



Thesis By
OLUFUNKE ASAKE
ADEBOYE

THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
Faculty of Arts Department of
HISTORY

The Ibadan elite, 1893-1966

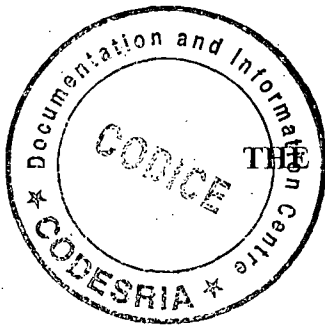
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THE IBADAN ELITE, 1893-1966

BY

OLUFUNKE ASAKE ADEBOYE
B.A. (HONS), M.A. (Ibadan)

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DEDICATION

To my husband, Samuel Adepitan Adeboye, for sharing my academic vision and for his constant devotion and love.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the mutations in the make-up, values and outlook of the Ibadan elite in the period between 1893-1966. This has become necessary because of the centrality of the elite in the society. The changes in the elite category are seen as reflections of other transformations in the society at large.

The study begins by examining the nineteenth century military elite in Ibadan and goes on to discuss how it responded to such factors as colonialism, Christianity and Western education, Islam, economic enterprise and partisan politics. The elite has had to modify its membership, criteria for new recruits, and values as a result of these encounters. Partisan politics proved to be the greatest challenge to the traditional elite structure by bringing the weight of the rival Federal and Regional parties in power to support the local partisans. But the traditional framework of the Ibadan elite never collapsed. There was still some continuity despite these various changes. The conclusion is that the Ibadan elite successfully transformed itself without breaking its traditional basis.

This study has borrowed insights from Sociology on the elite theory and other related concepts. This is in addition to its dependence on archival materials, private papers, Government documents, Church/Mosque papers, oral interviews etc. The idea is to demonstrate the value of the inter-disciplinary approach to historical enquiry.

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Gabriel Nyityo, Dele Adeoti, Gbemi Oduwole and Jane Unung provided me with varying degrees of camaraderie during my course of study. I also appreciate the assistance of Chief F.A. Bamgbelu of the Jadeas Trust Library and the secretarial support of Mr. Taiye Akano in typing the thesis.

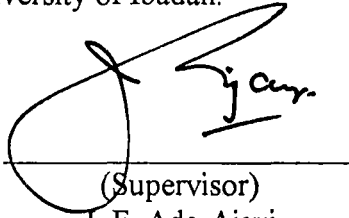
Finally, I register my profound gratitude and indebtedness to my husband, Adepitan, who shared my dreams and encouraged me in all ways open to him. He stood solidly by me and continually assured me that I would make it. From him, I have learnt much about devotion and love. It is to him that I dedicate this work as a token of my gratitude.

University of Ibadan
November, 1996.

Olufunke Adeboye

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by Olufunke Asake Adeboye in the Department of History, University of Ibadan.



(Supervisor)

J. F. Ade-Ajayi

B.A. (Hons), Ph.D (London); NNMA,
FHSN, Hon.LLD (Leics.), Hon. D. Litt (Birm.),
Emeritus Professor in the Department of History,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

November, 1996.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG	-	Action Group
ANCE	-	Association of Nigerian Cooperative Exporters
CAC	-	Christ Apostolic Church
CCII	-	Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes
CMS	-	Church Missionary Society
ICC	-	Ibadan Citizen's Committee
ICCMU	-	Ibadan Cooperative Cocoa Marketing Union
IDC	-	Ibadan District Council
IGS	-	Ibadan Grammar School
INAS	-	Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society
INTA	-	Ibadan Native Traders Association
IPA	-	Ibadan Patriotic Association
IPP	-	Ibadan People's Party
IPU	-	Ibadan Progressive Union
ISPA	-	Independent Schools Proprietors' Association
ITPA	-	Ibadan Tax Payers' Association
JHSN	-	Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
KDL	-	Kenneth Dike Library
NAI	-	National Archives, Ibadan
NCNC	-	National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons
NCWS	-	National Council of Women Societies
NNA	-	Nigerian National Alliance
NNDP	-	Nigerian National Democratic Party
NPC	-	Northern People's Congress
UAC	-	United African Company
UMC	-	United Missionary College
UPGA	-	United Progressive Grand Alliance
UPL	-	University Press Limited
UPP	-	United People's Party

PREFACE

The role of the elite in human societies has been a subject of interest over the years. The preoccupation of this thesis is not just with the functions and diverse activities of that category in Ibadan, but also with the structure and organization of the elite itself as a way of assessing how well it has adapted to changes. Although the concept of elite belongs, strictly speaking, to the social sciences, I have here attempted a historical study of the elite that I have identified in Ibadan in the period of study. This is aimed at presenting a cross-disciplinary perspective of the elite problematic.

The approach in the organization of the chapters is a thematic one. The major factors of change in twentieth-century Ibadan are examined to determine how much they have influenced elite behaviour and psyche. Such factors are the religious factor, the factor of colonialism, the economic factor and the political factor. Because women were as much a part of the elite as were men, a whole chapter is devoted to the study of the place of women in the elite cult.

The focus, however, is not completely on the elite, aspects of the behaviour of the masses are also highlighted to show the interrelationships between these two social categories. And despite the fact that the elite concept is a collective syndrome, the differentiation within the category also constitutes another parameter of this study. Lastly, in defining the elite concept, I have tried to balance Western ideas with traditional Yoruba concept of elitism and their beliefs on *Olá*. The point is that in playing out different roles and adapting to changes, the Ibadan elite was conditioned by both Western and traditional ideas of elitism.

INTRODUCTION

Elite Theory

The concept of the *elite* does not lend itself to a uniform definition. Different scholars have defined it in diverse manners. However, a basic assumption underlies the elite theory, namely, that of inequality. This has to do with inequality in individual endowment: of resources, skills, mental capacities etc. This inequality produces a situation in which a minority dominates the rest of society.

The term 'elite', gained wide currency in the 1930s in Britain and America largely through the sociological theories of the elite propounded by Vilfredo Pareto and his disciples. He defined the elite in a very general sense when he wrote:

Let us assume that in every branch of human activity each individual is given an index which stands as a sign of his capacity, very much in the way grades are given in the various subjects in examinations in schools... So let us make a class of people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity and to that class give the name of elite.¹

Pareto's usage would thus incorporate outstanding individuals in their various occupations and vocations. In addition, the above definition underlines the inequality of individual endowment earlier mentioned and, stretching the concept a bit, it would presuppose that persons who are poorly endowed in terms of their resourcefulness cannot aspire to elite status.

1. V. Pareto, *The Mind and Society*. II pp. 1422-3 quoted in T.B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (Penguin, England, 1982), p.7.

Pareto did not, however, stop here. He goes on to delineate the 'governing elite' which was his real subject matter.¹ Pareto divides the elite into two classes: a governing elite comprising individuals who directly or indirectly play considerable part in government and, a non-governing elite comprising the rest. He then goes on to describe the relations between those who have power, the 'governing elite' and those who have none, the 'masses'.

After Pareto came Gaetano Mosca who made a systematic distinction between 'elite' and 'masses' though using different terminologies. According to him,

In all societies - from societies that have meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawning of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies - two classes of people appear - a class that rules and a class that is ruled.²

In other words, Mosca sees the elite as a minority which constitutes the ruling class in any society. This, in a sense, is a modification of Vilfredo Pareto's earlier view which divides the elite into a 'governing' and 'non-governing' elite. Both Mosca and Pareto were thus concerned with elites in the sense of groups of people who either exercise directly, or are in a position to influence very strongly the exercise of political power in the society.

However, the meaning of 'elite' has since Pareto and Mosca undergone many modifications. S.F. Nadel³ uses the term to describe a broader and more

1. Pareto, *op. cit.* p. 1423.

2. G. Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, (McGraw Hill, New York, 1939, p.50.

3. S.F. Nadel, "The Concept of Social Elites" *International Social Science Bulletin*. Vol. . VIII, No. 3, 1956, p.413.

flexible stratum of people, who for whatever reason, claim a position of superior prestige and a corresponding measure of influence over the fate of the community of which they are a part. He then identifies the other distinguishing features of the elite. One is group character or corporateness - the elite must see itself as a group and be conscious of its identity. It is in this regard that one can talk of the corporate values, duties, rights and rules of conduct of the elite. And because of the exclusiveness of the elite category there is also that determination in it to maintain the status-quo in order to preserve its uniqueness. The other features of the elite are high status and imitability i.e. the ideals which it represents must be deemed imitable by the masses. In other words, the elite is an innovator, and a model of new ideas and values to be adopted by others in the society. According to Nadel, the elite must, however, not be too imitable lest it loses its exclusiveness. In addition, its superiority must be of a general kind.

It will not only be the wealth of the rich and the learning of the educated that will be admired or envied, rather the various interests, achievements, characteristic manner and the moral outlook of the rich or educated will all be regarded in the same light as qualities valued or judged desirable. It is this general recognition of superiority which turns a particular body of pre-eminent people into an elite.¹

Taken at face value, the above presupposes that the elite has an unrestricted scope of influence in which its presence is felt, a clear contradiction of R. A. Dahl's position on the issue. According to Dahl, different elite groups have different

1. Nadel, *op. cit.* p.417.

scopes of influence. A group with a high degree of influence over one scope may not have the same level of influence in other scopes.¹ Nevertheless, the disposition, activities and outlook of the elite need not refer to the scope but to the various manifestations of its activities. The scope would then be the extent, both in spatial and temporal terms, of the general jurisdiction of the elite. For instance, a wealthy man need not be active only in the economic sphere; he may also be a distinguished politician and a committed youth leader. His activities in all these areas are just manifestations of his leadership trait which is not restricted to any particular sphere. His scope of influence would then be the locality in which he operates at any given time.

Meanwhile, C.W. Mills has an exclusive stance on the subject of elite. His analysis concentrates solely on the power aspect.

The power elite is composed of men whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women, they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences.²

Power elite simply implies that power conferred by formal positions of authority in society is an essential attribute of the elite. In Mills' usage, the powerful are those who are able to realize their will even if others resist it. Such power comes when one has access to the command of major institutions in society. He concedes that 'not all power is anchored in and exercised by means of such institutions' but it is

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1. R.A. Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model" *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 52, No. 2, June 1958, p.465.
 2. C.W. Mills, *The Power Elite*. (Oxford University Press, New York, 1956), pp.3-4.

'only within and through them [that] power can be more or less continuous and important'¹

The ideas of superiority and influence highlighted in Nadel's definition of the elite examined earlier are echoed in P.C. Lloyd's definition. In Lloyd's words:

The elite comprise the superior persons in society. The elite influence the behaviour of the masses; it is an imitable body of persons.²

He then goes on to distinguish between influence on the one hand, and power and authority on the other hand. While the latter are associated with institutionalized relationships and structure, the former is linked with non-structured relationships and with informal networks of communication. In other words, he was trying to point out the fact that the elite did not necessarily have to occupy a visible position in the formal structures of power in a society before their influence could be felt. This stand is at variance with Mills' view earlier discussed.

In addition, Lloyd describes the elite as the creator of new ideas and values. It is one of the forces which continually redefine the norms of society. Imitability is also identified as one of the components in the definition of the elite.

P. Thoenes introduces two new elements in his definition of the elite. One is the fact that the elite has certain pretensions to leadership. In other words, the elite sets itself up over others in the society - imposes itself on the masses.

1. Mills, *op. cit.*, p.9.

2. P.C. Lloyd, 'Introduction' in P.C. Lloyd, (ed.). *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*. (Oxford University Press, London, 1966), p.50.

The elite is the relatively small adventitiously organized group, which legitimately or not exercises authority, lays claim to exercise it, or believes it should exercise authority over the other groups with which it maintains a relationship, usually of a political or cultural nature.¹

The other element is the charismatic one, the fulfilment of a mission by chosen men for the benefit of the greater whole. In this regard, an elite

is a group of persons in society which, as a group, stakes out a claim to understand, to enforce and/or to maintain, that role of command which determines the structure, formation and development of the larger society or of a major part of it.²

The elite then is the executor of a task or the conservator of an order. It must regard itself as 'guardian of a mission'.

A common thread runs through the definitions of T.B. Bottomore and H.H. Smythe and M.M. Smythe.³ To them the elite is a group of individuals who have attained the highest ranking in society or stand at the apex of the social pyramid. Masses look up to them as decision makers and leaders in political, economic or social spheres. This is without prejudice to the origins of such individuals. As long as they are considered successful according to current norms in their society, they are included within this elite concept. S. Keller also sees the elite as a

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1. P. Thoenes, *The Elite in the Welfare State*. (Faber and Faber, London, 1966), p.25.
 2. *Ibid.*, p.48.
 3. H.H. Smythe and M.M. Symthe, *The New Nigerian Elite*. (Stanford University Press, California, 1971); Bottomore, *op. cit.*

minority set apart from the rest of the society by their pre-eminence in one or more spheres of human activity.¹

In A. Cohen's definition of the elite, the salient elements are: that they occupy commanding positions and have common interests, which they sometimes articulate in formal organizations.² The elite seek to perpetuate its status, and its particularist interests are incompatible with the principle of equality of opportunity usually upheld by the formal constitution of society.

From all the above definitions of the elite, certain points come out as salient characteristics of the elite. The first is that the elite is a minority in the society. This makes it possible for it to organize itself effectively. Another is that of superiority, meaning that the members of the elite are deemed to be superior to the rest of the society. Other terms used to convey this same meaning are 'pre-eminence' and 'high-status'. A third element is the influence or authority exercised by the elite over the masses. Influence here means the ability to affect or change others' dispositions, positions, outlook, actions and lives. Again, some of the definitions stress the exclusive nature of the elite and its determination or commitment to preserve that exclusive nature. This presupposes that the elite is a coherent, united and self-conscious group.

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1. S. Keller, "Elites" in D.L. Sills (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. (Macmillan & The Free Press, U.S.A. 1968), Vol. V. p.26.
 2. A. Cohen, *The Politics of Elite Culture*, (University of California Press, 1981), p.xvi.

The elite has a role, or a function to perform in the society, and that is to set the pace for societal progression. Members of the elite are creators of new ideas and values and they are considered imitable by the masses. In doing this, the elite of a necessity has to be conscious of itself as a dynamic category with a corporate identity. And in line with Thoenes, the elite has a mission to fulfil in society.

In other words, the elite is that group of eminent individuals, some of whom may or may not occupy formal positions of authority in society but all of whom have that carriage that sets them apart, that influence over others that attracts a corresponding measure of deference to them from the rest of society. They innovate and define societal values as well as internalize change.

The classical elite theory examined above was developed as a rebuttal of Marxism. That is why it stresses the inevitability of social hierarchy, itself a product of uneven endowment of individuals and of large scale organization. Its focus is on the behaviour and attributes of individuals who constitute the elite rather than on the structural conditions of social classes. It also portrays the elite as linked to the masses by shared values (hence its immutability) in contrast to Marxism's emphasis on the antagonistic character of class relations.

In African Studies

Therefore, when elite theory came to be applied to African societies in the 1950s and 60s it fitted well with prevailing ideas that Africa lacked social classes in the European sense, and that the nationalist elite constituted the natural leaders of the mass of Africans against colonialism rather than the embryo of a new ruling

class.¹ The elite theory thus gained wide usage among Africanists. Ironically, even a Marxist like Thomas Hodgkin in his well known study, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* fell into using the non-Marxist language of elite theory in his distinction between 'elite nationalism' and 'mass nationalism'². On the other hand, when serious Marxist analysis started to be applied to African countries in the late 1960s and 1970, elite theory fell out of favour: scholars preferred to speak of 'ruling class', 'political class', 'national bourgeoisie' etc. in place of the elite.³

In Nigeria, the best known studies of the elite (which utilized the elite theory) still remain Patrick Cole's *Modern and Traditional Elites in the Politics of Lagos* (1975), H.H. Smythe and M.M. Smythe's *The New Nigerian Elite* (1971), and E.A. Ayandele's *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society* (1974). These works have looked at specific areas of the elite concept. While Cole's preoccupation, for instance, was with the juxtaposition of modernity and tradition

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1. *International Social Science Bulletin*, Vol. VII (subtitled) *African Elites*. No. 3, 1956. All the articles there are relevant: K.W. Grundy, "The Class Struggle in Africa: An Examination of Conflicting Theories". *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 2, No. 3, Nov. 1964, pp. 379-393; P.C. Lloyd, (ed.), *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*. *op. cit.*
 2. T. Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (London, 1956). I am grateful to Prof. J.D.Y. Peel for drawing my attention to this.
 3. G. Kay, *The Political Economy of Colonialism in Ghana*. (Cambridge University Press, 1972); E.A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa*. (New York, 1973); P. Gutkind & I. Wallerstein (eds.), *The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa*. (Beverly Hills, 1976); M. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*. (London, 1976).

in the elite outlook, Ayandele focussed on the way the colonial experience has moulded the Nigerian elite.

The concept of the elite has not yet been adequately explored in relation to Ibadan. In P.C. Lloyd *et. al.*(eds.) *The City of Ibadan*,¹ the chapter by Lloyd on the Ibadan elite is one-sided. His yardstick for categorising individuals into the elite group was essentially a material one - a University degree and government employment. Could not there have been other individuals, not in government employment and without a University degree, who qualified for elite status? Toyin Falola's *Politics and Economy in Ibadan: 1893-1945*² though not a specialised study of the elite, does give useful insights into the structure of the society from which one could glean some information on the place of prominent individuals in it before 1945. G.D. Jenkins' Ph.D thesis³ titled "Politics in Ibadan" also looks at the political activities of Ibadan leaders and politicians. His own emphasis, however, is on politics and the institutional network that activates it. The biography of Adegoke Adelabu written by K.W.J. Post and G.D. Jenkins⁴ has a political bias because their subject was a politician. Notwithstanding, the work is a

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1. P.C. Lloyd, A.L. Mabogunje & B. Awe (eds.) *The City of Ibadan*. (Cambridge, 1967).
 2. T. Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan: 1893-1945*. (Modelor, Lagos, 1989).
 3. G.D. Jenkins, "Politics in Ibadan". Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Northwestern University, 1965.
 4. K.W.J. Post & G.D. Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*. (Cambridge. 1974)

house-hold, numerous bonded labourers (*iwòfà*¹) and *erú* (slaves).

It is thus possible for an individual with no background of *ọlá* to be fortunate enough to amass great wealth for himself. Such persons are referred to as '*at'àpáta-dìde*' (one who has risen from the rocks). The wealth of such individuals is admired and coveted by other less fortunate people, but a typical '*at'àpáta-dìde*' does not attract as much respect as an *ọlọlá* because *ọlá* is much more than *ọlà*. The following proverb brings this point out more clearly:

Ailówó Olówu kíí se ká fi wé ti egbèrún aségítà. (The Olowu [ruler of Owu] even if penniless, is not to be compared with a thousand wood cutters).

This means that the dignity and importance of the Olowu do not derive from wealth or money because even if he was penniless he would still stand head and shoulders taller than other poor folks. The Olowu is an *ọlọlá* and it is this *ọlá*, more than wealth that elevates him above others.

Directly related to this is the fact that a person with a background of *ọlá* could be given a title even if he had no great *ọrọ* (wealth) as illustrated in the song below:

Bí o ko l'áso
 Bí o kò ní sòkòtò
 Iwọ la fi se é
 Iwọ la fi s'àgbà oyè
 Iwọ la fi se é

-
1. The *iwòfà* served their masters as a form of interest on loans which they or their relatives had taken. They worked for them until the loan was repaid in full. It was not only the *ọlọlá* that kept *iwòfà*. Other categories of well-to-do people also did. But the numbers held varied according to individual economic ability.

Even if you do not have (many) clothes
 If you do not have trousers
 You are our choice
 We have made you the Senior Chieftain
 You are our choice.

But it is rare for a commoner without a background of *olá* in him, and without great wealth which he could use as a social lever to achieve any significant title in the society.¹

So if *olá* is not the same thing as *olà*, what then is it? The concept of *olá* is a composite one. It presupposes some degree of wealth or material comfort and *ipò* (a high position in the social hierarchy). This *ipò* could be a function of any title(s) or office(s) held by the individual concerned. In addition, *olá* suggests an aristocratic carriage, an aura of respect and unlimited honour. The idea of *olá* is also closely linked with control over the society and a state of material cum psychological satisfaction.

The *olólá* (the one who has *olá*) is that individual who needs no further introduction: he already enjoys tremendous *òkiki* (fame) which precedes him wherever he goes in his community. He has more than enough resources to meet his needs. Others in the community stand aside for him to pass. Important decisions in the society cannot be taken behind his back. This is not because he is the wisest man, but because his support is necessary to carry crucial communal programmes through. His word is enough to settle quarrels and misunderstandings

1. The exception to this was nineteenth-century Yorubaland when nonentities rose to be military geniuses and from there assumed senior political offices e.g. in Ibadan and Ijaye.

in the society because he is much respected by all and sundry (except his detractors, if he has any). He is highly dignified and gets whatever he wants in the society. He is continually acknowledged by others as being an important personality.

In Yoruba communities, certain compounds are designated *ilé-ọlá* (lineages of *ọlá*). More often than not, these are the compounds of important title holders in the society. Royal families are classic examples of *ilé-ọlá*. Anybody born into such families automatically becomes an *ọmọ ọlá* (offspring of *ọlá*). But to give further credence to this claim of *ọlá*, such individuals need to work hard to distinguish themselves in the society. The point is that the concept of *ọlá* is not an individualistic one. Once an individual attains the position of *ọlá*, his family and entire household enjoys the benefits of *ọlá*. His children especially are treated with the kind of honour that is bestowed on him. Hence the Yoruba proverb.

Èmí àbàtà ní m'ódò sàń
 Ọlá baba ní mú omo yan.
 (The spirit of the mire animates the river, the
ọlá of a man hold high his sons' heads)

The posterity of such an *ọ́lọ̀là* delight in their 'enviable' pedigree by answering such names as:

Kòfówórọ́lá - Did not purchase *ọlá* with money, and

Ilélabọ́lá - We met *ọlá* in our home.

Other characteristics of *ọlá* are also revealed in some Yoruba names. *Ọlaniyan* means *ọlá* has its boasts. Thus, it was not uncommon to see people with a background of *ọlá* beating their chests with their palms saying, 'èmi ọmọ ọlá' to

register their contempt of anything low or mean. They took great pride in being offsprings of an *ọlọlá* and for coming from an *ilẹ ọlá* (lineage of *ọlá*). The Yoruba also believe that *ọlá* is sweeter than titles - *Ọládúnjoyè* - This is to underline the notion that while *oye* (titles) are desirable, they do not constitute an end in themselves. *Ọlá* is the ultimate in individual social advancement.

In addition, *ọlá* has *ẹyẹ* - *Ọlálẹyẹ* and *iyi* - *Ọlániyi*. The concepts of *iyi* and *ẹyẹ* overlap in many respects, and in fact, they go hand in hand in traditional Yoruba thought. *Iyi* has to do with respectability, dignity, stateliness, esteem and worthiness. *Eyẹ* also connotes respectful regard and wide acceptability, but it has an additional touch of pagentry, ceremonial splendour and flourish. All these values converge in the concept of *ọlá*.

Furthermore, *ọlá* draws attention to the individual(s) concerned and puts them in the limelight. This is the idea expressed in a name like *Ọláfimi hàn* (*Ọlá* pointed me out). It is also believed that *ọlá* attracts benevolence to people - *Ọláwóore*. Thus honour begets honour.

Ọláòsebikan means *ọlá* does not dwell exclusively in one place. This name rules that everybody has a right to the pursuit of *ọlá*. Thus a typical Yoruba man would not want to accept that *ọlá* is the exclusive preserve of certain lineages in the society. Rather, he would pray to Olodumare through his family *òrisà* (divinity) to give him *ọlá* which he would enjoy and leave for his posterity to whom he has given names such as:

Ọláwùnmí - I desire *Ọlá*
Ọlásééni - *Ọlá* can be possessed, and
Ọládunmi - *Ọlá* is sweet to have.

But in spite of the articulation of the desire for *ọlá* among all and sundry, very few ever attain a position of *ọlá*. Why is this so? The Yoruba believe that *ọlá* is not just to be achieved by hard work and labour, it is a matter of destiny. This brings us to the belief of the Yoruba in *Ori* (destiny) in so much as it affected the attainment or non-attainment of *ọlá*.

It is the belief of the Yoruba that man's destiny - his success or failure in life, depend to a large extent on the type of *Ori* he chose in heaven before coming to the earth.¹ The Yoruba divinity called *Ifá* is believed to be a witness to everyman's choice of destiny, hence his appellation '*ẹlẹri ipin*'. It was therefore necessary for people to consult *Ifá* to find out the true path of their destiny. According to Wande Abimbola, the choice of a good *Ori* is the choice of a potentiality to success, not the choice of success itself.² Hence every individual still has to work hard in order to bring his destiny to realization. However, the only hope of redress for those who have chosen a bad *Ori* lies in hard work coupled with the performance of sacrifice, since "sacrifice is... the element of reparation of ones inherent defects."³ But there is still a world of difference between the achievements of the man with the good *Ori* and another with a bad *Ori*,

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1. *Ori* in this context is the inner-head (not the physical one, although that too is known as *Ori*) or predestination. This is known as *àyànmó*, *ìpín*, *kádàrà* or *ìpònrí* in Yoruba.
 2. W. Abimbola, *Sixteen Great Poems of Ifa*, (Unesco, 1975), p.33.
 3. Abimbola, *op. cit.*, p.33.

sacrifice notwithstanding.¹ The man with a bad *Ori* can only hope that his sacrifices will cushion the effects of his ill-luck. The Yoruba thus say: 'Ayànmó o gboogun'. (that which is affixed to ones destiny cannot be rectified by medicine).

The point so far is that the Yoruba believe that only individuals who have chosen *Ori olá* can ever attain a position of *olá*. Others who did not rise high in the society could not do so because they have not chosen *Ori olá*. Thus no man can rise higher than his *Ori*. This belief is not paralleled in the Western elite theory earlier examined.

For those who have chosen *Ori Olá*, the path to *Olá* is not always smooth. First, they must be hardworking. An *Ori olá* does not guarantee success to a lazy man. It is hard work together with the fortune of a good *Ori* that will put the individual concerned in the high status of an *enìyàn pàtàkì* (important personality) or *eniyàn nla* (big personality) where *olá* is within easy reach. There were several

1. This is the idea expressed in Odu Ifa *Osa Meji*, verse 4:

Owèrè là njà
 Gbogbo o wa
 Owèrè là njà
 Èni tó yan'rí rere kò wópò
 Owèrè lá njà
 Gbogbo o wa.
 (We are just writhing about
 All of us
 We are just writhing about
 Those with good *Ori* are very scarce
 We are just writhing about
 All of us.

Other Odù Ifá such as *Ogúndá Méji* and *Ogbègunda* also pursue the theme of *Ori* and man's choice of destiny.

avenues through which one could become an *eniyàn pàtàkì*. One was through the acquisition of titles. Holders of chieftaincy titles, religious titles and other important offices in the society were regarded as being very important. These were individuals who exercised some formal influence or authority over the rest of society. Secondly, wealth (*orò*) and later *owó* (money or ready cash in the nineteenth century) conferred a high status on individuals. This meant that ambitious individuals had considerable scope to build up a position for themselves outside the hierarchy of official titles. Such people were able to amass some wealth individually which stood them in good stead in their struggle for social advancement. These were the *Olórò* (men of wealth) and the *Olówó* (the *nouveauroche*).

Apart from title holders and wealthy individuals, the *Gbajúmò* and *Bòròkinni* also enjoyed a high status in the society. The public recognition enjoyed by the *gbajúmò* could either be as a result of his personality (i.e. orator, bold, fearless etc.) or his expertise in his profession (e.g. a master craftsman, a leading musician, an ingenious blacksmith, a popular babalawo etc.). Such a man was thus important by virtue of the social recognition which he enjoyed, hence the term *gbajúmò*, '*eni-tí-igba-ojú-mò*' (one acknowledged by numerous people). A *gbajúmò* may not be opulent, but a poor man could never become a *gbajúmò*. The *gbajúmò* is also an *omohuabi* - one who is virtuous, a person of integrity, rectitude and full of *iwà rere* (good character). And, like the concept of the 'gentleman' in Western thought, the *gbajúmò*, as a marginal elite, is expected to be an

epitome of good character, courteous, polite, unassuming, decent and honest.¹ A delinquent or egregious person could never be a *gbajùmò*, neither could a notorious person because notoriety is evil repute which is a dishonorable counterfeit of renown - a major attribute of the *gbajùmò*. The notion of *gbajùmò* is that of honour worthily won by the deeds of the individual concerned.

The *Bòròkinní* is a respectable man in a secure financial position. He is not as affluent as the *olórò*, but just a step below him. And if he succeeded in amassing additional wealth for himself, he could become an *olórò*. The proximity of these two social categories is reflected in the proverb:

Bòròkinní òn olórò, egbàrà; òbùn
òn asiwèrè òkàùn; òkánjùà àti
olè, déédéé ló rí.

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1. This to some extent, is similar to the idea expressed by Cardinal Newman when he wrote:

All that goes to constitute a gentleman - the carriage gait, address, gestures, voice; the ease, the self-possession, the courtesy, the power of conversing, the talent of not offending; the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand - these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity; but the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? Are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society?

J.H. Newman, "Breeding and Education" (1876) in W.L. Guttsman (ed.). *The English Ruling Class*, (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1969), pp.210-11.

(The *bòròkinni* and *Ọlórò* are equals, the dirty person and the lunatic are colleagues, while the covetous is peer of the thief).¹

Another element in the notion of the *Bòròkinni* is that of munificence. The *bòròkinni* is very generous, especially to people of lower social status. This benevolence attracts to him numerous supporters who acknowledge his status as an *èniyàn pàtàkì*. The status of both the *gbajúmò* and the *bòròkinni* might eventually be acknowledged by the formal conferment of titles on them, but this would thus be a product of their importance in the society and not the cause of it.

Lastly, military prowess also provided an avenue to high status. Powerful warriors and military chiefs enjoyed considerable prestige in the society. This was particularly so in the nineteenth century due to the insecurity of the period. In an age of endemic warfare, warriors enjoyed increasing esteem and they tended to overshadow other office-holders. In fact, commoners could rise to prominence through military exploits. Military titles thus provided a veritable bridge used by the ambitious to cross the line between commoner and eminent.²

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1. The point being made above is not that of equality per se, but that certain attitudes or habits, if unchecked, could grow to something bigger. Just as the *bòròkinni* could become an *ọlórò* with time and given the requisite resources, the dirty person could turn himself to a lunatic in appearance. In the same vein, a covetous man could metamorphose to a fully-fledged thief. On a general note, the idea is that coming events cast their shadows before them.
 2. Names like *Akintólá* (valour is enough for *olá*) and *Akínrinólá* (the valiant walks in *olá*) show the belief of the military class that military prowess could be used as a stepping stone to *olá*.

However, not all *èniyàn pàtàkì* were *ọ́lọ́là*. The state of *ọ́lá* is more than that of pre-eminence. In it, the greatness of achievement and the magnificence of renown are celebrated. Of all the categories of *èniyàn pàtàkì* described above, office and title holders were the most distinguished. Even popular and wealthy people were not as important as they were. They were ensconced within the formal structures of government and they had tremendous authority over the rest of society. They were not necessarily the most affluent but they definitely enjoyed a lot of prestige and esteem. Despite their abundant resources, wealthy people still sought to advance their social position by the acquisition of titles. These title holders - *olóyè* - led by the *ọ́ba* (king) were regarded as the *alágbára* (the powerful) in the society. *Agbára* (power) in this sense was neither physical might nor supernatural prowess, but authority legitimately exercised.

In the case of nineteenth-century Ibadan society, military might and civil chieftaincy converged. The principal warlords were also the prominent/leading chiefs. They had *agbára*, *òkíkí* (renown), and most importantly, *ọ́lá*. They epitomised the principle in the name *Ọ́ládùnjoyè* (*Ọ́lá* is sweeter than titles) by refusing to adopt the monarchical system and its accompanying hierarchy of titles obtainable in other major Yoruba communities.

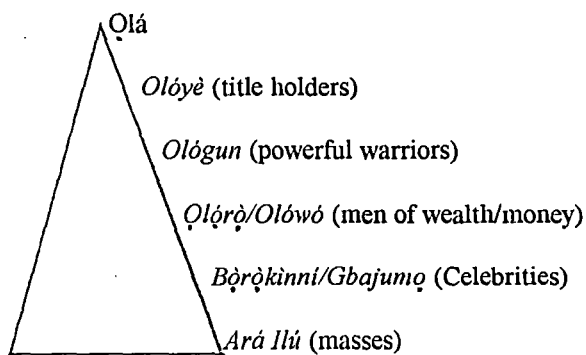


Fig. 1: Social Hierarchy and the Pursuit of Ọlá

A crucial factor in the making of the *ọlọ́lá* is that of followership or admirers. No individual is considered important unless he is publicly acknowledged by people i.e. the other members of his community. This public recognition constituted having *èniyàn* (people). These 'people' are his admirers and well-wishers. This idea of having people is indicated in the following song:

Eniyàn l'asọ mi
 Eniyàn l'asọ mi
 Bí mo bá ti r'èni ì mi
 Inú mi a dùn, ara mi a yá gágá
 Eniyàn l'asọ mi
 (I am clothed with people
 I am clothed with people
 When I see my own people
 I am glad and in high spirits
 I am clothed with people.)

In other words, it is the society, made up of many *èniyàn* that determines who is important and who is not. The Yoruba society thus rewards with high status roles which they considered important and very relevant.

In as much as everybody desires *Ọlá*, no one wants a reversal of *ọlá*, especially those who have tasted it. Names like *Ọlaitan* (*Ọlá* never finishes) and

Olánipèkun (*Olá* has no end) express this feeling. It is a tragedy of great magnitude for an *ilé olá* to become *ahoro* (desolate) as reflected in the following excerpt from an *oriki* of a lineage in Ogbomosho.¹

Bí olá ntàn, a wù wọn
 Bí olá d'ojúdé a sù wọn
 Akèhìnsí olá ki í rò
 ko-ko-ko ní í le.

When *Olá* blossoms they are attracted,
 When *Olá* is displaced, they are dejected.
 The reversal of *olá* is unpleasant,
 The situation is usually hard.

It is clear, from the foregoing analysis, that *olá* is the ultimate in individual social advancement. In the words of Karin Barber:

What men hoped to attain, it seems, was not wealth as such or power as such, but a total state of sufficiency and command over their social environment, a state called *olá*. *Olá* is (a) complex, composite, shifting and sensuously realized concept... [It] is ultimately the capacity to attract and retain the gaze of other people.²

But *olá* is more than this. Barber identifies the elements of sufficiency, social command and public acknowledgement in *olá*, but leaves out a very vital aspect, namely, the splendour that is in *olá*. *Olá* is a greatness of splendour that rises above all that is mean, poor, obscure or inadequate, and above the inhibition of

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1. I am grateful to Prof. O. O. Olatunji of the Dept. of Linguistic and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan for drawing my attention to this piece.
 2. K. Barber, *I Could Speak Until Tomorrow: Oriki, Women, and the Past in a Yoruba Town*. (International African Institute, London, 1991), p.203.

powerlessness or low estate. It is at once assertive and resplendent. And it takes pride in the influence it wields in the society. It is this lustre and the aura of comfort that issue out of it coupled with the control it exercises on the society that makes *olá* to be much sought after by people.

The essential point is that the concept of the elite in Western philosophy corresponded to the notion of the *olólá* (and *olá*) in traditional Yoruba thought. Underlying both concepts are the same principles of high class, social influence, social superiority and public acknowledgement.¹ Due to the dynamism of the elite category, values associated with it are often modified within its limits as a response to changing times. In the case of the Ibadan elite, many changes were foisted on it, not only in the realm of values, but also in its recruitment, outlook and general character.

The question now arises as to how the minority that constitute the elite emerge generally. This is historically determined and experience varies from place to place. The elite could emerge through coercive, economic or organizational means. The factor of coercion has to do with the military and the observation of Professor Adekanye on this point is instructive. According to him,

There is an historically intimate link between military factors, particularly wars and conquests, on the one hand, and the origins of a privileged stratum of warriors termed 'ruling class' on the other.²

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1. An exception is the Yoruba concept of *Ori Olá* not paralleled in Western thought. But it has been gradually eroded by the growth of the two foreign religions - Islam and Christianity in the twentieth century.
 2. J.B. Adekanye, "Military Occupation and Social Stratification", Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University of Ibadan, Nov. 1993.

This factor is also very relevant in nineteenth-century Ibadan history because the war situation of that age produced the military leadership that dominated its history. The economic factor has to do with the growth of commerce or trade. This results in the accumulation of wealth which is also useful in the rise of the elite. The last is organizational skill or leadership qualities of elite. In this regard, elite position may come as a result of its members possessing, either in fact or in the estimation of others in the society, some attribute which is valued in the society.¹ This attribute may be a concern for the public good, political sagacity, status in a religious hierarchy or some other leadership qualities - part of which could be from external sources e.g. the acquisition of western education which enlightens a group and equips it with new skills and methods which it could employ in its rise to elite status.

Conclusion

By 1893, the hold of the initial traditional/warrior elite on Ibadan affairs had been slightly impaired. The first precipitant of change was the factor of Islam. Islam found its way into the ruling elite circle where it easily meshed with tradition. It was this traditional/muslim elite with a military background that now had to grapple with new groups which also aspired to elite status in the 1893-1966 period. These groups included the products of Western education and Christianity, individuals who have made it in various entrepreneurial activities and politicians.

1. G. Parry, *Political Elites*. (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1969), p.37.

Another question is how the elite sustains its continuity? Was the ruling elite in Ibadan in the 1920s the same - or continuous with the elite of the 1890s? How do we gauge the extent to which the class maintains itself through recruitment or incorporation of wholly new groups? One way of doing this is to see how much of the initial values and outlook of the early elite were retained by the new groups, and to identify changes introduced by the latter groups. Another way is to examine the origins of the new groups to determine whether they shared the same backgrounds with, or were subject to the same formative moulds as the early elite.

This brings us to the issue of the circulation of elites i.e. changes in membership over time. This could be caused either by the incorporation of new social groups or by powerful movements such as a revolution which could result in the displacement of the elite members. In Ibadan, there was no revolution, neither did new social groups completely take over the elite category. The question that arises again is that of continuity. To what extent can one talk of an 'old' and a 'new' elite in Ibadan?

A crucial point in elite formation is the ability of the individuals concerned to recognise that a variety of roles exists for them to play in the society, and then go ahead to maximise their power and influence by playing out those that seem most advantageous in particular situations. This is the factor of personal strategy or individual resourcefulness in social advancement. In other words, the fact that the elite concept is a collective phenomenon needs not becloud individual initiative.

There is another sense in which the term 'elite' is used in Nigerian English and this gives it a distinctive meaning which only partially overlaps with the

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND HISTORY OF IBADAN

Introduction

Ibadan is not a city of remote antiquity. Its history dates back to the nineteenth century. Its foundation was linked to the series of wars and population movements occasioned by the fall of the Old-Oyo empire. However, the present Ibadan as we know it was not the first settlement to be known by the name. Oral traditions speak of three Ibadan.¹ The first was said to have been founded by Lagelu, an Ife prince, who came to settle in the Ipara forest which originally belonged to a section of the Egba Agura called Soge.² It was located between the forest and grassland belts of Yorubaland and so was called *Ihú-èbá-òdàn* . (a town on the edge of the grassland).³ This new settlement was a centre of communication and a meeting point for Egba, Ife, Ijebu, and Oyo traders as a result of which it rapidly grew to become a prosperous town. But this prosperity was shortlived. Ibadan, as the settlement was called, was destroyed by the Alaafin of Oyo to punish the people and also to propitiate the Yoruba gods for the sacrilegious unmasking of an *Egungun* (ancestral spirit) which occurred there.⁴

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- 1, I.B. Akinyele, *Iwe Itan Ibadan*. 4th ed. (Board Publications Limited, Ibadan, 1981), pp.1-25.
 2. K. Morgan, *Akinyele's Outline History of Ibadan*. Part I. (Caxton Press, Ibadan. n.d.), p.28.
 3. Akinyele, *op. cit.* p.14.
 4. Morgan, *op. cit* , p.37; T. Falola and Dare Oguntomisin, *The Military in Nineteenth Century Yoruba Politics*. (Ife University Press, 1984), p.44.

The survivors of the Oyo attack took refuge on a hill known as Oke-`Badan, and this became the nucleus of `second' Ibadan.¹ They faced a lot of hardships on the hill and later they were joined by migrants from Ife, Owu and some other Egba towns. Thus Ibadan once more became virile and active. It was, however, converted into a military camp in the second decade of the nineteenth century. This military camp later became the focal point for the `third Ibadan' which exists till now.

The Emergence of the 'Third' Ibadan

The rise of the `third' Ibadan was closely linked with the political crises and the wars in northern Yorubaland which led to the fall of the Old-Oyo empire early in the nineteenth century. This upheaval triggered off the migration of a very large number of refugees who had been displaced and rendered homeless by the wars.² The revolt of the Oyo provinces devastated the countryside and engendered an atmosphere of insecurity which made people to desert their homes.³ Some of the refugees settled in the unaffected southern fringes of the Oyo empire such as Ede, Iwo, and Oshogbo while others joined the Ijebu and Ife in the Owu wars of 1821-1826. After the defeat of Owu, the allied forces attacked neighbouring Egba settlements before camping at the 'second' Ibadan in 1829. The town was not

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1. Falola and Oguntomisin, *op. cit*, p.44.
 2. T. Falola, *The Political Economy of a Pre-Colonial African State: Ibadan 1830-1900*. (University of Ife Press, 1984). p.15.
 3. A. Smith, "A Little New Light on the Collapse of the Alafinate of Yorubaland", in G.O. Olusanya (ed.) *Studies in Yoruba History*. (U.P.L., Ibadan, 1984), p.51.

destroyed but its original inhabitants almost completely deserted it.

These new settlers were joined by many other homeless Oyo refugees escaping southward from the destructive activities of Afonja's *jama'a* who continued after his death to pillage the southern districts.¹ Many other restless soldiers from Ife and Ijebu kingdoms as well as some Egba also went to stay in the settlement. The composition of Ibadan in its early days was thus not just the Oyo population, but some Egba, Ife, Ijebu, and groups from other parts of Yorubaland came there to seek new fortunes for themselves. Ibadan consequently became "the home of a motley crowd of soldiers and restless civilians".² But this was not to be the permanent state of affairs. Early in the 1830s Ibadan was transformed into a permanent settlement and it ceased to be just a war camp. This was achieved by means of power tussles for the control of the settlement among the three principal groups that were there.

The first incident was a fight which broke out between the Egba and the Ife elements. The Egba, fully aware of their own relative weakness especially in military and numerical terms, quickly left the camp. After some time, the Ife and

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1. A. Smith, "A Little New Light on the Collapse of the Alafinate of Yorubaland", in G.O. Olusanya (ed.) *Studies in Yoruba History*. (U.P.L., Ibadan, 1984). p.53. Afonja was the rebel commander of the Oyo forces who enlisted the support of the Fulani to overthrow the Alaafin.
 2. T. Falola, "The Political System of Ibadan in the Nineteenth century" in J.F. Ade.Ajayi & B. Ikara (eds.) *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*. (U.P.L., 1985), p.105.

Oyo elements in the camp also got themselves embroiled in a leadership struggle. This eventually resulted in the Gbanamu war which ended in favour of the Oyo.¹ The Ife group consequently left the settlement, leaving the Oyo in control.

Then arose the issue of how the town was to be governed. The socio-political climate of Ibadan largely determined this. In the first place, the population was made up essentially of warriors and it thus followed logically that the military should be actively involved in whatever kind of political administration that developed. Secondly, the general atmosphere in the entire Yorubaland in the early nineteenth century was that of political unrest and war. Aggressive states were emerging which sought to consolidate their power at the expense of the older ones. The situation thus called for a state of military preparedness. The effect of this in Ibadan was that a military system of government came into being because the military was the only group able to meet the political exigencies described above.

The Military System of Government

The military system of government that developed in Ibadan went through many adaptations and modifications from time to time to reflect new trends in the politics of the town. The first military council was constituted by Oluyedun who was the first overall ruler of Ibadan. He did not take the civilian title of *Baalẹ* but that of *Aare-Ona-Kakanfo*, a long-standing Old-Oyo military title, meaning Commander-in-Chief of the army. The person next in rank to him was Lakanle who took the title of Otun Kakanfo. Oluyedun selected other lieutenants and gave

1. Morgan, Part I, *op. cit.*, p.61.

them titles in accordance with their valour. There was Osi Kakanfo (the left hand man), the Ekerin Kakanfo (fourth to the Kakanfo), and the Ekarun and Ekefa Kakanfo (fifth and sixth), and Aare Abese (leader of the footmen), and Sarumi (Chief of Cavalry).¹ The ninth member of the Council was a civilian named Labosinde who was given the title of Babasale (Chief Adviser). This office carried no specific duties. It was just created to honour the incumbent.

The existence of this council would presuppose that the Ibadan political system under Oluyedun was not a dictatorship of a single individual but that of a group. Political power resided jointly in the members of the council and the overall leader was only absolute in theory because he ruled in consultation with the members of this council. In this sense, he was no more than a *primus inter pares*. Scholars have described this system of political organisation as a 'military oligarchy'², 'military aristocracy'³ and 'military republic'.⁴

The eight members of the military oligarchy thus governed Ibadan. They performed military as well as administrative roles: they made laws, adjudicated in civil and criminal cases, and policed the state. There was no state treasury, the

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1. G.H.C. Dawes, "The Politics of Militarism in Ibadan 1819-1905". M.A. Thesis (unpublished), University of Ibadan, 1982. p.161.
 2. Falola, "The Political System", *op. cit.*, p.107.
 3. Falola, The Political Economy, *op. cit.*, p.23.
 4. B. Awe, "The Rise of Ibadan as a Yoruba Power in the Nineteenth Century." Ph.D. Thesis, Oxford, 1964, p.80.

chiefs ran official affairs from their own personal coffers, and if any perquisite or revenue accrued to the state, it went into their private purses. After Oluyedun came Oluyole who modified the political system and gave the military a firm hold of the affairs of the state. He created new titles to reward distinguished warriors and to expand the 'bureaucracy'. Instead of the Aare Ona-Kakanfo title used by his predecessor, Oluyole assumed the Oyo title of Bashorun (Prime Minister). Other new titles included that of Balogun who was next in rank to him. The Balogun had two principal lieutenants, the Otun (in command of the right wing of the army) and the Osi (Commander of the left wing). The Seriki line of chiefs was also added to the already existing titles. The Seriki headed a group of soldiers junior in rank to those under the Balogun. The remaining titles were Aare-Agoro,¹ Agbaakin, Ashipa, Jagun, Asaju and Iyalode.² The title of Babasale created by Oluyedun was dropped.

This was the initial political system created by Oluyole. But it was more of a military council than a political council of state because all the members except the Iyalode were warlords, and they were all expected to perform administrative duties. One then wonders why civilians who were relatively freer were not chosen as administrators. In the first place, men who had distinguished themselves in wars

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1. Falola and Oguntomisin, *op. cit.*, p.49.
 2. Dawes, *op. cit.*, p.162; Falola, "The Political System", *op. cit.*, p.107; A. Adeyemo, *Oluyole: An Epic History of the Yoruba*, (Bayem Publishers, Ibadan, 1989). p.15. The Iyalode title was for women. See chapter 7 of this volume for details.

needed to be rewarded with titles and brought into the political system in order to reduce tensions and agitations for recognition in the society. Secondly, retired warriors needed not stay idle, they could spend the rest of their lives as administrators. And lastly, in an age of endemic warfare, the populace would feel more secure if they knew that their affairs were being directed by those who could defend them in the event of any external attack.¹

To make this military system of government more relevant to the day to day demands of municipal administration, Oluoyole created a new line of civil chiefs made up of war veterans. These men were expected to always stay in the town and administer it.² Provision was also made for the office of an overall leader - Baale - who would be able to combine military prowess with the ability to govern. Thus by the time Oluoyole died in 1847, a military system of government had firmly taken root.

By 1850, power was shared by two major chieftaincy groups - the civil line led by the Baale, and the military line led by the Balogun. The civil line comprised chiefs in the Baale and Iyalode lines while the second group was made up of the military chiefs in the Balogun and Seriki lines. All the chiefs in the Baale line were war veterans and were required to possess adequate knowledge of administrative procedures and the history of the town. They must also be familiar with the foreign policies of other major Yoruba sub-groups.³ Their duties included:

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1. Falola, "Political System", *op. cit.*, p.108.
 2. The 'civilians' referred to were retired warriors and not just ordinary citizens with no military experience.
 3. Falola and Oguntomisin, *op. cit.*, p.49.

maintenance of peace and order and ensuring the economic prosperity of the town. In fact, all unimportant political decisions especially those not involving wars were to be made by the civil chiefs. The military chiefs made all the important decisions; they had the first and last say in issues relating to war and generally overshadowed their 'civilian' counterparts.¹

Ibadan's military system of government at this time had three main features. First, leadership was collective. No ruler was powerful enough to override the views of others. Decisions were jointly taken. Secondly, appointment to any chieftaincy title was not hereditary. Titles were achieved through merit, and promotion was from a lower rank to a higher one. Indeed, in order to ensure that the chiefs gave their utmost to the town, they were not allowed to take the highest title on the assumption of office. They had to pass through a series of promotions. These promotions, in turn, depended on "a man's valour, the available vacancies, and the political interest of those in a position to influence the choice of the chiefs."² Merit and individual enterprise were thus encouraged. The result was that many seekers of fame and renown trooped to Ibadan from neighbouring Yoruba towns and cities. Thirdly, new titles were created from time to time to reward those who distinguished themselves in battle to forestall a situation in which deserving warriors would begin to agitate for titles.

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1. B. Awe, "The Growth of Ibadan in the Nineteenth Century" being a paper presented at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, during a seminar titled "Ibadan in the changing Nigerian Scene", Feb. 28-March 1, 1964, p.7.
 2. Awe, "The Growth of Ibadan", *op. cit.*, p.6.

Meanwhile, more people continued to migrate to Ibadan. They came, not only from among the Oyo-Yoruba but also from all parts of Yorubaland because Ibadan offered more scope for individual advancement than other traditional Yoruba towns. The new comers often settled in groups according to their origins. The Ijebu in Isale 'Jebu, the Egba at Yeosa, the Oyo and Ife at Oja'ba.

Economy

Ibadan's economy in the nineteenth century was primarily an agrarian one. The people practised agriculture extensively. Some writers like Akinyele and Jenkins have echoed Hinderer's view that war was the leading enterprise in Ibadan to the detriment of other economic pursuits.¹ However, other evidence from Hinderer and later Awe support the fact that agriculture was indeed practised on a large scale. For how else were the chiefs with enormous compounds able to feed their large retinue of hangers-on and followers? Even if they engaged in trade, what did they exchange for the arms which they bought from their trading partners? Despite the fact that the chiefs were almost always on the war-front, they had large farms cultivated by their slaves. Within the towns were some small farm in which 'flourish [ed] the orange, plantains, banana' and other staples.² The main farms were outside the town.

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1. G.D. Jenkins, "Politics in Ibadan" Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University, 1965; Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.210; A. Hinderer, *Seventeen Years in Yoruba Country*. (Sealey Jackson & Halliday, London, 1873), p.110.
 2. Hinderer, *op. cit.*, pp.58-59.

These stretched in 1858 as far as Lalupon and beyond to the north-east, and as far as the town of Apomu in the south-east. Indeed they were sometimes as far as 30 miles away and embraced more deserted Egba townships such as Ojo, Ika, Iroko, Ikeye, which then became Ibadan farm villages.¹

The chiefs had the largest farms because they had the labour with which to cultivate them. A large number of slaves caught in wars were kept for domestic use on these large farms. In the words of Johnson, 'the chiefs had large farms and farm houses containing from a hundred to over a thousand souls.'²

In fact, Bashorun Oluyole (1833-1847) and Aare Latoosa (1871-1885) were examples of rulers who demonstrated a keen interest in agriculture. Oluyole had extensive farms of okro, beans, vegetables, corn and yams. It was said that his okro farm was so vast that he was able to supply all the okro required for sale in the town, and that he also offered sacrifices that his kolanut trees might be fruitful.³ Latoosa also owned extensive farmlands⁴ which provided him with food to feed the thousands of private soldiers and slaves who looked after his household. These extensive plantations not only supported the chiefs' large establishment, but also supplied the market.

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1. B. Awe, "Ibadan, Its Early Beginnings" in P.C. Lloyd et. al. (eds.). *The City of Ibadan*. (Cambridge, 1967), p.15.
 2. S. Johnson, *A History of the Yorubas*. (C.M.S., Lowe & Brydone, London, 1960), p.325.
 3. Morgan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.86; Johnson, *op. cit.*, p.306.
 4. Morgan, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p.7.

Trade was another pillar in the economy of Ibadan. The chiefs participated actively in trade because they had access to farmlands and controlled the labour which provided the farm products; they could also provide the porters and necessary security. In exchange for slaves, palm-oil and palm-kernels, they got arms and ammunition, clothes and spirits.¹

The geographical situation of Ibadan gave a vigorous fillip to commerce. The town was situated between the coast and the interior. This made it a rendezvous for traders from all parts of the Yoruba country. And according to B. Awe², Ibadan became increasingly important as a commercial centre because the destruction of the old-Oyo empire caused a shift in the direction of trade within the Yoruba country from the north to the south. In order to meet the demands of trade, a number of chiefs founded market places in front of their compounds. Such chiefs included Ibikunle and Delesolu who were the founders of Ayeye and Oje markets respectively.

Oja-Iba³ grew to be the most important market in Ibadan in the nineteenth century. It was located at the centre of the town and it witnessed the largest traffic of human beings and goods. Imported goods brought by Egba and Ijebu middlemen included textiles, salt, cutlery and mirrors which they exchanged for hand-woven clothes, livestock and foodstuff of other Yoruba merchants from

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1. Falola and Oguntomisin, *op. cit.*, p.57.
 2. Awe, "Ibadan, Its Early Beginnings", *op. cit.*, pp.15-16.
 3. Oja-Iba was named after Oluyole, the first Bashorun in Ibadan. 'Iba' being the shortened form of (I) Bashorun.

outside Ibadan.

In the 1840s, during the period of Bashorun Oluyole, Hausa traders arrived in Ibadan. Their presence added another dimension to the already booming trade in Ibadan. Goods such as ivory, leatherworks, and sometimes slaves from the north began to arrive in the town while kolanuts were bought in exchange.

Apart from farming and trade, crafts also constituted an important feature of the economy. In the early days, Ibadan was known as the city of sixteen gates and seventeen blacksmith shops. The smiths obtained their raw materials locally. They made fires from palm-kernel shells and local woods. Their bellows were made from the skin of animals, and their furnaces were constructed of local clay. Other craftsmen were potters, house-builders, weavers (cloth weavers, basket weavers, mat weavers), black soap and calabash makers, and beer brewers.¹ Although these artisans were overshadowed by the prestige of the military chiefs, they were in their own class and indispensable to the entire population.

Society in Ibadan

Ibadan's population was a heterogeneous one due to the attraction of trade and the policy adopted by the people to accept all new comers. This heterogeneity did not, however, cause major frictions. The different groups interacted cordially and began to widen communication networks among themselves as they intermarried and soon put their original identity behind them, fusing themselves into the foundation of what we now call traditional Ibadan. The Hausa did not mix with

1. A. Callaway, "From Traditional Crafts to Modern Industries" in P.C. Lloyd *et. al.* (eds.) *op. cit.*, pp.154-155.

the others, they were ethnically segregated and they have remained so till the present. For them, Islam and their common language were factors that made them keep to themselves.

Ibadan people lived in large compounds which often contained hundreds of inhabitants. The compounds were built in the form of a series of enclosed rectangular courtyards. Therein lived an important man with his wives, children, other dependants, and some domestic slaves.

Due to the turbulence and instability of the nineteenth century, Ibadan quarters developed not so much on the basis of ties of kinship, but largely on the basis of dependence on particular chiefs for military activities and security. Thus surrounding the compound of the military chief were the habitations of his 'war-boys'. The other slaves stayed on the farms to provide food for the rest.

Because the Ibadan society was not patterned along the lines of the older Yoruba towns, there was easy social mobility. A commoner from another Yoruba town could come and make a name for himself in Ibadan. Indeed, a few of the important chiefs in Ibadan by the middle of the nineteenth century were men with obscure pedigrees in their original homes. Ibadan society was an open and liberal one. Individual enterprise was encouraged while merit was rewarded accordingly. The sky was thus the limit for resourceful and industrious persons. And as long as wars were fought in the century, a lot of individuals had ample opportunity to distinguish themselves although political intrigues and sheer envy occasionally hindered the prospects of some.

Furthermore, there was the clientage system of 'babaogun' (war patron). This was a partron/client relationship whereby a distinguished military chief

became a leader of hundreds of people who became his personal followers and gave him their allegiance. They did his bidding at all times provided they felt safe and secure under his leadership.¹ This system served to bring all the population under the effective control of the military chiefs. The system was particularly advantageous in providing an avenue for the rise of enterprising soldiers to prominence and it made for neatness in social relations without prejudice to other overlapping loyalties on the part of the populace.

Nineteenth century warfare provided opportunities for ambitious women to advance to high status in the society. They acquired wealth through trade and farming and were accorded respect and recognition. The *Iyalode* title, for instance, was created to reward eminent women for their contribution to war efforts. Some women were very active in Ojaaba, Oje, Ojaagbo, Ayeye, Agbeni and other markets in the town. The very successful among them had agents who travelled on their behalf out of the town to transact business in other markets in Apomu, Ikire and other villages in the Ife kingdom. The absence of most of the menfolk gave women the opportunity to excel in trading and farming. Such big-time traders could afford to equip and field their male slaves as their own contribution to the war effort. They also granted great credit facilities to the war chiefs. Examples of such women are Efunsetan Aniwura and Madam Omosa, Bashorun Ogunmola's daughter. Other areas in which women were active as leading craftmasters were soap-making, weaving and the pot-making industry, as well as in processing agricultural raw materials. Such industrious women could rise to be heads of

1. Falola, *Political Economy*, *op. cit.*, p.193.

traders' guilds and ultimately *Ìyálojà*. Some women also made their mark outside the commercial sphere. These were priestesses - *Ìyá Olórìsà* (e.g. functionaries of *kòrì* and *Òrìsà Oko*) and *Ìyá Onísègùn* now called *Eléwé Omo* (traditional healers who attended to children and pregnant women. In fact, the absence of able-bodied men who were at the battlefield, and the need for regular rituals to invoke spiritual assistance for the warriors made women to play a dominant role in traditional religious worship in nineteenth century Ibadan. More research is still needed however to illuminate the activities of particular individuals in this regard.

In terms of religious affinities, Ibadan was not homogenous. There was traditional religion, Islam and Christianity. As would be expected, traditional religion preceded both Islam and Christianity in Ibadan and it rested mainly on two cults, Oke-'Badan and Egungun.² The cult of Oke-'Badan is the tutelary divinity of the town. The goddess, Oke-'Badan, was, and is still believed by her worshippers to be the goddess of fertility and procreation.

The cult of Egungun had to do with ancestral spirits and it was predicated on the Yoruba belief that death is not the end of human life and that the dead have their own world, different from that of the living but which maintains a spiritual link with those still alive. Therefore, during Egungun festivals, the departed spirits of the ancestors visited their living relations in form of masquerades. Other lesser divinities found in Ibadan included Obatala, Orunmila, Ogun, Esu, Sango, Osanyin etc.³

1. E.B. Idowu, "Religion in Ibadan", in P.C. Lloyd *et. al.* (eds.) *op. cit.*, p.237.

2. *Ibid.*, p.238.

Islam was introduced in the early 1830s by learned Muslim teachers who came from the Hausa country through Ilorin to preach in Ibadan. By 1871, Islam had gained a large number of adherents in the town, especially through the proselytizing activities of itinerant sheikhs.¹ One of such missionaries from Ilorin even started a Quranic school at Oke-Aremo which was visited by Muslim students from all over Yorubaland. The rate of conversion of Ibadan people to Islam gradually increased and by the end of the century, they were already going on holy pilgrimage to Mecca.

Christianity came to Ibadan in 1851² with the visit of David Hinderer, a C.M.S. missionary. Through his activities and those of his colleagues, the C.M.S. founded a church at Kudeti. Other missionary organizations followed suit and by the end of the century there were many Christian denominations in Ibadan.

Thus in the nineteenth century, traditional religion started to come under fire from Islam and Christianity and these two religions openly campaigned against it, and gradually, it began to lose its adherents. Nevertheless, a large proportion of the population still turned out during Oke-'Badan and Egungun festivals which were like 'national' celebrations.

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1. F.H. El-Masri, "Islam" in P.C. Lloyd *et. al.*, (eds), *op. cit.*, pp.250-251; Awe, "The Rise of Ibadan", *op. cit.*, p.124.
 2. Idowu, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-240; Hinderer, *op. cit.*

External Relations¹

Owing to the fact that the founders of Ibadan were principally Oyo - Yoruba, the rulers of the town at its inception recognized that they owed nominal allegiance to the Alaafin of Oyo. The Alaafin acknowledged this allegiance and, because of his own military weakness, depended on the rulers of Ibadan and those of Ijaye to defend his domains from external aggression. In this regard, the Alaafin Atiba in the 1930s gave Oluyole of Ibadan the title of Bashorun and saddled him with the responsibility of defending the eastern flanks [Ekun Osi] of the former Oyo empire from external attack.

Incidentally, the Fulani were at this time besieging the eastern districts with the view of spreading the Islamic faith. It thus fell on Ibadan to put a stop to the Fulani menace. This it did effectively in 1840 when it inflicted a crushing defeat on the Fulani at Oshogbo.

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1. For detailed discussions of Ibadan's external affairs and wars in the nineteenth century see: I.A. Akinjogbin, "A Chronology of Yoruba History 1798-1840", *Odu: A Journal of African Studies* Vol. 2, No. 2, Jan. 1966; J.F.A. Ajayi & R.S. Smith, *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century*. (Cambridge and Ibadan, 1964), Part III; S.A. Akintoye, *Revolution and Power-Politics in Yorubaland 1840-1893* (Longman, 1971); B. Awe, "The Rise of Ibadan", *op. cit.*, "The End of An Experiment: The Collapse of the Ibadan Empire 1877-1893." *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*. Vol. III, No. 2, 1965, "The Ajele System: A Study of Ibadan Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century". *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1964, "Militarism and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century: The Ibadan Example". *Journal of African History* XLV No. 1, 1973; T. Falola, "The Foreign Policy of Ibadan in the Nineteenth Century", *ODU* No. 23/24 Jan/July 1981; R.C.C. Law, "The Chronology of Yoruba Wars in the Early Nineteenth Century". *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*. Vol. V. No. 2, Jan. 1970.

Having consolidated its power with the Fulani defeat, Ibadan now resolved to build itself into a formidable force in Yorubaland by carving out spheres of influence at the expense of the older states. The opportunity for this came when Balogun Ibikunle (1851-62) led Ibadan troops to drive the Fulani away from the Ekiti country where they had been trying to establish a hegemony. After defeating the Fulani, Ibadan then established its own influence in the conquered Ekiti towns by placing a resident official, *ajélè*, in each of them.¹ This was much to the displeasure of the Alafin and other Yoruba states who saw it as an indication of mounting Ibadan power in the region. Indeed, the presence of Ibadan in Ekitiland not only enhanced its prestige, it also increased its resources because tributes accrued to it from the area. Moreover, in the event of any war which involved Ibadan, its vassals had to contribute men to assist in the prosecution of such wars. Ibadan thus exploited the Ekiti extensively.

With the way Ibadan's power and influence was increasing in Yorubaland it was inevitable that it would clash with Ijaye which also had similar ambitions in the region. Eventually in 1862, war broke out between the two states. Ibadan forces under Ogunmola routed those of Ijaye and the town was completely destroyed.

This victory on the part of Ibadan made the Egba and Ijebu uneasy. They saw the balance of power in Yorubaland being tilted in Ibadan's favour, and very soon, they imagined they could be at the mercy of Ibadan rulers who were aiming at overall supremacy in Yorubaland. To forestall this, the two states closed their

1. The *ajélè* were responsible, not to Ibadan as a state, but to individual war chiefs who regarded these conquered territories as fiefs in their possession.

trade routes to Ibadan. This meant that the latter would no longer have access to arms and ammunition which it got from the Europeans on the coast via the Ijebu who were middlemen. Without firearms, Ibadan rulers were thus to be halted in their bid for supremacy in Yorubaland.

But the British interpreted the closing of routes by the Egba and Ijebu to mean that they wanted to monopolise the trade at a time they (the British) were advocating free trade and the opening up of the interior. The British therefore opened another route to Ibadan which bypassed the Ijebu and the Egba. This was a big relief for Ibadan, and its rulers promptly intensified their efforts to be overlords of Yorubaland.

The Ijesha kingdom was the next victim of Ibadan imperialism. It was crushed and put under Ibadan's authority. This further increased the fears of other states not yet under Ibadan as they envisaged it would soon be their turn. They harboured hostile feelings against Ibadan and wished a stop be put to its expansion. Aare Latoosa, who was Ibadan's ruler in the 1870s did not help matters by antagonising the Alafin who also was already resentful of Ibadan's growing influence which had overshadowed his own importance.

Thus by 1877 when war broke out between Ibadan and the Egba, the climate of opinion in Yorubaland was so much against Ibadan. Other Yoruba rulers saw Ibadan's leaders as upstarts who had no regard for tradition and who were sending jitters down their spines. Therefore when war broke out in 1877 many other Yoruba states fought against Ibadan and the war dragged on for sixteen years leaving neither victor nor vanquished until the Europeans intervened. This intervention, welcomed as it was, proved to be another landmark in Yoruba

history as it ushered in the imposition of colonial rule on Yorubaland. In 1893, Ibadan chiefs signed an agreement with the British which effectively brought them under colonial rule.

The Nineteenth-Century Ibadan Elite

From the ongoing discussion, it is evident that the elite in nineteenth-century Ibadan was made up of the military. These were the superior elements in the society who wielded a lot of influence and enjoyed considerable prestige. A look at some of the individuals that made up the elite in the period between 1830-1893 would reveal their basic characteristics and assist us in defining the basis of their recruitment into the elite category. (See Table 1 at the end of this chapter).

In the first place, not all warriors fell into the elite category. Ibadan contained a large percentage of warriors because it was a military state. It was only those individuals who led the troops in the wars to defend and expand the city that qualified for elite status. This was acknowledged by the conferment of military titles on such men. How were these men selected? From Table 1 it is clear that men of proven courage and bravery rose high in the Ibadan system. For example, Latoosa distinguished himself as a tough and brave warrior in Ogunmọla's private army and soon became its captain. It was from this position that he was installed Aarẹ-Agoro under Balogun Ibikunle during the time Olugbode was Baalẹ (1851-1864). Latoosa did not disappoint the senior chiefs who gave him the title. He fought bravely in the Ijebu Eṛẹ and Ijaye wars. Consequently, he was promoted Otun Seriki by Bashorun Ogunmọla, his mentor (who had now become the head chief, 1864-1867). From there he became Otun Balogun in Orowusi's reign (1869-

1871) and finally he rose to be the Aare succeeding the latter as head-chief of Ibadan in 1871. Iyapo, son of Balogun Ibikunle was another brave warrior. He distinguished himself as a promising warrior at a very young age in his father's private army. It was from being head of Ibikunle's army that he was made the Seriki by Aare Latoosa in 1873.

It could thus be seen that bravery, courage and prowess were attributes associated with the military and with the rise of its elite in nineteenth-century Ibadan. The careers of Ajayi-Ogboriefon and Olugbode, "Sangosokun tii j'Aare"¹ also illustrate this vividly. Orowusi is another case in point. He was a well known and respected hunter before he came to Ibadan. So when he adapted the valour, skill, and resilience he used in the forest against his game to the war situation in Ibadan, very few of his military colleagues could equal him. No wonder he rose to become the Baale in 1867 after an active military service.

Secondly, there was an element of luck in the rise of these men to fame. Bravery, courage, prowess and such other military values were not enough for success. If luck went against them in the battle-field and they were defeated or captured despite their martial skills, they were done for. An end would automatically come to their careers if not to their lives. Illustrations of this experience could be found in the lives of Seriki Lawoyin and Chief Ilori, the Osi Balogun. Lawoyin was deposed because he lost a battle and many of Ibadan's promising troops in 1873. Chief Ilori was captured by the Ilorin forces in 1878 at

1. See Table 1 for details.

Ikirun and executed.¹

But luck was not always against them. It was not in all cases that the leading warriors were captured in war. They won many battles too: capturing slaves and other booty. Ironically, there was some advantage in the death or fall of military chiefs, namely, the rapid rise of the junior ones. This was a manifestation of the Yoruba proverb that says:

Bi t'enikan ko ba baje, t'elomiran kii dara.

One man's misfortune could pave way for another's success.

This was the fortune of Ajayi Osungbekun and Orowusi. Due to the death of the senior chiefs at the Kiriji war, Ajayi Osungbekun rose from Seriki (the head of the junior titles) to Balogun in 1885 (the most senior military title). In the same vein, the death of the senior chiefs in the Ilesha war which ended in June 1870 made way for Orowusi who was promoted Baale from the position of Ashipa Balogun (4th Chief to the Balogun).

The question was now how the chiefs ensured that luck was always on their side for success in their struggle for fame and power. The answer to this could be found in their dependence on *oògùn* (charms or native medicine). The charms were to bring good fortune, ward off supernatural attacks, bring success in wars, make them invincible and for longevity. From Table 1, we can see that Orowusi, Oyesile and Ogboriefon used and depended on charms greatly. Ogboriefon accumulated so much charms that a line in his *oriki* (praise poem) describes him as 'A b'oògùn gb'òògùn pòn' (the one with overlapping charms).

1. Morgan, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 14-16.

Ogunmola's case with charms even predated his appointment as a military chief in Ibadan. He was a practising *babalàwo* (diviner and medicine man) widely known in his native town of Fesuru and environs before he came to sojourn in Ibadan. And up till his death in Ibadan, he remained an Ifa-priest - consulting the Ifa oracle for future happenings and making diverse charms for himself and his household.

Aare Latoosa was another member of the military elite who depended on the use of *oògùn*. Latoosa's case is interesting because at a point in his military career he was converted to Islam¹ which would presuppose that he thereafter did away with traditional religious practices such as the use of *oògùn*. But that was not the case. He was still praised as "Ara gbogbo kiki *oògùn* wonkoko" (the body that is covered with *oogun* all over). It might be thought that that particular line of his *oriki* was a carry-over from his pre-conversion life. However, two of his grand children, namely, Chief Tiamiyu Aare and Alhaji Ganiyu Arowolo-Aare, both claimed that Latoosa had a lot of *oògùn* despite the fact that he was a muslim. They indicated an area within the family compound, designated *Ilé Agbára* (power house) of Aare Latoosa still preserved as a relic of his times, though without its major accouterments.² They made it clear that up till his death in 1885, Latoosa regularly consulted his power house while remaining a muslim.

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1. He was said to have sought for a male child in vain until he embraced Islam. Thereafter he had his first son, Sanusi and this confirmed him in the faith. S. Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas op. cit.*, pp.502-3; Morgan, *op. cit.*, part 3, p.7; T.G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba 1841-1908*. (Longman, 1978), p.52.
 2. Interview with Chief Tiamiyu Aare and Alhaji Ganiyu Arowolo-Aare. March 28, 1995.

Latoosa combined the elements of traditional religion with that of Islam for success. There is no evidence that he was a *babaláwo*. So he must have had one or more *babaláwo* who made his charms. On the other hand, there is evidence that he had the support of Mallams (muslim clerics locally called *alfas*) who made talisman for him as well as prayed for his success in wars. For instance, *Alfa* Sulayman Alagunfon was one of the selected *Alfas* who prayed on the warfront for Latoosa's victory - himself died on the warfront during the Kiriji war in 1886.¹ If Latoosa used *babalawo* and *alfas* to support his drive to make Ibadan the lord of Yorubaland and himself the sovereign, it might be safe to conclude that other muslim chiefs in pre-1893 Ibadan such as Osundina and Ali-Laluwoye also patronised the *alfas* (if not the *babaláwo*). In fact, Osundina is described in his *oriki* as

"A s'álùwàlá nibi ofà nrojo
Osi 'Bàdàn tíí wé lawàní re k'ogun lójú²"

One who performs ablutions under a hail of arrows
The Osi (Balogun) of Ibadan who goes to battle wearing his turban.

While the activities described in Osundina's *oriki* above could be taken as his way of identifying himself as a devout muslim, they could also be interpreted as portraying his faith in these observances as a sure way to success and victory in war.

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1. S.A. Hameed, "Ibadan Central Mosque: Imamship Issue" Long Essay, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan. Nov. 1989, pp.163-164.
 2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp.282-3.

That the point raised above on the possession of *oògùn* relates to Orowusi, Ogboriefon, Ogunmola, Latoosa and Olugbode does not mean that other members of the military elite were excluded. In fact, all warriors (whether junior soldiers or senior chiefs) depended to some extent on the use of *oògùn* - it was only the degree of use that varied. And it could be said that the more popular a warrior became, or the higher he moved up the military hierarchy, the more he depended on *oògùn* because he would then face greater perils and risks than before. The support of *babaláwo* and or *Alfas* was thus crucial for the success of the individual members of the military elite. And where a military chief enjoyed the support of powerful *babaláwos* or was himself a *babaláwo* (such as Ogunmola was) it was believed success was just within his reach, *ceteris paribus*.

Wealth was another element in the rise of the warriors to elite status. Wealth was measured in terms of the possession of a large household, *éru*(slaves), horses, *dukia* (property) and extensive farmlands. Before they became chiefs, Oyesile, Opeagbe and Ajobo were very wealthy individuals. (See Table 1). Balogun Ibikunle is said to have owned a very big compound¹

Alágbàlá jaiyà-jaiyà baba Kuejò
 Agbàlá `Bíkúnlé j'oko elòmíran lo
 A b'ágbàlá tó kòrikò sàré tán
 Agbàlá nlá baba Ojó-'Gan.

Owner of impressive compound (is) Kuejò's father
 Ibikunle's yard is bigger than some people's farmland
 For it is big enough even for wolves to run a race
 Vast indeed is the compound of Ojo-Gan's father.

1. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.58.

Very wealthy men like Bashorun Oluyole and Aare Latoosa became cynosures of all eyes and their affluence became a talk of the town. Of Latoosa,

'O lo rere bí olá Aàrẹ
As extensive as the Aare's wealth¹

became a common saying and an index for the comparison of other people's wealth. Numerous wives were also used as an indication of wealth. It was also said of Latoosa that he was:

Ọmọ Aku tó bí'mọ méfà lóòjọ
B'áya bá ti mọ l'ọmọ naa mo.²

Son of Aku who gave birth to six babies on a day.
The more your wives, the more your children.

Oluyole invested his own wealth in wives, farmlands, European drinks and clothes, especially silk and velvet.³ This show of materialism might be frowned upon nowadays but it was a product of the milieu in which they lived. (see also Oyesile and his love of *Tofi* cloth in Table 1). Wealth was not only important in the acquisition of elite status but also in its maintenance.

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1. *Olá'* is here translated as wealth but it is more than that. See the Introduction above for a full discussion of the traditional Yoruba concept of *Olá'*.
 2. Interview with Pa Ganiyu Arowolo-Aare and Chief Tiamiyu Aare, both of Ile-Aare, Oke Aare Ibadan. March 28, 1995.
 3. Falola, *Political Economy*, *op. cit.*, p.28; Johnson, *op. cit.*, p.306. For a description of Oluyole's flamboyant lifestyle see A. Adeyemo *Oluyole: An Epic History of the Yoruba*. (Bayem Publishers, Ibadan, 1989), p.15.

Apart from military valour, wealth and oogun, charisma was another important factor in the rise of men to prominence. Here, charisma is defined as "the aggregate of those special gifts of mind and character which are the source of the personal power of exceptional individuals and upon which they depend for their capacity to secure the allegiance of, and exercise decisive authority over, large masses of people."¹ Seriki Iyapo certainly possessed this element. Despite the fact that he was young and relatively inexperienced in the art of war (when compared to the senior chiefs) he was much loved by people and he had a very large following. This was not a case of inheriting his father's (Balogun Ibikunle) fame but of endearing himself to the people. This is not to say that relationship to Ibikunle did not enhance his image but his own charisma played a greater role. He was not excessively wealthy like Latoosa or Oluyole because he did not have all the opportunities they had. Nevertheless, he was tasteful and moderate. He loved his people in his quarter at Ayeye and protected them passionately. This attitude attracted many more followers to him than to the other senior chiefs. And it was this popularity, among other things, that got him into trouble with the chiefs in 1877.

Balogun Ajobo too possessed this charisma. To this he added generosity. He feasted people regularly in his compound and spent lavishly on them. Although he allowed his fame to get into his head which made him disregard the other chiefs,

1. *Funk and Wagnalls, New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language.* (J.G. Ferguson Publishing Company, New York, 1973). Encyclopedic Version.

eventually causing his own fall, the point is that charisma was an element which aided some warriors in their rise to prominence in Ibadan.

Furthermore, the role of followers/people (*èèyàn*) was crucial in the making of the elite. Followers meant a large retinue which comprised relations of the warlord, dependants, soldiers-in-training, war-boys (*baba-ní-nmá-sa* 'father-says-I-should-not-run') slaves and other clients (i.e. compounds and people to whom he was *bàbáogun*). The more followers a warrior had, the more important he was considered to be in the society and the more prestige he enjoyed. This would serve him in good stead in his bid for higher laurels (titles). Therefore to recruit more followers and keep those he already had, a warlord had to invest either money or charisma, or both. In the event of war, all under him followed him to war. The more captives he caught, the more wealthy he became because slaves were an index of wealth. This wealth he used to recruit more followers and keep those he had. The cycle thus went on and on. Military valour produced followers who in turn bred advancement, wealth and more followers.

The process of accession to elite status, may thus be briefly sketched out. An ambitious individual from any of the lineages or compounds, or even from outside Ibadan, attached himself to a successful warrior as a first step. This was how Lawoyin attached himself to Chief Ajobo, Ogunmola to Chief Oluyole, Latoosa to Chief Ogunmola and Ibikunle to Chief Toki Onibudo. He then learnt the art of warfare by actually participating in wars. Success at the warfront could earn him a 'subsidiary' title from his warlord. If he continued to distinguish himself in war, he would succeed his master as head of his compound and army. That was if the master had no son deemed brave enough to succeed him. This was why

Ibikunle succeeded Toki Onibudo as Lord of Ayeyẹ and head of his compound.¹ Alternatively, the rising warrior could then proceed to gather his own bodyguards and stand on his own, independent of his warlord (as in the cases of Lawoyin, Ogunmola and Latoosa).

The next phase in his rise would then be to work his way to the top by acquiring a title in the military hierarchy in the town. To be considered for a title, he had to distinguish himself at war by performing valiantly. His performance and valour may even earn him the leadership of military expeditions which in turn would provide him with further opportunities to distinguish himself. In addition to this were the factors of wealth, *oògùn*, luck and charisma. Ballad singers and drummers, were not left out of this process of social advancement - they all contributed to the making of the great military chief. In addition to all these, good moral conduct was a determining factor in the acquisition of the highest titles.

From the above description, it is clear that wars constituted an important factor in the rise of individuals in the society. Wars provided the avenue to prominence both in the making of new warriors and in enhancing the stature of the old ones and this remained the case until 1893 when the imposition of colonial rule on Ibadan brought an end to all wars.

The military elite wielded a lot of influence and enjoyed considerable prestige in Ibadan. It organized itself into an oligarchy for the administration of the town. So it was a ruling elite. It had a firm grasp of, and exercised profound influence on the institutions of the society. The set of attributes it possessed and

1. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp.254-275.

the values it represented brought out clearly its impact on the Ibadan society. This elite saw itself as a distinctive class of persons and as such guarded its interests. This consciousness probably evolved with the first attempt at establishing a military system of government in the early 1830s. The warriors had similar aspirations, lifestyle and values. They all aspired to get the highest titles in the city and be reckoned among the greatest. To them, service for the land was paramount not only because it served to elevate them further in the society, but because it was a mission which bordered on the sacred, viz, love of ones land. It was a passion, the fulfilment of which increased the power of the state and the prestige of the individual. The martial spirit was thus a driving force among the nineteenth-century Ibadan elite.

Moreover, due to the fact that the members of the military elite saw themselves as colleagues and equals to some extent, they would not tolerate any dictatorial tendency from any of them. Not only that, excessive wealth and popularity on the part of any of them invited the envy of others. The social scene of nineteenth-century Ibadan was a setting in which many warriors were contesting for fame and renown, thus rivalry and competition abounded. This would explain the intrigues which led to the fall of Elepo, Akere, Iyapo, Ajobo, and Ajayi Osungbekun noted in Table 1. The 'crimes' of these men ranged from pride to high-handedness which show that humility demonstrated through deference to leading opinions, and temperance in handling colleagues were values esteemed by the military.

Nineteenth-century Ibadan society was a 'classless' one if 'classes' are defined in the Marxist sense of economic or political interest groups, largely

hereditary in character and logically opposed to one another. What existed there were different social categories with the masses at the base of the hierarchy and the military elite at the top. Relations between the categories were not antagonistic. The military chiefs had a mission to protect the masses. The masses in turn sought to imitate the values of the military elite, and the daring among the masses actually succeeded in crossing the line between commoner and eminent. This possibility of mobility via military exploits made the social stratification in Ibadan fluid as more entries were made into the high-status group. Differences in wealth no doubt existed, and these are held to be necessary in a society where individual achievement was stressed. But the point is that the society was not ordered along the lines of economic cleavages and schisms.

Again, the elite controlled admissions into it. Wealthy and distinguished civilians were barred from holding office and titles in the state. The only exception were women chiefs belonging to the Iyalode line. Even these were marginalised when it came to decision making except those directly affecting women. Thus the military made it clear that anybody who sought recognition of any nature in the society had to be directly affiliated to it.

In addition, the military elite controlled the economy of the state. The economy of Ibadan depended primarily on agriculture. The chiefs had large farmlands which they used their slaves to cultivate. The products from such farms were used to feed their fleet of dependants while the rest was exchanged for other items like salt, arms and ammunition which they needed. Due to the fact that the military chiefs caught a lot of captives at war, they could afford to keep many of such in their farms and thus maintained large plantations of diverse crops. They

also regulated whatever trade and goods that passed through their territory and enacted laws that affected all craftsmen and artisans in the society. It was in this sense that the military as an elite controlled the economy of the state.

There was also the position of the family in the rise of an individual to high status. In their bid for social advancement, individuals did not allow themselves to be encumbered by family or lineage loyalties. As mentioned earlier, ambitious men broke away from their own lineages to attach themselves to successful warriors who trained and exposed them to the war situation. On becoming successful, such men founded compounds of their own and as they became more important with bodyguards and followers of their own, they enjoyed a lot of prestige and privileges which flowed over to their family members. In the words of Morgan, "those who enjoyed this period were the chiefs, their family and relatives, the brave soldiers and slaves of the great chiefs."¹

Another important feature of the military elite was its imitability. The conduct, aspirations, estate and outlook of the military were considered worth emulating by other members of society, especially the youth. That was why many of them strove to become a member of the privileged category by joining the great warlords to learn under them.

Because of its preeminence and preponderance in the society, and partly due to changing circumstances, this elite also created the *Mógàjí* institution. This institution was created probably in the 1870s and became widespread by the 1890s and the decades that followed. The first generation of military chiefs and elite in

1. Morgan, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p.71. Also see Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.211.

Ibadan was made up of men who came from different towns outside Ibadan as shown in Table 1. These men established families and compounds of their own which needed to be perpetuated. It was this need that led to the rise of the *Mogajiship*. The *Mògàjí* was the heir of the military chief who succeeded him as head of the compound. It could thus be said that most of the second-generation military came from among the heirs of those of the first-generation. For example, Seriki Iyapo was son of Balogun Ibikunle; Chief Oyero was another son of Ibikunle; Chief Ilori, Osi Balogun was the son of Ogunmola; Chief Akeredolu and Balogun Ajayi Osungbekun were both sons of Orowusi.¹

The remaining members of the elite were individuals who came from outside Ibadan in search of fame. The Mogaji institution thus developed at a time when there was a need for descendants of the first military chiefs to succeed them in order to institutionalise the military tradition in the succession pattern. So, while outsiders continued to troop into Ibadan in search of the 'golden fleece', sons of past elite also had an opportunity to rise high if they could distinguish themselves. These two strands of the elite composition existed side by side. Again, it could be said that the *Mogajiship* grew as an institution at a time when Ibadan's expansion was being checked, reducing opportunities for ambitious new comers. The existing chiefly families then probably tried to 'close the membership book' of the town's elite.

The establishment of British rule in Ibadan in 1893 put an end to all its wars of expansion and aggression. This meant that wars ceased altogether to

1. See Table 1 for details.

provide an avenue for the rise of the elite. New entrants to the hierarchy of titles were thus recruited from among the *Mogajis*. The *mogajiship* therefore became a recruitment ground for aspirants to elite status within the traditional framework in Ibadan.

This *mogaji* system was proof of the dynamism of the nineteenth-century Ibadan elite. This dynamism was also exhibited in the way it accommodated changes. For instance, a number of hitherto subdued social groups rose into prominence in the 1890s due to the clamp on Ibadan's military aggression. The Iyalode and her lieutenants as well as religious leaders gained more prestige. Leaders of the Islamic religion patronised by the Muslim chiefs (e.g. Aare Latoosa in the 1870s and 1880s) rose to prominence too. Wealthy individuals such as Madam Omosa (daughter of Bashorun Ogunmola) enjoyed a high status on account of their wealth. The point is that cessation of wars in the 1890s allowed other aspirants to elite status who had been overshadowed by the military elite in the preceding decades to gain additional prominence though they were not admitted into the ruling elite. That this took place without noticeable turmoil in the society was due to the dynamism of the elite in adjusting to change. *Mogajis* became quite prominent too once the practice of absorbing them into the chieftaincy lines became established. But it must be said that the military chiefs who still remained in the 1890s towered above other eminent individuals in the society due to the formal position of authority they occupied within the state.

Summary

The attempt in this chapter has been to discuss the early history of Ibadan in the nineteenth century as a way of illuminating the elite in the period and its attributes. Apart from military skill and prowess, other factors which went into the making of the elite were

wealth, use of *oògùn*, good luck and charisma. This brought into focus the significance of *babalawos*, *alfas*, slaves and followers in the rise of the elite.

The military elite laid the foundation of society. It established a political system which was under its firm control. It also had a strong hold on the economy and the society at large. However, the rules and regulations it laid down for the conduct of societal affairs were soon to be eroded by colonial rule. The socio-political structures it established were also to be tested by the operation of the colonial state. The resilience or vulnerability of such socio-political edifices in the face of the British would show how relevant or otherwise the nineteenth-century structures were under the colonial dispensation of the twentieth century. It would also show how continuous the nineteenth century elite was with its twentieth-century counterparts. In other words, was the twentieth-century elite the same or continuous with the nineteenth century elite in terms of background, criteria of recruitment, composition, attributes and values?

These and other issues are thrashed in the following chapters. But concerning the nineteenth century, it should be said that the socio-political situation and ideological climate of Ibadan on the eve of British colonization represented the result of careful political engineering, social innovations and economic control on the part of the elite on the one hand, and other exigencies of the milieu, extraneous to the Ibadan people on the other hand. The effects of changing cultural manifestations on the composition and performance of the elite, and how the elite managed to maintain its exclusiveness in the face of all these are subjects of concern in the following pages.

Table 1: Some Members of the Nineteenth Century Military Elite in Ibadan

	NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
1	Oluyedun	Ilorin (Was son of Aare Afonja)	Aare-Ona-Kakanfo	Was the first overall ruler of Ibadan with the title of Aare. He constituted the first military council in Ibadan	1830s
2	Oluyole	Oyo-Ile (From the Bashorun lineage)	Bashorun	The first Bashorun of Ibadan. Was a blacksmith before he came to Ibadan to become a warrior. He was Osi-Kakanfo during Oluyedun's reign. Commanded the Ibadan army during the Eleduwe War of 1830 in which Alaafin Oluewu made the last attempt to throw off the Fulani yoke.	1833-1847
3	Oderinlo	Agberi	Balogun	Led the Ibadan army in many wars e.g. Oshogbo War (around 1840), the first Ijaye War and the Aye War which marked the beginning of Ibadan raids into Ekiti country.	1833-1851
4	Lakanle	Oyo	Otun Kakanfo	Led Ibadan in many wars which included the Iperu War of 1836.	
5	Opeagbe	Ogbomosho	Baale	Was the first Baale (civil head) of Ibadan He was Osi to Balogun Oderinlo before he became Baale. Was a very wealthy man even before he came to Ibadan. According to oral traditions, he entered Ibadan accompanied by a fleet of horses. He was a worshipper of Obatala but was benevolent to Muslims during his tenure as Baale.	1850-51
6	Adelakun	Oyo	Ekerin Kakanfo	Was a member of Oluyedun's military council. He participated in the major wars fought in his time.	1830s
7	Oluwaiye	Oyo	Ekarun Kakanfo	Also a member of Oluyedun's Council. Took part in wars fought in the Aare's time.	1830s
8	Keji	Oyo	Aare-Abese	-ditto-	1830s
9	Osun	Oyo	Sarumi	A member of Oluyedun's military council as leader of the horsemen. Very active in wars led by Balogun Oluyole and Oderinlo.	1830s
10	Elepo	Oyo	None	A very powerful warrior that was respected and feared by the military chiefs. His open refusal of a title made him a threat to them. According to traditions, he refused even the	1830s

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
			senior title of Balogun. Through a series of intrigues, he was eventually asked to leave the town.	
11 Lajumoke	?	Otun Balogun	Was Otun to Balogun Oderinlo during Oluyole's reign.	1830s and 40s
12 Bankole Aleshinloye	Ofa	Balogun	Was the Balogun during Oluyole's tenure as head-chief before Oderinlo succeeded him.	1830s
13 Oyesile a.k.a. Olugbode	Kuta	Baale	<p>He rose from Abese Balogun in Oluyole's time to succeed Opeagbe in 1851. He was such a famous warrior that his oriki describes him as 'Sangosokun ti i j'Aare'. (The dreaded one bold enough to accept Aare (Kurunmi's) challenge to fight). Under his direction, Ibadan made a lot of territorial conquests. He was also very wealthy. He had beautiful horses with decorated saddles. He was 'A r'oso 'le d'e sin' (One who prepares beautiful decorations for his horses). He wore the best clothes in his days.</p> <p>'Kijipá l'aso òlẹ, Baale Ibadan Tófi l'aso àgbà.</p> <p>'Kijipa is the cloth for the lazy', says Baale Tofi is the cloth for elders.</p> <p>(Tofi was a finely woven crimson cloth, also called Alaari). Upon all, he was very powerful in oogun. His oriki calls him: 'A b'ògùn yí gbiri l'aja, baba 'Jadun' One whose oogun rolls about in the rafters, father of 'Jadun.</p>	1851-1864
14 Ibikunle	Ogbomoshó	Balogun	Was Balogun in Baale Olugbode's time. He demonstrated his prowess at the siege of Ede, the Ara War of 1854 and the Iperu War to mention but a few. He was also very wealthy. His compound was reputed to be one of the biggest in Ibadan. He had extensive farmlands at Ogbere and Odo Ona.	1851-1864
15 Ogunmola	Fesuru (near Iwo)	Bashorun	Was Otun to Balogun Ibikunle before he became Bashorun in 1865. He is remembered for his impressive performance and leadership of Ibadan troops during the Ijaye War of 1859-1862 which saw the end of Aare	1865-1867

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
16 Osundina	Iware	Osi Balogun	Kurunmi, the Makun War, and the Iperu War. He also fought in a number of other major wars. Before he came to Ibadan, he was a powerful babalawo, and up till the time he died, he remained an ardent Ifa priest. Was Osi to Balogun Ibikunle during Baale Olugbode's period. This meant that he was the chief next to Ogunmola but he died before he could be promoted Balogun. He fought in the wars led by Ibikunle and Ogunmola. He was the first Ibadan chief to be converted a Muslim and he took the name Momodu (Mohammed).	1850s
17 Akere	Fiditi	Balogun	He rose from Ashipa Balogun to become the Balogun when Ogunmola was made head-chief in 1865. He led Ibadan troops in the Igbajo War (1866-1867) and the Ilesha War (1867-70) but he died at the War Camp as a result of the intrigues of his subordinate chiefs.	1865-67
18 Orowusi	Ogbagba (near Iwo)	Baale	He was an ode-aperin (elephant hunter) before he came to Ibadan. He rose from Ashipa Balogun to become Baale after the death of Akere. In addition, to being very courageous on the warfront he was: 'Opo oogun ti i ru 'mo gale' (Excessive charms that possess a man)	
19 Latoosa	Ilorra	Aare-Ona-Kakanfo	He was trained as a warrior in Ogunmola's private army from where he led detachments of Ibadan soldiers on military expeditions. His first military title was Aare-Ago. He rose from there to Otun Seriki. He became Otun Balogun Ajobo, and later head-chief of Ibadan with the title of Aare-Ona-Kakanfo. As head of Ibadan, he prosecuted many wars in Yorubaland and was greatly feared in the region by other states. He was converted to Islam. But despite this he was still known as: "Ara gbogbo kiki oogun wonkoko" ("Entire body full of charms")	1871-1885
20 Ajayi Jegede	?	Seriki	He was Seriki under Baale Olugbode. He led a detachment of Ibadan army during the Ijebu-Ere War to Igbara in 1852.	1850s

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
21 Odunjo	(Egba)	Seriki	He succeeded Ajayi Jegede as Seriki during Olugbode's tenure. (Not much is known about his exploits but he is nonetheless mentioned as one of the mighty men of Baale Olugbode's time).	1850s
22 Tunbosun	?	Otun Balogun	He was Otun Balogun Akere during the reign of Bashorun Ogunmola. He fought in the Igbajo War (1866-67) and other wars led by Balogun Akere.	d. 1867
23 Abayomi	?	Osi Balogun	He was Osi (third in command) to Balogun Akere. His exploits in the first Ijaye War (1859-62) during which time he was Ajia Balogun) brought him into limelight. He was also active in the Igbajo War as leader of a detachment of Ibadan army.	d. 1867
24 Ali Laluwoye	Iware (was brother of Osi Balogun Osundina)	Otun Balogun	He rose from Ekerin Balogun under Akere (in Ogunmola's reign) to Otun Balogun Ajayi Ogboriefon in Aare Latoosa's time. He fought (and even led) in many of the major wars of his time.	d. 1882
25 Ajayi (Ogboriefon means carrier of the Efon man's head)	Ejigbo	Balogun	<p>He rose from Abese Balogun to Osi Balogun before finally becoming the Balogun in 1871. His contemporaries were Akere, Ogunmola and Latoosa. He is remembered for his courage and tactics in leading Ibadan troops to victory during the Igbin campaign of 1877. He was the hero of the Ikirun or Jalumi War (1878). He also distinguished himself in a few other engagements in the Ekitiparapo. His death in 1879 brought some relief to the Ekitiparapo confederate forces. His oriki describes him as:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"A b'oogun gb'oogun pon." The one with overlapping charms.</p> <p>It is also said that he was as brave as Balogun Ibikunle.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Bi a ba mu t' Ibikunle Oloke kuro Balogun bi Ogboriefon d' agira se". If we leave Ibikunle the mighty out, it is hard to find a Balogun that excels Ogboriefon.</p>	1871-1879

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
26 Oyewo	Ibadan (son of Ibikunle)	Aare Ago Bashorun	<p>He was Aare Ago to Bashorun Ogunmola. He fought alongside Balogun Akere in many wars. The courage and determination with which he commanded Ibadan troops in the Ilesha War (1867) is remembered in the traditions. He is said to have commanded his men to fill up a trench so that other Ibadan troops could cross over and fight:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">O ke gi legi, o k'araba le 'ta O k'erinmado l'akoko O gbe 'gi nla ka ori Afa-Jegede f'Ashipa.</p> <p>He felled trees after trees. He felled the Araba on the Atta He felled the Erinmado on the Akoko He laid the trunk of a big tree across Jegede trench for the Chief Ashipa to cross over.</p>	
27 Iyapo	Ibadan (son of Ibikunle)	Seriki	<p>He was the head of Ibikunle's compound. His charisma attracted a lot of followers to him in his quarter at Ayeye. This public recognition and militancy valour was acknowledged by Aare Latoosa through the conferment of Seriki title on him. His exploits as Seriki added to his fame at home. He was also a wealthy man. He renovated his father's house at Ayeye with ornately decorated pillars. This became the subject of a song:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Opo ile 'Yapo Erebe"</p> <p>(The pillars of Iyapo's house are magnificent)</p> <p>He neither lived to old age nor rose in the chieftaincy hierarchy. He was the object of an intrigue in 1877 as a result of which he committed suicide.</p>	1873-77
28 Ajobo	Owu	Balogun	<p>He rose from being Seriki in Bashorun Ogunmola's regime to Balogun under Baale Orowusi. He was very wealthy in addition to being powerful in battle. His generosity (open-handedness) at home even made him more popular. According to his Oriki</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Irinwo l'eru Ogúnmolá Otalugba ni ti Sùnmólà Gbogbo wọn ko i ti i tó K'áta ko'yo l'óòjọ nilé e Awútutu.</p> <p>(Ogunmola had only four hundred slaves</p>	d. 1871

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
29 Lawoyin	?	Seriki	<p>Sunmola had two hundred and sixty All of them do not add up to the number that carry salt and pepper daily in Awututu's (Ajobo) house.</p> <p>Ajobo was exiled from Ibadan in 1871 as a result of a row he had with the other chiefs and Aare Latoosa.</p> <p>He was Seriki in Orowusi's time and carried the title to Latoosa's tenure. He participated in the few wars prosecuted in Orowusi's time but luck went against him under Latoosa. The detachment of Ibadan troops he led during the Ogedengbe War of 1873/74 was defeated and several young soldiers of note lost their lives. This annoyed Aare Latoosa who saw Lawoyin as a very unlucky man, and he deposed him. Lawoyin returned to his farm where he lived in obscurity till he died.</p>	deposed 1873
30 Ayorinde Aje	?	Osi Balogun	<p>After the Ara War of 1854 fought in the Ekiti country, Ayorinde, who was then a junior chief did not return home with the victorious Ibadan army. Instead he stayed behind in the Ekiti area to raid for slaves. Through this exercise he accumulated great wealth. He eventually returned to Ibadan as an old man in 1872 by which time most of his contemporaries had died. He met at the head of government some of his subordinates who had risen to power during his absence. He was honoured with the title of Osi Balogun. He died in 1876.</p>	d. 1876
31 Ilori	Ibadan (son of Ogunmola)	Osi Balogun	<p>He succeeded Ayorinde Aje as the Osi Balogun during Latoosa's period. Together with Seriki Iyapo, he dislodged Ogedengbe and his forces at Ise-Ekiti during the Emure War (1874). He was despatched with Balogun Ogboriefon to attack the Ilorin/Ijesha forces at Ikirun, but he was captured during the engagement at Jalumi in 1878.</p>	Captured in war in 1878
32 Akintaro	Ibadan (son of Akere)	Osi Balogun	<p>He succeeded Chief Ilori as Osi Balogun in Aare Latoosa's reign. His bravery made the Aare to install him a senior chief from being the heir of Akere. His tenure as Osi Balogun was</p>	1878-1880

NAME	NATIVE TOWN	TITLE	PROFILE	PERIOD
33 Akeredolu	Ibadan (son of Orowusi)	Otun Seriki	<p>not long because he died while fighting at the Kiriji War.</p> <p>He succeeded Amoo as Otun Seriki. The latter died in the Igbo-Alawun War in Ekitiland when Seriki Lawoyin's troops were defeated by Ogedengbe. Akeredolu fought in the Ado War of 1873 but died shortly after in April 1874. His Oriki refers to his martial acts:</p> <p>Bi 'keredolu ko bá sí Nijó òran ja seḷe l'ona Igbàrà Bi 'keredolu ko bá sí L'Oshogbo la bá gbé mu'kò</p> <p>(if not for Akeredolu On the day trouble broke out on the way to Igbara If not for Akeredolu We would have taken our pap (breakfast) at Oshogbo (as captives)</p>	1870s
34 Ajayi Osungbekun	Ibadan (son of Orowusi)	Balogun	<p>He was the brother of Akeredolu. He rose from the position of Seriki to Balogun after the death of Latoosa. He continued the prosecution of the Ekitiparapo until 1886 when the British made peace between the warring parties. Between 1886-1893 he led Ibadan troops in their military camp at Ikirun to fight Ilorin troops and defend Ofa and neighbouring towns. On his return to Ibadan in 1893 he was the victim of an intrigue planned by his chiefs to protest his avaricious lifestyle and that of his slaves while he was at Ikirun. He is remembered as:</p> <p>'Bankole Yi'tam'e tu A gbé 'kirun ja 'Lorin logun O yò fuu ! Aya jin 'mọ gi i ri '</p> <p>(Bankole who mixes bullets with gunpowder- He who stays at Ikirun to fight the Ilorin He appears suddenly, and people tremble)</p>	1885-1893
35 Tajò	?	Otun-Aare- Ona-Kakanfo	<p>He was deputy first to Baale Orowusi and later to Aare Latoosa. He was a war veteran who stayed back at home to administer the town while the others fought at the Ekitiparapo. Because he retired early from war, he outlived most of his contemporaries who died on the battle ground at Ekitiparapo.</p>	1870-1890

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Notes

The *Oriki* (praise poems) of these men were also useful in this compilation. They contain some historical information. These were, however used with extreme caution because of the flowery language and exaggeration which characterise this genre of oral tradition.

The titles indicated in the third column of the table were the highest taken by the incumbents. They all (except Akintaro) had other junior titles.

The periods indicated in the last column denote the time of their most acknowledged exploits/pursuits

CHAPTER TWO

THE IBADAN ELITE; 1893-1966

Introduction

This chapter presents a portrait of some of the individuals that made up the elite in Ibadan in the period under study. It presents their individual profiles (as tabulated in the following pages) as well as their general behaviour and values. As discussed in the introduction to this work, the elite comprised eminent men and women who exercise some degree of influence over the rest of the community. Their influence is of a general kind but which could be concentrated in certain spheres more than others. Thus we have the Christian elite and their Muslim counterparts. These factors of 'eminence' and 'influence' were taken into consideration in selecting the following men and women for study in this thesis. Many Ibadan indigenes and non-indigenes¹ were interviewed and asked to give names of individuals they considered 'influential' and 'eminent' in the period of study without prejudice to the religion and sex of such persons. I compared the names I got from the different informants and drew out those that recurred in most of the lists. Again, I looked into the membership of early elite organizations such as the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan and the Ibadan Progressive Union and made a list which I crosschecked with other 'big' names found in Archival records, Private Papers, Church Records, Newspapers (namely, *Irohin Yoruba*, *Southern Nigeria Defender*, *West African Pilot*, *Daily Times* and *The Nigerian Tribune*) and other secondary texts. The result of the entire exercise is the list below. The guiding principles in this selection were eminence and influence.

1. See bibliography for

Table 2: A Cross-Section of The Ibadan Elite 1893-1966

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
1 Rev. Daniel Olubi	Christianity	Orile-Itesi (in Egbaland). His descendants now live in Ile Olubi at Kudeti	He was converted and baptised in 1841 at Abeokuta. He became an associate of Hinderer in 1852 and followed him to Ibadan in 1853. He was ordained deacon in 1868 and became a full priest in 1869. He took charge of the Kudeti Church after the Hinderers left. He was an important leader of the early Christian community in Ibadan.
2 Imam Uthman Abu Bakr Basumu	Islam	Settled at Ita-Okoro, Ibadan (Originally from Katsina)	A learned Muslim teacher and preacher. Lived at Ita-Okoro, Isale Osi in Ibadan. Rose to become the Chief Imam of Ibadan 1839-1871.
3 Chief David Kukomi	Christianity	Originally from Oyo-Ile. Established Kukomi Compound in Ibadan.	Initially a warrior and adherent of traditional religion. He was later converted by Rev. David Hinderer to Christianity. He was the first Babasale Onigbagbo (Patron of Christians) in Ibadan. His first daughter, Abigail Lapemo Kukomi married Josiah Akinyele. He died in August 1895.
4 Imam Ahmad Qifu	Islam	Originally from Borno. Established Qifu's Compound at Isale-Alfa, Ibadan	He first settled at Oyo before coming to Ibadan. He was a pious Muslim and popular Arabic teacher. He was Chief Imam in Latoosa's reign (1871-1872). One of his sons, Mohammed Lawal also became the 8th Chief Imam of Ibadan in 1911.
5 Rev. Francis Lowestoft Akiele	Christianity	Ile Olunloyo, Agbongbon. Kudeti area, Ibadan.	Son of Chief Olunloyo, a friend of the Hinderers. He was Mrs. Hinderer's first male pupil. He became a teacher at Kudeti in 1869. He was later ordained a deacon and served in Ibadan for some years before being transferred to Ogbomosho in 1891. He retired from the CMS service in 1924 and thereafter went back to Ibadan. He died in 1928.
6 Imam Haruna Agbeni	Islam	Originally from Oyo-Ile. His compound became known as Ile-Lemomu Agbeni, Ibadan	He was learned in Arabic and Islamic Studies. Rose to become the Chief Imam of Ibadan in 1872. He died in 1884. (Agbeni was put behind his name by Ibadan people to distinguish him from Imam Haruna Matanmi of Oke-Gege, also in Ibadan).
7 Mr. William Stephen Allen	Christianity	Sierra-Leone	Born in 1829 in Sierra-Leone. His father was a freed slave. W.S. Allen joined the Hinderers at Kudeti in 1858. He was a cotton trader and later dispenser of European medicine. He was also

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
			catechist at the Ogunpa church from 1860-1875, and at Yemetu from 1894-1907. Died in 1914.
8 Imam Abdullahi Basunu	Islam	Ita Okoro, Ibadan	Son of Uthman Abu Bakr Basunu (No.2 above). He studied under his father and was highly learned in Arabic and Islamic Studies. He became Chief Imam of Ibadan in 1896. Died in 1911.
9 Mr. Josiah Akinyele	Christianity	Alafara, Ibadan	Born in 1840 in Ibadan. He later came under the influence of the Hinderers. He became a leader in the Ibadan Christian community. His contemporaries included W.S. Allen and R.S. Oyebode. He was the father of A.B. and I.B. Akinyele (d.1924)
10 Imam Sulaiman Alagufon	Islam	Originally from Ilorin. His compound became known as Ile-Alagufon, Agbeni, Ibadan.	He was a pious and learned Muslim. Deputy to Imam Haruna Agbeni. He later became Chief Imam in 1884. During Aare Latoosa's time, he was among the Imams who followed the Aare to battlefronts, praying for his victory. He died in 1886 on the war-front.
11 Rev. Richard Scott Oyebode	Christianity	Oke-Offa, Ibadan	Born in 1850 to the family of David Kukomi. He was trained by the Hinderers whom he joined in the 1860s. He taught at Aremo School from 1869. He mediated in the Kiriji War, and served as interpreter and go-between between Ibadan Chiefs and British Officers at the 1893 Agreement. He was ordained in 1895 as a deacon.
12 Imam Ibrahim Gambari	Islam	Originally from Zaria but settled at Oja'gbo, Ibadan	Highly learned in Arabic and Islamic Studies. He rose to be Chief Imam in 1886. He died in 1896.
13 Chief Daniel Adetoun	Christianity	Oke-Offa Babasale, Ibadan	He was a descendant of Chief Daniel Kukomi. He had his education under the missionaries. He was one of the first councillors in the Native Council constituted in 1903 and he was there till 1907. He succeeded Chief Kukomi as Babasale Onigbagbo of Ibadan. Died in 1918.
14 Rev. James Adedeji Okuseinde	Christianity	Aremo, Ibadan.	His father James Okuseinde (Sr) was a Sierra-Leonian who came to Ibadan with David Hinderer in 1853. James (Jnr.) attended the Christian Training Institute Abeokuta in 1874. He was secretary and later Chairman of the Ibadan Native Church Council.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
			He was ordained priest at Kudeti in 1895. He served as councillor in the Ibadan town Native Council together with D. Adetoun and A.F. Foster (1903-1907). He was member, Ibadan Agricultural Society, Egbe Agba 'O-Tan, Yoruba Patriotic Society and was senior pastor at Aremo till 1940 when he died.
15 Alfa Abubakar al Qasim a.k.a. Alfa Alaga.	Islam	Oke-Aremo, Ibadan.	A renowned Islamic scholar. He established an Arabic school at Oke-Aremo where many branches of Islamic education were taught - Arabic Grammar, Philology, Theology, Quaranic Studies and Prophetic traditions. He also introduced public preaching and Quran exegesis during the month of Ramadan. He was among the first batch of Mecca pilgrims (Alhajis) in Ibadan at the end of the 19th century. His students included Haruna Matanmi and Abdullahi b. Uthman Basunu.
16 Hon. Ernest Henley Oke.	Christianity	Originally from Ifjaiye	Came to Ibadan in 1909 as Headmaster of Baale School. He was Secretary to the Ibadan Council in 1912. Was a founder of the United Native African Church at Idikan. He was involved with the nationalist movement as head of the Ibadan branch of the National Congress of British West Africa. He was a member of the Legislative Council (1924-30). Also a member of the Egbe Agba -'Otan. Died in 1930
17 Alfa Abubakar Onisiniyan	Islam	Ori-Are, Agbeni, Ibadan.	He was a contemporary of Imam Haruna Matanmi in the 1920s. He also belonged to the first generation of Mecca pilgrims in Ibadan. He founded a mosque in his quarter.
18 Rev. Alexander Babatunde Akinyele	Christianity	Alafara, Ibadan	Born in 1876 to Josiah and Abigail Akinyele. He attended the Fourah Bay College in Sierra-Leone and obtained a B.A. from Durham in 1906. He was ordained priest of the Anglican Church in 1910. He obtained an M.A. from Durham in 1925. In 1933 he was consecrated Assistant Bishop of Lagos Diocese. He was the first Principal of Ibadan Grammar School established in 1913 and a foundation member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan. He was highly respected in Ibadan. He became Bishop of Ibadan Diocese of the Anglican Communion in 1952 and retired in 1956.

	NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
19	Chief Simeon Orukotan	Christianity	Ile Kukomi, Oke-Offa Babasale, Ibadan	A son of David Kukomi. He had elementary education and was active in the Christian community. He was a member of the Aremo Church Parish Council in 1908. He was the first Christian to be made a chief - He was made Maye Baale in February 1919 by Baale Situ. He rose to become Abese Baale before he died in 1923.
20	Chief John Lagbayi	Christianity	Ile-Kukomi, Oke-Offa Babasale, Ibadan	A descendant of Chief Kukomi. Literate. He became Babasale (Patron) of Ibadan Christians from 1927 to 1933. He was also a Native Court Judge. Died in 1933.
21	Chief Salami Agbaje	Islam	Originally from Iseyin. His compound in Ibadan became known as Ile Agbaje Ayeye.	A wealthy trader. Literate. He associated a lot with Christians. Member, Egbe Agba-O-Tan and Legislative Council (1930-35). He was made Councillor in the Ibadan Native Authority in 1935 and joined the traditional Chieftaincy hierarchy in the same year. He rose to become the Balogun of Ibadan in 1952 and died in 1953. Was reputed to be the wealthiest man in his time.
22	Chief Isaac Babalola Akinyele	Christianity	Alafara, Ibadan	Brother of the Rev. A.B. Akinyele. He attended St. Peter's School Aremo and C.M.S. Grammar School, Lagos (1878-1907). Worked as Customs Clerk under Ibadan Native Authority in 1903. He was Secretary to the Ibadan Council from 1906-1919 and later its Treasurer. He resigned from the N.A. in 1920 to establish himself as a farmer and produce buyer. He was a foundation member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan. He became an Associate Judge in Ibadan in 1935, President, Land's Court in 1936 and Chief Judge in 1954. He rose through the traditional Chieftaincy hierarchy to become Olubadan in 1955. He was also a leader of the Christ Apostolic Church. Was Treasurer of the Cooperative Movement in Ibadan in the 40s and 50s. He authored Iwe Itan Ibadan in 1911, and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1961. He died in 1964.
23	Chief Adebisi Giwa	Islam	Ile Lanipekun a.k.a. Wonuola, Ibadan.	Was a farmer, produce merchant and general trader. He was believed to come after Salami Agbaje in terms of his wealth and material acquisitions. He was a chief in the traditional hierarchy and rose to be Ashipa Olubadan. He was the First President of the Land's Court at Oke Aare. He died in 1938.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
24 Rev. Daniel Adesina Williams	Christianity	Ogunpa, Ibadan	Was Pastor in charge of the Ogunpa Church in the early 20thC. He married a daughter of the Rev. Daniel Olubi and was a member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan.
25 Rev. E.M. Alalade	Christianity	Oke-Offa, Ibadan	He was the pastor of St. David's Church, Kudeti from 1921 to 1941. Was also a member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan.
26 Alfa Muhammad Lawal Qifu	Islam	Ile Qifu (Kifu) Isale-Alfa, Ibadan	Son of Imam Ahmad Qifu, Ibadan's Chief Imam (1871-1872). He studied Arabic and Islamic Studies under his father and other Alfes. Himself rose to become the Chief Imam (1911-1922). He was very pious and devout.
27 Mr. S.A. Layode	Christianity	Kudeti, Ibadan	A produce buyer. One of the leaders of the Christian community in Ibadan, especially at Kudeti. Literate. Was a member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan.
28 Mr. Theophilus Durowojuola Alalade	Christianity	Oke-Offa, Ibadan	Brother of the Rev. E.M. Alalade. Member, Egbe Agba-'O-Tan, member (and President in 1927) of the Bokini Society. A leader of the Christian community especially at Aremo. Was Vice-President of the Ibadan Cocoa Cooperative Marketing Union (I.C.C.M.U.) till his death in 1945. (The Alalades are cousins to the Adetouns.)
29 Chief Akinpelu Obisesan	Christianity	Ile Aperin, Ibadan	Born in 1887 and trained at the St. Andrew's College. He worked with the Railway till 1920. Between 1923-1930, he was shopkeeper for Messrs. Miller Brothers, an agent for UAC and later to Chief Adebisi Giwa. He retired from all these in 1930 to engage in full-time farming. He was a foundation member of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan, member I.P.U. (1930-1963), Legislative Council (1943-51). He was Councillor in the Ibadan Native Authority from 1939-1942 and again in 1949-51. Leader of the Cooperative Movement from the 1930s to 1963 when he died. He was also a customary court Judge and traditional Chief in Ibadan.
30 Chief Denrele Adetimikan Obasa	Christianity	Ile-Ife but resided at Idikan, Ibadan	Was editor of Irohin Yoruba published by the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan of which he was once Secretary. Also a founder of the First Baptist Church, Idikan. Although his chieftaincy title was from Ile-Ife, he played an active role in Ibadan life especially as member of the Egbe. Died in May, 1945.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
31 Chief J.L. Ogunsola	Christianity	Ile Olode Sodunlola, Ibadan	Was the first Headmaster of St. Paul's Primary School, Yemetu (1918-21). Was made Councillor in the Ibadan Native Authority in 1942. He was a big time farmer and one of the key figures in the Co-operative Movement in Ibadan in the 1950s. He rose to be Otun Balogun in 1960 in the traditional Chieftaincy hierarchy.
32 Alfa Daniyan	Islam	Ile Iya-Otun, Isale-Osi, Ibadan	Was a popular Muslim Scholar in Baale Situ's reign (1914-25). Himself studied under Imam Haruna Matanmi of Isale Osi. His own students included Mohammed Aliyu Folorunsho and Ahmad Muili Adisa (both later became Chief Imams in Ibadan).
33 Mr. Samson Okeowo	Christianity	Ijebu	Wealthy trader who resided in Ibadan. He was an active leader of the local Christian community. He donated a two-storey building at Alekuso to the Ibadan Grammar School in 1913. He was installed as the head of the Ijebu Community in Ibadan in 1930
34 Mr. S.T. Omikunle	Islam	Kudeti, Ibadan	School teacher. President of the Ibadan Patriotic Association IPA (1936-1948). Through this office he became heavily involved in local politics in Ibadan
35 Mr. John Adelagun	Christianity	Ile Adelagun, Oja'gbo, Ibadan.	A prominent leader of the Christian community in Ibadan. He died in September, 1939.
36 Chief Bello Abasi a.k.a. 'Megida'	Islam	Ile Aleshinloye Ibadan	Son of Olubadan Okunola Abasi and member, Ibadan Patriotic Association IPA. He became President of the Association in 1948. Was installed Babasale Musulumi (Patron of Muslims) in Ibadan. in 1953. He played an active role in local politics.
37 Chief Owen H. Adetoun	Christianity	Ile Kukomi, Oke Offa Babasale, Ibadan.	Son of Daniel Adetoun and a descendant of David Kukomi. Member, Egbe Agba-O-Tan. Got his Chieftaincy title (Bada Olubadan) in 1944 and gradually rose within the ranks. Was councillor together with J.L. Ogunsola in the N.A. Council in the 1940s and remained active in Council affairs
38 Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu a.k.a. 'Penkelemeesi'	Islam	Oke-Oluokun, Ibadan	Educated at the Yaba Higher College. Worked with the Cooperative Department before entering politics. A leader of the N.C.N.C. and the Mabolaje Was a Federal legislator in 1954 and from there became Minister for Natural Resources and Social Services. Also Chairman of the Ibadan District

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
39 Chief Emmanuel Adegboyega Adeyemo	Christianity	Ile Opeagbe, Isale-Jebu, Ibadan	Council and later chairman of the NCNC Western Working Committee and First National Vice-President of the NCNC. A very charismatic political leader. Died in 1958 Joined the colonial civil service as clerk in 1930. Between 1940-1946, he was in the army. Became Assistant Treasurer of the Ibadan N.A. from 1947-1956. Was President of an Ibadan District Customary court 1956-1960. Got a Chieftaincy title in 1955. Member of Western House of Chiefs 1960. Member, Ibadan Progressive Union. Was Emergency Commissioner of Local Government in 1962. A close adviser to Olubadan Akinyele. (He became Olubadan in 1994).
40 Dr. Anthony Saka Agbaje	Islam	Ile Agbaje, Ayeye, Ibadan.	First son of Chief Salami Agbaje. Attended Ibadan Grammar School. Was the first Ibadan son to train as a medical doctor in 1934. Member, Ibadan Progressive Union. Was part of the joint effort that established the Western Echo (a newspaper based in Ibadan) in the 1940. Founded a private hospital called Alafia Hospital in Ibadan.
41 Chief Augustus Meredith Adisa Akinloye	Christianity	Ile Akinloye, Oje, Ibadan	Attended Ibadan Grammar School 1927-1934. Was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1949. Actively involved in local politics in Ibadan. Was counsel for Ibadan Chiefs in the agitation against Chief S. Agbaje in 1950. Joined the Action Group and elected to the Western House of Assembly as Minister of Agriculture in the Action Group government till 1956. He was chairman, Ibadan Council 1961-64. In 1963, he joined Chief S. L. Akintola to form the United People's Party.
42 Alfa Haruna Matanmi a.k.a. Alfa Oke-Gégé	Islam	Originally from Oshogbo but settled at Oke-Gégé, Ibadan	His father, Matanmi, was a descendant of Laaroye the first King and founder of Oshogbo. Haruna was an Islamic Scholar and teacher. He was a missionary and grand shaykh of the ulama in Ibadan and Yorubaland in general. Belonged to the Sufi sect. He was the second Chief Mufassir (Chief Quranic exeget) of Ibadanland. He rose to become Chief Imam in 1922. An Arabic work, Usulul-Fara'id (The Principles of Inheritance) is believed to have been written by him. He died in 1935.
43 Chief Timothy Lajide Oyesina	Christianity	Ile Aresa, Agbongbon, Kudeti Area, Ibadan	Started his teaching career in 1924 as a tutor in Ibadan Grammar School where he worked for 14 years. Went into produce buying briefly in 1938.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
			He thereafter embarked on School Proprietorship. He established Ibadan Boys High School, Oke Bola (1938); Ibadan City Academy, Oke Eleta; Aresa Secondary Modern School, Oke Ado; Ibadan Boys School, Oke Bola (Primary); Ibadan Public Day School Kobomoje (Primary); Ibadan Public Day School, Elekuro, and Ibadan Boys' High School (Primary) Oke Foko, Ibadan. He was an active member of the Ibadan Progressive Union and Secretary of the Ibadan Patriotic Association.
44 Shaykh Tahir Malik Matala	Islam	Oke-Adu, Ibadan	He was son of Shaykh Malik b. Hussayn of Oke-Adu, an Islamic Scholar. Himself a respected Islamic Scholar. In the 1940s he became the Chief Mufassir. Locally called Alfa Tafsir which qualified him to preach in the Central Mosque and expound the Quran.
45 Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo	Christianity	Ile Ojo 'Badan Oje, Ibadan	A Sergeant-Major in the Royal West African Frontier Force during World War I. Later joined the Civil Service as Chief Manager of the Ibadan Forest Reserve. Was admitted into the Balogun line of Ibadan Chiefs in 1935 as Gbonka Balogun and rose to become the Ekarun Balogun (6th in line to the Olubadan) before he died in 1954. A prominent member of the Idikan Baptist Church and instrumental in the founding of the Salem Baptist Church at Yemetu Alaadorin, Ibadan in the early 1950s.
46 Shaykh Hassan a.k.a. Alfa Abata	Islam	Oritamerin, Ibadan	A Muslim scholar. Was among the first Muslims to found quarter mosques in Ibadan. He also rose to become Mogaji Agba (a senior Islamic functionary). He was a member of the Inner Council which chose the Chief Imam.
47 Rev. Emmanuel Oladipo Alayande	Christianity	Ali-Iwo Compound, Ibadan	Born in 1910, he attended St. Andrew's College, Oyo from 1929-1932. Taught at Ondo for some years before going to Fourah Bay College, Sierra-Leone from where he graduated in 1946. Obtained a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of London in 1947. Was Principal of Ibadan Grammar School from 1947-1968. He was ordained priest in 1950, and became a Canon in 1960. An active member of the I.P.U. Was also involved in the Egbe Omo Oduduwa and the Action Group.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
48 Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga	Islam	Ojaaba, Ibadan	A wealthy textile trader at Gbagi. Though not literate, she employed many clerks who transacted business on her behalf. She was made the Iyalaje of Ibadan (leader of all female traders) in the 1950s. Was an active member of the Action Group Women's Wing formed in 1953. Was also a leader in the National Council of Women Societies in the 1960s. A devout Muslim, she built a private mosque at Sango and performed the hajj in 1953. Was an active member of the Ansar Ud-Deen Society and leader of the Isabatudeen Society which founded the Isabatudeen Girls' Grammar School in 1964.
49 Chief Victor Owolabi Esan	Christianity	Agbeni, Ibadan	Was a school teacher in the 1920s after which he joined the Public Works Department of the Ibadan Native Authority in 1930. Was a foundation member of the Ibadan Progressive Union and its first secretary in the 1930s before he went into private practice. He was later honoured with the title Ekerin Aare of Ibadan by the Olubadan in Council.
50 Madam Hunmoani Apampa	Islam	Married into Ile Apampa, Ibadan	Leader of the Women's Wing of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in Ibadan from 1954 - 1965. She belonged to the Mabolaje Grand Alliance and was a staunch supporter of Adegoke Adelabu. She was not literate but an effective women's leader.
51 Chief (Mrs.) Wuraola Esan	Christianity	Ile-Ojo'Badan, Oje, Ibadan	She trained as a teacher at the United Missionary College (UMC) Ibadan 1928-1930. She founded the Ibadan People's Girls School in 1945. Leader of the Women's Wing of the Ibadan Progressive Union in the 1950s. Member, Egbe Omo Oduduwa and the Action Group. Member of the Nigerian Senate 1960-65. Also a leader of the National Council of Women Societies in the 1960s. She entered the Iyalode line of Chieftaincy in 1955 when she was made Balogun Iyalode by Olubadan I.B. Akinyele. She rose to be Iyalode in 1975. Died in 1985.
52 Chief (Mrs.) Hunmoani Alade	Islam	Ile Latoosa, Oke Aare, Ibadan	A wealthy female trader and an active leader of the Action Group Women's Wing in Ibadan in the 1950s and early 60s. Was a traditional chief of Ibadan in the Iyalode line. She rose to become the Iyalode in 1985.
53 Chief Daniel Tayo Akinbiyi	Christianity	Elekuro, Ibadan	A trader and businessman. Had many shops in Ibadan where he sold imported goods. Was also involved in the produce trade. Later he went into

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
			manufacturing Akinbiyi Excelsior Aerated Waters, locally called ('Oti Akinbiyi'). Foundation Member, Ibadan Progressive Union. Councillor, Ibadan Native Authority 1936-38. In 1951, he was elected into the Western House of Assembly. Was made a traditional chief and he rose to become Olubadan in 1977.
54 Imam Ali Mohammed a.k.a. Ajagbe Afasegbejo	Islam	Ile Lemomu, Agbeni, Ibadan	Was grandson of Haruna Agbeni (the fourth Chief Imam of Ibadan, 1872-1884). His own father was Mohammed Ajagbe and his mother was a descendant of Aare Latoosa. He studied under his father and became an Islamic scholar. He rose to become Chief Imam of Ibadan in 1935. He died in 1940.
55 Mr. J.L. Lasebikan	Christianity	Ile Mele, Kudeti, Ibadan	Was councillor at the Ibadan Native Authority together with Akinpelu Obisesan (1939-1942). Was an active member of the Ibadan Progressive Union. Died, October, 1942.
56 Imam Yusuf Inakoju	Islam	Ile Inakoju, Ojaaba Ibadan.	Son of Alfa Inakoju who was learned in Arabic and Islamic studies. His mother was Atikatu, one of the daughters of Imam Sulayman Alagufon (1884-86). He studied under his father and other learned alfas. Joined the Jama'at of the Ibadan Central Mosque during the reign of Bashorun Apampa (1907-1910). Was Chief Mufti (most learned and oldest scholar in the Central Mosque) and chief Mufassir (Chief Quranic exegetist) of Ibadan before becoming the Chief Imam in 1940. Died after 2½ months of holding the office.
57 Chief D.T. Ariyibi	Christianity	Oke-Seeni, Ibadan	Became the Babasale (Patron) of Ibadan Christians in 1952. Was a member of the African Church. Worked with G.B. Ollivant firm for a long time.
58 Imam Muili Adisa Basunu	Islam	Ita-Okoro, Isale- Osi, Ibadan	Came from a lineage of Imams. His father, Alfa Abdullahi Basunu was Chief Imam of Ibadan (1896-1911) while his grandfather, Uthman b. Abu Bakr Basunu was also a Chief Imam (1839-1871). A highly respected Muslim Scholar who studied under his father and other eminent scholars. He became the Mogaji for his father's house and Imam of Ita-Okoro compound in 1937. He became the Chief Imam of Ibadan in 1940 after the death of Yusuf Inakoju. He performed the Hajj in 1954 and died in 1982.
59 Chief Simeon E. Sumnonu	Christianity	?	An associate judge of Ojaaba Court. Was Babasale of Ibadan Christians in the 1920s. Died in 1927

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
60 Mr. E. Akinlabi Sanda	Christianity	Ile Sanda, Eleegun, Beyerunka area, Ibadan.	An active member of the Ibadan Progressive Union and much involved in Ibadan local politics. Was councillor in the Ibadan N.A. in the mid-forties. Got an O.B.E. in 1952.
61 Mr. Sam A. Oloko	Christianity	Ile Oloko, Agodi, Ibadan	Worked at the Agriculture Department of the Colonial Civil Service at Ibadan. Foundation member and First President of the Ibadan Progressive Union. A leader of the Christian Community, especially at Aremo. Was conferred with an M.B.E. in 1952. Member, Board of the Cooperative Bank, Ibadan, 1959
62 Alfa Elesinmeta	Islam	Ile Elesinmeta, Isale-Osi, Ibadan.	From a family of Islamic scholars. Also active in Ibadan local politics. A close aide of Adegoke Adelabu he was more like the 'Chaplain' of the Mabolaje.
63 Bishop D.R.Oyebode	Christianity	Ile Kukomi, Oke-Offa. Babasale Ibadan.	Son of the Rev. R.S. Oyebode. Was Assistant Bishop of Ondo-Benin Diocese of the Anglican Church and later succeeded A. B. Akinyele as Bishop of Ibadan Diocese (1956-1960) He died in July, 1960.
64 Barrister Emmanuel Olawuyi Fakayodé	Christianity	Ile Dada, Oke Mapo, Ibadan	Born in 1921. Passed the Cambridge School Certificate Exam in 1942. Obtained the London Matriculation Certificate in 1946. Went to England in 1949 for further studies and qualified in the Middle Temple as a Barrister at Law in 1953. He returned to Ibadan to practice in 1953. He was called to the High Court Bench in March 1965. Was elected a member to the Western House of Assembly in 1956-1959. Actively involved in politics as one of the leaders of the NCNC in Ibadan in the mid fifties. Was Chancellor of the Anglican Diocese of Ibadan from 1961-1970.
65 Mr. Salami A. Akinfenwa	Islam	Ile Akinfenwa, Beere, Ibadan	Active on the local political scene. Was a member of the Ibadan Citizen's Committee (ICC) (a political party formed in the 1950s) and of the Hayley Reform Committee constituted in 1951.
66 Canon P.V. Adebisi (Orukotan)	Christianity	Ile-Kukomi, Oke-Offa Babasale, Ibadan.	A descendant of Chief David Kukomi and cousin to Bishop Oyebode and Bishop Akinyele. Was among the first set of students at St. Andrew's College, Oyo. Apart from his career in the Church he also took a keen interest in Ibadan affairs. Was member, Advisory Committee of the N.A. Council, 1946, and of the Hayley Reform Committee, 1951.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
67 Mr. Horatio Sowemimo Olunloyo	Christianity	Ile Olunloyo, Agbongbon, Kudeti Ibadan.	Was trained by his uncle Canon F.C.A. Olunloyo. He was the first graduate of the Olunloyo family. He passed his B.A. and L.L.B. through private studies. A foundation member of the Ibadan Progressive Union Was Treasurer of the Ibadan N.A. in the 1940s.
68 Barrister AbduMojid Folarin Mobolanle Agbaje	Islam	Ile Agbaje, Ayeye, Ibadan.	Son of Chief Salami Agbaje. A product of the Ibadan Grammar School. Read Law at the Middle Temple (1942-45). Returned to Ibadan in 1947. Joined the N.C.N.C. in 1954 and was elected to the Western House of Assembly in 1956. Became Chairman, Ibadan Council in 1958. Was member of the N.C.N.C. National Exco (1958-1960). Joined the A.G. in 1960. Re-elected into Ibadan Council in 1961. Rejoined the N.C.N.C. in 1962. An active defense lawyer.
69 Mr. D.A.O. Durosaro	Christianity	Ile Durosaro, Gege, Ibadan.	A foundation member of the Ibadan Progressive Union.
70 Chief Salawu Aminu	Islam	Ile Akinbami, Adeoyo, Ibadan	Was Messenger to the Egba United Government , (1904-1911), Clerk to Chief Salami Agbaje for many years. Later became a produce merchant. Became Mogaji Akinbami in the 1920s. Got his first title in the traditional system in 1929 (Aare Onibon Balogun). Rose through the ranks to become Balogun in 1954, and eventually Olubadan in 1965. He was actively involved in Ibadan local politics and he associated closely with Chief I. B. Akinyele and Chief Salami Agbaje.
71 Chief Theophilus Akangbe Akinade	Christianity	Ile Akinade, Ibadan	He first joined the Railway Department before moving to the Ibadan Native Authority Constabulary as a recruit. He rose to be Divisional Local Government Police Officer for Mapo and Sergeant-Major. He retired in 1947. Was a leader of the Christian community. He helped in founding Anglican Churches in Ibadan villages e.g. Wakajaiye Etile, near Olodo and Akinade village at Araromi Aperin. He was also a traditional chief and he rose to be Otun Olubadan before he died in 1971.
72 Alhaji Gbadamosi Otit	Islam	Isale-Alfa, Ibadan	He was a very wealthy trader and literate. An active member of the Ibadan Patriotic Association popularly called Egbe Omo Ibile.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
73 Chief Olatunji Olagoke (formerly known as J. L. Dina).	Christianity	Yemetu, Ibadan.	Born in 1909, he attended St. Paul's Primary had a career in the civil service from 1926-1968. Was awarded Coronation Medal by Queen of England in 1953. He was Local Government Adviser and Sole Administrator, Ibadan Division in 1966. An active Church leader. He published Iwe Itan Ijo Ibadan ati Aadota Odun Ijo Yemetu in 1944. Member, Ibadan Progressive Union.
74 Alfa Ahmadu Rufai a.k.a. Alfa Oke-Aare	Islam	Ile Latoosa, Oke-Aare, Ibadan.	Son of Alfa Bello, Oke-Aare. A distinguished Islamic scholar and teacher. Was a member of the Council of Chief Imams and Alfas which was responsible for the selection of principal Islamic functionaries in Ibadan. He founded an Arabic and Islamic Training Centre at Iwo Road, Ibadan.
75 Chief William Akintunde Ajani	Christianity	Yemetu, Ibadan	Born in 1917. Attended St. Paul's Primary School, Yemetu, and Ibadan Grammar School (1926-1935). Worked with John Holt (1936-37) and U.A.C. (1938-41). He joined the Native Constabulary in Nov. 1941 and retired in 1969 as the Assistant Chief Officer. Thereafter he went into private business as a petrol dealer and transporter. An active leader in the Christian community (he became Babasale Onigbagbo of Ibadan in 1993).
76 Mrs. Aboderin	Christianity	Ile Ojo'Badan, Oje, Ibadan	Daughter of Yejide (of Ile Olunloyo) who was trained together with Akiele by the Hinderers. She married Chief Aboderin of Ojaaba. Was leader of Egbe Ina Olorun Ntan, St. David's Church, Kudeti, Ibadan.
77 Alhaji K.O.S. Aare	Islam	Ile Latoosa, Oke-Aare, Ibadan.	Son of Baale Situ (1914-1925) and grandson of Aare Latoosa. Educated. An active politician, he was one of the lieutenants of Adegoke Adelabu in the Ibadan N.C.N.C. camp in the 1950s. He was also a prominent leader in the Muslim community.
78 Mrs. J.E. Bolarinwa	Christianity	Ile-Dada, Oke-Mapo, Ibadan	School teacher. She founded Alafia Nursery and Primary School, Mokola Ibadan. Was an active leader of the National Council of Women Societies. She is related to the Olokos on the mother side.
79 Chief J. A. Ayorinde	Christianity	Ita Esu Awele, Ibadan	Born in 1907. Attended St. David's Primary School Kudeti, and Ibadan Grammar School. His career as an Agricultural Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture lasted from 1927-1967 when he retired. He is a local historian and author. His publications include Itan Igbesi Aiye Oba Akinyele

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
			(1974). He was a member of the Ibadan Progressive Union, and the Ekerin Olubadan of Ibadan presently.
80 Alhaji Y.S. Ola-Ishola	Islam	Opo-Yeosa, Ibadan	Secretary, Islamic Missionary Society founded in the 1930s to establish Islamic Schools. Later, in the 1940s and 1950s he became involved in local politics as a member of the Ibadan Patriotic Association and as Councillor in the N.A. Council. He was also into national politics as an active member of the Action Group in Ibadan. Member, Ibadan Progressive Union.
81 Chief H.V.A. Olunloyo	Christianity	Ile-Olunloyo, Agbongbon, Kudeti Ibadan	Attended Ibadan Grammar School. Worked in Lagos as an Accounts clerk under a German firm in 1938. Taught at Olubi Memorial School, Ibadan and Ibadan Boys' High School in 1940. Was also clerk at the N.A. Treasury in the 1940s. He went into transportation and farming in 1948. Was a politician - Member, Ibadan People's Party formed in the 1950s. Member, Western House of Assembly in 1955, and was a member of the Ibadan Progressive Union till 1952. A traditional chief in Ibadan. (He is presently the head of the Olunloyo family and the Otun Balogun of Ibadan).
82 Alhaji S.A. Salami	Islam	Oja-Igbo, Ibadan	An active leader in the Muslim community. Was a founder of the Islamic Missionary Society in the 1930s. He was also a Native Court judge in Ibadan.
83 Canon E.A. Adigun	Christianity	Kudeti, Ibadan	A leader of the Christian community in Ibadan and also pastor of St. David's Church Kudeti (1941-1963). In his older years, just like Bishop A.B. Akinyele, he played the role of an elder statesman in Ibadan politics (making peace, arbitrating in disputes, and offering advice on burning issues).
84 Alhaji T.K. Animasahun	Islam	Odinjo, Ibadan	A very wealthy trader and a leader of the Muslim community. As member of the Islamic Missionary Society, he was committed to the cause of education for muslim children. Founded the Muslim Grammar School, Odinjo, Ibadan in 1969.
85 Chief James Oyeboade Aboderin	Christianity	Ita Adebipopon, Kudeti, Ibadan.	A wealthy produce merchant and general trader. Was appointed Councillor to the Ibadan N.A. Council 1933-1936. In 1936 he got his first chieftaincy title - Lagunna Olubadan - in the traditional hierarchy. Member, Ibadan Progressive Union, and an active church leader. Died in June, 1945.

NAME	RELIGION	COMPOUND/ NATIVE TOWN	PROFILE
86 Alfa Sunmonu Lanase	Islam	Ile Lanase, Aremo, Ibadan.	A muslim reformer, he criticised the syncretic practices and lukewarmness of Ibadan Muslims and advocated a return to 'pure Islam'. He organized his own following as a sect different from the orthodox Muslims in the city. He died in 1954 but his movement continued.
87 Rev. Akingbehin Olunloyo	Christianity	Ile Olunloyo Agbongbon, Kudeti Ibadan.	He was trained by the Rev. F.L. Akiele of Ogbomoso. Was first a school teacher before becoming a priest. He, in turn trained his brothers who also became important personalities in Ibadan, viz., Horatio Sowemimo Olunloyo, F. Akinniran Olunloyo and H.V. Akinniyi Olunloyo.
88 Chief Adeoye Omiyale	Islam	Oja'aba, Ibadan	Local politician. Member, Ibadan Patriotic Association, and of Adelabu's Mabolaje N.C.N.C. Grand Alliance. Was also a traditional chief in Ibadan.
89 Chief (Mrs.) Abimbola	Islam	Ojaaba, Ibadan	An active women's leader. Sold fowls at Ojaaba. Was also active in the National Council of Women's Societies and in the Action Group Women's Wing Ibadan. A traditional chief who rose to be Iyalode in the 1950s.

General Characteristics

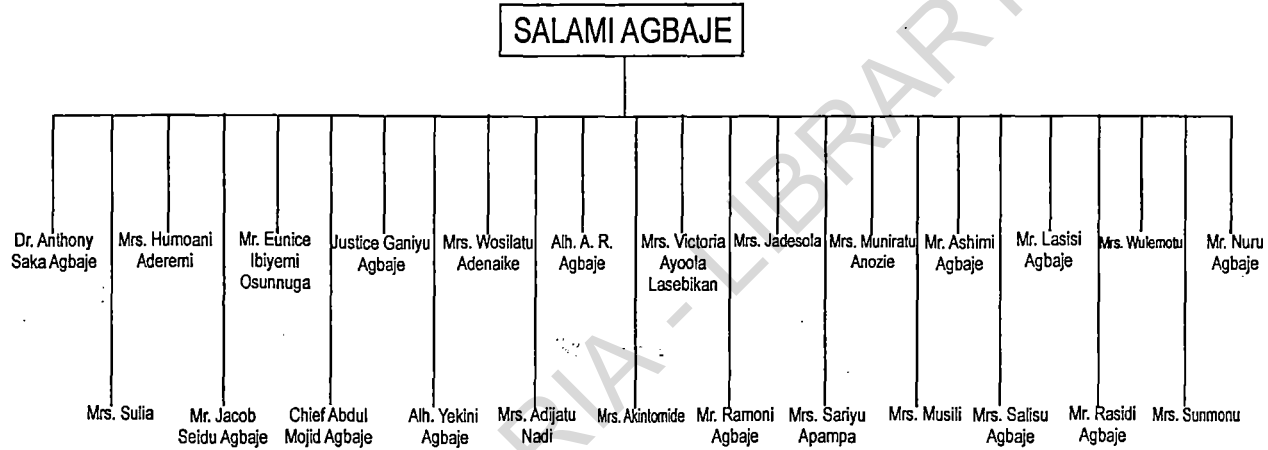
This segment discusses some observations made from the profiles of the elite as tabulated above. A few of the issues highlighted here are given fuller attention in subsequent chapters of this work. It could be observed that the above list does not include a substantial number of the traditional elite. For example, names of traditional title holders like Chief Mosaderin, Dada Opadere, Bashorun Apampa, Chief Irefin, Situ Aare, Okunola Abaasi, etc. are absent from the list. The discussion of their nineteenth-century forbears in the previous chapter is deemed sufficient for the time being. However, the few of them listed above such as Chief Salawu Aminu and Chief I.B. Akinyele were individuals with other qualifications to elite status apart from their traditional titles.

The elite could be divided into two broad groups - the Christian elite and the Muslim elite. This division is necessary because of the manner in which the religious factor prepared individuals for elite status. This is given detailed treatment in Chapter Four. The Muslim elite again could be subdivided into two groups. The first group is that of the learned scholars and religious leaders. These were individuals whose claim to elite status derived from the leadership role they played primarily in the muslim community in Ibadan. In this group were the Imams, other functionaries of Islam, religious teachers and scholars as well as the early *alhajis* and *alhajas*. This group established a tradition of religious piety and Islamic scholarship in their respective families which was carried on by their descendants. Thus we have families of *alfas* and Imams such as the Basunu, Motala, Alagunfon, Daniyan, Alaga, Onisinniyan, Gambari, Inakoju, Abata, Qifu etc.

The second group of the muslim elite comprised individuals and families whose claim to elitism was not due primarily to their occupation of leadership positions within the Muslim community in Ibadan, but rather to other factors such as wealth and/or to prestige acquired in the political arena. In this group were Agbaje, Adebisi, Omikunle, Y.S. Ola-Ishola etc. The Agbaje family, for instance, preserved its elitist outlook by producing eminent individuals who have continued to play leading roles in Ibadan affairs in particular and Nigerian politics in general. Some of the products of the family were Dr. Anthony S. Agbaje, Barrister A.M.F.M. Agbaje, Barrister Yekinni Agbaje (SAN), Hon. Justice Ganiyu Agbaje and Alhaji Rufai Agbaje. (See Fig. 2 for the Agbaje family tree). There is also the Aare Latoosa family which has preserved its muslim overtone over the years. Aare Latoosa, as we discussed in the previous chapter, was a military chief who rose to become the head of the Ibadan empire. This put him at the head of the local traditional elite. Moreover, he was the first Muslim ruler of Ibadan. This made him not just a member of the traditional elite but also a member of the emerging muslim elite. His family at Oke-Aare has preserved this heritage. His descendants included Baale Situ (1914-1925), Alhaja (Chief) Hunmoani Alade, Alhaji K.O.S. Aare, Alfa Rufai Oke-Aare, Alfa Bello Aare, Alhaji Tiamiyu Aare and Alhaji Arowolo Aare (See Fig. 3).

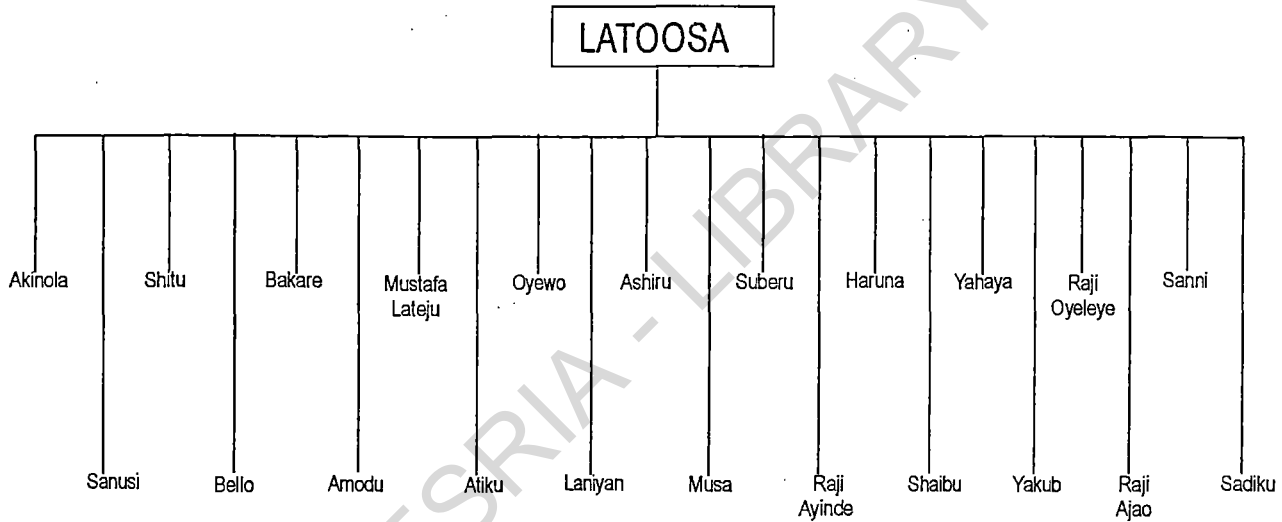
The Christian elite also preserved the elite heritage over several generations. An example is the family of Chief David Kukomi of Oke-Offa Babasale, one of the early Christian converts in Ibadan. The family has continued to produce great leaders of the Christian community in Ibadan such as Rev. R.S. Oyebode, Bishop D. Oyebode, Rev. A.B. Akinyele, Chief I.B. Akinyele, Canon

FIGURE 2
FAMILY TREE OF CHIEF SALAMI AGBAJE



Courtesy of:
Justice Ganiyu Agbaje
Oremeji,
Ibadan.

FIGURE 3
FAMILY TREE OF AARE LATOOSA



Courtesy of:
Alhaji Tiamiyu Aare(Grandchild)
Ile Aare, Oke Aare,
Ibadan.

NOTE:
Females were not represented on
this tree because they are too
numerous.

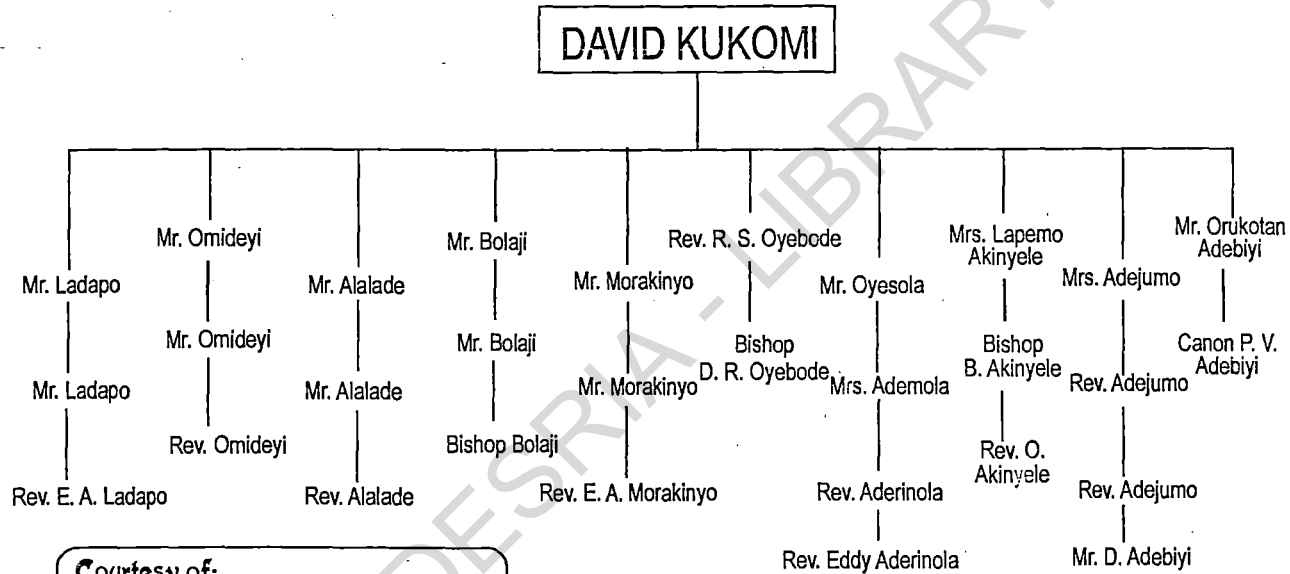
P.V. Adebisi etc. (See Fig. 4 for others). Another example is the Mele family of Kudeti. Chief Mele's descendants included Canon Oyedeji, Rev. G.L. Lasebikan (Snr.), Rev. Omideyi, Rev. G.L. Lasebikan (Jnr.) etc. (See Fig. 5 for others).

There is also a fascinating kinship pattern among the Christians. This could be due to intermarriages among them. i.e. the Christian elite tended to marry from their circle. Thus the Alalades of Oke-Offa were related to the Akinyeles of Alafara who were in turn related to the Adetouns. In the same vein, the Mele family of Kudeti was related to the Aboderins of Ita Adebiope. A daughter of Rev. Daniel Olubi got married to Ven. S.V. Latunde while another daughter became the wife of Rev. D.A. Williams of Oke-Bola (Ogunpa). Again, the principal branches of the Mele family (viz. Lasebikan, Omideyi, Oyedeji and Ajayi) were also linked with the Olunloyos of Kudeti.¹ The network is indeed an intricate one.

Another important observation on the elite is that they tended to concentrate in particular areas in the indigenous core of the city. The Muslim elite who rose to prominence before their Christian counterparts in Ibadan were concentrated on the right side of the city if one drew a line from Agodi through Mapo to Molete (See Map 1). They were thus to be found in high concentrations in Popoyemoja, Oke Gege, Oritamerin, Agbeni, Ayeye, Ojaaba, Oke Aare, Beere, Oke-Aremo, Odooye, and Ali-Iwo side. They were also to be found in small

1. Interview with Pa Olaolu Omideyi (a member of the Mele family) Age 78 years. March 23, 1995; April 5, 1995.

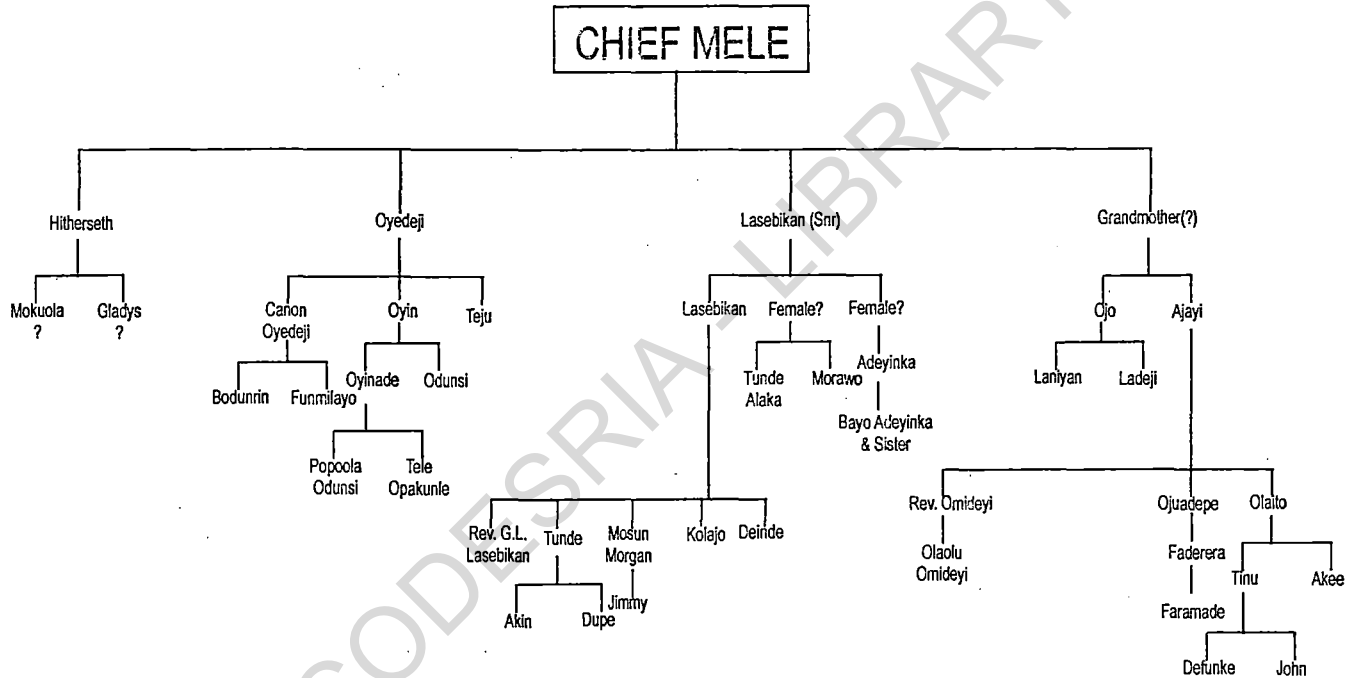
FIGURE 4
FAMILY TREE OF DAVID KUKOMI

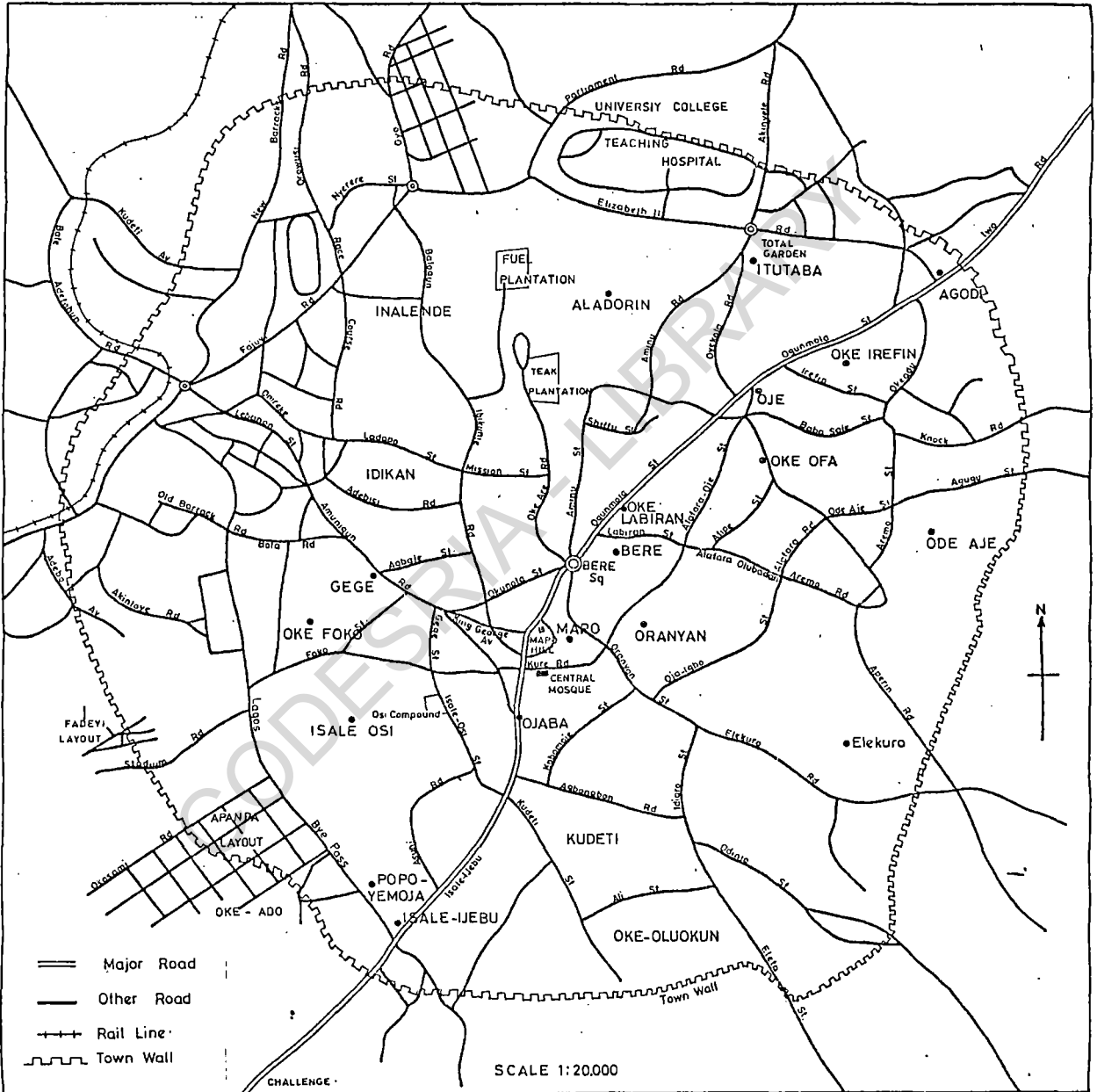


Courtesy of:
G. A. OYEBODE
 2, Fatiregun Street,
 Ebute-Metta, Lagos.
 (With the kindness of Prof. J.D.Y. Peel)

FIGURE 5
FAMILY TREE OF MELE OF KUDETI

Courtesy of:
 Pa Olaolu Omideyi.
 Yemetu, Ibadan.





Map of Ibadan Showing the Old City Walls and Major Neighbours.
 Source: Ministry of Lands & Housing Survey Division Ibadan Western
 State (1969).

pockets in other neighbourhoods in the city. Likewise large clusters of Christians were to be found on the other side - the area from Kudeti, Agbongbon, Elekuro, Mapo, Aperin, Aremo, Oke-Offa and Agodi. Consequently, most of the Christian elite came from these areas.

The explanation for this could be found in the settlement pattern of the early Muslims and Christians. The first Muslim population was around Ayeye area where the first Imam in the nineteenth century - Abdullahi Gunnugun resided. The tendency was then for other Muslim migrants to settle where there was already a Muslim population. Other waves of Muslim migrants then settled at Oke-Gege, Isale Osi, and Popoyemoja. Again, being the first imported religion in Ibadan, Islam had already made great inroads among many of the oldest families in Ibadan which were located in the immediate vicinity of Mapo Hill. These were families like Iba Oluyole, Aare Latoosa, Oke-Aremo etc. all of which constituted a large portion of the traditional core of Ibadan.

In a similar manner, the Hinderers settled at Kudeti and consequently, the highest concentration of Christians in indigenous Ibadan was to be found in the Kudeti, Elekuro, Aremo, Oke Offa axis. The reason for this could be that when the missionaries came, the content of their message (which include monogamy and reliance on God alone with no traditional additives) put off a lot of the Chiefs at the traditional core of the city, many of whom were already Muslims. It would thus seem that Christianity thrived more in the 'Kudeti axis' and gradually from there penetrated the other side. In fact, most of the early Churches like St. David's Kudeti, St. Peter's Aremo, Elekuro Methodist Church, and Christ Church, Mapo were located in this 'Kudeti axis'. Consequently, there was a predominance of

Christian influence in the area. The most educated indigenes in Ibadan were largely from this side whereas there is a lot of Muslim influence on the opposite side.

Elite Social Culture

The elite, as a distinct group in the society has its own sub-culture. This refers to its behaviour, attitude, outlook, values and status symbols. Talking of status symbols, I mean those items of external consumption that conspicuously advertise the wealth, affluence, and position of individuals enjoying a high status in the society. In the case of the Ibadan elite these were numerous.

One was the use of fine and expensive clothes such as *etù*, damask and *Aso-Okè*. For instance, during the twenty-first year anniversary of the Bokini Society at Aremo Church in 1943, Akinpelu Obisesan was dressed in an *etù* outfit.¹ Again, in 1953 while in England for the Coronation Party of Queen Elizabeth II at the Buckingham Palace, Obisesan "dressed in *petuje dandogo*, *etu* trousers, *gbàriyè Aso-Okè*" was given a Rolls-Royce car to ride, he "appeared as a big chief" as he entered the palace.² It should be noted here that not every member of the elite went about in such expensive attires. The religious leaders certainly cared less about material possessions than their other colleagues. But even for the rest of the elite who valued expensive outfits, such were not daily

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1. Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Akinpelu Obisesan Papers. Box 49: Diary 1943. Entry for August 29.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1953. Entry for May 28.

apparels. Ceremonies, special outings and festivals provided the occasions for the display of gorgeous attires.

Cars also constituted another set of status symbols. But before cars became prominent in the twentieth century, horses were used to identify eminent personalities. Obisesan recorded in his diary on January 17, 1922 that two men on horseback - Messrs Adebisi Giwa and J.A. Gbadamosi - visited him at home. The grandeur of the visit made the host to lament: "I was ashamed to receive strangers of eminence like these in my poor house". But six years later, when he was more confident of his own social standing, he could host the same Adebisi with a retinue of about fifteen persons all on horseback and entertain them without any feeling of shame on his part.¹ As the twentieth century dragged on, cars became popular in Ibadan and they came to be associated with high class. Salami Agbaje was the first man to own a car in Ibadan. He bought his first car in 1915.² Others who had cars in the 1920s included Chief Adebisi Giwa, Mr. Samson Okeowo, Mr. Akandi Akinloye and a few others.³

New houses, different from the mud houses with thatched roofs which were the common sight in the city, were also another symbol of high status.

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1. "Like a mighty warrior chief with glittering retinues all on horse-backs [sic], Chief Adebisi came for his feast today". The 'feast' here was Obisesan's New Year Feast. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1928. Entry for Jan. 8.
 2. *Yoruba News*, March 9, 1926, p.2.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1926, Entry for January 7; Diary 1927, Entry for February 5. Box 55: Dairy 1922, Entries for Jan. 7 and March 22.

Salami Agbaje had many of these. He was the first to build a storey building with cement blocks in Ibadan, as opposed to the bungalows built earlier by Bashorun Fajinmi (1897-1902), Bashorun Apampa (1907-1910), Baale Irefin (1912-1914) and one Mr. Bakare Adewusi.¹ Mr. J.M. Odunsi, an Egba trader living in Ibadan 'opened' his own 'block building' with pomp and great show in 1929.² Chief Adebisi also constructed a 'palatial' building for himself, which he 'opened' in 1933 with great feasting.³ The houses built by these men and others in their social category were constructed with cement, and sometimes cement was used to plaster mud houses, and painted brightly. Iron sheets were also used for roofing as from the first decade of the twentieth century. They could last longer and they reduced the risk of fire, but were very expensive. Because of these iron sheets the houses of the rich acquired the name *ilé páànú* (houses with iron roofs).

Many of the eminent people in Ibadan had numerous wives. Although polygamy was a common practice in traditional Yorubaland, it acquired a wider appeal to the *nouveau riche* in the twentieth century. In the words of Okediji and Okediji:

Although polygamy was valued in traditional Yoruba society for social and economic reasons, it did not appear to be the preferred form of marriage for many except those who are relatively affluent, and hence, were in a strong position to maintain a big household.⁴

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1. *Yoruba News*, December 8, 1931, p.5.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1929, Entry for Dec. 21.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1933. Entry for Mar. 3.
 4. F.O. Okediji and O.O. Okediji, "Introduction" to N.A. Fadipe, *The Sociology of the Yoruba* (Ibadan University Press, 1970), p.19.

Obisesan referred to not less than eight wives of his own in his Diaries, and he kept on acquiring them even in his old age. He married Falilatu in August, 1953 when he was about sixty-six years old.¹ One then understands his earlier plight in 1930 when he complained of fatigue due to excessive sexual intercourse with his wives!² Salami Agbaje also had ten wives³ and twenty-seven children while Adebisi Giwa had about twenty wives.⁴

The affluent also hosted parties regularly. Marriages, births and funerals of aged parents were lavishly celebrated. The burial ceremony of Adebisi's father was the most expensive feast Obisesan had ever witnessed as he recorded in his diary:

It is [sic] indeed a great burial feast...
I have said oftentimes that money is
worth having. The burial feast of
Adebisi's father is the greatest event
I have ever seen in my life.⁵

Another example is the wedding ceremony of Agbaje's daughter, Cecilia Adijatu, and one Mr. Joseph Faloni on February 17, 1927, on which occasion Agbaje spent a lot of money, displaying his wealth so much that Obisesan recorded "that God in

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1953. Entry for Aug. 20.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1930. Entry for Jan. 29.
 3. Agbaje kept to the Islamic injunction of not having more than four wives at any given time. O.A. Ojo, "The Life and Times of Chief Salami Agbaje". B.A. Long-Essay, University of Ibadan, 1988 pp.121-122.
 4. Interview with Dr. Busari Adebisi, Mar. 16, 1995.
 5. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entries for March 23 & 24.

his mercy has abundantly blessed Mr. Salami Agbaje is a fact that no sane people can deny".¹ Even Chiefs hosted large parties and entertained lavishly with gin, among other things. In his Annual Report for 1926, the Resident, Oyo Province noted that:

those attending the Chiefs' ceremonies and annual festivals now expect to be entertained with gin, as was the case before 1914 when spirit was sold at 6d to 1/- a bottle. This throws a very heavy burden on the Chiefs who feel bound to provide this luxury...

The chiefs could ill-afford this, but they soon found a way out in order to preserve their prestige. The gifts and bribes they demanded usually included gin or other spirits. They could thus entertain at a level to match their status without spending a lot of money. After guests must have been properly fed, it was also customary that the host present them with other gifts which they would take home. Such 'take-aways' included kolanuts, 'bush-meat' (roasted meat locally called *erem igbe*), turkey, even live goats, gin or champagne and beer.

For instance, on February 2, 1922, Salami Agbaje, Adebisi Giwa, Akinpelu Obisesan and one 'Abioye of Bale' paid a visit to Balogun Oyewole and Otun Balogun Aminu where they received such gifts as turkeys, gin, 'plenty kolanuts', a duck and two goats.² Also on March 20, 1935, Rev. A.B. Akinyele visited the Baale of Ibadan Okunola Abasi, who gave him a big tin of Durmore's Biscuit and four packets of sugar.³ On June 1, 1941, Akinpelu Obisesan visited the Osi

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1927. Entry for Feb. 17. See also Akinyele Papers. Box 3: Diary 1927. Entry for Feb. 17.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for Feb. 2.
 3. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 3: Diary 1935. Entry for Mar. 20.

Balogun, Chief Folarin Solaja, who presented him with a gift of one *étù* gown. Exchange of gifts was also common during festivals and other ceremonies. During the Muslim *Iléyà* festival of 1928, Akinpelu Obisesan, a Christian presented Chief Adebisi, a Muslim, with one case of schnapps and Mr. Amao (another Muslim friend) with a case of Becks (a brand of beer)¹ Again, during the funeral ceremony of Rev. A.B. Akinyele's father (Josiah Akinyele) in 1924, Salami Agbaje sent him a gift of meat (quantity unspecified), two cases of beer and three guineas.²

The nature of the gifts, as we can see from the above examples depended on the status of the guests on the one hand, and on the status and economic power of their hosts on the other. To a lesser degree, it also depended on the occasion of the visit, i.e. there was a difference between ordinary or routine visits and visits made during celebrations and festivals. Gifts made during celebrations tended to be more expensive and assorted than those made during ordinary visits. But a lot depended on the economic power of the hosts. That was why somebody like Chief Adebisi could afford to give Egbe Agba-'O-Tan members who visited him during his installation as Ekarun Baale in 1929, one big ram, two big turkeys, six bottles of schnapps and twelve bottles of beer.³ However, if the host had a high status but without a corresponding economic ability to back it up, he would always be

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1928. Entry for May 29.
 2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 11: Duplicates of Letters. 1924 Correspondence Book. p.19. Letter of March 4, from Rev. A.B. Akinyele to Mr. Salami Agbaje.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1929. Entry for Aug. 19.

embarrassed anytime he was visited or in the company of more affluent colleagues.¹

The question then arises as to the importance of gifts in the society. Gifts were an expression of goodwill and of hospitality. They represented a demonstration of generosity. Thirdly, gifts were a display of wealth. They signified the affluence of the giver. And among the elite, exchange of gifts was also a show of camaraderie. The tacit principle of reciprocity implied in the exercise more or less bordered on an obligation, which was why impecunious members of the elite were always subject to embarrassment.

Another characteristic of the elite was that they belonged to societies, organizations and groups which catered for their interests and through which they articulated their views and opinions. These societies, in addition to the individual achievements of members, advertised the exclusiveness of the elite and further puts it in the limelight. The societies provided a forum for the elite to meet and rub minds on common interests and general issues which affected them. These societies were of different types. There were those with religious overtones such as the Bokini Society (founded in 1922) and made up of Christian gentlemen most of whom were members of the Aremo Church²; the Borokini Friendly Society affiliated to the Ibadan Patriotic Association (popularly called the Egbe Omo Ibile

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1. That was the experience of Akinpelu Obisesan in the case cited in p. above in 1922 when he was financially handicapped.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 49: Diary 1943. Entry for Aug. 29.

under S.T. Omikunle which was made up of Muslims¹; and Killa Society, a Muslim organization affiliated to the I.P.A. The second type was the socio-cultural society. A good example of this was the Egbe Agba-O-Tan (Elders-Still-Exist) founded in 1914. The Egbe's initial aim was to preserve the cultural heritage of the Yoruba and make itself the custodian and repository of traditional knowledge and history. The Egbe's rituals were much like those of the masonic lodges. But later its outlook became increasingly political as it meddled more and more in local politics.²

The third type of these societies was the political associations (not parties, because they were not involved in electoral contests). In this category were: The Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society founded in 1921, the Ilupeju Society founded in 1922³, the Ibadan Progressive Union founded in 1930⁴ and the Ibadan Patriotic Association founded in 1936.⁵ These societies were primarily concerned with local politics and the role the elite was to play in it. The elite therefore sought through these different political organizations to give direction to local politics and to act as leaders of public opinion, representing the 'interests of the entire populace'.

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 30: Ibadan Patriotic Association Papers. File 1, Minutes of Meeting Mar. 29, 1937.
 2. See Chapter Three below for details on the Egbe Agba-O-Tan.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for Feb. 4.
 4. "Ibadan Progressive Union: Fifty Years of Its Founding 1930-1980." Exhibition Programme. 1980.
 5. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 30 File 1: Aims and Objectives of the Ibadan Patriotic Association. Oct. 19, 1936.

All these different categories of societies could again be divided into two broad units on the basis of their membership. There were those which had an exclusive elite membership such as the Egbe-Agba-O-Tan, Ilupeju Society, Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society and the I.P.U. On the other hand, there were those in which members of the elite played leadership roles while the bulk of the membership was made up of the masses. In this set were: the I.P.A., the Borokini Society (Muslim), and to a lesser extent, the Bokini Society (Christian). This last society was made up largely of educated Christians who were also active in other societies.¹

Apart from their official aims, these societies also served other ends in elite circles. They provided opportunities of fellowship, intercourse and comradeship for members of the elite. They also provided avenues for mutual help for members. In times of personal crisis, members came to the assistance of one another in the spirit of true brotherhood. They also identified, and rejoiced with one another in times of joy and celebrations. On the whole, membership of these societies conferred a badge of importance on eminent individuals who also exhibited considerable pride in their association with others in the elite category.

In some of these societies, meetings were rotated in the homes of members who were expected to entertain the entire membership. Such meetings therefore provided an opportunity for the member hosting it to display his hospitality and

1. For example, Akinpelu Obisesan was also in the Egbe Agba-O-Tan and IPU, likewise Messrs Alalade, Oloko and Ogunsola. In this same society were also elders like E.H. Oke, who was its Patron and S. Okeowo, a wealthy Ijebuman and benefactor of the Ibadan Grammar School.

advertise his wealth. In the Ilupeju Society, for instance, not all members were very rich but the rich were to be found there. This meant that the entertainment provided by individual members who hosted the society in turns varied according to their economic abilities. When Salami Agbaje hosted the Society in March 1922, he entertained members with a cow, two he-goats, two turkeys, one case of gin, one of beer and other assorted items.¹ This was a clear demonstration of his wealth. By contemporary standards, his performance was above the average expected from members of his social category. The Bokini Society (Christian) also rotated meetings in members' homes and the highpoint of such meetings was the feast given by the host. The comments of Akinpelu Obisesan, an active member of Bokini, on the feasts given by other members give us an insight into the degree of importance attached to such feasts, and how the quality and extent of the feast were used to judge the performance of the host. On Mr. Adelagun's feast of Oct. 1, 1939, Obisesan commented: "Mr. Afolabi Adelagun sent the Society nice dishes".² On Mr. Jagunna's feast of March 30, 1941, he said, "a palatable thing, but not equalled [sic] the one of last month".³ On Mr. Alalade's feast of Jan. 4, 1942, he wrote: "Alalade feasted the Bokini very well", and on Mr. Taiwo's feast of Nov. 29, 1942, Obisesan recorded: "Mr. Adigun Taiwo feasted Bokini Society, and his feast, I must confess beat my own of first of November."⁴ Members thus

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for Mar. 26.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 49. Diary 1939. Entry for Oct. 1.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 49. Diary 1941. Entry for Mar. 30.
 4. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 49. Diary 1942. Entry for Nov., 29.

struggled to provide feasts that would meet with the approval of others in the society and which would not fall below general expectations.

However, it was not only the elite that organized themselves into several societies, the masses also had their own associations which ranged from religious groups, cooperative thrift and credit societies, to social clubs. The social clubs were the most popular. Each of such had a 'Manager' locally called *Manija* who saw to the day-to-day running of the 'Egbe' and the *Giwa* who was the patron or 'father' of the 'Egbe'. The highlights of the Egbe's activities were their dancing processions through the town in their uniform attires called *anko* on ceremonious occasions and during religious festivals. These celebrations could range from the Egbe's anniversaries to the individual celebrations of members such as weddings, burial of aged parents, house-warming etc.¹ The societies of the masses thus differed greatly from those of the elite. While the same spirit of brotherhood operated in both camps, the elite did not indulge itself in the fanfare that characterised the societies of the masses. Even where the two categories belonged to a common association such as religious groups e.g. Egbe Borokini (Muslim) the elite still stood out due to their carriage, comportment and status symbols.

In addition, it was customary for 'big' people in town to be visited by the prominent *Egunguns* (ancestral spirits) during their festivals. The two most important Ibadan egunguns viz, *Olóòlù* and *Alápánsanpá* made it a point of duty

1. Interview with Chief Tiamiyu Aare and Alhaji Ganiyu Arowolo-Aare. Mar. 28, 1995.

to pay courtesy visits to the homes of members of the elite during their outings.¹

Another characteristic of the elite was that they did not go out alone. This was particularly true of the rich and other important title holders.² They were always accompanied by servants and hangers-on who waited on them.³ These followers constituted a substantial drain on the financial resources of these 'big' men because they had to be taken care of in one way or the other. The more followers a rich man had, for instance, the richer he was considered to be by the populace. The demands of keeping a fleet of followers was even more on chiefs who were 'obligated' by tradition to maintain such. The houses of important chiefs were therefore always in a festive mood. People could be seen coming in and going out, eating and dancing. Drummers were also part of this entourage. It was not uncommon to find a chief or any other 'big' man accompanied by drummers who sang his praise and used the talking drum to chant his *oriki* either on ordinary days or during festivals and other ceremonies. And at intervals, the subject of the praise-singing would make presents of cash or other material gifts to the drummers. This presupposes that unlike the masses who sometimes made use of itinerant drummers or went to drumming lineages to hire the services of drummers

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1. For example, the *Oloolu* visited Obisesan in June 1946. But Christian and Muslim leaders (i.e. religious leaders) were exempted by such guests. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 50: Diary 1946. Entry for June 22.
 2. Politicians and religious leaders also had lieutenants and close aides who waited on them.
 3. Obisesan always had a few of these men around him on his important outings. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entries for Mar. 24 and 26.

when needed, some drummers wilfully attached themselves permanently to the houses of the chiefs and other 'big' men. They remained there as long as it was economically wise for them to do so.¹

The elite endorsed this attitude of keeping hangers-on and consequently, its outlook as a group tended to be materialistic. Emphasis was placed not only on how much an individual had, but also on how much of it he was ready to distribute as largesse among his 'followers' and others around him. This 'largesse culture' was an issue on which members of the elite did not all agree - showing the differing values of these individuals - and this caused occasional ripples within their social category. But what was the social significance of the largesse in Ibadan?

The largesse was a step above the general display of hospitality expected of all in the society. It was also beyond the usual demonstration of generosity. It was given by a socially superior person to others below his social category in order to maintain their goodwill. The recipients of such benefaction more often than not constituted the "followers" of the 'big' man and they were useful in the process of social advancement. Their support and admiration of the individual in question bred more support for him from the wider populace. In other words, to maintain a good reputation and operate in a socially conducive climate, members of the elite gave out regular 'gifts' - in cash or in kind - or gratuity to the people around them. This was however, given as a favour not as of right. The 'followers' or 'clients' of

1. With the rise of modern music bands and singing groups in the mid twentieth-century, the feasts of the elite became more celebrated and colourful because they were the only ones who could afford to patronise the music bands. The masses could not.

the 'big-man' could not 'outrightly' demand for such gifts. The system thus operated on a level of tacit agreement. But any important personality who refused to acknowledge popular support by bestowing the largesse made himself liable to charges of selfishness, of being tight-fisted and of being miserly. This could go a long way to undo a big man in a society where socio-political advancement depended heavily on public acknowledgement and support.

Adebisi Giwa was an example of an elite who subscribed to this traditional demand of generosity. Some verses of his *oriki* quoted below depict how open-handed he was with his material resources.¹

Adébísí Idikan	
Omo Ogbojà	
Adébísí baba Gbádégesin	
Olonje ni oògùn àbíkú	
Baba Sàriyù	5
Tí íse malu l'ápá l'ápá	
Ase malu t'esè tese	
A ní k'ará 'Bàdàn ó wá jeun	
Adébísí baba Gbádégesin	
Ení dé'lé Adébísí tí ò yó	10
Esin ló so mónú re bè	
Olónje ni oògùn àbíkú	
Baba Sàriyù	
Abi`kéran bí isù èlú	
Omo Ogbojà ²	15

1. Please note that as with all *Oriki*, the language used here is very hyperbolic and so should not be taken literally
2. Taken from E.L. Lasebikan, *Ijinle Ohun Emu Yoruba*. Akojo Kinni. (Ministry of Education, Western Region, Nigeria and Longmans Green and Co., London. 1958). p.19.

Adebisi of Idikan.¹
 Son of Ogboja.²
 Adebisi, father of Gbadegesin
 He-who-has-food can cure the *abiku*.³
 Father of Sariyu.
 Who cooks the cow with its fore limbs.
 He cooks the cow with its hind limbs.
 And invites Ibadan people to come and feast.
 Adebisi, father of Gbadegesin
 Anyone who is not satisfied after dining
 at Adebisi's place
 Must have taken up a horse's stomach
 before going there.
 He-who-has-food can cure the *abiku*
 His pieces of meat are as big as bundles
 of *èlú*⁴
 Son of Ogboja.

Members of the elite who could not afford such a retinue of 'followers' and a flamboyant lifestyle to match it bemoaned their luck and wished they could be like others in their social category who could. Wrote Obisesan in 1922 during his period of financial privation:

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1. Idikan is a neighbourhood in Ibadan. Adebisi resided there.
 2. Ogboja was Adebisi's mother. She hailed from Efon-Alaaye. Interview with Dr. Busari Adebisi. Mar. 16, 1995.
 3. These are children who die at infancy and reincarnate only to die before they grow old. Some of them are believed to be capable of reincarnating times without number, torturing their parents unless something drastic and supernatural is done to arrest them. The idea in this *oriki* is that a man with an array of assorted food items can entice the *abiku* who could even completely forget about dying again.
 4. *Elú* leaves are used for making cloth dyes in Yorubaland. They were usually packaged in balls as large as footballs used in the game of soccer.

I regard my past and present life as being indolent and lazy one [sic]. Nobody in this town will revere anyone of no means, he would be counted as no-man... after all, what is our intelligence, our school going and reading of books without getting money to back these three things.¹

But with the establishment of western education and the exposure which it brought, a few of the members of the elite became more progressive in their outlook. These were men with a defiant attitude, who could challenge the society. In this group was Salami Agbaje. Although he was generous as far as general hospitality was concerned, he refused to subscribe to the idea behind the 'largesse culture'. Many admired his wealth and wished they could be as rich as he was, in fact, he became the 'yardstick for others to measure their progress', but the admiration stopped there. In 1949, he was charged with selfishness. And this charge was serious enough to sustain a 14½-month agitation aimed at depriving him of his Otun Balogun title.²

In the petition written against Agbaje, the authors stated, *inter alia*, that:

Adebisi Giwa we loved because he used his money to entertain, to dazzle and to sustain the best elements of our population. We have nothing but contempt and ridicule for Chief Agbaje whose sole aim for piling up earthly treasure is to constitute his children into an everlasting pampered Herenvolk [sic].³

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for Feb. 3. His financial status however changed in the 1940s-60s by which time he had a different story to tell.
 2. For details on the agitation against Chief Agbaje, see Ojo, *op. cit.*, Chapter three.
 3. Petition against Chief Salami Agbaje by Junior Chiefs and Mogajis to the Olubadan-in-Council, Dec. 27, 1949, in H.L.M. Butcher, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Allegations of Misconduct made against Chief Salami Agbaje, the Otun Balogun of Ibadan, and Allegation of Inefficiency and Maladministration on the part of the Ibadan and District Native Authority*. Government Printer, Lagos. 1951.

A 'tight-fisted' rich individual could be tolerated by the community, only that his chances of social advancement would be severely limited. But a 'tight-fisted' or 'selfish' chief could not be tolerated. According to one J.A. Ladipo:

The trouble... is not that Chief Agbaje has wealth but that he does not use his wealth to benefit the common man. In Ibadan, chiefs' houses are usually the scene for merriment, drinking and eating all day... Chief Agbaje's house does not indulge in such revelry. Anyone, at anytime, can easily walk in straight to the Chief... and the discussion usually is that of business. It may be Chief Agbaje is living in a world far in advance of his people. There is apparently no offence for one to be progressive in outlook, but anyone who has made money a master will obviously be an enemy of society.¹

The issue here is not so much whether Agbaje 'made money a master' but that having been admitted into the chieftaincy structure and enjoying the privileges of office and the additional enhancement they gave his status, he failed to meet the claims of tradition on him which were sometimes couched in the form of demands within the 'largesse culture'. The agitation against him which was kindled by junior chiefs and Mogajis enjoyed the tacit support of senior chiefs and some opportunistic elements in the city's politics. They all wanted to defend tradition, while a few of the elite tried unsuccessfully to mediate.² It was Butcher's Commission of Inquiry into the dispute that eventually cleared Agbaje of all the charges made against him in 1952. Although Butcher, in a rather simplistic manner dismissed the charges made against Agbaje as being flimsy - how could you try a

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1. *Southern Nigerian Defender*. June 28, 1952.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 61: 'Ibadan Affairs'. Minutes of Ibadan Divisional Council Meeting of Jan. 10, 1951.

person for being selfish? - the episode is significant in that it demonstrated the fact that times had now changed. A single individual could summon enough guts to refuse to countenance societal demands on him. The episode also showed that the elite category was far from being homogenous. Again, it revealed that the values, outlook and attitudes of the elite were not sacrosanct. They were liable to redefinition and reappraisal. This is not to infer that there was a total change in the status quo, but that the ball of change was set rolling, and it received acceleration from the independence of mind of its champions and the additional enlightenment provided by Western education.

With the approach of party politics and the struggle for power which accompanied it, the traditional 'obligation' of the members of the elite to their 'clients' took a modified form. Emphasis now shifted from doling out material gifts in form of the largesse to 'compensations' in kind. A number of the political elite in the 1950s and 1960s had established links and connections with their aides both within and without the city. These connections and their own influence were used to help their 'followers' and 'clients'. This assistance came in many forms: helping them to secure licences (e.g. butcher's licence, drivers licence etc), to find wage employment; bailing them out of problem with the authorities; assisting to procure certain privileges for them e.g. allocation of market stalls for their wives, and other forms of assistance. The capacity of the individual elite to offer protection for others during the heat of partisan politics was widely tapped by their 'clients'. The values of the masses too had been modified with time. Material gifts, though still valued, was no longer the most important benefit they could derive from their association with members of the elite. Knowing the right person

who could protect or assist you in times of crisis was more crucial than material gifts.

Most of the political elite that attracted large followings in the 1950s and 1960s in the likes of Adegoke Adelabu, A.M.A. Akinloye, A.M. F.M. Agbaje and Adeoye Adisa were not the weathiest individuals in the period. But their ability to offer assistance to the masses when such was needed, their ability to offer protection during crises, and other forms of political inducements they used drew many people to them and ensured that they were not in want of public support and acknowledgement. And during election times, such support was easily turned into votes.

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The values of the modern Christian and Muslim elite in Ibadan discussed above show that they were affected in the period of study by modern ideas of *òlájú* (enlightenment) and independence of mind, as well as by the traditional concept of the pursuit of *olá* and social advancement. They were also affected by the prevailing national socio-political norms as Ibadan was drawn into the wider orbit of regional/national politics. The elite tried to make the best of these different worlds. On the one hand, they subscribed to, and adopted some aspects of the concept of *olá* which they found attractive; while on the other hand, they pushed aside those to which they objected because of the inhibitions such traditional values were likely to impose on them in their pursuit of high status. Again, a third reaction was that they came up with new values as a response to new factors of change.

The modern elite subscribed to the value of respectability i.e. the *iyi* and *eye* in *olá*, and they pursued this vigorously. This would explain the 'eye-catching' status symbols, the maintenance of numerous 'hangers-on' and followers, and the eagerness to preserve the 'largesse culture' as a way of winning more support from the people. They also appreciated the social control which the attainment of *olá* gives. This was in terms of the power/influence over others which they enjoyed. Masses looked to them for direction and they responded by mobilising them for socio-political action. All these are amply illustrated in the following chapters.

The elite, however, objected to the principle of ascription implied in the notion of *ile-olá* (lineages of *ola*) because it hindered ordinary men from aspiring to a high status. Some of the men that rose to elite status in our period were men with 'obscure' origins who were not in any way related to the traditional chiefly families of the nineteenth century. But once they attained high status, their family members - offsprings and descendants also basked in the elite heritage, and in certain cases, reinforcing it with their own hard work and additional commitment to excellence. The elite also discountenanced the concept of *Ori* (destiny) in as much as it relates to success in life and the achievement of *olá* and high status. The advent of Islam and Christianity overshadowed the belief in *Ori*. The adherents of these two faiths (particularly those who were educated) disregarded the inhibitions which a bad *Ori* could place before them in their pursuit of excellence and social elevation. Although some aspects of the doctrines of these two religions touch on predestination and destiny, they were not as restrictive and limiting to success as the notion of a bad *Ori* was.

Again, although the religious elite embraced the traditional notion of *omolúàbí* which emphasised good character, honesty, humility, rectitude, and accountability (an epitome of virtue - the equivalent of the English concept of 'gentleman'¹), those in the political class (both the chiefs and the modern politicians) sometimes pushed it aside in their Machiavellian approach to politics (both local and national-partisan). This approach was characterised by high-level intrigues, intolerance, aggression, corruption, and sometimes violence. The modern politicians were, however, more guilty of this than the traditional chiefs.

But the modern elite introduced new values. Acquisitions of Western education became a prized achievement and this gave birth to the *òlájú* concept. The *òlájú* were the enlightened as we shall read in Chapter Four. This concept of *òlájú*, apart from the general idea of innovation, progress and enlightenment which it connotes also introduced some degree of independence of mind. And for individuals who were already predisposed to 'doing things their own way', this crystallized into defiance as was the case of Salami Agbaje who challenged societal values. In addition, the emphasis placed on money and ready cash in the nineteenth century received a vigorous fillip in the twentieth century. Men of money could now boldly challenge the society and use their money as a stepping stone to elite status. Their resources brought them renown which they used to acquire titles. These titles in turn gave them control over the community, which was needed to push them to a state of *olá*. This is illustrated in the careers of Adebisi Giwa and Agbaje treated in Chapter Six.

1. See pp 18-19 above.

Summary

The Ibadan elite had certain attributes which were largely representative of the milieu in which it operated. However, much of these was a function of the traditional concept of *olá* which animated members of the elite, though they did not act in ways that suggested a wholesale endorsement of such traditional values. They readily modified and adapted them to their changing world as they deemed fit.

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CHAPTER THREE

IN THE THROES OF COLONIALISM

Introduction

As a force operating in the wider society, colonialism brought far-reaching changes that affected not only the elite but also the rest of society as a whole. However, for the elite, the colonial experience was a travail and it had to struggle vigorously in its throes to preserve its identity and sanity since colonial rule denied it of its basic avenues to power and prominence and made it reorder its values and outlook.

As we shall soon see in this chapter, colonialism was such a potent force that the members of the elite were constantly being jostled and pushed against one another. This produced the intense intrigues and crises of the period. In fact they collided not only with one another but also with the wider society. The result was that the very fabric of the stratum was threatened many times with serious implications for the society at large. As if that was not enough, new people sought entrance into the elite category - thanks to Western education, one of the by-products of colonial rule. Naturally, a crisis was provoked which involved so many other issues, all of which led to a search for a new order in the society. The new entrants were admitted but not without some resistance from the incumbents - the old chiefs. The latter did not lose initiative, but liaised with the former to create a situation in which some of the educated men were given titles in the traditional structure in order to preserve the prestige of the stratum. The elite thus internalized change in order to preserve continuity. How they achieved this and coped with the other challenges of the period are issues examined in this chapter.

The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Ibadan

On August 15, 1893, an agreement was signed between the Acting Governor of Lagos, G.C. Denton on one side, and Baale Fijabi and some Ibadan Chiefs on the other hand.¹ After the signing of the document, a twenty-gun salute was fired² and the Acting Governor presented the Chiefs with sixty pounds sterling, eight bundles of expensive cloth and 'various potables' while the colonial band entertained the people.

That was the occasion of the signing of the 1893 Agreement which brought Ibadan under colonial rule. The background to the Agreement was the prolonged war in Yorubaland with Ibadan as a major belligerent. The British stepped in as mediators. However, their desire to make peace was borne out of their imperialist ambition in Yorubaland. The Ibadan Agreement was thus one of a series of treaties designed to establish British rule in Yorubaland. A closer look at the Agreement will reveal some of its provisions.

The preamble states that it was an agreement between Denton, the Acting Governor representing the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Baale and authorities of Ibadan on behalf of Ibadan people. But in fact, the Agreement consisted of a series of clauses (five to be precise) embodying declarations made by the Ibadan party while there were no such declarations by the British. This

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1. See Appendix A.
 2. The firing of the gun must have been done by the British. Given the reluctance of the Ibadan Chiefs to sign and the considerable dragging of feet that took place before they eventually did, one could conclude that they saw nothing that called for celebration in the Agreement.

gave the Agreement the appearance of concessions forced by a victorious power on their conquered foe after a major combat. Some of the other articles of the Agreement serve to buttress this viewpoint. Article One says:

That the general administration of the internal affairs of the following Yoruba towns, viz: Iwo, Ede, Oshogbo, Ikirun, Ogbomosho, Ejigbo and Iseyin and in all countries in the so-called Ekun Otun, Ekun Osi is vested in the general government of Ibadan and the local authorities of the said towns, set in harmony with and are subject to Ibadan notwithstanding that the Alafin is recognised as the king and Head of Yorubaland.

This article restored the control of towns hitherto under the Ibadan empire to it. But what is interesting here is the last clause that 'recognized' the Alafin as 'king and Head of Yorubaland'. Just who accorded the Alafin this recognition? Certainly, not Ibadan chiefs whose power and fame had eclipsed that of the Alafin before 1893. Other Yoruba states could also not be said to have recognised the Alafin as their 'Head' because each state had its own King or Oba and even if one conceded that some towns and villages in the Oyo orbit were subordinate to the Alafin in the late nineteenth century, a larger portion of Yorubaland made up of states like Ijebu, Egba, Ife, Ekiti, Ibadan and its network of influence was certainly beyond his control.¹ So that leaves the British as the only party that recognised the Alafin as the 'king and Head of Yorubaland'. The irony in this is that - if the

1. The fall of the Old Oyo Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century had drastically reduced its influence in Yorubaland so that by the end of the century, the Alafin was constantly at the mercy of the more powerful states like Ibadan. Even at the height of its power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Old Oyo was not known to have controlled states such as Ijebu, Ekiti, Ife, etc. For details on power relations between the Yoruba states see S.A. Akintoye, *Revolution and Power Politics in Yorubaland 1840-1893*. (Longman, 1971)

British recognised the Alaafin as 'king and Head of Yorubaland', why did they allow the administration of 'Ekun Otun' and 'Ekun Osi' to be carried out by Ibadan and not by the Alaafin? This contradiction was to create a lot of problems later especially in relations between Oyo and Ibadan during the Residentsip of Capt. Ross in Oyo.

In addition, Articles 2, 3 and 4 recognise the Oyo Treaty (i.e Treaty made between the British and Oyo in February 1893) and even amplified some of its terms. This is curious given the fact that Ibadan was not party to the Oyo Treaty. And as if that was not enough, Ibadan Chiefs would now receive on their land European officers and soldiers 'for the purpose of better securing the performance of the Oyo Treaty and this Agreement'. To cap it all, Article 5 states that in the event of any dispute regarding the Agreement, arbitrators should be appointed by the two parties, and any possible lack of agreement by the arbitrators would be settled by the Governor.¹

What does one make of this Agreement? According to G.D. Jenkins,² the Agreement was just a recognition on the part of Ibadan that its

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1. This article was later drawn upon by Ibadan 'people' during the 1951 dispute over Butcher's Report on the Agbaje agitation and N.A. reforms, but the British authorities disregarded them. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 38: I.P.A. Papers. Iyalode & Her Subordinate Chiefs to the Chief Commissioner W. Provinces, April 9, 1951; F.U. Anyiam (for the IPA) to the House of Commons, London. April 16, 1951.
 2. G.D. Jenkins, "Politics in Ibadan" Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University. 1965. p. 119.

sovereignty had been lost. The Ibadan Chiefs had no other choice than to sign. Refusal to sign would have made the British to forcibly bring them to their knees. The experience of Ijebu-Ode in 1892¹ was still very fresh in their minds. There was also the possibility that the Ibadan chiefs signed the Agreement believing that the British would soon leave Yorubaland and that whatever they lost now would be restored after the exit of the British.

Therefore, while the Agreement could be seen on the one hand as having been forced on the chiefs by the difficult situation created by the British, it could also be seen as the beginning of a fundamental change in their circumstances. Their loss of sovereignty signified by the Agreement was indeed a change in their political status and this was yet to bring other far-reaching changes in its wake. Those who signed the Agreement on Ibadan's behalf were non other than its elite - the military chiefs and they were most affected by the changes formented by colonial rule.²

1. The British bombarded Ijebu-Ode in 1892 in their bid to establish colonial rule. See O. Ikime, *The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest*. (Heinemann, London. 1977), pp.54-58.

2. Apart from Baale Fijabi, the head chief, other signatories on the Ibadan side were:

Chief Osuntoki	- Otun Baale
Chief Fajinmi	- Osi Baale
Chief Akintola	- Balogun (represented by Oyeniya)
Chief Babalola	- Otun Balogun
Chief Kongi	- Osi Balogun
Chief Sunmonu Apampa	- Ashipa
Chief Ogundipo	- Seriki

The remaining chiefs witnessed the Agreement.

Colonialism: Meaning and Implication

Colonialism has been defined by R. Emerson as "the establishment and maintenance, for an extended time, of rule over an alien people that is separate from, and subordinate to the ruling power".¹ It entailed the domination of the alien majority and its exploitation for the benefit of the 'mother' country. British colonies were to provide markets for its manufactured goods, increase the supply of cheap foodstuffs and industrial raw materials.² To ensure this, the colonies were to remain free trading zones and primary producers for the indefinite future. Colonies thus provided the solution to most of the economic and social problems in industrial Europe under conditions of protectionism.

The main features of the colonial enterprise from the above definition were domination, exploitation, and retardation of growth. Political domination meant that initiative and freedom in political action were seized from the native population by the British administration. Many economic schemes were also introduced to ensure the systematic exploitation of the people while no attempt was made to industrialise the local economy thus retarding its growth. However, while the issues of exploitation and retardation of economic growth later unfolded with the progression of colonial rule, that of political domination took effect almost immediately the people were colonised. The British proceeded to establish

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1. E. Emerson, "Colonialism, Political Aspects' in D.L. Sills, (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Vol. III. (Macmillian and Free Press. U.S.A. 1968) p.1.
 2. D.K. Fieldhouse, "Colonialism, Economic Aspects" in Sills (ed.), *op. cit.* p.8.

what has been called 'Indirect Rule' on the native population. By this, the local chiefs continued to administer their land, subject to the guidance and overall authority of British officials. According to Captain (later Lord) Lugard, local administration in the colonies was to be run through the indigenous political system, though this might be modified as circumstances dictated. His reason for this was that:

an arbitrary and despotic rule, which takes no account of native customs, traditions and prejudices, is not suited to the successful development of an infant civilization, nor in my view is it in accordance with the spirit of British colonial rule.¹

Thus in theory, the British were to rule their subject peoples through local institutions and rulers, and to modify or change them as the need arose. This implied that the traditional political system was to be prepared to receive foreign influence and to face confrontations from the British. The philosophy behind British rule was a negative one (exploitation/domination) and the realization of this was bound to generate conflicts, many of which put the local population on the defensive - and they had to resort to different tactics and strategies to keep themselves afloat in the colonial tide.

There were many issues which affected the fortunes of the elite during the colonial period. It is necessary to select a few salient ones for detailed consideration. The first was the end of intergroup wars.

1. F.D. Lugard, *The Rise of Our East African Empire*. Vol. II. Blackwood, London. 1893), p. 651.

The End of Wars

The year 1893 in which the Ibadan Agreement was signed also marked the end of the intergroup wars which had bedevilled the Yoruba country for the greater part of the nineteenth century. Ibadan was a major actor in most of the military engagements. Infact, the Kiriji or Ekitiparapo War which involved almost all Yorubaland and lasted sixteen years (1877-1893) was a grand alliance against Ibadan, and it was only through the intervention of the British in 1893 that the War was brought to an end.¹ After the establishment of British rule no other war was fought in Yorubaland. Later in 1893, Captain Bower of the Ijebu-Ode campaign was posted as Resident to Ibadan and as Travelling Commissioner to supervise the peace in Yorubaland. To aid him in keeping the peace and establishing law and order, a company of Hausa constabulary was placed at his disposal.² The establishment of colonial rule in Yorubaland thus put an end to all intergroup wars in the land. While this represented the reign of peace and an end to all the sufferings, untold misery, loss of lives and property, and destruction that usually attended wars, it had grave consequences for the internal politics of Ibadan.

The Ibadan military system of government in the nineteenth century, as demonstrated in Chapter One of this work, was based on the dynamism of the military class, individual enterprise and distinction shown on the battle field. War provided the avenue to prominence both in the making of new warriors and in

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1. For details on the role of Ibadan in these wars see B. Awe, "The Rise of Ibadan as a Yoruba Power in the Nineteenth Century". Ph.D Thesis. Oxford, 1965, and Akintoye, *op. cit.*
 2. C.H. Elgee, *The Evolution of Ibadan*. (Government Printer, Lagos. 1914), p.5.

enhancing the status of the old ones. Now that there were no more wars, the warrior class faced the possibility of extinction. In other words, the military elite now had to grapple with the collapse of the very structure that had enhanced its rise. The military nature of Ibadan politics and government was a response to the prevailing situation in the nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, the situation began to change and this called for a review of the political structure and the social yardstick for advancement. The elite now had to respond to compulsory peace.

The situation in which the elite found itself after 1893 was very complex. The wars had led to the death of many senior chiefs in the Balogun (military) line thus producing many vacancies in the chieftaincy structure.¹ This engendered a lot of competition and struggle among the military chiefs for the vacant titles. In fact, the competition for power was so intense that the chiefs, in the heat of a misunderstanding, asked Balogun Osungbekun to commit suicide in 1893. After him came Baale Fijabi who tried to solve the problem of competition for power by carefully filling the existing vacancies and by creating more titles to satisfy the rest of the elite. However, Fijabi's

skills could not solve the problems of change brought about by the British presence and the inevitability of adjustment to peace for the first time in over a decade. The termination of the wars had devastating impact on the fortunes of the power elite, especially the warriors who had hitherto relied

1. T. Falola, "Ibadan Power Elite and the Search for Political Order 1893-1939". *Africa* Vol. XLVII No. 3, Sept. 1992. p.342. Some of the Senior chiefs that died during the Ekitiparapo war included Ajayi Ogboriefon the Balogun, Ayorinde Aje, the Osi Balogun, Ali Luluwoye, the Otun Balogun, Lawoyin, the Seriki and Akeredolu, the Otun Seriki. For more details see I.B. Akinyele, *Iwe Itan Ibadan*, 4th ed. (Board Publications. 1981). pp.89-111.

on the wars for booty and whose status and influence derived from the qualities associated with courage and military achievements.¹

For most of the chiefs, there was a fall in their sources of revenue. This was because war booty and captives constituted a large part of their revenue. To make ends meet, many of the chiefs became very corrupt, demanding bribes before adjudication in cases involving the masses, thereby creating more problems for the body-politic.

Meanwhile, some aspects of the old political arrangement began to be questioned. First was the line of cavalry chiefs called the *Sarumi* line. With the termination of wars, many people declined promotions or appointment into any title in the line² because they could see that there was no future for such an office in the present dispensation. Second was the question of who should succeed to the Baaleship between the Balogun and the Otun Baale. Before 1893, the Balogun did not become the Baale. This was not because it was unconstitutional or a taboo for the Balogun to succeed to the headship of the town, but rather the Balogun rarely lived long enough to become Baale due to the perils of war. Even in cases where the Balogun was still alive, the booties of war and the glories of victory in battle provided a stronger attraction for him than the office of the Baale. So the next senior chief to the Balogun or the most influential chief in the military line

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1. Falola, "Ibadan Power Elite" *op. cit.* p.342.
 2. N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4. "Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town" by E.N.C. Dickinson. 1938, p.47.

usually succeeded to the Baaleship as was the case of the six Baales after Oluyole.¹ The next four were Otun Baales before becoming the Baale. This change began with the reign of Baale Osuntoki (1895-97). At that time, Balogun Akintola who was still alive refused the offer of the Baale title with the hope that the white man would soon go, giving him an opportunity to carry his title to war according to custom. He did not know that times had changed and that there would be no more wars. Osuntoki who was then the Otun Baale was made Baale in Akintola's stead.²

After Osuntoki's death in 1897, Akintola also conceded his right to the Baaleship to Fajinmi who until then was the Otun Baale.³ In 1902, following Fajinmi's death, Kongi, the Balogun then demanded to become the new Baale, but he was opposed by the chiefs in the Baale line who prevented

1. Baale Opeagbe was Osi Balogun before he succeeded Oluyole as head-chief.

Oyesile Olugbode, Abese Balogun succeeded Opeagbe
 Ogunmola, Otun Balogun succeeded Olugbode
 Orowusi, Ashipa Balogun succeeded Ogunmola
 Latoosa, Otun Balogun succeeded Orowusi
 Fijabi, Abese Balogun succeeded Latoosa.

Note: Balogun Ajayi Osungbekun could have succeeded Latoosa, but before he could be made Baale, he was forced to commit suicide during a serious intrigue spearheaded by his chiefs. See Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp.114-115.

2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.169.

3. *Ibid, loc. cit.*

him from taking the title.¹ The Balogun based his claim on the pre-1893 practice; by virtue of his position as the most senior war chief, he had an unchallengeable right to the Baaleship whenever there was a vacancy. The Otun Baale, Mosaderin, on the other hand, based his own claim on the fact that he was next in rank to the Baale, and that seniority should take precedence over any military yardstick since there were no more wars to prove military prowess and valour. Unfortunately for Kongi, the European presence also made it impossible for him to forcefully deal with his rivals, and Mosaderin was made Baale in 1902. After him, another person from the Baale line, Dada Opadere, became the Baale. The Balogun after Kongi had to choose the path of diplomacy to achieve his ambition of becoming Baale. Balogun Apampa had to cross to the Baale line to become Otun Baale before he could eventually succeed to the Baaleship in 1907.² And it was not until 1910 that a Balogun (Akintayo) succeeded in securing promotion to the Baaleship.³

The other issue that generated considerable crisis had to do with the yardstick (criteria) for the recruitment of new chiefs and the promotion to senior titles. In the absence of wars, new chiefs were now recruited from the pool of *Mogaji* (lineage heads), while promotion was based on the principle of seniority. But it was not as easy as that. A lot of conflict was generated over cases of appointments to chieftaincy titles. There were many *Mogaji* scrambling for few

1. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp. 143, 144-148.

2. *Ibid* , pp. 164, 168. This was the first time a Balogun would cross to become Otun Baale in order to succeed to the Baaleship.

3. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.168.

vacancies in the chieftaincy structure. The competitions were very intense. According to T. Falola,

Mogajiship constituted a major threat to the political system: the competition for Mogajiship contributed to alienation and conflicts in many lineages: the Mogaji were ready tools in the hands of senior chiefs to use in the power game among themselves; they assisted the senior chiefs in collecting bribes; and the competition among the Mogaji for promotion sometimes entailed conflicts between different lineages.¹

But rather than blaming the crisis in the political system on the *Mogajiship*, we should examine a more fundamental root, namely, the socio-political disorder occasioned by the workings of the colonial state. The *Mogaji* institution merely responded to changes in the political fabric of the Ibadan society. It was the absence of wars that accentuated the competitions engendered by the *Mogaji* institution. If wars were still fought, *Mogajiship* would not have become the major factor in the recruitment of chiefs between 1893-1935.

New titles were introduced from 1893 by Baale Fijabi, Fajinmi in 1897, 1900, 1902, and Apampa in 1907 and 1910. These titles were added to reward 'deserving' individuals and to settle conflicts between two contenders of equal merit. The list of titles became very long and in 1938 there were fifty-four titles in the Baale, Balogun, Seriki and Iyalode lines. This created its own problems. First, there was the issue of whom to reward. There were numerous *Mogaji* each of whom was attached to a senior chief as his patron. This, of course, meant that there was considerable lobbying among the chiefs to get their candidates appointed. Secondly, the longer the list of titles became, the longer the time it

1. Falola, "Ibadan Power Elite", *op. cit.*, p.344.

took to get to the top from the bottom if the principle of promotion by seniority was strictly followed which produced aged and feeble rulers. This again meant that the longevity of senior chiefs was directly disadvantageous to the ambitions of their juniors to rise quickly. Those who were impatient among the junior chiefs had two courses before them. One was to press for accelerated promotion which would make them to jump over the heads of some of their immediate seniors (an undesirable action to those jumped over). The other course was to champion or support any intrigue that could eliminate their seniors as that would earn all those under the displaced persons automatic promotions. These two alternatives were prone to breed instability but unfortunately, both were adopted with grave consequences as later events unfolded.

Meanwhile, another major development in the colonial period affected the elite greatly, and that was the new administrative pattern established by the British.

New Administrative Pattern

After the establishment of British presence in Ibadan, a new administration was set up in which the chiefs could only exercise power within limits defined by the British. Both the new administrative structure, and the redefinition of the power of the chiefs which it produced, generated crises and tensions which destabilized the elite. Particularly significant in this respect were changes made in the Native Council and in the judicial system.

The Native Council

As a strategy of effective administration the colonial government inaugurated the Ibadan Town Council in August 1897. The main aim behind the

formation of town council was to make use of indigenous chiefs in the administration of their town, though they would function under the authority of British officers. This was in line with the 'Indirect Rule' principle earlier discussed. In other words, the use of indigenous chiefs was to reduce to the barest minimum the risk of rebellion and resistance against foreign domination among the masses. The Ibadan Council comprised the Baale, Otun Baale, Osi Baale, Balogun plus eight to twelve minor chiefs.¹ While the establishment of the Council according to British expectations would bring about better government, it was not clear how it would improve the status of the chiefs.

In fact at the initial stage, the chiefs demonstrated considerable passive resistance to the issue of the Council. They merely attended Council meetings in obedience to the Resident, F.C. Fuller. They refused to participate in the deliberations. According to the Resident:

I had drawn up a set of rules for the better administration of Ibadan both as regards the state of the town and the administration of justice. I invited discussion and advice but no one offered a single suggestion, indeed beyond laughing occasionally and observing that it was all new to them. They all maintained silence.²

In the new scheme of things, the chiefs were to play a subordinate role unlike in the pre-1893 times when they initiated the agenda and the debate and made all the decisions. Conducting the Council largely in English also constrained them. Although Fuller later got them to begin to participate actively in Council

1. Elgee, *op. cit.*, p.6.

2. Resident's Travelling Journal, Entry for Sept. 6, 1897. Quoted in Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan 1893-1945*. (Modelor, Lagos, 1989), p.34.

debates, (via threats and blackmail) their position as subordinates was still unchanged. In fact, the Resident, and not the Baale as one would have expected, was the President of the Council until 1901 when the Native Councils Ordinance was promulgated. The official reason for the Residents headship of the Council was that the Council "needed a literate and experienced administrator in the British tradition to guide it in its functions".¹ This gave the chiefs no opportunity to employ their own culture and experience to the best use of the government of their town except when such was in line with the British tradition.

The functions of the Council were legislative, administrative and judicial. It made rules on a wide range of subjects and the members "in their administrative capacities also ensured the implementation of those rules"² However, one must not overemphasise the powers of the chiefs and Baale in this context because it was a 'delegated power' which must not be abused. Elgee wrote that by 1898 the Baale and Council had "power of life and death [over the masses] subject to the Resident's approval."³ In other words, without the permission of the Resident the Baale and chiefs could not pretend to such powers. If they did they paid dearly for it as exemplified in 1900 when the Baale, together with his chiefs executed two "supposed murderers" without the Resident's permission. The Baale was fined one hundred pounds (£100) by G.H. Denton, the Acting Governor. Thus, one could see that to talk of the chiefs as having "power of life and death" was a mockery of

1. Falola, *Politics and Economy*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

2. J.A. Atanda, *The New Oyo Empire* (Longman, London, 1973), p.93.

3. Elgee, *op. cit.*, p.7.

their political power which was not derived internally from the socio-political relations in the society but from the British officials. And in fact, if any such power existed, it was the Resident that exercised it.

In 1901, Sir William MacGregor devised the Native Councils Ordinance. His reason for doing so was to enhance the prestige and authority of the chiefs for the purpose of 'administrative efficiency'. MacGregor felt that the powers of the chiefs had been witnessing a gradual erosion since the imposition of colonial rule (which was the truth). The presence of the British political officers had eclipsed the authority of the chiefs,¹ for these officers often ignored the importance of the chiefs and overruled their wishes and preferences as they liked. The Native Councils Ordinance was, therefore to correct the situation.

With the coming into being of the above Ordinance, the Baale became the President of Ibadan Native Council, and the Resident was to advise only when necessary. The other provisions of the Ordinance were that the Council now had authority to deal with all matters of internal administration or matters affecting the people within its area of jurisdiction. Also District Councils, like the Ibadan Council had the right (which it shared with the Governor) to establish new town or village Councils where they were not in existence before. These new Councils would then be subordinate to the provincial or district Council of the area.

These changes would seem to have increased the powers of the chiefs vis-a-vis that of the Resident. But if the Council now deliberated on myriads of issues

1. N.A.I. CSO 1/3 Vol. V. p.394. Letter No. 44 of Nov. 11, 1901. Macgregor to Colonial Office.

with increasing power, the power of the Resident was in no way diminished. Indeed, it has been alleged that the Resident regarded Ibadan as 'his empire, one in which he must be treated as the emperor'.¹ He must be consulted by the chiefs on all major affairs relating to Ibadan. In short,

Ibadan was not a diarchy to be ruled jointly by the Chiefs and the British. Chiefs were just assistants, and not rulers, since they did not exercise sovereign or supreme authority.²

In other words, despite the 'reforms' that were carried out by the Ordinance, the chiefs were still no more than assistants to the Resident. Although, he was no longer a member of Council after 1901, the Resident must approve the agenda and all decisions taken in the Council. He frowned against and struck out any decision not taken in the spirit of the 'British tradition'.

The constant changes in the membership of the Council also affected the Ibadan chiefs. Many chiefs were left out of Council and, from time to time, its membership was extended to loyal chiefs. Despite the limited power exercised by those in Council, the chiefs who were out of it saw themselves as being excluded from power and as a result they were very bitter.³ In fact, they directed their anger at their colleagues whom they believed were responsible for their misfortune. This would thus imply that in the absence of wars and given the dissolution of the old

1. Falola, *Politics and Economy, op. cit.*, p.42.

2. Falola, *Politics and Economy, op. cit.*, p.47.

3. In the perception of the masses, membership of the Council was seen as giving 'power' to the chiefs though in reality such chiefs were indeed subordinate to the British colonial officers.

nineteenth-century Council which comprised all principal chiefs, membership of the new Colonial Council was seen as conferring some social standing. This was more so as certain perquisites in forms of bribes, gifts and salaries accrued to Council members. Those excluded from Council membership lost all these. As a way of solving the deprivation suffered by chiefs excluded from the Council, Baale Dada Opadere in 1907 asked that the Council be enlarged to include all the principal chiefs, twenty-six in number, but the request was refused by the Governor.¹

Apart from chiefs, a few educated individuals were also members of Council. In 1903 Rev. J.A. Okuseinde, Mr. A.F. Foster and Mr. D. Adetoun were appointed into the Council by the Resident to act as 'liaison members to explain the Resident's criticism and suggestions to the illiterate chiefs"² who were unable to cope with the complicated issues which now came before them. The involvement of these educated members had tremendous implications. It introduced the educated elements to local politics and later as the demands of municipal government became more complex and the old (illiterate) chiefs unable to cope, these men were to agitate for reorganization of the entire administrative structure which gave power to the chiefs. In other words, the chiefs, as the old elite, began to be challenged in the discharge of their duties by the new elements who were seeking admission into elite category on the ticket of their western education. This was to generate a lot of furore, as will be examined later. But for

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1. N.A.I. Iba Prof. 3/4. Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson. 1938. p.52.
 2. *Ibid., loc. cit.*

now, their membership in council began to open their eyes to the faults and ineffectiveness of the old chiefs in the administration of the town. These same chiefs had administered their town effectively in the nineteenth century without any challenge to their authority. But times have changed with the establishment of colonial rule. The above discussion has shown the uneasy position the colonial council put the elite and the effects that this had on Ibadan politics. But that was not, by any means, the only administrative arrangement of the colonial state that adversely affected the elite. Among others were the judicial changes.

Judicial Changes

On August 8, 1904, the Baale and Council signed the Judicial Agreement with the British authorities. By this they surrendered to the Supreme Court of the Colony the trial of all cases "of murder and manslaughter" and all cases in which one of the parties was a non-Yoruba.¹ This meant that the Baale and his council could not preside over any criminal case and he had no jurisdiction over cases involving non-natives. On August 16 of the same year, another Agreement published as the "Ibadan and Oyo (Jurisdiction of Supreme Court Ordinance No. 170/1904)" was signed. This Agreement provided for the extension of all laws of the colony of Lagos to the protected areas of Oyo and Ibadan except as the Supreme Court chose to recognize existing Yoruba laws and custom. The rules for implementing the *Ordinance* were to be determined by the Chief Justice. The courts were now totally incorporated into the British system.

1. Elgee, *op. cit.*, p.16.

Commenting on the Judicial Agreement, Jenkins wrote:

It possessed no authority as a negotiated transfer or recognition of jurisdiction in any but the narrowest sense - a series of marks by illiterates to a piece of paper whose contents they could not read but with which they vehemently disagreed.¹

All the opposition mounted by the chiefs against the new judicial arrangements was crushed.² The new court system began to operate in 1905 in three tiers. The first was the 'Native Court' controlled by the senior chiefs which met for a week at Oja'ba. They dealt with cases that did not involve British interests. The second was the 'District Court' under the control of Parsons, Assistant Resident in charge of the courts. Appeals from the Native Court came here, while the court also has jurisdiction over minor offences under British law committed by the Ibadan. The third was the Lagos Supreme Court which had jurisdiction over murder and other serious crimes and over all cases involving non-Ibadan people, and it also heard appeals from the District Court.

This new judicial arrangement really threatened the basis of the political power of the Baale and his chiefs as they had in fact anticipated in 1893 when they wrote Denton, the Acting Governor, concerning the proposed 1893 Agreement that: "...we fear the authority and respect of the Baale and chiefs will suffer deterioration as there may be two Courts of Appeal."³ In fact, the Courts of

1. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.175.

2. For details, see *Ibid.*, pp.176-177.

3. Baale Fijabi and Chiefs to G.C. Denton, August 14, 1893. Full text of the letter is reproduced in S. Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas*. (C.M.S. Lagos, 1937) pp.638-639.

Appeal that emerged from the Judicial Agreement of 1904 (i.e. the District Court and the Lagos Supreme Court) were beyond the control of the Baale and chiefs. It should be noted that the administration of justice in traditional African jurisprudence was aimed at restoring the social equilibrium and not just at determining legal rights and duties. This would explain why justice was not the function of an elite group outside the ruling circle, but of the ruling elite.¹ And this ruling elite, as I have demonstrated so far in this work was the military class in nineteenth century times. Therefore to "modify the traditional judicial process as the Judicial Agreement purported to do was to interfere with the basis of political power"² of the Baale and his chiefs. But then the Agreement of 1893 had already knocked this "basis of political power" out of joints when 'Baale and Authorities' (chiefs) of Ibadanland transferred their sovereignty to the British.

Commenting on this Judicial Agreement, O. Adewoye wrote that it struck a death blow on the sovereignty of Ibadan just as it did to those of the other states on whom it was also imposed. As he put it:

In Yoruba society, as in other African societies, the ultimate power to redress grievances and thereby maintain peace and order is, like sovereignty itself, indivisible. The Judicial Agreements sought to divide that power and consequently undermine the sovereignty of the State.³

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1. J.H. Driberg, "The African Conception of Law". *Journal of African Sociology*, Vol. XXXIV 1935.
 2. O. Adewoye, "The Judicial Agreement in Yorubaland 1904-1908", *Journal of African History*. Vol. XII, No. 4, 1971, p.618.
 3. Adewoye, *op. cit.*, pp.622-623.

However, in the case of Ibadan, the Judicial Agreement of 1904 only served to translate into real terms the loss of sovereignty that the chiefs of Ibadan had already suffered in 1893. If the Ibadan Authorities did not fully appreciate the implication of colonial rule in 1893 when they thumbed the Agreement, they were now seeing its manifestations as the very basis of their political power was threatened. They were gradually made to acknowledge the loss of their sovereignty through this Judicial Agreement and other "obnoxious" ordinances which the British authorities later came up with in the course of colonial rule in Ibadan. Another of such "obnoxious" arrangements was the subjugation of Ibadan to the Alafin of Oyo by the British.

The Subjugation of Ibadan to Oyo

The rationale behind the subjugation of the chiefs of Ibadan to the Alaafin of Oyo was closely linked with some aspects of the 'Indirect Rule' policy. In order to be able to rule through local rulers, the Governor of Lagos in 1900, Sir. William MacGregor decided to improve the status of the paramount chiefs so as to make for administrative efficiency. In the Yoruba country, the Alafin was seen by the British officers as a paramount ruler and they proceeded to 'revive the ancient powers and glory of the Alafin.'¹

Having enhanced the status of Oyo among the Yoruba, the colonial administration began to rely on the advice of the Alafin of Oyo in the promotion of Ibadan chiefs. the Alafin used this opportunity to influence politics at Ibadan and

1. Thus they set out to create the 'New Oyo Empire'. See Atanda, *op. cit.* p.100.

"to regain the power which he [had] lost for most of the nineteenth century when Ibadan emerged as the dominant power."¹ Ibadan chiefs suffered a lot of humiliation during this period because any of them who opposed the Alafin or the dominance of Oyo was victimised. We only need to cite three cases - the deposition of Baale Irefin in 1914, of Balogun Ola in 1917 and of Baale Situ in 1925 - as examples of the injustice and degradation suffered by Ibadan chiefs under colonial rule.

Deposition of Baale Irefin

In 1912 Irefin was made Baale of Ibadan because he was the Alafin's choice in defiance of the will of Ibadan people and that of the Council of Chiefs. At his installation he was made to thumb an oath of office in which he pledged his loyalty to the Alafin. After this, he was pronounced Baale by the Alafin's representative.² This idea of 'signing' an official document by a new Baale was a novelty introduced by the British officials to extract loyalty from the Baale to the Alafin. This meant that Irefin had to please the Alafin in all respects if he wished to enjoy his office. The whole idea was symptomatic of the changing times.

The appointment of Capt. Ross as Acting Resident for Oyo Province in April 1912 made the Ibadan Chiefs to petition the Government against him. Before that time, Ross had been District Commissioner in Oyo since 1906 and had vigorously pursued the policy of increasing the powers of Oyo at the expense of Ibadan. The chiefs believed that with Ross as Resident, they would lose their

1. Falola, "The Ibadan Power Elite", *op. cit.*, p.347.

2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.173.

authority over their tributary towns and that whatever authority they still enjoyed as an independent Native authority would be lost to Oyo under Ross's patronage. All these sentiments were expressed in their petition.¹ When this came to the knowledge of Ross, he decided to deal with Irefin whom he saw as the figure behind the petition. He took advantage of the intrigue-infested nature of Ibadan politics to get rid of Irefin. Ross got the chiefs to write another petition against Irefin in which they dissociated themselves from the first one, claiming that they were coerced by the Baale to affix their marks to it. They rejected Irefin as Baale for not accepting the Alafin as their overlord and for writing the first petition.²

The reason for the chief's change of position is not far-fetched. Apart from the fact that Irefin was an imposition, the creation of any vacancy - by whatever means, either death or deposition - in the chieftaincy structure was a matter of great interest to the chiefs as this would earn all the title holders lined below the vacant office automatic promotions. The deposition of Irefin thus meant that each chief in the ladder would move a step up, hence their joining up with Ross against him.

The Alafin quickly approved the deposition of Irefin in his capacity as Ibadan's overlord while Ross gave it official sanction. In 1914, Irefin was deposed and after spending a few weeks on his farm, he came back to the town and died on February 12, 1914, in his home.³

1. *Ibid.* pp.177-178.

2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.179.

3. *Ibid*, *loc. cit.*

Deposition of Balogun Ola

After the deposition of Baale Irefin, Balogun Ola continued the anti-Alafin crusade and this got him into serious trouble with the British. The administrative officers in Ibadan then claimed that Ola's crime included, *inter alia*; frustrating their attempts to get recruits during the World War I years, opposing land leases to aliens, making remarks that could bring down the morale of the people and disparage the colonial government during the war years, and seeking for a letter writer to assist him write a petition against the Alafin, the Resident, and Grier, the District Officer.¹ However, his main crime seemed to have been his staunch opposition to the increasing influence of the Alafin. Ola opposed Ross' proposal to use part of Ibadan tax funds to pay Alafin's salary² which had earlier been approved by Council in his absence. It is in this light that one should then see the other charges as Ola's way of creating problems for the colonial administration in Ibadan.

In the middle of 1917, the administration decided to deal with Balogun Ola. He was excluded from the Council of Chiefs and the other chiefs were instructed to ostracise him. He was also disqualified from getting any further promotion in the chieftaincy structure.³ Despite all these, Ola still enjoyed popular support among the masses. The colonial administrators then decided to use the other chiefs to effect the fall of Balogun Ola. The D.O. instructed the principal chiefs to write a petition rejecting Ola and demanding for his official deposition by

1. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp.225-232.

2. *Ibid*, pp.234-235.

3. *Ibid*, p.229; Falola, "The Power Elite" *op. cit.*, p.348.

government.¹ On 18 August, at a meeting held at Agodi Court with Ross in the chair, and at which all the chiefs were present, an emissary of the Alafin announced Ola's deposition. Ola went home and committed suicide the next morning. Thus rather than going on exile and admitting a guilt that was not his, Ola 'acted as a man' and did not spoil his name. This impressed the people of Ibadan who therefore remembered him as Balogun 'Kobomoje' (He did not spoil his manhood). His compound was also renamed Kobomoje's compound as a tribute to his brave act.²

Deposition of Baale Situ

Situ succeeded Irefin in 1914 as the favoured candidate of the Alafin. After the deposition of Balogun Ola, relations between Situ and the Alafin deteriorated to the extent that he was eventually deposed by the same Alafin. Situ's crime was multifacetal.³ The summary of it all was that he was not submissive to the Alafin and he was very 'impertinent' in refusing Ross's orders each time he was advised to go to Oyo to settle his case with the Alafin, thus violating the oath of loyalty (to the Alafin) which he had made at his installation. Capt. Ross was the principal actor in this drama of Situ's deposition. He drew up a set of charges which were to prove Situ's disloyalty and disrespect to the Alafin as well as his incompetence to rule.⁴ He forwarded the charges to the Southern Provincial Headquarters in May 1925 and proceeded to set in motion the machinery of Situ's deposition.

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1. The petition was signed by Baale Situ and ten to twelve Council Chiefs. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.234.
 2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp.137-188.
 3. N.A.I. CSO 26 File 14935 deals with the case of Situ.
 4. N.A.I. CSO 26 File 14935 Memo C.70/1925 of May 2, 1919, Ross to Sec., Southern Provinces.

Situ was asked to go to Oyo to see the Alafin who interrogated him and then wrote Ross that he no longer wanted him as Baale. But a proper inquiry had to be conducted before Lagos authorities could sanction Situ's deposition because the Alafin's questions to him at Oyo did not appear to be fair enough. Ross then ordered Situ's retrial by the Alaafin.¹ This was done and the administration was satisfied that there were sufficient grounds for Situ's deposition. What was left was to get a petition from the Ibadan Chiefs. This they wrote on June 15 disowning Situ as their Baale for his unpopularity at home, and his disloyalty and disobedience to the Alafin.

It is important to note that during the crisis, the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan wrote a petition to the Acting Governor in which they pointed out that the active roles played by the Balogun and Otun Baale in earlier agitations against Situ could not be divorced from the fact that the two men were still aspirants to the Baaleship.² They requested that a 'Board of Inquiry' be set up to look into the case. This request was not granted and on June 27, 1925, Situ was deposed and sent into exile at Saki where he died in 1932.³

Three important points are clear from the deposition of the three chiefs discussed above. One is the active role played by other chiefs in their deposition.

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1. For details of the retrial, see N.A.I. CSO 26 File 14935 Proceedings of Situ's Re-Trial, Enclosure in Memo No. C.50/25 of 23 June 1925, Sec. Southern Provinces to Chief Secretary, Lagos.
 2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 49: File 9. Egbe Agba-O-Tan to F.M. Baddeley, Gov. of Nigeria. June 15, 1925.
 3. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 3: Diary 1932. Entry for Oct. 16; Obisesan Papers. Box 49: Diary 1932. Entry for Oct. 18; *Daily Times* Oct. 20, 1932.

There was not a single instance when the chiefs protested the deposition of any one of them. They were very parochial and selfish, being more concerned with their own political gains which would come out of such depositions than with the political stability of the state. The second is the issue of suicide committed by some of the deposed chiefs. The suicide committed by Balogun Ola, for instance, was seen as act of bravery by his contemporaries. It was seen as being more honorable to commit suicide than to face an ignominious end.¹ This principle of honour was very much at play even in the unusual circumstance of the colonial period in which the chiefs found themselves. The third is the role played by a force newly introduced to Ibadan local politics, namely, the Egbe Agba-O-Tan in Situ's case. This Egbe comprised individuals with western education, which in itself was another powerful force in the society that altered and redefined the composition of the Ibadan elite in the colonial period. It is to that force that we now turn.

Western Education and the Rise of New Men

Western education in Ibadan had a very chequered history especially in the first half of colonial rule. The earliest attempt at the provision of western

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1. "Ikú yá ju èsín" (Death is better than disgrace was the Yoruba adage that justified such acts of suicide. The death of Baale Dada Opadere in 1907 after his deposition by the British was the first suicide case involving a principal chief in Ibadan in the twentieth century. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 7: Duplicate of Letters. Rev. A.B. Akinyele to Bishop Tugwell, Feb. 4, 1908.

However in the nineteenth century there were many more of such cases e.g. of Chief Elepo, Balogun Ajobo, Seriki Iyapo, Balogun Ajayi Osungbekun etc. (see Table 1 in Chapter 1).

education was that of the C.M.S. missionaries, David and Anna Hinderer in the second half of the nineteenth century.¹ Their first pupils were Christian converts and they offered them elementary education. Other missionary organisations such as the Roman Catholic Mission, Wesleyans, Baptist etc. joined them before the end of the century and they all provided western education for their converts in one way or the other. It was in 1905 under the Residentsip of C.H. Elgee that the colonial government made the first attempt to provide education for their subjects. But the Baale's School which opened in 1905 soon collapsed due to the refusal of the chiefs to send their wards to school. Meanwhile, some of the product of the mission schools required further education. The Ibadan District Council, thus established the Ibadan Grammar School in 1913 with Rev. A.B. Akinyele as its first principal.² This school contributed a lot to the production of a corps of educated men who were to play important roles in Ibadan politics.

However, there were a few educated folks in Ibadan before the Grammar School was founded. Such men included Rev. James Okuseinde, E.H. Oke, Rev. Daniel Olubi, Rev. R.S. Oyebode, W.S. Allen, Rev. D.A. Williams, Rev. A.B. Akinyele, I.B. Akinyele, D. Adetoun, A.F. Foster and Akinpelu Obisesan. Some of them had begun to play important roles in Ibadan politics. Even as far back as

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1. A. Hinderer, *Seventeen Years in Yoruba Country*. (Sealey, Jackson and Halliday, London, 1873), p.86.
 2. The school was started on March 31, 1913. K.D.L., Akinyele Papers. Box 10: Duplicates of Letters. A.B. Akinyele to Rev. A.W. Howells. April 5, 1913.

the late nineteenth century, R.S. Oyebode, Revs. Olubi and Okuseinde acted as intermediaries between the illiterate chiefs and British officers resident in Lagos. These early educated Christians played important roles in Ibadan politics especially as culture brokers. On the one hand, they were familiar with European bureaucracy and knowledgeable in its language and culture, while on the other hand, they appreciated the demands and tendencies of Ibadan local tradition. Those who were appointed Councillors of the Ibadan Council particularly fulfilled this role. The British officers must have sensed their growing influence because when Councillor A.F. Foster died in 1904 he was not replaced and in 1907 the other two Councillors, viz. Okuseinde and Adetoun were dropped.

With their exclusion from Council activities, the educated elements found another platform for their activities in the Egbe Agba-O-Tan. A discussion of the structure, activities and significance of the Egbe is necessary at this juncture as that would give us an insight into the relevance of the new educated class to elite 'circulation'¹ in Ibadan.

The Egbe Agba-O-Tan²

The Egbe started as a Yoruba cultural society with its membership drawn from many Yoruba towns and its base at Ibadan. But it later became 'localised'

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1. The concept of elite 'circulation' is part of the classical elite theory derived from Pareto *et. al.* (see Introduction). It deals with the expansion or propagation of the elite to include new entrants.
 2. Egbe Agba-O-Tan means Elders-Still-Exist Society.

and ended up as an 'Ibadan' organization which interested itself considerably in local affairs. This presents us with two phases from which to analyse the Egbe: (the Pan-Yoruba Cultural Phase and the 'Local' Ibadan Phase).¹ While it operated as a Yoruba cultural organization, the Egbe's activities had crucial implications for Yoruba unity, and they contributed substantially to the preservation of Yoruba culture and national histories. The Egbe also had international leanings demonstrated in its association with the West African Students Union. In addition, the Egbe promoted journalism in Yorubaland in particular through the publication of its *Irohin Yoruba* (Yoruba News). But most relevant to our purpose here is the Egbe's involvement in Ibadan affairs and its role in building up the local educated elite.

The society was founded by six Christians, viz: Rev. A.B. Akinyele, I.B. Akinyele, A. Obisesan, M.C. Adeyemi, E.H. Oke and J.A. Okuseinde.² As an Egbe *agba* (society of elders) these men were not, strictly speaking, elders. Except E.H. Oke who was sixty-eight (68) years old in 1914, and J. Okuseinde who was fifty-four (54), the others were in their late thirties. Their claim to an elderly status was a metaphor. They regarded their acquisition of Western education and Western civilization as sufficient condition to confer on them substantial respectability and authority in the society akin to that enjoyed by the aged

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1. The two phases overlapped at some points. But I feel the 'Pan-Yoruba Cultural' Phase was from 1914 to around 1930, and the 'local Ibadan' Phase from 1925 to 1944/45.
 2. E.H. Oke was more or less patron of the Egbe.

traditional chiefs. This respect was to be matched by corresponding duties. Just as the chiefs personified tradition, these educated men sought to make themselves custodians of history and culture through the employment of their literary skills. The primary objective of the Egbe was,

to institute research into all Yoruba Religions, Customs, Philosophy, medical Knowledge, Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, Poetical Culture [sic], Political and National Histories etc.¹

It was to be a society for the preservation of Yoruba culture. Membership was opened to 'Native Gentlemen of Yorubaland'. The Egbe admitted men who were not even resident in Ibadan. Rev. Kuye, Rev. Adejumo and Ladipo Solanke, for instance were not living in Ibadan although D.A. Obasa, E.H. Oke and J.M. Odunsi were; and M.C. Adeyemi soon moved to Ondo.² All these were non-Ibadan Yorubas. This broad base gave credence to the Egbe's aims which concerned the whole of Yorubaland. In this way, it put local elites in other parts of Yorubaland in touch with one another thus enhancing a 'cross-fertilization' of ideas.

The Egbe adopted the masonic style in its organization. It was divided into three sections, called 'Degrees' which corresponded to the first three orders of the

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1. *Constitution, Rules and Regulation of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan*. Ilare Press, Ibadan. 1914. The 'Poetical Cultures' could mean Poetry and/or oral literature.
 2. See Table 3 at the end of this chapter for a list of Egbe members.

Ancient Freemasons.¹ The affairs of the Egbe were kept secret. This would largely explain the dearth of records pertaining to its affairs despite the fact that all its members were literate.² According to its *Constitution*,

To avoid leakage of the society's movements, the proceedings of every meeting are to be kept a profound secret and must not be divulged to outsiders; even the absent members must not be acquainted with the nature of the discussions or business transacted at the session in which they were not present on pains of serious punishment or dismissal.

The Egbe therefore kept its operations away from the gaze of the traditional elite whom it was trying to overshadow; from the colonial regime with which its members did not see eye to eye on many occasions; and from the masses in order to maintain the mystique of high class.

Another aspect of the Egbe's organization was the idea of fraternity - probably borrowed from Freemasonry too. Members were addressed as 'brothers' and they were encouraged to help one another. The society constituted a

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1. Freemasons were members of an extensive secret order dating from the Middle Ages. They denoted themselves "Free and Accepted Masons". The movement first grew popular in England, Scotland and Ireland and from there spread to other parts of the world. It got to 'Nigeria' in the 1860s and by 1906 there were at least seven Lodges in Lagos. By the 1940s there was at least one lodge in Ibadan - the Eureka Lodge (with one of the members of the Christian elite, Ven. S.V. Latunde as its Treasurer) K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 41: File 2 - Lodge Activities of A.B. Akinyele. On the history of the Free-masonry institution, see H.L. Haywood, "Free-masonry" in *The American People's Encyclopedia*, (Grolier Incorporated, New York. 1962) pp. 1007-1010.
 2. Apart from a copy of the Constitution which I found in Akinyele's Papers, and the Egbe Correspondence Book for 1928-1931, there were no other Egbe documents except passing references to its activities in some members' private diaries.

'brotherhood' in the sense that Abner Cohen described Creole Masons in Sierra-Leone in the 1970s as forming a 'Grand Cousinhood'.¹ And this cordiality was carried outside the Egbe into other realms. These masonic touches in the Egbe were due to the fact that a few of the members were also masons. For instance, Rev. A.B. Akinyele was a very prominent mason.²

Perhaps, the question to ask is what was the significance of masonry in Nigeria in the first half of colonial rule that endeared it so much to the educated elite? The Freemasonry institution was an aspect of Western civilization. Its popularity among British elites at home recommended it to the Nigerian educated elite who was becoming keenly interested in many aspects of Western culture ranging from European names and clothes to social institutions. Between 1868 and 1906 there was a rapid growth of the Freemasonry institution in Lagos.³ By 1914, it had become a fashionable thing among the Lagos educated elite and their colleagues in a few other Yoruba towns. The masonic organization of the Egbe

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1. A. Cohen, *The Politics of Elite Culture* (University of California Press). 1981. pp.67-75, 81-87 & 95.
 2. He was a member and later rose to be master in Lodge St. David No. 1356 Sc. of Oke Ado, Ibadan in the 1940s. He was also associated with Lodge Obanta No. 1487 Sc. of Ijebu-Ode in the mid-fifties, with Lodge Faith. No. 1271 Sc. of Lagos in 1954, and Eureka Lodge No. 6222 EC of Ibadan in the late 1940s. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 41, File 2: Lodge Activities of A.B. Akinyele.
 3. E.A. Ayandele, *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society*. (Ibadan University Press, 1974) p.19.

Agba-O-Tan therefore represented an endorsement of yet another aspect of Western culture by the Yoruba educated elite, especially as some of these structures suited its other purposes well.¹ The Egbe was different from Rev. T.A.J. Ogunbiyi's Reformed Ogboni Fraternity which was an attempt to reconcile Freemasonry with traditional Ogboni, so as to preserve local culture and minimise the spread of foreign culture. However, the Egbe was not a full-fledged lodge. As time went on, a few of these masonic attributes were dropped when other Egbe's interests overrode them. The idea of secret operations, for instance, was gradually neglected as the Egbe sought to play an active role in Ibadan politics and subsequently began to speak out on burning issues in the 1920s.

The most active members in the Egbe were Rev. A.B. Akinyele, I.B. Akinyele, D.A. Obasa, J.A. Okuseinde, and E.H. Oke. These were important personalities who played leadership roles in other areas of Ibadan life. Alexander Babatunde Akinyele was born into a Christian family. His father, Josiah Akinyele was one of the early converts made by the Rev. David Hinderer in the 1850s.² Alexander attended mission schools and was the first Ibadan man to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree, which he got from the University of Durham through

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1. This feature has created a dilemma in explaining or typifying the Egbe's philosophy. On the other hand, the society promoted Yoruba culture as we shall soon see in the following pages, ^{in fact} on the other hand, it promoted the Western Freemasonry institution among its members.
 2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 3: Diary 1927. (Information recorded at the back of the diary).

Fourah Bay College, Sierra-Leone in 1906.¹ In 1910, he was ordained as an Anglican clergyman and in 1913 became the founding Principal of Ibadan Grammar School.² For the next twenty years he toiled and laid the foundations of the school as the pioneer in secondary education in Ibadan. In 1925, he obtained a Master of Arts degree also from Durham, and in 1933 he was consecrated as the Assistant Bishop of the Lagos Diocese of the Anglican Church. He was widely exposed, at least by contemporary standards, having been to Sierra-Leone and London. This exposure and his high level of education probably motivated him to support and give direction to the Egbe.

Isaac Babalola Akinyele was also very active in the society probably due to the encouragement and proddings of his senior brother, Rev. A.B. Akinyele. Isaac attended C.M.S. Grammar School in Lagos where he finished in 1901 after which he became a customs clerk in Ibadan in 1903. He was Secretary to the Ibadan Council from 1906-1912. From 1912 to 1920 he was Treasurer to the Ibadan Native Authority. These public offices created the need for him to rub minds with other educated folks in other sectors of the society - which need was met in the Egbe.

Ernest Henley Oke was another public figure in Ibadan in particular and in Nigeria in general. He was a native of Ijaye who came to Ibadan in 1909 as

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1. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 51, File 1: Credentials.
 2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 7: Duplicate of Letters. Reports of the Ordination Service at St. Peter's Church Ake on Sept. 25, 1910; Box 8: Duplicate of Letters. Report of the Opening Ceremony of the Ibadan Grammar School on March 31, 1913.

Headmaster of Baale's school. He was later appointed Secretary to the Ibadan Council in 1912. He was a member of the Legislative Council representing Oyo Division between 1924-1930. In the 1920s he was involved in the nationalist movement as head of the Ibadan branch of the National Congress of British West Africa, and in 1928 he was member of a small group concerned with the establishment of a Commercial and Industrial Bank in Ibadan. He was the founder of the United Native African Church in Ibadan.

James Adedeji Okuseinde was senior pastor of Aremo Church and a revered leader of the Christian community in Ibadan. His sister was wife of Samuel Johnson, historian of the Yoruba, whose younger brother became a member and patron of the Egbe. Denrele Adetimikan Obasa was an Ife man. He was one of the founders of the First Baptist Church, Idikan in 1906. He later became editor of *Irohin Yoruba* founded by the Egbe in 1924.

An examination of the membership list shows that a third of the Egbe's members (32%) were clergymen. This percentage reflects the leadership structure of the early christian elite. The missions selected their brightest pupils for training as clergymen. And since only clergy and professionals received higher education, the former were bound to be considerably represented in leadership positions within educated circles. Directly linked to this is the fact that the Egbe had a predominantly christian membership. Salami Agbaje was the only muslim member. This affected his own outlook to life especially since relations among members were very cordial and warm. Some of Salami's close friends were Egbe members such as Rev. A.B. Akinyele, Akinpelu Obisesan and D.A. Obasa. A.B. Akinyele's diaries and private papers, for instance, are replete with issues relating to his

friendship with Chief Salami Agbaje. As a result of this Christian influence, Agbaje gave his children Western education (not only because he could afford it but also because he appreciated the value of Western education.¹)

The Pan-Yoruba Cultural Phase

A notable policy of the Egbe in its bid to preserve Yoruba culture was the idea of building up the Ooni of Ife as the most important monarch in Yorubaland. This was to counter Resident Ross's scheme of restoring the lost glories of the Alafin.² The discriminations which the Ooni, who traditionally was the spiritual father of all Yoruba suffered from the hands of Capt. Ross drove him into the arms of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan. Ooni Ademiluyi (1910-1930) saw the Egbe as a body of educated and enlightened men who could help him fight his cause.

The king requested Agba-O-Tan to use its influence in getting Government and the general public to recognize him as the first man in Yorubaland and therefore should be given due respect and stipend.³

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1. Among his children were Dr. A.S. Agbaje (Medical Doctor) and A.M.F.M. Agbaje (lawyer and politician in the decolonization period) both now deceased. Hon. Justice Ganiyu Agbaje (now retired from the Supreme Court of Nigeria) and Yekinni Agbaje (a Senior Advocate of Nigeria SAN) are examples of his remaining sons. Many of Agbaje's children also married Christians. Adijatu Cecilia Agbaje married one Mr. Joseph Faloni of the Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary's Oke-Padre, Ibadan on Feb. 17, 1927 while Dr. Anthony Saka Agbaje married Miss Cecilia Evelyn Buknor at the Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos on Oct. 26, 1933.
 2. The Oyo Province created in 1914 of which the Alafin was designated the 'most paramount chief' covered an area of 14,381 sq. miles while the Ooni was given 'jurisdiction' over Ife Division whose area was only 1,660 sq. miles. In terms of stipend, the Ooni received £1,400 per annum to the Alafin's £4,800 which was the highest in the entire province.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1927. Entry for Nov. 26.

However, the Egbe could not do much to help the Ooni. In Ibadan, the Baale suffered greater humiliation and indignity from the hands of the Alafin and Resident Ross. In fact, attempts by the Egbe to advise the colonial administration on the issue of Ibadan chiefs were simply ignored by the British officials who went ahead with the policy of subjugating Ibadan to Oyo.¹ Nonetheless, relations between the Egbe as a group and the Ooni remained cordial.²

The significance of the Egbe's link with Ife could be seen in two ways. On the one hand, it represented a formation in the Alafin/Ooni tussle for supremacy in Yorubaland in response to Ross's pro-Alafin policy.³ On the other hand, it added to the prestige of the society and boosted the morale of its members in the whole of Yorubaland in general, and in their local communities in particular. That they were a bunch of men with 'inter-town' connections in Yorubaland attracted considerable esteem and dignity to them especially as their commitment to the development of Yoruba culture and history was backed by the Ooni who was regarded by Yoruba people as the 'custodian' of Yoruba mysteries and their spiritual head.

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1. We have already seen the Egbe's intervention in the case of Baale Situ.
 2. They journeyed to Ife frequently to visit him: to present him with a royal chair as a mark of honour to their patron; to sympathise with him on the death of his Aremo (heir) in 1929. Even when Egbe members were in Ife as a group for other functions, they always paid courtesy visits to the Ooni. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers Box 47: Dairy 1927. Entry for September 17; Dairy 1928. Entry for March 13; and Dairy 1929, entry for Oct. 24.
 3. This Alafin/Ooni tussle has had serious implications for Yoruba unity and intra-group relations because even after Capt. Ross and his successors had left, the contest between the two monarchs lasted till 1991 when Osun State was created.

In the pursuit of its cultural ideal the Egbe was involved in a series of other activities. It established a Publication Committee which encouraged publishing in Yoruba with I.B. Akinyele as its general editor.¹ The goal of the Committee was to record the history of the Yoruba people for posterity. Thus in 1916, the Egbe published I.B. Akinyele's *Iwe Itan Ibadan* which had been written in 1911 and M.C. Adeyemi's *Iwe Itan Oyo-Ile ati Oyo Isisiyin abi Ago-D'Oyo* (The History of Old Oyo and the Present Oyo formerly called Ago), written in 1914. Akinyele's work is a chronicle of Ibadan history from the foundation of the town to 1911.² And up to the present, the book has remained invaluable to students of Ibadan history. Adeyemi's work is a very useful text for the historian of Oyo. It is also historiographically useful as a complement and cross-reference to Samuel Johnson's *History of the Yorubas*, where both describe the same events. In fact, the efforts of Dr. Obadiah Johnson in editing and publishing Samuel Johnson's *History* could also be said to have drawn inspiration from the Egbe Agba-O-Tan's

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1. Akinyele's 'Preface' to M.C. Adeyemi's *Iwe Itan Oyo*.
 2. In his 'Akiyesi' (Preface) written in 1911 to his *Iwe Itan Ibadan*, Akinyele claims that the original impetus for the work came from an earlier group in Ibadan known as "Egbe Onife Ile Yoruba (Society of Lovers of Yorubaland) of which he was a member. This group held regular public lectures at which crucial themes relating to Yorubaland were expounded. It was at one of such lectures that he spoke on the topic "Ilu Ibadan Nigba Lailai Ati Ni Igba Isisiyin" (Ibadan Town in the Past and Present) on May 17, 1911 at the Baale's School, Oranyan, Ibadan. This lecture took him two consecutive meetings to deliver. It was the success of this lecture that encouraged him to embark on a more comprehensive history of Ibadan the same year. He published the *Iwe Itan Ibadan* in 1911 but the Egbe Agba-O-Tan published a second edition in 1916.

history project because Obadiah was one of the patrons of the Egbe. Altogether, these 'local' histories provide an understanding of the approach of 'traditional historians' to the study of their society both in a contemporary and in an historical perspective. Again, the Egbe published *Iwe Ti Awon Akewi* (Yoruba Philosophy, Vol. 1 &2) written by D.A. Obasa. These volumes contain Yoruba Oral Literature in flowery language and beautiful composition. In fact, the Egbe organized regular meetings at which its members, teachers and other members of the literate community in Ibadan met at the Ibadan Grammar School to recite portions of the poems.¹ This exercise was aimed at preserving the richness of the Yoruba language and passing it on to the next generation.

Another important activity of the Egbe was the publication of the *Irohin Yoruba*. The newspaper not only reported events and developments in Yorubaland, it also constituted the mouthpiece of the Egbe - presenting its views and opinions. In order to solicit wide support and regular funding for the newspaper, the Egbe arranged meetings with other members of the literate community in Ibadan at which shares were sold. During one of such meetings in September 1927, over 150 shares of twenty shillings² were bought by those present. Once the newspaper began to operate in 1924, it covered events not only in Yorubaland but in other parts of the country.

Furthermore, the Egbe had international leanings as reflected in its promotion of Pan Africanism through the support it gave to the West African

1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1927. Entry for May 13.

2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1927 Entry for Sept. 3.

Students' Union. This shows that the influence of the Egbe transcended the local and national levels in Nigeria. The Egbe assisted the Union to solicit for funds for the building of its hostel in London. The Secretary to the Union, Mr. Ladipo Solanke was invited, to Ibadan in December 1929 for the fund-raising exercise.¹ At the end of the activities marking the fund-raising campaign, a total of thirty-seven pounds, eleven shillings and six pence (£37.11.6) was realized. In 1930, the Egbe also mobilised a few other groups in Ibadan in resolving to form a branch of WASU in the city in order to promote higher education.²

The Ibadan Local Phase

In building themselves up as an elite reaching out beyond Ibadan, members of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan realized they needed a firm local base from which to operate. Consequently, they set out to influence and to play a more active role in Ibadan affairs. The high-handed rule of Captain Ross in Oyo Province and in Ibadan especially made it difficult for them to remain mute on local issues. As individuals, a few of them had acted as interpreters and as advisers to the traditional chiefs - they now sought to take a step forward by directly intervening in local affairs as a body. This, in a sense, marked a departure from their original

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1. The Egbe popularised the mission by organizing a rally at Mapo Hall on Dec. 23, 1929 which was attended by Chiefs and members of the literate community in Ibadan.
K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1929. Entry for Dec. 23; Diary 1930, Entry for March 10.
 2. The other groups included the Ibadan Agricultural Society, the Traders' Union and the Cooperative Planters' Union. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1930. Entry for July 14.

commitment to cultural matters alone, and a breaching of the policy of secrecy.¹ It also marked the localization of the Egbe as an 'Ibadan' organization.² To illustrate the Egbe's intervention in local politics we could cite its attempt to mediate in the case of Chief Folarin Solaja, the Osi Balogun in 1941.³

The agitation against Chief Folarin Solaja broke out in April 1941 after the death of Chief Ishola, the Otun Balogun. A large section of the town and some junior chiefs began to press for the deposition of Chief Solaja who was now eligible for promotion to Otun Balogun, and before long this became a burning issue in Ibadan local politics. The Egbe delegated A. Obisesan to mediate in the crisis. But his efforts were to no avail. This was partly due to the fact that by this time, there were so many groups in the politics of Ibadan such as the Ibadan Progressive Union (IPU) and the Ibadan Patriotic Association (IPA) equally interested in the issue. Moreover, the problem was not just a question of a chieftaincy title (i.e. promotion of Chief Folarin Solaja from Osi to Otun Balogun) but that of social values. The 'people' of Ibadan, represented by the IPA and some junior chiefs did not want Folarin Solaja, a man with an Ijebu pedigree, a money-lender who charged interest, a rich but miserly man, to become a high-chief - a post which qualified him for succession to the Olubadanship in the event of

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1. The policy of secrecy had already been punctured by the activities of the Egbe's Publication Committee and by the publication of the *Irohin Yoruba*.
 2. This phase of the Egbe's activities began around 1925 and it saw the ascendancy of the Ibadan members.
 3. I have already referred to the Egbe's role in trying to avert the deposition of Baale Situ in 1925.

a vacancy occurring in that office.¹ All these went beyond the Egbe's scope of arbitration. After this episode, it became increasingly clear to members that for them to exercise a lasting and respected authority in Ibadan politics and to transform the society, they needed to occupy formal positions in the societal power structure.

Before this time, the Egbe had been mobilising other associations in the town for political action. On October 17, 1929, a joint Committee of the Agricultural Society² and the Egbe Agba-O-Tan met to discuss some laws proposed by the Native Administration on the issue of land lease and registration of farmland. The committee met with the Resident to express their fears on the proposed laws. The Resident assured them that government had no intention of taking the people's land.³ Again, in July 1930, the Committee (this time with the Cooperative Planters' Union) sent another petition to the colonial authorities on the issue of low prices of farm produce.⁴ In all these, the Egbe was feeling its way

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1. For details on the Solaja Agitation, see N.A.I. Iba. Div 1/1 'Ibadan District Council Matters Affecting". 18 Vol. VIII 1941 pp.701-724, 726-739, 746-751, 761-778, 818, 851, 873-875, 899, 903-920; K.D.L. Obisesan Papers: Diary 1941. Entries for April 2, 23, May 6, 13, 15, 21 June 11, and Sept. 26. The promotion of other chiefs took place on Sept. 26, 1941. Chief Solaja was never promoted after this agitation, he died as Osi Balogun though he was not deposed.
 2. The society also comprised some Egbe members such as A. Obisesan, O.H. Adetoun and I.B. Akinyele.
 3. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1929. Entries for October 17 and 29.
 4. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1930. Entry for July 17.

and fishing for popular support by championing causes that affected the populace.

On the social plane, the Egbe associated with influential and prominent non-members (perhaps in a bid to woo them). In August 1929, fourteen members visited Chief Adebisi Giwa (a wealthy Muslim trader) to congratulate him on his installation as Ekarun Baale and he entertained them lavishly.¹ Not only that, the Egbe liaised with other groups in Ibadan to organize receptions for colonial officials in the city. This could be a way of socializing with the colonial administrations and of making connections that would later serve them in good stead.²

The activities of the Egbe began to die down gradually in the mid 1940s. By 1950 there was no further mention of the Egbe in the records. By this time, its remaining members had grown old. Coincidentally, a number of new groups³ had arisen which took over some of the later functions of the Egbe, especially with regards to participation in politics. So, what was the influence of the Egbe on the ruling elite structure in Ibadan during the three decades it operated?

The desire of some Egbe members to become a part of the ruling elite took a long time to materialise. During this period, the more liberal-minded and ambitious members probably concluded that, as organized, the Egbe was too conservative to be a useful tool for the capture of political power. Its cultural

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1939. Entry for August 19.
 2. For example, in March 1939, the Egbe mobilised all societies in Ibadan to arrange a rousing welcome for the new Chief Commissioner. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 49: Diary 1929. Entry for March 28.
 3. Such as the Ibadan Progressive Union and the Ibadan Patriotic Association.

objective and non-confrontational stand were no longer suited to the aggressive politics of the nationalist period. Rather than transforming the Egbe, these members, together with a younger generation of educated men spearheaded the foundation of newer organization in Ibadan. These first-generation educated elite, while still retaining their membership in the Egbe played leadership roles in the new groups and were able to mobilise the new men to press for inclusion within the decision-making body of the traditional elite.

In 1933, I.B. Akinyele and J.O. Aboderin, as members of the I.P.U. were accepted as nominated councillors into the Native Authority. On the completion of their tenure the two of them were 'rewarded' in 1936 with junior chieftaincy titles of Lagunna Balogun and Lagunna Baale respectively. It was from this position that I.B. Akinyele rose through the hierarchy to become Olubadan in 1955. Salami Agbaje was another example. He became very active as leader of the Ilupeju Society in Ibadan affairs. The colonial administration then nominated him to represent Oyo Province in the Legislative Council from 1930-1935. In 1936 he was made a Councillor of the Ibadan Native Authority which gave him the title of Ikolaba Balogun in the same year. This was the twelfth ranking title in the Balogun line, and from there he rose through the ranks to become Balogun of Ibadan in 1952.

The careers of Akinyele and Agbaje show that men with no background of Chieftaincy (i.e. not from any of the traditional warrior families in Ibadan) began to gain admission into the ruling elite. Western education thus brought in men who would otherwise not have qualified, into the traditional decision-making circle, with the Egbe Agba-O-Tan as their first organizational contact. Again, the

tolerance and magnanimity with which Egbe members dealt with the old chiefs distinguished the society constituting the first-generation educated elite in Ibadan - from their successors whose means and methods were more militant. The Egbe personified the virtue of Western education, and ideology introduced by the colonial state, without causing a rupture in the traditional structure of society.

But more significantly, the Egbe would be remembered in the political life of Ibadan for the paternal role it played in providing many of the leaders of other groups which emerged in Ibadan after World War I. The Ibadan branch of the National Congress of British West Africa was led by E.H. Oke and A. Obisesan. The Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society was led by S. Agbaje, I.B. Akinyele, J.O. Aboderin and A. Obisesan, while the Ilupeju Society was led by S. Agbaje. I.B. Akinyele and A.B. Akinyele played advisory roles in the IPU while A. Obisesan was its President for two consecutive terms. On one plane, the Egbe provided the organizational platform for the apprenticeship of the educated elite which subsequently assumed the lead in other associations. On another plane, it acted as a kind of 'umbrella' organization, 'fostering' the newer groups.

The Educated Elite and Chieftaincy Politics

The 1930s represented a crucial decade in the rise of the educated class in Ibadan. These men saw themselves as the cream of the society. They had western education which none of the chiefs had. Therefore they felt they ought to participate directly in the exercise of power in the town. To wrest power outrightly from the chiefs would be impossible because the colonial officers who felt safer dealing with the chiefs would have forestalled it. The chiefs, on their

own part also realized that they had to accommodate the new men if they were to have any lever in their dealings with the British officers. It was this accommodation that took the form of admitting the educated men into the chieftaincy structure by conferring titles on them.

The urgency of the action made the traditional elite to bypass the usual Mogaji route through which an aspiring chief had to go. The principal consideration for selecting a Mogaji into the chieftaincy ranks was descent from nineteenth-century warrior chiefs (some of whom had embraced Islam and bequeathed it to their offspring). But because there were many of such qualified Mogajis, additional criteria of popularity among the people, wealth, and good public speaking were introduced. Wealth in particular became an often misused yardstick, and Bashorun Fajinmi (1897-1902), Baale Dada (1904-1907), and Baale Situ (1914-1925) were said to have been guilty of giving titles to the 'highest bidder'.¹ Access to the ruling elite circle now had an alternative avenue namely, modern claims of western education which now had to be recognized by a chieftaincy title. Because the former means of getting a chieftaincy title by claims of military valour had been rendered obsolete by the absence of wars, the latter now seemed more viable in the new dispensation.² So, despite the fact that the chiefs were losing their relevance in modern administration and municipal government because of their illiteracy, and the demise of the military basis of their power, chieftaincy remained a stabilizing factor in the politics of the 1930s and

1. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, p.228.

2. This is not to deny the Mogaji route to the traditional chieftaincy hierarchy.

1940s. That was why the 'modern elite' (educated men) sought to get into the chieftaincy ranks in order to have a lasting influence on the affairs of the town.

The I.P.U., for instance, played the role of fielding candidates to represent its interests and pursue its cause in the town council having understood from the tactics of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan that to collaborate and work hand-in-hand with the chiefs, directing and advising them when necessary, would be more fruitful than attempting to outrightly dislodge them. Education plus a position in the chieftaincy structure now constituted another ticket that qualified a man for a ruling-elite status. Moreover, the collaboration between the chiefs and the educated men was significant for elite continuity in two respects. One, the retention of the old chiefs within the ruling elite cadre meant that tradition would still be preserved to some extent in the making of decisions and policies. Secondly, the educated men would be able to make meaningful changes in the status-quo as insiders of the traditional decision-making process without generating much friction. But how long were the chiefs to remain relevant to the new administrative set-up given the tide of change rolling in with each year of colonial rule? And how lasting or cordial was the tacit 'pact' of chiefs and educated elite to be, given the fact that some junior chiefs were jumped over by some of the educated chiefs? The junior chiefs so over-looked were not pleased and they, no doubt welcomed any development that could remove those educated chiefs if only to provide promotion outlets to enable them regain their positions in the chieftaincy hierarchy.

Meanwhile, with their newly-found accord, the chiefs and educated elite began to press two issues with the colonial authorities. The first was independence

from Oyo. In fact, the I.P.U. members in the Ibadan Native Authority, with the backing of the chiefs, led the campaign which resulted in the breaking of Oyo's power over Ibadan.¹ Also, the transfer of the provincial headquarters from Oyo to Ibadan later in 1934,² though an administrative convenience was seen as part of the move to decrease the importance of Oyo and consequently that of the Alafin, and increase that of Ibadan.

The second issue for which the chiefs and the educated elite pressed was to change the title of the headchief of Ibadan from *Baale* to *Olubadan*. During the struggle with Oyo, Capt. Ross and the Alafin repeatedly claimed that the title of *Baale* portrayed the ruler of Ibadan as no more than a village head because village heads were called *Baale*. The Ibadan chiefs and educated elite now regarded the *Baale* title as derogatory and thus requested that it be changed.³ This is because in the new political dispensation, the nomenclature of the rulers was becoming

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1. Supplement to the Nigeria Gazette Extra-ordinary No. 17 of April 3, 1934 pp. 1 and 11; Ayorinde Papers, "Profile of the late Olubadan D.T. Akinbiyi " (Akinbiyi was a foundation member of the I.P.U.) and oral interview with Chief J.A. Ayorinde at his Ekotedo residence 29/5/90, 26/1/93.
 2. N.A.I. Iba. Div. 1/1 File 301. Removal of Resident's Office from Oyo to Ibadan 1934/35.
 3. *The Petition of the Ibadan Native Authority and the chiefs of Ibadan Towns Through the Senior Resident, Oyo Province, to the Chief Commissioner, Southern Provinces and His Excellency, the Governor of Nigeria.* 1936. Printed at Lisabi Press, Ibadan. N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4 Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson, 1938. p.62.

increasingly useful in determining what roles the colonial officers assigned to each ruler. In the nineteenth century, nobody cared about a change of title. But colonial rule had altered it all. Values were being reordered. Ibadan chiefs, who cared less about Obaship or monarchy in their days of military glory as long as they controlled the barrel of the gun were now scrambling to improve the status of their head-chief vis-a-vis that of other Yoruba Obas because the British had refused to countenance the basis of the regional power and fame they enjoyed in the preceding century. What they now wanted, in other words, was a situation in which the position of their ruler would be made comparable with that of other paramount rulers in the province. This would make the Olubadan to gain the additional prestige necessary to match up with the increasing importance of Ibadan town as the headquarters of the Oyo Province. The town had a very large population, buzzing commercial activities and an increasingly articulate educated class. This was what the 1936 petition for the change in title of the head-chief was aimed at.¹

Clash of Interests: Chiefs Versus Educated Elite in the Reorganization Furore

So far, we have seen the cooperation of the chiefs and the educated individuals, in pressing for the two issues discussed above. However, the cooperation between these two social units began to crack as their interests started to diverge and later collide as from the second half of the 1930s. This collision of interests between the educated elite and the illiterate chiefs was taking place

1. See Chapter Six for details of the politics of Change of title.

against a background of general mistrust and conflict among the chiefs. What caused all these was the issue of appointments to Council and Native Courts. Closely related to this was the issue of promotion among the chiefs. Since all the senior chiefs were illiterate and very old, should they still continue to monopolise the position of judges in the Native Courts? Secondly, should these old and illiterate chiefs continue to sit on the administrative council of a city of Ibadan's size given their inability to grasp the intricacies of modern municipal government? The answer of the educated elite and the British administrators was that there should be reorganization. The educated men wanted to be increasingly involved in the running of the town in order to give direction to it. The British officials supported this viewpoint and advocated that the chiefs should delegate power to the educated elite.

In June 1935, it was decided that chiefs who were found incapable should retain their titles but should not be promoted, and in January, 1936, it was again decided by Council that old and infirm chiefs should not be appointed as Native Court Judges.¹ The fact that these two decisions implied a loss of power on the part of the chiefs would show us that they were not the initiators of such moves. Even if they agreed to it, they either did so out of ignorance or coercion. Later developments, however, showed that they were not coerced. Again, the chiefs agreed to the Resident's suggestion that the Council be reformed so that its membership would be by appointment with the exception of the Baale and Balogun

1. N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4. Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson, 1938. p.58.

who would be ex-officio members.¹

When the Council was eventually reorganized in accordance with the above decisions in 1936, the results were far-reaching. In fact, it jerked the chiefs to the realization of the full implication of the measures to which they had earlier agreed. The senior chiefs now saw these changes as having been designed to embarrass them because of their old age and illiteracy, and favour the educated men. The appointment of educated junior chiefs to sit with the senior chiefs in the native courts was even more painful to the chiefs² - these appointments were made following the Council's agreement to Resident Ward-Price's suggestion that suitable men should be made members of courts irrespective of the seniority of their titles. However, the senior chiefs felt that the Olubadan, Okunola Abasi, was responsible for their misfortunes because they saw him as being pro-government. They therefore set themselves in opposition against him. They refused to cooperate with government and stopped attending meetings called by the Olubadan. The colonial administration felt threatened and on December 3, 1937, the Chief Commissioner, Southern Provinces suspended five of the senior chiefs from their positions in Council and their salaries were stopped immediately. This

1. *Ibid.*, p.59.

2. In 1937, I.B. Akinyele (Lagunna Balogun), and the Babasale Onigbagbo sat with the Osi Olubadan and the Ekerin Balogun (both senior chiefs) in the Ojaaba Native Court 'B' Grade. The judges of the Beere Native Court No. 1 'C' Grade were all junior chiefs: Salami Agbaje-Arealasa Balogun, J.O. Aboderin - Ayingun Olubadan, and Salawu, Mogaji Olugbode (was not even a chief yet), Dickinson's 'Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town *op. cit.*, p.71.

suspension did not end the problem. Anti-government feelings soared high while many governmental duties were paralysed. Eventually in March 1938, the crisis was resolved by the intervention of a third party (made up of eminent individuals in the community such as Canon Okuseinde).

The situation after this crisis was not very different from what obtained before it. The Council now comprised the Olubadan, ten other senior chiefs and two Councillors. The principle of promotion by seniority was still applied to vacancies in the Council and in the chieftaincy structure in general though Council "reserved the right to exercise their discretion and to pass over any chief considered unsuitable"¹. The educated men still had not got hold of the administration of the town by the close of the 1930s. What the colonial government learnt from the experience was that the time was not ripe for any major reorganization. If any change was called for, it had to be done piecemeal. The Second World War however, diverted the attention of government to the war while the educated elite devised new strategies to enable them exercise more power.

Summary

The colonial period was one in which the traditional elite of Ibadan was 'no longer at ease'. For a while, it seemed the traditional warrior/muslim elite was able to control the colonial factor in terms of recruitments into the elite category. But later, they were challenged by new men who had acquired western education. These were members of the Christian community who had earlier been excluded from official positions of power. They now wormed their way into chieftaincy positions as the accepted route to achieving elite status.

1. N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4. Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson. 1938, p.76.

In this regard, it can be said that the factor of western education brought into the elite individuals and families who would not otherwise have qualified. The first set of educated chiefs, Akinyele and Aboderin were not from any of the recognised chiefly compounds. I.B. Akinyele's father, Josiah Akinyele, for instance, was not with any military pedigree. He came under the influence of the Hinderers at a very early age and raised his own five children in the Anglican faith. So it was I.B. Akinyele's western education and his active role in Ibadan public life, having been apprenticed in the Egbe-Agba-'O-Tan, that earned him the chieftaincy title of Lagunna Baale in 1936 and not his family background or military prowess.

Furthermore, it could be said that the 'old' elite set out to regulate and integrate the factor of western education into existing modes of access to elite status. This was what conferring chieftaincy titles on illustrious educated men was meant to achieve. Thus, within the chieftaincy structure, the two camps met. However, the accord of the traditional elite and the educated men was not a harmonious one - it was rather borne out of necessity. They were like strange bedfellows with divergent interests. The inevitable cracks began to surface in the socio-political edifice as epitomised in the 1930s reorganization furore. The colonial administrators tried to resolve the impasse. But the old chiefs had learnt their lesson - that the colonial period was one in which they necessarily had to compromise some of their traditional ideals. What a painful ordeal! The story was not a continuous chain of frictions and tensions. There were occasions when overall cooperation was needed to achieve common ends as was the case of the demand of Ibadan's independence from Oyo and the change of the *Baales* title. But while the elite struggled in the throes of colonialism for survival, other forces continued to impinge upon it.

Table 3: Some Members of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan. By 1933

	NAME	PROFILE	NATIVE TOWN	RELIGION
1	E. H. Oke (d. 1930)	Secretary to Ibadan Council in 1912. Member of Legco 1924-1930	Ijaye. Came to Ibadan in 1909	Christianity. Founder, U.N.A Church, Ibadan
2	J. A. Okuseinde	Clergyman. Councillor in Ibadan. 1903-1907.	Ibadan. (Father a Sierra-Leonian who came to Ibadan with the Hinderers in 1853	Christianity. Became Senior Pastor of the Aremo Church.
3	A. B. Akinyele	Clergyman. First Ibadan man to hold a B.A. Principal Ibadan Grammar School.	Ibadan	Christianity. (Anglican)
4	I. B. Akinyele	Secretary Ibadan Council 1906-1919, later Treasurer 1919-20. Later became produce merchant.	Ibadan	Christianity. Later became a leader in the Christ Apostolic Church.
5	M.C. Adeyemi	Clergyman. Grandson of Alafin Adeyemi (1876-1905) and Schoolteacher	Oyo	Christianity. (Anglican)
6	A. Obisesan	Mercantile clerk and farmer Later leader of the Co-operative Movement in Nigeria.	Ibadan.	Christianity. (Anglican)
7	D. A. Obasa	Editor, Yoruba News	Ife (but resident in Ibadan)	Christianity. (Baptist)
8	D. A. Williams	Clergyman	?	Christianity (Anglican)
9	E.M. Alalade	Clergyman	Ibadan	Christianity
10	S.A. Layode	Produce Buyer	Ibadan	Christianity. A prominent lay-leader in the Kudeti Church.
11	T.D. Alalade	Mercantile clerk	Ibadan	Christianity (Anglican)
12	Rev. Kuye	Clergyman	Abeokuta	Christianity (Anglican)
13	Rev. Adejumo	Clergyman and Medical practitioner	Ife	Christianity
14	S. Agbaje	Wealthy trader. Member, LegCo 1930-1935	Ibadan	Islam

NAME	PROFILE	NATIVE TOWN	RELIGION
15 O. H. Adetoun	Son of D. Adetoun (Babasale Onigbagbo). Later became a chief	Ibadan	Christianity
16 E. T. Odejoke	Mercantile Clerk	Ibadan	Christianity
17 J.M. Odunsi	Wealthy trader	Abeokuta (but resident in Ibadan)	Christianity
18 S. Aderemi	A Prince of Ile-Ife and a wealthy produce merchant. Later became Ooni in 1930	Ile-Ife.	Christianity (Anglican)
19 Ladipo Solanke	Founder and Secretary, West African Students' Union, London.	Abeokuta.	Christianity
20 Dr. O. Johnson	Medical practitioner in Lagos Brother of the Rev. Samuel Johnson. A patron of the Egbe.	Oyo	Christianity.

(This list was compiled from the Private diaries of A. B. Akinyele and A. Obisesan from 1914-1933)

CHAPTER FOUR

ON THE QUESTION OF FAITH: TRADITIONAL RELIGION, ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Introduction

This chapter looks at the experience of the elite on the question of religion. During the period under study, there were three major religions in Ibadan, viz, traditional religion, Islam and Christianity. While traditional religion in Ibadan started with the foundation of the town, Islam and Christianity were later arrivals. An attempt is made here to examine the growth and spread of the three religions with special emphasis on the inroads they were able to make into the ruling elite circle, on how they have affected elite recruitment, on the role of the elite in them, and on the changes that took place in that role during the period of study. In other words, how have these religions affected the constitution and membership of the elite? The demands of the three religions and the way each has impinged on elite formation, attitudes and values constitute just one side of the coin. The other side is the way the elite has affected the development of these religions in Ibadan. What major changes have taken place in the religious development of Ibadan, and what were the implications of these on social differentiation? Again, what were the major changes in the elite outlook on religion and how have these conditioned its behaviour and response to major social issues?

Traditional Religion in Ibadan

Traditional religion in Ibadan rested mainly on two cults viz, the Oke `Badan and

Egungun cults.¹ Other divinities worshipped elsewhere in Yorubaland were also to be found in Ibadan except the cults of kingship which were ignored. These divinities were Obatala, Yemowo, Esu, Orunmila, Ogun, Sango, Yemoja, Osanyin, Oduduwa etc. Ibadan was in fact, established on an *Odu Ifa* called *Ose Meji* which became the guardian *Odu* of the city. However, *Olodumare*, the Supreme God remained the object or ultimate end of all worship. Other religious beliefs on divination, dreams, witchcraft, sorcery, magic and medicine found in Ibadan were also similar to those of other Yoruba groups.

The Oke-'Badan was a goddess of fertility and procreation. It was also the tutelary divinity of the city. This goddess, 'Atage Olomu Oru' (Owner of breasts like pots) was worshipped annually in a communal festival. The festival was dedicated to the spirit of the hill as a thanksgiving for the refuge which it provided in periods of danger, and also to Lagelu the mythical founder of the town.

The cult of the ancestors called *Egungun* had its basis in the Yoruba belief that death is not end of man. The dead have only gone to another world, albeit one which still maintains a link with the abode of the living. In other words, the

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1. Important *Egungun* in Ibadan were Alápánsanpa, Atipàkó Olóòlu, Lémójágbà, Gógo, Kekeku, Fere-bí-ekùn, Olúnládé, Gbódógbódó, Sàlàkó (Eégun anírin) Elebolo, Amuludun, Afidíelége, Adéagbo, Amónilojú-Okè-Balógun.

Oral interview with Pa Omotayo Adebimpe, himself an èléégun and present towncrier (alágo Oba) of Olubadan Adegboyega Adeyemo Operinde I, at the palace, Ojaaba. 11/4/95.

ancestral cult means to the Yoruba that the family life of this earth has been extended beyond the physical milieu to the spiritual one. The *Egungun* festival was usually before the harvesting of yams.

There were a few interesting links in the patterns established by the practice of aspects of traditional religion and the functioning of the Ibadan local elite. First, during *Egungun* festivals, it was customary for the principal *Egunguns* such as Oloolu and Alapansanpa to visit the compounds of a few members of the elite to 'pray' for them and receive their yearly gifts. Those visited were usually important chiefs and other prominent members of the community. Muslim and Christian leaders were exempted from such visits. The Aboke (priests of Oke-Badan) also made similar visits to the elite during Oke-Badan festivals.

Secondly, these annual religious festivals provided occasions for the celebration of the heroic deeds or achievements of the members of the elite. Innovations made by the chiefs or any laudable development falling within their tenure were made the theme of songs rendered during such festivities. For instance, during the reign of Baale Osúntóki (a.k.a. Baale Olosun¹, 1895-1897), the British administrative officials purchased large quantities of *lapalapa*² fruits

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1. He was an Osun priest (Osun was a river goddess).
 2. *Làpàlàpà*, also called *bòtujúè*, *ewe ayaba* is a 'Physic Nut' with the biological name, *Jatropha Curcas*. The plant is used for fences, the leaves are used for treating dysentery while the green, viscid juice is used as a remedy for mouth boil. It was a common domestic plant to which the people attached no monetary value.

from members of the community, for planting fences around their residences. This novelty surprised as well as pleased the masses who never thought of making money out of the *lapalapa* fruit which was not a 'cash crop'. This feat became a song for the next Egungun season in 1896 and the credit for it was given to Baale Osuntoki.¹

There was, however, another twist, albeit a negative one, to the use to which the fanfare and 'liberty' provided by the religious festivals was put by the elite and their followers. Simmering animosities within the elite were usually exhumed during Egungun and Oke'Badan festivals which usually degenerated into occasions for the singing of abusive songs and trading of invectives by supporters of the quarrelling groups. This was the case during the Oke'Badan celebration of May 1907 when abusive songs were rendered by the supporters of the chiefs who were quarrelling with Baale Dada Opadere. It was this Oke'Badan celebration that brought to the fore the gathering clouds which eventually culminated in Baale Dada committing suicide on December 16, 1907.² Another example was the

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1. Laiyé Olósun
Làpàlàpá d'owó
Osun yoo gbe o
Baba Olósun

In the time of the Osun priest
Lapalapa became money.
Osun will bless you
Thou Osun priest.

I B. Akinyele, *Iwe Itan Ibadan*. 4th Ed. (Board Publications Ltd., Ibadan. 1981) p.127.

2. For details of the Baale Dada affray, see Akinyele, *op. cit.* pp.154-159.

1936-38 reorganization furore which saw the Balogun and some chiefs pitched against the Olubadan, Okunola Abaasi.¹ The Oke`Badan and Egungun festivals of 1937 consequently took the form of public affrays between the supporters of the two factions.

The point here is not just that Oke`Badan and Egungun celebrations were usually lawless or licentious in Ibadan, but that the elite seized the opportunities offered by the liberty of speech and rowdiness of such festivals to settle old scores between themselves. And because they were the leaders in the society, such disputes easily spread, becoming communal issues with the masses necessarily taking sides and perpetuating the quarrel.

Of all the principal functionaries of traditional religion such as the Alagbaa, Oluawo, Araba and Aboke, the Aboke (priest of Oke`Badan) was the most important in terms of the popularity and esteem which he enjoyed within the city. Although he exercised no political authority in the city, he occupied a prominent place in its religious life because of the significance of Oke`Badan to Ibadan's growth and development. But on the whole, traditional religion suffered a lot of setbacks occasioned by its loss of adherents in the face of persistent assaults from the two other religions which regarded its practices as 'heathen' and its adherents as 'pagans'. And due to reduced patronage, the priests of these cults were generally men of little wealth with low prestige in the community despite the fact that their powers were feared. Indeed, they were of little relevance to modern

1. See Chapter 5 for details.

socio-political development except when there was any need for them to perform some of their traditional roles such as making rituals for the community.

A lot of problems are associated with writing on traditional religion in Ibadan. These are situated within the general problems confronting the historiography of traditional religion in Africa. Apart from the fact that there is little or no documentation on the religion, it is not homogenous in nature (we have already noted that there were diverse cults and divinities in Ibadan). Again, practitioners are reluctant to grant information to researchers (sometimes even after charging a fee) on the growth and different aspects of the religion and the personalities involved in it. Thus it is difficult to measure change and adaptation in traditional religion and to get to know what really obtained there. The result of this inhibition is that Islam and Christianity have continued to overshadow traditional religion and to offer more research prospects and attract more adherents.

Nevertheless, it is still possible to attempt a survey of the leading Ibadan chiefs who were adherents of traditional religion in our period of study (as in Table 4 below). This table shows the gradual decline of the number of chiefs identifying with traditional religion, and the rise of Muslim, and later Christian chiefs. Despite the fact that Islam had penetrated the ruling elite circle as early as the 1850s when Chief Momodu Osundina was the Osi Balogun, the chiefs who were adherents of traditional religion were not easily dislodged. It was in the 1920s (about seven decades later) that Muslim chiefs began to outnumber them. Before the 1920s therefore, traditional religious values remained firmly embedded in the culture of the elite through individual chiefs like Fijabi I, Akintola, Osuntoki, Babalola, Fajinmi, Mosaderin, Dada Opadere, Omiyale, Akintayo, Awanibaku, Irefin, Idowu, Ola and Oyewole. The presence of chiefs like Oyekola, Onifade, Oke and Igbintade Apete, though now in the minority between 1930 and the 1950s ensured that

TABLE 4:
Religious Affiliation of the top four chiefs in Ibadan 1893-1960

Year	Baale or Olubadan	Balogun	Otun Baale or Olubadan	Otun Balogun
1893	Fijabi I (ATR)	Akintola (ATR)	Osuntoki (ATR)	Babalola (ATR)
1897	Fajinmi (ATR)	Akintola (ATR)	Mosaderin (ATR)	Babalola (ATR)
1904	Dada Opadere (ATR)	Omiyale (ATR)	Apampa (Muslim)	Akintayo (ATR)
1910	Akintayo (ATR)	Situ (Muslim)	Irefin (ATR)	Idowu (ATR)
1914	Situ (Muslim)	Ola (ATR)	Amida (Muslim)	Idowu (ATR)
1925	Oyewole (ATR)	Okunola (Muslim)	Amida (Muslim)	Aminu (Muslim)
1930	Okunola (Muslim)	Aminu (Muslim)	Oyekola (ATR)	Onifade (ATR)
1946	Suberu Akere (Muslim)	Amodu Aare (Muslim)	Fijabi II (Muslim)	Memudu Ali-Iwo (Muslim)
	Akintunde Bioku 1947-1948 (Muslim)			
1948	Fijabi II (Muslim)	Amodu Aare (Muslim)	Oke (ATR)	Memudu Ali-Iwo (Muslim)
1952	Ali-Iwo (Muslim)	Salami Agbaje (Muslim)	Igbintade Apete (ATR)	I. B. Akinyele (Christian)
1955	I.B. Akinyele (Christian)	Salawu Aminu (Muslim)	Yesufu Kobiowu (Muslim)	Bello Akinyo (Muslim)
1960	I. B. Akinyele (Christian)	Salawu Aminu (Muslim)	Yesufu Kobiowu (Muslim)	J. L. Ogunsola (Christian)

Note: ATR is Adherent of Traditional Religion

some bit of those values still lingered among the ruling elite. The exit of the chiefs who were practitioners of traditional religion also coincided with the rise of the Christian chiefs.¹ In 1955, when I.B. Akinyele became the first Christian Olubadan, the next three chiefs to him in the hierarchy were all Muslims. Islam and Christianity thus became the main factors in shaping the outlook of the elite category in Ibadan.

Islam and Ibadan²

Islam preceded Christianity in Ibadan. The earliest inhabitants of the city included Muslim converts and an Imam called Gunnugun. These Muslims were few in number and their commitment to the faith was a nominal one because they still observed some traditional religious practices which were unIslamic. Moreover, their knowledge of Islam was scanty and unsound. What could be regarded as true Islamization in terms of total commitment to Islamic tenets and complete renunciation of traditional religious practices on the part of converts began in the 1830s when learned Muslim teachers came from Hausaland through Ilorin to preach in Ibadan. Ahmad Qifu and Uthman b. Abu Bakr Basunu were two of such teachers.

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1. The first Christian Chief was Simon Orukotan, son of David Kukomi. He was installed the Abese by Baale Situ (1914-1925). But he died in 1923, before he could rise to any of the senior ranks of the chieftaincy hierarchy.
 2. Getting material for this section has not been an easy task. Because of my Christian faith, Muslim leaders in Ibadan were not disposed to granting me interviews given the background of Muslim/Christian hostility in the city especially within elite circles in 1994/95. This meant I could not have access to many of the religious documents in their possession and in the Central Mosque. Only a few of them were forthcoming and quite helpful, namely, Alh. (Dr.) K.K. Oloso - Lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, an indigene of Ibadan and member of the reconstituted Council of Scholars (Diwan al-Ulama) of the Ibadan Central Mosque; Dr. W.A. Nasiru, also of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan; Hon. Justice Ganiyu Agbaje, a retired justice of the Supreme Court of Nigeria and influential in the Muslim community Ibadan; Alhaji Elesinmeta from the popular Elesinmeta family, Isale Osi, Ibadan, and Chief Imam, School of Agriculture, Moor Plantation, Ibadan; and Alhaji Tiamiyu Aare of Latoosa family, Ibadan. The fire outbreak that ravaged the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan in 1994 also denied me of the use of some vital Islamic documents kept in the departmental library.

Ahmad Qifu came to Ibadan during the reign of Oluyedun and was reputed to be a grandson of a past Alafin of Oyo. Uthman b. Abu Bakr Basunu came during Bashorun Oluyole's reign (1833-1847). He came from Katsina via Borno. He was the first truly Muslim Imam in Ibadan in 1839. After this time, Islam began to spread rapidly in Ibadan. By 1871, Ibadan had its first Muslim ruler in the person of Aare Latoosa. Islam also had a lot of adherents among the Ibadan populace especially through the preaching of itinerant Sheikhs who came from Ilorin. Already, by the 1870s, Ilorin had become the chief Muslim centre for learning and spiritual guidance in the Yoruba country. It was from there that individual preachers came to proselytise in Ibadan. Of these Sheikh Abu Bakr b. al Qasim locally known as 'Alfa Alaga' and 'Alfa Oke-Aremo' was particularly instrumental to the growth of Islam in Ibadan.

Abu Bakr b. al. Qasim was a native of Ilorin.¹ He settled on Oke-Aremo on his return from Ilorin. There he started a school which drew pupils from all parts of Yorubaland. He also made a significant contribution in the field of scholarship. Some of his most distinguished pupils were Aminu Allah, Malik b. Husayn, and Harun Matanmi. All these men became teachers and preachers and continued in the intellectual tradition laid by him. In short, Abu Bakr laid the foundation of Islamic learning in Ibadan.

Harun Matanmi, a student of Abu Bakr also played a prominent role in the growth of Islam in Ibadan. Infact, he succeeded the latter as the leader of the

1. F.H. El-Masri, 'Islam' in P.C. Lloyd, *et. al.* (eds.) *The City of Ibadan* (Cambridge, 1967) pp.251-252.

Muslim community until his death in 1935. Harun produced many Muslim scholars, and himself was so versed in Islamic learning that he became the final authority on any religious disputation. He improved the quality of learning and kept in touch with intellectual developments in the Muslim world by inviting renowned scholars from places as far as the Sudan and Sokoto to Ibadan. He also sent his own students to other Muslim centres such as Ilorin. One of such students was Al Sheikh Salih b. Abd al Qadir (1871-1909). Due to the intellectual activities of Harun, Ibadan became a centre of Muslim learning which also drew students from all over Yorubaland. In 1922, he became the Imam of the Central Mosque, a post he held till 1935. Some of his colleagues who were also learned *alfas* included Alfa Motala of Oke-Adu, Alfa Hassan Abata, Alfa Abdu-Salam of Oke Koto, Alfa Bello of Oke-Aare and Alfa Abdullahi Basunu (who was the Chief Imam of the Central Mosque from 1896-1911)¹.

The above Islamic teachers laid a very solid foundation for the spread and growth of Islam in Ibadan in the twentieth century. However, there was some internal differentiation in the Muslim community along theological lines. Most of the Muslims in Ibadan were orthodox following the Maliki rite. They were either Tijaniyya or Quadiyya. The former was more popular than the latter which was mostly embraced by the malams (the learned group). The Ahmadis who believed

1. A.H. Shuaibu, "Ibadan Central Mosque: Imamship Issue", Long Essay, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan. 1989. This bit was based on his interview with Alhaji Burhanudin Sanusi Alaka who was the Grand *Mufti* (Chief Islamic Scholar) in Ibadan in 1989. (Shuaibu's father was an Imam of a *Ratibi* Mosque).

in the priesthood of Murza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian constituted an unorthodox group. They formed the Ahmadiyya Movement which was active in the educational field as well as in evangelism.¹ The Ahmadiyya mission in Ibadan founded a Grammar School at Eleyele.

In fact, both orthodox and unorthodox Muslims tended to distrust Western education and to set up koranic education instead or as a rival. This was not an adequate substitute. Hence the significance of groups such as the Ahmadis and Ansar-Ud-Deen in promoting education along Western lines, thus increasing Muslim participation among the educated elite. Other frontliners in educational activities were the Young Nawar-Ud-Deen Society, the Islamic Missionary Society and the Isabatudeen Society.

The Islamic Missionary Society was established in the 1920s under the leadership of Alhaji Salami of Oja-Igbo and Y.S. Ola-Ishola.² The latter, as secretary of the new society, also maintained close links with the Muslim Congress of Nigeria. The Islamic Missionary Society founded the first Islamic Primary School at Odoye in Ibadan on July 17, 1935. It also established at Orita-Bashorun the Islamic High School in 1957, which was the first Muslim Secondary School in Ibadan. In addition, the Isabatudeen Society, which was an organization of Muslim women formed in 1958 under the leadership of Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga, founded the Isabatudeen Girls' Grammar School at Orita-Bashorun in 1964. Both

1. El-Masri, *op. cit.*, p.255-256.

2. Information supplied by Alhaji Elesinmeta, April, 1995. (He provided written answers to a questionnaire I sent to him).

the Nawar-Ud-Deen and Ansar-Ud-Deen also established numerous primary schools in Ibadan.

From the activities of these diverse groups, it is clear that the Muslim community in Ibadan was not one homogenous lump that recognised the headship of the Chief Imam as was the case in the nineteenth century when Islam started to thrive in Ibadan. The tendency towards sectionalism started in the 1920s and has continued beyond our period. The independent sects were not subject to any control from the Imamate and more often than not, they tended to be uncooperative with the authority of the Imamate. This was partly due to the fact that the latter built their own Central Mosques with independent Chief Imams and regarded their membership as distinct from that of the main Central Mosque at Ojaaba. An exception to this was probably the Isabatudeen Society which enjoyed the patronage of the Chief Imam and other principal functionaries of the Imamate.

Perhaps, the most militant and antagonistic of such organizations were reformist groups such as the Lanase and Bamidele movements. These have been described as 'thorns in the flesh'¹ of the Imamate. Of the two, the Lanase movement was the earlier and more militant. Its founder was one Alfa Sunmonu Lanase who was active in Ibadan from 1935 to 1954 when he died.² He assigned

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1. Shuaibu, *op. cit.*, p.127.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1954. Entry for April 14. His comments on the Alfa are instructive. "...a great religious reformer. He made all the Muslims in Ibadan to regard him especially the Chief Imam, his subordinates and leading Muslims, as one who had brought innovation they hated much. The Muslims who are opposed to his reform, according to human calculation will regard his death as victory over their enemy".

to himself the task of reforming Islam in Ibadan and 'to wash it clean from the contamination of idolatry and to snatch it away from Western decadence with its religious proselytization'.¹ In doing this, he stepped on the toes of the Muslims in Ibadan because his methods were so austere and stoic. Moreover, he condemned many of their practices and this tended to isolate his movement in the city. It also made him unpopular with the Chief Imam and other leaders of the Imamate.² In fact, the Chief Imam and other leaders of the Central Mosque were so much against Alfa Sunmonu Lanase establishing a separate Jumat mosque for his movement that it became a matter for litigation.³ The victory of the Lanase group in the case probably encouraged other 'independent' muslim organizations to have not only separate Jumat Mosques but also exclusive praying grounds for the 'Id' festivals. The Chief Imam thus found it increasingly difficult to control these independent organizations.

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1. E.O. Oyelade, "Islam and Modernism in Yorubaland: The Reaction of the Lanase Movement". *Religions: A Journal of the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions*. Vol. 5. Dec. 1980. p.19.
 2. He preached that women be kept in purdah and his followers adhered to this. He also spoke against feasting and merry-making at funerals and weddings. Oral interview with Alh. Tiamiyu Aare 28/3/95 and Justice Ganiyu Agbaje 9/2/95.
 3. The case was heard by Justice Desalu of the Onireke High Court, and the decision was in favour of the Lanase movement. Interview with Alh. Aare. *op. cit.*

Islam and Society

Islam challenged the polytheism of the Ibadan people by preaching faith in one God. This was new to the people. However, the steady spread of the religion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries points to the fact that the religion found ready acceptance in the people. Certain traditional practices such as polygamy were also accommodated by Islam and some of the leaders of the Muslim Community in Ibadan were natives such as Abu Bakr b. al Qasim and, even when they were not natives, they were from other parts of Yorubaland e.g. Sheik Harun Matanmi from Oshogbo. This made those early preachers to easily identify with the people as they could detect their susceptibilities and dispositions. No wonder then that Islam drew support not only from the ordinary people, but also from the chiefs.

The first Ibadan chief to embrace Islam in the nineteenth century was Chief Osundina who took the name 'Momodu' (Muhammed). He was made Chief by Baale Opeagbe (1850-1851) and rose to be Osi Balogun during Baale Olugbode's time (1851-1864). Osundina used his good offices to get Baale Opeagbe, who was not a Muslim to patronise the few Muslims in Ibadan. Opeagbe gave the Muslims land on which to build their mosque. Before then, Bashorun Oluyole (1833-1847) had destroyed their former mosque at Ojaaba. The new mosque so impressed the people that they celebrated it in the following verse of Opeagbe's *oriki*:

O ko'le kan àrà, o koju re si òkánkán
 O ko'le kan, o koo si teure
 O ko'le kan ribiti, o ni ki gbogbo omo kéwú
 ki o ma a wa foju kan ara won.¹

1. Extracted from Opeagbe's *Oriki* recorded in I.B. Akinyele, *Iwe Itan Ibadan*. 4th ed. (Board Publications, Ibadan. 1981), p.50.

(He built a marvellous house and faced it eastwards
 He built a house, he built it on elevated ground
 He built a round house and said all
 Muslim children should go there to meet.)

But Osundina's zeal, by contemporary standards, was even more than Opeagbe's benevolence. Out of his interest and devotion to Islam, he is alleged to have given his daughter, Fatimah, in marriage to one of the leading Islamic scholars in his time, namely, Alfa Utuman Basumu of Ita-Okoro.¹ Osundina's zealously for Islam is also expressed in the following extract from his *Oriki*:

Imàle `Bàdàn on là bá ki
 Imàle `Bàdàn on là bá yìn
 A kò r'èni a o se `madai' fún mó
 A s'àlùwàlá nibi ofà nròjò
 Osi 'Badan ti i we lawani ree k'ogun lojú²

(The Ibadan Muslim we salute you
 The Ibadan Muslim we praise you
 We've missed the person we can honour
 You who perform your ablutions even under a hail of arrows
 The Osi [Balogun] of Ibadan goes to battle wearing his turban)

It would seem Osundina advertised his Islamic faith to his family members because his brother, Laluwoye was also a Muslim with the name Alli. Or it could be that the two of them were converted under the same circumstances. Alli Laluwoye too was a high chief in Ibadan. He rose from Ekerin Balogun under Akere (in

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1. I.G. Yusuf, "Imamate in Ibadanland", Long Essay, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Maiduguri, Borno State of Nigeria. 1992, p.17.
 2. Akinyele, *op. cit.*, pp.282-283.

Ogunmola's reign 1864-1867) to become the Otun of Balogun Ajayi Ogboriefon in Aare Latoosa's time (1871-1885). And as a chief of high calibre, his Muslim influence must have affected many people, especially his clients.

It was really during the time of Aare Muhammad Latoosa that Islam became consolidated in Ibadan. Latoosa was an ardent patron of Islam but he was syncretic in certain ways.¹ According to T.G.O. Gbadamosi,

while engaged in the Ekitiparapo war, he [Latoosa] ensured that the large military camp of the Ibadan had a clearing nearby for prayers. He, together with his followers, said the 'Id' prayers... at the praying ground which is outside the gate at the eastern end of the Ibadan camp at the risk of coming under fire from the mocking Ekitis.²

It was under such a leader that Islam grew rapidly in Ibadan. Latoosa also had the practice of taking *Alfas* (men of Islamic learning and piety) along with him to the battle front to offer prayers and make charms for the success of Ibadan warriors. Sulayman Alagunfon was one of such *Alfas*. In fact, he was the Chief Imam of Ibadan from 1884-1886 and is said to have died on the warfront during the Kiriji war.³

After Latoosa, there were many other Muslim rulers in Ibadan in the twentieth century such as Sunmonu Apampa who was Baale from 1907-1910;⁴ Baale Situ Aare (Latoosa's son, 1914-1925); Okunola Abaasi Alesinloye (Baale from

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1. See pp.63-64 above for details of his syncretic practices.
 2. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*. (Longman, London 1978), p.53.
 3. Shuaibu, *op. cit.*, p.164.
 4. Sunmonu Apampa was patron of many Islamic scholars and students e.g. Shaykh Haruna Matanmi (a.k.a. Alfa Oke-Gege). The Central Mosque at Ojaaba was roofed with iron sheets during his reign.

1930-1946),¹ Suberu Fagbinrin Akere (was Olubadan for six months in 1946); Akintunde Bioku (1947-1948); Oyewusi Fijabi II (1948-1952); Memudu Ali-Iwo (1952); Yesufu Kobiowu (1964) and Salawu Aminu (1965-1971).²

This would show that Islam had become a new factor in the recruitment of individuals and granting of access to elite status. This factor sought legitimacy and acceptance by operating through the traditional warrior elite. It thus appeared that for a while, the traditional warrior elite was able to control Islam as a factor in gaining access to elite status. That was why chiefs who were adherents of traditional religion were able to hold on to power within the chieftaincy hierarchy till around the 1920s when Muslim chiefs started appearing in the majority. This also shows that only a few of the traditional warrior elite had embraced Islam in the nineteenth century and established the Islamic tradition within their families. In fact, most of the twentieth century muslim rulers were from recognised families of the traditional warrior elite.³

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1. His title was later changed to Olubadan in 1936. He also completed the expansion of the Central Mosque.
 2. Other twentieth-century Ibadan Muslim rulers are beyond the period covered by this study.
 3. Sunmonu Apampa was the son of Chief Osundina, Situ was the son of Aare Latoosa, Okunola Abaasi was the son of Bankole Aleshinloye (the first Balogun in Ibadan), Suberu Akere's father was the famous Balogun Akere (1867-70). Oyewusi Fijabi's father was Baale Fijabi (1893-95) while Memudu Ali-Iwo was a direct descendant of the famous Balogun of Iwo who came to settle in Ibadan in the nineteenth century.

On the other hand, Islam sought to make the traditional elite more relevant to the changing times in Ibadan by presenting to them a set of new values. Islam preached faith in one God which amounted to a disregard for the old traditional polytheism. Other aspects of Islam also made its converts to lose faith in the old culture. Moreover, Christianity did not offer better prospects to the elite who recoiled at the subservience of the white man's religion. They saw in Islam a form of *Ilaju* (enlightenment). This was especially true of the external aspects of the religion - the new way of dressing,¹ the new mode of greeting, the parade on horseback during the Muslim festivals etc. The muslim chiefs constituted a 'new breed' in the society and the way they advertised the religion made it desirable to many of their clients and others in the community. As from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Islam started becoming 'fashionable' also among the ruling elite as they sought to perpetuate it within their families such that their descendants 'automatically' became muslims.

Again, the fact that most of the twentieth-century muslim rulers were descendants of the first Muslim Chiefs in Ibadan would show that Islam had made a solid inroad into the conclave of the traditional elite. It had become a factor to be reckoned with in terms of recruitments into the traditional chieftaincy structure. It would seem that Muslim Mogaji had greater chances than before of getting chieftaincy titles in the opening decades of the twentieth century. In other words, more Muslim chiefs were admitted into the chieftaincy hierarchy enough to create a situation where there was a preponderance of Muslim chiefs in the upper ranks

1. Osundina even wore his own turban to the warfront.

as from the mid 1920s as shown in Table 4. It now remained for illustrious Muslims who found themselves outside this traditional network to work their way to the top of the social ladder independent of the traditional elite. The avenue for this was provided by the Imamate.

The Chief Imam was the head of the orthodox Muslims in Ibadan. The early Imams were pious and devoted men who also excelled in Islamic scholarship. After the Imamship of Ibrahim Gambari of Oja'gbo (1886-1896), subsequent Imams were chosen from the families of the previous Imams whom it would seem had built 'religious dynasties' for themselves.¹ The exceptions to this were Imam Haruna Matanmi (1922-1935) and Imam Mohammed Bello Yusuf Inakoju (31/5/40-27/9/40) who were not from the families of former Imams.² By the beginning of the twentieth century the office of the Imam and those of other senior Islamic functionaries had acquired a position of significance in the wider Ibadan society. This had to do with the close association between these muslim leaders and the nineteenth-century military chiefs in Ibadan. The traditional military elite who were already distinguished in the society patronised and popularised the Muslim leaders causing them to rise to fame and renown, and to reverence and awe (the spiritual dimension) which most of the latter lacked. The Imamship thus

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1. This development has made El-Masri to conclude that the office of the Imam "gradually became confined to a few families" El-Masri, *op. cit.*, p.254 n.3.
 2. Other later Imams such as Sadiq Ali Folorunsho (1938-1988) and Mudathiru Abdus-Salam (1988-91) were not also from the families of the past Imams. Altogether, these new men were able to get to the Imamship through their commitment to excellence in Islamic scholarship and piety.

grew to be an office of "great prestige" which was keenly contested for by the leading Muslim scholars of their day.¹

There were two important offices directly under the Imam. One was the Chief *Mufassir*² (Chief Quranic exegetist) who interpreted the Quran and preached during the Ramadan month at the Central Mosque. The other was the *Ajanosi* who read passages from the Quran and delivered addresses before the Friday prayers commenced at the Central Mosque. These two religious functionaries and the Imam were appointed for life by a 'Council of Scholars' (Diwan al-Ulama) made up of ten leading members of the Central Mosque. The Council comprised the *Mogaji* line of six men and the *Alfa* line of four men. The men in the *Mogaji* line were 'heirs' i.e. representatives of all the past Chief Imams. Each *Mogaji* was chosen by the members of his family. The line was headed by the *Mogaji Agba* (Chief *Mogaji*) who was the most senior man - in terms of the number of years he had spent as a *Mogaji*. The *Alfa* line was made up of "long established scholars and shaykhs or the representatives of their families and those *Alfas* (scholars) who had joined the *Jama`at* (congregation) of the Central Mosque through their teachers".³

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1. El-Masri, *op. cit.*, p.253.
 2. Locally called Alfa Tafsir. Shuaibu, *op. cit.*, p.116.
 3. Shuaibu, *op. cit.*, p.109. Since there were only four seats for the *Alfa* in the Council of Scholars, it would seem that there was always a long waiting list of *Alfas* eager to enter the Council. This, I presume, would have engendered some degree of politicking among them and others that mattered in the Central Mosque. So apart from the Imamship in itself, membership of the Council was also keenly contested especially as the new Imam would eventually emerge from one of its senior members.

This group was headed by the *Alfa-Agba* (Chief Scholar) on the basis of the seniority of his ascendance to the position of scholarship.

Two points come out of the above arrangement. One is that the Chief Imam, his lieutenants, members of the Council of Scholars, and a few other leading Scholars outside the official circle of religious offices, all constituted a vital part of the Muslim elite in Ibadan. That was why appointments to the Imamship and other principal Islamic offices in Ibadan were limited largely to the families of the past Imams and Scholars (*Alfas*).¹ To preserve the elite tradition within their families, these Muslim leaders consistently pursued a policy of intermarriage among themselves. These internal marriages cemented the religious ties among them as well as partly keeping the elite stock pure.² Even where their choice of marriage partners went beyond the immediate circle of the *alfas* and Imams, it went to that

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1. A few of the families of the Muslim elite were: Inakoju compound at Ojaaba; Ita-Okoro compound at Isale-Osi (the base of Imam Uthman Abu Bakr Basunu 1839-1871, Imam Abdullahi Basunu 1896-1911, and Imam Muili Adisa Basunu (1940-1982); Qifu (Kifu) compound at Isale-Alfa; Elesinmeta compound at Isale-Osi, Harun Matanmi compound at Oke-Gege, Harun Agbeni compound at Agbeni, and Alagunfon compound, also at Agbeni, all in Ibadan.
 2. Examples of such marriages abound. (a) Alfa Yusuf Inakoju, a learned scholar, married Atikatu, daughter of Imam Sulayman Alagunfon (1884-86). One of the products of the marriage was Imam Bello Inakoju (1940). (b) One of the wives of Imam Sadiq Ali Folorunsho (1983-88) was Asiata Amoke, daughter of Imam Abdullahi Basunu (1896-1911). (c) Imam Ahmad Muhali Adisa (1940-1982) married Husaynat Anike, sister of Mohammad Sadiq b. Ali Folorunsho who later became Chief Imam (1983-1988).

of the Muslim political title holders¹ in Ibadan and to other categories of the muslim elite.

The second observation is that the *Mogaji* line of the Council of Scholars and indeed the Mogajiship of the families of past Imams were reflections of the 'traditional' Mogajiship in Ibadan chieftaincy politics. Although the religious mogajiship did not qualify its incumbents for admission into the traditional political hierarchy of chieftaincy titles, it served partly as a recruitment ground for future leaders of the Muslim community, a springboard from which Muslims who aspired to socie-religious advancement could take off. On the other hand, it also restricted opportunities of illustrious and learned Muslims who were not from the recognized families of past Imams but who eyed the Imamship. Such men might have to go through the Alfa line.² It represented an adaptation of a political organizational pattern to the religious sphere. This could be represented as a borrowing of structural framework from one sector of the society by another.

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1. (a) Imam Abdullahi Basunu (1896-1911) married a grand daughter of Balogun Ali-Iwo who had come to settle in Ibadan around the mid-nineteenth century. (b) Misturah, one of the daughters of Imam Abdullahi Basunu was married to one Chief Ayyub of Isale-Osi who rose to be Ekarun Olubadan before he died. (c) Alfa Mohammed Ajagbe, son of Imam Harun Agbeni married a descendant of Aare Latoosa. Imam Ali Mohammed (1935-1940) was a product of the union. It is also significant to note that Christian spouses were strictly discouraged by members of this category of muslim leaders.
 2. This was the case of Imam Harun Matanmi (1922-1935), Muhammed Bello Inakoju (1940), Sadiq Ali Folorunsho (1983-1988) and Mudathiru Abdul Salam (1988-1991).

Apart from the category of learned scholars from which the leaders of the Muslim community were chosen, there were two other categories of the Muslim elite. One was situated somewhere below the official leaders of the Muslim community discussed above. This was the class of the *alhaji* (s) and *alhaja*(s). These were individuals who could afford to make the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. In this group were Alhaji Abubakar Onisinyan of Ile Ori Are, Agbeni and Alfa Harun Matanmi of Oke Gege.¹ These two represented the first-generation *alhaji*(s) in Ibadan who combined wealth with religious piety and who were respected because of the widening of their religious experience effected by the pilgrimage. But by the middle of the twentieth century, the esteem enjoyed by subsequent *alhaji*(s) was due more to their wealth than their religious peity. Hunmoani Alaga was among the first set of women to perform the *Haji*.

The other eminent set of individuals within the muslim community were those who were neither official leaders of the faith nor necessarily *alhaji*(s) but who were wealthy enough to be recognised as being important among other Muslims. These individuals, more often than not were the benefactors of the Imamate and the Muslim community in general. Salami Agbaje belonged to this group. In 1921 when the central mosque was being expanded due to the growing

1. Interview with Alhaji Tiamiyu Aare and Alfa Elesinmeta as cited above.

number of worshippers, he supplied and transported the essential building materials from Lagos at his own expense. He also made the largest single donation of five hundred pounds (£500) towards the completion of the project.¹ Members of this elite category built personal mosques in their quarters for the use of the community. This kind of mosque (*ratibi* mosques) and its congregation were an extension of their social influence. Chief Adebisi Giwa and Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga (both rich traders) exemplified this. In this group too was Alhaji T.K. Animashaun who single-handedly established a Grammar School at Odinjo in 1967 to train Muslim children.²

The relationship between Muslims and the rest of society was cordial. Right from the nineteenth century, Ibadan chiefs patronized Muslim leaders for talismans and charms in times of war. The link between the two groups was particularly close when the head-chief (Baale or Olubadan) was a muslim. Even when he was not a muslim, he always tried to be cordial with the muslim community in line with the Yoruba view of the ruler as father of all in the society without any religious discrimination. Again, the link between the political head of the town and the Muslim community was further cemented by the custom of having the new Chief Imam turbaned by the Olubadan or in his presence. This

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1. *The Ibadan Muslim Progressive Committee, Facts About the Ibadan Central Mosque. Ibadan 1968. p.4; The Ibadan Muslim Progressive Committee, Official Opening of the First Phase and Launching of the Second Phase of the Ibadan Central Mosque. Ibadan, 1982. p.3. Cited in Shuaibu, op. cit.*
 2. Interview with Alhaji Elesinmeta, April 1995, and Justice Ganiyu Agbaje, 28/3/95.

practice reinforced the relationship between the religious elite and the political leaders of the town.

Apart from this, muslim leaders played an active role in the political development of Ibadan. We have already seen many of the traditional chiefs who were muslims. The muslim elite was also in the political parties. Alfa Abdullahi Akano Elesinmeta was the Propaganda Secretary of the Ibadan Tax Payers Association, the group that spawned the Mabolaje¹ which was led by the indefatigable Adegoke Adelabu, another muslim. Even in the Mabolaje, Elesinmeta was one of Adelabu's henchmen, playing a very active role (akin to that of a chaplain) in the party. Alhaji Y..S. Ola-Ishola of the Islamic Missionary Soceity was a member of the Ibadan People's Party (I.P.P.) formed in June 1951. He resigned from the party in October of the same year to join the Egbe Omo Ibile (I.P.A.) of which he later became Secretary. By 1954, he was one of the N.C.N.C. leaders in Ibadan having been Secretary of its Western Working Committee in 1952. But in August, 1954 he crossed to the Action Group and remained there till the end of our period (1966). He was also a founder of the United Muslim Party (UMP) formed in June 21, 1953.² The other founding members were Bello Abasi, A.B. Inakoju and Salami Akinfenwa³ - all Ibadan Muslims. The UMP was

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1. The 'Mabolaje' was short form for 'Ibadan Mabolaje Grand Alliance' between the Ibadan Tax Payers Association and the N.C.N.C. See chapter 8 for further details.
 2. *Nigerian Tribune* June 24, 1953.
 3. Salami Akinfenwa was a member of the Ibadan Citizen's Committee and also active in Ibadan Native Council matters in the 1950s.

probably formed as a counter-check to Adelabu's Mabolaje and it enjoyed the patronage of the Action Group. The UMP was heavily criticised because of its religious bias and it died a natural death.¹

Furthermore, there was the creation of the office of the Babasale Musulumi (Patron of Ibadan Muslims) in 1953. The first incumbent was Bello Abasi, son of the Olubadan Okunola Abasi, and President of the Egbe Omo Ibile from 1948.² The office of the Babasale Musulumi was represented as the Muslim equivalent of the Babasale Onigbagbo (Patron of Christians)³, but the circumstances which gave birth to it were more political than religious. In fact, it was alleged that the chieftaincy was supported by the Action Group as an incentive to Bello Abasi for the role he was expected to play in supporting the party and, in addition, to bring to its disposal his reputation and weight in Ibadan politics.⁴ Whatever was the case, the office went moribund after the death of Abasi only to be resuscitated later in the 1990s as a bulwark for Ibadan Muslims in the political heat of the decade.

Lastly, there was also a certain degree of fusion of traditional and muslim values represented by the idiosyncracies of certain members of the elite. Adegoke

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1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, June 29, 1953; June 30, 1953 and July 1, 1953.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 32: Egbe Omo Ibile Papers. File 2 'Resolution on the Appointment of Bello Abasi as Chairman I.P.A." Sept. 24, 1948; *Nigerian Tribune*, Sept. 8, 1953.
 3. The first Christian Babasale was David Kukomi installed in the third quarter of the nineteenth century in Ibadan.
 4. *Southern Nigeria Defender*. Oct. 29, 1953.

Adelabu was a case in point. Despite the fact that he was an *Alhaji*, he did not allow his muslim beliefs to stop him from invoking traditional sentiments in his political manouvering. All these constituted the magic in him that was called 'charisma' which attracted so many followers to him in the heat of politics. The point here is that while Islam contributed much to the shaping of the outlook of the muslim elite, it also responded to contemporary socio-political fluctuations and was sometimes merged with traditional values by political draughtsmen for the achievement of political ends.

The Growth and Spread of Christianity in Ibadan

Christianity was introduced to Nigeria through the activities of missionaries that came largely from Europe and America. In Ibadan, the first Christian mission was the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) represented by the Rev. David Hinderer.¹ In 1851, Hinderer sowed the seed of Christianity in Ibadan which later germinated and blossomed as represented by the activities of the numerous Christian missions in the city. At the intitial stage, the missionary enterprise in Ibadan met with certain problems, chief among which was opposition from the native population and the rivalry of traditional religion and Islam both of which had already been in Ibadan before the arrival of Christianity. The early missionaries grappled with lack of funds and men with which to do the work of the gospel. The insecurity caused by incessant wars during the second half of the century made the task of the missionaries particularly onerous as most of their supplies (personal

1. A. Hinderer, *Seventeen Years in the Yoruba Country*. (Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, London. 1872). p.20.

effects, missionary materials) were either lost in transit from Lagos to Ibadan, or held up by one or the other of the warring factions. Despite all these obstacles, the CMS mission in Ibadan managed to make a slow progress. By 1884 it already had three congregations at Kudeti, Ogunpa and Aremo with one hundred and thirty-three (133) communicants and perhaps, about that number again were connected with the church.¹

The CMS were not the only missionaries in Ibadan. By the beginning of the twentieth century several others came to establish in Ibadan. The Christian Church then began to spread rapidly. By 1966, the terminal date of this study, there had been not just an extensive spread of the Christian faith, but also a proliferation of Christian organizations and Churches in Ibadan.

There were two broad categories of Christian organizations in Ibadan in the period under study: the 'established churches'² and the other groups. Under the 'established churches' were Protestants and Roman Catholics. The other groups comprised the African Churches and Independent Churches (called 'Aladura' or 'Pentecostals').

As mentioned above, the Protestants first got to Ibadan. The incident of the arrival of David Hinderer and his missionary party in Ibadan on May 16, 1853 is commemorated in the saying:

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1. Hinderer, *op. cit.*, p.20.
 2. The 'established Churches' were those with Western roots and which had commonly accepted doctrines, with some air of permanence about them, namely, all Protestant forms and the 'historic' Roman Catholic Churches.

'Esin si `keje ló mú gbàgbó wò `Bàdàn'.¹

(The horse was the seventh in the party that brought Christianity to Ibadan).

This was because David Hinderer entered Ibadan on horseback followed by five other men, viz. Messrs Phillips, Dalley, Marsh, Olubi and Okuseinde.² The last two were Yoruba. The party approached the Baale Olugbode and his chiefs for permission to establish their mission in Ibadan and preach there. The chiefs conferred among themselves and the Osi Balogun, Chief Osundina, a Muslim opposed the missionaries on the grounds that they were bringers of ill-luck; everywhere the missionary went, he was followed by wars, pestilence, and epidemic. This was incidentally an opinion that would appear to have been encountered in a few other places against the whites and the missionaries.³ When the chiefs could come to no agreement among themselves, the Ifa oracle was consulted and it was Ifa that ruled in favour of the missionaries, that they be allowed to stay. Immediately, the missionary party was warmly received and handed over to one Chief Abayomi, the Ajia Balogun who was to be their patron, to represent their interests in the Council of State. Chief Abayomi in turn entrusted the Hinderer group to Chief Olunloyo, his balogun who lived very close to Kudeti hill, the area allocated to the latter.

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1. Interview with Rev. G.L. Lasebikan (Snr.) in his home at Felele, Ibadan 27/1/93; and Chief H.V.A. Olunloyo, Otun Balogun of Ibadan, at Olunloyo compound 27/1/93.
 2. Interview with Rev. Lasebikan as cited above.
 3. Gbadamosi, *op.cit.*, p.126; S. Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas* (C.M.S. 1921), p.136.

Some important points come out from the above narrative on the arrival of Hinderer to Ibadan. One, that the Ifa oracle was not averse to the coming of the missionaries. Could it be that the oracle was demonstrating its benevolence to the missionaries because it knew (or foresaw) some of the benefits they also possessed, such as Western education? However, this benevolence was not reciprocated by the Christian missionaries who later attacked traditional religion with intense passion and venom. Secondly, the missionaries were not excluded from the network of the clientage system existing in Ibadan at that period. Chief Abayomi was Hinderer's 'babaogun'. Although Hinderer was spared the intricacies and military demands of the clientage system, he could still approach the chief if he had any problem. Thus, just as other citizens were placed under the protective custody of military chiefs, Hinderer was also placed under the Ajia Balogun.¹

The CMS was not the only Protestant mission in Ibadan. In 1888 Methodist missionaries came to Ibadan, but it was in 1891 under Rev. C.B. Macaulay that they established a mission there.² The Baptist mission came to Ibadan in 1906 to establish the First Baptist Church at Idikan, spearheaded by Chief D.A. Obasa.³ From there the Baptist mission began to spread in Ibadan.

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1. This clientage system has been discussed in detail in Chapter One of this work.
 2. E.B. Idowu, "Traditional Religion and Christianity" in P.C. Lloyd *et. al.* (eds). *The City of Ibadan*. (Cambridge 1967), p.239.
 3. J.A. Atanda, (ed.) *Baptist Churches in Nigeria 1850-1950*. (Ibadan University Press. 1988) pp.43-44.

Other Protestant missions in Ibadan in the period under study included the Salvation Army, founded in 1921 and the Seventh Day Adventist, established in 1926.¹

The Roman Catholics were not left out of the missionary enterprise in Ibadan. In 1895, Bishop Paul Pellet of the Société des Missions Africaines (SMA) decided to found a mission in Ibadan and he sent Fathers Pied and T. Klaus to start the spadework.² These two approached the Baale and Chiefs who appeared favourably disposed to the idea of the establishment of a Catholic mission in their land. A site was chosen at Oke-Aare Hill for which the missionaries paid twenty-five pounds sterling (£25). It was on this site that the first Catholic Church in Ibadan was built. Later in 1907, a new and larger mission was opened near Ogunpa stream called Oke-Padre and in the following year a convent was added to it. The Catholics also opened a seminary in 1908 at Oke-Aare where they hoped to train priests. However, few of the early students reached the goal of priesthood, but many became teachers and catechists, and served the mission well as laymen.

There were also other missions in Ibadan. First were the African Churches. These African Churches were break-aways from the established Protestant Churches (i.e. Anglican, Methodist, Baptist) because of the dominant position of

1. Idowu, *op. cit.*, p.239

2. M.P. MacLoughlin, "Highlights of the History of the Catholic Church in the Lagos Ecclesiastical Province" in A.O. Makozi and G.J. Afolabi Ojo (eds.) *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*. (Macmillan Lagos, 1982), p.21.

white missionaries in the church and partly on grounds of discipline connected with Christian practice. Other issues that fuelled secession were the relationship of the Church to Yoruba society and culture, and racial discrimination within the Church.¹ They all wanted churches run by Africans for Africans with some measure of control of the clergy. They all resented the racist attitude of the white missionaries and were unanimous in their condemnation of the humiliation to which African Church leaders like Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther and Bishop James Johnson had been subjected.² The schisms occurred in Lagos where separatist movements (African Churches) such as the Native Baptist Church, United Native African Church, United African Methodist Church (Eleja) and the African Church (Salem and Bethel) which spread all over Nigeria began.³ The first introduction of an African Church into Ibadan took place in 1914 and gradually the movement began to spread in the town.

These African churches conformed their worship to the ways and practices of the orthodox churches from which they had earlier seceded. Even their liturgies were still the same as before. They used traditional music and songs at worship, and certain traditional practices such as polygamy were tolerated for laymen in the African Churches, while insisting that the Ministers must be monogamous.

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1. J.D.Y. Peel, *Aladura: A Religious Movement Among the Yoruba*. (International African Institute and Oxford University Press, London. 1968), p.55.
 2. S.A. Dada, *A History of the African Church*, (Aowa Publishers, Ibadan. 1986), p.53.
 3. J.B. Webster, *The African Churches Among the Yoruba 1888-1922*. (Claredon Press Oxford, London. 1964). Chap. Two.

There were also the Independent Churches, independent in the sense that they did not belong to any of the well established groups. This genre of churches was also 'African' in that they were founded, organized and run by Africans. Their mode of worship also incorporated some traditional elements. The movement that led to the rise of these independent churches started around 1924-30 (or a bit earlier) as a result of the people's longing for spiritual fulfilment and reawakening which the 'established churches' did not offer.¹ The major bodies formed then included Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) founded around 1925,² the Apostolic Church and the Church of the Lord. Some of these churches later proliferated and multiplied under various names. Most of the founders of these Churches were individuals (prophets) who claimed to have seen heavenly visions, received divine revelations or a divine call to preach the gospel.³ The major emphasis of these churches was on the efficacy of prayer hence the name 'aladura' by which they were commonly called.⁴

Some of the other characteristics of the independent churches included divine healing through prayers alone, boisterous and ecstatic behaviour at worship plus a frank and uninhibited zeal for evangelism.⁵ As a way of indigenizing the

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1. Idowu, *op. cit.*, p.241.
 2. It was first called the Seraphim Church before it was changed to Cherubim and Seraphim.
 3. Examples of such prophets are Daniel Orekoya, Joseph Babalola, Moses Orimolade, Captain Abiodun and Oshitelu.
 4. Peel, *op. cit.*
 5. Idowu, *op. cit.*, p.242.

church these independent churches provided their own substitutes for certain elements connected with the traditional system of divination, for example, there was the use of Psalms as charms, rituals with magical overtones and the imposition of ritual acts or penances. The overall effect of this was that the worship of those spiritual churches had a way of stirring the emotional recesses of the African mind which the imported liturgies of the 'established churches' could not do.

All these Christian organizations and churches were not just concerned with evangelism (i.e making conversions among the people of Ibadan), they were also concerned with the provision of Western education and healing. The pioneers in the field of Western education were the CMS missionaries. The first elementary school in Ibadan started in the home of the Hinderers on Kudeti Hill. Chief Olunloyo gave two of his children, Yejide and Akiele¹ to be trained by the Hinderers in their school. After Kudeti, the CMS established other schools around their other mission stations (Ogunpa, Aremo and Yemetu). In 1913 the first Grammar School in Ibadan, Ibadan Grammar School was established by the Anglicans. The Catholics were not left out of the educational field. "After the mission moved to Oke-Padre, the number of conversions increased and there was a

1. There are some discrepancies in pieces of information relating to this. Oral information given by Chief H.V.A. Olunloyo (on 27/1/93) states that Olunloyo first gave two slaves whom he later withdrew and replaced with two of his own children. The Ibadan historian, I.B. Akinyele records that Olunloyo gave two of his children. Whether slaves or his own kids, the fact still remains that Olunloyo gave two children - Akiele and Yejide and it should be enough for us here that the sources consulted agreed to the number and names of the children given.

marked increase in school attendance."¹ The educational activities of the Roman Catholic covered elementary and secondary schools. And in this respect, St. Theresa's College was moved from Lagos to Ibadan in the late forties and Loyola College was opened in 1953. The mission also had an Institute for Training Lay Leaders. The Baptist, Seventh Day Adventists and the other missions all had educational institutions which offered elementary and secondary training to pupils.

Furthermore, the provision of healing was prominent in the programme of the Christian missions. While the Catholic missions established hospitals like the Catholic Hospital at Oluyoro Oke-Offa to provide health facilities and health care for the people, the independent Churches emphasized divine healing through prayers alone and in that way ministered healing to their flock. So while one group (the established church) dispensed healing through the human agency and facilities, the other ministered same through the divine or supernatural agency. Their methods differed but their aims remained the same.

Christianity and Society

The relationship between the Christian Church and the rest of Ibadan society at large varied over time. The early missionaries - Hinderer and his party - encountered considerable opposition from the people of Ibadan. On the one hand, the local chiefs were suspicious that Christianity might jeopardize their influence and authority. Christianity was an alien creed with which they were not familiar and so they could not bring themselves to trust it. This could be seen in the way

1. Macloughlin, *op. cit.*, p.21.

early converts were persecuted by their immediate families and the rest of the society. Anna Hinderer's memoirs later published as *Seventeen Years in Yoruba Country* is replete with examples and cases of this.¹ Again, Islam had been embraced by the leaders of the city before the advent of Christianity, so they saw it as a rival faith. Chief Osundina's (Osi Balogun) impatience with the missionaries described earlier in this chapter was just a sample of the hostility demonstrated by muslims and indeed by the rest of the society who were adherents of traditional religion to the early missionaries and their converts. Perhaps, the rest of society had cause to fear the missionaries who succeeded in converting some traditionalists as well as a few members of the leading muslim families. The very first set of Christian converts in Ibadan comprised Olawale Inakoju (from the Inakoju Muslim family), James Oderinde (another muslim) who brought David Kukomi (a traditionalist), Israel Atere, Noah Kujeminiya, Fabiyi, Cornelius Adesolu, Peter Adebisi and Laniya (the first female convert).² In addition, the first set of pupils at the St. Paul's Anglican Primary School established in 1894 was made up of Rabiun Alli-Iwo (a descendant of the Balogun Alli-Iwo who was a staunch Muslim), Raji and Oseni (both from Muslim homes), David Ojo³ (son of an Ifa priest) and

1. Hinderer, *op. cit.*

2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 44: Notebook titled "Memorial Address: Canon Okuseinde 1860-1940". The material for this address was compiled from the sermons of Canon Okuseinde by Bishop A.B. Akinyele.

3. Paternal grandfather of the author.

eleven other children.¹ Indeed such early converts were seen as the scum of the society. It was later when their literary skills became evident and they began to acquire the ways of the *Oyinbo* (white man) that they were seen in a much better light. Gradually the gospel broke through the hostility and indifference of many of the people and by the end of our period (1966), with all the 'spiritual' churches and their direct appeal to the African emotion and spirit, a large percentage of the population had embraced Christianity.

Christian education was also not embraced by majority of the populace initially because of the deep-seated mistrust of Christians discussed above and also because the chiefs did not appreciate the value of education. They considered sending their wards to school a waste of the time which those

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1. The others were Okediran, Okedara, Odekeye, Babatunde, Dairo, Adeyemi, Oniroko, Adegoke Akintayo, Ojo Jaiyeoba, Albert Adewusi and Ayoola. J.L. Dina, *Itan Ijo Ibadan Ati ti Aadota Odun Ijo Yemetu*. (Union Press, Ibadan. 1944) p.12. (J.L. Dina was himself a product of St. Paul's Primary School, and was Treasurer of St. Paul's Church (1941) before he published the *Itan Ijo*.)

Note that the Kudeti school was the first in Ibadan. The first set of pupils there, under the tutelage of Mrs. Hinderer were: Akiele, Yejide, Onisaga, Lanionu, Arubo, Elukolo, Abudu, Ogunyomi, Konigbagbe, R.S. Oyebode, Susanna Dalley and Mary Ann Macaulay. These children could be divided into three categories. First were the offsprings of fellow missionary workers, second were children of converts and well wishers (e.g. Olunloyo's kids), and lastly there were destitutes and slaves picked from the streets. Hinderer, *op.cit.*, K. Morgan, *Akinyele's Outline History of Ibadan*. Part 2 (Caxton Press, Ibadan. n.d.) pp.131-151.

kids could have spent on the farm. Eventually, missionary education was accepted and it became successful to the extent that by 1966, seventy-five percent (75%) of the work of education in Ibadan was in the hands of the churches.¹

But before this was achieved, a lot of efforts and activities were invested by native leaders of the church who laboured to give Christianity a solid footing in Ibadan. While the credit for bringing and planting the 'Good News' went to the missionaries, that for nurturing and spreading it belonged to these native leaders. The 'fathers' of the C.M.S. Church in Ibadan were Rev. Daniel Olubi (who took over from Rev. Hinderer as Pastor of the Kudeti Church), Mr. James Okuseinde (Snr), Messrs W.S. Allen (first Catechist and Church worker at Ogunpa), Simon Orukotan (who later became the first Christian to be made a traditional chief in Ibadan), David Kukomi (the first Babasale Onigbagbo), Daniel Adetoun (who later succeeded Kukomi as the second Babasale Onigbagbo), Josiah Akinyele, J. Lasebikan and John Adelagun. Altogether, these men worked for the propagation and preservation of Christianity in Ibadan, starting from their own individual families. The Christian tradition was firmly preserved in their families and it is not surprising that many of the twentieth-century C.M.S. clergy and leaders of the Church came from their descendants. Rev. A.B. Akinyele and Chief I.B. Akinyele were sons of Josiah Akinyele while Rev. Olusegun Akinyele was his grandson. The descendants of Simon Orukotan included Canon P.V. Adebisi and Rev. Adebisi. Among the children of Daniel Olubi were Rev. Daniel Olubi (Jnr) and Rev. Othniel Olubi. The descendants of J. Lasebikan included Rev. Gabriel

1. Idowu, *op. cit.*, p.243.

Ladoke Lasebikan and Canon George Latunji Lasebikan. Canon Okuseinde (the Senior Pastor of Aremo) was son of Mr. James Okuseinde while Mr. Elkanah Allen, the Baba Egbe Ibukun Olorun of St. Paul's Church Yemetu was the son of W.S. Allen. The descendants of David Kukomi included: Rev. R.S. Oyeboode, Bishop D.R. Oyeboode, Rev. E.A. Ladapo, Rev. Omideyi, Rev. E.M. Alalade, Bishop Bolaji, Rev. E.A. Morakinyo, Rev. Adejumo and Rev. T. Aderinola.

Moreover, the work of education carried out by the churches has had a tremendous impact on Ibadan life. It is in this respect that the careers of A.B. Akinyele¹ and E.O. Alayande are very significant. A.B. Akinyele was the first Principal of the Ibadan Grammar School from 1913-1933. As one of the leaders of public opinion in Ibadan (an active member of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan and a member of the first-generation educated elite in the city, his social standing brought great prestige to the school which gradually became identified, though not exclusively, with elite children.

More importantly, his position as a clergyman served to underpin the Christian orientation of the early educated elements in Ibadan. The students were given a combination of sound secular and religious instructions, and this Christian undertone helped to mould their characters. Rev. Akinyele became Bishop in 1933² - the first to be produced by Ibadan - upon which he left the school. He was succeeded as principal by a series of clergymen (Archdeacon S.V. Latunde), 1933-1940, Canon F.A. Odusanwo, 1940-1948, Archdeacon E.O. Alayande 1948-

1. For a biographical sketch of Rev. A.B. Akinyele, see pp.149-150 above.

2. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 3: Diary 1933. Entry for July 25.

1968). Of these men, however, Archdeacon E.O. Alayande left the most indelible mark on the school - this perhaps could be because like the founder, A.B.Akinyele, he spent two decades heading the school, a period which allowed him to realize his potentials as far as school administration and leadership were concerned.

Emmanuel Oladipo Alayande was born in 1910 to a Muslim family whose traditional profession was drumming.¹ He got converted while in school. He attended St. Peter's Infant School Aremo for his elementary education after which he proceeded to St. Andrew's College Oyo from 1929-1932. After teaching for a decade in a couple of schools, he left in 1943 for Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone where he obtained a B.A. in 1946 and later a Diploma in Education from the University of London in 1947. On his return to Nigeria, he joined the staff of the Ibadan Grammar School as vice-Principal in 1947 and became Principal in 1948, remaining in the office till 1968 when he retired. Meanwhile, he was ordained an Anglican priest in 1950. He became a Canon in 1960 and in 1976 was made an Archdeacon.

As head of the oldest secondary school in Ibadan, Rev. Alayande was instrumental in shaping the careers of many eminent individuals. Part of the innovations he made as Principal were: the introduction in 1956 of the Higher School Certificate (HSC) programme to the school; the movement of the school from its old site at Oke-Aare to its present, larger site at Molete in 1951; and the

1. Interview with Ven. E.O. Alayande at his Oke-offa residence. Jan. 26, 1990.

development of a multi-ethnic, non-segregated and co-educational boarding institution from which the new University College Ibadan (established in 1948) drew a considerable number of science and art undergraduates over the years

Perhaps, the most important contribution of Bishop A.B. Akinyele and Rev. E.O. Alayande as individual members of the elite category in Ibadan to social life in the city was in the area of reproducing the elite through opportunities offered by Ibadan Grammar School. It is clear that the school was open to students from all over the nation once they satisfied entry requirements, but the fact that it was located in Ibadan made it more relevant to the city's social development. The Christian atmosphere of the school gave the students an unmistakably Christian orientation, and for the indigenes particularly, the friendship and social ties they had made in the school served them well later in life in political and other social fields. A large number of the educated elite in Ibadan during the period covered by this study had attended the Grammar School.

Equally important is the role of the school in producing men who later founded, headed or taught in other Ibadan schools thus spreading the Grammar school's 'culture'. This role was foisted on it because it was the first secondary school in Ibadan. Government College, Ibadan was established as part of government's meagre effort in the educational sector. And up till 1938 when T.L. Oyesina founded Ibadan Boys' High School¹, these two remained the only secondary schools in Ibadan. In the 1940s and 50s a few more individuals rose to

1. Timothy Lajide Oyesina was once a teacher at the Grammar School before he founded the Ibadan Boys' High School in 1938. Interview with T.L. Oyesina (Jnr) at his Oke-Bola residence in Ibadan. 4/10/94.

the challenge of shortage of schools by establishing private educational institutions thus expanding the frontiers of knowledge in Ibadan.

With the acquisition of Western education by a sizeable number in the Ibadan society, there came the rise of what was known as the *òlájú* culture.¹ The *òlájú* in the city comprised mostly Christians and some non-Christians who had acquired Western education. These were not Ibadan indigenes only but comprised others from outside Ibadan who were resident in the town. The *òlájú* culture manifested mainly in language, dressing, marriage, diet, and general attitude. The *òlájú* used the English language in official and private communications.² Some of them even pretended lack of proficiency in the Yoruba language when dealing with illiterates. The *òlájú* also preferred Western dresses especially the suits (by the men). On the issue of marriage, the ideal of the *òlájú* was monogamy. But this was not always the case in practice. While a few of them were actually monogamists, others had more than one wife. Of the many wives, one was the 'official wife' who wore gowns, hats and gloves, and could speak some English. She also accompanied the husband on formal occasions such as official receptions or 'garden parties'. The other wives had to engage themselves in money-yielding ventures if the man must retain his status in society because he could not afford to feed and clothe them all and their children, buy good clothes for himself and meet other socio-economic obligations all at the same time. With regards to eating

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1. *Olaju* in Yoruba means one whose eyes are opened, that is, 'the enlightened'.
 2. T. Falola has similar findings in his *Politics and Economy in Ibadan*. (Modelor, Lagos. 1989), p.222.

habits, while others had light or no breakfast, something light at lunch and a heavy dinner, the *olaju* observed all the three meals - breakfast, lunch, dinner. In addition, table manners were emphasised among the *olaju*. But these were not hard and fast habits. They were often relaxed when the *olaju* was not in the public gaze. More importantly, the concept of the *olaju* went beyond the external parade of a new culture. It had to do with psychological pride. It was an attitude of the mind which saw others as lacking what the *olaju* possessed - western education, and it was the attempt to display these skills that produced the characteristics described above.

Of all these, the one which ordinary folks who did not share their status always liked to imitate was the use of English language for communication. Some of the people began to pick English greetings such as 'welcome', 'good morning', 'good afternoon', 'good evening', and phrases such as 'thank you', 'hello', 'how much', 'nice man' etc. But why should the people choose to imitate the use of English language by the *olaju*?

The reason for this could be that the indigenes regarded the English language as a 'superior' language to Yoruba because it was the language spoken by their colonial masters; it was also spoken by the Europeans who operated the firms that bought their produce and lastly, it was the language which their sons who had been to school learnt and subsequently spoke. And if it was regarded as an important language by the *olaju* then it must be so indeed. But one should ask here whether the *olaju* culture was coterminus with high status in the society. Or in other words, were the *olaju* the elite of the colonial period?

The *òlájú* were those who sought to imbibe *oyinbo* ways in their conduct and mannerisms. The outward symbols they adopted advertised them as a different 'species' in the society and lifted them out of the general class of ordinary men and women. But that is not to say that they were automatically admitted into elite status. They needed to distinguish themselves in other realms before they could aspire to elite status. However, the *òlájú* culture did one important thing, it provided the recruitment ground for future elite. As discussed in Chapter Three, the elite category during the colonial era comprised the old elite - chiefs who still clung to their traditional claims to leadership, and the new elite - the educated elements. These educated elements were recruited from among the *olaju* although that was not their only qualification.

Next, we need to look at the role of the big men in the church. Some of the individuals who occupied high positions in the society also performed important roles in the church. They helped in the leadership and organization of the church. They were the patrons of some of the churches providing the 'father figure' or 'elder image'. They contributed immensely to the finances of the church. As individuals who belonged to the elite category they transferred the patron/client network which existed in the political sphere into the church thus using their political influence in the traditional setting to promote Christianity among their followers who would not have joined the church except as clients of a great man. I shall illustrate this point with the careers of I.B. Akinyele, E.H. Oke and D.A. Obasa between 1920-1964.

However, before the three men listed above became active in politics and religion, even before they were born, there had been instances of highly placed

individuals patronising the church. Such was the case of Chief Olunloyo in the middle of the nineteenth century. Olunloyo did not become an outright convert but he was sympathetic enough to the cause of Christianity. He was the first person to give his children to the missionaries to be trained. He was also quite friendly and close to the Hinderers as attested to in Anna Hinderer's records. The basis of Olunloyo's friendliness with the missionaries should not be interpreted as flowing out of his official duty as their protector. That responsibility did not dictate that he should give his children as pupils to the Hinderers, but should be seen as a demonstration of the soft spot he had for missionaries and their religion. As a chief, for him to openly present himself as a convert would have done him a lot of injury (both social and political) and so it was enough or considered adequate by him that he should plead the cause of the christians and assist them in all ways open to him, short of actually joining them. His was an age in which big men could only sympathize with, and be benevolent to Christianis but refrained from becoming part of them.¹

But things changed in the twentieth century, when the Egbe Agba-O-Tan, made up of educated elements in the society gradually began to play an active role in local affairs. As their society had to do with cultural revival and preservation, they celebrated the progress of Africans not only in the state but also in the church. Some of the active members were religious leaders - A.B. Akinyele was an

1. This was unlike the case with Islam in the same period when rulers and chiefs embraced it openly. By that time Islam had been firmly rooted (Nonetheless, it had had its own teething problems and trying times too in the 1830s/1840s).

ordained Anglican priest who rose to be a Bishop. D.A. Obasa was a founder of the Idikan Baptist Church. The Egbe, because of the leadership position it played in the society brought its members into limelight and people recognized them individually and collectively as leaders. This bestowed some prestige on those members as well as a high status in society which they carried over into religion. In other words, they transferred the popularity and the high status which membership of the Egbe and their own individual achievements outside the Egbe had conferred upon them into their religion to further its cause.

E.H. Oke was also another important figure in the Ibadan society who played a very active role in religion.¹ He was the founder of the United Native African Church in Ibadan. Even before founding the U.N.A. Church, he was a member of the First Baptist Church, Idikan which he had joined in 1908.² As founder and patron of the U.N.A. Church, he was also favourably disposed to the Seraphim Church.³ His role in the UNA church was that of a father or patron and his activities in this regard were varied. He was instrumental in the acquisition of the church site and building. He also provided a substantial part of the church finances. His influence in the society was also reflected in the esteem and right of place accorded him in the church. E.H. Oke was not just a 'big man' in church, but the thread of religious leadership ran in his family. His son N.S. Oke was a leader of the Seraphim Church while his nephew M.A. Oke became an elder of the

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1. For his biographical sketch, see pp 150-151 and Table 2 above.
 2. Atanda, *op. cit.*, p.45.
 3. Peel, *op. cit.*, p.89.

Apostolic Church. This was another age in which prominent men played an active role in religion, enhanced by the resources, fame and esteem which they acquired outside the church.

It was not only in Ibadan that big men in the society played leadership or equally elevated roles in the church. In Lagos, H.A. Caulcrick was another important personality who was chief patron of the Ebute-Metta local U.N.A. church. There were other examples in other places too.¹

J.B. Webster's stereotype of the big man in Church whom he called the 'elder' is worth noting here. According to him the 'elder' "formed the apex of a pyramid of followers the size dependent upon his wealth, influence and family."² The 'elder' also had to perform many obligations to the people (his followers), to come to their aid anytime they needed financial help. They turned to him in all cases of emergency and he did not expect or demand repayment of the loans which he gave out. Webster then concludes that 'an elder could not be such without wealth. If he lost it, customarily, he lost his following. But money alone could not automatically confer the position.'

Perhaps, the best illustration of the role of the big man in church was in the career of I.B. Akinyele. He was a member of the Anglican Church Aremo before he joined the Faith Tabernacle Church in 1925.³ A branch of the Faith Tabernacle

1. Webster, *op. cit.*, p.137.

2. *Ibid*, p.138.

3. Faith Tarbernacle was the first in the series of independent churches that started to rise as from the 1920s. It was first started in Lagos from where it spread to other parts of Yorubaland. See Peel for more details.

Church¹ was established in his farm at Akinke village, fifteen miles to the southeast of Ibadan. He introduced the church to the local farmers and in doing this he was instrumental in spreading the doctrine to a social category different from those of the clerks, traders, who had earlier embraced the 'aladura' genre of Christianity. A school was also established there. Thus, by educating the people, Akinyele sought to create the conditions for a 'general acceptance of Faith Tabernacle doctrines.'² He used his important position to influence the traditional world of the farmers.

Again, when the Faith Tabernacle was to give way to the Christ Apostolic Church, the wave of revival stimulated by Prophet Daniel Orekoya's activities took place under the patronage of I.B. Akinyele in the 1930s. This revival penetrated Ibadan farms especially Akinyele's own farms at Akinyele Market, Akinke and Igbo-Elerin. He nurtured the church in these areas by visiting them regularly from the city as a pastor when his duties as a chief in Ibadan permitted. He was also assisted by local prophets. Even after he became Olubadan he still managed to find time to preach and spread the work of the church among his people.³ He was able to use his traditional position first as a chief and later as Oba, and the prestige conferred on him by his personal achievements to further the cause of the Christian gospel. He was very successful in this as Christianity now spread to a number of Ibadan villages. His influence was not restricted to the villages. Some of his

1. Peel, *op. cit.*, p.90.

2. Peel, *op. cit.*, p.90.

3. He was heavily criticised by his political opponents for this. *Southern Nigeria Defender*. Nov. 19, 1956.

personal associates who were highly placed received the faith through his activities.¹

Akinyele also established a Secondary Modern School and Secondary Grammar Schools e.g. C.A.C. Grammar School, Aperin Oniyere established in 1960. He contributed financially to the construction of churches at Akinke, Akinyele and at Olugbode in Ibadan.

While Oba Akinyele exemplified the role 'big men' or the elite could play in the promotion of religion, the other side of the coin is how religion affected some members of the elite. Although religion was not a state matter, any member of the elite that embraced whatever religion did so on an individual basis. And it was on that score that Christianity affected the conduct of public officers, especially those like Chief Akinyele who also played prominent roles in their congregation. Because of their public profession of religion such men strove to be upright and 'gentlemanly' in conduct and morals.

Before leaving this aspect, the office of the *Babasale Onigbagbo* (Patron of the Christians) is worth examining as an example of the early Christian elite in Ibadan. In the early days of Christianity in the town, its adherents faced a lot of problems as discussed above. In the face of opposition and intense hostility from the wider society, the early Christians naturally flocked together. This then created the need for a leader of their own kind-somebody to represent their interests and plead their cause with the local authorities.

1. J.A. Ayorinde, *Itan Igbesi Aiye Oba Akinyele*. (O.U.P. Ibadan. 1974). p.27.

The early clergy could not perform this role because they were not natives. The individual to fill this position must be well placed and respected in the society and must be of a relatively high status for his voice to be heard in the Council of Chiefs when speaking on behalf of Christians.

These qualities were found in David Kukomi of Oke-Offa quarters who was made the first Babasale of Ibadan Christians. He was a warrior, and as a member of the military class, he was respected in the wider society and well known. He had been converted during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, and at this time Christianity was not popular enough to bestow a high status on its adherents. A few, like Kukomi who were well respected earned the respect not on account of their being Christians, but as a result of their activities outside the church. Nonetheless, the conversion of such 'big men' boosted the morale of the Christian community.

The duties of a Babasale were varied. He mobilized the Christian community for any task or assignment that concerned them. He was also their spokesman in the town. Later in the colonial period, he began to sit as an adviser to the chiefs in court cases involving adherents of the Christian faith to prevent violations of its observances by non-Christian court members. This duty had an allowance attached to it and although the fee was negligible it boosted the image of the Babasale in an age when membership of courts and the Council was seen as a reflection of elite status. He also liaised with the Baale (later Olubadan) -in-Council on behalf of Ibadan Christians.¹

1. Oral interview with Rev. E.O. Alayande

Kukomi served well as the Babasale and adequately represented the interests of the Christian community. His quarter at Oke-Offa was renamed Oke-Offa Babasale. He also established a strong christian tradition in his family. His son, Simon Orukotan, was the first Christian chief in Ibadan. He was Abese Baale during Baale Situ's reign (1914-1925). After the death of David Kukomi, the second Babasale, Daniel Adetoun (1895-1918) also came from Oke-Offa. However, with the growth of the Christian population and the spread of different denominations, the title started to make its rounds among the various Christian groups.¹

So in the twentieth century, the Babasale did not represent only Anglicans, he was Patron of all Christians: Methodists, Baptists, Catholic, Aladura, etc. There was only one Babasale at a time, and individuals who succeeded to the office were men of high standing. Apart from being prominent in their local congregations, they also had connections outside the church and were much respected in the society. Despite the variation in doctrine and practice, Ibadan Christians maintained a united front as represented by the office of the Babasale Onigbagbo. But this should not be overemphasised as the office gradually lost its relevance.

The challenge posed by the hostility of the society to early Christians gradually cooled off as many more people became Christians and as Western education became more accepted. A new challenge arose from the proliferation of

1. D.T. Ariyibi who became Babasale in the 1950s was a member of the African Church. Interview with Chief (Mrs) J.E. Bolarinwa, 27/10/95.

Christian denominations which made it increasingly difficult for the Babasale to adequately represent the interests of all Ibadan Christians. With the passage of time, the office became more ceremonial, but the incumbent still remained a symbol of the unity of the local Christian community.

Apart from the coordinating role of the Egbe Agba-O-Tan, and the representative role of the Babasale, there were other 'solidarity' events which brought members of the Christian elite and their various followers together. One was the *adura odun* (universal annual prayers) organised by the leaders of all the churches in Ibadan at the beginning of each new year. This lasted from between three days to one week. It involved all members of the Christian community, and in the early days of Christianity in Ibadan, it was rotated among the churches for the entire duration of the exercise. This period also saw the exchange of pulpits. The Christians could gather at Kudeti today to listen to a Wesleyan (Methodist) priest while the next day could be the turn of the Anglicans at Elekuro (the Methodist' hold). Baptists and other groups were also very much a part of this exercise, and it emphasised the unity of the Christian body.¹

Also, in addition to the Babasale, there were other categories of church leaders whose influence was primarily restricted to their immediate congregation. These were not the 'early' church 'fathers', neither were they necessarily their descendants. They were laymen who played active roles in their local churches. While many of them were wealthy, a lot of them were average folks whose main distinctions were their Christian

1. The earliest reference to the *adura odun* was in Rev. F.L. Akiele's Diaries. K.D.L. A.B. Akinyele's Papers. Box 1: F.L. Akiele's Diaries. Diary 1888, entry for January 7. After each day's meeting, the host minister usually feasted his colleagues, including those from other denominations.

zeal and organizational abilities in the church. The prestige they enjoyed in the church could then be used (if they were so inclined) as a starting point for the pursuit of further distinctions in the wider society.

The first classification is that of society heads in the church. The ideas of societies gained wide prominence in Ibadan churches in the twentieth century. On the one hand the society served as an organizational unit in the Church, on the other, it was a forum for interaction, camaraderie and fellowship of individuals of similar age groups, sex or other interests. In short, it was an adaptation of the *Egbe* association in traditional Yoruba societies to the Church setting. The leaders of such church *Egbe* were men and women of great influence within the local assembly. For example, in the 1920s, Elkanah Allen and Maryanne Moyala were *BabaEgbe* (Father) and *Iya Egbe* (Mother) respectively of the *Egbe Ibukun Olorun* of St. Paul's Anglican Church Yemetu.¹ At St. David's Church Kudeti, Madam Aboderin was *Iya Egbe 'Ina Olorun Ntan'* (The Light of God is Shining) while Madam Kokumo was *Iya Egbe Isokan*² (Unity Society).

The second category is that of the church 'chiefs'. These were holders of chieftaincy titles conferred by the church. The titles, such as Balogun, Iyalode, Baale (and their lieutenants) were directly adapted from the town's hierarchy of political offices. However, the functions of the church's chiefs' did not correspond

1. Dina, *op. cit.*, p.48.

2. Interview with Pa Dotun Olubi (a descendant of the Rev. D. Olubi and an old member of St. David's Church, Kudeti). 29/9/94.

to that of their colleagues in the town with a similar nomenclature.¹ These chieftaincies were probably created to reward illustrious church members and to serve as overall coordinating points for lay mobilization. In the 1940s, for instance, Chief Theophilus Akinade was Balogun Ijo, Chief Samuel Abiala, Baale Ijo, Chief D.A. Ojo, Osi Balogun, Chief Joseph Oladeji, Otun Balogun and Chief (Mrs.) Victoria Dina, Iyalode, all of the St. Paul's Church Yemetu.² There were variations in these designation in other churches. For instance, rather than have Baale, Balogun, Iyalode etc. in the Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary's Oke-Padre, Ibadan, the church simply chose 'Iya Ijo' (mother of the church) and 'Baba Ijo' (father of the Church). Other titles in that particular congregation were those of the Papal Medalists who were not as distinguished locally as *Baba* or *Iya Ijo*.³

The last set of church leaders were the church benefactors and activists. In this class were individuals such as Mrs. Patience Adesina (wife of Mogaji Adesina, Alafara, Ibadan), the first woman lay Reader of St. Paul Yemetu; Mr. W.A. Ajani, who together with Mr. Adebale helped to secure land at Olodo and Moyede for St. Paul's Church, and has dispensed a lot of munificence to the

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1. There were no physical wars for the Church's Balogun to fight!
 2. Papers of the St. Paul's Church, Yemetu: "Biographical Notes on Early Pioneers" in the custody of Pa E.O. Abioye, Church Secretary and Chairman Centenary Anniversary Celebration Committee of 1994.
 3. Interviews with Fr. Anthony Adediran and Fr. Peter Ajibola, both clergymen at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Oke-Padre, 29/9/94; and Mrs. C.M. Aina, an old member of St. Mary's Church and a Papal Medalist. 4/10/94, 10/10/94.

assembly¹; and Mrs. Ayoka Ejiade (nee Ojo) who was the first woman synod delegate from Yemetu Church and was involved in organising young girls for christian activity - active in Girls' Life Brigade with the assistance of other women from the Yemetu Church as Mrs. Owolabi and Mrs. J.O. Ojo in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s.² All these men and women played leadership roles in the church and stood out among their peers.

Summary

Of these three religions, traditional religion suffered most in the period of study due to the onslaughts of the two other religions and its own nature. This affected its leaders; only those of them who had additional sources of advancement such as wealth and/or political positions were able to hold their own. Even within the chieftaincy hierarchy, traditional religion could not resist the other religions (especially Islam) for too long. Islam gradually became a new factor in the recruitment of men to elite status first under the monitoring of the traditional/warrior elite who ensured that the early Muslim rulers were drawn from the established traditional families until the Muslim elite was able to entrench itself in the traditional decision-making body.

The experience of the Christian elite was slightly different. The factor of Christianity brought into the traditional elite structure men who would not otherwise have qualified for elite status and these men were 'initiated' as it were,

1. Chief Ajani, now 78 years old was made the Babasale Onigbagbo of Ibadan in 1993.

2. Papers of the St. Pauls' Church, Yemetu: "Early Pioneers", *op. cit.*

into the elite tradition via the conferment of chieftaincy titles on them. But the Christian chiefs were in the minority and they never quite mustered enough weight within the chieftaincy hierarchy as their muslim counterparts. Within the wider society, Christians were a force to be reckoned with because the factor of Western education equipped them with new skills and more opportunities for advancement which put them in a social category above the ordinary masses. In fact, because of the restricted access to jobs in the colonial administration, even lowly paid jobs of messenger or interpreter conferred prestige because it provided access to the Europeans. Similarly, the clergy of the 'established churches' were seen as occupying "European" posts by the masses who ascribed an elite status to them.

Lastly, the dividing line between religion and state was sometimes not clear-cut in cases where leaders from one group also performed crucial roles in the other (i.e. religions leaders also performing political duties in the state or vice-versa). This overlapping loyalty has made religion (i.e. the three in Ibadan) to remain a factor for unity despite its heterogenous nature in the city.

CHAPTER FIVE

GRAPPLING WITH LOCAL POLITICS (1920s - 1940s)

Introduction

This chapter looks at the development of party-politics in Ibadan and how astute individuals used opportunities offered by this as stepping stones to prominence within the community. The early political organizations are examined as a way of highlighting the main concerns of the local elite and how these were modified during the period covered by this chapter i.e from the 1920s to the late forties (after which the political tempo reached a frenzy in the decolonization period).

Local politics in this respect thus centred largely round the political activities of the Christian educated elite who wanted to have a meaningful say in decision-making and get into the Native Council. The various ways in which the influence of the Christian elite was manifested in Ibadan provoked strong reactions from educated muslims and the illiterate masses. All these forces and the traditional chiefs constituted the principal strands in Ibadan local politics. The chiefs were, however, not a part of the party structure. But matters affecting them became issues of political concern to other members of the elite as demonstrated below. In a way, political associations such as the Ibadan Progressive Union (IPU) and the Ibadan Patriotic Association (IPA) groomed the local elite in the nuances of politicking and served as a middle ground between chieftaincy politics and the aggressive partisan politics of the decolonization era.

Development of Partisan Politics in Ibadan

On a general note, politics consists of the process through which goods, services and privileges are allocated by government and rules established for their allocation by other social institutions.¹ Partisanship is when an individual or group relates to, or is devoted to a party - which is a body of persons united for some common purpose such as political ascendancy or the capture of public office in electoral competition with one or more other parties.² Taken together, partisan politics would then be the process through which individuals organize themselves into political units for the acquisition of public office and power which they could use to allocate goods, services and privileges in the administration of the society of which they are an integral part. The individuals involved in this process may not openly declare their intentions of winning political power at first; they may start by seeking to influence decision-making and exerting some pressure on the wielders of political power, but ultimately, their goal is to control the reins of government.

It is in the light of the above definition that we shall trace the beginnings of partisan politics in Ibadan. In examining the rise of modern political parties in the town, it must be noted that the first few groups in Ibadan were not outrightly political parties but social organizations which interested themselves considerably in local politics as well as in other socio-economic issues.

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1. C.R. Adrian, "Local Politics" in D.L. Sills ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Vol. 9. Macmillan and the Free Press, U.S.A. 1968, p.459.
 2. *Funk & Wagnalls New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language*. Encyclopedic Version; (J.G. Ferguson Publishing Company, New York. 1973), p.921. J.A. Schlesinger, "Party Units", IESS Vol. 9, p.428.

Another crucial point is that commerce and christianity were the important sources from which the 'new men' of Ibadan politics from the 1920s to the 1940s were recruited. The 'old men' were the traditional chiefs who engaged in chieftaincy politics among themselves for the control of power. Incidentally, the 1920s saw the preponderance of Muslim elements in the chieftaincy hierarchy. This thus made the competition for power between the traditional elite and the Western-educated elite to acquire a religious undertone. It was virtually, a Muslim versus Christian affair, but the interplay of commerce, Christianity, western education and politics in Ibadan (as elsewhere in Southern Nigeria during the same period) makes it impossible to discuss the religious factor in politics without touching on the others. In other words, although the focus of this chapter is on the political activities of the elite, i.e. politics, due attention will also need to be paid to commerce, Christianity and western education in as much as they impinged on the performance of the elite.

A number of socio-political organizations arose in Ibadan after World War I. These were political movements formed such as the National Congress of British West Africa, Blyden's Temple and Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). During December 1920 and April 1922 the Ibadan educated elite demonstrated a brief interest in the ideas of Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican leader of Pan-Africanism.¹

1. Recent works on Garvey include: R. Lewis & M. Warner-Lewis (eds.), *Garvey: Africa, Europe, the Americas*. (Africa World Press Inc., New Jersey. 1994) and, J. Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society*. (Louisiana State University Press. 1991). On the Ibadan elite and Garveyism see. G. Williams, "Garveyism, Akinpelu Obisesan and his contemporaries: Ibadan 1920-22" in T. Ranger and O. Vaughan (eds.), *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa*. (Macmillan, London 1993).

Their attraction to Garvey was a response to the collapse in produce prices after the shortlived boom of 1919-20 and the consequent trade depression when cocoa price in Ibadan fell from £80 (eighty pounds) per ton in 1920 to £15 (fifteen pounds) in 1921.¹ Garvey's message concerning the need to found independent black banks, shipping lines and businesses spoke directly to the plight of these African traders as did the nationalist plans put forward by the leaders of the National Congress of British West Africa closer home in Lagos and Accra.

When prices fell and trade slumped, Ibadan traders were badly hit just like their counterparts elsewhere. But worse hit were the Christian traders who barely survived the crash, unlike their muslim counterparts. The reason for this, according to Garvin Williams, was that Muslims were more committed to trade than Christians. Christians "engaged in trade, as in farming and other activities in order to finance the lifestyle which they believed appropriate to a Christian gentleman"², but for the prominent Muslim traders, "trading was a way of life",

1. Williams, *op. cit.* p.112.

2. Williams, *op. cit.*, p.112.

and they devoted themselves entirely to it without any reservation.¹ Therefore, after the depression and for the next two decades, three Muslim traders - Salami Agbaje, Adebisi Giwa and Folarin Solaja were clearly wealthier than any of the others. And it was to them that the other traders turned for help in trying to get back to business in the 1920s.

It was this group of disillusioned Christian traders that was attracted to the writings and ideas of Marcus Garvey. This was more so because they were literate. Prominent in this group was Akinpelu Obisesan who regularly subscribed to the *Negro World* published by the Jamaican which he found 'inspiring and instructive'² Other members of the Christian elite who were drawn to Garveyism

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1. If anybody was to be devastated by the slump, it should have been those (Muslim traders) who invested heavily in commerce and not those (Christian traders) whose commercial investments were lighter. I feel the Muslim traders were able to bear the experience better than their Christian counterparts because their own investments were diversified and not concentrated on produce trade. Salami Agbaje, for example, was into the transport business and manufacturing. He also had a saw-mill and a general repairs mechanical workshop in addition to being a produce merchant. Adebisi Giwa and Solaja too had their fingers in several other pies. So it would have been easy for them to survive a slump which affected only the produce business as long as the local economic climate remained salubrious. Moreover, a general trader can survive a slump by selling whatever is available and in demand at a profit, while the produce merchant is dependent on the production and overseas price of a single commodity. Besides, Christian traders had not yet acquired similar business roots because the years they had spent in the pursuit of Western education coupled with the period of wage employment some of them had with European firms or government departments before entering trading did not allow them the opportunity of an early encounter with commerce. Such an encounter could have entrenched them firmly by the 1920s to be able to better withstand such trade depressions.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for January 1.

included Babarinwa, Sowemimo, Ibaru and E.H. Oke. These men did not form themselves into any formal organization to champion the cause of Garveyism although it seemed that a branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association was floated with Sowemimo as President.¹ They met in informal settings to discuss Garvey's ideas extensively. They were particularly concerned with the downtrodden nature of the Negroes and the indignities they were made to suffer throughout the world which were mirrored in the humiliating discriminations suffered by the Ibadan elite from the Lugardian regime of Capt. Ross.

Despite this, a man like Obisesan was skeptical about the practicability of Garvey's ideas and their acceptability in colonial Africa. In other words, he was concerned about the contextual disparity of the experience of the American Negro and the African. He wrote:

If Africa will be redeemed, it will be the work of Providence: Garvey, though a great champion of his race cause, does not know the aims and aspirations of Africans politically, commercially, socially and otherwise. My conviction is that Africans will be free from European bondage, but when and what hour no mortal African can say.²

Closely related to the ideas spread by Marcus Garvey in his *Negro World* were those of the National Congress of British West Africa which also filtered into Ibadan around the same time. The Congress was formed in Accra in 1920 from

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for April 12.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for March 3.

where it spread to Lagos.¹ A branch was started in Ibadan in the same year under the leadership of E.H. Oke. Obisesan was also a part of the local National Congress of British West Africa because its aims tallied with those of Garveyism. i.e. to reduce the suffering of the blackman and make him master of his own destiny.

Both Garveyism and the local National Congress of British West Africa did not last long in Ibadan. By the middle of 1922 both had died down completely. A number of reasons have been given for the short lifespan of these two movements. According to Williams, several problems stood in the way of the development of Garveyism and more generally, of nationalist ideas in Ibadan.² Firstly, Garveyism and the National Congress attracted support from members of a small educated Christian elite who represented only a minute fraction of the entire population which was largely illiterate. They could not mobilize a substantial following in Ibadan and develop a political movement of their own because they lacked the economic resources and had not yet acquired the political standing with which to do so. More interestingly was the fact that Garveyism came to Ibadan in a magazine and not in person. The form which it took and its message failed to attract any interest from the established Muslim traders and the bulk of the Ibadan populace who were also Muslims and illiterate.

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1. J.S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1958). pp.192-195; R.L. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*. (NOK Publishers International, Enugu. 1983), p.45.
 2. William, *op. cit.*, p.125.

Garveyism appealed to the imagination. But it did not offer any practical course of action to its prospective followers in Ibadan. Nor did the National Congress of British West Africa. In Ibadan, nationalism could not offer a means of securing electoral office, or of earning a living either in politics or in business.¹

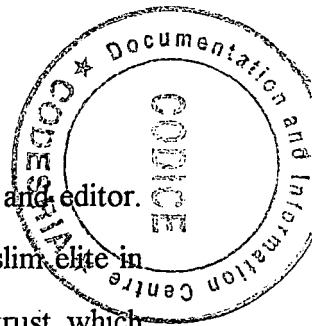
Another significant organization in Ibadan was a branch of Blyden's Temple formed in 1920.² But it died off unceremoniously like the National Congress of British West Africa and Garveyism discussed above. The cooling off of these nationalist tendencies has been linked with the determination of British administrators to prevent 'trouble makers' (nationalists) from Lagos from penetrating the interior to mobilize support. Equally important was that the Lagos nationalist lacked interest in the hinterland. The nationalist urge in Ibadan was thus isolated from sources from which it could draw inspiration. This led to the collapse of nationalist activities in Ibadan in the early twenties. And by 1923, Ibadan had lost interest in Lagos affairs despite the importance of the years 1922 and 1923 in Nigerian constitutional history. No wonder then that the elective

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1. Williams, *op.cit.*, p.125. Williams is also of the view that the Christian elite in Ibadan was preoccupied with parochial issues in the early 1920s. This I find objectionable because despite the fact that it was naturally involved in local issues, the Ibadan Christian elite spread its tentacles wide as epitomised in the activities of the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan discussed in Chapter 3 above.
 2. Edward Blyden was the West-Indian writer on African matters. One of his themes was the issue of the African personality. For details on Blyden see: R. July, "Nineteenth Century Negritude: Edward W. Blyden". *Journal of African History*. Vol. V, No. 1, 1964. pp. 73-86; H.R. Lynch, "Edward W. Blyden: Pioneer West African Nationalist". *Journal of African History*. Vol. VI, No. 3, 1965, p. 373 ff.

principle that was introduced in the Clifford's Constitution covered only Lagos and Calabar, which were considered the abode of politically articulate persons, and excluded Ibadan and other parts of the country. If Ibadan had been at least half as politically-active as Lagos - being genuinely interested in nationalist matters - and all the above nationalist movements - allowed to flower, it is probable that the elective principle could have been extended to it and Ibadan drawn into the wider orbit of national politics at that period.

This, however, does not mean that local politics was neglected. On the contrary, the Ibadan elite involved itself in local politics and a lot of local issues became politicised. Several political organizations were formed on the local scene. One of such was the Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society which was formed in 1921 comprising both Christians and Muslims and some members of the Egbe Agba-'O'Tan. It planned to establish a printing press and publish a newspaper, the *Ibadan Weekly Review*. The financial backing for the newspaper was to come from Salami Agbaje.¹ Among those involved in planning the new printing press and newspaper in 1921 were I.B. Akinyele, J.O. Aboderin and A. Obisesan, all members of the Christian elite, and Adebisi Giwa, another wealthy muslim. Although the printing venture never took off successfully, the idea in itself shows the desire of the Ibadan elite both Christian and Muslim to articulate their own opinion on local (and if need be national) matters unhindered. The press was to be their mouthpiece, firmly under their control. Unfortunately, the venture collapsed

1. K. D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55. Diary 1921. Entry for June 14.



amid bitter arguments among its planners over who should be manager and editor. The collapse of the printing venture shows that the Christian and Muslim elite in Ibadan had not fully integrated. There was still lack of complete trust which bordered on jealousy especially as the Muslim traders were wealthier than their Christian counterparts.

This is not to create the impression that there was always friction between the Christian and Muslim elite in Ibadan. Some individuals felt as much at home among others of a different faith as they could be among their co-religionists. For instance Salami Agbaje was a Muslim, but he was so concerned with modern business, education and politics (the major preoccupations of the Christian elite) that he was considered 'one of us' by Ibadan Christians.

In 1922, the Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society was reformed as the Ilupeju Society with Salami Agbaje as President. The primary concern of the Society was with local affairs especially with Capt. Ross' policies and their consequences for the Baale of Ibadan and for the educated and commercial elites of the city. In this regard, on January 22, 1922, Agbaje and Adebisi Giwa led a delegation of the Society to Baale Situ to discuss the indignities to which Ross had subjected him. They also visited Balogun Oyewole who had been antagonising the Baale to make peace on February 2.¹ They were also concerned with the issue of the constitutional reform of the Ibadan Council. Again, the Society was established as a forum for uniting Christians and Muslims especially in the fields of commerce

1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for February 2.

and politics where their interests converged. As the President, Agbaje attempted to use his wealth to fill the gap between Christians and Muslims as a basis for his own political activities. He wanted both Christian and Muslim support for his own political ambitions in Ibadan. He was accused of mishandling the Society's funds and by 1925, the Society had been disbanded, some say, due to the influence of Capt. Ross.

Despite the short lifespan of the society, it was significant in two respects. In the activities of the society was revealed the concern of the educated and commercial elites of Ibadan with the advancement of their interests so as to secure recognition of their status within the colonial order. Such activities were tailored around their objections to certain aspects of the colonial administration such as the subjection of Ibadan to the arbitrary rule of the Alaafin of Oyo and his messengers (discussed in Chapter Three) and Ross' disregard and lack of respect and tolerance for educated Africans.

Secondly, there was the attempt to integrate both the Christian and Muslim elites in a single organization. The failure of the Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society's printing scheme shed light on the major cracks in the elite make-up, namely, mutual distrust and suspicion. This could be explained as the struggle for renown between different pockets within the same elite cadre. These pockets were distinguished by the different religions which they professed. The fact that the Muslims were wealthier than the Christians and closer to the traditional elite also served as a catalyst to accelerate and intensify the contest. The failure of the Ilupeju Society to blur the demarcation between these two pockets show that for a long time religious difference would probably remain an undercurrent in the politics

of the Ibadan elite. For how long would this be so? And what would lead to its permanent disappearance? These are questions that shall be addressed as we go on.

The Ibadan Progressive Union

Another important local organization was the Ibadan Progressive Union formed in 1930. The period between 1925 (which marked the final end of the Ilupeju Society) and 1930 saw the Ibadan educated elite searching in vain for a viable political instrument which could bring it into limelight. During this same period, the indignities suffered by Ibadan chiefs from the Alaafin and Captain Ross reached their peak. In fact, the degradation which Ibadan suffered from Oyo affected not only the traditional chiefs, it also injured the ego of the educated elite who could do nothing about it. To illustrate this, I will cite an incident which occurred in 1926 in which a representative of the Alaafin insulted the people of Ibadan.

After the installation of Chief Oyewole as Baale (1925-30), he decided to fill the Balogun post which he vacated by promoting Abaasi Alehsinloye (Otun Balogun) as the Balogun. During the installation ceremony of Abaasi when a large crowd of people gathered to celebrate, a messenger of the Alaafin of Oyo called Janta shouted contemptuously:

Oye kée-kèè-kée ní ímú ní íse àbámò
 Erú Alááfin, o ta'kun gbooro mú ará oko.
 Kékeré olá ní í fa ará oko l'enu ya!
 E o wa rii bi o ti nfá Abaasi l'enu ya bayi!¹

1. "Ibadan Progressive Union: Fifty Years of Its Founding 1930-1980", Exhibition Programme. 1980, p.16; S.O. Biobaku, *Sources of Yoruba History* (Oxford University Press, 1973). p.86.

It is the petty chieftaincy that brings regret.
 The Alaaḥin's slave prepares a long rope to
 ensnare the bush-man.
 It is the petty honour which inflates the
 bush-man.
 Don't you see how it is making Abaasi
 to lose his head?

This speech was a comprehensive insult that ridiculed not only Abaasi Aleshinloye, the new Balogun, but also the entire people of Ibadan - both elite and masses - whom Janta called "ara-oko" (bushmen or unenlightened). The Balogun title which was and still is the second most important title in Ibadan was derisively described as "Oyè kée-kèè-kée" (insignificant title) and "kékeré ola" (inconsequential honour). This kind of invective especially when made in the open before a mammoth crowd - the type that normally gathered for such installation festivities - is one that cannot be easily forgotten. The fact that the people of Ibadan could not lift a finger against Janta who represented the Alaaḥin, who in turn had the full backing of Capt. Ross representing the British administration, made the insult more damaging. The ego of the Ibadan people was severely deflated. However, this was just one of the many cases of such humiliations suffered by Ibadan Chiefs and people from the Alaaḥin and Capt. Ross.¹

Under such circumstances, the elite was moved, as the leaders of public opinion to find a way of expressing itself, to find an instrument it could use to bring about change, and to look for a forum for effectively articulating its mind. If nothing was done to change the status of Ibadan in relation to Oyo, the elite knew

1. For details on the Ibadan experience under Oyo, see J.A. Atanda, *The New Oyo Empire*, (Longman, London. 1973).

that no matter the kind of prestige and recognition it might enjoy locally, either as individuals or as a group, in the eyes of Oyo it was not different from the masses of Ibadan because they were all "ara-oko". So the search in the years between 1925-1930 was for an organization that would adequately fight the cause of Ibadan people as defined by its elite.

The second reason behind the formation of the Ibadan Progressive Union (IPU) was a social one. Some members of the elite felt that the social life of Ibadan had been taken over by the non-indigenes which ought not to be as expressed in excerpts from a letter written by V.O. Esan to S.A. Oloko in May 1930:

I can see that social functions in this our town of Ibadan have here-to-fore [sic] been organised and carried out by mostly strangers - I mean those who are no 'sons of the soil'. I think, however, that this is a fault attributable to us who call ourselves native of this place.

It seems to me that it is our lot, we present generation, to endeavour to raise the status of social life in this town. For however long, the stranger must go and, in the word of the Holy Writ, leave our house desolate unto us. Social life does a great deal in the advancement of a people, a town, or a race...¹

The strangers referred to were indeed many in Ibadan. There were non-Ibadan Yorubas i.e. Yoruba people from outside Ibadan e.g. Ijebu, Egba, Ekiti, Oyo, Ogbomosho etc. non-Yoruba immigrants such as Hausa, Ibo, Urhobo, etc. and non-Nigerian immigrants such as Lebanese and Syrian traders. Of all these categories, the non-Ibadan Yorubas were seen as the greatest threat to the socio-political and economic survival of the Ibadan. And singled out for particular

1. "I.P.U. Exhibition Programme", *op. cit.*, p.15.

attention were the Ijebu who were not only more numerous than the other groups, but also well educated, very astute businessmen and very industrious. Later in the heat of partisan politics in Ibadan, the issue of the Ijebu elements called "Native Settlers" became a very sensitive one. But for now, the point being made is that the fear of the Ibadan elite typified in V.O. Esan's letter was not unfounded, given the socio-economic position of the 'strangers' in Ibadan at that time.

Eventually, on August 17, 1930, the Ibadan Progressive Union was born. Its foundation members included V.O. Esan (who became its first Secretary), S.A. Oloko (the founding President), D.T. Akinbiyi, J.L. Ogunsola, T.L. Oyesina, D.A. Obasa, A.S. Agbaje, J.A. Ayorinde, H.V.A. Olunloyo, J.A. Bolarinwa, T.M. Ladapo, E.A. Sanda, and E.A. Adeyemo.¹ All of these men were educated. Some were school-teachers such as Ogunsola and Oyesina; A.S. Agbaje was a medical doctor; D.A. Obasa was a newspaper editor; D.T. Akinbiyi a businessman while a few like Oloko and Ayorinde were in government employ as civil servants. These men had occupations that were considered as high class by the rest of the society and in terms of new values introduced by colonialism, they constituted the cream of the society. These men were also about fifteen years younger than those who made up the Egbe Agba-'O-Tan. This generation gap was certainly significant in the origins of the new society.

In the first place, this meant that the men in the IPU were not exactly the same as those in the Egbe. The IPU men were better educated. They were Christians almost without exception. While the defunct Ibadan Native Aboriginal

1. E.A. Adeyemo is the present Olubadan of Ibadan.

Society and the Ilupeju Society were concerned with spreading their membership among both Christians and Muslims as a way of uniting the two, the IPU by deliberate design and as a result of circumstances was made up of mainly Christian members. The circumstances referred to here were represented by the situation in Ibadan in the thirties whereby most of the educated persons were Christians because Western education was largely in the hands of Christian missionaries. And because more Christians than Muslims were educated, the educated elite was predominantly Christian. Therefore, since the IPU was made up of educated men, it was bound to be unmistakably Christian in its membership, policies and general outlook. The fact that no attempt was made to encourage and welcome Muslim youths into the body made the IPU an established group of the Christian educated elite which alienated Ibadan Muslims in the thirties and forties. And because the Muslims were not well educated, there was nobody who could immediately champion their own cause for political recognition despite the affluence of a few of them.

However, members of the IPU were willing to include Egbe members like Akinpelu Obisesan, Isaac Akinyele, D.A. Obasa, and Rev. A.B. Akinyele in their activities even to the point of giving them important offices in the new organization. The activities of the IPU were varied and, more than the other organizations that preceded them, they plunged headlong into local politics.

Their approach to politics, just like that of the Egbe, was non-confrontational. But more than the Egbe, they made a number of demands and championed some causes for Ibadan successfully. They cooperated with the Resident, Ward-Price, who, unlike Capt. Ross his predecessor, was sympathetic to

their demands and apt to dialogue with them. The period of the Residentsip of Ward-Price in Ibadan is recalled with joy and pleasure because he was believed to be very tolerant of the elite and treated them with respect.¹ He also depended on them because he saw them as a group of conscientious and vocal men who could support him if his policies outran those of the government in Lagos.

In 1933 the IPU asked Ward-Price to put educated men on the native Council to advise the Chiefs. The Resident acceded, after which the Union nominated Isaac Akinyele and J.O. Aboderin who were appointed upon Council's approval. These two men, with the backing of the Resident, the Chiefs and the IPU, led the campaign which in 1934 saw Ibadan re-established as a Native Authority independent of Oyo and the Alaafin.

In April 1934, Ibadan Division was officially recognised as an independent Native Authority.² Ibadan thus ceased to be under Oyo. The Oyo Court of Appeal also stopped to have jurisdiction in Ibadan and Ife (renamed Ife-Ijesha) Divisions. There were now five independent Native Authorities, and five subordinate ones instead of the previous arrangement where the Alaafin was the only paramount Chief in the Province. Even the five subordinate Native Authorities were not under the Alaafin but under the Baale of Ibadan and Council.³ In effect, the Baale now gained in importance and psychologically, this

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1. Oral communication with Chief J.A. Ayorinde at his Ekotedo residence 29/5/90 and Archdeacon Alayande at his Oke-Offa residence, 26/6/90.
 2. *Supplement to the Nigeria Gazette Extraordinary* No. 17 of April 3, 1934, pp.1 and 11.
 3. *Ibid., loc.cit*

probably boosted the ego and morale of the Ibadan people especially the elite who had desired this for a long time.

This then meant that although the educated elite wanted to have a say in the administration of Ibadan and participate in decision making, they did not want such to be at the expense of the prestige of the traditional chiefs. The major handicap of the chiefs was their lack of Western education which made it difficult for them to understand and cope with the demands of modern municipal administration needed in Ibadan. The chiefs could delegate the performance of tasks they could not perform to the educated men, without loss of power or prestige. To disparage them would amount to a rape of the tradition which the educated men said they wished to uphold. They were ready to tolerate and accommodate the old elite and, when necessary, even boost their image as was the case when the IPU Councillors again led the chiefs to petition the Governor-General of Nigeria in 1936 that they wanted the title of the Baale changed to 'Olubadan'. This was because the head of every small village or settlement was recognised as Baale. Even leaders of commercial guilds were called Baale such as the 'Baale Agbe' (head of the farmers). It was thus felt that the ruler of Ibadan should have a more distinctive and honourable title.

According to the petition:

... the proposed change of title is a mere nomenclature and implies no change whatsoever in the constitution of Ibadan.¹

1. *The petition of the Ibadan Native Authority and the Chiefs of Ibadan Towns through the Senior Resident, Oyo Province, to the Chief Commissioner, Southern Provinces and His Excellency the Governor of Nigeria, 1936.* Printed by Lisabi Press.

Having said this, it quickly adds that

... the title of Olubadan is not hereditary, but it is the common property of all the chiefs. Any future Baale of Ibadan shall be entitled to this title.¹

This bit was probably included to forestall the creation of the impression that the change in title was to facilitate the establishment of a dynasty. Another interesting portion of the petition states that:

... this Olubadan title does not confer upon the holder the right to wear a beaded crown, and it is hoped that no holder of it either [now or] in the future shall have such aspiration.²

The implication of this was that the change in designation was only to boost the prestige and status of the ruler and that it carried no significance for the actual content of the office. This move was like a follow-up to the important change earlier brought to the office of the Baale by the independence of Ibadan from Oyo and the subsequent grouping of the other subordinate Native Authorities under him. The educated elite and the chiefs would definitely not have supported any move that would make the Baale or any in their rank to become an overmighty chieftain because they knew that such a one could circumscribe and eventually stifle their own power as the privileged stratum of the society. Even if the ruler rose without their support, which was very unlikely - the chiefs knew how to overwhelm such with a web of intrigues. The experiences of Situ, Irefin and Ola bore this out.³ That was why that clause was put in the petition that the title was

1. *Petition of the Ibadan Native Authority, op. cit.*

2. *Ibid., loc. cit.*

3. These were discussed in Chapter Three above.

not to be hereditary. The request was granted and the title of the Baale was changed to Olubadan. The Olubadan - and the whole Ibadan elite - therefore gained additional prestige to match up with the increasing importance of the town as the headquarters of the Oyo Province and the abode of a vast number of people.

Thus, the IPU as a representative body of a significant part of the Ibadan elite, infused life into the Council through its Councillors and gave direction to local administration in Ibadan. The Union also had other social programmes, the most important of which were their efforts in the field of education. In February, 1933, the Literary Section of the Union was inaugurated. This section later became known as the IPU Study Circle. It organized regular debates on topical issues which ranged from politics to religion and economics. Later it embarked on excursions to historically significant places as a way of educating its members.¹ It also established a Reading Room which grew into a Club and Library. In addition, the Circle had an Higher Education Fund which comprised a scholarship programme to assist and encourage brilliant youths to further their education.

The idea of the Higher Education Scholarship Fund was first mooted in 1938 when Bishop A.B. Akinyele donated one pound to start it off. By 1941 all members of the IPU parent body, as well as those of the study circle, resolved to contribute twenty-one shillings each to the Fund. One of the beneficiaries of the scheme at its inception was Adegoke Adelabu then known as Joseph Adegoke Sanusi when he was at the Yaba Higher College. In 1942 the idea of the Fund was introduced to the general public. Non-members were encouraged to contribute to

1. "IPU Exhibition Programme", *op. cit.*, p.45.

the Fund. In fact, in the 1942 awareness drive for the Fund, Ibadan indigenes in Lagos supported the scheme with great enthusiasm. Also during the week-long campaign organized by the Fund Committee for home support in 1944 a total of £573.14.9½ (five hundred and seventy three pounds, fourteen shillings, nine and half-pence) was realised. This represented the contribution of not only IPU members but also of the Muslim community, the Chiefs, and masses under the auspices of several trade guilds, religious organizations and social clubs.¹

Furthermore, members of the Union from time to time published articles in local and national newspapers on issues relating to Ibadan to create awareness of such among others not in the union and to make their voices heard. On matters generally relating to the proper conduct of local administration in Ibadan, the IPU corresponded regularly with the colonial administrative officers to make its views known and to advise them.² The Union also interested itself considerably in the affairs of the Ibadan Grammar School in particular and in education in Ibadan

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1. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 42: Pamphlets. "Ibadan Higher Education Scholarship Fund, Secretary's Report and Financial Statement 1942-1944". The Fund Committee was headed by A. Obisesan with T.L. Oyesina as Secretary and S.A. Oloko as Treasurer.
 2. An example was in May 1941 when the Union wrote series of letters to the Senior Resident on proposals for the formation of an Advisory Board of Ibadan. Among other things, the letters dealt with the composition and duties of the proposed Board. See "IPU Exhibition Programme", *op. cit.*, p.49.

generally.¹ Prominent citizens who got national awards such as I.B. Akinyele and A. Obisesan who had the O.B.E. conferred on them by the colonial government were honoured by the Union.

But much more important than all these, for the purpose of this study, was the fact that the IPU was neck-deep in Council affairs and by extension, in local politics. In May 1941, it issued a Memorandum on the Olubadan Chieftaincy succession in which it documented the pattern of succession. This document embodied the established practice in Ibadan i.e. rotation of succession between the Balogun and Olubadan lines - more or less like a written 'constitution' - and this was expected to serve as a reference point in case of any succession dispute.² This and other activities of the IPU showed that it had established a firm hold on the affairs of the city. However, for none of the IPU members was politics seen as the only area in which they could advance or be effective. They were also effective in the church and in their individual businesses. To them, politics was not an 'occupation' which should be pursued to the exclusion of all else. That was to be the disposition of a newer breed of politicians that would surface in Ibadan as

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1. In Dec. 1941, the Union wrote the Lord Bishop of Lagos requesting the release of Rev. S.V. Latunde from St. Peter's Anglican Church, Lagos to be Principal of Ibadan Grammar School. Also in February 1947, the IPU held a meeting at Mapo Hall with the Ibadan branch of the Nigerian Union of Teachers to discuss matters affecting education generally in Ibadan. "IPU Exhibition Programme:, *op. cit.*, p.49.
 2. Such disputes hardly ever broke out because the Ibadan succession pattern was via automatic promotions through the hierarchical chieftaincy structure. This system was so well established that it precluded any dispute.

elsewhere in Nigeria during the struggle for independence. There was another organization in Ibadan which later rose to challenge the 'prerogatives' and monopoly of the IPU on Ibadan politics, and it is to that group that we now turn.

The Ibadan Patriotic Association (IPA)

The Ibadan Patriotic Association was formed in 1936. Different reasons have been given by scholars for its foundation but none of which appears tenable. According to G.D. Jenkins¹, the Association was spearheaded by one Bello Abaasi to gain popular support for his father - Baale Aleshinloye Okunola Abaasi - who had just assumed the Olubadan title. This seems a very parochial concern, and in any case, Bello Abaasi was not among the founders or early leaders of the Association. He only rose to prominence in the group after the death of Taiwo Omikunle, the first President.² It is not impossible that himself and Omikunle could have been friends since they had common interests, viz, Islam, Ibadan affairs, and membership of the same society. However, R.L. Sklar³ states that the IPA was founded by Muslim members of the IPU who were disturbed by its overtly Christian tone. The problem with this view is that none of the Muslim IPA

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1. G.D. Jenkins, "Government and Politics in Ibadan" in B. Awe *et. al.* (eds.) *The City of Ibadan*. (Cambridge 1967). p.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers: Box 30, File 4Crisis in Ibadan and Ibadan Patriotic Association: Boxes 28 and 33, Egbe Omo Ibile Ibadan; and Box 32, Ibadan Patriotic Association Documents
 3. R.L. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*. (NOK Publishers International, Enugu). 1983. p.289.

members, had been prominent in the IPU; rather, it could be said that, at some point later, the IPA membership came to include some IPU men. So the religious difference between the two groups, though real enough appeared to be at best a secondary factor in the foundation of the IPA. What then was the reason behind the formation of the IPA?

A close examination of its objectives may reveal the concern of its founders. In a document signed by the leaders¹ of the association on October 19, 1936, their primary aim was:

to hold meetings to discuss Ibadan affairs because the members wish to take an interest in their town and wish to get information from reliable persons whenever this is possible.

Other objectives of the group included the education and enlightenment of members socially through public lectures in order to equip them to be good citizens who understand the ways of 'the government'. It is thus clear that the IPA represented a body of persons who hitherto had been denied active participation in the affairs of the town but who now wished to prove their mettle. The main handicap of a vast majority of the members was illiteracy. That was why the leaders felt it was necessary to educate them and control their excesses by "preventing them from wilfully and ignorantly committing offences against the ... law ... of the government". Therefore, that the Association had a predominantly Muslim membership was not because it was founded as a Muslim organization but

1. These were S.T. Omikunle (Chairman) A.L. Carew (Vice Chairman), A.L. Akande, and A.S. Oriola (Protem Secretary). Obisesan Papers. Box 30: File 2.

because majority of the illiterate members happened to be muslims.¹

Due to the fact that the IPU was a group of educated, 'high class' men who closed their doors to illiterates, the IPA was probably the answer of the illiterate masses to this snobbery and their instrument for challenging the IPU monopoly on the town's affairs.² But the masses had to be organised and given a sense of direction. Their energies had to be properly channelled. This is where the few Christian members of the Association become relevant. Together with S.T. Omikunle (the first President of the Association and an educated Muslim) they provided the leadership for the Association.

From its inception in 1936, the IPA was a mass organization. Its membership included a few IPU and more than thirty (30) other clubs and

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1. This issue has already been treated in this chapter. Most of the educated people were Christians because Western education came via Christianity, while Muslims who despised Western education remained illiterate.
 2. If this was so then the other stated objective of the Association was probably for 'window-dressing' in order to secure official approval for it, namely, that the Association would:

make known to the chiefs any resolutions which they make, it being understood that this is for information only, and that the society has no reason to expect its resolution to be adopted by the Native Authority.

If IPU recommendations such as the revival of the Councillorship could be adopted by the N.A. why not those of the IPA? Indeed, it is said that this bit and a few others like it were included on the advice of the D.O. who made it clear to the leaders of the Association that if they were not adopted, "it was unlikely that this Association would meet with approval or encouragement."

K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32: File 1. Letter No. 1418/13 of Oct. 12, 1936 from D.O. Ibadan to the Executive Council, Native Administration, Ibadan. Subject: The Ibadan Patriotic Association.

trade guilds which increased with time. By 1951, at the time of the 'Agbaje Dispute' it had more than sixty (60) member organizations each with its own head called 'Giwa'. Almost immediately it was established, the IPA plunged headlong into Ibadan politics and the first task it gave itself was to mediate in the row between two factions of the Chiefs and restore peace in the land.

The dispute broke out as a result of the 1936 reorganization carried out by the colonial officers in which educated junior chiefs were made court judges while some senior chiefs were denied council membership. (See Chapter Three). The aggrieved Senior Chiefs, led by the Balogun set themselves in opposition against the Olubadan - Okunola Abaasi whom they held responsible for their misfortunes because he appeared to be pro-government. This generated deep crisis in Ibadan as the chiefs in the two factions constantly clashed with one another. Even annual festivals of Egungun and Oke 'Badan degenerated into occasions for the singing of abusive songs and trading of invectives by supporters of the quarrelling groups.¹ There were even alleged instances of physical assaults² and cases of overt insubordination of the Balogun and his supporters to the Olubadan³. It was a very bad situation.⁴

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1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 30: File 4 Crisis in Ibadan and Ibadan Patriotic Association. Correspondences from IPA to District Officer, Feb. 22, 1937; to the Senior Resident through the District Officer, March 3, 1937.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers . Box 32, File 1: Petition from the IPA to the Senior Resident, Oyo Province through the District Officer, Ibadan Division, May 13, 1937.
 3. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32 File 1: Petition from the IPA to the District Officer, Ibadan Division, May 25, 1937.
 4. This situation was also referred to in E.N.C. Dickinson, "Intelligence Report on IbadanTown 1938" N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4. p.74.

All the attempts of the IPA to mediate in this 'high-brow' dispute foundered. The Association started by urging the Resident of Oyo Province to mediate in the crisis.¹ When nothing was forthcoming from the Resident, IPA leaders took the bull by the horn by arranging a peace meeting at the Balogun's house in February 1937.² They invited only the chiefs in the Balogun faction to this meeting which made it one-sided.³ Even when they asked the chiefs to state their own case they were ignored and told that it was not yet time to settle the issue. This attitude was probably borne out of the fact that the IPA was still very young (five months old) and was yet to win the respect of the chiefs as a force in Ibadan politics. Again, the issues involved were very grave and fundamental - they had to do with changes brought by the colonial regime and not just a case of Okunola Abasi's lack of popularity among his senior chiefs. These went beyond the arbitrate faculties of IPA men.

But the IPA leaders were not discouraged. They continued by writing to the Balogun and his group imploring them to cooperate with the Olubadan and warning them of the adverse effects of the prolonged agitation.⁴ When nothing

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1. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 30: File 4Crisis in Ibadan & IPA. Petition from the IPA to the Senior Resident through the D.O. Dec. 28, 1936.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32: File 1. Minutes of Meeting of IPA held at the Balogun's House on Feb. 17, 1937.
 3. These were the Balogun, Otun Balogun, Osi Balogun, Ashipa Balogun, Osi Olubadan, Ekerin Balogun and Ekerin Olubadan.
 4. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 30: File 4Petition from IPA to the Balogun and his Aggrieved Associates. Feb. 26, 1937; IPA to the Balogun and His Group through the D.O. Mar. 10, 1937.

positive came out of this too, the IPA enlisted the support of the Ibadan Descendants' Union, Lagos in putting pressure on the Balogun group, and also went ahead to issue public releases in which it openly denounced the activities of the aggrieved chiefs.¹

On March 29, 1937, the Chief Commissioner of the Western State Provinces 'settled' the quarrel among the chiefs at Mapo. But before we examine the aftermath of this 'settlement' let us examine the views of the IPA on the issue of reorganization.² On the issue of the promotion of chiefs, the IPA supported the idea of jumping over inefficient and unpopular characters. It advocated the inclusion of educated men (with no titles) on the court bench who would ensure that records of proceedings were correctly kept. In addition, the Native Council should be enlarged to include the Seriki, the Native Authority Treasurer, Ex-members of the Legislative Council, the IPA President and Ex-Councillors. The Association also wanted to have a say in the appointment of future Olubadan and Balogun. From all these, it is clear that what the IPA deemed to be the crucial elements for public service were popularity with the masses, efficiency, vitality associated with youthfulness and Western education. These (except perhaps

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1. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32, File 1: Correspondence from Sec. Ibadan Descendants' Union. 67, Bamgbose St., Lagos, to Chief Balogun, Otun and Osi Olubadan. Mar. 7, 1937. The Public Release was titled "An Appeal for Peace in Ibadan". It also solicited public support for the new government reforms.
 2. This is based on a document in the Obisesan Papers titled "Recommendations". It is doubtful that these were accepted. They were probably IPA inputs into the representation made before E.N.C. Dickinson. But they were vital because they revealed the minds of the IPA leaders.

'popularity') were hard to find among the senior chiefs but present among the leaders of the IPA. In other words, IPA leaders wanted to have a more active role to play in Ibadan politics. They saw themselves as representatives of a vast segment of Ibadan population (the masses) and as such merited a proportionate allocation of the leadership of the town. But before this could be achieved peace had to reign in the town. So with vigour, they continued their efforts in peace-making in Ibadan.

This was especially necessary because the mediation of the Chief Commissioner did nothing to quell the embers of rancour among the ranks of the senior chiefs. It was the search for a lasting solution to this political crisis that made the IPA to ally momentarily with the IPU in 1937. The leaders of the two groups met regularly to discuss ways of solving this impasse and on July 31, 1937, a delegation made up of both IPA and IPU leaders visited the aggrieved chiefs to make peace.¹ But nothing came out of this effort too.

Unfortunately, the IPA could not pursue its peace making mission further than this. By December 1937 it had fallen into internal chaos and this prevented it from embarking on any public policy for the time being. Meanwhile, the colonial administration, piqued by the chiefs' refusal to respect the mediation of the Chief Commissioner, suspended six of the senior chiefs from their positions

1. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32: File 2 Minutes of Emergency Committee Meeting of IPA and IPU leaders held on July 28, 1937 at Odoye with S.T. Omikunle on the Chair and T.L. Oyesina as Secretary.

and stopped their salaries in December 1937.¹ Eventually, the political crisis was settled in March 1938 by a group of eminent persons in Ibadan which included Rev. J.A. Okuseinde.²

Meanwhile, relations between IPU and IPA leaders remained cordial. They both made a joint representation before E.N.C. Dickinson, the British official who was compiling an Intelligence Report on Ibadan.³ IPU leaders such as A. Obisesan, S. Oloko, and J. Ogunsola attended IPA meetings. Somehow T.L. Oyesina (a foundation member of the IPU) metamorphosed from being Secretary to the defunct IPA/IPU joint committee to that of the IPA.⁴ Gradually, other IPU men began to withdraw from the IPA leaving only T.L. Oyesina there. This was because the IPU men saw themselves as 'enlightened' folks who were not ready to be pushed around by the "unlettered IPA leaders".⁵ The following exchange

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1. The chiefs affected were Chief Oyekola; Otun Olubadan; Fagbinrin, Otun Balogun; Oyetunde, Osi Olubadan; Ishola, Osi Balogun; Oyewusi, Ekerin Olubadan; and Adeduntan, Ekerin Balogun. Obisesan Papers. Box 32: File 1. Letter from the suspended Chiefs to the Chief Commissioner, Southern Provinces, Enugu. February 26, 1938.
 2. N.A.I. Iba. Prof. 3/4 Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson. 1938. p.74.
 3. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32: File 1. A. Obisesan to T.L. Oyesina. August 6, 1937.
 4. He started signing IPA documents as Secretary in February, 1938.
 5. These were the illiterate *Giwa* (heads) of the component organizations who paraded themselves as leaders of the IPA, seeking audience with the British officials and acting on behalf of the Association without recourse to the educated central leaders.

between A. Obisesan and T.L. Oyesina further proves the point. After commenting on the poor manner in which IPA affairs were being handled and warning Oyesina not to allow himself to be swayed by 'unwanton influence' (from the IPA) Obisesan wrote:

I do not preach segregation or discrimination among classes, but we who read and write must be able to tell those who are [sic] not how to move. I bear nobody grudge; my criticism of IPA management is simply to improve things.¹

However, Oyesina did not fully agree with this view. He felt that educated Christians should remain in the Association to give direction and proper leadership to its activities.² After all, were they not all subjected to the overwhelming authority of the same colonial regime?

You will admit that we are a nation in school. Government officials, missionaries and mercantile men are our Teachers. The educated elements are the senior scholars; the unsophisticated of us are the junior ones. The right relations between all these are not far to seek. If Messrs Oloko, Ogunsola, and several others are right... [in leaving the IPA], time will tell.³

It is thus clear that the point of divide between the IPA and IPU was 'enlightenment' as provided by Western education which IPU men had but which was absent in most of the members of the IPA. T.L. Oyesina stood for cooperation between these two blocs but his own stance later changed as we shall soon see.

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1. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32. File 2 Correspondence from A. Obisesan to T.L. Oyesina. May 18, 1938.
 2. The *Giwas* were not likely to follow the educated leaders sheepishly except when their literary skills were needed.
 3. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32, File 2. T.L. Oyesina to A. Obisesan. May 19, 1938.

Apart from IPA/IPU differences, there were also cleavages within the IPA. There were three main factions. One was led by S.T. Omikunle, the President, another was led by Busari Giwa, the head of Olowolagba Society of Isale-Osi and the third comprised educated Christians. Omikunle's faction comprised men who were loyal to him while Busari's faction brought together the recalcitrant *Giwas* in the Association. The first attempt to reconcile these men came from the Olubadan-in-Council¹ which set up a committee comprising Councillor D.T. Akinbiyi, Ashipa Olubadan, Ekarun Olubadan, Ekarun Balogun, and Councillor O.H. Adetoun to meet with the IPA men in December, 1937.² The failure of this peace-keeping effort made Akinpelu Obisesan to attempt to settle the rift (as an elder statesman) in Feb. 1938³. It would seem this latter attempt succeeded because there was no further mention of the quarrel in the records.

Another high point in the development of the Association was the exit of Secretary T. L. Oyesina in July 1940. This was due to the pressure of his other commitments. Earlier in July 1938, he had founded the Ibadan Boys' High School, the first privately-owned post-primary institution in Ibadan. He was also Financial Secretary of the IPU; Secretary to the Nigerian Youth Movement, Ibadan Branch; President of the Egbe Molebi Ile Aresa (Aresa Family Society); Secretary of the

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1. This was probably as a reciprocation of the IPA's earlier peace-making efforts in the senior chiefs' dispute.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32, File 1. T.L. Oyesina (Secretary IPA) to Councillor D.T. Akinbiyi, Mapo Council Hall. Dec. 27th, 1937.
 3. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 33: File 1. Akinpelu Obisesan to T.L. Oyesina, February 24, 1938.

Church of England Temperance Society, Ibadan; and leader of the Ibadan Scouts Local Association.¹ All these activities became increasingly demanding and thus he had to resign his secretaryship in the IPA.²

The exit of Oyesina, who represented the last of IPU men in the IPA, saw the rise of Bello Abasi (a.k.a. Megida) to prominence in the Association.³ Bello was the son of the Olubadan Okunola Abasi and had maintained close relations with S.T. Omikunle. He was a very powerful man in Ibadan affairs because he acted for his father who had been incapacitated by old age. Abasi probably sought to use the IPA to gain popular support and acknowledgement for himself. By 1945, he had become so powerful as to constitute a menace to Council Chiefs and literate Councillors whom he defied with impunity.⁴ The petition written by Council members against him in October 1945 and the death of his father - Okunola Abasi in June 1946 put paid to his manouverings in Council politics. He then turned his attention to consolidating his stand in the IPA. With the death of S.T. Omikunle, Bello Abasi became the President of the IPA in 1948.⁵ From this

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1. T.L. Oyesina's Curriculum Vitae in Obisesan Papers, Box 32, File 1. Interviews with T.L. Oyesina (Jnr) at SW7/31^D, Mesi-Ogo Chambers, Oke-Bola, Ibadan. Oct. 4 & 10, 1994.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 33: File A. T.L. Oyesina to S.T. Omikunle. July 26, 1940.
 3. Bello Abasi was barely literate and so was not to be regarded as an educated Muslim. His power/influence derived from other sources.
 4. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 50: Diary 1945. Entries for July 23, Sept. 25, 26, 27, 28, Oct. 1, 2 & 8.
 5. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32, File 1: Document titled "Appointment of Bello Abasi as Chairman, IPA. Sept. 24, 1948.

position, and with a considerable portion of Ibadan masses behind him, he was able to meddle considerably in Ibadan matters such as the 'Agbaje dispute' of 1949/51, the Hayley Reform issue, and to flirt with the national political parties, viz, N.C.N.C. and A.G. in Ibadan. His influence in the Association which by then had become known as the Egbe Omo Ibile, was so strong that he almost personified the society. The Egbe Omo Ibile continued to grow as a mass political organization, the first of its kind in Ibadan, with more than sixty constituent societies.

Meanwhile, the challenge to the IPU control of Ibadan affairs became more insistent and variegated. But before we examine the other quarters from which the challenge came and the form it took, we should, perhaps ask how threatening or encompassing was the IPU control? In other words, what was the nature of the control of the IPU over Ibadan politics?

The height of IPU influence was manifested in Council affairs. Overall effective work in the Council was performed by special Committees which regularly included IPU members such as D.T. Akinbiyi, O.H. Adetoun, H.V.A. Olunloyo, I.B. Akinyele and J.L. Ogunsola. But the control of the IPU on Ibadan went beyond the political realm. It was also evident in the social and economic fields. Socially, IPU members were to be found either as priests or lay-leaders in the major churches in Ibadan such as St. Peter's Aremo, Methodist Church, Agbeni, St. David's Kudeti, Christ Church, Mapo, Christ Apostolic Church, Olugbode etc. They also controlled schools, especially the Ibadan Grammar School, the *alma mater* of most of the IPU men - which was headed first by the Rev. A.B. Akinyele (an Egbe Agba-'O'Tan member who was also active as patron

of the IPU) and later by his son-in-law the Rev. E.O. Alayande, another IPU stalwart. The Grammar School produced many of the teachers and headmasters of other schools. An example of such products was T.L. Oyesina who founded six schools in Ibadan.¹

Although a few wealthy Muslims stood out of the Ibadan society in the twenties and thirties, the forties now saw the rise of some IPU businessmen e.g. J.O. Aboderin, O.H. Adetoun, I.B. Akinyele who were into farming, produce trade and general business. A. Obisesan was a leader of the Cooperative Movement, and through these men and few other IPU men in other vital sectors of the local economy, the influence of the Union was made real. IPU control was thus a long-standing one in terms of political generations, it was self-perpetuating and interlocking, and it effectively controlled policies affecting the lives of non-members.²

Non-members challenged this IPU control. In fact, the Union frequently clashed with prominent Muslims like Bello Abaasi who detested, among other things, the IPU arrogance. There were other individuals such as Adegoke Adelabu, L. Ade Bello, and K.O.S. Aare who represented the group of educated Muslims excluded by the IPU from power. These men were not even admitted into the Union through its Youth Wing formed in 1947. The IPU thus provoked a reaction against itself as a Christian, wealthy clique which monopolised much of the political and socio-economic power in Ibadan. In other words, members of the

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1. Osunkunle Papers. L. Osunkunle, "In Memory of an Old Student and Tutor: The Late Chief Timothy Lajide Oyesina, J.P. M.O.N.
 2. Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.27.

Union were regarded as a privileged and opportunistic group who came into Ibadan public life in 1930 to reform the city and put it in order when there were no other persons equipped with the necessary education with which to do so and consequently entrenched themselves as members over the city.

Meanwhile, the issue in the late forties was much more complex than a case of Muslim or masses challenge to IPU ascendancy in Ibadan. The crisis was much broader. It centered around the question of who was to exercise political power legitimately in the city. Should it be the European administrators whose position in the country as a whole was now being challenged by nationalists fighting for independence? Should it be the IPU leaders who did not represent the entire populace? Or should it be the chiefs who were ill-suited for the task because of their illiteracy and the fact that chieftaincy and traditional institutions generally were on the decline (a function of colonialism)? So the struggle between the IPU and non-members clamouring for power was just an 'act' in the overall political drama unfolding in Ibadan. Indeed, the Ibadan case was made more complex by the fact that it became part of a greater debate which was in progress throughout Nigeria as a whole, on who should inherit power from the colonial rulers. The national parties formed to contest for this power and overall control of the country were very active on other local scenes too, and in Ibadan, they tried to mobilize support which they could use to their advantage during election time. And in the process of soliciting local support, they found themselves meddling in local politics.

Summary

The decades between 1920-1949 saw the rise of the Christian elite in Ibadan politics. Their encounter with Garveyism and other Pan-African cum nationalist ideals broadened their horizon but their sphere of action, however remained their immediate community. They set themselves the task of charting a more beneficial course for Ibadan affairs. While they championed causes that benefited the populace at large, their mind was also on advancing their own status. Neither the Ibadan Native Aboriginal Society nor the Ilupeju Society proved an effective political instrument for the furtherance of the interests of the Christian elite as did the IPU. But IPU control on Ibadan life did not go unchallenged. The intensity of the challenge showed how firm the IPU hold on Ibadan affairs had been. This hold was loosened in the heat of politics of decolonization.

CHAPTER SIX

ON THE CHALLENGES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Introduction

Just as partisan politics and other challenges of the colonial state offered illustrious Ibadan indigenes ample opportunity to rise to elite status, entrepreneurship also provided a veritable avenue to high status and societal acknowledgement. In addition, entrepreneurship presented them with numerous challenges which brought out the genius in them despite the severe limitations of the milieu in which they operated. The colonial state as an imposed entity with its own goals and policies set certain restrictions on the aspirations of local entrepreneurs, making it difficult for them to attain great heights. More damaging were the activities of European commercial firms, Lebanese, Syrians and non-Ibadan natives such as the Ijebu-Yoruba who presented fierce commercial competition to Ibadan entrepreneurs.

What was the response of the indigenous elite to these challenges and 'provocations'? How equipped was it to meet these challenges? In what areas was it active? What were the aims and results of its activities in the economic field? And talking about challenges, were these only from external sources, or were there internally-generated economic cleavages and differences among the elite?

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how good an avenue to high class was provided by entrepreneurship and successful economic pursuits. It also examines how well integrated into the elite were individuals who came to the top via the economic route.

Entrepreneurship: A Definition

An entrepreneur has been defined as one who undertakes to start and conduct an enterprise or business, assuming full control and risk.¹ This control implies leadership roles which includes managerial tasks of maintaining routine functions of a business organization and innovation i.e. making strategically important or innovating decisions. Innovation has to do with the initiation of new ideas or things, or the doing of things that are already existent in a new way. This innovation is usually a direct, creative response to prevailing circumstances. The other aspect of entrepreneurship mentioned in the above definition is that of risk-taking. Risk-taking is coping with uncertainty and accommodating contingencies. Although one can say that the element of risk is present in varying degrees in almost all human endeavours and therefore not exclusive to the entrepreneurial function, the fact still remains that the incidence of risks is more pronounced in the business or economic sphere where loss or gain is calculable in precise material terms than in others.

A.H. Cole's definition is also relevant here. According to him, entrepreneurship is:

the purposeful activity (including an integrated sequence of decisions) of an individual or group of associated individuals, undertaken to initiate, maintain or aggrandize a profit oriented business unit for the production or distribution of economic goods and services.²

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1. Funk & Wagnalls, *New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language*. (Encyclopedic Edition. Ferguson Publishing Company 1973).
 2. A.H. Cole, *Business Enterprise in Its Social Setting*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1959) p.7

Entrepreneurship is here applied to activities in the business or economic sphere. Its focus is on manufacturing or production of goods, distribution of same, and the provision of marketable services.¹

From these two definitions, it would appear that all who engaged in productive activities either of goods and services, and of distribution of same in Ibadan during our period fitted into the definition of entrepreneur. Within this broad group, however, were distinctions. There were small-scale producers with the traditional system of apprentices who also doubled as the labour force, and the large-scale businessmen who made it more through commerce than manufacturing. Some of the small-scale producers were women engaged in traditional crafts such as dyeing, *adire* making, weaving, and modern industries like tailoring, bakery, etc. But women flourished more in trading and a few of them became very rich, sending their children to overseas universities and investing in housing and transport.

However, not all entrepreneurs were members of the elite - only a few of them were. In other words, entrepreneurship was not coterminous with elitism. Those entrepreneurs who were members of the elite were the business magnates and wealthy folks who had amassed a lot of affluence through their economic activities and have used same as a stepping stone to a higher social status. Society accorded them recognition as influential and powerful citizens. In certain cases,

1. For a discussion of various definitions of 'entrepreneurship' and approaches to the subject, see T.C. Cochran "Entrepreneurship" in D.L. Sills (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. V. (Macmillan and the Free Press, U.S.A. 1968), pp.87-90.

economic power and political authority coincided which made the individual concerned an acknowledged leader. And if he was able to deliver the political goods expected of him adequately, using his wealth to service and enhance his status, he became a leader par excellence. It is with this group of entrepreneurs who also made it to the elite category that this chapter is particularly concerned. Attention is also focused on other entrepreneurs as the need arises. In other words, the paramount task here is to determine how illustrious men responded to the general challenge of entrepreneurship as a means to high status. But before going into that it is proper to first examine the general economic situation within which elite and non-elite alike operated.

The Nigerian Economic Background

The colonial economy provided the context within which the people of Nigeria operated from the end of the nineteenth century to 1960. The colonial state had its own set goals which it pursued diligently. Because the colonial enterprise was essentially exploitative, its goals included the incorporation of the local economy into that of Europe. This incorporation was necessary in order to protect colonial economic interest against competition from other capitalists, to arbitrate the conflicts between European capitalists and to guarantee optimum conditions under which private firms could exploit Africans.¹ The colonial rulers

1. W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington D.C. 1974) p. 164; T. Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan 1893-1945*. (Madelor, Lagos 1989) p.75. For a detailed appraisal of colonial economic goals in Nigeria see T. Falola (ed.) *Britain and Nigeria: Exploitation or Development?* (Zed, London, 1986)

dictated the music and controlled the performance with the aid of the state apparatus. Africans had no say in the matter. Moreover, the policies designed to facilitate this exploitation were also aimed at destroying the institutions which sustained the pre-colonial economic system and to introduce new ones. The aim was to facilitate a speedy incorporation of the Nigerian economy into the world capitalist system.

All these policies affected strategic aspects of the economy such as transportation, currency, labour, land and tolls. The transformations engendered in these various aspects were in turn meant to control the flow of trade, promote the development of a cash-crop economy, and preserve the domination of the exchange sector by interests that understood the needs of the colonial state. The process of incorporation brought international fluctuations in trade to bear on the Nigerian economy. Depressions and booms related to external pricing of export goods and other external conditions affected the Nigerian economy, and local entrepreneurs had to struggle hard to maintain their positions.

Perhaps the true significance of the economic history of Nigeria in the first half of the twentieth century lay in the growth of the cash economy which had its foundation in the development of agricultural export products called cash-crops.¹ The 'industrialization' of the country was to come later during the century. The rapid rise in the value of agricultural export produce which was noticed towards the close of the nineteenth century, also continued into the twentieth century

1. R.O. Ekundare, *An Economic History of Nigeria 1860-1960*, (Methuen & Co. Ltd., London 1973), p.142.

before being slowed down by the World Wars and the general economic depression of the 1930s. The development of transport facilities and the gradual spread of Western education naturally led to greater emphasis being given to the financial aspect of agriculture. Production for local sales and export became the aim of many farmers and they were successful in this respect.¹ The bulk of the population was made up of farmers, and most other people who were not directly involved in practical agriculture earned their incomes from agricultural production, either as producers, buyers or motor transport magnates, transporting export products from the local markets to the shipping centres on the coast.² Still others were engaged in the retail business, selling imported items to the general public.

This was the general condition within which individual entrepreneurs operated in Ibadan. The economic layout was thus a function of the colonial authorities. Over this and its components indigenes had little control. Again, entrepreneurs lacked huge capital with which to establish large manufacturing industrial concerns. The available commercial banks: the Bank of British West Africa (B.B.W.A.) and Barclays Bank were not ready to grant credit facilities to Nigerian traders. Business-minded individuals therefore did not have any means of generating the type of capital necessary for industrial investments.

Nigeria therefore did not have a strong capitalist element in society which could speed up its rate of economic growth. Again, the business climate was not entirely favourable.

1. Ekundare, *op. cit.*, p.156.

2. *Ibid.*, p.205.

Considerable progress still had to be made in the provision of primary economic and social services - good roads, communications, banking facilities and better health conditions on which to lay the foundations of a strong economy.¹

Moreover, the colonial authorities did not consider the economic development of Nigeria their duty, that was to be for private enterprise. The economic policies and attitude of the colonial government as enunciated above thus presented a big challenge to Nigerians with the entrepreneurial zeal. Their response to this was to engage in the distributive trade as a way of demonstrating their economic initiative within the various restrictions of the colonial setting. Here again, they encountered numerous other challenges.

Commercial Challenges: European Middle-men, Lebanese and Syrian Traders

Apart from the restrictive nature of the colonial economy on indigenous enterprise beyond the level of distribution, the activities of European middlemen, Lebanese and Syrian traders also represented important challenges to the commercial aspirations of Ibadan indigenes. The case of the European firms applied to other places as well in Southern Nigeria. A few of these firms predated the colonial enterprise in Nigeria and the colonial authorities supported them because they could be counted upon to sympathise with, and help meet some of the needs of the colonial regime.

The European firms were mainly located in Lagos because of proximity to the port and to the seat of the colonial government. From Lagos, they established branches in other major cities of the country. Such firms included: the

1. Ekundare, *op. cit.*, p.120.

Niger Company, John Holt & Co., Messrs Miller Brothers & Co., the African Association Ltd., Lagos Store Ltd., the British Nigerian Syndicate, British Cotton Growing Association, Elder Dempster & Co., Messrs Siegher & Co., G.L. Gaiser, A. Dachse & Co. and Messrs W.B. MacIver & Co. This array, however changed over the years. Some of the firms were forced by the economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s to abandon the Nigerian trade. Others simply amalgamated into bigger units in order to cope with the harsh economic conditions. Even the big firms were faced with a drastic reduction in their profit margins. Despite all these, some new firms still joined in the foreign trade.

Competition among the firms was very intense. At a time, German traders were more successful than the British but eventually the latter gained upper hand because of the support of the British colonial government. These foreign firms were engaged in the import and export trade. Their exports were mainly agricultural produce while imports comprised European manufactures such as cotton goods, trade spirits, building materials, iron and steel, bicycles and motor cars. In fact, cotton goods represented the most important single item of importation, the increased consumption of which reflected the cheapness of foreign cotton in relation to locally made textile. The effect of this on the local weaving industry was crippling to say the least. The 1920s was a period of consolidation for the foreign firms during which time they penetrated the hinterland, with devastating effects on the operation of indigenous middlemen who had profited when Europeans were restricted to the coast.¹ The indigenes were not completely

1. T. Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan, 1893-1945*. (Modelor, Lagos, 1989). p.201.

displaced but they were now responsible for a lower percentage of trade. In some cases, they even 'collaborated' with the European firms by supplying them with agricultural produce which they procured from the local farmers. Some even served as commercial agents to the Europeans.

Ibadan, as a major city in Nigeria had its own share of the foreign trading firms. By the 1960s there were no less than fifteen branches of such firms in Ibadan. These included: G.B.O. Ollivant & Co., Patterson & Zochonis Ltd., John Holt & Co. Ltd., Miller Brothers, African and Eastern Trading Corporation, the Societe Commerciale et Industrielle de L'Afrique Occidentale, H.B. Russell & Co. Ltd., W.B. MacIver & Co etc.¹ These firms were attracted to Ibadan because of its rapid growth and increasing importance as an administrative and commercial centre. The large population of Ibadan represented a ready market for imported goods. The making of Ibadan the capital of the Western Region in 1952 boosted the image of the town and launched it on the path of expansion and improvement:

...Ibadan now became the focal point of political and economic activities for a region some 42,000 square miles in area... The increasing concentration [in Ibadan] of so many people (senior civil servants, University teachers, professionals, technicians etc.) earning income well above the average for the region, substantially increased purchasing power in the city.²

This, in turn, stimulated rapid growth in commerce and in employment opportunities. New commercial firms were established and old ones

1. A.L. Mabogunje, *Urbanization in Nigeria*, (University of London Press, London. 1968) p.195

2. Mabogunje, *op. cit.*, p.200.

expanded.

The activities of the foreign firms in Ibadan from the beginning of the century to the mid sixties had an adverse effect on local traders. These Europeans had some advantages over the Nigerian traders. The most important of this was that they had the backing of the colonial government. In other words, official support emboldened the firms and made them successful. Again, they had capital and access to cheap goods and controlled markets, including sources of goods. Their access to capital enabled them to monopolise the import trade which was characterized by the holding of large stock for long periods. Lastly, they had personnel with the knowledge of trade. All these advantages enabled the foreign firms to establish a monopoly on trade. Infact, their dominance in the commercial sphere presented a real challenge to local traders who also wanted a meaningful share of commercial activities. The indigenes were circumscribed by the firm grasp of the foreign firms on trade - only a few local traders managed to excel.

Moreover, the commercial policies of the European firms had a paralysing effect on African trade. To protest the stifling activities of the foreign firms, Ibadan traders organized a union known as the Native Traders' Union. Salami Agbaje was the President of the Union in the late 1920s with Akandi Akinloye as Secretary.¹ The Union made various representations to, and petitioned the Resident, Oyo Province, several times, complaining about the activities of European firms which they said were hindering the economic efforts of the African middleman.²

1. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47 Diary 1928. Entry for April 3.

2. Many of such petitions are contained in N.A.I., Oyo Prof 1. File No. 1441 p.1-5 of Appendix 'A', pp.21-24, 26-30, and 31-36.

European firms were, however, not the only hinderance to the growth of indigenous enterprise, Lebanese and Syrian traders also constituted another veritable obstacle.

Lebanese and Syrian traders arrived in Ibadan after the railroad from Lagos got there in 1901 and by the beginning of World War I, they had become settled as traders. By 1924, there were twelve Lebanese in Ibadan but they were firmly ensconced as middlemen in the local economy. By 1930, 56 Lebanese were resident in Ibadan and their numbers rose as the years rolled by.¹ Most of them began as retailers of imported goods, particularly cotton goods, for which they opened large shops in Gbagi Street. They were also involved in the marketing of export products - agricultural produce - and they had a firm control of the palm kernel trade. They also diversified their trade by engaging in banking, retailing, produce processing etc. but they did not make much direct investment in the city. Their commercial methods were very pragmatic. They studied the local language and custom and this enhanced their activities by giving them some degree of acceptability in the eyes of the local populace. Again, they penetrated the town and its surrounding villages for their produce business. But what characterised them most was their spirit of togetherness. They stayed close together on Gbagi Street and interacted among themselves thus enjoying collective support. They also helped one another. The rich Syrian assisted his less fortunate brothers to

1. For a detailed study of the Lebanese in West Africa, see T. Falola, "The Lebanese in Colonial West Africa" in J.F. Ade.Ajayi and J.D.Y. Peel, (eds.) *People and Empires in African History* (Longman, London. 1992), pp.121-142.

obtain funds and make the right trade contacts. They competed successfully with European firms in terms of operation, staff and access to goods.

However, the activities of the Lebanese and Syrians in Ibadan constituted a threat to indigenous traders. In 1930, a dispute broke out concerning the Lebanese control of Gbagi Street. Their increasing number and concentration in Gbagi excluded indigenes from the commercial benefits of the place which had now developed into an economic centre. Their main economic concerns in Gbagi included shoe shops, grocery stores, a restaurant, appliances, transportation, autosales, and several night clubs. The imported cloth business was firmly under their control. They so much dominated trade in Gbagi that a few local traders had to leave the place for the new Dugbe market. The Gbagi issue became protracted because it coincided with the world-wide depression which left the commercial careers of many Ibadan traders in ruins. Only the most wealthy traders survived this experience. But the dominance of the Lebanese and Syrians in trade continued. In 1935, as a recognition of their commercial preponderance in Gbagi, the street was renamed Lebanon Street by the local authorities, and the following year they began to spill over into the adjoining New Court Road.

Besides, they continued to acquire more property in these areas. This was made possible through bribes and 'gifts' to Council Chiefs despite the protest of local traders. Only the very wealthy, high ranking, local entrepreneurs were able to compete with the Lebanese and Syrians, and they resented their dominance and hold on trade. The observations of H.L. Ward-Price, Resident of Ibadan from 1931 to 1936, perhaps gives a clear characterization as well as summarises the economic menace of the Lebanese and Syrians.

There is a small coterie of traders about whom there has been a good deal of argument, namely, the Syrians and Lebanese. Their numbers are steadily increasing. They do not come and go like other foreigners, but reside permanently in the country with their wives and children. They speak English for the most part, in an elementary way, but know the native language well enough for it to be useful to them in their work. Their modest way of living and small overhead costs have caused them to be accused of preferring squalor to comfort... They keep to themselves, having only trade relations with Europeans and natives; they are well conducted and law abiding... Quietly, but steadily, their profits mount up. Many chiefs and educated Nigerians regard these Syrians and Lebanese traders as yet one more obstacle in the way of the local native to get a fair share of the trade of the country, and they wonder when a limit will be placed on the number of immigrants of this nature.¹

Before closing this segment, a little should also be said concerning the commercial relations between the Ijebu in Ibadan and the indigenes. This is because, in a sense, the Ijebu also constituted another obstacle in the way of the commercial ascendancy of the indigenous trader. The Ijebu competed with the Lebanese and Syrians for land and trade but they lost especially in the struggle for shops in economically strategic places such as Lebanon Street and New Court Road. But they were not discouraged by this. Being by tradition a trading group, they established shops along Agbeni and Amunigun Streets and formed a link between the traditional city and the new commercial centre in the Old Gbagi/Dugbe axis. A few of them even had stalls in Dugbe. Apart from individual trading units, they also had joint-stock companies such as Ikorodu Trading

1. H.L. Ward-Price, *Dark Subjects*, (Jarrolds, London 1939). p.235.

Stores.¹

Apart from trading, the Ijebu were also into crafts and industries. They had preferences for crafts like goldsmithing, metal working, mechanical repair work, printing and sign writing. Indeed, more than any other group, they controlled the printing business. And talking in terms of large industrial establishments, two large tyre-rethreading factories in Ibadan in the 1960s belonged to men of Ijebu pedigree.²

The unease which characterised Ibadan-Ijebu relations in the city was not only due to the commercial aspirations of the Ijebu, but was also due to their attitude to work, lifestyle, spending and investment, all of which were resented by the Ibadan. The Ijebu believed that virtue existed only in hard work, and that leisure undermined virtuous living.³ This put them in the same class as the Syrians who also believed in hard work and lived Puritan lives. They avoided women and alcohol. To them the worth of money was in investment. They invested in transportation - owning one or two lorries for commercial transport -, in the education of their children, and in landed property. They bought plots of land in

1. A.L. Mabogunje, "Stranger Communities: The Ijebu", in P.C. Lloyd *et al.* (eds.) *The City of Ibadan*, (Cambridge University Press. 1967) pp.85-91.

2. *Ibid.*, p.88.

3. This attitude had since been modified by the Ijebu. Although they are still regarded as being generally frugal in everyday material transactions, the Ijebu are popularly known, among the entire Yoruba race, for their profligate spending at occasional celebrations such as funerals of aged parents, wedding ceremonies, house-warming and birthday parties, and conferment of chieftaincy or religious titles.

the periphery of the city - especially along the Ijebu Bye-Pass where they built many modern houses in the 'Brazilian' style which they rented to civil servants and other salaried workers.

The Ibadan viewed this in a different light. With them, work easily merged with pleasure, and money, they believed, should be spent to acquire honour by the building up of large following. This incongruity of values made the Ijebu unacceptable to the Ibadan.

The Ibadan speak of the Ijebu not as *alejo*; strangers and guests to be accorded generous hospitality in the cultural expectation that such action is reciprocal and pleasurable, but as *ajeji*; strangers who "eat in two places", make of hospitality a one-way street, or do not reciprocate at all.¹

Consequently, the Ijebu were denied political power within the local set-up because they would not spend money on people. Even a few Ijebu who had gained entry into the chieftaincy structure on the ticket of their long residence in the city were removed and denied political power when they were nearing the peak of their political career.²

Indigenous Entrepreneurs

The activities of Ibadan indigenes in the economic sector could be seen partly as a response to the various challenges thrown to them by European firms,

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1. D.R. Aronson, "Cultural Stability and Social Change Among the Modern Ijebu-Yoruba." Ph.D Thesis, Chicago, 1970 quoted in Falola, *Politics and Economy, op. cit.* p.276.
 2. There was the case of Osi Balogun Folarin Solaja who was prevented from further promotion on account of his Ijebu pedigree. He was also accused of being miserly and selfish.

Lebanese/Syrian traders, and by Ijebu traders. On the other hand, their efforts also represented local initiative and innovation in making a living and a name for themselves in the economic sphere. A large number of Ibadan people were involved in the distributive trade, retailing imported items and serving as middlemen in the produce business. A few were also involved in the transport business. However, many of the traders had no adequate capital to engage in the import trade, credit was not forthcoming from the existing banks. Unavailability of capital also stood in the way of industrial development in Ibadan. But there were many small-scale industries and a few large ones, all of which could not effect a major transformation of the local economy.

Indigenous traders were in three broad categories. There were the high-ranking entrepreneurs who competed with Europeans and Lebanese/Syrians. These men were involved in importation and in the cocoa and palm-kernel trade. There were also middlemen who linked agricultural producers and petty traders with the foreign firms. Many of them served as agents of foreign firms and of the indigenous merchants, buying produce from the farms and selling foreign goods. Most of these men were also involved in cocoa farming in the period before 1914. These early cocoa farmers invested their wealth, among other things, in the education of their children. 'Cocoa wealth' in form of school fees was thus part of the material base for the Ibadan Grammar School.¹ In the third category were

1. Apart from paying their wards' fees, a number of them made substantial contributions to the school in its early days e.g. J.O. Aboderin donated a clock to the school in 1915.

small scale traders, mostly women who operated in the night, morning and periodic markets. They sold foodstuffs, locally produced goods and imported items. Our main pre-occupation here, however, is with the first category and a few from the second. These were individuals who got admission into the elite cadre and used their wealth, among other things, to maintain their membership there. Prominent in this group were Adebisi Giwa, D.T. Akinbiyi, J.O. Aboderin, Salami Agbaje and Hunmoani Alaga.¹

Adebisi Sanusi Giwa belonged to Ile Olanipekun (also known locally as Ile Wonuola). His father was one Adesina, a weaver who migrated from Offa.² His mother was Ogoja (sometimes called Ogboja). Adebisi was the second son of the union.³ He took to farming at a very young age though weaving was the family vocation. Later he entered the business world as a buying agent for Miller Brothers. This led him into a stable relationship with the British firm. He thereafter became a produce buyer in his own right, buying and selling to the European firms.

By this time he had become a wealthy man. He was distributor for UAC and he had several shops at Gbagi. He did not abandon his farming with this enlargement of his business frontiers. He went ahead and established a large cocoa plantation of about fifty hectares at Mamu village on the way to Ijebu-Ode. To work his farm, he largely made use of pawn labour. These were men bounded to

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1. The economic rise of Hunmoani Alaga was toward the end of our period.
 2. Interview with Dr. Busari Adebisi (last son of Adebisi Giwa) on March 16, 1995.
 3. He had one other brother - Adeoti and a sister, Adetinrin.

work for him as interest on a loan which they or any of their relations had taken. They continued to work until the debt was paid in full. The transient nature of this labour force would suggest that Adebisi maintained a policy of regularly loaning out money with easy conditions to ensure a steady supply of labour on his farms.

He sold his cocoa to the foreign firms. He also cultivated food items at Mamu which he sold to the people of Ibadan and its environs. From all these business activities he was able to amass tremendous wealth for himself. Indeed, his commercial partnership' with Miller Brothers and agricultural investments at Mamu were so widely acknowledged by the local populace that a verse of his *oriki* celebrates them thus:

Alaimokan mokaan nii so pe Oke Mapo
 Lowo o Debisi ti nwa,
 Owo Adebisi nbe ni Mamu
 Owo Akanji nbe ni Miller ti o lee parun
 Baba Gbadegesin.

It is only the ignorant that says it is from
 Mapo Hill (administrative centre) that Debisi's money comes;
 Adebisi's money is at Mamu,
 Akanji's investments at Miller's is indestructible.
 Father of Gbadegesin.¹

To what use did Adebisi put his wealth? i.e. How did he invest it? His background shows that he had no formal Western education. But it seemed he was literate enough (probably through self education) to carry on business transactions with the Millers. He did not appreciate the value of Western

1. Interview with Dr. Busari Adebisi as cited above. Other verses of Adebisi's *oriki* emphasise his 'generosity' to people and the festive air that always surrounded his house. See Chapter Two above.

education and so did not invest in the education of his children. He gave most of them elementary education which, he believed, was all they needed to fit into the commercial world. He consequently set them up as traders in their own right.¹ From what he could observe in his days, the most learned were not always the wealthiest, and if the acquisition of Western education had very little to do with the accumulation of wealth, why should he 'waste' money on University or higher education of his children when they could 'make it' in life without such. His two children who had University education acquired it after his death in 1938. His conservative attitude to Western education did not see into the future. Fifty years after his death, Western education had become so widely embraced that those who exhibited any reluctance to acquire it were seen as being odd and counted as nonentities. This is why Adebisi's children lived in relative obscurity except the two who had Western education, and perhaps Saka Adebisi who inherited his vast wealth. However, Adebisi invested in real estate. He had about fifty houses when he died in 1938 and many other landed property at Dugbe and Apata areas of Ibadan.²

His wealth brought him fame which he used as a stepping stone into prominence. He became Mogaji Ile Lanipekun/Wonuola during the time of Baale Oyewole (1925-29). He thereafter joined the chieftaincy hierarchy as Jagun Baale.

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1. Akinpelu Obisesan recorded in his diary on June 5, 1928 that "Chief Adebisi has taken up his eldest son, Lasisi, as one of his Dugbe clerks though a boy of average education."
 2. Interview with Dr. Busari Adebisi as cited above.

From there he rose until he became Ashipa Olubadan before his death. As Ashipa, he was made the first President of the Land's Court at Oke-Aare because he was literate. But the other senior chiefs did not like this because they had their eyes on the same position. Land cases were regarded as the juiciest in terms of perquisites accruable to the presiding judges. This made the Presidency of the Land Court to be much sought after.

Adebisi's wealth earned him admission into the ruling elite via the acquisition of a chieftaincy title. In other words, the prominence which his wealth gave him was acknowledged by the conferment of a title on him by members of the ruling elite. To make his own stand sure, Adebisi befriended the high and mighty e.g. Gbadosi Otiti, another wealthy muslim. His palatial building at Idikan was a port of call for distinguished guests and Obas visiting Ibadan. To cement his membership of the ruling elite, he married from most of the leading chieftaincy families in Ibadan. He married daughters of Oyewole, Fijabi, Irefin, etc.

Furthermore, to ensure that he was well acknowledged within Christian circles, he made a network of friendship with the leading members of the Christian elite in Ibadan e.g. Bishop Akinyele, Akinpelu Obisesan, Abiola Jacobs, etc. This link with Christians was also useful in cementing his commercial ties with them. Occasions to advertise his wealth and continued affluence were provided by the Muslim festivals. During such festivals he displayed his wealth by parading an array of expensive clothes, horses and retinue. He was not a very pious Muslim but was recognised and much respected in the muslim community largely due to his wealth from which muslims and non-Muslims alike benefitted. He had about twenty wives and numerous children.

J.O. Aboderin was another successful and prominent Christian merchant in Ibadan. He bequeathed the affluent legacy to his descendants. However, not all indigenous entrepreneurs were able to sustain their respective businesses. Some collapsed along the way and folded up. No doubt such instances represented negative performance of the local economic effort; nonetheless, they demonstrated local initiative and resourcefulness while they lasted. A case in point is the economic career of D.T. Akinbiyi.

D.T. Akinbiyi began his business career by selling imported goods - hats, ties, shirts, shoes and singlets - in his first shop at Agbeni, Ibadan. His success in this venture made him to establish more shops in Ibadan and one in Lagos. He was also involved in the produce trade. Later, he went into manufacturing, producing Akinbiyi Excelsior Aerated waters locally known as *Oti Akinbiyi* in 1931.¹ Initially, these business concerns were very successful, and he amassed a lot of wealth for himself. However, the entire business began to crumble at the end of the 1930s and it eventually collapsed, making him to retire to his farm. But why did Akinbiyi's business collapse? Firstly, the general economic climate in the 1930s adversely affected his business. The world-wide depression left the commercial careers of many Ibadan traders in ruins. This was due to violent price fluctuations of export products in the world market during the depression years and immediately after which made produce buyers to incur heavy losses. Since Akinbiyi was deeply involved in the produce trade he was seriously affected and was never able to recover. Secondly, from the time of the formation of the Ibadan

1. *Yoruba News*, October 20, 1931.

Progressive Union in 1930, Akinbiyi had become more involved in Ibadan affairs that he had little time for his business. He was one of the nominated Councillors in the Native Authority. He was also neck-deep in partisan politics. In 1951, he became a legislator in the Western House of Assembly. Moreover, his admission into the chieftaincy hierarchy made him defer to the traditional demands for generous spending and acquisition of a following. Those who made up his following were generally the type that would be indebted to him through their patronage of his business concerns without any intention of paying up. An astute businessman could tactfully extricate himself from such unprofitable social demands at the risk of being labelled a miser as was the case of Salami Agbaje. But since the depression of the 1930s had knocked the life out of Akinbiyi's business, other factors only confirmed its mortality.

Perhaps the best and classical illustration of the activities of indigenous entrepreneurs is the economic career of Salami Agbaje. He was involved in importation of European goods, in the produce business, in the transport business, and in industrial production. The economic career of Agbaje is significant in many respects not only in the economic history of Ibadan but also in its political development. His career is a testimony to the efficacy of individual resourcefulness situated in a not very favourable economic climate. Furthermore, his multi-dimensional business activities give us an insight into his innovative and calculating mind. The excessive wealth that he acquired from his business dealings brought him wide acknowledgement from the populace, akin to, but greater than that accorded Adebisi Giwa. Having acquired so much renown, he began to seek admission into the ruling elite. The conferment of a chieftaincy title on him in

1936 confirmed the fact that besides membership of traditional chieftaincy families, wealth, could also bestow an elite status. The 'Agbaje dispute' of 1949/51, however, demonstrated that the demands of tradition on its office holders were still valid despite the various novelties brought by Western civilization. But before we look into that, an examination of Agbaje's business activities is necessary at this juncture.

Agbaje started his business activities as a timber contractor, supplying the engineering firm responsible for the construction of the railway - Messrs Shelford & Sons - with timber with which they made planks that were used to line the rails. In 1871, the construction of a railroad had begun which was to run from Lagos to Ibadan through Yorubaland and into Northern Nigeria to evacuate the products of the hinterland. The railway opened through to Ibadan in 1901.¹ After raising some capital from the timber business, Salami went into produce buying. He bought produce from farmers in the interior and sold same to European firms who shipped them abroad. From those firms, he also bought European cloth, hardware and trade spirits which he in turn retailed. As one of the middlemen in the local economy, Agbaje became a repository of a great deal of information about Europeans and about the producers from whom he purchased and to whom he sold. This thus put him into political limelight. He was also able to amass a lot of wealth for himself because trading generally, although not always was quite profitable.

1. Ekundare, *op. cit.*, p.134.

Having accumulated substantial capital after some years in the produce business, Salami attempted to ship produce directly to the United Kingdom. It was this that lifted him into the category of the high-ranking entrepreneurs. During World War I, and at great risk to his capital, he acquired large quantities of cocoa at Ibadan, Iwo, Odo-Oba, Lalupon, Olodo and a few other villages surrounding Ibadan altogether amounting to some thousand tons which he sold to great advantage after the removal of the space control which had delayed the steady shipment of produce, resulting in the large accumulation of cocoa then urgently needed in Europe.¹ From this single bid, Salami made a tremendous amount of money. Also, he regularly supplied other items such as palm kernels, palm-oil, maize, rubber and ivory.² His success in trade was also evident in the fact that the front pages and inside covers of the issues of *Yoruba News* for the year 1926 carried his adverts.

Salami Agbaje was also a partner in the Oke-badan Trading Company. This was a produce buying Association.³ The company was formed in 1950 with its storehouse at Onireke, Ibadan. There were six shareholders. The others were: Chief Ladipo, Mr. Ali, a wealthy trader at Idi-Omo, Mr. Sunmola Otun, a trader at Amunigun, Mr. Asani Adesokan of Alekuso, and Mr. Yesufu Adeyemo, a wealthy produce buyer at Opo-Yeosa, all of Ibadan. The partners were buying agents for

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1. *Yoruba News*, March, 9 1926.
 2. *Yoruba News*, March 16, 1926.
 3. N.A.I. Ib. Min. Agric. 1/1 18: 137/2 p.10.

Messrs I.T.A. Ltd., Ibadan. Between 1952-1953, the Okebadan Trading Company had bought produce to the following tonnage:

- (a) Palm kernels, from January 1952 - December 1952, 374 20cwt tons.
- (b) Cocoa, from Sept. 1952 to March 1953, 612 9cwts tons.

The company was later appointed a licenced trading agent for the Nigerian Oil-Palm Produce Marketing Board.¹

Apart from dealing in produce, Salami was also an importer. He imported European goods such as cotton materials, gin and rum, hats, umbrellas, building materials (particularly cement, galvanised iron sheets and paints) matches, salt, soap, sewing machines and thread, some electrical goods, shirts and singlets. He was one of the few importers in Nigeria at that time. The other popular importer and general merchant in Ibadan in the 1950s was Saka Adebisi (son of Adebisi Giwa). Salami must have been exceedingly rich to attempt importing goods from Europe. This is because many Nigerians had no adequate capital with which to embark on such. His head office was at Gbagi while he had other shops at Ayeye, Oke-Aare, Agbede-Adodo, Oke-Dada, Agodi, Beyerunka, Popo-Yemoja, Isale-Osi, Oke-Ado, Osungbekun, Elekuro, Ogunpa and Amunigun, all in Ibadan.²

Agbaje also operated a transport business. He started by using his own trucks and lorries to transport to the coast produce which he intended to ship abroad. and as motor transport services started to develop in Ibadan, he extended such services to outsiders. The transport business in the entire Oyo Province was

1. N.A.I. Ib. Min. Agric 1/1. 18: 137/2 p.10.

2. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Sept. 7, 1950.

then dominated by four groups, namely, the Nigerian Railway Motor Transport Services, Government Motor Transport, Transport Services run by different European firms, and indigenous transporters.¹ Agbaje belonged to the last group. Competition was intense among these four groups - each felt its services were the most effective. But the populace preferred the indigenous transporter because his services were the cheapest.

Indigenous transporters responded to economic changes, costs of vehicle maintenance, and the economic capabilities of people in different areas in fixing their own rates.²

The few indigenous transporters available thus prospered well under effective patronage from the populace.

Salami's lorries and trucks carried agricultural produce from the interior to the coast. He also had vans which provided inter-city transport services, carrying passengers as well as goods. This aspect of his business grew very wide and he thereby became so popular that the Resident of Oyo Province in 1921 could not help commending him while writing his report for the year.

Some of the educated people are most progressive, notably one Salami Agbaje, a native of Ibadan who has started a motor service on three important trade routes ... Salami Agbaje has a service from Ibadan to Ikire and Ife, a distance of 56 miles and one van plying Ibadan to Oyo. He has vans also at Oshogbo carrying passengers from Oshogbo to Ibadan... Agbaje and J. Oke [another transport magnate] also ply Iseyin-Oyo route and they take passengers and goods.³

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1. Falola, *Politics and Economy, op. cit.*, p.193.
 2. *Ibid., loc. cit.*
 3. N.A.I. CSO26/06027 Annual Report, 1921. Oyo Province, p.9 & p.62; CSO26/09723, p.27.

He later extended his services to the northern and eastern parts of the country, carrying passengers as well as goods.¹

One problem which Salami encountered in his transport business was that of servicing his vehicles. There were very few motor-servicing stations in the country in the late twenties and early thirties.² He solved this problem by establishing a mechanical garage for servicing not only his own vehicles but also those of members of the public who patronised him. Agbaje's mechanical garage was in fact, second only to the P.W.D. (Public Works Department of the Native Administration) in Ibadan when it came to all forms of mechanical repairs, be it of motor vehicles or other types of machines. In fact, any mechanical repair that could not be done at the P.W.D. was referred to his garage.³ The secret of the success of this garage was the competence of the technicians which Agbaje employed, principal among whom was his son, Seidu Agbaje. Salami was also into industrial manufacturing albeit on a medium scale.⁴ He established the Ibadan

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1. Oral information from Lawyer Yekinni Agbaje interviewed at his office, Agbaje & Agbaje Chambers, Majaro Street, Oremeji, Mokola, Ibadan on Oct. 30, 1987.
 2. Ekundare, *op. cit.*, p.146.
 3. Interview with Arch. E.O. Alayande at his Oke-Offa residence in Ibadan on 9/11/87, confirmed by Chief J.A. Ayorinde, Ekerin Olubadan during an interview with him at his Ekotedo residence on 21/11/87, and by Chief E.A. Adeyemo, the Otun Olubadan (now Olubadan) on 22/11/87 at his Isale-Jebu home.
 4. Medium, in the sense that such efforts were bigger than most of Ibadan small-scale industries, but not as large as the Nigerian Tobacco Company, the Lafia Canning Factory, and the Odutola Tyre Industry, all in Ibadan.

Aerated Water Supply Company at Gbagi, where he produced mineral water (a form of 'soft' non-alcoholic bottled drink).¹ At Ayeye, he had another food-processing factory where he ground all sorts of grains and processed other staples which were all packed into bags and sold. He established a printing press with J.M. Aribisala as his press manager.² He operated the press for a long time before handing it over to his first son, Dr. S.A. Agbaje in the forties when the latter, together with others like T.L. Oyesina established a newspaper called *Western Echo*.³ Salami also revived his timber business which he called the Ibadan Timber Company, located at Ayeye. This was generally referred to by the populace as a sawmill.

Furthermore, Agbaje had a cinema business located at Ayeye. There, foreign films like those of Charlie Chaplain were shown to viewers. He later sold this cinema business to some Syrians who continued to operate in his Ayeye premises. This further enhanced his prestige because people outside felt he had employed the Syrians to work for him. The general belief then was that only the very rich could employ Syrians who charged exorbitant wages.

From all these business activities Salami Agbaje made a great deal of money. He became rich to the extent that others used his success as a yardstick to measure their own progress. His business career was not without its dark

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1. Oral information from Lawyer Yekinni Agbaje, *op. cit.*
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entry for Jan. 10.
 3. Interview with T.L. Oyesina (Jnr.) at his office, Mesi-Ogo Chambers, Oke Bola, Ibadan. Oct. 4 and 10, 1994.

moments, though, as was the case in 1926 when he was duped in an attempt to ship large quantities of cocoa to the United Kingdom.¹ The loss he incurred was to the tune of hundreds of thousands of pounds. He was shaken by this disaster but because he invested in other business lines as we have seen, he was able to survive it. And thereafter, his business continued to boom.

But what did Salami Agbaje have to show for his intensive business activities in terms of possessions and achievements? This is not easy to estimate. According to the Annual Report of the Resident, Oyo Province in 1922:

Salami Agbaje... has built very large cement block houses on European lines for trading and living purposes as well as a very handsome dwelling for himself. He has a very large fleet of motors and a repair garage.

His trading stores were scattered all over Ibadan, where he stored cocoa, sold general merchandise, imported goods and his own stock. He also invested his money in the education of his children. Despite the fact that he had over twenty children, he made sure that they all received sound education. He sent more than

1. Oral information from Lawyer Yekinni Agbaje, *op.cit.*

half of them to the United Kingdom and America to study.¹

His achievements could also be seen in terms of the number of 'firsts' behind his name. He was the first Ibadan man to employ 'whitemen', *Oyinbo alawo funfun* in his business.² In the early days of his business, he hired a European book-keeper. Later, he employed more: two of them managed his transport business, and one was his Chief Clerk, by name Mr. Felix Firmin.³ He was the first to establish a cinema business in Ibadan.⁴ He was the first to build a house of two storeys with cement blocks in Ibadan, as opposed to the bungalows built earlier by Bashorun Fajinmi, Bashorun Apampa, Baale Irefin and one Mr.

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1. His opponents during the 'Agbaje dispute' acknowledged this by stating, among other things, in their petition that:

He will have enough to do buying more lorries, equipping his saw-mill with the latest apparatus, developing his farm estates, extending his mineral factory and sending the remaining brood of his children to Eton and Cambridge for higher education.

Petition written by Junior Chiefs and Mogajis against Chief Salami Agbaje on December 27, 1949 addressed to the Olubadan-in-Council

Full text reproduced in H.L.M. Butcher, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Allegations of Misconduct Made Against Chief Salami Agbaje, the Otun Balogun of Ibadan, and Allegations of Inefficiency and Maladministration on the Part of the Ibadan and District Native Authority." Government Printer, Lagos. 1951. See Appendix D.

2. *Yoruba News*, March 9, 1926.
3. *Yoruba News*, Jan. 29, 1924; Dec. 8, 1931.
4. Oral evidence from Chiefs Adeyemo and Ayorinde as cited earlier.

Bakare Adewusi.¹ He was the first indigene to own a car in Ibadan, having bought his first car in 1915. He was also the first individual to construct motorable roads in Ibadan all by himself. He had one linking Ibadan metropolis to Ijokodo village, where he had his farms, and another linking Omi-Adio with Alako village via Ido. He was the first Ibadan man to connect electricity to his house.² He was also the first individual to produce a medical doctor son in the whole of Ibadan, to host first-class Obas - such as Alafin of Oyo and Alake of Egba - in his own house. This concept of 'firsts' shows how wealth could be used to break new grounds and gain public respect. In short, it is a tribute to Agbaje's economic success.

In the eyes of his age, Agbaje was its own version of the modern billionaire, anticipating individuals like Gabriel Igbinedion of the Okada business conglomerate and M.K.O. Abiola, the man who has his fingers in so many economic pies. By reason of his prominence and business activities, he was admitted into the chieftaincy hierarchy as a chief, thus consolidating his economic achievements with the possession of political power. He rose through automatic promotions to become the Balogun of Ibadan before his death in 1953.

The business activities of Salami Agbaje and other high ranking entrepreneurs in Ibadan demonstrated the gradual emergence in the city of a new commercial class which we can call the 'commercial elite'. This group hired a number of other indigenes to work for them thereby producing employment

1. *Yoruba News*, Dec. 8, 1931.

2. *Yoruba News*, March 9, 1926.

opportunities in the society. The emergence of this class of commercial elite was however, not peculiar to Ibadan, the phenomenon was also noticeable in other big cities of the country like Lagos, Onitsha etc. This class had some capital but which was not enough for their investments into the economy to be geared towards the industrialization of the nation. This class was essentially a distributive one. Considerable efforts in industrializing the country were to come later in the century. To that extent, one can liken the new class to Frantz Fanon's 'petite bourgeoisie'. This probably represented the emergence of the powerful middle class which later made substantial investments in the economy of the nation.

The rise of Salami Agbaje to socio-political prominence was however, not without some troubles despite his economic success. In the early thirties he made his desire to get a chieftaincy title known to the British administrative officers. Subsequently, in September 1933, the Resident, H.L. Ward-Price spoke to the Council of Agbaje's aspirations to become a chief and a native court judge.¹ This desire for a chieftaincy title as well as a judgeship shows the political values of the time. That was why senior chiefs who were not made court judges were so disgruntled and unhappy - judgeship attracted a lot of perquisites and gifts. And more than the material gains, it was also of great social value in conferring dignity on the incumbents. Earlier in August 1933, a letter had been written to the Baale and Council by 'a large number of influential persons in Ibadan', recommending the appointment of Salami Agbaje as the President of Ojaaba Native Court with a

1. N.A.I., Iba. Prof 3/4. Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson. Nov. 1938. p.58.

chieftaincy such as will be compatible with the high office of a President of a court.¹ The Council chiefs refused to grant those requests on the grounds that only senior chiefs were native court judges, and since Agbaje was not even a junior chief, he could not be considered for the post of a judge.² For a moment, it seemed as if Salami Agbaje would never get a title because he did not even possess the basic prerequisites that he needed to make him a chief, namely, that he was neither a Mogaji nor a member of any of the recognized chieftaincy families. But despite all these, in February 1936, Agbaje was given the title of Ikolaba Balogun. He thus entered the chieftaincy hierarchy at the twelfth senior title of the Balogun line, jumping over eight junior chiefs of the same line.³ And in October of the same year, he was appointed President of the Bere Native Court II.

Agbaje's case was not the first time a person who was not a Mogaji was made a chief and even jumping over others who were supposed to be his seniors in the chieftaincy hierarchy in the process. We have already seen the cases of ex-

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1. Butcher's *op. cit.*, p.32.
 2. Even the educated Councillors were against Agbaje's overtures and they strongly resisted him. Their argument was that if Agbaje wanted a title, he must start from the beginning of the chieftaincy hierarchy.

K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1933. Entries for August 9, 12, 14 & 17. But ironically, J.O. Aboderin, who was among those who opposed Agbaje was later conferred with the title of Lagunna Baale in 1935 which was the 4th title in the Baale line (meaning that he leapfrogged over three junior chiefs).

3. The chiefs he jumped over were: Aare Onibon, Gbonka, Aregbeomo, Ota, Lagunna, Aare-Ago, Ayingun and Ashaju, all in the Balogun line.

N.A.I. Iba. Div. 1/4 C.D.I. "Intelligence Report on Ibadan" 1937-1938.

Councillors Akinyele and Aboderin on whom the titles of Lagunna Balogun and Lagunna Baale were conferred respectively - each of them jumping three chiefs in their respective lines. Nonetheless, Agbaje's case was still unique. The title of Ikolaba Balogun was a fairly senior one and he got a judgeship along with it. This shows that he had gained so much weight in the society via his economic success that his demands could not be ignored. He got concessions that went beyond the reach of even individuals with traditional rights.

The greatest threat to Agbaje's socio-political status was the agitation mounted against him from 1949-1951 known locally as the 'Agbaje dispute'. This event is important in many respects. In the first place, it demonstrated the potential crisis embedded in the manner in which wealthy and educated men were made to jump over many junior chiefs by the Council in their acquisition of chieftaincy titles. Secondly, it showed the rise of a new breed of politicians, symbolised by the career of Adegoke Adelabu who would not scruple to trample over others to achieve political ends. Thirdly, it represented the unstable state of Ibadan affairs in the late forties and fifties. This was the period of decolonization in which many issues were struggling for attention while local and national politics were undergoing great changes. At the same time, different sets of values were colliding as represented by the rise and fall of diverse opinions.

The 'Agbaje dispute'

When Olubadan Okunola Abaasi died in 1946 he was succeeded by Suberu Fagbinrin who also died in the same year. Oyetunde I came after him and he too died before 1946 ran out. The death of these three Olubadans in a year meant a

series of rapid promotions for all the chiefs. By 1949, Chief Salami Agbaje was the Otun Balogun, the first educated person to hold such a senior title, which was third in rank to the Olubadan. Towards the end of 1949 the Olubadan, Oyewusi Fijabi and the Balogun, Memudu Ali-Iwo both began to suffer ill-health and it seemed that Agbaje, as the second to the Balogun was now eligible for the Olubadanship. To appreciate this situation better, it will be necessary to understand the process by which the Olubadan was appointed.

On August 19, 1946 the Ibadan Native Authority made the following statement as part of an authoritative declaration of Native law and Custom regarding the appointment of a new Olubadan and the seniority of Chiefs.

The Senior Chiefs shall be divided into two lines:

Olubadan line

Otun
Osi
Ashipa
Ekerin

Balogun line

Otun
Osi
Ashipa
Ekerin.

Seriki

The senior chiefs as shown above and the Councillors who are members of the Native Authority shall form the body responsible for the selection of a new Olubadan and shall be authorized so to select... The holder of any title in either the Olubadan line or Balogun line in the rank of the senior chiefs shall be eligible for the post of Olubadan, but the two lines shall succeed in turn. In the event of a vacancy occurring, chiefs in the line from which the late holder was promoted shall not be eligible...¹

In January, 1950, this procedure was modified by a resolution of the Ibadan

1. Butcher, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

District Native Authority Council which read in part as follows:

The Olubadan shall be chosen from the line whose turn it is to present the next Olubadan. The Olubadan may be chosen from any of the first four senior chiefs on the Olubadan line when it is the turn of that line to present an Olubadan, and from the first five senior chiefs of the Balogun line when it is the turn of that line to present an Olubadan. When the Chief presented as Olubadan by either line is not accepted by the Council, the line shall be asked to present another candidate as substitution for the one first presented.¹

The principle of promotion enshrined in this succession system thus made any vacancy in the chieftaincy line, however caused, a matter of great interest to those holding the more junior titles. From the above excerpts it is clear that if the Olubadan were to die in 1949, Salami Agbaje as Otun Balogun qualified as a candidate for the Olubadanship.

It was at this point that an intense agitation was set afoot by the junior chiefs and Mogaji for the deposition of Chief Agbaje to prevent the possibility of his being chosen as the Olubadan in the event of any vacancy. To write their petition, they got Adegoke Adelabu who agreed to do so for payment in kind, viz, the post of Administrative Secretary of the Ibadan Council (which post was to be newly created). However, a sum of £1000 (one thousand pounds) was to be given as security deposit to be returned upon his appointment as the Secretary.

It is interesting that the junior chiefs and Mogaji thought that the prerogative of choosing or appointing an Administrative Secretary was theirs, hence their promise to Adelabu. Equally interesting was the latter's demand for a

1. N.A.I., Iba. Div 1/1 "Ibadan District Council: Matters Affecting" 18 Vol. XII. 1948-1951. p.889^A.

monetary guaranty. This would indicate that he did not trust the chiefs to fulfil their promise or that he knew that the fulfilment of the promise was totally beyond them. Adelabu proceeded to write the petition on the payment of only £50 (fifty pounds) and in it he accused Agbaje of a multitude of sins which ranged from selfishness to tyranny.¹

A critical study of the petition reveals some issues in Ibadan local politics. Firstly, the petitioners must have been quite conservative and parochial to be able to gather against a man for being rich, ambitious and resourceful. "Our chiefs are not meant to be rich, cunning or extraordinary", they wrote but "mild, humane, noble, cultured, compromising, dignified and honourable".² Secondly, the petition reflected the level to which political intrigues had degenerated in Ibadan. The junior chiefs and Mogajis were actually offended that Agbaje took defaulting business partners to court.

This shows that the claims of tradition on the public office holder, though subtle, were very crucial to the maintenance of social equilibrium. He had to be generous with his resources, doling out benefaction and largesse or else he would be seen as selfish, avaricious and miserly. He must be seen to be compromising with the populace from time to time, not sticking to his principles at all times, nor always insisting on his rights. Failure to do this would attract allegations of 'exploitation', 'deceit', 'ruthlessness' and 'vindictiveness'. He must not be too outspoken in his views lest he be charged with 'machinations', 'ambition' and

1. For the full text of the petition see Appendix 'D'.

2. *Ibid.*

'tyranny'. Deception was a moral deficiency which could be overlooked in ordinary men but not in a public figure. The charge of 'corruption', if proved, was a great offence, but in the case of Agbaje, none of the allegations brought against him could be substantiated with convincing evidence.

Meanwhile, the crisis deepened as more petitions came from other societies such as "Women Titled Chiefs and Societies", 'Maiyegun League', 'Ibadan Welfare Committee' (the last two belonged to the Egbe Omo Ibile) all demanding for Agbaje's immediate deposition without putting forward any evidence of his misconduct. As it turned out, the Egbe Omo Ibile was very active mobilizing other groups in the anti-Agbaje front and taking over from the junior chiefs and Mogajis.

Some Yoruba Obas, namely the Ooni of Ife, Adesoji Aderemi, Awujale of Ijebu-Ode, Oba Gbelegbuwa II and Alafin of Oyo met in June 1950 to mediate in the dispute between Agbaje and the other chiefs, but all was to no avail.¹ Some respectable citizens in Ibadan like Akinpelu Obisesan also tried to arbitrate, but rather than getting resolved, the crisis deepened.²

Eventually, in January 1951, the Governor of the Western Region established a Commission of Inquiry, with H.L.M. Butcher as the Sole Administrator to inquire into the charges against Chief Salami Agbaje and also into allegations of inefficiency and maladministration made by British officers against the Council. The Commission began its proceedings on January 23, 1951.³ The

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1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, June 26, 1950; K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 51; Diary 1950. Entry for June 23.
 2. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers, Box 51: Diary 1950. Entry for July 4.
 3. Butcher, *op. cit.*, p.5.

result of the Inquiry was unforeseen by all. Agbaje was cleared of all charges levelled against him because Butcher saw all of them as flimsy and without substance. This made the Egbe Omo Ibile to take last minute desperate steps to kick against Butcher's recommendation. The Egbe hired the services of a Lagos Lawyer, Fred U. Anyiam to petition the colonial office in London; some members of the House of Commons, and Sir. J.S. Macpherson¹, the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Nigeria. Its argument was that Butcher's Commission of Inquiry was invalid having been set up in direct violation of the 1893 Agreement which stipulated that disputes be adjudicated by arbitrators to be jointly appointed by the traditional rulers of Ibadan and the British authorities.² The Egbe Omo Ibile therefore wanted Butcher's findings and recommendations to be ignored, and steps already taken by government to implement them be retraced - Agbaje to be

1. K.D.L., Akinyele Papers. Box 38. F.U. Anyiam Lagos, to Hon. W. Fletcher, House of Commons, London. April 3, 1951; F.U. Anyiam to Sir. J.S. Macpherson, April 4, 1951; F.U. Anyiam to Tom Driberg, Rev. Sorensen, J. Dugdale, Baldwin, Selwyn Lloyd and T. Reid (all M.Ps) London, April 16, 1951; J. Griffith of the Colonial Office, London, to T. Driberg (M.P.) May 2, 1951; *Southern Nigeria Defender*. July 9, 1951.

2. The relevant portion of the 1893 Agreement is Section 5 which says:

And we do finally agree that all disputes which may arise under or in reference to this Agreement shall be enquired into and adjusted by two arbitrators, the one to be appointed by the Governor of Lagos for the time being, the other by the Baale and authorities of Ibadan, and in any case where the arbitrators so appointed shall not agree, the matter in dispute shall be referred to the Governor of Lagos whose decision shall be final.

deposed, the Olubadan to be recalled from suspension and that no colonial officer be made Sole Native Authority for Ibadan.

Despite all these outcries, government went ahead and implemented Butcher's recommendations, not only with regards to the Agbaje dispute but also in connection with the administration of the Native Council. By August 1951, nobody could reopen the dispute though there was still considerable tension in the community. Eventually in February 1952, the rift between Chief Salami Agbaje and the Egbe Omo Ibile was completely ironed out at a peace meeting organized by Mallam Idah (a muslim leader), the Iyalode and the other titled women, the Ashipa Balogun, Chief Salami Aminu, I.P.U. (Youth Section) and the Ibadan Citizen's Council.¹ The dispute thus came to an end.

The real sin of Agbaje was that he was disliked and that he remained unbothered by his negative public image. He used his power derived from the modern economic sector without subjecting himself to the claims of tradition to which others bowed with the largesse of the big man. At Council and Committee meetings he was very outspoken owing to his progressive outlook and this made him unpopular with the majority of Ibadan chiefs who detested rapid changes or any reduction in their power.² He conducted his business on contractual lines, or

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1. K.D.L., Obisesan Paper. Box 28: Egbe Omo Ibile. Letter No. EO/E1.30 of Feb. 14, 1952 from the Egbe to Mallam Ndah of Isale-Ijebu, Ibadan; *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Feb. 16, 1952.
 2. For instance, he was Chairman of the Council Reform Committee which recommended the separation of the executive from the judiciary - which was seen as a threat to all senior chiefs.

at least with contractual implications. When business partners failed, he frequently sought legal redress, although he also tolerated debtors for years. But his overall image as a shrewd businessman made people uneasy because he would tolerate none of the traditional demands that he considered to be of no economic value. His house was devoid of the usual merriment and feasting that characterised other chiefs' residences. He kept no retinue of hangers-on. This independent outlook gave him a bad reputation. And it was this failure to attempt to erase this public view of himself within the framework of the traditional system that made Agbaje - the modern capitalist - personally obnoxious to a section of the populace.¹

The Ibadan Bus Service: An Attempt at a Public Liability Company

The Ibadan elite made an attempt to establish a Public Liability Company as part of their activities in the business sphere. This was in form of the Ibadan Bus Service which was to provide municipal transport in Ibadan. This scheme eventually collapsed after having been in operation for about sixteen years. The story of the bus service shows the innovative spirit of the elite in the face of harsh local circumstances heightened by a refusal to acknowledge its own lack of expertise in

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1. And many of these people were never reconciled to Agbaje. Commenting on Agbaje's death in 1953 at almost 80 years of age, Obisesan wrote: "He lived to an advanced age bordering on 80; but I do prefer that he lived longer and made peace with his enemies who are many..."

K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1953. Entry for Oct. 31. For more details on Agbaje see O.A. Ojo, "The Life and Times of Chief Salami Agbaje. Long Essay, Dept. of History, University of Ibadan. June 1988.

certain fields. It also demonstrates how partisan politics could stand in the way of communal progress.

Municipal transport was not well established in Ibadan in the period before 1945. We have already seen the activities of Salami Agbaje in the transport business. But his own efforts and those of other indigenous transporters such as Messrs Dawodu (based at Oshogbo), and Oke-Owo Motors, were directed at inter-city transport. As Ibadan became more metropolitan and bigger, there was the need for a well-organised and efficient municipal transport system. Before World War II, two private bus companies established an erratic and not too profitable system. The companies were Beere's Transport and Engineering Company and General Bus lines owned by one Mr. Antonopulus.¹ The Beere Company was based in Oshogbo and in 1938 it started a passenger bus service from Beere square via Lebanon Street to Agodi (all in Ibadan). General Bus lines also joined the transport business the following year² plying the same route because that was more or less, the only tarred road in the city and since it passed

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1. In April 1939, Mr. J. Antonopulus approached the Ibadan Patriotic Association with a proposition of a Bus Cooperative Business or Partnership with them. Members thanked him for his initiative but said they would prefer to watch what Antonopulus could make of the transport business on his own, before they pooled their resources with him. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 32: Ibadan Patriotic Association Affairs. Minutes of Meetings held at Chief J.O. Aboderin's house at Oja'ba on April 30, 1939.
 2. G.D.. Jenkins in his unpublished Ph.D thesis titled "Politics in Ibadan" (Northwestern University, 1965) has a Chapter on 'Municipal Transport'. There, he claims that Antonopulus started his business in 1938, but from the minutes of the meeting cited above, it seemed he started in 1939.

through the centre of the town - Beere - human traffic on it was also very heavy. However, both companies collapsed due to shortage of gasoline, tyre and spare parts during the war.

After World War II, the idea of municipal transport was renewed again. In Dec. 1947, Akinpelu Obisesan as President of the Cocoa Cooperative Societies and Councillor E.A. Sanda, a wealthy trader and member of the Cooperative movement both made an official trip to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) to attend a Cocoa Survey and Research Conference at the West African Cocoa Research Institute (WACRI). They also inspected WACRI's experimental farms at Tafo.¹ In Accra, they saw the city's municipal transport system which impressed them and they felt Ibadan should establish one like it. On getting home, they discussed the idea of a municipal transport system with Council, pointing out that there was much that Council could gain from it. But the colonial administrative officers did not believe that Council should involve itself in such a scheme, especially when it was suggested that the capital with which to run the proposed transport system should come from it. The administrative officers then resorted to feet-dragging on the issue pointing out that the proposals before Council did not say anything about the intricacies of the scheme and other incidentals such as maintenance costs, depreciation costs etc. But the Councillors who enthusiastically supported the

1. In Jenkins' account, the trip was made in 1946 by four people, viz, Akinpelu Obisesan, I.B. Akinyele, A.F. Abell (District Officer) and E.A. Sanda. But in Obisesan's entries in his diary, the trip was made from Dec. 8-13, 1947 by himself and E.A. Sanda.

proposal were not discouraged. If Council would not take the lead or initiative to establish the municipal transport system, they would. Thus, the Ibadan Bus Service was established at the end of December 1947.¹

The Bus service was a private business concern and it was organized along the lines of a public liability company. It offered five thousand ordinary shares at the rate of five pounds (£5) each for public subscription. A Board of Directors was elected by the shareholders from those having at least forty shares. The Board was to oversee the management of the company, determine the salaries of the staff, the allowances to be paid to Board members and the dividends to be paid to

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1. This again is at variance with Jenkins who gives July 1946 as the date of the establishment of the Ibadan Bus Service. Obisesan recorded in his diary on Dec. 29, 1947 that "today the Ibadan Bus Company brought its first Bus to the Council and members had a ride in it" K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 50: Diary 1947. Entry for Dec. 29.

It is possible that the IBS could have been inaugurated for some time before it actually began operation, but if the trip to Ghana which supposedly introduced the elite to the idea of municipal transport was made in Dec. 1947, then the IBS could not have been born earlier.

I feel there is a way one can reconcile Jenkins' reconstruction and Obisesan's diary entries. The first trip to the Gold Coast was probably made by four people early in 1946. The dialogue between these men and Council dragged till the middle of the year when the IBS was set up. Between July 1946 and December 1947 arrangements for the purchase of vehicles and establishment of the management of the Bus Service were put in place. The trip of Akinpelu Obisesan and E.A. Sanda supposedly to attend a Cocoa Conference in the Gold Coast in December 1947 also served as a much-needed follow-up visit for last minute clarifications on the Accra transport system. By this time, the first bus of the IBS had been acquired. And eventually on December 29, 1947, the Bus Service started its operation.

shareholders. The Directors were T.L. Oyesina, who was Managing Director, J.A. Taiwo, A.R. Adegbite, S.A. Akinfenwa, Madam Hunmoani Alaga, D.T. Akinbiyi, E.A. Sanda and Dr. A.S. Agbaje. J.B. Arowolo replaced Sanda on the latter's death. Of the subscribers, 85% were traders while 15% were civil servants. The Council also purchased some shares.

Interestingly, all the directors, with the exception of Madam Humoani Alaga who was an illiterate though wealthy, were in the Advisory Board of Council while most of them were also Councillors. They were individuals who had some say in the Council business and they brought Council influence to bear on the affairs of the company so that even though the British administrative officers did not allow Council to run a transport business, the directors more or less ran the IBS like a Council affair. In fact, a lot of the people who bought shares in the company did so out of solidarity for Council and patriotism for Ibadan as much as for profit.

On its own part, Council actively protected the 'rights' of the IBS. For instance, the directors believed that the IBS should have the 'sole right' to operate buses in Ibadan and they set out with the help of Council to frustrate other entrepreneurs with the same ambition, e.g. Odotola Brothers (owned by Ijebumen) and the Elite Trading Company (owned by a group of predominantly ex-service men).¹

The original aim of the IBS was to improve transportation and ease human traffic on the streets by providing rapid and efficient transport, and eliminate a

1. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.380.

substantial number of taxi cabs which by now had become a regular sight on Ibadan roads. Initially, things went well. A Bedford bus was first acquired by the Company. In 1948, five more buses were purchased, followed by two more in the following year. In 1950, six new Bedford buses were added to the number. This shows that the IBS started on a sound economic and political footing. The political security of the company was provided by Council as mentioned above. The company enjoyed a monopoly and it thrived well. In 1955, a dividend of 20% was paid to the shareholders. For the major shareholders, this was lucrative business. To expand its services in 1952, the company got a loan of £40,000 (forty thousand pounds sterling) at 5% interest rate per annum from the Regional Government to purchase new buses from the United African Company.

However, the business started to decline in the mid-fifties. This probably could have been as a result of repayment and servicing of the loan, and over-expansion of the company which was not matched by a corresponding improvement of the skill of the directors.¹ In 1957 a dividend of 4.6% was paid to the shareholders, showing the extent to which the company's turnover had deteriorated. But instead of recovering, it continued on a downward slide. Some other reasons were responsible for this decline. Taxi cabs were on the increase in

1. Oyesina, the Managing Director was a school proprietor. Agbaje was a medical doctor. Akinbiyi's business acumen could not save his own business from collapsing. Alaga, though a thriving businesswoman was an illiterate. Sanda died only to be replaced by Arowolo. None of the directors possessed exceptional business ability that could match the demands of the company. Or could it be that the odds against them were too numerous?

Ibadan creating a fierce competition for the IBS. Secondly, the drivers and conductors employed by the company were getting increasingly dishonest and the directors could not devise any means of permanently eradicating this.¹ Again, other private transporters had entered the bus service. The increasing growth of the local economy and political changes in Ibadan led to the breaking of the IBS monopoly. Among the new transporters was the firm of the Odutola Brothers. All the new companies offered a stiff competition to the IBS. More damaging to the company was the rapid rate at which its equipment was collapsing. This was probably due to poor maintenance and bad roads. The IBS was thus on its way to total collapse.

The Ibadan Council, which had provided the IBS with official support and political security could not be of any assistance to it during this crisis. This was because fresh elections had brought into the Council new men who were unsympathetic to the IBS cause. They were also members of the elite but of a different political persuasion. Individual political calculations thus came to override 'communal' schemes. In fact, the Council in 1962 not only refused to assist the company but went ahead with plans for establishing its own transport business, independent of the IBS. Values and duties were now ordered not according to prevailing exigencies but in terms of political considerations. By 1962, the IBS had accumulated liabilities totalling £32,000 (thirty-two thousand pounds sterling) having operated at a loss for six consecutive years.

1. K.D.L., Akinyele Papers. Box 40: File 5. T.L. Oyesina, Chairman Ibadan Bus Service Ltd. to the Manager, I.B.S, April 23, 1951.

Despite clear indications of bankruptcy, the directors of the IBS had continued to run it out of a sense of moral duty because the company had been founded 'to benefit the community'.

The difference between assets and liability, they argued, represented the 'goodwill' the IBS possessed in the community and they requested Council to assume financial responsibility for this 'goodwill'.¹

If the directors were still in charge of Council affairs at that time, they would probably have done this with little hesitation.

The stance of the directors on the collapse of the company as revealed in the above paragraph is significant in certain respects. One, it could be a demonstration of their inability to save the company at its period of economic stupor, which again is a direct indictment on their competence as directors. Two, it could also be seen as an illustration of the commitment of the directors (viewed as members of the elite) to the welfare of the community which the Bus Service was supposed to serve. But which was more important, the welfare of the community at large or the economic interests of the shareholders which they were primarily supposed to preserve as directors? The answer of the elite to this was shown in the way it handled the affairs of the IBS. In a curiously chivalrous fashion, the directors deferred to popular needs, choosing to serve the community and retain societal 'goodwill' at the cost of their integrity as capable Managers. Still, another side to the issue is to see the directors' profession of concern for public welfare as an alibi to cover up their failure to effectively manage the IBS.

1. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.403.

Related to this is the fact that their intolerance of competition from rival firms served, in a way, to render the IBS ineffective and obsolete. Whatever was the case, the IBS experience showed the response of the elite to a local problem, viz, the issue of municipal transport.

The Cooperative Movement

Another economic field in which some members of the elite became active was the Cooperative Movement. A few of them played leadership roles in the movement with the result that Ibadan in particular and Western Nigeria in general became a beehive of Cooperative activities in Nigeria. I.B. Akinyele and Akinpelu Obisesan exemplified the involvement of the Ibadan elite in the movement. But more than Akinyele, Obisesan became identified with several developments in the Cooperative Movement and distinguished himself as a leading expert in that economic field, as it spread in the Western Region. The Western Nigerian Cooperative Movement is important for this study in that it illustrates the role of the Ibadan elite in mobilising a vital economic group - farmers - and bringing them together for cooperative purposes. It is an apt commentary on the leadership role of the elite.

The idea of the Cooperative Society was not original to Ibadan. The first attempt at cooperation for real modern business came from the Agege Planters' Union formed in 1907.¹ This was a group of cocoa farmers who resolved to pool their resources together for better efficiency in production and sale of the crop.

1. S.O. Adeyeye, "The Western Nigeria Cooperative Movement, 1935-64". M.A. Thesis, University of Ibadan. 1967. p.17.

Although the Union eventually died in the late 1930s, as a pioneer society, it made tremendous contribution to the development of the cocoa industry in the country in those early years. Encouraged by the Agege example, the Ibadan Planters' Association was formed in the 1920s independent of government control. This Association became affiliated with another bigger Cooperative, the West African Cooperative Producers Ltd., initiated by Winifred Tete-Ansa of the Gold Coast.¹ Through this Cooperative, the Ibadan Association exported over 3,000 tons of cocoa in 1929 and another 391 tons 18 cwt 22Ib before its final collapse in the following year.² The collapse of Tete Ansa's Cooperative structure tolled the death knell of the Ibadan Planters' Association in 1930 which also lost a lot of money in the process.³ All attempts to revive it failed. But some of its leaders maintained their conviction that Africans were capable of running commercial business comparable with the foreign companies in the country. The significance of the Ibadan Planters' Association was thus that a number of its leaders later became the moving spirits behind the Nigerian Cooperative Movement. The most notable of such men was Akinpelu Obisesan. A number of factors, environmental, circumstantial, personal skill and an opportune background were responsible for

1. Adeyeye, *op. cit.*, p.33.

2. *Daily Times*, October 27, 1930.

3. It was also alleged that the gross corruption of the Secretary of the Planters' Union, Mr. Akinloye contributed substantially to its fall. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 47: Diary 1930. Entries for Nov. 5 and 10.

the leadership role which Obisesan played in the Cooperative Movement as we shall soon see.

In the first place, Ibadan happened to be an important cocoa producing area. This in itself provided a suitable context for Obisesan's activities. In fact, after the slump of 1921 from which Agege never survived, Ibadan took over as the leading cocoa centre in the whole of the country. Secondly, the cooperative spirit was already at work in Ibadan as evident in the organization of various associations such as the Egbe Agba-O-Tan, Egbe Ilupeju, Ibadan Progressive Union and the Ibadan Agricultural Society¹ all of which, among other things, stressed the tradition of cooperation among its members in socio-economic and political fields. Even Church societies such as the Egbe Borokini of St. Peters Anglican Church, Aremo of which Obisesan was also a member in the 1920s demonstrated the importance of cooperation in several of their activities.² In other words, the idea of cooperation was not alien to the Ibadan in particular and the Yoruba in general.³ Thirdly, Obisesan had considerable commercial experience. Between 1914-1923 he was a produce buyer and this probably made him to appreciate the advantages of cooperative marketing. He was also a shop-keeper for Messrs Miller Brothers, a foreign trading firm and an agent for UAC both

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1. Akinpelu Obisesan belonged to all of these groups.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 55: Diary 1922. Entries for the entire year are relevant in this respect.
 3. Some Yoruba sayings illustrate this principle of cooperation:
 `Agbajo owo la fii so'ya.
 Ajeje owo kan ko gberu d'ori.
 meaning: It is only in cooperating that we can succeed.

between 1923-1930.¹ This experience must have made him to see the negative implication of the prevailing practice whereby foreign firms had the ultimate control of the marketing of local agricultural produce. This gave little room to the African traders to operate, curtailing their economic aspirations and exploiting them.

It was while he was still an employee of the Miller Brothers that Obisesan participated in the formation of the Ibadan Planters' Union, helping farmers to sell their produce direct to the United States and not through any European firm.² His financial difficulties³ with Miller Brothers made him to retire in 1930 to engage in full-time farming, living among the local farmers thereby becoming well known to most of them.⁴ His family connections were also of help in his rise as a leader of the farmers' movement. He belonged to the Aperin family which owned vast tracts of land in Aperin, Akanran and in many of the surrounding villages⁵ on which many farmers were tenants. His father was an important and influential chief -

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1. This is according to Obisesan's diary entries for those years.
 2. Adeyeye, *op.cit.*, p.42.
 3. This was in the 1920s when Obisesan's financial position was quite precarious. See his Diary entries for 1922 especially.
 4. According to Adeyeye, Obisesan retired voluntarily from Millers, but information from the latter's diaries shows that the shop he was keeping was closed due to the acute shortages he incurred. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Box 47 Diary 1930. Entry for Sept. 4.
 5. e.g. Araromi, Inuodi, Amurire, Aba Ogo, Eriolopa, Lagunju, Obideyi, Awishe, Abiola, Baleosho, Osunlana, etc.

Chief Obisesan, the Agbakin Baale (1893-1901) under Baale Fijabi and Baale Fajinmi. All these won for him the admiration and confidence of the people. Again, his active role in the Egbe Agba-O-Tan and Ilupeju Society brought him in contact with many eminent Yoruba leaders which he later used to build a network of contacts that he exploited while forming the Cooperative movements.

With all these behind him, Obisesan embarked on organizing Ibadan farmers into a new group. And instead of founding one large and all-embracing society consisting of farmers and produce traders in Ibadan and the sub-urban areas, he established several societies at the village level. Membership of each society was to be limited to bonafide cocoa famers and the support of the department of agriculture was to be solicited, and in the latter regard, O.T. Faulkner, Director of Agriculture was quite helpful. Accompanied by I.B. Akinyele, Obisesan then went round villages, explaining the benefits of joint marketing of produce and the reasons for the failure of the defunct Ibadan Planters' Association. In 1933 a number of such societies were established in the surrounding villages and in 1934 they federated to become the Ibadan Cooperative Cocoa Marketing Union, (ICCMU) with Obisesan as President. The ICCMU served the member societies by fermenting and buying their cocoa. By 1936, thirty-six cocoa marketing societies were attached to the Ibadan Cooperative Union. This was such an impressive development that government felt the need to become more involved and set these societies on `a more definitely cooperative basis'.¹ In February 1936, Capt. E.F.G. Haig was appointed Registrar of

1. Ekundare, *op. cit.*, p.376.

Cooperatives, and the Cooperative Department thus created became responsible for the Cooperative Movement affairs. Meanwhile, Obisesan and other leaders remained active in Ibadan. By 1938 Ibadan had become the leading centre for Cooperative movement throughout the country with about forty cocoa-marketing societies with a total membership of 2,576.¹ By 1939, the ICCMU had become 'the best of its type in the country' and the Governor had to visit Ibadan on February 2 and 3 to present a Certificate of Registration to the Union.² Ibadan thus became a leading Cooperative Centre, 'undertaking not only ordinary cooperative sales but also extensive educational propaganda work for the spread of cooperative ideals and methods.'³

As leader of the Cooperative Movement, Obisesan was active, superintending the activities of the various societies so that the objectives of the movement could be realized. These were: to arrange for the sale of members' cocoa to the best advantage; to encourage members to produce the highest grade of cocoa and to market it in the best conditions; to advance loan to members; to encourage thrift by accepting members' deposits, and to promote a cooperative spirit among members. Together with other cooperative leaders, he preached the cooperative gospel in several Yoruba areas outside Ibadan with the result that many Cooperative Societies were formed in the Ondo, Ife/Ijesha and Oyo

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1. T. Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan 1893-1945*. (Modelor, Lagos. 1989) p.296.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers . Box 49: Diary 1939. Entry for February 2.
 3. Adeyeye, *op. cit.*, p.45.

Provinces. His dream was to organise a centralized cooperative structure in Nigeria which would be free of government control as was the case in the Gold Coast.¹ This was because government control over the Nigerian Cooperative movement meant that farmers could not export their produce directly; they had to sell to the foreign firms who then shipped it abroad. Government would not hear of any idea to dislodge the foreign firms, not to speak of initiating such itself. This was a major obstacle to the cooperative movement which realised that farmers could earn more for their crops if the European middlemen were removed. How this was to be effected however remained a problem.

To centralize the Cooperative societies, Obisesan's idea was to start with the ICCMU of which he was President and which was the most advanced secondary² cooperative in Nigeria. This he could use as a pillar on which to build the central organization. But this plan did not materialise immediately because the movement was still growing in the country. However, Obisesan laid a solid foundation for it in the ICCMU. As the movement spread into the rest of the region, some apex organizations were set up to knit all of them together and centralize their activities. The effort of Obisesan and other Cooperative leaders in this respect was invaluable.

One of such apex organizations was the Association of Nigerian Cooperative Exporters Ltd. established in 1945 as the sole exporting agency of all

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1. The Gold Coast Farmers' Association was centralized and relatively free from government control.
 2. Primary cooperative were those in direct link with the farmers, while secondary cooperatives coordinated the activities of the former.

the marketing cooperatives in Western Nigeria. It started with four secondary cooperative societies (Cooperative Produce Marketing Unions) as its foundation members. Its main objective was to operate as a central agency for the marketing of members' produce. It first marketed cocoa in the 1944/45 season under the quota system of the West African produce Control Board. Later when the Nigerian Cocoa Marketing Board was formed, the Association was appointed a licensed buying agent. Gradually, and through the 1950s the Association succeeded in breaking through the monopoly of the foreign firms which faded out of business with the passage of time.

Another apex organization was the Cooperative Bank of Western Nigeria Ltd. Obisesan and other Cooperative leaders saw the need for a special bank for the financing of Cooperative projects. All their attempts to found one before 1950 were frustrated by the colonial government which was bent on protecting the interest of foreign firms. But the Action Group party functionaries who came to power in the Western Region in the 1950s were sympathetic to their desires. Eventually in 1953 the bank was established with a £1,000,000 (one million pounds sterling) grant from the Cocoa Marketing Board. The primary function of the bank was to provide a source of capital for cooperative societies. The bank also served the general public through its ordinary banking business.¹

The Western Nigeria Cooperative Printing Press Ltd. founded in 1960 owed its origin to Obisesan's initiative. He believed that if the cooperative movement established its own printing press, it would conserve a lot of money

1. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers, Box 51: Diary 1954. Entry for January 1.

which would make more funds available to it for developmental purposes. Obisesan then championed the campaign to raise money for the establishment of the press. In 1959, accompanied by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies and the Secretary of the Cooperative Union of Western Nigeria, he toured the cooperative centres in the region to solicit for contributions. A total of £11,500 (eleven thousand, five hundred pounds sterling) was realized with which a small printing press was established. The Press was then registered as an apex Cooperative Society in November, 1960. The press went into operation immediately and in the first four months of operation declared a turnover of nearly £12,000 (twelve thousand pounds) and a net surplus of £300 (three hundred pounds). The Press continued to grow even after Obisesan's death in 1963.

Other apex organizations of the Cooperative movement founded with the active participation of Obisesan were: The Cooperative Union of Western Nigeria Ltd., a cultural non-trading organization formed in 1952 to federate all cooperative societies in the Western Region,¹ and the Cooperative Supply Association Ltd. formed in the same year to create a wholly Nigerian system of consumer cooperatives which entailed not only wholesale importation but also bulk and retail distribution of consumer goods.

Before Obisesan's death, he rose very high in the Cooperative Movement. He died as President of the Nigerian Cooperative Federation, Cooperative Union of Western Nigeria Ltd. and Association of Nigerian Cooperative Exporters Ltd.,

1. Obisesan was returned as President of the Cooperative Union of Western Nigeria in 1954. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1954. Entry for Dec. 4.

having held the office of the first president of the Cooperative Bank of Western Nigeria Ltd.¹ In fact, he was indisputably the leader of the Cooperative Movement in his times. His organizational skills and high status in the society provided the incentives which helped in mobilizing the farmers in Ibadan who in turn formed the nucleus of the Cooperative Movement as it developed in other parts of the Western Region from where it spread to the rest of the country.

While Obisesan was busy dedicating his time and energies to cooperative matters, he also derived some exposure from the experience. As a leader of the Cooperative Movement he attended several conferences outside the country - in Ghana and in London. And it was on the basis of his leadership in the movement that he was appointed member of Western House of Assembly to represent Agriculture and Cooperative Societies in 1946. From the Assembly, he was elected, together with three others, in 1947 to the Legislative Council.²

In the realm of nation building in Nigeria in the period between 1934-1964 the cooperative societies acted as a cohesive force in fostering regional unity through the organization of regional cooperative bodies. Today, the skyscraper called 'Cocoa House' in Ibadan is a monument to the cooperative activities of farmers in the Western Region and a testimony to the prosperity of the cocoa

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1. He resigned as President of the Cooperative Bank in 1960 after occupying the position for seven years. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 53: Diary 1960. Entry for March 10.
 2. K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 50: Diary 1946, entry for Dec. 5; Dairy 1947, entries for Jan. 13 and August 18; Box 51: Diary 1950, entry for Oct. 21; Diary 1952, entries for March 4, Sept. 14; Diary 1953, entry for July 2; Diary 1954, entry for October 10.

trade. The one thousand-seat Obisesan Hall constructed also in Ibadan by the Cooperative Movement is a memorial to Akinpelu Obisesan who laboured so hard to ensure that the movement grew. His efforts should be seen as being geared towards the economic emancipation of the local farmers. It was only in cooperation that they could break the monopoly of the foreign firms and claim a rightful control over the marketing of their own produce. This took them a long time to achieve, but Obisesan set the ball rolling in Ibadan. Therein lies his significance in the Cooperative Movement.

The career of Obisesan in the Cooperative Movement exemplified the zeal and commitment with which members of the elite plunged themselves in spearheading and organising economic ventures, responding to whatever challenges came their way. As leaders in the community, the task of mobilizing and channelling the energies of the masses into viable pursuits naturally fell on them. And they were successful in most cases. The career of T.L. Oyesina discussed below is another case in point.

T.L. Oyesina and School Proprietorship

The entrepreneurial abilities of Timothy Lajide Oyesina were channelled in a slightly different direction - school proprietorship. Altogether he established seven private schools in Ibadan (two secondary and five elementary schools). At the beginning of the exercise, making profit was not his primary inspiration. Rather, he was concerned with the inadequacy of educational opportunities in Ibadan in the 1930s. At that time, there were only two secondary schools in the whole of Ibadan, viz, Ibadan Grammar School established in 1913 and Government College

established in 1929. Himself a teacher at the Grammar School for some years, Oyesina appreciated the value of education and the bright prospects awaiting educated youths in the future.

Thus in January 1938 he established the Ibadan Boys' High School with only five pupils.¹ By the end of the year the number had risen to thirty-six. He encountered initial difficulties of lack of funds and inadequate accommodation coupled with the problem of attracting qualified teachers, but he was able to surmount all these, placing the school on a sound footing as the first private secondary school in Ibadan. The success of the Ibadan Boys' High School probably encouraged him to found another secondary school which he named Ibadan City Academy in 1948.² This was a secondary school with a commercial bias. Vocational studies were taught alongside the regular secondary school course. This was a demonstration of Oyesina's far-sightedness, a show of the realistic nature and practicability of his ideas. His aim was to train the students in self-reliance.

The two schools developed into large educational institutions with hundreds of pupils each and a fleet of qualified teachers. This was a fulfilment of Oyesina's dreams but he did not stop there. In an unprecedented manner in Ibadan, he went ahead to establish five elementary schools to feed the two

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1. K.D.L, Akinyele Papers. Box 49, File 10. Pamphlet titled "Ibadan Boys' High School's History: How It Began" by T.L. Oyesina.
 2. Interview with T.L. Oyesina (Junior) at his Office, Mesi-Ogo Chamber, Oke Bola, Ibadan. Oct. 4, 1994.

secondary schools. These elementary schools also had the task of inculcating a sound mind to the young pupils. The schools were: Akinyele Memorial Primary School, Oke-Ado; Abiola Jacobs¹ Primary School, Foko; Public Day School, Elekuro; Public Day School, Kobomoje; and Aresa Primary School.²

Apart from this, he was the first President of the Independent School Proprietors' Association (ISPA) which came to the aid of private schools struggling to find their feed. Part of his activities in the Association was leading a campaign which successfully sought government recognition of ISPA as an Examining Body for the Standard VI Elementary School Leaving Examination.³ His activities in the field of education marked him out as an educationist and seasoned manager.

Although his motive in establishing schools was not primarily to make money because school proprietorship was not particularly encouraging as a profit-making venture given the hostile colonial setting, he was able to make a living out of it and ultimately amass considerable wealth for himself. Apart from the schools, he also had his hands in other business concerns. He was a founder and director of the Ibadan Municipal Bus Company discussed above.⁴ He was also involved in

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1. One of the benefactors of the Ibadan Boys High School and a close friend of T.L. Oyesina.
 2. Interview with T.L. Oyesina as cited above.
 3. M. Omolewa, *The Life and Times of T.L. Oyesina*, (Abiprint, Ibadan, 1981).
 4. He later rose to be Chairman of the Ibadan Bus Service Board of Directors. K.D. L. Akinyele Papers, Box 40: File 5. T.L. Oyesina to the Manager, I.B.S. April 23, 1951.

the publication of the *Western Echo* (a daily newspaper launched in 1948 but which later went moribund) in addition to being a one time President of the Ibadan Native Traders Association.¹

Because he was not given to conspicuous display of wealth like his contemporaries we do not know exactly how rich he was. But the fact that he possessed vast tracts of land some of which he used to build his schools; that he could sponsor himself on overseas tours (e.g. the World Scout Commissioners' Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal in 1951, the World Alliance Conference of the YMCA at Cassel, Germany in 1957 and the one in Japan in 1965); owned several houses in Ibadan and one in Lagos, invested in the education of his six children, and frequently helped other less fortunate individuals to succeed in life, all show that he was certainly an affluent man.

His career is important not only because he was able to make it to the top through school proprietorship - a venture that involved too many problems and held little attractions for most people - but, more importantly, because while doing so he also expanded the frontiers of education in Ibadan, giving many children opportunities to acquire Western education as a stepping stone to whatever the future held for them, and helping in the reproduction of the city's social elite.

Summary

The elite responded to the various economic challenges which came its way in different manners as could be seen in the cases cited in this chapter. For instance,

1. Interview with T.L. Oyesina (Jnr.) as cited above.

Adebisi Giwa and Salami Agbaje stood up to the commercial challenge posed by European firms, Lebanese, Syrian and Ijebu traders. The IBS on its own part, was a response to the problem of municipal transport. Akinpelu Obisesan saw the need to organize farmers in order to improve their lot and he rose gallantly to the occasion. T.L. Oyesina saw the limited educational opportunities in Ibadan and strove to expand the frontiers of education in the city, facilitating elite reproduction in the process.

Not all of these efforts succeeded. Those that did demonstrated the initiative and genius of the elite. Those that did not were pointers to their human limitations. The examples cited here represented only a minute fraction of the entrepreneurial activities of the elite. There were many other members of the elite with notable contributions and roles in the fields of economic enterprise.

Finally, this chapter had proved that wealth acquired through diverse economic means was used as a stepping stone to elite status in Ibadan. Thus, in addition to the tickets of Islam, Christianity and Western education, another inroad was made to the top via affluence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WOMEN OF SUBSTANCE

Introduction

The elite in Ibadan also comprised women. The rise of women to prominence in the society was not just as an extension of their husbands' or fathers' popularity and status, but some women attained high positions in their own right. They rose above the normal level at which ordinary men and women operated, and distinguished themselves in several areas. These were the women of substance. Substance here does not mean only material possessions - wealth and property - but it also refers to that stuff that constitutes success, and gives solidity and essence to individual achievements. Not many women were able to make it to the top partly because Ibadan was a male-dominated society. The few that excelled thus deserve special attention.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were three major arenas in which industrious women distinguished themselves. One was the world of markets and commercial enterprise - a world that sometimes incorporated farming and the different crafts. The women that excelled here rose to be leaders of market guilds (*Iya Egbe*) and ultimately *Iyaloja* (head of the market women). These leaders enjoyed broad acknowledgement among the mass of the women folk. The second arena was the world of men - of power politics and political intrigues, and a few women were able to rise here too, attracting the admiration of both men and women. In between these two areas was the religious sphere where the interests of the two genders converged, with women playing vital roles which were not always visible to the uninitiated. Although the central focus of this thesis

recognition of their ability to participate meaningfully in the political process.² But since the nineteenth century when the title was introduced to Ibadan it has undergone many notable changes. Colonialism especially stripped the Iyalode institution of its power and influence, making it to acquire new forms and functions. To appreciate this change better, let us examine the office of the Iyalode in pre-colonial times.

Ibadan in the nineteenth century was a warrior state, the effectiveness of which depended on the principle of merit and individual achievement built into the state system. This principle applied also to the office of the Iyalode whose position was not hereditary but based on merit. The candidate for the Iyalode office had to prove her worth which was often based on her contribution to the military success of the town. The nature of this contribution, as we shall soon see, required that the Iyalode be a woman of great wealth and property.

The Iyalode title was introduced in the 1830s by Bashorun Oluyole and his Council to reward distinguished women.¹ One of the earliest holders of the title

1. N. Mba, in her *Nigerian Women Mobilized: Women's Political Activity in Southern Nigeria, 1900-1965*. (University of California, Berkeley 1982) p.7 and Awe, op. cit. p.149 both claim that it was Baale Olugbode that introduced the Iyalode title to Ibadan in the 1850s. But according to T. Falola, *The Political Economy of a Pre-Colonial African State: Ibadan 1830-1900*. (University of Ife Press 1984), and "The Political System of Ibadan in the Nineteenth Century" in J.F. Ade.Ajayi and B. Ikara (eds.) *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*. (U.P.L. 1985) p.107; G.H.C. Dawes, "The Politics of Militarism in Ibadan, 1819-1905." M.A. Thesis, University of Ibadan 1982, p.162; and A. Adeyemo *Oluyole: An Epic History of the Yoruba*. (Bayem Publishers, Ibadan 1989) p.15, the title was already established as part of the Ibadan title system by the time Olugbode became the Baale in the 1850. These latter scholars attribute the introduction of the Iyalode title (to Ibadan) to Bashorun Oluyole who also created other new titles such as Aare-Agoro, Agbaakin, Ashipa, Jagun and Asaju. See Chapter One for more details.

was Iyaola, a prominent trader who had made generous contributions to the Ibadan war efforts. She sold arms and ammunition on credit to the war chiefs and fielded her own soldiers as a unit of Ibadan's national army. Within a short time, she had so consolidated her position as a leader in the town that Anna Hinderer could describe her as "the mother of the town.... a sort of queen, a person of much influence, and looked up to with much respect"¹ And according to Awe, Iyaola's

peculiar position in this society where a man's following, his popularity, and his economic resources virtually determined the amount of influence he could wield in the body politic, gave her *de facto* power in defiance of what was customary and traditional among the Oyo Yoruba.²

Efunsetan Aniwura was the second Iyalode of Ibadan. Her career demonstrated the political power which an Iyalode could possess especially in an open society such as Ibadan. She was a very successful and wealthy trader. She owned many slaves³ and had extensive plantations. She organized military supplies for the war chiefs while on the battlefield as well as maintaining her own army. A high point in her career as Iyalode was in the 1870s when she led even male chiefs to protest Aare Latosa's pro-war policy which had a crippling effect on trade and disrupted relations with Ibadan's neighbours, and his domestic policy which tended toward the establishment of a dictatorship. She refused to provide

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1. A. Hinderer, *Seventeen Years in Yoruba Country*. (Sealey Jackson and Halliday, London. 1873) p.110.
 2. Awe, *op. cit.*, p.152.
 3. She is believed to have had as many as two thousand slaves. See S. Johnson, *A History of the Yorubas*. CMS, Lowe & Brydone, London, 1960, p.393.

financial and moral support during his military campaigns. This annoyed Latoosa who took his revenge by ordering her assassination in 1874.¹ In the words of Nina Mba,

Efunsetan was especially significant not because of her wealth or power as Iyalode, but because she was one of the few women in Southern Nigeria before 1900 to have engaged in open political opposition to the indigenous government. [In that instance], Efunsetan was not acting as the representative of the women, but as the representative of a political group consisting of male chiefs.²

Efunsetan mastered the game of politics and played it alongside men only that the result of this for her proved to be fatal. She was first and foremost a political leader and secondarily a women's leader. Her case shows that nineteenth-century Yoruba women were also initiated into the web of political intrigues which obtained at the highest level of decision making. It also demonstrates the strength and potentialities of the Iyalode office in the hands of a dynamic and astute incumbent. By the 1890s, this office had become so important in the Council of Chiefs and respected in the community that the incumbent, Lanlatu Asabi Giwa was a signatory to the Agreement of 1893 which established colonial rule in Ibadan.

Despite the importance of the Iyalode title in the second half of the nineteenth century, women did not have equal representation and authority with men in the political system; men still predominated. The council of chiefs which had more than ten members had the Iyalode as the only female member and this

1. Denzer, *ibid.*, p.13; Mba, *op. cit.*, p.8, and Awe, *op. cit.* p.152.

2. Mba, *op. cit.*, p.9.

was not proportionate to the female population in the town. It was true that she had other subordinate women chiefs but these were not admitted into the state council as permanent members. This meant that the views of the Iyalode on any issue could be overruled if they went against those of the male chiefs who were in the majority. To have her way, the Iyalode would then have to employ her political skills and acumen.

However, the Iyalode's office was not the only avenue to the top available to women in pre-colonial times. Other women used their wealth got from far-flung commercial activities to acquire political power and a prestigious social standing without necessarily occupying a visible position in the societal power structure. Madam Omosa was a case in point. She was the daughter of Bashorun Ogunmola who ruled from 1864 to 1867.¹ She supplied food and arms to the Ibadan army during the Kiriji War (1877-1893). She was also the first Ibadan trader to purchase Snyder rifles (a superior weapon at the time).² She maintained an army of her own which she used to repel the attack of the Ijebu on Ibadan while the state army was engaged in Ekitiland. Apart from this, she enjoyed such a respectable position in the society that she was called upon by the masses,

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1. Interview with Mrs. Kemi Morgan at her residence in Oke Bola, Ibadan. June 18, 1992.
 2. K. Morgan, *Akinyele's Outline History of Ibadan*. Vol.3 Caxton Press, Ibadan n.d. p. 94.

including members of the Christian community to settle their personal differences.¹ All these made her very powerful and popular in Ibadan. There were also heads of market women called *Iyaloja* (mothers of the market) who oversaw market affairs and the maintenance of peace and order in the markets. These women arbitrated in disputes involving market women and any case they could not settle was referred to the Iyalode whose compound had a section which housed female prisoners. These prisoners constituted an important source of free labour to the Iyalode.

The point being made is that women occupied positions of authority in pre-colonial Ibadan. Apart from occupying the Iyalode office, women were also powerful as priestesses of local deities and played prominent roles during festivals² of such deities. Again, some of them rose to limelight on account of their wealth and organizational abilities as the example of Madam Omosa has shown. The Iyalode, just like the male members of the elite, built around herself a large

1. F.L. Akiele was sent by Daniel Olubi to Omosa on May 19, 1885 to "beg her to settle the difference between Oni of Agbeni and Awakan's family." Again Akiele went to Omosa on behalf of Olubi on June 20, of the same year "on Adejoke's matter". The fact that Omosa also enjoyed some esteem among the Christians could suggest that she was sympathetic to their cause even though there is no evidence that she was ever converted.

K.D.L. Diaries of F.L. Akiele of Oke Kudeti. Box 1: Diary of 1885. Entries for May 19 and June 20. (F.L. Akiele was the son of Olunloyo. He was trained by the Hinderers and later became a priest. He should not be confused with Rev. A.B. Akinyele.

2. These deities such as Orisa-Oko, Obatala and Kori (Orisa Ewe) were not as popular as the Okebadan - the tutelary divinity of Ibadan - and the Egungun cult both of which received greater patronage in Ibadan from the menfolk.

following of kinsmen and hangers-on. Her compound was one of the points of convergence of power and influence in the town. She thus became a factor to be reckoned with in local politics. But this situation was not to remain unchanged. The approach of colonial rule altered a number of things in the position of the Iyalode and other female leaders in Ibadan. This experience was not peculiar to the women. The colonial state disrupted traditional political systems generally and undermined the position and authority of local rulers, both male and female. However, the experience of the women, as we shall soon see was not totally a catalogue of woes. There were new opportunities which they exploited in order to preserve their dynamism and relevance in the new colonial dispensation.

Colonialism and the Status of Women

The establishment of colonial rule reduced the role of the Iyalode. In the first place, the abolition of warfare by the colonial authorities put an end to her role in military matters. In so far as the military attribute of Ibadan life was eradicated, the Iyalode had to look for new ways of making herself relevant to development in the town. Another aspect of the colonial state that did much damage to the image of the Iyalode was the fact that she was not included in the new Council. The new town Council constituted in 1897 comprised the Baale, Otun Baale, Osi Baale, Balogun, plus eight to twelve minor chiefs.¹ Subsequent changes in Council membership in the opening decades of the twentieth century did not bring the

1. C.H. Elgee, *The Evolution of Ibadan*, (Government Printer, Lagos 1914), p.6.

Iyalode into the Council. So for a long time, the Iyalode, like the male chiefs excluded from Council membership, suffered a diminution of status.¹ With this, the office of the Iyalode was bereft of its past attraction and power. Although she remained the official leader of Ibadan women, actual leadership devolved upon different categories of women. She also lost the political power she wielded in the pre-colonial era. This is not to say that the Iyalode ceased to function entirely, but the colonial environment made it difficult, if not impossible for her to perform as she used to in the pre-colonial period. Consequently, other 'agencies' arose to play some of those roles.

In this new group were the wives of the senior clergymen in Ibadan. They were very few in number but much respected in the Christian community.² These women had been trained by the wives of the early CMS missionaries. They could speak and read English and some had elementary education. They assumed the role of mothers to their congregation and oversaw women affairs in the Christian community. Although they were not professional teachers, they taught the women under their jurisdiction useful domestic skills such as knitting, sewing, housekeeping, childcare, personal hygiene etc. Many people sent their daughters to live in the 'mission house' under the tutelage of the wives of the clergymen. The mission house thus acquired a cultural significance. It became a centre of socialization and a melting pot for Western and traditional ideas of domesticity.

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1. See Chapter Three for details.
 2. There was no comparable group of Muslim wives/women at this time because Christian women had the advantage of Western education and exposure which the former did not have.

This raised the social standard of womenfolk in the church above that of their counterparts outside. Among such women leaders were Mrs. Okuseinde, wife of Rev. James Okuseinde of Aremo and Mrs. A.A. Williams, daughter of the Rev. Daniel Olubi of Kudeti.¹

With the spread of Western education in Ibadan, schoolteachers also came to play a crucial role in grooming women for future advancement. These school mistresses became much respected and held in high esteem by the populace. Western education expanded the opportunity available for women to excel.

Among the educated elite, teaching ... [was] associated with Christian mission work and was considered the only respectable position for their daughters. [Thus] Elite parents and missionaries encouraged girls to become teachers.²

The first two African female teachers at Kudeti Girls' School were Miss Olorunfemi, and Miss Taylor in 1891. In the twentieth century were others such as Miss Okuseinde (who later became Mrs. Soares), Miss Sade Richardson (who became Mrs. Ojo). Mrs. Akinola, Mrs. Andrew, Mrs. Ogundipe and Mrs. Adejumo were all teachers at the Kudeti Girls' School.³ They taught domestic science, among other things, thus consolidating what the wives of the Christian clergymen had begun. Domestic science training was quite important because it facilitated the entrance of women into modern occupations in the colonial

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1. Interview with Mrs. Kemi Morgan, June 18, 1992, and Pa Dotun Olubi (grandson of the Rev. Daniel Olubi) on Sept. 29, 1994.
 2. Denzer, *op. cit.*, p.26.
 3. Interview with Mrs. Kemi Morgan as earlier cited.

economy. The girls used the training they had acquired to set themselves up as dressmakers, bakers, caterers, etc. Again, domestic science training itself broadened the chances for more employment for women as teachers.¹ It also improved the performance of both the pupils and teachers as better homemakers. The early female teachers were seen as those who made this possible. Other female teachers included Mrs. Wuraola Esan, Mrs. T. Ogunlesi, Mrs. J.E. Bolarinwa and Mrs. Kemi Morgan. Although their salaries were meagre, they enjoyed considerable respect and esteem in the society.

The political fervour of the decolonization period brought a new set of women to the fore of developments in Ibadan. These were female politicians and leaders of women organizations. Most of them had acquired western education and those who did not were wealthy women who also possessed tremendous organizational ability. Together they mobilized women for active participation in politics. Among these were Mrs. Wuraola Esan, Mrs. Tanimowo Ogunlesi,² Mrs. Egbinola Bolarinwa, Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga and Alhaja Hunmoani Alade all of

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1. Denzer, L. "Domestic Science Training in Colonial Yorubaland, Nigeria" in K.T. Hansen, *African Encounter with Domesticity*. (New Brunswick; Rutgers University Press, 1992) p.135.
 2. Mrs. T. Ogunlesi is an Ijebu woman from Iperu-Remo. She has lived in Ibadan since around 1927 when she started to teach at the Kudeti Girls' School till 1934 when she got married and moved to Lagos, and from 1947 till present. Her long stay in Ibadan has exposed her to what life in the growing city meant to the female population and she has attempted to identify with their aspirations and yearnings from time to time. As such, she is part and parcel of the history of Ibadan women.

whom were active in the Action Group Womens' Association.¹ The Association was inaugurated at Ibadan on March 12, 1953 with Mrs. Ogunlesi as its first President. She was also appointed as one of the unofficial advisers to the Action Group in the Constitutional Conference of 1953. The Women's section cooperated with the leadership of the party on all issues, and at the same time mobilizing female support for the party. Madam Abimbola, the Iyalode in the 1950s was also an active member of the Ibadan divisional executive council of the Action Group Women's Association which saw to the establishment of new branches. There were also many non-Ibadan women in the Action Group at Ibadan. Such included Mrs. H.I.D. Awolowo, Mrs. Akerele, Mrs. Akran and Mrs. Solaru.

In addition, there was Madam Hunmoani Apampa an Ibadan woman who led the Women's wing of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in the town.² She took over the leadership of NCNC women in Ibadan in 1954 when Mrs. Elizabeth Adekogbe, the previous leader left the party to join the Action Group.³ Madam Apampa, a Mabolaje woman and staunch supporter of Adelabu, remained the President of the association till 1965. It has been alleged that majority of indigenous Ibadan market women belonged to, or supported the NCNC Mabolaje Alliance, while the 'stranger' element in the markets, especially

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1. Interview with Mrs. Kemi Morgan *op. cit.*, Mba, *op. cit.*, pp.264-267.
 2. K.W.J. Post & G.D. Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*. (Cambridge University Press, 1973), p.444.
 3. Mba, *op. cit.*, p.250.

the big traders supported the Action Group.¹ This could be due to two factors: the leadership of the Mabolaje Alliance, and that of NCNC Women's Wing. The Mabolaje/NCNC Alliance was led by Adegoke Adelabu whom we shall discuss in Chapter Eight of this work. Adelabu's political methods were such that endeared him to the common men and women. He came down to their level and mixed freely with them unlike the 'elitist' airs of Action Group leaders in Ibadan. Adelabu also championed the cause of the market women several times by involving himself personally in the unending commercial disputes surrounding Lebanon Street on the side of the women in the 1950s. Besides, Madam Apampa, an illiterate also found it easy to operate among the indigenous market women majority of whom were also illiterate. She felt at home among them.

Apart from nationalist political parties, there were also a few women organizations which championed the cause of women and campaigned for better conditions for them. One of such associations in Ibadan was the Womens' Improvement Society (WIS) founded by Mrs T. Ogunlesi in 1947. Other foundation members included Mrs. Soares (nee Okuseinde), Mrs. Opelami, Mrs. B.A. Banjo, Mrs. Wuraola Esan, Mrs. Akinyemi, Mrs. Oduyoye, Mrs. P. Dina, Mrs. Ogunseye, and Mrs. Banjoko, all members of the educated elite. The aim of the society was to encourage young women to improve themselves by organizing catering and Homecraft classes so that they could become better wives, better mothers and builders of good homes. The society was also concerned with social welfare work such as improving conditions in the markets and building hostels for

1. Mba, *op.cit.*, p. 264.

girls in which it collaborated with the Young Women's Christian Association. The society helped in hospitals translating medical instructions from English to Yoruba and organizing mother-craft demonstration classes for patients at the ante-natal clinic under Sister Leeming at Adeoyo Hospital'. The Society established the First Day Nursery in Ibadan to cater for the children of working mothers. This was an equivalent of the modern day-care centres.¹

There was also the Ibadan Women's Movement established in 1952 by Mrs. Elizabeth Adekogbe. It had laudable objectives such as advocating universal suffrage; admission of women to the Native Authority Council; nomination of women from the movement to the Western House of Assembly; more secondary schools for girls; lowering of the bride price; and controls over Syrian and Lebanese monopolies.² But it failed to carry the indigenous women along with it. It was mainly composed of educated non-indigenes resident in Ibadan.

The National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) was an 'umbrella' organization that comprised individual societies. The National Council was to enable women organizations get government recognition and assistance. Formed in Ibadan in 1959, it was initially made up of the Nigerian Council of Women (NCW, the new name acquired by the Ibadan Women Improvement Society), the Isabatudeen Society led by Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga, and the Women's section of the Ibadan Progressive Union led by Mrs. Wuraola Esan. The Council's first

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1. Interview with Chief (Mrs.) Tanimowo Ogunlesi, Oct. 18, 1994, and pieces of information gleaned from her private papers.
 2. Mba, *op. cit.*, pp.181-182.

President was Lady Ademola (wife of the Chief Justice of the Western Region) and its aims were: to promote the welfare and progress of women, especially in education, and to ensure that women were given every opportunity to play an important part in social and community affairs.¹

The NCWS had regional branches. The Western Region branch established two day-nurseries, one workers' canteen, and one health centre, while all branches ran adult education classes for market women and sponsored girls in secondary schools.² Active in the NCWS were women such as Mrs. Ogunlesi, Mrs. Bolarinwa, Mrs. Solaru, Mrs. Esan and Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga. With the help of Alhaja Alaga, who was head of many market unions, the NCWS mobilized market women to be active in issues concerning them in particular and women in general. Part of this was the condition of markets. The Ibadan branch of the NCWS had a group that monitored developments in the various markets and which saw to the cleanliness of the markets. This group regularly called on government to help contribute to the upkeep of the markets.³ The NCWS was not dominated by a single leader - it was not a one-woman show - because it was an agglomeration of individual societies, and this made for continuity and permanence. But inherent in this advantage was the lack of mass appeal it would

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1. Mrs. J.E. Bolarinwa, Private Papers. File titled 'National Council of Women Societies'. Report of the First Annual Conference, Ibadan Jan. 12-14, 1961 (Western Branch).
 2. *Ibid.*
 3. Interview with Mrs. Kemi Morgan as earlier cited; Bolarinwa Papers, NCWS File. Petition from the NCWS to the Sole Administrator of Ibadan. April 20, 1966.

have had if the Council had been headed by single charismatic leaders.

By 1960 there were a few Ibadan women in the professions and the number continued to increase.¹ However, majority of Ibadan women, especially the illiterates were into trading. In addition, among women leaders, Christians predominated. There were fewer Muslim women leaders. The well-known ones in our period were Mesdames Hunmoani Alaga, Hunmoani Alade and Hunmoani Apampa. The predominance of Christian Women in leadership positions may not be unrelated to the opportunity of Western education which they acquired, but which the Muslim counterparts did not have. The early colonial period was one in which Muslim parents hesitated to send their wards (most especially girls) to mission schools which then constituted a veritable agency for achieving the apostasy of Muslim children. And since there were very few government - controlled schools and fewer Muslim schools, the girls were denied Western education. Instead, they possessed elementary koranic education and, or traditional domestic training.

In fact, the new progressive Muslim brotherhoods - the Ansar-Ur-Deen and the Ahmadiyya encouraged influential muslim women to assume leadership roles and establish associations among their female members. One of such associations was the Isabatudeen Society founded by Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga, a textile merchant and made up of pious wealthy women.

1. See L. Denzer, "Women in Government Service in Colonial Nigeria, 1862-1945", Working Paper in African Studies. No. 136, African Studies Centre, Boston University, 1989, for more details. The professions included the legal, medical, and the civil service.

What was important in the rise of women to elite status in Ibadan as in other parts of Yorubaland during the colonial period was not Western education per se nor religion, but individual resourcefulness which could manifest itself in form of expertise in handling new trading institutions established by the colonial state, having capital to invest, creditworthiness (a matter of personal integrity), the ability to utilise trained clerks and perhaps lawyers, and make strategic connections. In other words, the rise of women to fame required that they be politically astute, with a high acumen and a clear understanding of situations coupled with expertise in harnessing available resources to meet contingencies in politics, in the economy and in the society at large.

The Iyalode institution, though it suffered a loss of power and authority during the colonial period still managed to be of some relevance to the society depending on the dynamism of the incumbent. Up till the 1940s the Iyalode took part in Council deliberations only unofficially and her compound still served as the jail for women prisoners.¹ Iyalode Abimbola, the incumbent in the 1950s took an active part in party-politics to make herself relevant to Ibadan life. But beyond the purview of the colonial authorities, women continued to be very active in the economy of Ibadan, exercising wide control over the markets. Herein lies the significance of some of the colonial *Iyalodes* in Ibadan like Madam Rukayat and Iyalode Abimbola who brought the esteem and aura they already enjoyed in the economic sphere into their office. Others such as Hunmoani Alaga also distinguished themselves in the economic realm. Still, some women like Madam Wuraola Esa, treated below, rose via party politics

1. Awe, *op. cit.*

Madam Wuraola Esan²

Wuraola Adepeju was born in 1909 into the Ojo'Badan family in Ibadan - a respected traditional family of the local elite which played an important role in town politics. Her father was Thomas Adeogun Ojo, a former Sergeant-Major in the Royal West African Frontier Force who saw active service in the Asante campaign and in the Cameroons during the First World War. After his retirement from the army, he took a post in the civil service as Chief Manager of the Ibadan Forest Reserve.² He was admitted into the Balogun line of Ibadan chiefs in 1935 as Gbonka Balogun (a junior title) and rose to become the Ekerin Balogun (fifth in line to the Balogun) before he died in 1954. His claim to elitism was dual in that he also belonged to the new class of Christian elite. He was a devout Baptist of the Idikan assembly and he was instrumental in the founding of the Salem Baptist Church at Yemetu Alaadorin in the early fifties, just before his death. Although he had no formal education himself, he encouraged his children to acquire Western education. Wuraola's mother was Dorcas Ajitie Ojo (alias Iya Gbogbo - mother

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1. The framework for this biographical sketch was based on L. Denzer, "Gender and Decolonization: A Study of Thee Women in West African Public Life" in J.F. Ade.Ajayi & J.D.Y. Peel (eds.) *People and Empires in African History*, (Longman, London, 1992); O. K. Alli-Balogun, "A Biography of Chief (Mrs.) Wuraola Adepeju Esan: The Iyalode of Ibadan". Long Essay, Department of History, University of Ibadan, June 1987; and "A Brief History of Chief (Mrs.) Wuraola Adepeju Esan, Iyalode of Ibadan". Funeral Programme, St. James Cathedral, Oke-Bola, Ibadan, July, 1985.
 2. In 1942 he was promoted Arealasa Balogun and by 1952 he was already Ekerin Balogun. This is at variance with Denzer in her work cited immediately above whose claim presupposes that Thomas Ojo's highest title was Ekarun Balogun.

K.D.L. Obisesan papers. Box 49: Diary 1942, Entry for February 27; Akinyele Papers Box 61: Ibadan Affairs. Minutes of Ibadan Native Authority Council. Feb. 18, 1952.

of all). She was the second of eight wives. She traded in kolanuts and alligator pepper and she travelled extensively in Southern Nigeria in pursuit of her commercial activities.

After completing her elementary education in 1927, Wuraola attended Idi-Abba Baptist Girls' School, Abeokuta from where she obtained her Standard VII Certificate. She then proceeded to United Missionary College (UMC) Ibadan in 1928 for teacher training. As part of the pioneer set, her colleagues at the UMC included Miss E.O. Alalade (who later became Mrs. Aboderin) and Miss Akinyemi (Mrs. Adewusi). She completed her two-year course in 1929 and was appointed in 1930 as a Third Class certified teacher to the Akure Women Training Centre. This institution was not a regular school but it offered domestic science training for girls in preparation for marriage, especially as missionary wives. Three years later, she was transferred to the staff of the UMC.

It was while in Ibadan that Wuraola married Victor Owolabi Esan, a member of an influential Christian family in Ibadan, then on the staff of the Public Works Department. Victor had been instrumental in the launching of the Ibadan Progressive Union in 1930 and was its first Secretary. He was very active in local affairs under the auspices of the Union. The couple then moved to Lagos where she taught at the Methodist Girls' School, Yaba for some time before the birth of her first child. In 1944 when Victor travelled to England to study law, Wuraola returned to Ibadan with their children.

While awaiting her husband's return from the United Kingdom, Wuraola occupied herself with the advancement of education in Ibadan. She founded the Ibadan People's Girls' School in 1945. The school was initially an elementary one

designed to meet the growing demand for girls education among the people of Ibadan. This presupposes that the foundation of the school was not just to serve as a means of livelihood (i.e. a source of income) 'to help maintain her family', it was a response to the educational needs of the local community. This was a time when educational opportunities were generally inadequate in Ibadan. Mrs. Esan was not the only individual that rose to this challenge. Earlier in 1938, T.L. Oyesina had founded the Ibadan Boys' High School, in 1947, Mrs. J.E. Bolarinwa founded the Alafia Institute while in 1948, Mrs. Ogunlesi founded the Children Home School, a nursery/primary boarding school in Ibadan, and in 1966 Christ High School, also in Ibadan. The above school proprietors and others in Ibadan were the members of the Independent Schools Proprietors Association of which T.L. Oyesina was the National President.¹ These men and women came together to rub minds on the challenges of setting up and running private educational institutions in the colonial setting. In this regard, they were pioneers responsible for creating more opportunities for education when government and the missions could not meet the rising demand for education in the 1930s and 1940s.

By 1955, the Ibadan People's School had become a modern school for girls only and in 1965 it became a full-fledged secondary school. It was the first private secondary school for girls in the whole of the Western Region and Mrs. Esan was fully in charge till 1967. The students first sat for the West African School Certificate Examination in 1969. However, Government took over the school in

1. See p.329 above for more on the Independent Schools Proprietors Association

1975. Wuraola Esan also encouraged others to establish schools as education was a lasting legacy that one could bequeath to posterity. Among those she encouraged was Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga who led the Isabatudeen Society to found Isabatudeen Girls' Grammar School in 1964. The society also received much encouragement from the Ansar-Ud-Deen society and the Ibadan Central Mosque.¹ Wuraola's concern with children's education also brought her to the governing boards of many schools such as: Yejide Girls Grammar School, Ibadan Boys' High School, Ibadan City Academy and the Local Authority Teachers' Training College, Iyana-Offa.

The activities of Wuraola Esan were not restricted to educational matters, she was also involved in women affairs - championing the cause of women and mobilizing them for active participation in politics. She was a member of the Women Improvement Society founded by Mrs. Ogunlesi. She was also the leader of the Women's Wing of the Ibadan Progressive Union (IPU) in the 1950s when her husband was the President of the Union. As President of the IPU Women's Wing, she organized a reception for Mrs. James Aggrey and Mrs. Crystal Faucet - two American Women visiting Ibadan for the formal opening of the University College. These visitors admonished Ibadan Women to take an active part in politics, being themselves members of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured Peoples (an organization based in the United States of America).

1. A. H. Shuaibi "Ibadan Central Mosque Imamship Issue" Long Essay. Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan. November, 1989 p.52

Again Wuraola Esan was very active in the Women's Association of the Action Group although she did not join immediately it was established in 1953. What attracted her to the Association was the development programme of the Action Group especially in the field of education. She later became Secretary of the Association in 1960.¹ She conducted tours to organize branches in the Western Region, served on committees, and was active in political campaigns, earning a reputation for dedication and hard work.

As a women's leader, she attended many international conferences at which issues that universally affected women were discussed and strategies devised to solve problems facing women all over the globe. In 1957, together with Mrs. Elizabeth Adekogbe, she attended the World Conference on Women in Montreal, Canada. This conference provided part of the impetus for the founding of the National Council of Women Societies in 1959. The Women's Wing of the IPU which Wuraola Esan led was a constituent part of the NCWS, giving her the opportunity to also play a leadership role in the Council as one of its founders. In 1963, she attended the world conference on Women's Rights with Mrs. Ransome Kuti in Moscow and the one held in Budapest in 1964.

Apart from playing an active role in Women's organizations, she was also a politician in her own right. Her first involvement with politics was with the Nigerian Youth Movement in which she had taken a keen interest during her school days. Wuraola and her husband were also members of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the cultural nationalist organization which gave birth to the Action

1. Mba, *op. cit.*, p.265.

Group. It was, however, in the Action Group that she fully developed her potentials as a politician, contesting for elective office, playing leadership roles, attending nationalist conferences and representing women's interest.

The first time that Wuraola was a candidate for elective office was in 1958 when she was elected to the Ibadan Urban District Council. In the same year, the Action Group appointed her as one of its female unofficial advisers to the Constitutional Conference in London. Other women in the conference were Mallama Ina Nusa (an Action Group woman from Zaria and the first Northern woman to have attended a constitutional conference) and Mrs. Hannah Otudor who together with two other men represented the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) State Movement as part of the Action Group representation.¹ Meanwhile she accompanied party leaders on political campaigns within the Western Region and even led many local campaigns herself. In 1958, Wuraola was nominated by the Action Group as a candidate for Ward SW9 in Ibadan in the Western Region elections. This was a particularly tough contest and the party already knew that it had little hope of winning. She was only nominated when the party could not get anyone else to stand. And she lost the election as the Action Group had feared. She was again nominated as a candidate in the 1959 general election. This, according to Larray Denzer, made her the second woman to stand for national election in Nigeria.¹ The election campaign was characterized by violence and

1. Mba, *op. cit.*, p.261.

2. The first was Miss R.T. Brown who was nominated as the A.G. candidate for Port-Harcourt in the 1959 Federal elections.

thuggery. She lost, receiving 7,169 votes to her opponent's 9,355.

Despite these two electoral defeats following closely one upon another, Wuraola Esan was not intimidated or discouraged. She remained undaunted and active in the Action Group. In 1960 she became the only woman to serve in the Federal Executive Committee of the party, a post she held till 1964. To reward her loyalty and good services in the Action Group, the party appointed her a special women's representative in the Federal Senate in 1960. She was one of the twelve Western representatives in the Senate. And from 1960-1964 she was the only woman member of the Federal Parliament. The following year, two women, Margaret Ekpo and Janet Mokelu won seats in the Eastern Regional Assembly, while in 1964 Mrs. Bernice Kerry was nominated to the Senate by the government of the new Mid-Western Region. In the Senate, Wuraola held her own ground even in the face of opposition from her male counterparts. She was articulate, witty and a forceful speaker.

Wuraola used her position in the Senate to advocate for equal rights and raising the status of women. She implored government to ensure that women were adequately represented in official appointments to public office, national boards and corporations. Women should be as much a part of the decision-making process as the men. They should not just be placed in such important positions to lend colour to the gathering or grace the deliberations with their flamboyant appearance, but they should be appointed on merit. Again, she pleaded for fairness in the assessment of women for taxation. According to her,

... if we must tax women, let us correctly assess the women we must tax. If we tax women earning below £300, we shall not be tackling the problem realistically because they would no longer be able to help their husbands and the proposed austerity measures might not be beneficial to the country after all.¹

She also argued frequently for more education for girls and more instruction in domestic science in the schools. She was particularly concerned with the fact that Northern Women were denied the franchise. She repeatedly called on Northern politicians to redress this situation. But this was not to be until 1979 when Northern women got the franchise from the military government.

As the only female in the Senate, she did not accept any intimidation from the male members. In fact, she openly protested any measure she considered condescending or discriminatory. For instance, in January 1964, she protested that she had never been included in any of the Parliamentary delegations.² In addition, she did not hesitate to oppose the male members on any issue on which she did not agree with them. In March 1963, she argued against an increase in parliamentary salaries which was supported by almost all the other parliamentarians. It was a setting overwhelmingly dominated by men, and she held her head high, coping well with the jibes and sarcasm of the male senators. But she was not always at loggerheads with them. She regularly cooperated with them. For example, she

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1. Nigerian Senate Debates, Session 1962-63. The Federal Ministry of Information, Printing Division, Lagos. (Debate on the Governor-General's Address) pp.115-122.
 2. Nigerian Senate Debates 1964. The Federal Ministry of Information, Printing Division, Lagos. Col. 851.

joined other senators to agree to the proposal on the creation of the Mid-West State, adding that women should be duly recognised in the new state.

... the reason for the creation of this fourth region should be made clear so as to allay the fears of the people concerned... We must be thinking of creating many more other states as well because we feel the desire of everybody is to enjoy life more abundant and freedom for all.

Whenever we want to create this fourth Region, women should be made Ministers because this is a new thing and we are living in a new and progressive age.¹

On the whole, Wuraola Esan proved to her male colleagues in the Senate that females were also to be reckoned with in the political arena. Apart from the fact that she was very vocal, the relevance and logicity of the issues she discussed showed that she was a woman of high calibre.

While in the Senate, Wuraola Esan continued to play an active role in the Action Group. In 1961, she was among the delegation of the Action Group Women's Association which toured the Northern Region to mobilise the women there for the party. The mission was a failure because the delegation was ignored and even boycotted by the Northern women who would not even sell to them in the markets. Together with other Action Group women, namely, Mrs. Soyawo and Mrs. Ogunlesi, Wuraola Esan tried in 1962 to mediate in the Action Group split between Akintola and Awolowo, but the effort was to no avail.

In March 1965, she resigned from the Action Group in protest against the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) between the Action Group and the NCNC, to join the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). But she had so

1. Nigerian Senate Debates, *op. cit.*, 1963, pp.12-13.

mastered the intricacies of politics that she did not own up directly that she was in the NNNDP camp.¹ Instead she went to the extent of publicly refuting any association with the party by issuing a press statement in January 1965 denying that she had joined it. Despite all this, it was not a secret that she was related to Akintola by marriage. More importantly, she remained a Western Region representative in the Senate under the NNNDP government. If she was not in any association with the NNNDP she would have been relieved of her seat in the Senate. Her speech in the Senate on April 29, 1965 was more revealing:

I would like to remind my Northern brothers that now we have female members in the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) and even in Parliament representing the NNA, it is time when the women of the north had the franchise.²

This speech indicated that she regarded herself as part of the NNA which was the temporary alliance of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and NNNDP, especially as there was no other NNA woman in Parliament to which she could have been referring.

Wuraola was also involved in local politics in Ibadan. In 1955 she was made the Balogun Iyalode, third in line to the Iyalode by the Olubadan, Oba I.B. Akinyele thereby gaining admission into the traditional chieftaincy structure. As a chief, her major concern was the improvement of conditions of market women; the construction of more comfortable markets, better conditions for trading, and equal access with men to loans. She eventually became the Iyalode of Ibadan in 1975.

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1. The NNNDP was very unpopular at this time.
 2. Nigerian Senate Debate. April 1965, Col. 181.

Although the office itself had suffered considerable loss of power during the colonial period, Wuraola Esan brought her achievements from other spheres to elevate and add more prestige to the Iyalode office. She thus combined traditional and modern roles to create a solid base of support for herself. In addition, she was also the first literate (educated) Iyalode that Ibadan would have. Hers was therefore the case of an incumbent adding to the esteem of the office while on the other hand, the office broadened her base of operation. She now had direct access to the female masses in Ibadan, success among whom could translate her political ideas to reality.

She played an active role in religion too especially in the Anglican Church. She was a member of St. James' Anglican Church Ogunpa (her husband's place of worship). She was also a member of the Anglican Committee; of the Women's Guild, and of the Mothers Union. She was President of Ladies' Sunrise League and Matron of the Workers League. She was active in St. Anne's Church, Ibadan as President of the Egbe Ore-Ofe. She was member and later grand-matron of the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) founded in 1947.

Wuraola was involved in several social activities and organizations. In 1950, together with women like Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga, she founded the *Ibile Ibadan Irepodun*, a Cooperative Thrift and Credit Society. Besides, she was member or matron in many societies, including the Farmers' Council; the Ibadan Descendants Union; the Oluyole Ladies Club; Nigerian Society for Agricultural Development (Oyo State Branch); and Star Pioneers of Nigeria. She also served on many government boards and establishments such as the Oyo State Council of Arts and Culture (1980-85); Management Committee of the Federation of Boys

and Girls Clubs (1982-84); and the Ibadan Zonal Committee on Women and Development (1984). She was a member of the Child Welfare Committee (1950-1955). She was a Justice of Peace and a Customary Court Judge (1975-80). She died on July 2, 1985.

The political career and life history of Wuraola Esan show that she was very concerned with women affairs. She used every opportunity to promote and protect their interests. As a national political leader she was concerned with general national issues such as education, unemployment, better condition for workers etc. Her achievement as the first woman Senator in Nigeria put her in the same class as Mabel Dove of Ghana who was the first woman in West Africa to be elected to a national legislature, and Aoua Keita of Mali - the first woman to be elected a deputy to a national assembly in a French-speaking, West African territory as well as one of the first to be elected to a national political bureau of the Rassemblement Democratique Africain (RDA). Her preoccupation with girls' education and equal rights for women was paralleled in the career of Constance A. Cummings John of Sierra-Leone who founded the Eleanor Roosevelt Preparatory School for Girls in 1952 and formed the Sierra-Leone Women's Movement.¹

In her rise to prominence, Wuraola used traditional and modern tools. She entered the ranks of traditional women chiefs thereby combining traditional and

1. Denzer, "The Influence of Pan-Africanism in the Career of Constance A. Cummings-John", in R.A. Hill (ed.), *Pan African Biography*. (African Studies Centre, University of California, Los Angeles & Crossroads Press (African Studies Association) 1987. pp.137-160; and "Constance A. Cummings-John of Sierra-Leone: Her Early Political Career", in *Tarikh*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1981, pp.20-32.

modern roles to broaden her support base. The fact that she came from an elite family - her father being a traditional chief and part of the bourgeoining Christian elite in the 1920s and 1930s - determined the kind of education she had which in turn had a strong influence on the opportunities she later had in life. Her marriage to V.O. Esan, another member of the new educated Christian elite consolidated her elite orientation. But her own performance and abilities confirmed her as a leader, not only of women but also of men. In the Action Group and in the Senate she proved her mettle, and in Ibadan, she restored some of the faded glories of the Iyalode office before she died in 1985.

Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga.¹

The career of Hunmoani Alaga is the history of the struggles for survival by the Ibadan market women in the second half of colonial rule which incidentally witnessed the growth of nationalist agitations. Her biography is also a testimony to the fact that western education need not be a prerequisite for leadership.

Hunmoani Amoke Alarape was born in 1907 to a Muslim family at Ojaaba, Ibadan. Her father was a muslim priest (*alfa*) who hailed from Iwo which had become a muslim stronghold in the second half of the nineteenth century.² Both of

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2. The only work so far on Hunmoani Alaga is T.M. Fadoju "Alhaja Hunmoani Alarape Alaga: A Biographical Study" Long Essay. Department of History, University of Ibadan, which I found particularly useful on the early life of Hunmoani.
 2. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*. (Longman, London, 1978). p.68.

her parents were traders - itinerant hawkers who dealt in textiles. They bought imported textiles in Lagos and sold in various Yoruba towns such as Oshogbo, Ilorin, Ede, Ogbomoso, Ejigbo, Iragberi, and Irawo. As a result of this background, Hunmoani was introduced to trading at a very early age and, as she grew up, she accompanied her parents on their commercial trips. She was thus in a way apprenticed to them, learning under their tutelage. By the time she came of age, she was already able to stand on her own as a trader.

Hunmoani had no experience of Western education. The second decade of the twentieth century when she could have started schooling was part of a milieu in which Western education was largely in the hands of Christian missionaries. Muslim parents found the idea of sending their wards to missionary schools distasteful as there was the possibility of such children being converted to Christianity. Female education especially was considered a waste by Muslim parents who reasoned that whatever training the girls achieved would be put to use ultimately in another man's household. Only very few parents who appreciated the value of education sent their wards to school. In as much as Hunmoani's father was a muslim, she was given the benefit of koranic education though not in depth. In 1925, she married Sanusi Oshinusi, a tailor who had a shop in the popular Gbagi market.

A few years after marriage, she got some money (probably from her husband as was common among Yoruba men to start their wives off in a trade) to start trading in Gbagi. With one hundred pounds she opened a shop at Gbagi in 1929, becoming the first woman to do so in Ibadan. She sold textile products - cotton, *ankara*, khaki and guinea brocade. The European firms with which she

transacted business were G.B. Ollivant, John Holt and the UAC. But due to her inability to read and write English, she employed clerks who transacted business on her behalf. By 1932 she had become very successful and wealthy, employing numerous clerks and supplying over a hundred and fifty agents. Her¹ success was due to her trading skills and acumen, and the fact that she employed book-keepers and clerks to make up for her own lack of education. Apart from her textile business over which she was sole entrepreneur, she was also involved in joint commercial ventures with other business-minded individuals. A case in point was the Ibadan Bus Service² - a public liability company - in which she was a major shareholder and member of the Board of Directors. As the only illiterate member of the board, her wealth gave her access to a place where her lack of education could have debarred her.

Again, her great wealth (an evidence of her commercial success) and organizational ability brought her to the position of leader of the market women. In 1934 she was made the leader of women traders who sold cloth on counters (wooden boards). The title rendered in Yoruba was *Iya Egbe Alaso ni counter*. In this capacity, she settled disputes between the women traders, acted as their spokeswoman on crucial matters and attended to other general issues pertaining to them. Her efficiency in leading the women was rewarded in the 1950s when she was made the *Iyalaje* of Ibadan - leader of all female traders. But apart from this, she was President of the Women Cotton Traders Union and also of the Ibadan

1. Mba, op. cit., p.265.

2. Already discussed in chapter six above.

African Textile Traders Association. These were all female trading guilds - the women formed their own associations because they were not admitted into the Ibadan Native Traders' Association formed by the men under the leadership of Salami Agbaje. Why were the women not allowed to be members of the INTA? Both men and women were to be found in Gbagi (later renamed Lebanon Street), the commercial nerve centre of Ibadan.¹ Both groups were exposed to the same commercial threats - the monopoly of foreign firms and the intransigence and dominance of the Lebanese/Syrian traders. Moreover, all the women could not be said to be 'petty' traders. Some of them were big-time traders such as Hunmoani Alaga, Hunmoani Alade and Madam Obisesan and these were the ones that played leadership roles in the women's associations. Meanwhile, not all the men were business magnates like Salami Agbaje, Adebisi Giwa, J.O. Aboderin and E.A. Sanda. Many of them dealt in small stock of commercial items.

Therefore, if there was a convergence of interest among male and female trader, why did they not join together in a common commercial guild? Why was gender used as a factor of organizational differentiation among male and female traders? The reason for this could either be embedded in male chauvinism demonstrated in their wariness of the methods of female traders, or it could be that the pettiness of female disputes (which erupted regularly) and some peculiarly feminine concerns made it necessary for them to have separate organizations.

1. See Chapter Six above for more on the commercial rivalry at Gbagi.

Whatever was the case, the women traders under their leaders, prominent among whom was Hunmoani Alaga made very dramatic but effective protests against any unfavourable policy.

With Hunmoani Alaga as the head of the market women in the Gbagi area, there were many protests organized. The principal issue that caused considerable controversy from the 1930s to the early 1950s was the threat of the Lebanese and Syrian traders¹ who maintained a firm monopoly on the commercial life of Gbagi. Part of the problem also derived from the direct contact between the two parties - the Lebano/Syrians supplied the women with the materials they retailed. The frequency of the commercial disputes between the women traders and the Lebano/Syrians did not necessarily represent the intolerance and aggressiveness of the womenfolk (though these may be partly responsible) but it was an apt commentary on the milieu in which they operated. Theirs was a commercial world of rivalries and intense competition. It was a dynamic setting in which external changes frequently complemented internal adjustments. It was also one in which losses, gains, and commercial opportunities had financial implications. The Lebano/Syrian trader was the 'upstart' who established himself in a position which the indigenes felt should be theirs. The male traders did not have as many confrontations with the Lebano/Syrians as the female traders did. This was probably because the Lebano/Syrians metted out a raw and harsher deal to the women who were more into retail trade than the men.

1. These Lebanese and Syrian traders will henceforth be called 'Lebano/Syrians'.

For instance, the quest of the Lebano/Syrians for profit made them engage in retail business, underselling indigenous women retail traders whom they also supplied with the same goods. This made the Women Cotton Traders Union led by Hunmoani Alaga to organize a protest against the Lebano/Syrians in July 1938.

According to the women,

The Syrian... loads lorries with cotton goods, holds his scissors and yard measure, and right into the bush market he goes, halting at all villages, and selling the same goods sold to us, at reduced prices. In this circumstances, sirs, how are we and our children to live?¹

Although the Lebano/Syrians stopped hawking goods in lorries on the warning of Council chiefs, they still maintained their commercial dominance in Lebanon Street. In fact, the knowledge that the Lebano-Syrians occupied too much land without proper authority was irksome to the women traders who wanted them displaced at all costs. Led by Hunmoani, the women again lodged their complaints with Council chiefs who consequently resolved to be renting land to the Lebano/Syrians at a fixed rate. But that did not end Lebano/Syrian dominance in Gbagi. They resorted to subletting among themselves and at the same time making considerable 'gifts' to the chiefs, courting their favour for more land.¹

The women traders continued to fight the Lebano/Syrians even in the 1950s. In 1952, they protested their auction system, *gbanjo*, which undercut

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1. N.A.I., Iba. Div. 1/1 File 1551, Union of Women Traders (Cotton Goods) in Ibadan, petition from.
 2. T. Falola, *Politics and Economy in Ibadan 1893-1945*, (Modelor, Lagos. 1989), p.274.

prices fixed by market women, and the practice of not measuring up to the quantity of cloth for which the women had paid them. Council chiefs investigated the matter and ordered the Lebano-Syrians to stop the practice.

The year 1953 marked a turning point in the history of the confrontation between the market women and the Lebano/Syrians. In the first place, the City Council was now drawn into the dispute because a few of its policies that year went against the commercial interests of the women. Secondly, the Mabolaje, a local political party also entered the dispute on the side of the women. However, the idea of market organizations forging alliances with political parties was not peculiar to the Ibadan case.

In Lagos, market women forged alliances with first the nascent political parties and the educated women's organizations that emerged in the 1920s; the women used these alliances to protest new market policies that interfered with their autonomy or violated their sense of fair play.²

In the case of the Ibadan Women traders, the initiative for the alliance came from the political party - Mabolaje. This was at a time when the party was seeking to mobilize support in preparation for the 1954 Council election. The leader of the party, Adelabu, saw the great potential for support that inhered among the market women - they came from all over the city, and were in touch through their families and customers with virtually the entire female population.

An occasion for the interplay of these different strands to the commercial dispute revolving around Lebanon Street was the imposition of new Street Trading Rules by Council which affected traders in Lebanon Street, New Court Road, and

2. Denzer, "Yoruba Women", *op. cit.*, p.31.

Onireke Street near Ogunpa Motor Park in September 1953. The enforcement of the legislation displaced many women traders who had no shops and had been using the frontage of the shops owned by Lebano-Syrians to hawk their goods.¹

Quite naturally, the women protested the new rules. Led by Hunmoani Alaga, a delegation of the Ibadan African Textile Traders Association presented a petition to Council authorities in Mapo Hall on September 21, 1953. According to the petition:

... Sometimes we are told not to encroach the road with our goods and since then we have been keeping with this order because we dare not encroach the road at all. But yet, police never cease of [sic] troubling us to remove, and they want us to quit from our place altogether... That in stopping us from selling cloths, there [sic] is a means of blocking our trade and daily bread because we have no other means of our [sic] livelihood.²

As a result of this protest Council halted the enforcement of the Street Trading Rules. This was a triumph of the market women and of the organizational ability of Hunmoani and other women leaders. However, the delight of the market women at this turn of event was shortlived because Council rescinded its decision (under great pressure from the Senior District Officer) and decided to reenforce the Rules. It was at this time that Adegoke Adelabu together with Barrister E.O. Fakayode (another Ibadan NCNC leader) took up the cause of the market women. The issues revolving round Lebanon Street, for reasons outlined earlier thus -

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1. The women affected by the Street Trading Rules were many; in the estimation of Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.189, there were 3,000 of such petty traders in Lebanon Street and New Court Road.
 2. N.A.I. Iba. Div. 1/1 File 1359/S.25 Petition from Ibadan African Textile Traders' Association, September 21, 1953.

became a party matter.

On December 28, 1953, Fakayode and Adelabu led about 5000 women to Mapo for an interview with the administrative officers on the Street Rules. Adelabu and Fakayode spoke with the District Officer Lewis, opposing the enforcement of the Rules on behalf of the market women. They requested that the enforcement of the rules be postponed until the existing Council had been replaced in the election to be held in March 1954, after which the new Council could then amend the Rules in deference to public opinion.¹ The immediate result of this meeting was that on December 29, Council granted 84 lock-up stalls to the Traders' Association and this was attributed to the involvement of Adelabu in the struggle on the side of the women.

However, in the following year the Rules were enforced thereby renewing the agitation of the women. Adelabu became Chairman of Council in April 1954 and from that time till March 1956 when it was dissolved, he tried to defer to public opinion by allowing the women to continue to trade in Lebanon Street. But with his exit from Council it seemed the authorities would not hesitate to drive the petty traders away from Lebanon Street. Thus on March 13, 1956, Adelabu led 500 market women to the House of Assembly at Agodi where they confronted A.M.A. Akinloye, one of the honourable members. Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga, Madam Obisesan, and a few other leaders of the market women had an audience with the Minister of Local Government who advised them to draw up a petition to

1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Dec. 30, 1953.

the new Council.¹ Despite doing this, the problem of street trading remained unsolved as it had been politicised. The important point from the struggle as I have presented it so far, is that the women leaders, principal among whom was Hunmoani Alaga were indefatigable. They protested what they considered a violation of their sense of fairplay, mobilising the market women and making themselves heard by the appropriate authorities with the help of their allies - Adegoke Adelabu and E.O. Fakayode of the N.C.N.C. The women thus exploited available avenues to plead their cause.

The political heat of the mid 1960s, especially in 1964 affected relations between market women led by Alaga and other redoubtable women on the one hand, and the City Council on the other hand. Relationship between the two groups became more strained and the women appealed to the Olubadan, as father of all to save them from the politicians. They complained of being harrassed by thugs believed to have been sent by N.N.D.P. Councillors. This situation was further heightened by the fact that the women leaders were Action Group stalwarts. In fact, none of the policies of the Council went down well with the women who saw such as constituting deliberate attempts by the NNNDP politicians to victimise them. The case of the transfer of Dugbe market to another site proposed by Council was another issue which caused a lot of furore. The attitude of policemen and Council messengers to the women did not help matters. They harassed the women mercilessly. To protest all these, the women led by Hunmoani

1. *Nigerian Tribune*, March 15, 1956.

Alaga demonstrated round town, singing provocative war songs, made representations to the Olubadan, and even closed the markets.¹

The activities of Hunmoani Alaga were not only channelled towards organizing protests and demonstrations (although this showed her organizational ability) but also toward establishing viable economic institutions which thrived on mutual understanding in a tranquil atmosphere. In 1950, together with Wuraola Esan, she founded the *Ibile Ibadan Irepodun* Cooperative Thrift and Credit Society. She also founded *Egbe Alafowosowopo* in 1961 (another Consumer Cooperative Society). These two societies raised money and built a maternity centre at Mapo which they later handed over to the Ibadan City Council for proper maintenance.

In addition, Hunmoani was into politics. She was an active member of the Action Group Women's Association formed in 1953 and was on the Executive Council of the Association together with Mrs. Ogunlesi and Mrs. Akerele. She was the only non-literate and non-Christian to be elected into its executive committee.² Most of the members in Ibadan were the educated, prosperous traders. Part of the activities of Hunmoani in the Action Group was to organize market women to support the party. For example, during important ceremonies such as the National Youth Day on April 30, 1953, market women wore Action

1. *Nigerian Tribune*, Sept. 29, October 16, and December 31, 1964. These protests involved women from Gbagi, Dugbe, Agbeni and Gege markets.

2. *Daily Service*, March 14, 1953.

Group badges and danced round town in support of the party. The women also organized financial contributions to support the party, they spread information about party activities and political meetings. Hunmoani also organized other women organizations upon which she presided (such as the Cooperative Societies and Islamic religions societies) to support the Action Group.

As a member of the Action Group, Hunmoani, though not literate was exposed to diverse national issues upon which the party deliberated and took steps. Such issues included the controversial 1963 national census and the NNDP versus Action Group crisis in the Western Region.¹ At this point, one should ask how Hunmoani managed to remain loyal to the Action Group while at the same time relying on the assistance of Adelabu (NCNC) in the market women struggle. In the early 1950s (as from 1953 to be precise) when she joined the Action Group Women's Association as a foundation member, she was also in touch with Adelabu and Fakayode of the NCNC. The answer to this could be found in the way politics was carried on at the time. Hunmoani could not have been unaware that the overtures of Adelabu had political undertones, but since his assistance was valuable in the circumstances, it was accepted. Moreover, Adelabu did not lose out in the 'deal'. Majority of the petty traders supported the NCNC and as mentioned earlier, they were to be found in the NCNC-Mabolaje Women's wing led by Madam Hunmoani Apampa. This mass support was largely responsible for the electoral successes of the NCNC in Ibadan in 1954 and 1956. Adelabu's

1. *Nigerian Tribune*, April 28, 1964.

Mabolaje was represented as the party of the common people. On the other hand, the 'big-wigs' among the market women - Madam Obisesan, Hunmoani Alade, Hunmoani Alaga, and a few others were Action Group members. The main point, however, is that Hunmoani Alaga was astute enough as a politician to receive the assistance of local NCNC leaders on behalf of the Market Women Association without compromising her own allegiance to the Action Group.

Besides, Hunmoani was a leader in the National Council of Women Societies. The Isabatudeen Society of which she was President was a member of the NCWS. In the Council, she interacted with other women leaders such as Lady Ademola, Mrs. Wuraola Esan, Mrs. T. Ogunlesi, Mrs. Adetoun Ogunseye, Mrs. Akran, Mrs. Elizabeth Adekogbe all of whom were concerned with the advancement of women. Hunmoani's horizon was broadened beyond the world of market women and commercial disputes (though these were legitimate pursuits in their own right). Some of the issues handled by the Women Council included the Marriage Ordinance of 1962 on which they maintained that women should not be slaves to their husbands; the virtues of monogamy; and the matter of abortion. The women opposed abortion and urged government to establish centres to care for unwanted children and enable single mothers earn a clean living. They also proposed that women should be educated on family planning. These were indeed progressive ideas that are still relevant today in the nineties.

In the realm of religion, Hunmoani was also very active. She was a devout muslim. She built a mosque at Sango, arranged koranic lessons for children and employed Arabic teachers to instruct them. She performed the holy prilgrimage to Mecca in 1953. This made her an 'alhaja', thus joining the class of muslim elite

who enjoyed a high status in the Islamic community because of their visit to the holy land. Only people of considerable means could afford the trip. She was a member of the Ansar-ud-Deen Society, a muslim brotherhood concerned with the propagation of Islam and the education of Muslim children.¹ She was also a member of the Egbe Ifelodun - a society of Muslim women, mostly traders who engaged in mutual help and staged dances during Muslim festivals.

In 1958, with the encouragement of the Ansar-Ud-Deen, Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga founded the Isabatudeen Society. This was a women organization which comprised many of the members of the Egbe Ifelodun and other Muslim women. The society started with eleven members and by 1959 there were about 100 members with branches in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta.² The aim of the society was to promote the educational, moral, religious and social advancement of the Muslim community. It was, however, more concerned with education, especially of girls¹. In 1964, the society founded the Isabatudeen Girls' High School in Ibadan. Each

1. In fact, she was the *Iyà Egbé* (matron) of the society.

W.O.A. Nasiru, "The Advent and Development of Islam in Ibadan", Unpublished paper, n.d. p.77; A.H. Shuaibu, "Ibadan Central Mosque: Imamship Issue". Long Essay, Dept. of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan. Nov. 1989, p.52.

2. Some of the active members of the society were: Alhaja Salamat Ijaduola, Alhaja Mopelola Akande of Ile Iyalode, Ojaaba, Alhaja Abadat of Idi-Arere, Taibatu Jawando and Nimatallahi Adebisi. Shuaibu, *op. cit.*, p.52.
3. F.A. Ogunseye, "The Women of Nigeria", *Presence Africaine*, Vol. 4/5 Nos. 32/33 1960, p.47.

of the members made considerable financial contributions to the establishment of the school which started with thirty girls. It has since grown big and populous. Government took over the school in 1974. The founding of the school is very significant especially with Alhaja Hunmoani Alaga directing the project. This would not have been unrelated to her exposure both in the Action Group Women's Wing and in the NCWS to the necessity of female education as a means of advancing the lot of women. By so doing, she, together with other women in the Isabatudeen society, expanded the frontiers of educational opportunities available to girls in Ibadan.

The career of Hunmoani Alaga shows us that lack of western education need not be a barrier to individual excellence and achievement. In her profession as a trader, she was very successful as a result of her commercial skills and expertise in employing book-keepers and a clerk, and the fairly conducive atmosphere within which she operated. As a leader of market women she forged alliances with politicians to have the needs of the women met and protest 'injustices' done to them. In this regard, her career paralleled that of Madam Alimotu Pelewura, the President of the Lagos Market Women's Association from the 1930s to 1951. Pelewura supported Herbert Macaulay and his NNDP and exploited this relationship to protest any violation of the women's rights. Like Hunmoani, she was also a Muslim and illiterate. These women leaders also forged alliances with the educated women's organizations. Nina Mba and Cheryl Johnson analysed the effectiveness of the alliance between educated women and market

women leaders in defending women's economic and social interests in Lagos.¹ We have already discussed the relationship between Hunmoani Alaga, representing the market women, and the Action Group and NCNC, and the NCWS. She was very dynamic as a women's leader, demonstrating that her lack of Western education was not an obstacle in her rise to the top, and that women could be as distinguished in their chosen field of operation as the men.

Summary

In the pre-colonial period, women played important roles in the society; despite the restrictions of a military state. The Iyalode was a political leader in the Council of Chiefs. She was also the head of the women, presided over all affairs pertaining to them with the assistance of her subordinate female chiefs. Market heads called *Iyaloja* were also prominent in the pre-colonial Yoruba economy as well as individual women who had made their mark in trading. In the religious sphere, women were known as priestesses.

The establishment of colonial rule curtailed the powers of the women. The Iyalode lost her position in the new Council established by the colonial administrators. She was no longer what she used to be; she lost considerable authority. But the women were not despondent. They looked for new ways of making themselves relevant to the new order and sought avenues of distinguishing themselves. The market place offered ample opportunities for the economically astute to excel. They also used western education to get themselves a place

1. Mba, *op. cit.*, pp.193-232; C. Johnson, "Madam Alimotu Pelewura and the Lagos Market Women", *Tarikh*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1981. pp.1-10.

among men at the top. Wuraola Esan was a teacher turned politician as well as a woman activist, distinguishing herself as a leader. She brought considerable prestige to the office of the Iyalode, thus combining traditional and modern roles to broaden her support base.

Western education did not provide the only avenue that women took to the top as the career of Hunmoani Alaga shows. Muslims were also distinguished as popular leaders. Hunmoani mastered the art of politics well and utilised overlapping alliances forged with the Action Group, NCNC and NCWS to champion the cause of women. Both Wuraola Esan and Hunmoani Alaga were concerned with the issue of broadening the educational opportunities for girls in Ibadan, leaving behind a very honourable heritage represented by both the Ibadan People's Girls' High School and the Isabatudeen Girls High School.

These were not the only women who made it to the elite category in their time. There were many others. A lot of women played leadership roles in their churches as *Iya Ijo* and *Iya Egbe*, such as Mrs. Aboderin, *Iya Egbe Ina Olorun Ntan* and Madam Kokumo, *Iya Egbe Isokan*, both of the St. David's Anglican Church, Kudeti.¹ There was also Sussanah Moyoade of Inalende, one of the early Christian converts in Ibadan in the late nineteenth century who mobilised other Christians for prayers with dramatic results and preached to non-Christian women.²

1. Interview with Pa Dotun Olubi, Kudeti, September 29, 1994.

2. Interview with Rev. G.L. Lasebikan (Senior) at Felele, January 27, 1993.

We have already mentioned Madam Hunmoani Apampa, a muslim, and a political leader in the Mabolaje. Teachers were also part of the women elite. Apart from the early teachers mentioned in this chapter, there were others like Mrs. Kemi Morgan, daughter of the Bishop A.B. Akinyele. She obtained certificates of education from the University of Manchester and Liverpool Teacher Training Collège in 1939 before starting a teaching career in Lagos and later in Ibadan.¹

Taken together, all these women had one thing in common - they were all women of substance. Their careers demonstrated that women could excel in whatever sphere of human activity they found themselves, be it social, political, economic, or religious. Hunmoani Alaga and Wuraola Esan are used as examples to illustrate female membership of the elite cult.

1. "Citation of Mrs. Kemi Morgan Read at the occasion of the Merit Award presented to Her by the Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) during the Ibadan Week '92 Grand Finale Celebrations held at Mapo Square, Ibadan on Saturday, September 14, 1992" CCII Papers.

CHAPTER EIGHT

IN THE CRUCIBLE OF PARTISAN POLITICS

Introduction

The decolonization period in Nigerian history was characterized by intense partisan politics. The intensity of this political competition permeated the national, regional and local levels. In Ibadan, the struggle was no less fervid. There, political competition acquired new forms different from the old IPU, IPA practice with which the populace was acquainted. Partisan politics was like a crucible, the contents of which were subjected to severe heat. The elite constituted the principal actors in this political drama. The period saw certain changes in the elite outlook and basic values while some of its admission requirements were redefined. The politics of this period also revealed the interplay of a number of issues which included the dynamism of particular personalities, the convergence of local and national issues, and the endurance of certain elements of traditional society. Underlying all these was the resilience of the traditional framework of chieftaincy politics and its survival as the rallying point of the elite. Much more than the experience of colonialism had hitherto affected the elite, the operation of partisan politics tested and tried the stuff with which it was made. Partisanship was now understood in a new dimension and members of the elite were not slow to master its intricacies.

This chapter looks at partisan politics in the period of decolonization with regards to the competition for dominance in the politics of Ibadan which it entailed, and how the local elite responded to the political structure at both the Federal and Regional levels i.e. the integration of local affairs into Regional and

Federal politics. A few local issues that were politicised are examined to illustrate how men gained access to 'power' in Ibadan based on mobilization of the masses, and how such men became a new elite dominating the hitherto existing groups. Special attention is also paid to the ethos of traditional political system as it lingered in the modern political process. The central task is to determine how far the factor of partisan politics transformed the composition of the elite by introducing new men, and how the old elite was able to cope with this intrusion.

Outline of Regional Politics and Reform

After the Second World War, the struggle for decolonization became more intense in Nigeria. This was because the war indirectly accelerated the development of political consciousness among the articulate populace. The experience of ex-servicemen opened their eyes to the mortality of the British and destroyed the aura which had hitherto surrounded the whites and which had helped to bolster the 'whiteman's superiority'. Moreover, the negative economic impact of the war on the colonies and the continued discrimination against Africans made nationalists to be more critical of the colonial government. The local press in Lagos became increasingly hostile to the colonial authorities, whipping up nationalist sentiments among the people.

The response of the colonial government to this challenge took the form of constitutional reforms. However, the Richards Constitution which took off in 1947 did not satisfy nationalists particularly because they were not involved in its preparation. The constitution endorsed the regionalization of the country - the regional administrative structure of 1939 was now formally incorporated into the

Constitution as delineating political units. The colonial government then went ahead to create more public boards and corporations, and reform existing ones as a way of improving public utilities. But these could not reduce the tempo of nationalist agitations aimed at securing greater participation in government.

In Lagos, competition for power at the national level was a principal preoccupation of the nationalists there. The National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) was formed in August 1944 with Herbert Macaulay as President and Nnamdi Azikiwe as Secretary to provide leadership for the national cause. And almost immediately, the Council devoted itself to the issue of the constitutional proposals made by Sir Arthur Richards. But along the line, the NCNC assumed strong Igbo undertones. A group of Yoruba nationalists led by Obafemi Awolowo also founded an organization for the Yoruba, Egbe Omo Oduduwa (Society for the sons of Oduduwa), a cultural organization, first in London in 1945 and later in Nigeria in 1948. Its basic objective was consciousness-raising, to make Yoruba-speaking people in the Western Region to see themselves as one, and as belonging together. It was this organization that spawned the Action Group in 1950. The AG, which was publicly launched in Owo in 1951, was declared openly as a regional party, aimed at providing the necessary leadership and organization for the peoples of the Western Region.

Between 1945 and 1951, the nationalist movement in Nigeria fragmented, and national politics assumed the form of a competition between three dominant parties, each associated with one of the majority ethnic groups that formed the main unit in one of the three regions. Within each region, the majority group tended to exercise political dominance over numerous other smaller ethnic groups

while seeking electoral support from groups in the other regions. In the West, the Yoruba constituted the largest ethnic unit. The A.G. sought electoral support in the West by courting the local power bases i.e. the Councils. The NCNC also competed against the A.G. in the West for the support of the masses. What ensued was intense rivalry and competition between the two parties.

The post World War II period also saw the gradual democratization of the Native Authority system. In the 1950s the Native Administration structures were reorganized into local government councils whose membership was based on the elective principle. The Sole Native Authorities began to disappear. Besides, as part of a general effort to reform the judicial system in Nigeria, a Commission of Inquiry headed by N.J. Brooke was established to look into the Native Court system with particular emphasis on the constitution of the courts, the law administered in them, and the link between them and the higher courts. The implementation of Brooke's recommendations in 1954, among other things, precipitated great changes at the local level.

On the eve of the advent of the regional parties (NCNC and A.G.) to Ibadan, the political configuration of the city depicted the IPU and ICC, representing the old Christian elite and the large Egbe Omo Ibile (IPA) which had begun to challenge it as discussed in Chapter Five above. As an extension of the democratization of the Native Authority system, the decolonization period also witnessed the introduction of modern democratic practices such as elections to the local scene with the result that partisanship became more entrenched and it acquired new forms different from the tolerance and magnanimity associated with the IPU, IPA practice.

The 1950s also saw various attempts to reform socio-political institutions and structures in Ibadan. The 'Agbaje dispute' of 1949-51 and the report of the H.L.M. Butcher who inquired into it had touched on certain issues which bordered on the need to reform the Native Authority. This was a very sensitive matter to the people of Ibadan most of whom preferred gradual change still anchored on traditional practices to any dramatic change in the status quo. Other issues such as the position of the 'Native Strangers' and the Northern Districts agitation for 'independence' were also burning at the time.¹ The administrative reorganization which culminated in the creation of Oshun Division out of the old Ibadan Division in 1951 enraged the people of Ibadan and became a political wound around which a few other local issues crystallised. Moreover, tax reforms became very sensitive and unpopular in Ibadan as was the Hayley Reform Committee² which recommended many of these local changes. All these rearrangements not only produced tumultuous responses from the different opinion shades in the local power orbit, they also afforded ambitious individuals opportunities to rise to political limelight.

1. The Northern Districts of the Ibadan Division were: Iwó, Ede, Oshogbo, Ejìgbò, Egbédòrè, Ogbómòshó, Ifélódùn, Aiyédáade, Igbóorà, Bínúkonú and Odò-Otin. They all wanted to be free of Ibadan's control.

The term 'Native Strangers', though it generally covered all non-Ibadan Nigerians resident in the city, was specifically applied by the Ibadan to the Ijebu elements there. The Ijebu in Ibadan paid tax to the city authorities but were not allowed any representation in the city Council, neither were they allowed access to land on long lease or by direct purchase. It was the agitation of the Ijebu on these matters that constituted the 'Native Strangers' issue. The Ijebu in Ibadan, however, called themselves 'Native Settlers' and not 'Strangers'.

2. This Committee was headed by Resident John Hayley and its task was to discuss and recommend reforms of the Ibadan Native Authority.

Party Formations and Affiliations in Ibadan

The NCNC and the Action Group both got to Ibadan (venue of the 1950 Constitutional Conference) in 1951 at a time when the city was embroiled in a web of local issues some of which had been unleashed during the 'Agbaje dispute'. So in seeking support in Ibadan, these two parties needed to take a stand on such local issues. This marked the integration of local into regional politics. Because the NCNC declared its support for the Ibadan Native Authority in the latter's struggle with its Northern districts, and also offered to mediate in the crisis between the Ibadan community and the 'Native Settlers', the Egbe Omo Ibile decided to affiliate with it. The Maiyegun League (a farmers' guild) also pledged its support to the NCNC through the Egbe Omo Ibile. The A.G., however, did not enjoy the goodwill of many Ibadan indigenes especially as its founders were strongly associated with the 'Native Settlers' issues. A few educated Ibadan men who had been members of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa openly supported the A.G. in its bid to find its feet in Ibadan. Such men included A.M.A. Akinloye, S.O. Lanlehin, and the Rev. E.O. Alayande.

After the establishment of local branches in Ibadan, these two parties began to canvas for membership and support among the indigenes and the 'stranger' elements in the city as a way of consolidating their stand before elections. In this process, the regional political rivalry between those two parties intruded more into the local Ibadan scene. Meanwhile, politically-ambitious educated men in Ibadan began to make their own alignments independent of the 'intruding' regional parties.

On June 16, 1951, the Ibadan People's Party (IPP) was formed by a group of young men.¹ Among them were A.M.A. Akinloye, a lawyer who got elected as

of the chiefs. In addition, they did not condescend to the level of the masses who remained in a world of their own, albeit as part of the same social system. IPU influence only affected the masses through their general control of Ibadan affairs.

There was thus much difference between the orientation of the IPU and the new IPP which looked forward to a direct involvement in chieftaincy politics and mobilization of the hitherto dormant masses. Again, the IPP was born out of a desire of the new men to establish a political organ which they could use to manoeuvre between the two regional parties - NCNC and A.G. - in the coming elections. There was the need for them to master their own locality before aspiring to wider horizons in regional and national politics. This set of young men wanted to establish a corporate identity for themselves on the local scene, given the general atmosphere of aggressive national politics and the intrusion of outside politicians into Ibadan in the early fifties. The inauguration of the IPP was thus a demonstration of group consciousness on the part of the second-generation educated elite which made up its membership.

Given this background, the birth of the IPP was not warmly received in some political quarters in Ibadan. Immediately the party was inaugurated and its officers elected, Bello Abasi, the leader of the Egbe Omo Ibile, dismissed Adegoke Adelabu from his capacities as member and General Secretary of the Egbe because

of his involvement with the new party.¹ This action shows that Abasi saw the IPP as a threat to his own party and political ambition. Abasi, who was not as vocal and as educated as Adelabu, had wanted to use the latter's organizational and oratorical talents to make the Egbe a formidable force in local politics while taking the credit for it. Therefore, Adelabu's involvement with the IPP was seen by Abasi as a case of divided allegiance, and also as an attempt to weaken his hold on the Egbe by providing his deputy with an alternative power base. He might even have feared that the IPP could grow up to rival the Egbe. Abasi obviously did not consider the possibility of cooperating or collaborating with the IPP. His was an independent 'Egbe' that was not to be absorbed by another. Perhaps, Akinloye's profession as a lawyer also intimidated Abasi who was barely literate. What, then, did all these indicate?

By virtue of the position of leadership he occupied, Abasi was a member of the elite, but there were categories among the political elite in the sense that they did not all wield the same degree of influence in the society. In one category was the old, educated IPU men with their parochial and Christian outlook. In another was the new IPP made up of younger men who were more educated and radical in outlook. In between these two categories were the likes of Abasi who was not well read, was conservative, and a Muslim. These categories should not

1. K.D.L., I.P.A. Papers. Box 28: Letter from Bello Abasi to Adegoke Adelabu, June 17, 1951.

be seen as horizontally arranged but vertically. The idea is that none was basically more 'elitist' or 'superior' to others. To the general populace, they were all above the common mould of ordinary people.

Having registered its existence as a political party, the IPP immediately got involved in local issues, showing its concern for local problems such as the Northern Districts' issue.

The result of the 1951 elections demonstrated that the new regional parties were yet to find their feet in Ibadan politics. IPP men won the six seats¹ allocated to Ibadan in the Western House of Assembly. This was a dual triumph. It was a triumph of local forces over the 'intruding' NCNC and A.G. It was also a triumph of the new IPP men over the old IPU/ICC monopoly.² The Christian undertone of the IPU/ICC accord had driven Abasi and his Egbe into the IPP camp. There, religion was not a crucial factor in politics. But because the IPP men were more

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1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Sept. 25, 1951. One of the assemblymen was D.T. Akinbiyi, an old IPU faithful. It is not clear whether he crossed to the IPP camp or was supported by the IPP campaign as a lean concession to the old guard.
 2. The following comments of Akinpelu Obisesan on the IPP electoral victory is a typical IPU/ICC assessment of the incident.

ICC to which I allied myself was defeated, thus the hope of my friends who were very eager to win became blasted. The men, to all intent and purpose regarded as undesirable will go to the new House of Assembly. Ibadan People's Party won the race to the utter discomfiture of ICC. Ibadan will now face a new world - let us look afar and see what next will follow.

K.D.L., Obisesan Papers. Box 51: Diary 1951. Entry for September 14.

articulate and more educated, they succeeded in outmanoeuvring Bello and his Egbe.

The shifting alignments that followed the IPP victory showed the unstable nature of local politics. Five¹ out of the six IPP assemblymen, on getting to the House, declared their support for the Action Group. Only Adelabu supported the NCNC. Despite the initial stance of the IPP that it was not an adjunct to, or member of any of the regional political parties, the six Assemblymen now realized that they needed to affiliate with these national parties for them to operate on a pedestal that was higher than the local level. The policy of non-alignment could work on the local level where the IPP had a firm root and could mobilise considerable support, but it did not stand a chance at the regional level where the party was virtually unknown. Therefore, in order to play a more meaningful role in regional politics, the six IPP legislators jettisoned their non-alignment policy.

This inevitably led to a division of the IPP into two factions. In January 1952, Adelabu formed a new IPP which would be an ally of the NCNC. The other IPP faction was led by Akinloye who was made Minister of Agriculture by the Action Group - the ruling party. By this time, Adelabu had become the most important NCNC leader in Ibadan. The approach of the 1952 Council elections made Adelabu to take certain steps towards ensuring electoral success for his party. He forged a new alliance with the Egbe Omo Ibile and the ICC - the groups that were marginalised by the 1951 IPP electoral victory. This alliance did not

1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*. Oct. 19, 1951. The five men were: M. Aboderin, A.M.A. Akinloye, S.O. Lanlehin, D.T. Akinbiyi and S.A. Akinyemi.

stop individual political units from being active as either ICC, Egbe Omo Ibile or IPP. More than half of the thirty-nine Councillors elected in 1952 to the Ibadan Council were from the ICC/IPU.¹ Control of politics at the local level thus remained in the hands of the old group of educated elements.

The alliance collapsed in 1952 and neither the IPP (AG) nor the IPP (NCNC) could be said to have any meaningful hold on Council affairs. Adelabu was still to get his bearing as far as ultimate control of the Ibadan masses was concerned. The second-generation educated elite in Ibadan were yet to achieve a firm control of the city's politics. But the days of the old guard were numbered because the new men were becoming more impatient and politically insatiable. Most of the individual members of the 1952 ICC/IPU Council later declared their personal allegiance to the Action Group. This gave the Regional Government formal control of the Council. Meanwhile the chiefs had no place in this new electoral process other than to persuade voters to support their candidates. This was the political climate of Ibadan when the Ibadan Tax Payers' Association, also known as the Mabolaje (Do Not Spoil Honour) was formed.

As its name implies the ITPA used the issue of taxation as its rallying point. This is given full treatment below as an example of how politically astute minds used issues of reform with which the populace disagreed as opportunities to bring themselves to public focus by manoeuvring popular feelings against their political opponents. The Mabolaje was a mass party whose politics bordered on populism.

1. K.W.J. Post and G.D. Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*. (Cambridge, London. 1973), p.120.

And, more than any of the previous and existing political groups, it brought the ordinary man in Ibadan face to face with partisan politics, ensuring his full participation in the political process. The Mabolaje initiated the masses to the exciting world of elections, party campaigns, party alliances and other associated practices.

Issues of Reform and the Rise of New Men

The emphasis here is not just on issues of political, economic and social reforms, but on how political entrepreneurs utilized these reforms, and the public response which accompanied them, as opportunities to rise to limelight and subsequently to elite status. The most volatile issues were tax and court reforms because they generated considerable furore in the community.

To understand the thrust and tenor of tax reforms, it is necessary, at this juncture, to briefly describe the old system of tax collection in Ibadan. Direct income tax was introduced in Ibadan by the colonial authorities in 1918. This was operated through the *Babaogun* system whereby each *Babaogun* was to collect taxes due from his followers. To make it easier, the *Babaogun* also enlisted the services of other chiefs and *Mogaji* under them to collect from their compound members. This was done during the cocoa season when people were believed to have plenty of cash. Tax collection was thus based on personal clientele - the general belief was that the chiefs, more than any other authority would know their followers intimately. A flat rate of seven shillings was levied. To encourage the chiefs to collect the taxes promptly and efficiently, a ten percent rebate was given them from the total amount collected from which the government took 30% to

50% with the rest going to the Council. Heads of trade guilds were also used to collect taxes from tradesmen and they were given the rebate.

This system of tax collection was fraught with many problems. Principal among such was the issue of evasion. Another problem was the ineffectiveness of collection due to the fact that lists of taxpayers were not revised periodically. This meant that dead names were not struck out while those of people who had attained the tax paying age were not added. The system thus became unjust. Again, several contingencies often stood in the way of tax collection with the result that effective collection was delayed in some years thus reducing the amount expected at the end of the tax season.¹

All these problems affected Council finance and bothered the administrative officers who began to look for ways of reforming the tax system. Tax matters were therefore crucial in several respects. One, the Native Authority needed to boost its revenue by adopting a more efficient system of tax collection which would solve the problem of evasion, ensure equitable and just assessment of citizens and do away with the old system of collection handled by the Chiefs and *Mogaji*. However, the Chiefs and *Mogaji* did not want the privilege of tax collection to be taken away from them. It was a very lucrative business. And despite the fact that the system was steeped in abuse and corruption, the chiefs did not mind as long as they were able to collect more tax and recruit additional payers. The more they collected, the more came to them by way of the ten percent

1. G.D. Jenkins, "Politics in Ibadan", Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Northwestern University, 1965, p.346.

rebate. Lastly, the masses were uncomfortable about any reform that might increase the amount of tax they paid.

In 1952, tax collection was reorganized on a territorial basis. The electoral wards which the Hayley Reform Committee set up for Council elections became the new tax areas. This took tax collection from the hands of the junior chiefs and *Mogaji*. Another major step taken to reform the tax system was the idea of tenement rate suggested by the different Councils. But this never fully materialised because of the political sentiments associated with it.

Members of the elite who were also in the Council generally played round the issue of the property tax in a most careful way so as to retain their ascendancy in society. For instance, in 1952 when the new Council brought the idea up for discussion it received very little support from the Councillors. This was because most of them who wanted to stand for re-election at the next local polls (in 1954) realised that supporting such reforms would make them unpopular and discredit them before the masses thus spoiling their chances for a comeback. Moreover, many of the Councillors who owned modern houses believed that such houses would attract heavier taxes than they could afford. Subsequent attempts to revisit the tenement rate in 1958 and 1963 only received lip service from Councillors. Besides, the traditional elites was strongly against the tax proposals. The Olubadan and his chiefs wrongly believed that the proposed property tax would be extended to land, both communal and individual. The masses too shared these fears that a land tax would be the thin end of the wedge to alienate them from their land. If they were to maintain their inalienable rights to land, they must kick

against such property tax. Therefore, the entire population never wholeheartedly supported tax reforms in any form.

But political entrepreneurs such as Adegoke Adelabu saw in this general fear of tax reforms opportunities for personal socio-political advancement as long as they could effectively exploit and channel popular sentiments to their own advantage. In 1953, Adelabu formed the ITPA to protest changes in the tax system.¹ This group was also to be a local organ of the NCNC. But in the real sense, the ITPA was Adelabu's personal political instrument to mobilise public support and bring himself into limelight using the issue of taxation as a *causis belli*.² The association had a mass membership and it effectively organized the public to full participation in politics. It capitalised on the general fear of taxation and the resentment of the Mogaji to the withdrawal of their tax privileges.

Some of the foundation members of the ITPA included L. Ade Bello who had been involved in organizing several other groups³, S. Lana, S.L. Akano, Alfa Eleshinmeta, Yesufu Mogbonjubola and Buraimo Alao. However, majority of the members of the association were illiterate. The Association also attracted the Maiyegun League, a farmers' guild, led by Lawani Latorera which had been

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1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, June 29, 1953.
 2. This interpretation of Adelabu's intentions is also shared by Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*
 3. Such groups included the Oke-Badan Improvement Party, the Ibadan Welfare Association, the Community of Ibadan Citizen. He was also active in the Egbe Omo Ibile.

alienated from the Regional government because of cocoa plant cutting resumed in 1952.¹

In 1954, the Mabolaje (another name for the ITPA) was officially aligned with the NCNC thus becoming the NCNC-Mabolaje Grand Alliance, though locally it remained known simply as the Mabolaje. This was considered necessary to broaden the support base of the party in preparation for the March 1954 Council elections. Although the Mabolaje was made up of largely uneducated elements, the merger with the NCNC brought a few educated men such as A.M.F. Agbaje, R.O.A. Akinjide into the party. Others like A. Adisa and E. Fakayode were later to become prominent in the party. But overall command of Mabolaje's affairs remained in the hands of Adelabu who wanted to use the local scene as a springboard from which to launch to higher planes. To maintain his authority in the party, he packed its executive council with illiterate men some of whom had been foundation members of the ITPA.

Mogajis also played a vital role in the Mabolaje. As compound heads, they were useful in mobilising the support of their compound members. They all looked up to Adelabu as a hero of the Ibadan people who rose to champion their cause against the 'detestable' tax reforms, and for his earlier refusal to join the A.G. in 1951 which was seen as an attempt to remain true to the masses. To them, the

1. Government embarked on cutting of diseased cocoa trees in the late forties in order to eradicate the 'swollen shoot' infection, and this made it unpopular with the farmers. R. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*, (NOK Publishers, Enugu, 1963) p.296.

Action Group was synonymous with Awolowo who represented 'impudent native settlers' and the unpleasant reforms of the Western Regional Government. Adelabu took maximum advantage of all these sentiments.

The method of the Mabolaje was to turn ordinary local issues to political matters to be used in criticizing the regional government. Tax and Court reforms and the matter of allowing indigenes to trade on Lebanon Street were turned into political points on which its manifesto and propaganda were based during campaigns for the 1954 Council elections. We have already examined tax reforms while Chapter Seven of this study has addressed the issue of Lebanon Street, among other things. Let's now turn to the reaction of the Mabolaje to Court Reforms.

In 1953, before the Report of the Brooke Commission which looked into the affairs of Native Courts was made public, the British Resident in Ibadan, John Hayley sought to prepare the minds of Ibadan chiefs in advance by explaining the proposed reforms to them so that it would not come as a shock. The implementation of Brooke's recommendations would mean that the Ibadan Native Court of Appeal which served the whole Division would have to be reconstituted with a single judge assisted by traditional assessors. This was unlike the existing practice in which the most senior chiefs were judges with the Olubadan as President of the Court. The judge of the Appeal Court should be literate, of good repute, of sufficient age and standing to command respect and with a good

1. N.J. Brooke et. al., *Report of the Native Courts (Western Province) Commission of Inquiry*. (Printed by the Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, for the Government Printer, Lagos 1952).

understanding of customary law and English law. The Olubadan Igbintade who was not literate certainly did not possess all these qualities. The Ibadan idea of having at least one literate chief on each court panel was to be continued and extended to all other courts in the Division. The principle of separation of powers was also to be entrenched in the new judicial system, namely, that those who judged cases in the courts should not be the ones to make laws in the Council. This was a direct blow to the traditional combination of judicial and legislative powers by the Olubadan and Chiefs who also constituted the executive arm of government.¹

Reaction to these proposals came from various quarters - from senior chiefs who were also Council members, from the junior chiefs and *Mogaji*, and from interested groups in the city - but none was in total agreement with it. The most heated resistance to the proposals came from the Mabolaje.² The association presented the reforms not only as a plan to eliminate traditional chiefs and *Mogaji* from the Native Judiciary, but also as a means of abolishing native chieftaincies and the Native Court system. The position of the Mabolaje should be seen as nothing more than political propaganda in form of deliberate misrepresentations aimed at whipping up public emotion which the party could exploit to its political

1. The policy of separation of powers had earlier been suggested by the Ibadan Citizen's Committee in their memorandum to Butcher's Commission of Inquiry in November, 1950. K.D.L. Akinyele Papers. Box 62: Ibadan Native Administration" by the ICC. Nov. 22, 1950.

2. Other associations such as the Ibadan Band of Unity also opposed the proposed reforms. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Nov. 20, 1953.

advantage. Its claims were preposterous and grossly exaggerated.

Later in 1953, the Regional government announced the reforms, setting out in details the structure of the new Courts.¹ Among other things, all judges were to be literate with a Chief Judge who would also be in charge of the Appeal Court. The Otun Balogun, Chief I.B. Akinyele was appointed as Chief Judge. In the Appeal Court, he was to be assisted by two assessors to be appointed by the Resident. As Chief Judge, Akinyele was to advise the Resident on the appointment of all the other judges and their assessors. Even after winning Council elections in 1954, Adelabu as Mabolaje leader and as the new Council Chairman made last minute attempts to frustrate these reforms. In his argument, he pointed out that Chief Akinyele was an AG supporter who would not hesitate to appoint his party-men as judges and assessors.² Despite this and other criticisms, the new judges were duly sworn in and the new judicial system took off.

Meanwhile, Adelabu continued to rise politically. Due to the popular support it enjoyed, the Mabolaje emerged victorious in the 1954 Council elections and Adelabu was made Chairman. Further, NCNC victory in the November 1954 Federal elections elevated him to the position of a Federal legislator. From the House of Representatives he became a member of the central cabinet as Minister for Natural Resources and Social Services, an office he held concurrently with the

1. *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Oct. 19, 1953.

2. This made the proposed judges and Chief Akinyele to meet with the Senior District Officer on April 9, 1954 to discuss 'the threat contained in Mr. Adelabu's (inaugural) speech' to Council. K.D.L. Obisesan Papers. Dairy 1954. Entry for April 9.

Chairmanship of the Ibadan District Council. His rise in the NCNC was equally meteoric. In May 1955 he became the first Vice-President and later Chairman of the NCNC Western Working Committee, and First National Vice-President of the NCNC. His numerous activities in these capacities need not bother us here¹; but a pertinent question is - how far did Adelabu's success in national and regional politics affect his standing and status within the elite category in Ibadan?

Adelabu brought the political laurels which he had acquired both at the regional and national levels home. To the masses, he was an illustrious Ibadan son that could stand comparison with nationalists elsewhere. They were very proud of him. His external fame no doubt brought him acknowledgement at home. This acknowledgement bred more support for his party and earned him greater prestige. But if he had depended alone on his external fame to carve a place for him in the local elite circle he would have been disappointed. To earn respect among the masses as a true local hero, he identified with their aspirations, fears and petty day-to-day preoccupations, many of which he championed with unreserved vigour and commitment. The Ibadan masses were his primary constituency. He created himself the

'peculiar man of the masses' by walking round town bare-footed and by eating with 'the people' from the same dish... [He] does not consider himself as one of the detached elite, but as one of the illiterate masses whose only recommendation is 'this is my father-land'²

And by so doing, he 'stole' the hearts of the people. In his time, the masses knew

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1. For details on these, see Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*; Sklar, *op. cit.*
 2. *West Africa*, March 12, 1955.

of no other local leader. They 'idolized' him. It was this popular support and acknowledgement that transferred him into the class of the elite. Again, his electoral victories gave him a direct access to the decision-making circle of the local elite and great influence over the lives of others. But how representative of the Ibadan elite was Adelabu in his political career with special regards to his activities as leader of the Mabolaje?

The conduct of Adelabu as a local politician did not make him a typical representative of the old Ibadan political elite. His ideas and approach were quite different from those of the IPU/ICC. His deep involvement with the masses had no parallel in the annals of the IPU. Even Lawyer Akinloye, a contemporary politician who lived in the traditional core of the old city at Oje among the masses was not as popular as him. Besides, Adelabu was very astute. He championed the cause of the Mogaji and junior chiefs - who were particularly conservative in their demands - without appearing to be conservative himself. He was radical in his support of public opinion in that he rarely spoke against the narrow views of the masses which other members of the political elite did from time to time.

Throughout Nigeria he was admired for his militant nationalism. His colleagues in the nationalist movement respected him for his ideals; but the people of Ibadan loved him because he was the idiosyncratic personification of their traditional values and their cantankerous hostility to imposed reforms.¹

In his times, this kind of public support and acknowledgement created the esteem and honour which constituted the ultimate in social advancement.

1. Sklar, *op. cit.*, p.294.

Although Adelabu was not affluent, he had great control over his social environment, access to public facilities, and lived in an aura of charisma and goodwill. His involvement in political gatherings which ended up in riots and violence, and his association with assemblies declared unlawful made him a novel species in Ibadan although he was not necessarily more delinquent than his political contemporaries. He represented a new class of Ibadan politicians and even within that class, he was unique because his charisma and power over the masses were unequalled in Ibadan in his lifetime. His was a populist approach to politics and the charisma he evinced recalls the leadership 'magic' of Seriki Iyapo and Balogun Ajobo, both nineteenth-century figures in Ibadan history.¹ And just like those nineteenth-century characters had a tough time from their detractors, Adelabu did not enjoy an all-round support. His political opponents in the AG, though they admired his wit and boundless energy, saw him as uncouth, outspoken and very impertinent. He represented the dawn of a new era in politics which witnessed mass participation and he combined political sagacity with political entrepreneurship.

Adelabu's setbacks such as the Report of the Nicholson Commission of Inquiry which in 1955 placed responsibility for most of the Ibadan Council's misdeeds on him, resulting in the loss of his ministerial position and the dissolution of his Council in 1956, did not reduce the support the masses gave him. He was still a hero to the ordinary man. The loss of his position in the NCNC national executive also made no difference to the masses as long as he still championed

1. See Chapter One of this study for details on the careers of these two men.

their cause. This was probably why his untimely death in a motor accident in 1958 unleashed a very violent riot in Ibadan and its environs in which many people were reported killed.¹ The point being made is that the ideas, method and personality of Adelabu made him more popular than others in the elite cadre, and if public acknowledgement is a major confirmation of elite status, then Adelabu was an elite in a class of his own.

After his death, there was a prolonged leadership tussle in the Mabolaje which was exploited by the Regional A.G. government to entrench its political control in Ibadan and circumscribe the former's influence there. What followed was the disintegration of the Mabolaje. Adelabu's

unique presence had held together the disparate set of elements in the NCNC - Mabolaje Grand Alliance without ever making a viable machine or even an inheritable organization of them. There was... no one with sufficient ruthless determination to override the personal rivalries of the NCNC lawyers [Adisa, Agbaje, Fakayode etc.], to hold together the conglomeration of Maiyegun League leaders, dance groups, welfare societies and market women which he had temporarily aligned.²

But more important than Post and Jenkins' view quoted above is the fact that Adelabu's style unconsciously popularised a distinct culture in Ibadan modern politics - that of the charismatic leader who drew majority support from the masses. During the Second Republic in Nigeria, another politician, Busari Adalaku arose in Ibadan politics in Adelabu's style which appealed so much to the masses that they supported him despite the fact that there were more educated and

1. Sklar, *op. cit.*, p.303' Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.428.

2. Post and Jenkins, *op. cit.*

'polished' men in his party - the Unity Party of Nigeria (Ibadan branch) - who could have delivered the same political goods more promptly.

Party Politics and Chieftaincy Politics

Many of the reforms examined above affected the status of the chiefs. While Court reforms denied them of their traditional judicial duties, the removal of their tax privileges dealt a nasty blow to them. Moreover, the scheme of things under the new electoral process did not give any opportunity for chiefs to play an active and direct role in party politics. Most of Ibadan chiefs were uneducated. Their only qualifications were age, kinship ties and tradition which were of little relevance in the new dispensation. Even if they were educated, it would be an intolerable blow to their dignity for a chief to contest and lose an election, so they stayed out of partisan politics. But at every election, their ability to persuade voters remained an important but diminishing factor. They, however, knew that for them to remain relevant and exercise whatever little power they still had, they had to give their support to the government in power. The most interesting case was when the chiefs were faced with the dilemma of trying to please the party in power in Council and another at the regional level both at the same time. The result of this was the clash of chieftaincy politics and party politics as was the case between 1952-1956.¹

The Olubadan that reigned during this period was Igbintade Apete (1952-1955) and he openly supported the NCNC. As an aged and feeble man, he was

1. The 1952-54 Council was controlled by IPU/ICC men who sympathised with the A.G. regional government, while the 1954-56 Council was directed by NCNC stalwarts.

easily manipulated by Adelabu.¹ In September 1953, Igbintade was alleged to have chaired a meeting of the NCNC at Mapo Hall. He was consequently reprimanded by the Councillors in the Ibadan Native Authority Reformed Council, and he was later said to have issued an official statement repudiating the NCNC.² Again, in February 1954, a 'motion of censure' on the Olubadan was passed in the Council because he was alleged to have been sending his messengers to accompany Adelabu on his electioneering campaigns.³ This allegation was however dismissed by Adelabu as the handiwork of some AG. stalwarts.⁴ One could see in the above allegation the undignifying position in which Olubadan Igbintade had put himself by indiscreetly supporting a political party openly. But this was not the end of the matter. The Olubadan continued to 'support' the NCNC throughout the March 1954 Council elections, and this made the *Nigerian Tribune* to ceaselessly pour invectives on him. In the March 23, 1954 issue of the newspaper, a correspondent wrote:

The Olubadan has shown himself beyond all reasonable doubts that he is an enemy of progress, that he prefers being the President of a political party than [sic] being the Olubadan over all Ibadans, at home and abroad, for, at present, he favours a section of the community as against the other.

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1. Igbintade was 87 years old in 1952.
 2. N.A.I. Iba. Div. 1/1 File 2642/S.3, p.125, "Petition from the Ibadan NCNC Grand Alliance to the Minister of Local Government, Lieutenant Governor, Western Provinces, Senior Resident, Ibadan and Senior District Officer, Ibadan for the Dissolution of the Ibadan Native Authority Council" April, 1954.
 3. *The Nigerian Tribune*, February 2, 1954, an unsigned article captioned "Another Crisis - Adelabu Campaigns with Olubadan's messengers.
 4. N.A.I. Iba. Div. 1/1 File 2642/S. p.114 Adelabu's Rejoinder (Unpublished) to the above article, sent to the District Officer, Ibadan. February 4, 1954.

This, no doubt, was rude language which no 'commoner' could have dared to employ against the military chiefs of the nineteenth century. Then, nobody in the society, save the military elite could criticise the Baale; and they could do this because of their own political significance. But now, 'commoners' could heap abuses on the ruler on the pages of a newspaper because of party politics with absolute impunity. Such an act was symptomatic of the collapse of the respect which the Olubadan inspired as the ruler. It represented not only a drastic fall in the esteem of the traditional elite but also the aggressive, vindictive and intolerant manner in which partisan politics was conducted locally in Ibadan. One must not forget to point out here that *The Nigerian Tribune* was the mouthpiece of the Action Group.

In so far as politicians could go to the extent of showing gross disrespect to a traditional ruler as epitomised in the case cited above, nothing stopped them, once they had the power, from actually tampering with the office and position of the ruler that would not toe their line. A case to illustrate this was the appointment of a new Olubadan to succeed Igbintade. Igbintade died on February 8, 1955 and three days later, when the senior chiefs met to discuss his successor, Chief I.B. Akinyele, the Balogun and Chief B. Akinyo, the Osi Balogun were nominated. The following day, Chief Akinyele was chosen by the senior chiefs (who also constituted the kingmakers) to succeed Igbintade because Akinyele was senior to Akinyo in the Balogun line of the chieftaincy hierarchy.¹ One should add here that

1. Succession to the Olubadanship was, and is still by promotion in order of seniority. The Balogun line and the Olubadan line succeed alternatively. The late Igbintade was from the Olubadan line.

Akinyo was the candidate of Adelabu who was then Chairman of Council.¹

Having chosen Akinyele, the kingmakers sent a letter to the Resident, Mr. Murphy, intimating him of their choice. The Resident then indiscreetly gave a copy of the notice of approval to Adelabu 'as a matter of courtesy'². But surprisingly, Adelabu decided to instal Akinyo as Olubadan at Ojaaba market at 6.00 p.m. on February 12. He did this amidst rioting and turmoil without the knowledge of a vast majority of the people of Ibadan and District. On the following day, the Resident announced that government recognition of Akinyele was "final, irrevocable and in accordance with the law. Any other installation is bogus and anybody taking part in it exposes himself to the risk of prosecution."³ On February 18, Akinyele was duly installed as the Olubadan and on March 3, Akinyo apologised and paid homage.⁴

From the above incident, one could see the impudence of politicians - Adelabu and his lieutenants - in attempting to instal a ruler of their choice. Adelabu was only the Chairman of Council. Constitutionally, he had no right to interfere the way he did in the issue because he was not a kingmaker. Even a single kingmaker could not unilaterally instal a king. The implication of Adelabu's

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1. J.A. Ayorinde, *Igbesi Aiye Oba Akinyele*, (Oxford University Press, Ibadan. 1974) pp.30-31.
 2. N.A.I., CE/N2. E.W.J. Nicholson, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Administration of the Ibadan District Council. 1955, p.5.
 3. *Ibid.*
 4. Ayorinde, *op. cit.*, p.35.

action was that if he could summon enough guts to attempt to instal an Olubadan, he would not scruple to depose a reigning one if he deemed it necessary. In fact, this was his plan for Olubadan Akinyele in 1955 when a motion was passed in the NCNC - dominated Council that for peace to reign during the inquiry that E.W.J. Nicholson was to conduct into the affairs of the Council the Olubadan should be suspended.¹

One wonders why it was the Olubadan who was only the ceremonial President of the IDC that should be tipped for suspension and not the boisterous chairman of the Council who also headed all the ten committees of Council. According to J.A. Ayorinde,² the Ibadan NCNC members in the Council wanted to avenge the deposition of the Alafin of Oyo who was a staunch supporter of the NCNC by the Western Region Government controlled by the A.G. This was why they wanted to extract their pound of flesh in the deposition of Olubadan Akinyele who, incidentally, was a supporter of the AG.

Whatever was the case, the point is that the clash of chieftaincy politics and party politics brought a lot of ridicule and dimmution of status to the traditional elite who found out, to their great dismay, that the remaining vestiges of authority they still possessed were being taken over by politicians who constituted the newbreed, second-generation, educated elite in Ibadan.

Between Tradition and Modernity: Bridges of Continuity

Despite all the attacks of politicians on the traditional chieftaincy structure, it is

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1. Ayorinde, *op. cit.*, p.43. This motion was moved by Y.L. Ladoja and seconded by J. Bamidele, both of the NCNC.
 2. Ayorinde, *op. cit.*, pp.41-43.

interesting to note that the system did not collapse. It responded in a most intriguing way to the challenge posed by party politics, among other factors, to its continued existence. The resilience it demonstrated owed much to its heterogeneity which had earlier appeared to be a disadvantage.

Before Christianity became popular in Ibadan, the traditional elite was already admitting Muslim chiefs into its hierarchy. Many of the chiefs who identified with Islam were not necessarily literate in Arabic nor pious Muslims. But identification with Christianity appeared to have demanded more from them especially in terms of the acquisition of literary skill however elementary it might be. The first Christian chief was Simon Orukotan who was made *Maye Baale* during the time of *Baale Situ* (1914-1925). Other Christian candidates were admitted into the traditional structure in the 1930s. These new men had Western education which the 'old' chiefs lacked. This multiple heritage of the ruling elite, while it engendered occasional clashes, also in a way ensured continuity by accommodating change within its ranks. The 'old' chiefs, because of their numerical preponderance in the chieftaincy hierarchy, maintained tradition while making the best use of the modern skills of the new men.

During the decolonization period when the traditional structure received such severe battering from modern politicians, its essence did not crumble. This was because some of the members of the traditional elite were themselves familiar with the ways and language of the modern politicians. This is where the career of I.B. Akinyele comes in. Isaac Babalola Akinyele was a member of the IPU and had been nominated as literate Councillor together with J.O. Aboderin into the Native Authority Council in 1933. He was given the title of *Lagunna Balogun* in

1935 and thereby admitted into the traditional chieftaincy hierarchy. His presence in the traditional hierarchy was significant in many respects. Himself and J.O. Aboderin, who also was made Lagunna Baale in the same year represented the reappearance of Christian presence in the hierarchy after the death of Chief Simon Orukotan in 1923. These men were also to be carriers of the influence of Western education into the traditional structure. By accommodating such men, the traditional structure thus put itself in tune with 'modern' developments, whether political, or socio-economic as long as such were predicated on the enlightenment attributable to Western civilization.

Moreover, I.B. Akinyele was a supporter of the A.G. when it got to Ibadan in the 1950s. This political affiliation acquainted him, a traditional chief, with the methods and 'rules' of decolonization politics both at the regional and national levels. And as those regional rivalries were being transposed unto the local scene, it now behoved individuals like himself in the chieftaincy structure to defend the traditional framework which had accommodated so many changes and shades of opinions, from the onslaught of the partisans.

Notwithstanding that he was an educated elite and Christian - these were still in the minority among the traditional chiefs in the 1950s - Akinyele stoutly accommodated traditional views and some of its demands. As a senior chief, he was noted for his defence of tradition such that his fellow chiefs, most of whom were illiterate, could easily identify with and support him. An illustration of this attitude was when Akinyele, as Chief Judge, following the implementation of the 1953 regional judicial reforms, made gallant concessions to his fellow chiefs who were not made judges. He understood the mood of the period, especially the

feelings of the Senior Chiefs that were so denied. He appreciated the fact that to soothe the frayed nerves of the chiefs something had to be done to cushion the adverse effects and unpleasant implication of the Court reforms on them. This was why he proposed that the Senior Chiefs whose names he had not listed as assessors and who did not qualify as judges should be paid a sum in compensation for the court allowance they had been drawing before. He was applauded by the chiefs who saw him as a defender of tradition. As far as the chiefs were concerned, if they could not get the office, they would make do with the perquisites.

One may want to question the propriety of this arrangement. Why should the chiefs be remunerated for doing nothing? The allowance to be given to them should not be seen in terms of its pecuniary value but as a pragmatic instrument to be used in reducing friction and dissipating accumulated grievances. Besides, Akinyele's magnanimity in the above case is another way of assuring the chiefs that they were still crucial to the survival of tradition. Akinyele, as Chief Judge of the Customary Courts represented the authority of the Regional government while at the same time he put himself in the good books of the traditional elite by upholding their integrity.

Earlier in 1953, when his Christian convictions would not permit him to accept custody of the Ibadan War ensign (in the form of a staff) during his installation as Balogun, he decided to make some concessions. Rather than rejecting the staff altogether, he made a silver substitute which he would not have to 'appease' with traditional religious rites periodically.¹ Thus, he refused to

1. Ayorinde, *op. cit.*, p.14.

partake in the unchristian act of sacrificing to the staff but retained the symbol of tradition by accommodating a substitute.

Others like J.O. Aboderin, J.L. Ogunsola, D.T. Akinbiyi etc. also contributed much to the survival of the traditional framework of chieftaincy politics. They ensured that the traditional fabric of the elite category was not torn even in the heat of partisan politics. They used their authority and positions as senior chiefs and ultimately as Olubadan (Akinyele, Akinbiyi), their network of family relationship and their connections with the Regional Government to protect the interest and integrity of the traditional institution. They thus constituted veritable bridges between tradition and modernity, ensuring that the Olubadan remained the rallying point of the whole elite group in the city.

Partisan Politics within the Local Ethos

A significant observation about party politics in Ibadan is that it was largely carried out within the ethos of traditional political and clientage processes. This buttresses the point made above concerning the persistence of 'tradition' in Ibadan politics. This persistence was evident in several aspects of socio-political interaction among the populace.

One was in the enhancement of individual status which usually followed an electoral success and the responsibilities attached to it. A new class of 'honourables', 'councillors' and 'ministers' emerged. All these titles tended to boost the image and political standing of the individuals concerned. Some of them had an official salary plus other allowances all of which increased their economic power. A few like Hon. Adelabu who was a Federal Minister had an official

apartment in Lagos, official car with allowances for maintaining them in addition to his £3200 (three thousand two hundred pounds) salary per annum. This new class of office holders were held in high esteem. Even Councillors were treated with a great deal of respect in their respective constituencies as they were the mouthpieces of those whom they represented.

The responsibilities that were linked with such enhanced status were reminiscent of traditional demands made on the *olola* in pre-colonial times. A lot of hangers-on and dependants attached themselves to the 'honourable'. To be considered a 'good' man, he had to be generous, striving to meet their petty demands which might prove a heavy burden for his income. Political supporters also expected to be entertained lavishly by the 'honourable'. The case of the Councillor whose allowances did not total £100 (one hundred pounds) a year in the 1950s was more serious. He was expected to pay fines, doctors' fees and other charges on behalf of members of his constituency, and even make small loans to them.

Because these demands were greatly in excess of the incomes of the political figures, they resorted to taking 'gifts' of all sorts which they glibly regarded as the perquisites of their office. Some of these 'gifts' could be incriminatory as was the case of Adelabu whom the Nicholson Commission found to be guilty of several acts of corruption.¹ While this could be said to be an indictment on the morality of the new class, it could also be seen as a natural response to the situation in which they found themselves.

1. Nicholson's 'Report', *op. cit.*, p.129.

However, this was not peculiar to Ibadan. It was a general trend among all categories of the Nigerian elite. Commenting on the reasons some public figures engaged in corruption and what he calls 'kleptocracy' or institutionalised robbery, Segun Osoba writes:

The financial demands on them [members of the elite] from members of their external families in form of the school fees of the children of indigent relatives, the housing, feeding and even clothing of poor or invalid relations, along with, in the case of politicians, the exactions of local men of influence in their constituencies, all meant that many members of the elite, with the best intentions in the world could not live in style on their legitimate income. And living in style was clearly one of the main distinguishing features of the top Nigerian elite.¹

Furthermore, patron-client ties provided much of the fabric for Ibadan politics. Patronage flowed along personal networks based on kinship (membership of the same compound), marriage, old school ties, and religious affiliations. The last two were used by the Christian elite to mobilise support. But for the newbreed, second-generation elite of the likes of Adelabu, kinship, marriage, community ties and membership of the same compounds were more important networks for mobilizing support from below. Those below used the same networks as channels to lobby for diverse kinds of assistance from patrons higher up in the hierarchy. This clientage continued to act as a medium for political participation at the local level.

In addition, the use of personal charisma and popularity characterized the Ibadan political scene. These twin elements, among other things, had been

1. S. Osoba, "The Nigerian Power Elite" in P.C. Gutkind and PL. Waterman (eds.), *African Social Studies*. (Heinemann, London, 1977), p.379.

instrumental to the rise of some of the nineteenth-century military elite.¹ Modern politicians also considered it pragmatic to create a favourable opinion climate, in the traditional manner, for themselves to operate in. The political career of Adegoke Adelabu is a case in point. Adelabu's method of mobilising the masses could also be a function of his 'induction' under Bello Abasi; whose instrument - the Egbe Omo Ibile - was the illiterate population. To effectively arouse the people who were largely uninterested in regional and national issues contained in the newspapers, Adelabu had to come to their level and identify with local issues which concerned them. Another political leader with the popular appeal was Adeoye Adisa who contended with A.M.F. Agbaje after Adelabu's death for the leadership of the Mabolaje.

However, there were other elements in the conduct of party-politics in Ibadan which could not be readily attributed to traditional antecedents. Such were part of the inventions of modernity in the conduct of elections, for instance. Firstly, money was used as a vital key in election campaigns especially by A.G. candidates who regarded theirs as the party of the rich.² Election expenses were always very high. Money and other material incentives were reportedly used by both the AG and the NCNC to gain the support of some strategic individuals. Secondly, the factor of shifting loyalty, popularly known as 'cross-carpetting' became endemic on the Ibadan political scene and this demonstrated the uncertain nature of 'modern' politics. We have seen the case of IPP legislators who moved

1. See Chapter One for the Careers of Seriki Iyapo and Balogun Ajobo.

2. Sklar, *op. cit.*, pp.312-313.

to the AG and NCNC camps in 1951 after their initial resolution to remain within their own party. Again, with the death of Adelabu, A.M.F. Agbaje led other NCNC members of the Ibadan Council into the AG in 1961.¹ And in 1962, A.M.A. Akinloye, Chairman of Council, led other AG Councillors to the new United People's Party (UPP) formed by S.L. Akintola, a former lieutenant of Awolowo in the AG.

Lastly, there was the element of violence in Ibadan politics. The intolerance of the politicians and their lack of control over the mob created violent scenes during many electioneering campaigns. And as the Nigerian experience showed, this was not restricted to the local scenes; it permeated the regional level culminating in the 1964 crisis in the Western Region. But despite the political novelties introduced by the practice of the new electoral system, partisan politics and the combative spirit which accompanied it was situated within the background of traditional clientage processes from which it borrowed some insight.

Summary

The decolonization period saw the incorporation of local politics into the more intricate web of regional/national politics. This meant that there was a multiplicity of rivalries at the local scene which thoroughly threatened the traditional framework of chieftaincy politics. The reforms instituted by the regional government also provided opportunities for the rise of new men into the elite cadre adding to the variety of the category. Political office holders now constituted a

1. Agbaje rejoined the NCNC in November, 1962.

crucial section of the decision making machinery which affected the lives of the entire populace. But despite all these intrusions, the traditional structure of Ibadan politics did not collapse. Men like Akinyele bridged the gap between tradition and modernity, ensuring continuity in the elite framework despite the overwhelming forces of change which came against it. Moreover, their task was made easier by the fact that political competition and seeking of support by partisans was carried on with the spirit of the traditional mobilization and clientage system.

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CONCLUSION

THE IBADAN ELITE: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

In the light of the foregoing analysis of the Ibadan situation made through a survey of some crucial themes, it is necessary to now attempt a definition of the elite in the city.

Before the mid-nineteenth century, the elite in Ibadan was made up solely of the military. But with the passage of time new entrants were allowed and adaptations made in the elite cadre. This traditional elite included warriors like Ibikunle, Aleshinloye, Iba Oluyole, Ogunmola, Dada Opadere, Oderinlo, Latoosa etc. They distanced themselves from monarchy and stressed republicanism. There was an open society which emphasised merit and fostered social mobility. Authority was collectively wielded but prominent chiefs enjoyed great prestige.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the war chiefs started to abandon traditional religion and embrace Islam. They saw in the new religion a form of 'enlightenment' which lacked the subservience of the white man's religion. Thus by 1893, the elite had been transformed into a traditional/muslim elite with a military background. Besides, valour in war was no longer the only criterion for elite membership though it remained a principal one. Sons of past warriors were made *mogaji* to immortalise their fathers' names and to institutionalise the succession system within the leading families (military compounds) rather than make it open to all and sundry. All these were in addition to the new identity provided by Islam.

With Islam as a source of complementary values, the elite confronted colonialism in the twentieth century (precisely from 1893 onwards) and, though change was forced on it, it was able to control it. Colonialism, no doubt, considerably reduced the power of the elite and circumscribed its authority. Besides, Christianity and Western education threw up newly-educated men who desired power within the context of traditional council politics. This was the situation up till around the late 1940s. The factor of entrepreneurship also brought affluent men and women into public focus. The likes of Adebisi Giwa and Salami Agbaje aspired to elite status and membership of the local decision-making circle. Like the educated elite, these new individuals were accommodated within the traditional chieftaincy hierarchy which already had a preponderance of illiterate Muslim incumbents. Thus, to an extent, the traditional framework of the Ibadan elite remained intact. Occasional ripples occurred due to clashes of interest of its component units, but there was no rupture.

The greatest challenge to the traditional elite structure, however, came from the factor of partisan politics. Party politics subjected local power to regional and national politics by importing extra local rivalries to the Ibadan scene. Moreover, the new electoral process introduced in the decolonization period disregarded the traditional structure, while politicians openly antagonized the chiefs and ultimately the tradition which they represented. But it was neither a mortal contest nor a one-sided assault. Even aspiring and successful politicians needed local support from the masses who have remained loyal to the Olubadan and the traditional framework. This has ensured continuity in the elite psyche despite the great winds of change blowing against it.

The most notable bridge of continuity between tradition and modernity in the elite outlook was provided by the careers of men like I.B. Akinyele, J.L. Ogunsola and D.T. Akinbiyi. They got into the chieftaincy hierarchy as members of the educated elite and subsequently became integrated into the traditional elite structure. They thus effected a balance between tradition and modernity within the elite category. They used their wider connections to protect and defend traditional institutions while at the same time curbing the 'excesses' of traditional demands. Such men were clearly in the minority in the traditional hierarchy, but their influence has been tremendous as stabilizers and political tranquilizers. Ogunsola died as Otun Olubadan in 1964 but Akinyele rose to become the first Christian Olubadan in 1955-1964. Akinbiyi became the second Christian Olubadan in 1977-1982 (his tenure falls outside our period).¹ The tenures of such men have been among the most notable and remarkable in Ibadan.

This study has demonstrated the resilience of the traditional elite structure in the face of traumatic and provocative changes. Rather than collapse, the framework of traditional chieftaincy politics held on, and remained the rallying point of the elite. The Olubadan has thus remained in direct line of continuity. All the new entrants into the elite category, viz, the politicians, commercial, religions and educated elite, have expanded and transformed its structure without destroying its continuity.

The point here is that dynamism within the elite category is a function of its

1. The third Christian Olubadan is the present incumbent, Oba Emmanuel Adegboyega Adeyemo, Operinde I, who became king in 1994.

adaptation to regular changes. A social unit, such as an elite, that does not respond to changes will atrophy; its conservatism will be its major undoing. On the other hand an overdose of traumatic and drastic changes could lead to a social rupture and loss of identity. Within the elite category in Ibadan, a remarkable balance was maintained between change and continuity - tradition and modernity - which produced the interesting transformation that is here described.

This, in a sense, is what is often reflected, albeit roughly and rather in a demeaning way, when outsiders speak of Ibadan as a 'big village'. 'Big', indeed because of its large geographical size and teeming population, and 'village', not because of a communalistic ethos, but because the traditional element of deference to chiefly authority and influence has remained intact among the indigenous core of the population. The wide network and coverage of the chieftaincies have also made it pertinent for most, if not all of the indigenous population to be committed to the continued survival and 'sanctity' of the traditional system. The fierce competition that still characterises the admission of *Mogajis* into the chieftaincy hierarchy is also a testimony to the continued importance attached to the traditional chieftaincy structure by the local populace.

The centrality of the ruling elite among other categories of the elite has been brought out in this study. The ruling or governing elite (who actually wielded political power and made political decisions) were the most prestigious and most eminent in the society. That was why members of the educated elite and commercial elite sought an entrance into that category. Even some elite members who were already prominent in the religious sphere still sought to be recognized as part of the 'ruling elite'. Hence the desire for chieftaincy titles among ambitious

men. And when the traditional chieftaincy hierarchy could no longer accommodate aspirants who did not belong to any of the recognized chiefly families, an honorary line of titles was created in the 1950s by Olubadan Igbintade. Honorary in the sense that appointees did not compete for promotion. The most senior title of the line, Aare of Ibadanland was then conferred on Bishop Akinyele in May 1953. This represented an adaptation of the traditional chieftaincy system to the changing times.

Furthermore, as a social unit, the elite constituted positive agents of development. Although they had their uncomplementary aspects too, such as seeking their own group interest above society interest, the leadership role they played in mobilizing the masses for socio-political action has to be acknowledged. They have been significant in pushing the society forward.

Beyond 1966

The military menace in Nigeria has not allowed party-politics to flourish - this is another arena in which the local and national elites would have demonstrated their genius. The Second Republic which lasted from 1979-1983 before it was disrupted by the military saw such Ibadan men as Chief A.M.A. Akinloye, R.O.A. Akinjide, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, Alhaji Busari Adelakun etc. in the fore of national and local politics. For instance, the political method of Busari Adelakun, as mentioned earlier, recalled the idiosyncracies of Adegoke Adelabu 'Penkelemesi', especially his identification with the masses and his resultant mass appeal. Adelakun, locally known as 'Eruobodo'¹ by his supporters, associated

1. This means 'the river fears no one'.

closely with the illiterate populace even at the risk of being labelled 'crude, rough and unrefined' by his opponents. A man of little education, he lacked Adelabu's intellectual inclination and erudition, but surpassed him in political aggression and intrigues. The socio-political role that he played together with his compeers, though not enviable in terms of its ethical implication, was a product of the milieu which nurtured ethnic politics, favouritism, corruption, electoral malpractices, violence and large-scale fraud.

The clamp on political activities by the national military government restricted the spheres of operation of the elite to the social, economic, and religious. A lot have sought advancement and acknowledgement via the religious platform e.g. Alhaji Azeez Arisekola Alao (Aare Musulumi of Yorubaland), Mohammed Ajiroba (a.k.a. Sat Guru Maharaji - a mystic and occult master) etc. Others have intensified their economic activities making a name for themselves in the process and amassing immense wealth. In this category were Alhaji (Dr.) Mufutau Lanahun, Chief Kola Daisi, Chief N.O. Idowu, Chief Bode Akindele, Chief (Mrs) Sulia Adedeji, Chief (Mrs) Joko Ayoade, Chief Layi Balogun etc. A few like Chief Layi Oshunkunle have continued to champion the cause of education especially in Ibadan rural areas.

Political appointments in government (local, state or national) have also fulfilled the elite's quest for power. With the increase in educational attainments of individuals, there was the growth of the bureaucratic class made up of senior civil servants. Altogether, Commissioners, Director Generals, Local Government bosses and Chairmen of Public Boards and Government Parastatals make up a yet

newer elite with names like Chief Otiti, Chief (Dr.) Dejo Raimi, Chief Oyetunji Bello, T. Akinyele etc. topping the list.

A notable development in the post 1966 Ibadan elite is the general desire for the acquisition of chieftaincy titles. This was not a novel development as this study has demonstrated, but it gained tremendous proportions in the period after 1966. The clamp on politics made the elite to seek other means of promoting themselves. Having acquired considerable prestige in economic, religious and educational circles, and even in the civil service, they still desired a chieftaincy title as a crown of their achievements in identification with the traditional structure. The explanation for this could partly be found in the continued relevance and elasticity of the traditional structure in Ibadan to socio-political advancement. The traditional structure has been fruitful as an agency of individual socio-political aggrandisement. It has also operated as a showpiece for the wider society of the 'talents' available in the local community since its membership was not strictly conditioned by kinship and other ascriptive standards.

There is also the psychological aspect of regarding individuals with no titles before their names as nonentities. Thus, for instance, even some University dons who have their chains of degrees to be proud of, have also joined the scramble for the acquisition of chieftaincy titles. Another reason for this development could also be found in the fact that traditional chiefs are believed to be closest to the grassroots over which they wielded prestige. If the new elite could not pretend to the powers of the traditional chiefs, they at least consoled themselves with the externalia of office provided by honorary chieftaincy titles.

There has thus been a great increase in honorary chieftaincies as numerous individuals sought for ways of making themselves popular with the masses and lending aura to their status. The Olubadan Yesufu Oloyede Asanike (1983-1993) really met the new men on their terms by elongating the chieftaincy lines of Olubadan, Balogun, Iyalode and Seriki through the addition of new titles to them. He also created Baaleships for several parts of the municipality, hence we have Baale Bodija, Baale Ojoo, Baale Ikolaba, Baale Orogun, Sarkin Sabo, Sarkin Sasa, etc. This was in addition to creating more honorary titles like the Bashorun which he conferred on M.K.O. Abiola, a popular industrialist, non-indigene of Ibadan.¹ The proliferation of honorary titles is also noticeable in other parts of Yorubaland and in the country at large. Despite renewed efforts by the Federal and state governments to push traditional chiefs to a dark corner through successive Local Government reforms, and by allowing them no significant role in the military regimes, the different classes of the elite have unconsciously continued to emphasise their relevance and potentials through their enthusiastic patronage of the traditional structure.

Meanwhile, the daily struggle for social advancement continues unabated at the local level in Ibadan. Traders and other businessmen strive to excel in their chosen fields, likewise their contemporaries in other fields. In fact, socio-political challenges are seen as creating opportunities for individuals to prove their mettle. The colonial period has gone with its socio-political and economic challenges.

1. In fact, a modest title of Bashorun Parakoyi (i.e. head of the guild of traders) transformed by usage into plain Bashorun (i.e. of the whole community).

Other crucial developments followed in its wake.

More will still come as such are part of the workings of human societies. And as these challenges come in various forms, Ibadan men and women will continue to rise up, seeking for ways of advancing and distinguishing themselves. Old elites die, new elites are formed, and the elite tradition continues among a people who believe that *Olá* does not dwell exclusively in one place - *Olaosebikan*.

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APPENDIX AIBADAN AGREEMENT OF 1893

AGREEMENT made at Ibadan this 15th day of August, 1893, between His Excellency George Chardin Denton, Esq., Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Acting-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Lagos, for and on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, her heirs and successors on the one part, and the undersigned Bale and Authorities of Ibadan, for and on behalf of their heirs and of the people of Ibadan on the other part.

We, the undersigned Bale and Authorities of Ibadan on behalf of ourselves and of the people of Ibadan, do hereby agree and declare as follows:-

1. That the general administration of the internal affairs of the following Yoruba towns, viz: Iwo, Ede, Osogbo, Ikirun, Ogbomoso, Ejigbo and Iseyin and in all countries in the so-called Ekun Otun, Ekun Osi, is vested in the general government of Ibadan and the local authorities of the said towns act in harmony with and are subject to Ibadan notwithstanding that the Alafin is recognised as the King and Head of Yoruba-land.
2. That we fully recognise all the provisions of the Treaty dated the 3rd February, 1893, made at Oyo between His Excellency Sir Gilbert Thomas Carter, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, the Companion of the Most Distinguished Order, on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Alafin of Oyo as Head of Yoruba-land.
3. That we fully agree to carry out within the territory of Ibadan all the provisions of the said Treaty.
4. That we further agree in amplification of the said Treaty on our own behalf to the following terms and conditions:-
 - First. That we will use every effort to secure the free passage of all persons coming through Ibadan either from the interior to Lagos, or from Lagos to the interior, and we promise to afford protection to persons and property so passing.
 - Second. That for the purpose of better securing the performance of the said Treaty of the 3rd February, 1893, and of this agreement, we do hereby agree to receive at Ibadan such European officers and such a force of the Lagos constabulary as the Governor shall from time to time deem necessary for the said purpose and for

securing to use the benefits of the said Treaty and Agreement; and we also agree to provide land for the occupation of such officers and force.

Third. We further agree, upon the request of the Government of Lagos, to provide land for the construction and maintenance of a railway through our territory, should the construction of such a railway be determined upon, and to accept for such land such compensation, if any, as shall be agreed upon between the parties hereto or between the authorities of Ibadan and the persons undertaking the construction of such railway.

5. And we do finally agree that all disputes which may arise under or in reference to this Agreement shall be enquired into and adjusted by two arbitrators, the one to be appointed by the Governor of Lagos for the time being, the other by the Bale and authorities of Ibadan, and in any case where the arbitrators so appointed shall not agree the matter in dispute shall be referred to the Governor of Lagos whose decision shall be final.

Done at Ibadan this Fifteenth day of August, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Three.

GEORGE CHARDIN DENTON, C.M.G., Acting Governor.

FIJABI, the Bale	x
OSUNTOKI, the Otun Bale	x
FAJINMI, the Osi Bale	x
AKINTOLA, the Balogun, by his representative, OYENIYI	x
BABALOLA, the Otun Balogun	x
KONGI, the Osi Balogun	x
SUNMONU APAMPA, the Asipa	x
OGUNDIPO, the Seriki	x (their marks)

Signed in the presence of:

G.B. HADDON-SMITH, Acting Inspector General, Lagos Constabulary
W.R. HENDERSON, Acting Travelling Commissioner
D.W. STEWART, Capt., Asst. Inspector, Lagos Constabulary

We, the undersigned, do swear that we have truly and honestly interpreted the terms of the foregoing Agreement to the contracting parties in the Yoruba language.

JOHN A. WILLIAMS, Clerk to Travelling Commissioner
C.J.P. BOYLE, Clerk and Interpreter

Participants in and witnesses to the Agreement:

LANLATU, the Iyalode	x
MOSADERIN, the Ekerin	x
OGUNGBESAN, the Ekarun	x
OBISESAN, the Agbakin	x
TANIPEYI, the Maye	x
AKINTUNDE, the Ekefa	x
SALAKO, the Are Alasa	x
BAMGBEGBIN, the Areagoro	x
ENIMOWU, the Abese	x
OLAIFA, the Asaju	x
OMOSANYA, the Otun Seriki	x
AINA FAGBEMI, the Osi Seriki	x
EWEJE, the Sarumi, by his representative ALAWO	x
DADA OJO, the Ekerin Seriki	x (their marks)

Signed in our presence,

JOHN A. WILLIAMS, Clerk to Travelling Commissioner
C.J.P. BOYLE, Clerk and Interpreter.

APPENDIX BA. OBISESAN TO T.L. OYESINA

18/5/38

My dear Oyesina,

Thank you ever so much for your favour which came to hand this morning. As the month is running to a close I ask that the boy Moses Obisesan be allowed to start his class tuition from June 1st to pay the fee of 20/-.

II. I don't blame you at all for being accessible for service to certain leaders of I.P.A., but I challenge you seriously as one well informed in the act of socialism to say conscientiously whether the way the affairs of the I.P.A. are being managed is constitutional. I care for no office. But as one of those who took a prominent part in the affairs of the town not only today but for the past 20 years ago or more, I feel it to be my duty to offer you some warning; sometime ago I overheard that Mr. Iyaniwura and two others as representatives of I.P.A. interviewed the D.O. about Ode-Omu Baleship whereas this was outside the pale of Ibadan politics; matters of this kind have been handled in a similar way in the past; you ought to have noticed that Messrs Ogunsola, Sam Oloko and several others have ceased to attend I.P.A. meetings. Their liberal education would not allow them to tolerate anything mean.

You are a youngman with a push, but do not allow yourself to be swayed by unwanton influence. Yourself, Oloko, Ogunsola and others form important number among the Christian element in Ibadan and therefore you are regarded as light; I do not preach segregation or discrimination among classes, but we who read and write must be able to tell those who are not how to move. I bear nobody grudge; my criticism of I.P.A. management is simply to improve things. The last Ibadan political crisis may likely repeat itself in another colour and if this should be so, which I pray not for, on whom would you look up to for moral support as we did during the last.

I have written at length and this I do, not to damage, but to improve the working of I.P.A. which I cherish a big future hope for.

Remember me to your dear wife and your kid, I mean the baby.

Ever yours
(Sgd.)
A. Obisesan

APPENDIX CT.L. OYESINA REPLIES A. OBISESAN

Oke Bola,
Ibadan,
19th May, 1938

Mr dear Sir,

Please accept my sincere gratitude for your letter received this morning. I do not advise that your boy stays till the end of the month. You will discover that he is placed in Preparatory class. The earlier he commences, the better. You may settle his fee at the end of this month; but let him start receiving tuition at once. So much for your boy.

Your allegation about Messrs Iyaniwura is not without its element of truth. We have checkmated such move by making a ruling which forbids people to approach the Administrative Officers without due sanction from the Association. Besides, Mr. Iyaniwura and people of his type have lost their weapon of ravaging, and their victims have found them out.

"Criticism is a healing medicine though bitter to swallow". I for one welcome constructive criticism always. We cannot progress without it. You will agree with me that I.P.A. is octopus. It is so unwieldy that not all the members know themselves. As the Secretary, I cannot lay claim to the fact that I know every member.

Our people have not got a "Creed"; we must invent them one. They have a force which we can well direct to the right channel. All good schoolmasters know that they should use nothing but instincts in children. Boys or girls do not learn with any idea of after-life. That is beyond the pale of their reasoning; it is their parents' horizon of experience. Children learn for curiosity and rivalry. These we watch, and we give them copiously. As a consequence we have highly intellectual children.

You will admit that we are a nation in school. Government officials, Missionaries, and Merchantile men are our Teachers. The educated element are the senior scholars; the unsophisticated of us are the junior ones. The right relations between all these are not far to seek. If Messrs Oloko, Ogunsola, and several others are right in their views according to you, time will tell.

Best compliments of the season to you and family.

Your dear compatriot,
(Sgd.)
T.L. Oyesina.

A. Obisesan Esq.,
Ile Aperin, Aremo
I B A D A N.

APPENDIX DREF.

N.A.I. CE/B17. 1951. H.L.M. Butcher. Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Allegations of Misconduct Made Against Chief Agbaje.

Petition Written Against Chief Salami Agbaje by the Junior Chiefs and Mogajis in 1949

From the Junior Mogajis
Mapo Hall
Ibadan
27th December, 1949.

"To the Olubadan-in-Council,
Mapo Hall, Ibadan

"Copy The Senior District Officer,
i/c Ibadan Division,

"The Honourable, The Senior Resident,
Oyo Province, Oyo.

"Your Highness,

THE IMMEDIATE DEPOSITION OF CHIEF SALAMI AGBAJE

"We beg most humbly and respectfully to submit for your earnest consideration and immediate action the following representations for the deposition of Chief Salami Agbaje, the Otun Balogun, and for his instant reversal to the status of an ordinary citizen of Ibadan which was all he had up to a very few years ago.

"2. From the foundation of Ibadan in the days of the great Lagelu to the period of our illustrious father, Fijabi I, when Ibadan Chiefs and Authority concluded a treaty of amity, friendship and abolition of slave trade, with Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain till the time of you, our August father Fijabi II, the Chiefs and peoples of Ibadan have carried the administration of this great city according to native law and custom. It behoves us as the traditional representatives of the general mass of the people and the guardians of public liberty to warn you, our father, that since the incursion of Mr. Salami

Agbaje into our ranks, we have watched his career first with keen interest, then with grave apprehension, of late with great alarm and today with hysterical terror. His tenure of office has been a continuous violation of our customary native laws and a shameful travesty of what Ibadans associate in their minds with the title, the dignity and the functions of that exalted position. We are no alarmists, but we warn you, our fathers that our common heritage the glittering prize won with the blood, the sweat and the tears of our forefathers, is about to be delivered into the hands of a tyrant, besides whom Nero and Caligula pale into insignificant.

"3. We accuse Chief Salami Agbaje, the Otun Balogun of (I) Injustice, (II) Selfishness, (III) Avarice, (IV) Exploitation, (V) Deceit, ((VI) Vindictiveness, (VII) Machination, (VIII) Ruthlessness, (IX) Ambition and (X) Tyranny. We accuse him of planning in the secret of his heart to overthrow our 200 years old republican freedom and her representative institutions and substitute a regime of terror, oppression and desposition. We are not laying vague general charge. We shall give cogent reasons and adduce factual evidence in respect of each count.

"4. Injustice - No sooner had Chief Agbaje became a Chief than he was made the President of Bere Court No. 2, we should expect a man of his experience and standing to be above the temptations of his office. But the reverse was the case. The court was turned into a counting house. Perquisites were manufactured on such a scale and with such a cool efficiency as astounded everybody and lowered the morale of other courts in general. The records of successful appeals from his judgements to the district Officer's court are living testimony not to his incapacity but to his shameless cynicism in regards to money affairs.

"5. Selfishness - Well-born affluent Yoruba in general, even when they are not chiefs, are distinguished for their generosity, largesse, and hospitality. But here is a man, a millionaire by local standard, the owner of the largest number of commercial properties, and residential mansions in town, fourth in rank to the paramount ruler; He has a private road in his farm at Igbo-Ido accessible freely only to his hired labourer, and open to other pedestrians on the payment of fees. The enclosure system is alien to Yoruba communal land system. Nowhere else from Owo to Igbogila, from Ikenne to Igbetti, can you find a counter-part to this heartless violation of the freedom of movement of our peasant population. Our policy in regards to the right of passage always has been and happily for us shall remain "from each what he can afford and to each what he needs".

"6. The Otun Balogun had a full brother, Sanni Agbaje by name, who died some years ago. He left behind many children. Where are those children today? Many of them have been driven from his compound by their cruel Uncle to live on their wits and the generosity of the public under the roof of mere acquaintancies. How many of the nephews has Chief Agbaje sent overseas for higher education? None. And six of his own children have gone overseas for further studies or business contracts. So even in his small and restricted family he discriminates, whilst the Yoruba custom from time immemorial is for

the head of each family to regard his nephews, nieces their wives and children as his own children without distinction of actual paternity and to fend for them accordingly. Sanni Agbaje, the only man according to Yoruba usage, who should have been leading the luxurious life of Chief Agbaje's heirs today, mounting horse before him on ceremonial occasions, died a broken man a mere bread baker in the village of Gbongan. With the generality of the Yoruba people, there is no crime more heinous and damning than this. And this is the man, the paragon we are to tolerate as a Senior chief, to enthrone as a ruler in the near future to adore, to emulate, to venerate, to look up to in ordering our humbler lives and in giving lessons to our children on citizenship and on civic responsibilities. Why? Because he knows how to hoard money and how to spend it to educate his own children exclusively into a leisured care-free spending class feeding fat on the sweat-labours of the common people, contemptuous of their body broken with over-exertion and their manners coarse from lack of culture. We refuse.

"7. Avarice - Moderate thrift and reasonable foresight in money affairs befit any man, whatever his station in life, but Chief Agbaje is neither moderately thrifty nor reasonably foresighted in monetary affairs. He knows how to make money, believes in hoarding money, worships the hoarding of money and in his rapturous adoration of the hoard is oblivious of many finer and more enduring things in life. His hands are in every pie. The same man is farmer, transporter, produce-buyer, sawmill-owner, money-lender, contractor, hardware dealer, manufacturer of mineral-water, member Native Authority, fire-wood seller, Appellate Court Judge, poultry-keeper, Landlord, co-partner in various miscellaneous undertakings, for the manufacture of profits. These activities are not healthy for public life. They portray an astute mind and a mean soul. They befit the industrial baron rather than the aspirant to the coveted throne of Ibadan. Henry Ford and John Pierpont Morgan were not the founders nor the upholders of the finest traditions of the American Republic. We need George Washingtons, Abraham Lincolns, and Delano Rosevelts, to manage our public affairs. Ibadan never shall want great souls and large hearts.

"8. Exploitation - Some capitalists are benevolent employers of labour plowing back into the community in decent wages what they export as profits. Meet anyone who has worked under Chief Agbaje as labourer, clerk, or salesman. You will hear tales of woe, or payment in kind, of starvation wages, of tricks to swallow one's cash security, of oppression of gross inhumanity. He is a cruel economic machine that grinds mercilessly to powder all who luckily come under his propeller. Sympathy, encouragement, affection, are foreign to his nature. Every human sentiment is sacrificed to out-put and profits. How many Ibadan citizens have worked under this man to become secure, comfortable or independent. It is one long story of accumulating debt, of famishing poverty, of ultimate collapse. He is a social dehydrant that sucks the blood of his victims.

"9. Deceit - This is a handy weapon in the hands of the unscrupulous politician with whom the end justifies the means. The victims are lulled to sleep with soft spoken

words, a parade of innocence and an appearance of contentment. Suddenly comes the treacherous blow and one more is added to the unending list of casualties. When Chief Agbaje was an Honourable member of the Legislative Council some years ago, he committed the Chiefs and people of Ibadan to acquiesce in Births and Deaths Registration without consulting the opinion of anybody. It was the then Resident, Mr. Murray, who first intimated the Chiefs of this false assurance to the Government. Every page in this dirty book is full of foul lies, tissues of falsehood and blatant mis-representations.

"10. Vindictiveness - Forgiveness is not in Chief Agbaje's dictionary. Popular fancy assigns to power conscious of his own strength a certain indifference to attacks. The Otun Balogun harbours vengeance for wrongs many years old and keeps old injuries in a water-tight compartment of his brain. Woe betide the old enemy who gets into the grip of the iron vice. The present tension between the Senior Chiefs and the Abasi family, the threatened suspension of Chief Solagbade the Ikolaba Balogun, the thwarting of Prince Merchant A.O. Makanjuola's plans, the unsuccessful attempt at one time to prevent the promotion of Chief Saka Adebisi the Agbaking Olubadan are all traceable to the savage vindictiveness of this one fiend. If Chief Agbaje had his way in Ibadan for only one year, he would declare a war of anihilation on old political enemies, liquidate their corpses from maltreatment and disgrace. Coming events cast their shadows.

"11. Machinations - Political machination is the hobby of Chief Agbaje, and in it the new excels the old Machiavelli. Factions, disloyalty, splinter-groups, traitors, fifth-columnist, informants, shocktroops, gossips and propaganda are all manipulated with consummate skill to serve the interest of that massacred firm Agbaje & Sons. Go to the bottom of any political tumult for the past decade, and you will find the everlasting intriguer. Never before Chief Agbaje entered the Inner Council was that subjected to so many blunders, miscalculations, obliquity, court litigations, press criticism and loss of prestige. The Ede tangle could have been settled long ago, but our hero manouvred events to suit his own private purposes, legal fees accrued to his son as the case dragged on from court to court, and the administration lost in money and in public esteem. In the Ibadan Progressive Union, the Western Echo Press Limited, Egbe Omo Oduduwa, The Nigerian Youth Movement, in Church and Society, you will find his heir fight for leadership in order to boost his father and to get people to join the band wagon. The hostility of Zik's Defender to the Native Authority, the Election feud with ex-Councillor Y.S. Ola Ishola, the Native Settler's Agitation, all derive inspiration from the master-mind who delights in fishing in troubled waters he thinks himself very clever that he will thus confuse and bamboozle the public and prevent them from dealing with himself - the greatest danger to peace and tranquility of this city-state in our generation. We are undeceived.

"12. Ruthlessness - One or two years back Mr. A.B. Lawoyin was a humble Native Court Clerk. For reasons he left the Native Administration service, and set up as transporter and contractor he lives to curse the day he approached Chief Agbaje for financial aid which resulted in some of form of partnership agreement. The merits of the

case have been treated by a competent court. But the social conscience shall never forget the pang. Behold Lawoyin before he fell in with the evil genius of Agbaje, and Lawoyin after the monster had mauled him, he seized his lorry without court's process, dragged him from the Magistrate's court to the Supreme court, and to the West African Court of Appeal, all the Senior Chiefs intervened to get him to temper justice with mercy, but Shylock had his pound of flesh. Mr. Lawoyin today is without his lorry, without his family, without any visible means of livelihood. His home, the last bulkwalk, against the ravages of the elements, is gone. The Iron sheets of the roof have been sold. He owns naught but the Buba on his back. The dilapidated dwelling is there for all who care to go and inspect. It is an indelible warning that we are in a state of emergence on the edge of the abyss. If this is not ruthlessness, what is it?

"13. Ambition - Politics they say is a dirty game. But even among thieves, is there no code of honour? In unguarded moments, burning passion temporarily subjugates steel with power and will gain a glance into the heinousness in the beyond scene, Mapo Hall. Chiefs and Commoners in large attendance. And Otun Balogun (Chief Salami Agbaje) openly insulted and almost assaulted (but the timely intervention of kindly bystanders) his Balogun, a man senior in age, in rank, and in bodily infirmity. This a gross breach of Yoruba etiquette, and of the quorum unusually preserved in most trying circumstances by Ibadan Chiefs. Politics may be dirty, but can't dirt be signified? Need a political feud become the brawl of the gutter and the gibberish of baboons? Ambition is a vile pass that blinds its victim and leads him to the dungeon, and the dunghill. What other outproof can we have of the secret impatient plan to liquidate the obstacles to the coveted post of Olubadan. Ambition unlimited throughout history from Phillip I of Macedon to Charles XII of Sweden, to Napoleon I of France, and Hitler the last of Germany has always dug his own grave with one final fateful master stroke egregious blunder that fascial scene at Mapo was the very limit of our endurance. It convinced irrevocably the doubting Thomases among us and strengthened immensely the firm beliefs of unshakeable Peters. It has given us a unanimity of opinion as regards the culprit's unconditional deposition which more than any argument however voluminous and pungent is the harbinger of victory in the task to which we have put our shoulders, if the Balogun with his age, his rank and his helplessness, is not safe from brutal public humiliation what is in store for us, younger men can imagine. This man is already most in two many things. He is the richest, the owner of the largest number of properties, the greatest industrialist, the most astute intriguer. He needs one more trophy to complete his museum of success. He want to be the most wickedly successful modern Olubadan. He will fail.

"14. Tyranny - "We strongly recommend that the Native Courts be made independent of the Native Administration Executives, that is, the office of judges should not necessarily be held by the Chiefs or members of the Native Administration. That is not an extract from the speech of a Zikist frothing in the mouth with renaissance and boiling all over the body with resurgence. It is the innocuous bait of the tyrant thrown to hungry democratic progressive. It is paragraph 14 of the views and recommendations of a

committee appointed by the Ibadan Divisional Native Authority for the 1950 constitutional reforms of Nigeria. The committee was chaired by Chief Salami Agbaje the Otun Balogun. It is no exoneration to say that he was not present when that decision was taken, or that it was a majority view or that chiefs and responsible commoners were there. He was made the chairman in order to watch the interests of the chiefs. It is an unwritten law of our chieftaincy etiquette that juniors do not oppose the views of their seniors when they are put at the Head. The final draft must have been submitted to him before publication. It was his duty to consult his other Senior Chiefs on such a delicate and controversial issue. But he already knew their mind and he did not like it. How very easy to hide one's ardent desire behind the anonymity of a Committee? The resolution as it stands is a slap on the face of the Chiefs. It is an invitation to the subtle undermining and the ultimate destruction of the Yoruba Institution of Chieftaincy. It is an insult on the intelligence of the Ibadan people who are firm believers in Chieftaincy. Progressive commoners in their mis-calculation of the reality of the situation could be excused for advocating a Municipal Local Government. But what of a supposed Chief, fourth in rank to the Paramount Ruler asking for the transference of the only visible function left to his order, Chief Agbaje is a pseudo-chief. He is in it, but not of it. There is no puzzle. That committee was a hand-picked of the faction whom Chief Agbaje hopes to lead to the new Cannan, flowing with milk and honey. They were over-elated and forgot themselves. They actually felt that they were the government of Ibadan with him there on the CHAIR. In their regime judicial Administration will become the biggest slice in political patronage of loyal henchmen, Ex-School masters, professionals, and retired civil servants. All will be set to farm prietor - the unmasked TYRANT.

"15. Ola Vs Ola (Wealth Vs Nobility) - We have gone through the sordid catalogue of Chief Agbaje's sins ploughing lightly on the surface lest we exhume putrefying corpses too stinking for public examination. Injustice selfishness, avarice exploitation, deceit, vindictiveness, machination, ruthlessness, insatiable ambition, and soulless tyranny, these are not bad equipment for an adventurer in the jungle of modern finance. They have never been the distinguishing characteristics of the Ibadan Nobility and are a very poor pase-port into their ranks. Mr. Salami Agbaje among our Senior Chiefs is a wolf strayed into a flock of sheep. The very traits that make him such a successful individualistic entrepreneur are, in a Head of State wielding supreme political power, dangerous to the liberty of the subjects. Our chiefs are not meant to be dangerous to the liberty of the subjects. Our chiefs arenot meant to be rich, cunning or extraordinary. We prefer them mild, humane, noble, cultured, compromising, dignified and honourable. Mr. Salami Agbaje is not a fit and proper person to sit among our Senior Chiefs, much more to hold the reigns of administration. We implore you our fathers, to thank him greatly for his past services in the Legislature, the Courts and the Council but to add firmly that he retire from active participation in the management of our affairs. He will have enough to do buying more lorries, equipping his saw-mill with the latest apparatus, developing his farm estates, extending his mineral factory and sending the

remaining brood of his children to Eton and Cambridge for higher education. We reserve to ourselves the right to determine who shall rule with our very lives. IF NEED BE.

"16. The Fate of Tyranny in Ibadan History - But for the British Protectorate Ibadan has her traditional way of dealing with tyrants. Maybe the Original of which Chief Salami Agbaje is a poor replica, was slaughtered along with his gang, Irefin was deposed. Ajobo was exiled. We pray you, our fathers, will read the handwriting on the wall. We hope the Authorities will not set fire to public indignation accumulated over two decades. Ex-Prime Ministers are honoured citizens in civilized states. That man is wise who knows when, how and where to stop. THE GAME IS UP.

"17. Money-maker Aleshinloye we tolerated because he used his money as an instrument of policy to rescue Ibadan from vassalage and to introduce discipline into a public life too much saturated with chaotic elements. Adebisi Giwa we love because he used his money to entertain, to dazzle and to sustain the best elements of our population. We have nothing but contempt and ridicule for Chief Agbaje whose sole aim for piling up earthly treasure is to constitute his children into an everlasting pampered Herrenvolk.

"18. Ibadan, An Organic Community - Ibadan is a living, virile organic community. Periodically, like all other living organisms, it undertakes instinctive involuntary exercises to keep itself in good health. Chief Salami Agbaje is a poisonous morsel in the stomach of this gigantic organism. He is the wonder of our times. Nobody knows anything of his lineage. How, when and why he managed himself into Ibadan. We challenge him to publish his own geneological tree. We are as suspicious of his future as he is to erase all traces of his own beginnings. Our living organism, by its own volition, its own organisational efficiency shall vomit him out. We are assured of the co-operation of the several parts of the body. This is not a matter of intellectual argument. IT IS THE PRIMORDIAL FOR SURVIVAL.

"19. Our Chieftaincy System, our native laws and customs, our ancient traditions, whatever their academic faults, are the most representative institutions of local government in the present stage of the development of the masses. Progress is bound to come but we rely on the gradual enlightenment of the masses to foster it. WE REFUSE DEAR FATHERS, TO HAND OVER OUR DESTINY TO ANY UNSCRUPULOUS GRABBER BE HE EVER SO SUCCESSFUL AND SO PROSPEROUS.

"20. We repeat our original contention. Chief Salami Agbaje, the Otun Balogun should be immediately deposed from the ranks of Chieftaincy and be asked to revert to his original status of ordinary citizen. He ought never to have been made a chief at all. He has abused the office of a Chief. He is not by natural endowment, up-bringing or philosophy of life the right type in which to entrust the government of his fellow-men. His proto-type, the model on which he has set himself, is Ladapo Ademola, the ex-Alake of Abeokuta.

"But he lacks even that man's redeeming features-blue blood, culture and aristocratic bearing. A desperate disease requires a desperate remedy. Anything short of surgical operation will only bring that painful paroxysm that precedes DEATH. We trust in the wisdom of our Fathers to PUT THE WELFARE OF THE STATE ABOVE THE INTERESTS OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

We are,

(Sgd.)

Your Obedient Children".

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Appendix E

CONSTITUTION

Rules & Regulations

of

EGBE AGBA-O-TAN

FOUNDED JANUARY 30, 1914

Ilare Press, Ibadan

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This Book is the Property of

EGBE AGBA-O-TAN

NO. 1 LODGE, IBADAN

CODESRIA - LIBRARY

Constitution of the Egbe Agba O 'Tan¹

1. That this Society shall be known and called Egbe Agba-o-tan of Yorubaland.
2. That this Society's aim and object shall be to institute reserchers into all Yoruba Religions, Customs, Physiology, Medical Knowledge, Arts, Sciences, Manufacturers, Poetical Cultures, Political and National Histories &c.
3. That only Native Gentlemen of Yorubaland are eligible for Membership.
4. That the Officers of this Society shall consist of a Ruler, Deputy Ruler, Warden, Caplain, Treasurer, Secretary and a General Editor. All Officers are to be appointed annually.
5. That the Society shall consist of three sections called Degrees as follows:
 - (a) Knights of the First Degree consist of the active and hard-working members of the Society in all its different scopes and branches.
 - (b) Knights of the Second Degree consist of members who, after being found zealous and deeply interested in the Society, are allowed to pay towards the Benefit Fund of the Society.
 - (c) Knights of the Third Degree consist of the newly admitted members.
6. Admission Fee shall be 21/- Members shall be admitted by Ballot and Initiation.
7. That the Monthly Subscription shall be 1/-, That the Benefit Fund Subscription shall be by shares of 50/- each.
8. That the Meeting of the Society shall be taking place not less than once and not more than twice in a month: - Emergency meetings excepted.
9. That the meetings of the Society shall always be opened and closed with prayer.
10. Duration of Meeting to be from 4.30 - 5.30 p.m. but if necessary may be prolonged by mutual consent.
11. To avoid leakage of the Society's movements, the proceedings of everyl meeting are to be kept a profound secret and must not be divulged tl outsiders; even the absent members must not be acquainted with the nature of the discussions or

- business transacted at the session in which they were not present on pains of serious punishment or dismissal.
12. After the usual notification to members, the proceedings of any meeting containing an Officer, the Secretary, and two other members are to be accepted as valid.
 13. Proved cases of Leakages of the Society's secret against a member is punishable with instant dismissal from the Society.
 14. Members resigning or expelled from the Society have no further claims upon its General or Benefit Funds.

"EGBE AGBA O TAN"

Signs, pass-words, tokens, grips &c.
For the use of members of the society.

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1. The full title of the booklet is *Constitution and rituals of Egbe Agba-o-tan. Founded January 30, 1914* (Ibadan: Ilare Press n.d [1914]. the copy used here was found in the University of Ibadan Library, Manuscript Section, Akiyele Papers, Box 44/9. See also chapter xx above. On the titlepage of this copy was written. 'This book is the property of Egbe Agba-o-tan No. 1 Lodge, Ibadan'. The text published follows as closely as possible the typography, spelling, etc. of the original text.

Recognition: - To rub the face with the right hand from the forehead downwards, and stop at the chin, as if stroking one's beard and looking round for a minutes for answer.

Answer:- The first and fourth fingers of the right hand are to be help up bending the second and third fingers with the thumb over the second in the palm of the hand, and circling the first finger round the right ear, and dipping the fourth finger into the ear as if scratching it.

Test-Word: - On coming closer the tester inclining a little closer and gives the word "...?" in a whisper, and the responser answers "..."

Grip: - In shaking hands with a tester brother, each grips the other's thumb, pressing the knuckles with so-many fingers corresponding to the number of degrees attained.

Knock: - The knocking of the members of the Third Degree is four successive raps on the door without intervals.

Answer: - The answer is the same number of raps as knocked in all the degrees.

The Second Degree: Two successive knocks, a short interval, and two quicker knocks.

The first Degree: One knock, then two quicker knocks, and one knock.

Passwords at Meeting: - After prayer all will stand up, the Ruler sitting, will give three knocks on the table. Then the whole members will say thus "Ki Agba ma tan" and the Ruler will reply by saying "Ni Ile wa." After which all present will resume their seats.

Entering the Lodge: - A member entering when the Lodge is in when in session session should knock and then give the sign of RECOGNITION to the Ruler; after the response should advance 4 steps, and bow to the Ruler before taking his seat retiring in a backward step i.e. without turning his back to the Ruler.

New Members are to be initiated after the opening and completing of the regular business of the Lodge.

THE CEREMONY OF INITIATION

Question: - Whom have you there?

Warden: - A Candidate who comes of his own free will and accord to be a member of this Order.

Chaplain: - Let him in.

Question: - Are you willing to be a member of this Order?

Answer: - I am willing.

(Here the Rules, Regulations, Bye-Laws, aims and Object of order will be read.)

Question: - Are you prepared to obey all the Rules, Regulations, Byelaws and Orders of this Lodge which have been and which will from time to time be made for the guidance of this Order?

Answer: - I will.

Question: - Are you prepared to keep all the Secrets and Symbols of this Order without divulging any of them to anyone but he who is properly initiated in this Lodge?

Answer: - I will.

Question: - Are you prepared to assist the aims and objects of this Order financially, intellectually and physically as far as lies in your power?

Answer: - I will.

Question: - Are you prepared to support a brother who is a member in all legitimate claims and from scandals of all kinds known to you so, that this Order may keep its good reputation?

Answer: - I will.

Question: - Are you prepared to support a brother in distress of whatever nature known to you as far as you are able, God being your helper?

Answer: - I will.

(Here the Hymn 277 "Emi Orun gb'adura wa" will be sung) then the Master of Ceremony will say: - I will thank you all to kneel while the blessing of God is invoked on our proceedings.

Prayer: - Almighty God, vouchsafe we beseech Thee to be present in this our meeting and grant that this (these) Candidates may be true and faithful to this Lodge and endeavour to keep to the promise they had thus made for the good of this Order and our Country and the welfare of the inhabitants thereof, so that the knowledge and wisdom of our elderly persons do not die away in our land through the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Here all will arise and the Candidates proceed to sign the pledge.

Hear ye! All ye true and loyal sons of Yariba, I declare (Name.....) duly initiated and proclaim them members of Egbe Agba-o-tan from this day hence forth.

Introduction and Congratulations. (By the Secretary.)

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- (f) Iba. Div. 1/1 File 1551.
- (g) Iba. Div. 1/1 File 1359/S.25.
- (h) Iba. Div. 1/4 C.D.I. Intelligence Report on Ibadan. 1937-38.
- (i) Iba. Div. 1/1 File 2931 Annual Report, 1951.

(ii) Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO) Papers

- (a) CSO 1/3 Vol. V.
- (b) CSO 26 File 14935
- (c) CSO 26/06027 Annual Report, 1921.
- (d) CSO 26/09723.
- (e) CSO 26/35457.

(iii) Ibadan Provincial Papers

- (a) Iba. Prof. 3/4. Intelligence Report on Ibadan Town by E.N.C. Dickinson, 1938.

(iv) Oyo Provincial Papers

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(v) Ibadan Ministry of Agriculture

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(vi) Government Publications

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- (b) CE/N2. Nicholson, E.W.J. Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into the Administration of the Ibadan District Council. (Lagos: Government Printer, 1956).

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- (d) Supplement to the Nigeria Gazette Extraordinary No. 17 of April 3, 1934.
- (e) NLH3 Nigerian Senate Debates, 1962-65. (Lagos: The Federal Ministry of Information, Printing Division).

2. Private Papers

The private papers consulted for this thesis were in two categories. There were those deposited in the Manuscript Section of the Kenneth Dike Memorial Library, University of Ibadan, while the others were in the custody of the owners or their family members.

(i) Private Papers at Kenneth Dike Library

(a) -- Akinpelu Obisesan Papers

These contain his personal diaries from 1920 to 1962, his private and official correspondences, and documents relating to Ibadan affairs, minutes of Council meetings, and papers on the Nigerian Cooperative Movement.

(b) Rev. A.B. Akinyele Papers

These are packed in seventy (70) different boxes. They contain his diaries (from 1904 to 1955), duplicates of letters, religious magazines, Synod reports, documents on the Ibadan Grammar School, papers pertaining to Ibadan affairs, Church pamphlets and sermons, and other unsorted papers.

(c) F.L. Akiele Papers

These are packed together with A.B. Akinyele's papers described above. A lot of patience is required in sorting them out. They contain his diaries for 1885-88, 1891-92, 1897-99, 1902, 1907, 1909-1910; and some of his letters for 1924.

(d) Ibadan Patriotic Association (IPA) Papers

Some papers of the Ibadan Patriotic Association, originally known as the Egbe Omo Ibile Ibadan are packed with the papers of Akinpelu Obisesan Boxes 30, 32, 33 and 28.

(ii) Private Papers (Others)

(a) Ayorinde Papers

These belong to Chief J.A. Ayorinde (Ekerin Olubadan of Ibadan - fifth in rank to the Olubadan), high chief and local historian. They are in his possession at No. 1, Ayorinde Street, Ekotedo, Ibadan. They cover a broad spectrum of Ibadan life especially on the activities of individual elite members.

(b) Oshunkunle Papers

Papers of Chief Layi Oshunkunle provide useful information on the educational development of Ibadan rural areas and on the role of the educated elite generally in Ibadan.

(c) Oyesina Papers

These are in the possession of T.L. Oyesina (Junior). There are valuable documents there which pertain to the pioneering efforts of Chief T.L. Oyesina (Snr) in the realm of founding and running private schools. Some of the documents also shed light on his other activities in Ibadan political life and on his contemporaries.

(d) Bolarinwa Papers

These are the private documents of Chief (Mrs.) J.E. Bolarinwa, proprietress of Alafia Nursery and Primary School, Ibadan. Apart from highlighting her commitment to the cause of education in Ibadan, these papers also contain some documents on the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) of which she was Assistant Secretary and later President of the Western Nigerian Branch in the 1960s.

(e) IPU Papers

These are papers and documents of the Ibadan Progressive Union (the old 'Youth Wing' as distinct from the 'elders' of 1930) in the possession of the Secretary, Eng. E.O. Oladeji. Particularly useful was the handbook of the Union which contained its history, aims and objectives, and activities.

(f) C.C.I.I. Papers

These are the official papers of the Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes. This is an umbrella organization that embraces all Ibadan Unions and Associations. Particularly useful for this study were papers read during seminars organised by the Council on Ibadan issues, and citations prepared on illustrious indigenes during the annual award dinners.

(g) Papers of St. Paul's Church, Yemetu

Of great value were the "Biographical Notes on Early Pioneers" of the Church in the custody of Pa E.O. Abioye, Church Secretary, and Chairman of the Centenary Anniversary Celebration Committee of 1994.

3. Oral Sources

A major problem encountered in the course of conducting the interviews for this research was the fact that individuals of different religious persuasion from the author's were reluctant to give information on their religion. While Muslim leaders maintained a non-compromising attitude for the most part, some leaders of traditional religion in Ibadan even charged fees before they could grant an interview. I found a way out of the former problem by preparing questionnaires which some understanding Muslims helped to administer to a few leaders of the faith. A lot of such questionnaires never returned but the few that did contained much-needed information.

Below is a list of all my informants.

Aare, Ganiyu (Alhaji). Age 65⁺. Trader. A grandchild of Aare Latoosa. Interviewed at Oke-Aare. 28/3/95.

Aare, Tiamiyu (Chief). Age 60⁺. Politician, Customary Court Judge. Grandchild of Aare Latoosa. Interviewed at Oke-Aare. 28/3/95.

Abioye, E.O. Age 70⁺. Retired school teacher. Secretary, St. Paul's Church, Yemetu, Ibadan. Interviewed in his house at Yemetu, Ibadan 4/10/94, 6/10/94.

Adebimpe, Omotayo. Age. 60⁺. Alagogo Oba (Town Crier) for Olubadan Adegboyega Emmanuel Adeyemo. Also an egungun patron. Interviewed at the palace of the Olubadan. 11/4/95.

Adebisi, Busari (Dr). Age 55⁺. University don. Former Secretary to the Oyo State Government. Son of Chief Adebisi of Idikan. Interviewed at his residence in Oluyole Estate, Ring Road, Ibadan. 16/3/95.

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Adeniran, Kunle (Prof.). Age 55⁺. University don. Ibadan Indigene. Interviewed in his Office, Dept. of Linguistic and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan. 4/6/92.

Adeyemo, Emmanuel Adegboyega (Chief). Age 85. Olubadan of Ibadan. Interviewed in his house at Isale-Ijebu before he ascended the throne. 21/6/90.

Adeyemo Bayo (Prince). Age 45. Son of the Olubadan Adegboyega Adeyemo. Interviewed at the Palace. 11/4/95.

Agbaje, Yekinni (Mr). Age 60⁺. Barrister at Law. Senior Advocate of Nigeria. Son of Chief Salami Agbaje. Interviewed in his Chambers, Agbaje & Agbaje at Majaro Street, Oremeji, Mokola, Ibadan. 30/10/87, 8/11/87.

Agbaje, Rufai (Alhaji). Age 70⁺. Mogaji of Agbaje compound. Interviewed at Ile Agbaje, Ayeye, Ibadan. 13/10/87, 23/10/87, 4/11/87.

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- Awe, Bolanle (Prof. Mrs.). Age 60⁺. Retired Professor of History, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. Interviewed in her office. 18/6/92, 18/1/94.
- Ayorinde, J.A. (Chief). Age 85⁺. High Chief, Ekerin Olubadan of Ibadan, Local Historian. Interviewed in his house at Ayorinde Street, Ekotedo, Ibadan. 21/11/87, 29/5/90, 14/8/92, 15/8/92.
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- Omowon, S.A. (Mr.). Age 50⁺. Principal, Ibadan Boys High School. Interviewed in the School on 4/10/94.
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