

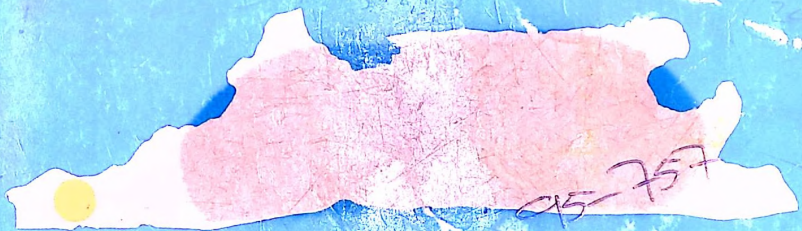
NC
OT
5159
B132
B132

WBN

113

BADAGRY

A study in History
Culture and Tradition
of an
Ancient City



Edited by:
G.O. OGUNREMI
M.O. OPELOYE
ŞIYAN OYEWƏŞÇ



BADAGRY

A study in History

CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

of an

ANCIENT CITY

UNIVERSITY OF IBBADAN
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

957 8757

Published by:

Rex Charles Publications

P.O. Box 22015 University of Ibadan Post Office

Ibadan Oyo - State (022) 317951

in Association with

Syndicated Communications Ltd.

Theodolite House (2nd Floor)

New State Hospital Road,

Adeoyo Ring Road,

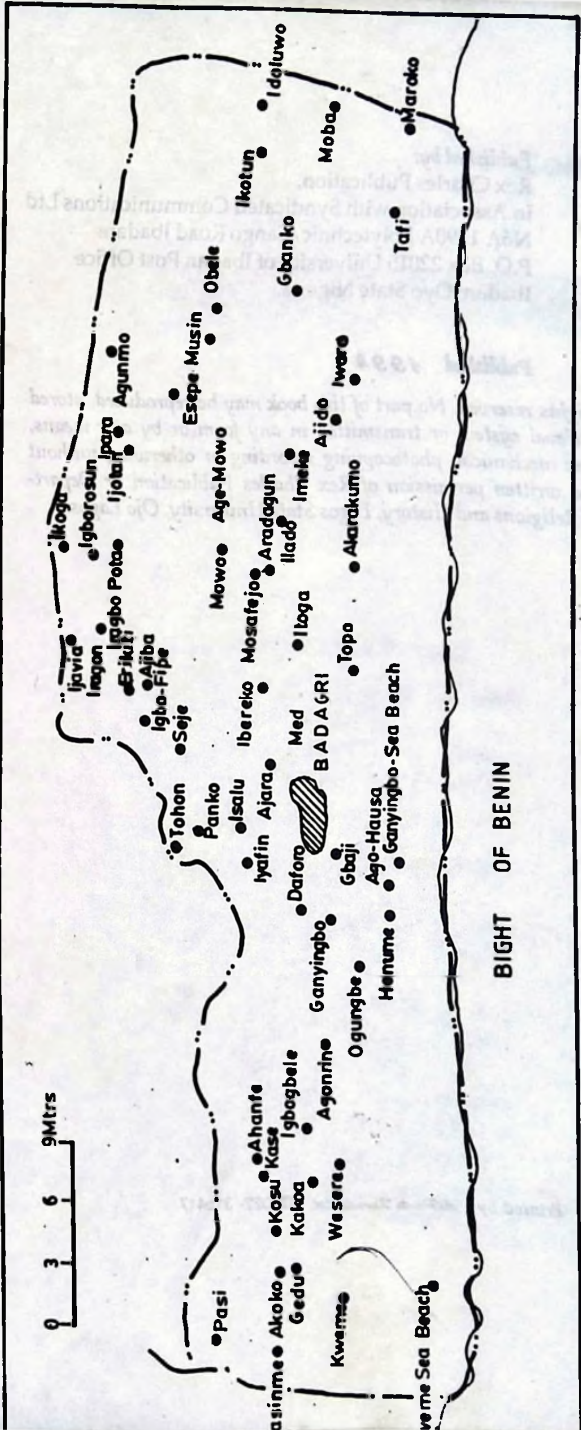
Ibadan, Oyo - State.

(022) 315417

Rex Charles ISBN 978 2137 - 24 - 3

Syndicated ISBN 978 31115 - 6 - 6

Printed by: Adprints Konsults-Ltd. (022) 315417



BIGHT OF BENIN

THE EXTENT OF BADAGRY AS AT 7TH JULY 1863.

Published by:
Rex Charles Publication,
in Association with Syndicated Communications Ltd.
N6A 1390A Polytechnic/Sango Road Ibadan.
P.O. Box 22015 University of Ibadan Post Office
Ibadan, Oyo State Nigeria.

Published 1994

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic mechanical, photocopying recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Rex Charles Publication or Department of Religions and History, Lagos State University, Ojo Lagos.

Printed by *Al-Printers Kowale Ltd* ☎ 022- 315417

Contents

		<i>Page</i>
	<i>Dedication.</i>	vi
	<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	vii
	<i>Preface</i>	ix
	<i>Acknowledgment</i>	xi
CHAPTERS		
Section I: INTRODUCTORY PAPERS		
1	Micro History in the Service of National Development - I.A. Akinjogbin.	1
2	Badagry in the Eyes of Time — Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I, The Akran of Badagry.	9
Section II: HISTORICAL STUDIES		
3	The 'Ogu-Awori' Peoples of Badagry Before 1950: A General Historical Survey.	15
4	The Dialogue between Geography and History in Badagry: An Economic History Review — G.O. Ogunremi	37
5	The Fluctuating Economic Fortunes of a Nigerian Sea Port: Economy and Trade in Badagry to 1900 — Kehinde Faluyi.	49
6	Ecology and Economic Development, Agriculture, Trade and Transportation in Badagry C. 1880-1950 — Ayodeji Olukoju	72
7	The International Boundary and Underdevelopment in Badagry — L.C. Dioka	90

8	Smuggling in Badagry 1861-1989 — Adebayo Adeogun	109
9	Inter-Group Relations in Frontier State: The Case of Badagry — L.C. Dioka and Siyan Oyeweso	128
10	Women in Badagry Economy 1800-1900 — M.M. Faseke	154

Section III: THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

11	Preliminary Notes on Zangbeto: The Masked Vigilante Group Among the Ogu in Badagry — Adefioye Oyesakin	165
12	The Growth and Influence of Islam in Badagry — M.O. Opeloye and I.L. Akintola	176
13	Christian Evangelism in Badagry — D.F. Asaju	192
14	Origin and Development of Catholic Church in Badagry — C.A. Ariri-Chidomere	212
15	Religious Interactions: Factors of Syncretism in Badagry Religious Life — D.F. Asaju and R.M. Owanikin	222
16	Religious Interaction in Badagry: An Islamic View Point — M.A. Muhibbu-Din. and M.O. Junaid	233

Section IV: SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES

17	The Physical Fabrics of Badagry: A Develop- mental Discourse — Ayo Omotayo	251
18	Problems of Urbanization and Development in Coastal Towns: The Case of Badagry — Tayo Odumosu	261
19	Badagry Local Government as a Vehicle of Development: An Appraisal — I.A. Olojede	271
20	Social Life and Customs in Contemporary Badagry — Laide Adedokun	286
21	Tourism Potentials in Badagry Area: Oppor- tunities and Challenges — O. Ojo	295
22	Badagry: The Religious Functions of Ag- balata Market — Alaba Simpson	305

23	The Degree of Bilingualism of the Ogu Speakers of Badagry - Implications - J.K. Avognon.	314
24	Border Township: Multilingualism and Internationalism in Badagry — Rotimi Johnson	324
25	The Transit Camp Theory and the Educational Development of Badagry between 1850 and 1900 — A.O.K. Noah.	331

Section V: BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES

26	Trends in the Development of Education in Badagry — Oyenike Olorunda	338
27	Oba C.D. Akran: An Assessment of His Contributions to Political Modernisation in Nigeria — H.A. Ekiyor	344
28	The career of Seriki (Faremi Williams) in Badagry 1870-1919 — H.I. Tijani	354
29	The Political Ideas of Hundeyin — Abubakar Mornoh.	365
30	T. Ola Avoseh: The Historian of Badagry — Siyan Oyeweso	378

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the people of Badagry and especially the Akran of Badagry Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I whose enthusiastic support and interest contributed in no small measure to its publication.

Contributors

1. I.A. Akinjogbin, a retired Professor of History, Department of History, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.
2. His Royal Highness, Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I is the Akran of Badagry.
3. Kunle Lawal is a Lecturer in the Department of History, Lagos State University, Ojo.
4. G.O. Ogunremi is a Professor of Economic History and Head of History Department, Lagos State University, Ojo.
5. Kehinde Faluyi is a Senior Lecturer in History Department, University of Lagos, Akoka.
6. Ayodeji Olukoju is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Lagos, Akoka.
7. L.C. Dioka is a Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Lagos, Akoka.
8. Adebayo Adeogun is a Lecturer in the Department of History, Lagos State University, Ojo.
9. Siyan Oyeweso is a Lecturer in the Department of History, Lagos State University, Ojo.
10. M.M. Faseke is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, Lagos State University, Ojo.
11. Adefoye Oyesakin is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of African Languages and Literatures, Lagos State University, Ojo.
12. M.O. Opeloye is an Associate Professor and Head of Islamic Studies Unit, Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.
13. I.L. Akintola is a Lecturer in Islamic Studies in the Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.
14. D.F. Asaju is a Senior Lecturer in Christian Studies in the Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.
15. C.A. Ariri-Chidomere is a Lecturer and Head of Christian Studies Unit, Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.

16. R.M. Owanikin is a Lecturer in the Christian Studies Unit of Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.
17. M.A. Muhibbu-Din is a Lecturer in the Islamic Studies Unit of Department of Religions and Philosophy, Lagos State University, Ojo.
18. M.O. Junaid is a Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Lagos, Akoka.
19. Ayo Omotayo is a Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Planning, Lagos State University, Ojo.
20. Tayo Odumosu is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Planning, Lagos State University, Ojo.
21. I.A. Olojede is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Lagos State University, Ojo.
22. Laide Adedokun is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, Lagos State University, Ojo.
23. O. Ojo is a Lecturer in the Department of Geography, Lagos State University, Ojo.
24. Alaba Simpson is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, Lagos State University, Ojo.
25. Rotimi Johnson is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English, Lagos State University, Ojo.
26. A.O.K. Noah is a Lecturer in the Department of Educational Foundations, Lagos State University, Ojo.
27. Oyenike Olorunda, is in the Department of Curriculum Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo.
28. H.A. Ekiyor is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Lagos State University, Ojo.
29. H.I. Tijani is an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of History, Lagos State University, Ojo.
30. Abubakar Momoh is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Lagos State University, Ojo.
31. J.K. Avoguo is a Senior Lecturer in French in the Department of Foreign Languages, Lagos State University, Ojo.

A detailed academic study on Badagry is long overdue when one considers its position of historical importance as an ancient town. The preponderance of documentary materials on it made available by the explorers, missionaries and colonial administrators make the study more urgent.

Badagry, founded around 1425 A.D., is populated by the Ogu (erroneously called Egun by the Yoruba) immigrants from Gold Coast (modern Ghana) Dahomey (modern Benin Republic) and Togo and the Awori, a Yoruba speaking race. Thus, making the town a bicultural as well as bilingual community.

In view of its strategic location, Badagry has at different times played different roles of socio-economic importance in the course of its history. It was a frontier state sharing borders with the ancient Kingdoms of Dahomey and Port' Novo before the creation of the international boundaries. It was an important southern terminus during the trans-saharan trade and also a famous harbour for the notorious trans-Atlantic slave trade.

In addition, it was a major market, a trading entrepot and a commercial centre serving the Aja and Yoruba countries. As a coastal town, it was the main port serving the Yoruba hinterland up to the second half of the 19th century. Badagry was the first base of the christian missionaries in modern Nigeria as well as the first point of call of the explorers and the colonialists.

All these made the town to be of great importance to the historical development of Nigerian hinterland. Even today, in spite of its proximity to Lagos, it still maintains a recognizable position. It is an administrative and Local Government Area headquarters.

The growing importance of Badagry makes its study a worthwhile exercise. It was in realisation of this that the Department of Religions and History, Lagos State University, made "Badagry History and Culture" the focus of her first conference. The Conference attracted erudite scholars drawn from various academic disciplines who presented scholarly papers

on different subjects and the conference theme.

The lead paper entitled "Micro History in the Service of National Development" was presented by Professor I.A. Akinjogbin of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. Most of the papers presented touched on Badagry's history, culture, religion, economy, politics, sociology, geography etc.

This book contains thirty chapters, divided into five sections viz:

- (i) Introductory chapters
- (ii) Historical studies
- (iii) Theological studies
- (iv) Sociological studies
- (v) Biographical studies

Though it is unusual, two methods of referencing are accommodated in this work (the traditional numbering method and the A.P.A. method which is indicated within the text). This is due to the different backgrounds of the contributors. It should be noted that some contributors refer to Ogu as Egun. However, wrong use of Ogu terminologies are reduced to the barest minimum. It is hoped that the book would be of immense benefit to future researchers on Badagry.

Editors.



Acknowledgment

The National Conference on Badagry History and Culture gave birth to this book. It is therefore pertinent to thank those who contributed in no small measure to the success of the conference. First, the University Administration under the Vice-Chancellorship of professor (Mrs.) Jadesola Akande who was magnanimous to approve that the conference be sponsored by the University. Our most heartfelt gratitude goes to His Royal Highness Whenu Aholu Meno-Toyi I, the Akran of Badagry and his Chiefs, particularly Chief Ajose-Harrison for their enthusiasm to host the conference.

Next was Professor 'Deji Ogunremi, who as the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences gave the much needed support and encouragement. One cannot but thank Dr. M.O. Opeloye, the Ag. Head of Department of Religions and History, who left no stone unturned to ensure the success of the conference. We must thank Mr. E.A. Adeniji of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo who when he was at the Lagos State University on sabbatical leave pointed the attention of the department to this study. We also recognise the efforts of our colleagues in the Department, particularly those of Siyan Oyeweso and the Heads of Units. The contribution of Dr. H.O.D. Danmole on Sabbatical Leave in the Department from University of Ilorin deserves special mention for he processed the assessment of the conference papers to make them worthy of publication. Last, but by no means the least, was the wonderful assistance of Mr. Fola Boye of Rex Charles Publication, who accepted to publish the work for us without taking any advance payment. Their intervention came at the nick of time. If not for this kind gesture the book may not have come out so soon for lack of funds.

It is our sincere hope, notwithstanding the economic depression, that similar conference on other major cities of Lagos State will be organized in future from which would emanate works of this nature.



**HIS MAJESTY DE WHENO
Aholu Menu Toyi I (OFR)
AKRAN OF BADAGRY**

1

Micro History in the Service of National Development

by: I.A. AKINJOGBIN

I thank the organizers of this National Conference on the history and culture of Badagry for inviting me to give this keynote address. My gratitude goes to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Professor 'Deji Ogunremi, a colleague and friend of many decades. I also commend Dr. M.O. Opeloye, the Acting Head of the Department of Religions and History, an engaging scholar for his untiring efforts to ensure that I am here today. Last, but by no means the least, I thank the Vice-Chancellor, Professor (Mrs.) Jadesola Akande, for hosting this academic conference.

When the *Ground work of Nigerian History* was published in 1980, it was realised by scholars that a large chunk of the history of Nigerian peoples was yet to be included. That a considerable chunk was excluded was not the fault of the originators of the book or of its editor. Nor was it because the work was done in a hurry; for it took more than ten years of preparation before the idea was concretised into a book form. Rather it was because of the distinctive nature of what should constitute Nigerian history up to 1914 and the state of knowledge at the time of preparation.

It is common knowledge that before Nigeria was brought together into a single nation state by the colonial powers, most of the component communities, some would call them nationalities, had existed as autonomous units for hundreds of years. Their developments were far from uniform; while some of these communities were still gatherers, wandering virtually naked in the bush and highlands, some had just emerged from that stage and were beginning to settle in permanent abodes. Yet others had formed kingdoms and empires that could stand side by side with any of their contemporaries any where in the world.

However, it should be noted that some of the communities were so isolated that they had never come into contact with any other groups beyond themselves, while others had traded and conducted civilized diplomatic relations with both the eastern and the western worlds. All these people, at different levels of awareness and cultural antecedents were brought together as Nigerians – with equal rights under the Nigerian law.

Now, unless we study the historical antecedents of all these people, we may be in danger of falsely assuming the true nature of the history of our country. Furthermore, we may therefore be guilty of expecting too little or too much from people of different historical experiences to perform at the same level. When we operate under false historical assumptions, national development suffers.

To this end, all the economic theories, memorised by our brilliant economic advisers of government rest on the assumption of a uniform level of cultural and historical experiences as implied by the phrase *ceteris paribus*. Where such is not present, that is where *cetera nonpares sunt*, simply assume that they should be, the theories tend not to work as expected.

Whereas, if we know the historical and cultural baggage of the different groups making up Nigeria, we can at least adapt those theories or better still create new ones that would suit our circumstances.

This is why the study of micro history, the study of the histories of the various communities that make up Nigeria, is very essential. We need these studies to give us a complete picture of pre-colonial period. Once we have that as the foundation, the structure we are building, the Nigerian nation, will stand on firm knowledge. There is no way of shortcircuiting it. We either know the historical antecedents of the various Nigerian communities and build a virile nation on that knowledge or we continue to run from one crisis to another.

Perhaps we should make a clarification at this point. Each of the communities in Nigeria know their own history, at least, enough of it to give them confidence in themselves as human beings. What we are advocating here by emphasising the study of micro history is that this knowledge be made available to the general Nigerian public, and that the knowledge be integrated into the general Nigerian cultural baggage.

There is another reason why this study must be undertaken quickly. Those local people who know their community histories are diminishing in numbers. For as young people are sent to school where these things are not taught, they do not stand a chance of knowing them. The only opportunity they will ever have is if the knowledge is gathered quickly and incorporated into the general Nigerian history.

However, the study of micro-history must not be an end in itself but a means to an end. We must be careful not to create cultural particularism in the minds of the small communities we are studying. Rather, we must encourage them to see themselves as little chips in the puzzle that is Nigeria and that without Nigeria, they are merely isolated chips and without them Nigerian history remains incomplete.

It is within this context that the study of micro history is a worthwhile academic exercise. Other similar studies such as this have been done.

Some of you here probably participated in the History of Lagos State project, which has been published. Also, already published is a similar one done at Kano. One each on Katsina and Port Harcourt have been published outside this country.

Furthermore, one on Ijebu-Ode and another on Ife, are still to be published because academic publishing in this country has virtually collapsed. I am sure that there are many more micro-studies of various parts of Nigeria at various stages of completion. Your study of Badagry will therefore be a useful addition to the growing literature.

There are three main reasons among others why this exercise on Badagry should be approached in such a multidisciplinary way. When scholars meet like this to rub minds together, each discipline learns from the methodologies and conclusions of the others and every scholar is intellectually enriched beyond material imagination.

This is one aspect of academic life that non-academics find difficult to understand. They wonder what exactly we derive from exercises like this that do not bring money, material possession or power. They cannot see that intellectual nourishment gives the whole personality, and even life itself, a meaning beyond self. This continuous enrichment of the mind sets academic pursuit apart from other mundane pursuits and scholars must endeavour never to give it up for the pursuit of less worthy ends. The Holy Bible in Proverbs ch 8 v. 10 says "Thus ... knowledge rather than the choice of gold."

The second reason why Badagry deserves to be studied is that it is a border town. This is not just in the sense of being a colonial border between English and French speaking spheres of influence even though that is true. Beyond that, it is a border community between two African language groups the Yoruba and the Ogu. As a town which integrates two different languages even though within the same cultural continuum, Badagry has characteristics that could teach humanity some lesson in peaceful co-existence.

Practically everyone in Badagry is bilingual in Yoruba and Ogu. Its geographical environment, the lagoon system, makes it mandatory for the economic and social life of Badagry to be integrated into Yoruba and Ogu worlds. Instead of imposing a colonial boundary that we have found impossible to maintain after an unusually heavy expenditure, maybe an understanding of Badagry's pre-colonial existence will teach us a lesson or two on how to keep boundaries.

The third reason why Badagry should be studied, is that such a study would show man's unconquerable will to survive in spite of all odds. It's location cannot be said to be ideal geographically, surrounded as it is by lagoons and marsh lands. Yet by sheer will, the people have been able to

tame the environment for their survival and indeed prosperity. Surprisingly they did not ask for foreign aid or get into debt in the process.

Acursory look at the history of Badagry will further buttress this point. The present site where it now stands is the second since the town was constituted in 1724, over two hundred and sixty years ago.

The first site, which was situated about twenty-four miles north of the present site became recognisable between 1724 and 1727 when refugees moved there from the kingdoms of Whydah and Allada which were conquered and incorporated into the kingdom of Dahomey by Agaja, king of Dahomey between 1708 and 1740.

These refugees were probably not the original founders of Badagry but guests who came to take solace in an already existing settlement. Their presence however swelled the population and gave the small village an added importance. Within the next ten years, this first Badagry had become an important commercial centre, flourishing on the export of slave trade across the Atlantic. It competed, sometimes successfully, with Porto Novo and Whydah in the volume of slaves exported to Europe and America.

This economic prosperity created two problems for settlement. Internally, there were succession disputes that could not be resolved peacefully. Whenever a prince lost the contest to the throne he withdrew to a territory not too friendly to Badagry and from there tried to instigate rebellion and encourage external attack. The second problem was that economic rivalry developed between the ports, particularly between Porto Novo and Badagry.

From about 1776 onwards, Porto Novo became the foremost port of Oyo and the then Alaafin Abiodun, would do anything to protect it and enhance its fortune. Competition from Badagry was therefore unlikely to be tolerated by Oyo. In 1784, because of a combination of factors, the Alaafin ordered that Badagry be destroyed and he got all the surrounding kingdoms to comply, even though some of them appeared to disapprove of the action. Lagos under Kutere did not directly participate in the attack, but prevented Badagry from getting provisions. In the event, Badagry was destroyed in 1784 and its surviving population moved to the present site. Some of them who fled to Lagos were well received and settled there.

The foundation of this new Badagry coincided with a period of great changes at home and abroad. The mighty Oyo empire which ordered the destruction of the old site started to collapse in 1796 and never recovered until 1836 when its capital, old Oyo, was abandoned. The trans-Atlantic slave trade, on which rested most of the economics of the coastal towns, Badagry inclusive, declined, first, as a result of the French revolution and Napoleonic wars and then, because of the British abolition of the slave

trade.

The Yoruba civil wars which became intensified from about 1821 revived the slave trade and therefore the economic fortunes of the coastal towns. On the other hand, they caused great political changes in Yorubaland and prompted mass migration of population from one part to the other. Some of the forced mass migration resulted in the foundation of Abeokuta around 1830.

In the next two decades, Abeokuta made efforts to extend its power to the coast and make Badagry its port. At the same time, Porto Novo, which Oyo had used as its agent of destruction of Badagry, now lay claims on it since Oyo was no longer in position to wield political influence there.

This was the context within which Badagry existed in the last years of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. The result was that internal conditions in Badagry were chaotic. At some points, the central authority was so weak that each of the quarter chiefs were claiming virtual independence of the central authority. It was during this era that we hear of chief of Spanish town, chief of English town and so on. The ambitions of the powerful neighbours, Porto Novo and Abeokuta, did not make for stable internal conditions as each disgruntled chief could flee to either place and seek its support.

By the middle of the 1850's, the colonial powers were becoming interested in Badagry. Repatriated slaves of Yoruba origin from Sierra Leone made their contact with their nativeland through Badagry and it was there they first settled and planted their new religion - christianity.

British authorities in Lagos soon discovered that they needed Badagry port for maximum income through import duties. At the same time, the French wanted it as the port through which they could reach the interior of Yorubaland and cut the Yoruba hinterland off from British influence in Lagos. Some British traders in Badagry were not too keen to have Badagry as part of Lagos, for if it remained a free port, they would not pay import duties and their profits would increase. In the end, it became part of the British colony of Lagos, thanks to the efforts of people like Thomas Tickell.

This potted history of Badagry typifies the experience of most communities in Nigeria, who have also experienced peace, wars, mass movement, economic prosperity and poverty. It is a micro-study of Nigerian History. Their survival to date also typifies man's unconquerable determination to survive.

What is unique in the case of Badagry will be the specific issues which confronted the people, the leadership that emerged during each period, the methods used to solve the problems and the lessons learned by the people as reflected in their lores, proverbs, and material cultures general-

ly. In all these, the study of Badagry as indeed all micro historical studies can enrich the general history of Nigeria.

Some concerned citizens might ask, with some note of despondency in their voices, "but who is interested in any historical study, whether micro or macro, apart from a few of you who refuse to see that you can make more money in some less vigorous ventures?" Their despondency will surely have arisen from the general anti-intellectual and more poignantly anti-history climate now pervading the whole country.

You read in the news papers everyday, complaints about the great damages that have been done in the last five years to all grades of education in all parts of the country. But those damages are nothing compared with the determination to suffocate the study of history out of existence. History is no longer a subject to be studied in the primary and lower secondary schools. Even local histories are not allowed to be taught. It is allowed in senior secondary classes, but then who will be interested in a subject he has never heard of in the previous nine years of education?

In other words, it is almost like ensuring that no one offers the subject even though it is in the books. From there, it is a short cut to saying that when the 6-3-3-4 system of education becomes fully operational, the departments of history in our various Universities may have to be closed down, since they will have no students.

Yet, it is difficult to imagine that the eradication of the knowledge of history from Nigerians is a deliberate intention of this present government, or of any government in Nigeria, past or future. Surely, the governing elite engaged in the gigantic task of integrating the numerous groups into one nation state of Nigeria, knows, or ought to know, the invaluable help that historical knowledge will contribute to this task.

Ignorance of each other's historical and cultural antecedents breeds fear of each other; fear breeds suspicion, suspicion leads to hatred and hatred is through the study of the history and culture of various Nigerian people in such a way that each one will begin to see its relationship to the others. That way the "One indivisible nation" which we are seeking to build, will be feasible. By obliterating the study of history from our educational institutions, we are negating the very ends we mean to serve.

The second reason why government should rethink its policy towards the study of history in our educational institutions is for the government itself to be able to measure in any meaningful way whether it is progressing or not. It is very easy to be moving without making any progress. That is what is called motion without progress or moving in circles. If you are not aware of what went before, what issues arose, how they were tackled and what the consequences were, when similar issues arise again, you are

unlikely to be any wiser, in spite of pompous speeches and apparent hard work. You may not even know that similar issues arose before.

If for instance, the present ruling elite in Africa remembers that the present economic plight of the continent afflicted Egypt in the 1870's and that the present solutions being proposed for its solution by the Western powers were used then to salvage Egypt, which in the end was not salvaged but lost its independence to the West, then the present African leaders might be less sanguine in the ultimate result that they would achieve through the application of the present policies called different names in various African countries.

The third reason is that if you want a rapid economic and technological advancement, you cannot do it behind the back of history for that will be attempting to move forward in amnesia. The result again will be circular movement. Indeed it could be worse, you could be destroying the very base of what you are attempting to build.

Fourth, any individual who does not know his history lacks self confidence. If a Nigerian does not know the history of his country, the moments of its victories and the reasons for its failures, he cannot be expected to be nationalistic. He cannot be expected to be proud of his heritage or of his citizenship. Have you ever asked why so many important black Americans want to know more about Africa? It is to recover their dignity and self confidence. Have you ever asked why many so called Nigerians give such a bad image of their country in foreign lands? One reason is that since they have never known Nigerian history, even the recent ones, they have no image of Nigeria in their minds that they want to protect.

Do we complain that corruption is now rampant among the high and low in Nigeria? In the absence of any knowledge of the corporate growth and goals of the country, each official sitting by our collective resources, sees himself as constituting Nigeria and helps himself to it. A study of the history of Nigeria will inculcate nationalism into the minds of the individual, show him where he is part of the whole, and how he can benefit or harm the whole by his actions or inactions. MAMSER can surely benefit from a knowledge of Nigerian history.

We can go on and on, but I hope we have said enough here to show that micro historical studies can contribute immensely to the understanding of the general Nigerian history and that Nigerian government must reverse its present attitude towards the study of history and actively encourage and cultivate the intensive study of Nigerian history.

Almost one and half decades ago, I advocated that the Nigerian government "should consider, as a matter of priority, the establishment of a National Institute of Historical Research. Its duties should be to conduct detailed and intensive research into the various collective experiences of

the Nigerian People." The need for such an institute is as great today as it was in 1977 when I called for it.

work. You may not even know that in the
 If the instance, the present state of the
 present situation of the country is that the
 that the present situation is that the
 power were used that is to say, the
 voted but that the intention is to
 leaders might be less engaged in the
 achieve through the application of the
 names in various African countries
 The third reason is that if you want a
 advancement, you cannot do it behind the
 attempting to move forward in a
 movement, indeed it could be worse
 based on what you are achieving today.
 Fourth, an individual who does not
 himself. It is not enough to know the
 mind of the nation and the reason for
 to be nationalistic. The country is
 his citizenship. Have you ever asked
 Americans want to know more about
 and self confidence. Have you ever
 give such a bad image of their country
 since they have never known. We
 have no image of Nigeria in their
 Do we complain that corruption is
 low in Nigeria in the absence of the
 and goals of the country, each of
 sees himself as contributing to the
 history of Nigeria will include
 individual show him where he is
 of them the work by the nation
 from a knowledge of Nigerian history.
 We can go on and on, but I hope we
 into historical studies can come
 the general African history and
 its present attitude towards the
 and cultivate the necessary study
 Almost two and a half decades
 ment should consider the
 from a Institute of Historical
 detailed and intensive research in the

2

Badagry In the Eyes of Time

 WHENO AHOLU MENU TOYII – *The Akran of Badagry*

The History of Badagry is the history of waves of migration of people from the West African sub-region. According to tradition, this ancient town of Badagry — Ogbagleme or Gbagle — in short in the Ogu language of the people was founded by a great ancestor — Akran Gbafoe around 1425. Gbagle (Badagry) has the rare privilege of having recorded many firsts in the West African sub-region. It was the first town in West Africa to become urbanised and boast of a two-storey building built in 1845. This building still stands on its original site till today.

Badagry was befittingly christened Canterbury of Nigeria during the courtesy visit of the Akran's Palace by the delegates to the World-wide Anglican Consultative Council Conference (ACCC) on 17th July, 1984. The delegates were led by His Grace, The Most Revd. and Rt. Hon. Robert A.K. Runcie, The Archbishop of Canterbury and President of the Council. The town is the birthplace of Methodism in Nigeria. It was the first town where christianity was first preached in Nigeria in September, 1842 by the Revd. Thomas Birch Freman and William De Graft under the famous and historic Agia Tree.

Gbagle also has the singular feat of being the first Nigerian town to celebrate the first Christmas on 25th December, 1842 throughout what is now known as the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with Revds. Freeman (Methodist) and Townsend (Anglican) officiating. The town which housed the first ever church building (constructed with bamboo leaves) is unquestionably and indeed the christian pilgrimage town of Nigeria. Furthermore, it was the premier town of modern education having in 1845 nurtured in the first-two storey building, an institution for comprehensive education, theological studies and vocational training.

Ogu Language and People

The Badagry people are the OGU people erroneously called *Egun* by other Yoruba-speaking people as a result of the effect of metal sounds. Their

language is also called the OGU language. They are from four main-stocks namely:

1. The Ga/Ewe,
2. Whedah,
3. The Whemes and
4. The Whlas (Whras) respectively.

The Yoruba traders from the hinterland later settled in and around Badagry and environs. The Ogu people of Badagry have their kith and kins in the Peoples' Republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey), Ghana (formerly Gold Coast) and the Togo Republic respectively.

They are enterprising and industrious people — fishermen, farmers and craftsmen. They settled along the coastline stretching from Kweme sea-beach (the border area between Nigeria and Benin Republic) through the main town to parts of Lagos area chiefly Tin Can Island previously well known as "Aimlofide" and Menukunme contracted to "Mekunwen" and other parts of the then Bar Beach now Victorial Island, Lagos. It could be aptly said that Badagry spreads through the Badagry waters — Badagry creek to the sea — coastal front of Lagos.

Religion

The people from time immemorial had their own religious denominations with notable shrines of **Hevioso** located at Vede-Genvie, **Loko-Magbeyon** at Agbalata (Ogbata) **Nabuluku (Nabruku)** at Jegba, **Adiye and Topodun** and **Adikomoh, Whlakoh, Ajaloko** at Ganho, **Made** at Adaiiko (Adariko) **Ahoviko Quarters, Vlekete** at Posukoh (where Richard Lander was tried as a spy of the British Government, forced to drink a poison to prove his innocence, but survived the ordeal).

The Ogu Toplisen Shrine

Situated at Hunto is an important shrine of very great historical significance as the hierarchy and the extended congregations of the various traditional groups joined by other well-wishers coverage around this shrine to watch the crowning ceremony of past and present Badagry Monarchs — The Akran of Badagry.

The Ogu people of Badagry particularly the traditional religionists just like their christian and muslim brothers have a strong belief in the supreme God — The Almighty, referred to as "JIWHEYEWHE" or MAWU or OSE ("Se) — The creator and accepts "JIWHEYEWHE" — The Almighty God as the supreme being, untouchable, the mightiest, the owner of the universe and of all things around us.

In spite of the different religious faiths held by the people, Badagry continues to enjoy unprecedented religious tolerance and understanding — a great pointer to the cultural development of the Ogu people. In fact, the modern Arcade for the site of the Agia Tree where Christianity was first preached in Nigeria is directly beside the Central Mosque in Badagry.

The Monarchy Wheno-Aholuship and Traditional Administration Egun Omo Ahoru

The sentence — “Ogu vi, Gunnu Vi, “Aholu vi” meaning the Ogu child, the prince/princess, the child of the Ogu king” has been from the beginning of times the appellation used by our Yoruba kinsmen for the Ogu people from Badagry and other Ogu-speaking areas. This appellation is a manifestation of the loyalty to and unqualified support for the monarchy — The Wheno Aholuship in Badagry and environs from the earliest times.

The ancient main town of Badagry is divided into eight quarters namely:

- (1) Jegba, (2) Ahovikoh, (3) Boekoh, (4) Awhanjigoh,
- (5) Asago, (6) Ganho, (7) Posuko and (8) Whlakoh

JEGBA, the first of the quarters — which is the quarters with the royal beads and crowns — has been the seat of the Wheno Aholu — The Akran of Badagry. The other seven quarters are headed by traditional white-capped high chiefs (with specific traditional functions and responsibilities over various villages within the entire Badagry area). The quarters and titles of the high chiefs are:

Quarters	Title of the Traditional White-capped High Chief
Ahovikoh	WAWU
Boekoh	MOBEE
Awhanjigoh	JENGEN
Asago	BALA
Ganho	AGOLOTO
Posuko	POSSU
Whlako	FINHENTO

The installation and coronation ceremonies of the Akran were performed with solemn and lengthy traditional rites which set the Akran apart as a great monarch and as a symbol of love, unity and understanding of the Ogu people. In addition to his position, as the father of the entire Ogu people in Ogu land, the Akran is seen as the people's personification, re-incarnating all his ancestors back to the origin of the dynasty and as the titular head of all the various sects of traditional religions in Ogu land.

The appointment of King Akran – who must always be a prince from the Akran Royal House – was by divination supported by the people through the kingmakers. The Wheno Aholu Akran, the white-capped traditional high chiefs, the district heads – Totagans have from time immemorial been responsible for the administration of the Badagry (gbagle po oto le o) and adjoining areas before the advent of the colonialists. To date, seventeen monarchs/king Akrans have reigned in Badagry beginning from Wheno Aholu Akran Gbafoe. The Wheno Aholu, The Akran of Badagry presides over the traditional council row known as the Royal Council of King Akran of Badagry.

Badagry – Political

The history of the European “scramble” for and eventual partitioning of the African continent is noteworthy chiefly as a result of the well-known Berlin West African Conference of 1884–1885. In Badagry, a Franco-British frontier commission met in 1885 and established boundaries of Republic of Benin and Nigeria. This in effect placed Porto Novo in the former French territory along with Ketu while Badagry and Imeko in the north fell to the east of the artificial frontier in what is today Nigeria.

Earlier, on 7th July, 1863, the Treaty of Cession was signed by the Akran of Badagry and his high Chiefs on one hand and the representatives of the Queen of Great Britain on the other, thus ceding the town and territory of Badagry under Lagos or Lagos territory.

In fact, Badagry under whatever treaty had not been placed at any time under Lagos according to available records from the colonial office. The treaty also approved in unmistakable terms, effective from 1st July 1863, a total payment of £500.00 as yearly pension and allowances to the King Akran of Badagry and his white-capped high Chiefs.

Trade, Commerce, Industry and Treaties

Badagry was a notable commercial centre for precious commodities like spices, beads, palm produce which attracted sufficient economic activities in the maritime field. The infamous business – the slave trade – also had its share in the commercial business of Badagry during the nineteenth century. Around 1825–1827 early explorers like Richard Lander and Captain Clapperton were in Badagry to explore the possibility of trading with the people.

About 1864, ocean-going vessels were in Badagry and it was on record that on 23rd September 1864, an ocean-going steamer “EUCASTADOR” having Lfmos as the Captain sailed from Badagry to Europe carrying economic crops as export goods. On the import scene it is important to

note that on 4th March 1863, an ordinance was enacted that a duty of nine pence per dozen and four pence and half penny per gallon be levied on all beer imported on and after this date into Badagry.

The traditional Ogbata (Agbalata) market which initially was the slave market at Posukoh and abolished in the 1880's became a market specifically for legitimate trade around Asago and Awhanjigoh and Hunto areas.

The Agbalata market meaning "the swamp head" – located near the coastline and by the swamp had grown beyond a city market to the status of an international market attracting several people from Ogu speaking areas of Benin Republic, Ghana, Togo and some other African states. Badagry was one of the earliest international ports in Nigeria and one of the earliest gateways to international trade.

It served as the port for the Atlantic slave trade in the seventeenth century which was stimulated by the need for labour in the mines and plantations of the new world. It was not surprising therefore that the position of Badagry led to the discovery of Lagos harbour and the growth of the city of Lagos that was later to become a prominent metropolis.

From the above information, it could be inferred that the treaties and conventions entered into between the Akran of Badagry and his high chiefs and the Queen of Great Britain during 1842 and 1864 were apparently to prepare the grounds for the eventual commercial development of Badagry which led to the discovery of Lagos harbour and the development of international trade in Lagos.

The people of Badagry are endowed with rich cultural heritage which enable them to develop their traditional occupation and vocations like fishing, farming, traditional building construction and furniture works, basket making, mat weaving, pottery, piggery, fish processing and black-smithery and local gin distillation. Traditional festivals e.g. Zangbeto, Avo-Hunwe, Ogu and Hevioso feature prominently in and around Badagry where all the farm products, the sea, river and swamp foods and materials are put into use and processed as festival materials.

Births, marriage, naming ceremonies, traditional chieftancy installation ceremonies, deaths, co-operative trade groups and social groups anniversaries are important occasions for the display of the rich culture of the people of Badagry which from time immemorial had attracted visitors/tourists to this ancient and historic town.

The rich culture of Badagry had enabled the people to realise the importance of certain days of the week like: **Azanvogbe**, **Ggboezangbe** or **Awulezangbe** (Sunday), **Atezangbe** (Monday) or **Aholuzangbe** (Thursday) when the people should rest, take stock and show greater devotion to the Creator – Almighty God, or for Monday – (Atezangbe) commence a profitable venture in clean environment, effect continuous

cleaning of the environment as many times as possible to facilitate and promote wealth and prosperity.

Equally important is *Aholuzangbe* (Thursday) when the king commands his subjects to effect some schemes or enforces certain laws for public good.

I remember that in 1977, during my coronation ceremony, I appealed to the Federal Military Government to establish a port in Badagry. Although, the economic climate might not be quite fair for such a project, we in Badagry sincerely believed that *Gbagle* naturally is richly endowed with all potentials for the establishment of a port for import-export trade with the ECOWAS countries, a salt refining industry, a petroleum refining industry, a glass and pottery works and of course the promotion and development of the Tourism Industry – a major foreign exchange earner.

I will therefore seize this opportunity to passionately appeal to the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, The Lagos State Government, worthy investors from all over the globe and all the friends of Badagry to come over to Badagry – the ancient and historic town of brotherly lover, the town of great traditions, the gateway to modern civilization and the peaceful haven – a place of refuge which gave protection to notable Kings of Lagos and other internationally known personalities.

Finally, may I sincerely on behalf of my high chiefs, the district heads (Totagan) titled chiefs and the whole people of the Badagry area congratulate Professor Deji Ogunremi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Dr. M.O. Opeloye, the Ag. Head of Department of Religions and History, Lagos State University, Mr. Siyan Oyeweso, The Conference Organising Secretary, Guest Speakers and eminent participants from other universities trusting that the result of this important conference will undoubtedly identify and truly confirm the fact that Badagry – the town of great traditions, and culture stands at the apex as an ancient and historic town in today's Federal Republic of Nigeria.

It is my fervent prayer that *Ogbagleme* (*Gbagle*), The town of changes now undergoing a dramatic renaissance will definitely see exciting changes in due course.

Vive LASU.

Vive *Gbagle*. (Badagry)

Vive Nigeria.

Long Live LASU.

Long Live *Gbagle*. (Badagry)

Long Live Nigeria.

3

The 'Ogu-Awori' Peoples of Badagry Before 1950: A General Historical Survey

KUNLE LAWAL

Introduction

One of the poverties of the existing historiography of the Badagry area has been the focus on the 'Gun' speaking peoples of the area at the expense of their Awori brethren.¹ This has somewhat led to the emergence of the tendency to assume that the area was essentially a 'gun'-speaking area. A closer examination of the history of the area would reveal the contrary. Available evidence, in fact, shows that the whole area of modern Badagry was originally peopled by the 'gun' and the Awori contemporaneously.² As would be shown below, some areas actually witnessed autochthonous settlement by the Yoruba-speaking Aworis who were later dislodged by the 'Guns'.³

This chapter attempts to present a background survey of the general history of the Badagry areas before 1950. In achieving this objective, this writer divides the survey into three major sections, namely: The 'Gun'; the Awori; and the Agonyin – the three major linguistic groups to be found in the area under study. The chapter concentrates on the necessity of acknowledging the fact of interdependence of all the groups identified, judging from such factors as: geographical complementarity and contiguity; similar natural endowments and disadvantages; as well as common historical experiences.

It is also important that the area being considered in this chapter should be identified for ease of understanding of the intricate link in the historical development of the area. The present Badagry Local Government Council area of modern Nigeria is the target area. However, a selective discussion of the settlements in this area becomes unavoidable for obvious reasons. In a furlong or vast geographical area with many towns, villages and hamlets with similar historical experience and cultural affinity, studying individual settlement may become repetitive even though unique experience may be a persuasive factor in doing the contrary.

The factor of space and need for brevity is also an important consideration for the selective approach in the discussion of the settlements in the area. However, and as would be shown below, developments in one area affected the other in a way that would suggest that contiguous areas would normally influence themselves in more ways than one. One useful example of this observation is the manner of the peopling and sedentarization of modern Badagry township, the seat of the local administration of the area under discussion.

The Gun-Speakers

The majority of 'gun' speakers in Badagry area inhabit the modern town of Badagry and its immediate environs. This area stretches south-westwards to include the purely coastal settlements of Gberefu, Ganyingbo, Weshere, Kweme, Gbaji and eastwards to include the Ajara group of villages Aradagun, Ajido, Mowo etc. All the previous attempts to discuss the early history of Badagry agree on "migration" as, perhaps, the most important factor for the sedentarization process in the area.³ Thus, migrations generally determined the nature and scope as well as the settlement pattern of the gun-speaking people, as those of the Awori people in modern Badagry area.

Linguistically speaking, the 'gun' are 'a sub-group of the larger Aja cultural complex which embraces not only the Fon area of the ancient Kingdom of Dahomey and Mahin to the north (of Modern Benin Republic) but also includes the Ewe of Togo'.⁴ The 'gun' of Badagry are the offshoot of those who migrated to the area from Whydah, Allada (Porto Novo), Wemie, Savi and Jakin.⁵

One of the most pictorial information on the nature of the Badagry terrain before 1842 has been given by Archibald Dalziel in his *History of Dahomey*. Up till the 1780s, 'Badagree' which was a neighbouring port of trade to Dahomey was

only inhabited, occasionally, by a few people belonging to the shipping and some natives in the pay of the captains, for the convenience of recovering goods from on board, and transporting them across the lake, and through the adjacent swamps to the different factories, which are settled at the towns some miles back in the country.⁶

This picture could be held to be true until the mid-1860s.

In recent times, a picture of a virile society, with a well-established system of political organisation as well as social set up has come to be painted of the Badagry society of the pre-British rule area. For instance,

Avoseh talks of many Akrans who had ruled over Badagry well before 1863.⁷ This position may be a variant of the tendency to present Badagry as a well-developed settlement with a long history of centralised political system and governmental set-up before 1842. However, available evidence may not support such assertion.

The Coastal Scene

The spate of migrations to the site of present Badagry area also accounted for the development of such antiquated settlements as Ganyingbo, Weshere and Kweme. In the case of Ganyingbo, for instance, its founder, Wholu came from Genwhegbo, a settlement somewhere between modern Benin and Togo republics.⁸ Wholu led a migration to the Ganyingbo beach with another princely personality who moved further east to the Irewe area. However, unlike the other migrations which were engendered by wars and raids, the Wholu-led migration into Ganyingbo area appears to have been determined by economic consideration as they were in search of better living conditions.⁹

This would suggest that the Ganyingbo settlement pre-dated the Agaja Trudo wars of expansion. This group of settlers were essentially salt makers who also developed a clay-brick industry with their womenfolk specialising in mat-weaving and pottery. A recent archaeological excavation by one Dr. Phillips from the University of Ibadan suggests that Ganyingbo had existed well before the Agaja Trudo's wars of the mid-18th century.¹⁰ Indeed, oral accounts indicate that it was the raids and wars which forced them to move further south to the site of present Ganyingbo village. The people actually constructed a canal to deter the invaders.¹¹

Closely related to the foregoing development is the founding and growth of settlements by the Keta or Aganyin peoples. Apparently a much more recent settlement than those of the 'gun', these villages were established by itinerant fishermen who came to the Gberefu area from Modern Ghana, passing through the Seme area.¹² One of the earliest of such settlements was Yovoyan founded about the early 20th century.¹³ Others are Asakpo, Tosuri, Aḳoro etc. The one at Asakpo seems to have been originally established at Agonvi and later in Keta with the assistance of the family of Aivoji, who appear to be a direct descendant of Wholu, the leader of one of the early 'gun' settlers in the area.¹⁴

Other 'gun'-speaking settlements outside Badagry township itself included a number of villages which colonial records refer to as 'small and insignificant'. One of the largest of such villages was the "Ajara group of villages made up of Topa, Vetho, Doko, Agamaden. Others are Age-

Mowo, Ajido, Ebute-Olofin, Ikoga, Igborosun and Pota.

One of the most prominent of this group of 'gun' settlements to the north east of Badagry township is Ajido. The people of Ajido claimed that they migrated to their present site from a place called *Whara Whegbo* in modern Benin Republic as a result of war declared on them by King Gezo.¹⁵ Thus, Ajido can be said to have been founded in early 19th century (c. 1830s or 1840s). The migration of the Whara Whegbo people under Ado took them through such areas as Ahaji, Godome, Abanla, Ope and Kefnou. At Ajido, the people first settled at a site called *Homme* (palace) where they also played a game known as *Aji*, similar to the Yoruba *Ayo*.¹⁶ It was after this game that the town was named Ajido.

Considering the fact that the newly established Ajido town had years of organised political administration behind it, the government of the town was under the Oba of Ajido assisted by a council of chiefs. These included: Vokogun, Hunga, Gagbo, Agbasagan, Soyongan, Saga, Awhenga, Sumn and Ogoga. Important decisions of the King and his council were made known to the people through the *Zangbeto*, a form of night guard who looked after the town. Other awe-inspiring institutions in Ajido were: Gbembo (the most revered), Sindo, Verekete, Agbeye, Tomegu and Topodum.¹⁷

The centrality of the *Zangbeto* as the foremost institution for social security could be seen in the division of the town into five quarters with each having its own *Zangbeto* meeting place. In practical terms, the *Zangbeto* cult could be likened to the *Ogboni* cult among the Yorubas. Membership of the *Zangbeto* was opened to all males over the age of eighteen years. Unlike the *Zangbeto*, the *Gbembo* cult had the responsibility of training the society's adolescents for a period of three years in selected cult houses in the town. These young people were tutored in the niceties of societal norms and conventions. After three years of training, the young ones emerged bearing new names and wearing the deity's tattoo.¹⁸

The people of Ajido were mainly fishermen. Those of them who did not fish either farmed or produced oil. For the women, fish smoking, mat-weaving and trading were their major occupations. Apart from these, the women were also involved in pottery. Of all the gun-speaking people of Badagry, the Ajido people enjoyed a considerably warm relationship with their Awori neighbours. They influenced their neighbours as much as they were influenced by them. It is thus proper to see developments in the one influenced by developments in the other. A cursory look of the founding and growth of the Awori communities will elucidate this position. However, a consideration of the activities of Europeans would seem to be as important in the historical development of the Badagry area as those of

the Awori-speaking peoples.

Perhaps most important for our understanding of Badagry's transformation from a seemingly neglected backwater area into a popular commercial centre was the activities of European traders. Within the local population, aspects of the traditions relating to the original settlement of Badagry suggests that it was founded by a Dutch trader, Huntokonu.¹⁹ This much, as it may be unacceptable, may in fact be a reflection of the importance of the European in the drama of permanent settlement of Badagry. These three categories of sojourners, one can argue, hold the key to the mystery of who the early set of permanent settlers of Badagry were. The reasons for this view are not far to seek.

Modern Badagry may in fact have been one of the asylums developed by those of Dahomey neighbours fleeing from the expansionist wars of Agaja Trudo.²⁰ Dalzel, whose career in these areas has been well-preserved in his memoirs has recorded many series of migrations of the people in the vicinity of the old Dahomey Kingdom in the wake of the powerful military machineries unleashed on the area by Trudo.²¹ Most of Trudo's wars of expansion resulted in several migrations eastwards and northeastwards to the periphery of the Awori country on the Badagry creek.

Drawing from the traditions within Lagos circles (popularised and reduced to writing by Prince J.B.O. Losi), Akinsemoyin, a prince of Lagos was said to have taken refuge in Apa, (near and (not) Badagry) in the early 18th century.²² With the main line of transport and communication being the stretch of water (the Badagry Creek) running from Lagos to the Badagry area.

It would appear strange that Akinsemoyin did not sojourn in Badagry but Apa. This is not to disregard the claim that Akinsemoyin's mother was from Apa and that this may have acted as a more emotional pull for him to go there than stay in Badagry. In spite of this, one can also argue that Apa and not Badagry became the choice because the latter was still largely unattractive as a sedentary settlement. When it became such, Badagry became the logical political asylum of Lagos princes.

For the Europeans, Badagry became important only in the 18th century and this was because of commercial reasons more than any other factor. A.F.C. Ryder has analysed aspects of the growth of Badagry as an important trading centre in the 18th century.²³ Nevertheless, he implies that this was so especially when Apa (the ancient Yoruba Kingdom south-east of Badagry) had declined.²⁴ For instance, Hertog, a Dutch trader moved his headquarters from Apa to Badagry in 1736, while it became an important link in the ivory trade which took off from the port of Ughoton.²⁵

Badagry would seem to have retained its commercial importance be-

cause the late 18th and early 19th centuries were those of prosperity for her as a port town used for export of trade and other articles such as cloth probably from the Yoruba interior and Lagos. Badagry's attraction as a market town would seem to have been boosted because it was almost simultaneously developing as a cosmopolitan settlement.

Socio-Political Set-up before 1851

Asiwaju implies that prior to British rule, Badagry had no centralised government since there was "no one in the Western District who commanded the natural obedience of all the others".²⁶ This position contrasts sharply with the claim by some sources within Badagry that the town had developed the institution of Akranship since the dawn of its history.²⁷ Any attempt to reconstruct Badagry's political history before 1900 cannot avoid getting involved in this debate.

It would appear to this writer that the tendency to ascribe contemporary political advancements to pre-colonial times may be behind the latter claim. The picture that seems plausible in terms of the political organisation of Badagry before 1842 appears to be that of a confederal set-up, more or less an association of quarters under different ward or quarter head. These quarters, such as *Posukoh*, *Ahovikoh*, *Whrakoh*, *Asagoh*, *Awhanjigoh*, *Boekoh* and *Ganho* operated more or less on equal basis. However, it would appear that over time, but definitely not before 1800, the Akran (who belonged to the *Jegba* quarters) became the *primus inter pares*.

Although the circumstances and mode of the transformation of the Akran into the most important chief in Badagry is still not clear, an educated guess can be hazarded to present some possible explanations for this phenomenon. One useful picture of the political arrangement in Badagry before 1842 has been given by the Lander brothers.²⁸ Richard and John who visited Badagry in the mid-1820s noted that the chiefs of the principal wards in Badagry took on the titles of Kings of European nationals settled in different wards of the town.

The reference to Akran as the King of the Portuguese may in fact indicate that the Portuguese settled under the umbrella of the leading ward head at *Jegba* quarters. The same can be said of the English traders who may have found the ward head of *Ahovikoh* Wawu(n) a useful ally and the French who seemed to be protected in Badagry by the *Jengen*, the head of *Awhanjigoh*.

While the Akran may have been the most senior of the chiefs that oversaw affairs in Badagry, the seemingly flexible nature of his pre-eminence would seem to have combined with the heterogeneous nature of the settlement to have made Adele Ajosun's sojourn in the town a regal and

royal one. When Adele was expelled from Lagos as a result of some political disputes in 1821, he ended up in Badagry where he lived a life of royalty and was in fact allowed to head the administration of the town with the indigenous chiefs of Badagry under his overall authority.³⁰

Indeed, Richard Lander noted that the Akran, the senior chief of Badagry was one of Adele's principal lieutenants.³¹ Contemporary traditions in Badagry deny this, the major reason being that it was inconceivable that a town would allow a foreign royalty to take over the responsibility of its government when in fact that town had its own indigenous administration. Yet it is this same argument which probably cements the view that government in pre-Adele's Badagry was essentially a loose association, largely uncoordinated except perhaps during emergencies (such as the infrequent threats and actual times of war for which the area was then known) and that it was the advent of Adele that encouraged some form of centralisation of political power.

The attempt by one Zofun to refuse Adele's admission into Badagry and his subsequent expulsion from the town on this account is probably indicative of the refusal of majority of Badagry chiefs to be dominated by one individual considered to be of equal status. It may also be an indication of Zofun's own unpopularity. Details of the career of Adele at Badagry would seem to indicate that his stay in that town must have brought considerable political transformation and his exit may have created a vacuum which was later filled by the Akran, who by this time appeared to have become the *primus inter pares*.

The socio-religious set up of the town of Badagry up till 1842 would seem to be largely that of a society undergoing some transformation from what appears to have been a commercial transit camp into a trading centre. That Badagry was not a highly populated settlement before 1770s and slightly less sparsely so till the beginning of the 1800s would appear to have been a phenomenon brought about by natural forces. Although, blessed by the lagoon front of the Badagry creek, the town did not enjoy the patronage of big European trading argosies because of the sand bar which cut the lagoon away from the sea.

The town's lagoon and river system was to accommodate only canoes and medium sized ferry boats, that did not require big anchor and propeller to operate in its relatively shallow waters. This would perhaps imply a settlement of principal traders and middlemen who acted on behalf and under the direction of Europeans traders. These indigenous group were largely 'gun'-speaking.

At the same time, field work by this writer has revealed that around the town of Badagry itself, pockets of settlements of non-'gun'-speakers did develop either before or contemporaneously with the town. Apart from

the Yoruba settlement of Apa, well to the southeast of Badagry, other groups such as Mahin, developed settlements around the town. I have argued elsewhere that the phenomenon of migrations from areas to the east of Lagos by a group of *Ilaje*-speaking peoples of (the Mahin) should be taken well in hand in any consideration of the settlement pattern of the Lagos area and which in this instance includes those settlements around Badagry and beyond up till Porto Novo.³³ Some of such settlements founded by the Mahin was *Kese*, Soki-ere to the southeast.

The importance of the presence of these non-'gun' speakers in Badagry is to buttress the observation that the town was largely heterogeneous. This heterogeneity would seem to have dictated the numerous types of ancestral worship and a variety of shrines that were established in the town. The individualistic trait in the 'gun' would also appear to have encouraged individuals to undertake religious worship the way each person perceived it.

While it is reasonable to suggest that corporate religion amongst pre-colonial Africans was often represented by the religion of the government (in this case, the royalty), pre-1842 Badagry seemed to offer freedom of religion to its members. Details of the introduction and growth of Islam and Christianity into Badagry have been the subjects of many authoritative studies and these need not concern us here.³⁴ That Badagry was the first corporate home of Christianity in modern Nigeria and from where it was spread to many other parts of the country and considering the fact that there was no known incidence of religious intolerance towards the adherents of Islam from the largely traditional population of the town is probably an evidence of the general acceptance in the town that its heterogeneous origins included religious pluralism.

The Swampland

Unlike those of their brethren in modern Oyo Local Government area, whose geographical area is an expanse of land full of creeks and often covered by a network of swamps and lagoons, the Swampland of Badagry Local Government mostly inhabits the inland areas. While modern road and waterway developments have changed the face of this area considerably, it still remains one of its old features. Although they may appear different, the Swampland are fundamental historical and cultural attributes in other words, aspects of the unique peculiarities of individual settlements. Swampland were generally slave-catchment, historical, economic and social centres.

In the Swampland, the 'gun'-speaking peoples, the Swampland were generally slave-catchment, historical, economic and social centres.

migrated south at various times before 1800.³⁵ They had all, without exception experienced incessant raids from the Egba and Dahomey warriors.³⁶ These invasions often led to the disbandment of a whole community or disruption of communal peace.³⁷ Also without exception, they all speak a low and slurred dialect of the Yoruba language.

In terms of economic activities, while the riverine Aworis were mainly fishermen who engaged in this occupation by adopting different methods such as *Obiriki* (small lead-weight nets) cast from a canoe and other forms of traps set along the margin of the mangrove, those in the upland combined some other forms of occupational and commercial activities with fishing. These included farming, their main crops being beans and cassava, the collection of bamboo (from raphia palm) and firewood, and the burning of charcoal for sale. They also engaged in the business of reaping of palm produce and tending of vast coconut plantations.

Others engaged in boat (canoe) building for service of the fishing industry as well as transportation over the creeks and lagoon waterways that dotted the area. The Awori women are mainly engaged in mat-weaving, dyeing and pottery, the latter being especially encouraged by the availability of clay from the Islands in the main Badagry creek; as well as cracking of palm kernels where oil was produced.

Socially, the Awori-speaking people cherished and recognised the authority of their elders in social and cultural organisation of their societies.³⁸ Mostly, they worshipped Oro and Sango among other Yoruba deities. By the end of the 18th century when Islam was introduced, a number of them became muslims while various forms of christianity also existed. The architectural style common among the Aworis was that of houses constructed of wattle in the simple rectangular form quite different from the Yoruba system of large family compounds in favour of alignment in streets with distinct quarters and the house of elders or chiefs as nuclei.

By the dawn of the 20th century when European rule became firmly entrenched, the British colonial government categorised the Aworis of modern Badagry Local Government into an umbrella "Western Awori Group". This group consisted of the inhabitants of about twenty five square miles of land (approximately) to the north of the main Badagry creek and on the immediate west of the Ologe creek system. The leading towns in this area (which will be focus of our attention here) were Ilogbo, Iworo, and Ilado. These settlements, though generally called Aworis were of mixed stock and considerably intermarried with the 'guns'. However, they were generally more akin to the Aworis than the 'guns.'

In various ways, these Awori settlements interacted with their 'gun'-speaking neighbours. Aspects of these inter-group relations witnessed in-

termarriages and even migrations. They also quarrelled over farmland as they were mostly geographically contiguous. At various times before the middle of the 20th century, most of the towns looked up to Badagry township for support in terms of access to European colonial administration. For most of the second half of the 19th century, Chief Seriki Abass acted as their *Baba Isale* (Patron or Intermediary) with the Europeans in Badagry.³⁹

Other forms of interactions also existed. For instance, the Aworis of Ale intermarried with the Jengens of Badagry and even consulted the family from time to time.⁴⁰ The Ilogbo-Awori had close link with one 'Chief Aminu' of Badagry (an Oyo descendant who wielded a lot of influence in the town) while the people of Ilado took many of their problems to Posukoh quarters in Badagry.⁴¹ However, the close-knit relationship between the Awori people and the 'gun'-speaking ones of Badagry should not blur the unique and rich history of individual towns and settlements. Thus, a brief sketch of the past of some of the towns in the area will be useful.

Ale (Araromi)

There are two major versions of the traditions relating to the founding of Ale town. Nevertheless, the versions agreed that one Oshuku was the founder. For the first version, i.e. the one related by the people of Ilogbo and Ado-Odo, Oshuku left Ojo, through Ibiku (now Ibiye) on the Ologe lagoon to settle at the present Ilogbo from where he proceeded to establish the settlement at Ale. Oshuku was said to have brought the Alaworo deity (Ojo's principal deity) from the Iloro quarters of Ojo where he once lived.⁴² Clearly, Ale was a much more recent settlement than Ilogbo.

However, the Ale's version of the settlement story states that Oshuku came to the Ilogbo area from Ile-Ife. The Ales claim that Ilogbo was then a high bush and that the period of this settlement was contemporaneous with that of Ado-Odo. They also claimed that he brought the Alaworo deity from Ile-Ife. It was this deity that admonished Oshuku to move from the red-soil (laterite)-*ilepa*, i.e. Ilogbo to the present site of the town-Ale. The sojourn of the forebears of the Ale people at Ilogbo was short-lived as they left their quarters to move to their present site.⁴³

At the outset, authority for political and government decision was vested in elders of the town who constituted themselves into a governing council. This council of elders used the spirit of Oshuku, the legendary founder of the town as its mouthpiece through which important decisions were enforced. In the 1860s, Sir John Glover who had become governor of the British colony of Lagos launched an attack on Ilogbo, Ale's eastern

neighbour and during which time he visited Ale.⁴⁴ Glover's visit was during the reign of Akpao who succeeded Oshuku. He subsequently made Akapo a stipendiary chief. Others who reigned after Oshuku and Akapo included Aina Ikete, Falola and Orutan who were installed as Bale.⁴⁵

The people of Araromi Ale maintained warm relations with their neighbours although this was interspersed with disagreements over land occasionally. Especially, warm relationship was maintained with Badagry on account of martial links between one Ekunufu of Badagry who married Abeji, a grand daughter of Oskuku – the founder of Ale.⁴⁶ Apart from this, another Badagry man, Imosu-Ahuji also married an Ale woman who later became the mother of Sinji Jengen of Badagry.⁴⁷ Thus, Chief Jengen took special interest in the affairs of Ale and acted as their patrons in the European courts in Badagry and even Lagos.⁴⁸

In terms of their social organization, the Ale people operated similar institutions to other Awori settlements. As it has been noted already, the authority of the elders was firm as they exercised a civil jurisdiction in petty disputes. However, since the late 1860s when British colonization touched the area, the position and influence of the ruler of the town had been strengthened.

A number of people moved away from Ale to found other areas which in practical terms were brought under the political and economic control of the town. Such settlements included: Magbon founded from Ale but later populated by Egba people; Oko-Afo which was founded by a Ketu man from Ale; and Ibiku with a long historical link with Ale who had also engaged in some ownership dispute with the Igbanko people over land.⁴⁹ As far as can be seen, the relationship of the Ale people with Ilogbo was cordial and no known case of political or land dispute was recorded for the period under study.

Ilogbo

This town is situated in the extreme north on the only piece of highland in the old Badagry district where the prevailing sandy soil gives place to laterite. Its origin is obscured although the people claimed to have come from Ile-Ife, the cradle of Yoruba under the leadership of one Olumogbo.⁵⁰ Olumogbo was said to have taken the Igbesa route down to Mowo from where he led the migration into the red soil area, settling at Awoli near Okanran to the Northwest of present Ilogbo.⁵¹

Olumogbo (the leader of the migration) brought with him a crown and a patron deity, *Ogamogun* as well as Gbedu drums and constituted the first settlement of the Ilogbo Awori but subsequently moved to found another settlement at their present site. Some of those who reigned as

leaders of the first settlement were: Olumogbo, Asoroko, Osupa Tabiala, Ilumolewaye, Aregele, Igba-ko-se-goke-orule, Arojomi, Ojolo, Asamobo-opuje.⁵³

One account claims that the present site of Ilogbo was founded as a result of a succession dispute after the death of Asamo.⁵⁴ This led to various migrations in different directions viz: Ado-Odo, Ota and Ilogbo – the present site of the town. At Ilogbo, the people established another settlement with one Aregi of the old Idomo quarters as Onilogbo.⁵⁵ Aregi was succeeded by Labisi who took the title "Atekojoye" an Ota descendant during whose tenure the Ale people came from Ojo to settle. It was also during his time that the Egba invaded and sacked the town. The confusion that resulted from this led to the abdication of the Onilogbo and his flight to Oto, to the Northeast of the town.

Significantly, Ilogbo was attacked after the cessation of the Egba raids by Sir John Glover who led an armed team to 'deal' with them for being reluctant to stop slave trade.⁵⁶ This was the single most important factor for the genesis of European contact with the Ilogbo people. It also introduced a new dimension to the politics of the town because Sir John Glover chose one Alula man variously disputed as an Ado or Ilogbo man on the female side of Aregi who was residing with his father at Ojo as Onilogbo.⁵⁷ From this time, successive Onilogbo were taken to Lagos for approval.

The political organization of Ilogbo in pre-colonial times placed considerable emphasis on the acquisition of traditional authority by the handing over of the royal deity, *Isuntan* to a newly chosen Onilogbo.⁵⁸ This deity always passed into the hands of the *Otunbas* i.e. the children of the royal household, a situation which gave them power in the choice of who became Onilogbo eventually. As in other Awori towns, Ilogbo was governed on daily basis by a 'council of elders' based on age and honourable ancestry.⁵⁹ This gerontocratic oligarchy was made up of elders who were influential and representative enough to command the obedience of the common people.

In the specific case of Ilogbo, the Onilogbo, though at the head of the political ladder found himself more or less a puppet of the nine old men who in actual fact looked after the welfare of the town.⁶⁰ Thus, the effective government of the town consisted of the *Igbimo* or council which ensured peace and harmony by adjudicating such matters as matrimonial disputes and other civil matters. They also saw to the dispensation of justice in criminal matters, the fundamental power in this regard residing with the *Oshugbo* which dealt with all serious crimes.⁶¹ There was also a secret society known as the *Alalu* led by a spiritual priest with more religious functions than political.⁶²

The social organization of Ilogbo supported the existence of classes, companies or age-grades, *Egbe* – to which young men were organized. The head of each *egbe* was called *Giwa* while all *Giwas* came together to elect one leader known as *Balogun*, who, if necessary was expected to put pressure on the *Igbino*. There were also the *Oga-Ilu* who was the right hand-man of the Onilogbo; as well as the *Balogun* of the town (quite different from that of the *Giwas*). The *Balogun* was in charge of the arrangement of the communal activities of the town.

The pre-eminence of Ilogbo in its immediate environs should not be in doubt. The people founded about three villages viz: Ipara, Ijotun and Isamo. They also accommodated some 'gun'-speaking peoples who settled on such Ilogbo land as Igborosun, Ikoga, Okanran, Ijonu, Ago Isufe, Oke-Egan, Pota and Ijotan on which they paid annual rent (Ishakole) to the Ilogbo. Other lands of the Ilogbo included Ago-Eruku and Imoide where the Egbados settled, as well as Abia – a village of mixed Awori and Egun elements.⁶⁴ This kind of mixed population is also to be noticed in the growth and development of Iworo on the north bank of the Lagos – Porto Novo Creek.

Iworo

The Aworis and 'Gun'-speakers are the two major linguistic groups within Iworo and her environs. However, each of the components of these groups has a separate foundation and each has its own history of origin. For Iworo, there are two accounts of how the people migrated from Ile-Ife.

The first account suggests that the earliest leader of the Iworo people was one Ajagun who came down with the Olofin of Ado-Odo from Ile-Ife.⁶⁵ It could be surmised that the Iworo people were part of the general migration from Isheri on the Ogun river, not less than 300 to 400 years ago. It is recounted that the Olofin of Ado-Odo and Ajagun parted ways around the town of Pota with the former taking the red-soil which took him to Ado. Ajagun, on his part, continued along the white sand road which took him to Imeke, while a group of his followers continued and settled near the modern Iworo lagoon. He was said to have been rejected by the team that went to modern Iworo because he was allegedly oppressive.⁶⁶

The second version agrees that Ajagun led a group of people from Ile-Ife through Isheri to Ilado-Odo where they were advised by the Ifa oracle to continue their movement.⁶⁷ While the first version indicates that Ajagun stayed at Imeke and allowed a group of his followers to proceed to the site of modern Iworo, this second version claims that it was the other way round, with Ajagun landing at Iworo beach where he found a

lot of cowrie shells. However, this version claims that Ajagun was replaced as leader during one of his military expeditions.⁶⁸

In the two versions, Ajagun reacted to his rejection by 'sinking' into the ground and pronouncing a curse on his successors barring them from using the site of his disappearance. The versions also agreed that one Ishejoye (Sesejoye) succeeded Ajagun and was installed at Iworo. While the names of two rulers seem to have been lost to history, others who reigned after Ishejoye included Osupa Tabiala; Aiyegudugbu who granted land to 'gun' speakers to settle at Ebute Olofin and Ajido; Famolu who supported Akitoye against Kosoko and was given a white cap in this regard. Another ruler of note was Obanla Osheshe who took the place of Iyesu, after the latter was removed from the throne by Sir John Glover on account of his slave trading activities.⁶⁹

The system of government in Iworo had the Olofin as head of a council of titled chiefs who ruled through the medium of a secret society known as *Ejiwa*. The decisions of the council (made up of the Olofin, Onsiki, Ojomo, Olowo, Aro, Balogun, Onimole, Alaagba, Alajaye and Ogalu) were usually announced at night.⁷⁰ The balance of power between the Olofin and his council depended on the spiritual sanction behind him as well as his strength of character. The chieftaincies of the council were hereditary.

The town of Iworo had attracted the support and friendship of the Kings of Dahomey, Ile-Ife and Lagos who sent presents to its ruler. It also acted as haven for many Lagos personalities who either sojourned there or inter-married with the people. In fact, one of Oshodi's daughters got married to an Iworo man. In its immediate environs, Iworo interacted with and encouraged the founding of many sub-towns such as Imeke, Magbon, Epe, Oko-Iroko, Ojogun and Abule Louis which was founded by one of Sir John Glover's ex-soldiers.⁷¹

Ilado

To the west of Iworo lies the small village of Ilado, a settlement of mixed Awori and Egun but who are proud and jealous of their Yoruba origin. It may have been founded around the late 18th or very early 19th century. The Awori people related that they were led by a crowned-head from Ile-Ife, Oba Oye from Ajilete (near Ilaro) down the Yewa river to the site of Itohun from where they moved to Mosafejo and finally to Ilado.⁷²

A synthesis of traditions from Iworo and Ilado confirms that Iworo predated Ilado. It is thus possible that the first settlers at Ilado actually accompanied Ajagun (founder of Iworo) on his voyage of exploration which ended at Iworo. With time, Ilado became a strategic town in the commer-

cial interactions between Badagry and Ado-Odo. Indeed, during the reign of Oba Oye's successor, Ikujeminiya (who took the title of Bale) the people of Ilado combined forces with those of Mosafejo, Aradagun and a Badagry war-captain, Possu to repel Egba forces at the battle of Mowo.⁷³

The Ilado-Awori were essentially farmers, hunters and fishermen. Like others in the area, they cultivated such crops as beans, coconuts and cassava. The people claimed that they constructed the Mowo creek in the 19th century to reduce the risk posed by its swampy nature and to enhance commerce and movement in the area.⁷⁴ The system of government was similar to that existing in other Awori towns.

There was a council of elders that saw to the day-to-day running of the settlement in conjunction with the Bale. A secret arm of the government of the town was the *Iyewa*.⁷⁵ Ilado had always been a peaceful and friendly town. It maintained close connection with Iworo people with whom many intermarriages were consummated. In a mark of special friendship devoid of any master-servant relationship, the people of Ilado helped in the construction of the house of the Olofin of Iworo during the reign of Famolu. (c.1940s).⁷⁶

The Egun-Awori Confederation

British colonial rule was formally and firmly entrenched in the Badagry area, as in many areas of modern Nigeria, by the end of the 19th century. Thus, the dawn of the 20th century witnessed attempts to reorganise the system of local administration of various communities and villages in the Badagry area to bring them in line with the style that would be convenient for the Europeans. The signing of a treaty in 1863 (7 July), between some Badagry chiefs and representatives of British government could be said to have marked the beginning of effective British administration as colony district.

By 1895, a district council was established to look into the administration of the area.⁷⁷ Apart from Seriki Abbas Williams, an Aiyetoro indigene and businessman who not only settled in Badagry but was also appointed its headman, no Badagry chieftain was appointed to the council. The British believed that the level of development (i.e. lack of transportation and communication) as well as the unhealthy rivalries and jealousies amongst the Badagry leaders were evidence of their unpreparedness for direct administration under a new system. These factors, coupled with that of language difficulty would have led to confused deliberations at the council meetings. The situation continued until 1902.

In 1902, Sir William Macgregor set up a council at Badagry under the Native Council Ordinance of that year.⁷⁸ The council's main task involved

advising the governor on good government and welfare of the native population. The council's authority covered: internal administration, preservation of justice, peace, protection and encouragement of trade and commerce. Badagry chiefs were represented on this council by Chief Possu while Seriki Abbas Williams also exhibited fair representations to the small Awori towns which were not reckoned with by the colonial administration because they were considered 'unsettled areas'.⁷⁹

With the amalgamation of southern and northern Nigeria in 1914, native courts were established in the colony districts. In 1918, a Grade "B" court was established at Ilaro, headed by Seriki Abbas who was transferred there from the Badagry Council.⁸⁰ This transfer gave opportunity to Badagry chiefs to serve on the council one after the other. The courts established from the council did not take care of the Awori communities. Rather, they were catered for by a minor court set up at Apa which heard but would not give judgement on the cases.⁸¹

The establishment of the Badagry Council, by implication, also created the growth of a 'patron-clientele' relationship between Badagry chiefs and surrounding villages respectively.⁸² This was because such villages found out that in the new dispensation, it was necessary to have a sympathetic supporter in the emergent centre of power in Badagry. Thus, the Awori villages especially realised the need to have patrons in the council to represent their economic and political interests. Apart from the practical fact of proximity, the council in Badagry bound it and the surrounding villages and settlements together became alternative sources of political and judicial succour (Lagos) were so far away. This political symbiosis led to a significant phenomenon in the history of the area under consideration.

Before April 1938, two district councils and native authority administrations, namely: The Badagry Town Council and Apa District Council made up the Egun Native Administration. However, by first of April, 1938, the colonial administration, based on the decision of the people proposed the creation of a new system of local administration which sought to integrate the political administrations of all the towns and villages in the Badagry area.⁸³ In broad terms, this new dispensation meant that a confederation was created as a Native Authority of the Egun and Awori people.

This Native Authority was a central council that met at Badagry. It was made up of representatives of the Badagry Town Council; the Apa District Council, representatives of other Egun villages, as well as the Awori units of Ilogbo, Ale, Ibiku, Iworo, Ibereko, Igbankaw and Ikotun. This reorganization was expected to guarantee equal representation of all the villages under the Badagry district.⁸⁴

From April 1938, the colonial administration created the following institutions.

- (i) An Egun-Awori Confederation or Central Council which met at Badagry Town and Apa District;
- (ii) Two Conciliar Native Courts sitting at Apa and Badagry for their respective areas;
- (iii) Two Conciliar Native Councils at Apa and Badagry.⁸⁵

This arrangement could be described as all-embracing as it ensured that one group was placed under the administrative control of the other. The arrangement existed till the 1950s and beyond. The Native Authority system remained the nucleus of local administration in the Badagry district in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Conclusion

The transformation of a loose association of interactive and contiguous strings of settlement from the dawn of their history into a unified whole of geographically complimentary area under a modern concept of local council administration, as we have seen in the case of the present Badagry Local Government is an interesting case study of century-old story of intergroup relations. As the foregoing paragraphs have shown, the people of present Badagry Local Government are no strangers to themselves. They had interacted in various ways before modern European administrative system further cemented the bounds between them.

Over the years, evidence of similar historical experiences coupled with practical dictates of factor of natural endowments as well as disadvantages have existed and conditioned the nature and scope of the development of the area. Indeed, in all the areas considered in this chapter, the factor of migration played a significant role in the settlement story of individual areas. Further from this, this factor provide the string or thread that bound and bounded geographically contiguous and linguistically homogenous areas together as the 'gun' and the 'Awori' people of Badagry have shown.

Thus, it can be seen that with related settlement experience, most of the areas found out that they were either related consanguinally or through intermarriages. The factor of intermarriage also furthered interactions in the socio-economic and political spheres of the historical experience of the people under consideration. In specific term, this encouraged the growth, in some cases, of the concept of 'patron and client' as one town that enjoyed the confidence of contemporary centre of power acted on behalf and protected the interest of the others. This phenomenon was most prominent at the dawn of European colonisation in the late 19th century.

The advent of European rule, different from the beginning of European contact significantly affected the pattern of the interaction as well as the

fortunes of the settlements of modern Badagry Local Government Area. The establishment of formal central native courts, treasuries and other appurtenances of European rule from the 1890 brought into sharp focus, the reality of a new era. This new era, for good or for ill, accelerated the process of collapsibility of apparently and understandably different socio-political institutions of different ethnic and religious backgrounds into a unique mould under European supervision. This process, as this chapter has sought to highlight, provided the logical prelude to the evolution of the institutions that now uphold the ideals and expectations of modern Badagry Local Council area. The peopling of the area is, thus, decidedly on historical considerations, rather than accidental ones.

Note and References

1. Some of these are: Akinjogbin, I.A. *Dahomey and Her Neighbours: 1708 – 1818* London, 1967; Asiwaju, A.I. *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule: 1889 – 1945* London, 1976; Asiwaju, A.I. "Aja Speaking Peoples of Nigeria: A Note on their Origin, Settlement Pattern and Cultural Adaptation to 1945" *Africa* 49 (1), 1979. Okaro K'-Ojwang "Society, Trade and Politics in Badagry, 1841-1891: A Case Study of African Response to British Penetration of South-West Nigeria" Unpub. M. Phil thesis, University of Ibadan, 1979; and L.C. Dioka "Badagry since 1842: Urbanization in a Nigerian Border Region" Unpub. M. Phil thesis, University of Lagos, 1986.
2. See for example CSO 26/30030/SI *Intelligence Report on the Badagry Districts* by R.J.M. Curwen in 1938.
3. In addition to Note 1 above, see also T. Ola Avoseh *A Short History of Badagry* Lagos, 1938; A Dalzel *The History of Dahomey: An Inland Kingdom of Africa* Reprint edn. London, 1967.
4. Asiwaju "Aja Speaking Peoples of Nigeria..." *Op. cit.*
5. Dioka "Badagry since 1342; ..." *Op. cit.*
6. Dalzel *The History of Dahomey ... Op. cit.*
7. Avoseh *A Short History of Badagry Op. cit.*
8. *Oral Evidence* Interview with Chief Bankole Aivoji (95 Years) Aivoji Sea Beach September, 1990.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.* and Interview with Mr. Phillip Aivoji September, 1990.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Oral Evidence* Interview by Teju Odunsi with Oba Ajaton II of Ajido, April, 1990.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.* also CSO 20/30030/SI *Op. cit.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Other accounts suggest that Badagry was a farm of a gun personality, *Agbede* whose acts of "generosity" and hospitality to strangers to the farm in search of vegetables" soon gave the name, *Agbadagreme* to the settlement. This name in gun language means, "the farm of Agbede" This was corrupted by the Missionaries to 'Badagry'. Its original name was supposed to be *Gbagi*. This tradition has been popularised by the office of the Akran, the official ruler of Badagry and it seems to have been the official version of

- the settlement story of the town. See *Badagry, Lagos State: Our Town Series No. 2 Official Publication of the Lagos State Government*.
20. See Dalzel, A. *A History of Dahomey ... Op. cit.*
 21. *Ibid.*
 22. *Iwe Itan Eko*, Lagos, 1984; and translated in 1991 under the title of *The History of Lagos*.
 23. A.F.C. Ryder *Benin and the Europeans: 1485-1897* London, 1967 pp. 185-235.
 24. *Ibid.* p. 189
 25. *Ibid.* p. 234
 26. Asiwaju, A.I. *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule Op. cit* p. 97.
 27. For instance, Avoseh, A. *A Short History of Badagry Op. cit* and interview conducted in 1987 by Mr. Shina Hundeyin with the Akran of Badagry, Wheno Aholu Menutoyi I.
 28. See Rechar and John Lander *Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger*, London, 1832, Vol. 1 p. 17. Also R.C.C. Law 'The Career of Adele at Lagos and Badagry' *JHSN* 9, 2, 1978 p. 48.
 29. Richard and John Lander *Op. cit.*
 30. R.C.C. Law 'The Career of Adele ...' *Op. cit.*
 31. Cited in *Ibid.*
 32. Elsewhere, it is claimed that Adele was received well in Badagry because of his maternal link as his mother was said to be a 'Badagry woman' See Avoseh, *A Short History of Badagry Ibid.*
 33. A discussion of the *Mahin* in the history of the settlement pattern of the Southwestern districts of Lagos can be found in my article 'Mahin and Early Lagos' in *Odu; Journal of West African Studies* (New Series) Forthcoming.
 34. See the following, J.F. Ade-Ajayi *Christian Missions in Modern Nigeria 1841-1891: The Creation of A New Elite* London, 1965; T.G.C. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba 1841-1908* London, 1976; and Avoseh *A Short History of Badagry Op. cit.*
 35. See CSO 26/29939 *Intelligence Report on the Awori of Ikeja Districts NAI.*
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. *Ibid.* Also CSO 26/30030/SI 'Intelligence Report on Badagry District' NAI.
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. *Ibid.*
 41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*
43. CSO 26/29939 'Intelligence Report on Ikeja Districts' NAI.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.* Also CSO 26/30030 'Intelligence Report on Badagry Districts'
Op. cit.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.* Also see W.D. Micintyre 'Sir John Glover and the Colony of Lagos' *Journal of African History* 1969.
57. COS26/30030 "Intelligence Report ..." *Op. cit.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.* *Oral Evidence* Interview by Teju Odunsi with Oba J.A. Ajose Arajomo April, 1990.
66. *Ibid.* Also *Oral Evidence* Interview by Teju Odunsi with Mr. J.A.O. Ajose at Aruwe Compound, Iworo April, 1990.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.* Also CSO26/30030 'Intelligence Report ...' *Op. cit.*
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Oral Evidence* Interview with Oba Ajose and Mr. Ajose *Op. cit.*
71. CSO 26/30030 'Intelligence Report ...' *Op. cit.*
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.* Also Adetoku O. Odunsi "Iworo and Her Neighbours to 1973" Unpub. B.A. History Project, Lagos State University (LASU) August, 1990.
75. CSO26/30030 'Intelligence Report ...' *Op. cit.*
76. *Ibid.*

77. *Ibid.* Also see Adeshina K. Hundeyin "The Badagry Local Government: A History" Unpub. B.A. History Project, LASU, August, 1990.
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.* Also CSO26/30030 'Intelligence Report ...' *Op. cit.*
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.* A Study of the nature, scope and dimension of this theme can be found in S.T. Barnes *Patrons and Power: Politics in Mushin*, Manchester University Press. 1986.
83. CSO 26/30030 'Intelligence Report on Badagry Districts' NAI.
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*

4

Dialogue between Geography and History in Badagry: An Economic History Review

G. O. OGUNREMI

Introduction

Of all the divisions that make the modern Lagos State, Badagry is by far the luckiest in the hands of scholars.¹ This cannot be a mere coincidence; it is due largely to its position in history and its geographical location. Although, it is not the only settlement with geography and history dialogue which attracts scholars in West Africa, it has, in its own case, certain characteristics which force the hands of scholars on it.

These characteristics in terms of agriculture and other productions as well as its domestic and external trades make Badagry worthy of study. In this contribution, our attention will focus on the role that geography plays in the history of the area with emphasis on Badagry.

Traditionally, geography and history are two disciplines that are often combined in universities. They are regarded as brothers which depend on each other for a thorough education of a person. Geography is particularly so important to history as a discipline that nobody can understand the history of a place without first understanding its geography. Indeed, many countries owe their rise or fall to their locations.

The importance of rivers, lakes, lagoons, ocean, mountains and valleys as well as climatic conditions, vegetation, rainfall, temperature, humidity, location to the equator or to the meridian line, mineral resources, and a host of other geographical phenomena cannot be over-emphasized in the history of a country. That Europeans settled in some parts of East Africa rather than West Africa is partly due to geographical conditions in both regions of Africa. There are so many other examples in world history where geography has been the main determinant of their history.

This is not to say, however, that geography determines every aspect of the history of a people. No doubt, the human factor plays a crucial role in the rise and development as well as decline and collapse of a country. It is man who determines a settlement; and it is he who exploits the environment and all the geographical phenomena for his convenience and for na-

tion building. Human ingenuity overrides all other factors. For example, but for human capability to develop science and technology the history of Egypt or Israel which are in deserts would be different. Agriculture would be virtually impossible and economic development hampered.

What is being stressed, however, is that geography plays a significant role in deciding a settlement and especially in its early history. Although human ingenuity is almost without limit since man has indeed conquered his environment, the capability in terms of science and technology development is not evenly distributed globally. This development has come with time- speedily in some places but very gradual in many others. For example, the North has been more technologically developed than the South, and there are striking differences within the countries of the North and South.

In many countries of the Third World, and especially in Africa, science and technology development has been extremely slow. Nature, virtually still controls the man. Centuries ago nature controlled all countries but the control of nature on some countries in West Africa is still very strong. Badagry is one of such countries. Even today the control of man over the environment of Badagry is limited.

One important factor that has helped scholars in writing the history of Badagry is the availability of documents made possible by explorers, missionaries and the colonial administration. The journals of Hugh Clapperton and his servant Richard Lander, among others, have been monumental.² As a starting point for their journeys into the hinterland, they could not resist the temptation of describing vividly almost everything that came their ways. Since the impact of man on Badagry was rather slow, the situation there in about 1825 when Hugh Clapperton reached the area was similar to what the colonial administration described in 1925.

Also because Badagry was the first base of the christian missionaries in modern Nigeria, it attracted their detailed description.³ Whereas the explorers merely passed by, the missionaries lived with the people. They were in position to study and write on their environment, history, religion and social behaviours. All these combined to make Badagry a lucky settlement in the hands of scholars of various disciplines. Using these sources, one can now have a cursory look at the economic-history of Badagry with emphasis on its production and trade.

Production

Like in many other parts of the world, production in Badagry was determined by the ecological setting of the settlement. For example, because of

its location at the coast of the Lagos Lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean, its soil has never been amenable to elaborate farming. Farming which was the mainstay of the African economy was minimally done in the area because of the sandy nature of the soil.

However, this poor nature of the soil has been exaggerated to the extent that we are informed that no food crop thrived. Food crops such as cassava grew luxuriantly and provided the staple foodstuff for the people. With the growth in population, the production of cassava or any other food crop became insufficient and Badagry had to rely on foodstuff from the hinterland, especially from the neighbouring Egbadoland and Dahomey.

Although the Badagry soil was not quite suitable for cultivation of food crops in abundance, it was particularly adequate for the cultivation of coconuts (*cocos Nucifers*). Indeed, coconut production became one of the two most important economic occupations for which the area became famous. Coconut plantations were developed along the coastline of Badagry and its environs. The plantations, according to traditions began around the Topo Island and spread to the other areas such as Gbaji-Yeketome, Apa and Ilogbo. The original owners were various families and some individuals.⁴

Unlike the famous plantations in the West Indies, the coconut plantations were not capital-intensive. But like them, they were land-intensive. Except that the type of land suitable for coconut was limited to the coastlines, land, generally, was not scarce in relation to the population in West Africa. Yet, the plantations were more capital-intensive than the foodcrop farms which were on extremely small scales.

Therefore, those who dominated the coconut plantation industries were the influential and rich ones in Badagry. It was more capital-intensive than food production because of the time-lag of about nine years between the time of cultivation and the time of fruition. It required some capital to get the plantation maintained for many years without any immediate reward. However, like the cultivation of cocoa and kola nuts some foodcrops were grown in between the coconut trees. This reduced the burden of hardship.

Of the three major ethnic groups in Badagry — the Aworis, the 'Guns' (also referred to as Ogu or Egun), and the Kitas — the Aworis and 'Guns' are the major coconut farmers. The 'guns' from the modern Benin Republic, Togo and even Ghana participated in the coconut cultivation. To those planters from places other than Badagry, coconut cultivation on a large scale could be also more capital-intensive than ordinary foodcrop cultivation. In their own case, they had to pay in cash or in kind for the land and also had to employ labourers who also would be paid.

The indigenes of Badagry concentrated on the nearby plantations until when the land was exhausted. With time they therefore had what the Yoruba called *Oko etile* (the nearby plantations) and *Oko-iwaju* or *Oko egan*, meaning plantations far away from home. At the stage when long distance farming was involved the venture also became more expensive. Labour had to be employed and keeping two homes meant spending more money. Besides, the farmer had to buy coconuts for sowing. This cost next to nothing up to about 1950. But by 1984 forty nuts (Owo kan) cost as much as ten Naira (₦10.00). This, of course, has since increased tremendously.

At least six factors helped the growth of coconuts in Badagry. First, the soil was suitable for its germination and rapid growth. The nut is known to have thrived in the coastlines of tropical land. Indeed, it has been claimed that the palm originated in tropical America from where it spreads to other tropical areas of the world.⁶ This point agrees with our idea of geography and history being in constant dialogue.

The second factor was the enthusiasm of the christian missionaries, especially the Roman Catholic Mission which tried to carry the dictum of "the Bible and the Plough" to the people of West Africa in a serious bid to stop the supply of slaves.⁷ Although all christian missionaries did encourage the employment of Africans in managing their own domestic economies, the Anglican mission which preceded the Catholics did not seem to have done much in the coconut cultivation. Based in Topo Island, the Catholics who realized that the soil and climate were ideal for coconut cultivation encouraged the indigenes to cultivate it.⁸

Third, the proximity of Badagry to Dahomey (Republic of Benin) contributed to the cultivation of coconut. It is well known that coconuts were not grown in all the places where they developed along the coastline, the ocean current is known to have been responsible for carrying coconut seeds to other areas. If transported by favourable current, it has been estimated that coconuts could travel about 3,000 miles from its place of origin and could still start growing in water after 110 days. It is therefore plausible that even before the Catholics introduced it at Topo, the coastal areas had been lined by the nuts and Badagry coastal areas had had coconuts scattered all over.

Fourth, the coconut palm like the oil palm is regarded as "the tree of life" which is useful all through. But most important is its nut which produces copra. Copra has been a major export crop in Zanzibar and some other coastal areas of East Africa. The British colonialists were aware of the importance of the export crop which would yield revenue to their administration. In the opinion of one District Commission,

The condition of soil that lies hundreds of miles between the coast lines of West Africa and the sea are so favourable to the growth of coconut that there should be in time and a large export of copra.⁹

This brilliant prospect of exporting copra encouraged the district commissioners in charge of Badagry to acquire land and embark on a government-owned plantation. This was to serve as a model to the indigenes who were encouraged to develop their own plantations.

The fifth factor that made production of coconuts possible was the involvement of the indigenes. All that the missionaries and the colonial administration did was not sufficient for the large-scale cultivation of coconuts. The indigenes were instructed on spacing and timing of planting as well as time of harvesting. In order to ensure that famine did not ensue, cassava was intercropped with coconuts. Indeed, it was the efforts of the indigenes more than the ecological advantage that accounted for the success story of coconut cultivation in Badagry.

Since the 1880s indigenous planters had been showing keen interest. Among them were Chief Sumbu Mobee, Chief Seriki Abasi, Oje, Hundayin and a host of others. Thus, the industry that was begun on a rather shaky and on a very small scale by the missionaries gradually became elaborate in Badagry and its environment that had a similar ecological situation. By the 1960s, more potentates and ordinary people had shown interest. Oba C.D. Akran, a devout member of the Catholic church and a minister in the defunct government of the Western Region of Nigeria showed active interest. He was responsible for taking over the coconut plantation established by the Catholics. Such a royal participation boosted the industry.¹⁰

The village, Gbaji, where the famous ruler showed interest became one of the major coconut producers. Following the ruler's footsteps were Chief Sakpo, who had a plantation on Sakpo beach, Yusuf, Hungbo Barikano, Hugua and Hotepo, and Idowu Abiona from Apa. All these people and others appreciated that Badagry had a territorial advantage owing to the suitability of the soil for the successful growth of coconuts.¹¹

The last factor which is closely related to the fifth was the Farmers Association that was organized. This association comprised all farmers — food and coconuts producers. This is because sometimes there was a difficulty in making a distinction between the two producers. Indeed, while every food producer might not be a coconut farmer, every coconut farmer was also a food farmer.¹²

The association was based in each village, with its own local leader holding its weekly or monthly meetings. Issues which were capable of disturbing production of coconuts such as trespassing on others' land,

bush burning leading to fire outbreak in plantations, problems constituted by hired labourers on farms, pest control and dissemination of ideas regarding improvement in cultivation leading to better yields. Recently, the association pulled their resources together for mechanization, especially in the area of the use of tractors. Although they did not buy tractors, they were able to hire at the Ikoga Machinery Department in the Ministry of Agriculture. This made it possible for as many as over 200 seedling plants to be planted on large plantations.¹³

Coconuts industry dominated the economy although it was not the only crop being produced. This is because thousands of people of different sexes engaged in the production of coconuts. It was ingenious of the indigenes to appreciate the value of their soil which had been condemned as good for nothing simply because foodcrops did not thrive there.

Another important production in Badagry was fishing. As in the case of coconuts, fishing industry was determined by the geographical location of the settlement. This point is, in fact, more relevant to fishing which has been the traditional occupation of the people. Whereas there can be some arguments concerning the origin and spread of coconuts, there can be no doubt that fishing is an indigenous occupation of the people. Lying very close to the lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean, Badagry's involvement in fishing was natural.

Full specialization hardly existed in any part of West Africa in the pre-colonial era. Fishermen and women were therefore not confined to fishing alone. Although gender specialization too was usually non-existent, men dominated certain occupations such as farming and fishing. Two factors seemed to determine men's domination of fishing in Badagry. First, it was risky, time-consuming and required being patient, although the Edo, Ijo and Ilaje women were also prominent in fishing. The 'Guns'/Aworis make sure that many of their women never got into such a job. Second, fishing involved leaving home and the itinerant fishermen in particular could be on the lagoon for days. For women who had to take care of their children and the family properly, this was considered to be difficult and not ideal.¹⁴

Apart from the 'Guns' and the Aworis, the Ijos, Ilajes and some Fanti from modern Ghana were involved in fishing. They ventured into the sea and all over the lagoon, catching fishes such as *Epiya* (*Tilapia Aro* (*Clarias geniepinus*)) *Igbakere* (*Lutjanus goreensis*) *Sawa* (*Sardinella Aurita*) *Obokun* (*Chrysichtys nigrodigitatus*), *Kuta* (*Sphyraene Piscatorum*) *Efolo* (*Eflomalosa fimbriat*), *Owere* (*Trachinotus goreensis*) and Iseke.¹⁵

In catching these fishes, traditional methods were employed. This included calabashes, pots, poison, hooks, hands, harpoon and nets. Traps of various sizes and of different methods were also used. However, the

canoe was of supreme importance in fishing, without it, fishing was confined to small rivers and creeks in Badagry. However, where it was available fishermen ventured into the heart of the lagoon, going long distances from the settlement. Although they cannot be compared with the Ijo fishermen in the canoe — intensive fishing, the people in Badagry spent a considerable amount of their time in fishing.

If men kept their women at home while they were on the lagoon to fish, they did not leave them to be idle. The women were fully responsible for preservation and selling fresh fish. Preservation was usually by smoking those that could not be sold. To the extent that both men and women were involved in fishing industry it provided occupation for all. Unlike coconut production which required ownership of land, no one needed to own any portion of the lagoon to fish in. Furthermore, the fishermen did not require the intervention or encouragement of missionaries or government officials. It was an industry that was easy to enter. The big producers with large canoes and nets did not prevent or even discourage the small ones with hooks and calabashes. In other words, it was an industry that required little capital and small household labour.

Other areas of production in Badagry need not take our time because they are numerous but of less importance. However, like those already treated they were related to the ecology of Badagry. Among these are salt manufacturing, pottery, net-making and other agricultural occupations such as rubber tapping, palm produce, some animal husbandry and mat-making. Each of the occupations mentioned above was important for three reasons. First, they provided revenue for individuals, with which they were able to buy food stuffs that they could not produce. They also paid taxes, bought cloths and other necessities of life and provided themselves with shelter.

Second, they were easy to set-up and operate, requiring very little capital, labour and entrepreneurial ability. Some of them such as mat-making was, in fact, dominated by women and children. Third, the jobs were done within the vicinity of Badagry and the materials required for making salt or mat were quite close to the people.

This, however, is not to underrate the activities involved. For example, to extract salt by boiling saline water of the lagoon required patience and a long time. Pottery involved clay moulding into various shapes before elaborate drying and firing ensued. Similarly, mat-making meant kneeling or sitting down from dawn to dusk. In other words, each of the occupations was taken seriously.

Trade

The areas of production treated above were for local consumption as well as for internal and external exchanges. The efforts of the missionaries and colonial officials to export copra out of the elaborately produced coconuts was not impressive. It was nothing compared with the production of coconuts and copra in the coasts of Eastern Africa. Neither did it come near those of the Republic of the Phillipines where in 1913, over 30 million coconut trees already bearing fruits were in existence. By 1963, over 200 million trees were bearing coconut fruits out of which copra was being exported elaborately.¹⁶

However, coconuts in Badagry locally known as *agbon* was an important commodity for trade. Realising that Badagry was and still famous for coconuts, traders streamed there to purchase them in large quantities for retailing. The large quantity consumed locally certainly reduced copra export trade.

The trade in fish was a completely different story from that of coconuts. Like Epe, Lekki, Ikorodu, Lagos and other coastal settlements, fish trade was popular in Badagry. Again, because of its location fish was caught abundantly whereas animal husbandry was done on a rather small scale. Therefore, animal meat was more expensive than fish for local consumption. Besides, fish was in various sizes and can be sold in ones or twos or in small or large measures and could be eaten fresh or preserved, meat did not have all these qualities. But most importantly, fish could be caught by everybody for both consumption and for sale.

Traders from far and near patronised the Badagry market, bringing foodstuffs that could not be produced there such as yams, cocoyams, pepper, livestock and those which it could not produce enough such as *gari* and other cassava products. For locally produced articles of trade, Badagry relied on the nearby Egbado, Egba and Awori settlements. However, since the sixteenth century, it relied more on Lagos to the east and Whydah and others to the west. Fish, coconuts, some palm oil and kernels which were produced in Badagry were exchanged for other foodstuffs and some European products especially the table salt which gradually replaced the locally produced one.

Contrary to the foregoing, in which production had all along emphasized the dialogue between geography and history, was the slave trade. This traffic in human beings had little to do with the location of Badagry except that it was the point of shipment. But unlike coconut and fish production, the slaves that were exported were brought from the hinterland. Like Lagos, Whydah and other sea or lagoon ports, Badagry served the purpose of concentrating and shipping slaves from West Africa

by the European slavers. Since literature is immense on the slave trade, the less we discuss it the better in order to avoid tautology.

Market places served as centres of exchange in the pre-colonial era in Africa. In Badagry, there was a large market situated near the Oba's palace and the coast. One feature of the market was that unlike many other markets in other settlements, it was attended and patronised for four days running and there was a resting period of four days when it was not in operation. This special feature enabled traders from a long distance to bring their wares to the market and exchange them for commodities produced in Badagry and also with those brought by other traders.¹⁷

Furthermore, because of its location, Badagry could be reached both by land and water routes. This meant that traders from the hinterland used multifarious routes in reaching the place. Such routes were used by Hugh Clapperton to reach Sokoto. The routes were also used to drag slaves from Old Oyo and beyond to Badagry. Similarly, the lagoon routes were used by traders from Dahomey areas in the West and Warri-Lagos area in the East. By the same token, Badagry traders carried their mats, fish, coconuts and other products to the markets in the hinterland and at the ports. All these accounted for the lucrative trade that Badagry enjoyed since the pre-colonial era.

Conclusion

The main thrust of this chapter is to emphasize the well known idea that geography is a strong determinant of history. A good per cent of the history of the area under study in the pre-colonial period was determined by its geographical location. Even the slaves that were not directly produced in Badagry were traded and shipped there. Certainly, this is not peculiar to Badagry or even African settlements, it is a universal truth. However, human ingenuity which overrides all other considerations has not been underrated. Indeed, modern technology has made a distinct difference. Today, water that is safe for human consumption is more readily available in Kano which is more or less in the desert than in Lagos and its environs which are in the heavy rainfall region.

In the case of Badagry it has been stressed that all its productions and most of its domestic trade in the pre-colonial era were dictated by its location. Production of and trade in coconuts, fish, mats, palm oil and a few others depended on location. It is well known that this has been partly responsible for its decline economically. Its proximity to Lagos which became the seat of the British colonial administration and whose port became more intensively used took over most of the advantages that Badagry had initially. Likewise, at the western side, the French colonial

administrations concentrated their efforts in developing Whydah, Porto Novo and Cotonou ports. Trades in these ports robbed Badagry of its development.

One other initial advantage was its location as the first evangelical seat of the christian missionaries. The slave trade for which Badagry was notorious in the nineteenth century contributed largely in killing christianity. For one thing, confusion was created in the minds of the people. They could not differentiate between the whiteman who was a christian missionary and who was preaching that everyone — the Oba as well as the slave — was equal before God and the whiteman who was a slave trader and who enslaved and treated shabbily fellow human beings created by the same God. The missionaries left for Abeokuta in the hinterland and Lagos, another port settlement. In this way, the location of Badagry was a curse rather than a blessing because this also adversely affected it economically.

Finally, it must be mentioned that this chapter deals mainly in the domestic economy of Badagry in the pre-colonial era. One point that has not been discussed is the local currency that was used in trading. This is because the currency, especially the rods, slaves, cowries, cloths and others were not peculiar to Badagry. All monies used were those that were acceptable to other traders from the other parts of West Africa. Also, specific dates have been avoided not because there were no changes from time to time but because periodization is a problem in the pre-colonial era. For the same reasons, reliable statistical data were unavailable for most part of pre-colonial era, and if distortions are to be avoided unreliable statistics must not be used.

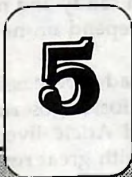
Lastly, this chapter is like a review of what is largely known on Badagry and most of the material relies heavily on oral evidence. Despite all the shortcomings, it is believed that the economic history of Badagry has been presented to show that, by and large, there has been a dialogue between geography and history.¹⁸

Notes and References

This contribution is partly based on an elaborate study of Lagos and its environment which has been partly sponsored by a research fund made available by the Lagos State University. I seize this opportunity to thank the Lagos State University Authority for the research fund; and its Department of Religions and History for undertaking a conference on Badagry.

1. Among the basic works done on Badagry are the following: T.O. Avoseh: *The History of Badagry*, Ife-Olu Press, 1938; B.H. Hodder, "Badagry I, Slave Port and Mission Centre", *Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 2, December 1962, pp. 81-84; and "Badagry II, One hundred years of change", *Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 6, 10.1, 1963, pp. 17-31, G.A. Fadeyi, "The Growth and Decline of Badagry, A Geographical Analysis", M.A. Thesis, (Unilag). Unpublished, 1967; K.M. Okaro-K'Ojwang, "Society and Politics in Badagry 1841-1891", "A case study of African Response to British Penetration in South Western Nigeria", M. Phil (Ibadan), Unpublished, 1979; L.C. Dioka, "Badagry since 1842, Urbanization in a Nigerian Border Region", M.A. Thesis, (Unilag), Unpublished, 1986.
2. Hugh Clapperton, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa, from the Bight of Benin to Soccattoo*; Richard Lander, *Records of Captain Clapperton's Last Expedition to Africa*, Vols. 1 and 2, London, 1830, Frank Cass, 1967.
3. T. Ola Avoseh: *The History of Badagry*, Ife Olu Press, 1938; C A2/043: Journals of Rev. C.A. Gollmer, 1845-61.
4. For most parts of this paper, I am grateful to my research assistants — Messrs. Lawson, Dania and Ipaye and Miss Allen who collected elaborate oral data which were very helpful.
5. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 7.
6. *Ibid.* Grolier Inc, 1954, p. 169.
7. J.B. Webster, "The Bible and the Plough", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2, 1963, pp. 418-34. The idea was originally made by Thomas Fowell Buxton.
8. "Oral Evidence by Marian Allen.
9. M.J. Edmonds and D. Edwards, *An Economic Evolution of Wet Coconut Process*, Developed at the Tropical Product Institutes, Gray's Inn Road, London, 1973, p. 13.
10. T. Ola Avoseh, *A Short History of Badagry*, Ife-Olu Printing works, Lagos, 1938.
11. "Oral Evidence" collected by Marian Allen from Chief Ola Avoseh (801), the Gbesiewu of Badagry, on 22/4/91.

12. *Ibid.*
13. Oral evidence collected by Mr. Lawson and Miss Allen.
14. Oral evidence collected by Adenike Ogunnowo.
15. *Ibid.*
16. R. Child, *Coccoloba* Longman, London, 1964, pp. 1- 17.
17. Literatures on Badagry emphasize this Point.
18. A.G. Hopkins in his *An Economic History of West Africa*, Longman, London, 1973, p. 11 Says *inter alia* "Indeed, West Africa's economic past is the record of a continuous dialogue between geography and history..." this study partly justifies the assertion.



The Fluctuating Economic Fortunes of a Nigerian Sea Port: Economy and Trade in Badagry to 1900

KEHINDE FALUYI

Badagry, the gateway to Nigeria was the main port serving the Yoruba hinterland up to the second half of the 19th century¹. It was one of the earliest international ports to the vast resources of the area between the Gold Coast and the Delta as well as the earliest gateway to international trade.² It was regarded as the coastal satellite of the European enterprises along the coast. First and foremost, it was a market town, a trading entrepot, a commercial centre and a slave centre.³ Furthermore, it was the first town to receive the christian missionaries in the 19th century and the first to celebrate christmas day in Nigeria and the first home of the Sierra Loenians.⁴ Badagry therefore is of great importance to the historical development of Nigerian hinterland.

Badagry meant many things to different peoples, such as christians, muslims, Europeans and indigenes. It was the commercial nerve centre of the Lagoon corridor from the Gold Coast to Benin, being the most accessible port in the area. There are striking similarities in the history of Badagry and Lagos, and indeed, the former's history and development was closely linked with that of the latter, her eastern neighbour located 58 kilometres away. Both are located on the Lagoon and separated from the sea, so, both could not be approached directly from the sea. Lagos was separated by a turf which prevented easy entry by the European traders before it was dredged in 1876. Badagry is also separated from the sea by a few kilometer long sandy and marshy corridor but could be crossed easily by small boats.⁵ They were probably founded at about the same time. It is claimed that Lagos was founded about 500 years ago, at about 1482, while Badagry was probably founded at about 1425.⁶

The two were involved in the slave trade and owed their prominence as well as notoriety to it. Both were partly populated by migrants. For instance Lagos was largely populated by Bini, Ijebu, Ijo, Egba, A wori as well as the ex-slaves from Sierra Leone and Brazil. Similarly, Badagry was part-

ly populated by migrants from Gold Coast, Dahomey, Aladah, Whydah and Porto Novo. The two settlements are both located in sandy and marshy land, therefore, not agriculturally rich and hence depend on neighbouring areas for food supplies.

For most of their history, the events in Lagos often had repercussions on Badagry. The town had often served as a refuge for Lagos rulers during political problems. Akinsemoyin, Akintoye and Adele lived in exile in Badagry, during their times and were treated with great respect and hospitality befitting their status because of their relationship with the place.⁸ All these were not without repercussions, as the group in Lagos carried their attack to Badagry to chase off the opponent as was the case during the Kosoko-Akintoye conflict in the 19th century.⁹ Indeed, such events often affected the peace and stability of the two towns in many ways. This situation has been explicitly expressed by R.C.C. Law when he said, "the sequence of events which culminated in the British annexation of Lagos in 1861 presents a pattern of considerable complexity, in which the process of European commercial and political penetration interacted with local tensions and conflicts – internal dimensions in Lagos, the rivalry between Lagos and other ports such as Badagry and Porto Novo for control of the Atlantic trade and others".¹⁰ Being two close openings into the Yoruba hinterland they were prone to the competition of the interior states for the control of the coastal port. Hence, a diversion to one port by the people from the interior directly or indirectly affected the economy of the other.

Before the second half of the 18th century, European slavers, the Dutch, French, English and later Brazilians preferred the port of Badagry to Lagos because it offered greater security. This accounted for the prosperity of the former, as it became a commercial centre along the Guinea coast. But the situation was reversed in the last quarter of the century as Lagos supplanted Badagry as a port because of diversion of commerce to its port partly because of the rise of Dahomey and the incessant and sustained attacks on it from her neighbours including Lagos.

In addition, in the 19th century, the abolition of slave trade and the policing of Porto Novo and Badagry corridor by the naval patrol diverted traders and commercial activities to Lagos, because it offered better opportunity for slavers to escape and avoid the patrol. When Lagos became the centre of British political influence along the Guinea coast, the prosperity of Badagry came to an end. In other words, whereas both had similar experiences and the same factors influenced their development which made the two rival ports along the West African coast before 1860, Lagos indeed was the greatest beneficiary of the commercial demise of Badagry as it absorbed all the commerce that had hitherto passed through

the town. The irony of this symbiotic relationship is that whereas, Lagos remains the most important commercial city in Nigeria today with the largest number of Industries, Badagry has no single industry and would probably have been one of the poorest and least developed if not for the creation of Lagos state which made it a divisional headquarter, and hence, a centre of development.

Unfortunately, its future growth and expansion is likely to be affected very adversely by recent developments in the neighbouring towns to the east. The establishment of educational institutions in Ijanikin and Ojo respectively, both located between Lagos and Badagry will no doubt further divert resources, population and even development away from Badagry in preference to these areas. The rapid growth and development of Okokomaiko and Ketu which were villages before Ojo became a university town is a clear demonstration of this trend.

Badagry has received some attention from scholars. Hodder has examined its position as the first mission house and its plight after a century of missionary enterprise in Nigeria.¹² Fadeyi attempts an analysis of the growth of Badagry from geographical view point in view of recent development.¹³ Okaro K'Ojwang traces the history of Badagry between 1842 and 1891 to demonstrate the interplay of politics and trade in the fluctuating fortunes of the town,¹⁴ Dioka examined the impact of being frontier town on the development of Badagry.¹⁵ Chief Avoseh's work, sheds light on the early history of Badagry and its socio-political organization.¹⁶

Okaro, Dioka and Avoseh devoted considerable attention to the origin, settlement and early development of Badagry. Dioka in particular discussed the relationship between Badagry and her neighbours.¹⁷ R.S. Smith¹⁸ and R.C.C. Law¹⁹ examined the relations between Lagos and Badagry. From the above, one could say that the area under study is particularly lucky among Nigerian towns as it has received the attention it deserves because of its great historical significance and its central position in the eventual evolution of Nigerian nation.

However, it would appear that most of the works concentrated on the political development. For instance, the relationship between Lagos and the town in the 19th century is largely explainable in terms of political climate in Lagos, while its evolution as a border or frontier town was connected with the Franco-British politics of colonisation. In the same vein, the internecine conflict within Badagry over the years was intrinsically linked with the politics of the town.²⁰ Hence, most of the works, probably with the exception of Fadeyi and Dioka are all biased in favour of political development in the town. The over-concentration on politics can perhaps explain why little attention has been given to the economy of the once

thriving commercial emporium along the Guinea coast.

Virtually all the scholars and other writers mentioned the role of commerce, particularly, the Atlantic trade in the rise and development of Badagry. But these are more or less general statements on the economic activities in the town. Information on the role of the people of Badagry on this and the economy is very scanty. For instance, even by the time when the Sierra Leonian immigrants arrived in Badagry in the 1840s no one could say with certainty about their business.²¹ Perhaps, they tried to promote trade which dominated their activities in the interior in later years.

Whereas there were references to the trade of Badagry, about the presence of the European merchants and the wealth of the chiefs etc., but there is no major attempt to examine the economic basis of the town, other than slave trade. The neglect is perhaps due to the fact that information on the economy is rather fragmentary. Even European visitors such as the Lander brothers and Denham hardly left any information on Badagry as those on other places visited by them on the coast as well as in the interior.²²

John Adams did not throw much light on this either, except to say that "its benevolence, and respect to inland traders made the Port preferred to either Lagos to the east or Adrah to its west"²³. There is still much gap in the economic history of Badagry. The purpose of this chapter, is to attempt a reconstruction of its economic history and thereby fill a gap in Nigeria economic history.

Environment and Economy

Badagry is situated on the north bank of the main Lagoon. Located around Latitude $6\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north of the Equator and Longitude $3\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ east of the Greenwich meridian, it is bounded in the south by the Atlantic ocean, in the north by the Egbado territory, in the east, hemmed in by the swampy water of Lagos, and in the West by Benin Republic, otherwise known as Dahomey during the period under review. Of course, it is a frontier town between Nigeria and Benin. Because of its location, it is often described as a gateway to Nigeria.²⁴ It is a coastal town, located as Lagos within the low lying coastal zone.²⁵

The entrance to Badagry is characterised by coastal terrain, dominated by creeks and river estuaries. The location of the town made it of strategic importance and preferred to any other port in the neighbouring areas, for trade and commerce.²⁶ Its coast is almost unbroken for a considerable distance, while its creeks had good links with Lagos and Porto Novo.²⁷ It is also well protected and therefore attracted traders of different

nationalities, particularly up to the second half of the nineteenth century. Badagry therefore enjoyed some advantages which other neighbouring ports lacked.

It had a good port, the best, and most accessible at the time. It was a water front separated from the sea by few kilometer-long sand-belt, which means that ships could not come in directly, but had to berth a few kilometers off and discharge their cargo through carriers.²⁸ Thus, Badagry's sand-belt served as a buffer where ships could discharge their cargoes and then proceed to the town. It also had good communication by water with Porto Novo, Lagos, Ikorodu and Ikosi which was located northeast of Ikorodu.²⁹ Also, river Yewa linked all the villages in the area with Badagry making room for inland water-way in the area. Moreover, it was linked with Dahomey Alladah, Lagos, Oyo Empire and consequently within North Africa through Housaland.³⁰

Badagry, therefore, enjoyed a unique position among the coastal towns, having the best communication network of trade routes and productive activities.³¹ Since all goods coming into the interior had to pass through the town it became a meeting point for all traders from the hinterland thereby turning it into the most commercial port along the coast from Gold Coast to the Delta estuary. The prosperity of the town and the regular flow of goods into the port turned away the attention of many of its inhabitants from other occupations other than commerce as they were sure of regular supply of food. Thus, the people hardly bothered to engage in agriculture.

Perhaps, Talobot best summarised the situation in Badagry when he said, "the natives do not cultivate anything, not even cassava, the town is entirely dependent on Porto Novo for its trade and its inhabitants."³² This is perhaps to emphasize the link between it and Porto Novo. If she depended so much on latter, it stood the risk of starvation whenever there was trouble in the place. But available evidence has shown that the interior states as well as the Europeans preferred Badagry to Porto Novo. Indeed, the former had enjoyed periods of boom before Porto Novo became prominent. The town would not have depended so much on Porto Novo alone, as it was generally believed.

It will therefore suffice to say that the nature of the Lagoon trade coupled with the location of the two towns (Porto Novo and Badagry) made commercial link more promising if not inevitable. For instance, when Dahomey was under Oyo, Oyo used Porto Novo as an outlet for her slaves, but with the independence of Dahomey and her struggle to monopolise the trade of the area, trade shifted to Badagry.³³ In other words, Badagry could survive without Porto Novo as supplies would still come from Egbado, Lagos and from Yoruba hinterland.

Although commerce was important in the development of Badagry and made it an international port, not everybody lived on commerce. To all intents and purposes, the commerce was dominated by the chiefs and the Europeans. The greater majority who did not belong to these two groups lived on other economic activities apart from trading. One of such activities was fishing. Badagry was essentially a fishing community and many obtained their living by it. According to intelligence report, fishing and salt-making were the traditional occupation of the people.³⁴ To this end, the people of Badagry were engaged in other economic activities which must have contributed to its development as an important town and port. One can therefore discuss the economy under two broad headings, the domestic and external trade.

Domestic Economy

For the lagoon and riverine communities, fishing remains the most important occupation and the means of livelihood for the majority. This is equally true of Badagry where fishing was the main occupation which attracted the Ilaje, Ijo and the Fante of the Gold Coast to the settlement. No one is certain about the extent of the contributions of these groups to the growth of the settlement but they were attracted to the place partly because of the abundance of water and rivers and because of the favourable situation it offered for trading with the Europeans.

The importance of fishing in Badagry could be gleaned from the observation of the Lander brothers who noted that the natives procure necessities of life chiefly by fishing.³⁵ This is contrary to Talbot who opined that all the people of Badagry lived on commerce while all their food supplies came from outside.

For the coastal communities, particularly among the Yorubas, fishing was considered as very hazardous task and therefore regarded as man's job. For instance, in Lagos, all male children were taught how to fish and paddle the canoe as soon as they had the strength to do so just like their counterparts in the interior who sent their children to the farm at an early age. But this is not to say that women were not engaged in fishing, but it is probably a recent development, because the Yorubas rarely expose their wives to what they considered to be risky. Thus, their role in such ventures was merely supportive particularly in smoking of fish for preservation and other related activities.

Fishing was a family affair, involving the head of the family and his children. The number of people involved in lagoon fishing depended on the size of the canoes in use. Like in Lagos, fishing in Badagry was confined to the lagoon, the marshy creeks and the rivers, as it was cut off from the ocean. Traditionally, fishermen row or sail along the coastland

lagoons and creeks. They go in dug-out canoes as far as is compatible with safety. The fishermen along the Lagos and Badagry lagoon hardly ventured into the sea.³⁷ The trend was also observed by Adams when he said; "the turf on the line of the coast being very heavy, and the natives never passing it either for the fishing purpose or trade."³⁸

As in other parts of the lagoon creek, and indeed along the West African coast, fishermen in Badagry used various equipments and methods. Locally made cords and nets, iron hook were part of the equipments used for fishing. But draining of water to expose the fish was the commonest method in river fishing. This could be undertaken by a group of fishermen. The dry part exposes the fish which could be collected easily with calabashes.³⁹

The simplest equipment used for fishing along the coast is the hook (Awo) The hook is tied to a cord which is lowered into the stream and the fish in an attempt to swallow the bait eventually swallows the hook. This method cannot be used for large scale fishing and therefore it is employed occasionally and not for commercial fishing. As the hook could only trap a fish at a time, many hands would be required to be profitable for commercial purposes.

Apart from this, the hook has its own limitations. To be effectively used on the lagoon the canoe would be required to be stationed at a point before the fish could swim towards the hook to pick the bait, which is a rather difficult task for the canoe as well as its peddler. Apart from the use of the net, the Lander brothers also gave the idea of the equipment used in Badagry in the 19th century. These include spears and earthen pots, but the commonest method was the net.⁴⁰ This involved casting of the net into the lagoon and allowed to remain in water for some time before it is drawn. The essence of net casting is to encircle the fish within the area covered by the net.

Generally, for the people of the colony province Iregbe net fishing was commonly used. It involved a mixture of pounded nuts made up of salt, pepper and potash. The mixture is dropped under water the taste is detested by the fish and in attempt to avoid it swims in to the net.⁴¹ There are many other methods used for fishing, but the method to be used depends on the water level. Whichever method is employed, the use of the canoe is indispensable. Small dug-out canoes are used by individual for lagoon fishing.

The canoe was the most important link between Badagry and other areas until the advent of motor transportation. The dug out canoes appear to be the commonest along the Lagos and Badagry lagoon. They were often small with a scare of two or three; and fitted with paddles. However canoes fitted with sails were also in use in the 19th century particularly on

the shallow waters between Lagos and Badagry in 1865.⁴³ In Bosman's time small crafts were used for transportation between factories, but canoes remained the commonest on the Lagoon. Although canoes served generally for transportation along the lagoon, it is probable that the small canoes seen on the lagoon were used for fishing while the bigger ones could be employed for trading and commerce.

Associated with fishing is its smoking for preservation. Fish could easily be contaminated if not properly preserved. The process of preserving fish was also an important activity among fishing communities, particularly if they were engaged in fishing on commercial basis. It could be preserved by salting, drying or smoking. Perhaps, the commonest method used along the Lagos and Badagry lagoon was smoking. By this method, the fish was left to dry off in fire prepared specially for the purpose through dehydration. The process is still commonly used among fishermen. Since the method is simple, as it involves smoking fish with some fresh leaves, it is preferred by many people. Smoking was occupation of the women because this required absolute care and it is time consuming. Smoking has a number of advantages over other methods of preservation.

Another occupation besides fishing was salt manufacturing. Salt was an important ingredient in the food of the people, and therefore essential to everybody. It was in high demand by the people in the hinterland who were no producers of the commodity. Fish and salt produced along the coast were exchanged for agricultural products from the interior. The people of the forest and riverine areas probably supplemented imported salt with those produced by the coastal communities. Salt was made to crystallise through oxidation or by boiling. Other important centre for salt manufacture in Badagry was Ajido. The existence of Brine ponds in Topo and Ajido suggests the importance of salt processing. The industry probably declined with the importation of European salt. The attack of Dahomey on Badagry in the early decades of the 18th century was partly motivated by their ambition to have access to the salt pits.⁴⁵

Other economic activities in the area were pottery, craft and net-making basket making and weaving. From the above, one could see that although trade was of great importance in Badagry, it would appear that this was under the control of the chiefs who acted as middlemen and brokers. Those who could not make a living in trading may have concentrated their efforts on other available occupations. It is therefore misleading to say that Badagry depended entirely on neighbouring towns for the supply of its needs. It is plausible to say that trade accounted for the prosperity of Badagry and the development of the port, the domestic economy did not only supplement this, it provided job for the majority of the population who were not directly involved in trading activities.

Trade

From time immemorial, Badagry had been involved in both internal and external trade. The former is concerned with domestic trade within the region. On the other hand, external trade was mainly in the export of slaves through the port in exchange for imported European goods.

Generally, trade in Badagry developed in response to ecological factor, prevailing situation on the coast and the demand for European goods in the hinterland. First, the nature of the soil was a limitation to agricultural activities and production of food crops. If food was grown in Badagry, it was insufficient to feed its population. Hence, the inhabitants had to depend on their neighbours for the supply of foodstuff. This dependence on other communities was expressed by Talbot when he said, "the natives do not cultivate anything, not even cassava".⁴⁶

Badagry got the bulk of her food particularly palm produce, corn and other food items from Egbado and other Yoruba hinterland. Despite the fact that food was not produced in Badagry it was in abundance as the West African coast from Whydah down to Lagos and Ijebu was well cultivated, producing all necessities of life in good quality.⁴⁷ The central position of Badagry on the western side of the Yoruba country attracted people from all works of life to the coastal port. As a result of its advantageous position, people converged there daily for trading purposes. It was reported that every article of food and produce was always exhibited in the market.⁴⁸ Its importance as a market place was expressed by Avoseh thus, "In those days, all neighbouring towns respected Badagry as it was a centre of trade."⁴⁹

Due to its popularity, many varieties of goods were often available in the market. These included maize and cotton which were probably brought from Ijanna, Yams, produce of local crafts including fishing net. Apart from local goods, European goods were also on display. These were guns, gun powder, textiles and cowries.

Because of its geographical location Badagry was linked with the hinterland by a network of trade routes which facilitated the movement of supplies from the interior to the coast. One of such routes from Badagry went through Ilaro, Eruwa, Kano before connecting Hausaland and later north Africa. The second also came from Badagry through Otta, Abeokuta, Iseyin before terminating at Ilorin. Another also came from Badagry and passed through Ketu, Meko and went straight to Katunga. Other auxiliary routes came from the interior and terminated at Badagry. For instance, one from Ibadan passed through Abeokuta and Ijebu before terminating in the town. The people of northeastern Yorubaland were also linked with the port. For instance, traders from different directions came

through Ado-Ekiti, Ilesa, Ife, Ikire, Ibadan during peace time and then to Ijebu Ode through Epe, Ikorodu Ota, Ilaro and finally terminated their journey in Badagry.⁵⁰ There was also commercial link with Benin through the lagoon.

Apart from the routes which came from distant places, virtually all the markets of the Egbado area were linked by river Yelwa with Badagry. In fact, those who wanted to go to Lagos from this area had to pass through Badagry. For instance in Ado-Odo, traders came to Badagry by river Yewa before proceeding to Lagos. Those from Igbessa, Totowu, Ipoke, Ilaro were all connected with Badagry. There is no doubt that she was so important commercially and her people, indigenes and the European merchants took advantage of it either as middlemen, brokers and traders.⁵¹

In the third decade of the 19th century, Egbado also developed another trade route through southern Egbado to the port of Badagry.⁵² All these enhanced easy accessibility to and effective communication with the port. It would therefore not be surprising that all necessities of life were easily available despite the fact that Badagry did not produce as such.

The various sources through which goods came explain the reasons why all the necessities of life were easily available in the town. As a convergence of many routes from far and near, foodstuffs and other goods were always brought to the place from where they were distributed to other places.⁵³

Being located at such an advantageous position she became a melting pot of peoples and cultures: the Ilajes, Fantes, and Guns, Aworis and Europeans of different nationalities converged in Badagry thereby transforming it from a small settlement of immigrants to an emporium of both domestic and external commerce, and the most important port between the Gold Coast to the West and the Niger estuary to the East.

External Trade

The trade in slaves was a major factor in the development of Badagry. Her involvement in it accounted for the prosperity of the port, and the abolition of the trade contributed to its decline and desertion, while the improvement of Lagos port diverted commerce, people and even economic activities away from the town. It was the trade that transformed Badagry from a small fishing village into a commercial centre and also linked her with important Empires of Oyo, Egba and even Benin.⁵³ It was observed that slavery and slave dealing was the sole traffic of the town.⁵⁴ Every Badagry man today is proud of showing to the visitors how their forefathers had used the chains on slaves in those days. In other words, every citizen acknowledges the importance of slaves to the survival of the port in the past.

It may be difficult to say when slave trade started in Badagry. Perhaps, it started before the 18th century. Initially, Apa was more prominent than Badagry in the slave trade. However, it would appear that the decline of Apa shifted European activities to the town. Furthermore, Badagry was not important as a slave port until the arrival of the Dutch agent Hertogh in the area. He was probably the merchant who consolidated the trade in the area by attracting more European traders to the town. The fact that the ward he established has since produced the ruling family in Badagry is a testimony of his influence in the emergence of the town as a slave depot. It was he who probably established lodges in the town between 1732 and 1738.⁵⁵

As a Dutch agent, Hertogh was in charge of the lodges between the Gold Coast and Benin. He successfully organised trade in slaves and other commodities for the Dutch such that all traders were diverted to the eastern part of Dahomey on the arrival to Badagry. Such was his commercial organisation in Badagry and its environs that Whydah was virtually deserted. It was probably because of the desertion of Whydah which generated the envy of the Dahomian ruler on the towns to the east of Whydah. For instance, Dalzel put the situation thus, "He had long regarded Apa, Port Novo and Badagry with a jealous eye, on account of the great number of ships with reported to these ports, while Whydah was almost totally abandoned."⁵⁶

Hertogh paid dearly for diverting trade to the ports east of Whydah as he was murdered in 1738 probably by the agent of the King of Dahomey thereby resulting in decline afterwards.⁵⁷ Perhaps, the murder of Hertogh and the subsequent decline in the Dutch influence led to the intensification of Portuguese interest around Badagry, as they also established lodges between Apa and Badagry between 1737 and 1748.⁵⁸ They were probably followed by the French, the English and others who traded along the Lagos lagoon.

The English originally established in Whydah, but later moved to Badagry soon after the murder of Hertogh, probably between 1760 and 1778.⁵⁹ The Brazillians came later and the activities of Da Zouza and Martinez, both of them Brazillians who became prominent in the area perhaps coincided with the intensification of Brazillian activities and their prominence in the trade of the port. They became prominent since the second half of the 18th century, and controlled the trade until the abolition by the middle of the 19th century.⁶⁰

The location of Badagry and the nature of the slave trade generally dictated the establishment of factories by each of the European interests trading on the West African coast. As Badagry is located inland, at least, about a mile from the sea, there was the need for the agents to oversee the condi-

tion of trade and distribution of European goods. This made the establishment of the factories by each European country a necessity. In Badagry each of the chiefs was known and identified with different European quarters. Each of the European powers probably constructed lodges and baracoon in their quarters for keeping slaves waiting for ships.

Purchasing slaves along the West African coast was not an easy enterprise, which unlike industrial goods could be determined and controlled by demand and supply mechanism as ships had to remain on the coast for as long as it took to load a ship.⁶¹ No inducement of any type or promise of good trade bargaining, credit facilities to traders as well as guarantee and directives that African merchants or slave traders be given trust was enough to ensure regular supply or delivery of slaves to the European ships. Procuring slaves was not like producing any industrial goods which could be adjusted in response to the law of demand and supply. Even, wars which can produce slaves may at times constitute great barrier to the trade. Thus the agents stationed at the factories had to contend with buying of slaves from the African merchants in whatever quantity they could get at any given time and store for an affiliate ship arriving for cargoes of sales.

Heagreaves throws light on the French conduct of trade in Badagry and its environs, he stated thus "when a French ship arrived at a port which was highly respected, and known in the interior, the captain writes to the director to inquire about the situation of trade at Juda, Epe, Porto Novo and Badagry".⁶² The traders were themselves aware that loading a whole ship with slaves could not be secured at a place, hence, shippers had to wait for considerable period until their ship was fully loaded.

The slaves seen by Lander brothers were those being matched to the beach for transportation across the Atlantic. Being weary after a long and hazardous march from the interior to the coast, they could not but be miserable. Apart from this it is obvious that people fastened together by the neck and feet could not have felt convenient under any circumstances. But this could best describe the treatment as well as the general condition of slaves either in Badagry or in any part of the West African coast as such. For any one who was being carried away to an unknown destination, after a gruesome experience from their villages far in the interior, their look could not but be unhappy.⁶³

It would appear that securing and purchasing slaves in Badagry was more difficult than in any other place like Lagos, Dahomey and Oyo. In the first instance, Badagry was not ruled by a powerful King as in these other places. In the other areas mentioned above, the kings controlled vast areas and commanded considerable respect traditionally and militarily from other subordinate rulers. The Badagry chief on the other hand, was

just first among equals who also derived his influence from dealings with the Europeans in the town. Badagry, being not centrally organized, the ruler was not strong enough to exercise considerable influence over any area beyond the town. The chiefs therefore depended on slaves which came to the town.

The position of Badagry and its loose organization accounted for the invasion by Dahomey, as well as the attempts by Lagos rulers to exercise protectorate rights over the settlement on some occasions when the town felt threatened by outside forces. Therefore, she depended on slaves which came to the market for sales as the chiefs themselves did not venture like the chiefs in Lagos to scout or hunt for human cargo.⁶⁴ Perhaps, for the same reason, the chiefs in Badagry were contented with staying in the town acting as middlemen and brokers, instead of going to the interior to purchase slaves.⁶⁵

In spite of the weak position of the chiefs, the town got slaves from many sources. However, Badagry port also competed with some other centres both east and west. The supply of slaves therefore depended on prevailing conditions in competing areas. But in many cases Badagry like Lagos got her slaves through supply from interior traders.⁶⁶ War may lead to increase in supply at a particular time, but some carried raids into the interior in order to supply the consignment already promised either in offsetting earlier advances or in exchange for gun powder and ammunition.

During the reign of Alafin Abiodun of Oyo, slaves were diverted to Badagry as it was becoming difficult to use Porto Novo.⁶⁷ Similarly, many slaves may have been sold in Badagry during Kosoko's attack. The control of Dahomey by Gezo, following his successful declaration of independence from Oyo, forced Oyo to re-direct her trade through Badagry. Also, when there was depression in trade Dahomey traders flooded the eastern markets thereby increasing the traffic in the ports. Such diversions as said earlier accounted for constant invasion of Badagry by Dahomey in the last quarter of the 18th century.⁶⁸

A large number of slaves sold in Badagry came through Egbado corridor. It would appear that all the slaves captured in the area in the 19th century were sold through the town.⁶⁹ The Egba-Egbado war, the Dahomean raids and the Yoruba Civil War provided many prisoners of wars and captives which were sold to the Europeans at the coast through the ports. All those interviewed in Egbado towns and villages such as Ado-Odo, Igbessa, Totowa Igbesa and Ajido were unanimous that Badagry provided the market for the sales of slaves coming from Egba and Egbado areas.⁷⁰ The Owu war, which shifted the centre of slave trade from Porto Novo eastwards may have also boosted the trade of Badagry.⁷¹ The situation was confirmed by J.P. Mannix who remarked that in the

1840s slaves poured into Lagos, Whydah and Badagry because of the wars between Dahomeans and the Yoruba. However, the diversion of slaves eastwards of Whydah was partly due to high prices of slaves there as against lower prices in Badagry and Lagos, and partly because of seizure of ships in Whydah.⁷²

Generally, Badagry got slaves from many sources, because of its easy communication with the interior. Even when Whydah and Lagos were blockaded slaves were still sold through the Badagry port, because ships could pass from Badagry to the Denham waters, Lake Nokue without being intercepted at Porto Novo.⁷³ Badagry's link with Egbado provided access to Oyo and to Hausaland. The security afforded by the port coupled with its ready communication with the hinterland attracted European merchants into the town thereby making a thriving commercial centre on the Lagos lagoon.

The level of participation of Africans in the slave trade would appear to differ from one community to the other. But it is generally agreed that Africans did not engage in wars purposely for slave raiding. This is clearly shown in the statement of Dahomean King Kpengla to Dalzel in the 1790s. "Your countrymen therefore, who alleged that we go to war for the purpose of supplying your ships with slaves are gravely mistaken; Dahomean ever embarked in war merely for the sake of procuring therewithal to purchase your commodities".⁷⁴ However prisoners of war were either retained as househelps, or as labour for agriculture and the surplus sold to the Europeans. For a society like Dahomey which was known for her many wars of aggression and expansion, the supply of slaves may have come directly from the wars.

But the coastal chiefs of a town like Badagry which did not command any substantial area and power, might have been contented with the middlemen position, as they were certain that slaves would eventually come to their port. They probably did not venture into the hinterland to scout for slaves. The slave trade required a lot of capital to fund, because it involved guns, gunpowder, chains and baracoons just to mention fee. Feeding the slaves while waiting for sailing involved considerable expenses. The Badagry chiefs who took active part in the venture obtained loans and credits, chains and imported items from their respective European partners. They also exchanged the imported goods for slaves or bought them with the available currency, and kept them under chain and lock on their compounds.

Apart from acting as middlemen and brokers, some High Chiefs supervised the traffic.⁷⁵ Others, particularly peasants may have served in carrying consignments mostly imported goods from the coast to the town when canoes were not available. It would also appear that the chiefs of Badagry

derived considerable revenues from taxes on slaves, imported goods and on markets for their administration. In addition, revenues were collected from the toll gates which were controlled by the chiefs. It is probable that each of the quarters installed toll gates in addition to those erected at the entrance to the town. The aim of collecting the toll was to raise revenue and improve town services such as the maintenance of town roads as well as the baracoons.

There is no doubt that slave trade was important to the economy of Badagry in the past. However, the trade expanded or fluctuated depending on the political situation in the neighbouring territories. For instance, Porto Novo competed with neighbouring ports for slaves and imported goods hence when trade is so concentrated in a part say the west, the fortune of the other part will be adversely affected. In 1807, it was reported that trade was diverted to Lagos because of the war between Dahomey and King of Porto Novo and partly for failure of Badagry to honour its contract with the interior people.⁷⁶ In 1843, when King Gezo of Dahomey was being persuaded to abandon the slave trade, he demanded that the trade in Lagos, Badagry and Porto Novo be prohibited as well, because he believed that those involved in those places were getting rich.⁷⁷

Similarly, when Lagos was no longer safe for slavers, its traders sought refuge in Badagry and the slave trade flourished there at such times. Domingo Martinez the Brazillian slave merchant who made his fortune in Lagos earlier settled in Whydah when he discovered that Lagos had been heavily policed. From his new base he tried to launch himself back to Lagos.⁷⁸ The series of attacks on Badagry by Dahomey and its eventual destruction in 1784 clearly demonstrated that the economic fortune of one community meant near disaster or depression for other competing ports. It is within the context of the politics and trade along the lagoon coast and the competition for slaves among the coastal towns that the fluctuating fortunes of Badagry could be properly understood.

The Era of Abolition and Attempts to Adjust to New Economic Dispensation

The abolition of slave trade in 1833 by the British did not bring an abrupt end to the slave trade. If anything, it increased the export of slaves through Badagry as there was diversion of trade to the town while other ports such as Whydah and Lagos came under the squadron surveillance. Second, the war in the interior also diverted considerable slaves to Badagry. The bombardment of Lagos and its occupation also diverted

trade. Indeed, as noted earlier the raids on other ports like Dahomey, Porto Novo and later Lagos was an advantage to Badagry as it brought a revival of commerce in the early part of the 19th century. However, the control of Badagry by the British coupled with the incessant raids of the lagoon coast by the squadron brought an end to the slave trade.

With the end of the slave trade, Badagry was faced with the problem of finding an equally viable alternative commerce comparable in terms of profit to the slave trade. The impediment put on the way of slavers by the squadron inevitably left the people with no other alternative than to resolve themselves to the pursuit of lawful commerce.

With the end of the slave trade, Badagry became the first port of call for the missionaries who established in the place in 1842. They encouraged the Sierra Leoneans to migrate to the town, partly to establish commercial link in an attempt to boost their enterprise in the palm oil trade. Second, the Saros wanted to use Badagry as a base from where they could link up with their families at Abeokuta. They probably encouraged the people of Badagry to take up palm oil and kernel trade. Initially, it would appear that the people of Badagry were enthusiastic about the trade. The town enjoyed the rich supply of palm produce from Egbado. The regular flow of commerce from the interior, and the anticipated prospect of large commerce probably encouraged Badagry chiefs to welcome the Saros to their town.

Within a short time Badagry became an important centre of trade in palm and imported items. Such was the enthusiasm that it was reported that palm oil and kernel processing was the main occupation of the people of Badagry. When the Sierra Leoneans arrived in the 1830s and early 1840s, they were well received with the hope that they would strengthen the trade contact of the port. Some individuals set up oil factory and these attained some measure of success. However, the Sierra Leonians were forced out of Badagry probably for lack of commerce and the inability of the chiefs to guarantee their safety and of their properties.

The open welcome which the chiefs in Badagry extended to the Sierra Leonians was probably a mere pretence. The Saros being freed slaves themselves would not have been well received by those who lived on trade in slaves. Second, the Saros were looked upon as the agents of the British who were using the squadron to end slave trade. The hostility to them was apparently a reaction against them because they constituted barrier to the trade in slaves particularly when the trade in palm produce was not profitable enough to producers of coconuts. Other crops such as copra, cocoa and rubber were experimented, but it would appear that not much came out of these. Cassava may have been tried to supplement the food supply and relieved Badagry of her dependence on the interior for

the supply of all her food needs. There was a plan by Golmer to organize agricultural show and distribute prizes to the farmers in an attempt to stimulate their interest in agriculture.

Initially people were enthusiastic to cultivate but later grew skeptical about the suitability of the soil for large scale farming. The people of Badagry's aversion to agriculture can be better summarised in the following statement, "Trade we shall, trade our forefathers taught us". They believed that an attempt to develop agriculture was a direct invitation to another Dahomean attack.⁹¹ Hence, rather than pay greater attention to agriculture the people clung to their trade in spite of fast declining revenue, apparent poverty, and dwindling population. They preferred to engage in ventures which would bring quick or immediate profit instead of enduring the period of gestation which would have run into many years, which cultivation of export crop entailed. In spite of the efforts of people like Seriki Abass, Hundeyin and others to encourage plantation, the people were not interested in putting available land to agricultural production.

The Decline of Badagry

The rise of Badagry was due largely to the slave trade and the activities of its chiefs as brokers and middlemen. The chiefs supplied the various European merchants with slaves and other trade merchandise. The end of the slave trade and the failure to have an immediate alternative which was also as profitable as the commerce in human beings coupled with the disintegration of the town by the Europeans brought about the decline. Whereas, the end of the slave trade and the civil war in Yorubaland diverted much of the commerce of the interior to Lagos, it diverted trade, and centre of activities away from Badagry. Even the trade with Egbado, a principal supplier of slaves and other trade commodities to Badagry was diverted to Lagos. Any hope of catching the trade of the neighbours to its West was frustrated by the menace from Dahomey and the intense competition posed by the firm of Regis to Hulton and other traders from the town.

Badagry was burnt in 1851 which led to migration of part of its population. Thereafter, the constant threat of another invasion by Dahomey did not cause only instability and panic, it led to the exodus of people from the place, thereby leaving the town deserted. Whereas Dahomey also suffered adversely due to the abolition of slave trade, but recovered from the slump as the territory took to plantain agriculture and extensive cultivation and processing of palm oil. Badagry on the other hand, had poor agricultural base, as the environment was unsuitable for agriculture. But

even if the area could support large scale agriculture the people did not like to engage in agriculture, as the prosperity of the town in the past rested on the profit of the middlemen. But once this was no longer available due to loss of trade, the entire economy collapsed.

By 1875, the Lagos turf was dredged, thereby allowing ships to have direct access to Lagos. With the opening of Lagos to direct communication from the sea, Badagry port was no longer useful as it had no direct access to the sea. Consequently, the remaining trade which had been passing through the port was re-routed to Lagos, as the facility in the port was no longer sufficient to cope with the volume of trade towards the end of the 19th century.

Perhaps, the instability within Badagry coupled with lack of economic resources and the diversion of commerce from the frontier towns by both the French and British administration further impoverished Badagry and eclipsed its erstwhile prosperity. Such was the desertion that her population of 12,500 in 1800 had less than 5,000 at the beginning of the colonial period.

Conclusion

Badagry and Lagos were probably established at about the same time. They both owed their prosperity in the past to their participation in slave trade. However while the slave trade and the commodity trade enhanced the development of Lagos the abolition led to the decline of Badagry and the desertion of the town. Badagry's economic basis was fragile as her prosperity depended on the profit as middlemen. As the trade was abolished and the town could not adjust to the new economic dispensation by taking up agriculture, the whole economy collapsed. The location of Badagry between powerful Lagos and Dahomey was also a disadvantage to the town. The town cannot be freed from crisis, slumps and prosperity of the neighbours, as its fortunes were intricately tied to events in the two areas. This situation perhaps accounted for the fluctuating economic fortunes of Badagry up to the beginning of colonial rule.

Notes and References

1. T.O. Avoseh; *The History of Badagry*; Ife-Olu Press, 1938, p. 10. See also P.A. Talbot; *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*; London, 1926; vol. I, p. 110. Also see Lagos State Information Division; *Our Town Series* No.2, "Badagry" pp. 4-5, Hodgkin, *Nigeria Perspectives*; p. 172.
2. 'Badagry' in *Our Town Series*, p. 4.
3. Aradeon, "The Role of Small and Intermediate Settlements in the Development Process, The Badagry-Porto Novo Region", Unpublished Survey, Lagos, 1983, p. 54. The same view is expressed in NAI File No. RG/W3. Intelligence Report on the Egun Speaking People of Badagry compiled by Mr Wormal.
4. B.W. Hodder; "Badagry I. Slave Port, and Mission Centre" *Nigerian Geographical Journal*, vol. 5, No. 2, Dec. 1962, pp. 81-84. J.F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891*. Longman 3rd Imp (1975), p. 34. See Wormal's Intelligence Report, p. 9.
5. L.C. Dioka, "Badagri since 1842; Urbanisation in a Nigerian Border Region" M.A. Thesis, Unilag Unpublished 1986, chp. I.
6. There is no consensus on this date. While the indigenes claim that Badagry was founded around 1425, most sources claim that the town was founded in the late 1720s. It would appear that Badagry was already established by the time when Hertogh who was corrupted as Huntokonu arrived in Badagry in 1731. If the date is accepted, the town must have been founded at an earlier date. See A. Van Dantzing; *The Dutch and the Guinea Coast 1674-1742*. GASS-ACCRA 1978, pp 236-237.
7. Badagry was mainly populated by the Awori and Ogu migrants while the Fante were probably the earliest group to establish fishing hut in the town. For the settlement of Lagos; See E.K. Faluyi, "Migration and the Development of Lagos from the earliest times to 1880" in *LASU Journal of the Humanities*, vol. 2, (forthcoming).
8. R.C.C. Law, "The Career of Adele at Lagos and Badagry 1807-1837". *JHSN* vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 35-59.
9. R.C.C. Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.
10. R.C.C. Law, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
11. A.I. Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbours*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1967, p.115.
12. B.H. Hodder; "Badagri I Slave Port and Mission Centre", *op. cit.*, and B.H. Hodder, "Badagri II One hundred years of changes" *Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1963, pp. 17-31.
13. G.A. Fadeyi, "The Growth and Decline of Badagri" A Geographical Analysis M.A. Thesis (Unilag) Unpublished 1967.

14. K.M. Okaro-K'Ojwang, "Society and Politics in Badagry 1841-1891": A Case Study of African Response to British Penetration in South Western Nigeria. M. Phil (Ibadan), Unpublished, 1979.
15. L.C. Dioka, "Badagri since 1842" Urbanisation in a Nigerian Border Region M.A. Thesis, Unilag (Unpublished) 1986.
16. T. Ola Avoseh; *The History of Badagri* Ife Olu Press, 1938.
17. L. C. Dioka, 'Badagri since 1842' pp. 32-42.
18. R.S. Smith; *The Lagos Consulate*, Methuen 1983 pp. 84-5. See also "Canoe in West African History", *JAH* Vol. 10, (1970).
19. Robin Law; "The Career of Adele at Lagos and Badagry.
20. For instance, Kosoko wanted to control Badagri in the 19th century so as to cut off Egba supplies and to control its trade. See W.E. Ward *The Royal Navy and the Slavers*; George Allen 1969, p. 206.
21. K.M. Okaro-K'Ojwang pp. 47-55.
22. Robin Hallet, *The Niger Journal of Richard and John Lander*, Frederick, A. Praeger Pubs. 1965, pp. 53-54.
23. John Adams, *Remarks on the country extending from Cape Palmas* Frank Cass & Co, 1966, pp. 95-96.
24. L.C. Dioka, "Badagri since 1842", *op. cit.*
25. R.K. Udo, *Geographical Regions of Nigeria*, Heinemann 1970, p. 20.
26. A.I. Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Her Neighbours*, p. 115. Also Elisee Soumonni; "Trade and Politics in Dahomey," Ph.D. Thesis Unifs (Unpublished) 1983, pp. 169-194.
27. L.C. Dioka, "Badagri since 1842", *op. cit.*, p. 29.
28. L.C. Dioka, "Badagri", *op. cit.*, p. 30.
29. Kola Folayan; "Trade Routes in Egbado in the 19th Century" in A.I. Akinjogbin and S.O. Osoba (ed.), *Topics on Nigerian Economic and Social History*; Unife Press 1980, pp. 83-87.
30. Kola Folayan, Trade Routes in Egbado, *op. cit.*, See also E.W. Bovill; *Caravans of the Old Sahara*; Oxford University Press, 1933, pp. 255-256. G.A. Fadeyi, Badagri, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
31. Kola Folayan, *op. cit.*, p. 84. Both Dioka and Fadeyi also devoted attention to the study of the trade Routes which confirms the importance of communication network in the development of Badagri.
32. P.A. Talbot, *Peoles of Southern Nigeria*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p.
33. R.C.C. Law, *The Oyo Empire 1600-1837*, Oxford 1977.
34. Intelligence Report on the Egun Speaking People of Badagri, pp. 28-29.
35. Robin Hallet (ed.), *Journal of Richard and John Lander*, p. 53.
36. Afolabi Ojo, *Yoruba Culture*, Unibadan Press, 1967, p. 45.
37. R.S. Smith, "Canoe in West African History", *JAH* Vol XI 4 (1970),

- pp. 517–518.
38. R.S. Smith, p. 517. See also John Adams *op cit* p. 99
 39. Afolabi Ojo, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
 40. Robin Hallet, *Journal of Richard and John Lander, op. cit.*, p. 54.
 41. N.A.I. Ijebu Prof. File No. 826, Vol. II. On fishing in Ijebu Creeks and on the Lagos Lagoon.
 42. R.S.S. Smith, "Canoe in West Africa," *op. cit.*, p. 524.
 43. John Whitford, *Trading Life in Western and Central Africa*, Frank Cass, 1967, pp. 103–118.
 44. G.A. Fadeyi, 'The Growth of Badagry', *op. cit.*, p. 69.
 45. R.K. Udo, *Geographical Regions of Nigeria*, Heinemann 1970, pp. 20–21.
 46. P.A. Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, op. cit.*, p. 10. A similar view is also expressed by Kola Folayan, in Trade Routes in Egbadò in the 19th Century, in A.I. Akinjogbin and S.O. Osoba (ed.). *Topics in Nigerian Economic and Social History*, Unife Press, 1983, p. 85.
 47. P.A. Talbot, *Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, p. 110.
 48. G.A. Fadeyi, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
 49. T. Ola Avoseh, *History of Badagri, op. cit.*, p. 10.
 50. E.K. Faluyi, "Socio-Economic Relations Between North-Eastern Yorubaland and the Coastal Communities of Lagos and Egba Area", *ODU* (forthcoming).
 51. Most of the trade routes in Egbadò linked Badary in one way or the other. Most of those interviewed in Egbadò confirmed the link and the importance of Badagry as a coastal market. For instance, Chief Adetokunbo Odu (68) of Ado-Odo said, "The Awori of Egbadò carried their farm products from Ado-Odo to Lagos through river Yewa via Badagry 23/10/83. Similarly, Oba J.O. Akpo of Ado-Odo (96) has this to say; "The markets used in the purchase and sale of slaves and other goods were those of Lagos, Badagry, Iworo Ajido and Ejirin" 23/10/83. Chief Adeleke Ogundeke, Baale of Totowu-Igbesa (75) 26/10/83 also said, 'The slaes were taken to Lagos and Badagry to be sold to the Dahomeans who came to the coast for their purchase. See also Fadeyi, *op. cit.*, p. 72. "Trade Routes in Egbadò", pp. 84–85.
 52. Kola Folayan, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
 53. Allan Ryder; *Benin and the Europeans*, Longman, 1969, pp. 188–90.
 54. K.M. Okaro-K'Ojwang, "Society and Politics in Badagri", *op. cit.*, p. 72.
 55. For the activities of Hertogh who was probably known and addressed by the indigenes as Huntokonu in Whydah and Badagry. See A.V. Dantzig; *The Dutch and the Guinea 1674–1742*. Selected

- Documents, No. 287-402, pp. 248-340. See also Allan Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans*, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-194. See R.C.C. Law. "Trade and Politics Behind the Slave Coast", *JAH*, Vol. 24., No. 3, 1983, pp. 339-403.
56. Archibald Dalziel; *The History of Dahomey*, Frank Cass 1967, p. 116.
 57. A.V. Dantzig; *The Dutch and the Guinea*, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
 58. R.C.C. Law, *Oyo Empire 1600-1837*, *op. cit.*, p. 341. See also J. Palma; "The Dutch Participation in the African Slave Trade 1675-1795", p. 41.
 59. The British William Hawkins Father of John Hawkins was believed to be the first Englishman to engage in the slave trade, but it would appear the British were not fully involved until the middle of the 17th century. See Van Dantzig. *The Dutch and Guinea*, *op. cit.*, p. 237. Also Don Taylor; *The British in Africa*; Robert Hale 1962, p. 26 and Postma *The Dutch Participation in African Slave Trade*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
 60. For the activities of Da Souza in Dahomey; See Pierre Verger; *Trade Relations between Bight of Benin and Bahia 17th - 19th Century*; Unibadan 1967, pp. 406-412.
 61. J.P. Mannix, *Black Cargoes*, Longman 1963, p. 25.
 62. J.D. Heagreaves France and West Africa Mac. p. 52. Also, Lawrence C. Jennings, "French Policy Towards Trading with African and Brazillian Slave Merchants 1840-1853", *JAH*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 515-528.
 63. Robin Hallet. *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.
 64. N.A.I. File No. RG/W3 INTELLIGENCE REPORT ON EGUN SPEAKING PEOPLES, Compiled by Mr. Wormal, p. 15.
 65. R.C.C. Law; *Oyo Empire 1600-1837*, p. 274.
 66. A.I. Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbours*, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
 67. R.C.C. Law, *Oyo Empire 1600-1837*, *Ibid.*
 68. A.I. akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbours*, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
 69. Oral Interview with Chief Oba Akapo, Olofin of Ado-Odo (aged 96), 23/10/83.
 70. Oral interview with Oba Akapo Ake II, Chief Adedokun Odu, Ado-Odo (68), 23/10/83. Oba Adesola Gbeleyi, Adinloye II of Igbesa 84 years 20/10/83.
 71. R.C.C. Law, *Oyo Empire*, *op. cit.*, 274.
 72. J.P. Mannix, *Black Cargo*, *op. cit.*, p. 265.
 73. Kola Fodayan, 'Trade Routes' *op. cit.* See Kola Folayan, Egbado and Yoruba-Aja Politics 1832-1894, M.A. Ibadan 1967, p. 77.
 74. Ronen Dov, "On the African role in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Dahomey", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, Vol. VI, 1971, pp. 9-12.

75. For instance Chief Mewu was an important canvansary for traders.
76. C.W. Newbury, *The Western Slave Coast and Its Rulers*, Clarendon Press 1961, p. 51.
77. Pierre Verger; "Notes and Documents in which Lagos is referred to by the Name 'OWIM', and which mention relation between Lagos and Brazil, *JHSN*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1956, p. 347. The slave trade in Badagry is discussed in greater details in Pierre Verger; *Trade Relations between Bight of Benin and Bahia*, pp. 183-188.
78. David A. Ross, "The Career of Domingo Martinez in the Bight of Benin," *JAH* Vol 1, No. 1 (1965), p. 30.

Introduction

The relationship between history and geography has, in the words of one writer, gone through phases of uneasy co-existence¹ as many historians have come to question the concept of geographical determinism which they perceived as overemphasising the role of physical location, environment and special regional features in the evolution of human society. Nevertheless, writers concede that the ecology has had considerable and, at times, a lasting impact on human activities. They argue that the idea of environmental determinism leads to play down the role of man in society.² The crux of their argument is that the stress on ecological constraints gives little scope to man's ingenuity and resourcefulness in the transformation of human societies. It is significant in this regard that technology has enabled man to harness the resources of his environment to suit his needs.

It is a debate from the burgeoning theme of the concept of geographical determinism is valid to the extent to which man is unable to impose his will on his environment. Thus, the history of technologically advanced societies provides a record of man's success in overcoming ecological constraints, in such states, man rather than the environment has dictated the pace of economic development. For the same could hardly be said of technologically deficient societies.

It is to this connection that this paper examines the impact of location and resource endowment - or lack of it - on agriculture and land use, roads and land transportation in the technologically backward Badagry District during the colonial period.³ It shows that while there were obvious ecological constraints on economic activities in this area, man has not been a passive doleful and a helpless victim of the environment. He has not only adapted to the environment but has succeeded to some extent in subverting it.

- 75. For instance, Crist Mewis was an important conveyor for traders.
- 76. C.W. Newbury, *The Western Slave Coast and Its Rulers* (London: Press 1961), p. 31.
- 77. Pierre Vigny, *Notes and Documents in which Lagos is referred to by the Name Ouidi*, and which mention relations between Lagos and Brazil, *IASM*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1956, p. 247. The name Lagos in Vigny is discussed in greater detail in Pierre Vigny, *Lagos: Relations between Right of Lagos and Bahia 183-188*.
- 78. David A. Ross, "The Coast of Domingo Martins in the Right of Bahia," *IASM*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1952, p. 30.

about 1800

about 1800

NOTES

page 11

page 11

6

Ecology and Economic Underdevelopment: Agriculture, Trade and Transport in Badagry, C. 1880–1950

AYODEJI OLUKOJU

Introduction

The relationship between history and geography has, in the words of one scholar, "gone through phases of uneasy and divorce"¹ as many historians have come to question the concept of geographical determinism which they perceived as overemphasizing the role of physical location, environment and special regional features in the evolution of human society. While such scholars concede that the ecology has had considerable and, at times, decisive impact on human activity; they argue that the idea of environmental determinism tends to play down the role of man in society.² The crux of their argument is that the stress on ecological constraints gives little or no credit to man's ingenuity and resourcefulness in the transformation of human societies. It is significant in this regard that technology has enabled man to harness the resources of his environment to suit his ends.

We can deduce from the foregoing then that the concept of geographical determinism is valid to the extent to which man is unable to impose his will on his environment. Thus, the history of technologically advanced societies provides a record of man's success in overcoming ecological constraints. In such places, man rather than the environment has dictated the pace of economic development. But the same could hardly be said of technologically deficient societies.

It is in this connection that this paper examines the impact of location and resource endowment – or lack of it – on agriculture and land use, trade and land transportation in the technologically backward Badagry District during the colonial period.³ It shows that while there were serious ecological constraints⁴ on economic activities in this area, man has not been a passive onlooker and a helpless victim of the environment. He has not only adapted to the environment but has succeeded to some extent in subjecting it.

Developments in the Agricultural Economy of Badagry and its environs

One area in which the environment registered an appreciable impact on the Badagry economy during this period was the agricultural economy. Writing in 1850, the missionary, C.A. Gollmer, had described the area as most infertile; its soil being "80 per cent sand and 20 per cent decayed vegetable matter".⁵ The result was the poverty of agriculture in Badagry which early travellers attributed to the "habitual indolence" of the people. However, one perceptive early observer contended that "no intelligent farmer would be deceived by the barren, sandy soil of Badagry"⁶ It was in recognition of this fact that attempts were made to promote the cultivation of crops considered suited to the soil texture of Badagry and its districts. Although the record of such efforts was not particularly encouraging, some success was registered in respect of coconut cultivation.

Coconuts had been introduced by the Portuguese in the seventeenth century but it was only in the 1880s that conscious efforts were made to encourage the cultivation of the crop in Badagry area. This was in the expectation of the development of a substantial copra trade along the coastline of southwestern Nigeria. Colonial officials were especially enthusiastic about the prospects of the industry. Thus, the Badagry District Commissioner declared in 1887 that the "conditions of soil on the strip of land that lies hundreds of miles between the inland waters running parallel to the coastline of West Africa and the sea are so favourable to this crop that there should be, in time, a large export of copra".⁷

Chiefs were enjoined to participate in the scheme of coconut cultivation and they promised to mobilise the people by personal example. Colonial officials then resorted to giving careful instructions about cultivation such as the need for interspacing of seeds. By 30th September 1888, 13,023 coconut seeds had been handled under the scheme.⁸ However, the people were reported to be unenthusiastic about waiting for some nine years before they could see the fruits of their labour.⁹ They were further discouraged by the harmful effects of tornadoes on coconut nurseries and of pests and disease on the young trees. There was also the havoc wrecked on the plantations by dry season fires. Moreover, the scheme had to contend with the problems of labour shortage and the costs and difficulties of bush clearing as well as the weeding of the plantations. A final consideration was in respect of the effects of coconut cultivation on food production. It was to resolve the clash between both interests that the colonial administration encouraged the people to intercrop cassava with coconut. This experiment began from the early 1890s.

In the final analysis, the expectations of the colonial officials were large-

ly unfulfilled as coconut cultivation failed to yield the desired results. The nuts were small and of poor quality and copra manufactures failed to attain the required quality and quantity. For, in addition to the aforementioned problems of labour shortage, overall cost of cultivation, disease, pests, bush fires and tornadoes, there were problems of low rainfall and unsatisfactory quality of soil. Nonetheless, the coconut tree remains a conspicuous feature of the Badagry landscape to this day.

An attempt was also made to encourage the production of rubber from local trees. One of these, the *Abba*, was found to react favourably to straining with lime juice.¹⁰ Indeed, the then Secretary of State, Lord Knutsfr expressed appreciation of Alvan Millson's efforts at promoting India rubber production in the Badagry district in the 1880s. But Millson had admitted in 1888 that attempts at preparing the latex of the *Abba* tree proved "a complete failure when shipped in large quantities".¹¹ It thus to be expected that the people did not embrace rubber production with any great enthusiasm. They were however, more forthcoming in respect of oil palm exploitation since palm oil was preferred to coconut oil. Hence, the oil palm is a dominant feature of the territory north of the lagoon.

A conclusion that could be drawn from the foregoing discussion is that the Badagry district was deficient in the requisite natural resources to sustain a virile agricultural economy. This was because only a narrow strip of laterite land in the northern part of the district was able to sustain the production of food crops such as corn, yam and beans. But the output proved inadequate for local need. A report of 1932 aptly described the situation:

Ninety per cent of the dry land in the District is pure sand, and exceedingly infertile as regards the standard foodstuffs. Four fifths of the population do not grow their own food, but have to purchase it from outside the District except for palm oil, fish and a little cassava.¹²

Consequently, Badagry District has had to depend largely upon external sources to supplement local production of foodstuffs. Gari, for example, was obtained from Ikorodu and Ejinrin while maize and its byproducts were procured from the Egbado area.¹³ It was reported in 1902 that the "people of Badagry complain bitterly of the prices they now have to pay for corn, agidi and yams, all of which have to be imported from Porto Novo and other distant places." Their problem was further compounded by the influx of Lagos traders who offered better prices, bought up everything wholesale and left them with very little for retailing at high prices.

The district, however, fared much better in animal husbandry. The Report on the area in 1900-01 noted that at the Obada market, which held every eight days, fowls and "all sorts of poultry", sheep, pigs and goats were sold at great profits. For example, a fowl bought at Badagry for 1/- fetched 1/6d in Lagos while a pig at 15/- went for 20/- in Lagos. "It is now a difficult matter in comparison with former times", the Report stated, "for a resident here to buy fowls, as they are snapped up like hot cakes by the people from Lagos who will pay good prices known for certain of an excellent profit when taken to Lagos market".¹⁵

The discussion in this section has shown that the record of agricultural practice in Badagry District during this period was largely unsatisfactory. As an earlier writer has remarked, it was a case of "trial and error... reflecting the restrictive character of the natural environment".¹⁶ The cultivation of coconut was not a complete failure since the crop remains an important element of the economy till today. Its fluctuating fortunes could be explained in terms of price movements and elasticity of demand. Thus, heavy plantings of coconut seedlings were reported in the area in 1951 due, it was said, "to the abnormal price at present being obtained from the sale of copra". During the same period also, "unusually heavy plantings of local cowpeas" were observed just outside Badagry. This was attributed to the good sales of copra, palm oil and kernels which provided more money for cultivating extra land for planting. Second, there were ready sales of cowpeas in Badagry and for "export" to Lagos and other places.¹⁷

What could be concluded from the foregoing is that the people were responsive to incentives but were largely constrained by their unfavourable environment. In this connection, they used their initiative by adding a little manure to the soil and by interplanting cassava and cowpeas. As the Badagry Divisional officer remarked in 1951:

The interplanting of cassava through cowpeas in this area is no doubt a rotation known and proved to be successful over a period of many years, but has not been in operation for the past few years as other enterprises have proved more profitable, and it is only this year owing, in my opinion, entirely to *economic reasons* that this considerable increase in cultivation has taken place.¹⁸

In effect, it cannot be said that the farmer in this area was either lazy or ignorant. He was indeed more than a mere helpless victim of the environment. Nevertheless, his efforts were constrained to a great extent by the peculiar nature of his environment. As is shown below, the environment also influenced the pattern and development of trade in the district.

The Dynamics of Trade in Badagry and its District

The geographical factors of location and topography have had a profound impact on the development of trade in this area. Badagry is sited on the northern bank of the great lagoon which spans the entire length of the Bight of Benin.¹⁹ However, unlike Lagos which has a natural opening to the sea, Badagry is separated from the open sea by a sand spit. This peculiarity was initially advantageous to the port for it shielded it from the kind of violent surf that buffeted Lagos port until harbour improvements took place there in the early twentieth century. Moreover, the sand spit enabled Badagry to continue exporting slaves in defiance of the British anti-slavery naval squadrons since she was beyond the range of their guns. The port thus enjoyed the best of the slave trade until the cession of 1869.

But, in the subsequent period, Badagry declined as a port as its initial advantages had lost their significance or even became outright liabilities. The neighbouring port of Lagos then displaced Badagry as the pre-*port* of the region - a reversal of their respective positions in 1815.²⁰ The situation at the beginning of this century has been described thus:

Everything was against Badagry Trade had shifted from west to east and centred on Lagos, and generally, from the lagoon side to the seaside. What is more, through modern route development Lagos port had stretched its tentacles into the interior and had captured what used to be the hinterland of Badagry prior to the establishment of British administration.²¹

Lagos had been found to occupy a more advantageous position in the east-west lagoon network from Porto Novo in the west to Opobo in the east.²² Moreover, the Ogun river afforded it access to oil palm-rich areas of the Yoruba hinterland. Furthermore, Lagos was the seat of the colonial administration while Badagry was further disadvantaged by its location close to the border with Dahomey where a rival and often hostile power swayed. Consequently, Badagry ceased to be an international port of entry in 1876 though customs duties continued to be collected on merchandise from Porto Novo in transit. It then became a lagoon port of some significance in southwestern Nigeria. But, it was no more than a mere satellite of Lagos in the subsequent period.

The dependence upon or orientation towards Lagos was the chief feature of Badagry trade during this century. According to a Report of 1902, "The whole trade of the District passes through Lagos, the commercial intercourse between it and the adjacent French Protectorate (Dahomey) being practically nil".²³ This was in sharp contrast with the situation in

1863 when the administrator of the Colony, John Glover, found that Badagry was "completely dependent on Porto Novo for its trade, and the inhabitants for the necessities of life; in fact it can only be regarded as the shipping port of Porto Novo".²⁴ Indeed, the ruler of the latter state collected one head of cowries on every puncheon of palm oil shipped from Badagry.

The principal reason for the re-orientation of Badagry was, undoubtedly, the creation of an inter-colonial boundary between the British Colony of Lagos and the French Colony of Dahomey. In the aftermath of the Anglo-French agreement of 1891, Badagry had to look eastwards in the direction of Lagos. However, people from Dahomey continued to attend Badagry markets.

The inter-colonial border also ensured that Badagry captured a substantial portion of the Egbado trade that formerly passed across the border. A report of 1891 stated that "nearly all the produce from places south of the Ado River finds its way to Badagry instead of to Porto Novo as formerly".²⁵ This diversion of trade was reflected in an unprecedented increase in the volume of oil exports from the district in 1900. In that year, some 300,000 gallons of palm oil were sold to exporters in Badagry.²⁶

On the whole, it would appear that the great volume of trade in 1900 was an exception to a general trend, especially if the magnitude of trade is measured by the presence of European firms. Thus, up to 1901, only one expatriate firm, the German enterprise of Messrs Witt and Busch, was stationed at Badagry. However, another German firm - G.L. Gaiser and Co - set up a factory there in 1902. In that year, the Report on the District stated that there seemed to be "plenty of trade for both firms" and lamented that there was "no enterprising British Firm established here to prevent the trade becoming the monopoly of foreigners".²⁷ But, following the outbreak of the First World War and the consequent "capture" of German trade by British firms, the firm of Miller Brothers was stationed at Badagry until October 1918 when Messrs Maclver & Co.; African Oil Nuts & Co. and British Nigeria Company joined it. In addition to these expatriate firms, African traders from Lagos were reported to be active in the District, trading in large quantities of English cotton goods and miscellaneous merchandise. Many of them also sold produce to the expatriate firms in the district or dealt direct with those in Lagos.²⁸

In the aftermath of the First World War, Badagry, like other parts of the world, enjoyed a brief trade "boom" from 1918 to 1920. A report on the trade of the district during this period asserted that "Not a small quantity of the produce of the district was... attracted to Lagos direct by the slightly higher prices ruling in the town."²⁹ But by 1921, the town and its environs were in the grip of a Depression. Nonetheless, the report for 1921

indicated signs of improvement as the "quantity of shipments to Lagos of palm oil and palm kernels showed a tendency to increase, and the markets of the district were well attended.³⁰ However, at the time of writing the report in December 1922, only Miller Brothers and African Oil Nuts & Co. Ltd. were the remaining British firms stationed there. By the end of 1922, there were further improvements in trade and markets were reported to be well attended. The average price of oil had risen from £18 in 1921 to £22:5 per ton in 1922 but the average prices for kernels fell from £12:2:6 in 1921 to £10:7:6 in 1922.³¹

By 1925, the volume of trade done at Badagry in palm oil and kernels was said to be "very considerable". This is indicated by the presence of four European firms in the area. Three of these had resident European agents while many African traders were reported to be doing a "large" trade.³² One of the European firms was reported to have purchased produce in excess of £70,000 in 1925.³³

There was a further improvement in trade in palm produce at Badagry in 1926. Thus, the average price of palm oil rose from £22 in 1925 to £25 per ton in the following year. That for kernels declined from £14:10 to £13:10 and Copra's from £21:10 to £19. The prices of cocoa, all of which, like the great bulk of the palm produce, was produced in the Ilaro Division, varied between £20 and £62, averaging £55 per ton. The palm produce trade was affected by a drought early in 1926, and towards the end of the year there were complaints of bad trade. However, there were signs of improvement in early 1927. Evidence that times were hard was provided by the sudden re-emergence of Victorian coins in the area. These were said to be "very dirty but in an excellent state of preservation showing that they have been buried. The fact that they have now been dug up is probably due to the poor state of trade".³⁴

The general decline in trade extended into 1927 with the average price of palm oil falling by some 5/- to £22:15. Cocoa's also fell by some pounds to £48:1 per ton. However, copra (£20 per ton) and kernels (£15:2:6) experienced some slight improvement on 1926 average prices. Purchases by European firms at Badagry during 1927 were as follows: Miller Bros. (£99,964) African Oil Nuts & Co. (£42,269) and W.B. MacIver & Co. (£19,458).

The depression which devastated the world economy between 1929 and 1934 had a profound impact on Badagry and its districts. The annual report on the area in 1931, at the height of the economic adversity, noted "a good deal of poverty" there since the people did not produce the foodstuffs they consumed. Rather, they were "dependent on the sale of palm produce which cannot be exchanged from the Protectorate because the farmers themselves have ample supplies of oil" – which they themself-

ves could not sell!³⁶ The ensuing economic hardship then created a great demand for coins of lower denomination than the half penny. This was because such coins were required for the purchase of small quantities of goods. Thus, the intelligence report on the area in 1932 stated that, "there was never any demand for [tenths of a penny] here or elsewhere in Southern Nigeria in more prosperous times".³⁷ Hence, between October and December 1931, tenths of a penny were put into circulation in the Badagry area. But, by the end of that year, the Divisional Officer reported that practically all the tenths "had passed into the Ilaro Division "most of them probably in the purchase of foodstuffs"³⁸

There were, however, signs of improvement in 1932 but the difficult situation was not ameliorated. The annual report for that year painted a grim picture of human existence in the Badagry area:

The people of this District have suffered considerably owing to the fact that the soil is extremely poor, except near the Northern Boundary, where sand gives place to laterite... Very little farinaceous foodstuff is grown and this must be purchased from other districts by the majority of the population. In order to pay for this imported food the people are largely dependent on Nigeria's export trade in palm oil and palm kernels, although there is a considerable demand for edible palm oil and dried fish from Badagry for local consumption in Lagos.³⁹

Badagry was thus paying a high price for its dependence on the metropolitan markets – a price which all primary producing communities pay till today. The Gazetteer on Badagry aptly summed up the situation in the following words:

When European trade booms a rather artificial prosperity is seen. In times like the present the absence of ... real ... wealth becomes apparent. Most of the population, unlike much of Southern Nigeria, are barely self-supporting, but directly dependent on the export trade to Europe and America.⁴⁰

Ultimately, Badagry, like other parts of the world, experienced a definite trade revival in 1935.⁴¹ Thus, the average price of palm oil rose from £6:3:10 in 1934 to £10:16:6 in 1935. The respective figures for kernels were £3:13:10 and £7:4:0. The change of fortunes was also reflected in the increase in the volume of produce exported from Badagry: palm oil exports rose from 101 tons in 1934 to 350 tons in 1935 and kernels' from 1,279 to 1,524.

The "boom" of 1935–36 soon relapsed into a depression towards the end of 1937 and this situation persisted till the outbreak of the Second

World War in September, 1939. The entire war period, as is well known, was characterized by the imposition of strict controls on the external trade of Nigeria and the channeling of Empire trade towards the sustenance of the Allied war effort.⁴² Nigeria, like other colonial dependencies, was not to experience a trade "boom" until the post-war quinquennium.

The foregoing study of the dynamics of the trade of Badagry and its districts has demonstrated the effects of unfavourable location on the port and of poverty of the soil on the export trade of Badagry. This area has also been shown to have been doubly dependent on the international economy for income with which to purchase foodstuffs and also on the port of Lagos which was its outlet and market. On the one hand, dependence on the international economy wrecked havoc in times of trade depression especially between 1929 and 1934. On the other hand, dependence on Lagos was detrimental to Badagry as it tended to encourage high retail prices in the town thereby aggravating the misery of an impoverished people.

In the meantime, the environment also constrained economic developments in Badagry in the sphere of road transport development. As is discussed below, the swampy terrain was a barrier to the "opening up" of this district.

The Development of Land Transportation in the Badagry Region

As has been stated above, Badagry was a lagoon port situated in a region of swamps. It was, therefore, dependent on a system of water-based communications to the West, North and East. The lagoon waterways afforded regular communications with Porto Novo in the West and Lagos in the east while the Yewa river granted access to the Egbado region. The following is a list of trade routes in the Badagry District in the early 1930s.⁴³ The first ran from Porto Novo to Lagos through Badagry. The second was the Yewa river which linked Badagry with Ado and other parts of southern Egbado. The third was the Ado - Ikoga - Pota - Mowo - Aradagun - Itoga - Badagry route. Another ran through Ilogbe, Ale, Mowo, Aradagun and Itoga to Badagry while a fifth was the Ilogbo-Ibiku-Ologe Lagoon - Ojo Creek-Ojo-Lagos route. The sixth route was that linking Ota, Ologe Lagoon, Ojo creek, Ojo town and Lagos. All of these were water-based routes.

While it could be seen from the above that the water-based network of routes was rather extensive and therefore largely satisfactory, the land-based connections were very poor indeed. The presence of water, swamp and sand posed great obstacles to road-building in this area. Nonetheless,

attempts were made in the late nineteenth century to encourage the making of land routes in the District. Thus, the District Commissioner reported in October 1888 that roads in the District had been "well done, and on the whole, with considerable willingness".⁴⁴ In 1898, over forty miles of roads were built in the District, including those from Badagry to Koga and Ragbo to Koga. The extent of road building was however, limited partly by the difficulty of the terrain and also by the belief that it entailed "turning up malaria with every spade of earth".⁴⁵

Consequently, by the 1930s, the road network in the Badagry District left much to be desired. The state of affairs was described as follows:

There are no roads, unless Badagry Marina be counted as such. The usual paths run everywhere. They are all sand, more or less soft, except just on the Protectorate boundary where laterite is found. Most of them are cut by belts of swamp, which in some cases are crossed by canoe-ferry, and in others have to wade. And even the open plains between the swamps are so flat and lacking in natural drainage, that they are often waterlogged over large patches in the wet (sic) season. In fact with the exception of the sea-beach and the lagoon-side path from Badagry to Iworo, it may be said that no journey can be made from any village to the next one without having to wade somewhere, except for a part of the dry season.⁴⁶

In effect, by the 1930s, the need for effective all-season land communications between Badagry District and the outside world had become imperative. For one thing, motor transport was found to be cheaper than head portage. In 1933, it cost 4/- per effective ton-mile to head-load goods whereas motor transport cost a mere 4½d per ton mile.⁴⁷ In any case, porters were difficult to come by. But most important of all, motor roads were believed to be capable of stimulating trade much more than could the waterways. Hence, the Badagry Town Council enjoined the colonial government in 1929 to assist it in developing road links with Ado so that trade could flourish at Badagry.⁴⁸ These were also expectations that overland connections with the hinterland would bring in a greater quantity of foodstuffs and thus make life better for the common people who were finding it difficult to compete with the Lagos traders for the available quantities. Road links with southern Egbado were, therefore, expected to ensure quicker and greater supplies of foodstuffs than were coming from Lagos, Ikorodu and Ejinrin.

It is against this background that one should consider the clamour for the opening of a land route to Ado. Thus, the people of Badagry repeated their request for government assistance in an address to the Governor in April 1939.⁴⁹ The latter associated himself with their desire but pointed

out that half the total sum of £8,000, which was the estimated cost of constructing the proposed road, would be spent on the Mowo Swamp. He promised that if the Native Administration could construct the rest of the road, the central Government would, in more prosperous times, endeavour to assist in handling the Mowo Swamp. The Governor then instructed that a fresh estimate should be made by the Public Works Department (P.W.D.). John Padonu, who spoke on behalf of the Council, assured the Governor that the N.A. could build the rest of the road in six months but could not afford the necessary laterite surfacing.

Sequel to this meeting, a fresh reconnaissance of the proposed road was undertaken and a new estimate of £9,200 was arrived at. The Director of Public Works, R. Rodger pointed out, however, that "the road at this cost will be, to all intents and purposes, an earth road and so not fit for light traffic. To surface it with laterite would cost a further £1,000." In a report on the road, Thomas Brand of the P.W.D. remarked that the people of the district "seem very keen to have the road and should prove helpful. This is especially so at the Mowo Swamp where they would appreciate a highway, and in such circumstance the cost of clearing could be kept down."⁵¹ Indeed, the people had already cleared various parts of the swamp on their own account.

The Divisional Officer in his comments on Brand's report agreed that the Ajara Doko line was preferable to the Ikoga route because a road through the former area would serve the populations cluster of villages of the Ajara group. Second, it was on the trade route to Ipokia, west of the Yewa river and thence to Dahomey. Third, it provided between Ajara-Doko and Mosatejo a dry stretch of land more suitable than the low-lying country between Badagry and Itoga, much of which was waterlogged during the wet season. He, however, remarked that "it is doubtful whether a road from Ado to Badagry would be of immediate commercial value. The importance of the road is moral and political rather than commercial."⁵² In the meantime, the Native Administration had agreed to shelve the project for the duration of the Second World War and had resolved to build up a reserve of funds from which construction would begin in the post-war period.

Nonetheless, the people of the Badagry district took advantage of a meeting with the Governor in April 1940 to press for progress on the road. The Governor, like his predecessor, expressed support from the people but explained that it was difficult to raise the sum of £8 - 9,000 needed to execute the project. He then promised to bear their request in mind especially as they had begun work on the project on their own initiative.⁵³ In this connection, the Divisional Officer reported in 1941 the great effects of the Egun-Awori people in continuing the development of the Mowo Em-

bankment on which "a considerable amount of work had been done." He stated that they were much encouraged by the Governor's reference to their work in his recent broadcast.⁵⁴

Since help was not readily forthcoming from Lagos, attempts were made to elicit the interest and support of the Ilaro N.A. Which was at the other end of the road. Thus, in January, 1942, the D.O. Badagry prevailed upon his counterpart in Ilaro to construct the five-mile portion of the Ado-Badagry road in his Division.⁵⁵ He explained that the Egun-Awori N.A. was "very poor" and could only afford "very little" in the preceding two years towards financing the road project. Yet, the people were so "desperately anxious" to see it through that they had voluntarily started work on an embankment thirty feet wide and a thousand yards long over the most difficult stretch - the Mowo Swamp. In contrast, the portion of the road in the Ilaro Division passed over red soil devoid of stream or swamp.

In addition to asking the Ilaro N.A. to construct the portion of the road in its area, the D.O. Badagry solicited for an interest-free loan of £300. This was to complement a sum of £300 expected from the Central Administration and £150 which the Egun-Awori N.A. was able to provide. In asking for assistance from the central government in Lagos, the acting commissioner of the Colony gave the "border dimension" to the matter: "I consider that the sum asked for would be well spent not only as an encouragement to the people themselves but for its political effect in contrasting conditions on both sides of the border".⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the response from the Ilaro Division fell short of expectations. Thus, the Director of Public Works noted in 1942 that the "Badagry people seem to be more enthusiastic about the work than the Ado people".⁵⁷ This indifference on the part of the Egbado was also shared by their colonial administrator. For instance, the D.O. Ilaro contended that there was no justification for the construction of the road in war-time. Direct appeals were, therefore, made to the Resident of the Abeokuta Province. Considering "the large numbers of people from the Ilaro Division who attended the Badagry market", the Commissioner of the Colony argued that the road "would be of great advantage to both divisions".⁵⁸

The acting Resident of the Abeokuta Province, Captain A.P. Pullen, appeared to be more enthusiastic than his subordinates in Ilaro. Hence, he stated that "we should not be parochial and... as a road outlet for Badagry people appears desirable, the Ilaro Native Administration Treasuries should contribute towards the cost of construction."⁵⁹ In this regard, he obtained official sanction for a vote of £605 towards financing the project. In the same spirit, the Financial Secretary, Lagos, announced that the

central administration would give a grant of £650; provided the Ilaro N.A. undertook the construction of a road to connect the Ado-Badagry road with the Ado-Ere road. "Sympathetic consideration", he promised, "would also be given to a request for assistance in maintaining the road when completed".⁶⁰ To crown it all, a meeting of the South-western Area Transport Advisory Committee in August, 1942 resolved that "the completion of the (Ado-Badagry) road is highly desirable for the development of the area".⁶¹

Work, therefore, proceeded on the project and, finally, in 1944, the first motor car driven by the Agricultural Officer through to Badagry. The Badagry branch of the Nigerian Transport Commission (N.Y.M) aptly represented the mood of the people on "The whole community... was over-filled with profoundest joy as a car was driven in and it is very strongly wished that the in-rush of cars and lorries be greatly encouraged".⁶² However, the road was by no means completed though it could carry fair-sized lorries loaded with palm produce.

But, the problem of maintenance soon began to dampen the enthusiasm initially generated by the road. As this involved a sum of £950:11:8 in 1942/43, it was not an inconsiderable burden on the poor Egun-Awori N.A. However, the Central government in 1945 decided to refund 25% of the expenditure of the N.A. on the maintenance of the road. This assistance was continued and in 1948 a grant-in-aid of £300, which offset the entire cost of maintenance, was given to the N.A. But by 1949, the N.A. had become financially strong to the point of dispensing with the grant-in-aid.

Ironically, it was at this point that the colonial officials and the people of Badagry began to complain about the volume of traffic on the road – something they had clamoured for in the first instance. The D.O., for example, complained that the heavy traffic was raising the cost of maintenance because the road, being of soft sand, could not bear the weight of the traffic. It could therefore not be re-built as quickly as it was destroyed by fast moving heavy lorries. He pointed out that a road census over a period of six months had shown that an average of 90–100 vehicles plied the road a day before and on every market day. This meant that for 25% of the year, the road was carrying an average of 50 heavy vehicles per day, a figure that increased every month. In addition, an average of 3–4 vehicles passed in and out of Badagry on each of the remaining days of the year.⁶³

The D.O. Badagry who highlighted this problem was particularly displeased by the fact that none of these vehicles was owned or stationed within the Division. He lamented that:

The position is such that the Badagry N.A. is expected to main-

tain a road for the almost exclusive use of vehicles from outside its area. It cannot even be argued that the presence of these vehicles brings additional wealth through additional trade in the market, as the main purpose of their presence here is to remove food, from an area that is unusually short of food, to supply the demand of the big towns, and it cannot be doubted that since the influx of traffic from the big towns, the prices of local foodstuffs have increased considerably; and the quantity available markedly diminished. It has been made quite clear to me that the Badagry people resent paying to maintain a road which results mainly in less food and high prices for themselves.⁶⁴

Consequently, the D.O. Badagry stressed the need for the construction of a proper permanent road surfaced with materials capable of bearing the weight of the increasing traffic; but such a scheme, he pointed out, could not be financed by the N.A. However, since the Ilaro N.A. had agreed to tar its section of the road down to the border with Dahomey, the D.O. Badagry implored the P.W.D. to take over the complete construction and maintenance of the remaining portion in the Badagry District. This was particularly necessary because, as he argued, the road "serves people mainly outside the Division,... the local people obtain little direct benefit from it, and ... under these circumstances it is ... more properly a liability upon the Central Government than the local Native Authority".

Taking a cue from this, the Commissioner of the Colony asked the P.W.D. to upgrade the Ado-Badagry Road from Category B1 to B3 which would entail central government responsibility to the tune of 75% of total cost of maintenance.⁶⁵ But the Director of Public Works explained that the road could only be considered under category B2, that is, as a trunk road upon which through traffic (and that not originating or terminating within the boundaries of the local Administration) exceeded the local traffic.⁶⁶ Government was responsible for only 50% of the cost of maintenance of such roads. The Badagry - Ado road was accordingly classified as trunk B2 with effect from 1st April 1950.

The road now had to be tarred since the sandy sections of it were almost impassable at certain times of the year. Hence, in 1952, the D.O. Badagry submitted to the Colony Development Board a proposal for the tarring of the road. He argued that the road was "the only access to Badagry for motor traffic and therefore the only way the large numbers of produce-carrying lorries can reach the important exchange centre of Badagry market". Since many of these lorries came from as far as Abeokuta, Ibadan, and Ijebu-Ode, the road, he asserted, "might be said to form one of the vital links in the trade of this country".⁶⁷ But it was not until 1958 that the road was made a tarred all-season highway. Writing in

1963, Hodder contended that this "link-up may prove to be the most important single stimulus to trade Badagry has experienced this century".⁶⁸ This was no doubt true of the period under consideration in this paper. The situation today is, however, remarkably different as Badagry no longer has direct access to Lagos by means of a dual carriageway, a development of far-reaching significance in its history.

Conclusion

This paper has illustrated the impact of the environment on economic developments in the Badagry region. It has shown that the poverty of the soil and the swampy terrain constrained agricultural practice and land use, the conduct of commerce and the establishment of overland communications. Nonetheless, man has not fared badly in the encounter with nature. For, as an eminent scholar has remarked, "by sheer will, the Badagry man has been able to tame the environment for his survival and indeed prosperity". This, he contended, demonstrated "man's unconquerable will to survive in spite of all odds".⁶⁹

On the whole, this study does not completely invalidate the concept of geographical determination going by the extent to which agricultural practice in Badagry has been constrained by the unfavourable environment. Yet, the appreciable success in the development of land transportation is a tribute to man's resolve to overcome environmental constraints. Consequently, as far as Badagry is concerned neither the argument for nor against ecological determinism can be stated absolutely.

It should be emphasised, however, that the ecology is only one of several factors accounting for the socio-economic underdevelopment of Badagry. For example, political considerations were involved in the ascendance of Lagos and the concomitant decline of Badagry. The result has been that Badagry continues to be a political and economic backwater dwarfed by and heavily dependent upon her eastern neighbour – Lagos. In the final analysis, it could be said that the ecology has provided the setting in which other forces of change have affected the history of the area.

Notes and References

Materials for this paper were collected in the course of an on-going research in the impact of maritime trade on Lagos during the colonial period. I thank the University of Lagos which sponsored the research through the Central Research Committee. My gratitude goes to Dr. B.A. Agiri, Messrs Leo Dioka, Muyiwa Okuseinde and Abayomi Akinyeye for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Abayomi Akinyeye whose practical assistance made the fieldwork possible.

1. Allen M. Howard, "The Relevance of Spatial Analysis for African Economic History: The Sierra-Leone-Guinea System", *Journal of African History*, XVII, 3 (1976), p.365.
2. Adeleye Ijagbemi, "Ecology Control and the Pre-Colonial Economy in Upper Guinea", Paper presented at the Joint Seminar: Staff and Postgraduate, Department of History, University of Ibadan, 1983, p.1. A pioneering study is Helge Kjekshus, *Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History*, London: Heinemann, 1977. Also see Ogunremi's view in chapter 4.
3. "Badagry District" as used here encompassed the "Western District" of the Lagos Colony. The area was subsequently constituted into the Egun-Awori N.A.
4. For the geographical setting of this study, see G.A. Fadeyi, "The Growth and Decline of Badagry: A Geographical Analysis", M.A. Thesis (Geography), University of Lagos, 1969, ch. II especially pp. 43-46 and 58-64. The specific environmental constraints shall be highlighted in the appropriate sections of this paper.
5. Fadeyi, "The Growth...", p. 04, citing C.A. Gollmer, *Journal CMS CA2/043*, 18 Dec., 1850. The discussion in this section excludes the fishing industry which does not provide relevant illustration of the negative impact of the ecology on the economy.
6. T.J. Bowen, *Adventures and Missionary Labours in several Countries in the Interior of Africa*, Charleston, 1857, p. 96 cited in B.W. Hodder, "Badagry I. Slave Port and Mission Centre" *The Nigerian Geographical Journal (N.G.J.)* vol. 5, No. 2, (Dec. 1962), p. 80.
7. Badagry Letter Book, 1887 cited in B.W. Hodder, "Badagry II: One Hundred Years of Change", *N.C.J.* vol. 5, No. 2, (Dec. 1962), p. 80.
8. National Archives, Ibadan (N.A.I) BADADIV 7/1, District Commissioner's Letter Book 1888-89, Alvan Millson to Col. Sec., Lagos, 1 Oct., 1888.
9. This section draws on Hoder, "Badagry II...", *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 20

11. NAI BADADIV 7/1 *op. cit.*, Millson to Col. Sec., Lagos, 26 Dec. 1888.
12. NAI Comcol 1 1344 "Badagry Gazetteer, 1932", "Intelligence Report or Gazetteer" enc. in D.O. Badagry to Adm. of the Colony (Ad. Col). 19 Feb. 1932, Section VIII: Agriculture.
13. Fadeyi, "The Growth...", *op. cit.*, p. 96
14. NAI LAGOS *Annual Reports*, 1902, p. 137. Report on the Western District, Feb. 28 – June 24, 1902.
15. NAI Lagos *Annual Reports 1900–01*, p. 37: Badagry; Report on Badagry by R.J.B. Ross, Dist. Com., 5 March, 1901
16. Fadeyi, "The Growth...", *op. cit.*, p. 95
17. NAI Comcol 1 327/S.1 "Agricultural Development: Badagry. Division", D.O. Badagry to Comm. of the Colony (Comcol), 12 June, 1951.
18. *Ibid.*, same to same 8 Aug. 1951.
19. This paragraph draws on Hodder, "Badagry I ...", *op. cit.* pp. 75–79.
20. Hodder, "Badagry II...", *op. cit.*, p. 20.
21. Fadeyi, "The Growth...", *op. cit.*, pp. 128 – 129.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 125
23. Lagos *Annual Reports*, 1902, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
24. Glover to Russel, 10 June, 1863, cited in Hodder, "Badagry II...", *op. cit.*, p. 18.
25. Badagry Letter Book, 1891, cited in Hodder, "Badagry II...", p. 23.
26. NAI CSO 1/1/35 enc. in Dispatch 197 of 16 July, 1901: Report on Badagry District, 1900 by H.W.H. Cummings, Dist. Comm.
27. Lagos *Annual Reports*, 1902, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
28. NAI CSO 26/4 51045 "Annual Reports on the Colony Districts, 1918 – 1921", p. 15 para. 29.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, Report for 1921, p. 53. We should note that producers tended to increase production in the face of declining prices to be able to maintain their income levels. This is known as the producers' "perverse reaction to the market".
31. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. 1 "Annual Reports on the Districts of the Colony, 1922", para. 18.
32. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. III "Annual Reports ... 1926", p. 74.
33. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. II "Annual Reports ... 1925", p. 68.
34. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. III ... *op. cit.*, p. 74
35. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. IV "Annual Reports ... 1927", p. 99
36. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. VIII, "Report for 1931", para. 34.
37. NAI Cmcol 1 1344... *op. cit.*, section xiii: Trade and General

Wealth.

38. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. VIII ... *op. cit.*, para. 34.
39. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. IX "Annual Report, 1932" para. 53.
40. NAI Comcol 1 1344... *op. cit.*, section XIII.
41. NAI CSO 26/4 09512 Vol. X "Annual Reports, 1933 - 35", Report for 1935, para. 37.
42. For a good summary, see Axel Harneit-Sievers. "Economics and Politics in Nigeria During World War II", Paper presented at the Joint Seminar: Staff and Postgraduate, History Department, Univ. of Ibadan, 26 Feb. 1988.
43. NAI Comcol 1 1344 ... *op. cit.*, section XIII.
44. NAI BADADIV 7/1 *op. cit.*, Milson to Col. Sec. Lagos., 3 Oct. 1888.
45. Hodder "Badagri II..." *op. cit.*, p. 22, citing District Commissioner's Diary, 1913.
46. NAI Comcol 1 1344 ... *op. cit.*, section XIV: Communications.
47. Hodder, "Badagri II ...", p. 22, citing Miscellaneous Information, Nigerian Secretariat, 1933.
48. *Ibid.*, citing Minutes of the Badagri Town Council, 1929.
49. NJAI Comcol 1 593 vol II "Badagri-Ado Road", Extract from Governor's Reply to Address of Welcome presented at the Badagri District Meeting on 3 - 5 April, 1939.
50. *Ibid.*, Rodger to Comcol. 23 Oct. 1939.
51. *Ibid.*, enc. in Rodger to Comcol.
52. *Ibid.*, D.O. Badagri to Comcol. 19 Lec. 1939.
53. *Ibid.*, Extract from His Excellency's Notes of Meeting with the Badagri Div. Council, 1 April 1940.
54. *Ibid.*, Ag. D.O. Badagri to Comcol. 31 March, 1941.

7

The International Boundary and Underdevelopment in Badagry

L. C. DIOKA

Introduction

Border regions all over the world, have, by the virtue of the special circumstances surrounding their evolution, tended to present special problems. International Boundaries have been defined arbitrarily in terms of¹ latitudes, longitude and other geometric lines which bear very little or no relevance to the pre-colonial history and character of the societies.² The result was the fragmentation of coherent culture areas, artificiality and neglect of border communities. These characteristics were shared by all borders whether in America, Asia, Africa or Europe up to 1945. From 1945, the character of European Border regions began to change from fragmentation and neglect to integration. African border regions have, on the other hand, retained the earlier characteristics despite the changes taking place in Europe since 1945. While border towns in Europe are merging and forming conurbations, African border towns are decreasing in population and forming 'frontier march-lands'.³ Therefore, what has characterised African border towns is neglect especially in the provision of communication facilities and industries. It is the absence of these that has affected population growth along the border region.

It is within this set-up that the case of Badagry will be examined. The main thrust of this paper, therefore, is to show that, although African border regions have suffered neglect, Badagry has suffered special neglect. It will be shown that Badagry, before the colonial period and, in fact, early part of the colonial era, was a booming trade centre with a population of over 12,000 people; a figure it has never again attained. Since the boundary was imposed, it has been reduced to a neglected market town outside the main stream of development: Therefore, an assessment of current efforts and recommendations for future developments will be made.

Definition of Concepts

It will be pertinent to define the concepts employed in this paper. This is

more so as the terms 'Development and Under-Development' are capable of varied interpretations. Here the definition of Border Development 'the totality of the social, economic, legal and political activities of governments and private sector Organisations in opening up hitherto under-developed areas through the provision of necessary facilities and infrastructures to further improve the quality of life of the inhabitants, facilitate closer social and economic interaction and mutual cooperation...' ⁴ will be adopted for this paper. Conversely, the absence of these will be defined as 'Under-Development'. However, emphasis will be placed on roads, water, transport, industries, trade, population, and the changes these have undergone from the time the boundary was imposed till now.

Location and the People

Badagry is fifty-one kilometers West of Lagos. It is bounded in the north by the Egbado Plateau, in the south by the Atlantic Ocean and in the west by the Nigerian-Benin border. In the east, it is hemmed in by the Mangrove swamps west of Lagos. ⁵ Badagry also shared a boundary with the then Kingdom of Porto Novo.

The location of Badagry made it a peripheral and a strategic location before the establishment of the international boundary. It was a key market between the Aja, and Yoruba countries. The control of Badagry as Port, was a major cause of war in 1830s through 1840 among its strong neighbours especially the Egba at Abeokuta, the Awori and Egbado States which obstructed this access. ⁶ Badagry also attracted the attention of the neighbouring states of Lagos, Porto Novo and Dahomey. These underscored the strategic importance of the location of Badagry for trade.

Occupying this strategic town is a mixed population of the Yoruba and Aja Speaking Peoples. Their mixed origins have been traced to their early migration. Only a brief reference will be made here to migration and settlement in Badagry as these have been fully documented elsewhere. ⁷ The migration and settlement will help us establish the interlocking cultures which were arbitrarily severed by the international boundary. Two major migrations established the demographic pattern in Badagry today.

The first was the Yoruba migration which allegedly started from Ife when an Oni of Ife sent out his sons to establish independent kingdoms. The second was Aja migration which started with the expansionist wars of Agaja-Trudo. Each of these migrations left its imprints on the demographic pattern and inter-group relations in Badagry today.

The Yoruba migration was led by an Ife prince, Aheshe, who ultimately established Apa (West of Badagry) and a line of Obas called 'Alpa'. ⁸ The

history of Badagry is therefore closely linked with Apa. It was under Aheshe, the eleventh Alapa of Apa that Hontokunu, a Dutch trader, who influenced the growth of Badagry, was granted land, for trade on the present site of Badagry. When Hontokunu met Aheshe, Badagry had been occupied by the Yoruba of an earlier migration.

The trading base of Hontokunu in Whydah had been disturbed by the wars of Agaja Trudo of Dahomey. He brought 100 Canons as present to Aheshe for the defence of Apa and the trading route between Badagry and the sea against Dahomey in exchange for the land he received. From then, Badagry developed rapidly and Apa declined.⁹

Another branch of the Ife migration established the Akoro (Aklon) and Ija Osa (Jasin) quarters of Porto Novo.¹⁰ Therefore, the Yoruba migration established Apa as well as Akoro and Ija-Osan quarters of Porto Novo as Yoruba Communities.

Perhaps the Aja migrations seem to have had more durable impact on the demographic pattern of Badagry. Agaja Trudo, King of Dahomey, 1708-1740, decided to take control of the coast of Southern Dahomey. Consequently, he embarked on the conquest of such states as Whydah, Hueda, Weme, Allada and Jakin. The wars consequent on these decisions, dislocated the settlement pattern in the region. The reason for Agaja Trudo's wars has been a topic of discussion by many scholars. Some scholars such as Hopkins and R.C. Law saw it as economic while Akinjogbin saw it as political.¹¹ Whatever the true motive, the point is that the waves of migration occasioned by the war, laid the foundation of today's situation in Badagry.

Aja refugees formed the eight wards of Badagry and others settled in scattered villages beyond the town. But parts of Badagry had been occupied by the Yoruba of an earlier migration. The two groups came together and formed a mixed community. The Aja of Badagry in particular were historically and culturally linked with the Aja of Porto Novo, a link that has been sustained till today. It was on this mixed community with interlocking cultures extending to Porto Novo that the international boundary was imposed.

The International Boundary 1861-1889

The evolution of Nigeria's International boundaries has been discussed at length by many scholars.¹² However, a brief reference will be made to the evolution as this touches on the issue of underdevelopment in Badagry. Badagry had, from its early history, been a frontier state and its control affected the relations between Old Oyo and Dahomey. In 1724, Dahomey captured Allada the major port for Oyo's export of slaves. Allada had

a tribute-paying state to Oyo since 1698. She participated in slave trade from Allada.¹³ Oyo Therefore, undertook a military action against Dahomey to reassert her influence and imperial ambition. This led to series of wars between 1726 and 1747, resulting in the imposition of tributary obligation that lasted for a century, on Dahomey.¹⁴ This also led to the demarcation of the territory between Dahomey and Oyo with Badagry falling within Oyo's sphere of influence.¹⁵ The point here is that the demarcation and establishment of Badagry as a frontier state predated the imposition of the international boundary by over a century. Although the beginning of the international boundary has been traced to the time of British effective presence in Nigeria in 1861, Badagry has been playing the role of a frontier state since the 1720s.

The occupation of Lagos in 1861 and the cession of Badagry in 1863 were the first major steps in the evolution of the boundary. The presence of the British in Lagos and Badagry and the French in Porto Novo, generated tension and rivalry which made the two imperial powers struggle to acquire protectorates. The French declared protectorates over Porto Novo, Ipokia and Okeoda, most of which were close to the bank of the Yewa River which entered the Lagos Lagoon through a deep estuary in Badagry. Therefore, the cession of Badagry in 1863 was not unexpected.

This intensified rivalry between the British and the French leading to the convention of Porto Novo in 1863 between Glover and Didelot. This could be considered as the first international boundary agreement between the British and the French in the region.¹⁶ The convention agreed that British claim to Ipokia should be suspended and her troops at Ipokia, Kwame and Weshere withdrawn. Article 3 of the convention defined the boundary of Porto Novo and the Western District of Lagos colony as 'an arc of a circle centred on Badagry with a radius equal to the distance between Badagry and Apa Guns stationed on the sea shore...'¹⁷ The convention also made provisions for Chiefs of Ipokia who had been transferred to Porto Novo to be given safe conduct if they wished to leave or would retain their posts if they chose to stay. Although the provisions of the convention were not ratified, it was the first international attempt at boundary definition in Nigeria.

The Berlin West African Conference

While the convention of Porto Novo did not settle the rivalry between the British and the French, it brought a brief period of peace in the territory. The Berlin West African Conference upset this uneasy calm and ushered in a period of intense rivalry which led to the scramble and the ultimate imposition of the boundary in 1889. The Berlin West African Conference

has been treated at length and its significance adequately assessed by many scholars.¹⁸ Some of its provisions touched on the boundary treaty of 1889 in Badagry and therefore needs a brief mention here. The explosive situation in the Congo, was aggravated by the agreement reached between Britain and Portugal in 1884. Other European powers rejected this accord and urged for a conference to resolve the problem. This was particularly welcome to Germany, a new entrant to the race for colonies. The Conference anchored its deliberations on three criteria: the navigation of the Congo and Niger, the problems of hinterlands and the principles of effective occupation and notification of the powers.¹⁹ The principles of effective occupation and notification of the powers increased the tempo of the rivalry in Badagry, ushered in the scramble and ultimately hastened the signing of the boundary treaty of 1889; as the principle of effective occupation entailed a definition of the territory involved. France renewed the protectorate agreement with Porto Novo and set to control the surrounding districts of Porto Novo and Dahomey. Britain, on the other hand, extended her influence to Apa and Ketanu. This naturally brought her into conflict with France. Since Ketanu was a key route between Porto Novo and Dahomey, Britain wanted to use it to force Porto Novo to seek British Protection, a situation France would never permit. Both parties sent their forces to the disputed territories and war was narrowly averted.²⁰ They agreed to come to a conference which led to the convention of Lagos in 1888.²¹ The convention prepared the ground for the 1889 boundary treaty. The agreement was reached in Paris and contained five articles. Article four defined the boundary as starting from the coast of the Gulf of Guinea at the 'Meridian which intersects the territory of Porto Novo at the Ajara Creeks leaving Pochra (Ipokia) to the British colony of Lagos...'²² By the terms of this treaty, Badagry was clearly in the British territory, retaining its characteristics as a frontier state which it inherited by the virtue of its location. The treaty of 1889 was only the climax of a process which began in 1861. Therefore, for this paper, the period up to 1861 will be regarded as the pre-boundary period and thereafter the post-boundary era. It remains assessing the extent to which the international boundary underdeveloped Badagry. It will be necessary therefore, to examine the pre-boundary development *vis-à-vis* the post-boundary situation before drawing a conclusion.

Pre-Boundary Development

The evolution of the boundary near Badagry took place between 1861 and 1899. Some aspects of development especially communication, trade, population size, cultural ties and relations with the outside world up to

1889 will be assessed here.

Badagry was strategically located on a network of trade routes. The strategic location of Badagry did not limit its routes to its immediate environment, but, rather gave the town an international outreach of great dimensions. Three main areas in the development of these routes could be identified and they include the trans-Atlantic route, the trans-Saharan route and the lagoon/Creek system of communication.

The trans-Atlantic route which was prominent in the era of the slave trade linked Badagry with Europe, America and other parts of the world. Richard and John Lander used one of the trans-Atlantic routes from England to Badagry. They set out from Portsmouth in England to Medeira, to Cape Coast, then to Cape Verde Islands to Freetown in Sierra Leone then to Whydah and Badagry.²³ Badagry was therefore an international route terminal and a number of routes from France, England, Portugal, Brazil and America converged there. Traders from these countries came to Badagry to transact business.²⁴

Land routes, although described by some Europeans as poor and marshy, foot paths were nonetheless well developed in Badagry.²⁵ One of the land routes linked Badagry with Old Oyo. From Badagry, the route led to Owo, Ipokia, Ilaro, Ijana, Ilogun, Iseyin, Shaki, Kishi and Oyo. From Oyo the route passed through Raba on the Niger, then to Kano and ultimately to Bornu. The routes went across the Sahara Desert to North Africa. Richard Lander confirmed the existence of the route during his last journey from Badagry to Sokoto.²⁶ From these routes, contact was maintained between Badagry and North African cities of Tropolli and Tunis. From North Africa also, a traveller could still go to Europe.

Following the fall of Oyo in the late 1830s, another route developed between Badagry and Abeokuta. The attempt by Ado to block this route was the major cause of the siege which Abeokuta laid on Ado between 1840 and 1853.

Pre-boundary routes in Badagry also included a network of lagoons, Creeks and rivers which criss-crossed the whole area. Badagry creek links both Lagos and Porto Novo lagoons. Also canoe services were maintained, even till today, between Badagry and Porto Novo by the Tiffonou from Porto Novo.²⁸ Besides, rivers Yewa (Nigeria), Weme and Ajara (Benin) penetrated the hinterlands of Badagry and Porto Novo and had been used for communication purposes since pre-boundary times.

The means of communication in pre-boundary Badagry was well maintained and thoroughly organised. Some features of this organisation included the Caravansaries and toll gates.²⁹ Most of the roads within Badagry were wide and well maintained. This led Crowther to describe the Badagry-*Ipokia* road as a fine road which would 'admit four persons

riding abreast'.³⁰ Toll gates which we see on some of our roads today could be traced to such developments in Badagry during the Pre-Boundary period.

Some of the routes had natural obstacles such as the rivers mentioned earlier. In such cases bridges were erected to overcome such obstacles. Gollmer gave an interesting description of such a bridge across the Yewa river when he noted that the bridge was about 100 feet long, 3 feet above water at flood and consisting of about 500 sticks in two rows and one stick opposite each other.³¹ This detailed description of communication system in pre-boundary Badagry, shows the extent of underdevelopment of this region in post-boundary era.

Trade

The major reason for the development of communication in pre-boundary period was to foster trade. Trade in Badagry at this period could be classed as long distance and local trade. Long distance trade was carried out between Badagry and the outside world. The slave trade linked Badagry with Europe and America while the trans-Saharan trade linked Badagry with North Africa. Before the International boundary, Badagry was an international trade terminal. The land routes also linked Oyo and Hausaland with Badagry.

Such European goods as gin, rum, iron-bars, swords, muskets, cutlasses, glass, manchester plates, jugs and dishes were found in Badagry. Apart from these European goods, Badagry was also the distribution centre of such goods as palm kernel, palm oil, kola, local cloth and salt. Salt was produced at Ajido while kola came from Ikorodu, Abeokuta and other parts of Yorubaland.³² There was therefore, a free flow of goods between Europe, America and North Africa on the one hand and Badagry on the other.

The water-borne routes formed the major routes for local trade linking the town, Porto Novo and the surrounding Yoruba Districts. Badagry, therefore, had routes and links that extended to Europe, America, North Africa, Porto Novo and Old Oyo. It is within this context that the extent of underdevelopment in Badagry since the boundary days can be assessed.

Population

Another index of the degree of development in Badagry at this period was the size of its population which in turn reflected its economic vibrance. The major constraint in the discussion of the population of Badagry in the pre-boundary period is the non-availability of reliable data. What is used therefore is mostly the population estimates by some European travellers,

missionaries and administrative officers, as indicated by the table below.

Table I. Badagry Population 1846-1890

Date	Population	Source
1846	5 — 6,000.	Gollmer
1864	3, 000	Freeman
1890	5, 000	Moloney

Source: Mabogunje, A.L. *Urbanization in Nigeria*, New York, Africana Publishing Corp. 1968, p. 91.

These figures were mere estimates and at times estimates for the same date conflicted as illustrated by the table below.

Table II	Badagry 1890 - 1911
1890	4,000
1911	6,000

Source: Hodder, B.W. 'Badagry: One Hundred Years of Change'. *Nigeria Geographical Journal*, 6(1), 1963.

Whatever the weaknesses of these figures, they indicated the population trend at the time. The figures especially for 1846 and 1864, show that the population of the town was much higher before effective British occupation. By 1890, there was a sharp drop in both tables. The period was decisive for both the structure of political domination, the growth of settlements, the massive movement of the population and the consolidation of external European intervention. It was also a period of political intervention by one neighbour or the other, but the most important factor was European presence. Significantly, the estimate of 1890 came just a year after the boundary treaty of 1889.

The growth of population before the boundary in the area, was affected by a number of other factors. The pre-boundary period was the period of the Yoruba Civil Wars which began with the fall of Old Oyo and the rise of Dahomey and Abeokuta. Badagry was often attacked by some of her neighbours - Lagos, for example, attacked her in 1851. She was under threat of attack from Dahomey or Porto Novo. She served as a centre of inward migration; when Okeodan was sacked in 1848, Badagry was one of

the recipients of its scattered population.³⁴ Moreover, the town also received population from outside the region. Some of the returned Africans from either Sierra Leone or Brazil found their way to Badagry. It becomes possible to account for the growth in the population of the town during this period.

Post-Boundary Development

In 1863 Badagry was annexed and came under effective British control. The French were equally getting entrenched in Porto Novo. Both the British and French established informal empires among themselves. The presence of the powers near Badagry brought a number of limitations. Restrictions in trade and movements of people started. Badagry lost her pre-eminence. It will be necessary at this stage to assess the major developments especially in communication, trade, population size and international relations.

Perhaps, communication was the worst affected in Badagry during this period. The trade routes which linked Badagry and North Africa through Hausaland could no longer operate. The Yoruba Civil Wars aided this, but more importantly, the European powers later began to carve out territories for themselves and this eliminated the former trade routes for Badagry. Again the abolition of the slave trade equally reduced the volume of business transacted at Badagry. The numerous ships which used to call at the port of Badagry stopped calling. The port of Lagos was dredged in 1876 and that marked the end of Badagry's sea routes. The location of Badagry near the boundary and the policy of colonial powers to divert trade away from the border ushered in a period of rapid decline for Badagry. With its trans-Atlantic and trans-Saharan routes amputated, Badagry became a neglected market town outside the main stream of colonial development.

The removal of its routes also meant the end of its international trade. The large number of Europeans who transacted business in Badagry shifted to Lagos with the exception of Miller and Brothers, African Oil Nut Company, Messrs W.B. MacIver and Co. Ltd., and Hutton Trading Company.³⁵ Whatever remained of its local trade was equally limited by the unsettled situation in Yorubaland and the restrictions by the French in Porto Novo.

Consequently, the population rapidly declined. It is within this context that one may understand the low population figure of 3,000 estimated by Moloney for the town in 1890. Ever since then, it has been recording only a very low increase. One can then argue that a phenomenon which eliminated both the land and sea routes of Badagry, removed its port,

destroyed the trade and diminished the population, grossly underdeveloped the town.

The Boundary as a Line of Division

Although, the acquisition of protectorates and spheres of influence clipped off the international routes of Badagry, the actual laying of the boundary line between Britain and France introduced more traumatic experiences in terms of communication for Badagry and other border areas. All available roads ran in a north-south direction and parallel to the boundary.³⁶ Along the western boundary of Nigeria, there were only three roads linking Nigeria and the Republic of Benin. Badagry got its first all-season road in 1958 about ninety-five years after the cession of the town. The boundary destroyed the links which Badagry used to have with neighbouring Porto Novo in the past. The Badagry Express Way, the only road linking the two towns through the Seme border post, was opened in 1976; about 118 years after the cession of Badagry. It was indeed a long period of neglect.

Border Trade

Border markets near the boundary in Badagry are a response to the presence of the international boundary. In a situation where the international links of the town were severed and contact with its neighbours across the boundary limited, the people would necessarily find ways of survival. It is this need that gave rise to border markets. The boundary fragmented coherent culture areas and sought to prevent economic co-operation between them. Border markets did not conform to the traditional market system in Yorubaland. The people bought, sold and used the currencies interchangeably in apparent defiance to the arbitrary separation imposed by the boundary. Unfortunately, authorities have labelled these markets illegal and have sought to close them down. In all these measures, the border communities have suffered. There are still other areas in which border communities have suffered. They have been neglected in the siting of industries and border regions are often considered as threatened areas, at least in Africa up to the present. In 1966 an attempt was made to site a fibre-bag industry in Badagry but this led to a spate of protests from some individuals. A leading article in the journal, *West Africa*, carried the caption 'What future for fibre'. This is the extent of the neglect of Badagry because of the presence of the international boundary near the town.

Psychological Dis-orientation

One of the most traumatic experiences of border communities, especially Badagry, is the constant harassment of the people by security officials at the various check points on the allegation that they were not Nigerians or they were illegal immigrants. The Oba of Badagry expressed the situation very succinctly when he said "such had been the unjustifiable and continuous harassment of the people that at every check point either on the mainland or the Island side of Badagry main town, my subjects have always been interrogated, manhandled or ridiculed on the pretext that they belong to the Republic of Benin".³⁷ It is an embarrassing situation for a man to come out from his house only to be apprehended as an illegal alien at his backyard. Besides, a situation where the Chiefs or the Oba himself had to go to security agents from time to time, just to identify their subjects is not healthy. This problem has compelled the Oba of the town to embark on the printing of identity cards for his subjects to enable them move freely in their own homes.³⁸ The practice of branding border communities criminals was expressed by the Inspector-General of Police, Al-haji Gambo, when he observed that the people living at the borders were either passive to the effort of the law enforcement agencies or positively hostile towards them. It was his view that some did so because of their interest in criminal activities going on at the border or for reasons of affinity.³⁹ The Inspector-General was good enough to admit that some of the law enforcement personnel were high handed.⁴⁰ Badagry has been left out of the main stream of development but the people are now being harassed and maltreated as illegal immigrants or common criminals.

Development between 1960–1985

One would have expected that with Independence, the long neglect of Badagry would have ended, but this was not to be until very recently. The successor states of the British and the French, Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, inherited the attitudes and prejudices of Britain and France. Border areas were still regarded as threatened areas even after independence. Both Nigeria and Benin were not keen to transform the border areas and redress the imbalance in development between the core areas and the peripheries. Badagry suffered in a number of ways. This partly explains why the first secondary school in Badagry was established only as recently as 1955. The establishment of the first secondary school, after one hundred and ten years (110 years) of the establishment of the first primary school was indeed long.⁴² The extent of the neglect of Badagry will be better appreciated when one realizes that Lagos, one of the places to which the missionaries went after they left Badagry, had its first secondary

school, the C.M.S. Grammar School Lagos, in 1859.

However, between 1960 and 1985, remarkable progress was recorded in the field of education in Badagry. During the period, ten secondary schools, one teachers' college and forty-nine Primary schools were established in the Badagry Local Government Area. This could be regarded as a period of boom in educational development in Badagry. Perhaps, a number of factors were responsible for this. The free education policy of the then Western Nigerian Government was a major contributory factor. The policy made it easy for parents to send their children to school without the payment of school fees. Consequently, children registered in schools in large numbers which in turn necessitated the building of new schools. This policy was not aimed at redressing the neglect of Badagry as such, but the town benefited from a policy that affected the whole of Western Nigeria.

The large number of both primary and secondary schools established in Badagry could give a wrong impression of the actual situation in the town. Badagry local government, up to 1985, was a large area including parts of Ajegunle, Mile 2, Ojo and other nearby towns. Now that these outlining areas have become separate local government areas, the number of schools in Badagry has equally been reduced.

Perhaps one major and definite step taken by the Lagos State government to improve education in Badagry, was the establishment of a model secondary school at Kankon about five kilometres from the border. It is the nearest secondary school to the border along Nigeria's Western boundary. It has full boarding facilities and is also the proposed site for the creation of a languages zone especially for the teaching of French and English.

The rate of progress noted in the development of education did not apply to the establishment of industries. In this area, Badagry is still neglected even till today. The protest against the establishment of the coconut fibre industry in 1966 testified to the discrimination against Badagry in the siting of industries. The town was considered too near the border and therefore not safe for the establishment of industries.⁴³ Strikingly, the coconut fibre industry is still the only industry in Badagry today. The Volkswagen Assembly plant in Ojo town, once under Badagry local government, is the largest single employer of labour in the Badagry area. Today, Ojo is no longer under the Badagry Local Government. During the Jakande administration (1979-1983) it was proposed that Badagry would be divided into Industrial, Agricultural and Residential areas. The plan never materialized.⁴⁴ There are no industrial layouts and there are no facilities that could attract investors to the town.

The health sector seems to have received better attention than the in-

dustrial sector. Before 1985, a General Hospital, some maternity homes and Health Centres were established both by the State government and local government. Good as these are, they are grossly inadequate for the population of the town. It is however important to point out that insufficient health facilities is a common problem throughout the country. If the core areas lack adequate health facilities, the health situation in neglected border areas will certainly be severe.

It is then obvious that the international boundary has grossly underdeveloped Badagry. Economically, Badagry shared the fate of Border regions as neglected areas. Industries were sited away from Badagry because, as a border town, it was regarded as un-stable and not safe for the establishment of industries. In road development, Badagry suffered more than most border towns. Its pre-boundary international routes were clipped off. Besides, the colonial policy which made roads run parallel to the boundary instead of crossing it seriously affected the town. In terms of trade, the international prestige which Badagry enjoyed rapidly disappeared at the appearance of the international boundary. The port was closed and the trans-Atlantic route also closed with it. The boundary which encircled Hausaland as British territory ensured the permanent closure of the trans-Saharan trade routes. Even then, what would have been a regional trade with its immediate neighbours across the border was regarded as illegal trade. What once were items for free trade were labelled contraband. Culturally, Badagry equally suffered. Not only did the boundary fragment coherent cultures, the border communities had to undergo the trauma of an imposed new culture on an already mixed one at the border.

In fact, the degree of underdevelopment in the Badagry region was adequately summarised by Mabogunje when he observed that explorers such as Captain John Adams who visited Badagry, Porto Novo and Whydah about 1789, noted that those territories were densely settled with people engaged in agriculture and food production of various types.⁴⁵ Those explorers wrote glowing accounts of what is now the border region of Badagry as areas of great economic and social activities of the time. Badagry, particularly was so economically vibrant in those days that its control was a constant source of conflicts among its powerful neighbours of Oyo, Dahomey, Porto Novo and Lagos. This really buttresses the view that Badagry was not only underdeveloped, but specially neglected and the long un-pardonable neglect of the past was compounded by the imposition of an artificial boundary. Immediately after independence, development in Badagry was not given the attention required until recently.

Development of Badagry: Current Efforts

One of the good things that happened to the development of Badagry is the current border studies undertaken by Professor Asiwaju and a number of other border scholars. These studies have brought to the lime light, the gross under- development in border regions and have succeeded in sensitizing governments, both Federal and States, on the need to accelerate the development of border regions. Badagry has benefited from this. It is within this context that the current efforts of Lagos State government in the development of Badagry will be examined.

Perhaps, the most successful current effort in the development of Badagry is in road construction. The effort of the state and local governments as well as the Directorate of food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) must be commended. The sum of thirty million Naira is said to have been spent. One major project being executed by the Lagos State Government in Badagry is the construction of the 26.1 kilometer Gbaji-Aseri Road at a cost of twenty-five million naira. In the same manner, the local Government and DFRRI have constructed 154 kilometers of rural roads to link 120 communities and some of them are indicated in the table below.

Table III

Cleared/Graded Feeder Roads	Kilometers
1. Enuke-Yetekeme-Pashi	4.00 km
2. Itoka-Aradagun	7.00 km
3. Imeke-Igbanko	6.10 km
4. Agalaso-Agbovipe-Erekiti-Iragbo-Ikoga	10.00 km
5. Aivoji-Gberefu-Yovogan-Topo-Island-Coastal Road	26.00 km
6. Epe-Ago-Ajo	4.00 km
7. Esepe-Mushin-Obele-Magbon-Ibiye Road	10.00 km
8. Abia-Ilogbo	6.00 km
All-Season Roads	Kilometers
1. Oke-Afo-Kogbo-Pota	10.03 km
2. Iworo-Epe	5.03 km
3. Akarakumo-Ajido	7.06 km
4. Ajara-Agric Farm Road	3.00 km

Source: Lagos State Government, 'Border Developments, Current Efforts and Future Programmes' Paper Presented at the Conference on Accelerated Development of Nigerian Border Regions; Durber Hotel, Lagos, 1989, p. 3.

The state government has also taken a number of other measures to improve the quality of life of the border communities. It has supplied electricity to Gbaji, Ganyingbo Apa, Igbogbele, Kankon, Iragbo, Erekiti, Itoga-Zanmu and Ibiye at an estimated cost of ₦7.5m. In the same manner, some communities in the rural areas have been supplied with water. Interestingly too, jetties are being constructed to assist water transport. Perhaps, another significant effort by the Government is the construction of new schools in border areas. The building of a model Secondary School with full boarding facilities at Kankon, five kilometers from the border is highly commendable. The government has also shown interest in tourism by the purchase of a 365 seater cruiser boat to enhance tourist movement from Badagry to other parts of the state. Worthy of mention also is the development of the site of the Agia tree where Christianity was first preached in Badagry, into a modern arcade. The government has also built a number of dispensaries and maternity homes in the areas. The effort is indeed commendable.

Recommendations

Laudable as these projects are, they represent a belated attempt to remedy some of the wrongs done to Badagry. Apart from the provision of the modern cruiser to aid tourism, there is no serious attempt to aid water transport. The building of the jetty along the Marina is good, but it is suggested here that government should show as much concern for the riverine communities as it has shown for some of the up-land areas. Some of these communities depend on water transport for their daily needs.

Even in their construction, one cannot but notice that most of the roads are either DFRRRI or local government roads over difficult terrain. Certainly some of the roads do not survive the rains. Their construction and upkeep cannot be undertaken by the local government alone. While a total of eight roads covering a distance of 72 kilometers were rural roads, only four roads of 25 kilometers are all-season roads. This again indicates the limited involvement of the government in the provision of all-season roads.

However, it is important to point out that border areas are special areas and therefore need special attention. Some of the problems in border regions are beyond both the state and local governments and need Federal Government attention. In Badagry, the riverine nature of the terrain makes it difficult and very expensive to construct all-season roads. This needs Federal attention. Again, some of the hindrances to tourism, such as the absence of banking facilities and use of a convertible currency demand the attention of both countries. This under-scores the need for a consistent

policy towards the border regions and co-operation with the neighbouring government. The Federal Government needs to re-examine the role of the Economic Community of West African States with a view to accelerating the implementation of its protocols.

One area that has not yet been addressed by both Federal and State Governments is the issue of transborder co-operation at the local level. The communities astride the border are culturally, historically, linguistically and economically linked. Therefore, they must always seek to co-operate. There is need to establish a policy that will harness this affinity for the development of the communities. In this connection, it is suggested that trans-border co-operatives be established. Fishing co-operative already existing in Badagry could co-operate with similar societies in Porto Novo to boost fish production since their combined resources would enable them buy more modern fishing equipment. Similarly, canoe transport already dominated by the Tiffonou from Porto Novo could be developed into a transborder venture for the benefit of all the parties. This will create harmony.

Border markets have become indispensable phenomena of the border landscape. It will be better to develop and control them rather than close them or pretend not to recognise their presence. The decision of the Lagos State Government to open up more rental markets, with the establishment of banking services and a bilateral chamber of commerce, will be most welcome if implemented. In addition, the proposed establishment of a cottage Industrial Estate in Badagry would mark the beginning of industrial take-off in the town.

It will be necessary at this stage to mention the problem of identity cards. It is an unpleasant experience for a man to be constantly harassed in his own village as an illegal alien. One must, therefore, commend the efforts of the Akran of Badagry in trying to print identity cards for his subjects. The issue of identity cards is far beyond what the Akran and his subjects or the state government can do. The attention of the Federal Government is urgently needed. The plans for the National Identity card should be pursued with greater vigour. This is more so now that the Republic of Benin has issued identity cards to its citizens. It implies that those without identity cards are Nigerians and the victims are usually the border communities. It is hoped that the implementation of these recommendations by both the State and Federal Governments would help to remedy the long neglect the town had suffered in the past.

Notes and References

1. Jumare and Dioka, 'The Nature and Character of African Border Regions', Paper presented at the National Planning Conference on the Development of Nigerian Border Region at Durbar Hotels, August 1989, p. 1.
2. James, I., 'The 1983 Nigeria-Chad Border Conflict' *"Nigerian Journal of International Affairs"*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1984, p. 83.
3. Mills, L.R., 'The Development of a Frontier Zone and Border Landscape along the Dahomey-Nigeria Boundary' *"Journal of Tropical Geography"*, Vol. 36, 1983, p. 44.
4. Col. Raji Rasaki, Military Governor, Lagos State, 'Border Developments; Current Efforts and Future Programme: The Lagos State Perspective', Paper Presented at the International Conference on the Accelerated Development of Nigerian Border region at Durbar Hotel-Lagos, August 1989, p. 1.
5. Dioka, L.C. 'The Evolution of Nigeria's International Boundaries' Adefuye *et al* (eds) *The History of the People of Lagos State*, Litramed, 1986.
6. Newbury, C.W., *The Western Slave Coast And Its Rulers*, Oxford 1961, p. 30.
7. Asiwaju, A.I., "Aja Speaking Peoples of Nigeria: A Note on their Origin, Settlement and Cultural Adaptations to 1945." *"Africa."* 49 (1) 1979.
8. From Aheshe the Alpas of Apa have been traced to the present day. It was under Aheshe, the eleventh Alpapa that Hontokunu settled in Badagry. See also, N.A.I., RG/W3, *"Intelligence Report on the Egun Speaking Peoples of the Badagry District of the Colony,"* 1937, p. 20.
9. *Ibid.* p. 22.
10. Igue and Adams, 'Porto Novo and Cotonou Hinterlands', Aradeon, D. (ed), *The Role of Small and Intermediate Settlements in the Development Process: The Badagry Porto Novo Region.* *Human Settlement Programme I, Faculty of Environmental Science, University of Lagos, 1983, p. 249.*
The establishment of Akoro and Ijasan quarters in Porto Novo, gave rise to an erroneous story that an Apa man established Porto Novo with T. Agbalin see RG/W8. *"Intelligence Report on the Egun"*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
11. Akinjogbin, A.I., *Dahomey and Its Neighbours 1842-1872*, The Clarendon Press, 1967, p. See also, Hopkins, A.G., *An Economic History of West Africa*, London, Longmans, 1973.

12. Anene, J.C., *The International Boundaries of Nigeria: The Framework of an Emergent African State 1885-1960*, London, Longman, 1970.
13. Prescott, J.R.V., *The Evolution of Nigeria's International and Regional Boundaries*; pp. 25-26.
14. Peter Morton Williams, "Oyo Yoruba and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1620-1830", *J.H.S.N.*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1964, p. 32.
15. Norris, R., *The Memoirs of the Reign of Bossa Ahadee, King of Dahomey*, London, 1789, pp. 13-15.
16. Smith, R., *The Kingdoms of the Yoruba*, London, Methuen, 1969, pp. 87-88.
17. Etudes Dahommennes, IX, 1953, pp. 13-15.
18. Prescott, J.R.V., *Evolution of Nigerians.*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
19. Robbinson and Callagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism*, 2nd ed. London, Macmillan, 1981, Also see Garvin, R.J. and Betley, J.A., *The Scramble for Africa*, Ibadan University Press, 1973, pp. 31-34.
20. Obichere, B.J., *West African States and European Expansion: The Dahomey-Niger Hinterlands 1885-1898*, New Haven, Yale, University Press, 1977.
21. N.A.I., CSO, 1/1, Vol. 5. "Moloney to Graville 30th August 1886."
22. Co. 806/271, Moloney to Holland, 13th June 1888. See also B.J. Obichere, ... "Dahomey-Niger Hinterlands," *op. cit.*, p. 41.
23. For details of the 1889 Boundary Treaty, See Brounlie, I., *African Boundaries: A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopedia*, London, C. Hurst & Co., 1979, p. 170.
24. Lander R., 'Record of Captain Clapperton's Last Expeditions to Africa', London, Franck Cass, 1966, Vol. 1, pp. 16-17.
25. Kopytoft, J.H., *A Preface to Modern Nigeria: The Sierra Leonians in Yoruba 1830-1890*, London, O.U.P., 1965, p. 58.
26. RG/W3, Intelligence Report on the Egun, *op. cit.*, p.
27. Lander, John & Richard, "Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger with a Narrative of a Voyage down that River," London, John Murray, 1832.
The whole of volume I is devoted to the description of that journey.
28. Folayan, K., "Trade Routes in Egbado in the Eighteenth Century' Akinjogbin and Osoba (eds.) *Topics on Nigerian Economic History*, University of Ife, Press, 1980, p. 85.
29. Igue & Adams, 'Porto Novo and Cotonou Hinterlands, Aradeon D. (ed), "The Role of Small and Intermediate Settlements..." *op. cit.*, p. 251.
30. Caravansaries were resting points for large caravans entering or

- departing a large city. The caravansary was usually ten miles from the large City. Badagry had a caravansary at Mowo. Badagry also had a toll gate at the northern end of Ipokia. For the details of Toll Gates see Toyin Falola', *The Yoruba Toll System: Its Operation and Abolition*, *J.A.H.*, Vol. 30, 1989.
31. Crowder S., *Journal*, C.M.S. CA2/031, Nov. 19th, 1845, cited in Folayan, K., "Trade Routes in Egbado in the 19th Century", *op. cit.*, p. 90.
 32. Gollmer, C.A., "*Journal*," C.M.S., CA2/043, Sept. 1859.
 33. Agiri, B.A. 'Aspects of Socio-Economic Changes Among the Awori, Egba and Ijebu Remo Communities during the 19th Century', *J.H.S.N.*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1974, pp. 465-83.
 34. AINA, 'Population Dynamics in the Badagry Porto Novo Region', Aradeon, D. (ed.), "*The Role of Small and Intermediate Settlements*"..., *op. cit.*, p. 58.
 35. Ajayi, J.F.A., 1974, p. 155.
 36. Miles, L.R., 'Development of a Frontier Zone...', *op. cit.*, p. 45.
 37. Asiwaju, A.I., *Western Yorubaland Under Colonial Rule 1889 - 1945: A Comparative Analysis of French and British Colonialism*, London, Longman, 1976, p. 185/
 38. DE-WHENO AHOLU-TOYI, I (OFR), The AKRAN OF BADAGRY, 'A Message To All Participants and Invited, Guests, at The Nigeria-Benin Transborder-Cooperation Workshop at ASCON, TOPO, Badagry, May 1988, p.5.
 39. Alhaji M. Gambo, Inspector-General of Police, 'The Border as Asylum: The Imperative of Trans-Border Police and Public Cooperation with Special Reference to Allegations of Nigeria's Stolen Automobiles in Benin Republic, Paper presented at the Nigeria-Benin Transborder Cooperation Workshop, at ASCON Badagry, May 1988, p.4.
 40. *Ibid.*
 41. The first Secondary School in Badagry was established by Oba C.D. Akran as Badagry divisional School, and later Badagry Grammar School. It is one of the outcomes of the free education policy of then Western Nigerian Government.
 42. Avoseh, T.O., *The History of St. Thomas Church*.
 43. 'Fibre Industry', "*West Africa*", 1966.
 44. Interview with Chief Ajose-Harison, at the Oba's Palace, Nov. 1990.
 45. Mabogunje, A.L., 'Tending the Meadows from the Peripheri', Key Note Address at the Planning Conference on the Development of Nigeria's Border Regions, Durbar Hotels, Lagos, 1989, p.3.

deporting largely. The movement was usually from the large city centers and a curiously at times, they had a toll gate at the end of the toll. For the details of toll gates see Tolson's. The Tolson Toll System in Operation and Administration, pp. 11-13, 1930.

31. Crowder S. Journal, CALIF. Nov. 1881 and in Tolson's "Toll Gates in Operation in the 19th Century," op. cit. p. 90.

32. Gifford, J.M. Journal, CALIF. Sept. 1888.

33. Agin, B.A. "Aspects of Social Economic Change Among the Awaok, Igbo and Ibibio Peoples Communities during the 19th Century," ILM, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1974, pp. 44-45.

34. "Ibibio Population Dynamics in the Badagry-Nigeria Region," Academic, T. 1, 1971, "The Role of Social and Institutional

Structures," op. cit. p. 58.

35. Ajayi, J.E.A. 1974, p. 122.

36. Miles, L.R. "Development of a Frontier Zone," op. cit. p. 12.

37. Asiwaju, A.J. "Western Colonization of the Yoruba, 1817-1842: A Comparative Analysis of Factors and their Consequences," London, Longman, 1974, p. 187.

38. DE WILHELM ABOLU-TOYIN, I (OBE), THE ARRIVAL OF BADAGRY: A MESSAGE TO ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS OF COUNTRIES IN THE NIGERIA-BRITAIN TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATION, Nsokpor, 1974.

39. ASOGBA, M. "Badagry, May 1988," p. 2.

40. "Asylum: The Importance of Transborder Police and Public Cooperation with Special Reference to Asylum of Nigeria's Stateless Nationals," in "Nigeria: A Country Report," prepared at the Nigeria-Britain Transborder Cooperation Workshop at ASOGBA, Badagry, May 1988, p. 4.

41. Ibid.

42. The first secondary school in Badagry was established by O.D. Akin as Badagry District School, and later Badagry Grammar School. It is one of the outcomes of the free education policy of the then Western Nigerian Government.

43. Ayoade, T.O. "The History of the Town of Badagry," Ibadan, 1974.

44. Interview with Chief Ajose-Harrison, at the Oba's Palace, Nov. 1990.

45. Makogonle, A.L. "Feeling the Matchdown from the Periphery," Kay Note Address at the Planning Conference on the Development of Nigeria's Border Regions, Durruti Hotel, Lagos, 1987, p. 2.



Smuggling in Badagry 1861-1989

ADEOGUN ADEBAYO

Introduction

Badagry is a coastal town situated close to the Nigeria/Benin Republic border. It is the seat of Badagry Local Government. It is inhabited by both the Aworis who claimed descentance from Ile-Ife, and also the Gu.

The strategic geographical location of Badagry makes it accessible both by land and sea routes, but unfortunately, the vegetation and soil do not support arable farming. The major occupation of the people from time immemorial has therefore been fishing and trading, thereby making Badagry an important trading centre.

Badagry was an important southern terminus during the trans-Saharan trade and also an important harbour during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The easy network of communications therefore made the people of Badagry important middlemen between the Europeans on the coast and Africans in the hinterland. The viable routes between Badagry and the hinterland was one of the factors responsible for the Yoruba civil wars of 1820-1897.

The advent of colonial rule in West Africa led to the demarcation of West Africa into two regions. The French and British therefore demarcated areas hitherto occupied by the same people into two different political and economic zones. By 1889, the Anglo-French Agreement had finally established the boundary between the two regions.

The two colonial governments, the French in Dahomey and the British in Nigeria, thus established custom posts to control movement of peoples and goods across the border and to raise revenue for their respective governments. This subsequently led to smuggling, across the border.

Smuggling of goods began as a result of different tariffs imposed by the two governments as well as differential market conditions existing astride the border. This is further enhanced by government policies. Unfortunately the situation remains and smuggling persists up till today.

Effort at combating the illicit trade had been initiated both by the

colonial governments and the post colonial governments but unfortunately this has not yielded the desired results as smuggling continues.

Many factors ranging from corrupt custom officials, lack of adequate communications equipment, lack of personnel, negligence of the border towns among others have jeopardized efforts at combating smuggling.

This work gives a frame work of smuggling in Badagry right from the 1860's to 1985. It gives a comprehensive account of smuggling activities during the colonial and post-colonial periods. Efforts at combating it is also highlighted. The effects of the illicit trade on Badagry and Nigeria in general are also mentioned and concluded by policy advice.

Geographical Location

Badagry is about fifty kilometres West of Lagos. It is the headquarters of Badagry Local Government. It is bounded in the North by Egbado Plateau, in the South by Atlantic Ocean and in the West by Seme International border.

The relief of Badagry is typical of a coastal region. It is situated on a flat coastal plain with swamps, marches and creeks. The terrain is lowlying and the area experiences occasional flooding, most especially during the raining seasons.

Badagry is drained by numerous but small streams and the most important is Yewa river which has extensive flood plains around the town. Climatically, the town experiences a constant high temperature throughout the year.

The soil and vegetation of the town are closely related. On the beaches where there is sand there are coconut palms while further inland there are woody plants, shrubs and tall grasses. The swamp vegetation is found within the narrow stretch of Creeks and Lagoons with a vegetation that includes raffia palm which provides abundant raw materials for the craft industry. It is pertinent to mention that the vegetation and soil of Badagry do not support arable farming.

Origin

Gbagle – a contraction of the word *Ogbagleme* meaning in Ogu language, "a farmland near the swamp" was the original name of the ancient and historic city of the Ogu peoples¹. This was later adulterated by the Yoruba as Agbadarigi and later shortened by the European traders as Badagry²

Two distinctive waves of migration into the area have been identified. The first was that of Yoruba migration which was led by an Ife Prince called Alashe. Alashe later settled at Apa (West of Badagry) and founded a line of Obas called Alapa³.

The second migration was that of the Aja people who fled from Dahomey during the reign of King Agaja Trudo from 1708 to 1740. The King's wars of expansion were directed at the coastal Aja States mostly Henda or Whydah, Allada, Weme and Jakin.

The Aja arrived in Badagry at different times. The first group were the Hendo who were displaced from Savi and Jakin. They founded the Jegba and Awhanjigo wards of Badagry about 1730. The second group were the Wemenu and other Henda settlements who established Boeko, Asago, Ahoviko and Ganhd wards. Possuko ward was later established under one of the Akrans known as Jiwa, while Wharako ward was the last to be established by the Aja in Badagry⁴.

A Dutch trader called Huntokunu in Gu language but whose real name was Hendrick Meynheer Hertough also contributed to the establishment of Badagry. Huntokunu was said to have arrived at Apa from Dahomey where his trading base had been disturbed by the Dahomean wars in 1732. King Whese, the eleventh Alapa of Apa, therefore gave Huntokunu a piece of land (on the present site of Badagry) for his trading activities. In return, Huntokunu gave the King gifts which included one hundred canons for the defence of Apa⁵.

Some scholars have linked Huntokunu with the foundation of Badagry. This is quite erroneous since there had been an already established society who warmly received and patronised him on his arrival in Badagry.

During his trading activities he appointed a prince called Akran as an agent. Akran later succeeded him after his death and he was subsequently elected King of the town by the people. Although Huntokunu could not be ascribed with the role of founding Badagry, he contributed to the evolution of monarchical system in the town. Akran has since remained the title of the King of Badagry.

The people of Badagry were traditional worshippers who worshipped the same gods as the Yoruba. Among their gods were Egungun, Oro, Izagbeto and Igunnuko. Later, Islam was introduced in the town by Oyo traders and migrants while returning slaves from Sierra-Leon and the New World introduced christianity. In 1842, a Christian Mission led by Thomas Birch Freeman, a Mulatto and Superintendent of the Cape Coast Wesleyan mission, established a mission station in Badagry. He left the station in charge of a series of assistance when he proceeded to Abeokuta⁶.

Trade has from time immemorial formed the economic bedrock of Badagry and a means of livelihood for the people. Trade has been the main occupation of the people of Badagry since the land cannot support arable farming and also because of her strategic geographical location as both land and sea routes. The people of Badagry had participated in both internal and external trade.

Internal trade between Badagry and other towns in the interior such as Abeokuta, Ilaro, Ipokia, Lagos and many more were carried out through the land, creeks, lagoons and river routes. The Egbas used Badagry's Port as an important outlet for their trade⁷. A system of markets linked the various groups with Badagry as a major connecting point. These markets in conjunction with Badagry sustained the economic life of the region and enabled the people to maintain their symbiotic relationship⁸. Goods involved were mainly food stuffs such as pepper, palm oil, palm kernel, fish, beans, maize, potatoes and kolanuts.

Badagry had served as a major international slave market as far back as the 1740s. Traders using sea routes from Spain, France, Portugal, England and Brazil converged in Badagry to transact their businesses⁹.

Badagry also served as an important terminus for the trans-Saharan trade, when the southern terminus shifted from Porto-Novo to Badagry after the fall of Old Oyo. Goods such as slaves, kola, salt, and pepper were traded in.

During the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Badagry was also a major slave port along with Dahomey and Lagos¹⁰. Trade goods included slaves, gin, rum, iron bars, swords, muskets, cutlasses manchester plates, jugs and dishes.

Trade, both internal and external, was well organised. Duties were collected from European traders on land routes for safe passage which was well maintained. Duties ranging from 5 – 10 cowries were also collected on a herd of livestock from each trader while slave traders paid two hundred cowries per slave¹¹.

History of the Border

The Nigeria/Dahomey (now Benin Republic) like other African borders is an European imposition. It was created by the British and the French as a consequence of the international rivalry and scramble between them since 1820s. This later culminated in the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference and finally led to the demarcation of the border in 1889.

European traders and Missionaries had been actively involved in peaceful trade transactions and evangelisation in many coastal towns such as Porto-Novo, Whydah, Badagry and Lagos, to mention but just a few.

In 1851, the British took over Lagos and finally annexed it in 1861. At the same time, the French on the other hand had been active in Whydah, Porto-Novo and Badagry. The involvement of both the British and the French in the trade and politics of Lagos and Porto-Novo respectively began a new row of rivalry between the two powers.

Between 1861 and 1862, the British had signed protectorate treaties with

some towns such as Oke-Odan, Ipokia and Adu to check further French advancement in the area. In 1863, Stenhope Freeman, the first British Governor of Lagos, visited Badagry with the assistance of Thomas Tickel, British Agent-General in Badagry. Consequently, a treaty of cession was signed between Freeman and the Chiefs of Badagry on 7 July, 1863.

At the same time, the French first strengthened her hold on Porto-Novo and Whydah. This became necessary in order to foster and protect her economic interest in the areas and to check the growing influence of the British, West of Lagos. In 1863, the French declared Porto-Novo a Protectorate.

In an effort to resolve the crisis that had engulfed the area, an Anglo-French Convention was held in Porto-novo in August 1863, in which the Yewa river was fixed as a frontier between the two powers and war was averted. At the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference, where the definition of territorial limitations was stressed, both powers were armed with enough treaties to enhance the effective occupation of their areas. They both claimed almost the same towns and this nearly led to war, which was averted by another conference held between them in Lagos in 1888.

The immediate cause of the erection of boundary between the two was the famous Monsieur Viard's (a French man) excursion to Ilaro and Abeokuta in 1889. This excursion was at the instance of the French Mission in Topo Island near Badagry. During the tour, Viard was said to have signed treaties with the local Chiefs who had accepted French protection and obligations to channel their trade through Porto-Novo.

The British saw this move as inimical to their West African Colonial interest and Governor Moloney of Lagos quickly toured Egba and Ilaro areas to successfully persuade them to disown the treaties they had signed with the French. Both parties later met in France in 1889 to resolve the issue amicably. On August 10, 1889, an Anglo-French Agreement was signed which defined British and French areas of influence as:

"The meridian which inter-sects the territory of Porto- Novo at Ajara Creek, leaving Ipokia to the English Colony of Lagos. It shall follow the above-mentioned meridian as far as the ninth degree of north Latitude where it shall stop"¹²

This agreement signified the establishment of the boundary. On 14 June 1898, an Anglo-French Protocol was signed which defined the northern boundary. Actual demarcation of the boundary began as a result of series of Anglo-French Boundary Commissions in 1895-96, 1906, and 1912 when boundary markers were erected and re-erected along the bi-national line.¹³ Minor diplomatic adjustments were made along the boundary but the main alignment had remained as defined in the original agreements of

1889 and 1898 and comprehensively set out in the Agreement of 14 October, 1906.

The establishment of the boundary left a lot of negative and positive impacts on the socio-political and economic lives of the people of the areas. More importantly, it divided people with the same cultural identity into two different administrative blocs. To some extent, it was advantageous to Badagry as trade in the area increased. But one major consequence of the establishment of the boundary has been smuggling.

Colonial Economy and the Emergence of Smuggling in Badagry

European activities which had been rampant in West Africa became more pronounced when they took over the political leadership of their respective areas. In 1861, the British annexed Lagos and the need for effective control of the adjoining areas such as Lekki, Palma and Badagry was contemplated¹⁵. In 1863, the British ceded Badagry. Thomas Tickel a Briton was appointed Vice-Consul for Porto-Novo and Badagry on 1st March 1861. He was charged with the responsibility of effective border control. Many reasons were responsible for smuggling during the pre-boundary and post-boundary colonial periods¹⁶.

During the pre-boundary colonial period, the rivalry between the British and the French led to the imposition of different tariff policies in their colonies. In the 1860's, the French imposed about 2-4 per cent duties on goods, while the British imposed about 8-10 per cent¹⁷. The French tariff was to encourage the indigenes to patronize French exported goods since they were very impoverished and in line with her policy of assimilation. While on the other hand, the British imposed high tariffs to discourage the indigenes from patronising other foreign goods and to raise revenue for the administration of the colonies.

The imposition of duties on Badagry by the British therefore made smuggling of goods a profitable venture. With the French low tariffs, merchants found it more profitable to import their goods through Porto-Novo and then smuggled them through Badagry into Lagos where they commanded higher prices. This situation made business men to seek cheaper goods from Porto-Novo and avoid paying duties on the dutiable goods so as to sell at exorbitant prices in Lagos thereby widening their profit margin.

The desire of the British administration to monopolise the hinterland trade also led to smuggling.¹⁸ On 24th September, 1963, Glover, the governor of Lagos instructed Thomas Tickel to ensure strict observance of the trade embargo against Abeokuta. Duties were to be paid on all imports

moving hinterland such as gun-powder, tobacco and gin. British intent was to divert the bulk of the traffic from Porto-Novo to Lagos through Badagry and thus ensure the hinterland trade in favour of Badagry.¹⁹

The trade embargo imposed between Badagry and Abeokuta led to civil disturbances in Badagry when the chiefs and people refused to cooperate with the British. The chiefs refused to collect tax on the trade to Abeokuta and allowed free passage of exports.²⁰ By 1865, the British had mounted a patrol boat up the Yewa river to ensure effective blockade,²¹ but the revenue realised from Badagry was too small, thereby showing the ineffectiveness of the border post.

The British administration also encouraged smuggling by operating different tariff systems among the merchants. British merchants were allowed to import goods through Porto-Novo, duty free, while non-British merchants paid duties. The system of preferential treatment to British traders increased smuggling as non-British merchants also sought to avoid paying duties.

The people of Badagry also engaged in smuggling because they were opposed to the custom duties imposed on their trade by the British administration. The custom duties lowered their profit margin and they sought every means to avoid paying duties. The people were so impoverished that they could not afford to pay the duties.

During the post-boundary colonial period, smuggling activities increased tremendously. It has been pointed out that smuggling was one of the most serious consequences of the establishment of international boundary and Badagry being a frontier town, became a smuggling zone. The reasons which were responsible for post-boundary smuggling activities did not vary radically from those of pre-boundary colonial period but with slight differences due to effective political and economic control of the two colonies by the two colonial powers.

The establishment of the border and introduction of frontier zone, led to the development on both sides of the border two different political and economic system in an area which hitherto had enjoyed the same system. Politically, the people of the border area soon realised for the first time that they were in two different political entities, different languages and cultures, and different political systems.

Economically, Nigeria's vast economic potentials and commercial advantages over Dahomey (Benin) led to the introduction and development of different price systems astride the frontier zone. The bulk of commodities smuggled during this period were made up of European manufactured goods, imported into the different administrative zones. For example, alcoholic drinks, tobacco, and printed materials were smuggled into Badagry from Dahomey while guns and gun powder and British

manufactured bicycles and bicycle parts were smuggled from Badagry to Dahomey.

Smuggling continued because of the higher prices offered for smuggled goods at the other end of the border. For example, goods smuggled from Badagry commanded higher prices in Dahomey and vice-versa.

Another reason for smuggling was the introduction of different monetary systems by the two colonial powers in their respective administrative areas. The introduction of the French Franc and the British Sterling created exchange problems for the indigenous people. This led to the emergence of currency brokers in frontier settlements like Badagry and Seme. The activities of these illegal money brokers led to unprecedented counterfeiting which aided smuggling. The availability of different currencies at the border made it easier for the smugglers to procure necessary currency needed to purchase their goods with ease. Such goods were later smuggled across the border.

Organization of Smuggling

Smuggling during the colonial period was a complex network. It varied from single individual smuggler to a more complex chain of network that worked like the Mafia Organization. The geographical position of Badagry favoured the nefarious activities of the smugglers. The openness of the border zone facilitates easy and rapid movement of goods and people across it. Also the lagoons, creeks and marshes all provide easy means of transportation for the smugglers.

The intimacy of the inhabitants in understanding their local terrain and routes enabled them to outwit the ill-equipped custom officials who were not familiar with the topography of the areas. Also lack of good frontier roads and the availability of numerous bush paths facilitated easy movement of people and goods, while at the same time difficult for the custom officials to effectively patrol.

In carrying out their illegal activities, smugglers made use of foot and bush paths, canoe, bicycles and motor cycles. Individual smugglers made use of foot paths and bushy routes in carrying out their activities. They crossed the border at Seme and Owode, using foot and bushy paths or at times riding on bicycles and motorcycles avoiding custom officials.

Canoe and boat transportation also aided smuggling right from colonial era up till today. The goods were concealed in these vessels and when the smugglers were accosted and searched, the goods were never detected.

Smuggling activities in Badagry has been part and parcel of trade in the town. A large number of people residing in the town have been actively involved in illegal trans-frontier trade. Smuggling has become another

major source of livelihood for the people after fishing and legitimate trading. Most people involved in smuggling did not consider it illegal trade, as most of them move freely across the border, but regarded it as normal business.

Efforts of Colonial Administrations at Combating Smuggling

Smuggling of goods across the border gave both the British and the French colonial administration a lot of concern and to arrest the situation, both governments set up a number of machineries.

Both governments set up custom posts manned by officials for the collection of duties and combating smuggling. In 1866, the British appointed the first revenue collector for Badagry. He was charged with the collection and supervision of duties from ware houses at Ajara, Topo and at the mouth of the Yewa river²².

The high rate of smuggling in spirits led to the promulgation of the spirits Licence Ordinance of 1890. This was promulgated in order to control illegal liquor trade and exact all the necessary duties. Unfortunately the ordinance proved ineffective and smuggling of liquor from both Lagos and Porto-Novo increased tremendously. Later, it was decided that a custom house be built at the Ado river Yewa Estuary for the purpose of checking the smuggling of liquor²³. In May 1890, police and other law enforcement agents raided the villages of Rikiti, Jaron Ragbo and Ajara where large quantities of unlicensed liquor were seized and fifteen traders convicted²⁴. This action led to the reduction of trading activities in the area.

Another joint effort by both colonial administrations was the setting up of boundary pillars in 1906 and 1912. This was to demarcate the two areas and transform the border boundary into an effective political as well as economic dividing line. Between, 1900 and 1942, a number of custom posts were set up, aimed at checking smuggling and collecting duties on goods.

On March 30th, 1923, the French government in Dahomey (Benin) issued a circular declaring business in foreign exchange as illegal. In the same vein, the British expressed deep concern over the high rate of illegal transportation of French copper coins into Abeokuta Province in the 1920's. It therefore issued a stern warning against accepting the valueless French coin.

Similarly in the 1930's and 1940's local administrators particularly those in charge of frontier districts were encouraged by the colonial governments to meet regularly and discuss issues of common concern of which

smuggling was one. Such meetings were usually held between the British District Officers (D.O.) in charge of frontiers and their Commandants or Prefects of the adjacent areas constituting the same area in the French Dahomey.

Smugglers were also subjected to severe beating, most especially on the French side. Their contraband goods were seized and they were made to pay exorbitant fines and in most cases convicted. But despite all these severe punishments, smuggling continued unabated.

Post Independence Smuggling Activities

Based on the interview conducted, there had been increase in smuggling activities in the post independence era. This has been due to a number of reasons, which are similar to what obtained during the colonial period. The variance has been due to improved economic conditions, difference in tastes, and governmental policies.

Smuggling of certain goods become lucrative when there is an official control of goods in the form of prohibition, total ban or imposition of high tariffs. This leads to scarcity of such goods in the open market and an automatic increase of its market value. When government banned the importation of tyres, wheat and rice, smuggling of these commodities increased tremendously as the goods became scarce in the open market.

Also smuggling is possible when a particular economic situation creates the opportunity. Such situation could be temporary or permanent, such as port congestion, calamities caused by natural disasters such as famine, and fire outbreak. For instance in the '70s when Lagos port (Apapa) was congested, ships were diverted to Benin Republic ports to berth and discharge their cargoes which were later transported by road via Badagry to Lagos. This situation led to scarcity of imported goods in the open market and a boom period for the smugglers.

Price differential of particular goods astride the border also lure people into smuggling business. Petroleum products, cocoa and toiletries are smuggled out of Nigeria into neighbouring countries like Republic of Benin, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad because of the high prices they command there. Likewise goods such as cigarettes, jewelry, coffee and tin tomatoes, are smuggled into Nigeria from these countries because of their high prices in the country (Nigeria).

Taste also lures people into smuggling. Nigerian's preference for imported goods, at the expense of home made ones boost smuggling activities. Different brands of spirits, textile, shoes, jewelry and drinks are smuggled into the country despite the fact that they are locally produced in the country.

Different tariffs imposed on certain goods by the government also encourages smuggling. Different brands of vehicles, cigarettes, spirits and jewelry are smuggled into Nigeria through Badagry from Benin Republic because of the high tariffs imposed on them in Nigeria and lower tariffs in Benin Republic.

Another reason why smuggling continues to be a lucrative venture is when what is illegal in one country becomes legal in another country. In Nigeria, importation of old and new textile materials are prohibited while this is not the case in Benin Republic. It is therefore not surprising to see new textile materials such as guinea brocade, imported lace, wax ankara and second hand clothings in different brands all smuggled into the country through Badagry. The rate and manner at which the commodities are smuggled into the country suggest that the Benionis deliberately imports them for the Nigerian markets.

Hard drugs are also smuggled into Nigeria through Badagry. Drug carriers usually make use of Cotonuo international airport either for their departure or arrival journeys. This is because the airport lack sophisticated detective gadgets unlike the Murtala Mohammed airport in Lagos. They therefore make use of the Lagos-Badagry road, and also bush paths, to get to Benin Republic.

Smuggling activities is made easy because Nigerian currency is widely used in transaction. Before the introduction of Second Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM), the rate of the naira was very high but with SFEM came devaluation. The Naira is still widely exchanged for the French Franc at the border where currency brokers exist.

On the whole, smuggling activities in Badagry have been encouraged by the custom officials who are so corrupt and go for nothing but "settlement", which vary according to the quantity and quality of the goods smuggled. For instance, flour and second hand clothings and shoes command higher settlement than rice.

Since the decree on smuggling had been promulgated, nobody has been arraigned before the tribunal nor convicted. Smugglers are not even scared since they are sure that even if they are caught, they would neither go to court nor be convicted but rather, they would "settle" their way through.

Modes of Smuggling

Although many categories of smugglers have been identified, they would be classified into three major categories.

The first category are individual smugglers usually school drop outs, children whose ages range from three years old and above, and adults alike. They usually cross the border through the bush paths on motor bicycles carrying their goods across the border.

The second category are the big time smugglers, who usually invest huge capital in the business. They use lorries and trailers to transport their goods across the border usually at night and they "settle" the custom officials along the road with large sum of money.

The third category are the canoe men and women who pose like fishermen and market women on the creeks from Badagry to villages in and across the border. They usually conceal the contrabands and the naval patrol men usually mistake them for fisher men and market women.

Attempts at Combating Smuggling

A number of measures have been introduced at combating smuggling in Nigeria and Benin Republic. Although these efforts have been yielding results, a lot still has to be done in putting a total stoppage to the illicit trade.

As it was during the colonial period, Custom Departments have been enlarged to handle the ever increasing cases of smuggling. Custom Officials mount road blocks along the Lagos-Seme road notably at Gbaji, Owode junction, Munwo, Ajara, Ibiye and Agbara. Other security agents such as the Police, Immigration's department, Quarantine and State Security Service and occasionally the Army, also mount check points along the road.

Special Patrol Squad also frequently patrol the border, for effective anti-smuggling activities. They are called "Roving Squad" and they mount special road blocks anytime, along the border area. There is also vigilant squad known as the "Surveillance Officers" at the border. They are usually plain cloth officers who keep surveillance over the activities of the smugglers and later pass on, such information to the custom officers for necessary action.

The creeks and lagoons that link Badagry with Benin and Lagos are also patrolled from time to time by the men of Custom's department. They are equipped with speed boats, hovers and other anti-smuggling boats. The Nigerian Navy and the Custom's department also mount joint sea patrol on a regular basis with the aim of cracking down on the smugglers.²⁵

Constant raids are usually carried out by the men of customs and police on markets in Badagry, where a lot of contrabands are being sold. Such contraband goods are usually seized by the security agents. Similar raids are also carried out on the border towns and villages, resulting in the arrest of smugglers and seizure of contraband goods.

In June 1988, a National Border Patrol was established with a view to make effective, the patrol of our porous border. The unit consists essentially of air and land border patrol operations. It also participated in the

trans-border bilateral meetings between Nigeria and Benin Republic in March and July 1989. The unit has been effectively carrying out its operations with impressive records.²⁶

An enforcement and Drugs Division has also been established for the co-ordination of all anti-smuggling operation. This division carried out a special anti-smuggling operation tagged "Operation 20-20" throughout the country, lasting for one month from December 20th 1988, to January 20th, 1989. A large number of various smuggled goods were seized and also a number of arrests were made.²⁷

In June, 1988, the Unit also established the National Drugs Units to control the wave of drug smuggling in the country. The functions of the Unit included among others to control and detect all hard drugs by searching and prosecuting all hard drugs suspects, as provided by the law. This Unit also participated in international drug seminars and bilateral talks.

The government has also set up various agencies to educate the people of the evils of smuggling. Radio and television stations and Newspapers have all joined hand with government in propagating and educating the populace on the adverse effects of smuggling on the national economy.

The border patrol Units also enlighten the people along the border on the evils of smuggling. The Federal Military Government has also reduced the subsidy on petroleum and petroleum products, consequently the petrol prices went up from 20k to 70k per litre. This has thereby decreased the profit margin of smugglers.

Bilateral talks at government level have also been initiated between officials of both countries. In September 1988, Nigerian President, General Ibrahim Babangida, held an official meeting with his Benionion counterpart, President Kerekou, on bilateral talks including issues of smuggling. Workshops and Seminars have also been organised to discuss problems and effects of smuggling. For instance in May, 1988, a transborder workshop was held in Nigeria and attended by Benionioin officials. Joint border patrol have also been carried out by security agencies of the two countries in order to effectively combat smuggling.

In the spirit of joint economic ventures, both governments had established two companies namely the Cement and Sugar factories both in Benin with Nigerian government controlling major shares. These ventures are aimed at encouraging border integration and discouraging smuggling.

The Nigerian government has also increased the export drive incentives for her companies with a view to discouraging smuggling of their products. Nigerian companies are now more involved in exporting their products abroad, rather than leaving them to smugglers.

The ECOWAS free Trade Policy has also helped in reducing the rate of smuggling; ECOWAS call for low tariffs among member Nations has

brought so many goods within the reach of the people thereby discouraging smuggling.

In conclusion, all efforts have yielded good results but a lot still has to be done before a total halt could be achieved.

Effects of Smuggling

Smuggling during both the colonial and post colonial periods has had adverse effect on the nation's economy, politics, social life, and above all national security. In comparison, smuggling in the colonial era was minimal compared to what obtains during the post colonial era. Many factors such as economic growth, oil boom, taste and social factors contributed to this.

One major economic effect of smuggling is that it makes government control of inferior goods ineffective. Since smuggled goods do not pass through the appropriate distributive channel, governmental control over them is rendered impossible. Smuggling frustrates government economic reform policies, and its loss of revenue to the government.

Similarly, smuggling creates trade imbalance between Nigeria and her neighbouring countries. This is because majority of Nigerian goods smuggled into these countries are of greater economic value than those coming into Nigeria. This situation makes neighbouring countries to benefit more from smuggling activities than Nigeria and causing Nigerian government to lose duties on both export and import goods. Smuggling renders government efforts at estimating trade between Nigeria and her neighbours impossible.

Smuggling hampers the growth of local industries, since smuggled goods are sold at cheaper prices than those smuggled into the country. This situation is further made worse by consumers' preference for smuggled goods. The effect of this is the closure of many locally manufacturing industries, and retrenchment of workers, leading to mass unemployment and loss of internal revenue for the government.

Smuggling of Nigerian currency into neighbouring countries such as Benin Republic, has contributed to the weak value of the Naira. It is also disheartening to see Nigerian's money being used as medium of exchange in Benin markets with impunity.

On the political scene, smuggling contributes to government's inability to meet projected Budget targets. This is caused by loss of revenue for the government and an adverse effect on government's inability to meet her financial and social obligations. Such obligations include payment of workers salaries, execution of governmental projects, inability to meet foreign exchange demands, and non-provision of social amenities. All these lead to disenchantment among workers and the citizenry in general,

thereby making such government unpopular.

Smuggling also exposes the government as being inefficient and inadequate in protecting lives and properties of its citizenry through her security agents. Foreigners would not feel safe to invest in such a country.

On national security, smuggling of arms and ammunitions and other dangerous weapons has caused political instability since colonial period. Smuggling of arms in large quantity into Nigeria is a great threat to national security. Such dangerous weapons, arms and ammunitions could find their way into the hands of undesirable elements such as armed robbers and hired assassins who may use them in causing disorder and harassing innocent citizens.

Also massive smuggling tends to paralyse government security services and exhibit their inefficiency, while on the other hand, it gives the smugglers a false sense of power and security. If unchecked, complex network of smuggling could frustrate the efforts of legitimate government security organisations. All these tend to demoralise the citizenry.

One of the attendant social effects of smuggling is mass unemployment which the close down of local industries could bring about. This could lead to social evils such as armed robbery, vandalism, thuggery, civil disturbances and youthful exuberance. All these threatens the security of the citizenry.

Smuggling forms the livelihood of the people of border regions. It is so popular in such towns as Badagry that it is not even seen as an act of economic sabotage (which it is) but rather as a legitimate business. A lot of people including children have made a lot of money from the illegal business.

Smuggling has a psychological effect on the children who acted as agents (*kelebe*). Such children never acquire western education, rather they grow up to become perpetual skillful smugglers or armed robbers.

Smuggling activities have served as a link between peoples of the same language and culture divided into two different political entities. They maintain their family ties by crossing the border on illegal routes to trade with one another. The people of Badagry while carrying on their illegal trans-frontier trade participate in a number of festivals in Benin-Republic.

Smuggling activities have given rise to emergence of border markets astride the two borders. This is typical of Owode, Seme and Badagry. Goods are brought from the towns to these markets to be smuggled across the border. The markets serve as currency centre where both the Naira and CFA could easily be obtained for smuggling activities.

Some smuggled goods could be hazardous to human health. Examples of such goods are dangerous drugs like Heroin, Indian Hemp, Cocaine among others. Also some expired drugs and conterminated food items are

also smuggled into the country and if consumed, could be hazardous to human life, since they are not checked by appropriate health authorities. The chances of getting them into the open market are very high.

Smuggling encourages corruption and it had given rise to a class of wealthy men and women who call themselves "business men or business women". Nigerians, because of their lust for money, have seen smuggling as a means getting rich quickly.

Smuggling has also made custom officials corrupt and rich. Since they receive large sum of money from the smugglers termed "Settlement" which they share among themselves, they never carry out their daily operations diligently.

Smuggling has psychological effect on hard working class in the society, as it could demoralize them. Since everybody has seen it as a quick way of making money, there may be a drift towards this trend. It is a common factor that all calibre of people, men and women, old and young, children of school age, literates and illiterates, including soldiers, policemen, Naval Officers, Airforce personnel are all involved in smuggling.

Smuggling has tarnished the Country's image abroad. Every Nigerian is seen abroad as a drug carrier and is subjected to rigorous body and luggage searches. Smuggling of Nigerian goods to unauthorised countries could also tarnish that country's foreign policy and thereby mar the country's international obligations.

Conclusion

This work has highlighted the degree of smuggling perpetrated by Nigerians. Smuggling of goods across the border which started during the colonial days is still an active business up till today. Government should rise up to stamp out the illicit business mainly because of its adverse affect on the nation's economy and citizenry. Since government is aware of the numerous factors responsible for smuggling, efforts should be geared towards its eradication.

First and foremost, the Department of Custom and Excise should be overhauled. Corrupt officials should be given the boot while the more honest and dedicated ones retained. Adequate equipment should be provided for all enforcement agencies connected with the security of the country's border. These anti-smuggling equipment should include, patrolling vans, boats, arms and ammunitions, helicopters and motor-bikes. All these would enhance affective border patrol and put a check on smuggling activities.

Adequate and efficient communication equipment such as walkie-

talkies, and VHF radios, should also be purchased to enhance communication link between officers on patrol and those at check-points. Proper check-point building and not shanties should be provided so as to enhance on-the-job comfortability for the officers.

Also there should be an increase in the man-power of all the agencies to cope with the increasing security demands of the border. A twenty-four hours surveillance of the border should be manned. All security enforcement agents should also cooperate with one another. The Customs, police, Immigration, Quarantine should all see their work as complementing and not competing with.

There is a need for cooperation between the border law enforcement agencies on both sides of the Nigerian/Benin border. Close working cooperation and familiarisation tours between the officers on both sides should be encouraged. Joint border patrol and check points should be carried out to allow easy detection of criminals and smugglers.

There is also a need for systematic involvement of the local communities in policy designed to benefit them. Both sides of the borders should be equally developed so as to erode under-development of a part of the border. Such policy carried out by the government to benefit the people should have lasting effect on them.

Border towns should be made to enjoy some basic amenities such as good roads, pipe born-water, electricity and provision of small scale business. All these would provide employment for the people and discourage them from smuggling. For example there are very few industries in Badagry. Government should establish more industries in border towns.

There should be gradual regional integration which should serve as a stepping stone for transborder cooperation and coordination. Joint ventures such as the sugar company at Sare and the Onigbolo Cement Company should be encouraged by both governments. Companies should be given incentives to invest in border region, thus increasing official trade between the two countries and discouraging smuggling.

Above all, communities should be mobilised to assist custom personnel in combating smuggling. Their geographical knowledge of the area would be an advantage and they easily identify smuggles among their midst. It should be noted that eradication of smuggling is impossible, since it is a border phenomenon, but these enuniated measures could bring it down to an appreciable marginal level.

Notes and References

1. The Royal Council of King Akran of Badagry (Souvenir Programme for 10th Coronation Anniversary of De Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I, Apr. 26, 1987, p.6
2. Avoseh, T. *A Short History of Badagry*, Lagos Ife Olu Printing Works, 1938, p. 12.
3. See N.A.I. RG/W3, "Intelligence Reports on the Egun" p. 20.
4. Dioka L.G., "Badagry since 1842, Urbansation in Nigerian Border Region": Unpublished M. Phil. (History) University of Lagos, 1986, p. 34.
5. *Ibid ...*
6. Freeman, "Journal of various visits to the Kingdoms of Ashanti, Aku and Dahomi in West Africa" (2nd Ed. London 1844) pp. 204-214. The Assistants at Badagry were the Reulu de Graft.
7. Crowder Michael, *The Story of Nigeria*, London 1978, p. 134.
8. Dioka L.C. *Op. cit ...*, p. 36
9. Newbury C.W., *The Western Slave Coast and Its Rulers* Oxford, 1961, p. 30.
10. Crowder Micheal, *Op. cit ...*, p. 92
11. Folayan Kola, *Egbado and Yoruba Aja Power Politics, 1832-1894*, M.A. Ibadan, 1967, p. 82.
12. Aderibigbe A.A., "Expansion of Lagos Protectorate, 1863-1900, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1958.
13. Anene J.C., *The International Boundaries of Nigeria, 1885-1960: A Framework of an Emergent African Nation*, (London, Longman, 1970) pp. 141-232.
14. Brownlie I., *African Boundaries: A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopedia*, London, C. Hurst, 1970.
15. Okaro-K'Oj wang Kungo Masiro, "Society Trade and Politics in Badagry, 1842-1891; A case study of African Response to British Penetration in South-West Nigeria", M. Phil Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1979, p. 138.
16. Foote to Russel, 8th March 1861, "F. O. 84/1141"
17. Dioka L.C., *Op. cit ...*,
18. Glover to Tickel, 24th September, 1863, "F.O. 84/1201"
19. *Ibid ...*
20. Glover to Sandys, 27th April, 1865, "CSO 8/5, Vol. 1"
21. *Ibid ...*
22. Dioka L.C. C. *Op. cit ...* " 94
23. Johnson to Acting Colonial Secretary, 20th March, 1890, "BADADIV 5/3 Vol. 9"

24. *Ibid ...'*
25. Akindele R.A. and Vogt M.A., *Smuggling and Coastal Piracy in Nigeria*, Lagos, 1983, p. 83
26. An Address by the Deputy Director, Enforcement and Drugs, to the Senior Officers' Seminar, 6th November, 1989.
27. *Ibid ...'*
28. *Ibid ...'*

- 24. Ibid...
- 25. Abimbola R.A. and Vogt M.A. Smuggling and Coastal Piracy in Nigeria Lagos, 1983, p. 63
- 26. An Address by the Deputy Director, Enforcement and Docks, to His Honour Chief Justice, September 6th November, 1988
- 27. Ibid...
- 28. Ibid...

1991, p. 100

1994, p. 100

1995, p. 100

1996, p. 100

1997, p. 100

1998, p. 100

1999, p. 100

2000, p. 100

2001, p. 100

2002, p. 100

2003, p. 100

2004, p. 100

9

Badagry: Intergroup Relations in a Frontier State

L.C. DIOKA & SIYAN OYEWESO

Introduction

Badagry is a frontier state. Before the imposition of the international boundary it shared borders with then Kingdoms of Dahomey, Port Novo and Lagos. Whatever happened in these States affected her. These neighbours of Badagry were stronger and, at times, jealous of the strategic location of the town as an entry point during the trade routes. Badagry at that time, enjoyed port facilities which her neighbours lacked. This often led to conflict and the general atmosphere of hostility which existed between Badagry and her neighbours.

Relations between Badagry and her neighbours should be seen not in conflict terms only. Badagry was also a meeting point of Aja and Yoruba cultures. The population was composed of two major groups, the *Ogu* and the *Yoruba*. The two cultures clashed and interpenetrated thereby creating a new corridor of cultural overlap. It was under this environment of interlocking cultures that bi-lingualism flourished in the town. Most of the people are fluent in both Yoruba and Ogu. One can therefore see Badagry as a town where cultures merged, interlocked and diverged. Mixed populations are found in Badagry more than in other parts of Lagos State.

The contact between the various groups in Badagry created a favourable environment for cultural integration. This culture contact affected various facets of life in the town as is evident in language, religion and politics. The people worshipped common local deities and are bi-lingua in Ogu and Yoruba. Even the decentralised political system of the Ogu is giving way to the hierarchically organized system of the Yoruba.

Many mixed communities, whether of the periphery as in the case of Badagry, or at the centre of the State, have much to learn from Badagry. That the people of Badagry have been able to forge peace, harmony and exchange of culture in a bi-lingua, bi-cultural and bi-national setting is a challenge to the diverse ethnic group in Nigeria today.

This chapter, therefore, will examine intergroup relation between the

Ogu and Awori Yoruba and between Badagry and her neighbours - Lagos, Dahomey, Old Oyo, Porto Novo and Abeokuta. Finally, the impact of intergroup relations and the lessons to be learnt will be assessed.

Location

Badagry is situated on the Osa Lagoon which forms part of the continuous lagoon that stretched from Lake Nokue near Porto Novo to Lagos. It is about fifty one kilometres from Lagos, bounded in the north by the Eg-bado Plateau, to the west by the Yewa River, to the south by the Atlantic Ocean and in the east by the Mangroove swamps. A mile wide sand belt lies between the sea and the lagoon.¹

Access to and from the sea is easy. (See fig.1) Its location made it one of the most strategic posts for trade in the region prior to the development of Lagos and Cotonou as sea ports. It was indeed a key market between the Aja and the Yoruba countries and its control as a port was the major cause of war between the Egba at Abeokuta, The Eg-bado and Awori States which obstructed this access. ² Other neighbouring Kingdoms such as Old Oyo, Dahomey and Lagos, as well as European colonial powers inter-ferred with its internal affairs and greatly influenced intergroup relations in the town.

The emphasis on Badagry as a frontier State and the struggle for its control began in the early 1720's. Dahomey captured Allada, the major port of Oyo's export trade in 1724. Allada had been paying tribute to Oyo since 1698 and from there Oyo participated in the slave trade.³ Oyo therefore took military action against Dahomey to re-assert her influence and imperial ambition between 1726 and 1747 and this resulted in the imposition of tributary obligations on Dahomey for a century.⁴ This led to the demarcation of territorial spheres of influence between Oyo and Dahomey. Under the arrangement, Badagry came under the Oyo's sphere of influence,⁵ and remained a frontier State ever since.

The People and Settlement

Badagry is not a frontier State but a mixed community. The people and their settlement in the town have an important bearing on the relationship existing between them. It will be necessary then to examine briefly how the various groups especially, the Awori-Yoruba and the Ogu came to settle in Badagry as these migrations and settlement patterns established the intergroup linkages existing in the area. More than anything else, this factor made Badagry a mixed community.

The stages of the migration and settlement of the Yoruba and Ogu in Badagry have been identified as Yoruba migration, Aja migration and the

third was the migration set in motion by French high handedness in Dahomey (now the Republic of Benin).⁶ For the present paper only two, the Yoruba and Aja migrations will be examined here.

The Yoruba migration and settlement in Badagry allegedly started from Ife as part of the greater Western Awori movement in the 16th and early 17th centuries.⁷ The group left Ife and settled at Isheri and from Isheri to Ota and from Ota they dispersed in various directions, some to Ado and others to Igbessa. Ado was regarded as the dispersal point for the group that entered Badagry.⁸ From there again various groups moved to Pota, Ibereko, Mowo, Age and Imeko. Some others moved to Iworo and Ebute-Olofin under the great pressure from Oyo,⁹ (See fig. 11).

The foundation of Badagry town has often been linked to *Apa*. *Apa* was said to be established as a result of the great Western Awori movement. An Oni of Ife was said to have sent out his sons to establish independent kingdoms. One of the Ife Princes named Asheshe set off and had a brief stop over at Ibeshe and later settled at *Apa* and founded a line of Obas called *Alapa*.¹⁰ The eleventh *Alapa*, *Wheshe*, was said to have given a piece of land to *Huntokunu*, a Dutch trader, often erroneously acclaimed the founder of Badagry, to set up a trading base.¹¹ What transpired between the Whese and *Huntokunu* seemed to have been a business deal. *Huntokunu*, whose trading base in *Wydah* was distributed by the Dahomean wars in 1732, offered to Whese, gifts including one hundred cannons for the defence of *Apa*. Whese on his part, granted land to *Huntokunu* (on the present site of Badagry) for trade which included transactions in slaves, tobacco, gin, beads and other items. It means then that Badagry was already occupied since the piece of land given to *Huntokunu* belonged to *Agbada*, one of the Whese's servants. *Huntokunu*'s presence in Badagry attracted many people and aided the growth of the town. It would be incorrect therefore to say that *Huntokunu* was founder of Badagry.

Another branch of the migration had found its way into Porto Novo and established *Akoro* and *Ija Osan* quarters.¹² Thus in the region of study, the Ife migration set up two groups of settlements: *Apa* and Badagry on the one hand and *Akoro* and *Ija Osan* in Porto Novo on the other. Another wave of Yoruba migration that entered Porto Novo about this period was motivated by trade, especially in Kolanuts, dye and local cloth.¹³

The Yoruba migrations were followed closely by those of the Aja. The events that led to this mass movement have been traced to the expansionist drive of *Agaja Trudo*, King of Dahomey from 1708 to 1740. He embarked on the conquest of the coastal Aja States mostly *Heuda* or *Whyda*, *Allada*, *Weme* and *Jakin*. The events disclosed the population. Scholars have differed in their explanation of the motive for this expansion. Thus, *Akinjogbin* argues that it was political, a desire to return to the old system or

what he called the 'ebi' system. Both Law and Hopkins attributed it to economic consideration.¹⁴ The merits and demerits of such a debate are outside the scope of the present work. The important point here is that Agaja's wars set in motion waves of migration which irrevocably altered the demographic pattern and permanently established the inter-group minglings that laid the foundation of today's situation in Badagry.

The Aja arrived in Badagry at different times. The first group were the Heuda driven from the Savi and Jakin. These founded the *Jegba* and *Awhanjigo* wards of Badagry about 1730. But between 1750 and 1775, further pressure from Dahomey displaced the Wemenu and other Heuda settlements. These established *Boeko*, *Asago* and *Ahoviko* wards. Later, land was granted to other Wemenu refugees who set up the Ganho ward, while *Possuko* occupied a very vulnerable part of Badagry, thus the war chief of the town was selected from the ward.¹⁵ The last ward to be established in Badagry by the Aja was the *Warako* ward and has since retained its traditions and relations with Porto Novo. Besides, it has the largest Egun settlement in Badagry while most of the other refugees came from Hauda and Weme. Thus the *Finheto*, the title holders from Wharako ward, still go to Porto Novo for installation.¹⁶ In 1778, the Ekpe market opposite the sand belt in Porto Novo was destroyed as a result of the commercial rivalry between Porto Novo and the King of Dahomey over the control of Whyda as a trading port. As a result, refugees fled to Badagry and laid the foundation of Wharako ward.¹⁷ Beyond Badagry town, other Aja groups settled in scattered villages in the neighbourhood.

Before the eighteenth century, Dahomey and Porto Novo were still friendly. Thus Porto Novo and her satellite chiefdoms in the Weme Valley were initially free from Dahomean attacks. This, perhaps, explains why the Anago Yoruba adopted the use of facial marks called 'Eji' borrowed from Porto Novo. With such marks they were identified as subjects of Porto Novo and thus free from Dahomean menace. In the same vein, Ado-Odo benefited from her friendship with Porto Novo.¹⁸ But this friendship between Dahomey and Porto Novo ended under Behanzin who embarked on the subjugation of Porto Novo.

During the reign of Tofa (Ruler of Porto Novo from 1874 to 1908) Dahomean attacks increased Egun migration from Porto Novo to Badagry. Consequently, a number of villages, especially from Porto Novo District, were settled in different parts of Badagry District. Thus the Tori established *Iragbo* Village and were later joined by the Heuda. Today, *Iragbo* village has two quarters - the *Tolico* and *Heuedako* quarters. The *Ajara* group settled in *Ajara* village near Badagry while the *Setto* settled in Badagry. Igue had observed that the *Setto* were not Egun, but that they were a Yoruba nucleus absorbed by the Egun population of Porto Novo.¹⁹

When the Egun people of Porto Novo were displaced from their kingdom, the Setto followed them into Badagry.

The Aja communities in Porto Novo and Badagry formed one coherent culture area which was closely interlocked and operated as a single socio-economic unit before the colonial era. Badagry and Porto Novo not only interacted between themselves as siamese twin towns, but also with their Aja and Yoruba neighbourhood. The two towns have therefore established a true symbolic relationship. The *Tiffonou* provided canoe transport between Badagry and Porto Novo and saw their operation as intra-community service.²⁰ Water transportation enabled inter-regional trade to flourish. This trade fuelled relations not only between Badagry and Porto Novo, both being Yoruba-Aja mixed communities, but also strengthened the inter-group relations between Aja and the Yoruba. The establishment of an inter-colonial (later international boundary has tended to sever a network of relations that have preceeded the new boundary for centuries.

Intergroup relations in Badagry could be viewed from two major perspectives: the cultural relations between the Awori Yoruba and Ogu as well as some of the minority groups in the town on the one hand and between Badagry and her neighbours on the other hand. The cultural linkage here will be discussed under the Aja-Yoruba transition zone.

Aja-Yoruba Transition Zone

As Dr. Barth has asserted "...ethnic and cultural boundaries still persist despite the flow of persons across them...cultural differences can persist despite inter-ethnic contact and interdependence."²¹ This in a way, describes the interesting but unique relations in Badagry where cultures merged and diverged. Badagry developed away from the rest of Yoruba land and towns and in a different kind of environment. It than established greater contact with the Aja people of Dahomey than with most Yoruba towns. It consequently developed an Aja-Yoruba culture before the colonial period. It was on this Aja-Yoruba culture that an Anglo-French one was super-imposed. Thus from these mixed sources of origin, there developed an original mode of culture that was neither purely Yoruba, Aja nor Anglo-French. The over- all result was that the Aja-Yoruba culture on the one hand, and the Anglo-French one on the other, clashed and interpenetrated. Then emerged a new corridor of cultural overlap in a bi-lingual, bi-cultural and bi-national setting.

In this area, certain villages have mixed populations and the inhabitants are mostly bi-lingual and some are even tri-lingual. Some speak Yoruba, Ogu and French or Yoruba, Ogu and English. Villages such as *Aradagun*,

Mowo and *Mosafejo* are classic examples in this zone. But this does not in any way imply a neat division of cultural boundaries for cultures merge imperceptibly into each other. Let us illustrate with specific examples. It has been the general belief that the Yoruba language had mounted and maintained a serious assault on Aja language. This is not surprising since it was also the language of trade. The surprising thing is the tenacity displayed by Aja language *vis-a-vis* Yoruba dominance and it has in some cases become the dominant language of certain groups even in areas previously occupied by the Yoruba. In areas where Aja language has been completely displayed by Yoruba, the Aja still keep to their original language for use in shrines.²²

The nature and scope of this change will be illustrated from the mixed villages. *Mowo* village was originally established on a piece of land that belonged to the Possu family in Badagry. Later the Awori-Yoruba came to settle in the village. Today the dominant language in *Mowo* is Yoruba. A few speak Ogu while a small group is bi-lingual.²³ *Mosafejo*, on the other hand, was an Awori village, founded by a Yoruba man from *Ilado* village. Many Egun joined the Yoruba and outnumbered them. The predominant language in the village is Ogu instead of Yoruba, the language of the founders. *Aradagun* rather presents a picture of a more mixed village. The land on which the village was established was claimed by the *Ganho* family, an Ogu group in Badagry. This claim has been upheld by the Supreme Court in a relevant adjudication. A Yoruba migrant group from *Ogbomoso* settled on the land and it became a Yoruba village. However, the Ogu began to move into the village, first in trickles and later in large numbers. Today the village is divided into two quarters, speaking two different languages, Ogu and Yoruba, though a few are bi-lingual.

The case of *Apa* is even more illustrative. *Apa* was a Yoruba kingdom founded by a Yoruba prince who set up a line of Obas whose dynasty still reigns there today. But Yoruba language has been completely displaced by Ogu. In fact, the only remaining relic of their Yoruba origin is the beaded crown and the few members of the royal family who still remember a few words of Yoruba. The case of *Iragbon* is similar. It was founded between 1870 and 1880 by *Iroko* (referred to by the Ogu as *Loko*), an Awori from *Ado-Odo*. *Iroko* was a sub-chief in *Ado* before his departure. Later, the Egun joined the settlement, and today *Iragbon* has more Egun than Yoruba. There are many other villages with mixed population in the old Badagry District.

These instances illustrate the scope of cultural integration that has taken place in this area of cultural transition. To the extent which the two main cultures, Yoruba and Aja have survived, there is an interesting balance of the one *vis-a-vis* the other. More interestingly, there is an increasing degree

of mixture as evident in the incidence of bi-lingualism. In any case, either culture has undergone modifications due to contact with one another. In language, the extent to which the original Egun tongue is retained has varied from cases to cases in Badagry and Egbado south where the original tongues have managed to survive in prayers and sacred songs used at the shrines, much in the same manner as the survival of the Yoruba language in the cults of the *Orisha* as in Bahia and other parts of Latin America, particularly Brazil.²⁴

The Ogu have fallen under the varying degrees of Yoruba linguistic influence. In Badagry, the original tongue has remained intact. It is significant, however, to note the tenacity which the Ogu language has displayed *vi-a-vis* the Yoruba language. This is illustrated by common words in both languages as the table 1 below shows:

Table I: Yoruba words that have come into Egun dialect

English	Ogu	Yoruba
Society	Ogba	Egbe
Council	Ogbimo	Igbimo
Bamboo	Oba	Opa
Custom	Asa	Asa
together	Kpodome or Popo	Po
Death	Oku	Iku
Father	Baba	Baba
Mother	Ona or Iya	Iya
Village Head	Togan or Bale	Bale
Come	Wa	Wa

In spite of the degree of interaction, some Ogu words have remained resistant to Yoruba linguistic influences, as illustrated below in Table II.

Table II:

English	Ogu	Yoruba
Day	Azan	Ojo
Beach	Whuto	Etikun
Snake	Odan	Ejo
Wood	Nake	Igi
Pot	Ozen	Ikoko
Build	Gba or Gbawhe	Ko or Kole
Sky	Ji whe	Orun
Wise	Nhonu	Ogbon

Source: RG/W3, W.G. Wormal, A Report on the Egun speaking Peoples of Badagry District of the Colony, Appendix B, 1934, pp. 53-57.

See also Oyenuga, O., "The Cultural Aspect of Badagry," *B.A. Long Essay*, University of Lagos, 1989, p. 68.

This buttresses the view that the culture, viewed from the point of language, clashed and interpenetrated, thus qualifying Badagry as a frontier settlement located within zone of cultural transition.

Religion

This is not intended as a full treatment of traditional religion in Badagry, it will be used to illustrate the fact that the cultural transition zone can be measured from the point of view of religion. Both the Ogu and the Yoruba have maintained to a certain extent their traditional religions. Both religions have greatly influenced each other and have been influenced in turn. The Ogu have retained the original deities and festivals they brought from Benin and have acquired some new ones from their Yoruba neighbours. Both the Yoruba and Ogu believe in the Supreme God,²⁵ who should be worshipped through a hierarchy of other minor deities. This belief system is known among the Egun and Awori Yoruba as *Vodun* and *Orisa* respectively. These Vodun and Orisa were meant to be effective means of communication between God and man and therefore not hierarchy of gods.²⁶

A major difference between the Ogu religious system and that of the Yoruba was in the provision made by priests for the training of initiates in the various cults. The priests in charge of the training of the initiates was called *Voduno* and he prepared instruction manuals used for the training.²⁷ Successful initiates became members of the cult and were called *Vodunsi*.²⁸ This process of training became a bond of unity among the different Egun cults, as the different worshipers came together as members of a common congregation. In their own case, the Awori Yoruba system, each religious cult maintained its own programme and remained under its own leadership. They do not see themselves as members of a single religious faith. The Ogu system has defined offices for members which is comparable to the Christian system as the table iii below shows:

Table III:

	Egun 'vodu' Offices	Christian Equivalent
1.	Dute or Vothano	Bishop
2.	Hunto or Hunga	Archdeacon
3.	Avose	Reverend
4.	Sinhunto	Catechist
5.	Agbayi	Deaconess

Source: Oyenuga, O.B.A.: *B.A. Long Essay*, University of Lagos, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

Perhaps, another important difference between the deities among the Ogu and the Awori Yoruba is the classification of Egun deities into two major groups: those that keep training colleges for the training of the adherents and priests and those that are content with priests and adherents but no formal training or seminary where initiates are trained. Some of the gods that retained students and training centres include - *Igunnu* now a festival in Badagry, *Duduwa* (Oduduwa) in Badagry, *Ajahugbo* and *Zozoan Ajara* and *Topo*. Others include *Hevioso*, *Vetho*, *Deji*, *Odan*, (god of snake) *Vawhe*, *Topothur* and a number of other water spirits. On admission to the training colleges, the initiates were given new names or cult names. The old names were never referred to again in conversation or in daily life some of the cult names adopted by initiates include *Agboesi*, *Vereketesi*, and *Gethesi*.

Wormall, in the intelligence report on the Ogu, did not appreciate the need for and the advantages derived from such training. For him the initiates were merely taught songs and dances in preparation, for the annual festivals.²⁹ The training, however, did confer actual benefits. The young initiates were taught respect, loyalty, integrity, the history of their ancestors and, in fact, national consciousness. They usually acquired new names and received marks that differentiated them from non-initiates. European Administrators were, however, worried about the adoption of cult names because they alleged it aided tax evasion.

A greater degree of interaction in religion between the various groups in Badagry can be seen by examining some of the festivals in the town. This is more so as the festivals have some kinds of link with religion. Some of the festivals to be considered here include the *Zagbeto*, the *Egungun*, the *Oro* and the *Igunuko*. The aim here is not a detailed discussion of the festivals.

The *Egungun* festival in Badagry has assumed the status of a national religious institution. All sections of Badagry community participate even though the *Egungun* has a Yoruba origin. It is used as an instrument of justice and each of the eight wards in Badagry has a place specially dedicated for preserving the dresses and other things used for the *Egungun* festival until the following year. It is important to note here that on the morning of the *Egungun* festival, all the white cap chiefs in the town would lead a procession of all the *Egungun* to the Oba's palace to pay him homage and to receive blessings from him. The point here is that all in Badagry, whether Awori-Yoruba or Egun have to accept *Egungun* as their own festival. The *Oro* is also of Yoruba origin and acts as a *vigilante* group which all sections of Badagry have come to accept and in fact employ for peace keeping.

The *Zagbeto*, on the other hand, was initially an Egun festival which originate in Porto Novo. *Zangbeto* simply means night guard and Ze

means might. It is a raffia masquerade cult, which apart from its entertaining people during its festivals, appears on special occasions or during an emergency in the community. The priest of Izagbeto announces the date of the festival and a committee is set up to raise funds for the celebration. Again, every citizen of the town is expected to contribute.

Igunuko festival in Badagry has neither Ogu nor Yoruba origin. Tradition says that the *Igunuko* shrine and masquerade were introduced in Badagry by Nupe settlers in the town. Today *Igunuko*, like the *Egungun*, *Oro* and *Zangbeto* has become a regular feature of Badagry cultural life. All groups in the town participate in the celebrations.

All these festivals in Badagry have one common feature. All participants, apart from the masquerades, have accepted *asoebi*, one of the Yoruba traditional forms of dressing, as ideal for the festivals. Although all the festivals have different origins, all sections of Badagry community have come to accept them, even in the case of the *Zangbeto* where Ogu is the only language the participant can use, other groups still participate. The language barriers have been overcome showing the degree of cultural interaction that has taken place in the town. Such other Yoruba deities as *Elegba* which the Ogu call '*Lagba*' are found all over Badagry. It is interesting to note how plurality of gods co-exist in Badagry, yet each system remained distinct. The location of Badagry in a cultural transition zone promoted social and ethnic affinities that have extended to Porto Novo.

The Ogu in Badagry were resistant to changes in religion. This resistance to outside religious influences greatly struck Wormal and he concluded that the missionaries who first arrived in Badagry in 1842, left for Abeokuta because they could not make any impression on the people. In the same vein, Avoshe explains that the missionaries failed because they could not make these 'Popos part with their gods.'³⁰ Perhaps more fundamental to missionary failure in Badagry was the reason advanced by Webster that missionary teaching and alien influences emphasized Christian separation from the traditional life and customs.³¹ Besides, some of the products of early mission schools saw themselves as a superior class. Ajayi summarizes the implications of this superiority complex exhibited by the mission boys thus: '*It was dangerous for the children, dangerous for the missionary cause as it did not encourage parents to send more children, and in any case, pride and indiscipline were certainly not Christian virtues.*'³² This tended to scare people rather than draw more converts to the missions.

Despite this gloomy picture, missionary impact was felt in Badagry. Some of the people not only accepted Christianity, but became prominent church leaders. The first African Missionary to Porto Novo, Reverend Marshall, was from Badagry. Perhaps more spectacular than Marshall as a Missionary from Badagry was the Right Reverend Godonu Medegbepo

Fisher, the founder of the *Independent Native African Church* and its first Bishop.³³ Early administrators commended the organising ability of Bishop Fisher and contrasted it with those of the white missionaries whose effort produced little effect. The Independent Native African Church had branches and schools in Badagry District and beyond.

Thus, in spite of the differences between the various groups and their desire to hold firmly to their traditional forms of worship, a high degree of culture contact has taken place.

Political Changes

The binding factor in the town was the town council on which all the chiefs sat. The Akran dominated the affairs of the council but his powers were greatly limited. He could not take away any important decisions without consulting the other chiefs. Even after consultation the High-Chiefs could still act independently. Clearly, there was no effective central control. Thus, Badagry politics was at one time polarised into Kosoko and Akintoye factions and at another time, Pro-Egba and Pro-Dahomey groups. The signing of the treaty of cessions by all the chiefs of Badagry is a further illustration of this point. The Akran then would have signed for the whole town if he had a perfect control of the town.

Iworo, a town close to Badagry had a different political structure. Iworo was organised along the pattern of other Yoruba towns. At the head of administration in each Yoruba kingdom, is an *Oba* or King, who usually wears a beaded crown. He is advised by a Council of titled men representing diverse interests and he reigned supreme. Within the kingdom, each town is represented by a *Bale* who also acted on the advice of a Council. The structure of the Bale's Council is similar to that of the Oba, except that the Bale does not wear a beaded crown. At the head of Iworo administration is the *Olofin* with a beaded crown. He is assisted by hereditary title holders, a situation significantly lacking in Badagry. Thus, in the Badagry transition zone, two different types of political organization or structure confronted each other; the loose decentralized and consultative pattern of Badagry and stratified and hierarchial model of Iworo.

One then wonders why Badagry should remain loose and decentralized when all the surrounding kingdoms were hierarchically organised. All the areas from where the Aja fled into badagry were also organised kingdoms of varying sizes and importance, and such examples as Heuda or Whydah, Jakin, Weme and Porto Novo can illustrate the point. It has been suggested that decentralization was a part of Aja organisation as shown in the example of other Aja villages in Ipokia, and other parts of the Badagry

District.³⁴ Wormall, on the other hand, suggested that the traumatic experience of the Aja during their flight made them averse to chiefly rule. They accordingly decided to avoid such autocracy and maintained a loose form of political organization, a petty state structure.³⁵

The ward system in Badagry should be seen as a reflection of this petty state structure. It is within this context that the import of the view that decentralization was a part of Aja social organization can be appreciated. Fleeing their small kingdoms in a hurry, the Aja found themselves in Badagry with a higher concentration of population that obtained in their former states. All they could achieve was a confederation of wards in which all the wards were of equal status. This could be regarded as an Aja experiment in political organization. Such a system does not operate in Porto Novo and Dahomey nor does it obtain among the Yoruba neighbours of Badagry.

But the border position of Badagry and inter-group relations had not promoted this entirely Aja political experiment to develop and mature undisturbed. It has to confront the Yoruba political model and this brought certain modifications. A few forum for resolving inter-village disputes, made up of the Aja and Yoruba has now emerged. This can be seen in inter-village meetings that discuss problems, a situation that was not previously obtained in the area. During such meetings chiefs and elders from different villages consulted and co-operated for their mutual benefit.

In 1950, the Paramount Chief in Badagry, the late Oba C.D. Akran was crowned.³⁶ Since that time changes have been observed in the title of badagry monarchs. The title Oba, a Yoruba derivative became more prominent, than Akran. Today, emphasis is being placed on the *Aholu* as the title for Badagry monarch. Again there is determined drive towards centralization. The *Aholu* is a paramount and not merely a *primus inter pares* as in the earlier days. The development of the kingship system in Badagry is more like the Yoruba model.

Badagry today could be seen as a product of inter-group relations. Its growth, religions, politics and social organisation have all been influenced by this factor. This tends to justify the view that Badagry is a laboratory where culture contact at its best could be observed.

Badagry-Oyo Relations

In the pre-1800, Badagry, because of her strategic and geographical importance as a coastal town, attracted, in economic terms, the attention and envy of her neighbours like Lagos, Porto Novo, Oyo and Dahomey. In fact, Oyo had to establish commercial relationship with her because it was an important market. Badagry was vital to Oyo because her economy in

the 18th century rested considerably on slave trade. Since Badagry had easy access to other West African markets, it meant that Oyo could get constant supply through her and Porto-Novo.³⁷

This acknowledged economic importance made Oyo-Badagry relations in the opening decades of the 18th century more cordial. In particular, Oyo used her military might to protect this important slave market. The reality was that any power that threatened Badagry's territorial security or economy incurred Oyo's wrath. Thus, Oyo was at war with Dahomey on several occasions before 1750 in defence of Badagry with the 1739 invasions being the most serious.²⁸ In other words, Agaja's attack on Badagry in 1737 was not repulsed. Oyo also took retaliatory measures against Dahomey in 1739 to teach her a lesson as Badagry was "...Eyeo's (Oyo) calabash out of which nobody should be permitted to eat but himself."³⁹ Thus, when in 1777 the King of Dahomey planned another attack against Badagry in order to divert trade to his own port of Wydah, the Alaafin warned him seriously against such an adventure.⁴⁰

However, by 1784, the cost of maintaining Badagry as an independent state had proven too burdensome for the Alaafin that he decided to make it a vassal town under his own authority. Another hypothesis that has been offered to explain the shift in Alaafin's policy is that he was reorganising his whole system of communication with the coast.⁴¹ In fact, it is possible to argue that the sovereignty of Badagry was probably too uncomfortable for the Alaafin more so when other kingdoms with the same geographical area like Porto Novo and Dahomey were already under Alaafin's influence.

Whatever might be the position, the fact is that in 1784 the Alaafin brought Badagry under his control but used Dahomey to achieve his objective. On this occasion the Dahomey army was -

...joined by a numerous body of auxiliaries from the inland countries of *Mahee* and *Nago*...and marched in great force towards Badagry, conducted by guides, which had been provided by the King of Eyeo. The Dahomey commander, the AGAOW, laid waste the whole country in this progress, taking many prisoners, which were immediately sent to Eyeo, according to the treaty which had been previously entered into with that Prince.....⁴²

It is important to add that Lagos also joined in the grand design against Badagry and particularly undertook "to prevent the Badagrys from receiving supply of corn from his (Oba of Lagos) dominions."

The Oyo hegemony over Badagry prevailed into the 1820's as the 19th century explorer, Hugh Clapperton, was reportedly told by Alaafin that Badagry and Dahomey "all belonged to me."⁴³ Clapperton also report

that Oba Adele (the exiled King of Lagos and ruler of Badagry) was paying tribute to Oyo and that Badagry had replaced Porto Novo as the main outlet for Oyo slave exports. We are also able to deduce from Clapperton's account that there was a very good economic relationship between Oyo traders and Badagry during the Adele years (1821-1830). Adele might have probably diverted established personal connections with these traders while still in Lagos. Besides, Oyo traders probably diverted their trade to Badagry in the hope that it would prove less vulnerable than Porto Novo or Dahomean attacks.

There is, however, the need to add that Badagry-Oyo relations in the 18th and 19th centuries went beyond economics. For literatures on the introduction and spread of Islam to Badagry revealed that the religion got to the town through an Oyo itinerant trader, *Ramalana Saibu Ogboalejo*. Other Oyo muslim traders that accompanied him were said to include *Buraimo, Sule Eleshin, Sulu and Alfa Bashiru*.⁴⁴ The first two Imamas of the town, *Abdullahi and Yesufu* were Hausa probably in Ogboalejo's party. In addition, it has also been suggested that the Egungun masquerade was introduced to Badagry by the Oyo migrants and traders.

Badagry-Abeokuta Relations

Abeokuta was established in 1830.⁴⁵ For the next five years after its foundation, Abeokuta enjoyed a very warm relationship with Badagry especially under Oba Adele. For it is on record that Badagry under Adele Ajosun came to the timely rescue of this nascent state on three occasions. First, it aided Abeokuta in its war with Ota in 1830. Second, the Owivi war of 1833 between the Egba on one hand and the Ijebu and Egbado on the other hand ended in favour of Abeokuta because of the military assistance that came from Badagry.⁴⁶ In recognition and appreciation of this assistance, the ruler of Badagry was given a gift of 300 slaves by Sodeke while Adele himself made a personal visit to Abeokuta. Indeed, the Owivi-Egbado campaign was not only a military success, the conquest of Egbado secured communications between Abeokuta and Badagry.

The third occasion when Badagry intervened in Abeokuta's politics was in 1834 when Adele, after the Owivi war, invited Egba and Ijebu leaders to the Ogboni House and effected a reconciliation between them. However, by 1842 Abeokuta appeared to be a stronger partner in the Badagry-Abeokuta relationship as the Egba could dictate to Badagry, during its siege on Ado in 1842, to send troops to its camp at Mowo or face military bombardment. Badagry was thus caught in the fire between the Egba and Porto Novo.⁴⁷

Apart from political relations, there is good evidence of trade relations

between Badagry and Abeokuta. In fact, the Abeokuta-Badagry trade route was very vital to the two states and it has even been suggested that cassava was introduced to Yorubaland through this route⁴⁸ The route became strategic to Abeokuta because of the pressing demand for European arms and ammunitions (through this route) to prosecute the 19th-century Yoruba wars in which the Egba were a key actor. It was because of this strategic consideration that the Bashorun of the Abeokuta army in July 1851 wrote to Captain L.T. Jones (the Senior Royal Navy Officer on the Coast) that:

At present, Badagry is the only medium of communicating between the English and Abeokuta, but if Lagos is destroyed and Akintoye restored we should have little fear...⁴⁹

Badagry-Egbado Relations

Although badagry was a defender of Egba Interests against Egbado in the 19th century, this did not preclude the establishment of solid economic relations between the two communities. Available records reveal that political relations between Badagry and Egbado improved in the 1850's. This was indicated by the careers of two Egbado personalities residing in Badagry during this period. These were J.O. Falola and Seriki Abbass. These two men, despite the alien status, were able to rise to leadership positions in Badagry in the 19th century. As a politician, Falola endeared himself into the hearts of the people as he showed their knee interest in the social welfare and educational progress of the people. Reflections on his career today indicate that he was a selfless politician who did not see politics as a means of aggrandisement.

Seriki Abbass too lived in Badagry between 1800 and 1919 as a freed slave and an Egbado. He had initial difficulties of gaining public acceptance. However, his humility, industry, business acumen and charisma endeared him to the Badagrians who rallied him as a public leader. He was the first Yoruba to make an effective inroad into Ogu politics. He was a strong promoter of the cause of Islam as evidenced in the number of mosques he built for Badagry muslims in the 19th century. The *Egbe Killa*, a missionary society, was also generously funded by him.⁵⁰

Badagry-Porto Novo

Politically, badagry has been strongly influenced by the factor of her location on the borders of more powerful rival power of Porto Novo, Lagos, Dahomey and Abeokuta. Events in these kingdoms had their impact on Badagry.

In particular, Porto Novo intervened in the internal affairs of Badagry. An instance was when the Akranship of Badagry became vacant. Chief Jenghen of Awhanjihgo ward, supported by Lagos, laid claim to the throne.⁵¹ Yet the established practice in Badagry was and still is, that the Akran should come from Jegba ward. Chief Jenghen's attack on Porto Novo in 1781 at removing Zinzu who was considered a threat to his continued occupation of the throne offered a good opportunity for both Porto Novo and Dahomey to attack Badagry. They embarked on a joint attack on the town in 1783 allegedly to protect Zinzu. This attack was repeated in 1784, with Ketu and Sabe aiding Porto Novo and Dahomey, as well as a tacit approval from Oyo.⁵² Oyo had earlier condemned Badagry's attack on Porto Novo as harmful to trade. Besides, Porto Novo was important to Oyo as a port. Badagry was defeated and Zinzu installed as Akran Jiwe.

The relationship between Porto Novo and Badagry deteriorated further in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1822, for instance, Badagry was again attacked by Porto Novo.⁵³ This attack was sequel to the expulsion of Porto Novo's ally, Zofun, the Akran who opposed the granting of political asylum to Adele in Badagry. Indeed Adele's admission affected negatively Badagry-Porto Novo relations in the sense that it provokes internal rebellion within the two states. For instance, the Mehu of Porto Novo was a friend and ally of Adele and, in the event, instigated rebellion against his Suzerain, King De Hueze.⁵⁴ This event later climaxed in the expulsion of the Mehu from Porto Novo and the granting of political asylum to him in Badagry. This offered a good excuse for Porto Novo to attack Badagry and Dahomey readily sided with her. One account records that Adele defeated the Porto Novians in 1825 but the expulsion of the Mehu would appear to indicate that Porto Novo was the stronger side.⁵⁵ By the late 1860's, however, Porto Novo was able to establish political and economic control over Badagry. By this time, Badagry had become completely dependent on her for trade. At best, it was not more than a shipping beach for Porto Novo, whose King exacted one head of cowries, for every puncheon of palm-oil shipped from there.

Badagry-Dahomey Relations

Since the establishment of Badagry in the 15th century, Dahomey had always cast covetous eyes on her or at best to reduce it to a satellite status. In the 1770's, for instance, King Kpengla of Dahomey attempted to divert Badagry's trade to the new port of Jakin but for the timely intervention of Alaafin Abiodun.⁵⁶ Economic considerations were also at the background of Dahomean sack of Badagry in 1784. However, so long as the military might of Oyo could be asserted, Dahomean's ambition was kept in check.

Nonetheless, this vested economic interest became very inordinate after Dahomey had successfully liberated herself from Oyo hegemony in the 1820's. For Dahomey not only expanded into the Egbado area, but also controlled Whyda and Porto Novo. Consequently, Abeokuta was viewed a dangerous rival in the region.⁵⁷ To be precise, despite the fact that she controlled the activities of European traders on her coast, she ensured that Abeokuta did not succeed in controlling Badagry in a similar manner. When in 1842, Sodeke attempted to remove the only obstacle on Abeokuta-Badagry route by besieging the hostile town of Ado, Dahomey came to its timely rescue.⁴⁸ The siege lasted till 1853 when the missionaries intervened to get the Egba to decamp. In fact, by 1855 Badagry had become not only a base for Dahomean onslaught on the Egba, it had effectively passed under the Aja sphere of influence.

Badagry-Lagos Relations

Badagry and Lagos had profound socio-political relationship especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. In fact, most of the Oba of Lagos of the period took refuge in Badagry whenever they had any problem. R.S. Smith has even described Badagry as "the traditional town of refuge for Lagosians."⁵⁹

However, the first evidence relating to interactions between Badagry and Lagos comes from Oba Akinsemoyin's marriage. He reportedly took as wife a Badagry woman, Aweresi, when he came to Badagry. J.B. Losi provides us with documentary evidence to the effect that the relationship between Lagos and Badagry reached its height during the reign of Oba Ologun Kutere who probably ascended the Lagos throne around 1780's.⁶⁰ According to him, Badagry, during this time, held Lagos with great respect and awe that she sought the consent of the Oba of Lagos before taking any important decision. Indeed, available evidence reveals that Oba Ologun Kutere often provided military assistance to Badagry whenever she was under attack or its threat.⁶¹ In 1784, for instance, he sent his fleet to assist Badagry when the joint Dahomey, Oyo and Porto Novo armies attacked the town.

After 1784, however, Ologun Kutere attempted to subject the town under his control but the 1788 expedition turned out to be unsuccessful. In 1790, Oba Ologun Kutere again used his influence and position to scare off an impending Dahomean attack on Badagry. He was said to have sent the following gifts to Dahomean Authorities: "one hundred slaves, one hundred kegs of powder, one hundred pieces of cloths, one hundred cowries, one hundred demi-jons of rum and one hundred rolls of tobacco."⁶² However, the Lagos authorities later made this the basis for claim of

tribute from Badagry. It was in the apparent attempt to enforce the payment of this tribute that the Lagos forces attacked and destroyed Badagry in 1793. Eventually, Ologun Kutere succeeded in enforcing the tribute and Badagry is said to have been made tributary to Lagos before the 1820's⁶³

If Badagry had a fluctuating but generally cordial relationship with Lagos under the Ologun Kutere, the politics of the communities became intricately intertwined during the reign of Oba Adele who probably ascended the throne of Lagos around 1811. Before he was exiled from Lagos in 1821, Oba Adele had a very warm relationship with Badagry.⁶⁴ This probably accounted for the reasons why he was granted political asylum in badagry and accorded a generous reception. It is important to also remark that Adele Ajosun's mother was a Badagry woman. For a complex of these reasons Adele was accepted as the paramount ruler of Badagry. Although there was initial opposition to this new arrangement as evidenced in the Zofun's organised rebellion, the political climate was generally in favour of Adele.⁶⁴⁵ Besides, the fact that Adele brought with him to Badagry his aged mother and the skull of his father also worked in his favour. It is also possible to argue that he was given a rousing reception because Badagrians saw his arrival as an opportunity to throw off the yoke of Lagos.

Adele's exile years in Badagry 1821-30 were quite critical in Badagry-Lagos relations as Adele succeeded in building a rival state of his own in Badagry from where attacks were launched on Lagos. Accounts of his rule in Badagry were recorded by Hugh Clapperton, Robert Pearce and Richard Lander in 1830.⁶⁶

In 1829, Adele, on the advice of some of his trusted Badagry aides, launched a military offensive against Lagos in order to regain his throne but the expedition turned out to be a dismal failure. Many of his generals including the Commanding Officer of the expedition, *Bombani*, not only met their end, several others were taken as captives and sold into slavery. After 1829, Adele launched further expeditions from his Badagry base against Lagos but they were all checkmated. The Lagos authorities responded to the situation by instigating internal uprisings in Badagry and by bribing one of the chiefs to poison Adele.⁶⁷

One other significant episode of Adele's years at Badagry was the sponsored attacks on the town by his enemies. Although, the 1825 attacks, according to John Lander, were ultimately repelled by Adele's loyalists, it is important to stress that the attacking force comprised forces from Lagos, Dahomey and Porto Novo.⁶⁸ This position is predicated on the information given to Clapperton in 1835 that Adele had to defeat "The Dahomeans, Alladahs and the peoples of Lagos United." This is also confirmed by the Lagos traditions as related by Losi. According to him,

Adele, disguised as a woman, visited the Dahomean camp and sold them poisoned bread from which they died, causing the rest to flee home.⁶⁹ In fact, Adele's compatriots and adversaries acknowledged his mastery of the occult world and attributed his military victories to same. By 1825, Adele had succeeded in establishing national pride and confidence among the Badagrians. Clapperton, for instance, recorded in 1825 that:

He has within a few years raised their character from that of an insignificant people, subject to the inroads of every neighbour, to be respected and feared by the Alladahs (Porto Novians) and Lagos, and even to be regardless of the friendship or enmity of Dahomey itself.⁷⁰

Apart from the restoration of national pride to the Badagrians, Adele's exile years are also significant in two other respects. First, according to Pearce, Adele had succeeded by 1825 in subduing "a number of towns depending on Lagos."⁷¹ Second, Adele had succeeded largely in establishing personal ascendancy over the Badagry chiefs and, according to the Landers, the Akran was just one of Adele's principal lieutenants. However, Adele received a considerable measure of support in the pursuance of his aspirations from the ex-Mehu of Porto Novo.

Moreover, the career of Oba Akintoye (of Lagos) in Badagry (1864–1851) also gives a vivid illustration of the crucial position of Badagry in Lagos politics. Like Oba Adele, Akintoye also maintained himself at Badagry between 1864 and 1851. He also relied, like Adele, on the political support of the ex-Mehu of Porto Novo. And thirdly, Akintoye's mother was also an indigene of Badagry. In fact, it is important to stress that even before Kosoko's successful bid to the throne in 1845, Kosoko's inveterate enemy - the Eletu Odibo, had exiled himself to Badagry from where he was later recalled.⁷²

The most crucial point to our study is that because of the fictional tussle, Badagry was to become a theatre of war between the rival claimants to the throne. In fact, the town became polarised into pro-Akintoye and pro-Kosoko groups. Even Christian missionaries who have found a new haven in Badagry rallied to the support of Akintoye whom they portrayed as a bastion of opposition to slave trade while Kosoko was depicted as a notorious slave dealer. Consequently, they appealed to the British authorities to restore Akintoye to the Lagos throne and thereby establish British influence, power and authority through him.

However, this situation did not go unchallenged by Oba Kosoko because he saw Badagry as the place where the plan to unseat him was being hatched. He therefore, imposed economic sanction on the town and further ensured that no trade went to the town. This had the desired

biting effect. The loss of trade being experienced in Badagry was to increase the hostility and enmity between the Akintoye and Kosoko's supporters. To be precise, the anti-Akintoye group saw Akintoye's presence in the town as economically suicidal and therefore attempted to exile him and his supporters.

In the first confrontation that broke out in mid-June 1848, the Kosoko party proved militarily stronger but for the military aid rushed to the pro-Akintoye group by the missionaries. In 1849, Consul Beecroft decided that Akintoye's life was in grave danger and took him to his base in Fernando Po. The ridicule and tension sparked off by Akintoye's departure provoked a civil war in Badagry and again, the missionaries intervened on the side of the Akintoye's group.⁷⁴ In July 1851, Kosoko loyalists from Lagos made two determined and desperate attempts to regain Lagos but they did not succeed in landing.

However, the ultimate military confrontation between the pro and anti-Akintoye groups did not come until December 1851 when, from their Badagry base, the British bombard Lagos into submission. These civil wars had disastrous impact on Badagry. In August 1850, T.J. Bowen, a baptist missionary estimated the town's population at 10,000 but when he revisited it in November 1851, "the site of it once populous town now covered with field of India corn and only about 1,000 people living in rude shelters"⁷⁵

Between 1851 and 1861, the relationship between Badagry and Lagos was essentially one involving Badagry and British consular authorities. From available records, Badagry was, throughout the period, a source of anxiety to the colonial government because of the functional politics of the town. In particular, the support being given by the ex-chief of Porto Novo, to Akintoye was affecting the flow of commerce to Lagos as Kosoko had placed economic embargo on the town.⁷⁶

Besides Kosoko's measure against Badagry, the King of Porto Novo (the Mehu's suzerain) also took some retaliatory measures. Consequently, trade with Lagos was halted and this caused traffic on the Western Lagoon to be subjected to interference. It was within this context that consular officers like Frazer and Benjamin Campbell wanted the Mehu outside Badagry "by a little patient palavering" and the return of WAWU (and other chiefs) who had been expelled from the town sequel to the disturbance of June 1851.⁷⁷ In 1854, Consul Campbell, with assistance from the Kings of Porto Novo and Ado drove the Mehu out of Badagry and later granted him asylum in Lagos where he died a year later.

Apart from the need to resolve the conflict between the pro and anti-Akintoye factions in Badagry, the British consul in Lagos also had to interfere in the repeated clashes between the local population and some British

trading firms. In particular, it had to intervene in January 1860 in the clash between the local population and Novelli's acting agent representing Novelli and Co-op Manchester.⁷⁸ It was to put a permanent stop to clashes of this nature and to promote British trade that the colonial officers in Lagos began to moot the idea of appointing a Vice-Consul to superintend the affairs in Badagry and also at Porto Novo. It was against this background that one Thomas Tickel, described as "one of the few reputable British Merchants in Badagry" was appointed.⁷⁹ From 1861 to the end of colonial rule, Badagry became subordinate to the administration.

Badagry-Sierra-Leone Relations

Badagry, inevitably, had to interact on a large scale with Sierra-Leone in the 19th century due to the abolition of slave trade. Following the abolition, many of the freed slaves returned to Nigeria not only because of patriotic considerations but also because of commercial interests. Several stayed in Badagry because that was their point of departure and the only place they could still remember after their agonizing experience in the New World.

According to Christopher Fyfe, for instance, the sixty-seven immigrants that arrived in Badagry on April 1, 1839, included "two Hausa emancipated in Trinidad."⁸⁰ In 1842 some 300 former slaves were also reported to have returned to stay in Badagry; and some of them had begun to trade in palm oil between Badagry and Freetown.⁸¹ The Aku Muslims also settled in Badagry during this period. According to Ajayi Crowther's testimony, the most notable group of the muslim emigrants in Badagry was the one headed by Salu Shitta. Shitta was at the head of a group of about fifty followers with their wives and children. Muhammad Shitta Bey, was also another Aku muslim that settled (he later moved to Lagos) in Badagry in the 19th century.⁸² In short, the population of Badagry during this period was reinforced by considerable migration from Sierra-Leone.

Conclusion

From the few case studies of states that Badagry had cause to relate with in the 18th and 19th centuries, the inescapable conclusion one arrives at is the dominance of Dahomey and Lagos in Badagry affairs. The rulers of these two States were keenly interested in controlling Badagry's economy to the advantage of their respective countries. In fact, the early years of its contact with Lagos was economic in character.

Commercial rivalry was also inevitable between Badagry and Porto Novo and both had, before 1790, acquired enormous commercial importance as major centres of the Atlantic slave trade. By the early 19th cen-

ture, however, economic activities at Badagry port had declined while Porto Novo became the centre-piece of commerce.

We also observe in this study the strategic importance of Badagry to Lagos politics as the careers of Akinsemoyin, Adele and Akintoye have simply demonstrated. Both Adele and Akintoye, for instance, used Badagry as base for attacks on Lagos. Besides, Lagos rulers used marriage to consolidate their political base. This practice also obtained between Badagry and the peoples of the Republics of Benin and Togo.

Apart from inter-mariages, trade also affected the culture of Badagry in that the people migrating there brought their traditions there. For instance, the Igunuko Festival which is a popular festival today in Badagry was decidedly a Nupe introduction. Similarly, Islam also got to Badagry through the activities of Oyo (Muslim) itinerant traders.

Finally, we also observe the conspiracy of Oyo, Dahomey, Lagos and Porto Novo against Badagry on several occasions in the 18th and 19th centuries. Virtually all these countries were jealous of the economic potentials of Badagry and sought to establish some influence there or control it. In fact, the present state of economic underdevelopment of Badagry can to a reasonable extent, be attributed to the depredations of these countries.

Notes and References

- 1 Adams, J. *Sketches Taken During Ten Voyages to Africa between 1786 and 1800*, London (n.d.) pp. 96-98. See also Okaro - K'ojwang, "Society, Trade and Politics in Badagry, 1841-1891". A case study of African Response to British Penetration in South West Nigeria." Unpublished M. Phil. Thesis University of Ibadan 1979, p.2
- 2 Newbury, C.W. *The Western Slave Coast and its Rulers*, The Clarendon Press, 1961, p. 60. See also Folayan, K. "Trade Routes in Eg-bado in the 19th Century" Akinjogbin and Osoba (eds.) *Topics on Nigerian Economic History*, (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1980, p.86.)
- 3 Okaro-K'Ojwang, "Society, trade and Politics" *op. cit.*, p. 16
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Akinjogbin, I.A. *Dahomey and its Neighbours*, (London: Cambridge, 1967, p. 92.)
- 6 N.A.I RG/W3, Intelligence Report on the Egun, p. 20. See also Igue and Adams, "Porto Novo and Cotonou Hinterlands." Aradeon, D. (ed.) *The role of Small and Intermediate Settlement in the Development Process: The Badagry - Porto Novo Region*, Unpublished Survey, Project", 1983 p. 249.
- 7 Folayan, K. "Egbado and Yoruba-Aja Power politics 1832-1894" Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1967, p.10
- 8 Newsbury, C.W. ...*op. cit.*, p. 19.
- 9 The details of Awori migration have been adequately documented by Okaro-K'Ojwang, "Society, Trade and Politics", *op.cit.*, p.17-19
- 10 The names of the rulers of Apa up to 1937 were:
 - (1) Ashesha
 - (2) Agboju Gbayi
 - (3) Atewogbayi
 - (4) Afilele Jogi
 - (5) Ogegi
 - (6) Gbeshe Agbo Fonja
 - (7) Akraba (ki jeja keja - who never ate fish)
 - (8) Gboju lodi
 - (9) Wase Otuyeye
 - (10) Aiyonvon
 - (11) Whese
 - (12) Agunloyi (or Aginloyebi oyinbo)
 - (13) Aigengunle
 - (14) Bepon
 - (15) Okunkun, see also N.A.I., RG/W3 *op.cit* p. 20.

- 11 Huntokunu was a Dutch factor known as Henderick Meynheer Hertough, but in Gun Language means 'the sailor laughs'.
- 12 Igue and Adams, "Porto Novo and Cotonou Hinthierlands" Aradeon, D. (ed.), ...*op. cit.*
- 13 Aguessey, "Contributions to the Ancient kingdom of Porto Novo" cited by Igue and Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
- 14 Akinjogbin, A.I., *op. cit.*, p. 107
- 15 Newsbury, C.W., *op. cit.*, p. 32
- 16 Avoseh, T.O. *A short History of Badagry*, (Lagos: Ifeolu 1938), p. 32.
- 17 Newsbury, C.W. *op. cit.*, p. 27
- 18 Asiwaju, A.I., "The Aja Speaking peoples of Nigeria: A note of their origins, settlements and cultural Adaptations to 1945" *Africa*, 49 (1), 1979, p. 23.
- 19 Igue and Adams *op. cit.*, p. 22
- 20 *Ibid.*,
- 21 Fredrick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, (London: Allen Unwin, 1970), p. 10.
- 22 Asiwaju, A.I. *op. cit.*, p. 22.
- 23 *Ibid.*,
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 21
- 25 The supreme God is known as 'Olodumare' among the Yoruba and Jiwe among the Egun. See also Idowu Bolaji, *Olodumare, God in Yoruba Belief*, (London: Longmans, 1966).
- 26 The Vodou as a cult has been traced to Haiti, Cuba, Brazil where it is known as Vodoo. See Okaro-K'ojwang 'Society Trade and Politics *op. cit.*, p. 24. Footnote 2.
- 27 *Ibid.*, See also RG/W3, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 28 N.A.I. cso File No. 30030, Vol. 1. p. 24.
- 29 N.A.I. RG/W3, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-13
- 30 Avoshe, T.O., *op. cit.*, p. 50. See also RG/W3 pp. 9-13.
- 31 Webster, J.B. *African Churches Among the Yoruba 1862- 1972.*, (London: Oxford, Clrendon Press, 1964 pp. 111-112. See also Ayandele, *Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842- 1914*, (London: Logman 1966), p. 330.
- 32 Ajayi, J.F.A. *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841- 1891: The making of a New Elite*, (London: Longman, 1965).
- 33 Webster, J.B. *African Churches Missions in Nigeria 1841-1922*, *op. cit.*
- 34 Asiwaju, A.I. *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- 35 RG/W3 Intelligence report on the Egun, *op. cit.*, p. 20
- 36 Asiwaju, A.I. *op. cit.*, p. 26
- 37 A.I. Akinjogbin, *op. cit.*,
- 38 A.I. Akinjogbin, "Agaja and the conquest of the coastal states of

- Aja states 1724-1730'.
- 39 A. Dalze, *The History of Dahomey: An Inland Kingdom*, (London: Frank Cass, 1971).
 - 40 *Ibid.*,
 - 41 Peter Morton - Williams. "The Oyo-Yoruba and the Atlantic Trade. 1670-1830" in JHSN, Vol 3, No. 1 1964.
 - 42 A. Dazel, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
 - 43 Hugh Clapperton, *Journal of a second Expedition into the interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Socatoo*, (London: Frank Cass, 1966).
 - 44 G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba*, (London: Longman, 1965).
 - 45 A.I. Asiwaju, "From an Egba Refugee Camp to a Nigerian State Capital: Abeokuta 1830-1980" Lecture Delivered to mark the celebration of the 150th year of Abeokuta at Abeokuta, 18th December, 1980 (mineographed).
 - 46 S.O. Biobaku, *Egba and their Neighbours 1842-1872*, (London: Oxford, 1957.)
 - 47 I.A. Akinjogbin "Dahomey and Yoruba in the 19th century" in J.C. Anene and G.N. Brown (eds.) *Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries*.
 - 48 Kola Folayan "Trade Routes in Egbado in the 19th century" *op. cit.*,
 - 49 Cited in S.O. Biobaku, *op. cit.*, p. 42
 - 50 Oral Interview with Chief T. Ola Avoshe,
 - (i) the Gbasiewu of Badagry, 80+, January, 18, 1990
 - (ii) See also, T.O. Avoshe, *op. cit.*,
 - 51 R.C.C. Law, "The Career of Adele in Lagos and Badagry" in JHSN Vol. 9, No. 2, 1978,
 - 52 Lonbard J. "The Kingdom of Dahomey" in Forde and Kebarry (eds.), *West African Kingdoms in the 19th Century*, (London: Oxford, 1967).
 - 53 C.W. Newbury, *The Western Slave Coast*, *op. cit.*,
 - 54 T. Ola Avoshe, ...*op. cit.*,
 - 55 R.C.C. Law, *op. cit.*,
 - 56 R.C.C. Law, *The Oyo Empire 1600-1836*, (London: Clarendon, 1973)
 - 57 I.A. Akinjogbin, "Dahomey and Yoruba in the 19th century" *op. cit.*,
 - 58 Toyin Falola and Oguntomisin, *The Military in 19th Century Yoruba Politics*, (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1984),
 - 59 R.S. Smith. *The Lagos Consulate 1851-1861*, (London: Macmillan 1978), p. 17
 - 60 J.B. Losi, *History of Lagos*, (Lagos: CMS, 1967 edn),
 - 61 R.C.C. Law, "The Dynastic Chronology of Lagos", *Lagos Notes and Records*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1970.

- 62 J.B. Losi, *op. cit.*,
- 63 A. McL Davidson, "The Early History of Lagos", *Nigerain Field*, XIX, 2, 1954.
- 64 A.B. Aderibigbe, "Lagos: The development of an African City, (Lagos: Longman, 1975).
- 65 R.C.C. Law, "The Career ...*op. cit.*,
- 66 (i) Hugh Clapperton, *Journal of a second expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Socatto.*
 (ii) Richard and John Lander, *Journal of Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger* London, 1832).
- 67 E.H. Duckworth, "Badagry: Its Place in the Pages of History" *Nigerian Magazine*, No. 38, 1952.
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 J.B. Losi, *A History of Lagos, op. cit.*,
- 70 Hugh Clapperton, *op. cit.*,
- 71 Pearce, D.
- 72 J.F. Ade Ajayi, "The British Occupation of Lagos", No.69, 1961, p.
- 73 Obaro Ikime "The Fall of Lagos" in *The Fall of Nigeria*, (London O. Ikime, Heinemann, 1977)
- 74 R.S. Smith, "The Lagos Consulate 1851-1861", *J.A.H.*, 14, 4, 1973,
- 75 T.J. Bowen, *Adventures and Missionary Labours in Several Countiies in the Interior of Africa from 1849 to 1856*, (Charleston: 1857),
- 76 B.W. Hodder, "Badagry: Hundred Years of Change" in *The Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 6. June 1963.
- 77 R.S. Smith, *The Lagos Consulate, op. cit.*, p. 45.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 45-46.
- 79 Kola Folayan "The Career of Thomas Tickel in the Western District of Lagos 1854-1886, *J.H.S.N.*, Vol. 1, 1969.
- 80 B.W. Hodder, "Badagry: Slave Port Mission Center" in *The Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 5, Dec. 1962,
- 81 J.F. Ade Ajayi, *op. cit.*,

10

Women in Badagry Economy, 1800-1900

M.M. FASEKE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first is to explore the part played by women in Badagry economy in order to examine the extent to which they have adjusted to their environment. The second objective is to contribute to the growing literature on women. Before highlighting the role of women it is necessary to give an insight into Badagry's economy as this would facilitate our thorough understanding of the former.

In the pre-colonial era, Badagry's economy was not remarkably different from that of other towns within similar ecological zone. As in Epe, Ikorodu and Ijo villages of the Niger Delta, the principal occupations of the peoples of Badagry were fishing, farming, manufacturing and trading. Flanked on the southermost end by the stretch of the lagoon extending from Porto Novo on the West to Lagos water on the East, Badagry had and still has a large supply of fish all the year round. Dug-out canoes were the traditional fishing craft. Woven fresh palm branches held upright and turned as the occasion demanded served the purpose of sails. Rahia poles were used as oars. The rowing was done by the person standing towards the stern of the boat. This contrasts sharply with the Ijo practice where everybody in the boat was engaged in paddling without a recognised leader. Another contrast with the Ijo was the fact that Badagrian's canoes were smaller and not very hardy.

With respect to farming (crop and animal), it was little developed in both pre-colonial and colonial Badagry society. Whereas every man and woman in the rain forest and savannah areas of Nigeria was a farmer, this was not the case in Badagry. This is not to say however that the people did not practise crop farming at all. The Ogu practised some kind of farming but on a small scale. Crops grown were vegetables, onion, coconut, corn, cassava and palm produce. Crop farming was on a small scale because land is unsuited for large scale agriculture. Over ninety per cent of the dry land is pure sand and exceedingly infertile. Where the soil is not

too sandy it is too muddy for agriculture.² Even in the pre-colonial era, some attempts were made at improving the agricultural base of Badagry. One of such attempts was the use of composite on farm yards. In addition, cattle dung was also used. These attempts did not yield much fruit as they could not help to change the original texture of the soil.

Due to the poor quality of the soil, the food crops that thrived most were cassava and to a lesser extent, maize. However, since the treaty of cession of Badagry to the British in 1863 and the consequent British administration from that period, efforts to improve agriculture in the town were directed towards the cultivation of coconut.³ Although, coconut was not a new crop in Badagry having been introduced by the Portuguese in the 17th century,⁴ no large scale efforts had been made to develop it until the advent of the British administration. It must be admitted that the conditions of soil, in particular, the strip of land that ran parallel to the coast were favourable to coconut growth.

In the 1880's, the planting of coconut was rapidly pursued and by 1886 over 13,000 coconut trees had been successfully planted around Badagry. It must be acknowledged that the cultivation of coconut was not without its problems. Tornadoes, pest and diseases often cause severe havoc to the coconut nurseries. These problems were solved by employing the labour of school children and also by encouraging inter-cropping especially with cassava. One protracted problem to which solution could not be proffered was in the poor quality of the nuts. In spite of British encouragement of large scale cultivation of coconut for copra export, the trade had very limited success. Badagry populace preferred the palm oil to the coconut oil. The oil palm is therefore the dominant tree on the landscape immediately north of the lagoon behind the fringing line of coconut trees. The preference for oil palm has to do with its utilitarian value.⁵ The palm tree is still exploited as the raw material for producing domestic articles apart from its edible value.

In the manufacturing sector, articles made from wood were popular among the men folk. The manufacturing of boats and canoes depended heavily on indigenous plants. Other important industries engaged in by men included rope making and wooden household furniture.

With regard to trade, Badagry acted as a trading centre. By about 1815, Badagry was more important in this respect than Lagos.⁶ The town, until the latter part of the 19th century had certain geographical advantages over Lagos. Badagry port was protected from the violent swift by the sand spit. In addition, it had a quiet lagoon reaching westwards into Porto Novo territory and eastwards to Lagos.⁷ The relevance of this to our discussion is that Badagry was because of her geographical position an important trading centre. Until about 1815, Badagry was at its height as one

of the most important slave ports on the coast. With the decline of slave trading activities at Badagry and the growth in the importance of other commodities such as palm produce and cloth, Badagry's trade declined initially only to pick up again after the second half of the 19th century. As the natural centre for water-borne trade in the south-west corner of Nigeria and along the lagoon to and from Dahomey, Badagry's trade in a variety of goods, including spirits, tobacco, palm oil, enjoyed a great boom.

In concluding this section, salient points need to be emphasized. The first is that the economic activities with which the people of Badagry were engaged in, were dictated to a large extent by their geographical environment. The low scale farming in terms of Badagrian participation and the variety of food crops was as a result of the environment. Secondly, under this situation the predominant occupations were fishing and trading with farming as subsidiary. In 1880, the District Commissioner for Badagry noted that part of the reluctance on the part of the Badagrians to farm the sands pit was caused by the belief that farming there was doomed to a failure. The Jegbas and Wharakohs (two of the eight wards to which Badagry was divided) were reluctant to take to farming because according to them "they were traditionally fishermen and needed no change".⁸ Finally, there was a wide range of economic activities to which the people could participate.

Economic Activities of Badagry Women

Marshall has stated that the economy of the Yoruba communities was characterised by a sexual division of labour.⁹ While men had been classified as agriculturists, women were regarded as traders. If this position is valid as we shall examine shortly, it means that the women contributed immensely to Badagry economy given the limited participation of Badagrians in agriculture as mentioned in the preceding section. Even within the limited agricultural activities of Badagrians, women still played an important role. In the pre-colonial setting, there was joint enterprise in most cases between spouses. While the men cleared the land, turned the soil and planted the seed the women, though sometimes, did more of the harvesting, processing and marketing.

The perishability of the farm products coupled with the need to obtain cash resulted in exchange processes. The processing of crops was done not only for consumption and exchange but also for preservation of crops was problematic. Women's ingenuity in processing the harvests on the farm to a level where it was risk averse is commendable. This is so in view of the enormous task involved in the task of processing. The processing of palm

fruits into palm oil was no easy task as the oil palm fruits had to be boiled, mashed and the oil extracted from the fruits. That done, the raw oil had to be cooked for a fairly long time to reach a refined form.

Crops that could not be processed alongside the processed ones were disposed off in the market. The usual practice was for farmers' wives to engage in the sale of the products for which they received commission and in some cases nothing.¹⁰ The principal produce of Badagrians was palm oil.¹¹ Although her production did not reach a scale comparable to the Niger Delta's, it was always in high demands. One could in fact argue that the very fact that the women could always find market for palm oil would, apart from reasons earlier given, explain the preference of the menfolk for cultivating palm trees rather than coconut.

With the consolidation of British rule as the century progressed, some of the economic services hitherto rendered by women to their husbands free of charge had to be reviewed by the women. Women battered for food items from other men and the earnings would be theirs without any control from their husbands.¹² This was a clear case of women adjusting to the exploitative environment trying to enhance their buying power with the exploitation of their husbands through different colonial measures such as custom duties and taxation.

Throughout the period covered by this study, animal farming was exclusively women affair. Women took care of the domestic animals. Pig-gery, rabbitery and poultry were mainly carried out by both Ogu and Awori women. The breeding of pigs was still a common feature of almost every household in Badagry.¹³ There have been speculations that pigs were probably introduced into Badagry by Europeans. Considering the enormous potentialities of the European trade with West Africans, such introduction is feasible and possible. It is also probable and possible that the pigs were indigenous. Whatever its source, the important point is that women were and are still responsible for their up-keep.

A joint enterprise between the men and women was the fishing industry. Although women did not fish in the lagoon and creeks, they always, until the turn of this century, accompanied the fishermen to the sea.¹⁴ The fishermen together with the women went in dug out canoes as far as Ajido and Cotonou. Some of them on moonlit nights made use of broken bottles and a piece of iron which they tinkled to attract their prey.¹⁵ During such outings, the women arranged the fishes as the men emptied their nets inside the canoes. However, only two wards out of eight in Badagry took part in large scale fishing whereas in neighbouring Epe, both men and women were engaged in the fishing industry. Moreover, unlike the Ilajes and the Ijos, the Ogu women did not take active part in catching fish. However, the women processed fishes either by

smoking or drying. They also controlled the distributive aspect by selling in the markets for local consumption and for export.

Women in the Manufacturing Sector

Awori and Ogu women manufactured a wide range of items including various kinds of baskets, earthen wares, household utensils and so on. Although some of the crafts which produced these wares could be practised by any woman, some were practised only by select communities either because only they had the necessary raw materials or because they alone possessed the expertise. The foremost industry in Badagry was and still is mat weaving which is exclusively undertaken by women.¹⁶ Mats were used mainly as spreads for sitting and sleeping on. The ward that is most-ly associated with this industry is Ujegba. In general, mats are of two different types - the ordinary grass mat derived from *sarcophyrynium* plants and the sedge grass mat. The materials used for its production is *Cyperus articulatus* (Ifin). The ideal habitat of the sedge grass is the marsh or swampland. Thus, the *Ifin* grows naturally within the swampy coastal lowland and riverain marshes of Badagry. The cylindrical grasses about two fifth of a centimetre in diametre are used as warp which the thin raffia threads, not more than two twists and spaced at regular intervals of about four to eight centimetres apart serve as the weft. The finished products dyed in contrasting colours, meet not only the demands of the peoples of Badagry but a sizable surplus remains for export to the neighbouring territories.

With mat weaving were associated a number of other industries such as dyeing, indigo making, raffia cutting and other related activities all of which were undertaken by Badagry women. Different guilds were formed to take charge of the various professions. Thus, there were *egbe onifin*, *egbe eleni* etc. It would however appear that the quarters reckoned for mat weaving were not the producers of the various components of the industry. For instance, the *Ifin* was mostly made at Posukoh while the dyeing pots were products of the ceramic industry at Topo. The diversification of the industry was tenable in view of the expertise and work involved. Besides, the difference in ecology from one area to another also partially accounted for this. In the pottery industry which complimented the dyeing industry, the types of clay suitable was found sporadically. The only place with relatively steady supply was Topo. The other raw materials used in the pottery industry like wood for firing the pot, locust bean and *Ira* trees *Bridelia Ferriginea* were all fairly widely distributed at Topo. Potters, predominantly women, produced a great variety of useful domestic utensils including cooking pots, water pots, vats for dyeing and

earthen wares among others. In spite of Badagry's early contact with the wider world, the method of producing pottery, i.e. by molding of clay and firing to harden did not change in any appreciable way in the 19th century. Pots are still being molded entirely by hand.

Cosmetic making is another industry that was widespread among Badagry women. Oil making from coconut *adi agbon* on a large scale was undertaken at Igbagi and Ajido. The oil extracted from coconut has a delicate scent that smoothens the body. Soap making manufactured from the remnants of the oil palm products was largely made by Ado Odo women. A few quarters such as Boeko, Ahoviko and Garho were also involved in soap making. The *Egbe Ose Omeke* was an association of women soap maker to which every soap maker belonged.

Women also engaged in the salt making industry. The industry unlike the others, required little capital outlay. Salty water was fetched and evaporated over a slow fire in special earthenware until the latter was filled with salt. Gberehi and Ajido were the major centres of salt industry.

The various industries practised by women showed an attachment to the local environment in the materials employed in the entire process. This indicated that their environment determined their economic activities.

Women in Commerce

If Badagry was not a notable and manufacturing centre, it was a prominent trade port. In fact, trade, both internal and external was the life wire of Badagrians. Its importance should be seen against the backdrop of Badagry's poor and infertile soil. Badagry was not self sufficient in terms of food production and had to import food-stuffs from among neighbouring territories. In particular, Badagry depended on Ipokia and Okeodan both of which are located in Egbado region. While these Egbado market towns could supply products like maize, guinea corn, cotton as well as livestock.¹⁷ The rainfall and soil conditions made difficult the production of palm produce in any large quantity and so this had to be imported from Badagry. The latter developed in consequence of differences in ecological conditions in which one part produced more of one kind of good than it could consume and had to exchange the excess for those which it needed and could only get from its neighbours. Surely, this was a clear situation of Badagry women adjusting to their environment.

Badagry was served by a network of lagoons, creeks and rivers which provided major means of communication for neighbouring inland towns like Ikorodu, Epe as well as Lagos and Porto Novo. This made Badagry a transitional area for towns in Nigeria and those of Dahomey.¹⁸ This car-

dinal location further contributed to making the area a converging point of routes from both land and sea and an important strategic economic zone before the creation of the international boundary.¹⁹ Badagry women therefore involved in trade links with Porto Novo. The Dahomeans exchanged imported goods with products such as beads, glass and other luxuries which the people of Badagry bought from the Hausa who came from the North (as Badagry became the Southern terminus of the trans-Saharan trade by 1830). Clapperton recorded that the trade routes were quite safe and secure. Greater security was ensured through the system whereby traders travelled in caravans often of several hundred women and they had definite resting places usually under some big trees.²⁰

With regard to internal trade, Badagry women were equally very agile. Badagry could boast of three markets where local exchange of articles was done. The main market first sited at Farakoh and later moved to Agbalata stretched the length of Marina up to the Agia tree and Verekete square. The Verekete end of the market served as the slave market while the Marina section was used for agricultural and manufactured articles. The organisation of this market would appear to be typical of Yoruba town markets. Orderliness in the market and indeed other markets was maintained by the market leader, the *Iya Oloja*.

Apart from the markets located within Badagry, there were, in addition, markets within the surrounding villages. They included among others, Ajido, Apa, Mowo, Ilogbo and Iworo. While the Badagry market served as the central outlet for the whole of the region, these other markets supplied Badagry market with various products in the area. The markets for the reason earlier given, played a major role in the lives of the people. Its importance can also be seen from the fact that important traditional festivals do not fall on market days, the markets being periodically arranged. Being mostly traders rather than producers, the people would naturally avert anything that could disturb trade. Furthermore, since the traders were mostly women, traditional festivities which invariably require women fellowship could, logically, not be organised to fall on market days.

The different guilds to which reference was made in an earlier section were meant to enhance the item of trade each guild was involved in. Each member of a guild contributed a fixed amount of money periodically (usually on market days). The total amount was given to a member and the process was repeated until each member had had her turn.

One aspect of trade was the mode of transaction. Currencies used as means of exchange varied from *manillas* to *salt*. However, of the various currencies, the cowries *Cypraca moneta* were widely used. Although it has obvious disadvantages one of which was lack of easy portability which is

essentially characteristics of a medium of exchange, it had many advantages as well. Its widespread use in many parts of Nigeria in the 19th century encouraged easy flow of trade. It was a money which "no forger can imitate and which by dexterity of the natives in reckoning the largest sums, forms a ready medium of exchange in all transactions".²¹

Although the greater part of the period under discussion did not fall, within the colonial period, for the sake of completeness we shall examine, if only cursorily, the economic activities of women in the colonial era.

Women in Colonial Badagry Economy

In the early years of colonialism attention was on cash crops, the bedrock of the export economy. Having introduced a commonly accepted currency and banking system, the colonial regime increased opportunities for commercial intercourse dramatically. The above development common to most West African colonies in the 19th century meant for the people of Badagry the creation of new economic opportunities. However, the traditional division of labour according to sex in Badagry was altered. Colonialism provided the people with greater incentives to go into large-scale distributive and retail trade as well as wage labour. Because women were not able to quickly adapt to the changes in the economic conditions for reasons that would be discussed shortly, the women were thus placed at a disadvantage. Consequently, while the men could go into large scale distributive, retail and external trade, the women remained in the internal market system. That was not all. In wage labour, men constituted the high income earners and women the low income earners.²²

Marshall, in *Women, Trade and the Yoruba Family* suggested two main factors for the perpetuation of the traditional sexual division of labour under the colonial rule in Yorubaland. First, was the introduction of the export crop farming. Second was the expansion of job opportunities in the distributive sector of the economy coupled with the virtual absence of other employment possibilities for unskilled women which meant that most women, if they were to earn money at all, had to continue in their roles as traders.²³

As mentioned in an earlier section, coconut and palm trees were the most important cash crops grown in Badagry. While the womenfolk did relatively well in the palm oil production, they did not do so well in the coconut production. The interest the British had in cocconut production in Badagry, contributed to the emergence of producers and indigenous large-scale cultivators, mostly men and children. The coconut industry created different categories of producers and entrepreneurs. There were men who owned coconut farms but employed labourers to work on the farm, while

there were those who worked on their farms themselves. However, women took part in the distributive sectors by buying and preparing the coconut into copra.

Women's distributive activities were largely seen in retailing. Thus, the cash crop economy because of its dependence on land and physical rigour favoured the male folk than the female. This would partially explain the inability of the women to adapt quickly to the changed economic conditions. The other reason had to do with the formal education introduced by the missionaries. Although it was not the colonial administrators that introduced Western Education, they increased the tempo as the 19th century progressed. Since the females were disfavoured because of the universal attitude of emphasising male headship over female, it meant that the latter could not enjoy the limited educational facilities placed at the people's disposal.

In the colonial era, women's economic activities were still limited to retail trading within the internal market system. Consequently, there were not wealthy women until the turn of this century. This was more so because of the creation of international boundaries as most of the women who traded with the people of Porto Novo were adversely affected by the new development. Limited by the scope of marketing their wares, marginalised by the cash crop economy, the women turned to smuggling in order to bail themselves out of the economic woods.

From all of the above, it is clear that women, under the traditional economy demonstrated their ingenuity by adapting themselves to their environment by turning to manufacturing and trading in locally sources articles. Their inability to adjust to the colonial economy was due to its dependence on western education.

Notes and References

- 1 G.J. Afolabi Ojo, *Yoruba Culture* (London, 1971) p. 33.
- 2 L.C. Dioka, "Badagry since 1842: Urbanization in Nigeria Border Region", M. Phil Thesis, University of Lagos 1986, p. 29.
- 3 R.W. Hodder and W.C. Newbury, "Some Geographical Changes along the Sea Coast of West Africa". *Tijdschrift voor Econ. on Soc. Geografie* Vol. 52. 1961 p. 82
- 4 *Ibid.*,
- 5 Interview with Madam Fola Dosu at No. 25, Market street, Badagry, 8/1/90.
- 6 R.W. Hodder, *Ibid.*, p. 84
- 7 Badagry Letter Book, 1888, cited in R.W. Hodder, *op. cit.*
- 8 T.O. Avoshe, *A Short History of Badagry*, Lagos, 1938
- 9 G. Marshall, "Women, Trade and the Yoruba Family" Ph.D Columbia University.
- 10 Yakubu Abdurahaman Ayinde, "Women in Badagry Region 1863-1960:" M.A. Dissertation University of Lagos 1989 p. 63.
- 11 Interview with Mrs. Mausi Dosu, at No. 5, Agbaosi Lare, Badagry (16/1/90).
- 12 *Ibid.*,
- 13 K.B. Lawson, 'Some Aspects of the Economic History of Badagry 1900-1950', Essay submitted to the Department of History, Lagos State University 1988 p. 9.
- 14 Interview with Madam Funmi Asokere at 55 Marina, Badagry (18/1/90).
- 15 *Ibid.*, Also, Sir Alfred Moloney, 'Notes on Yoruba and the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos', *West African Proceeding of the Royal Geographical Society* Vol. XXIII, October 1890, p. 608.
- 16 Interview with Madam Comfort Toyon, 3, Hospital Road, Badagry.
- 17 Kola Folayan 'Trade Routes in Egbado in the 19th century' in I.A. Akinjogbin and S.O. Osoba *op. cit.*, p. 85.

- 18 L.C. Dioka, "Badagry since 1842: Urbanization in a Nigeria Border", *op. cit.*,
- 19 *Ibid.*,
- 20 T.J. Bowen, *Adventures and Missionary Labours in several countries and Church Missionary Intelligence* Vol. IV, 1853, p. 101.
- 21 A.G. Hopkin, "The Currency Revolution in South - West Nigeria in the late 19th century" *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria* Vol. II, No. 3, Dec. 1966, p. 472.
- 22 N.E. Mba, *Nigerian Women Mobilized: Women Political Activity in Southern Nigeria, 1900-1965* (Berkey 1982)
- 23 G. Marshall, "Women, Trade and the Yoruba Family", *op. cit.*,

History and Organization of Zangbeta

The Oyo people popularly called Egun by their Natives and neighbours.

- 18 J.C. Dika "Badagry since 1817" *Journal of the Nigerian Historical Society* 1961, p. 119-120
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 T.J. Bowen *African and Asiatic Studies in Social Sciences and Church Missionary Intelligencer* Vol. IV (1903) p. 101
- 21 A.G. Hopkins "The Country Revolution in South-West Nigeria in the late 19th century" *Journal of African Studies* Vol. VII, No. 3, Dec. 1966, p. 472
- 22 N.E. Mbat *Nigerian Women: Labour, Women's Political Action in Southern Nigeria, 1900-1960* (Ibadan, 1965)
- 23 G. Marshall "Women, Trade and the Yoruba Family" *Journal of African Studies* Vol. VII, No. 3, Dec. 1966, p. 472

- 24 J.C. Dika "Badagry since 1817" *Journal of the Nigerian Historical Society* 1961, p. 119-120
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 *Ibid.*
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 *Ibid.*
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 *Ibid.*
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 *Ibid.*
- 54 *Ibid.*
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 *Ibid.*
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 *Ibid.*
- 60 *Ibid.*
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 *Ibid.*
- 63 *Ibid.*
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 *Ibid.*
- 66 *Ibid.*
- 67 *Ibid.*
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 *Ibid.*
- 73 *Ibid.*
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 *Ibid.*
- 76 *Ibid.*
- 77 *Ibid.*
- 78 *Ibid.*
- 79 *Ibid.*
- 80 *Ibid.*
- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 *Ibid.*
- 83 *Ibid.*
- 84 *Ibid.*
- 85 *Ibid.*
- 86 *Ibid.*
- 87 *Ibid.*
- 88 *Ibid.*
- 89 *Ibid.*
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 *Ibid.*
- 92 *Ibid.*
- 93 *Ibid.*
- 94 *Ibid.*
- 95 *Ibid.*
- 96 *Ibid.*
- 97 *Ibid.*
- 98 *Ibid.*
- 99 *Ibid.*
- 100 *Ibid.*

11

Preliminary Notes on Zangbeto: The Masked Vigilante Group among the Egun of Badagry

ADEFIOYE OYESAKIN

Introduction

A constant feature of the coast dwellers is the need to effectively defend their settlements against external aggressors from the overseas and hinterland neighbours and the necessity to venture and attack others. They have to be warlike because of the unique position they occupy on trade routes. The Egba and their neighbouring Egun coast dwellers fought bitterly during the 19th and the early part of 20th centuries¹ while the Ijaw mounted series of raids on Ijebu Ere (Ijebu coast dwellers) during the same period. Faced with this situation, each group of coast dwellers set up various organisations and devised various techniques to effectively combat and forge aggressions, 'Okosi' a special war boat mounted by spear and javelin bearers among Ijebu Ere², and Zangbeto the Night Guards, among the Egun, are some of the means that aided war adventures.

Most of the devices and the adventures for which they were forged have, over the peaceful years, become ceremonial. Zangbeto, however, still retains most of its traditional functions. This paper examines the past and present functions of Zangbeto and gives reasons why the traditional organ is still relevant to our present day industrial society which is relatively free from inter-tribal wars. Its aim is also to prove the thesis that an organisation or a device among a community no matter how sacred becomes ceremonial once it is no longer relevant to that society but as long as it is functional to the system, its ceremonial aspect will be a mere appendage, no matter its age.

We would like to stress at this juncture that some of the conclusions in this paper are tentative because our research is still at infancy. The paper is mirrored through Marxist theory on evolution of human society.³

History and Organisation of Zangbeto

The Ogu people popularly called Egun by their hinterland neighbours,

claimed that they belong to the old Yoruba Ketu Kingdom.⁴ Egun are, however, found along the coast in Ghana, Togo, Republic of Benin and Nigeria. They constitute the dominant group in Badagry where they have ruled for centuries.

Zangbeto, the nightwatch Lord, is said to be as old as the Egun people. Each Egun quarter and every settlement has its Zangbeto, in fact, every Egun Community, whether in Togo or Benin Republic has its Zangbeto; Zangbeto is therefore synonymous with the Eguns. The account in this paper is however limited to Badagry town.

Although the etymology of the word Zangbeto (Zan - night; gbeto-person/people)⁵ is well known, the origin of the organisation is shrouded in mystery. Oral tradition⁶ says that Zangbeto is a sea spirit that people used to go to the sea to consult but at a stage he came out of the sea clad in raffia. On the advice of the Ifa Oracle he was lured out of his domain into the palace and has since then resided there.

Zangbeto has no shrine and he has no symbol other than the raffia costume. Sacrifices are, however, offered to him on the beach and elders are said to constantly consult him when necessary.

This paper does not aim at unraveling the mystery or the origin of Zangbeto; suffice it to note that the myth on the cult has revealed one crucial factor in the life of coast dwellers; the importance of the water body as a means of defence and as a source of living. Whatever the origin, Zangbeto has since become the protector of the people.

The cult played a leading role during the Yoruba inter-tribal wars of late 19th and early 20th centuries. Zangbeto in raffia was used to frighten unsuspecting enemies away from the battlefield; such opponents took Zangbeto to be 'Oro' (i.e. fairy). More importantly, was its use to spy on enemies in their war camps and even in their settlements. The raffia costume served as camouflage to the soldiers in the bush while the belief that Zangbeto imbues his subjects with supernatural power must have installed psychological confidence in the warriors of that time.

The organisational structure is simple and pyramidal. The command comes from the apex which is occupied by *Agboadasi*, the executive head, whose authority is required on all acts, spiritual and temporal. In the past, the occupant of that post played significant role on the battlefield. Today, all cases of criminal acts detected are reported to him, he fixes the date of the Zangbeto festival and makes the required sacrifice. He is directly responsible to the Oba who is the ceremonial head of the cult.

Next to *Agboadasi* is the *Zangan*, the district head. In the past he was a sectorial army commander on the war field but today he takes care of the Zangbeto under his command in the district (i.e. in the quarter). He is directly responsible to *Agboadasi*. After *Zangan* is 'Kogan' the sectional

head who takes care of a batch of about ten cult members. Last but not the least is the 'Kisonyito' the messenger. In the past, those holding the office of the messenger were the detective agents of the organisation. Today, two officers have been added - that of 'Iyalode' (Women Patron) and Secretary.

The chain of command is, till today, strictly from Kisonyito through Kogan to Zangan and ultimately to Agboadasi. Membership of the cult is open to all male Eggun who are of impeccable character. Oral test is conducted for every applicant and only a few are admitted on oath into the cult. Discipline is severe and strictly enforced, any member of the public can report malpractices by a Zangbeto to any of the officers who rigorously monitor the activities of their subordinates and maintain proper discipline.

Cases of misconduct by cult members are handled at regular quarterly and general meetings. Members of the cult found guilty are fined openly disgraced by caning or dismissed and cursed on the beach, depending on the gravity of the offence committed. Informants revealed to us that no cult member would ever wish that his case should generate dismissal; it is like being condemned to death and in the past serious offences attracted a death penalty.

Zangbeto's Function Today

Days of intertribal wars are over and besides, modern organised armed forces take care of external aggression or internal insurrection. The Police Force was also set up to combat crimes; it is therefore surprising to find a traditional organisation like Zangbeto actively performing some of the functions ascribed to the organs set up by the government. Among the Ijaw and Ijebu Ere for example, all the war organisations and devices have become ceremonial. Festivals are held once a year and sacrifices are offered to commemorate the active olden days.⁷ Apart from dancing and feasting, the war organisations in those two communities and many others are moribund. This is not with Zangbeto. The famous 'Egungun' and 'Oro' cults among the Yoruba no longer arrest witches nor do they execute criminals. Egungun and Oro, the once dreaded cults, have become mere entertaining fads. Not so with Zangbeto.

Today, the traditional roles of Zangbeto have changed only a little way. Strictly speaking, the cult still performs the function of maintaining law and order as it did centuries ago. In fact, the only change that has occurred is its target. Zangbeto now directs its attacks mostly on criminals operating in urban areas instead of the opposing army on the warfield. Means of effecting law and order have similarly not undergone much changes;

sticks, cutlasses, flutes and charms are the tools of Zangbeto as they have been over a hundred years ago.

Zangbeto maintains law and order in Badagry by a two-pronged attack. Spiritually, Zangbeto preserves properties by placing symbolic and charmed objects on them. Charmed rags are for example tied round fruit trees like colanut and maize. Most of the indigenes strongly believe that whoever steals the object so preserved is doomed, so most of the inhabitants keep off. It is even reported that Zangbeto maintains its own environmental sanitation edict by simply displaying dry banana leaves on spots where refuse should no longer be dumped and most of those acquainted with it do comply.

Similarly, Zangbeto uses spiritual means to ward off evils in the society when sacrifices are made during the outbreak of epidemics to appease the major divinities of the Egun. During the six day festival of Zangbeto, prayers are offered and a pig is killed on the beach as a sacrifice for peace and harmony.

The second and perhaps, the most important function of Zangbeto is to wage war on criminals in the society. The job entails triple action of prevention, detection and prosecution. During the day, the Kisoniyito group of the cult go, *in cognito*, to market places, bar and restaurants, hotels and motor parks. They watch the movements and listen to the speech of people found there, especially strangers. If necessary, a Zangbeto trails the movement of an individual suspected of having criminal intentions.

Any criminal act detected during this time is promptly reported to Kogan the sectional head. If the need be, an arrest could be effected otherwise the final resting place of the suspect is closely watched at night. The group also watches what individuals say; the aim of this is to nip rumour mongering at the bud and give necessary feedback to the powers that be (Oba and Chiefs) on the feelings of their subjects.

Zangbeto also imposes curfew on the town from 12 midnight to 5 a.m. During this period, road blocks are mounted at strategic places in the town. Those entering or leaving the town are periodically checked.⁸ Visitors with genuine intentions may be escorted to their destinations while those suspected to be criminals are arrested after interrogations.

Apart from this, patrol on foot is mounted in the town; each Zangbeto has his beat; where burglars are caught and arrested. The cult members on duty at night make use of various instruments to carry out their duty. The flute is particularly useful at summoning other Zangbeto for help if need be. Communication on the movement, number and place of suspected criminals are conveyed through the flute; when the flute is blown vigorously and continuously, for example, it is a signal for help from the

generality of the people.

Inhabitants, especially male adults, troupe out with their arms; this call comes up when dangerously armed bandits in large number are confronted. In a situation of this nature the Police is also contacted. Partly through the activities of the Zangbeto and the co-operation of its inhabitants, Badagry town is one of the relatively crime free zones of Lagos State.⁹

It is mostly during the night that prosecution and punishment are effected by the Zangbeto. Criminals caught during the day or those suspected of criminal acts are *arrayed* for prosecutions at night. Those caught at night are also tried before day break. Zangan, the district head handles most of the cases. After interrogation, the accused may be pronounced guilty on the weight of the evidence presented, and a fine is imposed; the fine varies with the severity of the offence, thus an accused found guilty could be cained.

The venue of the judgment is mobile, it depends on the location of the Zangan at the time the accused was caught. Except those caught or suspected during the day, Zangbeto institutes instant justice. As for the accused person resident in Badagry, Zangbeto could evade his compound and order him out to defend himself against the allegation made. Most of the cult members interviewed admitted that because of the constant harassment by the Police on Zangbeto many of those caught are now transferred to Police stations.

Zangbeto enforces his judgement through blackmail and curse. Thus, an accused found guilty is given a period within which to pay the fine. Should he fail to do so within the period (and this could be immediate), Zangbeto's custome is deposited in his residence with a band of Zangbeto waiting on him. This is the first stage and it could be called moral force. If the culprit is adamant, he is blackmailed throughout the area in which he resides; his crime is told loud and clear to the people so that they could abhor him as a plague.

Furthermore, a recalcitrant case is taken to the beach and the person is cursed. Most of those interviewed in Badagry believe in the potency of Zangbeto curse and they declared that no right thinking person would ever wish to be cursed by Zangbeto. While the above submission could be controversial one point should be noted; an individual is subject to the control of the society and in a relatively close society like that of the Egun a person stamped as being odd is bound to be engulfed in a sense of shame. The psychological impact of a situation like this is better imagined than described.

From the above account, we can see that Zangbeto performs the role of maintaining law and order in the society through the dual processes of

traditional spiritual enactment and modern system of detection of crimes and arrest of criminals.

There is no doubt as to the effectiveness of Zangbeto as agent of law and order. The question that comes to mind however is why, in the face of modern organisations like the Police and Army, Zangbeto is still actively playing the role and even instilling confidence in most of the hearts of those it serves.

The major reason is found in the relevance to the society. Nigeria is in the formative stage of capitalism, a period the Marxists have labelled "an era of primitive accumulation".¹⁰ The rush for money plus its retinue of good things of life is the vogue. In a process where the end justifies the means, crime cannot but be a major factor in the developmental process. Armed and unarmed robberies, murder, arson and child kidnaping to make money are some of the crimes that have pervaded every community (Egun inclusive) in Nigeria. A vigilante group like Zangbeto definitely has a role to play and it is actively playing it.

Related to this factor is the ineffectiveness of government organisations like the Police Force and the Army at combating crimes and internal insurrections. The failure of these organisations is well known and need not be extensively documented here. Cars are occasionally snatched by armed robbers about fifty metres to a road block mounted by a detachment of dangerously armed Policemen; furthermore, soldiers commonly drive along the wrong side of the road, they even sometimes beat up "the bloody civilians" who dares muse at the act.

A rival local and more humane body like Zangbeto should thrive. That is why the organisation whose language the people understand, the group that is well known to deliver instant justice, the cult that lives among the people instill much confidence in the hearts of the people.

Again, the ability of a body to withstand the test of time lies partly in its organisational structure. There are rules and regulations in Zangbeto which, to some extent, prevent an individual member from exploiting the privileged position of the cult. Furthermore, disgraceful punishments meted out to bad eggs of the cult whenever they were caught served as deterrent to others. The Police with all its shortcomings also check the excesses of Zangbeto. Finally, the open-reporting built into the system has played a significant role in the control of the members.

This is an advantage Zangbeto has over the Nigerian Police Force. Not many have access to the State Commissioner of Police nor the Inspector General of the Federation. The checks and balances in the organisation of Zangbeto will go a long way towards stabilizing the system.

Finally, there is a vital spiritual entity that pervades the organisation. Zangbeto, as far as the generality of the people are concerned, is a spirit

capable of destroying an individual. This belief is firmly held by members of the Zangbeto and most members from Egun Society in general. In fact, members of the cult strongly believe that they are imbued with the spirit and if they misuse it they are doomed. This belief has, no doubt, contributed to the respect the cult generates from all and sundry.

How long the fear factor could hold the fort for Zangbeto is an open question; it is however clear that the fear generated by the belief system will progressively fade as the society becomes more scientifically oriented.

Clash of Interest

Sapped faith is not however, the major factor that could in future, erode the influence of Zangbeto. The organization is at present facing two inter-related problems. Firstly, there are, in spite of disciplinary measures in the group, several bad eggs in Zangbeto. Some of those interviewed accused members of the cult of extorting money from innocent citizens especially those who arrive late in the town.

Furthermore, some members of the vigilante group are said to be fond of blackmailing people in order to collect money and other materials from those they are supposed to be protecting. Some are even said to engage in blackmailing to have illegal sex dealings with innocent women. If accusations like those above mount to a formidable level, Zangbeto's influence will definitely wane.

The second problem facing the future growth and existence of Zangbeto is the clash of interest between it and the Police. The group accused the Police of arbitrary release of accused persons handed over to them by the body and constant harassment of cult members. The Police on the other hand complained that Zangbeto's justice on suspected criminals is illegal – the trial, judgement and punishment of offenders are said to be out of order. The Police submitted that most of those caught and handed over to them for prosecution have no strong case against them.

The accusations and counter accusations stated above arise from the differences in the methods of operation adopted by the two organisations. The Police follows, to a large extent, the Western European system of administering justice while the Zangbeto mostly engages in traditional African method of dealing with offences. The former is slow and costly, the latter is fast but could be arbitrary.

In spite of the differences in the methods adopted by the two forces, the clash of interest need not arise if the two sides could recognise the fact that they are mutually interdependent and should therefore find time to sit down regularly to iron out their differences. If this mutual co-operation is not adopted Marxists' law of negation of the negation¹¹ will operate and

one party will wipe out the other. It is obvious which will go. This will be very unfortunate for the generality of the people especially the law abiding citizens.

Conclusion:

In this paper, we have examined Zangbeto through the Marxist theory of the evolution of human society. The theory states, *inter alia*, that every human society evolves with time; the changes are on the whole for a better and more complex structure. The changes do not completely obliterate features of the old structure. The amount and the degree of the old form retained in the new one depends, however, on certain factors. One of such factors is the strength and the usefulness of the old form *vis a vis* those of the opposing forces that brought about the change.

Among the Egun like every community in Nigeria, western civilisation through colonialism was the major force that changed the society and one of the agents used by the colonial power was the Police Force. This agent has not rendered Zangbeto redundant in the new Egun Society of Badagry because the Police Force (i.e. the agent) is ineffective.

Marxist theory states that conflict occurs between the old structure of the society and the new changing structure. The conflict, as stated by Karl Marx, will continue until a new compact structure bearing the stamp of the old structure becomes stable. Zangbeto is in this turmoil today. We would not have worried on what will be the outcome of the conflict between Zangbeto and the Police, but Marxist theory states that "accidents" in terms of brute force, for example, might be used by the superior power in order to over-ride the old form. This is where the danger on Zangbeto by the superior force lies because the former is backed by government.

If this happens, the natural process of evolution of human society is bound to suffer because the Police would not be able to effectively take over the functions of Zangbeto. The vacuum created by the exit of Zangbeto might be used by criminals to intensify their activities.

In order to prevent this from happening, we suggest that Zangbeto should be re-organised. The Oba of Badagry should set up a Board of Management of Zangbeto with the Oba as the Chairman. Representatives of the Zangbeto cult, the Police and that of the Local Government should be on the board. The Board should draw up a code of conduct for Zangbeto members and should also regulate and specify its duties in the society. There should be a documented working relationship between Zangbeto and the Police. The Local Government should provide fund for the Oba of Badagry to effectively run the cult.

crimes and to bring it nearer to the people, while Zangbeto needs the Police as a watch dog. Mutual co-operation between the two bodies will be a tremendous benefit to a crime invested society such as ours.

Badagry town is one of the relatively crime free towns in Lagos State.

Police account in Badagry and Ibeju Headwaters stated that the group at the road block, it mounted at Mobile Patrol Station at the outskirts of Badagry.

I became acquainted with Zangbeto on Nov. 26, 1988, when one of the members of the Vigilante group piloted us through Badagry to the General Hospital. He was ordered to follow us by the leader of the group at the road block.

7. An example of such festival is "Oduun" see:
 Tamuno T. N. "The Festival" Nigerian Magazine No. 97 (1988) pp. 68-78.

8. I am grateful to:
 (a) Pa Okeale Femi, No. 6, Onitsha Street, Bafio, Badagry; and
 (b) Mr. Hanner Fasina (Town Chief of Ode of Badagry);
 Workshop Quarter, Badagry; on the piece of information con-
 tained in this section. For a written account on Zangbeto see:
 Our Town series, no. 2, BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE Publish-
 ed by the Information Division, Ministry of Information, So-
 cial Development, Youth Sports and Culture, Lagos State.

9. I am grateful to:
 Lecturer in French, Linguistics, Lagos State University, Ojo.
 1. I am grateful to Dr. I.K. Avonon, an Egun Linguist and Senior
 Lecturer in French, Linguistics, Lagos State University, Ojo.
 2. R.S. Smith (1976) Kingdoms of The Yoruba: Studies in African
 (a) T.O. Avonon (1978) op. cit.
 (b) See

3. For a clear and concise exposition of this theory see Akinola Yor-
 makoya (1986). *Wasit Aye Classes and the Class Struggle of Social and*
Political Knowledge No. 14, Progress Publications, Moscow.

4. For a clear and concise exposition of this theory see Akinola Yor-
 makoya (1986). *Wasit Aye Classes and the Class Struggle of Social and*
Political Knowledge No. 14, Progress Publications, Moscow.

5. Gungbola Tunde. "Tributary notes on Okeai Festival", in *Adim-
 bala Wande* (Edited), 1975 Yoruba Oral Tradition pp. 281-298.

6. Ibeju Water side people are called Ibeju Ewe, i.e. those dwellers. The
 special war boat and the numerous expeditions it mounted are
 now commemorated during an annual festival called "Okoai" (see
 T.O. Avonon (1978) *A Short History of Badagry, Lagos*.
 1818, Cambridge University Press.

(b) I.A. Akinjogbin (1967) *Dabany And its Neighbours* 1908 -
 Oxford University Press.

Notes and References

1. For a detailed account of the conflict, see among others:
 - (a) S.O. Biobaku 1957: *The Egba And Their Neighbours 1842-1872* Oxford University Press.
 - (b) I.A. Akinjogbin (1967); *Dahomey And Its Neighbours 1708 - 1818*, Cambridge University Press.
 - (c) T.O. Avoseh (1938) *A Short History of Badagry, Lagos*.
2. Ijebu Water side people are called Ijebu Ere, i.e. slum dwellers. The special war boat and the numerous expeditions it mounted are now commemorated during an annual festival called "Okosi" (see Ogunpolu Tunde. "Preliminary notes on Okosi Festival" in Abimbola Wande (Edited), 1975 Yoruba Oral Tradition pp. 551-598.
3. For a clear and concise exposition of this theory see Antenia Yor-makoya (1986). *What Are Classes and the Class Struggle of Social and Political Knowledge* No. 14, Progress Publications Moscow.
4. See
 - (a) T.O. Avoseh (1938) op. cit.
 - (b) R.S. Smith (1976), *Kingdoms of The Yoruba*, Studies in African series No. 2, Methuen & Co. Ltd., pp. 77-87.
5. I am grateful to Dr. J.K. Avognon an Egun Linguist and Senior Lecturer in French, Linguistics, Lagos State University, Ojo.
6. I am grateful to:
 - (a) Pa Okeyale Fanu, No. 6, Onitiju Street, Baiko Badagry; and
 - (b) Mr. Honner Fasinu (Town Crier of Oba of Badagry); Worakoh Quater, Badagry; on the piece of information contained in this section. For a written account on Zangbeto see: Our Town series, no. 2: BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE Published by the Information Division, Ministry of Information, Social Development, Youth Sports and Culture, Lagos State.
7. An example of such festival is "Odun" see: Tamuno T. N. "The Festival" *Nigeria Magazine* No. 97 (1968) pp 68-76.
8. I became acquainted with Zangbeto on Nov. 26, 1986, when one of the members of the Vigilante group piloted us through Badagry to the General Hospital. He was ordered to follow us by the leader of the group at the road Block it mounted at Mobile Petrol Station at the outskirts of Badagry.
9. Police account in Badagry and Ikeja Headquarters stated that Badagry town is one of the relatively crime free towns in Lagos State.

10. See Dara, G.G.: "The Oral Poet And The Public Mentality in the Primitive Accumulation"; paper read at the 3rd Annual Congress of the Nigerian Folklore Society, University of Sokoto, Dec. 1983.
11. See Yamakoya A. (1985) Op. Lit. for a clear explanation of the law.

M.O. OYEYEA & H. ANAYOLA

Introduction

The history of Islam is an integral aspect of the religious history of Badagry, one of the aboriginal ancient towns in the south-western part of modern Nigeria. The religious history of this town has received very little attention by historians compared with other areas of Nigeria. It must be noted, however, as mentioned that the literature on the growth of Christianity in the region is plentiful while that of Islam is virtually non-existent.

Existing studies on the various aspects of the history of Badagry¹ have given peripheral attention to the features of Islam in the town, yet the attempt by Professor Chidambas, though unique, still exhibits a particular bias from the standpoint of this chapter. This is the fact that his book, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba* deals mainly with the muslim history of the spoken Yoruba peoples of south-western Nigeria. Adefioye et al's work on Lagos state² gives a rather scanty attention to the theme of Islam in Badagry. These lacunae could be understood since their areas of primary research interest was outside Badagry.

However, this should not be interpreted to mean that the town of Badagry had an erasable Islamic history before the 20th century. Far from such a viewpoint, it can be revealed that an Intelligence Report written by the British colonial administration on Badagry towards the end of the 19th century indicates that Islam had been a force to be reckoned with in the town for several decades before the end of that century.

In Badagry there is a large Muslim community happily free from the vicissitudes of Lagos. The bulk of the Yoruba population of the town is Mohammedan and in two quarters, there are more Egba Mohammedans than Christians. In many villages there are ill-kept mosques, evidences of the Badagry mosque...³

This chapter therefore attempts to present a synthesis of the growth and influence of Islam in Badagry.

12

The Growth and Influence of Islam in Badagry

M.O. OPELOYE & I.L. AKINTOLA

Introduction

The history of Islam is an integral aspect of the religious history of Badagry, one of the acclaimed ancient towns in the south-western part of modern Nigeria. The religious history of this town has received very little attention of historians compared with other areas of Nigeria. It must at the same time be mentioned that the literature on the growth of Christianity in this town is copious while that of Islam is virtually non-existent.

Existing studies on the various aspects of the history of Badagry¹ have given peripheral attention to the fortunes of Islam in the town, yet the attempt by Professor Gbadamosi, though unique, still exhibits a particular lacuna from the standpoint of this chapter. This is the fact that his book, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba* deals mainly with the muslim history of the entire Yoruba peoples of south-western Nigeria; Adefuye *et al's* work on Lagos State² gives a rather scanty attention to the theme of Islam in Badagry. These lacunae could be understood since their areas of primary research interest was outside Badagry.

However, this should not be interpreted to mean that the town of Badagry had no unique Islamic history before the 20th century. Far from such assumption, it can be revealed that an Intelligence Report written by the British colonial administration on Badagry towards the end of the 19th century indicates that Islam had been a force to be reckoned with in the town for several decades before the end of that century:

In Badagry there is a large Muslim community happily free from the schisms rife in Lagos. The bulk of the Yoruba population of the town is Mohammedan and in two quarters, there are more Egun Mohammedans than Christians. In many villages there are ill-kept mosques off-shoots of the Badagry mosques...³

This chapter therefore attempts to present a synthesis of the growth and influence of Islam in Badagry.

The Beginnings: Islam in Badagry Before 1870

Although Gbadamosi suggests that Islam was being practised in Badagry by the 1790s,⁴ it is not clear what major dating methods he used to arrive at this date. However, since it is generally believed that his was a major work on the history of Islam among the Yoruba, one is persuaded to assume that this date is reasonable although further research may come to suggest some other date.

Another popular date for the introduction of Islam into Badagry is 1821.⁵ It is believed that some muslim immigrants led by one Saibu Ogoalejo left the old Kingdom of Oyo for Badagry consequent upon the general disorders and civil wars among the Yoruba people.⁶ The circumstances leading to the dispersal of Yoruba into the diaspora in the 19th century need not be treated here.

The introduction of Islam soon received a boost from other early muslim immigrants into Badagry such as Atari, Magaji Akinola, Buraimoh, Sule Kayode Elesin Sulu, and Alufa Ashiru. These were mostly itinerant teachers well versed in Arabic-Islamic learning and who were highly respected for their erudition. They engaged in teaching, led daily prayers and nurtured the religious life of the nascent muslim community. One Mallam Abdullah, a man of Hausa descent was particularly knowledgeable in the Qur'an and he was said to have attracted many disciples from the members of the community. He established a mosque for his followers at Awusako Vlekete in Posu quarters. This was, in fact, the first mosque in Badagry while Imam Abdullah was the first Imam of the town.

By the 1830s, it appears that the muslim community was numerically strong enough to organise an impressive 'Id al-Fitri celebration which was witnessed by Richard Lander, the famous 19th century English explorer. By 1844, the number of the muslims had increased considerably consequent upon the abolition of slave trade. Gbadamosi has rightly suggested that Aku muslims in Sierra Leone who availed themselves of the opportunity to return home came to settle in Badagry. One of the most notable of this group was Salihu Shitta. The returnees mixed freely with the earlier group of adherents.

One useful impact of the activities of the returnees on the fortunes of Islam in Badagry was the increased confidence, strength, courage and influence of the Muslims, particularly as the returnees included Muslims skilled and talented in different arts. Many of them were useful in the construction of the early mosques that sprang up in the town. Many of them however moved to Lagos in 1852. This may have been as a result of the Mewu crisis⁷ which witnessed the mass exodus of many Badagry people to the neighbouring towns, viz: Ajase, Port Novo, Dogo, Igbogele, Apa etc.

Most of those who moved out of the town did not return until three years later. One is persuaded to argue that this crisis, to some extent retarded the growth of Islam because many of the muslims were scattered and thrown into disarray.

By the year 1856, most of the people in exile had returned to Badagry. This return witnessed the rise of internal strife, caused by leadership and power tussle resulting in the division of the Muslim Community. Indeed, it would appear salient to note that Islam grew in this period at a rather slow pace, its history often punctuated by internal strife within the nascent muslim community.

The period before the 1870s was particularly that of conflicts and disagreements among the muslim community. The reason for this view is not far to seek. For instance, internal disagreements led to the creation of splinter groups, the abandonment and the establishment of mosques around the town. Before 1877 when the first *Jumu'ah* mosque was built, the original site of the mosque being used by the community at Vlekete was abandoned by a group led by one Abdu Salami Alalukuriani and a new one was established at Asaqo quarters.

Abdullah, the first Imam was supported by such personalities like Saliu Balogun and Atari and they later established a new mosque at Elesin (also in Posu quarters); while other leaders like Sulu Buraimoh, Aruna and Ikoya among others continued to use the Vlekete mosque. Later, Imam Abdullah applied for a piece of land from Thomas Tickel to accommodate his growing congregation. This request was referred to Chief Jengen who promptly approved the grant of a bigger land for the building of a mosque. It was the mosque that was built in 1877 that has served as the *Jumuah* mosque till the present day.

It is also necessary to identify the role of some personalities apart from the purely religious leaders in the growth of Islam in Badagry before 1880. Eminent members of the community such as Bello Danmole, Muhammed Lawal, and Seriki Abbas⁸ to mention a few contributed immensely particularly to the building of the central mosque. The last in the set of early mosques in Badagry was in fact founded by Seriki Abbas in the year 1896. It was located at Sango.

The internal strife described above was a blessing in disguise as it led to wider dissemination of information about Islam to other parts of the town. This is the picture of the early days of Islam in Badagry. The religion faced some initial problems although it soon flourished. A number of factors could be responsible for this. It should be noted that Badagry was a market town as well as a popular port settlement. As a market town, Badagry provided a congenial environment for the striving of Islam.

The frequent visits of the itinerant Mallams and Muslim traders aided the growth of the religion in the town. In like manner the hospitable disposition of the indigenes towards the early Muslims contributed immensely to the growth of Islam because the people encouraged freedom of worship.

The Era of Consolidation and Steady Growth

The last two decades of the 19th century and early 20th century may be described as the period of consolidation and growth of Islam in Badagry. This period witnessed the establishment of the first government sponsored Muslim School; the expansion of Islam to neighbouring towns and villages; and the enthronement of the non-Hausa Imams and formation of formidable Muslim organisations.

It must be pointed out that establishment of Qur'anic schools in Badagry was as old as Islam itself. The early Qur'anic schools in the town were dated as far back as 1825.⁹ These schools were located in the houses of the Mallams or under shady trees. The traditional method which encouraged rote learning was used. Examples of such schools which thrived till the mid-20th century were those founded by Alufa Akewusola in a compound named after him; Asago, Alufa Jonwonjonwon in Wawu compound, Ahojiko and Alufa Tabraniyu in Posuko.

With the consolidation of Islam, the muslims in Badagry were in a position to press for the establishment of a government-sponsored muslim school which incorporated in its curriculum the twin disciplines of Arabi-Islamic education. The aim was not only to have a school where Arabic and Islamic learning would be taught in a refined manner but more importantly, to have a school where muslim children would be able to pursue western education without any fear of being converted to christianity.

The school which was established in 1898 drew its pioneer muslim teachers from Lagos and they included Mallam Aruna, Mallam Saliu and Alhaji Nuru Taba Thomas. The indigenes of Badagry who helped to sustain the school were people like Malam Muhammed Busari, Mr. Y.Y. Balogun, Mr. Nuru Durojaiye, and Mr. N.N. Giwa. The school was however closed some years after its establishment.

Perhaps the consolidation and growth of Islam would be more appropriately treated within the context of developments at different points in Imamate succession, particularly the Imams who reigned up to the mid-20th century. On the whole, ten Imams (*al-Imam-al-Jami'*) have reigned in Badagry town.¹⁰

If Islam found its roots in Badagry during the reign of Imam Abdullah, the first Hausa Imam, it certainly consolidated itself during the reign of

Imam Yusuf, the second Hausa Imam in Badagry. It was in consequence of the consolidated position of Islam that the muslims were able to start conferring honorific titles on prominent members of the Muslim community. During the tenure of Imam Yusuf in 1897, the honorific title Serikin Musulumi was conferred on Abbas Faremi William. Such titles were conferred to secure the recipients' support for the muslim community.

The demand for the establishment of a muslim school in 1898 as noted earlier was also the result of consolidation of Islam in Badagry. More importantly, the period witnessed the spread of Islam to the neighbouring villages and towns including: Ibereko, Ajido, Iworo, Itoga, Aradagun, Mowo, Ikoga, Mosafejo, Araromi-Ale, Ojogun, Imeke, Igborosun etc. It must be pointed out that muslims in each of these communities can be counted on finger tips and many of them for a long time had only *Musal-la*¹² as a place of worship.

The first indigenous Imam was Imam Sanni Sule Elesin of Elesin compound, Posuko. He led the Muslim community during the first two decades of this century. His enthronement was an index of remarkable progress of Islam in Badagry because it meant that the muslim community already had consolidated among the Yoruba indigenes who were knowledgeable enough about Islam to assume the highly venerated office of an Imam. Some memorable events occurred during the reign of this Imam, namely, the conversion of Yinwo Hundeyin in the year 1915, the commencement of holy pilgrimage to Makkah and al-Madinah in the year 1910, the formation of *Egbe Killa* which took place in the same year.¹³

Each of these events is significant in its own right. The conversion of Hundeyin was a victory for Islam because it meant that the religion was beginning to gain acceptability and popularity among eminent Ogu indigenes. The first holy pilgrimage to Makkah undertaken by five Badagry muslims as early as 1910 is probably indicative of the high degree of spiritual development attained by the muslims of the town within the short period of the introduction of Islam.

It requires a strong faith to be prepared to face different hazards which the pilgrims of those days were exposed. Out of the five people who performed the holy pilgrimage, two of them, Alhaji Tijani Sulu and Liad Ajape returned to Badagry while the others died in the holy land.

The significance of the formation of *Egbe Killa* lies in the desire of its members to foster corporate feeling among the muslims to help raise the tone of religious living and more importantly, to make Islam fashionable and attractive. By the activities of *Egbe killa*, they make non-muslims embrace Islam. They engaged in activities that added colour to the celebration of the two *Ids* like riding on horses and blowing of trumpets.

T. Ola Avoseh noted that the day members of the Killa society visited Ajido in their usual 'Id procession, the whole town was shaky.

After the demise of Imam Elesin, three Imams reigned in quick succession between 1920 and 1944. These were Alhaji Imam Tijani Sulu, Imam Uthman Ashiru, Imam Awesu Akewusola assisted by Uthman Bakare. Imam Akewusola was afflicted by a protracted illness hence the necessity for Uthman Bakare's assistance. He performed this role till the death of the Imam in 1944.

The period between 1920 and 1944 saw further growth of Islam with the formation of two formidable muslim organisations, i.e. the Ahmadiyyah Mission and the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society. The former was formed in 1922 during the era of Imam Tijani while the latter was formed in the year 1929 during the tenure of Imam Akewusola. The formation of these organisations is significant in that they brought some form of modernity into Islam. The activities of their members, the way they conducted their ceremonies show that Islam is not incompatible with modernity.

Ansar-Ud-Deen has more impact in Badagry than the Ahmadiyyah hence the attention which would be given to it in this study. The society was founded in April 1929 under the name of *Young Ansar-Ud-Deen Society*. It was introduced to the town by one Mr. J.A. Afinni who had been a member of the Lagos branch of the society. Within the first year of its formation, its members rose from fourteen to forty. Its first Chairman and Secretary were Messrs Raji Aralamo and N.N. Giwa respectively.

One of the significant achievements of the Ansar-Ud-Deen was recorded in the field of education. Since the scrapping of the first Muslim government-sponsored school, muslims had been making concerted effort to reinstate it. This did not materialise until 1938 when Ansar-Ud-Deen Primary School was established. This was as a result of the relentless efforts of people like Messrs Raji Aralamo, A. Ade Giwa, N.N. Giwa L.S. Akanni, T.A. Afinni, N.S. Adelakun and Y.L. Gongo among others.¹⁴

A few years after the founding of the Ansar-Ud-Deen School, another school was carved out from it named Muslim Primary School. This step was taken to solve the problem of over-population of students. This incident showed that one school was grossly inadequate for the muslim children who had more than 90% of the total enrolment of students in the school.¹⁵ The society also established a Modern School which was upgraded to a secondary school later. Another achievement of the society was the recently established Arabic School for the acquisition of Arabic and Islamic Education by Muslim children.

The Contemporary Era

Between 1944 and the present, four Imams have reigned in succession. These are Alhaji Imam Abdul Gaffar Tijani of Bereketé, Posu Quarters (1944-67); Imam Uthman Bakare of Arole Compound, Posu Quarters (1967-69); Imam Imran Ashiru of Vlekete (1969-84) and Alhaji Imam Dada Abu Bakr from Arole Compound (1984 to date).¹⁶ However, this period has not witnessed an appreciable progress in the growth and development of Islam in Badagry. In a sense, Islam may be said to be in a state of stagnation. The same stagnation is also evident in the case of Islamic education in the era.

Stagnation in the growth of Islamic education in Badagry resulted from the absence of reputable Arabic Schools. This was (and still is) due to the fact of Badagry's proximity to Lagos where several Arabic schools had been established in the early twentieth century. Another major factor was lack of adequate number of erudite Islamic scholars in the area. Prominent among the few that emerged was Mallam Tajidni, the Chief Imam of the Abanise Central Mosque who hails from Ilorin in Kwara State.

One of the reasons for the slow progress of Islamic education in the area is, low enrolment of students in the schools which in turn is due to language barrier between the teacher and the students. The students speak Ogu while the teacher speaks Yoruba. On the other hand, since the majority (or at least 80%) of the Ogu people of Badagry are bilingual (i.e. they speak at least Egun and Yoruba), and because many of the people who attended the European or Western schools in the area were not discouraged by the language barrier, it is surprising that only the pupils in the Qur'anic schools have been encountering the problem of language in the acquisition of Islamic Religious Knowledge in Badagry.

Stagnation in the spread of Islam is evidenced by the fact that the religion remains more popular among the Yoruba indigenes of Badagry. Muslims in the town are more concentrated in the Yoruba dominated compounds. Moreover, about two quarters out of eight remain the nerve centre of Islamic activities.

It is pertinent at this point to note that up till today, inspite of the age of Islam in Badagry only seven *ratibi* mosques (all concentrated in two quarters) and three *Jumu'ah* mosques (including Ansar-Ud-Deen and Abanise *Jumu'ah* mosques) exist in Badagry. The neighbouring towns (28 in number) have one mosque each serving pathetically as both *ratibi* and *Jumu'ah* mosque. An exception is Ajara town which has a *ratibi* mosque (the Egbatedo mosque) apart from the central mosque which started recently.¹⁷

This state of affairs in our view is attributable to the passive attitude to evangelisation and proselytization. In order to sustain and expand the muslim community in Badagry, there appears to be need for vigorous evangelisation campaign bearing in mind the strong influence of christianity and traditional religion in the town.

There is no gain saying the fact that education is a concomitance of Islam and this is why the Imams in Badagry should endeavour to increase their followers' knowledge of Islam bearing in mind that lack of knowledge of the religion by some muslims might cause a drift of converts to christianity. To be able to perform this function, the Imams should themselves be learned because there are many Imams parading themselves as learned thinking that knowledge of Islam ends with the ability to conduct marriage and naming or funeral ceremonies. It is sometimes possible for an Imam to be unlearned because the principles guiding selection of an Imam as laid down in the *Shari'ah* are at times set aside in favour of selfish considerations.

Our point of emphasis here is that Islamic education should be for all without any exception. It is for the Imam, for the masses, including the mosque functionaries (viz the Mufassir, the Mu'azzin and the Ajanasi).¹⁸ This implies that within the Muslim Community there should be a sizeable number of formal and informal Islamic schools. This leads us to the development of Islamic Education in Badagry.

Islamic Influence on Education

It is characteristic of Islam for its form of education to follow wherever it spreads. This may be attributed to the high premium this religion places on education.

The Qur'n describes a learned man as better than the ignorant (39:10); it therefore urges man to acquire knowledge (96:4-8) and challenges him to research and achieve scientific and technological break-throughs on earth or in the sky (55:33). Prophet Muhammad referred to knowledge as the right of every Muslim.¹⁹ He also encouraged the education of females.²⁰

Although Islamic education may be said to have begun in Badagry simultaneously with the entry of the religion (1821); it was not formally launched until 1825 when the first *Ile-kewu* (arabic school) was opened.²¹ The first *alfa* (or mallam) who taught the Qur'n was Salu Balogun with the assistance and encouragement of Abdullahi (an Hausa man), Aruna Medeoro, Momo Lawal and Sunmonu Kannike.²²

The first pupils were grown-up men who received Qur'nic lessons in the houses of the *alfa* or *Imam*. Children were later taught under trees or on verandahs. The subjects taught were restricted to Arabic reading, writ-

ing, memorizing the Qur'an while learning by rote was common. The mosques played significant roles in educating the Muslims of Badagry as they served as venues, rallying points or information centres for the growing muslim population, particularly the first one built by Ogboalejo and his men in 1821 at Iganho quarters.²³

The muslims of Badagry, like their counterparts in Lagos and Epe, discouraged their sons and daughters, from embracing western education *ab initio* when the latter came about three decades later. They stayed away from the christian mission schools causing an unprecedented fall in attendance as discovered by a Committee of the Board of Education set up in 1889 to investigate the poor attendance in the schools.

Muslim apathy to western education seemed to have been based on the fear that colonial formal education was anti-Islamic while at the same time it could not be referred to as secular because it promote the interests of the Christian religion. For this, Henry Carr called Muslims 'drags to our progress'.²⁴

Henry Carr's statement, however, is an erroneous reading of the true feeling of the Muslims towards western education. Fafunwa captures the real mood when he argues that Muslim education in Nigeria was retarded not because the Muslims were unprogressive or because their religion was opposed to formal education but because education in colonial days was wholly enveloped by Christianity.²⁵

The eventual acceptance of western education by Badagry Muslim in spite of their earlier hostility may have been due to Islam's encouragement of education.

Although it took the indirect intervention of three Muslim dignitaries before they changed their minds, their persuaders quoted profusely from the Qur'an and the *hadith*. The intervention was indirect because it did not directly occur in Badagry but in Lagos and among Lagos Muslims who shared the same feelings with their Muslim brothers all over Yorubaland.

The three personalities were al-Haj Harun al-Rashid of Sierra Leone, a distinguished Arabic scholar who arrived in Lagos on 20th April 1894,²⁶ the Sultan of Turkey who wrote in July of the same year to urge Muslims to accept western education²⁷ and 'Abdullah Quillam, a Muslim Lawyer based in Britain who attended the opening of the famous Shitta Bey Mosque in July 1894.²⁸

Mention must also be made of the efforts of Dr. E.W. Blyden, the Agent of Native Affairs, at persuading the Muslims to accept western education. This acceptance which began in Lagos in 1896 extended to Badagry in 1898 when the muslims in the town petitioned the colonial government.²⁹ As the case with Lagos, a muslim school was placed under the government's control. The school's curriculum was extended to include

such subjects as English Language and Arithmetic. The school's week days were from Saturday to Wednesday. The pioneer teachers of this school included Alhaji Nuru Taba Thomas, Alfa Aruna and Alfa Salii — while indigenes like Muhammad Abudi Busari, Y.Y. Balogun, R. Usman, Nuru Durowoju and N.N. Giwa assisted the school.³⁰

Badagry seemed to have been favoured by its relative proximity to Lagos because similar requests from Muslim Communities in Ibadan and Ijebu-Ode in 1897 and 1899 respectively were not met.

The Muslims of Badagry provided land and labour for the Government Muslim school, tackled the problems of equipment, staff, organization and sometimes the finances. The school continually expanded and additional buildings were put up to accommodate more pupils while more teachers were employed.

The muslim community continued to show great interest in the school as well as exercise immense influence. In 1900, for example, they had cause to complain about the conduct of one of the teachers who was later removed on the orders of the Government. The new teacher had to work hard to regain the confidence of the parents who had withdrawn their children.³¹

Although reports on the school was generally satisfactory at the initial stage (between 1899 and 1910), the tide turned a little later. For example, whereas an account of the superintendent of Education on the Lagos Muslim School showed that it expanded with a new and larger school erected at Lafiaji in 1898 and another at Isalegangan in 1905,³² the Badagry school declined with the general decline of the ancient town at the turn of the century.³³ Hence, the Muslim community had to rely on its experience at an early stage particularly after 1926 when the government took its hands off the school.

However, the significance of that single school lies in the fact that it demonstrated that the Muslims of Badagry had come to accept western education and also that they realized that Islamic and Western forms of education are not necessarily exclusive. It also marked a significant government achievement in the area of relations between the colonial government and the Muslims in Badagry. The fact that enthusiasm for western education remained after 1926 when government assistance for the schools ceased, shows the extent to which government endeavours at winning Muslims over to western education had succeeded.

Credit for this realization should go to Blyden who headed the colonial government's campaign for the encouragement of Muslims to accept western education. So also are the unofficial roles of al-Rashid and Quilam. To ensure continued enjoyment of western education, the Badagry Muslims appealed to the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society in Lagos who opened a

school for them in 1938 under Mr. M.B. Onipede.³⁴

Of the ten primary schools in Badagry, one was founded by the Muslim community while another was established by the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society. One of the ten secondary schools in Badagry and its environs was also founded by the Ansar-Un-Deen.³⁵ It is regrettable, nonetheless, that none of the ten primary schools (including the two Muslim schools) has a teacher of Arabic language while only five have teachers of Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK).

We also observe that although all the secondary and primary schools in Badagry are blessed with teacher of Bible Knowledge except Akarakumo Primary School, ten out of the twenty institutions have no Islamic Religious knowledge teachers. Note should be taken that Muslim students abound in all the institutions which of course belong to the government and such students may be interested in offering IRK at the different levels.³⁶ No government should ignore the needs of a large proportion of its youth.³⁷ We therefore suggest that the Badagry Schools' Management Committee should recruit more teachers to teach these two subjects in Badagry schools.

The Islamic Cultural Influence

The gospel of the unity of Allah (*al-wahdaniyyah*) which is a cardinal principles in Islam has always influenced Muslims in all parts of the world. The Qur'an amplifies this unity of Allah (112:1-4; 2:163; 6:19) who creates and sustains all (7:54; 11:6-7; 13:16-17). It holds polytheism *ash-shirk* as a major sin *Kabirah*; see 31:13). This same principle appears to have propelled the Muslims of Badagry to condemn the worshipping of idols.

It is only recently that traditional festivals like the *Avo-Hunwe*, *Zangbetu*, *Kubito* Egungun or masquerade *Oro* and *Gunuko* no longer produce unpleasant reactions by the Muslim community. Idols of traditionists were derided in the past as dummies and effigies. There was therefore a clash of values between the Muslims and their traditional counterparts.

This clash is exemplified by the *Ewe Akoko* incident in Badagry. The leaves of the tree *newboldia leaves* are generally held sacred in traditional Yoruba Society and they are often used to mark shrines (like the *mariwo* or tender offshoots of the palm tree). One Yanda Habibu and some Muslims picked the *akoko* leaves to thatch the roofs of their houses. The traditionists reacted by attempting to cordon off the mosque with the leaves. The Muslims resisted and Oba Iposu Aporogan had to intervene.³⁸

In spite of such incidents, however, Islam continues to play a significant role in the lives of the people of Badagry and its environs. Islam in Badagry, like in Lagos and Epe, expanded to outlying areas facilitated by

the urban-rural relationship between the towns and the environs.

Villages from Ajara, Ibereko, Aradagun, Muwo, etc. came to Badagry to trade and perform social functions. They went back to their villages with doses of Islamic tenets injected into their system. Also, some Badagry Muslims who had farms and other transactions in the surrounding villages became cultural agents of Islam. The success of Islam in the outlying areas of Badagry belies Jack Mendelsohn's assertion that Islam appealed only to "the detribalised young man in the city."³⁹

Islam has also influenced the cultural life of Badagry Muslim. This is manifest in the way they dress. Robes and turbans are common sights on Badagry streets. Badagry Muslims also wear their traditional dress which conform to Islamic standards. The men use *buba* (local shirt) *Sokota* (pair of trousers) with *fila* (cap) or complete with *agbada* (local free gown) or *jalabiyah* (flowing gown). Muslim women also use *gele* or *ibori* (scarf) to cover their heads as required by Islam.

Child naming ceremonies are also conducted in Muslim fashion for Muslim parents. However, funeral ceremonies of deceased Muslims lack genuine Islamic trait as eating, drinking and dancing are still allowed. This practice negates both the letter and spirit of the *hadith* of 'Abdullah bin Ja'far in which the prophet asked the deceased's friends to prepare food for his relations.⁴⁰ The four schools (Malikite, Shafiite, Hambalite and Hanafite) also regard this practice as deplorable (*markruh*) because "It adds to loss" and because "it is reminiscent of *jahiliyyah* practice."⁴¹

Many Arabic loan-words have crept into the vocabulary of the people of Badagry in general. This phenomenon is most noticeable when they speak Yoruba. Examples of such words are *adu'a* (*al-du'a* i.e. supplication) *alafia* (*al-'afiyah*, i.e. health) *arisiki* (*ar-rizq* i.e. wealth) and *asiri* (*as-sirru* i.e. secret).

Conclusion

The problems highlighted in this chapter pose some challenges for the Muslims in Badagry which should be squarely addressed. Fortunately, there is the Badagry branch of the Council for Imams and Alfas. This Council cannot afford to maintain lukewarm attitude towards the progress of Islam in the town. It should be able to mobilise the various Islamic groups and interests in the town to pursue such programmes that would improve the state of Islam and of the Muslims. The challenges ahead which cannot be treated with levity in the overall interest of Islam include the following:

- (i) promotion and spread of Islam to all the nooks and crannies of Badagry town;

- (ii) promotion of Arabic and Islamic education among Badagry Muslim;
- (iii) promotion of religious, moral and social advancement of all Badagry Muslims;
- (iv) promotion of welfare projects to cater for the needs of the handicapped Muslims in Badagry.

To be able to pursue these noble objectives, *zakah* fund should be centrally created into which all *zakah* money should be paid as well as other forms of money received from muslim philanthropists. If concerted efforts are made to realise the above objectives, Islam would move several steps forward from its present state.

Notes and References

1. T.G.O. Gbadamosi: *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba 1841-1908*, (London, Longmans, 1978) p. 21.
2. Adefuye, Agiri and Oshuntokun (eds.): *A History of the peoples of Lagos State* (Lagos, Lantern Books, 1987), p. 45
3. See N.A.I. C5026/30030.S.1: "A Report on the Re-organisation of the Badagry District."
4. Gbadamosi: *op. cit.*, p.
5. Avoseh, T. Ola (Chief), *Esin Imale Ni Ilu Badagry*, Lagos, 1938, p. 36.
6. Gbadamosi, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
7. According to Avoseh, *op. cit.* in his *Short History of Badagry*, Mewu crisis erupted as a result of the chieftaincy dispute between two Lagos Princes, Kosoko and Akintoye which was settled in favour of the former and the latter had to seek asylum in Badagry. Akintoye enjoyed the support of the Badagry people at first but because of certain incidents, the town with its chiefs became divided, some threw their supports for Akintoye while others were in support of Kosoko. Mewu who was himself a stranger Chief was one of Akintoye's supporters.

In those days in Badagry, whenever there was threat to peace and stability of the town it was customary to make a law forbidding gun firing after consulting Ifa oracle. Mewu deliberately made subterranean move to contravene this law. He secretly arranged with Genesenu to fire defenceless strangers during a funeral ceremony at Athanpoji. Those men went to Mewu to report that the towns people had fired at them. Consequently Mewu gave orders that the town should be attacked. The crisis that ensued claimed many lives and destroyed a lot of properties.

8. A.I. Asiwaju: *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule 1889-1945* London, Longmans, 1976 and Gbadamosi, *op. cit.* have attempted a bride outline of the career of Seriki Abbas Williams.
9. See Avoseh, *op. cit.* p. 13.
10. *Ibid.* and field work by this writer between 1986 and 1989.
11. Alhaji Karimu Lagoro (C. 82): Muslim Leader in Ibereko, interviewed 25th June, 1989.
12. *Musalla* is the Arabic term meaning a place demarcated for worship as against a constructed work.
13. Alufa Ajape (C. 85): Otun Bashorun of Badagry, Ajape Compound, Awhanjigoh, Badagry, interviewed 26th December, 1989.

14. Alhaji G.B. Ogunlola (C. 72) Chairman, Zumratul Hujaj Badagry, interviewed 3rd January, 1990.
15. Alhaji, M.G. Layode (C. 65); Chairman Ansar-Ud-Deen Society, Badagry Branch, interviewed 26th Dec., 1989.
16. Alhaji Imam D.O. Bakrin Abanise (C. 65), Posuko, the Chief Imam of Badagry, interviewed 4th January, 1990.
17. *Ratibi* mosque is the mosque where muslims living within the same quarters observe their daily prayers while the *Jumu'ah* mosque is the central mosque where worshippers from larger community say their *Jumu'ah* prayers.
18. *al-Mufasssir* is a Qur'anic exegete: *al-Mu'dhin* is the one who calls to prayer while *Ajanasi* is the one who reads the text of the Qur'an for the *al-Mufasssir*.
19. *Tirmidhi* 39:19
20. *Bukhari* 3:35
21. Avoseh, T.O., *op. cit.*, p. 13
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8
23. Others include the Awusako mosque at Verekete, Awhanjigo Mosque (1896), Sowhe Mosque (1945) etc.
24. Henry Carr, "The Requirements of Education", *CMS Conference*, Lagos, April 15th 1892.
25. Fafunwa, B. *History of Education in Nigeria*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1982, p. 72.
26. *The Lagos Weekly Record*, 28 April, 1894.
27. See, *The Colonial Report* or 1894.
28. See the "Annual School Report (1895)" in the *Lagos Weekly Record*, 23 February, 1895.
29. Gbadamosi, T.G.O., *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba*, Longman, London, 1978, p. 4.
30. Avoseh, T.O. *op. cit.* p. 14.
31. National Archives, Ibadan, CSO 26, Ross, R.J.B., *Western District Report, 1900-1901*.
32. National Achieves, Ibadan, CSO 26, File 17611, *Newson to Carrier*, 16 October, 1926.
33. Hodder, B.W., "Badagry: One Hundred Years of Change", in *The Nigerian Geography Journal*, vol. 6, June 1963.
34. Interview with Alhaji Isa Hassan, Ansar-Ud-Deen Missioner, Badagry, 43 years old, January 23, 1990.
35. The two primary schools are Muslim Primary School and Ansar-Ud-Deen Primary School respectively while the secondary school is the Ansar-Ud-Deen Grammar School.

36. Failure to provide IRK is a contravention of Section 35(2) of the 1979 Constitution, Section 24(2) of the 1963 Constitution and Section 7 (II) of the National Policy on Education of 1981 which stipulate the right to educate children in father's own religion.
37. The institutions in Badagry are thickly populated. For example, the ten secondary schools have 4,434 students (1,659 females, 2,775 boys) while the Government Teachers' College established in 1975 has 611 students (248 boys, 363 girls). See Lagos State Ministry of information, *op. cit.* p. 10.
38. Gbadamosi, T.G.O., *op. cit.* p. 200.
39. Mendelson, God, *Allah and Juju*, New York, 1962, pp. 130-131.
40. Al-Jazairi, A.R., *Al-Fight Ala al-Madhaib il-Araba'ah*, Cairo, n.d., vol. 4, p. 540.
41. As-Sayyid Sabiq, *Fiqh us-sunnah*, Maktabat ul-Adab, Cairo, 1978, pp. 62-64.

Introduction

Badagry town and its people are unique in many ways but most particularly in their historic tradition and religious values. The people are "in all things religious".¹ In fact history has it that Christianity was first preached in Badagry in 1842² before the faith spread to other parts of Nigeria. On the spot of the fallen Agia tree now stands a beautiful monument in commemoration of Badagry's privilege as recipients of pioneering evangelisation in Nigeria, though this remains contestable.³

Also striking is the recently rebuilt and decorated missionary cemetery which reminds one of the early missionary activity in this ancient town. The still standing first storey building in Nigeria was a missionary and architectural masterpiece at its time, that remains a tourist attraction. These are not only what makes the study on Badagry unique; rather, it is the fact that some aspects of the people's life and history remain either controversial or ironical. For instance, a cursory observer of the people's tenacious attachment to traditional religious practices would not help wondering about the reason for the people's resilient attitude towards accepting Christianity despite being the earliest beneficiary of the faith in Nigeria.

Has their attitude really changed in modern day Badagry? What impact has Christianity made on the people? What evangelisation methods were/are being employed by Christian churches in Badagry and to what extent have these yielded fruition? These are the issues this chapter intends to examine.

Few works (albeit tangential) have been done on the traditional religion of the Badagry people as well as the early experience of the Christian missionaries in Badagry which culminated in their temporary abandonment of the town for more receptive, cordial and fruitful grounds in the hinterland. J.F. Ade Ajayi's work⁴ in examining the motives for missionary enterprise in Nigeria, presents Badagry simply as a pioneering port of passage for the evangelising missionaries.

E.A. Ayandele expounds more on the experience of the missionaries in Badagry, their hindrances and impact on the life of the people. He believes that "Christianity, commerce and civilization were the primary concerns of early missionary party."⁵ Other than the two books mentioned above, most available studies are found in unpublished dissertations of under graduate students, mostly Badagry indigenes. The only popular indigenous attempt to document in some details the history of Christianity in Badagry was made by Chief T.A. Avoseh who authored the pamphlet *History of St. Thomas Church Badagry*.⁶ Yet none of the above sources have adequately addressed the methods, obstacles and prospects of evangelisation *per se* particularly in relation to the modern context.

In addressing this void, we intend to utilise in addition to the above sources, current information from oral interviews, participant observations and some unpublished materials.

*In doing this, our method would be phenomenological; no claim can be made to exhaustive discourse particularly in the cases of individual church denominations, more so, that several churches possess common evangelisation traits and methods.

Background Studies

(a) *Traditional Religion of Badagry*

Evangelising African people is usually a tedious task because Christianity has to necessarily address the religiously pluralistic nature of the people. Badagry people have their traditional religion with its highly developed liturgy and influence on virtually every part of the peoples life. This (like traditional religions of other African peoples) has been described by foreign investigators with such terms as paganism, heathenism, animism and idolatory etc., terminologies which Bolaji Idowu has described as offensive and opprobrious labels borne out of foreigners racial prejudice and preconceived bias against the inherited indigenous religion of the African people.⁷

The Christians do not buy this argument. Rather, they see it as their God-given commission to civilize the 'dark-continent' of Africa through the light of the Christian Gospel. In other words, paganistic heathens and idolators are to be converted to the only true religion where salvation can be obtained.

The Egun people, indigenes of Badagry are largely adherents of the *Vodun* of *Vothun* as variously called, which is the Egun equivalent of the yoruba *Orisha* (deity). These are divinities or gods in the traditional pantheon; they serve as intermediaries between man and the Supreme God. There are numerous *Voduns*, prominent among which include Dikuunu,

Ajangbo, Loku, Verekete or Othan, Dagbe, Awhanji, Topodun, Hevioso, Zangbeto, Adiyas, Rokomogbeyan, Nabruku.⁸ The gods are too numerous to be mentioned.

It is noteworthy that virtually every indigenous family or clan in traditional Badagry had its patron deity that must as a matter of course be worshipped every day under the leadership of the eldest person in the family or clan. Usually this responsibility is hereditary in the family. Established Vodun shrines dot many parts of the town. In most cases, each shrine has officiating priests and priestesses. It is also common sight to find placements of ritual sacrifices at strategic places such as road interjunctions, seashores and under Iroko trees in the town. The Vodun shrine is usually well decorated with striking art works.

Badagry festivals are usually religious festivals staged by votaries to honour their Voduns. The community as a whole is mandated to make financial or material contributions to the celebration of these annual festivals. *Zangbeto*, *Igunnu*, *Igelede* and *Oro* are the most prominent. This researcher encountered the *Igunnu* masquerade during the course of the research and was struck by the possessive involvement of the followers who compelled every passerby to off their shoes in respect of the masquerades. Such was the all-involving and all-compelling character of Badagry religious Festivals.

The masquerades are sometimes organised to commemorate the worship of the *Kuvito* (ancestors). There are numerous taboos that no one dared to violate without calamitous repercussions. Strongly connected to this are numerous *Jujus* and Festishes which can be utilised to serve diabolical or retributive ends. Totemism is also common as some devotees venerate animals such as snakes, crocodiles and inanimate objects such as particular rocks and trees (particularly the Iroko and Akoko). The riverine boundary of the town and its many fishers also necessitated the worship of the lagoon and sea, etc.

There still exists an agelong practice of training and initiating idigenes especially youth into the Vodun cult. It is usually mandatory for every family to nominate a young member either male or female who would be subjected to training and initiation. In the choice of the initiate, the decision of the parent was all that mattered; over and above that of the person himself. On his choice, a group of Vodun devotees are believed to use Akoko leaf or a piece of clothing (sometimes handkerchiefs) soaked in fetish/charms to touch or cover up the person and afterwards he/she loses control of his/her mind and is carried into the Vodun yard or shrine for training prior to initiation.

This process lasts between a duration of one to three years depending on the cult concerned. Graduation ceremonies for the trainees are usually celebrated with much pomp and pageantry. A graduand is thenceforth ranked above common people of the society. He cannot even take a chieftancy or Obaship position which are seen as being inferior. It was with this environment of plurality of religious beliefs and activities that Christianity was to come into contact with the evangelism.

Christian Evangelisation of Badagry

(a) *Evangelistic Methods: The Missionary Era*

The story of the coming of Christianity to Badagry is too familiar to be repeated here. Suffice it to recall that the three major Mission Church in Badagry were the Methodists (Wesleyans), Church Mission Society (CMS) and the Roman Catholic. The pioneering missionaries to Badagry were the Methodists through the arrival on 24th September 1842 of Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman and Rev. William De Graft and their families. After two months stay, on invitation of King Shodeke, Freeman travelled to Abeokuta where he preached. He returned to Badagry for Christmas Celebration only to meet the C.M.S. missionary Henry Townsend who had just arrived. Both men celebrated the Christmas Service together.

Later, Rev. Samuel Crowther and Rev. C.A. Gollmer, accompanied by some craftsmen and school masters and labourers arrived Badagry on 17th January 1845 for mission work¹² though their initial plan was to proceed to Abeokuta but this had to wait due to the unpredictable political situation arising from the death of King Sodeke who was favourably disposed to missionaries.

The Roman Catholic Church arrived Topo near Badagry in 1876 where they initially began a farm settlement on the Island. The church was later established in Badagry between 1890 and 1891. Each of these churches used the following peculiar methods in evangelising the people.

The open air method was the most common. The initial proclamation of the gospel in 1842 by Thomas Birch Freeman was Open air, under the fallen Agia tree. Such preachings were done in several gathering of people and in strategic places. De Graft also preached in the evening times at the market place. Within six months, in July 1843, he was reported to have held the first baptismal service for five men and one woman.

The first reaction of the Badagry people was of bewilderment about the gospel message. They treated the white missionaries with suspicion having just experienced the horrors of slave trade. Thus it was no surprise that not many people took the preachers seriously enough to get converted. Instead they were treated with mockery, heckling and physical

threat particularly by adherents of the traditional religion. The Missionaries experienced these in Badagry and were forced at a point to temporarily abandon the town for more fruitful areas.

It was customary for the missionaries to build churches for worship service (especially on Sundays) and as venues for evangelism. With this permanent base many people were invited. While Thomas Birch Freeman was away to Abeokuta, William De Graft started regular Sunday Services in the Methodist Chapel put up by returnee slaves. The C.M.S. team that arrived in 1845 utilised the period of their stay in Badagry (while watching political development in Abeokuta following Sodeke's death) to construct a church and mission house where regular services were held.

The advantage of mission churches was also notable in the availability of a permanent place of consultation for troubled persons who needed counselling, a centre of enlightenment to inquisitive people and place of refuge for those who were persecuted for converting to Christianity. To complement this was regular visitation to various family homes. On the other hand was the access people also enjoyed to visit the homes of missionaries. Christian missionaries employed this method in Badagry and paid regular visits to strategic homes mostly of these strongly involved in traditional religion and in doing this, emphasis or pressure was placed upon the husband or the most elderly male of the family who wielded the greatest authority over the family.

The conversion of the leader means the eventual conversion of the whole family. This method of selective evangelism in the home was complemented by the kindness, care and hospitality by the missionaries' visiting the sick, consoling the bereaved, praying for the troubled and aiding the needy. This attitude proved to be emotional weapons of admiration for the white man's religion although this response was sometimes temporary emotional admiration in crisis situations and in some cases do not necessarily last or result into conversion of the beneficiary.

Evangelistic travels outstation was also common. It is on record that Rev. C.A. Gollmer and Rev. S.A. Crowther made such journeys from Badagry to neighbouring villages such as Ipokia, Iworo, Ajido, Okeodan, Ishagbo and Idogo, preaching the gospel and encouraging education.¹³ Henry Townsend's trip to Abokuta was borne out of this motive as well. This method yielded fruits. For instance just recently (1989), the Anglican Church in Iworo celebrated the Centenary of the establishment of the Church and the impact of Christianity on the socio-political life of the people.

The missionaries faced language barriers in their outreach due to their lack of speaking knowledge of Egun and the Yoruba languages and in the such cases the services of the returnee slaves who served as interpreters

was invaluable. Situation improved with the involvement of Rev. S.A. Crowther, himself a Yoruba liberated slave. The movement of the C.M.S. station from Badagry to Lagos in July 1852 was partly due to the earlier successful evangelism of the town through the efforts of James White. Lagosians responded more favourably to the Christian message than the adamant Badagry people. Thenceforth Badagry became and remained an outpost.

Education was prominently employed in Badagry. The missionaries regarded education as a necessary concomitant to evangelism and Christian conversion; Ajayi quotes Bowen's statement:

Our design and hopes in regard to Africa are not simply to bring as many individuals as possible to knowledge of Christ: We desire to establish the Gospels in the hearts and minds and Social life. This cannot be done without Civilisation. to establish the Gospel among any people... they must read the Bible and this implies instruction.¹⁴

Not only was Bible study a regular feature of evangelism, the missionaries also established schools to train children in various disciplines and arts. The primary goal of this was to produce African Clergy and interpreters who would more effectively reach their fellow Africans with the Gospel. This would keep with Henry Venn's advocacy of a dominant native pastorate in Africa more so since the climate (particularly the Malarial disease) resulted into high mortality rate among the missionaries.

To complement the educated priests was the need for trained artisans and literate Civil Servants. In order to achieve the above goals, the missionaries built schools. In 1843 Mr. and Mrs. William De Graft established the 'Nursery of the Infant Church' in Badagry. This school is known as the Methodist School today. This is regarded as the first school in Nigeria. Several Badagry children including those of Chiefs were enrolled;¹⁵ for example Chief Poku enrolled his son Edward Buko.¹⁶ Rev. G.C. Gollmer also established the Gollmer Boarding School which is known today as St. Thomas School. It was much later in 1931 that the Anglican School was established. A technical school was also established to produce artisans such as Carpenters, Tailors, Bricklayers and Printers etc.

The result of this trend can be seen in the large involvement of Badagry people in vocational jobs today more than in academic pursuits. As mentioned earlier, the Roman Catholic Church started a Farm Settlement at Topo Island before establishing the mission in Badagry. They also did not underestimate the importance of education as a tool of evangelism. The mission established 'Our Lady of Apostles Primary School' Badagry in 1941, the 'Badagry Grammar School' in 1955 and 'Badagry Teachers Train-

ing College' etc. Apart from the opportunity for preaching to students which the schools provided, there was also enhanced involvement in the activities of the Church.

At 'Our lady of Apostles Primary School' for instance, Christian prayers were said at daily assemblies, Bible knowledge and moral instruction were taught and students attended Sunday church services as well as church festivals such as the Juvenile Harvest. Due to the above, numerous non-Christian children converted to christianity.¹⁷ Despite Government take-over of mission schools in 1976, the Christian traditions of such schools continue to manifest. It was not uncommon for converted educated children to afterwards resist the traditional religion of their parents or even convert such parents (though this was rare).

Another prominent method or tool of evangelism in Badagry was the Primary Health Care which the Missionaries provided the people. Evangelism must cater for man's physical as well as spiritual needs. Jesus healed various ailing people while preaching his 'good news' of salvation.

The missionaries usually had medical personnel in their teams not only to cater for their own health but also that of the generality of the people. The Roman Catholic Church in Badagry made more impact on the people in this area. The Catholic Sisters who resided in the Badagry Roman Catholic Convent usually provided health care and maternity services for the people of Badagry and environs so much that majority of the people abandoned their former medical centre for the relatively cheap and more efficacious mission healthcare. One Sister Jarlett was awarded the Order of the British Empirs for her meritorious medical services on the Creeks.¹⁸

It is disheartening that some unruly people robbed the Catholic Sisters Convent in Badagry in 1986, stealing most of their equipment. This medical mission had to be abandoned and the Convent closed. According to Rev. (Fr.) Hartnett, there are hopes that this would be reopened in the near future. We should mention also the mission's involvements in agriculture. The CMS operated vegetable gardens and crops fields in Badagry in the 1840's.¹⁹ While the Catholics had a Coconut farm on Topo Island. This coupled with healthcare were aimed at improving the quality of life of the Badagry people.

There was also the contextual factor of evangelism whereby doctrinal resemblances between Christianity and Egun traditional religion are emphasised to attract people into the more refined Christian faith. A striking example of this is the common symbol or sign of the Vodun called *Adihe*, which takes the shape of a Cross. This can suggest the Christian Symbol of the Cross and so the traditionalists can be tempted to see Christians as their religious pals. The Badagry people found greater affinity with the Roman Catholic Church even though the Methodists and Anglicans ar-

rived first. The reasons are not far fetched.

Firstly, the Egun people have closer contact and interaction with their tribal relations in the now French and Portuguese Colonised areas outside the Nigerian border particularly in Benin Republic. These people were mainly Catholics and no wonder why most Egun Christians join the Catholic Church in Badagry; although this was a later development since Catholicism was not initially enthusiastically embraced in Badagry.²⁰

However to date, the Church has a population of about 3,000 and seventy percent of these are Badagry indigenes.²¹ Secondly, the Catholic Church's highly developed liturgy, traditions and display of symbols and art find counterpart in the highly developed liturgy and art decoration of the Vodun shrines. However, the influx of Badagry people more into the Catholic Church does not imply that the Church compromises Jesus Christ's Uniqueness and the exclusiveness of the Christian Gospel; thus such converts must renounce their 'pagan' practices for the Christian faith.

(b) *Evangelistic Methods: Modern Era*

The era of the missionaries has passed and new phases of Christianity can be seen in present day Badagry. The mission churches today though still retaining their inherited traditions, have found it expedient to modify their evangelistic methods to take cognisance of the current needs of the people. The Christian scene is no longer dominated by the Methodist, Anglican and Catholic Mission. Newbreed Church denominations of various doctrinal emphasis and characteristics have arrived on the scene, contributing to the current trend of proliferation in Nigeria.

The churches in Badagry and environs today, their date of establishment and number of branches as presented partly by Chief T.O. voseh²² are tabulated below:

Denomination	Date of Establishment	Branches
Methodists	1842	40
Anglican	1845	19
Roman Catholic Topo	1876	1
Roman Catholic Badagry	1900	26
UAMC (Eleja)	1922	31
Salvation Army	1923	12
The Apostolic Church	1926	8
Jehovah Witness	1933	7
Cherubim & Seraphim	1935	Unknown
Christ Apostolic Church	1940	15
Apostolic Divine Church	1960	3
Celestial Church of Christ	1961	100

Denomination	Date of Establishment	Branches
Agbo Mimo	1964	2
Church of Christ	1967	4
First Baptist Church	1972	3
Foursquare Gospel Church	1975	10
Gospel Faith Mission	1980	3
Deeper Life Bible Church	1984	4
Assembly of God Church	Unknown	1
Aposptolic Church		
Shekinah Church	1986	1

The churches listed above fall under different categories. Apart from the mission or orthodox churches such as the Methodist, Anglican, Catholic and Baptist, there are the Evangelicals such as the Apostolic church and Salvation Army; the Gospel charismatics such as the 'Deeper life Bible Church', Foursquare Church and Gospel Faith Mission and finally there are the indigenous pentecostals most of whom fall under the comity of *Aladura* Churches, such as the Cherubim and Seraphim and Celestial Church of Christ. Each of the above categories utilise some different methods of evangelism in Badagry. Yet it must be stressed that the missionary methods discussed earlier were fundamental and the modern Churches also utilised these in addition to their modern methods discussed below.

Revival services or what the Yorubas call *Isoji* is a common phenomenon in modern day churches particularly among the indigenous pentecostals and the charismatics. Revival services are occasions for a practical reinvigoration of people's spirituality through intensive worship sessions conducted with much gusto. In this, traditional music and dances are employed as stimuli for the people's active participation. This yields much results as it serves as a point of attraction to the typical Egun.

The Egun people love traditional music and dance. The rhythm of their drum beats and other instrumentation can be very stimulating. The borrowing and introduction of Egun music and dances into Church worship was an activating and attractive factor unlike the usual solemn piano-dominated worship of the Mission Churches and it is proof of the positive effects of indigenising Christianity in the Nigerian traditional context.

This is in line with Imasogie's view that "Christian Theology must be informed by the contextual milieu of its target audience in such a way that the word will become flesh among the people".²³ Revivals are occasions for manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as healings, miracles and visions. There is no doubt that the charismatic nature of churches have attracted numerous Badagry people to Christianity.²⁴

Bashua's recent study accused missionaries of showing same attitude in Badagry.²⁸

If this was the attitude of the missionaries in Badagry it was inevitable for them to have faced stiff opposition since there were many of the peoples practices to be opposed: divination, amulets, witchcraft, incantations, superstitions and idolatory.²⁹ If this was so, then the legendary rumor that Christian missionaries were severally persecuted and some martyred in the process would be true.

However, the view of Badagry indigenes denies the above situation. Earlier published works including that of Ade Ajayi³⁰ agree in asserting that the missionaries were not persecuted and forced out of Badagry but attributed their abandonment of Badagry for Abeokuta and Lagos to several factors such as settled political situation of the town due to inter-tribal wars and the peoples suspicious attitude towards the white missionaries having recently experienced the cruelty of white slavers.

Chief Ajose-Harrison, the Semehen of Badagry, asserts categorically that the missionaries were welcomed by the tolerant people of Badagry and also that the missionary attitude towards the people was very cordial even while carrying out their evangelism. He stated further that the missionaries never forced their religion on indigenes nor compelled them to accept Christian ways. Their method was rather peaceful and simply invitational. He noted the close and friendly interaction of the whites with the Badagry people (including non-Christians).³¹

If this was the case, there would be no cause for conflict. Yet it must be noted that in practical terms there was no way of gospel delivery that would be devoid of condemnation of idolatory etc. which usually causes conflict in all places down the ages, though this can be done in subtle ways. It is in seeking this change or conversion that christianity has its vital thrust. Thus the claim that Christians were not persecuted in Badagry may not be taken as absolutely correct.

(b) *Response to the Faith: The Factors*

The attitude of the Badagry people to Christianity was influenced by several factors. In the first instance, the timing of the missionaries arrival was unfavourable. The people of Badagry had just experienced the slave trade under the white slavers. Thus any white man was suspected and unwelcomed except on commercial basis. In this case, what the people could benefit materially from foreigners preoccupied their minds more than the theological concepts and abstractions preached by the missionaries. The white slavers had indulged the people into alcoholism (due to exchange of rum for slaves) and materialism so much that the missionaries remarked that the people asked for bread when presented with the Gospel.

Ade Ajayi equally stated that the people welcomed the missionaries not because of their religion but because of gaining materially (trade) through them.³² The Mewu war in Badagry led to abandonment of the town by foreigners. C.A. Gollmer also left moreso when the mission realized little or no converts among the people after many years of evangelism, a frustrating situation which led him to declare "I have laboured in vain; I spent my energy for nought."³³

Why did the missionaries fail in Badagry? Their first setback was the death of their members through malaria disease. On the list of casualties were Mrs. Gollmer (1845) Mrs. Muller (1848) Mr. Willougby (1850) and Mr. & Mrs. Van Cooten in 1850 and 1851 respectively.³⁴ These losses were psychologically demoralising and discouraging to the missionaries.

The strongest reason was undoubtedly the strong and tenacious attachment of the people to their traditional religion in its various ramifications. According to T.O. Avoseh, the voodoo element in the religion was awful and any indigene wishing to convert to Christianity had to be prepared to face the diabolical repercussions of such action due to magical attack by traditionalists and sorcerers. This scared people away from being converted and some who had to seek refuge in the mission house or churches away from the hostility of their kins and peers

Moreover, traditional religion pervades all aspect of the people's life, so much that for some to drop out of their childhood faith would be like fish out of water unless the churches had closely related alternatives for such deserters. However, Christianity proved more spiritually satisfying. It is in recent times that charismatic Christianity proved attractive to the versatile Egun. Closely related to this is the close-knit family or clan system whereby the religious direction of a family depends largely on the leading of the most senior parent.

African lifestyle is usually communal but Christian evangelism approaches individuals who in the case of Badagry people had to identify with the religious inclinations of their corporate family (composed of the ancestors and the living). In most cases priesthood of family *Voduns* are hereditary in the family and so gives little room for individual members of the family to deviate from the traditional religion.

There is the food and festival factor of the peoples' religion. Festivals such as the *Igunnu* and *Zangbeto* involved the whole community. Even non-adherent passers-by in the present day (irrespective of their religion) are compelled to remove footwears as act of obeisance to the nearby *Igunnu*. Every traditional family in Badagry make financial and material contribution to the religious festivals. Traditional discipline enforced compliance. As a result there is adequate availability of free food for participants throughout the duration to the festivals.

This gluttony factor has been jointly identified ³⁴ as a deterrent to some Badagry people's conversion to Christianity. Ade Ajayi may be correct in stating that "the hold of the traditional religion on the people was very firm." ³⁵

There is a malignant element of syncretism in the attitude of most Badagry people towards Christianity. By this we mean the practice of owning loyalty to and practising more than one religion at the same time. This attitude is discouraged in the Bible (Rev. 3:14).

It is common among Christians in Badagry today to find active members of the church partaking actively (sometimes as masquerades) and under-going intensive 'pagan' rituals in traditional religion. This is not seen as incompatible with their christian faith. A Lay reader in the church can at the same time be a priest of the *Igunnu* cult. An Anglican priest ³⁶ narrated an incident when after his sermon against the peoples syncretic attitude in Badagry, notable church elders warned him afterwards to desist from such.

Rev. S.S.O. Kunnuji ³⁷ observes that even for many youths in the church, traditional taboos and discipline are more revered than Biblical or Church doctrines and injunctions. However, Kunnuji states that the few committed Badagry christians are really dedicated and some like himself have taken to Christian priesthood. The syncretic attitude is characteristic of the people and is shown equally by Muslim converts as some of these so participate actively in the traditional religious rites and festivals.

Perhaps this attitude is traceable to the people's age-long philosophy and practice of religious pluralism whereby every religion is welcomed into the pantheon and co-worshipped in a spirit of religious tolerance. Whatever the reason, this attitude coupled with outright repudiation of Christianity by some people jointly account for the enigma of continued resilience of most Badagry people in accepting Christianity even today. The above notwithstanding, it must be recognised that the brickwall is gradually disintegrating as more indigenes convert to Christianity today through the various evangelistic methods of the numerous churches who today have domiciled in Badagry with many Egun members.

Badagry children are increasingly receiving education and many youths are deviating from their family's occultic worship. The town itself is increasingly getting urbanised with many aliens resident therein. These, coupled with the increasing pull or tempo of modern evangelisation have reversed Badagry's negative attitude towards Christianity as can be seen in the number of churches in the town.

5. Conclusion: A Critique

Undoubtedly Christianity has had a chequered history in Badagry. The rapid proliferation of churches in the town today indicate an apparent reception of the Christian faith by modern day Badagry people even if most of them are still not Christians. A few critical notes need to be made in concluding this work.

A shade of doubt still exists as to the claim of Badagry being the first port of Christian evangelism in Nigeria as shown earlier in my comments in the third footnote of this paper. The traditional religion of Badagry people still remain paganistic and idolatrous when viewed from the Christian perspective. To the Badagry people, it is still the revered religion of their indigenous forebearers which they are traditionally bound to proudly keep. In this, they have every right.

Egun religion (vodunism) is apparently structurally similar to that of every other African people such as the Yoruba, they differ only in names. For example, the Vodun is the Yoruba Orisha, while Hervioso finds perfect counterpart in the Yoruba Sango, god of thunder, etc. Egun resilience towards Christianity in defence of their religion is not unique. However, in keeping up to their religion, there is an urgent need to modernise some extremist indulgences such as forcing youths against their wish to either undergo Vodun training and initiation or inherit the family ancestral cult. The new generation must be allowed to change with the times and given freewill to choose the religious path that may best suit them.

There are still conflicting reports of the attitude and experience of early missionaries in Badagry. It is not unlikely that they were arrogantly pre-conceived in their denunciation of the peoples traditional religion, in which case persecution of the missionaries could have occurred, otherwise nothing less severe could compel missionaries to abandon their mission no matter how unfavourable their condition. Yet this can still not be proved and the myth of persecution remains inconclusive.

Despite the advantages of indigenising Christianity in Africa, one vital caution needs to be made. Christianity must, despite the religion and culture of any people, declare uncompromisingly the uniqueness of the Christian gospel, of Jesus' death and atonement for the sins of the world. As Peter declared in Acts 4:12, "And there is no other name given among men whereby he can be saved except the name of Jesus." In dealing with the Badagry situation as indeed every settling in the world, this truth cannot be compromised. Here, even symbolic and doctrinal semblance between Christianity and vodun religion should not be taken as 'oneness' or 'sameness' but rather as partially, 'likeness'. The vodun cross is definitely not the Cross of Jesus.

As regards the success or failure of Missionary enterprise in Badagry, this is only relative. It is noteworthy that successful evangelism from Biblical perspective is not quantitative but qualitative. Matthew 24:14 regards evangelisation as a 'testimony' or evidence that people have heard the gospel and cannot claim excuse of ignorance on the judgment day. Thus people are to be preached to and invited out of love; they being free to choose to be converted or not. Thus as rightly put by Heldenbrand, successful evangelism should be seen in terms of the message delivered and not compulsorily on the account of the number of converts realized³⁸ (even though this is the ultimate goal).

From this perspective, missionary efforts in Badagry can be adjudged to be successful having evangelised the town and its environs, enhanced education and health care, etc., all of which have contributed on the long term as a fruit planted which has yielded the result of the spread of christian activity in the town today. However this success could have been earlier realised if Henry Venn's concept of absolute native pastorate for African missions was adopted. Perhaps the African people were best suited to evangelize their own people having been familiar with their background and characteristics and indeed the climate and language. Yet this success must not be taken for granted since it is known that prophets sometimes do not have much respect in their homelands.

The modern chrismatic and prophetic churches in Badagry today have brighter chance of winning more converts among the Egun if their appeal is well presented to the people. The mission churches have even found themselves modifying their practices and evangelistic drive due to loss of membership to the chrismatics or even to the vibrant traditionalists. Christian festivals should provide such good facilities as entertainment for people to prevent deflection to vodun festivals where they enjoy the facility.

The task before the churches in evangelising the people of Badagry remains gigantic. The Christians must utilise modern methods through the translated literature and mass media for greater outreach. More denunciation need to be made of syncretic attitude of the people and the Churches should be unanimous in exposing and disciplining such practitioners. The modern day evangelist need to learn a lot from the spirit, zeal and commitment of early missionaries who endured hardship and made immeasurable sacrifices. The trend among modern day evangelists is a sickening indulgence in selfish materialism and comfort which do not allow for effective identification with the spiritual needs of the people of Badagry.

Undoubtedly, the evangelisation of Badagry started by the early missionaries is an ongoing process that, despite existent problems and

Notes and References

1. E.B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (Longon: Longmans, 1962), p. 1.
2. A monument claiming this, stands in Badagry to commemorate this pioneering privilege, and this is a tourist attraction.
3. Before the 1842 proclamation of the Christian Gospel in Badagry, some parts of what is now corporately called Nigeria had been in contact with the Christian faith. Peter McKenzie reports that persecution of Nigerian Christian converts occurred as early as 1538 in the then Kingdom of Benin (see Peter Mckenzie "The persecution of Early Nigerian Converts" *Orita* XI/I (June 1977), p. 46. He opined further that "Christianity spread Northwards from the Sea Coast taking rest first at Benin and Warri then later at Badagry and Abeokuta in the West and Calabar in the East" (*Loc. cit.*). E.P.T. Crampton in his book *Christianity in Northern Nigeria* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979), p. 17 agrees with the above. He shows that during the 1841 Niger expedition, Christianity was already actively preached in the North. For example at Idah, an Arabic Bible was presented to the Attah and the need for keeping Sunday as Sabbath was explained to him. He even pledged to protect Christian teachers that were made to domicile there. Coming nearer home, Christian returned slaves in Badagry were already preaching the faith before Thomas Birch Freeman arrived Badagry on the Macedonian call for James Fergusson, himself a returnee African slave. The import of the foregoing is that the history attributing to Badagry the site where Christianity was firstly preached need to be modified as the site where formal organised Christian mission was first established in Nigeria.
4. J.F.A. Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-1891* (London: Longmans, 1965).
5. *Ibid.*
5. E.A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria: 1841-1914* (London: Longman, 1966).
6. T.A. Avoseh et. al. (ed.) *The History of Saint Thomas's Church: 1842-1986*, pamph., (Badagry: Church Review Committee, 1986).
7. E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (London: S.C.M. 1979) pp. 108-134.
8. S.G. Kuponu, "The Advent of Christianity in Badagry" Unpublished Dissertation, Immanuel College of Theology, 1983, p. 3.
9. Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), p. 48.

10. H.C. Alleman, *New Testament Commentary* (Pennsylvania: Muhlenberg Press, 1944) p. 257.
11. M. Zerwick and M. Grosvenir, *Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974), p. 99.
12. T.O. Avoseh *op. cit.*, p. 10.
13. *op. cit.*, p. 9.
14. Ajayi, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
15. Babs Fafunwa, *History of Education in Nigeria* (London: George Unwin, 1974), p. 81.
16. A.J. Bashua, "The Impact of Christianity on the social life of the people of Badagry" Unpublished Dissertation, Department of History, Lagos State University, 1989, p. 65.
17. Personal Interview, Mr. James Avoseh, 56, Headmaster, Our Lady of Apostles Primary School Badagry, 3/2/90.
18. Personal Interview, Rev. (Fr.) E.D. Hartnett, Resident Priest, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Badagry, 3/2/90.
19. Modupe Oduyeye, "The Planting of Christianity in Yorubaland," in Ogbu Kalu (ed.), *Christianity in West Africa: The Nigerian Story*, (Ibadan: Daystar, 1978), p. 258.
20. Personal Interview, Mr. John Kapo, 62, Chief Church Warden, Sacred Heart Catholic Church Badagry, 3/2/90.
21. Personal Interview, Mr. Pius Babatunde, 30, Catechist, Sacred Heart Catholic Church Badagry, 3/2/90.
22. T.O. Avoseh, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93; field survey.
23. Osadolor Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa* (Achimata: African Christian Press, 1983), p. 40.
24. Personal Interview, Rev. M.A.K. Job, 58, Retired Methodist Minister, Ajara, 27/1/90.
25. Researcher's participant observation.
26. R.T. Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1978), p. 78.
27. S.A. Adewale "Christianity and other Religions: The Nigerian Situation" in S.A. Adewale (ed), *Christianity and Socio-Political order in Nigeria* (Nigeria: NACS, 1987), p. 91.
28. Bashua *op. cit.*, pp. 42-44.
29. J.O. Oladoja "African Response to Christianity! The Yoruba Episode" in S.B. Mala and Z.I. Oseni (eds.) *Proceedings of Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions Conference, 1980* (Ibadan: NASR, 1980), pp. 80-81.
30. Ajayi, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
31. Personal Interview, Chief Ajose-Harrison, Semehen of Badagry, Badagry, 6/2/90.

32. Ajayi, *op. cit.*,
33. T.A. Avoseh, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
34. Personal Interview, Rev. M.A.K. Job and Rev. S.G. Kuponu, Badagry, 27/1/90.
35. Ajayi, *op. cit.*
36. Personal Interview Rev. S.G. Kuponu, Resident Pastor Anglican Church Iworo, Badagry, 27/1/90.
37. Rev. S.S.O. Kunuji, Resident Pastor Anglican Church Idale-Topo, Badagry, 27/1/90.
38. Richard Heldenbrand "Mission to Muslims: Cutting the Nerve?", *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 18/3/ (July 1982), p. 138.
39. See 'Foreward' to T.A. Avoseh *et. al's History of Saint Thomas' Church Badagry, op. cit.*

14

Origin and Development of the Catholic Church in Badagry

A.C. ARIRI-CHIDOMERE

Introduction

Badagry, one of the most historical centres in Yorubaland is more and more receiving the attention it deserves in recent times. While many of these works are yet to be published, it is heartening to note that Nigerian Scholars are becoming increasingly attracted by the historical importance of Badagry. It must be said however that enough attention has not been devoted to the church history of Badagry.

This work is not intended as a comprehensive study of the history of the Catholic Church in Badagry, but as part of the ongoing process of solidification and maturation of the history of the church. After an examination of the background to the coming of the Catholic Church to Yoruba land, we will proceed to look into the early missionary activities of the Catholic in Badagry. Our conclusion will take the form of an examination of the progress made so far and the major problems that confronts the church.

Preamble: The Society for African Missions (S.A.M.)

We find it necessary to begin this study with a short history of the Society for African Missions since it is this body of dedicated priests that the credit for the successful planting of Catholic Christianity in Yorubaland in general and Badagry in particular must go.

In 1854, Right Reverend Malchior Joseph de Marion Bresillac, titular Bishop of Pruse and the first Apostolic of Coimbatore in India returned to Rome to submit his resignation as the Bishop of Coimbatore. He was making no headway in India, and convinced that his approach was to blame, he decided to opt out.

Born in 1813 in the south of France and a member of the Paris Foreign Missions, Bresillac later became interested in Africa. He requested the Holy See to grant him a mission in Dahomey. He hoped that after he had

blazed a trail there, other like-minded volunteers would follow suit. However, the Pope. Pope Pius IX, had other plans. He did not want a missionary undertaking a mission whose continuity could not be assured. He therefore, requested Bishop Bresillac to found a society of priests who would devote themselves exclusively to the evangelization of Africa. Thus was born in Lyons in 1856, the Society for African Missions (SMA).

This society must be credited the origin of official Catholic christianity in Yorubaland in general and Badagry in particular. Bishop Bresillac had specifically requested to be permitted to minister in Dahomey. But aware of the dangers of Dahomey¹, Rome instead offered the mission of Sierra Leone to him.

The first missionary attempt in Africa by Bresillac and his Society ended a failure.² Within six weeks of their landing in Sierra Leone in 1859, all but one of the six SMA missionaries that landed in Free Town died, including Bishop Bresillac himself. The area was ravaged at the time by an epidemic of yellow fever and the missionaries became easy prey to it.

After the death of Bishop Bresillac in 1859, Father Eather Planque assumed the leadership of the new society. What he inherited in manpower was nothing to go by – two priests and six aspirants. However, he was determined that the association should not die in infancy. A year later in 1860, he was assigned the newly created missionary territory of Dahomey, a territory which included the Yorubaland of Nigeria.

In 1861, Father Planque was able to send out a team of three priests to new territory. This team included the indefatigable Father Francis Borghero, an Italian; Father Francis Fernandez, a Spaniard; and Father Lewis, a Frenchman. However, it is Father Borghero that successfully ted Catholic christianity in Dahomey and Yorubaland.³

The Catholic Church in Yorubaland

Born in 1820 at Ronco Sciria, Genoa, and ordained priest in 1855, Father Borghero became the first Italian priest to join the Society for African Missions. He landed in Ouidah in April 1861.⁴ The group's field of vision was not limited to just Dahomey. They were also interested in the new colony of Lagos. Consequently Borghero later set out for Lagos and landed on the 17th of February 1862. He was surprised to meet a large number of Catholics already living in the area.

These Catholic were Yoruba slaves emancipated in Brazil where they had become Catholics.⁵ Before the coming of Father Borghero, the Catholic community in Lagos and other coastal towns of Nigeria were visited periodically by priests from the island of Sao Thome. However, the real work of keeping the Catholic faith alive in Lagos until the mis-

sionaries came was done by a lay catechist popularly known as Padre Antonio. "... regarded as the first apostle of Nigeria."⁶ He returned from Brazil, where he had been emancipated from slavery, specifically, to "... prepare the way where there shall one day be seeing the feet of those bearing 'Good News' of those who proclaim peace" and to keep his fellow countrymen from staying from the faith.⁷

Father Borghero could not accept the land offered him by the Sardinian consul in Lagos to establish a Catholic mission and a school, probably because of the shortage of missionary workers at the time. Rather, he organised Lagos as an out-station of Oidah. From then until 1868 when Lagos had her first parish priest in the person of Father Pierre Bouche, she was visited by priests from Ouidah and Porto Novo. In 1891, the first Bishop of Lagos, Bishop J.B. Chausse was consecrated in Lyons. The Catholic had, at last, established a firm hold in Yorubaland. From Lagos, Catholic christianity was carried to other Yoruba towns - Abeokuta in 1889 and Ibadan in 1895.

The Catholic Church in Badagry

Badagry had contacts with the SMA missionaries about the same time as Lagos. Though Lagos was the primary interest of the missionaries, having secured the town as an outstation, other outstations were opened up in the neighbouring towns and villages including Badagry. Father Borghero is known to have made at least two visits to Badagry. The first was in 1863 on his way from Lagos to Porto Novo. On this occasion, he performed two infant baptisms, children of the Brazilian returnees living in Badagry. Again in 1864, on his way back from Abeokuta, during one of his tours of the Yoruba interior, Borghero passed through Badagry.⁸ Apart from these transit stop-overs, available records give the impression that Badagry did not come within the orbit of regular Catholic missionary evangelism until 1876 when Topo christian settlement was set up.

Topo Christian Community

One would have expected that a Badagry mission should be cited in the town proper. However, the first mission that could be called a Badagry mission was sited at Topo, an island away from Badagry. A number of opinions have been put forward as the reason behind the establishment of Topo Christian community. According to Oduyoye, the missionaries preferred

the untouched native in his paganism to the sophisticated colonies in the coastal seaports. They wanted to make converts among the

natives; they wanted to affect the social life of the native community with leaven of christianity. The method they chose for doing this, however, was to create a separate christian community where they could teach monogamy and discourage fetish rites, two aspects of native culture which they judged to be strongest in keeping the natives from embracing a christian style of life.⁹

On the other hand, MacLoughlin states that the project was influenced by the Jesuit experimental farms in Paraguay.¹⁰

In my opinion, the aim of Topo settlement was never consistent. This could explain the confusion as regards the intention of the founders. Topo was initially conceived as an agricultural school especially for orphans and slaves. But as time went on, the desire to set up a Christian community began to take the upper hand. In his report to Father Plaque, Father Bel, the then superior of the settlement, stated that apart from the boys directly in the charge of the Fathers, "we admit on the land of the mission, families who wish to put themselves under the rules we have imposed ... Their children must be baptized and brought up in the Catholic faith ..."¹¹

Finally, when the later aim failed,¹² the settlement became more or less a boarding school for young ones from the age of about six years.¹³

Father Borghero had mooted the idea during his second visit to Lagos in 1863 when he saw the possibility of setting up christian communities in the empty space he saw along the coast.¹⁴ Twelve years after this, in 1875, arrangements were set in motion for the establishment of an agricultural project in Topo, a strip of island lying between the sea and the lagoon and situated about five kilometres from Badagry towards Lagos. Through the influence of Sir James Marshall, the Supreme Judge of Lagos and Cape Coast, the Topo island was leased to the Catholic Church in 1876. Following the construction of a shed for the Fathers and the opening of an agricultural school, farming began in 1879.

By 1885, fifty four families, mostly traditionalists were working on the land and eighteen children, orphans or redeemed from slavery, were in the care of the priests. In 1892, a convent was established and Rev. Sisters commenced the training of girls. In the same year, the construction of the mission house, began in 1890, was completed by Rev. Father Provenchere. It also served as a rest house for missionaries who were ill or were convalescing.

Life in Topo was strict and highly regimented. The day begins promptly at 5.30 a.m. After morning prayers and Mass, the residents trooped to the farm where they worked till 11.00 a.m. Breakfast was taken in the farm at 9.00 a.m. School began at 1.00 p.m. after lunch and lasted till 5.00 p.m. Between 5.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. when they would go for evening studies,

they prayed twice before and after supper. At 9.00 p.m. they must go to bed and ten minutes later all lights must be put out.¹⁵

It is this austere aspect of life there and the fact that juvenile delinquents were being sent there as alternative to prison that gave Topo its bad reputation as a remand home for *Omo Alaigboran* (bad children). This sort of life imposed on the inmates of Topo is, however, explained by the desire of the missionaries to inculcate in the native Africans the virtue of christian industry.

The Badagry Catholic Mission

As we mentioned earlier, the initial aim of establishing a purely Catholic community at Topo did not quite materialize. According to Father Jules Poirier, who was the first Superior of Topo, the project could not succeed because of lack of incentives on the part of the people to abandon both polygamy and fetish rites. However, as C.A. Imokhai rightly pointed out, the failure of the experiment "... is sociologically understandable and had very little to do with polygamy and fetish rites."¹⁶ What the Topo project was in effect trying to do was to move an urbanized community into a rural agricultural community at a time when the tendency was that of a movement from the rural areas to the urban centres.¹⁷

When therefore the initial aim of making Topo a Catholic community failed,¹⁸ the missionaries returned to the traditional system of establishing mission centres in the midst of the people. Hence the establishment of the Catholic Mission in Badagry town.

Reverend Father Bel became the first resident priest in Badagry in 1901. Before this time, the town was served by the priests at Topo. Situated in its present site, the mission consisted of a number of huts which included the church building itself and the Father's house. Initially, Topo mainland was the only outstation. However, as time went on, efforts were made to open up outstations in the adjoining towns and villages. Thus today, Badagry has become one vast parish with twenty seven outstations. Below is a chronological list of the stations:

- 1901 - St. Joseph's Church Topo
- 1915 - St. Michael's Church, Ilogbo
- 1916 - St. Patrick's Church, Iragbo
- 1927 - St. Leo's Church, Ikoga-Zebbe
- 1935 - St. Augustine's Church, Iyafin
- 1940 - St. Joseph's Church, Akarakumoh
- 1944 - Our Lady of Fatima, Ganyingbo
- 1945 - St. Francis' Church, Apa
- 1945 - St. Machael's Church, Iragon

- 1948 – Our Lady of Lourdes' Church, Erikiti-Ajido
- 1950 – St. Paul's Church, Akere
- 1955 – St. Mary's Church, Ojogun
- 1955 – St. Peter's Church, Agorin Sea Beach
- 1958 – St. James's Church, Gbaji
- 1967 – Holy Family Church, Ajara
- 1980 – St. Anne's Church, Ibereko
- 1980 – St. Francis' Church, Igbo-Oja
- 1983 – St. Andrew's Church, Kwene Sea Beach
- 1983 – St. Anthony's Church, Irewe
- 1983 – Catholic Church, Agbara
- 1986 – Catholic Church, Ajido
- 1986 – Catholic Church, Igbogbele
- 1987 – Catholic Church, Mowo
- 1988 – Catholic Church, Aivoji Sea Beach
- 1988 – Catholic Church, Owode
- 1990 – Catholic Church, Awusa

As the population of the Catholic community in Badagry town grew, it became necessary to build a bigger and more befitting church. In 1967, therefore Father Ghent began the construction of the present church building. Because he had to demolish the existing structures, he had to move temporarily to the Miller's house in the Gaho quarters in Badagry.¹⁹

Right from the beginning, the missionaries recognised the importance of schools as an instrument of evangelization. As such they expanded their area of operation, they established primary schools in strategic places. The first of these schools was built in 1936 at Iragbo, followed by two others in 1944 at Badagry and Ikoga Zebbe. Between 1951 and 1955 four other primary schools were built at Ganynigbo (1951), Igbo-Oja (1955), Agorin Sea Beach (1955), and Ojogun (1955). The importance of these schools in the work of evangelizing the people cannot be overestimated.

As the children are being taught to read and write they were at the same time taught the doctrines of the Catholic Church. Non-Catholics who came to these schools, usually become Catholics by the time they complete their studies. The apex of the Catholic educational endeavours in Badagry was the founding of Badagry Grammar School in 1957, with Father Moor as the first principal. The Women Teacher Training College which came after the Grammar School was later transferred to Mary Land.

The church in Badagry was equally active as far as health care delivery is concerned. A maternity/dispensary was built near the prisons yard, along the Marina. Here the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles founded by Father Planque in 1875, cared for the sick and expectant mothers. The

most famous of these sisters is Sister Carlet. She was a tireless health worker who toured the villages regularly, attending to the people's health problems not minding whether they are Catholics or not. She was awarded the O.B.E. by the colonial government in appreciation of her work in the area.

The Church and the People of Badagry

The response of the people of Badagry to the message of Christianity in general left much to be desired.²⁰ This attitude of the people was responsible for the fact that even though the missionaries usually landed first in Badagry, they always left the town for other places.²¹ According to Oduyoye, this apathy to the Christian message is explainable by the fact that Badagry "... was a slave port, and that predominant concern made it difficult for the chiefs and people to listen to missionaries who wanted the slave trade completely stopped." Moreover, the slaves were partly paid for with rum. This regular supply of rum produced alcoholism in Badagry.²²

These notwithstanding, it seems to me that the main element behind the attitude of the people of Badagry to christianity is the nature of the traditional religion of the people. As Father Hartnett has rightly pointed out, the traditional religion of Badagry has a rich and well developed liturgy. Any religion therefore, that will win the hearts of the people from the traditional religion must hold a much stronger appeal than their traditional religion.²³

In spite of this apathy to christianity, it must be credited to the people of Badagry that there is no known physical violence against the missionaries and the christians in Badagry.

Conclusion

The Catholic Church was the last christian denomination to be brought to Badagry by the missionaries. In spite of this, she has made steady progress, though slow at first, such that today, she ranks amongst the foremost christian denominations in the area. Apart from the main work of evangelization, she has contributed in no small way to the educational and social progress of the locality. Her schools and institutions have turned out many prominent men and women who held and still hold important positions both in the government and the society. Her health care services benefited all who needed it.

The problems which the Catholic Church faces include those which she shares with other christian bodies. These pertain to the differences which exist between Christianity and the culture of the people, such as

polygamy and the mandatory initiation into the cults of the traditional religion. Other problems include that of man-power. As we mentioned earlier, the Catholic Church in Badagry now has some twenty seven out-stations under the care of just one priest. Clearly more priests are needed to adequately care for such a vast parish. The nature of these problems, however, are such that need time and tact before they can be solved.

The Church and the People of Badagry

The response of the people of Badagry to the message of Christianity is general left much to be desired. The message of the people was to pay little for the fact that even though the missionaries would have had to be Badagry, they always left the low for their times. According to Oduyoye, this quality to the Christian message is epitomized by the fact that Badagry "... was a slave port, and that predominant concern made it difficult for the chiefs and people to listen to missionaries who wanted the slave trade completely stopped. Moreover, the slaves were being sold for with run. This regular supply of run produced elsewhere in Badagry. These notwithstanding, it seems to me that the missionaries failed the attitude of the people of Badagry to Christianity is the nature of the traditional religion of the people. As Father Oduyoye rightly pointed out, the traditional religion of Badagry has a rich and well-developed liturgy. Any religious doctrine that will win the hearts of the people must be a traditional religion must hold a message that is in line with the traditional religion of this people to Christianity. It must be created in the people. Badagry that there is no lower, elevated religion against the traditional religion and the Christian in Badagry.

Conclusion

The Catholic Church was the last Christian denomination to be brought to Badagry by the missionaries. In fact, she has made a very poor showing at first, which is today, she has made a very poor showing in her traditional demonstration in the area. Apart from the network of evangelization, she has concentrated in no small way to the education and social development of the people. Her schools and institutions have turned out many prominent men and women who are and will be the backbone of the state both in the government and the society. Her health services have been established all over the state.

The problems which the Catholic Church now includes those which she shares with other Christian bodies. These problems are the difficulties which exist between Christianity and the religion of the people, such as

Notes and References

1. The ferocious barbarism of the regime of King Gle-Gle who was in power at this time was well known in Europe. Cf M.J. Bane, *Catholic Pioneers in West Africa*, London: Burns and Oaths, 1956, pp. 127, 128, 140-142.
2. Bane, *op. cit.*, p. 132. A moving description of the last hours of Bishop Bresillac and his Vicar General, Father Reymond, is contained in letter written by M. Bremond, a French layman to the Sacred Congregation for the propagation of faith. See Bane, *op. cit.*, pp 133-135.
3. We have been using Yoruba land where one could have more conveniently used Nigerian. This is in recognition of the fact that about this time, the Holy Ghost Fathers of Father Francis Liberman led by Bishop Shanahan were doing a wonderful work among the Igbos east of the river Niger.
4. A detailed account of their arrival at Quidah is given by Father Borghero himself. See Bane, *op. cit.* pp. 137-141.
5. For now those slaves came to be emancipated, see J.F.A. Ajayi, *Christian Missionaries in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a new Elite*, Esse: Longman Group Ltd, 1965, pp. 49-59; Modupe Oduyoye, "The Planting of Christianity in Yorubaland" in Ogbu Klu (ed.), *Christianity in West Africa: The Nigerian Story*, Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1978, pp. 247-252.
6. See Bane, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
7. *Ibid.*
8. See M.P. Macloughlin, "Highlights of the History of the Catholic Church in the Lagos Ecclesiastical Province", in A.O. Makozi and G.J. Afolabi Ojo (eds.) *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*. Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Ltd., 1982, p. 16.
9. *Op. cit.* p. 290
10. *Op. cit.*, p. 19
11. Ajayi, *op. cit.*, p. 115. See also idem, "The Development of Secondary Grammar School Education in Nigeria" in *the Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, No. 2, Dec. 1963, pp. 520-521.
12. Cf., Oduyoye, *op. cit.*, p. 292
13. This is the opinion of Mr. Lawrence Owusu, the Catechist of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Topo and his sister, Mrs. Theresa Okedaro who are both products of the settlement.
14. Ajayi, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
15. Mr. Lawrence Owusu, Interview.
16. Reverend Father C.A. Imokhai, "The Evolution of the Catholic

- Church in Nigeria" in A.O. Makozi and G.J. Afolabi Ojo (eds.), *History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, Lagos: Macmillan Nigerian Ltd., 1982, p. 10.
17. *Ibid.* See also Oduyoye, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
 18. It must be stated that in the opinion of those interviewed the failure of Topo christian settlement was only apparent and not real. According to Todd, "... Topo created an atmosphere of happiness and industry which had its effect throughout the neighbourhood. The influence was of the same kind as that exercised by the Benedictine monasteries of the Middle Ages throughout Europe which often did not have a direct religious effect, but suffused the whole of the society with a tangible visible idea of industry and prayer, so that gradually with striking conversions, society was changed." (John M. Todd, *African Mission*, London: Burns and Oates, 1961, p. 201.
 19. This information was supplied by Mr. John Kapo, the chief church warden of the church in Badagry.
 20. Oduyoye, *op. cit.* pp. 258-259.
 21. *Ibid.*
 22. *Ibid.*
 23. An Interview.

15

Religious Interaction: Factors of Syncretism In Badagry Religious Life

D.F. ASAJU AND D. OWANIKIN

Introduction

Syncretism can be described as that attitude whereby a person combines the tenets, as well as partake in the worship of more than one religion concurrently. Those who indulge in this can be described as the 'Here and There' religionists because they owe dual allegiance to various religions which are essentially dissimilar.

Syncretism can be viewed from two perspectives. On the one hand it may be seen positively as a laudable practical effort at enhancing religious interaction, tolerance, understanding and cooperation in the fashion of the unificationists.¹ On the other hand, it can be seen negatively from the dogmatic perspective particularly by the monotheistic religions such as Christianity and Islam, as an act of unfaithfulness, indecision and unrighteousness. These two religions which have popularly domiciled in Badagry are exclusivist, making it contradictory to combine their faiths with another. Therefore, syncretism is seen as sitting-on the fence-religiosity whose practitioners cannot be regarded as seriously committed adherents of either of the practised faiths.

What obtains sometimes is not a serious indulgence by practitioners in more than one religious faith, but commitment to one, with a partial inclination and participation in certain aspects of another, in areas such as festivals, songs etc., especially if these have been embedded in a people's tradition over the years. Of course, there are certain traditional practices such as the use of items (and their symbolism) and procedures during naming, marriage, chieftancy and funeral ceremonies which Christians and Muslims readily employ. It is not such indigenisation or contextualisation of foreign religions in the African milieu that we refer to as syncretism here but an active marging of the core of their faiths (where they are proved to be incompatible).

The different dimensions of syncretism can be found in Badagry religious life. This poses problem of justification of such tendencies on

scriptural grounds, as well as the demographic implications of this tendency in assessing the religious classification of the populace. This problem also bothers the churches and mosques whose evangelistic efforts have been hindered by uncommitted or inconsistent converts.

This chapter purposes to examine this phenomenon and the factors responsible for it. It would also discuss its effects as well as proper suggestions were necessary.

Religious Situation in Badagry

(a) *The Religions in Badagry*

Ayihon me mimo ofa
male hothoe
whenana me we yise wa

Translations:

We met Ifa² in the world
 Islam came afterwards
 Christianity came in the afternoon (later)

The above Egun rendition of the popular Yoruba saying is true of Badagry religious history.

Badagry indigenes had their indigenous religion which was characterised by the worship of the Supreme God serviced by numerous divinities called Voduns³, equivalent to the Yoruba *Orishas*. These are local divinities and ancestral spirits who served as intermediaries between Man and the supreme God. Their functions are departmentalised in God's theocratic pantheon. There are numerous Voduns; each with set liturgy and distinctive priests and devotees in attendance and each has festival occasions. *Hevioso* (thundergod) occupies a prominent place in the pantheon. Voodoo (sorcery) practice is common among the Egun people; so is Ancestor worship/veneration. Religious festivals for masquerades such as the *Igunuko*, *Verreketete*, *Zangbeto* and *Oro* are grand, and these enjoy the massive participation of the indigenes from far and near.

Some Badagry youths are dedicated annually for training and initiation into the cult of the Voduns, and this lasts between one year to three years depending on the demands of the particular Vodun.

Training take place within the precinct of Vodun shrines, temples and convents. Such shrines and temples dot many parts of the ancient town as evidence of the continued prevalence of traditional religion among the people. They have tenaciously remained attached to this religion despite the proselytizing efforts of Christianity and Islam.

According to Gbadamosi, Islam arrived at Badagry by the 1790s though Avoseh's date of 1821⁵ appears more likely to be correct. It came through some Oyo migrants (such as Saibu Ogbonalejo, Mogaji, Akinola, Buramoh, Sule Salu and Alfa Ashiru etc.)⁶. Since its arrival, it has continued to win converts among the people. The Badagry General Mosque stands near the site of the fallen Agia tree where Christianity was first preached in Badagry.

Christianity came to Badagry in its formal mission in 1842 and it is claimed that the faith was preached here first in Nigeria though there are evidence of earlier contact of the missionaries with other parts of present day Nigeria. Rev. Birch Freeman of the Methodist Mission, Rev. Henry Townsend of the Anglican Mission (CMS) as well as others such as Rev. C.A. Gollmer and Rev. S.A. Crowther contributed immensely to the introduction and spread of the faith in Badagry though their efforts did not initially receive the people's favourable response. This trend has however been reversed today due to an upsurge of evangelism which has led a large part of the population into converting to Christianity in its various denominations.

(b) *Comparison of the Religions: A Doctrinal Perception*

It is significant to compare and contrast some of the doctrines of the three religions in order to determine some of their compatibilities or otherwise since this is the fundamental ground for considering syncretism.

The three religions agree on the existence and oneness of the supreme God, called by different names. Also they have their festival occasions which are usually celebrated with gusto, pomp and pageantry. Vodunism and Islam agree on the practice of set times of prayers, and rites accompanying birth, naming and marriage ceremonies. Also Muslim acts at worship have similarity with the prostrating and genuflecting acts in Vodunism. Vodunism and Christianity share similarities in the practice of baptism, extempore prayers and charismatic worship, as well as the existence of art-decorated places of worship and convents.

The three religions however disagree in other areas. Vodunism recognizes the intermediary role of the numerous divinities (voduns) who incidentally are the objectives phenomena since they have distinct cults and priests while the supreme God is worshipped with the voduns or the divinities acting as the intermediaries.

Islam upholds absolute unity or oneness (*Tawhid*) of Allah. This high concept of monotheism rejects any form of intermediary between God and Man (Quran 112). To associate partners with God in worship is tantamount to *Shirk* which is the greatest sin in Islam. Christianity has a slightly different and complex conception of monotheism based on the

Trinity of the Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Here Jesus occupies intermediary role as the only Son of God. From the foregoing, it can be seen that the crux of the theological differences is in the fact that Vodunism has many sons of God, Christianity has only one son while Islam has no son. It is also noteworthy that while Christianity and Islam have Coded Scriptures (Bible and Quran), Vodunism still has its articles of faiths and tenants in Oral tradition making it susceptible to changes.

Christianity and Islam share common status of prophets in the Bible and Quran, though their accounts differed in some details, for example the biblical conception of the divinity and crucifixion/resurrection of Jesus Christ is refuted in the Quranic account of Issa (Jesus) etc. Therefore, their concepts of salvation run counter to each other. The Christian belief is that salvation comes through faith in God through Jesus Christ the divine incarnate son, crucified and resurrected. Acts 4:12 strongly claims that salvation can be achieved only through faith in Jesus and no one else neither any other religion. Islam condemns this position, asserting that faith in the unity of Allah only, guarantees salvation.

The use of magic, charms, amulets are common in Vodunism but not allowed in Christianity and Islam although the latter is less emphatic on this. Ancestor worship manifested in form of masquerades has no counterpart in both Christianity and Islam. The 'careta' masquerading practised by the Catholic Church in Old Lagos, for instance, has no Christian basis but arose from a syncretism of Christianity and traditional religion by returnee slaves from Brazil. The rituals offered to numerous family, clan and community Voduns are regarded as abominations⁷ by Christians and Muslims since the deities are seen as idols while their worship is dismissed as 'paganism', terms which some scholars of traditional religion condemn as opprobrious and derogatory, arising from foreign missionaries preconceived bias against the culture or religion⁸ of the African people.

The foregoing has shown some areas of differences which make it contradictory to syncretize the religions particularly where the monotheistic and exclusivist ones are involved. It is difficult to be a Christian and Muslim⁹ at the same time or to be an adherent traditional religion and Christian/Muslim at the same time. Each religion ought to be known and treated exclusively according to its faith and peculiarity. It is this fact that Sheikh Ahmed Zamani wanted to portray when he said:

In the great debate between Christians and Muslims (and by implication other religions in contact), there are areas where no amount of logical discourse can bring the two sides nearer to each other and where the existence of an impasse must be recognized.¹⁰

This is the ground on which our perception of Syncretism in Badagry would be based.

Syncretisms in Badagry Religious Life

The Badagry indigenes are traditionally open-minded and accommodating in matters of religion. Religious fanaticism owing to extreme religious particularity is not common among them. There are several die-hards who are either Traditionalist to the core, Christian to the core or Muslim to the core, such do not partake in syncretic behaviours. But for majority of the people this is not so. The underlying philosophy for this behaviour can be found in the following adages:

(i) *Aliho dopo ma bio ahime*

Translation: A market does not have only one entrance.

(ii) *Aga kope Zisunron na ohe We Agbasa ma na je Agbasa go*

Translation: The sky is wide enough for different birds to fly together without collision.

The import of the above is in the readiness of the people to accept and possibly practise virtually every religion in the town. For this reason they interact inter-religiously, in felicitation during the different religious festivals like *Egungun* (masquerade) festival, Christmas and *Eid el kabir* (Muslim festival). The open-mindedness is part of the people's heritage.¹¹

Many Egun people do not regard it as sacrilegious to be a Christian or Muslim and at the same time partake actively in rituals of Vodun or the masquerade such as *Igunnuko*. This trend has been a cause of worry for Church priests and leaders in Badagry. The Roman Catholic Church which has perhaps the largest population of Egun Christian indigenes, can report of several of its Egun youths who participated (willingly or by compulsion) in the annual Vodun initiation rites despite warnings from the Church.¹³ Such culprits are consequently, usually subjected to discipline such as ex-communication from taking the sacraments in the Church. Yet, this does not seem to deter them. The Anglican Church is no exception. Several youths and even leaders are initiated leaders of the Vodun cult. There is even the case of a Church Lay Reader of St. Thomas' Church Badagry who is a Priest of *Igunnuko*.¹⁴ A Church priest narrated an occasion when he preached against syncretic attitude of the people in Badagry only to be confronted and warned to desist from such, by some respected elders and leaders of the same church. It is also baffling that many church members make greater financial contribution to the annual Vodun and *Igunnuko* festivals more than they do to the Church.¹⁵ There are even reported cases of masqueraders being active church members. The same experience is found among the Muslims some of whose mem-

bers partake in masquerading contrary to Islamic injunction. The reason for this attitudinal and systematic syncretism can also be traced to the popular saying that:

*Mile na basi Jowamo miton,
gise ma ko do mi ma na
basi jowamo miton*

Translation:

We shall celebrate our traditional Rite.
Christianity does not debar us from
celebrating our traditional rites.

This inherent belief of the people in the possibility of syncretising their faith with the foreign monotheistic religions is not seen as being contradictory to the ethics of the exclusive religions. In this case, the Bible/Quran is not the supreme judge but the people's self-avowed philosophy, since their cultural heritage has greater authority than any alien religion.

The traditional status of the Oba and Chiefs of Badagry could be reflective of this accommodating and all-embracing tendency.

Some Badagry titled and functional Chiefs are either Christians or Muslims, just as the present Oba is a Christian, yet they are all seen as compulsory patrons of all religions domiciled in their domain. Perhaps due to the above, there has been relative religious peace in Badagry. Similarly the common indigenous family today is comprised of members who belong to the different religions. Thus it is indispensable that the people interact and cultivate the culture of religious tolerance.

Factors Responsible for Syncretic Attitude in Badagry

(a) *Religious Pluralism*

As noted earlier the historical and cultural background of the Badagry people bequeaths to the people a plurality of gods each of which has distinctive adherents. Their functions are departmentalised and many of the Voduns are totem gods and are identified with various aspects of the Cosmic phenomena. For example, there are gods of the river, rock, trees and thunder etc. Every aspect of the people's life is influenced by their religion. They, like the Yoruba can be said to be "in all things Religious". A votary of one Vodun can be an adherent of another since various Voduns served different purposes. Therefore it was no surprise for the people to take Christianity and Islam as welcome religions only in so far as they can be added to the conglomeration of gods in the Egun pantheon.

(b) *Semblance of Doctrines*

There is no doubt that Egun religion (Vodunism) has some striking similarities with Christianity and Islam. The core issue of compatibility is however not in similarities but in sameness. Christianity for instance, may share common outward traits with Vodunism as earlier stated but essentially as far as articles of faith are concerned the two religions are poles apart. The areas of similarities is typified for example in the Vodun sign of the Cross called *Adihe*. This is similar to the Christian Cross of Jesus. The *Adihe* does not have the spiritual meaning attached to the Christian conception and it is not proved whether this was influenced by early Christianity.

Also, the Catholic Church's display of symbols and art on its buildings finds counterpart in the flamboyant art and symbol impressions of Vodun shrines.¹⁷ The Catholic convents are comparable to Vound 'convent' for training initiates. The indigenous churches' prophetic oracles and spirit-possession are like the Vodun adherents' practice of divination, ecstatic trances and spirit-possession. The Charismatics inspiring rhythmic traditional church music are not dissimilar to the gusto that accompanies the Egun religious or traditional music and dance. The numerous rituals of the Celestial Church of Christ can be said to have antecedents in the traditional religion of the people.¹⁸

The danger with semblance of doctrines is the temptation for adherents of one religion to keep rigidly to their old faith with preconceived bias and resilience against others which may/may not be better, making the possibility of conversion difficult since they would see nothing new in the other religions.

(c) *Traditional Indulgence and Food Factor*

When a system or action has been long indulged in, it eventually becomes a part of the person. Old habits (and religion) die hard. Christian or Muslim proselytizers would be overambitious in expecting a spontaneous renunciation of the Egun people's age-long religion and with it their traditions in preference of their imported faiths. Egun traditions is the totality of the life of the people and most people who wish to give it up may prefer to take the more cautious approach of sitting on the fence to experience and compare both and later (may) decide for one. Incidentally, both Christianity and Islam demand instant and absolute decision of the converts for their new faith. As Jesus Christ clearly put it, a person cannot serve two Masters (Matthew 6:24) thus by implication, Christianity and Vodunism cannot go together in their essential articles of faith though Christianity can utilize Egun mediums and methods in making the faith more relevant to the people's context. Incompatibility of other religions'

doctrines with those of Islam is also implied in Quran chapter 2, verse 208.

Associated with the above is the materialist and food factor in Egun traditional religion particularly during the festivals. In the first instance, the generality of the people are required to make financial and material contributions to the festivals and such investment psychologically encourages their commitment. In the second instance, free food is served to all participants throughout the duration of the festival. This is a point of attraction for the people who would benefit from this communal providence which counts a lot in these days when many people suffer from the pains of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The indulgent, the gluttonous, the excited, the pleasure-seeking and the serious devotee find this opportunity to meet to dine and wine.

Neither Christianity nor Islam provides such facilities and the people are not ready to give it up easily. This accounts for why some people adopt the syncretic attitude.

(d) *Crisis Situation*

It is not uncommon to find people in one form or another visiting experts of a different religion to seek fast and efficacious solutions to their problems. Numerous Christians and Muslims who suffer from mysterious diseases and spiritual oppression visit (albeit secretly) Vodun priests and herbalists for charms, amulets and medicine for protective, preventive or curative purposes.

Similarly the Christian can visit the powerful Muslim Mallams and Ifas for curative concoctions while the Muslim may attend Christian evangelical crusade hoping for miracles or even undergo ritual healing in the indigenous Spiritual Churches such as the Celestial Church of Christ. This is common as a visit to the Badagry beach presents one with sights of praying white garment prophets engaging in ritual for all and sundry irrespective of their religious leanings.

All the above are syncretism due to crisis situation. It is noteworthy that in most cases once the problem or crisis situation passes and the problem is solved, the consultee may revert to his former religion.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of this chapter that numerous factors which are fundamental have caused the tendency towards religious syncretism among Badagry people. This trend is not religiously neat. Each religion needs to have distinct characteristics and enforce discipline in matters of unfaithfulness or lack of dedication of its members. Though syncretism can serve the end of forging increased religious interactions for mutual under-

standing and peaceful co-existence, it is however a possible factor for lack of progress of the Churches or Mosques. It can waterdown the uniqueness and veracity of the two monotheistic religions. It can lead to confusion in religious beliefs of children as Mesi, *et al* has shown in their study of the impact of traditional religion on education in Badagry.¹⁹

The Christian and Muslim leaders and preachers themselves are afraid to confront and vigorously condemn this trend perhaps because they themselves are involved in the misnormer or because they are afraid of the diabolical attacks of voodoo on them by the vodunists. However, it is in the fearless and uncompromised declaration of the truth as one knows it and believes it that successful evangelisation and religious understanding can be realistically achieved.

This has implications for the recurrent but questionable theology that claims 'all ways lead to God' the basis of which syncretism is viewed and practised. This philosophy implies that every religion is true and can lead to salvation in the afterlife. It is even usually asserted that God reveals himself through various mediums and so, all religions worship the same God. Though this theory appears logical, it hardly has scriptural support in the two monotheistic and exclusivist religions of Christianity (Acts 4:12) and Islam (Quran 3:19).

This chapter believes that syncretism should not be seen as a demonstration of the virtues of religious interaction. Rather the road to inter-religious understanding, tolerance and co-existence would be well paved if adherents of each religion preach uncompromisingly its peculiar doctrines and articles of Faith (as simply invitational and not coercive) and recognize the equal rights of adherents of other faiths to do same. Therefore, syncretising the incompatibles would be tantamount to religious cosmetology. Strong commitment to particular religions would enhance a clear demarcation, classification and understanding of the religious situation in Badagry.

Notes and References

1. Unificationists (Such as that led by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in the United States of America) attempts to show the Universality of God and the need for unification of various religions and denominations with the belief that all religious faiths lead to the one and same Supreme God.
2. Ifa (Yoruba Oracular divinity and instrument of divination) is used here as representative of Yoruba traditional religion.
3. The Badagry name for God – *Vodun* evokes some noteworthy semblance and possible identification with the Vodoo cults in other parts of the world. In this study of this cult, H.E. Freeman believes that "Voodoo (from *Vodun* meaning 'Spirit') is a folk religion of Haiti, consisting of a mixture of African Witchcraft and elements from other religions... Initially Voodoo came to the Western Hemisphere over 200 years ago when the first African slaves were sold ... Although Vodoo ceremonies vary somewhat from place to place, they are all essentially the same. They are presided over by a priest or priestess who leads the rituals, which include singing and dancing to the sensuous beat of drum rhythms, thus invoking the presence of Spirits. There are ritual offerings of food, and the blood offerings of animals or fowls. As the Music, drink and, dances begin to take effect, one after another of the participants begin to fall into a state of trance as the demons (impersonating ancestors or gods) begin to take possession of their devotee... the vodoo cults practise both white and black magic and engage in various forms of Spiritism and occultism (mediumistic trance, divination, magic charming etc)" See Hobart E. Freeman, *Every Wind of Doctrine* (Ibadan: Oluseyi Press, 1987), pp. 151-152. The above description befits the *Vodum* cults in Badagry in characteristics and possibly in origin since Badagry was a major slave port. This picture of the cult (though written from a subjective perspective by the author) has implications of incompatibility in syncretising vodunism with other religions.
4. G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba: 1841-1908* (London: Longmans, 1978).
5. T.O. Avoseh, *Iwe Esin Imale ni Ilu Agbadarigi* (Apapa: Adedu Press, 1960), p. 36.
6. See Opeloye and Akintola's Chapter 12.
7. Christians are particularly warned to abstain from food offerings to idols (see Acts 15:20).

8. E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (London: SCM, 1973), pp. 108-134.
9. It should be noted however, that there are some people who believe in a practice both Christianity and Islam. This syncretised faith is tagged 'Chrislam'. For an example of this practice, See D.F. Asaju's Proliferation and Deviant Tendencies in Some Nigerian Churches: A Case Study of Jesus Of Oyingbo's 'Universal College of Regeneration', in S.A. Adewale (ed.), *Proliferation of Churches in Nigeria* (Ibadan: N.A.C.S., 1989).
10. W.M. Watt, *Islam and Christianity Today* (London: R.K.P., 1983), p. 114.
11. Personal Interview, Alhaji I. Yakubu, Badagry Indigene, Iworo, 4/2/90.
12. Personal Interview, Rev. (Fr.) E.D. Hartnett, Priest, 'Sacred Heart Catholic Church' Badagry, Badagry, 3/2/90.
13. Personal Interview, Mr. John Kapo, Chief Church Warden, 'Sacred Heart Catholic Church' Badagry, Badagry, 3/2/90.
14. Personal Interview, Rev. S.S.O. Kunnuji, Priest, Anglican Church, Idale-Badagry, 27/1/90.
15. Personal Interview, Rev. S.G. Kuponu, Priest, Anglican Church, Iworo, 27/1/90.
16. E.B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (London: Longmans, 1962), p. 1.
17. Personal Interview, Rev. (Fr.) E.D. Hartnett, Priest, 'Sacred Heart Catholic Church' Badagry, Badagry, 3/2/90.
18. The Origin of the Celestial Church of Christ in Nigeria has been traced to activities of Some Egun People. See Olu Obafemi, *Pastor S.B.J. Oschoffa, God's 20th Century to Africa* (Lagos: Pathway, 1986) p. 45f.
19. See N.O. Mesi and L. Ogunjuyigbe, "The Effects of Traditional Religion on Education in Badagry", Unpublished N.C.E. Dissertation, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, 1987, pp. 12-18.

- 8. E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Discussion* (London, SCM Press, 1957), pp. 108-114.
- 9. It should be noted however that since the same people who believe in an ancestor both Christianly and Islam, they are called both Islamic Christians. For an example of this practice, see Dr. Asim's *Prohibition and Permitted Tobacco in Arab Moslems*. *Chicago Center Study of Islam* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 108.
- 10. W.M. Watt, *Islam and Christianity* (London, A.S.P., 1962), p. 111.
- 11. Personal interview, Ahmad, 1. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 12. Personal interview, Ahmad, 2. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 13. Personal interview, Ahmad, 3. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 14. Personal interview, Ahmad, 4. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 15. Personal interview, Ahmad, 5. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 16. E.B. Idowu, *Obi: The African巫术* (London, Longmans, 1962), p. 11.
- 17. Personal interview, Ahmad, 6. *Islamic Religion*, London, 1962.
- 18. The Quran of the Central Church of Christ in Nigeria has been placed to facilitate of some form of the Old Testament. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1962, p. 111.
- 19. See also, Ahmad and J. Gwynne, *The Ethics of Traditional Religion in Islam* (London, University of London Press, 1962), pp. 111-112.

16

Religious Interactions In Badagry: An Islamic View Point

M.A. MUHIBBU-DIN AND M.O. JUNAID

Introduction

Three distinct phases are discernible in the effort to trace the religious history of the people of Badagry. The notable aspects are closely related to the emergence of the three dominant religious, namely: African Traditional Religion (ATR), Christianity and Islam.

Firstly, there was an era when traditional religion held an almost unchallenged sway, perhaps from the inception of the first settlement till about the middle of the nineteenth century. Secondly, with the abolition of slave trade, Badagry along with Lagos and Abeokuta became settlement centre for the returning freed slaves from Sierra-Leone. During the period, many Christian religious bodies started to show more interest in the conversion of Africans. The African freed slaves from Sierra Leone and Brazil were trained as missionaries and carried the great burden of evangelisation, hence, the evolution of Christianity. The influx of Christian missionaries marked the second phase of religious expansion.

In the third phase, both the church and the mosque strove to win more souls and adjust to the local traditions and practices. This era which stretched into the early decades of the twentieth century can rightly be described as that of religious indigenisation.

African Traditional Religion

For several centuries, Badagry was a stronghold of indigenous worship. Traditional religion is still very strong with adherents worshipping regularly at their various shrines and temples. The people of Badagry, like other Yoruba sub-groups, believed in the existence of one Supreme Being – the Almighty God – and many small gods who derived their cosmic power and authority from the Supreme Being. The belief system in Badagry took the form of *Vodun* and *Orisa* cults among the Egun and Awori-Yoruba respectively.¹ There are vital differences between *Vodun*

and Orisa cults as regards the way they were organised and the functions they were expected to play in the society.

In the *Vodun* system, the worshippers of the different divinities came together as members of a common congregation under the leadership of a Chief Priest called the *Vodono*. The Chief Priest drew up particular courses of instructions and set specific periods of training for all the apprentices.² He also prescribed a strict code of moral conduct during the training period and admitted children between the ages of ten and twelve.³ In the course of the several years of training in *Vodun* yard, the inmates were instructed on the social virtues of integrity, respect and loyalty. After the completion of the training, the apprentices became full members of the *Vodun* cult. They were then known as the *Vodunsi*.⁴

On the other hand, the worshippers of the various *Orisa* belong to no single congregation and had no centralized leadership. Instead, the priests of the various *Orisa* were as independent of one another as the functions which the separate cults were supposed to fulfil in the society. Unlike the *Vodun* system, the initiation of the adherents was not limited to the youth nor was there any collective system of regular training for the adherents.

Among the notable traditional festivals which had taken place in Badagry and its environs were: *Egungun* festival, *Oro* festival, *Hevioso* (Sango – god of thunder), *Topothunus*, *Igunnu* to mention a few.⁵ It was perhaps because of the attraction and festivities that go along with the traditional religion that the number of shrines in Badagry township alone, numbered the churches and mosques put together.

Christianity

March 1841, James Fergusson, a leading immigrant in Badagry, requested the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in London to send out a missionary to promote the gospel there.⁶ He pointed out that the prospects for missionary work at Badagry were bright. The Methodists immediately instructed Thomas Birch Freeman, a mullato of Black and English parentage to occupy Badagry as an out-station and establish a mission there.

On 24 September, 1842 Freeman arrived in Badagry. He was accompanied by a Fante Catechist, William de Graft. The two preached the gospel of Christ under the famous *Agia Tree* in Badagry and this marked the beginning of Christian evangelisation in Nigeria. They were followed later by Rev. Henry Townsend, Samuel Ajayi Crowther and C.A. Gollmer, all of the Church Missionary Society. With the spread of Christianity to the neighbouring towns like Abeokuta, Lagos and other parts of Yorubaland, Badagry unquestionably could be regarded as the hub of missionary activities in Nigeria, and gateway to Christianity.

Islam

Islam pre-dated Christianity in Badagry. By the time Christian missions started their evangelical activities on the southern coast of Nigeria, Islam had already gained much ground in the northern periphery of Yorubaland and had been embraced by a section of the Yoruba population of Badagry.

Although the date of entry of Islam into Western Yorubaland cannot be fixed with precision, documentary records show, that European explorers watched a colourful celebration of *'Idul-Fitr* festival at Badagry in 1830.⁷ Moreover, Muslim population in neighbouring Lagos had been on a steady increase. Islam had found its way into court of Adele I.⁸ Many of them had been converted through contact with itinerant mallams mostly from Ilorin or the Nupeland. The peculiar nature of the town as a market-centre provided a conducive atmosphere for the itinerant mallams who actively combined trading with the preaching of Islam.

Islam in Badagry was further reinforced by a considerable migration from across the seas. The geographical location of the town as a port of disembarkation for the freed slaves was another possible factor in the spread of Islam. During the nineteenth century, there was an organised return of the liberated slaves to their homelands. Although most of these returnees were Christians, some of them had been Muslims even before their capture and export as slaves⁹ while others were probably converted to Islam in their foreign environment.

In Badagry, there were quite a number of these Muslims, some of them were in possession of the *Arabic Bible* given to them while in Sierra Leone.¹⁰ The arrival of Shitta Bey in Badagry was quite significant in this respect. The return of these repatriates contributed immensely to the rapid spread of Islam.

As a corollary to the increasing number of the Muslims, it became absolutely necessary to erect mosques and expand the existing places of worship. Moreover, there were among the repatriates, many artisans and skilled men. Their practical skills and talents enhanced their status quo in the society and greatly accelerated the emergence of the Badagry Muslim Community.

An appreciation of basic factors that contributed to the rapid growth of Islamic influence in the region is essential for a better understanding of the subsequent developments as well as the nature of the relationship between Islam and other religious beliefs.

Despite the persistent support of the colonial administration to Christianity in Badagry, Islam had been able to hold sway for a number of reasons one of such reasons was the absence of racial discrimination and

clerical hierarchy among the Muslims. There was no need for an organised clergy or for formal places of worship. Muslim could worship anywhere and everywhere. Besides, the religion was preached and propagated by Africans themselves without any recourse to foreign supervision.

Another factor was the ability of the religion to accommodate some African norms and customs. For instance, Islam accepted the African mode of dressing and endorsed the enlarged family system – an attribute which made it more acceptable to the Africans. This tolerance or accommodation of African practices persuaded some scholars to proclaim Islam as the religion of Africa.¹¹

Prior to the colonial era, Muslims had constituted an important and progressive section of the Badagry community as well as in the villages situated along the banks of the lagoon and Yewa river. Although they were in the minority, they had gained considerable influence due to their regular contact with Muslim traders in Lagos, Port Novo and other large towns. With the advent of the colonial rule, the British operated the system of Indirect Rule which preserved the traditional chieftaincy institutions and granted them some measure of authority over the local people. In effect, the hierarchical administrative line run from the Colonial Administrator through the Paramount Chiefs to the Direct Head Chiefs down to the local Village Head.¹²

The colonial administration tried to harness the influence of the Muslims to the machinery of the government, thus recognising them as a force to be reckoned with. One of such frontline Muslims who rose to prominence was Faremi William Abbas. By virtue of his enterprise, wealth and disposition, he was appointed the *Seriki* of Badagry Muslim Community.¹³

Indeed, the services of the Muslims were enlisted on several administrative bodies which were set up by the colonial administration. In 1897, the Native Advisory Board was established by McCullum in order to arrest the French menace along the Western borders of the colony. About half of its membership was Muslim.¹⁴ Henry Carr was the Secretary of the Board. With these appointments, the prestige of the Muslims was enhanced and the status of their religious community increased. The new appointments also opened fresh areas of influence to Islam. Hitherto, Muslim political efforts had been confined within the local political structure. That the Muslims took up active service under the new dispensation also prepared them to keep abreast of the new changes in the society.

The Initial Conflicts in Interactions

The relationship between the Christian Missionaries and the local people was characterised by suspicion and disdain. While the African Traditional Religionists saw the Missionaries as agents of colonization, the Christian missionaries saw the traditional religion as nothing more than fetishes, idolatry and barbarism. However, there was no open hostility or persecution as the hold of the traditional religion on the people was still very firm. They welcome the missionaries, not because they wanted Christianity, but because they were weak and poor and they hoped the missionaries could attract some lively commercial activities to the town.

The expansion and growth of Islam meant, to some extent, an undermining of the position of both the traditional religion and Christianity. A greater threat to the traditional institutions lay in the new set of values which Islam was introducing into the society. Although, these sets of values were introduced gradually, they influenced the relationship between the society and the nascent Muslim community. For instance, Muslims would not accept nor recognise a custom in which women were confined indoors during festivals that involved secret rituals and which women were forbidden to see. In principle, the Muslims would not yield to any form of curfew imposed for reasons of traditional worship,¹⁵ neither would they place any premium on other traditional social taboos.

The uncompromising attitude of the Muslims with regard to *Tawhid*¹⁶ in a society with a long tradition of multiple gods and goddesses always set the Muslims and their neighbours at loggerheads. This clash of values was clearly evident in Badagry in the popular event of the *Akoko* leaf.¹⁷

The *Akoko* leaves were generally held sacred in the traditional society and sometimes used during the conferment of traditional chieftaincy titles. In Badagry, the Muslims had rejected such ideas and views in its totality. Some Muslims once invaded a traditional grove to pick these leaves in order to thatch the roof of their houses. This brought them into a serious conflict with the infuriated custodian of the grove. In a swift reaction, the traditionalists wanted to use the sacred leaves to cordon off their mosque, a move which the Muslims resisted with vigour. The matter was taken to Oba Posu Aplogan and his council of chiefs for arbitration. The Muslims firmly asserted that a leaf was a leaf.¹⁸ The point being made here, is that the relationship between Islam and traditional African religion in Badagry was characterised by hostility in the earliest period.

Christian challenge to Islamic expansion took numerous forms and patterns. There was a deliberate attempt to force the Muslims to accept Christianity. Under the inspiration of Rev. Johnson, the Christians were enjoined to go on the offensives. One effective organ for the realisation of

this plan was in the provision of western education. Indeed, Christian missionaries regarded western education as a potent instrument of evangelisation.

Education at this level was not designed to meet the social or material needs of the people, rather, curriculum was designed with the sole purpose of training students who would graduate as catechists, deacons and priests. This, the Muslims resisted by shunning the christian education and by striving hard to have a Muslim School which was granted them in 1899.

Interaction at Inter-personal Level

With the passage of time, the relationship between the adherents of the three religions become cordial particularly at the inter-personal level. According to the Chief *Imam*, Central Mosque, Badagry – Alhaji Dauda O. Bakare it is rare to find in Badagry a family that is wholly Muslims, Christians or traditionists. Hence, it is common place to find the practitioners of the three major religions in one and the same family.

Chief T. Ola Avoseh – a veteran historian and Christian was met for an interview on religious interactions in Badagry, he charged us to return to Lagos State University campus to inform his Christian Brother – Dr. Avoseh.¹⁹ His reason was that Saturday was the 8th Day Funeral Outing ceremony of his deceased Muslim sister called Safuratu and that he should attend unflinchingly. Another call at Seriki Compound – a well known Muslim quarters in Badagry, revealed the presence of a small hall dedicated to *Eegun* Apaje-poloogun (a masquerade). Alhaja Moriamo Adejumo – one of the custodians of the compound explained that the masquerade belonged to their grandfather who because of certain circumstances beyond his control had to bring the masquerade from Offa in Kwara State to Badagry. Since the father, Chief Seriki Abbas Williams was a Muslim and propagator of Islam in Badagry, he has to settle the masquerade first in another compound. However, because of the free religious interactions in the family, they play host to the masquerade and its team annually during their festival at Seriki Compound.

In the neighbouring towns such as Iworo and Ajido, members of families belong to the three religions and interact freely. They belong to the same social clubs such as Prime Mover Club and Awori West Progressive Association. A Christian could be the Chairman while his Secretary could be a Muslim or vice-versa.²⁰

In Badagry and her environs, the religions of the people become closely associated with various festivals. While the Christians celebrate the Easter Day, the Christmas Day and some less popular festivals, the Muslims

celebrate the 'Idul-Fitr' 'Idul-Kabir and the birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW); the traditional religious groups celebrate Avo-Hunwe festivals, the Zangbetu, Kubito (Egungun), Oro, Gunuko and other festivals.²¹

Though, the Oba of Iworo town is not a Muslim, yet he attends the 'Id prayers while the Muslim community pays a courtesy call on the palace and pray for the Oba who donates generously. Other non-muslims also attend 'Id prayers not only in Badagry but also in her environs.²² In March 1830, Richard Lander was invited to the end of Ramadan 'Id prayers at Badagry by the muslim community. He honoured the invitation, he remained with them till the end of the prayers. He recorded seventy (70) as the number of the Muslim worshippers.²³

Muslims also honour invitations from Christian community especially during the Harvest, Christmas and New Year festivities. Food, visits and gifts are exchanged among them and their Christian counterparts. Muslims are called more often than not to slaughter animals for their Christian and traditional worshippers' counterparts. For instance, the members of Anglican Church, Iworo, usually invited the Chief *Imam* of the town to slaughter the cows that were normally killed for the celebration of their annual festivals. However, one year, Chief *Imam* Idris 'Ali (d. 1968) happened to come late for the slaughtering of the cow, so the Christian community had to do the slaughtering themselves.²⁴ When offered the meat, the Chief *Imam* declined to partake of the meat. Thenceforth the Anglican Community stopped inviting the Muslims for slaughtering of animals.

The Chief *Imam* of Badagry remarked that when practitioners of traditional religion and Christians noticed that when Muslims were offered food they seldom partake of it, in the spirit of religious understanding, they normally invite the Muslims to slaughter their animals for them.

On the question of inter-marriages among Muslims, Christians and the traditionalists, it is a reality resulting from the social intercourse of the three religions. Through it, the Chief *Imam* of Badagry noted, Islam has been able to penetrate the traditionalists. For example, he said Ajara town in Badagry had been an exclusively traditionalists domain about ten to fifteen years in the past. But today, through inter-marriage, not less than five mosques and a number of churches have sprung up there. The Chief *Imam* explained further that it is rare to find a muslim lady married to a non-muslim in Badagry because such inter-marriages were not allowed in Islam. He said for example his own daughter fell a victim of such a marriage but she retraced her steps back into Islam without any coercion on his part.

In Ajido town, Rev. J.I. Akinyanmi noted that Muslims in the past were formerly opposed to marriage with non-Muslims. He said by design or accident one of his daughters got married to a Muslim. He remarked that as long as she participated in the Christian festivals with him, he is not bothered and perhaps, God had wanted to use his daughter to work on the muslim family.²⁵ Mr. W.E. Ajose is indifferent to the idea of inter-marriages. He said a Muslim could marry a Christian lady or vice-versa. But he considered mutual love to be the most essential thing.²⁶ According to Chief Avoseh Ganmu, formerly, the traditionalists in Badagry and environs allowed inter-marriage. But presently it has been discouraged because other religions such as Islam and Christianity failed to release their daughters for festivals in cults.²⁷

On the question of religions tolerance and peaceful co-existence, the Chief *Imam* of Badagry – Alhaji D.O. Bakare could not recall a time when Muslims had any clash with other religious groups. He said before any misunderstanding degenerated into violence, it would have been resolved at the family level. In Ajido township, the only religious clash which would have ensued between Muslim and Christian communities in 1944 but for the timely intervention of the government was the controversy over a footpath which ran through the Muslim community's *Id* praying ground to the Christian cemetery.²⁸

The week long revival crusade mounted by the Christ Apostolic Church ery recently could have resulted into a religious disturbance between the additional worshippers and the Christ Apostolic Church but for the wise intervention of the Akran – His Highness Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi (O.F.R.). The revivalists ridiculed the traditionalists and invoke *Oro* during the day. Also, the Administrator of cults complained about some elements he described as vagabonds and jobless people who cause disorders in the public during their festivals. He threatened court action against such culprits on arrest.

Besides the aforementioned cases, Badagry and her environs have enjoyed a peaceful religious co-existence and tolerance. Rev. Canon S.O. Ogunsanya²⁹ remarked that one of the reasons for this relative stability is that all chiefs and dignitaries in the Church belong to all the traditional cults. He added that there is cordiality between the Muslims and Christians. For example, the Chief *Imam* of Badagry Central Mosque sent them (Christians) some crates of soft drinks when they were embarking on a communal labour on their grave yard.

Islamic Viewpoints on Religious Interactions

Islamic teachings on religious interaction may be partially responsible for the relative peace enjoyed among the adherents of the three religions in Badagry. Let us consider Islamic view points on the following issues:

(i) *Religious Freedom:*

Religion is a law of faith in God and righteous living. In the view of Islam, religion is one, for the Truth is one. It is the truth preached by all the earlier prophets and inspired books. Religion in essence amounts to a consciousness of the will and plan of God and joyful submission to that will and plan. If any one wants a religion other than that, he is false to his own nature as he is false to God's will and Plan.³⁰ Despite the fundamental unity in the essence of religion, differences in religious observances occur due to cultural, gradational developments in spiritual and intellectual consciousness of mankind. Allah, *Subhanahu wa ta'ala* reiterates:

To each among you we have prescribed a particular way (of religious observances). If God has so willed He would have made you a single people. (He did not do so) in order to test you in what He has given you. So strive to excel one another in virtue. To Allah you have all to return eventually. He will show you the truth of the matters about which you dispute.³¹

In recognition of this unity in diversity in religion and despite the culpable corruption and interpolation of some earlier scriptures that came before the Qur'an, Allah grants religious freedom thus, "let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error."³²

If it had been their Lord's will, they would all have believed, all who are on earth. Will you then compel mankind against their will to believe?³³

Religious freedom aside, the Qur'an also recognises the universal brotherhood of mankind.³⁴ The Prophet (S.A.W.) says:

O people your Lord is one, and you have descended from one man (i.e. Adam). There is no superiority for an Arab over non-Arab, nor for non-Arab over an Arab, you are all the offspring of Adam and Adam, who was created from the dust...³⁵

For effective religious interaction, Islam recognises mankind as one large-extended family. While the Muslims form 'the family', the people of the scripture (Jews and Christians) form 'the close relatives' and people professing other religions could be seen as distant relatives.³⁶

(ii) *The Family:*

Regarding the Muslims who form the family because they have similar faith and follow identical religious law and observances Allah says:

O ye who believe! Fear God as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast all together, by the rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love so that by His Grace, you become brethren: And ye were on the brink of the Pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus doth God make His signs clear to you that ye may be guided.

It continues thus:

Let there arise out of you, a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong, they are the ones to attain felicity. Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful penalty.³⁷

(iii) *The Close Relatives:*

Muslims have special relationship with the Jews and Christians. They are referred to as the people of the Book because they share certain common beliefs. Allah, *Subhana wa ta'ala*, says:

And dispute ye not with people of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation) unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): But say, "We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our God and your God is one; and it is to him we bow in Islam."³⁸

Another passage of the Glorious Qur'an reads:

Of the people of the Book are a portion that stand (for the right), they rehearse the signs of God all night long and they prostrate themselves in adoration. They enjoy what is right, and forbid what is wrong: and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works. They are in the ranks of the righteous.³⁹

(iv) *Distant Relatives:*

Polytheists, atheists or agnostics are classified as distant relatives in the extended family of mankind because they do not share the same belief and world-view with Muslims. As human beings, they share the same origin with them. And as citizens of this earth, they deserve respect and peaceful co-existence with Muslims. On the difference of religion, the prophet was asked to say:

Say, you that reject faith, I worship not that which you worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which you have been want to worship. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your way and to me mine.⁴⁰

The Glorious Qur'an further reads:

Do not revile those who associate something with Allah least they wrongfully revile Allah through ignorance.⁴¹

In another place it reads:

(O prophet) if anyone from among the *Mushrikin* (polytheists) as thee for asylum grant it to him, so that he may hear the word of God and then escort him to where he can be secure. That is necessary because these people do not have knowledge (of truth).⁴²

(v) *Social Relations:*

Principles guiding the social intercourse between muslims and non-muslims are to be discussed as follows:

(a) **Marriage between Muslims and Non-Muslims**

Marriage between a muslim and a non-muslim woman belonging to the people of the Book (*Ahl al-kitab*) who are the Jews and the Christian, is permitted in the *shari'ah*. By extension, people who follow revealed Books include the Buddhists, Hindus, Sabi'ans, Magians and those who follow the religion of Confucius or Tao.⁴³ All the legal provisions regarding Marriage (*Nikah*) in Islam must be complied with when contracting a marriage with non-muslim woman. Allah, Glory be to Him says:

Lawful unto you in marriage are not only chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the people of the Book, revealed before your time, when you give them their due dowers and desire chastity, nor lewdness, nor secret intrigues.⁴⁴

The best example of this type of marriage is given by the prophet himself. He married a coptic lady, Mariyah Qibtiyyah from Egypt. The non-muslim woman who belongs to the people of the Book married to a muslim is free to observe her faith and celebrate her festivals without any compulsion from the husband.⁴⁵ It is in view of the absence of this provision and freedom to practise her religion in other religions such as Christianity that Islam prohibits the marriage of a muslim woman to a non-muslim man whether he belongs to *Ahl al-kitab* or idolaters.

The warning that immediately follows the permission given to marry women from the people of the Book is very significant. The Muslim who makes use of this permission has been warned to guard his faith and morality very cautiously against the influence of his unbelieving wife.⁴⁷

Contrary to the above permission, marriage is prohibited between Muslim (male and female) and idolaters or idolatresses (*al-mushrikin*) unless and until the unbelievers accept Islam. On this uncompromising stance of Islam in this regard is premised on the importance it places on the institution of family which is the unit of society. Islam considers it a danger for the society for a couple to hold fundamentally different faith and world-views. The Glorious Qur'an reiterates:

Do not marry unbelieving women (idolaters), until they believe: A slave woman who believes is better than an unbelieving woman, even though she allures you. Nor marry (your girls) to unbelievers until they believe: A slave man who believes is better than an unbeliever, even though he allures you. Unbelievers do but beckon you to the Fire. But God beckons by His Grace to the Garden (of Bliss) and forgiveness.⁴⁸

(b) Food

The rules of Islam in this respect being analogous to those of the people of the Book, there is no objection to mutual recognition, as opposed to meat of animals killed by pagans with superstitious rites. Allah says:

This day are all things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the people of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them.⁴⁹

"The food of the people of the Book" also includes what has been slaughtered by them.⁵⁰ The Muslims are permitted to take meals with the people of the Book and they with the Muslims. But the repetition of the sentence "all good and pure things have been made lawful for you" is very significant. It shows that the Muslims should not partake of their food, if the people of the Book do not observe those rules which are essential from the point of view of the Islamic Law or if they include unlawful things in their food and drink. For instance, if they do not mention the name of Allah over the animal they slaughter or they mention of others than that of Allah over it, the flesh would be forbidden for the Muslims. Likewise if liquor or pork or any other forbidden thing is served, the Muslims are not permitted to sit at the same table with them.⁵¹

The same rule applies to the food and drink of other non-muslims except that the muslims are not permitted at all to eat the flesh of the animals slaughtered by non-muslims. Moreover, they are permitted to eat the flesh of the clean animals slaughtered by the people of the Book only, if they duly pronounced the name of Allah over it. The Glorious Qur'an refers:

Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled animal, and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall, and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten – except what you slaughter – and what is sacrificed on stones set up for idols.⁵²

(c) Inheritance

There is no reciprocal inheritance between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, whether the non-Muslim was an apostate or a relation who has been a Muslim. The Holy prophet Muhammed (SAW) says: The Muslim does not inherit from the unbeliever, nor does the unbeliever inherit from the Muslim.

However, a muslim is allowed to make wills in favour of his non-Muslim spouse or close relations within the one-third limit of his estate with the consent of the other heirs.⁵³

Assessment of Religious Interactions in Badagry

The finding of this research in our area of study is that the level of cordiality in religious interaction is very high. Two factors responsible for the relative cordiality are viz:

- i) The people of Badagry are distributed among the three religions so much so that no single family is entirely muslims, christians or traditional worshippers.
- ii) Secondly, all the three religions teach faith in God and righteous living. Hence there is peaceful religious co-existence.

The mutual respect for and participation in the religious observances of one religious group by the others are testimonies. However, the undemarcated line of interaction at times border on religious syncretism for instance, the Gunuko festival is celebrated by muslim and christian members of the family which is the custodian of the cult in Badagry. Despite the vital contribution of Seriki family to Islam in Badagry, its romance with and elaborate hosting of Apaje-poloogun masquerade cannot be said to be strictly Islamic. It is not also impossible to find in

Badagry some christians and muslims carrying out all the traditional rituals when they give birth to twins. In a nutshell they consider Christianity and Islam as foreign religions. Besides, in the name of religious interaction all the chiefs and dignitaries in the church belong to all the traditional cults.⁵⁴

The Administrator of Cults (Alagbe Ega) remarked that they formerly accompanied the Muslims during their festivals to their praying grounds, though they were disallowed entry yet they rejoiced with them and celebrated together, but at present things have changed.⁵⁵

On the question of evangelization, Islam and Christianity are involved through their various societies and denominations. Their preaching are gentle and not offensive nor acrimonious. They provide social services to public. Even though each group claims to be better than the other but they do not condemn one another. But recently, radical Christian revivalists who came from outside Badagry preached against Islam and traditional worshippers. This is considered a threat to the hitherto religious peaceful co-existence in Badagry.⁵⁶

Conclusion and Suggestion

It can be safely concluded from this study that religion rather than being a source of conflict and dissension, is indeed an instrument for creating the consciousness of the will and plan of God Almighty, righteous living, peaceful co-existence and agent of development. Therefore, the current waves of the so-called 'religious disturbances and vandalism' in the country have to be traced to another cause. It has been speculated that some politicians who may have lately realized that Nigerians no longer subscribed to the ethnicity bogey may have opted to exploit the religious sentiments of the masses.⁵⁷ "Every religion that is worth the name prohibits killing, stealing, lying and so on. Religion is anti-thetical to terrorism and rascalism."⁵⁸

In the light of the foregoing, we offer the following suggestions. That the people and governments of Nigeria have to borrow a leaf from the positive levels of religious interactions as demonstrated by the people of Badagry in the following manners:

- (a) All religious groups 'trade' in God, as such, they should be at alert, rather than being used by political opportunists, they should apply the spiritual and moral values of their faith to build Nigeria rather than destroy it.
- (b) All religious groups should avoid intolerance and particularistic claims.

- (c) Nigeria is a multi-religious country, therefore Muslims should be allowed to practice *Shari'ah* while there should be free propagation of Christianity in the north.
- (d) There should be equitable distribution of power and opportunities at Federal and State levels.
- (e) Offensive preaching should not be allowed.
- (f) Religious leaders should not, for selfish reasons, compromise ideals with political leaders.
- (g) However, religious syncretism as portrayed in Badagry should be avoided in order to maintain the sanctity of each religious tradition and practice.

Notes and References

1. The Supreme Being is called 'Olodumare' in Yoruba and Jihwe or Yehwe in Egun: See Bolaji Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*, London, Longmans, 1966.
2. T. Oba Avoseh *A History of Badagry*, 1938.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-56.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Fergusson to the Rev. Thomas Dove, 2 March 1841, ECC 2/1096 quoted in Kopytoff, J.H. *A Preface to Modern Nigerian: The Sierra Leoneans in Yoruba 1830-1890* Wisconsin, Madison, 1965. J.F.A. Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1941-1891*, London, Longmans, 1965, p. 31.
7. Richard and John Lander: *Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger*, pp. 24-27 Cf T.G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba 1841-1908*, Longman, 1978, pp. 4.
8. Gbadamosi, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
11. Trimmingham, J.S. *The Influence of Islam Upon Africa*, Longmans, 1968.
12. For an indepth study of Indirect Rule in the British Colony, see Tarikh, vol. 3, No. 3.
13. He was also appointed by the District Commissioner Major J.H. Ewart as the President of Badagry Native Council in 1902, see Asiwaju, A.I. *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule, 1889-1945*, Longman, 1975, p. 150.
14. McCullum to Colonial Secretary, 28 October 1892. Out of its eleven members, six were Muslims: namely, Brima Imam, Seidu Olowu, Yusuf Bey, Sunmonu Okere, Ali Olori Balogun, and Kassumu Giwa.
15. It is customary for the natives to impose curfews during some of their traditional festivals in order to perform certain rites and sacrifices.
16. 'Taoheed' means Unity of God which is a fundamental principle of Islam.
17. Gbadamosi, T.G.O. *op. cit.*, p. 200.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Dr. Avoseh is the Dean, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University.

20. Information was supplied by Mr. Abdul Wahid Ishola Hassan, he is currently the Assistant Secretary, Muslim Mission Community, Iworo. Also, he is the Chairman, Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Muslim Community, Badagry.
21. Badagry, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
22. Information is supplied by Mr. Aina Emmanuel who hails from Iworo. He is a final year Christian Religious Studies (CRS) student in the Department of Religions and History, Lagos State University. The Chief Imam of Badagry confirms this. "Non-muslims attend 'Id prayers though they do not pray but they only come to share the joy of the occasion with their muslim brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers, etc.
23. T. Ola Avoshe: *Iwe Esin Imale Ni Ilu Agbadarigi*, Badagry, Adeolu Printing Press, 1964, p. 7.
24. Information supplied by Mr. W.E. Ajose – Headmaster, Anglican Primary School, Iworo. He has been the Treasurer for Badagry Church Council since 1972 up-to-date.
25. Interview with Rev. J.I. Akinyemi in charge of African Apostolic Church, Ajido on 25/12/89. 54+
26. Interview with Mr. W.E. Ajose on 25/12/89.
27. Chief Tiye Ganmu is the Alagba Ega i.e. the Administrator of Cults in Badagry; interviewed on 20/1/90: 90+
28. Information supplied by Rev. J.I. Akinyemi on 25/12/89.
29. Rev. Canon S.O. Ogunsanya is the Vicar – St. Thomas' Church Badagry and Chairman, Badagry District Church Council. Interviewed on 20/1/90. 70+
30. A. Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Beirut, Bar Al-Arabia, 1968. Read, 'Ali's Footnote Commentary No. 418 on Qur'an, Ch. 3:85.
31. *Ibid.*, ch. 5:48.
32. *Ibid.*, ch. 2:256.
33. *Ibid.*, Qur'an, 10:99, see also, ch. 42:8.
34. *Ibid.*, Qur'an 49:13.
35. See, S.U. Balogun, 'Islam and Universal Brotherhood' in eds., C.S. Momoh et al, *Religion and National Building*, Ikeja NARETO, n.d. vol. III, p. 333.
36. *Ibid.*, this classification should not be seen as discriminatory but as a matter of identification.
37. A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, Qur'an: Ch. 3:102–105.
38. *Ibid.*, Qur'an 29:46.
39. *Ibid.*, Qur'an 3:113–114. Read also verse 64 of the same chapter.
40. *Ibid.*, Qur'an ch. 109:1–6.
41. *Ibid.*, ch. 6:108.

42. *Ibid.*, ch. 9:6.
43. Muhammed 'Ali, *The Religion of Islam*, Labore, Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1973, pp. 505-506. See also, 'Abdur-Rahamn al-Jizri, *kitab al-fiqh 'alal-Madhahib al-Arba'at*, n.p., n.d., vol. 2, pp. 199-222.
44. A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, Qur'an, ch. 5:6.
45. A. Rahman I., Doi, *Non-Muslim Under Shari'ah (Islamic Law)* Maryland, U.S.A., International Graphics, 1979, p. 53.
46. M.O. Opeloye, "A Comparative Study of Selected Socio-Theological Themes Common To The Qur'an And The Bible. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, 1988, pp. 465-7, 486.
47. S. Abul A'la Maududi, *The Meaning of the Qur'an, Labore, Islamic Publications Limited*, 11th ed., 1976, vol. III, ftn. 23, p. 21.
48. A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, Qur'an, ch. 2:221.
49. *Ibid.*, 5:6. In this respect the christian rule is the same: cf. "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication" (Acts XV:29).
50. See, Muhammed Ali, *A Manual of Hadith*, Lahore, Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, n.d., p. 346, Hadith 6 - it reads: "There is no harm in eating an animal slaughtered by a Christian of Arabia; if thou hearest him invoking another name than that of Allah, do not eat it, and if though dost not hear him, Allah has made it lawful, and he knew their unbelief."
51. See S. Abdul A'la Maududi, *op. cit.*, ftn. 21, p. 20.
52. Holy Qur'an, ch. 5:3.
53. Muhammed Ali, *A Manual of Hadith 6*, pp. 337; see also, Abdul 'Ati, *Hammudah, The Family Structure of Islam*, Lagos, Islamic Publication Bureau, 1982, p. 256; Ahmad A. Jarma, *Inheritance in Islam*, n.p. 1986, p. 13.
54. Interview with Rev. Canon S.O. Ogunsanya. He also remarked that the so-called Church-goers and not Christians that exist in Badagry also spend their money for the promotion of traditional festivals.
55. Interview with Tiye - Alagba Ega.
56. Information supplied by Rev. Canon S.O. Ogunsanya who remarked that such offensive preaching could lead to conflict. he affirmed that the Orthodox St. Thomas Church would never allow such a thing.
57. *African Concord*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
58. M. Dukor, 'Religion and the Nigerian Nationhood: *Religion and Nation-Building*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

17

The Physical Fabric of Badagry: A Development Discourse

AYO OMOTAYO

Introduction

The physical environment of any human community constitutes an important resource base whose utilisation largely determines the quality of life within the community. To a large extent, the nature of the environment in which people live plays an important role in the development of their everyday life.¹ This is seen in the fact that from time immemorial, the activities of the people reflected in their possible and probable actions, are conditioned and limited by the opportunities the environment offers.

Although, critics of environmental determinism² are wont to dismiss this claim, it is still necessary to assess the development of a place from such perspective, if only to give a fair evaluation of factors inhibiting the development of a people. Indeed evidence abound to show that the claims of environmental determinism are still relevant in societies where level of technological development is still rudimentary. It is generally recognised in the studies of land evaluation that physical resource base, location and socio-cultural factors are important ingredients in land capability assessment.

Thus, the study on Badagry should initiate from the assessment of the role the physical environment has played in the development of the town. Given this, an attempt is made in this chapter to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the physical fabrics of the city. This, in other words, means that a physical description of the city is made with specific and or corollary assessment of its influence on development. It is believed that such a discussion should emerge from the point of view of developmental process.

Fabrics of Development

Since this chapter speaks of a developmental discourse, it is instructive to then define development. This has become necessary in the light of the

fact that the word development has taken on different meanings to different scholars. As implied by Aboyade,³ development has multi-diverse meanings. However, to engage in the dialectics of a developmental discourse will stretch the capabilities of this work. Thus development in the case of the foregoing will be seen in terms of the process of modernization from a pre-colonial society to a partially integrated society where man has successfully linked up in beneficial terms with the physical fabrics of the environment.

Fabrics in this parlance will then mean the profitable linkage and balance between man and his social, cultural, religious, economic conditions on one hand, with all physical factors such as relative location, vegetation, climate, drainage and soils on the other hand, with both geared towards the modernization of society. Where the entrepreneurial ingenuity of man has kept a progressive balance with all the factors, then the fabrics are said to be tenuous, but where there is no profitable linkage for progress and advancement regardless of inhibitions, the fabrics are considered weak.

Although a comparative analysis of a city's fabrics with that of another appears attractive for evaluation purposes, they only serve as a purpose of order. In this wise, a comparative analysis with other cities is not necessarily a necessity neither is it a sufficient condition that should enable us judge and come to a conclusion on the question of under-development or development of a city. In the case of Badagry, allusions to other towns have been made and they do not necessarily form the basis for the concluding views.

Location and Extent

Badagry (57 km from Lagos) is the Westernmost part of all Nigerian major towns. It occupies a narrow stretch of land between the Badagry Beach that has inlets into the sea at Cotonou and the Atlantic Ocean. According to Mabogunje⁴ it lies within the young sedimentary salt-bearing strata that cover the bulk of Bight of Benin Coastlands. It is the chief town of the Ogu people who also are found in other smaller towns and villages dotting the surrounding area. Its northern limits are shared with the Aworis of Ogun State.

Its eastern extent terminates where a mixed group of Aworis are found around Oto-Ijanikin, its western limits terminate at the Seme Border while it is wholly bound by the Atlantic ocean on the south. The attraction it offered to the missionaries was not unconnected with this vantage location on the Atlantic; the expressway to Europe in those days. Why the town's prominence as a chief slave-trading post and nadir of missionary activities

in South-Western Nigeria never led to the development of a modern port is not immediately clear.⁵

Reasons for this however, might lie in its relative location vis-a-vis that of Lagos. First, while Lagos enjoyed the resourcefulness and vibrancy of the people of the interior, especially the Ijebu traders, Badagry suffered from its association with hinterland towns populated by the Aworis and Dahomeans, whose ambition as far as legitimate trade was concerned especially in the 19th century is debatable. It also seemed that Lagos was better located given its central position on the East-West Lagos, complex of South-Western Nigeria. This means that it is able to trade not only with its western neighbours, but also with its eastern neighbours that extend as far as Opobo, tapping an hinterland rich in resources of oil palm, fish and timber. One other issue that has been considered as an inhibiting factor in the development of the town is its location as a border town. But one is constrained to look elsewhere for factors responsible for this underdevelopment. This is because Idi-Iroko, another town that shares similar location does not exhibit Badagry's sign of atrophy. Badagry therefore seems to be unique in its status as a town that has refused to grow.

It is here seen that despite its great extent, and its early start, Badagry as a town could not benefit from these advantages, and has remained in a state of inertia. It suffers from a location that places it at the service of ethnic groups that are not economically ebullient. Thus, we can say that its location in relative terms does not favour it, especially in terms of credentials that were needed for growth at the turn of the century. It has been poorly serviced by a wretched hinterland.

Relief and Drainage

Badagry is situated on a flat coastal open island of Lagos State with swamps, marshes and creeks. The most prominent points that dominate the morphology of the state are the depositional landforms with their low relief and very faint slopes when they occur at all. Badagry is situated on a stratified series of sedimentary rocks made up of silt, clay and sand of various sizes and composition deposited on the coastal plains in quaternary times. The surface is however composed of loose sand in about 80% of the total land area.

Generally, the town is like the rest of the country's coastal plains which has a low-laying terrain. The Badagry area has an elevation of less than 5m above sea level. This low-laying nature makes it susceptible to coastal flooding especially during the rainy season. Although the advantage of low relief is often seen in the attraction it has for concentration of manufacturing concerns and mechanized farming, Badagry's case has been an exception.

Like in other parts of the country's coastal areas, Badagry is drained by numerous but tiny streams that are often lost in the swamps and maze of creeks. The main river in the Badagry area is the Yewa, which like other rivers in the state has developed extensive flood plains, on which small channels are sometimes cut and flow as distinct river during low water period. The numerous bridges found along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway are an indication of the complicated nature of the drainage system, where swamps and creeks inter-link in a very complex fashion.

The Lagoon in this area maintains a fairly constant volume of water throughout the year. Because of this, it may guarantee an all year-round usage especially for transportation. At the turn of the century, the importance of the Badagry Lagoon for transportation has started declining. Today, traffic on the Badagry creeks are generally low – compared to those around Epe, Ibeju and Ejinrin in the state and one of the six trade routes. Oto, Olojo Lagoon, Ojo Creek, Ojo town and Lagos had already shrieked.⁷ The stock of fresh water in the Badagry Lagoon is sustained by the discharges of the fresh water streams. The creeks and the Lagoon are therefore useful breeding grounds for fish and other aquarius life.

It seems that one of the chief occupations in the Badagry area is therefore organized around the sea. Cooperative for commercial fishing goes on around the sea. This writer witnessed a fishing expedition on the sea by a group of young men who apparently came from the same village. The catch on that day was however pitifully small. Subjected to standard economic scales, it is doubtful if those able-bodied men were gainfully employed.⁸ However, on the creek and other tiny waterways, fishermen mostly in groups of fours carry out fishing activities for justifiable returns. One cannot but conclude that the mainstay of Badagry's economy should be fishing and a great deal has to be done to improve on it. Physically, this area is endowed with good fishing grounds, but obsolete and poor fishing techniques as well as adverse natural conditions have not enable the area to benefit from its potentials. The scourges of the water hyacinth has driven most of the fishermen away from lagoonal interiors and has also increased their cost by three times.

Weather and Climate

The location of the town with respect to the equator and the Gulf of Guinea is important in the type of weather and climate obtainable. Whereas, it may generally be said that the climate of Lagos State is the wet equatorial type which is dominated by the rainy season that lasts from August to about November, the climatic situation in Badagry differs from this significantly. This is brought about by the location of the town that

places it in the Accra scrub zone. This is an area of West Africa extending from Accra in Ghana to the Badagry area where the total precipitation received is low compared to those of other areas along the same coastal transect. A very good example is seen in the fact that while the Epe-Ibeju area is densely vegetated, the Badagry area is sparsely vegetated and looks more like a scrubland. The area is characterized by a constantly high temperature throughout the year.

In the Badagry area, the mean monthly maximum temperature fluctuates around 30°C, while the mean monthly maximum temperatures are rarely below 22°C.⁹ While the relative humidity is high all over the state throughout the year and may not be less than 75–80%, it is found to be lower about 60–80% in Badagry zone. A remarkable aspect of its climate is the cooling effects of the sea-breeze from the Gulf of Guinea that should attract tourists to the Badagry Beach especially during the hot afternoons.

Like all other areas of the state, the weather condition may sometimes become fickle, and the arrival of the early rains delayed. The "August Break" phenomenon, a condition in which rains cease temporarily in the month of August and resumes thereafter is also observed to have been less stable than it used to be before. All in all, we see that the climatic conditions of Badagry is different from those of other towns with similar physiognomy. This climatic condition has not favoured agricultural activities to any enviable degree. It has adversely affected the vegetation and the soil types as we shall see in the ensuing section.

Soils and Vegetation

The soils and vegetation are closely related because they have been largely influenced by the nature of the marine and fluvio-lagoon sediments as well as the prevailing climatic and drainage conditions.¹⁰ In cases where human activities have not destroyed ecological balance, the soil types and vegetation species bear a close resemblance to each other.

The soil types in Badagry are mainly three. On the land adjacent to the sea front, is the recently laid unconsolidated coastal beach sand that supports little or no vegetation. The soils are coarse and very loose with high acid content. Further away from the shore, they support the growth of coconut palms where the top soil is improved. Coming further inland, into the lowland sandy plains are the low organic matter. The soils are loose and have very little capacity to hold water. They can, however, be made fertile by the addition of humus to the top soil.

Finally, hydromorphic soils, which are very rich in organic matters are found along the creeks and the stream channels. They are the most fertile soils of Badagry area, but unfortunately they do not cover large areas, and

can only be cultivated for good yields during the dry season. The sandy soils are however rich in silica and should support the development of glass manufacturing ventures.

The vegetation type found in this zone follows closely the soil type distribution. On the beach sands are found very primitive creepers and coconut palms that line the beach front. Further inland on the lowland sandy plains are the woody plants, oil palm trees and shrubs. Interspersed with these, are the tall grasses that indicate the influence of the Accra scrubland phenomenon. The swamps vegetation is found within the narrow confines of the hydromorphic soils around the creeks, rivers and the lagoons. This consists mainly of red mangrove trees, dense growth of bindweeds and pure sands of reeds. Rimming this vegetational zones are the raffia palm that provides abundant raw materials for the fledging craft industry in the area.

The water hyacinth which first appeared in early 1985 has continued to be a nuisance. They can now be officially grouped as water vegetation because they grow directly on water bodies and have destroyed all attempts to wipe them out. The hyacinth is a prolific breeder and its presence has continued to disturb lagoonal activities. Experts have however suggested that the plant could be used as soil fertilizers. Tentatively, one might conclude that the soil and vegetational resources of Badagry are yet to be fully tapped. This position is informed by the facts that crops suitable for the loose sandy soils such as groundnut are not extensively grown.

Enterpreneurial Underdevelopment

Having given a general description of the state of the environment, we must necessarily examine the people who relate to the environment. The history and culture of the Ogu people have been critically examined by works with more competence at doing so. What is left for this work to do is to evaluate the people's entrepreneurial skills, which are necessary ingredients in the modernization of the society. This section therefore briefly examines the entrepreneurial capabilities of the Badagry society.

Badagry's lack of growth can be attributed to the fact that it lacked the men with sufficient knowledge of modern day economic tools needed to advance their society at a time in history when various society's were jostling for economic advantages and functions that modernized their societies. This absence of men (or values) persisted at a critical time in the economic history of the nation. The Nigeria of then was not one in which simplistic attitude to economic activities could have been sufficient credentials for economic advancement. Even if one views entrepreneurship of the Badagrian society from the Schumpeterian¹¹ sense of role play-

ing, lacking still, in that society was, the "creative response" which Shumpeter considered critical for entrepreneurial development.

The socio-cultural approach to entrepreneurial development which melts into the role theory might have been proper in explaining the weak fabrics of the city, as not producing the "change by deliberation" against society's normative pattern, but this is constrained by the fact that, empirically it is difficult to justify the altruistic nature of the Badagrian society. This then means that from within the society, a lethargic mien was not abhorred by the society's intrinsic normative pattern. In effect, it seems justifiable to suggest that there were no men to "raid this cycle" and call into new use, latent energies and resources as described by Shumpeter.¹² As it were, the "structure of the situation"¹³ was never broken.

Perhaps, however, a viable explanation would have been found within the purview of the psychological approach which according to McClelland¹⁴ distinguished entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs on the basis of high achievement measurement. This according to him is based on socialization practices of child rearing. However this cannot be pursued for lack of empirical data to support the position.

Also, in this chapter, the search for the reasons of underdevelopment of Badagry has been pursued *qua geographical* and it well seems that I have scratched a non-geographic bottom. It is then pertinent to suggest within my competence, before other disciplines take over, that the only viable option for growth would have been the influence of other societies on Badagry. This would have helped the Badagrian society to save itself from itself – so to say, or "must force" changes on the society either by gradual positive assimilation or a sudden overthrow of "lethargic attitudes". Lagos served this function, unfortunately, doing so negatively and pushing Badagry further into the fringe and margins of an economically prosperous core.

Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to give a physical description of Badagry spiced with the implications for development. It is seen that despite her advantageous position in history, the town of Badagry has not profited enough due to certain extraneous factors. While One has not endeavoured to discuss these factors exhaustively, we have at least shown that to a large extent, Badagry has not realised her full potentials. Development in the area has not reflected the unusual but abundant resources the town is endowed with. This is largely due to the fact that the people have not mastered their environment.

To date, the fabrics of the city are weak compared to other towns of the same status. Its economy is delicately patched on fragile grounds because the people's activities are largely controlled by nature. The need is therefore great for an awakening of the people's consciousness through a well articulated package of programmes that must be targeted at the people's psyche and their entrepreneurial potential. It is only when this is done, that we can begin to build a tenuous fabrics for the city. No doubt Badagry is an unusual town, and its refusal to grow – so to say – cannot be explained in conventional developmental parlance.

Unravelling the real reasons for her underdevelopment would certainly require the continuation of the thesis initiated in this study – that is organised round a spatial effectiveness of man's entrepreneurial response to a physical environment no matter how inhibitive the physical environment might be.

Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to give a preliminary description of Badagry, a town with the reputation for development. It is seen that despite her advantageous position in the coastal belt, the town has not developed enough due to certain external factors. While the town has been favoured by nature, these factors, consequently, we have to look for. It is not to a large extent, Badagry has not reached the stage of industrial development in the state and indeed the country but significant reasons for the town's underdevelopment with Badagry are the fact that the people have not made use of their environment.

Notes and References

1. Omotayo A.O.; Ojo, A.O. and Odumosu T.: "The Rural Environment of Lagos State: The Problems and Prospects for Rural Development." *In perspective on Integrated Rural Development in Lagos State*. Lagos: The Office of the Military Governor of Lagos State, 1982.
 2. Olukoju A.: "Econology and Economics Underdevelopment: Agriculture, Trade and Transport in Badagry City, 1880-1950. Paper presented at the Natural Conference on Badagry History and Culture, Badagry, 1990.
 3. Aboyade O.: *Integrated Development Economics*. M. Helm. (1985) London.
 4. Mabogunje A.: "The Land and People of West Africa"; in Ajayi and Crowther (eds.) *History of West Africa* (2 Vols.) London: Longmans, 1971.
 5. Olukoju A.: *op. cit.*
 6. Ojo A.O. and Omotayo A.O.: "The Physical Environment of Lagos State", in Arowolo O.O. (ed.); *Living Conditions in Lagos*. Lagos: Lagos State University, 1988.
 7. Omotayo A.O.: "Fieldwork to Badagry Coast, Badagry," The report is not officially published yet.
 8. Throughout my field tour not a single passenger boat was sighted by these boats still run from Ebute in Lagos to Epe and Ikorodu. (Footnote 7)
 9. Ojo A.O. and Omotayo A.O.: *op. cit.*
 10. Abegunde M.A.: "Aspects of the Physical Environment of Lagos State", in Adefuye et al (eds.) *History of the People of Lagos State*: (Lagos, Litramed, 1982).
 11. Shumpeter J.A.: "The Theory of Economic Development" (Tras. R. Opic, Cambridge, Havard University Press (1949)
 12. *Ibid* "The Creative Response in Economic History" *Journal of Economic History* 7 No. 2 (1947)
 13. Akeredolu-Ale E.O.: "The underdevelopment of indigenous Entrepreneurship in Nigeria". (Ibadan: IVP, 1975).
 14. McClelland, D.C.: "The Society (New York: D. Van Nustrand Co. inc. 1961).
- * The hinterland is Dahomean and Aworian not notable either for cash crop, food surplus nor great trade routes.

Bibliography

1. Akeredolu-Ale E.O.: "A Socio-historical Study of the Development of Entrepreneurship Among the Ijebu of Western Nigeria": *African Studies Review* Vol 16 No. 3 (Ibadan, 1973).
2. East, W.G.: *The Geography Behind History*: London, Nelson, 1965.
3. Fadeyi A.G.: "The Growth and Decline of Badagry", A Geographical Analysis": Unpublished M.A. Thesis. University of Lagos, 1969.
4. Udo R.K.: *Geographical Regions of Nigeria*, (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1970).

18

Problems of Urbanization and Development in Coastal Towns: The Case of Badagry

TAYO ODUMOSU

Badagry is both a coastal town as well as a border town. It is the first town in the western border with the rest of West Africa of which Benin Republic is the nearest. This chapter examines the problems facing coastal towns in Nigeria using Badagry as a case study. It begins from an observation that majority of coastal settlements face one basic problem, which has stunted their growth – poor physiographic nature of the environment. In the case of Badagry many other problems can be added, one of which is the unusual climatic condition which plays a part in poor soil and severe environmental problem leading to retardation of economic growth. The paper posits that this has been responsible for the general poverty of all coastal settlements except where:

1. the settlement has natural harbour deep water to the open sea.
2. has a very rich and resourceful hinterland and or
3. becomes a nodal or terminus settlement (These three points have been well elaborated in Mabogunje 1968).

This chapter notes as a basic premise that "urban centres develop because of the tendency for people and specialised institutions to concentrate at a locality in order to facilitate the exchange of goods and ideas and take advantage of the economies of scale which a larger settlement would offer: (Adalemo 1977 p. 76)". It means therefore that urban centres are centres of development which give impetus to further economic development. Since commerce, banking, industrial development, government administration, higher education and the storage, processing and marketing of agricultural produce require urban climate to develop and flourish, it is therefore logical to argue that economic development of any area is directly related to the rate and size of urban development. As noted by Kudiabor (1977) the development of Europe and Japan, North America can be attributed to the significant roles that small and medium sized towns played. Coastal towns in most cases offer excellent port location with complex basic services. This is not the case with coastal locations in West Africa.

Problems of Poor Physiography

West African and even African coasts are regular, straight and unindented. This narrows the spaces that could be available for entry into the sea. Also most of coastlines are low lying, sandy and swampy that make ports development very difficult. For instance, in Britain the coasts end in high cliff make ports development natural. Also coasts are highly indented that if the coasts were to be stretched it would be longer than the entire African coastline. Nigerian coasts are swampy varying in width from a few kilometres near Badagry to as many as 100 kilometres in the Niger Delta. The regular coastline is broken only where rivers and creeks enter directly into the sea intercepting the almost unending stretch of mangrove forest. In the western part of Nigeria a line of low, sandy, beaches known as sandpits or sandbars separate from the sea a number of shallow lake called lagoons and are connected to the Gulf of Guinea by narrow channels (Obdi 1970).

Badagry in particular has a number of features that give it distinctive character. First among these is the sandy nature of the area which is more a result of the weather condition than that of the topography. The sandy nature is caused by the absence of large rivers that drain into the area that could bring alluvium and other materials that could make the area swamp forest. Another reason why Badagry area is sandy is that Badagry shares in the experience of the condition that affects Accra in Ghana. Around Cape-Three Points there is upwelling of water which causes rain bearing wind to lose its water in from of forced condensation over the ocean. De-moistured wind then blows inland through Accra in an easterly direction until the effect is ameliorated somewhere after Badagry. This makes less rain to fall and therefore gives Badagry its Sudan Savannah climatic type character. It is this climatic condition that has not allowed the soil to be like those of its latitude and have made agriculture and its allied activities an unenterprising venture – Sandy soil retains little or no water for viable agriculture.

Secondly the presence of sandbars and sandpits few meters away from the coast enclosing a lagoon but forming a formidable barrier to direct access to the open sea is another problem of Badagry. The lagoon however provides access to the open sea 56 kilometres away in Lagos. The implication is that only Lagos could develop a port since it is the one that enters directly into the sea. The lagoon through which one must pass to reach Badagry is shallow that at best it could only allow family express. Badagry therefore has the following physical problems:

1. It is located in sandy coast which lacks the necessary resources such as timber that could have been used as resources for development.

2. The flat sandy terrain is not good for agricultural practices since sandy soils retain little or no water for plants and contain little plant nutrients for plants to thrive.
3. The low lying nature of the coast makes ports development (which is known as a vehicle of development) a costly venture if it is possible.
4. The sandbars and sandpits prevent the town from having direct access to the sea (which could have encouraged ports development even if it is costly).
5. Those ports Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Calabar that have direct access to the sea explain their relative higher development. The development of the ports of Warri and Sapele can be attributed to the timber resources of their mangrove swamp forests.

In summary it means that it might not be possible to develop a port in Badagry unless the barriers are removed and even then the low lying nature of the area would make port development a costly venture.

The Hinterland of Badagry

The concept of hinterland presupposes a region far away inland that is desirous of reaching the coast either for the purpose of exporting its commodities or importing commodities which it lacks. Hinterland can be rich in agricultural production, mineral production or even manufactured goods. The richer the hinterland the more vigorous the activities at the ports serving it. These port activities will go along way in developing the port city. The higher the activities (that is the more activities it handled) the more vigorous the economy. The port city will receive revenue from taxes and levies on ports activities and provide employment opportunities and as with the experience of most ports cities encourage manufacturing activities.

The immediate hinterland of Badagry is similar in character to it. It has similar physiographical nature that there is little it can offer to Badagry. A little further inland is a vigorous area economically but attention is not directed to Badagry but to Lagos which has port facilities. Lagos has captured all the viable hinterland of Badagry.

Badagry's position as a border town has not added any advantage to its development. While other border towns have utilised their position to bring wealth Badagry seems to be a sleeping town yet millions of Naira worth of goods are being smuggled through the town every year. (Could it be that the teaching of early missionary people entered the heart of the people so much that they all perceive the evil of smuggling when other people equally religious relish in it?) The only plausible thing one could

offer again is the terrain of Badagry. While in other areas, forest or firm ground allows people to cut paths to smuggle, the sandy and swampy terrain discourages this as it is too risky to cut paths through the terrain and the only option is the road which is full of anti-smuggling squad.

Modality of Badagry Township

The nature of the terrain mentioned above has made road construction not too attractive. Badagry unlike other coastal towns of note is not linked with other parts of country either by road or by rail or by air or by water. The only viable road is the expressway which offers only one direction from Seme Border to Lagos. Other roads are largely untarred local roads linking small villages to the town. In fact before the construction of the expressway Badagry has no direct access to Lagos. To get to Lagos people must pass through Owode Egbado before reaching Lagos adding over 100 kilometres to the journey. The water may used to be the shortest (even if not the quickest) route to Lagos. There are no roads to connect Badagry to Idi-Iroko, Ilaro and Ado-Odo – direct northern neighbours. There is no railway to Badagry which shows its relative unimportant economic level unlike Idogo which has a rail extension because of its important agricultural production.

From the three points it could be seen why Badagry's growth has been stunted.

The Impact of Lagos

Discussion on Badagry will be incomplete without an examination of the impact of Lagos on it. The relationship is better conceptualised when examined from the concept of Growth Pole. According to Perroux (1950) every region must have a settlement which will attract more investments relative to others. According to Adalemo (1972) underlying the whole idea of growth poles is the hypothesis that growth takes place within and benefits from the process of urbanisation. This growth within the urban centre undergoes a cumulative process which turns the city into a growth centre. Urban centres with initial advantage benefit from the cumulative growth process to become growth centres. In fact this is what has been happening to Lagos. As an urban centre it has become a growth centre accumulating investment and productive ventures. Needless to say that it is nations primate city. This has robbed all the peripheral area of the much need growth impetus since resources and investments have at the initial stage been diverted to it. So much is this diversion that there is backwash effect on the lagging region. That is the peripheral areas are stagnating. The cumulative causation effect will be such that investment will continue

to pile up (in Lagos). This situation will continue until such a time when there is an intervention. Friedman (1967) argued that the only thing that intervenes is conscious government regional plan policy. This could establish the development of smaller growth centres and stimulate growth in the peripheral, stagnating area. When this happens the larger growth centres can then encourage further growth through the process called spread or trickle-down effect.

It is important to note that these strands of concepts did not specify the physical limit of growth centre. Marshall (1978) has however provided a yardstick for the determination of the limit of each centre and its peripheral region in what he called urban field. He noted that the extent to which urban influence reaches is the urban field. This field varies with the type of activity under consideration. In this case Lagos has been having changes in its urban influence. The whole of Nigeria used to be its hinterland and under its direct influence. However with conscious regional planning since independence some other urban centres have been made growth centres and they are now self sufficient and have less of Lagos influence. This is not the case with Badagry which is just 56 kilometres away and which has experienced tremendous impact of Lagos. According to this growth pole concept all the resources (the few ones) have gone to aid the growth of Lagos.

In line with Friedman's observation that only government can redress this situation, the Lagos State Government in recent years has formulated policies (Lagos State Regional Plan 1980-2,000) aimed at making Badagry a growth centre by initiating projects that can enhance the quality of life in the town. Such include the establishment of vegetable oil industry, coconut fibre industry, and tourist industry.

Changing Roles of Badagry

Given all the above problems one could ask why did Badagry exist at all? In spite of its problem Badagry can boast of rich heritage Fadeyi (1969) Avoseh (1936). Even though it is a small town its presence has made Christianity possible in Nigeria. It was in the town that the first missionary activities took place. It is on record that Revered Thomas Birch Freeman preached the first sermon under the famous yet historic Agia tree in September 1842. However when missionary activities gained ground Badagry discovered that it could no longer contain them and the headquarters of Church Missionary Society moved to Lagos and Ibadan which have larger populations and improved accessibility.

Another importance is that it used to be a safe harbour for slave dealers. Then the slave dealers used smaller ship that needed smaller draught.

They were able to sail up to Badagry. The calm water and the location offered an attractive and serene environment for slaving activities. When slave trade collapsed there was no viable alternative trade that could replace it and this caused the stagnation of the town. The new trade, palm oil, is bulky and only bigger ships can efficiently evacuate it but the water is not deep enough to allow this type to sail into Badagry. The diversion of these commodities to Lagos became obvious.

Another problem is that even though Badagry used to be a haven for refugees both famous and ordinary, this population has contributed little or nothing to the development of the town. It is on record that many people including European traders, missionaries, explorers, and Africans especially those running away from the fratricidal wars between the Egba and Dahomey (Benin Republic) on the one hand and the Egba and Yoruba other groups on the other hand lived in Badagry one time or the other. King Adele of Lagos once sought refuge in the town in 1820. King Akin-toye of Lagos similarly sought refuge in Badagry in 1845. However no sooner they left than they forgot everything about Badagry. It is on record that they usually left with their retinue.

Even though Badagry is relatively in a safe place the mid-19th century attack on it by Fon people made its population to drop from about 12,000 to less than 2,000 by the end of the century. By the turn of this century there has been a new development in the country – colonialisation – which did not have much time for Badagry. It never recovered until very recently.

Another important issue is industrial development. By 1855 one Thomas Hutton had established a factory in Badagry and by 1864 another had been established by one J.M. Jambo and Irmao. This means that Badagry could boast of the first industrial establishments and also the first vocation school in the country. But when the spirit of industrialization started in other parts Badagry was left out. All the problems enumerated above have also been observed in the case of Calabar. (See Udo 1967) another coastal town.

Yet another problem is that Badagry which used to be an important town in Colony province had this role diminished with the attainment of Independence in 1960. It became a divisional headquarters in 1967 when Lagos State was created. By 1976 it had changed to become the headquarters of Badagry Local Government. These administrative adjustment concepts have different roles and they continued to diminish the importance of Badagry. Just last year (1989) the Local Government which extended to Apapa and Orile rich industrial area and Festac and Satellite from where high tenement rates were obtained was divided into two. The rich part Ojo Area was excised from the Local Government. What was left

was Badagry and largely poor rural environment. This has returned Badagry to its shell and growth stimulus cut off.

Universities are basic non-manufacturing industries. One would have expected the Lagos State University to be located in Badagry so as to act as a vehicle of development. Instead it is located at the suburban area of the metropolis. Other industries like Volkswagen Assembly could have aided the development of Badagry.

Badagry Spatial Structures

Badagry is still a small town by all standard. The market is not in front of the Oba's palace as is the case in most traditional Yoruba towns and cities. There are however distinctive activities pattern on the landscape. Towards the eastern section of the town are institutional areas – hospital, Lagos State University Guest Houses, Conference Centres and far away ASCON. On the western side are the market, the Oba's palace and other residential areas. Along the major streets are the shops dealing in goods of immediate needs to the inhabitants. The market street and the main road that enters the town have shops in front of them. Along the later road are Banks, School Management Board, Inland Revenue and Hotels to mention some activities. The other side of the town – Agena side – houses the Local government Secretariat and other institutions such as schools, hotels, hostels and Military barracks.

The Issue of Development

The study of urban centre is perhaps the study of the well being of the inhabitants. Badagry like all other coastal towns has not developed to an extent that it will attract population to itself. As it is generally understood in development study, the larger the population the more likely economic specialisation and the higher the level of specialisation, the higher economic growth and the better the living conditions of the populace if the growth is allowed to spread among the people. One would have thought that given the two special attributes of Badagry it would be a thriving town. The citizens are poor and according to a recent survey (Odumosu 1992) income of the people is ₦1,000.00. the income distribution skews to the left with many people earning below the sum above. As noted earlier there are a few employment generating establishments in the town. The inhabitants engaged in farming activity which given the terrain yields little income to them. Some are engaged in smuggling which brings little income also.

This next question would naturally be why must Badagry be developed. The answer to this is to be found in the words of Hoselitz

(1955 p. 278) that "there is a general agreement that the growth and development of cities is a necessary condition of economic development, on the other hand, there are findings which tend to show that the richer a country, the more urbanized it is and the larger a city in any country, the wealthier it is." This means that the wealthier an urban centre is the richer its inhabitants. The need for an urban to develop is nothing but because the city is a major element in minimising distance cost involved in the production and distribution of goods and services. Cities in general are essentially the points of articulation of an economic system. Mabogunje (1968 p.22) noted that for any green economic system, it is theoretically conceivable that there is a given pattern of urban centres which makes for efficient economic interaction. Given the above fact it is to be expected the growth of Badagry would be a major contribution to the overall development of the nation's economy. But there is a problem here and this involves the location of the town as a border town as well as a coastal one.

Many countries do not feel at ease developing border towns. The development of Badagry town would have benefited the entire south-western part of the country as it could service the hinterland corridor along the border. Badagry is an excellent area for free port. Its growth would have improved the lot of the entire space economy of the region.

The Way Forward

The way forward to the growth of Badagry to enable it take its proper place among towns and cities in Nigeria is to apply regional planning prescriptions. One of such prescriptions is to recognise the town as a growth pole or growth centre and to inject money into the town so as to further attract all the adjoining rural population to it. This is what the state Government is doing at present but it needs to be more aggressive. In the process of this, the town's economy will receive a boost and enable it to play its growth pole role. It can do this if labour intensive large scale industrial establishments are located there. This will create employment opportunity, encourage the growth of non-basic activities and create multiplier effects.

It is not too late to move the University to Badagry if only to use that as an instrument of growth pole. Also the state government can encourage the Federal Government to make Badagry a zone of tax-free manufacturing port being a border town. Mabogunje (1974) has noted the importance of accessibility in his study of urban centres in Nigeria, Badagry requires more than its present accessibility to enhance its growth. Perhaps a line of the railway to it will be beneficial. This should link it not only with Lagos but other areas like Idi-Iroko, Owode Egbado, and Ilaro. Its ports also

could be developed so that it can serve the western corridor and boost its development. There is a new discovery from the recent activities of the Rural Development Department of the State Government – that Badagry area could grow commercial quantity swamp rice.

In conclusion, it is safe to note that all coastal locations are hostel location for urban development except in some few cases in Nigeria. That their development will be a costly venture as they need selective development is not in doubt. Badagry's problem of developing into a full urban centre is a problem of its location and i.e. a geographic one whose solution can only be geographically solved.

Notes and References

1. Avoseh, T. (1938) *A Short History of Badagry* Lagos. Ifeolu Printing Works.
2. Adalemo Ayinde (1977) Towards a Model of Planned Urban Development in African Countries in Akin L. Mabogunje and Adetoye Faniran (eds) *Regional Planning and National Development in Tropical Africa*. Ibadan University Press.
3. Burgess E.W. (1925). The Growth of City An Introduction to A Research Project Bulletin of America. Sociological Society No. 18 pp. 85-97.
4. C.M.S. (1974) *Church History* Publication of Church Missionary Society, Lagos.
5. Fadeyi, G.A.: (1969) "The Growth and Decline of Badagry - A Geographical Analysis," Lagos.
6. Friedman John (1967) Regional Planning and Nation Building: An Agenda for International Research *Econs. Dev. & Cult Change* Vol. 16 No. 1 pp. 120-36.
7. Hodder B.W. (1963) "Badagry Slave Port and Mission Centre", *Nigerian Geographical Journal* Vol. 5 No. 2 p. 75.
8. Kudiabor C.D.K. (1977) "Urbanization and Growth Pole Strategy for Regional Development in Ghana", in Akin L. Mabogunje and Adetoye Faniran (eds.) op. cit.
9. Lagos State (undated) *Our Town Series No. 2 Badagry* Min. of Information.
10. Lagos State (1981) Master Plan for Lagos State 1980-2,000. Min. of Economic Development.
 - a. Mabogunje A.L. (1968) *Urbanization in Nigeria*. London Univ. Press.
 - b. (1974) *Cities and Social Order* Inaugural Lecture University of Ibadan.
12. Marshall, A (1978) "Location of Service Towns", University of Toronto Dept. of Geography Research Publications.
13. Obeli H.O.N. (1970) *An Outline Geography of Nigeria*.
14. Sayer R.A. (1976) Urban Modelling and Modellers A Critique of urban models, *Urban and Regional Planning*, Pergamon
15. Perron Francois (1950) "Economic Space: Theory and Application" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 64 No. 1 Feb. p. 96
16. Udo R.K. (1967) "The Growth And Decline of Calabar", *Nigerian Geographical Journal* Vol. 10 Dec. No. 2 (1969) *Geographical Regions of Nigeria*, Heinemann.

19

Badagry Local Government as a Vehicle of Development: An Appraisal

OLOJEDE IYABO A. (MRS)

Introduction

Globally, governments seek to attend to the wishes and aspirations of their citizens. In practical terms, good governance presupposes the capacity to ensure social justice for all its citizens by catering for life, liberty and estate. In Nigeria, this purpose is well articulated in "The Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy" of the partially suspended 1979 constitution! Regrettably, majority of Nigerians, to whom these high sounding ideals relate live in the rural communities of the country.² These are millions of poor, alienated, vulnerable and immobile Nigerians.

In a large federation as ours, it is apparent that the federal and state governments cannot meet the monumental task posed by rural poverty, disease and isolation. In this context, local governments assumed a more active role in the development of local communities. Local governments are conceived as primecentres for social and economic development. To what extent have local governments in Nigeria performed these development functions? Specifically, what role has Badagry Local Government played in the development of communities within its jurisdiction? This chapter seeks to address the questions raised in this section.

At this juncture, we shall briefly define key terms in the study.

The concept "development" has been a subject of controversy for decades. It means different things to different people. Rodney defined development as increase in productive capacity, measured in terms of Gross National Product, Gross Domestic Product, growth rate and indicators such as hospitals, doctors and energy consumed.³ Kunu stated development as the ease or increase in the ease with which we do things (and the comfort in which we dwell as a result).⁴ For our purpose, development shall simply refer to a process by which a continuous increase in a system's efficiency produces the conditions which result in general upliftment.⁵

Barber in his *Local Government* referred to local government as the authority to determine and to execute matters within a restricted area inside and a smaller than the whole state.⁶ A more illuminating and useful definition for our context is given by Bello-Imam. He defined local government as that non-sovereign authority with defined territory, administrative structure, defined powers and local autonomy all geared towards the satisfaction of the citizen's wants and desires.⁷ It might or might not be elected.⁸

Local Government in Nigeria.

Since Badagry Local Government does not exist in a vacuum, it would not be out of place to briefly review the wider local government system in Nigeria. In addition, the analysis would no doubt aid an in-depth understanding of the operations of Badagry Local Government (a microcosm of Nigerian local government).

The search for rural transformation in Nigeria has been long and painful. For the amelioration of poverty, stagnation and alienation, local government is designed among other levels of government as a vehicle of change in the rural communities. In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the local government has been subjected to constant reforms. The object of various reforms is to evolve a viable system that could serve the purpose for which local government is created.

In the early colonial period, the British administration ruled the Nigerian colony through the Native Administration system. Absolute power was vested in warrant chiefs in the East and Obas in the West and *nirs* in the North.

This was alien to the indigenous peoples.⁹ This arrangement lasted till 1950. The failure of Native Administration system especially in the East and Western Nigeria led to the introduction of a new local government system modelled after the British pattern (country council system). It was first introduced in Eastern Nigeria in 1950 and later in other regions. Regrettably, the newly introduced local government system was short-lived. Operational weaknesses of the system and subsequent military coup of 1966 led to its premature death.

During Yakubu Gowon's era, local government was left in the hands of state governments. The Federal Government was more concerned with economic issues – increased standard of living, industrialization and security.¹⁰ As a result, the states enjoyed considerable autonomy in the control of local governments. It is therefore not surprising for states to embark on different reforms as they deemed fit. The East Central and Mid Western States introduced the Divisional administration system; the South Eastern State inaugurated Development Administration. Equally, the

Northern State adopted half-hearted reforms.¹¹ In 1966, the Military Governor of Northern Nigeria brought Native Courts under the control of the Chief Justice of the Federation. Native Authority Police Forces in Northern Nigeria were to come under the operational control of the Inspector General of the Nigeria Police.¹² Whatever the real grounds for these reforms, the local governments continued to be embattled by inadequate staffing, poor finances, loss of required autonomy and emphasis on administration instead of government. Consequently, the reforms left unresolved the problems posed by rural poverty and stagnation.

In contrast, the 1976 local government reforms were more purposeful. Among other objectives, the reforms were introduced to:

- (i) guarantee local governments as sub-state units within which socio-economic activities could be carried out;
- (ii) to stimulate citizen involvement in socio-economic development activities.¹³

To ensure the effectiveness of the reforms, the management and financial aspects of local councils were renovated. In an attempt to boost the morale of local government employees and enhance their career prospects, the Unified Local Government service was inaugurated. Under this new system, the local government employees were pooled into a single service under the management of a Local Government Service Commission.

On the financial level, the local governments finances were boosted through the joint 10 per cent contributions of Federal and State Governments from the latter's annual revenue to the former.¹⁴ The net effect is that considerable sums of money were pumped into the local government for the development of the rural areas in the country. On the negative side, many local governments reduced their enthusiasm to collect their own internal revenue efficiently.¹⁵ Added to this is the decision of some state governments like Bendel, Kaduna and Kano to abolish flat rate (or pool) tax, which in the past provided the local authorities with at least half of their revenue.¹⁶

The rural local governments were faced with a more difficult situation. Firstly, tenement rates were almost non-existent. Secondly, the rural communities have no daily markets, the users of which can pay reasonable stallage fees, and very few trucks, hawkers or squatters from which to collect fees.¹⁷ This produced a series of financial handicaps. Planned capital projects which could have been of immense benefit to local communities could not be fully executed. For example, it was reported that in eight of the Northern States only between 42% and 62% of the proposed projects are in fact carried out by the local government.¹⁸

Other problems involved (in practice) by the 1976 reforms include the

establishment of a functional relationship between the states and local governments with a view to ensure that the latter concentrate their resources on the provision of essential services such as health, road network, water supply, drains and refuse collection.¹⁹ Despite the cosmetic renovation of financial and management capabilities, the performance of local government is still dismal. Official complaints abound about local governments ineffectiveness while several councils have been suspended and some probed.²⁰ In such circumstances, effective and efficient implementation of development projects becomes a herculean task.

Further attempts to rejuvenate local communities through local governments were made by Babangida administration. The regime was spurred to action by the debilitating social and economic conditions particularly in the rural areas. Towards the channeling of a new socio-economic order, institutional approaches were adopted to alleviate problems in rural communities.

The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures was established in 1986 to improve the quality of life and standard of living of the people in the rural areas, among several objectives. Similarly, new measures were introduced in 1989 at the local government level to invigorate the system to enable it carry out its development functions.²²

New local councils were created raising the total from 301 to 499 for the development of the quality of life in rural area. On the wider political plane, it reflects efforts to take government nearer the grassroots and ensure the integration of these communities. In the same vein, Ministries of Local Government were abolished to guarantee local government autonomy in the new dispensation.

Functions of Nigerian Local Government Under 1976 Reforms and 1979 Constitution)

As highlighted earlier, the need for a more active local government arose when it was apparent that Federal and State Governments could not meet the monumental tasks of rural problems. In this context, local governments were assigned functions in consonance with the upliftment of rural communities. They include the following.²³

A. *Mandatory Local Government Functions*

1. Collection of rates (including tenement rates) radio, television and non-mechanical propelled vehicle licences.
2. Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds, homes for destitutes and infirm, markets, motor parks, public conveniences, roads, drains and recreation facilities (including playgrounds and parks).

3. Control and regulation of outdoor advertising and hoardings, pets, shops, kiosks restaurants and Laundries.
4. Registration of all births, deaths and marriages.

B. Functions in which Local Governments are to participate.

1. State economic planning and development.
2. Provision and maintenance of primary education.
3. Development of agriculture and natural resources (other than the exploitation of minerals).
4. Provision and maintenance of health services.

C. General

Any other functions that may be conferred by the State Assembly.

Having outlined the functions of local governments, the question then arises – to what extent has Badagry Local Government (BLG) performed these functions? This will be the focus of subsequent sections.

Assessment of Badagry Local Government

In this section, our analysis of Badagry Local Government shall be restricted to the period between 1983 and 1989. This selection is guided by the stability and coherence provided by the period under study. BLG consisted of three area offices which are Badagry, Ojo and Ajeromi. The historic town of Badagry served as the headquarters of the Local Government Area.

The various documents and annual reports of BLG provide conservative information on its performance. With the constraint imposed on the length of this chapter, we cannot examine all the development activities. We shall examine road development, health services, water services and primary education.

Road Development

One of the major problems faced by rural dwellers in Nigeria and communities in BLG by extension is the despicable condition of physical infrastructures such as road network. The near absence of feeder/access roads is a cog in the successive effort at achieving self sufficiency in food production and improved rural income. The poor rural road network discourages direct conveyance and sale of farm outputs thereby leading to exploitation by middlemen in form of low prices for hard inputs by farmers. This phenomenon tends to accentuate the low rural incomes and thereby widen rural-urban income gap. The end result for the majority of

rural dwellers is a situation of poor investment, inability to satisfy basic needs and alienation from decision making processes. Since transportation manifests a strong correlation to the level of socio-economic development, road development was selected as the priority of BLG. Table I reflects a number of rural feeder roads constructed as at 1987.

Table I: Road Development

S/N.	NAME OF ROAD	LENGHT	AVERAGE WIDTH
1.	Aivoji-Yovogan Gberefu	5.2km	10m
2.	Badagry-Itoga Aradagun	7.4km	10m
3.	Imeke - Gbanko	6.10km	10m
4.	Agemowo Access Road	4.0km	10m
5.	Ilogbo-Idanyin Road	3.8km	10m
6.	Gbeji-Aseri Road	20km	10m
7.	Ajara-Isolu	2.1km	10m
8.	Alakotomeji- Access Road	3.2km	10m
9.	Enuko-Yekere Pashi	4.km	10m
10.	Ipara-Oke Ogbe	2km	10m
11.	Ibereco-Itoga	1km	10m
12.	Ilogbo-Okanran	4.2km	10m
13.	Eruku-Ipara	4.1km	10m
14.	Ganyingbo-Topo Agowi	1.7km	10m
15.	Ilogbo-Ijegemo	6.2km	10m
16.	Araromi-Esepe Mushin, Obele Magbon, Ibiye	10km	10m
7.	Ajangbadi-Ada Loke Odan Era, Ilogbo, Sibiri-Etegbin	9.7km	10m
18.	Ekunpa Ilemba Awori	1.3km	10m
19.	Epe-Ago Ojo, Oko-Igbo	4km	10m
20.	Odan-Era Ijanikin	3.7km	10m
21.	Akanran Epeku	2.0km	10m
22.	Okohundu Erekun	1,000m	In Progress
23.	Erekun-Itogbesa	2.5km	In Progress
24.	Itogbesa-Irewa	3.5km	In Progress
25.	Irewe-Ibode	3.2km	In Progress
26.	Obede-Ropeku	3.5km	In Progress
27.	Isagira-Egan	2.5km	In Progress
28.	Egan-Esofin	1.5km	In Progress
29.	Esofin-Ojota	4km	In Progress

Sources: Culled from J.A. Bamgbose, "Local Government As An Instrument of Developmen: A Case Study of Badagry Local Government." Unpublished B.Sc. Original Essay, July 1988 p.21

Public Health Services

Public health has been defined as:

The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting physical health and efficiency through organized community efforts for the sanitation of the environment, the control of community infections, the education of the individuals in principles of personal hygiene, the organization of medical and nursing service for the early diagnosis and preventive treatment of disease and the development of the social machinery which will ensure to every individual in the community a standard of living adequate for the maintenance of health.²⁴

From the above definition, it is implied that public health is inter-sectorial. It ranges from environmental sanitation, health education to curative services. In the work cited earlier, Bamgbose statistically delineated the various health projects of BLG to meet the health challenges.²⁵

About twelve public toilets were constructed across the local communities to dissuade people from polluting the environment through defecation. In 1987 alone, about 116,606 tons of refuse were collected while 71 drains were cleared. Vigorous attempts were also made to abolish the pail system through house inspection. During this same period, about 20,713 premises were inspected to measure that the pail system is eventually phased out. In addition to the existing health centres, eight maternity centres were also proposed in 1987 to cater for the growing population of children and pregnant women in its jurisdiction. Since the majority of the population is largely illiterate, the LG through its Health Education Unit has been most vocal in mobilising the local communities towards new way of thinking (particularly the habit of visiting health centres). As a result, health centres within BLG have recorded increased attendance.²⁶

Provision of Pipe Borne Water

The unavailability of potable water in many rural communities has rendered these areas veritable spots for diseases. In the drive to eradicate water borne disease and ensure a comfortable living for the rural folks, many LG's including BLG embarked on water projects. In the period under study, bore holes were constructed in communities within BLG. These include Iyagbe, Ibeshe, Ikare, Igbologun, Igbede, Moba, Tafi, Okolodun, Agonua, Irewe, Olomometa, Ojogun, Ishagira and Ere kun Okogbo.

Provision of Primary Education

Education constitutes the life-wire of any nation. Its liberating effects on the people and the nation cannot be underestimated. Free primary education is one of the elements of the Nigerian educational policy. Towards the successful implementation of free education at this level, the Federal, State and Local Government shared responsibilities for its funding and maintenance until 1979. In discharging its constitutional responsibilities, BLG constructed 180 new primary schools. Maintenance services were also rendered to about sixty-four primary schools.

To corroborate or invalidate official information on BLG's performance, the people's views were sought through the questionnaire method. Four hundred (400) questionnaires were administered while two hundred and eight (208) were returned. The sample was drawn from four communities viz; Iworo Ajido, Badagry, Isashi and Ojo (Table II).

Table II: Respondents from Selected Communities

COMMUNITY	RURAL	SEMI-URBAN	NO	%
1. Iworo Ajido	✓	—	60	28.8%
2. Badagry	—	✓	36	17.3%
3. Isashi	✓	—	44	21.1%
Ojo	—	✓	68	32.6%
TOTAL			208	100%

returns from Questionnaire administered in Badagry Local Government, 1989.

the population is largely illiterate, primary questions were raised to ascertain people's knowledge. As shown in Table III, the high response of 94.1 per cent in Ojo, 93.3 in Iworo Ajido, 90.9 in Isashi and 66.6 per cent in Badagry demonstrates the knowledge of the people with respect to the institution.

Table III: Awareness of the existence of Badagry Local Government

S/N.	COMMUNITY	YES	%	NO	%
1.	Iworo Ajido	56	93.3%	4	6.6
2.	Badagry	24	66.6%	12	33.3
3.	Isashi	40	90.9%	4	9.1
4.	Ojo	64	94.1%	4	5.8
	TOTAL	184	86.2%	24	13.7

Source: Questionnaire, 1989.

The people further indicated that Badagry Local Government is active in their communities. Table IV shows that the presence of Badagry Local Government is felt in most communities as reflected from impressive responses.

Table IV: Is the Local Government Active in your Community?

S/N.	COMMUNITY	YES	%	NO	%
1.	Iworo Ajido	60			—
2.	Badagry	28			22.2
3.	Isash	28			36.3
4.	Ojo	64			5.8
	TOTAL	180	83.8	28	21.4

Source: Questionnaire, 1989

In the follow-up questions, respondents were asked to rate the performance of BLG between 1983 and 1989. On the average, the performance was rated as fair (Table V).

Table V: Evaluation of Badagry Local Government Performance

COMMUNITY	EXCELLENT GOOD		FAIR	POOR
Iworo Ajido	-(Nil %)	12(20%)	44(73.3%)	4(6.6%)
Badagry	8(22.2%)	4(11.1%)	20(55.5%)	4(11.1%)
Isashi	-(Nil %)	-(Nil %)	8(18.1%)	36(81.8%)
Ojo	4(5.8%)	4(5.8%)	48(70.5)	12(17.6%)
TOTAL	12(3.5)	20(9.2)	120(54.3)	56(29.2)

From official and independent sources of information it is clear that local government is not only the closest level of government to the grassroot population but a probable instrument of development.

On the whole, Badagry Local Government during the period of analysis proved that given proper incentives, it could be useful in assisting in the developmental process. On the negative side, the myriad of obstacles faced by Badagry Local Government tended to slow down its pace in the discharge of its constitutional responsibilities.

However grandiose the goals of any organization or institution, they cannot be achieved without the human resources. Manpower then becomes a critical variable in the achievement of set goals. In her survey, [redacted] revealed that one of the critical problems that militated against [redacted] Local Government in the provision of essential services is the executive capacity.²⁷ This is most visible in the health department which provides health services. Skilled manpower is not only grossly inadequate but mal-utilized. In some cases wrong number of people were assigned to duties above their capacity. For instance in 1987, 30 inspectorate employees were made to inspect 27, 737 houses to ascertain the degree of cleanliness.²⁸ Poor manpower planning is also to be found in the Works and Housing Department. It is reflected in BLG documents that there is a dearth of personnel especially of middle technical officers in civil, mechanical and electrical engineering who could have been useful in the supervision and co-ordination of projects.

The inability of Badagry Local Government to attract the right calibre and required number of employees stems from historical, political and societal development. Most Nigerians would prefer to associate with other government agencies rather than local government.²⁹ In an interview with some employees of BLG, they revealed that inability to secure better job offers is largely responsible for their continued stay in BLG employment.

The greatest danger facing BLG is inadequacy of funds. The extent of its involvement in primary education is a drain on its resources. Under the 1979 constitution, the Federal Government ceased to have responsibility for primary schools (Babangida's administration has now reversed it) and most State Governments shifted the responsibility of payment of teachers salaries to the Local Governments including BLG. As a result, a greater chunk of its expenditure went to the payment of teacher salaries.

In 1988, for example, the total sum of ₦12 million naira was expended on teachers' salaries by Badagry Local Government.³⁰ In the same vein is the problem of tax evasion among the people. This is particularly in collection of tenement rates. Local support is a vital element in the successful implementation of proposed projects. For increased governmental participation and effectiveness, additional resources are required in form of taxes. This requires the loyalty of people in supporting through payment of taxes. Unable to collect taxes in sufficient amounts, reports indicated that BLG is always in a financial crisis. The inability to raise funds in sufficient amount has greatly affected the performance of Badagry Local Government.³¹

A final set-back for BLG is the redrawing of local government boundaries in 1989. As mentioned earlier, BLG was split into two (Ojo and Badagry (LGs). Prior to the division most of the internally generated revenue accrued from Ojo and Ajeromi areas of the council which are largely urban. Many private organizations and international markets are located in these areas making them a hive of activities. For instance, Volkswagen of Nigeria paid ₦200,000 yearly as tenement rates. Other sources of revenue from these areas include advertisement boards, stallage fees from numerous markets, rates on television, radio and public toilets. Conversely, the new BLG is essentially rural. It has 123 communities of which 115 are rural and only 8 semi-urban centres.

In Badagry for instance, public toilets which are paid for in Ajegunle and Ojo are rarely being used by the people. The main markets are not even on a daily basis and motor parks are few. The net effect is that the internal revenue declined considerably. Table 2 shows a marked disparity in internal revenue before and after separation.

Table 2: Internally Generated Revenue

Months	Income
January	₦833,232.28
February	₦1,026,718.58
March	₦705,847.94
April	₦879,038.06
May	₦598,790.18
June	₦474,978.42

Separated

July	N58,317.69
August	N79,247.50
September	N110,904.08
October	N66,190.93
November	N55,700.96
December	N50,694.80

Source: Treasury Department, Badagry Local Government, December 16th, 1989.

The bleak financial position is worsened by the presence of other governmental agencies at the LGs. With the creation of the agency for mass mobilisation (Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice and Economic Recovery) and National Electoral Commission BLG (like all other LGs) was directed to accommodate these agencies (provide cars offices and accommodation for their staff) thereby straining the already lean purse of BLG.

Strategies for Improvement

Based on the foregoing discussions, our recommendations will aim at improved performance of BLG for the transformation of communities under its jurisdiction. This would involve the local people, traditional rulers, BLG, Federal and State Governments. Most of the problems enumerated in the previous section revolve around funds, quality and quantity of manpower.

Since overt reliance on grants is dangerous, we recommend that BLG should commission studies on ways and means of improving the internally generated revenue. We opine that there are many untapped resources within the local government. For instance, the beaches are likely sources of revenue. Chairs and parks can be constructed in beaches. At present, the Federal Government has declared the beaches future tourist centres (under its control). BLG can appeal to the Federal Government for the temporary use of such places till the Federal Government is ready to implement its programme. In addition, the traditional rulers have role in mobilising their people towards the payment of taxes to improve the financial state of BLG.

The Federal/State Governments have a role to ensure the survival of BLG. Policy wise, the present administration is committed to the upliftment of rural communities. Local Government is recognised as the bedrock of socio-economic justice. In fact, the new revenue formula reflects the conception of local government as the basic unit for the

wide departure from policy statements. The present directive of Federal/State Government entreating LGs (including BLG) to accommodate its own agencies without making extra provisions is retrogressive. We suggest that both Federal and State Governments should give additional funds to assist them financially (for the extra load).

Perhaps more important, is the missing thread in BLG manpower planning. Manpower planning is the process of obtaining the right people:

- in the right number
- with the right knowledge, skills and experience
- in the right jobs
- in the right places.³²

A systematic evaluation of job requirements should be undertaken especially in the field services (works, health and revenue collection). This would eliminate haphazard recruitment and placement of personnel.

Since most of the problems and challenges discussed in the study are man-made, efforts at improving BLG would simply be a question of time, desire, decision and commitment.

Conclusion

The study does not in any way claim to have been exhaustive. Our focus in it is essentially on the internal processes. This is due to limitations imposed by the demands of research which include financial resources and time. However, more work can still be done to enhance BLG through research findings. Future research should centre more on impact of BLG services/programmes on groups within carefully selected communities. The objectives and evaluation criteria should include the public conditions that various programmes are designed to affect.

11. *Ibid.* p. 339
12. *Ibid.* p. 339
13. I. Adeniran (1972) 'Reflections on Local Governments Under the Presidential System', *African Journal of Management*, Vol. 1 No. 2 October p. 87
14. G.O. Crowe (1976) 'Making The Third Tier of Government More Effective: An Assessment of the 1976 Local Government Reforms', *ASCOM* *Ibid.* p. 32
15. *Ibid.* p. 33
16. *Ibid.* p. 33
17. *Ibid.* p. 34
18. *Ibid.* p. 34
19. *Ibid.* pp. 33-60

Notes and References

1. I.B. Bello-Imam, (1989) "Rural Development in Nigeria: A Theoretical Explanation", A paper presented at the National Conference on Social Mobilisation and Community Development, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Jan. 11-13, p.3.
2. *Ibid* p. 3
3. W. Rodney, (1974) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, (Washington: Howard University Press) pp. 21-24.
4. Atome Kunu, (1987) "Orthodox and Radical Theories of Development and Underdevelopment in Nigeria and the Third World: The Futile Quest for a Difference" in S.O. Olugbemi (ed), *Alternative Political Futures for Nigeria*. (Lagos: Nigerian Political Science Publication) p. 48.
5. This definition is taken from I.B. Bello-Imam (1989) op. cit p. 2.
6. M.P. Barber, (1974) *Local Government* (London: Macdonald and Evans) p. 1.
7. I.B. Bello-Imam, (1986) "Development and Utilisation of Human Resources at the Local Government Level" Paper Presented at the National Conference on Reflections on Nigeria's Development: Socio-Economic and Political Survival, University of Lagos, June 2-4th p. 1.
8. *Ibid*. p. 1
9. The new powers given to the Obas, Emirs and Warrant Chiefs were untraditional. For instance, pre-colonial Igboland operated an egalitarian system while Obas in Yorubaland operated a system of checks and balances.
10. For details see R.F. Ola "The Military and Two Decades of Local Government in Nigeria" in S.O. Olugbemi (Ed) op. cit p. 335.
11. *Ibid*. p. 339
12. *Ibid* p. 339
13. L. Adamolekun, (1982) "Reflections on Local Governments Under the Presidential System", *Ascon Journal of Management*, Vol. 1 No. 2 October p. 63
14. G.O. Orewa, (1976) "Making The Third Tier of Government More Effective: An Assessment of the 1976 Local Government Reforms". *ASCON Ibid* p. 52
15. *Ibid*. p. 53
16. *Ibid*. p. 53
17. *Ibid*. p. 54
18. *Ibid*. p. 54
19. *Ibid*. pp 56-60

20. N.A. Lawal, (1987) "Local Government as a vehicle of Rural Development: An Appraisal" in S.O. Olugbemi (Ed) *op. cit* p. 391
21. 1986 Budget Speech by President Ibrahim Babangida, December 31st, 1985.
22. The *Guardian* June 8th 1989 p. 10
23. D. Olowu, (1986) "Institutional Approaches to Rural Infrastructure Development", *Quarterly Journal of Administration*, Vol. XX. Nos 3 & 4 April, 1986 p. 159.
24. C.E.A. Winslow, "The Untilled Fields of Public Health" Quoted from H.L. Blum (1963) *A Public Health View Point* (London: Collier Macmillan Ltd) pp. 30-31.
25. J.A. Bamgbose "Local Government as an Instrument of Development: A case study of Badagry Local Government". Unpublished B.Sc. Original Essay, July 1988 pp. 22-25
26. *Ibid.* p. 26
27. A.K. Seidu "The Influence of Personnel on the Provision of Social Services in Badagry Local Government of Lagos State." Unpublished B.Sc. Original Essay, Lagos State University Ojo, July 1988 p. 13
28. *Ibid:* pp. 13-15
29. I.B. Bello Imam (1986) *op. cit* pp. 1-4
30. Bamgbose *op. cit* p. 33
31. Bamgbose *op. cit* p. 41
32. D.M. Akinnusi, "Assessment of Manpower Planning in A recession." A paper presented at the National Seminar on Labour Market Adjustment in Recession: The Nigerian Experience. Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management, University of Lagos, October 16-17th, 1989. p. 2.

20. N.A. Laxai (1987) "Local Government as a Vehicle of Rural Development: An Appraisal", in S.O. Orwa (ed) op cit p. 191

21. *1985 Budget Speech by President Indira Gandhi*, December 1985

22. The Government of India (1985) p. 198

23. D. Orwa (1986) "Institutional Approaches to Rural Development", Quarterly Journal of Administration, Vol. XX No. 3, April, 1986 p. 150

24. C.E.A. Winslow, "The United States of Public Health", Oxford University Press (1983) Public Health Year Book (London Collins) The Martinelli Ltd, pp. 30-31

25. J.A. Bangorah "Local Government as an Instrument of Development: A Case Study of Badajoz Local Government", unpublished B.Sc. Original Essay, July 1988 pp. 22-23

26. *Ibid* pp. 26 (1987) *Journal of Administration* Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 1

27. A.K. Singh "The Influence of Personnel on the Provision of Social Services in Badajoz Local Government of Lagos State", Unpublished B.Sc. Original Essay, Lagos State University, Ojo, July 1988 p. 13

28. *Ibid* pp. 12-13

29. B. B. B. (1988) op cit p. 33

30. Bamgbose op cit p. 33

31. Bamgbose op cit p. 41

32. D.M. Adeniji "Assessment of Management Planning in A Local Government", paper presented at the National Seminar on Local Government Administration, Lagos, The Nigerian Government Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management, Lagos, October 1980 p. 2

33. *Ibid* p. 329

34. *Ibid* p. 330

35. L. Adeniji (1987) "Reform of Local Governments Under the Presidential System", *Asian Journal of Management*, Vol. 1 No. 2, October p. 63

36. G.O. Orwa (1978) "Making The Third Tier of Government More Effective: An Appraisal of the 1976 Local Government Reforms", ASCON *Ibid* p. 22

37. *Ibid* p. 23

38. *Ibid* p. 24

39. *Ibid* p. 25

40. *Ibid* pp. 26-27

20

Social Life and Customs In Contemporary Badagry

LAIDE ADEDOKUN

Introduction

Most previous efforts¹ at documentation on Badagry have focused largely on the early history of the ancient town, particularly the early contact and trade with Europeans, as well as the religious developments, of the people. Very little attention² has therefore been paid to the life and culture of the people and the changes brought about through early contact with other cultures.³ This largely descriptive chapter attempts to fill this void in the existing literature on Badagry.

A short consideration of the settlement and migration pattern of the people of Badagry would reveal the pattern of inter-group linkages that exist as well as show Badagry as a cultural transition zone between the Yoruba and the Aja culture areas.

The first migration was allegedly led by one Ashehe, an Ife Prince who established the Kingdom of Apa, west of Badagry. This Yoruba migration eventually led to the emergence of two groups of settlements — Apa and Badagry on one hand and Akoro and Ija Osan in Porto-Novo on the other. The second migration and settlement was that of the Aja, under the King of Dahomey, Agaja Trudo⁶. Here, the founding of Badagry was linked with his expansionist drive between 1708 and 1740⁷. As a result of the dynastic dispute among the three sons of the later King of Allada, Dagbagri Genu, one of the sons, moved to the coastal region and founded Dahomey with Abomey as the capital. This invasion on the natives resulted in their mass movement eastwards into the creek and sandspit country beyond Porto-Novo. One of such fleeing groups of Popo was said to have founded Badagry, with additional refugees joining them later. It is notable that the Chief of Jegba ward traced his linkage back to 1724 when Agaja Trudo annexed the coastal state⁸.

With these pattern of linkages with the Yoruba and the Aja, it is little surprise that the Ogu culture has been affected and modified by the influences of these and other foreign cultures. For example, the Aja Com-

munity in Porto-Novo and Badagry formed one coherent culture areas which was closely interlocked and formed a single socio-economic unit before the colonial era. Trade relations flourished between Badagry and Porto-Novo and also between Yoruba-Aja communities with the establishment of mixed communal markets such as the Ajara Market in Porto Novo. However, Badagry established greater contact with the Aja people of Benin than with most of Yoruba towns although the influence of the latter through language is not in any doubt. This chapter attempts to examine the culture of the people of Badagry and the impact of their relationship with other cultures.

The Concept of Culture

Culture is a very important aspect of any social structure as it distinguishes man from non-man and one social organisation from another. It has therefore assumed a central position in anthropological and sociological studies. It embraces all the materials and non-material expressions of a people, as well as the processes with which the expressions are communicated. To Andah (1982);

... It has to do with all the social, ethnical, intellectual, scientific, artistic and technological expression and process of a people, usually ethnically, nationally, or supra-nationally related, and usually living in a geographically contiguous areas; what they pass on to their successors and how these are passed⁹.

thus evident that culture shapes the personality of the members of a society, controls their behaviours and directs their relationships within the group. To understand a group of people, therefore, is to understand various aspects of their culture.

The distinction often made between material and non-material culture is purely theoretical, for in practical terms, one influences the other. Material culture consists of a variety of artifacts which we create and use in an attempt to come to terms with and exploit their physical environment. It is possible to use some of these as indices of power and richness of a society. They include handicrafts, decorative arts, recipes, architecture, art and symbols.

Non-material aspects of culture include values, philosophy, religion, ceremonies, drama, music, festivals and dance. This chapter dwells largely on this. Specifically, we shall discuss ceremonies — marriage child naming and funeral, family and other social life of the people and language relationships.

Marriage

Traditional social institutions embody patterns of culture which have evolved over hundreds of years. They represent man's success in interaction with his physical environment. Given the available natural resources and level of technological development, the Ogu people have developed viable social institutions, many of which have survived the latter part of the 20th century. Marriage, one of such, is the socially approved union of a man and a woman as husband and wife. Among the Ogu people of Badagry, the manner of establishing and terminating such a relationship is culturally spelt out, in addition to the associated obligations and restrictions.

The traditional Ogu marriage is a union between two extended families rather than between two nuclear families or individuals. The existence of three distinct stages were observed in the marriage system. They are a period of early intimation, the settlement of the bride price (wealth) and the marriage ceremony. The extended family is involved at all stages — from mate selection through the marriage ceremonies and even after. This involvement is not unexpected as the extended family is found to be a grouping of related nuclear families which quite often live together in the same compound, constituting the group most readily identifiable and most important for the individual in his or her daily life.

The process of mate selection often involves male members of the extended family, especially the elders who may in fact have marked out spouses for their young ones from childhood. There are various endogamous rules guiding the selection of a suitable spouse. These are based on religious faith, locality and even occupation. When a selection is made, a period of close acquaintance with members of both families is observed. This is necessary for members of both families to satisfy themselves that the family on the other side is free from the taint of any hereditary disease such as insanity, epilepsy, leprosy and also whether they are insolvent debtors.

In addition to this, discrete inquiries are made to ascertain the moral and social qualities of the prospective partner (especially the girl) and her mother. Often times, they require the opinion of a diviner to know whether the marriage will be possible and successful. If negative traits are found, the extended family stakes a strong position by rejecting the choice. If however, they are satisfied, in addition to the possession of desirable character traits like chastity, learning, courage and grace, they proceed to formally introduce their family to the girl's family. The boy's family often takes various gifts such as kegs of palm wine, native gin, coconut, maize flour and other assorted drinks along while going to make their intention

known to the girl's family. On their own part, the girl's family often needs some time (this varies) to give a reply to their request. During this period; of waiting, they (girl's family) would have the opportunity to make inquiries about the prospective suitor and his family. If they are satisfied, this is conveyed to the boy's family and courtship formally begins.

The second stage is the settlement of payment of the bride price (wealth) by the prospective groom's family to the prospective bride's family. This is a sum of money, goods and other gifts demanded and given to the girl's family before the final marriage ceremony can take place. Our various interviews reveal that the institution of bride price performs certain functions among the Ogu people. First and foremost, it is a symbol of marriage contract, as marriages contracted in registries (by ordinance) are considered incomplete if the bride price has not been settled. Secondly, it is a form of protection for the bride and helps in maintaining the marriage. This we found to be quite functional in times of conflict when husbands and wives could easily separate but for the bond between their two families made possible through such marriage exchanges. Thirdly, it is a symbol of alliance between two kingroups. It is also a form of compensation for the loss of the bride's services to her family. Generally, these exchanges serve to legitimize the intended marriage, give stability to the arrangement being made and bring about social cohesion between the two families and lineage.

There is no fixed bride price, as the two families exchange what is considered a handsome price, given their socio-economic background. The range often includes choice Kolanuts, some alligator pepper, bitter melon, good quality wrapper, head-tie, assorted drinks and money, according to the suitor's ability. After the settlement of the bride wealth, and after the gods have been appeased, the wedding day is fixed. It is interesting to point out that, sometimes, a 'kidnap' is arranged for the bride by the groom's family after this stage, such that there would be no need for marriage ceremonies¹⁰.

Marriages may be solemnised at any time of the year. The day of marriage is a day of feasting for the two families and their well-wishers. Significantly, the paternal and maternal aunts assume a prominent role in relation to the bride. They are the representatives of the bride's family and they perform the most important function of offering prayers and conjugal blessings for the success of the new union.

The bride is conducted to her new home at night by members of family and housewives from her husband's extended family. She is attired in her best, with a thin white cloth for a veil, and accompanied by a band of local musicians. She could also have with her, cooking utensils, brooms and other personal effects, which may include her idols. The bridal party is

met at the entrance of the bridegroom's compound by a female band of the house especially selected for that purpose. The symbolic ceremony of the washing of the bride's legs is performed and she is formally admitted into the bridegroom's household. She is then conducted to the apartment of the headlady of the house and she becomes the inmate of that house for life. Traditionally, a patrilocal living arrangement is preferred. This is thought to make starting married life for the new couple easier. It also affords the husband's family the opportunity to take good care of the bride when she eventually has a baby.

Marriage customs allow for many wives and the man and his wives often live with other members of the extended family. Polygamy is thus widespread for reasons ranging from affluence to high infant mortality and the need for more farm hands. Children, especially in a polygamous set-up were an economic asset. Women tend to marry at a much younger age than men — usually about 16 years. They are therefore more likely to be widowed and remarry. Divorce is rare, traditionally, when there are children resulting from the union.

Adultery with the husband's blood relation, stealing, repeated insolvency and barrenness are common causes of divorce. Even with these, divorce may not be granted until traditional chiefs of the quarter are convinced that all possible means of settlement have been exhausted.

Child-naming

Children are highly valued among the Ogu and the more, the merrier. Family size is often large as a result. It is not uncommon to find a woman having ten to twelve children and a man's affluence may be measured through his ability to have and successfully train many children. The child naming ceremony, ushering a new born into the world and giving him/her a social identity is considered very important. Child-naming is done by the husband's family (of origin) through the white capped chief of the area, who gets informed as soon as a child is delivered.

A male child is named on the ninth day while the female child is named on the seventh day. From the day she delivers till after the naming ceremony, a newly delivered woman is not allowed to eat salt. This is thought to be helpful in starting off breast-feeding and getting back to normal shape after delivery.

On the child-naming day, the mother of the child is forbidden to take her breakfast until the traditional rites relevant to the naming ceremony have been performed. One of these is the symbolic celebration that accompanies the dropping of the umbilical cord when a local delicacy 'ahomfre' is prepared and served with assorted drinks. Men are normally present at

naming ceremonies but the paternal aunt of the new born is responsible for carrying out the major assignments during the naming ceremony. The 'Tanyin' as she is called uses smoked fish, palm oil, alligator pepper, assorted gin, water, honey, salt, maize and bitter kola to offer prayers during the ceremony. Each of these items is believed to be significant for the child's survival. The palm, for example is believed to be one of the earliest sources of food eaten in different forms by the people.

Names are given to newly born babies in consideration of special events surrounding their birth, the historical background of their lineage, and often carry religious connotation, reflecting the place of religion in the life of the people. Some of the communal ones include Senami (God's gift), 'Sehubo, (God surpasses all things), Senukon (God first) and Segodo (God behind you). After the child is formally named, eating and dancing begin. The special Ogu food 'Lifin' (corn flour porridge) is served with fish soup to visitors. The newly delivered woman is not allowed to go out or to do any strenuous work until the fortieth day when she is considered hale and hearty to continue with her household chores.

Family Life

The most widespread traditional family form found among the Ogu is the extended family where two or more generations of people related by blood and marriage are found living together in the same household. The smallest unit in the social system is thus the family which is almost always large with a man, his wives, several children and relations by blood and marriage.¹¹ Ancestry is traced to two or more generations and a man sees his grandchildren as his own. The Ogu family system is essentially patrilineal in nature. Descent and inheritance are normally passed down the male line of the family. The first male child is recognised as the heir and given prominence in sharing properties.

A typical Ogu compound is made up of a collection of rectangular houses constructed of walls of wattle or bamboo piles and a thatched roof. The houses are arranged in short rows and built close to each other. Compounds are separated from one another by a small bush or banana grove. It is thus possible for several families to live closely together under the headship of the eldest surviving male member of the lineage.¹² The head of the compound exercises general authority over members and ensures peace and harmony in the compound. Several of such lineages or compounds combine to form a village or quarter among the Ogu. The oldest of the villages often produce the overall head of the quarter and this is often hereditary.¹³ It is interesting to point out that the kinship system among the Ogu links all inter-related persons by bonds of common

obligations, group solidarity and mutual assistance; members as a single extended family and identified themselves as such. There are no formal age grades and puberty rites that prepare young boys and girls for adult roles as found among some cultures (e.g. the Aworis). Rather, adults of the same age often come together to promote economic ventures within their quarters.

Within the family and large society, Ogu women have from time immemorial played prominent social, political, economic and religious roles. They are engaged in various traditional occupations like mat weaving, fried food and processing mills, as well as trade in varying items such as fish and farm products. This has given them a fairly high level of economic independence characteristic of their Yoruba counterparts.¹⁴ Women are, however, excluded from accepting the rulership within the monarchy. However, they perform significant functions in relation to the traditional institution of Wheno Aholuship.

The paternal aunt (Tanyin) of the ruling monarch is an important and influential figure, without which a would-be occupant of a vacant throne cannot be decided. At the family level, the significant role of the Tanyin at naming ceremonies has already been discussed.

The 'Ahosis' (King's wives), although kept out of publicity are expected to function as educators, moral guardians and conciliators among women. The King's mother, herself an 'ahosi' is also an important figure in the palace. She is expected by virtue of her position and experience, to guide other 'Ahosis' and despite her position offer great respect to the ruler.

Family, home care and socialisation of children are the primary roles of Ogu women. It is the belief of the people that the God of prosperity lives in a clean environment, therefore women have cultivated the habit of maintaining a clean environment in the market and at home. Also in the course of their interaction at home and in the market place, they have been found to influence the minds of their husbands in decision-making. Through their membership of economic groups (e.g. craft guilds), they have been able to influence the emergence of leaders in politics. And in traditional religion, women are not just worshippers. They are found along with men in traditional seminaries. They are also custodians of the instruments of worship.

For the whole family, the traditional Ogu attire is the big wrapper which may sometimes be used with a jumper and a top. This mode of dressing is thought to have been influenced by the environment of the people. As fishermen, farmers and craftsmen, the wrapper is a good companion offering freedom and warmth. As a mark of respect, chiefs and other people present at a gathering where the Aholu Wheno is, tie their wrapper and hang it on their left hand instead of the normal slinging on

the left shoulder.

The demise of an old member of a family is instantly reported to the chief of the quarter who reports to the Wheno Aholu with gifts in the form of alligator pepper and drinks. The corpse is preserved by turning it upside down while a date is fixed for the burial. On the eve of the burial, which may be two to three days after death, a ceremony synonymous with wake-keeping is performed where libations are poured to appease the gods before the burial. If it is suspected that the death is not natural, an attempt is made to ascertain the cause of the death, not primarily for the purpose of revenge, but to prevent a reoccurrence. This closely guided procedure is only exclusively done and witnessed by few strong and powerful elders. Burial takes place at home. It was common for the deceased to be buried in his bedroom or at the back of the house. At burial, a livestock is killed and the ceremony, called 'Ago' is rounded up with feasting, drumming and dancing and may last for several days.

Summary and Conclusion

We have attempted in the foregoing to bring into focus some of the cultural practices that give meaning to the life of the Ogu people. The people have evolved a distinct culture of their own, largely influenced by their long contact with the Egun of Benin Republic and Porto-Novo as well as their Yoruba neighbours. This is why there are many similarities between the Ogu and these other cultures, making Badagry an example of culture intact at its best.

The very introduction of Christianity to the people had far reaching consequences on marriage and family life. The traditional form and pattern of marriage have been largely undermined. Under the new Christian orientation, monogamy was highly favoured and Church marriages were encouraged. Aspects of other ceremonies like child-naming and funeral were also handled by the Church and Islamic religious organisations. Gradually there were changes in the social life of the people, resulting from culture contact. The dead, for example, had to be buried in the Church cemetery, away from home. This removed part of the myth and symbolism surrounding the spirit of the departed. The age-long practice of parent's involvement in selecting a partner for their children declined with education and greater mobility for the young ones. Average age at marriage increased gradually from 16 - 18 years to over 20 years for both young men and women who now mostly go through part of the formal educational system.

Another area of change is in the mode of dressing. This long culture contact with traders and missionaries influenced the Ogu people into

using western and Yoruba dresses. This is also associated with the need to attend more formal religious gatherings different from the traditional religious outings. With these changes, marriage and family have assumed a social significance different from what they used to be. There is need to revive and preserve the beautiful and unique culture of the Ogu people in order to adapt it for the development of the society. It is only in this way that future generations can learn from the rich past.

In an effort to improve their level of economic prosperity, developing countries in general and African countries in particular have, in recent times, been looking at tourism as an economic sector whose potential must be fully tapped. In Nigeria, for instance, the fluctuating fortunes of the oil industry with its adverse consequences on the nation's foreign exchange earnings has more than ever before, necessitated the need for alternative sources of revenue for the nation. The present commitment of the Federal and State Governments towards tourism development should therefore be seen in the light of this pressing need to diversify the revenue generation base of the country.

It is therefore not surprising that by some strange way, there has been a growing awareness of the immense potentialities of some of Nigeria's physical, cultural and historical landmarks for eventual development as tourist attractions. This is particularly true of Badagry given her unique environmental setting. This growing awareness stems partly from the fact that a number of physical, locational and historical factors combine to favour the development of Badagry as a very prominent tourist centre of both national and international status. Among these are the proximity of the town to both the lagoon and the Atlantic ocean, the existence of extensive coastal beaches as well as the prevalence of a tropical climate and a luxuriant vegetation being as typified by the existence of a number of large coconut plantations. Added to this is an historically rich past coupled with a fascinating cultural heritage. Furthermore, her unique location near a large population of potential tourists by virtue of the closeness to Metropolis Lagos and the gateway to the ECOWAS countries places her in a vantage position as far as tourism development is concerned. It can therefore be asserted that Badagry has a very prominent role to play in the development of tourism and its services.

It has been observed however, that in spite of this potentially great role which tourism can play in the overall development of Badagry Area, its

to be seen as the dominant culture. This is also associated with the need to extend more formal religious gatherings different from the traditional religious events. With these changes, marriage and family have become a social significance different from what they used to be. There is a need to revive and preserve the traditional and unique culture of the Ogu people in order to adapt to the development of the society. It is only in this way that future generations can learn from the rich past.

The Ogu people's traditional culture is not natural, as always is claimed. It was the result of the Ogu people's deliberate decisions to change their culture to meet a challenge. This deeply guided preservation of their traditional culture was not by any strong and powerful ruler. It was the result of the Ogu people's decision to be buried in the Ogu cemetery as a result of the Ogu people's decision to be buried in the Ogu cemetery. At the end of the day, it is founded up with a strong and lasting foundation.

Summary and Conclusion

We have attempted in this study to bring into focus some of the cultural practices that are relevant to the life of the Ogu people. The people have evolved a distinct culture of their own, largely influenced by their long contact with the Ogu of the Ogu, Yoruba and Ibo, as well as the Ogu of the Ogu. There are many similarities between Ogu and Yoruba, Ibo, and Ogu, making Ogu a unique culture of its own.

A very important aspect of the Ogu people's culture had far-reaching impacts on marriage and family life. The traditional form and pattern of marriage have been significantly influenced. Under the new Christian dispensation, marriage ceremonies are now held and Church marriages were encouraged. Aspects of other ceremonies like child-caring and funeral were also handled by the Ogu and other religious organisations. Gradually there were changes in the social life of the people, resulting from culture contact. The Ogu, for example, had to be buried in the Church cemetery, away from home. This evolved part of the Ogu and Ogu people's surrounding the spirit of the departed. The age-long practice of parents' involvement in selecting a partner for their children declined with education and greater mobility for the young ones. Average age at marriage increased gradually from 15 years to over 20 years for both young men and women who now marry as a regular part of the formal education system.

Another area of change is in the mode of dressing. This long culture contact with modern and westerners introduced the Ogu people into

21

Tourism Potentials in Badagry Area: Opportunities and Challenges

OLUKAYODE OJO

In an effort to improve their level of economic prosperity, developing countries in general and African countries in particular have, in recent times, been looking at tourism as an economic sector whose potentials must be fully tapped. In Nigeria, for instance, the fluctuating fortune of the oil industry with its adverse consequence on the nation's foreign exchange earnings has more than ever before, necessitated the need for alternative sources of revenue for the nation. The present commitment of the Federal and State Governments towards tourism development should therefore be seen in the light of this pressing need to diversify the revenue generation base of the country.

It is therefore not surprising that for quite sometime now, there has been a growing awareness of the immense potentialities of some of Nigeria's physical, cultural and historical landmarks for eventual development as tourist attractions. This is particularly true of badagry given her unique environmental setting. This growing awareness stems partly from the fact that a number of physical, locational and historical factors combine to favour the development of Badagry as a very prominent tourist centre of both national and international status. Among these are the proximity of the town to both the lagoon and the Atlantic ocean; the existence of extensive coastal beaches as well as the prevalence of a littoral climate and a luxuriant vegetation setting as typified by the existence of a number of large coconut plantations. Added to this is an historically rich past coupled with a fascinating cultural heritage. Furthermore, her unique location near a large population of potential tourists; by virtue of the closeness to Metropolitan Lagos and the gateway to the ECOWAS countries places her in a vantage position as far as tourism development is concerned. It can therefore be asserted that tourism has a very prominent role to play in the development of Badagry and its environs.

It has been observed however, that in spite of this potentially great role which tourism can play in the overall development of Badagry area, its

development, in relative terms, has not been commensurate with the identified potentials of this ancient town. This situation therefore calls for a proper planning and rational development of the tourism potentials of the area for which a thorough understanding of the people's attitudes and perception of these potentials is very fundamental. It is against this background that this chapter examines the perception of the people about tourism potentials in Badagry area.

An attempt is made in this study to appraise some aspects of the tourist potentials in Badagry area. In all, there are thirteen major tourist attractions which have been highlighted in this chapter and all of which have resulted from the physical, historical and cultural background as already noted. The chapter further examines the basic issues of perception and attitudinal disposition of the people as they relate to tourism. Some of the problems militating against the full utilization of these potentials are also highlighted while the chapter concludes by proposing some strategies on how to accelerate the tempo of socio-economic development of badagry through tourism.

Badagry's Tourist Attractions: The Physical Factors

The major aspects of the tourist attractions in Badagry and its environs perhaps be best described on the basis of their geographical, historical cultural significance. As already noted, Badagry town, by its coastal location and the attendant physio-geographical setting, is endowed with a lot of natural features that possess high tourist potentials. Among such features are the Atlantic sea front; the lagoons, creeks and beaches; the botanically rich vegetation ranging from the mangrove to the luxuriant gallery forest to the grassland.

The lagoons and the sea front offer excellent opportunities for sea cruising, nature watching, hotel development and other tourism-related activities. In particular, the Badagry beach possesses some locational characteristics that greatly enhance its appeal for recreation and tourism. In comparison to the Victoria beach in Lagos island, the Badagry beach is relatively less vulnerable to the effects of strong waves. Consequently, its waters are usually calm thus resulting in a serene environment which often lends itself to a lot of interesting recreational activities such as sea cruising and nature watching. In addition, being a beach which is subjected to less erosion than the Victoria Island beach, it offers greater opportunities for hotel development since structures built along its shores are usually free from oceanic incursion which is a common phenomenon at the Victoria Island beach. In terms of water quality, the waters of Badagry beach are relatively cleaner and probably less polluted than those

of the Victoria Island beach, which by virtue of its urban location, is more prone to a lot of environmental abuse.

Equally significant is the calm tropical weather of Badagry which serves as an additional incentive to visitors especially foreign tourists from the temperate regions. It must be stressed also that the relative quiet which usually prevails in Badagry presents a sharp contrast as well as a welcome departure from the hustle and bustle of the Lagos metropolis thus making the town an ideal tourist location not only for foreign tourists but also to all those who long for a temporary break from city life and its associated problems.

Of major historical importance are those features that bear some relevance to the town's unique role during and immediately after the slave trade. Notable among such features are the following:

The Badagry Museum

The museum which houses the relics of the slave trade is one of the most cherished museums in the country. This museum is located at High Chief Mobee's Palace at Boekoh, Badagry. The late Chief Sunbu Mobee who was reported to have supervised traffic in slave trade towards the end of the nineteenth century died on December 16, 1893.

One of the most important historical relics in the museum is the neck chain, which is about 50 metres long. This neck chain is capable of holding about 100 slaves by the neck through the use of clasps which are secured around the necks of the slaves. Also included in the museum is the hip clap which was used to lock the left leg of one slave to the right leg of the other in order to regulate their movement. Other relics include baby's link which consists of seven links used in holding the hands of babies together and the security clasp which was used to hold slaves who were tired on their way to the sugarcane plantations. All these relics have been attracting tourists from both far and near for over a century. The present museum was re-built in 1974.

The Site of the Fallen Agia Tree

This historical tree which was located in the heart of the ancient town once formed the focal point for important socio-cultural and religious gatherings. An Ogu farmer/hunter named Agbede built a hut under the tree for rest and relaxation. It is also significant to note that on arrival in Badagry in September 1842, the Revd. Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesleyan (now Methodist) Mission held the first ever christian religious service in Nigeria under the tree. The first Christmas day in Nigeria was also celebrated under the tree by Revd. Birch Freeman and his colleague, Revd.

Townsend of the C.M.S. Mission on 25th December, 1842. Among some important landmarks located close to the site of the fallen Agia tree are the Badagry Central Mosque built in 1877; the "Vrekete Central Market which was officially opened in 1889 and the Badagry Town Hall whose foundation was laid in 1958.

A monument has been built to mark the spot of the fallen Agia tree whose height was put at 48 metres and its circumference at about 9 metres. The tree which was destroyed by a storm on June 1959 was reputed to have stood for over 300 years.

The First-Storey Building in Nigeria

The building which is situated at the marina was built by the C.M.S. Missionaries. It is important to note that this building apart from serving as the first Vicarage for the C.M.S. Mission, also contained the study inside which Bishop Ajayi Crowther translated the English Bible into Yoruba language. The building which in its original form was completed in June 1845 was a prefabricated structure built from strong African hardwood. The building which is 13 metres long and 8 metres wide was estimated to have cost ₦650.00 at the time of completion. A lot of repair work has been carried out on the building in order to prevent its total collapse due mainly to old age and non-occupation since 1978 when the building moved into a new Vicarage in the premises of St. Thomas's Church. The building since been serving as an important tourist attraction.

Cemeteries, Graves and Tombs

A number of cemeteries, graves and tombs abound in Badagry that if properly maintained can offer a lot of tourist attractions especially because of their historical and religious importance. Among such cemeteries, probably the most significant is the one located along the Hospital Road not far from the General Hospital. The importance of the cemetery stems from the fact that it houses the graves of a good number of the early missionaries and administrators among whom are Mrs. Muller, Mr. & Mrs. Cooten and Mr. Mark Willoughby.

Of an equally important historical significance is the grave of the first slave merchant, George Freemingo, popularly called Huntokonu, which is located in the palace of Wheno Aholu Menu- Toyi I, The akran of Badagry. The late Freemingo was assassinated and buried about 1620 A.D. The Boglo's tomb which is located at the Gbogbole sea beach is another of such historical landmarks that offer tourist attraction.

Socio-Cultural Landmarks

The Badagry Markets

A number of traditional markets abound in Badagry which offer a lot of variety to the tourist both in terms of their physical setting as well as in the type of goods usually displayed. Of these markets, the all purpose Agbalata market which is also the largest is the most highly patronised. It covers a relatively wide expanse of land from the Marina and to the swamp stretching to the Methodist Primary School at Jegba quarters. Other markets include, Jubilee, Hunto and Vrekete. It should be noted that these markets ;have been in existence for over two centuries now.

The Oba's Palace

The Palace of the Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I, the Akran of Badagry by its unique design and pictureasque setting presents the visitor with an architectural masterpiece which symbolises the rich cultural heritage of the people. The palace, situated at Gayinkoh in the Jegba quarters of Badagry is the official residence of His royal Highness, The Wheno Aholu Menu-Toyi I, the Akran of badagry and the Royal family. Within the palace is the Menu-Toyi I Hall which caters for all royal receptions. The palace also contains Committee rooms, offices, guest houses and the royal family's shrines.

The Shrines

One of the most important shrines of very high historical and traditional significance in Badagry is the Ogu Toplisen shrine which is located at Hunto. Its significance lies in the fact that all Badagry monarchs are crowned within this shrine. Other notable shrines include Hevioso at Veth-Genview; Loko Megbaeyan at Agbalata; Nabruku at Jegba quarters; Adiyi and Topodun at Adikome; Whrakoh Ajaloko at Ganho quarters; Mathe at Aderiko Ahoviko Vlekete at Posukoh Badagry where Richard Lander was tried as a spy of the British Government. Lander was forced to drink a potion to prove his innocence but he survived the ordeal.

Hotels and Guest Houses

In order to cope with the high influx of tourists that is likely to result from the anticipated expansion of tourism in Badagry area, there is an urgent need to provide more hotels and Guest Houses of international standards. At present, only few of the existing hotels can meet such stand-

ards. These include Hotel De James, Ajara Hotels and the Lagos State University (LASU) Guest Houses.

Given the locational advantage of Badagry especially her proximity to Metropolitan Lagos (about 80 km.) with a population of over seven million, it can rightly be said that Lagos metropolis forms the major source region for potential local tourists to the town. This is even more so when one considers the accessibility factor. Badagry is linked to Lagos by an all-season express road, a journey which takes about forty-five minutes. In addition, Badagry can also be reached from Lagos by water through a network of Lagoons and creeks; a journey which in itself offers a lot of excitement and thus provides an additional impetus to tourism.

With the current efforts by the government in the development of other modes of transportation to compliment road transportation especially in the coastal environment, the Lagos-Badagry waterway may soon become more popular and even more appealing to tourists from Lagos who may see it as a welcome alternative to the erstwhile road transport especially because of the relatively higher degree of adventure that is likely to be associated with such a journey.

Current Attitudes to Tourist Attractions in Badagry Area

As already noted, Lagos metropolis forms a major source region for potential local tourists to Badagry area. In order to examine the perception of these potential local tourists, an attitudinal survey was carried out in Isolo, a sub-urban location within the Lagos Metropolitan region and in three other locations along the Lagos-Badagry expressway. These locations include Ojo, Ijanikin and Ibereko.

Fifty (50) questionnaires were randomly administered in each of the four study locations making a total of 200. Out of these, 187 were duly completed and returned. The responses were grouped under the following sub-headings: awareness; patronage; priority rating; services rendered and facilities. From the responses, it was revealed that people close to the tourist attractions were not necessarily the most aware. For example, 54% of the respondents in Ojo claimed to be aware of and to have visited at least one-third of the tourist attractions listed.

In contrast to Ojo, about 28% of those interviewed in Ibereko, 34% in Isolo and 30% in Ijanikin claimed to be aware of at least one-third of the listed tourist attractions. Hence, there appears to be a reversal of the expected process of diffusion of information contrary to the distance-decay function expounded by Haggestrand where the quality (flow) of information is supposed to decrease away from source of information to the peripheral areas. This distortion may partly be attributed to the observed

differences in the general level of education of the respondents in the different locations used for the study. For instance while 86% of the respondents in Ojo and 72% of those in Ijanikin are either University undergraduates or national Certificate of Education (NCE) students, only 22% of the respondents in Ibereko and 43% of those in Isolo fall within category. (Table 1).

Table 1: Educational Backgrounds of Respondents in the Study Locations

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	IBEREKE		INAJIKIN		OJO		ISOLO		TOTAL	
		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)
First S.L. Certificate	10	21.3	01	2.2	NIL	0	06	13.2	17	9.2
Secondary Class 4/ Trade Centre	12	25.5	05	11.2	02	4.1	04	8.6	23	12.2
WASC/Grade II	15	31.9	07	15.6	05	10.2	16	34.7	43	22.9
HSC/NCE/OND	06	12.8	24	53.3	32	65.3	15	32.6	77	41.3
HND/Degree	04	8.5	08	17.7	10	20.4	05	10.9	27	14.4
TOTAL	47	100	45	100	49	100	46	100	187	100

In terms of patronage, all the respondents who claimed to have visited Badagry on tourist excursions claimed to have visited the Badagry beach. However, while 67% of the respondents who claimed to have visited Badagry on tourist excursions claimed that their visits were to the Badagry beach, only 22% claimed that they have visited the First Story Building in Nigeria and the Museum for the Slave Trade Relics in addition to the beach.

While about 91% of the respondents acknowledged the usefulness of holiday excursions, only 43% see its potential values beyond being a means of recreation only. This group acknowledged the educational values of holiday excursions and its possible impact in exposing people to a nation's rich cultural heritage.

Constraints for Tourism Attraction in Badagry Area.

In order to assess people's perception of some common constraints to tourism in the study area, the responses of the interviewees to these constraints were grouped into six categories. (Table 2):

Table 2: Peoples' Perception to Tourism Constraints in Badagry Area

CONSTRAINTS	IBEREKO		IJANIKIN		OJO		ISOLO		TOTAL	
		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)
Little or No interest	18	38.2	07	15.5	02	4.1	09	19.6	36	19.3
Limited Financial Resources	06	12.7	14	31.3	23	46.9	05	10.8	48	25.7
Little or No times to Spare	13	27.9	08	17.7	10	20.4	21	45.7	52	27.8
Transport Problems	02	4.3	05	11.1	08	16.3	03	6.5	18	9.6
Local Attraction not known to me	05	10.6	09	20.2	04	8.2	07	15.2	25	13.4
Others	03	6.3	02	4.4	02	4.1	01	2.2	08	4.2
TOTAL	47	100	45	100	45	100	46	100	187	100

From this table, it can be observed that lack of time for recreation ranked highest in the list of constraints picked by the respondents. This constraint alone accounted for about 28% of the total responses. The pattern, is however slightly modified when the responses are considered on a locational basis. For example, while "little or no time to spare" ranked highest in both Ibereko and Isolo, "Limited financial resources" ranked first in both Ijanikin and Ojo. This development may be explained in part by the fact that majority of the respondents in both Ijanikin and Ojo were students drawn from Lagos State College of Education (LACOED) and Lagos State University (LASU) respectively.

It is significant to note that in general, the two most mentioned constraints relate to time availability and finance. Taken together, these two constraints could seriously hamper efforts being made to promote recreation and tourism activities. Of an equally serious magnitude is the apparent lack of interest in recreation and tourism as revealed by the respondents. Although, this constituted a significant percentage in only one of the locations — Ibereko. It is nonetheless relevant to stress the need to increase public awareness about the inherent advantages of recreation and tourism among the populace. There is also an urgent need to increase public awareness as to the location of the tourist attractions, as some of the respondents indicated lack of information as to the location of the tourist attractions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From this preliminary study, it has been revealed that people's awareness of the tourist potentials in the study area is still very limited as only about 28% of the respondents claimed to be familiar with not more than one-third of the thirteen tourist attractions highlighted in the study. Secondly, this awareness is highest in Ojo and Ijanikin rather than in Isolo, in spite of its proximity to Lagos metropolis and even in Ibereko which is the closest of the four locations to Badagry where the tourist attractions are located.

Two things need to be emphasized here. First, there is the need for improving the general awareness about our tourist potentials through public enlightenment and education. As already noted from the results, the level of awareness is strongly related to the level of formal education. This no doubt suggests the need to incorporate tourism education into the Social Studies component of the school curriculum particularly in Lagos State. This will not only lead to a better appreciation of our cultural and historical monuments but will also help in inculcating tourism culture especially in our youths thereby leading to greater interest in tourism development. Secondly, there is the need to compile the list of important festivals and the dates on which such festivals are held. The knowledge would further increase the awareness of the people for some of the tourist locations, particularly those that derive largely from the cultural background of the area and which have, up to now, not been given adequate exposure.

On a national level, there is also the need for an inventory of major tourist attractions in the country. This will no doubt help in publicising the level of tourism development both within and outside the country thereby boosting the returns from this important sector of the economy which has hitherto remained unexploited.

In order to foster increased private investment in tourism via the development of infrastructures such as Hotel Accommodation, Government should provide added incentives for investors and liberalise the process of land acquisition for tourism projects. Furthermore, in the planning of tourism accommodation, maximum advantage should be taken of the natural physical endowments of each town. One can for example observe that the natural water fronts in Badagry have not been fully utilised when constructing hostel accommodation except for the LASU Guest Houses. Any assistance in ensuring that maximum advantages are taken of such natural endowments will no doubt enhance the prestige of tourism and increase the potentials for tourist attractions in the area.

Notes and References

1. Ayo Omotayo, Kayode Ojo & Tayo Odumosu (1987): *Some Aspects of the Physical and Human Environment of Lagos State*: Proceedings of the Seminar on Integrated Rural Development in Lagos State held in Badagry, 6th - 8th May, 1987.
2. *Badagry: Our Town Series No. 2*. Lagos State Ministry of Information, Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture.
3. Helleiner, F. M., "Lessons for Tourism Research in Nigeria" in Oguntoyinbo J.S. et al (Ed). *Resources and Development in Africa*, (Lagos: I.G.U., Regional Conference, 1978).
4. Hyma, B. & Ojo G.J.A. "Tourism in Tropical Africa: A Review and Research Agenda," in Oguntoyinbo, J.S. et al (Ed.) *Resources and Development in Africa*: (Lagos: I.G.U. Regional Conference, 1978).
5. Soule R.A., *The Physical Resource Base of rural Lagos*: Proceedings of the Seminar on Integrated Rural Development in Lagos State held in Badagry 6th - 8th May, 1987.

22

Badagry: The Religious Functions of Agbalata Market*

ALABA SIMPSON

Introduction

The Agbalata market in Badagry¹ is an extension of the Obada market founded in 1889. It is patronised by people from various states of Nigeria as well as from neighbouring countries. The market is usually in session every nine days for four days running². The international status of the market would appear to render it an important social phenomenon, the economic characteristics and social attributes of which would immediately present any researcher with potential areas of enquiry.

However, our immediate interest in the present research, is to go beyond the purely economic and social line of enquiry and to focus on certain aspects of religious functions of the Agbalata market that appear to fortify the basic structure of this societal institution.

Devoid of its economic function and trade activities, the Agbalata market of Badagry is essentially reflective of certain religious orientations that would tend to render purely economic explanations inadequate for its systematic understanding. The importance of the market, which is common to human societies, has already been demonstrated in the field of social anthropology (Nadel, 1946; Bohannan and Dalton, 1962; Bohannan and Bohanan, 1968; Moffat 1981). Similarly, the pervasiveness of religion in simple as well as complex societies has been observed by Schneider (1968). According to him, there is need for enquiry into the relationship between religion and economy. Beyond the question of economic based market mode of communication as well as attested dates of events concerning the Agbalata market therefore, there is need to study the potency of the market as systematically analysed from its latent religious status. The religious functions and attributes of the market are therefore bound to be an additional power house of information concerning the history and culture of Badagry.

This cannot however be exhaustively approached in this chapter, since it is a part of an ongoing research on Badagry generally, but it is hoped

that the attempt made here will generate constructive contributions that will open the gate-way for future research. Such future attempts will no doubt influence knowledge concerning the overall culture of Badagry.

Communal Attributes of Ritual

As a concept within anthropological literature, ritual is subject to varied definitions, although the prescriptive, communal and mystical attributes involved in its manifestations appear common to these definitions.

The encyclopedia of religion³ defines ritual as a form of prescribed activity that is essentially motivated by considerations of tradition and symbolism and serves as a bond of social unity and symbolic reminders of common goals.

Kluckhohn (1965) and Rappaport (1971) have both implied in terms of human needs, the physiological dimension involved in ritual. For Kluckhohn in particular, ritual is an ongoing activity that often symbolises a dramatization of the fundamental needs of the society. Along this line, Levin and Kyriakos (1986) have emphasised that the collective aspect of religion is often assumed to indicate *Social Support*. It may therefore be suggested that rituals performed, especially where market matters are concerned, represent communal response to the need for the constant attention of the people, as is particularly exemplified by the case of Agalata.

The market in African concept transcends a mere business institution, it reflects a place where existing social life creates certain significant social relationships that signify common areas of life, (Nadel 1946). The Agalata market of Badagry is no exception and the ways in which this is exemplified in the market's regular affairs is an indication of its unifying characteristics as specifically guarded by the market population and officials. Two traditional officials occupy the apex position of market (*Ahi*) leadership in Badagry. They are the *De Ahigan* (male titled Chief and market leader) and the *Ne Ahigan* (female titled chief and market leader). Together with the members of the market committee, ensuring general peace and prosperity in the market (*Ahi*) is the major responsibility of both the *De Ahigan* and the *Ne Ahigan*. The settling of disputes and assurances of cleanliness in the market (*Ahi*) are thus seen to be by the *Den Ahigan*, the *Ne Aghigan* and the members of the market committee, by whom disputes are usually attended.

In terms of religious involvement, it is the *Ne Aghigan* and *De Aghigan* that bear spiritual responsibilities concerning the absolute welfare of the Agalata market. Very often, meeting is arranged with traditional diviners (*Bokono*) to deliberate on the events going on both around the market (*Ahi*)

and within the community generally. Every year, the oracle has to be consulted concerning the likely progress and possible handicaps that may beset the market (*Ahi*). Meetings are also held with the incumbent Akran and members of his Cabinet — all to seek the means whereby necessary rituals and prayers would be offered concerning the smooth running of the market (*Ahi*) and the safe-keeping of its patrons and customers.

Rituals are also performed annually as a matter of necessity and also when pestilence or any form of disaster sets in. Weekly rituals are also observed every nine days at the *Legba* Shrine by the Badagry Roundabout, and in various shrines within the community at regular intervals. Such rituals usually coincide with the beginning of each market session. Apart from these fixed rituals, officials of the traditional religious groups like the *Igunuko*, *Oro*, *Egungun*, *Gelede* and the various *Vothun* groups usually set time apart for ritual (*Avoh*) performances designed for uplifting the market (*Ahi*) spiritually. General response was recently (1989) made along this dimension when the high priestess of *Oshun-Iya-Alaro*⁴ elsewhere in Lagos State predicted the flow of a "Strange" river into the Badagry waters. This incident, she said, would claim lives at its approach. Property would also be lost in the event. The prediction received prompt attention concerning the need to avert the perceived impending destruction. Rituals to avert the possible fulfillment of the prediction were therefore performed by traditional religious leaders as well as Christian and Muslim bodies respectively. The Muslims sacrificed a cow as part of their own measures for propitiation for the promotion of peace and general calm in the Agbalata market and in the general Badagry community.

The Christians also, having been approached through the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) offered prayers of Songs and Meditation at the market (*Ahi*) during the period in question. The traditional religious leaders performed the necessary rituals (*Avoh*) while the *Den Ahigan* and the *Ni Ahigan* lead the market (*Ahi*) in the necessary ritual (*Avoh*) performances.

The three forms of religious observance that were marked at the market (*Ahi*) show that every facet of religion is exhaustively consulted, by the *Den Ahigan* and *Ni Ahigan*, concerning the need for peace (*Jijowe*) and tranquillity in the Badagry community.

Agbalata market thus stands as a sacred point of social and economic interaction where social-cultural progress is considered a necessary factor in the history and culture of Badagry.

Religious Connotations of "Agbalata"

It is popularly believed within the Badagry community that before the Ag-

balata market came to be known by this name, the market, which was initially situated at the site of the Agia⁵ tree in Badagry was constantly terrorised by certain mystical forces. This, coupled with the problem of space resulted in its movement from the Agia site where it was formerly called Jubilee⁶ market, to its present location. The market from the time of the said movement till the present has been called Agbalata.

A cursory look into the origin of the name may enhance our understanding of aspects of religious implications concerning the market. Two major schools of thought exist in Badagry concerning the origin and meaning of the name 'Agbalata'.

The first school of thought sees Agbalata simply as a corruption of the word 'Ogbata' which means "Swamp Head" in Ogu. 'Ogba' in this case, refers to swamp while 'ta' refers to head. Combined together, 'Ogbata' is a depiction of Swamp-head in Ogu. This explanation is basically geographical, dealing mainly with environmental setting.

The second school of thought suggests that Agbalata is a corruption of 'Agba Olota'. The latter, according to this school of thought, is the name of a sea deity that originally belonged to the Ibereko settlement of the Awori stock in Badagry. 'Agba' is considered to be the equivalent of the Yoruba 'Ojubo' which refers to the place where a particular deity is worshipped p. a shrine. Hence, 'Agba-Olota' considered to bear reference to the place here 'Olota' is worshipped. Being situated the present site of the Agbalata market. Agbalata is said to be an adulteration of 'Agba-Olota'. This explanation is religious in nature, dealing with worship.

The two explanations rendered by each school of thought are considered in this chapter to be relevant to the name of the main market in Badagry. The first, for example, actually reveals that the market (*Ahi*) is situated at a swampy area, being very near the Marina. The second explanation also points attention to the deity referred to, whose shrine is visibly located behind the pottery sellers in the market, by the water side. The 'Agba Olota' in this case, is considered to be a river deity, an equivalent of an 'Orisa Odo' (Sea god) in Yoruba land. In view of our present consideration however, the name that largely reflect the religious foundations of the market is the 'Agbalata', given its affiliation to the 'Agba-Olota' shrine.

Proximity of Market to Shrine

One prominent observation that generated from the 'Agba-Olota' school of thought is the notion that the Agbalata market, where this explanation is accepted, is founded upon the name of a deity, based on the close proximity of the market (*Ahi* to shrine (*Vodun hue*).

The seeming relationship between market places and associated shrines (Vodun whe), both in terms of name and proximity is further exemplified in the existing cases of other markets (*Ahi*) in the Badagry Local Government area. Ikoga market (near Ado Odo in the Badagry Local Government) for example, is locally referred to as "*Sangotedo*" founded by the god of thunder (*Hevioso*). Verekete market, the next market to Agbalata market is also named after *Verekete*, the goddess of prosperity, and is situated within very close range to the deity's shrine (*Vodun whe*). The Iworo market⁷ initially had no shrine close to it, but no sooner did the market start operating, than a shrine was erected within close range to it. Similarly, the Hunto market which was formerly located at the site of the *Gusa* (Gu) shrine, provided another example of market location in close proximity to shrine.

These examples, when concretely examined may have more to offer generally concerning the religious aspect of the market (*Ahi*) in Badagry and of Agbalata market in particular. The need for regular consultation at the shrines (*Vodun whe*) concerning the markets mentioned is not unlikely to be a motivating factor in communal choice of respective market location.

From the fore-going considerations, it would seem that great reliance concerning the well-being of the market (*Ahi*) is placed by the Badagry community on the proximity of such markets (*Ahi*) to shrines (*Vodun whe*). Those who are affiliated to particular gods among the market people for example, would occasionally give money or other forms of gifts to the priests (*Vodun-no*) or priestesses (*Vodunsi*) for the purpose of appeasing the gods concerning the welfare of the market (*Ahi*). This observation calls for more research efforts to allow objective analysis of market proximity to shrines (*Vodun whe*).

Generally, the place of religious intervention in matters concerning public and private states of emergency in Badagry is consequent upon the predominance of various gods who are believed to be emissaries between the people and God (*Mawu*) (Avoseh, 1938). The role occupied by ritual in Agbalata market, highlights the influential position of these gods in the Badagry community.

The Role of ritual Performance in Agbalata Market

The intervention of certain religious bodies in the affairs of the Agbalata market is expected to shed more light on the religious inter-relatedness to market issues. The purpose of rituals in Agbalata market at present are threefold in nature:-

- (i) To ensure general prosperity

- (ii) To ensure peace and well-being of the people through the reign of the king (*Wheno Aholu*)
- (iii) To protect the interest of the customers who come from far and wide so that patronage will be retained.

Occasionally, rituals (*Avoh*) are performed in order to discourage and ward off attacks from law enforcement agents who harass traders from the neighbouring villages, thus affecting their degree of patronage. The market (*Ahi*) runs the risk of loosing its essential of sellers of the various commodities sold in the market (*Ahi*) are prevented from coming in. Propitiatory rituals (*Avoh*) are therefore offered by traditional diviners (*Bokotono*) that minister to the King (*Wheno Aholu*) for the purpose of ensuring peaceful atmosphere in the various social and economic transactions of traders within the Agbalata market environs.

The market (*Ahi*) stands as the place where information could very easily be disseminated concerning various incidents happening in the community. If for example, there are strange and mysterious happenings in the community, it is in the market (*Ahi*) that such incidents are disseminated through discussion, and necessary actions taken by the traditional market officials.

Principally therefore, the motivating factor behind the ritual (*Avoh*) ob-
 stance that is so pervasive among Badagry concerning the Agbalata
 set, is deeply rooted in the fear of loosing what appears to be the
 best seat of patronage for them, that is, the Agbalata market. Its sur-
 val is therefore seen to depend on constant watch being set over it as
 well as regular action concerning the performance of rituals (*Avoh*) to ap-
 pease the gods of the land.

Findings and Conclusion

Attention to patterns of religious interaction within the Agbalata and neighbouring markets will no doubt suggest a number of specific research questions, answers to which would encourage better understanding of the overall history and culture of Badagry.

The community's desire to maintain its economic strength through seeking the welfare of its customers along with their own, is readily acknowledged by the people of Badagry. The religious affiliation of the community with the Agbalata market is thus largely perceived by members of the community as the means through which this desire is met. Based on the findings of the study, this researcher considers the Agbalata market as saliently exhibiting attributes that openly support the economic desires of the community, while latently maintaining an overall protection

of the latter. This is because through the various rituals and diverse religious observance held at, and in connection with the market, the political structure of the community within the Badagry environs is being perpetuated. The success of the market for example, would continuously ascertain the supremacy of the Badagry township — the seat of the Akran, over neighbouring villages.

Also, the patriarchal stability of the community is being re-enacted by the delegation of a female market leader (*Ne Ahigan*) and a male market leader (*De Ahigan*) — the latter having supremacy over the former in terms of political and administrative functions within the market.

Overall, the Agbalata market, despite its external economic structure and activities, reflects the characteristics of a sacred institution whereby the economic and non-economic interest of Badagry are latently protected in religious dimensions.

Notes

- * This paper results from an ongoing field work on the Badagry community, embarked upon in November 1989. Secondary data were also used for the background history and current status of the Agbalata market. I am grateful to His Royal Highness, Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi I, Akran of Badagry for granting me permission to study the Agbalata market and also for granting me sessions of depth interviews and group discussion with himself and members of His Royal Cabinet. My gratitude also goes to *Ahosi Daho* and *Ahosi Pevi*, wives of the incumbent Akran of Badagry. I am also most grateful to Chief T. Ola Avoseh for his generous assistance concerning the dissemination of information on the Agbalata Market. I thank all the chiefs, male and female together with various members of the Badagry community who allowed the study to materialize. I also acknowledge the help rendered by the officials of the Badagry Local Government for their assistance during the period of study.
1. The Agbalata market is patronised by people from various parts of Nigeria and also by neighbouring countries like Republic of Benin, Togo and Ghana. These people usually bring their own local products to sell at Agbalata and would buy local products from Badagry to sell at their various bases.
 2. The market is at present, increasingly becoming a daily market although the original nine-day observance is still set apart and ritually acknowledged. The main languages spoken in the market are:- Ogu, Yoruba, French, Hausa and pidgin English.
 3. See Fern, Vergilius (ed.) 'Ritual' in *Encyclopaedia of Religion*. Greenwood Press, 1976, p. 665.
 4. For a pictorial representation of Oshun Iya Alaro High Priestess, and acolytes, see Gbenga Sonuga, *Lagos State, Life and Culture*, vol. 1 Gbajumo Publishers Co. Ltd., Nigeria, 1987, p. 107.
 5. This tree is considered to be a powerful tree in terms of its attributed capacity to host witchcraft meetings and also as a venue for idol worship.
 6. It is not unlikely that the name 'jubilee' was given to the market to mark the end of the slave trade era. This, if initiated by the Missionaries who were in Badagry at the time, could be biblically based, as found in Leviticus: 25:10.

"... proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family". (Holy Bible, King James' version)

7. The Iworo market is believed to have been refused by the god of the shrine to run night market and this is being observed to date.

References

- Avoseh, T. Ola: *A short History of Badagry*. Ifeolu Printing Works, Lagos, 1938.
- Bohannon, Paul and George Dalton (Editors). *Introduction to Markets in Africa*, Northwestern University Press, 1982.
- Bohannon, Paul and Laura Bohannon: *Tiv Economy*, Longman's Free and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
- EADE, Egun-Awori District Council Matters, BLG File, April 1975.
- Fern, Vergilius: *Encyclopaedia of Religion*: Greenwood Press, 1976, pg. 665.
- Holy Bible: (*King James' Version*): Leviticus, Chapter 25:10.
- Kluckhan, Clyde: "Myths and rituals: A General Theory" in Lessa William A. and Evan Z. Vogt. *Reader in Comparative Religion. An Anthropological Approach*. Harper and row Publishers, 1965, pp. 144-168.
- Levin, Jeffery, S. and Kyriako. S. Markides: "Religious Attendance and Subjective Health" in *Journal for the Scientific of Religions*. 1986, 25, (1) 31-39.
- Moffat, Susan: *The Market in West Africa* Paper presented at the Departmental Seminar, (Post graduate) Department of Social Anthropology, S.O.A.S., University of London, 1981.
- Nadel, S.F.: *A Black Byzantium, The Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria*, Oxford University Press, London, 1946.
- Rappaport, Ray A.: "Ritual Sanctity and Cybernetics" in *American Anthropologist*, 1971, Vol. 73, pp. 59-76.
- Schneider, Lewis: "Problems in the Sociology of Religion" in Paries, Robert E. L. (Edition) *Handbook of Modern Sociology*, Rand McNally & Co., Chicago, 1968.
- Sonuga, Gbenga (ed.): *Lagos State: Life and Culture*. Vol. 1, Gbajumo Publishing Co. Ltd. Nigeria, 1987.

... proclaimed liberty throughout all the land unto all the in-
 habitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you, and ye shall
 return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return
 every man unto his family. (Leviticus 25:10-11)

... the two marks is believed to have been retained by the God of
 Israel, the shema to the right mark and the shema to the left.

References

Ayob, T. O.: A Short History of Badagry. Ibadan: Evanson, Wode, Lagos, 1938.

Böhm, Paul and George Dalton (Editors). Introduction to Malinké in Africa. Northwestern University Press, 1982.

Böhm, Paul and Laura Böhm. The Koro. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968.

EACD. Egun-Awo District Council. Malinké. April 1972.

Fern, Verjilus. *Anthropology*. Ibadan: Greenwood Press, 1974. pp. 605.

Holy Bible. (King James Version). Leviticus, Chapter 25:10.

Kluckhohn, Claude. "Myths and Rituals: A General Theory," in *James Will*
 A. and Evan L. Vogt. *Readings in Comparative Religion*. An Anthology
 of the American Harper and Row Publishers, 1963. pp. 14-168.

Levin, Jeffrey S. and Kyoko S. Harada. "Religious Attendance and
 Subjective Health," in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1976, 25, (1)
 31-38.

Mottet, Susan. The Malinké in West Africa. Paper presented at the
 Departmental Seminar, (Post Graduate) Department of Social
 Anthropology, S.O.S., University of London, 1981.

Nadel, S.P.: A Black System. The Kingdom of Koro in Western Oxford
 University Press, London, 1960.

Rappaport, Ray. "A Ritual Society and Cypriotes in Malinké"
Anthropologist, 1971, Vol. 73, pp. 39-76.

Schneider, Lewis. "Problems in the Sociology of Religion," in *James*
 Robert L. (Editor). *Handbook of Modern Sociology*. Rand McNally &
 Co., Chicago, 1963.

Sonyaga, Ghenga (ed.). *Lagos State: Life and Culture*. Vol. 1. Gannamo
 Publishing Co. Ltd., Nigeria, 1987.

23

The Degree of Bilingualism of the Ogu¹ Speakers of Badagry – Implications

J. KENTOMAKPA AVOGNON

Introduction

This study addresses the relative values of the main Nigerian languages spoken in Badagry (Lagos State), their linguistic and socio-cultural implications for Nigeria and Africa.

The purpose of the study is to determine the domains or spheres of use of each of the languages in the multilingual setting. The dominance of any one language or the relative dominance of the languages is a function of socio-linguistic and socio-cultural factors, and of attitude towards language use.

Secondly, using the findings as input, linguistic and cultural recommendations are made regarding the prospects for the choice of a national language/national languages and the tackling of linguistic barriers in Nigeria and all over Africa.

Data collection and direct contacts with language communities in Badagry was first carried out from July to September 1980.² Data analysis and processing were effected throughout the 80s. Verification, is projected for the 90s.

Twenty-one major domains of language use were surveyed and the findings scrutinized. The domains include public places, government agencies, the Oba's Palace, neighbouring villages, Churches, Mosques, Schools, Commercial Banks, Streets, and Markets, etc.

Methods employed, included eliciting, casual, consultative and conversational techniques put through the triple medium of Yoruba, OGU and English language.

This approach gives rise to the following oral *Questionnaire*, in fact a *dialogue-questionnaire* (Oral).

Question I:

1. What social group do you belong (to)?
2. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?
3. What's your first language?

4. Do you speak OGU? Yoruba?

Following is another questionnaire used in interviewing Managers and Directors of Commercial and Industrial concerns, as well as heads of Government Agencies and Schools.

Question II:

1. How many of your (staff), (pupils), (employees) are Yoruba?
2. How many of your (staff), (pupils), are OGU?
3. How many native speakers of Yoruba speak OGU?
4. How many native speakers of OGU speak Yoruba?

Using this multiple form questionnaire to explore Badagry, we arrived at the figure (1) below, showing the domains (J.B. Price 1974) or spheres of use of the main Nigerian languages spoken in Badagry as well as the numerical importance of the speakers of the languages.

Fig. 1: Domains, Social Groups, Language use

	DOMAINS	DOMAIN SOCIAL GROUPS			
		POPULATION	YORUBA	OGU	OTHERS
	1. First National Bank	22	11 only 2 speak OGU	11 All speak Yoruba	—
2.	Coconuts Industry	23	8 4 APWk OGU	12 All speak Yoruba	Awori 3 all speak Yoruba
3.	Post Office	20	All Yoruba only one of them speaks OGU	—	—
4.	The Oba's Palace	40	OGU is the mother tongue. All biligrual OGU-Yoruba	All native speakers of OGU	—
5.	First Storey Building	15	None speaks Yoruba	All native speakers of OGU language	—
6.	ASCON	50	Non-Academic (Junior) staff. All speak Yoruba	$\frac{3}{4}$ OGU	—
7.	Slave Centre		All speak OGU	OGU and Yoruba	—

8.	Private House 1.	15	10 2 speak OGU	All speak Yoruba	—
	2.	8	5 1 speaks OGU	3 All speak Yoruba	
	3.	12	5 Only Children speak OGU	4 speak	3 Neither OGU nor Yoruba
	4.	6	All Yoruba. Non speaks OGU	—	
	5.	9	All 9 are native speakers of OGU	All 9 speak Yoruba	
9.	Answer-Rudeen Primary School Pupils. Staff	90% Bilingual 95%		10% including others. 5% including others	
10.	Methodist Primary School Pupils Staff	25% Bilingual 14		75% 4	—
11.	Our Lady of Apostles Primary School Pupils Staff	75 Bilingual 12 2 speak Ogu		25 4	— 2
12.	St. Thomas's Anglican Primary School Pupils Staff	653 3 Speak Ogu		50 25	32 4

The preceding Table (Fig. 1) presents explorations and findings in Language domains in Badagry city. Badagry turns out to be a bilingual or multilingual city though not all strata of the population can be characterized as such.

English is used in all spheres of official or public life. In all other domains of social inter-course, Yoruba and OGU are employed for interpersonal and intergroup communication and activities.

These two Nigerian Languages are the majority languages on account of their communicative adequacy and the people's emotional attachment to these vehicles of expression of typical Nigerian and African cultures and realities.

Yoruba and OGU languages constitute the bilingual edifice of Badagry. Focusing on them simultaneously and on some sociolinguistic factors, theory reveal the "Language Dominance configuration³ (WEINREICH 1953)" of the people of Badagry.

In "Languages in Contact (WEINREICH 1953)". Weeinreich identified seven criteria relating to language dominance configuration namely; Relative proficiency, Mode of use, order Learning and Age, Usefulness in Communication, Emotional, Function in Social advances and Cultural values.

However, since our study focuses on language domains and the use of languages by social groups or language communities, Weinreich's seven criteria are inapplicable here. The data and the findings in Fig. 1 (p. 1-5) suggest three criteria appropriate to our need and situation. For all practical purposes, these criteria for the study of language dominance configuration in this context are:

1. Age group and language community
2. Bilinguality
3. Social interaction (Language use).

Consequently, Fig. 1 (p. 1-5) and the preceding remarks lead practically the following chart:

2 Language Dominance Configuration Chart

AGE GROUP & LANGUAGE COMMUNITY	BILINGUALITY %	SOCIAL INTERACTION
Adult nat. speakers of Yoruba	+ Bilingualism 25	+ Yoruba, + OGU
Adult nat. speakers of Yoruba	- Bilingualism 75	+ Yoruba, - OGU
Adult nat. speakers of OGU	+ Bilingualism 100	+ OGU, + Yoruba
Child nat. speakers of OGU	+ Bilingualism 100	+ OGU, + Yoruba
Child nat. speakers of Yoruba	+ Bilingualism 100	+ Yoruba, + OGU

∴ Rating native speakers of OGU and Yoruba, the

+ Symbol denotes a positive quality, attribute or proficiency.

- Symbol denotes a negative quality, attribute or non-proficiency.

Consequently, the chart reveals a double dominance: viz: language dominance from the point of view of the city. First, the sum (5 points) of the positive symbol confers to Yoruba the title of the dominant language in Badagry followed closely by OGU (4 points) the relatively dominant language. Second, from the vantage point of native speakers, two positive signs connote not only proficiency in the two languages, but also the relative dominance of the two languages, the first language being usually considered as the stronger language.

The dominance configuration chart reveals five strata of native speakers with regard to the criteria of Age group and language community, Bilinguality and social interaction. Bilinguality relates to the degree of linguistic competence in the two languages, while social interactions inevitably disclose performance or communicative ability or competence of the speaker.

The first stratum of speakers as the chart shows (25%) consists of one quarter of the Yoruba language community and is entirely bilingual, Yoruba-OGU speaking.

The second stratum (75%) represents typical monolingual speakers, who either understand OGU or do not but who in any case do not speak the language.

The third social group consists of children of Yoruba origin at the Primary School level. These are entirely bilingual Yoruba-OGU speaking.

The fourth stratum comprises typical OGU children at the Primary School level and it is entirely bilingual OGU-Yoruba speaking.

The fifth social group is made up of about native speakers of OGU. As the chart indicates, the entire OGU language community is completely bilingual, OGU-Yoruba speaking.

II: *Findings and Extrapolations*

In accordance with our proposed criteria for language dominance configuration Yoruba stands out as the dominant Language in Badagry, followed closely by OGU the second relatively dominant language.

The first inference to be drawn addresses a sociolinguistic observation. The adult OGU-Yoruba bilingual on account of the emotional and social values of Yoruba language, constrains himself to communicating more often in Yoruba than he does in his native language (OGU) since in certain situation,⁴ he uses Yoruba rather than OGU in social interaction even with other native speakers of OGU. The same observation obtains for OGU-Yoruba bilingual children.

These characteristics and the linguistic behaviour of the OGU language community foster the frequency of the functional uses of Yoruba language and consequently its vitality and dominance.

The second inference is both socio-cultural and socio-economic. First by virtue of the location of Badagry, the city serves as a crucial inter-state and international junction. As a junction in Lagos State, Badagry possesses several arteries linking the city to other parts of Lagos and Ogun State. These two states are typically Yoruba speaking, in addition to OGU which is also common to the two States. Since language plays a vital role in the socio-cultural and socio-economic life of (the) people (of these States), the proximity of Badagry to these centres of Yoruba language and culture,

subjects the city to the influence of substantial linguistic and socio-cultural currents. The usefulness and dominance of Yoruba language become instantly comprehensive.

Furthermore, as a strategic border town between Benin Republic and Nigeria, Badagry is a vital meeting point for the OGU of both countries. The city affords the OGU community of Badagry the opportunity to undergo a steady influence from the neighbouring OGU community of Benin Republic. Their historical and cultural ties are fostered through the bulk of linguistic, cultural, diplomatic and economic cooperation and manifestations in operation daily on either side of the border.

These factors, and particularly the linguistic and cultural aspects of the contact contribute in no small measures to the promotion and maintenance of OGU-Yoruba and Yoruba-OGU bilingualism among a cross-section of the inhabitants of Badagry.

The two basic findings of this study, namely *language dominance configuration criteria* and the *interlocutory constraints* of bilingual communities in Badagry are of high significance to the second half of this study, i.e. the implications for language planning, linguistic and cultural unity in Nigeria and Africa.

Implications for Language Planning Linguistic and Cultural Unity in Nigeria and Africa, Recommendations and Conclusion

The *findings* of this research suggest that similar inquiries into the language dominance configuration using our new *Configuration* criteria in urban areas and border towns focus in Nigeria and all over Africa, inevitably become a matter of necessity and urgency for the following motives.

2. The exercise will be helpful in *determining the exact linguistic spheres* of myriads of unrecognised indigenous languages. The under-taking should be accompanied by language development and exploitation for functional and institutional purposes. These efforts would contribute in no small measures to language planning and the enhancement of the social and cultural values of national languages and eventually to the choice and promotion of national language to official status.

3. In other words, our argument is that since adequate information on language dominance configuration is instrumental in language planning, the proposed criteria should not only be functional, but also implementational in inquiries on social values of language and culture.

In this respect, the findings of this study form a useful pointer in the direction of language use and language choice.

4. Once the language dominance configuration of the areas concerned is established and the degree of bilingualism, multilingualism of (the) speakers ascertained, linguistic, cultural and instructional efforts should be geared towards making the entire population bilingual or multilingual in the dominant and relatively dominant languages.
5. The venture could benefit from insights into child Bilingualism (Piaget, van OverBeek Stern; Avognon, (1989) and techniques in Second Learning (Gieouz, Houis, BENNENT Brook, PAULSTON, Halliday, 1968). Language learning theories should be applied to child and adult bilingualism using suitable materials for imparting dominant border languages to speakers of other national languages.
6. Linguistic evidence and psycholinguistics bear the fact that potential and effective bilingualism is better obtained in childhood because of the learning and switching facilities and aptitudes of children before the end of adolescence stage (Saer, Stern, Weinreich, 1953, Troike (1974). Our language dominance configuration study in Badagry also reveals linguistic support for this claim.
7. As for imparting the second or third language to speakers of other languages revealed by research, single or parallel medium of instructions should be set up. In Badagry for instance, where the relatively dominant languages are Yoruba and OGU, a parallel medium of instruction would consist of imparting carefully graded courses in the two languages simultaneously. Native speakers of OGU would be instructed in Yoruba, and Yoruba speakers in Ogu with the aid of situational language learning methods and techniques.⁶

With the acquisition of the dominant languages and relatively dominant languages in Nigeria and Africa, subject to auspicious motivational factors, the development of linguistic competence and communicative aptitudes will be the happy outcome.⁷ Nigerians and other Africans will emerge with effective competence and aptitudes to communicate in indigenous languages other than theirs.

It stands to reason that intergroup and interpersonal relations and transactions through the relatively dominant languages of Nigeria would promote mutual understandings, solidarity and a sense of belonging to and possessing the same cultural and national identity and heritage. This linguistic and cultural awareness sense of oneness, coupled with practice, will no doubt inflict a crushing defeat to linguistic and cultural barriers in Africa and in Nigeria. Among the competing dominant languages, a language of predilection or a favourite of the people would emerge as the national language, lingua-franca of Nigeria. (Kwobuluyi, Abba Rufai, et al, 1980).

8. The preceding observations, by extension and association are also valid for the dismantling of linguistic barriers in Africa. As suggested above, sociolinguistic research relating to language dominance configuration in border towns all over Nigeria and Africa should bare the dominant and relatively dominant languages common to neighbouring African States in the same way as this study reveals the relative dominance of Yoruba and OGU in Badagry and their belonging to national languages spoken in the Federal Republic of Nigeria as well as in the people's Republic of Benin.

9. It is imperative that the OGU and other institutions of the sub-region of Africa preside over the singing of linguistic and cultural conventions among neighbouring African States, and then sponsor the relevant research so that dominant and relatively dominant languages may be institutionalised and taught all over Africa.

Enacting, financing and implementing the project require the joint cooperation and collaboration of the OAU and other specialised agencies of African Governments in concert with the various centres for Applied Linguistics in Africa.

In any case, in the feasibility and implementation of this useful project, top priority must be given to communication and conversational aspects of the sub-regionally dominant languages.

10. Exchange visits involving children and adults should be organised. First, Nigerians from some States visit Nigerians in other States and stay for some determined period of time in order to practise the dominant language and culture acquired. The exchange visits should be simultaneous and reciprocal. The psychological impact of this quest for knowledge, language, and way of life of fellow Nigerians would go a long way to clear hurdles in the way of national unity and enhance the sense of oneness.

11. In the same way, educational and cultural visits between institutions in African States should enable Africans to familiarize themselves with the communicative means and cultural values of fellow Africans.

If all hands are seriously and effectively put on deck in the acquisition and use of national and sub-regional languages, mutual understanding, national and African unity harmony, peace and progress will be undoubtedly fostered.

Notes

1. (a) Native speakers of OGU language call their language "OGUGBE" i.e. OGU language whereas other people traditionally and erroneously term it Egun Language.
(b) GBAAGI was the original name for the ancient town and the name is still in use today when speaking the OGU (erroneously and yet popularly referred to as Egun) language of the people. European traders, explorers and missionaries corrupted it to Badagry.
2. Thanks to the first research grant obtained after his doctorate degree from the University of Ilorin, the writer was able to carry out the project.
3. The bilingual or multilingual edifice of an area an individual, etc, and the dominant language(s) used.
4. Evidence in first names, naming ceremonies, some social and cultural ceremonies, preference by majority of OGU people to communicate among themselves in Yoruba language rather than in OGU language.
5. After (the) adolescence, state, the age of crystallisation sets in, making language learning and acquisition faculties and devices rigid and consequently a new language learning a tedious task.
6. Through research and practice, the writer collects and puts to sue in language learning pertinent language and culture forms and expressions in appropriate social situations, (AVOIGNON Studies In Situational Learning Techniques, in Lagos State, Lekanlola Publishers, 1988).
7. Conviction and assertion based on appreciable results obtained from the use and output of Situational Language Learning Techniques thus:
 - LACOED (Lagos State College of Education) Pro-degree French Studies, 1983-1984.
 - LASU (Lagos State University), "Situational French for LASU Community", 1984-1987.

Selected References

- AVOGNON, J.K.: Child Bilingualism and Communicative Strategies in a Multilingual Setting; ITL, N. 85-86, 1989.
- AVOGNON, J.K.: Situational Language Learning Techniques In The Uses of OGU Language And Cultural INCAS, 1986.
- AWOBULUYI, O.: The National Language Question, UNILORIN, 1980.
- HALLIDAY, M.: Linguistic Sciences and Language Learning, O.U.P., 1968.
- HOUS, M.: 'Le Bilinguisme African' in Antropologie Linguistique de L'Afrique Noire, P.V.F. 1972.
- MACKEY, Bilingualism as a World Phenomenon, Nontreal, 1967.
- OVERBEKE, V.: "Introduction au probleme du bilinguisme, Labor, 1974.
- PRIDE, J.B.: The Social Meaning of Language, O.U.P. 1974.
- TROIKE, M.: Bilingual Children - A Resource Document". Centre for App. Linguistics, 1974, New York.
- WEINREICH: Languages in Contact. Findings and Problems. Mouton, 1953.

Border Township: Multilingualism and Internationalism in Badagry

ROTIMI JOHNSON

Border Township: Multilingualism and Internationalism in Badagry

Border towns are generally melting-pots of civilisation and culture; and the multiculturalism that is here in this unique status relates principally to languages and social practices. This suggests that communication means and social life are the best indices of the level of multiculturalism that characterise border township while multiculturalism itself is a reflection of the cross-cultural influences that define the position of a border town. It is with these in mind that multilingualism and internationalism in Badagry will be examined with specific references to its status of border township.

Badagry is a Nigerian town situated in Lagos State at the border point between Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, a francophone country with strong historical ties with Nigeria. Within Nigeria, Badagry which is a predominantly Ogu speaking area, is situated in the Yoruba-Ogu speaking zone of the country, consequently, both Yoruba and Ogu are commonly spoken in the town; and being neighboured by a francophone country, the influence of French and its traces in the local languages are noticeable in the town. It is remarkably that Porto Novo, the nearest border-town to Badagry in the Republic of Benin is equally a Yoruba, Ogu and French speaking area with the noticeable influence of English on the local languages. The cumulative effect of this on Badagry is that multilingualism and multiculturalism have become necessary features of communication and social intercourse in the area.

The centrality of multilingualism and internationalism to this exposition demands both a theoretical explication and an elaboration of the concepts with the specificity of the Badagry experience as the practical manifestation of both theory and concepts. Significant definitional attempts abound in the literature on multilingualism but the most appropriate will be used for orientational purposes here. In a general sense, multilingualism is the ability to speak three or more languages. It implies

the ability to communicate effectively in those languages, that is, understand other speakers and make oneself understood in those languages¹ but it is necessary to bear in mind divergent scholarly views.²

Linar Hangen believes that a bilingual and by extension a multilingual is any person who can make meaningful utterances in a second or several other languages while Lewis Balkan believes that a bilingual, is the equally balanced, near-perfect speaker of two or more languages.³ Hangen and Balkan emphasise simple communication and mastery of the language of communication, competence as well as effectiveness respectively.

This simple dichotomy of vision is not fully cognisant of the complex nature of multilingualism and it is with this in mind that it becomes imperative to examine Weinreich's typology on multilingualism as highlighted by A.B.K. Dadzie.⁴ It is necessary to reiterate here that notions of bilingualism and their practical manifestations are applicable to multilingualism; and while Weinreich talks specifically about bilingualism; his ideas are understandably extended to multilinguals. Weinreich identifies three types of bilinguals (or multilinguals: the co-ordinate bilingual, the compound bilingual and the subordinated bilingual).

The co-ordinate bilingual "is the type of bilingual who acquired the two languages in such a way that their practice can be said to be equivalent to native-speaker efforts in the languages". The compound bilingual is he "in whom the two languages seem sourced from the same reference point. In this case the languages involved are so integrated at a deep level of organization that one language is equated more or less with the other". For example if an item (book, orange etc.) is conceptualised as the same reference in both languages, the language user will have no serious problems of expression and communication but if the concept is non-existent in the other language he may have some problems; and finally, the subordinate bilingual is he "who is proficient in his first language and acquires the second for various reasons. He speaks the first like a native speaker but has an accent in speaking the second and third as the case may be." It is quite appropriate to complement these definitional attempts and especially, Weinreich's typology with A.B.K. Dadzie's observation that "access to two or three languages and the use of foreign lexical items alone do not qualify an individual to be bilingual or multilingual."⁵

These definitions, explications and observations suffice for an orientational study of the Badagry experience which will be illuminated by the theories elaborated above. A research study⁶ of the linguistic status of students, young workers and market woman in the Badagry area reveals a lot of intellectually stimulating things about the cultural life of the inhabitants of the town but it is their linguistic status that offers the primal source of intellectual excitement. The first observation one makes when one gets in

contact with a significant number of the inhabitants is that they are bilingual. They speak both the local language and Yoruba fluently. It is natural to speak Ogu because it is the mother tongue of Most of the inhabitants of Badagry and it is necessary to speak Yoruba because Badagry is situated within the Yoruba speaking zone which is indeed a large linguistic zone.

A close evaluation of these inhabitants' linguistic functionality reveals that they satisfy both Hagen's and Balkan's criteria for bilingualism; and many of them are co-ordinate bilinguals according to Weinreich's typology. There is hardly anyone, of those interviewed, who does not speak Yoruba though it must be stated that a sizable number of them especially among the market women, speak Yoruba with an obvious Ogu accent. There are, however, indications that there are native Ogu speakers whose knowledge of Yoruba does not go beyond the use of some lexical items, though such people were hardly encountered in the course of our research study. In any case, their existence are readily outside the purview of this study. Of the non-Ogu indigenes who inhabit Badagry the Beninois from Porto Novo are almost indistinguishable from the indigenes because they speak fluent, Ogu and Yoruba especially those who have settled in Badagry over a long period of time. Of the Nigerian inhabitants, the Yoruba are closest to the indigenes in their mastery of the indigenous language though there are pockets of Ibos, Bendelites, and others who have also attained a high degree of competence in the language.

As a prelude to the study of multilingualism in the area it is indispensable to identify the major types of bilinguals in Badagry. There are five identifiable principal bilinguals in Badagry and these are the Ogu-Yoruba bilingual, the Yoruba-Ogu bilingual, the French-Ogu bilingual, the Non-Yoruba Nigerian Ogu bilingual and the English-Non-Ogu local language. This diversity already indicates the multiculturalism of life in Badagry and this will be examined later but the focus of attention shifts to English as the basic determinant of multilingualism in Badagry.

English as the official language of Nigeria is either acquired formally through institutionalised education or informally through auto-didacticism. It is therefore clear that most formally educated inhabitants of Badagry are multilinguals and though the informally educated ones are also multilinguals their level of competence makes them, according to Weireicha typology, subordinate multilinguals. However, the revelation here is that the school⁷ plays an important role in the production of multilinguals in the Badagry setting while the quest for education and commerce exercise considerable influence on the production of bilinguals.

The study carried out among students in Badagry shows that their basic biculturalism as reflected in the students' Yoruba first names and their Ogu surnames⁸ invariably leads to bilingualism. This biculturalism has already

been traced to the situation of Badagry in the Yoruba linguistic zone. And bilingualism is inevitably transformed into multilingualism as soon as the students acquire formal education especially at the secondary school level. The nature and scope of multilingualism among Badagry students have interesting features and three of such students as models will be used for illustration.

Bamidele Bokoh (Model 2)⁹, aged 17 speaks Hausa, Ogu, Yoruba and English. She was born in northern Nigeria where she learnt Hausa for eight years before coming to Badagry in 1980. Being Ogu by birth she had been acquiring the language systematically within the family while living in the Hausa linguistic zone. She started learning Yoruba and English almost simultaneously in 1980. Thus, in terms of the order of acquisition of the languages, Hausa is the first language (II), Egun her second language (12) Yoruba her third language (13) and English her fourth language (14) but in terms of competence and ease of speech and communication, Yoruba is her first language, Ogu, though her mothertongue, is her second language, English is her third language, while Hausa becomes her fourth language. It is significant that she speaks Yoruba better than both her mothertongue Ogu, and the language of instruction in schools, English.

Taiwo Kuwakenu (Model 4), aged 16, is of Ogu parentage. She is multilingual and she speaks Yoruba (II), English (12) and Ogu (13) which she acquired in that order and it is quite interesting to note that her level of competence in these languages and the facility of usage of these languages correspond with the order of acquisition of the languages. It is particularly striking that, like the first model, she speaks Yoruba better than her mothertongue.

Clara Hunvenu (model 8) aged 13 is also a multilingual of Egun parentage. She speaks Ogu (11), Yoruba (12) and English (13) but surprisingly she speaks English best followed by Ogu and Yoruba in that order. However, it is illuminating to note that her first name (Clara) is English and she is the youngest of the three models. Her situation is explicable by the circumstances of her parents and the 'modern' trend among westernised Badagry indigenes.

There are hardly any, strictly-speaking, bilinguals in the model school for even the non-Ogu speaking students of the school are multilinguals. For example Model 12, aged 18, is the Headgirl of the school. She is from Bendel State and she speaks Ishan (11) English (12) and Yoruba (13). Model 9, aged 13, is from Anambra and she speaks Igbo (11), Yoruba (12) and English (13).

It is noteworthy that most of the non-indigenes and non-Yoruba multilinguals in the school speak Yoruba as their third language rather than Ogu and this obviously because most of the Ogu students themselves

speak Yoruba fluently. There are however, several Yoruba-English bilinguals who are not proficient enough in Ogu to be classed as multilinguals even though they evince multicultural qualities since they can sing in Ogu and also use several lexical items in that language. Their position is understandable because they do not have a pressing need to speak another language since most of the students speak Yoruba, a less formal language than English. Ganiat Iginla (model 1), aged 17, exemplifies this category of students in Badagry.

From the foregoing, one can make some useful deductions: Yoruba is often the best language of the students — multilingual in Badagry; where the family is westernised English is often the best language of the student-multilingual and student often speaks Ogu better than Yoruba; but there are hardly any instances of bilingual or multilingual students speaking Ogu better than Yoruba even when Ogu is both the mothertongue and the first language.

Many young workers in Badagry and from Badagry are of the multilingual stock, speaking English, Yoruba and Ogu fluently. In most cases many of them speak Yoruba better than Ogu for various reasons, the most prominent of which is having to school in a pre-dominantly Yoruba-speaking area. The other major reason is that at a point in time, speaking Egun was associated with social and intellectual backwardness. These have created a multilingual situation in Badagry and the result is the multi-culturality, that thrives in the area to the advantage and benefits of the society.¹⁰

The international dimension to multilingualism in Badagry, a border-town, as evidenced by the influx of Yoruba and Ogu speaking foreigners with various levels of competence in English and French to the town enhances the multiculturalism in the area and the internationalism that results from this enhances the quality of life in the town. It is pertinent to say that French which would have been a 'strange' language in Badagry is not totally strange because, apart from the social intercourse that is consequent upon being neighboured by a francophone town or country, Badagry itself develops this 'francophone' through the teaching of French in all secondary schools in the town.

Thus internalisation, which is the manifestation of transnational socio-cultural qualities in an area within a country, is greatly enhanced. The attributes of internationalism derive largely from transnational multiculturalism which is closely allied to intranational multiculturalism which is informed by national multilingualism. Internationalism expresses itself in Badagry through dress, food, speech and social habits. Both internationalism and multilingualism are acquired through natural interaction, education and socio-political obligations. But the major effects of

internationalism and multi-lingualism in Badagry are in the areas of cultural development, civilisation human understanding, tolerance, broad-mindedness and sophistication in all aspects of human conduct.

Notes and References

1. Rotimi Johnson, "The Creative Writer and Multilingualism," A.W.A.Y.W. lecture delivered at the National Arts Theatre Lagos, January 13, 1990.
2. See B. H. Beardsmore, *Bilingualism: Basic Principles*, London Avon, 1982.
3. Cited by H. Beardsmore, "Aspects of Plurilingualism Amongst Lower level social Groups" in Sylvain de Coster (Ed), *Aspects Sociologiques du Plurilinguisme*, Paris, Didier, 1971 p. 77.
4. A.B.K. Dadzie, *Bilingualism*, unpublished seminar paper, University of Lagos, 1989.
5. *Ibid.*
6. This study was carried out principally at the Methodist girls Grammar School, Badagry, the Badagry Central Market and different locations in the town especially local restaurants.
7. For some useful information on the functions of this school in this regard, See Alan James and Rober Jeffcoate (Eds) *The School in the Multicultural Society*, London, Harper and Row Publishers 1981.
8. Two of such bicultural names from a secondary school in Badagry are Barnidele Bokoh and Taiwo Kuwakanu.
9. The Model number refers to the position of the student on the list of about fifty students interviewed.
10. See Rotimi Johnson, *op. cit.*, for some of the advantages and benefits of multiculturality.

Notes and References

1. Robin Johnson, "The Creative Writer and Multilingualism," A.W.A.Y.W. lecture delivered at the National Arts Theatre Lagos January 13, 1990.
2. See H. Bendahmane, *Bilinguisme dans l'ecole*, London: Avoir, 1982.
3. Cited by H. Bendahmane, "Aspects of Bilingualism Amongst Lower level social groups" in *Système de l'ecole* (Ibid), *Aspects Sociologiques de l'Education*, Paris: Didier, 1971, p. 72.
4. A.H.C. Dabizé, *Bilinguisme*, unpublished seminar paper, University of Lagos, 1989.
5. Ibid.
6. This study was carried out principally at the Methodist Girls Grammar School, Badagry, the Badagry Central Market and the latter locations in the town especially local restaurants.
7. For some useful information on the functions of this school in this regard, see Alan James and Robert Jackson (Ibid) *The School in the Multicultural Society*, London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981.
8. Two of such bicultural names from a secondary school in Badagry are Bamidele Bokoh and Taiwo Kowaleanu.
9. The Model number refers to the position of the student on the list of about 800 students interviewed.
10. See Robin Johnson, op. cit, for some of the advantages and benefits of multilingualism.

25

The Transit Camp Theory and the Educational Development of Badagry

A.O.K. NOAH

Introduction

In the areas of Christian evangelization and western-type schooling in Nigeria, Badagry, is unique. Christianity was first preached in the town, in Nigeria while the first western type school in the country was opened there in 1843. It is on the second area that this study concentrates and the problem is how does one account for the failure of Badagry to build on the opportunity of having the first school between 1843 and 1904 A.D.

Crowder (1978:113) has written that "In the late 1830's a number of freed slaves from Freetown returned to their original homes in Lagos, Badagry and Abeokuta" and that "As a result of trade between Badagry and Freetown, some of the aku (Yoruba) Creoles learnt of the great Yoruba cities of Abeokuta and Lagos and decided to return there." In 1839 some Yoruba leaders in Sierra Leone requested the Queen of England to let them establish a Badagry colony under her jurisdiction and provide missionaries. So anxious were they that without British protection and with no missionaries, a segment went to Badagry in 1840. These initiatives were followed by requests to CMS and Methodist Missions for greater evangelical presence in Badagry and Abeokuta. Though as Crowder (1978; 115) would prefer it, the emphasis in any history of early missionary activity in Nigeria must be on the CMS, it was the Methodists who first sent missionaries to Badagry; Revd. Thomas Birch Freeman, in the company of William de Graft, a Ghanaian, arrived Badagry on 24 September 1842. When Freeman returned to the Gold Coast, de Graft assumed control of the Badagry Methodist Mission and as Fafunwa (1974:79) put it:

The first known school was established by Mr. and Mrs. de Graft in Badagry and was named 'Nursery of the Infant Church'. Most of the fifty odd pupils were children of Sierra Leone emigrants, although a few of the local converts also sent their children to the school. Mr. and Mrs. de Graft were replaced in 1844 by Revd. Samuel Annear and his wife.

The school started in early 1843. This paper examines why educational institutions did not develop in Badagry as in Lagos and Abeokuta despite the fact that the first mission and the first school were established in the town.

Transit Camp Theory

The CMS contribution to educational development in Badagry started in January 1845 and its pattern suggests credence for the transit camp theory. In the month, a party made up of: Mr. and Mrs. S. Ajayi Crowther, Revd. and Mrs. Townsend, Revd. and Mrs. Gollmer, Messrs William March and Edward Phillips (teachers by profession) and necessary assistants arrived Badagry. In the words of Fafunwa, their plan was to immediately go to Abeokuta and commence their work, but they were forced to stay in Badagry for about eighteen months. Crowder (1978), Fafunwa (1974) and Ikime (1977) agree that the delay is a function of the death of Sodeke, the ruler who united the Egbas and took charge at Abeokuta. However, 'Sodeke tried to impose his personal rule on the town and thus tried to contain the problem but it erupted after his death in 1845' (Ajayi and Akintoye 1980:287). It was "Sodeke that Townsend met during his visit to Abeokuta in 1842 and on the return journey in December, he met Freeman. Accounts have it that Townsend was well received.

To Crowther's team, the death of Sodeke meant not only that the new mission would be without the protection of its sympathetic ruler, but also that the one unifying force amongst the Egba sub-tribes and immigrants that went to make up Abeokuta had been removed.

The Missionaries had to stay in Badagry also because some Egba chiefs had supported the slaving king of Lagos - Kosoko, while another slaving king, Gezo of Dahomey had taken control of Badagry — Abeokuta road. (Crowder 1978:114). The CMS party also had to tarry in Badagry because it considered it unwise to proceed until further contacts were made with the ruler of Egba (Fafunwa; 1974, 80).

The missionaries therefore contended themselves with opening a mission at Badagry; two schools were established, and an experimental farm set up with a steel corn mill to facilitate legitimate trade (Crowder 1978:114). Immediately the roads were cleared and relations improved, the missionaries in 1846 left for Abeokuta. Concerning the religious politics of schooling, it should be noted that there was no separating the church from the school. R.H. Stone, in 1858, as reported in Fafunwa (1974:84), said that 'I am fast coming to the conviction that schools for the rising generation must be the basis of all missions among barbarous and savage heathen. The gospel should be preached regularly and steadily,

faithfully and prayerfully; but though the children we get at the root of idolatory and leaven the whole hum.'

The review above reveals that before 1847, Badagry had three primary schools, one being the first of the type in Nigeria. It did not have a secondary school until more than a century after (1955, Badagry Grammar School) whereas Lagos had its first secondary school, the CMS Grammar School (also the first in Nigeria) in 1859, Abeokuta had its first secondary school — the Abeokuta Grammar School in 1908. Added to these, the Methodist group which opened the first school in Badagry opened two secondary schools (Methodist-Baptist High School, 1876, and Methodist Girls' High School 1879) in Lagos less than fifty years after. The question here is why did Badagry go into an educational oblivion between 1850 and 1900 A.D.?

The transit camp thesis may not be easily arrogated to a particular writer but it appears to have been there all along and taken for granted. It posits that in explaining the relative educational underdevelopment of Badagry, despite the establishment of the first school there, refuge may be found in the fact that the town was simply the port and not the point of interest to missionaries, early traders, and returnees and that it was sheer geographical and historical coincidence that led to the opening of the first school there. Proponents of this position cite the marooning of Crowther's Abeokuta-bound CMS party there in 1845 and are quick to point out that the party left for Abeokuta as soon as conditions improved. This position treats Badagry as a transit camp and puts her in a situation similar to ancient Ghana's in the gold trade; but while Ghana maximised hers and became a powerful kingdom, Badagry could not hence it is not an educational giant among contemporary Nigerian towns.

The transit camp position may actually be supported by the fact that Freeman had gone to Abeokuta establishing cordial relations with Sodeke within his first twelve months in Badagry and that after 1846, it was there that an intense evangelical and educational rivalry developed between the Methodists and the CMS. The transit camp explanation is also supported by the fact that according to Ajayi (1965:31), Revd. Thomas B. Freeman saw that as early as 1842, majority of the emigrants who had arrived and those who were still arriving did not stay in Badagry but were moving out to Abeokuta. The transit camp status of Badagry in Missionary activities in about 1850 does not sufficiently account for her relative educational underdevelopment particularly the establishment of secondary schools. The supposed status provided some opportunities which were not maximized or utilized.

Economic and Political Considerations

Economics and elementary logic would suggest the transit camp theory as being fallible. Economically, in about 1850 Badagry competed favourably with her neighbours in both supposedly illicit and legal trades. In 1846 when a representative of the large trading firm of Thomas Hutton and co. visited Abeokuta with a view to establishing a factory or trading store, factories were opened not only at Abeokuta but also at Badagry which had become an important trade centre both for slaves and legitimate commerce (Crowder 1978:115). Militarily too there are some indicators in this direction. About mid-nineteenth century, Badagry was not politically strong. When in about 1770 Badagry refused to pay tribute to Lagos and the ruler of Lagos threatened an invasion, the Akran ran to Dahomey. The implication is that a militarily strong state or equally capable one would resist or call a bluff in similar conditions.

It should be noted too that the attack on Badagry in 1784 engineered by Oyo could have left Badagry relatively weak.

During the Yoruba internecine struggles Badagry was reduced to a pawn in the Military chess game between Egba and Dahomey. Ikime (1977:8) amply describes the relationship in his attempt to explain the romance between the Egbas and the missionaries up to the 1870's.

It was clear that if Abeokuta was to have an uninterrupted supply of arms and ammunition she had to find her own port. Badagri, on the Lagoon, provided the answer. The weakness of Badagri at that point in time made her a suitable area in which to build Egba influence.

Ikime provides further information that about the time Egba sought expansion into Badagry, Dahomey recently free from Oyo hegemony, was desperately in search of palm oil producing areas and seeking expansion in Egbado/Badagry area.

In this atmosphere of general insecurity coupled with the reckless trafficking in human wares, the missionaries and returnees might not have stayed in Badagry. In fact, the hostility of the people of Badagry and lack of profitable trade forced the immigrants out of Badagry. Despite having introduced the first school and with a couple of converts the missionaries who were avowed enemies of the slave trade could have shifted attention to Abeokuta. It should be noted that in such a shift, sentimental considerations like the growth of the first school might not have been taken into consideration.

Culture and Religion

Western education was introduced along with Christianity, the failure of the later to achieve an easy and quick integration could have affected the

apathy of Badagry people to the former. About mid-nineteenth century an aversion to the whitemen may not be lacking in Badagry as may be supported by an attempt to poison one of the Lander brothers there in 1830. Ajayi (1965:34) has written that the missionaries found Badagry to be a difficult station. Though there was no open hostility or persecution, 'but the hold of the traditional religion on the people was very firm. They had welcome missionaries not because they wanted christianity, but because they were weak and poor and they hoped that the missionaries could attract some trade back to the town'. One should not be surprised then that by May 1845 the chiefs of Badagry planned an expulsion for the English, who were of no economic use to them (Ajayi, 1965:36).

In assessing the transit camp theory, attention should also be paid to agriculture. About mid-nineteenth century, Badagry people were reported to be more interested in trade rather than in agriculture. Rev. Gollmer's agricultural show and the offer of prizes failed to promote agriculture. He is reported as having admitted that the soil was most infertile, '80 per cent sand and 20 per cent decay vegetable matter' On the contrary, Abeokuta the major town to which the missionaries went about this time was judged by them to be ideal for applying Thomas Fowell Buxton's principle of the Bible and the plough going together to regenerate Africa.

The Local Interest Factor

So far external factors and influences have been considered. If the missionaries had opened the schools, and shifted attention outward, what attempts were made internally to keep them from going and open up secondary schools in Badagry before 1900 A.D. Perhaps it may be theorized that secondary education was not considered as important as primary education because the goal of education was to make the people literate and biblically or evangelically functional and these were achieved through primary education.

Fajana (1978:3) has written that Rev. S.A. Crowther confessed that he found from his experience in the Niger Delta that the illiterates are the best for the propagation of christianity. According to Fajana, there is no doubt that missionaries did not consider secondary and higher education as an important aspect of their work. However, a more important factor is that the repatriates who had the largest number of children in the schools could afford to send them back to Sierra Leone where this is considered necessary. Concerning local initiatives, it should be mentioned that the CMS Grammar School in Lagos was founded by Revd. T. B. Macaulay in 1859 more at the insistence or initiative of the people, particularly the returnees than at the initiative of the CMS mission. Fafunwa (1974:99) con-

firms this:

This school was influenced more by the wealthy Lagosians who were mostly ex-slaves from Sierra Leone than by the CMS Mission under which Macaulay served.

Fajana (1978:34) is of the view that the missionaries' evangelistic view of education led to the neglect of the development of secondary and higher education. According to him the missionaries played little part in the establishment of the CMS Grammar School in 1859 and the Wesleyan Boys' High School in 1879 in Lagos. In the former case, it was Captain J.P.L. Davies who organized a contributational scheme and collected about £13 for furniture and other needs and who also gave an advance of £25 for books. In the later case leading Wesleyan's collected £500 and requested a matching grant from the mission for the building of a school for their children who were forced to attend CMS Grammar school in the absence of a school of theirs. This view according to Fajana also affected the training of teachers.

A Momentary Anchorage

Preceding discussions would suggest that in explaining the educational stagnation of Badagry as reflected by her failure to have a secondary school, the transit camp theory is not a sufficient factor. One observes however that there could have been an immigration of educational interests from the town because of disorder and military insecurity and the inhuman trafficking in slaves.

One may regard all the factors as being complimentary because chronologically they seem related: about 1800, Badagry was peaceful and powerful but missionaries and recaptives suffered theft of property (Crowder 1978). About mid-century she came into the Egba-Dahomey war and with the growing stability of Abeokuta the missionaries and many recaptives left for Abeokuta. The bombardment (1851) and the annexation of Lagos (1861) by the British brought greater peace to Lagos and diverted missionary, economic and returnees interest away from Badagry.

The position then is that no one view may be taken as necessary and sufficient in explaining the educational stagnation of Badagry between 1850 and 1900 A.D.

References

- Ajayi, J.F.A. (1965) *Christian Missions In Nigeria 1841-1891*: England: Longmans.
- Ajayi, J.F.A. and Akintoye, S.A. "Yorubaland in the Nineteenth Century" in Ikime, O. ed. (1980) *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Ajayi, J.F.A. and Espie, I. (1965) *Thousand Years of West African History*, Lagos: Thomas Nelson.
- Crowder, M. (1978) *The Story of Nigeria*, London: Faber and Faber.
- Fafunwa, A.B. (1974) *History of Education in Nigeria*, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Hodgkin, T. (1975). *Nigerian Perspectives: An Historical Anthology*: London: Oxford University Press.
- Ikime, O. (1977) *The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest*: London: Heinemann.
- Ryder, A.F.C. "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade" in Ikime, O. ed. (1980) *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Fajana, A. (1978) *Education in Nigeria: 1842-1939*: Ibadan; Longmans.

References

Ally, I. A. (1973). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. and Alford, S. A. (1974). A study of the reaction between hydrogen peroxide and hydrogen sulphide in aqueous solution. *Journal of Chemical Kinetics*, 16, 1-10.

Ally, I. A. and Laidler, P. (1967). The reaction between hydrogen peroxide and hydrogen sulphide in aqueous solution. *Journal of Chemical Kinetics*, 9, 1-10.

Ally, I. A. (1971). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1972). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1973). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1974). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1975). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1976). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1977). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1978). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1979). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1980). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1981). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1982). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1983). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1984). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1985). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1986). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1987). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1988). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1989). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1990). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1991). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1992). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1993). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ally, I. A. (1994). *Chemical Kinetics in Aqueous Solution*. London: Chapman and Hall.

26

Trends in the Development of
Education in Badagry

OYENIKE OLORUNDA

Trends in the Development of Education in Badagry

Series of arguments and opinions have been expressed by those who are concerned with what should be the type and form of education to be given to the young ones. The varied opinions of the people are usually affected by what each predisposes to be the meaning of the word "education" and what it should stand for. Hence, various definitions have been given to education by educators, education philosophers and developers. According to Obiwusi (1981) education is the process through which adults of one generation transmit to the next generation the knowledge of skills, attitudes and opinions necessary to ensure the survival of an ethnic group, clan, social class or nation. This is characteristic of non-formal education which could be made available to learners in non-school settings such as homes. This type of education is open to any child in any traditional setting and as such not foreign to the Ogu people because the same is obtained in Badagry.

Others view education as a social process by which people are subjected to the influence of a selected and controlled environment (especially of the school) so that they may attain social competence and optimum individual development. However, it should be pointed out that education cannot be loosely equated to schooling because schooling is just an integral part of education. Education, in a wider sense, is the training of the entire person to enable him not only to acquire the ability to read, write and calculate or to be proficient in a given job, but also to enable him fit himself for living in the society.

Fafunwa (1966, 1982), Moumouni, (1966) and Obanya (1984) had attempted or prescribed a marriage of traditional education with the modern practices for the enrichment of education in Africa.

Prior to the coming of Christianity and Islam, there were no schools, and colleges but Nigerian society had its own system of education which was informal, practical, though not well organised as modern education is

now. The home was the school and the parents, grand parents siblings and older members of the family constituted the teaching staff and the educational content was strictly based on the need of the society. This study has, therefore, been delimited to cover the following areas:

- (i) Traditional education in Badagry prior to the introduction of Western and Islamic education.
- (ii) Major trends in the development of education among the Ogu.
- (iii) Conclusion and recommendations.

Traditional Education Among The Ogu

The development of the educational system that befits a set of people needs to be geared towards their belief and value system. It should be evolved and tied to the objectives, needs and aspirations of such people. Education in Badagry before the introduction of western education was purely traditional; thought out by the Ogu people, developed within the aspirations and needs of the people and directed towards the transmission of their cultural heritage. This rightly reflected Fafunwa's (1981) view on Education; "education whether modern or ancient aims at perpetrating the culture of the society". This is because traditional education attaches considerable importance to the training of the culture of the people.

However, the aim of traditional education as obtained among the Ogu of Badagry is multifarious with the end objective to produce an individual who is honest, respectful, skilled, cooperative and conforming to the social orders of the day. Among the other additional desired outcome expected of the traditional education are:

First, to produce well educated citizens needed in the traditional setting. In the Ogu language, Education is known as *Nukpokpon* meaning the pursuit of learning and of socially acceptable behaviour. Among the Ogu, whoever is not well grounded and well fitted culturally (no matter the level of foreign education imbibed) is regarded as an outcast and 'illiterate'. This is also true of other communities especially the Yoruba from whom the Ogu people have inherited some values.

Second, to provide vocational skills for the youths. Among the Ogu, the major occupation in the territory are fishing because of the nearness to the Lagoon and the sea, crafts such as poultry and mat weaving. Farming is restrictively practised with their major crops being coconut, cocoa and cassava. This is so because the Ogu people see farming as a subsidiary activity. (Obanya 1989). Contact with the Europeans in the 19th century led to the planting of cocoa and coconut by the Ogu people.

Third, the education is aimed at fostering communal living and for the production of disciplined youths and, finally, it is aimed at facilitating the

transmission of cultural heritage. This is because the Ogu has a distinct cultural heritage which is borne out of their contact with and closeness to the Republic of Benin, their immediate neighbour. The distinctive cultural heritage of the Ogu is even reflective of their highly structured traditional society at the apex of which is the Wheno-Aholu. Under him are heads of different quarters known as *Aholu* or *Ategun* followed by other titled chiefs known as *Ogaran*.

Among the Ogu, considerable emphasis is placed on character training. Indeed, it is the corner stone of African education with the medium of instruction being Ogu the mother tongue. Chief Watson N. O. in an interview lamented the fact that Yoruba is eroding off the value placed on the mother tongue (Ogu) because there are more Yoruba speakers in the surrounding communities. He, however, went further by saying that Ogu is not a dialect but a language in its own right having words in context for all the words within the Ogu vocabulary.

Major Trends in the Development of Education among the Ogu

It is widely agreed that at least part of a child's education is acquired informally through contact with parents, other children around him and recognised tutors like the *Zangan* and *Kregbetos* who are responsible for the training of the *Zangbeto* trainees.

Direct and indirect means of training are used in traditional education which is usually marked first by observation and imitation and followed by guided instructions as may be required depending on what type of traditional education is being imparted. For example, all female children are given instruction in the area of home-keeping, child-rearing, trading and other vocational training such as fishing, weaving etc. Vocational training in the traditional society is largely predicated on the apprenticeship system and is a time for educating millions of African youths and adults. Generally, at the advanced level of vocational training, the children are not trained by their parents but by relatives, master craftsmen in particular fields, friends, village heads, chief priests and other specialists in the various fields in order to instill and maintain discipline. Teachers in all the various vocational training do so systematically until the trainee has mastered all the necessary segments of the course content to qualify him for a full participation in the chosen course.

Another trend in the form of education obtained in Badagry is that which is inherited through contact with the western world brought about by missionary activities with the primary aim of evangelization which was later knit with western education that converts might be able to read

and write and more importantly that converts might be able to read the Bible. However, later, converts were helped in the area of practical agriculture and the aim and objective of the western education introduced by the missionaries were summed up by Nssau (1876) when he asserts that "the two objects of all school instructions are to impart knowledge, saving the soul and to fit the converts for practical usefulness in life". It therefore became a slogan that "the Bible and the plough" must regenerate Africa.

Western or Christian oriented education in South Western part of Nigeria dates back to September 24th 1842 when Rev. Birch Freeman and William de Graft landed in Badagry. Within a few days of their arrival, they opened "Nursery of the infant church" consisting of 50 pupils, mostly children of Sierra Leonian emigrants. Later, they established primary school, St. Thomas Primary School in Badagry in 1843. It was the first western education primary school in Badagry and indeed the first in Nigeria. In 1878, the first industrial technical school was established for delinquents in Topo Badagry by the Roman Catholic Mission. From what seems an insignificant beginning such as this has developed 49 primary schools and 11 secondary schools in Badagry Local Education District.

Another major trend in the development of education in Badagry is the efforts made by the Muslims who faced a different situation in that the Administration was moulded on western lines and the legal system was operated by judges and magistrates who were members of the English Inns or Courts and not by alkalis. To get even a junior post in Administration, a youth had to have obtained a full primary education or, better still, some Secondary education. But schools free of Christian indoctrination did not exist and the fear that their children would be converted to christianity made the muslims to shun the western based education. Instead they sent their children to *Plaza* schools where Mallams teach Quranic, Islamic education alone.

Later the moslems found out that they were missing a lot and would continue to lose if nothing was done to save the situation. Hence, they considered it imperative to establish their own form of education where western education would be blended with Islamic education having realised that both could co-exist. Today, there is one Muslim Secondary School in Badagry — A.U.D. Secondary School, and four Muslim Primary Schools in the Badagry Local Education District. In fact, information gathered reveal that Ogu people were many in the early Civil Service Organisation in Nigerian because of the joint efforts of the Western and Islamic education on the people in the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The development of education made the people develop a conscious desire to maintain solidarity within the groups in their community. Traditional education in particular, led to the development of upright and honest people because of the efforts of Zangbeto group which could be regarded as a local police force.

The education development made the people to inculcate the spirit of individuality in the people. This led to greater self reliance which is in tune with the efforts being made by the 6-3-3-4 education system. The teaching of local arts and crafts was entrenched in the school curriculum designed by the missionaries and those subjects are still taught in primary schools in Badagry till date.

Traditional education in Badagry has contributed immensely to the economic development of the community and the country at large. The main market, Agbalata serves as a common meeting point for traders from all over the country and neighbouring countries. Articles like mats, baskets, and many farm produce like coconut and other food items are usually bought in large quantities and transported to other parts of the country or exported into neighbouring countries like Republic of Benin and Togo.

Traditional education lays emphasis on the use of hands and not only intellectual development. This is seen in the teaching of local arts which has been part of the subjects taught since the inception of western or modern education in schools.

The teaching of Vocational subjects justifies the 6-3-3-4 system which calls for the development of psychomotor skills in school children. This has been ensured in the teaching of introductory technology in Junior Secondary Schools.

However, the teaching of Vocational studies has to be improved to embrace traditional vocational training perfectly by upgrading the local apprenticeship training into formal education. This could be achieved by employing Traditional tutors in area of Vocational education as instructors in the area of vocational studies. Besides, there is acute shortage of needed skilled manpower in the areas of vocational studies presently; the cost could be cheaper and more benefiting.

Due recognition should be given to those trained through traditional learning system if the culture of the people is to be well transmitted. We should remember that China did not dis-engage herself from her cultural past instead the past has been inculcated into their new education system.

Finally, the reform of education should seek to integrate the individual within his community and environment, to equip him for a productive life and for full participation in the progress of that community to ensure continuity of life and culture of the people as the National Policy on Education has stated, NPE (1989) section 1(3).

References

- Amadou-Mahtar, M. 'Address to the 36th session of International Conference in Education (Aug. - Sept. 1977). Geneva, final Report.
- Badagry, Our town series No. 2. (Lagos: Ministry of Information, 1987).
- Fafunwa, A. B. *New Perspectives in African Education*. (London: Macmillan, 1966).
- Moumouni, A. *Education in Africa*. (Andrew Deutch, 1966).
- National Policy on Education (Revised), (Lagos: NERD Press, 1989).
- Obanya, P.A.I. and Arinze E. *The Use of Cultural heritage in Nigeria Education*. (Ibadan: Kelu Bestway Press, 1983).
- Obanya, P.A.I. "Aspects of traditional Education among the Gunu" *Education in Lagos State: An Overview* (LASU, 1984).
- Obiwusi, B. *Principle and Practice of Education*. (Ibadan: Oyedoyin Press, 1981).
- Taiwo, C. O. *The Nigerian Education System*, (Lagos: Nelson, 1985).
- Thompson, A. R. *Education and Development in Africa*, (London: Macmillan, 1983).
- Interview with Chief S. O. Watson, Educationist, Badagry, 21st Jan., 1990.
- Interview with Mrs. F. Fabinu, 29 years, Teacher, Badagry, 27th January, 1990.

27

Oba C. D. Akran: An Assessment of his Contributions to Political Modernisation in Nigeria

H. A. EKIYOR

Sixteen years after the death of Oba Cladius Dosa Akran of Badagry, Aholu Jiwa II, I am of the opinion that it is high time his contributions to political modernization in Nigeria should be assessed and highlighted by an impartial observer. This is in view of the fact that the dusts of his reign had settled down, the bitterness that was nursed against him by his political opponents towards the end of his reign had subsided, and "the arena cleared of the debris of battle".¹

Therefore I intend to highlight in this Chapter the profile of the Oba, his contributions to the development of Badagry and the nation, his unique qualities and the period of his partial eclipse. It is relevant to note that there are scarcity of materials on the Oba. Moreover, there are no existing text books on him. Despite these handicaps, I still intend to highlight the points that have been enumerated above.

A Short Profile of Oba C. D. Akran

His Early Life

Oba Cladius Dosa Akran was an intelligent, hardworking and dedicated man who made a success of whatever he laid his hands on to do. Sir John Rankine, a former Lieutenant Governor of Western Nigeria described him as a man who was "very keen to make a success of his job".² He was from a humble and Polygamous family, and rose from penury to greatness. He was born January 13, 1899, but died on June 11, 1974 and was buried on June 22, 1974 near his father's tomb at Jegba palace after a seven hour traditional rites.³

It was a Reverend Father at Badagry who first discovered the talents of Oba C.D. Akran when he was a child. In view of this, the missionary persuaded his father to send him to school.⁴ The Oba started school at the age of fourteen years⁵ and later attended St. Gregory's College and Kings College where he distinguished himself.⁶ Before he attended Secondary

School, the Oba "apprenticed himself to a Goldsmith"⁷ with the intention of becoming a Goldsmith.⁸

His Working Life

He also attended the P & T Training School at Lagos and became a qualified electronic engineer. The Oba later worked in the Posts and Telegraph Department as an engineer where his dedication to duty earned him rapid promotions in the service.¹⁰ He worked for twenty-one years in the above Department and retired as a Senior Officer in 1947.¹¹ While giving his reasons for retirement, the Oba said: "I retired because my father died in the previous year and the people of Badagry wanted me to come and take over the throne".¹² It is relevant to note that during his tenure of office at the Posts and Telegraph Department, he became the Vice-President of the West African Joint Committee of Technical and Professional Workers.

His Ascension to the Throne

He came to the throne in 1948 at the age of 49 years¹³ after the death of his father — Kopon in 1946. His father was the Head Chief of Jegba Quarters. By the time he stepped into his father's shoes as the Akran of Badagry, another candidate had already assumed the title of Akran of Badagry with the name Ajiyon Kanho. This led to intense rivalry between the two Akrans¹⁴ and a chieftaincy dispute arose between the two contestants.

The District Officer in charge of Badagry held an election for the two candidates in Badagry so as to resolve the dispute. Oba C.D. Akran won with overwhelming majority. This brought the chieftaincy dispute to an end and he was accorded government recognition on August 18th, 1950.¹⁵

It was in 1948 that the Oba started his political career when he became a member of the Badagry Town Council and also Egun-Awori Native Council.¹⁶ The dynamic Oba later became president of both Councils¹⁷.

It will be worthwhile at this stage to enumerate the eight Quarters that existed in Badagry and the titles of head chiefs that were manning the Quarters. They were as follows:-

- i) Jegba quarters was ruled by the Akran
- ii) Ahovikoh Quarters was ruled by the Wawu.
- iii) Awhanyogor Quarters was ruled by the Jengen.
- iv) Posukoh quarters was ruled by the Posu.
- v) Wharakoh Quarters was ruled by the Finhento.
- vi) Boekoh Quarters was ruled by the Mobee.
- vii) Asagoh Quarters was ruled by the Bala.
- viii) Ganho Quarters was ruled by the Agoloto.¹⁸

His days in the Cabinet

He graduated from local politics to national politics in 1951. This was the year in which he contested election as an independent candidate¹⁹ through the electoral college system and became the first member of parliament for Badagry.²⁰ It is relevant to note that the Oba joined the Action Group after the election.

Moreover, in 1952, the cabinet of Western Nigeria was formed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and he was appointed the Minister of Local Development and Economic Planning.²¹ He was a notable figure in the cabinet, and was regarded as the number two man in the Action Group.² For the Oba acted as the Regional Premier whenever Awolowo was either on leave or was away from Ibadan on official duties.²³

On the eighth of August, 1960, this dynamic Oba was re-elected into the Western House of Assembly but with a reduced majority. However, he was re-appointed as Minister of Economic Planning and *Local Development* by Chief S. L. Akintola who replaced Chief Obafemi Awolowo as Premier of Western Region. In fact, Oba C. D. Akran was also the Minister of Finance between 1962 and 1966.

Oba C.D. Akran was a hardworking Minister who was dedicated to his duties. He made success of his ministerial assignments, and had "an astonishing grasp of its multi-farious problems"²¹ He was gentle and quiet. The Oba had a very good working relationship with the colonial administrators. Lieutenant Governor Rankine said that "his relations with the Administrations and with Europeans generally set a standard that his fellow ministers would do well to emulate."²⁵

His ministerial career abruptly came to an end when the Western Nigerian crisis which eventually engulfed the whole country, made the region ungovernable, and partly contributed to the military coup of 1966. The remote causes of the Western Nigerian crisis was the Action Group crisis of 1962.

The Action Group crisis of 1962 was mostly centred around two Yoruba personalities — the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief S. L. Akintola. The crisis resulted from the disagreements between the two leaders of the Action Group, which led to the disintegration of the party; and "its hold on the West and the cohesiveness of that Region was (also) broken."²⁶ Moreover, the conflict intensified the factional rivalry in Western Nigeria and introduced some elements of political instability into the Region.²⁷

It will be relevant to examine briefly the personalities and the background of the two leaders who were the central figures of the Action Group crisis. Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief S. L. Akintola were both lawyers, journalists and outstanding politicians. But the former was a hardworking, intelligent politician who got to the top through the dint of

hardwork. He was a successful lawyer from Ijebu Remo and was the Premier of Western Nigeria from 1954 to 1959. Walter Schwarz described him as Nigeria's ablest politician.²⁸ This outstanding politician was the brain behind the founding of the Action Group in 1951. The party originated from a series of private meetings summoned by Chief Obafemi Awolowo to discuss matters affecting the well-being of the people of Western Region.²⁹ He had observed that "that performances of the people of Western Region at the Regional and Central Conferences for the review of the Richards' Constitution had shown that they were unorganised and were lacking in concerted programme and effective leadership."³⁰

The Action Group was therefore founded "to provide this leadership and to capture power in the West at elections made necessary by the introduction of the Macpherson Constitution."³¹ He was appointed the first Federal President of the Party when the Action Group came into being.

The late Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola was a successful politician from Ogbomoso. He was a lawyer by profession and was elected deputy leader of the Action Group in 1955. As a result of his outstanding qualities, several chieftaincy-titles were conferred on him by traditional rulers of Yoruba Communities.³²

Chief Akintola was the Federal Parliamentary leader of this party and a General Minister in the national government of 1957-59. He was also the Premier of Western Region from 1960-1966. His tenure of office abruptly came to an end when the soldiers staged a Military *coup d'etat* in January 1966. He was one of the Regional Premiers that was killed when the military men took over the rein of power. But Chief Akintola will always be remembered "as the Churchill of Yoruba language."³³ He was "great in wit, alive in speech, icy in sarcasm and in the manouvres that inevitably beset politics".³⁴

It will be relevant at this stage to highlight the role Oba C.D. Akran played in the Action Group crisis. He initially used his fatherly figure position in the cabinet to mediate between the two warring factions headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Akintola.³⁵ But he later abandoned his role as a peace-maker and supported Chief Akintola's faction. The Oba later said in an interview that he wanted to be on the "winning side".³⁶ His critics have branded him as being an opportunist for always wanting to be on the "winning side". However, Oba C.D. Akran faithfully served the two quarreling leaders and "displayed maturity, dedication and loyalty to whoever was the premier".³⁷

The Contribution of Oba C.D. Akran to the Development of Badagry

During his tenure of office as a Minister in Western Nigeria, and his reign as an Oba, the interest of Badagry was always uppermost in his mind.³⁸ He confirmed this contention when he spoke to his audience in 1974 in the following manner: "I want to be on the winning side so as to get things done for Badagry."³⁹

He knew the importance of education to a nation and used his position in government to ensure that Badagry Grammar School was established in 1955.⁴⁰ This institution became the first secondary school in Badagry, and many prominent Nigerians have passed through this school.

It was also during his tenure of office as Minister that many modern amenities were given to Badagry by the Western Region Government. They included the establishment of telephone and telegraphic lines in 1956, pipe-borne water in 1955 and the construction of Coconut Industry and the Jute Bag Factory.⁴¹ Moreover, he also ensured that Badagry was linked to Lagos by road.⁴² From the foregoing, it seems that Oba C.D. Akran brought enormous economic, political and social development to Badagry.

His Contribution to the Nation

Although he was only a Minister in Western Nigeria between 1952-1966, his contributions and ideas were not only useful to Western Region, but also to Nigeria as a whole. As Minister of *Local Development* and Economic Planning, he was progressive and of great foresight. He "encouraged rural development and the establishment of small scale industries which is a catalyst to industrial development."⁴³

Moreover, Oba C.D. Akran was also a member of the Economic Mission that was sent by the Western Nigeria Government in 1956 to Western Germany, Italy, United States of America and Canada to woo foreign investors to Western Region. From the foregoing, it seems that he also played a role in bringing foreign investors to Nigeria.

The Western Region Government was generally regarded as a pacesetter between January, 1952 to December, 1959, for making outstanding contributions to the economic, political and social development of Western Nigeria in particular and Nigeria in general.⁴⁴ Chief Obafemi Awolowo was then the Premier of the Region but Oba C.D. Akran was a prominent cabinet minister who acted as the Premier of the Region whenever the substantive holder of the post was either on leave or went abroad on official duties. He was more or less the number two man in the Action Group

government of Western Nigeria.

Therefore, it will not be wrong to give him some credit for these epoch making achievements of the government. Moreover, this is in view of the fact that a parliamentary system of government with collective responsibility was being practised in the Region. In such a government, the decisions and policies of the cabinet were collectively taken by all the Ministers who were serving under Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Therefore, no single individual can exclusively claim all the credits for the modernization of Western Nigeria between 1952 and 59. Definitely, the Oba made his little contributions to these achievements. Chief Obafemi Awolowo described him as "a quiet man with an unimpeachable sense of duty."⁴⁵

It will be worthwhile to examine some of these epoch-making achievements:

1. Voting by symbol was introduced into Nigeria by the Action Group and was first practised at the Local Government Elections in Ijebu-Remo in 1953.
2. Steel boxes and security-printed ballot papers were first used in the Western Region in 1956, at the instance and insistence of Action Group Government . . .
3. It was only in the Western Region that the leader of Opposition was elected Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly.
4. Agricultural settlements and Institutes were first established in the Western Region.
5. It was in the Western Region that a minimum living wage was first introduced in Nigeria, and paid to workers in the Region.
6. The first ever industrial estate and housing estate in Nigeria were established in the Western Region. The first television service in Nigeria . . . was established in the Western Region.
7. It was in the Western Region . . . that Free Universal Primary Education, and Free Health Services for children up to the age of eighteen, were first introduced in any part of Nigeria . . .⁴⁶

The Unique Aspects of Oba C.D. Akran

Oba C.D. Akran had certain qualities that made him different from other Obas and politicians. It will be worthwhile enumerating these features.

He was a devoted Christian and had only one wife. The Oba was the only traditional ruler that was a monogamist during his time.⁴⁷ Even though he was a respected traditional ruler, he was ordinarily dressed, and did not wear any paraphernalia.⁴⁸ The Oba was not only modern in out-look but was also very accessible to his subjects.

He was pressurized and persuaded by his subjects after the death of his

father in 1946 to become the Akran of Badagry.⁴⁹ He therefore retired from the civil service and became the head Chief of Jegba Quarters in Badagry in 1948. Definitely, he was not an ambitious man. For the Oba was also persuaded by some Bales in Badagry and its environs to contest election into the Western House of Assembly in 1951.⁵⁰

It is also interesting to note that before he joined the Action Group, he was persuaded and lobbied by prominent citizens in Western Nigeria and Lagos.⁵¹ Moreover, in 1952, it was at the insistence of the prominent Action Group members in Lagos that he was appointed a Minister. Their agitation was due to the fact he was the only elected candidate of the party in Lagos and Badagry areas during the 1951 elections.⁵² All the other candidates were defeated.

Oba C.D. Akran also claimed that during the Action Group crisis that emanated from the disagreement between the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his deputy, Chief S.L. Akintola, he was offered the Premiership by the party leader but he turned it down and offered to mediate between the two leaders who were at each others throat.⁵³ Definitely, many Nigerians should have capitalized on the opportunity that was offered to the Oba.

The Period of Partial Eclipse

His political career abruptly came to an end in 1966 when the soldiers seized power in 1966 and his mentor, Chief S.L. Akintola was killed. He was arrested and placed under protective custody. However, he was later accused of fraud and embezzlement. The Oba was charged to the High Court of Ibadan and sentenced in February 1967 to seven years imprisonment.⁵⁴ Moreover the army found the sum of £125,000 in raw cash when his house was searched on January 30, 1966 and a bank account of £2.6 million was revealed during his trial in 1967.⁵⁵

His conviction was the anti-climax of his life. The good reputation and respect which he had acquired over the years, vanished into the thin air. Some of his subjects even agitated for his removal from the throne. However, he was later granted state pardon by Lt-Col. Yakubu-Gowon in 1970 and was released. But things were never the same again with Oba C.D. Akran.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the seventy-five years which Oba C.D. Akran spent on earth were eventful, even though his latter years, especially after the Action Group crisis and the formation of the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP), could be regarded as the period of anti-climax of his life.

Many of his critics regarded him as an absentee ruler of his domain and a very corrupt politician who used his ministerial position in Western Nigeria not only to enrich himself but also to lord it over the chiefs in the various quarters in Badagry. However, posterity will regard him as a great man who contributed to the political modernization of Badagry, the former Western Region and Nigeria as a whole. His weaknesses and inconsistencies had only confirmed the fact that mortals are never perfect, even when they are honoured and respected by lesser beings.

Notes and References

1. Oba C.D. Akran: "My life in Politics" in *Spear*, March 1974. An interview with *Spear* Editor, Sola Odunfa, p. 8.
2. "Biographical Notes on Western Region Ministers" Rankine to Lennox Boyd in *Rankine Papers* in Rhodes House Library, Oxford University. P. 6.
3. *Daily Times*, June 24, 1974, p.3.
4. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics". *Op. Cit.*, P. 9
5. *Sunday Times* June 16, 1974, p.9.
6. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics". *Op.cit.*, p. 9.
7. *Ibid.* p. 9.
8. *Ibid.* p. 9.
9. *Ibid.* p. 9.
10. *Ibid.* p. 9
11. *Ibid.* p. 9.
12. "Biographical Notes on Western Regional Ministers", *Op. cit.*, p. 6.
13. Oba C.D. Akran "No More Politics for Me." in *Sunday Times*, March 3, 1974, p. 11. An interview by Mr. Willy Bozimo.
14. Whenayon Hundeyin: "The Life and Times of Oba C.D. Akran: 1899-1974"; A Project, p. 28.
15. The Report of the Law and Finance Committee of the Egun Awori District Council, which met to settle the Chieftaincy dispute.
16. Whenayon Hundeyin, *Op. cit.*, p. 40.
17. Robert S. Smith: *The Lagos Consulate* (London Macmillan Press Limited, 1978), p. 15.
18. Extracted from an interview Whenayon Hundeyin had with Mr. Ogunbiyi, 52 years, on the 9th of April, 1989.
19. Whenayon Hundeyin, *Op. cit.*, p. 40.
20. Oba/C.D. Akran: "No More Politics for Me". in *Sunday Times*, March 3, 1974. *Op. cit.*, p. 11:
21. Whenayon Hundeyin, *Op. cit.*, p. 41.
22. Willy Bozimo: "The Life and Times of Oba Akran: The Leader, The Servant" in *Sunday Times*, June 16, 1974, p. 9. The last interview the Oba had before he died.
23. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics". *Op. cit.*, p. 11.
24. Chief Obafemi Awolowo: *The autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo* (London Cambridge University, Press 1987), p. 260.
25. "Biography Notes on Western Regional Ministers". *Op. cit.*, p. 6.
26. Remi Anifwoshe: *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience*, (London, Longman Group Limited, 1977), p. 57.
27. Henry Amie-Ogunga Ekiyor: "Political Corruption, and Political

- Instability: A Case Study of Western Nigeria; 1960- 66". A Ph.D. Thesis, p. 318.
28. Walter Schwartz: *Nigeria*. (London, Pall Press Limited, 1968), p. 130.
 29. Henry Amie-Oginga Ekiyor: *Op. cit.*, p. 318.
 30. Obafemi Awolowo. Awo. *Op. cit.*, p. 318.
 31. John P. Mackintosh: "Politics in Nigeria; The Action Group Crisis of 1962" in *Political Studies* Volume XI, No. 2, June 1963, p. 126.
 32. Richard, L. Sklar: "Nigerian Politics; The Ordeal of Chief Awolowo, 1960-1965" in Gwadden M. Carter (ed.) *Politics in Africa. 7 Cases* (New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), p. 127.
 33. Peter Pan: "Letters to my Grandchild" in *Daily Times*, 24 January, 1966, p.7.
 34. *Ibid.* p. 7.
 35. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics" in *Spear*, *Op. cit.*, p. 9.
 36. Willy Bozimo: *Op.cit.*, p. 9.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
 38. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics" *Op.cit.*, p. 8.
 39. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 41: He got the information from Mr. J. V. Hundeyin, 60 years. Badagry, 14-1-89.
 44. Obafemi Awolowo: *Path to Nigerian Greatness*. (Enugu; Fourth Dimension Publishing Co., Limited. 1981). pp. 136- 137.
 45. Obafemi Awolowo: *Awo. Op.cit.*, p. 260.
 46. Obafemi Awolowo: *Path to Nigerian Greatness. Op. cit.*, pp. 136-137.
 47. *Sunday Times*, March 3, 1974. p. 11.
 48. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics". *Op.cit.*, p. 9.
 49. See *Ibid.*, p. 9 and Whenyon Hundeyin: *Op.cit.*, p. 9.
 50. See *Sunday Times*, March 3, 1971 p. 11 and Oba C.D. Akran: *My Life in Politics"; Op. cit.*, p. 9.
 51. Oba C.D. Akran: "My Life in Politics", *Op.cit.*, p. 9.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
 54. Whenyon Hundeyin: *Op. cit.*, p. 45.
 55. Mokuwugo Okoye: *Growth of Nations: (Enugu; Fourth Dimension, 1978), p. 5.*

28

The Career of Seriki Abass (Faremi William In Badagry 1870–1919)

H.I. TJANI

Introduction

According to Avoseh (1938); Duckworth (1952); Newbury (1961) and Asiwaju (1976), there is need for an indepth study of personalities that aided the British administration in the Western province in particular, and Nigeria in general during the colonial era. In fact, the role of the individuals have been down – played by scholars, hence a scholarly work on Seriki Abass (Faremi Williams) would not be out of place. Indeed, the period between 1890 and 1919 witnessed a new dimension in British relation with Badagry. For effective administration, Africans were made use of as the link between the communities under the British sphere of influence (What was known as the Western province) and the Lagos colony. It is for proper grasp of the history of this period that this chapter focuses on Seriki Faremi Abass, who could be referred to as a comprador assistant of British rule in Badagry and Western province.

From Servitude

The Yoruba country was characterized with many civil unrests in the mid-nineteenth century which was partly due to the fall of Old Oyo Empire earlier in the nineteenth century, and partly due to the struggle amongst Yoruba states to replace Oyo's place in Yoruba politics and power.¹ Apart from this, there was also the incessant raid on the Egba/Egbado communities by the Dahomeans,² who had emerged as a state to be reckoned with on the demise of Old Oyo Empire. Of relevance to us here are the communities demographically and socially affected by these insecure nature of the Yoruba country during the early nineteenth century. Hence, we quite agree with Professor Asiwaju³ that the Egbado and Awori people of the Southern part of Yorubaland were greatly diverstated by the wars. In fact, the 1840 Egba campaigns⁴ on Egbado and Awori peoples further dislocated the socio-political and economic structure of the Egbado area in

- which Abass Faremi was born. Also worthy of note is that captives during these raids were often sold into slavery along the coast.

It was during this turbulent period that Abass was born. His father was of Aiyetoro origin, while his mother came from Aibo within the same Egbadado/Awori enclave.⁵ Much is not, however, known about his formative years except that at a very young age, he was captured and sold into slavery.⁶ However, there is a divergence of opinion here. A school of thought, represented by the Badagry local historian, T.O. Avoseh, states that Abass was sold and taken to Lagos Island for onward transfer to the Americas.⁷ This school used Abass association with Conrad Taiwo, the right hand man of King Kosoko of Lagos to juxtapose their position. In fact, this school posits that Abass was in the service of King Kosoko before being released at about 1870 and that he subsequently settled at Badagry. However, this needs to be carefully treated because later events did not corroborate the assertion.

The other school of thought which perhaps seems plausible is led by his children.⁹ According to them, Abass was sold into slavery at Badagry in the early 1850s. He was bought by one Housa – Muslim merchant called, Abdullahi who used his slaves on long distance trade from the hinterland to the coast.¹⁰ In fact, he is said to have given his slaves Islamic education and commercial training. Group of slaves were often sent on trade missions to the immediate vicinity to trade in potash, salt and slaves as well.¹¹ It was during this trading missions that Faremi, later named Abass by his master, Abdullahi, displayed his traits of industry and Commercial astuteness. Abass acceptance of Islam and his commercial dexterity paved way for his independence from his master by the late 1860s.¹²

On 'independence', Abass moved to Lagos where he traded in slaves. This could be ironical but what is important is that that was the vogue of the period. Through slave trade, he was able to amass wealth and establish a good social standing. This necessitated his second coming to Badagry. Opinion, however, is divergent as regards the date of his re-emergence at Badagry. According to Newbury (1961) and Asiwaju (1976), Abass arrived at Badagry in 1884.¹³ However, Avoseh (1938) suggested an earlier date, 1870 to be precise. According to him, Abass was involved in the partitioning of the Gberefu land in 1882. This date could be probable in view of the fact that the 1870s could have been used to lay a solid foundation which afforded him interference in local politics. What is of paramount importance to us is that during this period he diversified his business. Apart from slave trading which was gradually being replaced by the legitimate trade, he partook in merchandise by buying from the Europeans, manufactured goods, and selling farm produce to the latter at Badagry and Lagos through his chain of servants. Like All-Balogun of

Lagos fame, Abass became a money-lender as a result of the enormous wealth he acquired as a slave-dealer. In fact, the interests that accrued as a money-lender was used to diversify his business. His success in trade and commerce subsequently earned him respect and fame within Badagry and beyond.

On his death in June 1919, Abass Faremi Williams bequeathed legacy unsurpassed by his contemporaries. Four landed properties are noticeable in Badagry. These are a storey building at Marina, Awhanjigor, Agbalata and at Obada market (Twin house), which acted as his warehouse.¹⁴ There are also parcels of land at Badagry and its surrounding villages/communities in which he was the *Baba Isale*. Lastly, he owned properties in Lagos Island of which the building at 46, Offin Road, Lagos, is worthy of mention.¹⁵

Society and Politics in Badagry 1870–1919 The Abass Factor

The success of Abass would not be understood without understanding Badagry Society during the period under study. This would also shed light on the success of the British rule in Badagry during this period. No doubt, the success of Abass as a trader/merchant, farmer, middleman and money-lender, largely depended on his astuteness as a businessman as well as the societal situation.

Badagry remains a heterogeneous society. In fact, its peopling followed a wave of migrations by different ethnic groups particularly during the nineteenth century. George, describing the heterogeneity of Badagry's population states that, 'there were to be seen the aboriginal inhabitants, jostling with native traders from Lagos, Porto-Novo and Dahomey with Sierra-Leonean immigrants as well as Portuguese slave merchants from other side of the water'.¹⁶ Although the place of the Ogu-speaking people under the leadership of the Akran (the Aholu) is undisputed, the settlers, notably from Porto-Novo, Lagos and Egbado during the period under review, dominated the town's politics.¹⁷ Noteworthy of the immigrant settlers was Abass Faremi, who had earlier been a slave – boy at Badagry, but got his freedom and moved to Lagos from where he emerged successful as a slave dealer as well as a trader.

By the 1880s when the British Officials in Lagos sanctioned migration from other parts of the Lagos colony and protectorate to Badagry,¹⁸ the need for partitioning and demarcation of land hitherto unused became paramount. The target was the Gberefu land which had laid fallow since the Dahomeans' attacks of the early nineteenth century.

Chief Sumbu Mobi and Faremi Abass took the initiative, and met the

Aholu, Akran, to use the land for farming. The latter directed them to the British District Commissioner, Mr. Thomas Tickel, who was glad that the people wanted to engage in farming.¹⁹ However, the Ogu people were sceptical about the fertility and security of the Gberefu land which had brought them untold hardship in the past. They clung to the opinion that locust, fox and bears would be the one to harvest the products on these farms. In fact, most Ogu people refused to diversify their economy. They opined that the emigrant population could take to farming while they remained with their fishing job. The Jegba and Wharako quarters were particularly anti-farming.²⁰

Thus, Yoruba migrants and few Ogu people shared the Gberefu side of the cotton-tree which marked the boundary between Badagry and Itopo in 1882. Here, Abass took two plots, followed by Hundeyin, Oje, Obabiyi and others.²¹ At the end of the other boundary with Apa, Abass took another plot. With his support, the Fanti – fisherman, Magan, was allotted a plot on the beach by the Akran in the 1880s.²² Land hitherto acquired by Abass were used for farming purpose.

Abass began to diversify his business. He became a large scale farmer planting corn, coconut and palm tree. It is important to note that Abass contributed in a way to the resuscitation of the Badagry economy which had dwindled since the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. As Moreso noted, 'the activities of J.W. Rowland' who succeeded Thomas Tickel as the District Commissioner in 1887, coupled with the trading dexterity of people like Abass brought some improvements on trade transactions in Badagry.²³ With the completion of the Obada market in 1888, which formed the central market for Badagry, and the construction of two others, trade and commerce was boosted once again in Badagry.²⁴

Apart from being a large scale farmer, he was a general merchant trading in merchandise first with the Brazilians, and later with the German firms of G.L. Gaiser, and Witt and Busch, to which he leased houses and landed property at exorbitant profit.²⁵ Newbury posits that Abass collected about £84 per annum as landlord from trading firms of Gaiser Witt and Busch.²⁶ Moreso, he had the colonial government's approval to collect coconuts around Badagry town, apart from his plantation across the shore, thus, becoming the first African agent of colonial exploitation and exploration of farm produce from Badagry, which are meant for the metropolis. He is in fact, said, to have made £1,000 per annum from this venture.²⁷

We should stress that, wealth acquired as a trader/merchant was not only used to diversity his business ventures, it was also used in the course of Islam. In fact, the Muslim population within the area saw in him a leader and jihadst against Christianization.²⁸ Like other wealthy Muslims

of the period, such as Alli-Balogun, Olorun-Nimbe (Senior) and Abibu Oki, Abass spent his wealth toward the firm establishment of the faith in Badagry. Hence by 1895 Abass had become the *Sarkin Musulumi* of Badagry town. And at a colourful ceremony, reminiscence of the investiture of Shitta of Lagos as a Bey of the Ottoman Empire, Abass was turbaned as the *Seriki Musulumi* of the whole of Badagry (Western) district at Oke Odan in 1897 in the presence of the British Travelling Commissioner in-charge of the area.²⁹ Using his link with Lagos, he instituted the Killa Society at Badagry around 1898. This was a society meant for the propagation of Islam within the community. Like its Lagos counterpart, it consists of the elites and the wealthy men of the period.³⁰

All these activities created a strong local base for Abass. This factor, coupled with his successful trade relations with the Europeans, as well as his earlier assistance to the British Commissioners in Badagry, made him a candidate for the execution of British Colonial policies in Badagry.³¹

Available evidence shows that Abass had been incorporated into the official circle since 1895.³² According to Wormal:

In 1895, the District Commissioner, Major J.H. Ewart appointed Williams (Abass) as a headman, and he no doubt showed an active interest in the affairs of government which contrasted favourably with the indifference of old native Chiefs.²³

Although there were some resentments in 1895 by some Ogu people on the appointment of Abass William as the leading politician in Badagry, this was not militant enough to change the course of British action. In fact, the support of prominent Badagrians made resentment insignificant. For Hundeyin, Wusu-Onitiju, Gesenu, Ajose etc. it was time a purposeful leader be allowed to share in the work of administration which had been neglected by the Ogu generally. They preferred Abass in view of his contributions towards the upliftment of the town commercially.

In 1902, Governor MacGregor in continuation of McGullum's policy set up a council at Badagry under the "Native Council Ordinance" of 1901.³⁴ The Badagry Chiefs failed to realise the importance of being represented on the council. Chief Possu was the only Ogu member of the council which had eleven Yoruba people as members with Seriki Abass as the President.³⁵ Although the council was advisory, it was encouraged to settle matrimonial and land disputes unofficially.³⁶

Abass's wealth, proven leadership quality and loyalty to the British cause were some of the reasons that endeared him to the British officials. However, these are inadequate in explaining his relationship with the British officialdom. Moreover, it was partly due to the lukewarm attitude of the Badagry Chiefs towards the British that paved way for "external

forces" as the mouthpiece of local politics in Badagry during this period.

It was this loophole that Seriki Abass made use of to suit his own end. He was consulted by the District Commissioners frequently on matters concerning Badagry and its environs. This enhanced his role as the indispensable link between the Commissioner and the local populace. The end result was his selection by the Governor General Lugard as the paramount Chief of Badagry district in 1913.

Beyond Badagry

Seriki Abass' influence and power went beyond the precincts of Badagry. Coupled with this was his commercial relations with villages and communities beyond Badagry. In fact, before 1900 he had become the *Baba Isale* of Ale, Ilogbo and Ilado Imewe. His success as a trader with the firms of Witt and Busch and Gaiser based at Badagry, as well as his relation with C.D. Taiwo, made him a favourable *Baba Isale* for these communities. In fact, Comrad Taiwo often introduced Abass to communities beyond Badagry for possible trade relations.³⁷

Baba Isales are either clients or patrons that served as the link between the producers in the hinterland and buyers along the coast. It has been described as 'a classic example of patron/client relationship', based on 'vertical dyadic alliance'.³⁸ It is a voluntary agreement between two parties of unequal status both finding each other useful as an ally due to their differences in power and resources. Seriki Abass as the patron of Ale, Ilogbo, Ilado, Imewe and Aiyetoro, used his influence and power to assist them in their trade with the Europeans. They, in return, provided services in the form of helping on the farm and ensuring the security of their patron's business in their communities. Thus, the *Baba Isale* system was based largely on reciprocity. In fact, implicit trust and confidence of the District Commissioners, particularly between late nineteenth century and 1911³⁹ also gave credence to the position of Seriki Abass as *Baba Isale* during this period. Of significance here, was the success of his oil palm plantations at Idogo and Aibo, his maternal home town. Although records of production and hectares cultivated are not available, oral accounts suggests that the effort was successful as Abass was able to meet the demands of the Europeans.⁴⁰ One thing that is however uncontroversial is that, the success of the oil palm plantation should be seen from his role as *Baba Isale* of the communities.

Moreover, as *Baba Isale* of these communities, he participated in their boundary demarcation. In 1911, he, in conjunction with Hornby Porter fixed the Ilaro/Adarogun and Topo/Akarelomo boundaries. Although there were some resentments against what has been termed 'arbitrary

boundary demarcation the colonial government in Lagos upheld Abass/Hornby's position on the issue.⁴¹

In fact, the patronage of Abass by Egbado Communities (Ado, Igbesa, Ilaro and Ipokia) was based on the fact that, in him they saw a good diplomat with the colonial government in Lagos. He was the overlord of these places and supervised their civil affairs, despite the fact that he was nominally resident at Badagry. Hence, by 1918 he had become the President of the Ilaro Native Court.⁴²

Furthermore, the position of Abass during this period made the Ilogbo people switch over to him as their *Baba Isale* against Adamu Akeju, the Obanikoro of Lagos. The Obanikoro as the *Baba Isale* of Ilogbo had interfered with the installation of new Baale of Ilogbo in 1910 by imposing the unpopular candidate Ogbeunsoyo against the popular candidate Ogundeyin.⁴³ The Ilogbo people were therefore left with the option of choosing Abass as their patron because in him they saw an amiable *Baba Isale*.

Perhaps, the most remarkable of his activities outside Badagry was in the Egbado Movement which aimed at resettling the Egbados at their former hometown, which has been devastated by the Egba in the nineteenth century.⁴⁴ On the introduction of Comrad Taiwo, he assumed the leadership of the Egbados. His main interest was in the rebuilding of Aiyetoro, his father's hometown.⁴⁵ He sought for the independence of the Egbados from the Egba. However, his consolidation towards this end, brought about conflict between the Egbado and their Egba neighbours.⁴⁶ It was to his credit that, an administrative unit was established for the Egbado with headquarters at Ilaro, as distinct from Abeokuta during the period.

In the final analysis, the career of Abass beyond Badagry, was the continuity of his success in Badagry. His role as the *Baba Isale* of most of the communities brought more wealth. Needless to state that he was the executor of most British policies of exploitation in these areas. This would become clear in our assessment of his role.

An Assessment of Abass's Role in the Western Province

Between 1895 and 1919, Seriki Faremi Abass was in control of most of the area referred to as the Western province. His rise to such an enviable position has been discussed in the preceding analysis.

To the British colonialists, Abass was indispensable in the execution of their projects. And to them, the resuscitation of trade in Badagry; opening of roads and the resettlement of the Egbados were some of the achievements of Abass during his life time. His contribution towards the re-awakening of trade and commerce at Badagry in the 1890's, as well as his contribution towards the construction of the Obada market, made Major

J.H. Ewart refer to him as 'the only enterprising citizen' of the period.⁴⁷ Though, this might have been an exaggeration on the officer's part, it shows at a length, how the colonial office viewed his effort in this direction.

The opening of roads and resettlement of the Egbados should not be seen at face value. First, roads hitherto opened were not meant for the betterment of the people alone along the area. Rather, it was constructed for easy transportation of farm produce from the centres of production such as Aibo, Aiyetoro and Igbesa, to the point of evacuation to the coast (Lagos), for onward export to the metropolis. In essence, such colonial projects as road clearing and construction during the colonial epoch, was meant for effective exploitation of the people.⁴⁸ In fact, labour, used towards the construction and clearing of these roads, were gotten free. In this regard, Abass as the patron of these communities, as well as the spokesman for the British officials ensured the usage of African labour for colonial advantage.

The resettlement of the Egbados, particularly at Aiyetoro should be seen as a clandestine move on the part of Abass to dominate and control its politics. First, the resettlement of the peoples of Aiyetoro, Aibo and others, implies bringing more people within the colonial tutelage. Once this was achieved, Abass began exploiting the flaws created by earlier disintegration of the people by assuming the headship of the town.⁴⁹ Being the head, taxes were collected by his representatives in the town for colonial usage. It is worth noting that, efforts by his progenes to occupy the headship of Aiyetoro and Aibo were resented by the people. Hence, the Muslim title of Seriki rather than headship of Aiyetoro, was made hereditary to Abass family.⁵⁰

We should stress, as an end-note, that the success of Abass was largely due to the effective use of his former slaves, who were now seen as part of his household. An account maintains that, his generosity towards his servants and assistants largely contributed to his success as Baba Isale and British spokesman.⁵¹ The success of his coconut and oil palm plantations was due to this. But the question is, what was the condition of the labourers used on these plantations? The answer is, while he kept acquiring more wealth and fame, the labourers were in perpetual penury. Their wages were in form of farm produce,⁵² despite the fact that the British colonialist had monetised the economy. Like most merchants of his period, he exploited the labourers for his own end.

In the final analysis, Abass should be seen as a comprador assistant of British imperialist tendencies in the Western province between 1895 and 1919. Like all compradors, he aided the creation of an economic enclaves in the communities. The result was exploitation and underdevelopment of these areas.

Politics in Badagry – The Post Abass Era to 1931

Indeed, politics in Badagry between the 1880s and 1919 was personified in Seriki Abass. On his death, he created a great vacuum as the British administrators found it difficult to replace him. In fact, most of the Chiefs were indifferent towards colonial politics during this period.

Although some members of the Badagry colonial native council aspired to the presidency of the council and Chief Adviser to the District Officers, none was able to gain sufficient support from the people to justify such appointment. The Badagry Council which existed till 1930, had negligible influence on the people⁵³ of Badagry over Ilaro, while Apa emerged as an independent 'native' council in the 1930s.⁵⁴

With the re-organisation of 1939, the President of the Badagry Native Authority became elective as people of Seriki's calibre were lacking.⁵⁵ The year 1939 was significant in two ways. First, it was the period when the Badagry district was formally administratively organised. Secondly, it was the period when more local participation in politics began to be sought. This was partly due to the fact that the British could not 'create' the likes of Abass of the pre-1920 era. The place of Badagry was later resuscitated in colonial politics during the 1950s when the Akran along with majority of the populace pitched tent with the Action Group, undoubtedly the leading political party in the Western Region then.

Conclusion

The career and activities of Seriki Abass Faremi William should be seen beyond Badagry. His was a success story as he moved from servitude to glory. With wealth, he was able to seek for a place within the traditional, religious and colonial set-up. He consolidated his link with the British officials and maintained an effective grip on Badagry and its vicinity on behalf of the British administration. He thus became the comprador assistant of the British imperialist. At his death in June 1919, politics in Badagry was never the same.

Notes and References

1. Ajayi and Smith, *Yoruba Wars of the nineteenth century*, 1964
2. Dalzel, *A History of Dahomey*; Akinjogbin A., *Dahomey and its Neighbours*; Ajayi and Smith, *Yoruba, Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, for detailed discussions.
3. Asiwaju A.I. "The Western Province under colonial rule"; in Ikime O. (ed.) *Groundwork of Nig., History*, Heinemann, 1984.
4. Akintoye S.A. *Revolutions and Power politics in Yorubaland. 1840-1893*, London, 1971.
5. Interview with Chief T.O. Avoseh.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Avoseh T.O., *A History of Badagry*: Ife Olu Printing Press, 1938.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Akinsanya O.T., "A Biographical Study of Seriki Abass' with special emphasis on his role in the foundation of Aiyetoro (Egbado)". unpublished B.A. History project, Ogun State University, June, 1988.
10. Interview with Chief Avoseh *op. cit.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. The date of his actual independence could not be ascertained due to frailty of memory on the part of oral transmitters, and non-accessibility to Abass' private papers.
13. Newbury C.W. *The Western Slave Coast and its rulers*: Oxford, 1961. Asiwaju A. I. *op. cit.*
14. Comcol 1, Vol. 822, NAI.
15. Wormals report on the Egun speaking peoples of the Badagry District, N.A.I.
16. Cited in Hodder B.W. "Badagry: Slave Port and Mission Centre" *The Nigerian Geographical Journal*; Vol. 5, Dec. 1962, p. 82.
17. CSO 26, 30030/S. 1, N.A.I.
18. Wormal's report *op. cit.*
19. Avoseh T.O. *op. cit.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.* p. 24
24. See Wormal's report *op. cit.*
25. Asiwaju A.I. *op. cit.*
26. Newbury *op. cit.* p. 100 f
27. *Ibid.*
28. Interview with the Chief Imam of Badagry (16-01-90), Avoseh

- T.O. *Esin Imale ni Agbadarigi*. Apapa, Adeolu Press, 1960.
29. CSO 26, Vol. 300/S.I., N.A.I.
 30. Chief Imam and Avoseh T.O., *Esin Imale*, *op. cit.*
 31. His assistance to the constabulary unit at Badagry; Ticket and other commissioners are worthy of note.
 32. This is contrary to Newbury (1961) and Asiwaju (1976) earlier accounts.
 33. Wormal's report *op. cit.* p. 32.
 34. See official Gazette No. 9 of 15th Feb. 1902, N.A.I.
 35. Wormal's report *op. cit.*
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. Adeniji Adejinle "Bada Isale System"; Unpublished B.A. project, LASU, June, 1988.
 38. *Ibid.*
 39. See CSO 26, 300 30/S.I. N.A.I. This was the period of Pedington and Hornby Porter.
 40. Interview with Chief T.O. Avoseh (16-01-90).
 41. CSO 26, 30030/S.I. N.A.I.
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. Newbury *op. cit.*, p. 105.
 44. Biobaku S., *Egba and their Neighbours*, 1957.
 45. For detailed account of his role at Aiyetoro, see Akinsanya O.T. *op. cit.* Chapters 2 and 3.
 46. Newbury *op. cit.* p. 105
 47. Wormal's report *op. cit.*
 48. For details on British exploitation rather than development in Nigeria, see, Falola Toyin (ed.) *Britain and Nigeria: Exploitation or Development?*; N/York, 1987.
 49. See, Akinsanya O.T. *op. cit.*
 50. *Ibid.*
 51. Interview with Chief T.O. Avoseh
 52. *Ibid.*
 53. Wormal's report on re-organisation *op. cit.*
 54. *Ibid.*
 55. CSO 26 30030/S.1 *op. cit.*

T.O. East Africa in a Strategic Approach, African Affairs, 1981

29. CSO 26 Vol 30021, N.A.I.

30. Cf. Fitzmaurice and T.O. East Africa, 1981

31. His reluctance to the committee's report on East Africa and other countries, University of Toronto

32. This is contrary to Newbury (1981) and A. and W. 1981, 1982

33. Wormal's report on oil

34. See Official Gazette No. 40151, 1981, N.A.I.

35. Wormal's report on oil

36. Ibid.

37. Adeniji Adeniji "East Africa System, Unpublished B.A. project, LASU, June 1988

38. Ibid.

39. See CSO 26, Vol 30021, N.A.I. This was the period of Robinson and Johny Porter

40. Interview with Chief T.O. Awoyemi (1987)

41. CSO 26, 30021, N.A.I.

42. Ibid.

43. Newbury op. cit. p. 102

44. Blandin, S. E. and his colleagues' report on oil and gas

45. For detailed account of his role in Newbury see Adeniji, O.T. op. cit. Chapters 2 and 3.

46. Newbury op. cit. p. 102

47. Wormal's report on oil

48. For details on British exploration rather than development, Nigeria, see Britain's Role in Nigeria's Development, L.A.N.I. and Development, New York, 1987

49. See Adeniji, O.T. on the

50. Ibid.

51. Interview with Chief T.O. Awoyemi, L.A.N.I., 1987

52. Ibid.

53. Wormal's report on oil

54. Ibid.

55. CSO 26 30021, 1 or 2

56. Ibid. p. 24

57. See Wormal's report on oil

58. Ibid. p. 24

59. Ibid.

60. Interview with the Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Petroleum

Introduction

Indeed this is not a biographical study nor does it attempt to atomise or abstract the person of Chief Bola Senu Hundeyin from his social reality and substitute him for the political history of Badagry. Rather the attempt in this work is an addition to the relatively small but progressively enlarging body of study which insists that the individual is both significant and insignificant in the understanding of society. The individual is made by society as he also makes society. It is a form of *quid pro quo*, an interpenetrating relationship in which both the individual and the society are in constant dialogue and attenuation.

To that extent such individuals become the symbolism, epitome and bearers of certain ethos, nuances and prejudices in society. Because man is both the object and subject of history it is apparent that such a study in so far as it appreciates such a *totalising* conception of the man under study thus as being a representative of an aggregate social category it becomes apparent therefore that in understudying the individual's ideas especially those who have decided to undertake politics as a vocation we can understand the society better.

An understanding of society in this sense entails among others, a knowledge of the dominant social class, how the social class perpetrates its hegemony, how it reproduces itself and how the toiling people are alienated, and the mechanisms, institutional and social, that wrought this about. Above all, it offers us the opportunity of proposing a scientific option through the critique of the thoughts of the individual in question. It is exactly this that we intend to explore in the study of the political ideas of Chief Hundeyin.

Brief Life History and Background

Chief Bola Senu Hundeyin was born into a trading and priestly family in Badagry in the 1930s. He started his educational career in St. Thomas

Primary School, Badagry (1944–49). He then proceeded to the Teachers Training College, Ota (1949–50) where he obtained the Grade III Certificate. Soon after, he went to the Government Teachers Training College Ibadan (1952–53) and obtained the Grade II Certificate.

Between 1954 and 56, he enrolled for the GCE ordinary level as an external candidate and passed in all his six subjects. In 1956 he enrolled for the GCE Advanced Level and passed in all his four subjects. In December of 1956, he did the Higher School Certificate and passed in the four papers he enrolled for.

Chief Hundeyin taught at the Badagry Grammar School for a brief spell in the late 1950s, indeed the school sponsored his educational pursuit in the University. He remained in the school until political defences occasioned the late Oba C.D. Akran to instruct that his appointment be terminated. Shortly after, he moved to Ota, an Action Group stronghold where he was offered an appointment as a teacher at Ota Grammar School. Chief Hundeyin had joined the Action Group at its inception and was a member of its Executive in his division. He became the founder and leader of its Youth Wing in the entire Badagry Division.

In 1958, he gained admission into the University of Ibadan to read for the combined (Hons) Degree in Economics/History/Geography. He graduated in 1962. While at the university, he was a member of the Executive of the Students' Union. He served in the capacity of Organising Secretary throughout his schooling.

Individuals as Dapo Faleye, Frank Aig-Imoukhmede and Bamgboye had strong political influence on him. They all related very closely with Chief Obafemi Awolowo. They always paid him political visits at his Oke-Ado residence. Indeed, they championed one *Democratic Socialism* agenda and were involved in the demonstration over the Anglo-Nigeria Defence pact, so claims Hundeyin.

Chief Hundeyin was unanimously elected the Secretary of the Advisory Council that formulated the blue print that was to guide the about-to-be-created Lagos State. And in 1968 he became the first commissioner of works and transport in Lagos State.

He was a member of the committee of friends which organised Awolowo's birthday annually and a committee that finally metamorphosed into the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). In 1979, he was appointed the commissioner of Economic Planning and land matters by Lateef Jakande, the then Governor of the State.

Indeed, Chief Hundeyin, is one of the few Badagry sons that has had such rare privilege of political exposure equally as or even surpassing that of late Oba C.D. Akran. To that extent, he is not only an elite in Badagry but an opinion leader. Not only is he among the earliest educated

indigenes of Badagry but he is also one of those whose political tutelage is an outgrowth of a source which the Badagry people had identified with since the colonial era to date. Uptil this moment, Chief Hundeyin is in politics and he identifies with a tendency that is aptly identified as the Awoists.

Ontological Basis of His Ideas

Three basic perspectives, albeit adulterated, shaped his ideas. First, is naturally his youth, his resourcefulness; idealism and impressionistic character which made him to learn and read up issues on "Political Thought and Constitutional Politics". It is apparent that his renunciation of revolutionary violence partly derives from his internalisation of libertarian values as contained in various constitutional texts he read, and the philosophers he read such as Plato and Aristotle².

Second was the colonial reality, which had also influenced nationalists of that era, Nkrumah, Azikiwe and so on. To him, "Colonialism as a whole should come to an end, its administration meant that we have to be governed by a foreign country, foreign ideology and more importantly, repression of the people". He further contended, "Economically, we were subjected to the whims and caprices of the colonial powers. Trading was one of a master/servant relationship. It was a system which did not benefit this country. We were subjugated and subordinated. Our natural resources were subjected to exploitation by the colonialists".

This condition which naturally led to the under-development of the colonial people inspired Chief Hundeyin into politics, underlying his thinking was that "with the elimination of the colonial system, everything would be conducted by the indigenes". It must be noted, that "indigenes" in this sense have no collective but rather an elitist or even class implication for Hundeyin. We shall show this soon.

A very important influence on him is the personality and political views of Awolowo. His personality is one rooted in discipline, strictness and rigour. These values, Hundeyin claims to have imbibed are the values of public accountability and public service, these latter values tended to influence Hundeyin's instrumental conception of the role of government.

Second, he subscribes to Awolowo's conception of non-violence³ in the cause of social change. Indeed, in an extreme sense, his beliefs quite unlike Awolowo, his political mentor, is not of Fabian Socialism,⁴ as hinged on the voluntarist or evolutionary socialism, rather it is one of the denial of socialism on the ground of political imprudence for social warfare. The objective for him is that the people's consciousness should not be re-oriented even when it is known to be perverted. To him the objective of

political power renders every other object including strategic (principled issues) superfluous.

The outcome of all this is that while the manifest character of Hundeyin places him among what is now euphemistically referred to as the Awoists, the point must be made that he represents one variant that is more pre-occupied with the objective of electioneering and capture of state power.

The Badagry Reality and Politics

Hundeyin joined the Action Group a party which Sklar informed was made up of the business elite, teachers and all such privileged Strata in Society.⁵ In Badagry, its foremost citizen, the Oba C.D. Akran was in the A.G. This gave the party a leverage in the Badagry division over all other Political Parties. And with the introduction of Free Education, the Construction of the first major highway, first General Hospital, the building of the first Town Hall and Grammar School by the Government of Awolowo, it was apparent that the AG's support in the division would remain unshaken for a long time to come. Indeed, this was the situation as at 1962, when the intrafraternal struggles over primitive accumulation and political power broke out within the ranks of the AG.

From the account of Hundeyin, it is apparent that Awolowo raised the democratic Socialism question in order not only to attract the Youth to his side but also to give the party a national spread as a way of improving the residential chances of Awolowo in the National Election. Hundeyin was then at the University of Ibadan and he was among those who pushed for that position. But to him, he had always been skeptical about Ladoke Akintola, then premier in the Western Region. Thus when the conservative wing of the party opposed some of those radical decisions that followed the Jos meeting such as the obscurantist ideological question, the election of such youthful and non-Yoruba element as S.G. Ikoku into sensitive posts in the A.G., Akintola and some business interests including several traditional rulers decided to campaign against Awolowo. They sloganeered that democratic socialism meant that nobody should own more than a house or a pair of shoes. This to Hundeyin had negative electioneering dividends for the A.G. Hence he was among those who asked Awolowo to de-emphasize the ideological question. Although it is apparent that Socialist Ideology did not appeal to his political judgement.

Meanwhile, this became an opportunity for Hundeyin to elevate his political status, more so as the late Oba Akran was now with Akintola. It was here that Hundeyin was to properly exploit his political brinkmanship and skill. He went round the villages to campaign against Akran saying that the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) of Akintola

to which Akran belonged was out to erase all what the people had gained from the A.G.

Thus began the populist campaign of Hundeyin. Soon people in the division identified with him as the leader of the people. This grossly undermined the powers of the Oba as Hundeyin was now seen as the political leader. Hundeyin who was later to be appointed the *Miwe* of Badagry (*Miwe* is an Ogu Vocabulary which means "Someone who can mobilise the people within the shortest possible time") now saw himself as the political leader of Badagry. Indeed, it could be argued that there was this underlying attempt on his part to undercut the late Oba Akran's power especially politically, as indeed the Oba had assumed both political and traditional powers.

Hundeyin had himself conceded that "when AG was formed in Badagry it was a mass movement because of Oba Akran's influence. All other parties were virtually non-existent. You were either in AG or you were not".

When following his political opposition to the late Oba Akran, he was dismissed with a payment of three months salary in lieu of notice, and was shortly after offered a job at the Grammar School in Ota. The latter school, although gave him the appointment with "immediate effect" he was given two weeks of grace "to go and rest". He used the period once again to undertake a tour of the entire Badagry division and campaigned to the people that Oba Akran had caused his appointment to be terminated, whereas he had a family to feed. He did not inform them that he had secured another appointment. This won him the political sympathy of the masses. This was reflected in two ways, first he had already assumed the leadership of the AG in the division and second in the election that followed shortly, his candidate defeated Oba Akran in the legislative seat of Badagry.

What this successfully accomplished for Hundeyin, was the resolution of the intra-fractional attrition that existed between his group (the youth) and the elderly politicians of Badagry (led by Oba Akran and Chief Ayeni). It also by the same token successfully put Hundeyin at the helm of political affairs in Badagry, thenceforth. This was witnessed in the way he was selected into the Lagos State advisory Council, and how he defeated such political Juggernauts as Adeniran Ogunsanya who attempted to contest the seat of Secretaryship of the Council with him, indeed they were compelled to withdraw for him. This quite pusilanimously secured him a position in the Mobolaji Johnson administration, a commissioner. He used this as a leverage over the politically inclined "Committee of friends" in whose circle his opinion was highly respected and whose views he sometimes caused the Johnson government to implement. No doubt such a

position did help in no small way to secure him the commissionership post under Jakande in 1979.

What is the implication of all this? Essentially, it presupposed that a populist aspiring petit bourgeois element is capable of accomplishing his objective in so far as he is ready to engage in the politics of the promotion of the dominant values. This was reflected in his support for Awolowo who belonged in the majority side and in his politics of entrism as under the military junta that was to follow. His commitment to the political system is not hinged upon any discernible principled or ideological position but rather upon an amorphous concept of "good government and service to the people".

The Role of the State

There is not proper characterization of the state in the thought of Hundeyin. For him, the state can be reduced to government, and government to regime, or administration. It is in this wise that he sees the problem of the Nigerian State as one of leadership and management. He does not see the dialectical link between the base and the super-structure or how the values at the base are sustained and reinforced by state structures.

In this way, Hundeyin does not undertake an epochal differentiation of the transitory nature of the state.⁶ He does not even properly characterise the imperialist or colonial state apparatus or the historicity of the process of its institutionalization. Rather what Hundeyin does is a moral renunciation of colonial administration as being repressive or brutish and the people's determination at eliminating it because it is "rule by foreigners". That kind of perspective overlooks the emergent local social classes, the colonialist created.

It is in this context that Hundeyin finds difficulties in reconciling with the people's outcry that followed their failed expectations at independence. For Hundeyin "There was no intention to encounter problems, but the people envisaged a Utopia".

It is apparent that Hundeyin either intends to blur the corroborative character of the emergent indigenous bourgeoisie or he is being outrightly apologetic about the failure of the post independence leaders of Nigeria.

More than that it is glaring that Hundeyin does not appreciate the implication of Neo-colonialism as an aspect of imperialist domination. This has meant the continued domination of Nigeria and its entrenchment within the Capitalist orbit.

It is to that extent that the issue of foreign dependence on technology and other items as finished goods remain *permissible* to him. Because "we cannot do without foreign help now until we are self-reliant". The im-

plication of such an assertion is to mislead people into believing that under-development is part of our natural state, whereas studies by Rodney, Amin Nabudere⁷ and so on have proved otherwise. Again such a view also poses the capitalist path to development as the inevitable path for all societies, it shows it as univariate and a compelling system. Above all, it portrays it as a system that is *given*, unchanging and static. In a word, Hundeyin has no theory of alternative path of development or social change, least to say a theory of revolution.

Furthermore it is for the very reason that Hundeyin does not understand the theory of imperialism that he reduces the problem of Nigeria to one of management and leadership. In doing this he refuses to appreciate the ubiquitous role of the multi-nationals and their plundering mission in Third World Societies. A relation which a "good" leader can only mitigate but not redress. As to take the second option would require seeking alternative models of development.

To Hundeyin, the state has a purpose, it is one of providing the "greatest good for the greatest number", that is the utilitarian notion of the State.⁸ This purpose he believes can only be provided only by a good leadership which has the interest of the masses at heart. But the point to be made is that such an assumption is abstract, because first the state itself is a partisan institution or structure, it can neither be benevolent nor would it be neutral because it is encapsulated in the class struggle process.

Quite pathetically, Hundeyin does not acknowledge this political question. Second, assuming that the State is even neutral or under a "good leader" in the sense in which Hundeyin conceives of it; the point remains that he is more concerned about how to meet the immediate demands of the people. In other words, his objective is how to meet the concrete needs or demands of the people. It is to this extent that he subscribes to the concept of provision of *social services* as opposed to a preoccupation with the ideological question. The objective for him to satisfy a political objective which is political power or political legitimacy by the ruler. This to us is populist. On the other hand, such a dangerous position gives the impression that ideological positions merely pose abstract propositions which are neither real nor practicable. We disagree with such a proposition because the ideological question is the outcome of the contradictions and struggle arising out of the material conditions of men.

To the extent that the state is also the context in which resources are allocated or shared Hundeyin is also interested in it. This is why him, "Badagry would not be in the opposition because we have been neglected for long, we want to remain in the main stream so that we can benefit from the centre".

This kind of view is not only unprincipled but it could be opportunistic.

Because, this is what Hundeyin accuses Akintola of going, wanting to remain in "the main stream". Such a concept of politics can neither produce a "good leader" for which he is so pathologically committed nor can it produce a stable Nigerian Head of State who decided to context politics merely because his people were neglected cannot help practising the vices of statism, ethnicism and other sectrarian prejudices which Hundeyin himself says are the bane of the Nigerian Society.

The Ideology Question

It was Daniel Bell who in his work *The End of Ideology*⁹ argued that ideology was becoming increasingly irrelevant in the so-called plural capitalist society. However to Hundeyin, ideology is not relevant in the Nigerian Society because it is not politically prudent. That is, to him the adoption of an ideology is a matter of convenience. But it is none that silence itself it is a form of decision. But why is Hundeyin naive on the question of ideology. For him, it is capable of breaking the ranks of the political party. He argues that when Democratic Socialism was adopted in 1962 by the Action Group, very few party officers believed in it, and that nobody was willing to implement or operationalize it, not even Awolowo. Because the concept was in addition monstrous and ill-defined.

Again, when the "Committee of friends" was formed, Hundeyin and some of his colleagues advised Awolowo against raising the ideology question, this was why rather than pose an ideological agenda, the Unity Party of Nigeria, crystallised its programme around its now popular "Four Cardinal Programmes" of free education, free medical services, full employment and integration rural development. Those programmes when pushed to their logical conclusion are warfare programmes. At first sight they are fascinating and to the toiling masses they are messianic; but a closer look reveals that they do not pose the fundamental question confronting society. The problem of society is not merely one of reproduction of social life, but it is also one of the removal of exploitation of man by man. The provision of those programmes by any government cannot remove such a social relation it can only stem it. The ideological question poses the issues of material reproduction in a class perspective and epochally. It raises the issues of who owns the means of production, who controls the State apparatuses etc.

In a sense also, a Benthamite concept of the State's purpose could concretely be positive but in essence it is *qualitatively* negative.

Whilst evading the ideological question, Hundeyin submits that "Nigerians do not believe in Capitalism or Socialism". The point to us is not whether Nigerians *believe* in a system or not. It is an issue of what

Nigeria actually *operates* and the potential for the transformation of the system. The belief in a particular social system depends on the internalised values of a people and how long they can endure with these values, once their values result in conflict they are bound to re-think them or even transform them. Belief change is a function of the ongoing class struggle and the balance of social forces.

Again, that Nigerian is running a Neo-colonial economy that is capitalist is not in doubt. That such an economy has marginalised majority of the people and forced them to accept the prevailing social relations is also an objective reality, hence the issue is not a matter of choice but a point of compulsion occasioned by historical exigencies.

Hundeyin says that Nigerians prefer something "indigenous" to foreign ideology. Yet he has no consistent conception of his pet "indigenous ideology",¹⁰ it even becomes problematic whether to characterise such a neo-logism a social warfare system or an ideology in the vulgarised sense as found in Azikiwe's Neo-Welfarism.¹¹

Social Classes and Class Struggle

In a seemingly re-echoing of Nyerere's¹² phraseology at the embryonic stage of his development, Hundeyin contends "Africans are naturally capitalists, you cannot remove that trait in them. The people want to acquire wealth".

This assertion is highly loaded. First, it assumes that every African is capitalist, second, it confuses profit making with capitalism, third it assumes capitalist values as behavioural or innate and above all natural and hence cannot be removed.

What is the implication of this for class analysis? First, it is analytically faulty to assume that every African is a capitalist, although capitalist relations at present exist in Africa because relations of production are based on commodity and exchange, this is not a relation every one goes into. Not every African produces commodities. This is a specific form of social relation contingent to the Capitalist mode of production. It is a relation that also separates producers from owners, in the present Nigerian social formation. On the most part, we have middle and poor peasants who cultivate and market their crops by themselves. Indeed, there are no capitalists in Africa in the classical usage of the word. Because the Nigerian appropriating class is parasitic and indeed dependent on the metropolitan bourgeoisie. To that extent, it would be futile to undertake an analysis of class, class struggle and development without an examination of the special role of the imperialist appropriating class.¹³

It is not true that every African is naturally a "capitalist". As has been said, capitalism is a specific form of social relation contingent to the capitalist mode of production. Second, the profit motive predates capitalism, although it arose when the form of social relations in society had transcended the *use-value* form and hence the emergence of social classes. The point Hundeyin should inquire is how did some people come to be rich and others poor, rather than rationalising the situation that government should provide social welfare programmes and use progressive tax measures to stem the situation. First, even if every African were capitalist, all of them it would be assumed should make equal profit margin. But why are some richer than others? Second, the relation of a poor man being "profit or wealth inspired" is a matter more of *necessity* than convenience. He must eke a living to *survive*. Whereas for the rich man it is capital accumulation. Lastly, it should be noted that scholars have showed that communal Africa was *classless* by this it is implied there were no rich or poor people. Awolowo himself, Hundeyin's political mentor, subscribes to this. And this is why Awolowo abhors violence.

Hundeyin prefers to gloss over the question of class because firstly, he is an aspiring bourgeoisie, or at least he is a property owner who does not have any quarrel with property acquisition. Awolowo himself had said that one could be a millionaire and still remain a socialist. Second, in unravelling the concept of class, Hundeyin can achieve his political agenda of welfare programmes. This is the natural conclusion that could be drawn here. The masses are bound to gullibly follow because survival to them is the primary objective.

Charisma and Populism

Max Weber, identified three forms of authority, traditional charismatic and legal-rational. Hundeyin insists that he has charismatic authority because "I can mobilise the Badagry division without stopping out. I am very generous and I like helping the people".

Hundeyin's Charisma is not rooted in any psycho-physiological or moralistic variables. It has a political history and a political leverage. Indeed, his charisma also has a legal-rational content, if viewed against the Weberian background. From this also stems his populism. An attempt to exploit events and situations to elevate his person to a high pedestal.

How did the legal rational or political persuasion influence the development of his charisma? First it was only when trouble brewed within the A.G. that he exploited the situation to canvass against Oba Akran, and of course got him defeated even in the local government elections that followed in spite of the fact that it was massively rigged. Why

did his candidate win? He won because A.G. was synonymous with Awolowo and people were pathologically committed to their programmes. Hundeyin used this to elevate his political credentials, ditto for when he was sacked as a tutor at the instruction of Oba Akran.

Again, after the military coup and a total of 750,000 pounds sterling were found buried in a coffin in Oba Akran's¹⁴ houses. Hundeyin also made a political capital out of this. This further dragged attention to him.

Hundeyin claims that he went into politics (elective politics for three major reasons). "It would give me an opportunity to serve the people, it would confirm and establish my political leadership of Badagry division and it would bring me into the political limelight of the country".

On the first score, he did serve his people, but what much this has yielded to the people of Badagry remains to be seen other than a major road and the free education programme and all such social policies the UPN government adopted. The condition of living of the Badagry people, as Johnson¹⁵ shows, remains pathetically poor. On the second score, Hundeyin gives the impression that he is in power struggle with some other people. Indeed this is very correct in respect of his challenge to the traditional source of power in Badagry, a confirmation of this political leadership is also to be seen in his policies of *entrism*, he has served in various governments thus giving him political leverage and also in the chieftaincy title conferred on him by the Oba of Badagry in 1978. The third objective remains an on-going one. But on a modest note, it could be said that Hundeyin has sufficient political exposure. Generally what comes out of this is the Hundeyin is a politician concerned about how to make himself popular; His relationship with the established personality of Awolowo and the exploits in the local politics in Badagry have proved advantageous in this regard.

Hundeyin and the Future

Politics to Hundeyin is a vocation. To this extent he is irked by the blanket ban Babangida administration placed on all old politicians. To him, there is no guarantee that the youth would be better. He laments that some of them were not corrupt while in office. He however supports government's nostalgic disposition to ideology. Praying that a good leadership must strive to create a stable Nigeria. Such leadership qualities he asserts are best exemplified in Awolowo "the best President Nigeria never had". To him the grassroot can only be prepared to support the political programme only through such policies as the "Better Life for Rural Women" a programme he alleges was adopted from a grand design formulated by Awolowo, when his house was ransacked by the military after

the coup in 1983.

For whatever it takes, it is apparent that Hundeyin's political and administrative blueprint for Nigeria, especially when analysed against its epistemological background is scientifically faulty and at best begs the fundamental challenge facing Nigeria and Africa. Principally this challenge is hinged on the class struggle question and the role of imperialism. It is a struggle which the examples of Algeria, Guinea Bissau, Angola and Mozambique have showed us that it must be waged on a protracted basis of armed struggle. However, Hundeyin abhors this. "I am opposed to violence because it is inhuman".

But the reality remains that most African States, civilian or military have not ruled in the interest of the people and on the most part they have ruled through repression and violence. The very few who have attempted reforms at the top have had their regimes undercut by the imperialists and their lackeys. It therefore implies that to build a formidable social force and society that is genuine in its goal, a cleansing revolutionary option is inevitable.

Conclusion

The personality of Chief Bola Senu Hundeyin is inescapable in the study of politics in Badagry. He has been in politics in that part of Nigeria, since the colonial days to the present. And he says he would remain in it till his dying days.

What we have done in this work is to attempt a brief understanding of his political ideas against the background of his history and society. An examination of which also makes us understand the politics of Badagry and that of Nigeria with respect to the issue of political power.

In projecting what seems his political beliefs, Hundeyin also promotes the values of his class, his political associates and so on. Therefore his principles and precepts are not personal to him, they remain the atomised in-put that shape up the interest of certain people in the Nigerian Society and at times constitute the basis of political rule.

Notes and References

1. A lot is elucidated as the vies of Chief Hundeyin, in this work, is based on the personal interview the writer conducted with him on February 3, 1990. In that regard, I am highly indebted to Sina Hundeyin for the assistance he rendered in ensuring that the interview held.
2. Aristotle has a very perceptible analysis of political models.
3. See for instance Akin Omoboriowo *Awoism* (Ibadan: Evans, 1982) p. 17.
4. Margaret Cole *The Story of Fabian Socialism* (London, Weldenfeld and Nicoldon, 1964) p. 2 for a theoretical discourse see William Eben Stem *Modern Political Thought* (New York: Rivehart and Winston Inc, 1960) Chapter XII.
5. Richard L. Sklar *Nigerian Political Parties* (London: NOK Publishers, 1963) p. 265.
6. K. Marx *The Communist Manifesto* (Moscow: Proggess Publishers, 1968) p. 36-38, Bjorn Beckman "Whose State: State and Capitalist Development in Nigeria" *Review of African Political Economy*, Sept. 1982. pp. 37-51.
7. Chinweizu *The West And The Rest Of Us* (London: NOK Publishers, 1978) p. 55, (II) Walter Rodney *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle - L' ourveroure publishers, 1972) p. 126 and Micheal Barrat Brown *The Economics Of Imperialism* (Middlesex penguin, 1974) p. 59.
8. Utilitarianism whose pedigree and tradition was institutionalised through Jeremy Bentham was meant to check the rising tide of peoples revolts in its era, by moralising property relations and its call for moderation through the state.
9. Staurt Hughes was actually the first person to use the concept .

Notes and References

1. A lot is made of the view of Chris Hani in this work, based on the personal interviews which are conducted with him in February 1987 in that regard, and which are included in this book. In fact, the assistance he rendered in ensuring that the interview took place is very much appreciated.
2. A similar view is expressed in the analysis of political movements in the book.
3. See for instance, *South African Communist Party (SACP) 1987*, p. 17.
4. Margaret Cole, *The Story of Fela Sotik* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), p. 2 for a theoretical discourse, see William Forman, *Black Political Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), Chapter XII.
5. Richard L. Sklar, *Whites, Blacks and Politics* (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 205.
6. K. M. M. The Communist Manifesto (London: Progress Publishers, 1987), p. 28-38; also see *Whites, Blacks and Politics* (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 205.
7. *Chinweizu: The West and the Rest of Africa* (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 22. (The West and the Rest of Africa (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 22).
8. *Whites, Blacks and Politics* (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 205. The book is a very good one, and it is a pity that it is not more widely known. It is a very good one, and it is a pity that it is not more widely known.
9. *Whites, Blacks and Politics* (London: NOK Publishers, 1987), p. 205. The book is a very good one, and it is a pity that it is not more widely known. It is a very good one, and it is a pity that it is not more widely known.

30

T. Ola Avoseh: The Historian of Badagry

SIYAN OYEWESO

Since 1938 when Chief T. Ola Avoseh first published his *A Short History of Badagry*, his name has often been invoked by anybody who endeavours to unravel Badagry's past. In fact, his home has been a Mecca to foreign and Nigerian scholars interested in any aspect of Badagry's life.¹ Apart from his commitment to historical scholarship, T. Ola Avoseh has also been intensely involved in the local politics of the town. In the past, he was the General Secretary of Badagry Binukonu Friendly Society (1927-32), General Secretary of Badagry Citizen Hope Association (1938), General Secretary, Nigerian Youth Movement, Badagry Branch (1939-41), Founder and General Secretary, Ogu-Awori Improvement Union, President, Ogu Cultural Research Association, among others.² Through these platforms, Avoseh had contributed to the socio-political and educational advancement of Badagry.

In recognition of his meritorious services, the late Oba C.D. Akran conferred the chieftaincy title "Gbasiewu of Badagry" on him on 13th January, 1974.³ However, before we begin an evaluation of his contributions, it is necessary to discuss his life and background.

His Early life, Education and Career Structure

Theophilus Olabode Avoseh was born on the 21st March, 1908 to the peasant family of Mr. Emmanuel Oriesawa Avoseh and Madam Ojulari Avoseh at Ajidagba Cottage, Adonpji, Boeko Quarters, Badagry. His father was said to be of Awori extraction while his mother was Ogu, daughter of Vintofinji Ranpokonu of Dahomey, Ajara Vedo, Badagry.⁴ Theophilus Olabode spent his early formative years at Ajara Vedo, his mother's birth-place but he was moved to Badagry, the moment he became of school age. He started his elementary education in 1912 at St. Thomas' Schools, Badagry, under the headmastership of Revd. O.K. Ajose.⁵ He obtained his Standard V Certificate – the highest level in the school – in 1925.

Apart from his primary education, T.O. Avoseh took some time off to learn carpentry, the profession he inherited from his father. In 1925, he set up his own industry which soon became flourishing. On the advice of his bosom friend, Mr. O.S. Hundeyin, T.O. Avoseh left carpentry for teaching at St. Thomas School. The first phase of his teaching career lasted from 27th January 1927 to March 1941.⁶ In 1928, he sat and passed the entrance examination to St. Andrew's College but he was disqualified by the Government Medical Officer on the account of his poor health. In the circumstances, he had to engage in self-education and by 1929 he was able to pass the Standard VI examination as an external candidate. He also received tuition from the Nomal Correspondence College. Twice, in 1932 and 1934, he enrolled for Teachers' Higher Elementary Certificate and twice he failed. This admission of failure marks T.O. Avoseh out as an exemplary Nigerian when it is realised that most autobiographers often paint their academic life in rosy terms. He quibs philosophically: "It is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all."⁷

On April 24, 1935, Avoseh got married to former Miss Leticia Olaide. In January 1941, the Management of St. Thomas School slashed teachers' salaries by about 40% while Avoseh's monthly salary was cut from £2.10 to £1.10. This was after he had rendered fourteen years of service to the school. While other indigenous teachers like Nupowakun and E.F. Oyindiran resigned in protest, Avoseh stood his grounds because of his commitment to the education and welfare of Badagrians. However, the power-play in the School at the Management level soon culminated in the termination of his appointment by March 1941. By the time, however, he had set record as the longest serving indigenous teacher in the School since its inception in 1845.⁸

Avoseh is a man of many parts. As a teacher in St. Thomas', he was also keenly involved in freelance journalism with the sole objective of promoting Badagry's cause and views in the newspapers. He was then a regular contributor to *Daily Times*, *Daily Service* and *Akede Yoruba* and he wrote under such pen names as "True Son of the Soil" and "Omo Oluwo."⁹ On the 7th of May 1941, Avoseh's life took a new turn when he secured appointment as Badagry Town Council Clerk in the Egun Awori Native Authority. For the next sixteen years, he was to devote himself to local government administration. One peculiar feature of this job was that Avoseh found himself on constant transfer and by 1945, he had served in Apa, Ilẹgbo-Ale, Badagry and Awori Councils. In fact, by 1957 when he voluntarily retired from civil service as Acting Secretary/Treasurer Ajeromi District Council, he had worked in all the fourteen areas of the Group Councils in the Badagry Division.¹⁰

With his resignation from civil service job, Avoseh soon got back to teaching, something he had abandoned for the past sixteen years. This is an eloquent testimony of his deep commitment to education and teaching. With the permission of the Ministry of Education, Ikeja, he built a primary school at Iyalode Street, Ajegunle. The school, "Ajeromi Public School" was formally opened on 13th January, 1958, and Avoseh taught there for next six months in which he took up managerial responsibilities. When the school started in 1958, it had only three classes but by 1969 when the Federal Government took over all private schools, the school had boasted of eighteen classes and over twenty teachers. The status of the school had also risen from third class to first class.¹¹

One other aspect of life that Avoseh got himself involved in after his 1957 voluntary retirement was his appointment in the Ministry of Information and Home Affairs as a Cinema Commentator. In the course of his assignment, he got transferred to Badagry, Epe, Ijebu Ode and Abeokuta.¹² In 1968, at the age of sixty, he was compulsorily retired having served the Ministry of Information for ten years. His career had come full circle.

After his retirement from public service, Avoseh was also appointed by the Government to a number of positions. Between November 1966 and May 1971, he was twice a Board Member of the Badagry Grammar School. In July 1969, he was appointed a member of the Committee of Management Egun Awori District Council. On May 1st 1972, he also became a member of the Egun Awori District Council Caretaker Committee.

His Contributions to the Church

Although, his grandfather, Ajidagba was a traditionalist to the core, T. Ola Avoseh is a practising Christian and he has acquired the christian virtues of honesty and selfless service to others. He is a devout methodist. Avoseh was baptised on 27th August by Rev. J.A. Olanle but was only confirmed on 10th October 1932. Since 1932 to date, he had served the Church in various capacities – Lay Reader, Secretary, St. Thomas Parochial Committee (1933–41) and Secretary, Lay Reader Association (1965–1975).

Since 1968 till recent times when he stopped going to church for health reasons, he served as the Conductor of Morning Prayer Band. He also played a prominent role in the formation of Pioneer Missionary Area in March, 1970.¹³ To date, he is a member of Lagos Diocesan Synod and, in 1973, he was given a Certificate of Honour by Rt. Rev. S.I. Kale, for having served successfully for twenty five years as a Lay Reader. On behalf of the church, he authored in 1970, *The History of St. Thomas Church, Badagry* while he has also written such pamphlets as *The First Christmas Day in*

Badagry. *The First Storey Building in Nigeria, The Historical Tree of Badagry Under Which the Missionaries Preached the Gospel of Christ* to further the cause of Christianity in Badagry. In November, 1974, Avoseh was sworn in as a Principal Church Representative on the Creation of Badagry Provisional District Church Council. In 1975, he became Chairman of the Lay Readers' Association.¹⁴

Avoseh's contributions to Badagry and Historiography

Chief Avoseh is an accomplished local historian. His *A Short History of Badagry*, despite the reservations it has provoked in some quarters, is not only the first systematic attempt at writing the history of Badagry, it is a book with which to take off for research on any aspect of Badagry's history and culture. Avoseh also followed this book up with *A Short History of Epe* (1960), written when he was working as an Information Officer at Epe. Other books written by him with an eye on history include, *The History of Saint Thomas' Church, Badagry* (1970) *Iwe Itan Esin Imale ni Ilu Ag-badarigi* (1964) and *Biographical Sketches* (1978).

Apart from these historical works Avoseh also wrote three other works which have direct relevance to Ogu studies. *Li Ede Egun Pelu Itumo ni Ede Yoruba ati Gesi*, (Apapa: Adeolu, 1962) *Awon Oruko Egun Pelu Itumo Nwon i Ede Yoruba* (Apapa: Adeolu, 1962) and *Iwe "Ajara Dabi Eko"* (Apapa: Adeolu, 1983).

The aim of this section of the paper, therefore, is to raise and answer the following questions: Why did he write the books? What were his sources and methods? Of what relevance are these books to us? And what are the major deficiencies of the books?

Patriotism was the major propelling force for Avoseh in the writing of his *A Short History of Badagry*. He conceived the work as a pioneering attempt towards a comprehensive history of Badagry. It was a call to more enlightened and educated Ogu descendants to commit to writing their historical past. As modest as the attempt was, *A Short History of Badagry* was the outcome of eight years of fieldwork during which he collected traditions from "unsophisticated native elders".¹⁶ Like any historian of a pre-literate society, he was confronted with the problem of chronology and conflicting oral traditions. On the whole, the work is divided into eighteen chapters. The first chapter narrates the traditions of origin and early history of Badagry area especially Iworo, Ibereko and Iyafin. According to him, the earliest migrants to this area were from Ifewara and Ife Esu from the Yoruba hinterland.¹⁷

The second chapter discusses the "Founding of Badagry." He identifies three waves of migration into Badagry: those who fled from Gberefu

when the town was destroyed by Dahomey, the Apa people who were a branch of the Ife ruling house and the fugitives from Dahomean coastal area. The leader of the last group was said to be a farmer called "Agbethe" whose farm "Agbethegreme" was famous for cassava and corn. It was from "Agbethegreme", farmland of "Agbethe" that Badagry derived its name. Avoseh further relates that a Dutch trader, "Huntokonnu", who had been to Whara, Wheda, Apa and Accra later joined the refugees at Badagry. He concludes the chapter with the list of the eight quarters in Badagry: *Boeko, Asago, Awhanjigo, Posuko, Ganho, Wharako, Ahoviko* and *Jegba*.¹⁸

The third chapter deals with the number of the ruling houses in Badagry and Badagry chieftaincies. Originally, according to Avoseh, there were six ruling houses but *Pojeagewu, Soba-Whe* and *Yeku-Whe* are now extinct leaving *Jigbeko, Misinayi* and *Ganyiko*. With regard to Badagry chieftaincies, seven portfolios existed: *Wawu, Jengen, Boe Wheda, Bala Wheda, Finhento Gankonnu* and *Posu*.¹⁹

The fourth chapter is a catalogue of the deeds and achievements of the *Akrans* from Akran Gbafoe (Azaru Toblavo) to the twelfth one, Akran Meje. Chapters five to eleven deal with the historical origin of the eight quarters that the town is traditionally divided into.²⁰ Chapter twelve examines the nature of relationship existing between Badagry and Lagos on one hand and between Badagry and the British on the other. Chapter thirteen discusses the partition of the land known as Gberefu. While the fourteenth discusses the socio-political structure of Badagry, Chapter fifteen examines the wars between Badagry and Lagos, Badagry and Porto-Novo, Badagry and Dahomey in the 18th and 19th Centuries, the Mewu Uprising, Badagry's treaty of cession, Tickel's administration, among others.²¹ Chapter sixteen discusses Badagry's religious worship while the seventeenth highlights the contributions of some illustrious personalities of the town to the development of the town. Such names include Rev. D. Coker, Mr. J.O. Falola and Chief Seriki Abass. In the eighteenth chapter, he says his account is essentially the views of his informants and that he has left raw materials as raw as possible. Finally, Appendix III (pp. 61-65) contains a list of principal events in Badagry history. Let us differ our assessment of this work until we have considered other historical works by Avoseh.²²

A Short History of Epe (1960)

Avoseh wrote this work in 1960 while working as an Information Officer in the Epe Division. His objective was to provide a written account of Epe, the largest town in the colony; which was by then lacking. It is important

to remark that – Epe “sons of the soil” wrote three separate forwards to the book. Olayemi Tobun writes that the “work reflects the true historical background in all respects of both the Ijebus and the Ekos of Epe” (p.7). Ade Odebisi also says “without hesitation he (Avoseh) has endeavoured to meet our long felt need” (p.8). The third, S.C.A. Yoloye also opines that Avoseh has tried to be unbiased and “he has avoided any controversial issue between the Ekos and Ijebus.” (p.9).

Chapterizations

The work is divided into thirteen chapters. Chapters one and two concern the founding of Epe and how the name Epe was derived. According to him, the founder of the town was an Ife hunter, Huraka, who settled under the Popoka tree. After some time, one Modu from Omu came to settle with him. Popoka was later corrupted to Poka, a town now three miles to Epe and which is believed to be the original homestead of Huraka. Huraka was later joined by Agbaja, Ofuten and Lugbasa from Ubu; Alara from Ilara; a woman named Alaro and Ramope, Ogunmude and Oloja Shagbafara from Ijebu Ode. The word “Epe” itself is also said to have derived from the “Epe ants which infested Huraka’s homestead.”²³ Briefly, the ruling house of Epe has succeeded in linking itself to the mainstream of Yoruba history.

Chapter three discusses the peopling of Epe. The earlier migrants Agbaja, Ofuten and Lugbasa settled at Apakeji, Ekita while Alaro occupied Oju Alaro, Etita Opo and Lagbade. The Alara allocated four quarters to his four children before he left to the Alara of Ilara: Eyindi, Tugbeyin, Etitun and Ajagannabe. Finally, Ramope domiciled at Ita Osugbo, Oloja-Shagbafara settled at Aleke and Ogunmude at Igbo-Ogumude.²⁴

The fourth chapter discusses how Epe came to acquire its cosmopolitan character especially with ex-king, Kosoko of Lagos and about 1,500 of his followers seeking asylum in Epe in December 1851. Kosoko followers also include Ogus like Posu, Ajenia and Nupe like Oshodi Tapa. Epe also granted asylum to Awujale Fidiote in 1882 with a sizeable number of his followers. Epe also received Ijo and Ilaje migrants from Warri and Okitipupa in 1905.²⁵

The fifth chapter examines the government of Epe and highlights the primacy of the Oloja and Oshugbo Iwashe and the Age Groups in the political structure. In particular, the author traces the origin of the acrimony between the Eko-Epe and Ijebu-Epe to the Colonial government appointment of the Bales and Eko Epe to as the Native Authority after the Ijebu expedition of 1892. Two of them were even appointed to the Epe Central Council in 1901. It also provides us with a list of the Olojas of Ijebu

Epe and the Bale of Eko Epe.²⁶

Chapter six discusses the war between Makun Omi and Ijebu-Epe in 1848, The Treaty of Epe (1863), Ijebu expedition of 1892, the Civil War between Eko-Epe and Ijebu-Epe in 1905 and 1912, among other issues.

Chapter seven describes Epe as animists with the invocation of the spirits of the dead being observed annually in such festivals as Epa, Igodo Imole, Jigbo, Agira among others. The recognised traditional festivals were Ebi Igbe, Osu Erinna, Okosi and Oforan. The introduction of Islam was traced to one Muhammed Audu of Katsina while Islam also received a great boost with the coming of Kosoko and his men. Christianity in Epe was also said to have been introduced by the C.M.S. under Rev. I.A. Braithwaite in 1892. The Cherubim and Seraphim (1930), Church of Apostle (1974) and the Baptist Church (1957) also have presence in Epe.²⁷

Chapter eight is on the educational trends in Epe with the Eko-Epe feverishly 'acquiring western education while the Ijebu Epe takes to business and commerce. The ninth chapter discusses the traditional occupation of the people with fishing and trading occupying a prime of place. Chapters ten, eleven and twelve discuss respectively the history of Ibeju, Lekki and Ejinrin. The 13th, last chapter, is a table of important events in the annals of Epe.²⁸

Iwe Itan Isin Imale Ni Ilu Agbadarigi

Avoseh wrote this work in 1964, some thirty years after the story of Islam had been related to him by the pioneering Muslism of Badagry. In particular, the work gives us important clues about the introduction, growth and spread of Islam in the 19th and early years of the 20th century. The work reveals that Islam was introduced to the town by some Oyo Muslim traders around 1821 during the early years of the Yoruba warfare.²⁹ He records that by 1830, Islam had already had an impressive following with Richard Lander, the 19th Century British explorer, participating in the Muslims' Eid-el-Kabir of that year. The work is also very revealing on the peaceful spread of Islam in Badagry and its surrounding villages such as Ajido, Iworo, Ojo and Ibereko.³⁰

The book further informs us that Islam recorded faster pace among the Yoruba elements of Badagry than the Ogu elements. Other issues of importance in the book include the building of the first Mosque (Verekete), the establishment of the first *Madrassa* (Islamic School) in 1825, the founding of a Muslim School in 1898 by the colonial government, among others.³¹ Finally, the book records that Badagry Muslims started going on Holy pilgrimage in 1910 and concludes that, by 1964, Islam was the religion of majority of Badagrians, next to traditional religion.³²

The History of Saint Thomas's Church, Badagry

This work by Avoseh was published in 1970 and written at the instance of the St. Thomas's Church Council. In fact, the work is a bird-eye view of the history of christianity in Badagry 1842 - 1970. Going through the work, it becomes very clear that Avoseh and his family have been closely connected with the Church since the inception of christianity in the town. The work indeed reveals that Badagry is the cradle of christianity in Nigeria, yet the religion has had little impact on the lives of the people. With deep insight into the traditions and history of the Ogu, Avoseh advances reasons for the slow progress of christianity in the town. He has also successfully identified the impact of local customs and traditions on the practice of christianity. Finally, the work discusses the personalities that have connected with the achievements which the church in Badagry has recorded so far.

However, we need to add that there are other works by avoseh which should read, along with the *History of St. Thomas' Church* for a more detailed account of the history of Christianity in Badagry. These include: *Iwe Itan Kukuruu ati Egbe Ajumogbadura Owuro Ti Ijo Thomasi Mimo Ni Badagry, The First Christmas Day in Badagry, First Storey Building in Nigeria* and *The Historical Tree of Badagry Under Which The Early Missionaries Reached the Gospel of Christ.*³⁴

AVOSEH AND OGU NATIONALISM

Avoseh has also written works to promote Ogu Nationalism. Three of such works will suffice in this paper. The first is *Oruko Egun Pelu Itumo Won Li Ede Yoruba* which can be translated as (Ogu Names and their translations in Yoruba.) This work was first published in 1962 and re-printed in 1982 under the auspices of the *Ogu Cultural Research Association* of which Avoseh himself is the President.³⁵ In fact, Avoseh did not disguise the fact that the book was written to assist Ogu people to discover their roots and to know the significance of their names. It was meant to appeal to the patriotic instinct of the Ogu people so that they could stop bearing Yoruba, Christian and Muslim names. In fact, he specifically appealed to Ogu Christians to discontinue the practice of using English names for baptisms and to use Ogu in place.

Another work by Avoseh with the same cultural content is *Iwe Li Ede Egun Pelu Itumo Re ni Ede Yoruba ati Geesi: (An Ogu Book and Its Translations to Yoruba and English)*. In particular, the main objective of the book is to correct Ogu names that had been misspelt in registers of births and popular literatures; for example: *Afoseh* (Avoseh), *Bawe* (Vahwe), *Gothonu* (Godonu), *Athande* (Adamde). From the few examples cited above, it is

clear that whereas "V" is absent in Yoruba alphabets, it is very prominent in Ogu and, consequently, Yoruba's "F" should not be used as a substitute. Second, "TH" in English alphabets stands for "D" in Ogu's. Moreover, there are transactions in Yoruba and English, Ogu forms of salutations, foodstuffs, occupations, articles in daily use etc. The book can otherwise be referred to as "Teach Yourself Ogu."

The third work where Avoseh's commitment to Ogu Nationalism is portrayed is *"Iwe Ajara Dabi Eko"* (1983). Although, the work is a celebration of an Ogu/Ajara patriot, Honfo Mitohogbe Tonuewa, its main focus was an appeal to all Ogu descendants to be committed to the progress and advancement of Badagry. In other words, they should take cue from Honfo who endured all abuses and scorn in the name of Ajara and optimistically prophesied that Ajara (a place often referred to as backward and uncivilized) would soon become modernized like Lagos. Nonetheless, the work also gives some important clues on the historical origins of Ajara. Through the effort, for instance, we know that there are fourteen autonomous quarters in Ajara, each with its own founder. Second, we are also made aware that Ajara is today the "Broad Street of Badagry."

Avoseh: An Assessment

The picture of Avoseh that emerges from our discussion of his formative cum school years and career structure is that of a man who possesses a dogged determination to succeed in life in spite of all odds. He is ready to claim successes and admit failures as the tides of events dictate. He is as bold as he is forthright. His commitment to selfless service and honesty of purpose is a virtue admitted by his friends and adversaries. His commitment to the socio-political and educational advancement of Badagry is also not in doubt given his role in the various Badagry's development organizations, cultural associations and church committees geared towards development.

Although he received no formal training in history, Avoseh has by dint of hardwork and love for history, distinguished himself as an outstanding historian. He belongs to the class of local chroniclers as J.B. Losi, Ajisafe, Akinyele, Olunlade, Abiola, Ojo, Oyerinde and Samuel Johnson. His work on Badagry has generated and provoked further discussions on Badagry history as the position of Harrison seem to indicate. If other local historians disagree with some of Avoseh's position, this does not detract from the value of his works. Rather, it has fulfilled one of the objectives he sets for himself. For Avoseh did say in 1938 that:

I cherish the hope that this little effort of mine will prove an incentive to others particularly Egun descendants more enlightened and

abler than myself to embark on the more ambitious work of supplying a fuller history of Badagry (p.6).

Despite the fact that Avoseh is not a professional historian, his methodology is surprisingly modern. He made use of three sources: oral traditions, eye-witness accounts and written materials. In his *A Short History of Badagry*, he found it necessary to consult Ajisafe's *History of Abeokuta*, Akindele Akinsowon's *History of Porto-Novo* and J. B. Losi's *History of Lagos* and H. Macaulay, "Who has the interest of Badagry at Heart". Similarly, he found Losi, Okubote's *History of Ijebe-Ode* and *Nigeria's Sessional Paper No.9 of 1939* useful for his *A Short History of Epe*. Avoseh is acutely conscious of the living culture into which he was born and hence, he has made a meticulous use of oral traditions.

He collected oral sources for more than eight years before the *History of Badagry* was eventually written. He also realised the need for historical accuracy and therefore interviewed his informants on more than one occasion. That he was quite aware of the necessity to use written accounts to illuminate oral traditions and vice versa proves him to be a painstaking researcher and a pioneer of modern Nigerian historical methodology.

It is also credit worthy that Avoseh has transformed the numerous traditions of Badagry and Epe peoples into written accounts. Indeed he extended our knowledge of Badagry and Epe history not only to the century but to remoter period. In fact, his works on Badagry and Epe have been transformed into the "Authorised Version" and in several cases, it is difficult to "go beyond him" to collect a large body of fresh information because of the inevitable problem of feedback. In fact, scholars like Asiwaju, Gbadamosi and Dioka, who have done extensive research into Badagry's history, in spite of their interpretation and re-interpretation, acknowledge Avoseh's invaluable contributions.

Another noteworthy aspect of Avoseh's contributions of history is his willingness to write both in English and Yoruba. This style was most probably adopted to get in touch with larger audience who could not read nor understand English. Hence he wrote his book on *Islam in Badagry Yoruba*. And whenever his works appear in Yoruba (as in the case Iwe "Ajara Dabi Eko"), he had consulted experts in Yoruba studies as Chiefs J.O.O. Samuel and Solomon A. Ogunbiyi.

It is also important to remark that Avoseh's love for history precludes him from attaching monetary value to his published works. Precisely, *History of Badagry*, *Itan Esin Imale ni Ilu Agbadarigi*, *History of St. Thomas's Church, Badagry* and *Iwe "Ajara Dabi Eko"*, were not meant for sale nor were they sold. Rather they were distributed free of charge to interested readers.

Avoseh's contributions to history is further enhanced by his own awareness that "ultimate history" is not within the reach of any historian and that such enterprise is not even the proper business of historians. He always keeps the door open to further extension of knowledge and improvement on whatever he has written. Thus, in *Iwe Isin Imale*, he writes:

Mo mura tan lati te Iwe Islam ti o kun ju eyi lo ta ba le pe mi lati gba itan na. (I am ready to write a more comprehensive history of Islam in Badagry whenever anybody who has fuller information is ready to furnish me with such).

The view also re-echoes in his *A Short History of Epe*

I do not profess to have produced the best exhaustive history of Epe but I hope that these feeble efforts of mine shall be a stepping stone for others to follow.

Finally, Avoseh is also a pioneer of Ogu studies. As the president of OCRA he has devoted some attention to Ogu language and grammar. And although Ogu orthography has changed considerably, he provided some vital clues to the study and development of Ogu language.

Despite our acknowledgments and Avoseh's contributions to Nigerian history and historiography, there are some flaws in his books and conception of history. First, his objective for writing the histories of Badagry and Epe was to fulfil a patriotic call to duty. But despite this nationalistic ambition, he still accommodates Christianity, and European rule. In the concluding section of the *History of Badagry*, he enthusiastically appealed to all Badagrians to give necessary support to the Native Authority System as he conceives the authority as agent of progress and change.³⁹

Second, it is evident that he lacks the requisite ability to handle oral traditions. His discussions of the legends of origins of Badagry and Epe are mere narrations. Even when confronted with two or more versions of an event, he just recorded one that appeals to him. He even proudly tells us that all he has done is to record the facts as he found them or told. This is unhistorical. The proper business of history is not mere collation of supposed "facts". Rather, interpretation is central to history. There is evidence to show that Avoseh shies away from certain controversial aspects of history as the *History of Epe* indicates. Again, history can only be enriched by a discussion of such controversial issues and by appealing to evidence to back up any claim/side.

Another noticeable weakness of Avoseh's *History of Badagry* and *History of Epe* is the absence of chronology. He follows closely the traditional pattern of associating events with reign lengths. In other words, he did not give any precise date before 1842 in respect of Badagry and 1851 in the

case of Epe. However, there is evidence that there is an order in the works which gives a relative form of chronology.

Moreover, Christianity has a great impact on his view of causation. Often times, he invokes the peripathetic hands of God to explain some of his personal misfortunes, especially his sickness in 1917, 1921-23, 1935 and 1972. Even the same explanation is given for escape during a boat mishap in 1934. However, the claim to divine intervention in the historical process is very antiquated as it is unhistorical.

Finally, there is evidence in some Avoseh's works to prove that he is not too sure of the world he belongs to: the traditional culture or the Euro-Christian culture. In fact, in one of his minor works, *Iwe Ikomo Jade*, Avoseh made a very strong appeal to Ogu Christians to adopt the biblical practice of naming children on the eighth day. Here, Avoseh shows an unhesitating preference for the Jewish-Christian culture instead of Egun since "Jesus Christ Our Lord and John the Baptist were named on the 8th day".⁴⁰ Evidence also shows that Avoseh has a fervent belief that the day a child is born had a deterministic influence on his life. Hence he claims that children born on Mondays are always gentle, prosperous, open-handed and sympathetic to others while those born on Tuesdays are quick to anger and very libidinous.

Conclusion

These criticisms, the place of Avoseh in Badagry's history and historiography is assured. He stands in a class of his own among other local chroniclers. Indeed, any research into the history and Christianity in Badagry, Badagry history and culture must inevitably and necessarily start with Avoseh's works.

We should acknowledge that he is not a trained historian, yet he has been very painstaking and meticulous in his search for evidence and in cross-checking such evidence with other available evidence. All that we need to do is to recognise areas that are deficient in his works and make amends especially by cross-checking his own accounts with other local chronicles, contemporary written sources and, if possible, to look for fresh oral traditions.

Notes and References

1. Prominent scholars that have visited T. Ola Avoseh for research purposes include R.S. Smith, R.C.C. Law, C.L. Newbury, Neir, A.I. Asiwaju, G.O. Gbadamosi, among others.
2. T. Ola Avoseh *Biographical Sketches* (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1978), pp. 28-32.
3. Interview with Pa O.S. Hundeyin, 90, Badagry, 29th November, 1989.
4. Interview with Chief T. Ola Avoseh, Badagry, 15th November, 1989.
5. T. Ola Avoseh, *Biographical Sketches*, op. cit., p. 12
6. *Ibid.* p. 12
7. *Ibid.* pp. 13-15
8. Interview with T. Ola Avoseh, 4th December, 1989.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. T. Ola Avoseh, *Biographical Sketches*, op. cit. pp. 18-20
13. T. Ola Avoseh, *The History of St. Thomas's Church Badagry 1842-1970*, (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1970), pp. 14-16.
14. Ola Avoseh, *Biographical Sketches*, op. cit., p. 18
15. Ola Avoseh, *A Short History of Badagry* (Lagos: Ifeolu Press, 1938), p.2
16. *Ibid*, p.8
17. *Ibid*, pp. 12-13
18. *Ibid*, p. 14
19. *Ibid*, pp. 14-15
20. *Ibid*, pp. 15-49
21. These include (i) *A Short History of Epe* (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1960), (ii) *Iwe Itan Isin Imale Ni Illu Agbadarigi*, (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1960).
22. Ola Avoseh, *A Short History of Epe*, pp. 13-14
23. *Ibid*, p. 15
24. *Ibid*, pp. 16-18
25. *Ibid*, pp. 18-19
26. *Ibid*, pp. 20-28
27. *Ibid*, pp. 28-42
28. T. Ola Avoseh, *Iwe Itan Isin Imale*, op. cit., pp. 6-8.
29. *Ibid*, pp. 8-10.
30. *Ibid*, pp. 12-14
31. *Ibid*, pp. 14-16

32. T. Ola Avoseh, *The History of St. Thomas's ... op. cit.*
33. T. Ola Avoseh, *Iwe Itan Kukuru Egbe Ajumogbadura* (1973)
34. T. Ola Avoseh, *The Historical Tree of Badagry*, (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1984)
- T. Ola Avoseh, *First Storey Building in Nigeria*, (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1984).
- T. Ola Avoseh, *The First Christmas Tree in Badagry* (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1984).
35. T. Ola Avoseh, *Oruko Egun Pelu Itumo Won ni Ede Yoruba*, Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1982 reprint) p.8
36. T. Ola Avoseh, *Iwe "Ajara Dabi Eko"*, (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1983).
37. T. Ola Avoseh, *Iwe Esin Imale, op. cit.*, p.6
38. T. Ola Avoseh, *A Short History of Epe, op. cit.*, p. 11.
39. T. Ola Avoseh, *History of Badagry op. cit.*, p. 65
40. T. Ola Avoseh, *Iwe Ikomo Jade, Oruko Awon Ojo, Adura Ojojumo, Ojo ati Osu Ibimo, Ojo lati Dawole Nkan ati Iwe Eri Ijo Ibi Omo* (Apapa: Adeolu Press, 1960), p.1

Index

- Abba, 74,
 Abolition of Slave Trade, 50
 Adele, 20-21, 50, 266.
 Agaja, 4, 17; Trudo, 19.
 Aganyin, 15, 17.
 Agbalata, 13; Agbalata
 Market, 299, 305-307, 309.
 Agba Olota, 308.
 Agboadasi, 166.
 Agbon, 44.
 Ahudu, 340.
 Ahi, 306, 308.
 Aholuzangbe, 13, 14.
 Ahomfre, 290.
 Ahois, 292.
 Ahorikoh Wawu, 20.
 Alaaḡin Abiodun, 4, 61.
 Alalu, 26.
 Allada, 4, 16.
 Ale, 24.
 Alpa, 91.
 Aja, 16, Aja speaking people, 91, 132.
 Agagun, 27, 28.
 Aji, 18.
 Ajido, 18, 56, 61, 240.
 Akapo, 25.
 Akinsemoyin, 19, 50.
 Akintoye, 50.
 Akoko leaf, 237.
 Akran Gbafoe, 9.
 Annexion of Lagos, 50.
 Apa, 19, 22, 39, 91, 286; Apa
 District Council, 30.
 Asakpo, 17.
 Ashehe, 91, 286.
 Ategun, 340.
 Atezagbe, 13.
 Aro-Humme, 13.
 Avoseh T. Ola, 378-389.
 Awori, 15, 22, 44.
 Ayo, 18.
 Azanrogbe, 13.

 Badagry Council, 30; International
 Boundary and Underdevelopment,
 90, 92;
 Badagry Town Council, 30, 81
 Baracoon, 60, 62, 63.

 Berlin W.A. Conference, 93.
 Bishop Ajayi Crowther, 298, 331
 Bokono, 306.
 Border Trade, 99; History, 112.

 Canterbury of Nigeria, 9.
 Captain Hugh Clapperton, 12, 38, 45.
 Catholic Church, 212.
 Christian Evergelism, 192, 195.
 Cocos Nucifers, 39.

 Da zonga, 59.
 De Aligan, 306-307.
 Domingo Martinez, 59, 63.

 Edo, 42.
 Egypt, 7.
 Ejiwa, 28.
 Eucastador, 12.
 Ewe of Togo, 16.

 Fanti, 42.
 Farmers Association, 41.
 Fon, 61.

 Ganyingbo, 17.
 Gbale, 9, 14.
 Gbaji - Yeketome, 39.
 Gbembo, 18.
 Gberefu, 17.
 Gbozagbe, 13.
 Genwhogbo, 17.
 Gezo, 18, 61, 63.
 Gold Coast, 49, 50, 54, 58, 59. .
 Growth Pole, 264, 268.
 Gun, 15, 16, 17, 22.
 Gunuko Festival, 248.

 Hertog (h), 19, 59.
 Hevioso, 13.
 Nentry Carl, 183.
 Homme, 18.
 Huntokonu, 19, 92.
 Hundeyin, 65, 180, 365-376.

 Igbimo, 36.
 Illado, 23, 26.
 Illaje, 42; llaje speaking people, 22.
 Illogbo, 23, 25, 39.
 Ijo, 42.

- Imeko, 12
 Iregbe Net Fishing, 55
 Irewe, 17.
 Islam, Consolidation and Steady Growth, 179;
 Imam Sanni Sule
 Elesin, 180; Contemporary eru, 182,
 Influence on Education, 183;
 Cultural Influence, 186.
 Isuntan, 26.
 Iyewa, 29.
- Jakin, 16.
 Jegba Quarters, 20.
 Jiwheyewhe, 10.
 John Glover, 77.
 Jubilee market, 308.
- Kese, 22.
 Keta, 17.
 Ketu, 12, 57.
 King of Allada, 286.
 King Kpengla, 62.
 Kingdom of Dahomey, 4.
 Kitas, 39.
 Kutero, 4.
 Kweme, 17.
- Lagos, 5.
 Limos, 12.
- Mahin, 16.
 Mamu, 10, 62.
 Mawu, 309.
 Micro-history, 2.
 Mowo Swamp, 82, 83.
- Nigerian Youth Movement, 84.
 Ne Ahigan, 306-307.
- Oba C.D. Akran, 41, 344-351.
 Obada Market, 75.
 Obiriki, 23.
 Oga-ilu, 27.
 Ogaran, 340.
 Ogbaleme, 9.
 Ogbata (Agbalata), 13, 308.
 Ogboni Cult, 18.
 Oko etile, 40.
 Ogu Toplisen, 299.
- Ose, 10,
 Oshugbo, 26.
 Oshuku, 24, 25.
 Otunbas, 25.
 Owu War, 61.
- Posukoh, 10, 13, 20, 24.
- Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, 265, 331.
 Richard Larder, 12, 21, 38.
 River Yewa, 53, 58, 80, 82, 236.
- Seri, 16.
 Saros, 64.
 Seriki Abbas, 65, 238.
- Tanyin, 291, 292.
 The First Storey Building in Nigeria, 298.
 Thomas Tickell, 15.
 Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, 4
 Transit Camp Theory, 332, 335.
 Topo Island, 39.
 Totagans, 12, 14.
- Victorian Coins, 78.
 Vodun, 233-234.
 Vodono, 234.
- Wemie, 16.
 Weshere, 17.
 Whare Whegbo, 17.
 Wheno Aholu Akran, 12.
 Wheno Aholu Menu Toyi, 240, 299.
 Whydah, 4, 16, 44, 57, 59, 63.
- Yoruba, 3, 15.
 Yoruba Civil Wars, 5, 61.
 Yovogan, 17.
- Zangan, 340.
 Zangbeto, 13, 18, 239, 340.
 Zofun, 21.



THE SLAVE TRADE RELICS

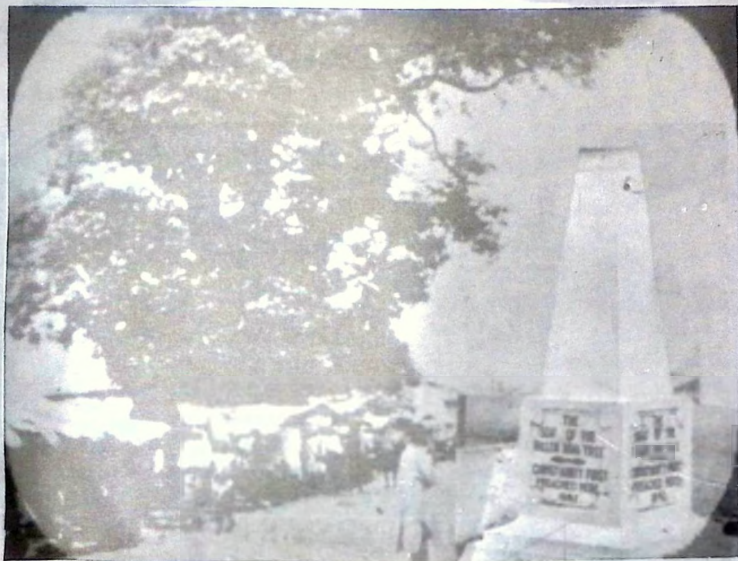


**THE FIRST STORY BUILDING
NIGERIA**



...of the Republic of Korea.
 The Attorney General, Mr. ...
 called ... and his son, ...
 Always ... - ...
 other "Sato" - ...
 and ...
 feature of ...
 ...
 ...
 To complement the Sato
 are three smaller drums -
 the ...
 which the Sato is beaten
 along with eight drummers a
 Sato.

SATO DRUMMERS



spot of the fallen Agia tree

2/354
197
~~18~~
12

ACK

EADAGRY: (A Study in History Culture and Traditions of an ancient city) is a product of the National Conference on Badagry History and Culture Organised by the Department of Religions and History, Lagos State University, Ojo, in January 1990. The book contains thirty chapters contributed by scholars of diverse academic specialities focusing on history, economy, culture, politics and sociology of Badagry and her people.

The book is addressed primarily to academicians, researchers and students. It should also be of interest to general readers and all tourists who are desirous of knowing about the ancient town of the Ogu people.

ISBN 978 2137 - 24 - 3

Produced in Nigeria.

Rex Charles Publication,
in Association with Syndicated Communications Ltd.