediately preceding the nineteenth century.

The third major group of Europeans to come to Nigeria during the nineteenth century, the traders, brought about great changes in commerce with the help of their Nigerian counterparts. With the abolition of the slave trade, 'legitimate' forms of commerce were established. Products indigenous to Nigeria—palm oil and kernel, for example — were exchanged for manufactured goods from Europe. Local traders, meanwhile, organised themselves into companies and firms which enjoyed both administrative and consular powers.

In this chapter we shall examine in some detail the various changes in relations between Nigeria and Europe which occurred during the nineteenth century, paying special attention to the crucial role played by European explorers, missionaries, and traders in bringing about these changes. The student will gain an appreciation of both the scope of these changes and the consequences which they brought upon the social, political, and economic life of the Nigerian peoples. The major concern of this chapter is on the explorers and the missionaries. We shall examine relations on trade in the next chapter.

The explorers

In Nigeria the suppression of the slave trade and the development of 'legitimate commerce' took place simultaneously. European — especially British — explorers played a key role in the opening up of the Nigerian interior to British trade. Prior to the nineteenth century, very little had been known about these interior regions since until then there had been no perceived need to move into the hinterland to trade with Nigerian peoples.

What were the objectives of these European adventurers who were determined to explore these inland regions previously untouched and unseen by foreigners? So far as it may be understood, their intentions were many and varied. Two considerations, however, are of primary importance. Firstly, it is known that some of these explorers were motivated by the desire for scientific knowledge. This motivational factor should not be exaggerated, though. Secondly, and perhaps most important, were strong economic factors at play: vested European business interests wanting to promote the course of trade in West Africa by exploring Nigerian inland waterways. Hence the early explorers focused their efforts on the exploration of the Niger River. As soon as the mouth of the Niger was discovered

and explorers began to use this waterway to explore further and further into the interior, results of their findings were regularly sent to British commercial enterprises. British companies and individual traders were quick to put to great advantage the benefits of these discoveries.

Major explorers and increasing knowledge of Nigeria in Europe

The key explorers during the nineteenth century who delved deeper and deeper into the Nigerian hinterland were of British and German descent. As has been noted, they were generally sponsored to serve the commercial or economic interests of individual business enterprises.

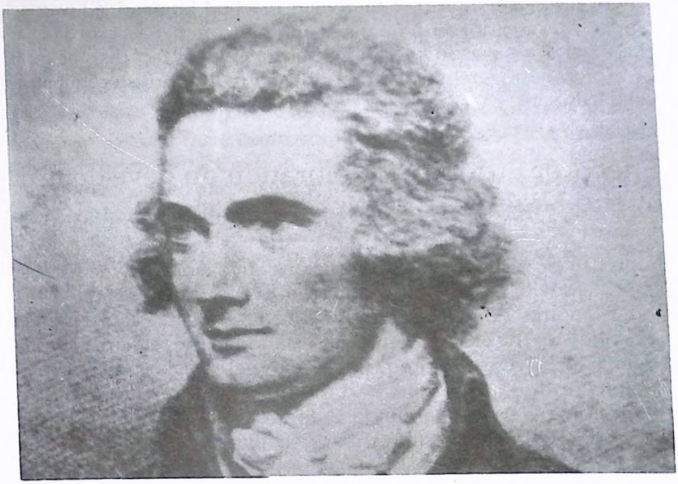
It is not surprising that it was the British who led in the race for the exploration of the Nigerian interior. After all, as the leading industrial nation in Europe, Britain, more than any other country, needed more markets for its manufactured products. She also needed more resource-rich territories from which to acquire cheap raw materials to feed its rapidly growing industries.

One particularly important British explorer was the Scotsman mentioned earlier, Mungo Park, who made two journeys into the West African interior. His efforts enabled Europe to know the direction in which the Niger flowed. Other explorers of note were Clapperton, the Lander brothers, and two German explorers, Barth and Baikie, who worked for British firms.

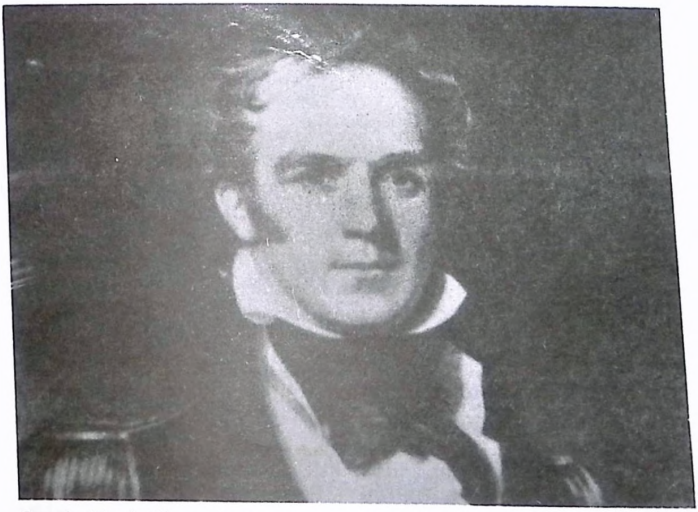
In 1820 Clapperton and another British explorer named Denham crossed from Tripoli and reached Lake Chad to the north of Nigeria. Three years later during their explorations they were received by the Shehu of Borno, al-Kanemi, and they visited Kano, a great commercial centre which was already well known for the trans-Saharan trade between North Africa and Europe. They also eventually reached Sokoto, the capital of the Sokoto caliphate, and other important northern Nigerian cities.

In 1830 the Lander brothers travelled overland from Badagry in the south to Bussa in the north. It was few years earlier that Mungo Park had met his death in the latter city. From Bussa they sailed down the Niger and through the Benue confluence until they reached Asaba. Late in 1830 they were taken as captives to Brass, located at the mouth of the Niger.

The exploration carried out by the Lander brothers was extremely important to their British backers, for soon after news of their



Mungo Park



Captain Hugh Clapperton

discovery of the mouth of the Niger reached England, a Liverpool trader, Macgregor Laird, financed another commercial expedition to the coast. This was in keeping with the evident fact that the gains of exploration were always first utilised by the British commercial establishment.

Effects of European exploration on development of the Niger

European exploration of interior regions of Nigeria, and the activities associated with that exploration, produced definite political, social, and economic effects. Politically, the effects that explorers had depended on the existing political situation in the regions along the Niger which were explored. Nigerians were suspicious of the intentions of these foreigners and therefore tried to curtail their influence on governmental life in their areas of operation. From the beginning they were certain that the explorers were motivated by practical political reasons and not simply by the desire to add to the storehouse of scientific knowledge about the region.

In northern Nigeria, Clapperton was pointedly asked by the rulers of Borno and Sokoto to explain the role which the rulers of Europe were trying to play in Christian Greece when Christian Europe was at the time ranged against the Ottoman rulers of Turkey. Muslim rulers everywhere, including those in Nigeria, were anxious to guard against the political and territorial ambitions of Christian Europe in Muslim territories.

Whatever the reservations Nigerian rulers had about the explorers, there were still many who were willing to use the foreign visitors to achieve their own political ends. The rulers of Borno, for example, sought guns from Clapperton and the Lander brothers in their pursuit of military support in Borno's wars against neighbouring states and kingdoms. And in the 1830s the rulers of Oyo made similar requests to the explorers for military and political assistance.

With respect to the socio-cultural sphere, the influence of the explorers was less significant. The visitors would praise the virtues and advantages of the European world, trying to persuade those Nigerians with whom they came in contact with to tailor their lives on a more European model. More often than not, this simply amused the Nigerians and they would make jokes about European customs such as monogamy. Nigerians — most of them, at least — chose to retain their long-held traditions and customs.

It was in the economic domain that the effect of exploration was

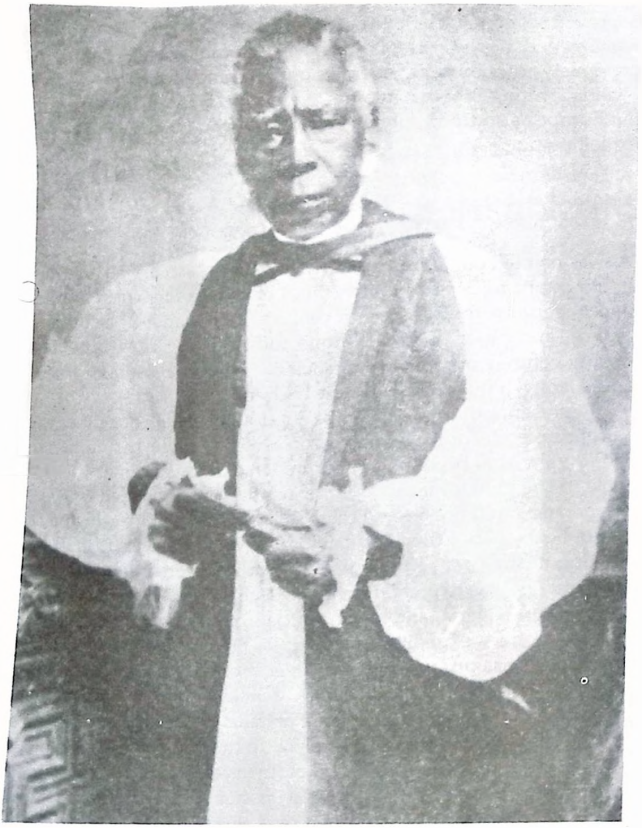
most keenly felt. The African Association established in 1788 was at least in theory geared to promote the process of scientific advancement in Africa. In practice, however, its real objective was to chart the courses of African waterways in order to further the economic exploitation of the interior regions. Through their voyages of discovery they prepared the way for Christian missionaries and the champions of legitimate trade, and by sometimes selling guns and other articles manufactured in Europe to Africans, they created in these buyers a need and taste for these manufactured items. Along the way, the European explorers also enhanced the prospects for improved economic relations between Europe and Nigeria. Exploration opened the minds of European merchants and traders to previously unknown commercial opportunities which existed in Nigeria. Through these explorers, Nigeria became known throughout Europe as an undeveloped land which was just ripe for foreign exploitation.

Missionaries

As was pointed out earlier, foreign missionaries also played extremely important roles in the furtherance of contacts between Europe and Nigeria in the nineteenth century. They came from Britain, France, and other parts of Europe and America. Their activities, mainly centred on converting souls by making Nigerians accept Christianity, flourished between 1842 and 1892.

The presence of missionaries in Nigeria was a direct result of the European philosophical changes in which a more humanitarian world view was becoming better understood by and more acceptable to the general masses. European humanitarians felt that the slave trade could not be eradicated simply by force or by using naval patrol boats alone; they felt that efforts would have to be made at striking at the root of the entire system itself. Their aim in using missionaries was twofold: to promote legitimate commerce between Europe and Nigeria, and to win Africans over to the Christian faith.

A missionary expedition made up of British missionaries called the Niger Missions reached the Niger River in 1841. The object of their expedition was to establish a model farm in Nigeria, to penetrate the interior in the interest of trade, and to conclude treaties with local Nigerian hinterland rulers. In the end all of these objectives were achieved. And it was partly as a result of the activities of the Niger Missions that Christian missions enjoyed a remarkable degree of success from the mid-nineteenth century onwards in establishing a foothold in parts of southern Nigeria.



Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther

The Niger Missions also relied on missionaries of Nigerian descent, notably Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a religious leader of Egba origin who became the first African Bishop of the Church Missionary Society in West Africa.

The Christian evangelisation of southern Nigeria proceeded with considerable ease. The Wesleyan Methodists were evident in the Abeokuta, Lagos, and Ibadan areas of Yorubaland. Meanwhile, the Church Missionary Society, whose bishop was Samuel Ajayi Crowther, achieved considerable success in southwestern portions of Nigeria. Their influence stretched across Abeokuta, Lagos, Ibadan, and Ilesa areas of Yorubaland, and until the 1890s the Society was the only church in the whole Niger Delta area except for Old Calabar and the Cross River Valley. Despite its non-British origins, the Roman Catholic Church was most successful in the entire southern portion of Nigeria, taking root in Lagos and Abeokuta, in Oyo and Ibadan in Yorubaland, and in the Asaba and Igbo areas of western and eastern Nigeria.

Why missionaries were received

Prior to the end of the nineteenth century, evangelisation in Nigeria was carried out by both Africans and Europeans alike. This stood in sharp contrast with the earlier phases of territorial exploration in the region which were carried out by only European explorers and involved no African participation. The reactions of various Nigerians to the efforts of these religious missions depended upon the particular social, political, and economic interests of the individuals in the regions confronted by these visitors from abroad. For the Yoruba the missionaries were especially welcomed because of the assistance it was hoped they would offer to the group fighting the current Yoruba wars at that time. The Egba, for instance, received the British missionaries with the expectation that their new-found allies would provide them with weapons to fight their enemies, the Dahomeans, and their hostile neighbours.

For the people of the Niger Delta the missionaries were also welcomed guests. This was partly due to the fact that it was hoped that they would assist them in achieving economic prosperity and, with it, material wealth. Delta residents looked to the missionaries to provide them with the literary and technical know-how to improve their competence in accounting and commerce, both of which would be highly beneficial in their goal of mastering European business techniques in the new climate of trade and economic cooperation. Kings Eyamba V of Duke Town, Eyo Honesty II of

Creek Town, and George Pepple I of Bonny in southeastern Nigeria made specific requests for missionaries to teach Western education in their regions in order to promote commerce and trade.

The missionaries did not make great strides in all regions, however. The spread of their influence achieved only modest success in the Edo and Igbo hinterlands and among the Ijebu-Yoruba and Itsekiri of the Niger Delta. They also failed to achieve any significant success in the northern part of Nigeria, especially in parts where Islam had already taken a strong foothold. Indeed, in the north they efforts helped to put a check on incessant Dahomean attacks and to curtail the Ibadan and Ijebu from attacking the Egba. Missionary intervention in Egba politics also led to an eventual encroachment on the sovereign status of the people of Egba and paved the way for inception of British colonial administration in the territory. To achieve their political objectives in Egba the British used the so-called Egba *Saro,* Christian ex-slaves of Egba origin who were first resettled in Freetown, Sierra Leone, but later were allowed to return to Abeokuta.

In Lagos, also, missionary political influence was greatly felt. It was missionaries from Abeokuta who encouraged British agents in Lagos to depose Kosoko, the king of Lagos. They felt that the king's economic policies were detrimental to the development of legitimate trade. Generally speaking, missionaries played a more or less intrusive role in Nigeria's internal political affairs.

Social influence

Politics aside, the influence of the missionaries was also considerable with respect to social and cultural life. It may be stated with some confidence that the education provided by the missionaries and the resulting Western ways of thinking embraced by those who participated in that educational experience constituted one of the most potent sources of sociocultural change in Nigeria during the nineteenth century. Nigerians who participated in the Western educational experience thought of themselves as an African elite group. And as their numbers increased they began to make up a new class of professionals and businessmen who aspired to positions of leadership in their respective communities. Anxious to politically, socially, and economically adopt a quasi-British lifestyle, they formulated in their minds the image of a developed Nigeria modelled after the British and European way of life.

On the cultural plane, the missionaries distorted and, to a certain extent, destroyed traditional Nigerian culture. They preached that Christianity was superior to traditional African religions, wrongly

describing the religious practices which had developed over the centuries in Nigeria as forms of pagan worship. The symbolic manifestations of traditional African religions, culture, and practices were also represented as evil by the missionaries. Hence they destroyed national totems and places of worship, attacked polygamy, and forbade the long-held custom of selling and shopping at markets on Sundays. In Brass and the Niger Delta, the Christians also encouraged slaves and ex-slaves to revolt against their current and past masters.

made gains only on the plateau and in the middle belt, areas which did not have a historically strong Islamic influence and where traditional African religions were practised.

Impact of missionary activities

Heightened missionary activity during the nineteenth century produced important consequences for the political, social, and economic life of Nigeria and its peoples. It was not uncommon for missionaries to meddle in the government and interfere with the politics of Nigerian communities, sometimes influencing the choice of who would be appointed to governing positions. Through their Western education and Christianity the missionaries undermined traditional Nigerian culture, partially replacing it with values which were of European origin and which were foreign. Economically they also encouraged the growth of commerce by introducing new crops (e.g. sugar cane) and establishing model farms and plantations. To be sure, these economic innovations profited those Nigerians who participated in them, though failure was not uncommon in certain areas.

Christian missions and education

Christian missionary activities were allowed by certain Nigerian rulers within their territories because of the prospect of sharing from the benefits of the Western education which went along with Christian proselytising. Indeed, one of the missions' most important activities was setting up and running Christian schools for the teaching of Western education. Schools were built in Abeokuta, Ibadan, Lagos, Calabar, Onitsha, and various other parts of southern Nigeria: virtually all Christian denominations — including Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, and the Church Missionary Society —. participated in this activity.

In addition to the building of schools and the propagation of Western education in these regions, the missions initiated other social activities and programmes. In order to teach Nigerians modern farming methods they built model farms consistent with the so-called

Bible-and-plough policy current in Britain at the time. They also set up steel corn mills in order to stimulate legitimate trade, and they built hospitals and clinics to provide health care for Nigerians, especially in areas where Christiantiy showed some promise.

Political influence

The political influence of the missionaries was particularly evident in Abeokuta, where, fortunately for the Egba populace, missionary

Economic impact

The economic impact of European missionary activities in Nigeria during the nineteenth century was not as significant as other spheres of the local cultures. The experimental farms which they established in certain areas did not yield expected results. Farms set up in Badagry and Abeokuta by the Church Missionary Society, for example, failed woefully. However, the missions did encourage legitimate trade by not only preaching against slavery and the practices associated with it but by their support of cash-crop production. The changing of Nigerians' economic habits was therefore one of the missions' important preoccupations.

Summary

1. The contacts with the Europeans during the century took different forms: trade, religion, and exploration.
2. European explorers played vital roles in the opening up of the country's interior for British commerce.
3. Exploration was motivated by two main reasons: the desire for scientific knowledge, and more importantly, vested European business interests. They saw the exploration of the inland waterways as a further means of promoting the course of trade.
4. The major explorers included Mungo Park, Clapperton, the Lander brothers, and two Germans, Barth and Baikie, who worked for British firms.
5. Exploration activities had consequences on trade, culture and politics.
6. Missionaries were more prominent than explorers. They were active between 1842 and 1892.
7. Missionaries were received because of the belief that they could help in finding solutions to certain political and economic problems.
8. Missionary activities had many consequences on politics, education, culture, and the economy.

Questions

Essays

1. Examine the consequences of nineteenth century European exploration on the political, social, and economic lives of the people of the Nigerian geographical area during the period.
2. Discuss the activities and impact of missionary work in Nigeria during the nineteenth century.

Multiple-choice

1. The main groups of Europeans who came to Nigeria in the nineteenth century were
   A. explorers, missionaries, and traders
   B. missionaries, agriculturists, and traders
   C. doctors, missionaries, and farmers
   D. missionaries, traders, and soldiers
2. The European explorers who came to Nigeria in the nineteenth century were motivated by the desire for
   A. scientific knowledge
   B. scientific knowledge and economic profits
   C. religious knowledge
   D. political glory
3. A large part of northern Nigeria was explored between 1820 and 1823 by
   A. the Lander brothers
   B. Clapperton and Denham
   C. Mungo Park
   D. Macgregor Laird
4. The Niger Mission arrived in Nigeria in
   A. 1841
   B. 1851
   C. 1800
   D. 1864
5. Which of the following statements is false?
   A. The missionaries distorted traditional Nigerian culture
   B. The missionaries did not interfere in local politics
   C. The missionaries achieved success in southern Nigeria
   D. The missionaries played a leading role in spreading Western influence in Nigeria

Chapter 9 New commercial developments

Introduction

The abolition of the slave trade created the need for alternative products of trade. This involved a process of transition in Nigeria's trade relations with Europe from supplying human beings to producing raw materials. This transition was not without its consequences on the country's social, economic and political institutions. The transition also brought the Europeans closer to Nigeria and it enabled them to exert political control in the ports and later in parts of the hinterland. This chapter examines the new commercial developments:

1. the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade,
2. the trade in raw materials, or the so-called legitimate trade,
3. the organisation of trade, and
4. the impact of trade.

Suppression of the Atlantic slave trade

No event was of a more crucial importance in the shaping of relations between Nigeria and Europe during the nineteenth century than the suppression of the Atlantic slave trade. The trade in slaves had started during the fifteenth century and reached its peak in the eighteenth century. But then, certain political, economic, and social changes in Europe and especially in Britain which occurred in the early part of the nineteenth century brought about the eventual abolition of the trade in slaves. For several hundred years before the nineteenth century, Britain had been the leading slave-trading nation in Europe. Then, in 1807, the British Parliament passed an act which proclaimed that trade in slaves was illegal. So, in an ironic change

of positions, it was the British themselves who finally championed the campaign to end the slave trade.

Reasons for the suppression of slave trade

The industrial revolution

It was probably the Industrial revolution and, with it, the extensive use of non-human labour which, more than any other reason, accounted for the British decision to abolish the slave trade.

The Industrial revolution swept through England during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and it brought to Britain the status of being the first industrialised nation in Europe. As a result of this industrialisation, British businessmen were more keenly interested than other businessmen on the continent in expanding existing markets and opening up new ones for its manufactured products. It then became clear that the buying and selling of slaves was an activity which was not conducive to the expansion of markets for industrial goods.

Ocean-going vessels which had hitherto been used for slave trading were easily reconditioned for the transport of cotton and palm oil, both of which were far more profitable commodities of export. Both commodities were also dearly needed to fuel the revolution in the industry back home. Newly built industrial centres in Britain needed raw materials to keep the factories productive and growing. Liverpool, for example, needed a steady supply of palm oil, while the mills in Manchester required cotton to produce its goods. For her industries to be lubricated, and soap and lighting provided, Britain required an assured quantity of palm oil—a quantity which the West African interior could supply.

The economic motive, therefore, must be considered as one of the main reasons for Britain's campaigns to suppress the long established slave trade. The profitable exploitation of Nigerian coastal cities and inland regions would help to supply the budding Industrial Revolution to the north.

New philosophical ideas

Economic, although a strong motive, was by no means the only reason for such a radical change in direction. Philosophy also played an important part.

By the end of the eighteenth century, a more humanistic view of mankind began to catch the imagination of important philosophical

thinkers and writers. These new ways of thinking, which had begun to gain ground both on the continent and in Britain itself, stressed the rights of the individual and incorporated the principles of liberty, equality, and the brotherhood of mankind. As the Englishmen became familiar with these ideas, the main argument presented by a rapidly growing and active slave-abolitionist constituency — that slave trading violated the fundamental rights of man — became more acceptable to the general population.

Philanthropists and humanitarians alike played essential roles in the eventual elimination of the slave trade. In Britain, William Wilberforce, a member of Parliament, along with Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp, founded the Committee for the Abolition of Slave Trade in 1787 . In addition, Wilberforce coordinated the anti-slave trade struggle and helped win the sympathy of British Prime Minister William Pitt, Member of Parliament Charles James Fox, and the majority of his colleagues in the British Parliament.

Implications of the suppression of the slave trade

The Abolition of Slavery Act, passed by the British Parliament in 1807, marked the beginning of what was to eventually turn out to be an extremely effective effort to suppress the slave trade. Other nations around the world followed the British lead, with the United States, Sweden, and the Netherlands abolishing the slave trade in 1808, 1813, and 1814, respectively.

However, the taking of legislative initiatives to abolish the slave trade was not the same thing as actually stopping these now-illegal activities. As the dominant naval power on the West African coast, Great Britain assumed the responsibility of leading the movement to halt the trade. These efforts would finally bring about important new developments in Nigerian-European relations in the nineteenth century. The major aspect of these new changes were thus:

The establishment of a naval squadron

The establishment of a naval squadron to patrol West African slave routes and arrest or detain ships which continued to carry slaves was an extremely important measure taken by Britain to end the slave trade in Nigeria and West Africa. The rights and powers of the squadron was defined and strengthened by treaties signed between Britain and other European nations — Portugal and Spain, to name two — which for centuries had been engaged in slave

trading in West Africa. These treaties established an internationally recognised legal right to detain and search ships on the high seas which were suspected of transporting slaves for the purpose of trade.

Though the naval squadron achieved only a limited success at enforcing the abolition in slave trading, a significant impact was nonetheless achieved by capturing slaves from the Bights of Benin and Biafra, an area which extended along the coast of present-day southern Nigeria, and resettling them in the colony of Freetown, in Sierra Leone.

Another important result followed from these anti-slavery efforts: Great Britain provided itself with the opportunity to increase and strengthen its involvement in Nigerian commercial and political affairs. The British naval squadron was the instrument through which this involvement was achieved. It was, in every sense, a military force whose aim was the implementation of British policy in Nigeria through the use of force, if necessary. It was the first time in history that such a presence was maintained by the British in West Africa.

In the course of assisting in the suppression of the slave trade, the British naval squadron stationed along the coast of West Africa had ample opportunity to familiarise itself not only with the specific geography of the Nigerian coastal region but, eventually, with the political realities of the local cultures. This familiarisation would prepare the British for their future role in the region, the suppression of social, political, and economic rights of the Nigerian people and their rulers.

Legitimate commerce

The gradual abolition of the slave trade meant also a gradual decline in the wealth of slave dealers and rulers who had depended on the trade. To recover from the economic depression, they had to cooperate with those who preached or promoted the new trade. The stage was thus set for legitimate commerce. The transition to legitimate commerce was not difficult partly because some communities continued to trade in slaves and raw materials till about the middle of the nineteenth century and the fact that these goods already grew in Nigeria where they were valuable as foodstuff.

The various Nigerian states adjusted differently to the transition. Some states such as the Yoruba tried to cooperate with the slave dealers while at the same time laying the basis for rapid production of palm oil. Some other communities intensified their trade with their neighbours. Finally, there were some states, particularly those

along the coast, which quickly responded to the legitimate commerce by selling raw products obtained from the hinterland.

The traditional rulers who had participated greatly in the slave trade were forced to adjust to the new demands of the legitimate commerce. For some time, these chiefs continued to sell slaves since it was still profitable to do so. Those who had been supporting themselves with the proceeds from the slave trade found it very difficult to change to the new trade. By the 1860s however, it had become difficult, if not impossible, to sell slaves; and the rulers were forced to take alternative course of actions. The first, and one which brought about a series of conflicts, was that they resorted to plundering and forcefully collecting tributes, from their neighbours. Secondly, the rulers employed their slaves in large numbers to grow crops for export, and this became the most permanent form of adjustment to the abolition.

Trade and commerce ensured a continuing link between Europe and Nigeria. In order to promote legitimate trade, the British, as well as other Europeans who participated in it, interfered in the political affairs of Nigerian communities situated in the coastal states. Not all Europeans who traded in these coastal regions were easy converts to this legitimate trade. The Portuguese, for example, disagreed with the British over the timing of the abolition of slave-trade and the subsequent shift to legitimate trade. In addition, this shift in trade practices caused competition between the individual trading companies of Europe on the one hand, and companies of British origin on the other. This sort of competitive climate caused a serious quarrel to develop between Liverpool traders and agents of the Royal Niger Company, on the Delta coast.

The practice of legitimate trade had its negative features. In addition to its overemphasis on palm oil products, it was notoriously a one-sided affair: the Europeans alone determined the type and volume of the commodity they wanted as well as the price they would pay for it. In addition, no means were discounted in the pursuit of their objectives and, as a result, there were many occasions when harsh and often impracticable methods were applied. Although persuasion was sometimes used, military force was more frequently used.

Another feature of nineteenth century trade in the region was the fact that until the latter part of the century it took place mainly on the coast. The Europeans rarely went into the hinterland. However, with penetrations into the interior during the course of the century, the subsequent exploration of the country, and the activities of the missionaries, the way gradually opened up for direct trade between the Europeans and the people of the hinterland.

Legitimate trade

The British introduced what was termed 'legitimate' trade in place of the slave trade. This trade was in palm products and other Nigerian goods which were exported. But it was palm oil which developed during this period into the main article of trade between Britain and Nigeria.

During this period there were both political and commercial disagreements. On the one hand there were the so-called legitimate traders who were in direct competition with those who, despite the recent anti-slave trade legislation, refused to give up what for so long had been a lucrative source of income. Then there were those who were stubbornly against this stronger British presence in the region, especially refusing to tolerate what they saw as the British naval squadron's interference in Nigerian affairs.

An example of an instance which provoked this latter source of friction occured in 1836, when the Regent of Bonny arrested a British naval officer for interferring in the local affairs of his territory. The officer was attempting to obstruct trade between his people and the Spanish. As a result, the British intervened militarily and compelled the Nigerian chief to sign a treaty.

Trade between Britain and the Nigerian coastal cities grew steadily. In 1834 Britain's trade in palm oil with the region was estimated at £500 000, while the average tonnage of oil exports from Bonny to Britain was put at 13 945. A decade later, these annual amounts had almost doubled, compelling Britain to be more politically and militarily committed to the Nigerian geographical region.

The era of treaties

A notable outcome of Britain's efforts at abolishing the slave trade was that they ushered in a period during which several treaties were signed between Britain and Nigeria which directly affected relations between the two countries. This was the beginning of a period during which various European powers attempted through persuasion or military means to force African rulers, in this case, Nigerian chiefs – to sign treaties which were formulated in Europe. These treaties were designed to reserve for the foreign powers the rights and privileges to trade and, in some cases, to exercise a monopoly over trading activities.

These treaties became increasingly common as the nineteenth century progressed. A treaty was signed in 1839, between Britain and Bonny; another, in 1841 was entered into between Great Britain and King Pepple and the chiefs of Bonny. These agreements were of-

ficially intended to check the slave trade; however, treaty violations were used as justification to attack the territories of African rulers. It should also be noted that the terms of these treaties usually had to be interpreted to the African rulers and that there were more than a few cases in which these rulers would sign treaties without full knowledge of exactly what they were agreeing to.

Once the interior regions of the country had been successfully penetrated and explored by the British and other Europeans, the foreigners soon realised that profits from the new trade could easily be improved. This could be done by replacing local Nigerian rulers with either British or Europeans, or by placing in positions of power Nigerians who owed their new-found authority to their foreign benefactors. In some cases consular authorities were set up in areas along the coast with powers covering large areas of the interior.

These consular powers were well known for their habit of bending existing rules of commerce in their areas of jurisdiction in order to suit their interests. Thus they fought to abolish commercial practices that appeared detrimental to the development of legitimate trade. One infamous instance of this sort of activity was the relentless opposition of Consul Hutchinson to the control of trade by the Egbo leaders of Old Calabar. The Egbo leader was branded a government functionary whose powers were clearly detrimental to trade and prosperity — a case of giving a dog a bad name so as to hang it.

The era of consular authority signalled the beginning of a new period of aggression by the British against Nigeria. It marked a new phase in Britain's efforts to intervene in Nigeria's internal affairs and to dictate to the people of the country through the use of the gunboat.

The reaction of the Nigerian people to this new British attitude varied. Some communities, as in Bonny, reacted by protesting; others, as in the case of the Ijo of Brass, responded by arming themselves and countering the Europeans by force. In the lower Niger and on the Benue, Nigerians, occasionally robbed European ships or British commercial houses of their valuables.

Regardless of local reaction, the British consular authorities succeeded in imposing their will on the people. The consuls, otherwise known as 'supercargoes,' never hesitated in forcing obstinate Nigerian traders into submission when they felt it necessary to do so. They frequently acted in these aggressive ways against Nigerian commercial interests in Bonny, Lagos, and the Niger Delta. Although Nigerian rulers had never formally recognised that the British had legal powers or rights to force legitimate trade upon them, they bowed to the stern British will, realising that the 'supercargoes' were there to force matters on them and would succeed at all cost.

Organisation and features of legitimate trade

In this section, we shall examine the most important aspects of the organisation of the trade. These include: the articles of trade; the system of exchange; the African merchants that participated; the European firms that were involved; the competition among the firms; the emergence and role of the Royal Niger Company; and the rise of consular authority.

Articles of trade

Among the commodities brought by European traders were guns and gunpowder, hardware, beads, tobacco, salt, iron, textiles, spirit and some food items. Iron, salt, spirit and textiles were the chief imports, accounting for about three-quarters of the total value. Textiles of different kinds (woolen and cotton goods) were the leading commodities. All the goods were mass-produced in the Euro-American industries. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the quality of most of the goods had gone down in an attempt to increase the profit margin of European traders who exchanged the shoddy or second-hand goods with Nigerian products.

In return for European goods, Nigeria sold a variety of articles which included those that were formerly subsidiaries to the trade in slaves. These articles included timber, rubber, coffee, pepper and indigo. Others which gained tremendous importance during the country were palm oil from the 1830s onwards, cotton in the mid-century, groundnuts and palm kernel in the second half and cocoa in the last quarter of the century. The most demanded of the goods were palm oil, palm kernel and groundnut.

Palm oil was the 'pioneer staple' and the leading commodity for export in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Industrial revolution in Europe created the need for more oils and fats. Palm oil was used as a lubricant to oil the machinery, to manufacture candles needed for lighting and to make soap. Oil was got from West Africa. Production centres were concentrated in areas such as Guinea, Cameroons, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Ghana, Republic of Benin and Nigeria. The greatest centre of production was the Niger Delta in Nigeria, an area known to the Europeans as the Oil Rivers. Calabar, Brass and Bonny in the Delta were the 'homes of oil'. Production in the Delta rose from 4 700 tons in 1827 to 13 945 tons in 1834 and 25 000 tons in 1845.

Groundnuts and palm kernel were also in high demand in the second half of the century. Groundnuts were needed to manufacture oil and soap, and palm kernels to make margarine and cattle

feeds. Groundnuts for example were obtained in Sierra Leone, northern Nigeria, the Gambia and Senegal.

System of exchange

The system of exchange between the Europeans and the coastal traders on the one hand and the coastal traders and those in the hinterland on the other was based on the use of currency and mostly on the trust or barter system. The use of currency was not new to nineteenth century Nigeria. The different types of currency described in Book One continued to be in use for domestic transactions. New types were added by the Europeans. For example, British coins, Spanish dollars and doubloons imported from Spain, the Americas and Portugal were used in a few places.

The trust system was, however, the most popular form of exchange between the European merchants and their Nigerian counterparts. The trust system was an arrangement whereby manufactured goods were exchanged with raw materials through the barter system. The European traders would give their goods to their Nigerian agents on credit. The agents would sell the goods and use the money to buy Nigerian products or, in some cases, the agents would exchange the European goods with Nigerian products. Later (from a month to a few years), the agents would repay the European traders with Nigerian goods equivalent to the amount of goods which they had received. A number of steps were taken to protect traders from cheating one another. The European merchants often collaborated with the local chiefs or any other well-known person who acted as guarantors to the Nigerian agents. However, there were, a few cases as in the Delta, were the Courts of Equity had to try debtors or were used to recover debts.

The trust system enabled Nigerians with small capitals to participate in the export trade. It also enabled the European merchants to monopolise trade and force Nigerian traders to sell their goods to them. This was done through the offer of credit to Nigerian agents. Once this credit was received the agent becomes indebted to the European merchant and must supply him with the products at the appropriate time. Due to this indebtedness, the Nigerian agent could not quickly change trading partners even when it was profitable to do so. Indeed, there were many temptations not to honour the credit. There were usually new European merchants, called 'interlopers' by the established ones, on the coast. These interlopers also wanted trade and they were usually willing to offer credit, sell their goods at prices lower than that of the established traders and buy African products at higher prices. Some Nigerian traders evad-

ed their debts and sold their goods to the interlopers in the bid to make some profit. There were many who also received credits from two or more merchants, a practice known as 'double trust'. The inability to fulfil the trading obligations led to a series of crises between European merchants on the one hand and between European and Nigerian traders on the other. The disadvantages of the trust system were of such magnitude that Nigerian educated elite repeatedly and sincerely called for its abolition in preference for the use of money. For instance, *The Lagos Times And the Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* of 10 August 1881 discussed at length the origin and disadvantages of the trust system. It traced its history to the time of the slave trade when European slave dealers exchanged goods for men. The newspaper pointed out that the system had continued to be in force ever since with the effect that African traders strongly believed in the 'miserable idea that trade must be done on credit, and traffic must be pursued, not with one's own independent capital, but with that of another'. The paper went on to catalogue the disadvantages of the system. Firstly, it was not a convenient method of trading: 'many groan almost helplessly and hopelessly under the system, especially when there are heavy liabilities against them pressing for immediate settlement'. Secondly, Africans could not sell their goods to the highest bidders: 'The system often places a receiver of credit at a great disadvantage in the market, and makes it particularly difficult for him to compete with the man who owes no debt for what he offers to sell.' Thirdly, the system made goods more expensive and reduced the profit of the African traders:

> the creditor rightly reckoning upon the length of time he has to wait for his money, the possible risks attending the advance he makes, and the possibility of his not being paid back in full, increases his charge upon it and this consumes at once a portion of the profits that might have fallen to the lot of the debtor and throws him back, for besides losing the double cash and trade discounts usually made on ready payment which might have added to his profits, he has to pay higher prices for his goods and interest in addition.

Finally, the system encouraged conspicuous consumption and false living among African traders:

> often, upon the receipt of large credits new modes of living are at once adopted; artificial wants rapidly increase; the luxuries, the expensive and perhaps not inocuous pleasures of European life, and the extravagance of foreign fashions become

at once indispensable; large houses are built and furnished perhaps in very expensive style. ... In some cases, harems grow rapidly in size, and are well furnished with inmates, and beyond jurisdiction, often slaves are quickly multiplied in addition. These people abuse the power of credit ... and eventually bring themselves and others into a complication of miseries. Mushroom gentlemen, going down as quickly as they came up!

The paper concluded thus: 'The system then, such as it is here, oppresses trade, robs it of much of its productiveness, and establishes by the side of it a miserable serfdom'.

African merchants

African merchants based in the trading centres along the coast and those from the hinterland engaged in trade with their European counterparts. The African traders acted as brokers and mostly as middlemen; they took the European goods to the areas, especially in the hinterland where they could exchange them for African products.

Since the trade was profitable for most of the time in the nineteenth century, Nigerians with the necessary capital outlay struggled to participate in it. The quest for participation in the trade caused numerous conflicts among the people in the coastal states who strove to monopolise the trade with the Europeans. The efforts to break the monopoly of the coastal states as well as the political implications of direct access to the coast contributed to many of the incessant wars among the Yoruba and the people of the Niger Delta.

A few number of the Nigerian traders were wealthy. Some of them were also powerful, having made use of the profit from the trade to acquire power, or their positions as chiefs to participate in the trade.

One significant development in the organisation of trade following the use of steamships was the emergence, from about the 1850 onwards, of a new class of merchants usually referred to as 'educated Africans' in the urban centres. In the words of Linnart Limberg, the educated Africans were 'a group of Africans, mostly literate, who led life more or less outside the old tribal society, and often devoted themselves to trade'. A number of this group were liberated slaves and products of mission schools. Many of them were not at all educated though they imitated the life-styles of the educated ones. They were mostly concentrated in the urban centres such as

Freetown, Monrovia, Cape Coast, Accra, Lagos, St. Louis, Dakar and Rufisque.

The ambition of the new African merchants was to own a firm which would operate like that of an European. They wanted huge profits which some of them thought could be accrued by taking their goods directly to Europe and by-passing European merchants. Others were contented with obtaining credits from the European merchant Houses in Britain or France with which they had contacts. Some of them became wholesalers and agents to European firms. A few of the African merchants succeeded to such an extent that their firms became as large as those of the Europeans.

European merchants and trading companies

British merchants dominated the trade with Nigeria for the most part of the century. Britain took the lead mainly because she was the first industrial nation. France was second to Britain. Germany joined in the second half of the nineteenth century, and by the 1880s had been handling a third of the total West African overseas trade. Germany's rise and rapid trade expansion have been attributed to three main reasons: 'the rise of the palm kernel market, which was dominated by Hamburg because German farmers were the main buyers of cattle cake, and because the Dutch were the largest manufacturers of margarine; the ability of Hamburg to supply cheap liquor; and the development of steamship services between Germany and West Africa'.

The European merchants came with their articles of trade mostly to the Nigerian water edge. The ports along the coasts were the major entrepots of exchange. The mode of trading took three forms during the century. The first was the floating trade in which vessels stayed along the coast while the Europeans bartered their goods with Nigerians. Because of the hardships involved in the trade the merchants never embarked on the voyage except they were sure of making a profit of about 60 per cent. The floating trade declined in importance after the 1850s. The second was the castle trade in which merchants stayed in the entrepots where they had their stores, though this did not prevent them from taking part in the floating trade as well. Many of these merchants received goods on credits from merchant houses in Europe (e.g. from Messrs Forster and Smith, Messrs W.B. Hutton, Sewell Ross & Co., W. King of Bristol, F. and A. Swanzy, and Bannes Brothers, all of Britain). The third form of trade was the establishment of trading posts and stores in

the hinterland. This became a major feature of European trade in the last quarter of the century.

Competition among European merchants and the emergence of the Royal Niger Company

Because of the substantial profit from the trade, Europeans usually competed with each other for the control of West African trade. Up to the 1850s when the floating trade was flourishing, there was an intense rivalry between those who engaged in the floating and castle trade. The resident merchants were against those who sailed along the sea and often combined to form a monopoly against them. The merchants in the entrepots also struggled with one another for trade.

The use of steamships in the second half of the century intensified the rivalries among European traders. Before then the slow-moving sailing ships were in use. By 1852, the African Steamship Company had begun a regular service to carry goods and mail to West Africa. It was later joined by others such as the French-based Fabre-Fraissinet line and German's Woermann-Linie. The use of steamships made freights cheaper, thus lowering the costs of business trips. It also made the crossing of the Atlantic easier and faster. More importantly, the steamship made it possible for many European trading groups which could not afford private ships to pay for the use of the mail steamers in transporting their goods to and from Africa. These small trading firms seized the opportunity to come to Africa in large numbers and by 1856 they were up to two hundred in West Africa. Before the use of the mail steamers, big firms with the advantages of huge investments in ships and goods had monopolised the trade (e.g. Messrs Tobin and Horsfall in the Delta, Messrs T. Hulton, Messrs Swanzy and Messrs Forster in Ghana). Among the new comers to West Africa who later became prominent were the firms of G.L. Gaiser from Hamburg which joined in 1869, the Manchester firm of John Walkden, 1868 and finally John Holt who began in the Delta in the 1870s.

The competition for trade caused bitterness among the established trading houses, the small and new ones, and the African merchants. In the search for more trade and profit, many of the European merchants penetrated the hinterland in the last quarter of the century. Indeed, the European merchants were eager to revive the idea of chartered companies with monopoly over trade. One British company in fact succeeded in this and its activities are worth highlighting in brief. This was the Royal Niger Company (RNC) a chartered company which 'became the prototype for other chartered

companies in Africa' and revived 'the chartered company as a method of acquiring and ruling territories'.

The Royal Niger Company (RNC)

The architect of the RNC was Sir Taubman Goldie. Goldie was a successful British man, one of Britain's empire builders of the late Victorian era. Through his commercial and political activities, Goldie played a major role in the colonisation of Nigeria by Britain. He used the RNC to establish an empire on the Niger, an empire that was the prototype for most other chartered companies in Africa. In addition, be contributed immensely to British colonial administrative policies.

The beginning of Goldie's involvement in Nigeria was in 1877 when his trading interest took him to the lower Niger, the most flourishing centre for the trade in palm produce. This was a time of cut-throat competition for trade by many European merchants. The Delta chiefs also collected levies from traders making use of the waterways; and there were constant rivalries among the African chiefs over the control of the River Niger. The competition for trade, the cost of maintaining staff and patrol teams and the duplication in the payments of duties increased the overhead costs on trading, reduced profits and made the palm produce more expensive in the market.

Sir Goldie came out with a plan to solve the problems of trade for British merchants. In 1879, he organised all the important trading interests into a single company, known as the United African Company (UAC). The competition with two French companies — the Compagnie Francaise de l'Afrique Equiatoriale and the Compagnie du Senegal, the quest of the French to establish a colonial empire in West Africa, and the advance of Germany from the Cameroons to northern Nigeria forced Goldie to improve the organisation and activities of the UAC. In 1882, Goldie increased the subscribed capital of the UAC from £200 000 to £1 million and offered shares to the public. He also changed the name of the company to the National African Company (NAC). His problem was how to deal with the two French rival companies. Having failed to persuade them to join the NAC, Goldie used his skill and money to undercut their prices by almost 25 per cent. By 1884 they had been forced out of business.

Faced with the threat of the colonial expansion of the French and Germans into the Niger, Goldie applied for a royal charter from the British government to enable his company not only to control trade but also the Niger territory. He obtained the charter in 1886 and the company was re-named the Royal Niger Company. The charter em-

powered the RNC to govern those territories with which it had signed treaties of protection, acquire new territories, abolish slavery and slave trade and to collect taxes and duties in order to defray the cost of its administration. The RNC must not, however, interfere with the peoples' customs and religion, prevent other firms from trading or transfer any part of the Niger territory to any person or organisation without the consent of the Secretary of State, that is, the British Minister in charge of foreign territories.

The RNC made use of its charter to govern and to establish a firm control on trade. It imposed high duties on exports and imports. It also requested firms wishing to trade in the area to obtain licences at very high charges. The argument of the RNC for imposing high duties and granting licences was that it spent a huge amount of money to acquire the banks of the Niger. And because it claimed a particular control over the lower Niger, it exercised wide-ranging powers which served to protect British interest.

The shareholders of the RNC benefitted from its activities more than Nigerians. The annual dividends that went to the shareholders were made from the exploitation of Nigeria's resources. The RNC did not spend its profits on the transformation of Nigeria. Neither did it develop the transport system or introduce new industries and crops. The RNC tapped the trade of eastern Nigeria until its charter was revoked in 1899. It received a handsome compensation of £865-000 and a ninety-nine years rights to exploit tin in northern Nigeria.

Finally, the RNC played an active role in the partition of Africa. It collaborated with the British government to prevent the penetration of France and Germany into eastern and northern Nigeria. In the 1870s, both the Germans and the French considered the west coast a major area for expansion. By the early 1880s, the two French companies earlier mentioned had become well established in the Delta. Goldie anticipated the German and French ambitions. Not only did he succeed in driving away these two companies, he employed his extensive trade networks and gunboats to control coastal chiefs.

The RNC penetrated into the hinterland. By 1884, Goldie had concluded thirty-seven treaties with local chiefs. In addition, he used his fleet of twenty gunboats to spread his monopoly and bombarded Akassa, Brass, Patani and Asaba for attacking his trading factories. He assisted chiefs like the Emir of Nupe who were friendly with the RNC with military support. With all these gains, Goldie was able to advance the interest of Britain at the Berlin Conference of 1885. It was in the same year that Britain formally proclaimed a Protectorate over the Niger areas, defined as 'the territories on the line of coast between the British Protectorate of Lagos and the right

or western bank of the Rio del Rey' and the 'territories on both banks of the Niger, from its confluence with the River Benue at Lokoja to the Sea, as well as the territories on both banks of the River Benue, from the confluence up to and including Ibi.'

With the charter of 1886, the RNC became more ambitious. It established its headquarters at Asaba on the River Niger, together with a High Court of justice and a constabulary. The RNC used monopolistic powers not only to antagonise Nigerian merchants but also to obstruct the activities of the French and the Germans. The RNC successfully dominated the Oil Rivers and other areas: as far as Jebba. It extended its influence to Borgu; and its frontiers northwards into the Nupe territory; and westwards to Ilorin. Through all these, the RNC contributed a great deal in curbing the penetration of France.

Consular authority

British firms thought that they could only derive the maximum advantages from trade if the British government exercised total control over Nigeria. Up till the 1880s the British government was opposed to the acquisition of colonies that could become a burden to the British budget. Nevertheless, it established a strong political influence along the coast where foreign traders had to interact with their African counterparts. Consuls — state agents living in foreign territories to protect their countrymen — were appointed in the second half of the century to promote trade and impose several commercial and political terms on Nigerian chiefs. Indeed, a notable feature of legitimate trade was the use of consular power to promote and protect British commercial interest.

John Beecroft was the first of the consuls. He was appointed in 1849 as the consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra. He had already acquired a vast knowledge of the west coast before his appointment. During his six years service as consul, he wielded influence in Lagos and in the Delta. His goal was to involve Britain in the political affairs of the coastal states. He never hesitated to interfere in local politics and was an advocate of colonial acquisition of the coastal states. In 1849, he settled the dispute between British traders and king William Pepple of Bonny. In 1850, he deposed Oba Kosoko of Lagos and installed Akitoye who promised to abolish the slave trade. Again in 1850 he intervened in the slave rebellion in Old Calabar. Three years later he sent Pepple on exile.

The aim of Beecroft and other consuls was to use power to secure the maximum advantages for commerce. They worked for the downfall of chiefs who were regarded as obstacles in the way of

trade. They protected chiefs who identified with British interests, even when such chiefs were unpopular with their people. The consuls intervened in disputes between European and Nigerian traders. They used military forces to suppress the peoples and groups opposed to them. Finally, they worked for the gradual acquisition of Nigeria. They provided, for the use of Britain, vital information on the country's economy and security. They also took part in the actual process of acquisition. In 1861, the consul was instructed to annex Lagos in order 'to secure forever the free population of Lagos from the slave-traders and kidnappers who formerly oppressed them; to protect and develop the important trade of which their town is the seat; and to exercise an influence on the surrounding tribes which may, it is hoped, be permanently beneficial to the African race'. This annexation was to the benefit of Britain.

From 1861 onwards, the consuls concentrated their interests in other strategic areas. They interfered in Yoruba politics in order to assist merchants to obtain palm oil and other products. They forced or persuaded some Yoruba states to open their trade routes, and they sent peace missions to settle their wars. By 1885, British officials in Lagos had reached the conclusion that direct British interference in Yorubaland would be necessary to end the wars and control the Yoruba states. This was done in the 1890s.

In the Niger Delta, the consul intervened in local affairs because of the intense competition for palm oil between the Delta states and European traders. British and French merchants engaged in bitter competition which led Britain to proclaim a Protectorate in 1885.

Impact of trade

The trade in commodities stimulated a massive production of goods in Nigeria, unlike the previous trade in slaves which failed to establish such a link with the economy. All the articles of trade earlier referred to were cultivated and sometimes processed before they were sold. For instance, a lot of energy and time had to be expended in processing palm oil and in removing kernels from the shells.

The massive production of the goods owed to at least four reasons. Firstly, the Nigerian climate and vegetation were suitable for the production of the crops. Secondly, and more importantly, the prices paid for the crops helped to stimulate production. Compared with food crops, the export crops attracted higher prices, thus offering the attractions to farmers. Thirdly, the European missionaries and officials employed all their propaganda machinery to encourage the production of cash crops. The officials wanted African farmers to

cultivate those products needed in the cities while the missionaries were interested in creating a crop of 'rich farmers' whose minds would be receptive to their message. Finally, farming was not a new occupation in West Africa; the farmers simply continued with their age-long practices of cultivating different crops.

Many people were also engaged in processing raw materials (e.g. palm oil) for export and trade. Unlike the trade in slaves which called for a few entrepreneurs with the capital outlay to secure and sell slaves, the .egitimate trade involved many people who needed little financial outlay to engage as producers or petty traders.

The massive involvement in the trade encouraged the trend towards the commercialisation of labour and land, both of which were now actively involved in production. Large expanse of lands were tilled for production while many people found employment in any of the diverse occupations connected with the trade. Indeed, hundreds of people migrated to areas where they could produce or trade, as was the case with farmers who went to eastern Nigeria to process palm oil. Wealthy citizens also employed slaves, who would formerly have been sold, on their farms and trading enterprises. Indeed the abolition of the slave trade helped to intensify the use of slaves as domestic labour.

Since the commodities for export brought immediate cash and profits, the orientation of the Nigerian economy shifted from an inward looking one that produced for internal consumption to an outward looking one that produced for foreign markets. This had many implications for the Nigerian economy and society. In the first place, the people subordinated their domestic needs to production for European needs. Instead of producing the food crops and the raw materials which they needed for internal consumptions, they produced cash crops because it brought more financial gains. Consequently, most of the states experienced increases in the cost of foodstuff; and in the urban centres, the teaming population had to cope with high cost of living. Secondly, by subordinating their economies to that of Europe, the Nigerian states exposed themselves to exploitation. The products of their laborious activities, and the most important of their resources were taken to Europe. In return, they obtained essentially luxuries which they could only consume. They in fact obtained commodities such as liquor and tobacco to satisfy transient desires and guns and gunpowder to liquidate precious lives. These were products which had very little impact on economic development; but which were in steady demand because of the contacts with Europe.

The prices which Nigerians received for their products were dictated by the Europeans since they, Nigerians, could not control the

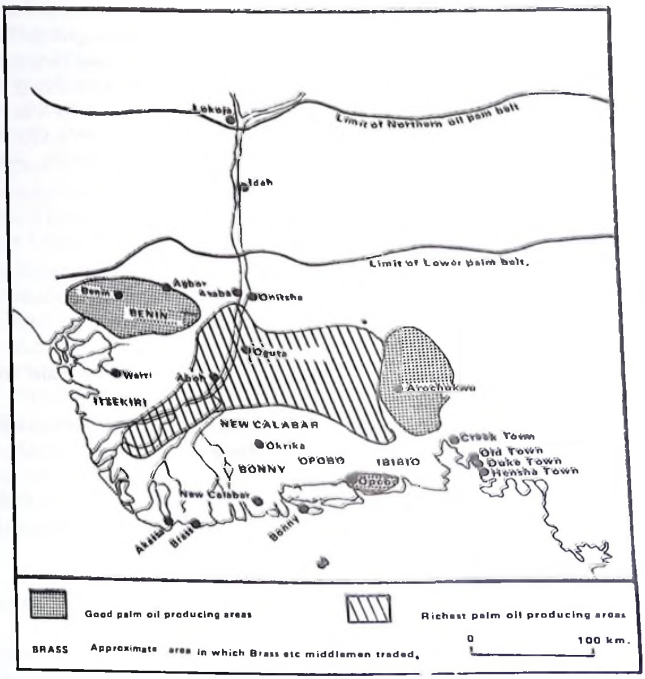
volume of goods and since their major consumers (the Europeans) often had either alternative substitutes or markets. Generally, the prices of Nigerian products varied with the changes in business and industrial activities in Europe. The exchange between a developed, industrialised nation and an under-developed, producer nation cannot but be unequal. Nigeria experienced adverse price fluctuations throughout the century. Prices in the first half of the century were relatively stable. The price of palm oil, for example, continued to be on the increase up to 1861 (except for 1844-1846 and 1851-1852) when it reached its highest peak of £45 per ton in Liverpool. Prices of Nigerian products fell from 1861 onwards and they never rose until the twentieth century. The price of palm oil fell from £45 per ton to £32 from 1862 onwards and fell to a considerably low amount of £20 from 1886 onwards. The price of palm kernel also fell from £15 per ton in the 1860s to £10 from 1886 onwards. Similarly, the price of groundnut fell from its 27½ francs per 100 kilos in 1857-1867 to 15 francs from 1877-1900. Hopkins gave two reasons for this fall, both of which show clearly that West Africa's reliance on Europe was risky and that its economy was vulnerable: 'First, there was an increase in the supply of mineral and vegetable oils following the discovery of petroleum resources in the United States in the 1860s and the entry into the market of Indian groundnuts and Australian tallow after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Second, European demand for a wide range of raw materials, including oils and fats, was checked in the last quarter of the 19th century with the advent of the so-called Great Depression.'

The imports also had disruptive effects on local manufacturers. For instance, the smithing industries in the coastal parts experienced a decline because of the competition with the mass-produced and cheap European iron bars and iron implements. A number of industries such as the cloth and gold mining were, however, able to resist competition.

The impact of trade was not restricted to the economic sector; but also affected the political and social institutions of Nigeria particularly those of the coastal states. The rise of the African merchants already referred to threatened the power and the continued survival of the indigenous power elite. Whether in Abeokuta, Lagos or the Delta, the new merchant class struggled to be part and parcel of government in order to make and execute laws instead of being subjects who must take instructions. In Abeokuta, they competed for chieftaincy titles and became members of the *Ogboni*, a secret society with wide powers. In Lagos, they ignored the traditional chiefs and held them in contempt until the 1880s.

Impact on the Niger Delta

The Niger Delta which was the leading producer of palm oil in Africa experienced the most far-reaching socio-political changes. Several of the changes owed to the impact of foreign trade. The most revolutionary of these changes was the acquisition of power by men of low social status. Early in the nineteenth century, the Niger Delta had five principal city-states (Calabar at the mouth of the Calabar and Cross Rivers, Brass, Grand Bonny and Elem Kalabari to the east and Itsekiri to the west). The leadership of the city-states and the Houses (a group of lineage organised for politics and trade) was in the hands of the nobility which derived its wealth partly from participating in the Atlantic slave trade. Every House had its free born commoners and slaves who were prevented from becoming rulers.



The Niger Delta and palm oil producing areas

The trade in palm oil in which the slaves and the commoners participated led to the emergence of a few rich citizens among them. Wealth could bring power; and these citizens became eager to secure political power. In Brass and Elem Kalabari, a number of these 'new men' became heads of subordinate Houses. In Itsekiri, Nana, a commoner rose to the prestigious post of the king, though he was never crowned. In Calabar, numerous oppressed slaves and commoners working in the exploitative palm plantations ran away to the Qua-Iboe River where they established a community. The leading men among them formed a society known as the Order of Blood Men which employed non-violent means to demand equal rights. In Bonny where the revolution was most successful, there was an intense competition for the throne between men of servile origin and the nobility. Alali, an assimilated slave in the Anna Pepple royal House, became not only the head of the House but also the most powerful person in Bonny from 1830 to 1866. He was succeeded as the head of the House by Jaja, an Igbo slave. In the bid to gain political ascendancy in Bonny, the Manilla Pepple, a rival royal House of the Anna Pepple, attacked Jaja in 1868. He withdrew from Bonny to Opobo, a strategic location which cut off Bonny from its trading empire on the River Imo. At Opobo, Jaja established a new city-state with himself as the ruler and a flourishing trading empire. Jaja grew to become the most celebrated king in the Delta.

Summary

1. The background to the emergence of 'legitimate' commerce was the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade.
   a) Britain took the lead by abolishing the trade in 1807. By the late 1860s, the slave trade had virtually been suppressed;
   b) economic factors were largely responsible for abolition.
2. In spite of the abolition, Europeans still had reasons to come to Africa:
   a) they needed raw materials for their industries;
   b) they also needed markets to dispose of the products of these industries.
3. The campaign for trade in raw materials spread, leading to exploration, establishment of plantations and the influx of foreign traders into Africa.

4. Nigerian states responded to abolition in different ways:
   a) states who had depended on the slave trade suffered decline;
   b) some quickly adjusted to the new trade;
   c) it was easy to adjust because Nigeria was an agrarian society.
5. The articles of trade brought from Europe included: guns and gunpowder, beads, tobacco, salt, iron, textiles, spirit and some food items. The chief imports were iron, salt, spirit and textiles. Nigeria sold timber, rubber, coffee, pepper, indigo, palm oil, palm kernel, cotton, groundnut and other commodities.
6. African merchants acted as brokers and middlemen. The ambition of many states to be involved in trade contributed to inter-group conflicts. Peoples and communities who took part in the trade derived a number of economic and political advantages.
7. European traders and firms came to Nigeria mostly from Britain, France and Germany:
   a) there were three methods of trading with Nigerians: floating trade, castle trade and trading posts.
8. European merchants engaged in competition with one another. The competition became bitter after 1850 with the use of steamships. It was largely responsible for the formation of the Royal Niger Company which obtained a charter in 1886.
9. The Royal Niger Company was able to
   a) amalgamate many companies;
   b) establish a trade monopoly on the Delta;
   c) curb the rivalries of France and Germany; and
   d) paved the way for the British acquisition of eastern Nigeria and parts of northern Nigeria.
10. The British government assisted European traders by appointing consuls to promote trade and impose several commercial and political terms on Nigerian chiefs.
11. The trade had many impacts on the society: it stimulated an expansion in the production of cash crops; many people were involved in production; it encouraged the trend towards the commercialisation of land labour; it oriented the economy of Nigeria towards the West; it had a disruptive influence on local industries; and it promoted the rise of Nigerian merchants who used their wealth to acquire power.
12. The impact of the trade was felt more in the Niger Delta where it brought major changes to political institutions.

Questions

Essay

1. Account for Great Britain's decision to abolish the slave trade in 1807, and examine the significance of this decision for Nigeria in the nineteenth century.
2. Examine the features of foreign trade in the second half of the nineteenth century.
3. Discuss the important as, ects of the organisation of trade with Europe afte\ 1850.
4. Analyse the impact of legitimate trade on the peoples and society of Nigeria in the nineteenth century.
5. With reference to the Niger Delta, examine the consequences of trade with Europeans on political institutions.
6. Describe the emergence and the role of the Royal Niger Company..
7. Of what use was the consular authority to commerce?

Multiple-choice

1. Which of the following statements is false?
   A. The abolition of the slave trade brought to an end the commercial contacts between Nigeria and Europe
   B. The abolition of the slave trade did not bring to an end the commercial contacts between Nigeria and Europe
   C. European companies continued to come to Nigeria after the abolition of the slave trade
   D. Nigerians traded into Europe after the abolition of the slave trade
   E. The chiefs maintained relations with Europeans after abolition of the slave trade
2. The British Parliament passed an act which proclaimed the trading in slaves illegal in
   A. 1800
   B. 1870
   C. 1807
   D. 1827
   E. 1814
3. Which country took the lead in abolishing the slave trade?
   A. The United States of America
   B. France

C. Great Britain
D. Sweden
E. Germany

4. The proponent of the Bible and the plough (or Civilisation, Commerce and Christianity in Africa) was
   A. Bishop Ajayi Crowther
   B. Sir T.F. Buxton
   C. Sir H. Macaulay
   D. Lord Lugard
   E. Mrs Lugard
5. The goods imported to Nigeria included
   A. cars and aeroplanes
   B. ploughs and plough drivers
   C. word processors and their spare parts
   D. tobacco and gunpowder
6. The exports included
   A. tobacco and gunpowder
   B. guns and salt
   C. spirit and tobacco
   D. rubber and palm oil
   E. papers and ink.
7. The system of exchange was by
   A. barter and the use of money
   B. banking and barter
   C. silent trade
   D. unsilent trade
   E. free exchange
8. The trust system enabled
   A. purchase without credit
   B. purchase on credit
   C. purchase of cocoa only
   D. purchase of rubber only
   E. purchase of palm oil only.
9. The architect of the Royal Niger Company was
   A. Lord Lugard
   B. Sir Wilberforce
   C. Sir Goldie
   D. Sir Flint
   E. Lord Crowder
10. The RNC played these roles except one
    A. it established a monopoly
    B. it used a charter to advance trade
    C. it competed with France and Germany for colonies

D. it assisted the British government in the partition of Africa
E. it developed Nigeria

11. One of these was a well known consul
A. John Beecroft
B. Taubman Goldie
C. Lord Wilberforce
D. Sir Richards
E. Lord Coleman

12. Which of the following is not true of the impact of legitimate trade
A. more cash goods were produced
B. some merchants became politically influential
C. Nigeria retained its link with Europe
D. some local industries experienced decline
E. all citizens benefited positively

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Chapter 10 The British conquest of Nigeria

Introduction

By the end of the nineteenth century the Europeans had moved inland from the coast of the hinterland and were beginning to effectively influence the course of events in those areas in which they settled. In this chapter we shall examine the process by which the actual penetration of Nigeria, especially from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards came about as a result of military conquest.

The British conquest of Nigeria was accomplished in two distinct phases. The first of these occurred between 1851 and 1900. It began with an attack on Lagos in 1851. The subsequent occupation, a decade later, of the Lagos area made it the first colonial settlement in present-day Nigeria. Once Lagos had been occupied, the British then moved inland into the Yorubaland, capturing Ijebu in 1892.

Also during this first phase, the British speeded up their encroachment on the sovereign rights of the rulers and peoples of the Niger Delta areas. They concentrated the bulk of their military aggression on those they saw as their central targets. These were the rich coastal middleman traders. It was in this context that the ancient city-state of Opobo, which had prospered under its leader, Jaja, was dealt a severe blow with Jaja's banishment in 1891. Similarly, in 1894, Nana of Itsekiri, to the west of the Niger Delta, was banished after a vigorous British military attack. Finally, the conquest of Bini in 1897 and the banishment to Calabar the same year of its ruler Oba Ovonramwen, marked an important stage in the worsening of relations between the British and local Nigerian rulers. This provides yet another example of Britain's intention to impose its rule by threat of force or by force itself.

The second phase of the British conquest of Nigeria took place from the turn of the century until 1914. It was brought about by the withdrawal, in 1899, of the royal charter which had been granted to the Royal Niger Company to dominate the affairs of northern

Nigeria. The most significant events during this phase were the occupations of the Sokoto caliphate, Borno, and northern Nigeria's central belt. It was during this phase that groups of 'stubborn' individuals in parts of southern Nigeria were attacked, conquered and brought under British rule. Especially significant was the conquest of the well-known Aro, who the British regarded as the most important rulers in much of the Igbo and Ibibio hinterlands. With the Aro defeated, the vast Igbo heartland was brought under British imperial control. However, there is the need to look at a few important events which preceded the British conquest of Nigeria.

One of the most important events preceding the British conquest of Nigeria was the granting of a royal charter to the Royal Niger Company in 1886. Under the provisions of this charter, it was possible for Consul Hewett to travel through several parts of the Niger region and conclude 'protection' treaties with African rulers, acquiring in the process the right for British firms and traders to enjoy exclusive trade relations with the Nigerian communities in the region. As a result, British traders, by virtue of these treaties, also began to look at these Nigerian regions in political terms as their 'spheres of influence' a cliche in common usage ever since the European colonial powers met in Berlin in 1884 and 1885 to formally agree on their stakes in West Africa. Once these treaties had been concluded with African leaders and communities, it was an easy step to then point to treaty violations as reasons for their subsequent aggressive behaviour.

Britain's efforts at suppressing the slave trade also paved the way for their subsequent conquest of Nigeria. As we have already seen, after the British Parliament passed the Abolition of Slavery Act in 1807, the British championed the campaign against the slave trade. However, not all Nigerians were in agreement with the Act. Also, the fact that not all Nigerians supported the arguments that the slave trade was immoral or could no longer serve useful economic purposes provided the British with a useful excuse to interfere in the domestic, economic, and political lives of the coastal and hinterland peoples. British reaction to the reluctance of some Nigerian rulers to quickly adjust to the new trends was frequently to use the naval squadron to force these rulers to obedience. Kosoko, the Oba of Lagos, was attacked because of his alleged refusal to stop dealing in slaves. The same fate befell Nana of the Itsekiri, Jaja of Opobo and Oba Ovonramwen of Bini. British influence continued to extend into the interior of the Yorubaland as a result of the conquest of Ijebu in 1892 and Oyo in 1895, and the installation in 1893 of Captain R.L. Bower as 'Resident of Ibadan and Political Officer in Charge of the Hinterland of Lagos Colony'.

The imposition of legitimate commerce was, to a certain extent, an equally important factor which led to British conquest of the region. Competition between British traders and their Nigerian counterparts, on the one hand, and between Nigerian traders themselves, on the other, led to the establishment of administrative and organisational structures set up to run the new trade. These structures, in turn, helped to weaken traditional power structures.

In this vein, the establishment of consulates in the Lagos and Delta areas from the mid-nineteenth century onwards was an entirely new development in Anglo-Nigerian relations during the period. The various British consuls appointed to run these consulates exercised such great authority that they were able to either question the powers of the indigenous Nigerian rulers or, more often, order those Nigerian institutions to be attacked. In a sense it was this abuse of official powers by various consuls that led to attacks on Brass and Bini in 1897 and, ultimately, British capture of the Igbo and Ibibio hinterlands.

As for the northern Nigeria, the way to British conquest of this region was not paved until the Niger Company's royal charter was withdrawn in 1899, after which the key northern areas of Tiv, Borno, Kano, and Sokoto, the capital of the Sokoto caliphate, were attacked and brought under the umbrella of British rule between 1900-1914.

The first phase of British conquest (1851-1900)

The occupation of Lagos (1851)

In 1861, Lagos became the first part of Nigeria to be formally integrated into the British colonial empire. A decade before this, the city surrendered its sovereignty after it had been attacked by British gunboats. As a result, its ruler, Kosoko, was deposed and Akitoye was enthroned as the new Oba of Lagos.

The British claimed that it was because the ruler and people of Lagos had failed to abandon their slave trading practices that they attacked the city. There was indeed some truth in this claim, although it must be pointed out that this does not sum up the entire situation which led to the conquest of Lagos and its integration into the British empire. More accurately, the British were angered

by the refusal of Lagos not only to take more concrete steps to put an end to the slave trade (which continued into the 1840s), but by the fact that the city and its people frustrated British attempts to participate in other types of trade as well. Kosoko even put obstacles in the way of freed slaves who had been resettled in Sierra Leone and were seeking to find new homes in Lagos.

Lagos was a particularly attractive area for the British, who had pinned great hopes on the city as the main gateway to the vast, unexplored opportunities of the Yoruba interior. Once missionaries had established themselves in Abeokuta, a town quite close to Lagos, they claimed that Lagos stood in their way to developing trade in cotton and other products. They painted Kosoko as a notorious slave trader, an opponent of legitimate trade, and an obstacle to the general advancement of civilisation. It is true that Kosoko did oppose the activities of the Western missionaries. The missionaries saw this as a reason to represent him as a backward ruler who was against the British mission to civilise Nigeria.

These factors which resulted in the attack on Lagos were not helped by internal family quarrels which had been going on among the Lagos ruling families since 1811. In that year Esilogun, the first son of the reigning Oba Ekutere, was passed over and second son Adele I was appointed Oba of Lagos. Then, in 1821, Esilogun, with the backing of Portuguese and Brazilian traders and a constituency of supporters in Lagos, overthrew Adele I and put himself on the throne. Meanwhile, Adele fled to Badagri and in 1825 enlisted British support and tried without success to return to Lagos to once again assume leadership. Eight years later, this time backed by his Bini overlord, the Oba of Benin, Adele returned as Oba of Lagos, only to die within a year of his return. His successor, Oba Oluwo, reigned until 1841, dying without any heir to succeed him.

Thus the struggle for leadership of Lagos was renewed. This time the two factions who sought the position of Oba were Oluwole's cousin, Kosoko, and his uncle, Akitoye. Akitoye was eventually crowned Oba of Lagos, but Kosoko fought back and was successful in 1845, banishing Akitoye after his ascent to power.

Anxious to widen their power base and extend their control over the area, the British were quick to use these family power struggles to their advantage. Akitoye was all too happy to ally himself with the British if such an alliance would win his throne back, and the British did not hesitate in exploiting the differences between these pro-Akitoye and pro-Kosoko factions, finally backing the followers of Akitoye.

The British attacked Lagos in December 1851. Their immediate reason was that the Oba had refused, despite repeated efforts by

John Beecroft, a British agent and consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra, to sign an anti-slave trade treaty. Such a treaty had been signed by the neighbouring Egba kingdom in the late 1840s, thus drawing a sharp contrast with the Lagos refusal, under Kosoko, to have anything to do with a treaty of friendship with the missionaries or any treaty prohibiting slave trading.

Consequently, on Christmas Eve, 1851, a British naval force entered the Lagos harbour and two days later an attack on the city began in earnest. The British strike force was made up of a detachment of the West African squadron whose superior fire power far outmatched the Oba's relatively meagre defenses. Kosoko fled the city accompanied by his chiefs and closest supporters. When the conquerors finally moved into the city they installed Akitoye as the new Oba.

Akitoye did not wait for long before he signed the anti-slave trade treaty which Kosoko had shown so much reluctance to support while he was the Oba of Lagos. This act tended to support the official British view that the overthrow of Kosoko was carried out in order to suppress the slave trade on the Lagos part of the west coast of Africa. After signing the treaty, Akitoye also pledged to guarantee that missionaries would have complete access to Lagos and its environs to preach their faith. More importantly for the British, Great Britain was accorded the status of most favoured nation, to the relative exclusion of other foreign powers, with respect to commerce and trade in the general Lagos area. In return for all these concessions, the British guaranteed the security of Lagos from attack from the defeated Kosoko and his forces.

Following the capture of Lagos, a direct consular regime was established on a full-time basis and would continue to be in effec until 1861. Due to internal instability in Lagos and inter-ethnic war fare in Yorubaland, Britain needed a stable base from which t regulate her trade with the interior. This led to further expansio of its influence, power, and authority within and around the Lagos are

Meanwhile, the powers granted to the new Oba were greatl reduced, usurped as they were by the authority which the consu exercised over the Lagos consulate. The consul assumed new powe in the area of trade and the administration of justice, regulating ir ternal and external trade and settling disputes between and amon traders in his own court. The consul wielded great powers in oth areas as well, making him much more than a consular representati of the British Government. As for Akitoye, he merely accepte whatever actions the consul took since it was to the consul that h owed his office and from that same consul that he received

guarantee of continued power, reduced though it might be. When Akitoye finally died in 1853, it was Consul Campbell who picked his successor — a clear indication of who was at the seat of real power in the region.

As has been pointed out, Lagos became a British colony in 1861, just ten years after Kosoko had been defeated and banished from the city. Foreign Office instructions at the time indicate the British objectives behind this move: '... to secure forever the free population of Lagos from the slave-traders and kidnappers who formerly oppressed them; to protect and develop the important trade of which the town is the seat; and to exercise an influence on the surrounding tribes which may, it is hoped, be permanently beneficial to the African race'.

The official objectives do not refer to the commercial and economic interests which would prove to be the primary factors behind the capture. The actions and policies of the consuls who presided over the affairs of the territory during the ten-year period clearly showed that trade, particularly to the advantage of the British empire, rather than putting a halt to the slave trade or 'advancing the course of civilisation to the benefit of the African race', guided official policies in Lagos.

The British decision to occupy Lagos formally was taken in view of increasing British activity on the Niger as from about 1854. From that time on there was the hope that there could be developed an overland route from Lagos to the Niger through the Yoruba country. If this route was developed, Lagos would be the centre from which the goods would be exported. Hence Lagos was important and had to be under British control. This was the only way to ensure that British trade would be paramount in Lagos.

It must be pointed out that when Lagos was captured it was as a result of the fear of being attacked by the British that the Oba signed the treaty of annexation. Clearly the British were promoting their interests in compelling Oba Dosunmu to sign the treaty even though in so doing he was no doubt aware that this act would also serve his own interests. Aware that gun boats filled with British troops were already stationed in strategic positions around Lagos, Dosunmu signed the treaty knowing full well that if he failed to do the British bidding, he faced the real possibility of attack and certain defeat.

Lagos was ceded for the sum of £1030, payable as a pension to the Oba of Lagos. Henry Stanhope Freeman was appointed governor of the Colony of Lagos, thus establishing a new era in the history of the new territory of Nigeria.

The Ijebu expedition of 1892 and the British push into Yorubaland

With the conquest of Lagos and the establishment of a British colony in the territory, the expansion of British interests and powers into the interior of Yorubaland was inevitable. The same motivation which stood behind the establishment of British dominance in Lagos – namely, the securing and protection of British commercial aims – also applied in their bid for control of the interior of Yorubaland, including Ijebuland.

Yorubaland in the second half of the nineteenth century was an area seriously troubled by internal strife and warfare. The restless political climate dating in some cases back to the early 1820s. With a strong military structure built up over time, Ibadan was at the centre of this political tension, emerging after the collapse of the old Oyo empire as the main new force to be reckoned with in the territory. The expansion of Ibadan power brought with it a new policy of war with Ijaye, producing in its aftermath a succession of military alliances geared to stopping the rise of the Ibadan military power base.

One such alliance, known as the Ekiti-parapo, was formed between the kingdoms of Ekiti and Ijesa and resulted in confrontations which dragged on for sixteen years, becoming one of the longest Yoruba wars of the century. In the end no side was able to win any conclusive victory and each was anxious for the intervention of a third party which would relieve them of the burden of such long-lasting hostilities.

It was the British who finally mediated between the warring factions, although they were certainly more concerned with their own interests. They were able to negotiate between the two sides by threatening to apply force when necessary, and in this particular instance they used the *Saro* Yoruba, mostly black missionaries, to negotiate an end to the protracted conflicts in 1886. This treaty demarcated boundaries and required all parties to return to these boundaries and 'to submit themselves to such directions as may seem necessary or expedient to the Governor of Lagos for better and more effectively securing the object of this Treaty'.

The treaty also contained a clause which required all parties to open up their borders for free and unimpeded commercial transactions. All unsettled matters covered in the treaty, including matters dealing with commercial transactions in the areas of former conflict, were to be referred to the administration of Lagos for clarification or settlement. Indeed, contained in both the letter and spirit of the

treaty were all the conditions and grounds upon which subsequent intervention or imposition of British rule could be achieved. And, quite naturally, the logical outcome of such a treaty did not take long in materialising.

The attack on the Ijebu in 1892 was a significant episode in the conquest of Nigeria and, more specifically, in the occupation of Yorubaland. The importance of this conquest and subsequent occupation came more as a result of the signals which the defeat of the Ijebu sent to the neighbouring Yoruba kingdoms than in the physical act of conquering the Ijebu territory itself. For the Egba peoples, in particular, the fall of the Ijebu was so demoralising that it took very little pressure on the part of the British to gain submission with a promise of relative independence which they would enjoy under the 'enlightened' leadership of the Christian Saro.

Prior to the general deterioration of Anglo-Ijebu relations, the Ijebu had enjoyed a commercial boom while the rest of the Yoruba kingdoms suffered as a result of their self-imposed inter-ethnic warfare. From this commercial prosperity the Ijebu were able to build up a considerable amount of wealth. This enabled them to build a strong kingdom which was relatively better defended against any potential attacker from within Yorubaland. Thus they were able to resist for sometime any encroachment, both direct and indirect, by the British. Even after the imposition of the colonial government of nearby Lagos in 1861 and the subsequent establishment of a *Pax Britannica* regime on much of Yorubaland resulting from the treaty of 1886, the Ijebu were anxious to maintain their independence. Indeed, it was this very spirit of independence and Ijebu assertiveness in the commercial arena that the British agent in Nigeria construed as an 'insult' for which the Ijebu would be made to pay the price in 1892.

The situation was further worsened by the resistance of Ijebu rulers to missionary activities in their terrritories. It was no secret that they saw missionaries, white or black, as inimical to their own immediate and long-term interests, having learned from past experiences of the critical role played by the missionaries, in the events which culminated in the annexation of Lagos and the treaty of 1886, which greatly diminished the sovereignty of many Yoruba kingdoms. These past experiences certainly must have stood fresh in their minds as a clear indication of potential problems for their own power bases, with the missionaries perceived as the most powerful agents of the British in Yorubaland.

In response to this Ijebu resistance to missionary penetration and, to some extent, their opposition to free trade with the British, the

British opened up a new trade route to the east which bypassed the Ijebu territory to reach the Yoruba hinterland. This posed a direct threat to Ijebu income from trade and as a result dealt a critical blow to its political power. Also, as a result of this dramatic move, tensions between Ibadan and Ijebu were greatly increased since Ibadan was then able to acquire weapons and ammunition directly from Lagos without going through the Ijebu as middlemen.

Several unrelated incidents precipitated the attack on the Ijebu. One occurred in 1890, when the Ijebu turned back a white, probably a British missionary, seemingly for his failure to pay a transit fee of £50 while at the same time allowing free passage to another white missionary, this one thought to be French. Another was the Ijebu refusal 'to discuss trade' with the Lagos acting governor, Denton, when he visited Ijebu in 1891. This action infuriated the new governor, Carter, who, in 1891, replaced the generally passive Governor Moloney. A year after he became governor the aggressive Carter forced the issue of Ijebu resistance to commercial discussion with the British by landing approximately 1000 British troops to engage the Ijebu army of 7000.

Better equipped than the Ijebu soldiers, it took little time for the British to defeat their enemies, although British sources described the encounter and the performance of the Ijebu as 'unexpected'. The very fact of this admission is, itself, telling and probably indicates that, in fact, Ijebu resistance to the British attack was formidable and sustained. It is clear, then, that the Ijebu constitute the only Yoruba group which went so far as to engage the British in military combat in defense of its sovereignty. They ultimately lost when the war was lost.

The Ijebu defeat had a considerable impact on developments in the rest of Yorubaland in the concluding years of the nineteenth century and afterwards, for with this defeat came the installation of a British Resident in Ibadan, backed by a garrison of British-led troops. From their Ibadan base the new garrison was able to launch operations into territories of neighbouring towns and provinces, such as the move into Oyo in 1893 mentioned earlier.

More importantly, though, the defeat of the Ijebu brought about a profound change in the attitude of the people of Yorubaland. Before the loss they had been rather self-confident and self-assured in their dealings with the British; now most of them began to realise that what had happened to the Ijebu could just as easily happen to any of them. Hostility and resistance, both common attitudes before the defeat, began to be replaced with a general attitude of cooperation with the British in a very wide sense. This explains what

some commentators have described as the peaceful penetration of much of Yorubaland after the Ijebu defeat.

The situation in Oyo was not at all, the same with what transpired in the rest of the territory. In Oyo, former capital of the Oyo empire, a war of conquest had to be waged by the British in order to bring about its submission. In the rest of Yorubaland, however, the situation following the defeat of the Ijebu was one in which the British gradually and without much resistance were able to successfully impose their rule and authority. Thus, in Egbaland, where this changed attitude towards the British was most typically manifested, British imperial agents met with little resistance from the already Christianised and largely pro-British Saro elements who had nonetheless retained and jealously guarded their autonomy and independence.

Throughout the 1880s, missionaries achieved a considerable amount of influence in the territory, thanks to the direction and leadership of Rev. J.B. Wood. For a while, though, traditional elements in Ijebu tried to resist the British encroachment by playing the French against the British, but this tactic was doomed to failure, especially after the French and British successfully concluded a treaty in 1888 by which border demarcations in crucial parts of West Africa were agreed upon.

With the failure to cause dissension between the French and British, the Egba began resorting to a more direct way of undermining this foreign influence by closing commercial routes to British trade. This certainly caused no small amount of irritation to the British, who were determined to keep trade routes open at all cost. However the irritation was short-lived. The Egba needed little to remind them of the fate that had befallen the Ijebu, and before long the doors to unlimited British trade were opened with a treaty ensuring free trade signed in 1893 between Great Britain and the Egba.

Though in technical terms the 1893 treaty did not mean the loss of independence for the Egba, a quasi-colonial status was achieved with the installation of what was called the Egba United Government. This was created at the request of the Lagos colonial government and dominated mainly by Saro clergymen and British missionaries. Soon after the United Government was established at its headquarters in Abeokuta, the British stationed a Resident there and it was not long before the presence of this intrusion began to erode the independence of the Egba people.

Between 1912 and 1914, the British administration under Lord Lugard tried to enforce a general policy of amalgamation in Nigeria. Taxes were imposed on the people of Egba in an effort to raise funds for the administration of the regions, The Egba resisted as fiercely

as they could in the belief that they were still independent people who could not be taxed by any alien authority. British authorities reacted swiftly and forcefully, descending on tax resisters and eventually stripping away any semblance of independence on the part of the people of Egba. Gradually the independent spirit which for so long had been a part of the Egba people died a slow death as it had done elsewhere in neighbouring Yoruba kingdoms. The fall of these other kingdoms was facilitated, no doubt, by the weariness of sixteen years of war.

The collapse of the Delta states

The principal states in the Delta area whose fall paved the way for the establishment of British rule in the region were, to the east, Opobo, Brass, Bonny, Kalabari, and Okrika, and, to the west, Itsekiri and the Bini River areas.

The British increased their activities in the Niger Delta area towards the last quarter of the nineteenth century, mainly to counter French and German activities which appeared to have gained added momentum during the period. The sense of urgency was heightened especially after the Berlin conference of 1884-1885. After the conference, it became almost mandatory for European powers to substantiate their claims to territories in Africa by showing evidence of 'effective occupation'. This meant that they were required to show proof that they had established sufficient means of administering areas to which claims had been laid. They were required to show that the territories claimed were not simply 'spheres of influence' (a term we discussed earlier) but, indeed, areas which had been effectively occupied.

So intense was the competition between the British and the French in the Delta area during the latter part of the nineteenth century that British traders persuaded their government to declare the entire Delta district a protectorate. Once so declared, Consul Hewett travelled widely in the district and signed treaties of 'protection' with various rulers and peoples. These treaties eventually became bargaining tools in the hands of the British agents as, for example, during the Berlin Conference already referred to. Indeed, it was on the basis of some of these treaties that the British declared a 'Protectorate of the Oil Rivers' in 1885.

The proclamation of the Oil Rivers Protectorate over the Niger districts was the first effective step taken by the British to formalise territorial control in the Niger Delta states. Still, the proclamation raised a number of problems not only for the Nigerian peoples but

also for British officials themselves who were now on the spot to implement the policy on behalf of the British government. Following the establishment of the Protectorate, British traders naturally expected the British consul then appointed to take charge of the affairs of the Protectorate. They also expected him to take further necessary steps to ensure that regular trade would be carried out in the area without any obstruction or interference. To the traders it made no difference if in the course of ensuring regular trade Britain interfered in the internal politics of the Delta community.

It was in the Delta state of Opobo, described by historians as a small, brave city-state, that one of the first significant clashes between the British and local residents — in this case Jaja, a Nigeria middleman trader who was also a territorial king — occurred. It was not unusual that such an individual should be one of the first to be involved. After all, legitimate trade prospered enormously in this region, thus sharpening the prospects of conflict between indigenous authorities and alien British agents anxious to dominate trade and establish political control. This particular British attack on the soveriegnty of the Opobo people occurred only two years after the proclamation of the Protectorate of the Oil Rivers.

Before the clash, Jaja, the king of Opobo, had enjoyed a distinguished career in commerce, skillfully conducting trade in the entire eastern Delta area with a cleverness and firmness strengthened through allegiances with various hinterland trading towns. These allegiances had been forged as a result of marriage alliances, friendships, and, at times, military conquest. His main strength lay in his shrewdness in the process of negotiation, as can be evidenced in the favourable terms of a treaty negotiated between himself and the British in 1885 by which the British themselves guaranteed the sovereignty of Opobo.

Just one year after the British gave their guarantee of independence to Opobo, a quarrel ensued between King Jaja and the British over attempts by British traders to gain direct access to hinterland markets under Jaja's direct influence and control, particularly threatening the valuable markets of Ohanbele and Essene. An opponent to outside interference with trade in the region, Jaja used all means at his disposal to block the European traders from any direct dealing with his sources of supply. Indeed, any Nigerian trader in his sphere of commercial influence who attempted to trade directly with the British or any other foreign interest without Jaja's sanction was swiftly dealt with. A case in point involved an attack made in 1881 by Jaja's men against the people of Kwa Ibo during which property belonging to both African and European traders alike was destroyed.

Jaja's monopoly over commerce in the Delta region finally com-

pelled the British to take actions against him. British traders were resentful of Jaja's practice of trading directly with England instead of allowing British companies and individual traders on the coast access to the booming oil trade. The Amalgamated Association, formed by British and European traders to break the Jaja monopoly, failed to achieve its objective despite support received from the British consul of the Oil Rivers Protectorate. In 1887, Acting Consul H.H. Johnston forbade Jaja from exacting 'comey,' or customs duties, on traders in the Delta state of Opobo. Johnston himself told Jaja that his practice of trading directly with England without the medium of British traders on the coast amounted to unjust competition with those who had paid duties.

Jaja sent a delegation of chiefs to Britain to explain his case to the Secretary of State for the colonies. Meanwhile, Johnston threatened that unless he opened trade without further delay he would face a British attack. Jaja refused to alter his policy of independent and direct trade with England and, in fact, further tightened his control over trade with the interior. He however promised that he would stop collecting 'comey' but he did not keep this promise.

Johnston then devised a means of dealing with Jaja. He invited Jaja aboard the HMS *Goshawk* so that they could discuss the trade deadlock between him and the British traders. Initially Jaja refused to board the ship but promised to do so if his safety was guaranteed. Johnston pledged that no harm would come to him and that he would be allowed to return to land once the discussion was completed.

The pledge proved to be nothing but a hoax. As soon as Jaja had come on board he was told that he must agree to let himself be taken to Accra aboard the *Goshawk* to stand trial and that if he did not agree he would be considered an enemy and Opobo would be attacked. Faced with this dilemma, the king agreed and was taken to Accra, where he was tried and found guilty of blocking trade and failing 'to assist the British consular or other officers in the administration of justice and the development of the resources of the country'. From Accra he was deported to the West Indies, and when he was finally permitted to return to his homeland in 1891, he died en route.

Jaja's confrontation with the British was an extremely important event in the process of gradually dismantling the sovereignty and independence of the Delta peoples of southern Nigeria during the era of the partition. By breaking the King of Opobo in the way he did, the acting consul clearly demonstrated that the British were determined to use force if necessary to advance their political and economic aims. The deportation of Jaja was unique in itself in Anglo-

Nigerian relations during the period. It demonstrated that the British colonial power would let no obstacle stand in its way to replacing African middleman—traders and that it would see to it that they would be eliminated in situations where they proved themselves to be too stubborn.

In 1891, a government was established for the Oil Rivers Protectorate, collecting revenues, primarily from import duties, totalling nearly £90 000 in its first year. With Opobo now under British control, the neighouring city-state of Bonny was soon also brought under colonial control. In the same manner, Kalabari, another nearby city-state, asked for and was given a British vice-consul in the early 1890s.

Occupation of the Itsekiri kingdom

One other area of the Delta region where the British had to apply force in order to achieve their goal of occupation and domination was the Itsekiri kingdom. Here, the economic and political power was in the hands of Nana, an extremely successful merchant prince of the Niger Delta who by the last quarter of the nineteenth century had distinguished himself enough to acquire the title of governor of the Bini River.

Conquest of the Itsekiri by the British and the fall of Nana can be traced to a combination of both external and internal factors. Externally, the most important factor seemed to have been the fact that Sir MacDonald, commissioner of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, wanted as part of his general plan for the Niger Delta to annexe the Itsekiri in order to make them an effective part of the protectorate and oust any potential European rival wishing to claim the territory as its own. Internally, and perhaps the most important factor, was the presence of constant conflict between ruling families, a common feature of Itsekiri history.

This internal family warring involved three leading trading families. These consisted of two factions of the royal family-one in Ode-Itsekiri (modern Warri) and the other based in Batere-and another rival family group, the Ologbotsere family, based in Jakpa. The most important names in the Ode-Itsekiri and Batere factions were Dogho, Numa, and Tsanomi, while Nana, Idiare, and Olomu are counted among the most significant names in the Jakpa-based faction. The central issue which aggravated the rivalry between these families was the question of who would occupy the office of governor of the Bini River.

Previously, the holder of the office of governor and the procedure for appointing someone to that position were regulated in a man-

ner which managed to avoid conflict. In 1883, however, Nana, at the time was the most successful and powerful trader in region, disrupted the balance by assuming the governorship the death of Olomu, his father and the previous governor. The ing of power by the merchant prince was not unexpected in ar in which economic power was increasingly becoming more im tant than ritual or inherited power. In fact, economic and pol power had become so closely related that the acquisition of on but implied the presence of the other.

As governor of the Bini River, Nana had to contend numerous enemies, not the least of which was Dogho, who cov the position of the governor. Before long the British, too, bec his enemies. They were extremely displeased over the succes had achieved as a trader on the Delta coast and in the hinterl Indeed, the British saw Nana as the Jaja of the western Delta. comparison did have some merit. He wielded tremendous pc and control over the Urhobo oil market, to name just one so of influence. And, like Jaja, he was not only wealthy but had a opinion of his position in Delta politics and commerce as we so high, in fact, that he routinely dictated terms of trade, muc the chagrin of his British counterparts.

It was inevitable, then, that Nana and the British were hea towards a confrontation. This finally happened in the early 18 The British accusation against him was threefold: he was acc of obstructing trade in the hinterland: blocking routes of comm and participating in human sacrifice. Going through documents the time show these accusations to be false. They were put for to justify any action the British might see fit to take against the Its kingdom and its ruler.

The campaign to defeat Nana lasted from August to Septe 1894. It climaxed in Nana's refusal to board a British ship to di ways of resolving the trade difficulties alleged by his captors cording to one historian, the naval and military force built u the British to deal with him was 'easily the most impressive c tion of British forces up till that date'. The attack force was E against Nana's army at Ebrohimi, a well-defended settlement C creeks of the western Delta. The defense was strong but even lost to the invaders, thanks in great part to assistance rende the British by Dogho, Nana's archenemy, who not only f British animosity against his political and commercial rival bu showed the British the best way to reach Ebrohimi.

Nana himself managed to escape capture but finally gave h up in Lagos, where he was tried and found guilty on the by familiar charges of obstructing trade and holding back the

of progress and 'civilization'. For being such a faithful ally to the British, Dogho was awarded a medal and appointed a British political agent, a position he retained until his death in 1932. With the fall of Nana, British rule in the entire Itsekiri kingdom was fully established.

Aftermath of the occupation of the Itsekiri kingdom

British expansion efforts into the hinterland followed in earnest after the fall of the Itsekiri kingdom. Indeed, even while the campaign to conquer Nana was being waged, a significant step in the direction of such expansion was made with the establishment of three vice-consulates in Warri, Sapele, and Bini River. The first two became outposts from which the expansion of British interests into the hinterland areas of Urhobo, Isoko, and Ukwani were carried out. Expansion did not proceed as smoothly as it could have, being limited to some extent by the lack of unanimity in the policies which the administration of the Royal Niger Company pursued through Ralph More and MacDonald, vice-consuls from the early 1890s until the abrogation of the Royal Niger Charter in 1899.

Efforts at pacification in the Delta area on the part of the British marked the period between 1900 and 1914, when no major wars of conquest were fought in the region. War of a more limited nature was carried out, however. Because these were largely fragmented societies, conquering them did not involve the waging of war on any large scale; instead, each had to be subdued one at a time and in a way involving relatively small-scale skirmishes carried out by military patrols occasionally sent into these areas. Conquered in this manner were Evrho (Effurun), in 1896; Orokpo, in 1901; Iyede, in 1908; and Ozoro, in 1910-1911.

The conquest of Bini

The British conquest of Bini was long in coming but finally did occur in 1897. Unlike other Nigerian kingdoms, the Bini kingdom did not participate much in overseas trade and did not engage in other forms of general contact with foreigners during the era of the European scramble for, and partition of Africa. Indeed, during the period, there existed a royal decree forbidding all subjects of the ancient kingdom from conducting direct trade with the Europeans.

The reasons for the fall of Bini are complex and cannot be attributed to any one event like the 1897 battle which marked the actual end. In reality, the fall occurred against a background of political and

economic developments during the nineteenth century which resulted in a general weakening of Bini, making it difficult if not impossible to prevent a British assault and subsequent occupation. It was a combination of both internal and external factors, therefore, which made the fall of Bini possible.

The external factors were multiple. Like all other economies in the region, Bini's economy was dependent on trade with the Yoruba, the Itsekiri, the Nupe, and the Europeans. However, the nineteenth century witnessed certain developments which severely decreased and in some cases entirely disrupted these trading relationships, thus leading to periods of disastrous financial crisis for the Bini kingdom. For one thing, the Yoruba wars which plagued much of Yorubaland during the period disrupted overland trade routes between Bini traders and the Yoruba, thus curtailing trade. Politically, these wars also enabled some of the Yoruba states to become independent of Bini control since Bini, already weakened economically, lacked the resources to fight the Ibadan emergence as the dominant force in Yoruba politics in the course of the Yoruba wars.

The decline of the Bini kingdom was further accelerated by British efforts during the period to suppress the slave trade by stationing a naval squadron on the coast. This action was a severe blow to the Itsekiri kingdom, one of the most important Bini trading partners. This action also resulted in the abandonment of Ughoton, the main Bini port through which the bulk of its trade with outside kingdoms and foreign powers was conducted.

Equally detrimental were religious developments in the north, namely the Islamic jihad, which involved the Nupe, another important Bini trading partner. An invasion led by the Nupe during the period produced two extremely serious consequences for the Bini: it undermined trade and, to a worse degree, resulted in political instability in certain parts of the kingdom.

Internal factors which made the fall of Bini possible involved political strife, particularly the internal struggle for political leadership by princes and in some cases pretenders to the throne who tried to seize power. Political tensions were particularly acute during the 1850s, for example, when confusion and political discord followed the death of Oba Osemwede. One prince who lost his bid to succeed to the throne fled to neighbouring Esan (Ishan) and from there fomented trouble for the newly appointed Oba.

Such was the complex internal and external political and economic situation in Bini when the Europeans — the British, to be specific — decided to take measures during the second half of the nineteenth century to establish colonial rule in the territory.

In 1862, Richard Burton became the first British consular agent

to visit the Bini kingdom. The British were anxious to establish direct contact with Bini because of the fear and respect which neighbouring peoples had for it. On this first visit, though, his main intention was to seek the Oba's assistance in keeping the Itsekiri under control. As things turned out, he failed woefully. The Oba was only interested in obtaining more favourable trading conditions for himself and for those under his control. The most important consequence of Burton's visit was quite unexpected, however, and this was the misrepresentation of Bini as an uncivilised kingdom which indulged in slave trading and human sacrifice.

During the age of the European scramble for Africa, it was difficult to justify the desire to conquer Bini except, perhaps, for purely selfish and opportunistic purposes. The allegation that the kingdom had been carrying out acts contrary to the tenets of civilisation was merely a pathetic attempt at justifying the attack which would come shortly thereafter. The Berlin conference had recognised Bini as part of the British Oil Rivers Protectorate and in 1891 it was placed under the Bini River vice consul. Gallwey tried to visit Bini the following year to discuss with the Oba trade disputes between the kingdom and the Itsekiri since the Oba had been accused by both the Itsekiri and the British of hampering trade and monopolising commerce on the Bini River. When the British agent presented himself at the Oba's residence, however, the king refused to see him, an act of defiance which infuriated Gallwey.

Then, in 1892, the Oba did receive a British party. At this meeting he was presented with a treaty which would have allowed the British to not only serve in the capacity of advisors but it also provided for the opening up of the Oba's territories to free trade. The king stood his ground and absolutely refused to sign. His chiefs, however, did sign the document, which for the British meant that it was as good as law. The Oba's failure to abide by the terms of this treaty eventually became the official British justification for attacking Bini five years later in 1897.

There were actually two British attacks on Bini; both have been termed massacres, although they were certainly, massacres of very different kinds. The first, ill-fated from the beginning, was led by a Captain Phillips. Although elaborate steps had been taken to disguise the true nature of the mission, certain Bini chiefs suspected the worse since the British party came without the Oba's prior approval and they attacked the party of seven officials, two traders, and well over 200 carriers, killing all the whites except two who managed to escape, and also killing several of the carriers.

Although the death of Captain Phillips and the others was termed a massacre, this description has more recently been re-examined

and the concept of massacre seems to more appropriately fit the full-scale British attack which followed. The British forces totalled 1500 and there were surely many more deaths as a result of their attack than had been experienced during Captain Phillips' unfortunate mission. Resistance to this second attack, which lasted from February until August 1897, has been aptly described as heroic, but futile. In addition to untold numbers of casualties the Oba was forced to give himself up, after which he was exiled. He finally died in Calabar.

As we have seen, the events of 1892-1897 which culminated in the fall of Bini underline the fact that it was actually a combination of many factors which were responsible for the British attack and conquest of Bini. Contrary to the established European viewpoint, Bini was not attacked because it was suspected that the Oba might have been involved in slave trading and inhuman practice — although the truth or falsity of these allegations is certainly important for other reasons — but, more accurately, because of the need to break the commercial monopoly the Oba had over trade on the Bini River, a fact which Itsekiri coastal traders resented deeply and incessantly complained about.

A full account of the fall of Bini cannot limit itself to only the British attack in 1897. This was only the final blow in a long list of events and circumstances leading up to the collapse. Among these events were the political and economic difficulties Bini experienced as a result of internal quarreling among certain chiefs and princes, and adverse economic and political spin-offs as a result of wars in Yorubaland and the jihad and Nupe invasion from northern Nigeria.

The second phase of British conquest (1900-1914)

The conquest of northern Nigeria

Prior to the end of the nineteenth century, the Royal Niger Company was the sole agent of British administration in northern Nigeria. With the abrogation of the company's charter in 1899, however, the British were determined to stem the tide of German and French colonial intentions in the region by getting a firmer grip on the political and administrative affairs of the territory. It was essential that the Protectorate of northern Nigeria become an effective area of British control, and the British were prepared to go to great lengths to ensure this control — even if it meant using force.

The appointment of Captain Frederick Lugard as high commissioner of northern Nigeria brought the British a great deal closer to the realisation of their goals. On the first day of the year 1900 Lugard, in front of 1000 of his troops, officially proclaimed the region the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and, so proclaimed, he had the Union Jack hoisted. As Lugard saw it, the proclamation meant the taking over from the Royal Niger Company of the lands which the company had previously ruled over, the so-called 'territories of the Niger'.

The reality of the situation, however, belied the hypocrisy of Lugard's proclamation, for with or without such a proclamation, conditions were largely unchanged for the majority of the mostly Muslim people of northern Nigeria. Far more important, perhaps, is the fact that the proclamation merely served to arouse the fear and hostility of the people of the north, who were in any case suspicious of any alien administration led by infidels. To them there was no real difference in kind between rule under the Royal Niger Company and rule under this Captain Lugard.

In the opening years of the twentieth century the seat of British administration in northern Nigeria was Lokoja, while the first areas of confrontation between the British and the northern Nigeria peoples were in the southern emirates — Bida and Kontagora, then Adamawa. These emirates were important parts of the Sokoto caliphate brought together as a result of the religious wars and political reorganisation of Uthman dan Fodio in the early nineteenth century. Once the southern emirates were brought under British rule, it was a foregone conclusion that free access could then be made to the seat of the caliphate, Sokoto.

A British attack against the emirates of Kontagora and Bida was preceded by the establishment of a British military settlement in Wushishi, an area which lay between the two emirates. The opening of a station in this area was interpreted by Bida and Kontagora's emirs as a direct threat which had to be counteracted.

Their worst fears proved to be well founded. Justifying their attack against Kontagora and Bida by informing the Colonial and Foreign Offices that they were 'barbarous' and slave trading entities, the British attacked, first Kontagora in early February 1901 and next Bida two weeks later. Both battles ended in decisive British victories and the emirates fell under British control, with Lugard appointing new emirs at the heads of the two emirates. These appointments were of course made at the behest of the British and on terms clearly delineated by Lugard himself as high commissioner of the Protectorate.

Bauchi was next to fall into British hands, and this was perhaps

the easiest win of the time. For some unexplained reason the Emir of Bauchi suspected no threat when British troops were stationed only 50 miles away. As a result of his trustfulness, Bauchi was not able to put up any real resistance when the British occupied the emirate.

Gombe was no great distance from Bauchi, and it was the next to fall into British hands, even though the Emir of Bauchi, who had fled when the British moved into his city, continued to put up limited resistance efforts afterwards. The occupation of Gombe was also carried out with little resistance, and once the British were settled in these two emirates they instituted a provincial administration called the Bauchi Province, with headquarters in Bauchi. Though the British were able to occupy this area with relatively little resistance, it is important to note that pockets of resistance continued to be present in parts of Bauchi even long after the so-called provincial administration had been established. The British were engaged in various expeditions against these resistance groups in and around Bauchi from 1902-1907.

Meanwhile, other parts of the Sokoto caliphate were being pacified and integrated into the northern protectorate. Zaria was forcibly brought under British control in 1902, with a military base set up there to support the British mission of conquest in other northern territories. A year later, two additional major territories, Kano and Sokoto, fell to the British.

The most significant resistance to British attacks appeared to have been put up by Sokoto, the seat of the caliphate. There were two main confrontations in Burmi between Sokoto forces, under the command of Caliph Attahiru, and the British. In the latter, fought in July 1903 Sokoto lost some 600 men, while the British, although emerging victorious, also suffered heavy casualties. Attahiru's defeat nonetheless marked the final collapse of northern Nigeria's active resistance to British rule.

In assessing the fall of the Sokoto caliphate, it would be a mistake to discount the positive role played by Islam, which to a great extent accounted for the spirit of determination of the people in their reaction to the British thrust. Islamic belief counselled resistance to a rule that was not itself Islamic, a belief which accounts for at least some of the resistance which the British were confronted with in their bid for further expansion and power in the region. On the other hand, it may be argued that the very same set of Islamic beliefs accounted for an actual *weakening* of resistance, this coming about as a result of the fact that Muslims were also encouraged to flee if they found resistance to be hopeless.

Regardless of the positive and negative roles played by Islam

caliphate resistance was hopelessly doomed to failure. Its lack of any central organisation and its crude weapons and relatively disorganised military forces were grossly inadequate to counter the attack of the more mobile, better equipped, and better trained British forces.

The conquest of the Aro and Igboland

By the end of the nineteenth century, two cultures from the heartland of eastern Nigeria, the Igbo and the Ibibio, had remained virtually untouched by the imperial scampering which had become so common on the Delta part of the eastern region and elsewhere. This state of affairs did not last long, however. Towards the end of the century the British had begun to push into the Igbo and Ibibio hinterland.

The Aro were by far the single most important group among these two largely decentralised and clan based cultures. It was said that their preeminence in the area was due to their deity, called Ibini Ukpabi, or the Long Juju oracle at Arochukwu. Perhaps the Long Juju also explained their prominent trading position in the region; maybe they profited from the extra protection which this deity provided them as they traded from one part of the east to the other. Whatever the reason, the Aro were a formidable people in the region, sometimes enlisting the services of mercenaries to fight their wars while they became more and more prosperous.

They were not a warlike people themselves. They were not known for aggression in any place except, perhaps, the marketplace. They never sought political supremacy over the Igbo or Ibibio peoples, and when they did come into conflict with any group in the territory, it was only when their commercial and economic interests were threatened. By 1901 the Aro were the dominant middleman-traders between the British on the coast and the Igbo and Ibibio in the hinterland.

Aro resistance to British penetration initially took the form of inciting Cross River groups and others to resist the British, and to this end they formed alliances in 1899 with the Ikwo, Ezza, and Izzi clans. On another front, they also organised terrorist raids against those in the region who gave the appearance of accepting British rule. The intention was to make it clear to submissive villages and communities that their support of the British would result in severe punishment at the hands of the Aro.

Finally, in 1901 the British decided to put an end to what they perceived to be an unacceptable threat to their rule in the region. Grossly misunderstanding the role of the Aro among the Igbo and the Ibibio — they wrongly assumed that the Aro were the political leaders of, as opposed to the dominant economic force behind the Igbo and Ibibio — the British were of the opinion that once the Aro were defeated the Igbo and Ibibio in eastern Nigeria would automatically be brought under its rule. So in 1901 with a force of 87 officers, 1550 rank and file, and 2100 carriers, Sir Ralph Moor launched an attack on the Aro.

Accounts of the conflict suggest that there was little actual fighting. The terrain of the region facilitated the British campaign, and because the Aro were never really a warring people, little military resistance was offered. In addition, the few guns and mostly crude implements used by the Aro in their defence proved to be no match for the superior weaponry of the British. In a short while, then, a British victory was effected, although this did not necessarily mean an end of resistance to British activities and penetration of Igbo and Ibibio lands.

The conquest of the middle belt

The Tiv, the most conspicuous group in the middle belt of Nigeria, faced conquest by the British in the early part of the present century outside the political context of the Sokoto caliphate. This was to be expected, however, since historically they were never part of the caliphate.

Their clashes with the British were many and occurred over a relatively long period, reaching a climax from the turn of the century until 1914. This resiliency to attack is partly to be explained by the fact that they lived in fragmented, more or less autonomous communities, each independently defending itself against British or other outside encroachment.

Indeed, the Tiv had a long history of such resiliency to outside influence, vehemently resisting Islamic conversion during the jihad of Uthman dan Fodio in the early part of the nineteenth century, and during the era of slave trading they stoutly defended themselves against slave raiders. So when the British began their mission of conquest and annexation in their region, they had already been well schooled in the art of self-protection through independent means.

Fighting between the Tiv and the British was sporadic between 1900 and 1901 this being merely a prelude to their main clashes which occurred during a two-year period beginning in 1906. The

initial confrontations, following Lugard's declaration of the Northern Protectorate in 1900 occurred directly as a result of a British attempt to install telegraphic posts along Tiv areas, an act of trespass which naturally provoked local residents and leaders. British attack forces during this initial campaign — especially between February and March 1900 — consisted of no less than 350 officers and men, leaving in their wake burnt down houses and farm lands and, in some cases, completely destroyed villages.

The attack against the Tiv in 1906 occurred against the background of a commercial dispute between the Hausa and Jukun during which the latter enlisted Tiv support. Fighting resulted in the disruption of trade and, it was alleged, the destruction of properties belonging to the Royal Niger Company. To deal with the Tiv for their alleged role in the destruction of British property, a military contigent of '26 officers, 2 medicals [13 NCOs], 642 rank and file, 850 carriers, and 4 maxim guns' was assembled. This ample force met considerably weak resistance due to their more sophisticated military organisation and better weaponry. The British fought with maxim guns while the Tiv relied on their bows and arrows.

This campaign did not bring about complete 'pacification' of the Tiv but it did result in the establishment of a British military post and the subsequent administration of Katsina Ala. The campaign was followed by a period of rather peaceful penetration of Tiv lands and the rest of the middle belt, and by 1914 it may be said that British penetration had been effectively achieved in the entire region.

The occupation of Borno

The fall of Borno to the British came about during a period of intense competition for political power in the region. The main rivals were the French and Germans, who believed they had territorial claims to the area; the British, who had come to believe that under the Berlin Conference the geographical area in question had become part of their Nigerian possessions, and a Sudanese military adventurer, Rabih Fadlallah, and his son who succeeded him.

Rabih was the first to come to power, this was in 1893. When he did, he banished the royal family of the *Shehu* to several parts of northern Nigeria, after which certain family members forged alliances with various European powers. The French, for example, who by this time were active in the region of Zinder, were courted by, and eventually allied with several banished members of the royal family. As a result, a French-backed force attacked and killed Rabih in April 1900 installing Umar Sanda as the new Shehu of Bornu.

Meanwhile, the legitimate heir, the slain Rabih's son, quickly made overtures to the British to assist him in recapturing the throne.

It wasn't long before the French lost patience with Umar Sanda for his inability to pay the debt owed to them for having installed him as Shehu, so they replaced him with his younger brother Abubakar Garbai. But by this time Rabih's son had allied himself with the British, who were determined to install him as their own choice for Shehu. Unfortunately, however, his bid for power was short lived. He was killed in Guyba in 1901 during an attempt to seize the throne. To avenge his death, the British led an expeditionary force in 1902 against the present Shehu. Their justification for this act of aggression was that, according to them, the killing of Rabih's son took place on what they considered to be British territory. As a result of this campaign, the British appointed their own choice of Shehu of Borno.

With their own choice for Shehu on the throne, the British moved quickly to consolidate their hold on the region. The new Shehu was made to implement British tax-collection methods and to abandon his own methods. And to show that they meant business the British ordered one of the Shehu's trusted aides hung for abusing the British 'sense of justice' in collecting taxes.

Next, the British insisted that all citizens of Borno surrender their firearms. This was a sensitive issue to the people of the region since the possession of firearms represented to them an assurance of security. To hand them over to the British meant to them that they were surrendering their independence and guarantee of survival. The firearms were finally surrendered. However, it took two years from 1902-1904 before they would capitulate.

Finally, the British insisted that the capital be moved to Kukawa. The Shehu was reluctant to make this move but finally gave in and Kukawa became the new capital in 1904. When the Shehu finally moved to the new seat of his reign, on 30 September 1904 Lugard officially presented him with a staff of office after forcing him to swear to an oath of office.

It can be seen from the preceding narrative that the process by which the British occupied Borno was to a great extent different from the relatively more violent and turbulent process by which other parts of the country were put under British rule. Borno's special historical circumstances mitigated any pitched war of conquest by the British against established power bases in the region. Indeed because of factional conflict long embedded in Borno society, the British were looked upon by the people as a deliverer from historically turbulent Borno politics, and they took advantage of this favourable situation by quickly adding Borno to their Nigerian estate.

The conquest of, and subsequent imposition of British colonial rule over Nigeria had enormous consequences for every segment of the society. By definition, colonial rule meant the administering over the political and economic lives of the Nigerian people by a foreign power primarily for the economic and political benefit of the colonising power.

With the British colonisation of Nigeria came widespread cultural contact between Nigerians and Europeans, thus replacing the relatively limited contact which had been the case during previous centuries when European influence hardly went beyond the confines of coastal towns and cities. Increased contact with a larger segment of the population resulted in profound changes in religion, law, architecture, technology, and concepts of social stratification. This effected the gradual disintegration of traditional Nigerian society as the various peoples of the region were brought under a unified British administration. During times past, the primary concern of the British had been with trade and the general promotion of commerce; with colonisation, new objectives — cultural integration and the desire to alter the basic traditions and customs of the society — were also added.

In addition to introducing Western culture and customs to the Nigerian peoples, an entirely new world of economic possibilities was opened up to a large segment of the population — this, too, contributing to the further disintegration of traditional values and customs.

The new rules of commerce which came with colonisation had deeply felt effects on the entire trading structure of the country. Head porterage, for example, gave way to modern systems of transportation, and free trade areas were opened up. This deprived the indigenous rulers of the opportunity to collect customs and tolls as had been part of the previous system. Portable currency was also introduced for the first time, and with this the creation of a new consumer mentality following the introduction of more and more European goods into the Nigerian market.

With the conquest and subsequent colonisation of Nigeria also came a unity of hitherto disparate and politically antagonistic groups. British administration of the area gave rise to a period of relative cooperation and harmony which after the amalgamation of 1914 was somewhat diminished by administrative measures introduced by the colonial regime. A Western-oriented economy was born.

But perhaps the most radical change introduced by the British after

the conquest was the introduction of Western education. Initially more encouraged in the south than in the north, the new educational system soon became the key to success in the new economic order. And as a direct result of this revolution in schooling, English was established as the official language of the government and the English language ultimately played a key role in the spreading of the Christian faith.

The silent revolution in Nigeria following the British conquest occurred initially mainly in the southern part of the country. After the conquest of the Sokoto caliphate to the north, few administrative changes were introduced there and for several years administrative matters remained more or less as they had been before the conquest. The British found the traditional emirate system of government under the leadership of various emirs to be suitable for their purpose

Summary

1. By the end of the nineteenth century the Europeans had moved inland from the coast of the hinterland and were beginning to effectively influence the course of events in the area in which they settled.
2. The British conquest of Nigeria was accomplished in two distinct phases. The first occurred between 1851 and 1900. It began with an attack on Lagos in 1851. The British then conquered Yorubaland, the Niger Delta and finally Bini in 1897.
3. The second phase of the British conquest of Nigeria took place from the turn of the century until 1914. This phase involved the conquest of the Sokoto caliphate, Borno, middle belt and the Igbo and Ibibio hinterlands.
4. In 1861, ten years after Kosoko had been defeated and banished from the city, Lagos became a colony of Britain.
5. The Ijebu defeat had a considerable impact on developments in the rest of Yorubaland in the concluding years of the nineteenth century. The defeat brought about the installation of a British Resident in Ibadan, backed by a garrison of British led troops. From their Ibadan base the new garrison was able to launch operations into territories of neighbouring towns and provinces.
6. In 1885, the British proclaimed a Protectorate of Oil Rivers over the Niger districts. This was the first step taken by the British to formalise territorial control in the Niger Delta states.

7. The second phase of the British conquest of Nigeria started with attacks against the emirates of Kontagora and Bida. The attack was preceded by the establishment of a British military settlement in Wushishi, an area which lay between the two emirates.
8. The most significant resistant to British attacks in the north during the second phase was put up by Sokoto.
9. Wrongly assuming that the Aro were the Political leaders of the Igbo and Ibibio, the British, in 1901 launched an attack on the Aro. They thought the defeat of Aro would mean the surrendering of the entire Igbo and Ibibio peoples.
10. The conquest of Borno marked the end of the British conquest of Nigeria. The resistant by the citizens of Borno was completely eroded with the surrender of their firearms to the British invaders. However, it took two years, from 1902-1904 before they finally capitulated.

Questions

ssay

Give a concise account of the British occupation of Lagos, 1851-1861.

2. Outline the factors which led to the collapse of the Delta states in the later part of the nineteenth century.
3. Examine the role of internal factors in the 1897 British conquest of Bini.
4. Account for the British conquest of the Sokoto caliphate and show why resistance to British attack failed.
5. Account for the relative ease with which the Tiv and the Aro were conquered by the British.
6. Examine the significance of the British conquest for subsequent political, economic, and social developments in Nigeria.

Multiple-choice

1. The British conquest of Nigeria was accomplished in two phases,
   A. 1851-1861 and 1861-1904
   B. 1851-1900 and 1900-1914
   C. 1861-1884 and 1885-1914
   D. 1840-1951 and 1900-1914

2. The most important reason for the British occupation of Lagos was
   A. the desire to put an end to slave trading
   B. to secure and protect British commercial aims in Lagos and the Yoruba interior
   C. to Christianise the people of Lagos
   D. political glory
3. In order to establish a peace treaty in 1886 between the warring Yoruba people, the British used
   A. the French
   B. the Americans
   C. the *Saro* Yoruba
   D. the Ijebu
4. The British did *not* attack Ijebu in 1892 because
   A. of the spirit of independence and assertiveness of the Ijebu in the commercial arena
   B. the Ibadan people instigated the British to attack the Ijebu
   C. the Ijebu were hostile to missionary activities
   D. the Ijebu refused to discuss trade in 1891 with Lagos Acting Governor Denton
5. The Protectorate of the Oil Rivers was established in
   A. 1886
   B. 1884-1885
   C. 1885
   D. 1900
6. The first significant clash between the British and indigenous Nigerian authorities in the eastern Delta of the Niger occurred
   A. on Itsekiri lands
   B. in Opobo
   C. in Kalabari
   D. in Bonny
7. The most important individual in the sphere of commerce and politics in the Itsekiri kingdom during the later part of the nineteenth century was
   A. King Jaja
   B. Dogho
   C. Nana
   D. Oba Ovonramwen
8. The first formal act of British control in northern Nigeria was marked by the declaration of a protectorate over the northern area on
   A. 1 January 1900
   B. 1 January 1914

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NIGERIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY is a new textbook specially written to fully cover the requirements of the new History of Nigeria curriculum for Senior Secondary year two. The text is well researched with emphasis on the important events in the period, notably the jihad, military warfare, missionary activities, new commercial developments and British conquest. The book is written in a language which the students will find very easy to understand.

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