

THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF ILORIN IN THE  
NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES:  
THE RISE AND DECLINE OF A MIDDLEMAN SOCIETY

by

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## SYNOPSIS

At the beginning of this thesis, an introductory section sets out the major themes. This is followed by a sketch of the political and administrative history of Ilorin, providing background information.

Chapter One deals with the trading activities of Ilorin in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, having regard to continuities between Ilorin and Old Oyo, trade routes, the means by which Ilorin made its profits, the commodities of trade and the eventual decline of the Ilorin entrepot.

Chapter Two deals with the bead industry of Ilorin, tracing its nineteenth century prosperity and twentieth century collapse. Attention is paid, in this and other chapters on industries, to origins, personnel, organisation and trade.

Chapter Three examines the men's weaving industry of Ilorin in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chapter Four provides a survey of the women's pottery industry, including its twentieth century expansion.

Chapter Five examines the agricultural metropolitan districts around Ilorin Town, including dates of settlement, administrative organisation, the nineteenth century use of

slaves and the underdevelopment of these districts in the twentieth century.

In conclusion, the major themes of rise and decline, and of Ilorin's middleman role, are re-examined.

approx. 90,000 words.

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Mr. J.D. Clarke, former Education Officer, Ilorin Province, who has done so much to preserve the record of Ilorin's economic activities;

and to the memory of Alhaji Yahaya Kalu Olabintan, master weaver.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due first and foremost to my supervisor, Professor J.D. Fage, for his invaluable advice and support; and to Professor R.J. Gavin for many useful discussions and suggestions. I have benefited greatly from Professor Gavin's pioneering work in the field of Ilorin economic history.

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I am indebted to His Highness, Alhaji Sulu Gambari, Emir of Ilorin, and to the Sarkin Gobir, Ilorin, for granting interviews; and also to many informants who are acknowledged individually elsewhere.

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My thanks are due to the Royal Commonwealth Society for permission to reproduce photographs from the Macfie Collection in its Library (plates XXXII-XXXV). I am indebted for photography to the Geography Department, University of Birmingham (plates I, II, VI-XI, XXVIII-XXX) and to Sule Ajao (plates XX, XXI, XXIV-XXVII).

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ABBREVIATIONS

CMS	Church Missionary Society
CO	Colonial Office
DH	District Head
DNB	District Note Book
DO(E)	District Officer (Emirate)
DTD	District Touring Diary
DTN	District Touring Notes
FO	Foreign Office
Ilorprof	Ilorin Provincial Files
IPAR	Ilorin Province Annual Report
L.G.A.	Local Government Area
N.A.	Native Authority
NAI	National Archives Ibadan
NAK	National Archives Kaduna
PRO	Public Record Office
RH	Rhodes House
SNP	Secretariat/Secretary Northern Provinces
TN	Touring Notes.



USE OF NON-ENGLISH WORDS

Names of towns, districts, compounds, titles and titleholders have been given in anglicised form. Correct current orthography, however, has where possible been used for other non-English words, especially technical terms.

The English plural suffix has been generally used, in the interests of clarity, except in the case of the names of ethnic groups.

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis attempts a survey of some of the most important aspects of the economy of Ilorin, both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The aspects surveyed are, first, the involvement of Ilorin Town in long-distance trade; second, its major industries, namely the production of lantana beads, narrow-loom cloth, and pottery; and third, the agricultural hinterland of the town, termed by colonial administrators the "metropolitan districts".

The initial general impression gained by a student of the Ilorin economy is one of great importance and prosperity in the nineteenth century, followed by a marked decline and failure to redevelop during the colonial period. A major theme of this thesis, therefore, is an examination of this impression, with respect to the three aspects named above. Of particular importance to an understanding of the prosperity and decline of Ilorin is its commitment to the role of intermediary; a role which is examined in the chapters on trade and on the metropolitan districts.

Further themes and areas of concentration include, for example, the extent of economic continuities, in terms of trade and industry, between Old Oyo and Ilorin; the role of the slave trade, slaves and other dependants in the Ilorin economy; the part played, and the rewards gained, by various members of the Ilorin elite; and the similarities and differences between the major industrial groups.

Prior to a discussion of these various themes, a brief outline of the political and administrative history of Ilorin provides necessary background information and an introduction to some of the names and terms most frequently utilised in the main body of the text.

THE HISTORY OF ILORIN: A POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

OUTLINE

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ilorin was at most a small town. In the early years of that century, the town was in the charge of Afonja, who was also the Are Ona Kakanfo of Old Oyo. Probably his family had been in control in Ilorin for several generations before. Afonja revolted against the alafin, and disaffected Yoruba, also Hausa and Fulani began to flock to the town. Afonja is said to have called in Mallam Alimi, a Fulani Muslim reformer, for aid. Later, Afonja lost control of the forces gathered in Ilorin, and was overthrown and killed. A Fulani dynasty was set up, and Ilorin became an emirate within the Fulani Empire, under Gwandu.<sup>1</sup> The office of emir

1. Two very similar accounts of the history of Ilorin at this and later periods are given by H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), pp.63-81; and S.J. Hogben and A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, The Emirates of Northern Nigeria (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp.285-306.

A further account of the nineteenth and twentieth century history of Ilorin, drawing on various sources, including Hermon-Hodge and Johnson (see below), is given by Samuel Ojo, A Short History of Ilorin (Shaki, W. Nigeria: Atoro, 1958). Another, with a Fulani bias, is the History of Ilorin compiled by M. Sulu, Native Courts Registrar, 15/10/53, pp.1-9, in RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, C.W. Michie, Political Situation in Northern Provinces and History of Ilorin. The pro-Fulani bias in this account is clear not only from the authorship (M. Sulu, who collected the material and compiled the account, is now Alh. Sulu Gambari, Emir of Ilorin), but also from internal evidence.

Material on the Afonja period and Fulani conquest of Ilorin, from the viewpoint of Oyo, may be found in

rotated between the descendants of Abdusalami and Shita, two sons of Malam Alimi. Two other sons of Alimi were said to have preferred territorial aggrandisement to succession to the throne, and were given land and the titles of Basambo and Shiaba.<sup>1</sup>

Ilorin Town under the Fulani dynasty was divided up into five wards for purposes of administration. One, the Emir's Ward, was administered by the Magaji Gari,<sup>2</sup> an official who was also the emir's intermediary in relations with his overlord in Gwandu.<sup>3</sup> The other four wards were placed under baloguns, or war-lords, representing the various ethnic groups in the Ilorin population: these are Baloguns Fulani, Gambari (Hausa), Ajikobi (Yoruba), and Alanamu (Yoruba). Each of these wards was divided into sub-wards,

Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yorubas, ed. O Johnson (Lagos: C.M.S. Bookshops, 1921), Chapters 6 and 7. A more recent and more critical account of the same periods is given by Robin Law, The Old Oyo Empire c.1600-c.1836 (Oxford: O.U.P., 1977), Chapter 12.

1. On these two other sons, see Hermon-Hodge, p.65; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p.288. Also see Peter C. Lloyd, The Political Development of Yoruba Kingdoms in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1971), p.41.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, Ilorin Town General Notes on by G.R. Osborn, 1928, and Addendum, 1939 (in same file), para.2.
3. Lloyd, p.42; S.A. Balogun, "Gwandu Emirates in the Nineteenth Century with Specific Reference to Political Relations: 1817-1903" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1971), p.391. For another role of the Magaji Gari, see RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, M. Sulu's History, p.8.

Ajikobi Ward, for example, including Ajikobi, Ojuekun, Ogidi, Oloje and Zarumi Sub-Wards.<sup>1</sup> Sub-Ward chiefs, generally known as magajis,<sup>2</sup> were placed in charge of these, under the various baloguns. Some members of the Yoruba population, it may be noted, were placed in wards other than those controlled by the Yoruba baloguns. Ibagun Sub-Ward, though Yoruba in population, was included in Gambari Ward. Idiape area, home of the family of Afonja, was included in the Emir's Ward.

Although they were given no territorial jurisdiction in the town, the descendants of Afonja and his brother were given the titles of Magaji Are<sup>3</sup> and Baba Isale<sup>4</sup> respectively. In the nineteenth century, these two were regarded as officials of the emir's household,<sup>5</sup> together with other officials

1. For a list of the sub-wards in each ward in 1922, see eg. Table 1, p.44.
2. The word magaji, while commonly used for a head of a descent group, properly refers to a person ennobled by the emir or one of the baloguns with the gift of a horse and sword. Lloyd, p.42.
3. This title contains one element of Afonja's title of Are Ona Kakanfo.
4. According to R.C. Abrahams (Dictionary of Modern Yoruba (London, etc: Hodder and Stoughton, 2nd Edition 1962), p.92), this title is given to an elder brother who renounces his rights and allows his younger brother to become chief; in this connection, it may be noted that according to Lloyd (pp.42-43), Afonja's brother was the ruler of Ilorin before his own arrival.
5. G.B. Haddon-Smith, Interior Mission to Yorubaland 1893: Extracts from the Diary of G.B. Haddon-Smith, Political Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library, London, Notes on Ilorin.

such as the Sarkin Dogari, a slave who was variously described as "prime minister" and "jailer and chief executioner",<sup>1</sup> the Sarkin Baraji, head of the palace guard,<sup>2</sup> and the Balogun Afin, head of the emir's slaves.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from the various titleholders mentioned above, a number of others may be mentioned. These included the Sarkin Gambari and the Sarkin Gobir, both of whom had been important in the early years of Fulani conquest and rule,<sup>4</sup> and who were included in Gambari Ward; and the various ajias, ajia being a title given to slaves who had distinguished themselves in war. Most of the more famous ajias of the nineteenth century, it is said, seem to have been slaves of the emir.<sup>5</sup>

The town of Ilorin swelled with immigrants from the

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1. Ibid; Bowen Papers, Ogbomoso Baptist Seminary Roberson Collection, vol.1, p.38, Bowen Journal 22/4/55; Robert Campbell, A Pilgrimage to My Motherland. An Account of a Journey among the Egbas and Yorubas of Central Africa in 1859-60 (London: W.J. Johnson, 1860), p.61; Ivan B. Mustain, "A Political History of Ilorin in the Nineteenth Century" (M.Phil. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1978), p.103, citing an interview with the Emir. Another official, however, was sometimes named as the executioner (see eg. Bowen Papers reference, above).
  2. Mustain, pp.95, 103, citing interviews with the Emir. In 1927 the same official was referred to as the "thief catcher" (NAI CSO 26/3 12687 vol.5, IPAR 1927, para.29).
  3. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, IPAR 1921, no.92, para.30; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, M. Sulu's History, p.8.
  4. See eg. Hermon-Hodge, pp.65-66; Ojo, pp.23-24; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p.288.
  5. Lloyd, p.42. See also Appendix to Chapter 5, pp.336, 337. But they do not seem to have been slaves in every case. See NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Ilorin Emirate Reorganisation of Districts, Unsalariated Owners of Titles in Ilorin.



north-western parts of the Old Oyo Empire, and with slaves from various areas. The majority of its people were of Yoruba origin.

Ilorin began to spread its power into the areas surrounding the town. The lands immediately around were given out by successive emirs, as what the British administration later described as fiefs, to chiefs and favourites in Ilorin, who often gave them out again to other sub-holders. Some people were settled on these lands, and others went out daily from the town, to provide food for its inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

In the nineteenth century the town prospered owing to its trading position, to its thriving luxury industries, and to slave capture, utilisation and sale. Helped by their opportunities for economic gain, the baloguns gradually gained more and more power, until by the end of the century they had the emirs at their mercy.<sup>2</sup>

Ilorin was conquered in 1897 by Goldie and the Royal Niger Company, and later incorporated into British Northern Nigeria. During the years that followed the takeover it became clear that Ilorin's days as a major economic power

1. On fiefs and fiefholding, see Chapter 5, pp.221-28.

2. On the position of the emirs at the end of the century, see Hermon-Hodge, pp.73-74, 77; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp.298-99, 301; Lloyd, p.45; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, M. Sulu's History, p.7.

were over. Politically, however, the emirs (that is, the emirs of the Abdusalami house, who have practically monopolized the office during the twentieth century, at the expense of the descendants of Shita)<sup>1</sup> recovered and continued to retain a great deal of power under the Native Authority system. In addition, during the colonial period, the Afonja family regained some of their influence, with the two Afonja titleholders being placed on the Emir's Council in 1913,<sup>2</sup> and a new ward, carved out of the Emir's and other wards, being created for the Magaji Are in 1939.<sup>3</sup>

The fiefholders of the lands around Ilorin were replaced at the beginning of the colonial period by district heads, who were ordered to reside in their districts, though often the new district head came from the family of the former fiefholder. The families of the emir and the baloguns, plus the descendants of the two non-ruling sons of Alimi, virtually monopolized the district head posts. In the early twentieth century there was a further outflow of population to the areas

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1. See Hermon-Hodge, *Genealogies*, pp.82, 83; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp.303, 306. For a justification of the choice of members of the Abdusalami house, see RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, *Political Situation, M. Sulu's History*, pp.8-9.
  2. Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p.303; NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, *General Notes, Addendum, 1939*, quoting from Palmer, 1913.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, *General Notes, Addendum, 1939*, paras.6-7.

around Ilorin, or metropolitan districts. The people of these districts (roughly coterminous with what until recently<sup>1</sup> were the Asa, Moro and the rural parts of Ilorin Local Government Areas of present-day Kwara State) remained much more thoroughly and for much longer under the control of Ilorin Town than did the other districts, populated by Igbomina, Igbolo and Ekiti groups, which were also officially included in Ilorin Emirate under British rule.<sup>2</sup>

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1. A new local government reorganisation has recently taken place, resulting in the subdivision of the Local Government Areas listed here.
2. On the district heads, and on prolonged control from Ilorin, see Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 1: LONG-DISTANCE TRADE AND ILORIN

An examination of long-distance trade is crucial to the story of the prosperity and decline of the Ilorin economy. The present study of Ilorin trade owes much to the pioneering work of R.J. Gavin, particularly in terms of the advantages which nineteenth century Ilorin enjoyed or created with respect to its entrepot role; the methods by which Ilorin acquired its profits from this role; the extent to which the Ilorin entrepot was beginning to decline even before the beginning of the colonial period; and the story of its further decline in the twentieth century. Attention is paid in this chapter to further developing Professor Gavin's work in these areas. Other areas examined include the routes by which this trade flowed to and from Ilorin in the nineteenth century, the commodities of trade, including slaves, the profits made by various members of the Ilorin elite, and the continuities between Ilorin and Old Oyo.

Nineteenth century Ilorin reveals itself in many ways to be a successor state of Old Oyo, and this is evident in terms of long-distance trade. The precise extent to which Ilorin owed its massive early nineteenth century enlargement,

and its takeover by the Fulani and their allies, to considerations of trade, is unlikely ever to be known. A number of points, however, attest to an awareness of such considerations among the founding fathers of the town. First, Ilorin, inhabiting the same ecological zone as Old Oyo, and similarly close to Niger crossing places, enjoyed, as Gavin has pointed out, the same natural advantages,<sup>1</sup> which may well have been a factor in its choice, both by its earliest and later settlers. Second, Ilorin was situated some forty miles south-east of Old Oyo; and its enlargement occurred when trade from that city along eastern routes to the south had been gaining in importance. Robin Law points out that Old Oyo trade with Ijebu was of some importance, but that the market for this trade, Apomu in the kingdom of Ife, was apparently only founded in the latter half of the eighteenth century, while Oyo trade initially passed to the coast by a more westerly route through Allada.<sup>2</sup> It was the Ijebu whom Afonja is said to have supplied when he took over from Oyo the activity of producing and exporting slaves to the south,<sup>3</sup> thus testifying to the importance of the eastern route.

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1. R.J. Gavin, "The Impact of Colonial Rule on the Ilorin Economy 1897-1930", Centrepoint 1 (Oct. 1977), 17, 18.
  2. Robin Law, The Old Oyo Empire c.1600-c.1836 (Oxford: O.U.P., 1977), pp.218-19.
  3. *Ibid.*, p.281.

Both the production and export of slaves to the south, plus the re-export of the same commodity from further north, had been important activities in Old Oyo,<sup>1</sup> which continued and flourished in nineteenth century Ilorin. The entrepot function of Old Oyo, with its natural advantages, plus a government well aware of the importance of trade, straddling the trade routes and controlling the exchange of goods like natron and slaves from the north for European goods and cowries from the south,<sup>2</sup> was paralleled in the new trading centre of Ilorin. It should not be suggested, however, that the parallel was exact. The Oyo kingdom, for example, which was bigger by far than Ilorin, must have controlled the trade routes for a much longer distance than its successor. And Ilorin, although its successor, was not entirely Yoruba, but a town of mixed population, its Hausa inhabitants being closely linked into the Hausa trading system which spread over a considerable area in the nineteenth century, and its Fulani royal family, unlike its Yoruba predecessors, spurning any personal involvement in trade.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid., pp.226-27.

2. Ibid., pp.214, 228.

3. Interview with His Highness Alhaji Sulu Gambari, Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82. On Old Oyo, see Law, Oyo Empire, pp.232-33.

The importance of Ilorin as a centre of trade is emphasized in the frequent comments of impressed European visitors, from the 1850s to the early years of the twentieth century. The town was described as "one of the greatest entrepots of Central Africa, and the commercial emporium of all southern Sudan and of this part of the western coast";<sup>1</sup> it was said to be the biggest market town in the interior, "famous among the negroes",<sup>2</sup> and "far and away the most important trade centre in Northern Nigerian territory on the Lagos side of the Niger".<sup>3</sup> Its importance is also revealed by the size and frequency of the caravans passing towards it from both north and south. At Raba, where traders crossed the Niger on their way to and from Ilorin, caravans of about 3000 people and upwards of 1000 head of livestock were being taken across towards Ilorin in early 1858.<sup>4</sup> At the same

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1. William H. Clarke, Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland 1854-1858, ed. J.A. Atanda (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1972), p.185.
  2. Gerhard Rohlfs, "Reise durch Nord-Afrika vom Mitteländischen Meere bis zum Busen von Guinea, 1865 bis 1867.2. Hälfte: von Kuka nach Lagos (Bornu, Bauchi, Saria, Nupe, Yoruba)", Petermann's Geographische Mitterlungen, no.34 (1872), 93, 94. For translations of this work, I am indebted to Dr. Dirk Kohnert, University of Bielefeld, and Mrs. Marion Johnson, C.W.A.S., University of Birmingham.
  3. NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Trade and Prospects of Ilorin Province, C.A. Birtwistle, para.2.
  4. Samuel Crowther and John Christopher Taylor, The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger: Journals and Notices of the Native Missionaries Accompanying the Niger Expedition of 1857-1859 (London: Church Missionary House, 1859; reprint ed., London: Dawsons, 1968), pp.148-49.

crossing point, a few months earlier, five caravans were recorded as passing within the space of a few days.<sup>1</sup> Further south, caravans of between 1000 and 3000 people were leaving Ogbomosho for Ilorin in 1855; their size was explained as due to the need for security against marauders,<sup>2</sup> but their size and frequency taken together reveal the importance of trade with Ilorin, even in a period of considerable danger on the road. The extent of trade with Ilorin was not only noted, as in the examples above, in the middle of the century, but also in 1886, when caravans from the town were said to be arriving almost daily in Lagos,<sup>3</sup> and in the years immediately after the colonial takeover in 1900.<sup>4</sup>

A number of trade routes, from various directions, converged on this major trading centre. From the south, the following can be traced. From Lagos, routes ran to Abeokuta, thence to Ibadan or Ijaye (until its desertion)<sup>5</sup> and on to the north. Alternatively, Ilorin could be reached from Abeokuta by way of Eruwa, Iseyin, (new) Oyo and Ogbomosho. At Iseyin, a more northwesterly route branched off, leading

1. Ibid., pp.94-98.

2. Clarke, Travels, pp.33, 34; Bowen Papers, Ogbomosho Baptist Seminary Roberson Collection, vol.1, p.326, 4/2/56. See also p.16 below.

3. PRO CO 147/11, Glover to Cardwell, 7/2/86, para.5.

4. NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Ilorin Trade, para.2.

5. Ijaye was deserted in 1862 (Robert Smith, Kingdoms of the Yoruba, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen and Co., 1976), pp.88-89).



through Shaki, Igboho and Igbeti. From Ibadan (reached from Abeokuta, Ikorodu or Ijebu Ode) a route through Ijaye or Fiditi, Oyo and Ogbomosho also led to Ilorin, as did more easterly routes through Iwo, either from there through Ogbomosho, or through Ede, Oshogbo, Ikirun, Inisha, Offa and Ojoku. Further east again, a route led from the coast via Ondo, Oke Mesi and either Otun or Ila and Offa to Ilorin. The easterly routes to the coast were joined at Otun by the route from Benin through Use<sup>1</sup> and Akure.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Also called Uhen, Oha or Usen.

2. CMS CA 2/0 49/03, David Hinderer, Journal, 7/6/51 and 25/7/51; Bowen Papers Ogbomosho, vol.1, p.145, Bowen to Taylor, 21/11/51; Samuel Crowther, Journal of an Expedition up the Niger and Tshadda Rivers, 2nd ed., with new intro. by J.F.Ade Ajayi (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1970), p.231; T.J. Bowen, Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labours in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa from 1849 to 1856 (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1857), p.205; Clarke, Travels, pp.143-44, 157-61; Alfred Moloney, "Notes on Yoruba and the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos, West Africa", Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society 12, New Series (1890), 599; Samuel Crowther, Niger Mission: Bishop Crowther's Report of the Overland Journey from Lokoja to Bida, on the River Niger, and thence to Lagos, on the Sea Coast from November 10th 1871, to February 8th 1872 (London: Church Missionary House, 1872), pp.20, 21-24, 26-31; J.Milum, "Notes of a Journey from Lagos to Bida, etc.(1879-80)", Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society 3, New Series (1881), 36-37; A.F. Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger (London: George Philip & Son, 1892), p.311; S.S. Farrow, "A Visit to Ilorin", Niger and Yoruba Notes 1 (1894), 28; NAI CSO 1/1 12, Lagos no.322, Moloney to Knutsford 24/10/88 and Lagos no.306, Moloney to Knutsford 10/10/88; PRO CO 147/66, no.322, Moloney to Knutsford 24/10/88, para.9; PRO CO 879/33, part 1, no. 31, encl.19, Millson to Ag. Col. Sec. 25/5/90; R.E. Bradbury, Fieldnotes from Benin 1951-61, Birmingham University Library, B.S.17, 58, 561.

Any attempt to assess the comparative importance of these various nineteenth century routes to Ilorin runs up against the problem of the frequently changing conditions of relative safety and danger along them. In some cases, routes could be completely closed. The routes from Ibadan and Abeokuta through Oyo and Ogbomosho might be considered the most important because they were the most direct: but these were often endangered and even closed. The dangers on the route between Ogbomosho and Ilorin in 1865 have already been noted,<sup>1</sup> although trade was still continuing on a large scale, indicating the importance of this particular stretch, on which caravans from Abeokuta and Ibadan converged. Conditions on the routes might change over very short periods. The Baptist missionary, Clarke, noted in the same year 1855 that

a few weeks ago such was the condition of the country between Ijaye and Ogbomosho that we came in company of a large caravan for better security and protection; now we return almost single handed, regardless of danger or confirmed as to its absence.<sup>2</sup>

Again, in 1858, the road from Ilorin through Ogbomosho to Ibadan was reported to be "much frequented"; yet a year or

1. See p.14 above.

2. Clarke, Travels, p.35.

two later it was deserted, owing to the wars.<sup>1</sup>

During such periods of danger or closure of the direct routes, much longer ones might gain in importance, as alternatives. In 1856, for example, Abeokuta's more direct route to Ilorin being closed as a result of its war with Ibadan, many traders took the longer northern route through Shaki and Igboho,<sup>2</sup> even though it took an estimated thirteen days from Abeokuta to Ilorin instead of eight or nine through Iseyin and (new) Oyo.<sup>3</sup> This more westerly route, however, had its own dangers, and it seems unlikely therefore that it was ever very much frequented, except in times of absolute necessity. The missionary Clarke, passing between Igboho, Igbeti and Ilorin in 1855, learned of an entire caravan recently captured, and of raiders both Yoruba and Bariba (from Borgu).<sup>4</sup> As late as 1900, the reputation of Igbeti was that of "the home of robbers and idlers, who .... find it a safe harbour

1. Daniel J. May, "Journey in the Yoruba and Nupe Countries in 1858", Journal of the Royal Geographical Society 30 (1860), 213; Robert Campbell, A Pilgrimage to My Motherland. An Account of a Journey among the Egbas and Yorubas of Central Africa in 1859-60 (London: W.J. Johnson, 1860), pp.108-112.
2. "Exploratory Tours in Yoruba", Church Missionary Intelligencer 7 (Jan. 1856), 18, 21, 22.
3. Bowen Papers Ogbomosho, vol.1, p.145, Bowen to Taylor, 21/11/51.
4. Clarke, Travels, pp.66, 77. He writes of the capture "of" Baribas, but it seems from the context that this should read "by".

from which to plunder travellers and neighbouring towns".<sup>1</sup>

Another yet longer route came into prominence later, with the virtually complete closure of the more direct roads in the later 1870s. This was the route from Lagos through Ondo, Ijesha and Ekiti country, by which the journey to Ilorin was said to take twenty-nine days, as against fifteen by the route from Lagos through Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ogbo-mosho.<sup>2</sup> This Ondo route is said to have fallen out of use in the mid nineteenth century, due to political disturbances in Ondo and Ife. By 1880, however, it was reported to have become very profitable, owing to the closure of the other routes.<sup>3</sup> In 1888 it was described as "free and safe";<sup>4</sup> but it could also present hazards to traders. By 1890, for example, it was "infested with Ilorin marauders" north of Oke Mesi. It passed through difficult country, no attempt was made to keep it

1. David W. Carnegie, Letters from Nigeria of the Honourable David Wynford Carnegie, F.R.G.S., 1899-1900 (Brechin: Black & Johnston, Printers and Publishers, 1902. Privately printed, not published), pp.74-75.
2. PRO CO 879/33, part 1, no.31, encl.19, Millson to Ag. Col. Sec. 25/5/90; Milum, pp.36-37.
3. G.O. Gbadamosi, "The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1968), p.137; S.A. Akintoye, "The Ondo Road, Eastwards of Lagos, 1870-95", Journal of African History 10 (1969), 581-83, 585, 588.
4. PRO CO 147/66, no.322, Moloney to Knutsford 24/10/88, para.9.

in good repair, and travellers were liable to "excessive exactions and even loss of liberty". Even at the same time as these disadvantages were reported, however, it was still of importance, at least as a major supply route for arms and ammunition to Ilorin.<sup>1</sup>

War between Ibadan and Abeokuta, with Ilorin and Ekiti subsequently joining in against the former, broke out in 1877, and soon led to the virtual closure of the more direct routes between Ilorin and the coast, as mentioned above. Hostilities continued for many years, but although trade may have been almost at a standstill by the direct routes until about 1881,<sup>2</sup> it later revived, though it was still often and seriously disturbed. In 1886, for example, the routes through Ibadan, Ikorodu and Ijebu were open, and caravans from Ilorin arriving almost daily in Lagos. The Egba people, however, at the same time, were "sullenly holding aloof from commercial pursuits".<sup>3</sup> In 1888, it is said, the Ogbomosho route was

1. PRO CO 879/33, part 1, no.31, encl.19, Millson to Ag. Col. Sec. 25/5/90. Millson calls it "the main" supply route for Ilorin, but other routes were also important. See Joseph P. Smaldone, Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp.104-107 and notes.
2. Gbadamọṣi, p.137; CMS CA 2/0 56, James Johnson, 27, Johnson to Wright 9/5/79; 53, Johnson to Wright 30/1/78; 54, Jan. 1879; 55, Jan. 1880; Milum, pp.36-37.
3. PRO CO 147/11, Glover to Cardwell, 7/2/86.

being extensively used, by traders from all parts of the country on their way to Ilorin, and the northern route from Abeokuta and Iseyin was also in use (though the continuing dangers of travel are illustrated by the report that hundreds of traders felt it necessary to seize the opportunity of accompanying, in safety, the Oyo embassy to Ilorin in 1888). In 1888-89, however, problems arose again on both these routes, following the failure of the peace negotiations. Ibadan blocked the Ogbomosho route (to activities on which she had hitherto connived) and attacked Ilorin-bound caravans on the road north of Abeokuta.<sup>1</sup> In 1890, negotiations succeeded in securing the reopening of this latter road,<sup>2</sup> and the renewal of peace initiatives in 1891 by the new Emir Moma of Ilorin appears to have signalled a general reopening of routes.<sup>3</sup>

There is less to say about the routes from Ilorin to the north. This is in part, of course, because the European observer/recorders were concentrated in the south,

1. Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yorubas, ed. O. Johnson (Lagos: C.M.S. Bookshops, 1921), pp.576-82; CMS G3 A2 /0 1891, no.26, A.F. Foster, Journal, 26/6/89; CMS G3 A2 /0 1889, no.149, Harding to Lang 4/10/89.
2. PRO CO 879/33, part 1; no.35, encl.13, Meeting Lagos Govt. House, 11/8/90.
3. Johnson, pp.609-10; Babatunde Aremu Agiri, "Kola in Western Nigeria, 1850-1950, a History of the Cultivation of Cola Nitida in Egba-Owode, Ijebu-Remo, Iwo and Ota Areas" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1972), p.70. But see p.28 below, note 2.

but it may also have been that disturbances on these routes were fewer, as the routes passed through the relatively peaceful territory of the Caliphate. Despite this relative safety, however, there was sometimes disturbance to trade. Kontagora raiders, for example, posed a threat to caravans as far south as Biri-Biri, south of Jebba.<sup>1</sup> In the 1860s the people of Share, on a more easterly route to Ilorin from the Niger, had deserted their town from fear of attack by Masaba of Nupe; their return in the early 1870s was welcomed, as the town was regarded as a place of safety in a lonely area which was potentially the haunt of robbers.<sup>2</sup> The routes between Ilorin and the north bank of the Niger were subjected to blockade and counter-blockade, on the part of Masaba on the one hand and Ilorin on the other.<sup>3</sup>

There were a number of Niger crossing places, en route south to Ilorin. In the late 1850s, Raba was an important point, described as the highway from Kano to Ilorin and the principal route to the coast;<sup>4</sup> the number of caravans crossing

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Ilorin Emirate Reorganisation of Districts, Lanwa.
  2. Crowther Report, 1871-72, p.16.
  3. Ibid., p.12; Michael D. Mason, "The Nupe Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century: a Political History" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1970), pp.486-87.
  4. Crowther and Taylor, pp.94, 95, 97; PRO FO 84/1061, Baikie to Malmesbury, 17/9/58.

there at the time has already been described.<sup>1</sup> Later, however, Masaba closed the Raba ferry, in an effort to redirect trade to a route nearer to Bida, over which he would have greater control.<sup>2</sup> It seems that his efforts succeeded, since in the 1890s the main route out of Ilorin was the "Bida Road",<sup>3</sup> and in the early years of the twentieth century it was said that the bulk of the trade passing into Ilorin from the north came through Bida, the main trade route passing from there through Muregi, Pategi and Lafiagi to Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> From Lafiagi a road led along the river to Shonga,<sup>5</sup> which was brought under Bida control,<sup>6</sup> then south to Share. From both Shonga and Share, roads branched off to the crossing at Raba.<sup>7</sup> From Share, the route led south via Igpurin and

1. See pp.13-14 above.
2. Mason, p.486; Crowther Report 1871-72, p.16.
3. G.B. Haddon-Smith, Interior Mission to Yorubaland 1893: Extracts from the Diary of G.B. Haddon-Smith, Political Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library, London, Notes on Ilorin.
4. NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Ilorin Trade, para.6; NAK Ilorprof 5/6282, Re-Assessment Report on Sharagi District, 1918, paras.26, 49; NAK \_\_\_\_\_, Assessment Report Patigi District, 1912, para.29.
5. Crowther Report 1871-72, pp.15-16.
6. Mason, pp.306-307.
7. Milum, p.31; A.F. Mockler-Ferryman, British Nigeria (London: Cassell & Co., 1902), p.186; Clarke, Travels, p.170.



Oke Oyi to Ilorin.<sup>1</sup>

The town of Jebba, on the Niger, seems to have been of little importance until the last few years of the nineteenth century, although a route from the north crossed the river at Buka, not far away.<sup>2</sup> Jebba itself, however, seems not to have gained importance until a Niger Company station was opened there, and the Ilorin salt trade was transferred there from the Shonga station, which was closed in 1889.<sup>3</sup>

The route from the north which crossed the river at Buka was said to lead from Sokoto through Jega to Kontagora, and from there to the Niger and Ilorin. A further route led from Kontagora, via Ogudu on the Niger to Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> At the turn of the century, however, it would appear, as already suggested,<sup>5</sup> that the bulk of Ilorin's trade passed along the more easterly route through Bida to the Niger.

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1. See eg. Crowther Report 1871-72, pp.16-17.
  2. S.F. Nadel, A Black Byzantium (London: O.U.P. for I.A.I., 1942), p.319.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Report on Local Government Reform in the Metropolitan Districts of Ilorin Emirate (excluding Bala and Afon), para.25; NAK Ilorprof 5 6280, Lanwa District Land Boarding, Budgen 11/2/19; Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, pp.123, 217; PRO FO 83/1239, Carter to Ripon 28/3/93, para.4.
  4. Nadel, p.319; RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers s.64, Kontagora Province Report, pp.118-19.
  5. See p.22 above.

Ilorin's rise to prominence as an entrepot was greatly assisted, as Gavin has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> by its position immediately to the south of the Niger crossing places detailed above. A further natural advantage, also suggested by Gavin, was the ecological position of the town. With respect to the traders and beasts of burden coming from the north, "the ecology of the region required that a good part of this mass of men and animals should make a halt somewhere in Ilorin's region. Further movement southeastward toward the tsetse infested forest raised death rates among donkeys to unacceptable levels .... Where the natron, which was one of the most important commodities going south, had to be transferred from its leather topped baskets into headloads for onward movement commercial transactions would normally arise, and likewise with other goods".<sup>2</sup> Fear of tsetse infection was not, however, always sufficient to prevent the passage of pack animals to the south of Ilorin, as these animals were reported as passing through Shagamu to Lagos in the 1890s, accompanying Hausa traders.<sup>3</sup> While no evidence has been found to suggest any lessening of tsetse infestation at this time, a number of other factors may be suggested in explanation of this report. This was a period when Hausa traders were venturing in some numbers

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1. Gavin, "Impact", p.17.

2. Ibid., p.18.

3. Agiri, p.70.

to the south;<sup>1</sup> and being more skilled in the treatment and usage of pack animals than southern traders would have been, they were more likely to take their animals along. In addition, the report dates from a time of relative safety on the roads,<sup>2</sup> and consequently shorter journey time.<sup>3</sup> If the animals were to be exposed to infection for a relatively short period only, then the risks involved in their use may well have lessened sufficiently to be outweighed by their advantages ("asses" being reported to be able to carry the loads of six men),<sup>4</sup> especially when the profits to be gained in the developing kola trade<sup>5</sup> are borne in mind.

Ilorin was geographically situated between north and south, and it was actively concerned, as Gavin has shown, with encouraging and emphasizing its mediatory role between the two.<sup>6</sup> It provided a wealth of interpretary and mediatory skills, whereby, for example, Hausa-speaking traders could find in its Gambari quarter "the lodging house keepers, the brokers, the dealers and the mallams who could see

1. See pp.71-72 below.
2. Agiri, pp.69-70.
3. See eg. Clarke, Travels, pp.23, 33, on delays attendant on dangerous conditions.
4. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.
5. On the kola trade, see p.71 below.
6. Gavin, "Impact", p.18.

to their wants, direct them to buyers, provide finance as required, help find return cargoes and advise generally about the local environment".<sup>1</sup> Its government was concerned to underline the mediatory role of the town, by emphasizing especially Hausa, the main language of trade,<sup>2</sup> by appointing officials to deal with European visitors,<sup>3</sup> who were regarded

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1. Ibid., pp.19-20.

2. Ibid., pp.18-19, and notes 22 and 23, citing Bowen, Central Africa, p.193; Clarke, Travels, p.82. Gavin notes both Hausa and Kanuri, spoken during Clarke's visit, as "the languages of business".

The situation with respect to languages used during audiences with the emirs is somewhat complex. When Bowen visited the emir in 1855, the ruler greeted him in Yoruba, then proceeded to interrogate him in Hausa, which the interpreters translated. Clarke, later in the 1850s, reported that the court language was Fulfulde, but that not infrequently the emir, who could speak four or five languages, used Kanuri or Hausa, which were immediately translated into Yoruba by his interpreter. A.C. Mann, in 1855, reported that the emir would not speak Yoruba, although able to do so, and that the interpreter would translate what was said by non-Hausa speaking visitors into Hausa for him (CMS CA 2/0 66, A.C. Mann, Journal, 3/8/55). Campbell, who visited Yorubaland in 1859-60, reported that although the emir could understand Yoruba well, the customs of the court required that everything should be communicated to him by the interpreter in Fulfulde (Campbell, p.104). In 1889, the emir's salutations to Commissioner Macdonald's party were made in Hausa, Yoruba and Fulfulde, and Macdonald had his commission read aloud in Yoruba (Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.189). Despite the complexity, it can be seen that in all examples given except one, the use of the Hausa language was maintained.

3. Gavin, "Impact", p.20, citing Clarke, Travels, p.81. On officials who were charged with dealing with Europeans, see also eg. CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 1-4/8/55; Campbell, pp.101-102; Crowther Report 1981-72, p.17; Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, pp.185-86; Farrow, "Visit to Ilorin", p.29.

as important potential traders,<sup>1</sup> and by seeing to these visitors' entertainment.<sup>2</sup>

Ilorin's government was also concerned with protecting the entrepot trade (together with the flow of essential supplies for Ilorin itself) by ensuring the availability and safety of routes leading to the town. To the south, for example, Gavin suggests, "Ilorin had to manoeuvre in Yoruba politics to ensure that whenever its own road due south to Ibadan was closed, a suitable alternative through Abeokuta or Ekiti would remain open".<sup>3</sup> But in some cases the government's actions, though ultimately intended to protect the trade, led to quite the opposite results, at least in the short run. Ilorin's attempt, for example, to counter Masaba's closure of the Raba ferry took the form of a threatened blockade and was answered by a threat to close the Niger crossings altogether.<sup>4</sup> Ilorin entered the war against Ibadan in 1878, it is said, because its traders were unable to come through Ibadan with their produce or goods in the preceding year, and therefore Ibadan was considered "a great disturber to the trade of

1. See Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.192.
2. On the (sometimes lavish) entertainment of these visitors, see pp.38-39 below.
3. Gavin, "Impact", p.22.
4. Mason, pp.486-87; Crowther Report 1871-72, p.12.

the country on account of its mischievous restlessness";<sup>1</sup> but the immediate effect of Ilorin's action was to render the trade routes more dangerous still. And its activities against Ibadan took the form, for example, of a blockade of the foodstuffs trade from Ilorin to the south,<sup>2</sup> which must have resulted in considerable losses to the town. Furthermore, Ilorin raiders were active in Ekiti country in 1890, despite the fact that this was a time when the eastern route to the coast through Ekiti was of importance due to the dangers on other routes, and when it was one of Ilorin's major supply lines for arms.<sup>3</sup> Attacks on Ekiti areas by Ilorin armies had in fact been going on for many years.<sup>4</sup> In the 1850s, for example, the town of Otun had been partly destroyed, and its inhabitants scattered, by an army from Ilorin, even though it was one of the main

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1. British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies Africa 63 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), pp.383-84, Moloney to Rowe, 12/5/81.
2. Information from Emmanuel Alao, of Oluo Isale ruling house, Oke Oyi, 16/1/81. The date to which his information refers is somewhat uncertain; he mentions the "Jalumi War", an episode of 1878, but says that the blockade took place after the settlement of the war by Britain, as revenge (i.e. in the 1890s).
3. See p.19 above, and note 1.
4. NAI CSO 26 51597, Assessment Report Ekiti Division, Ondo Province, 1929.

suppliers of palm oil to that city.<sup>1</sup> It would appear, from these Ekiti examples, that in the eyes of some members of the Ilorin warrior elite, the profits to be gained from slave capture tended to outweigh considerations of trade. Certainly this would apply to those warriors with only limited access to profits from the entrepot trade; but it may also have applied to successive Baloguns Gambari, in whose quarter the entrepot trade was centred,<sup>2</sup> but who were also among the most assiduous acquirers of slaves.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever was the case elsewhere, the Ilorin authorities were certainly making efforts to ensure the safety of the westerly route south from the Niger,<sup>4</sup> at least in the later years of the nineteenth century. When the Niger Company moved from Shonga to set up a station at Jebba, a hunter was engaged with his followers to protect the route from

1. On the palm oil trade between Ekiti and Ilorin, see Gavin, "Impact", p.40, note 6. D.J. May, who passed through in 1858, says that about five years before, Otun had been attacked and partly destroyed by an Ilorin army and many of its inhabitants had fled, but it had not been subjected to Ilorin and was still paying tribute to Ibadan in 1858 (May, p.223).
2. See pp.43, 45-46 below.
3. On the numbers of slaves owned by successive Baloguns Gambari, see Chapter 5, p.234; and Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.
4. Which was subject to attack by Kontagora raiders. See p.21 above.

Jebba to Bode Sadu, on the way to Ilorin.<sup>1</sup> In making these arrangements, Ilorin was attempting to protect its salt supplies,<sup>2</sup> and also, in all probability, taking advantage of the Niger Company's move to try to lure the trade away from the more easterly route, and thus away from Bida's control.<sup>3</sup> Tolls were collected at Bode Sadu,<sup>4</sup> probably to serve as payment for those who were providing the protection service. No suggestion has been found, however, that Ilorin collected any tolls on the eastern route from the river. They were already collected by a Bida representative at Shonga,<sup>5</sup> and by Share,<sup>6</sup> and for Ilorin also to collect, along the relatively short stretch of the route which lay within its control, might have placed an excessive burden on the traders.

Tolls were also collected on the route from Ogbomosho to Ilorin at Obanisuwa,<sup>7</sup> and at the gates of Ilorin itself.

1. NAK Ilorprof 5 6280, Lanwa District Land Boarding, Budgen 11/2/19.
2. See p.23 above.
3. On this easterly route, see pp.22, 23 above.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Emirate Reorganisation, Lanwa.
5. Mason, p.307.
6. Rohlfs, p.92.
7. Johnson (p.576) calls it "the last toll gate to Ilorin", and Haddon-Smith "the gate of Ilorin" (21/2/93).



Of these gates there were more than a dozen,<sup>1</sup> some of importance, others only minor entrances leading from the farms outside the town. Of all of them, the most important were the Hausa Gate, through which the route from the north (the western and eastern branches having come together outside the town)<sup>2</sup> led into the commercial Gambari quarter; and the Agbeshoro or Oyo Gate, through which a major route led away to the south.<sup>3</sup>

There is some disagreement as to who controlled the gates and received the tolls, but it seems likely that the gates were in the hands of the various major chiefs. For one thing, it is reported that the post of keeper at each gate was "within the patronage of some great man".<sup>4</sup> For another, it is claimed by the present Sarkin Gobir<sup>5</sup> that the Ero or Sobi Gate was controlled by his ancestors, to whom the tolls were paid.<sup>6</sup> The present emir, however, claims that an emir's representative was stationed at each

1. H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), p.276; Mockler-Ferryman, British Nigeria, p.190; Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.
2. PRO CO 147/124, Plan of Ilorin by C.F.S. Vandeleur.
3. For these gates, see map 2, p.367; also Hermon-Hodge, p.275, on the Agbeshoro Gate.
4. Hermon-Hodge, p.275.
5. On the Sarkin Gobir, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.
6. Interview with the Sarkin Gobir, Ilorin, 23/4/83, conducted by A.I. Alesinloye and H.J. O'Hear. On this interview, see Bibliography, p.344.

gate, or at least at each of the most important, to collect the dues, which he submitted daily to the Sarkin Dogari in the emir's household,<sup>1</sup> who submitted them in turn to the emir.<sup>2</sup> But even if emirs' representatives were indeed stationed at the most important gates, it is still likely that the tolls passed first through the hands of representatives of the chiefs, before being handed on to those of the emir. This is especially likely to have been the case in the later years of the nineteenth century, given the weakness of the emir with respect to his baloguns at that time.<sup>3</sup>

Some question also exists as to the extent to which tolls actually contributed to the income of the Ilorin elite as a whole. Gavin has suggested that they were of no great economic importance: that the amounts collected could have little more than satisfied the wants of the gatemen, their superiors and staff, and that informal payments for access to the market were of much greater value.<sup>4</sup> In 1893 it was recorded that tolls varied from 20 to 100 cowries on each "package" of "foreign goods".<sup>5</sup>

1. On the Sarkin Dogari, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.
2. Interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82.
3. On the emir's weakness vis à vis his baloguns, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.7.
4. Gavin, "Impact", pp.22-23.
5. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.

At the turn of the century they were said to have been 2d a load,<sup>1</sup> which, as Gavin has pointed out, was as little as one sixth of one per cent of the value of a natron load.<sup>2</sup>

It may be that these tolls were much lower than those paid elsewhere. In the early years of the nineteenth century, for example, tolls of 250 cowries were recorded for every loaded animal at Wazo, in Kontagora area; and 300 to 500 at a town in Yauri.<sup>3</sup> The contrast with Ilorin is underlined when it is realised that these figures were recorded prior to the periods of inflation in which cowrie values were so much eroded.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the amounts collected in Ilorin may not have been insignificant as a source of income. In the early 1860s, 2000 cowries or one head<sup>5</sup> at Abeokuta were worth 1/9, an amount which it was said could keep a man for a week.<sup>6</sup> In Ilorin towards

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, P.M. Dwyer, Extracts from Reports Ilorin 1902-1908, July 1902.
2. Gavin, "Impact", p.22.
3. Clapperton, cited in Akin L. Mabogunje, Urbanization in Nigeria (London: University of London Press, 1968), p.62.
4. On cowrie inflation, see pp.52-54 below.
5. For the number of cowries in a head, see Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.306; General Staff, War Office, Military Report on Northern Nigeria, vol.1 (General) (London: H.M.S.O., 1908), p.140.
6. Richard F. Burton, Abeokuta and the Camaroon Mountains. An Exploration (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1863), vol.1, p.129.

the end of the century a head was still worth between 7d and 1/3,<sup>1</sup> which was still an amount of some value in comparison with costs of living and wage rates.<sup>2</sup> At these values, while 20 cowries per load would be of small account, a hundred would not, especially when the large numbers of loads passing daily through the major gates are borne in mind.

In addition, the value of tolls collected in Ilorin was increased by various means. For example, two tolls were levied on traders approaching from the north, one at the Asa River just outside the town, and one at the gate itself.<sup>3</sup> In addition, goods were taxed both on entering and leaving the town.<sup>4</sup> Extra payments were very probably also exacted in addition to the basic toll; in 1902 the British Resident reported that the emir was said to have been entitled to a tax of 2/6 on each donkey:<sup>5</sup> although the amount seems inordinate, in comparison with the

1. Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, pp.298-305, 306.
2. Ibid., p.306, gives details of Ilorin food prices in 1889 (eg. fowls 1/6 per dozen, eggs 1d per dozen, yams 2d per dozen). Sylvia Leith-Ross records that in 1907 a carrier earned 6d a day, or 3d when returning home without a load; and that a man could live on a penny a day (Sylvia Leith-Ross, Stepping Stones, ed. and with an intro. by Michael Crowder (London and Boston: Peter Owen, 1983), p.47).
3. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, July 1902.
4. Interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83.
5. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, July 1902.

basic toll rate.

It is said by the present Sarkin Gobir that his ancestor, controlling the Ero Gate, exacted only one cowrie per person as toll; this however is likely to be merely a conventional figure, representing a small amount, since the Sarkin is also said to have exacted, if no money were available, an equivalent in foodstuffs.<sup>1</sup> That it was indeed only a small amount he collected, however, is suggested by the position of his gate,<sup>2</sup> which must have dealt mainly with the influx of produce from the farms; and there is likely to have been a considerable difference between the amounts extracted from wealthy caravan traders at the major gates and those from farmers or local produce traders.<sup>3</sup> Even foodstuffs entering the town from a relatively long distance, such as palm oil from Otun, entering at the main gates, probably escaped quite lightly, since high tolls on them would only have led to higher prices for Ilorin consumers. Indeed, farmers actually residing in the town were supposed to pass

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1. Interview with Sarkin Govir, 23/4/83.

2. See map 2, p.367.

3. Haddon-Smith records that only "a small portion was levied on "produce of the country" (Notes on Ilorin). Hermon-Hodge writes of "one yam or its equivalent" (p.275).

through the gates free, although predictably a certain amount of "extortion" was reported.<sup>1</sup> Thus, while the chiefs controlling the major gates of Ilorin might expect fairly substantial amounts in tolls, those controlling the minor gates might receive relatively little.

Whatever the precise economic value of tolls to their recipients, the informal payments made by traders for access to the market must also have represented an important source of income. That this was so, although little direct evidence is available, is strongly suggested by the major role played by other types of access payments in Ilorin: for access to land, for example, to justice and to information,<sup>2</sup> Ilorin providing a classic example of what has recently been termed a "clientilist" society.<sup>3</sup>

Gavin has given a graphic account of the process by which such access to the market might be achieved.

A.F. Mockler-Ferryman, who visited Ilorin on an official mission in 1889, commented "the importance of being adequately provided with presents in these countries cannot be overestimated, for without the wherewithal to "square" the chiefs it is impossible to travel". His superior, Macdonald, brought £150 worth of presents as

1. Hermon-Hodge, p.275.
2. See Chapter 5, pp.228-30, 282-83. The experience of the present writer also testifies to the role played by baba kekeres and access payments.
3. R. Jeffries, "Beyond the Crisis in African Studies", West Africa, 16/5/83, p.1179.

envoy of the Queen; it was believed he intended to open up a trade in shea butter and this was regarded as a satisfactory introductory payment. What the government controlled was access to the market - by individuals, groups and the subjects of other powers .... To get such access, depending on one's status and the complexity of one's case, one could have to climb through tier upon tier of officials, just as political access to secure a favour, the ransom of a relative or the return of plundered property, could require a similar ascent through level after level of more generalised knowledge, wisdom and wealth until one prostrated and begged at the Emir's feet .... Of course one could not embark on such an ascent with empty hands, and begging at every level required a payment. For most purposes, the regular trader in the town was spared the rigours of negotiating the hierarchy since each institutionalized sector of the economy .... had its appropriate gateway <sup>1</sup> to authority, its official baba kekere ....

Customarily, strangers arriving in Ilorin waited for some days, assigned to a baba kekere,<sup>2</sup> their movements curtailed, before being called to an audience with the king. Following this audience they could move around more freely. This was a routine which was experienced and noted on numerous occasions by missionaries and envoys to the town.<sup>3</sup> Although

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1. Gavin, "Impact", p.23.

2. Literally "little father". Actually an intermediary.

3. See eg. CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 1-3/8/55; Campbell, pp.100-102. On the baba kekere system see also Farrow, "Visit to Ilorin", p.29.

For delays before seeing kings of other towns, see eg. Clarke, Travels, pp.150-51; on seclusion of visitors before seeing the king in Ijebu, see CMS G3 A2/0 1889, 149, Harding 4/10/89. In Ijebu, payments for access to roads were made to the king and the baba kekere.

these visitors believed it to be simply a matter of protocol, it may also have been elaborated as an essential stage in the achievement of access to the market. The emir would wish, no doubt, for time to investigate and interrogate his visitors and to make sure of their intentions (including their intention to pay) before allowing them access to the commercial sector of the town. In 1857, while Clarke and his party were allowed some freedom of movement as their visit to the emir was delayed longer than normal (by the latter's illness), one of the two places they were still restricted from visiting was the emir's market.<sup>1</sup>

Although the emir might receive a sizeable payment in exchange for his permission to trade, it is not certain that this actually represented a great deal of personal profit. In the case of important visitors, much of this would be siphoned off by his obligation to give out substantial presents in return for theirs. When the C.M.S. missionary, A.C. Mann, and his party came to Ilorin in 1855, the emir presented them not only with provisions for their stay but also with a horse.<sup>2</sup> A later missionary visitor received several bags of

1. Clarke, Travels, pp.103-105. The other place was Sobi Hill outside Ilorin. This may have been forbidden for religious or security reasons. On Sobi, see also Farrow, "Visit to Ilorin", p.37; but also CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 11/8/55.
2. CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 1-12/8/55.



cowries and ten loads of yams.<sup>1</sup> In 1872, Samuel Crowther was entertained, by the emir and the Magaji Okaka,<sup>2</sup> with four bullocks, six bags of cowries, sixteen hundred yams, four pots of palm oil, and forty loads of guinea corn for the horses, such lavishness being occasioned, no doubt, by the emir's desire to retain cordial relations with Masaba of Nupe, from whom Crowther had come, and who had recently threatened a complete stoppage of trade.<sup>3</sup>

The baba kekere, operating in the access - to - market process, was one form of middleman. Ilorin people also profited as middlemen in the market itself, as both "landlords" (mai gida) and "brokers" (dilali). The need for safe accommodation with a reliable landlord is illustrated by the reports, current in the nineteenth century, of the dangers to be encountered in Ilorin,<sup>4</sup> although these may have been deliberately exaggerated, in order to encourage traders into the landlords' hands. It is clear, however, for Ilorin as for other areas linked into the Hausa trading system, that these so-called landlords were in reality large-scale brokers (the scale of their businesses being confirmed

1. Farrow, "Visit to Ilorin", p.29.
2. Chief of one of the sub-wards of Balogun Fulani Ward.
3. Crowther Report 1871-72, Introduction and pp.12, 17, 32. See also p.27 above.
4. CMS CA 2/0 85/265, Henry Townsend, Journal, 21/8/59; CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 13/8/55.

by the fact that in 1922 the incomes of "landlords" as a group were estimated well to exceed those of "brokers" (that is, brokers who were not also landlords),<sup>1</sup> who offered accommodation and other facilities in order to attract customers to their brokerage businesses.<sup>2</sup> There is some disagreement in the sources as to whether any actual accommodation fee was paid at all. In 1902 the Resident reported that traders did have to pay for their quarters and grazing grounds;<sup>3</sup> but in 1912 it was said that no actual lodging fee was charged.<sup>4</sup> It may be that the earlier of these two reports reflects the nineteenth century situation, while the later results from the decline in trade, the landlords being forced to make special offers, such as free accommodation, to attract clients. This supposition is supported by the fact that by 1912 landlords were having to send out touts from the town, in order to attract business.<sup>5</sup> Whatever the situation as regards the accommodation fee, however, it is clear from the account

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, appx.4.
  2. On landlord-brokers elsewhere, see eg. Abner Cohen, "The Social Organisation of Credit in a West African Cattle Market", Africa 35 (1965), 10.
  3. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, July 1902.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Re-Assessment Report by A/R Lethem, Progress Report, para.37 (this report is also to be found in NAK SNP 7 2807/1912.
  5. *Ibid.*, para.37.

given below that the incomes of landlord-brokers were obtained very largely from brokerage.

The traveller coming into Ilorin, it is said, would appoint an agent to take care of the sale of his goods. This agent -- clearly a "landlord" -- would take care of his client in terms of accommodation, food and general welfare. The goods of the client would be sold through his agent, to whom the seller would pay a commission of about one quarter of the selling price. The agent would then use half of this to purchase a gift for the client, thus effectively reducing the commission paid to some ten or twelve per cent.<sup>1</sup> This percentage is confirmed by other sources, which report first that the amount paid was two shillings in the pound<sup>2</sup> and second that on cattle costing four to five pounds each in 1922, the charge was five shillings per animal.<sup>3</sup> This second source also confirms that in general (the examples of cattle and general dealers being given) the commission was paid by the seller.<sup>4</sup>

With respect to the sale of slaves, however, brokerage arrangements appear to have been somewhat different. According

1. Interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83.
2. Colonial Reports Annual: Northern Nigeria 1900-1913 (London: 1900-1914), bound volume 1900-1911, p.298 (1904).
3. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, paras. 32, 38.
4. Ibid., para.38.

to an 1893 report, in the case of slave sales the agent's fee was paid by the purchaser, and was a fixed charge of five heads of cowries, "exclusive of the purchase money";<sup>1</sup> this last phrase may perhaps be taken to suggest that a further amount, maybe a percentage of the purchase price as with other commodities, would also be paid by the seller. The fee mentioned above would by the exchange rates of the time be worth between some three and six shillings per slave, given that slaves in Ilorin were selling at about five to eight pounds each.<sup>2</sup> A later report, while agreeing that a fixed charge was to be paid to the agent per slave, asserts that it would be paid by both seller and buyer, at 1/9 from each.<sup>3</sup>

A further source of income was obtained through manipulation of the bargaining process. The broker would agree on a price with the prospective buyer, but would present only part of this to the seller of the goods. If the seller refused it, then the broker would return to him later, having added a few shillings, claiming that it had been done by the prospective buyer. He would absorb the difference between the price actually paid by the buyer and that which the seller accepted,<sup>4</sup> although obviously

1. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.

2. Ibid. See also p.57 below, note 1.

3. Carnegie, p.94.

4. Joseph Ayodele Ariyo, "Ilorin, Its Origin and Growth" (B.A. dissertation, A.B.U. 1969), p.33.

his ability to do this would be somewhat limited, if he was to retain the confidence of his clients.

All in all, the income of large-scale landlords and brokers must have been very considerable. In the early twentieth century, when an average man was earning perhaps some five to ten pounds per annum, some of the large brokers in Ilorin were estimated to be earning up to two or three hundred;<sup>1</sup> and this at a time when the entrepot trade was in decline.

Most of the profits from this trade went to middlemen from Ilorin itself, although there is evidence to suggest that both Hausa from the north and men who were described as "Moors and Arabs" were also active as landlord-brokers in the town.<sup>2</sup> The vast majority of the landlords, however, were Ilorin Hausa, 292 out of 296 men following this occupation in 1922 being registered as residing in the Hausa-peopled areas of Gambari Ward, as seen in Table 1, on the following page. "Brokers" (who were not also landlords) in 1922 were somewhat more evenly spread around the town, but a sizeable number were clustered in this same area.

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, para. 37 and appx.4.
  2. James Frederick Schon and Samuel Crowther, Journals of the Rev. James Frederick Schon and Mr. Samuel Crowther, who, with the Sanction of Her Majesty's Government, Accompanied the Expedition up the Niger, in 1841 (London: Hatchard and Son, Nisbet and Co., Seeleys, 1842), p.320; Bowen Papers Ogbomosho, vol.1, p.26, Bowen Journal, 16/12/53 and p.327, 4/12/56; Crowther and Taylor, p.56. In one case an "Arab" was identified as being in actual fact an Egyptian. Crowther and Taylor, pp.97-98.

TABLE 1: BROKERS, LANDLORDS AND TRADERS, 1922<sup>1</sup>

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Sub-ward</u>	<u>Brokers<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Lodging House Keepers</u>	<u>Traders</u>	<u>Total Male Pop.</u>
Fulani	Fulani	3	3	29	678
	Okeogun	4	-	26	388
	Okaka	-	1	10	250
Gambari	Sarkin Zango	46	204	54	1173
	Sarkin Karuma	17	88	6	974
	Bari	12	-	29	533
Emir's	Ibagun	3	-	57	1488
	Magaji Gari	7	-	153	1613
	Baboko	2	-	47	674
Alanamu	Badari	-	-	14	198
	Alanamu	10	-	488	2929
	Adewole	3	-	179	1757
Ajikobi	Bandawaki	2	-	110	666
	Ajikobi	29	-	279	3009
	Ojuekun	5	-	210	1627
	Ogidi	-	-	46	760
	Oloje	2	-	3	626
	Zarumi	-	-	42	659

£

1. Source: NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town by H.E. Priestman, appendices.

2. Two large cloth brokers are identified, one in Ajikobi Sub-Ward, one in Magaji Gari Sub-Ward.

Much of the gain, then, from the entrepot trade was flowing specifically into the Hausa quarter of Ilorin Town, a fact which is further illustrated by reports of the Gambari market. Although the Baptist missionary, Clarke, saw in the emir's market an "immense throng that covered an acre or more",<sup>1</sup> it was the Gambari market where "all the fine goods such as saddles, silk-sash, raw silk, trona and many other articles, brought by interior traders, [were] deposited", and one might catch "a glimpse of the industry of the people and something of the trade that knows scarcely any bounds on this side of the Atlantic on the one hand and the Mediterranean on the other".<sup>2</sup> This impression is confirmed by another observer a few years later who saw in the same market "fine horses, donkeys, mules, horse-trappings, swords, leather work, silk clothing, tobés,<sup>3</sup> antimony, salt, cola nuts, stationery" and other articles for sale.<sup>4</sup> In the 1890s clothes, including "some very handsome Mahomedan gowns" fetching as much as five pounds each, leather work, swords, horses and asses were sold in the Gambari

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1. Clarke, Travels, pp.104-105. See also CMS G3 A2 /0 1895, 36, Report of Journey to Ilorin undertaken by S.S. Farrow, 13/11/93 - 5/12/93.
  2. Clarke, Travels, p.84.
  3. A "tobe" was a loose robe. See eg. R.H. Stone, In Afric's Forest and Jungle (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1900), p.30.
  4. Campbell, p.106.

market, although similar goods were also available in Alanamu market.<sup>1</sup> By 1912, the Gambari quarter was still regarded as the commercial centre of the town, containing the chief market, where "kolas, antimony, potash, and all kinds of manufactured articles, homemade or imported by rail or caravan" were sold.<sup>2</sup> Slaves were offered for sale in the Gambari, emir's and Asunara (in Balogun Fulani quarter) markets, the first-mentioned being maybe the most important centre for this commodity.<sup>3</sup> The number of slaves on sale in the Ilorin markets was subject to variations, from 500 to 600 being observed at the end of the 1850s, "hundreds" some twenty years later, and 30, 50 and 100 on various occasions in 1893.<sup>4</sup> The best slaves,

1. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4/900/1912, Progress Report, paras.8, 40.
3. Campbell (p.62) says that the Gambari market was almost exclusively devoted to the sale of slaves. Haddon-Smith (22/2/93 and Notes on Ilorin" refers to slaves sold in both the Gambari and emir's markets. Farrow, in CMS G3 A2 /0 1895, 36, indicates that they were for sale only in the Gambari market. Oral sources also mention these two markets, plus Asunara (interviews conducted by Otolirin Adesiyun with the following, in Ilorin: Mustapha Mesuna, Adana Compound, 10/7/75; Alfa Sheu, Alowa Compound, 12/7/75; Aminu Sinhaba, Sayodun Compound; Alfa Salimonu, Pakata Isale Oja, 14/7/75; Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Olabintan Compound, 19/7/75. On Adesiyun's interviews, see Bibliography, p.351.
4. Campbell, p.62; Milum, p.36; Haddon-Smith, 22/2/93; Gilbert T. Carter, Despatch from Sir Gilbert T. Carter, furnishing a General Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition 1893 (London: H.M.S.O., 1893), p.23; CMS G3 A2 /0 1895, 36, Report of Journey by Farrow 1893.



however, may have been sold outside the actual market place, as happened elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> a suggestion supported by the fact that only "old men, old women, middle-aged men and women, and children" were seen in the market by one 1893 observer, although it was boys and young men who were said to fetch the highest price.<sup>2</sup> Other commodities in the markets included Ilorin woven cloth, which was for sale in the emir's, Alanamu and Omoda (in Ajikobi quarter) markets.<sup>3</sup> The emir's market was said also to offer a "heterogeneous collection of country products", plus various items of European manufacture,<sup>4</sup> and food and small livestock.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, most of the markets in Ilorin were largely concerned with the sale of foodstuffs, including Ojagboro, in the Gambari quarter, which catered

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1. David Carl Tambo, "The Sokoto Caliphate Slave Trade in the Nineteenth century" (M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1974), p.3 and note 6.
2. Haddon-Smith, 22/2/93 and Notes on Ilorin.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.40; interviews conducted by Toyin Ibrahim Hassan with the following: Alfa Adelodun, Idi-Igba, July/Aug. 1981; Alfa Raji, Singini Quarter, July/Aug. 1981. On the interviews conducted by Toyin Hassan as a follow-up to those conducted by Otolirin Adesiyun, see Bibliography, p.343.
4. Carter, p.22.
5. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.40.
6. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.

for the needs of the large Hausa trading population.<sup>1</sup>

The markets were controlled by the baloguns, and perhaps other chiefs, in whose areas they were located,<sup>2</sup> these collecting revenue from the stall holders.<sup>3</sup> Although this was profitable to all the chiefs concerned, the largest proportion of profit must have flowed in the direction of those whose markets contained the more wealthy long-distance traders, dealing in luxury goods, rather than those whose markets dealt mainly with local food products and petty trade. Much of the trade in more valuable goods, however, as with slaves, must have been carried on outside the market place itself, in the houses of landlord-brokers; but in these cases, one suspects, revenue was collected in the form of periodic gifts. As for the emir, he made gains from his own market, but revenue from others went first through the hands of the baloguns,<sup>4</sup> in which process a

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.40.  
For information as to the quarters in which the various markets are situated, see NAK Ilorprof 5 3737, Ilorin Town 1939-40.
2. Ivan B. Mustain, "A Political History of Ilorin in the Nineteenth Century" (M.Phil. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1978), p.100, citing NAK SNP 15/1, no.11, Ilorin Resident's Report 1900; Abdul-Raufu Isola Ajao, "The Institution of Balogun in Ilorin c.1823-c.1960" (B.A. dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1981), p. 28. Gambari market is said to have belonged not only to Balogun Gambari, but to the Sarkin Gobir and Sarkin Gambari (interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83).
3. Ajao, p.28.
4. Ibid.

considerable amount would be siphoned off.

Many products were involved in the Ilorin entrepot trade. From the north came cloth and gowns, ivory, natron and potash, cattle and other livestock, leather and slaves, and from the south European textiles, other manufactures, spices, spirits and cowries. Cloth and gowns came both from Hausaland and Nupe. They are frequently mentioned as notable among the trade goods, and while they were costly yet they were in demand, both in Ilorin and further south.<sup>1</sup> No estimate, however, either absolute or relative, can be made of the value of this trade.

For some other goods, suggestions at least may be made of their value in relative terms. Ivory was an important item in the mid nineteenth century, but it is little mentioned thereafter, and may have been generally in decline as a trade good (though still traded at Egga on the Niger).<sup>2</sup> The group of commodities somewhat indiscriminately

1. T.J. Bowen, "Grammar and Dictionary of the Yoruba Language", Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, vol.10 (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1858), p.x; Rohlf's, p.95; interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83; RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, July 1902; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.298 (1904); SNP 7/8 146/1907, Ilorin Trade, para.11.
2. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Account of Ibadan, 23/10/51; "Exploratory Tours in Yoruba", p.22; Crowther and Taylor, p.97; Mason, p.484; Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.123.

referred to in the sources as "natron" or "potash", much of which is said to have actually consisted of natron,<sup>1</sup> and which had many and varied uses,<sup>2</sup> was brought south in some quantity throughout the century,<sup>3</sup> and appears to have been the single most important south-bound item by its end.<sup>4</sup> By the early years of the twentieth century it was closely followed in value by the cattle trade: in nine months of 1906, officially recorded figures for "potash" passing through Ilorin put its value at sixteen thousand pounds, with cattle close behind at twelve thousand.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.119 (1902); Bowen, Central Africa, p.307.
  2. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Account of Ibadan; Clarke, Travels, p.273; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.120 (1902); Paul E. Lovejoy, Caravans of Kola (Zaria: A.B.U. Press ltd., and University Press Ltd., 1980), pp.60, 123-24.
  3. See eg. Crowther and Taylor, p.97; Bowen, "Grammar", p.xviii; Rohlf's, p.95.
  4. See eg. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.16 (1900-1901).
  5. NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Ilorin Trade, paras.15, 16.  
On the importance of both "potash" and cattle by the beginning of the twentieth century, see eg. RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers, s.64, Kontagora Province Report, pp.118-19, Nupe Province Report, p.139, Ilorin Report, pp.101-102; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.119 (1902).

Unlike natron, salt came to Ilorin, ultimately or directly,<sup>1</sup> from the south. It is unlikely, however, that a great deal of it was re-exported north through the town, at least in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, since by that time Hausa traders could bypass Ilorin and obtain their salt from the traders at Egga; indeed, Ilorin received much of its own supply from the Niger.<sup>2</sup> Some of this salt from the Niger was, however, re-exported south from Ilorin during the late 1870s, when a trade embargo in the south had been placed on the importation of this commodity to Ibadan and the interior.<sup>3</sup>

Of importance to the Ilorin entrepot trade from south to north were European manufactured goods, especially cotton cloth, whose pre-eminence was observed in the late 1850s and whose importance was emphasized again in the early twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> Spirits and munitions were also re-exported through Ilorin to the north. The spirits

1. On direct supplies from the south, see eg. interview conducted by Toyin Hassan with Alfa Raji, Singini Quarter, July/Aug. 1981.
2. See eg. PRO FO 881/5913, Macdonald Report, 1889, p. 87; Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.123.
3. CMS CA 2/0 56/54, Johnson to Wright, Jan 1879.
4. PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon 6/3/58 and encl. Davis to Campbell 31/1/58; NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Ilorin Trade, para.4.



trade was reported to be of importance in the 1860s,<sup>1</sup> and to be on the increase in the early 1890s.<sup>2</sup> Guns and powder were also reported to be important re-export commodities in the 1860s,<sup>3</sup> but in general Ilorin may not have been able to compete with Nupe, which is described by a modern researcher as the principal source of munitions for the emirates further north;<sup>4</sup> in addition, many of the firearms imported into Ilorin were absorbed by the armies of the town itself.

Cowries also became in effect a trade good in the Ilorin entrepot exchange, passing from south to north. They may well have been an important item, at least for some time. Paul Lovejoy has suggested that there was an imbalance between the (greater) value of goods going south and the (smaller) value of those en route to the north, and that this was redressed for a time by the export of cowries to the north. Due to the massive inflation affecting cowries in the south from the 1850s onwards, resulting in a marked cowrie value differential between that region and the north, traders could sell their goods at inflated prices in the south, and with

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1. Rohlf's, p.95.

2. See p.69 below.

3. Rohlf's, p.95.

4. Smaldone, pp.104, 107.

the cowries they obtained there in exchange, they could buy further goods at bargain prices in the north. This, Lovejoy suggests, probably encouraged the further expansion of exports from the north.<sup>1</sup> Ilorin was certainly involved in this south-north exchange, as local informants report that cowries were received by Ilorin Yoruba traders in the southern markets in exchange for Ilorin woven cloth; these cowries were then carried back to the town,<sup>2</sup> where they were of greater value than in the south (this value differential thus probably stimulating a growth in the trade in Ilorin cloth to the south). Then, at least in the 1860s, they were among the main commodities obtained in Ilorin market by Hausa traders,<sup>3</sup> who would then carry them further north, where they were yet more valuable than in Ilorin. Lovejoy further suggests that the south-north movement of cowries probably ceased to operate by the 1870s, because once their worth depreciated beyond a certain point in the south, their bulk per unit value made it uneconomical, in terms of transport costs,

1. Paul E. Lovejoy, "Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria", Journal of African History 15 (1974), 565, 575-78.
2. Interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Olabintan Compound, 28/5/81. Interviews conducted by O. Adesiyun with Abdul Kareem, Singini Quarter, 9/7/75; Mustapha Mesuna, Adana Compound, 10/7/75; and Abdul Lasisi, Pakata, 14/7/75.
3. Rohlf's, p.95.

to move them north. An exception, perhaps, was movement north along the Niger, where transport costs were less.<sup>1</sup> Yet the overland movement of cowries to Ilorin may not have entirely ceased at this time; this is suggested by the fact that Ilorin informants, whose personal memories in general probably relate to the end of the nineteenth century, nevertheless mention cowries being brought north to the town.

Certain important trade goods were probably primarily absorbed by Ilorin itself, rather than being re-exported. Into this category come horses, for example, which were of considerable military importance to the town. The number of horses kept in the town helps to illustrate the extent of this trade; given that mortality rates were high in Ilorin conditions, and locally-bred animals too small and weak for cavalry use, there was a continual requirement for replacements through trade.<sup>2</sup> As early as 1830, it was said that Ilorin possessed "upwards of three thousand horses",<sup>3</sup> though this may have been an exaggerated figure, arrived at through fear of this powerful new state. In 1851, Barth estimated its cavalry strength at five

1. Lovejoy, "Monetary Flows", pp.578, 579.

2. Law, Oyo Empire, pp.184-85.

3. Ibid., p.283, quoting Richard and John Lander, Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger (London: John Murray, 1832), vol.1, p.190.



thousand,<sup>1</sup> although he did not himself visit the town. In 1889 at Offa, Ilorin's fighting strength was said by observers to be two thousand men, of whom about eight hundred to a thousand were mounted.<sup>2</sup> In 1897, however, Ilorin could only muster about the same number of mounted men against the Royal Niger Company force,<sup>3</sup> when the town was fighting for its very independence. But this number may not in fact have represented the entire cavalry force of the town; bearing in mind first that the emir and his military official the Sarkin Baraji alone kept some three hundred and fifty horses between them;<sup>4</sup> and also that political quarrels in Ilorin may have reduced the number available. Yet, even a force of one thousand horses reflects a considerable trade and investment given Ilorin conditions.

The horses were brought from Hausaland and Bornu, particularly Sokoto and Bornu.<sup>5</sup> The best, naturally, were sold to the chiefs, who were said to prize them highly.<sup>6</sup> The

1. Cited by Smaldone, pp.59-60.
2. PRO FO 84/1940, Macdonald Report 1889, encl. 3.
3. Smaldone, p.60.
4. Interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82. On the Sarkin Baraji, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.
5. Law, Oyo Empire, p.216; Smaldone, p.59; Bowen, "Grammar", p.xviii; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp. 182-83 (1903), 297 (1904).
6. Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin; Carnegie, p.5.

trade from the north was subject to some vicissitudes, as in 1859, when the Sultan of Sokoto had prohibited their export to Ilorin and Nupe, lest they should fall into the hands of an unauthorised Kontagora warrior.<sup>1</sup> Some trade in horses went on through Ilorin to the south, though there are disagreements as to its extent. Millson, for example, believed it to have been a "large and remunerative" traffic;<sup>2</sup> but as Clarke pointed out, "the inveterate jealousy existing between the Mohammedans and heathens prevents the general introduction of this animal into the lower country as the former well knows that the superiority of their soldiery depends upon their cavalry".<sup>3</sup> Not only Ilorin but also Yoruba states further south would naturally prohibit the trade in horses during wartime.<sup>4</sup> That only a limited export trade in horses was permitted by Ilorin to the Yoruba states further south is suggested also by the high prices which were paid for them, compared with Ilorin, in the other Yoruba states. While, in the early 1890s, a horse could be bought in Ilorin for a price equivalent to about one slave, elsewhere in Yorubaland, as Millson

1. Robin Law, The Horse in West African History (Oxford: O.U.P. for I.A.I., 1980), p.62; Crowther and Taylor, pp.422-23.
2. Alvan Millson, "The Yoruba Country, West Africa", Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society 13, New Series (1891), 578.
3. Clarke, Travels, p.229.
4. Law, Horse in West African History, p.56; Burton, vol.1, p.155.

himself reports, it would cost the equivalent of seven slaves.<sup>1</sup>

Another item absorbed mainly by Ilorin itself was raw silk, for use in its weaving industry. It was said to have been brought south to Ilorin in "immense quantities" in the 1850s, when its passage at Raba was observed.<sup>2</sup> Also brought south was lantana stone, absorbed by the Ilorin beadmakers.<sup>3</sup> The items absorbed by Ilorin represented a considerable outflow of funds from the town;<sup>4</sup> but the silk was used in the production of luxury cloth which was subsequently exported to the benefit of Ilorin; the beads were also exported; and the horses (and also firearms) were also profitably used, in the production of slaves.

1. According to Haddon-Smith in 1893, the price of slaves varied from £5 to £8, boys and young men fetching the highest price (Notes on Ilorin).

In 1897 a male Hausa slave was reported to have been bought for £10 in Ilorin (E. Adeniyi Oroge, "The Institution of Slavery in Yorubaland with Particular Reference to the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1971), p.392). Other types of slave fetched a lower price. In 1896, a woman and child were sold for less than £6 (PRO CO 147/105, encl. Odo Otin, 29/5/96); and in 1893 an old woman was likely to fetch only about £2 (Carter, p.23).

2. PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon 6/3/58 and encl. Davis to Campbell 31/1/58.

3. See Chapter 2, pp.97-98.

4. See R.J. Gavin, "The Middle Niger Valley: A Historical Overview", paper presented at Seminar on the State of Cultural Studies in Kwara State, Ilorin, Nov. 1978.

By the mid nineteenth century, Ilorin was reported to have the largest slave market in the region, and its fame as a centre of the slave trade lasted into the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> It was not only an entrepot for this trade, but also, as suggested above, a producer of this commodity. Its importance in this latter role began with Afonja,<sup>2</sup> and its slaves were captured initially from the towns of the disintegrating Oyo Empire and later from areas to the east, notably Ekiti, but also Igbomina and Yagba.<sup>3</sup> Slaves were also produced for Ilorin as payments from its tributary towns, though the importance of this source of supply is called into question by a report that Osi, for example, supplied only two slaves a year.<sup>4</sup> The lantana workers, also, may have been indirectly

1. Mustain, p.114, citing R.H. Stone; RH Mss. Afr. s. 958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904. See also Oroge, p.366.
2. See Chapter 5, p.217. See also p.11 above.
3. Peter C. Lloyd, The Political Development of Yoruba Kingdoms in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (London: R.A.I., 1971), p.43; May, p.226; NAK SNP 7/13 4703/1912, Omu District Assessment Report 1912, para.9, and Omu-Isanlu District Assessment Report 1916, para.6; NAI CSO 26 51597, Assessment Report Ekiti Division, Ondo Province 1929, part.2: Historical.
4. H.A.K. Danmole, "The Frontier Emirate: A History of Islam in Ilorin" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980), p.100, citing NAK Ilorprof no.6338, Notes on the History of Igbominas, Ekitis, Ajasse, Otun, Obo and Osi.

involved in the production of slaves, as it is said that many slaves were exchanged by Benin City for their beads.<sup>1</sup> Many of the slaves produced by Ilorin were destined to enter the market, "slave dealing" being one of the major sources of revenue, it is said, for the Ilorin chiefs.<sup>2</sup> Not all, however, were sold. Others were absorbed into food production, servicing the army in other ways, or serving in the army.<sup>3</sup> Still others were sent as tribute to Gwandu, but of these some may well have been re-exported south by the Caliphate authorities as "government surplus",<sup>4</sup> thus re-entering Ilorin as commodities in its entrepot trade.

Slaves were captured in war by the chief warriors (not by the emir, who did not himself go to war),<sup>5</sup> and slaves from tributary towns also passed through the hands of these chiefs.<sup>6</sup> The emir by Islamic law was supposed to

1. See Chapter 2, p.113.

2. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, April 1902.

3. See Chapter 5, pp.231-37, 239-40. On slaves serving in the army, see interview conducted by O. Adesiyun with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Olabintan Compound, 19/7/75.

4. Tambo, p.20. This refers to slaves being sent from Sokoto, but it could have occurred also with respect to Gwandu, to whom Ilorin sent its tribute. It is also possible that Ilorin on occasion sent tribute in slaves to Sokoto: See CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 6/8/55.

5. From the time of Emir Shita, Ilorin emirs did not, apparently, go to war. Mustain, p.96.

6. Danmole, p.93.

take one fifth of the captured slaves, and return the rest to the war leaders for distribution. It is likely, however, that these and their subordinates had already helped themselves liberally before the captives even reached the emir.<sup>1</sup> In addition, it was presumably from the emir's one-fifth share that tribute to Gwandu, of fifty to two hundred slaves per year,<sup>2</sup> was paid. So it seems clear that the emir gained less than his baloguns from the capture of slaves.

The slaves which were put on the market in Ilorin by the war chiefs and others joined a trade which flowed overwhelmingly from north to south, a fact reported consistently from the early 1850s to the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> This southward flow, despite the decline of the Atlantic slave trade, is explained by the expansion of legitimate commerce in for example Yorubaland, creating a need for labour which sustained or even increased the demand for slaves.<sup>4</sup>

1. See Tambo, p.15; Mustain, p.116; Danmole, pp.92-93.
2. S.A. Balogun, "Gwandu Emirates in the Nineteenth Century with Specific Reference to Political Relations: 1817-1903" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1971), pp. 391-92; CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 6/8/55.
3. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Account of Ibadan; "Exploratory Tours in Yoruba", pp.21, 22; CMS CA 2/0 85/265, Townsend, Journal, 25/8/59; PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon 6/3/58, encl. Davis to Campbell 31/1/58; CMS CA 2/0 69, Meakin, Journal, 31/10/59; CMS CA 2/0 56/51, Johnson, 18/5/77; interview conducted by Toyin Hassan with Alfa Raji, Singini Quarter, July/Aug. 1981; RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.
4. Tambo, p.19.

Barth had reported that the best slaves from the north were sent to Nupe, and from there down the Niger to be shipped overseas;<sup>1</sup> but it seems unlikely that this Niger route to the south could long have been or remained more important than that through Ilorin as a highway for slaves, since even in the early 1850s there were "hundreds of slaves" reportedly pouring into Ibadan from the north.<sup>2</sup> The route through Ilorin would have been at an advantage over the Niger, once the Atlantic trade was in decline, and Yoruba markets directly to its south becoming more important; and there is some evidence to suggest that by 1859 even Nupe itself was sending its slaves to Ilorin for sale.<sup>3</sup> Nupe, however, seems always to have been more concerned with the slave trade to the north rather than the south, although even this declined as more and more slaves began to be absorbed into Nupe's internal economy.<sup>4</sup> For all these reasons, therefore, it seems that the Ilorin slave route to the south was more frequented than the Niger, at least in the second half of the century.

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1. Cited in Nadel, p.104.

2. CMS 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Account of Ibadan, 23/10/51.

3. Since in 1859 a "long string of slaves", "mostly of the Tapa and Kukuruku tribes", i.e. Nupe and Afenmai, were seen on the road between Oyo and Ijaye (CMS CA 2/0 69, Meakin, Journal, 31/10/59).

4. Mason, pp.479-80, 483, 484.

Ilorin was a producer not only of slaves but of other items, products of its Yoruba craftsmen and women. Trade in the pottery produced by the women is likely to have been on a relatively small scale before the arrival of the railway in the early twentieth century, as the product was of low value compared with transport costs.<sup>1</sup> The lantana beads and Ilorin narrow-loom cloth, however, were luxury items, and both were of importance in nineteenth century long-distance trade. The beads were said to be in great demand for the regalia of chiefs in the south, and were traded especially to Benin and the Niger Delta, and to Yorubaland south and east of Ilorin. The trade, it would appear, was on a large scale.<sup>2</sup> Ilorin cloth and gowns were much in demand in Kano and Zaria, and also in the Yoruba states to the south.<sup>3</sup>

The commodities produced in Ilorin, and those exchanged there, were in the hands of a variety of traders. The great majority of the traders engaged in the northern trade to and from Ilorin were from Hausaland and even

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1. See Chapter 4, p.181.
  2. Chapter 2, pp.111-12.
  3. Chapter 3, pp.139-40.



further north,<sup>1</sup> including members of the Sharifai trading group who claimed descent from the Prophet.<sup>2</sup> Hausa traders carried Ilorin cloth to the north, but so did Ilorin Yoruba, who were also involved in bringing cotton back to the town.<sup>3</sup> The participation of Yoruba merchants in the northern trade, however, may have been limited by charges levied on them to the north of Ilorin: at Raba ferry, while a Nupe passenger and load paid only a hundred cowries and a Hausa a hundred and twenty, a Yoruba was charged two hundred.<sup>4</sup>

Traders also came to Ilorin from the south. Egba were prominent in the slave trade from Ilorin to the south.<sup>5</sup>

1. See CMS CA 2/0 66, Mann, Journal, 6/8/55, 14/8/55; Bowen Papers Ogbomosho, vol.1, p.327, 4/2/56; Clarke, Travels, p.183; Crowther and Taylor, p.97; British Parliamentary Papers, Slave Trade 45 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), p.8, Davis to Campbell, 31/1/58; Bowen, "Grammar", pp.x, xix; Campbell, p.104; Rohlfis, p.95; Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.123; Polly Hill, "Notes on the History of the Northern Katsina Tobacco Trade", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 4 (Dec. 1968), 477; Douglas Edwin Ferguson, "Nineteenth Century Hausaland Being a Description by Imam Imoru of the Land, Economy, and Society of His People" (Ph.D. thesis, U.C.L.A., 1973), pp.362, 375; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.120 (1902).
2. Bowen, Central Africa, p.196. On this group, see eg. Lovejoy, Caravans of Kola, pp.58, 68; also Paul E. Lovejoy, "Plantations in the Economy of the Sokoto Caliphate", Journal of African History 19 (1978), 358.
3. Chapter 3, pp.129, 139-40.
4. Crowther and Taylor, p.201.
5. CMS CA 2/0 69, Meakin, Journal, 31/10/59; CMS CA 2/0 56/51, Johnson, 18/5/77; RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.

They also came to Ilorin to buy woven cloth, along with others from Ijebu, Ede, Ekiti and especially Ogbomosho, plus other southern towns. Ilorin Yoruba, as seen from local informants' reports, were also prominent among the traders carrying woven cloth to the south.<sup>1</sup> Ilorin traders are frequently mentioned by nineteenth century observers, on routes to the south, travelling for example to Ibadan, Ijaye, Shaki, Eruwa, Abeokuta and Lagos, and further east to Ila (in southern Igbomina), Otun (in Ekiti), and Okeibode on the Ijesha frontier.<sup>2</sup> Although the ethnic origin of these traders is left unspecified in the observers' reports, they were likely to have been Yoruba, as few of the Ilorin Hausa engaged in the actual long-distance trade. It is evident from Table 1, on page 44, that only a very small percentage of men from the Fulani and the (Hausa areas of) Gambari Wards were occupied in actual trading, as opposed in Gambari Ward to the very large number occupied as landlords and brokers. The small numbers of Ilorin Hausa traders in the table may be compared with the enormous numbers so

1. Chapter 3, p.140.

2. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Journal, 25/7/51; Clarke, Travels, pp.22, 121, 127, 152; Bowen, Central Africa, p.188; "Exploratory Tours in Yoruba", pp.21, 22; CMS CA 2/0 56, 5, Johnson to Hutchinson 29/7/75; 7, Johnson to Sec. Lagos 24/9/75; 51, From Ibadan to Oyo and Ogbomosho (Eruwa); PRO CO 147/66, no.322, Moloney to Knutsford 24/10/88, para.9; PRO FO 83/1239, CO to FO 5/5/93, transmitting Carter to Ripon 28/3/93, para. 3; Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S. 560, 561.

listed in Alanamu and Ajikobi Wards, in Yoruba-populated Ibagun and in Magaji Gari (which contained the Yoruba Afonja compounds). The Ilorin Hausa would have perceived no necessity to engage in long-distance trade, when they could profit so handsomely from brokerage alone.<sup>1</sup> As for the Fulani in Ilorin, trade was not a traditional occupation for them, and in any case, they, like the Yoruba, would have come up against the strength of the Hausa system with respect to trading in the north.

While Ilorin Hausa made their money through brokerage, and the Yoruba through long-distance trade to the south, the town's elite also profited from trade, through tolls, access payments, control of markets and the sale of slaves. Further south, in nineteenth century Ibadan and Abeokuta, the elite profited additionally in the role of chiefly entrepreneurs, through mobilising their resources in export crop production and trade.<sup>2</sup> There is no evidence of such entrepreneurs, however, in Ilorin, although there is some suggestion of its elite members being in some fashion engaged in trade. Members of the elite are said to have engaged in trade as individuals, though not as families,<sup>3</sup> and

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1. On their income from brokerage, see p.43 above.

2. Oroge, pp.159-61, 185-86.

3. Interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83.

there is evidence to suggest their involvement (perhaps to a considerable extent) in the middleman role.<sup>1</sup> The palace itself is said not to have engaged in trade;<sup>2</sup> perhaps this would have been out of keeping with the dignity of the ruler of a reformist Islamic state. Nevertheless, in the 1860s, a brother of (probably) one of the emir's senior household officials held the monopoly of the spirits trade,<sup>3</sup> which was decidedly out of keeping with Islamic law.<sup>4</sup>

The major chiefs of Ilorin enjoyed considerable opportunities for profit, many of them in connection with trade. Their economic prosperity is reflected in their political importance, especially that of successive Baloguns Gambari and towards the end of the century of the Balogun Alanamu.<sup>5</sup> The emir also received a share of the trade profits,

1. Ariyo, pp.32-33.
2. Interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82.
3. The German traveller Rohlfs was lodged with the "chief minister", whose brother had a monopoly of the spirits trade (Rohlfs, p.95). This chief minister may well have been the Sarkin Dogari, an official of the royal household, who had dealings also with other European visitors, and was termed by them the "prime minister" (Bowen Papers Ogbomosho, vol.1, p.38, Bowen Journal 22/4/55; Campbell, pp.61, 101-102.
4. Some members of the Ilorin elite were not averse to the consumption of alcohol. See PRO FO 84/1940, Macdonald Report, p.3; Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin.
5. On the power of these baloguns, see eg. Hermon-Hodge, pp.71-74; Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin; PRO FO 83/1443, Goldie to FO 24/4/96, encl. Report of Omoru, p.1.

though this was diminished as it passed through other and acquisitive hands on the way to his own. This diminution, at its most extreme, is reflected in the report that, at the end of the century, his income came to well under fifty pounds a year.<sup>1</sup> The economic plight of the emir is further underlined when it is recalled that on such an income he would have to retain a household in keeping with his status, support Islamic scholars and royally entertain important visitors to the town.<sup>2</sup> Given his economic situation, his political weakness with respect to his baloguns can be easily understood.

Some question hangs over the economic prosperity of Ilorin in general, however, during the later years of the century, as well as over that of the emir. The entrepot role of the town may have been to some extent in decline even before the Niger Company attack and British Government takeover at the end of the century. In this connection, the extent to which Ilorin may have been already bypassed by other routes, or become merely a transit station for traders passing through, instead of exchanging their

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.
2. Interview with Dr. I.A. Gambari, of Ahmadu Bello University (son of the Emir of Ilorin), 27/9/82; Danmole, pp.94-95; on the entertainment of visitors, see pp.38-39 above.

goods in the town, will be examined here.

Ilorin was bypassed, in terms of certain commodities, by the Niger River trade. These included salt,<sup>1</sup> cowries perhaps from the 1870s,<sup>2</sup> and ivory, although trade in this last may have been in any case in general decline.<sup>3</sup> But as Gavin has pointed out, the trade in the bulky commodities of natron and potash had not, as might have been expected, been diverted to the Niger route, except for a period in the 1880s, and this ended when the Niger Company expelled the Lagosians from the river. Thereafter, the natron reverted to the Ilorin route, due, Gavin suggests, to lack of interest on the Niger Company's part and the preference of the Hausa merchants for the old channels of trade.<sup>4</sup> As he further points out, and as figures cited earlier reveal, Ilorin still retained a substantial portion of trade in this commodity in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> The trade in slaves, also, continued to come through Ilorin in the latter half of the nineteenth

1. See p.51 above.

2. See pp.53-54 above.

3. See p.49, above.

4. Gavin, "Impact", p.32. See also A.G. Hopkins, "An Economic History of Lagos" (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1964), pp.41-42.

5. See p.50 above. Gavin, "Impact", p.32 and note 57, citing Northern Nigeria Blue Book, 1911.

century<sup>1</sup> and up to the beginning of the twentieth.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the spirits trade through Ilorin appears to have been on the increase in the early 1890s, this "illicit traffic" allegedly defrauding the Company of "a portion of its legitimate trade".<sup>3</sup> At the same period it was said that many goods were unavailable at the Company's stores, and that low prices for produce were given in those stores.<sup>4</sup> Thus it would seem that Ilorin was holding its own, at least, with the Niger Company's trade. The Lagos blockade of Ilorin in 1896 helped to divert trade again from there to the Niger;<sup>5</sup> but alternative routes to the south were swiftly utilised by the town and goods were soon "passing regularly from Lagos to Ilorin by way of Iseyin and the Bariba country on the West and through the Ekiti country on the East".<sup>6</sup>

Even though trade continued to come through Ilorin, however, it was in some instances by the 1890s merely a transit trade, as suggested by the report referred to

1. See p.61 above.

2. See p.84 below.

3. Farrow, "Visit to Ilorin", p.30.

4. PRO FO 83/1239, CO to FO 5/5/93, transmitting Carter to Ripon 28/3/93, paras.3-5.

5. Hopkins, p.251.

6. PRO CO 147/107, Denton to Chamberlain 18/12/96.

earlier,<sup>1</sup> that Hausa merchants were passing through the town in the early 1890s with their pack animals, going through to the south instead of exchanging their goods in Ilorin and returning to the north. As Gavin has noted, the evidence for the nineteenth century as a whole is conflicting, with respect to Hausa traders going through to the south, but he suggests that those whose passage was reported were either individuals only, or represented only temporary captures of the caravan trade by the southern towns.<sup>2</sup> In 1851, Hinderer met traders from Kano in Ibadan.<sup>3</sup> In 1856 at Ede, Clarke met "a man from Hausaland, engaged in the silk trade".<sup>4</sup> Also in the mid fifties, Stone reported that caravans from the interior, containing Muslim traders some of whom had travelled as far as North Africa and the Middle East, met caravans from the coast in Ijaye and Ibadan.<sup>5</sup> But that Ilorin remained the terminus for Hausa caravans in general is confirmed by Crowther and Baxter's report from Raba in 1857,<sup>6</sup> and

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1. See p.24 above.

2. Gavin, "Impact", p.20 and note 30.

3. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Journal, 16/7/51.

4. Clarke, Travels, p.115.

5. Stone, pp.50, 51-52, 55.

6. PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon 6/3/58, encl. Davis to Campbell 31/1/58.



by Clarke's observation that in the whole of "Southern Soudan, there is no point where trade is so greatly concentrated as in the city of Ilorin", which "the monthly caravans from Hausa make their terminating point on the South".<sup>1</sup> And it is clear from Rohlf's observations that Hausa traders still exchanged their goods in Ilorin in the 1860s.<sup>2</sup>

By the late 1880s and 1890s, however, there is plenty of evidence of Hausa caravans passing through Ilorin to the south, in connection, particularly, with the kola trade. In the late 1880s, larger quantities of this commodity had begun to be imported through Lagos, and with the Niger route closed to indigenous traders, it was being transported north overland.<sup>3</sup> In 1889 Hausa traders were reported, carrying kola for example, on the road from Abeokuta through Iseyin to Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1890s, again, Hausa caravans were passing through Shagamu with

1. Baptist Seminary Ogbomosho, Travels and Explorations of W.H. Clarke, pp.215-16, Clarke to Tustin 20/1/58.
2. Rohlf's, p.95.
3. On the trade in kola in general, see eg. Agiri, pp. 66-70; Lovejoy, "Monetary Flows", pp.578-80; Lovejoy, Caravans of Kola, pp.113-18, 145.
4. CMS G3 A2 /0 1891, no.26, A.F. Foster, Journal, 29/9/89; Johnson, pp.579, 582.

natron, returning with kola from Lagos.<sup>1</sup> Farmer-traders from northern Katsina were also travelling to Lagos by this time, selling natron and livestock in, for example, Ilorin, Ibadan and Abeokuta, with whose proceeds they bought kola which they carried north.<sup>2</sup> In 1893 many small Hausa caravans were observed on the road south from Ilorin via Oyo.<sup>3</sup> It is in the light of the above that the reports stating that prior to the British takeover no caravan was allowed to pass through Ilorin either to north or to south, and that no trader from the south (except for a few selected merchants) was even allowed to enter the city,<sup>4</sup> should be considered; as an act of desperation on the part of an Ilorin whose entrepot role was rapidly slipping away. Nevertheless, despite all those who passed through it, Ilorin was still the terminus for many Hausa caravans as late as the turn of the century, as is clear from accounts of the city at the time of the 1897 attack, which took place when many Hausa were staying there to trade; and from reports of the earliest years of

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1. Agiri, p.70.

2. Hill, p.477.

3. Haddon-Smith, 4/2/93, 5/2/93.

4. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, July 1904; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.298 (1904).

colonial rule.<sup>1</sup>

Instead of providing a boost to Ilorin's economy, the kola trade seems rather to have encouraged its decline, with Hausa caravans passing through the town to Lagos and depriving its middlemen of profits they might otherwise have made.<sup>2</sup> It was not a complete disaster for Ilorin, however, as in the early 1890s its own traders were themselves engaged in the Lagos kola trade in large numbers,<sup>3</sup> bringing north to Ilorin supplies for the town itself, and for those Hausa traders who still preferred to terminate their journey there. Nevertheless, although Ilorin retained its entrepot role to an extent, and gained some profit from the kola trade, the events of the 1890s in general had revealed two elements working against the town. These were the strength of the Hausa system, on whose traders Ilorin depended for its entrepot role, but who were powerful enough to choose, if they so wished, to

1. Seymour Vandeleur, Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger (London: Methuen & Co., 1898), pp.283-84; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.39 (1901), 107, 120 (1902).
2. For similar conclusions on the kola trade, but in the early twentieth century, see Gavin, "Impact", pp.45-46, note 53.
3. FO 83/1239, CO to FO 5/5/93, transmitting Carter to Ripon 28/3/93.

pass through Ilorin to the south; and the strength of the economic pull to the south, which led the Hausa traders to choose to pass through.

In 1897 the forces of the Royal Niger Company attacked and "broke" the city of Ilorin. The Company did not, however, follow up its conquest with any effective administration, and in 1900 its charter was withdrawn. The British Government took over from the Company, and Ilorin became a part of the new Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> With this latter event, as Gavin has shown, the emirate finally lost any control over the entrepot trade; no longer, for example, could it even attempt to control the movements of traders from north and south.<sup>2</sup> No longer could it claim to provide the only safe route and trading centre in the area; as the new authorities pointed out in 1904

the security of the roads now enables traders to travel singly by unfrequented roads, and so to avoid the toll-stations instead of as

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1. R.A. Adeleye, Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria 1804-1906 (London: Longman, 1971), pp.187, 198-200, 213, 218-19.
  2. Gavin, "Impact", p.31; RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, April and May 1902.

formerly being compelled to unite in large numbers for mutual protection, and to travel <sup>1</sup> by certain routes only.

The effects of the emirate's loss of any power to control the movements of traders, and of the colonial government's provision of overall security, can be clearly seen in the growth of trade on the eastern routes which bypassed Ilorin. By 1912, for example, "a certain number of Hausa traders now cross at Egbom and proceed South to the Yagba country" and "the trade between Patigi and Egbe [in Yagba] has greatly increased. Nupes, Hausas and Yagbas are to be met on the road in considerable numbers. Much of the produce of the Yagba country south of Egbe is taken through to Hida. It consists principally of Yoruba kolas, palm oil and native cloth".<sup>2</sup>

Even if the traders still came to Ilorin, however, the emirate government could no longer even attempt to prevent them from simply passing through with their goods.<sup>3</sup> Even before the colonial takeover, Ilorin had been unable to prevent sizeable numbers of Hausa traders from passing

1. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.294 (1904) and Taxation of Natives in Northern Nigeria, p.807. See also PRO CO 446/46, Wallace to Lyttelton 7/10/05, encl. Miller to Orr 27/7/05.
2. NAK Assessment Report Patigi District 1912, paras.30, 31, 33.
3. As they had earlier attempted to do. See p.72 above.

through to the south.<sup>1</sup> Southern traders had also passed through on occasion (as recorded by Crowther in the early 1870s),<sup>2</sup> but it appears that it was only after 1900 that their great influx to the north began; this influx reflecting, as Gavin has suggested, the ever-growing economic power of the south.<sup>3</sup> By 1904, great numbers of southern Yoruba traders were passing through Ilorin and settling on the Niger, whereas a few years earlier, it was said, it would have been difficult to find even one on the north bank of the river (due, no doubt, to the obstructions placed in their way by the Niger Company,<sup>4</sup> but also, perhaps, to both Ilorin and Nupe opposition). Southern traders were also going on north of the Niger, to Bida for example, in increasing numbers.<sup>5</sup> As far north as Jega the market as early as 1903 was "full of Yoruba traders".<sup>6</sup>

1. See pp.71-72 above.

2. Crowther Report 1871-72, p.17.

3. Gavin, "Impact", pp.32-33.

4. See p.68 above.

5. On southern traders going to the Niger and further north, see RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers, s.64, Ilorin Province Report; Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.303 (1904), 425 (1905-1906); PRO CO 446/46, Wallace to Lyttelton 7/10/05, encl. Miller to Orr 27/7/05.

6. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.182 (1903).

Soon after the colonial takeover came another event which dealt a further blow to Ilorin's entrepot role. This was the extension of the railway to the north, reaching Kano by 1911, by which, in Gavin's words, "the old head-loading and pack transport system was doomed and along with it the preference for breaking bulk at Ilorin".<sup>1</sup> Ilorin, although on the railway line, was effectively bypassed by it.

Among the commodities which shifted fairly quickly to the railway was kola, with two-thirds of the quantity imported being shipped north by rail by 1915.<sup>2</sup> It is doubtful, however, how much entrepot profit there had been for Ilorin in this trade even twenty years before, since even then much of the kola had been in transit in the hands of Hausa traders.<sup>3</sup> With the arrival of the railway even this transit trade was to a large extent removed, while at the same time much of the Yoruba-grown kola passed along more easterly routes on its way to the north.<sup>4</sup> In the late nineteenth century some profit

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.32.

2. Ibid, p.32 and note 59, citing Railway Department Reports 1909-1916. See also Agiri, pp.266-67.

3. See pp. 71-72 above.

4. See p.75 above.

had come to Ilorin from its own traders active in the kola trade;<sup>1</sup> but their twentieth century profits, compared with those of the dominant Hausa traders,<sup>2</sup> must have been on a relatively small scale. At the end of the colonial period, traders from Ilorin or Hausa immigrants living there would buy locally-grown kola from the rural markets in the Ibadan area. In Ondo Province they would also help in harvesting the kola, with part of the crop as their fee, and first consideration in the sale of the remainder. Their kola was brought back to the Ilorin area, and after packing sent on by road or rail to the north,<sup>3</sup> but the whole process was a mere shadow of Ilorin's previous bulking and debulking role.

Although the railway furthered the decline of Ilorin as an entrepot, it was in other ways useful to the town, providing transport for its own goods<sup>4</sup> and encouraging in

1. See p.73 above.

2. On the dominance of the Hausa, see Agiri, p.216; R. Galletti, K.D.S. Baldwin, I.O. Dina, Nigerian Cocoa Farmers: An Economic Survey of Yoruba Cocoa Farming Families (London: O.U.P., 1956), p.60.

3. Samuel Akindede Agboola, "Some Geographical Influences upon the Population and Economy of the Middle Belt West of the Niger" (M.A. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1962), pp.63, 72.

4. Gavin, "Impact", p.32 and note 58, citing Northern Nigeria Blue Book 1911, Trade Returns Offa and Budo Egbe; NAK SNP 10/5 139p 1917, IPAR 1916, Nigerian Railway Exports.



particular the expansion of the pottery trade.<sup>1</sup> And despite the railway, some caravan traffic did continue, though much of it may have been merely transit trade (although profits for the middlemen of Ilorin were still sizeable as late as 1922).<sup>2</sup> The section of the caravan route which passed south of Zungeru to Bida and Ilorin was not served by the railway, and caravan traffic continued to flow along it.<sup>3</sup> The lack of railway facilities along this section, together with the high cost of rail transport<sup>4</sup> on those sections through which the railway ran, plus the facilities still offered in Ilorin and the preference of Hausa traders for old trade channels,<sup>5</sup> ensured that caravan traffic continued along the routes south to Ilorin, although reduced, for a number of years. In the year 1918, for example, over 20,000 foot passengers

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1. See Chapter 4, p.183.

2. See p.43 above.

3. NAK Assessment Report Patigi District 1912, para.29; NAK Ilorprof 5/6282, Re-Assessment Sharagi 1918, paras.26, 49.

4. See eg. I.N.R. Oyeyipo, "Migration in Igbominaland 1900-1977 with Special Reference to its Economic Effects" (M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham. 1978), p.12. See also p.80 below, and note 3.

5. For the suggestion of preference for old trade channels at an earlier period, see p.68 above.

crossed the Jebba Bridge,<sup>1</sup> and as late as 1934 the road between Jebba and Ilorin was thronged during the dry season with a double stream of trade. Drove of livestock and "a continual procession of foot passengers with headloads" came from the north. In the opposite direction the traffic was said to consist almost entirely of kola, quantities of which were carried by headload, but larger consignments were frequently consigned by lorry to Jebba, from which they were sent north by rail.<sup>2</sup> From this time on, lorry transport was beginning to overtake the caravan trade. It was cheaper by far than rail,<sup>3</sup> and therefore available to the small-scale trader. By 1937, ninety per cent of the traffic on the main roads in Ilorin Province was lorry-borne, having increased by about fifty per cent in the previous three years, and the number of lorries on the road having

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1. NAK SNP 10/7 133p/1919, IPAR 1918, Elphinstone to SNP 19/6/19.

2. NAK SNP 17/2 23595, IPAR 1934, para.63.

3. On the cheapness of lorry transport as opposed to rail, see NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.8, IPAR 1930, paras. 101, 102, and vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.103.

On the takeover of trade by lorries, see eg. NAK SNP 17/3 25753, IPAR 1935, para.84; SNP 17/3 27779, IPAR 1936, para.76; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.11, IPAR 1937, paras.55, 84.

quadrupled in the previous five.<sup>1</sup> The development of lorry transport, with its ability like the railway to bypass old marketing centres, must have served as a yet further blow to the Ilorin entrepot.

One commodity which shifted neither to the railway (in general) nor to lorry transport was cattle. This trade, "which was on the increase, did much to keep the Ilorin entrepot alive", although Gavin has also suggested that cattle like other goods "gravitated toward higher priced markets in the south and the growth of the cattle dealing business at Ibadan (and at Lagos and Abeokuta) .... took place at Ilorin's expense".<sup>2</sup> Certainly there was an immense increase in the numbers of cattle brought down from the north in the early twentieth century, from perhaps 3,000 per year to more than 60,000 by 1918.<sup>3</sup> By the late 1940s some eighty thousand head of cattle were still walked through Ilorin every year, while only half that number were sent from Kano and other stations on the western railway line.<sup>4</sup> The cattle were brought down by

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1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.11, IPAR 1937, para.84.
  2. Gavin, "Impact", p.32.
  3. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.298 (1904), 550 (1906-1907); NAK SNP 10/7 133p/1919, IPAR 1918, Elphinstone to SNP 19/6/19, paras.1-2.
  4. G.I.Jones, "The Beef-Cattle Trade in Nigeria", Africa 16 (1946), 31, 36; Thomas Shaw and Gilbert Colville, Report of Nigerian Livestock Mission (London: H.M.S.O., 1950), pp.88-91.

Hausa traders,<sup>1</sup> to be met in Ilorin, at least in the 1920s and 30s, and probably much earlier, by a yearly influx of Ijebu who came there to buy.<sup>2</sup> Clearly however a number of the cattle brought down on the hoof were not sold in Ilorin, but driven instead by their Hausa dealers to other centres further south.<sup>3</sup> This number tended to fluctuate year by year. As early as 1912, for example, it was reported that many fewer head were sold in Ilorin, Lagos prices having tempted their owners to go on, "only stopping at Ilorin a few days instead of until their stock was completely disposed of as formerly".<sup>4</sup> By 1922, Ilorin landlords were again making a good living out of the cattle trade, dealers paying five shillings per head sold, while one dealer alone might sell as many as thirty

1. See eg. Galletti, p.60; John D. Birkett, "The Trade Cattle of Northern Nigeria", West African Review, April 1952, p.329.
2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1926, para.64; Festus Olufemi Ogunlade, "Differential Trends in the Development of Western Education in Nigeria: The Case of the Middle Belt" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1982), p.155; NAK SNP 17/2 25753, IPAR 1935, para.12; SNP 17/3 27779, IPAR 1936, para.54; Florence Adebisi Okediji, "An Economic History of Hausa-Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria: 1900-1939" (Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, 1970), p.224.
3. NAI CSO 26 19855, Assessment Report on Abeokuta Town Abeokuta Province, 1927, para.75; Okediji, p.240.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.34.

head in a month in the town.<sup>1</sup> In 1925, however, the trade was again in something of a decline, with cattle passing further south for sale;<sup>2</sup> whereas two years later the cattle trade was of sufficient importance for the emir to oppose a bypass road on the grounds, in part, that cattle would thus be diverted from the town,<sup>3</sup> and by 1936, out of 83,000 cattle arriving, over 50,000 changed hands in Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> Two years later, trade was again disappointing, cattle yet again being taken south for better prices.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless by the late 1940s Ilorin was still the "main cattle distributing centre", the "great entrepot" of the trade.<sup>6</sup> And in the following decade, the strength of objections in Ilorin, instigated by "hotel-keepers" and others, to a plan to move the cattle

1. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, para. 38.
2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol. 3, IPAR 1925, para.101.
3. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol. 5, IPAR 1927, para.23 and minute, also Hermon-Hodge to SNP 20/4/28.
4. NAK SNP 17/3 27779, IPAR 1936, para.20.
5. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.12, IPAR 1938, para.78.
6. Jones, p.32; Daryll Forde and Richenda Scott, The Native Economies of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946), p.272.

track and market out of the town<sup>1</sup> would appear to confirm its continuing importance. Although Abner Cohen's remarks on the early 1960s suggest that Ilorin by then had become merely a transit stop,<sup>2</sup> it is nevertheless clear that its entrepot position with respect to the cattle trade had survived on and off for many years, despite the attractions of markets in the south.

Like cattle, slaves had been an important commodity in Ilorin's nineteenth century entrepot trade, though they disappeared far more quickly from it in the twentieth. The public slave markets in Ilorin vanished almost immediately,<sup>3</sup> although slave dealing actually continued for some years,<sup>4</sup> almost certainly for rather longer than the colonial officers realised.<sup>5</sup> Ilorin

1. Provincial Annual Reports 1954 (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1956), Ilorin, para.56; NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30 vol.1, General Local Government Reform Ilorin Emirate, Perm. Sec. Local Govt. to Res. Ilorin 13/2/57; Provincial Annual Reports 1956 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1958), Ilorin, para.51; Provincial Annual Reports 1957 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1959), Ilorin, para.58; Provincial Annual Reports 1958 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1959), Ilorin, paras.47, 145; Provincial Annual Reports 1959 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1962), Ilorin, paras. 46, 138; Provincial Annual Reports 1961 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1963), para.42.
2. Cohen, p.9.
3. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, p.10 (1900-1901).
4. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904; RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers, s.64, Ilorin Report, p.115.
5. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.402 (1905-1906), 629 (1907-1908); Oroge, p.366.

in the twentieth century could no longer profit as middle-man in the slave trade, nor could it produce slaves for sale; a double blow, and a serious one, to its economy. The loss of profit from slave sales was especially severe on the elite, who had already lost much of their trade-related income (access payments and tolls being no longer available to them), retaining only their market dues.<sup>1</sup> The fact that they were no longer required to expend so much on payments for arms and horses, due to the cessation of wars, must have proved only a very partial compensation: especially since expenditure on these goods could have been more than recouped by the slaves procured with their use. Indeed, a further drain on their depleted income resulted from the continuing though reduced purchase of horses in the twentieth century,<sup>2</sup> as these were no longer economically productive, but merely for prestige.

Other Ilorin products, apart from slaves, met with mixed fortunes in the colonial period. The trade in Ilorin pots, aided by the railway and later by lorry transport, expanded enormously. It was, however, as Gavin has noted, a

1. Interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83.
2. On the number of horses kept by the major Ilorin families in the twentieth century, indicating a continued though reduced trade, see *ibid*; also interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82; NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx.2.

low-profit trade,<sup>1</sup> and one which was largely, perhaps, in the hands of long-distance traders from the south, Ilorin women acting as bulking agents only within the town.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, together with the cattle trade, it reveals that the story for Ilorin after the turn of the century is not solely one of stagnation or decline. The trade in beads also enjoyed some years of prosperity, whether real or apparent, but later followed the entrepot trade into eclipse, having virtually if not completely died out by the late 1930s.<sup>3</sup> The other luxury trade, in hand-woven cloth, continued throughout the colonial period, though it may have been on a somewhat smaller scale as the number of weavers began to decline; and there is some reason to suppose that it fell rather more into the hands of southern dealers than before,<sup>4</sup> thus allowing potential income to be drained away from the town.

Early twentieth century expectations for Ilorin, in terms of its trade in pots, beads and cloth,<sup>5</sup> were therefore only partially realised. Expectations for the

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.39.

2. See Chapter 4, pp.187-88.

3. See Chapter 2, pp.114-15.

4. See Chapter 3, pp.146-47, 152-54.

5. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.59.



trade in export crops<sup>1</sup> were hardly to be realised at all. In most of Ilorin Emirate, high-gain export crops like rubber, cocoa and palm-oil (to which may be added kola, a high-gain product for internal trade) could not be successfully produced, as Gavin has pointed out.<sup>2</sup> Attempts to develop other export crops in the area also ran into problems. Allen's Long Staple, for example, the most desirable variety of cotton for export purposes, could not be grown, while the local variety fetched low export prices. Attempts to develop groundnuts as an export crop also failed, for which processing problems and low prices compared with the food-crop trade are given in explanation by observers. These are not, however, altogether satisfactory reasons, since a major trade in groundnuts grew up further north, where the same processing problems must have been encountered; and prices must have been high enough to encourage this crop in the north, even over Allen's cotton which grew well there. Tobacco also failed to take off in Ilorin, whether from processing difficulties or lack of demand is not altogether

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1. Ann O'Hear, "Colonial Government Agricultural Policies, Ilorin", unpublished paper, Nov. 1982, pp. 1, 8 (see back pocket).
2. Gavin, "Impact", p.39.

clear.<sup>1</sup> Where shea nuts were concerned, however, low prices due to lack of demand were certainly the main explanation for the lack of a large-scale export trade from the Ilorin area.<sup>2</sup> Instead, in Ilorin Emirate as a whole, there developed an important food-crop trade, supplying especially the export-crop producers and urban dwellers further south,<sup>3</sup> a development illustrated by the relative importance of the twentieth century emir's market, which functioned as a bulking centre for the food-crop trade.<sup>4</sup>

This trade was more profitable than any export trade in local cotton, groundnuts or shea; but even so it was less so than the trade in high-gain export crops. A

1. On attempts to introduce Allen's cotton, groundnuts and tobacco and their failure, see O'Hear, "Agricultural Policies", pp. 1-10.
2. See eg. Hermon-Hodge, p.240, and NAK Ilorprof 6/3 AGR 11, Shea-Nuts Industry -- Development of 1940-57.
3. See eg. NAK SNP 10/6 137p/1918, IPAR 1917, para.61; NAI CSO 26/3 12687 vol.3, IPAR 1923, para.68; Hermon-Hodge, p.197; CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.71; CSO 26/2 12687 vol.10, IPAR 1932, para.96; SNP 17/2 23595, IPAR 1934, para.63; CSO 26/2 12687 vol.11, IPAR 1937, paras.1, 84; CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPAR 1950, para.1; Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.15; J.R. Mackie, "The Possibilities of Increased Production of Cotton in Nigeria", Empire Cotton Growing Review 25 (1948), p.10.
4. Agboola, pp.139-40, 144-45; NAK Ilorprof ACC 59, District Notebook Ilorin Town; Chapter 5, p.291 and note 1.

European trader in Ilorin, for example, noted that

unlike trading centres like Kano, Zaria, Ibadan and Abeokuta, Ilorin lacked the enormous advantage of cash crops for export, of groundnuts, cotton, cocoa and the palm products. The spending power of the people for imported goods was therefore restricted . . . . Trading conditions for the companies were always very difficult, with fierce competition to take the limited available <sup>1</sup> trade.

This situation, however, as well as reflecting the lack of a high-profit export crop around Ilorin, may also reflect the limited extent to which some parts of the metropolitan districts produced even food crops for trade, for reasons including both the exhaustion of their land and the deprivations of the Ilorin elite, these factors in combination rendering the local population either unable or unwilling to produce much for trade.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the foodstuffs which were extracted from local people by the elite were

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1. E.W. Pearce (retired agent, John Holt Ltd, Ilorin), "Some Memories of Trading Conditions in Ilorin pre 1939", April 1983.

2. See Chapter 5, pp. 263-84, 293, 296-300.

more likely, perhaps, to be absorbed in prestige consumption in the town,<sup>1</sup> rather than to enter long-distance trade.

The problems of twentieth century Ilorin therefore were due not only to the lack of a major export crop, but also to the failure of its people to involve themselves fully in the food crop trade. Not only did less of the metropolitan districts' produce enter the market than might have been expected; in addition, as Gavin has revealed, in these districts, as opposed to the areas outside the immediate orbit of the town, the long-distance food-crop trade was allowed to fall into the hands of traders from the south.<sup>2</sup> Outside the immediate orbit of Ilorin, local traders were very much involved in this trade. In Offa, for example, the trade in yams and imported goods came firmly under local control, with its merchants combining to freight rail trucks with Offa yams for sale to the south.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, but with respect to local cloth, many men in the Igbomina areas were involved in long-distance

1. Interview with Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83.

2. Gavin, "Impact", pp.35-36.

3. Ibid., and note 77, citing NAK SNP 7/13/266/1918 vol.1, Offa Assessment Report 1918, para.55; NAK Ilorprof 5 6278, Reassessment of Offa District 1925, para. 86.

southern trade.<sup>1</sup> A different picture emerges in the metropolitan districts, and also in Ilorin itself, where the traders in cattle were Hausa from the north and Ijebu from the south;<sup>2</sup> where local traders' share in the kola trade was probably small;<sup>3</sup> where local traders even in Ilorin cloth may have been losing their place in the southern trade;<sup>4</sup> and where the trade in pots may have been largely in the hands of southern buyers.<sup>5</sup>

Southerners also dominated the foodstuffs trade, both in the metropolitan districts, and in Ilorin Town. At the railway-side villages of Bode Sadu, Elebu and Lanwa, to the north of Ilorin, the food-crop trade in 1912 was monopolized by southern buyers, except for European firms at Bode Sadu. Yams and cereal crops were bought, while the chief export from Lanwa was locust

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.36 and note 78, citing eg. J. Awotunde, "The Emigrants of Ekunmesan-Oro; a Study of the Rise of the Wealthiest Group in Igbominaland" (research essay, A.B.U., 1974). See also NAK SNP 7/13 4703/1912, Omu-Isanlu 1916, para.128.
2. See pp.81-82 above.
3. See p.78 above.
4. See Chapter 3, pp.146-47.
5. See Chapter 4, pp.187-88.

beans.<sup>1</sup> The situation was similar in 1917, with prices rising and southern traders taking advantage of the facilities offered by the railway.<sup>2</sup> Southern traders had penetrated far to the west of the railway line<sup>3</sup> by the following year, when "nine big Ogbomosho traders" were reported in Malete.<sup>4</sup> Southern foodstuffs traders were still dominant in the northern railway villages in 1929, although by that time some local people had entered the export trade on a small scale.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, even at the Ila Market Station, which was south of Ilorin and close to the non-metropolitan districts, export traders from the south were still of importance.<sup>6</sup> Not only were such traders involved in foodstuffs

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.35 and note 77, citing eg. NAK Ilorprof 531/1912, Assessment Report Share District, para.33. See also NAK SNP 7/13 3096/1912, Ilorin Division, Lanwa District Reassessment Report by Mr. R. Scott Chapman, paras.5, 13, 19; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708A/1912, Assessment Report Adjidungari District by A/R Chapman Oct. 1913, p.5.
2. NAK SNP 10/6 137p/1918, IPAR 1917, para.61.
3. In which they were far more venturesome than the European firms. See NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.5, IPAR 1927, para.80.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 199/1918, Malete District Assessment Report, para.7.
5. NAK Ilorprof 5 6279, Lanwa 1929 (various references). See also NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.10, IPAR 1932, para.70.
6. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon District Tax Revision 1929 by A.J. Knott, appx. f, Export Trade from Ila Market.

export; thirty-six of them who in the same year had "settled down temporarily" in Oloru District were all reported to be traders in cloth.<sup>1</sup>

There are indications that southern traders continued to dominate the metropolitan districts trade, even in the 1940s and early 50s. At least one wealthy southern trader was still in evidence at Bode Sadu in the post-war years.<sup>2</sup> By the early 1940s a "strangers' section" had grown up in Oke Oyi, on the main Ilorin to Jebba road.<sup>3</sup> And Ijesha traders may have become the dominant group, both in the foodstuffs and imported goods trades.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly in Ilorin itself the long-distance trade in foodstuffs was in the hands of southern traders, some of whom settled in the "Sabon Gari" of the town.<sup>5</sup> The lorries plying the roads of the emirate by the late 1930s seem to have been largely in the hands of traders from

1. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/399, Oloru District Tax Revision 1929, para.8 and minutes 3/1/30 and 7/1/30.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa District Touring Notes 1939-53, 12-15 March [between 1947-50], Campbell 18-20/6/51, Herbert 28-30/4/52.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 3513, Igborin District Touring Notes, 4-5 March [1943?].
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1947-50 [actually 1942-51], Calder 22/11/43 - 3/12/43, Bird 12-22 Aug. [1950?].
5. Interviews with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82, and I.A. Gambari, 27/9/82.

Abeokuta and Ibadan,<sup>1</sup> rather than Ilorin. The people of Ilorin Town seem to have preferred a middleman role as before; not only with respect to cattle, but also in the foodstuffs trade.<sup>2</sup>

In 1922, with its wealthiest middlemen still enjoying substantial incomes, Ilorin had to outward appearances scarcely begun to decline. But some pointers were already there. In the same year, as Gavin has shown, it could be seen that Ilorin was far slower already than Offa in adopting new equipment and occupations;<sup>3</sup> and by 1927 the contrast between Ilorin and Abeokuta, in terms of occupations and incomes, is clear.<sup>4</sup> Although the southern cities had, along with Ilorin, lost their independence and therefore any power to control the entrepot trade, nevertheless in the twentieth century, unlike Ilorin they continued to prosper and develop. This was achieved not only by the production of high-gain export crops, but also by participation in long-distance

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.12, IPAR 1938, para.80.
2. See Chapter 5, pp.288-91, 295-96.
3. Gavin, "Impact", p.36 and note 80, citing NAK SNP 7/13/266/1918 vol.1, Offa Assessment Report 1918, appx. 3b, and NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appendices.
4. NAI CSO 26 19855, Assessment Report Abeokuta.



trade, not only in their own crops but in food crops from further north. Ilorin on the other hand had no major export crop; and produced fewer foodstuffs for the market, perhaps, than might have been expected. It also failed to prevent the trade in these foodstuffs and other commodities from being taken over by southern traders. In explanation of this last, it may be noted that in Ilorin the role of middleman rather than trader was traditional to many of its inhabitants. And while, as in 1922, profits were still to be made from the middleman role, they would have been unwilling to change. By the time they might have been so willing, traders from the south had monopolized the long-distance trade. It may be also that the Ilorins were unwilling to involve themselves closely, as long-distance traders, with their erstwhile enemies to the south; though in their middleman capacity they had had plenty of contact with southerners already. As time went on, the Ilorins, relatively poorer than the traders of the export-profiting and economically powerful south, may have found it less easy to finance themselves in long-distance trade<sup>1</sup> (as may have occurred in the case of the trade in Ilorin cloth); yet, Offa merchants, despite

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1. This would not, however, have applied to the Ilorin elite. See Chapter 5, pp.294-96, for this point, and for suggestions as to why the elite, specifically, did not involve itself in long-distance trade.

their own lack of a high-gain export crop, had found no difficulty in financing their own activities in the trading sphere. But Ilorin in the nineteenth century had never been an innovative city, as the southern cities were, in their development of replacement products for slave exports and of chiefly entrepreneurs. Ilorin, although it has been described as the first of the Yoruba "super-cities"<sup>1</sup> was in many ways backward-, not forward-looking as the others were; rather seizing (as it is said to have seized the beadmakers),<sup>2</sup> and holding on to, some remnants of the profit-making activities of its predecessor, Old Oyo. With such a background, then, it is hardly surprising that when Ilorin's old roles began to decay, it was unable to find new ones to fill their place.

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1. Gavin, "Impact", p.13.

2. See Chapter 2, p.104.

CHAPTER 2: ILORIN LANTANA BEADS: INDUSTRY AND TRADE

While Ilorin profited greatly from the nineteenth century entrepot trade, nevertheless, as Gavin has concluded, it was "almost as much a producing as a trading city".<sup>1</sup> Among its most important products were red stone beads, called lantana by the Hausa who brought the raw material to the town.<sup>2</sup>

These beads were made from jasper, banded agates or chalcedony,<sup>3</sup> which are all forms of crypto-crystalline silica, quarried close to the Niger at Litingo, Kirtashi

1. R.J. Gavin, "The Impact of Colonial Rule on the Ilorin Economy 1897-1930", Centrepoint 1 (Oct. 1977), 28.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Reassessment Report by A/R Lethem, Progress Report, para.29; Wilfrid D. Hambly, "Culture Areas of Nigeria", Field Museum of Natural History Anthropological Series, vol.21, no.3 (Chicago: 1935), p.432; Guy de Beauchene, "Report to Third Conference of West African Archaeologists", in D. Calvocoressi, Report on Third Conference of West African Archaeologists, Accra, June 1969, p.63. I am indebted to Mark Duffill, S.B.S., A.B.U., Zaria, for drawing my attention to this report.  
For an alternative name, "susi" or "sui-stone", see Leo Frobenius, The Voice of Africa, trans. Rudolf Blind (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1931), vol.1, p.335; vol.2, p.443.
3. Frobenius, vol.1, p.334; J.D. Clarke, "Ilorin Stone Bead Making", Nigeria, no.14, 1938, p.157; F. Daniel, "Bead Workers of Ilorin, Nigeria", Man, Jan. 1937, p.7; Beauchene, p.63; information from J. Richardson, formerly of Kingston Minerals, Ilorin, 1979; information from mineralogists at Union Carbide Metals, Niagara Falls, U.S.A., August 1981.

and other locations, west of Sokoto, not far below Say, and said to be seven days from Illo.<sup>1</sup> These quarries are in the present-day Niger Republic. The stone was quarried by Hausa, then brought down the Niger and delivered to Ilorin by Hausa traders,<sup>2</sup> and exchanged for cloth and gowns.<sup>3</sup> The finished beads are highly polished and reddish-brown in colour,<sup>4</sup> though the shades vary, as do the sizes and shapes of the finished product. Small, long cylindrical, and barrel-shaped beads were made, as were triangular pendants. Beads appearing in profile as an elongated hexagon were also fashioned, and

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.29; Clarke, p.156; Daniel, p.7; Adam Mischlich, Über die Kulturen im Mittel-Sudan, Landwirtschaft, Gewerbe, Handel. Unter Beifugung der Hausa-Texte (Berlin: 1942), p.182. I am indebted for this reference and its translation to Mark Duffill. The work is based on material collected from the Hausa scholar, Imam Imoru (for whom see also Chapter 1, p.63, note 1), and refers to the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Also see J.W. Scott Macfie, "The Pottery Industry of Ilorin, Northern Nigeria", Bulletin of the Imperial Institute 11 (1913), 114; Beauchene, p.63; Administrative Map of Nigeria, 5th edition; information from K.A. Ibrahim (for whom see Bibliography, p.344), 6/9/82.

2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.29; Daniel, p.7; Mischlich, p.182; interview with Alhaji Abdulkarim and others, of Ile Ashileke (ileke = bead), Ilorin, 29/5/80; information from Bayo Abubakar Yahaya, of Ile Onileke, Ilorin, 9/6/82.
3. Mischlich, p.182.
4. See plates I, II, p.369.

unbored cones for use as ear plugs.<sup>1</sup>

These were the result of a lengthy manufacturing process, requiring skill, strength and considerable patience. First, the stone was chipped roughly into shape, with the aid of a small chisel and a double-headed hammer, the latter said to be of "burnished steel". Piercing was then achieved by rapidly tapping a small drill with a hammer, while the drill was twirled on the stone. The drills used, incidentally, are perhaps better described as punches, since they were unthreaded. In the 1930s, these were said to be made of "scrap tool steel". At the beginning, a punch with a point of one-sixteenth of an inch would be used, but this would be replaced by finer ones as the work progressed. A worker would have as many as sixty punches set out in front of him. After drilling, the pierced bead was then worked vigorously across a grinding-stone, before final polishing was done on a smooth board.<sup>2</sup> Unused or unusable scraps of stone, even dust, perhaps, were not wasted, as they were used as a colourant

1. For the shapes of the beads, see especially the excellent diagram in Clarke, p.156; also NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.30; Daniel, p.8; Hambly, p.482.
2. For the information in this paragraph, see Daniel, pp.7-8; Clarke, pp.156-57.

in the decoration of good quality pots.<sup>1</sup>

Beadmaking, like other activities in Ilorin, was a carry-over from Old Oyo. Considerable evidence from tradition attests to its being practised there,<sup>2</sup> although there is little archaeological confirmation, only a couple of red stone beads having been found on the Old Oyo site.<sup>3</sup> This is only to be expected, perhaps, as the valuable beads would mostly have been carried away by their owners on the abandonment of Old Oyo, and the grinding stones used by the beadmakers were also portable. Old Oyo was a natural centre for the industry; the best grinding stones were found in its vicinity,<sup>4</sup> and as a centre of wealth and political power it must have provided a ready local market. Its position as a centre and controller of trade

1. Macfie, p.114.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.28; Ile Ashileke interviews, 29/5/80 and 1/6/80; Clarke, p.156; Daniel, p.8.
3. Frank Willett, "Investigations at Old Oyo, 1956-1957: An Interim Report", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 2 (1960), 75; personal communication from Robert Soper, University of Nairobi, 10/12/81.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.28; Ile Ashileke interview, 29/5/80; Daniel, p.8.

routes must have facilitated both the supply of raw materials (the unworked stone could be conveniently carried down the Niger, then to Old Oyo)<sup>1</sup> and accessibility to markets elsewhere.

One of the major markets for the beads produced in Old Oyo may well have been Benin. Although no direct evidence of trade in beads between them is available, a number of pointers strongly support the suggestion of its existence. If it is true, as reported in 1912, that on the abandonment of Old Oyo the original makers were "purchased and captured to teach the Ilorin makers",<sup>2</sup> then the prospect of taking over a lucrative trade with Benin could well have provided the reason for such eagerness to have the industry transferred. In addition, Landolphe reports an encounter in Benin in the late eighteenth century, with a group described as "Oyos" (who may in fact have been Hausa coming through or on behalf of Old Oyo), between whose country and Benin there was said to be a considerable trade in luxury

1. See map in E.W. Bovill, "Jega Market", Journal of the African Society 22 (1922-23), facing p.50.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.28. But see also p.104 below.

articles.<sup>1</sup> Whether these traders were Hausa or from Old Oyo itself, the luxury articles may well have included the red stone beads. Furthermore, even earlier, it would seem from the descriptions of van Nyendael and Dapper that beads of the type produced in Old Oyo and later in Ilorin were worn by Benin officials in the seventeenth century, Nyendael, for example, describing beads of "pale red coctile earth or stone", "very well glazed" and like "speckled red marble".<sup>2</sup> Although Dapper reports that the oba increased his supply of jasper by foreign wars to the north and east,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless there may have been friendly relations between himself and the alafin,<sup>4</sup> at least at times, and the trade in beads may have taken

1. J.F. Landolphe, Mémoires du Capitaine rédigés sur son ms. par J.S. Quesné (Paris: 1823), vol.2, pp. 85-88.

For the suggestion that these may have been Hausa, see A.F.C. Ryder, Benin and the Europeans 1485-1897 (London: Longmans, 1969), p.225.

2. H. Ling Roth, Great Benin Its Customs, Art and Horrors (F. King and Sons Ltd., 1903; reissued by Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1968), p.26, quoting Nyendael; Joseph Marquart, Die Benin-Sammlung (Reichsmuseums für Völkerkunde in Leiden, Serie 2, Nr. 7) (Leiden: 1913), pp.xxxvi-viii (including quotations from Nyendael and references to Dapper). I am indebted to Mrs. Marion Johnson, C.W.A.S., University of Birmingham, for drawing my attention to this work, and for translations from German to Mrs. Johnson, and from Dutch to Mrs. E. de Veer, C.W.A.S.
3. Marquart, p.xxxix.
4. The Lander brothers were told that the alafin was "brother to the king of Benin". Richard and John Lander, Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger (London: John Murray, 1832), vol.1, p.176.



the form of a royal exchange between them, as there was later between oba and emir.<sup>1</sup> In support of this supposition it may be noted that certain types of red stone beads were in the oba's gift;<sup>2</sup> and, as Gavin has suggested, the brass pillars decorating the palace at Old Oyo may have represented Benin's own contribution to the exchange.<sup>3</sup>

On the collapse of Old Oyo the beadmaking industry was transferred to Ilorin. One may speculate that the falling off of Benin's European trade, reported for the early nineteenth century,<sup>4</sup> led to even greater demand for Oyo beads, and further encouraged Ilorin to take the industry over. In the nineteenth century, Ilorin, like Old Oyo before it, was in a good position as a centre of the production and trade in beads. Grinding stones could still be easily obtained, and the unworked red stone could still be brought down the Niger, off-loaded, and carried to Ilorin.<sup>5</sup> The town was prosperous, so

1. On the later exchange, see p.112 below.
2. Marquart, pp.xxxvi-vii. See also R.E. Bradbury, The Benin Kingdom and the Edo-Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria (London: I.A.I., 1957, reprinted 1970), p.46.
3. Gavin, "Impact", p.29. A reference to these brass pillars is to be found in H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929), p.68.
4. Ryder, pp.229-39.
5. Daniel, p.7.

there would be a good local market for the beads, and it was even better situated than Old Oyo to supply markets in eastern Yorubaland and Benin.

It was reported in 1912 that the original craftsmen in Ilorin were "families of slaves in Old Oyo, who were purchased and captured to teach the Ilorin makers, on the abandonment of Old Oyo".<sup>1</sup> This may not have been so in all cases, however, as a later source attributes the introduction of the craft to refugees,<sup>2</sup> rather than slaves; although this may merely reflect the sanitising of the original tradition. It is also likely that some beadmakers were settled in Ilorin prior to the Fulani takeover and the abandonment of Old Oyo. The Ashileke family, for example, which claims to be "the origin of the beadmakers" in Ilorin, claims also to have come from Oyo to Ilorin to join Afonja, who gave its members a place to settle in Okelele.<sup>3</sup> And it is probable that Afonja also had beadmakers within his own family in Ilorin, as his descendant

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.28.

2. Clarke, p.156.

3. Ile Ashileke interviews, 29/5/80 and 1/6/80; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 9/8/82. On Okelele, see p. 108 below.

the Magaji Are has today.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly not all of the beadmaking families in nineteenth century Ilorin were slaves; this is evidenced by the relative lack of government control,<sup>2</sup> at least once they were settled in Ilorin, and by their pride in their craft.<sup>3</sup> Slaves, however, were equally certainly utilised by these families in their work. Iwofa (debt pawns) were also used, and might in the process become experts. Warriors from beadmaking families brought home captured slaves. Others were purchased by wealthy beadmakers. Slaves might be owned not only by the head of a family, but also by other individuals within it, and were used not only in beadmaking but also on the farm.<sup>4</sup> It is said

1. A Baba Leke in the Magaji Are compound died in 1982. There are also beadmakers in the Osin Aremu area, Afon District, which is Afonja family land (K.A. Ibrahim, 13/9/82; Appendix to Chapter 5, p.330).  
On an earlier Baba Leke in the same family, who was politically powerful in the early twentieth century, see NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.53.
2. See pp.109-110 below.
3. Mentioned in NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.28. Also illustrated by the fact that one member of the Ashileke family decided, after stone beadmaking had more or less died out, to learn glass beadmaking at Ife, because beadmaking had been his family's occupation (Ashileke interview, 1/6/80). K.A. Ibrahim reports the pride in their craft which leads to the adoption by members of beadmaking families of names such as Baba Leke (father of beads) or Omo Oni Leke (beadmakers' child).
4. K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82. On the wealth of beadmakers, see also p.114 below.

that there was no beadmaking compound that did not have slaves,<sup>1</sup> and the design of these compounds, which in 1912 were described as "peculiar to themselves with many tiny courtyards and narrow passages in which I have counted over 80 doors",<sup>2</sup> perhaps reflects the employment in the past of large numbers of slaves.

The beadmakers, as would be expected from the traditions of their origin, were said to be all Yoruba.<sup>3</sup> The art is said to have been largely the work of men, but with women also assisting in the process of grinding.<sup>4</sup> In the tax figures for 1922, 263 female beadmakers were recorded, along with over 800 males. Since "girdlemakers" (women making an altogether different type of bead<sup>5</sup>) were listed

1. Ibid.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.48. This characteristic was also noted by the present writer at Ile Ashileke, 1980.
3. Daniel, p.8.
4. Ashileke interview, 29/5/80; information from B.A. Yahaya, 9/6/82; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 6/9/82. These two last informants say specifically that the women were involved in grinding; the Ashileke statement, however, in translation, seems rather to suggest involvement in polishing.
5. This was made from palm kernel or palm nut shells, and was used for women's girdles (NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, Annual Report Ilorin Province 1921, para.22; RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Sylvia Leith-Ross, Report on Women's Education Ilorin Province, 30/4/29, p.15; G.J. Afolabi Ojo, Yoruba Culture (London: University of Ife Press and University of London Press, 1966), p.260; Hambly, p.432). This type of bead also, probably, like lantana, was traded to Benin (R.E. Bradbury, Fieldnotes from Benin 1951-61, Birmingham University Library, B.S.68).

separately, it would seem that the 263 were indeed involved in the stone beadmaking industry, and this is further corroborated by the fact that no females were listed in areas where there were no males. Within the beadmaking areas, however, there is no correlation between the numbers of females and those of males, but this may be taken simply to reflect the difficulty of assigning primary occupations to women who might each follow a number of activities part-time. The income of male beadmakers in 1922 was estimated at £24 a year, while that of the females was put as low as 24/-.<sup>1</sup> This might be taken to indicate that the females were only minor assistants (or alternatively that they were used as cheap labour); their contribution, however, should not be dismissed altogether, since they engaged in a stage of the process requiring considerable strength and effort, and it is noteworthy that they were frequently married into other beadmaking families,<sup>2</sup> where their skills

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1. For all the above information on the beadmakers in 1922, see NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, appendices 2 and 4.

In 1937 the beadmakers were said to be of both sexes. Daniel, p.8.

2. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82. On the considerable experience gained by females before marriage, see *ibid.*, 6/9/82.

and experience could continue to be used.

The industry was concentrated in the Yoruba areas of the town, the figures for male beadmakers revealing that it was centred in Okelele, but with other sizeable concentrations elsewhere. The district called Okelele covers Ibagun Sub-Ward, which in 1922 had 223 male beadmakers; part of Ojuekun, which had 121; and perhaps part of Zarumi, which had 61; that is, over 400 altogether in the Okelele area. Other clusters of beadmakers included those in the Sub-Wards of Magaji Gari (where there were 71), Baboko (44), Alanamu (91), Ajikobi (69) and Ogidi (70).<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that the industry was concentrated in the Yoruba areas of the town, since the Hausa and Fulani, under the influence of reformist Islam, were not wearers of beads.<sup>2</sup> The major Yoruba families had their own

1. See Table 2, p.175. Ibagun, though in Gambari Ward, was populated by Yoruba; and Magaji Gari Sub-Ward contained the Afonja compounds in Idiape area.
2. Interview with the Sarkin Gobir, Ilorin, 23/4/83, conducted by A.I. Alesinloye and H.J. O'Hear; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82. See also R.J. Gavin, "The Middle Niger Valley: A Historical Overview", paper presented at Seminar on the State of Cultural Studies in Kwara State, Ilorin, Nov. 1978. The emir, however, sent beads to other rulers (see p.109 below, note 3). He is also said to use beads for his sons and daughters during their marriage (K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82), which may, perhaps, be seen as an example of increasing Yoruba-isation among the Fulani; this is also illustrated by the fact that the emir's family now has its own oriki, or praise-songs.

personal beadmakers, Baloguns Alanamu and Ajikobi and Magaji Are having them in their own compounds, and Ile Ashileke being beadmakers to the Magaji Ojuekun.<sup>1</sup> The output of their beadmakers, however, would not be entirely absorbed by the chiefly families themselves: members of the Magaji Are family are said to have traded in beads, and females in the Balogun Alanamu family were well known in both the local and long-distance trades.<sup>2</sup>

Ilorin elite members gained from the industry in additional ways. Beads might be given to the emir or other chiefs by those seeking favours or services,<sup>3</sup> as a form of access payment. And the tax levied on the beadmakers was high.<sup>4</sup> But apart from retaining their own craftsmen (in the case of the Yoruba chiefs), and extracting tax and gifts, the Ilorin government or elite appear to have exercised relatively little control over the industry. Although the emir could advise (at least) the reduction of sales of any product when necessary, it

1. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 13/9/82.

2. Ibid., 18/9/82 and 28/4/83.

3. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82. Although the emir did not use the beads himself, he may have given them out to relatives (see p.108 above, note 2) and he certainly sent them to Benin (see p.112 below) and gave them out as gifts to visitors and to other rulers (information from B.A. Yahaya, 9/6/82; K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82).

4. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82. On high taxation of beadmakers in the early twentieth century, see p.114 below.

seems likely that control of output and therefore value was exercised in this case by the craftsmen themselves,<sup>1</sup> through their families and associations.

Output, of course, was controlled in the first instance by the lengthy process of production. It was said, for example, to take more than three hours to drill a one-inch hole,<sup>2</sup> and from four days to over a week to produce a necklace of perhaps eighteen beads.<sup>3</sup> Restriction of output seems also to have been a consequence of limiting production to certain extended families; the skill was handed down within these (a process aided by intermarriage), so that in 1921 it could still be reported that the industry was in the hands of certain families or clans.<sup>4</sup> Outside apprentices and iwofa could however be trained;<sup>5</sup> but this

1. On this paragraph so far, see interview with the Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82.
2. Clarke, p.156.
3. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 13/9/82. In Bida it is said that the average production per worker was three beads a day, that is in polishing, sometimes boring, and grinding to new shapes the "crude or plain" beads brought from the north (S.F. Nadel, A Black Byzantium (London: O.U.P. for I.A.I., 1942), p.283).
4. NAK Ilorprof 4/1/29/1922, Annual Report -- Ilorin Province 1921, para.22; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 6/9/82, 13/9/82. On intermarriage between beadmaking families, see p.107 above, and p.111 below, note 2.
5. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 6/9/82, 13/9/82.



might fluctuate according to output requirements.<sup>1</sup> Output and price were further restricted by the beadmakers' craft associations, through raw material hoarding,<sup>2</sup> which may well be reflected in the makers' reputation as "thriftless and spasmodic workers".<sup>3</sup>

In the nineteenth century, the bead industry was of considerable importance to Ilorin. The product was in great demand for the regalia of chiefs further south, and as late as 1912 it was still said that "pagan chiefs" would pay ten pounds for a chain from neck to knee, and that buyers would come from as far away at Warri, in the Niger Delta.<sup>4</sup> Some indication of the scale of this trade in the later years of the century may be gathered, perhaps, from the fact that in the same year, 1912, over 600 (male) beadmakers were counted in a tax assessment exercise. This

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1. As may have been occurring in the pottery industry. See Chapter 4, p.186.
  2. Information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82, 24/4/83. These associations are also said for example to have helped members in trouble, such as bankruptcy, to have attracted buyers for particular kinds of beads and seen to the intermarriage of sons and daughters of beadmaking families.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.33.
  4. Ibid., Progress Report, para.32; Daniel, p.8.

may even have been an underestimate of their number, and in a further tax report ten years later, a figure of 851 was given.<sup>1</sup>

The beads were traded not only to Warri but for example to Igbomina and Ekiti country, Oshogbo, Oyo and Ogbomosho,<sup>2</sup> especially to chiefs, who used them in crowns and necklaces, for the marriages of their children and for presentation to other kings.<sup>3</sup> The most important customer for the beads was Benin, as signified by the emir's own annual presentation of them, in gift-exchange with its king.<sup>4</sup> In Benin, the beads continued in official use in the court. "Dull agate" was still in the late nineteenth

1. Ibid., Brief Report, para.9; Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx.4. It is likely that the higher figure for 1922 reflects a more intensive count (and therefore a more accurate one) rather than any major increase in beadmakers' numbers between 1912 and 1922, since differences of the same order are also found on comparing the 1912 and 1922 figures for other occupations.
2. Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S.21; information from B.A. Yahaya, 9/6/82; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82.
3. Ulli Beier, Yoruba Beaded Crowns: Sacred Regalia of the Olokuku of Okuku (London: Ethnographica, 1982), p.60; Frank Willett, "Archaeology", in S.O. Biobaku, ed., Sources of Yoruba History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp.135-36; information from K.A. Ibrahim, 18/9/82.
4. Interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82.

century in the oba's gift,<sup>1</sup> and the so-called corals he distributed in the festival of that name were actually Ilorin jasper beads.<sup>2</sup> It is said that Benin exchanged many slaves for these beads,<sup>3</sup> and while no direct corroboration in Benin sources has been found, it is likely that the oba at least, with his almost unlimited access to slaves,<sup>4</sup> would use them in exchange for the beads from the emir.<sup>5</sup> Both Ilorins and Edo were involved in this long-distance trade, though Ilorin traders did not go through to Benin, and may have reached no further than Otun. Some Benin traders ventured as far as Ilorin, but the majority were more likely to buy from middlemen, in

1. Ling Roth, p.26, citing Cyril Punch.
2. Frobenius, vol.1, pp.334-35.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.32.
4. Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S.49. See also Bradbury, Benin Kingdom, p.41.
5. There are references in the Benin sources to mysterious trips to Ilorin by the oba's representatives (Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S.21, see also 49), suggesting perhaps that there was a royal exchange of slaves for beads, although the present-day oba and emir say that Benin's exchange for beads was in kola, oil and plantain (interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82. This interview took place soon after the oba had visited the emir.

Akure or elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

Even after the colonial period had begun, in 1912 to 1922 the beadmaking industry still prospered. High prices were still paid for the beads, and profitability was said to be further enhanced by the very low cost of the stone, in comparison with the finished beads.<sup>2</sup> The estimated income and proposed tax of the beadmakers were among the highest in the town, and their reputation as "thriftless and spasmodic" may reflect not only their restriction of output,<sup>3</sup> but also others' jealousy of their prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

Soon after 1922,<sup>5</sup> however, there began a sharp decline, so serious that the beadmaking industry was all but

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1. Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S.12, 346, 560, 561; interview with Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, paras.31, 32.
  3. See pp.110-111 above.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, paras.33, 41, and Brief Report, para.9; Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, para.34 and appendices 3 and 4.
  5. Clarke, p.156 (1938-39), says that the industry flourished until "about fifteen years ago". It was, however, still considered an important craft when Hambly passed through in 1929 (p.432). It took, perhaps, some years for the decline to be fully appreciated.

eliminated within fifteen years. The value of the beads fell sharply. In 1937 they were selling at from 2d to 2/- each, as against from 2/- to 5/- in 1912.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the numbers of craftsmen decreased equally sharply, from a peak of 851 in 1922, to 28 in 1934, and 15 in 1935,<sup>2</sup> although around 1938 perhaps about 40 were said to be working part-time.<sup>3</sup> In 1939/40 at the most 13 bead-makers were listed for tax purposes,<sup>4</sup> and by 1955/6 they had disappeared altogether from the tax rolls,<sup>5</sup> although a few were still operating as part-time workers, dividing their time between the industry and the farm.<sup>6</sup>

Clearly this spectacular decline occurred when the value of the beads fell to a level at which it no longer justified the long and tedious hours of work; but the reasons for this fall still require to be explained. First of all, it can be noted that it was not due to competition from other centres of production. These,

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.31; Daniel, p.8.
2. Daniel, p.8.
3. Clarke, p.156.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5/3737, Ilorin Town [tax], 1939-40. Two "trade" lists are included in this file, one giving 11 beadmakers, the other 13.
5. NAK Ilorprof TAX/35 vol.1, Ilorin Native Treasury General Tax, 1955-56.
6. NAK Ilorprof 5 3519/s.7, Ilorin Beadmakers Cooperative and Thrift Loan Society, 1955, Monthly Report on Cooperative Societies in Ilorin Province for Month of January 1955, and A.D.O.E. to D.O.E. 15/3/55.

around Ilorin, were on a minuscule scale, three beadmakers only being recorded in Offa in 1918,<sup>1</sup> and it seems only one in later years.<sup>2</sup> The single beadmaker noted in Afon, also in 1918, was clearly a connection of the Magaji Are family in Ilorin.<sup>3</sup> Larger stone bead centres, such as Bida (which in any case had somewhat different specialisations from Ilorin) met a similar fate.<sup>4</sup>

It may be that overproduction in the early twentieth century supplies part at least of the explanation for the industry's decline. Traders in beads may have reached Ilorin in greater numbers after the beginning of the colonial period, due to the safety of the routes<sup>5</sup> and greater ease of transport by rail or improved roads, and thus stimulated an increase in production. Such an increase may also have been encouraged by a fall in the price of

1. NAK SNP 7/13/266/1918 vol.1, Offa Assessment Report 1918, appx. 3b.
2. Information from Peter Ibitoye, 11/11/82, following his interview with Mr. Raji of Olowa's Compound, Offa. This beadmaker was an Ilorin man, and bought his stone from Ilorin.
3. NAK Ilorprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Report Afon District Ilorin Province 1918, appx.3; see p.105 above, note 1.
4. Frobenius, vol.1, p.334; vol.2, p.443, 444; Nadel, pp.283, 284. See also p.110 above, note 3.
5. Bradbury Fieldnotes, B.S.560. See also Chapter 1, pp.74-75, on safety of routes in general.

stone: while in the late nineteenth century, perhaps, this raw material was expensive,<sup>1</sup> by 1912 it was reported to be low in price.<sup>2</sup> Rulers in Yorubaland may have contributed to an increase in production by demanding beads in the early years of colonial rule as replacements for regalia lost in the nineteenth century wars; but they would eventually have completed their replenishment.<sup>3</sup> And this, plus the long absence of an oba from Benin, previously the most important customer, and changes perhaps in fashion, would result in a marked decrease in demand. This in turn, when beads were still being produced in large numbers, would lead to their drop in value and the industry's decline.

The idea of a shift in fashion is suggested in the comments of an observer in Ilorin. He asserts that Christianity, by the 1930s, had "fostered a contempt for

1. "From Hausaland people ... are taking potash and lantana, which is expensive" (Mischlich, p.182, Mark Duffill's translation). It is, however, possible that Imam Imoru, cited in Mischlich, was referring to the cost of the finished product rather than the stone.
2. See p.114 above.
3. I am indebted for the suggestion with respect to replenishment of regalia supplies to Prof. Ade Obayemi, History Department, University of Ilorin. Certainly the demand from the chiefs declined; see Daniel, p.8.

everything connected with the old days"<sup>1</sup> (a trend accentuated by the later apostolic revival),<sup>2</sup> and goes on to suggest that this was expressed in a shift of feminine fashion, toward cheaper imported imitation jewellery. But this, while undoubtedly containing an element of truth (it is echoed in Bida),<sup>3</sup> cannot be the whole explanation, since many of the customers for the beads were chiefs or wealthy people, who used the beads for regalia or purposes of prestige; and for such people, cheap trinkets would surely have provided no adequate substitute. Yet, while on the one hand replenishment by chiefs may have been completed, on the other, cheap imitations may have caused the genuine article to lose its previous prestige value,<sup>4</sup> and thus to be replaced among its wealthy customers by other articles which were still or newly prestigious. Some imported beads were manufactured as copies of the local styles,<sup>5</sup> and copies of lantana, specifically, may have been flooding the market at this time, as by 1929 it

1. Clarke, p.156.

2. Pointed out by Ade Obayemi.

3. Nadel, p.284.

4. I am indebted for this suggestion to Prof. Ade Obayemi.

5. Nadel, p.284, note 1.



was reported that for one genuine lantana bead, ten imitation ones were seen.<sup>1</sup>

The prospects for the beadmaking industry did not improve after the 1930s. Even though the possibilities of resuscitation were considered in the 1950s, it was only briefly and without results. The 1940s and 1950s were years of interest in the development or modernisation of local industries and in the cooperative movement, and various industries in Ilorin were affected or discussed. In early 1955 the beadmakers featured in discussions relating to cooperatives and equipment. It was reported that those beadmakers who remained were anxious to reform their group, and to attempt to regain some of their lost members. Enquiries were made by the authorities about "a simple form of drill and polisher", and about the possibility of finding the red stone closer to hand. The Waziri,<sup>2</sup> however, seems to have believed that the beadmakers' organisation was unsuitable to form the basis for a

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Report on Women's Education, p.7.

These imitation lantana beads were most unlikely to have been manufactured in Britain, but could have come from a variety of other sources. See Board of Trade Journal 124 (1930), 563; Clarke, p.156.

2. Acting as an official of the Ilorin Native Authority.

cooperative; and mechanical drills and polishers were reported to require too high a degree of skill. There the matter was dropped.<sup>1</sup>

Since the 1950s there has been no revival of the industry, and nowadays only traces of it remain. In Ilorin, the beads are still used, notably by brides. They are now treasured by their elderly owners, and hired out to other families. A few old men, perhaps, still make them, and they and others also do repairs. Little, if any, of the stone is still brought to the town, although one of the quarries in Niger Republic has remained in operation.<sup>2</sup> Men now in middle age, who had completed their apprenticeship as beadmakers, have long since taken to other occupations, and their sons have undergone no such full-time training.<sup>3</sup> With the lack of apprenticeships over many years, and the continuing attraction of other work, any future revival becomes unlikely in the extreme. While the industry continued to prosper in the early twentieth century for some years, its later collapse, even more so than that of the entrepot trade, has been complete.

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1. For these discussions, see NAK Ilorprof 5 3519/s.7, Ilorin Beadmakers, 1955.

2. Beauchene, p.63.

3. For the information in this paragraph, see Ile Ashileke interviews, 29/5/80 and 1/6/80; information from Ibrahim Olabintan, Ile Olabintan, Okekere, Ilorin, 23/4/81; B.A. Yahaya, 9/6/82; K.A. Ibrahim, 9/8/82, 18/9/82.

CHAPTER 3: THE NARROW-LOOM CLOTH OF ILORIN: INDUSTRY  
AND TRADE

The town of Ilorin has been the centre of a second luxury industry, apart from the manufacture of lantana beads. This is the production of quality cloth by male weavers on a narrow, horizontal loom. Unlike beadmaking, in which women played some part, it has been an exclusively male preserve. Women in Ilorin were weavers, but they produced a broader cloth on an upright loom.<sup>1</sup>

The finished products of the narrow-loom industry in the nineteenth century were of various types and styles. They included the types known collectively as alari, noted for their dark red colour and likely to have accounted for quantities of the magenta-red waste silk, alharini, which after crossing the desert was brought

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1. On women's weaving in Ilorin, see eg. notes by Sylvia Leith-Ross in Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929), p.282.

south in large amounts by Hausa caravans to Ilorin.<sup>1</sup> Strips woven from this silk were also used as lining for expensive gowns.<sup>2</sup> Sanyan, or West African wild silk, was also brought to Ilorin from Hausaland. Mixed with cotton, it produced a soft though non-lustrous light brown cloth, characteristically bearing a narrow white stripe, both these colours being natural to the silk.<sup>3</sup> Etu ("guinea-fowl")

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1. Interviews conducted by Toyin Ibrahim Hassan with aged weavers in Ilorin, July/Aug. 1981. These were follow-up interviews with weavers previously interviewed by Otolirin Adesiyun in 1975 (on these Hassan and Adesiyun interviews, see Bibliography, pp.343, 351 ); A. Yusuf, "Ilorin Weaving", N.C.E. project, College of Education, Ilorin; Joanne Bubolz Eicher, Nigerian Handcrafted Textiles (Ile-Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press, 1976), p.41; Mahdi Adamu, The Hausa Factor in West African History (Zaria & Ibadan: A.B.U. Press and O.U.P., 1978), p.125.  
On raw silk being brought to Ilorin, see Chapter 1, p.57.  
The names of alari and the other types or patterns listed below were given by the weavers interviewed by Adesiyun and Hassan.  
For a modern version of alari cloth, see plate XI, p.376 below.
2. Venice Lamb and Judy Holmes, Nigerian Weaving (Roxford, Herts: H.A. & V.M. Lamb, 1980), pp.40-41 and see plate 64, pp.48-49.
3. "Reports of Recent Investigations at the Imperial Institute", Bulletin of the Imperial Institute 14 (1916), 168-71; John C. Ene, Insects and Man in West Africa (Ibadan University Press, 1963), p.25; Kate P. Kent, West African Cloth (Denver: Denver Museum of Natural History, 1971), p.26; Eicher, p.41; John Picton and John Mack, African Textiles (London: British Museum Publications, 1979), pp.27-28; Lamb and Holmes, p.44.  
The word sanyan, like alari, is of northern origin. See "Investigations Imperial Institute", pp.168, 170; Adamu, p.125.

cloth, using dyed sanyan, was similar to the Nupe product, also bearing the guinea-fowl name, in checks of indigo and white.<sup>1</sup> Alaro cloths, said to be in great demand from Lagos, were plain or in a variety of striped patterns, made from indigo-dyed yarn.<sup>2</sup> Petuje ("kill guinea-fowl and eat"), a light and dark striped cloth, is said to be one of the alaro group.<sup>3</sup> The supplementary weft float patterns, so characteristic of Ilorin weaving in the twentieth century, and sometimes seen on alari cloths,<sup>4</sup> are likely to have been a somewhat later introduction to Ilorin than the warp striped or checked types.<sup>5</sup> The idea, suggested by R.J. Gavin, that Ilorin was also

1. Information from Amuda Shaibu Oganija, Ile Oganija, Oke Apomu, Ilorin, Aug./Sep. 1978 (on this informant, see Bibliography, pp.344-45); information from E.B. Bolaji, Ile Bale Ibagun, June 1983.  
On the Nupe cloth, see Marion Johnson, "Cloth on the Banks of the Niger", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 6 (June 1973), 358-59.
2. Interview with Abdul Kareem, Singini Quarter, 8/9/75, conducted by O. Adesiyun; Hassan follow-up interviews, July/Aug. 1981; Lamb & Holmes, p.46 and p.52, plate 67.
3. Hassan follow-up interviews, July/Aug. 1981; Ruth Boyer, "Narrow Band Weaving among the Yoruba of Nigeria", Craft Horizons 24 (1964), p.53; Lamb & Holmes, p.50.
4. See Eicher, plate 5(a); Lamb & Holmes, p.37, plates 40-43, and p.40.
5. See p.160-163 below, on weft float patterns. See plates III, IV, VIII-XI, pp.370, 373-76, below, for illustrations of older and newer types of Ilorin cloth.

producing a variant of the Kano black cloth,<sup>1</sup> seems unlikely. Although a deep blue-black dye was produced in the town, and beaters were employed to produce a glaze, on alaro cloths for example,<sup>2</sup> there is no evidence that Ilorin ever produced anything approaching the narrowness and delicacy of the Kano cloth.<sup>3</sup>

As with the production of stone beads, the narrow-loom cloth industry in Yorubaland well predates the expansion of Ilorin in the early nineteenth century. It may originally have been introduced from the north.<sup>4</sup> It was, as Robin Law points out, important in Old Oyo,<sup>5</sup> where raw materials were locally available, where in addition

1. R.J. Gavin, "The Impact of Colonial Rule on the Ilorin Economy 1897-1930", Centrepoint 1 (Oct. 1977), 44, note 47.
2. David W. Carnegie, Letters from Nigeria of the Honorable David Wynford Carnegie, F.R.G.S. 1899-1900 (Brechin: Black & Johnston, Printers and Publishers, 1902. Privately printed, not published), p.57; NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, para.35; "Ilorin", Nigeria Magazine, no. 49, 1956, p.155 [ed. D.W. Macrow, no author given]; Lamb & Holmes, p.46.
3. For a description of the Kano black cloth, see Eicher, pp.77-78.
4. As may, perhaps, be suggested by the northern origin of the names for certain materials. See p.122 above, note 3. A northern origin is also suggested by Robin Law, The Old Oyo Empire c.1600-c.1836 (Oxford: O.U.P., 1977), p.204.
5. *Ibid.*, pp.204-205.

silk from the north was already in use, and from where it seems that cloths were traded to the south, although not, unlike the later Ilorin trade, to the north.<sup>1</sup>

In the nineteenth century, there was a movement of weavers from Old Oyo and the western parts of its empire to Ilorin. Unlike the beadmakers' case, however, there is no suggestion of forcible transfer, and by no means all the weavers found their way to Ilorin,<sup>2</sup> many of them spreading instead over various other areas of Yorubaland. Some of the weaving families in Shaki, for example, claim to have moved there from Old Oyo.<sup>3</sup> In Iseyin, as Jennifer Bray has noted, the weaving industry received a considerable impetus during the first decades of the century, when refugees fled there from settlements destroyed by Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> A little later the New Oyo weavers, it is said, arrived there from Iseyin and the Awaye-Ibarapa areas in

1. The long-distance trade in woven cloth is discussed by Law, pp.208, 216-17, 224.
2. On the possibility that beadmakers were forcibly transferred to Ilorin, see Chapter 2, p.104. On the Ilorin monopoly, or near-monopoly, of lantana beadmaking, see Chapter 2, pp.115-16.
3. A.L. Mabogunje and M.O. Oyawoye, "The Problem of the Northern Yoruba Towns: The Example of Shaki", Nigeria Geographical Journal (Ibadan) 4 (Dec. 1961), 7.
4. Jennifer M. Bray, "The Organisation of Traditional Weaving in Iseyin, Nigeria", Africa 38 (1968), 271.

the west. Their arrival, it is suggested, dates from the 1830s and 1840s, when Alafin Atiba was attempting to force people into his new capital city.<sup>1</sup> Thus the development of the weaving industry in these towns was linked with the early nineteenth century upheavals in north-west and western Yorubaland; and the Ilorin industry received its own impetus from the same series of upheavals (and the resulting and long-continuing wars) and from the same directions. A number of weaving families in Ilorin today, for example, claim to have originated in areas to the north-west of the town, including Igboho and Old Oyo, though not all of them were weavers before they came.<sup>2</sup> Others came to Ilorin from Iseyin and Awaye.<sup>3</sup>

Some weavers declare that their families came to

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1. I am indebted for these items of information and suggestions to R.O. Lasisi, History Department, Kwara College of Technology. Mr. Lasisi is a member of a compound of weavers and Koranic scholars in present-day Oyo.
  2. Interviews conducted by O. Adesiyun with the following: Abdul Kareem, Singini Quarter, 9/7/75; Mustapha Mesuna, Adana Compound, 10/7/75; Babankudi, Olukodo Compound, 11/7/75; Jimoh Isowo, Ode Isowo, 15/5/75; Baba Onimangoro, Alasinrin, 16/7/75. Also Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji, successor to Abdul Kareem as Magaji, Singini Quarter; and Baba Onimangoro, Ile Alasinrin, Pakata, July/Aug. 1981.
  3. Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Sheu, Alowa Compound, 12/7/75 (hereafter referred to as Alfa Sheu 1); Alfa Sheu, compound unknown, 20/7/75 (hereafter referred to as Alfa Sheu 2); Aminu Sinhaba, Sayedun Compound, July 1975; and Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Olabintan Compound, 15/7/75.



Ilorin "because of Islam" or "by religious war".<sup>2</sup>

This may imply a motive of religious fervour for their migration, and the desire to pursue Islamic learning in Ilorin. Otherwise, it may simply imply that the Islamic revival, because it led to the defeat and destruction of Oyo and through this to the long period of subsequent wars, had made it necessary to look for a well-defended town like Ilorin in which to live. The first alternative, however, is the more likely, as many of the ancestors of present-day weaving families are said to have been Muslims even before they came to Ilorin;<sup>3</sup> and as there is a clear connection between Islam and the weavers in Ilorin.<sup>4</sup> They have tended to settle in districts like Agbaje and Okekere,

1. Adesiyun interviews with Mustapha Mesuna, Babankudi and Jimoh Isowo. Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji and Baba Onimangoro; also with Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi, Ode Isowo, July/Aug. 1981.
2. Adesiyun interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu.
3. Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji, Baba Onimangoro and Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi; also with Alfa Adelodun, Ile Baraye, Idi Igba; Aminu Sinhaba, Sayedun Compound; and Alfa Abdul Lasisi, Ile Onikan. Adesiyun interview with Mustapha Mesuna.
4. As has been noted also in Iseyin. Bray, "Traditional Weaving", p.271.

which are noted as centres of Islamic scholarship;<sup>1</sup> and many have also been mallams.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever the influence of Islam, the weavers must have also settled in Ilorin in the hope of greater profitability there than elsewhere. The growth of the industry in the town is likely to have been encouraged by its position on the trade routes to north and south, by its connections with the Caliphate markets, and by the numbers of potential customers in the thriving middleman and slave-raiding town of Ilorin itself. The cloth woven in Ilorin was highly prized and in great demand in the nineteenth century, and its sale for export contributed to the prosperity of the town.

Other factors also encouraged the growth and profitability of the industry in Ilorin. These included the availability of raw materials and of cheap labour for use in their production. Cotton was grown in and around Ilorin,

1. On Agbaje as a mallams' centre, see eg. Hermon-Hodge, pp.274-75. A cloth sellers' association headed by alhajis from Agbaje quarter is reported (Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi). The compound of the celebrated weaver, Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan is near that of the Kamal-ud-Deen family, noted for Islamic learning (on Alh. Kamal-ud-Deen, see H.A.K. Danmole, "The Frontier Emirate: A History of Islam in Ilorin" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980), pp. 221-25.
2. Information from A.S. Oganija; Adesiyun interview with Alfa Baba Dan Aladi, Idi Igba, 18/7/75; Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Abdul Lasisi.

as was indigo.<sup>1</sup> But not all the raw materials required were locally available. The waste and wild silks brought from the north have already been mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Cotton was also obtained, both by Hausa and Ilorin traders, from the north, especially Kano.<sup>3</sup> It was imported both because the Hausa women were considered the best spinners,<sup>4</sup> and also because of the insufficiency of locally available cotton.<sup>5</sup> So much cotton was required by the Ilorin weavers (including the women) that it had also to be imported from Igbeti to the north-west,<sup>6</sup> and from the Ekiti and probably the Igbomina areas to the east.<sup>7</sup> Indigo leaves were also

1. Adesiyun interviews; Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji and Aminu Sinhaba.

For details of the various plants which produce indigo dye, see Mrs. F. Daniel, "Yoruba Pattern Dyeing", Nigeria, no. 14, June 1938, p.125; Eicher, pp.27-28; Picton and Mack, p.38.

2. See pp.121-22 above.

3. Eg. Adesiyun interviews with Babankudi and Alfa Sheu 1; also with Alfa Abdul Lasisi, Pakata, 14/7/75. Also Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Adelodun, Aminu Sinhaba and Alfa Raji.

4. Adesiyun interviews with Baba Onimangoro; and with Alfa Nafi, Idi Igba, 16/7/75; and Alh. Abdul Gambari, Oke Agodi, 19/7/75.

5. Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji, Alfa Adelodun and Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi. Also Yusuf, "Ilorin Weaving".

6. Adesiyun interview with Babankudi.

7. Hassan follow-up interview with Aminu Sinhaba; William H. Clarke, Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland 1854-1858, ed. J.A. Atanda (Ibadan University Press, 1972), p.152.

obtained from the north-west, Igbeti and Igboho being well-known source areas,<sup>1</sup> and probably from Nupe to the north.<sup>2</sup>

Quantities of cotton and dyestuffs, however, did come from the area around Ilorin, especially on its western side,<sup>3</sup> and much of the labour involved in the production and processing was provided by slaves. Informants emphasize the use of slave labour in nineteenth century Ilorin agriculture in general: "they preferred the slaves on the farm than elsewhere".<sup>4</sup> Slaves were "abundantly" used in cotton cultivation<sup>5</sup> (some of the weavers having cotton

1. Adesiyun interviews; G.J. Afolabi Ojo, Yoruba Culture (London: University of Ife Press and University of London Press, 1966), p.85. Igbeti and Igboho were close to Old Oyo, which had been a major centre of indigo cultivation in the early nineteenth century. See R. Lander, Records of Captain Clapperton's Last Expedition to Africa (London: 1830), vol.2, p.211.
2. Indigo certainly came from Nupe in the twentieth century. S.F. Nadel, A Black Byzantium (London: O.U.P. for I.A.II, 1942), p.235.
3. In 1912 it was said to come mostly from "Oke Imoru", that is, the western and north-western environs of Ilorin (NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Re-Assessment by A/R Lethem, Progress Report, para.26). Afon District, close to Ilorin on the southern side, was said in 1918 to have few cotton or indigo farms (NAK Ilorprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Report Afon District Ilorin Province 1918, paras.24, 26. On "Oke Imoru", see also p.132 below, note 4.
4. Adesiyun interview with Amuda Yusuf, Pakata, July 1975.
5. Adesiyun interview with Alh. Abdul Gambari; Hassan follow-up interview with Baba Onimangoro.

farms worked by them),<sup>1</sup> as were iwofa.<sup>2</sup> Slaves were also among those employed in spinning,<sup>3</sup> in the production and processing of dyestuffs<sup>4</sup> and in dyeing.<sup>5</sup>

In the nineteenth century, then, slaves provided cheap labour for the cultivation of raw materials required by the weaving industries. When the colonial government took over, however, the slave supply was halted, and the existing slaves were legally allowed to claim their freedom.<sup>6</sup> The effect of these events, according to one Ilorin informant, was that some farms were "spoilt" when the slaves "disappeared".<sup>7</sup> Some others

1. Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Abdul Lasisi, Alh. Yahaya Kalu and Jimoh Isowo. Later, however, Alh. Yahaya Kalu said that neither his father nor anyone in his family had cotton farms (interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Olabintan Compound, Okekere, 28/5/81).
2. Adesiyun interviews with Jimoh Isowo; and with Alfa Adelodun, Idi Igba, 17/7/75.
3. Adesiyun interviews with Mustapha Mesuna; and with Alfa Ahinla, Idi Igba, 17/7/75.
4. Adesiyun interviews with Mustapha Mesuna, Alfa Abdul Lasisi and Alfa Adelodun.
5. Adesiyun interview with Mustapha Mesuna.
6. See Chapter 5, p.251.
7. Adesiyun interview with Alfa Salimonu, Isale Oja, Pakata, 14/7/75.

report that although their weaver fathers owned farms, they themselves did not inherit them,<sup>1</sup> perhaps an indication that the slaves who had worked them were gone. Some, certainly, managed to leave the Ilorin area; but the great majority of farm slaves remained on the land around the town (as the colonial authorities in fact desired),<sup>2</sup> in many cases moving, at the instigation of their masters and together with other dependants, further out into the farming hinterland.<sup>3</sup> Since the ex-slaves remained on Ilorin land and under their masters' control, it is unlikely that the arrival of colonial rule heralded any major crisis in raw material supply. This supposition is supported by a 1912 report that much of the cotton used by the Ilorin weavers was still grown locally in "Oke Imoru",<sup>4</sup> the farms in the western hinterland of the town.<sup>5</sup> It is also unlikely that changes with

1. Adesiyun interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu (but see p. 131 above, note 1). Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Adelodun and Aminu Sinhaba.
2. See Chapter 5, pp.251-53.
3. Chapter 5, pp.254-62.
4. i.e. "Moro Interior". Present-day Moro L.G.A. is named after the Moro River.
5. NAI Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.26.

regard to slaves made any great impact on the numbers of weavers themselves, since few slaves had been taught to weave,<sup>1</sup> being concentrated instead in the more laborious and less highly skilled production stages.

As would be expected, given their places of origin, the male weavers settled largely in the Yoruba quarters of Ilorin, particular concentrations occurring in the areas under Balogun Ajikobi, Magaji Bandawaki, Magaji Zarumi, Balogun Alanamu and Magajis Ojuekun and Ogidi.<sup>2</sup> A few Yoruba weavers lived in other quarters of Ilorin, in which a few Hausa and other weavers may also have been working, serving their own communities,<sup>3</sup> just as a Hausa potter served the Gambari community, at least in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> Although the

1. Adesiyun interviews with Alh. Yahaya Kalu and Jimoh Isowo. But see also interview with Mustapha Mesuna.
2. These were the areas of concentration in 1922, and may be taken to represent earlier settlement patterns. The areas are given in order of numbers of weavers found in each. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx. 2.
3. Information from A.S. Oganija.
4. J.W. Scott Macfie, "The Pottery Industry of Ilorin, Northern Nigeria", Bulletin of the Imperial Institute 11 (1913), 118. See also plate XXXV, p.389.

weavers were Yoruba, like the beadmakers and potters, and shared with them a common origin in the north-western areas of the old empire, their settlement pattern in Ilorin was not entirely the same as that of these other occupational groups. Although concentrations of beadmaking families existed in many of the weavers' areas listed above, the main area for the beadmakers was Ibagun, and a further cluster existed in Magaji Gari area.<sup>1</sup> These were areas in which relatively few weavers had settled.<sup>2</sup> They are also among the oldest parts of the town, with warriors of Afonja in Ibagun,<sup>3</sup> and the Magaji Gari quarter housing Afonja's own family. It may be suggested, therefore, from the above, that the weavers had fewer connections than the beadmakers with the Afonja (pre-Fulani) period in Ilorin; and that many of them were later arrivals who clustered in the areas inhabited by the victorious Muslim Yoruba supporters of the Fulani regime, rather than in the quarters where lived the defeated supporters of Afonja.

With respect to the beadmakers it has been suggested that their concentration generally in Yoruba rather than Hausa or Fulani areas may reflect the fact that Hausa

1. See Table 2, p.175.

2. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx.2. For later expansion of the weaving industry in Okelele (which includes Ibagun), see p.155 below, note 2.

3. Information from E.B. Bolaji, Ile Bale Ibagun, 27/2/83.



and Fulani Ilorins, under the influence of reformist Islam, were not bead wearers.<sup>1</sup> It does not seem, however, that any similar correlation can be made with respect to Ilorin woven cloth. Gavin has suggested that the Islamic revival had removed the taste for richly textured robes from among its adherents, and substituted a demand for the less gaudy but fine Kano black cloth.<sup>2</sup> But Ilorin cloth was also much in demand at the time among the Islamic populations of the north;<sup>3</sup> and it was available in whites and deep blues, and in subdued, unobtrusive patterns;<sup>4</sup> so there seems no reason to suppose that it was not worn by the Hausa and Fulani Ilorins.

Whether or not the Ilorin emirs themselves wore the locally-woven cloth, they certainly utilised it as gifts, as they did the beads.<sup>5</sup> The members of an Ibadan embassy of 1887, for example, were presented with

1. Chapter 2, p.108.

2. R.J. Gavin, "The Middle Niger Valley: A Historical Overview", paper presented at Seminar on the State of Cultural Studies in Kwara State, Ilorin, Nov. 1978, pp.5-6.

3. See p.139 below.

4. See eg. the etu pattern illustrated in Lamb & Holmes, pp.48-49, plate 64. White cloth was also produced in Ilorin. See Adesiyun interviews with Mustapha Mesuna; and Alfa Yahaya, Ile Sefutu, 11/7/75. Also Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Raji.

5. On beads as gifts, see Chapter 2, p.109, note 3.

garments of alari cloth.<sup>1</sup> Such items may have come into the emirs' possession in form of presents from seekers after favours; or the rulers might have honoured particularly famous weavers with their patronage.<sup>2</sup> It is unlikely that they acquired the cloths through taxation, as all available evidence points to the conclusion that no tax was levied on the weavers' products in Ilorin prior to colonial rule,<sup>3</sup> nor indeed was there any other form of elite control.<sup>4</sup> This general lack of control is similar to what is known with respect to beadmaking also, although the weavers seem to have been luckier in terms of tax;<sup>5</sup> which may reflect the lesser individual wealth of the

1. British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies Africa 63 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), p.555, Johnson to Hamilton 23/1/87.
2. As Emir Abdulkadiri, for example, patronised Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan in the twentieth century (interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81). Alh. Yahaya Kalu's presentation double-sided patterns bear names connected with the emir. Information from Ibrahim Olabintan, grandson of the weaver, Dec. 1981; also Adesiyun interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu. On names of these patterns, see p.164 below, note 3.
3. Adesiyun interviews; Hassan follow-up interviews.
4. Interview with the Sarkin Gobir, 23/4/83, conducted by A.I. Aleşinloye and H.J. O'Hear.
5. See Chapter 2, p.109, on high taxation of beadmakers.

weavers,<sup>1</sup> but also their more privileged position as wholehearted supporters of the Islamic regime.

Narrow-loom weaving was associated with certain families, though this association was not, it would seem, as close as the parallel association in the beadmaking industry.<sup>2</sup> Some patterns, though not many perhaps, were kept secret within families.<sup>3</sup> Sons and relatives were apprenticed to the trade, though apprentices were often taken from among outsiders as well, both from Ilorin and elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> In terms of patterns and apprenticeships, therefore, plus raw material cultivation and the use of family slaves, the family may be seen as a unit of production. However, although spinners and dyers often belonged to weaving families, they were not professionally under the weavers' control, and would sell their materials and skills to anyone, whether a family member or not,

1. Certainly they were less wealthy than the beadmakers in the early twentieth century. See eg. p.151 below, and Chapter 2, p.114.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, Annual Report Ilorin Province 1921, para.22.
3. Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan kept his double-sided patterns within his family (information from Ibrahim Olabintan, 16/11/81). He did not, however, attempt to keep the single-sided supplementary weft float patterns secret (Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi), always assuming that he was the innovator with respect to them. For a discussion of these various types of patterns and their introduction, see pp.160-64 below.
4. Adesiyun interviews; Hassan follow-up interviews; interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81.

leaving the weavers from their own family to acquire their supplies on the open market;<sup>1</sup> a situation somewhat different from that which prevailed at Iseyin and elsewhere in Yorubaland.<sup>2</sup> The family was also to some limited extent a unit of trade. Female family members were sometimes responsible for local cloth sales.<sup>3</sup> Sons and other relatives, plus slaves and iwofa, were utilised in headloading cloth for weaver-traders, although professional carriers were also used.<sup>4</sup> These weaver-traders, however, if more recent practice is anything to go by,<sup>5</sup> and as would in any case be expected, were dealing not only for their own family members, but also for other weavers from outside.

The trade in Ilorin cloth, carried on both by these Ilorin weaver-traders, and by merchants from elsewhere,

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1. Adesiyun interviews; Hassan follow-up interviews. Only one informant declared that the women spinners were under the weavers; Hassan interview with Alfa Raji.
  2. Bray, "Traditional Weaving", p.272; Ojo, p.84.
  3. Information from Otolirin Adesiyun.
  4. Adesiyun interviews; interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81; information from Abdulraufu Ajao, 1978, on iwofa.
  5. Information from A.S. Oganija.

flourished in the nineteenth century, with the industry expanding to supply an export as well as a local demand. The scale of the industry is revealed by the observations of mid-century visitors to the town, who in a ride of less than an hour counted over 150 looms in operation;<sup>1</sup> and also by the "immense quantities" of waste silk flowing south to supply these looms.<sup>2</sup> What they were producing was high-quality, costly cloth much valued over a wide area.<sup>3</sup> In the 1880s "tobes" from Ilorin were said to be among the best in Zaria.<sup>4</sup> In 1889, Ilorin cloth and gowns were much in demand in Kano, to which market they were then being carried by Hausa traders who obtained them in Ilorin in exchange for salt, which had been obtained as a result of their ivory sales on the Niger.<sup>5</sup> Ilorin traders also carried cloths to Kano and Bida,

1. Robert Campbell, A Pilgrimage to my Motherland. An Account of a Journey among the Egbas and Yorubas of Central Africa in 1859-60 (London: W.J. Johnson, 1860), p.106. These would have been men's looms, which unlike those of the women were set up outdoors.
2. Chapter 1, p.57.
3. PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon 6/3/58.
4. P. Staudinger, Im Herzen der Haussa Lander, 2nd ed. (Oldenberg: 1891), p.716.
5. PRO FO 881/5913, Macdonald Report, p.87.

for example, for sale.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the northern trade, there was also an important trade to the south, with southern destinations such as Lagos, Ogbomosho, Ibadan, Onitsha and Ekiti being clearly emphasized in the testimonies of Ilorin weaver informants.<sup>2</sup> Prior to the development of the Ilorin industry, there had already been a trade to the south in cloth from Old Oyo,<sup>3</sup> which Ilorin may have taken over on the empire's collapse. Ilorin products may have been among the "country cloth" sent south by the river route in the 1830s.<sup>4</sup> At the mid-century it was said that Ilorin cloth had "long been celebrated throughout Yoruba and neighbouring countries",<sup>5</sup> which may suggest the importance of the southern trade. This trade may have been further encouraged around the 1860s by the cowrie price differential of the time, which meant that Ilorin traders could sell their cloth in southern markets at inflated prices, then use the cowries so obtained to buy goods in Ilorin or further north at bargain rates.

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1. Adesiyun interviews with Aminu Sinhaba and Alfa Nafi.
  2. Adesiyun interviews; Hassan follow-up interviews; interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81.
  3. See pp.124-25 above.
  4. Sources detailing the commodities exported downriver in the 1830s are listed by Paul E. Lovejoy, in "Inter-regional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria", Journal of African History 15 (1974), 576. Ilorin cloth was certainly sent downriver to Onitsha later in the century; see Adesiyun interviews.
  5. PRO FO 84/1061, Campbell to Clarendon, 6/3/58.

And even if this cowrie trade became unprofitable in the 1870s,<sup>1</sup> the southern markets would have been attractive as sources of kola, for example, in later years.<sup>2</sup> And the trade to the south may also have been encouraged in these later years of the century by the growth of a seaborne trade in Yoruba cloth from Lagos to what is now Ghana and Sierra Leone. This grew from the late 1870s until 1891, after which it began to decline.<sup>3</sup>

The Ghanaian trade has long been of importance to the weaving industry of Ilorin. And although it seems likely that in the late nineteenth century a substantial proportion of it was carried on through Lagos and by sea, the cross-country routes have also been utilized, though to what extent, and to what extent Ilorin's own traders have been involved on them, are by no means clear. It seems likely that in the nineteenth century some of the Ilorin cloth exported to Kano was re-exported to Salaga by Hausa traders plying the northern cross-country kola

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1. On the cowrie differential and its effects, and the suggested end to the cowrie trade, see Chapter 1, pp. 52-54.
  2. On the kola trade, see Chapter 1, p. 71.
  3. A.G. Hopkins, "An Economic History of Lagos" (Ph.D thesis, University of London, 1964), pp.39-40.

route.<sup>1</sup> The more southerly kola route may also have seen the passage of some Ilorin cloth. Ilorin traders did go to Borgu to sell the cloth, and traders from Borgu came to Ilorin to buy.<sup>2</sup> The cloths might then be carried by Bariba traders to Gonja, there to be exchanged for kola. Due to the dangers on the direct route from Ilorin to Kishi and the north west,<sup>3</sup> it is likely that the Bariba (a group of whom were observed by Samuel Crowther in 1857) would follow a route from Ilorin to the Niger, crossing at Raba then again below Busa, from which point they would proceed to the west.<sup>4</sup> Yoruba traders were seen at Salaga as early as 1877,<sup>5</sup> and in large numbers

1. Traders from Kano to Salaga did carry cloth. See Colonial Reports, Annual: Northern Nigeria 1900-1913 (London: 1900-1914), bound volume 1900-1911, p.119 (1902).
2. Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Nafi and Mustapha Mesuna.
3. See Chapter 1, pp.17-18.
4. Samuel Crowther and John Christopher Taylor, The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger: Journals and Notices of the Native Missionaries Accompanying the Niger Expedition of 1857-1859 (London: Church Missionary House, 1859; reprint ed. (London: Dawsons, 1968), pp.102,103.
5. Salaga Papers, compiled by Mrs. Marion Johnson, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, vol.1, SAL/3/1, David Asante's Account of Salaga, 1877.



at Jega in 1903;<sup>1</sup> but whether these were Ilorins is unknown. The dearth of Ilorin traders in Northern Ghana in the twentieth century, reported by a modern researcher,<sup>2</sup> suggests that by that time at least they were very few in the cross-country cloth trade. But the existence of a large group of Ilorins in Lagos by 1887,<sup>3</sup> and of substantial and long-resident groups in the twentieth century in Accra and elsewhere<sup>4</sup> suggests that Ilorin traders by those periods were far more active in the sea-borne trade.

Whatever the extent of Ilorin traders' own involvement, the trade in Ilorin cloth to Ghana has been considerable. By the 1930s it was said to be much in favour there with chiefs for "ceremonial dress";<sup>5</sup> and the extent of the trade is revealed by the effects on Ilorin of the export

1. See Chapter 1, p.76.
2. Personal communication from Jeremy Eades, University of Kent, 12/12/79.
3. Gavin, "Impact", p.34 and note 70, citing Lagos Blue Book 1887, p.28.
4. G. Brian Stapleton, "Nigerians in Ghana with Special Reference to the Yoruba", in Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Conference Proceedings, December 1958; G.Brian Stapleton, "Nigerians in Ghana", West Africa, 21/2/59, p.175.
5. J.D. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", Nigeria, no.14, June 1938, p.124. See also Picton and Mack, p.117, black and white plate 113.

ban imposed during the Second World War.<sup>1</sup>

Within Nigeria a southern orientation of the cloth trade in the twentieth century has been clear. As early as 1912, a colonial officer was emphasizing the southern trade,<sup>2</sup> while the trade to the north is hardly mentioned in colonial records at all. To some extent, this emphasis as recorded merely reflects the transit trade in cloth to Ghana via Lagos and Ibadan (whose Oje market was attended by Ghanaian traders at least in the 1960s,<sup>3</sup> and very probably earlier). But it also reflects the growing economic prosperity of southern and coastal areas during the colonial period, when these, with their earnings from export crops, were best able to afford the expensive Ilorin cloth. The southern orientation of the trade is illustrated in the situation of the major twentieth century markets for the cloth, which have been

1. NAK Ilorprof 5 3685, Local Industries - Orders for. The ban lasted from 1943 to at least 1946.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.26.
3. B.W. Hodder and U.I. Ukwu, Markets in West Africa (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1969), p.96; Bray, "Traditional Weaving", p.276.
4. As does the movement of Ilorin weavers to settle in Ijebu. Information from E.B. Bolaji, Ile Bale Ibagun, June 1983; Lamb & Holmes, p.25.

especially Lagos, Ibadan and Onitsha.<sup>1</sup> Ilorin traders ceased, perhaps before the colonial period ended, to travel to Onitsha themselves,<sup>2</sup> but that town has remained an important distribution centre for the cloth, supplied at least in part through Oje market in Ibadan.<sup>3</sup> Oje, which began to operate as a cloth market in the late 1930s, became the major centre for the sale and distribution of Ilorin cloth.<sup>4</sup> The son of an Ilorin dealer gives his version of this market's foundation.

This Oje market should have [been] situated at Ilorin, but [was not] due to some conditions which prevailed during that time such as hatred of each other, because [it was] the dealers' belief that if the market is situated at Ilorin, those that they employed will become as rich as them .... also, Ogbomosho people dominated the weaving during that time and they agreed to situate the market at Ibadan. Ibadan people also wanted the market [there]. 5

The above account suggests that it was not merely a

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1. On Lagos and Ibadan, see information from A.S. Oganija; and Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi and Baba Onimangoro. Lagos and Ibadan have also been the dominant markets for Iseyin cloth; Bray, "Traditional Weaving", pp.277, 275.
  2. Information from A.S. Oganija.
  3. Bray, "Traditional Weaving", p.276.
  4. Hodder and Ukwu, pp.95-96.
  5. A.S. Oganija.

question of orientation, but one of domination by the southern traders, for whom Ibadan would be more convenient as a marketing centre than Ilorin. Even in the nineteenth century the Ilorin dealers had shared the long-distance trade with others from both north<sup>1</sup> and south; but they were certainly important at that time in the southern trade,<sup>2</sup> although fluctuations in their numbers did occur. Despite the impression, for example, given by Ilorin informants that many Ilorins were engaged in carrying cloth to Lokoja (for Onitsha), it seems that in the early years of colonial rule this route was largely in the hands of cloth traders from the north.<sup>3</sup> In the colonial period in general, however, there seems to have been an influx of cloth

1. On Hausa traders coming to Ilorin, see eg. p.139 above; Adesiyun interviews with Mustapha Mesuna and Babankudi; and Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Abdul Lasisi.

On Ilorin traders going to the north, see pp. 139-40 above, and also Adesiyun interview with Alfa Sheu I.

2. On Ilorin traders going to the south, see Adesiyun interviews with Abdul Kareem, Alfa Sheu I, Aminu Sinhaba, Amuda Yusuf, Alh. Yahaya Kalu, Jimoh Isowo, Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi and Alfa Nafi. Also Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Raji, Aminu Sinhaba and Alfa Abdul Lasisi. Interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81.

On southern traders coming to Ilorin, see Adesiyun interviews with Abdul Kareem, Mustapha Mesuna, Alfa Yahaya, Babankudi and Amuda Yusuf; also all Hassan follow-up interviews.

3. PRO CO 446/46.

traders from the south. As early as 1912 it was reported that one corner of Gambari market in Ilorin was "almost entirely occupied by Southern Nigeria dealers in cloth".<sup>1</sup> By 1925, "a large number of men from the Southern Provinces" were "making a business of native woven cloth .... at nearly every local market" in the emirate.<sup>2</sup> And in 1929 Oshogbo and Ogbomosho traders were reportedly buying large quantities of cloth for export to the south.<sup>3</sup> The hostile reaction, related on page 145 above, of Ilorin dealers to the idea of a major market at Ilorin may have arisen in part from a fear that an even greater influx of southerners would ensue.<sup>4</sup> A "famous cloth market .... held on Sunday nights" in Ilorin in the late 1940s<sup>5</sup> may reflect a belated attempt by these dealers to recapture a pre-eminent position in the trade.

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.40.
  2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687, vol.3, IPAR 1925, para.122.
  3. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Sylvia Leith-Ross, Report on Women's Education Ilorin Province, 30/4/29, p.8.
  4. I am indebted to Prof. R.J. Gavin for this suggestion.
  5. Daryll Forde, ed., The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of Western Nigeria, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, Western Africa, part 4 (London: International African Institute, 1951; reprinted with supplementary bibliography 1969), p.76.

Even though potential profits were being diverted by traders from the south, the industry in Ilorin continued to thrive. In 1926, for example, demand was reported to be high.<sup>1</sup> In 1938 the Ilorin industry was said to be flourishing, and demand appeared to be on the increase.<sup>2</sup> And whatever the problems occasioned by the Second World War,<sup>3</sup> by the 1950s a ready market for the "fairly expensive" Ilorin cloth was again reported, with a "definite snobbery" in favour of local as opposed to imported cloth.<sup>4</sup> Other centres of narrow-loom weaving have also continued to function in the twentieth century, notably Iseyin;<sup>5</sup> but the Ilorin industry appears not to have been adversely affected by its competition; the two have had different specialities,<sup>6</sup> and specifically, by the 1930s at least, Ilorin was becoming known for the newer supplementary weft

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1926, para.80.
2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.12, IPARs 1938 and 1939, IPAR 1938, para.81.
3. See p.153 below.
4. Provincial Annual Reports 1957 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1959), Ilorin, para.65; also "Ilorin", pp.148-55.
5. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.26.
6. Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Sa'adu, Oke Agudi, 20/7/75, and Alfa Sheu 2.

float patterned type of cloth, utilising colourful imported yarns.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the competition from southern dealers, the dealers of Ilorin certainly continued to profit from the trade. In 1922 for example, 145 "brokers", including cloth brokers, were recorded in the town. While the average income for males in general was under twelve pounds a year,<sup>2</sup> the average broker's income was put at fifteen.<sup>3</sup> This may well have been an underestimate, given that some brokers were said at the same time to be making from two hundred to three hundred pounds per year,<sup>4</sup> and that, a few years later, after intensive scrutiny, the tax of "certain cloth sellers" was increased.<sup>5</sup> The two largest cloth brokers in Ilorin already paid fifteen pounds each in tax in 1922, so that their declared income must in each case have exceeded three hundred and fifty pounds.<sup>6</sup> Some of the brokers

1. See pp.158-59, 160-63 below.

2. As calculated from the average incidence of tax at approximately 9/6 per adult male, which was 4% of average income. See NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, end of appx.2, beginning of appx.3.

3. Ibid., appx.4.

4. Ibid., para.37.

5. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1926, para.48.

6. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, para.41 and appx.4.

in Ilorin were dealing with imported as well as handwoven cloth,<sup>1</sup> but Lawani for example, one of the two wealthiest and a resident of Ajikobi Sub-Ward, must have made much of his profit from the cloth produced by that area's weavers, who accounted for almost 25 per cent of its adult males.<sup>2</sup>

The Ilorin cotton sellers also profited. As an informant reported

In the earliest period there was only one market women association .... the Cotton Women Association. Their function was to buy and sell the cotton to the weavers. They could increase and decrease the price of cotton. They are very powerful. 3

Another informant has given details of large-scale cotton dealers, male and female, of the last 30 or 40 years, some of whose profits have been invested in a factory, situated in Ilorin and producing yarn.<sup>4</sup> The cotton sellers' profits,

1. Ibid., para.37.
2. Ibid., appx. 2(14) and appx. 1; there were 765 weavers listed in the sub-ward out of a total adult male population of 3009.
3. Information from Emmanuel Adewumi (collected from a transporter in Ilorin), 3/4/78.
4. Information from A.S. Oganija. Also interview with the Manager, Prospect Textile Mill, Ilorin, conducted by Toyin Hassan, 14/7/81.



however, were made at the expense of the weavers,<sup>1</sup> who may have been abandoning their farmlands,<sup>2</sup> and with them their hedge against inflated cotton prices,<sup>3</sup> due to the increasing preference for imported cotton and silks.<sup>4</sup> Certainly the weavers in Ilorin have been less well-off in the twentieth century than the dealer groups. In 1912, their tax equalled that of the average male,<sup>5</sup> but ten years later they were well below the average.<sup>6</sup> As previously related, the dealers resisted the idea of a major cloth market in the town, as the weavers would then have been able to market the cloth themselves, and share in the profits made by the dealers;<sup>7</sup> the market went to Ibadan instead, and the weavers' incomes remained low. Despite this, many of them remained

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1. And at the expense of the raw material producers. On the profits made by middlemen out of these producers, see Chapter 5, pp.288-91.
2. See p.132 above, on weavers who report that although their fathers owned farms, they themselves did not inherit them. An alternative explanation of the weavers' abandonment of their farms is however offered there.
3. Suggested by R.J. Gavin.
4. See pp.157-59 below.
5. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Brief Report, para.9.
6. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, end of appx.2, appx.4.
7. See p.145 above (quotation).

in the industry, doubtless because, as in Iseyin,<sup>1</sup> the income though low was reliable, given the generally high level of demand in a place and at a period of few alternative opportunities for employment. In Ilorin there were for many years few such opportunities; it may be recalled that the town, in the 1920s, was slow in comparison with Abeokuta and Offa, for example, in adopting new occupations.<sup>2</sup> A weaver might also receive other benefits from his dealer, such as help with the costs of his marriage, thus supplementing his basic income.

Although there has been no collapse of the weaving industry in Ilorin, such as affected its fellow luxury trade of stone beadmaking, it does seem that there has been some decline in weavers' numbers since the early colonial period. In the 1912 tax count, just under 1500 male weavers were reported in Ilorin.<sup>3</sup> In what seems generally to have been a more accurate count in 1922,<sup>4</sup> over 2000 (some 10 per cent of adult males) were

1. Bray, "Traditional Weaving", p.279.

2. Chapter 1, p.94.

3. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Brief Report, para.9.

4. See Chapter 2, p.112, note 1, on these tax counts.

counted.<sup>1</sup> By 1939/40, the numbers were down to about 1400; but in terms of percentage of adult males the weavers were up to 15.<sup>2</sup> An event which had a marked effect on the weavers' position was the Second World War. During this time the industry was hit by a ban on both the export of cloth and the import of yarn; and the numbers of weavers in Ilorin were reported to have decreased by 200 in 1945/6 alone. The use of hand-spun cotton in production for a market starved of imported cloth seems not to have been able to compensate for the lack of a Ghanaian trade and of imported yarn.<sup>3</sup> In 1948 the industry may still have been in decline, due to lack of export opportunities,<sup>4</sup> and continued shortage, perhaps, of imported yarn. By the 1950s both demand, and supply of these yarns, had improved,<sup>5</sup> and in 1956 there were said to be three weavers' guilds in the town, the largest having 700 members alone.<sup>6</sup> The tax figures

1. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149, Priestman Report, appx.2.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5/3737, Ilorin Town [tax] 1939-40. Much emigration of farmers had been occurring (see Chapter 5, pp.254-55). This would have left weavers as a higher percentage of the whole. However, some emigration of weavers also occurred (eg. to Ijebu, see p.144 above, note 4), thus lowering their numbers in absolute terms.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 3685, Local Industries.
4. NAI CSO 26/2 12687, vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1948, para.18.
5. "Ilorin", pp.148-55.
6. Provincial Annual Reports 1956 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1958), Ilorin, para.58.

for 1955-56, however, record only slightly over 800 male weavers in all, somewhat over 7 per cent of the total adult males.<sup>1</sup> It may well be that the weavers' guild numbers included large numbers of part-timers, who were listed under other occupations for purposes of tax.

Some further decline in numbers may have occurred more recently, especially since alternative employment opportunities were increased by the creation of a state capital at Ilorin in 1966. One informant in 1978 reported only about 10 people weaving in one family as against some 50 ten years before.<sup>2</sup> Others have also reported substantial declines.<sup>3</sup> In earlier days, primary education seems to have had little impact on weavers' numbers; except that it may even have increased them slightly, as unemployment among primary leavers led them to turn towards weaving apprenticeships.<sup>4</sup> The more recent entry of weavers'

1. NAK Ilorprof TAX/35 vol.1, Ilorin Native Treasury General Tax, 1955-56.
2. Information from A.S. Oganija.
3. Ibid; also information from Saka Jimoh, Ile Olodo, Okelele, 18/7/79; investigations made by Toyin Hassan in Ile Olodo, July/Aug. 1981; interviews with Alh. Alaga, Ile Olodo; Alfa Salimonu, Ile Kongbari, Abayawo Rd.; Raheem Olesin, Ile Olesin, Okelele, all conducted by Toyin Hassan, July/Aug. 1981.
4. Interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81. On the lack of effect of primary education on numbers of weavers in Iseyin, see Jennifer Bray, "The Economics of Traditional Cloth Production in Iseyin, Nigeria", Economic Development and Cultural Change 17 (1969), 544-45.

sons into secondary and higher education, however, is now contributing towards the numbers' decline.<sup>1</sup> But the numbers of weavers are likely to continue to fluctuate with the economic situation of the country as a whole; and in some parts of Ilorin they may actually have increased over the years.<sup>2</sup>

In comparison with Iseyin, the Ilorin weaving industry has revealed some conservatism in terms of the organisation

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1. Interviews conducted by Toyin Hassan with Alh. Alaga, Alfa Salimonu and Raheem Olesin.
2. A survey of 890 males in Okelele, Ilorin, in 1979, produced over 200, or over 24 per cent, weavers (Susan Watts, "Marriage Migration: A Case Study from the City of Ilorin", Liverpool Papers in Human Geography; a Working Paper of the Dept. of Geography, University of Liverpool, p.2), as compared with the 1922 tax count, in which for Ojuekun and Ibagun Sub-Wards combined (Okelele), only 273 out of 3115 adult males (11 per cent) were weavers (NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appendices 1 and 2). In 1955, only 87 weavers were found in the two sub-wards (NAK Ilorprof 3/14 TAX/35 vol.1, Ilorin Native Treasury General Tax 1955-56).

A number of suggestions may be put forward to explain this apparent recent increase. First, the 1979 survey, which covered less than one-third of the numbers counted in 1922, may have found a pocket of intensive weaving activity. The two Okelele compounds in which investigations were carried out by Toyin Hassan in 1981, and in which declines in numbers were reported (see p.154 above, and note 3), may have been outside this pocket. Second, the survey was taken during the early dry season, a period of major weaving activity, so a number of part-time weavers may have been included; although an effort was made to identify the main occupations of the respondents (personal communication from Susan Watts, Sep. 1983). Third, Ibagun was an area from which much emigration of farmers took place in earlier years (see Chapter 5, p.261 and note 2), and with the departure of the farmers, the proportion of weavers as a percentage of the whole may have risen.

of its trade. In Iseyin, cooperative societies were set up in the 1960s, through which the weavers, and not only the more prosperous among them, could buy their yarn more cheaply and sell their finished goods.<sup>1</sup> There have been dealers' associations in Ilorin, and weavers' guilds set up in the late 1940s and 1950s with colonial government encouragement, but these guilds do not appear to have taken root. Although some meetings of weavers take place, others categorically deny the existence of weavers' associations, and no cooperatives like those in Iseyin appear to exist in Ilorin today;<sup>2</sup> thus revealing, perhaps, a tighter control

1. Bray, "Traditional Weaving", pp.277-78.

2. On weavers' guilds and meetings, sellers' associations, and lack of weavers' associations, see the following: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1949, para.52; NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.20, Development Annual Report on Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, Ilorin Province Annual Report, 1949; Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.58; Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Sheu 1, Alfa Abdul Lasisi, Amuda Yusuf, Alh. Abdul Gambari and Alfa Sa'adu; information from Otolirin Adesiyun; Hassan follow-up interviews; interviews with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81 and 6/10/81, and information from his grandson Ibrahim Olabintan, 24/12/81; information from Sule Ajao (on Okelele), June 1983.

The assumption apparently made by Venice Lamb (Lamb & Holmes, p.29) that there is an overall functioning guild in Ilorin is therefore questionable. Lamb in addition states that the chief of the weavers in Ilorin is "Yaya Kalu"; but while Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan was indeed leader of a colonially-sponsored weavers' guild, some other weavers categorically deny that he had any special position, and in the years immediately before his death in 1982 he took no part in the annual weavers' festival described by Lamb.

by the dealers over the trade than elsewhere. In several other respects, however, the weaving industry in Ilorin has displayed not conservatism but, on the contrary, adaptability. It has adapted, for example, to changes in transport, shifting quickly to the use of the railway in the twentieth century, as Gavin has noted;<sup>1</sup> and to changes in directions of marketing, and the use of the sewing machine to join the woven strips, although, as Gavin has also remarked, Ilorin was initially slower to make this last change than were weaving industries elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

The industry in Ilorin has also revealed its adaptability with respect to raw materials. Although handspun cotton, much of it from Kano, continued in use throughout the colonial period, especially when imports were banned,<sup>3</sup> imported machine-spun yarn became popular very early on. In 1912 the increase in its import to Ilorin was sufficient to attract the notice of the assessing officer.<sup>4</sup> The

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.32, and note 55, citing Northern Nigeria Blue Book 1911, Trade Returns Offa and Budo Egbe.
2. Ibid., p.36. See Chapter 1, p.94, on Ilorin's comparative slowness in adopting modern industries.
3. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", p.121; "Ilorin", p.155; NAK Ilorprof 5 3685, Local Industries, memo. from M. Saadu 16/8/41 and minute on memo. from SNP to Chief Secretary 19/6/46.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.26.

weavers of Ilorin took to mixing imported cotton yarn with their own<sup>1</sup> and in some cases to using the imported product for the warp and handspun cotton for the weft threads of a piece of cloth.<sup>2</sup> Although imported yarn produced a less hardwearing cloth,<sup>3</sup> it increased the productivity of the weavers. Because it broke less on the loom, tangled less and ran more smoothly than handspun yarn, it greatly increased production speed.<sup>4</sup> An Ilorin informant, for example, has estimated that production was doubled.<sup>5</sup> Thus there were considerable advantages to be gained from the utilisation of imported cotton, quite apart from the fact that its greater range of colours than had previously been

1. Adesiyun interviews; interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu, 28/5/81.
2. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", p.121.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.26; information from A.S. Oganija; Adesiyun interview with Amuda Yusuf; "Weaving in Nigeria: A General Survey", Nigeria, no.14, 1938.
4. Information from A.S. Oganija; Picton and Mack, p.115; Eicher, pp.40-41; Bray, "Economics of Cloth Production", p.547; information from Marion Johnson.
5. Hassan follow-up interview with Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi. This agrees with Dodwell's estimate (C.B. Dodwell, "Iseyin, the Town of Weavers", Nigeria Magazine, no. 46, 1955) but is somewhat in excess of Bray's ("Economics of Cloth Production", p.547).



available with local dyes<sup>1</sup> led the cloth produced with it to be greatly in demand. But there were also disadvantages attached to its use. Its increasing popularity may have increased the weavers' dependence on the dealers; and led to the decline of the spinning and dyeing crafts.<sup>2</sup>

Other raw materials were also introduced and adopted. By the 1930s, dyed silks from Europe had arrived in Ilorin.<sup>3</sup> to be used mainly in the new weft float patterns,<sup>4</sup> and to be supplanted later by imported rayon yarn.<sup>5</sup> More recently, metallic yarns have also come into use.

Local indigo dye continued to be used;<sup>6</sup> it was reportedly in general use in Ilorin in the 1920s, and the "most popular" there even in the 1950s.<sup>7</sup> But imported

1. On the limited range of colours previously available, see eg. Marion Johnson, of C.W.A.S., University of Birmingham, "Weaving", unpublished paper.
2. Except for a period during the Second World War, when they benefited from the lack of imported yarn (NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1941, para. 44.
3. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", p.122. Sylvia Leith-Ross (RH Mss. Afr. s. 1520, Report on Women's Education, p.22) refers to silk and cotton mixtures already being sold in Lagos by 1929.
4. Picton and Mack, p.117.
5. Ibid., p.28.
6. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", p.122; Wilfrid D. Hambly, "Culture Areas of Nigeria", Field Museum of Natural History Anthropological Series, vol. 21, no. 36 (Chicago: 1935), p.414.
7. Hermon-Hodge, pp.281-82; "Ilorin", p.155; although both of these may be referring to the indigo dyeing of imported cotton cloth rather than to the dyeing of yarn or handwoven cloth.

dyes were already in use in the town in the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> Imported synthetic indigo and caustic soda (to replace potash as an alkali) speeded up the dyeing processes,<sup>2</sup> but both had their own disadvantages. Synthetic indigo, less colourfast than the local product, has therefore tended to be used only in combination with it;<sup>3</sup> and caustic soda is easily used in excess.<sup>4</sup>

The use of new colours, as mentioned above, helped to keep up the demand for the products of Ilorin's looms. Added to this, as a factor in the retention of demand, is Ilorin's most important and singular innovation, namely the introduction of what may best be described as supplementary weft float patterns, in which these new coloured yarns have been used. In these patterns, the extra weft floats across one face of the cloth, and is laid in at intervals with the ground weft, in order to hold the pattern in place. The pattern appears on one face of the cloth only.<sup>5</sup> These patterns may take the form of weft

1. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", p.122.
2. Eve de Negri, "Nigerian Textile Industry Before Independence", Nigeria, no. 89, 1966, p.98.
3. Boyer, p.52; de Negri, p.98; Eicher, p.70; Kent, p.55.
4. Eicher, p.70.
5. Personal communication from John Picton, 5/6/81 and 29/8/82; Kent, p.8; Picton and Mack, pp.116-17.

stripes, geometric or stylised animal shapes, Koran boards, or even letters.<sup>1</sup> This form of patterning has been particularly characteristic of Ilorin in the present century, and has apparently been little used elsewhere among the male weavers of Yorubaland,<sup>2</sup> though it has also been practised among the Hausa,<sup>3</sup> and among female weavers on the upright loom.<sup>4</sup> John Picton has pointed out that the loom adaptation for these patterns in Ilorin is the same as that found among the Djerma, although in Djerma patterning the extra weft floats alternately over one face then the other, so that each is the negative of the other.<sup>5</sup>

It is probable that the use of weft float patterning in Ilorin is of relatively recent introduction. Most of the patterned cloths said in Ilorin to have been woven

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1. Picton and Mack, p.117 and black and white plate 113; Lamb and Holmes, plates 40-43, 58, 69, 72, 73.  
See also plates VIII-X, pp.373-75 below.
  2. Picton and Mack, p.116. Little seems to have been done in Oyo, and little if any in Iseyin. See Boyer, pp.52-53; Dodwell, pp.119, 121.
  3. Eg. Picton and Mack, p.116, report a cloth with weft float patterns in magenta silk obtained at Idah in 1913, and said to be of Hausa origin.
  4. Marion Johnson has pointed out that the women's upright loom is more suitable for these patterns than the men's horizontal loom.
  5. Personal communication from John Picton, 5/6/81.

there before the colonial period are the ones with simply warp stripes and checks; though some informants do mention reke, apparently an Ilorin name for weft float types of pattern.<sup>1</sup> A relatively recent introduction of these patterns, to Yorubaland in general, is also suggested, as Venice Lamb points out, by the facts that alaro cloths, used for traditional ceremonies,<sup>2</sup> do not include them; and that in Yoruba cloth naming the emphasis is not on the weft float designs but on the background weave.<sup>3</sup> If the attribution of two cloths from the Adams collection of 1900 to Ilorin by Lamb<sup>4</sup> is correct, then these are the earliest examples of Ilorin weft float patterning known

1. See pp.122-23 above. For reke, see Adesiyun interviews with Alfa Adelodun and Alfa Baba Dan Aladi; also Hassan follow-up interviews.

2. As are etu, petuje, and alari.

3. Lamb & Holmes, p.43.

4. Ibid., p.37, plates 42,43.

Samuel Crowther's family in the early nineteenth century were well known for the type of cloth they wove, aso elerin. Although the name of the cloth may seem to suggest, as it does to J.F.A. Ajayi (J.F. Ade Ajayi, "Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo", in Philip D. Curtin, ed., Africa Remembered (Madison, Milwaukee and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p.292), that it included a weft float elephant design, this is not necessarily so; see for example the "elephant shirt" of Nupe (Johnson, "Cloth on the Banks", p.359.

to the present writer.

The weft float patterns are said to have been introduced into Ilorin by the celebrated weaver Yahaya Kalu of Olabintan Compound, the weaver himself being among those making the claim.<sup>1</sup> Alhaji Yahaya, however, is unlikely to have been born much before the turn of the century;<sup>2</sup> and if weft float designs were already being used in Ilorin in 1900, then it may be suggested that he was instead their major developer and populariser, rather than their actual originator in the town. Indeed, even if the patterns were known in Ilorin before 1900, it is likely that they became popular only later, since, as Marion Johnson has suggested, the fashion for brighter colours and more obtrusive patterns probably began among the newly wealthy groups of the colonial period rather than among the old -- and especially Muslim -- elite, who were constrained by their beliefs to dress in a more subdued fashion.<sup>3</sup>

1. Hassan follow-up interviews with Alfa Adelodun and Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi; interviews with Alh. Yahaya Olabintan, 28/5/81 and 6/10/81; information from Ibrahim Olabintan, 16/11/81.
2. J.D. Clarke believes that he was about 35 years of age around the year 1937 (information, 25/6/81). Alh. Yahaya Kalu himself claimed to have been born before the arrival of the Europeans (interview, 28/5/81).
3. I am indebted to Marion Johnson for this suggestion. On the dress of the Muslim elite, see also p.135 above.

Alhaji Yahaya Kalu has also claimed to have invented a double-sided form of the weft float patterns (like those of the Djerma, mentioned above, and the Ewe and Ashanti).<sup>1</sup> The present writer has never seen these double-sided patterns on any Yoruba male weaver's cloth besides the Alhaji's own.<sup>2</sup> His presentation cloths, including those named for the emir, contained these double-sided forms,<sup>3</sup> whose technique he has passed on to his family members alone.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps it is these patterns, rather than the single-sided versions, for whose introduction Alhaji Yahaya Kalu was truly responsible.

1. See p. 161 above, on the Djerma; and Picton and Mack, p.56, on the Ewe and Ashanti.
2. Except for cloth possibly woven by another member of his family. See plate V, p.371.  
The Danford Collection, housed at C.W.A.S., University of Birmingham, contains a gown said to be of Ilorin origin (though no precise provenance is available), made of cloth with both double and single-sided patterns. It is very similar to later examples of Alh. Yahaya Kalu's cloth (see plates III-VII, pp.370-372), and since it is said that he would not teach the double-sided patterns to anyone outside his own family, and he was well known to the colonial officers, it is very likely that the Danford collection gown was made from cloth woven by him, or possibly by a relative of his. John Picton agrees that the double-sided weft-float patterns are very unusual in Yoruba, or indeed Nigerian, cloth (29/8/82).
3. Adesiyun interview with Alh. Yahaya Kalu. These cloths included obajeri ("the emir trusts someone"), obajare ("the emir is not guilty") and obatekode ("the emir arrives from Lagos"). Information from Ibrahim Olabintan, Dec. 1981.
4. Information from Ibrahim Olabintan, 16/11/81.

A British Education Officer, J.D. Clarke, was a customer of the Alhaji in the 1930s,<sup>1</sup> and took a keen interest in the weaving industry as a whole. He recognised its adaptability, giving the example of imported yarn, although he disapproved of "cheap and ugly imported dyes".<sup>2</sup> But together with later officials he criticised the weavers for their refusal to accept a broader loom.<sup>3</sup> In 1945, in keeping with policies of modernising traditional industries, a textile development programme was incorporated into the development plan for the country as a whole. Territorial centres were set up for weaving training, to which broad looms were introduced.<sup>4</sup> In 1949 one of these centres came into operation in Ilorin.<sup>5</sup> It was never very successful, and in 1955 was admitted to have very little effect on the local weaving industries.<sup>6</sup> The

1. In 1981, Alh. Yahaya Kalu still retained lists of cloths ordered by J.D. Clarke.
2. Clarke, "Ilorin Weaving", pp.121, 122.
3. Information from J.D. Clarke, 4/8/79.
4. R. Olufemi Ekundare, An Economic History of Nigeria, 1860-1960 (London: Methuen, 1973), p.302.
5. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1949, para.49; NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.20, Development Annual Report, IPAR on General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes 1949.
6. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1951, para.44; Provincial Annual Reports 1952 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1954), Ilorin, para.61; Provincial Annual Reports 1955 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1955), Ilorin, para.35.

staff of the centre were attempting to introduce a broad loom to the male weavers of Ilorin, and it was considered regrettable that "the conservative attitude of the weavers should make it so difficult for them to adopt the technical advice which would enable them to modernise and revivify this important industry".<sup>1</sup> But since the industry concerned displayed considerable adaptability in other respects, it is unlikely that the refusal to adopt the broad loom was due to mere conservatism; even if the weavers declared, as they did to British officials in the 1930s, that they wished to continue with the narrow loom "because it was done like this by my father".<sup>2</sup> If the weavers had attempted to convert, they would have been faced with unfamiliar tasks requiring considerable, unproductive periods of retraining; and local tailors would have had difficulty in cutting garments economically from a broader cloth.<sup>3</sup> Most important, the European broad looms were too expensive (at perhaps twenty pounds per loom),<sup>4</sup> too large, and

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1. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.58.
2. Information from J.D. Clarke, 4/8/79.
3. I am indebted to Marion Johnson for this last point.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.41, Development Scheme Local Industries, minute Textile Officer to Resident 11/12/51.



too complex to be locally made.<sup>1</sup> In 1957, by which time the Ilorin weaving centre was moribund and all attempts to win over the local weavers had failed, even the colonial administration had perceived that "as long as the ready market for their narrow loom products continues there seems no good cause to press the matter".<sup>2</sup> Thus, even though these attempts to "improve" the industry persisted for a considerable time, unlike the short-lived interest in the resuscitation of beadmaking, in the end the result in each case was the same.

Unlike beadmaking, Ilorin's other luxury industry, that of narrow-loom weaving has shown no sign of dying out in the twentieth century. Indeed, demand for its products continues to increase with the wealth of the community as a whole. But in spite of its remarkable

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1. See eg. A.E. Southern, "Cloth Making in Nigeria", Nigeria Magazine, no.32, 1949, pp.38-39, including illustration. On the reasons why weavers elsewhere would not adopt the broad loom, see Esther N. Goody, "Daboya Weavers: Relations of Production, Dependence and Reciprocity", in Esther N. Goody, ed., From Craft to Industry (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1982), p.82.
  2. Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.65.

adaptability -- a trait which the beadmakers, in the rapidity of their eclipse, had no chance to reveal -- it has not been a growth industry, and its successes have been in no way sufficient to offset Ilorin's general economic decline. Partly because of the activities of the dealers in cloth and cotton, it has offered a low income to the actual producers, who have been ready to seize any chance of more lucrative and less exacting employment. And the dealers in cloth themselves, as in the foodstuffs trade, may have lost their position to some extent to the more affluent southern merchants. Nevertheless, the Ilorin dealers have made considerable profits for themselves: but in only the case reported on page 150 has reinvestment of these in economic development been found. Although some profits have recently gone into education, it is likely, perhaps, that the largest percentage has been absorbed in ceremonial expenses and consumption for prestige.

CHAPTER 4: ILORIN POTTERY: INDUSTRY AND TRADE

The third major Ilorin industry, that of pottery production, differs from the others already discussed, in that it is a women's industry, and its (non-luxury) products have reached their widest market only in the twentieth century.

These products are divided by the potters into "red" and "black" ware. The former includes large vessels for storage of water and other materials, perforated pots for smoking meat or fish, oil lamps (also made in black) and water coolers, for example. Many of these pots are decorated with washes or designs in various types of reddish slip. The black ware includes the fine lidded or unlidded soup pots with burnished designs, and pots of various sizes and shades for storing medicines and oils. The black colouration is produced by a process of smoking in wet leaves or grass; it is then sealed in and made lustrous with a liquor made from the pods of the locust

bean tree.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the raw materials used in the making of both types of ware are found locally, although not all. In the past, a red slip for good quality pots was provided by an emulsion of powdered lantana stone, which was brought from far to the north west, for the use of the beadmakers<sup>2</sup> in the first instance. Another type of red slip is brought from Iloffa, some forty miles away. Others are found locally, however, as are the clay and mixing material.<sup>3</sup>

1. For the information in this paragraph, see especially Sylvia Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery (Lagos: Ibadan University Press, 1970), p.13 (Intro. by Michael Cardew) and pp.182-88; Wilfrid D. Hambly, "Culture Areas of Nigeria", Field Museum of Natural History Anthropological Series, vol.21, no.3 (Chicago: 1935), pp.423-24 and plates XCV-XCVI; interviews with Mrs. Adepate Hassan, Ile Alabere, Okelele, 26/5/80 and 30/5/80; interviews with Mrs. Sifawo Awero (Iya Shao-le), at Ebu Dada, 27/5/80 and 2/6/80; interviews with Mrs. Belawu Issa, Ile Oyinbo Alagbede, Okelele, 31/5/80 and 3/6/80; interview with Madam Fatimoh, Ile Babayo, Okelele, 2/9/82; J.W. Scott Macfie, "The Pottery Industry of Ilorin, Northern Nigeria", Bulletin of the Imperial Institute 11 (1913), 114-18.

See also plates XII-XXXII, pp.377-388 below.

2. See Chapter 2, pp.98, 99-100.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery 1950-52, Report by Michael Cardew on a Tour of Parts of Zaria, Plateau, Niger, Ilorin and Kabba Provinces, Nov.-Dec. 1950, p.24; personal communication from Michael Cardew, 4/8/79; "Ilorin", Nigeria Magazine, no.49, 1956 [ed. D.W. Macrow, no author given] p.148; RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Sylvia Leith-Ross, Report on Women's Education Ilorin Province, 30/4/29, p.13; Mrs. Hassan interviews 26/5/80 and 30/5/80; Awero interviews 27/5/80 and 2/6/80; Issa interview 31/5/80; information from A.S. Ibrahim, of Okelele, Ilorin, 29/1/79. On the mixing material, see also Macfie, p.115.

In the past these two last-mentioned were dug by the potters themselves; more recently either they have hired men to do this work, or men dig independently and sell to the potters.<sup>1</sup>

The women engaged in the industry are all independent producers, except that unmarried girls help their mothers, and women may come together for the purpose of firing. There is no guild or association of potters.<sup>2</sup> The extended family, however, is of some importance with respect to production. Many potters work in their family compounds,<sup>3</sup> and the craft is associated with certain families which it would seem tend to intermarry, and which specialise in the production of particular types of pots.<sup>4</sup> Some control is

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.13; "Ilorin", p.148; Mrs. Hassan interview, 26/5/80.
2. Mrs. Hassan interview 26/5/80; Awero interview 27/5/80; Issa interview 31/5/80; NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery 1950-52, 5436/2, Maddox to Regional Deputy Director, Commerce and Industries, 18/9/50.
3. Though many others work at Ebu Dada, on the outer edge of Okelele.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, Annual Report Ilorin Province 1921, para.22; Mrs. Hassan interview 26/5/80; Awero interview 27/5/80; Issa interview 31/5/80; interview with Adama (Adamo), Ile Babayo, Okelele, 5/6/80; interviews conducted by Toyin Ibrahim Hassan with Iya Adamo (mother of the above-mentioned), Ile Babayo, and with Iya Baba Ile Olodo, Ile Olodo Laniya, Okelele, July/Aug. 1981; Madam Fatimoh interview, 2/9/82.  
See also p.172 below, note 1.

exercised, through the family, over who may be taught to pot.<sup>1</sup> Both local and large-scale long-distance trade is carried on by Ilorin middlewomen who may (but may not) be members of the potters' families.<sup>2</sup>

The pottery tradition of Ilorin, as in the case of other industries in the town, would seem to derive originally from Old Oyo. There is some evidence from tradition to

1. Mrs. Hassan interviews 26/5/80 and 30/5/80; Awero interview 27/5/80; Issa interview 31/5/80; interview by Toyin Hassan with a group of women making "coolers" at Ile Babaoye, information received 15/7/81; Toyin Hassan interviews with Iya Adamo and Iya Baba Ile Olodo, July/Aug. 1981; Toyin Hassan interview with Mrs. Adepate Hassan, Ile Alabere, July/Aug. 1981.

However, both Sylvia Leith-Ross (Women's Education, p.13) and the author of "Ilorin" (p.148) report that outside apprentices are taken.

The question of precisely how this craft is handed down by females through male descent groups will be investigated more thoroughly in a future paper. At present, three pointers may be suggested. First, rules are laid down as to whom a potter may or may not teach in her husband's compound. Generally it seems that she may only teach her own daughters. Second, such daughters may marry back into a pottery compound. Third, women who marry into a family with a particular pottery speciality may be taught to make that speciality, provided they have previously, in childhood, been taught to make other types of pots. These women will then hand on their knowledge of the speciality to their female children.

2. Information from A.S. Ibrahim, Okelele, 29/1/79; Mrs. Hassan interview 26/5/80; Issa interview 31/5/80; RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.12.

support this;<sup>1</sup> and archaeological investigations have also revealed considerable similarities between the pottery of the two towns. These similarities involve both red and black ware, and include the black cooking pots with concave-centred lid and central knob,<sup>2</sup> although the decoration of such pots in Old Oyo was generally performed otherwise than by the burnishing technique now utilised in Ilorin. Considerable similarities have also been noted in terms of makers' marks.<sup>3</sup>

The transfer to Ilorin is associated, again as with other industries, with the decline and fall of Old Oyo

1. Frank Willett ("Investigations at Old Oyo 1956-57: An Interim Report", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 2 (1960), 77) refers to the descent of Ilorin pottery from Old Oyo, confirmed by cautious enquiry about the antecedents of modern Ilorin potters. Sylvia Leith-Ross says (RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Women's Education, p.13) that the pottery industry was active before the Fulani conquest and the first potters were said to have come, some from Old Oyo, and some from Shao, but she also reports (in H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), p.281) that the first potters came from Shao, and that the people of Shao claim they taught some people from Old Oyo and the latter carried the art to Ilorin. In 1970, Leith-Ross wrote (Nigerian Pottery, p.182) that local tradition says the first Ilorin potters came from Shao; and that when she herself was in Shao around 1927, she found an old woman who had been Shao's last potter, and who, when asked who had taught pottery to Ilorin, replied "Shao".  
On Shao, see also pp.176-77 below.

2. See plates XXVI, XXVII, p.385, and XXXIII, p.388.

3. Willett, "Interim Report", p.76; personal communication from Robert Soper, University of Nairobi, 10/12/81.

and the rise of Ilorin under Afonja and later the Fulani. Some potters may well have been living and working in Ilorin prior to the Fulani takeover, as Sylvia Leith-Ross reports.<sup>1</sup> A pre-Fulani presence is also suggested by the fact that the potters, like the beadmakers, have close connections with areas of Ilorin (Okelele and Idiape) which are associated with the Afonja period.<sup>2</sup> The centre of the pottery, as well as the beadmaking, industry, is in Okelele;<sup>3</sup> and the main Ilorin pot market is in Idiape, next to the Friday mosque of the Fulani which was built over Afonja's personal shrine.<sup>4</sup> Not only were these two industries centred together, but their settlement patterns in Ilorin as a whole are closely correlated, as Table 2, on p.175, reveals; so it is likely, perhaps, that the majority of the potters accompanied the beadmakers, somewhat later than the earliest arrivals, to

1. See Leith-Ross, *Women's Education*, cited in p.173 above, note 1; also Leith-Ross, *Nigerian Pottery*, p.182.
2. On these areas' connections with the Afonja period and with the beadmakers, see Chapter 2, p.108 and note 1, Chapter 3, p.134.
3. See Table 2, p.175. On the sub-wards which make up Okelele, see Chapter 2, p.108.
4. Information from A.I. Alesinloye, Baba Isale Compound, Idiape; also S.J. Hogben and A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria* (London: O.U.P., 1966), p.287.



**TABLE 2: POTTERS AND (MALE) BEADMAKERS 1922<sup>1</sup>**

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Sub Ward</u>	<u>Adult<sup>2</sup> Males</u>	<u>Adult Females</u>	<u>Potters</u>	<u>Male Beadmakers</u>
Fulani	Fulani	678	1222	5	4
	Okeogun	388	626	2	1
	Okaka	250	439	1	0
Gambari	Sarkin Zango	1173	1808	4	34
	Sarkin Karuna	974	1629	6	13
	Bari	533	838	6	18
	Ibagun	1488	2295	233	223
Enir's	Magaji Gari	1613	2542	56	71
	Baboko	674	1023	16	44
	Badari	198	278	0	1
Alanamu	Alanamu	2929	4251	60	91
	Adevole	1757	2602	67	28
	Bandawaki	666	969	32	1
Ajikobi	Ajikobi	3009	4409	224	69
	Ojuekun	1627	2466	200	121
	Ogidi	760	1335	30	70
	Oloje	626	1030	66	2
	Zaruni	659	977	43	61

1. Source: NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, Appendices i and ii.
2. It may be noted that males are greatly outnumbered by females. This may be due to men going out of the town to farm, leaving a wife in Ilorin. See eg. NAK Ilorprof 411 E/1922, Malete District Revision of Village Registers 1923-26, 1923 Report on Revision of Village Registers, para.8. On a similar situation elsewhere, see NAI CSO 26 19855, Assessment Report on Abeokuta Town Abeokuta Province, 1927, 1053/07/1924, Resident to S.S.P. Lagos, 11/4/27, para.15.

Ilorin as members of refugee (or slave)<sup>1</sup> families on the abandonment of Old Oyo.<sup>2</sup>

In Shao, a surviving pre-Fulani village<sup>3</sup> a few miles north of Ilorin, there is also a history of pottery production, said to be of both black and red ware.<sup>4</sup> Large red pots much like those made in Ilorin were seen being made in Shao in the late 1920s;<sup>5</sup> and Shao people have claimed, it seems, that their ancestors taught both Old Oyo and Ilorin to make pots.<sup>6</sup> Shao may well have been responsible, at least in part, for the introduction of pottery techniques to Ilorin in pre-Fulani times; but, rather than Shao having taught Old Oyo, it is more likely that both were part of the same pre-nineteenth century tradition. The Shao industry later began to die out, as it was unable to compete with Ilorin,<sup>7</sup> whose potters were so much more conveniently

1. See Chapter 2, p.104.
2. A close connection with the beadmakers is also suggested by the potters' use of lantana stone. See p.170 above.
3. See Chapter 5, pp.208-209.
4. Information from Adefemi Samuel Adegina of Elemaso Compound, Shao, received 28/8/82.
5. Hermon-Hodge, p.281 (notes by Leith-Ross).
6. See p.173 above, note 1.
7. Hermon-Hodge, p.281 (notes by Leith-Ross); "Ilorin", p.148.

situated, with a large local market and easy access to major trading routes. Pottery production in Shao had declined so far by the early twentieth century that in 1912 this occupation was not even mentioned in the area's assessment report, in which it was noted instead that 80 per cent of its women were engaged in carrying firewood to Ilorin.<sup>1</sup> Only one family in Shao continued the tradition, and by the late 1920s the craft was still practised by one descendant of that family and her apprentice daughter.<sup>2</sup>

Shao also claims to have taught women from some other villages in the metropolitan districts around Ilorin.<sup>3</sup> And in support of this claim, there is evidence of small-scale present-day production in Aregun,<sup>4</sup> a village near Agbeyangi in Igborin District, which is claimed to have been founded by Shao.<sup>5</sup> In 1931, 29 potters were recorded in Agbeyangi

1. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, Ilorin Province North Western District Assessment Report, paras.1, 27, 31.
2. Hermon-Hodge, p.281 (notes by Leith-Ross). This may be the same as the "ebu" (pottery) family of "Shefi Koko", mentioned by A.S. Adeşina, 28/8/82.
3. Information from A.S. Adeşina, 28/8/82.
4. Personal communication from Susan Watts, Geography Department, University of Ilorin.
5. Shao Community, "Memorandum to the Chieftaincy Panel by the People of Shao: A Case for the Grading of the Ohoro of Shao", 1978, p.5. The Chieftaincy Panel to which this memorandum was submitted was the Ekundayo Panel of 1978. The claim of Shao to have founded this village is, however, not borne out by recent investigations in the village itself, in which a variety of origins, including direct from Old Oyo, are claimed (personal communication from Susan Watts, 6/4/83).

Village Area, suggesting that Aregun's production was then on a larger scale. Smaller numbers of potters were recorded in other parts of Igporin District at the same time.<sup>1</sup> But in much of the metropolitan districts, there is little evidence of pottery (or indeed any other craft) production, as Gavin has pointed out,<sup>2</sup> in the twentieth century at least. This excepts Shao itself and Afon District, where there were also a number of pre-Fulani settlements,<sup>3</sup> and where 69 potters were recorded in 1918.<sup>4</sup> Some sizeable numbers of women weavers were also noted in 1931 in Igporin District,<sup>5</sup> also an area of mixed population, including not only Aregun but also Oke Oyi, for example.<sup>6</sup> In Lanwa District, however, in 1912, few industrial workers were reported. Even the women were said to weave and dye on only a small

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1. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/889, Igporin District Revision 1931.
  2. R.J. Gavin, "Sketch of the Economy of Ilorin Province in the First Three Decades of the Twentieth Century Based upon Selected Assessment Reports", unpublished paper, Department of History, A.B.U., p.2.
  3. See Chapter 5, pp.210-214.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Report Afon District Ilorin Province 1918, spx. 3, Industrials.
  5. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/889, Igporin Revision 1931.
  6. On the pre-Fulani origins of Oke-Oyi, see Chapter 5, pp.208-209.

scale, yam drying, locust bean preparing and shea nut collection being their chief occupations.<sup>1</sup> Ejidogari District at the same period was almost entirely agricultural, with only a little pot-making and dyeing;<sup>2</sup> and Malete in 1928 was similarly agricultural; craftsmen being practically negligible and women making sheabutter and collecting firewood.<sup>3</sup> Districts such as these were populated largely by slaves and other dependants of Ilorin families, who were settled on the land after the Fulani takeover; and their lack of craft development is a reflection of the policy generally followed by the Ilorin elite of keeping their dependants ignorant, isolated and under control.<sup>4</sup> And even where pottery traditions already existed, as in Shao and Aregun, they were unable to compete with Ilorin and so declined.

While the industry of Shao was declining, pottery

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1. NAK SNP 7/13 3096/1912, Ilorin Division, Lanwa District Reassessment Report by Mr. R. Scott Chapman, para.10.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708A/1912, Assessment Report Adjidungari District by A/R Chapman Oct. 1913, para.12.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 5 279/1928, Malete District Taxes Revision by W.R.R.Ffrench, paras.6, 10.
  4. A policy which is examined more fully in Chapter 5.

production in Ilorin was developing and prospering in the nineteenth century. Although there are few references to the Ilorin pottery industry in the nineteenth century literature, it is highly regarded in those that can be found. Rohlf's, for example, who travelled through Ilorin in the 1860s, drew attention to

the people of Ilorin [who] are very skilled in all kinds of craft .... the pottery may well be compared with that of the Keffi-Abd-es-Sang people, who know how to bronze.<sup>1</sup>

This last may have been written after the author had seen pots in Ilorin which had been treated with locust bean pod liquor. This treatment, without or with incomplete carbonization, produces an effect very like that of a bronze glaze.<sup>2</sup> Later, in 1893, Governor Carter of Lagos noted appreciatively that

a good deal of pottery is made in Ilorin, some of it by no means inartistic, and marvelously cheap. I bought some pretty well

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1. Gerhard Rohlf's, "Reise durch Nord-Afrika vom Mittel-landischen Meere bis zum Busen von Guinea, 1865 bis 1867. 2. Hälfte: von Kuka nach Lagos (Bornu, Bauchi, Saria, Nupe, Yoruba)", Petermann's Geographische Mitterlungen, no.34 (1872), 95.
  2. See plates XXX, XXXI, p.387; also Cardew in Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, p.13.

made jars for cowries to the value of one halfpenny each; huge jars shaped like the Egyptian patterns could be purchased for 1 600 cowries or threepence each.

Ilorin pottery is not mentioned by any nineteenth century source as an article of long-distance trade. It is likely that any long-distance trade in pots in the days before first rail and then motor transport became available would have been considerably smaller in volume. This would have been due to the low value of pots per headload, as revealed by Carter in his comments quoted above, compared with that of luxury items such as lantana beads and fine woven cloth. Yet one need not necessarily take the omission of pottery from the descriptions of long-distance trade as proof that it had not been traded outside Ilorin at all. In 1931 the Ilorin Resident was reporting that "apart from foodstuffs and woven cottons Ilorin may be said to have no exports of any importance",<sup>2</sup> even though it is clear from other sources that Ilorin pottery was by this time being exported to the south on a very large scale. Thus, the failure of nineteenth century observers to mention pottery as an article of long-distance trade

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1. Gilbert T. Carter, Despatch from Sir Gilbert T. Carter, furnishing a General Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition 1893 (London: H.M.S.O., 1893), p.22.
  2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.71

may in part reflect the fact that it was not always considered worthy of mention, due perhaps to its being a women's and a non-luxury trade. In the twentieth century, people like the Resident of 1931 would have considered it less important than the foodstuffs trade, which fed the export crop producers to the south.

There are pointers to suggest the existence of some export trade in pots at least from Ilorin in the nineteenth century. In 1912, for example, the black pots were "carried all over the province heaped up in loads on the heads of women",<sup>1</sup> and this may have been a continuation of a pre-colonial trading pattern. In the same year, not long after the railway had reached Ilorin, it was reported that "small round soup pots from Ilorin have a reputation and are much exported to Southern Nigeria".<sup>2</sup> The trade to the south by rail grew rapidly<sup>3</sup> and sizeably, and it is hard to explain how this could have been so speedily achieved, had the reputation of the pots in distant southern markets not predated the arrival of the railway.

The major growth period for the Ilorin pottery trade

1. Macfie, p.118.

2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Re-Assessment Report by A/R Lethem, Progress Report, para.38.

3. See eg. Macfie, p.111, and plate XXXIV, p.389 below.



did, however, begin with the railway, with exports of pots by rail to Lagos increasing from 88 tons in 1915 to 268 in 1921.<sup>1</sup> In 1917 the figure (of 120 tons) was about half the total tonnage carried from the town by rail.<sup>2</sup> By 1929, despite the possibility of competition from imported items, the level of exports was estimated to have remained the same, or even maybe to have increased.<sup>3</sup>

In 1912, not only were Ilorin pots exported by rail to the south, but also to the north.<sup>4</sup> Generally speaking, however, throughout the colonial period, reporters emphasized southern destinations,<sup>5</sup> although the pots have also been sent, perhaps more recently, to Onitsha, Makurdi and Jos.<sup>6</sup> Black soup pots have always been particularly important in the export trade, although red pots have been

1. Railway Department Reports 1915-21. I am indebted for this reference to Prof. R.J. Gavin.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4/69/1919, Report Ilorin Province 1918, para.67.
3. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, pp.7-8.
4. Macfie, p.111.
5. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.12; F. de F. Daniel, "Ilorin Province", Nigeria, no.15, 1938, p.181; "Ilorin", p.148; NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Report by Cardew, p.24.
6. Personal communication from Michael Cardew, 4/8/79; Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, pp.182, 184.

exported as well.<sup>1</sup> As early as the 1940s, Ilorin black pots were popular in the Gold Coast,<sup>2</sup> and in the following decade they were on sale as far away as Liberia.<sup>3</sup>

In 1918 the Resident remarked that the Ilorin pottery industry appeared to be increasing, at the expense of the industry in other provinces,<sup>4</sup> and the railway figures tend to bear him out.<sup>5</sup> It would seem that Ilorin soup pots, already considered superior, quickly began a comprehensive takeover of the southern market, once a cheaper method of transport had been found. In the 1950s both black and red Ilorin ware were still considered superior to those made further south, an observer offering in explanation that they were "well fired and would withstand a greater variety of usage".<sup>6</sup> Certainly the low firing temperature used

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.38; Graham Connah, The Archaeology of Benin (Oxford: O.U.P., 1975), p.133; Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, pp.182, 184.
2. Personal communication from Michael Cardew, 4/8/79.
3. Information from J.D. Clarke, formerly Education Officer, Ilorin Province, 4/8/79.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4/69/1919, Report Ilorin Province 1918, para.67.
5. Railway Department Reports. Compare amounts exported from Ilorin and from Abeokuta.
6. "Ilorin", p.148.

by Ilorin potters enables the pots to resist thermal shock, that is, to be used without cracking over an open fire; but firing at this temperature is not confined to Ilorin alone, but is practised by potters all over West Africa.<sup>1</sup> The locust bean pod liquor treatment used on Ilorin ware is instrumental in increasing its strength, but again this is not applied only in Ilorin;<sup>2</sup> for one thing, the potters fleeing from Old Oyo to various destinations spread the techniques of black ware production all over Yorubaland.<sup>3</sup> Ilorin's success in the pottery trade is thus unlikely to have been based entirely on the knowledge of these, albeit useful, techniques. When the potter Michael Cardew visited the town, he was reduced to explaining that its pre-eminence in pottery was to be accounted for partly by good communications, partly by the possession of very good clay, but chiefly by "an imponderable aptitude on the part of the local people".<sup>4</sup>

By 1922 a considerable number of Ilorin women were

1. Michael Cardew, "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", Nigeria, no.39, 1952, pp.189-91; Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, p.12 (Intro. by Michael Cardew).
2. Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, p.13 (Intro. by Cardew).
3. Frank Willett, "Archaeology", in S.O. Biobaku, ed., Sources of Yoruba History (Oxford: O.U.P., 1973), pp. 128-29, 133; Willett, "Interim Report", pp.76-77.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Report by Cardew, p.35.

engaged in pottery production; in the tax assessment of that year over a thousand were counted (see Table 2, p.175). Even so this number was still far lower than those of women pursuing the crafts of spinning and weaving at that time. This is perhaps to be seen as a reflection of the restrictions observed by members of pottery families on who could be taught to pot, whereas women from virtually every family would spin or weave. There is some evidence from this period, however, and from the 1950s, that outside apprentices could under certain conditions be taken on by the potters;<sup>1</sup> and a balance seems to have been achieved, no doubt by this means, of ensuring that the numbers of producers and therefore output were sufficient to keep the prices of their product low<sup>2</sup> and thus attractive to southern customers, but yet not so low as to deprive the potters themselves of a reasonable income.

Evidence of the potters' enjoying such an income comes from the 1922 Tax Assessment Report. Together with (female) weavers and dyers they were estimated to be earning the highest average income among female "industrials" in

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1. See p.172 above, note 1.

2. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.13, on large Ilorin Pots: "Considering the process is a lengthy and fairly arduous one, their price is very low".

Ilorin Town.<sup>1</sup> This income was also considerably higher than potters in Afon and Offa had been said to be making a few years before.<sup>2</sup> As is frequently the case with women's industries, however, their average income compared unfavourably with that of even the lower-income males.<sup>3</sup>

A larger income must have accrued to the dealers, such as those "women potters whose dealings with Lagos and other Southern traders must be on a large scale", who were noted by Sylvia Leith-Ross in 1929<sup>4</sup> and who may well have been among those female traders in the 1922 report whose incomes were considerably higher than those in the women's industrial category.<sup>5</sup> But it may be suggested that these dealers concerned themselves largely with the Ilorin end of the trade, leaving long-distance transportation and the Lagos end in the hands of the southern

1. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, appx.4.
2. Ibid., appx.3; NAK Ilorprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Afon 1918, appx.3.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx. 4. See also comments on women involved in lantana beadmaking, Chapter 2, pp.106-108.
4. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.12.
5. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Priestman Report, appx. 4.

traders,<sup>1</sup> as was characteristic of Ilorin at the time.<sup>2</sup> Thus, as with other Ilorin-produced articles of trade, part of the profit may have been siphoned off into the hands of the southerners, and away from Ilorin Town.

In the years after the Second World War, in pursuance of the general policy of encouraging traditional industries' development, the various pottery industries in the country were investigated. As Ilorin was said at the time to have "probably the greatest output of native pottery of any town in Nigeria",<sup>3</sup> it was necessarily one of the towns surveyed. In July 1950, in a preliminary statement, prior to his tour and recommendations, Michael Cardew warned that "no general transformation of the primitive native pottery was to be expected"; that it would be on the whole correct to teach the new techniques (including the use of the potter's wheel and kiln firing) to men rather than to women, and that only a small fringe of women potters would be likely to find

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1. Leith-Ross refers to an increasing number of Southern Yoruba coming to Ilorin for trade (Women's Education, p.6), and also to potters whose dealings with Southern traders must be on a large scale (see p.187 above).
  2. For other examples, see Chapter 1, pp.91-93.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Report by Cardew, p.24.

their place in the modernised sector of the industry. After visiting the women's pottery industry of Ilorin later in the year, however, he recommended that a training centre should be set up there, to serve as the centre for all of Yorubaland. It was at this time that Cardew wrote of Ilorin's pre-eminence, its good clay and communications and "imponderable aptitude" of the people;<sup>1</sup> all of which no doubt influenced him in his choice. The Emir of Ilorin was in favour of the idea, and the Ilorin colonial officers, though dubious of the benefits to be gained (mindful of the unsuccessful Textile Training Centre already in the town<sup>2</sup>), passed on his views, and made further enquiries of the Kaduna Government. A second Pottery Officer visited Ilorin to explore the possibilities, but by mid-1952 it had been passed over as the "Western" centre in favour of Ade-Ekiti. Perhaps there was a lack of local interest in Ilorin, at levels lower than the Native Administration, as indicated by the acid comment of the District Officer, with regard to Ilorin's being passed over, on the "indolence and apathy of the people".<sup>3</sup>

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1. See p.185 above.

2. See Chapter 3, pp.165-67.

3. For the information in this paragraph, see NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery 1950-52.

Efforts, however, continued to be made by the N.A. At the end of 1952 the Waziri,<sup>1</sup> mentioning the numbers of pottery breakages in transport, asked the Minister for Local Industries whether anything could be done to strengthen the local ware. The Minister suggested in reply that an Ilorin man should be sent to the Training Centre already in operation under Michael Cardew's direction at Abuja, though he was rightly doubtful whether the Ilorin ware was capable of much improvement. He pointed out that the local potters were already masters of their craft, and that the methods taught at Abuja were totally different from traditional ones. Opinion in Ilorin was sounded as to whether a trainee should be sent; the "local view" as it was returned stressed the distinctness of the Ilorin pottery type, and the opinion that nothing could be gained by the application of different methods such as were taught at Abuja. There was no wish for anyone to be Abuja-trained, although suggestions for improvements, particularly in strengthening the pots, would, it was said, be welcomed.<sup>2</sup>

At least one further effort to "improve" the industry was made. In about 1962, the Ilorin N.A. again requested that Ilorin pottery "be brought up to the standard of

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1. See Chapter 2, p.119, note 2.

2. NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery.



Abuja". On this occasion Michael Cardew again visited the town, this time in the company of a (male) Nupe potter who demonstrated the making of butoci or "prayer bottles"<sup>1</sup> on a potter's wheel. The Ilorin potters, as Cardew related, were suitably impressed, but refused to allow these pots to be fired among their own. And as no funds were provided, either by the Regional Government or by the N.A., the idea came to nothing.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the sporadic efforts of the Ilorin N.A. finally failed, due to lack of money, for example, and local lack of interest. It would seem in the long run that the Minister's views, and the similar opinions of local people in Ilorin, were founded on good sense. The "modernising" of the traditional pottery industry would have involved, as Cardew himself had pointed out, the introduction of what would in fact have been an industry which was completely new, for which the equipment was quite different from, and incomparably more expensive than, what was already in use, and which would probably have excluded all but a small proportion of the women.<sup>3</sup> While there existed a massive and

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1. Used for ceremonial ablutions. G.B. Bargery, A Hausa-English Dictionary and English-Hausa Dictionary (London: O.U.P., 1934).

2. For the information in this paragraph, I am indebted to Michael Cardew, personal communication, 4/8/79.

3. See pp.188-89 above, and Cardew, "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", p.197.

steady demand for the traditional ware, no reason would appear (as the Ilorin male weavers must likewise have felt, confronted with the new and expensive broad loom)<sup>1</sup> for the adoption of major and dislocatory innovations. And the existing market was based on the advantages of the existing ware, which might very well be lost during "improvement" attempts. As Cardew also pointed out

There is always a temptation to say that the technique of native pottery ought to be "improved", but the more one looks into the matter the clearer it becomes that the technique is all of a piece and is (though primitive) yet highly evolved and efficient as regards certain qualities; and the would-be improver might easily find that he had "improved away" the most important quality<sup>2</sup> of the ware.

Thus the Ilorin pottery was a "perfected" ware; the techniques of the potters were unsusceptible of absorbing major innovations without removing some of the advantages of the original product; not to mention changing the whole nature of the industry. The adoption of kiln firing, for example, would have removed the single major advantage of the traditional ware, its ability to be used without cracking over an

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1. See Chapter 3, pp.166-67.

2. Cardew, "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", pp.193-95.

open fire. Likewise, the subjection of the clay to the treatment required before throwing on a wheel would also have lowered this thermal shock resistance. Again, not only does the traditional low firing temperature produce maximum heat resistance, it also, in ensuring maximum porosity, ensures the product's suitability for use in a hot climate for the storage of cool water. The clay mix traditionally used, while having the best consistency for building and coiling methods, would be unsuitable for throwing on a wheel; yet, if the wheel were introduced, it would be incapable of producing the larger pots in a single piece; these would either have to be made by joining together two or more wheel-thrown pieces, or by a return to the traditional building method; which would in its turn require a return to the traditional clay mix type.<sup>2</sup>

The participants in Ilorin's traditional pottery industry expressed a lack of interest in the mooted innovations, because these were seen as not only unnecessary but disruptive, when the pots already produced were well suited for their purpose and enjoyed a large and steady market.

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1. For the building method, used in Ilorin, see plates XVI, XVII, p.379.
  2. For the information in this paragraph, see Cardew, "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", pp.189-97; Leith-Ross, Nigerian Pottery, pp.9-15 (Intro. by Cardew); NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Preliminary Survey of Pottery in West Africa, by Michael Cardew, 31/7/50, paras.4, 6.

Even the disadvantage resulting from the brittleness of the pots may have been exaggerated, as, in the 1960s, remarkably, a low breakage rate among pots transported by road was reported by one of the transporters involved.<sup>1</sup> Thus the lack of interest in innovations should not necessarily be taken to imply an overall inability of the potters either to innovate or to adapt. An ability to adapt, on the contrary, is suggested by their apparent adjustments of the rate of entry to the craft;<sup>2</sup> a related and major example of their adaptability is their rapid adjustment to the probably far larger output required to meet the markets which the railway opened up. There has been, however, no innovation in Ilorin in terms of types of pots produced, in contrast with those districts,<sup>3</sup> described in the 1950s by Cardew, where the potters were attempting, albeit with traditional methods and firing temperatures, to produce imitations of imported designs.<sup>4</sup>

Not only have no new designs been introduced, but some types of pots previously made in Ilorin are now no longer produced, or else produced in much smaller numbers

1. Personal communication from Michael Cardew, 4/8/79.
2. See p.186 above.
3. Presumably including Abuja.
4. Cardew, "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", p.197; NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Preliminary Survey by Cardew, para.15.

than before. One of the two types of decorated water cooler described by Hambly in 1929-30,<sup>1</sup> for example, is now made only to special order.<sup>2</sup> The variety of decorative patterns used on these coolers also appears to have been reduced.<sup>3</sup> The elegant double-ended pedestal lamp previously produced is now virtually forgotten.<sup>4</sup> The variety of black pots has been considerably reduced since the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Ilorin's pottery industry in general appears to have streamlined itself, concentrating on a smaller number of designs, this itself also exhibiting an ability to adjust.

The reduction in designs illustrated above, however, may prompt the suggestion that there has been, perhaps in the last thirty years, a decline in the pottery trade caused by a decline in demand for some items. Certainly the

1. Hambly, plate XCVI and p.424. The design for these coolers may have been in imitation of pots from the north. See plates XXII-XXV, pp.383-84 below, and compare plate XXXV, p.389 below.
2. As was done by Madam Fatimoh, Ile Babaoye, March 1983. See plates XXIV, XXV, pp.384.
3. Hambly (p.424) noted designs which included geometrical patterns and human figures.
4. After being shown a drawing of Hambly's illustration (plate XCVI), an old Ilorin potter produced two such lamps in 1979. See A.S. Ibrahim, 29/1/79, and plate XXI, p.382 below. For pedestal lamps in black ware, see plate XXXII, p.388 below.
5. For the variety produced in 1912, see plate XXXII, p.388.

demand for some types has decreased, and has affected producers trained in only one design.<sup>1</sup> Among the items for which demand has fallen are oil lamps (no longer needed, for example, as in the 1930s, to illuminate the Emir's Market every night),<sup>2</sup> "savings banks"<sup>3</sup> and table ware. This last was still produced in the late 1920s,<sup>4</sup> but has since been replaced (except for black serving bowls) by imported crockery and enamel. Pots made specifically for pre-Muslim rites are probably also much less in demand.<sup>5</sup> More prosaically, the import of crockery and enamel, already mentioned, plus metal cooking pots and buckets and plastic storage vessels, and more recently the mass-production of some of these in Nigeria itself, must have lessened the

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1. Such as the woman present at Issa interview 31/5/80, who had previously been making "savings" banks" only. Many potters, however, are trained as children in more than one design. For example, Madam Fatimoh makes water coolers, oru (pots for medicine), and ajere (pots for smoking meat or fish) (Fatimoh interview 2/9/82). Mrs. Hassan (interview 26/5/80) makes red pots both of flowerpot size and also various large water or storage pots. Mrs. Issa (interview 31/5/80) makes both oru and black cooking pots (isaasun).
2. Hambly, p.424; Nigeria, no.14, 1938, p.95 (photograph and caption); Daniel, p.181.
3. Issa interview 31/5/80.
4. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, Women's Education, p.13.
5. Macfie, p.111 (and see plate XXXII, p.388, middle of top row), described a particular pot which was so utilised.

demand for some Ilorin pots; even the potters themselves now use enamel and plastic receptacles during their pottery production process.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, a large demand for other types of pots remains. The manufacture of large water or other storage pots seems to have been little affected by other products' competition; and smaller red pots have in recent years been much in demand for use as flowerpots.<sup>2</sup> One major advantage of the traditional ware is its continuing cheapness compared with its manufactured competitors; and in the case of the black soup pots there is still the fact of their suitability as against any other available vessel for use over an open fire. While it is true that many more homes have been provided with other types of cooking facilities (part from the open fire), many others have not, or else such facilities are found too costly in fuel for everyday use. Even educated women may prefer to cook in the traditional fashion over a fire,<sup>3</sup> or may prefer their less educated

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1. See plates XXII, XXIII, p.383.
2. As predicted in NAK Ilorprof 5 5436, Pottery, Preliminary Survey by Cardew, para.11.
3. Cardew, in "Nigerian Traditional Pottery", p.193, points out that it is unlikely that people will ever be content completely to give up using pottery for metal, as some types of food are much better when cooked in a casserole, which must be due to the low speed of cooking. In addition to Cardew's observation, it may also be noted that a traditional pot can be impregnated with pepper, say for a week's cooking, while a metal saucepan can not.

housegirls to do so.

The demand for certain types of Ilorin pots may even have increased over the last thirty years, to fill markets created by the decline of pottery production in other areas, which is caused by the migration of women and young people and by western education.<sup>1</sup> But while migration does not seem to have adversely affected production in Ilorin itself, the spread of education may have done so, leaving fewer potters to meet the continuing, even increasing demand. Over the last ten years, potters in Ilorin agree, their numbers have declined. More girls have been going to primary and even secondary school. Girls who go to school are still taught to make pots, but education, it is said, has been affecting the numbers who choose to continue with their craft in adult life. Educated girls are said to regard pottery production as a dirty job. And even for those who have not enjoyed education, the alternative of petty trading may have more appeal. In one centre of pottery production, Ile Alabere in Okelele, an observer noted in 1981 that although some 60 women were still

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1. I.N. R. Oyeyipo, in his "Migration in Igbominaland 1900-1977 with Special Reference to its Economic Effects" (M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1978), pp.31-32, quotes migration and "western education" as reasons for the shortage of labour leading to the decline of the pottery industry in the town of Igbaja. Many youngsters who would have carried firewood and clay for the potters are not at home, and those who are regard the work as dirty.



working there, all were of more or less middle age or above.<sup>1</sup> But a 1979 survey, also in Okelele, revealed that a sizeable majority of the potters who were found were between 20 and 30 years of age, although only a small number were between 15 and 20.<sup>2</sup> The survey revealed also that some 13 per cent of women in its area were potters,<sup>3</sup> a percentage somewhat higher than that recorded for Okelele in 1922.<sup>4</sup> These various findings, taken together, would seem to suggest that the number of potters operating in Ilorin has been fairly steady in the last 50 years, and that any decline which has taken place has been of very recent occurrence indeed. They help to illustrate the tenacity and success, thus far, of the pottery industry in twentieth century Ilorin.

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1. For the information in this paragraph so far, see Mrs. Hassan interview 26/5/80; Toyin Hassan interview at Ile Babaoye received 15/7/81; Toyin Hassan interviews with Iya Adamo, Iya Baba Ile Olodo and Mrs. Adepate Hassan, July/Aug. 1981.
  2. Personal communication from Susan Watts, University of Ilorin, 1980. On this survey, see also Chapter 3, p.155.
  3. Susan Watts, "Marriage Migration: A Case Study from the City of Ilorin", Liverpool Papers in Human Geography; a Working Paper of the Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, p.2.
  4. In 1922, potters in Ibagun made up 10.15% of the total adult female population of the sub-ward. The percentage in Ojuekun was 8.11.

## CHAPTER 5: THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS

In previous chapters, emphasis has been laid mainly on the economy of Ilorin Town; that of its rural hinterland, or metropolitan districts, remains to be considered. This chapter falls into three sections, dealing first with the nineteenth century and earlier history of these districts; second with the period around the time of the colonial takeover and third with the rest of the colonial period. In the first section, an attempt will be made to examine the claims to pre-Fulani origin<sup>1</sup> made by some of the settlements in the metropolitan districts, as a distinction between pre-Fulani and later origins is relevant not only to the question of craft production in these districts,<sup>2</sup> but also to their general development in the twentieth century. This will be followed by a discussion of the administrative organisation

1. The expression "pre-Fulani" refers to the period prior to that when Ilorin was taken over by the Fulani Mallam Alimi and his sons, and their supporters. The expressions "Fulani takeover" and "Fulani period" are also used. It should be noted, however, that by no means all of those involved in the takeover or in positions of authority during the following period were Fulani; and that the Fulani inhabitants of Ilorin Town have become progressively Yoruba-ised. On this last, see also Chapter 2, p.108, note 2.
2. See Chapter 4, pp.178-79.

and resettlement of these districts in the nineteenth century, to which their subsequent economic history is also closely tied. The role of slaves in the rural economy will be examined, and the contribution of these rural areas to Ilorin's nineteenth century prosperity will be assessed.

The areas to be examined came to be called the "metropolitan districts" in the colonial period (during which they were included in Ilorin Emirate), and the term recognised their special ties with Ilorin Town. They are to be distinguished from those other districts, which were also included in the Emirate, but which achieved a measure of independence from Ilorin rule in the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> These other districts, populated by Igbomina, Ekiti and Igbolo (around Offa) groups, eventually became Ifelodun, Irepodun and Oyun Local Government Areas within present-day Kwara State; the metropolitan districts became Asa, Moro and the rural sections of Ilorin Local Government Areas.<sup>2</sup> Asa L.G.A. consists of

1. NAK SNP 17/2 23595, IPAR 1934, paras.5-6.

2. Except for a small part of Afon District which is now in Oyun, not Asa, L.G.A. The parts of Ajasse District closest to Ilorin should also be regarded as part of the metropolitan area.

Reference is made in this chapter to "present-day" Asa, Moro and Ilorin L.G.A.s. It should be noted here that this is not precisely correct, as these have recently been the subject of further sub-division, and new L.G.A.s have been set up.

Afon, Owode (Bala) and Onire Districts; Moro of Paiye, Malete, Oloru, Ejidogari and Lanwa; and Ilorin L.G.A. includes Igporin and Akanbi. These districts mostly radiate outwards from Ilorin Town.

#### THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND EARLIER HISTORY OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS.

The basic difference between the metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts of Ilorin Emirate lies in the fact that the non-metropolitan areas possess strong traditions of settlement and chieftaincy which clearly predate the Fulani takeover of Ilorin in the early nineteenth century. In the metropolitan districts such traditions and chieftaincy systems have been to a large extent lacking (except for some examples to be discussed below), and much of the population consists of people who have settled in the districts since the Fulani takeover, that is during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In many cases these are the descendants of people sent out from the town by Ilorin "fiefholding" families who were granted the land by the Fulani emirs. The presence or absence in the records of a full range of chieftaincy titles for a particular settlement is, indeed, a useful indication of whether that settlement

is of pre-Fulani, or later and dependent, origin.<sup>1</sup>

It is sometimes alleged or assumed that the metropolitan districts were empty before the Fulani period,<sup>2</sup> perhaps as a result of the desire of the Ilorin elite of that period to establish the primacy of their own claim to these lands and their people. But the lands were not empty before this time; and some traces of their pre-Fulani settlement still remain.

A number of villages in the metropolitan districts, for example, lay claim to pre-Fulani origin, and some of these claims are well founded. A note of warning may be sounded, however, as other present-day claims must be treated with caution, as the example of Onire will reveal. In a deposition made by the "Onire Area Community" to a chieftaincy

1. This is because the lack of titles is consistent with recent settlement, and with the tight administrative control from Ilorin by Ilorin-appointed district and village heads, for which see p.320 below. The usefulness of taking the lack of titles as a rule-of-thumb indication of settlement since the Fulani takeover is also illustrated by the example of Igbaja District, where the four pre-Fulani Igbomina villages had councils of title-holders, but the seven settlements dating from the Fulani period all had village heads. See NAK SNP 17/2 10315 vol.1, Ilorin Province District Heads and N.A. Officials, Appointments, Dismissals etc., Igbaja [1933?], Resident Ilorin p.12 in 20975.

2. See eg. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, Ilorin Province North Western District Assessment Report, para.13; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708 A/1912, Assessment Report Adjidungari District by A/R Chapman October 1913, para.1.

commission in 1978 it was claimed that Onire town was founded in about 1800 by one Prince Ahmadu, son of Aribiyi, who had left the town of Ajasse (in Igbominaland) due to a dispute over the succession to the throne of that town.<sup>1</sup> Although the deposition contains a detailed account of Ahmadu's wanderings, and there is indeed an Aribiyi ruling house in Ajasse,<sup>2</sup> it is doubtful whether much credence can be placed in these claims. For one thing, only five "Aribis" or rulers of Onire are said in the deposition to have reigned, and of these only the second, it is said, was on the throne when the Europeans arrived at the end of the nineteenth century; all this casting doubt upon the possibility of the Aribi family's claims stretching back for as long as a century before the colonial period. For another, Onire appears to possess neither a complete chieftaincy system<sup>3</sup> nor local customs of any note (though

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1. Onire Area Community, "Memorandum for the Grading of the Aribiyi of Onire", 10/5/78. This memorandum was written for submission to the Ekundayo Chieftaincy Panel.
  2. Nigerian Herald, 23/6/78.
  3. There is no indication of a system of chieftaincy titles either in the early assessment reports (see NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Onire District Revision by H.R.Oke 1924 [incorrectly given as 1922 on cover], Appendices) or in NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Report on Local Government Reform in the Metropolitan Districts of Ilorin Emirate (excluding Bala and Afon), 1955, see para.20. Nor is there any system of titles mentioned in the Onire Memorandum 1978.

the 1978 deposition, aware of this lack, protests that the customs and traditions of the town had disappeared with the advance of Islam and the influence of Fulani culture). It is said, however, that a titleholder from Onire, the Magaji Are, goes to a village called Aribi (said to have been Ahmadu's first stopping place)<sup>1</sup> to help elect its bale;<sup>2</sup> this may perhaps suggest some measure of authenticity in Onire's claims; on the other hand, the custom may be of recent origin only and the Magaji Are of recent creation, in imitation of Ilorin Town.<sup>3</sup> According to records of the early colonial period, the lands of Onire were given out as "fiefs",<sup>4</sup> by either Emir Abdusalami or Emir Shita, to Magaji

1. Onire Memorandum 1978.
2. Personal communication from Susan Watts, Department of Geography, University of Ilorin, 28/6/83.  
"Bale" = village chief.
3. For the Magaji Are of Ilorin, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.5.
4. The British colonial officers regularly employed the terminology of feudalism with reference to Ilorin. P.C. Lloyd has argued that the use of this terminology tends to exaggerate the difference between the patterns of dependency in Ilorin and those in Ibadan. The terminology is used here for the sake of convenience; but in addition it may be noted that there were significant differences between the two states; as Lloyd himself points out, the farm lands of Ibadan were not allocated in the first instance to the older or more powerful descent groups, and the descendants of the original granters have few rights in the land, whereas in Ilorin the farm lands were so allocated, and the descendants of the granters have enjoyed rights to tribute and to allocate land. The Ilorin system, as Lloyd says, ensured a more permanent dependency relationship between granter and grantee groups (P.C. Lloyd, The Political Development of Yoruba Kingdoms in the 18th and 19th Centuries (London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1971), pp.43, 52.

Ojuekun, a Yoruba chief (of Ojuekun Sub-Ward of Balogun Ajikobi Ward) in Ilorin Town, who sent Aribi there as his representative.<sup>1</sup> In a recent law suit over landownership in Onire District, which was won by the present Magaji Ojuekun, Aribi was called a "caretaker". In his own evidence, the Aribi representative claimed that Aribi owned the land before Magaji Ojuekun, but he did not seem to be claiming pre-Fulani origin.<sup>2</sup> From most of the above, therefore, it seems likely that the claim of Onire to pre-Fulani foundation by the Aribi family is only a recent one, which has been put forward to bolster the claims of the family to chieftaincy recognition and the desire of the area to assert its independence from Ilorin Town, from where the Magaji Ojuekun still wields an important influence even today.<sup>3</sup>

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1. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.8; NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire District Ojuekun District Assessment Report by G.J. Lethem, 1913, para.4 and Regrouping of Village Areas 1917; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Onire 1924, para.2 and appx. on Onire V.A.; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 136/1927, Onire District Tax Revision, 1927, para.14.
  2. Ilorin Upper Area Court I/CVF 10/74, Ibrahim Baba Alapa rep. Ojuekun family (plaintiff) v. Salimanu Magaji Sosoki and Alhaji Anafi Onire (defendants). I am indebted to Susan Watts for the use of notes on this and other court cases.
  3. Alfa Muhammed Yahaya, "Ilorin Relations with her Western Districts -- Afon, Onire and Owode, 1823-c.1960" (B.A. dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1982), p.11. See also Ojuekun v. Sosoki.

The Onire example helps to illustrate the difficulties frequently encountered in the reconstruction of Ilorin history, as elsewhere, due to the interference of current political issues in "traditional" accounts.



The case of Olobondoroko, in Afon District, provides a further example of a dubious claim to pre-Fulani foundation. The earliest available account, written in 1912, states that the Magaji Zarumi, a sub-ward head in Ilorin Town, by name Olobondoroko, and two other fiefholders, "obtained the lands and farmed and built a town and stocked it with their followers" in the reign of Emir Abdusalami.<sup>1</sup> In 1929, only three chieftaincy titles were reported in the town, and these clearly represented the three original fiefholders.<sup>2</sup> Recently, however, it has been claimed that the town is of pre-Fulani origin, and that the Zarumi family were natives of this town before coming to settle in Ilorin.<sup>3</sup> This, as can be seen, is unlikely to represent past actuality; it probably reflects, instead, the Zarumi family's desire to emphasize their longevity in the area, especially in case of land disputes over the boundary with neighbouring Reke, of which the Balogun Alanamu family make a similar claim (their

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure in Afon District, Report by Captain Burnett 1912, Case 1.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon District Tax Revision 1929 by A.J. Knott, para.10; compare names in Land Tenure Afon, Case 1, genealogies.
  3. Mumeen Yusuf Ganiyu, "Ilorin and District Administration with specific reference to Lanwa and Ejidogari Districts c.1823-c.1960" (B.A. dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1982), pp.1-2 (information from eg. Alh. Safi Jimba, Ile-Ologun Jimba, Ilorin, Feb. 1982); Nigerian Herald, 5/12/77 (author probably Alh. Safi Jimba) and 14/7/78.

claim, at least, however, being of greater antiquity).<sup>1</sup>

Other settlements' claims to pre-Fulani origin, however, may be taken more seriously than those examined above. In both Shao (in Oloru District) for example, and Oke Oyi (in Igborin), greater depth in kingship traditions is observable, and a range of chieftaincy titles exists. Local customs and rituals are described in detail by the people, and, at least in the case of the mass-marriage festival in Shao, continue to be practised up to the present day.<sup>2</sup> All these factors combine to suggest that the two settlements are of some age, and thus support their claims to predating the arrival of the Fulani. Additional evidence also supports their claims. Oke Oyi, for example, is mentioned as a pre-Fulani settlement by Samuel Johnson.<sup>3</sup> And while Fulani

1. See Nigerian Herald, 5/12/77, for both claims, and reference to a recent land dispute. For the greater antiquity of the Balogun Alanamu family claim, see eg. S.J. Hogben and A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, The Emirates of Northern Nigeria (London: O.U.P., 1966), p.292.
2. Shao Community, "Memorandum to the Chieftaincy Panel by the People of Shao: A Case for the Grading of the Ohoro of Shao", 1978 (written for submission to the Ekundayo Chieftaincy Panel); information from Emmanuel Alao (of Oluo Isale ruling house, Oke-Oyi), Nov. 1980 and 16/1/81. On Oke-Oyi chieftaincy titles, see also NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Igborin District Touring Notes Captain Priestman 1923, Notes on Village Areas (also titles in Pepele and Apado).
3. Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yorubas (Lagos: C.M.S. Bookshops, 1921), p.200.

historical traditions are generally concerned to emphasize the settlement of the metropolitan districts from Ilorin and under Ilorin elite control, thus asserting over them the rights of the emirs and fiefholders, yet even these traditions admit the claims of the settlements of Shao and Oke-Oyi, by the act of listing them among the towns that were conquered during the Fulani period (by Balogun Gambari Karara, in the reign of Aliu the fourth emir).<sup>1</sup> The traditions of Shao itself understandably deny any suggestion of conquest by Ilorin,<sup>2</sup> though it seems to be admitted in Oke-Oyi. In a recent version of the Oke-Oyi tradition, when the Ilorin "village head" of the town is mentioned, it is admitted that the imposition of such a head was the jihadists' policy in conquered towns, especially in those areas which they had found difficult to conquer.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the placing of

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1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, C.W. Michie, Political Situation Northern Provinces and History of Ilorin, History of Ilorin compiled by M. Sulu, Native Courts Registrar, 15/10/53, p.6. This is generally a Fulani-biased account. See Political and Administrative Outline, p.3, note 1.
  2. Shao Memorandum 1978, p.6. Fulani conquest is, however, perhaps reflected in the Memorandum's account of a usurper Ohoro (ruler) who had assistance from Ilorin. See pp.14-15. But also see NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Oloru District Revision of Village Areas by N.M. Jones 1924, Historical: "when the Fulani came down from the North they followed them, there was never any fighting at Shao".
  3. Information from Emmanuel Alao, Nov.1980.

Ilorin fiefholders over these two settlements is perhaps the best indication that conquest did occur. The original rulers were not reconfirmed as fiefholders, but instead fiefholders or agents from Ilorin were imposed.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, pre-Fulani chiefs elsewhere who "voluntarily surrendered"<sup>2</sup> and placed themselves under Ilorin protection had their lands regranted to them, either at fiefholder or sub-fiefholder level. An example is Ila Oke, in what became Afon District, which is said to have been founded in the reign of Alafin Abiodun (that is, in the later years of the eighteenth century) by Yajba and Shekumbe, sons of the Timi (ruler) of Ede. They paid tribute to the alafin. When Shekumbe held the lands, "Majia the Nupe" came and "broke" the town, and Shekumbe fled to Ilorin. The third holder of the lands, Ewola son of Yajba, put himself under Fulani protection, received his former lands back from the Balogun Fulani, and rebuilt the town.<sup>4</sup>

1. See Appendix to Chapter 5, pp.333, 336.

2. Quoted from RH. Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, M. Sulu's History, p.6, referring to Ajasse and Igbaja.

3. This would have been Etsu Majiya II. See Robin Law, The Old Oyo Empire c.1600-c.1836 (Oxford: O.U.P., 1977), p.285.

4. See Appendix, p.331; NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 36; Nigerian Herald, 14/7/78.

A similar story of voluntary surrender and placement under Ilorin control is told of Ojoku, also in Afon District. Its people claimed to have come from the Niger, before the Fulani takeover in Ilorin. It was a certain Lanlu and his brother who came, and were given the lands, presumably by the alafin, since they paid tribute to him. Ogo Sulu, son of the founder, "followed" Afonja, at the time when Mallam Alimi had arrived in Ilorin. Unlike Ila Oke and other towns, Ojoku escaped the ravages of Majia (perhaps because its founders were Nupe themselves).<sup>1</sup> The third landholder of the family "followed Ilorin" and the fourth paid tribute to Emir Abdusalami.<sup>2</sup> A visitor in the 1850s spoke of Ojoku as having "escaped the destructive hand of the Fulani";<sup>3</sup> but it did not escape destruction at a later date. When the Offa War<sup>4</sup> broke out it was destroyed, and the landholder and

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1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Report on Local Government Reform in the Bala and Afon Districts of Ilorin Emirate 1954, Summary of Approximate Tribal Distribution in Afon District.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 34.
  3. William H. Clarke, Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland 1854-1858, ed. J.A. Atanda (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1972), p.160.
  4. On the Offa War, see eg. Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp.295-98.

his heirs fled to Ilorin. After the war, the heir returned with the sanction of the emir, and rebuilt the town.<sup>1</sup> A similar story again is told of Ikotun, which is said to have been senior to Ojoku in pre-Fulani days.<sup>2</sup>

Also in Afon District is the village of Ajagusi, whose ruler in the pre-Fulani period was said to have owned a large area of land. He was said like the others to have paid tribute to the alafin. This area was also overrun by the Nupe, causing the people to flee. The ruler fled to Ilorin, put himself under the protection of the Balogun Fulani, and was allowed to return to his land. But the land was later laid waste again, this time by the Ibadans during the Offa War. The ruler fled once again, later to return once more to his land, again as client of a Balogun Fulani.<sup>3</sup>

Ila Oke, Ojoku, Ikotun and Ajagusi, then, are among the towns and villages in Afon District which claim to have

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 34; this states that Fiede, the heir, followed the Basambo as his baba kekere (for which, see eg. pp.228-30 below); a slightly different version has it that the family were granted the lands by the first Basambo, brother of the first two emirs, in the reign of Emir Shita. See Appendix, p.329.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 33.
3. Ibid., Case 30; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala and Afon, paras.10, 13 and Historical Notes on Afon District, paras.1-3, 7; Yahaya, p.15.

been founded before the arrival of the Fulani. Although they make this claim, however, it is noticeable that their traditions, generally speaking, have little pre-Fulani generational depth;<sup>1</sup> and it might be suggested that this casts doubt on their veracity. But the pre-Fulani origin of Ojoku is confirmed by the mid nineteenth century traveller Clarke;<sup>2</sup> and in Ila Oke and Ikotun, as well as Ojoku, the traditions are supported by the existence, reported in 1929, of a range of chieftaincy titles,<sup>3</sup> while the apparent absence of these from Ajagusi may be explained by the extent of its nineteenth century disruption and consequent reduction to a hamlet of extremely small size.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the traditions recounted above were collected early in the colonial period, within living memory of many of the events described. Indeed, one of the pre-Fulani landholders mentioned in the accounts (the landholder of Ipetu, also in Afon District) had arrived back and been re-granted

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1. See pp.210-211 above; also NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 20 (Odo Ode), Case 31 (Ipetu), Case 33 (Ikotun) and Case 30 (Ajagusi).
  2. Clarke, p.160.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, paras.10. 11.
  4. By 1954 it was reported to be a hamlet of only about 160 souls. See RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Historical Notes on Afon District, para.1.

his lands several years after British rule had begun, and with the blessing of the British resident of the time;<sup>1</sup> thus the pre-Fulani origin of this particular holding was accepted by the emir, and by the Balogun Fulani, whose client the claimant had become, in the presence of the British administration. The Ilorin chiefs do not appear to have disputed any of these Afon District traditions; perhaps a further indication of their accuracy since, as already pointed out, it was in the interest of these chiefs to stress later settlement rather than earlier, and settlement of people who accepted no other origin than Fulani Ilorin.

Even in the northern district of Ejidogari, which was claimed in an early colonial record to have been uninhabited as late as the 1880s,<sup>2</sup> its Fulani landholders admit to some pre-Fulani settlement. The present district head, and descendant of the original fiefholder Shiaba Daniyalu,<sup>3</sup> admits that four villages, namely Ejidogari, Aiyetoro, Itigiwa and Olokiti were already in existence before the advent of the first Shiaba. Of these villages, the three last-mentioned capitulated to him after he had occupied the

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 31.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708A/1912, Adjidungari, para.17.
3. On whom, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.4.



first with "Muslim soldiers".<sup>1</sup> It is reported also that a beadmaking industry previously existed in the village of Aiyetoro,<sup>2</sup> and this also may be taken to support the suggestion of its pre-Fulani origin, since as has already been seen, the presence or absence of any notable industrial activity in metropolitan districts' settlements is generally closely correlated with their date of origin.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to pre-Fulani settlements still in existence today (though in the case of Ajagusi apparently on a much reduced scale), a few accounts tell of previous settlements or settlers now disappeared. A chiefly family of present-day Shaki, for example, claims to have originated in an "Oyun Town" which has since been ruined,<sup>4</sup> and Owode and the westernmost parts of Afon Districts are said to

1. Ganiyu, p.17, citing the district head of Ejidogari, Mallam Popoola Shiaba. A variant tradition, however, also exists among the descendants of the first Shiaba: that the settlement of Ejidogari was founded by a nephew of Emir Abdusalami [a member of the Shiaba family?] and later handed over to one Eji. Ganiyu, p.9, citing Mallam Alabi Ajia, younger brother of the present DH Ejidogari.
2. Ganiyu, p.22. No information is at present available as to the type of beads which were made.
3. See Chapter 4, pp.176-79.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 2242, History of Ilorin Publication of by Mr. S.O. Bada (the Bada of Shaki) (actually Samuel Ojo. See Political and Administrative Outline, p.3, note 1).

have been previously inhabited by Ogbomosho people, the sites of whose ruined towns were still identifiable in the early years of the colonial period. These people had been gradually driven out by Ilorin warriors, whose followers took up the land.<sup>1</sup> A further example of a former settlement now either completely or largely deserted is Shao-Ile, in Oloru District. This is not, as its name might suggest, the original site of Shao, but an old walled town, its walls still visible as late as 1924, which had been sacked, presumably by the Fulani, whereupon many of its people fled to (the already existing) present-day Shao.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly the metropolitan districts around Ilorin were by no means empty when the Fulani Emirate came into being. Equally clearly, however, a good deal of population movement was taking place around that time. There may, for example, have been quite considerable movement into parts of what became Afon District, judging by the traditions related above. But movement took place especially from the time, and as a result, of Afonja's revolt against Oyo and the

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode District Report by Lethem 1913, paras.2, 3.

2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Oloru 1924, Historical.

subsequent Fulani takeover and establishment of the emirate. Its direction seems to have been in general first into Ilorin Town, and then out.<sup>1</sup> Movement inwards came through enslavement, the desire to join the jihad, and the desire to profit through industry and trade in the newly important centre. Many of the immigrants came from the city of Old Oyo and its environs. Gradually the population then began to move out again, towards the metropolitan districts, this process continuing into the first half of the colonial period and even taking on new vigour during that time. A number of sources may be cited in illustration of the broad general lines of this two-way movement, beginning with the role of Afonja, who according to Johnson

made Ilorin into the large city it now is. There were several towns and villages around at no very great distance from Ilorin .... Most of them this restless warrior captured one by one and resettled them around Ilorin so as to make it into what it has become. The able-bodied men he enrolled among his soldiers, and several women and children he sold into slavery, in order to have wherewith to maintain and supply arms to his war boys.

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1. This inward and outward movement was first described by R.J. Gavin, "Sketch of the Economy of Ilorin Province in the First Three Decades of the 20th Century based upon Selected Assessment Reports", unpublished paper, Department of History, A.B.U., p.2.
  2. Johnson, p.200.

The original population of Ilorin is said to have received "a large admixture of blood from the Hausa and Nupe and the enormous slave population which grew up under the Fulani".<sup>1</sup> Many of the Hausa were themselves ex-slaves of Yoruba masters within the empire of Old Oyo, who seized the opportunity created by Afonja's revolt to desert their masters and flee to Ilorin.<sup>2</sup> Fulani also came, many with Mallam Alimi. Some, who had previously lived as herdsmen, settled down to found chiefly families in the town.<sup>3</sup> Others continued to pursue their previous occupation in the rural areas around the town, especially in Malete District.<sup>4</sup> Yoruba Muslims also came to Ilorin, many, in

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Reassessment Report by A/R Lethem, Progress Report, para.11.
2. Johnson, p.193.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Ilorin Emirate Reorganisation of Districts, Unsalariated Holders of Titles in Ilorin.
4. Kehinde Galadima Gegele, "Ilorin Relations with Oloru, Malete and Paiye Districts 1823-1960" (B.A. dissertation, University of Ilorin 1982), pp.22-23 (Malete); David W. Carnegie, Letters from Nigeria of the Honourable David Wynford Carnegie, F.R.G.S., 1899-1900 (Brechin: Black & Johnston, Printers and Publishers, 1902. Privately printed, not published), p.70 (Malete). See also Carnegie, p.71 (Adisa); RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.10 and Summary of Approximate Tribal Distribution in Afon District; and Area Court Grade 1 Afon, suit 375/75, case 361/75, Busari Akanbe Ogele, family of Are Ogele (plaintiff) v.Bani Gaa Budu Nuhu (defendant), evidence of plaintiff and plaintiff's witness 1, on Fulani in Afon.

Agboola reported in the early 1960s that the Fulani in Ilorin area were most numerous in Ilorin Town itself (7% of the population) and Malete District (10%) (Samuel Akindele Agboola, "Some Geographical Influences upon the Population and Economy of the Middle Belt West of the Niger" (M.A. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1962), p.62.)

the early years, putting themselves under the leadership of Solagberu.<sup>1</sup>

A large proportion of the population consisted of slaves. Some of the lantana beadmakers may have entered Ilorin originally through enslavement, having been "purchased and captured" from Old Oyo.<sup>2</sup> Other members of the slave population were captured as a result of various campaigns, including those in distant areas of Yorubaland.<sup>3</sup> Most of the population of Ajikobi and Alanamu Wards was later said to be of Old Oyo origin and the remainder, "who know no origin but Ilorin" were descended from slaves, though many of these latter had been sent out to farm and settle on the lands around the town.<sup>4</sup> After the sack of Old Oyo, some of its "remnants" were said to have taken up residence in Paiye District, the remainder of the people there having taken up farms from Ilorin. Many of the people of that district, in 1922, were described as "domestic slaves or ex-slaves of notables in Ilorin".<sup>5</sup> These statements were

1. Johnson, p.194.

2. See Chapter 2, p.104.

3. See Chapter 1, p.58.

4. NAK Ilorprof ACC 59, District Note Book Ilorin Town.

5. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye District Revised Assessments, Report on the Revision of Village Registers in Paiye District by A.E. Cadell, paras.2, 3.

echoed in the report of a later inquiry, prior to local government reforms, into the metropolitan districts, except for Bala (Owode) and Afon. The population of the districts surveyed was then described as "predominantly Yoruba", nearly half of whom claimed to be of Old Oyo origin, the remainder describing themselves "simply as Yoruba proper of Ilorin origin", this last-mentioned group including "a considerable number descended from slaves of the Fulani and other war-lords, who were sent out from Ilorin to settle and work in the land granted as fiefs to their principal assistants by the early emirs".<sup>1</sup> A separate report on the two remaining districts explained that the whole of Bala and much of Afon were also settled by "heterogeneous groups of followers and slaves of the fiefholders".<sup>2</sup> And the existence of a large population of slaves and others whose relationship with Ilorin was of a dependent nature is further confirmed by the strength and nature of the protests and statements which have been heard from metropolitan districts people in recent years.<sup>3</sup>

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1. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.14.
  2. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.25. Also see H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), p. 168, quoting Burnett's 1912 report on land tenure in Afon District (erroneously dated as 1914 by Hermon-Hodge).
  3. See eg. pp.273, 316 below.

The settlement or resettlement of the metropolitan districts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was mediated by the "fief-holding" system set up by the Fulani emirs, who gave out the lands. The Ilorin Resident's report for 1903-1904 explained that either the emir would grant land to one of his chiefs, who then "sub-let" it, or that the emir himself appointed bales (area headmen) and farmers who then paid tribute to him direct.<sup>1</sup> This, although somewhat simplified, provides a starting-point for an investigation of the system. In the second type of case, as with some of the relatively small landholdings of Afon<sup>2</sup> and Akanbi,<sup>3</sup> one should perhaps regard the emir himself as the fiefholder, and the grantees as sub-fiefholders. But in many cases the emir did give out fiefs to his major chiefs, who thus became the fiefholders and who subsequently gave them out again to their families, followers or agents. Some slave chiefs, however, may have been appointed by the emirs not as fiefholders themselves but rather as agents for the emir as fiefholder. One example of this may be Shao,

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1. RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers s.64, Ilorin Province Report 1903-1904, p.111.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon; also Hermon-Hodge, quoting Burnett.
  3. See NAK Ilorprof 4 D 164/1917, Akambi District Notes on Assessment 1918-22, Hermon-Hodge Ag. Resident to SNP Kaduna, 7/9/22, para.4; NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.7.

to which Emir Shita, in a 1917 account (see Appendix to this chapter, pp.328 and 336), is said to have appointed Ajia (that is, ranking slave warrior)<sup>1</sup> Atikekere, whereas an earlier account declares Shao to be a personal fief of the emir.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in 1917, Adenlolu, a slave, was listed as recipient of Lanwa, but other accounts are clear that he was sent there rather as an overseer.<sup>3</sup>

The difference, however, between a slave agent and a fiefholder may not always have been absolutely clear, as may be suggested by the fact that, although Adenlolu is still remembered by some people as a slave agent, his descendants are now legally recognised as the owners of the land.<sup>4</sup> And in terms of wealth (since tribute would pass through the agent's hands), prestige and power there may have been little difference. Adenlolu was described as "a man of great importance". When he died he was succeeded by

1. See Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.
2. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.2.
3. See Appendix, pp.328, 334; compare with NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3766, Lanwa District Ilorin Province Assessment Report R.S. Chapman May 1912 [file actually contains comments on this report and a Burnett report on Lanwa], C.S. Burnett, Lanwa Lands, 9/7/13, paras.1-3; and letter from Burnett, 9/7/13, paras.1-4. See also p.247 below.
4. Upper Area Court I/CVF 3/76, Salami Olokoba represented by Bello Akanbi (plaintiff) v. Buraimoh Mogaji Lanwa represented by Alabi Amuro (defendant).



his son Iyodele, who in 1913 was "the most important man in the District of Lanwa .... This man, together with Ajia Dudu, another slave .... seem to have considerable power in the land". Ajia Dudu, who had been a slave of Adenlolu, had later become messenger for Iyodele, to Ilorin and the out-lying farms.<sup>1</sup> From the cases of both Atikekere and Adenlolu, it is clear that there was no prohibition against slaves holding powerful and prestigious posts, nor against possessing slaves of their own, which they might utilise on their "extensive farms".<sup>2</sup>

Much of the division and handing out of land seems, naturally, to have taken place in the reigns of the earlier emirs, notably Abdusalami and Shita, as seen in the Appendix, pp.328-29. Lands continued to be distributed by Zubeiru (1860-68), and there is also considerable evidence of lands being distributed by Emir Aliu (1868-91).<sup>3</sup>

1. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3766, Lanwa 1912/13, C.S. Burnett, Lanwa Lands, 9/7/13, paras.1-2; letter from Burnett, 9/7/13, paras.1, 4.
2. For slaves owning farms, see J. Milum, "Notes of a Journey from Lagos to Bida, etc (1879-80)", Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society 3, New Series (1881), 37. Also see p.234 below, on Jimba.
3. Although it is not reflected in the 1917 file used in the Appendix to this chapter.  
 For fiefs distributed by Emir Aliu in Lanwa District, see Ganiyu, pp.5, 7; Olokoba v. Magaji Lanwa, defendant's witness 3. On Onire, see NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.6. On Afon, see NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 22; Yahaya, p.13.  
 Dates of the reigns of Zubeiru and Aliu are taken from Hogben & Kirk-Greene, p.306.

Some of this land went to small-scale holders. These were likely to reside on the land. Much of it, however, as the Appendix to this chapter reveals, was given out to the major chiefs; the emirs themselves, the baloguns, other major warrior chiefs such as Magaji Ojuekun; warrior slaves such as Ajia Ijesha and Jimba, the slave who sacked Old Oyo;<sup>1</sup> and other title holders including the Basambo and the Shiaba, the Sarkin Gambari, and the Magaji Are and Baba Isale. In the case of the two last-named, the lands involved may have been held by the Afonja family prior to the establishment of the emirate, and later regranted to them, both as an attempt to placate them and also as an expression of their submission to the emirs.

Fiefs, once granted, were held on a hereditary basis<sup>2</sup> by the family of the original grantee. They could, however, be resumed by the emir, as happened in the case of Igborin (see Appendix, p.333) and in (presumably Bala area) in Owode District, where the holdings of the Balogun Alanamu were resumed on the deposition of the title-holder, Ali Inakoju, at the beginning of the colonial period.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Hogben & Kirk-Greene, p.291. Whether they are called fiefholders or agents, they held the lands.
  2. NAK SNP 10/1 808p 1913, Ilorin Land Tenure, Extract from a Report compiled by E.C. Duff, p.2.
  3. Hogben & Kirk-Greene, pp.301-302; NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode 1913, paras.3, 5, 6, 7; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.12, IPARS 1938 and 1939, IPAR 1939, para.32.

Although small-scale grantees might settle on the land, important fiefholders did not. This was said to have been a matter of policy on the part of the rulers of the Fulani emirates generally, who compelled their chiefs "to live at the capital and to present themselves almost daily before the emir, or at least to attend the regular weekly Friday celebration at the emir's mosque. It was in this way that the emirs considered that they could best control their subordinate chiefs".<sup>1</sup> Emir Suleiman, in the early years of colonial rule, certainly seems to have been thinking along these lines, judging by his reaction to the colonial administration's insistence that district heads should reside in their districts.<sup>2</sup> In the late nineteenth century, however, this policy had proved ineffective, as the emirs lost much of their power to the baloguns.<sup>3</sup>

The emirs, in handing out fiefs, also attempted to guard against their chiefs' acquisition of large consolidated blocks of land: This was done by ensuring that fiefs were given out in small and scattered parcels.<sup>4</sup> The Balogun Gambari, for example, is said to have received,

1. Hermon-Hodge, p.165. See also Nigeria Gazette (Extraordinary), no.46, Lagos, 3/9/52, vol.39, Decision of H.E. the Governor on the Claim for a Revision of the Inter-Regional Boundary between the Northern and Western Regions, para.41.

2. See eg. Hermon-Hodge, p.164, citing the Annual Report of 1907-1908.

3. On the emir's loss of power, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.7.

4. Gazette no.46, para.4.

within the metropolitan districts, the following lands: Oloru, including a number of what were later called "village areas" in Oloru District, Babadudu and Jegi in Ejidogari District, Moya in Igporin and Kangile in Akanbi.<sup>1</sup> Of all these lands, not even the first was considered large enough to become a district on its own under British rule, though it did form the nucleus of one. In some cases, even important chiefs might share the lands of a single village area with others. In Adiloju hamlet, for example, in Gama<sup>2</sup> village area, although the Magaji Are is said to be the fiefholder of the entire Gama area, he appears to have shared the ownership of the hamlet land with others, including Balogun Ajikobi.<sup>3</sup>

The fiefholder might send an agent to look after his

1. See Appendix, pp.332-35; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Akambi District Revision by N.M. Jones 1924, list of fiefs and para.7; Hermon-Hodge, p.165; Ganiyu, p.10; Gegele, pp.19-20.
2. Gama is in Ajasse District, but see p.201 above, note 2.
3. Appendix, p.328; NAK Ilorprof 5 6289, Ajasse District Revision of Assessment by I.V. Hoskins 1930, para.12; Upper Area Court I/CVF 25/75, Gama Suburbs Community represented by Alfa Raji Balogun Adini (plaintiff) v. Alh. Karimu Kolawole (defendant), plaintiff's witnesses 10, 15.

It may be noted that this example illustrates the problems encountered in attempting a reconstruction of the Ilorin fiefholding system, which seems to have been rather more complex than the 1917 summary in the Appendix would admit; as is confirmed by a comparison of this 1917 material with the earlier report on the lands of Afon District (NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon).

lands, as with Adenlolu in Lanwa, sent by the emir,<sup>1</sup> and Aribi and others sent by Magaji Ojuekun to his lands around Onire.<sup>2</sup> The agent might be a slave, a follower, or a son; Magaji Ojuekun, for example, is said to have sent his son to the Adigbongbo area of his Onire fief. Agents might also be sent by smaller-scale fiefholders as well, in some cases. In Iekale (Afon District), Beamena, a Fulani, received his lands from Emir Shita, to whom he paid tribute. He left a slave, Ennetan, to look after the land. In 1912, Sumanu, son of this slave, was bale (area head man) and caretaker of the land, letting out the farms and collecting rents for the fiefholder.<sup>3</sup> In Eleuri, Ago, Abeokuta and Afon (all in the same district), fiefholders also put in agents who became bales of their respective areas.<sup>4</sup> Momodu, described as a "factor", or "follower" of Magaji Gari in his Afon fief, was said to have been the first settler in the area, arriving with seven followers, each of whom subsequently became heads of different households or wards.<sup>5</sup>

Thus the fiefholder himself, or his agent, sub-fiefholder

1. See p.222 above.
2. See pp.205-206 above; and NAK Ilorprof 4 D 136/1927, Onire 1927, paras.22-23.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 9.
4. Ibid., Cases 11, 18, 19, 24.
5. Ibid., Case 24; Yahaya, p.13.

or original tenant<sup>1</sup> would go about the business of settling the lands, either with slaves, or free tenants, or, as in Ogele, with both. In Ogele, it was said, Emir Shita "put one of his head slaves Audali to look after the farms and other slaves. Audali's son is now Bale and collects for the Emir. Many of the farms are let to free men who pay rent to the Bale but follow some big man in Ilorin".<sup>2</sup>

Free tenants had need of such a "big man in Ilorin" to "follow". This was their baba kekere, their patron or intermediary, "who had open to him channels whereby he could advance his clients' interests in, say, a law case, a land dispute, or in fact any accident of life wherein a friend at Court was useful".<sup>3</sup> The baba kekere might be the tenant's own fiefholder, or he might be the most powerful fiefholder in the area, as in Olobondoroko, where tenants of the other fiefholders followed the Magaji Zarumi, and "gave him presents from time to time".<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, he might be the fiefholder's agent, or even his agent's agent, examples of

1. As seen above, "agent", "sub-fiefholder", and "original tenant" all seem to have meant much the same in practice. See also NAK SNP 10/1 808p 1913, Land Tenure 1913, p.2.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 7.
3. Hermon-Hodge, p.166.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 1.

both of which seem to have occurred in Lanwa District.<sup>1</sup> The baba kekere might also be in some other way connected with the fiefholder, or he might be someone else entirely. In Ogele, which was held by the emir, free tenants followed the emir himself, or his slaves or sons, or the Sarkin Dogari, or the Magaji Baboko, who was a sub-ward head in Alanamu Ward of Ilorin Town.<sup>2</sup> In Odo Ode, tenants of the (pre-Fulani landlord and) fiefholder paid rent to him but followed, variously, Baloguns Fulani and Gambari, Magaji Are and a son of the emir.<sup>3</sup> Several tenants on Ajagusi lands were followers of Balogun Fulani.<sup>4</sup> The "Liman Agbaji"<sup>5</sup> was said to be baba kekere to many farmers in "Oke Moro", that is in the lands to the north-west of Ilorin Town.<sup>6</sup>

Not only tenants, but also small-scale fiefholders needed such a patron, especially when first taking, or retaking, up their lands. The former ruler of Ajagusi, as has already been noted,<sup>7</sup> utilised the patronage of Balogun

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1. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3766, Lanwa 1912/13, C.S. Burnett, Lanwa Lands, 9/7/13, para.1; letter from Burnett, 9/7/13, paras.3,4.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 7.
  3. Ibid., Case 20.
  4. Ibid., Case 30.
  5. "Liman" = Imam. On Agbaje, see Chapter 3, pp.127-28, and 128 note 1.
  6. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913, para.13.
  7. See p.212 above.

Fulani in order to be allowed to return to his land. Other pre-Fulani landowners also regained their lands through the intercession of the Balogun Fulani.<sup>1</sup> Other men, also wishing to be granted small fiefs, "followed a big chief or slave of the Emir .... and, when they took up land, asked them to get the sanction of the Emir for so doing. This was done, and a yearly gift was given to these men for protection's sake, and to further their interest in the Court should they have occasion to bring in some case for settlement".<sup>2</sup>

Both slaves and free tenants were settled on the metropolitan district lands, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>3</sup> Sources already cited would seem to suggest that a considerable proportion of these settlers were slaves.<sup>4</sup> The "ultimate tribal origin" of these slaves, by the 1950s, had in general become obscure,<sup>5</sup> the claim to know no origin but Ilorin being in itself, one might suggest, an indicator of slave status in the past. Slaves

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Cases 31, 33.
  2. Hermon-Hodge, p.169, quoting Burnett.
  3. For a detailed discussion of early twentieth century migration, see pp.254-62 below.
  4. See pp.219-20 above.
  5. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.14.



captured or purchased in childhood would be unlikely to remember any details of their original home; those taken as adults may have been forbidden to mention the matter. By the second slave generation, origins would very likely have been forgotten. In one isolated example, however, a group settled near Ilorin Town were still able in the 1950s to identify their origin as Ekiti; their ancestors having been captured, perhaps, during the Balogun Gambari's raids on Osi and Obo in the 1840s.<sup>1</sup>

Although slaves in the nineteenth century Ilorin Emirate were employed in various occupations, they were predominantly used on the farm.<sup>2</sup> Some were agents or overseers,<sup>3</sup> but the great majority were actually engaged in agricultural work.

The statement just made, however, should probably be taken to apply in large part to male, rather than female, slaves, since women in Yorubaland, including Ilorin, are by tradition only peripherally engaged in agriculture.<sup>4</sup> When Governor Carter, visiting Ilorin in 1893, and inquiring into the destination of a female slave, was told that she

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.11.
2. See Chapter 3, p.130.
3. See eg. pp.222-23 above.
4. RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Sylvia Leith-Ross, Report on Women's Education Ilorin Province, 30/4/29, p.11; Clarke, p.260.

would be used on the farms,<sup>1</sup> presumably this would have involved only the customary female pursuits of onion farming or help with the harvest.<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, the female slave may have been utilized in other rural occupations, like the woman who on being enslaved and taken to Oloru a few years later was employed in plucking reeds for mat making.<sup>3</sup> Women slaves were also utilized in another customary female task,<sup>4</sup> that is carrying produce from the farms into Ilorin Town.<sup>5</sup>

Of the work of a male farm slave, one or two accounts, from the turn of the century, survive:

The domestic slave almost in every case works on the farms; he is obliged to make 200 heaps of earth [yam heaps] as a day's work, which is absurdly light

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1. Gilbert T. Carter, Despatch from Sir Gilbert T. Carter, furnishing a General Report of the Lagos Interior Expedition 1893 (London: H.M.S.O. 1893), p.23.
  2. On which, see RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, Leith-Ross, *Women's Education*, p.11.
  3. PRO CO 147/105, encl. Odo Otin 29/5/96.
  4. Clarke, p.260. Leith-Ross describes womens' work not simply as carrying farm produce but also marketing it (RH Mss. Afr. s.1520, *Women's Education*, p.11.
  5. A.F. Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger (London: George Philip & Son, 1892), p.195. Haddon-Smith also notes many women carriers of farm produce, though he does not identify them as slaves (G.B. Haddon-Smith, *Interior Mission to Yorubaland 1893: Extracts from the Diary of G.B. Haddon-Smith, Political Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library, London, 20/2/93*).

considering an ordinary hardworking farmer can complete anything up to 1000 heaps. As soon as the slave has completed his allotted amount he has the rest of the day to himself.

He can till a portion of the farm for his own use, seed and spade [sic] being freely supplied by his master, and sell the produce in the markets, the proceeds of which belong absolutely to himself .... The slave is fed, clothed and housed by his master and very often looked upon as one of the family ...<sup>1</sup>

This statement may be excessively idyllic (though the Oloru slave testified to her good treatment while enslaved), especially as the Resident who wrote it had every reason to want the slaves to be kept on the farm.<sup>2</sup> In addition, while a farmer in his prime is capable of making 800 to 1000 heaps in a day, it is more likely that he will attempt about 400.<sup>3</sup> But, if 400 heaps may be taken as an average day's work, and therefore the 200 referred to above as half a day's, then this account is in agreement with a slightly earlier report, which states that a farm slave in Ilorin worked half a day for his master and half a day for himself (with one full day to himself every week),<sup>4</sup> and with

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1. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, P.M. Dwyer, Extracts from Reports Ilorin 1902-1908, Annual Report 1904.
  2. See pp.252-53 below.
  3. Information from H.J. O'Hear, 21/3/83, following interview with two farmers of Alara Village Area, Oloru District.
  4. Carnegie, p.94.

Campbell's description of farm slavery in Yoruba areas further south.<sup>1</sup>

Some villages or village areas housed both free and slave cultivators, working farms that were side by side.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, whole villages were populated by slaves. The slave war-chief Jimba,<sup>3</sup> for example, was reported to be the owner of the small village Oko Jimba (Jimba's Farm) between Ilorin and Offa, in which village he had settled his slaves.<sup>4</sup> On a vastly larger scale, Balogun Gambari Ali is said to have had, in the 1850s, "a village of 26,000 slaves of his own, all working in irons".<sup>5</sup> While it is true that an account of about the same time described the same Balogun as very rich and owning numerous slaves, and that he was at that time at the height of his power,<sup>6</sup> it is likely that

1. Quoted by E. Adeniyi Oroge, "The Institution of Slavery in Yorubaland with Particular Reference to the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1971), pp.199, 200.
2. See p.228 above.
3. The Jimba who was met in the late nineteenth century must have been a descendant of the original slave-warrior of that name. See p.224 above.
4. This was a convenient location, as he was at the time engaged in the Offa War. PRO FO 84/1940, Macdonald Report, p.6, encl. 2, Ferryman to Macdonald 4/10/89, and pp.7-8, encl. 3, Journal of Visit to Ofa Camp by Rev. C. Paul, C.M.S. Also Mockler-Ferryman, p.194; Igbomina S.W. Area Court Grade 1, Ajasse Po, suit 455/73, case 229/75, first defendant's evidence.
5. CMS CA 2/0 49/104, Hinderer, Account of Ibadan, 23/10/51.
6. Mahdi Adamu, The Hausa Factor in West African History (Zaria and Ibadan: A.B.U. Press and O.U.P. Nigeria, 1978), p.104 and note 40, citing T.J. Bowen.

the numbers quoted above may have been obtained by hearsay as far away as Ibadan, and therefore subject to considerable exaggeration. Nevertheless, the numbers quoted may be taken as suggesting that large plantations, as well as small, did in some cases exist in the area around Ilorin Town.

Only one detailed account of such a plantation has been found for the environs of Ilorin. The planter concerned was not an Ilorin man, but one Braima, a native of Lagos (a Lagos businessman, perhaps, following the Royal Niger Company),<sup>1</sup> and his plantation was somewhere on the borders of the Ilorin and the Share lands, on the route between Ilorin and the Niger. Unfortunately, no evidence is at present available as to which of the two towns controlled this land, or as to how it was acquired by a native of neither. An eye-witness of the 1890s records that

For some miles our route lay through Braima's plantations. Our host rode with us to the boundary of his farm, explaining his various projects, and discoursing, farmer-like, on the state of the crops and the season. The farm covers a large tract of country, spreading far and wide over hill and dale. Now we pass through vast fields of lofty millet, and now through acres of yams. We skirt a wild-looking granite hill, and descend into a deep valley, where we find ourselves riding under the ample shade of a regular forest of bananas .... Plantations of pepper and various spices are next passed through, and by the time we reach the limits

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1. I am indebted to Dr. T. McCaskie for this suggestion.

of our host's domains, we have seen what can be done with land, in this part of Africa, by a man of enter- 1  
prise.

Such a large-scale consolidated operation may have been, however, the exception rather than the rule, as many Ilorin fiefs were small in size. In addition, perhaps, the small size and dispersed nature not only of the fiefs but of many of the settlements on them may be seen as indicative of a lack in general of such large-scale enterprise.<sup>2</sup>

Slaves are remembered as "abundantly" used in the cultivation of cotton for local weaving and also in the growing and processing of leaves used for blue dye. Weavers were among those having cotton farms worked by slaves.<sup>3</sup> It is likely, however, that the largest proportion of produce from the Ilorin farms was made up, not of these items, but of foodstuffs, which found their way in large quantities into Ilorin Town.<sup>4</sup> In part, these were brought

1. Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, pp.211-14.
2. For the generally small size of settlements in the nineteenth century, see eg. Carter, Appendix 2, Itinerary of Route Taken, Interior Mission 1893, pp.43, 44. For a similar situation later, see eg. the tax counts of Magaji Village Area in 1917, and Osin Aremu in 1929 (NAK Ilorprof 4 D 164/1917, Akambi 1918-22; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, appx. A).
3. See Chapter 3, pp.130-31.
4. On foodstuffs coming in to Ilorin Town, see Carter, Itinerary, and Haddon-Smith, 27/9/93.

into the town by non-market means. First of all, there was the produce sent in by the slaves. Second, there was the yearly tribute in foodstuffs exacted from free tenant farmers, passing from farmers to agents to fiefholders to the emir.<sup>1</sup> At each stage the recipient would extract a share, before passing on the remainder.<sup>2</sup> Apart from his share of the yearly tribute, the agent or head tenant might also be provided with a regular supply of provisions by the farmers in his area.<sup>3</sup>

The extraction of foodstuffs for the Ilorin elite might be, however, less formalised perhaps and certainly more violent than has been suggested above. In 1859, for example, a member of a missionary party witnessed what was described as a robbery, committed on a farmer returning from his farm. His yams were seized, it is related, by one of the king's slaves who was employed on the king's farms.<sup>4</sup> The witness rescued the farmer's load and returned it to him, but it was soon seized again by another slave.<sup>5</sup> In a

1. See pp.227, 228 above, and pp.263-67 below. Also Carnegie, p.66, 96; Yahaya, p.20; Gegele, pp.33-34.
2. Yahaya, p.20; RH Mss. Br. Emp., Lugard Papers s.64, Ilorin Report 1903-1904, p.111; see also p.268 below (quotation).
3. Carnegie, p.96.
4. This may have been in the area of Ogele, a fief which remained in the hands of the emir. See p.229 above.
5. CMS CA 2/0 85/265, Henry Townsend, Journal, 22/8/59.

further example of violent methods of extraction, in 1900, in the Agodi lands west of Ejidogari, a claimant to the lands was reported to live by "thieving and extorting farm produce from the people".<sup>1</sup>

Additional non-market contributions were provided by the payments a tenant farmer was obliged to make to his baba kekere;<sup>2</sup> besides these, he might also have to pay court fines in form of agricultural produce.<sup>3</sup>

Produce which was sold through the market system, either by freemen or by slaves,<sup>4</sup> seems to have been subject to price control from Ilorin. Malete in 1900 was said to have a small market,<sup>5</sup> but there were complaints from the people there that the emir and his advisers were not in favour of such "country markets", their policy being to cause all produce to come to Ilorin for sale.<sup>6</sup> Again, in

1. Carnegie, pp.69-70. This period was one of general lawlessness. See RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.
2. Gegele, p.31; Hermon-Hodge, pp.166, 169 (quoting Burnett); NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, various cases.
3. Gegele, p.34.
4. See p.233 above, on slaves producing and selling for themselves.
5. Carnegie, p.70; Gegele, p.34, however, records a tradition that Idi-Isin market at Malete was reputed to be the largest in several districts.
6. Carnegie, p.70.



Ejidogari the "king"<sup>1</sup> in the same year objected to the system whereby he had to send all produce to Ilorin, instead of to Jebba where his people would receive a higher price.<sup>2</sup>

Although there is no evidence in Ilorin, as there is in Ibadan,<sup>3</sup> for the development of chiefly entrepreneurs, nevertheless the system of fiefholding and settlement of slaves and followers on the land was one which helped to enhance the prosperity of Ilorin Town in the nineteenth century. The cheap foodstuffs which flowed in by various means to the Ilorin war chiefs were utilised in feeding the members and supporters of the Ilorin armies. The chiefs' "large followings", "largely utilized for warlike purposes"<sup>4</sup> were fed by these means, as were the large numbers, slaves or otherwise, who were responsible for the welfare of the

1. Eji, later exiled. See Appendix, p.332.
2. Carnegie, p.66. Some corroboration is perhaps provided by an observer's remark in 1893, that food was cheap in Ilorin (Haddon-Smith, Notes on Ilorin. Also see Milum, p.36). The channelling of produce into Ilorin was not, however, done by forbidding markets in this area, as Ejidogari had a large market (Carnegie, p.83). See pp.284-86 below, on this topic.
3. See Chapter 1, p.65.
4. Colonial Reports Annual: Northern Nigeria 1900-1913 (London: 1900-1914), bound volume 1900-1911, pp.628-29. See also Hermon-Hodge, p.168, quoting Burnett.

numerous horses kept in the town.<sup>1</sup> In addition to their contributions in the form of foodstuffs, the population of the metropolitan districts could be used as a reserve from which recruits for the army might be obtained.<sup>2</sup> The armies, both fed and to some degree recruited from the metropolitan districts, could then produce further batches of captured slaves, whose sale in Ilorin would add to the wealth of the chiefs and their supporters, and to that of all those, including the middlemen, concerned with the marketing of slaves. Even for the farming population itself, despite slave or other dependent status and the costs of tribute and gifts to patrons, the system may be considered to have been functional at least; since they received, in a period of insecurity, a protected place to farm and a guaranteed if none too profitable market for their produce. Slaves, who were reportedly well treated,<sup>3</sup> and tenant farmers

1. On horses being kept in the town, see Carnegie, p.58; and Mustain, pp.91, 94-95; information from A.I. Alęsinloye. Baba Isale Compound, Ilorin, 29/8/82 on the number and types of personnel required to look after the horses; see Chapter 1, pp.54-55, on cavalry numbers in Ilorin.
2. Ganiyu, p.16. See also Shao Memorandum 1978, p.7, on Shao aid to Ilorin in the Offa War.
3. See pp.232-33 above.

may even have been slightly less badly off in the nineteenth century than they became in the colonial period; as in the twentieth century they had to face, additionally, the burden of taxation by the colonial government (though, it is reported, at the same period the tribute required by the fiefholders decreased)<sup>1</sup> and extra depredations from a whole new range of district officials.

#### THE PERIOD OF THE COLONIAL TAKEOVER.

Colonial rule in Ilorin began effectively in 1900, and the second section of this chapter examines a number of matters relating generally to its earlier years. These are the organisation of the areas under consideration into administrative districts; the changes, if any, in the situation of the slaves; and the further outmigration of farmers into these districts.

Ilorin Province was one of the first to adopt the district system,<sup>2</sup> and after various experiments, amalgamations and reseparations of territories, by about 1920 the

1. See p.264 below.

2. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.221, 228; Hermon-Hodge, p.164.

metropolitan districts had taken up their definitive shape.<sup>1</sup> Apart from Akanbi District, which partly encircles Ilorin Town, they radiate from the town like the "spokes of a wheel"<sup>2</sup> to the emirate boundaries. The British were concerned to abolish what they saw as the administratively unworkable scattered fiefdom system in the Fulani Emirates, and to appoint resident district heads, the better to oversee the collection of tax. The idea of district heads actually residing in their districts ran counter to the desires of the emirs, to whom it seemed not only a deprivation of "much of the pomp and circumstance" of their position and their capitals, but also to presage the independence of the district heads, who, the emirs thought, would act in direct relationship with the British officials.<sup>3</sup> The new system in Ilorin, of districts radiating from the town, with their headquarters in a number of cases relatively near the town<sup>4</sup> and therefore close to the emir's control, and with district heads not from the most important

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1. See NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.1, 817/1913 Elphinstone 22/4/13 para.14, 1821/1913 E.C. Duff 1/9/13 para.14. Also NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Emirate Reorganisation, various references. On Malete and Paiye, see NAK Ilorprof 4 199/1918, Malete District Assessment Report, para.2; Gegele, pp.47-48.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 437/1918, IPAR 1918, (in 1918 file) Report no. 79 for Quarter ending 31/12/1915, para.5; NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.4.
  3. Hermon-Hodge, p.165. See also p.225 above.
  4. See map 3, p.368.

chiefs themselves but from among their heirs,<sup>1</sup> seems to have represented something of a compromise between the desires of the British and the fears of the emir.<sup>2</sup>

The existence of many small and scattered fiefs led to problems for those who attempted to draw the boundaries of these districts, and to appoint their heads. It also led to problems for those who were so appointed:

Not all fiefholders could receive districts, and it was not easy to find chiefs who had held any really dominant traditional influence in any area large enough to be formed into a district. So that even when the greatest care had been taken in selecting District Headmen and allocating and defining the districts, there was inevitably a certain artificiality.

A newly appointed headman found himself in charge of a district in which there was no doubt a useful nucleus in a fief or fiefs of his own, but which included fiefs of other rival holders who resented the apparent loss of the full control they had previously exercised over them. At the same time, the new headman lost in other districts his former control of fiefs of his own. In effect, the new headmen were administrative officials whose powers and authority conflicted with the almost feudal order now being inevitably ousted. The present district of Akambi is a notable example of this: it comprises eight fiefs, none of which is even connected with the District Head. 3

The disappointed fiefholders, who received no districts of

1. See pp.244-46 below.

2. See eg. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Historical Notes on Afon District, para.5.

3. Hermon-Hodge, pp.165-66.

their own, might well join the ranks of the baba kekeres,<sup>1</sup> who caused continual troubles for the British in the Ilorin area.<sup>2</sup>

Efforts were made, in Ilorin, to allot districts to those who had "a useful nucleus in a fief or fiefs". The district of Malete, for example, went to its former fiefholder, the Basambo,<sup>3</sup> while Ejidogari was given to the Shiaba, who had been fiefholder over Ejidogari itself and a number of other villages in the new district, though there is perhaps some conflicting information over precisely how many.<sup>4</sup> Oloru District was given to the family of the Balogun Gambari, who already possessed a substantial fief in the area, with the general idea that the family member who became district head should be the "heir apparent"

1. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, Annual Report Ilorin Province 1921 no.92, 1344/29/1922, Resident to SNP Kaduna, 8/5/22; Lloyd, p.44.
2. On the twentieth century activities of the baba kekeres, see pp.282-83 below.
3. Appendix, p.329; NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.4; Hermon-Hodge, p.85; NAK SNP 17/2 25753, IPAR 1935, para.39; Gegele, pp.45-47.
4. Appendix, p.329; Hermon-Hodge, p.86; Ganiyu, pp.9-10, 17; NAK Ilorprof ACC 62 Ejidogari District Note Book. For possibly conflicting information, compare Appendix, pp.332-33 and Ganiyu.

to the Balogun.<sup>1</sup> The Sarkin Gambari, having a fief or fiefs in Igporin District, became its district head.<sup>2</sup> Magaji Ojuekun, holder of a substantial fief in the area, became Onire's district head.<sup>2</sup> The Balogun Ajikobi family received the headship of Paiye, their former fief, again apparently with the idea that the district head should be the successor to the family title.<sup>4</sup> With the same idea, the Balogun Fulani family received the headship of Afon, in which area the titleholder had been baba kekere to many landholders.<sup>5</sup> In none of these cases, however, does the

1. NAK SNP 10/8 3p/1920, IPAR 1919, para.23; NAK ILOrprof 4D 411/1922, Oloru 1924, NA.Staff; Hermon-Hodge, pp.81, 92; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para. 43; NAK Ilorprof 2/1 acc. no 1 [formerly], Ilorin Division District Note Book 1944, Oloru; Gegele, pp. 44-45.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, note on DHs; NAK SNP 10/8 3p/1920, IPAR 1919, para.24; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.2, IPAR 1924, para.44; Hermon-Hodge, p. 87; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.12, IPARS 1938 and 1939, IPAR 1939, para.6; NAK Ilorprof 2/1 acc. no.1 [formerly] Ilorin Division DNB 1944.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Onire 1924; NAK Ilorprof ACC 80, Onire District Note Book; Yahaya, pp.11, 13.
4. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.5; Appendix, p.329; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, note on DHs; NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, Ilorin Town General Notes on by G.R. Osborn, 1928; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARS 1940-51, IPAR 1944, Part 1 General Survey; NAK Ilorprof ACC 86, Paiye District Note Book; Gegele, pp.48-49.
5. See pp.210, 212, 214, 229 above.

succession ruling seem to have been very generally applied.<sup>1</sup>

Owode (Bala) District was originally headed by the Ajia Ijesha. He, and Balogun Alanamu, had been the major figures in the area; having been charged with driving away the Ogbomosho men, they resettled it with their own followers.<sup>2</sup> Balogun Alanamu Inakoju lost his farms on being deposed<sup>3</sup> and so the district was given to the Ajia. In 1931, however, he too was deposed (as district head), and since that time the district has been headed by a brother of the then emir.<sup>4</sup> Two other districts, Akanbi and Lanwa, also found their way into the hands of the emirs. In the case of Akanbi, no large fief existed and a number of

1. NAK SNP 10/3 170p 1915, IPAR 1914, para.11; NAK Ilorprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Report Afon District Ilorin Province 1918, para.75; NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, General Notes Osborn; Hermon-Hodge, pp.81, 96; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, para.15; NAK CSO 26/2 12687 vol.7, IPAR 1929, paras.27, 28; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Historical Notes on Afon District, para.6; NAK Ilorprof ACC 57, Afon District Note Book; Yahaya, pp.34-35.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode 1913, paras.2-5.
3. See p.224 above.
4. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.12; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, note on DHs; Hermon-Hodge, p.203; NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, General Notes Osborn, Genealogies Emirs; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.43; NAK Ilorprof 2/1 acc. no. 1 [formerly], Ilorin Division DNB 1944; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Historical Notes on Afon District, para.6; Yahaya, pp.33-34.



expedients had previously and unsuccessfully been tried.<sup>1</sup> The acquisition of these districts by the emirs' family reflects the strengthening of the political power of the emirs under British rule, and illustrates the strengthening of their economic power. In the cases of Lanwa and Owode, it also supports the suggestion that Adenlolu and the Ajia Ijesha had been agents rather than fully-fledged fiefholders.<sup>2</sup> Appointments to these three districts seem to have been by way of preparation of sons of the reigning emir for eventual succession to the throne, as with the appointments of Momodu Woru, Umoru and Abdul-kadiri to Lanwa District;<sup>3</sup> alternatively, appointments compensated (or removed to a safe distance) unsuccessful candidates for the throne or their descendants. The descendants of Alege, defeated in his efforts to succeed Emir Moma in 1895, became district heads of Akanbi.<sup>4</sup>

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 863/1912, Akambi District Ilorin Province Assessment Report by Mr. Budgen 1912, Historical.
  2. See p.222 above, for Adenlolu. Also NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, 6569/vol.2/294, Michie to Perm. Sec. Min. Local Govt., 18/8/55, para.6: "Lanwa District was never divided into fiefs but was retained by the Emirs of Ilorin as their personal property. Since the British occupation the District Head has therefore always been a close relative of the Emir".
  3. Hermon-Hodge, pp.81, 82-84. "Eventual" succession because, under the old system, a member of the alternate house would be expected to be the immediate successor.
  4. Hermon-Hodge, pp.73, 84; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 298-99; NAK Ilorprof 2/1 acc. no.1 [formerly], Ilorin Division DNB 1944.

Mohamadu Laofe became district head of Lanwa in 1920 after his younger brother Abdulkadiri had become emir.<sup>1</sup> Later, the eldest son of Emir Abdulkadiri was appointed district head of Lanwa, after the son of Mohamadu Laofe succeeded as emir.<sup>2</sup>

Smaller fiefholders, sub-fiefholders, agents, relatives or followers of fiefholders, important tenants and early settlers became village (area) heads, with the title of bale or magaji, within the various metropolitan districts. It was said, for example, that the village head might be "either related to, or granted subsidiary rights by, the original fiefholder".<sup>3</sup> The descendants of Adenlolu, agent of the emir in Lanwa, became magajis of Lanwa Village Area.<sup>4</sup> Adigbongbo Village Area in Onire District was administered by a son of the fiefholder and district head, Magaji Ojuekun,

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 28/1920, Lanwa District Touring Notes 1916-20, 51/1920, Ag. Resident to SNP Kaduna, 5/1/20, paras. 1-2; Hermon-Hodge, p.84.
2. Ganiyu interviewed Alh. Aliyu Abdulkadiri, DH Lanwa and son of the previous emir, in Oct. 1981 (p.5 and note). Also see Busari Ajani Alade, "The Effect of Kwara State Local Government Reforms on Ilorin Division" (B.Sc. (Soc. Sc.) dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, 1973), pp.71-72.
3. See p.268 below.
4. Olokoba v. Magaji Lanwa, plaintiff's witness 1 and defendant's witness 1; Ganiyu, pp.34-35.

except for Elebu, which was administered by a follower of the fiefholder.<sup>1</sup> The descendants of Lawani Giwa, a follower of Balogun Ajikobi and given land by him, became village area heads of that land in Onire District.<sup>2</sup> The family of Momodu, "factor" or follower of Magaji Gari the fiefholder, and said to be the first settler in Afon, provided the bales of that area.<sup>3</sup> The Ilorin families which are said to have obtained lands from the emirs in various parts of what became Lanwa District, provided magajis for these lands.<sup>4</sup> The families of what are said to have been important early settlers from Ilorin provided the bales of Owode,<sup>5</sup> and of Sapati in Afon District.<sup>6</sup>

Even before they had begun to solve the problems attendant on the organisation of districts, the British officials had

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 136/1927, Onire 1927, paras.22, 23. On the exact family relationship of the VH Adigbongbo to Magaji Ojuekun, contrast NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913, para.7.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Onire 1924, notes on Budo Odde V.A.
  3. NAK Ilorprof ACC 57, Afon DNB; Yahaya, p.13. See also p.227 above.
  4. Ganiyu, p.6.
  5. Yahaya, p.12.
  6. Ibid., p.14.

been obliged to consider the question of the slaves. On the defeat of Ilorin by the Royal Niger Company in 1897, many Hausa slaves in Ilorin had seized the opportunity to flee from the town.<sup>1</sup> Some slaves went to the north<sup>2</sup> but some reached only as far as Lanwa District.<sup>3</sup> The exodus of slaves, it is said, caused some farms to be "spoilt",<sup>4</sup> especially, perhaps, in the period when work could easily be obtained in the construction of the railway line.<sup>5</sup> In 1900, the first Resident had to enquire into and settle many slavery questions at Ilorin;<sup>6</sup> in 1904, however, Dwyer his successor was reporting that few slaves had been liberated in Ilorin Province, and of these only one case referred to Ilorin, the rest having come down with the caravans, and that "as to .... slaves running away, I had

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1. Seymour Vandeleur, Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger (London, Methuen & Co., 1898), p.293. See also PRO CO 147/124, Report by Sir George Goldie on the Niger Sudan Campaign, 1897, 6/3/97, Extract from letter received 20/2/97 from Emir of Ilorin.
  2. Interview conducted by Otolirin Adesiyun with Alfa Salimonu, Pakata Isale-Oja, 14/7/75.
  3. Carnegie, p.38; NAK SNP 7/13 3096/1912, Ilorin Division Lanwa District Reassessment Report by R. Scott Chapman, para.18.
  4. See Chapter 3, p.131.
  5. See RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Report for Jan/March 1908 on progress of the railway line; also NAK SNP 7/13 3096/1913, Lanwa Chapman 1912, para.18 on Hausa in the areas close to the railway.
  6. Carnegie, p.110.

only five complaints during the year and in each case they were women who had gone off with some man".<sup>1</sup> In 1905-1906 only three slaves were liberated, and none at all in 1907-1908.<sup>2</sup> While these figures are by no means conclusive, taken as evidence,<sup>3</sup> it is likely that the vast majority of the slaves remained, in and around Ilorin, especially when the policy of the British officials is taken into account. Their dilemma is neatly summarised by the author of the 1908 Military Report, when he admitted "the anomaly under which the law of the Protectorate admits the right of every human creature to assert his freedom, while the executive desires not to interfere with the only existing form of labour contract, or to overturn the social system".<sup>4</sup> In 1905,

1. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.
2. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.402, 628.
3. Polly Hill believes that such figures are of little interest, "since most slaves continued to be ransomed or manumitted outside the courts" (Polly Hill, "From Slavery to Freedom: the Case of Farm-Slavery in Nigerian Hausaland", Comparative Studies in Society and History 18 (1976), 409). There may, however, be some interest in a comparison of the Ilorin figures given in the text with figures for elsewhere; in the first quarter of 1906 alone, there were 40 cases of redemption or ransom through the native court in Zaria (Nigeria Colony, Report of the Native Courts (Northern Provinces) Commission of Inquiry, Sessional Paper no.1 of 1952 (Lagos: Government Printer, 1952), p.11).
4. General Staff, War Office, Military Report on Northern Nigeria, vol.1 (General) (London: H.M.S.O., 1908), p.106.

Lugard empowered the political officers of Northern Nigeria to refuse employment, asylum and even liberation papers to slaves wherever they felt that there was a wholesale movement of domestic slaves. The political officers were even said to be dealing with fugitive slaves as vagrants to be sent back to their masters.<sup>1</sup> Dwyer, indeed, in Ilorin, may have been thinking along these lines even earlier, since he referred in 1904 to dealing with "complaints" of slaves running away.<sup>2</sup> Certainly he had no sympathy for ideas of mass liberation:

There are, of course, a large number of domestic or farm slaves in the Province, who are both happy and contented and who are useful members of the community ....

It would be a bad day for the Province if the Government insisted on the slave accepting that freedom he does not ask for .... The farmers could not pay for sufficient hired labour to keep the Province in its present flourishing condition and the markets would suffer severely. Again, if these slaves, and I greatly object to such an appellation, were forced to be free, the old master would not be likely to feed and house them and they would have to shift for themselves. There would then be a great danger of them turning into highway robbers, as was the case when I took over the Province in 1900 ....

It would be an astonishing revelation to

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1. Oroge, p.142, citing PRO CO 520/95, Minute Paper, Slavery in Northern Nigeria, 1910.
  2. The early Ilorin Province Residents may in fact have been instrumental, through their reports, in helping to shape official policy on this matter, as they were in terms of other policy areas (for which see Robert Wilfred Hannah, "The Origins of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria, 1890-1904" (Ph.D. thesis, Michigan State University, 1969).

the people at home who get hysterical over the degrading effects of slavery to visit Ilorin and see for themselves the well fed, well dressed happy men and women who live in this "degrading" condition. 1

Given the views quoted above, it seems unlikely that any large number of the slaves were allowed to run away from Ilorin and its surrounding districts. In any case, for those who had been enslaved as children, or for several generations, and knew no other home than Ilorin, there was nowhere to run to. And while they stayed on the lands, which were owned or controlled by the Ilorin elite, they remained obligated to that elite.<sup>2</sup>

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1. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1904.
  2. This is similar to the situation described by Mason in Bida (Michael Mason, "Captive and Client Labour and the Economy of the Bida Emirate: 1857-1901", Journal of African History 14 (1973), 471).  
 In central Hausaland, however, except for Zaria, it is said to be more likely that "the ex-slaves owned by private Hausa farmers became wholly detached from their former masters, neither rendering them any special services nor occupying their land" (Hill, "Slavery to Freedom", pp.413-414).  
 In both Nupe and Ilorin the fiefholding system and the payment of tribute (zakka in Nupe, isakole in Ilorin) continued right through the colonial period. On Nupe, see Dirk Kohnert, "Rural Class Differentiation in Nigeria -- Theory and Practice", Afrika Spectrum (Hamburg) 14 (1979), 303-306; E.O. Adeniyi, "Land Tenure as a Socio-Cultural factor in Rural Development in the Middle Belt of Nigeria", in Rural Development in Nigeria: Proceedings of the 1972 Annual Conference of the Nigerian Economic Society (Ibadan: Nigerian Economic Society, 1973), p.291.  
 For other similarities between Nupe and Ilorin, see p.263 below, note 2.

In the early years of colonial rule, then, a new system of administration, though with important elements of continuity, was set up. The colonial government also considered the position of the slaves, but in Ilorin in this matter continuity was the order of the day. Some of the slaves, however, did experience change, but in the form of relocation, as a renewed out-flow of farmers from Ilorin Town took place, in the years immediately preceding the colonial period, and during its first thirty or so years.<sup>1</sup>

During this period, the opening up of "new" lands (that is, lands unoccupied at the time, or sparsely populated) for farming was going on largely in the (more remote) districts to the north west of Ilorin Town. Other areas had been more thoroughly settled or resettled from Ilorin at a somewhat earlier time. Owode District, for example, to the south west of Ilorin Town, was described by 1913 as "long settled" by Ilorin farmers.<sup>2</sup> In neighbouring Onire, by the turn of the century, farmers had already taken up land "to a considerable distance" from Ilorin Town.<sup>3</sup> In what became

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1. This flow of settlement, for the period following the establishment of colonial rule, was first noted by R.J. Gavin, "The Impact of Colonial Rule on the Ilorin Economy 1897-1930", Centrepoint 1 (Oct. 1977), 37-39.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode 1913, para.15.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913, Ojuyekun District, paras.3, 5.



Ejidogari District, on the other hand, the tide of settlement had not begun until the 1880s at the earliest.<sup>1</sup> In the north western districts generally, and especially in the north of Paiye District, new land was only being taken up around the year 1912.<sup>2</sup> In 1922, people from Ilorin were still arriving in Paiye, and as the land in more thickly populated areas became worked out, farmers were pushing out further to the sparsely populated areas. People were "sending out either their sons or domestic slaves and in some cases coming out themselves to farm".<sup>3</sup> In Malete, in the following year, it was said that a considerable number of people had just come out from Ilorin Town.<sup>4</sup>

A second aspect, or second stage, of this migration was the transformation of temporary farming camps into more permanent settlements. As would be expected, this got underway earlier in the more southerly districts than in the north west. Bala, for example, in Owode District, had been founded originally as a farming camp, occupied only during the farming season, but gradually people built themselves

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1. Although it had not been completely uninhabited before. See pp.214-15 above.
  2. NAK SNP 7/13 5552, NW District, para.13.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, para.7(a).
  4. NAK Ilorprof 411 E/1922, Malete District Revision of Village Registers 1923-1926, Report by A.E. Cadell, 1923, para.6.

permanent houses and began to stay all year.<sup>1</sup> This must have happened at a relatively early date, as by 1913 the district was being contrasted with those of "Oke Moro" to the north west, "in that the villages run to a considerable size. In fact they have become permanent homes to most of the people and good compounds and as in Bala a good mosque are built".<sup>2</sup>

In the more northerly districts there were certainly some examples of relatively large and apparently permanent settlements before the beginning of the colonial period.<sup>3</sup> In much of the area, however, permanent settlement was only achieved later. In 1912, it was said of the farmers of the north western districts that in former times they had resided mainly in Ilorin Town, spending only a few days on their farm for cultivation or harvesting purposes. After the British occupation they began to leave "the shelter of the town" and live permanently in their farm hamlets.<sup>4</sup> Even then, as another account of the same year observes, many

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1. Personal communication from Susan Watts, Geography Department, University of Ilorin.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode 1913, paras.15, 16.
  3. See eg. Milum, p.34 and Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, p.181 (Igorin District); Carnegie, pp.67 (Ejidogari village) and 68.
  4. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.13.

farmers were still not permanently based on their farms:

They farm for the most part in the districts to the West known as Oke Imoru, their habit being to spend 3-10 days on the farms according to distance from Ilorin, returning to town for 3-4. On return they sell their produce in the markets near the Western Gates -- Pakata, Oloje, Gbane and Ondoko .... Land in the immediate neighbourhood of the town is said to be exhausted and <sup>1</sup> surprisingly little of it is farmed.

The same reporter, however, notes ruined houses, and "the repute that the inhabitants lived much more closely than now",<sup>2</sup> which may well be an indication that many farmers, other than those referred to above, had moved permanently out of the town. And even from the account quoted above, it is clear that farmers were farming further out than before, and that they were spending less time in the town, coming in largely for marketing purposes, and soon going back to their farms.

The reference to farmers leaving "the shelter of the town" after the beginning of the colonial period suggests that it was now safer for them to do so. This was certainly a factor in the movement of farmers out of fortified settlements in emirates further north,<sup>3</sup> and played its part with

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.25.

2. Ibid., para.21.

3. Joseph P. Smaldone, Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1977), pp.153-54.

respect to Ilorin also.<sup>1</sup> The exhaustion of the land in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, referred to in 1912, indicates a pre-colonial reluctance on the part of the farmers or their masters, due no doubt to considerations of safety, to leave its immediate environs. But on the other hand (and also despite any pre-colonial fears on the part of the elite of the "tendency of distant settlements to assert their independence"),<sup>2</sup> it may be noted that the beginning of the flow of settlement even out to Ejidogari District seems to have preceded the establishment of colonial rule,<sup>3</sup> and that the process of settlement in Owode went on through the Offa War.<sup>4</sup> In addition, a large number of ruined houses in the northern part of Ilorin Town was noticed as early as 1893,<sup>5</sup> also perhaps an indication of out-movement of farmers prior to the beginning of colonial rule. By the 1890s, the Ejidogari area may well have been one of relative security, compared with the lands to the

1. Interview with His Highness Alh. Sulu Gambari, Emir of Ilorin, 8/12/82.
2. As suggested by Gavin, "Impact", p.38.
3. See pp.254-55 above. Ejidogari village itself was said to be a large settlement by 1900. Carnegie, p.67.
4. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode 1913, paras. 3, 6.
5. Haddon-Smith, 22/2/93, and Notes on Ilorin, although he suggests that it is due to the number of people absent from the town, at Offa Camp.

south and east of the town,<sup>1</sup> and this may have lent impetus to the flow of settlement there; a further important factor, however, may already have been the exhaustion of land around the town.

Other factors, leading to the continued out-movement of farmers, operated in the years following the establishment of colonial rule. In 1907-1908, for example, it was reported that one result of the appointment of resident district heads had been the movement of considerable numbers of their followers out to the farms; and also that since they no longer needed the protection of powerful chiefs, "voluntary serfs" were leaving their protectors and taking up unoccupied land for farming.<sup>2</sup> It is likely, however, that this movement was encouraged or even directed by the chiefs,<sup>3</sup> since they no longer needed large followings for war,<sup>4</sup> and since their income from slave sales, which previously had aided in the support of these followings, was no longer forthcoming.<sup>5</sup>

1. See pp.211-12 above, on lack of safety in what became Afon District.

2. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.627-28; Hermon-Hodge, p.164.

The reference to "voluntary serfs" is interesting. The various types and degrees of dependency found in and around Ilorin and mentioned above will be investigated in more detail in a future paper on the "dependency continuum".

3. See p.255 above.

4. Colonial Reports 1900-1911, pp.628-29.

5. Emir Sulu Gambari (interview 8/12/82) agreed that people were sent out to farm because families in the town could no longer "afford to feed them".

Movement out to the farmlands was still going on years later. A "back to the land" movement to the western districts was mentioned as late as 1930.<sup>1</sup> Further factors leading to the movement continued to arise. In the early 1920s it was reported that conditions were hard for traders in Ilorin Town who had therefore come out to farm;<sup>2</sup> and in 1926 the Resident was reporting a tendency on the part of small traders in Ilorin, faced with the competition of rivals coming with the lorry trade from the south, to transfer their attention to petty trade in the districts, of which Lanwa was singled out.<sup>3</sup>

Even when large-scale movement from Ilorin Town had ceased, or was no longer reported, movement within and even beyond the metropolitan districts continued. Land exhaustion, by 1929, had driven residents of Afon District to move further from Ilorin Town, to the more southerly areas of the district, to find more fertile land.<sup>4</sup> Sosoki, in Onire District, became a springboard for migration further west,

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1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.8, IPAR 1930, paras. 25, 58; see also vol.6, IPAR 1928, paras.21, 53.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, para.7(a); NAK Ilorprof 411 E/1922, Malete 1923, para.6.
  3. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1925, 306/1926/35, Resident to SNP Kaduna, 25/3/27, replying to comment by Lt. Governor, re para.48.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, para.2.

including across the border into northern Oyo Province of Southern Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> Some families have moved several times, like that of Alhaji Babatunde Elias, a present-day representative of a group which left Ibagun Sub-Ward (a common source area for migration to Oyo Province)<sup>2</sup> and in their third move crossed the Southern Nigeria border into northern Oyo.<sup>3</sup> Movement across the Southern Nigeria border, to the west of Ilorin, had begun as early as 1912<sup>4</sup> and it was suggested then that one reason might be a desire to escape from direct taxation.<sup>5</sup> Later, in a period of general economic depression, emigration to the Southern Provinces from the north western districts was attributed to the lower tax rate incidence across the border.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Susan Watts, "Patterns of Rural-Rural Mobility in Central Kwara State, Nigeria", Liverpool Papers in Human Geography: a Working Paper of the Dept. of Geography, University of Liverpool, pp.2-3.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, General Notes Osborn.
  3. Information from Toyin Hassan, following interviews with Alh. Babatunde Elias of Ile Tuntun, Okelele, Ilorin, and Oruola Keji in Oyo L.G.A. Received 11/11/80 and 30/1/81.
  4. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.13.
  5. Ibid., 828/1910, Elphinstone 22/4/13, para.18, in reply to Lt. Governor's comments. See also NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, IPAR 1921, Oniri.
  6. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.10, IPAR 1932, para.70.

Other factors, apart from taxation, may also have been operating to encourage this movement across the border. Not all of those settled in the metropolitan districts since the beginning of colonial rule had been slaves or other dependants, their movement out of Ilorin orchestrated by their masters;<sup>1</sup> but for those who were, emigration across the border may have seemed to offer a chance of independence. In other cases, however, their movement may have simply been a continuation of previous movements, in the same direction, and into areas which, although cut off from Ilorin by boundary settlements, were still regarded as Ilorin fiefs. In these cases, no such independence may have been either considered or attained: in 1915, for example, it was pointed out that "the people living over the [Southern Nigeria] border still regard themselves as people of Ilorin, and as part of the following of the Ilorin Balogun from whose ward they emigrated. They return to Ilorin for any occasion".<sup>2</sup> Any movement in their direction would have been seen as simply rejoining one's fellows across the boundary line.<sup>3</sup>

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1. There is no evidence of directed migration of dependent status with regard to Alh. B. Elias and his family (information from Toyin Hassan, 11/11/80 and 30/1/81).

2. NAK Ilorprof 4/1 72p/1916, IPAR no.79, 1915, para.5.

3. See eg. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.10, IPAR 1932, para.70: "the Southern Provinces towns [near the north western districts] were originally founded by Ilorin men and consequently the boundary must appear somewhat arbitrary to the native mind".

An example of lands cut off from Ilorin were those of the Ojuekun lands which, since a boundary settlement of 1906, had been across the border from Onire District (NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913, para.6).



## THE COLONIAL PERIOD AS A WHOLE .

In the third section of this chapter, an examination will be made of the metropolitan districts, of the fate of their residents and their landholders and controllers, during the colonial period as a whole, with emphasis on the extent of their prosperity and development during this time.

The fiefholders of these districts continued to receive foodstuffs from their dependants farming in them. Sources cited above<sup>1</sup> indicate that some of the slaves, at least, had previously worked for their masters for half of each day. It seems likely that this system of production through half days' work was, in the early colonial period, commuted into a periodic remittance of produce; maybe this latter mode of slave utilisation had been common even earlier, as it had been the custom in nineteenth century Nupe, whose pattern of dependency relations has in other ways been quite similar to that of Ilorin.<sup>2</sup>

Tribute continued to be paid in the metropolitan districts.

1. See pp.232-33 above.

2. See Mason, "Captive and Client Labour", pp.465-66, on periodic remittance of produce. For other similarities see p.465 (produce destined for the capital and armies), and pp.466-67 (scattered fiefs). For similarities with respect to the fate of the slaves in the colonial period, see p.253 above, note 2.

although not by free tenants no longer farming on a particular fiefholder's land. In 1912, for example, due to land exhaustion, the farmers living in Idieme (where the agent was the Ajia Opele) in Afon District, moved to another man's land to farm: "they pay rent to him, but live in Idieme; nothing is given to the Ajia except [by] his slaves. When Idieme land is ready for farming again rent will be paid to the Ajia".<sup>1</sup> The unfortunate slaves, presumably, were paying both tribute to their master and rent for their new farms.

In the same 1912 account, some examples were given of the tribute paid in various parts of Afon District (see pp.265 - 66). The author of this report considered that the amounts paid in tribute were relatively small, commenting that "now that a general tax, that is, for transmission to the colonial government is collected from each individual, the landowners gain very little from their estates, except a few presents and a certain amount of recognition from their tenants",<sup>2</sup> and that the absentee landowner living in Ilorin "seems to care very little about his rents as long as enough food is brought in to supply him and his family. In old days, when a big following was kept up, this rent was looked into carefully. What they do care about is that they

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Case 8.

2. Ibid., para.25.

**Case 6** Land of Ero Aba

**Fiefholder: Mukpe**

**Tenants: Brimah and Sule**

**Each pay rent 1 load yams 1, load guinea corn**

**Case 20** Odo Ode Town and Lands

**Fiefholder: Ogude**

**Tenants: rent yearly**

**Abekpe 2 loads yams 2 loads guinea corn**

**Alanwa 2 " " 2 " " "**

**Budo OIla 1 " " 1 " " "**

**Egbola Oda 2 " " 2 " " "**

**Alatere 2 " " 2 " " "**

**Eyesela 2 " " 1 " " "**

**Case 22** Asakpa Lands

**Fiefholder: Belo**

**Tenant: Lawant pays yearly 4 " " 4 " " "**

**Case 23** Abuju Lands

**Fiefholder: Suman**

**Pays to Emtr yearly 5 " " 5 " " "**

Case 28

Okaka Lands

Fieldholder: Balogun Fulani Zuberu

Tenant: Taffa, rent yearly

4 loads yams 4 loads Guinea corn

Case 30

Lands of Ajagusi

Fieldholder: Oedele

Tenants: rent yearly

Mama Jima

4 " " 4 " " "

Abibu

4 " " 4 " " "

Amadu

2 " " 2 " " 1

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1. NAK Iloriprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon.

are recognised, at any rate in name, by their tenants, and that all matters of dispute, etc., are brought to them".<sup>1</sup> This opinion may gain support from comparison with another source, that is, if the estimate made in the same year, in Ejidogari, that 3 per cent of the produce of an average farmer came to 5 loads of yams, one load of guinea corn, and half a load of maize<sup>2</sup> is at all accurate. This is always assuming, of course, that in each case "load" refers to the accepted weight of a head-load.<sup>3</sup> The amounts of tribute cited, it may be noted, were those paid by free tenants; even if little was demanded from these people, more may have been expected from slaves.<sup>4</sup> The reference above to recognition in matters of dispute may indicate that tribute had been lessened only in a situation where it could be replaced by greater profits from court cases and other disputes. And in any case, the total tribute received would have been augmented by the amounts brought in by dependants newly sent out to the farms.

This system of isakole payments to fiefholders was still continuing in the 1950s, when it was discussed in the course

1. Hermon-Hodge, pp.168-69, quoting Burnett.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708 A/1912, Adjidungari, para. 3.
3. Which was about 56-58 lb. See eg. NAI CSO 26/2 vol.1, IPAR 1923, Current Prices Native Grown Articles; vol. 2, IPAR 1924.
4. A reason suggested by Polly Hill for the lack of details on slaves' payments is that the authors of the assessment reports were instructed to make no mention of farm slavery (Hill, "Slavery to Freedom", p.411).

of investigations conducted prior to local government reform. For Bala (Owode) and Afon Districts, in 1954, it was reported that the amount of produce paid in by the head of each extended family varied, but the average appeared to be 8 - 9 yams [perhaps between half a load and a load] and two bundles of guinea corn annually.<sup>1</sup> In the following year, for the rest of the metropolitan districts, it was reported that each farmer paid usually about 6 or 8 yams and a small bundle of guinea corn each year.<sup>2</sup> The author of this second report went on to describe the method of payment:

The vast majority of the Village Areas in the Metropolitan Districts comprise only one fiefhold, and the Isakole is usually paid to the Village Head, who is either related to, or granted subsidiary rights by, the original fief-holder. The Village Head then keeps a proportion, varying from a quarter to a half of the total contributions, for himself and his family, and sends the rest to the original fief-holder, who in many cases is in fact the District Head.<sup>3</sup>

The amounts mentioned here are even smaller than those of forty years before. Their accuracy, however, may be questionable, since in each case the investigating committee

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1. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.22.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.6.
  3. Ibid.

included members of the Ilorin elite with vested interests in the fiefholding system, and these may have wished to underestimate the amounts which were paid.<sup>1</sup> The suggestion of the reports' inaccuracy in this regard may be supported by the fact that they were clearly inaccurate in another respect, that is, in their assertion, no doubt encouraged by the fiefholding committee members, that isakole was voluntarily paid and not resented by those who paid it;<sup>2</sup> the inaccuracy of which was quickly revealed as the abolition of isakole was soon to become important in the policy of the I.T.P., the new political party which won overwhelming<sup>support</sup> among the poorer people both in the town and the districts, in the 1956 elections.<sup>3</sup>

Even if only a small amount was generally paid by farmers, it still may have caused them problems, when taken in combination with the many other payments they were obliged to make.<sup>4</sup> Also, in some areas, a farmer might have to pay

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1. For the composition of these committees, see *ibid.*, p. 10, and RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Reform in the Igbomina Area 1954, p.62.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.9; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.22.
  3. C.W. Whitaker, The Politics of Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp.143, 150. On the non-voluntary nature of such payments, see also Alade, pp.74-75.
  4. See pp.274-77, 279-84, 292 below.

isakole several times over. The author of the second report, having said that the vast majority of village areas consisted of only one fief, went on to point out some exceptions, notably in Akanbi and Igporin Districts, where "the land is split up into a large number of small holdings belonging to various minor title-holders in Ilorin. Here it sometimes happens that a prosperous farmer who expands onto new land pays Isakole to two, three or even more different fief-holders in Ilorin".<sup>1</sup>

However small the amount paid by the individual farmer, the total paid in to the fiefholders in Ilorin was clearly sizeable.<sup>2</sup> That isakole was still of importance to its recipients in the 1950s is confirmed by the "violent and unanimous opposition" of the members of the Ilorin N.A. Council (made up at that time of the Ilorin elite) to the suggestion made in 1954 that it might be abolished<sup>3</sup> and by the haste with which in 1958 they re-established the customary right of the district head of Malete "to collect a portion of his people's cash crops",<sup>4</sup> after isakole had

1. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC 30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.7.
2. NAK 17/1 NAC/30 vol.1, General Local Government Reform Ilorin Emirate, 6089/29, Resident to Perm. Sec. Ministry Local Govt., 27/5/54, para.9.
3. Ibid.
4. Whitaker, p.163.



briefly been abolished during the period of I.T.P. control.<sup>1</sup> Since the district head of Malete was also fiefholder of his entire district,<sup>2</sup> it is not clear whether he was claiming this right as district head or as fiefholder; and since it was a frequent occurrence for the district head to be either a fiefholder in his district or a member of the fiefholder's family, little distinction may have been made.

Isakole was also paid in other goods, apart from food-stuffs, and was also rendered as services both to fiefholders and to district heads.<sup>3</sup> Fulani families living in the Ogele area, for example, would send ropes as their tribute when the Are Ogele, descendant of the emir's agent on the

1. Provincial Annual Reports 1957 (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1959), Ilorin, para.23.
2. See p.244 above.
3. Two forms of isakole are described in this study: that is, payments, and also services, to fiefholders or district heads. A third meaning of the term also exists, and while it is not immediately relevant here, it should be mentioned in order to avoid any possible confusion. This third meaning, in contrast to the others, is described in NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30 vol.1, General Local Government [1954], 6089/29, para.9. The committee took note, states the author, that in the two metropolitan districts of Bala and Afon (the only ones which had been surveyed at the time) and in parts of Igbominaland colonised from Ilorin, isakole or annual tribute of farm produce was still paid by farmers to the ruling families in Ilorin whose fiefs these lands had been, whereas, in other parts of, for instance, Igbominaland, payment of isakole was, in contrast, an acknowledgement by a stranger of a village's right to the land he was allowed to farm.

The isakole reported by Susan Watts, for example, in parts of present-day Asa L.G.A., is clearly an example of this last-mentioned meaning of the term (Susan Watts, "patterns of Rural-Rural Mobility", p.6.

land, was building a new house.<sup>1</sup> An investigator in the early 1970s defined isakole as compulsory farm labour from each village to the district head.<sup>2</sup> Roofing grass was also brought as tribute, and the service of roofing performed for the fiefholder<sup>3</sup> and very probably also for the district head. A statement made in 1977 sums up the goods and services which were provided, and the bitterness with which their provision is remembered:<sup>4</sup>

1. Ogele v. Nuhu, plaintiff's evidence.
2. Alade, p.73.
3. Upper Area Court I/CVF 4/75, Mohammed Alao Galadima rep. by Alh. Ore Galadima (plaintiff) v. Sunmola Atiku Budo Gbagba family rep. by Atolagbe Fili (defendant), plaintiff's witness 1.
4. Despite the reference below to isakole being paid or rendered "up to the 1950s", it may not have completely disappeared even yet. B.A. Alade reported that compulsory (though not voluntary) gifts to district heads had ended in the 1960s (pp.74-76), but it is clear from more recent court case reports that tribute is still being paid, in some instances at least, to former fiefholders or agents (see eg. Galadima v. Gbagba, plaintiff's witness 4, defendant's witness 9; Ogele v. Nuhu, plaintiff, plaintiff's witnesses 1&2; Afon Area Court 1, sitting at Afon, suit 290/75, case 363/75, 9/6/75, Baba Agba Lawoyin (plaintiff) v. Alh. Jimoh and Apará (defendants), defendants' witnesses 2 & 3).

The final demise of tributary payments may perhaps be at hand: in 1982 it was reported that few of the farming dependants came into the Baba Isale Compound, Ilorin, for the festival of Id-El Kebir (they would normally have come in for the festival with farm produce), because having been given their own L.G.A.s (see p.201 above, note 2), they no longer wished to do so. Information from A.I. Alesinloye, Baba Isale Compound, 29/9 82 (second day of Id-El Kebir).

Up to the 1950s, our fathers were forced to carry on their bare heads thatched grasses from their respective villages, no matter how far, to Ilorin for the construction of the houses of one Balogun or the other in Ilorin.

We were compelled to contribute large portions of our farm products to feed the families of some overlords in Ilorin every year, it was then a question of these overlords reaping and feeding fat where they did not sow ....

All these maltreatments were made possible by the "foreign" district heads, who .... were the principal agents through which all these inhuman acts were being perpetrated. 1

Isakole in the form of goods or services was of benefit to both fiefholders and district heads. The district heads also profited from the people of the metropolitan districts in a number of other ways during the colonial period. In 1929, for example, activities of the district head of Afon were revealed, which led to his deposition and imprisonment in the same year. "Misdeeds" had been going on in his district, and the tax records were conveniently and dramatically stolen when the British assessing officer began to be suspicious. When the books were recovered, "considerable peculation" was found.<sup>2</sup> In 1931, the district heads of

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1. Nigerian Herald, 30/11/77, text of address given at a press conference by the Oke Moro and Oke Asa Development Union. See also Nigerian Herald, 4/1/78, letter from Salman Akande, A.B.U. Zaria.
  2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.6, IPAR 1928, 11294/53, SNP Kaduna to Chief Sec. Lagos, 16/12/29, quoting from Ilorin Province Handing Over Notes by T.C. Newton Resident, paras. 3 & 4; vol.7, IPAR 1929, paras. 27, 28, 70.

both Oloru and Owode were also removed, due to maladministration and "shady transactions in the handling of tax".<sup>1</sup>

It is not simply a story of profit for the district heads, but often, specifically, of profit at the expense of the metropolitan districts' people. When districts were set up in the early years of the colonial period, the heads appointed to them wasted no time in setting about the extraction of maximum profit from the people they controlled (in fact, since they were so frequently discovered and deposed, they may have come to feel that speed in extortion was essential). Much of what they gained was through taxation. In 1908, for example, the district head of Paiye was deposed for "illegal taxation", collecting "rent over and above what he was ordered to, and in three cases .... twice from the same village".<sup>2</sup> In 1912 in Akanbi it was reported that the Balogun Alanamu, whose head slave was district head

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.43.
2. RH Mss. Afr. s.958, Dwyer, Annual Report 1908. The word "rent" is used twice by Dwyer in this passage, but it seems clear from the context that what is meant is not isakole but government tax. Certainly both were paid. See eg. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3766, Lanwa 1912/13, Nana v. Yusufu, 3/7/13. Nana, the plaintiff, wished her slave Abdulahi to reside at her farm at Okemi (granted by the court) and to collect A. government taxes (not allowed) and B. her own dues (allowed). (The plaintiff was not allowed to collect government taxes because these were already collected by the district head or his representative). It is also clear from the metropolitan districts local government reports of 1954-55 that both isakole and government tax were paid.

at the time, had until the year before been making "additional demands beyond the annual tribute".<sup>1</sup> In 1922 the district head of Iqporin, the Sarkin Gambari, was deposed for "illegal exactions during tax collection", of at least twenty-five per cent above the assessed amount.<sup>2</sup> In 1926 the Afon district head was likewise deposed, in part for having (at least) condoned an illegal levy of tax.<sup>3</sup> Afon appears to have been a particularly unpleasant district for its inhabitants: its next district head was almost immediately deposed as well,<sup>4</sup> and another was suspended in 1957, it would seem for "oppression or victimisation".<sup>5</sup>

It was not only the overall amount of tax collected from them that caused problems for the people, but also the manner of its division. In Owode in 1919 it was found that the tax had not been equitably divided among the hamlets, the incidence in one area varying from 2/- to 30/- per adult male.<sup>6</sup> Much the same range of incidence was noted in Lanwa District, with the observation that, despite this

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 863/1912, Akambi 1912, Historical. In this case, "tribute" refers to government tax.
2. NAK SNP 9/9 300/1922, IPAR 1922, para.28.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 123/1926, Ainde (Daudu) District Head of Afon Deposition of 1926.
4. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, Knott to DO Emirate, 25/9/29.
5. Whitaker, pp.149, 162.
6. NAK Ilorprof 4 270/1918, Owode Revision 1918-1919, 20/4/19, para.4.

range, there was no marked difference in wealth among the hamlets.<sup>1</sup> In Akanbi in 1922 the district head's own area was reported to be more leniently treated than the others,<sup>2</sup> thus perhaps leaving these others to pay more than their share. And in Igporin in the following year it was explained that a bale, in apportioning the tax, was "naturally less fearful of grinding the faces of the poor than of incurring the hostility of his leading citizens".<sup>3</sup>

It was not through tax collection alone that opportunities of enrichment arose for the district heads. In 1912 the district head of Lanwa was reported to have taken bribes, and indeed to have taken money from the people at every opportunity.<sup>4</sup> In the same year the Basambo, both fiefholder and district (then village) head of Malete, was found to be touring his territory with a following of six horsemen and a number of others, all of whom expected free entertainment from the villagers en route. He was reminded that as soon as his staff became salaried, such an activity would be

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1. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 28/1920, Lanwa DTN 1916-20, Budgen to Resident 10/4/19, paras. 5, 6.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 164/1917, Akambi 1918-22, Notes by Priestman, 12/11/22.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Igporin DTN 1923, D. Method of Collection, 3.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3766, Lanwa 1912/13, C.S. Burnett, Lanwa Lands, 9/7/13, para.4.

treated as an act of extortion.<sup>1</sup> Yet his family does not seem to have taken this to heart, since in 1926 his successor was seen with a following of four hundred men, during a boundary dispute.<sup>2</sup> In 1926 also, not only was the district head of Afon involved in illegal taxation, but he had also demolished villagers' homes without compensation, offered a bribe, and forced at least one village head to give him a portion of his salary.<sup>3</sup>

All these depredations were not allowed to pass by without any reaction on the people's part. Though their opportunities for reaction were limited, they were not entirely inert. When in 1913 the district head of Onire was said to have abused his position (in some unspecified manner), the farmers took the opportunity of that year's riots in Ilorin Town to burn and plunder his village.<sup>4</sup> On another occasion, the district heads of both Paiye and Malete received collections of items designed to symbolise the feelings and intentions of the people towards them.<sup>5</sup> In

1. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.40.
2. NAK Ilorprof 411E/1922, Malete 1923, E.C. Pickwood 12/8/26.
3. NAK Ilorprof 4 123/1926, DH Afon Deposition 1926.
4. Although this was organised at least in part by the Magaji Ojuekun, since the DH, although a member of the Ojuekun family, had ceased to support its interests. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3631, Onire 1913, paras.7, 9, 10, 11.
5. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye District Touring Notes 1930- [52], Minute to Resident 14/5/31, and Minute to DOE 16/6/31. Again, in the case of Paiye District, there is a suggestion of orchestration from one of the DH's brothers in Ilorin, but there is also evidence of the people having reason for wishing the DH ill.

the case of Owode and Oloru Districts, many people moved away due to the unpopularity of the district heads.<sup>1</sup>

The removal of the district head mentioned above from Oloru District does not appear to have much changed the situation there. In 1933, when asked by the political officer charged with making a survey, neither the district head of the time nor any of his followers were able to price any article for sale in the market, the refusal to give this information being a negative but clear reaction on the part of the people, which the Resident rightly took to betoken a "complete lack of confidence" between the people and their district head.<sup>2</sup> Later, in Oloru again, the district head was challenged by inhabitants of his district over matters of taxation.<sup>3</sup>

The major families of Ilorin Town profited not only by appointments to district headships but also by appointments to posts at all levels of the N.A., both in the town and the districts.<sup>4</sup> An educated member of such a family would

1. Gegele, p.44; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.9, IPAR 1931, para.43.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 2198/1933, Oloru Revision 1933, G.M. Paterson to DOE Sep. 1933, and marginal note by [?] F. de F. Daniel Resident.
3. Gegele, p.54, and his informants.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, General Notes Osborn, Genealogies. At least in some cases, information was added to these genealogies after 1928.



move up through the administrative (and judicial) levels over the years<sup>1</sup> and a district head would tend to surround himself with family members as junior district personnel, family members who might eventually follow the same upward route as himself.<sup>2</sup> For the more junior district personnel as well as for their seniors, remuneration need not be confined to their official salary, though their unofficial earnings must often have had to be shared with the district head.<sup>3</sup>

N.A. personnel in the districts included those involved in judicial affairs. The district heads themselves possessed or assumed considerable judicial powers<sup>4</sup> and could profit through receipt of bribes in judicial affairs.<sup>5</sup> Other judicial personnel included the alkalís, who also frequently

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1. NAK Ilorprof 2/1 acc. no.1 [formerly], Ilorin Division DNB, DH Afon.
  2. See eg. *ibid.*, Afon. This was still occurring as late as the early 1970s. See Alade, pp.45-46.
  3. As presumably happened in the case of Ainde, DH Afon. NAK Ilorprof 4 123/1926, DH Afon Deposition 1926.
  4. Alade, p.53.
  5. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 271/1918, Ejidogari District Notes 1918-23, B.R. Lawrence to Resident, 26/6/29, case v. DH Ejidogari, para.3.

augmented their earnings through bribery and embezzlement of court fees.<sup>1</sup>

Extortion from the metropolitan districts' people, and harassment of them in addition, was carried on by other officials as well. Messengers of the district head (onise qba) charged fees before they would deliver any message. According to information collected in the early 1970s, but referring to an earlier period, the amounts charged had been exorbitant: 5/- for an individual, 20/- to 30/- for a message to a village as a whole.<sup>2</sup> These amounts may be compared with the cash which the metropolitan districts people might be able to acquire; even if they could obtain such work, their pay as labourers in Ilorin in 1956 would have amounted to only 2/- to 3/- per day.<sup>3</sup>

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1926, para.39 on Onire; vol.8, IPAR 1930, para.31 on Owode; vol.6, IPAR 1928, para.43 on Oloru; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Knott to DOE 7/8/30, para.2 on Paiye & Malete. This was, of course, not confined to the districts, but also frequently occurred in the town. See eg. NAK SNP 10/9 119p 1921, Ilorin Province Report for 15 Months ending 31st March 1921, paras.33, 34; NAK SNP 17/2 10315 vol.1, Ilorin Province District Heads and N.A. Officials Appointments, Dismissals, etc. D 1648/38, J.P. Smith Resident to SNP Kaduna, 23/10/40, Yusufu Chief Alkali Dismissal of, paras.2, 3.
2. Alade, pp.85-86. See also p.272 above, note 4. Compare the similar situation mentioned in NAK SNP 10/5 139p/1917, IPAR 1916, para.29. See also Mockler-Ferryman, Up the Niger, pp.217-18, on the pre-colonial period.
3. Provincial Annual Reports 1956 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1958), Ilorin, para.81, Labour Office Report.

Market staff charged a 3d gate fee, which had to be paid before a seller was allowed to enter the market. Those with no cash at the beginning of the day were prevented from entering and selling their produce. N.A. staff harassed and humiliated bicycle owners without current licences (the money for which was collected at a season when many could not afford to pay) and they would be taken to court and fined. Sanitary inspectors (wole-wole) could find a household insanitary, and this would also result in a fine (that is, presumably, unless a bribe had been paid instead, to prevent the case from being taken to court). Forest guards (wogi-wogi) could declare any tree igi-qba, that is, the emir's tree. Any farmer who had already tampered with such a tree could also be taken to court.<sup>1</sup> Harassment was not only for economic ends. In the 1957 elections, according to the Annual Report, the Ilorin elite had used the "whole N.A. machine", including police, courts and officials from the Forestry and Health Departments (presumably the forest

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1. On the paragraph thus far, see Alade, pp.85-87. One would be inclined to accept Alade's findings on these functionaries and their activities, since not only did the villagers interviewed by him agree that these practices had existed, but so did the councillors, who had been arbitrarily chosen and did not always act in the best interests of the villagers (Alade, pp.5-12, 77, 80-83. See also p.283 below on councillors acting as baba kekeres). Also some corroborative evidence is provided by colonial officers: see below.

guards and sanitary inspectors referred to above), to resist the developments associated with the rise of the I.T.P.<sup>1</sup> Even earlier, the "political odium" in which the majority of farmers in the metropolitan districts held the N.A. staff was already seriously affecting the chances of success of those N.A. employees who were engaged in agricultural extension work.<sup>2</sup>

Even those fiefholders and others who received no N.A. post in the districts could, quite apart from their isakole, still make a living from the people there by acting as their baba kekere. This go-between system, involving payments from clients to their patrons,<sup>3</sup> proved tenacious, particularly it would appear in matters connected with the courts. In 1925 for example it was reported that every effort had been made to eliminate the baba kekere, who claimed he must be bribed before he could appear before the court, but that the system was deep-seated among the people.<sup>4</sup> In 1947 and 1957 the system was still reported to be functioning in the courts.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Provincial Annual Reports 1958 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1959), Ilorin, para.10.

2. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.46.

3. Hermon-Hodge, p.169, quoting Burnett. See also below.

4. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.3, IPAR 1925, para.66.

5. NAK SNP 17/43493, IPAR 1947, paras.10-11; Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.40. See also Whitaker, pp.127-128.

The continued tenacity of the system to an even later date is illustrated by the tendency of the local councillors in the metropolitan districts, chosen by the then Military Government as a result of the 1968 local government reform, to take up the same baba kekere position towards the people they were supposed to represent. Each acted as intermediary between his people and the bureaucracy, for example where any court cases occurred. An observer was informed that a villager could not see the district head or go direct to court; he must first go through the local councillor, who could manipulate the situation to his own advantage.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1950s the I.T.P. aimed to abolish not only isakole and the baba kekere system, but also ar'oja, or market dues. This third institution provides a further example of the means by which the district heads and others profited at the expense of the metropolitan districts farmers. Apart from paying a market entrance fee,<sup>2</sup> the market seller was also obliged to surrender a portion of his produce to the baba oloja (market owner or father) who transmitted it, presumably after deducting his own share, to the district head. As with those paid out to messengers, the amounts which are said to have been given are large:

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1. Alade, pp.83-84. On choice of councillors, see p.281 above, note 1.

2. See p.281 above.

<u>Quantity for sale</u>	<u>Ar'oja</u>
3 - 6 yams	1 yam
9 - 12 "	2 yams
15 - 21 "	4 "
24 - 30 "	6 "
33 - 60 "	8 "
63 & over yams	10 "
3 - 5 measures of grains	$\frac{1}{2}$ measure
6 - 12 " " "	$1\frac{1}{2}$ measures
13 - 20 " " "	2 "
$\frac{1}{2}$ bag grains	4 "
1 " "	6 "
subsequent bags	2 " on each bag.

The proportion taken on women's commodities such as eko (a food made from maize) was similar to the above.<sup>1</sup> In a large market, such as that of Ejidogari, the quantities collected must have been considerable.<sup>2</sup>

In the mid 1950s, one of the signs of the breakdown of law and order in the metropolitan districts was the illegal opening of markets by the local people,<sup>3</sup> "illegal" because the right to open markets rested with the central N.A.<sup>4</sup> This

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1. Alade, pp.73-74.

2. On the numbers of sellers and quantities for sale in Ejidogari market, see Agboola, pp.132-33.

3. Whitaker, p.137.

4. For earlier recommendations that this power should be delegated to the district councils under the reformed local government system, see RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Recommendation 22; NAK 17/1 NAK/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, Recommendations 11 & 19.

question of the opening of markets had arisen before: as seen above, in 1900 it was said that the emir or his advisers did anything but encourage them, their policy being to cause all produce to come to Ilorin for sale.<sup>1</sup> The Ilorin elite, however, even if it had been its policy to do so, had not completely prevented the opening of markets in the districts, even in the pre-colonial period, since the same author in 1900 reports the existence of markets at both Malete and Ejidogari, the latter having an attendance of about 500 people.<sup>2</sup> Certainly in the twentieth century there has been no dearth of markets in the metropolitan districts.<sup>3</sup> A large market was reported at Odunbako, 15 miles to the north of Ilorin, in 1916<sup>4</sup> and numerous markets have been reported to be in existence in later years.<sup>5</sup> In the twentieth century, markets have been useful to the Ilorin elite, in the channelling of foodstuffs to the district heads and their followers and cash to their officials. Other methods have been found, and clearly had already been found as early as 1900, to ensure the arrival of food in Ilorin Town,

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1. See pp.238-39 above.

2. Carnegie, p.83.

3. The Ejidogari Report 1912 says there are not many markets in the district, but lists 7 (NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708A/1912).

4. NAK SNP 10/5 139p/1917, IPAR 1916, para.91.

5. Eg. Agboola, pp.130, 131 and figs. 38, 39.

and at a low price, other than a simple refusal to allow the opening of markets in the districts. The desires of the farming population in the 1950s to open markets may therefore be seen, not as a reaction against a lack of markets altogether, but against a system whereby all markets were established and controlled by the N.A. and market fees and ar'oja were compulsorily collected. Whitaker notes that "the peasants' understanding of political power and authority derived exclusively from their traditional forms and expressions, such as .... the ability to grant or withhold from a village the prerogative of opening a market";<sup>1</sup> but the people's action in opening illegal markets, while it was certainly a political and social statement, was a matter of economic concern to them as well.

That the channelling of much of their trade towards Ilorin was a non-voluntary matter is indicated by interference with the price paid to the metropolitan districts farmers for their produce. This interference was noted first in 1900, when the "king" of Ejidogari had complained of having to send all produce to Ilorin, instead of to Jebba, where the people would receive a higher price.<sup>2</sup> Interference with the price paid was visible again in 1912, as Gavin has noted,<sup>3</sup> when a British assessing officer

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1. Whitaker, p.518.

2. See p.239 above.

3. Gavin, "Impact", p.38.



remarked on the low (or non-) profitability of the food-stuffs trade of the "North West District"<sup>1</sup> with Ilorin, basing his opinion on the difference between local market prices and Ilorin prices, and transport costs.<sup>2</sup>

The channelling of trade in the direction of Ilorin Town, or at least the curtailing of trade with elsewhere, was achieved, at least in part, by the intervention of the Native Administration. If a lorry from the south, unauthorised by the N.A., arrived in the metropolitan districts wishing to trade directly in foodstuffs there, it could, it is said, be halted and turned back by the district head.<sup>3</sup> In 1928, presumably with the object of preventing such incursions, the emir opposed the construction of a road leading from Budo Egba (on the main road south to Ogbomosho) to Alapa in the west, explaining that the "Western Districts, which are the famine-reserve of Ilorin", would be denuded by middlemen exporting foodstuffs by lorry to Lagos;<sup>4</sup> but even where a motor road did run through the metropolitan

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1. A short-lived amalgamation of districts.
  2. NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, paras.32-34 and Table of Harvest Prices per Ton.
  3. Interview with Alh. Yekini A. Okunola (for this informant, see Bibliography, p.342), 16/12/82.
  4. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.5, IPAR 1927, para.23 and 393/1927/29, Hermon-Hodge Resident to SNP Kaduna, 20/4/28, re para.23.

districts, it might still remain unused by traders,<sup>1</sup> who would have been deterred by the prohibitions alleged above. The fear of famine expressed by the emir may have been quite real (it was shared both by the N.A. and the colonial officers),<sup>2</sup> but his desire to channel the trade may also have been due to a wish to protect the profits of local middlemen in Ilorin, as against those of southern traders who might wish to trade directly with the district people<sup>3</sup> and due also simply to a desire to reconfirm the subordinate position in which the Ilorin elite wished the district people to remain.<sup>4</sup>

The channelling of trade into the town was also assisted by the activities of these Ilorin middlemen (and women). Their activities were in addition a major reason for the low profitability of trade to the metropolitan districts producers. The middlemen operated both in the rural markets and in the markets in Ilorin Town, and like the baba kekere

1. NAK Ilorprof 5 2198/1933, Oloru 1933.
2. NAK SNP 10/6 137p/1918, IPAR 1917, para.61; NAK SNP 10/7 133p/1919, IPAR 1918, para.60; NAK Ilorprof 5 3582 Paiye 1947-50 [actually 1942-51], J.R. Bird, 21-22 Aug. [1950?]; NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa District Touring Notes 1939-53, C.J.L. Reynolds, 18-20 Dec. [1950]; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes Paiye District W.A. Herbert, May 1952.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 6279, Lanwa 1929, Minute from TCN 5/10/29: the emir has often said (of the southern traders in Lanwa District) that he does not want these "alien middlemen".
4. Alh. Okunola relates that the metropolitan districts people dared not, in general, show any signs of wealth (interview, 16/12/82).

(whom they resemble in function), their existence has proved tenacious over time. In 1928 a European trader explained that the "bushman" would not come direct to the canteens; that "all trade is driven into the town where he is fleeced by the middleman. That they are the people who make the profit .... that it is inherent in the Ilorin trade system if not elsewhere, that native trade is a closed ring of middlemen and that the bushman could not come direct to the canteen even if he would, he would be broken by the middlemen's trade union".<sup>1</sup> In the following year, these comments were echoed by the Resident:

The common people are hopelessly at the mercy of rings of middlemen, who pocket most of their hard-won earnings: corn from the districts may be sold two, or three times before it reaches the Emir's Market, and each middleman makes his profit; yet it is almost impossible to persuade the common farmer to bring his raw material even to a European canteen, partly because it is not his custom to do so, and partly on account of his fear of the particular "ring" which habitually <sup>2</sup> buys his produce.

This type of situation, of course, was not confined to Ilorin;<sup>3</sup> its importance in this case lies in its combination

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1. NAK Ilorprof 5 D 3640, General Notes Osborn, Diary 1928 by Mr. Grey of the Niger Co.
  2. Hermon-Hodge, p.277.
  3. Eg. information from E.W. Pearce (formerly with John Holt, Ilorin), 13/7/83, on a middleman group in Shagamu.

with all the other means employed by Ilorin to deprive its metropolitan districts people of what otherwise might have been their gains.

The fatalistic attitude of the trader quoted above, the Resident's assumption of the "gullibility or the mental lethargy of the peasant"<sup>1</sup> and the habitual distance kept by the colonial officers from direct interference in matters of trade,<sup>2</sup> reveal the unlikelihood of any improvement in the situation of the farmer, and the middleman system continued to flourish. In 1949, evidence of its continuance, and also a rare example of an attempt to break its hold, were provided when the cooperative movement was introduced, and it was hoped that cooperative village shops might "rescue the peasants from the unscrupulous exploitation now in practice by the middlemen" operating in the villages.<sup>3</sup> The movement, however, proved to be a failure in the metropolitan districts,<sup>4</sup> and the middleman system went on unabated. In the early 1960s, it was reported that food crops were first

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1. Hermon-Hodge, p.277.

2. Except during the Second World War, when a requisitioning system was introduced.

3. NAK Ilorprof 4007/s.35, Ballah and Afon Rural Development Cooperative Societies, 880/110, DO Ilorin Division, Chairman of Rural Devpt. Subcommittee to Asst. Registrar Northern Region Kaduna, 26/2/49.

4. See *ibid.*; also p.318 below.

marketed in the feeder markets along the roads entering Ilorin Town. Ilorin middlemen and women would purchase them there, from farmers' wives, and from other middlemen who came from the rural markets and farms around the town. Only then would these foodstuffs be taken for resale in the emir's market in the centre of the town.<sup>1</sup> In 1978, women in the districts would still not sell directly to individuals outside the market system, on the grounds that they were obliged to sell to a market women's ring in Ilorin Town.<sup>2</sup>

Much was extracted from the metropolitan districts farmers, both in cash and kind. When all the customary payments are considered together with the low profit margins offered by the foodstuffs trade, it is understandable that on occasions they were hard put to it to find the means to

1. Agboola, pp.139-40; also p.134 on Ilorin middlemen in Ejidogari market. A somewhat similar pattern was noted by Susan Watts in the late 1970s; Agbaku market near Sosoki (Onire District) deals in farm produce which the women take to Ilorin to be sold in either Oloje market, on the edge of Ilorin along the main approach road, or less often in the emir's market in the centre of the town. According to Watts, 8 out of 47 households in Sosoki claimed to have houses in Ilorin, most of them being households in the magaji's compound which had houses in the Adangba area between Oloje market and the emir's market (personal communication). It would be interesting to know whether it was middlewomen from these households who carried the foodstuffs into Oloje market.

Also see p.257 above (quotation), on farmers selling in markets, including Oloje, near the western gates of Ilorin Town.

2. Information from Mrs. F.O. Adebisi, Kwara College of Technology, on Oloru or Igporin District, 1978.

pay their government tax. The problems caused for the farmers by government taxation are clearly illustrated on a number of occasions. In Oloru District in 1931 the inhabitants of a hamlet were found to have departed, due to their inability to pay the required amount of tax.<sup>1</sup> In the following year, migration was reported into the Southern Provinces, where the incidence of tax was lower.<sup>2</sup> The seriousness of the situation in Oloru District was underlined in 1933 by a survey which revealed (even without any mention of customary payments) the difficulties encountered by the farmers in their attempt to make ends meet.<sup>3</sup> These examples are taken from the period of general depression in the early 1930s, but taxation still clearly constituted a major, and perhaps increasing, problem in the 1950s, when it was one of the most important grievances raised during the period of I.T.P. agitation, both in the districts and in the town.<sup>4</sup> In 1956 it was admitted that the "comparatively high rates of tax" were increasingly onerous to the poorer people.<sup>5</sup>

1. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/399, Oloru District Tax Revision 1929, Tour of Oloru, Ejidogari and Lanwa Districts, Oct. - Nov. 1931, paras. 4, 6, 7.
2. See p.261 above.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 2198/1933, Oloru 1933, Appendices 9-11 and Resident to DOE 9/10/33.
4. See eg. Provincial Annual Reports 1955 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1955 / ? / Ilorin, para.5; Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.11.
5. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, paras.18-19.

Considering the burdensome nature of taxation to the farmers, and the harassment they might endure during its collection, it is not surprising that they often engaged in trade in order (but only in order) to pay their tax.<sup>1</sup> Given the extraction of ar'oja whenever they entered the market, and the low profits obtainable in trade with the Ilorin middlemen, it is understandable that the farmers failed in many cases to produce any further surplus for trading purposes. In 1918 it was noted by an assessing officer in Malete that the general level of income in the district was surprisingly low: and the explanation proffered by the Resident was that the majority of people, especially farmers, lived "only hand to mouth though they could make very large incomes if they liked .... The income earned is enough to support life and no more".<sup>2</sup> As late as 1960 it was noted of Paiye District that the farmers grew only as much as they needed for their own requirements and tax.<sup>3</sup>

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1. On villagers trading only to pay tax, see the following: NAK Ilorprof 4 D 164/1917, Akambi 1918-22, Asst. Supt. of Agric. to DO Ilorin, 14/6/18 (maize trade); NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes W.A. Herbert 28/4/52 - 30/4/52 (shea nuts); NAK Ilorprof 5 5351, Akanbi District Touring Diary [1945-52], Touring Notes Akanbi W.A. Herbert May 1952 (shea nuts); Lanwa DTN 1939-53, C.J.L. Reynolds 18-20 Dec. (tree crops); NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou./131 vol.1, Touring Notes Paiye District G.R. Gardner 9/9/60 (agricultural crops).
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 199/1918, Malete 1918, para.7 and 1256/1919, K.V. Elphinstone Resident to Hermon-Hodge Assessing Officer, 5/4/18.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou./131 vol.1, TN Paiye, Touring Notes Paiye District G.R. Gardner, 9/9/60.

Not all of the commodities produced by the metropolitan districts farmers were absorbed by, or channelled into, Ilorin Town; some also entered the long-distance trade carried on in the districts along the railway and the north-south road. This trade, however, was in the hands of southern traders, in contrast to the situation in Offa, for example, where it was firmly in the hands of local men.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that most of the metropolitan districts farmers would be unable to amass the necessary capital to become long-distance traders, but it is less easy, perhaps, to explain why members of the Ilorin elite did not join in the long-distance trade. Given the amounts in foodstuffs and cash which they were extracting from the districts, they could have found no difficulty in acquiring the goods and capital required. Even if smaller amounts of foodstuffs per farmer were brought in after the beginning of the colonial period than before, the total amounts amassed by elite members were large, and augmented by supplies brought in by dependants newly sent out to the farms.<sup>2</sup> The surplus of foodstuffs amassed was further increased by the fact that these dependants, once sent out, no longer required to be fed by their masters in the town. Perhaps, however, the

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1. See Chapter 1, pp. 90-94.

2. See pp. 267, 270 above.



very sufficiency of food and cash they could acquire by non-market means led to a lack of incentive among elite members to go out and trade. And they may also have preferred to utilise their acquisitions in prestige consumption in Ilorin Town.<sup>1</sup>

Some elite members, however, are said to have involved themselves in the middleman trade in Ilorin Town,<sup>2</sup> and at least during the requisitioning years of the Second World War, the district heads were acting capably as bulking agents in the districts.<sup>3</sup> Earlier evidence of their interest in roads (including that of the Sarkin Gambari, who in 1926 had made a feeder road from his headquarters at Igporin to the railway station at Lanwa)<sup>4</sup> may well reflect a desire on the part of some of them to seize and

1. See Chapter 1, pp.89-90.

2. Joseph Ayodele Ariyo, "Ilorin, its Origin and Growth" (B.A. dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, 1969), p.33.

3. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586 Oloru District Touring Notes [1943-53], J.M. Calder Touring Diary 22/11/43-3/12/43, 15/2/44 and 9/1/46-21/1/46; NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1942-51, Touring Diary J.M. Calder 19-29 June 1943 and 9/1/46-11/1/46; NAK Ilorprof 6/3 AGR 11, Shea Nuts Industry Development of 1940-57, Record of interview between Resident Ilorin and Manager UAC Lokoja, 5/2/44, on guinea corn; NAK Ilorprof 3513, Igporin District Touring Notes [1940s-54], Touring Diary J.M. Calder 9/1/46-22/1/46, J.M. Smallwood 24-28 Jan 1946; NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Diary J.M. Calder 9/1/46-21/1/46.

4. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.4, IPAR 1926, paras.20, 21; vol. 5, IPAR 1927, para.19. This may be contrasted with the attitude of the emir (p.287 above). Perhaps the priorities of district officials did not always coincide with those of the elite in the town. On DHs, the central N.A., and roads in later years, see pp.301-306 below.

profit from this bulking role. In so far as they were willing to enter into trade at all, the middleman role of bulking agent may well have been more amenable to them (as was the middleman role of baba kekere) than that of long-distance trader; as they are said to have been averse to travelling out of the Ilorin area.<sup>1</sup>

The share of the farmers themselves in the foodstuffs trade was limited for a number of reasons already discussed above. To these may be added the further reason, in the areas close to Ilorin, of the exhaustion of their land. Not only did this make it difficult for the farmers involved to produce any surplus for trade, but it even led to problems, in some cases, in feeding themselves and their families.

Land exhaustion in the farming areas close to Ilorin Town had been reported from early on in the colonial period. In 1912,<sup>2</sup> and again in 1922,<sup>3</sup> the land in the vicinity of the town was said to be exhausted. In 1930 the same was reported from Gama and Amayo areas (in Ajasse District but close to Ilorin Town), many of the former inhabitants

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1. Okunola interview, 16/12/82.
  2. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Progress Report, para.25; NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.23.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, para.18.

having moved away into Offa and (some parts of) Afon Districts. It was not, it was emphasized, a matter of land needing to be left fallow for a few years, but of whole areas going out of cultivation for good.<sup>1</sup> In 1942 the area within about a ten mile radius from Ilorin Town was said to be the most seriously degraded, with crop yields half the normal,<sup>2</sup> but the region within a radius of twenty miles from the town was also said to be gradually deteriorating. Upwards of a thousand tons of yams, it was reported, were normally railed away each year, but apart from two exceptional years the figure had gradually diminished during the previous ten years.<sup>3</sup> A study of grass succession on fallow land appeared to have shown that the land would regain its fertility in from five to eight years, and it was also noted that farmers liked to leave their land fallow for at least five years. In Afon District, however, while those farmers living outside a nine-mile radius of Ilorin Town had sufficient land to permit a five-year fallow period, pressure on the land inside the nine-mile zone was such that farmers there were obliged

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1. NAK Ilorprof 5 6289, Ajasse 1930, paras.10-14.
  2. J.Dundas, "Farming Conditions and Grass Succession", Farm and Forest 3 (1942), 20; J. Dundas, "Ilorin Rural Planning Scheme", Farm and Forest 3 (1942), 132.
  3. Dundas, "Rural Planning Scheme", p.132.

to reduce the fallow to four years or even three.<sup>1</sup>

This was not the first occasion on which Afon District was singled out for mention. As early as 1912, land exhaustion and consequent movement of farmers was reported there.<sup>2</sup> By 1929 the Afon District lands near Ilorin Town, in a number of village areas, had become "exhausted and infertile", the main part of the crops being obtained from the village areas more distant from the town; though even these were beginning to be affected.<sup>3</sup> In 1954, the drift of population to those parts of Afon District further from the town was still going on.<sup>4</sup>

Akanbi District, partially encircling Ilorin Town, was also affected. In 1924 the soil throughout the district was said to be poor, and the assessing officer was told that every year the people were obliged to go to Ilorin for food, their soil being so poor that their crops were not sufficient to

1. NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.7, Administration Department Rural Development Policy, Minutes of Meeting of Rural Planning Subcommittee, 23/1/42, para.3; Dundas, "Farming Conditions and Grass Succession", pp.20, 21. See also Agboola, pp.86-87, on 3-year fallow.
2. NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure Afon, Cases 1, 8, 13.
3. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, paras.2, 27.
4. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.8; NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30 vol.1, General Local Govt., 6089/29, Resident to Perm.Sec. Ministry Local Govt.27/5/54, para.2.

support them through the year.<sup>1</sup> References made in the 1950s to the "low standard" of farming in Akanbi, and to the fact that little yam but much cassava was grown there<sup>2</sup> reveal the continuing exhaustion of the land; as also, perhaps, does the report that its people traded only in shea nuts (not a produce of their farms) and only in order to pay tax.<sup>3</sup>

The process leading to soil exhaustion began in the nineteenth century, when considerations of safety must have led many people to farm close to the town.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, at this time and since, many farmers must also have preferred this area due to its closeness to the urban market, and fiefholders in this area would have packed it with their dependants, for similar reasons. The result has been excessively high farming densities: even after an exodus of people in the 1950s<sup>5</sup> the population density of Akanbi District still remained higher than most others.<sup>6</sup> It was these densities

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Akambi 1924, para.5.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 5351, Akanbi DTD 1945-52, Touring Notes Akanbi District M.J. Campbell 15 June [1950?] and W.A. Herbert 6/5/52.
3. Ibid., W.A. Herbert 5/5/52.
4. See pp.257-59 above.
5. See pp.323-24 below.
6. Agboola, fig.18 and p.57. According to fig. 18, the population density of Akanbi was 90 per square mile, whereas most of the other metropolitan districts were around 50 per square mile. Only Igborin, with 156, was higher. After Akanbi came Lanwa, with 88.

that caused the fallow period to be cut down to an insufficient time. Lack of manuring,<sup>1</sup> denudation of trees due to the town's demand for firewood<sup>2</sup> and the absence of measures of erosion control all helped the process along.

Efforts to deal with the situation, made by the colonial Agricultural Department, were varied but unsuccessful. Attempts to introduce the use of "green manure" would appear to have failed.<sup>3</sup> A Rural Planning Scheme specifically aimed at the land-exhausted areas around Ilorin fell victim to the altered priorities and demands of the period of the Second World War.<sup>4</sup> Efforts after the war to introduce mixed farming, with cattle as a source of manure, and erosion control in the metropolitan districts were also unsuccessful, due in summary to disagreements among the British officials and to problems of finance.<sup>5</sup>

These projects, although unsuccessful, do reflect the growing concern of the colonial government, especially in the last twenty years of its existence, with the "development" of

1. See eg. NAK SNP 17/3 27779, IPAR 1936, para.19; Dundas, "Ilorin Rural Planning Scheme", p.132.
2. Dundas, "Farming Conditions and Grass Succession", pp. 19-20.
3. Ann O'Hear, "Colonial Government Agricultural Policies, Ilorin", p.13.
4. Ibid., pp.16-17.
5. For the story of these projects and their failure, see *ibid.*, pp.17-18, 21-30.

the territory over which it ruled.<sup>1</sup> Apart from agriculture, two further areas of activity, also linked with development, namely roadbuilding and education, are of particular interest to the story of the metropolitan districts, and will be examined here.

Motorable roads were usually regarded as avenues to development through the expansion of trade,<sup>2</sup> a repeated theme in post-war Ilorin annual reports, with Residents stressing the need for all-season roads to assist in the foodstuffs trade to the south.<sup>3</sup> Some members of the N.A., especially district officials, were also reported to be in favour of road improvements around Ilorin in the post-war years. In some cases their concern was with administrative efficiency and control of the districts from Ilorin, rather than with trade,<sup>4</sup> in others they may have simply been

1. For other unsuccessful attempts at "development", see Chapter 2, pp.119-21; Chapter 3, pp.165-67; and Chapter 4, pp.188-93.
2. Although the construction of a motorable road did not always result in expansion of trade. See pp.287-88 above.
3. NAK SNP 17 43493, IPAR 1947, para.20; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1948, para.4 (though the author expresses some misgivings); Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.69.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 5351, Akanbi DTD 1945-52, 476/11/33, Emir's comments on Touring Notes Akanbi, 24/12/45.

following earlier policies of channelling food effectively into Ilorin,<sup>1</sup> but in other cases they seem to have been genuinely concerned with the expansion of trade.<sup>2</sup>

In the non-metropolitan districts an interest in road improvement, accompanied by the building of "unauthorised roads", was reported as early as the mid 1930s.<sup>3</sup> In the metropolitan districts, on the other hand, such desires and activities hardly began to be noted until the middle of the Second World War,<sup>4</sup> and in some areas not until much later still.<sup>5</sup> Even where such desires or activities are reported, however, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether they reflect the wishes of the people themselves, or rather the

1. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring C.J.L. Reynolds, 4/4/50, re road from Oloru [?] to Ilorin via Shao.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Lanwa 12-15 March [between 1947-50].
3. I.N. R. Oyeyipo, "Migration in Igbominaland, 1900-1977 with special reference to its Economic Effects" (M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1978), p.37, citing NAK Ilorprof 4/4 ACC 19, Touring Diary 1935, R.L. Payne. By the late 1940s the people of those districts were contributing thousands of pounds towards road construction. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1948, para.4.
4. NAK Ilorprof 3513, Igporin DTN [1940s-54], Touring Diary Igporin District 4-5 March [possibly 1943; not later]; NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Notes J.M.C. 15/2/44; NAK Ilorprof 5 5351, Akanbi DTD 1945-52, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 15/12/44. There is evidence, however, of DHs in these districts being concerned with the expansion of trade in the 1920s. See pp.295-96 above.
5. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.62.



desires and perhaps instructions of the district heads.<sup>1</sup> In some cases also, such activities were not directly connected with the promotion of trade, but with the provision of amenities such as water supplies.<sup>2</sup>

The condition of the roads in the metropolitan districts in the post-Second World War years was variable. In some areas, perhaps particularly favoured, the roads were good. To Bala, for example, whose district head was a brother of the emir,<sup>3</sup> there was reportedly an all-season motor road from Ilorin as early as 1946.<sup>4</sup> In many other areas the situation was not so satisfactory, and, as with the roads from Shao to Oloru and Ilorin to Shao, motorability was impaired or prevented by lack of bridges.<sup>5</sup> Some efforts were

1. See eg. NAK Ilorprof 3513, Igporin DTN [1940s-54], Touring Diary J.M. Calder 9/1/46-22/1/46.
2. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.62; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes W.A. Herbert, 1/6/52.
3. See p.246 above.  
Bala was also favoured in other ways, being, together with Afon, the centre chosen for a general development programme. See eg. NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.1 vol.1, Development. Ilorin Provincial Development Committee Correspondence and Minutes, Minutes of Meeting 29/3/46, Preliminary Announcements 17/4/47, and Minutes 13/5/47. See also p.312 below.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s. vol.1, Ilorin Province Development Committee, Minutes 29/3/46, para.1.
5. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Diary J.M. Calder 17/1/46, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 4/4/50, Touring Notes M.J. Campbell, 2 & 3/5/51.

made to remedy such conditions, but funds were said to be limited<sup>1</sup> and so also were the results. Four roads were listed by the Provincial Development Committee under its feeder roads programme in 1945. One of them, Shao to Ilorin, was in the metropolitan districts. As late as 1951, work on this road had certainly not been completed, if indeed it had ever been begun.<sup>2</sup> This is not, however, to say that nothing at all was done. In the same year, 1951, roads were under construction in Igporin District,<sup>3</sup> one involving Agbeyangi, which was probably a favoured village along with Bala.<sup>4</sup> For minor works, other sources of finance

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1948, para.4; NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.38, Development Scheme Ilorin Survey, Minutes of Meeting 23/5/49, item e. See also NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1942-51, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 1-3 April [1950]; NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 4/4/50.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.1 vol.1, Ilorin Province Development Committee, Minutes of Meeting 31/7/45; NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Notes M.J. Campbell 2/5/51.
3. NAK Ilorprof 3513, Igporin DTN [1940s-54], Touring Notes M.J. Campbell, 2-3/5/51.
4. Agbeyangi is said to be the home of the mother of the present emir. The tax list for Agbeyangi in 1931, together with a comparison with other village areas in this tax report, also gives some hints of connections with the elite and of favoured status (NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/889, Igporin District Revision 1931). Later evidence of favoured status with respect to roads is given by a map of 1958, on which the road from Agbeyangi over the district border is "N.A." while the other roads are "District Council" or "Communal" (NAK Ilorprof ACC 66, Igporin District Note Book [1958-59]).

might be found.<sup>1</sup>

Although the emir himself was on record as supporting the construction of at least some motorable roads in the metropolitan districts,<sup>2</sup> and so were a number of district heads, nevertheless little money was actually allocated by the Native Authority to road-building projects in these areas. This was due at least in part to the shortage of funds which was frequently reported,<sup>3</sup> and to consequent advice from British officials. This may not, however, have been the entire story. After the new elected District Councils came into action, a new upsurge of road-building activity is clearly visible in 1958, for which it is obvious that funds were available.<sup>4</sup> This new availability of funds may

1. NAK Ilorprof 3513, Igporin DTN [1940s-54], Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 27/1/49.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5 5351, Akanbi DTD 1945-52, 476/11/33, Emir's comments on Touring Notes Akanbi, 24/12/45.
3. Eg. Resident C.W. Michie, in 1956, reported that the Ilorin N.A. had already seriously raided the reserve funds, and that in order to raise the necessary extra money, the wealthier sections of the community would have to be more heavily taxed. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, paras.18-19.
4. NAK Ilorprof ACC 66, Igporin DNB, Communications, Communal Development, Development projects; NAK Ilorprof ACC 17, Touring Notes Oloru 1958, 21-26/7/58, 6-7/8/58; NAK Ilorprof ACC 35, Touring Notes Afon 1958, S, Touring Area 1/9/58, Afon 25/8/58; NAK Ilorprof ACC 57, Afon DNB, Roads; NAK Ilorprof 22/3 TOU/94 I Tours and Inspection Notes N.A. Officials, Development Secretary's Touring Notes, Onire District Council 3/2/59, Lanwa District Council 5/2/59, Oloru District Council 6/2/59, Owode District Council 9/2/59, Afon District Council 10/2/59, Igporin District Council.

have resulted from the delegation of some road-building powers from the central N.A. to the District Councils;<sup>1</sup> it may also have sprung, on the part of an elite which had been temporarily unseated by the I.T.P. and only recently restored to power,<sup>2</sup> from fears of a renewal of I.T.P. activity unless some improvements in district conditions were seen to be underway. And it suggests that earlier efforts with respect to road-building in the metropolitan districts may have been only half-hearted, rather than simply a reflection of lack of funds.<sup>3</sup>

The provision of educational facilities, like the provision of roads, has often been considered to be a springboard to economic and social development, and may also be seen as a reflection of economic development desired or underway. The educational situation of the metropolitan districts has been similar to their situation in terms of the provision of roads. And, as with roads, their backwardness is most clearly visible when it is contrasted with the

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1. As earlier recommended. See RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, Recommendation 22; NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/s.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.24, Recommendations.
  2. See Whitaker, pp.137-72.
  3. The lack of good roads has remained an issue in the metropolitan districts. In the 1979 election year, for example, roads were made the subject of campaign promises in this area by both major parties. Nigerian Herald, 3/1/79, 7/2/79 and 16/2/79.

situation in the Igbomina, Ekiti and Igbolo districts. During the 1950s, persistent comment on this contrast was heard from British officials in Ilorin, in terms of the extent to which compulsion was necessary to ensure attendance, the level of schools which were required or desired, recruitment to the Provincial Secondary School, and, most strikingly, the percentage of primary-age children at school. Little compulsion was reported to be needed in the southern districts, but in the northern "a great deal of persuasion" was still required.<sup>1</sup> Outside the metropolitan districts, the junior primary school was popularly regarded as quite inadequate, and communities were pressing for permission to open community senior primary schools.<sup>2</sup> In 1957 only 8 out of 121 pupils in the Provincial Secondary School came from the northern part of the Province,<sup>3</sup> the southern districts providing the great majority of the pupils.<sup>4</sup> Not only were the people of the southern districts utilising the Provincial Secondary School, but they were also opening

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1950, para.36.
2. Provincial Annual Reports 1954 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1956), Ilorin, para.21.
3. Ilorin Province included Borgu and Lafiagi Divisions as well as the "metropolitan" and "southern" districts. See Hermon-Hodge, map at end.
4. Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, paras.77, 84.

and utilising their own community secondary schools<sup>1</sup> as well as finding opportunities for secondary education elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> In the southern districts in 1958, 67 per cent of the children of junior primary age were enrolled in school; for the metropolitan districts the figure was less than one per cent.<sup>3</sup>

By far the largest percentage of schools among those serving the Province as a whole were those established and run by the Christian missions; far fewer had been established by the N.A.<sup>4</sup> The mission schools, however, were largely to be found in the southern districts, where 90 had been established by 1947.<sup>5</sup> Ten years later the acting Resident noted that the Province was educationally divided by a line running through Ilorin Town. To the south<sup>6</sup> of this line only five N.A. schools were to be found, to the north of

1. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1943, para.44, and IPAR 1946, para.43; Provincial Annual Reports 1954, Ilorin, para.21; NAK Ilorprof 5 6431, Touring Notes by D.B. Mann, Igbomina and Ekiti - Esie Nov. [1954]; NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou./87, Touring Notes, Divisional Officers Ilorin Emirate, Oro, Aitchison 17-19 Oct. 1958.
2. Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, para.44.
3. Provincial Annual Reports 1958, Ilorin, para.72. For 1959, the figures were 75 per cent as against 2 per cent. Provincial Annual Reports 1959 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1962), Ilorin, para.70.
4. NAI CSO 26/2 12687, vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1951, para.41; Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, para.40.
5. NAK SNP 17 43493, IPAR 1947, para.25.
6. Or more accurately, perhaps, to the south east.

it only a handful of Voluntary Agency (that is, mission or community) schools. In general, then, education south of the line was provided by the Voluntary Agencies, to the north by the N.A.s.<sup>1</sup>

The metropolitan districts were situated mostly in the area where few missionary schools were to be found. The same Resident in 1957 admitted that N.A. education was not so efficient as that which was provided by the missionary schools (an opinion that is confirmed by secondary admission performance<sup>2</sup> and by numerous descriptions by observers of the low standards in the metropolitan districts N.A. schools<sup>3</sup>), but he went on to argue that if the northern part of the Province had been more receptive to education, then more Voluntary Agency schools would have been established there,<sup>4</sup> and educational development in those areas would have moved ahead.

One question which must first be considered in this connection is whether missionary activity, including education, had ever really been permitted in the metropolitan

1. Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.77.
2. Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, para.40.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 24-26/1/52 and 4-15/2/52; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 6/2/52; NAK Ilorprof ACC 22, Touring Notes Owode 1958, C.F.A. Salaman 12/9/58; NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou/120, Touring Notes Igborin [1958-59], C.F.A. Salaman 25/1/59. See also Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, para.40; Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para. 67.
4. Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.77.

districts. Little evidence seems to be available, but there was no prohibition on missionary activity in these districts by the 1960s<sup>1</sup> and it would appear that prohibition had always been centred on the traditional town of Ilorin, rather, perhaps, than elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting, nevertheless, that the most tenacious of the few mission schools established in the metropolitan districts was the one established by the Seventh Day Adventists at Shao, while a somewhat less long-lived school was founded by them at Oke Oyi;<sup>3</sup> these being the two villages of the northern districts which lay firmest claim to an existence prior to and independent of Fulani rule.<sup>4</sup>

For whatever reason, few mission schools existed in the metropolitan districts, and the growth of N.A. schools, both there and elsewhere, was slow. Even as late as 1958-59, touring officers mentioned only eleven schools in the area,

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1. Information from Rev. and Mrs. Harrison (formerly Sudan Interior Mission, Ilorin), Toronto, Aug. 1977.
  2. Ibid; also information from Emmanuel Alao, Nov. 1980. Although permission had to be sought, it is said, to build a church in any part of the emirate (H.A.K. Danmole, "The Frontier Emirate: A History of Islam in Ilorin" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980), p.240).
  3. Information from Emmanuel Alao. The school at Shao is still in existence (University of Ilorin, Faculty of Health Sciences, Students' Report on 1st COBES Posting, 3rd-28th October, 1978, pp.89, 90.
  4. See pp.208-209 above.



of which only one (Malete) was a senior primary school<sup>1</sup> and none was a secondary school.<sup>2</sup>

Responsibility for the slow rate of educational growth in these districts may be attributed, at least partly, to the political officers<sup>3</sup> in Ilorin, whose attitude to the spread of education in general was a cautious one. Their caution may have been soundly based, as they had earlier remarked on the low standard of missionary education, while it was expanding rapidly despite lack of money and supervision;<sup>4</sup> but they may equally have been alarmed by the possibility of the spread of anti-colonial militancy along with the "imperfectly controlled" spread of education.<sup>5</sup>

1. NAK Ilorprof ACC 18, Touring Notes Paiye 1958, 30/9/58-3/10/58; NAK Ilorprof ACC 35, TN Afon 1958, Afon VA Miscellaneous; NAK Ilorprof ACC 62, Ejidogari DNB, Education; NAK Ilorprof ACC 66, Igborin DNB, Education; NAK Ilorprof ACC 80, Onire DNB, Education; NAK Ilorprof ACC 86, Paiye DNB, Education; NAK Ilorprof ACC 71, Lanwa District Note Book, Education; NAK Ilorprof ACC 72, Malete District Note Book, Development Projects; NAK Ilorprof ACC 85, Owode District Note Book, Education.
2. The first secondary school in the metropolitan districts was in Malete, founded 1969-70 (Alade, p.89). The next was in Afon in 1976 (Nigerian Tribune, 23/12/81).
3. I.e. Resident, D.O., etc., as opposed to departmental officers.
4. NAK SNP 17/3 27779, IPAR 1936, para.61.
5. See NAK SNP 17 43493, IPAR 1947, for reference to the "imperfectly controlled" spread of education in the southern districts and the "latent dangers of haphazard elementary education". See also NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol. 13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1946, para.43; while the writer is impressed with Offa Grammar School, which was run by the community with mission help, he was aware of "a whiff of Zikism" about the place.

The caution of the political officers may also be explained by the perennial lack of funds. Already in 1950, although they had opened relatively few schools, they had begun to complain that the N.A. would not be able to "go on building expensive schools in every village".<sup>1</sup> Plans at least were made, nevertheless, for major primary and adult education efforts in two selected areas of the metropolitan districts, Bala and Afon, as early as 1947,<sup>2</sup> although it does not seem that any spectacular success was actually achieved.<sup>3</sup> And the colonial officials, together with the emir, firmly supported efforts to improve attendance in those metropolitan districts schools that did exist.<sup>4</sup> They also, although rather late in the day, announced with the approval of the N.A. a modest expansion plan for these schools<sup>5</sup> and they

1. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, C.J.L. Reynolds 18-20 Dec. [1950?].
2. NAK SNP 17 43493, IPAR 1947, para.7.
3. A comparison of Owode DNB with others (Paiye, Igporin, Onire, Malete, Lanwa and Ejidogari DNBs) reveals that by 1958, in terms of education, Bala, if anything, was somewhat backward compared with other districts. At Afon, at the same period, attendance at school was reported to be not particularly good (see p.313 below, note 4).
4. Eg. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 24-26/1/52 and 4-15/2/52; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes Hibbs 6/2/52. See Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para. 68, for the emir's "personal intervention" at Malete.
5. Provincial Annual Reports 1958, Ilorin, para.89.

set up means designed to ensure the admission of at least a few of their children into the Provincial Secondary School.<sup>1</sup>

The slow growth of educational provision in the metropolitan districts was also a response to what the colonial officials identified as a lack of demand.<sup>2</sup> Even where schools had been opened, chronically low attendance was the almost inevitable result,<sup>3</sup> and only in a few areas in the later years of the colonial period was any sign of popular demand reported.<sup>4</sup> This lack of demand was due to a number of factors. One possibility, however, which may come to mind, may be dismissed. This is the influence of Islam, per se, which may be discounted, as Muslims in the southern

1. Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.84.
2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1940, para.56.
3. Eg. NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1942-51, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 3/4/1950 [?]; NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 24-26/1/52 and 4-15/2/52; Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Notes I.R. Stanbrook 16/2/53; Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.68; NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou./1920, TN Igborin [1958-9], C.F.A. Salaman 25/1/59; Provincial Annual Reports 1959, Ilorin, para.71; Provincial Annual Reports 1961 (Kaduna: Govt. Printer, 1963), Ilorin, para.83; Alade, p.52.
4. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 26/2/52; NAK Ilorprof ACC 35, TN Afon 1958, Touring Notes S.Touring Area 1/9/58; NAK Ilorprof 22/3 TOU/94 I, Tours NA, DEV/117/15, Development Secretary's Touring Notes Afon DC 10/2/59. There was a demand for a school at Ajagusi, but at the same time it was pointed out that attendance at Afon was not particularly good.

districts by the 1950s were seen to be actively involved in the promotion of community schools.<sup>1</sup> A factor which was, however, influential in causing a lack, or withdrawal, of interest in education in the metropolitan districts was the introduction of school fees in 1950;<sup>2</sup> a charge of 1/- per month at that time must have seemed an extremely large amount to the people, when added to all their other expenses already described, and in fact of their limited cash-producing abilities. The favourable response of metropolitan districts parents to the decision of the late 1960s, that primary school costs should be shared among the entire population in the form of "Education Rates", instead of being borne by individuals, provides some further indication of the previous importance of fees as a constraint on educational enrolment.<sup>3</sup> A further constraint was the lack of adequate roads, as in Oloru village, whose children were obliged to cross the unbridged Weru River if they wished to reach the Elemere school.<sup>4</sup>

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1. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, C.J.L. Reynolds 18-20/12/ [1950]; NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1950-51, IPAR 1950, para.36; NAK Ilorprof 5 6431, TN Mann, Touring Notes Igbomina Area, Ajasse 16/3/55. And, indeed, by no means all the people of the metropolitan districts were Muslims. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, 6569/vol.2/294, C.W. Michie Resident to Perm. Sec. Ministry Local Govt. 18/8/55, para.3.
  2. NAI CSO 26/2 12687 vol.13, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1950, para.36.
  3. Alade, p.88.
  4. Gegele, pp.56-57.

Still another factor leading to a lack of interest in education is said to have been the fact that "no jobs were found for them" after they had finished school;<sup>1</sup> indeed, as has been seen above, many of the N.A. positions, at all levels, were given to sons of Ilorin elite families.<sup>2</sup>

The N.A. was also more directly involved than this in the obstruction of educational development in the metropolitan districts. It is true that the emir himself was actively supporting educational development there, at least in terms of raising attendance figures,<sup>3</sup> and that the central N.A. approved a modest expansion plan. And even the district heads in some cases could be seen to be cooperating with official policy.<sup>4</sup> In many other instances, however, the attitudes of district heads and others were less favourable. By 1956, even British officials had reached the conclusion that poor attendance in the primary schools was mainly due

1. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 6/2/52.

2. See p.278 above.

3. See p.312 above, and note 4.

4. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 296/1918, Maleta District Notes 1917-21, Emir's Touring Report Oct. 1937; NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru DTN [1943-53], Touring Notes I.R. Stanbrook 16/2/53.

See also NAI CSO 26/2 12687, IPARs 1940-51, IPAR 1946, para.41; and NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1942-51, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 3/4/ [1950]; but soon afterwards, see NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 6/2/52.

to the failure of N.A. administrative (that is, district and village heads) and educational officials to carry out their duty of enforcing attendance orders;<sup>1</sup> and in the same year "great difficulties, much discouragement, and sometimes deliberate obstruction from traditionally minded N.A. officials" were reported in the adult education field.<sup>2</sup> One district head had even invited the sons of a friend, "a rich man from Offa", to fill places in his school, despite the fact that more than sufficient local children were said to be available.<sup>3</sup> A recent and forceful statement from people of the metropolitan districts offers an explanation of these obstructive attitudes, one which is consistent with much that has been previously noted:

Up to the 1960s, our children were intentionally denied access to education because the overlords back at home in Ilorin felt we should have no right to education for fear that once we became educated, our eyes would be opened and we would cease to become "the soup ingredients" which they made us to be. 4

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1. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.68. See also NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 4-15/2/52.
  2. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.78.
  3. NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1942-51, Touring Notes C.J.L. Reynolds 24/4/49.
  4. Nigerian Herald 30/11/77, text of an address at a press conference by Oke Moro and Oke Asa Development Union. The "soup ingredients" quotation may be compared with a similar remark, also recorded recently, that "we were foodstuffs for Ilorin". Gegele, p.37, note 9.

Even where district heads made efforts to put official policy into practice, the methods employed (with the awareness and apparent approval of the political officers) may have led to the opposite effect from that which was intended. Quotas of pupils per village were drawn up, threats were employed, and at least on occasion the Yan Doka, or N.A. police (whose reputation among the metropolitan districts people may easily be imagined, given their political utilisation by the N.A.),<sup>1</sup> were employed in rounding up the pupils.<sup>2</sup>

From an examination of road construction, education and some agricultural development activities, a number of points arise. Many of the difficulties described above are attributed, in the official record, to a lack of funds. While an overall shortage of funds does seem to have existed,<sup>3</sup> the problem for development may have been as much or more one of misallocation of those funds which were available. This is suggested by the changes seen in 1958, by which time certain funds had come under District Council, and not N.A., control;<sup>4</sup> and it is demonstrated also by the complaint of

1. See p.281 above.

2. NAK Ilorprof 5 3336, Lanwa DTN 1939-53, Touring Notes V.D. Hibbs 24-26/1/52, 4-15/2/52; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye DTN 1930-52, V.D. Hibbs 6/2/52, 6/3/52.

3. See comments of Resident Michie, in Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, paras.8-9, and Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, paras.18-19.

4. See p.305-306 above.

the Ilorin Agricultural Department made in 1948, which revealed how small a percentage of total funds was allocated to agriculture in Ilorin Division as compared with what was made available by other N.A.s in Ilorin and (neighbouring) Kabba Provinces.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this apparent misallocation of funds, it is also clear that other obstructive activities were pursued by N.A. officials, including district heads.

The underdevelopment of the metropolitan areas is revealed most strikingly when it is contrasted with the progress of the southern districts. The establishment of community schools in these latter districts has been noted above,<sup>2</sup> and a further reason for the underdevelopment of their neighbours becomes clear when the two areas are compared in terms of community feeling, and in terms of the setting up of organisations to express this feeling or give it practical form. It is interesting to note in this connection that the cooperative movement appears to have flourished in the southern districts, while in the metropolitan districts it failed.<sup>3</sup>

1. See Ann O'Hear, "Agricultural Policies", p.39 and note 4. Ilorin Division included both the metropolitan and the southern districts.
3. See pp.307-309, 313-14 above.
4. Provincial Annual Reports 1956, Ilorin, para.57;  
Provincial Annual Reports 1957, Ilorin, para.64;  
Provincial Annual Reports 1958, Ilorin, para.70.



On numerous occasions in the southern districts, community feelings gave rise to community development projects, as with the "unauthorised roads" which were being constructed as early as the 1930s,<sup>1</sup> and the community grammar schools of later years.<sup>2</sup> In the metropolitan districts such feelings and projects were lacking. These districts were "artificial administrative divisions" as compared with "those like Share and Ajassepo which comprise distinct racial communities with their own hereditary rulers and following very much their ancient boundaries".<sup>3</sup> Due to the heterogeneous origin of much of their population, as followers or slaves of the fiefholders,<sup>4</sup> their relatively recent, scattered and small-scale settlement,<sup>5</sup> and at least in the earlier years of the twentieth century their frequently shifting settlement pattern,<sup>6</sup> community feeling was slow to develop. In the 1950s, the population of the northern districts could still be described as "an unorganized

1. See p.302 above.

2. See pp.307-308 above.

3. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 708A/1912, Adjidungari, para.1.

4. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, para.25; also pp.219-20 above.

5. On the small size of settlements see p.236 above, and note 2. See also NAK SNP 7/13 5552/1912, NW District, para.13.

6. NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Paiye 1922, District Notes 27/2/17, on Paiye and Malete.

proletariat, resistant to modern ideas and showing, as yet, little of the vigour and initiative of the more homogeneous groups of Igbominas and Ekitis".<sup>1</sup> Even as late as the early 1970s, community projects were hardly to be found, their lack being at that time explained in terms of the small size of settlements, many of these harbouring grudges against each other, and also the "overwhelming illiteracy" of councillors and council chairmen whose responsibility it was to advise the people on possible development plans.<sup>2</sup>

The close administrative control over these districts, noted by Gavin,<sup>3</sup> which was still seen in the 1950s, exercised from Ilorin Town by district and village heads,<sup>4</sup> was hardly conducive to the development of representative community organisations whose presence might have speeded up the pace of development. This may be seen with regard to the "progressive unions". In the Igbomina area, these unions were reported to have been largely responsible for building "the remarkable network of feeder roads" which existed there by the 1950s, also mosques, churches, schools and adult education classrooms.<sup>5</sup> In the more northerly of the

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1. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Government Metropolitan 1955, 6569/vol.2/294, C.W. Michie Resident to Perm. Sec. Ministry Local Govt. 18/8/55, para.3.
  2. Alade, pp.91-92.
  3. Gavin, "Sketch", p.2.
  4. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.20.
  5. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Igbomina 1954, para.30.

metropolitan districts these unions seem not to have existed at all at that period<sup>1</sup> and in Bala and Afon Districts they were reported to be existing in "rudimentary form", usually as friendly societies. In the more southerly villages of Afon District, however, the unions were showing signs of assuming the functions performed by their counterparts in the Igbomina and Igbolo districts. The unions of Ikotun, Ila Oke and Ojoku had all been involved in building motorable roads. It seemed significant to the reporter at the time that Ikotun and Ojoku were two of the relatively few metropolitan districts where an ilu or council of titleholders was in existence,<sup>2</sup> and it seems significant also to the present writer. The existence of a range of titleholders has already been noted<sup>3</sup> as an indicator of pre-Fulani origin, an origin which seems likely to be true, for this and other reasons, in all three of the villages mentioned above.<sup>4</sup> It would seem, therefore, that their demonstration of community spirit, unusual in the metropolitan districts, while it results in part from the example of the Igbolo and Igbomina

1. While progressive unions are mentioned in both of the other local government reports of the same period, they do not seem to be mentioned at all in the Local Govt. Metropolitan Districts (excluding Bala and Afon) Report (NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAK/30/c.1), although it may be noted that a page (p.4) is missing from this file.
2. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, paras.17, 24.
3. See pp.202-203 above, and p.203 note 1.
4. See pp.212-14 above.

districts to which these villages are adjacent, owes its origin also to their awareness of community existence dating back to pre-Fulani times.

Lack of community spirit in the metropolitan districts as a whole is both a symptom and a cause of their underdevelopment. The same may be said of their general lack of migration to the south (that is, out of the Northern Provinces or Region). Where there has been such migration, there have also, it is true, been some negative results. Where, for example, there has been a high level of migration from areas in Ilorin Province to urban or cocoa-farming areas in the south, agricultural production in the home areas has been much reduced, as Gavin has noted.<sup>1</sup> But, as he has also pointed out, there are many more positive results, such as the return of migrants who have learned new craft skills, and the part played by migrants in the development of their home areas, in terms, for example, of road-building and education.<sup>2</sup> These results may be seen in the southern districts of Ilorin Province, from which migration to the southern towns and cocoa farms was most pronounced, beginning early on and achieving massive proportions by the 1930s.<sup>3</sup>

1. Gavin, "Impact", p.34.

2. Ibid., p.36; Oyeyipo, pp.37-38.

3. NAK Ilorprof 5 6289, Revision of Ajasse District 1930, paras.100, 104; NAK Ilorprof 5 2250, Assessment of Igbaja District 1933, para.14.

Although there was some movement out from the metropolitan districts to the Southern Provinces during these same years, it was on nothing approaching the same scale, nor was it to the urban or wealthy cocoa-growing areas. Instead it was short-distance movement, merely continuing the line of earlier movement away from Ilorin Town, going either across the border in the north west into the remote farmlands of the northern part of Oyo Province<sup>1</sup> or from Afon District into neighbouring rural areas of Oyo or Ilorin Provinces.<sup>2</sup>

By the 1950s around 35 to 40 per cent of men were absent at a time from the southern districts of Ilorin Province, in Lagos or the Western Region. In one village area the figure was as high as 75 per cent. The exodus from these districts was estimated to have caused a decrease of between 12 and 25 per cent in the population of many village areas over the previous twenty-five years.<sup>3</sup> The situation which was found by the same reporters in the metropolitan districts was a very different one. In the districts other than Bala and Afon, they found that in only two cases, Akanbi and Igporin Districts, was a significant proportion of the population absent in the Western Region

1. See pp.260-262 above.

2. NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0/321, Afon 1929, para.29; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 99/1928, Afon District Revision 1928, para.4.

3. Provincial Annual Reports 1955, Ilorin, para.6; RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Igbomina 1954, para.32.

(from the situation of these two districts, it may be noted, it is clear that this does not refer to a simple continuation movement across the northwestern or southern border). In Afon, however, they found signs that migration was in the process of assuming a degree of importance similar to that in the southern districts, as in 1954 21 per cent of the population was absent in the Western Region, or in Lagos or the Gold Coast. The great majority of these, as yet, were absent for periods of less than a year, but 3 or 4 per cent paid extended visits to Lagos and Accra.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear, however, that the metropolitan districts in general had failed to share in the movement to the wealthy cocoa areas to the south, thus missing what for the other districts became a rich source of encouragement and funding for development. This may have been due, in part, to the isolation of the metropolitan districts people and their consequent ignorance of opportunities, but they were also, it is alleged, directly prohibited from attempting to migrate.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, the close control maintained over

1. NAK Ilorprof 17/1 NAC/30/c.1, Local Govt. Metropolitan 1955, para.11 and Summary of Population Trends.
2. RH Mss. Afr. s.1210, Political Situation, Local Govt. Bala & Afon, paras.19, 20, and Summary of Attendances at Meetings and Destination of Absentees in Afon District.
3. Okunola (interview 16/12/82) alleges that the people of the metropolitan districts did not dare to migrate unless in secret.

them by district and village heads would have made it possible to enforce such a prohibition. Yet some migration to the south from these districts did occur in the 1950s, and if control was maintained in other cases as alleged, then its absence or ineffectiveness in the cases where migration did occur must be explained. Some of the migration recorded as having taken place was in desperation, and in secret, as with those inhabitants of Paiye District who fled for fear of reprisals after the collapse of the I.T.P. Their migration, although it was to the Western Region, was in the traditional direction, north west to Igbeti,<sup>4</sup> but in other cases, such as that of Afon District, migration was reported to urban centres not only in Nigeria but also in the Gold Coast. In the case of Afon District migrants, bonds of dependence to Ilorin may well have been less than elsewhere, loosened by closeness to the non-metropolitan districts and in some cases by pre-Fulani traditions;<sup>2</sup> indeed, the slackening of ties with Ilorin was recognised eventually by the inclusion of some southern Afon areas in Oyun, rather than Asa, L.G.A. In addition to these other factors, land exhaustion in some areas of Afon may well have continued to drive some migrants away.

1. NAK Ilorprof ACC 18, TN Paiye 1958, 30/9/58-3/10/58; NAK Ilorprof 3/15 Tou/131 vol.1, Touring Notes Paiye, C.F.A. Salaman 20/10/58.

2. See pp.210-14 above. See also map 3, p.368.

Migration from the more northerly districts was mostly from Akanbi and Igporin. In both of these districts there were said to be numerous small-scale fiefholders, whose power to hold the people may have been less great than that of the more powerful chiefs; whereas the factors driving or leading the people away may have been more powerful than elsewhere. Of these factors, land exhaustion, for example, and the possibility of multiple isakole payments have already been reviewed;<sup>1</sup> others may have included the knowledge of opportunities gained by those in Akanbi who were close to the town and those in Igporin who were close to the north-south road or the cattle route. Low productivity due to land exhaustion may have made the fiefholders less anxious to keep the people on the land; indeed, with the expansion of the town, the land in its immediate vicinity may have been of greater value to them when it was empty of population, for building purposes. Again, as in Afon District, there were some villages whose ties with Ilorin may have been weaker, as with Oke Oyi, Apado and Pepele,<sup>2</sup> or more lenient, as with Agbeyangi.<sup>3</sup>

Outside these exceptional areas, however, there was little migration of the type which took place from the

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1. See pp.296-300, 269-70 above.

2. See p.208 above, and note 2.

3. See p.304, note 4, above.



non-metropolitan districts. The majority of the people were unable to profit from the economic possibilities of such migration, and stayed in the metropolitan districts, where their local possibilities of profit were lessened, in various ways, by those whose dependants they remained. This dependency system in the nineteenth century had probably been functional, in some sense and in varying degrees, for all concerned. In the twentieth century, however, its continuation, while still providing sustenance for the members of the elite, can be seen to have proved dysfunctional to the prosperity and development of the people as a whole.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 5: EMIRATE REORGANISATION OF DISTRICTS,  
1917<sup>1</sup>

A. List of Fiefholds under Fulani Tenure, in Metropolitan Districts.

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Territory</u>	<u>To Whom Given</u>	<u>Description</u>	
Emir Abdusalami	Okemirin	Abdulkadiri	Nephew	
	Gama	Magaji Are <sup>2</sup>	Ilorin chief	
	Opolo	Koro	Follower	
	Ilota	Duromi	Yoruba	
	Ile-apa	Warri	Follower	
	Berkodo	Amodu	Sarkin Dogari <sup>3</sup>	
	Efue	Otu	Slave	
	Onire	Magaji Ojuekun	Warrior	
	Fata	Kuye Magaji Ogidi	Warrior	
	Awe	Zarumi	Warrior	
	Karkara	Ilorin farmers	-	
	Emir Shita	Shao	Ajia Atikekere	Slave
		Adio	Asaju	Slave
		Lanwa	Adenlolu	Slave
Adio		Alfa Sadiku	Scribe	
Zaki		Alfa Zaki	Scribe	
Okutala		Magaji Akiali	Slave	
Akanbi		Akanbi	Slave	
	Kaba Dogari	Kaba	Dogari <sup>4</sup>	

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1. Taken from NAK Ilorprof 4/1 829A/1917, Ilorin Emirate Reorganization of Districts.
  2. On the Magaji Are, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.5.
  3. On the Sarkin Dogari, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.
  4. Emir's bodyguard?

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Territory</u>	<u>To Whom Given</u>	<u>Description</u>
Emir Shita	Ogele	Abdulai	Slave
	Oko Erin	Erin	Slave
	Olobondoroko	Zarumi	Warrior
Daniyalu(Shiaba)	Ejidogari	Shiaba	Son
Abubakare			
(Basambo) <sup>1</sup>	Ojoku	Ogunlola	Warrior
	Malete	Aliu Ishola	Follower
Emir Zubeiru	Owode	Ajia Ijesha	Slave
	Amu	Alege	Son
	Igbogun	Igbogun	Slave
Sarkin Gambari <sup>2</sup>	Igporin	Bako	1st Sarkin Gambari
Balogun Gambari	Oloru	Omodare	Slave
	Babadudu	Babadudu	Follower
	Moya	Ojo	Hunter
	Kangile	Kangile	Slave
Balogun Ajikobi	Alapa	Lawani Giwa	Follower
	Paiye	Amodu Beki	Follower
Balogun Alanamu	Bala	Sanda	Follower
	Odo Ode	Mofoluku	Follower
	Laduba	Kontan	Follower
Balogun Fulani	Ila Oke	Shekunbi	Yoruba
	Kulende	Obo	Follower
Baba Isale <sup>3</sup>	Osin Aremu	Aremu	Follower
	Magaji	Momodu	Son
Magaji Gari <sup>4</sup>	Afon	Momodu	Follower

1. On the Shiaba and the Basambo, see Political and Administrative Outline, p.4.

2. See *ibid.*, p.6.

3. See *ibid.*, p.5.

4. See *ibid.*, p.4.

B. Fiefholds District by District

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Afon <sup>1</sup>	Afon	Momodu follower of Magaji Gari	Reg: Emir Shita
	Olobondoroko	Olobondoroko follower of Balogun Ajikobi	"
	Odo Ode	Mofoluku follower of Garuba, 3rd Balogun Alanamu	"
	Osin Aremu	Aremu follower of Baba Isale	"
	Ojoku	Ogunlola	Reg: Emir Shita to whom he did homage, and put under Abubakare, son of Allmi
	Ogele	Abdulai slave of Emir Shita	

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1. For this district, at least, the account given is much simplified. Contrast with Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure in Afon District, Report by Captain Burnett 1912.

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Afon	Iaduba	Kontan follower of Garuba, 3rd Balogun Alanamu	Reg: Emir Shita
	Ila Oke	Shekunbi by fealty to Usumanu, 1st Balogun Fulani	"
	Oko Erin	Erin slave of Emir Shita	
Akanbi	Akanbi	Akanbi slave of Emir Shita	
	Opolo	Koro favourite of Emir Abdusalami	
	Ilofa	Durosini Yoruba chief, scattered but reinstated by Abdusalami	
	Magaji	Momodun son of Abudu, 2nd Baba Isale	

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Akanbi	Kulende	Jobo relation of Usmanu, 1st Balogun Fulani	
	(a) Tankeh		
	Kangile	Kangile, slave of Balogun Ali	
	Karkara		No original head
Ejidogari	Ejidogari	Umoru Sanda nephew of Emir Abdusalami	Umoru gave the land to Eji slave of Sarkin Dogari, afterwards exiled by Dwyer (a jealous Hausa farmer)
	(a) Aniya		Remarks on Lanwa
	(b) Abike I		Grouping are appli-
	(c) Ogumbo		cable to Ejidogari
	(d) Olokitti		
	(e) Okuta Ila		
	(f) Aiyede		
	(g) Aiyetoro		

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Ejidogari	(h) Itigiwa (i) Jeje (j) Arlore		Original holder a Hausa slave
	Amu	Alege son of Emir Zubeiru	
	Babadudu	Balogun Ali 2nd Balogun Gambari	
	Okutala	Magaji Akiali slave of Emir Shita	
Igporin	Igporin	Allah Sariki slave of Bako, 1st Sarkin Gambari	Rights in this land surrendered to Emir Shita, who wanted it for Magaji Akiali
	Apado	Bako 1st Sarkin Gambari	
	(a) Agbeyangi (b) Pepele (c) Oke Oyi		

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Igporin	(d) Oke Ose		
	Moya	Ojo hunter given by Ali, 2nd Balogun Gambari	
	Ile-apa	Warri follower of Abdu- salami	
Lanwa	Lanwa	Adendelu [sic] slave of Emir Shita	Lanwa comprises all the following, (a) to (i). The respec- tive bales act rather as a staff to Adendelu than as separate village area heads.
	(a) Ama		
	(b) Bode Sadu		
	(c) Sulu		
	(d) Idowu		
	(e) Biribiriri		
	(f) Isakara		
	(g) Cata		
	(h) Awukunle		
	(i) Jebba		



<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Ianwa	Okemi	Abdulkaddiri nephew of Emir Abdusalami	
	Addio	Alfa Saddku slave to Emir Shita	
	Zaki	Alfa Zaki scribe to Emir Shita	
Malete	Malete	Aliu Isola follower of Abubakare, 1st Basambo (Emir's family)	
	(a) Jenkunu		
	(b) Ajanaku		
	(c) Gbugudu		
	(d) Logun		
	(e) Aga		
	(f) Paku		
Oloru	Oloru	Balogun Ali 2nd Balogun Gambari	Presented by Balogun Ali to his slave Omodare
	(a) Alara		

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Oloru	(b) Tepatan		
	(c) Mamah		
	(d) Pakumah		
	(e) Olomu		
	(f) Abuyarriin		
	(g) Aroyewun		
	(h) Alagbede		
	(1) Yowere		
	Adio		Asaju slave of Emir Shita
	(a) Yeregi		
	(b) Onibaramu		
(c) Braimah Ayaki			
Shao		Ajia Atikekere slave of Emir Shita	
(a) Ashomu			
(b) Yeke			

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Area</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Onire	Onire	Magaji Ojukun follower of Abdusalami	
	(a) Adigbongbo		
	(b) Yowere		
	Alapa	Lawani Giwa follower of Balogun Ajikobi	
	(a) Budo Odde		
	Fata	Magaji Ogidi follower of Abdusalami	
	(b) Agbona Market		
	Awe	Zarumi follower of Abdusalami	
	(a) Orimaro		
Owode	Owode	Ajia Ijsha slave of Emir Zubeiru	
	(a) Sokoto		
	(b) Mahrah		
	(c) Otetere		

<u>District</u>	<u>Village Head</u>	<u>Original Head</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Owode	Bala	Sanda follower of Balogun Alanamu	Reg: Emir Zubeiru
	Berkodo	Amodu Sarkin Dogari	Reg: Abdusalami
	(a) Gambari		
	(b) Kinlhum		
	Efue	Otu slave of Afin <sup>1</sup> head of slaves	Reg: Abdusalami
	Igbogun	Igbogun slave of Emir Zubeiru	
Paiye	Paiye	Amodu Baki follower of Buari, 3rd Balogun Ajikobi	
	(a) Bello Ipa		
	(b) Inawole		
	(c) Guniyan		
	(d) Awuyan		

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1. i.e. slave of Balogun Afin, for whom see Political and Administrative Outline, p.6.

### CONCLUSION

The first impression of Ilorin, of nineteenth century rise and twentieth century decline, can be seen to be in large part true. In the twentieth century, the previously prosperous entrepot was in decline, no new export crop had been found, and for Ilorin there was even a limited entry only into the long-distance foodstuffs trade. As for Ilorin's industries, the lantana industry and trade collapsed even more thoroughly than the entrepot trade. The weaving industry continued, however, even innovating in some respects, as trading Ilorin had failed to do. Nevertheless, there is evidence of some decline in weavers' numbers and of some conservatism, and less profit, perhaps, flowed into Ilorin from the weaving industry than might have done. The pottery industry even expanded during the twentieth century, but it was operating on a far lower profit level than the nineteenth century luxury industries had done. Colonial efforts to "improve" the industries came far too late for the bead trade, and were simply irrelevant to the others. Also irrelevant to Ilorin, however, despite evidence of some industrial decline, is any simple model describing the collapse of local industries due to the competition of European goods.

To say that Ilorin experienced a twentieth century

decline is also perhaps too simple a statement, as it is difficult to find a baseline date for the beginning of this decline. In some ways the Ilorin entrepot was already declining well before the turn of the century, while some entrepot functions continued in the town as late as the 1950s. Again, the bead industry appeared to flourish in the early colonial period, only beginning its own decline in the middle to late 1920s.

The reasons for Ilorin's decline and lack of re-development are complex, and the various models of underdevelopment are of limited use. To say, as does Samir Amin, that prosperity flowed to the south and away from the savanna has some relevance to Ilorin, but fails to explain the continuing prosperity of Hausa, as opposed to Ilorin, traders. The model suggested by Gunder Frank and others, that those economies which are sucked into the world economic system are those that suffer underdevelopment, is of no help in considering Ilorin. In fact, the Ilorin situation was exactly the opposite: it is the fact that Ilorin was inadequately sucked into the international economy, as compared with, say, Abeokuta, and even Offa, that led to its lagging behind. Isolation, in the case of Ilorin, did not lead to growth; precisely the reverse.

It seems that to some degree, at least, Ilorin chose its own isolation. Certainly, it had less chance of twentieth century profit making than the export crop areas; but it seems to have withdrawn from any suggestion of

involvement in long-distance trade. Faced with a contraction of its economic prospects, Ilorin turned inwards, and consolidated what remained to it in the rural areas around the town.<sup>1</sup> The middleman and baba kekere roles had brought great wealth to Ilorin in the nineteenth century; in the twentieth, its people fell back on these roles, in the now insular, contracted economy. But in their eagerness to extract maximum profit from these roles in the rural areas (other opportunities for profit-making having declined), they were instrumental in preventing the development of their own agricultural hinterland and its people.

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  - ii. Dr. I.A. Gambari of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (son of the Emir of Ilorin), 27/9/82.
  - iii. Alhaji Yekini A. Okunola (a native of Offa, local historian and member of Ilorin Agricultural Development Project staff), 16/12/82.
- and, in alphabetical order, according to compound:
- iv. Mrs. Adepate Hassan, Ile Alabere, Okelele, Ilorin, 26/5/80 and 30/5/80 (see also I B ii a below).
  - v. Mrs. Belawu Issa, Ile Oyinbo Alagbede, Okelele, 31/5/80 and 3/6/80.
  - vi. Alhaji Abdulkarim and others, Ile Ashileke, Okelele, 29/5/80 and 1/6/80.
  - vii. Adama (Adamo), Ile Babayo, Okelele, 5/6/80.
  - viii. Madam Fatimoh, Ile Babayo, Okelele, 2/9/82.
  - ix. Alhaji Yahaya Kalu, Ile Olabintan, Okekere, 28/5/81 and 6/10/81 (follow-up to interview by Otolirin Adesiyun, for which see p.351 below).
  - x. Mrs. Sifawo Awero (Iya Shao-le), compound not recorded, at Ebu Dada, her working place, 27/5/80 and 2/6/80.



B. Interviews conducted on the present writer's behalf by Toyin Ibrahim Hassan, of Ile Tuntun, Okelele, mostly in July/Aug. 1981.

(i) Follow-up interviews conducted with a number of the aged weavers previously interviewed by Otolirin Adesiyun (see p.351 below), and in one case with the successor of a weaver previously interviewed. These interviews in most cases were taperecorded.

- a. Baba Onimangoro, Ile Alasinrin, Pakata.
- b. Alfa Adelodun, Ile Baraye, Idi Igba.
- c. Alfa Sheu Fasaunsi, Ode Isowo (Ile Isowo).
- d. Alfa Abdul Lasisi, Ile Onikan.
- e. Aminu Sinhaba, Ile Sayedun.
- f. Alfa Raji (successor to previous magaji), Singini Quarter.

(ii) Other interviews by Toyin Hassan:

- a. Mrs. Adepate Hassan, Ile Alabere, Okelele.
- b. Iya Adamo (mother of Adama, see A vi above), Ile Babaoye, Okelele.
- c. A group of potters making water coolers, Ile Babaoye.
- d. Alfa Salimonu, Ile Kongbari, Abayawo Rd.
- e. Raheem Olesin, Ile Olesin, Okelele.
- f. Alhaji Alaga, Ile Olodo, Okelele.
- g. Iya Baba Ile Olodo, Okelele.
- h. The Manager, Prospect Textile Mill, Ilorin, 14/7/81.

(iii) Information from Toyin Hassan, following his interviews with Alhaji Babatunde Elias, of Ile Tuntun, Okelele, Ilorin, and Oruola Keji village in Oyo L.G.A., Oyo State. Information received 11/11/80 and 30/1/81.

C. Interview with the Sarkin Gobir, Ilorin, 23/4/83, conducted by A.I. Alesinloye and H.J. O'Hear. Mr. Alesinloye, a member of the Baba Isale family, Idiape, Ilorin, was able to confirm the statements made by the Sarkin Gobir.

D. Other informants, among whom the following may be singled out:

- i. Adefemi Samuel Adesina, Elemaso Compound, Shao, 28/8/82.
- ii. Emmanuel Alao, Oluo Isale Ruling House, Oke Oyi, Nov. 1980 and 16/1/81.
- iii. E.B. Bolaji, Ile Bale Ibagun, Okelele, Ilorin, 1983.
- iv. J.D. Clarke, formerly Education Officer, Ilorin Province, 4/8/79 and 25/6/81.
- v. Kayode A. Ibrahim, Ile Magaji Are, Idiape, Ilorin. This informant carried out investigations in Ile Magaji Are, Ile Alahun, Ile Ashileke (see also A v above), Ile Awola, Ile Balogun Alanamu and Ile Eleyinla (Agbaje), 1982-83.
- vi. Amuda Shaibu Oganija, Ile Oganija, Oke Apomu, Ilorin. This informant is a member of a weaving family and the

son of a dealer in woven cloth. Information received Aug./Sep. 1978.

- vii. Ibrahim Olabintan, Ile Olabintan, Okekere, Ilorin (grandson of the weaver Alh. Yahaya Kalu, for whom see A ix above), 1981.
- viii. Bayo Abubakar Yahaya, Ile Onileke, Ilorin, 9/6/82.

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66 Rev. A.C. Mann.

69 George Meakin.

85 Rev. Henry Townsend.

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(ii) Archival Material in Nigeria.a. National Archives Ibadan.

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b. National Archives Kaduna.

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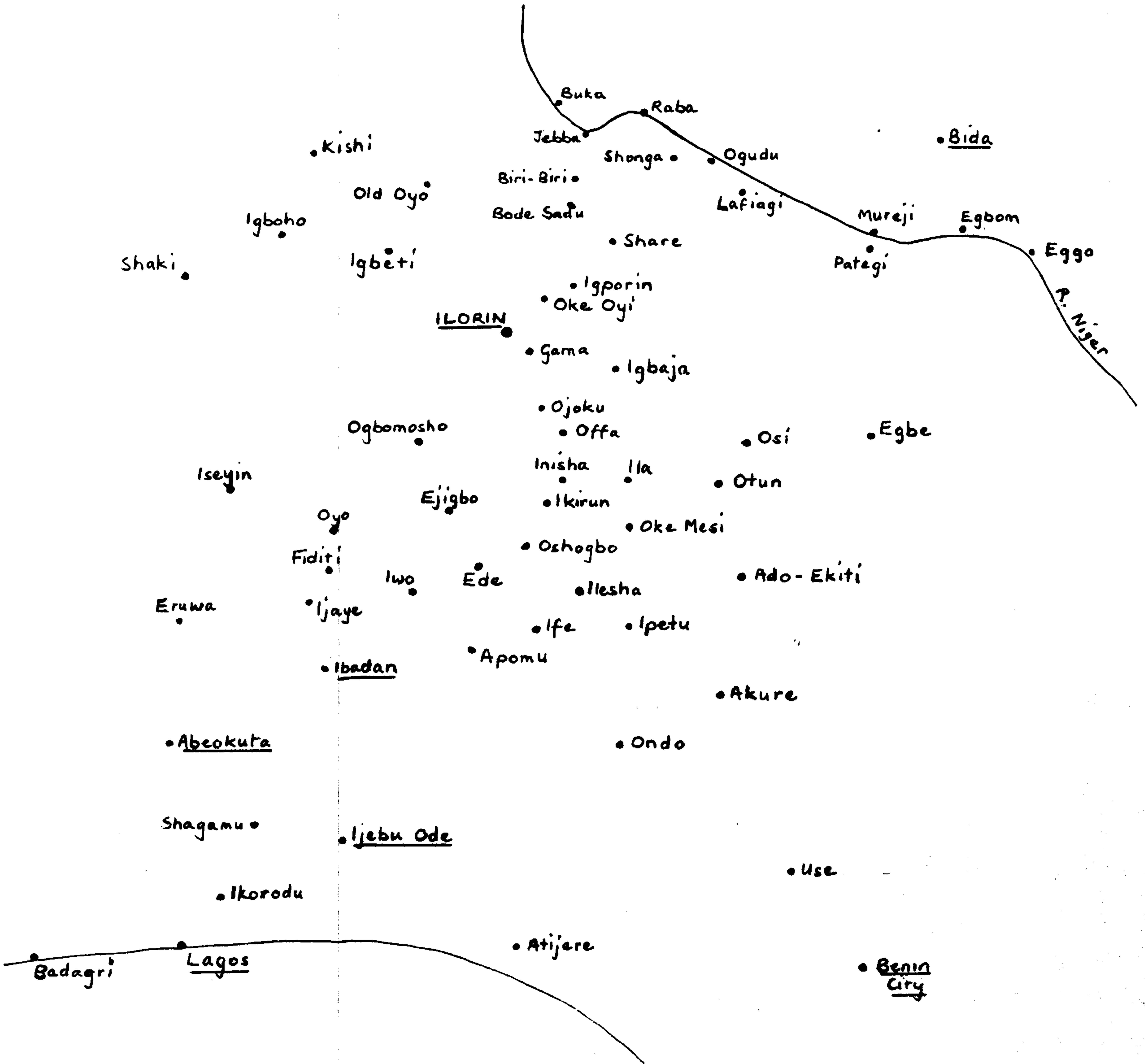
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MAP 1: ILORIN: TRADE ROUTES

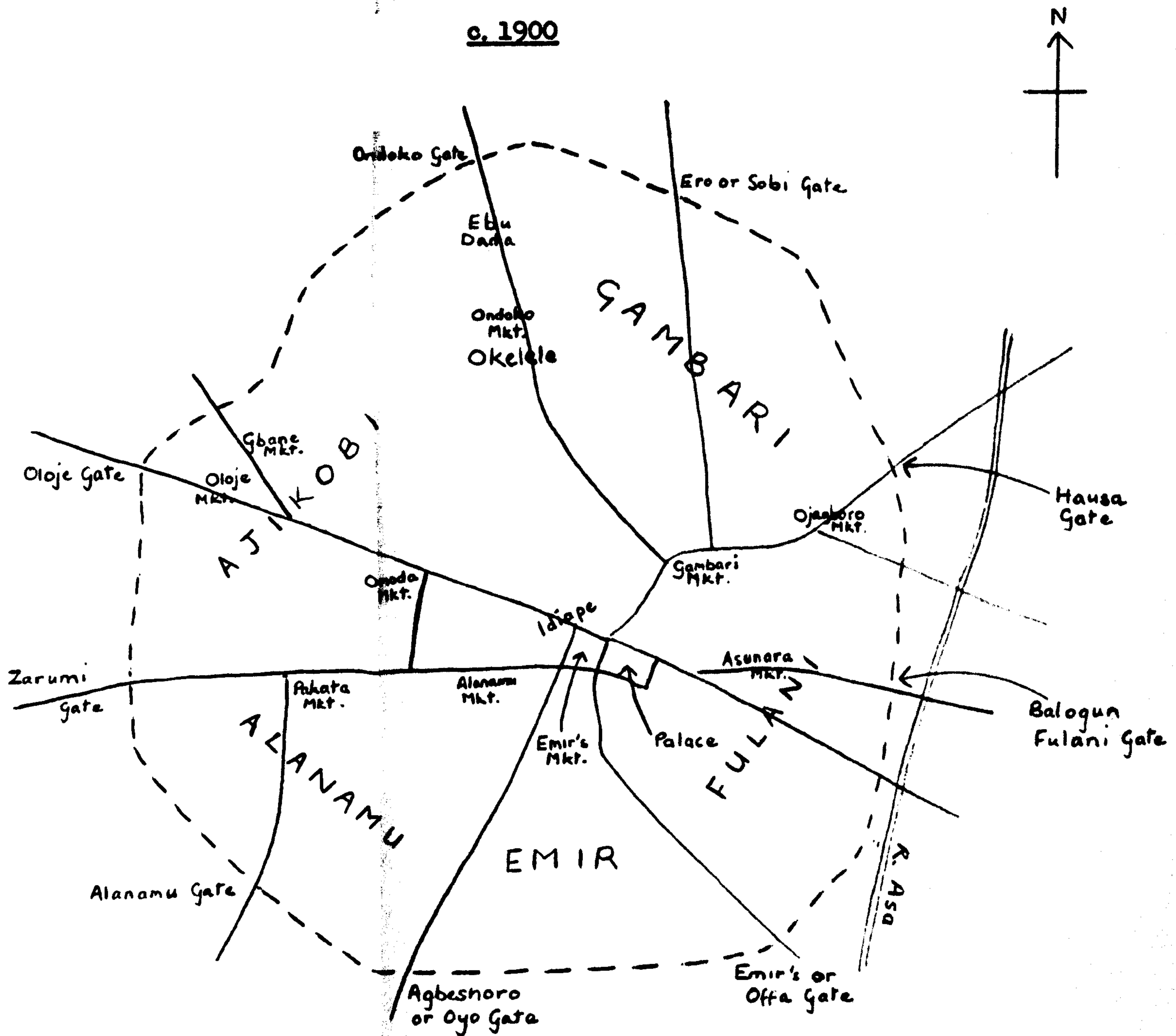


Scale: approx 1" to 30 miles.



MAP 2: ILORIN TOWN

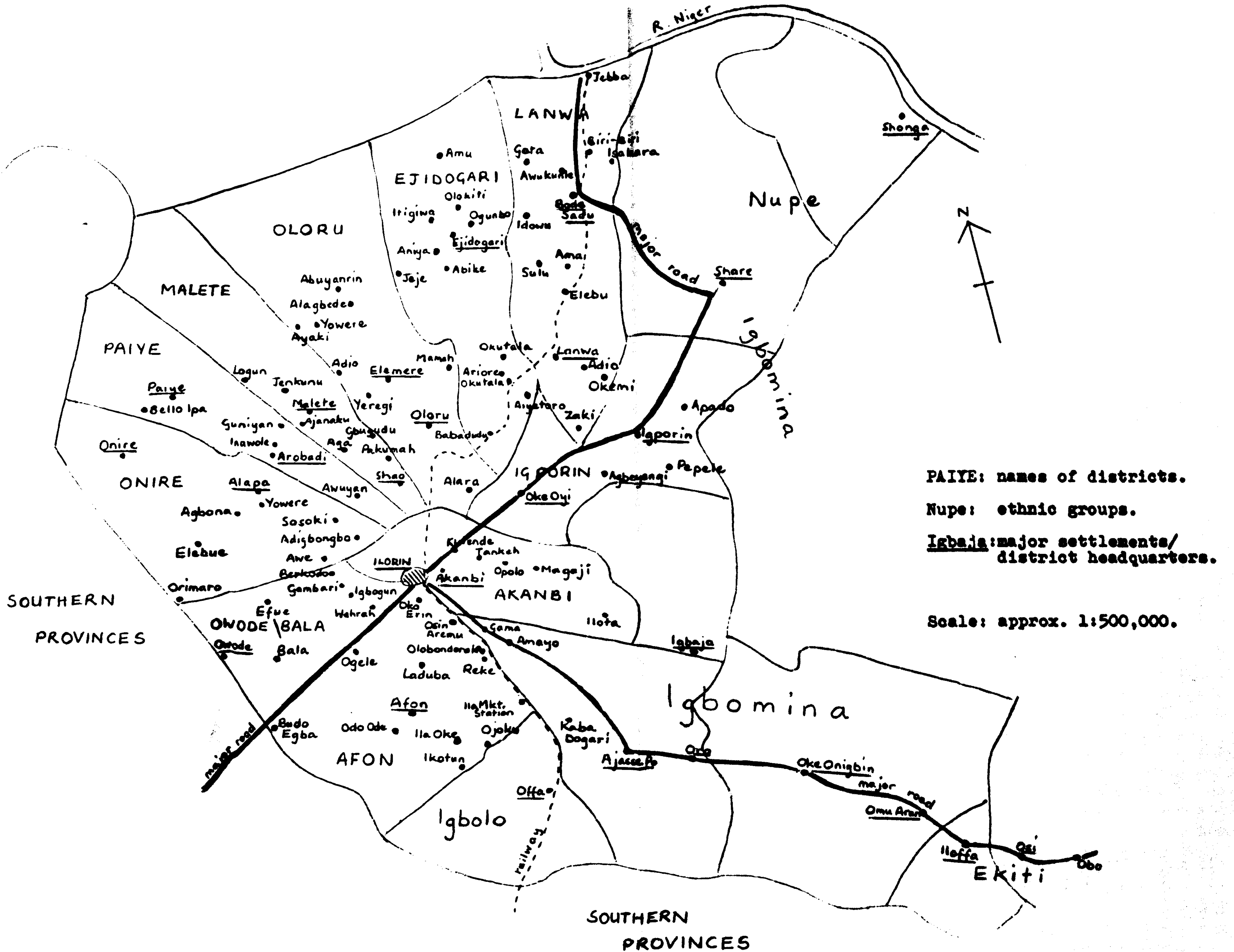
c. 1900



Sources: NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Re-Assessment by A/R Lethem; H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929); PRO CO 147/124, Plan of Ilorin by C.F.S. Vandeleur, 1897.

Scale: approx. 1" to 1000 yds.

Map 3: ILORIN EMIRATE c. 1930



SOUTHERN PROVINCES

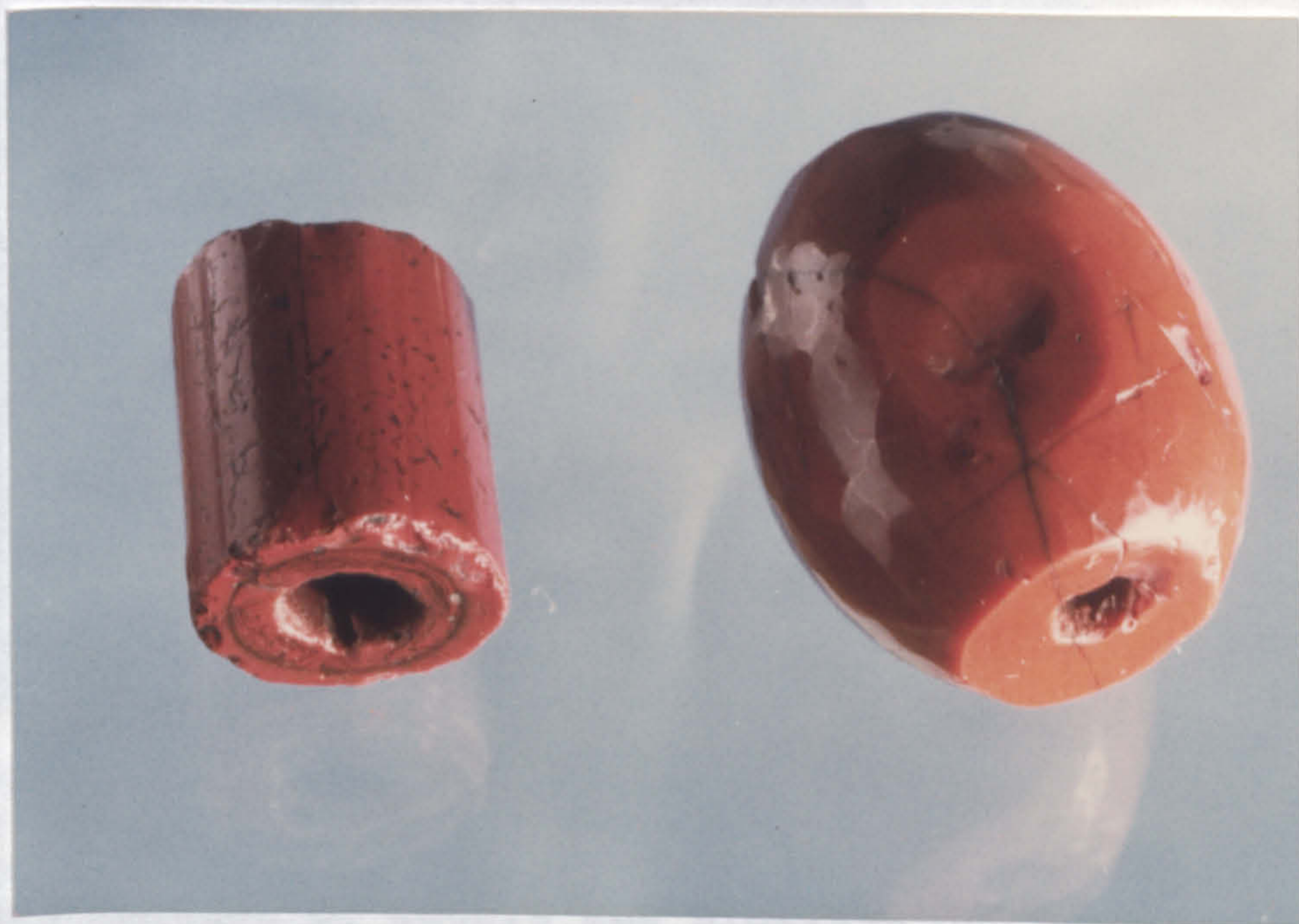
PLATES

## PLATE I



PLATES I AND II: two views of Ilorin beads, approx. 3 times actual size. These are less translucent in reality than they appear in the photographs.

## PLATE II



with the  
central  
hole and  
patterns.

## PLATE III



## PLATE IV



PLATES III and IV: Alhaji Yahaya Kalu Olabintan, with two pieces of his cloth. On left, older style warp striped patterns, using indigo dyes. On right, Alh. Yahaya'a own combination of double and single-sided weft float patterns.

## PLATE V



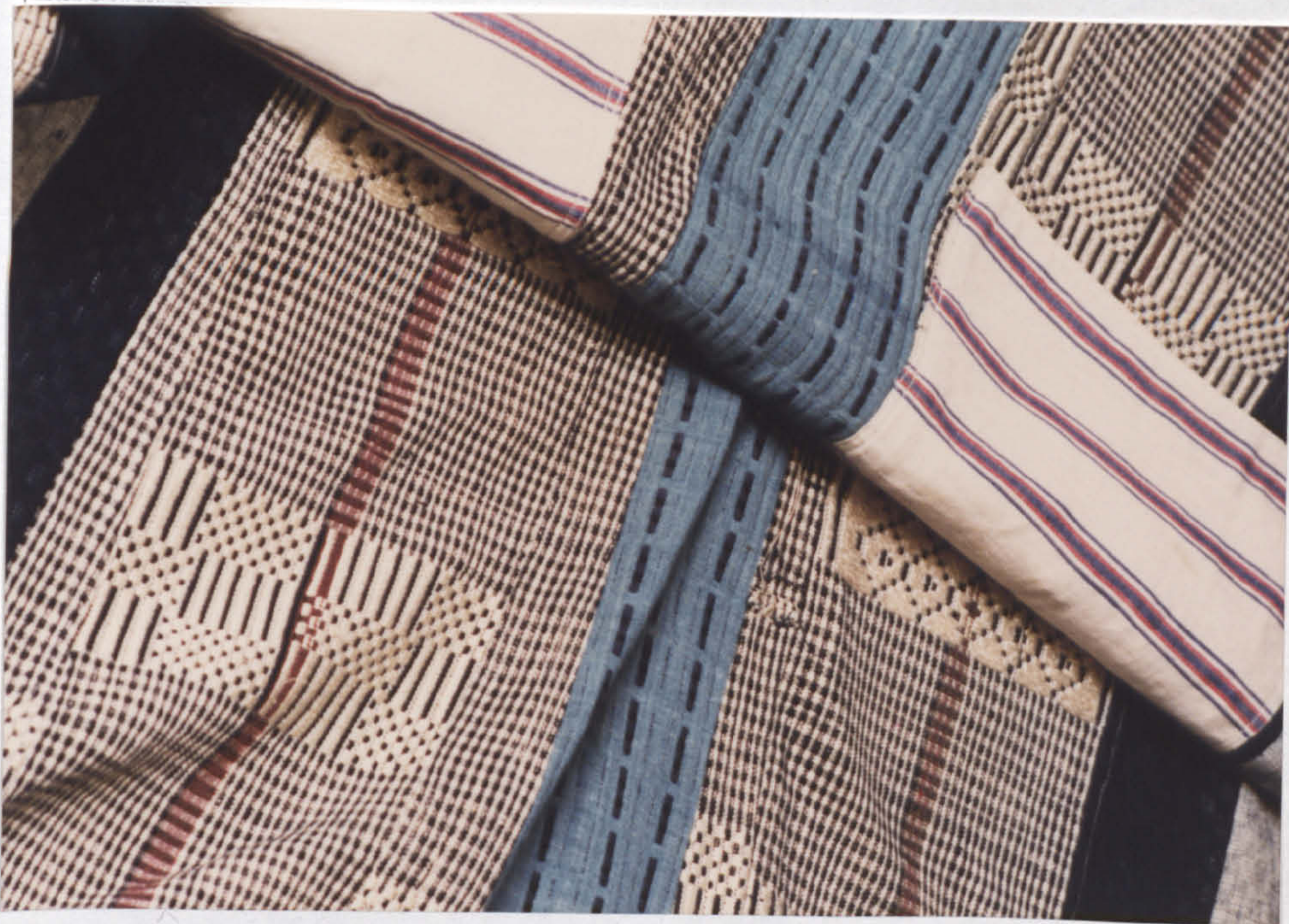
A further example of the combination double and single-sided weft float patterns. Woven by Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan, or possibly by another member of his family. Right-hand panel shows reverse side of the cloth.

## PLATE VI



PLATES VI and VII: gown in Danford Collection, C.W.A.S., University of Birmingham, showing double and single-sided weft float patterns. Very probably woven by Alh. Yahaya Kalu Olabintan. Lustrous cream-coloured thread, probably imported artificial silk or rayon, used for designs. Embroidery added after weaving. Plate VII shows reverse side.

## PLATE VII



## PLATE VIII



Modern Ilorin woven cloth, showing single-sided weft-float patterns of broad weft stripes and stylised Koran boards. Gold metallic thread used in warp stripes. Due to the lighting used in photography, the background colour of the cloth appears brown; it is in fact deep red. Oniwala pattern.

## PLATE IX



Modern Ilorin woven cloth, with single-sided weft float pattern in green, pink and cream. Silver metallic thread used in warp stripes. Ododo Muritala pattern.



## PLATE X



Modern Ilorin woven cloth, with single-sided weft float pattern: "Alhaji Mamanyile Okoh Okekere Ilorin Kwara State", etc. Gold metallic thread used in warp stripe.

## PLATE XI



Modern Ilorin Woven cloth. Gold metallic thread used in warp stripe. Alari pattern. Due to the lighting used, the background colour appears brown; it is in fact deep red.

## PLATE XII



Ilorin red pots, for water or other storage. Red slip added.

## PLATE XIII



Large red water pots.

## PLATE XIV



PLATES XIV-XIX (see also following pages): the process of making a red storage pot. Note use of an old pot for making the basic shape, and use of building method in adding to this shape.

## PLATE XV



## PLATE XVI

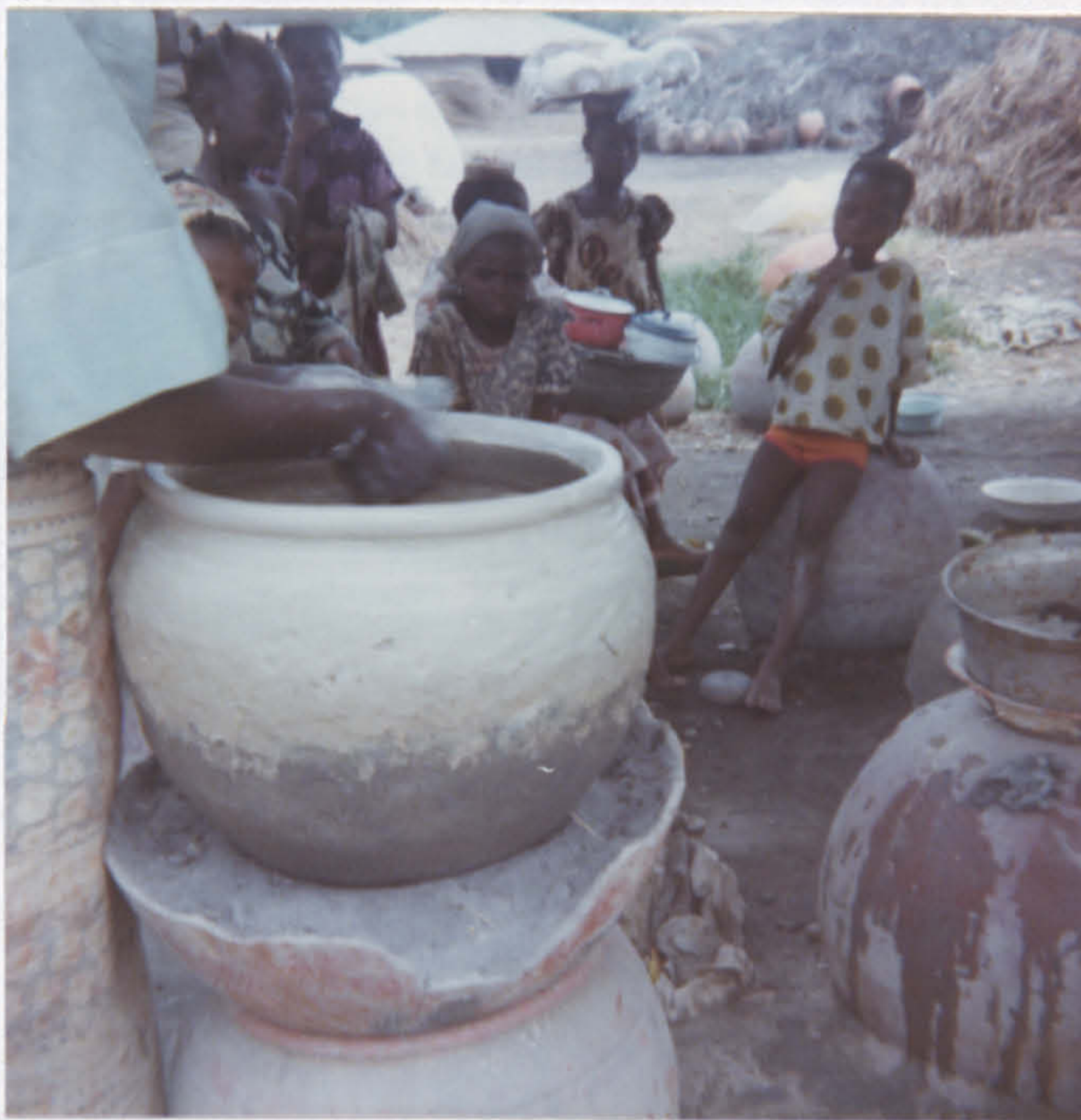


PLATES XVI, XVII: Making a storage pot. Building method.

## PLATE XVII



## PLATES XVIII and XIX



Making a storage pot: final stages.

## PLATE XX

Perforated pot used for  
smoking meat or fish  
(ajere).



## PLATE XXI

Double ended pedestal  
oil lamp, made by an  
old Ilorin potter.  
Rarely produced  
nowadays.





## PLATES XXII and XXIII



Madam Fatimoh, of Ile Baboeye, Ilorin,  
making a water cooler. Note use of  
plastic and enamel containers.

PLATE  
XXIV



Longer-necked water cooler, made  
only to order nowadays.



Madam Fatimoh, Ile Babaoye, making  
such a pot.

PLATE  
XXV

## PLATE XXVI



Black pot. Note slightly concave-centred lid, and central knob.

## PLATE XXVII



Black pots (centre of picture) in Idiape pot market, showing underside of lid.

## PLATES XXVIII and XXIX



Black soup pots, showing designs on inside and underside.

## PLATE XXX



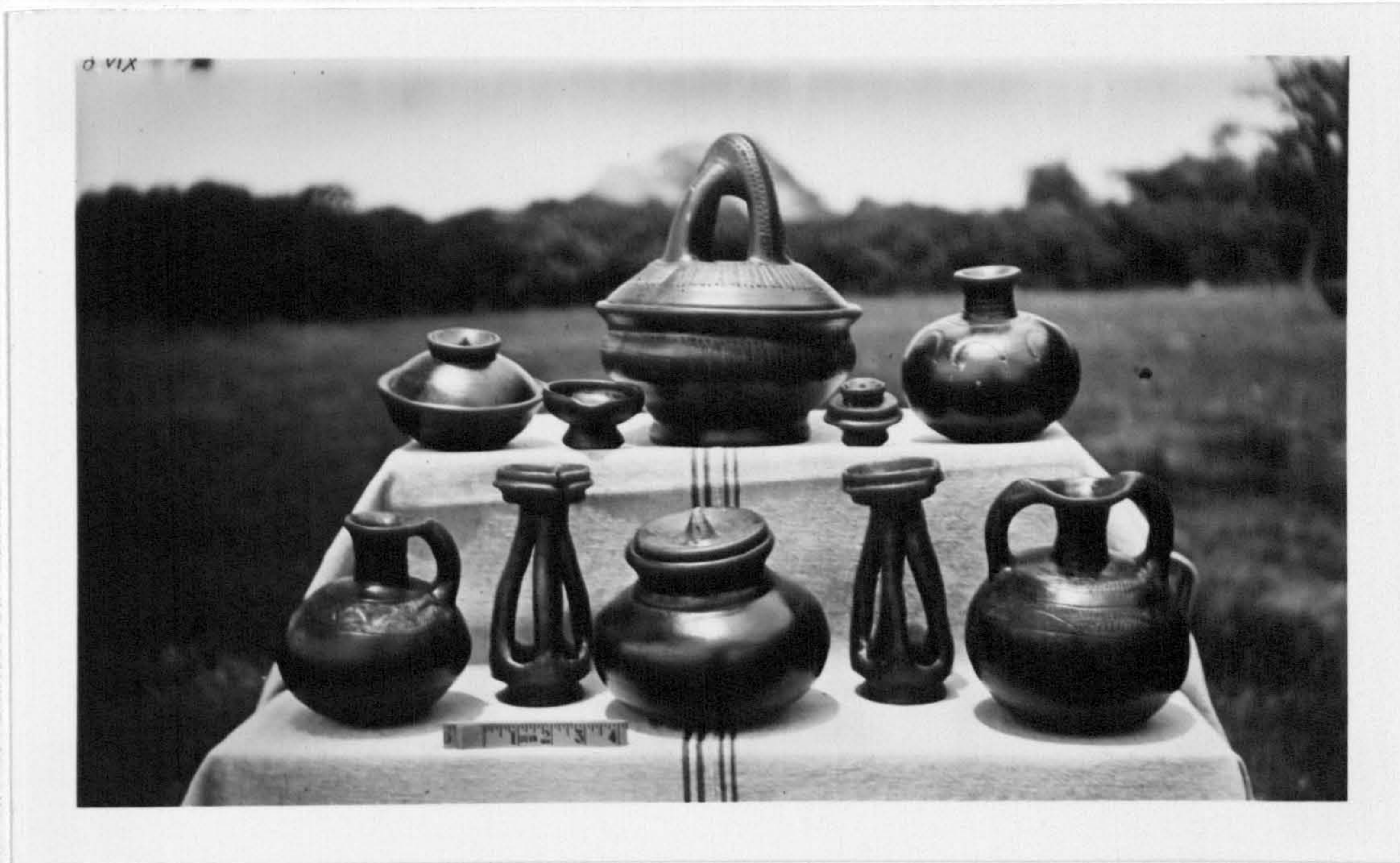
Medicine pot (oru). Note bronze colour given by locust bean pod liquor.

## PLATE XXI



Medicine pot being dipped in locust bean pod liquor. Locust bean pods at right of picture.

## PLATE XXXII (Macfie Collection, Y 304 3C 167)



Black pottery, Ilorin, 1912. Note range of designs.

## PLATE XXXIII (Macfie Collection, Y 304 3C 165)



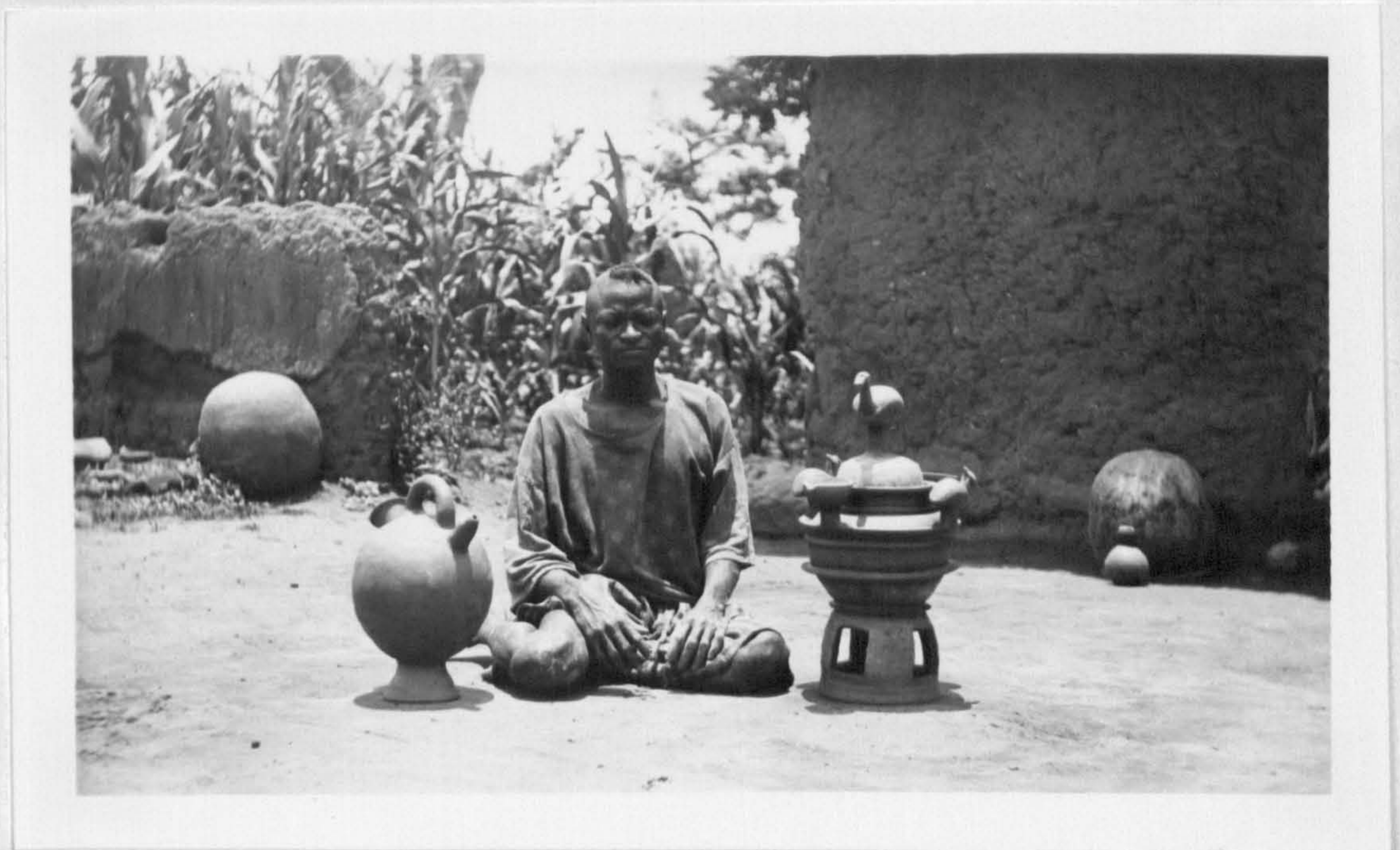
Black pottery 1912, firing. Note concave-centred lids and central knobs.

## PLATE XXXIV (Macfie Collection, Y 304 3C 162)



Black pots at Ilorin Railway Station, 1912.

## PLATE XXXV (Macfie Collection, Y 304 3C 168)



The Hausa potter, Ilorin, 1912.

COLONIAL GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURAL POLICIES, ILORIN<sup>1</sup>

Ann O'Hear

Nov. 1982.

This paper is intended to provide background for a wider study of the "underdevelopment" (to what extent and for what reasons) of Ilorin and the surrounding districts during the colonial period. Reference is made especially to agricultural activities in or affecting the area around Ilorin known as the "metropolitan districts". "Agriculture" is broadly defined, to include cattle breeding and animal husbandry including poultry, which were under the purview of the Agricultural Department.

The work of the Ilorin Agricultural Department began in 1913,<sup>2</sup> and, from the outset, a considerable emphasis was placed on the development of export crops.

In 1907 the (Lagos) Commercial Intelligence Officer, C.A. Birtwistle, had visited Ilorin and assessed its prospects. He was particularly impressed with the prospects of an export trade in cotton,<sup>3</sup> a crop which was soon taken up by the Ilorin Agricultural Department. One of the chief activities of the Department in the early years was the "breeding up" of an indigenous cotton (or the introduction of an exotic variety) which would be of a higher export value than the local variety then grown.<sup>4</sup> Experiments with Allen's Leng Staple Cotton took place for example at Ilorin, Bode Sadu and Offa.<sup>5</sup> Much later, in 1929, Isahan cotton was being tested.<sup>6</sup>

1. Abbreviated references to some files (NAK and NAI) and published annual reports are used in the footnotes. For full references, see pp. 41-43 below.

2. H. Hermon-Hodge, Gazetteer of Ilorin Province (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), p.245.

3. NAK SNP 7/8 146/1907, Trade and Prospects of Ilorin Province, C.A. Birtwistle, para.9.

4. Hermon-Hodge, p.245.

5. IPAR 1919.

6. Hermon-Hodge, p.251.

A great deal of work was done on the pests and diseases of cotton.<sup>1</sup> Seed was distributed for many years, even into the late 1930s,<sup>2</sup> and even as late as 1940 an Isahan seed distribution scheme was being proposed.<sup>3</sup>

But, in the long run, the efforts to make cotton an important export crop in Ilorin Province failed. Although a reasonably large amount was exported in the early years, up to a peak of approximately 2,500 tons in 1921,<sup>4</sup> exports thereafter declined considerably to about 2-300 tons per year, and plunged to virtually nothing in the early 1930s.<sup>5</sup>

Virtually no Allen cotton -- the favoured variety -- seems ever to have been exported from Ilorin.<sup>6</sup> Much time appears to have been wasted in continuing the experiments and efforts, since as early as 1919 both the Director of Agriculture of the Northern Provinces and Thornton, the Ilorin Superintendent

1. Ibid., p.252.

2. IPAR 1925, para.74; IPAR 1936, para.65; IPAR 1937, para.66; 2887, 2853/38, R.L. Payne Deputy Resident to Supt. of Agric. Ilorin, 16/8/35, Ilorin N.A. Administration Estimates 1936-37, New Item.

3. 4007/s.10, 674/IAS/67, AO Ilorin to Resident, 30/11/40, Coordination of Welfare Department, para.2.

4. IPAR 1915, para.96; IPAR 1916, Purchases of Seed Cotton (BCGA) 1915 and 1916, and Railway Exports 1916 Cotton; IPAR 1917, para.58; IPAR 1918 (Ilorprof), para.65; IPAR 1919, para.92; IPAR 1921, para.205; S.A.Agboola,

"Some Geographical Influences upon the Population and Economy of the Middle Belt West of the Niger" (M.A. thesis, University of London, 1962).

5. IPAR 1924, para.94 and Return of Produce Purchased 1924 Cotton; IPAR 1925, para.122 and Return of Produce Purchased 1925 Cotton; IPAR 1926, para.80 and Return of Produce Purchased 1926 Cotton; IPAR 1927, Return of Produce Purchased 1927 Cotton; IPAR 1928, para.101; IPAR 1929, para.108; IPAR 1930, para.115 and Return of Produce Purchased 1930 Cotton; IPAR 1931, para.112 and Return of Produce Purchased 1931 Cotton; IPAR 1932, para.104 and Return of Produce Purchased 1932 Cotton.

6. IPAR 1924, para.94; IPAR 1926, para.80.



of Agriculture, were reporting that Ilorin had been proved to be a province unsuitable for the development of cotton.<sup>1</sup>

A number of reasons were responsible for the failure. Notably, Allen's Long Staple, favoured by the merchants, could not be grown successfully in Ilorin. Considerable boll-shedding<sup>2</sup> led to low yields -- between 31 and 313 lb. per acre as compared with nearly 600 at Zaria,<sup>3</sup> and the high percentage of staining meant that what cotton was produced was of low quality.<sup>4</sup> Thus the failure of Allen at Ilorin appears to have been largely due to its susceptibility to insect pests -- bollworm and cotton stainer. This susceptibility, further, seems to have some connection with the rainfall pattern; the humid conditions of November and December were said to allow the cotton stainer to thrive.<sup>5</sup> This explanation connects humidity with cotton stainer attack; earlier explanations also connected humidity with boll-shedding.<sup>6</sup>

Ishan cotton, which was also tried by the Agricultural Department, also could not be grown successfully in the area:

1. IPAR 1918 (SNP), AG. SNP to Director of Agric, 26/6/19; IPAR 1919, para.103;
2. IPAR 1918 (SNP), 638/1919, AG. Director of Agric. Northern Provinces to SNP, 11/7/19; IPAR 1919, SNP to Director of Agric. Kaduna, 30/8/20, sending extract from memo by Resident Ilorin, paras.8,9.
3. IPAR 1919, SNP to Director of Agric. Kaduna, 30/8/20, sending extract from memo by Resident Ilorin, para.5.
4. Agboola, pp.159-60, citing O.B.Lean, "Comparative observations on the pests of cotton at Ilorin, Northern Nigeria", 6th Annual Bulletin of the Agricultural Department, Lagos, 1927, p.142.
5. Ibid., pp.158-59, referring to experiments from 1924 onwards.
6. IPAR 1919, SNP to Director of Agric. Kaduna, 30/8/20, sending extract from memo by Resident Ilorin, paras.8, 9; ibid., 1395/1920, memo in reply from Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Kaduna to SNP Kaduna, 2/9/20, para. 2(b). 3(b).

and in any case it was not favoured for export, or by the local weavers.<sup>1</sup>

A note on local cotton may be added here. The percentage of lint obtained from the local cotton was low.<sup>2</sup> It also had short staples<sup>3</sup> and was considered to be rough and harsh and brown in colour.<sup>4</sup> Thus it was not favoured by the merchants and fetched a lower export price than Allen's.<sup>5</sup> The amounts of local cotton exported (except from Bode Sadu)<sup>6</sup> declined greatly during the 1920s, because higher prices were offered in the local markets for cotton to be used in local weaving<sup>7</sup> and because export prices for it continued to be low.<sup>8</sup>

1. Agboola, p.157, citing J.R.Mackie, "The possibilities of increased production of cotton in Nigeria", Empire Cotton Growing Review 25 (1948), 10.
2. IPAR 1915, para.97; Agboola, p.155.
3. Agboola, p.155, citing C.N. French, Report on the Cotton Growing and Industry of Nigeria (London: 1925), p. 12.
4. Ibid., p.155, citing N.M. Pense, Cotton in British West Africa (London: 1920), pp. 11 and 12.
5. IPAR 1919, 1395/1920, from Director of Agric. Northern Provinces to SNP Kaduna, 2/9/20.
6. IPAR 1924, para.94 and Return of Produce Purchased 1924 Cotton; IPAR 1925, paras.122, 123 and Return of Produce Purchased 1925 Cotton; IPAR 1926, para.80 and Return of Produce Purchased 1926 Cotton; IPAR 1927, Return of Produce Purchased 1927 Cotton; IPAR 1928, paras.80-84, 101 and Return of Produce Purchased 1928 Cotton; IPAR 1929, para.108 and Return of Produce Purchased 1929 Cotton.
7. IPAR 1925, para.122; IPAR 1926, paras.64, 80; Hermon-Hodge, pp.237, 254.
8. NAK Ilorin 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, para.26; IPAR 1925, para. 100; IPAR 1926, paras.64, 80.

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Finally, in Bode Sadu, where little or no local weaving was done,<sup>1</sup> exports of cotton appear to have declined in the 1930s, when export prices fell to a very low level.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that in Bode Sadu the trade continued for as long as the export price remained sufficient for it to be at all profitable for the farmers there to interplant cotton, with little extra labour,<sup>3</sup> with the yams which they were profitably growing for sale.

Unlike the prewar period, when efforts to encourage cotton seem to have continued long after they might justifiably have been abandoned, a more cautious attitude seems to have prevailed after the Second World War. A 1947 statement of policy, for example, pointed out that before there could be improvements in cotton there would have to be a middle belt research station.<sup>4</sup> Again, in 1956, in response to pressure from Ilorin weaving interests, the Agricultural Department insisted that the employment of funds and staff on cotton in Ilorin Emirate would not be economically justified.<sup>5</sup> This was even at a time when extra funds had recently been allocated to agriculture.<sup>6</sup> However, some efforts were made in Borgu to encourage cotton as an export crop,<sup>7</sup> and even to encourage cotton growing in

1. IPAR 1925, para.123; IPAR 1926, para.80.
2. Eg. IPAR 1930, paras.95, 115; IPAR 1931, para.112; IPAR 1932, part 3, para.13; IPAR 1934, para.65. Also Returns of Produce Purchased Cotton in IPARs 1930, 1931, 1932.
3. Hermon-Hodge, pp.238-39; see also IPAR 1919, 1395/1920, Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Kaduna to SNP Kaduna, 2/9/20, para.4.
4. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, Export Crops.
5. IPAR 1956, para.58.
6. See p. 30 below.
7. IPAR 1955, para.7; IPAR 1959, para.60.

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the metropolitan districts.<sup>1</sup>

Tobacco was another potential export crop which was encouraged in Ilorin Province in the early years. Experiments were carried out at Ilorin, Otun and Bode Sadu.<sup>2</sup> Various imported tobaccos were tried, and satisfactory results reported, with respect to return per acre and quality.<sup>3</sup> By 1919, Thornton had worked out a method of "preparing a bright leaf" which according to him was simple and readily understood by the farmers; and he noted with satisfaction that the farmers were carrying out the instructions they had been given.<sup>4</sup> By 1920 "a great extension of Virginian 5 tobacco" was reported in the western part of the province, and in 1921 nurseries and curing sheds had been erected at the headquarters of each district; although, in contrast to the cooperative attitude noted above, slow progress was being made with the farmers in 1921; they were said to be unaware of the benefits of "topping" and "suckering", and possibly disinclined to put in the labour involved.<sup>5</sup> Annual tobacco shows were held, and in the same year, 1921, one of the firms purchased all the exportable varieties displayed, amounting to 4571 lb., and there were as many as 247 exhibitors as opposed to 105 in the preceding year.<sup>7</sup>

In 1922, however, the tobacco show was not a success, and was not attended by any representatives of the commercial firms;<sup>8</sup> in 1924 it was reported that tobacco was not being taken up as a crop as expected;<sup>9</sup> and in 1925 the experiment was abandoned, as it was said that Thornton, despite his efforts, had been unable to arouse any enthusiasm for the crop,

1. NAK Ilorprof ACC 41, Touring Notes Ejidogari, 9-12/10/58.
2. IPAR 1917, para.57 for Otun and Bode Sadu.
3. IPAR 1915, para.101; IPAR 1916, para.107.
4. IPAR 1919, para.107.
5. IPAR 1920-21, para.104.
6. IPAR 1921, para.208.
7. Ibid., paras.211, 212.
8. IPAR 1922, para.109.
9. IPAR 1924, para.94.

except in one district or Lafagi-Fategi Division (Oke Onyun), and there was no prospect of making it a commercial success. In 1929, it was reported that the reason for this failure was that it had been found impracticable to produce tobacco of suitable quality by the curing methods available to local farmers.<sup>1</sup>

Although the experiment in tobacco-growing in Ilorin was abandoned for many years, it was revived in the 1950s, though not this time for export, by the Nigerian Tobacco Company. By 1955, Ilorin had a large-scale tobacco factory (run by a subsidiary of British-American Tobacco Company) but its tobacco (Virginian) came from Oyo and Zaria Provinces.<sup>2</sup> In 1956, however, N.T.C. was preparing to enlist the help of farmers in Northern Ilorin and Southern Borgu,<sup>3</sup> and in 1957 over 200 acres were planted under N.T.C. sponsorship in Afon, Onire, Paiye and Elemere areas, although an immediate problem was that poor soil and excessive rain spoiled an initially good crop.<sup>4</sup> An N.A. tobacco nursery was established at Alapa.<sup>5</sup> A further problem arose, namely that N.T.C. rates compared unfavourably with the profits to be gained by selling yams.<sup>6</sup> In 1959, the "promising start in commercial tobacco growing" in South East Ilorin was "nipped in the bud" by N.T.C.'s decision not to buy from Ilorin Division owing to "general over-production". Progress however had been made with a new scheme to establish flue-cured tobacco in Ilesha and Western Borgu.<sup>7</sup> By the time of independence, then, although some progress had been made, tobacco had still not

1. Ibid., para.94; IPAR 1925, para.127.
2. Hermon-Hodge, p.252.
3. K.N. Buchanan and J.C.Pugh, Land and People in Nigeria (London: 1955), p.205.
4. IPAR 1956, para.16.
5. IPAR 1957, para.49.
6. NAK Ilorprof ACC 80, Onire District Note Book (deals with 1958/59).
7. NAK Ilorprof 6/5 AFL/590/c.3, Complaints to DO Ilorin by the Association of Local Weavers and General Traders, Ilorin, against Nigerian Tobacco Company.
8. IPAR 1959, para.64.

been established as a major cash crop in the areas around Ilorin.

The initial failure of the tobacco experiments in the mid 1920s appears to have re-stimulated efforts to encourage another export crop, namely groundnuts.<sup>1</sup> These had been mentioned as early as 1907 as a potential export, and what was described as a large export trade had developed in Ilorin Province in the early years. By 1917, however, the trade had ceased altogether in the area between Ilorin and Jebba, and was confined to the riverine (Nupe) districts of the province.<sup>2</sup> The reason given for this decline was that the trade from the Ilorin to Jebba area in yams and yam flour was much more profitable than the trade in groundnuts.<sup>3</sup> A small export trade continued, virtually confined to the Nupe districts.<sup>4</sup>

Even in years when prices for groundnuts were good, farmers were reluctant to offer them for export.<sup>5</sup> This was due, in addition to the good prices offered for foodstuffs, to the processing problem which groundnuts involved. The method of shelling, it was said, entailed so much labour that prices for export even when good would not adequately compensate farmers for their efforts.<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Government efforts in Ilorin to encourage groundnut production increased in the mid 1920s. Experiments were carried out on Ilorin Government Farm,<sup>7</sup> and

1. Hermon-Hodge, p.253.
2. IPAR 1917, para.61.
3. NAK SNP 7/13 3096/1912, Ilorin Division, Lanwa District Reassessment Report by R.Scott Chapman, para.4; IPAR 1917, para.61.
4. IPAR 1924, Return of Produce Purchased 1924 Groundnuts; IPAR 1925, para.125, and Return of Produce Purchased 1925 Groundnuts; Hermon-Hodge, pp.200,253.
5. IPAR 1924, paras.80, 94.
6. Hermon-Hodge, p.237; also NAK Patigi District, May 1912, by A/R Budgen, para.36.
7. IPAR 1925, para.125; IPAR 1926, para.80.

seed was sold out to farmers for planting at various centres throughout the province.<sup>1</sup> A new method of shelling by treading was introduced by Thornton, a method which, it was claimed, enabled the work to be done with a minimum of labour while producing a very low percentage of broken nuts.<sup>2</sup> This method, however, must have enjoyed only temporary success, as reference was still being made in 1940 to processing difficulties.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the efforts at groundnut encouragement do seem to have achieved some temporary results. In 1926-28 there was a sizeable increase in export production, in not only from the Nupe areas but also, on a smaller scale, in the Ilorin to Jebba area. This was aided by some years of reasonable prices.<sup>4</sup> In 1929, however, the price began to fall, and with it export production,<sup>5</sup> and one of the merchants was commenting that farmers were not enthusiastic about groundnuts, that food crops were more remunerative and therefore interested them more.<sup>6</sup> With falling, then plummeting prices in the 1930s<sup>7</sup> the trade collapsed, becoming again

1. Hermon-Hodge, p.253.
2. Ibid., p.239.
3. NAK Ilorprof 6/3 AGR 11, Shea-nuts Industry - Development of, 299/27/117, Resident Ilorin Province to District Manager UAC Bida, 4/6/40, Groundnuts.
4. See eg. IPAR 1926, Return of Produce Purchased 1926 Groundnuts; IPAR 1927, Return of Produce Purchased 1927 Groundnuts; IPAR 1928, Return of Produce Purchased 1928 Groundnuts.  
Although prices were lower than they had been in 1924 (IPAR 1924, paras.80, 94).
5. IPAR 1929, Return of Produce Purchased 1929 Groundnuts; compare these prices with those of previous years.
6. IPAR 1929, para.106.
7. IPAR 1929, Return of Produce Purchased 1929 Groundnuts; IPAR 1930, para.116 and Return of Produce Purchased 1930 Groundnuts; IPAR 1931, para.115 and Return of Produce Purchased 1931 Groundnuts; IPAR 1932, Return of Produce Purchased 1932 Groundnuts; IPAR 1933, pt. 3, para.13; IPAR 1938, para.79.

small-scale and virtually confined to the Nupe areas.<sup>1</sup> It was reiterated that farmers had reacted to low prices by reverting to their assured source of income in foodstuff growing.<sup>2</sup>

There is relatively little to report on groundnuts in the period after the Second World War. In 1947 they were still seen as an export possibility. Improved seed was available and in process of being multiplied for distribution. The main inhibiting factor was said to be the mid-season dry spell, and so a fast-maturing variety was under trial.<sup>3</sup> Apart from a reference to fertiliser trials of groundnuts in Ejidogari in 1958,<sup>4</sup> no other information is available.

In the early years after its establishment, the Agricultural Department in Ilorin did not confine itself to the encouragement of export crops. A considerable amount of work was also done on the improvement of local food crops, work which was said to have been one of the chief activities of the Department.<sup>5</sup> Experiments in seed selection were carried out, in order to produce improved seed for the staple crops such as Guinea corn, maize, beans and yam.<sup>6</sup> Results

1. IPAR 1930, para.116 and Return of Produce Purchased Groundnuts; IPAR 1931, para.115 and Return of Produce Purchased Groundnuts; IPAR 1932, para.105 and Return of Produce Purchased Groundnuts; IPAR 1933, pt. 3, para.13; IPAR 1934, para.65; IPAR 1936, para.76; IPAR 1937, para.84.
2. NAK Ilorprof 6/3 AGR 11, Shea-nuts Industry - Development of, 299/27/117, Resident Ilorin Province to District Manager UAC Bida, 4/6/40, Groundnuts.
3. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agricultural Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba, Statement of Policy 1947-56, paras.38, 39, Export Crops.
4. NAK Ilorprof ACC 62, Ejidogari District Note Book, Crops, 4 (1958).
5. Hermon-Hodge, p.245.
6. IPAR 1914, para.39; IPAR 1916, paras.105, 107.

seemed to be encouraging,<sup>1</sup> and Thornton, a Yoruba speaker, was engaged in publicising the results of his efforts among the farmers.<sup>2</sup>

It might be briefly noted here that experiments were not always carried out simply with the aim of increasing food production for local consumption. Maize, for example, was also an export crop;<sup>3</sup> and experiments in food crop yields were carried out with a view to their usefulness to the tax assessing officer.<sup>4</sup>

In about 1919, experiments were tried with a dry weather cereal, called "maskvari". There was no doubt, it was said, that this quick yielding crop could be grown in large quantities along the many rivers in the emirate; that it was not taken up was attributed to the Ilorin farmer's being "exceptionally obstinate in his conservatism . . . unless he can foresee financial profits".<sup>5</sup> This sounds, in fact, more like commonsense than conservatism; and especially in the vicinity of Ilorin, where land was scarce, farmers would be unlikely to give up much-needed food crops in order to try something whose food value was to them uncertain and whose processing techniques were unfamiliar.

Difficulties were also experienced with respect to the introduction of a new type of maize. The new type, Hickory King, was introduced to Ilorin and multiplication by local

1. IPAR 1916, para.107; IPAR 1915, para.101; in NAK Iloriprof 4/1 437/1918, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1918, Report no. 79 for the Quarter ending 31 December 1915, para.55.
2. IPAR 1916, para.105; IPAR 1917, para.56.
3. In NAK Iloriprof 4/1 437/1918, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1918, Report no. 79 for the Quarter ending 31 December 1915, para.55; IPAR 1915, para.100.
4. IPAR 1914, para.39; NAK Iloriprof 25/1 ACC 2, Assessment Report Afon District Ilorin Province 1918, 328/1918, Resident Ilorin to DO, 10/4/18, commenting on the Assessment Report, including its paras.14, 20; NAK Iloriprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.S. Priestman, paras.19-22.
5. IPAR 1919, para.98.

farmers was organised for some years.<sup>1</sup> Eventually, in 1919, the experiment had to be abandoned; although its yield was superior the farmers disliked it, as the "pap" made from it was unacceptable to local tastes.<sup>2</sup>

A new variety of rice ("Malaya" or "Ceylon Swamp") was introduced. By 1920 it was reported to have completely replaced the local variety in the (Niger) riverine areas of Ilorin Province.<sup>3</sup> In the early 1920s, experiments were made with imported varieties of rice ("Guinea Creole" being the heaviest yielder) in the swampy areas around the Asa River near Ilorin Town, and by 1926 it appeared to be gaining favour with farmers in the vicinity.<sup>4</sup> In subsequent years, however, when early planted food crops promised well, less rice was planted than in years when food crops promised badly.<sup>5</sup> Little is heard of rice around Ilorin in later years; except that a programme for experimental work on rice in 1941-42 was to include work at Ilorin.<sup>6</sup> In the event, however, during the wartime and post war years, actual concentration in the encouragement of rice growing in Ilorin Province was upon the Nupe areas around the River Niger.<sup>7</sup>

1. IPAR 1915, para.99; IPAR 1917, para.57.
2. Hermon-Hodge, p.248; IPAR 1919, para.97 ("it is disliked by the natives as a foodstuff on account of the dull whitish specks throughout the Blanc mange".)
3. NAK 1912, by A/R Budgen, para.18; Hermon-Hodge, pp.249-50.
4. IPAR 1922, para.108; IPAR 1924, para.94; IPAR 1926, para.80; Hermon-Hodge, pp.200, 252.
5. Hermon-Hodge, p.252.
6. 4007/s.10, 674/IAS/67, AO Ilorin to Resident, 30/11/40, Coordination of Welfare Department, para.2, Ilorin Emirate (2) Rice.
7. IPAR 1941, para.11; IPAR 1942, para.1; IPAR 1943, para.1; Buchanan and Pugh, p.116; IPAR 1955, para.7.

As well as the encouragement of export crops and food production, a further aim of the Agricultural Department in Ilorin (and in the North as a whole) was the maintenance of soil fertility and (linked to this) the establishment of a system of permanent cultivation. The earliest experiment in this direction was the attempt to introduce mucuna, or green manure.

Work on green manure began in the 1920s, and by 1929 two district heads (at Bode Sadu and Oke Ode) had started demonstration farms on a rotational system using mucuna, as practised on the Ilorin Experimental Farm.<sup>1</sup> In 1932 it was reported that on farms in the neighbourhood of Ilorin where green manuring had been practised for some three years, satisfactory guinea corn crops had been obtained from land which was previously considered to be derelict and useless. Considerable areas of mucuna had been planted in 1932, around villages where the land had been exhausted by almost continuous cropping over long periods of time.<sup>2</sup> In 1933 it was reported that the emir himself had for some time been practising the use of green manure.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these apparently promising indications, little is heard of green manure in Ilorin after this time. By the late 1930s it seems to have been generally accepted that green manuring in the Middle Belt had failed.<sup>4</sup> As the Ilorin Resident had pointed out in 1929, green manure was not edible and would therefore be slow to commend itself to the farmer;<sup>5</sup> second, and because of this, communities (such as those around Ilorin) which were short of land would often be "unable or unwilling to make the initial sacrifices in food crops and unrewarded labour for a long term plan intended to restore fertility and high yields".<sup>6</sup>

1. IPAR 1929, para.126.

2. IPAR 1932, para.107.

3. IPAR 1933, pt. 3 (?), para.7.

4. Daryll Forde and Richenda Scott, The Native Economies of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946), p.281.

5. Hermon-Hodge, p.251.

6. Forde and Scott, p.103.

The improvement of soil fertility and the establishment of permanent cultivation remained a major aim. In furtherance of this, in 1935, a cattle project was established in Ilorin, with the intention of breeding cattle suitable for mixed farming in the Middle Belt.<sup>1</sup> Experiments in mixed farming using Fulani and local cattle had actually begun in Ilorin in 1932,<sup>2</sup> but it was in 1935 that a herd of West African Shorthorn was brought from Ghana, on the advice of the Director of Agriculture.<sup>3</sup> and breeding experiments began. It was hoped to maintain a pure bred Shorthorn herd, to be improved by selection, which would supply bulls as required; and to mate these bulls with female Zebu/Shorthorn crosses. The object was to breed for resistance to trypanosomiasis, and capability for work.<sup>4</sup> In the early years it was definitely intended to use the cattle as working animals; this was still the aim in 1940,<sup>6</sup> but by then the emphasis was shifting away from the use of cattle for work to their use for the provision of manure.<sup>7</sup>

1. IPAR 1935, para.75.

2. IPAR 1932, para.102.

3. IPAR 1935, para.75; IPAR 1936, para.19.

4. 2887, 81/IAS/370, Superintendent of Agric. Ilorin to Asst. Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Zaria, 8/7/35, Cattle Breeding Policy Middle Belt, paras.2-3.

5. 2887, 18/IAS/592, Supt. of Agric. Ilorin to Asst. Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Zaria, 16/10/35, Mixed Farming Middle Belt, para.4; IPAR 1936, para.63; W.K. Hancock, Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, Volume II, Problems of Economic Policy 1918-1939, Part II, p.256.

In 1934, experiments were said to have shown that "with the possible exception of yams", all local crops could be economically cultivated by means of cattle (IPAR 1934, para.57).

6. 4007/s.10, 674/IAS/67, AO Ilorin to Resident, 30/11/40, Coordination of Welfare Department, para.2.

7. Ibid., attaching Agricultural Policy - Ilorin Province, compiled by Director of Agric., 21/11/40.

In 1937 the cattle project received a grant of £3400 from Colonial Development funds, and by 1938 "unit farms" had been established in various areas to test the health, resistance to trypanosomiasis and working capacities of the cattle. Experiments were made with local cattle (Muturu and Keteku) and with other imported cattle.<sup>2</sup> By 1943 it was being said that the Ndama imported from French Guinea were the most resistant breed.<sup>3</sup>

The cattle project ran into a number of problems right from the outset. The farm site at Ilorin was close to the main cattle track and the trade cattle grazing areas, thus there was the danger of infections spreading from the trade cattle to those on the Stock Farm.<sup>4</sup> Also, there are indications of disagreements between the Veterinary Department, which did not control the Stock Farm, and the Agricultural Department, which did.<sup>5</sup> The most important problem, however, was the continued lack of local interest in the use of cattle, including the use of manure, which was several times reported in the years up to 1941.<sup>6</sup>

The question of soil fertility in the lands immediately around Ilorin was one which exercised the Ilorin authorities. Green manure, for example, had been tried on lands around

1. IPAR 1937, para.18.

2. IPAR 1938, paras.22, 68.

3. Agboola, p.163, citing D.H. Brown, "Ilorin Stock Farm", Farm and Forest 4 (1943).

4. IPAR 1934, para.57; 2887, 81/IAS/370, Supt. of Agric. Ilorin to Asst. Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Zaria, 8/7/35, Cattle Breeding Policy Middle Belt, para.13.

5. 2887, V.k3k/188, Chief VO (Ag.), Headquarters Veterinary Department Vom to SNP Kaduna, 28/9/35, Mixed Farming Middle Belt; 2887, 81/IAS/592, Supt. of Agric. Ilorin Province to Asst. Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Zaria, 16/10/35 (response to the above); 2887, II29/111/243, VO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin, 1/9/42, Ilorin Stock Farm, para.1.

6. IPAR 1934, para.58; IPAR 1938, para.22; IPAR 1939, para.21; 4007/s.10, 151/25, Asst. Conservator of Forests to Resident Ilorin, 11/3/41, para.5.

Ilorin which were reported to have previously useless. Such exhaustion of land around Ilorin had been noted on numerous occasions by the administrative officers. In 1912 and 1922 the land in the immediate vicinity of the town was reported to be exhausted; in 1912 and 1929 the same was reported for that part of Afon which was close to Ilorin Town; in 1924 for Akanbi, and in 1930 for Amayo and Gama.<sup>1</sup> In 1941, in recognition of these problems, a Rural Planning Scheme for the area was recommended by the Rural Planning Sub-Committee in Ilorin.

The area to be covered by the scheme was that within a 20 mile radius of Ilorin, where it was said the rural economic position was gradually deteriorating under existing farming and woodland exploitation. It was noted that in this area the production of yams had gradually diminished during the previous ten years. The danger zone, where the land was seriously degraded, was the area within a ten mile radius of the town, where, due to density of population resulting in scarcity of farmland, the fallow period which should normally and necessarily have lasted for 5 to 8 years had in certain cases been reduced to 4 or even 3. In places, crop yields were said to be only half of the normal. The position was made worse by the non-use of manure, and the denudation of an area up to 20 miles from Ilorin, due to the demand for firewood in the town.<sup>2</sup> It was decided that the first need was for an accurate and comprehensive survey of

1. NAK Ilorprof 4 900/1912, Ilorin Town Re-Assessment Report by A/R Lethem, para.25; NAK Ilorprof 4/13 D 149/1922, Assessment Report Ilorin Town 1922 by H.E. Priestman, para.18; NAK Ilorprof 4 814/1912, Land Tenure in Afon District Report by Captain Burnett 1912, Cases 1,8,13; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 O/321, Afon District Tax Revision of 1929 by A.J. Knott, para.2; NAK Ilorprof 4 D 411/1922, Akambi District Revision by N.M. Jones 1924, para.5; NAK Ilorprof 5 6289, Ajasse District Revision of Assessment by I.V. Hoskins 1930, paras.10-11.

2. 4007/s.10, Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the Agriculture and Forestry Subcommittees of the Provincial Welfare and Development Board, 17/7/41, paras.5, 8; 4007/s.7, Minutes of a Meeting of the Rural Planning Sub-Committee of the Provincial Welfare and Development Board, 23/1/42, para.3; J. Dundas, "Ilorin Rural Planning Scheme", Farm and Forest 3 (1942), 132-33.

the area, and that this should begin with Owode District.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, this work had to be interrupted, and finally abandoned altogether, due to war production demands for timber and rubber supplies.<sup>2</sup> Thus the scheme was ruined by changed priorities, caused by orders from above.

After the Second World War, the idea of rural agricultural planning schemes was taken up again, and Bala (in Owode District) was made the centre for efforts to introduce mixed farming and erosion control. But the original aim of the earlier scheme, that of helping the worst-hit land-exhausted areas immediately around Ilorin Town, seems to have been lost by this time. Bala, for example, was outside the ten-mile zone,<sup>3</sup> and the length of fallow there was said to be as much as 6 to 9 years.<sup>4</sup> Plans were made to allot ten acres per family in Bala,<sup>5</sup> which would not have been possible in the more over-crowded areas nearer to Ilorin Twn. Bala in fact seems to have been chosen for convenience, not for any reasons of urgency with respect to exhaustion of the soil. It was, although outside the ten-mile zone, still within easy reach of Ilorin on a good motor road, which made for ease of supervision; the District Head (a brother of the Emir) could be relied on for assistance: the area had already been surveyed, and an

1. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of a Meeting of the Rural Planning Sub-Committee of the Provincial Welfare and Development Board, 23/1/42, paras.2, 5; Dundas, p.133; 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of a Meeting of the Provincial Welfare and Development Board, 27/2/42, para.3.
2. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, 4007/114, Resident Ilorin Province to SNP Kaduna, 20/11/42; 4007/s.7, Minutes of a Meeting of the Rural Planning Sub-Committee of the Provincial Board, 15/9/42, Rural Planning Scheme for 20 Mile Area, paras. 1-4.
3. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of the Meeting of the Ilorin Provincial Development and Welfare Committee, 29/3/46, para.1.
4. Ibid., para.4.
5. 4007/s.14, 9/7/28, Richards AO to Resident Ilorin, Rural Reconstruction: Ballah Proposals for Demonstration Farm, 20/9/46, para.3.

experimental farm (presumably one of the cattle "unit farms") had previously been sited there.<sup>1</sup>

Before proceeding to further details of post-war mixed farming efforts in Bala and Ilorin, it is convenient at this point to continue the story of the cattle project, which had been set up in order to provide cattle for such mixed farming schemes. The cattle project, centred at the Ilorin Stock Farm, continued during and after the Second World War. Staffing problems occurred during the war,<sup>2</sup> and, presumably for this reason, the unit farms had been abandoned.<sup>3</sup> The fact that there had been periods when no Agricultural Officer was available led to doubts in the administrative officers' minds as to the reliance which could be placed on the breeding records.<sup>4</sup> Some such problems were hinted at by the Agricultural Department itself, for by 1946 it was admitted that although a great deal of information had been gained, there was need for a comprehensive review of the methods which should be implemented to achieve their goal; and in 1947 they recommended the use of more standardised methods of assessing resistance to trypanosomiasis.<sup>5</sup> They reiterated that the Ndama was the most promising breed, and decided that future work should be concentrated on them. Not only resistance to trypanosomiasis should be considered, but also the

1. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of a Meeting of the Ilorin Provincial Development and Welfare Committee, 29/3/46, paras.1, 2, 4-6; 2887, 1/10/407, T.S.B. Aribisala for AO to DO Ilorin, Cattle Pool for Mixed Farming Scheme, para.7; RH Mss. Afr. S.1210, C.W. Michie, Political Situation in Northern Provinces and History of Ilorin, Report on Local Government Reform in the Bala and Afon Districts of Ilorin Emirate, 1954, p.138.
2. IPAR 1945, para.53.
3. IPAR 1946, para.45; 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of Meeting of Ilorin Provincial Development and Welfare Committee, 29/3/46, para.5.
4. IPAR 1946, para.45.
5. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department, Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, paras.8-9.



ability to survive other diseases; and work on Ndamas was henceforth to follow the line of selection and multiplication of suitable strains with particular regard to this general "survival conformation" and to milk-yielding capacity.

Problems, however, soon arrived. These included difficulties, as before, between the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments (despite the formation in 1947 of a joint committee which was said to have gone far to increase the cooperation between the two),<sup>2</sup> and also between the Agricultural Department and the administrative sector. In 1947 the Resident, very probably prompted by the Veterinary Department, was asserting the following; that no cattle were resistant to trypanosomiasis; that trying to breed such animals was not the answer, but that the answer was tsetse eradication; and that he looked forward to the introduction of "fine, upstanding Zebu", which were much superior to the Ndama (though he did admit that the Ndama could tolerate tsetse belt conditions).<sup>3</sup> In asserting the primacy of tsetse eradication over cattle breeding, the Resident may well have had a point; all the same, his remarks do demonstrate a certain lack of understanding between the Agricultural Department and himself. Again, in the same year, the Veterinary Officer was recommending a concentration on Borgu (Keteku) cattle as against Ndama,<sup>4</sup> in which recommendation he appears to have been disastrously wrong, if one considers the fate of the Borgu cattle which were eventually purchased for the mixed farming scheme.<sup>5</sup>

A further problem was that it was difficult to acquire,

1. Ibid., paras.8, 10.
2. IPAR 1947 (SNP), para.24.
3. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, 4007/s.1, Ilorin Provincial Development Committee. Preliminary Announcements (Resident's Draft), 17/4/47, Item 2. Animal Trypanosomiasis, paras.1-2.
4. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, 61/5/142, A.H.A. Hamilton VO to Resident, 17/10/47, Proposals for Discussion: Ilorin Provincial Development Committee, paras.5, 9.
5. 4007/s.14, 6/10 Vol.11/59, J.F. Ward SAO to Resident Ilorin, 17/11/50, Mixed Farming: Ilorin Province, paras. 4, 5, 7.

either by importation or by breeding, sufficient Ndama or Ndama crosses either for large-scale investigations of trypanosomiasis resistance,<sup>1</sup> or for mixed farming or improvement of local herds -- and this was the reason why Borgu cattle were finally tried in the mixed farming scheme.<sup>2</sup> In 1946 it was asserted that Government had made provision for the importation of a number of Ndama, but either these went to the new Oyo farm instead of to Ilorin, or else the idea of large-scale importation was abandoned.<sup>3</sup> In addition to importation problems, the breeding programme was probably also hindered due to the Ndama's being a "shy breeder".<sup>4</sup>

Although the mixed farming idea was more or less abandoned by 1950,<sup>5</sup> work on the cattle project continued. From about 1948 for some years at least, the work was aided by

1. 4007/s.20, 4007/s.20/54A, Resident Ilorin Province (R.H. Maddox) to SNP Kaduna, enclosing Annual Report on the General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes. Ilorin Province, 1948, Stock Farm.
2. 2887, 1/10/40, T.S.B. Aribisala for AO to DO Ilorin, 13/11/47, Cattle Pool for Mixed Farming Schemes, paras. 6, 11.
3. In 4007/s.10, Nigeria Statement of Agricultural Policy, Laid on the table of the Legislative Council as Sessional Paper No. 16 of 1946 (published by Govt. Printer, Lagos, 1946), p.10, Ilorin Stock Farm.
4. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department. Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, Ilorin Stock Farm, para.10.
5. 4007/s.14, 6/10 Vol.11/59, J.F. Ward SAO to Resident Ilorin, 17/11/50, Mixed Farming: Ilorin Province; 4007/s.14, 4007/s.19/91, SDO Ilorin Division to SAO Ilorin, 11/12/50, Mixed Farming: Ilorin Province; see also 2887, Telegram from Mansfield Production Officer Zaria to AO Ilorin, received 2 (?) November 1952.

the deployment of Development Officers to the Stock Farm.<sup>1</sup> Work was still concentrated on the Ndama,<sup>2</sup> but once the mixed farming scheme was dropped the aim became simply to supply Ndama bulls for the improvement of Muturu herds in the Middle Belt and especially Ilorin Province.<sup>3</sup> In this they were unsuccessful; in the year 1956 the Annual Report lamented the fact that in spite of the "obvious and acknowledged" superiority of the Ndama-Muturu crosses, local stock owners had shown little interest in acquiring Ndama bulls on loan;<sup>4</sup> in 1957 it was said that this lack of progress was due to the non-cooperation of Fulani herdsmen employed by the Yoruba owners of the Muturu herds;<sup>5</sup> and in 1959, although the Ndama herd was still kept, little use was made of their services.<sup>6</sup>

In the end, despite the problems and delays, the cattle project did achieve some success, in that a definite conclusion as to the superiority of the Ndama was reached; but the two aims for which the Ndama herd was bred (mixed farming and local stock improvement) remained unachieved.

The mixed farming scheme which was abandoned in 1950 had been begun in 1947, when a "mixed farmer" was set up at Bala

1. 4007/s.33A, 4007/s.33A/31, R.H. Maddox Resident to SNP Kaduna, 29/6/49, Half Yearly Progress Report on Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes, E. Development Officers; 4007/s.33A, /40, R.H. Maddox Resident Ilorin Province to SNP Kaduna, 17/12/49, Half Yearly Progress Report July-December 1949 Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes, E; 4007/s.33A, /54, T.P.G. Hopkins Ag. Resident Ilorin Province to SNP Kaduna, 12/7/50, Half Yearly Report Jan-June 1950 Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes, para.3, Development Officers.

2. IPAR 1951, para.34; IPAR 1952, para.37.

3. Ibid., and IPAR 1954, para.27.

4. IPAR 1956, para.46.

5. IPAR 1957, para.51.

6. IPAR 1959, para.55.

and two others near the Stock Farm (for ease of supervision).<sup>1</sup> By the beginning of 1948, these were waiting to be supplied with cattle,<sup>2</sup> and in the same year others had also applied to join the scheme.<sup>3</sup> The plan was that cows should be purchased in Borgu, that with them a cattle pool should be established near Ilorin, and Ndama bulls be made available to them.<sup>4</sup> Only in-calf animals would be issued out to mixed farmers, who would be encouraged to send them back for service after they had calved.<sup>5</sup> In addition, an Ndama bull was to be stationed at Bala.

Bala had been selected in 1946 as the site for a coordinated development scheme, leading to the production of a model village area, in accordance with Northern Provinces policy.<sup>6</sup> The proposals for mixed farming in Bala were discussed by the Agricultural Department with the district head (who was said to be providing go-ahead leadership) and with the proposed "model" farmer (who was said, like the people

1. IPAR 1947 (Ilrprof), 711/31, Agric. Department to Resident, 7/1/48, Summary of Agricultural Work in Ilorin Province

1947, para.7; 2887, T.S.B. Aribisala, for AO to DO Ilorin, 13/11/47, Cattle Pool for Mixed Farming Schemes, para.7; 4007/s.14, 6/10 Vol II/1, SAO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin Province, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, para.3.

2. 4007/s.14, 9/2/210, T.S.B. Aribisala for AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 3/1/48, para.2.

3. 4007/s.14, 6/10 vol.II/1, SAO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin Province, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, 1948/49, Requirements for Mixed Farmers.

4. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agricultural Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.22.

5. 2887, 1/10/407, T.S.B. Aribisala for AO to DO Ilorin, 13/11/47, Cattle Pool for Mixed Farming Schemes, para.6.

6. 4007/s.14, 9/7/18, AO Ilorin to Deputy Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Zaria, 3/8/46, Balliah Farm, para.9.

in general, to be enthusiastic).<sup>1</sup> The farm to be set up in Bala was to serve as a model of a holding suitable for a family unit of farmer, wives and children. Ten acres were to be allotted to the family unit, of which  $3\frac{1}{2}$  would be under cultivation,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  under grass, and 4 were for orchards, fuel plantation, compound, vegetables and permanent grassland. The system of farming proposed was "alternate husbandry", that is, the land should be put down to grass after a period of cultivation. The area was to be divided into 8 plots, cropped in rotation. Although the area of cultivation was to be considerably greater than the average for Bala village, some farmers were already cultivating as much, and the prospective model farmer said that he could handle the area. A number of animals were to be kept, including two cows and their progeny (from the pool herd) and one Ndama bull on loan.<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis, in Bala and Ilorin Province in general, had shifted from the use of cattle as working animals to their use for manure. The Statement of Policy 1947-56 for Ilorin Province indicated that manure production was primary, and that the production of meat and milk were important, though secondary, considerations. Ploughing would be introduced wherever feasible, but mixed farming did not necessarily mean ploughing.<sup>3</sup> In Bala, the Provincial Development and Welfare Committee decided that cattle were to be used only for manure and meat. Ploughing would not be introduced there, "because this method of cultivation was not suitable to the

1. 4007/s.14, 9/7/28, Richards AO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin, 20/9/46, Rural Reconstruction: Ballah Proposals for Demonstration Farm, para.13; 4007/s.14, p.31, Development Officer to Resident, 29/1/47.
2. 4007/s.14, 9/7/28, Richards AO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin, 20/9/46, Rural Reconstruction: Ballah Proposals for Demonstration Farm, paras.2-13.
3. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department, Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para. 21; see also para.1.

growing of yam, which is the main crop in the area".<sup>1</sup> Later it was re-emphasized that there had never been any ploughing on Bala farm, nor was it intended to do any;<sup>2</sup> although, strangely enough, among the items of equipment which a mixed farmer was expected to buy were cultivators, yokes and ploughs.<sup>3</sup>

Although originally there appear to have been a number (if limited) of applicants for mixed farming, most of them later faded away.<sup>4</sup> A major reason for this was surely the long delay in the provision of cattle, which was caused largely by the misgivings of the administrative officers, aided by absence and changes of senior agricultural personnel. The administrative officers expressed various reasons for their attitude. First, they stated that no cattle pool could be set up, as the Veterinary Officer could not guarantee immunity from tsetse for any cattle; in this, they may have been right in the end, but it is odd that at the same time the Veterinary Officer was willing to give a qualified approval to the cattle pool scheme.<sup>5</sup> Second, the District Officer expressed his view that farmers would not appreciate the use of cattle and would not look after them properly; that it was difficult to persuade farmers of their usefulness when "by doing very little they can get all they need".<sup>6</sup> His conclusion as to non-appreciation of cattle was a reasonable one.

1. 4007/sl Vol.1, Minutes of Meeting of Ilorin Provincial Development and Welfare Committee, 29/3/46, para.5.
2. 4007/s.14, 9/2/24, J.F. Ward SAO to Sec. Rural Development Subcommittee, Ilorin, 15/1/49, para.2.
3. 4007/s.14, 6/10/vol.II/1, SAO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin Province, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, 1948/49 Requirements for Mixed Farmers.
4. 4007/s.14, 6/10/vol.II/59, J.F. Ward SAO to Resident Ilorin, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, para.8.
5. 4007/s.14, 4007/s.19/51, DO Ilorin Division to AO Ilorin, 7/11/47, Rural Development Ballah; 4007/s.14, 1/10/407, T.S.B. Aribisala to DO Ilorin, 13/11/47, comments on this by Veterinary Officer, 25/11/47.
6. 4007/s.14, 1/10/407, T.S.B. Aribisala to DO Ilorin, 13/11/47, comments on this by DO to Resident, 26/11/47.

but arrived at for the wrong reasons. A third, and wholly justified objection was on the grounds of the cost of the project to the individual mixed farmer, and this point will be returned to later. The crux of the problem, however, may have been the expense to the N.A. The Ilorin N.A. was remarkably parsimonious, in comparison with others, when it came to spending on agriculture; but, as the District Officer pointed out, experimental work such as the setting up of a cattle pool might more properly be a charge on the Government rather than the N.A.;<sup>2</sup> and maybe the emir also remembered his own earlier personal payment for stock, in the hope of profits which had never materialised.<sup>3</sup>

Eventually, approval for the purchase of a number of Borgu cattle for the mixed farming project was obtained.<sup>4</sup> Further delays ensued, caused in part by the absence of the Agricultural Officer, but finally the animals were bought. Soon, however, they became infected with trypanosomiasis, and less than six months after their purchase four out of eleven had died and the remainder could no longer be valued as high as their purchase price.<sup>5</sup> The Agricultural Officer then reported that there were no further prospects for mixed farming, due to the problems with provision of cattle; and

1. 4007/s.31, 23/4/20, J.F. Ward SAO to Deputy Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Samaru, 21/2/48, para.2, NA Estimates of Expenditure 1948-49 (a comparison of all the NAs in Ilorin and Kabba Provinces with respect to expenditure on agriculture); IPAR 1952, para.30.
2. 4007/s.31, DO to Resident, 24/7/48.
3. IPAR 1946, para.45.
4. 4007/s.14, p.79, R.H. Maddox Resident to SDO, 2/12/48, and p.87, 10/3/49.
5. 4007/s.14, 6/10/Vol.II/59, J.F. Ward SAO to Resident Ilorin, 17/11/50, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, paras 1-9.

Given the attitude of the administrative officers all along, it is hardly surprising that the Resident immediately ordered the mixed farming project to be closed.<sup>1</sup>

The mixed farming scheme, therefore, never actually took off, since cattle were never issued to the farmers involved. Even if they had been issued, the indications are that yet further problems would have arisen. In Bala, for example, there was some question as to the real enthusiasm or suitability of the candidate farmers. In April 1947 the chosen mixed farmer (son of the village head), had attempted to steal £137 in tax money from his father's house, and a new candidate had to be sought.<sup>2</sup> Although in December of the same year a number of farmers there had apparently agreed to cooperate in the project, by January 1949 it was reported that a suitable Bala farmer had not been found.<sup>3</sup>

The cost of equipment and animals to the individual mixed farmer would also, as the District Officer pointed out,<sup>4</sup> have constituted a problem, even when paid in instalments over a number of years.<sup>5</sup> The extent of the problem may be

1. Ibid., para.9 and minutes; R.H. Maddox Resident to SDO, 21/11/50; SDO to Resident, 22/11/50; Resident to SDO, 26/11/50; also 4007/s.14, 4007/s.19/91, SDO Ilorin Division to SAO Ilorin, 11/12/50, Mixed Farming: Ilorin Province.
2. 4007/s.14, p.37, DOE to Resident (?), re 8/4/47; p.38, N. Saadu to DO, 19/4/47; and A0 to DO, 21/4/47.
3. 4007/s.14, 9/2/24, J.F. Ward SAO to Secretary Rural Development Subcommittee Ilorin, 15/1/49, para.2; and, commenting on this, 4007/s.19/85, Resident Ilorin to SAO Ilorin, 21/1/49, quoting from Minutes of a Meeting of the Rural Development Subcommittee, 17/12/47, para. 7, Livestock Improvement.
4. 4007/s.31, DOE to Resident, 24/7/48.
5. 4007/s.14, 6/10/vol.II/1, SAO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin Province, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, para. 2 D.

seen when one looks at the estimated costs, in 1948, to each mixed farmer, which would have been in the region of £58, plus interest at a rate of seven per cent.<sup>2</sup> An additional cost would have been that of employing an assistant; even in 1948 it was admitted that a mixed farmer could only operate successfully if he had a boy or other helper,<sup>3</sup> and in 1950 it was pointed out that if a farmer was not to spend too much time with his cattle, he would have to employ a herdsman, at a high wage rate altogether out of proportion to the farmer's cash returns, unless, that is, mixed farming were to be developed in conjunction with communal activities.<sup>4</sup>

Even if these problems had been overcome, there still remained the long-term difficulty of the unwillingness of farmers in general to use manure;<sup>5</sup> they were still reported to be "not in the least stock-minded".<sup>6</sup>

Given the problems outlined above, the mixed farming project may well have failed in Ilorin, even if suitable cattle had been provided. Nevertheless, it is a pity that Ndama cattle were not provided, since at least in that case the project would have been given a fairer trial. As it was,

1. Ibid., 1948/49 Requirements for Mixed Farmers.
2. 4007/s.14, pp.78-79, SDO (?) to Resident, 22/9/48, commenting on 6/10/vol.II/1, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province.
3. 4007/s.14, 6/10/Vol.II/1, SAO Ilorin to Resident Ilorin Province, 25/6/48, Mixed Farming Ilorin Province, para.2, General.
4. 2887, 6/10/52, SAO to Director of Agriculture Northern Provinces Kaduna, 9/6/50, Mixed Farming West Kabba Province, paras.9-10.
5. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.25.
6. 4007/s.38, VNI 61/1, A.H.A. Hamilton VO to Resident Ilorin Province, 6/8/49, para.7.

it seems to have been a complete waste of several years' effort, plus a demonstration to the farmers of the futility of the efforts of the Agricultural Department.

In Bala, it had been intended that the mixed farming project should be carried on in conjunction with measures to combat soil erosion. By 1947 it was being pointed out that manuring by itself could be of no more than a temporary benefit in terms of fertility, as long as erosion continued; and that the most speedy results would be obtained by a combination of both manuring and soil conservation.

Four methods of erosion control were discussed in Ilorin: broad base terracing with crop ridges parallel and on the contour (which was expensive at £3 to £4 per acre by hand and about £1 by machine, but had the advantage of being a permanent method of control); ridge and bar cultivation; contour ridging with manuring; and strip cultivation (of crops and grass). It was noted that this last method would involve changes in the land tenure system.<sup>2</sup>

Certain specific plans were agreed on. Since Bala had been chosen for development into a model village area, it had already been decided that the whole area should be contoured so that questions of drainage and erosion could be dealt with before any definite sites for village layouts and fuel plantations were chosen.<sup>3</sup> By April 1947 the contour survey had been completed.<sup>4</sup>

A start was then to be made on the broad-base terracing of the watershed above Bala village; this was to be done at

1. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, 4007/s.1, 17/4/47, Ilorin Province Development Committee Preliminary Announcements, Item 5, Soil Conservation and Manuring, paras.6, 10.
2. Ibid., para.9; 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of a Meeting of the Ilorin Provincial Development Committee, 13/5/47, para.5, Soil Conservation.
3. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of Meeting of Ilorin Provincial Development and Welfare Committee, 29/3/46, paras.2, 6.
4. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, 17/4/47, Ilorin Provincial Development Committee Preliminary Announcements, Item 1 (viii).

N.A. expense, and the work was expected to continue for 3 or 4 years. During that time, men were to be trained and would then be available to work on any other soil conservation scheme.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a soil conservation survey of Ilorin Province was to be made, and the Soil Conservation Committee was to decide where the needs were most urgent and what method of erosion control was to be applied.<sup>2</sup>

Just like the mixed farming scheme, the Bala soil conservation scheme failed to get off the ground. In 1947 work was suspended, although in 1948, it seems, the project was resuscitated.<sup>3</sup> But as late as May 1950, the Agricultural Department was reporting inability to start work on it.<sup>4</sup>

In 1947, the delay was caused in part by the departure of the Agricultural Officer on leave,<sup>5</sup> and in part by the attitude of the Resident, who in a rather confused account of his views criticised the expense and scope of the project, and explained his feeling that the project as it stood would be a complete waste of time, as no peasant farmer, just by looking at the work, would be able to apply it to his own land.<sup>6</sup> Here, he seems to have misunderstood what the Agricultural Department had in mind; as the project was to be carried out for Bala village as a whole, and, indeed, a general policy

had been agreed by the Development Committee that the problem of soil conservation should be attacked village by village and not farm by farm.<sup>1</sup> Later delays were said to have been caused by shortage of staff,<sup>2</sup> which may well have been related to lack of funds. It is doubtful whether the project was ever begun at all. Here again we have an example of the unwillingness of the administration to spend N.A. money on an agricultural project unless they were absolutely convinced of its worth. And although soil conservation was an important matter, it is difficult to see how it could have been extended to the province as a whole, given the cost of a single pilot project.

In further pursuance of their policy of increasing soil fertility, the Agricultural Department in the 1950s began to experiment with artificial fertilisers. Experiments were carried out from about 1950 onwards at Ilorin Government Farm, Bala, Paiye and Oke Oyi, and later at Ejidogari.<sup>3</sup> These were to test the effects of superphosphate and ammonium sulphate when applied singly and in combination to the main staple crops of maize, guinea corn and yam, grown on good, medium and poor soils.<sup>4</sup>

In 1956 a fertiliser campaign was begun (at last a greatly increased proportion of N.A. resources had been assigned to agricultural projects).<sup>5</sup> Extension work was carried out in

1. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.27.
2. Ibid., para.28; 4007/s.14, Ilorin Provincial Soil Conservation Committee Minutes of Meeting, 27/6/47, A. Short Term Plan (2).
3. 4007/s.14, June 1948, Ballah Model Farm; Short History of Development, paras.17-20, p.71.
4. 2887, DOE to Resident, 2/8/50.
5. 4007/s.14, AO to Resident, 18/6/47.
6. 4007/s.14, 3612/127, R.H. Maddox Ag. Resident Ilorin Province to SNP Kaduna, 7/11/47, Soil Conservation. Appointment of Special Provincial Soil Conservation Committee, paras.3, 4.

1. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Minutes of Meeting of Ilorin Provincial Development Committee, 13/5/47, para.5, Soil Conservation.
2. 2887, DOE to Resident, 2/8/50.
3. IPAR 1950, para.1; NAK Ilorprof 5 3582, Paiye 1947-50, 21-22 August (19507) and Touring Notes J. Campbell 29/6/51; IPAR 1954, para.27; NAK Ilorprof ACC 62, Ejidogari District Note Book, Crops, 4.
4. 4007/s.33A, 9/9/129, Cromwell AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 7/7/52, Agricultural Development Schemes Outline Progress Report for Ilorin Emirate 1 April 1952-30 September 1952, para.1.
5. IPAR 1955, para.30; IPAR 1956, para.46.

various centres including Ejidogari<sup>1</sup> and Iporin.<sup>2</sup> Farmers, however, were unwilling to take to the use of fertilisers. First of all, their usefulness may not have always been immediately apparent to the farmers; in Ejidogari for example, in 1958, a touring officer reported that he saw no difference between guinea corn which had been fertilised and that which had not.<sup>3</sup> But even where it is said that the usefulness of fertilisers had been clearly demonstrated, farmers were still unwilling to make use of them.<sup>4</sup> Among the reasons suggested for this by agricultural or administrative officers were persistent drought, and also political problems. In the metropolitan districts of Northern Ilorin in 1956, the period of Ilorin Talaka Parapo agitation against the N.A., it was said that the "political odium" with which many farmers regarded the N.A. staff reinforced the farmers' conservatism and made the task of N.A. extension staff even more difficult than usual.<sup>5</sup> Another problem was the high price; a 1957 report mentioned the farmers' unwillingness to pay.<sup>6</sup> Later, in 1961, a subsidy reduced the price from 12/- to 5/- per 40 lb. bag, but this did not lead to any immediate increase in fertiliser use. In spite of extension efforts, it was reported, only rice farmers had taken to the use of fertilisers.<sup>7</sup> It may also be that there were further reasons for lack of fertiliser use: as Agboola mentions, the farmers

1. NAK Ilorprof ACC 41, Touring Notes Ejidogari, 8-12 October 1958, C.A.A. Salaman, Extension Work.
2. NAK Ilorprof ACC 66, Iporin District Note Book (1958-59).
3. NAK Ilorprof ACC 41, Touring Notes Ejidogari, 8-12 October 1958, C.F.A. Salaman, Government Experimental Farm.
4. IPAR 1956, para.46; IPAR 1959, para.54.
5. IPAR 1956, para.46.
6. IPAR 1957, para.49.
7. IPAR 1961, para.74.

feared fertilisers because they might encourage weed growth, and also because they believed that fertilisers would cause a reduction in the keeping quality and taste of their crops.<sup>1</sup>

The use of fertilisers was introduced specifically as a means to increase food crop production, which was said in 1952 to be the main aim of agricultural development in Ilorin Emirate.<sup>2</sup> Some efforts were also made in the direction of introducing improved varieties of these crops. In 1947, among the crops under observation for possible multiplication projects were cassava, guinea corn and maize.<sup>3</sup> Either progress was slow, however, or efforts intermittent, as it is not until 1955 that we hear of the first steps taken to provide imported varieties of maize (this was part of the belated response to the high emigration level to the south and east of Ilorin; in answer to which a more modern and diversified agriculture was being recommended).<sup>4</sup> Experiments on maize were again reported in 1957,<sup>5</sup> and by 1958 a Village Maize Multiplication Scheme was underway, which continued with increasing success through the next few years.<sup>6</sup>

Attention in varying degrees also continued to be paid to the old export crops of tobacco, groundnuts and cotton.

1. Agboola, p.167.
2. 4007/s.33A, 9/9/129, Cromwell AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 7/7/52, Agric. Development Schemes Outline Progress Report for Ilorin Emirate 1 April 1952-30 September 1952, para.1.
3. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department. Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.37.
4. IPAR 1952, paras.6, 7.
5. IPAR 1957, para.49.
6. IPAR 1958, para.58; IPAR 1959, para.56; IPAR 1961, para.69.

And in 1955, after the increase in money allocated to agriculture, and the call to diversify agriculture to combat emigration, steps began to be taken to experiment with other export crops, namely coffee, cocoa and palm oil.<sup>1</sup>

Other crops which were considered included soy. This was first referred to in 1944, when experimental work was going on, no doubt stimulated by wartime demands. There was evidence, it was said, that soy was suited to local conditions, and prospects were encouraging.<sup>2</sup> These experiments, however, do not seem to have been continued or followed up, as the next reference to soy is in 1957, when studies of it as a possible cash crop were again being undertaken.<sup>3</sup>

Rama fibre production was encouraged after the Second World War. At first it was with a view to a possible export trade, but then the idea of setting up a small hessian factory in Ilorin was suggested.<sup>4</sup> In 1949, their first year, Government efforts to encourage rama were not a success; a Textile Officer worked hard teaching farmers how to ret the crop, and gave "every assistance" in marketing, but disappointing amounts were brought in for sale. Everything, the Resident explained, was done in a hurry, four Government departments were involved, and there was no cooperation. Plans were made to try again in a more organised fashion in the following

1. IPAR 1955, para.30.
2. IPAR 1944, para.46.
3. IPAR 1957, para.49.
4. IPAR 1948, para.18; IPAR 1949, para.53; 4007/s.38, Development Scheme Ilorin Survey, Ilorin Provincial Development Committee Minutes of Meeting, 23/5/49, Item 7, Rama; 4007/s.20, /69A, R.H. Maddox Resident Ilorin Province to SNP, 27/1/50, enclosing Ilorin Province Annual Report on General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1949, Commerce and Industries.

year.<sup>1</sup> Efforts continued into the 1950s,<sup>2</sup> but farmers were cautious; in Oloru and Paiye they were reported, in 1952, to be waiting to see the profitability of the crop.<sup>3</sup>

One final effort to increase agricultural production should be mentioned. An Ilorin experiment in mechanisation was one unit of a general scheme, paid for by Government and not the N.A. (one reason why the Ilorin administration decided not to oppose the project).<sup>4</sup> An area of land near Amayo was taken over in 1948,<sup>5</sup> and tractor cultivation was in progress there by 1949.<sup>6</sup> Agricultural Development Officers were

1. IPAR 1949, para.53; also 4007/s.20, /69A, Maddox to SNP enclosing Report on Development and Welfare Schemes, 1949, Commerce and Industries.
2. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru District Touring Notes, 20/5/52, Touring Notes Herbert, Oloru; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye District Touring Notes 1930-, Touring Notes W.A. Herbert 27/5/52 at Sabami and Inawole; 31/5/52 at Gunnliyan; and 1/6/52 at the other Gunnliyan; 4007/s.33A, 9/9/129, Cromwell AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 7/7/52, Agric. Development Schemes Outline Progress Report for Ilorin Emirate 1 April 1952 - 30 September 1952, para.4.
3. NAK Ilorprof 5/1 3586, Oloru District Touring Notes, 20/5/52, Touring Notes Herbert, Oloru; NAK Ilorprof 3/11 0682, Paiye District Touring Notes 1930-, Touring Notes W.A. Herbert, 1/6/52.
4. 4007/s.31, p.5, DOE to Resident, 6/7/48, para.2.
5. 4007/s.31, 23/4/56, J.F. Ward SAO Ilorin to DOE, 25/11/48.
6. 4007/s.31, 23/4/155, Ransford Agric. Development Officer to Resident Ilorin Province, 3/9/49; 4007/s.20, /69A, R.H. Maddox Resident Ilorin Province to SNP, 27/1/50, enclosing Ilorin Province Annual Report on General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1949, Agriculture.



deployed to the project.<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning, the project was regarded with some suspicion by the District Officer whose comments on the possibility of "mechanised destruction" and land tenure problems were echoed by the Ilorin Agricultural Officer as well.<sup>2</sup> The District Officer, however, went further. He believed that in spite of "pious hopes" about cooperation, there could never be large-scale and profitable agriculture without the emergence of an agricultural labouring class, which would lead to social and political problems. He believed that

the Deputy Director of Agriculture's intention to convert tractor unit holdings into settlements would lead to other problems; that it was a delusion to think that mechanised agriculture could be grafted on to the existing village communities and local economy; and that settlements for the purpose of mechanised agriculture would have to be built up as something entirely new.<sup>3</sup> This was why he recommended that the only hope for the conversion of the tractor unit into a settlement was to attach it to an already existing artificial community, such as a leper settlement, or to develop it in conjunction with the settlement of an uninhabited area. The Agricultural Officer therefore considered the possibility of attaching the tractor unit to the leper settlement at Omu Aran, as the only possible way of converting the unit into a

1. 4007/s.31, 23/4/155, Bamsford Agric. Development Officer to Resident Ilorin Province, 3/9/49; 4007/s.33A, /54, T.F.G. Hopkins Ag. Resident Ilorin to SMP Kaduna, Half Yearly Report January-June on Colonial Welfare and Development Schemes, para.3, Development Officers; 4007/s.33A, /66, R.H. Maddox Resident Ilorin to SMP Kaduna, 13/1/51, Half Yearly Progress Report (Development Plan) for January-June 1950 (?) for Ilorin Province, para.4, Development Officers.

2. 4007/s.31, p.5, DOE to Resident (?), 6/7/48, para.3 (1) and (11); 4007/s.38, 9/2/263, AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 18/7/49, Sokoto Survey, para.3, (1) and (111).

3. 4007/s.31, p.5, DOE to Resident (?), 6/7/48, para.3 (iv).

settlement; but he decided that this plan was inadvisable, owing to the nature of the Omu Aran terrain, and the lack of educated personnel at the site. He decided that in the case of Ilorin the proposed tractor unit would have to be solely for purposes of experiment and data collection, and that any possibility of conversion to a settlement would be unlikely. The tractor unit was then established at Amayo, where there was suitable terrain.<sup>2</sup>

Little more appears about the unit in the records; but by 1952 it was reported that efforts which had been made to interest farmers around Amayo in tractor cultivation had proved unsuccessful and had had to be temporarily abandoned.<sup>3</sup> Soon afterwards, presumably, the project was finally abandoned, as it was elsewhere.

The story of the work of the Agricultural Department in Ilorin has been seen to be generally a story of failure; however, the efforts to improve the local poultry appear to have achieved at least some success. As early as 1931, a flock of Rhode Island Red chickens was kept at Ilorin, and fertilised eggs and cockerels were offered for sale,<sup>4</sup> with a view to improving the local stock. This work was continued after the war, but it was reported in 1947 that only limited numbers of eggs and fowls were being produced for distribution, and that the staffing situation would probably limit expansion.<sup>5</sup> Small-scale poultry improvement schemes were planned

1. 4007/s.31, 23/4/40, J.F. Ward SAO Ilorin to Deputy Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Samaru, 17/9/48, Experimental Tractor Holding.

2. 4007/s.31, DOE to Resident, 15/9/49.

3. 4007/s.33A, 9/9/129, Cromwell AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 7/7/52, Agric. Development Schemes Outline Progress Report for Ilorin Emirate 1 April 1952 - 30 September 1952, para.2.

4. IPAR 1932, para.102; IPAR 1933, part 3(?), para.7; IPAR 1936, para.64.

5. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba. Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.43, Poultry.

for Bala and Afon (both classed as centres for development) in 1949.<sup>1</sup> Under the Five Year Plan the biggest item of agricultural development was a £1000 poultry unit for Ilorin; but still in 1950 staffing problems prevented a start on it from being made.<sup>2</sup> In 1954, however, it was reported that the poultry flock had been expanded, and that half-bred Rhode Island Red cockerels were issued to villages.<sup>3</sup> Some problems were reported in 1956; that little interest was being shown in exotic poultry breeds, although it was admitted that the use of such stock was complicated by the prevalence of avian diseases.<sup>4</sup> Soon, however, interest in such breeds became and seems to have remained high,<sup>5</sup> and in 1961 this led to the poultry unit again being greatly extended.<sup>6</sup>

Before the war it had been noted that there was a large and flourishing turkey trade, for which Ilorin and Gama were the main breeding areas.<sup>7</sup> In 1941 a scheme for turkey improvement was begun. Birds were purchased in the Gold Coast and brought to Ilorin for distribution. Reports were encouraging, and people wished to purchase such birds. Unfortunately the scheme was halted, probably due to wartime problems, to be brought up again as a suggestion in 1947.<sup>8</sup> Nothing more, however, is heard of this plan, until in 1961 it was

1. 4007/s.14, Minutes of Rural Development (Afon and Ballah) Subcommittee, 23/7/49, para. 6; and 5/15/23, J.F.Ward SAO to DO Ilorin, 3/3/49, Monthly Instructions to Extension Workers for March 1949, Rural Development.

2. 2887, DOE to Resident, 7/8/50.

3. IPAR 1954, para.27.

4. IPAR 1956, para.46.

5. IPAR 1957, para.52; IPAR 1959, para.55; IPAR 1961, para.67.

6. IPAR 1961, para.67.

7. IPAR 1933, Part 3, para.16; IPAR 1934, para.58.

8. 4007/s.1 Vol.1, VO to Provincial Development and Welfare Board, 16/4/47, para.2.

reported that a new turkey unit at Ilorin Farm had been started during the year.<sup>1</sup>

The turkey project, like others, was subjected to long delays. The chicken improvement scheme on the other hand was one of the most long-lived projects of the Department; and the fact that it was persisted in for so long must have been a major factor in its eventual success.

The history of the work of the Agricultural Department during the colonial period in Ilorin is generally one of failure. In conclusion, some of the reasons for this failure may be surveyed.

Sometimes the conservatism of local people was put forward as a reason for failure; but their conservatism was often more a matter of commonsense and justifiable caution. Fluctuating export prices made the farmers wary of taking up new crops; these fluctuations demonstrated to them the need for conservatism. Again, the high price of development also contributed to their wariness, as in the case of the cost to the individual farmer both of mixed farming and of fertilisers.

Personnel problems certainly contributed to the general failure. The shortage and absences of senior agricultural personnel led to lack of supervision, as in the case of the cattle project during wartime, and delays, for example in implementing anti-erosion and mixed farming projects. Absence of and changes in senior personnel led to lack of continuity, and confusion over the exact policies which had been agreed on or followed before; this problem may for example have led to the apparent change in rural development policy (with respect to land exhaustion) between 1942 and 1946, and may also have contributed to the difficulties which beset the cattle project.

The shortage of all levels of personnel created a serious problem when it came to the carrying out of extension work;

1. IPAR 1961, para.68.

a problem frequently emphasized by the Agricultural Department itself.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the educational standard of N.A. agricultural staff was frequently low.<sup>2</sup> Extension work requires skilled, persistent and consistent effort, and the lack of sufficient, adequate staff at all levels would have made this impossible to attain.

The shortage of and inadequate staff was caused at least in part by problems of finance. A very meagre amount of money was provided for agriculture by the Ilorin Native Treasury until 1955.<sup>3</sup> This was another problem of which the Agricultural Department was well aware. In 1948, for example, the Senior Agricultural Officer demonstrated how little was made available, in Ilorin Division, as compared with that allocated by other N.A.s in Ilorin and Kabba Provinces.<sup>4</sup> The lack of money, or refusal to allocate it, delayed numerous projects. In some cases it might be conceded that lack of provision of money was related to lack of suitable projects; nevertheless, in so far as lack of money led to lack of staff for extension work in general, it must have seriously hampered progress.

A further reason for failure may be seen in the fact that the Ilorin Agricultural Department seems to have had to accept policies which were formulated by higher authority for the north, or the country, as a whole. Some of these policies may well have been suitable for other parts of the north, but

1. 4007/s.10, 4/2/514, AO to Residents Ilorin and Lokoja, 10/7/47, attaching Agric. Department Ilorin Province and Western Kabba, Statement of Policy 1947-56, para.21(5); 4007/s.38, 9/2/263, AO to Resident Ilorin Province, 18/7/49, Sokoto Survey, para.6; see also IPAR 1956, para.46.

2. IPAR 1955, para.30.

3. *Ibid.*

4. 4007/s.31, 23/4/20, J.F. Ward SAO to Deputy Director of Agric. Northern Provinces Samaru, 21/2/48, para.2 and NA Estimates of Expenditure 1948-49. Ilorin Division included present day Moro, Asa, Ilorin, Ifelodun, Irepodun and Oyi L.G.A.s.

not for Ilorin; as in the case of the encouragement of export crops, a policy which continued in Ilorin long after it could be seen to be a waste of time. In addition, some of these general policies seem to have been wholly misconceived, as in the case of the tractor project. Also, local plans geared to the specific needs of Ilorin had to be sacrificed to general policies; the Rural Planning Scheme was abandoned due to General wartime needs.

It is not, however, possible to blame higher authority entirely for the failures. The mixed farming scheme may have been imposed from above, but the plans for its adaptation made in Ilorin itself, with high costs to the farmer, and confusion over suitable cattle, were also to blame. Quarrels and lack of cooperation between various departments in Ilorin also contributed to the problems.

Although the encouragement of export crops succeeded elsewhere, a number of reasons contributed to their failure in Ilorin. These included fluctuating and low export prices, processing problems, and climate in the case of cotton and Groundnuts. Climatic problems also affected the introduction of fertilisers, a process which was hampered by drought. Agboola has described problems caused by the characteristics and unreliability of the early and late rains around Ilorin, which must also have affected programmes such as the fertilizer campaign.

Thus, although problems often emanated from within the Government itself, external factors such as economic depression and rainfall problems also made their contributions to the causes of the general failure.

1. Agboola, pp.41-43, 101.

ABBREVIATIONS

- (1)  
 Ilorprof: Ilorin Provincial Files  
 NAI: National Archives Ibadan  
 NAK: National Archives Kaduna  
 (S)AO: (Senior) Agricultural Officer  
 (S)DO(E): (Senior) District Officer (Emirate)  
 SNP: Secretariat/Secretary Northern Provinces  
 VO: Veterinary Officer.
- (2)  
2887: NAK Ilorprof 5 2887, Mixed Farming Middle Belt.  
4007/s.1 Vol.1: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.1 Vol.1, Development.  
 Ilorin Provincial Development Committee - Correspondence and Minutes of.  
4007/s.7: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.7, Administration Department.  
 Rural Development - Policy.  
4007/s.10: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.10, Development: Agricultural Department.  
4007/s.14: NAK Ilorprof 4007/s.14, Development. Rural Development (Demonstration Farm, Ballah Village Area).  
4007/s.20: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.20, Development. Annual Report on Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes.  
4007/s.31: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.31, Development, Experimental Tractor Units.  
4007/s.33A: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.33A, Ilorin Province Development Half Yearly, Quarterly Reports on.  
4007/s.38: NAK Ilorprof 5 4007/s.38, Development Scheme Ilorin Survey.
- (3)  
IPAR 1913: NAK SNP 10/2 49p 1914, Ilorin Province Report (Annual) 1913.  
IPAR 1914: NAK SNP 10/3 170p 1915, Ilorin Province Report (Annual) 1914.  
IPAR 1915: NAK Ilorprof 4/1 72p/1916, Ilorin Province Annual Report No.79 - 1915.  
IPAR 1916: NAK SNP 10/5 139p 1917, Ilorin Province Annual Reports 1916.  
IPAR 1917: NAK SNP 10/6 137p/1918, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1917.  
IPAR 1918: NAK SNP 10/7 133p/1919, Ilorin Province Annual Report No.87 1918, and NAK Ilorprof 4/69/1919.

IPAR 1919: NAK SNP 10/8 3p/1920, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1919.  
IPAR 1920/21: NAK SNP 10/9 119p 1921, Ilorin Province Report for 15 Months ending 31st March 1921.  
IPAR 1921: NAK Ilorprof 4/1 29/1922, Annual Report - Ilorin Province 1921 No.92.  
IPAR 1922: NAK SNP 9/9 300/1922, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1922 No.93.  
IPAR 1923: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.1, Ilorin Province Report No.94 for Year 1923.  
IPAR 1924: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.2, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1924.  
IPAR 1925: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.3, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1925.  
IPAR 1926: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.4, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1926.  
IPAR 1927: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.5, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1927.  
IPAR 1928: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.6, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1928.  
IPAR 1929: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.7, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1929.  
IPAR 1930: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.8, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1930.  
IPAR 1931: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.9, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1931.  
IPAR 1932: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.10, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1932.  
IPAR 1933: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.11, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1933.  
IPAR 1934: NAK SNP 17/2 23995, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1934.  
IPAR 1935: NAK SNP 17/2 25753, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1935.  
IPAR 1936: NAK SNP 17/3 27779, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1936.  
IPAR 1937: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.11, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1937: file also contains Ilorin Province Annual Report 1937.  
IPARs 1938 and 1939: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.12, Ilorin Province Annual Reports 1938 and 1939.  
IPAR 1940: NAK SNP 17(?) 33106, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1940.  
IPAR 1940-IPAR 1951: NAI CSO 26/2 12687 Vol.13, Ilorin Province Annual Reports 1940-51 (1947 missing).  
IPAR 1947: NAK SNP 17(?) 43493, Ilorin Province Annual Report for the year 1947, and NAK Ilorprof 5/1 4838.

The following reports are all printed by the Government Printer, Kaduna. Figures in parentheses indicate year of publication:

IPAR 1952: Provincial Annual Reports 1952 (1954).  
IPAR 1953: Provincial Annual Reports 1953 (1955).  
IPAR 1954: Provincial Annual Reports 1954 (1956).  
IPAR 1955: Provincial Annual Reports 1955 (1955?).  
IPAR 1956: Provincial Annual Reports 1956 (1958).  
IPAR 1957: Provincial Annual Reports 1957 (1959).  
IPAR 1958: Provincial Annual Reports 1958 (1959).  
IPAR 1959: Provincial Annual Reports 1959 (1962).  
IPAR 1961: Provincial Annual Reports 1961 (1963).