





Ibadan History Series
General Editor K. O. Dike, Ph.D.

Revolution and Power Politics in Yorubaland 1840-1893

Ibadan Expansion and the Rise of Ekitiparapo

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Abbreviations

- N.A.I. National Archives, Ibadan
C.M.S. Church Missionary Society
N.C.P. Niger Coast Protectorate
U.I.L. University of Ibadan Library
E.D.O. Ekiti Divisional Office, Ado-Ekiti
A.P.S. Aborigines Protection Society
P.P. Parliamentary Papers
C.S.O. Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos (for records of, now lodged at the National Archives)
J.H.N. Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
C.O. Colonial Office



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Ibadan History Series

General Editor's Introduction

The 'Ibadan History Series' grew out of the efforts of some members of the Department of History, Ibadan University, Nigeria, to evolve a balanced and scholarly study of the history of African peoples South of the Sahara. In the years before the Second World War, the study of African history was retarded, and to some extent vitiated, by the assumption of many scholars that lack of written records in some areas of Africa meant also the absence of history. Documentary evidence had become so overwhelmingly important for the European scholar that he tended to equate written documents with history, and to take the absence of documents to mean the absence of events worthy of historical study. As a result in the nineteenth century, when Europe occupied Africa, her scholars did not attempt to understand or to build on the historical traditions in existence there; they sought instead to challenge and to supplant them. The history of European traders, missionaries, explorers, conquerors and rulers constituted, in their view, the sum total of African history.

Fortunately for the historian of today, African historical consciousness remained alive throughout the period of colonial rule: that tradition was too much a part of the African way of life to succumb to the attacks of the European scholar. Even in the heyday of white supremacy some educated Africans of the period were sufficiently dominated by their past to feel impelled to commit to writing the laws, customs, proverbs, sayings and historical traditions of their own communities. Notable among these may be mentioned James Africanus Hottel of Sierra Leone, Reindorf and Sarbah of Ghana, Otomba Payne and Samuel Johnson of Nigeria, Apolo Kagwa of Uganda, to name but a few. The published works they left behind have become important sources of African history today; but they were swimming against the current of their time and made little impression on contemporaries. Historians continued to write as if Africans were not active participants in the great events that shaped their continent.

The decided change towards a new African historiography

General Editor's Introduction

came with the movement towards independence. African nationalists rejected the European appraisal of their past. They demanded a new orientation and improved educational facilities to effect this re-appraisal. With the establishment of new universities in Africa, it was inevitable that the teaching of history and the training of African historians would receive a new impetus. For obvious reasons the changeover was slow in coming. Even in the new universities the old theories for a time prevailed: besides European history, there were courses only on 'European activities in Africa' at the undergraduate level, and at the post-graduate level research was generally on British and French policy towards their African territories.

By the late 1940s, however, African research students were insisting that African history must be the history of Africans, not of Europeans *per se* in Africa; that local records and historical traditions must be used to supplement European metropolitan archives; in short, that oral tradition must be accepted as valid material for historical reconstruction. No doubt the validity of non-written sources for historical research had been pointed out before, but it was new for university departments of history to accept it, especially in relation to African oral tradition. Even then not everyone was happy about it. Anthropologists replied cautiously that oral tradition, even when seemingly factual, was not history and could only be interpreted in terms of its functions in society and within the particular culture. But this did not destroy its validity as material for history; it only argued for a return to the link between history and sociology advocated in the fourteenth century by the famous Tunisian historian, Ibn Khaldun.

Even in studies of European impact on African societies and cultures, where European archival material still remains our major source, this source should be checked and supplemented by oral tradition, material artefacts and other sources of history in Africa. The achievement of the present position in the study of African history has been the result of individual and cooperative efforts of many scholars in different parts of the world, but I think it is fair to say that the Universities in Africa, and Ibadan in particular, have played and are playing their part in this pioneering work.

Enugu
June 1967

K. ONWUKA DIKE

To 'Busola



Introduction

As in the history of most African peoples, the nineteenth century was an era of intense, tumultuous and far-reaching changes in the history of the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria. Some of these changes were brought about by external factors – the intensification of trade with Europe in the natural resources of Africa in response to the Industrial Revolution taking place in Europe, and the beginning and spread of Christian missionary evangelism and western education sponsored by various European missionary bodies. But among the Yoruba, other potent formative forces were at the same time at work. From the beginning to the end of the century, a great movement was unfolding which, itself a product of a complex set of circumstances, occasioned a long series of wars and acted as the vehicle of momentous political, social and economic developments.

It used to be common, especially among nineteenth-century European observers, to explain this movement as the response of the Yoruba to external factors – especially trade – and the wars used therefore to be regarded as struggles over the trade routes to the coast, or as slave raids aimed at obtaining captives either to supply the labour needed for producing the articles of the growing 'legitimate' trade or to be sold to the few boats still involved in the last vestiges of the Atlantic slave trade. Studies in recent years, however, have shown that these explanations do not fit the facts. It is now generally accepted that, in origin, the movement was essentially concerned with new attempts at state formation and the institution of new centres of power, and that the explanation for it can only be found in factors indigenous to the Yoruba community itself – although, of course, these internal factors and the foreign formative forces were inevitably intertwined and seriously affected each other, while trade routes and the selling of war captives were important means in the resolution of these struggles.

Though the Yoruba are culturally one and the same people,

they have, as far back as their traditions go, been for a long time organised into a large number of kingdoms. In the present state of our knowledge, it is impossible to tell whether they were from the very beginning of their history settled under these separate kingdoms, or whether their traditions of a common origin of almost all their rulers from Ife do mean the existence, in the very distant past, of one single vast state which later broke up into succeeding small states. At some stage these kingdoms became grouped into sub-ethnic divisions, each of which represented some measure of expansion of loyalty beyond the small kingdoms. It is obvious from the traditions that the existence of so many kingdoms created a situation in which wars were rather common – even between kingdoms in the same ethnic sub-groups. The cultural homogeneity of the people blurred the political boundaries, as the conflicting claims in boundary disputes in our day clearly show. Apart from being a source of petty clashes, this uncertainty of boundaries was always a source of temptation to growing states or ambitious leaders. Here and there, a state which found, or thought, itself stronger than its neighbours would set out to expand by seizing towns and villages formerly conceded as belonging to the neighbours but which were not different from itself in any important cultural detail. In this way, a long series of wars might be sparked off. One or two kingdoms did manage to swallow up their neighbours and thereby establish their *pax* over a fairly large territory; but most of Yorubaland did not experience this.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, the most successful of these kingdoms, the Oyo kingdom of the Alafin, expanded over most of northern and western Yorubaland as well as over parts of the territories of the non-Yoruba neighbours – the Nupe, the Ibariba and the Aja of Dahomey. By so doing it pacified a large area. Furthermore, it established relationships with most other Yoruba kingdoms, and its influence considerably curtailed the frequency and severity of the conflicts among them.

The decline of this empire in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, and its ultimate demise soon after the opening of the nineteenth, destroyed this equilibrium. The first major war of the century was a clash between kingdoms which had been the immediate southern neighbours of the Old Oyo Empire – Owu and Ife, the latter supported by Ijebu from further south as well as by thousands of Oyo refugees who were fleeing

from the troubled centre of their disintegrating kingdom in the north. The war resulted in the destruction of Owu and the neighbouring Eḡba kingdoms and the migration of their citizens south-westwards where they founded a new state, Aḡeokuta.

The rise of a number of successor states to the Oyo Empire – notably Ibadan, Ijaye, new Oyo and Aḡeokuta – in the former territories of the Owu and Eḡba, and the rivalry between them to inherit the former political position of the Alafins led to a new and prolonged series of wars. Also, some of the older kingdoms, like Iḡebu and Ife, now tried to expand vigorously. For instance, Ife encroached on the towns of its southern neighbour, Ondo, and thereby set up a chain of disastrous events in that forest country. In the northern fringes of Yorubaland, a new state, Ilorin, had emerged in Oyo territory shortly before the appearance in the south of Ibadan and the others. Starting as a local revolt against the Alafin, but later getting absorbed into the Fulani Jihads which were creating revivalist Muslim emirates in Northern Nigeria, Ilorin became one of the states involved in the rivalry for dominance in Yorubaland. From the west, Dahomey, recently freed from Oyo control, began to strive to expand into Yorubaland and, until close to the end of the century, repeatedly invaded western Yoruba territories. On a smaller scale, the Nupe were harassing the extreme north-eastern Yoruba borderlands. Meanwhile, through trade with European merchants along the coast, fire-arms had found their way into Yoruba warfare from the 1820s on. Though traditional weapons continued to be in use till the end of the century, the increasing use of fire-arms had important consequences for the nature and effects of Yoruba wars.

Gradually, Ibadan became the most powerful of all the Yoruba states. It checked Ilorin's expansion and retrieved most of the territory which Ilorin had conquered. In the end, it destroyed Ijaye which, for some time, was its greatest rival. It failed, however, to subdue the Eḡba and Iḡebu, who controlled all the best and shortest routes from its territory to the coast. It even failed to negotiate with them a route to the coast. And since the fire-arms could only be obtained from the coast, this was a very significant failure, in reaction to which Ibadan was frequently at war with the Eḡba and Iḡebu in the south-west. North-eastwards, however, Ibadan was much more successful. By the end of the sixties, it had carved out an empire probably covering more of Yorubaland than the Old Oyo Empire – comprising Ibadan city

and its countryside, Ibarapa, Oṣun, Ife, Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Igbomina and Akoko, with some claims in the Upper Ogun area. This was the most forceful of all the solutions offered to the problems created by the collapse of the Oyo Empire; and it was this achievement of Ibadan that drew the north-eastern Yoruba peoples – Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina – into the thick of the whirlwind which was sweeping the face of Yorubaland.

The Ibadan armies began to penetrate into these eastern districts towards the end of the forties. For about three decades afterwards, the area witnessed conquests, revolts, reconquests, raids and depredations. After a long series of futile, because unco-ordinated, revolts against Ibadan in reaction to certain failings of the Ibadan provincial administration, the kingdoms and sub-groups of the region pulled together in a Confederacy, the Ekitiparapo, which, in alliance with Ibadan's rivals, fought Ibadan for sixteen years until the British brought an end to all the wars in 1893.

In terms of human suffering, the effects of all this were grave. The wars and the raids resulted in widespread insecurity, while the migrations, the flights and the forcible seizures of people led to the desertion of homes and means of livelihood, the breaking up of families and the scattering of their members in different directions. Whole towns and villages became deserted and large areas of farmland were reclaimed by jungles.

This, however, is only the negative side of a movement which deserves to be regarded as a revolution. Some of the communities (like Abeokuta, Ibadan, Oyo, Ilorin, Modakeke near Ile-Ife and Aiyede in Ekiti) created by this revolution have survived to our day as important socio-political local entities in the wider unity of one Nigeria. Moreover, one cannot understand the population map of south-western Nigeria without understanding the demographic changes wrought by the nineteenth century. The comparative emptiness of considerable expanses of the north-western parts of the Western State, the high concentration of population in the area comprising such big towns as Ibadan, Oyo, Iwo, Ede, Ejibo and others – these were among the results of the nineteenth century. Moreover, probably more than ever before, the nineteenth century witnessed a great deal of mixing of Yoruba peoples. Fragments of the various Yoruba sub-groups were thrown all over the Yoruba homeland, most getting absorbed into their new homes. It is surprising how little it is usually realised

that each of the Oyo, Ekiti, Ijebu or any other Yoruba sub-group of today is really a synthesis of fragments from almost all parts of Yorubaland. The city of Ibadan, which was founded in the 1820s by a combination of Ife, Ijebu, Oyo, Owu and Egba peoples, and which later attracted considerable populations from Ijesa, Ekiti, Akoko, Igbomina and Iyagba, witnessed the most intense example of this synthesis.

Furthermore, in many cases, especially in those of the Ibadan empire and the Ekitiparapo, the developments of the nineteenth century led to the growth of more inclusive loyalties far beyond the confines of the petty kingdoms or even sub-ethnic divisions. Also contributing to the weakening of the old kingdoms and their rulers was the rise of many leaders (like Oluyole, Sodoke, Ogunmola, Kurumi, Latosisa, Ogedemgbe and others) whose type, in terms of traditional Yoruba concepts of authority, was new. Some of these, moreover, were men who deserve to be counted among Africa's great leaders. Yet another significant feature of the nineteenth-century situation was the fact that, faced with the need to organise new states and other political entities, the Yoruba evinced much political creativeness – and the resulting constitutional experimentation is exemplified by Ibadan's republicanism, Ijaye's military dictatorship, Abeokuta's federalism and the confederalism of the Ekitiparapo. Finally, between the nineteenth-century Yoruba situation and the eventual imposition of British rule on the Yoruba there were some connections. In the first place, the wars created the occasion for repeated British interference in Yoruba affairs, and the restoration of peace to Yorubaland served as the ultimate pretext for British conquest. Secondly, the war-weariness contributed much towards the acceptance of British protection by many Yoruba states.

The particular focus of the present work is the impact of these developments on the north-eastern region of Yorubaland, the territories of the Ekiti, Ijesa, Akoko and Igbomina. Probably no other area was more profoundly affected than this region. Living in countries broken by hills and rocks, the Yoruba peoples here had, before the nineteenth century, lived in small kingdoms which were grouped into four sub-ethnic divisions, and were frequently hostile to one another. Moreover, they formed the marches of the Yoruba with the Edo and Afenmai peoples of the Benin kingdom and, before the nineteenth century, had belonged

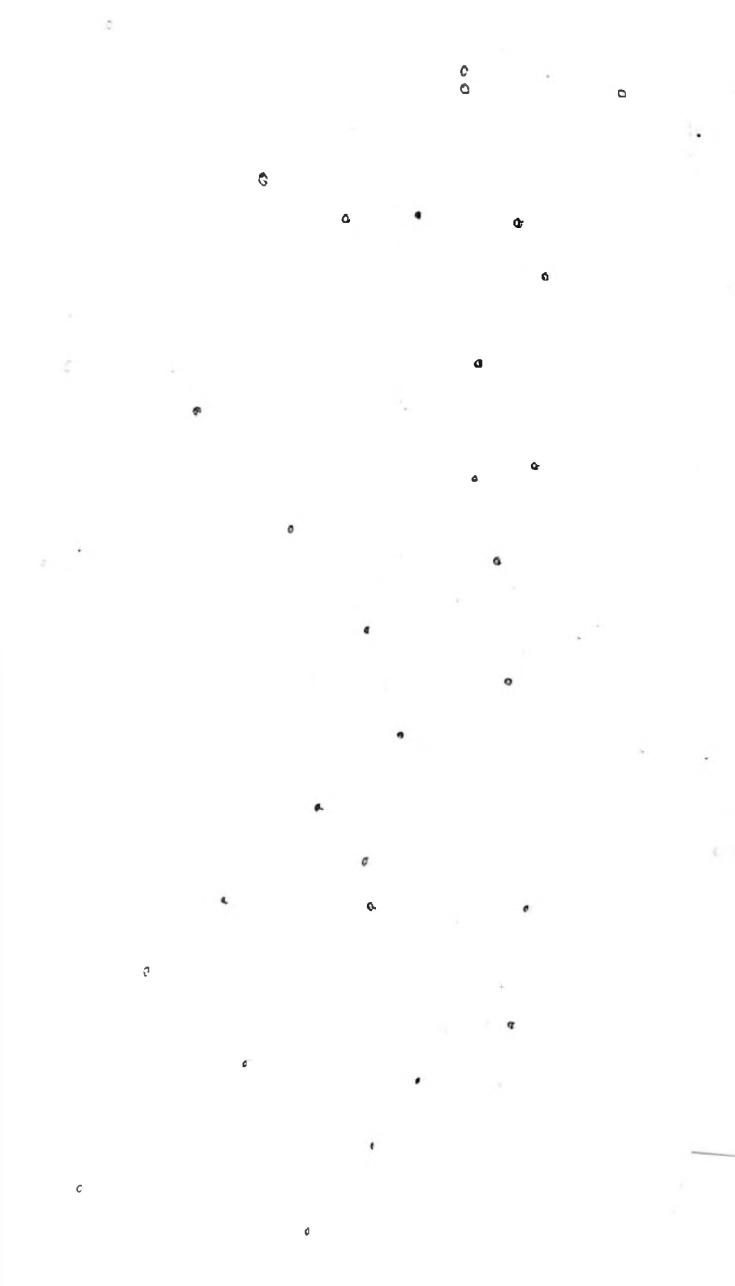
more to the main stream of the history of Benin than of the other Yoruba. The nineteenth century did not only reverse both of these trends, it also affected these peoples in many other important ways.

In the first place, no other area, outside the central provinces of the Old Oyo Empire witnessed so much destruction of towns and villages and wholesale transplantations of people – in this case mostly to Ibadan. Secondly, the rise of the Ekitiparapo among these mostly minutely fragmented communities was one of the most radical products of the nineteenth century political upheavals. Their old kingdoms and rulers still continued to exist. In fact the revolt against Ibadan had had as an important objective the saving of the kingdoms and throughout the long war, many of their rulers were drawn into the service of the Ekitiparapo in one way or another. But in all reality the creators and leaders of the Confederacy were not the kings but the 'new men', the warrior chiefs who were mostly men of humble origin, men who had risen in the world through adopting the ideas and organisational methods of the Ibadan leaders with whom they had been thrown into close contact by the Ibadan wars of expansion. Moreover, it was of great significance that a single body of leaders was now, for the first time in their remembered history, making decisions for all the states of these hilly districts and tapping their resources in the service of a common end.

Ultimately too, the ideas began to appear among the people that the revolution should be carried further and made more permanent. The measures most popularly advocated – that the Ekitiparapo should be converted for all time into one sprawling state with a paramount king, or that the people of all the towns and villages comprising it should transplant themselves into a single new megalopolis – would have meant the smashing up of the old kingdoms and state structures, and this would have been of immense revolutionary moment for the whole of Yorubaland. However, the cessation of hostilities in 1893 and the beginning of the establishment of British colonial rule in that year arrested the revolution.

These developments in this part of Yorubaland, however, are not treated in isolation but as part of the great movement transforming the whole of Yoruba society. The outcome is that the present work offers a wide view of the whole movement – although concentrating its probing light on an area about which

no former research has been done. It is hoped that the work may be found a worthwhile contribution to the understanding of an important current in the nineteenth-century history of Nigeria and of one of the forces which have moulded Nigeria as we know it - the power revolution among the Yoruba, its nature and consequences, and the nature and sociology of Yoruba warfare in that century.



Chapter I

Prelude to the Nineteenth Century: Eastern Yorubaland

The Yoruba of West Africa inhabit a broad homeland which covers most of south-western Nigeria and part of the neighbouring Republic of Dahomey. Of this homeland, the eastern half consists of the territories of the Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Akoko, Igbomina, Owo, Ondo, Ikale, Ilaje, and the cluster of small groups (Iyagba, Ijumu, Ikiri, Owe, Owoṛo and Abunu) of Kabba and part of Kogi Division of the present Kwara state. Over most of these eastern countries¹ the landscape is gently to strongly undulating, and descends gradually from the Ekiti, Kabba, Akoko and Ijeṣa hills in the north to the low-lying territories of the Ondo, Ikale and Ilaje. The Ilaje country lies along the coast and is deeply dissected by a large number of lagoons and creeks. In the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Akoko territories, as well as in Kabba and Kogi Divisions, the landscape features many steep-sided residual hills and ridges. The relief of eastern and northern Ijeṣa and of western Ekiti is dominated by a quartz ridge running north to south from the area of Igbajo, through Imeṣi-Ile and Eṣṣon to Ipetu-Ijeṣa, and reaching its highest point near Erin-Oke, east of Ileṣa, where it rises to 2,400 feet. In the areas of Idanre of northern Ondo, Akure, Ikeru and Ado of southern and central Ekiti, and Oka and Ikeru of Akoko, the most notable relief features are steep-sided dome-shaped inselbergs rising abruptly from the surrounding country and displaying bare rock faces. In Kabba and Kogi Divisions in the extreme north-east of Yorubaland, the Agbaja plateau runs from north-west to south-east, terminating near Lokjoja at the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers. Altogether, these areas of hills and inselbergs constitute the most rugged parts of Yorubaland. The Akoko territory, in the far eastern part of the region, is about the most craggy – its hills merging into the Kukuruku hills of the Afenmai region of the Mid-west State.

1. Buchanan, K. K. and Pugh, J. C.: *Land and People in Nigeria*, London 1962, pp. 12-20.

These north-eastern Yoruba hills constitute a watershed from which a number of rivers flow north or north-east to the Niger and south to the Gulf of Guinea. The Oyi and the Ebba might be mentioned among the rivers flowing to the Niger. Of those flowing southwards, the most important are the Oni, the Oluwa with its tributary the Omānla, the Siluko with its tributary the Oweṅa, and the Oṣe with its tributary the Oḡbeṣe.

Except for its far-northern reaches, the vegetation of the whole area is high forest punctuated by patches of cultivated land around the main towns and villages. Usually, the ridges and hills, wherever the bare rock domes are absent, are very thickly wooded. In the north-eastern parts of Ekiti as well as most of Akoko and Kabba, comparatively open woodland savannah predominates; but even in such areas, scattered patches of rain forest are found.

The peoples mentioned above, who share this region among them, are ethnic and territorial sub-groupings of the Yoruba. Of the other such sub-groupings occupying the rest of Yorubaland the main ones are the Oyo, Ijebu, Eḡba, Ife and Eḡbado.² It is not known at what stage in their history the Yoruba became differentiated into these sub-groups. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century such divisions had become easily recognisable³ and in spite of the much greater contacts among the Yoruba since the nineteenth century, the average Yoruba is still more conscious of his membership of his particular sub-group than of the whole Yoruba.

Probably mostly because of this latter fact, foreign writers on the Yoruba are apt to exaggerate somewhat the cultural differences between the Yoruba sub-groups. For instance, after analysing the traditional political organisation of a number of Yoruba states – the Ekiti kingdoms, the Ijebu kingdom, the Owe of Kabba, and the kingdom of Iwo (an Oyo state) – Peter Lloyd concluded that the 'various Yoruba sub-tribes have widely differing political

2. Peter Lloyd calls them 'sub-tribes' of the Yoruba – Lloyd, P. C.: 'Traditional political system of the Yoruba', *South-west Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 4, No. 10, 1954, pp. 366–84. Awolowo calls them 'tribes' of the 'Yoruba national, ethnic or linguistic group' – Awolowo, Obafemi: *Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution*, O.U.P., Ibadan 1966, p. 94. I prefer 'sub-groups' or 'sub-groupings' of the Yoruba ethnic group.

3. Ajayi, J. F. A. and Smith, R.: *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge 1964, p. 2.

institutions'⁴ and that scholars, especially Paula Brown,⁵ who have assigned a single general type of political organisation to the whole of the Yoruba, have confused the situation.

That the Yoruba political system varied from place to place is true. It is only to be expected that, in a country as extensive as that of the Yoruba, differences in environment and historical experience would result in the political institutions varying from area to area. Moreover, it seems reasonable to suggest that political institutions varied from time to time in each place, both in their structures and relative importance in the whole system. But in spite of this, it seems nearer the truth to claim that, in its basic outline, one political system pervaded the whole of Yorubaland and therefore that it is possible to speak of a Yoruba type of political organisation as Paula Brown does.⁶

Comments similar to the above are applicable to other spheres of Yoruba culture: language, religion, marriage customs, kinship systems and child-rearing practices. Thus, for instance, all the sub-groups speak what is clearly the same language, though each speaks a more or less distinct group of dialects of that language, and these dialects are mutually intelligible.⁷

It is important also to note that none of the sub-groups is internally as homogeneous as writers such as Peter Lloyd seem to imply. In the first place, each group is sub-divided into a number of branches (usually kingdoms) differing, usually only slightly but at times quite considerably, in their culture and traditions.

Thus among the Egbas, the three Egbas branches – Egbas Agura, Egbas Oke-Ona and Egbas Agbeyin (or Egbas Alake) – have it that they came into the Egbas forests at different times in history, and their traditions are different from one another's.⁸ Ijebu traditions have it that each of the many states of the Ijebu country was founded by a separate immigrant group, the main groups being the one which founded the powerful Idoko kingdom now known as Ijebu-Imuṣin, the one⁹ which established the Ijebu-Igbo

4. Lloyd: *op. cit.* pp. 366–84.

5. Brown, Paula: 'Patterns of Authority in West Africa', *Africa*, Vol. 21, 1951, pp. 261–78.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Johnson, the Rev. S.: *History of the Yoruba from the earliest times to the beginning of the British Protectorate*, Lagos 1921, Introductory Chapter.

8. Biobaku, S. O.: 'An historical sketch of Egbas traditional authorities', *Africa*, Vol. 22, 1952, pp. 35–49.

dynasty, the two separate ones led by Ogborogan and Obanta which founded Ijebu-Ode and established its ruling dynasty, the series which peopled the Remo area, and the group which founded the Ajalorun dynasty of Ijebu-Ife.⁹

Moreover, though the Egba have now lived together in a single metropolis (Abeokuta) for over a century, there are still local variations in their dialect. The Egba-Alake, who before the nineteenth-century wars lived in the part of the Egba country adjacent to the Ijebu-Remo district, still speak a brand of the Egba dialect somewhat similar to Ijebu-Remo dialect.¹⁰ Among the Ondo, the Ode-Ondo dialect differs considerably from the Idanre dialect. Even more marked differences in dialect are to be observed among the Akoko where the dialects of any two neighbouring towns differ at least slightly.¹¹

The degree of diversity in each sub-group was obviously the result of its history and circumstances. Apparently, the sub-groups owed their origin to the fact that in a Yorubaland in which long-range lateral communications were considerably inhibited by thick forests, kingdoms in particular localities tended to develop closer contacts and stronger bonds with one another than with other kingdoms located in far-away places. In each sub-group that thus emerged, the extent to which any initial difference (as in dialects and traditions) would tend to disappear would depend on the nature of the locality and the historical experiences of its member kingdoms. For instance, in the Oyo country of northern Yorubaland, the comparative lightness of the vegetation and the success of Oyo-Ile in establishing its control over all Oyo towns resulted in some degree of homogeneity in the sub-group. On the other hand, the many Ekiti kingdoms remained distinct from one another because, according to Ojo,¹² 'the hilly and dissected topography of the area . . . slowed down contacts and therefore kept the sub-kingdoms intact'. Mrs. Awe says that although the Ekiti could be grouped together culturally, 'the hilly nature of their country has always encouraged a certain amount

9. Ayantuga, O. O.: *Ijebu and its neighbours, 1851-1914* (Ph.D. Thesis), London 1965, pp. 21-2.

10. Biobaku: *op. cit.* pp. 35-49.

11. (N.A.I.), Beeley, J.H.: *Intelligence Report on the Akoko District* (1934), pp. 1-10.

12. Ojo, G. J. A.: *Yoruba culture: a geographical analysis*, London 1966, p. 124.

of parochialism'.¹³ And the explanation for the greater cultural diversity among the Akoko would seem to reside in the fact that they occupy the hilliest and most rugged part of Yorubaland.

Then it must be pointed out that it was not always clear where one sub-group ended and another began. Along the borders of any two neighbouring sub-groups, there are towns and villages which the observer would find difficult to place and about which contradictory information would be offered on either side of the border.¹⁴

Finally, the relationship between the various branches of each sub-group was not always cordial. Quite often, they settled their disputes by appeal to arms and on occasion did not scruple to invite neighbours who belonged to other sub-groups to take part in their wars.¹⁵

In short then, to over-emphasise the cultural differences among the sub-groups and then to represent every one of them as an entirely homogeneous entity is to give a wrong picture of the whole Yoruba community. Admittedly, there were usually fewer differences in culture between the members of each sub-group than there were between the sub-group as a unit and other sub-groups.¹⁶ Moreover, sub-group consciousness played an important role in the history of the Yoruba. The rulers of the kingdoms of each regarded one another as blood 'brothers' and were, ideally, expected to respect the territorial integrity of one another. Sub-ethnic unity usually found greatest expression when members of one sub-group had to deal with 'foreigners'. A member of the sub-group was preferred to, and more trusted than, a 'foreigner'.

13. Awe, Mrs. B.: *The rise of Ibadan as a Yoruba power, 1851-1893* (D.Phil. Thesis), Oxford 1964, p. 127.

14. A good example of such a town is Irun in Akoko. In a letter dated 11 January 1935, the *Onirun* (ruler) of Irun said he was a younger brother of the *Onimesi* of Imesi-Lasigidi in the Ado (Ekiti) kingdom, and that the Irun people wanted a merger with Imesi; Onirun to D.O., 11 January 1935, E.D. 610/12, Ekiti Div. Off., Ado. Many Irun people still insist that they are Ekiti, not Akoko. However, the Rev. C. Phillips, who travelled through the Akoko and Ekiti countries in 1894, recorded: '10th Dec.: left Ogbagi . . . came to Irun the last Akoko town. . . Phillips's 1894 Diary, Phillips 1/1 (N.A.I.).

15. cf. the Rev. Father Oguntuyi: *A Short History of Ado-Ekiti*, Akure n.d., Pt. II, p. 19, for wars between Ado and Ikeru in Ekiti.

16. Among the members of the Owe group in Kabba, Peter Lloyd says, 'there are fewer differences in culture than between the group as a whole and neighbouring sub-tribes', Lloyd: *op. cit.* pp. 366-84.

Aggression against a 'foreigner' appears to have been far less objectionable than aggression against a 'brother'. And, though foreign aggression on a section of the sub-group did not always meet with united resistance by all its members, yet it seems to have been the case that sub-ethnic unity was most greatly accentuated in times of foreign aggression. In the nineteenth century, as will be seen in the following chapters, these sub-group loyalties played an important part in the resistance of the other Yoruba to the pan-Yoruba expansionism of Ibadan.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, a certain pattern of political relationships had evolved within each group. In some, like the Oyo, one single ruler had been paramount for a long time. In others, like the Ijebu, the situation was that of a single powerful ruler gradually emerging to a position of ascendancy but whose paramountcy was yet resisted or only tenuous in certain parts. In yet other divisions, such as the Egbas, peoples of a number of autonomous kingdoms lived together on the basis of equality.

The Ekiti, Ijesa, Akoko and Igbomina, who occupy the greater part of north-eastern Yorubaland, are the peoples most involved in this study. According to the traditions of the Ekiti, the Ekiti country was made up of sixteen kingdoms.¹⁷ Though there are now seventeen of the older kingdoms – Otun, Ikole, Ado, Oye, Ijero, Ido, Ikere, Akure, Ise, Emure, Efon, Okemesi (traditionally Imesi-Igbodo),¹⁸ Ara, Işan, Itaji, Obo and Ogotun – the people still stick to the notion of 'the sixteen kings of Ekiti'. This

17. The first written reference to the '16 kings of the Ekiti' is to be found in the statement recorded from the Awujale of Ijebu in 1882 when he said that he was an ally of 'the 16 kings of Ekiti' – P.P. 1887, C. 4957, *Correspondence Respecting War between Native tribes in the Interior of Lagos*, 'Statement of the Apena's Mission to the king of Ijebu, Dec. 1882-Jan. 1883', enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883. There is also a reference to the '16 crowned kings of Ekiti country' in the letter – the Kings of the Ekitiparapo to Moloney, 20 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

18. In this work, three towns are referred to bearing the common name Imesi: Imesi-Laşigidi (in the Ado kingdom and on the Ekiti-Akoko boundary in the far east), Imesi-Igbodo (now Okemesi and capital of the Okemesi District in Ekiti) and Imesi-Ile (the Ijesa village where the Ekitiparapo army encamped between 1879 and 1893). In each case, I prefer to keep the old name – Imesi-Laşigidi, Imesi-Igbodo, Imesi-Ile – for purposes of clarity.

list does not include Aiyede, which was founded by the Iye warrior Eşugbaya about the middle of the last century.

Among the Ijeş, tradition preserves the names of seven crowned rulers – the *Owa* of Ileş, the *Owa* of Igbajo, the *Owaoye* of Imeşi-Ileş, the *Alare* of Ilare, the *Oloni* of Ifewara, the *Olotan* of Otan-Ile and the *Elejeş* of Eşa-Oke.¹⁹ The tradition of the Igbomina speaks of a number of kingdoms in the distant past of which the most prominent were the *Orangun* of Ila, *Orangun* of Oke-Ila, *Asaoni* of Oke-Ewu, the *Alaran* of Aran, the *Alapa* of Apa, the *Oloro* of Oro (now Oro-Ago), the *Olupo* of Ajaş, the *Oluşin* of Işin, the *Eleş* of Igbaja and the *Oloro* of Ekumesan-Oro.²⁰ Among the Akoko, nothing like the Ijeş, Igbomina or Ekiti kingdoms, each controlling fairly large areas, seems ever to have developed. Each town lived under its ruler and no two of these towns are known ever to have acknowledged a single ruler.²¹

Not much is definitely known about the origins of these peoples. The Yoruba historian, Samuel Johnson, says that the Ekiti are a section of 'the aboriginal elements' occupying Yorubaland before Oduduwa.²² In general, it would appear that the people now living in these eastern districts are of two types – the aborigines of the country and the later immigrants. About the former, a great deal of information is still preserved in the traditions of the people. Thus Ulli Beier, mainly through an analysis of these traditions, has identified what might be aboriginal survivals in the kingdoms of Ado, Akure, Ikerę and Ijero in Ekiti.²³ Also, the chiefs of Ogotun still remember that when their ancestors came to settle in their present town, they found a number of small settlements in the locality – the Arun under the *Alarun*, the Igbon under the *Olowagbon* and the Isodu under the *Olusodu*. Knowledge about these earlier inhabitants of Ogotun remains so vivid, in fact, that N. A. C. Weir, who carried out a study of the Ogotun in 1933, came to the conclusion that 'it is probable they [Ogotun] are

19. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 23, gives the names of only two of these kingdoms – Ileş and Igbajo.

20. Dada, P. O. A.: 'The People called Igbomina', a paper read at the Annual Conference of Igbomina Students' Union, Omuaran, 28 December 1963; also May, D. J.: 'Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe countries in 1858', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, No. 3, 1860, pp. 221-2.

21. Beeley: *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

22. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 22.

23. Beier, Ulli: 'Before Oduduwa', *Odu*, No. 3, 1956, pp. 25-32.

aboriginals' and that it is unlikely they ever had much contact with the Yoruba immigrants from Ife.²⁴

Samuel Johnson has also recorded a tradition which says that the Ijeṣa of Ileṣa 'hailed from the Ekitis'.²⁵ This could mean that the aborigines of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries were the same people, with perhaps the greater section living in Ekiti.

It ought to be noted, however, that available evidence is not conclusive regarding whether the earlier settlers of the eastern Yoruba districts about whom so much is still known in those parts were definitely aboriginals. It is at least possible that some of them were earlier immigrant settlers from the west (Ife) who were subdued by later Yoruba immigrants from the same source. In the case of Ado and Ikere, for instance, Ulli Beier points out that the *Obukere* at Ikere and the *Elesun* (whom the *Ewi* found at Ado) might conceivably represent earlier Yoruba immigrants, while the *Ewi* and the *Ogoga* represent a backwash of Yoruba migration from Benin.²⁶

However this may be, it seems that the ruling groups in practically all the states of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko countries were the leaders of immigrant groups most of whom claim to have come from around Ile-Ife, while the others claim to have come from the east (mostly Benin) or from other places at different times. Of those rulers who trace their origins to Ile-Ife, Johnson makes particular mention of the *Owa* Obokun of Ileṣa, the *Orangun* of Ila, the *Ore* of Otun, the *Alara* of Ara, the *Ajero* of Ijero, the *Alaye* of Efon and the *Owa* of Igbajo. But to this list is usually added the *Oloye* of Oye, the *Elekole* of Ikole, the *Onitaji* of Itaji, *Onisan* of Iṣan, *Olojudo* of Iddo, *Oluṣo* of Ajaṣe, *Oluṣin* of Iṣin and a few more in Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina. Of these, the *Orangun* of Ila is often regarded as the fourth of the direct sons of Oduduwa or Olofin, first ruler of Ife and progenitor of the Yoruba. The *Owa* of Ileṣa is said to be a descendant of Obokun, one of Olofin's sons or grandsons who, by an act of bravery and loyalty to the great father, earned himself the gift of the 'sword of victory' from Ile-Ife.²⁷

24. (N.A.I.), Weir, N. A. C.: *Intelligence Report on Oḡotun District* (1933), pp. 1-3.

25. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 21.

26. Beier: *op. cit.*, p. 29.

27. Abiola, J. D., Babafemi, J. A. and Atayero: *Iwe Itan Ileṣa, Ileṣa 1932*, Chapters I and II.

Of the groups who are represented as having come from the east, the story usually goes that they too first came from Ife and went, either separately or in the company of the Oba of Benin, to the east where they settled in the Benin kingdom. Thereafter, for one reason or another, they retraced their steps due westwards and finally settled in their present abode. Rulers belonging to this group are found almost entirely among the Ekiti and Akoko, though a tradition has it that the Owa of Ilesha once undertook a lengthy expedition to visit his 'brother', the Oba of Benin and on his return journey established dynastic ties with the ruling family of Akure.²⁸ The *Alano* of Idoani and the rulers of Arigidi, Işua, Ifira, Afa, Ipesi and Epinmi (in Akoko), the Ewi of Ado, the *Deji* of Akure and the Ogoga of Ikere (all in Ekiti) are the best known in the group. The Benin origins, or at least the close connections of the rulers of these kingdoms with Benin, seem to be shown in many similarities between their culture and Edo culture, especially in the strong influence of the Edo language on their dialects. For instance, each of their rulers uses the Benin ceremonial sword (which is roughly leaf-shaped) as the official ceremonial sword, while Edo influences are obvious in court rituals and ceremonies and royal regalia. Such common chieftaincy titles as *Ojomọ*, *Saşere* and *Ologboşere* might conceivably have been derived from Benin.²⁹

A few rulers do not fit into either of these groups. For instance, as has been pointed out, the *Ata* of Aiyede is a descendant of Eşugbayi, the *Balogun* (war leader) of the Ekiti town of Iye near the Iyagba boundary who, after the town was destroyed by the Ilorin about the middle of the nineteenth century, roamed about pillaging and conquering until he finally settled with some Ekiti and Iyagba refugees in the present town of Aiyede.³⁰ The rulers of the towns of Oke-Ode, Ore, Ile-Ire and Agunjin in Igbomina are said to have come from Oyo (probably in the seventeenth century); while the founder of the Oloro dynasty of Oro-Ago

28. Egharevba, J. U.: *A Short History of Benin*, Ibadan 1960, p. 33; Kęnyo, E. A.: *Yoruba Natural Rulers and their Origin*, Ibadan 1964, pp. 83-4; Atandare, J.: *Iwe Itan Akure*, an unpublished manuscript of a book on Akure history.

29. Akintoye, S. A.: 'The North-eastern Yoruba Districts and the Benin kingdom', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 4, No. 4, June 1969.

30. May: *op. cit.*, p. 225.

came, according to Igbomina traditions, from Ketu in the far western Yoruba country.³¹

Apart from these, many of the Ekiti and Akoko towns contain pockets of people who are the descendants of immigrants from various quarters outside. In the Ijero kingdom, the villages of Iye, Ijeṣa-Iye, Iperẹ, Iporo and Eḍa claim to have fled from the North during the Nupe wars early in the nineteenth century. Bovell-Jones thinks that 'their contention is corroborated by the fact that their organisation differs in minor details from that of other settlements [in the Ijero kingdom] and that their facial markings are not the same.'³² All over Akoko there are traces of settlers of Iyagba and Kukuruku origin; while among the Igbomina there are scattered pockets of Nupe and Fulani settlers who have now been absorbed into the local society.³³

It is not always clear how the immigrant ruling groups managed to establish their sway over the earlier settlers of the eastern districts. The need to impress the subject people with the legitimacy of their rulers has affected the traditions in two ways. First, each ruling group wishes to prove that it originated from Ife, the fountainhead of legitimacy among the Yoruba. Secondly, and more important here, anything which tends to connote conquest is carefully kept out of the traditions. In describing the process whereby power was seized from the earlier settlers, a common euphemism is usually employed to suggest that the earlier ruler of the town, who was anxious to devote his time to the town rituals, invited the stranger to assume responsibility for civil and political matters.³⁴

Yet it is possible to discern three main trends in this process of seizing power. First, there are those ruling groups who, when they arrived in the country, settled in or near some existing town by whom they were given land to build houses and make farms. However, as time went on, and most probably because of the more advanced political organisation of the immigrants, the state system of the former settlers was gradually effaced in favour of the imported system, leading ultimately to the political ascen-

31. Dada: *op. cit.*, p. 16.

32. (N.A.I.), Bovell-Jones, T. B.: *Intelligence Report on the Ijero District of Ekiti Division, Ondo Province*, June 1936, p. 7.

33. Beeley: *op. cit.*, pp. 1-10; Dada, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

34. Lloyd, P. C.: 'Yoruba Myths: A sociologist's interpretation', *Odu*, No. 2, 1956, p. 24.

dancy of the newer over the older settlers. At Ise, in Ekiti, for instance, the members of the small Orun community continue to claim to be the descendants of the original owners of the land.³⁵

Secondly, there are those ruling groups whose ascendancy seems to have been achieved through armed conquest. In Ado, the story of how the Ewi tricked and decapitated the Eḷesun³⁶ (ruler of the then settlement of Iḷesun) suggests that the Ewi and his followers established their sway by conquest. Johnson tells the story of how the Owa Obokun carved, with his sword, a kingdom for himself around Iḷeṣa.³⁷

Thirdly, there are those ruling groups who seem to have come in much larger numbers than the original settlers of the place they now occupy, so that their ascendancy was made immediately possible by sheer superiority of numbers. Oḡoṭun tradition has it that when the Ologoṭuḥ came, his followers were so many that the people of the three small villages of Arun, Igbon and Isodu were almost immediately overwhelmed.

Finally, in some cases, two or more of these processes went into operation. Thus the Ogoga, who was gradually becoming a leading personage at Ikere, seems to have been aided in his assumption of supreme civil power by the intervention of Benin arms.³⁸ And at Ado, where the sovereignty of the Ewi was established through conquest, the Ewi still finds it necessary to attempt, at his installation, to win over the Iḷesun people by paying ritual respect to the Eḷesun.

Once established, each kingdom grew through the founding of settlements from the major town, and conquest, or willing submission, of other towns and villages. A number of factors dictated the founding of settlements from the main town. The majority of such settlements arose as a result of agricultural activities. Usually the farms were situated only a few miles around the town. But the increase in population and the desire for more fertile land

35. (E.D.O.), WP19741A, Petition by Egbẹ Omo Ibiḷe Orun, 30 June 1940.

36. Oguntuyi: *op. cit.*, pp. 9-13.

37. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 24.

38. (N.A.I.), Weir, N. A. C.: *Intelligence Report on the Ikere District of Ekiti Division, Ondo Province* (1933), pp. 11-13.

eventually induced large sections of the agricultural population to go far away from the town to make farms. In such cases, the long distance made it difficult to return to town daily or even frequently, with the result that huts of a more permanent nature would be built and a village would emerge. This would usually develop into a more permanent settlement, with the huts being continually modified until they became town houses. Quite often such a settlement never went beyond being a camp (*ago*) or farmstead (*aba*); sometimes it became a hamlet (*abule*) or a village (*ileto*) or even a town.³⁹

Other settlements were founded away from the main town or existing villages, to perform some definite functions. This group would include those villages which arose as market centres for the surrounding villagers and the townspeople;⁴⁰ the villages which performed religious functions for the whole kingdom;⁴¹ villages which served as defensive posts for the heart of the kingdom.⁴² Some villages arose in localities where geographical conditions facilitated the development of a particular industry.

Then there were those villages and towns which were added to the kingdom by conquest. In the Akure kingdom, the villages of Oba, Ilara, Ijare and Ero did not originate from Akure but appear to have been conquered.⁴³ Ilesa had to change its site twice because of aggression by Akure before it finally settled at the present site. In the Efon kingdom, Ido-Irapa seems to have sought the protection of the Efon during the Benin invasion of the early nineteenth century.⁴⁴ It would seem that many erstwhile independent towns lost their independence during the war years

39. c.f. Ojo: *op. cit.*, Chapters 4-5, for details of the development of such villages in other parts of the Yoruba country.

40. Igbara-Oke in the Akure kingdom, arose on the spot where Akure, Ilesa and Ogotun traders used to meet for trade. In the nineteenth century it became the meeting point for Ekiti and Ondo traders.

41. The village head of Iworopora in the Ado kingdom is the high priest of Obalufon for the whole kingdom. Weir, N. A. C.: *Intelligence Report on Ado Ekiti* (1933), pp. 20-1.

42. The cluster of villages which were situated on the hills some four to six miles west of Ado and known collectively as Uyin acted as defence outpost to Ado.

43. (N.A.I.), Weir, N. A. C.: *Intelligence Report on the Akure District of Ekiti Division, Ondo Province* (1934), Appendix D.

44. (E.D.O.), File No. A2/47, *Adeniran, Alaye of Efon v. J. O. Fasan, Bale of Ido-Irapa*.

of the nineteenth century through seeking the protection of their more powerful neighbours.⁴⁵

In outline, as already pointed out, the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina share, as do the other Yoruba sub-groups, a common type of political organisation. But, owing to the comparatively greater cultural contacts between these eastern groups, even the details of their political organisations are very similar. For instance, Johnson points out that the term *ọwa* for king is typical of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa – it was ‘a generic term amongst them’.⁴⁶ And D. J. May, after travelling in the 1850s first through the *Ọyọ* country and later through Ijeṣa and parts of Ekiti, pointed out that he found, among other differences, the important one that the structure of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa palaces differed from that of the *Ọyọ* palaces in that the former lacked the high gabled porch characteristic of *Ọyọ* palaces.⁴⁷

In general outline then, the political structure of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko town was based on a combination of the lineages, the associations, and the institutions of central state authority. Everybody belonged to an *ebi* (lineage) and the male members of a lineage lived together in one *agbo-ile* (compound). Each lineage was made up of the male descendants of a common predecessor and had its own corporate organisation with an *Olori-ebi* (lineage head) who was usually the oldest member of the lineage. The lineage held meetings to discuss matters affecting itself or its members, or to settle disputes between its members.

As the conduct of each member greatly affected the reputation of the lineage,⁴⁸ the lineage was deeply interested in the affairs of

45. The town of Osi would seem to be the best example of this. Yoruba tradition recorded from the earliest days of the British Protectorate supports Osi's claim to have been independent and powerful in the not-distant past – cf. (E.D.O.), Ambrose, Capt. W. G.: North-eastern Travelling Commissioner's Diary, entry for 20 November 1901.

46. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 23.

47. May: *op. cit.*, p. 221.

48. In a rather rigid way, society took every individual as the microcosm of his lineage. Thus a young man of good conduct might find it difficult to find a wife simply because it was remembered that a member of his lineage had in the distant past committed a shameful offence like stealing or had had a serious disease like leprosy. Conversely, everybody inherited title to praises due to the good or valiant

its members and exercised a powerful moral authority over them. The lineage performed some judicial functions, especially in cases affecting matrimony, quarrels, debts and some criminal offences such as minor cases of stealing, offences against the person and adultery. Its penal authority did not go beyond chastisement, fines or other impositions. No person would dare to stand up against the authority of his lineage. Where a lineage had a chieftaincy title in the town, the lineage was responsible, whenever necessary, for recommending to the *oba* and his chiefs the candidate who ought to be selected for the title.

Perhaps the most important association was the age grade. Each person belonged to an age grade. These groups were constituted about every three years – although the interval varied from place to place. The grades were called *egbe* in some places and *otu* or *igbamọ* in others. In some towns, men and women belonged to the same *egbe* while in other towns women had separate *egbe* of their own. Usually in the bigger towns, each *egbe* was organised on two levels: on the quarter level and then on the town level. The quarter *egbe* had its own *Olori-egbe* (President), *Atele* (Vice-President), *Akapo* (Treasurer or Curator) and *Olojua* (sharer of things at meeting or feasts).

Each *egbe* had its own function to the town.⁴⁹ The youngest were fit only for weeding and sweeping public places; those above them for cutting and carrying thatch for public buildings; the next for carrying out the thatching repairs and clearing the roads; the next still for carrying guns and ammunition and accompanying their elders to war. Between the ages of twenty-seven and thirty, a man became fit for military service. The elders were exempt from public work. In some places, like *Ikerẹ*, a man had to reach a certain age grade before he could assume a chieftaincy title. Apart from public work, the age groups were often well organised and exercised considerable moral authority over their members. Furthermore, members of age groups performed a number of obligations communally for one another.

In addition to the age grades, there were a number of professional or trade associations, like the hunters' association (*Egbe Ode*), the women dyers' and weavers' associations (*Egbe Alaro*

deeds of members of his lineage. Hence the praise-songs, praise-sayings and special names associated with each lineage.

49. Lloyd: 'Traditional Political System of the Yoruba', *op. cit.*, pp. 366–384.

and *Egbe Alaṣo*), and many market 'commodity associations'⁵⁰ like *Egbe Oniyọ* (salt sellers), *Egbe Eleran-ogun* (sellers of bush meat), cloth sellers, kola sellers, iron implements sellers and others. Each of these associations occupied its own important place in the political system. Begun basically with a view to protecting and organising the trade or profession, each association eventually evolved a more or less detailed organisation, with *Olori-egbe*, *Atele*, *Olojua*, meetings and rites of admission. At times, an association came to have a guardian god and surrounded itself with an air of mystery.⁵¹ Each association came to perform a definite function to the state. The hunters association watched the safety of the roads and joined the blacksmiths association in propitiating the god *Ogun* (god of iron and war) for the town. The commodity associations were responsible for the general order and care of the market place. Each such association had its own *isọ* (area) in the market place and was responsible for the erection, repair and allocation of the stalls. They also, singly or in combination, settled disputes arising from the market place.

These associations had a great deal of moral authority over their members. Such authority was used in performing judicial functions, especially in quarrels arising from the trade, debt and simple cases of stealing and fraud.

The most important institutions of central state authority were the chiefs, the councils and the *ọba* (king). There were two broad sets of chieftaincy titles – the civil and the military – each with a senior and a junior segment. Generally, the civil chiefs were responsible for communing with the *ọba* daily on matters affecting the town, and for judging all criminal and civil cases. Those who were the heads of quarters bore the responsibility of maintaining peace in their quarters and judging cases above the competence of the lineages. The *ẹlegbe* (war chiefs) under the leadership of the *Olori-ẹlegbe* were in charge of defence. They led the citizen armies which came into existence in times of war.

The councils met in the palace of the *ọba*. The palace of each *ọba* contained at least three courtyards, used as chambers for

50. The term 'commodity association' is derived from Hill, Polly: 'Markets in Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4, December 1963, pp. 441-53.

51. The association of blacksmiths for instance, had the god *Ogun* (god of iron) as their patron-god and their workshops were regarded with much respect.

these councils.⁵² Usually, there were an Upper or Inner Council of the top five or six chiefs usually called *Olorimarun* or *Iwarefa*, a Lower Council of some of the top plus the lower chiefs and a Council of the military chiefs. The membership of these councils was more or less fixed by tradition, but in cases of emergency could be altered to suit the occasion. When found necessary also, prominent men in society, elders or leaders of lineages could be called to a meeting of any of the councils. The *oba* had the right to call any citizen, even at the shortest notice, to attend a meeting of a council. The Inner Council met daily (or was supposed to meet daily) to deliberate on all affairs of state. The *oba* himself was often in attendance, but if he were not in attendance all decisions had to be conveyed to him through a member who bore the traditional duty of liaison between the council and *oba*. Once the decision was conveyed and the *oba*'s views heard, the council dispersed and it was left to the *oba* to cause it to be passed to the people or executed. This council was the highest judicial authority of the state and could hear all serious cases which were above the competence of the quarter chiefs.

The Lower Council and the Council of war chiefs met less frequently. The Lower Council deliberated on matters placed before them by order of the *oba* and could also judge important cases. The war chiefs met only when occasion demanded it. In times of grave emergency, they might meet with the top chiefs.

The *oba* was the father of his town. In theory, the government of the town was the *oba*'s government and he was supposed to have power of life and death over his people. He was supposed to be so rich that his wealth could not be compared with that of any citizen, however rich,⁵³ and his court was supposed to be the last word in grandeur and manners. On being made *oba*, a man ceased to be called by his own name and was invested with a grand symbolic epithet.⁵⁴

52. (U.I.L.), Clarke, William (Baptist Missionary to Central Africa) in his *Travels and Explorations, 1854-8*, pp. 160-72, described Ileša and its palace; also May: *op. cit.*, pp. 216-19. See Beier, Ulli: 'The Palace of the Ogoḡas in Ikerē', *Nigeria*, No. 44, 1954, for a description of the Ikerē palace.

53. The Ado have a proverb which says, '*Nwḡn ki ika 'Ewi mḡ ḡlḡla*' (Nobody ever mentions the Ewi when counting the rich, because he is far too rich for that).

54. The epithet was usually conferred at the *oba*'s installation and was supposed to symbolise the fortunes of the kingdom (as foretold by the oracle) during the reign.

In practice, however, the *oba* exercised little direct authority of his own. The chiefs, the councils, and further down the ladder, the lineages and associations were the chief instruments of authority.

Usually the *oba* communicated with the townspeople through one of his own attendants who acted as town crier. Occasionally he might think it necessary to call a town meeting and this would be held in the large courtyard of his palace. This courtyard was also used for all state appearances, especially at the time of the festivals. Except on great religious occasions the *oba* did not appear before the people. If he called a town meeting, he sat behind a curtain in his portico where he could see, but could not be seen by, the people and one of the leading chiefs spoke for him or echoed him.

✓ Furthermore, there were certain institutions of a specialised nature which performed duties akin to those of the police, jailers and executioners. Such bodies were the *Efa* and *Origbo* at Ado and the *Olorokun* at Ikerẹ. In each case they wore a distinctive uniform and had an aura of religious awe surrounding them.⁵⁵

Finally, the place of age in the political system deserves mention. The importance of age arose from the respect paid to old and experienced people as the repositories of society's traditions and wisdom. In the lineages and associations, the voices of old men had much weight and were often decisive. Even in the councils of chiefs, though rank might in theory be all important, the voice of an old chief often proved, in practice, weightier than that of a young chief of a higher rank.

The political organisation of the more advanced villages and towns in the kingdom followed more or less the pattern of the organisation of the capital town. The people of the camps, farmsteads and hamlets almost invariably still were citizens of the capital town: they still had their homes in the main town and returned to town at intervals and to take part in the festivals and ceremonies. Consequently, lineages and age groups did not usually develop in these settlements. Any co-operative functions, like clearing the roads or felling trees across streams to make bridges, were usually carried out communally.

55. See *Oba Adegoriola*, the *Ogoga* of Ikerẹ: 'A note on the administration of Ikerẹ before the advent of the British', *Odu*, No. 3, 1956, p. 23, for a description of the uniforms and functions of the *Olorokun* at Ikerẹ.

Of central administration in the kingdom there was very little.⁵⁶ The capital town was known as *olu-ilu* (capital town) or *ara'lu* (metropolis) and all the other towns and villages were known collectively as *ereko* or *egure* (suburban towns). In times of emergency, especially war, the *ereko* chiefs or the *bale*s (subordinate rulers) would be called upon to attend council meetings with the metropolitan chiefs to plan the defence of the whole kingdom. Also, the appointment of each *bale* was supposed to be sanctioned by the *oba* – although, in fact, no case is known in which the *oba* refused to sanction the appointment of a *bale* whom the village chiefs and people had selected.

In theory, the villages recognised the *oba* as their king, but the *bale*s and their chiefs were, in practice, the rulers of the *ereko* towns and villages. During festivals, the villages sent gifts and tributes to the *oba*. Such gifts and tributes seldom approached the proportion or nature of levies or taxes, and were important not so much for their economic value as for their political significance. There were cases where only a calabash of kola or a sheep would be sent. Much smaller gifts were not unknown.⁵⁷ Usually, each village sent the same type of gifts every year, and consequently these gifts tended to assume symbolic or even ritual qualities. The *oba* was also expected by custom to send token gifts in return to the villages.

Apart from these annual presents, the *oba* might occasionally demand gifts from one or other of the villages, and these would be forthcoming. This custom was open to abuse, and it was rather often (it would appear) abused, especially by the *oba*'s sons and relatives, who might walk into a village and in the name of the *oba* demand one thing or another. And this was perhaps always the greatest cause of disaffection between the villages and the *obas*. The *Owa* of *Ileša* himself admitted in the nineteenth century that there was a great deal of resentment in the subordinate *Iješa* towns on account of the thoughtless exactions of the *Ileša* chiefs and princes.⁵⁸ Whenever gifts were brought to the *oba*, each

56. See (N.A.I.), Vosper, R. A.: *Intelligence Report on the Effon District* (1934), pp. 1–14, for a description of the traditional administration of the Effon kingdom.

57. e.g. bitter-kola.

58. C.4957, Report of the Rev. Charles Phillips's second mission to the interior as envoy of the Governor of Lagos, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

village had to approach him through one leading chief in the town.⁵⁹ In addition, each ereko town or village was responsible for keeping in repair particular portions of the palace and the town walls of the olu-ilu.

In the day-to-day administration of the ereko towns and villages, the ōba had no hand, although all their major succession disputes were referred to him for settlement. The ōba settled all disputes between villages within the kingdom, and bore the responsibility for any dispute between a part of his kingdom and parts of neighbouring kingdoms.

It was perhaps in the pattern of relationships within each group that the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina differed clearly by the nineteenth century. By the beginning of the century, one of the Ijeṣa kingdoms, the Ileṣa kingdom of the Ōwa, was in the process of establishing its dominance over all the Ijeṣa. On leaving Ife with the 'sword of victory', the Ōwa Obokun and his successors moved the seat of their government for a long time from town to town in the Ijeṣa country (from Igbadaye to Ilowa, Ibokun, Ilaje or Ipole-Ijeṣa) before they finally settled at Ileṣa. While they were on the move and after their settlement at Ileṣa, their story was one of continual conquests. The best known of the early Ōwas were the great warrior rulers Obokun, Ōwari, Oge, Owaluṣe, Atakunmoṣa, of whom not less than two have been deified and are still being worshipped in various parts of Ijeṣa.⁶⁰ By the time the nineteenth century opened, Ileṣa had grown into a great city, with seven gates which, according to a tradition recorded in 1882, led to some 900 Ijeṣa towns and villages all of which were subordinate to Ileṣa.⁶¹ Of the old Ijeṣa kingdoms, only Igbajo which was tucked away on the more distant, more rugged and thickly forested hills of northern Ijeṣa managed to retain its

59. e.g. In the Ijero kingdom the villages of Ōro, Idao, Iroko, and Epe used to approach the Ajero through the Ōbanla; Ara, Ipoti, Odo-Ehin through the Ēisikin; Inu through the Ēisaba; Iyapa, Ilokunwo, Era, Ewu, Iye, Ijeṣa-Iye, Ipōro, Ipēre and Ēda through the Ogboni; Ikoro through the Sade and Ijurin through the Aṣa.

60. Ōwari and Atakunmoṣa.

61. C.M.S. (Y), 1/7/5, 'Towns destroyed by the Ibadans in the Ijeṣa country', notes taken by P. J. Meffre when he visited Imeṣi-Ile in January 1882 as envoy of the Lagos government.

independence. But even Igbajo was frequently menaced by the Ileṣa army and seems to have, at certain times, paid some tributes to Ileṣa.⁶²

Among the Igbomina, the Orangun of Ila is regarded as something of a 'father' and the original inheritor from Ife of the land on which all the Igbomina later settled.⁶³ Before coming to Ila, the seat of government of the Orangun had been established for brief periods in a number of localities, the best remembered of which are Oke-Ila and Ila-Yara. Probably in the sixteenth century and because of a dispute or famine, the centre of the kingdom was once again moved from the latter place to Ila under the leadership of a certain Igbonnibi, a scion of the dynasty.⁶⁴ The traditions say that because crops grown around Ila did much better than those grown around the older settlements, more and more people came to settle at Ila. In the end, therefore, Ila became a very large town.

All the other Igbomina kingdoms agree in their traditions that they are younger than the Ila kingdom. But each of them, while respecting the Orangun as 'father', seems to have been independent of him. Moreover, it seems obvious from the traditions that Ila was not always the most powerful of the Igbomina kingdoms. For instance, from information he collected at Ila in 1858, D. J. May noted, 'Ila [is] now the principal town of the Igbomina district. . . . This district of Yoruba is small in extent, . . . the principal chief in it was he of a town, Ewu [Oke-Ewu] . . . but recently he has been eclipsed by the chief of Ila' [*sic*].⁶⁵ Also, in the eighteenth century, while Igbomina was in the Oyo Empire, the Oyo authorities boosted the prestige of the Olupo of

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62. Igbajo tradition speaks of a time when the Igbajo people took tributes to the Owa of Ileṣa. However, this was, according to this tradition, not because Ileṣa had conquered Igbajo but because an Igbajo prince had become Owa of Ileṣa – the royal families of Ileṣa and Igbajo being, in the earliest times, of one and the same stock.

63. Dada: *op. cit.*, p. 2.

64. Ila palace tradition has it that twenty years after Igbonnibi and his followers came to Ila, the Oba of Benin sent messengers to inform him that certain white people had visited Benin. Igbonnibi sent his son, Lakale, to Benin to see the white men and Lakale came back with gifts from the white men for his father. From this event, Lakale received the name *Baba-Oyinbo* (white man's father) by which he continued to be known even after he later became Oba.

65. May: *op. cit.*, pp. 221–2.

Ajaşę by using him as a local superintendent of Oyo interests in northern Igbomina.⁶⁶

The Akoko present a different spectacle. As has been said, each town was more or less a kingdom, and though two or three towns might be compelled to join together in times of war, such alliances never developed into permanent institutional arrangements.⁶⁷

Before the nineteenth century, the Ekiti kingdoms never acknowledged any one single leader.⁶⁸ In fact, no two kingdoms in Ekiti are known to have been ruled together by a single Ekiti ruler. Each kingdom lived under the leadership of its own oba who accepted the leadership of no other person over and above himself. As we have seen, the Ekiti ruling groups did not all originate from the same place, nor did they migrate into the Ekiti country at the same time. The ruling groups came into the Ekiti country from different places; and even those who have it according to their tradition that they came from the same place (Ifę or Benin) also have it that they left their places of origin at different times and arrived in the Ekiti country at different times.⁶⁹ What might be called the 'Ekiti dialect' differs, in varying degrees, from one kingdom to another.⁷⁰ However, in the midst

66. Another tradition, however, has it that the Oluwo of the now small village of Oke-Aba was the most powerful northern Igbomina ruler before the Nupe invasions of the early nineteenth century. But it is significant that during these invasions the Nupe accorded the Olupo the status of senior Igbomina chief.

67. Beeley: *Intelligence Report on Akoko*, *op. cit.*

68. Lee: *op. cit.*, pp. 168-70, made this point; so did Peter Lloyd in his *Yoruba Land Law*, Oxford 1962, p. 185.

69. There is general agreement on this among the Ekiti - though claims of precedence among the kings make it difficult to find out who arrived in the Ekiti country before whom; (E.D.O.) Weir: *Intelligence Report on Ado* (1933), p. 31, stated that it appeared to him, from his investigations, that 'the arrival of the Ados was many years later than that of the Oyes . . .'. Judging from a comparison of the king lists, it would seem that the greater number of the earliest arrivals in Ekiti were from the west; cf. Akintoye: 'The North-eastern Yoruba Districts', *op. cit.*, p. 543.

70. C.O. 879/33: Alvan Millson, who visited the Confederate settlement at Imęsi-ŕę in 1890, spoke of the members of the Confederacy as 'forcibly united but still incongruous elements'; Millson to Colonial Secretary, 30 March 1890. Also, this view was very popular with the British administrative officers in Ekiti in the 1930s. O. V. Lee in his *Intelligence Report on the Ekiti Division* (1942), W.P. 19741A, Ekiti Divisional Office, Ado, pp. 163-8, stated that though there was an

of the plurality of ideally equal kings, the Ekiti had developed an accepted pattern of relationships among their many states by the opening of the nineteenth century.

These Ekiti *obas* – their relationships, their exploits, their achievements, even their failures – constitute a leading theme in the sayings, proverbs, folk songs and folk tales of the Ekiti people. From this wealth of folk literature, one subject, among others, stands out most prominently – the ‘brotherhood’ of the Ekiti kings. First, apart from representing all these *obas* as brothers, tradition also binds together as special ‘brothers’ little groups of them – the Ewi, *Ẹlẹkọlẹ* and *Ajero*;⁷¹ the Ewi and the Alara; the Ewi and the *Onitaji*; the *Ajero*, the Alara and the Ore. Here, the term ‘brother’ is not to be taken literally: it is a convenient universal synonym for all kinds of close relationships and friendships, political or cultural. In fact, its use tends to obscure the true nature and details of the relationships it covers, thereby making them difficult to trace and analyse. There seems, however, to have been close cultural and political contacts between these brothers. It is said according to *Igbara-Odo* tradition that the *Olowa* of *Igbara-Odo*, the *Ogoga* of *Ikerẹ* and the *Deji* of *Akurẹ* were sons of the same mother from Benin.⁷² The Benin origin of some of these rulers appears certain, but what type of special relationship developed among them after their settling in the Ekiti country is not clear. The close cultural, and perhaps political, association between *Ikerẹ* and *Akurẹ* is borne out by the fact that to the present day, there is a shrine in the *Akurẹ* palace known as *Iwa-Ogoga* at which the *Ogoga* used to worship annually.

Secondly, from the myths, stories and surviving practices among the Ekiti, it appears possible to discern at least a few general conventions and trends in intra-Ekiti relations. It seems to have been a rather generally accepted practice that the chiefs of

Ekiti country characterised by hills and rocks, there could not be said to be an ‘Ekiti people’. ‘The Ekitis’, he said, ‘are not a different tribe’, (i.e. they are not a sub-group in the sense that the *Ẹgba*, *Ijebu*, etc. are). N. A. C. Weir in his *Intelligence Report on Ikerẹ District* (1933) (N.A.I.), p. 2, stated, ‘The people who are called *Ikerẹs* are described as Ekitis inasmuch as they live and occupy land in a district which takes its name owing to its hilly nature’.

71. Babamponi, I. E.: *Itan Ewi, Ẹlẹkọlẹ at Ajero*, Ibadan n.d., tells the story of the origin of the kinship of these three *obas*.

72. (E.D.O.), Weir: *Intelligence Report on Ado District* (1933), Appendix D.

each of the 'sixteen' *olu-ilu* should, on the death of their *oba*, send envoys to inform the other *Ekiti obas*; also that each *oba*, at his accession, should send gifts and messages to the other *Ekiti obas* to inform them of his new status.

Dynastic marriages also seem to have occurred frequently among the *Ekiti* ruling houses. In some cases, in fact, such marriages occurred so frequently and over such a long period of time (as between the *Ewi* of *Ado* and the *Alara* of *Ara*) that they tended to assume the force of an unchangeable tradition. The mother of Prince *Fabunmi* of *Imeṣi-Igbodo* (who later led the *Ekiti* in the revolt against the *Ibadan*) is said to have been an *Oḡotun* princess.⁷³ And there is the story of the *Ikḡole* princess who was sent away with escorts as wife to the *Ore* of *Oṭun*; but at *Ido* on the way, the *Olojudo* was so attracted by her beauty that he took her for his wife, later sending *Ido* chiefs to the *Ẹḡḡkḡole* to announce and apologise for what he had done. The *Ẹḡḡkḡole* is said to have sent another girl to the *Ore*.⁷⁴

Another practice which seems to have been very common was that whereby an *oba* sent his children to live in the palaces of other *obas* until they came of age. As each *oba* usually had many *oloris* (wives) and a large number of children, and as succession to the throne was not settled by the principle of primogeniture, there was always in each palace a violent and bitter rivalry among the *oloris*, each wanting one of her own sons to succeed his father. Consequently, his father's palace was often not a safe place for a young prince to live and grow up in, and the practice was common of sending young princes away to be reared under the care of some reputable *balḡ* in the kingdom or, more often, in the palace of another *Ekiti oba*.

This same result was often achieved in another way. It was the rule that any of the many wives of an *oba* who committed adultery should lose her head. This penalty, however, was very often commuted to banishment from the kingdom; and such banished women as a rule took their younger children along with them to

73. Chief J. G. Omikunle's *Notes on Ekiti history* (manuscript) which he kindly allowed me to use. Chief Omikunle is the *Lejua* of *Okemeṣi* (*Imeṣi-Igbodo*) and is generally regarded at *Okemeṣi* as a town historian.

74. The son of this *Ikḡole* princess, called *Oṛḡku*, later became *Olojudo*: since then the *Olojudo* and *Ẹḡḡkḡole* have regarded each other as blood brothers. *Oṛḡku* has since also been the common name for male children of the *Ido* royal family.

their place of exile – usually the *olu-ilu* of another kingdom, where they and their children would live as guests of the *oba*. As the person of an *oba*'s wife was considered almost sacred, very few ordinary citizens would dare to take the risk of lodging her under their roofs.

Finally, trade served as a great uniting factor for the Ekiti people. The major trade routes were the south to north highway (starting from Akure or Ise, to Ado, then passing through the village of Are to the old site of Oye, then to Egosi, Itaji, Işan, Obo and Otun⁷⁵ to the Igbomina, Nupe and Oyo countries); and the smaller route which ran from Ado to Ara, to Ijero, Ikoro, Imesi-Igbodo (with a branch to Efon), then through Imesi-Ile and Igbajo in the Ijesa country to the Oyo country. There were smaller connecting routes: notably Ikole to old Oye, and Ogotun to Ara or Efon. Traders, mostly women, were continually moving to and fro on these routes and their innumerable feeder paths, carrying their wares on their heads from one end of the Ekiti country to another. Northern Ekiti traders carried the products which they had procured from their Nupe, Igbomina and Oyo neighbours (leather-works, shea-butter, potash, dried fish from the Niger, beads, and a large number of grassland herbs and delicacies) along with their own homespun cloth, cotton and locusts' beans to the markets of the south; while the southern Ekiti, whose country consisted more of tropical and sub-tropical forests, carried their *osun* (camwood),⁷⁶ kola, palm oil and *adi* (palm-kernel oil) together with imported goods like coral beads, European cloths⁷⁷ and metal implements to the northern markets. Işan (capital town of the Işan kingdom), Ara (in the Ijero kingdom) and Obo (in the Ado kingdom) made the finest pots and pottery goods in Ekiti, and young women from all over Ekiti used to converge on these towns to buy them.

It must not, however, be inferred from the above that the relationship between the Ekiti kingdoms was always cordial.

75. (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/3/2: Moloney described Otun as the meeting place for Ilorin and other northern traders on the one hand and Ekiti, Ijesa and other southern traders on the other – Moloney to Knutsford, Confidential Desp. of 30 April 1890. May: *op. cit.*, p. 223, also stated (1858) that the great highway from south to north passed through Otun.

76. A highly valued cosmetic wood.

77. Bought from Benin traders.

There were occasions when disputes and major disagreements led to armed clashes. Perhaps the most notable of these were the hostilities between Ado and Ikerẹ, Akurẹ and Isẹ, Isẹ and Emure. The Ado kingdom, having succeeded in conquering all the towns and villages in its neighbourhood, seems also to have desired to conquer Ikerẹ, and this led to a series of wars lasting till the last years of the nineteenth century.⁷⁸ The cause of hostility between Akurẹ and Isẹ is not so well known, but this hostility led to wars, the most memorable of which appears to have been the Otatere war⁷⁹ which was fought in the reign of Igbogi, the twenty-second Deji of Akurẹ. Emure and Isẹ were also often at war, owing, no doubt, to the ambition of the Isẹ (who are reputed to have been very warlike) to conquer Emure.⁸⁰

The Ekiti, Akoko, Ijeṣa and Igbomina appear to have shared the common experience of armed pressure by their powerful neighbours – notably Ọwọ and the Edo kingdom of Benin from the south, and the great empire of Ọyọ from the north-west. Akoko and Ọwọ traditions speak of at least twenty-seven invasions of the Akoko country by Ọwọ armies.⁸¹ Only one war between Ọwọ and an Ekiti state is definitely remembered, that between Ọwọ and Akurẹ in the reign of the Deji Igbogi.⁸² However, among the Ekiti, the Ọwọ people enjoyed the notoriety of brigands on the trade route from Ekiti to Benin.

Akurẹ tradition also records one war between Akurẹ and Ondo – also in the reign of the Deji Igbogi.⁸³ Apart from this, it would appear that Ekiti or Akoko contacts with Ondo were much less frequent than their contacts with Ọwọ, probably because Ondo was cut off from Ekiti and Ijeṣa by high hills, thick forests and big streams. At Igbara-Oke in the Akurẹ kingdom, Ondo, Ekiti and Ijeṣa traders used to meet to exchange their goods.

The earliest contacts of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Akoko with Benin

78. cf. Oguntuyi: *op. cit.*, pp. 52–6, for an account of these wars.

79. cf. Weir: *Intelligence Report on Akurẹ District*, *op. cit.*, Appendix D.

80. For an account of the Emure-Isẹ hostilities see Jegede, T. O.: *Itan Isẹ-Ekiti*, Ibadan, n.d., pp. 22–4.

81. Beeley: *Intelligence Report on Akoko*, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–20; also Ashara, M. B.: *The History of Ọwọ*, Ọwọ 1951, pp. 11–24.

82. This is described in detail in Atandare, J.: *Iwe Itan Akurẹ* (unpublished). Also in Weir: *Intelligence Report on Akurẹ*, Appendix D.

83. *Ibid.*

were commercial. It is generally believed that these earliest contacts dated back to the fifteenth century.⁸⁴ Benin traders brought corals, European cloth, cowrie shells and European iron implements and, at a later date, guns and powder, and took away home-spun cloth and camwood as well as beads and potash imported from the north through Ekiti and Akoko. Akure was the *entrepôt* of this Benin trade and a considerable number of Edo people soon settled permanently at Akure.⁸⁵

From about the middle of the fifteenth century and through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Benin Empire underwent a great deal of expansion.⁸⁶ The period of the greatest expansion was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the time of the great warrior kings Ewaure, Ozolua, Esigie, Orogbua and Ehengbuda. Ekiti and Akoko traditions usually attribute the success of the Benin wars of expansion to fire-arms introduced by Europeans. But it is known that the early Portuguese traders did not sell firearms to Benin, and that it was not until about the end of the seventeenth century, when the great tide of Benin expansion had ebbed, that the Dutch began to sell some flintlocks in the Benin River.⁸⁷

Benin armies first entered Akoko and Ekiti in the reign of Ewaure (who probably reigned in the late fifteenth century),⁸⁸ and between that time and the nineteenth century, the Edo invaded Akoko and Ekiti at various times. In Ekiti, their activities did not at first go beyond the southern Ekiti kingdoms. Akure became a sort of Benin military outpost, and from there Benin armies led out expeditions into the Ekiti interior. A secondary post seems to have later grown up at Ikeru. By the late sixteenth century, Benin forces had already penetrated as far as Otun in the extreme north of Ekiti and were attempting to go beyond.⁸⁹

84. Akintoye: 'The North-eastern Yoruba Districts', *op. cit.*, pp. 544-6.

85. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Akure Political Officer (Capt. Roupell) of Benin, 26 April 1897, *Benin Political Papers* (1897).

86. Bradbury, R. E.: *The Benin Kingdom and the Edo-Speaking Peoples of South-western Nigeria*, International African Institute 1957, pp. 19-22.

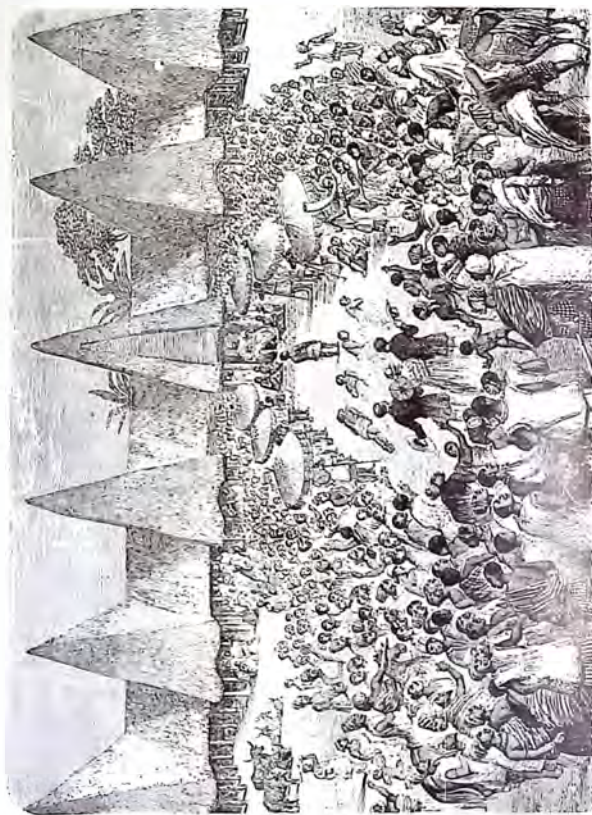
87. Ryder, A. F. C.: 'Dutch trade on the Nigerian Coast during the 17th century', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1965, p. 208.

88. Bradbury, R. E.: 'Chronological problems in the Study of Benin History', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1959, pp. 263-87.

89. Bradbury: *The Benin Kingdom*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.



Citizens of Abeokuta.



Public reception in a Yoruba palace; the Alafin Atiba receives the Rev. H. Townsend, Mrs. Townsend and the Rev. A. Mann at the Oyo Palace September 1853.

As military ventures, the Benin invasions appear to have been remarkably successful. The Ekiti and Akoko were too fragmented to offer much resistance to the mighty power of Benin. In only a few places like Ado and Akure therefore, was positive armed resistance offered. Oye, making adroit use of the forests and hills, is said to have inflicted a defeat on the Benin armies once. In one of the invasions, the Ado people, rather than offer resistance to the guns or tamely surrender, resorted to measures of passive resistance.⁹⁰ These were, however, almost all the few exceptions. By far the overwhelming majority of Ekiti kingdoms which were attacked offered their submission peacefully.

It is not known, however, how great the political consequences of these invasions were. A number of conclusions are indicated. First, even the armed invasions never touched some kingdoms like Obo and never succeeded in subduing others like Oye. Otun in the extreme north saved itself from trouble by reaching an agreement of friendship with the Oba of Benin through the Benin commanders;⁹¹ it later used this agreement to its own advantage, when, in the first years of the nineteenth century, it called upon Benin soldiers to use their guns in suppressing its rebellious subordinate town of Aye. In the fighting, one of the commanders of the Benin army was killed by the Aye and many of his soldiers gave up thought of returning to Benin, and settled at Otun.⁹²

Secondly, the Ekiti country is so distant from Benin that even when Benin was at the peak of its power, its hold on the Ekiti always remained more or less tenuous. And Benin was not always powerful. For perhaps all of the eighteenth century, Benin's power suffered a depression, marked only intermittently by short periods of recovery.⁹³ The great distance of Ekiti from Benin and the wide fluctuations in Benin's power enabled the Ekiti kingdoms, a few years after each conquest, to ignore or forget the terms of submission which they had offered to the

90. Oguntuyi: *op. cit.*, p. 20, gives an account of this war - 'Ogun Olupona-ku-s'upona' (Olupona ku s'upona - roughly, 'let every man die before his house'). The orders went round that everybody must stand unarmed in front of his house and absolutely refuse to move even when threatened with the gun. Death was to be preferred to being enslaved.

91. Egharevba: *A Short History of Benin, op. cit.*, p. 61.

92. The Aye war took place during the Benin invasions of 1810-18. The descendants of the Benin settlers are still at Otun in the street called *Ogbon Balogun*.

93. Bradbury: *The Benin Kingdom, op. cit.*, pp. 19-22.

conquering Benin commanders. The promised tributes were stopped and the kingdom continued to live in freedom. Sooner or later, another Benin commander would come and the usual terms of submission be once again offered, only to be ignored within a few years of the departure of the commander for Benin.⁹⁴ This explains the remarkable frequency with which Benin, when at the peak of its power, was compelled to invade Ekiti.

Not as much is known about Edo activities among the Akoko. Akoko tradition seems to suggest that the Edo were more successful in Akoko.⁹⁵ This was probably due partly to the comparative nearness of the Akoko country to the Benin kingdom, as the Akoko were the immediate western neighbours of the Afenmai areas of the Benin kingdom, and partly to the much greater fragmentation of the Akoko. But even then it was very difficult for a single authority to rule the Akoko as a whole and the topography of their country aided frequent revolts.

The Igbomina too began to feel the Edo threat from about the seventeenth century when Benin armies attempted to penetrate beyond Otun. Here, however, the invaders were effectively contained until the last Benin invasions in the first two decades of the nineteenth century when some of them pushed briefly into the frontier areas of Igbomina.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the Ijesa appear to have experienced no Benin threat. By the nineteenth century, the Owa of Ijesa claimed that the territories under the influence of Benin bounded the Ijesa kingdom in the east.⁹⁷

Usually when an area was conquered it was constituted into a 'tribute unit' and Benin representatives (known locally as *Bale-kale*)⁹⁸ were put there to watch Benin interests. As soon as Benin's hold on the kingdom slackened, these agents usually settled down in the kingdom and attended to their own interests.

94. Akure seems to have been an exception to this; Benin settlers were so many at Akure that they were able to exert influence to ensure continued loyalty of the Deji and chiefs. Even then, Egharevba mentions at least two instances when Akure had to be reconquered. Egharevba: *op. cit.*, pp. 58-60.

95. Beeley: *op. cit.*, pp. 1-10.

96. Akintoye: 'The North-eastern Yoruba Districts and the Benin Kingdom', *op. cit.*, pp. 547-52.

97. May: *op. cit.*, pp. 216-19.

98. *Bale-kale* or *Abilekale* is the Ekiti name for representatives of foreign powers. (Literally meaning a person who stays behind to keep watch on things.)

For a Benin man in Ekiti and Akoko, the opportunities were almost limitless for self-improvement through trade or the pursuit of some industry like metalwork. These pursuits were more attractive and more rewarding than the thankless and dreary job of an isolated agent of a distant king or chief, in the hills and forests of Ekiti. Quite often, such agents, like other Benin traders and craftsmen, intermarried with their hosts and acknowledged the authority of the *oba* in whose domain they lived. In each town, the Benin community usually lived together and appointed from among themselves leaders known as *Olotu-Ekiran* or *Olotu-Ado*. Such leaders, however, had no formal place in the wider government of the town; although they had usually to be consulted whenever it became necessary to bring the *Edo* community into participation in the affairs of the town.⁹⁹ •

On the whole, the available evidence points to the conclusion that before the nineteenth century the eastern Yoruba kingdoms, especially those of the Ekiti, Akoko and *Owo*, were drawn more towards the centre of the Benin kingdom in the south-east than westwards and north-westwards towards the main centres of Yoruba civilisation. But at various times and to varying degrees, the Ekiti, *Ijesa* and *Igbomina* also came under *Oyo* influence. The Old *Oyo* Empire, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, constituted by far the largest and most powerful state in Yorubaland. The basis of the military power of the empire was its great cavalry, and for this reason it was able to establish its control over the more open areas of the Yoruba homeland (the *Oyo*, *Egba* and *Egbado* districts) while the Yoruba states of the forests (*Owo*, *Ondo*, *Ijebu* etc.) remained outside its sway. Of the eastern Yoruba districts, only the *Igbomina*, occupying the comparatively open savannah country north of Ekiti, came under the empire.¹⁰⁰ The others, the Ekiti, *Ijesa* and Akoko, while acknowledging the *Alafin* (king) of *Oyo* as a senior brother among all Yoruba rulers, appear to have remained independent of the *Oyo* Empire, though with difficulty in some cases.

Of these, the *Ijesa*, being immediate southern neighbours of the metropolitan province of the *Oyo* Empire, appear to have been frequently under pressure by *Oyo*. Peter Morton-Williams

99. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Akure chiefs to the Political Officer, Benin, 26 April 1897.

100. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 13, says the *Igbomina* country was a backwood province in the *Ekun Osi* (or eastern) part of the Empire.

even suggests that the Ijeṣa rulers might have become vassals of the Alafin of Oyo at one stage, but there is no evidence for his further suggestion that the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Akoko districts might have been 'slave reservoirs' for the empire.¹⁰¹ According to Johnson's evidence, the Ijeṣa did attempt to fight back and caused much trouble for the people living in the outlying districts of the Oyo Empire. It was in answer to this that Ede was established as a sort of frontier post by the Oyo authorities, and this town became the base for many Oyo expeditions into the Ijeṣa country. Most of these expeditions, again according to Johnson, fared badly at the hands of the Ijeṣa forces. Probably in the late seventeenth century, the Ijeṣa established Osoḡbo on the River Oṣun as a shield against the thrusts from Ede.

In spite of this common tradition of suffering in the hands of these powerful neighbours, the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko never learned to come together for their mutual defence before the nineteenth century. Among the Ijeṣa, the challenge of Oyo pressure might have stimulated the rise of a common political leadership, that of the Owa of Ijeṣa. But among the Ekiti or Akoko, where an agglomeration of political authorities persisted, hardly any attempt at co-operation, say against the Edo, is recorded. In fact, among the Ekiti, the two kingdoms most affected by Edo expansion, Akure and Ikeru, came to look on it as bringing more good than evil. Akure became very wealthy as a result of the Benin trade, and Ikeru was able, with Benin aid, not only to put a permanent check to its ambitious neighbour, Ado, but also to threaten some other Ekiti kingdoms.¹⁰²

Also rather than unite, the Ekiti and Akoko and then the Ijeṣa and Ekiti were often hostile to each other. The Ekiti quite often used to carry wars of conquest and plunder into the Akoko (and Iyagba) countries. The political dishnity of the Akoko was always a temptation to its neighbours. In particular, Ikoḡ many times invaded the Akoko and Iyagba countries and established its sway

101. Morton-Williams, P.: 'The Oyo Yoruba and the Atlantic Trade, 1670-1830', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1964, p. 27.

102. Whole villages (like Are, Afaḡ, Agbado in the Ado kingdom) were removed by the Benin forces and brought to settle at Ikeru. This boosted the population and power of Ikeru.

over a number of Akoko towns and villages. Ado, too, seems to have made some conquests in Akoko.¹⁰³

The kingdom of Ilesa, having subdued most of the Ijesa country, appears to have begun by the opening of the nineteenth century to nurse expansionist ambitions in Ekiti. Its immediate Ekiti neighbours were Akure, Efon, Imesi-Igbodo and Ogotun. Its strong Benin connections seem to have sufficed to secure Akure against serious molestation by the Ijesa.¹⁰⁴ Both Efon and Imesi-Igbodo, situated on very high hills, managed to keep off the Ijesa.¹⁰⁵ Ogotun was the most vulnerable, and the Ologotun seems to have been compelled to come to some sort of agreement with the Owa in order to save his kingdom from destruction.¹⁰⁶ Even then the Ijesa continued to manifest so much ambition and such restlessness that it tended to breed a rather strong antipathy among the Ekiti towards the Ijesa.¹⁰⁷

103. (E.D.O.), *Ado Intelligence Book*, Vol. 1, p. 51. The Epeko claimed in a meeting at Ado on 29 March 1909 that the following villages in Akoko were once under Ikole in the nineteenth century: Afin, Oyin, Eruşu and Eşe; and that they were seized from Ikole by the Nupe in the last years of the century. Ado tradition also has it that Afa in Akoko was subject to Ado in the nineteenth century. Many an Akoko or Ado warrior came to acquire such appellations as 'Eni ti Akoko nbi omọ sin ni eşe oke' (The man for whose service the Akoko breed children in the Akoko hills), while an Ikole warrior (Okombo) was also known as 'Eni ti o nta Iyagba pelu imole re' (The man who sells the Iyagba and sells their idols along).
104. (N.I.A.), Benin Dist., 3/1/3. A speech by the Lisa of Akure at a meeting of Akure chiefs held in Chief Eremo's house on 15 April 1897 reviews the relationship between Akure and Ilesa - Akure chiefs to the Political Officer, Benin, 15 April 1897: *Benin Political Papers* (1897).
105. An acting Resident of Ibadan (F. C. Fuller), travelling in the Ekiti country in August-September 1897, discovered that the direct road from Efon to Ilesa passed over such high hills and steep slopes as to be almost unusable. He had to give up his horses (as the animals could not do the climbing and descending) and scramble over the hills as best he could - *Ibadan Resident's Travel Journal*, 1897, Iba. Prof. 3/6 (N.A.I.).
106. According to Ogotun tradition recorded from the Ologotun and Ogotun chiefs on 18 July 1963, the Owa and the Ologotun once reached an agreement never again to declare war on each other; and that the covenant was sealed by sharing roasted maize between the two. In remembrance of this, the sharing of roasted maize is still included in the funeral rites of the Ologotuns.
107. (U.I.L.), 'An account of Dr. Mojola Agbebi's work in W. Africa -

This of course does not mean that the relationship of the Ekiti to the Akoko, and the Ijeṣa to the Ekiti was always one of hostility. Even in times of armed clashes, much peaceful, especially commercial, contact continued between the peoples of the eastern Yoruba countries. The trade routes which have been described in Ekiti connected that district with the Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko districts, and such border towns as Otun, Igbara-Oke, Arigidi and Ikarẹ grew into important market towns.¹⁰⁸ The point is that the political pressures of the Ijeṣa under the Owa of Ieṣa on the Ekiti, and of the Ekiti (especially those of the Ikoḷe and Ado kingdoms) on the Akoko, sustained the traditions of hostility between the eastern Yoruba sub-groups. This made it impossible before the nineteenth century for them to unite against a common powerful enemy (for instance Ekiti and Akoko against the Edo), and, when all their countries were overrun by the Ibadan in the nineteenth century, made it impossible for a long time for them to forget their differences and come together to present a united front against the Ibadan armies.

comprising Yorubaland, Fantiland, the Ekiti country, Southern Nigeria and the Cameroons', a collection of articles and papers, 1894-1903.

108. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1. The Rev. Charles Phillips passed through Arigidi in December 1894 and described it as an important market town where Akoko, Ekiti and Nupe traders met to do a lot of trade.

Chapter 2

Ibadan Conquests and their Effects

The Old Oyo Empire had, with its power and influence, maintained a degree of order and prevented major wars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not only within its borders, but in the whole of Yorubaland.¹ By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the empire was in decline. A clear sign of this decline is seen in the career of one *Başorun* (Prime Minister of the Empire) who for a long time held all authority in the empire in the hands of himself and his children and reduced successive Alafins to mere puppets.² The climax was reached when Afonja of Ilorin, the *Arę-Ona-Kakanfo* (the highest military officer of the empire) revolted against the Alafin, set himself up as an independent potentate at Ilorin and invited the Fulani to come under his banner in a war to make himself overlord of large parts of the empire. But the Fulani soon got rid of Afonja and made themselves masters of Ilorin. From there, they began a systematic conquest of the Oyo Empire from the north until Oyo-Ile itself, the ancient capital of the empire, had to be deserted.³

1. Ajayi and Smith: *Yoruba warfare, op. cit.*, p. 5; Akinjogbin, I. A.: 'The Oyo Empire in the 18th Century: A Reassessment', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1966, pp. 449-60.
2. *Ibid.* However, Akinjogbin disagrees with this interpretation of the significance of Gaha's career in the history of Oyo. He argues that the conflicts between the powerful Gaha and successive Alafins arose from disagreement on the question whether Oyo should go on extending the empire by military means or concentrate on the economic exploitation of the area it already controlled. He therefore suggests that Gaha's success in reducing many Alafins to puppets and then destroying them did not signify weakness at the centre of the empire. The present writer holds the view, however, that Gaha's was one of those revolts of great chiefs against the Alafin which signified, and accelerated, the weakening of the state.
3. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas, op. cit.*, pp. 258-68; Akinjogbin, I. A.: 'The Prelude to the Yoruba Civil Wars of the Nineteenth Century', *Odu: University of Ife Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1965, pp. 24-46.

These disturbances in the north soon set up a chain of events in the south and south-west of Yorubaland. Large numbers of the Oyo who were fleeing from their flaming homes in the north, came to settle in the Egbaland country in the south. Here, new refugee settlements emerged, notably Ibadan, Ijaye and Oyo (or Ago-d'Oyo) which became the new seat of the Alafin, the king of the Oyo. Ibadan emerged about 1827-9 after the destruction of Owu and many of the Egbaland towns by an Ife-Ijebu alliance aided by some of the Oyo refugees. In the heterogeneous community of Ife, Ijebu, Owu, Egbaland and Oyo people which sprang up at Ibadan, the Ife were at first the dominant group. But a disagreement which led to the expulsion of the leading Ife chiefs and a continuous influx of Oyo refugees led to the ultimate predominance of the Oyo elements. Thereafter, Ibadan came to be generally regarded as an Oyo town, although, in its acceptance of people and selection of leaders, the town remained singularly indifferent to people's sub-ethnic origins. About the same time as the founding of Ibadan, the Egbaland, dislodged from their homes, moved further south where, under the protection of the Olumo Rock, they founded, with a substantial section of the Owu, the town of Abeokuta. By so doing they came into conflict with the Ijebu who resented the prospect of the growth of Egbaland competition in the coastal trade.

The defence of the Oyo country against Ilorin fell on the shoulders of the new refugee states, especially Ijaye and Ibadan. While Ijaye bore the defence of the districts west of the River Ogun, Ibadan faced the Ilorin in the eastern Ogun districts - the Oshun districts.⁴ The Ibadan scored their first major victory against Ilorin at Osoybo in 1840. From then on they began a systematic rolling back of the Ilorin domination over the Oshun districts of the country.

Since the Ekiti and Ijesaland countries had not been parts of the Oyo Empire, they had not been affected by the political troubles which, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, had disrupted the empire. And until about 1840, they did not feel the impact of the political convulsions and wars which, owing to the

4. Ajayi, J. F. A.: 'The Ijaye war 1860-65' (a case study in Yoruba war and politics), in Ajayi and Smith: *Yoruba Warfare, op. cit.*, pp. 67-9; Awẹ, Mrs. B.: 'The Ajele System: A study of Ibadan imperialism in the 19th Century', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1964, pp. 47-60.

collapse of the empire and the Fulani invasions of the northern Yoruba country, had seized the Oyo, Egba, Egbado and Ijebu countries from about 1820 on, except that many of the Oyo refugees came to settle in Igbomina and Ekiti towns. It was only the Nupe, who were invading the Iyagba country (north-east of Ekiti) in those years, who overran many of the Igbomina towns and made passing incursions into the northern and eastern kingdoms of Ekiti.⁵

When they were baulked in their drive directly southward, however, the Ilorin forces veered east into the Igbomina, Ekiti and Ijesa countries in successive waves. With little difficulty they conquered most of the Igbomina towns and villages. Further southward, however, they found the kingdom of Otun in the extreme north of Ekiti standing in their way. Otun is said to have been very powerful at this time. Its population had been recently swollen by Oyo refugees from the north. Also, through direct contact with the Oyo Empire over the centuries, Otun had learnt the Oyo arts of war. Consequently, Otun proved very difficult for the Ilorin to subdue, and for some time it was a gate-keeper to the rest of Ekiti southward. Many times it was beaten, but each time it fought free again.⁶

Even apart from the stubborn resistance put up by Otun, the Ilorin invasion of Ekiti and Ijesa never had much chance of permanent success. The power of the Ilorin army depended upon its cavalry. Cavalry warfare was, however, ineffective in Ekiti and Ijesa. First, the country is far too hilly and too rugged for mounted troops to fight in.⁷ Secondly, while horses might be invaluable in the open grassland areas of the northern Oyo and Igbomina countries, in the thick forests of most of Ekiti and Ijesa they were almost useless. Finally, these forests harboured certain dangerous

5. May found the Nupe deeply entrenched in the Iyagba country (just east of Aiyede) in 1858. May: 'Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe countries', *op. cit.*, pp. 225-6; see also Dada: *The people called Igbomina*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
6. May visited Otun in 1858 and has left us an account of one of Otun's rapid recoveries after Ilorin conquests. He wrote: 'Otun . . . was of considerable size until about five years since, when it was attacked and partially destroyed by an army from Ilorin, it was not however subjected . . . many of its former inhabitants who had fled have returned and the place is becoming restored . . .' May: *op. cit.*, p. 223.
7. In Ekiti many hills are deified and worshipped for having shielded the people during the wars.

species of tse-tse fly which had a particularly virulent effect on horses.⁸

Nevertheless, the Ilorin grimly pursued their ambitions in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries. Around the north-east of Ekiti, where the forests are less dense, they made some headway and subjected the kingdoms of Iṣan, Itaji, Oye, Ikole and Obo to severe punishment. Whenever they attempted to venture into other parts of the Ekiti country or into the Ijeṣa country, however, they met with failure. The horses, subjected to the strains of the hills, the forests and the tse-tse fly, sickened or died. The cavalry men, unused to fighting without their horses, were quickly hunted down in the forests and hills.⁹ The odds were against Ilorin domination of Ekiti and Ijeṣa.

In general, each of the Oyo refugee settlements which had emerged in the south (Oyo, Ibadan and Ijaye) was inspired by two ambitions. First, there was the strong desire to avenge the humiliations which the Oyo had suffered from the Fulani and to complete the expulsion of the Fulani from the territory which they, from their base at Ilorin, had conquered. Secondly, each refugee settlement manifested an ambition to re-establish the old order in the Oyo world and to reunite the country, but was determined that the reunited country would be under its own leadership.¹⁰ We have seen how the former ambition was being gradually fulfilled owing, in the main, to the exertions of Ibadan.¹¹ The reunification of the Oyo country proved not so easy, since

8. The *Glossina longipalis* and the *Glossina palpalis*. Ojo: *Yoruba Culture*, *op. cit.*, p. 112, points out that the species found in the grasslands are not as virulent as these forest species. It is significant that many Ekiti towns believe that the sight of a horse is abhorrent to their town gods, and that therefore any horses brought within their gates would die quickly.

9. Johnson (*op. cit.*, Chapter 9) gives an account of the sufferings of the Ilorin forces in the wooded hills of the Ekiti-Ijeṣa country in the war he called the 'Polẹ War'. (This name is derived from the cry 'Polẹ-Polẹ' which the people shouted as they pursued the discomfited Ilorin troops through the hills and forests.) Chief Omikunle also records that the Imesi-Igbodo people defeated the Fulani outside the walls of the town, in the war known as 'Ogun Oke Ada' (Ada is a small stream some two miles outside the town). Omikunle: *Notes on Ekiti History*, *op. cit.*

10. Ajayi and Smith: *Yoruba Warfare*, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-9.

11. Ijaye under Kurumi was at the same time blocking the road against Dahomey incursions to the districts west of the River Ogun. For this purpose, the Alafin invested Kurumi with the title of *Arẹ-Qna-Kakanfo*.

Oyo, Ibadan and Ijaye each was anxious to establish its own dominance over the reunited country.

Inevitably, therefore, a power tussle arose between these new states. While the Alafin at Oyo hoped to achieve his ends by an appeal to tradition, the rulers of Ibadan and Ijaye knew that their towns had no place in the traditions of the Oyo people, and they therefore chose to achieve the same ends by blood and iron. Thus, in the end, the first phase of the tussle had to be fought out between Ibadan and Ijaye, with the Alafin, shortsightedly believing that it was in his best interests that Ijaye should be vanquished because its territorial ambitions in the Upper Ogun clashed with his own, lending his weight to the Ibadan side.

Meanwhile, Ibadan was strengthening itself and making good its claim to the leadership of the Oyo country by systematically establishing its political control over the towns of the Ogun district from which it was expelling the Fulani. It was after establishing its sway over these districts that Ibadan came into direct contact with the Igbomina, Ekiti and Ijesa countries. By the second half of the 1840s, the Ibadan forces had begun to enter Igbomina and Ekiti.

During the Kiriji War, the Ibadan sometimes said that it was the eastern peoples themselves, especially the Ekiti, who had invited them to intervene in their internal quarrels and wars.¹² Often again, they claimed that they had gone to the Ekiti and Ijesa countries in order to free the people from Ilorin domination.¹³ It is sometimes stated by scholars and historians that the Ekiti had revolted against their Ilorin conquerors, and that the Ibadan had gone there to help the people to throw off the Ilorin yoke. These views tend to exaggerate the success of the Ilorin in their bid to conquer and dominate the Ekiti and Ijesa. The Ilorin were not, as has been pointed out, making much headway, and at the time of the Ibadan entry into Ekiti it would be wrong to talk of Ilorin domination of the Ekiti and Ijesa. The coming of the Ibadan only strengthened anti-Ilorin forces in a fight in which the Ilorin were already doing badly.

12. (N.A.I.), C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, 'Notes and letters of the Rev. J. B. Wood, 1881-96', 'Notes for 20-5 September 1884. (U.I.L.), the Rev. Olubi's 1884 Diary, entries for September 1884.

13. C.4957, 'Report of Messrs. H. Higgins and O. Smith, Special Commissioners of the Lagos Government to the Interior in 1886', enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887, and H. Higgins to Col. Office, 20 June 1887.

Secondly, it has been claimed that the Ibadan, in invading the Ekiti-Ijeṣa countries, were inspired solely by philanthropic or brotherly feelings of serving the interests of fellow Yoruba towns, believing that 'none of these Yoruba towns was strong enough to withstand an Ilorin attack without Ibadan's support'.¹⁴ Such a view as this would appear to oversimplify the situation, as the matter of motives is always a complex one. Obviously, it would be wrong to rule out altruism in the motives of the Ibadan authorities. And among the Ibadan people and war boys (*omo ogun*), the feeling that the Fulani of Ilorin were foreigners and should not be allowed to conquer any part of Yorubaland must have been very strong, sufficient to inspire them to acts of selfless heroism in their conflicts with Ilorin forces in the north-eastern districts. But it is more than equally wrong to attempt to explain mostly on the basis of altruism the grim drive of such a powerful and growing state as Ibadan was by about 1845. In the activities of political communities, altruism is not an unusual bed-fellow with vital political, economic or even selfish considerations.

In order that the successes hitherto¹⁵ achieved by the Ibadan in expelling the Fulani from the Oyo country and establishing their own control over parts of that country might be maintained, it had become necessary to keep the Ilorin forces as far away as possible from the Oyo country, and also as weak as possible. The attempts of the Ilorin to entrench themselves in the Ekiti-Ijeṣa countries was therefore a new threat to the Ibadan programme. An Ilorin success in Ekiti and Ijeṣa, if it were possible, would place in the hands of the Ilorin a large, thickly populated country from where they could outflank the Ibadan positions in the Oṣun area. It was therefore essential to foil the plans of the Ilorin in Ekiti and Ijeṣa, and to do this, the Ibadan had no choice other than to invade the Ekiti-Ijeṣa countries in order to expel the Ilorin.

In addition, by the late 1840s and throughout the 1850s, the power contest between Ibadan and Ijaye grew more and more intense.¹⁶ As early as 1844, Ibadan and Ijaye had clashed in an

14. Mrs. Awẹ repeatedly stresses this point in her thesis *The Rise of Ibadan*, *op. cit.*

15. By the last years of the 1840s, the Ibadan had expelled the Ilorin from the Oyo country as far as Ikirun which was developed into an Ibadan outpost. The Ilorin, however, still controlled Oṣṣa, some 18 miles north of Ikirun.

16. Ajayi and Smith: *op. cit.*, pp. 76-85; Awẹ: *The Rise of Ibadan*, *op. cit.*, Chapter 5.

inconclusive war (the Bateḍo War) in which Ijaye had proved, on the whole, stronger. Thereafter, while Ibadan was busy establishing its sway over the Oyo districts east of the Ogun (the Èkun Osi of the old empire), Ijaye was doing the same in the Oyo districts west of it (in the Èkun Otun). Therefore, as soon as the eastern Oyo districts were put under control, the Igbomina, Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries, and the lands that lay behind them, became objects of desire to Ibadan. The possession of these districts would be an invaluable asset in the power struggle with Ijaye. The tributes paid by the people would enrich Ibadan and improve its war potential. Slaves would be caught from these districts to be sold for the purchase of military equipment. The able-bodied men there would be trained as soldiers to swell the Ibadan fighting forces, or set to cultivate the Ibadan farms to produce the large quantities of food required for its massive and growing population. In the delicate balancing of forces between Ibadan and Ijaye, Ibadan was deriving a great deal of moral advantage among the Oyo from the support accorded it by the Alafin. The possession of Ekiti and Ijeṣa and the country beyond would materially and decisively (perhaps also irretrievably) tilt the balance in its favour.

Moreover, by the 1840s Ibadan had evolved into an essentially military state.¹⁷ Though the almost universal Yoruba chieftaincy system of two cadres of chiefs (the civil and the military) had emerged at Ibadan, in practice, qualification for a chieftaincy title was usually decided by military prowess. Chieftaincy titles were not hereditary. Any man, regardless of his place of origin or his birth, could become a chief if he showed the requisite military capabilities and could rise by promotion to the leadership of the Ibadan state. Many adventurous men from all over Yorubaland migrated to Ibadan, there to seek the military honours which they could not hope to achieve in their own places of origin. When such a new man arrived in Ibadan, he would attach himself to one of the chiefs under whom he would have the opportunity to prove his mettle in the battles. In accordance with his ability, he would eventually acquire a military following of his own at the head of which he would go to battles. As this following increased and his military achievements grew, public attention would be turned on

17. *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, for details of the organisation of Ibadan. Also Lloyd, P. C.: *Local Government in Yoruba Towns* (Ph.D. Thesis), Oxford 1958, p. 13.

him and he might be accorded a junior chieftaincy title in the army. With good conduct and an improving military reputation, he could rise to the highest posts in the state.

The Ibadan fighting forces were therefore made up of a series of personal armies owned, maintained and led by the chiefs. The chief's army was his main instrument in his struggle for power in the state. A chief's army would normally consist of his own kith and kin (younger brothers, nephews, etc.), the men in his own quarter of the town (if he were a quarter head), new immigrants or other freeborn citizens who voluntarily attached themselves to him, and finally his able-bodied slaves (captives in the battles and raids).

This system accounted at once for much of the strength and weaknesses of Ibadan. On the one hand, each campaign was characterised by a rivalry among the chiefs for distinction and achievement; each fighting man, too, was inspired by a strong personal loyalty to his chief in whose successes and glories he felt entitled to share and of whom he was intensely proud. On the other hand, the constant itch in every chief for chances to win honour and prove himself, the desire to increase his army through captures in the field, the necessity for, at the same time, acquiring other slaves for sale in order to be able to maintain his army and buy the guns and powder on which its greatness depended, the necessity to keep the army frequently busy and exercised – all these meant that Ibadan had to be continually fighting.

This, of course, involved constantly finding new avenues for Ibadan's military exploits. The late 1840s and early 1850s marked a time when such new fields had to be discovered. Right from the founding of Abeokuta, the Ibadan had been trying to conquer or destroy that town, because its growing power constituted a rival to the power of Ibadan and because its situation between Ibadan and the coast greatly curtailed Ibadan's freedom of access to the ports where arms and ammunition were procured.¹⁸ In this hostility to Abeokuta, Ibadan had found an identity of interest with the Ijebu who also feared the political and economic rivalry of Abeokuta.¹⁹ By the late 1840s, however, the Egba had proved

18. Ibadan procured ammunition mainly from Lagos and Porto Novo through the Ijebu and Egba countries. Abeokuta stood on both the Lagos and Porto Novo roads. Biobaku, S. O.: *The Egba and their neighbours, 1842-72*, Oxford 1957.

19. Ajayi and Smith: *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1.

that they were able to defend their town. By the 1850s, Ibadan, under the Balogun Ibikunle, had discovered that it was necessary to pursue a policy of peaceful co-existence with not only the Ijebu, but also the Eḡba, both of whom controlled the routes to the coast.²⁰

At the same time as the Eḡba and Ijebu countries were as good as closed to the Ibadan army, Ibadan was reaching the limits of its territorial achievements in the Oyo country. Ijaye barred it from the western Ogun districts and the Ilorin, pushed north as far as Oḡfa (only a short distance from Ilorin town itself), appeared capable of resisting any further push. In the process of pursuing the Ilorin up to Oḡfa, the Ibadan forces had over-run some Igbomina towns which lay more or less on the direct routes from Ikirun to the north. The Ekiti-Ijḡsa country lay only some few hours' walk from the Ibadan outpost of Ikirun; furthermore, in that Ekiti country, the Ilorin were struggling to entrench and strengthen themselves. To prevent a resurgence of Ilorin power, to harness the resources of Ekiti for the power contest in the Oyo country, to open new avenues for the activities of the restless war chiefs and their more restless war boys – these were the important economic and political considerations in the motives for the entry of the Ibadan forces into Ekiti and Ijḡsa. But it ought to be repeated that it is unrealistic to attempt to separate these from purely altruistic feelings. In the minds of many Ibadan leaders, there probably was no real difference between the interests of Ibadan as such and those of the north-eastern Yoruba peoples whose countries were being harried by the Fulani.

Finally, as is usual in such situations, the aims and ambitions of Ibadan crystallised and became more far-reaching as its conquests expanded. The first few campaigns in the eastern Yoruba country led to the expulsion of the Ilorin from these areas and the establishment of Ibadan rule over some of the towns there. And by 1863 Ibadan had emerged as the most powerful state, not only in the Oyo country, but in the whole of Yorubaland. From then on there became apparent in the actions of the Ibadan leaders the dream of a vast empire comprising all the Yoruba and having Ibadan as its centre. The very nature of the town – composed as it was from the 1850s of elements from practically all sections of the Yoruba, considerably free from inhibitions imposed by

20. Awe: *The Rise of Ibadan*, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40.

traditions and highly geared towards achievement – seemed to set for it just such a destiny.

Ibadan activities in these eastern countries fall roughly into three periods: first, the late 1840s to 1854, second, 1854 to 1860 and third, 1866 to 1876. The first period was terminated by the Otun war of 1854; the second period was separated from the third by some five years during which the attention of Ibadan was occupied by the Ijaye and Remo Wars; the third period was terminated by the renewal of Ibadan-Egba hostilities in 1877.

The period up to 1854 represents a sort of overture to Ibadan's exploits in the east and it was marked by hesitation on the part of the Ibadan authorities. The scene was characterised by a series of haphazard campaigns and conquests which produced practically few political results. And in many of these campaigns, some of the Ibadan chiefs went into the Ekiti country in the company of sections of the Ilorin army.

This, however, did not mean that the Ibadan had any considered intention of sharing control in Ekiti with the Ilorin. Before they entered the Ekiti country, the Ibadan forces had been fighting mostly in familiar territory. But in Ekiti they came into contact for the first time with a comparatively new and strange country. At the same time, the stories of Ilorin's difficulties and disasters in Ekiti were not encouraging. There was a natural tendency, therefore, to doubt and vacillate and to proceed with caution to test the ground. It was essential to get to know something of the conditions of the country first and concerted expeditions with the Ilorin who had been in Ekiti earlier were useful in this respect.²¹

The first formal Ibadan expedition to Ekiti, the Aye campaign, was sent out about 1847 when Otun, again in danger from its subordinate but powerful town of Aye, called on the Ibadan for help.²² The Aye, aided by some Ilorin forces, resisted the

21. See Johnson: *op. cit.*, Chapter 17, for details of these campaigns.

22. Johnson (*op. cit.*, p. 294) says this war was between 'Aaye' and Otun 'in the Efon and Ekiti districts contiguous to one another'. Johnson made a mistake here and confused Efon-Alaye in western Ekiti with Aye, an Otun subordinate town very near Otun town itself. The war was between Otun and Aye and not between Otun and Efon-Alaye. There were in fact many wars between Otun and Aye. Though Otun was the capital town of the kingdom, Aye was very powerful. At different stages of the long feud, therefore, Otun had to invite foreign

combined Ibadan-Ọtun forces stoutly until they were starved into submission. Most of the survivors then fled northwards to the Igbomina towns of Ẹkan and Omuaran where they were offered refuge. Thither a section of the Ibadan forces followed them. Ẹkan, Omuaran and Ilofa fell in rapid succession, most of their people fleeing to Oro-Agọ further north. At Oro-Agọ, the Ibadan were stopped. This town was situated in a naturally fortified position, its houses built on and between rock outcrops. At the approach of the Ibadan, the people threw around their town a wall of stones from behind which they sent out a steady hail of arrows. On withdrawing from here, the Ibadan briefly harassed Oro and Esie.²³ Meanwhile, the remaining Ibadan troops, under the Balogun Oderinlo, had pushed on into northern Ekiti where they took Iyapa, Oro, Uši, Işan and other towns and villages in that neighbourhood. At Itaji, however, they ran into an ambush and suffered a rout. Before and after this, there were many minor expeditions to Ekiti. In 1848, some Ibadan and Ilorin forces combined to raid the Ẹffon district.

These campaigns, though very successful, did not lead to the formal establishment of political control over the towns and villages affected. Ẹkan and Ọtun were in fact the only towns over which Ibadan protectorate is known to have been established in these years. Yet the campaigns had a value of their own. The Ibadan, after a few years of frequent fighting in Ekiti, became acquainted with the country and therefore more and more confident in their activities there. Depending on their infantry, unlike the Ilorin,²⁴ they were not subject to the limitations which the Ilorin suffered in Ekiti.

While all this was happening amongst the Ekiti and Igbomina, the Ibadan had started to cast menacing glances at the Ijeşa

aid against Aye – first the Benin warriors (cf. Chapter 1 above), and then the Ibadan. Atọlagbe, D.: *Itan Ore, Ọtun at Mọba*, Ikire 1947, pp. 27-34.

23. The Ibadan campaigns in Igbomina are preserved in the traditions of these towns. The descendants of the people of Aye are still found scattered in the neighbouring towns. See also Atọlagbe: *op. cit.*, pp. 30-5; Dada: 'The People called Igbomina', *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18.
24. Cavalry was comparatively unimportant in Ibadan's war-craft. When for instance, the Ibadan defeated the Ilorin in the Oşogbo War (c. 1840) and captured many of their horses, they did not use these horses for fighting but slaughtered the greater number for food. Smith, R.: 'The Yoruba Wars (A general study)', in Ajayi and Smith: *op. cit.*, pp. 13-22, also pp. 33-6.

country. The kingdom of Ilesha, by far the most powerful north-eastern Yoruba state, constituted the greatest potential obstacle to Ibadan's ambitions in Ekiti and Ijesa. It was obvious, therefore, that Ibadan could not leave it alone. Nor were the incentives for an attack of Ilesha lacking. Before the influx of the Oyo to the south owing to the Ilorin menace, the towns of Igbajo, Osoyobo, Ada, Ire and Otan-Aiyegbaju (then Otan-Koto) were Ijesa towns, all, with the exception of Igbajo, under the suzerainty of the Owa of Ilesha.²⁵ With the mass Oyo migrations from the north, however, the Ijesa populations of these towns were swamped. Hence when later the Oyo towns of the Osun districts - Ikirun, Iragbiji and others - who were close neighbours to these Ijesa towns offered their submission to Ibadan, the Ijesa towns, under the influence of the Oyo immigrants, also submitted to Ibadan. The Ilesha authorities never acquiesced in this loss and from time to time made attempts to recover what they believed to be their own.

It was such attacks on Osoyobo that first gave the Ibadan their excuse for invading the Ijesa country soon after the Aye war. In Ibadan, vacant chieftaincy titles had just been filled - Olugbode was made the Bale, Ibikunle the Balogun, Ogunmola the Otun and Osundina the Osi. It was the practice after the conferment of military titles that the recipients should seize the first opportunity to prove their fitness for their titles.²⁶ The Ijesa of Ilesha and Ibokun, at the bidding of the Owa of Ilesha, were raiding the Osoyobo farms. The Ibadan army marched under the new Balogun and besieged Ilesha. For a year, Ilesha, reinforced by contingents from Ibokun and Ilesha, withstood the attack. In the end, Ilesha and Ibokun were deserted and their people fled to Ijebu-Ere. The Ibadan then advanced further into the Ijesa country, compelled Imesi-Ile and Esa-Oke to offer their submission, and then conquered and sacked Ijebu-Ere (which was stoutly defended by the Ilesha and Ibokun refugees and Ilesha forces), Erinmo, Erintadogun and many other towns and villages.

25. A man called George (a returned emigre resident at Osoyobo) informed William Clarke (1857) at Osoyobo that Ede originally belonged to the Ijesa kingdom (Clarke: *op. cit.*, p. 149). George, however, was wrong; Ijesa tradition does not claim Ede as an Ijesa town. See also Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

26. A tradition apparently inherited from the great past of the Old Oyo Empire, cf. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 191.

The people of Ijeṣa, frightened by these happenings, now offered their submission to the Ibadan, bringing them cowries, beads and hostages. The Ekiti kingdom of Oḡotun, neighbours to the Ijeṣa, also peacefully surrendered to Oṣundina, the Osi. Igbara did the same, to Ajayi Jeḡeḡe, the Seṛiki. The Ibadan then returned home to put an end to this campaign which has become known as the Ijeṣu-Ère War.

This was in the first years of the 1850s. By 1854, the Ibadan had good reason to be more confident and resolute in Ekiti. The powerful Ijeṣa kingdom had, they believed, been humbled, and the Ibadan war boys had come to know Ekiti intimately. Moreover, an interlude of peace supervened in the relationship between Ibadan and her Ègba and Ijeṣu neighbours.

In 1853, Eṣugbaya, fleeing from some Ilorin pursuers, took refuge at Otun. The Ilorin authorities demanded that the Otun chiefs should surrender him and, when they refused, the Ilorin army marched out and besieged Otun. In 1854, after a stout defence of over twelve months, the Ore of Otun asked the Ibadan for help. It was the end of the Ijeṣu-Ère War and an Ibadan contingent of about 3,000 under Ajayi Jeḡeḡe was sent straight from the Ijeṣa country to the relief of Otun. Finding itself too small to cope with the Ilorin, the contingent sent home for reinforcements. The entire Ibadan army, therefore, marched out.²⁷

A number of complications arose to change the course of the Ibadan army, however. The Alara of Ara had been deposed by his subjects for grave offences against the state. He now fled to the Ibadan army to solicit help. Twice the Ibadan sent him back to Ara with escorts and twice the Ara people accepted him, mainly out of fear of the Ibadan. The Ibadan army then proceeded on its march, some through Igbajo and some through Ila, foraging widely for food. The latter group reached Otun, but the former group, on entering Ekiti in the area of Imeṣi-Igbodo and Ikoro in the Ijero kingdom, asked the Ajero's permission to forage in the Ikoro farms. Ikoro was a large, prosperous town, and famous all over Ekiti as fierce and warlike.²⁸ The Ajero had no intention of sacrificing the prosperity of Ikoro to the pleasures of the Ibadan, and he therefore returned an insolent answer. Thereupon, some of the Ibadan soldiers began to raid the Ikoro farms, looting

27. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Venn, 22 April 1854.

28. Hence the praise name '*Ikoro Èṣo*' - 'Ikoro the valiant'.

barns and capturing some farmers. The Ikoro people immediately began to organise their resistance. The Ibadan chiefs, however, informed about the warlike spirit of Ikoro and not wanting to be diverted from the original objective of the campaign, freed the farmers who had been seized and asked them to inform the Ikoro authorities that the Ibadan desired no quarrel with Ikoro but only wanted food. This request was not only turned down; the Ibadan learned that the Ikoro, in retaliation for the outrages of the Ibadan boys on their farms, were already beginning to conspire with some neighbouring towns to attack the Ibadan army in the rear when the latter began to fight at Otun. Alarmed by this development, the Ibadan chiefs ordered the army to attack Ikoro. The Ikoro poured out to meet the enemy in the countryside, determined to decide the issue there and spare their town the sight of battle. Fierce engagements followed, but the Ikoro were slowly pushed back into their fortified town which was then besieged.²⁹

Ijero took alarm and prepared to go to the aid of the Ikoro. The Ajero also sent to all the neighbouring Ekiti rulers to inform them of the danger to Ikoro and invite them to send their armies to its defence, warning them that the fall of Ikoro would open the gates of all Ekiti to the Ibadan. He also sent to the Ilorin at Otun and they, seeing an opportunity to confront their enemy, sent two contingents under Adedeji and Magobon.

The rulers of Ekiti responded enthusiastically to the Ajero's call. Only the kingdoms in the extreme south (Akure, Ise, Emure, Ikeru) and some in the north-east sent no contingents. Otun was still besieged by the Ilorin and had much need of the Ibadan; and Eşugbayi, the founder and yet uncrowned ruler of Aiyede, was trapped by the Ilorin at Otun. Forces came from almost all the other kingdoms. At Ara, the Alara, who had gained so much recently from the Ibadan, had it announced, against the manifest wish of the Ara people, that Ara would not join the other Ekiti in the defence of Ikoro. This led to a renewal of the civil strife at Ara. Two chiefs openly defied the Alara, and pitching their camp outside the gate, called on the Ara people to come forth to the defence of their Ikoro brethren against the Ibadan. An attempt by the Alara to rouse public feeling against the rebels failed completely, and the Alara was reduced to taking the

29. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal Extracts for September 1854-March 1855.

desperate and foolish step of attempting, with only a few followers, to crush the rebels by force. The rebels proved too strong for him, and leaving him in disgrace at home, they led out a large but unofficial Ara army to join the other Ekiti at Ikoro.

For about a year³⁰ the united Ekiti army and their Ilorin allies held on to Ikoro. At last, when things began to look bleak, the Ilorin betrayed their friends, made a unilateral peace with the Ibadan and left. Immediately after that, partly out of gratitude to Ibadan for allowing them safe conduct out of Ikoro, and partly because they were terrified by the fierceness with which they had seen the Ibadan fight at Ikoro, the Ilorin raised the siege of Otun and thus set free the Ibadan army there to join the main army at Ikoro. Eşugbayi of Aiyede, in payment for the services done to him by the Ibadan in saving him from Ilorin capture at Otun, was brought to Ikoró to help the Ibadan army against the Ekiti. The Ekiti had no chance against such overwhelming odds. Food became so scarce that most of the women and children had to be evacuated to near-by towns. As for the men, a stage was reached when, according to stories reaching Ibadan, they had to resort to eating the trees and roots of bananas and gun-powder mixed with soup.³¹

Yet they refused to surrender. The Ekiti people, according to Hinderer, 'love their liberty - and have been known in the hour of extremity to choose death rather than a life of slavery'. They 'therefore killed with their own hands their wives and children and after that died themselves by shutting themselves up in their houses and setting the houses on fire'. The ruler of the town was taken captive to Ibadan in 1855.³²

After the fall of Ikoro, the Ibadan proceeded to subdue the towns which had sent help to Ikoro. Ijero and all the towns in the Ijero kingdom submitted.³³ At Ara, however, they encountered a setback. The Ara contingent at Ikoro, as soon as Ikoro had fallen, had gone back to Ara which was now immensely swollen by refugees from Ikoro and Ijero. They planned to assassinate the

30. From about April 1854 to about February 1855. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Straith, 28 February 1855.

31. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal extracts for September 1854-March 1855.

32. *Ibid.*; also C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Annual Letter for 1855; Hinderer to Straith, 1 October 1855.

33. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal extracts for the quarter ending June 1855.

Alara and raise a rebellion and he, deserted by the Ara people save for a few loyalists, had to seek protection from the Oyo residents and with them he escaped, hotly pursued, from Ara.

The Ara then began to tighten the defences of their town against the Ibadan who were approaching from Ijero. Chief Elejofi, a true patriot who had remained neutral in the recent civil disturbances, proved the man of the hour. Under him Ara held out heroically for about six months during which time 'the Ibadan army suffered an immense loss of men from repeated and unexpected attacks from the town'. At last, however, hunger and want compelled the Ara people to surrender. They sent presents to the Ibadan and promised to reinstate the Alara. However, when the Ibadan invited Chief Elejofi and his leading colleagues to come to the Ibadan camp for a settlement of all outstanding disputes, the chiefs suspected a plot and refused to attend. The Ibadan then asked the Ara people to give them some men to guide them to Igede, the first town in the Ado kingdom. But the Ara refused thus to aid the destruction of their neighbours. Piqued by these refusals, the Ibadan army stormed and took Ara. Then followed a repetition of that act of self-destruction which had occurred at Ikoro. Chief Elejofi, aided by his eldest son, solemnly destroyed his house, his belongings and many of his wives and children before taking his own life. His example was followed from house to house. By sunset, smouldering ruins had taken the place of this town which had been as large as Ijaye and had been one of the oldest, one of the largest and one of the most powerful towns of the Ekiti. Many weeks after, the town was still reported at Ibadan as uninhabitable 'on account of the offensiveness of the great numbers of unburied bodies'. The Ibadan army returned home towards the end of September 1855.³⁴

This campaign had important effects on later developments. In the first place, it brought an end to the hopes of the Ilorin in Ekiti. By their surrender at Ikoro and Otun, the Ilorin had accepted their own failures and the supremacy of the Ibadan in Ekiti. From now on, although the Ilorin still continued to send expeditions to

34. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal for the quarter ending September 1855; Hinderer to Straith, 1 October 1855. Ara has not regained its old size even today. The old town walls still enclose large areas of ruins now overgrown with thick bush. Only recently, the descendants of the people of the Ilegemọ quarter went back to reoccupy the old site of their quarter, about a quarter of a mile outside the confines of the present town.

Ekiti, such expeditions became less and less frequent, and the Ilorin forces appeared more and more as mere appendages to the Ibadan forces. It was not difficult to see who was master in Ekiti.

Secondly, the collapse of the united Ekiti army at Ikoro and the fall of Ara succeeded in striking terror into the hearts of the Ekiti people. From now on, and especially in the years immediately following the Ara War, the resistance of the Ekiti people to the Ibadan tended to be marked by some degree of fear and feebleness.

Finally, the Ibadan had in this campaign learnt a lesson which they put to effective use in their future campaigns. The Ikoro War had taught them that a combination of the Ekiti in the defence of their country could be very formidable and was, therefore, to be avoided. It was a cardinal feature of Ibadan's strategy henceforth to endeavour first to isolate any town which was marked out for its attack by coaxing, deceiving or bribing its neighbours into neutrality at least.³⁵

After the fall of Ara, the main Ibadan army under the Balogun returned to Ibadan. But many junior chiefs who, while serving under their superiors, had not had full scope to distinguish or enrich themselves and expand their following through the acquisition of slaves, stayed behind in Ekiti, ravaging and conquering. Probably every town in Ekiti, with the known exceptions of Ado and Akure, fell in the next two or three years.

The Ado kingdom was perhaps the largest and most powerful Ekiti kingdom. It had the advantage over Otun that while Otun occupied the less densely forested parts of northern Ekiti and was vulnerable from the Oyo and Igbomina countries in the north, Ado occupied the thick forests of central Ekiti and was surrounded by Ekiti territory on almost all sides.³⁶ The only attack on any part of the Ado kingdom in these years ended in disaster for the Ibadan. In 1857, after an expedition in Akoko, Abayomi with Olunloyo, was making for Ise which was then a tributary of his. On entering the eastern districts of the Ado kingdom, he attacked and took Agbado. But the Balogun of Ado (generally believed to be Ogunbulu Ala)³⁷ was sent to intercept him. Abayomi was

35. cf. the story of Ibadan invasions in Oguntuyi: *History of Ado, op. cit.*, and Atolagbe: *op. cit.*

36. It was only along its eastern boundary that the Ado kingdom shared a boundary with a non-Ekiti people - the Akoko.

37. Oguntuyi: *op. cit.*, p. 43. Ogunbulu Ala was born at Aisegba in the Ado kingdom. For about twenty years he was the leader of the Ado forces.

ambushed and had to fight his way to Ise, losing all he had taken at Agbado, and leaving Olunloyo and many of his best men behind. He finally returned to Ibadan in a worse state than he had left it over three years before.

Another of the chiefs who stayed on in Ekiti was Ayorinde who, after the fall of Ara, went to Aiyede as the guest of Eşugbayi and from there conquered many towns and villages in eastern Ekiti. After a short visit to Ibadan, he came back, escaping from justice, to Aiyede. Eşugbayi helped him to establish himself at Irun in the Akoko country in 1856. For ten years he pursued a very successful military career in Akoko and after the fall of Ogbagi which proved his most difficult opponent, he became lord of Akoko and Idoani. He opened a route to Owo through which he obtained ammunition from Benin. When at last he decided to return to Ibadan, he first taught Irun the bitter lesson that it was unwise and suicidal to befriend an Ibadan warrior. On arrival back in Ibadan, he was accorded a chieftaincy title and died shortly afterwards.³⁸

On leaving Ara, the Bada, Ajobo, went on an expedition against Pakunde, an Ekiti town near the Akoko border. The rumour somehow reached Ibadan that the Bada intended to establish himself permanently at Pakunde and thereby set up a rival power in the east. Alarmed at this, the Ibadan chiefs took drastic steps to counter him. Ibikunle sent to all the towns in Ekiti and Akoko to save Pakunde from destruction and emboldened by such a message, the Ekiti and Akoko rose against the Bada. The men whom he had sent to procure supplies were captured at Ado, Ikole, Oye, Odo-Aiyedun, Ikoyi and many other places. The Bada then decided to return home. At Ikole and again at Omujelu he was ambushed and lost many men while fighting his way through. At Aiyede, Eşugbayi, normally a friend of the Ibadan since he was extricated from Otun in 1854-5, refused to let the Bada have provisions. He and his men arrived in Ibadan in a starving condition.

As a result of these and other minor expeditions in the years following the Ara War, most Akoko, Igbomina and Ekiti towns had come under Ibadan by 1860. Some towns like Ikere, Ise, and Aiyede (under Eşugbayi) were not conquered but peacefully accepted Ibadan's protection. Many others, however, resisted stoutly until they were overwhelmed. Ise in the south became a

38. Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 321-3.

sort of outpost and supply depot from where the Ibadan sent out expeditions to the Akoko country. In the north, a chain of defence posts against the Ilorin was established, running roughly west to east from Ikirun, through Igbajò, Ila and Otun to Aiyede. To the north-east of Aiyede lay the Iyagba country under Nupe control.³⁹

On the whole, the Ibadan met with more determined resistance in the Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Igbomina and Akoko countries than they had met with in the Oṣun area. Some towns like Itaji and Oro-Agò had to be almost continually subjected to attack.⁴⁰ Even the towns which peacefully offered their submission did so only to avoid being destroyed. In the Oṣun districts, many towns like Ikirun had willingly yielded to Ibadan control because they genuinely felt an identity of interest with the Ibadan. Like the Ibadan, they felt the burning desire to check the Fulani and expel them from their country. Ibadan was seen especially by those of them who had experienced Fulani conquest as a stronger brother who had come to rescue them from foreign oppression.⁴¹ No such feelings existed in Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina. There was usually nothing, therefore, like a glad acceptance of Ibadan's rule. Practically every town had to be fought, intimidated or tricked into yielding to the Ibadan.

Moreover, the anti-Ibadan resistance, especially among the Ijeṣa, Ekiti and Igbomina, was marked by much co-operation. Among the Ijeṣa, the Owa of Ileṣa with the Ileṣa army constituted a generally accepted leader in the defence of Ijeṣa territory. The Ekiti and Igbomina had no such common leaders. Even then, the latent spirit of kinship found expression in such incidents as the defence of Ikoro, the refusal of the Ara to aid the designs of the Ibadan on the Ado kingdom, the sufferings of the Bada in Ekiti and the refuge granted by Oro-Agò to the Ekan, Omuaran and Ilòfa people. In 1853, the Otun chiefs had put Otun into trouble with the Ilorin army by refusing, against the advice of the Ore, to hand Eṣugbayi over to the Ilorin who were his deadly enemies. The joint defence by many of the Ekiti kingdoms of Ikoro was of particular significance in that it represented a foretaste of the

39. May: 'Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe countries', *op. cit.*, p. 225.

40. Itaji tradition speaks of almost continual attacks by Ibadan on the town. It is said that, on one occasion, only about six persons and a dog survived.

41. Awẹ: *The Rise of Ibadan*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

future Ekitiparapo. In the face of relentless Ibadan aggression, traditional particularism among the Ekiti and Igbomina began to yield place to realisations of a common destiny. In spite of very clever diplomacy by Ibadan to prevent cooperation amongst its enemies, the feeling was surely growing that the Ekiti would have to either stand together or fall one by one.

The resistance by the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina, however, whether individual or concerted, failed to prevent the Ibadan from sweeping through their country. To this victory of the Ibadan, their diplomacy in preventing cooperation among their enemies contributed a great deal. So also did the Oyo refugees who had been resident in Ekiti before the Ibadan invasions. These men acted as a sort of fifth column behind the Ekiti lines and often openly aided the Ibadan forces by supplying them with information about the Ekiti-Ijeṣa country. More important still, they aided Ibadan diplomacy by undermining the morale of some towns and persuading them to submit peacefully to the Ibadan conquerors.⁴²

Perhaps the greatest factor in the victory of the Ibadan, besides their superior military organisation, was the large numbers which the Ibadan armies commanded. The Ibadan armies were made up, not of the fighting men of Ibadan town alone, but also of a very large proportion of towns in the Oyo country. Each of the towns of the Oṣun area over which the Ibadan had established their protectorate was in duty bound to provide contingents and food stores to help each expedition sent out from Ibadan. The army which between 1854 and 1856 conquered Ikoro, Ijero and Ara comprised contingents from practically all Oyo towns and villages, with the exception of Ijaye and a few towns loyal to it.⁴³ Even at Ikoro, the united Ekiti forces were no match for these hordes. Generally, the wider the Ibadan conquests grew, the larger the forces Ibadan commanded. In the later stages of the wars, large numbers of Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina youths entered as captives or free adventurers into the service of the Ibadan chiefs and fought lustily for their chiefs even against their own people.⁴⁴

42. Imesi-Ile and Eṣa-Oke surrendered to Ibadan owing to the advice of a certain Oluokun, an Oyo refugee resident in those areas. Ikere also probably yielded to similar persuasion.

43. Awṣ: *op. cit.*, p. 130.

44. C.4957, Report of the Special Commissioners of the Lagos Govern-

In these years when the whole of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko territories were passing under the control of Ibadan, many of the Ife towns – Apomu, Ikire, Gbongan and others – finding their overlord unable to protect them against Ibadan expansionism, willingly accepted Ibadan overlordship. In due course, the ancient city of Ile-Ife itself was to become a vassal of Ibadan. During the massive Oyo migrations southwards earlier in the century, a sizeable refugee population had grown up in Ile-Ife. For a long time the relations between them and their hosts were cordial. But in the forties disagreements appeared and the refugees finally withdrew from the town and established just outside it a separate settlement to which they gave the name Modakeke. About 1850 open war erupted between the two and the Ife were defeated and forced to abandon their town for five years. In 1854 Ibadan intervened and made it possible for the Ife to return, but as a result of this intervention both Ile-Ife and Modakeke became tributaries to Ibadan, obliged to contribute contingents to Ibadan's armies.⁴⁵

In 1860, the rivalry between Ibadan and Ijaye finally led to war.⁴⁶ The Alafin continued to lend his support to the Ibadan cause, and so did many other Oyo towns. The Egba and, to a lesser degree, the Ilorin, seeing an opportunity to humble the traditional enemy, made alliances with Ijaye. By now, a change of attitude had occurred among the Ijebu as they had gradually come to realise that the power to fear in the country was not Abeokuta but Ibadan. The Ibadan showed themselves very ambitious, and by their conquests in the Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Akoko and Igbomina countries, they had become immeasurably more powerful than, and more menacing to, every one of their neighbours. Especially because the routes which passed through Ijebu from Ibadan to Lagos were shorter than those which passed through Egba territory, the

ment to the Interior in 1886, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887, and H. Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 July 1887; also C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Venn, 14 January 1861.

45. The full story was told by Hinderer after a visit to Ile-Ife and Modakeke in 1858. C.M.S., CA2/049, Journal of David Hinderer's Missionary Journey in August–September 1858.

46. See Ajayi and Smith: *Yoruba Warfare*, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–128, for details of the Ibadan–Ijaye feud.

Ijebu had good reason to fear the designs of the overmighty Ibadan. As far back as 1852 the Ijebu had begun to move closer to the Egba;⁴⁷ in 1860, therefore, the Awujale brought Ijebu into the coalition against Ibadan.

The Ilorin sent a contingent to join the Ijaye forces encamping against Ogbomoso and also succeeded in destroying Ibadan's tributary town of Ilobu. But for the rest, they avoided direct clashes with the Ibadan army and limited their actions to embarrassing Ibadan's allies by raiding their farms from the north. The Ijebu, apart from raids on Ibadan farms and the capture of Apomu near Ife, concentrated their efforts on preventing the Ibadan from procuring ammunition from the coast through the Ijebu country. Such efforts, however, were foiled by some of the Ijebu-Remo who cherished their flourishing trade with the Ibadan and therefore refused to join the rest of the Ijebu in taking sanctions against them. For this reason, the Ibadan were able to obtain a steady flow of ammunition from the coast throughout the war.

In the circumstances, the brunt of the actual fighting which soon developed into the defence of Ijaye against the besieging forces of Ibadan and her allies, devolved on Ijaye and the Egba. Two years of grim fighting on either side followed, but by March 1862 the defenders of Ijaye were beaten and Ijaye itself destroyed.⁴⁸

The destruction of Ijaye did not mark the end of hostilities. The Ijebu-Remo had disobeyed the Awujale and had refused to join in the war against Ibadan and by so doing had contributed in no small measure to the victory of Ibadan. The Awujale now invited the Egba army to punish the Remo for their offences. It was also essential to subdue the Remo in order to enable the Awujale to establish his hold more firmly on the district so he could close the Remo roads against the Ibadan. In other words, the Egba-Ijebu allies were continuing the war in another sphere and taking swift steps to reverse the verdict of March 1862. To leave Ibadan in its present pre-eminent position was unthinkable as it spelt doom to the Egba and Ijebu.

The Egba and Ijebu overran the Remo districts, seizing strategic towns on the routes to Lagos. The Ijebu seized and garri-

47. In that year, the Ijebu allowed the Egba to begin to use the River Ogun, which flows partly through Ijebu territory, as a highway to Lagos.

48. See C.M.S., CA2/049, Mann's Journals, 10 February 1862, for an account of the last days of Ijaye.

soned Iperu, while the Eḡba, after seizing Makun, a market town on both the Abẹkuta-Lagos and Ibadan-Lagos roads, laid siege to the important market town of Ikorodu.

The Ibadan army, under the Ọtun Balogun Ogunmọla, marched to the relief of the Remo towns. But the Remo expedition turned out to be an impossible assignment for the Ibadan. With the Eḡba and Ijebu roads now closed against them, they could not procure ammunition in sufficient quantities to enable them to fight the allies effectively. Moreover, there was always the fear that the Ijebu of Ijebu-Igbo might attack the Ibadan army from the rear.⁴⁹ As for the allies, they held on to the towns they had captured and maintained the siege of Ikorodu. Consequently, for three long years the Ibadan were locked in a nerve-racking stalemate with the allies. The situation drastically affected the trade of the Lagos colony, however, and therefore compelled its administration to intervene. It was the British government of Lagos under Captain John Glover who, after months of negotiations, finally succeeded by using force to extricate the Ibadan from the Remo impasse in 1865. Peace was concluded between Ibadan and the allies, and by late 1865 the Eḡba and Ijebu roads were partially thrown open to the Ibadan.

While Ibadan was thus occupied in fighting the allies at Ijaye and in Remo and large numbers of Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko were fighting under Ibadan's banner either as contingents sent from home or slaves and war boys of the various Ibadan chiefs,⁵⁰ the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries were free from the frequent raids and movements of Ibadan troops. The Akoko did not enjoy such a respite, as Ayorinde was still at his headquarters of Irun and from there was conquering far and wide. Evidence about the reaction of the Ekiti to this five-year respite is very scanty. It would seem that a number of towns, notably Itaji, Ikole, Ijero and Emure, seized the opportunity to reassert their independence and cease sending tribute to Ibadan. It is not possible, unfortunately, to assess the true extent of this revolt in Ekiti, or what, beyond refusing to pay tribute, was positively done by the Ekiti. No attempt is known to have been made in these years to get the

49. Awe: *op. cit.*, pp. 210-11.

50. According to Ijeṣa tradition, an Ijeṣa contingent served in the Ibadan army at Ijaye.

whole or any part of Ekiti to combine against the Ibadan. It is, however, suggested that some of the towns which had been destroyed between 1854 and 1860 were resettled in the first half of the 1860s. It appears that those citizens of Ara who, on the fall of their town, had fled to different parts of the country and had been trickling back before 1860, began in the peaceful years to return in large numbers.⁵¹

The reaction of the Ijeṣa to the preoccupation of the Ibadan with the Ijaye and Remo Wars is better known. Not only did they reassert their independence, they also attempted to destroy the power of Ibadan in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries by conquering towns which were Ibadan's dependencies in those countries. The Ijeṣa authorities were also eager to seize the opportunity to further Ijeṣa's age-old expansionist ambitions in the Ijeṣa and Ekiti countries.

In Ekiti, the Ijeṣa army first attacked Eḡḡon during the Ijaye War, probably in 1861-2. Employing the lesson which they had learnt from the Ibadan, the Ijeṣa first sent messengers round to the neighbours of Eḡḡon in order to procure their neutrality. At Imesi-Igbodo,⁵² the authorities gave way to the Ijeṣa and had it announced by the town crier that the kingdom of Imesi-Igbodo had no interest in the impending war between Eḡḡon and the Ijeṣa and would, therefore, remain neutral. It was made an offence for any Imesi-Igbodo man to go to the aid of Eḡḡon. Similar declarations of neutrality were proclaimed at Oḡotun where Ijeṣa envoys were also sent.

But the proclamations achieved very little. The desire of the people of Imesi-Igbodo and Oḡotun to help their Eḡḡon brethren overrode all fears. At Oḡotun, a fierce young warrior named Oṣunsan defied the Oḡotun's proclamation, secretly organised

51. At Ara, it is said that for years after the sack of the town, the number of inhabitants in it were so few that the Ibadan did not think of appointing an Ajele for it; that about the time of the Ijeṣa invasions of Oḡotun and Imesi-Igbodo (i.e. while the Ibadan were busy in the Ijaye and Remo Wars, 1860-65) many of the old quarters of Ara were reoccupied by Ara exiles returning home from many places and some refugees from Oḡotun and Imesi-Igbodo; and that the first Ajele was appointed to Ara about the time of the Ibadan-Ijeṣa clash at Igbajo.

52. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/3. The Rev. C. Phillips has an account of these Ijeṣa invasions attached to his 1885 Diary. His accounts, apparently collected during a visit to Ijeṣa, agree with the Imesi-Igbodo (and Oḡotun) accounts.

the youths into a powerful force and led them out to the support of Eḡḡon. At Imeṣi-Igbodo, Prince Adesoye, brother of the reigning oḡba (Aḡḡḡṣe) and father of Prince Fabunmi, the future leader of the Ekiti, openly disregarded the law and went at the head of a volunteer force to help Eḡḡon.

For over a year, fierce fighting continued at Eḡḡon. Repeatedly, the Ijeṣa sent entreaties to the Oḡḡotun to recall Oṣunsan from Eḡḡon, and repeatedly Oṣunsan and his men ignored the prayers, the warnings and the threats from home. However, Eḡḡon had been so weakened by the recent Ibadan depredations as to be unable to bear a prolonged siege. After more than a year of endurance, Eḡḡon gave way to the strain and the people fled mostly in the company of Oṣunsan, to Oḡḡotun.

The Ijeṣa army then laid siege to Oḡḡotun. In his extremity, the Oḡḡotun sent to his immediate neighbours, Ikeṣe and Ara, to come to his aid. Ara was far too weak yet to undertake such a task. The Ikeṣe people favoured sending an army to the relief of Oḡḡotun, but when the news arrived that Ara was sending no help, fear and peaceful counsels prevailed.

The Oḡḡotun and the Eḡḡon refugees held on doggedly for a year. When the Eḡḡon saw that further resistance was hopeless, they began to trickle back home, leaving the Oḡḡotun alone to defend their town. The Oḡḡotun now sent to Ibadan for help and the Ibadan, who were too busy in Ijebu, advised the Oḡḡotun to save their town by surrendering. The Ijeṣa army accepted the surrender of Oḡḡotun and set off on the homeward march.⁵³

The victorious Ijeṣa forces arrived at Ileṣa breathing threats against Imeṣi-Igbodo for sending aid to Eḡḡon. The Imeṣi-Igbodo authorities heard this and sent Chief Agbesokun, the Oisa-Oyin, to Ileṣa to explain that Imeṣi-Igbodo had not authorised Prince Adesoye's activities. The Ijeṣa deceptively returned a satisfactory answer, but a few weeks later the Imeṣi-Igbodo people woke up to find the Ijeṣa army behind their walls. Nobody was ready for war, and the people and their oḡba had no alternative but to take the only road open to them and flee northward to Ila in the Igbomina country. The Ijeṣa entered and sacked the town, taking away as much of its wealth as they could carry.

In the Ijeṣa country, Igbajo was the target of Ileṣa aggression. 53. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/3. Notes by the Rev. C. Phillips attached to his 1885 Diary.

Igbajọ had chosen to remain loyal to Ibadan rather than accept Ileṣa's protection. For this reason the Ileṣa chiefs were resolved that Igbajọ should be destroyed – or at least conquered and forced to accept, like the other Ijeṣa, the overlordship of Ileṣa. In 1866, the Ijeṣa army besieged Igbajọ and Igbajọ sent to Ibadan for aid. The Ibadan authorities were now in a position to pay attention to the eastern provinces of their empire. The Remo War had ended and a somewhat steady supply of ammunition was assured, especially through the Ijebu country. The events of the past few years had shown that it was very dangerous to tolerate the existence of Ileṣa as a power in the eastern countries. Moreover, since the Ijebu-Ere War, Ileṣa had consistently spurned Ibadan's overlordship; she had also not given up her attempts to recover Oṣogbo from Ibadan.⁵⁴ If Ibadan ever hoped to have full control in the east, it was now essential that Ileṣa should be subdued. Finally, the presence of such a powerful state on the road between Ibadan and Benin where the Ibadan obtained some of their ammunition,⁵⁵ was not to be tolerated.

Ogunmọla, now the Baṣorun, despatched troops under the new Balogun Akere to the relief of Igbajọ in December 1866. In mid-January 1867 the Ibadan army arrived at Igbajọ, found the Ijeṣa army quarrelling among themselves as to the wisdom of the Igbajọ campaign, and quickly routed them. All the Ijeṣa chiefs who were captured were put to the sword.

The Ibadan army then penetrated deep into the Ijeṣa country, captured a number of towns and began to surround Ileṣa. When the news reached Lagos, swift moves were made by the missionaries and Ijeṣa residents in Lagos to get the Lagos government to intervene and save Ileṣa. Sir John Glover⁵⁶ sent Lt. J. Gerard, his private secretary, to plead with the Alafin and Ogunmọla. The Baṣorun, who had not forgotten what Glover had done for Ibadan in the Remo War, relented and raised the siege of Ileṣa.⁵⁷

Ogunmọla died shortly after the Igbajọ campaign, and the control of affairs in Ibadan fell into the hands of a group of young

54. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Venn, 25 May 1856; Hinderer's Journal of a Missionary Journey, August–September 1858; Hinderer's Report for the half-year ending September 1859.

55. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Venn, 4 January 1861.

56. J. H. Glover, Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos 1864–66; Administrator of Lagos subject to the Governor-in-Chief at Sierra Leone, 1866–72.

57. CO147/13, Gerard to Glover, 31 January 1867, enclosure in Blackall to Carnarvon, 15 February 1867.

men – Akere, Latosisa and Ajayi Ogborieḡon. True products of the Ibadan system, these were restless young warriors who gloried in the greatness of Ibadan and manifested a single-minded resolve to enhance that greatness in all directions. Under these men, it was unlikely that Ibadan would continue to brook the challenge constituted by Iles̄a in the east.

At the same time, the Ijes̄a were discovering a champion in the person of a young warrior named Ogedemḡbe. Born in the small village of Atori in the Ijes̄a country, Ogedemḡbe too was, though in a slightly different way from his Ibadan contemporaries, a product of the Ibadan system. As a young man, he had been taken in one of Ibadan's earliest invasions of the Ijes̄a country into captivity to Ibadan. There, like many other young men from the Ekiti and Ijes̄a countries, he had learnt the art of war and of military organisation. In the end he had managed to effect his escape⁵⁸ and as soon as he had arrived at Iles̄a he had begun, in true Ibadan fashion, to collect a military following of his own. This group of young *ipaiye* (partisans) first made their mark in the disastrous Igbaj̄o War and in the civil commotion which seized Iles̄a after that war.⁵⁹ Thereupon the prestige and the numbers of the *ipaiye* had rapidly increased and Ogedemḡbe had soon become the greatest single military leader in the Ijes̄a country. And under the influence of Ogedemḡbe and his *ipaiye*, the Ijes̄a became very confident and therefore more daring in their attitude towards the Ibadan.

In the circumstances, the clash of forces between Ibadan and Iles̄a could not be long delayed. Not very long after the news of the death of Ogunm̄ḡla reached Iles̄a, the Ijes̄a decided that the time had come to resume the assault on the power of Ibadan. The

58. Ogedemḡbe made more than one attempt to escape. After he had failed in one of these attempts, he would have been sacrificed to the gods but for the intervention of certain influential persons in Ibadan. Even then, to teach him a lesson, deep, rough cuts were inflicted on his face and these disfigured him for the rest of his life.

59. A leading Iles̄a chief, Chief Okanle, the Odole, was held responsible for the Igbaj̄o disaster. He was attacked by a violent, stone-throwing mob, who destroyed his houses, scattered his family and looted his belongings. It is said that Ogedemḡbe's *ipaiye* led the mob and therefore became heroes of the masses – Abiola, J. D. *et al.*: *Iwe Itan Iles̄a*, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–9. Hinderer met the Chief Odole in 1858 and described him as 'the mouth and everything of the king' – C.M.S., CA2/049, Journal of a Missionary Journey, August–September 1858.

Ibadan answered back very quickly. Marching through Oşogbo, the Ibadan army under the Balogun Akere first encountered the Ijeşa army at Ibala in December 1867. The Ijeşa were dislodged and forced to fall back on Ileşa itself. For more than a year the Ijeşa, championed by Ogedemgbe and hiş ipaiye, very stoutly defended Ileşa until they were starved out.

When all looked hopeless, Ogedemgbe opened negotiations with the Ibadan through Ajayi Ogboriefon, the end result of which was that Ogedemgbe was guaranteed safe conduct with his men out of the doomed city if he would peacefully depart and leave Ileşa to be dealt with as the Ibadan pleased. On or about 4 June 1870 Ogedemgbe led out his ipaiye and threw open the gates. Ileşa immediately fell into the hands of the Ibadan and many of its people were taken into slavery.⁶⁰ From then on Ileşa became properly an Ibadan dependency.

The sack of Ileşa shocked the whole of Yorubaland. Ileşa was widely reputed to be very powerful and impregnable. William Clarke, who travelled extensively in the country in 1857-8, has left us an account of the strength of the town. After spending three days seeing Ileşa, Clarke concluded that it surpassed Ilorin in size, population and in the strength of its defences. Of its defences he wrote, 'Four and five miles from the town, my attention was drawn to three separate ditches ten feet wide, cut through the woods and running, how far I could not tell'. Surrounding the ruler's palace was a great wall, some eighteen to twenty feet high and five to six feet thick.⁶¹ About the same time, Hinderer visited Ileşa and described it⁶² as 'one of the larger towns of the country, in extent perhaps next to Ibadan. . . I have never seen in this country a place so well fortified as Ileşa. The walls are at least fifteen feet high and no less than six feet thick, with a trench around it of about twenty feet in depth, whereas inside there are high trees close to it all round at a distance of about ten yards one from the other, so that a scaffolding can be erected between their branches to defend the walls from it. Hundreds of human skulls are tempered into these walls, at the

60. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1870, and Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1870; also Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 377-82.

61. Clarke: *op. cit.*, p. 157.

62. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal of a Missionary Journey, August-September 1858.

north gate I counted upwards of a hundred, all which are of war captives.' Of the people, he wrote, 'The Ijeṣa are people of very strong passions, fierce and headstrong. It is said their infants have to drink a kind of medicine in which, when decocted, hard stones and knives are boiled, and that makes them so fierce and passionate' (*sic*). Hinderer's attendant, H. Johnson, remarked, 'I tell you for true, no person want to come for teach these people he must be like Daniel'. When asked what he meant he answered 'Me tell you, master, if he no able for stop the lion mouth, he no do for these people'.⁶³

By devastating Ileṣa, the Ibadan showed that probably no power in the country could resist them. The Eḡba, who since the Remo War had opposed transportation of ammunition through their territory to the Oyo country, immediately reacted by tightening the embargo. But among the Ekiti, Akoko and Igbomina, the sack of Ileṣa would appear to have been followed by almost universal surrender. Not till 1872 were there again any signs of revolt and resistance among the Ekiti to the Ibadan yoke.

In that year the Ibadan interfered in a succession dispute between two contestants to the throne of the Owa, had one installed and the other murdered. In anger, Ogedemgbe came out of his hiding place, stormed Ileṣa and forced the Ibadan nominee to flee. Latosisa, now the Aṛe-ona Kakanfo, and supreme ruler at Ibadan, sent the newly appointed Balogun Ajayi Ogborieḡon to drive off Ogedemgbe. Ogedemgbe fled before the arrival of the Ibadan army but Ajayi entered Ileṣa and had it sacked a second time. He then went in pursuit of Ogedemgbe, who fled to Ita-Ogbolu in the Akure kingdom in Ekiti. Ajayi made his camp at Ogotun with the Igbo-Alawun forest between him and Ogedemgbe.

The Deji of Akure, whose kingdom was thus put in danger, began to make defensive preparations. He also sent for aid to his brother oḡbas in southern Ekiti. Ogotun was occupied by the Ibadan and therefore could do nothing. Ikere's policy was influenced by some Oyo residents who advised it to keep out of the trouble.⁶⁴ Isẹ remained inflexibly loyal to Ibadan. The other

63. *Ibid.*

64. A sizeable Oyo population had settled at Ikere and was to play a major part in the affairs of that town. Oba Adogoriola, the Ogoga of Ikere: 'A note on the administration of Ikere', *op. cit.*, pp. 19-24.

kingdoms, Emure and Ado, responded and sent contingents.⁶⁵ Ogedemgbe was made to swear that he would not betray Akure to the Ibadan and an alliance was formally entered into between him and the Ekiti allies.⁶⁶

The Ekiti-Ijeṣa allied forces met with success after success from the start. Making adroit use of the forest, they surprised the Ibadan at every turn and inflicted heavy losses on them. In some of these ambushes the Ibadan lost many of their young chiefs. In the end, Ajayi had to be recalled and he returned in disgrace to Ibadan.

Thus for the first time ever, Ekiti and Ijeṣa people threw aside their traditional suspicions of each other and co-operated to resist the Ibadan. If the other Ekiti kingdoms, especially those of western Ekiti who were behind the Ibadan army,⁶⁷ had dared to join in the hostilities against the Ibadan at this time, there is little doubt that Ajayi's army would have perished. But so great yet was the fear of Ibadan in men's hearts that such a development was impossible.

Yet the Igbo-Alawun War had shown, first, that the Ibadan were not invincible, and secondly, that there was much that could be gained by a combination of all the eastern peoples against the might of Ibadan. Such instances of co-operation, especially between the Ekiti and Ijeṣa were to become more and more evident in the years after 1872. While Ijeṣa had remained prosperous and powerful, the Ijeṣa had believed in their ability to resist the Ibadan single-handed. But with the sack of Ijeṣa in 1870 and again in 1872, that confidence was destroyed and there emerged a growing realisation among the Ijeṣa that co-operation with the Ekiti was perhaps the only way out of the common suffering of the eastern countries.

After the Igbo-Alawun War, the Aṣẹ Latosisa hastened to take vengeance and to redeem the prestige of Ibadan arms. He made the kingdom of Ado the target of his attack. Ado was the only Ekiti kingdom that had never suffered an Ibadan conquest nor lost any town to the Ibadan. The Ibadan had gradually become intolerant of this free island in the midst of their imperial territory. Moreover, Ado had contributed to the defence of Ikoro in 1854-5, and had soon after that humiliated an Ibadan army at

65. Oguntuyi: *History of Ado*, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-4.

66. Atandare: *Iwe Itan Akure*, *op. cit.*, Chapter 3.

67. i.e. Eṣṣon and Imeṣi-Igbodo.

Agbado. It had also been a member of the Igbo-Alawun coalition against Ibadan. And to sharpen national ambition with a personal quarrel, the Arẹ Latosisa remembered that his own brother had been one of the Ibadan who had perished at Agbado.

The Ibadan army, under the Arẹ-Ona Kakanfo himself, left Ibadan on 8 December 1873 and arrived in Ekiti towards the end of the month.⁶⁸ Meticulous care was taken to isolate Ado. Ara and Ijero were coerced into contributing contingents to the campaign. Ise and Ikere (the traditional enemy of Ado) in the south made it impossible for Ogedemgbe, Emure and Akure to come to the aid of Ado.

The Ibadan army then entered the Ado kingdom, took Igede in a single day and Awọ in two. After Awọ, the Ijero and Ara contingents revolted against the unpleasant assignment and dispersed to their homes. The next town, Uyin, held out for six days and then fell. The way was thus open to Ado town itself. A disunited Ado army met the Ibadan outside the walls, stood a few hours of combat and rapidly disintegrated into a fleeing mob. The civil population joined in the general stampede in the direction of Gbonyin district and the Akoko country.

This defeat did not, however, destroy the power of resistance of the Ado people and of their friends in the Igbo-Alawun alliance. Since the Igbo-Alawun War, these allies had breathed threats of destruction against those Ekiti kingdoms (especially Ise) which had willingly remained loyal to Ibadan during the war. Ise had always been a loyal outpost of Ibadan, and the allies decided that to weaken the power of Ibadan Ise should be destroyed.⁶⁹ For its part, Ise got ready to defend itself and defied the allies. Thus, when some Ado people, who were fleeing from their town after it had been sacked by the Ibadan, arrived at Ise, the Ise people seized them, sold some to the Ibadan, sacrificed some to their gods, and imprisoned or enslaved the rest. At the same time, the Ise authorities defiantly refused to surrender on request certain offenders who had escaped from Akure to Ise.⁷⁰

Consequently, as soon as the Ibadan army had returned home from Ado, the Ekiti-Ijesa allies laid siege to Ise. The Arẹ

68. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1873 and half-year ending June 1874.

69. Jegede T. O.: *Itan Ise-Ekiti*, Ibadan n.d., pp. 27-46, and Oguntuyi: *op. cit.*, pp. 48-51, contain accounts of the fall of Ise.

70. *Ibid.*; also Atandare: *op. cit.*

✓ Latosisa immediately sent an army under two young chiefs, the Şeriki Iyapọ and the Osi Ilọri, to the relief of Işẹ. The siege was hurriedly raised and Ogedemgbe and the allies fell back on the Itaogbolu stronghold. When the Ibadan army arrived and found Işẹ at peace, they proceeded to attack Emure (a member of the alliance) which was only a short walk from Işẹ. Absolutely unprepared for such a development, the Emure people escaped from their town and left it for the Ibadan to sack. The Elemure was taken captive to Ibadan. The Ibadan army, as though on a tour of inspection, then went straight across Ekiti from south to north, passing through towns all of which were now Ibadan dependencies.

But the allies did not give up their determination to destroy Işẹ. In fact, the sack of Emure would seem only to have incensed them further. The siege was resumed. It is not known precisely how long this war lasted.⁷¹ Işẹ was a large and powerful town, but against a combination of such great warriors as Ogedemgbe, Aduloju and Falọwo of Ado, Aşa of Itaogbolu and the Ologun Eruru of Emure, few towns could hope to survive. After a brave resistance, Işẹ collapsed and its people were shared as slaves among the allied warriors.

✓ As soon as Işẹ was dealt with, Aduloju and Ogedemgbe seem to have conceived the idea of embarking on the destruction of Ibadan's power in the east.⁷² The Akoko country, being very distant from Ibadan, always constituted a poorly defended backwoods province of the Ibadan empire. At this weakest point of Ibadan power, the two warriors dealt serious blows until about 1879. Many towns surrendered, destroying all connections with Ibadan and contributing men to the allied army. Others, like Idoani, which resisted, were destroyed and their people enslaved.⁷³

71. Jegede (*op. cit.*, pp. 27-45) suggests that it went on for three years. Weir (*Intelligence Report on Akure, op. cit.*) puts it between 1873 and 1875.

72. Oguntuyi, *Father: Aduloju Dodondawa*, 2nd Edition, Ibadan 1957, pp. 41-2.

73. Account of the destruction of Idoani, Afo and Ikun, from an interview with Chief Oyegbata of Idoani (9 August 1963). When Idoani fell, the parents of Chief Oyegbata were taken into captivity by Ogedemgbe. He said he was born a few months later at Igbara-Odo (Ekiti) where Ogedemgbe stationed some of his slaves for a while. He later went with his parents and Ogedemgbe to the Ekitiparapọ camp at Imeşi-Ile where he grew up. After the war, he and his parents went to live at

Even when Ogedemgbe returned to Ita-Ogbolu in that year, Aduloju continued for years from his headquarters at Imesi-Laşigidi to subdue town after town tributary to Ibadan.⁷⁴

Soon after the destruction of Işe and while Aduloju and Ogedemgbe were still in the Owo forest on their way to Akoko, the Ibadan army under Latosisa himself entered Ekiti again. The purpose of this campaign was kept secret even at Ibadan and remained obscure for a long time. No attempt was made to pursue Ogedemgbe and Aduloju, who were in the far south. Judging from what later transpired, one reason for the expedition would seem to have been that some major disaffection had by now developed between the Ibadan and their Aiyede friend, Eşugbayi, now the *Ata* of Aiyede.⁷⁵ Eşugbayi was himself a very ambitious man, and surely one of the greatest warriors among the Ekiti and Ijeş. From his town of Aiyede he was for ever leading out expeditions into the Iyagba and Akoko countries and subjecting town after town to Aiyede. By the middle seventies he ruled over a large and heterogeneous kingdom made up of some Ekiti, some Akoko and some Iyagba. Sooner or later, such a man was bound to excite the suspicion and hostility of the Ibadan chiefs.

Furthermore, the campaign appears to have been conceived by Latosisa as, among other things, part of the preparations for the extension of Ibadan conquests into the far north-eastern Yoruba countries – the territories of the small Yoruba sub-groups (Iyagba, Ijumu, Ikiri and others) of present-day Kabba Division. Hitherto, Ibadan had not disputed the Nupe control of these areas, but it would seem that, according to Ibadan traditions, Latosisa and the other Ibadan chiefs had by about 1875 begun to consider plans for expelling the Nupe. And this is why, when about August or September 1875 Umaru, the king of Nupe, had asked Ibadan to send him help in a campaign against the Igbira who lived beyond the north-eastern borders of Yorubaland, Latosisa had eagerly obliged. An Ibadan army had been imme-

Ileş and finally escaped back to Idoani when Ogedemgbe was arrested by Captain Bower in 1894.

74. Oguntuyi; *Aduloju, op. cit.*, p. 43; also *History of Ado, op. cit.*, p. 50.

75. Eşugbayi had by now settled down as oba of his town of Aiyede with the title *Ata*, a title which he obviously derived from his Igbira and Iyagba neighbours. He is said to have been a good friend of the *Ata* of Okene, the ruler of the Igbira.

diately despatched and this was joined later by reinforcements from home as well as by small contingents from Ekiti and Akoko. Latosisa's intention, it is said, had been to employ this campaign to familiarise the Ibadan forces with the Yoruba territories on which he had his eye, since these territories lay between the Ekiti-Akoko provinces and the Igbira country. Large numbers of Ibadan troops had thus converged on Igbira, taking care to spread out as widely as possible into the neighbouring Yoruba districts and occasionally harassing towns and villages and kidnapping people – all to the alarm of local Nupe officials. Soon, however, the Nupe authorities became suspicious of the interests and activities of the Ibadan men in these areas. They quickly made peace with the Igbira and asked Ibadan to withdraw its troops.⁷⁶ Latosisa had to comply, but a few weeks later he was personally leading the Ibadan army to north-eastern Ekiti. Part of his plan, it is said, was to find one pretext or another for sending Ibadan forces into the Nupe-held districts in that neighbourhood.

In December 1875 the Ibadan army marched into Ekiti and encamped at Iyapa. Many of the Ekiti kingdoms, now much emboldened by the events of the past few years since the Igbo-Alawun War, sent contingents to a hastily formed army which waited at Ijeṣa-Iye near Aiyede to confront the Ibadan. The Ibadan stormed Ijeṣa-Iye, scattered the Ekiti forces and proceeded towards Aiyede. Aiyede was deserted and the Ata himself took refuge at Omu-Ijelu.⁷⁷ Omu-Ijelu had repulsed three attacks before, but on this occasion it fell in a single day. The captive oḅa, Eṣugbayi, accepted the status of an Ibadan protectorate for his kingdom and promised to pay tributes. After Omu-Ijelu, Ikḳole was the next (and last) town to be taken, the people deserting their town and fleeing in different directions.

Thousands of people escaping from Iṣan, Aiyede, Itaji, Omu-Ijelu and Ikḳole fled into the Iyagba and Ijumu countries. Ignoring the Nupe claims for the first time ever, the Ibadan troops followed – burning farms, dispersing whole villages and spreading panic far and wide. They penetrated so deeply into Nupe-held territory that they encountered detachments of the Nupe cavalry, with

76. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1875.

77. A town built on a hill and surrounded by a strong wall and thorny thickets, and believed in those days to be impregnable.

whom some skirmishes were fought. At last, apparently having no orders to begin a full-scale war, they withdrew and joined the Are in Ekiti.

In Ibadan this campaign later received the name *Wokuti*⁷⁸ from the fact that many of the Ibadan boys, when they set off on the homeward march, died mysteriously somewhere in the Ekiti hills. Johnson has said that what happened was that the Ibadan forces missed their way, fumbled into dangerous terrain and perished almost to a man.⁷⁹ The story told by the survivors when they arrived at Ibadan, however, was that 'the enemy had, on their running away for their lives, lined (after themselves) all the way through with poison' (*sic*).⁸⁰ Because of the great events that were to shake the whole country from 1877 on, this proved to be the last Ibadan campaign in the eastern Yoruba countries.

✓ Ibadan conquest was often accompanied by total or almost total destruction of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko or Igbomina town involved. Such destruction was usually the result of the exasperation of the Ibadan victors with the resistance they had met. At times, however, such destruction followed no apparent provocation. In either case, the sacking of a town was invariably followed by a frantic scramble for captives. Each free-born war boy surrendered some proportion of his captives to his chief and kept the rest to himself. The slave-soldier enjoyed less freedom over his captives, but his position and prestige with his master were usually greatly affected by the degree of his successes in making captives on these occasions. Thus, all concerned – chief, free-born soldier or slave-soldier – had something to gain from the sacking of a town. Hence the general eagerness to have every vanquished town pillaged, whether it had resisted or peacefully surrendered. Hence also the fact that few Ekiti or Ijeṣa towns escaped being ravaged. Some towns suffered this fate twice or thrice over.

Another point deserves to be stressed. The north-eastern Yoruba countries, almost throughout their subordination to Ibadan, were constantly disturbed by campaigns and raids. Some-

78. *Wokuti* – literally, 'pile the corpses out of the way'; so, 'Wokuti War', a war in which corpses were so numerous that they were piled upon one another, out of the way.

79. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 403–5.

80. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi's Journal Extracts for half-year ending June 1876.

times this was due to the restlessness of the Ibadan chiefs and their war boys and agents. Probably more often it was due to the fact that the Ekiti, Igbomina, Akoko and Ijeṣa were constantly revolting against Ibadan rule and therefore required to be frequently reconquered. Hence there was an almost continuous state of febrile agitation, of wars and rumours of wars, of fears and instability.⁸¹

Yet in the midst of all this, the Ibadan set up a system of political control in Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina. Every town which escaped total destruction was placed under the guardianship of a chief in Ibadan. The chief was the *Baba-kekere* (guardian) of the town, and it was his duty to the Ibadan authorities to ensure that the town remained loyal to Ibadan, paid its tributes and performed other assignments.⁸² To ensure the fulfilment of these duties, the chief had an *Ajeṣe* (high-powered representative or agent) on the spot. It was the duty of this official to see that the tributes were collected and transmitted regularly to Ibadan. He kept his chief well informed about happenings in the town and as the representative on the spot of the imperial power was responsible for receiving and introducing foreign visitors to the local authorities. It devolved upon him to arrange for the comfort of all Ibadan chiefs and messengers passing through his domain. In selecting these *Ajeṣes* from among their followers, the chiefs looked principally for ability and loyalty and cared very little for place of origin. As a result, the men who served as *Ajeṣes* in the eastern Yoruba towns, like those who served in other places, came from all over Yorubaland, including the eastern provinces themselves.⁸³

81. On 30 June 1858 D. J. May witnessed near Aiyede an example of such sudden alarms – May: *op. cit.*, p. 226.
82. It has not been possible to trace the Ibadan chiefs to whom most Ekiti and Ijeṣa towns were given as wards. A few are known: Ijebu-Èrè, after the Ijebu-Èrè War, was given to Ajayi Ogboriefon – (N.A.I.), C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre's note on 'Towns destroyed in the Ijeṣa country by the Ibadans', dated 1882. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/3, Notes attached by C. Phillips to his 1885 Diary – Effon belonged to the Aṣipa of Ibadan in the early 1860's; Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 323 – Iṣe in the 1850s belonged to Chief Abayomi.
83. In 1858 the *Ajeṣe* of the village of Pagan near Apomu was an Egba, a relation of the Alake of Abeokuta but one of the servants of the Otun of Ibadan. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer's Journal of a Missionary Journey August–September 1858. Agoo, one of the *Ajeṣes* at Omuo, was a native of Aiyedun in the Ikole kingdom.

Each dependent town had to send tribute regularly to the government of Ibadan, through the Baba-kekere. D. J. May said that in every town, 'a proportionate tax is levied on every house, which has to be paid every week or at farthest fortnight to the king, who transmits it.'⁸⁴ Apart from such regular tributes, each town was liable to emergency levies of cash and foodstuffs whenever Ibadan, in preparation for a campaign, demanded them. In addition, the Baba-kekere's usual source of regular income was his ward-town. Whenever the tributes were being sent to Ibadan, the Baba-kekere's share would be put aside and sent separately. The Baba-kekere could also make emergency demands on his ward-town. Finally, the dependent Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko or Igbomina town was obliged to contribute contingents for Ibadan's expeditions both in their own countries and outside.

The above was the system of Ibadan's provincial administration as it emerged in general outline. In eastern Ekiti, the project seems to have been entertained at Ibadan for some time of making Eṣugbayi of Aiyede a native superintendent of Ibadan's interests in the whole of Ekiti – or more probably in eastern Ekiti alone. Such a plan might have been thought of because of the frequent revolts in Ekiti, which, it was apparently felt, made it necessary to have a powerful native overseer on the spot. Eṣugbayi was invited to Ibadan and was given the title of 'Balogun Ekiti'; he was also presented with a staff of office.⁸⁵ Nothing of practical importance came out of all this other than that Eṣugbayi became the keeper of the borders of Ibadan's domain in north-eastern Ekiti against the incursions of the Nupe. For this reason, no Ajeṣe was placed at Aiyede and Eṣugbayi continued to be a friend of Ibadan until the 1875–6 invasion.

Among the Ekiti and Ijeṣa, the Ajeṣe and other Ibadan officials are spoken of as degenerate, greedy and rapacious people, given to licentiousness and debauchery; forcefully taking or stealing whatever caught their fancy and wantonly destroying much else; compelling wives in the presence of their husbands and daughters before their fathers to yield to their insatiable desires. Unfortunately, such generalisations arising from memories of

84. May: *op. cit.*, p. 219.

85. Both the staff of office and the title of 'Balogun Ekiti' still survive at Aiyede. In 1858, D. J. May encountered Eṣugbayi at Igbajo, returning from a state visit to Ibadan. May described him as 'the principal chief' of the Ekiti country. May: *op. cit.*, pp. 221 and 225.

decades of bondage under Ibadan have become so generally accepted in Ekiti and Ijeṣa and have so obscured the details of the system of Ibadan administration that it is now very difficult to trace in what ways it varied from town to town, and from time to time in each town, in the quality of its personnel and in its effects. Yet available evidence would seem to lead to the following conclusions.

Usually, the Ajeḷe was a member of the Baba-kekere's following – a trusted relative or war boy or even slave. Some of these men, it seems, behaved themselves in the provinces with the dignity, the sense of responsibility and the restraint befitting their exalted positions. William Clarke thought that many an Ajeḷe seemed to act 'in restraint of superior orders rather than from the outgushings of his own soul'.⁸⁶ Some of these Ajeḷes took genuine interest in the welfare of the dependent towns, especially against the rapacities of Ibadan chiefs, war boys or messengers in transit, and some succeeded in winning the affection of the dependent towns.⁸⁷ But some of the Ajeḷe took their appointment as a chance to enrich themselves. Arriving in the provinces, they treated the local chiefs and people with contempt, made exorbitant demands on the people for their own personal aggrandisement and lived a life of utter licence. Their notoriety usually spread far and wide in their own days and in our time has succeeded in overshadowing the memories of their better colleagues.

To bear messages from village to village and from the provinces to Ibadan, the Ajeḷe usually required a good number of attendants and messengers. The size of his household, however, was often enlarged by worthless and shiftless characters from Ibadan and other towns. There seems little the Ajeḷe, even when he was a responsible man himself, could do to keep away these ne'er-dowells who naturally felt entitled to share in the benefits accruing from the toils of the Ibadan armies. The problem of providing for the Ajeḷe's often very large household was a difficult one. The regular levies of foodstuffs on the townspeople were heavy enough

86. Clarke: *op. cit.*, p. 145.

87. The Ajeḷe at Emure is said to have been so good that when the Emure people reasserted their independence after the destruction of Iṣe, he was sent away under safe conduct to Ibadan. In gratitude for this, the Ibadan chiefs released the ruler of Emure who was in captivity at Ibadan.

on the people. To subsidise this often inadequate source, the members of the Ajele's household usually went to excesses. Probably imitating the practice whereby Ekiti obas' wives occasionally went to the market place to take little bits of food articles from the sellers,⁸⁸ the Ajele's boys would go to the market place to seize whatever they needed. Almost invariably, they also seized much that they did not need, and in the worst instances, they extended their seizures to the unripe crops on the farms and the cooked food in the houses. At times, they stationed themselves on the highways and compelled all women returning from the farms to carry their loads to the Ajele's compound. Sometimes they went so far as to force rich people to surrender to them such valuables as slaves.⁸⁹

Supplied from these various sources, the Ajele's household lived in a degree of comfort and opulence unique in the eastern provinces. The local obas and balẹs and chiefs, impoverished and ruined by the destructions of the invasions and by the endless tributes and exactions, looked with smouldering wrath on this veritable palace and its master who was, indeed, only a slave of an Ibadan chief.

From Ibadan, the Baba-kekere often had to send messengers to his ward-towns. These messengers were usually slaves of the chief. Even at Ibadan the chiefs' slaves enjoyed much liberty; knowing that they could not be easily called to account for their evil deeds, they were often guilty of evil-doing 'of which the free Ibadans are not seldom the victims', and the wronged person often dared not complain as the chiefs usually took the side of their slaves - 'so, practically Ibadan itself is under the slaves of the great chiefs'.⁹⁰

In the provinces, there was, in effect, no limit to what these

88. A practice referred to as '*oja rirẹ*', This practice survived till recent times.

89. William Clarke wrote, 'Here is a man [the Ajele] who calls himself a consul of a superior power surrounded by his train and daily attended by a crowd of hungry flatterers - just a life picture of what occurs in the . . . courts where glitter and show render things more palatable to lovers of royalty. Every little boy, even if his business is to cut grass for the horses, feels his importance because he, too, belongs to Agchle . . . [*sic*]'. Clarke: *op. cit.*, p. 146.

90. (N.A.I.), C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, 'Notes and letters of the Rev. J. B. Wood 1881-96'.

slaves could do. Samuel Johnson⁹¹ has left us a description of the excesses of these slave-messengers:

As soon as each one gets outside the Ibadan town walls he secures to himself the services of a drummer and fifer and a bard to sing the praises of his master as if the latter were coming; he collects behind him idle fellows who follow no regular employment and he moves as a little chief aping the master who sent him. When he enters a town he asks for the Ibadan Ajele there and introduces himself as the messenger of such and such a chief, the Ajele is to introduce him to the authorities of the town who will assign him quarters for lodging. The landlord has to defray all the expenses of the keep of this messenger and his followers who will remain there as long as they like . . . The best local dishes . . . must be provided every day with pots of local beer or palm-wine. The master of the house has to levy on all the inmates for the contribution of their share, even to the old women who lived on spinning cotton for their keep . . . cruelty, vanity, debauchery were more common with them than otherwise. A landlord would be compelled to wait on them at meals, at times holding the lamp in his hand . . . and sometimes the lamp is placed on his head making him as it were a lamp-post whilst they are partaking of his hospitality. Forcing their women, raping their girls, rifling their valuables are common . . . and they generally return to Ibadan with booty as from a raid. Who dares touch the messenger of a great Ibadan chief?

No part of the Ibadan empire – Oşun, Igbomina, Ekiti, Ijeşa or Akoko – escaped from the menaces of these messengers. Some small villages situated on the highways were so hard hit by these practices that the people fled and the villages became depopulated.⁹² But while some of the bigger and stronger Oşun towns, like Iwo, were able to check the excesses of the messengers or even exclude them from the use of their roads,⁹³ no Igbomina, Ijeşa, Ekiti or Akoko town succeeded in doing such a thing. It seems probable that no other single factor succeeded as much as these messengers in making the name of Ibadan stink in the provinces.

91. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 406.

92. C.M.S., CA2/019, W. S. Alley's Journal extracts for the half-year ending June 1878. On 12 February 1878 the Revs. Olubi and Allen passed through the village of Ofa (between Ibadan and Iwo). The Rev. Allen records: 'This village was once very beautiful, the inhabitants were about three to four hundred, but now they are not more than 50'. On inquiry, he was told that the people had fled their village owing to the exactions of the Ibadan messengers. He found the people sitting, 'with few provisions for sale at the frontage of the *orisa*s as defence'; when asked whether the *orisa*s (gods) were always sufficient deterrent to the Ibadan messengers, the people answered 'NO'.

93. *Ibid.*

To a brother, nephew, cousin or other relation of the Baba-kekere, the ward-town was, as it were, a sort of farm. He could go there whenever he so wished and as a relative of the Baba-kekere demand all manner of things from the local authorities. Under the supervision of the Ajele and his men, these local leaders would have to levy on rich men and households and the Ibadan man would return to Ibadan at the head of a large caravan conveying his booty.

There was another element of the system which touched the Ekiti kings particularly. In the general set-up of the Ajele system, no regard was ever paid to the traditional political system of the Ekiti. Towns within the same kingdom were allotted to different guardians and had different Ajeles appointed to them. The size of a town alone seems to have been the deciding factor in considering whether it should have an Ajele or not. This was an assault on the traditional political system and tended to encourage the bigger ereko towns which had Ajeles to become recalcitrant and insolent in their attitude to their traditional head, the o \bar{b} a of the olu-ilu of the kingdom. Especially in cases where there had been disagreements between the o \bar{b} a and his ereko town before, the Ajele system made things worse.⁹⁴ It was very common for the o \bar{b} as to bemoan the disruption of their kingdoms consequent upon the introduction of Ibadan rule.

The effects of the frequent wars and alarms and the exactions of Ibadan and its agents were grave. The people of the little villages and hamlets, unable to bear the burden of the frequent alarms and sudden levies, tended to desert their villages and flock to the bigger towns where they thought they could have some protection. D. J. May observed that until he entered the Iyagba country, after passing through the Ije \bar{s} a and Ekiti countries, he never saw small 'isolated dwellings'.⁹⁵ Even the bigger Ije \bar{s} a or Ekiti towns enjoyed very little security and after years of Ibadan rule presented a sorry sight. Ibokun in 1858 was 'a miserable and unimportant' town where the 'shattered and neglected aspect of the town, and the subdued and melancholy manners of its chief and his headmen'⁹⁶ bore testimony to years of Ibadan domination.

94. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, 21 April. After the Kiriji War, the Olojudo of Ido had to take drastic steps to compel Ifaki in his kingdom to revert to the traditional *status quo*.

95. May: *op. cit.*, p. 232.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

In February 1878 the Rev. Allen⁹⁷ was 'sorry to see this large and beautiful town [Ileṣa] . . . [now] full of wild grass and few people in it [*sic*]'. As recently as 1858 Ileṣa had been a large beautiful town with high thick walls, straight, wide, clean streets and an impressive palace.⁹⁸

Of the Orangun of Ila, William Clarke wrote in 1857-8: 'If there is a being that deserves our pity and sympathy, it is the unfortunate one whom the ravages of time have reduced from opulence and power to a state of poverty and penury. . . . Whatever the country [Igbomina] and capital [Ila] might have been in its palmy days, there are marks sufficiently evident to prove that those days are no more. . . . The very countenance of the man proved to me his energy was gone and if his physiognomy taught anything it appears the wounded spirit within his heart will hurry him to his grave.'⁹⁹ Clarke indicated that such a description might be applicable to many rulers in the eastern countries of Igbomina and Ijeṣa. And to describe the condition of Ekiti and Ijeṣa, a correspondent of *The Lagos Observer*¹⁰⁰ in 1884, quoted the following lines:

The spider holds the veil in the palace of Caesar,
The owl stands sentinel on the watch-tower of Afrasiab.

This then was the condition of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko countries for roughly three decades up to 1876. Reaction against the oppressive rule of Ibadan was all the time growing, and all that was required was for this reaction to be well coordinated and organised. Until this happened, the Ibadan had good reason to continue to believe in their invincibility in the eastern countries.

97. C.M.S., CA2/019, W. S. Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1878.

98. Clarke: *op. cit.*, pp. 161-6; May: *op. cit.*, pp. 216-9.

99. Clarke: *op. cit.*, pp. 186-7.

100. *The Lagos Observer*, 5 June 1884.

Chapter 3

The Founding of the Ekitiparapo, 1878

Such a well-co-ordinated resistance against Ibadan was to make its appearance in 1878. The trends towards co-operation between the north-eastern Yoruba peoples, especially amongst the Ekiti and then between the Ekiti and the Ijeṣa, had increasingly received encouragement from a number of other developments. In the first place, under the impact of Ibadan, the traditional military organisation of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa had gradually undergone a change. Side by side with, and in some cases in the place of, the group of *ẹlegbẹ* chiefs under the leadership of the *Olori-ẹlegbẹ* (leader of the *ẹlegbẹ* chiefs), the Ibadan military titles of Balogun, Ọtun, Osi, Seriki, etc. made their appearance.¹ Obviously, the efficiency of the Ibadan military system recommended itself to the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Akoko and Igbomina. The new system placed emphasis upon merit and made it possible to invest new capable warriors with the responsibility of defence. In the circumstances, the old military chieftaincies retreated to the background.² Aduloju at Ado, Fabunmi at Imesi-Igbodo, Olugbosun at Ọye, and Ogedemgbe at Ilesha assumed, not the appropriate traditional titles of the *Olori-ẹlegbẹ* or its equivalent but simply that of Balogun. In some kingdoms, like Ọtun and Imesi-Igbodo, as well as in most of the Igbomina towns, a whole series of new titles, ranging from the Balogun to the Seriki, was created. In other places, like Ado and Emure, only the title of Balogun appeared.³

At the same time as this new military organisation was being adopted, a whole range of new military leaders was appearing all

1. For instance, according to Ọtun traditions, the titles of Balogun, Ọtun, Osi, Seriki etc. which still survive in Ọtun were copied from the Ibadan during the wars. In fact the military organisation of Ọtun became so similar to that of Ibadan that Ọtun came to earn the appellation of 'Ibadan-kekere', i.e., little Ibadan.
2. The *ẹlegbẹ* titles, traditionally selective, started to become hereditary.
3. The kingdoms of northern and north-western Ekiti, which felt the Ibadan impact more, copied the Ibadan system more closely than the southern Ekiti kingdoms.

over the eastern Yoruba countries. These were the men who, at some time during the Ibadan conquests, had somehow (either as captives or adventurers) found their way to Ibadan. In the tough military schools of Ibadan, under one chief or another, they learned their military lessons before finding their ways home.⁴ On arriving back home, they usually acquired their own following in the fashion of the Ibadan warriors and chiefs. At the head of this private army, they went out on expeditions, acquired great wealth and enlarged their following. Such campaigns were usually not carried out at the instance of their *oba*, though the *oba* and his chiefs would be honoured with gifts of slaves at the end of each expedition, and though tributes extracted from vanquished towns and villages would be extracted in the name of the *oba* and proportions of it rendered to the *oba*.⁵ Politically and socially, the rise of these men was a revolutionary development among the eastern Yoruba, because it produced new pockets of power and prestige which were frequently in conflict with, and potentially threatened, the position of the *obas*. But because of their importance in the growing resistance against Ibadan, the new men were generally welcomed and adored.

It was mostly these men who took up the foreign military titles imported from Ibadan. They were to be found all over the Ijesa, Ekiti, Akoko and Igbomina countries, but the best known of them were Ogedemgbe of Ijesa, Aduloju and Falowo of Ado, Fabunmi of Imesi-Igbodo, Olugbosun of Oye, Adeyale of Ila, Odu of Ogbagi and Bakare of Afa.

The superiority of these men over the *elegbę* chiefs is obvious. In the first place, while no formal military training was usually undergone by those appointed as *elegbę* chiefs, the new men graduated from the best military school of the time – Ibadan. In the second place, while the *elegbę* led citizen armies which came into existence only in times of war, the new men led personal

4. The *obas* of the Ekitiparapo wrote in 1886: '... nearly everyone of our present warriors . . . has been a slave under different Ibadan masters from whom they acquire the knowledge of warfare . . .' (*sic*). C.4957, Kings of the Ekitiparapo to Capt. Moloney, 20 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Cranville, 23 June 1886.

5. Many towns which Aduloju conquered in Akoko were made to accept the overlordship of the Ewi of Ado and paid tribute to Aduloju who rendered part of it to the Ewi. Afa was one such town. For other Akoko towns in the same category see Oguntuyi: *Aduloju Dodondava, op. cit.*, p. 42.

standing armies made up of trusted slaves, servants and free-born adherents who had a stake in the victories of their leaders. Finally, the facts of Ibadan conquest had a personal meaning for many of these men. As captives in Ibadan some of them had experienced personal suffering and degradation at the hands of the Ibadan. As has been earlier stated, Ogedemgbe, for instance, had once tasted the torture of being selected for sacrifice to the gods of the Ibadan and had finally escaped with deep scars which were to disfigure his face for life. For the rest of their lives, such men burned with a deep sense of the wrongs they and their people had suffered and were suffering and yearned for the great reckoning. In these men, Ibadan was nurturing the forces which would sooner or later topple it from the pinnacle of power which it occupied.

Thus, after decades of suffering under Ibadan domination, the eastern countries began to evolve the military organisation and to produce the men that would, one day, be adequate to resist the Ibadan. Ogedemgbe's *ipaiye* formed the backbone of the defence of Ilesha in 1870, while Aduloju's and Ogedemgbe's personal armies constituted the hard military core of the alliance which humiliated Ajayi Ogboriefon at Igbo-Alawun in 1872-3.

One other factor was the opening of the Ondo road in the 1870s.⁶ Owing to the restrictions often imposed on trade through their countries by the Egba and Ijebu, the government of Lagos began to look for alternative roads to the interior. About 1869, Captain John Glover learnt that there was a road through the eastern lagoon, the Ilaje and Ikalẹ countries to Ondo and to the interior. He consulted the Ondo who were in Lagos and sent a certain Awobikun, an Ijesha man, by the Igbobini road to Ondo. Awobikun could not proceed to the interior, however, because of a war which was raging between the Ondo and the Ife. In the 1830s and 1840s, the kingdom of Ife, benefiting from the influx of thousands of Oyo refugees to its towns and villages, had set out on a career of conquest and expansion. Of this, the greatest victim had been the kingdom of Ondo beyond Ife's southern borders. Probably about 1845, the Ife had taken advantage of a war between Ode-Ondo, the capital city of the kingdom, and

6. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1/1. These details and others that follow on the Ondo road are derived from the Rev. (later Bishop) Charles Phillips, C.M.S. Missionary at Ondo from 1877, especially his notes on 'Glover and the Ondos' in *Diary and Letter Book of Bishop Phillips 1877-86*.

Oke-Igbo, one of its biggest subordinate towns, to encroach on Ondo territory. Taking the side of Oke-Igbo, the Ife forces had marched in, occupied Oke-Igbo and forced the people of Ode-Ondo to flee from their town. The Ondo had fought back and succeeded in stopping any further advance of the Ife, but they had failed to dislodge the enemy from Oke-Igbo or to re-occupy their main town, even when the heart of the Ife kingdom itself had (in 1850-4) been disrupted by conflicts between the Ife and their refugee guests. The people of Ode-Odo and the surrounding towns and villages had thereupon scattered into the deep southern districts of their kingdom, with disastrous consequences for the towns and villages there. When Awobikun came in 1869, therefore, Ode-Ondo and many of the southern Ondo towns (Araromi-Obu, Mofun, Igbindo, Odigbo and others) were in ruins and little bands of Ondo men were still keeping alive a guerrilla-type war against the Ife foothold in their kingdom. It was obvious that no trade could pass through these territories until the war had been settled. Towards this end, Captain Glover sent Awobikun and an Oyo man named Obayomi in 1871, and these men succeeded in preparing the grounds for the final settlement of the war, which was accomplished by Roger Goldsworthy, District Magistrate and Acting Collector of Customs for the Lagos colony, in 1872.⁷ Though he failed to persuade the Ife to give up Oke-Igbo immediately, Goldsworthy got both sides to agree to a cessation of hostilities and made it possible for Ode-Ondo to be reoccupied. Three years later, the C.M.S. began the rudiments of missionary stations at Ode-Ondo and at Itebu on the Ilaje creeks.

Lagos traders rushed to avail themselves of the opportunities of this new road.⁸ Ondo became the focal point of a number of roads converging from the coast through the Ilaje and Ikafe countries and then forking into two towards the interior – one through

7. C.O.147/23, Goldsworthy to Glover, 13 June 1872, enclosure in Hennessey to Kimberley, 24 August 1872; C.O.147/26, Report of A. L. Hethersett, Goldsworthy's interpreter on the expedition, enclosure in Glover to Kimberley, 30 October 1872.

8. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/4. The Rev. Phillips said on 28 February 1879 that one cause of anxiety to the missionaries at Ondo 'has been from the large influx of Lagos traders who . . . have made this town an highway to the interior'. The number of these traders was so large and the goods they carried so many that they excited the fear and cupidity of the peoples along the route.

Oke-Igbo to Ife and the Oyo country, the other through Ile-Oluji and the Ijesa village of Odo to the Ijesa, Ekiti, Igbomina countries and to Ilorin.⁹

Before the opening of this road, Benin had been the main source of military supplies for the Ekiti, Ijesa and Akoko. But the journey to Benin was very long, and the Benin road often infested with Benin and Oyo brigands. The journey to Ode-Ondo was much shorter¹⁰ and quite often Ekiti traders did not need to travel beyond Odo, a small Ijesa village which grew to a market of some importance.¹¹ Consequently, the old Benin road lost most of its trade to the Ondo road.¹² The new road contributed to the strengthening of the developments in the eastern provinces especially by making it easier and cheaper for traders and warriors there to procure arms and ammunition in large quantities.

Finally, far away in Lagos, returned emigrés from Sierra Leone and the Americas who were of Ekiti and Ijesa origin and a number of Ijesa-Ekiti men who, although captured and sold from their homes, had been fortunate enough to avoid being shipped away from Lagos, had formed themselves into an association (called the Ijesa Association) as early as about 1852.¹³ They appear to have, by 1876, changed the name of their association to the 'Ekitiparapo Society' (or Association). It began in Lagos as a Christian group holding weekly prayer meetings, but as the condition of the Ekiti and Ijesa countries in the interior grew worse and worse under the Ibadan yoke, its members seem to have become gradually preoccupied with politics – especially with considerations aimed at ameliorating the lot of their peoples in

9. See (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entry for 22 August for a description of the Ondo road; also Phillips to Read, 22 November 1898.
10. The Rev. Phillips wrote in 1894: 'A traveller can come from Ondo to Ado via Akure in 3 or 4 days'. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entry for 26 April. The journey from Akure to Benin usually took about one week.
11. (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 30 April 1890.
12. Even Oyo traders started to turn to the new road; (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/4, the Rev. C. Phillips: 'An address delivered at a missionary meeting held in the school room at Faji, Lagos, 28 February 1879'; also Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entry for 26 April.
13. (A.P.S.), T. Lloyd Harrison to Fox Bourne, 27 January 1892, has a story of the Ekitiparapo Society which he said was founded as Ijesa Association in Lagos 'about 40 years before', i.e. c. 1852.

the interior and, if possible, freeing them from Ibadan domination.

Thus, it soon became usual for special prayers to be offered in the weekly meetings of the association that 'God may bring about in due time events which may ameliorate [*sic*] condition of their country'.¹⁴ At first, their hope was that a vigorous expansion of Christian missionary work into the Ijeṣa and Ekiti countries would strengthen reaction against Ibadan and thereby hasten the impending rebellion.¹⁵ But as time went on, they appear to have come to the conclusion that positive incitement by themselves of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa peoples in the interior to armed uprising against Ibadan was the only way of achieving their end. Thus in 1875, the leaders of the association in Lagos approached the Administrator of Lagos and asked him to give them and their compatriots the same type of military training as the Lagos government was giving to the Hausas employed as soldiers by the government; it was generally known in Lagos that the intention of these men was to employ such training at some future time to lead the Ekiti and Ijeṣa in a revolt against Ibadan.¹⁶

The association brought its impact to bear on affairs in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries through its members who visited the interior and through a number of emigré elements who had come back to settle permanently at home. William Clarke found many of these men (whom he called 'Sierra Leone people') settled in the Ijeṣa country as early as 1857.¹⁷ D. J. May said in 1858 that he saw frequent instances of such men living in Lagos and travelling inland to visit their places of birth.¹⁸

Until about the middle of the 1870s, however, the influence of the association in the interior was very seriously curtailed by the fact that the only means of contact between Lagos and the Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Igbomina and Akoko countries was the road through Abeokuta or Ijebu and then through Ibadan to the interior. This enabled the Ibadan authorities to exercise a close scrutiny on all external contacts with the far interior. They came to know, for

14. *The African Times*, 1 February 1877; cf. Ayandele, E. A.: *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria: A Political and Social Analysis*, London 1965, p. 34.

15. C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Wright, 9 February 1875.

16. C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal extracts for the quarter ending 31 December 1875.

17. Clarke: *op. cit.*, pp. 175 and 194.

18. May: 'Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe Countries', *op. cit.*, pp. 216-23.

instance, that the motive behind the Ekitiparapo Society's advocacy of missionary work in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries was mainly political, and they therefore prohibited further extension of missionary work there, a prohibition which they found easy to enforce.¹⁹ Moreover, as the security imposed by the Ibadan authorities tightened, the Lagos men found their journeys through Ibadan on the way to and from their homes quite hazardous. On 2 March 1866 a group of Ijeṣa emigrés (most notable among them a certain Phillip Josse Meffre who had recently returned from Brazil) arrived at Ibadan on their return journey to Lagos after a visit to the Ijeṣa country. The Baṣorun Ogunmola arrested them, charged them with activities prejudicial to Ibadan's interests among the Ijeṣa and had them imprisoned. It was only the intervention of the C.M.S. missionaries at Ibadan that made it possible for them to secure their release on the 14th, i.e. after thirteen days behind bars.²⁰

This state of affairs continued until the Ondo road came into frequent use in the second half of the 1870s. From then on it became possible for people in Lagos to establish regular contact with the Ijeṣa and Ekiti countries without having to pass under Ibadan's searchlights. In fact, a great proportion of the trade with the interior through the Ondo road came into the hands of trader members of the Ekitiparapo Society who served mostly as agents and factors of the big Lagos merchants, and some of them began to settle in towns and villages on the Ilaje lagoon along the road either to trade or to farm.²¹ This linking up of the developments in Lagos with those in the Ekiti-Ijeṣa countries appears to have been the crucial factor in getting the minds of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa leaders ready for the big revolt when the opportunity eventually came in 1878.

In 1877, as in 1860, the attention of the Ibadan was again taken up by affairs in areas outside the countries of the Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Igbomina and Akoko. Since the end of the Remo War, the Eḡba embargo on Ibadan's trade with the coast, especially in arms, and

19. *The African Times*, 1 November 1876, 1 February 1877; C.M.S., CA2/049, Hinderer to Wright, 9 February 1875.

20. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

21. C.M.S., CA2/078, Phillips's Journal for quarter ending 11 August 1877; C.M.S., G3A2/02, Phillips to Griffith, 28 November 1881.

the political challenge which Abeokuta posed to Ibadan had become increasingly intolerable to the Ibadan people. By 1877²² it would appear the Aṣẹ Latosisa had made up his mind that Abeokuta must be conquered or destroyed totally. That year, the oracle predicted that in two years, if the Ibadan did not suppress the Eḡba or destroy Abeokuta, the Eḡba would raze Ibadan to the ground.²³ To the Ibadan that prophecy made the Eḡba problem one of absolute urgency. At the same time, the eastern countries looked sufficiently cowed to cease being a field for major military operations.

In April 1877 the Aṣẹ saw his chance to launch a war on the Eḡba and seized it. The Alafin had bought a large consignment of gunpowder at Porto Novo but for fear it might be confiscated by the Eḡba it had not been carried beyond Bọkọfi. The Aṣẹ, normally not so submissive to the Alafin, now offered to get the powder for him in the hope that the Eḡba would attack the Ibadan men conveying it. As the Aṣẹ had hoped, the Eḡba bull rushed at the red rag. The Eḡba protested loudly against the defiant expedition to their 'backyard'.²⁴ Chief Ogundipe of Abeokuta, who foresaw the consequences of any attack on the Ibadan carriers and guides, cautioned the Abeokuta masses in vain.

On Thursday, 21 June, however, the main body of the men who had traversed Eḡba territory to bring the powder to Ibadan arrived in Ibadan, bringing 'lots of powder, and rum in casks with loads of cloth and guns'.²⁵ But on the next day news reached Ibadan that the Eḡba had killed many Ibadan people who were living and trading at Abeokuta, and that only Ogundipe had, with difficulty, saved about 100 of them. At a public meeting on Monday, 25 June a messenger informed the Ibadan that the caravan (carrying articles of peaceful trade) which had attempted

22. The details that follow on the outbreak of the Eḡba-Ibadan war in 1877 are derived from a collection of private papers recovered from the late Oba I. B. Akinyele by the Ibadan University Library. This collection contains, *inter alia*, diaries of C.M.S. missionaries in Ibadan in the late nineteenth century – the Revs. Olubi, R. S. Oyeboḡe and W. S. Allen.

23. (U.I.L.), the Rev. R. S. Oyeboḡe's 1877 Diary, entry for 28 June. This is no doubt an example of a leader using religious sanctions to support his political policy.

24. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 413.

25. Oyeboḡe's 1877 Diary, *op. cit.*, entry for 21 June.

to pass through Eḡba territory after the powder men had been captured by the Eḡba.²⁶

The meeting, under the guidance of the Aṛe who was out to prove the Eḡba wrong to the whole world, resolved to send messengers to the rulers of Ilṛin, Ijebu, Oyo and 'all the petty towns' and lodge Ibadan's complaint against the Eḡba.²⁷ A messenger was also sent to Abeokuta to ask for the release of the Ibadan traders and their goods. It was clear to observers, however, that the Aṛe had made up his mind, and the Ibadan people themselves felt that the chiefs were only waiting for the Ramadan to end before launching the operations against the Eḡba.²⁸

Alarmed at the prospects of another great war, the missionary community in Ibadan made fast moves to prevent hostilities. On 27 June Olubi, Allen and Okuseinde (C.M.S. missionaries) paid a visit to the Aṛe and tried to dissuade him from carrying out the proposed expedition against Abeokuta.²⁹ The Aṛe dismissed them with the assurance that although the Ibadan felt gravely wronged by the Eḡba, they would not resort to war. He informed them that he had learned that when Ibadan messengers had arrived at Abeokuta, some liberty of trade had been allowed to the Ibadan people in that town.

In spite of this assurance, matters grew worse hourly.³⁰ Later on the same day, Ibadan people, whether with or without the Aṛe's knowledge it is not known, began to seize Eḡba people resident in Ibadan. Early on Monday, 2 July the Aṛe dictated a letter to the Rev. Oyeḡode for despatch to Mr. Dumareq, Administrator of Lagos, to lodge complaints against the Eḡba. On the next day a group of 'wild boys' went to kidnap farmers on the Eḡba farms. The Eḡba answered by plundering traders on their roads. The informal stage of the war had begun. On 4 July some of the Aṛe's own slaves went with other men to kidnap men working on the Eḡba farms. On Sunday, 7 July the Aṛe, who had hitherto taken no personal part in these overt acts, 'shared out powder to his war-boys in order to be in readiness against the day they are going to kidnap'.³¹

26. *Ibid.*, entry for 25 June.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*, entry for 28 June.

29. *Ibid.*, entry for 27 June. Also Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 415-6.

30. Oyeḡode's 1877 Diary, *op. cit.*, entry for 27 June.

31. *Ibid.*, entries for 1-2 July.

At this stage, the Egbas, who apparently had not wanted a full-scale war, began to regret what they had done. On 11 July a deputation came to Ibadan from Abeokuta led by one Liasu and bringing gifts of guns, powder and liquor to the Ibadan chiefs. The aim was to persuade these chiefs to drop their hostile intentions towards the Egbas. But in a public meeting which was held at the request of Liasu next day, Liasu behaved so foolishly and impertinently that hot exchanges ensued between him and the Seriki and other Ibadan chiefs. The mission was a failure. Panic now engulfed Abeokuta.³² On 20 July the Egbas sent another envoy but he was not allowed to enter Ibadan. On 24 July, the Abeokuta authorities sent to Ibadan two of the Ibadan men they had seized in the recent kidnappings.

All these peace moves by the Egbas did not impress the Ares and the war party in Ibadan. On 25 July, the informal raids on the Egbas farms continued. On Monday, 30 July before an assembly of Ibadan people, the Ares formerly proclaimed his declaration of war against the Egbas. On 31 July³³ the Ares himself led out the Ibadan forces on raids to the Egbas farms. These raids, which had the aim of destroying Egbas farms and villages (apparently with a view to weakening Abeokuta in preparation for a *coup de grâce*), continued throughout 1877 and for most of 1878.

The war soon began to spread. On the Ibadan side the tributary states, at the dictate of the Ares, hurried to send contingents to join the Ibadan army.³⁴ Iwo contingents joined the Ares on the 31 July expedition and more Iwo contingents arrived in Ibadan on 6 August. By September there were troops from many towns in Ibadan. In March 1878 contingents from Ife under Ojo Ayikiti arrived in Ibadan.³⁵

The Ijebu, who like the Egbas had placed some restriction on traffic in military supplies through their country since 1866, were

32. *Ibid.*, entries for 11-24 July. Oyebo records how incredible stories of the panic at Abeokuta reached Ibadan daily. At one time panic was caused by the story of a crow which was alleged to have been seen with a charm round its neck flying through Abeokuta; at another time it was a deer seen in the town (usually a bad omen); at yet another time, it was a leopard entering the town and striking someone dead in the street.

33. *Ibid.*, entry for 31 July. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 416, puts the first expedition on 1 August.

34. Oyebo's 1877 Diary, entry for 31 July.

35. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 422.

not immediately involved in the war. In fact the indications are that, in the beginning, the Awujalẹ was inclined to stand clear of the hostilities or take the side of whichever party appeared to him to be justly aggrieved. After receiving Ibadan's message of complaint against the Egbas, the Awujalẹ requested both the Ibadan and the Egbas to send sensible ambassadors to come and state their respective cases before him at Ijebu-Ode, promising to throw his weight on the side of 'the lenient against the obstinate'.³⁶ Before the proposed joint interview could take place, however, a change of front had occurred at Ijebu-Ode.³⁷ Obviously, Egbas envoys had been at work and had convinced the Awujalẹ of the wisdom of co-operating with the Egbas to check the excessive ambitions of Ibadan. On 10 July, the Arẹ received information that his envoy whom he had sent at the express invitation of the Awujalẹ had been refused entry to Ijebu-Ode. Some four days later the Ijebu of Ijebu-Ode began to take active anti-Ibadan measures and turned back Ibadan traders without selling salt and other goods to them. Ibadan was thus once again confronted by the alliance which had fought it to a standstill in Remo between 1862 and 1865.

While the Arẹ's bellicose policy was thus involving Ibadan in serious complications in the west, momentous events began to take place in the eastern provinces. As has been pointed out, a new combination of forces had been making its appearance there but the Arẹ Latosisa, impelled by his high ambitions to make Ibadan the ruler of the entire Yoruba country, did not grasp the realities of the situation. To him the eastern provinces looked securely subdued. Therefore the time appeared opportune for him to embark on a project which, according to Johnson, he had always entertained – to complete the subordination of the whole of the Yoruba country to Ibadan by conquering the Egbas and later the Ijebu. The other Ibadan chiefs, most of whom saw the danger in this project and opposed it, failed to muster sufficient support in their opposition to the Arẹ.³⁸ In the first place, there were irresolute men among them whose weaknesses foiled their plans against Latosisa. In the second place, the average war boy in Ibadan was attracted by the prospects of plunder and riches

36. Oyeboḍe's 1877 Diary, *op. cit.*, entry for 3 July.

37. *Ibid.*, entries for 10 and 14 July.

38. For a full account of the revolt by some chiefs against Latosisa's policy see Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 417-9.

which an Eḡba war opened up. Consequently these chiefs could neither unite nor get public support for their opposition to Latosisa's project.

Throughout the later half of 1877 and the first months of 1878 the Ekiti and Ijeṣa watched the expanding contest in the west. Then, as is often the case in great revolutions, a small explosion set off the general conflagration towards the middle of 1878. The Ibadan Ajeḡe at Imeṣi-Igbodo, Oyepetun, was notorious for his greed and wickedness. Accounts vary as to which outrage of his led to the outbreak. One account has it that he indecently assaulted Fabunmi's wife or a woman whose husband was a friend of Fabunmi, or that his men seized food or palm wine from the woman.³⁹ The most widely accepted version at Imeṣi-Igbodo and Imeṣi-Ile has it that on the day in question Fabunmi was celebrating his annual Erinle festival.⁴⁰ He and members of his age-grade and other friends and well-wishers were at the Odo-Erinle shrine (just outside the town) feasting and dancing. In the midst of this merry-making the news was brought to Fabunmi that the Ajeḡe's men had seized some of the palm-wine which one of his friends was sending to him as a gift. Almost immediately, a group of the Ajeḡe's men, armed with swords and matchets, and swearing and cursing, rushed down to the shrine and began to impound all the food and palm-wine, laying rude hands on Fabunmi's companions in the process.

Fabunmi reacted violently to the outrage. He rushed to his house to arm himself, and then made for the Ajeḡe's compound. On arrival there, he found a few members of the Ajeḡe's household and despatched those who would not or could not flee. Then the Ajeḡe himself came out to intercept him, but before he could say a word, Fabunmi had cut off his head. Many men who were bold enough to do so joined Fabunmi. That day, most of the Ajeḡe's messengers and hangers-on at Imeṣi-Igbodo perished by the sword. The rest, and most of the other Ibadan people resident in Imeṣi-Igbodo, fled the town.

When the work of carnage had been done the ordinary citizens of Imeṣi-Igbodo started to wonder and fear what the Ibadan would do in reprisal. It is said that people, fearing the conse-

39. Ojo, W.: 'Folk history of Imeṣi-Ile', *Nigeria*, No. 42, 1953.

40. The Erinle festival belonged to Fabunmi's father, but he continued to celebrate it after his father's death.

quences that might follow the day's events, began to pack their belongings in preparation for flight from Imeṣi-Igbodo.

But in the days that followed, the news spread all over Ekiti, Ijeṣa, and Igbomina and helped to ignite fires that had long smouldered in the hearts of the people. Throughout the length and breadth of Ekiti and Igbomina, Ibadan officials and other persons known to be associated with them were indiscriminately murdered, sacrificed to the gods or sold into slavery.⁴¹ It is not possible to estimate the number of lives involved in the holocaust. It has been suggested that at Ila alone, the number of massacred might have been up to 1,000.⁴² Ikere is probably the only Ekiti town where Ibadan officials are known to have been completely spared.

When the news reached Ibadan, the Arẹ Latosisa did not take it seriously. Apparently believing that the Ekiti and Igbomina would not dare challenge the power of Ibadan, he hoped they would repent of their rashness, send apologies to him and submit again. He was determined, however, that the initiator of the rebellion should be punished. So he sent messengers to the Olojaoke (ruler) of Imeṣi-Igbodo to tell him that he had no quarrel with Imeṣi-Igbodo or any other Ekiti town because he knew that Fabunmi was the real offender; therefore the Olojaoke, as proof of his loyalty to Ibadan, was to send to the Arẹ Prince Fabunmi's head in a calabash.

The account of what happened next varies from place to place in Ekiti. The following bare details appear to be commonly accepted. Although the Olojaoke had always been friendly towards Ibadan (it is said that he was always grateful to the Ibadan for helping him to return home from the seven-year exile at Ila)⁴³ and although he further feared that Prince Fabunmi's outburst against Ibadan was foolhardy and sure to lead Imeṣi-Igbodo to grave danger, he could not very well comply with the Arẹ's demand. The position of Fabunmi as a prince of the kingdom made it impossible for the Olojaoke to order his execution. Moreover, Fabunmi was the Olojaoke's own nephew and the man whom most people looked up to as the heir apparent to the

41. C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal for the quarter ending 30 September 1878, entry for 14 July.

42. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 423.

43. That is, following the Ijeṣa destruction of his town in the early sixties.

throne.⁴⁴ The Olojaoke therefore invited Fabunmi to hear the message for himself.

Fabunmi had by now acquired enormous confidence from the favourable reaction which, all over the eastern provinces, had greeted his first act of revolt against Ibadan. On hearing the Aṛe's message, therefore, he flared up and swore that he would take the Aṛe's head first. He insulted the Aṛe in full and boasted that the Ekiti would soon rise up to crush the power of Ibadan. It is sometimes added that having left his uncle's presence, he waited outside the palace for the Aṛe's messengers and cutting off the head of one of them, bade the rest go home to report to their master what they had seen.⁴⁵

Fabunmi was the son of that Prince Adesoye who, in the early 1860s, had disregarded the proclamation of his brother and oḃa (Oḃa Aponloṣe) and had gone to help Eḃḃon against the Ijeṣa army. His mother, it is said, was an Oḃoṣun princess.⁴⁶ It was from his father that he inherited the iron will and the bravery for which he was to be renowned in the eastern countries. Messrs. Higgins and Smith reported in 1886 that Fabunmi was 'said to be the bravest warrior in the [Ekitiparapo] army'.⁴⁷ With that bravery he coupled a genial disposition and a generosity which quickly endeared him to people and right from youth made him the accepted leader of his age-grade at Imeṣi-Igbodo.

Fabunmi was only a boy when the Ijeṣa sacked Imeṣi-Igbodo in the early 1860s.⁴⁸ As a youth he had learned cloth sewing and embroidery and during the exile at Ila he had perfected this art.

44. Messrs. Higgins and Smith, Special Commissioners of the Governor of Lagos to the Interior, 1886, spoke of Fabunmi as 'heir apparent to the throne'. C.4957, Report of Messrs. Higgins and Smith, Special Commissioners of the Governor of Lagos to the Interior 1886, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887. ☉

45. The Imeṣi-Igbodo accounts here (as recorded by Chief Omikunle in his *Notes, op. cit.*) agree with the Oṣun accounts as preserved by Aṣoḃalḃe in *Itan Ore, Oṣun ati Moḃa, op. cit.*, p. 33.

46. Her name is usually given as Eḃungun.

47. C.4957, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

48. The Special Commissioners said in 1886: 'Fabunmi is a man of about 35 . . .'; i.e. he would be about twenty-seven in 1878. He must therefore have been born about 1850-51, just over ten years before the Ijeṣa sacked Imeṣi-Igbodo.

His father died at Ila, leaving to him as the eldest son most of his great household and his enormous wealth in slaves, clothes and cowries. During the exile at Ila he travelled much in the Igbomina and Oyo countries and cultivated the friendship of his great contemporary, Prince Adeyale of Ila, who was later to become the military leader of Ila. After the return to Imesi-Igbodo, he found his way to Ibadan, but whether as a captive or as a free adventurer it is not known. It is known, however, that it was at Ibadan that he learned the art of war under one of the Ibadan chiefs.⁴⁹ He seems to have taken a special interest in horsemanship and all the rest of his life was an impressive figure on horseback.

It would appear that the circumstances surrounding his departure from Ibadan were unpleasant.⁵⁰ Tradition has it that for an unknown reason he was earmarked for some awful punishment or to be sacrificed to a god, and had to effect his escape in the night. On arrival at Imesi-Igbodo he began to put into practice the lessons which he had learned at Ibadan. He reorganised his age-grade, made it meet regularly in his own house and transformed it into a force in the town by encouraging its members to acquire firearms. Then he built for himself a private army from his slaves, younger relatives and free young men who were eager to attach themselves to him. With the Oyo traders and craftsmen at Imesi-Igbodo he remained on good terms and often in their company tried his hand at his old occupation of sewing and embroidery. Furthermore, although like every Ekiti leader he abhorred the Ibadan messengers and the Ajele and his troop of messengers and hangers-on, no open clash between him and any of these people is known to have occurred before the fatal provocation of 1878.

At the time when Fabunmi was raising the banner of rebellion against the mighty power of Ibadan, he was still under thirty years of age. All descriptions of him agree. He was a man 'with

49. Generally believed to be Chief Latosisa who later became the Aje-Ona-Kakanfo of Ibadan.

50. The following account is derived from Chief Omikunle's *Notes, op. cit.*; also from Chief (Madam) Oyeyemi, the Eiyelori of Ara whose father led the Ara contingent to Imesi-Ile. She thinks she must have been about five years old at the time her father set out at the head of the Ara forces to Imesi-Ile; she lived in the Ekitiparapo camp throughout the duration of the war and knew Fabunmi closely both during and after the war.

quick, impulsive manners and abrupt in speaking'.⁵¹ 'Tall and slim',⁵¹ with a light complexion and a regal carriage, Fabunmi was one of those men naturally cut out for leadership.

While the Arẹ Latosisa was busy fighting the Egbas and Ijẹbus and treating the gathering clouds in the east lightly, Fabunmi kept himself busy. To all the known warriors in Ekiti, Igbomina, Akoko and Ijẹsa he sent messengers to ask them to come together for the great and final revolt against Ibadan⁵² – to Aduloju, Ogedemgbe and Falowo who were busy fighting in Akoko, to Faboro at Ido, to Ogunmodede, Arimoro and Obe at Ilesa, to Adeyale at Ila, Olugbosun at Oye, Eşugbayi at Aiyede, Bakare at Afa, Odu at Ogbagi and tens of other warriors and military chiefs throughout the eastern countries. At the same time he sent messengers with rich gifts to all the kings, asking them to rise up and give leadership to their children (the warriors and chiefs) who were making a bid to free their people from the scourge of Ibadan oppression.

The situation in the Akoko country made it impossible for the Akoko leaders to respond to Fabunmi's call. While Aduloju and Ogedemgbe were busy wiping out Ibadan control in the eastern districts of Akoko (around Idoani), a greater danger threatened the Akoko country from the north-west. For some time, the Nupe had begun to make increasingly frequent incursions into the Akoko country from the north-west. The two most prominent Akoko warriors, Bakare and Odu, lived at Afa and Ogbagi in the north-west and west respectively. They could not leave their country exposed to the Nupe. Consequently, no major leader came from Akoko, although many Akoko young men later volunteered, organised themselves and joined the Confederate army.⁵³

In the absence of Ogedemgbe, the Ijẹsa leaders who were left at home were at first hesitant to commit the Ijẹsa people to a venture which for all they knew might collapse and involve all its initiators in trouble with Ibadan. It is said that the Ijẹsa were so

51. C.4957, 'Report of Messrs. Higgins and Smith' enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

52. The expression used was 'Gba fiye Ibadan', an obscure idiom, probably meaning 'rise up and clip the wings of the Ibadan'.

53. For a full account of the Nupe invasions of Akoko, see Bealey: *Intelligence Report on the Akoko District*, *op. cit.*, p. 14. Akoko tradition has it that it was very common for small bands of young men to go to the Ekitiparapo war and return after about three months.

panic-stricken that rumours of an Ibadan approach caused Ilesha town to be deserted more than once.⁵⁴ But in course of time, the Ilesha too plucked up courage and began to organise themselves for the great push.

The Igbomina responded promptly. Military preparations were put into operation. Prince Adeyale came in person to Imesi-Igbodo. The Orangun (ruler) of Ila sent his messengers to announce his personal willingness and the readiness of the Igbomina people to participate in the great venture.

In Ekiti, the response was almost wholly favourable. Only Ado, Ikerẹ and Işẹ did not participate throughout. Işẹ was yet in ruins. Ado and Ikerẹ were at the time engaged in one of their many wars with each other. Ikerẹ had declared war on Ado shortly after the Ibadan invasion of Ado in 1874. The Ikerẹ forces, under the influence of the Oyo residents at Ikerẹ led by one Alaleitan, an Oyo soldier of fortune, had marched to the walls of Ado but Ado, although only recently sacked by the Ibadan, had mustered enough power to throw them back.⁵⁵ The war had thereafter developed into prolonged desultory skirmishing with hostile camps facing each other at Ago, Igirimo and Awajin in the forests between Ado and Ikerẹ.⁵⁶ The Oyo residents continued to serve the Ikerẹ faithfully. It was for this reason that Ikerẹ had not joined in the widespread onslaught on the Ibadan earlier on in 1878. The preoccupation with this war which continued till 1894 was one reason why Ado and Ikerẹ did not take part in the Ekiti-parapo war.

Both at Ado and at Ikerẹ, however, it is insisted that the Ado-Ikerẹ war had very little to do with their non-participation in the Ekitiparapo war. Early in 1878 Ado had joined in the outrages on the Ibadan agents and residents. Ado tradition has it that when Prince Fabunmi's envoys came later on, the Ewi Atewogboye and his chiefs signified Ado's willingness to join in the project. They had then despatched messengers to Aduloju and Falowo at their Imesi-Laşigidi headquarters asking them to prepare to lead an Ado contingent to Imesi-Igbodo. It is said that Aduloju was now greatly advanced in age and that his sight had started to fail.

54. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 423.

55. For an account of the Ado-Ikerẹ war, see Oguntuyi: *History of Ado*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-6; also *Aduloju Dodondawa*, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-5.

56. The Rev. Charles Phillips, travelling through the Akoko and Ekiti countries, passed through the Ado camp at Ago in 1894. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entries for 11 and 12 December.

Consequently, he appointed his second in command, Falowo, to take his place at Imesi-Igbodo. The sword of Oranyan was brought out and propitiated and the news that Falowo was coming put Ado in a festive mood. Guns and powder were bought for the expedition but while testing one of the new guns, Falowo sustained an accident which led to the loss of one hand. Ashamed of being thus disfigured, he committed suicide.

After Falowo's death, Aduloju did not take in the sword of Oranyan and therefore continued to inspire hopes that he might still go to join the Ekitiparapo. It is suggested in many quarters at Ado that his vacillation and final refusal to go to Imesi was connected with an oath of friendship to Ibadan which he had been made to swear on his admission to the Ogboni fraternity at Ibadan.⁵⁷ His interpretation of that oath, it is said, was that he should never take the field openly against an Ibadan warrior chief.

At Ikerẹ, it is claimed that the war with Ado was not vital enough to occupy the energies of Ikerẹ and preclude it from sending troops to Imesi-Igbodo. The chief reason for Ikerẹ's non-participation, it is said, was the friendship which existed between it and Ibadan. Partly because of this friendship and partly because Ikerẹ was a good trading centre, a good number of Oyo people had come to settle there and as can be seen from the previous chapter, were very important in the affairs of the town. The presence of these settlers and their role in the Ado-Ikerẹ War brought Ikerẹ closer to Ibadan than ever before. The then Ogoga, Oba Agabaola, freely boasted of his relationship with Ibadan.⁵⁸

Apart from the towns which did not take part, some rulers and warrior chiefs in Ekiti, out of fear of Ibadan, hesitated long before they gave their blessing to the revolt. Some of these leaders did not succeed in shaking off their fears until the Confederacy had shown that it was capable of holding its own against the Ibadan. At Ikole Chief Famule, the Otun and the greatest Ikole warrior,

57. Another version of the Ado traditions credits Aduloju with the statement that the *Ifa* oracle had predicted that neither of the combatants would be able to defeat the other and that the war would become a long war without a decision.

58. According to Ikerẹ tradition recorded from Oba Adegoriola, the Ogoga of Ikerẹ, on 1 July 1963, Agabaola nicknamed himself *Aṣ'ore Ibadan ma l'ae* - roughly, 'he who, in spite of the enmity of his neighbours, can remain a loyal friend of Ibadan'.

refused to have anything to do with all that was going on. For that reason he lost all the respect that the Ikole people had for him. The people ignored him, organised themselves under lesser men like Chief Aşo Ogundana and sent contingents to Imeşi-Igbodo. It was not until the ensuing war had gone on for some years that finally, in an attempt to recover his old prestige, he led out his men to the front. He died shortly afterwards.

Another such leader was the Olojaoke, Oba Apönloşe, of Imeşi-Igbodo. From the start he and some of his chiefs had believed that Fabunmi's challenge to Ibadan had no chance of success. Therefore, while Fabunmi was sending messengers round the country, Oba Apönloşe was anxious to let the Aře Latosisa know that he and the generality of Imeşi-Igbodo people had nothing to do with Fabunmi's doings. An official envoy was secretly despatched to convey this to the Aře at Ibadan. The secret leaked out, however, and was received with public agitation and riots against the oba and those of his chiefs who were implicated with him. When the Imeşi-Igbodo envoy arrived back home he was seized by an angry mob and drowned in a stream outside the town.

Apart from the popular nature of the revolt, one other factor which worked against the hesitant rulers and chiefs was the arrogant attitude of the Aře Latosisa himself. The attitude of the Aře at this time is not easy to explain. He believed that the Ekiti and others would repent and sue for peace; yet whenever any of their towns sent messengers to him to profess their innocence and sue for peace, he treated them arrogantly and roughly and told them to go back home to prepare for his revenge.⁵⁹ Such treatment was not encouraging to anybody who might be inclined to back-slide and remain loyal to Ibadan.

Meanwhile, day by day, chiefs, troops and representatives of rulers from all over Ekiti, Ijeşa and Igbomina arrived at Imeşi-Igbodo. The details of the events that followed are obscure. A series of meetings was held at Imeşi-Igbodo. Renowned *Babalawo* (Ifa priests) and medicine men were invited from near and far. The Ifa oracle was consulted. The gods were propitiated. Representatives of the Ekitiparapö Society from Lagos participated fully in these meetings, and their promises of material and financial contributions to the struggle were crucial in the mould-

59. See Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 423, for Latosisa's treatment of the Ila messengers.

ing of decisions.⁶⁰ In the end, a multi-state organisation emerged under the name Ekitiparapo, a name probably imported into the interior by the 'Lagos men'. Oaths were taken binding all the members of the Confederacy together to continue the struggle until Ibadan's power had been totally destroyed in the eastern countries.

At the same time steps were taken to strengthen the Confederacy by alliances with all the other enemies of Ibadan in the country. At Abeokuta and Ijebu-Ode, the Confederate envoys met with easy success since both the Egbas and the Awujale were eager to ally themselves with other enemies of the Ibadan whom they had been fighting for months. An Ijebu army was already at Oru under the Balogun Onafowokan blocking the road to the coast and operating against the Ibadan farms and villages. The Awujale sent messengers to the Owa of Ilesa and to the Emir of Ilorin to sound their views on the war and received the encouraging reply from the Emir that he was ready to help the Ekiti recover their freedom.⁶¹

Up till now the Ilorin had not been bold enough to join the Egbas and Ijebu in the war against Ibadan. The experience of the Ijaye war had taught them to respect the ability of Ibadan to deal with any combination of its enemies. In fact, in September 1877, the indications were that the Ilorin, rather than take the side of the Egbas-Ijebu allies, would take that of Ibadan. On the 26th of that month, 'the king of Ilorin sent six large horses to the Arey by the king of Oyo as a present and to tell him [Arey] that he [king of Ilorin] is ready to partake of the provision which he [Arey] is making against the dry season'⁶² - i.e. the plan to ravage the Egbas farms. But when the Ekiti, Ijesa and Igbomina revolted and launched the Confederacy, the Ilorin tried to cash in on the situation to their own advantage. The Fulani strategy for expansion was always to cause division among a people, ally themselves with the weaker to destroy the stronger and then subdue the former. Now that almost all the weaker Yoruba states were rising up to pull down Ibadan and the alliance of the weaker

60. C.M.S., CA2/098, Account of the events of July-August 1878 as preserved by Young, C.M.S. agent at Ode-Ondo, in his Journal for the last quarter of 1878.

61. C.4957, Statement of the Apena's Mission to the king of Ijebu, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883, gives the Awujale's account of these events.

62. Oyebohede's 1887 Diary, *op. cit.*, entry for 26 September.

states had become formidable owing to the emergence of the Confederacy, the Fulani rulers of Ilorin saw their chance to play their usual game. If Ibadan could be destroyed as a power, then the Ilorin could resume their effort to conquer the whole of Yorubaland, including the eastern Yoruba provinces themselves.

Envoys were exchanged between the Ilorin authorities and Confederate leaders. Between June and August 1878, an alliance was formally entered into. Ilorin envoys came to Ibadan to acquaint the Aṛẹ with the alliance, adding, in reference to the Ekiti, 'If a man's wife deserted him and afterwards repented and came back to him, is not the husband justified in receiving her back?'⁶³ In other words, it was believed at Ilorin that the Ekiti were only throwing off the Ibadan yoke to have it replaced with that of Ilorin.

By August, the Confederate army was ready to move forward. While the preparations had been going on, messages had been sent to the border towns of Igbajo, Ireṣi, Ada and Ọtan-Aiyegbaju to invite them to join the Ekitiparaṣo. Originally Ijeṣa towns, they had been transformed into predominantly Ọyo communities by the coming of Ọyo refugees early in the century. Consequently, the towns, one and all, reaffirmed their loyalty to Ibadan and refused to join the Confederacy. In the case of Igbajo, it would appear that not only the Ọyo settlers but also the Ijeṣa citizens who preferred Ibadan domination to submission to the arrogant Ileṣa chiefs backed the refusal to support the Confederacy.⁶⁴ The defection of these towns created a big problem for the Confederates. The towns controlled the hilly country line which formed the approach to north-western Ekiti and northern Ijeṣa. Their membership of the Confederacy would have been invaluable, as their rugged locations made them supremely suitable as fortified posts against the advance of the Ibadan. On the other hand, their continued attachment to Ibadan would be a great asset to the Ibadan army. Once Ada, Igbajo, Ireṣi and

63. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 424.

64. 'He [the Owa of Ileṣa] then gave me some historical account of the defection of Ogbajo, in which he acknowledged that it was due to the ill-treatment the Igbajo people suffered from some Ijeṣa Head Chiefs . . . that they were obliged to surrender themselves to the Ibadans.' C.4957, Report of Phillips's second mission to the interior, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

Qtan-Aiyegbayu were occupied by the Ibadan army, the steep climb to the Ekiti hills would have been achieved and the Ibadan would be in a position to manoeuvre easily, circumvent the Ekiti army gathered to oppose them and then cut them off from their base.

Igbajo was the most important of these towns. At Ada the major road from Ikirun sent off a small branch over the hills through Ibokun to the Ijeṣa and Ekiti territory. The main road, however, continued from Ada up the hills to Igbajo, then through the Ijeṣa village of Imeṣi-Ile to Imeṣi-Igbodo and into the heart of Ekiti. Moreover, Igbajo, situated on the highest hills in the area, was the easiest to hold and defend against a stronger enemy. Finally, Igbajo was at that time an important Ibadan fortified post. To occupy it would be an immense initial blow to the morale of the Ibadan army.

In August, therefore, the main Confederate army marched from Imeṣi-Igbodo, through Imeṣi-Ile and attacked Igbajo.⁶⁵ The Igbomina contingents marched through Qtan-Aiyegbaju and Ireṣi to the walls of Igbajo. Even now, the Aṛe Latosisa refused to take the news from the east seriously and concentrated all the power of Ibadan on the Eḡba war. The Confederates piled pressure on Igbajo. At last, the Aṛe sent a small Ibadan force under Chief Oṣuntoki the Maye to relieve Igbajo. By then it was too late. The small Ibadan army and the people of Igbajo had to desert the town and flee to Ikirun. As they went, the people of Ada, Agba and Iragbiji in their rear joined them in a general stampede to Ikirun. The Confederate troops then entered Igbajo, made many captives and burnt the town down.

Much elated by this victory, the Confederates advanced on Ikirun and besieged it. Beyond the elation, however, it is not known what motives induced the Confederates to march on Ikirun. By taking Igbajo and later Ada, Qtan and Ireṣi, the Confederacy had achieved the expulsion of Ibadan from the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Igbomina territories. For the defence of their countries against a counter-attack by Ibadan, the Confederates' hold on the hilly country around Igbajo, Ada and Qtan would have been sufficient. Johnson has explained that the Ilorin, who were later to join the Confederate army at the siege of Ikirun, aimed to sweep down the Oṣun district and continue all the way

65. C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal for last quarter of 1878.

to the River Oba on the Ibadan farms – i.e. to take Ikirun, Oşogbo, Ede, Iwo and their villages.⁶⁶

It is not known, however, whether the Ekitiparapo, in besieging Ikirun, had the same or similar objectives. It does seem probable that their action was dictated by the advantage of Ikirun as a military post. Ikirun was easily the strongest town, with the best defences in the whole of the north.⁶⁷ It was also on the direct road between Ibadan and Ilorin and between Ibadan and Ila and Otun in the extreme north of Ekiti. If, therefore, the Ekitiparapo and their Ilorin allies could take Ikirun and occupy it, then they would effectively block all roads from Ibadan to Ekiti (i.e. the Ikirun-Igbajo-Imesi-Ile road; and the Ikirun-Ila-Otun road), with the exception of the road from Ibadan through Ife to Ilesha. It does not seem likely that the Confederates could at this time have hoped to conquer such powerful towns as Oşogbo, Ede and Iwo in addition to Ikirun, or take the risk of penetrating into Ibadan domain as deep as up to the River Oba.

Ijesa troops had taken part in the battle of Igbajo, but it is not until the siege of Ikirun that we begin to hear about their leading warriors. The Igbajo victory would seem to have convinced the Ijesa leaders that the present challenge was different from all former challenges to the power of Ibadan. At the same time the Ilorin contingents, under Ajia, marched south to join the Confederates in the siege.

The Ilorin forces, after going through Otan-Aiyegbaju, crossed the River Otin at a point on the main Ikirun-Offa road, and made their camp on a low hill off the Ikirun-Iba road. This was almost directly due north of Ikirun on the Ikirun farms. The Ijesa, under Arimoro, Ogunmodede and Obe, encamped some distance to the east of the Ilorin camp, in the deserted village of Iba on the Ikirun-Oyan road. The remaining Confederate army made up of the Igbomina contingents under Prince Adeyale and the contingents from most of the sixteen Ekiti kingdoms under Fabunmi, camped between the Ijesa and Ilorin forces, slightly nearer the former.

Ikirun was not an easy proposition like Igbajo. As has been already pointed out, Ikirun, having been for decades the chief Ibadan outpost against Ilorin, had developed exceptionally strong defences. The town was situated 'amongst a series of rocky and

66. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 424.

67. (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/1/13, Carter to Ripon, 11 October 1893.

well-wooded hills'.⁶⁸ Carter described it in 1893 as having 'no less than four walls . . . so arranged as to secure flank defence; the second wall has a ditch and a gate, the third and fourth walls have also ditches', adding that 'so far as the Ilorins are concerned, the town is practically impregnable'. Furthermore, there was an error in the arrangement of the Confederate and allied camps. All three camps were situated generally due north of Ikirun and sealed off all communication with the north but allowed completely free access to the south and to Ibadan. This meant first, that Ikirun could not be easily or quickly starved out and second, that Ikirun could send for and receive reinforcements from Ibadan.

From their camps, the Confederates and allies forayed far and wide in the Ikirun farms, destroying foodstuffs and barns and making it difficult for the inhabitants to venture out of the town. In their extremity the authorities of Ikirun sent urgent messages to Ibadan for relief.

At last, the Aṛe Latosisa realised that he could no longer ignore the happenings in the north-east. So, on 20 October 1878, fresh from an Eḡba expedition, the Ibadan army under the Balogun Ajayi Oḡborieḡon accompanied by Chief Ilḡri, the Osi, marched out to the relief of Ikirun.

Samuel Johnson has told in great detail the story of the famous battle of Ikirun (or the Jalumi War) which followed.⁶⁹ On 31 October, the Ibadan army entered Ikirun, just in time to save the town from falling since it was nearing the end of its endurance. The Ekiti, Iḡbomina and Ijeṣa had dangerously exposed themselves by leaving the defensible hills of their own country far behind. On 1 November the Ibadan took the field against the Ekitiparapo and their allies and Ajayi Oḡborieḡon alone routed the Ekiti, Iḡbomina, Ijeṣa and Ilḡrin armies that same day. The Confederacy sustained a major loss in the death of Prince Adeyale of Ila in the day's fighting.⁷⁰ The only notable achievement of the Confederates on this day was the capture, by Prince Fabunmi, of Chief Ilḡri, the Osi of Ibadan. The place where this occurred has been identified as Aḡbe Sango, off the track from Iba to Ikirun.⁷¹

In a day of grave disasters perhaps the gravest was the 'Jalumi'

68. *Ibid.*

69. Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 427-39.

70. Another important man lost in the battle was Afomodi, the Balogun of Ijero. He was captured and died later in captivity at Ibadan.

71. Ajayi and Smith: *Yoruba Warfare, op. cit.*, p. 46.

incident from which the war has received its name. The Ilorin, fleeing from the general rout, suddenly found that the bridge on the River Otin in their rear had disappeared.⁷² Hotly pursued by the Ibadan, most of the Ilorin rushed into the flooded stream and perished. So many men and horses are said to have died in the flood that corpses clogged up the stream and made a gruesome bridge for those coming from behind to gallop across.

The remnants of the Ijeṣa army scattered in different directions. The main Ekiti-Igbomina contingents fled due north in the direction of Ila. The victorious Balogun, resolved to crush the enemies of Ibadan once and for all, pursued them as they fled. In town after town they rallied, made a stand, held on for a while, failed and then fled on again. Ila, Ilōfa, Ora and Omuaran (all in Igbomina), Erinmope, Gogo (all in the Otun kingdom in Ekiti) fell into the hands of Ajayi Ogborieṣon and his subordinate chiefs. The people of Ekan burned their farms, poisoned the food in their barns and barricaded themselves in their town. A number of Ibadan soldiers died from eating the poisoned food but this was nothing to stop the victorious march of the rest. It looked as though the whole of Ekiti and Igbomina would be once more subdued. The man who saved the situation was the Arẹ Latosisa himself. The Ibadan forces were just setting out against Ekan when urgent messages came from Ibadan calling on the Balogun and his army to withdraw home. The Balogun entered Ibadan on 23 December.

It is not known precisely why the Arẹ Latosisa so precipitately ordered the Balogun to leave the campaign in the north-east and

72. Johnson says the bridge was deliberately cut by Offa people. Hermon-Hodge: *Gazeteer of Ilorin Province*, London 1929, says an Ibadan man named Kamiki who was resident at Offa persuaded the Offa people to cut the bridge. Certain persons interviewed by R. S. Smith (Ajayi and Smith: *op. cit.*, pp. 47-8) said the river itself bore away the bridge. (The Ibadan are said to have propitiated the goddess of the stream and invoked her to send a flood to carry away the bridge.) The present Olobagun of Obagun said the same thing. It is possible, however, that the incident was caused by a natural sudden rise of the waters of the stream. Governor Carter had a similar experience on the River Oba on 5 February 1893. He had spent the night of 4-5 February on the bank of the river. He wrote, 'On the morning of the 5th February, just as I was preparing for a start, the river suddenly rose, the ford widening out from a breadth of about 8 feet to quite 40 feet. There were no indications of rain in the immediate neighbourhood.' (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/1/13, Carter to Ripon, 11 October 1893.

return to Ibadan. It has been suggested that the Arẹ had become apprehensive of the growing fame of the Balogun arising from the latter's great victories in the north-east, and had therefore taken steps to check it by withdrawing the Balogun from that theatre of war.

It seems obvious, also, that the Arẹ still did not take the revolt in the north-east seriously. Apparently the rapid collapse of the Confederate and allied forces behind the walls of Ikirun confirmed in him the belief that the rebels could not long sustain a revolt against Ibadan. In that case he was bound to feel after Jalumi that the north-east was no longer worthy of further attention. To him, the Egbas war was still the paramount priority, and therefore he could not continue to expend time and energy flogging a dead horse in the north-east.

As it turned out, the Arẹ's attitude at this critical moment in the life of the Ekitiparapo proved to be the salvation of the Confederacy. Left to themselves after the withdrawal of the Ibadan army, the Confederate leaders were allowed respite to take stock of the situation and think of the next steps. The Arẹ Latosisa was soon to be proved wrong in his belief that the Ekitiparapo was as good as dead.

Chapter 4

The Kiriji War, 1879-1886

The Ikirun disaster shook the Ekitiparapọ to its foundations and dampened the spirits of people all over the north-eastern provinces. Those leaders who had feared that the Confederacy was bound to fail and had steered clear of its activities in the first instance were now greatly justified and encouraged in their attitude. Worse still, some of those who had joined it at the beginning began to think of backing out and making their peace with Ibadan.¹

This depression in spirit also spread among some of the allies, especially the Ilorin. Thus, while the Ibadan army was pursuing the Confederate forces in the Igbomina and Ekiti countries (after the battle of Ikirun), the Ilorin hastened to avert further suffering for themselves by attempting to make peace with Ibadan. On 18 November they sent envoys to the Arẹ at Ibadan to make the offer of peace. The Arẹ, however, treated the envoys arrogantly and sent them away without an answer.²

Yet in spite of this depression, the battle of Ikirun did not result in the dissolution of the Confederacy. The chief reason for this was that its core – made up of Fabunmi and the other Ekiti and Ijeṣa warrior chiefs as well as the 'Lagos men' – remained, on the whole, solid and little shaken by defeat. Fabunmi, better than any other man, symbolised this desperate resolve among the Ekitiparapọ leaders. As he himself put it later, he had to take 'a deeper interest' in the war than anybody else and not allow any setback to dispirit him and cause the collapse of the movement 'because, of all the Ijeṣa and Ekiti War Chiefs, it was I who took the initiative in throwing off the Ibadan yoke, and declaring war against them. Had it turned out that the Ekitis failed to unite in

1. Ojo, W.: 'Folk History of Imesi-Ile', *Nigeria*, No. 42, 1953, pp. 100-15, tells the story of the then Oba of Imesi-Ile, a certain Merumpe who, after first co-operating with the Confederacy, now opposed it and went off to Ibadan to protest his loyalty. He was deposed before he returned and lived the rest of his life in voluntary exile at Oṣogbo.

2. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

resistance, or the Ibadans succeeded in inflicting heavier calamities upon our country, my name and my people would be subject to everlasting execration from all our tribes on account of my presumption.'³ To stand on its feet again, the Confederacy needed a determined and vigorous rallying force. Men like Fabunmi provided that force.

Other factors aided the revival. The first was the attitude of the common citizens of the Ekiti and other eastern countries. The news of the Ikirun defeat, though staggering, does not seem to have greatly shaken their enthusiasm about the Confederacy. The available evidence would seem to show that though some rulers were prepared to surrender to defeat, the people still entertained confidence in the ability of the Ekitiparapo to achieve its objective.⁴

Another factor was the attitude of the Aṛe Latosisa himself. Strongly convinced that the Ekitiparapo constituted no serious challenge to Ibadan, his handling of it and its allies continued to be tactless in the extreme. Thus he refused to deal with the Ilorin when by doing so he could easily have detached them from the Ekitiparapo.

One further factor was the encouragement which the leaders of the Ekitiparapo appear to have received at this critical time from an unexpected source, the Alafin of Oyo. After the destruction of Ijaye, Ibadan had emerged as the strongest power in Yorubaland. Though nominally acknowledging the overlordship of the Alafin, the Ibadan leaders had become excessively overbearing towards Oyo and the Alafin. Instead of turning to the Alafin for guidance, the Ibadan actively sought to interfere in the political affairs of Oyo. Successive Ibadan leaders, like the Baṣorun Ogunmola and the Aṛe Latosisa, ignoring all dictates of tradition, had compelled an unwilling but helpless Alafin to concede imperial chieftaincy titles to them. Worse still, the Ibadan seized towns and villages once held by Ijaye and resumed Kurumi's territorial ambitions in the Upper Ogun.⁵

3. C.4957, Fabunmi, Balogun of the Ekitiparapo army in the Ife camp, to Governor Moloney, 27 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.
4. Ojo: 'Folk History of Imesi-Ile', *op. cit.* The people of Imesi-Ile, especially the young men, refused to back Merumpe in opposition to the Ekitiparapo; it was the young men who, according to Imesi-Ile tradition, spearheaded his deposition.
5. (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/1/13, Carter's General Report of the Lagos Interior

The result of all this was that the Alafin came to look on Ibadan and its ambitions as inimical to his own imperial interests. In the circumstances, the Alafin seems to have viewed with pleasure the emergence of two power combines, one in the south-west and the other in the north-east (with an accord between the two) against Ibadan. The Awujale of Ijebu, in recounting how he became an ally of the Ekitiparapo, stated that when the 'sixteen Kings of Ekiti' sent to him to ask for his support in their fight for freedom against Ibadan, he sent to the Alafin of Oyo to sound his opinion and he discovered that the Alafin was in favour of the freedom of the Ekiti.⁶ In October 1884, the bale of Kuta said that the responsibility of the war must be placed on the shoulders of the rulers of the Oyo country who had invited and encouraged Ogedemgbe to stand against Ibadan.⁷ The importance of this statement might be seen in the fact that the period following the Jalumi War was the time when the Confederates intensified their efforts to get Ogedemgbe to join them.

This does not mean that there was no truth in the Alafin's oft-repeated claim that at the beginning of the war he had sent envoys round to the belligerents to dissuade them from hostilities.⁸ The point is that such measures the Alafin claimed represented his open and advertised, but not his secret, activities. In the course of time the Alafin Adeyemi was to become proverbial amongst the Yoruba for his diplomacy and cunning.⁹

Nor was the Alafin the only ruler in the Oyo country who might

Expedition, enclosure in Carter to Ripon, 11 October 1893. The Ibadan told Carter in 1893 that all Oyo towns including those of the Upper Ogun (which the Alafin considered his own) 'were all under one government centred at Ibadan, and that the King of Oyo had nothing to do with the administration of affairs in these towns.'

6. C.4957, Statement of the Apena's mission to the King of Jebu, 1882-1883, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883.
7. The Rev. Olubi's 1884 Diary, *op. cit.*, entries for 15-27 October.
8. C.O.147/57, Alafin to Moloney, 15 May 1886; also C.M.S., G3A2/02, Alafin to J. B. Wood, 15 October 1881.
9. C.O.147/39, Moloney to Usher, 19 November 1879: Moloney wrote, '... the Alafin ... is playing a double game, superficially he desires peace but inwardly and in an underhand way is anxious to have the Kakanfo got rid of.' The reason for this, added Moloney, was that the Ibadan made the Alafin feel 'a potentate in name only'. See also for the Alafin's reputation as a cunning man, C.O.147/48, S. Johnson to Lieutenant Governor of Lagos, 23 January 1882, and *The Lagos Observer*, 28 February 1884.

have encouraged the Confederates in 1879. Many of the Oṣun towns which were subject to Ibadan knew as much oppression and suffering as the Ekiti or Ijeṣa and as soon as Ibadan had driven and kept the Ilorin out of the country south of Oṣfa, they had little or no reason left to love Ibadan. On the contrary, many of their rulers grew to hate Ibadan and, though they were too cowed to revolt openly, they could give encouragement to their insurgent Ekiti, Igbomina and Ijeṣa neighbours.

At the same time, the attitude of the south-western allies – the Eḡba and Ijebu – was very encouraging. As soon as the Ikirun expedition was over, the Aṛe Latosisa, believing that the north-eastern problem was settled, turned his attention to the south-west. His strategy here was to divide the Eḡba and Ijebu, and ally with one to destroy the other. With the Eḡba he was determined to have no friendly dealings as he was bent on conquering them 'to open a free route to the river Ogun'.

It was to the Ijebu therefore that he made his approaches.¹⁰ He sent presents and slaves to the Awujale and asked that peaceful relations be established between them, arguing that this should not be difficult since there had never been any cause for quarrel between the Ibadan and the Ijebu. The Awujale summarily refused the offer of friendship, however, and declined the gifts, openly declaring that he and his people were the allies of the Eḡba and the Ekiti. He concluded by saying that the Aṛe's offer of friendship was only a ruse to enable the Ibadan to procure war materials from the coast through the Ijebu. The Aṛe answered this rebuff by sending an expedition under the Sṛiki and Otun to ravage the Eḡba farms in the last days of December 1878.

The Ekitiparapo recovered from the shocks of the disasters of the Jalumi War and the many defeats following upon it and gradually took shape again. Since most of the leaders, while fleeing from the Ibadan army, had scattered into the towns and villages around Otun and the north, Otun became the focus of the renewed activities. In the first weeks of 1879 Fabunmi and the other Ekiti war chiefs converged on Otun which was now greatly swollen by Ekiti men fleeing from Ikirun and by refugees from most of the

10. C.M.S., CA2/019, W. S. Allen's Journal extracts for the half-year ending June 1879.

Igbomina towns, notably Ila, Oke-Ila, and Ọra.¹¹ The grand host of this cosmopolitan fortress was the Ore of Ọtun himself – Ọkinbaloye, a warrior prince who some four years before had quit the turbulent life of warfare to ascend the throne of one of the most renowned kingdoms of Ekiti.

The palace of the Ore became a sort of Confederate headquarters and from there messages went out to every known warrior and chief in the Ekiti and Igbomina countries. Aduloju of Ado, for the reasons already stated, continued to vacillate at Imęsi-Lařigidi. Ogedemgbe too, now at Ita-Ogbolu which since the Igbo-Alawun war had been his popular retreat, declined to commit himself. But a host of lesser war chiefs made their way to Ọtun to join the Confederate army. And although Prince Adeyale was dead and the Ọrangun of Ila had taken refuge with most of the Ila people at the village of Omupo,¹² many Igbomina men joined the Confederates at Ọtun. They came mostly from Ila, Ẹkan (under the Balogun Apapalař), Ilofa and a few other towns and villages. Among the Ijeřa too, determination and confidence soon began to grow again. In any case, the situation did not give any choice. Knowing the Ibadan as everybody did, the Ijeřa could hardly hope to escape harsh punishments for their role in the activities of the Ekitiparapọ so far and desperation stimulated the growth of determination. Steps were taken to salvage the ruins of the scattered Ijeřa forces and Ijeřa chiefs sent their representatives to Ọtun.¹³

Again, as in the early months of the previous year, meetings were held, Ifa priests, medicine men and Muslim diviners and charm makers were invited from all over the country, the oracles were consulted and the gods propitiated. Prince Fabunmi was confirmed in his leadership of the Confederate army, with the title of Balogun. Armed bands were selected to police every important road junction in the eastern countries. At Ọtun itself

11. Atolagbe: *Itan Ore, Ọtun at Mọba*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-5, tells the story of the preparations at Ọtun following the Jalumi War; story also from Ọtun palace traditions as recorded from the Ore of Ọtun on 11 January 1964.

12. The Rev. Phillips found him here in 1886. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his First and Second Missions, 1886.

13. Ijeřa traditions as recorded on 22 January 1964 from the Ọlojaoke of Imęsi-Ile who claimed to have been an eye-witness of the events of these years. (The Ọlojaoke died in 1965 at the age, according to his subjects, of 125.)

which throughout the war was to be the great market place where the Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Ilorin met regularly for trade, a small detachment was permanently stationed under a man named Agodi.

As soon as it had put its house in order, the Ekitiparapọ turned to the important task of diplomacy. Here the aim of its leaders was two-fold: first, to secure friends and allies and second, to isolate Ibadan. They met with success after success.

At Abeokuta, the Eḡba, who had continued to raid the Ibadan farms, reaffirmed their continued loyalty to the alliance with the Ekitiparapọ. At Ilorin, counsel was for some time divided. As soon as Ibadan had routed the Confederate and Ilorin forces at Ikirun and while the government of the Emir Alihu was making approaches to Latosisa so as to secure the Ilorin chiefs in captivity, the Balogun Kara who, due to some disagreement with the Emir, had not been allowed to join the Ikirun campaign, left Ilorin with an army to relieve the dispersed Ilorin soldiers. Kara advanced as far as Eḡhinjare and Ojoku, but seeing that the Ibadan were still pursuing the Ilorin forces as far as Erin, retreated to Ganmo where he proceeded to make military preparations on a gigantic scale.¹⁴ The Emir, more intent upon securing the release of the captive Ilorin chiefs, was against this expedition. The Balogun, however, insisted on having his own way and as soon as the Ibadan forces had returned home began to threaten Oḡfa.¹⁵

Oḡfa was the southernmost Oyo town still in the possession of the Fulani government of Ilorin. Ilorin's hold on Oḡfa, however, was constantly subverted by the people and authorities of Ibadan who, in order to cause a revolt against Ilorin rule, were in the habit of sending agents and taunting messages to the people of Oḡfa because of their continued submission to the Fulani stranger.¹⁶ Consequently, to the government of Ilorin Oḡfa had always been, at best, a sulky subject. In fact it would appear that

14. Account of these events as given to the Rev. C. Phillips when he visited the Ibadan, Ekitiparapọ and Oḡfa camps in 1886. C.4957, Report of Rev. C. Phillips of his first visit to Okemeṣi, Ilorin and Ife camps as a messenger of H. E. Moloney, Governor of Lagos, March-May 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

15. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi to Fenn, 26 February 1879.

16. Millum, J.: 'Notes of a journey from Lagos to Bida and Ilorin 1879-1880', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 2, 1881, pp. 26-37.

for some time before the Ikirun war, the Oḡfa had refused to pay the annual tributes to Ilḡrin and, expecting trouble, had begun to build a great wall to protect their town. In view of this poor relationship between Ilḡrin and Oḡfa, it is not surprising that the Ilḡrin should accuse the Oḡfa of having broken the Oḡtin bridge and having caused the Jalumi disaster, although it is not definitely known whether the accusation was founded or not.

✓ Therefore, as soon as the Ibadan forces had withdrawn, Kara laid siege to Oḡfa in order to punish the people, avowedly for the alleged treachery, but more probably for their recalcitrance. Thus when Confederate envoys visited Ilḡrin in the first months of 1879, the Balogun Kara was agreeable, while the Emir Alihu was still making fruitless advances to Latosisa in order to secure the release of his chiefs and hesitating to commit himself to an alliance which had recently cost him so much. In the end, it was Arḡ Latosisa's refusal to reciprocate the Emir's friendly approaches that settled the Ilḡrin dilemma. Late in February the Oḡfa applied for and received military aid from Ibadan.¹⁷ The government of Ilḡrin had to give its blessing to the siege of Oḡfa and to the renewal of the alliance with the Confederacy.

The Arḡ Latosisa, however, had not left the Ekitiparapḡ unchallenged in this diplomatic phase of the war. Early in 1879 he renewed his advances to the Ijḡbu,¹⁸ and here his moves and those of the Confederates clashed. After the Arḡ's failure to win the friendship of the Awujalḡ in December 1878 and his renewal of hostilities against the Eḡba, the Awujalḡ had taken the side of the Eḡba and like the latter had begun to send expeditions against the Ibadan farms.

The Ijḡbu expeditions were a failure but the Arḡ, not despairing in his attempt to win the Ijḡbu, set free the Ijḡbu marauders who were captured on the Ibadan farms. Then he reopened formal negotiations, this time making use of the Ijḡbu-Rḡmḡ as intermediaries. The Ijḡbu-Rḡmḡ were mostly traders and therefore were hard hit by the continued closure of the Ijḡbu roads

17. C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi to Fenn, 26 February 1879.

18. For an account of these events as given to Chief Ajasa, the Apena of Lagos during his visit to the Awujalḡ and chiefs of the Ijḡbu, December 1882-January 1883, see C.4957, Statement of Apena's mission to King of Jebu, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883; also C.M.S., CA2/075, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879; C.M.S., CA2/019, Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879.

against Ibadan. In an attempt to end hostilities and secure the reopening of the roads, the Ijebu-Remo advised the Arẹ to send another embassy to the Awujale, promising that they themselves would act as go-between. The Awujale accepted the presents but rejected the Ijebu-Remo as intermediaries.

The acceptance of the gifts encouraged the Arẹ to hope, and he proceeded to work through the Ijebu-Ode residents at Ibadan. These men, under the leadership of a certain Ijebu-Ode prince called Abinuşawa, were only too glad to oblige their hosts. In the meantime, however, Confederate agents were already at work at Ijebu-Ode, with the Ekiti-Ijesa slaves in the court of the Awujale playing a most decisive back-stage role.¹⁹ Ekitiparapo agents brought rich presents to the Awujale who, although expressing sympathy for the Confederate cause, wished to be satisfied that the Oni (ruler of Ife) was friendly to the Confederacy before he (Awujale) would commit himself by overt acts. The Ife were the immediate neighbours of the Ijebu to the north-east. Therefore, the attitude of Ife was important to the Ijebu since, if Ife were friendly to the Ekitiparapo, it would be possible for the Ijebu to send aid to Ekiti through Ife territory. On the other hand, if Ife were loyal to the Ibadan, the Ijebu would be under Ibadan pressure from the north and Ibadan-inspired pressure from the Ife in the north-east.

It was not difficult for the Confederate agents to prevail over the Ife authorities, because the Ife had never liked their subordination to Ibadan. The reigning Oni had died and it was the Oni-elect, Aderin, who sent his messengers with Confederate envoys to Ijebu-Ode.²⁰

The Confederates were so successful at Ijebu-Ode that an Ibadan delegation, under the leadership of Prince Abinuşawa, was refused entry to the city and was sent back with an angry message. Even then, the Arẹ persisted in sending envoys and princely gifts to the Awujale. Things came to such a state that those of the Awujale's slaves who were of Ekiti and Ijesa origin began to fear that the Arẹ's importunity might pay off, and they contrived to sabotage his moves. They kidnapped two of the

19. Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879, *op. cit.*; Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879, *op. cit.*

20. The Oni had died early in 1878, but it was not until the end of the year that Aderin was agreed upon as successor. C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal extracts for second quarter of 1878.

Arę's envoys on their return journey to Ibadan and sold them, one to Abęokuta and one to Ijębu-Igbo.²¹ The furore this caused in Ibadan against the Ijębu appears to have put an end to the Arę's approaches to the Awujalę. Soon, to facilitate the project of sending relief to the Confederates, the Balogun of Ijębu, Ọnafo-wọkan, at the orders of the Awujalę, opened the Isọya road to the Ifę territory and placed an army under the Sęriki Ogunşigun near Isọya to watch the road.²²

Another diplomatic battle was fought at Ondo. With the diplomatic victories of the Confederacy among the Egbas and the Ijębu, the only road to the coast still open to the Ibadan was the Ondo road via Oke-Igbo. But the Ekitiparapọ were determined to complete the isolation and blockade of Ibadan by winning the Ondo to their side and securing the closure of the Ondo road against Ibadan and other Oyo traders. Therefore, the Ekitiparapọ sent presents to the Ondo authorities and begged them to prevent Ibadan traders from using the routes through Ondo territory. At the same time, however, the Arę was sending envoys and presents to the Ondo authorities, appealing to them to keep the road open to his people.²³

The Ondo were sorry for the 'Ijeşas, Ekiti tribes, whose countries are now in a desolate condition, and whose people have long groaned under the yoke of their cruel conquerors', and realised that their own 'country's weal or woe is very much affected by the condition of the countries of the Owa . . .', their 'immediate neighbours'.²⁴ But the Ondo had suffered much from invasions in the recent past²⁵ and were now necessarily cautious. They had never been involved in a direct conflict with the dreaded Ibadan and had no ambition for such a conflict. Consequently, the Ondo authorities decided to remain neutral. They accepted the gifts from both sides and allowed each side to know about the moves of the other at Ondo.

On the whole then, the diplomatic contest of January to March 1879 ended in almost complete victory for the Confederacy and

21. C.O.147/52, Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883.

22. C.4957, Ogunşigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

23. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1/1, Diary and Letter Book of Bishop Charles Phillips 1877-86.

24. C.O.147/57, Oşemowe to Moloney, 13 May 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

25. The Ondo-Ifę War, otherwise known as the Oke-Igbo War, c. 1845-71.

the almost total isolation and blockade of Ibadan. By as early as the end of February, the Ilorin had been locked in combat with the Ibadan at Offa. Eḡba and Ijebu forces were exchanging blows with Ibadan in the Ibadan farms and the Eḡba and Ijebu roads remained firmly closed against Ibadan and other Oyo traders. Only at Ondo had the Arẹ's diplomacy known some success and then it was only to the extent of ensuring the neutrality of Ondo, with the result that the Ondo roads were left open to him and his opponents.

Even then the Ondo road passed through Ifẹ territory and the extent to which it would be useful to Ibadan depended on the attitude of the Ifẹ who remained cowed but unhappy and vengeful subjects of Ibadan.²⁶ Outwardly the Alafin remained benign and fatherly but there was, underneath, little love lost between him and Ibadan. In the circumstances, the only source from which Ibadan could expect active support was the subject Oyo towns and villages, especially those of Oṣun, who, while entertaining very little liking for their Ibadan overlord, could not well afford to refuse acceding to his every request.

Much of this diplomatic success of the Ekitiparapo was due to the universal fear of the power and ambitions of Ibadan. The Awujale even attempted in these months to settle the rift between Ifẹ and Modakeḡe in order to bring Modakeḡe into the alliance against Ibadan.²⁷

It is not known when the Ekitiparapo headquarters were moved from Otun to Imẹsi-Igbodo in the west. But by the end of March, the Ekiti forces were already concentrated at Imẹsi-Igbodo. The location of the Ijeṣa army at this time is unknown, but it would seem probable that it too had moved to Imẹsi-Ile, separated from Imẹsi-Igbodo by less than four miles of hilly country and connected to it by the old trade route. The Igbomina contingents had joined the main Confederate forces at Otun and had moved with them to Imẹsi-Igbodo.

The Ilorin army under Kara was encamped against Offa which

26. C.4957, Hewett to Moloney, 14 January 1881; also Statement of the Ifẹ chiefs made at the Ifẹ camp, 27 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.
27. C.4957, Ogunṣigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886. According to Ogunṣigun the Awujale did succeed in making the Ifẹ and the Modakeḡe friends for a while.

was being defended by the Ọffa people aided by contingents from Ibadan. This time the Ilọrin did not venture to send troops beyond their own borders southward. In order to cement the alliance between the Ekitiparapọ and Ilọrin, however, it was agreed (apparently at the instance of Ilọrin) to exchange token contingents between the two armies. An assorted Ekitiparapọ contingent under Ogunmọde of Ilesha and Chief Ajayi Ọfa, brother to the leader of the Ọtun forces, was despatched to the Ilọrin camp at Ọffa. The Ilọrin sent a mixed contingent of infantry and cavalry under Laşebikan to join the Confederates at Imeşi-Igbodo. Although Kara was later to use this arrangement as a stranglehold on the Confederacy, it sufficed for the present to underline the fidelity of either side to the alliance. In addition, the Ilọrin authorities were invited to send an ambassador to Ọtun to be responsible for the welfare of Ilọrin traders who came there. They sent a man called Aregudu.²⁸

It has been suggested that by now the war aims of the Confederacy had expanded a great deal. Obviously believing that their country could never know rest until the power of Ibadan had been greatly curtailed or even totally crushed, the Confederates realised that they had to do much more than merely expel the Ibadan from the Ekiti and other eastern countries. They would march across the Ọşun district up to the River Ọba, wiping out the dominion of Ibadan in every town and village.²⁹ Knowing that Ibadan did not enjoy the love of the people of those areas, they probably hoped that they could count on these oppressed people to welcome the Confederate forces and perhaps rise up to join them in a common war against Ibadan imperialism.³⁰ Then, once the march to the Ọba stream was accomplished, the Confederate forces could march on to Ibadan itself and destroy the great city.

While the Ekitiparapọ got set for this great, and as they hoped, final struggle against Ibadan, they intensified their efforts to get Aduloju and Ogedemgbe to join them. All manner of influences, ranging from gifts to charms, were employed to achieve this end. Both men, however, continued to stay away.

28. Atolagbe: *op. cit.*, p. 37.

29. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 439.

30. For encouragement received by the Ekitiparapọ at this critical time from rulers of the Ọsun district, see accounts in Olubi's 1884 Diary, entries for 15-27 October.

It is difficult to explain this protracted aloofness on the part of Ogedemgbe, especially in view of his bitter experiences at the hands of the Ibadan and his former opposition to Ibadan in the service of his people. Samuel Johnson suggested that Ogedemgbe, having crossed swords more than once with the Ibadan, was loth to do so again, 'but rather tried to see what might be done by entreaties and remonstrance to ameliorate the lot of his people'.³¹ Quite conceivably, Ogedemgbe might by now have come to the conclusion that further armed resistance to Ibadan was futile – a possibility which is indicated by Johnson's evidence that even when he had consented to join the Confederates, Ogedemgbe showed a reluctance to meet the Ibadan in open combat, but began to make offers of parley to Latosisa in an attempt to dissuade that great general from coming in person to lead the Ibadan forces. But it should also be added that Johnson again suggested that Ogedemgbe's reluctance to fight Latosisa arose, not so much out of fear as out of a desire to keep a covenant which he had made with Ibadan.

Apart from Johnson, however, it is known that Ogedemgbe was, during late 1878 and early 1879, busy fighting one of his most difficult battles ever, the siege of Idoani. He had attacked Idoani about the middle of 1878, but as late as May 1879 the news from there showed that he continued to suffer heavy losses from the defenders of the town.³² It was not until close to the end of 1879 that he was able to crush Idoani and return to Itaogbolu. His preoccupation with this battle, therefore, would seem to have been the chief reason for his continued failure to accede to the invitations from the leaders of the Ekitiparappo.

By April, the Confederate army was ready to move. Then, on the 8th, the news of the death of the Balogun Ajayi Ogorieḡfon shook Ibadan and within a few days spread over the whole country. For close on two months, the great warrior had been suffering from frequent attacks of convulsions, which were believed to be brought on by harmful charms made by the Ilorin and Ekitiparappo in the north.³³ In Confederate circles, the death

31. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 443.

32. C.M.S., CA2/078, Phillips to Maser, 5 May 1879.

33. C.M.S., CA2/019, W. S. Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879; also Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 438. According to Ibadan traditions, the convulsions began soon after a strange charm had been found in his compound.

of Ajayi Ogborięfõn at this time was regarded as a providential intervention. All arrangements for the attack on the power of Ibadan were therefore quickly completed and the army moved forward immediately.

Using the same route as in the previous year, the Ekiti and Igbomina forces marched through Imęsi-Ile where they were joined by the Ijeęa army and again laid siege to Igbajo. The people of Igbajo put up no resistance but fled, mostly to Ikirun. This time the Owa of Igbajo fled beyond Ikirun to Oęogbo where he was guest of the *Ataaja* (king) of Oęogbo for about three years.³⁴ The Ekitiparapo army marched on to Ikirun and began systematically to besiege the town.

The Arę Latosisa was not slow to respond to this challenge. But his position was complicated by the double necessity of sending forces strong enough to check the advance of the Confederacy from the north while at the same time providing adequate defence for Ibadan itself against possible Eęba-Ijebu attack. Already he had sent a considerable force under the Seriki's Otun, Osi and Ekerin to defend Ofa against the Ilorin. In the end he had to send out as strong a force as he could muster under the Seriki.³⁵

At Iwo, the Seriki learned that the Confederate army was too formidable for his own forces, and he waited there for reinforcements before proceeding to Ikirun. Behind the walls of this town the Ibadan army met the Confederate army and a number of indecisive battles were fought, in which, it would appear, the Ibadan did generally better than the Confederates. Then the Confederate forces began to retreat under pressure, but in perfect order, the way they had come, into their own familiar hills.

Closely followed by the Ibadan, they retreated past the ruins of Igbajo and in the hills about an hour's walk from Imęsi-Ile they stood firm and put an end to the advance of the Ibadan army. And these hills were to be the homes of the Ekitiparapo and Ibadan armies for the next eight years.

34. The Owa of Igbajo, Oba Famodun (grandfather of the present Owa) later moved to Ire where he died in exile. His remains were carried to Igbajo after the war.

35. C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal for the last quarter of 1879.

The fighting that now ensued and went on for eight years can be roughly divided into four periods: first the period from 1879 to late 1880; second, from late 1880 to 1884; third, from 1884 to mid 1885; and fourth, from about mid 1885 to late 1886. The first period was characterised by Ibadan superiority and repeated victories for the Ibadan army; the second saw the turn of military fortune in favour of the Ekitiparapọ; the third witnessed comparative recovery by the Ibadan; and the fourth was a period of stalemate.

At the opening of the war and for most of 1880 the Ibadan maintained an edge over their opponents in the battles which took place.³⁶ The series of Ibadan victories which began from the moment the Ekitiparapọ first crossed swords with the Ibadan behind the walls of Ikirun continued for months. Its first important result was that the Ekitiparapọ were compelled to abandon the siege of Ikirun and withdraw to their own country. In the hills between Igbajọ and Imęsi-Ile the Ekitiparapọ stubbornly refused to be pushed farther back. But even then the character of the war did not change until late 1880. In one of the battles, in fact, the Ekitiparapọ army broke before the Ibadan onslaught and fell in disorder on Imęsi-Ile town beyond their camp, and it was only the Ajero who saved the day and stopped the Ibadan war boys from entering the town. Thereafter, the Ekitiparapọ fought their way back to their camp and continued to hold their own in the face of repeated reverses.³⁷

No doubt the memory of the Jalumi War was still strong enough in these months to boost the morale of the Ibadan forces and frighten many men in the Confederate rank and file. Moreover, the prevailing mode of fighting in these months was merely a continuation of the mode characteristic of former Ibadan campaigns in the eastern countries and in the Jalumi War, and the Ibadan continued to maintain their traditional superiority over their enemies. In the first place, of the arms employed on either side, the type of guns known as Dane (or 'trade') guns still

36. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Phillips's Journal for 1 January-10 August, 1880; also Young's Journal extracts for quarter ending June 1880.

37. For instance, in a battle reported at Ondo on 24 May 1880, the Ekitiparapọ were reported to have been hard pressed and to have lost an important chief and many war boys. But the Arę himself only narrowly escaped, and lost three chiefs. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Young's Journal extracts for quarter ending June 1880.

predominated.³⁸ These consisted of a variety of cap guns and flintlock guns. Their range was limited and they had the added disadvantage that once the gunman had discharged a shot, he needed some three or four minutes at least to reload.

Secondly, each battle still consisted of a series of frontal attacks. The armies faced each other across the field and opened fire at each other. This fire was kept up by dividing the whole army into a number of parts. When one part had discharged its Dane guns, it withdrew to the rear to reload – and so on throughout the battle.³⁹ When a side broke under the fire, the other pursued to take captives. In this type of battle the Ibadan frequently excelled. First, they continued to command greater numbers than the Ekitiparapọ. In 1886, it was estimated that the Ibadan camp contained about 60,000 people and the Ekitiparapọ camp about 40,000. These figures included wives, children and other attendants of the fighting men, so that the troops might have been anything between half and two-thirds of the populations of the camp – that is, about 30,000 to 40,000 for the Ibadan and about 20,000 to 27,000 for the Ekitiparapọ. From the very beginning of the war, the Ibadan drew contingents from the towns of the Qşun area as well as from Ife. Secondly, the Ibadan were more skilful in this type of fighting than probably any other people in the country. After the fire had been kept up for a while, the Ibadan would suddenly drop their guns and charge with their drawn swords against the enemy's line. The surprise effect of such charges had won brilliant victories for them in the past and at the beginning of the Kiriji War frequently brought in good results.⁴⁰

That the war did not come to an end in these months in a decisive victory for the Ibadan was due to two main factors. First, the determination of the Confederate war chiefs proved impos-

38. Father R. P. Holley, Superior of the Catholic Mission at Abẹkuta, visited the Ekitiparapọ camp in December 1884. He found that most of the guns used by the Ekitiparapọ and Ibadan were Dane guns, but also that the Ekitiparapọ had for some time secured other types of guns, mostly Sniders. Holley: *'A Travers les pays du Niger', Les missions Catholiques*, Vol. 16, 1884, pp. 567-9.

39. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885. The Rev. Wood wrote, 'The Ekitis divide their forces into four parts – each of these serve for three minutes and at the expiration of this time another party comes in . . .'

40 It was such tactics that won the Ikirun War for the Balogun Ajayi Ogboriefọn in 1878. Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 427-34

sible to break. Used as they were to fighting the Ibadan, they doggedly held on in spite of the reverses, while they continued to invite reinforcements from all over the Confederate countries.

The second was that the Ibadan army was early beset by the canker-worm of jealousies and unhealthy rivalries which was later to eat away its strength. The Aṛe Latosisa himself, by his arrogance and cunning, aroused a strong suspicion among the chiefs that he was out to destroy them all and then establish himself and his sons as the absolute rulers of Ibadan. The chiefs, therefore, hesitated to win victories for him. Even when he himself came to the front early in 1880 and invited fresh troops from Oṛffa to join him, the Ibadan army always came short of winning victories sufficiently great to cripple the Ekitiparapo. No chief was prepared to enhance his greatness by winning this war for him. In fact, more than once in these months the Ibadan chiefs attempted to betray him to the enemy.⁴¹

In 1880, the tide turned in favour of the Ekitiparapo, and for over four years thereafter they continued to enjoy a strong superiority over the Ibadan. By then, Ogedemgbe had at last yielded to entreaties and come to Imeṣi-Ile with his large army which had been greatly swollen by his recent conquests in the Idoani district. Aduloju, however, continued to stay away at Imeṣi-Laṣigidi near the Akoko boundary. In order to bring Aduloju to Imeṣi-Ile, Ogedemgbe appealed to their old friendship, sent gifts and when entreaties failed resorted to threats, but all to no avail. Aduloju became very unpopular at Imeṣi-Ile, and when news arrived that he was attacking the powerful Akoko town of Afa, the suggestion was seriously made that the Ekitiparapo should send help to Afa so as to thwart him. Ogedemgbe was against this adventure, but a group of young warriors led by Aṣo Ogundana of Ikole and Ode of Ilesha went off to the aid of Afa. When Afa was starved into submission months later, Aduloju sent these young chiefs under safe conduct to the Ewi who sent them to Imeṣi-Ile. After that, no further attempt was made to invite Aduloju to Imeṣi-Ile.⁴²

As soon as Ogedemgbe arrived, Fabunmi, who was much younger and sought no personal glories for himself, relinquished

41. *Ibid.*, p. 444.

42. Early in the twentieth century, what remained of Afa came together with other villages to found the town of Oke-Agbe.

the leadership of the Ekitiparapọ army to him. From then on, the Ekitiparapọ could always draw on the experiences which Ogedemgbe had acquired from his frequent clashes with the Ibadan in the past.

Moreover, the Ekitiparapọ were beginning to obtain greatly improved arms for the war. In this quest for better weapons, the ideas and the execution belonged entirely to the leaders of the Ekitiparapọ Society in Lagos, and it is perhaps here that we see the greatest contribution of the Society to the Confederate war effort. The first step taken was to import improved varieties of the Dane guns. From Benin the Ekitiparapọ imported a long and large-muzzled variety which had a longer range and could carry heavier fire than the varieties hitherto in use and which, at every discharge, gave off a very loud report. Popular tradition has it that the war gained the name 'Kiriji' from the characteristic noise produced by this gun.⁴³

Not long after, the leaders of the Ekitiparapọ Society, many of whom were very successful traders, succeeded in employing their influence and commercial contacts in procuring for the Ekitiparapọ army better and much more modern weapons than the Dane guns: Sniders, Martini Henri rifles, Mauser rifles, Winchester rifles and Remington rifles.⁴⁴ These were breech-loaders which had a very long range, could be fired more rapidly and were far more accurate because of their rifled barrels. Breech-loading guns were a very new development in military technology

43. This new gun was called *Okondọ*. It is possible, however, that the name 'Kiriji' was not derived from the noise of the *Okondọ* – which would make a booming or barking noise – but from the crack followed by a whistle which is the noise made when high-velocity bullets are fired from breech-loading rifles.

44. (N.A.I.), C.S.O. 1/1/13, Carter to Ripon, 23 August 1894. In 1894 after Ogebemgbe's return from Imęsi-Ile, the following articles were seized from him by agents of the Lagos administration:

126 Snider rifles, 24 Martini Henry rifles, 8 Mauser rifles, 5 Winchester rifles, 1 Remington rifle, 20 Cap guns, 101 Flintlock guns, 42 Kegs gunpowder, 7 Kegs iron bullets, 237 Boxes, tins etc. of assorted cartridges, including 18 rockets.

For the role of the Ekitiparapọ Society, see, e.g. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Phillips 'An account of my interview with chief Manuwa of Itębu' (written at Massey Street, Lagos, 28 November 1881); Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1879 Journal; Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1882 Diary, Entry for 21 August; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, S. Johnson to Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, 23 January 1882.

in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was one of the earliest breech-loaders (the 'needle gun') that had enabled Bismarck to strike down the Austrians in seven weeks at Sadowa in 1866. Until the Kiriji War, they were hardly known in the Yoruba country. They were so potent and so horrifying in their effects that strong voices were raised against their use even among the Confederate leadership. Ogedemgbe himself suggested that these rifles should not be introduced into the war since there was a possibility that the Ibadan too might succeed in obtaining them. Gradually, however, they came into use among the Ekitiparapọ and this immeasurably increased their superiority over the enemy. The leaders of the Ekitiparapọ Society even managed to procure some rockets for the Ekitiparapọ army.⁴⁵

For a long time, the Ibadan did not succeed in getting these modern rifles, and when they got them, it was not in quantities large enough to cause serious embarrassment to the Confederates. Strong letters went from the Ibadan camp at Igbajọ to the Oyo elements in Lagos, pointing out how the Ekitiparapọ were obtaining these advanced weapons through their sons resident in Lagos and appealing to the Oyo elements to emulate the example of their Ekiti and Iješa colleagues and arrange for these rifles for the Ibadan army. At other times, the Arẹ Latosisa's letters pleaded with the Oyo elements to bring the activities of the leaders of the Ekitiparapọ Society to the attention of the Governor of Lagos, so that the Lagos government might stop their continued participation in the war. No important result came from these letters.

In June 1884, however, the leaders of the Oyo group in Lagos thought out a plan designed to stop the activities of the Ekitiparapọ Society. They sent for publication in the press⁴⁶ one of Arẹ Latosisa's letters which had mentioned the names of the leading Ekiti-Iješa elements who were said to be buying rifles for the Ekitiparapọ and taking active part in the interior wars: F. Haastrup, W. Campbell, T. F. Cole and others. As the war adversely affected the trade of Lagos, its continuation was daily

45. These rockets, however, were found on inspection in 1894 to be only signal ones and not useful for fighting. But evidence that much was at first expected from them may be discerned in the Iješa saying, 'Apaja Gureje ko le ogun lẹ', 'Gureje's shooting stars have not, as expected, driven the Ibadan away'. Apparently Gureje had been very enthusiastic about the rockets.

46. *The Eagle and Critique*, 28 June 1884; also *The Lagos Observer*, 3 July 1884.

lamented by the Lagos press and vague hints were passed around about certain civilised Lagos Christians who were secretly promoting the destructive war in the interior.⁴⁷ The publication of this letter, therefore, was meant to discredit Campbell, Haastrop and others in the public eye and by exposing them to public ridicule to compel them to stop sending arms to the interior.

But Mr. Haastrop traced the publication of the letter down to Mr. I. H. Willoughby, a leading Oyò in Lagos, sued him for libel and obtained redress in the law courts. The court's verdict did more than exculpate the leaders of the Ekitiparapò Society; it also imposed a crippling caution on the Lagos Oyò elements in their relationship with the Ibadan army in the interior. In the end, therefore, Latosisa and his people obtained little help from their kinsmen in Lagos.

The introduction of the rifles changed the mode of fighting in the Kiriji War considerably. The old type of battle, with armies drawn up facing each other and firing at each other, did not totally disappear⁴⁸ but it no longer occurred frequently. New weapons called for new methods. Among the Ekitiparapò, there soon emerged a fairly strong Rifle Corps trained and led by volunteers and representatives sent up by the Ekitiparapò Society. It was made up of carefully selected and well-trained men (including many of the emigré volunteers) led by Labinjò from Lagos and Gureje from Abeokuta.⁴⁹

The trainers of the Rifle Corps appear also to have introduced the tactics of trench warfare among the Ekitiparapò. From trenches and from behind earth-works and parapets constructed on the battlefield, the Rifle Corps caused a lot of havoc even inside the Ibadan camp.⁵⁰ This compelled the Ibadan to change a number of things. First, they began to give their huts strong mud walls (in place of former bamboo walls) so that the walls might protect the occupants against the fire of the long-range breech-

47. e.g. *The Lagos Times*, 27 April 1881 and 26 January 1881; *The Lagos Observer*, 28 February 1884; C.M.S., G3A2/01, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1880; G3A2/02, Wood to the C.M.S. Secretaries, 14 December 1881.

48. The Rev. Wood saw instances of this in 1884. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

49. Labinjò appears to have been a well-to-do man in Lagos, cf. *The Eagle and Critique*, 28 June 1884 and *The Lagos Observer*, 3 July 1884.

50. Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568; also Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 490-1.

loaders.⁵¹ Secondly, they began to avoid face-to-face pitched fighting and resorted more and more to manoeuvres. A visitor to the Kiriji front in December 1884 reported that during the battles the Ibadan did not usually come openly into the field any longer, but contented themselves with 'pulling about the loop-holes in the camp's fortifications'. It was a war of surprises, in which speed and agility played a decisive part.⁵²

A number of developments away from the front were at the same time aggravating the weaknesses of the Ibadan. As long as Latosisa stayed at home in Ibadan, the fear of him was sufficient to keep both the Eḡba and the Ijeḡbu at some distance from Ibadan. But early in 1880 the chiefs at the front, angered by the reports of the behaviour of the Aṛe and his sons which they were receiving from home, invited him to come and lead the Ibadan army in person.⁵³ With his departure to Igbajo, the Eḡba and Ijeḡbu felt confident enough to prey upon the life-blood of Ibadan in the farms and villages. Against the Ijeḡbu, Ibadan was more or less able to hold its own. Sentinel posts and garrisons were established near the Ibadan-Ijeḡbu frontiers to warn farmers of Ijeḡbu raids and ward off the Ijeḡbu marauders. Quite often the patrols succeeded in repulsing Ijeḡbu raids and capturing some of the Ijeḡbu men.⁵⁴

The Eḡba, however, were a more determined and more difficult enemy. Sometimes the Ibadan farmers and villagers managed to hold their own against the Eḡba. But quite often the Eḡba came in very large bands (about 2,000 at times) and destroyed farms, burnt down barns and carried away farmers. In general, they made life on the Ibadan farms right up to the gates of Ibadan very insecure.⁵⁵

In 1881 events in the Oyo country increased the anxieties and difficulties of the Ibadan. In the last months of that year, the Dahomey, who had hitherto limited their raids to the Eḡba

51. C.4957, Report of Messrs Higgins and Smith, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

52. Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568.

53. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Young's Journal extracts for the quarter ending June 1880.

54. On 10 April 1881, an Ijeḡbu raiding party lost about 30 men killed or caught; the Ibadan lost only 2 killed. C.M.S., G3A2/02, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1881.

55. *Ibid.*; also *The Lagos Times*, 22 December 1880.

country, took advantage of the preoccupation of the Oyo country to extend their depredations to the Upper Ogun area. Ejio, Ilaji, Qbaninsawa, Atasa, Okele, Iwere, Ketu, Iganna and many other villages and towns in the western districts of the country fell in succession to the Dahomey.⁵⁶ These depredations continued until 1890 when the Dahomey country itself was invaded by the French.

In 1882 the position of the Ibadan got much worse. Until 1881 the Ife had continued to support the Ibadan, although more out of fear than love. About March 1881, however, the Ibadan war council decided to surprise the Ekitiparapo by capturing the Ijesa village of Oṣu on the road between Ile-Ife and Ileṣa.⁵⁷ The Ife authorities were approached to supply reinforcements to an Ibadan detachment which, after capturing Oṣu, would 'blockade Ileṣa and the territory of the allies, [so] that they might quit their stronghold [Imesi-Ile]'. But the Ife leaked the plan to the Ekitiparapo and the Ekitiparapo war chiefs countered by persuading the Qwa of Ileṣa to cede Oṣu to Ife. The Qwa's response is not known; however, when the time came for the execution of Ibadan's plan, the Ife would not let Ibadan troops march through their territory to attack Oṣu. Naturally this led to an open quarrel between Ibadan and Ife which became steadily worse as the months passed. Finally, early in 1882, the Ibadan decided that the Ife obstacle had to be liquidated and sent a small band of men to Ile-Ife to frighten or arrest the chiefs most opposed to Ibadan. On arrival, however, these men acted with a strong hand and in the trouble that ensued an important Ife chief was killed. Thereupon the Ife openly revolted, withdrew their contingents from Igbajo and declared for the Ekitiparapo. The Ibadan acted swiftly and a combined Ibadan-Modakẹkẹ force destroyed Ile-Ife.⁵⁸ The

56. It was believed in Lagos that the Egba were glad about the embarrassment which these Dahomey invasions constituted to the Oyo country and to the Ibadan. It was even alleged that the son of an important Abeokuta chief acted as guide to the Dahomey in 1881. The king of Dahomey was reported to have sent news of his successful raid in 1881 to an important Abeokuta chief and 'the news was received with much gratification at Abeokuta'. Abeokuta 'approves and encourages' the Dahomey invasions. *The Lagos Times*, 8 and 13 July 1881.

57. C.M.S., G3A2/02, Johnson's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1881.

58. C.M.S., G3A2/03, Phillips's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1882.

Ekitiparapo replied by sending a strong force under Prince Fabunmi and Chief Arimoro to join the Ife army in destroying Modakeke. The Ijebu second army under the Seriki Ogunşigun, which had encamped at Isoya near Ile-Ife since the beginning of the war, then advanced to the aid of the Ife and Ekitiparapo armies behind the walls of Modakeke. The Ibadan too had to send a strong force to the defence of Modakeke. In this way, a new front to the war was created.

It was not so much the withdrawal of the Ife contingent or the splitting of the Ibadan army at Igbajo to defend Modakeke that seriously affected the position of the Ibadan. Since the beginning of the war the Egbas road, the Ijebu road, the northern road through Ilorin to the Niger ports and the road to Benin all had remained closed against the Ibadan and other Oyo people. There had, indeed, been a leakage of the Egbas blockade, with Egbas traders going by roundabout roads to trade with the Oyo country at Eruwa, Ejio and Ilaji in the Ibarapa and Upper Ogun districts. But the Egbas authorities had always taken steps to ensure that the loads carried to Eruwa contained no arms and ammunition. Only one of the leading Egbas chiefs, chief Ogundipe the Alatişe who was a close friend to the Afe Latosisa, had had any success in smuggling ammunition to Eruwa; but such activities put him into trouble with the Egbas masses⁵⁹ and he had always to observe the greatest caution, with the result that only a very limited quantity of ammunition ever got through. Moreover, the frequent Dahomey invasions of the Upper Ogun district from 1881 on jeopardised the trade and thereby reduced its volume.

In the circumstances, the Ondo road through Ile-Ife had been the only road through which any large quantities of ammunition and other supplies could reach the Ibadan. Even in the best of times, the usefulness of this road to the Ibadan was curtailed by a number of factors. The first, as has been pointed out, was the ill-feeling of the Ife towards the Ibadan, and the second was the fact that the Ijebu controlled all the coastline between Lagos and

59. *The Lagos Observer*, 19 July 1883, reported that 'owing to some misunderstanding between the chief Ogundipe and the people, a civil war is threatened' at Abeokuta; and *The Lagos Times*, 12 October 1881, standing between the chief Ogundipe and the people, a civil war is threatened' at Abeokuta; and *The Lagos Times*, 12 October 1881, wrote 'Shofella, son of the famous Chief Ogundipe of Abeokuta, was shot on the Ibekekodo road on the 25th ultimo for alleged traffic in munitions of war with the Ibadans.'

Atijere on the Ilaje coast. Even before the open defection of 1881-2, the Ife had been opposed to the use of their country for promoting the war against the Ekitiparapo. Not infrequently armed bands of Ife young men attempted to stop Ibadan traders making use of their roads. It was the people of Modakeke who on these occasions made it possible for the traders to get some goods through. On the coast, the Ijebu freely preyed on any Oyo trader who attempted to pass the Ijebu sea-coast from Lagos to Atijere. Late in 1879 a prosperous trader, an Ijaye man resident in Lagos, who boasted that he was a personal friend of the Kakanfo and claimed that the Kakanfo would soon destroy all his enemies was kidnapped on the coast by the Ijebu of Makun and his trade was destroyed.⁶⁰ Finally, even though the Ondo authorities were officially neutral, many of their subjects felt that Ibadan was in the wrong in the war and therefore Ondo villagers and gatekeepers frequently ill-treated Ibadan traders and made things difficult for them.⁶¹

In spite of these factors, the Ibadan managed to do quite a good deal of trade through the Ondo road, while those Lagos traders who were not related to the Ibadan or the Confederates freely traded with either. But with the open defection of the Ife in 1882 and the blockade of Modakeke by a combined Ife-Ekitiparapo army, it became almost impossible for Ibadan traders to make use of the Ondo road at all. The total blockade of Ibadan, which the Ekitiparapo had sought from the beginning of the war, was now more or less achieved.

A few months later, however, relief came to the Ibadan from an unexpected source. The Ijebu trading interests had long chafed at the rigid restrictions imposed on trade with the Ibadan. In vain they had pleaded for a relaxation of the embargo and pointed out that the Egba, who had originally invited the Ijebu into the war, had secretly opened up trade with the Ibadan at Eruwa. By 1882 the tension reached a climax and the traders won the alliance of

60. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips's Diary and Letter Book 1877-86. Also O. O. Ayantuga: *Ijebu and its neighbours 1851-1914* (Ph.D. Thesis), London 1965, Chapter 6, describes the Ijebu blockade of the sea coast against Oyo traders.

61. e.g. on 29 April 1880, the Ondo officials patrolling the roads maltreated the Rev. Johnson from Ibadan 'to revenge on him for the war the Ibadans had taken against the Ekitiparapos'. The Lisa, however, punished them for this. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Young's Journal for quarter ending June 1880.

the main Ijebu army encamped at Oru under the Balogun Onafowokan. The Awujale fled into refuge to Epe and chief Onafowokan converted his camp at Oru to a market for trading with the Ibadan.⁶²

Even though this development in the Ijebu country saved the Ibadan from collapse, it did not completely solve the harrowing problem of shortages of ammunition and other necessities of life in the Ibadan camps and indeed in the whole of the Oyo country.⁶³ The Egba, by frequent kidnapping on the Oru road, made travelling through it a very risky venture, and the Ibadan authorities had to provide each caravan of traders with armed guards.⁶⁴ Moreover, the Ijebu, regarding themselves as benefactors of the Ibadan, charged usurious prices for their goods and behaved outrageously towards the Ibadan traders.⁶⁵

In contrast, the Ekitiparapo found it comparatively easy throughout the war to make use of the Ilorin road, the Benin road, the Ijebu road through Isoya and the Ondo road. The Ondo road carried most of the trade to and from the Ekitiparapo camp, and much of this trade was in the hands of members of the Ekitiparapo Society, many of whom, as earlier pointed out, came to settle in the Ilaje towns along the coast, especially in Chief Manuwa's town of Itebu.⁶⁶ Chief Manuwa was one of the Ilaje chiefs, his town being one of the western Ilaje settlements owing

62. For details of the civil war in Ijebu, see C.4957, Statement of the Apena's mission to the king of Jebu, 1882-3, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883; also Ogunşigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886; also Ayantuga, *op. cit.*, Chapter 6.

63. There are stories of how parents bargained away their children and children sold their parents to obtain some salt. Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 452-4.

64. See the Rev. Olubi's 1884 Diary, for the frequent Egba raids on the Oru road throughout 1884, e.g. entries for 6 July, 8 August, 24-25 November; also, *The Lagos Observer* of 8 May 1884 contains an account of such Egba raids early in 1884.

65. The leading Ijebu traders resident at Ibadan were alarmed at these outrages. Therefore on 23 July 1884 they 'met at Idi-Qsan [in Ibadan] to prohibit that the Ijebus should not ill-treat the Ibadans [*sic*].' the Rev. Olubi's 1884 Diary, Entry for 23 July.

66. The following account of the activities of the Ekitiparapo Society along the Ondo road is taken from C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Phillips: 'An account of my interview with Chief Manuwa of Itebu', November 1881; also Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1882 Diary, Entry for 21 August.

allegiance to the ruler of Mahin;⁶⁷ but he had embarked on a project aimed at setting Itẹbu up as an independent town. In order to attract most of the trade from Lagos into Itẹbu, he patronised the Christians and Lagos traders, and it was because of this that most of the members of the Ekitiparapọ Society wishing to settle along the Ilajẹ coast had come to settle at Itẹbu. Chief Manuwa's political and other activities, however, displeased the Mahin authorities and consequently Itẹbu was frequently threatened with attack and destruction. As a result of one such crisis in October 1881, the Ekitiparapọ settlers had to flee Itẹbu, and they finally established a colony of their own, Aiyesan, on the Ofara river which was one of the best inlets along the Ilajẹ coast. From then on it became much easier for members of the Ekitiparapọ Society to organise and protect their trade along the Ilajẹ coast. But a lot of anxiety was still experienced on account of the growing hostility of the neighbouring Ilajẹ towns who resented the growing commercial importance of Aiyesan. Therefore, the Ekitiparapọ Society strove to strengthen the colony by attracting more settlers to it. For this purpose it launched the 'Itẹbu Colonisation Society' to promote migration of Ijẹsa and Ekiti men from Lagos, Porto Novo and Abẹkuta to Aiyesan. Throughout the war Aiyesan served as the store of vital military equipment for the Ekitiparapọ camps in the interior.

The Ekitiparapọ by no means found things always easy on this road. The different peoples on the road – the Ifẹ, the Ondo, the Ikalẹ and the Ilajẹ – were rather often locked in political strifes which tended to make the road dangerous. The coastal Ijẹbu (especially those of Makun) in an attempt to retain most of the trade in their own hands sometimes attacked the Lagos traders and the Ilajẹ and thereby set up a chain of political reactions which greatly disturbed the trade on the road. The Ilajẹ and the Ondo, alarmed at the increasing loss of the trade to the Ekiti-Ijẹsa settlers on the Ilajẹ coast and their kinsmen from Lagos, also sometimes reacted by closing down the road for months. In fact the troubles on the road were so great at one time that the Ekitiparapọ Society began to give serious consideration to the project of opening up the River Ọni for trade from the Ilajẹ coast to the Ijẹsa country, thereby avoiding the Ondo and Ilajẹ towns as much

67. The Ilajẹ settlements were divided politically into two groups – one under the *Olugbo* (king) of Ugbo, the other under the *Ọmọpetu* (king) of Mahin.

as possible. This project, however, was never embarked upon.⁶⁸

The road was never so disturbed, however, as to endanger very seriously the Confederate war effort. But the Ekitiparapọ authorities had to be almost continually busy sending envoys and gifts to the Ondo authorities especially with a view to pacifying them and settling the quarrels between them and the Ekiti-Iješa colonists on the Ilajẹ coast. Also, in spite of rather frequent kidnappings of members of the Ekitiparapọ Society and the confiscations of their goods by the Ilajẹ, the Society generally pursued a cautious policy aimed at winning the friendship of the Ilajẹ. For one thing, since the Ilajẹ towns and villages controlled most of the routes and creeks, it was obvious that there could be no other realistic way of ensuring continued participation of Ekiti and Iješa traders in the trade. For another, the members of the Society were under the influence of the chiefs of the Ekitiparapọ on this matter, and the chiefs were always very anxious about the condition of these routes. In 1883, however, an incident occurred which threatened for a brief while to involve the Ekitiparapọ Society and its Aiyesan colony in an all-out war with the Ilajẹ. Some Lagos Iješa traders were assailed on the creeks near Atijere by Ilajẹ men. The traders had to use force to defend themselves and their goods and in the process they beat off the assailants and captured their leader. As it turned out, the captured man was of some importance among the Ilajẹ and they demanded to have him released, threatening war if he was not. But the leaders of Aiyesan stood their ground and replied that they would not release him unless the Ilajẹ first redeemed and restored an Iješa trader whom they had recently seized and sold into slavery. In the end the Ilajẹ relented and restored the trader and their own man was given up to them. Unexpectedly and happily the long contact between the Ilajẹ authorities and the Aiyesan leaders occasioned by this incident had the by-product of engendering some understanding between them. As a result, for a long time after 1883 the Ekiti and Iješa moved and traded in comparative peace in and through the Ilajẹ towns.⁶⁹

68. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Governor-in-chief, 1 April 1882.

69. C.M.S., G3A2/03, Memo entitled 'Itẹbu as a basis for missionary work in the Mahin country', by T. F. Cole (a trader at Itẹbu), dated December 1883. Compare the above interpretation of this incident with Ayandele's interpretation of the same in Ayandele: *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

In these years, therefore, the Ekitiparapọ enjoyed material advantages over the Ibadan. At times the Ibadan were so short of ammunition that the Ekitiparapọ war boys could go up to the very walls of the Ibadan camp and shoot into it. And the Ibadan chiefs talked and worried so much about this problem that visitors to their camp were often led to the erroneous conclusion that the failure of the Ibadan to obtain a road to the coast was in fact the cause of all the war. The Rev. Johnson went so far in 1882 as to venture the opinion that as soon as a road to the coast was guaranteed to the Ibadan, the war would come to an end.⁷⁰

Further still, the Ibadan suffered from the fact that they were fighting on the enemy's territory. The people of the small villages of Ada and Ọtan-Aiyegbaju to the rear of the Ibadan army were largely Iješa. It is true that when the war was about to begin, these towns and villages, led by Igbajo, owing to revulsion against the tyranny of Iješa chiefs and to the influence of the Ọyọ residents among them had refused to join their kinsmen in the war against Ibadan. When the war had gone on for some time, however, the exactions and depredations of the Ibadan army succeeded in causing a complete change of attitude amongst the villagers.

The Ekitiparapọ exploited the growing discontent. Agents from the Confederate camp roamed about the countryside behind the Ibadan lines where they could pass unrecognised, inciting the people to revolt against the Ibadan and join their own kinsmen. Such tactics met with considerable success. In 1884 the Rev. Wood noticed that the people of Ada village had begun to take the side of the Ekitiparapọ and that many of them were leaving their village to reinforce the Confederate army.⁷¹ At times the Confederate agents, obviously with the connivance of the villagers, kidnapped Ibadan traders in the villages and the roads leading to them. By nature these operations were risky. Of a band of eight men sent on such operations to the village of Ọtan on 20 January 1882, six were killed, one was captured and brought to the Ibadan camp in chains and only one escaped.⁷² Even then, this type of operation considerably increased the headache of the Ibadan authorities.

70. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Governor-in-chief, 1 April 1882.

71. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

72. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, 23 January 1882.

The pressure of these reverses and difficulties was disastrous in its effect amongst both the Ibadan chiefs and the war boys. The morale of the war boys suffered. At no time in their memory had Ibadan met with such a resistance as this. It has been suggested that the attitude of the Ibadan war boys when faced with this totally unexpected situation can be reasonably summed up in this statement: 'We did not come here to fight but to catch slaves.'⁷³ They expected a continuation of the long string of Ibadan's great victories stretching across the years from the Ijebu-Èrè War to the Jalumi War, and they were disappointed.

The chiefs gave way to petty bickering and mutual recriminations among themselves, with most of them blaming the reverses on the Arẹ. From the war front bad news frequently went abroad concerning the fate of the Ibadan army. News of bloody battles and heavy losses at Modakẹkẹ was added to that from Igbajọ. Reports of grave losses at the front rocked Ibadan from time to time - Kupolu, the commander of the Arẹ's infantry, Chief Akintarọ (the Osi), Chief Ajeigbe (the Èkẹrin), all fell in succession. On 24 February 1882 it was reported that Chief Ali, the Osi, had died in the camp 'from illness and broken heart'.⁷⁴ In Ibadan town itself whole streets were gutted at short intervals by great fires. The distress in Ibadan was unprecedented. On 16 August 1882 the Rev. Allen reported, 'The Ramadan fast ends today, people hardly know that the Mohammedans had gone to pray at the Iwo road as usual.'⁷⁵ The Confederates confidently declared 'that as things now stood they could not but see God intends to put a stop to cheats'.⁷⁶

The few recorded utterances of Latosisa in 1884 reveal the state of his mind. In a joint letter to the Rev. Wood and Chief Ogundipe of Abẹokuta in September the Arẹ pleaded,⁷⁷ 'What will you do that Ibadan should not be destroyed: . . . Deliver him [Latosisa] from the conspiracy which the whole country has

73. Allison, P. A.: 'The first travelling commissioners in Ekiti', *Nigeria Field*, No. 3, July 1952, pp. 100-15.

74. (U.I.L.), W. S. Allen's 1882 Diary, entry for 24 February.

75. *Ibid.*, entry for 16 August.

76. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre, P. J.: 'Towns destroyed by the Ibadans in the Ijẹsa country', notes collected in the interior on Meffre's visit to the war front as messenger of the Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, February 1882.

77. Translation from Yoruba by the Rev. Wood in his 1884 *Notes op. cit.*

formed against him.' After appealing to Wood to use his influence to secure the opening of the Ijebu, Egbas, Porto Novo and Ilorin roads, the letter continued: 'It is not Arẹ alone who sends this, but Maye, Seriki, Agbakin and Abese, and all the Mọgajis . . . also Iyalode and all the influential women. . . . Arẹ says that Oibo [i.e. the white man] shall beg Ogundipe for him very much. The kindness Ogundipe has done for the Arẹ the Arẹ appreciates. When he returns he shall repay that kindness. Ogundipe should not be angry nor allow the friendship to be broken. . . . Arẹ holds by Mr. Wood as to a stay, that he may not allow the Yoruba country to be destroyed [*sic*].'

In a subsequent letter to the governor of Lagos asking for British intervention⁷⁸ the Arẹ blamed all and sundry for his misfortunes. 'Many people,' he wrote, 'have tried to settle this war and failed through inefficiency and not from any unwillingness on my part.' There is a veiled attack on the Rev. Wood here for his abortive efforts of the previous September to restore peace. Again: 'This war originated from forbidding the Egbas stealing and selling Yoruba people. . . . This also is the sole known reason that the whole world is risen against me.'

In the dry season of 1884-5, the Ibadan obtained a quantity of Snider rifles and at once their position improved considerably. The initial fears that this might happen were first expressed by the Ekitiparapọ kings in June 1884 when they alleged that the Ibadan had decided to give up the war and return home, but that a certain Chief Taiwo of Lagos was delaying them with the promise that he would get them Snider rifles in the coming dry season. They wrote a frantic letter to the governor of Lagos alleging that 'Taiwo ordered ammunition for to destroys the remain peoples of the interior . . .' and that 'he determine to kill all nation from the face of the earth'. They begged the governor 'to put a stop to his Taiwo not to spoil our land by ordered that bad ammunition for Latosisa [*sic*].'⁷⁹

They achieved nothing by this appeal. The 'bad ammunition'

78. C.O.147/53, Latosisa to Barrow, 6 December 1884, enclosure in Barrow to Young, 26 December 1884, both enclosures in Young to Derby, 10 January 1885. It is said that the Arẹ once almost committed suicide, cf. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 461.

79. C.4957, the Ekitiparapọ kings to Governor of Lagos, 9 June 1884, enclosure in Young to Derby, 10 January 1885.

came to Latosisa and the Ibadan could once more hold up their heads against their enemies. As a result, fierce battles were fought in these months, with heavy losses on either side. In one such battle Labinjo, the leader of the Confederate Rifle Corps, was wounded on or about 13 July 1885. He died some five days later.⁸⁰

The recovery was short-lived. In August 1885 a severe blow fell on the Ibadan. Chief Momoh Latosisa, the *Arę-Ọna-Kakanfo*, died in the camp,⁸¹ and his death brought to the head of the Ibadan army a man who bore not the least resemblance to him – Chief Ajayi Ọşungbekun, the *Balogun*. Chief Ọşungbekun was a futile character whose style of life inspired very little respect among the enemy or the Ibadan themselves. Both the discipline and the morale of the Ibadan army were shattered.

Moreover, by the time of the death of Latosisa, the supply of rifles and ammunition by Chief Taiwo of Lagos had fizzled out.⁸² In late 1885 and early 1886, therefore, the Ibadan were probably in a worse plight than ever before.

By then, however, the *Ekitiparapo*, although maintaining their material superiority over the Ibadan, had become tired of the war. A sort of stalemate prevailed in the last months of 1885 and the first months of 1886 as both armies stayed in their camps and few battles were fought. This condition made the termination of the war in 1886 possible.

80. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1885 Diary, entry for 13 July.

81. C.4857, Report of Messrs. Higgins and Smith, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

82. In any case, Chief Taiwo sold the Rifles and Cartridges to the Ibadan at such exorbitant prices (rifles at £10 to £15 each and the cartridges at 6d each) that the Ibadan could not afford to buy them in very large quantities or for very long.

Chapter 5

The Ekitiparapọ: Organisation for War

The Confederate camp was situated about forty minutes' walk roughly due west of Imeṣi-Ile. From Imeṣi-Ile, the camp could be reached by the old road winding up hills, around rocks and down valleys. From the Confederate camp, due north-west and still on the old road to Igbajo, lay the Ibadan camp. Behind this, about an hour's walk away, was the town of Igbajo, mostly in ruins.¹

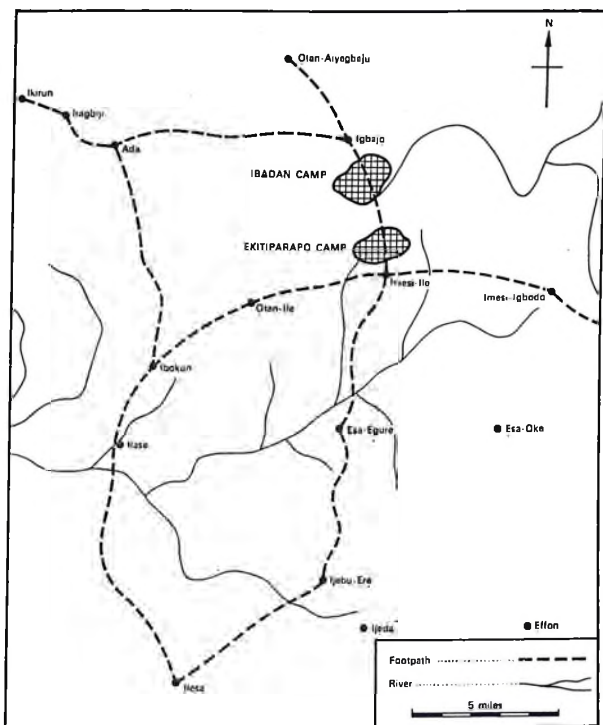
Both camps were situated on hills roughly facing each other; the Ibadan camp occupied part of the hillside and a little of the valley to the north-west. The Confederate camp was visible from the Ibadan camp and from all accounts was situated on a more militarily advantageous position.

Between the two camps was a fairly wide valley criss-crossed by a number of mountain streams flowing roughly north to south. This was the battlefield. It was marked here and there by slightly elevated ground. These promontories shielded the lower reaches of the Confederate camp from full view from the battlefield.² But standing on one of these elevations just some fifty to seventy yards outside the Confederate camp, one could see the whole field and the whole Ibadan camp.

One of the bigger streams, the Alapoto, flowed partly through the battlefield and partly through the Confederate camp. Another,

1. Much of the description of the Ekitiparapọ and Ibadan camps that follows is derived from visits by this author to the sites of the two camps, first through Igbajo and then through Imeṣi-Ile, on 16 and 23 January 1964 respectively. The old route connecting Igbajo to Imeṣi-Ile is still much used. The sites of the camps and the battlefield, however, are covered by very thick tall grass. This forest is usually less dense during the dry season (c. November-February) when some parts of it may also be burnt by bush fires. In addition, a number of visitors to the camps during the war have left descriptions of them, e.g. the Revs. Wood, Johnson, Phillips, Olubi, Holley and Messrs. Higgins and Smith, the Special Commissioners of 1886.

2. C.4957, Report of the Special Commissioners to the interior, 1886.



The Setting of the Kiriji Front

the Eleriko (which was later called Fejẹboju),³ roughly divided the field into a Confederate and an Ibadan section. Most of the streams dried up early in the dry season, leaving only the Eleriko and Alapoto to supply water to both camps.

Starting no doubt as a rough collection of hastily built huts, the Confederate camp, like the Ibadan camp, was to develop (quite early, it would appear) into a regular walled town. 'On the side next to the Ibadan camp was a wall, loop-holed, and with guard houses here and there along it.'⁴ A deep and wide trench was also dug along the whole length of this wall. The camp opened to the battlefield by a large main gate with a heavy, carved wooden door. At the gate there was, besides the sentinel's house, a mud-built shrine with thatched roof which when Messrs Higgins and Smith visited the camp in 1886 had 'several clay images before it'.⁵

The Confederate camp at its largest extent was a 'stragglingly built' town with wide spaces between groups of huts.⁶ Apparently the earliest settlers in May 1879 had merely settled together in a bunch, the contingent from each town building its huts roughly round those of its chiefs, with spaces between one group of huts and another. The later arrivals settled as best they could – either joining their compatriots in the older huts or erecting their own huts. In this way the camp had grown by 1886 into quite an extensive settlement.

The huts in the Confederate camp were mostly built simply with wooden pillars, bamboo walls and thatched roofs.⁷ Only a few huts had the more permanent structure of a mud wall. By 1886 the Ibadan camp was different from the Confederate camp in that most of its huts had mud walls. This, as has been suggested, was due to the acquisition of breech-loading guns by the Confederates during the war. These guns were shot to kill people right inside the Ibadan camp and many of the Ibadan people converted their walls from bamboo to clay to shield them against bullets from the breech-loaders.

By 1886 the Confederate camp had grown to contain about

3. Fejẹboju – literally 'take blood [and not water] from this stream to wash your face' – so named because so much blood spilled into the stream during the battles that it appeared at times as a stream of flowing blood.
4. C.4957, Report of Special Commissioners, Part I, enclosure in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887.
5. *Ibid.* This gate is still recognisable.
6. Holley: '*A Travers les pays du Niger*', *op. cit.*, p. 568.
7. *Ibid.*; also Report of Special Commissioners, Part I, *op. cit.*

40,000 people. (The Ibadan camp contained some 60,000.) Quite a large proportion of these, as has been pointed out, were wives, children and other attendants of the fighting men. The result was that the camp had the aspect of a regular town and performed much the same function. There were little market places here and there where women spread out their wares – food articles, home-made cloths, tobacco, potash, herbs and a variety of delicacies – for sale under sheds. The fact is that most men whose homes were distant from the camp would, if they could afford it, take some of their wives and children with them to the front. The camp was served by many paths winding between houses, rock outcrops and boulders.

Perhaps one of the most important and most frequented spots in the camp was the shrine of *Ogun*, the god of war and iron. This was a wooded grove right in the centre of the camp where sacrifices were frequently offered. Another important spot was the smithy – quite a large collection of workshops where the blacksmiths made iron bullets and shot from pieces of waste iron and repaired guns, matchets and swords brought to them by the fighting men. This smithy was near the walls, along the path to the main gate. It was held sacrosanct, for everybody regarded it as a serious act of sacrilege to pursue anybody into the smithy with intent to harm him.⁸

A short distance from the *Ogun* shrine and situated amidst rocks and boulders on a small promontory was the hut occupied by the Commander-in-Chief of the Ekitiparapọ forces. It had thick clay walls, the remains of which can still be seen. In front of the hut was a huge quartz rock and below that another one spread to cover a considerable area. The latter served as a sort of assembly-ground for the whole army while the former served as a rough dais.⁹ On this rocky dais a huge stool (actually part of the rock itself) was carved. This was used by the commander during meetings.¹⁰

The Commander-in-Chief's hut, apart from serving as a home

8. The *Ogun* grove can still be seen near the walls of Ogedemgbe's hut. The site of the smithy, marked by a large number of disused forges and stone anvils, is still easily recognisable.
9. Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568, gives a description of these rocks which he says 'served as court to his [Ogedemgbe's] collection of huts'.
10. This stone stool has weathered greatly but its outlines are still recognisable (23 January 1964).

for the Commander-in-chief and his wives and children, also served as the arsenal for the whole army. It was also the meeting place for the inner circle of chiefs which constituted the Confederate High Command.

The Rev. Father Holley who visited the camp in December 1884 described the commander's hut as 'a real military museum'. 'At the door,' he continued, 'mascots which appear to bar the passage against you; above, some hundreds of talismans due to the genius of the Mohammedans. In an angle about forty long guns; on one side drums blackened by frequent usage; suspended swords here, arrows there, heaped up archery near a collection of bows out of which some have been removed; in an angle - barrels of powder freshly arrived; some distance apart indigenous tunics awaiting the day of fight. In the middle of this heap of arms and ammunitions, the general-in-chief ruled modestly surrounded by his wives and daughters. More than fifty men were still able to be occupied in this arsenal by squeezing themselves in the corners.'¹¹

The Ekitiparapọ camp then, starting as a rough collection of huts, developed over the years into a settlement occupying 'an immense surface of ground' and with many features of a regular town. In its general layout, however, it never succeeded in having any 'order and symmetry'. 'The huts are built here and there in folds of ground, leaned against rocks, squeezed in between gigantic blocks which serve as walls and fortifications.'¹²

Finally, the military advantages of its position and its superiority to the position of the Ibadan camp was immediately apparent to visitors. Messrs Higgins and Smith, who visited both camps in 1886, said the position of the Ekitiparapọ camp 'was an exceptionally strong one for native warfare. Mountains on either side, Mesi-Ipole [Imęsi-Ile], an Ekiti town, and bush and forest in the rear, and open country between it and the Ibadan camp.'¹³ Father Holley described it as being surrounded by 'bare rocks and impenetrable woods'. In addition to these factors, it would appear that while the Ekitiparapọ camp was quite well served with water by the many streams flowing through it, the Ibadan camp occupied much drier ground and frequently suffered from

11. Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*; also Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

lack of water. As a visit to the site of the camps can still show, the Ibadan attempted to solve this problem by boring wells into the dry and rocky hillside.¹⁴

The camp's fortifications which have been described above constituted only a part of a greater system of defences sealing up Imeṣi-Ile and the camp. From Imeṣi-Ile the quartz ridge slopes down south-westwards towards Ileṣa, and down this slope two alternative routes ran to Ileṣa through Eṣa and Ibokun. From Ada behind the Ibadan lines a little-frequented path passed round the bottom of the hills, bursting out at Ibokun. This meant that on the Ibokun side Imeṣi-Ile was exposed to the Ibadan army. To correct this weakness, a small garrison was established at Ibokun and another at Oṭan-Ile between Ibokun and Imeṣi-Ile. Furthermore, at a rugged spot some two miles from Imeṣi-Ile on the route connecting Imeṣi-Ile to Ibokun, a mighty ditch was dug and a sentinel-post established. The traditions suggest that this was done when a small band of Ibadan war boys managed to slip through Ibokun and Oṭan-Ile to attack Imeṣi-Ile. The ditch was so wide and so deep that local traditions later ascribed its digging to the supernatural.

Even then the Ekitiparapo positions were still vulnerable from the Ileṣa direction. Ileṣa itself and the villages between it and Imeṣi-Ile (through Eṣa) were virtually empty as most of the people had moved to Imeṣi-Ile. Now, the Ibadan could attack Ileṣa from two directions and thence menace Imeṣi-Ile or even circumvent Imeṣi-Ile to invade Ekiti. The two directions were the Oṣogbo-Ileṣa and Ife-Ileṣa routes. We have seen how the Ibadan attempted and failed in 1881-2 to use the latter route. Earlier in September 1880¹⁵ a small Ibadan force from Oṣogbo attacked and seized the Ijeṣa village of Ilaṣe and attempted to penetrate to Ileṣa. But they were met by a detachment stationed at Ileṣa who routed them and threw them out of Ilaṣe. Thereupon a strong patrol post was established at Oke-Bode between Ileṣa and Oṣogbo. The rigid efficiency characteristic of this post was experienced in 1890 by Alvan Millson, then Acting Colonial

14. There are still the remains of many of these wells at varying stages of filling up. There are so many that one is led to suspect that most of them never reached water. Within a space of about fifty yards, I counted twenty-eight on 16 January 1964.
15. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1880.

Secretary of the Lagos colony, while on a peace mission to the interior.¹⁶

Of the groups making up the Ekitiparapo, the Ekiti and Ijeṣa constituted its heart and core. Between them the Ekiti and Ijeṣa supplied most of the leading warrior chiefs and fighting men. At all times, the Igbomina contingents were only a small group and the Akoko only a sprinkling of daring young men. Between these peoples the degree of integration in the camp appears over the years of war to have become so high that only such a well-informed visitor as Alvan Millson ever succeeded in discerning any differences between them.¹⁷ There is no evidence that they settled in recognisably separate parts of the camp.

This, of course, did not rule out the fact that some chiefs were still recognised as the leaders of the sub-groupings. In matters requiring important decisions, these chiefs would be called upon to speak on behalf of the sub-group. The Igbomina men generally accepted the leadership of the Ila chiefs. In the case of the Ijeṣa who were under the leadership of Ijeṣa, such sub-ethnic leadership was easy to establish. But with the Ekiti, who belonged to many autonomous kingdoms and who had never known common leadership, it was not as easy at first. Even then, the premier position of Fabunmi in the whole Confederacy must have early established his position as the highest chief among the Ekiti.

When late in 1879 Ogedemgbe finally arrived in the camp and Fabunmi relinquished leadership of the Confederacy to him, Fabunmi still remained a sort of second in command to Ogedemgbe¹⁸ and was, therefore, still the leading chief among the Ekiti, whom in urgent matters the Commander-in-chief had to consult on behalf of the Ekiti. In this role Chief Fajembola, the Olugbosun of Oye, reputed to have been perhaps the richest of the chiefs, appears to have stood next to Fabunmi. Thus in 1886 when Fabunmi was away to Ife leading the Confederate army sent there against Modakeke, we see Chief Olugbosun usually being referred to as the leading Ekiti chief or the spokesman of the Ekiti chiefs.¹⁹

16. C.O.879/33, Millson to Colonial Secretary, 30 March 1890.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Hence his appointment to lead the second Ekitiparapo army at Ife.

19. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885; also Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

For the whole Confederacy the chief executive was the Commander-in-chief of the forces – Ogedemgbe. The willingness of Fabunmi to relinquish leadership of the Ekitiparapo to this Ijeṣa chief shows the extent to which men were prepared to forget traditional sub-group differences and place emphasis on sheer experience and ability.

Chief Ogedemgbe, however, never took on the title of the 'Balogun of the Ekitiparapo', a title which Prince Fabunmi bore for the rest of his life. Chief Ogedemgbe was addressed simply as the *Ṣeriki*, or, more often, the *Ṣeriki* of the Ijeṣa.²⁰ It is not known when he acquired this title, and the fact that we have seen no reference to him as *Ṣeriki* of the Ijeṣa before 1879 is not in itself proof that he did not bear the title before that year.

Higgins and Smith who met Ogedemgbe at the peak of his power at the Confederate camp in 1886 described him as 'a man of medium height, thick-set, with a face animated and intelligent' although 'terribly scarred by cuts and wounds'.²¹ Father Holley described him as a man 'with sharp penetrating eyes. His face, ploughed with brutally cut tattooings, gives him a marked appearance of a warrior'. His body, Holley added, was 'dry and emaciated' and his voice 'hoarse and tired' from constant hard work.²²

In appearance and in manners his successes and elevation never spoil his inherent simplicity. Thus, when as leader of the Ekitiparapo he had to attend a great state occasion, 'he was dressed very plainly in a white sack-shaped garment, reaching nearly to his knees and drawn in round the waist by a belt with charms attached, and wore a brown velvet skull-cap.' On the same occasion, his Ibadan counterpart, the Balogun Ajayi Oṣungbẹkun was 'dressed in flowing robes and loose trousers, and wearing a gaudy velvet cap', and 'he looked the exact opposite of his rival Ogedemgbe'.²³

This simplicity, inculcated no doubt by his humble upbringing, was quickly apparent to strangers. Thus, although well over fifty in 1886, he appeared 'remarkably boyish in manner and

20. Many references to Ogedemgbe as the *Ṣeriki* (of the Ijeṣa) in C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; also in Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

21. Report of Special Commissioners, Part I, *op. cit.*

22. Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568.

23. Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

restless in his movements'.²⁴ This quality, moreover, was often a great asset and endeared him to any who had to negotiate with him. Mr. Wood admitted that Ogedemgbe was 'the best business man' he had ever met 'amongst the so-called uneducated natives'. 'His words,' said Wood, 'are few and to the point. He knows what he wants and does not beat about the bush.'²⁵ Moreover, although he was above show and vanity, he was not without dignity. He 'had a very good opinion of himself and quite appreciated the high position he held in the estimation of both friends and enemies'.²⁶

As Commander-in-chief Ogedemgbe was the most powerful man in the Confederate army. Apart from being the chief executive officer, he enjoyed very wide powers over decision-making. In all dealings with foreigners and other powers, he was the chief representative of the Confederacy.²⁷ Moreover, he had considerable authority over judicial matters, and most chiefs would gladly surrender to his arbitration in their quarrels with one another. Apart from his personal qualities, his great military reputation and the size of the personal army he commanded, a contributory factor to the respect he enjoyed amongst his colleagues was, no doubt, the fact that he was older than most of them.²⁸

To foreign visitors the powers enjoyed by Ogedemgbe sometimes appeared absolute and based on his own individual might.²⁹ The truth, however, is that Ogedemgbe's apparently unlimited powers were derived from the fact that he was leading

24. *Ibid.*

25. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

26. Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

27. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his First Mission, 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886; also C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

28. In 1884 Father Holley estimated Ogedemgbe's age at about fifty; in 1886, Messrs. Higgins and Smith estimated Fabumni's age at about thirty-five. The other chiefs like Chief Fajembola, the Olugbosun of Oye, Chief Arimoro of Ilesha, the Aṛe of Otun, who were about the eldest group of chiefs, are said to have been about Fabumni's age or only slightly older. A group of other chiefs, Aṣo Ogundana, Ode etc., were much younger men.

29. Charles Phillips wondered whether Ogedemgbe's immense powers were 'delegated to him by the gratitude of the kings or whether it is arrogated on the principle of might over right'. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his Second Mission, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

in a time of crisis – a situation which usually gives to leaders more control over affairs than their position formally allows to them. The available evidence shows that Ogedemgbe did not act as an absolute dictator but as a responsible leader compelled by crisis to act very fast and, therefore, to exercise a great deal of discretion over the management of affairs.

Even the very nature of the Confederacy precluded a dictatorship. Although men showed a willingness to forget traditional sectional differences in the interests of the common good, it was still unrealistic to ignore sectional interests when decisions had to be arrived at or action taken. Therefore, although Ogedemgbe's recorded utterances might sometimes be unduly arrogant, there was no important issue in which he was shown to be deciding or acting as a free and independent agent.

On the contrary, Ogedemgbe was always found among his chiefs or 'meeting with his chiefs'.³⁰ In fact there were many and frequent meetings in the Confederate camp. The most important and undoubtedly the most frequent of the meetings was that of the leading chiefs and Commander-in-chief. This was usually held in the residence of the latter – in his rooms or on the rocky platform before his house. This little ring of the leading chiefs, constituting the Confederate High Command, had to be almost continually meeting to discuss problems as they arose and to plan for the twists and turns in strategy. The number and names of all the chiefs in this ring are not definitely known. The names that usually occurred, however, were those of the Olugbosun of Oye, the Aşipa of Ijeşa and the Aŗ of the Otun forces – that is, after Fabunmi had left for Ile-Ife. On 23 December 1884 Father Holley witnessed a meeting of the leading chiefs in the Commander-in-chief's hut at which about fifty chiefs were present.³¹

The practice seems to have developed early of first clearing things within this group before presenting them to the whole Confederacy or acting upon them. In addition, every important visitor was first introduced to these chiefs before being introduced to the people in general. And in the months of the peace negotiations this body became intensely active, receiving visitors, hearing and considering proposals and presenting the Confederate viewpoint. They were with Ogedemgbe at every stage of

30. *Ibid.*; also C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; also Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*, also Holley: *op. cit.*, p. 568.

31. Holley: *op. cit.*, pp. 567–8.

the conferences and ceremonies which marked the end of the war.

The next important set of meetings in the camp was that of the whole body of chiefs, high and low. Such meetings were, it would appear, not a frequent affair. They became necessary when the leading chiefs thought it fit to inform all the chiefs before the general body of people. It is said also that in the morning before each battle, all the chiefs used to meet to receive instructions regarding the conduct of the day's battle from the High Command.³²

Finally, it was occasionally necessary to call a meeting of the general body of people – men, women and children – in the camp.³³ It seems to have been generally accepted that the highest authority in the Confederacy, especially in decision-making, belonged to the people in their gatherings. In fact, however, the people assembled more often to acclaim decisions of the chiefs or to take part in the colourful ceremonies which usually followed victories in the battles.

It is important to note, nevertheless, that the people believed a great deal in the powers of these general assemblies, as they were the gatherings of all the chiefs and the common people together. Thus, a common man boasted to the Rev. Wood in 1884 that it was the 'unanimous determination' of the whole Confederacy not to move from their present advantageous position before the Ibadan army had gone away, and that 'if Ogedemgbe were to attempt to remove, his head would be cut off'.³⁴ Ogedemgbe himself showed much deference to the wishes of the people. He confessed, for instance, that while the boundary between the Ijeṣa-Ekiti country and Ibadan territory was being discussed in the final peace negotiations, his own attitude was decided by the wishes of the people, although he did not necessarily share their view on the issue.³⁵

There was an element which seems to have added to the importance of the people's assemblies: the Ekiti-Ijeṣa emigrés, mem-

32. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; also C.4957, Phillips's Report of his First Mission, 1886.

33. Wood's 1884 Notes, *op. cit.*; Phillips's Report of his First Mission, 1886, *op. cit.*

34. Wood's 1884 Notes, *op. cit.*

35. C.4957, Report of the Special Commissioners, Parts I and II, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

bers of the Ekitiparapo Society, who came from Lagos, Abeokuta and other towns along the coast to join the freedom fighters at Imesi-Ile. These men were traders (sometimes quite wealthy) and artisans with varying degrees of western enlightenment. On their arrival in the Ekitiparapo camp, these emigrés acquired a great deal of influence in the councils of the Confederacy. Quite often, they were called to the meetings of the chiefs to render some expert advice.³⁶

But as they were not chiefs and therefore not regular members of the inner circle, they usually had to resort to the assemblies of the people as the forum for the expression of their views. Being more enlightened in the ways of the white man, they were very popular with the people. On occasion they could make the assemblies difficult for the chiefs.³⁷ And the foreigners who visited the camps to negotiate peace between the belligerents found these emigrés so tortuous and so difficult to please in the meetings that they came to regard the whole emigré group as irresponsible men who did not want the war to end because of the gains they were making through selling war materials to the Confederates.³⁸

Authority within the Ekitiparapo did not end with the camp. Though the kings could not (owing to prohibition by tradition) take direct part in the fighting,³⁹ they exercised considerable influence on all that was going on.

None of the kings is known to have ever visited the camp. But at least four of them – the Ore of Otun, the Ajero of Ijero, the Olojudo of Ido and the Owa of Ilesha – are known to have left their homes and come to live at short distances from the Confederate camp. The Owa was for a time domiciled at Ijebu-Ere before he moved to Esa-Egure nearer the camp. The Ore, the Ajero and the Olojudo came to live at Imesi-Ile throughout the war.⁴⁰ The Orangun of Ila continued to live at his refuge village of Omupo

36. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; also C.4957, Phillips's Reports of his First and Second Missions, 1886.

37. The Special Commissioners found these men so turbulent that they refused to recognise them further as spokesmen of the Confederacy. Phillips described them as 'very clamorous' in the general meetings.

38. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

39. C.O.147/54, the Ekitiparapo kings to the Governor of Lagos, 24 March 1885.

40. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; also C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

and from there played much the same part as the four rulers mentioned above.

The other *o*bas stayed at home, but their role was still important. The Ore, the Ajero and the Olojudo always insisted that they were acting as representatives and on behalf of the 'sixteen kings' of Ekiti. Letters by the *o*bas usually carried the marks, not only of the three of them staying at Imeṣi-Ile, but of almost all the Ekiti rulers.⁴¹ Furthermore, at home the *o*bas played the very useful part of organising the reinforcements and supplies that had to be frequently despatched to the fighting forces at the front.

Besides these, the functions of the *o*bas appear to have been chiefly advisory. They were generally acknowledged and revered as the God-ordained rulers of the people: consequently, the war chiefs did not normally embark upon any project or take any important decision without adequate consultation with them.⁴² And although the war chiefs, as the persons conversant with the details of events, took all decisions, they nevertheless attached a great deal of importance and respect to the advice of the kings and would not usually, except in an emergency, fail to ask for it. On the basis of this initial deference and respect between the war chiefs and the *o*bas a *modus vivendi* was established which practically precluded serious frictions between the two as long as the war lasted.

To the *o*bas, the war chiefs and fighting men were 'our devoted people who are ready to shed their last drops of blood in defence of our country, and to secure us perfect freedom from the yoke of the Ibadans'.⁴³ To the war chiefs, the *o*bas were 'fathers' and 'governors of the country' who had to be respected and listened to at all times.⁴⁴

Thus, when the Rev. Wood sought permission to visit the Confederate camp in order to make peace between the belli-

41. C.O.147/54, the Ekitiparapo kings to the Governor of Lagos, 24 March 1885; also C.4957, the Ekitiparapo kings to Barrow, 9 June 1884, enclosure in Young to Derby, 10 January 1885.

42. C.4957, Phillips's Reports of his First and Second Missions, 1886; C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

43. C.O.147/54, the Ekitiparapo kings to the Governor of Lagos, 24 March 1885.

44. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885. Ogedemgbe said in 1885 that the kings, and not he (Ogedemgbe) and the war chiefs, were 'the responsible governors of the country'. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Ogedemgbe to the Rev. Wood, 19 January 1885.

gerents in 1885,⁴⁵ the Ọwa of Ileṣa (whom he met at Eṣa) would not give him permission to proceed to the camp until he had sent to the war chiefs and received their answer to the effect that Wood could come. On his arrival in the camp, Ogedemgbe and the chiefs listened carefully to his proposals and then answered that they were impressed, but could not give an answer until the chiefs had heard what the kings had to say. Wood was therefore requested to visit the three ọbas at Imeṣi-Ile. The ọbas, one after another, after listening to Wood, thanked him for his trouble, but ended by saying that as to the detailed answer of the Confederacy, he would hear from Ogedemgbe and the war chiefs in the camp. Later that afternoon Ogedemgbe visited the ọbas at Imeṣi-Ile and then, on his return to the camp, convened a meeting of the inner circle of top chiefs. It was only after this that he was able to give Mr. Wood any answer.

Foreigners often misunderstood this situation. Thus when Ogedemgbe claimed that no ọba could change what he commanded, or an ọba said that what the *Ṣeriki* said was what the ọbas also said, foreign visitors were apt to think that the war chiefs were dictators to the ọbas.⁴⁶ This conclusion is an erroneous one, since the war chiefs did not need to dictate to the ọbas. This was partly due to the fact that since it was the war chiefs who controlled the knowledge and most of the means for waging the war, the ọbas did not, because they could not, really challenge the chiefs' control over affairs. Moreover, the ọbas seemed to have been prepared, on the whole, to accept the verdicts of the revolution which was transforming Yorubaland – verdicts of which one of the most important was the emergence of the new leadership of the war chiefs. Occasional frictions there were indeed, as when Ogedemgbe accused the Ọwa of Ileṣa of not doing enough to aid the fighting men and angrily ordered him to leave his palace and come to live nearer the camp, or when Fabunmi threatened to send his men to chastise the Ọlojaoke of Imeṣi-Igbodo and his traditional chiefs who were reported at one time in the early stages of the war to be making statements subversive to the war effort.⁴⁷ But such incidents were very few and relatively

45. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

46. Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

47. From Ijeṣa and Ekiti traditions recorded at Imeṣi-Ile, Imesi-Igbodo and Ileṣa. It is said that early in the war the Ọlojaoke of Imeṣi-Igbodo and his chiefs often said, whenever dead soldiers were brought home

unimportant, and we have no evidence that the war chiefs had to compel the compliance or co-operation of any *oba* in any major issue.

There was one field in which the *obas* on their own gave a lot of useful service to the Ekitiparapọ – the field of diplomacy. As kings, they were in the best position to establish diplomatic contacts with their brother kings all over Yorubaland, with a view to winning support for the Confederacy. We hear of their 'special messengers' in the courts of the Awujale, the Alake, the Oşemowe, and of Aderin, the *Ọni*-elect of Ife. On such diplomatic missions the *Ọwa* usually sent separate envoys from those of the Ekiti *obas*.⁴⁸ At other times, when very large diplomatic missions were being sent out (like the missions to the governors of Lagos) the messengers of the *Ọwa*, those of the Ekiti rulers as a group, of Ogedemgbe as Commander-in-chief, of the Ijeşa chiefs and of the Ekiti chiefs were usually sent. In fact, we hear of the kings' messengers in practically all diplomatic missions. In short, the Confederacy fully employed the services of its *obas* in that sphere where they were the most qualified to act on its behalf.

The fighting men in the Ekitiparapọ camp were recruited from three main sources: the private armies of the chiefs, the returned emigrés and the citizen soldiers from all over the Ekiti, Ijeşa, Igbomina and Akoko countries. As already explained, each war chief had his own private army made up of his kinsmen, slaves and free-born adherents. These men were quasi-professional groups who constituted a sort of permanent core to the Confederate army. They formed a good proportion of the men who could be found in the camp at any time. Ogedemgbe's private army was the largest of all, but other chiefs like Arimọrọ of Ijeşa and the Olugbosun are reputed to have had very large followings also, and there was a whole mass of smaller chiefs with smaller followings.

The emigré group was apparently always a small group. But it might be right to add to their numbers those men who were from

for burial, that their deaths were a useless sacrifice in a futile struggle and that men who had allowed themselves to be led to such pointless ends were fools.

48. C.O.147/54, the Ekitiparapọ kings to the Governor of Lagos, 24 March 1885.

time to time escaping from captivity from Ibadan, Ijebu, Abeokuta and other places and fleeing to Imesi-Ile. Although few, the emigrés were an enlightened, popular and restless group, and their number was frequently augmented by volunteers from Lagos and the Ilaje coast especially.⁴⁹ Apart from acting as secretaries and interpreters to the Confederacy, these men also acted as expert advisers. Moreover, among them were the best shots in the Confederate army.

The best known of them was Labinjo, an Imesi-Ile man, a fierce and passionate patriot who was immensely popular and respected.⁵⁰ Almost equally as popular were James Thomson Gureje whom Carter described unkindly in 1894 as a 'blood-thirsty ruffian',⁵¹ and a certain Johnson, a bookbinder from Lagos who acted as secretary and interpreter to the Confederate chiefs.⁵²

Finally, from all over the Ekiti, Ijesa, Igbomina and Akoko countries, men were almost continually arriving in the Confederate camp to reinforce the army. Any man who had known some service in the Confederate army was known all over the country as an *iyayu*. It was a great mark of honour and a source of pride to be an *iyayu*, and most young men, therefore, longed to go to Imesi-Ile, even if only for a short while.⁵³ A number of factors determined the length of time a man could stay away at Imesi-Ile. The more substantial citizens who could leave their farms in the care of some of their wives and younger sons could afford to stay away for long periods. Such men could rely on supplies of food being sent to them from home. It would appear that at least a very large proportion of those who stayed in the camp from the beginning to the end of the war belonged to this class.

The younger men who had only one or two wives and only small children had no means of continuing their farming while

49. *The Lagos Observer*, 22 November 1883, for instance, carried a story about a group of young men from Lagos who were going off to serve in the Ekitiparapo camp.

50. Labinjo's tomb is to be found at Imesi-Ile. cf. Ojo: 'Folk history of Imesi-Ile', *op. cit.*, pp. 98-117.

51. C.S.O. 1/1/14, Carter to Ripon, 23 August 1894.

52. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885; also C.4957, Phillips's Report of his Second Mission, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

53. According to popular traditions, boys who failed to obtain permission from their farmer parents to go to Imesi-Ile used to run away on their own.

they were away and therefore could not expect support from home. Most of them, therefore, could afford to be away for only a few months or a few weeks.⁵⁴ The most convenient time for such men to go to Imeṣi-Ile was during the dry season when there was little or no work on the farms. Some of them were at Imeṣi-Ile for only about a week ('two market days') and some visited Imeṣi-Ile for brief periods many times over. They carried their own food from home and had to think of returning when that ran out.

Regularly, envoys from the camp went to all corners of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Igbomina countries to ask the oḃas and civil chiefs to send more and more men to Imeṣi-Ile. When such messages were received, the chiefs would call meetings of their quarters and exhort the men to go and join their brethren who were fighting in the front against the Ibadan. Each town had its own customary interval for sending out its troops of volunteers. In some places it was every market day, in others, it was every alternate market day. The sending of reinforcements to the front, therefore, was well organised.

The provision of food was always a consideration of the highest importance in the Confederate camp. There were three main sources of food. In the first place, the fighting men spent much of their leisure clearing the land near the camp for cultivation. In this way considerable areas were constantly planted with yams, beans, maize etc. and these went some way to supplying the needs of the camp.⁵⁵

Secondly, women, including many of those who were in the camp, did profitable trade by selling food in the camp. They went far and wide to procure yams, corn, beans, pepper, salt, smoked fish for sale in the camp. Some of the women sold a variety of meals, cakes and puddings from yams, beans and corn.

Thirdly, probably the larger portion of the food required in the camp⁵⁶ came from supplies sent from all over the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and

54. There is a difficult Ijeṣa proverb which approximately means, 'He who has neither wife to carry yams nor children to carry maize from home could hardly fight for more than thirteen days at Imeṣi.'

55. Messrs Higgins and Smith saw around the camp 'farms of beans, tobacco and corn, which extended to a considerable distance.' Report of Special Commissioners, *op. cit.*

56. Akintoye, S. A.: 'The Economic background of the Ekitiparapo, 1878-93', *Odu: University of Ife Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1968, pp. 31-52.

Igbomina countries. Some of this came as parcels brought by individuals when they came to fight at Imęsi-Ile. Some came as parcels sent to individuals by their families at home. But the messengers who went round the country to step up recruitment and reinforcement also carried appeals to the kings and their chiefs to send food to the camp. At intervals, therefore, food parties, made up mostly of grown-up girls and boys under armed escort, were sent out to the camp by the town and village authorities. Sentinels and patrols appointed from the Ekitiparapo camp protected the more important roads to facilitate the journey of these food parties. Each town sent its own head-loads of food-stuffs to its own men (through their war chiefs) fighting in the front.

Occasionally, when food shortage struck the camp, it became necessary for the chiefs to take drastic action. Bands of armed men were sent from the camp to scour the country round and carry out what was known as *wa'ko-wa'ko* – i.e. searching the farms for food. Not infrequently these *wa'ko-wa'ko* parties went beyond merely searching for food. They forcibly compelled unfortunate farmers who fell into their hands to abandon their farms and come to Imęsi-Ile for service.

Information as to how the Ekitiparapo financed the war is scanty. Undoubtedly the cost must have been enormous. For instance, in 1894, shortly after the return of Ogedemgbe from Imęsi-Ile to Ilesha, he was arrested by agents of the British government for disturbing the peace of the country and made to surrender part of his store of arms and ammunition. He reluctantly surrendered a number of rifles, Dane guns, kegs of powder and bullets, boxes of cartridges and a few rockets – all of which Carter estimated at at least £1,500.⁵⁷ When we remember that this was only a part of all he had brought from the Confederate camp and that all of that was obviously only a part of the entire Confederate store, and when we add to this all the large quantities of powder and bullets and cartridges that had been expended month after month since 1878, we cannot but marvel at the expense the Confederacy had been to.

Some of the arms and ammunition used by the Ekitiparapo were gifts from the Ekitiparapo Society. The usual thing, however, was for the interior peoples to exchange their palm-oil,

57. C.S.O. 1/1/14, Carter to Ripon, 23 August 1894.

palm-kernel and home-spun cloths for the articles from the coast. Quite often they also exchanged slaves. Large caravans of slaves frequently left the interior for the coast throughout the war.⁵⁸ These were sold to the Eḡba, Ijebu, Ondo, Ikaḷe and Ilaje, all coastal peoples who used slaves as carriers of goods between the coast and the interior and as domestic and farm hands for the production of articles of legitimate trade, especially palm-oil.⁵⁹ British officials in Lagos reported in 1885, however, that some slaves were still being exported from Whydah by the Portuguese. Such slaves would have as their destinations either Brazil where, though the importation of slaves had been prohibited as far back as the 1850s, slavery was not abolished until 1888, or the Portuguese islands of Sao Thomé and Principe to which slaves were still being shipped from the mainland under the legal guise of 'liberated' labourers (*serviçaes*).⁶⁰

Slaves fetched far more in value than palm products and cloths. According to Governor Rowe, the price of slaves varied according to age and sex – from forty to eighty bags of cowries at Oru. 'Two pots of palm-oil measure 12 gallons, and the price of two such pots at the same market [Oru] is about one bag of cowries. Good country-made cloths are sold at Oru for about 2 bags of cowries each. The value of a slave therefore . . . in Oru market would be equal to from 80 to 160 such pots of palm-oil, or 20 to 40 good country-made cotton cloths'.⁶¹ An average farmer or weaver, therefore, would work for a very long time before he was able to take to the market as much oil or cloth as was equal in value to a slave.

This explains why slave-catching was such a noticeable feature of the Kiriji War. Rowe observed that in the battles of the Kiriji War, 'capture is the object of the warrior on either side', and Moloney that quite often, fighting was 'almost entirely confined

58. J. B. Wood was informed at Ondo that traders from Lagos usually came back from the Ekitiparapo camp with fairly large caravans of slaves. One such trader passed through Ondo in March 1885 with 147 slaves. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 25 October 1885.

59. C.O.147/50, Rowe to Derby, 18 May 1883.

60. C.O.147/55, Evans to Griffith, 28 August 1885. Allison, P.A.; 'The first Travelling Commissioners in the Ekiti Country', *Nigerian Field*, Vol. 17, No. 3, July 1952, pp. 100–15. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Wood to Lang, 25 October 1885; Philip Curtin: *The Atlantic Slave Trade – A Census*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1969, pp. 249–51.

61. C.O.147/50, Rowe to Derby, 8 May 1883.

to waylaying each other in the farms and highways'.⁶² Both Moloney and Rowe concluded from this that slave-catching was the motive of the Kiriji War. This view is a confusion of means with ends. A fighting man would rather capture than kill his opponent, and military manoeuvres were aimed more at capture than extermination, first because each soldier remunerated himself from the slaves he caught and second because slave-selling provided the chiefs and authorities with the richest means of meeting the expenses of war.

Probably most of the war material used by the Ekitiparapọ was purchased in exchange for slaves and some in exchange for palm products. It is conceivable that most of the slaves used in the barter came from captures in the Kiriji battlefield. It is improbable, however, that slaves obtained from this source always sufficed to meet Confederate needs. In the case of Ibadan, we know that whenever the Ibadan army was faced with this shortage they sent home to the civil chiefs and rich citizens in Ibadan to ask them to surrender some of their slaves for sale to buy arms and ammunition.⁶³ According to Ekiti traditions, the Ekitiparapọ, too, often resorted to similar measures. In addition, they are said to have set up some machinery for buying slaves for resale from all the country to their rear, especially from men like Aduloju and his followers who until the nineties were still raiding the towns and villages of the Kukuruku hills.

In addition to this, quite often it appears, it was necessary for war chiefs on the spot to submit some of their own slaves for barter. In fact the economic burden of the war on the war chief was very great. Although the central authority of the Confederacy often bought arms and ammunition for general use, the chiefs' private armies and the contingent from each town still occasionally looked to their own chiefs for the supply of war materials. Not infrequently the chiefs were personally heavily in debt to the traders from the coast.⁶⁴

62. C.O.147/45, Moloney to Rowe, 12 May 1881, enclosure in Rowe to Kimberley, 2 July 1881; C.O.147/50, Rowe to Derby, 18 May 1883.

63. C.M.S. G3A2/02, Johnson's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1881; also Allen's 1882 Diary, entries for July.

64. Chief Fajembola, the Olugbosun of Oye, told Charles Phillips in confidence in 1886 that most of the Ekitiparapọ chiefs had been impoverished by the war and that many were heavily in debt. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his Second Mission, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

Chapter 6

Peace Moves and the 1886 Treaty

From the very beginning of the war attempts were made to restore the peace. These peace moves fall roughly into two periods: first, the period from 1879 to 1885, and secondly, the period from mid 1885 to late 1886. The former was characterised by abortive peace negotiations while the latter saw the final massing of conditions favourable to the restoration of peace. In general, intervention came from three main sources: from indigenous authorities in the interior, from missionaries and from the British administration at Lagos.

As soon as the war was resumed in 1879 the first peace moves were made by the Ibadan themselves in an attempt to reach a settlement with the Ijebu in the south.¹ As at the close of 1878 during the diplomatic contest preceding the resumption of the war, the Aṣe Latosisa personally made approaches to the Ijebu, sending rich gifts to the Awujalẹ. Ijebu traders at Ibadan, ever anxious to be of service to their august host, were again freely used as intermediaries between the Ibadan and Ijebu authorities.² Soon after, Latosisa at last decided to try with the Eḡba too. He requested the Alafin to make approaches to the Eḡba authorities; the Alafin reluctantly consented and late in 1879 sent Mr. Foster, the C.M.S. catechist at Iseyin, with his *Ilari* (official messenger) to Abeokuta to negotiate for peace between the Eḡba and the Ibadan.³

About the same time similar steps designed to restore peace between the Ibadan and its Eḡba and Ijebu enemies were being taken by the Lagos administration. Believing that the principal parties in the wars in the interior were the Ibadan on the one hand and the Eḡba and Ijebu allies on the other, and that the

1. C.M.S. CA2/019, Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending June 1879.
2. C.O.147/39, Maser to Moloney, 29 September 1879, enclosure in Usher to Hicks-Beach, 30 September 1879.
3. *Ibid.*

Ekiti and Ijeṣa were merely partisans of the latter, the officials of the Lagos government hoped that a cessation of hostilities between the Ibadan and the southern allies would bring the war to an end in all its spheres.⁴ In October 1879, therefore, Governor Usher sent J. A. Payne and Pedro Martin, influential Yoruba men in Lagos, to ascertain how ready the Ijebu and Eḡba authorities respectively were to accept British mediation in the war.⁵ Not long afterwards Captain Moloney, the Administrator of Lagos, sent Thomas Tickel, Government Political Agent, to ascertain still more clearly the feelings of the Eḡba. The Eḡba authorities, however, refused Tickel entry to Abeokuta⁶ and the attempts to restore peace between the Ibadan and the southern allies came to nothing.

After a short break peace negotiations were intensively resumed both from the interior and from Lagos throughout 1881 and 1882. From the interior these moves were spearheaded by the Alafin of Oyo. His first moves in 1881 were aimed at persuading the Eḡba to open their roads to traders from the Oyo country. To this end he persuaded the Ibadan chiefs to release influential Eḡba men under captivity at Ibadan, including two kinsmen of Chief Ogundipe, the Alatiṣe, who had always shown himself opposed to the present war.⁷ These approaches to the Eḡba, however, achieved nothing, and the Alafin had to look around for other mediators in the Ibadan-Ekitiparapo War.

About the middle of 1881 the prospects for settlement of the war on its Kiriji front suddenly looked bright.⁸ Chief Aderin, the Oni-elect of Ile-Ife, in deference to the appeals of the Alafin sent his representatives to Imesi-Ile and Igbajo to persuade the Ibadan and Ekitiparapo to come to terms. The mission achieved some success. Both sides co-operated with Aderin's commissioners.

4. C.O.147/45, Moloney to Rowe, 12 May 1881, enclosure in Rowe to Kimberley, 2 July 1881.
5. C.O.147/39, Usher to Hicks-Beach, 24 October 1879; for reports of these missions, see Report of Payne's Mission to the Awujale of Ijebu-Ode, 11 November 1879; Report of Pedro Martin's Mission to the Eḡba, 10 November 1879, enclosures in Moloney to Usher, 19 November 1879.
6. *The Lagos Times*, 24 November 1880.
7. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, 29 November 1881.
8. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Account of Chief Aderin's intervention by the Aṛe Latosisa in his undated letter, Latosisa to Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, January 1882.

Agreement was reached on every point at issue and both sides agreed to disperse and go home, and so, for a while, it looked as though the war was at an end. Unfortunately, however, when discussion turned on the mode of effecting the dispersal, it was discovered that neither party was prepared to be the first to leave.

These failures demonstrated that no Yoruba power could settle the war. Both Chief Aderin and the Alafin became convinced that only the British government, acting through the Lagos administration, could end the troubles in the interior and use its power to guarantee the peace for the future.⁹ In October 1881, therefore, the Alafin invited the officials of the Lagos government and the agents of the C.M.S. to use their influence to persuade the Lagos government to intervene.¹⁰ Ultimately, two groups of people – Messrs S. D. Kester and Oderinlo Wilson, Oyo residents in Lagos, and Messrs P. J. Meffre and Joseph Haastrup, members of the Ekitiparapo Society in Lagos – were despatched in January 1882 by the Lt.-Governor of Lagos to the Oyo (the Alafin and the Ibadan) and the Ekitiparapo respectively. These interior rulers, as well as the Ife and Ondo authorities, were requested to send their representatives to Lagos to negotiate peace.¹¹

The interior dignitaries came to Lagos and important meetings were held under the auspices of the Lagos government. But the talks ran into serious difficulties and the war continued.¹²

Thereupon, the Arẹ Latosisa re-intensified his advances to the Ijebu.¹³ On 17 December 1882 Chief Onafowokan, the Balogun of the Ijebu army at Oru, acting in defiance of the Awujale, sent his envoys to Ibadan to announce Ijebu's willingness to come to

9. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Views expressed by the Alafin and Chief Aderin, Johnson to Griffith, 26 and 29 November 1881.

10. C.O.147/46, Alafin to Griffith, 15 October 1881; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Alafin to Wood, 15 October 1881; also Johnson to Griffith, 26 and 29 November 1881; and Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

11. C.4957, Letters by W. G. Griffith, Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, to the various rulers and chiefs of the interior, enclosures in Rowe to Kimberley, 14 March 1882.

12. C.O.147/48, Rowe to Kimberley, 15 April 1882.

13. The Rev. Johnson reported that when he passed through Ibadan in October 1881, some fifty slaves had recently been sent as gifts to the Ijebu authorities; that more slaves were being frantically collected and the Ibadan citizens at home were being made to pay exorbitant taxes to buy the slaves; and that even the missionary community in Ibadan was asked to pay part of the taxes. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 29 November 1881.

terms. The Awujale, who was determined to continue the war, was compelled to flee into exile from Ijebu-Ode to Epe.¹⁴ A settlement was then concluded between the new authorities of Ijebu and the Ibadan by which the Ibadan were allowed to buy arms and ammunition at Oru.¹⁵ This was a development in favour of Ibadan but not of overall peace; for by strengthening the Ibadan, it made it possible for the war to be further prolonged.

In 1883 the initiative for continuing the bid to settle the war was seized by two new elements: the influential Yoruba residents at Lagos and the non-Yoruba powers beyond the northern borders of the Yoruba country (the Sultan of Sokoto, the Emir of Gwandu and the Emir of Bida). A mission led by Chief Ajasa, the Apena of Lagos, sent in December 1882 by the Lagos people to persuade the Awujale of Ijebu to use his good offices to bring the war to an end, coincided with the time of the troubles among the Ijebu and therefore achieved nothing.¹⁶ But the representatives of the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emirs succeeded in getting the Ilorin and the Ibadan to return important prisoners of war and to agree to a truce at Ofa, which endured for some five months. The same peace missions from the north, however, totally failed with the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan at Imesi-Ile and Igbajo.¹⁷

In September 1884 the Rev. J. B. Wood (of the C.M.S. Abeokuta) went to the Kiriji front. This peace mission was the first direct missionary intervention in the war. In March 1885 Wood was back at the Kiriji front but, as we shall see, he achieved even less success than on his earlier visit.¹⁸

It is not surprising that peace was not easy to come by. The points at issue in the war embraced almost all the political problems and

14. C.4957, Statement of the Apena's mission to the Awujale of Ijebu, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883.
15. C.O.147/50 Rowe to Derby, 30 May 1883; C.O.147/51 Rowe to Derby, 2 July 1883.
16. C.4957, Report of the Apena's mission, enclosure in Moloney to Rowe, 31 January 1883.
17. *The Lagos Observer*, 5 July, 13, 23 and 27 September 1883; also C.4957, Johnson's interview with the Ilorin and Ofa in 1886, Johnson to Moloney, 21 May 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.
18. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes; (U.I.L.) Olubi's 1884 Diary, entries for 30 September-17 October; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

conflicts in Yorubaland since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The struggle for dominance in the Oyo-Yoruba country, the Ibadan-Ilorin rivalry, the struggle by the Egba and Ijebu for survival against Ibadan, the reaction of the states of the eastern Yoruba countries (as well as the Ife) against Ibadan domination – all and more were encompassed in the war. As such, practically all sections of the Yoruba were, directly or indirectly, involved in it. Everybody seems to have been determined that this war would have to be decisive, and no party was ready to give any chance to any settlement that did not satisfy its own particular end.¹⁹

Directly or indirectly these issues were connected with the overmighty, yet growing stature of Ibadan, and therefore, perhaps the greatest of the factors responsible for the failure of the peace moves up to 1885 was the universal fear and reaction generated by Ibadan's pre-eminence and by the greatness and aspirations of its leader, the Aṣẹ Latosisa. The leading Yoruba powers had watched with growing alarm and trepidation the stormy advance of Ibadan to very near a hegemony over the whole of Yorubaland. In its advance, Ibadan had shown that it could not be bound by any respect for traditions and for crowned heads.²⁰ Even the ancient city of Ife, respected as the fountain-head of the Yoruba, had not avoided the fate of becoming a mere vassal of Ibadan. And of the many warlike leaders who had built the fortunes of Ibadan, Latosisa personified more than any other that restless ambition characteristic of the Ibadan. At home and abroad, his ambitions seemed boundless. His opponents at home accused him of aspiring to a complete dictatorship over Ibadan. The enemies of Ibadan abroad accused him of attempting to make the Ibadan the

19. In 1882 Haastrup likened the war to a piece of land owned by five people; if anybody wanted to buy the land he must necessarily obtain the signatures of all five owners to his title deeds, or he might end by losing it. (Meaning that anybody wanting to restore peace to the country must satisfy all parties at once or he would fail.) C.O.147/48, Haastrup to Rowe, 7 April 1882, enclosure in Rowe to Kimberley, 8 April 1882.

20. In 1882, the Ekitiparapo war chiefs lamented that things had come to such a pass that the Ibadan, 'a people without a king or even a constitution' should reduce all the crowned heads in the country to nothing. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre's report of mission to Imesi-Ile, 1882; C.O.147/48, Statement of the Owa of Ilesha at Ijebu-Ere, 12 June 1881, enclosure in Rowe to Kimberley, 14 March 1882.

sole rulers of 'the whole world'.²¹ In every part of Yorubaland, there was some fear of this upstart who was believed to be seeking to make himself the absolute ruler of the absolute rulers of the Yoruba world.

This fear immeasurably hardened the determination of Ibadan's enemies to prosecute the war against her to the bitter end. The Awujalẹ of Ijẹbu, Ọba Ademiyẹwọ Fidiṣọṣe, for instance, insisted that the time had come when all the Yoruba states should join together to curb the Ibadan or the Ibadan would make themselves 'master of the whole world'. Therefore, he merely regarded the activities of the Ijẹbu traders at Ibadan who were frequently coming to him with offers of peace from Latosisa as at best the product of short-sightedness.

Unfortunately the Awujalẹ's power politics ignored the vital interests of an influential section of the Ijẹbu people: the traders, who were losing a great deal owing to the closure of the Ijẹbu roads to the interior. Consequently, his policy became progressively more unpopular among the people, and in the end was supported only by the Sẹriki Ogunṣigun and his army near Modakekẹ as well as the people of Ijẹbu-Igbo (Ogunṣigun's home town), who, unlike the people of Ijẹbu-Rẹmọ and Ijẹbu-Ode, did not much engage in trade.

The breaking point was reached in 1882 when an alliance developed between the trading interests and the armed forces under the Balogun Ọnafọwọkan.²² To the Ijẹbu troops at Oru, the war had gradually grown distasteful. As has been shown, the Ijẹbu raids of the Ibadan farms were seldom successful; in fact they frequently ended in disaster. Consequently, these raids had decreased in frequency and even before 1882 the Ijẹbu army had tended to stagnate at Oru. Naturally, the soldiers had begun to question the wisdom of continuing with a war that held so few advantages for the Ijẹbu people.²³ Hence the revolt against the Awujalẹ late in 1882 and the conclusion of peace between the Ijẹbu and Ibadan. But even after this settlement, the fear and

21. C.4957, Ogunṣigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886; C.O.147/48, Statement of the Ọwa of Ilesa, Ijẹbu-Ẹre, 12 June 1881, enclosure in Rowe to Kimberley, 14 March 1882.

22. Ayantuga: *Ijebu and its neighbours*, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-4; C.4957, Statement of the Apena's Mission to Ijebu, 1882-3.

23. See C.M.S. G3A2/01, Olubi's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1880 for Ọnafọwọkan's attitude by 1880.

distrust of the Ibadan was still so strong with the Ijebu that Onafowokan dared not disband his army at Oru until the end of the war.²⁴

Though the Ijebu defection was a big blow to the anti-Ibadan forces, it inflamed them rather than dampened their spirits. As far back as 1879 the Egbas authorities had said that the only condition on which they would lay down their arms was that Latosisa should 'go to sleep' and Ibadan should be disbanded and turned into a neutral zone.²⁵ Although actual Egbas participation in the war had since decreased and was still decreasing,²⁶ the Egbas authorities were still grimly committed to the war, which was very popular with the masses of Egbas people. In fact the Egbas people were so strongly in support of the war that few Egbas leaders dared to evince a pacific disposition. The only Egbas leader known to have been against the war was Chief Ogunpipe, but this stand of his was very unpopular.

One factor, the political division of the Egbas leadership, enhanced the power of the masses over the Egbas war policy. This sharp division was due at first, early in the war, to a dispute over the succession to the throne of the Alake²⁷ and, later, to troubles arising from the rivalry of the four crowned rulers of Abeokuta for supremacy in the state.²⁸ Since all parties were engaged in outbidding one another in popularity, it was almost impossible to obtain the cooperation of Egbas leaders to arrange a peaceful settlement. No side wished to look weak by advocating peace and it was obvious that if one side concluded peace, the others

24. C.S.O. 1/1/12, Moloney to Holland, 23 March 1888. Oru camp was broken up in 1888.

25. C.O.147/39, Martin's Report of his Mission to Abeokuta, 10 November 1879, enclosure in Moloney to Usher, 19 November 1879.

26. *The Lagos Observer*, 27 September 1883, reported that 'at Abeokuta at the present, the noise of war is drowned and . . . peace and pleasure abound . . . the only complaint being the prevalence of small-pox'; the 3 July 1884 issue of the same paper reported, 'The country [Abeokuta] has been quiet for the past six months'; and the 22 January 1885 issue spoke of 'its [Abeokuta's] monotonous state of late'.

27. C.O.147/39, Martin's Report of his Mission to Abeokuta, *op. cit.*

28. Violent disturbances were sparked off by the attempt of the Alake (Oyekan) aided by G. W. Johnson to divert import dues from the Gbagura and Owu chiefs to the Alake by changing the site of the Ogun ports. Such a measure would have enriched the Alake who would then have become supreme over the other Egbas rulers. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Wood to C.M.S. Secretaries, 29 July 1881.

would repudiate it.²⁹ And the fact that from quite early in the war the Egbas, unlike the Awujale of Ijebu, had allowed the traders to trade at Eruwa with the Oyo country in all but military commodities relieved the burden of the blockade on the traders, saved the Egbas from the experience of the Ijebu and enabled the Egbas authorities to maintain, almost indefinitely, the bellicose policy towards Ibadan.

The attitude of the Egbas, then, was chiefly responsible for the failure of the British interventions of 1879-80. When the Ijebu expelled their king early in 1883 and opened the Oru market to the Ibadan, the Egbas denounced the Balogun Onafowokan as a traitor and threatened to invade the Ijebu country in order to destroy Onafowokan and reinstate the exiled Awujale.³⁰ They also set out to make trade at Oru impossible by kidnapping traders along the Ibadan-Oru road throughout the war.³¹

Even with powers not directly involved in the war, the fear of Ibadan engendered a strong desire to see the Ibadan crushed. For reasons already mentioned, the Alafin had been secretly in support of Ibadan's enemies from the beginning of the war. As the war progressed, the Aṣẹ Latosisa and the other Ibadan chiefs were fond of issuing alarming threats against all those powers who had refused to support Ibadan actively in the war.³² In fact they frequently accused the Alafin of plotting with Ibadan's enemies in order to see the downfall of Ibadan and threatened that, whether or not they won the war, they would punish the Alafin whenever it came to an end.³³ Therefore, although the Alafin desired the return of peace, he did not wish that the war should end until the Ibadan had been humbled or at least until the ambitious and overbearing Latosisa had been destroyed.³⁴

In 1879, therefore, it was only with reluctance that he acceded

29. C.O.147/39, Martin's Report of his Mission to Abeokuta, 10 November 1879, enclosure in Moloney to Usher, 19 November 1879.

30. *The Lagos Observer*, 27 September 1883 and 28 February 1884; also C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

31. See (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, Entries for 6 June, 8 August, 12-15 November, for instances of repeated Egbas raids on the Oru road.

32. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Governor-in-chief, 1 April 1882; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

33. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Wood to C.M.S. Secretaries, 14 December 1881; C.M.S., CA2/098, Young's Journal extracts for last quarter of 1879.

34. C.O.147/39, Moloney to Usher, 19 November 1879; C.M.S., G3A2/01, Wood to C.M.S. Secretaries, 14 December 1881.

to Latosisa's request to make approaches to the Eḡba. Between 1881 and 1882, however, a number of developments compelled him to act more earnestly. The first was that the continued closure of the Eḡba and Ijebu roads had begun to affect not only the Ibadan army but also the civilian population of the entire Oyo country. The people could neither sell their own products (palm produce, home-made cloths etc.) nor obtain those articles of European trade which had now become part of their normal life – salt and European cloths. The opening by the Eḡba of the market at Eruwa, where some trade was done with the Oyo, did not much alleviate the suffering of the people. It is said that at Oyo town itself, there was a grave shortage of salt even in the Alafin's palace.³⁵

The consequent effort which the Alafin made in 1881 to persuade the Eḡba to open their roads led him into complications which, in turn, made it necessary for him to look around frantically for some mediator in the war between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan.³⁶ Each time the Alafin sent his envoys to Abeokuta, the Eḡba sent out raiding expeditions to the Ibadan farms, and although the Alafin denied any complicity in such raids, the impression was created among the Ibadan that the Alafin, while openly professing goodwill towards the Ibadan, was secretly inciting the Eḡba against them. There was a lot of menacing talk against the Alafin and it is said that influential men in the Ibadan camp at Igbajo suggested sending troops to sack Oyo and punish the Alafin. In the face of such danger the Alafin had to make attempts to win the confidence of the Ibadan. He began by sending food, some troops, gunpowder and a competent *Babalawo*³⁷ to the aid of the Ibadan army at Igbajo.³⁸ When he noticed that these actions had no effect, he took further steps. The straitened situation in which the Ibadan now found themselves gave him a good opportunity to parade his goodwill towards them. The continued closure of the Ijebu and Eḡba roads

35. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

36. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Account of events of 1881 as given to the Rev. Johnson by the Alafin early in 1882, Johnson to Griffith, 12 January 1882.

37. *Babalawo*: Ifa priest, medicine man and charm maker.

38. Allen witnessed the departure on 22 November 1880 from Oyo of the contingents sent by the Alafin. They carried kegs of powder, packages of shots and demijohns of rum as gifts for the Ibadan chiefs. C.M.S., G3A2/01, Allen's Journal extracts for half-year ending December 1880.

the consequent difficulty of the Ibadan in obtaining arms and ammunition and the success of the Ekitiparapọ in procuring modern breech-loading guns all threatened the Ibadan with sure destruction. But they could not face the disgrace of giving up the war and thereby conceding victory to their opponents. What many Ibadan chiefs would have liked would be for some respectable power to intervene and make it possible for the Ibadan army to withdraw honourably. Ibadan messengers were going from Ile-Ife to Ondo asking their rulers to mediate.³⁹ This gave the Alafin the chance to champion a negotiated peace for which he could claim the credit and for which the Ibadan might be expected to be grateful to him.

The Alafin therefore offered to mediate between the Ekitiparapọ and the Ibadan and sent his envoys to the belligerent camps to carry this out.⁴⁰ The mission, however, achieved nothing. A joint meeting of the Confederate and Ibadan chiefs was called on the battlefield. Obviously the Alafin's recent show of friendship to the Ibadan, especially his sending them gunpowder, had created deep suspicions in the minds of the Ekitiparapọ as to the Alafin's stand.⁴¹ Apparently they now suspected a plot to lure the Ekitiparapọ chiefs into a trap. Consequently, while the Ibadan chiefs, who arrived punctually on the battlefield, were waiting for the Confederate chiefs to arrive, they were suddenly assailed by a band of armed Ekitiparapọ men and just managed to escape in confusion to their own camp.⁴²

The Ibadan, being conversant with the Alafin's cunning, were always ready to suspect him. They now saw him as the big brain behind the treachery of the Ekitiparapọ. Anti-Alafin feelings ran very high again. His Babalawo was accused of making (at the Alafin's bidding) charms which were detrimental to the Ibadan cause and he was rudely expelled from the Ibadan camp. Talk of a punitive expedition against Oyo was heard again. The Alafin therefore was obliged to seek for some power big enough to

39. *The Lagos Times*, 12 October 1881; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

40. C.M.S., G3A2/02, Johnson to Griffith, 29 November 1881; also C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

41. Ogedemgbe told Meffre, early in 1882, that it was impossible for the Ekitiparapọ to trust the Alafin after he (Alafin) had sent gunpowder to the Ibadan. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre's Report of his mission to Imesi-Ile, January-February 1882.

42. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

mediate successfully in the war and restore peace in such a way that he could escape the menace of the Ibadan.

The fear of Ibadan, then, had been important in keeping the Alafin busy with peace-making in 1881. But another and immediately more menacing factor soon arose to add serious urgency to the Alafin's activities. This was the Dahomey invasion of the Upper Ogun area, which posed a direct threat to Oyo town itself. Refugees fleeing from their homes in the west filled Oyo town and frantically demanded that the Alafin should do something to defend them against the Dahomey.

These are the factors that explain the Alafin's appeals to Chief Aderin, the Oni-elect, and when Aderin had failed, to the British administration of Lagos in 1881. During these months and after, the Alafin never stopped wishing that the Ibadan might be humbled by their enemies. It was a case of a man being compelled by forces beyond his control to take steps which were directly to the benefit of his bitter enemy. As might be expected, many of his peace moves lacked sincerity. Having no power to defend himself against the overmighty Ibadan, he had to resort to cunning and simulation.⁴³ His secret opposition to any settlement that set the Ibadan free either before Latosisa had been destroyed, or before there were convincing guarantees for the future peace, was a factor in the failures of peace moves. It is significant that even as late as 1886 the Alafin's chief Ilari in the peace talks was named *Qbakoşetan*, which means 'the king is not yet ready'.⁴⁴

43. C.M.S., G3A2/02, Johnson to Griffith, 26 November 1881.

44. It was one of the diplomatic niceties of the Alafin's court to express the official attitude to an event by the meaning implicit in the official name given to the Ilari being used by the Alafin in that event. Johnson in his *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 211, tells the story of an occasion when the name of the Alafin's Ilari produced disastrous results. The leading personalities in the Old Oyo Empire (who had during the Fulani wars tacitly renounced allegiance to the Alafin) called a meeting at the instance of the Onikoyi, aiming to unite again under the Alafin to expel the Fulani from the country. 'After a prolonged deliberation they came to an agreement to return to their former loyalty and allegiance. The Onikoyi then asked that the Ilari be called in to bear the good tidings to his master, but when called aloud by his official [Ilari] name "Kofilegböin" the chiefs all gave a start . . . "What! Kofilegböin! [i.e. 'let's have it on stiff']. Is that then the king's intention? A name which implies implacability, resolute determination and inexorableness! . . . No one among us can consider himself safe at the hands of the king should we return to our allegiance, since he can send us such an Ilari at a time as this. . . ." [sic].'

Another important ruler who was not directly involved in the war in its early stages was Chief Aderin, the *Oni-select*. Until the destruction of Ile-Ife in 1882 by the Ibadan and Modakeke and the consequent alliance between the Ife and the Ekitiparapo, Chief Aderin was commonly regarded as the greatest of the few neutral powers in the country. Moreover, his prestige as the ruler of Ife and therefore spiritual head of the whole Yoruba, was now greatly enhanced by the strategic position of his country. Both the Ondo road and the Isoya road passed through the Ife country and therefore both the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo and their allies were constantly angling for Aderin's favour.⁴⁵ This is why the Alafin turned to him in 1881 as the man with enough influence to restore peace to the country. This is also why both the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan co-operated so much with his commissioners in his intervention which nearly brought an end to hostilities.

The *Oni-elect* was, however, only openly neutral. Secretly he feared the Ibadan as much as the Alafin did. When the Ibadan humbly approached him and reminded him that he was father of all and that it was from his people (the Ife) that they (the Ibadan) had derived their warlike spirit and war banner, he could not help being suspicious. He feared that 'the Ibadans are humble now because they are in distress on account of their disadvantageous position, from which if they are extricated, a period of rest will make them again a terror to the country at large.'⁴⁶ He believed that the Ibadan harboured some ill-will against him because he was not giving them full support in the war, and that if they were released from their present impasse, he was one of the people on whom the Ibadan would later wreak vengeance. In fact Ibadan travellers passing through Ondo and Ife were commonly boasting about what the Arẹ Latosisa would do to Ife or Ondo as soon as the war was over, and although Aderin and the Ondo authorities had no means of proving whether or not these were the true intentions of Latosisa, they held the strong suspicion that they were probably an exaggeration of something that had been said by the Ibadan chiefs.⁴⁷

Chief Aderin, therefore, also wished to see the Ibadan crushed.

45. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Governor-in-Chief, 1 April 1882.

46. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

47. C.M.S., G3A2/02, Johnson to Griffith, 26 November 1881; C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.

Consequently, it was with great reluctance that he finally acceded to the Alafin's request that he should mediate between the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapọ.⁴⁸ On one occasion he told Ibadan envoys who came to him at his Oke-Igbo camp that Latosisa should make up his quarrel with his king (the Alafin) first, before appealing to other people to come to his aid. After the Ifẹ openly declared for the Ekitiparapọ in 1882, they were one of the most difficult parties to persuade to come to terms, even in the final peace negotiations of 1886.

- ✓ The same uncompromising spirit also characterised the attitude of the Ekitiparapọ and their Ilorin allies to peace negotiations up to 1885. Having pushed the great giant against the wall, they were unwilling to let go until the final blow had been struck. The Ilorin sphere of the war, in fact, was to survive the settlement of 1886.

The Ekitiparapọ played some part in foiling the peace moves of 1879-80. They knew that if either Latosisa or the Lagos government succeeded in restoring peace between the Ibadan and the Egbas and Ijẹbu allies in the south, then the Ibadan would be free from commitments in the south, would consequently devote all their energy to the war against the Ekitiparapọ and, which was more dangerous, would be able to import arms and ammunition through the Ijẹbu and Egbas countries. The Ekitiparapọ therefore took steps to block the peace moves by frequently sending envoys and gifts especially to the Awujalẹ of Ijẹbu, begging him and the Egbas authorities to refuse to yield ground.⁴⁹

By 1881 the Ekitiparapọ had established a sound superiority over the Ibadan, owing to their freer access to the sources of arms and ammunition on the coast and their acquisition of breech-loading guns. Confidence and optimism pervaded the rank and file as it was felt that victory was certain, provided they did not fall prey to the usual stratagem of Ibadan. They became suspicious of moves involving gatherings and meetings with the Ibadan. In the end, because the Alafin sent gifts of arms and ammunition to the Ibadan, the Confederate leaders became

48. The Alafin told the Rev. Johnson, 'Twice I sent him [Aderin] presents in slaves to beg for his interference, and at the third time the Ibadans helped me with eight slaves'. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

49. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

suspicious of him too, even though he had been their secret friend from the beginning.⁵⁰ The Ekitiparapo Society, through its advice and material aid, played a great part in encouraging this confidence and determination. In fact so anxious were members of this Society to see their interior countries freed once and for all from Ibadan oppression that they repeatedly put obstacles in the way of peace negotiations. For instance, during the peace talks in Lagos in 1882, members of the Society did much to influence the Ekitiparapo delegates against compromise. They even warned these delegates that the British were showing so much interest in interior affairs because they wanted to seize the interior lands from the owners.

Few mediators had a chance of success in such circumstances. Both the Alafin and the Oni-elect failed. The Lagos government was called in, but at the peace talks in Lagos the Ekitiparapo announced that they now had the Ibadan in their grip and could not come to terms unless the British government was prepared to send its forces to the interior to guarantee that Ibadan would never again attack any of its neighbours.⁵¹ The peace talks collapsed.

When the missionaries intervened in 1884-5, the attitude of the Ekitiparapo had hardly changed – only they were now prepared to spell out their views in detail:⁵²

1. That since the war involved not only the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan but also the Ilorin, Egba, Ijebu and Ife, it must be understood that any settlement had to be comprehensive and general.
2. That the Ibadan should accept the independence of the peoples making up the Ekitiparapo.
3. That the border towns of Otan, Ireşi, Ada and Igbajo, which were Ijeşa but which were now being held by the Ibadan, should be returned to the Owa of Ijeşa.
4. That the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan should enter into an undertaking never again to make hostile incursions into each other's territory.
5. That the Ibadan should recognise Ilorin's possession of Ofa.
6. That the Awujale of Ijebu, now in exile at Epe, should be restored to his throne.

50. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre's Report of his mission to Imeşi-Ile, 1882.

51. C.4957, Minutes of interviews with interior delegates early 1882, enclosures in Rowe to Kimberley, 15 April 1882.

52. See C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes for an account of the Rev. Wood's visit to the Kiriji front in 1884; also (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary entries for 30 September to 17 October.

7. That the Ife should be restored to their town and the people of Modakeke should remove from Ife territory.
8. That a date should be agreed upon for the dispersal of the troops from the two camps and that to prevent any treachery on either side the Rev. Wood and his companions should wait on the battlefield to oversee everything.

It proved impossible to come to terms on all these items, although agreement was reached on most. The Ibadan leaders raised no objection to recognising the independence of members of the Ekitiparapo and to the suggested safeguard against future aggression. After a good deal more bargaining and haggling, some agreement was also reached on the issues of the four border towns, the Awujale and Modakeke. The Ibadan agreed to hand over the four border towns to the Owa of Ilesa, but asked that some time be allowed them to remove their people from there. The Confederate leaders agreed to allow the Ibadan 125 days for this. The Ibadan agreed to influence the Balogun Onafowokan to reconcile with the Awujale and invite him back to his throne, employing the cooperation of all the rulers in Yorubaland towards achieving this reconciliation. The Confederate leaders also agreed that the Modakeke be allowed 125 days to remove from Ife territory. On Ofa, however, agreement could not be reached as the Ibadan insisted that Ofa was a Yoruba town and therefore could not belong to the Fulani of Ilorin. Finally, it was again on the question of the method of dispersing from the camps that the negotiations broke down.

Neither party could trust the other enough to take the momentous step of striking camp first and dispersing, for fear that when they had thus become disorganised, they would be attacked by the enemy. The Ibadan recounted that they had suffered like that during the Ijaye and Remo Wars from the Egba and Ijebu. The Ekitiparapo insisted that they had suffered so much in the past from the treachery of the Ibadan that they could not now trust them in such a delicate and all-important issue. When Mr. Wood pleaded with the Ekitiparapo chiefs that the Ibadan were their senior brothers and that they should therefore pay the Ibadan the honour of first retreating, Ogedemgbe answered coldly that his people were no relations of the Ibadan, 'and as for the honour. . . God has taken it from them'.⁵³ On their side the Ibadan chiefs alleged that the Ekitiparapo had cut a secret path through the

53. (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, entry for 13 October.

hills which they intended to use to ambush the Ibadan once they had started to withdraw.⁵⁴ The truth is that the war had been fought with such ferocity that neither side was now in a mood for paying much deference to the rules of war. As a Lagos man (obviously a sympathiser of the Ekitiparapọ and probably a member of the Ekitiparapọ Society) put it in defence of the Ekitiparapọ, 'it is the height of folly to conceive for a moment that the invader, being pushed to the utmost extremity, should be allowed to decamp without loss of limb, or possibly, of baggage'.⁵⁵ The missionary intervention, like those mediations that had gone before it, failed to restore the peace.

Ibadan policy was characterised by an equal stubbornness, the product of the pride inculcated in the Ibadan by their former great achievements. The Ibadan approaches to the Egbas and Ijẹbus in the first months of the war in 1879-80 did not come out of a sincere desire for peace. Rather they were a strategic move designed to divide the enemies of Ibadan into two so that the Ibadan could crush them each in turn. Arms and ammunition obtained through the Egbas and Ijẹbu countries would be used to crush the Ekitiparapọ and Ilorin in the north; then Ibadan would turn round to crush the Egbas and Ijẹbus in the south - thus fulfilling the ambition of subjugating all the Yoruba. Such moves, however, had no chance of success for a long time because both the Egbas and the Ijẹbus saw through them. Nevertheless, the Aṣẹ Latosisa did not give up trying, and his efforts bore fruit in the settlement with the Ijẹbus early in 1883.

Before then, however, the untoward difficulties in which the Ibadan found themselves in 1881-2 compelled important sections of the Ibadan leadership in the front and at home to wish for peace with the Ekitiparapọ. But such sections excluded Latosisa himself. Latosisa was so used to leading the Ibadan from victory to victory that he could not reconcile himself quickly to the mere possibility of failure, no matter how hard the situation. In fact, when the British intervened in late 1881 to early 1882, he seems to have been horrified at the thought that peace might be concluded and the Ibadan sent back home without achieving the object of the expedition. Consequently, after the departure of the

54. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

55. *The Lagos Observer*, 13 March 1884.

interior representatives for Lagos in January 1882, Latosisa called a meeting of his chiefs 'and asked them if it had ever been known in any of their wars that the Ibadans had been forced to ask the assistance of the whiteman to make peace'. When the chiefs answered 'that this was the first time', 'he then urged them to make an effort before the return of the messengers to retrieve the character of the Ibadans' - that is, to destroy the Ekitiparapọ. As a result of such speeches, backed by bribes to many of the reluctant chiefs, the Ibadan challenged the Ekitiparapọ while peace talks were going on in Lagos and a fierce but inconclusive battle was fought at Kiriji.⁵⁶

By 1884, however, Latosisa was already tired of the war. Now advanced in age, he would give anything to be able to return to Ibadan as he did not wish to spend his last days in the camp.⁵⁷ But he completely failed to get the other Ibadan chiefs to cooperate with him in reaching a settlement with the Ekitiparapọ. The Rev. J. B. Wood, who visited the Ibadan and Ekitiparapọ camps in September-October 1884 in an attempt to reconcile the belligerent parties, identified two separate sections of the Ibadan leadership who were opposed to the Arẹ's peace-making: first, the Mọgajis (a usually turbulent group comprising the first sons of the leading houses of Ibadan) and secondly, many of the older chiefs at Igbajo.

Wood said that the Mọgajis hated Latosisa because of his inordinate ambition to achieve an absolute dictatorship over Ibadan; that many of them suspected that the Arẹ, in order to achieve this ambition, had caused the death of their fathers by treacherously exposing them to danger in battles and that some of them feared that the Arẹ was planning to destroy them in similar fashion. For these reasons, he said, the Mọgajis did not want the war to come to an end; for, as long as the war continued, the Arẹ always had to court them since they were needed to fight the battles for him. In fact the Mọgajis had in the process of the war established considerable authority over the Arẹ and now feared that if peace were made and the Ibadan returned home, the Arẹ, in the absence of the emergency of war, would be master of all again. Many of the older war chiefs, said Wood, shared the Mọgajis' suspicions of the Arẹ's ambition and therefore had misgivings about the prospect of returning home, and, because they

56. C.O.147/48, Rowe to Kimberley, 15 April 1882.

57. C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes.

could not express their opposition to the Arẹ and to peace openly, they were secretly edging the Mọgajis on.

There was, indeed, a great deal of political discontent in the Ibadan camp when Wood visited it late in 1884, and the political ambitions and methods of the Arẹ Latosisa obviously featured prominently as a cause of that discontent. Even then, Wood's analysis of the situation in the Ibadan camp in 1884 remains unconvincing. A leader in the position of Latosisa in a war, it is true, has always to be doing his best to retain the admiration and co-operation of his subordinates and, indirectly therefore, each such subordinate may be said to have some sway over the leader. But this is nothing compared with the enhanced authority over individuals and affairs which an emergency or a war gives to the leader. It is improbable that the Ibadan leaders could have believed that the powers of Latosisa in the setting of the ease and pleasure of civil life at home would be greater than his power in the grim emergency of a war camp – and further that they would believe this to the extent that they would wreck peace negotiations in order to ensure the continuance of the camp life.

The truth seems to be that most Ibadan chiefs felt that the Arẹ was compromising too much with the enemy and showing too much eagerness to make peace.⁵⁸ Most of the chiefs who during the hard times of 1881–2 had wanted some accommodation with

58. (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, entries for 30 September to 5 October show that within these first six days of peace negotiations, the Arẹ acted almost alone and agreed to many of the terms proposed by the Ekitiparapo. On the 6th, however, feeling that he had some concrete achievements to report to the other chiefs, he called them and the Mọgajis together for the first time since the beginning of the negotiations. Immediately strong opposition was expressed to the Arẹ's activities. When the Arẹ met with Mr. Wood on the 7th, the Mọgajis were in attendance as though they had come to keep an eye on him; and as a result of interruptions and of accusations to the effect that Wood and his companions were partial to the Ekitiparapo, Wood was so angry that he walked out of the meeting. From then on, things went from bad to worse, the Ibadan chiefs going back one by one on the points already agreed on between the Arẹ and the Ekitiparapo. On the 15th Mr. Wood made a final attempt to get the Arẹ, before an assembly of the Ibadan chiefs, to persuade the Ibadan to decamp first. There followed a most rowdy scene. 'The Kakanfo himself was eager to speak', but he did not get a chance to, as the Mọgajis led the other chiefs in noisily declaring that the Ibadan could not accede to Wood's suggestions. A public meeting was then called, but this also 'resulted into fire'.

the enemy to save Ibadan from defeat, had now changed their stand, mainly because they could now obtain arms and ammunition from the Ijebu market at Oru. Moreover, the internal collapse of the Ijebu and the success of Ibadan's diplomacy there might have encouraged some Ibadan chiefs to believe that fortune might yet come full-swing to the side of Ibadan. The Arẹ's subordinates, no doubt, felt that Latosisa was giving away too much and too easily and therefore selling Ibadan's honour. Latosisa himself would seem to have justified the fears of his people when he called a general meeting of the camp on 12 October and 'threatened the people to be careful against speaking nonsense on the Oibo's [white-man's, i.e. the Rev. Wood's] business as the peace-making man. He [Wood] is his [Arẹ's] father and if he [Wood] tells him [Arẹ] to remove at any time, he will.'⁵⁹

Consequently, stories were circulated in the Ibadan camp that the Arẹ was planning to sell the Ibadan to the Ekitiparapọ and that he had concluded some secret settlement with them so that he might return home. The Mọgajis, to the wild acclamation of the war boys, women and children in the camp, blamed the failures of the Ibadan army so far on the Arẹ and some of the older chiefs and promised that henceforth they would fight lustily for Ibadan and beat all its enemies. Latosisa had to give in and the negotiations came to an end. Two days later, Wood and his people took leave of both camps and bitter fighting was immediately resumed.⁶⁰

By the time Wood came back to the camps in March 1885, the situation had improved still more for the Ibadan. They had acquired some Sniders through Chief Taiwo of Lagos. Most of the Ibadan chiefs, believing that victory was now in sight, were disinclined to co-operate with Wood in any way.⁶¹ When asked whether they were prepared to continue the talks on the same terms as proposed by the Ekitiparapọ in the previous October, they answered that the Ekiti and Iješa were the slaves of Ibadan and had no right to make any proposals to Ibadan. To Wood's question whether they would want the British or the Egbas to come and mediate between them and the Ekitiparapọ, they replied that the only mediator they could welcome was one who

59. (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, entry for 12 October.

60. (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, entries for 17-20 October.

61. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Wood to Lang, 19 August 1885.



Reception of delegates from the Yoruba interior to the peace negotiations of 1886 by Governor Alfred Moloney, Lagos, May 1886. The Rev. S. Johnson (r.) and the Rev. C. Phillips (second from r.).



The town of Imesi-Ile: the camp of the Ekitiparapo forces between September 1886 and March 1893.

would come and scatter the Ekitiparapọ from their camp so that the Ibadan war boys would only have to pick them up at will. There was not the least chance for negotiations. Wood left after a few days.

Such then was the nature of the conflicts in the war and the temper of the whole of Yorubaland that while the warring parties could not come to terms, the other Yoruba states which were not directly involved and which might be expected to reconcile the belligerents were themselves not prepared to see peace restored until their own fears had been allayed. By late 1881 it had become obvious that the Yoruba could not put their own house in order. Hence their appeal to the British administration of Lagos in 1881-2 and hence the interventions from outside from 1882 on - from the emigré Yoruba community of Lagos, from the non-Yoruba rulers from the north and from the missionaries.

All these outsiders, however, were either not sufficiently well equipped or not sufficiently prepared to be equal to the task of restoring peace to the Yoruba homeland. The situation required a great power which enjoyed the respect of all and had the military strength to back up its prestige and to generate confidence about the terms of any settlement and the peace of the future, to quench all the open and subterranean fires raging in Yorubaland.⁶²

The Fulani authorities from the north could hardly be expected to enjoy the respect of all parties in this war, since the Ilorin authorities who were fighting the Ibadan were themselves members of the ruling Fulani élite of the territories to the north who were known to be concerned that the Ilorin should succeed in subduing all of Yorubaland. Hence, obviously, the failure of the northern emissaries in 1883.

The emigré community of Lagos was too violently divided along lines of sub-ethnic origin to be capable of sustained and effective action about their interior fatherland. Although these emigrés recognised that they had a duty to help their people in the interior to achieve peace, and although many of them were traders and were therefore being ruined economically by the continued closure of the interior roads owing to the war, in fact each group seems to have been more concerned with the victory

62. A similar view was expressed by the Alafin and Chief Aderin in 1882.

C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882.

of its own people in the interior and the Lagos atmosphere was poisoned by the acrimonious debate going on between the descendants' unions.⁶³ After the failure of Chief Ajasa's mission to the Awujale of Ijebu in 1882-3, nothing important was done by the Lagos people about the interior. In fact even Chief Ajasa's mission came under criticism from certain sections of the Lagos community who charged that it was a pointless piece of meddling in the affairs of the Ijebu.⁶⁴

Consequently, the impression became strong in government circles in Lagos that to allow the Lagos people to interfere further in the affairs of the interior states might prove dangerous. Thus, a month after Chief Ajasa's return to Lagos from Ijebu, the Lagos government refused Otumba Payne, an influential Ijebu in Lagos, permission to serve on a delegation of the Lagos Ijebu to the Awujale at Epe, on the grounds that he was a British subject and a government official. And hardly a month after this incident, the Earl of Derby found it necessary to warn the Lagos administration: 'While, however . . . I consider that every possible support should be given to any attempt to promote this object [peace in the interior] I am distinctly of the opinion that no encouragement should be given to any interference on the part of the native residents at Lagos with the affairs of the Chiefs in the interior'.⁶⁵ Henceforth, the Lagos government neither countenanced any attempt at intervention by the Lagos people nor thought of employing their services any longer in its own interventions in the war. Consequently, nothing more was heard about any attempt by the Lagos people to restore peace to the interior.⁶⁶

The missionaries derived a great deal of authority from the widespread respect in which they were held by the people.⁶⁷ Most

63. *The Lagos Times*, 28 January and 27 April 1881 and 27 December 1882; *The Lagos Observer*, 28 February 1884.

64. C.4957, A memo dated 15 February 1883, presented to Moloney, enclosure in Rowe to Derby, 15 February 1883.

65. C.O.147/50, Earl of Derby to Rowe, 28 March 1883.

66. Some meetings of representatives of the different groups in Lagos were held after the Apena's mission but these achieved nothing. *The Lagos Observer*, 1 March 1883.

67. Johnson said that in Ibadan, for instance, even in the worst times it was sufficient for a man to wear a shirt or be known to be 'one of the missionary agent's people' to be treated respectfully by all and sundry. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Johnson to Moloney, 21 May 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

parties in the war would gladly submit to missionary mediation because they felt that the missionaries had nothing to gain by their intervention and were only actuated by a genuine concern for the welfare of the peoples of the interior.⁶⁸ Wood's two visits to the Kiriji front in 1884 and 1885 were, in fact, in response to appeals made to him from various quarters in the interior. And it was this high prestige enjoyed by the missionaries that accounts in part for the co-operation which Wood obtained from both the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo in 1884.

To succeed in reconciling all parties, however, much more than mere respect was needed. It seems that in spite of other factors Wood would have ended the war between the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo in 1884 if he had had some power to take command and oversee the dispersal of the belligerents from their camps and convince both sides that treachery was impossible. Mere verbal assurances proved a very poor and unconvincing substitute for such positive power.

The British government, represented by the administration of Lagos, enjoyed a high prestige with most of the parties involved in the war and had the power to back up its arbitration.⁶⁹ It was not, however, prepared to assume any responsibilities in the interior of Lagos in the years up to 1885. At the beginning of the present war, for instance, the Colonial Office had instructed its Lagos officials to 'maintain an attitude of perfect neutrality and commit no act of partisan character'.⁷⁰ Two years later, fearing that British officials in West Africa were taking too much interest in the affairs of the Lagos interior, the Colonial Office again warned that 'Her Majesty's Government, whilst ready to promote by any friendly means the settlement of these long-standing

68. e.g. Wood's account of his visit to the Kiriji front in 1884, C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Wood's 1884 Notes. Not all the people in the country believed this. The Egbas, who were more acquainted with the ways of the white man, were aware that British missionaries could serve the interests of their own country. Hence their suspicion when they learnt in 1884 that Wood had been advising the Ibadan and Ekitiparapo to invite the British to intervene in the war. (U.I.L.), Olubi's 1884 Diary, entry for 25 October.

69. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/6, Johnson to Griffith, 23 January 1882, shows the attitude of the Alafin, Chief Aderin and the Ibadan to the British. Only among the Egbas and Ijebu did the British, as represented by the Lagos administration, enjoy a poor reputation.

70. C.O.147/47, Lees to Moloney, enclosure in Lees to Hicks-Beach, 7 October 1878.

dissensions which are the cause of so much bloodshed and misery, and seriously affect the prosperity of Lagos, could not approve any measure involving direct interference with the inland tribes. Such a course could not fail to involve the Colonial Government in dangerous complications, and would entail on this country an extension of responsibilities which Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to undertake.⁷¹

Such a policy of non-intervention, however, proved impossible to maintain owing to the effects of the war on Lagos. The closure the trade and ultimately the revenue of Lagos. Although informed quarters in Lagos could see that the war was not the only reason for the trade depression in Lagos,⁷² and although some other people were bitterly opposed to British intervention, certain vocal sections of the community held the war entirely responsible for the economic troubles of the town and charged that the Lagos administration, by doing nothing about the interior, was neglecting the vital interests of the people of Lagos.⁷³ Newspapers spoke of 'the badness of trade', of 'universal depression' and of 'unparalleled emergency' and lamented that 'the colony is at the present moment passing through an anxious crisis . . . undergoing a dreadful torture.'⁷⁴ The policy of the government was contemptuously described as a policy of 'do-nothing' or 'folded hands',

71. C.O.147/46, Kimberley to Rowe, 26 August 1881.

72. Mr. Pike (Assistant Collector and Treasurer) informed Governor Rowe in 1881 that the trade depression was not due to the war alone, but that the variations in the trade on different articles were due to particular causes – which he enumerated in C.O.147/48, Rowe to Kimberley, 8 April 1882. *The Lagos Times* of 21 January 1881 had in its editorial admitted that important contributive factors to the trade depression in Lagos were the ruinous competition among the Lagos traders and the fall of prices of raw materials in the English market. But such reasonings were unpopular with most people, and a correspondent of *The Lagos Times* of 25 May 1881 launched an attack on 'skillful financiers aided by fertile imaginations' who were attributing the depression to other causes than the war.

73. e.g. a letter by a correspondent of *The Lagos Observer*, 13 March 1884.

74. The policy of the Lagos government was contrasted with that of 'the enterprising French' on the Upper Niger. 'Should the French succeed in the effort which they are putting forth with so much vigour (while the Lagos government is doing nothing about the interior) it is easy to foresee that the trade that usually comes through Ilorin, Oyo, Ibadan and Abeokuta to Lagos will be diverted from us.' *The Lagos Times*, 27 April 1881; also C.O.147/39, Usher to Hicks-Beach, 24 October 1879.

and its officials were ridiculed as using 'non-intervention as a shield'.⁷⁵

Nor was the pressure on the Lagos government limited to unofficial sources. In January 1881 Consul Hewett,⁷⁶ who had visited Ondo in the previous December, suggested to Administrator Moloney that the time had come when something positive should be done about the interior wars.⁷⁷ And in May, Moloney himself in a despatch to Governor Rowe on the Gold Coast, spoke feelingly about the effects of the wars on Lagos and the interior states. The original aim of the British in bringing about the cession of Lagos, he reminded Rowe, was 'to assist, defend and protect the inhabitants, to put an end to the slave trade, not only here but in the neighbouring countries, and to prevent the destructive wars so frequently undertaken'. Though much had been done for the colony of Lagos, he argued, wars and raids still occurred in the interior which were greatly detrimental to the welfare of the states and peoples of the interior and to the prosperity of Lagos itself. Such an unhappy situation, he concluded, would continue as long as the Lagos government took no step to stop the wars.⁷⁸

It was such pressure that compelled the Lagos administration to intervene in the war in the period 1879-85. By July 1881 Governor Rowe, the official chiefly responsible for Lagos, had himself become convinced and was putting it to the Colonial Office that 'Her Majesty's Government has a direct interest in promoting peace in these [interior] lands.'⁷⁹ But having reluctantly intervened under pressure, the Lagos administration was quickly forced to withdraw by the type of rebuff which it suffered when the Egbas refused its representative (Mr. Tickel) entry to Abeokuta in 1880, or by the type of excessive demands made on it by the Ekitiparapo representatives in Lagos in 1882. Between 1882 and 1885 the Lagos administration took no further steps about the interior, but met every criticism and every appeal with the answer that it could never again intervene unless

75. *The Lagos Times*, 26 January 1881, editorial; 9 February 1881.

76. E. H. Hewett, H.M. Consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra (with Headquarters at Fernando Po) 1880-82.

77. C.4957, Hewett to Moloney, 14 January 1881, enclosure in Moloney to Griffith, 22 February 1881; both enclosures in Rowe to Kimberley, 2 July 1881.

78. C.O.147/44, Moloney to Rowe, 12 May 1881.

79. C.O.147/45, Rowe to Kimberley, 2 July 1881.

'distinct and unconditional overture by all the parties to the war' were made.⁸⁰

On 31 August 1885 Momoh Latosisa, the Arẹ-Ọna-Kakanfo, supreme leader and commander of the Ibadan forces, the man whose ambitions had done much to cause the war, died in the Ibadan camp at Kiriji. This event was perhaps the greatest of a number of developments coming in 1885 and 1886 to make a settlement of the war possible in the latter year. It was not that Latosisa had been against the restoration of peace all the time. In 1884 he had been anxious enough for peace to be restored so that he might spend his last days at home. But as long as he lived and led the Ibadan, every other Yoruba state had strong misgivings about the outcome of the termination of the war. His death, therefore, removed perhaps the greatest obstacle to peace.

Another development was the death of the exiled Awujalẹ at Ẹpẹ about the first week of June 1885.⁸¹ In the first place, this made it possible for the dominant party among the Ijẹbu (led by Ọnafọwọkan) to install their own nominee (Aboki) as the new Awujalẹ, so that the Ijẹbu authorities could speak with one voice in favour of peace. Secondly, it removed the question of the restoration of the late Awujalẹ as a bone of contention in future peace negotiations. Thus, although the Sẹriki Ogunşigun still maintained a rival army near Modakekẹ and continued till the end to chafe about the injustices which had been done to the late Awujalẹ,⁸² the death of the Awujalẹ had immensely simplified the Ijẹbu situation and thereby facilitated the progress towards peace.

Moreover, by late 1885 the leaders of the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapọ, the two chief belligerent parties, had grown tired of the war. Among the Ibadan chiefs the temporary elation of early 1885 arising from the few Snider rifles obtained through Chief Taiwo of Lagos had quickly vanished as the supply of the breech-loaders had petered out. And among the Ekitiparapọ chiefs and kings, although the determination to hold out as long as possible had not altogether died, the hope was no longer seriously enter-

80. C.O.147/54, Evans to Griffith, 19 May 1885.

81. C.O.147/56, Moloney to Colonial Secretary, 10 March 1886.

82. C.4957, Ogunşigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

tained that the Confederacy would yet win the decisive victory over Ibadan. Consequently, any prolongation of the hardships and heavy expenses concomitant with the war had begun to appear unnecessary.⁸³ Moreover, although there were still members of the Ekitiparapo Society who wanted the Confederacy to continue with the struggle, many of its most important leaders were now anxious to have peace restored.⁸⁴ In the lull of late 1885 to 1886, it was obvious that both sides would eagerly seize any serious opportunity in the future for a cessation of the war.

Only among the Ilorin were there still serious obstacles to peace. Chief Kara of Ilorin, having begun the siege of Offa in defiance of his Emir, had continued to be on bad terms with the Emir and could not conceive returning to Ilorin except as a victor.⁸⁵ So strong, however, was the desire for peace among the other parties in the war that Kara's obstruction could not prevent settlement from being reached in all but the Offa sphere of the war.

To cap it all, at the same time as the belligerent leaders became more amenable to arbitration, the attitude of the Lagos government towards the interior changed. This was due in the main to the growth of Anglo-French rivalry in West Africa by 1886, a rivalry which made the policy of non-intervention in interior affairs untenable.⁸⁶ And while positive action in the interior thus became compulsory, it was fortunate that Lagos had as its Administrator Captain C. A. Moloney, a man who had served in

83. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his Second Mission, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.
84. Haastrup, writing to the Owa of Ilesa at the time of Phillips's second mission to Kiriji in 1886 wrote, 'You would remember that all my letters and messages to you were to wait on God's time. It is now God's time that you should be freed from the yoke of the Ibadans . . . I hope you will embrace this opportunity and do not allow the ill advice of some of the Ijeṣas here, who pretend themselves having interest in the welfare of Ijeṣaland, make you lose the golden opportunity. I hope you will take Rev. Phillips as the true friend of the Ijeṣa'. He then advised the Owa to sign the Treaty immediately, assuring him that the government of Lagos, contrary to rumours being peddled by evil men, had no intention of seizing Ijeṣaland. C.4957, Haastrup to the Owa of Ilesa, 7 June 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 21 July 1886.
85. C.4957, Phillips's Report of his First Mission, 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.
86. This rivalry is described in Aderibigbe: *The Expansion of the Lagos Protectorate 1862-1902* (Ph.D. Thesis), London 1958, pp. 123-36.

the administration of Lagos earlier in the war and was therefore fully acquainted with the problems of the interior, and who had shown an eagerness to do something about the interior during his earlier stay in Lagos.⁸⁷

In the first months of 1886 the Lagos administration obtained the services of the C.M.S. missionaries to act as its envoys to the belligerent states. The Revs. Samuel Johnson and Charles Phillips set out in March of that year to visit the various war fronts and capital towns in the interior. When they returned to Lagos late in May, they were accompanied by representatives of the warring parties, each fully accredited to agree to terms of peace to be negotiated under the aegis of the Lagos government in Lagos. It is evidence of the willingness of all to cooperate in the cause of peace that the final negotiations occupied barely two weeks – between Moloney's first meeting with the Ibadan delegates on 21 May and the final joint meeting on 4 June. Even this length of time was caused by some delay in the arrival of Phillips and the Ekitiparapo envoys at Lagos.⁸⁸

The terms of the settlement were agreed upon in the joint meeting on 31 May:⁸⁹

1. The members of the Ekitiparapo to retain their independence.
2. The contending parties to respect the territorial integrity of one another in the future.
3. The Alafin to occupy the same position to the Owa of Ilesha as he had occupied before the war – that of an elder to a younger brother.
4. The boundaries between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan to remain as they stood at the time of agreement; as to the towns of Otan-Aiyegbaju, Ireṣi, Ada and Igbajo, those inhabitants who wanted to live with their Ekiti and Ijesa kinsmen could migrate, but the towns to remain in the possession of Ibadan.
5. The Ofa issue to be settled later.
6. The Modakeke to leave Ife territory, migrate across the River Oṣun and resettle on Ibadan territory between the Oṣun and Oba Rivers; those of them who wished to live with the Ife to move into Ile-Ife.
7. The Ijebu and the Ibadan to sign a treaty of peace, and the Ijebu to decamp from Modakeke and go home.

87. C.4957, Phillips's and Johnson's Reports of their First Missions, 1886, enclosures in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

88. Johnson arrived at Lagos on 13 May with delegates from the Alafin and the Ibadan. Phillips did not arrive with the Ekitiparapo delegates until 23 May. C. 4957, Moloney to Granville, 20 and 27 May 1886.

89. C.4957, Minutes of Joint Interview between the interior delegates on 31 May 1886 at Lagos, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 1886.

Between 31 May and 4 June, these terms were drawn up into a formal treaty entitled 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Commerce'.⁹⁰

The Ilorin and Egbas spheres of the war were not covered by this treaty. An attempt by Johnson and Phillips during their mission of March–May to persuade the Ilorin to participate in the negotiations had failed, owing to the confused politics of Ilorin. The Egbas were not even invited to participate, partly because the Egbas role in the war had become insignificant.

Between June and July 1886 Johnson and Phillips again went on a mission to the interior states to obtain the signatures of the respective rulers and chiefs to the Treaty of Peace.⁹¹ It soon became clear that there were serious objections to some of the terms of the Treaty. The Ekitiparappo objected to the transfer of the four border towns to Ibadan, while the Modakeke objected to the clause which obliged them to abandon their town. The desire for peace, however, was now so universally strong that no party wished to be thought responsible for any breakdown of the present moves. Even the Modakeke, though reluctantly, endorsed the Treaty in the end.

All that was now left was to execute the terms of the Treaty. To that end, a high-powered Special Commission of the Lagos Government was sent out in September 1886. The Special Commission was led by the Acting Colonial Secretary, H. Higgins, who was assisted by Oliver Smith, Queen's Advocate. They had an escort of fifty Hausas carrying with them a seven-pounder and a rocket trough with necessary ammunition and also holding fifty rounds of cartridges each. Mr. Willoughby, the Superintendent of Police, accompanied the Commission to look after the issue of money and presents to the interior rulers, and to see to the subsistence of the Hausas and carriers. The Commission was also accompanied by a photographer, drummers and buglers and by W. C. Speeding, Harbourmaster of Lagos, who was to collect geographical information on the journey.⁹²

On their arrival at the Kiriji War front, the Commissioners and their escorts were lodged in tents which had been erected for

90. C.S.O.5/1, Treaty of Peace etc.

91. C.4957, Johnson and Phillips's Reports of their Second Missions, 1886, enclosures in Evans to Granville, 24 August 1886.

92. C.4957, Instructions to Messrs Higgins and Smith, Special Commissioners, 1886, enclosure in Evans to Granville, 18 August 1886.

them in the middle of the battlefield.⁹³ And it was here in a pavilion erected in front of these tents that the final and most important function of the Commission was performed on Thursday, 23 September 1886 – the proclamation of peace. Before an assemblage of representatives of the Ibadan, Ekitiparapo, Oyo, Ijebu, Ife and Modakeke and with thousands of men and women watching from the tops of rocks and boulders outside the Confederate and Ibadan camps, Ogedemgbe, the Commander-in-chief of the Ekitiparapo forces and Ajayi Oşungbẹkun, the Balogun of the Ibadan, stepped forward and swore eternal friendship with each other and between their two peoples. The Chief Commissioner then read the Governor's Proclamation and the Treaty of Peace; then he made a few remarks and concluded by reading the Ratification of the Treaty, all being translated into Yoruba. Each signatory to the Treaty then came forth and affixed his mark and seal to the Ratification. And after a further exchange of happy remarks the Peace Proclamation was read and translated, after which the bugles played and a seven-gun salute was fired at 12.20 p.m.; this was greeted by the waiting thousands with loud and prolonged cheers and applause. The war apparently had come to an end.

The dispersal from the camps began soon after the Peace Proclamation. To make absolutely certain that there would be no trouble while this was going on, the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo were made to submit hostages to the Commissioners. The Ekitiparapo hostages – the Aşipa and Lewere of Ijeşa, Chief Ogunminu, the Are of Otun and Chief Aje of Ijero – were surrendered in the afternoon of the 23rd. The Ibadan hostages came in the next morning. By the 27th both camps had been entirely evacuated and the next day at 12 noon the signal was given for the two camps to be burnt down. The hostages were then released, and the Commissioners prepared to set out for the Modakeke front.

So great an achievement by the Commissioners within such a short time in the Kiriji front was partly because of the general war weariness among the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan and the strong desire therefore to have peace restored. Arguments on specific matters like the four border towns or the unconquerable fear among the Ekitiparapo of the treachery of the Ibadan over

93. C.4957, Report of the Special Commissioners, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.

the evacuation did not suffice to break this desire. Nor did such incidents as the outbreak of fire in the Ibadan camp in the night after the Peace Proclamation. The Ekiti and Ijeṣa slaves in the Ibadan camp were suspected of starting the fire and hundreds of these slaves made their escape in the confusion it caused. A single Ibadan chief is said to have lost 400 slaves that night. Yet the Ibadan merely contented themselves with lodging formal complaints with the Commissioners.

Very important also was the presence on the battlefield of a power with the military might to enforce good conduct and prevent any treachery – precisely the thing which Chief Aderin of Oke-Igbo had advocated since 1882. Nothing could have succeeded as well as this in reassuring either party. The Hausa soldiers with their breech-loaders, the seven-pounder and rocket, were a sufficient deterrent against any trickery. And the keeping of hostages from both parties for four days was a clear demonstration of the power commanded by the Commissioners.

On the Modakeḳe–Ife front, however, things did not move so smoothly.⁹⁴ It soon became clear that the Modakeḳe were not willing to honour the clause of the Treaty which obliged them to evacuate their town. The Modakeḳe argued that their town had been their home for several generations and that it was there that their immediate ancestors had been buried. Furthermore, they expressed fear about moving across the River Oṣun to settle on Ibadan land. This, they said, placed them too dangerously near the Ibadan, who were unreliable and who might in the future try to enslave them. All the arguments of the Commissioners failed to break down the stubbornness of the Modakeḳe. All the sober, constructive statesmanship of Fabunmi (leader of the Ekiti-parapo forces against Modakeḳe) whose activities in these negotiations won him the enduring admiration of the Commissioners, availed nothing. In the end, the Commissioners had to leave the Modakeḳe to their own devices, contenting themselves with the thought that Fabunmi was so capable and had everything and everybody so well under his influence that he could be relied on

94. The Modakeḳe had only reluctantly endorsed the Treaty, having objected to the clause which enjoined them to remove from their town. In fact, Carter discovered in 1894 that the Modakeḳe had not really endorsed the Treaty in 1886 but had only appended false marks to it to save themselves from being held responsible for the failure of the peace talks. C.S.O.1/1/14, Carter to Ripon, 30 August 1894.

to prevent any recrudescence of hostilities at Modakeke, or that perhaps he might even succeed in enforcing the Treaty.

Unlike the Ekitiparapo and Ibadan camps, Modakeke was not a military camp but a town with some history. It was therefore a mistake to treat Modakeke like the Kiriji camps in the Treaty. Perhaps if, as the Ijebu authorities had suggested,⁹⁵ efforts had been concentrated on finding a means of making the Ife and the Modakeke live harmoniously together, the problem might have been solved. To achieve by persuasion the evacuation of a town whose citizens were not conquered but had repeatedly shown themselves superior to their opponents in war in the past, the right and wrong of the situation notwithstanding, was no easy assignment.

The failure on the Ife-Modakeke front precluded any solution of the Oke-Igbo issue. Indeed this was not covered by the Treaty, but it had been raised in Lagos in May and the Ife had then readily admitted that Oke-Igbo belonged to Ondo and that as soon as the Ife were able to resettle in their own town, they would clear out of Oke-Igbo and surrender it to Ondo. Since no solution had been reached at Ife, the Oke-Igbo issue did not arise.

Similarly, the Commissioners failed to resolve the conflict on the Ijebu front. Tempers were still very high between the party of the new Awujale, led by the Balogun Onafowokan and his army, and the adherents of the late Awujale, championed by the Seriki Ogunşigun and his army, who were still encamped against Modakeke. Therefore, though Ogunşigun was willing to honour the Treaty and return home, he could not be persuaded that the new authorities of Ijebu would accept him. In the end then, the Commissioners had to leave Ogunşigun near Modakeke where he continued to utter threats against the Awujale and his supporters.

Finally, all attempts to extend the peace-making to the war between Ibadan and Ilorin failed. It had been hoped that a settlement of the Ibadan-Ekitiparapo war would have the effect of ending the Ofa war. But messages despatched by the Ekitiparapo to their Ilorin allies about the time of the Peace Proclamation failed to change the attitude of the Ilorin leaders. Consequently, the Ibadan and the Ilorin continued to fight each other at Ofa.

95. C.5114 *Further Correspondence Respecting War Between Native Tribes in the Interior of Lagos*, Johnson to the Administrator, 6 December 1886, enclosure in Evans to Stanhope, 6 January 1887.

The truth is that there was an important difference between the Ofo and the Ife-Modakeke wars: although the latter was truly an offshoot of the Ekitiparapo-Ibadan war, the former was more or less an independent war in its own right and belonged to the long rivalry between the Ilorin and the Ibadan for dominance in Yorubaland. The Ilorin did not, therefore, hold themselves to be bound by the settlement between the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo. Consequently, while the war on the Ife-Modakeke front lost significance owing to the cessation of hostilities at Kiriji and therefore soon came to an end after the Treaty, the war on the Ofo front long survived the Treaty.

Owing mostly to the benevolent influence of Fabunmi, any resumption of hostilities was prevented at Modakeke, and before the end of the year both the Ekitiparapo and Ibadan forces were withdrawn and the Modakeke and Ife left to work out their destiny by themselves.⁹⁶ Though the relationship between the Seriki Ogunşigun and the Awujale tended to deteriorate and there were clashes between their respective supporters, the withdrawal of the Ekitiparapo and Ibadan forces made his continued stay near Modakeke meaningless and untenable. In the end, therefore, he had no alternative but to withdraw to his own country.⁹⁷

96. C.5114, Memo on repudiation of Treaty by the Modakeke, enclosure in Evans to Stanhope, 17 November 1886, also telegram Evans to Colonial Secretary, 23 January 1887.

97. C.5114, Johnson to Evans, 23 January 1887.

Chapter 7

The Last Rumblings of War, 1886-1893

When the Special Commissioners returned to Lagos in October 1886, the Ibadan and the Ilorin were still fighting each other at Offa, and Fabunmi was putting up a great struggle to persuade the Ibadan, Ife and Ijebu forces around Modakeke to decamp and return home. In the latter sphere Fabunmi was so successful that by January 1887 the Ekitiparapo, Ibadan and Ijebu armies had left Modakeke.¹ Only the Modakeke still continued to refuse to desert their town as the Treaty had demanded or, as the Ife were now prepared to accept, to break up Modakeke and come to live with the Ife within the walls of Ile-Ife. And because the Modakeke would do neither of these, the Ife continued to feel themselves in danger from the Modakeke and therefore continued to hold themselves ready in their camp, refusing to reoccupy their town.²

Also, the Ijebu army under Ogunşigun, on leaving Modakeke, could not go straight home and make its peace with the new authorities of Ijebuland, as Ogunşigun still felt sore about the fate of the late Awujale and could not be sure of a good reception from the new Awujale and his party. Consequently, on entering Ijebu soil Ogunşigun and his army encamped just beyond the Ife boundary.³ In course of time the Ijebu were able to find a solution to the problems created by the accumulated animosities of the preceding few years and the existence within their country of two hostile armies – one under Ogunşigun and the other under Onafowokan.

The Ekitiparapo were no longer seriously concerned with the foregoing problems between the Modakeke and the Ife and in the

1. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 6 January; C.5114, Johnson to Hamilton, 23 January 1887.

2. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 2 and 20 March and 26 April.

3. C.S.O.1/1/12, Evans to Holland, 28 February 1887; also C.5114, Johnson to Archdeacon Hamilton, 23 January 1887.

Ijebu country, except that, since the possibility of a resumption of hostilities in those quarters could not be ruled out, the Confederacy was obliged to adopt measures to safeguard its interests there. For this reason Prince Fabunmi, when withdrawing from Modakeke in December 1886 or January 1887, placed a high official of the Ekitiparapo at Modakeke.⁴ This official was called an Ajele, but it would be more appropriate to regard him as an ambassador. Until the final settlements in 1893 the Ekitiparapo maintained this ambassador at Modakeke. He was to guard the interests of the Confederacy around Modakeke and Ile-Ife in general, and in particular the interests of the Ekiti and Ijesa people who traded to Ile-Ife, Modakeke and countries beyond.

The failure of the 1886 settlement to terminate the Ofa war had more important effects on the Ekitiparapo. At the latter stages of the peace negotiations in 1886 the Ibadan authorities had been willing to surrender Ofa to the Ilorin, provided the latter would not sack the town.⁵ Consistently till the end, however, Chief Kara of Ilorin had evinced a bloodthirsty resolve to stop at nothing short of sacking Ofa. Consequently, the Ibadan had to continue to defend Ofa, and, when they dispersed from their main camp at Igbajo, the Ibadan were obliged to continue to stay in the north-east to back up their army which was defending Ofa. Instead of going home, therefore, the main Ibadan army stayed on at Ikirun, a few hours' walk from Ofa.

Ikirun was very near to the Ijesa country. The loss of the Ijesa frontier towns to Ibadan in the 1886 settlement had had the effect of making the Ijesa country much more vulnerable to an enemy with his base at Ikirun. An army marching from Ikirun could reach from Ada in Ibadan's territory to Ibokun, right in the heart of the Ijesa territory and only a short distance from Ilesha itself, in less than two hours. Consequently, when the Ibadan, after dispersing from Igbajo, pitched their camp again at Ikirun, the Ekitiparapo authorities had to give serious consideration to their own next moves. In order to guard the country against any future aggression by the Ibadan, the Confederate leaders decided not to disband their forces but to encamp at Imesi-Ile and keep a

4. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 2 March.

5. C.4957, Report of the Special Commissioners, 1886, enclosures in Evans to Stanhope, 10 February 1887 and Higgins to Colonial Office, 20 June 1887.



Chief Ogedemgbe (second from l.), Commander-in-chief of the Ekitiparapo forces, and attendants. Photographed at Incesi-Ile c. 1888.



The Right Rev. Bishop Charles Phillips (seated) with the Rev. E. M. Lijadu and church elders at Ode Ordo, 1901.

close watch on the activities of the Ibadan until the latter left Ikirun and went home.⁶

There was yet another factor contributing to the decision to stay on at Imeṣi-Ile. When the war had started in 1879, the Ekitiparapọ and the Ilorin, as a seal of their alliance, had exchanged contingents. Now, when the final peace negotiations were going on in 1886, the Ekitiparapọ were concerned about the attitude of the Ilorin especially, because they were eager to secure the withdrawal of the Ekitiparapọ contingent serving with the Ilorin army at Oḡfa. But not only were the Ilorin not prepared to make peace with Ibadan over Oḡfa, they also refused to dismiss the Ekitiparapọ contingent or withdraw their own in spite of the strongest representations by the Ekitiparapọ authorities. After the dispersal from camp in 1886 the Confederacy was saddled with the responsibility of continuing the negotiations aimed at securing the withdrawal of their men from Oḡfa.⁷

Until the final complete settlement in 1893 of the wars in the interior the Ekitiparapọ no longer took a direct or active part in the actual conflicts involved. For the reasons stated above, however, the Confederacy continued to have the most profound interest in the events. The circumstances and the attitude of the Confederacy were changing from time to time, but for the whole period from late 1886 to early 1893 two main phases are discernible: the period from October 1886 to July 1887 and the period from late July 1887 to early 1893, with the fall of Oḡfa in July 1887 as the dividing line between the two.

Throughout the period from the settlement of the Confederate armed forces at Imeṣi-Ile in September 1886 to the fall of Oḡfa in July 1887 the Ekitiparapọ were free from any fears of threat from the Ibadan. This was because the Ibadan from all appearances seemed to be sincerely abiding by the 1886 Treaty and to be desirous of a general and final settlement of the remaining troubles in the country. Thus, soon after the departure of the Special Commissioners the Ibadan sent peace envoys to Ilorin to pave the way for a settlement of the Oḡfa War.⁸ They also influenced other rulers, especially the Alafin, the Ijebu and the Ekitiparapọ

6. C.S.O.1/1/12, Evans to Holland, 11 April 1887.

7. C.S.O.1/1/12, Evans to Holland, 11 April 1887.

8. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 March; C.5114, Minutes of interview between Evans and messengers from Ibadan, Modakẹkẹ and Ijebu held in Lagos, 31 January 1887.

authorities, to intervene in the Oḡfa War. Furthermore, Ibadan envoys went to the Ife and Modakeḡe authorities, and to Chief Oḡunḡigun and the Awujale, imploring them to put a quick end to the complications in the Ife and Iḡebu countries.⁹

So much in earnest were the Ibadan authorities that as early as January 1887 there were strong hopes in Ibadan that all wars would soon end and peaceful intercourse be resumed with all the neighbours of Ibadan, including the Eḡba.¹⁰ The Ibadan chiefs continued to offer to surrender Oḡfa to Ilḡrin on the understanding that the town would not be sacked, and they hoped that agreement would soon be reached on this. So optimistic were the Ibadan about this that Ibadan traders felt free to go far into Ilḡrin territory to trade. Also, although the Eḡba-Ibadan war had not been covered by the 1886 Treaty, the longing for peace was so universally felt that Eḡba and Ibadan traders had begun irregularly to break the trade ban and to open up the long-closed roads in anticipation of a final settlement.¹¹

In fact the only obstacles to peace in these months were the Ilḡrin authorities, notably Chief Kara. The Emir of Ilḡrin always received the Ibadan and other envoys royally and was content with the Ibadan handing over of Oḡfa to him.¹² But Kara continued to show that nothing would content him other than the destruction of Oḡfa. Consequently he remained, at best, apathetic to the peace missions. And while Ibadan people, hoping that peace would soon be made, went to trade in the Ilḡrin villages, Kara would not allow the Ilḡrin in his camp to reciprocate by coming to trade in Ibadan territory.¹³ At the same time, to the request of the Ekitiparapḡ leaders that Kara should release their men serving under him at Oḡfa, Kara answered, 'let my men perish with you, and let your men perish with me'.¹⁴

The result was that while the Ekitiparapḡ determined to continue to watch at Imeḡi-Ile until the Ibadan left Ikirun and went

9. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 20 March.

10. C.S.O.1/1/12, Oyebode (then native catechist at Ibadan) to Mr. Hethersett, 22 January 1887.

11. C.S.O.1/1/12, Evans to the Alafin Adyḡemi, 3 January 1887; also Evans to Holland, 11 April 1887.

12. C.5114, Johnson to Archdeacon Hamilton, 23 January 1887; also Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

13. Account given to the Rev. Phillips by an eye-witness from Oḡfa and Ikirun. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 March.

14. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 561.

home, they lived under no immediate threat or fear of the Ibadan until July 1887. They believed that the Ibadan harboured no secret designs against them, and that they were staying at Ikirun only to wind up the war with Ilorin. Only the conduct of Kara in refusing to release the Ekitiparapo contingent appears, in these months, to have constituted a source of anxiety in Confederate circles. But it must, apparently, have been clear that Kara himself was acting under desperate pressures. Obviously, Kara was afraid that if the arrangement whereby Ilorin and Ekitiparapo exchanged contingents was terminated, the Ilorin-Ekitiparapo alliance would come to an end and the Ilorin could no longer hope to obtain the help of the Ekitiparapo which might be needed again in the war with Ibadan. But then there was the hope among Confederate leaders that Ibadan's endeavour for the settlement of the Ofoa War might soon bear fruit, in which case Ilorin would no longer have reason to go on keeping the Ekitiparapo contingent.

In this atmosphere peaceful intercourse developed between the Ibadan and the Ekitiparapo.¹⁵ Ekiti, Ijesa and Igbomina traders went to Ikirun and other towns and villages beyond to trade. Ibadan and other Oyo traders could again move freely at Imesi-Ile and at least a few other areas in the Confederate countries. As early as January 1887 potash from Ilorin and *atin* mats¹⁶ from Ijesa and Ekiti were reported to be on sale at Ibadan after many years' break, and it was optimistically believed at Ibadan that the Ibadan army would, from the look of things, return home from Ikirun and Ofoa by February 1887, and that thereafter the age-old trade between the Oyo and the Ekiti, Ijesa, Igbomina and Akoko would again be fully revived.¹⁷

At the same time Ekiti, Ijesa, Aoko and Igbomina slaves in Ibadan who were able to redeem themselves were finding it easier to buy their freedom and make their way openly through the Ibadan territory to their own homes. In fact so cordial did the relationship between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan become that the Ibadan authorities came to take much interest in the fate of the Ekitiparapo men held up in the Ilorin camp at Ofoa. On one

15. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 March.

16. *atin* mats: mats made from a type of plant found mostly in the eastern districts of Ijesa (around Ipetu and Ikeji) and also in the Ogotun and Effon districts of Ekiti.

17. C.S.O.1/1/12, Oyebo to Hethersett, 22 January 1887.

occasion the Ibadan chiefs suggested a plan of escape whereby these men could flee from the Ilorin camp to Oḡfa and from there travel under Ibadan escort to their country.¹⁸ And frequent exchanges of communication and friendly gestures between Imeṣi-Ile and Ikirun made the possibility of misunderstandings very slim in these months.¹⁹

It was not, of course, that the Ekitiparapọ relaxed completely. They had suffered so much and fought the Ibadan for so long that no matter how peace-loving the Ibadan might appear, secret fear of them remained in the minds of Confederate leaders. Consequently, arrangements were made to forestall any surprise aggression by placing garrisons in most of the border villages. The garrison at Ibokun was now strengthened and a small patrol post established near the site of the deserted camp.

Furthermore, in the first months of 1887, when news was received at Imeṣi-Ile that the Ibadan had begun to make farms in the Ikirun countryside, the Confederate authorities ordered all their men to start making farms around Imeṣi-Ile. By March, large expanses of Imeṣi-Ile farmland had been cultivated and many types of crops – yams, beans and corn – planted.²⁰

Finally, the leaders of the Ekitiparapọ also continued to do everything in order to ensure the continued opening of the Ondo road to their people. As far as the Ekitiparapọ were concerned in this respect, the major problem had always been how to maintain the goodwill of the Ondo, the most powerful state of the road. In the first months of 1887 the Confederate leaders went on sending rich presents to the Ondo chiefs and praying them to keep the road open. Fraternal messages were sent frequently from Imeṣi-Ile to Ondo, and the Ondo chiefs reciprocated by keeping the road open to Ekitiparapọ traders. Even disturbances along the road owing to an Ondo invasion of the Ikalẹ country in March 1887 did not much affect the trade of Ekiti and Ijeṣa people there.²¹

The months between October 1886 and July 1887, then, saw the Ekitiparapọ maintaining a powerful armed guard against the

18. cf. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 562.

19. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 March; also account of these months as given by the Ibadan chiefs in C.S.O.1/1/12, Balogun and other Ibadan chiefs to Capt. Moloney, 10 August 1887.

20. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 19 March.

21. *Ibid.*, entries for 14 and 19 March.

enemy and attempting to put an end to any active commitments in the continuing Ilorin-Ibadan war by withdrawing their men serving in the Ilorin army. The Confederacy was not under any immediate pressure from the enemy, but decades of unpleasant contacts with the Ibadan had taught its leaders to be very watchful even when the Ibadan appeared to be at their friendliest.

On 19 July 1887 Ofofa suddenly fell to the Ilorin.²² The events which led to this collapse had begun about two years before.²³ Since 1885 the Ofofa people had been sharply divided over a succession dispute. The new Olofa with his supporters faced a strong opposition party which had supported the defeated candidate. Only the fear of the Ilorin army outside their walls and the influence of the Ibadan army at Ofofa had tended to minimise the tension between the two parties. By 1887, however, disagreements over the war policy began to have the effect of widening the breach. While the Olofa's party insisted that the Ofofa must prosecute the war until they had driven the Ilorin away and freed Ofofa from Ilorin domination, the opposition party felt that the war had gone on long enough and that some accommodation ought to be found with Ilorin. Furthermore, while the Olofa's party regarded the Ibadan army at Ofofa as brothers who had come to aid the Ofofa against the Ilorin oppressors, the opposition party regarded the Ibadan army more as an army of occupation in the service of an imperialist power (Ibadan) whose overlordship was indeed more oppressive than that of Ilorin.²⁴

The breach worsened towards a crisis in 1887. As early as March observers were predicting that owing to the division among the Ofofa, the town was bound to collapse sooner or later.²⁵ The Ibadan authorities at Ikirun, although still determined to continue with the defence of Ofofa, were beginning to say that if

22. *Ibid.*, entry for 1 August.

23. cf. Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp. 564-6; also Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer of Ilorin Province*, London 1921, pp. 97-9.

24. Hence the song:

'*Awa ko še ti Ibadan mo o,
T'onirugbon l'a o še.*'

(*'No more are we for the Ibadans, with the long-bearded our lot we'll cast.'*) Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 565.

25. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 March.

the opposition party, which enjoyed the majority sympathy in Ọffa, attempted to sell their town to the Ilorin, the Ibadan war boys would be ordered to conspire with the Ilorin to destroy and loot the town.²⁶ By 18 July the Ọlọfa's party and the Ibadan army had to escape from Ọffa in order to save themselves from being betrayed into the hands of the Ilorin by the other party. The next morning when the fact became known, the new leaders of Ọffa went with drummers and dancers to Kara's camp to offer their submission. Later that morning Kara entered Ọffa in triumph and, after killing his new friends in cold blood, had the town sacked.²⁷

The news of the fall of Ọffa was received with jubilation at Imeṣi-Ile.²⁸ The Ibadan had always shown that they were staying on at Ikirun only to be able to back up their army which was defending Ọffa, and that as soon as a solution was found to the Ọffa impasse, they would start on their homeward journey. Furthermore, they had repeatedly said that they were willing to concede Ọffa to the Ilorin, provided the latter would not go on to sack it. As far as the Ekitiparapọ were concerned, Ọffa had now passed into the hands of the Ilorin, and that was at least a solution

26. *Ibid.*

27. Johnson, in his *History of the Yorubas, op. cit.*, p. 566, has told the full story. On entering Ọffa, Kara sent horsemen to block all the gates of the town. He then asked all the chiefs and important people still in the town to appear before him, and they all came with leaves on their heads, a sign of submission. When they had gathered, Kara said to them, 'You now say you are all on my side; if that be so, why is it you held out so long against me, and did not open your gates secretly for my troops to enter? You know now the Ibadans have gone then you say you declare yourselves for me.' And as they lay prostrate before him, he coolly gave the order that they should all be slaughtered. 'Thereupon followed the process; a man appeared with a butcher's knife in hand, and another with a basin of water. Seizing these prostrate forms one by one, they were forcibly held down with head and neck raised and the throat coolly cut, and the blood thoroughly drained and the corpse thrown away. This done, the knife was washed in the basin of water - after the manner of slaughtering animals, and then they proceeded to the second, and third, and so on till they had slaughtered the whole of them.' The order was then given that the town should be burnt down.

28. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 1 August. Not only the Ekitiparapọ were happy at the fall of Ọffa. The Ifẹ were also happy the Ibadan could now go home and all wars come to an end. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 25 July.

to the problem. The only unpleasant aspect of this solution was that Offa had been sacked, but then the whole world knew that this had not been the fault of the Ibadan but that of the Offa themselves. Consequently, the Ekitiparapo now expected that the Ibadan would immediately disperse from Ikirun and go home, thereby making it possible for the Confederate forces concentrated at Imesi-Ile to put an end to the armed guard which they had kept since October 1886.²⁹ Also, the Ekitiparapo hoped they would now be able to withdraw their men who had been serving with the Ilorin forces.

In reality, however, things were not so easy for the Ibadan. If the Ilorin had shown themselves satisfied with the conquest of Offa and had put an end to their aggressive policy, it is probable that the Ibadan would have begun to think of going home. But the manner in which Offa fell into their hands only encouraged the Ilorin to further acts of aggression and conquest. Moreover, the fate of Offa frightened the other towns and villages in the neighbouring Ibolo district between Offa and Ikirun.³⁰ The people of Erin, Ijabe, Okuku, Igbayi, Qyan, Iba, Ekusa, Okuwa, Agboye, Ori and Asi therefore deserted their towns and fled for protection to the Ibadan at Ikirun. Consequently, Kara found himself, in a short while, master of the whole Ibolo district with the way made open to further conquests to the south.

Inisa, the only town in the Ibolo district which, being very far south and very near Ikirun, had not been deserted, became the victim of harassments by the Ilorin cavalry. Soon, the Ilorin horsemen were penetrating beyond Inisa, over the River Otin to the Ikirun farms, and Kara's envoys were telling the Ibadan authorities to make haste and quit Ikirun. In short, the Ilorin were again showing themselves ambitious to readvance into the territories from which the Ibadan had long ago expelled them.

A sort of irregular fighting now developed between the Ilorin and the Ibadan and continued until 1893. The Ilorin horsemen came down from their camp outside Offa, harassing and ravaging the Ikirun countryside.³¹ The defences of Ikirun itself, however, were so strong that the Ibadan army inside it lived without fear

29. *Ibid.*, entry for 1 August.

30. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Holland, 8 October 1887.

31. C.S.O.1/3/2, Denton to Colonial Secretary, Despatch Confidential, 12 November 1889.

of a direct Ilorin attack on the town.³² Even in the irregular fighting in the countryside the Ilorin were not doing very well. The country between Ofofa and Ikirun, being very hilly, was not suitable for manoeuvring horses. Moreover, the Ibadan war boys retained their superiority over the Ilorin in any close engagements and consequently, as soon as the Ibadan war boys appeared, the Ilorin quickly fled. Quite often the Ilorin horsemen ran into serious trouble and only managed to escape heavy losses because of the speed of their horses.³³ On other occasions, however, the Ibadan war boys, by pursuing the fleeing horsemen too far, ran into ambushes and lost some men. The Ibadan soon learned to curtail the frequency and effectiveness of the flying cavalry raids by establishing outposts at Inisa and other villages near Ikirun. Thereafter the skirmishes became few and far between but nevertheless continued until 1893.

In the circumstances it was not possible for the Ibadan to withdraw from Ikirun and go home. In fact rather than withdraw, the Ibadan were obliged to call up to Ikirun their army from Modakeke, which since January had been encamped at Osoybo under Chief Akintola.³⁴ Similarly the Ilorin continued to refuse to release the Ekitiparapo men serving in their army.³⁵

At Imesi-Ile there was an almost complete lack of understanding of the position of the Ibadan. The hope that the Ibadan would leave Ikirun as soon as a solution had been found to the Ofofa problem had been far too strong. Now that the solution had been found, it was not easy for most men in Confederate circles to understand why the Ibadan could not go home.

Traditional fears and suspicions of the Ibadan came prominently to the fore.³⁶ It was insisted that the Ibadan had been only tricking the Ekitiparapo since 1886 and that they would resume hostilities against the Ekiti and Ijesa countries at any time. The leaders of the Ekitiparapo were therefore urged to act quickly so

32. C.S.O.1/1/13, G. T. Carter's Report of the Lagos interior expedition.

33. C.S.O.1/3/2, Denton to Colonial Secretary, Despatch Confidential, 12 November 1889.

34. After withdrawing from Modakeke, Akintola encamped at Osoybo. C.5114, Johnson to Hamilton, 23 January 1887; also C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 28 September 1887, enclosures in Moloney to Holland, 8 October 1887.

35. C.S.O.1/3/2, Denton to Colonial Secretary, Despatch Confidential, 12 November 1889.

36. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Colonial Secretary, 8 October 1887.

that the initiative in the resumed war might not pass into the hands of the Ibadan.

Among the Confederate rank and file, there soon appeared three main lines of thought on this situation. The first and by far the most popular was that the Ekitiparapọ should immediately join the Ilọrin in launching an all-out attack on the Ibadan. Its chief advocates were the emigré group at Imẹsi-Ile under the leadership of Gureje.³⁷ Gureje and his colleagues had not found it possible since the conclusion of the 1886 Treaty to reconcile themselves to the clause of that Treaty which had readjusted the boundary between Ibadan and Ijeṣa territories and assigned the four Ijeṣa villages to Ibadan. They maintained that the Confederate war chiefs had betrayed the Ekiti and Ijeṣa people by agreeing to that clause, and that they must right the wrong by attacking the Ibadan and seizing all Ijeṣa territory from them.³⁸

Until the fall of Oḡfa these views had not been popular. But after that incident, Gureje and his friends came to symbolise an attitude which was coming to be popularly believed among the Confederate war boys and the general populace at Imẹsi-Ile to be the only realistic attitude. As most people saw it, it was a question of the Ekitiparapọ pouncing on the Ibadan or waiting to be pounced upon by the Ibadan.³⁹ And the oft-repeated statement of some of the Ibadan chiefs that the main reason they were now holding on at Ikirun was to have time to resettle the people of Oḡfa and the neighbouring villages⁴⁰ could only strengthen the suspicion that the Ibadan were not honest but were only waiting for an opportune time to attack the Ekitiparapọ.

A further factor immensely strengthened the arguments of Gureje and his colleagues. Before the fall of Oḡfa Chief Kara had remained loyal enough to his Ekitiparapọ allies. He had, for instance, prevented the Emir from yielding to secret proposals from certain Ibadan chiefs that the Ilọrin and Ibadan should

37. Phillips 1/1, Report of the interior by the Rev. Charles Phillips who visited the Confederate headquarters at Imẹsi-Ile in 1887 and 1888; Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October; C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

38. Phillips 1/1, Notes by the Rev. Charles Phillips of his visit to Imẹsi-Ile in October 1887; Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October.

39. *Ibid.*

40. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Colonial Secretary, 8 October 1887.

combine in a common assault on the Ekitiparapọ.⁴¹ Therefore, the Confederate leaders had found it easy to trust him. After the fall of Oḡfa, however, it was no longer so easy to be sure about Kara. Now that he was fighting face to face with the main Ibadan army, he showed more than ever before that he expected his allies, the Ekitiparapọ, to come to his aid actively and take the Ibadan in the rear. His agents roamed the length and breadth of the country trying to whip up support for the Ilḡrin cause among the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Ife.⁴² At Imeṣi-Ile therefore, the fear was growing that if Kara did not get the support to which he believed he was entitled and which he so fervently solicited, he might turn round and attack the Ekitiparapọ.⁴³ His character strengthened such fears. Kara had become pathetically addicted to strong liquors and increasingly subject to those fits of fury and insanity which were to mar his last days.⁴⁴ His moods changed so often and so violently that nobody could be sure what he might do the next moment. If in one of his fits he should decide to attack the Ekitiparapọ, then he would find the northern districts of Ekiti open and undefended before him; the Ekitiparapọ would find itself facing an Ilḡrin invasion from the north and an Ibadan army at Ikirun – a situation which could easily encourage the Ibadan to resume hostilities and involve the Confederacy in a war on two fronts.

Very soon, Gureje's war cries won the adherence of the Ekiti ḡbas – the Ore, the Ajero and the Olojudo – who were still at Imeṣi-Ile. In October 1887, these rulers told Charles Phillips that they wanted an immediate recourse to warlike operations against the Ibadan 'whom they regarded as enemies and deceivers'. They

41. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October; C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

42. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

43. *Ibid.*

44. A man of undoubted military ability, Kara the Balogun Gambari of Ilḡrin was, unfortunately, emotionally unstable. He was for days at times almost continuously under the influence of alcohol, and not infrequently he went completely mad and had to be chained down. In spite of this handicap however, Kara remained the effective leader of the Ilḡrin army until his death c. 1891. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888; also Captain A. F. M. Ferryman's Report of his visit to Oḡfa, 3 October 1889, enclosure in Report by Major Macdonald of an Expedition to Ilḡrin, Sept.-Oct. 1889, (N.A.I.), MOP4/4.

said that the white man had done well in 1886, but they feared that the Ibadan were now only looking for an opportunity to begin aggression against the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries. The Ibadan, they insisted, should go home immediately or else be treated as enemies at once. The Ekitiparapọ should soon begin to support the Ilọrin who, although 'Fulanis and Gambaris', had proved themselves loyal friends of the Ekitiparapọ in the latter's struggle to throw off the Ibadan yoke. Phillips failed to change the mind of any of the ọbas by reminding them that they and the Ibadan were brothers, that the Ilọrin had once fought them in the past and that they should not let their fear of Ibadan drive them into the hands of Ilọrin.⁴⁵

The second line of thought was only slightly different from the first. It agreed with the first in regarding the Ibadan as dangerous and treacherous enemies, and in insisting, irrespective of what the Ibadan were facing from the Ilọrin, that the Ibadan should pack up from Ikirun and go home now that the Ọffa deadlock had settled itself. But it emphasised that the Ekitiparapọ should strictly avoid going to war with the Ibadan but should remain neutral in the present fighting between the Ilọrin and the Ibadan. The chief protagonist of this view was the Ọwa of Ileṣa.⁴⁶

Finally, the third view was the view held by Ogedemgbe, Fabunmi, Olugbosun and a vast majority of the war chiefs. These war chiefs were alone in understanding the difficult situation of the Ibadan. Although they admitted the necessity of always being on their guard against the Ibadan, they would not agree that the Ibadan had deceived the Ekitiparapọ in anything since signing the Treaty in 1886. If the Ibadan were not moving from Ikirun after the fall of Ọffa, they understood it was because the Ilọrin made it impossible for them to do so. As they saw it, there was no ground for any immediately serious fear of the Ibadan and no justification for resorting to hostile acts against them. They regarded as irresponsible the popular clamour that Ibadan traders at Imeṣi-Ile should be seized.⁴⁷

The feelings aroused by these divergences of opinion were very strong and tended for a while to shatter discipline amongst the Confederate rank and file.⁴⁸ Gureje and his colleagues, while

45. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October.

46. *Ibid.* 47. *Ibid.*

48. Charles Phillips spoke of 'the absence among them [Ekitiparapọ] of discipline and respect for authority' in the months following the fall

openly accusing the war chiefs of pursuing a dangerous policy, repeatedly assumed authority irregularly and wrote letters on behalf of the Confederacy without consulting the war chiefs.⁴⁹ At other times, the chiefs were challenged to defend their policy before the general assembly of the people.⁵⁰ Angry persons travelling from Imeṣi-Ile spread fear all over the Confederate countries about alleged preparations by the Ibadan to reconquer their towns and infected the minds of people with their mistrust of the policies of the war chiefs. Delegations were therefore sent from all over these countries to Imeṣi-Ile to beg the war chiefs to make the last and final effort to destroy the Ibadan. At Imeṣi-Ile itself there were rowdy scenes, noisy meetings and public denunciations of men in high places.⁵¹

Consequently, for a long time after the fall of Oṣṣa the Ekitiparapọ authorities had to contend with indiscipline among their people and lived poised on the horns of an agonising dilemma as they were undecided whether or not to join with the Ilorin in fighting the Ibadan.⁵² At times they were able to control the situation, but at other times their hold on affairs was quite weak and they were made to take actions which could have led to renewal of war with the Ibadan. For instance, early in 1888 a group of Ekiti and Ijeṣa men who had recently redeemed themselves at Ibadan and were on their way home was waylaid by unknown persons. On 4 February the Ekitiparapọ war boys, insisting that the attackers of this group could only have been Ibadan men, compelled Ogedemgbe to endorse their seizure of Ibadan people who had come to trade at Imeṣi-Ile. Forty-eight of

of Oṣṣa. C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

49. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October.

50. For instance, on Tuesday, 18 October 1887, Charles Phillips visited Imeṣi-Ile to read the Confederates a letter from the Governor of Lagos appealing to them to keep off the war between Ilorin and Ibadan. When the letter was read to Ogedemgbe and the chiefs, they expressed their satisfaction with its contents. But Gureje and his men, who were not satisfied with the letter, became troublesome and stubbornly insisted that Ogedemgbe should call a public meeting to test the people's attitude to the letter. Ogedemgbe however refused to do any such thing. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 18 October.

51. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entries for 18 and 19 October; also C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

52. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Colonial Secretary, 8 October 1887.

these traders were then seized, but many of them were later released and the others sold to Ondo traders.⁵³

The Ibadan did not reply to these hostile acts. No doubt they were aware of the general anxiety of the Confederate chiefs to avoid further hostilities and they believed that for the Ibadan to engage in reprisals would be to strengthen the hands of the war party at Imeṣi-Ile. And they knew that to reopen the war with the Ekitiparapọ now that they (the Ibadan) were fighting the Ilorin cavalry in the Ikirun farms would put their army at Ikirun between the jaws of a nutcracker. Thus, to the endeavour of the Ibadan to avoid clashes with the Ekitiparapọ and to a sincere desire to honour the 1886 Treaty was now added the realisation that hostilities against the Ekitiparapọ would mean a dangerous war on two fronts. The Ibadan authorities therefore contented themselves with official representations to the Ekitiparapọ authorities and complaints to the Government of Lagos.⁵⁴

They also took firm steps, however, to protect themselves, in view of the growing restlessness at Imeṣi-Ile. The walls of Ikirun were strengthened and a new wall was added to include with Ikirun the site of Iragbiji about half a mile off.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the Ibadan started again to interfere at Modakeke and to reinforce the forces at Ikirun with men procured from Modakeke.⁵⁶ Finally, the border towns (Igbajọ, Ada, Otan-Aiyegbaju and Irẹṣi) were fortified against surprise attacks and communication between them and the towns on the Ijeṣa side of the border was reduced.⁵⁷

As might be expected, all the preparations on the Ibadan side tended to appear to observers on the Ekitiparapọ side as signs of secret plans by the Ibadan for an assault on the Confederates. Apparently they strengthened the conviction of Gureje and his adherents that the Ibadan had secret designs against the Ekitiparapọ, and were used by them to demonstrate the truth of their contentions to those who might doubt. Consequently, it became

53. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entry for 4 February.

54. C.S.O. 1/1/12, Moloney to Holland, 13 February 1888; also Moloney to Knutsford, 10 August 1888.

55. Phillips 1/1, from a letter by J. Harrison (of Breadfruit Street, Olowogbowo, Lagos) to the Rev. Charles Phillips, 12 December 1887 (attached to Phillips's 1887 Diary).

56. Phillips 1/1, Harrison to Phillips, 12 December 1887.

57. *Ibid.*

more difficult for the Ekitiparapo war chiefs to check their men and acts of hostility against the Ibadan became more frequent.⁵⁸ Such hostile acts took the form of kidnapping excursions by small bands of men into the Ikirun farms. But the frontier defences of the Ibadan were so good that these expeditions were rarely successful. In one such expedition about the middle of 1888 the Ekitiparapo war boys caught four persons, but in the next expedition they lost ten.⁵⁹ And some time later Bolarinde, the brother of Prince Fabunmi, was captured by the Ibadan while raiding the Ikirun farms and was sent to Captain Moloney in Lagos as proof of their sufferings at the hands of the Ekitiparapo.⁶⁰

√ It would seem that some war chiefs soon began to lend their support to the activities against the Ibadan, as the capture of Chief Bolarinde would seem to suggest. Certain private messages which passed between the Owa of Ilesha and Charles Phillips of Ondo late in 1888 throw useful light on the difficult position of these chiefs. To the surprise expressed by Phillips at the acts of hostility emanating from Imesi-Ile, the Owa answered that 'all their [Confederates'] recent doings were only a ruse to satisfy and disconcert the Ilorins whom they do not wish to displease.' Phillips noted that the Owa's answer 'helps to explain the difficult position the Ekitis occupy and the double game to which they have consequently to resort.'⁶¹ At the same time as the Owa and Phillips were exchanging messages, Ogedemgbe informed Phillips in confidence that in spite of the present hostile acts against the Ibadan he and other war chiefs did not intend to involve the Confederacy in the war between the Ilorin and the Ibadan.⁶² It would seem therefore that although the chiefs did not really have their hearts in the present goings-on, some connived or consented for fear that if the Ekitiparapo did not make at least a show of supporting the Ilorin against the Ibadan, the former might invade Igbomina and northern Ekiti, which were excessively vulnerable from Offa.

The effect of these haphazard acts of hostility against the

58. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entry for 10 July.

59. *Ibid.*

60. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 31 October 1888.

61. C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

62. C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888.

Ibadan was to curtail very seriously the cordial relations which had existed between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan before the fall of Ofa. For most of 1888 the roads between the Ekiti-Ijesa country and the Ibadan territory were again closed, and it became unsafe for their respective peoples to venture into each other's territory.⁶³ As the hostile acts were not continuous, however, the break in friendly communications was only intermittent. By the middle of October 1888, for instance, Moloney could report from Lagos that the estrangement seemed to have been removed and friendly intercourse resumed; further, that an agreement had been reached between the adjacent border towns under which they arranged to settle on the spot *inter se* such differences as might from time to time arise.⁶⁴ But the peaceful relations continued to be interrupted again and again until 1893. When Alvan Millson, the Assistant Colonial Secretary of Lagos, visited the Confederate camp in 1890, the strained situation led him to conclude that the Ekitiparapo were in fact actively involving themselves in the Ilorin-Ibadan war on the side of Ilorin.⁶⁵

While the situation thus remained uncertain in the north, the Confederate leaders were obliged to keep a close watch on their main source of military stores - the Ondo road. In the years after 1887 the Ekitiparapo encountered more difficulty along this road than at any time before. Most of this trouble arose from the growing resentment of the indigenous peoples along the road - the Ondo, the Ilaje and the Ikafe - to the growing power of the Ekiti and Ijesa colonists of Aiyesan who competed for the lion's share of the trade and were notorious for their hard business methods. Moreover, the Ondo authorities were infuriated by the refusal of the Aiyesan colonists to acknowledge the overlordship of the Ondo from whom they had originally obtained land for the establishment of their colony. Thus in September 1887, there was a very explosive dispute between the Aiyesan people and the Ikafe on account of the palm-oil trade, a dispute which nearly led to a blood-bath.⁶⁶ Next December, the Ondo nearly sent an army to wipe out Aiyesan owing to the treatment meted out by Chief Takuro, the leader of the Aiyesan colony, to an Ondo debtor of

63. C.S.O.1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888.

64. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 15 October 1888.

65. C.S.O.1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 19 April 1890.

66. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1887 Diary, entry for 6 September.

his.⁶⁷ Even then, the road was closed for most of 1888 by the Ondo authorities and the goods of Ekiti and Ijeṣa traders at Ondo were confiscated.⁶⁸ When Takurṣ died in 1890 and the Aiyesan leaders still denied Ondo ownership to the land on which the colony was situated, the Ondo replied by closing the road for most of 1891 and part of 1892.⁶⁹

The leaders of the Ekitiparapṣ Society reacted to all these by resuming discussion on the possibility of opening the Ṣni River for commerce so as to by-pass Ondo.⁷⁰ But the Ekitiparapṣ chiefs at Imṣi-Ile were very much worried that the activities of their men at Aiyesan were making enemies in that part of the country for all Ekiti and Ijeṣa people.⁷¹ Messengers were therefore sent to plead with the Aiyesan colonists. Realising that talk of opening up the Ṣni River and by-passing Ondo could only succeed in completely alienating the Ondo, the chiefs brought up powerful arguments against the project.⁷²

The more important assignment, however, was to placate Aiyesan's enemies, especially the Ondo. Between January 1888 and March 1892, therefore, Ekitiparapṣ envoys were almost continually at Ondo. Rich gifts were sent to the Ondo chiefs, and to Charles Phillips, whose intervention was sought.⁷³ Early in 1892, Carter visited that part of the country and, in response to appeals from the Confederate leaders, intervened in the dispute between Aiyesan and Ondo.⁷⁴ As a result of his intervention, the situation improved so much that a mission of the Ekitiparapṣ from Imṣi-Ile in February to March 1892 succeeded in com-

67. *Ibid.*, entry for 10 December.

68. *Ibid.*; also Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entries for 11-26 January; C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

69. C.S.O.1/1/13, Denton to Knutsford, 19 September 1891; C.S.O.1/1/13 Carter to Knutsford, 14 March 1892. There was some confusion over the question of ownership of the land on which Aiyesan stood, as the people of Ibu in the creeks were also claiming it. The Aiyesan people encouraged the Ibu people in this claim, hoping thus to avoid the very powerful Ondo.

70. C.S.O.1/1/13, Denton to Knutsford, 10 September 1891.

71. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter to Knutsford, 14 March 1892.

72. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entries for 11-26 January.

73. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1888 Diary, entries for 11-26 January, 26 February-2 April; C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 23 June 1888; Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888; Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1892 Diary, entries for January-March.

74. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter to Knutsford, 14 March 1892.

pletely restoring normal relations. On 11 March the Confederate envoys, acting on behalf of their masters, and the Ondo authorities swore eternal friendship between their two peoples, the Ondo pledging themselves never again to molest Ijeṣa passengers on their road and the envoys swearing that the Ekitiparapọ would never engage in hostile acts against the kingdom of Ondo.⁷⁵ In these ways the Ekitiparapọ succeeded with great difficulty in safeguarding their main line of contact with the source of ammunition and other imported goods on the Atlantic seaboard.

For the Ekitiparapọ, then, the period from 1886 to 1893 was quite different from that from 1878 to 1886. Before 1886 the Confederacy was engaged in actual combat on more than one front with the enemy. But after the Treaty of 1886 the Confederate leaders held firmly to the view that their objective for taking up arms in the first instance had been fulfilled and they therefore, although with difficulty, refrained from leading their men into new combat, their only concern being to watch the borders of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries against any resurgence of Ibadan aggression.

In the midst of the comparative leisure of those years of armed watching, there flourished a ferment of ideas concerning the future of the Ekitiparapọ. Most of the thoughts on the future of the Confederacy arose, it appears, from the abiding fear of the Ibadan. It was generally felt that though the Ibadan had been repulsed for now and might soon withdraw their armies from Ikirun, it would yet be foolhardy³ to think that their wings had been clipped for all time. They were very resourceful and it was only reasonable to fear that they might again resume their career of conquests. Therefore, it was necessary for the leaders of the Ekitiparapọ to make provision for that future.

Apart from the fear of Ibadan, there was also a growing apprehension about the true intentions of the Ilorin. It was not possible to forget that the Ilorin had once attempted to make conquests in the Igbomina, Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries. Moreover, under the guise of being allies, Ilorin people were freely travelling and residing in all corners of the Confederate countries. Many of such Ilorin travellers and residents were known agents of Chief Kara and were actively soliciting throughout those countries for support

75. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1892 Diary, entry for 11 March.

for an active participation by the Ekitiparapo in the Ilorin-Ibadan war.⁷⁶ Above all, the continued detention at the Ilorin camp at odds of Ekitiparapo men, in spite of all attempts by the Confederate authorities to secure their release, was gradually being seen to have sinister motives. There was a growing feeling among the chiefs, especially those from northern Ekiti, that after the Ibadan had gone, some reckoning would sooner or later have to be made with the Ilorin.

Another development which might have worried the Ekitiparapo was the growing menace of the Nupe from the direction of the Akoko country. The Nupe had subdued parts of the Akoko country and had begun to make incursions into the Ekiti country around Ikofo and Gbonyin districts. In the latter area, Aduloju, from his headquarters at Imesi-Lasigidi, had repulsed the Nupe at least twice, but it was becoming obvious that some greater power would be needed to keep the Nupe out of the Ekiti country and if possible expel them from Akoko. It is conceivable that the Nupe problem would have weighed very heavily with Ikofo chiefs at Imesi-Ile and that, therefore, the feeling would be growing among the Ekitiparapo that this problem too would one day demand an effort from the Confederacy.⁷⁷

Finally, there were idealists, especially among the emigrés, who hoped to see the Confederacy perpetuated. Having participated in the power, the greatness and the pride which its formation and achievements had conferred on the Ekiti and Ijesa peoples, such men wanted it to continue in one form or another. They were influenced not so much by immediate fears of Ilorin or Ibadan but by utopian hopes of a gigantic empire comprising the Ijesa, Ekiti, Igbomina and Akoko countries.

Indeed most men wished the Confederacy, after the present state of armed watching had ended, to be perpetuated in one form or another. There were, however, many divergent views on the form it should assume after the war. First, some people, mostly members of the emigré group, wanted it to continue to exist in much the same form in which it had existed since its

76. C.S.O. 1/1/12, Phillips to Moloney, 3 September 1888, enclosure in Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

77. Charles Phillips, who travelled through the Akoko country in 1894, found the Nupe in control of most of Akoko and Aduloju keeping guard at Imesi-Lasigidi. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entries for 8-11 December. See also Beeley, J. H.: *Intelligence Report on the Akoko District*, 1934, pp. 16-17.

formation, but with the important innovation that it would then have a sort of crowned president from among the kings. And since most of the influential emigré elements closely connected with the Ekitiparapọ were of Ijeṣa origin, it was advocated that the crowned president should be no other person than the Ọwa of Ileṣa whose territories, it was claimed, constituted the single largest kingdom in the eastern countries.⁷⁸ Such a view was limited to the emigré circle and was regarded as impracticable or even dangerous by most Ekiti and Ijeṣa chiefs. However, Gureje, who was very influential at Imeṣi-Ile, is said to have been very enthusiastic about it.⁷⁹

Of the many other views on this subject, the one which seems to have gained most popularity in the last years at Imeṣi-Ile was the one which sought to resettle the Ekiti and Ijeṣa peoples. It had long been believed among the Confederates that the Ibadan owed their unmatched power to the fact that they were settled in one single large city. This concentration of huge numbers of people in one town was the only thing, it was said, that could explain the great successes of the Ibadan, 'a lawless people . . . without principle upon which they acted, and without a constitution or even a king'.⁸⁰ This was the secret behind the ability of the Ibadan to bring tens of thousands of war boys to the field at short notice and to maintain large armies on many fronts at the same time and for great lengths of time.

From this premise it was concluded that if the peoples making up the Ekitiparapọ could resettle themselves in one or two large centres, they would become invincible. Apparently there were various opinions on the number of such settlements to be established and on their sites. It seems that some suggested having all the Ekiti and Ijeṣa in a single town while others suggested that two towns should be established, one for the Ijeṣa, possibly at or near Ileṣa, and the other for the Ekiti somewhere in northern Ekiti.

78. For views on the Ọwa's kingdom typical of the emigrés, see C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre: 'A note on towns destroyed in the Ijeṣa country by the Ibadans.'

79. Gureje was so committed to the idea of the Ekitiparapọ that, even after the disbandment of the Confederate army in 1893, he remained close to Ogedemgbe as his adviser. C.S.O.1/1/14, Carter to Ripon, 23 August 1894.

80. C.M.S. (Y) 1/7/5, Meffre: 'A note on towns destroyed in the Ijeṣa country by the Ibadans'.

The man whose name has been most closely connected with this scheme was the Ore of Ọtun, Ọkinbaloye, who from the outbreak of the war until his death some months before the dispersal from Imẹsi-Ile in 1893, lived at Imẹsi-Ile. No doubt influenced by the extreme northern position of his kingdom, which made it bear the brunt each time Ilọrin invaded the Ekiti country, he was worried about what the Ilọrin might do after this war with Ibadan. He has been credited with the saying, 'Mind, we are not sweeping our house clean of the men with the facial marks [i.e. the Ibadan] in order to create room for the men with the beard [the Fulani of Ilọrin]. I am afraid, the day of our final struggle is still ahead of us.'⁸¹

It would seem, therefore that the Ore offered his town to be used for this experiment of consolidating all the Ekiti people in one large town, although it is probable that other people had other sites in view.⁸² The idea seems to have been that each of the towns of Ekiti would be evacuated and its people would move to their own section of the new site which would then become a quarter in the proposed town. Each such quarter might continue to bear the name of the town of its origin or any other name as the people might choose. After settlement, the ọbas would come together to fashion out a system of government for the new metropolis. Ten years were to be allowed for all the towns to move, after which any town which still refused to move might be treated as a conquered town. For defensive purposes, a chain of frontier villages would be established along the more vulnerable sectors of the borders of Ekiti.

Nothing came out of this scheme. It would have been extremely difficult to put such a plan, which would have involved the transplanting of thousands of people living in hundreds of towns and villages scattered over the whole of the Ekiti country, into effect. Ọkinbaloye died about 1891, but the evidence strongly suggests that the plan continued to be popular at Imẹsi-Ile until 1893.

In the end, then, the leaders of the Confederacy, when preparing to disperse from Imẹsi-Ile early in 1893, had to content

81. From the Ọlojaoke of Imẹsi-Ile, 1964.

82. Ọtun tradition has it that Ọtun was specifically chosen for the site of the new town and that many of the Ekiti rulers had already sent their representatives there to choose the sites of their quarters. However, according to popular tradition at Obo, it was Ewu, and not Ọtun, that was so chosen.

themselves with making all member states subscribe to an oath aimed at preserving the sense of community of interests and common obligations which had constituted the spirit behind the Confederacy. All the chiefs and representatives of the member states swore on behalf of their peoples, first that they would never again resort to armed conflict against any of their Ekiti, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Akoko neighbours. In any dispute, they would accept it as an obligation to inform the other members of the Ekitiparapo and to submit to their arbitration. Even in their own internal affairs, especially in cases of major strife between the kings and their subjects, they would also invite and submit to the intervention of members of the Confederacy.

Furthermore, everybody swore that whenever they received any call to intervene in any dispute either within or between states, they would immediately send their representatives to join the representatives of the other states in restoring peace to the troubled spot. Finally, the oath made it a strict obligation binding on every member state always to regard the security of all parts of the Confederate countries as its concern and duty. To this end, it was laid down that whenever any part of these countries was menaced by any foreign power, all the states would make haste to send their fighting men to join together to repulse the aggressor.

In the first months of 1893 Governor G. T. Carter of Lagos travelled in person to the interior in order to put an end to the wars that were still going on there and send the belligerents home from their camps.⁸³ This was to be the final act of a series of peace negotiations and moves which had been going on since the end of 1886.

Most of the peace moves were undertaken by the British administration of Lagos. The troubles in the Ijeṣu country arising from the hostilities between the party of the Awujale Aboki on the one hand and the party of the late Awujale under Ogunṣigun on the other, plus the traditional reluctance of the Ijeṣu to allow free traffic through their country to non-Ijeṣu traders, resulted in the continued closure of the Ijeṣu roads.⁸⁴

83. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter to Ripon, 14 March 1893; also C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter's General Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition.

84. C.S.O.1/1/12, Evans to Holland, 28 February 1887; Evans to Holland, 11 April 1887; Moloney to Holland, 23 March 1888.

Moreover, after a few months of unofficial peace contacts between the Eḡba and the Ibadan early in 1887, the Eḡba renewed kidnappings and raids on the Oru-Ibadan road. Some trade continued to find its way from the coast through Abeokuta, along the Eruwa road to the Oyo country, and through Iseyin and Ogbomoso to Ilorin. But the Ibadan took exception to the continued opening of this road on the grounds that Ilorin and Eḡba traders were using it to carry arms and ammunition to the Ilorin camp at Oḡfa. By 1889, repeated Ibadan raids on the road made it almost impossible to use.⁸⁵ Because of these disturbances, the trade of Lagos suffered greatly and revenue fell off.⁸⁶

Furthermore, appeals came from the interior that the Lagos administration should intervene in the interest of permanent peace. Envoys went from the Ekitiparapo camp at Imesi-Ile to Lagos. Even the civil authorities of Ibadan, worn out by the demands of the war, supported such appeals.⁸⁷

Lagos was ready to listen. Moloney's attempt to improve the commerce and revenue of Lagos by signing a treaty with the Alafin in 1887 aimed at ensuring that trade from the interior would flow solely to Lagos, proved futile.⁸⁸ Moloney was not yet prepared to assume responsibility for making and ensuring peace in the interior. Instead, he hoped to persuade the Yoruba powers to come to terms by appealing to their sentiment. In this respect, he pointed out to the Ekitiparapo that the Ibadan were their kinsmen and that their interests were therefore closer to the interests of Ibadan than they were to those of the Fulani at Ilorin. He suggested that the Yoruba states should set up diplomatic missions with one another and establish institutions for ensuring peace between them.⁸⁹

85. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 576-83.

86. C.5114, Evans to Colonial Secretary, 28 January 1887; Evans to Holland, 19 May 1887. In the first quarter of 1887 alone, the deficit was estimated as £3,660. Evans to Holland, 15 April 1887; C.S.O. 1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 5 April 1890.

87. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 15 October 1888.

88. Similar treaties were signed with Ife and Ondo in 1888. Of all these treaties Moloney said, 'The importance to this Colony of such Treaties . . . is obvious since the conditions protect the interest of the Colony . . . against the diversions of trade beyond [Lagos]. . . .' C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 10 October 1888.

89. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Chiefs of the Ekitiparapo, 25 September 1887, enclosure in Moloney to Holland, 8 October 1887.

All these availed nothing, however. The appeal to Yoruba nationalism was unfortunately not convincing. The Ekitiparapo made it clear that they had no reason to regard the Ibadan as brothers since the Ibadan had not scrupled to destroy their towns in the past.⁹⁰ In the last months of 1888, therefore, Moloney resuscitated his pet suggestion that the government should ban the importation of arms and ammunition to the interior. He expressed the view that if the British government established control over the mouths of the Benin and Forcados Rivers and prevented war materials from passing through them to the interior, the Ilorin-Ibadan war would cease.⁹¹ But the project was impracticable and nothing was done about it.

Missionaries and merchants in Lagos and Britain soon joined in the appeal to the Lagos government. The Lagos Chamber of Commerce appealed to the Lagos government to send the governor to the interior with sufficient equipment to enforce his will on the belligerent parties, set up a permanent commission in the interior to ensure permanent peace there, and destroy the trade monopoly now enjoyed by the Eḡba and the Ijebu.⁹²

In the end, the Colonial Office became convinced of the necessity to establish permanent peace in the interior, and the Lagos government at last turned full attention to that quarter. Attempts were made to deal first with the Eḡba and the Ijebu. In 1892 a military expedition subdued the Ijebu, established British supremacy over Ijebu-Ode and annexed Ito-Ike, Epe, Ejirin, Ikorodu and all places commanding the trade routes through Ijebu. To avoid a similar fate, the Eḡba peacefully opened their roads later in the year. D

After the opening of the Ijebu and Eḡba roads, the Ilorin-Ibadan war in the north proved much easier to deal with than before. Major Macdonald of the Royal Niger Company and Alvan Millson from Lagos had, in 1889 and 1890 respectively, failed to get the belligerents to accept peace.⁹³ Alvan Millson, in fact, had

90. C.O.147/63, Ogedemgbe to Moloney, 29 October 1887, enclosure in Moloney to Holland, 13 February 1888.

91. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 24 October 1888.

92. C.O.147/83, Manchester Chamber of Commerce to Knutsford, 31 March 1891; also Liverpool Chamber of Commerce to Colonial Secretary, 27 January 1891, enclosure in Denton to Knutsford, 7 February 1891.

93. (N.A.I.), FOP4/4: *Report by Major Macdonald of an Expedition to Ilorin, September-October 1889*; C.O.879/33, Millson to Colonial

done very badly and failed to establish contact with the Ilorin. Partly responsible for this failure was the fact that Millson ran against the rising tide of fear that the British intended to take over the whole of Yorubaland.⁹⁴ But in addition, his journey to the interior seems to have coincided with one of those few times when the war party at Imeṣi-Ile was most influential, and for this reason the Ekitiparapọ refused to give him even the slightest co-operation.⁹⁵ Attempts by local powers to restore peace between the Ilorin and the Ibadan had also fared badly.⁹⁶

But the opening of the Ijebu and Egbā roads in the south changed the situation. The harsh fate of the Ijebu became an object lesson to other states in the interior. Moreover, the full opening up of trade between Lagos and the Yoruba interior further tilted the balance of power in favour of the Ibadan by ensuring to them undisturbed supply of arms and ammunition from the coast.⁹⁷ This made the Ilorin far more amenable to peace.

As far back as September 1891, Carter had written to the authorities of the separate states in the interior – Oyo, Egbā, Ondo, Ibadan, Ilorin, and the Ekitiparapọ – to inform them of his intention to visit the interior in order to put an end to the wars still going on there.⁹⁸ But the preparations for the Ijebu Expedition and the negotiations with the Ijebu after that expedition made it necessary for him to delay his visit until 1893.

In February 1893, Carter reached an agreement with the Alafin whereby the latter undertook to avoid going to war and to refer to the Governor of Lagos all disputes that were capable of leading

Secretary, 30 March 1890; also Millson, A.: 'The Yoruba Country, West Africa', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 13, 1891.

94. C.S.O.1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 5 April 1890.

95. The protracted reluctance of the people of Oke-Bode to grant Millson entry to the Ijeṣa country and the total refusal of the Confederate authorities to help him to establish contact with the Ilorin would seem to have been due to the influence of the emigré elements at Imeṣi-Ile. C.S.O.1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 19 April 1890.

96. C.S.O.1/1/12, Moloney to Knutsford, 15 October 1888; C.M.S. (Y) 4/1/8, Johnson to Wood, 4 May 1890; C.S.O.1/3/2, Moloney to Knutsford, Despatch Confidential, 8 February 1891.

97. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter's Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition.

98. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter to Knutsford, 28 September 1891.

to hostilities. In the first days of March he arrived at Ikirun.⁹⁹ On 3 March in a meeting with him, the Ibadan authorities at Ikirun agreed to disperse and go home and asked that the Ekitiparapọ should also be made to disperse from Imęsi-Ile. Meanwhile the news of his arrival had reached Imęsi-Ile, and on 4 March messengers arrived at Ikirun from Ogedemgbe to convey greetings and presents from the Ekitiparapọ to the white man. When these messengers were returning to Imęsi-Ile, Capt. Bower was sent along with them as the representative of the Lagos government to inform the Confederate authorities of the progress of the peace negotiations and to request them to be prepared to disperse soon.

On the 8th after further talks with the Ilọrin and the Ibadan, Carter convened the final Conference on the banks of the River Otin. Early that morning Confederate envoys had arrived with Capt. Bower to represent the Ekitiparapọ at the conference. The meeting commenced at 4.00 p.m. Brief speeches were made from all sides, and the two main combatants, the Ibadan and the Ilọrin, then split kola to mark the end of hostilities. Finally on the 14th, in accordance with the agreement, the Ilọrin camp at Ofa and the Ibadan camp at Ikirun were broken up and the Ekitiparapọ began to disperse from Imęsi-Ile.

99. C.S.O.1/1/13, Carter's Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition.

Chapter 8

The Ekitiparapọ in the Post-War Years

The 1886 Treaty and the 1893 settlement on the River Otin, then, marked the two stages of the formal dissolution of the Ibadan empire. After 1893, Ibadan's territory, outside the city of Ibadan and its immediate neighbourhood, comprised not more than the Oşun and Ibarapa districts plus one or two towns (Ikire, Apomu, etc.) formerly belonging to the Ife kingdom. But the rise of Ibadan remains one of the most important developments in the history of the Yoruba. In the first place, it was its military might that saved most of Yorubaland from conquest by the Fulani of Ilorin. Secondly, Ibadan is perhaps the only known example in Yoruba history of a community in which sub-ethnic lines of division were obliterated and in which Yoruba men and women of whatever origin united in the pursuit of great goals. Finally, not only did Ibadan ultimately build an empire embracing more of the Yoruba sub-groupings than any other state in pre-twentieth century Yoruba history; perhaps its greatest significance resides in the fact that from a town expanding in response to particular needs, Ibadan developed into the armed crusader for the unity of all the Yoruba – 'the soldiers of the fighting force of the Yorubas'.¹

For the success of this town, the chief explanation was its very youthfulness and its freedom from the traditional limitations on the individual's achievement. These qualities characterised not only its political and social organisation but also its distribution of economic opportunities. Just as a man of ability could, no matter his sub-ethnic or family antecedents, rise to any position in the state, so could he, if he was so inclined, acquire considerable wealth as a farmer or trader or artisan. For instance, there was in Ibadan nothing like the traditional Yoruba land tenure system whereby all the land belonging to a town was broken up into inalienable lineage holdings. On the contrary, every man was free to cultivate as much of the Ibadan countryside as he was able

1. May: 'Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe countries', *op. cit.*, pp. 213-33.

to reclaim from the forests. Therefore, except in the critical years of the Kiriji War, Ibadan's agriculture was always prosperous and many of its citizens made sizeable fortunes from farming. A contemporary of Latosisa, a woman named Efunṣeyitan, once had 2,000 slaves working on her farms.² Many other people gave their time to trade – organising the purchase of export products like palm oil and home-spun cloth from the interior and the distribution there of imported goods like European cloth and salt which were bought from the Eḡba and Ijebu. The more successful traders had large numbers of slaves to do their trading for them, and the Ibadan empire was, in the words of Bowen, a 'country of caravans'.³ Finally, as the huge population of Ibadan demanded a large variety of local manufactures, many people could make a comfortable living as smiths, leather dressers and tanners, saddlers, tailors, dyers and weavers.⁴ It is true that, usually, a military career was the quickest road to political and economic greatness, but Ibadan was at all times characterised by a certain youthful versatility – most people combining the rôles of soldier, farmer, trader and artisan. There was also always a vigorous and colourful rivalry – a rivalry in which sheer ability was usually the deciding factor – to amass large efficient armies, build sprawling compounds, raise extensive farms and own huge trading establishments.

All these made Ibadan appear as the promised land to able, ambitious and imaginative people from all over Yorubaland and, although many of these later returned to their homelands, the rest made Ibadan their homes and were completely loyal to the aspirations of the Ibadan state. It was these people, operating within the Ibadan system, who made Ibadan more powerful, richer and greater than all other contemporary Yoruba states. In recording the traditions of the Oṣun, Ijeṣa, Ekiti, Akoko and Igbomina areas, one often encounters expressions of horror at the fact that, throughout the Ibadan domination of these peoples,

2. For comments on Ibadan's land tenure and agriculture, see Hinderer, Anna: *Seventeen years in the Yoruba country*, London 1873, pp. 59–62; C.M.S. CA2/049, Hinderer's Annual Letter for 1858; C.4957, Report of Special Commissioners.

3. Bowen, T. J.: *Adventures and missionary labours in several countries in the interior of Africa*, 2nd Ed., London, 1968, p. 173; also Anna Hinderer, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–62; also C.M.S. CA2/049, David Hinderer's Journal of a Missionary Journey, August–September 1858.

4. Hinderer.

thousands of their sons were serving Ibadan loyally as soldiers, messengers and Ajeles. Such horror arose from the inability of the tradition-bound communities of Yorubaland to understand the new phenomenon: a community in which loyalties transcended the limits of the old kingdoms or of the sub-ethnic groupings.

Ibadan failed in the end mostly because it was unable to reconcile the bustling competition characteristic of its society with the material welfare of the conquered territories. The tendencies, arising largely from this competition, towards endlessly raiding, sacking and despoiling of subject towns made it impossible for the new loyalty which pervaded Ibadan to penetrate through to the vast majority of people who did not leave their homelands. Even many of the men nurtured by Ibadan revolted in the end against this rapacity. The constant aggression, moreover, made it impossible for Ibadan to work out any sort of arrangement with its southern neighbours, the Egbas and Ijebu, who commanded a special weapon in their control of the trade routes to the coast.

There were, however, other contributive factors – products of the conservatism of the Yoruba. First, most other Yoruba states, whose citizens were unused to regarding a man or community otherwise than as a member of this or that sub-ethnic group, insisted throughout on classifying Ibadan as an Oyo town. This attitude is seen in the circumstance that any state which was at war with Ibadan tended to treat all persons of Oyo-Yoruba origin as enemies. It tended to stiffen opposition to Ibadan and was, to a considerable extent, responsible for the harnessing of sub-ethnic loyalties for the wars against Ibadan. Another factor was the fact that, since Ibadan did not evolve into the traditional type of Yoruba state (i.e. a kingdom), the obas and chiefs of the other Yoruba states regarded its leaders as upstarts and found it very difficult to accept their leadership. In the view of most traditional rulers, the Ibadan should be subjects of the Alafin and had no right to claim to lead other people. The crisis of Ibadan's career as a great state and an empire builder came when an alliance emerged between these traditional forces, the new revolutionary forces (the new warrior chiefs) bred by Ibadan or by Ibadan's example, and the mass discontent created in the subject territories by Ibadan's activities.

The dissolution of the Ibadan empire, then, marked the end of

a great political experiment in Yorubaland. But the wars of the century and the Ibadan expansion had produced another important, though unintended, result. As has been pointed out, Oyo people fleeing from the north in the first decades of the century had scattered all over Yorubaland. Their greatest concentration was in the west, in the areas of Ibadan, Ijaye, new Oyo and the Ife and Oşun districts, but towns and villages of the further eastern countries – Igbomina, Ekiti, Ijeşá, Akoko etc. – also received many Oyo immigrants. Then, as a result of the Ibadan expansion eastwards, large numbers of Oyo people, from the area of Ibadan and the Oşun district especially, came to settle in the eastern Yoruba districts. Many of them came in the service of Ibadan, but perhaps more came as independent citizens and settled as farmers, traders or artisans. At the same time, thousands of people from the eastern Yoruba areas came, either as captives or free citizens, to Ibadan, Oşun, Oyo, Ijebu and Egbá territories. After the opening of the Ondo road, many Ekiti, Ijeşá, Akoko, Igbomina, Oşun, Ibadan, Oyo and Ilorin people came to trade or settle in the Ondo, Ikalé and Ilaje countries in the south, while some people from here were drawn into the territories of their northern neighbours. In the turmoil marking the birth of the Ekitiparapo in 1878–9, probably most of the immigrants in Ekiti, Ijeşá and other Ekitiparapo territories were forced to flee, and the evidence suggests that most of these took refuge in the Oşun towns.

Many of these people, however, had established some sort of root in the towns and villages from which they were being compelled to flee and, consequently, following upon the Peace Treaty of 1886, they began to return to the families and the means of livelihood which they had abandoned some eight years before. After the settlement of all the wars in 1893, the stream became a flood, and the result is that almost every Ekiti town came to have a substantial population of Oyo settlers. They usually settled in quarters known as *Ogbon-Oyo*, but in the course of this century they and their hosts have become mixed – and *Ogbon-Oyo* now means not a quarter where the Oyo elements live but the quarter originally predominantly settled by them. Some of the more conservative of these families still make the traditional Oyo facial marks on their children, but this practice is dying out very fast. But whether with or without the facial marks, the Ekiti man who is a descendant of the Oyo settlers usually speaks the

local dialect and is accepted without question in his town or village.

Similar trends occurred in other parts of Yorubaland; but Ibadan presents the best illustration. As has been pointed out, apart from the Oyo, Ibadan had from the beginning substantial numbers of people from Ife, Egba, Ijebu and Owu. The Ibadan expansion added to these many people from the Ife, Ekiti, Ijesa, Akoko, Igbomina and the Yoruba territories farther north-eastwards, while the growth of the trade with the coast brought in more Ijebu and Egba. From 1886 many of the people from the former subject territories began to redeem themselves and return home. But others, who had established roots at Ibadan, preferred to stay. Today, a good number of families in Ibadan are descendants of these people.

Within the three decades following the 1893 armistice the form of British control of the Ekiti-Ijesa country, beginning merely as haphazard interferences in the affairs of the different states, gradually crystallised. The prelude to this effective take-over was the series of treaties signed with the various rulers of Yorubaland. Of these treaties, the ones that concerned the member states of the Ekitiparapo were the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Commerce signed under the aegis of the British between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan in 1886, the Enactments for the Abolition of Human Sacrifices in the Ekiti and Ijesa countries made between the Commissioners of the Lagos Government and the leaders of the Ekitiparapo (1886),⁵ and the settlement between the Ilorin and Ibadan on the river Otin in 1893. Soon after this armistice, the Ibadan were forced to accede to an agreement whereby a British official was to be stationed at Ibadan to see to the affairs of the interior.⁶

Effective British occupation of the Yoruba interior began with the appointment of Capt. R. L. Bower to Ibadan under the above agreement late in 1893. He bore the title of 'Resident of Ibadan and Political Officer in charge of the Hinterland of Lagos

5. C.S.O. 5/8, Enactment for abolition of human sacrifices in the Ijesa country; Enactment for the abolition of human sacrifices in the Ekiti countries.

6. Johnson: *History of the Yorubas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 638-42, gives details of the prolonged reluctance of the Ibadan to accept a Resident in their town.

Colony'. In 1894 Capt. Bower established a garrison on the Otin river between Ikirun and Ofa.

The general war-weariness which now gripped the whole of Yorubaland disposed people's minds to accept the gradual growth of British political influence. But an important part was also played in promoting the acceptance of British influence by the Christian missionaries and their emigré converts who were returning to the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries in large numbers. It was one of the emigré elements who brought an end to the Ado-Ikeṣe war in 1894 by persuading the belligerents to lay down their arms. He also enlightened the Ado and Ikeṣe people about the benefits of British occupation and told them to invite British agents to come to their country.⁷ Also at Ise, a small emigré community was doing much the same thing and preaching the Gospel; their work was later to be of immense help to the regular missionary agents.⁸

The first missionary centre in the Ekiti-Ijeṣa country had been established by the C.M.S. at Ileṣa in 1859. It had made very little progress, however, owing first to the Ibadan invasions and then to the Kiriji War. But near-by at Ode-Ondo another C.M.S. station was flourishing under the Rev. Charles Phillips. As soon as the war came to an end in 1893, the C.M.S. began to expand the missionary work among the Ekiti and Ijeṣa. Early in 1894 Phillips assumed superintendence of the Ileṣa mission. He was then charged with the duty of expanding the mission from his Ondo and Ileṣa bases to the countries northward until he had effected a junction with the C.M.S. Niger Mission.⁹ In pursuance of this programme, he carried out an intensive tour of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries in April and May 1894.¹⁰ Before the end of 1896 mission stations were already established at Ado, Ijero, Akure, Ise and some other places in Ekiti.¹¹

The government and the missionaries derived mutual advantages from each other. On the one hand, the missionaries depended for their safety on the prestige of the government; on the other,

7. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1884 Diary, entries for 26-8 April and 12 December.

8. Phillips 1/1, Phillips to Baylis, 3 October 1895; also Phillips to the Arinjalẹ of Ise, 18 August 1898.

9. Phillips 1/1, Phillips to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 5 March 1894.

10. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entries for 12 April-2 May.

11. Phillips 1/1, Phillips to Baylis, 3 October 1895; also Phillips to the Arinjalẹ of Ise, 18 August 1898.

the government required, and used, the missionary agents as the medium of their communication with the people and their rulers. Consequently, the rulers and their people often regarded the missionaries as officials of the government and used them as advisers in their contacts with the government and to write and read for them letters to and from the government.¹²

Until 1897, the officials of the Lagos government did no more than see to the maintenance of peace in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries. This they did mostly by conducting occasional patrols from Ibadan or Odo-Ṣtin through parts of the country or by sending small groups of soldiers on patrol. Occasionally, however, the representatives of the government had to do more than just tour and patrol. Though the war was over, the Imeṣi-Ile veterans and the chiefs' war boys had not found it easy to settle down to peaceful pursuits. The war boys of Chief Ogedemgbe and Prince Fabunmi, especially, were fond of causing disturbances and of raiding farms and villages and kidnapping people. In the Akoko country also Aduloju's war boys kept up the practice of raiding and looting the Akoko and Kukuruku farms and villages, though mostly against the advice of their chief.¹³

In 1894 the Resident of Ibadan and the officer stationed at Odo-Ṣtin had to warn both Ogedemgbe and Fabunmi to keep their war boys in check.¹⁴ Soon after in the same year, following reports of serious disturbances caused around Oḡotun and Ilawẹ by certain Ijeṣa and Ara men, a number of troublesome people were arrested at Iḡeṣa.¹⁵ Later in the year, Ogedemgbe himself was arrested and imprisoned at Ibadan for about a year,¹⁶ and not long afterwards both Fabunmi and Aduloju were arrested, taken before the officer at Odo-Ṣtin and seriously warned against allowing their war boys to cause trouble in the country.¹⁷

In 1897 an attempt was made to give the far Yoruba interior specific administrative arrangements. It had not been clear in 1893 how much of the country beyond Ibadan and Oyo fell into the area of jurisdiction of the Resident of Ibadan. But in the

12. Phillips 1/1, Phillips to Major Ewart, 1 March 1899.

13. Oguntuyi: *Aduloju, op. cit.*, p. 52.

14. C.S.O.1/1/14, Carter to Ogedemgbe, 21 May 1894.

15. Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entry for 2 May.

16. C.S.O.1/1/14, Carter to Ripon, 23 August 1894.

17. Fabunmi was arrested in 1895 and Aduloju in 1898. Johnson: *op. cit.*, p. 646; Oguntuyi: *Aduloju, op. cit.*, pp. 52-3.

years that followed, he had been drawn increasingly into the affairs of the distant Ekiti and Ijeṣa territories. By 1897 it was obvious that his work load was too heavy and, in April of that year, Lagos proposed the appointment of an additional Resident (earning £600 per annum and having under his command a force of sixty Hausas) to take charge of the Ekiti-Ijeṣa area.¹⁸ The following August, therefore, Lt. A. O. Scott was sent to Akure with a small detachment of the Lagos Hausa Force which had for some time been stationed at Oyo. Scott was to bear the title of 'O/C Akure', and his orders were, *inter alia*, 'that he under the direction of the Resident Ibadan, should take charge of the country northward of Akure to the Ilorin boundary, and that owing to the unsettled nature of the country, he should not be absent from Akure for more than a few days at a time'.¹⁹ This semi-military arrangement continued until 1900.

When the appointment of an additional Resident had been first suggested in April 1897, what had been envisaged was that he would have his base at Otun in northern Ekiti, from where 'he could look after the territory lying between Odo-Otin and the Niger Coast Protectorate boundary'. However, when Scott was being appointed early in August, Akure had become a more problematic spot than Otun. This was due to the development of a boundary dispute between the Lagos government and the Niger Coast Protectorate. From May on, officials of the Niger Coast Protectorate claimed that Akure and the rest of Ekiti should belong to the N.C.P. on the grounds that these kingdoms had been formerly part of the empire of Benin.²⁰ But the representatives of the Lagos government argued that the Ekiti kingdoms had put themselves under the protection of and signed treaties of commerce and friendship with the Lagos government.²¹ By July it became necessary for the top officials of the two administrations to meet, and a tentative rough boundary was agreed upon running from Ugbo in the Ilaje country in the south to Owḡo in the north

18. C.S.O.1/1/18, Denton to Chamberlain, 10 April 1897.

19. C.S.O.1/1/19, Memorandum of Instructions to A. O. Scott, enclosure in McCallum to Chamberlain, 5 August 1897.

20. C.S.O.1/1/18, E. P. S. Roupell (Political Officer, Benin) to Officer Commanding Odo-Otin, 18 May 1897, enclosure in McCallum to Chamberlain, 5 June 1897.

21. C.S.O.1/1/18, McCallum to Consul-General Moor of N.C.P., 2 June 1897, enclosure in McCallum to Chamberlain, 5 June 1897.

and leaving Ilaje, Ikafe, Ondo, Idanre, Owo and all the Ekiti kingdoms in the area of influence of the Lagos government.²²

It was at the request of the Consul-General of the Niger Coast Protectorate, Ralph Moor, who revealed that Akure was strategically important to his programme of 'pacification' of Benin, that Lagos decided to send Scott to Akure. Lagos also agreed to accommodate at Akure a 'political agent' of the N.C.P. who would communicate with the Resident of Benin through Lieutenant Scott on matters concerning the Benin chiefs who were believed to be at large in the neighbouring forests.

In 1899, the Lagos government decided to further reorganise the interior. As far back as 1897, an acting Resident of Ibadan, after a tour of the Ekiti-Ijesa countries, had indicated that the government would have to work closely along the lines of the Ekitiparapo and rule the Ijesa and Ekiti from Ilesha, the Owa of Ilesha being, as was widely believed by government officials, the leader of the Ekitiparapo.²³ In 1899 Ijesa and Ekiti were constituted into a North-eastern District with headquarters at Ilesha. This district was placed under a Travelling Commissioner who was stationed at Ilesha and was allowed wide military, administrative and judicial powers for the purpose of maintaining peace and order. At the same time Idanre, Ondo, Ikafe and parts of Ilaje were constituted into the Eastern District of the Lagos Protectorate with its headquarters at Ode-Ondo.²⁴ Two years later the kingdom of Akure in the extreme south of Ekiti was for purposes of administrative convenience transferred from the North-eastern to the Eastern District.

Major W. R. Reeve-Tucker, the first Travelling Commissioner of the North-eastern District, arrived at Ilesha in November 1899. On 21 June 1900, the last 'O.C. Akure', Capt. Cochrane, formally handed over the detachment at Akure to him.²⁵ In December

22. C.S.O.1/1/19, Arrangement regarding the administrative boundary as between the Col. of Lagos and the N.C.P., enclosure in McCallum to Chamberlain, 3 August 1897.

23. (N.A.I.), Iba. Prof. 3/6, Notes attached by F. C. Fuller to *Ibadan Resident's Travel Journal, 1897*; also C.S.O.1/1/18, McCallum to Moor, 2 June 1897. McCallum, however, saw the need for a thorough inquiry into the relationship between Ilesha and the Ekiti kingdoms. McCallum to the Owa of Ilesha, 31 July 1897.

24. See the Journals and Diaries in Ondo Prof. 7 and 8, National Archives, Ibadan.

25. (E.D.O.), Reeve-Tucker, W. R.: Travelling Commissioner's Travel Diary, entry for 21 June 1900.

1899 Major Reeve-Tucker began a tour of the District. On 21 June 1900, he inaugurated at Oke-Imo in Ilesha an 'Ekitiparapo Council', consisting of the obas of the Ekiti and Ijesa countries. The sixteen Ekiti kingdoms represented at the inaugural meeting were Otun, Ado, Obo, Ijero, Ara, Akure, Effon, Ise, Ido, Oye, Ogotun, Ikere, Okemesi (Imesi-Igbodo), Itaji, Işan and Aiyede. The status of Akoko had remained uncertain since 1897 when there had occurred a dispute between the officials of Lagos and the Royal Niger Company over the Akoko towns and Owọ. For a short time in 1900 Reeve-Tucker appears to have regarded Ikole as part of Akoko, with the result that Ikole was not invited to the first meeting of the Ekitiparapo Council. When the Council next met in August, however, Ikole was represented.²⁶

The question of the boundary between the Lagos Protectorate and Northern Nigeria was not attended to until 1901 when a boundary was established cutting through Igbomina and Ekiti and therefore including most of Igbomina and the Ekiti kingdoms of Obo, Otun, Işan and Aiyede in Northern Nigeria.²⁷ In essence, this was a breach of the 1886 Treaty which had guaranteed the independence of the states of the Ekitiparapo.

In 1901 by an Order-in-Council, a Protectorate was formally proclaimed over Yorubaland. In the next year, as a result of protests from Ekiti rulers, Aiyede and Işan were returned to the North-eastern District of the Lagos Protectorate. Further boundary adjustments repeatedly shifted the boundaries between Ekiti and Northern Nigeria. In 1905 a big slice of the Aiyede kingdom and Işan went to the North. These towns and villages moved back south in 1909, north again in 1917 and finally south in 1919. During this time both Otun and Obo remained in Northern Nigeria, and for about three decades the history of these kingdoms (especially of Otun) was one long protest necessitating police patrols and collective fines.²⁸ In the end Otun had to be returned to Ekiti in 1936, leaving only Obo with small bits of Otun and Aiyede kingdoms in the North.²⁹

In May 1906 the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos (consisting roughly of the present Western and Lagos States) and the

26. *Ibid.* entries for June to August 1900.

27. (E.D.O.), Wann, J.: *Covering Report on the Otun Intelligence Report* (1938).

28. *Ibid.*

29. Obo is now in Kwara State.

Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (made up roughly of the present Mid-western, Rivers, South-eastern and East-Central States) were amalgamated, in accordance with instructions contained in an Order-in-Council of February 1906, into the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria.³⁰ The new Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was constituted into three provinces: Calabar or Eastern Province the Niger or Central Province and the Lagos or Western Province. Each province was placed under a Provincial Commissioner responsible to the Governor of Lagos. For administrative purposes each province was constituted into divisions and districts under Divisional, District and Assistant District Commissioners. Under the new arrangements Ekiti and Ijeṣa continued to be administered as the Ileṣa District with headquarters still at Ileṣa.

In 1913 Ekiti was finally detached from Ijeṣa and constituted into a separate district. By then Ado had acquired considerable central importance in Ekiti. As early as 1894 it had been noted by the Rev. Charles Phillips that Ado was the largest town in Ekiti and that, geographically, it was the most centrally situated of the capital towns of Ekiti.³¹ Consequently, by 1896 Ado had become something of a headquarters to the C.M.S. stations in the Ekiti country. In 1895-6 the Emmanuel Church and School (C.M.S.) were built in Ado and they soon assumed the position of mother church under a full pastor, with a central school. The only other Ekiti town that could have rivalled Ado in the selection of a headquarters of the new Ekiti District was Otun. Because of the leading role which the Ore of Otun had played in the Kiriji War the early British officials were inclined to regard the Ore as the leader of the Ekiti kings. Major Reeve-Tucker had acted on this assumption and his successors had generally followed suit.³² But Otun suffered from the obvious disadvantage for a headquarters: it was situated at the extreme northern corner of Ekiti. And in any case, before 1913 it had been transferred to the Ilorin Province of Northern Nigeria. In 1913 Ado, therefore, was selected as the headquarters of the new Ekiti District. The first District Com-

30. C.S.O.5/5/9, Southern Nigeria Order-in-Council of 16 February 1906.

31. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips to Baylis, 28 February 1895.

32. (E.D.O.), Ambrose, Captain W. G.: North-eastern Travelling Commissioner's Diary, Entry for 20 November 1901, gives the title 'Ore of Otun, head of Ekiti Confederacy'.

missioner for Ekiti, Mr. G. E. H. Humphrey, arrived at Ado in the same year.

When Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated in 1914, Ekiti District was placed under a District Officer and included in Ijebu Province. In the next year Ekiti and Ondo plus Akoko and Owo were brought together into a province and designated Ondo Province. Akure, which was returned to Ekiti in the January of 1915, was made the headquarters of this new province.

Up till 1913 then, it was the policy of the British officials in charge of the Yoruba interior to keep the Ekiti and Ijesa countries together and thus preserve the Ekitiparapo of the Kiriji War. These officials, deriving their knowledge of the Ekiti and Ijesa countries from their contacts with the interior during the Kiriji War or from documents dealing with the period of the war, saw the Ekitiparapo as the institution which had given the Ekiti and Ijesa common leadership and a single command in the nineteenth century and which would therefore be ideal for the functioning of the Indirect Rule system in the Ekiti-Ijesa countries. In general the programme had two stages: first, a reassertion wherever necessary of the internal authority of the kingdoms of the Ekitiparapo and secondly, an administrative forging together of these kingdoms under the banner of the Ekitiparapo.

The man who might be regarded as the father of this programme was Major Reeve-Tucker, the first Travelling Commissioner of the North-eastern District. He spared no pains in his efforts to strengthen the authority of the kingdoms. On his arrival in each kingdom he first summoned all the subordinate towns and villages and finally called a meeting in the capital town at which he summarily informed the baṣes that they were, and were only recognised by the government to be, under the oḅa.³³ He was so zealous in pushing ahead that he had no patience with those towns and villages which did not quickly conform to his idea of the kingdoms, and at times he treated such towns with a degree of high-handedness.³⁴ At the end of his tours in Ekiti early in 1900, he reported: 'I have called in all the tributary villages to the

33. (E.D.O.), Reeve-Tucker's Travel Diary, entries for 9-17 January 1900, describes Reeve-Tucker's activities in the Ado kingdom in 1900.

34. *Ibid.* In December 1899, in spite of protests by the people of Ido-Irapa, Reeve-Tucker informed them that they were under the Alaye

capitals of the Ekiti kingdoms and have placed the Balẹs securely under their kings. The Balẹs who were endeavouring to make themselves independent, a lingering remains of their old wars and disputes, I have effectively placed under their effective kings'.³⁵ It was after he had thus realized what he believed to have been the ancient purity of the Kingdoms that Revue-Tucker went on to launch his Ekitiparapo Council of 1922.

In spite of the enthusiasm of Major Revue-Tucker and his successors, however, the Ekitiparapo, as far as the Ekiti and Ijesa themselves were concerned, had been disintegrating since shortly after the armistice of 1893. The forces which had brought the Confederacy into being had disappeared with the restoration of peace and the spirit of the Ekitiparapo of the Kiriji War had soon disappeared with them. There were still indeed some dangers threatening the north-eastern Yoruba districts from outside after 1893. The stationing of a British official at Ibadan showed clearly that trouble could not be expected from the Ibadan any longer. But in the north, the Ilorin continued to be free from such controls and remained a powerful and ambitious state. Moreover, the Ilorin were showing clearly that they were not satisfied with the territorial arrangements of 1893,³⁶ and they began to make incursions southwards with a view to seizing Ikirun and Oşogbo where they again placed Ajeleş. However, owing to the firmness of Captain Bower, the Ilorin Ajeleş were expelled from Ikirun and Oşogbo in 1894 and the Ilorin attempt to destroy Bower's garrison at Odo-Qtin was decisively crushed in 1896.³⁷ But when they were thus worsted in their designs on Ibadan territory directly southward, the Ilorin, as they did in the 1840s, veered into the Ekiti country. Some of their men resident in the northern Ekiti towns (especially the representative whom they had stationed at Qtun at the invitation of the Ekitiparapo since the beginning of the Kiriji War) now posed as Ajeleş and began to act as such. Then, at the end of 1896 they sent a large army to invade Ekiti. It was not until the routing of their army at Erinmope near Qtun by a combination of Ekiti forces and contingents from the Odo-

of Effon. On 18 January 1900, he fined the ruler of Osi £5 for refusing to prostrate to the Ewi of Ado.

35. Quoted in (E.D.O.), Weir: *The Past and Present Organisation in Ekiti Division*, 1934, p. 34.

36. The Awere stream had been agreed upon as boundary in 1893.

37. C.S.O. 1/1/16, Griffith to Chamberlain, 31 July 1896.

Ọtin garrison at the close of 1896 and the occupation of Ilorin itself by the forces of the Royal Niger Company in February 1897³⁸ that the fear of Ilorin was finally removed.

But within the same year, trouble was again experienced from another source – from Benin. This arose from the deliberate policy of the officials of the Niger Coast Protectorate of reviving Benin claims in Ekiti in order to prove that Ekiti ought to belong to their Protectorate. As mentioned above, agents of the Niger Coast Protectorate visited Ekiti towns and villages finding out the descendants of former Benin officials, holding public interviews with the chiefs and informing them that they belonged to the kingdom of Benin.³⁹ Essentially, this was a contest between the British officials of Lagos and those of the N.C.P., but it had the effect of giving new pride to the Benin settlers in Ekiti and therefore of arousing fears of a revival of Benin attempts to conquer and dominate. Even after the boundary dispute between the N.C.P. and Lagos had been settled in 1897, such fears did not quickly vanish as Benin communities in Ekiti, claiming that their allegiance was only to the Oba of Benin, continued to act in many ways defiant of the Ekiti rulers in whose territories they had long lived peaceably.⁴⁰

These external threats, however, did not sustain the spirit of the Ekitiparapo between the Ekiti and Ijesa. This was mainly because the threats were not general, Ekiti being immediately affected – even though it might have been seen that Ilorin's restlessness was also potentially dangerous to the Ijesa country. Therefore, when, for instance, the Ore of Ọtun, appealing to the oath of Imeşille, called upon all the members of the Ekitiparapo to send

38. C.S.O.1/1/17, Denton to Chamberlain, 8 February 1897.

39. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Mem^o of replies given to the clerk and interpreter of the N.C.P. by the towns, chiefs and subjects of the late king of Ado, June 1897.

40. In defiance of the Ekiti rulers, these Edo communities began to send tributes and taxes to the Oba of Benin. Some tributes being sent to Benin by the Edo people at Igbara-Oke (in Akure kingdom) in 1897 were seized by the officials of the Arinjale of Ise and sent back to the Deji of Akure. As late as 1915, Edo communities in Akure sent tributes to Benin; the government of Nigeria, however, impounded such tributes and converted them to the use of Akure. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/2/1, Akure Chiefs to Captain Roupell, 15 April 1897; A.O.C. Scott to Roupell, 17 January 1897; also (E.D.O.), CSE 1/24/124, File C190/1914, Notes by W. E. Hunt (Ag. D.O., Ekiti), 1915.

forces to repel the Ilorin in 1896, response came only from Ekiti.⁴¹

In fact, rather than continue in the spirit of 1872 to 1893, the relationship between the Ekiti and Ijeṣa began to appear as though it would revert to what it had been before the 1870s. Under the leadership of Prince Haastrup of Itebu who was invited home and made Owa in 1895-6, the Ijeṣa government began to do things which appeared to the Ekiti to be a revival of the old expansionist ambitions of the Ijeṣa in Ekiti. Ekiti traditions speak of provocative interference by the new Owa in the affairs of the neighbouring Ekiti kingdoms – Eḡḡon, Oḡotun and Akure – but it is for the Akure aspect that we have the best evidence. From his accession until the British established a post at Akure in 1897, the Owa repeatedly acted as if Akure were his dependency – ordering the arrest of Akure citizens inside Akure town itself, and demanding that Akure should pay tributes to him.⁴² At every turn the Akure tried to be friendly⁴³ and on many occasions told the Owa, 'We have often told you that our town has never once been under your . . . jurisdiction'.⁴⁴ Apparently, the Owa was attempting to enforce the view which in the years immediately before 1893, had been strong among many of the leaders of the Ekitiparapo Society – namely, that the Ekitiparapo should become a single state under the presidency of the Owa. However, he caused rather widespread anxiety in Ekiti, and a traveller through Ekiti and Ijeṣa in 1902 still noticed that in many respects the Ijeṣa were as obnoxious to the Ekiti as the Ibadan were to the Ijeṣa, and that in some parts of Ekiti 'to be styled an Ijeṣa is regarded as an opprobrium'.⁴⁵

41. Iṣan, Aiyede, Ikole etc. immediately killed or expelled Ilorin agents amongst them. Talbot: 'From the Gulf of Guinea', *op. cit.*, p. 315. In many other parts of Ekiti, arrangements were begun to organise contingents to be sent to join the Otun army where it was waiting to meet the Ilorin invaders at Erinmope. However, according to Otun and Obo traditions, only the contingents from Obo had had time to reach Erinmope before the engagement came to an end.
42. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips to the Head Chief Ogboni of Ijeṣa, 31 August 1895; Phillips to Capt. Hawtayne, 20 September 1895; also Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Akure Chiefs to Roupell, 21 April 1897.
43. e.g. after Haastrup had been crowned the Owa (Oba Ajimoko I) the Akure chiefs warmly congratulated him and sent him rich gifts. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Akure Chiefs to Roupell, 21 April 1897.
44. (N.A.I.), Ben. Dist. 3/1/1, Akure chiefs to the Owa of Ijeṣa, 24 April 1897.
45. (U.I.L.) An account of Dr. Mojola Agbebi's work in W. Africa –

This growing apart of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa was even more encouraged by developments taking place in Nigeria in the first years of this century. Increasingly firm control of the Yoruba interior by the British led to the realisation that the age of wars was at an end and that the need for resistance to 'foreign' invasions by the Ekiti and Ijeṣa would never arise again. Boundaries were more or less settled and in any case, there could hardly be any fear that any of the African communities would again take the law into their own hands to readjust the boundaries. Moreover, new formative economic and social developments were changing the face of the country. The railway cut across Yorubaland, thus connecting it easily with the coast and Northern Nigeria.⁴⁶ Roads were constructed linking many parts of Nigeria, including Ekiti and Ijeṣa, with the railway. Soon, the telegraph made communication easy between Akure, which was to become the headquarters of the Ondo Province in 1915, and the centres of British authority at Ibadan and Lagos.⁴⁷ Improved communication gave a great impetus to trade in both old and newly introduced products.⁴⁸ In the social sphere, the age witnessed a great advance in Christian missionary work. This was accompanied by a great increase in the

comprising Yorubaland, Fantiland, the Ekiti country, Southern Nigeria and the Cameroons, microfilm copy of articles, newspaper stories, travel accounts etc.

46. Construction of a railway to connect Lagos with the interior was begun in 1896; by 1900 the line was open up to Ibadan; by 1909 as far as Jebba on the Niger; when the Jebba bridge was completed in 1916, trains could go straight up to Kano. By then, a fast train could go from Lagos to Kano in about forty-four hours. Burns, A. C.: *History of Nigeria*, London 1926, p. 289.
47. Akure was connected by telegraph to Ibadan and so with Lagos in 1906.
48. Scarcely any cocoa was exported from Nigeria in 1900; by 1926, however, the cocoa export was about 39,099 tons, earning just under £1½ million. By then also, palm oil export had shot up to 113,267 tons (£3¾ millions); palm-kernels 249,100 tons (about £4½ millions); rubber 1,594 tons (£203,143). From Ekiti, endless caravans of carriers conveyed the palm-kernels to Oṣogbo, an important town on the railway. Adventurous men from all parts of Ekiti took their part in tapping the wealth of the West African wild rubber, and as early as 1897 small colonies of them were to be encountered in various parts of the forests in the direction of Benin: C.S.O.1/1/18, Moor to McCallum, 7 June 1897; also (N.A.I.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/291/522, Vol. 1, Handing-over notes by A. R. A. de Garston (D.O.) to R. B. Kerr (D.O.), 2/8/39.

building of schools, and missionary schools appeared in practically all the bigger towns in the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries.⁴⁹

Thus, while the restoration of peace in 1893 had loosened the bonds of the Ekitiparapọ and the Ijeṣa activities in parts of Ekiti in the last years of the nineteenth century had destroyed the Ekitiparapọ spirit, the peaceful developments of the early twentieth century completely destroyed the necessity for the Confederacy. Therefore, mostly because it was difficult to get the Ekiti rulers to co-operate, Reeve-Tucker's Ekitiparapọ Council of 1900 quickly became defunct and stopped holding meetings after 1903.⁵⁰

Moreover, the Ekitiparapọ Society was soon affected by the general trend towards separation between the Ekiti and Ijeṣa. Though the name Ekitiparapọ Society lingered on long after 1893, in fact each of the two groups in it – the Ekiti and Ijeṣa – gradually came to assert its own separate existence. In the end, the Ekiti started their own Progressive Union in 1933.⁵¹ Even before this date, however, the administrative separation of the Ekiti and Ijeṣa countries in 1913 had marked the formal dissolution of the Ekitiparapọ of the Kiriji War.

The story of the Ekitiparapọ of the Kiriji War, then, ends in 1913. After that date, however, the Ekiti kingdoms, which had been only one of the arms of the Ekitiparapọ, continued to cherish and preserve its bonds in their relationship with one another. In fact the common threat to the Ekiti constituted by each of Ilorin, Benin and Ijeṣa in the years after 1893 tended to strengthen the spirit of oneness among the Ekiti – a spirit which they chose to

49. Oguntuyi: *History of Ado, op. cit.*, pp. 71-9 gives an account of the growth of C.M.S. and Roman Catholic Schools in Ado and some other parts of Ekiti.

50. Lee: *Intelligence Report on Ekiti, op. cit.*, pp. 143-5.

51. This Union was started by a group of educated Ekiti men living at home in Ekiti in 1933 – J. Ade Ajayi to members of the Ekiti Progressive Union, 3 September 1933; also 'Notes on the Ekiti Progressive Union' (1965) by Chief E. A. Babalọla, President of the Union till 1956; all in Private Papers of Chief E. A. Babalọla now in his custody at his Oke-Ado residence, Ibadan. The Lagos branch of the Union, which in the end became the most powerful branch, was initiated by Mr. R. W. Adedayọ (now the Oluṣi of Uṣi) in 1934. Adedayọ to all Ekiti literate young men in Lagos and Ebute Metta, 17 October 1934, in Private Papers of Oba Adedayọ, held in his palace at Uṣi.

call 'our Ekitiparapo' or 'our Confederation'.⁵² Before the establishment of British protectorate over the Yoruba interior, this spirit had been manifested in concerted resistance to external danger (as against the Ilorin invaders in 1896), and in concerted interventions in areas in Ekiti involved in civil troubles, in an obvious attempt to preserve the peace so as to ensure that all would be ready to meet possible external danger. These latter troubles arose from the unwillingness of the young men just returning from the war and from captivity (the ipaiye, the iyayu and the *atoyobop*)⁵³ to accept the *status quo ante bellum*, the traditional way of life which the cessation of war had restored – the system characterised by the prescriptive rights of royal and chiefly descent and of lineages. The position of these men in society was enhanced by the prestige which they had acquired in the late war by their command of many men who were their personal followers and sometimes by their greater enlightenment through travel and knowledge of the world outside Ekiti. In some places, like Itaji, the old order was forced to compromise and create chieftaincies for them quite out of accord with their humble origins.⁵⁴ In other places, however, they raised the standard of rebellion against the obas and chiefs, as in Imesi-Igbado where Fabunmi's ipaiye rebelled against the authorities in 1893.⁵⁵ In yet other places, they gave leadership to the reaction of the ereko towns and villages against reverting to their traditional position in the kingdom, an arrangement which the prolonged Ibadan conquest and domination had badly shaken – as in the kingdom of Ido where in 1894 the iyayu of Ifaki and some other villages led a revolt against the Olojudo of Ido in an attempt to establish the independence of their respective villages.⁵⁶ In such places we find the Ekiti rulers intervening with their united

52. (N.A.J.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/370/163, Oba Eyeowa II, the Ajero of Ijero to the Ewi of Ado and Deji of Akure, 23 June 1943.

53. *Atoyobop*: a person who had been in captivity in Ibadan and had returned home.

54. At Itaji, a whole group of iyayu, men of humble birth, were invested with chieftaincy titles on their return home. The most famous of these were Ajakaiye who became the Ologunpetu, Ogunkua the Elerio, Ogunole the Oloje, Ajileye the Ejigbo Ekuwa, Adewumi the Eḷemeḷe, Agbadara the Eḍemo.

55. Imesi-Igbodo tradition as preserved by Chief Omikunle in his *Notes*, *op. cit.*

56. (N.A.I.), Phillips 1/1, Phillips's 1894 Diary, entries for 21–23 April.

influence, in the spirit of the Imęsi-Ile oath, to mediate and restore order.⁵⁷ For instance, Phillips met the members of a peace commission drawn from most of the Ekiti kingdoms in April 1894 at Ido. These commissioners succeeded in persuading the rebellious villagers to submit to the Olojudo, and the Olojudo to release the ringleaders whom he had arrested and locked up in prison.

Even after the establishment of a British protectorate had removed the possibility of aggression from without, the spirit of the Ekitiparapọ continued to have vital emotional value among the Ekiti. In the early years of this century, this was shown in the almost continual protest of the Ekiti rulers against the loss of Akurę to the Eastern District and the boundary settlements which included slices of the Ekiti country in Northern Nigeria. As time went on, the growth of western education in the country enhanced this spirit because it led to the appearance of literate men and women who, in many cases, went to school and obtained employment in places distant from their own homes, whose horizon accordingly grew wider than those of the old kingdoms, and who therefore came to attach a great deal of importance to the oneness and 'common legacy' of the Ekiti. It was these people, living in their places of employment scattered over the whole of Nigeria, who joined with the 'Lagos Ekitis' to launch the Ekiti Progressive Union whose aim was to work for the advancement of Ekiti as a unit both by pressing the British administration to undertake, and by themselves undertaking, modern development projects transcending in scope the boundaries of the old kingdoms then (since 1917) called districts.⁵⁸

After 1913 also, the British administrative officials in charge of Ekiti, obviously influenced by the prevailing spirit in Ekiti, came to take the Ekiti District established in 1913 as the best expression of the nineteenth-century Ekitiparapọ, and in their administrative vocabulary, 'Ekitiparapọ' or, more often, 'Ekitiparapọ Confederation' referred only to the Ekiti District.⁵⁹ Furthermore, they came to believe that the administrative problems created by the existence in a single district of some sixteen or seventeen states each with its own ruler would be best solved by giving the spirit of the Ekitiparapọ, which was so strong among the Ekiti, positive institutional expression.

57. *Ibid.*

58. e.g. the Union launched a programme in 1939 to build an Ekiti Grammar School. The result is the Ekitiparapọ College, Iddo.

59. cf. Lee: *op. cit.*, pp. 1-145.

At first, when Native Administration was formally introduced to Ekiti in 1917, seventeen kingdoms were recognised and the ōba of each was gazetted as the Native Authority in his own kingdom. No attempt was made to establish overall authority, the District Officer being the main connecting link.⁶⁰ But by 1920 it was felt necessary to give the seventeen districts established in 1917 some corporate existence. Therefore, the Ekitiparapo Council of 1900 was revived, now comprising the seventeen district heads of Ekiti. A Central Treasury was also set up to control common annual estimates for the whole of Ekiti. In 1923 the Ekitiparapo Council was further invested with judicial powers and thus became a sort of court of appeal in certain cases for local courts established under the Native Administration system. Finally in the late thirties and early forties, the officials came forth with a plan for converting the Ekitiparapo Council into what was called a Superior Native Authority for Ekiti, under a president to be appointed from among the crowned rulers.⁶¹

Though the Ekiti continued to extol their oneness and their 'Confederation', they found the attempts by the administrative officials to provide them with a single political leadership very strange and they therefore began to protest. Even among the literate men and very definitely among the ōbas and chiefs, the idea that one of the Ekiti ōbas would become president and therefore have superiority over the others was completely unacceptable. Even assurances later on that in view of the objections, no longer would there be a single ōba acting permanently as president but that the post would be rotated instead among the ōbas, did not allay fears and opposition.⁶²

Before the Superior Native Authority plan had been mooted, protests had generally centred on the financial arrangements of a Central Treasury and common estimates. The larger and richer districts, notably Akure, Ado, Ikōle and Ijero, protested that their income was far in excess of the expenditure allowed them under the common estimates, and that this excess was being expended on maintaining a central administration at Ado and worse still, on

60. Lloyd, P. C.: *Local Government in Yoruba Towns* (an analysis of the roles of the ōbas, chiefs and elected councillors) (Ph.D. Thesis), Oxford 1958, pp. 34-8.

61. (N.A.I.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/370/163, Minutes of Ekiti Council Meetings, 12-13 and 24 August 1942.

62. *Ibid.*, Meeting of 24 August 1942.

supporting the smaller and poorer districts.⁶³ In response to these agitations, subsidiary estimates for each district were begun in the 1933-4 financial year, and sub-treasuries were approved for Akure in 1935, Ado, Ijero, Ikole and Oye in 1937 and Otun in 1940. By 1942 the Central Treasury dealt directly with only eleven of the districts and indirectly with the others through their sub-treasuries; it directly controlled only the 'Road fund' and what was called a 'Central Fund', contribution to which was on the basis of proportion of taxes collected.⁶⁴

Finally, when the Superior Native Authority was suggested, protest began to take the form of demands for actual secession by the largest districts - Akure and Ado.⁶⁵ By 1942, in fact, it looked as though the Ekiti District could not be held together and some of the British officials were already advising that disintegration be accepted and pursued.⁶⁶

But the threatened disintegration did not come. The prospect of break-up produced genuine shock in all parts of Ekiti. It soon became clear that nobody had really wanted disintegration and that if a plan of decentralisation were pursued to give the districts or groups of the smaller districts greater direct control over their finances especially, the agitations would come to an end. The obas began to appeal to one another in the interests of 'our Confederation',⁶⁷ and the Ekiti Progressive Union sent its officers round Ekiti to appeal to the kings, chiefs and people to stop doing things that could destroy the 'common legacy of the Ekitis'.⁶⁸ The administrative officials too became persuaded that, contrary to what they had thought, the Ekiti had never had a unified political leadership, that even under the Ekitiparapo during the Kiriji War the Ekiti kingdoms had continued to manage their separate

63. Lee: *op. cit.*, pp. 145-53.

64. (N.A.I.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/370/163, 'Minutes of Ekiti Council Meeting, 24 August 1942'.

65. Akure began to agitate for secession in 1939. (N.A.I., Ekiti Div. 1/1/291/522, Vol. 1, Handing-over notes by A. R. A. de Garston to R. B. Kerr, 2/8/39. Ado followed suit in 1942 (N.A.I.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/470/777, Ado District Tax-payers Association to H.E. the Governor, 14 September 1942; also Chiefs and Balos of Ado District to the Governor, 7 January 1943.

66. c.f. Lee; *op. cit.*, pp. 168-70.

67. (N.A.I.), Ekiti Div. 1/1/370/163, Oba Eyeowa II, the Ajero, to the Ewi of Ado and the Deji of Akure, 23 June 1943.

68. *The Daily Service*, 12 June 1944.

affairs, and that at all times the Ekiti men in the war front had claimed that they were speaking for and on behalf of the 'sixteen kings of Ekiti'. Thus the stimulation of Ekiti sentiment amongst the people themselves and the modification of policy by the government officials combined to preserve the Ekiti District more or less intact.

At the height of the agitations, the separation of Akure had been approved, but Ado later withdrew its own demands.⁶⁹ The amended proposals for the Superior Native Authority were approved in 1946, and the Authority came into being in 1948. All the obas together were to constitute its Council, and the presidency of this Council was to be rotated annually among them. The Authority was to discharge its functions through a number of Committees: Finance Committee, Education Committee, Discipline Committee and Executive Committee. Essentially, the functions of these committees were limited to joint services, while each district continued to enjoy much authority over its own local affairs. The Executive Committee was to handle chieftaincy disputes brought before the Council and prepare the agenda for the Council's meetings. In addition, the Council was given judicial power as a peripatetic Court of Appeal for the Native Authority Courts.⁷⁰

69. (N.A.I.), Ekiti 1/1/470/777, Minutes of Ekiti Council Meeting held at Ido, June 14, 1946; also R. E. Brown (D.O.) to Resident Ondo Province, 17 June 1946.

70. (E.D.O.), *Annual Report of Ekiti Division for 1948*.

Appendix I

Some Leaders of the Ekitiparapo in the Kiriji War

Obas:

Ọkinbaloye, the Ore of Ọtun (died at Imeṣi-Ile c. 1891)

Ọlatiloye Ọyiyọsoye, the Ajero of Ijero

Ọlayisade Ọdundun, the Olojudo of Ido

Agunloye, the Ọwa of Ileṣa

Warrior Chiefs:

Ijeṣa:

Ogedemgbe, Seriki of the Ijeṣa and Commander-in-chief of the Ekitiparapo forces

Arimoro, second in command to Prince Fabunmi in the second Ekitiparapo army sent against Modakeke

Igbomina:

Adeyalc, Prince of Ila (died in the Julumi War)

Apapalaṣo, Balogun of Ekan

Imeṣi-Igbodo:

Fabunmi, Prince of Imeṣi-Igbodo and 'Balogun of Ekitiparapo'

Ọtun:

Ogunminu, the Aṛe of Ọtun

Ijero:

Ọtunrangun Alaka, the Aṛe of Ijero and leader of Ijero forces (died in battle at Imeṣi-Ile)

Akata, the Balogun of Ijero

Ido:

Faboro, Prince of Ido (died in battle at Imeṣi-Ile)

Ọye:

Fajembola, the Olugbosun of Ọye

Akeoro of Ire

Aje of Egosi

Fabgoyo, later (after the war) Elejoka of Ọye

Ara:

Adagiri, the Sajowa of Ara, leader of Ara forces
Oluborode from Erijiyan

Ikole:

Aso Ogundana, after the war the Elejoka of Ikole
Adoko from Odo-Aiyedun
Okombò from Oke-Aiyedun

Emure:

Agodi, the Otua of Emure
Fatosin, later Chief Adanikin

Aiyede and Işan:

Adewusi Afogbangba of Işan, became famous as leader of
Eşugbayi's war boys and later led the Aiyede and Işan armies at
Imeşi-Ile

Itaji:

Falore, the Balogun and leader of Itaji forces

Obo:

Aruku, the Balogun of Obo

Omuo:

Ajaka, the Balogun of Omuo

Akure:

Sawo of Akure

Some Leaders of the Ekitiparapo Society, Lagos:

Frederick Haastrop (of Itebu) later (1896) Oba Ajimoko, the
Owa of Ilesha

Thomas F. Cole of Lagos

Joseph Haastrop

William Campbell Esq. of Lagos

Labinjo Esq. from Lagos, leader of the Rifle Corps at Imeşi-Ile
until his death in 1885

James Thompson Gureje, from Abokuta, soldier at Imeşi-Ile

Phillip Jose Meffre of Lagos

Ojamiyunwa Takuro, first head chief of the Aiyesan colony till
his death in 1890

Da Costa Brown, Takuro's successor as head chief of Aiyesan

Appendix II

1886 Peace Treaty

Treaty of peace, friendship and commerce between the Alafin of Oyo, the Balogun, the Maye, the Abese, the Agbakin, the Otun Balẹ of Ibadan; the Owa of Ilesha, the Owore of Otun, the Ajero of Ijero, the Olojudo of Ido, the Seriki of Ilesha, the Owoni of Ife, the Obalufe, the Obajiwo, the Obalorun, the Ajaruwa, the Arode, the Arisaure, the Balogun of Ife; the Ogunsuwa of Modakeke, the Balogun and Otun of Modakeke, the Awujale of Ijebu and the Balogun of Ijebu.

Whereas the Kings, Balẹs, Baloguns and Chiefs above enumerated, parties to this Treaty, and to the conditions and articles of agreement hereinafter set forth, profess to be earnestly desirous to put a stop to the devastating war which has for years been waged in their own and adjoining countries, and to secure the blessings of lasting peace to themselves and their peoples, and have appealed by their envoys and messengers duly accredited to His Excellency the Governor of the Colony of Lagos as representing Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen to mediate between them, and to arbitrate, and determine such terms and conditions as shall secure a just and honourable peace to the contending parties, and have each and all of them agreed to abide by such arbitration and determination, and to do his and their utmost endeavour to carry into effect the terms and conditions so arranged and determined. And whereas the envoys and messengers duly accredited by the aforesaid Kings, Balẹs, Baloguns and Chiefs have been received in audience by His Excellency the Governor, and have themselves assented both verbally and in writing to the terms and conditions of peace hereinafter specified, and have agreed to be bound thereby, and faithfully to observe the same.

Now this is to testify that the Kings, Balẹs, Baloguns and Chiefs aforesaid hereby ratify and confirm the said agreement made and entered into by their envoys and messengers for them and on their behalf and solemnly pledge themselves faithfully, loyally and strictly to observe and carry out the following terms and

conditions so far as they are individually or collectively concerned:

1. There shall be peace and friendship between the Kings, Balẹ, Baloguns and Chiefs, the signatories to this Treaty and their peoples respectively and the Kings, Balẹ, Baloguns and Chiefs aforesaid hereby engage for themselves and their peoples that they will cease from fighting and will remain within or retire to their own territories as herein provided, and will in all things submit themselves to such directions as may seem necessary or expedient to the Governor of Lagos for better and more effectually securing the object of this Treaty.
2. The Kings, Chiefs and peoples comprising the Ekitiparapo alliance or Confederation on the one hand, and the Balẹ, Balogun, Chiefs and people of Ibadan on the other shall respectively retain their independence.
3. The Alafin and Owa shall stand to each other in the relationship of the elder brother to the younger as before when the Ekiti countries were independent.
4. The towns of Otan, Ireṣi, Ada and Igbajo shall form part of the territories of Ibadan, and be subject to the Balẹ, Balogun and Chiefs of Ibadan. Such of the inhabitants of the towns aforesaid as desire to leave shall be permitted to do so at such time and in such manner as the Governor, his envoy, or messenger shall direct after conference with the governments of the parties principally concerned, and such people shall not be molested by the signatories their peoples or allies.
5. In order to preserve peace the town of Modakeke shall be reconstructed on the land lying between the Osun and the Oba rivers to the north of its present situation, and such of the people of Modakeke as desire to live under the rule of the Balẹ and Balogun of Ibadan shall withdraw from the present town to the land mentioned, at such times and in such manner as the Governor his envoy or messenger shall direct after conference with the governments of the parties principally concerned, and such of the people as desire to live with the Ifẹ shall be permitted to do so but shall not remain in the present town of Modakeke, which shall remain the territory and under the rule of the king and chiefs of Ifẹ, who may deal with the same as they may think expedient.

6. Except as herein provided the boundaries of the territories of the respective parties and signatories shall remain as at present and shall not be interfered with.

7. The Kiriji camp shall be broken up and the contending parties agree quietly and peaceably and without any demonstration to withdraw their armies and their peoples at such time or times in such manner, and by such routes as shall be directed by the Governor, his envoy or messenger after conference with the governments of the parties principally concerned.

8. The signatories engage themselves at or immediately after the signature of this treaty or at such times as may be directed by the Governor, his envoy or messenger after conference with the parties principally concerned, to withdraw their peoples and warriors and allies employed or associated with the contending peoples or armies at Modakęke, Isoya, or elsewhere, and wherever such allies or people or warriors may be employed in war, or likely to foster or promote war, and further when their peoples, warriors, and allies have been withdrawn, and the camp of Kiriji broken up and dispersed to do their utmost by peaceful and friendly means to bring about peace at Offa.

9. The signatories bind themselves to endeavour in every legitimate way to promote trade and commerce, and to abstain from dissension and acts likely to promote strife.

10. The signatories agree if any cause of strife or dissension should still exist after the ratification and carrying out of these conditions which is not dealt with herein, to refer such cause or matter unreservedly to the arbitration of the Governor of the Lagos Colony and peaceably and without resorting to strife or provocation to await his determination thereof and abide by it, testifying their gratitude to Her Majesty's Government for efforts already made and undertaken in their interest and their sincerity and earnestness in the cause of general peace and goodwill.

11. The armistice now existing between the hostile forces in the camps of Kiriji and Isoya shall be promoted, and the signatories bind themselves to cease from all warlike operations or acts of provocation, and to do their utmost to promote friendly relations until the Governor, his envoy or messenger shall be able to, and shall communicate with the signatories hereto.

12. As a guarantee of good faith, and for the further and better securing the objects of this treaty and the faithful and strict observance of the terms and conditions thereof, the signatories agree to place in the hands of the Governor his envoy or messenger as and when he may determine, such of their leading chiefs as he may require as hostages, who will continue and remain with him on the battlefield of Kiriji, whilst the armies and peoples of the respective signatories are dispersing therefrom, and for and during such time or period as the circumstances or necessities of the case may require, or to give such other or further guarantees as may seem just or expedient to the Governor, his envoy or messenger.

In witness thereof we have hereunto put our hands and seals the days and dates specified.

Name and Title	Country	Mk.	Seal	Date
1. Adeyemi The Alafin	of Oyo	X	LS	June 25th, 1886.
2. Ajayi Balogun	Ibadan	X	LS	July 1st, 1886.
3. Oşuntoki Maye	Ibadan	X	LS	July 1st, 1886.
4. Fijabi Abese	Ibadan	X	LS	July 1st, 1886.
5. Fajinmi Agbakin	Ibadan	X	LS	July 1st, 1886.
6. Tahajo Otun Bale	Ibadan	X	LS	June 14th, 1886.
7. Agunloye Owa	Ilesa	X	LS	July 7th, 1886.
8. Okinbaloye Owore	Otun	X	LS	July 3rd, 1886.
9. Oyişoye Ajero	Ijero	X	LS	July 3rd, 1886.
10. Odundun Olojudo	Ido	X	LS	July 3rd, 1886.
11. Ogedemgbe Şeriki	Ilesa	X	LS	July 2nd, 1886.
12. Derin Owoñi-elect	Ife	X	LS	July 18th, 1886.

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13. Awotionde Obalufe	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
14. Oramuyiwa Obajiwọ	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
15. Akintola Obaloran	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 16th, 1886.
16. Oşundulu Ajaruwa	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
17. Jojo Arode	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
18. Aworinlo Arisaure	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
19. Oga Balogun	Ifẹ	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
20. Ogunwole Ogunşua	Modakeke	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
21. Sowo For Balogun	Modakeke	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
22. Ayanleye For Otun	Modakeke	X	LS	July 14th, 1886.
23. Aboki Awujale	Ijebu	X	LS	June 9th, 1886.
24. Nofowokan Balogun	Ijebu	X	LS	June 10th, 1886.

Signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of the undersigned after the terms and condition therein contained had been interpreted and explained by us or one of us to the respective signatories.

(Signed) **Samuel Johnson** Clerk in Holy Orders,
Messenger and Interpreter for the Governor.

(Signed) **Charles Phillips**, Clerk in Holy Orders,
Messenger and Interpreter for the Governor.

Appendix III

Enactment for the Abolition of Human Sacrifices in the Ekiti Countries

Whereas the practice of immolating human beings is cruel, barbarous, futile and unjust in the eyes of all civilised nations and right-minded persons, and whereas the said practice has fallen into disuse in the Ekiti countries, and the present time appears opportune for its total abolition in those countries; and whereas the Ekitis are under a deep and lasting obligation to His Excellency the Governor of Lagos for having established peace between them and their late enemies the Ibadans, and for having thereby secured the independence of the said Ekiti countries; and whereas His Excellency the Governor of Lagos desires no other proof of the gratitude of the Ekitis for what he has done for them than that they should abolish the said abominable practice; and whereas the Ekitis have resolved to abolish the said practice accordingly: Now therefore we, the undersigned, representing all the Ekiti kings and countries, and being duly authorised to speak in their name, and on their behalf, do hereby enact, ordain and declare as follows, viz.:

1. The practice of immolating human beings, whether at the festival of any deity, or before, at or after the funeral of any king or subject or on any other public or private occasion, shall be and hereby is abolished for ever.
2. It shall be and hereby is constituted a criminal offence for anyone in any Ekiti country, or for any subject of any Ekiti king to perform or participate in or to aid or abet others in performing or participating in any human sacrifice.
3. Every such criminal offence shall be punished by the infliction of a heavy fine, imprisonment, or forced labour.
4. No person condemned to death for a crime shall be utilised for the purpose of human sacrifice.

Given under our hands and seals this 29th day of September, 1886.

Ọkinbaloye, Owore of Ọtun X
Ọyiyọsoye, Ajero of Ijero X
Ọdundun, Olojudo of Ido X (their marks).

I guarantee the enactment of the above-written promise.

Ọgedengbe, Seriki of Ijeṣa X (his mark)

Signed and sealed in our presence after the contents had been read and interpreted to the signatories by the Rev. Charles Phillips.

H. Higgins }
Oliver Smith } Special Commissioners.

(A similar Enactment for the abolition of human sacrifices in the Ijeṣa country was made at the same time between the Ọwa of Ijeṣa and Chief Ọgedengbe representing the Ijeṣa authorities, and the commissioners of the Lagos government.)

Sources and Select Bibliography

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

Documents examined for this study fall into two broad categories: missionary and government records. It took much longer in the nineteenth century for missionary evangelism, British influence, or trade with coastal merchants to penetrate to the eastern than it did to the western part of Yorubaland. Nevertheless, much information on the eastern Yoruba provinces abounds in the records of missionaries based in places like Ibadan, Lagos and Abeokuta as well as in the records of the British administration of Lagos.

From about 1850 commitments in the eastern Yoruba countries became of the utmost importance to Ibadan and therefore an important factor in the politics of the Yoruba interior. Missionary agents at Ibadan and other places, as well as officials of the Lagos administration, therefore, often had their attention attracted by happenings in the eastern interior. Local political, social and other developments always featured prominently in the diaries, letters, reports and journals of the missionary agents because these developments were important, and sometimes crucial, to the progress of the missionary work and in the life of the missionary agents themselves. The constant interest shown in the affairs of the interior by the agents of the Lagos government arose from the fact that Lagos was originally occupied by the British with the aim of using it as the port to tap the resources of the Yoruba interior, and therefore that the wars of the interior created anxiety in Lagos owing to their detrimental effects on the trade. For the same reasons, the Lagos community showed much interest in the affairs of the interior and this is manifested in the frequent stories in Lagos newspapers or in newspapers with representatives in Lagos.

In addition, much useful material on the earlier period is found in the writings of missionary and commercial travellers in the eastern Yoruba provinces. Of these the most important are the Rev. William H. Clarke of the Southern Baptist Convention and

Daniel J. May, a member of the Niger Expedition, sent by his superiors to explore the commercial possibilities of the far interior by travelling from the Niger overland to Lagos and back. Both these men and the Rev. David Hinderer of Ibadan visited parts of the Ekiti, Ijeṣa and Igbomina countries between 1857 and 1876 and have left first-hand accounts of the system and effects of Ibadan rule in the eastern provinces.

When the Kiriji War commenced in 1877-8 and the whole of Yorubaland became involved in hostilities, missionaries, officials of the Lagos administration and the Lagos community came to show greater interest in the interior generally and the eastern interior particularly. At the same time, the first really successful missionary station in the eastern Yoruba interior emerged at Ode-Ondo. Missionary agents from Ibadan, Abeokuta and Ondo played an important role from the beginning to the end of the war, either directly by themselves or indirectly as peace-making agents of the Lagos government, in attempts to restore peace to Yorubaland. The people of Lagos, whose economic life was more gravely affected by the Kiriji and allied wars than ever before, attempted to influence the administration to assume responsibilities for the restoration of peace in the interior, and their press gave a lot of scope to events taking place inland. Agents of the Lagos government visited the scenes of war and the countries of belligerent parties with a view to putting an end to hostilities. The result of all this activity is the availability of quite a large volume of primary documentary material on the eastern Yoruba territories from about 1877 on.

With the growth of British political influence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, we have access to another body of material. This consists of administrative papers, travel diaries and journals, complaint books, desk diaries, travelling court records, intelligence books, minutes of local councils, etc. Apart from painting pictures of the contemporary scenes in the eastern Yoruba interior, these papers also contain the first attempts at recording the traditions of the people. Especially, the fact that the earliest government officials in the Yoruba interior were contemporaries of many of the men who had played the leading roles in the late-nineteenth-century history of the Yoruba makes their records very valuable. Finally, when we come to the twentieth century, we begin to find private papers of literate local men.

1. Missionary Records

The Church Missionary Society

i) C.M.S. Yoruba Mission records deposited at the Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan: C.M.S. (Y)

ii) C.M.S. Yoruba Mission records in the Church Missionary Society Archives, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.4;

CA2 for records up to 1880

G3A2 for records after 1880

These are papers going to the missionary headquarters in London from the missionaries in the field in Nigeria. Up to 1880, they are numbered according to source, each missionary having a file. After 1880, they are numbered in chronological order. Both series are available in microfilm in the University of Ibadan Library.

The Society of African Missions

S.M.A. records in the S.M.A. Archives, Via della Nocetta, Rome - especially the papers of Father Holley

2. Government Records

Records of the Nigerian Secretariat

These are kept in the Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan, under the numbers:

C.S.O. 1/1-1/12 for Despatches of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos, 1861-1906

C.S.O. 1/13-1/18 for Despatches of the Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Protectorate and Southern Nigeria, 1891-1906

C.S.O. 1/19-1/25 for Despatches of the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, 1906-1914

C.S.O. 1/32-1/64 for Nigeria, 1914-1954

C.S.O. 3 for Telegram Books, 1892-1939

C.S.O. 4 for Reports (excluding printed reports)

C.S.O. 5 for Instruments (Treaties, Proclamations, Orders-in-Council) 1862-1960

NL/B for Council papers of Southern Nigeria

Records in the Public Records Office, London

C.O.147 for Colonial Office Papers relating to Lagos, 1861-1895 (now available, more or less fully, in microfilm in the University of Ife Library)

Printed Administrative Papers

Reports of the Conferences of the Yoruba Obas of the Western Provinces of Nigeria CFR5 (National Archives, Ibadan)

Report by Major Macdonald of an Expedition to Ilorin, September-October 1889 (Foreign Office Publications, 1889)

Correspondence respecting War between Native tribes in the Interior of Lagos - C.4957, 1887

Further Correspondence respecting War between Native tribes in the Interior of Lagos - C.5114, 1887

Despatch from Sir Gilbert T. Carter furnishing a general Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition - C.7227, 1893

3. Private Papers

Papers of the Rev. Bishop Charles Phillips now deposited by his son, Bishop S. C. Phillips, in the National Archives, Ibadan.

Papers (mostly Diaries) of the Rev. Olubi, which were recovered from the late Oba I. B. Akinyele and are now being kept by the Ibadan University Library

Diaries of the Rev. R. S. Oyeboḍe being held by the Ibadan University Library

Diaries of the Rev. W. S. Aḡen now being kept by the Ibadan University Library

Private Papers of Oba R. W. Adedayo, the Oluṣi of Uṣi in Ekiti, being held at his palace at Uṣi (including a well-kept body of papers of the Ekiti Progressive Union)

Private Papers of Chief E. A. Babalola, being held at his residence at Oṣoṣami Road, Oke-Ado, Ibadan.

Private Papers of Chief Orakunle, the Lejua of Okemeṣi, including his *Notes on Ekiti History*

Papers relating to Dr. Mojola Agbebi's work in West Africa, including Fantiland, the Ekiti country, Southern Nigeria and the Cameroons. This is a collection of papers whose originals are in the Carnegie Library, Howard University, Washington D.C., but which have been microfilmed for the Ibadan University Library. (Dr. Agbebi was an Ekiti man born 10 April 1860. Author, poet and preacher, he travelled widely in West Africa, England and U.S.A., and around the turn of the century he tried to form self-reliant churches and schools in Southern Nigeria.)

4. Local Administrative Papers

The National Archives, Ibadan, keeps records collected from the Local Government offices of many parts of the country. I have made use of those of these papers numbered as follows:

Ekiti Div. – for papers collected from the Ekiti Divisional Office, Ado-Ekiti

Ondo Prof. – a collection of papers relating to Ondo and Akure; papers relating to Akure are given the subsidiary number AK.Div.

Iba. Prof. – for papers collected from Ibadan

Ben. Dist. – for papers relating to the early administration of Benin

In addition, there is still a considerable volume of papers relating to early British administration in Ekiti being held at the Ekiti Divisional Office, Ado-Ekiti.

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C. ORAL SOURCES

This study is of a non-literate people and therefore oral evidence has been very important for it. The value of such material for research into the history of non-literate African peoples is now widely admitted, since it has been found that these peoples preserve their histories in their traditions, institutions, rituals and folk literature. For any scholar needing to use oral traditions in studies of the Yoruba, there can be no scarcity of material. Each of their many kingdoms has a complicated system of preserving its traditions. In most cases, there are official town historians, as well as palace musicians and singers acting as conscious keepers of the traditions. In addition, the lists of kings and other historical facts are usually repeated at the installation of new rulers and at certain annual festivals. Even such small units as lineages have similar methods of passing on their history. Finally, the Yoruba are very skilful at creating proverbs, epigrams, poetry, songs and names which preserve important historical details and many of their ceremonies and rituals deliberately re-enact past events. Nevertheless, recognising the need for much caution in employing material derived from these sources for research purposes – especially in the field of history of a people with such a complex social structure and rich traditions as the Yoruba – I have checked and cross-checked the remembered traditions and collected as many versions of each as possible, bearing in mind such considerations as the mode of their transmission, the

purpose they are expected to serve in the existing socio-political setting, whether or not their content conforms to the possibilities of the country in the period to which they refer, and how their content relates to the content of the traditions of other towns and villages in the country.

I did a total of 173 days of field work between 1963 and 1964 and covered a total distance of about 4,500 miles. In general, five types of people were selected for interviewing:

- a) Actual eye-witnesses of some of the events in this study. (A few men and women were found who had been eye-witnesses of or even minor participants in the Kiriji War and contemporary developments.)
- b) Direct descendants of the leading figures of the nineteenth century
- c) Present holders of important positions and titles – obas, priests, chiefs, official palace historians etc.
- d) Other men and women whose testimonies on traditions were locally respected because of their great age or other qualifications
- e) Persons known to have written local histories or to have collected local traditions in some written form

Places of special interest, visited, and about which information was collected, include towns, villages and other localities which were important in the nineteenth century as military camps and scenes of important battles and other events. Also, surviving rituals and other ceremonies which seem relevant to, or appear to re-enact important details in the remembered traditions, were observed wherever possible.

From all these sources have accumulated many town and village histories, lists of kings and other rulers, genealogies of the most important royal, chiefly and priestly families in the areas visited, information regarding the ethnography of the people, as well as collections of folk poetry, songs, sayings, proverbs, family praise-poetry and folk stories.

Because the men and women interviewed were mostly illiterate, questionnaires could not be used. All the oral information, however, was recorded in notebooks or on tape. Moreover, traditions already preserved in written form, especially in local chronicles and histories as well as the *Intelligence Reports* and records of the early British administrators, were found useful.

Below is a list of places visited and the persons interviewed. A short biographical note is added in most cases.

Ado District, 28 May-5 June 1963

The Ewi of Ado-Ekiti

Chief Akintola, the Eleyinmi of Ado, son of the Chief Eleyinmi who is reputed to have played a leading part in repulsing the Ikerẹ army from the gate of Ado in 1874. The present Chief Eleyinmi took some part in the latter stages of the Ado-Ikerẹ War. He thought he might be about ninety-three years old in 1963.

Chief Akodu, the Odoḷofin; knew Chief Aduloju intimately at Imesi-Laşigidi; later a trader between Ado and Benin; believed in 1963 to be the oldest chief in Ado

Madam Ibiḍolapo, the oldest of the surviving children of Chief Agbemu who was leader of Chief Aduloju's young men in the Akoko expeditions; she remembered Aduloju and Ogedemgbe clearly.

The baḷe of Iworopora village, traditionally chief priest of Obalufon for the whole of Ado kingdom

Representatives of Chief Aduloju's descendants

Gbonyin District, 6-8 June 1963

Oba Oḷadimeji, the Onimesi of Imesi-Laşigidi

Meeting of Imesi-Laşigidi Chiefs

Madam Tinuade, who claimed to be the only surviving wife of Chief Aduloju; seen at Imesi-Laşigidi

The Onijan of Ijan

The Oro of Agbado

Ikerẹ District, 9-12 June 1963

Oba Adegoriola, the Ogoga of Ikerẹ, author of the article 'A note on the administration of Ikerẹ before the advent of the British', *Odu*, No. 2, 1956; grandson of the Ogoga Agabaola who was ruler of Ikerẹ during the Kiriji War

The Olukere of Ikere, holder of the title of the Olukeres, who were the rulers of Ikere before the coming of Ogoga. (The Olukere is now only the chief priest for the town, but he still wears a crown.)

The Alare of Are quarter in Ikere

Some representatives of the Oyo community at Ikere

The Rev. Father Oguntuyi, author of *History of Ado*

Ise District, 14-15 June 1963

The Arinjale of Ise

Chiefs of the village of Orun, who claim to be the descendants of the earliest inhabitants of Ise

Mr. T. O. Jegede, author of *History of Ise*

A meeting of Ise Chiefs

Emure District, 16-18 June 1963

Chief Odole, a much travelled man, believed to be the oldest chief in Emure; also something of a town historian

Chief Olosi of Emure, son of the Chief Olosi, who with Ogedemgbe, Aduloju and others, destroyed Ise in the 1870s. The elder Chief Olosi is also remembered as the envoy sent to Ibadan to escort the Ibadan *Ajele* at Emure back home at the time of the general insurrection of 1878 and to secure the redemption of the Elemure (ruler) of Emure who was in captivity at Ibadan.

Ogotun District, 20-22 June 1963

The Ologotun of Ogotun

Chief Obajioro, official town historian

A meeting of the Ogotun Chiefs

Ikole District, 26-30 June 1963

The Ekekole of Ikole

Ogundana of Ikoyi quarter of Ikole, believed to be the oldest

man in the town; clearly remembered Latosisa's last attack on Ikole, 1875-6

S. A. Akinyemi of Odo-Aiyedun

Oye District, 1-3 July 1963

P. M. Falope, who was writing a history of Oye

The Oloye of Oye

A meeting of the Oye Chiefs

Chief Onijoka, traditionally head of the Elegbe chiefs of Oye

Chief Elegbo, second in rank to the Oloye

Aiyede and Itaji, 4-6 July 1963

A meeting of representatives of the lineage of Chief Falore who was captain of the Itaji contingents at Imesi-Ile

The Onitaji of Itaji

A meeting of the leading Itaji chiefs

A meeting of the leading Aiyede chiefs

Mr. Ademola Adyleye who was collecting material for a history of Aiyede

Işan District, 8-9 July 1963

The Onişan of Işan, who was believed to be the oldest oba in Ekiti; remembered Carter's visit to the interior in 1893

Chief Abejide, the Ologun or traditional commander of Işan forces

Ido District, 11-14 July 1963

The Olojudo of Ido

The Oluşi of Uşi, foundation member and first secretary of the Ekiti Progressive Union, Lagos

The Olosi of Osi

The present village head of Ifaki

The chief priestess of Okorobo, the village god of Ifaki

Ijero District, 16–20 July 1963

The Ajero of Ijero

Chief Akintola, the Sajuku of Ijero, believed in 1963 to be perhaps the oldest man in Ekiti. (The *Nigerian Daily Sketch* of 28 February 1967 reported the death of Chief Akintola – at the age, according to the newspaper, of 120.) Chief Akintola himself claimed to have been about fifteen when the Kiriji War started. He was a source of very intimate information about many of the war chiefs of the Ekitiparapo.

Chief Omoṭade, the Oḅanla of Ijero, son of Chief Fagbenro, the Oḅanla of Ijero who was one of the leaders of the Ijero contingents to Imeṣi-Ile

Chief Alufa, the Saade of Ijero, author of *Itan Ajero ati Oriḷe-Ede Ijero*

Chief Oḍoḍin of Ijero

Ara District, 23–28 July 1963

The Alara of Ara

Chief Ayeni, the Eḷegemo of Ara, the oldest man in Ara; son of Chief Eḷegemo who fought against the Ibadan in the 1850s. The elder Eḷegemo was taken into captivity to Ibadan when Ara fell in 1855; Chief Ayeni claimed he was born soon after that

Madam Oyeyemi, the Eiyelori (woman leader) of Ara women, daughter of Chief Adagiri, the Sajowa, who led the Ara forces at Imeṣi-Ile. A girl of about five when the Kiriji War started in 1878, Madam Oyeyemi lived in the Ekitiparapo camp throughout the war.

Chief Seriki of Ara whose father was taken into captivity to Oṣogbo when Ara fell; claimed that he was born many years later at Oṣogbo

Effon District, 1–3 August 1963

The Alaye of Effon

The village head of Ido-Irapa

Okemeşi District 4-7 August 1963

The Olojaoke of Imeşi (Imeşi-Igbodo)

Chief Omikunle, the Lejua of Okemeşi, who also kindly allowed me to make use of his private papers including his *Notes on Ekiti History*

A meeting of the surviving sons and daughters of Prince Fabunmi

A meeting of the leading chiefs of Imeşi

Ọtun District, 8-12 August 1963

The Ore of Ọtun, one of the oldest ọbas in Ekiti

A meeting of the leading Ọtun chiefs

Mr. D. Atọlagbe, descendant of Chief Ogunminu, the Aṛẹ of Ọtun forces at Imesi-Ile; author of *Itan Ore, Mọba at Ọtun*

Obo-ile, 13-14 August 1963

The Ọwa of Obo

Mr. Adebayo, grandson of Chief Aruku, the leader of the Obo forces at Imesi-Ile

A meeting of the leading Obo chiefs

Akure District, 17-21 August 1963

Mr. Joseph Atandare, author of *Itan Akure*

Mr. Samuel Alade, author of *The Awakening of Akure* (Oşogbo, 1950)

Benin, 24-26 August 1963

Ọba Akenzua, the ruler of Benin

Chief J. U. Egharevba, author of *History of Benin*

A meeting of leading Benin chiefs

Akoko and Ọwo, 28 August-3 September 1963

Chief Saşere, the oldest chief and oldest literate man in Ọwo

Chief Ashara, the author of *History of Owo*

Ọba Momoh, the Olukare of Ikare

Mr. James Abayomi of Oke-Agbe

Madam Ọmọboja of Oke-Agbe, daughter of Chief Oro who was leader of a section of the Afa army during the Afa War; she was taken into captivity to Imesi-Laşigidi where she lived as a member of Chief Aduloju's household (because Chief Aduloju took her aunt for wife) for many years; later, on a visit to Afa, she was captured by bandits and sold to Ondo traders who sold her to Ile-Oluji

Chief Arogunyo, the Sajowa of Oke-Agbe, son of Chief Olode of Afa who fought against the Nupe and against Aduloju; he believed himself to be about 100 years old; remembered clearly the beginning of the Kiriji War, which he called 'the Fabunmi War'.

A meeting of Ikare chiefs

Chief Oyegbata of Ido-Ani, whose father was taken into captivity by Ogedemgbe when Idoani was destroyed; Chief Oyegbata later lived in the Ekitiparapo camp at Imesi-Ile, as one of Chief Ogedemgbe's slaves, throughout the Kiriji War. He fled Ilesha when Ogedemgbe was arrested in 1894

Chief M. O. Daji of Idoani, son of Chief Atugbulu who also took a leading part in the defence of Idoani against Ogedemgbe

Ofa, 6-8 September 1963

A meeting of the Oloffa and his chiefs

Igbomina, 12-14 September 1963

The village head of Ora

Chief Adeleke Onaolapo, the Babakekere of Ila

The Orangun of Ila (September 1968)

Ọşun District, 16-25 September 1963

Ọba Famodun, the Ọwa of Igbajo, grandson of the Ọba Famo-

dun who was ruler of Igbajo during the Ekitiparapo attacks on that town in 1878 and 1879

Alfred Faşeyitan and Ezekiel Omideji, who acted as my guides to the site of the Ibadan camp

Chief Jimoh Oyewole, the Mogaji (leader) of Ikirun princes

Oba Adekansola, the Olobagun of Obagun village near Ikirun, a very old man who remembered in clear detail the Ilorin raids on the Ikirun farms (1887-93) and Capt. Bower's actions against the Ilorin after 1893

The Rev. M. F. Awomolo of Igbajo

Ondo District, 19-27 December 1963

Chief Akinsete, the Samo of Ondo

Chief Fawehinmi, the Lisa of Ondo, second in rank to the ruler

The Ajobu of Araromi-Obu near Aiyesan

The village head and chiefs of the old Ekitiparapo Society's village of Aiyesan on the lagoon

Mr. Takuro, grandson of Chief Ojamiyunwa Takuro who was one of the founders of Aiyesan and its first village head

Ijesa District, 4-23 January 1964

Chief Eşan Awodiya, the Odole of Ilesha, a descendant of that Chief Okanle, the Odole, whom Hinderer described in 1858 as the most powerful chief in Ilesha

Chief Agbayewa of Ilesha, a literate chief

Joshua Fakolade of Imesi-Ile, who acted as my guide to the site of the Ekitiparapo camp

Chief Familusi of Imesi-Ile

The Olojaoke of Imesi-Ile who was believed by his subjects to have been, in 1964, perhaps the oldest oba in the country; an eye-witness of many of the events of the Kiriji War

Prince Mayadenu, author of *Işedale Ijesa*

Ijebu-Igbo, 25-28 January 1964

Mr. Abiola Ogunsolu, a descendant of the Seriki Ogunṣigun

Ibadan, 1-4 February 1964

Suberu Konga of Iba's compound, Ojaba, Ibadan; a very old man who claimed to have been a boy at the time of the Jalumi War and to have later joined the Ibadan army at Ikirun as a stable-boy

Chief E. A. Babalola, one of the founders of the Ekiti Progressive Union and its president until 1956

Chief Kobiowu (later the Olubadan)

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