



RELIGIOUS CHANGE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION  
OF IDOANI (A YORUBA COMMUNITY)

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the  
University of Liverpool for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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## Dedication

To my mother Mrs. F. Ogunsola.  
and  
The entire Idoani Community  
without whom this work would not have been possible.

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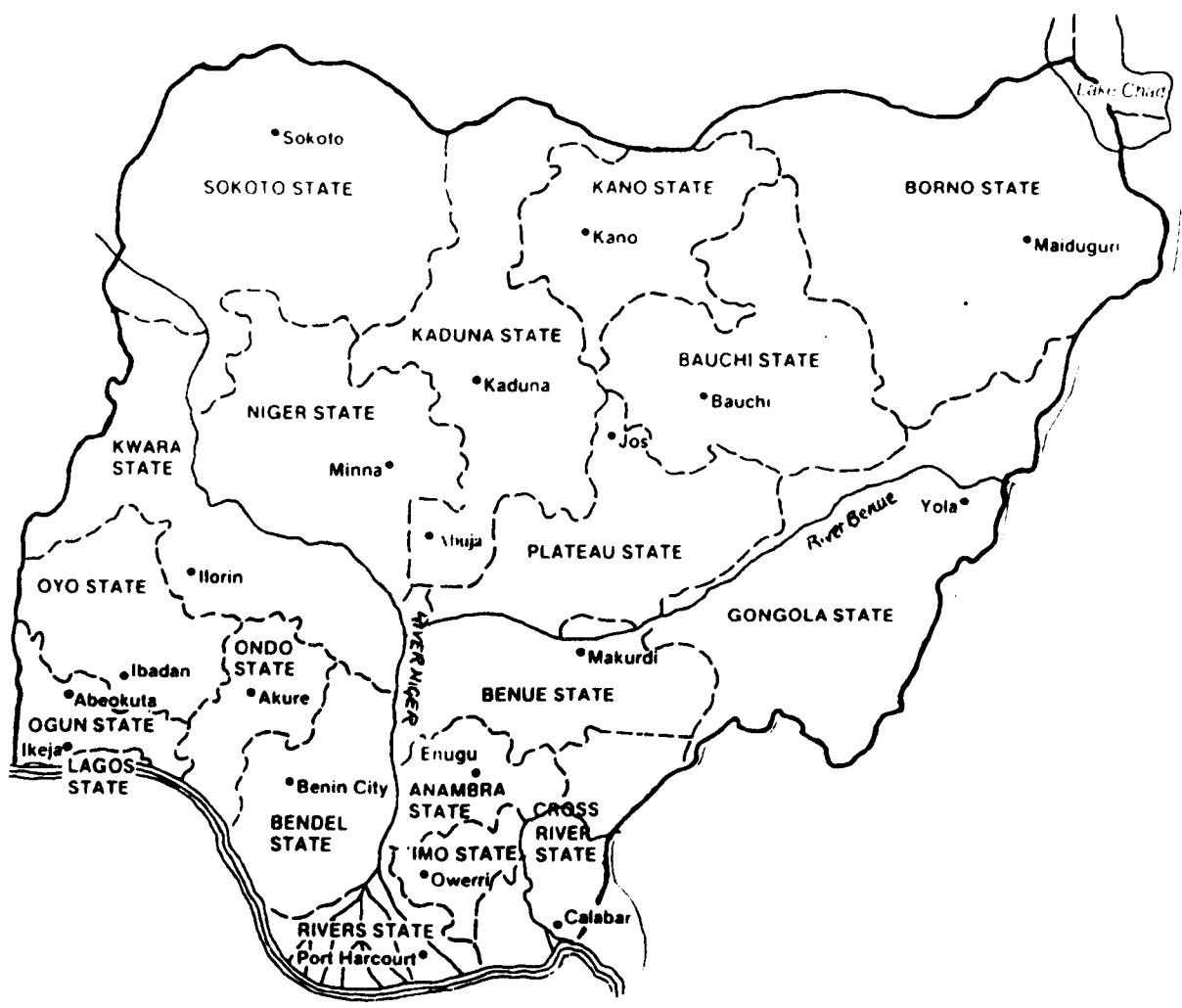
GLOSSARY OF YORUBA WORDS USED IN THE TEXT

Adugbo	Neighbourhood, usually translated as quarter.
Agbo	Tea made from boiling an assortment of leaves and barks.
Agbo'le	Compound, group of houses.
Aiye	The world of the living.
Are	Play, procession of music, dance and singing
Baba	Father.
Babalawo	Traditional healer, diviner.
Egbe	Association of equals.
Egun	Masquerade.
Eru	Slave.
Idi'le	Lineage.
Ile	House.
Oba	Political and Spiritual head of a <i>community</i>
Odun	Festival, Celebration.
Oku	Dead, death.
Ologun	War lord, <del>usually</del> freelance.
Oloye	Title holder.
Oriki	Praise name.
Orun	Heaven.
Osomaalo	Trader in cloth on credit.
Oye	Title.
Sin	Worship.

## ABBREVIATIONS

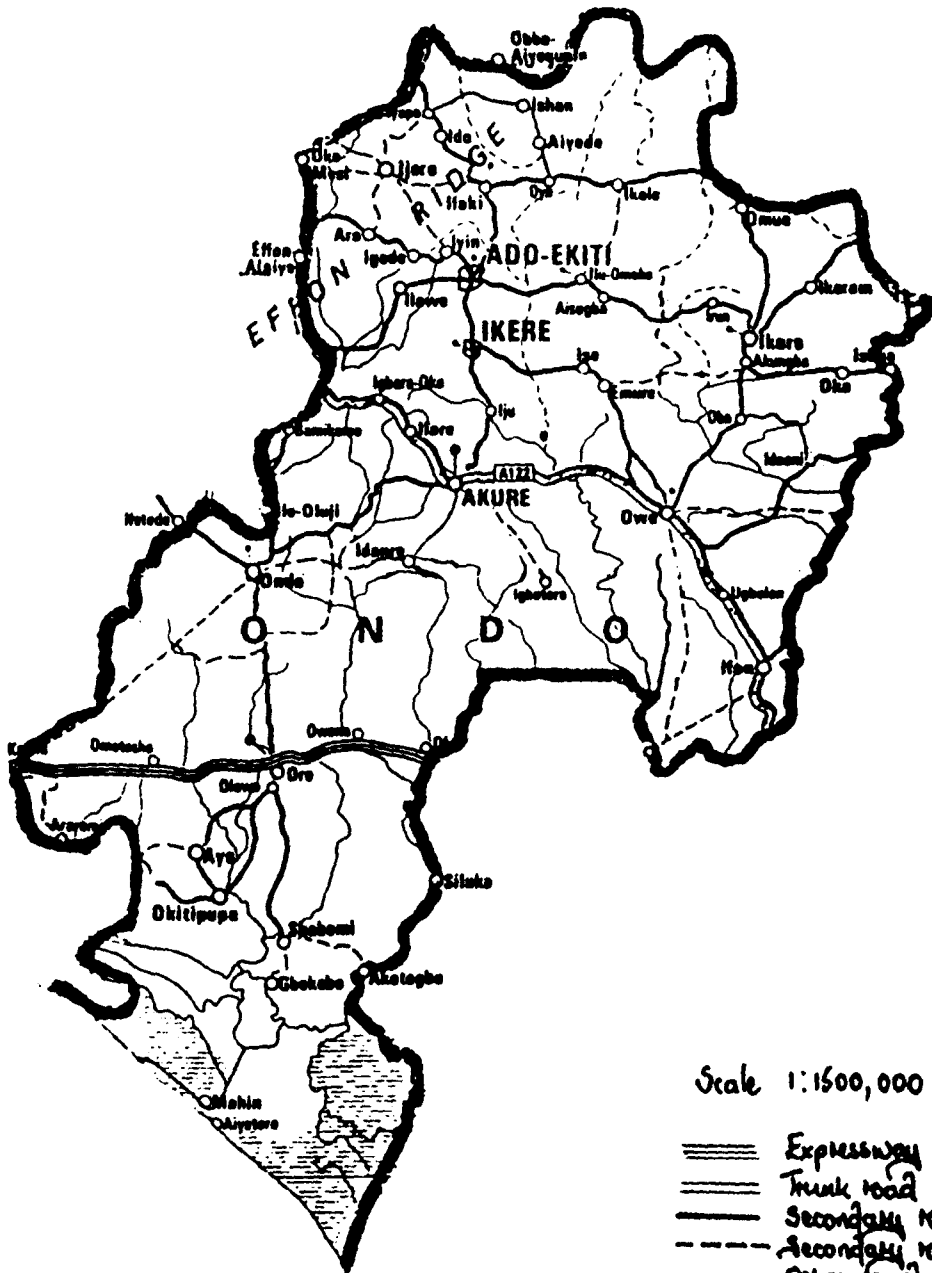
A.A.	American Anthropologist
A.J.S.	American Journal of Sociology
C.A.C.	Christ Apostolic Church
C.C.C.	Celestial Church of Christ
C.M.S.	Church Missionary Society
D.O.	District Officer
F.G.M.	Faith Gospel Mission
J.H.S.N.	Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
N.A.I.	National Archives Ibadan
R.J.C.C.	Remember Jesus Come Church
U.P.E.	Universal Primary Education

MAP 1: NIGERIA



----- state boundaries

# Map 2: ONDO STATE

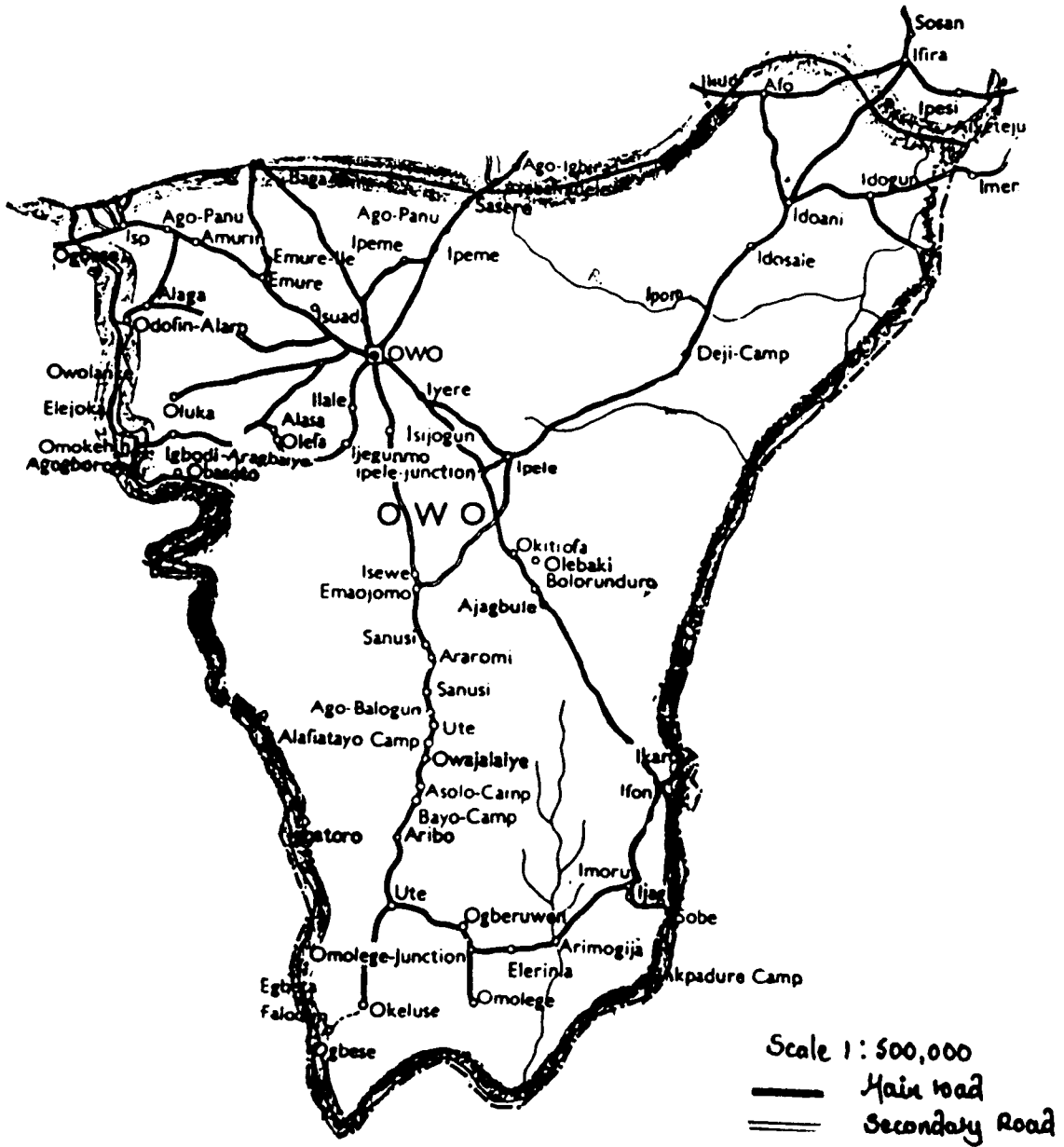


Scale 1:1500,000

- ==== Expressway
- ==== Trunk road
- ==== Secondary road
- Secondary road under construction
- Other road
- Track

ADAPTED FROM SPECTRUM TRAVEL MAP  
 PUBLISHED BY JOHN BARTHOLOMEW & SON LTD

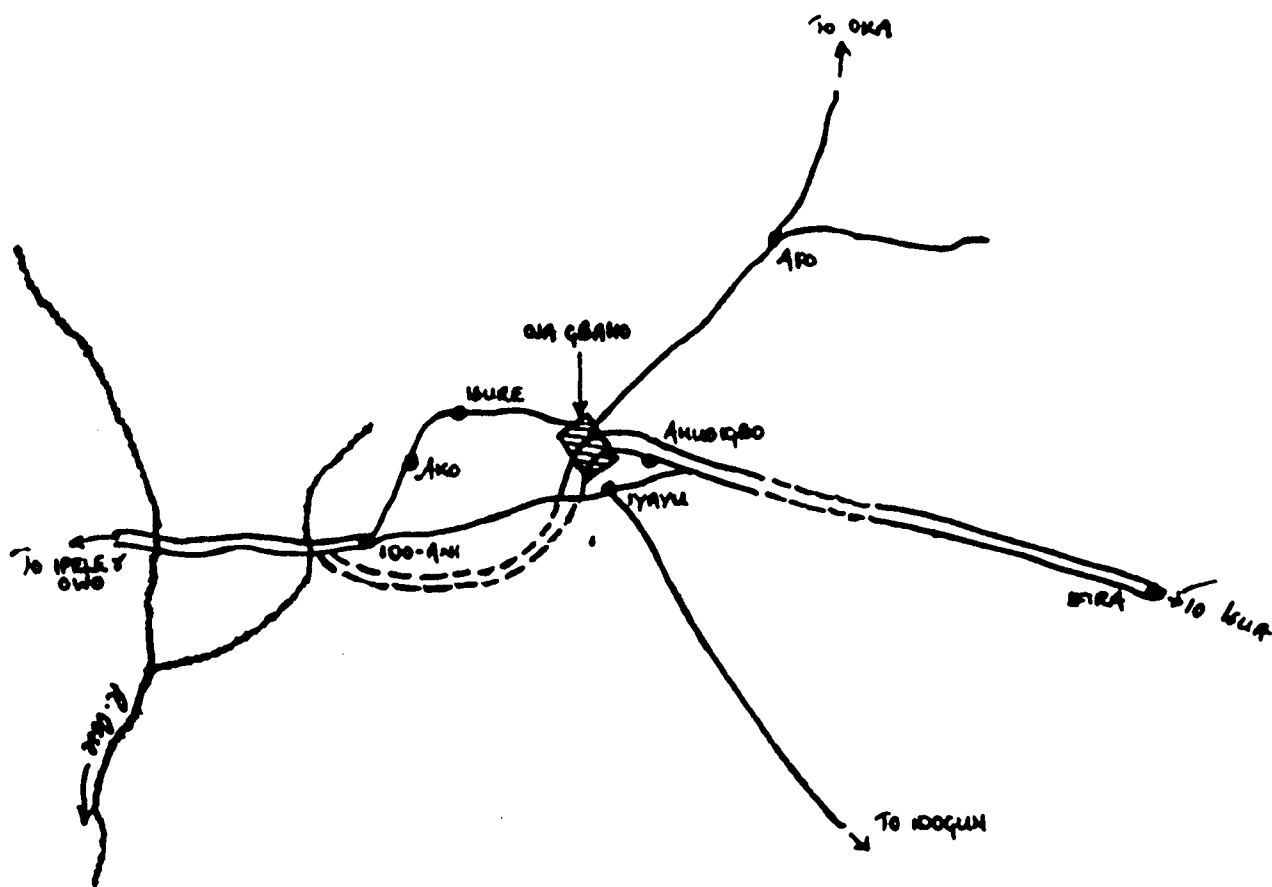
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ADAPTED FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF ONDO STATE  
 PUBLISHED BY ONDO STATE SURVEYS, AKURE, 1978



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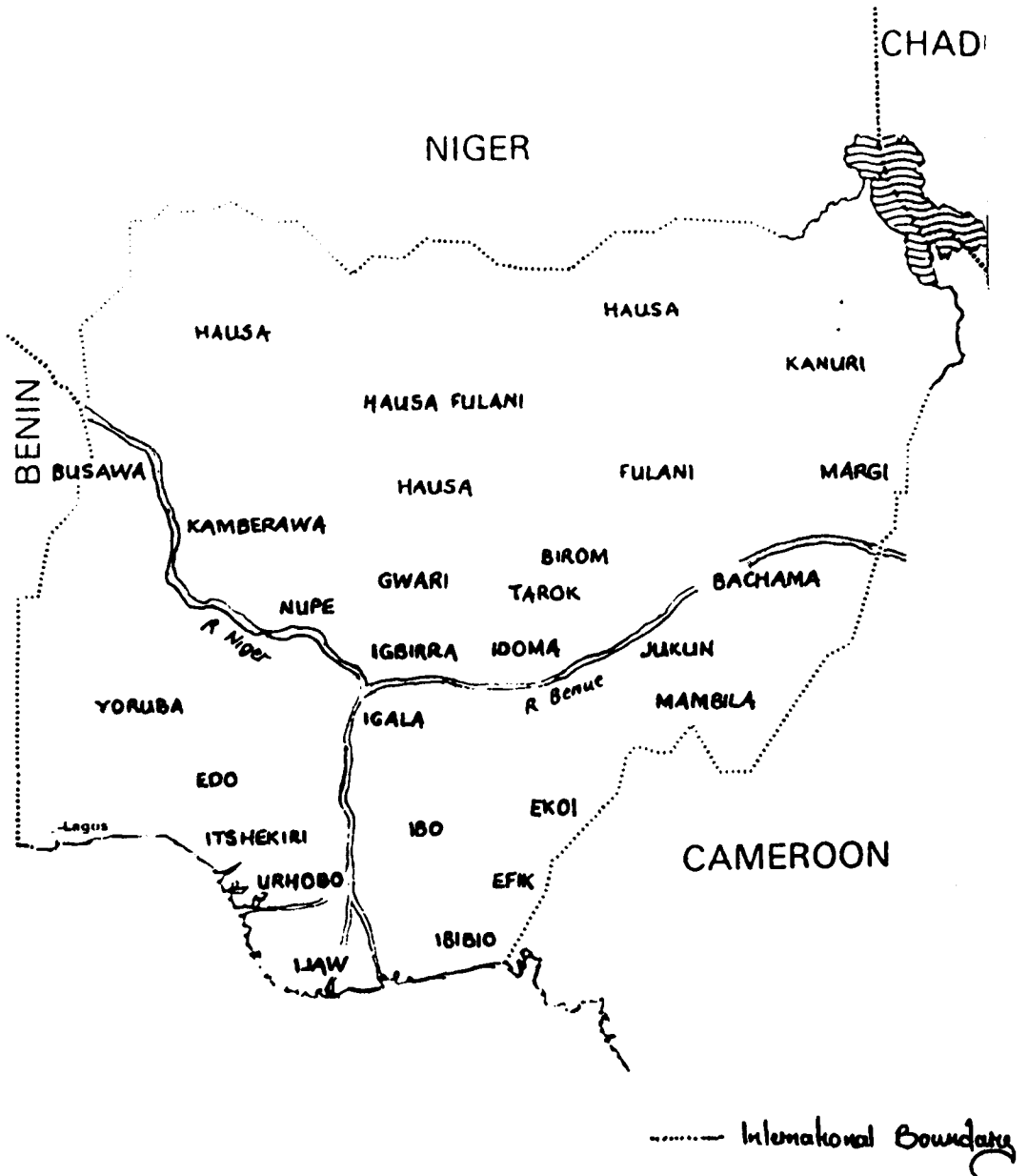


Scale 1:125,000  
 1.014" = 2 Miles

==== Completed motor road  
 - - - - Uncompleted motor road

ADAPTED FROM A MAP DRAWN BY D.O. CAPTAIN D. O'CONNOR  
 (N.A.I.) ONOOPROF 1/2, OF 1295 'THE ALANI OF IODANI: MATTERS AFFECTING'  
 D.O., OWO TO RESIDENT, ANURE, 31 MARCH 1921.

MAP 5: CULTURAL REGIONS OF NIGERIA



## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

This study was prompted originally by an interest in contemporary Yoruba religious culture, in particular in the role and significance in that culture of Christianity and Islam. Preliminary investigations seemed to indicate, that:

1. The contemporary role and significance of Christianity and Islam in Yoruba society is largely a consequence of the historical process by which they were incorporated into Yoruba religious culture,
2. 'Yoruba' religious culture has been community specific, even though the definition of community is usually highly contested and problematic.

The concern of this thesis, therefore, will be with religion and community at Idoani, the town in Ondo state of Nigeria where fieldwork was carried out. The theoretical concerns of the thesis are with religious change in Africa and the significance of religion for the articulation of community.

The model of religious change that will be employed in this study, has been formulated in response to four distinct bodies of work. These bodies of work have all been concerned with religion in Africa but have varied in terms of their explicit focus, their ideological character and the discipline to which they aim to contribute; they

include:

1. The contributions of social anthropologists to the study of traditional religions;
2. The writings of some African clergymen;
3. Some contributions to the Ibadan history series;
4. The concern with the rationality of 'conversion'.

The contributions of social anthropologists to the study of traditional African religion have reflected quite specific perspectives on the relationship between the traditional religions of other cultures and the 'religions' of their own culture, as well as the relationship between religion and society. Early social anthropologists treated African religions as belonging to the same species, but earlier and thus lower forms of the religions of their own cultures eg. Judaism, Christianity, and even science itself. Their orientation was evolutionist, positivist and intellectualist (Evans Pritchard 1965). To intellectualists, religion is; a theory of causation; an explanatory framework; and/or given knowledge about humanity's early history (Tylor 1871; Goody 1961; Geertz 1966). Both the pervasiveness of early intellectualist theories of religion and the covert intellectualism which, as we shall see, characterises the structural functionalist approach to the study of religion, seem to be derived from that tradition in the religious cultures of Western Europe in which the emphasis is on belief and confession, and is at

the heart of the definitional problem in the sociology of religion as well as the anthropological study of religion.

In particular, the roots of this emphasis on intellectual processes in the study of religion, like those of social science itself are in Protestant Christianity which represented an attempt to halt Catholic Christianity's drift away from Judeo-monotheism. To Weber who, according to Hill 'stands at a watershed in European thought' (Hill 1975; 260), Protestant Christianity was both a dynamic agent as well as a consequence of the general rationalization which was taking place in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Among the other agents Weber considered to have been involved in this process were: economic and political activity, the growth of capitalism and the separation of Church and state respectively (Weber 1930). The positivism of the founding fathers of sociology represented an extension of the rationalization process, in this instance to the explanation of social reality, that is to religion itself. To Comte the most committed positivist of the founding fathers of the movement which became sociology, religion's primary concern was to explain and thus give meaning to social reality. If the methods with which the physical sciences seemed to be having such a huge success at that time, were applied to society, the positivists expected that sociology, the science of man and society, would eventually replace religion. This expectation is

reflected in certain ambivalences towards the study of religion as well as a tendency, which still characterises much sociology, towards single explanatory frameworks like the monotheism of protestant Christianity which the founding fathers intended it would replace. Witness the vigour with which positivism, evolutionism, structural functionalism and marxism have been embraced at various stages in British sociology.

To the early intellectualists, all religions were bodies of erroneous beliefs about past, present and future realities. They were particularly concerned therefore, with understanding how these beliefs came to be formulated and accepted. They had little to say about the significance of religion to society and of social relations to religion. Durkheim's incorporation of these considerations into his explanation and definition of religion were an important breakthrough and made him, according to Evans Pritchard, 'perhaps the greatest figure in modern sociology' (1965; 53). For Durkheim, religion was not a product of reasoning but an objective social fact which arose out of the nature of social life itself, it was the means by which the collective society represented itself to itself and to its individual members. In Totemism, which for Durkheim was the most elementary form of religion, the sacredness of the totem is derived from the fact that it is a symbol of the society.

Although Durkheim's model with its emphasis on the

social character of religion did represent a major breakthrough for the study of religion, and is usually distinguished from intellectualist theories of his era and called a sociological theory, it was still very evolutionist, concerned with the genesis of religion and based, as Evans-Pritchard has described, on spurious ethnographic data. What is more significant for our argument here, however, is the fact that despite his own rules of sociological method, fundamentally, the theory offers what Evans-Pritchard has called a psychological explanation of a social fact (Evans-Pritchard 1965; 67). Ultimately, the theory is concerned with the intellectual processes which give rise to activity which stimulates intellectual processes.

The structural-functionalist anthropologists who employed Durkheim's theoretical models to analyse African religions and held the field more or less to themselves for some time, did not manage to shake off this covert intellectualism despite their emphasis on the social function of religion and their insistence that social function is quite independent of the veracity or falsity of religious beliefs. If a cause-effect analysis must be imposed Radcliffe-Brown argued, then it is ritual, the symbolic expressions of certain sentiments on which social life depends, that determines beliefs (Radcliffe-Brown 1952). In detailed ethnographies, structural functionalist anthropologists interpreted religious ritual

by relating it to social structure (Evans-Pritchard 1937; Fortes 1959; Middleton 1960; Turner 1967; 1968). Although they treated ritual rather than belief as the core element of religion, because they regarded ritual as values, norms, beliefs and sentiments about social roles and relationships, structural functionalism may be regarded as a covert intellectualism which like early intellectualist theories, assume that traditional religions are erroneous bodies of belief (Turner 1968; 1). These theories may avoid stating this assumption but they do treat 'beliefs' as mere justification or rationalization of rituals which symbolize something quite different.

A major drawback of structural functionalist approaches to the study of African religion has been the picture they have presented of African religion and religious life as static. Few of the structural functionalists made any attempt to discuss or account for developments and changes in African religion and only very rarely was any attempt made to account for the spread of Christianity and Islam in Africa. The picture they presented of static, closed and unchanging societies implied that change could only occur as a result of external pressures. Reflecting on the relationship between religion and social change, Wilson could only say that religious ideas could not escape reformulation as societies change (1971; 5). For Wilson, because beliefs and symbols are made relevant by social structure, it is changing social structure, which produces a change in



perception (Wilson 1971). Among the shifts in perception as a consequence of changes in scale that Wilson catalogues are: the introduction of choice where previously there was none; the growth of a conception of impersonal causation where previously misfortune was assumed to have a personal cause; and the shift from a conservatism in which the golden age is always in the past to a perspective in which the 'Kingdom of Heaven' lies in the future and is something towards which men strive. These shifts that Wilson identifies are part of a more general structural functionalist argument which postulates that the fundamental difference between African traditional religions and Christianity, is that the beliefs of the former only have relevance in small scale, relatively unchanging homogeneous societies while the latter is relevant to the large scale, rapidly changing heterogeneous societies of Europe. In addition however, in claiming that as African societies become large scale, traditional religious practices and beliefs no longer have relevance, Wilson's argument also implies that there is a direct relationship between the spread of Christianity and a decline in the significance of traditional religion. More recently, this position has been explicitly stated by Eades in The Yoruba Today. Opening the chapter on belief systems and religious organisation, Eades states that

'The most obvious trend in Yoruba religion today is the decline of the traditional cults in the face of Islam and Christianity (Eades 1980; 118).

To reach beyond the limitations of these social anthropological approaches to the study of religion in Africa, what seemed to be needed, was a theoretical perspective that could on the one hand offer some insight into traditional religious culture and on the other hand attempt to account for the spread of Christianity and Islam. Important steps in this direction have been made by two closely related categories of African scholars; clergymen and historians.

Despite their commitment to Christianity, the Church they serve and their education in mission schools which, according to Idowu, has taught them 'an attitude of contempt towards ..... native custom and religion', African clergymen have have played an important role in correcting the erroneous and derogatory picture of traditional African culture and religion presented in much of the literature (Idowu 1962, 1973; 99). Arguing that the concept of the supreme being had not been introduced to the Yoruba by Christian missionaries, but had been an integral part of indigenous Yoruba culture, Idowu concluded that the decline of indigenous Yoruba religion has been due to internal weaknesses; and that the incursion of the two world religions, Christianity and Islam, is bound up with the history of the Yoruba which historians were still collecting (Idowu 1962: 204). Just as Idowu predicted, the collection of African history has had profound consequences for our understanding of the processes of religious change and contemporary African

religious culture.

The problem has been, as Kalu has indicated, that for too long the canons of historiography had been race and written source (Kalu 1980; 2).

In an attempt to reach beyond the problems associated with traditional historiography, in the 1960s a new historiography was introduced at Ibadan. This new historiography employed, in addition to the usual documentary sources, a variety of non-documentary sources. By the 1970s, this new historiography was being adopted by some European historians and the case for the significance of the early history of African religions for understanding the processes of religious change in Africa was taken up with impressive results. Ranger, for instance, has produced evidence in his study Revolt in Southern Rhodesia of a Southern African High God cult of considerable scope and antiquity, and the persistence of historical African religious institutions (Ranger 1967).

A theoretical perspective on religious change must in addition, therefore, emphasise historical processes and take into account important non-documentary sources such as oral traditions and life histories.

In 1965, as part of the Ibadan history series, Ajayi published Christian Missions in Nigeria which described the influence of Christian missionary activity on the rise of new power bases in Nigeria. The following year, Ayandele published Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria

which reviewed the reaction of Nigerians to missionary activities. Because they were still constrained by the conventions of their discipline and relied heavily on documentary sources in which African historical processes were viewed from the perspective of Europeans in Africa, however, neither of these major studies could pay any attention to the early history of the Yoruba which Idowu had suggested was necessary for understanding the incorporation of Christianity and Islam into the religious culture of the Yoruba. Nevertheless, both these historians were very much concerned with the dynamics of the African societies about which they wrote and took up the challenge issued by the eminent British historian Hugh Trevor Roper when he arrogantly and foolishly announced that there was no history of Africa except the history of Europeans in Africa. Both Ajayi and Ayandele established categorically, that in West Africa, Africans had played decisive roles in the establishment and spread of Christianity. Ajayi described how Christian missionary activity in Yorubaland had been initiated in response to the demands of Yoruba peoples who had been freed from the trans-Atlantic slave trade to Sierra Leone and become Christians there. It was these people who had, when they wanted to return home, persuaded missionaries to accompany them. Ayandele's contribution on the other hand showed how the missionary enterprise was employed by some Africans as an instrument for the achievement of social, political, and economic aspirations.

Despite their ad hoc approach to analysis and explanation, the historical studies in the Ibadan history series were a refreshing alternative to the dominant models of African religion and African religious change in social anthropology, the weaknesses of which have already been considered. They continued, however, with that tendency in the literature to emphasize the impact of Christianity or Islam on African religious cultures and societies rather than the dynamics of the societies which incorporated these religions into their religious cultures. It is this tendency which has prompted the emphasis on questions about the movements of Christianity and Islam and the activities of the agents of these religions.

Although it was to account for the spread of Christianity and Islam in Africa, that a new intellectualist theory was eventually stated, it emphasised the dynamics of African societies.

In 1968, Peel suggested that if the origins of religion as a general phenomenon could not be studied as the early intellectualists had attempted to, the origins of Christianity in Africa could (p.13). Interpreting religious change among the Yoruba as a people's struggle to adopt its stock of theoretical concepts to the explanation prediction and control of events in a new and unfamiliar social situation, Peel made no general claims for his theory of religious change among the Yoruba.

Indeed his claim was that the Yoruba whose religious change the theory was meant to account for, were a special case because unlike other African peoples, their religious cults were only loosely articulated to social structure.

Although in more recent works Peel has emphasized the significance of both internal and external pressures for religious change in Africa, his accounts of the introduction of Islam and Christianity to the Yoruba in Aladura also reflect the biases of historiography at that time (Peel 1968; 1977; 1983). Thus Christianity first came to Yorubaland with the visit of the Methodist missionary T.B. Freeman and the account of the introduction of Islam starts with Usman dan Fodio who led the Jihad which established a theocratic Muslim Empire over the Hausa states of Northern Nigeria (Peel 1968). Checked by the lack of documentary evidence, or evidence of institutional growth, the account's attention then turns to the Muslim traders, domestic slaves and itinerant preachers who moved about Yorubaland and concludes that Islam spreads along the natural lines of influence in the society. It was however, Peel's commitment to a sociology with an historical perspective (itself a reaction to the absence of any such perspective in the structural functionalism which had dominated sociology up to this point) which made possible the break with the assumption that the impetus for conversion comes from Christianity and Islam, for it was in order to establish what had been special and particular about religious change among the Yoruba that

Peel was forced to consider the character of Yoruba religion and the dynamics of Yoruba society as significant factors in the process of religious change.

In his attempt to propound a general theory of African 'conversion' in 1971, Horton elaborated on Peel's breakthrough and denied that the Yoruba were a special case. Horton argued instead, that the cosmology of the Yoruba like that of most other African peoples, has two tiers. On one tier are the lesser spirits whose concern is with the microcosm, that is with prediction, explanation and control of the affairs of the local community and its environment. On the other tier, is a supreme being whose concern is with the macrocosm, that is the world beyond the local community and as a whole. The microcosm is part of the macrocosm and the supreme being is ultimately in control of the lesser spirits who govern it. As Africans became increasingly involved in the affairs of a wider world, Horton argued, the supreme being received increasing attention. It was because Islam and Christianity are cults of the supreme being and had arrived at the strategic point in this process that they were catalysts for changes that were 'in the air anyway'.

By suggesting that conversion to Christianity and Islam represent changes that were in the air anyway, Horton's theory represented an attempt to break with the implication in structural functionalist literature that 'conversion' involved a dramatic shift in perception. For

Horton, the shift is in cosmological emphasis rather than in perception. This shift in emphasis is, I would contend a shift in perception nevertheless, for it involves a shift in perception of what aspects of cosmology are significant. Like the general theory itself, this aspect also owes much to Peel's conclusions about religious change among the Yoruba. Again it was Peel's commitment to sociological enquiry with an historical perspective which seems to have sparked the initial breakthrough. Thus it was Christianity's initial intolerance and dogmatism, its refusal to conform to the rather generous rules of the game according to which the various cults, of which Yoruba religion consists, operated which made 'conversion' (a dramatic shift in perception) difficult. Instead, Peel suggested, the Yoruba recognised there was something in Christianity, but would not abandon all their previous beliefs for it (Peel 1968).

Horton's theory differed from early intellectualist theories of religion because it: 1) also had a sociological orientation and 2) it assumed that African religious thought had a rational basis. It also represented a major breakthrough in the study of African religion for two main reasons: 1) it assumed that there was continuity in African societies and 2) it presented a more coherent review of traditional African religion. Horton's theory was also enthusiastically received because, according to Van Binsbergen, it broke with the assumption that the impetus for conversion came from



Christianity and Islam and tied in with the ideological commitment which many Africanists seem to have shared at that time to

emphasis on essential continuity in African societies.....and the emphasis on the African as actively shaping and reshaping his social and ritual world (Van Binsbergen 1981; 28).

Typically, the opposition to Horton's theory comes from an historian with a penchant for comparative religion (one of the schools against which Horton's first expounded his theory). Fisher's objection to Horton's theory is that it fails to account for the evidence from Muslim black Africa which provides examples of societies in which the significance of the macrocosm has increased in terms of developments in, for instance, international trade, but which have failed to develop their cults of the supreme being. Fisher's contention is that because Islam is a prophetic religion, theoretically demanding conversion, it has been much more than just a catalyst.

According to Fisher, the evidence from Muslim black Africa indicates that there have been three stages to the spread of Islam: quarantine, mixing and reform. In character with arguments which treat the religions Christianity and Islam as the opposite of traditional African religions, Fisher suggests that what distinguishes reform Islam from traditional religion and the 'adhesion' which characterises the mixing stage, is the literate tradition of Islam which, as Goody and Watt have argued

has

brought about an awareness of two things: of the past as different from the present; and of the inherent inconsistencies in the picture of life as it was inherited by the individual from the cultural tradition in its recorded form (1962-3; 333).

For Fisher therefore, Horton's argument underestimates the ability of Africans to make rigorous Islam and Christianity their own. Of course in response to Fisher, Horton is able to point to examples from Muslim Black Africa which do fit his theory. Ultimately, however, the test of a good general theory, is not whether examples can be found to fit it, but what sort of a guide it is to the formulation of an agenda for research.

The main drawback of Horton's theory is its emphasis on explanation, prediction, control and spiritual beings as the central concerns of religion. Despite its claim to a sociological dimension, the theory fails to take into account the fact that in addition to their existence in the minds of men, religions also exist on the ground as organised bodies with specific political and economic significance for specific communities. By describing Christianity and Islam as catalysts therefore, Horton has underestimated the significance of these religions in contemporary African religious cultures, although not in the way Fisher has suggested (Fisher 1973). Again, because of its intellectualist emphasis, like those of the early social anthropologists, Horton's theory indulges in thought experiments for which there is no ethnographic evidence and for this reason, the theory seems to be, like

the intellectualist theories of the previous era, methodologically sterile. For beliefs, or intellectual positions and developments, are difficult to observe first hand and are unsuitable subjects for sociological enquiry let alone historical research. The answers to questions about these phenomena are likely to be determined by the context in which the interview takes place and the specific relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. This research student, for example, was frequently referred to as 'oyinbo dudu' - white person who is dark. This statement seems to suggest that for the subjects of my research I was perceived as being in an ambiguous position in relation to what is a racial and cultural divide. One effect of being placed in this category was that for many of those interviewed, it was not clear whether or not I shared Europeans' contempt for traditional religion. The result was that there was a general reluctance to discuss the traditional religion and its development, as well as an apparent tendency to underestimate the significance of traditional religion both in the past and in contemporary religious culture.

In his later works, Peel has come closer to bridging the gap between some of the simple material interest accounts of religious change and the limitations of Horton's intellectualist theory (Long 1968; Peel 1977). Peel's comparison of religious change in Ijebu and Buganda for instance indicates that for a more comprehensive model

of religious change that can reach beyond some of the limitations of the approaches outlined above, what is needed is an incorporation perspective that reflects more accurately the actual processes of African religious change. By comparison with the models considered above, an incorporation perspective would be more limited, in the sense that the questions it would prompt about African religious change would not be so wide and fundamental, but more specific and in some senses more comprehensive. Such a perspective should demand an inclusion in the analysis of religious change, a wider range of aspects of religion than the beliefs which are at the basis of intellectualist models of religious change and at the same time avoid the covert intellectualism of structural functionalist models of religious change.

Reflecting the ideological commitments of contemporary Africa therefore, a model of religious change with an incorporation perspective should be, as Peel's analysis has attempted to be, rooted more specifically in the analysis of developments in specific African cultures and societies and should make the following assumptions:

1. Religion is a complex phenomenon that is also essentially political. Concerned, that is, with the expression, representation, manipulation and distribution of power.
2. The incorporation of a new religion into a religious culture involves an expansion rather than a change in explanatory frameworks.

3. The impetus for the incorporation of a new religion, emanates from the existing religion, as well as existing social, political and economic realities.

Assumption 1.

Religion is a complex phenomenon that is also essentially political. Concerned, that is, with the expression, representation, manipulation and distribution of power.

This assumption has been derived from three aspects of Yoruba religious culture. The first of these is the interdependent relationship which exists between religious culture and socio-political organisation. There are two reasons why Peel failed to appreciate this fact, arguing instead that Yoruba cults were only loosely articulated with each other and social organisation. Firstly his unit of study was 'the Yoruba' rather than a specific Yoruba community and secondly he was working on the popular misconception of that era in Yoruba studies, that the orisa are the main element of traditional Yoruba religious culture. A more detailed exposition of the relationship between religious culture and socio-political organisation is provided in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. It may be noted at this point however, that in his introduction to the first Yoruba dictionary published in 1858, T.J. Bowen, one of the first generation of missionaries to Yorubaland whose familiarity with Yoruba language gave him an unusual insight, for that time, into Yoruba culture, described one of the features of that relationship thus:

The doctrine of Idolatory prevalent in Yoruba appears to be derived by analogy from the forms and customs of civil government. There is but one king in the Nation and one God over the universe. Petitioners to the king approach him through the intervention of his servants, courtiers and nobles, and the petitioner consiliates the courtiers whom he employs by good words and presents. In like manner, no man can directly approach God, but the almighty himself, they say has appointed various kinds of orisa (godlings) who are mediators and intercessors between himself and mankind. No sacrifices are to be made to God because he needs nothing, but the orisa, being much like man are pleased with offerings of sheep, pigeons and other things, they consiliate the orisa or mediator that he may bless them not in his own power but in the power of God (Bowen 1858; XXXI).

Although it is speculation to suggest that Yoruba religious culture is derived from the forms and customs of civil government, it is clear that a relationship exists between the two. The existence of a relationship was confirmed to Fadipe by an informant at Ogbomoso who told him that

Olorun is superior to the orisa.  
Olorun is to the orisa as Oba Alaafin to the baales. It is only necessary to be at peace with the baale and one is at peace with the Alaafin (Fadipe 1970; 284).

One effect of a relationship of this type is that religion itself can become the stuff of political discourse as the introduction of the African Church to Idoani described in Chapter 5 clearly illustrates.

The second aspect of Yoruba culture from which this assumption has been derived is the fact that within the

Yoruba language there was no single word which could be translated to mean religion. The word which tends to be used to mean religion is *isin*, the etymology of which provides important clues to the character of Yoruba religious culture. The root of the noun is related to the verb *sin* which is used in a variety of contexts. Reduced to English *sin* means 'to worship', but as the following examples of its use in a variety of contexts illustrates, it is also intended to imply caring, tending and aggrandisement or improvement of the condition of the object through care. Thus it is that with their different types of prayer, Christians and Muslims *sin* Olorun. In addition however, wives should *sin* their husbands and livestock. People *sin* their parents and their ancestors and when it was revealed that there was a plan, in the reorganization of Ondo State's Local Government Areas, to relocate Idoani in Ifon Local Government Area, the people of Idoani protested that to be under Owo in Owo Local Government Area was bad enough, but to be under Ifon that was 'too small to be putting Idoani in its pocket' was intolerable. It was said:

a fe ki a ma sin ara wa, ki  
Idoani na tobi  
we want to be 'worshiping' ourselves in  
order that Idoani too might be great.

This more complex translation of *sin* finds support in Barber's description of how an individual's status in a Yoruba community depends ultimately upon the

acknowledgement of his fellow men (Barber 1981). An awareness of this fact, Barber suggests, is extended to men's relations with the spiritual or superhuman;

an orisa without devotees fades into insignificance as far as the human community is concerned (Barber 1981).

Sin is used mainly in connection with ancestral cults, Olorun or Eledumare, and does not appear to have been used in relation to the orisa, but according to Barber, this awareness that Man makes God pervades Yoruba religious culture and far from indicating scepticism or decline of belief, seems to be a central impulse to devotion.

The word which is commonly used in connection with the orisa is *bo* which also means 'to worship'. This term is used, however, to imply worship involving sacrifice. Again, sacrifice is not really an adequate interpretation of *bo*, for the act seems to have required in addition to the placing of a particular item before the orisa; the involvement of a group of people, that is some kind of communion, without this, it seems, a sacrifice could become irrelevant. (Commenting on his father's late 'conversion' to Christianity, an elderly man at Idoani stated that it was when his father killed something to sacrifice to his orisa and could not persuade any of his christian children to join him in eating it, that the old man was forced to abandon the orisa).

The third aspect of Yoruba religious culture from which this assumption has been derived is the intense religiosity of Yoruba people which is suggested in the



way, among other things, people communicate with one another. Here are four examples of common blessings which might be exchanged in the course of any meeting between two Yoruba people:

Olorun a ran e l'owo  
God will help you

K'Olorun so wa  
May God guide us

A dupe l'owo Olorun  
We thank God

L'agbara Olorun  
With God's strength

The relationship between religion and politics in Yoruba culture seems to have been symbiotic in the sense that political authorities derived their power from religion while the fate of religious notions was determined by the ability of those who supported them to wield power.

#### Assumption 2.

The incorporation of a new religion into a religious culture involves the expansion rather than a change of explanatory frameworks.

This assumption has been derived from three quite different aspects of Yoruba religious culture from those discussed in relation to the first assumption. The first of these aspects is the pluralism of Yoruba religious culture which is characterised by a plurality of spiritual or superhuman beings, cults, and conceptual as

well as ritual frameworks.

The second aspect of Yoruba religious culture from which this assumption has been derived is its problem solving orientation, which Peel has called a 'this worldly' emphasis, evidence of which litters this study (Peel 1968).

The third aspect of Yoruba religious culture from which this assumption has been derived is the eagerness with which Yoruba communities have seized not just Christianity and Islam, but even before the arrival of these, some of the cults of their neighbours. This aspect of Yoruba religious culture is covered in more detail in Chapter 3, which discusses the religious culture of Idoani and Chapter 5, which describes and analyses the process by which Christianity and Islam were introduced to Idoani.

An incorporation perspective would not only make this assumption about religious change in Africa, but also about itself. The perspective is not, therefore, intended to replace intellectualist approaches to religious change, but to inform them. It does not question the validity of intellectualist perspectives although it must challenge any construction of historical reality based solely on their premises.

### Assumption 3

The impetus for the incorporation of a new religions emanates from the existing religion, as well as existing social, political and economic realities.

This assumption has also been derived from the creative element in Yoruba religion which Barber has identified as the central impulse to devotion (Barber 1981). It is also derived from the evidence that will be presented in the following Chapters which shows how the incorporation of Islam and Christianity into the religious culture of Idoani was a vehicle for the expression of conflicts and contradictions whose origins pre-date the introduction of these religions.

The main advantages an incorporation perspective has over other models of religious change are:

1. Its recognition of the complexity of religious phenomenon.
2. Its emphasis on continuity in African religious culture.
3. Its awareness that while traditional religious cultures continue to have significance, Christianity and Islam have become important mediums through which specifically religious as well as more secular objectives may be achieved, as well as supplementary explanatory frameworks.

#### Idoani: Defining the community

If a central problem of central African studies has been, as Van Binsbergen suggests, that of developing theory and methods capable of dealing with the unmistakable regional similarities which have emerged from the accumulation of anthropological work done in specific

areas (Van Binsbergen 1981; 13), the problem in West African, or more specifically, Yoruba studies has been to develop theory and methods which can account for the variations in structure and culture which have made it almost meaningless to use, for example, the term 'Yoruba religious culture' in the way I have done so far. The name Yoruba, the ethnic group to which the Idoani may claim to belong, was first coined in the nineteenth century and includes peoples whose culture and patterns of social organisation are quite varied. Although these variations are admitted and very apparent, there have been few attempts to account for them and a tendency to discuss the religious culture of the Yoruba as if it is an homogeneous entity (Idowu 1962; Awolalu 1979). A favourite approach of studies in Yoruba religious culture which have wanted to express an awareness of regional variation but not to account for it has been to insist that the data and the analysis relate to a specific region, sub-group or settlement (Bascom 1944; Morton Williams 1956; and 1964).

A classic example of an attempt to deal with regional variations in Yoruba culture is Lloyd's attempt to relate some apparent variations in customary land law in four Yoruba regions, to variations in kinship organisation between north and south (Lloyd 1962). A major problem with Lloyd's analysis however, is that southern Yoruba do not admit to a different theory for reckoning descent from

northern Yoruba from whom their customary practices concerning the allocation and access to land are supposed to be different. Another angle to which variations in Yoruba culture have been attributed is that of east and west (Morton Williams 1964; Ojo 1966). The fact is however, that most variations in Yoruba social, political and religious culture are only very loosely related, if at all, to simple north/south or east/west dichotomies even though these do have historical significance. More specifically, the variations are a reflection of the historical development of specific communities whose definition is usually problematic and highly contested. Religious culture in particular, to which the condition of communities is of particular concern and in which communities are symbolically represented, gives expression to the complex character and status of Yoruba communities.

The subject of this study, Idoani, is a single community by administrative definition but in fact it is composed of several communities still self-consciously striving to become one. Until 1921, it was six separate settlements. If the diversity in language, culture and organisation of which Idoani boasts is at all typical, then recent acknowledgements of structural and cultural diversity among the Yoruba just hint at the extent of the problem (Eades 1980). The relationships between Idoani's diverse communities and the making of one single community have been, as we shall see, critical in the processes of religious change with which this study is concerned and

are an integral part of the analysis. Idoani is therefore ideally suited for exploring the causes and effects of cultural diversity among the Yoruba.

~~The town is situated in Ondo State close to its~~ border with Bendel State, a boundary which represents approximately the boundary between the Yoruba and Edo cultural areas at the centre of which were the Oyo and Benin Empires respectively. Over the years, this boundary has been fluid and the area has a history of political instability. As a result, it seems, the settlements of this area are dispersed rather concentrated. Another fluid boundary which has probably affected the pattern of settlement and the cultures of this area is that between Yoruba speaking peoples and their northern neighbours the Igbirra and the Nupe. This dispersed settlement pattern characteristic of this area is quite contrary to the urban settlement pattern which has been presented as typically Yoruba (Bascom 1955; Lloyd 1962; Krapf-Askari, 1969).

The traditions of Idoani linking it to the east and Benin are quite distinct and widely agreed. They include traditions of origin, title structures and even the name of the town itself.

The name Idoani is made up of two words Ido and Ani, Ido means settlement, while Ani is the name of the Prince from Benin who is said to have arrived in the area late in the fifteenth century or early sixteenth century (Egharevba 1968; 23-24). According to Bradbury, a

reconquest of the north eastern Yoruba from Benin was attempted in the early nineteenth century with some success, but there is almost no reference or indication of this in any of the traditions of Idoani. The traditions which link Idoani to the west are about Ife not Oyo the centre of the western empire. They also relate to traditions of origin and title structures, but are less widespread. In more recent history there is evidence that the influence of Ibadan and settlements in Ijesa and Ekiti has been stronger than that of Benin or Ife. The traditions relating to peoples north of the Yoruba refer to Nupe attempts to conquer Idoani and to Idoani campaigns against the Nupe. There is, in addition, a large Igbirra population settled in the farm camps of Idoani.

During fieldwork the population of Idoani was estimated to be approximately 9320 (General Survey 1981; Source V). This figure refers to the Idoani township and probably included only a negligible percentage of those living in the hamlets and villages that are Idoani's farms and which together with the township constitutes the political unit called Idoani (General Survey 1981; Source V).

The town is divided into seven quarters: Ako, Amusigbo, Isewa, Isure, Iyayu, Oke Ido and Owani. The town is also divided between two settlements which are separated by a stretch of road some six kilometers long. The largest of the two settlements consists of Ako, Amusigbo, Isewa, Isure, Iyayu and Oke Ido. The second

settlement consists of Owani only.

Idoani is the largest and the headquarters of a group of towns which together constitute the Irekare District Council, a division of Owo Local Government Area. The other two towns in the district are Idogun and Afo (see Map 3).

Idoani may be described as a rural community firstly because communications to the settlement are relatively limited. The nearest trunk road is the A122 to which Idoani is connected by a narrow and winding secondary road of some 32 kilometers. This latter road was usually in a bad state of repair when fieldwork for the study was carried out. There were no telecommunications to the settlement and mail was collected from, and delivered to Idoani only 3 times a week. The supply of daily newspapers was erratic but since the establishment of a radio reception station at Idoani in 1979, it has been possible to receive Radio Nigeria and Ondo State Radio broadcasts on AM and FM wavelengths.

Idoani may also be called a rural town because although only 41% of the adults included in the General Survey declared themselves to be farmers, of the 35 other occupations declared, at least 15 were usually pursued along with farming. In addition to subsistence farming in the products of which there is some local exchange, Idoani farmers also produce for Nigeria's urban markets and for export. Cash crops include cocoa, kola, palm fruit and



casava.

### Exposition of the text

The periodisation which Peel sees as a central problem in any sociological history and which an incorporation perspective requires there should be, is drawn, in this instance, from the Idoanis' perception of their own history (Peel 1983; 4). The thesis is roughly divided therefore, into three sections.

*of study, doesn't take into account periodisation before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju wars.*

The first section includes Chapters 2 and 3 and deals with the period before the terrible Ogedemgbe/Aduloju wars which entered Idoani in the 1870s. These Chapters are mainly concerned with the structure and dynamics of socio-political organisation and religious culture. Since no documentary evidence was available about Idoani in this period, the evidence is drawn largely from the oral traditions of the different quarters and the characteristics of relevant institutions as they existed during fieldwork. This section establishes the structural basis of some of the conflicts and contradictions in which Islam and Christianity were to play significant roles.

The second section which includes Chapters 4 and 5 deals with a period of what I have termed the historical watershed because it covers what were generally regarded as the critical events in ~~the history~~ of Idoani. <sup>is recent history</sup> These include the wars of the nineteenth century, the introduction of Islam and Christianity, the establishment of colonialism and the expansion of the cash economy.

Here, a much greater use is made of the documentary evidence available to provide a more traditionally historical account than is offered in section one.

Section three which includes Chapters 6 and 7 aims to relate the developments in section two to subsequent developments in religion, politics and economy, and to describe the character of these in contemporary Idoani. The concern of Chapter 8 which concludes the thesis is to relate the development of Christianity and Islam to the structure and dynamics of traditional religious culture as well as to the articulation of community and contemporary socio-political organisation.

## CHAPTER 2

### Socio-Political Organisation and Authority at Idoani before the introduction of Islam and Christianity.

This chapter describes and analyses the composition and structure of Idoani's socio-political order before the introduction of Islam and Christianity.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first describes the composition and structure of the settlements which concentrated to form Idoani in 1921, some 29 years after the introduction of Christianity and Islam, while the second identifies and analyses the operation of three distinct types of authority in the socio-political structure of these settlements.

#### SETTLEMENT COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Like many of the settlements in Yorubaland, the composition and structure of Idoani seems to have been constantly changing through the years (1). Detailed accounts of variations in the structure and composition of the town are not available, but it is clear that until 1921, Idoani consisted of six separate settlements - Ako, Amusigbo, Ido-Ani, Isewa, Isure and Iyayu. When these settlements concentrated, they became the quarters of Idoani (2). A map drawn in 1920 shows the relative positions of these settlements at that time (see Map 4). In 1921, all but one of the settlements concentrated at Oja Gbamo which had been the site of a

popular and important market.

Table 1: Approximate populations of Idoani's quarters (1981)

Quarter	Adult population	Under 16s population	Total population
ISEWA	120	130	250
OWANI	370	510	880
OKE IDO	290	360	650
Total	660	870	1530
AKO	150	280	430
ISURE	640	850	1490
AMUSIGBO	620	1000	1620
IYAYU	1240	2260	3500
TOTAL POPULATION OF IDOANI			8820

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

ISEWA: Isewa is at present the smallest of Idoani's quarters (3). It is the least prosperous of the quarters and the most isolated at the largest of Idoani's two settlements. Although present population is no indication of past population, a general impression of Isewa's former size in relation to the other settlements can be formed by considering the evidence about past population in relation to data gathered in 1981 (see Table 1.)

The Isewa claim that because they did not join the larger of Idoani's two settlements until 30 years after the other quarters had concentrated, development in their quarter was negligible, and that consequently, many Isewa left the Idoani area and have never returned. Even before

this, it is said, their numbers had been greatly reduced by the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war in which many people fled, were killed, or captured away as eru (4). Unlike some of the other quarters, however, the Isewa are unable to point to large numbers of their people in specific places, which suggests that those captured from there may have been scattered, or that although their numbers may indeed have been greatly reduced, the real numbers lost were not as great as in the other quarters. The Isewa were therefore, probably the smallest, or next to the smallest of the six settlements even before Ogedemgbe or Aduloju ever entered the area (5).

According to some of the traditions at Isewa and Owani, the people of Isewa are descendants of the original inhabitants of the Idoani area. The composition of the settlement and its relationship with Owani today suggests that before the arrival of Ani (the Benin prince from whom the Ido-Ani settlement derived its name) the area had been occupied by a number of small groups of people, and that the role assumed by Asewa in the new order established by Ani was based on the fact that the Isewa were either the oldest, largest, or most powerful of these groups. In the new order, some of the original inhabitants of the area settled with Ani on the Ido-Ani hill, but Asewa and the Isewa people settled separately on Isewa hill. The distance between the two settlements enabled the Isewa to retain a measure of independence over internal affairs at

Isewa, even though (perhaps because) Isewa performed key ritual functions for Ido-Ani. The Asewa presides over certain odun that are performed jointly at Isewa as well as the installation of each new Alani and is one of the 'kingmakers' of the Alani (6). In addition, when a new Alani is selected, the new name he must assume comes from Isewa.

The installation rites of Alani illustrate the character of the relationship between the Isewa and Alani. The selected candidate spends three months at the Asewa's house during which time Asewa performs certain rituals which are a closely guarded secret. It is said, however, that these rituals involve Asewa taking the selected candidate into the Isewa bush and 'showing him certain things'. It is by this means that the transfer to Alani of certain ritual secrets is effected. These rituals are said to be concerned with mystical control of the environment, on which successful government is considered to depend, and to which, as the original inhabitant of the area, Asewa holds the key. Less elaborate versions of these rituals are performed for new Alani at the Eko Baba Oloja's compound and at each of the four constituencies at Owani which represent the original inhabitants of the area who settled with Alani at Ido-Ani (see below).

In addition to these installation rites and other ritual functions that Asewa performs for Alani and the Ido-Ani people, the relationship between the Alani and Asewa and the Isewa people was marked by the Alani's

deference both to the Asewa and the Isewa people. This was in recognition of the Asewa's superior ritual status and the people's earlier possession of the area. For example, it is said that on the death of an Alani, the people of Isewa are allowed to go into the palace and seize whatever they want; when the people of Isewa visit Alani, they are not allowed to sit down, for if they do, they are entitled to take whatever it is they have sat upon; the Asewa was not required to 'make obeisance' to the Alani, either to prostrate, or pay tribute; and on leaving Isewa on the completion of the installation rituals, it was forbidden for the Alani ever to set foot in Isewa again or to see the roofs of the Isewa houses.

Alternative versions of the early history of Isewa relate to the origins of Asewa. According to these traditions, the Isewa are indeed the original inhabitants of the area, but Asewa is said to have come with Alani from Benin. Typically, the details of these accounts of the origins of Asewa vary. Some claim that Asewa was the father of Alani, while others claim that he was the senior brother of Alani. Some versions claim that the paraphernalia of kingship were given to Alani in Benin, while others claim that Asewa, father (or elder brother) of Alani was too old to reign by the time they reached Idoani and so he installed Alani as oba in his place. According to these versions, Asewa settled at Isewa because, as he was senior to Alani, it would not, have

been fitting for him to make obeisance to his son (or junior brother), and because, he was the oba's senior his presence at Ido-Ani would have undermined the authority of Alani. According to these traditions, Alani's installation rites are a re-enactment of the original gift of kingship, while the special privileges of the Asewa and the Isewa people are derived from the seniority of the first Asewa over the first Alani.

The claim that the Asewa came from Benin, while highly possible, may simply represent an attempt to present the structure of the relationship between Asewa and Alani to the wider Yoruba community of which Idoani is now a part, employing an idiom used in other parts of Yorubaland. Within the Yoruba community, the seniority and political significance of oba and oloye tend to be assessed in terms of their ability to trace a connection with the prestigious centres of Ife or Benin, while aboriginals are ambiguously valued (7). Nor should we be surprised that the Asewa's claim to Benin origins receives support at Owani, for the way in which Alani and the Asewa are linked in the political structure of the community as a whole means that a higher status for Asewa enhances the prestige of Alani. Furthermore, the fact that Isewa is the poorest and smallest of Idoani's quarters means that Asewa is unlikely to be in a position to use this claim to challenge the status or authority of Alani.

In the period immediately preceding the



Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, the Isewa settlement is said to have been composed of two sections, representing groups of people from different places. The origins of these sections has been 'forgotten' and the division is ignored in contemporary socio-political organisation because the population of the quarter is so small. Perhaps it is because the division is no longer relevant to political or social arrangements in the quarter, that there is some confusion as to the name of one section. Isewa is said to have been one of the sections, but while some people claimed that the other section was called Olo, others claimed that it was called Oke Regbe. Olo probably described the people of the second section while Oke Regbe described the area of the settlement that they occupied (8). After the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, it was decided to ignore the division and for all to be known as Isewa.

Each of these sections consisted of a number of groups referred to as agbo'le and idi'le (9). The Isewa insist that agbo'le and idi'le are the same thing, perhaps because the family groups which, as in all Idoani's other settlements, were at the basis of Isewa's socio-political structure recruited their members according to both residence and agnatic descent. It is clear, however, that there was an emphasis on agnatic descent. The family groups of Isewa are therefore referred to as lineages. Today there are six such lineages at Isewa quarter - Isewa, Owoka, Elekpen, Olumosin, Oloro and Eko.

Table 2: Isewa's Lineage and Title Structure (1981)

Lineage	Title
Isewa	Asewa
Owoka	Owoka
Elekpen	Elekpen
Olumosin	Olumosin
Oloro	Emoire/Olosula
Eko	Eko Baba Oloja

Cutting across the lineages, there was an age group system. Unfortunately, details of the composition and structure of this age group system are vague because they no longer function. It is said, however, that the groups formed by the system did not have general names, but were named after the leader in each group. This suggests that the age groups were both sets and grades (10). These age groups were used, mainly for the organisation of communal labour. All other matters seem to have been organised according to lineages, with direct appeal to the Alani for the settlement of disputes between persons of different lineages.

In addition to Asewa, there were at least six other titles at Isewa: Eko Baba Oloja, Olumosin, Owoka, Olusosa, Emoire and Elekpen. The Asewa and the Eko Baba Oloja were the leaders of the two sections Isewa and Oke Regbe (Olo) respectively. Asewa was senior to Eko Baba Oloja, and is today regarded as the representative and thus the head of the Isewa people. The status of the lineages in which these titles are vested, and thus the titles themselves,

was derived from the connection between the lineage and the environment they inhabited. Holders of the titles were ritual specialists, the guardians, on behalf of their community, of ritual knowledge concerning the environment which was the property of the lineage.

According to a spokesman for the Eko lineage, every year, both Asewa and Eko Baba Oloja perform certain rituals for the Alani and the two communities; Isewa and Ido-Ani.

The other Isewa titles were also 'priestly' titles, and like the ritual knowledge their incumbents possessed, they were the property of the individual lineages (see Table 2).

IDO-ANI/OWANI: The Owani quarter was originally 'Ido-Ani' - 'Ani's settlement' (11). The use of the name Idoani to refer to all of the six settlements since the concentration in 1921 has caused considerable confusion particularly with regards to what is to be referred to as 'Idoani'. When it was decided that the settlements should concentrate, some sections of the Ido-Ani community, mainly the 'enlightened elements' and their followers, selected a site called Igbo Sasa, that was at the bottom of the hill on which Ido-Ani had been settled up to that point. Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu refused to move to this site, and their refusal was supported by the District Officer who was, by that time, the ultimate authority in

the area. The District Officer insisted that as these three settlements formed three quarters of the population of all the settlements, the site for concentration should be Oja Gbamo, the place favoured by Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu (see Map 4), as this would involve the least displacement of persons, and Oja Gbamo was roughly the geographical centre of the six settlements. A significant proportion of the people at Ido-Ani refused to move to this site, but after a quarrel within the community at Ido-Ani, and under a threat of being removed as oba if he didn't, the Alani and a group of followers moved to the Oja Gbamo site (12). Those who had refused to move to Oja Gbamo, moved instead, to Igbo Sasa, some five kilometers away from the Oja Gbamo settlement. Together, these two settlements constitute the Idoani township.

Initially, the people who moved to Igbo Sasa continued to call themselves Ido-Ani, even though Alani had left the community. Even today there are still those at the smaller settlement who refer to their community as Ido-Ani, refusing to acknowledge that the other settlements have any right to the name. They refer to the community at Oja Gbamo as 'Oke Iyayu' and/or Siddo. 'Oke Iyayu' is a subtle insult to the other settlements at Oja Gbamo, for it suggests that Amusigbo, Isure and Ako have placed themselves under Iyayu which is said to be the most junior of the six settlements. Siddo on the other hand seems to be a generic name which merely describes the Oja Gbamo

settlement as a concentration of settlements. At the Oja Gbamo site, reference is frequently made to Siddo Mefa - 'concentration of six settlements' (13). Among the five settlements which concentrated at Oja Gbamo and the Ido-Ani who joined them there, the Owani quarter was, for a long time, referred to as 'Ido-Sale' - 'the settlement down there', in recognition it might seem initially, of the fact that the altitude of Oja Gbamo is higher than that at which the Owani quarter is situated. The people of Owani whose pride had been dealt a serious blow by having lost the kingship and much of the status and privilege that had traditionally been derived from the 'possession' of it, bitterly resented the use of such terminology to describe them. Nevertheless 'Ido-Sale' still appears on some maps of the area. A compromise was eventually reached and it was decided to call the settlement Owani quarter of Idoani. Owa is a term used to refer to a royal dynasty, so that coupled with the name of the first Alani, it commemorates the traditional status of the community (14).

Until the five settlements concentrated around 1921, then, the Ido-Ani settlement was the home of Alani. Egharevba whose dates, unfortunately, are notoriously speculative, suggests that Ani entered the area in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century during the reign of the Benin oba Ozolua under whom there was some territorial expansion (Egharevba 1968: 23-24). According to Akintoye, evidence corroborated at Benin indicates that

the first Alani was a son of oba Ozolua called Evvare, but he admits that these traditions could have been invented to explain evidence of having been conquered by Benin or have been influenced by Egharevba's publication. Both at Owani and in Egharevba, it is claimed that the first Alani left Benin in the company of Ewi who became the oba of Ado Ekiti. The two are said to have 'rested' together at a number of places before they reached Ido-Ani. The Ewi spent some time at Ido-Ani before he eventually proceeded to Ado Ekiti, some 75 kilometers north west of Idoani. The king lists of these two towns suggest that if indeed their royal dynasties do have a Benin origin, they were established as a result of the same wave of Benin expansion, there having been between 16 and 20 Alani, and 22 Ewi to date (Akintoye 1969) (15). These traditions, by establishing a connection between Alani and the Ewi of Ado Ekiti, are intended to confirm the authenticity of the Alani's claim to be a crowned oba from Benin, since according to Johnson, the Ewi is one of the 4 supreme oba of the sixteen kings of Ekiti (Johnson 1921: 23).

The traditions of Isewa indicate that the area was already occupied when Alani arrived and that, although he may have had to establish his authority by conquest, Alani eventually settled down to a co-existence with the local population. Further speculation about the arrival of Alani has been inspired by Akintoye's findings. According to Akintoye, the founders of the royal dynasties of many of the settlements of north east Yorubaland were

originally the agents of the Benin empire, but as the power of Benin fluctuated, these isolated agents settled down to attend to their own interests (Akintoye 1971: 29). In a number of cases, these interests were commercial and Akintoye suggests that the earliest settlers were probably traders since the largest known Edo communities were at the important trading centres of Okeluse, Owo, Akure and Ikere (Akintoye 1969). Unfortunately no evidence to corroborate any of these suggestions was available at Idoani. The composition and structure of the Ido-Ani community does suggest, however, that Alani did arrive with a large band of followers.

Ido-Ani is composed of three main constituencies: the original inhabitants of the area consisting of four distinct families; Alani and his followers who are called the Udo; and the groups of settlers who joined the community after the arrival of Alani. These latter were referred to as Ebi Iwa. The Udo are said to have been the descendants of all those who came to Ido-Ani with Alani from Benin, while the Ebi Iwa have been described as

'a group of people who . . . ., were brought into the service of the Alani from neighbouring towns who later wielded considerable influence in the life of the town (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 11).

That influence may have come about as a result of the numerical strength or military skills of the groups or even as a result of political co-operation between the different groups of which the Ebi Iwa were composed.

Unlike the titles of Isewa which, with the exception of Asewa and Eko Baba Oloja were essentially undifferentiated according to authority, the titles of Ido-Ani reflected the relative social and political status of the different constituencies of which the community was composed. The title structure was, as Peel has shown was the case at Ilesa, the framework through which the community harnessed its various resources (Peel 1980).

There were four types of title at Ido-Ani, Iwarefa titles, Irare titles, Ilogun titles and Aworo titles.

#### Iwarefa titles

Although Iwarefa titles are an aspect of political organisation in a number of Yoruba settlements and are usually the senior titles of a community, their composition and significance varies, not merely from subgroup to subgroup but also from settlement to settlement (Ojo 1974: 24) (16). The composition and structure of the Iwarefa titles of Ido-Ani reflects the structure and composition of the settlement and thus also its historical development. Like the Iwarefa titles of Ilesa which Peel suggested represents elderly titles as opposed to younger leaders of the citizen soldiery (Peel 1980:228), the Iwarefa titles of Ido-Ani are the community's senior titles, although they are not necessarily in the possession of the community's elders.

The first three of the Iwarefa titles: Olisa, Oshodi



and Ajana are said to have been courtiers who accompanied Alani from Benin and belong to the different kinship groups of which the Udo community consists (17). The Olisa seems to have been the most powerful of the Iwarefa and all other title holders at Ido-Ani and is described by the present Olisa as 'iba 'keji oba' - second in command to the oba. The next four Iwarefa titles - Agbale, Ohunorun, Ajiboye and Asunlawe - were representatives of the original inhabitants of the area. These 4 titles were also the property of specific kinship groups.

The kinship groups selected from among themselves candidates for their titles who then had to be approved by the kingmakers before installation. Generally, the kingmakers for any title consisted of all title holders from the constituency to which the kinship group belonged e.g. original inhabitants or Udo.

In addition to the seven already mentioned, there were three other Iwarefa title holders; Olori Omo Mane; Olori Ebi Iwa and Olori Ilogun, head of the Royal family, head of the Ebi Iwa and head of the militia respectively. These titles were the property of the three houses/lineages of the royal family, who are a sub-group of the Udo); the Ebi Iwa (described above) and the militia; respectively.

The Omo Mane are the descendents of past Alani and thus members of the Udo constituency. It is said that it is the Omo Mane who own the kingship. The Omo Mane, referred to in English as the 'royal family', were divided into three ile or 'houses': Sadibo, Owusi and Ologbosere. Each of the houses had in addition to its head titleholder, who bore the name of the house, a stock of other titles which marked it as a separate and distinct kinship group. Each house took it in turns to present a candidate for Alani and for its main title holder to hold the title Olori Omo Mane.

Asabia and Adegbesan have suggested that the Ebi Iwa were the people brought into the service of Alani from neighbouring towns, and there is some evidence to support this contention. To begin with there is the fact that Alani seems to have made considerable personal use of this section of the community. An Omo Mane claimed that in former times, the Ebi Iwa were required to go and work on the oba's farms for one day every four days, but Udo and Omo Mane were not. Secondly, there is, in the accounts of elderly people of Idoani and in most of the accounts of the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, evidence that Ido-Ani was a formidable military power in the area before its devastation as a result of that war. If this is so, then successful military ventures, must have resulted in the capture of large numbers of persons who would have been brought to Ido-Ani and, as seems to have been the case

throughout Yorubaland, integrated into the community gradually.

If the Ebi Iwa were a section of the community whose status was low as a consequence of the fact that they had been captured and brought to Ido-Ani, then it is unlikely that in the absence of some overriding advantage to be achieved by accepting depressed status in return for accommodation, other settlers who had come to the area of their own free will would have wanted to settle with Alani, or even have been welcomed additions to the Ido-Ani community where their numbers were large or the prestige of their leaders high. It is possible however, that the Ebi Iwa are migrants to the area who joined Alani at Ido-Ani of their own free will, hence the hostility to Asabia and Adegbesans contention. We can only speculate about what an overriding advantage to be derived from settling with Alani may have been. Security from external aggression? Prestige from association with Alani?

Whatever the historical circumstances in which the Ebi Iwa came to Ido-Ani they formed a large, and consequently important, section of the community at Ido-Ani.

### Irare titles

The Irare titles were the stock of titles possessed by each of the various kinship groups of which Ido-Ani was constituted. They were known as Irare titles, it seems, because the expense involved in taking them meant that

they could only be taken by elderly men of the Irare age grade. It was usually at this stage in a man's life that he would have established a household large enough to produce the surplus agricultural produce needed to meet the demands of taking and holding a title.

Younger men who took these common titles before they had become Irare had to wait until they became Irare before they could be accorded the privileges and respect given to holders of these titles. Iwarefa titles were the only titles that conferred the dignity of Irare on the title holder regardless of his age.

The stock of titles which each kinship group possessed consisted of titles which had been brought from the group's original home, titles which denoted leadership of a group originating from the same place (eg. Oligun, Oluka etc. Obayemi 1976: 207 n30 and n34), and titles which had been awarded to an individual of the group by the Alani and had then become part of the 'property' of the group. Thus the distribution of the Irare titles in the community reflected the historical development and circumstances of the different kinship groups.

The number of titles in a kinship group's possession that were taken at any point in time depended upon the economic circumstances of the group, for an individual taking a title required material as well as the political and moral support of his kinsmen.

The Irare titles were taken as a statement and an

enhancement of both the individual and the group's prestige. It was both as Irare (the senior age grade) and as title holders, that they presided over the day to day administration of the settlement, including formulating policy in relation to the internal affairs of the community and dispute settlement. These title holders were not required to do any communal work or labour on the Alani's farms, but they were expected to contribute the material supplies needed for waging defensive or offensive war.

#### Ilogun titles

The Ilogun titles were military titles held by younger men who were responsible for leading the fighting men from their kinship group into battle. Each Irare title was supported by a military title, and it may be that the holder of the Ilogun title succeeded to the Irare title he supported when it became vacant, if by that time he had established for himself the necessary material conditions and support within the kinship group. In some cases, the name of the Ilogun title was the same as the Irare title.

Ilogun titles were awarded according to the ability of a kinshp group to contribute to the war machine of the settlement, in both men and supplies. Large kinship groups had as many as four Ilogun titles (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 13).

### Aworo titles

The Aworo titles were priestly titles whose holders had access to ritual knowledge which placed them in a special relationship with supernatural forces and gave them certain powers. Holders of these titles were the leaders of cult groups or specialists through whom individuals and the community approached supernatural forces. Popular Aworo could become wealthy individuals i.e. heads of large households and husbands to many wives, since they usually received some form of 'gift' for the services they rendered, but there is no indication that as a group they played any formal political role in the community. The Aworo were required to perform special rituals for the Alani and the community as a whole, and it is possible that this, and their wealth enabled them to exercise some political influence in the community from time to time.

### Age groupings

In addition to the elaborate title structure at Ido-Ani, the community was divided and ranked according to age. Age sets were formed by all those born over a certain period (what that period is at Owani is not clear). These age sets are referred to as egbe - a rather general term which refers to a group of equals. The grades through which the egbe moved were known as etu. There were six age grades - etu - through which both men and women passed, although the egbe of women were kept

separate from the egbe of men. The names of the etu were: etu Igunli; etu Odun; etu Oge; etu Ojomo; etu Egunka and finally Irare. The egbe on the other hand were named after the individual selected as leader of the egbe. Men joined the etu Igunli as soon as they were old enough to fight or get married, which, according to elderly people at Owani was quite late, up to forty and over. Men of this age are still referred to today as omode - children - who would have been dismissed as insignificant in the political affairs of the community. The egbe, on the other hand, were probably formed informally much earlier, developing out of the associations between children who are encouraged to play and associate with others of the same age as themselves. These ties, developed as a result of age grouping in sets were not allowed, to cut across the division of the community into Udo and Ebi Iwa. Udo and Ebi Iwa members did not form egbe together, so that each etu was divided into two sections, that of the Udo and that of the Ebi Iwa. Omo Mane belonged to the Udo side of the community since they represented the descendents of past Alani. The aboriginals seemed to have been included in the Udo sets with who they claim they have more in common than they have with the Ebi Iwa. Each section had its own leader and operated as a separate unit. If ever they came together for any reason, the head of the Udo section took precedence over the head of the Ebi Iwa section. Leaders of the age grades and age sets were chosen for their dynamism, leadership ability and

popularity.

The effect of age grouping was to stratify the community according to age.

The Irare were the highest of the grades and the next authority in the community to Alani and the council of Iwarefa title holders. As has already been indicated, they were responsible for policy formation, dispute settlement and the day to day administration of the settlement's constituencies. Their decisions were passed on to the etu Egunka who were responsible for translating their decisions into instructions for the junior grades. The etu Egunka was also responsible for supervising the junior grades while they carried out tasks like clearing the paths from the settlement to the farm. The authority of the Irare was based on the belief that with old age men acquire a spiritual power which could be used against those who dared to disobey them or even those who did not show the respect they required. Strictly speaking, Irare are not regarded as an age grade. On becoming Irare, a man is released from the age group system and is thus no longer required to perform communal labour.

It is only possible to speculate as to what the kinship groups of Ido-Ani were like in the past. They are referred to today as ebi, best translated from Yoruba as 'family', since it is a general term which includes both agnatic and cognatic kin. Today, these ebi consist of persons who are generally related patrilineally, mainly



men, but also women, as well as persons from other places who have been incorporated into the group. The role of the ebi in the social structure of the settlement suggests that they were the basic units of the community from which individuals obtained economic, political, as well as religious rights, but the fact that the political and economic status of the ebi depended upon the size of the group, suggests that descent was not the only criterion for recruitment to the group (18).

AKO: According to the traditions of Ako the settlement was originally very close to Ido-Ani, in particular to Alani's palace. It was so close, it is said, that the women of Ako and the wives of Alani fetched water in the same place. These traditions state that it was a dispute which broke out between the women at the place where they fetched water, which caused the Ako people to leave the area to settle at Oka Akoko, 17 kilometers north of Idoani. Eventually, the Ako returned to the Idoani area but no indication of why they returned is given in the traditions of Ako or any other quarter. On their return, the people of Ako are said to have settled some distance from Alani, close to the Isure settlement (see Map 4). Nevertheless, a relationship between them and Alani was re-established and they continued to be responsible for performing certain functions for Alani. The character of these functions is an indication of the type of

relationship that existed between the oba and the Ako.

On the death of Alani, the people of Ako are responsible for: destroying the structures in the area where the deceased oba's wives used to prepare food for him; moving the oba's market to a temporary site, and for cutting down all the trees in the market place and the palace. Two interpretations of the significance of these functions to the history of the relationship between the Ako and Alani are common currency at Idoani. In the traditions of Owani, according to Asabia and Adegbesan, these functions indicate that the people of Ako were the personal servants of Alani (Asabia and Adegbesan 1971 17). This contention was generally supported by non-Ako informants. The traditions of Ako itself on the other hand claim that the Ako were members of the Royal household who migrated with Alani from Benin.

Whatever the link between Ido-Ani and Ako before the move to Oka, the distance between them indicates that on their return to the area, the Ako enjoyed a measure of independence from the authority of Alani.

The Ako quarter is divided into six sections which are said to represent groups of people from different places. These sections are: Oke Poja, Ilemo, Iparapara, Isanu, Ilumo and Iyasa. The name of one section Oke Poja, clearly relates to its geographical location. The names of the other sections may relate to the place from which they originally came, but no indication of where these

places were is given in the traditions of the quarter, and it may be that the explanation for the existence of these sections in the traditions has been copied from one of the other settlements: Amusigbo, in which the most significant divisions are based on the differing origins of the people. In fact, these sections are more like localised patrilineages referred to as *idi'le*. These *idi'le* are further divided into segments called *apa - arms* - said to represent descendants of the sons of the same father. That these *idi'le* were localised is suggested by the fact that today, the segments of the *idi'le* are represented by houses which tend to be grouped together according to *idi'le*.

Cutting across the sections and *idi'le* into which Ako is divided was the age group system. There were six age grades through which the *egbe/sets* passed, beginning with unmarried young men. The names of these grades were: *egbe Agbe'le s'oke*, *egbe Ibalibe*, *egbe Itapo*, *egbe Ilode*, *egbe Ude*, *etu Merin* and *Irare*. Up to *etu Merin* grades were coterminous with *sets*, but there was a distinction between the two among the *etu Merin* and the *Irare*, which spanned longer periods of a man's life than other grades. The most senior grade, the *Irare*, was the supreme council of the community responsible for formulating policy, administration, dispute settlement and the allocation of land. Like the *etu Egunka* at Owani, the *etu Merin* performed executive functions, while the junior grades were the manpower resources of the community.

With the exception of Alako, the titles of the quarter were introduced recently in the quarter's history. The original Alako is said to have been the leader of the people who quit Ido-Ani to go to Oka. The title Alako, rotates between the five apa of the idile Oke Poja. Other titles in the quarter: Agunloye; Ojomu (the only titles that had been taken at the time of fieldwork); Sasere; Ojomo; Odogun; Ohunawe; Igigbo; Obanla; Odemo and Odofin are not a function of the political structure, as is the case at Owani, but are acquired by individuals as a statement and enhancement of their personal prestige. Many of these - Obanla, Sasere, Odemo - look like titles in other places in the Yoruba area and may have been borrowed from those areas. The expression used to describe this process is 'binu j'oye' - 'gets angry and takes a title'. The relative lack of political significance attached to these titles in themselves is emphasised by the fact that they are undifferentiated either by rank or function. Titles were first awarded at Ako during the reign of Alani Atewogboye (c. 1894-1920). Individuals were nominated for the titles by the Irare who remained the highest authorities in the community.

AMUSIGBO: Like the people of Ako, the original settlers of the Amusigbo settlement were former members of the Ido-Ani community. They have since been joined by other groups who, until the first half of the nineteenth century

when the area was threatened by Nupe invasion, occupied separate and distinct territories.

According to the traditions of Amusigbo quarter, the original inhabitant of Amusigbo was Alamusi, an Ido-Ani title holder who left Ido-Ani after a dispute with Alani. Alani is said to have waged war on him because he was jealous of a woman who stayed with Alamusi and passed excreta of coral beads that were very valuable. The woman had originally sought shelter with Alani, but he had refused to accommodate her because she demanded special treatment and he feared that this would cause trouble among his other wives. The woman then turned to Alamusi who gave her accommodation. When the woman started producing the coral beads, however, Alani became annoyed and started persecuting Alamusi until the latter was forced to leave and settle elsewhere. This story suggests that the first Alamusi left Ido-Ani because he amassed a wealth which eventually brought about a power conflict between himself and Alani.

An alternative account of the reason why Alamusi left Ido-Ani was offered by the Olisa of Owani Chief D.O. Asabia. He claimed, that Alamusi left Ido-Ani after a contest for the title Alamusi in which his rival was supported by the Alani. Part of the Alamusi's 'family' was left at Ido-Ani and the title Alamusi, although at present unoccupied is still listed as an Owani title, the property of a section of the community known as Odode, but also referred to at Owani as Amusi'le (20).

Among some sections of the Amusigbo, it is claimed that Alamusi came from the same 'family' as Olisa, who, it will be recalled, was the second most powerful individual man at Ido-Ani, and therefore probably, the most likely to be in a position to represent a serious challenge to the authority of Alani. The claim that Alamusi was a member of the same 'family' as the Olisa, is said to be supported in turn, by the fact that the rituals and taboos associated with the two titles are almost identical. In the absence of any other 'proof' of this connection it should be noted that it is also possible that the style and habits of the Olisa title have been copied in order to substantiate the claim.

The composition and the socio-political structure of Amusigbo seems to have been continually changing during the nineteenth century and perhaps before then also. Today, the quarter consists of twelve subquarters, referred to as adugbo by local people, the literal translation of which is 'neighbourhood', but which is generally translated in the ethnographic literature as 'quarter'. In this context, however, the term 'quarter' is inappropriate as Amusigbo is itself a quarter of Idoani. Local people also referred to these units as wards, in English, but again this term is inappropriate as it is also used to describe an altogether different type of unit in Iyayu. Since the history and the constitution of Amusigbo have many similarities with those of the town itself, then, I

will refer to the units into which the quarter is divided as 'subquarters'. These subquarters of Amusigbo are said to represent groups of settlers from different places who, until they concentrated at one place in the first half of the nineteenth century, occupied separate settlements. The concentration is said to have been motivated by the threat of Nupe invasions.

Although it is clear that Amusigbo did once consist of a group of separate settlements, only fragments of the history of the relationships between them was volunteered. As the first inhabitant of the area, and the title to which the name of the settlement seems to be related, it seems possible that Alamusi was at one time either the leader, or the central authority in the community.

The settlements of Amusigbo had been one settlement for over half a century when the settlements of Idoani concentrated but they still looked to Alani at Idoani to settle their disputes. This suggests that whatever Alamusi's or any other title holders' position had been in earlier phases of the settlement's history, it was often undermined, probably by the entry into the area of larger more powerful groups of settlers.

According to the traditions of the quarter some of the groups which once belonged to the loose federation of settlements which concentrated to form Amusigbo are no longer represented there, having been wiped out during the wars of the nineteenth century or having left as the result of disputes which broke out between the

settlements (22). The traditions of Iyayu (discussed below), and its proximity to Amusigbo before the concentration at Oja Gbamo in 1921 (see Map 2), suggest that it too may have once been one of the group of settlements in the Amusigbo area which together formed a loose federation.

The subquarters of Amusigbo which were once separate settlements are: Iye, Owamusi, Idofin; Owalasan; Odesere; Odurogbo; Iburon Odo; Iburon Oke; Odepesi; Ode Oyin; Upe and Isua.

Table 3: Eki Meta \*\*, Subquarters and Leaders of Amusigbo (1981)

<u>Eki Meta leader</u>	<u>Subquarter</u>	<u>Subquarter Leader</u>
Oniye	Iye	Oniye *
	Odegbamo	Aro
	Iburon Odo	Odolofin
	Iburon Oke	
	Odepesi	
	Owamusi	Alamusi *
Odofin	Idofin	Odofin *
	Upe	Olupe
	Isua	Obasiya

Independent Subquarters

Owalasan	Alasan *
Osere	Odesere *
Odurogbo	Awoden *

(\* has been used to identify High Chiefs)

(\*\* for the definition of Eki Meta, see pp 70-71)



Although the traditions of the quarter are intended to indicate the origins of some of the subquarters, they are also clearly charters for the present distribution of authority in the quarter and their historical significance has to be interpreted in the light of current arrangements.

### Iye

The Oniye of Iye subquarter is the head of the whole quarter and one of the six title holders, called High Chiefs who together with the three senior age grades govern the quarter. Iye is the largest of the twelve subquarters.

Oniye and the Iye people are said to have been the last group of settlers to have arrived in the area. Despite this, Oniye is the head of Amusigbo because, according to Iye traditions, he was a crowned prince from Benin, and like Alani, it was the size of his following and his possession of the symbols of kingship which caused the people in the area to accept him as their leader. The Iye traditions claim that Oniye should have been made oba at Benin, but he was cheated out of his inheritance and driven out of the kingdom. On leaving Benin, he first of all settled at Sebe, east of Idoani, in Bendel state where he was advised by an Ifa oracle to proceed to Idoani. The other subquarters of Amusigbo do not support the claims made by Iye traditions, but offer no other explanation as to why despite his late arrival

Oniye became the leader of the community; which may indicate that Oniye established his leadership by conquest.

Under Chief Oniye, are: Odegbamo; Iburon Odo; Iburon Oke; Odepesi and Ode Oyin subquarters.

#### Owamusi

This is one of the smaller subquarters of Amusigbo, and there are no other subquarters which come under the authority of the Alamusi its head.

The traditions of Owamusi along with those of Amusigbo and Owani claim that Alamusi was the first inhabitant of the Amusigbo area, who came to Amusigbo from Ido-Ani. The traditions of Owamusi however, also claim that Alamusi was one of the original inhabitants that Alani met in the area when he arrived from Benin and that he had come there from Ile Ife (21).

The position of Alamusi within Amusigbo is similar in some respects to that of Asewa as he stands in relation to Ido-Ani. Smaller and less prosperous than the later arrivals, he is one of the six High Chiefs of the quarter, despite the absence of a distinct power base. High Chief status has been accorded, it seems, in recognition of the fact that Alamusi was the original inhabitant of the area.

#### Idofin

The Odofin, head of Idofin is the third of the High Chiefs of the quarter. The traditions of the subquarter

claim that he came originally from Ile Ife, which he is said to have left in search of vacant land. These traditions also claim that Odofin is an Ile Ife title that is related to the royal family there. This is indicated, it was claimed, by the fact that in the possession of the Odofin is an imitation crown, or coronet, brought from Ile Ife.

On his arrival at Idoani, Odofin settled close to Alamusi who is said to have been his maternal relation. Together, the two moved from place to place in an effort to escape the oppression of Alani. It is, according to Chief Odofin, this maternal connection with Alamusi which accounts for the similarity in the rituals associated with the Alamusi and Odofin titles. Although his connection with Alamusi is maternal, the traditions claim that, through these rituals and some peculiar taboos, Odofin is also linked with the Olisa at Owani, to whom Alamusi is agnatically related. Whatever the nature of the traditional connection, Alamusi and Odofin are closely related both geographically and in the socio-political structure of the quarter.

Geographically, the Idofin subquarter is adjacent to the Owamusi subquarter. Together, Alamusi and Odofin preside over rituals like odun Aila, which involves the propitiation of an important source of drinking water for Amusigbo. In addition when a decision is being announced at meetings of the governing body of the quarter which are held every fourteen days. Odofin usually stands with

Alamusi to make announcements. Significantly, the only High Chief barred from voicing the decisions and judgements of the governing body of the quarter is Oniye, and although other High Chiefs who are particularly erudite may do so, it is usually done by Alamusi supported by Odofin.

Under the Odofin are two other subquarters; Upe and Isua (see below).

### Owalasan

Owalasan is the second largest subquarter in the quarter. The head of the subquarter is the Alasan who is the fourth of the six High Chiefs of the quarter.

The traditions claim the Alasan and his people came to Idoani from Oba Ile, Akure after a quarrel between two brothers.

### Odesere

The head of the Odesere subquarter is Osere, the fifth of the six High Chiefs of the quarter. Although the subquarter is not listed as being one of those under the authority of Oniye, the traditions of the subquarter claim that it is connected to Oniye. Said to have been of the same father and mother as the first Oniye, the Osere and his people claim to have left Benin with Oniye, settled with him at Sebe and come with him to Idoani. It was suggested that the first Osere was a ritual specialist who practiced his craft especially for Oniye.

## Odorogbo

The head of Odorogbo is Awoden, the last of the six High Chiefs. The traditions of this subquarter claim that the people came originally from Ube. They also claim Odorogbo is related to Alasan of Owalasan (see above), because when they came to the area, they settled close to where Owalasan was before the settlements congregated to form Amusigbo. The two subquarters still hold meetings together every fourteen days. Other details suggest that the subquarter has in the past transferred its allegiance from one of the larger and more powerful subquarters to another. Today the subquarter is connected to Odofin of Idofin. This came about it seems, partly as a result of the wars of the nineteenth century, and partly as a result of the power and prestige of successive Odofins.

The father of the present Awoden, Eyitoye, took the title because the previous holder's descendents had all been killed during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war. Although Eyitoye was related to the previous Awoden through his paternal grandmother who was the sister to Awoden, born of the same mother and father, his father was from Iye, and it is likely that it was because of this that the subquarter had close ties with Iye during this period. The mother of the present Awoden, however, was also the mother of the present Odofin and it was in the comparatively prosperous household of Odofin's father, that the young Awoden grew up. As sons of the same

mother, the present Awoden and the present Odofin, a former Assistant Commissioner of Police, remain close. Chief Odofin, who is a wealthy man, built the house in which Chief Awoden, his senior brother, lives and the two spend a great deal of their time together.

It was claimed that Osere and Awoden were only recently brought onto the council of High Chiefs, but again in the interest of the unity of the quarter few people were prepared to comment on this fact and nobody would give details of how or why, the two had come to be included on the council. It seems highly probable, however, that the inclusion of these two title holders is related to the fact that both are connected to Oniye and Odofin whose economic power and political status in the community, both traditional and modern, as well as reputations developed as a result of activities both within and outside Idoani, makes them the two most powerful title holders in the quarter.

### Odegbamo

According to the traditions of this subquarter and those of Iye, the Odegbamo are the descendents of Ugbamo, the fourth and youngest of the first Oniye's four sons. The Odegbamo, together with the Odu, who are the descendents of Ikusela's second son but do not form a separate subquarter, are kingmakers for the Oniye title. Descendents of Ikusela's third son, the Igbin, are said to have been wiped out by the wars of the nineteenth century.

The head of this subquarter is Aro, who is also the head of the kingmakers for Oniye. The existence of Odegbamo as a separate subquarter is perhaps surprising given the tendency for subquarters to represent a group of people with common origins distinct from those of the other subquarters. It seems likely that the reason for this separate existence is related to the fact that leaders of this segment of the first Oniye's lineage have been successful ologun who, as a result of their military expeditions abroad, increased their numbers by incorporating captives from these expeditions into their segment, thus achieving a high status in the community.

#### Iburon Odo and Iburon Oke

Both these subquarters are composed of settlers who came from Iburon near Epinmi, about 18 kilometers north of Idoani, now in Akoko south Local Government Area of Owo division. They are in the group of subquarters headed by Chief Oniye because when they arrived in the area, although they did not settle with Oniye, it was he who 'accommodated' them.

#### Odepesi

According to the traditions of this subquarter, the Odepesi came to Amusigbo from Ipesi which is some 15 kilometers north east of Idoani and is also in Akoko South Local Government Area. These people settled, on their arrival, at Amusigbo, under the protection of Oniye.

## Upe

The Upe are said to have come from a place called Ipe, 19 kilometers north of Idoani. Upe is one of the two other subquarters which, together with Idofin, make up the group of subquarters of which Odofin is the head.

## Isua

Isua is the third of the subquarters under Odofin. The people are said to have come to Amusigbo from Isua, 17 kilometers north of Idoani, in Akoko South Local Government Area, and to have 'family ties' with people in Okua quarter of Isua. The first leader of the settlers who came from Isua, is said to have been a babalawo, a profession still followed by many of the men of the subquarter. This first leader, called Ogirigbo, left Isua, according to the traditions of the subquarter, after his younger brother had been given the title instead of himself. He refused to stay and be forced to serve his junior brother.

The Isua were settled with the Iburon before the move to Oja Gbamo.

These then are the groups of which the Amusigbo settlement is constituted.

Some of the subquarters of Amusigbo are arranged into two eki meta which are political units consisting of a group of subquarters. Eki may be local dialect for the units I have called sub quarters, although I do not recall



their having been referred to by this name in my presence (23). Although the inclusion of meta - meaning three - in the name of these units implies that they are triads of sub-quarters, as they are with the eki meta headed by Odofin there are in fact five in that headed by Chief Oniye (24).

The eki meta appear to be political units representing the alliances between the subquarters. They are described by people of Amusigbo as 'having things in common' and as constituting 'family groups'. Although the subquarters of the eki meta have a common overall leader, each subquarter also has its own leaders and retains some autonomy in its internal affairs. The net result seems to be that while Oniye has the upper hand at present, Odofin who heads the second eki meta is a close second. By shifting allegiance from one to the other, smaller and less powerful subquarters have probably been able to exert political influence beyond that which size alone would ordinarily allow.

The subquarters tend to be conceived of as patrilineal descent groups, and the eki meta as groups of descent groups with kinship connections that are not necessarily patrilineal. Because the subquarters have generally occupied distinct and discrete territories both before and after concentration, and up to the present time, it would seem appropriate to describe the subquarters as localised descent groups. Although it is

clear that the subquarters are localised, however, it seems unlikely that they consisted solely of patrilineally related kin. The traditions of the quarter indicate that many of the settlements produced ologun who increased the population of their settlements by capturing people in battle. Furthermore, the general mobility of people in the area, the need for manpower resources for political competition at home and waging war in other areas, before the turn of the century, makes it unlikely that the settlements were constituted entirely of patrilineally related kin. It is likely therefore, that the idiom of kinship has been used to express the political ties between people of these groups, just as it has in the *eki meta*, which are also conceived of as 'family' groups.

Apart from the six High Chiefs there were seventeen other title holders at Amusigbo during the fieldwork period, three of which were priestly titles. The distribution of these titles appears to be based upon the traditions of a subquarter, the individual subquarter's desire for title, the ability of a subquarter to support the title and the willingness of the High Chiefs, elders and other title holders to award a title.

During fieldwork, all the title holders met together regularly to formulate general policy in the quarter, but administration and dispute settlement were handled by the High Chiefs in the presence of, and with advice from other title holders and the senior age grades.

It is said that in the past some groups were led by title holders while others were led by *olori* (heads or headmen). All the subquarters of the six High Chiefs are said to have brought their titles with them from their original homes. Other subquarters are said to have only started having titles within this century. Before this, the High Chiefs claimed the other subquarters only had *olori*. *Olori* is a standard prefix in this area, generally used where the dominant type of authority is gerontocratic. Like the *odion* of the Iyayu settlement (see below, pp 89), *olori* are said to have been the eldest men in the community. The low status with which this latter type of political organisation is now regarded, however, has made groups that may have been organised in this way reluctant to identify themselves as such, and in the interest of unity in the quarter, pointing a finger at particular groups is avoided. Although the present High Chiefs have claimed that all the groups without High Chiefs have only recently started having titles, the claim is clearly intended to justify present arrangements in the quarter. It also seems to represent an attempt to establish a political distinction between the subquarters of the High Chiefs and the others, and to rationalise the distribution of authority between the subquarter leaders. It is worth pointing out that a similar claim is sometimes made at Owani in relation to all of the Amusigbo title holders. There the claim is that with the exception of Alamusi, whose title came out of Ido-Ani, the other

Amusigbo leaders only became title holders sometime between 1915 and 1921 when Alani Atewogboye started conducting their installation ceremonies (Asabia and Adegbesan: 16).

The age group system of Amusigbo seems to be designed solely for the purpose of organising communal labour and taxation in the quarter. In Amusigbo, there does not seem to be such an emphasis on the comradeship and solidarity typical of these systems in other quarters. This is probably due to the fact that quarter age groups which span all the subquarters came into existence relatively recently. There are 9 womens grades and 10 mens grades. All the womens grades and the last 5 most junior of the mens grades are named after the leader, or the eldest member of the grade. The absence of solidarity and comradeship cutting across subquarter grouping means that these groups are best described as grades, having the structure of age sets, but lacking the spirit of sets because of the structure of the society in which they operate. The senior five of the mens grades, from the most junior upwards are Atele Itapo, Itapo, etu Merin, Atele Irare and Irare (25).

ISURE: Isure provides an interesting contrast to Amusigbo, because although like Amusigbo it is composed of settlers from different places, the way in which these people are organised is quite different. This difference

seems to be related to the fact that the touchstone of socio-political organisation in the settlement has, until recently, been the age group system rather than constituencies represented by title holders as is the case at Amusigbo.

Unlike the quarters discussed so far, the traditions and history of Isure are not so well articulated, largely, it seems, because they have only just become relevant. The age group system which was the basis of social and political organisation, assumes a natural order of things and does not require legitimation by reference to historical events. History has become relevant to political and social organisation in Isure, it seems, partly as a result of the attempt to incorporate a title structure into the political structure of the community during the reign of Alani Atewogboye, and partly as a result of the concentration at Oja Gbamo.

The establishment of a title structure seems to have established a need for an history because the title holders looked, like the title holders of the other quarters of the town, to their places of origins to legitimise their claims to titles; and to the sequence and pattern of their settlement in the Idoani area to legitimise the relative status of those titles. The desire for an articulated history was increased by the fact that with the concentration at Oja Gbamo, Isure became part of a community in which social and political

arrangements were legitimated according to historical traditions, the concentration itself becoming an aspect of these traditions. Within this community, the status of the different settlements of which it was composed depended largely upon the historical account a settlement could give of itself.

When during fieldwork, the elders of Isure were asked to give an account of their origins and their history, they began with an origin myth which stated that the quarter began from the union of a man and a woman. This myth is clearly an attempt to underline the fundamental unity of the quarter but since this was as far as the elders got, it is also symptomatic of the historical confusion in the community. To explain the divisions within the quarter reference was made to different origins of the groups of which the quarter consists. It seems the traditions of all the groups had only ever been articulated in relation to one another as a result of claims connected with the title structure and the way in which the age group system operated (26). Agreement could not be reached about how to present a coherent history of the different groups that was satisfactory to all as had been done at Amusigbo. The information concerning the traditions of this quarter which follows, are, therefore, derived from declarations made in 1966 to the Morgan Commission of Enquiry into Chieftaincy in Ondo state. These declarations are the statements made in support of one title (Elegiri) of one of the two sections into which

the quarter is divided. As a result the account focuses on one section and tends to assume that the structure and composition of the other section is not radically dissimilar.

The two sides into which the quarter is divided are: Ogun Ona and Oke Jimoh. Elders claimed that at their former site, the two 'sides' were divided by a clearing marking the boundaries of the two settlements. Each of these sections is composed of a series of *idi'le* (patrilineages) whose founding ancestors are said to have come from different places.

According to one of the declarations made to the Morgan Commission of Enquiry, the original inhabitant of the Ogun Ona section was Elegiri whose *oriki* suggest that he was a powerful *ologun* whose power, influence and prestige made him a virtual *oba*. The declaration claims that he came from Benin, but in emphasising his personal qualities implies that this is probably an expression of his political stature within the community. In this document it is claimed that Elegiri was the father of all the 'families' at Oke Jimoh, as well as Ogun Ona, his own section, with the exception of Olusure. Olusure of Ogun Ona section, was passing through the area on his way from Ijan Ekiti, his original home. When he got to where Elegiri was, Elegiri entertained him and then begged him to stay. At first Olusure refused to stay because he said that as the son of an *oba* in his home land, he was looking

for his own kingdom and could not place himself under the authority of an oba of the stature of Elegiri. In order to persuade Olusure to stay with him, Elegiri agreed to allow Olusure to take precedence over him. This is why the descendents of Olusure bear Olusure, the name of the leader of the settlement, which became Isure quarter.

The other declaration makes no reference to his origins, but claims that Elegiri was the first inhabitant of the area and was a generous man who, whenever anybody passed through the area, would invite them to stay and reside with him. Thus it was, that from Ikiran came the blacksmith family, Odogbede; from Iyire came the family Okunoshe; from Ohin Afo the Olosunla; from Ipesi the Okese and from Uka the Elemikan.

Although it is claimed that they were like obas in the extent of their wealth, influence and power, Olusure and Elegiri were not oba or oloye of the traditional Yoruba type like those at Ido-Ani, referred to as oye jije - title taking (27). For example, after the specific individuals mentioned in the declaration, persons bearing these titles were oloye only in so far as they were the descendents of heroic persons with special qualities who were once a part of the community. They personified the seniority of the lineage to which they belonged, but the position accorded no special privileges in the community to either the lineage or the individual.

The head of the Oke Jimoh section is Ojimoh, but the



title had not been taken at the time fieldwork was being carried out. Olusure, head of the Ogun Ona section and of the whole quarter, comes from the Owasure lineage. It is claimed that the lineage is divided into six segments; Odeija; Odogbede; Oluofi; Ohin Ako; Okese and Owa Isure. However at least one of these segments is a group of people who are said in the Chieftaincy declaration to have come as part of a separate migration to the area. Does this indicate that the segments of the lineage are in fact the components of a political unit rather than really descendents of the same ancestor? The Odogbede kinship group, headed by Chief Egbedi, is said to have come from Iyire in the declaration to the Morgan Commission of Enquiry. According to the eldest man of the Owasure lineage however, these people headed by Chief Egbedi are a segment of the Owasure lineage. This discrepancy between the accounts about the same kinship group, may indicate a switch in the allegiance of the leaders of this particular kinship group. There is also some confusion concerning another of the 'segments' of the Owasure lineage. The Okese referred to in the declaration as having come from Ipesi are also said to be a segment of the Owasure lineage.

The confusion surrounding the nature of the divisions in the quarter according to traditions of origin and in the statements of individuals trying to define their political jurisdiction is probably due in part, at least, to the fact that there are no political structures or

institutions (e.g. a chieftaincy structure) for which the traditions must account. The construction of these traditions is constrained, therefore, only by the desires of the individuals making them. The occasion on which the structure of the Owasure lineage was explained to me, for example, was the festival of a very beautiful and very popular egungun. People from all quarters of the town came crowding around to watch and it is possible that the claims made about the composition of the lineage are a reflection of the feelings of grandeur inspired by the spectacularity and popularity of the egungun. It is also possible, as has been suggested above, that the contradictory claims are a result of the political history of the kinship groups concerned; or, the confusion of the outcome of the operation of two different principles used for defining the relevant units namely, kinship and residence. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that the units named in the report to the Morgan Commission of Enquiry are conceived of as lineages. The structure of the lineages and their development as revealed in the life histories of the individuals of which they are composed indicates that they are in fact patrilineages which segment according to the state of political relations within the lineage. The fact that these lineages and their segments tend to be concentrated in specific areas of the quarter suggests that there was probably a preference for co-residence of members of a lineage and

its segments in the Isure settlement. After the concentration, with the limited space available at the intra quarter borders of the new settlement, this preference has been difficult to support and segmentation is now occurring according to divisions established by physical separation. If segmentation of the lineage occurred in the past as a result of the internal politics of the group, then it is possible, if not probable that the segmenting groups also moved to a new location in the settlement and may even have attached themselves to, and become incorporated for practical purposes into the lineages of their closest neighbours.

The lack of rigour in defining the lineages suggests that they were only nominally significant for access to critical resources such as land, people and power. If the lineage had had complete control of these resources then it is likely that lineage boundaries would have been more rigorously defined.

The ability of the lineage to exercise complete control over its members was undermined by the age group system, which promoted the integration of the community against the lineages, by promoting solidarity between men of the same age and therefore circumstances. Age sets were formed by men born over a period of 3 years while the grades spanned approximately 9 years. From the bottom upwards, the grades were; Igbalegbe, etu Odun, Egbodo, etu Aloro, etu Ilode, Egiri, etu Merin and Irare. There are no women's grades.

Although, as in the other quarters discussed so far, the Irare were the supreme council in the settlement responsible for policy formation administration and dispute settlement, their control of the government of the settlement was not as extensive as in the other quarters. The tyranny of age which structured relations within the lineage, the relative insignificance of the lineage in the political structure of the community, and the greater solidarity which exists within the age sets at Isure appears to have resulted in junior grades having some considerable influence in the government of the settlement. This was evident in the way the quarter was governed and administered during fieldwork, according to political structures whose existence predates the colonial era. The junior grades monitor the activities of the Irare in government and do confront them with accusations of negligence, mismanagement or injustice. This did not seem to be possible at Owani and Amusigbo. The Isure community met once a week at the Oki, a central place in the quarter which represents the unity of the community and has spiritual and mystical significance. At the Oki the Irare performed their judicial functions, and junior grades could challenge them. Usually, each age set sent a representative to these meetings but it was said that in the past everybody would attend them because it was illegal to go to the farm on that day.

The promotion of the age sets occurred roughly every nine years, at a grand occasion called Kawu, but it was

the Irare who determined when the promotion should take place. The attitude of the present Irare many of who were in the most junior sets before the concentration at Oja Gbamo, suggests that in the past, control of the promotion of the age sets gave the Irare an edge over the junior age sets. This situation lends further support to the contention that the politics of the community as a whole was based upon the confrontation of the old and the young rather than of the lineages.

Further evidence that the crucial divisions in the community were according to age is provided by the fact that within the Irare, who hold their own meetings every nine days, alliances between the senior men of the same or related lineages is strictly discouraged. The unity of the group as a whole is considered to be of such significance that it must not be jeopardised by in fighting or the formation of cliques on lineage or any other lines

IYAYU: Iyayu is, and probably was for some time before the concentration in 1921, the largest of the six settlements in the Idoani area. With a present population of approximately 3,610, it is two and a quarter times the estimated population of Amusigbo, the second largest quarter. Some of the reasons for supposing that Iyayu was larger than the other settlements for some time prior to concentration have already been touched on. For instance, there is the estimate made by H.D. de la Mothe in 1922

(28). Other reasons are; the fact that there are today people, in particular at Ilesa, who can trace a connection with Iyayu, because they are descendents of those who were captured by Ogedemgbe during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war

(29). It is possible that the scale of the captures from Iyayu was similar to that at Isure where large numbers are said to have been taken to Ado Ekiti and are today, acknowledged to have come from Isure by their descendents scattered through out Ekiti. But Isure is the only other quarter for which there is evidence of depopulation on a large scale as a result of these wars.

As at Isure, the touch stone of socio-political organisation at Iyayu is the age grade system, and it may well be that here too, it is this which accounts for the relative lack of concern with the history of the settlement. According to the traditions of all the other quarters, the Iyayu were the last to arrive in the Idoani area and the fact that all, or the vast majority of the people in this quarter came from Sosan, a settlement some 14 kilometers north east of Idoani, may be responsible for the fact that although the history of the quarter is less elaborate than the history of the other settlements, agreement about that history is far more widespread than in the other quarters.

The quarter consists of two territorial sections called Idosi and Ipara. These sections are said to have been founded by two hunters who came to the Idoani area from Sosan in the course of a hunting expedition and set

up their camp there. The hunters were Asowo and Amojó. Asowo is acknowledged as the founder of the Ipara section, while Amojó is said to have founded the Idosi section. Although it was claimed that the territorial divisions of Iyayu correspond to territorial divisions at Sosan from where Asowo and Amojó had come, this was definitely not the case when I visited Sosan in 1982.

At an interview with a group which included elders, the Odion, and various younger men, it was confirmed that the Iyayu had indeed come from Sosan. Sosan, it was said, however, is divided into 3 quarters; Esa, Upara and Esthe. Upara from which the title Olupara is derived is said to have been the first place at which Ayesan, the first oba of Sosan rested on his way from Benin. Hence the seniority of the Olupara over other title holders at Sosan. At Ipara, the seniority of Ipara over Idosi is said to be because Asowo, the founder of Ipara was senior to Amojó founder of Idosi. At Idosi, the seniority of Ipara is explained as having come about because on their arrival, as they were about to make a sacrifice to the Iroko tree, Amojó realised that his hands were dirty and therefore asked Asowo to perform the ritual for him. As Asowo had performed the ritual the year before, he performed it the next year and the following years, until it was assumed that he did so because he was in fact the senior of the two. This story suggests that there is some disagreement about the relative status of the two

sections, although clearly it is not of the order of that which exists in some of the other quarters.

Not long after the two hunters had set up their camps, Alamusi, took them to Ido-Ani and introduced them to Alani as friends of his that had come to stay with him. This part of the account of the origins of Iyayu seems to support the contention made in the section on Amusigbo, that Iyayu may once have been a member of the loose federation of settlements which concentrated to form Amusigbo early in the nineteenth century.

One by one individuals and their immediate dependents came from Sosan to join the two hunters at Iyayu.

Ipara is divided into three wards: Ayira, Sofan and Biopakun; while Idosi is divided into nine: Afakunu, Afoso, Uguotho Oke and Uguotho Isale, Afotu, Afesin, Ethe, Afogede and Afothin. These units are called ebiani in the Iyayu dialect and ebi or idi'le in Yoruba (30). The use of the terms ebi and idi'le which do not come from the Iyayu dialect to describe the ebiani seems to relate to the quality rather than the fact of the relationship between members of the same ward and the fact that they are exogamous units, for it is stated quite categorically that they are not descendents of the same man or related in any way.

The ebiani are essentially territorial units. Elderly persons in the quarter recalled that in the olden days, the ebiani were separated from each other by a patch of bush, people walked a short distance to get from one



ebiani to another, and that during the odun the bush would be burnt so that the egungun could pass from one ebiani to another easily. The internal structure and the relationship between the different ebiani varied. For example, one of the Uguotho, is divided into two sections which take it in turns to have their eldest man be the head of the whole 'family'. In the Afotho family on the other hand, there are four sections; Ifelodun, Ipata, Ovie (Osse) and Ilekoko among which there is a strict order of precedence. Both of these wards are exogamous units.

According to some informants, the wards of each section are ranked according to age, at Ipara the senior ward Ayira is followed by Biopakun and Sofan. At Idosi, the order from the most senior to the most junior is; Afakunu, Afotho, Afoto, Afothin, Afogede, Afesin, the two Uguotho and Ethe. The significance of this ranking according to age is particularly apparent during weddings and burials, for it determines the order in which celebrants present whatever it is that they wish to divide or share among the people of the quarter.

As is the case at Isure, the backbone of Iyayu's political system is its age group system rather than titles, as is the case at Ido-Ani and Amusigbo. At Sosan, it was explained that from experience, they had learned that when young men were oba, because young men are so hot headed, there is usually fighting between the oba and the people, whereas older men govern more cautiously and

therefore more wisely.

Cutting across the ebiani and at the basis of group life in the community the age group system consists of ten age grades lasting 7 years through which age sets spanning 3 years pass. The grades are, from the bottom upwards; Itagwetale, Osume Ebokoro, Ebokoro, odion Ebokoro, Egwa, Amu, Itapo, Uden, Uko Ilodi and Ilodi. Each grade had specific civil duties but was also required to do whatever other tasks were assigned to them by the Ilodi. Womens' grades were formed according to the same pattern but are separate from those of the men.

The Ilodi are the supreme authority in the community, essentially concerned with administration, dispute settlement and the maintainance of law and order. Only they can perform this latter function because only they have access to a sufficiently potent source of power, namely their collective old age. Government however, is the concern of all and before any new policy can be adopted in the quarter, there must be consultation with all the age grades with the exception of those of the women and the most junior grade the Itagwale whose average age today is said to be approximately 20 years, and who are considered, therefore, to be insufficiently experienced to be able to participate in the processes of government. According to elderly people at Iyayu, men in their quarter usually married at the relatively early age of 25.

With few exceptions, it is generally agreed that the titles of Iyayu were only introduced to the settlement, during the reign of Alani Atewogboye and at the instigation of the colonial administration who argued that the existing arrangements made administration difficult, and could not ensure adequate representation of the settlement. It was, it is said, through Iyayu that the colonial authorities first became aware of the settlements in the Idoani area. This was because of Iyayu's size and the prominent role people captured from there had played at Oke Mesi where the Ekitiparapo confronted the Ibadan, and in places like Ilesa to where many were captured. Before the establishment of a title system in the settlement, each section and each ward was headed by the eldest man in the section and the ward respectively. This man was called odion - a term which means in the general sense, 'elder', both at Iyayu and among the Benin Edo (Bradbury 1957: 32 - 33) (31). The actual authority and influence of the edio probably depended upon the personality of the individual holding the position in the community and we must be careful not to assume that the oldest man would necessarily have been weak of limb and feeble of mind, since as is still the case today, few elderly people survived for long in such a condition.

With the establishment of the title system in the settlement, the head of the two sections became Olupara for Ipara, and Oludosi for Idosi. Olupara was made head of the whole settlement and Oludosi second in command or

head of the settlement in the absence of Olupara. In addition to these two titles, a number of other titles were created and taken at Iyayu, but they had no political significance within the settlement, and interest in them soon flagged so that with the death of the initial occupant, few were taken in the next generation and most remain vacant. Between March 1980 and June 1981, the Olupara and Oludosi titles were also vacant. There have been three Oludosi so far, and the title has been vacant for only two years, Olupara on the other hand has been vacant for a period of ten years and there seems to be no prospect of its being occupied within the near future. The difference between the state of the two titles may reflect a difference in the emphasis each section places on titles and may also be due to the fact that the boundaries of the Idosi section of Iyayu march with the boundaries of the other quarters of Idoani, namely Amusigbo, Isewa and Ako, the first two of which have a tradition of titles. Idosi is also the closest of all the quarters to the oba's palace. The boundaries of Ipara on the other hand march with Idosi on the one side and the bush on the other. The Idosi, by far the largest of the two sections, seem to have assimilated the concepts and life style of their neighbours among whom titles have much deeper roots. The Ipara, on the other hand, tucked away in the hills on the outskirts of the town have retained the character of an altogether different socio-political

structure in which the emphasis is on egalitarianism, permitting only of distinctions in status according to sex and age. Thus it is that at Ipara, the vacancy of the Olupara title is due to the fact that there is disagreement about whether the title is to be passed from family to family or remain within the family. All Oludosi on the other hand, have come from the same family.

Both of the two exceptions to the contention that it was only during the reign of Alani Atewogboye that a title structure was introduced to Iyayu, are based in Idosi. These exceptions suggest that the Idosi were much quicker to adapt the social and political culture of their neighbours, and that parts of Idosi (and perhaps Ipara too) are constituted of people from places other than Sosan. If the latter is the case then it is possible that these people learned to speak the language of their hosts and could at that time only become integrated into the community by rejecting their historical traditions which would have continued to assert their different identity and perhaps excluded them from participation in the community.

The two titles which it is claimed pre-dated the establishment of the title system are Daji of Afotu and Odogun of Afotho. It is claimed that Daji obtained his title direct from the oba of Benin. There was, according to the traditions associated with the title, a time when the messengers Alani sent with the tribute for the oba of Benin were forever being waylaid by bandits. For some

years, therefore, Alani could find nobody willing to carry the tribute to Benin and there were fears that the oba of Benin would eventually send a punitive expedition to Ido-Ani. Eventually, Daji, a popular and successful ologun agreed to go, even though he held no title. Daji managed to reach Benin and explained to the oba why it was that he had received no tribute from Ido-Ani for some years. In acknowledgement of his courage and to protect him on the return journey, the oba handed Daji paraphernalia associated with chieftaincy e.g. coral beads for the neck, wrists and ankles and a staff to carry with him back to Ido-Ani, so that all would know that he came from the oba of Benin and was protected by him. Thus it was that Daji came about his title.

Odogun on the other hand claims to be the descendent of the rightful heir to the kingship of Jaja, a smaller settlement just across the border in Bendel State. The Onijaja is said to have been a son of the oba of Benin who came with Alani from Benin. According to the traditions of the Odogun of Afoto, he lost his right to the obaship of Jaja when, impatient for the return of the rightful heir to the kingship, the Onijaja installed another son in his place to avoid confusion after his death. When the rightful heir returned, the Onijaja sent his disinherited son to his brother the Alani of Ido-Ani asking him to accomodate his son at Ido-Ani. The Alani sent the Odogun to the Odion of Idosi and it was there that

he made his home.

Confusing though these traditions are, they suggest that the composition of Iyayu may not be as homogeneous as the traditions of the quarter and its structure suggest.

#### PATTERNS OF AUTHORITY

It is possible to identify three distinct patterns of authority as being at the basis of the variety in the socio-political form that existed in the group of settlements which were to become Idoani. These different types of authority, may be classified according to Weber's Ideal Type classification of traditional authority: Patrimonialism, Patriarchalism and Gerontocracy (Weber 1947: 346ff). According to Weber, traditional authority is distinguished from other types of authority by the fact that it is legitimised by a belief in the sanctity of the order. The traditions which legitimate authority designate the individual or group to whom authority is to be accorded, the content of the command, the objects and extent of authority and the area where the person or persons in authority may exercise their personal prerogative (Weber 1947: 341).

Weber is vague about the relationship between the different types of authority, and his description of these types of authority as traditional is probably irrelevant if not misleading. His typological classification is nevertheless a useful tool with which to analyse the

dynamics of Idoani's socio-political order for the socio-political structure of each settlement described in the previous section seems to have varied according to which type of authority was emphasised and the relationship between different types of authority within a community.

### Patrimonialism

Patrimonialism is when tradition places no restrictions on the extent of the title holder's authority. Authority may be exercised as if it is the title holder's personal possession rather than something which is held on behalf of the community, with the result that the members of the community are treated as subjects and the title holder depends upon an administrative staff to exercise his authority (Weber 1947: 347).

Only Alani seems to have had the means and the opportunity to exercise a patrimonial type of authority in the settlements of Ido-Ani.

According to the traditions of Idoani, Alani is the supreme authority in all the settlements. He is described as: *iba 'keji orisa* - the link between man and the supernatural world which has ultimate authority over the natural world; 'the owner of his people and the land they inhabit'; 'the father of the people'; 'the personification of the community'; 'the almighty'. The character of the authority tradition empowered Alani to exercise is also indicated by the installation ceremonies he had to go through, the rituals he performed for the community and



the taboos he observed which separated him from ordinary people. Although the installation ceremonies are generally a closely guarded secret, there is evidence that these are essentially concerned with establishing a relationship between Alani and supernatural forces. It would seem that it is because of this relationship with the supernatural that all other persons (with the exception of Asewa), were required to make obeisance to Alani, and forbidden to touch his person. Alani's authority was also derived, however from traditions which claimed that he was connected to the royal house of Benin and from the symbols of power he brought with him when he entered the area sometime in the distant past.

Although these two sets of traditions clearly accord Alani a patrimonial type of authority, the real extent of the Alani's authority depended not only on the extent to which the traditions were believed in by his subjects, but on the structure of relations within the settlements, and his relationship with the other settlements in the group of which he appears to have represented a centre.

There are traditions at Idoani giving the Alani the right to exercise patrimonial authority in relation to three distinct communities.

The first community was his own immediate constituency; the palace, which was at the centre of the several constituencies which made up the settlement of Ido-Ani.

The oba's constituency consisted of the oba's immediate family, e.g. his wives and children; eru who had been captured in war (32); strangers, who on arrival in the area would present themselves to Alani because it was his community and were frequently accommodated by him, as well as delinquents from other constituencies within Ido-Ani and probably from other settlements. This last category was made up of: women who had refused to go to the house of the man they had been married to; criminals; those who had not participated in the communal labour assigned to their age grade and those who had flouted the authority of the elders of their compound or community. Some delinquents only resided with Alani for short periods, so that the constituency was probably a fluid one.

At the palace, without the traditions of common origins and kinship ties that existed in the other constituencies of Ido-Ani, there was ample opportunity for Alani to exercise a type of authority close to the patrimonial model. The composition of this community meant that there was probably a need for an administrative staff to co-ordinate the productive and service activities that would enhance the wealth and prestige of the Alani in which those who made up the constituency were engaged. It was claimed that in the title structure of Owani there are four titles whose holders resided permanently with Alani. Unfortunately, how and from where these title holders were recruited, or their precise functions is not clear. However since all the titles of this quarter are said to

have been the property of distinct groups in the settlement, it is possible that although their selection required the approval of the Alani, personal loyalty to him was not the main criterion for their selection. That these title holders were in charge of administration within the palace is suggested, by the contention that the obaship was regarded as a 'possession' of the settlement. The existence of obaship at a settlement accorded a community prestige. Communities with no obaship were regarded as politically inferior. With title holders whose primary loyalty lay outside the palace in charge of administration within the palace therefore, the community was able to guard its possession and ensure that it remained worth possessing.

The second constituency over which, according to tradition, Alani was entitled to exercise patrimonial authority in this community was the settlement of Ido-Ani as a whole.

The exercise of patrimonial authority in this community however, was tempered by the existence of alternative types of authority, these being patriarchy and gerontocracy which will be discussed in more detail below. It should be noted here, however, that the character of the traditions on which these types of authority were based were different from those on which the authority of Alani was based. The patriarchs (the title holders who headed the different ebi and groups of ebi) derived their

authority from their traditions of origin. These traditions were closer to these constituencies in the sense that they explained individual's more immediate situations. In the case of the aboriginals, their traditions of origin took precedence because they predated the traditions of Alani. More recent traditions were probably kept out of general circulation to make their assimilation into the new community easier. The traditions from which gerontocratic authority was derived, on the other hand, concerned premises about the natural order and are therefore of a different order from those concerned with origin and obaship.

The administration of the Ido-Ani was shared between the Iwarefa title holders and the Irare title holders, the latter's authority being both patriarchal and gerontocratic. The existence of these two groups of administrators reflects the existence of two distinct types of relationship between the Alani and his people. Only the Ebi Iwa were required to work in Alani's farms every four days, which suggests that Alani's authority in relation to this section of the community was greater than over any other.

The character of the different types of relationship between Alani and his people is also expressed in the settlement's title structure. The Iwarefa title holders, who were the settlement's 'High Chiefs' consisted, with the exception of the Olori Ebi Iwa, of either Udo or the representatives of the original inhabitants of the area.

These two groups seem to have regarded the obaship as their collective possession, a symbol of their unity, whose status and prestige reflected and enhanced their own status in the community. Because they had nothing 'in common with' the Ebi Iwa, Alani could use members of these groups as administrators in relation to the Ebi Iwa. When Alani exercised authority over the Ebi Iwa then, it was through an administrative staff whose relationship with the oba was quite different from that between him and the Ebi Iwa.

An indication of the character of the relationship between the Iwarefa title holders and Alani is provided by evidence which suggests that Alani exercised more influence in their selection than in the selection of the holders of Irare and other title holders. There is evidence, for instance, that Alani could use these titles to recognise wealthy and influential persons who had no hereditary right to the titles, in order that he might draw on the resources they commanded. Although this evidence relates to the twentieth century, and indicates that the allocation of titles in this way depended upon the existence, within the community, of individuals whose wealth and influence was derived from outside the settlement; this situation is probably not peculiar to the twentieth century.

Before the advent of the cash economy, the main way in which an individual could establish prestige and

influence outside the community was through warfare (Oroge 1971: 146 ff). Oroge has suggested that it was out of the warfare of the nineteenth century that the breed of independent war lords the ologun developed (Oroge 1971: 90 ff). The traditions of this area and the composition of the settlements in the area, suggest however that persistent and widespread warfare was not peculiar to the nineteenth century. It seems probable, therefore, that ologun had existed in earlier periods, that some of these had been given Iwarefa titles, and that this was the basis of their close relationship with Alani. In a similar vein, Peel has suggested that the maintenance of differentials in the political structure of Ilesha required a regular intake of 'fresh slaves', which could only have been acquired through warfare (Peel 1983; 45).

In the selection of Irare title holders on the other hand, Alani seems to have had less influence. Apart from the fact that these titles were the property of quasi kinship groups and could remain vacant if there was nobody the group wanted to honour with a title, these were selected, each by their respective constituency and only then put before Alani for formal approval. The selection procedures suggest that the primary loyalty of the Irare title holders, who were also responsible for the administration of the settlement was not, in most instances, to Alani.

By openly expressing his support for a particular individual, Alani may have been able to influence the

selection from among the contestants, but the relevance or the effect of that support would probably have depended upon the relationship Alani had with the group as a whole. Even if the successful candidate was Alani's 'favourite' however, the members of such a candidate's constituency would probably expect his prime concern, after installation, to be defending the interest of his constituency against the other constituencies in return for their co-operation and support.

Since the status of Irare title holders depended on the extent of their following, unlike Iwarefa title holders whose status was determined by the title itself and its historical association with Alani, we can assume that few title holders would have been prepared to put the interests of Alani before those of their kinsmen and supporters where they conflicted.

The conflicting loyalties of Irare title holders placed severe restrictions on the ability of Alani to exercise the authority he derived from tradition over the whole community through them.

The third constituency over which some traditions accorded Alani the right to exercise some degree of patrimonial authority, was the community of all six settlements. Although each of the settlements were, to varying degrees, autonomous with their own political organisation, they did form a distinct political community in relation to other settlements or groups of settlements

in the area, and it is clear that Alani was at the centre of that community.

Alani's status within the community of settlements is related to a 'belief' in the legitimacy of the tradition that he came from the royal dynasty of Benin. These traditions which connect Alani with Benin are part of the package of attributes which make him an oba. Within Yoruba and Edo political culture, the status of oba is derived not just from the traditions of origin, but also from relationships with the mystical forces connected to the community and its environment, and with previous oba which, it is believed, can be established through installation rites.

Isewa and Ako acknowledged the legitimacy of the traditions according Alani authority over them in their own traditions discussed above.

Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu expressed their agreement with traditions according Alani authority over them by having each of their title holders, or senior men, pay Alani a nominal annual tribute of nine yams; by sending delegations of elders and title holders to pay their respects to Alani every nine days, and by bringing disputes to him for settlement. With no central authority of their own, these settlements seem to have depended upon Alani as an independent external authority for the settlement of disputes between different settlements, and between the different groups of which they consisted.



Furthermore, from their association with Alani, these settlements both contributed to his prestige and themselves derived some prestige in relation to the people of other settlements in the area outside the community under Alani.

Although it is clear that Alani was at the centre of a political community, and despite the fact that traditions accorded Alani patrimonial authority in relation to all three communities, the institution of obaship does not seem, in this case, to have always represented a concentration of political power as is claimed was the case at Benin (Bradbury 1973: 129 ff), Oyo before it was sacked in the first half of the nineteenth century (Law 1977) and Ilesa (Peel 1980). Among the factors which mitigated against the concentration of power in the person of Alani was the fact that the fighting forces of Alani's own community were, usually controlled by the Irare. This made it difficult for Alani to support any challenge to his authority over Ido-Ani itself, or the community of settlements which concentrated to form Idoani with the threat of force.

The fighting forces were formed from the lower age grades of the community according to constituency, family and compound. Each contingent of the force was led by an Ilogun title holder who was directly responsible to the Irare title holders in their constituency. Furthermore, the supplies required for any military campaign had to

come from the Irare. According to the local historians Asabia and Adegbesan, Alani Atunwase who died around 1894, did establish his own personal army composed of Hausa/Tapa mercenary soldiers and as a result he had all the people of Ido-Ani and the other five settlements

at his beck and call as instruments of cheap agricultural labour (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 22).

Apart from establishing a private army of outsiders with which to assert his authority Alani could manipulate the normally antagonistic relationship between the Irare and the junior age grades who formed the fighting forces, to his advantage.

In addition to the authority which the gerontocratic principles, that were at the basis of interpersonal relations in the society, gave them; the Irare's authority was also derived from the fact that they controlled access to food and wives. By instigating military campaigns through which the junior age grades could have access to these things, the Alani could provide them with the means to challenge the authority of the Irare and, by allying themselves with him, an alternative, but legitimate framework of authority within which to operate.

Although tradition accorded Alani a very patrimonial type of authority, then, the real extent of his power depended upon relations within and between the different groups over which he was entitled in theory to exercise his authority, and his ability to manipulate the groups of which his own settlement and the community of settlements

were composed, against each other for his own ends.

### Gerontocracy

According to Weber, gerontocratic authority exists where

imperative control... is in the hands of 'elders' - which... was understood literally as the eldest in actual years, who are most familiar with the sacred traditions of a group (Weber 1947: 346).

Gerontocracy, in Yoruba society is a principle of socio-political organisation, which governs interpersonal relations at all levels. Within Yoruba and Edo culture, gerontocratic authority is associated not only with the fact that the elders are the most familiar with the community's sacred traditions, but also with the belief that with old age, the spiritual power of an individual increases. Old people are therefore feared because consciously or subconsciously they may bring misfortune to those who offend them.

The all-pervasiveness of the gerontocratic principle among the Yoruba generally is illustrated by: the use of the third person *e* to address persons older than oneself and *o* for contemporaries or those younger than oneself; the fact that one may not refer to any person older than her or himself by name and the way that people genuflect or prostrate to elders.

The socio-political institution in which the gerontocratic principle finds expression is the age group system which stratifies the community into groups

according to age. This stratification is, next to stratification according to sex, the most consistent determinant of status in Yoruba society.

Age groups are of two types: sets and grades.

According to Radcliffe Brown, sets are

'a recognised and sometimes organised group consisting of persons...who are of the same age...Once a person enters a given age set whether at birth or by initiation, he remains a member of the same set for the remainder of his life'

Age grades on the other hand, are

'recognised divisions of the life of an individual as he passes from infancy to old age...(eg. infant, boy, youth, young married man, middle aged man, elder)' (Radcliffe Brown 1929).

The significance of this distinction for socio-political organisation is that while grades are concerned with conferring political status, sets, with their emphasis on collectivity, enable the formation of pressure groups and the achievement of specific objectives through collective action. In some instances, grade and set coincide but this is not always the case (Stewart 1977).

The number and names of the age grades differed from settlement to settlement, but the division of communal labour according to age grades seems to have followed the same pattern in all the settlements. The most senior age grade called Ilodi at Iyayu and Irare, in the other settlements, are responsible for policy formation, dispute settlement and land allocation, even where these are organised in smaller units than the whole settlement.

Strictly speaking, Irare are not regarded as an age grade or set. On becoming Irare, a man is released from the age group system and is thus no longer required to perform communal labour. In most instances, the official duties of the grade immediately below the Irare consist of assisting the Irare, i.e. calling people they want to see before them, running errands for them, serving refreshments at their meetings, and generally learning the role that will soon be theirs through associating with those already holding the position. This next grade usually performs executive functions, they translate the Irare decisions into instructions for the junior grades. Among the junior grades, some are responsible for supervising the performance of communal labour e.g. clearing the paths to the farm; clearing the town's drains; removing the rubbish from the settlement's public areas. The actual tasks themselves are the responsibility of the lowest grades. The grade just above the very lowest is also responsible for policing the community, arresting people and seeing that the elders' judgements are enforced.

Age set formation begins during childhood. Children of the same age and sex are encouraged to spend most of their time playing and working together. The child who plays or associates closely with others younger than him or herself will be scolded and teased with the term agbaya - grown up child. This term is also used to criticise

adults and even elders behaving in a way not befitting their age and thus status. In these instances, the term becomes a form of abuse rather than of playful teasing, as it is when used for a child. Through these early associations, which for boys are later incorporated into the formal age grade structure as sets, the children develop a sense of comradeship and solidarity with their age mates which continues throughout their lives.

One effect of age set solidarity was to provide a means by which young men and women could bring pressure to bear on their fathers and husbands. A man whose father was delaying with his marriage arrangements could put pressure on the old man by pointing to the fact that most of his age mates were already married; or, similarly, a woman could demand materials to wear from a father or husband on the grounds that her age mates all had it. The men's age sets in the middle grades were probably in the best position and the most likely to want to make collective demands on their 'fathers', for theirs were the grades that were the active ingredient in the system and, close to the period when they would be elders, the most anxious to have some say in their own affairs and those of the whole community. A corollary of this was that an individual elder's ability to exercise authority over the young men in his own compound was dependant upon co-operation between all the elders and their ability to present a united front to the young men.

The political significance of age group systems at

Ido-Ani and Amusigbo seems to have been undermined by the division of these settlements into other groups which took precedence over groups based on age in promoting solidarity. Furthermore, the authority of the Irare in these settlements could be superseded by that of the Alani at Ido-Ani; and that of the title holders heading each sub-quarter at Amusigbo.

At Isure, the political significance of age set solidarity had a tendency to be undermined by the solidarity in the patrilineal groups into which the community was divided. This is probably why the formation of cliques based on kinship was expressedly forbidden among the Irare. Despite the traditions which suggest that there were obas or powerful titleholders in the Isure settlement at one time, the head of the Irare is not Olusure or Elegiri, but the eldest of the Irare which is the governing body of the settlement.

At Iyayu the Ilodi were the supreme authority in the community and divisions based on lineage and compound were undermined in favour of age set solidarity. Title holders played no special role in the political organisation of the community. At the head of the Ilodi was the Odion, the eldest man in the community.

Although in theory, at Isure and Iyayu, the elders are the supreme authority, it is unlikely that they were able to exercise authority according to either individual or even collective whim, for apart from the fact that

according to tradition they exercised their authority on behalf of the community, there were a number of other factors which placed limitations on their ability to exercise authority. One such factor was the effect of the tyranny of age on interpersonal relations and the consequences of this for the structure itself. Within each compound the ba'ile was the supreme authority on whom the members of the household depended for shelter, feeding, spiritual/medical services, and in the case of young men, support for marrying. So depressed was the status of young men in the compound that there is said to have been little difference between their position and that of eru. However much they resented their position in the compound individually, they were powerless as individuals, and therefore unable to do anything to improve it. If they incurred their ba'ile's displeasure they risked losing his material and spiritual protection, and a consequent further depression of their status, but most of all they must have feared the spiritual power that might be used against them by an angry ba'ile. Such was the young man's fear of the old men in this period, an elderly man of Amusigbo declared, that in his youth, not only did they not dare to look their 'fathers' in the eye, they would not even dare to watch them eat! It was through the age sets in Isure and Iyayu, that younger men were able to exert some influence in the affairs of the settlement and over their elders. The division of labour between the grades meant that the elders depended upon the co-



operation of the junior grades in exercising their authority. This dependence seems to have enabled the junior grades to check the elder's exercise of authority without undermining the structure of authority itself. To have seriously undermined the authority of the elders would have been to doom their own future authority and to undermine the authority they currently exercised over those junior to themselves. At both Isure and Iyayu, there is evidence that the opinions of junior age grades were canvassed, for instance, before new laws were passed. This supports the contention that it was through the age sets that young men were able to exercise political influence.

Another factor which effectively limited the authority of elders was the fact that the Irare had to agree among themselves before any decision became effective.

Bradbury has described patrimonial and gerontocratic authority as representing two opposed and yet complementary conceptions of authority in Benin political culture (Bradbury 1973: 129). In the political culture of the community of settlements at Idoani however, the two types of authority are opposed without being complementary. Opposition occurs on two levels, between the settlements and within the only settlement where the two types of authority must co-exist. It is perhaps this opposition which accounts for the fragmentation of the

whole community.

If the tendency of patrimonial authority is towards centralization and a concentration of power, then the tendency of gerontocracy is towards the dispersion of power and a more egalitarian form of government.

Where there are competing claims to patrimonial authority and that competition restricts the development of the age set solidarity which is a consequence of gerontocratic authority patriarchy emerges as the dominant type of authority, although this type of authority also exists in settlements where patrimonialism or gerontocracy are the dominant types of authority.

### Patriarchy

Patriarchal authority is distinguished from patrimonial authority by the absence of an administrative staff and the relationship between the person in authority and those over whom he may exercise authority.

"Patriarchalism" is the situation where, within a group...authority is exercised by a particular individual who is designated by a definite rule of inheritance...The decisive characteristic of both (patriarchalism and gerontocracy) is the concept which is held by those subject to the authority of either type that this authority, though its exercise is a prerogative of the person or group of persons involved, is in fact pre-eminently an authority on behalf of the group as a whole' Weber 1947: 346) (brackets mine).

This type of authority appears to have existed in all the settlements of Idoani but to have been the dominant type of authority only in Amusigbo.

There appears to have been at Amusigbo, two distinct

ways in which the leadership title of each group could be taken. Titles could be ascribed, in the sense that they were passed to direct descendants of the original leader; and titles could be achieved, in the sense that they were used to honour a group's most dynamic and wealthy personality, and to employ his skills to represent the groups interests to the wider community. The Iye family, for example, always put forward their best man for the title, even though in theory the title was ascribed. In fact, the way in which each of the leadership titles was taken probably varied depending upon the situation a group faced and the character of the potential candidates when the title became vacant. Nevertheless, the titles were held as if they had been 'designated by a definite rule of inheritance' as Weber has described.

Today all the High Chiefs of Amusigbo claim to be direct descendants of the original leader of the group and to be connected with the prestigious centres of Ife or Benin. What history of these groups it is possible to elicit however, indicates that some of the titles have been held at certain points by individuals who having achieved success on military campaigns, returned home to be honoured with the title, in the hope, perhaps, that they would bring the group prestige by establishing themselves as leader of the whole community of settlements.

Although at Amusigbo the title Alamusi is related to

the name of the quarter and the holder is generally acknowledged as the original inhabitant of the area, the fact that the Oniye (apparently the last to arrive in the area) is the leader of the quarter suggests that overall authority within the community was achieved by competition between the leaders of the different settlements, or by conquest. What makes it unlikely that Oniye achieved his position by conquest is the fact that the concentration is said to have been a defensive strategy against a threatened Nupe invasion and the fact that before this the community's ologun were required to camp away from the settlements. It is also unlikely that those settlements whose leaders were olori were engaged in the competition for overall leadership, for political organisation based on gerontocratic authority militates against competition between individuals for political office. In this context, it is significant that Iyayu, which was one of the settlements in the loose federation the settlement formed before their concentration into Amusigbo, did not establish one of its members as leader despite its large population, and therefore wealth. The dominance of gerontocratic authority in the Iyayu community meant that it could not only not provide the leader of the whole federation, but when the settlements concentrated to defend themselves from the Nupe Iyayu was probably excluded because its size would have made it difficult to incorporate it as a subordinate unit in the new settlement. The consequences of this isolation were to

prove disastrous.

Today Oniye has the largest following in the Amusigbo quarter in terms of overall population and in terms of the number of groups which constitute the eki meta of which he is the head. The character of the Oniye's following in this period is, perhaps, indicated by the fact that one of the groups in that eki meta, Odegbamo, is a branch of the Oniye's lineage, whose founding ancestor was a successful ologun and influential person in the community.

Oniye is now the leader of the Amusigbo quarter, but his position does not represent centralization or a concentration of political power in the community. Up to today, the individual subquarters retain some autonomy in their internal affairs. Policy decisions, administration and dispute settlement within the quarter is carried on by the High Chiefs in consultation with other title holders and the elders of the quarter.

The eki meta may seem to represent a tendency towards a concentration of political power, but these groupings are the outcome of competition between powerful title holders in the settlement to gain control of the whole settlement and also represent the failure of any one of these title holders to come out clearly in control.

The net result of the competition for leadership at Amusigbo, is that while the Oniye has the upper hand at present, the Odofin is a close second. By shifting allegiance from one of these title holders to the other,

smaller less powerful subquarters can manipulate the competition between the two for their own advantage.

What personal authority the present Oniye does exercise seems to be derived from his personal wealth and influence both within, and outside Idoani. His main function as head of Amusigbo quarter is to represent the quarter in matters affecting the whole town.

The contention that the character of the authority of the leaders of the groups which constituted Amusigbo was patriarchal, also finds support in the structure of relations within subquarters. Individuals are members of the subquarters rather than 'subjects' of the leaders of these subquarters. Relations between members of subquarters are kinship or quasi-kinship in character and subquarters are often described as ebi or family even though they do not consist solely of people related according to clear cut principles of kinship. According to elderly people in the quarter, in earlier days, successful war lords were those who brought eru back with them to be incorporated into the group; women as the wives of men of the group and men to labour in the fields alongside the sons and other men under the ologun. Just as with the sons of the ologun, the good behaviour of the eru was rewarded with the ba'ile - father of the household - entering into marriage arrangements on their behalf.

Even the eki meta are described as 'family groups' and are said to 'have things in common', placing the

emphasis on relations between the members of the different subquarters rather than the fact that they are under one authority, or on relations between their leaders.

The traditions of Isewa claim a royal status for the Asewa, but he does not seem to have enjoyed the right to exercise patrimonial authority as did the Alani of Ido-Ani. The Asewa was, it seems, the most significant of the ritual specialists who headed each kinship group in the community, but the fact that all are said to have served the Alani and the Ido-Ani in some capacity or other makes it unlikely that these ritual duties accorded him any special authority in his own community.

There is no evidence that the Asewa headed a palace organisation of the type normally associated with obaship; his compound, like those of the other title holders seems to have consisted entirely of members of his own lineage. What evidence there is, indicates that Asewa and Eko Baba Oloja, who headed the other of the two sections into which Isewa was divided, were leaders whose main significance was as symbols of their communities and representatives of their groups rather than as figures of authority within these groups. Horton has described this situation as one in which there is a stress on leadership rather than authority, and as being one of the salient features of the socio-political organisation of segmentary lineage systems (Horton 1971: 85).

It is difficult to say what the dominant type of

authority at Isewa was, but it does seem that patriarchal and gerontocratic authority existed side by side in the socio-political structure of the settlement in the person of the title holder who headed each of the kinship groups and the age group system respectively. In most instances the title holder is the eldest man in the lineage, but there are cases where the title is held by men who are not the eldest in the lineage. This situation seems to arise where the ritual expertise of a younger man exceeds that of his elders.

The predominance of leadership over authority also seems to have characterised the position of Alako, the head of Ako quarter, who is representative of the individual who originally led the Ako away from Ido-Ani. Authority in the quarter is vested in the senior age grade; the Irare, not the Alako.

Obayemi has described the settlements of north east Yorubaland as mini states, and argues that typically they consist of a group of patrilineages united to form a community in which social life and government is carried on through institutions which cut across lineage boundaries. These institutions, he suggests are organised on the principles of age, ability and sectional representation (Obayemi 1976: 207). It would be misleading to describe the settlements of Idoani as consisting of groups of patrilineages, as their composition is clearly more complex than this. However



socio-political organisation does seem to have been concerned with the competing claims of these principles. In the different settlements of Idoani, it is clear that which one of the principles was emphasised varied. Although Obayemi does not concern himself overmuch with the diversity of ways in which the principles are combined and organised, referring only vaguely to 'local peculiarities' as a possible explanation of the diversity; this diversity must be relevant to any attempt to understand processes of change in these areas. The variation in socio-political organisation at Idoani seems to be related to two factors:

- 1) The reason the settlement was founded and the historical processes by which settlement occurred.
- 2) The type of authority emphasised in the political culture of the settlement.

The difference in the socio-political organisation of Iyayu and Ido-Ani where the emphasis was on gerontocratic authority and patrimonial authority respectively is probably related to the difference in their patterns of settlement.

The population of Iyayu seems to have been scattered over the area and to have consisted of migrants who came in search of farmland. If this was the case then the migrants probably travelled singly or in small groups of kin. This type of migration still occurs today. The migrant generally regards himself as a temporary resident and his political identification is with the community he has only temporarily abandoned. Political organisation in

settlements of this type is solely for the purpose of day to day organisation and administration. Sectional representation is irrelevant mainly because there are not distinct sections with clearly defined common interests that are opposed to those of other groups. The goal of the community, such as it is, is limited to harmonious co-existence and there is no function for those with special abilities to fill.

The other pattern of settlement is represented by Ido-Ani with its tendency towards the dominance of patrimonial authority. The settlers in these settlements seem to have arrived in larger groups not necessarily of kinsfolk. Having left their original home as the result of a political dispute; with a military brief; or in flight from military aggression. These settlers tend to arrive in the area with their own structures of authority and political culture. Their political identification is quite firmly with the new community, in which they are usually anxious to assert the authority they have been denied at home, or which they have come in search of. Where such groups come together, adequate sectional representation becomes highly relevant and competition between the different groups makes them anxious to employ the special abilities of individuals within the group. Given the differences between such groups, the question why they should be together at all arises. Here factors such as prestige and the existence of an external threat,

becomes relevant. Certainly it was the threat of aggression from external forces which motivated the concentration of Amusigbo.

The history of this area indicates that it has faced the threat of military aggression from north, east and west over a considerable period preceding that with which we are concerned and that many of the peoples of this area came originally as the result of wars in other areas (Akintoye 1971, Egharevba 1968, Johnson 1921).

It is unfortunate that the scantiness of historical evidence, and the way traditions are used as the idiom in which to present the structure of present political relations, means that traditions which refer to the arrival in the area of individuals with symbols of high status and power must be treated with caution. These traditions cannot be totally disregarded, however, if there is to be any explanation of the existence of obaship and certain types of title holding in some communities and its absence in others. Whatever the explanation of how obaship is maintained, its existence does seem to indicate the advent in the community, whether from within or from outside of dynamic individuals who were able to establish authority either by force or by persuasion.

Although there may be some material basis to account for the enduring prestige of Alani in the community of settlements, it is also possible to account for the Alani's continuing prestige in terms of the structure of relations between the various components of his own

settlement and between all the settlements of which Idoani is composed. The prestige of the Ido-Ani was derived from the possession of the obaship, but this hardly explains why Alani, as opposed to one of the other group's leaders, was able to assume and retain this position. Clearly a number of factors must be relevant, including some historical details that are not available.

A main contention of Obayemi's paper was that it was out of the mini states, still

'found at various points on the periphery of the Yoruba language unit....(including) Oworo, Ijumu, Abinu, Ikiri, Igbede, Yagba and Akoko in the north-east and groups like the Egbado, Ikale and Awori in the south,' (Obayemi 1976: 202)

that the mega states like Oyo, Ijebu, Ilesa etc. developed.<sup>4</sup> About this, there can be no doubt, both the history and structure of numerous settlements throughout Yorubaland gave testimony to this fact. According to Obayemi, the mini state form of organisation was once characteristic of the whole of the area populated by people speaking languages belonging to the larger cluster Kwa languages. This includes: Yoruba; Edo; Igara; Idoma; Igbo; Nupe; Igbirra and Gbari speaking peoples. Now it is clear from the discussion in this chapter that the pattern of political organisation in just one group of such states varies. These differences are highly relevant to the question of state formation with which Obayemi is concerned.

Although Obayemi dismisses the possibility that mini

states represent a breakdown of mega states on the grounds that if this were the case some indication of this would have emerged in the oral traditions or archaeological sources, this possibility must be taken seriously if the analysis of state formation is to avoid evolutionary assumptions. In fact, this theory does have certain attractions. It would account, for instance, for certain similarities in the political culture of the Yoruba and Edo areas. It may also explain the fierce egalitarianism and preference for an emphasis on gerontocratic authority at Iyayu and Isure which meant that despite Iyayu's superior numbers, and therefore 'wealth', they remained the junior partner in the alliance of states.

Some traditions express a preference for gerontocratic authority over the patrimonial type of authority and the associated structures despite the lack of prestige with which gerontocratic authority is associated in certain circles. The traditions of Idoani in which many of the title holders are said to have originally come from important centres like Ife and Benin means that we cannot afford to totally discount the possibility that mini states themselves are formed from the disintegration of larger states. Clearly our understanding of state formation can benefit from an analysis of the socio-political structure and dynamics of smaller states.

Table 4: The Settlements which became Quarters -  
Composition and Structure

<u>SETTLEMENT</u>	<u>DIVISIONS</u>	<u>SUB-DIVISIONS</u>
ISEWA	Sections Lineages	Oke Regbe/Olo Isewa
OWANI	Constituencies Kinship groups	Aboriginals Udo (Includes the Royal Family) Ebi Iwa
AKO	Idile	Oke Poja Ilemo Iparapara Isanu Ilumo Iyasen
AMUSIGBO	Settlements/Quarters Eki meta	Iye Odegbamo Iburon Odo Iburon Oke Ode-Ipesi Owamusi Idofin Upe Isua Owalasan Odesere Odurogbo
ISURE	Sides  Lineages	Ogun Ona Oke Jimoh  *Owasure Elegiri Odogbede Okunoshe Olosunla Okese Elemikan
IYAYU	Sections ebiani/afinmi	Ipara Ayira Sofan Biopakun Idosi Afakunu Afoso Uguotho Oke Uguotho Isale Afotu Afesin Ethe Afogede Afothin

\*It is not clear how these lineages are distributed between the two sections.

## Notes to Chapter 2

1. For an example, see details relating to Ibokun (Francis 1981: 31).
2. Throughout this thesis, Idoani will refer to the six communities collectively, while Ido-Ani will refer to one of the settlements, the former home of Alani, from who the name is said to have been derived. That settlement has been divided, in the re-organisation of 1921 between Owani quarter and Oke Ido quarter.
3. Quarter is generally used in Yoruba ethnography to describe the traditional administrative units of a settlement, although frequently they are much more than this (See Peel 1980). There are some Oyo, or 'Yoruba proper' settlements where there are four quarters to a town, but this, it seems, is rarely the case in the settlements of north eastern Yorubaland.
4. Ogedemgbe and Aduloju were Ijesa and Ekiti ologun respectively who invaded Idoani in 1878 (see Chapter 4 for details).
5. In a memorandum dated March 3, 1922, District Officer H.D. de la Mothe estimated that the population of Isure, Amusigbo and Iyayu was roughly 3/4 of the total population of the settlements. (N.A.I.) ONDOPROF 1/2, OP 1295 'The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting, D.O., Owo to Resident, Akure, 3 March 1922.  
According to figures collected in the course of a survey of 10% of rateable houses in 1981 the populations of Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu were still approximately 3/4 of the population of the whole town (see Table I).
6. The kingmakers are the title holders who must approve the candidate selected by the royal family for the obaship.
7. The Rev. Samuel Johnson, whose work, although full of the prejudices typical of an Oyo man in the service of Europeans, has become a major reference used by both academics and local people, described the Ijesa as 'stumpy, muscular and sheepish looking, with a marked want of intelligence offering no resistance to the Yoruba invaders who with their higher civilisation became rulers of the area' (Johnson 1921: 20). Together with the Ekiti, he claimed, they represent the aboriginal inhabitants of Yorubaland.

8. Oke means hill, and often features in Yoruba place names to indicate that the place is at a relatively higher geographical point than somewhere else.
9. The literal translation of agbo'le is flock of houses, agbo being a word used to describe a collection of things of the same kind and ile meaning house. Idi'le is also derived from two words idi and ile. The literal meaning of idi is buttocks, but it is also an euphemism for loins or genitals, which suggests that idi'le refers to people who originate from the loins of the founder of the house and may be translated as patrilineage. At Idoani it was said that the mother is simply a vessel for the seed of the father, that the mother contributes nothing to the creation of the child, so that being of the same mother therefore, although a stronger relationship than being of the same father, is not necessarily an indication of a connection through the loins, such a connection, can only be patrilineal.
10. Age groups are, it seems, of two basic types, Age grades and Age sets. The distinction between them was first made by Radcliffe-Brown, who described age sets as:

'a recognised and sometimes organised group consisting of persons...who are of the same age ...Once a person enters a given age set whether at birth or by initiation, he remains a member of the same set for the remainder of his life'

Age grades on the other hand, he described as

'recognised divisions of the life of an individual as he passes from infancy to old age...(eg. infant, boy, youth, young married man, middle aged man, elder)'  
(Radcliffe-Brown 1929)

11. Ido simply means settlement.
12. Although at Owani it is claimed that the number of people who accompanied Alani to Oja Gbamo was small, at Amusigbo it is suggested that it was approximately half the total population of Ido-Ani. The Ido-Ani who moved to Oja Gbamo now form the Oke Ido quarter of Idoani. The present population of the quarter is approximately 590 as compared with Owani's 880. Although these figures are a fairly reliable indication of the relative proportions the quarters Owani and Oke Ido today, they give no real indication of what they have been in the past. Oke Ido is the oba's quarter at Oja Gbamo, but 42% of its population are strangers (General Survey, Source V). This is largely because it has been the custom for strangers



to stay with the Oba. In addition, the situation is further complicated by the fact that many of those who accompanied Alani Atewogboye to Oja Gbamo later returned to Ido-Ani. (See Chapter 5 for details of these movements).

13. In the early days the Oja Gbamo site was also referred to as Ajegunle, a name generally used in Yoruba to refer to a meeting place.
14. Owa is a general term often used like oba in other parts of north eastern Yorubaland.
15. Kinglists are of course an unsatisfactory way of trying to calculate dates, since we have no way of estimating even the average length of the reigns of each oba let alone the actual length of time each king reigned. They are however of some significance when considered in relation to other material.
16. According to Ojo, Iwarefa titles refer to senior lineage chiefs in Ekiti, to chiefs of the senior title grade in Kabba and to senior chiefs of the Oshugbo (Ojo 1966).
17. Both Olisa and Oshodi seem to be cognates of the Benin titles Oliha and Osodi respectively. Oliha is the first of the seven Uzama titles, the chief priest in whose house the Uzama meet. According to Bradbury the Uzama are the most ancient and high ranking chiefs in the Benin state, and are also the kingmakers (Bradbury 1957: 35).
18. See Section II below for a more detailed discussion of the political significance of kinship groups size.
19. These traditions were related by Alako, who is the head of the quarter and a group of other household heads in the quarter
20. It is tempting to suppose that Amusi' bgo and Amusi' le refer to the 'Amusi' in the bush and in the 'house respectively. Igbo meaning bush, and ile meaning house. At the meeting during which the history of Amusigbo was told, however, it was claimed that the name was derived from the sentence ki gbogbo wa ka gbo si bi - let all of us mature here. Gbo is associated with the joy of maturity. Another sentence from which Amusigbo is said to be derived is ka to si bi - lets be everlasting here.
21. The use of owa in the name of the subquarter suggests that like Owani, Owamusi may have been the original home of a royal dynasty.

22. One group of settlers, of which there is evidence, but who are no longer one of the constituent groups of Amusigbo is the Uka. The Uka are said to have settled in the area from a place in the Ebo area, in very large numbers and to have terrorised the other settlers with their wickedness. Fighting broke out between them and the other settlers and the Uka were driven out of the area. Although this is said to have taken place some two hundred years before the Ogedengbe wars, the ruins of their former settlement are still apparent. (It is said that there are still some Uka among the Isure).
23. They were generally referred to by their specific name or as adugbo.
24. In line with such descriptions elsewhere, Peel suggests that this might refer to the three wings of a military organization. If this is so then the settlements of Amusigbo may represent gatherings around the military units of Idoani which, according to the traditions of both Owani and Amusigbo, used to camp outside the town.
25. Irare has been spelt in only one way in the text but there are at least two other ways of spelling the same thing, these are Erare and Ighare. These different spellings appear to be a function of the differences in the dialects of the communities, they have not been utilised to avoid confusion.
26. The specific aspect of the age group organisation to which I am referring here is the emphasis on the equality of members of the same group and the lack of differentiation among the Irare.
27. Oye jije refers to titles which derive their authority from a common source, like an oba, and which are supposed to accord the individual holding them, special privileges and authority in the community.
28. See note 5. above.
29. It may just be that the descendants of those captured to Ilesa have achieved prominent position there and in the nation Nigeria as a whole. E.g. The mother of Major General Adebayo's for instance is said to have been captured from Iyayu.
30. The 'mother tongue' of Iyayu, is described by D. Olatunbosun Oke as one of the unclassified non Yoruba 'mother tongues' of which there are several in the northern and central parts of Owo division, which included before the reform of local government, Akoko

South, Akoko North and Owo Local Government Areas (Oke 1972: 49 - 50). The language seems to have some affinity with Edo because the people who speak it say they can understand some of the words of the Benin Edo dialect, but not the sense of the language as it is spoken. It also has some affinity with Yoruba with which it is said to have some words in common.

31. The plural of Odio is Edio. The term is not used to refer to the senior age grade at Iyayu, as it is in Benin, but wherever it is used, it is referring to an individual whose authority is based upon his seniority.
32. All eru captured in war were the property of the Alani, his subjects are said to have only been able to employ the services of eru they had purchased.

## CHAPTER 3

### Religion and Authority

This chapter will describe Idoani's traditional religious culture and explore its relationship with traditional structures of authority. It is the religious culture described in this chapter which has inspired the theoretical perspective on religious change outlined in the introduction and so the chapter also reflects on some of the theoretical issues with which this thesis is concerned.

Unfortunately, there are no contemporary documentary or other 'hard' accounts of religious culture at Idoani before the introduction of Islam and Christianity. On the other hand oral traditions, or 'soft' accounts speak more about the revulsion to them inspired by Western European culture and Christianity, than they do about the traditional religious cultures. The account which follows therefore, has been pieced together from a variety of sources and cannot claim to be a comprehensive account of Idoani's traditional religious culture.

The exposition begins with a consideration of three critical concepts, within which the analysis takes place: religion, culture and God.

## Section 1: Religion, Culture and God.

### Religion

In the introduction, I argued that whereas some perspectives on religious change have a tendency to lay emphasis on the intellectual processes involved in religious change an incorporation perspective treats the incorporation of Islam and Christianity into a Yoruba religious culture as a complex process that has, in addition, socio-political dimensions. From this perspective religious change involves changes in the source, expression, and distribution of power and, therefore, authority.

An incorporation perspective must treat the concept of religion as matter for analysis as well as an analytical tool. This is because, as has already been pointed out in the introduction, in the Yoruba cultural tradition the word *isin*, into which the English 'religion' is usually translated, describes Christianity and Islam which have no exact correlation in Yoruba culture before their incorporation.

Conceptualizing religious change in a Yoruba community as opposed to the religious expansion of Western Europe and the Middle East therefore, requires that something called religion be distinguished from the rest of Yoruba social reality. What is to be called religion in pre-Christian and pre-Islamic Yoruba society depends upon what type of definition of religion it is ultimately

decided to adopt.

Definitions of religion may be placed on a spectrum at either end of which are what are minimum and maximum definitions of religion. The earliest minimum definition of religion was offered by E.B. Tylor who defined religion as 'a belief in spiritual beings'. Later on, Goody has suggested that whatever theoretical definition is expounded, in practice a minimum definition of religion is usually employed by 'writers in this field' (Goody 1961).

A pioneer of maximum definitions, at the other end of the spectrum, was E. Durkheim who defined religion as 'a unified system of belief and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral community called a church all those who adhere to them'. As we shall see this definition, by referring to beliefs and practices 'which unite', comes very close to a simple definition of culture - the totality of all that is shared. It is because of the similarity between this definition and the concept of culture that this definition may be placed at the maximum end of definitions of religion.

Whereas the minimum definition of religion is neat, simple and relatively straightforward to employ in analysis it is a somewhat impractical research tool, for how can belief be established and what precisely are spiritual beings? The maximum definition being less

simplistic reflects more accurately than minimum definitions the complexity of social reality, but is an unwieldy and therefore 'difficult' analytical tool. Minimum definitions of religion tend not to take into account the specifically religious emotions of awe and reverence associated with religious beliefs and usually assume that spirits are personal beings with very human characteristics. A main feature of maximum definitions on the other hand is that because of their complexity many more aspects of a society than 'religion' per se must be included in any sociology of religion, and all sociology of religion must confront the definitional problem.

The solution to these problems which has been employed in this analysis is the concept of religious culture. This concept admits to the importance of notions of spirituality but, linking these to notions of culture, avoids an ethnocentric stress on aspects which can only be equated with those stressed in Western European Christianity.

### Culture

In this perspective, culture is the totality of that which is shared, that which unites, across social geographical and temporal boundaries, that which binds people together. For this reason historical traditions are a critical ingredient of culture. It is culture which makes communication and interaction possible.

When the concept of religious culture is employed to

analyse religion in societies which have no concept of religion, the emphasis shifts from looking for the counterparts of those elements which in the Western European Christian tradition have been designated as religion, to establishing what the components of a society and its social fabric are, the significance of the various components in relationship to one and other, within the total framework of that society.

### God

In the Western European Christian tradition, God can become gods, and there is therefore a generic aspect which exists in English and other European languages even though this generic aspect is an anathema to their philosophies about God.

As we shall see in the account of Yoruba religious culture which follows, there are at least 4 distinct types of spiritual or superhuman beings in Yoruba culture: orisa, egun, baba wa (ancestors) and Olodumare or Eleda, Creator (Supreme Being). This latter has no generic sense at all.

For missionaries a critical goal of their enterprise as they saw it was the introduction of the concept of a Supreme Being to Africans. But according to Idowu and Awolalu, the concept of a Supreme Being is at the very core of Yoruba religious beliefs. Indeed, it seems that, unlike the Islamic and Western European Christian traditions which have conceptualised a generic name for



the supreme being, the Yoruba have a singular term only, and are therefore in that sense more rigidly monotheistic than either Christian Europeans or Muslims. Why missionaries did not recognise this is in itself an interesting question.

This critical difference between Christian European and Yoruba traditions about the concept of a Supreme Being makes 'God' or 'gods' unsuitable analytical tools, but highly suitable in the incorporation perspective for analysis, as Idowu has shown (Idowu 1962).

## Section 2: Baba wa, Egun and Orisa

The three components of Idoani's religious culture with which this discussion will be concerned are: baba wa (ancestors), egun and orisa. These components do not represent the totality of Idoani's religious culture or Yoruba religion, but they do seem to have been the major elements of Idoani's religious culture before the introduction of Islam and Christianity. This classification is essentially analytical, for as we shall see, these components are not discrete areas of religious culture. The aim of the classification is to impose order to facilitate description. The analysis which accompanies the description is concerned with the relationship that existed between religious culture at Idoani and the types of authority, that were exercised there and have been described in Chapter 2.

### Babawa/ Ancestors/ Oku Orun

The ancestors referred to variously as baba wa and oku orun (dead in heaven) were probably the most general and most important component of religion at Idoani, for it was the only aspect of religion in which every individual was involved at a personal as well as social level. Ancestors were, therefore, an integral part of every individuals spiritual reality.

In all the quarters, the gerontocracy which characterised relations between the living also extended to include the deceased members of the community, and the relationship between the dead and the living is very much like that between the Irare and the junior age grades of the community. The power of the dead over the living, like that the Irare exercised over their juniors, and the relationship between the Irare and the dead that was an important source of the elders' authority.

The good fortune of the community could be attributed to the ancestors of the community, but the same ancestors could also bring misfortune. In general they seem to have been regarded as the ultimate guardians of the traditional order, carefully watching over their descendants to ensure that they maintained the social order they had created. To see their descendants living together according to the codes they had established and approved, was believed to give the ancestors pleasure; to flout these codes was to court their displeasure and punishment.

During fieldwork, when an explanation was requested

about behaviour which at that time I had rudely classified as religious, the reply would come back

asa baba wa ni  
it is our fathers' custom.

The tones in which this explanation is given suggests that the notion is a fundamental assumption according to which social reality is structured. Indeed so fundamental is this notion that society is the heritage of forefathers that it was also used to explain the custom and behaviour of other peoples unfamiliar with this notion e.g. Europeans.

Just as a son feared his father, as an expression of respect and as the result of the authority he exercised over him, the living feared their dead fathers, as an expression of respect, with which to curry their favour, and because of the power it was believed they continued to exercise over the fate of the living after their death.

The process of becoming an ancestor with the power to reach beyond the grave started within an individuals lifetime. As individuals matured, the strength of their spiritual essence increased. The political authority of the Irare was partly derived from the spiritual power they were believed to possess as a result of old age (Ojo 1974: 29; P. Francis 1981).

Because of the spiritual strength, elderly persons are believed to possess, their prayers (adura) are eagerly sought, and their curses (epe) carefully avoided. This spiritual essence was usually referred to as agbara which

generally means strength, but in those instances when reference was being made to qualities of an elderly man or woman, its significance was clearly spiritual rather than physical. Generally, the younger a person, the less significant their eye and the emotion aroused by the curse of a teenager is more likely to be anger than fear.

The spiritual power of the Irare was also derived from the fact that they controlled the shrines through which the living communicated with the dead. Ba'ile were usually buried in the room they had occupied while living and into which the new Ba'ile will move it is in this room that the ancestral shrine is usually located.

Just as 'Man made God' however, men also made the ancestors. Survival after death depended upon the care and attention of the living. A major fear of those who were childless was that they would have nobody to sin them when they were dead. Sin is an important concept to Yoruba religious culture and refers to a behavioral complex which includes 'continuing care of', 'serving' associated with worshipping and the performance of the funeral rites which make a dead Irare an ancestor. What often happened, when an individual was childless, was that a sibling or other relation of the individual, female or male, would give her or him a child to 'train' as their own in order that they might have somebody to care for them as they grew older and 'remember' them after their death.

The fact that the dead required the support of the living to continue living as ancestors tempered the relationship between ancestors and the living just as it did that between the Irare and members of the junior grades. The father who was too severe was not only likely to see his offspring moving away from him to become involved, perhaps, their mother's kin or a spouse's kin, but was also unlikely to have elaborate funeral rites performed on his behalf to enable him to make a smooth passage from the world of the living to that of the dead. In time it was even possible that he would be forgotten. A popular elderly man on the other hand, was likely to be remembered by many and to receive regular and generous offerings which would give him a high status among the ancestors.

Popularity alone was not enough to ensure the care and attention of the living after death, for an Irare had to evoke fear and respect in the hearts of the juniors under him; to be popular without these was insufficient and likely to not only earn him the scorn of his peers but also result in his being referred to as agba'ya - grown up child.

There are at least five Levels at which ancestral cults at Idoani operated.

1. This first level involved the whole community of the settlement. A community ancestral cult at Ido-Ani was Oro, at which the ancestors came among the living to remind

them just how terrible they could be. Although Oro does seem to have had some of the characteristics of orisa, in that it is sometime attributed a personality (Idowu 1962; 193), at Idoani it is meant to represent ancestors of the whole geo-political unit.

Oro is said to have come out at night when, the men whose task it was to perform the ritual would run through the community waving the stripped branches from a single tree. It was from the noise these branches made when they were waved that the name Oro was derived.

Oro was summoned for Ido-Ani and Isewa together at Isewa, Oro was also summoned at Ako and Amusigbo. At Isure, it is said that the equivalent was Aloro while its equivalent at Iyayu is said to have been Egunle. Both Aloro and Egunle also involved the appearance of egun representing ancestors.

2. The second level at which ancestral cults operated was in relation to the different sections based on common origin in settlements where these were significant. The focus of rituals at this level was generally the individual who according to tradition, brought the group to settle at Idoani. Ogirigbo, propitiated at Isua subquarter of Amusigbo, is said to have led the people of the subquarter out of Isua Akoko, while at Upe Amusigbo there was egun Upe. At Owani, Kokofe is performed in turn by five different families. Unfortunately precise information about this ancestral phenomenon was not

obtainable, but it was said to have been an ancestral cult which existed among groups sharing an identity related to common origins.

This type of ancestral cult appears to have been particularly important in relation to patriarchal authority in those communities like Ido-Ani and Amusigbo where political units were formed on the basis of common origin.

3. Ancestor cults also operated in relation to the *idi'le*. An example of an ancestor operating at this level occurred during fieldwork when all the members of the *idi'le* Owasure, female and male, came together from their different compounds to do the *egun Okirikpe* representing the ancestors of the *idi'le*. Presiding over the proceedings was the eldest man who dressed up as an *egun*.

Within each household there was an ancestral shrine which was the area set aside for propitiation of the ancestors. The shrine was generally in the room where all former *ba'ile* were buried. It was here the *ba'ile* propitiated the ancestors on behalf of the household community. From time to time, the *ba'ile* called the whole house together to join him in propitiating the ancestors. Individuals of the household could also approach the *ba'ile* to propitiate the ancestors on her or his behalf.

Anybody who had not been the *ba'ile* seems to have been buried outside the house. Women were buried in the courtyard or near the house while children were buried in

the bush.

The death of a child who had not lived long was interpreted as abiku - a playful spirit reluctant to do earth duty. The death of young people was regarded as a shame, particularly where the individual had no descendants.

During fieldwork it was observed that men who, having died without having established their own household at Idoani, were buried by their children in their own quarters of the family house or at a site where they intended to build at a later date.

4. Although individuals propitiated and consulted their ancestors formally through their ba'ile, in the course of their day-to-day life, they frequently approached their ancestors informally. Individuals call out to specific ancestors with whom it had been established that they had a special relationship, or s/he might appeal to an ancestor believed to have special characteristics, which are generally derived from the character of specific individuals when they were alive.

At the birth of a child, various divinations are performed to establish what relationships with ancestors that child's spirit had decided before its birth, would be significant during its life.

It is an oversimplification to suggest, as Abimbola has, that in the religious culture of the Yoruba, the dead become orisa to their families (Abimbola 1973; 75), or



that ancestors are worshipped like gods orisa as Ubah has suggested is the case among the Igbo (Ubah 1982). There are some similarities between these two aspects of religious culture, but their social and political functions in the life of the community are quite different. (See below for a more detailed discussion of the differences between these aspects of Idoani's religious culture).

### Egun

At Idoani egun are the material representatives of ancestral spirits, but at the same time egun are human beings who put on the special clothes endowed with the spiritual power of the ancestors they represent. Those clothes cover the human form so completely that no part of the wearer is visible. The individuals wearing egun dress do not become the ancestors, but ancestors make use of the living essence of these carriers to return to aiye - the world of the living - for a while.

The living, it would seem, have an obligation to summon the ancestral spirits from time to time in order to enable them to taste the pleasures of aiye; to relive their past adventures; to inspect the community in order to ensure that things were as they had left them, and to see that they were still feared and respected as befitted their status.

As well as representing the ancestors, however, the appearance of the egun was also both a source of power and

an expression of it. We have already seen, for example, how the Irare derived authority from their control over access to the ancestral spirits who exercised control over the fate of the living. In the egun phenomenon, we can see how the Irare demonstrated the power this gave them and their control over junior age grades. It is said, for example, that

awon agba lo ngbe egun jade -  
it is the elders who bring out the egun

that is to say, it is they who summon the ancestors to appear. While they wore the dress of the egun, egun carriers, who usually belonged to the middle age grades, were in a dangerous state. The weakness of the spiritual power of these men gave them little protection against that of the ancestral spirits which took possession of them should they become angry with their descendants in the course of the odun during which they appeared. The carriers of the egun depended, therefore, on the protection of the Irare and the good behaviour of their communities while they were in this dangerous state. The Irare provided this protection by appeasing the ancestral spirits with offerings, by striking bargains with them and by using their authority over the community to order its good behaviour. The fact that the men who wore the egun could be commanded by the Irare to take the risk of entering this dangerous state then, demonstrated the authority the elders had over them.

During the period over which the odun lasted,

particular care had to be taken to ensure that all was well among the living and to show the ancestors the respect they demanded. Just as young children were advised not to disturb the living elders with their noise while they played, lest they incur their wrath, the elders usually ordered that no drums were to be beaten during odun, except as part of the celebrations; that there should be no rowdiness, rough play or quarrelling to disturb the ancestors during their brief visit to aiye and for certain egun they would order woman to stay indoors.

During the appearance of the egun, the oriki (praise names) of various ancestors would be called out, to show that they were remembered, to please them and to help them re-live their past adventures. As the egun heard their oriki they would dance, to demonstrate their pleasure, and it was during this period that individuals, could approach them to strike bargains with them, promising to do certain things if the egun would help them in some way, either to achieve some objective or to prevent the occurrence of a misfortune that had been forseen for them.

The character of the egun varied. As representatives of the ancestors, the egun exhibited the characteristics of those they represented. Some egun were known for their special concern with childcare, while others were known for the strength of their curse and some were known for the beauty of their dance. Some egun represented specific ancestral individuals while others represented collective

ancestral and Irare power. Those who represented collective ancestral power seem to have been summoned on specific occasions to deal with specific issues. An example of this type of egun is the Ale'mo's'oko egun (drivers of children to the farm) at Iyayu. The ancestors of each of the afinmi, the territorial units into which Iyayu was divided, were represented by one Ale'mo's'oko egun. During their appearance in 1981, they stalked through Iyayu in twos and threes threatening to beat young men and women wherever they were to be found in the town. Young people hid from them turning their dodges into a game. Older people gave the Ale'mo's'oko money. In olden days, it is said, this was done to drive these young people out of the settlement into the farms and in order to avoid being beaten, the young men and women could either seek refuge in the houses of certain elders with their permission, or run to the farms.

Because of the relationship between those who summoned the egun and the egun, they are generally conceived of as the property of specific groups or individuals. When it is claimed that it is the elders who bring the egun out, what is being referred to is the fact that the elders of these communities or groups control the egun who are their senior kin. The response to the question 'who is doing the egun?' was

awon agba lo ni -  
'it is the elders who have it'.

As as has been pointed out in the previous chapter, the Irare were the representatives of specific units of the community and in a sense, therefore, the egun belonged to the community as a whole.

In addition egun could be the property of wealthy individuals, as at Ilesa, although this seems to have been rare at Idoani and may have been an innovation of the nineteenth century (Peel 1983: 300). Egun belonging to individuals were usually brought out to honour an ancestor with whom the individual had a special affinity, but since egun were a source as well as an expression of power individuals also brought out egun to demonstrate their status in the community.

Whether they belonged to communities or individuals, egun could bring those who had them prestige and influence. News of an egun's achievements, such as their ability to cure ills or prevent disaster, or the strength of their curse, or the beauty of their appearance, travelled between settlements, even to settlements outside the Idoani group, and people travelled to see particular egun belonging to other communities, and to put requests to it.

Egun also featured in interstate relations. Leaders of communities often sent their egun to other communities as a form of tribute, to check that the receiving community held those sending the egun in the respect they deserved, or as an expression of their friendship. At Isewa, for example, Eko Baba Oloja was required to send at

least two egun to Alani, while from Ido-Ani, Alani would send his own egun to other settlements as an expression of his spiritual and political status. Relations between communities could depend, as we shall see, upon the way egun were treated.

### Orisa

According to the Sawe of Ilesa, who was a teacher at Idoani from 1921 - 1923, the people of Idoani did not pay much attention to the orisa which have been usually been regarded as the main component of Yoruba religious culture (Forde 1951: 29; Morton Williams 1964; Peel 1968). The attention which the orisa have received in the literature is probably due to the fact that superhuman beings with human personalities have been the main component in the religious traditions of Western Europe.

Most of the orisa at Idoani are aspects of the local environment although there are some which are described as having human characteristics. In the literature, it is claimed that the orisa number 400 or 401, or 600 or 601 (Bascom 1969: 77). These numbers are conventional, being meant to indicate that there are many orisa, too numerous to number precisely. The evidence from Idoani supports this contention. Each community had its own orisa. These orisa were such features of the local local environment as: bushes, rocks, hills, sources of water, or places with which communities had historical connections e.g. places from where they had come, or places where they stopped in

the course of their migration to the area. In addition to environmental orisa there is evidence that some pan-Yoruba orisa did feature in the religious culture of the settlements. The most important of these was Ogun.

Although Ogun featured in the religious culture of all the settlements, it was of the greatest importance at Ido-Ani and Isewa where it was associated with the Alani who is said to have brought it with him from Benin. At these two places, Ogun had to be propitiated by both communities at an annual odun called Ilagun, which is said to have involved human sacrifice. This odun had to take place before the new yams could be eaten. It was at this odun that the annual tribute of yams was brought from other settlements to Alani. Ilagun is said to have been the most important odun in the whole year celebrated by the entire population of the two settlements and there can be no doubt that his association with this cult greatly enhanced the authority of Alani.

Ogun has a special place among the orisa, especially of forest Yoruba (Ojo 1966: 96,171; Peel 1983: 22). It has been suggested that this is partly because the cult is so widespread among the Yoruba and partly because Ogun is said to be a descendant, like the Yoruba oba, of Oduduwa. According to the cosmological traditions of Idoani related to me at a meeting of babalawo from all quarters, however, the importance of Ogun is due to the fact that when Olodumare (the Supreme Being) created human reality he

gave it four things: the farmer; the hunter; the blacksmith and the diviner - agbe, olode, alagbede and babalawo - the four major occupations. Of these four, three: the hunter, the farmer and most especially the blacksmith, must bo Ogun in order to be able to persue their occupations without hindrance from the orisa. This is because all three must, in order to persue their occupations, have an intimate and therefore dangerous relationship with iron, the material aspect of Ogun which, although associated with bravery, opportunism, innovation and discovery, is also thought of as fierce, angry and vengeful (Barnes 1980; 7).

The claim that Alani brought the Ogun cult with him from Benin suggests that his rise to prominence in the area may be associated with the control of iron ore and the working of it. Ogun is far from marginal at Idoani as Barnes has suggested is usually the case (Barnes 1980). At Ido-Ani the Ogun cult was virtually a state religion. Even though the oral traditions accounting for socio-political structure make no reference to Alani's authority being in any way related to the cult, placing emphasis instead on his Benin origins, there can be no doubt that he derived considerable authority from his association with, and control of this important cult.

Even though Ilagun was dedicated to Ogun, the ancestors were also propitiated at the same time.

At Amusigbo, Iyayu, Isure and Ako, Ogun was variously associated with different lineages blacksmiths and non



specific groups of individual devotees.

Another pan-Yoruba orisa that featured in the religious culture of Idoani was Ifa, which is associated with divination. It seems likely that Ifa is a recent introduction into this area, as it was only rarely mentioned in the course of my enquiries by practising babalawo, some of who even asked me to buy the book in which the odu were written from Ile Ife, so that they might learn their secrets! Orunmila, the orisa of Ifa, was not mentioned at all in connection with socio-political organisation, and none of the individuals whose life histories I collected claimed Ifa or Orunmila as a family orisa. Osanyin, on the other hand, which is associated with herbal healing - *ewe ji ja* - and divination was quite common. This orisa is associated with specific *idi'le* and at Amusigbo, with the whole subquarter of Isua. This suggests that while Osanyin and perhaps other orisa of divination were inherited along with the right to the power of herbal healing, individuals entered into pacts with Ifa on their own, or with the assistance of more senior babalawo, in order to obtain its permission and assistance in the practice of, what is, the most lucrative branch of the divining profession.

A babalawo at Afo (see Map 3), said that he could do two other forms of divination which he referred to as *Awere* and *Seyi*. These are forms of divination involving a form of dried seeds and a series of short bamboo sticks woven

together respectively. Ifa, he said, is done only occasionally because it was very expensive. Whatever Ifa ordered, the client had to produce otherwise he would be in big trouble. With the others what they ordered was not usually so much, and nothing serious would befall the client who failed to carry out what was ordered.

Yet another of the pan-Yoruba orisa propitiated at Idoani was Sopona which is associated with smallpox (Idowu 1962: p95 - 100). It is said to have been the property of an idíle at Ako which was once smitten by a small pox epidemic sometime in the first half of the twentieth century. The cult was probably imported to cope with the crisis and dropped or allowed to fade into obscurity once the crisis was over. Whatever the case, propitiation of this orisa came to a complete halt when all the members of the family with which it was associated died, leaving no descendants to continue the association.

The orisa were propitiated on four levels, similar but not analogous to those at which the ancestors operated.

1. Orisa were propitiated at odun involving the whole of a settlement's community, e.g. Ogun at Ido-Ani. In addition there were public odun at which orisa associated with specific groups were propitiated on behalf of the whole community. The public odun of an orisa did not necessarily occur annually. Some occurred annually while others occurred at intervals of two or three years, or even

irregular intervals. The central figures in these public odun appear to have been the regular devotees or the lineage with which the orisa was associated, but many other members of the community were also involved in the proceedings. The purpose of the odun was not simply to propitiate the orisa on behalf of the whole community, but also to demonstrate the prestige and power of the orisa in an attempt to attract new devotees, and to give the cult group the opportunity to express their loyalty to the political authorities in the community. To do this the devotees would take their are - procession - with which they celebrated the odun to the residence of the head of their community. The public odun of the orisa associated with the oba or important ijoye were of special significance and were usually celebrated with the greatest amount of ceremony. This was because of the close identification of these individuals with specific orisa and the fact that the status of the oba or head of a community was often closely related to the status of the community.

2. Orisa were also propitiated by idi'le or agbo'le. At this level orisa were associated with specific families or compounds which would propitiate the orisa for their own benefit as well as on behalf of the whole community. The means by which families came to be associated with an orisa varied. In some instances the orisa was associated with the area from which the family had migrated, while in others the orisa was believed to have helped the family to

avoid a crisis etc. Within the family, a particular individual might specialise in the affairs of the orisa and regularly propitiate it on behalf of the family. It was to this person that individuals not of the family who wished to propitiate the orisa could turn for advice and assistance. Within the family however, it seems that the head of the cult was the head of the family, even though he was not necessarily the ritual expert of the cult.

3. Individuals propitiated orisa if they had been advised to do so either as the the result of a consultation through a babalawo, or as the result of advice from ancestors which had been communicated through the ba'ile. Some individuals were assigned to particular orisa either as the result of a commitment made by their mother during pregnancy in order to ensure safe delivery, or as the result of the advice of a babalawo or the ba'ile, or as a result of the circumstances in which the birth occurred. Individuals also sought involvement with orisa in order to achieve a particular objective, to avoid a disaster that had been 'foreseen' for them or to end a current one, or simply because they admired the group associated with an orisa. The individuals involvement with the orisa could simply consist of making sacrifice to the orisa or it could involve becoming a devotee of the orisa.

There were, it seems, various categories of devotees: those who made their sacrifice separately from other devotees, sharing the sacrifice with members of their

families; those who were members of groups of devotees associated with the orisa; and the alaworo who had entered into special relationships with orisa and were responsible for propitiating the orisa on behalf of the whole community and for tending the public shrines of the orisa. It is not clear what the difference between alaworo and regular devotees are.

4. Finally orisa were propitiated by groups of individuals whose occupations were associated with specific orisa where such groups formed some kind of association, and by individuals pursuing particular occupations. Although today there are, in the quarters of Idoani, associations of hunters, diviners and healers, and preparations underway for the formation of one for blacksmiths, it is not clear that there were such occupational associations in the period predating the introduction of Islam and Christianity. Today each of the existing associations is associated with particular orisa, hunters for example being associated with an orisa called Uja. The association of healers and diviners called Egbe Ewedaiyepo, was formed in 1953 and has its headquarters at Ibadan. Among the orisa associated with divination are Ifa, Osanyin and Ogirigbo.

Blacksmiths were associated with Ogun. Their propitiation of Ogun however, was not solely to safeguard their persons and ensure successful blacksmithing. In their forges blacksmiths also propitiated Ogun on behalf

of the community, and could elicit from Ogun what it wanted from the community. At blacksmiths' forges diagnosis and remedies could also be had for a variety of illnesses.

Not all communities, families, individuals or professional associations propitiated orisa. It would seem that whether or not they did depended upon historical circumstances and the whim of the individual. As Barber has pointed out,

... it is here that the elements of individual personality, choice and man-god reciprocity (which characterised Yoruba religion and is a central impulse to devotion) are most apparent (Barber 1981).

Among the 44 life histories researched for this study (see Source V) of the 18 who could give details of their fathers' religious practices, 4 stated emphatically that their fathers had had no personal or family orisa.

The propitiation of specific orisa was not confined to one group or individual, it could take place on any combination of levels. It seems unlikely, however, that orisa which had no individual devotees or cult group of any kind would be propitiated by the community as a whole.

Some orisa were represented by effigies which were kept as part of an individual's personal property, at shrines within the house for members of the house to use, or at shrines accessible to the whole community.

Propitiation of the orisa required sacrifice, and as

Idowu has pointed out each orisa generally had its own 'tastes' which tended to reflect its character and determined the form of sacrifice (Idowu 1962: p118). Sacrifice involved the item sacrificed being shared between devotees or those who an individual devotee could persuade to join him in partaking of the sacrifice. The importance of commensality in making sacrifice to the orisa seems to be underlined by the fact that making sacrifice is referred to as j'ebo - eat sacrifice, ebo being the noun derived from the verb bo - sacrifice or worship (Incidentally, ebo is also the term used in modern Yoruba for an all night party!).

In addition to the orisa mentioned so far, there is said to have been a phenomenon associated with the pan-Yoruba orisa: Esu. This phenomenon may, however, have been an aspect of Idoani's ancestral cults. Outside every house at the old sites, there was a pile of stones which constituted a shrine. This shrine was referred to by informants as Esu, through whom, along with Orunmila, human beings can approach Olodumare. According to Peel, the phenomenon is common at Ilesa and throughout eastern Yoruba areas (Peel 1983: 172). With the advent of Christianity, unfortunately, Esu was translated as the Devil of Christian European tradition. Since the Christians taught that all aspects of Yoruba religious culture were the work of the devil, it is possible that the term is used to refer to these shrines in this context

rather than meaning that they were the pan Yoruba 'trickster' orisa which has been discussed in the literature (Idowu 1962, Pelton 1980). The piles of stones which were described as Esu are said to have been similar to those which exist today at the oki at Isure where the shrines are said to have been most numerous. The oki is said to represent the unity of the quarter and to possess mystical power. It is here that community meetings are held. It is possible therefore, that the shrines outside each house represented the unity of the household, and that their being outside the house as opposed to inside the room of the ba'ile is somehow related to the more gerontocratic and therefore egalitarian structure of Isure society. Perhaps it is significant, in this context, that during fieldwork, it was observed that whenever the household slaughtered an animal to celebrate an occasion, the animal's throat was slit outside the house and its blood allowed to run into the earth where the shrine might once have been.

The boundaries between the components of religion that I have used to describe the religious culture of Idoani are by no means as distinct as their description so far may imply. The egun phenomenon, for example, seems to have straddled the boundaries of both the ancestors and the orisa, for in this form, the ancestors are more like the orisa; specific entities to which individuals could appeal directly. Egun also appeared at the annual odun of



some orisa eg. Ogun, although it is not clear what their function or status was on such occasions.

Despite the differences in the spiritual character as well as the socio-political significance of these components of Idoani's religious culture, the demands individuals made of the elements were essentially undifferentiated and concerned health, wealth and protection from misfortune.

What emphasis was placed on ancestor propitiation and orisa propitiation appears to have varied from settlement to settlement according to the type of authority which dominated the socio-political structure of the settlements. These variations reflect the fact that different types of authority were sanctioned by different aspects of religious culture and are a contradiction of Peel's contention in Aladura, that traditional Yoruba religion was only loosely articulated with social organisation.

At Iyayu and Isure, where the dominant type of authority was gerontocratic emphasis was placed on the ancestors, while there seems to have been a greater emphasis on orisa at Ido-Ani where the dominant type of authority was patrimonial. The Sawe of Ilesa who noted the relative insignificance of orisa at Idoani was, in fact, stationed at Iyayu, and it is likely that he would have seen much more evidence of orisa propitiation had he been stationed at Ido-Ani. The evidence collected

indicates that while orisa were propitiated at community level at Ido-Ani, at Iyayu, although orisa were associated with some specific ebiani/id'ile and or particular individuals, they were of little significance at the community level. Furthermore, the orisa of both Isure and Iyayu were more often associated with features of the environment.

At Owani, the annual odun of the orisa Ogun was of great importance and is associated with the authority of Alani.

At Amusigbo orisa were associated with specific sections or subquarters of the community. Significantly, however, the most important odun at Amusigbo, in which all the subquarters were involved was Oro, the odun associated with the generic ancestors. Like the failure of any of the subquarter heads to gain control of the whole community, this probably reflects the failure of any of the orisa cults to gain community wide significance. For although members of the different subquarters join in the odun of other subquarters as spectators or guests, it seems that it was only the spiritual authority of Oro which could be accepted by the whole community without compromising the status of any subquarter to another.

The differential emphasis on ancestors and orisa is also reflected in the greater number of egun which appear at Isure and Iyayu where the dominant type of authority is gerontocratic. The egun which appeared between April 1980

and June 1981 at Isure and Iyayu are further evidence of the difference in the orientation of these two quarters.

Table 5: Elements of Religious Culture according to Quarter

AKO	Owa Shopona, Sango, Ogun, Osanyin	Community shrine Orisa of idi'le
AMUSIGBO	Ijesu, Oro Ode, Osanyin, Ogirigbo Ogun Aila, Okunmun, Omibi	Community odun Orisa of subquarters Non specific orisa Non specific environmental orisa
IDO-ANI	Oro Kokofe  Uja Ogun, Orisa Oko Esu, Sango, Osse, Ota Okuru  Abiye	Community odun Ancestral of constituency Orisa of hunters Community Orisa cults Non specific orisa Non specific environmental orisa Unspecified element of idi'le
ISEWA	Oro, Arede Ogun Isuagu, Orele  Igeje, Oyemi, Epare	Community odun Community orisa cult Non specific environmental orisa Unspecified elements
ISURE	Aloro Okirikpe,  Osanyin Ogun, Ifa, Osanyin Kokoro, Eku, Oriwo  Goke	Community odun Lineage ancestral egun/cult Orisa of idi'le Non specific orisa Non specific environmental orisa Unspecified element
IYAYU	Alemosoko, Egunle, Ijogbo, Ogun Sango, Ogun Odogbe, Ogbo Ode, Osse, Okerie, Otaloro  Okeku	Community odun Non specific orisa " Non specific environmental orisa Unspecified element

NB. Community odun are those associated with ancestral elements. Non specific pan Yoruba and environmental Orisa which do not belong to specific id'ile and have no community significance were, it seems, propitiated directly by anybody

in the community. The unspecified elements reflect the fact that the classificatory categories discussed above do not represent the totality of Idoani's religious culture.

At Iyayu, where all basis of group identification was undermined in favour of the age grade structures, the egun which appeared - Alemosoko and Ijogbo - were representatives of the ancestors generally. A specified number appeared representing each of the different ebiani/afinmi dressed alike and acting together.

At Isure on the other hand, where lineage organisation was more significant in the political structure, the egun of the different lineages were quite distinct from one another and appeared at different times. Okirikpe, which came out at during Easter 1980, was the property of the specific lineage which brought it out.

This correspondence between the socio-political structure and the emphasis on particular elements of religious culture is, a reflection of the close relationship which exists between 'man-god' relations and human relations.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Historical Watershed

This chapter describes real historical processes rather than the structural principles which have been the concern of the previous chapters. More specifically, its aims are to expand on the regional and historical contexts in which the process of change at Idoani occurred and to use the analytical tools developed in the previous section to explore the process of change in the pre-Islamic and pre-Christian period

The nineteenth century was a watershed in the history of Idoani because: the settlements were involved in a series of major wars which resulted in large movements of population; the two 'world' religions were introduced to the area and the settlements became the property of the Royal Niger Company which would eventually turn its 'holdings' over to the British colonial government.

It is with the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war which was fought between 1870 and 1880 that the people of Idoani associate the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. As we shall see, this war did have important consequences for the history of Idoani. Although this chapter will deal with the incorporation of Idoani into colonial Nigeria, its emphasis is on the endogenous social dynamics in this period, and therefore on the events leading up to the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, the war itself and the consequences

of that war for socio-political structure and religious culture at Idoani.

#### Prelude to the end of an era

The wars in which Idoani was involved during the nineteenth centuries were of three types: there were wars with states with expansionist ambitions; with their neighbours; and with what it has been suggested were a 'new breed' of independent war lords, the ologun whose main concern was with increasing the size of their personal following and wealth through raids on other settlements (Oroge 1971; 90ff). In all of these wars, the Idoani were on the defensive but it was the wars in the latter category which had the most profound consequences for Idoani.

According to informants, the first war in which the Idoani were engaged during the nineteenth century was with the Nupe (or Tapa). These oral traditions claim that the war was not a Jihad. The Tapa were not concerned with bringing Islam to the area but with capturing people. Evidence from individuals' life histories indicates that some people were captured from Idoani as a result of these wars but the traditions of Idoani claim that the Nupe were driven off.

Nupe invasions into north-eastern Yorubaland began in the early nineteenth century and it was their involvement in resistance to the Nupe, Akintoye suggests, which made it impossible for Akoko leaders to answer Fabunmi's call

in 1878 for the peoples of Ijesa, Ekiti and Akoko to join together and get rid of the Ibadan who had come into the area in 1854 to defend it against the Ilorin, and had subsequently made themselves at home (Akintoye 1971: 91).

Some time before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, the Idoani also fought two battles with their neighbours and traditional rivals the Owo. According to the traditions, the Owo were attempting to raid Idoani for people and in the course of the battle many people were killed (1). These wars are often cited as a reason for the hostility between the two towns evident in archival records, petitions from Idoani to various governments and other documents.

#### The collapse of Oyo and the repercussions for Eastern Yorubaland

For the best part of three centuries, the Oyo Empire in the north-west had maintained a kind of order among the many and various states of which Yorubaland had consisted by subjecting a large proportion of the area, while in the east some kind of order had been maintained by the Benin Empire. The political crisis brought about by the collapse of Oyo at the centre of the empire in the west resulted in an intense scramble to acquire the human resources of settlements like Idoani which, their traditions suggest, were beyond even the periphery of the empire.

The decline of the Oyo empire saw the rise of Ibadan

which was to succeed, where Oyo had failed, in extending its influence to north-eastern Yorubaland including Idoani.

Initially Ibadan was occupied as a military headquarters for marauding expeditions and defence (Johnson 1921: 244), but as those fleeing from the Ilorin sought refuge there, the population increased and Ibadan developed into a permanent settlement.

From Ibadan and Ijaye (another town to which refugees from towns sacked by the Ilorin had fled), the Oyo defended their former territories against the Fulani at Ilorin, the Ijaye checking Ilorin advancement in the west and Ibadan their advancement in the east. As Ibadan and Ijaye attempted to drive off the Ilorin, each also nursed ambitions to re-establish the old order under their own leadership.

In 1840 the Ibadan checked the Ilorins' drive southward with a major victory at Osogbo (Akintoye 1971: 34). The Ilorin turned east into the Igbomina, Ekiti and Ijesa and succeeded in conquering most of the Igbomina settlements, but met with little success in the Ijesa, Ekiti and Akoko countries around Idoani, mainly because theirs was a mounted army unable to penetrate the rugged hills and thick forest, harbouring a virulent species of tsetse fly, which characterised the geography of these areas (Ojo 1966: 112). Only a few Ekiti towns were subjected, but the Ilorins' attempted invasion seems to have provided the excuse for the Ibadan to move into these



areas.

The character of social and political organisation at Ibadan was determined by the independent ologun who, with their followers flocked to Ibadan from all over Yorubaland. The status of any ologun in the community at Ibadan depended upon his military achievements and the size of his following (Oroge 1971: 96). These two factors were closely linked, for a large proportion of the ologun's armies were staffed by soldier slaves captured in war as well as by young men from all over Yorubaland, including the north east, who applied to join the army of the successful ologun. These armies which formed the households of the ologun, were fed and serviced by the women of the household and clients of the ologun. The women were the wives of the ologun and of his men many of whom had also been captured in war and marauding expeditions. The clients of the ologun were people who attached themselves to the household of the ologun and gave various services in return for the protection of the patron (Oroge 1971: 158, see also Awe 1964).

Having ousted the Ilorin in the war of 1854 - 55, many of the adventurers who constituted the Ibadan fighting forces were not ready to settle down peacefully at Ibadan. Some of them stayed on in Ekiti after the campaign against the Ilorin, in pursuit of personal fortune and glory with which they might later claim political status at Ibadan, while others were appointed

ajele - agents of Ibadan who administered the outlying territories of the empire, protecting Ibadan interests in the area and arranging the collection and transportation of tribute (Awe 1964).

Idoani came under the authority of Ayorinde, an Ibadan ologun who in the process of establishing his own following had been attached to the larger household of Chief Ogunmola at Ibadan. At the end of the campaign against the Ilorin, Ayorinde stayed on in the area until having conquered and looted a few Ekiti towns, he returned to Ibadan with his hands full, intoxicated with his own achievement. The celebration of his success on his return was lavish and young men flocked to his standard. But not long after his return, Ayorinde was arraigned by the civil authorities for beating his wife to death and told to die. This offence provided the excuse for the authorities at Ibadan to get rid of a potential threat to their own authority at the settlement. Having begged hard for his life and surrendered everything he had recently gained in an attempt to persuade the authorities to spare his life Ayorinde was deserted by his following. His patron Chief Ogunmola advised him to flee from the town and go into exile in the area from which he had recently returned.

In 1856 then, Ayorinde returned to Aiyede in Ekiti with just 12 followers, as the guest of Esugbayi, an Ekiti ologun whom the Ibadan had rescued from Otun when it was beseiged by Ilorin (2). Esugbayi helped Ayorinde to establish himself at Irun, from where he proceeded to wage

war on surrounding settlements. Eventually he located himself at Ogbagi a few miles south east of Irun, but not without some resistance from the people already there (see Map 2). At first, the Ogbagi summoned a powerful war lord to help them defend their territory. With this assistance, the Ogbagi nearly succeeded in driving Ayorinde off. But, with the help of Esugbayi, Ayorinde eventually outmanoeuvred the powerful war lord. The Ogbagi then sent to Rabbah in Nupe and to Ilorin for assistance. With their aid the Ogbagi drove Ayorinde off no less than three times and he suffered great losses. But Ayorinde rallied and eventually took Ogbagi (Johnson 1921: 322). Ayorinde then moved to Irun from where for the next ten years he established himself as

lord of the Akoko and the Idoani. He opened a caravan way to Owo through which he obtained ammunition from Benin. He was kind to all Oyos who flocked to his standard; but he absolutely forbade the introduction of intoxicating liquor into that country. They might buy whatever they liked slaves and booty. He himself undertook to supply all ammunition required for their raids. But no one must think of deserting him; in order to ensure this, he posted men in all the exits of his territory; any Oyo man caught escaping lost all he had caught and returned home as he came, but any Ekiti or Ilas similarly caught were seized with their slaves and sold to Owo (Johnson 1921: 322).

As he grew older Ayorinde longed to return to Ibadan and in 1872 he did, but only after he had waged war on his friends the Irun. On his arrival at Ibadan, he found that most of his former companions and fellow soldiers had died and that his subordinates had, by promotion through the

ranks risen to become the civil authorities of Ibadan. Ayorinde was honoured with the civil title Osi, but he died not long after his return.

The fact that Ayorinde was awarded a title on his return to Ibadan suggests that while in exile he had maintained contact with the authorities at Ibadan and that he may in fact have been acting as ajele for the area. As ajele he may have been channelling supplies obtained through Benin to Ibadan and he may have been responsible for ensuring that Oyos in the area did not develop, as he had done, into forces which could challenge the delicate balance of power at Ibadan.

The Ibadan had entered the Ijesa, Ekiti and Akoko areas on the excuse that they had come to oust the Ilorin, but they had also taken the opportunity to seek out new trade routes and to pursue their expansionist ambitions taking advantage as they did so, of existing rivalries in the area. In 1860, the rivalry between the Ibadan and the Ijaye finally led to war and the majority of the Ibadan forces in the Ijesa and Ekiti areas were called away to fight this war (Akintoye 1971: 53). The war lasted for 5 years during which time many settlements took the opportunity their absence presented to shed the yoke of Ibadan. The leader in this campaign was Ilesa, which not only regained control of some of the settlements that had been Ijesa territories, but set out to achieve their own age old expansionist ambitions. To meet the challenge of

the Ibadan and to persue these ambitions, a new class of militia was emerging in the settlements of northern and eastern areas of Yorubaland who had been bred by Ibadan or Ibadan's example. An epitome of the new breed, who was later to become an example of the heights to which they could aspire was Ogedemgbe who together with Aduloju launched the historically critical attack on Idoani.

Ogedemgbe too was, though in a slightly different way from his Ibadan contemporaries, a product of the Ibadan system. As a young man, he had been taken in one of Ibadans earliest invasions of the Ijesa country into captivity to Ibadan. There, like many other young men from the Ekiti and Ijesa countries he had learnt the art of war and of military organisation. In the end he had managed to effect his escape and as soon as he had arrived at Ilesa he had begun, in true Ibadan fashion to collect a military following of his own..... Ogedemgbe had soon become the greatest single military leader in the Ijesa country (Akintoye 1971: 59).

At Ado Ekiti, the largest settlement in Ekiti, the responsibility for the defence of the kingdom had fallen upon Aduloju who, like Ogedemgbe had been trained at Ibadan.

The ologun represented a serious threat to the structure of authority in the established order, particularly, in those communities where the emphasis was on gerontocratic authority. In particular it was their lawlessness within their home towns which made them very unpopular with the traditional authorities. According to Peel, Akintoye has probably exaggerated the extent of co-operation between ologun and obas (Peel 1983: 79, 84). Nevertheless, the ologun, were the only real defence the Ekiti, Ijesa and Akoko had against the Ibadan.

In 1870 after a long siege, the Ibadan entered and sacked Ilesa. Ogedemgbe was offered safe conduct out of Ilesa in return for which the Ibadan would be allowed into Ilesa to do with the settlement and its people as they pleased. Ogedemgbe and some of his followers fled eastward, hiding in the hilly forests of the Ekiti country from where they gathered men and resources to make occasional attacks on the Ibadan.

After an attempt to disrupt the Ibadan's arrangements for Ilesa, Ogedemgbe was pursued to his camp at Ita Ogbolu. The Deji of Akure in whose kingdom Ogedemgbe was about to be humiliated sent out a call for ologun to come to his aid. Among those who were sent to answer the call was Aduloju of Ado who came with his personal army. With the aid of those who answered the Deji's call, Ogedemgbe was able to inflict heavy losses on the Ibadan, so that eventually, the Ibadan leader was forced to return to Ibadan in disgrace.

In a bid to re-establish their authority in the area, the Ibadan launched an attack on Ado Ekiti, but as soon as the Ibadan forces had returned home having sacked Ado and a some other Ekiti towns, the alliance of ologun from different places which had crushed the Ibadan at Igbo Alawun began to attack settlements throughout Ijesa and Ekiti which had remained loyal to the Ibadan. The ologun then began a series of campaigns to establish their authority in the settlements in the Akoko and Idoani areas. With the departure of Ayorinde these settlements

were now undefended by Ibadan militia but some may have remained loyal to Ibadan. Even if they did not claim allegiance to Ibadan, few of the settlements appear to have been ready to capitulate to Ogedemgbe and Aduloju.

#### Prosperity at Idoani as a consequence of war

According to oral traditions at Idoani, despite the wars Idoani had been involved in, the period preceeding the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war was one of considerable prosperity. The population was large and increasing, and at the centre of the settlements there was an important market called Oja Gbamo, which attracted people from Owo, Akoko and north-western Edo settlements.

Idoani has not aquired the reputation of Owo in the literature as centre of political and commercial significance, but according to Chief Ologbosere of Oke Ido quarter, before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, Idoani was bigger than Owo. At Ido-Ani alone, there were at least 12 quarters which are no longer represented in the Idoani community (3).

There is no evidence of when Oja Gbamo, the market at the centre of the Idoani settlements, was founded, but it is said by elderly informants in all quarters and in the settlements of Imeri and Ifira, to have been a large and important market serving north-eastern Yorubaland and north western Edo areas (see Map 3). According to the informants, the market developed into a large and important trading centre because it was the first point at

which goods arriving from Benin became available to people in the interior of Akoko. The market is said to have been visited by traders from all over Owo, Akoko and from as far afield as Ilorin (4). In the minds of many informants, it was this prosperity which attracted Ogedemgbe and Aduloju into the area.

The prosperity of the area is likely to have been a direct consequence of an increase in the volume of trade passing through the area as a result of the new caravan route Ayorinde had opened through Owo to Benin. Furthermore it is likely that the establishment of Ayorinde's authority in the area had also increased political stability throughout Idoani and Akoko, leading to a greater coherence in political relations between the settlements and making the passage of traders and trade goods easier. If Ayorinde's presence had brought political stability, it was probably because he represented to the fragmented communities in the area a superior external authority to which disputes could be referred and settled peacefully. In addition, it is a sad reality that war itself, which involved producing commodities for sale to enable the importation of munitions, was itself a stimulant to economic growth (Awe 1968; Peel 1983).

The prosperity the area enjoyed may have inclined the settlements of Idoani towards loyalty to the Ibadan, because under Ayorinde it had prospered both economically



and politically.

Not all Idoani's prosperity in this period was the result of the activities of Ayorinde in the area, or of the expansion in trade. All six settlements benefitted too, from the influx of refugees fleeing from the turmoil in Ekiti and Ijesa west of Idoani, and from Nupe and Ilorin invasions in northern Akoko. These refugees may have been attracted to the area by the political stability and economic prosperity the settlements were enjoying. They swelled the populations of the settlements, enhancing the prestige of Idoani in relation to other communities, making it an increasingly formidable power base in north-eastern Yorubaland. It has already been noted that local traditions relating to this period claim that Ido-Ani was larger than that of Owo which according to 1963 Census had a population of approximately 89,693 as compared with a population of approximately 14,424 recorded in the same census for all of Idoani's 7 quarters.

Despite the prosperity of the area and the size of Ido-Ani, the Alani in the period preceeding the war does not seem to have represented a strong central authority able to reap the benefits the area was enjoying from trade and the influx of refugees, or to unite the settlements into one political entity. It is said, for instance, that when in this period Alani installed his own choice among the contestants for an Amusigbo title, the Amusigbo mounted a serious rebellion against Alani which forced him to remove his own candidate and approve the installation

of the popular candidate. Furthermore there is the fact that Oja Gbamo, the areas important market and was located at the centre of the settlements closer to Iyayu and Amusigbo than to Ido-Ani.

#### The Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war

Various explanations exist of why Ogedemgbe and Aduloju attacked Idoani. According to local traditions, they came for the settlement's human and material wealth.

Akintoye suggests that Aduloju and Ogedemgbe attacked Idoani as part of a campaign to destroy Ibadan power in the east (Akintoye 1971: 64). While Johnson claims that Ogedemgbe sent to Ibadan before his campaign against Idoani and the Are sent him a war standard and a contingent of:

... his slaves and volunteers among the restless and warlike youths of Ibadan (Johnson 1921: 443),

presumably for his war against the Idoani. Johnson's contention is that the relationship between Ogedemgbe and Ibadan was still close, enough to make him reluctant to join the alliance of Ekiti and Ijesa ologun who were taking the opportunity of the pressure on Ibadan forces from the Ijebu at home, and from the Ilorin with who they were engaged at Ofa, to drive them out of Ijesa and Ekiti. The alliance knew that because of these other commitments, the Ibadan would only be able to send one third of their army to meet any challenge they should present (Johnson 1921: 442).

Akintoye has produced evidence to show that from the middle of 1878 to the end of 1879, Ogedemgbe was in fact fighting

... one of his most difficult battles ever, "the seige of Idoani" (Akintoye 1971: 113)

in the course of which he suffered heavy losses.

Akintoye's argument is that this was why he did not join the alliance confronting the Ibadan at Imesi Igbodo.

Having crossed swords with the Ibadan on several occasions, Akintoye's claim is that Ogedemgbe was attempting to acquire the men and supplies he knew would be needed to ensure a successful outcome from any confrontation with the Ibadan.

More recently Peel, questioning both these contentions, has produced evidence which indicates that Ogedemgbe was not the kind of patriot Akintoye argues he was (Peel 1983; 84). Peel's interpretation of of events makes it is far more likely that in his attack on Idoani Ogedemgbe was more concerned with increasing his own power and prestige than with the campaign against Ibadan. That he was in pursuit of wealth is supported by these local traditions which claim Ogedemgbe was attracted to Idoani by "the coral and numerous beautiful women" for which the area is said to have been renowned. This reference to coral may indicate that it was to gain control of the trade route Ayorinde had opened through Owo to Benin that Ogedemgbe and Aduloju attacked Idoani. The reference to beautiful women, on the other hand, suggests that the large

populations of Idoani were also an attraction.

The material and human wealth of Idoani made it an attractive target but also a formidable opponent and the defence of the settlements was robust. As Akintoye has pointed out, Ogedemgbe spent over a year fighting the Idoani before he eventually crushed them and left to join the Ekitiparapo at Imesi Igbodo.

Together Ogedemgbe and Aduloju inflicted serious punishment on the Idoani. Some local traditions claim that as many as nine out of every ten able bodied men were carried off. Women and children were also taken, so that whole settlements were deserted. Those who were not captured fled to wherever they believed they might find refuge. According to Asabia and Adegbesan

large sections of the Ido people sought refuge with their relations at Owo or Ipele, Ako Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu on the other hand took flight in the opposite direction - northward or eastward (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 9).

Local accounts of the war indicate that its effects on the different settlements of Idoani varied.

According to Chief Ologbosere the head of Oke Ido quarter:

All Ido-Ani used to be bigger than Iyayu. The house where Ogedemgbe and Aduloju stayed for three years was close to the present location of Oke Ido. Ogedemgbe first came and familiarised himself with the people of the area, and at the end of three years he called people to settle the fight between them at Oja Gbamo, there he had his men rounded up as many people as possible. An Isure man attempted to kill him, but Ogedemgbe had used an ogun which made it difficult for anybody to hold him. The Iyayu fought with Ogedemgbe but Isure looked on as if

they were in collusion with Ogedemgbe because they put stones instead of gunpowder in their guns.

The references to the Iyayu and the Isure in this account suggests that they were the main protagonists in the conflict with the two ologun, or, at least, that they were expected to be.

According to Mrs. Folayan the wife of the Odion of Idosi, whose father was a jagun and used to tell stories about the wars:

When the settlements were separate, a visitor came to Isure in search of a wife. The Isure were not prepared to allow him to marry there, and became so annoyed with the stranger that they planned to kill him. The visitor discovered the plot however and he ran to Ogedemgbe to tell him that there was a land where they had no guns or axes and that all they knew how to use was the cutlass. Even though this was not true, the information brought Ogedemgbe to Isure. When they heard that Ogedemgbe was coming, all the quarters, which were separate then, began preparing for war.

According to Chief Arala of Amusigbo, the head of the 'Native Doctors' association called Ewedaiyepo, and Chief Olosunla, also of Amusigbo, the Ogedemgbe and Aduloju war entered Idoani through Isure and Iyayu but not through Amusigbo. As a result the people of these settlements suffered most and were taken away in the greatest numbers, but very few were taken from Amusigbo.

According to Chief Alamusi of Amusigbo, with Ogedemgbe and Aduloju came Asa from Ita Itagbolu near Akure. These ologun made their camps near Isure farms.

Alamusi's father was captured in this war and taken to Ado Ekiti.

According to Chief Asewa of Isewa the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war entered the Idoani area through the witchcraft of some people. Ogedemgbe promised the people many things but nevertheless he carried them off to Ilesa.

That large sections of the Ido-Ani fled to Owo and Ipele may seem curious given the traditions claiming that Ido-Ani had been at war with Owo not long before. Although there had been a history of rivalry and two wars between Ido-Ani and the Owo, Alanis of Ido-Ani and the title holders in the families at Ido-Ani which traced their origins to Benin have been careful to maintain some connection with Owo because it is through their connection with Benin that they have legitimized their authority at Ido-Ani and claimed authority over Idoani as a whole.

Owo had been, at various stages in its history, an outpost of the Benin Empire, at the centre of which, was an extremely powerful and highly centralized obaship that controlled much of the trade into the interior as far as Owo. Owo traditions maintain, however, that Owo princes were sent to Benin to be trained, only because the oba of Benin was a 'senior brother' of the Olowo and because there was a friendly relationship between the two kingdoms.

Relations between Owo, Ipele and Ido-Ani therefore

were based on historic kinship which had been strengthened through the years by trade and intermarriage between the people of the two settlements. With the outbreak of war, it was these ties which the Ido-Ani exploited for refuge. As those who had come from Owo to share the prosperity of Ido-Ani returned, because of the war, to their original homes at Owo and Ipele, they were accompanied by large sections of the Ido-Ani.

The Isewa were relatively hidden in the hills, but their traditions claim that they suffered heavy losses in the war. With the departure of the Ido-Ani, the Isewa would have had little or no defence against the invading forces.

The proximity of Ako to Isure, for which there is evidence that large numbers of people were captured, meant that it too suffered heavy losses.

Asabia and Adegbesan have suggested that: 'members of the other communities either had no where to go or took flight in the opposite direction - northward or eastward' (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 9). It was however, only very few sections of Amusigbo that had either the option or the inclination to flee, for none of the northern settlements offered the security which those fleeing from Ido-Ani expected to enjoy at Owo in the company of 'kin', and under the protection of Benin. The peoples of the settlements to the east were not Yoruba speaking and could

only be considered a refuge in the last resort. Apart from the threat of invasion by the Nupe under which the Akoko, north of Idoani lived and from where many of the groups which made up Amusigbo had originally migrated, there was also the near certain prospect that if Ogedemgbe and Aduloju met with success at Idoani, they would follow those fleeing north in their quest for eru and booty, which in fact they eventually did. Furthermore, there was a difference in the character of the relations between the settlements north and east of Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu, and those between Ido-Ani, Owo and Ipele. Traditions describing the migration of people from these settlements to Amusigbo invariably describe the migration as being the result of a dispute, making it likely that these settlements had been concerned with establishing their independence from their original homes rather than with emphasising it, as was the case with sections at Ido-Ani which claimed a Benin origin. Although there is likely to have been a certain amount of trade passing through these areas and perhaps some intermarriage between families at Amusigbo and those in settlements north and east of Idoani, few of the settlements could easily absorb a large number of migrants without seriously disturbing the delicate balance of power which, as at Idoani, characterised them. The Amusigbo, may have fled to their farms, but it seems unlikely that there was very much fleeing beyond these points.

For the Isure and Iyayu, the choices were even more



limited. As we have already seen, much of Ekiti, from where the bulk of the Isure had migrated was in the hands of the Ibadan ologun or at war, one settlement with another. Like those of Amusigbo, many of the origin traditions of the different families from different places which make up Isure suggest that the original migration may have been made as the result of a quarrel. More significant, however, as an explanation of why the choices of Isure and Iyayu were so limited when confronted with the ologun and why so many Isure and Iyayu were captured in the war, is the structure of authority in these two settlement. The fact that it was a council of elders that governed the settlements meant that:

1. It was not necessary for them to maintain connections with authorities in other settlements. Their authority being legitimised according to a religious ideology which vested authority in elders. This all-pervasive ideology about the nature of the natural order, required no external legitimation and therefore no strong ties existed with other settlements to which the Isure could flee, as had done large sections of Ido-Ani.

2. The conduct of negotiations and the actual battles would have been made cumbersome by the pace at which the elders who made up the council could decide what move to make next.

3. Their stance against the two ologun was probably

motivated in part by the anger and indignation they felt that comparatively young men like Ogedemgbe and Aduloju should dare to challenge their authority. This might explain why they chose to send all their forces - the age grades whose task it was to constitute the settlements fighting forces - against the ologun, believing that the power age had endowed them with would ensure that they would be victorious.

Both Isure and Iyayu suffered heavy losses early in the war. The stronger emphasis in the political structure at Iyayu on gerontocratic authority made them even more predisposed to the tendencies outlined above. In addition, the Iyayu were more vulnerable because Sosan from where all the Iyayu migrated was a relatively homogeneous community. The original migrants from Sosan to Iyayu, the two hunters Asowo and Amojò, are said to have migrated to Idoani in search of good hunting, suggesting that their departure had been due to pressure on natural resources in the area from which they came. It seems reasonable to suppose, therefore, that those who later joined the two hunters left Sosan for the same reasons, and that this made it an unattractive refuge, while its homogeneity made it an unlikely one.

Both Iyayu and Isure, with their emphasis on gerontocratic authority, placed greater emphasis in their moral and religious philosophies on the fact that the ancestors and the elders are guardians of the social and

moral order. The Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war therefore presented a greater challenge to the political authority of the elders in these communities, who were also the embodiment of legitimate religious authority, than it did to the title holders who exercised authority in Ido-Ani and Amusigbo, some of whose ancestors had acquired their own authority in their communities in ways similar to those now being employed by the ologun against them. The absence of oba and title holders at Isure and Iyayu probably made them seem to be legitimate and easy targets to the two ologun.

In 1879, having crushed the Idoani, Ogedemgbe returned to Itagbolu, and soon after joined the association of ologun from all over Ijesa, Ekiti and Akoko, at Imesi Igbodo.

with his large army which had been greatly swollen by his recent conquest in the Idoani district (Akintoye 1971: 117).

It was this association between ologun at Imesi Igbodo which came to be known as the Ekitiparapo.

Aduloju, meanwhile, stationed himself at Imesi Lasigidi and continued, according to the traditions of Idoani which claim that the battle lasted over 6 years, to wage war in the Akoko area and to conduct raids into Idoani.

Aduloju's failure to join the Ekitiparapo despite continuous appeals from his former comrade Ogedemgbe, and a campaign against him waged by some young ologun who were

outraged by his apparent lack of concern, was a great disappointment (Akintoye 1971: 117). It is possible, however, that he made a major contribution to the war effort by continuing to send contingents of men and supplies from Akoko to Imesi Igbodo to fight against the Ibadan. According to Johnson

the Ekitiparapos....fighting as they were for their independence, went on strengthening their forces by drawing recruits from the utmost bounds of the country behind them throughout the Ijesa, Ekiti, Efon, Yagba and Akoko countries, right on to Egbe (Johnson 1921: 448).

The majority of those captured from Idoani by Aduloju were from Isure who eventually settled in Ekiti. It seems that they returned there after fighting at Imesi Igodo because of the higher status of Ekiti settlements to that of the settlements from which they had originally been captured. Furthermore many of Aduloju's captives were women who were married to Ekiti men and had children in these places.

A large proportion of the men Ogedemgbe took with him to Imesi Igbodo from Idoani were Iyayu. There they fought with such vigour, that 'Iyayu' became a term used to describe soldiers of outstanding ability. Ogedemgbe had during his assault on north-eastern Yorubaland, reached at least as far as Sosan from where he is also said to have captured many people. It is possible, therefore, that some of those referred to as Iyayu at Imesi Igbodo were in fact from Sosan, but because they spoke the same language

as the Iyayu who fought a fierce battle with Ogedemgbe, and whose name therefore was more familiar, they were assumed to be - and therefore described as - Iyayu. Many of these soldiers eventually accompanied Ogedemgbe back to Ilesa. Some even took up important positions in his household or at settlements set aside for his eru. According to Chief Agbayewa of Owani quarter, his father who was captured by Ogedemgbe, spent some time at Imesi Igbodo and then, at the end of the war, accompanied Ogedemgbe back to Ilesa where he became his personal tailor, as well as a personal doctor, sewing agbada for him and preparing ogun for him. Eventually, Ogedemgbe appointed him ajele at a strategically important settlement called Iperindo (on which see Peel 1983: 51, 73, 82, 166-7).

The fact that most of the Idoani who settled in Ekiti, from where Aduloju hailed, were from Isure suggests that the Iyayu were the first to suffer major losses as a result of the war, and that after Ogedemgbe's departure those Aduloju captured were largely Isure.

The fact that there are large numbers of Iyayu and Isure at Ilesa and in Ekiti respectively and no large groups of people from Isewa, Ido-Ani, Ako or Amusigbo anywhere seems to confirm the contention that it was Iyayu and Isure which suffered the heaviest losses as a result of the war. The size of Ako and Isewa was probably so small anyway, however, that whatever the percentage of them carried off in the wars, their actual numbers would have been so small that they would have been unlikely to remain

as visible as the Iyayu whose non-Yoruba dialect made them more conspicuous. Furthermore both Isure and Iyayu were relatively homogeneous communities unlike the communities of Ido-Ani and Amusigbo, and again this probably made them more likely to remain highly visible in the new environments to which they were taken.

The war at Imesi Igbodo between the Ekitiparapo and the Ibadan was eventually brought to an end by the intervention of representatives of the British government at Lagos and C.M.S. missionaries who drew up a peace treaty and persuaded all parties to the conflict to sign it. The treaty was signed in 1866 and the Ekitiparapo moved their camp to Imesi Ile, but it was not until 1893 that the war camps were disbanded and those who peopled them began to return to their former homes.

#### Post-war reconstruction

The end of the wars in central Yorubaland did not mean that all acts of aggression ceased. When Charles Phillips travelled through the Akoko country in 1894, he found the Nupe in control of most of Akoko and Aduloju still keeping guard at Imesi Lasigidi (5). Again the ologun, but more especially their 'boys' had difficulty settling down. The 'boys' in particular still hoped to acquire the glory, wealth and huge followings of their masters and, they therefore continued to cause disturbances by raiding farms and villages for food and people. Eventually, in an effort to force them to bring

their 'boys' to heel, both Ogedemgbe and Aduloju were arrested by British authorities (Johnson 1921: 645, Akintoye 1971: 218).

Meanwhile to enhance his own position, to protect the settlements from further attack, and in a bid to redevelop the economy of the area, Alani Atunwase actively sought an alliance with the Royal Niger Company which had its headquarters at Lokoja (Asabia and Adegbesan 1971: 22)

(6). Although there are no records of the date when Alani Atunwase first established contact with the R.N.C. a letter reproduced in Idoani Past and Present confirms the existence of some sort of contract between the Alani of Idoani and the Royal Niger Company by August 1895 (Asabia and Adegbesan 1971: 24). On 21 February 1899, Alani Atewogboye, who succeeded Alani Atunwase, and some other Ido-Ani title holders signed a treaty with the R.N.C. in which they declared that their country

belongs entirely to the Royal Niger Company Chartered and Limited and that our power in ruling is derived altogether from the company (Asabia and Adegbesan 1971: 24)

According to Asabia and Adegbesan, this alliance with the Royal Niger Company was signed because Alani Atewogboye

had the presence of mind and sagacity to recognise that he was no longer in a position to defend his domain unaided (Asabia and Adegbesan 1971: 28)

There is no evidence that any official of the R.N.C. ever visited Idoani although the Idoani seem to have been in the habit of sending messengers to Lokoja along with

palm produce from the area.

The position of Idoani and the Akoko areas was uncertain for many years, as boundary disputes arose between the Lagos Government, the R.N.C. of Lokoja and the Niger Coast Protectorate. The latter claimed that the kingdoms as far as Ekiti should belong to them because they used to be part of the Benin Empire. In 1900 the British Government took over the properties of the R.N.C. and because it was through Lokoja that the Royal Niger Company had been dealing with Idoani, it was administered as part of Northern Nigeria. In 1915, Ekiti, Ondo, Akure, and Owo were brought together into a province which became Ondo province with Akure as its headquarters. It was not until 1919, however, that the Akoko areas and Idoani were handed over from Kabba Province to Ondo Province.

Officials of the British Government are known to have visited Owo from Benin for the first time in 1897.

Some oral traditions at Owani claim that Ido-Ani was the second place in the area to sign a treaty with the British after Benin, and that even before they knew of the existence of Owo, the British had planned to establish the D.O.'s headquarters at Ido-Ani. Because the Alani did not want any interference with his administration of the town, however, he refused to allow the British to build the D.O.'s residence at Ido-Ani and directed them instead to Ifon. These traditions have a 'sour grapes' quality to them, and are clearly meant to assert a higher status for Idoani than their traditional rival Owo, but they are



worth noting because they are linked to traditions which claim that it was as a result of the attention the Iyayu had captured at Imesi Igbodo that the Europeans had come to know about the area including Owo. In addition, when related to traditions about later British involvement in the area for which there is more substantial evidence, these traditions assert and reflect an awareness of a dramatic change in the attitude of the authorities at Ido-Ani towards European involvement in local affairs for, by the turn of the century these authorities were actively seeking British colonial involvement in the internal affairs of the settlement. This dramatic change in attitude is probably associated with the succession of Atunwase 'remake us anew' by Atewogboye 'reach out and take title'.

The quest for British involvement in the affairs of the settlement was actively encouraged by those who had been captured in the wars, and who had started returning to Idoani early in the 1890s. Some of those returning had become Christians during their sojourn abroad, and many had been impressed by the effect of Christian and British influence on the development of settlements they had visited.

Initially those who returned were received with joy, but that joy soon turned sour as the ideas and habits the returnees had acquired in the west, as well as their critical attitudes, towards the authorities at home that

their experiences had engendered in them, brought them into conflict with the authorities of their old homes. The adoption of Christianity and its consequences was just one aspect of the conflicts which arose, for these conflicts were also a symptom of the wider political and economic changes with which the adoption of Christianity was associated.

#### Notes to Chapter 4

1. The mother of Pa Adeyanju of Amusigbo's father was captured to Owo during these wars and married to the son of the Ojomo who is said to have led the campaign.
2. Esugbayi was from Iye (the original home of Oniye of Amusigbo), and was probably an ologun similar to the type which predominated at Ibadan. He is said to have been the founder of Aiyede (S.A. Akintoye, 1971; p7).
3. According to Chief Ologbosere, the head of Oke Ido quarter (the section of Ido-Ani which followed Alani Falade I to Oja Gbamo ---- See Chapter 5 below), some of these were: SELU, IBORO, DODORU, GBORO, OMO, BU WA, SEKERE, OGBORO, OKE JAN, OKE MU, UKA and OMI'REKE ARA.
4. Among these informants were elderly women of Ako and Iyayu.
5. CSO 1/1 Phillips 1894 Diary entries for 8 - 11 December.

## CHAPTER 5

### The new Religions and the new Settlement

The concerns of this chapter are the introduction and early development of Islam and Christianity; and the significance of Christianity for the structure of the community.

#### The Introduction of Islam

It is generally agreed in all quarters of Idoani that there was an Islamic presence in the area before the introduction of Christianity in 1892 and that this Islamic presence was confined to 4 of Idoani's six settlements; Ido-Ani, Isure, Ako and Iyayu.

Unfortunately the evidence about when Islam was first introduced to the area and what sort of presence it was before the arrival of Christianity, is patchy and often contradictory. At Owani for instance, the Imam claimed that Islam had been introduced to Idoani by Hausa missionaries who were also traders, some fifty years before the introduction of Christianity, that is sometime in the 1840s. According to Imam Amuda, the first Ido-Ani to befriend the Hausa was a man called Mallam Sani who continued preaching Islam to people after the Hausa had gone. Mallam Sani died in 1926 and unfortunately none of his children have survived, but according to Imam Amuda he was an old man of almost 100 years when he died and had become a muslim when he was a young man. Imam Amuda also

claimed that before the introduction of Christianity, over 50% of the population of Ido-Ani were Muslims. The Imam's estimates may not be accurate, but they suggest that Islam had been around for some time and had a large number of adherents.

An entirely different picture of the introduction and early development of Islam at Ido-Ani was presented by the local historian D.O. Asabia who, when interviewed during fieldwork, claimed that Islam was introduced to Ido-Ani 'ninety years ago', that is some time in the 1890s, by a son of Alani Atunwase called Disu who had been captured away to Epe during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war. Along with the later date Asabia gave for the introduction of Islam, when interviewed, he also claimed that there were not more than 50 Muslims at Ido-Ani by the time Christianity was introduced to the settlement.

In Idoani Past and Present, however, together with Adegbeṣan, Asabia has indicated that, in the reign of Atunwase (c.1870s - 1896), there was a strong Hausa/Tapa military presence at Ido-Ani (1971; 25). Although there is no specific evidence to this effect, it is possible that the missionary traders to whom the Imam attributes the introduction of Islam were associated with these Hausa/Tapa soldiers of Alani Atunwase. As Peel has suggested, mallams tend to go where they will get business and the faithful to receive them (Peel 1968; 47). In attributing the introduction of Islam to Disu in the

1890s, therefore, Asabia may have been practising the 'great man' theory of history in which social trends and events only have significance when they can be associated with 'significant' individuals. In this instance, Disu is significant to Asabia because he contested the obaship with Atewogboye and lost, just as in the contest between the two world religions at Idoani Islam had lost to Christianity.

Other evidence supporting the Imam's contention that Islam was introduced to Ido-Ani before Christianity by missionaries and traders comes from the literature. According to Akintoye, the Nupe had been invading the north-eastern settlements of Yorubaland early in the nineteenth century and in 1858 D.J. May found them deeply entrenched in the Iyagba country north of Idoani (Akintoye 1971; 35; May 1860). The Nupe had been Islamised in the eighteenth century and although the Idoani claim that Nupe incursions into their area were not in order to promote Islam, it is possible that it was through interaction with them that Islam was introduced to Idoani before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war (Gbadamosi 1978; 4).

At Iyayu and Isure the evidence available about the introduction of Islam points to a date in the 1890s, much later than that suggested by Imam Amuda at Ido-Ani. At Iyayu, the father of the Imam, Ibrahim Alagbede, himself a former Imam, claimed that it was his father, also called Ibrahim, who introduced Islam to Iyayu. Ibrahim senior had been captured by the Nupe as a child and taken to

Ilorin where he served as an eru of the oba and was shown how to kirun (1). Ibrahim returned to Iyayu in the 1890s when British authorities, having demonstrated their military strength at Oyo and Bida, ordered the release of all captives (Atanda 1972; Peel 1983; 101). On his return to Iyayu, Ibrahim is said to have gone to Ido-Ani to greet Alani and seek his approval. It was the Alani who made Ibrahim the first Imam at Iyayu and whenever the Iyayu Muslims celebrated Islamic festivals, it was Ibrahim who led the are to the oba's palace at Ido-Ani. This suggests that the Muslims at Iyayu acknowledged the political and spiritual authority of the Alani. On his return from Ilorin Ibrahim was accompanied by a wife and two sons. He is said to have gathered together a following of some ten people including his immediate family and to have built a small mosque, said to have been the first at Iyayu. Together with his sons Ibrahim senior did a little farming and supplemented this livelihood by teaching people the Koran, how to do Muslim prayers and by making Muslim charms. Alagbede described the ability to teach Islam as a trade with which it was possible to generate an income. In this way Ibrahim became quite wealthy and married, in addition to the wife who had accompanied him from Ilorin, three other women from Iyayu. Despite the fact that it was generally acknowledged that there were a large number of Muslims at Iyayu before the introduction of Christianity my own enquiries revealed no hard evidence of

this. It is possible, however, that this popular contention refers to the fact that some Islamic practices had become popular at Iyayu having come there via Ido-Ani before Ibrahim's return from Ilorin.

According to Alhaji Ibitoye, the Imam at Isure, it was a group of people who returned from Nupe that introduced Islam to Isure and Ako. This may indicate that as at Iyayu, Islam was introduced to these two settlements in the 1890s. Here too, however, there is other evidence which suggests that there may have been an Islamic presence in these two settlements before this date. There is for instance the fact that one of the two sections into which Isure is divided is called Oke Jimoh, oke being the Yoruba term for hill while Jimoh is the name given to Friday the day of the 'Jumma' prayers (pronounced and spelt Jimoh in Yoruba). Although names were not examined in any systematic fashion for this study, a number of Muslim names were in circulation at Isure and its neighbour Ako, and at least one of the ten whom Ajiroba identifies as having been responsible for the introduction of Christianity to Isure had a Muslim name, Yesufu Adumagbona (S.O. Ajiroba 1972; 9).

Pre-1890s Islam then, seems to have been closely associated with the oba and the palace at Ido-Ani. Preachers and ritual specialists who could teach Islam may have followed or accompanied Alani Atunwase's Hausa/Tapa soldiers or indeed Muslim traders in kola, beads and coral who visited the area before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war,



spreading Islam along what Peel has called the natural lines of influence in society, eg. trade and migration (Peel 1967). As strangers in the area, the traders and preachers would have lodged at the oba's palace, particularly if, as seems to have been the case with Atunwase, he represented the political centre of the area at that time. That early Islam was virtually a royal cult under the control of the oba is also implied by traditions which claim that Alagbede sought the Alani's approval to establish himself as an Islamic specialist at Iyayu and was made Imam by the Alani; as well as Asabia's claim that the religion was introduced by a son of Atunwase.

Whatever the quality of the Islam the early Muslims practised, the communities of Muslims which developed at Ido-Ani, Isure and Iyayu seem to have formed cult groups with a status in the community of settlements similar in some respects to cult groups associated with orisa but with one major difference. Unlike the orisa cults which were settlement, section, constituency, subquarter and kinship specific, Islam bound together individuals from four of the six settlements under Alani. Although it is not clear what the relations between the Muslims of the various settlements was, according to Asabia and Adegbesan, Alani Atunwase was a rich and powerful feudal monarch who had all the people of the metropolis at Ido and the provinces (the four other communities) at his beck and call as instruments of cheap agricultural labour and

warfare' (1970; 9). In this situation, the fact that they had a special relationship with the oba of Ido-Ani must have made the Muslims seem like fifth columns to other authorities of the settlements, constituencies and compounds to which they belonged, particularly if, as is possible, they used their association with Alani through Islam to flout the authority of their elders by appealing directly to the authority of Alani. These are likely to have been the source of the conflicts which developed between the Muslims and the authorities, for it was generally agreed in all quarters where there was an Islamic presence that by the time Christianity was introduced to the area there was no longer any quarrel between the Muslims and the authorities. It was said that

won ti pari ija  
the fighting had been ended.

### The Introduction of Christianity

The introduction of Christianity to Idoani is dated at 1892 and attributed to people who, having been captured in the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju wars and been converted to Christianity while they were abroad, were able to return home when the British, who were establishing their authority all over Yorubaland, ordered their release from captivity (Ajiroba 1972). Isaac Tenabe from Iyayu is the one individual to whom the introduction of Christianity to the area is attributed in all quarters of Idoani. Tenabe had been captured as a child during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war (2). His movements during the period he was in the

custody of Ogedemgbe are unknown but in the story of his life written by his children, Tenabe is said to have converted to Christianity at Ilesa and to have been baptised there by the Yoruba missionary Rev. M.J. Luke in 1892. Perhaps because of his tender years when captured, Ogedemgbe sent Tenabe to Owa Bepo, as his share in the profits of the war; for it was not until 1893 that the Kiriji camps were abandoned and the ologun returned to Ijesaland (Peel 1983; 85).

As we have already seen, many of those captured during the war were incorporated into Ogedemgbe's fighting forces and accompanied him to Oke Mesi, where the Ekitiparapo confronted the Ibadan. It was at these camps that many of Idoani's early Christians made their first acquaintance with the new religion. The camps were visited by the Rev. J.B. Wood, the Yorkshire born Superintendent of the C.M.S. interior mission; Rev. C. Phillips a Yoruba agent of the C.M.S. and Sierra Leonians resident at Lagos and Abeokuta, who had hailed originally from settlements in Ijesa, Ekiti and Akoko. Many of these latter were both Christians and traders, and as they travelled between Lagos and the camp, they traded in ABD Yoruba Primers and Bibles, as well as guns and ammunition (Johnson 1921: 494-508). The Rev.s Phillips and Johnson were at that time being used by the Governor of Lagos colony, Capt. A.C. Moloney, to negotiate terms for peace in the interior, so their visits were often lengthy, covering periods of up to two months. In

the course of their stay, the two missionaries held regular services and did evangelical work among those stationed at the camps (Johnson 1921: 508-522).

The fact that Tenabe was baptised a year before the camps were abandoned, suggests that he was not one of those camping with Ogedemgbe. In the same year that he was baptised, Tenabe was made a scripture reader and then sent to do evangelical work at Idoani and neighbouring settlements.

On his arrival at Iyayu, Tenabe gathered others with some experience of Christianity together and began to hold meetings. At first there were only three of them at the meetings: Joseph Adetuyi of Amusigbo, Mr Omole of Oke Ipara who knew how to read the Bible and in whose house the meetings were held, and Tenabe. They were soon joined by Daniel Iseorisa, a farmer who had been at Ifon, Daniel Bolade, the son of the Odion of Ipara, and a spectating band of children.

At first the Christians were well received in the community. The Idoani welcomed back the children they thought they had lost. According to Mrs. Folayan, a wife of the Odion of Idosi Iyayu, who claims to have been one of the spectating band of children curious about the strange kinfolk who had come among them, in the early days

whenever there was an odun, the people of the settlement would give the Christians money to give thanks on their behalf, for people believed that what they were doing was for the good of all the people, to make people well (3).

Initially then, the Christians seem to have been treated like any other cult group. Conflict soon arose, however, between the Christians and the authorities in each of the settlements. This conflict seems to have been stimulated by the fact that membership of the 'cult', provided many people with the excuse to shirk their social obligations. It is significant in this context, that most of the early adherents to Christianity are said to have been young men, those on whom, as we have already seen, the burden was the most, both within the compound and within the settlement.

The elders resented the fact that the new religion was robbing their households of some of its most prosperous members, to swell what they saw as the followings of relatively young men like Tenabe. Furthermore, just as Islam seems to have done, Christianity established a link between members of different settlements and the Alani whose authority they could claim to have in common, there by boosting his authority in relation to that of elders and other authorities. The character of the conflict between the Christians and the settlements' authorities; and that these latter assumed there was a link between the Christians and the Alani is illustrated by the incident which occurred at Amusigbo in 1899. During Christmas, the Christians of Ido-Ani took the 'Christmas festival' to Amusigbo, even though the authorities there had warned

that Oro, which women should not see, along with other egun would be appearing that day. When the Christians got to Amusigbo, there was a dramatic confrontation. The egun which appeared before Oro began to reprimand and beat the Christians, voicing and acting out the anger which the authorities of the settlement felt towards them. The Christians, however, fought back with a confidence derived partly from the doctrines of the new religion and partly, no doubt from the knowledge that they could call on support from Christians in larger and more prosperous settlements than Idoani, like Ilesa, Ondo, Lagos and Ayesan, from where many of the early Christians had repatriated. Their confidence was also inspired by the knowledge that Christians in these settlements had received, in their battles with their communities, the support of a new force in the land, the British: missionaries and colonial authorities (4). One of the Christian women seized the egun's mask revealing the wearer. Startled and scared, the egun carrier ran off into the bushes. Outraged by this direct challenge to their authority, the oloye of Amusigbo complained to Alani Atewogboye who, they believed, it must be presumed, had some control over the Christians.

Alani Atewogboye may have expected to realise some political advantage from the cohesiveness of the Christian community and the challenge that they presented to patriarchal and gerontocratic authorities in the settlements, in much the same way that Atunwase had from

his association with Islam. Although like the Muslims, the Christians seem to have acknowledged the political authority of Alani, he seems to have had very little control over their organisations and activities

The evidence relating to Islam may be thin but it does indicate certain similarities in the effect of the two religions on particular socio-political institutions and their reception into the community in the early stages. Indeed, the introduction of Islam to the settlements in an earlier period probably affected the way the Christians were received on their arrival at Idoani. If Islam had been in the area for some 50 years before the introduction of Christianity, then the rebellious young Muslims would have become elders and perhaps taken titles at Ido-Ani. Much of the conflict which existed in the early stages between the Muslim community and the patriarchal and gerontocratic authorities would have been reduced as a result. Muslim elders would therefore have had an interest in common with the non-Muslim elders in maintaining the existing structure of authority in the communities. It was probably expected, therefore, that the Christians would eventually settle down in a role similar to that of the Muslim community.

Whatever similarities there may have been between the processes by which the two religions were introduced to Idoani, it is probably the differences which account for the relative success of Christianity over Islam. That

success is indicated by the political status of the religion today, and the fact that 90% of the adult population are now Christians (General Survey 1981, Source V).

An important difference between Islam and Christianity seems to have been the way they were organised. Muslims may have been united under Alani Atunwase, but the character of the obaship which had been described in Chapter 2, meant that he was unable to develop an organizational structure as powerful and extensive in its influence as the C.M.S. Furthermore, since the authority of Alani was enhanced by the lack of unity among the other settlements he is hardly likely to have encouraged intra settlement co-ordination or solidarity.

That there was little cohesion between the Muslims of the different settlements is suggested by the fact that there are no institutions at Idoani which link Muslims from the different settlements and to this day, despite some attempt to remedy the situation, Islam at Idoani is still fragmented.

Between the Christians of the different settlements, on the other hand, there seems to have been considerable co-operation and interaction. There was much coming and going between the small thatched roof churches which had been erected at each settlement, and when the settlements concentrated in 1921, Christians from all quarters



worshipped at the same church. In his 1919 catechist's log book, the local historian S.O. Ajiroba of Amusigbo, tells of joint services being held at each of the settlements in turn, frequent visits between the Christians of the different settlements and pleas for unity among them from the superintendent at Owo who was frequently consulted about the affairs of the Christian community at Idoani (5).

Because of their solidarity and association with the C.M.S., and thus the British colonial authorities, the Christians played critical roles in local politics as well as in relation to wider political issues affecting the community of settlements as a whole, such as the incorporation of Idoani into colonial Nigeria and the status of the settlements in relation to neighbouring states.

Any authority Muslims had exercised had been sought within the existing structures of authority, thus Islam strengthened the authority of Alani Atunwase and Imam was treated like a title. In addition as Muslims grew older they took titles and traditional gerontocratic positions of authority in the community.

Although they may have flouted their elders, Muslims do not seem to have exercised the wider political influence which Christians eventually did as a result of their association with the colonial authorities. If Muslims had been under the control of the oba, Christians

brought the oba under their control.

In a bid to bring the Christian community to heel, Alani and the authorities in each of the settlements ordered that nobody should give the wives of Christians any medicine, that no family should allow its daughters to marry Christians and that families of women already married to Christians should order their daughters to return home. These orders relating to the movement of women are particularly interesting as they emphasise the importance of control over women to elders and title holders (see Chapter 2 and Peel 1983: 104-6). All fraternisation with Christians was forbidden, families disowned their children and the most difficult tasks in the community were assigned to Christians. It was a crime to become a Christian, there were public floggings of Christians and in 1902, the elders of Iyayu burnt down the church which had been built there.

Eventually the Alani and various authorities of the different communities sent a delegation to the District Officer at Sobe to protest about the disobedience of Christians. The D.O. told the delegation that Christians must be allowed to do their own thing and the egun followers theirs, but that there was to be no force. On their return to Idoani, the delegation met the Christians rejoicing over the finding,

awa yo igbagbo ki j'ofò  
we Christians do not eat air

they sang. Incensed, the authorities sent their

delegation back to the D.O. to make another report, but the D.O. merely repeated his original recommendation and refused to take any action against the Christians. That Alani and elders took these measures at all was a sign of the times, echoed in a popular saying in relation to that era

aiye ti di aiye oyinbo  
the world has become the world of the white  
men.

From that time onwards, indeed, Alani was gradually brought under the Christians' control. Christians were instrumental in uniting the settlements under the Alani but it was essentially for the benefit of the C.M.S. and the colonial administration who also stood to benefit from the concentration. Both of these bodies supported the Christians against the Alani because they considered the Christians the most suitable leaders of their communities.

It is possible that in signing the country over to the Royal Niger Company in 1899, thus establishing his own links with Europeans, Alani Atewogboye was trying to counter the power and prestige that was shifting to Iyayu because it had become the centre of Christian activity in the group of settlements. For this move, he received support from some of the Christian community at Ido-Ani who were anxious to promote their own settlement against the others.

A major concern of all the Christian communities at this point, was their incorporation into the official sphere of influence of the C.M.S. whose agents were spread

more thickly than either those of the Royal Niger Company or the British Protectorate. Incorporation into the C.M.S. sphere of influence was an important first step towards incorporation into the Protectorate which aimed to administer the whole of Nigeria. In 1910, after constant petitioning, the first independent C.M.S. worker was sent to Idoani and stationed at Ido-Ani (6). The agent, a Mr Ibileru, was a stranger. After spending a year at Ido-Ani he went on leave and while he was on leave, the C.M.S. ordered him to remove his residence to Iyayu when he returned from leave.

The reason the C.M.S. gave for transferring their agent was that by establishing his residence at Iyayu, the agent would be at the geographical centre of the community of settlements and it would therefore be easier for him to visit the thatched-roof churches that now existed in each of the settlements.

Both Alani Atewogboye and the Christian community at Ido-Ani appealed against the move. Alani Atewogboye argued that moving the agent went against the customary practice whereby strangers stayed with Alani at the political centre of the community, and the latter were anxious not to lose the agent because of the loss of prestige it involved and because while he was with them he had been teaching them how to read and write.

By 1910 when the catechist Ibileru arrived at Idoani, then, the attitude of Alani Atewogboye had changed. The

bitter hostility which had caused the protest to the D.O. seems to have been replaced by competition between Alani with the Ido-Ani Christians and the Christians at Iyayu for the catechist. There is no indication that the elders of Iyayu had settled with the Christians but hostilities between them had probably ceased partly because the location of the church with the worker's residence shifted from inside the Iyayu settlement to the area of bush between Iyayu and Amusigbo. Because it was now in the bush, the church became both difficult to control and less specifically significant to the Iyayu authorities. Another reason for this change in attitude seems to have been the fact that local authorities were starting to employ the Christians' skills in their dealings with colonial authorities and were therefore prepared to be more tolerant.

At Ido-Ani, an accord appears to have been established between the Alani and the Christian community. Alani Atewogboye seems to have decided to use the Christians skills, their increasing popularity, and their association with the British authorities in a bid to establish his authority over all the settlements in the area. The Christian community at Ido-Ani on the other hand, bitterly resented the removal of Ibileru to Iyayu because in his absence considerable effort and resources had been put, at his request, into constructing a house for him. In addition in the spirit of traditional rivalries between the settlements, Ido-Ani Christians were anxious to see Ido-Ani develop as the centre of Christian

activity just as it had been the centre of Muslim activity and they resented the fact that as a result of the move, the Iyayu and Amusigbo had taken control of the education which they now regarded as an important resource. At Ido-Ani, then, hostilities were dropped in favour of co-operation because the political ambitions of the Alani and the Christian community had become the same.

Despite continuous petitioning, the C.M.S. authorities refused to return Ibileru or any subsequent agents to Ido-Ani. In 1916 then, having heard about Ijo Eniyan Dudu - the 'Black Peoples Church', which was the African Church, from a son of the community, the dissatisfied sections of the Christian community at Ido-Ani after seeking the permission and support of Alani decided to train their own teachers. They therefore sent, first Moses Agbayewa and then David Orimoloye to be educated in the educational institutions of the African Church.

#### The Introduction of the African Church

A letter from the African Church members, written by M.O. Agbayewa, indicates that it was not just the removal of the C.M.S. agent (referred to as 'a teacher') which had caused dissatisfaction with the C.M.S. among sections of the Ido-Ani community (7). After mentioning the removal of the agent despite the fact that of the eight villages the agent supervised, they were the

first class and the ones paying the finances to support him,

Agbayewa, goes on, on behalf of the Church members, to accuse the C.M.S. of having suspended members because they were unmarried or polygamists and of having prevented members from taking the Lords Supper and catechumens from being baptised (8).

The political and religious conflicts which led to the introduction of the African Church to Ido-Ani are given expression in the early life history of the late Chief Ven. Arch. M.O. Agbayewa, founder of the African Church at Ido-Ani. The course of his early life reflects not only the prevailing religious and political climate at Idoani during this period, but also the significance of the socio-political dynamics between the different communities in the area to the development of Christianity.

Moses Agbayewa was born in September 1896, a year after his father had returned from Ilesa to where he had been captured by Ogedemgbe. His father had first been taken to the war camp at Oke Mesi, where he was given an ABD Yoruba Primer by missionaries. When the camps were disbanded in 1893, he accompanied Ogedemgbe to Ijesa. During his time with the ologun Agbayewa's father served Ogedemgbe in various capacities: as a tailor sewing agbada, as a charm and medicine preparer and as the ajele stationed at Iperindo, a strategically very important Ijesa border town, on the vital Ondo road. During the period he was with Ogedemgbe, Agbayewa's father became a Christian. In 1895 he returned to Ido-Ani to take up the Agbayewa title (described by Moses Agbayewa as the head title of the Ebi Iwa section at Ido-Ani). At Ido-Ani, Agbayewa's father took up farming and traded in spirits, cutlasses and cloth which he brought from Benin or Ejirin. He became a wealthy man.

At the age of 14, along with some other boys, Agbayewa became a houseboy in the household of the catechist Mr. Ibileru (9). Ibileru brought these boys up as Christians and in the evenings taught them how to read. During the year Ibileru spent at Ido-Ani, Agbayewa and David Orimoloye (Chief Ven. Arch. D.O. Asabia) were baptised at Ido-Ani along with three farmers from Amusigbo. When Ibileru went to Owo to relieve Rev. Gane who was to go on furlough, Agbayewa accompanied him.

At Owo, Agbayewa claimed, his eyes were opened, he realised that 'Ibileru did not know book', and so when Ibileru returned to Ido-Ani, he stayed at Owo. Rev. Gane had already told Agbayewa that they did not need any more houseboys at the mission and so he became the houseboy of a Muslim government clerk at Owo which enabled him to attend the C.M.S. school at Owo. Shortly after he started work with him, however, Agbayewa's master was transferred to Lagos and Agbayewa, realising that his master had been made a relieving clerk, left him. He then went to Oshogbo, became attached to a trader in cloth and attended All Saints C.M.S. school. There he passed Standard VI and was recommended by Rev. Packingham to go and sit the entrance exam for the prestigious Church Missionary Training Institution (later St. Andrew's College) at Oyo. The Institution however, refused to accept him on the grounds that he was too old, being by now nineteen years of age.

Frustrated and disappointed, Agbayewa returned to Oshogbo and applied for employment on the railway. He was accepted as a trainee brass moulder, but because of war in Europe, materials were in short supply and he was soon laid off. In 1917 Agbayewa returned to Lagos and joined J.K. Coker's African Church (10). While he had been at Ota Oshogbo Agbayewa had witnessed the opening of an African Church. J.K. Coker and other officials of the Church from Lagos who attended the opening impressed Agbayewa as men of education and substance.

It was to the African Church, in which he could see an opportunity to achieve his personal ambitions as well as to restore the dignity of his people, that Agbayewa now turned. He believed, he said, that, being able to speak and write English to the D.O. and other colonial officials, would put him in a position to bring enlightenment to his people and to help them pursue their political ambitions. Agbayewa became one of the foundation students at J.K.



Coker's training institution at Ifako, Agege. He was soon joined by David Orimoloye and later by other boys from the Owo, Idoani and Akoko areas who came to work on Coker's plantation.

After just three months at the training institution, Agbayewa was notified by telegraph that his mother had died and he returned to Ido-Ani to perform her burial rites. While he was home he handled some of Alani Atewogboye's paper work for him and was urged to make arrangements with the African Church so that a catechist could be sent to Ido-Ani. Agbayewa put the matter before the General Committee of the African Church who sent him and one Moses Ekundayo to open the first African Church in north-eastern Yorubaland at Ido-Ani. Agbayewa then went on to pioneer the establishment of African Churches throughout Ondo Province (as it then was).

Ten of the thirty eight members of the Ido-Ani Christian community joined Ekundayo and Agbayewa to form the African Church, and before long, the membership of the African Church at Ido-Ani outnumbered that of the Anglican Church in the settlement.

The success of the African Church at Ido-Ani was due largely, it seems, to its relationship with the traditional authorities of the community. In the catechist's log book for 1919, Samuel Oguntade of Amusigbo, describes how the Bo da wa had made an agreement with the Alani so that their church would be stronger than that of the C.M.S. The name Bo da wa was derived from the phrase bi o ba da o wa - even if you are not good you come - which the Anglicans believed characterised the attitude of the African Church. The term was meant to be an insult and suggested that the membership of the African Church was morally suspect. It is quite clear from colonial records relating to this period, that there was by now

complete co-operation between Alani Atewogboye and members of the African Church in political affairs much to the displeasure of colonial officials (11). These latter interpreted the co-operation between Atewogboye and members of the African Church as interference by the African Church in political affairs (12).

With both the C.M.S. Superintendent of the Ekiti district, Rev. F. Hedger, and the D.O. against them, the African Church formed an alliance with Alani Atewogboye. Alani Atewogboye seized the opportunity this alliance provided to employ the skills of African Church staff towards some of his own political objectives. For example, E.D. Sodeinde, who was leader of the African Church in Akoko and was stationed at Ido-Ani in 1918, wrote on behalf of Alani Atewogboye to the Oni of Ife, the Alafin of Oyo and the Deji of Akure for clarification of his position in the hierarchy of Yoruba oba (13).

According to Agbayewa's letter of 18.9.18, Rev. F. Hedger of the C.M.S. tried to stamp the African Church out by appealing to the Resident and other government officials. As a result of Hedger's efforts, the Resident of Benin visited Ido-Ani and told the African Church membership that the government could not allow two churches in the same town and that therefore the African Church should go. He accused Alani Atewogboye and others of having allowed the Pastor of the African Church to set up the Church without government permission, and tried to

persuade them to say that they did not want the African Church in their town. Nevertheless Alani and his Chiefs did not declare that they do not want the African Church in their town (14).

As a result of the confusion however, some of those who had joined the church left and returned to Islam or to being 'pagans', and Alani Atewogboye who had been attending the church stopped going. Agbayewa ended his letter with an appeal to J.K. Coker to

go and get permission from the Governor quickly before their letter [that of the Resident or the C.M.S. Superintendent] reach him (brackets mine).

Coker however had no influence with British officials and when in 1919 the African Church congregation put up a church at Ido-Ani, they were fined £50 by the D.O. Nevertheless the congregation of the church continued to expand and their political influence increased.

#### Settlement structure and religious change

The response to the new religions and the significance of the introduction of the new religions varied from settlement to settlement. Iyayu and Ido-Ani epitomize the extremes of variations in composition and structure between the settlements and are therefore likely to give rise to corresponding variations in religious change and development.

Iyayu, it will be recalled, had a population which was relatively homogeneous culturally, and a socio-political structure based on gerontocratic authority,

while Ido-Ani's population was culturally heterogeneous and its socio-political structure was based on complex patterns of interaction between three competing types of authority: patrimonialism, gerontocracy and patriarchy. Some of the significance of these variations has already been noted. For example it has already been shown how at Iyayu the new religions represented a challenge to existing authorities which derived their authority from a religious culture whose world view and practices Christians were required to despise and condemn. The distance between the Christians and traditional authorities was further emphasised by the fact that they were excluded from access to that authority, largely because of their age, and partly because of their inability to conform to the ritual requirements associated with traditional authority.

At Ido-Ani, however,<sup>x</sup> although the new religions also challenged existing authorities, that challenge was tempered by the fact that so engrossing was political competition in the community that the new religions quickly became an aspect of it, exploited by one type of authority against the others. According to Asabia and Adegbesan,

Mr Ibileru was ordered by the C.M.S. mission to move his residence to the more responsive and more prosperous congregation at Iyayu (my emphasis) (Asabia and Adegbesan, 1970: 32).

Considered in conjunction with some of the other evidence that has been presented, this admission by two Ido-Ani

members of the African Church suggests that the total exclusion of the Iyayu Christians from traditional structures of authority made it possible for them to give themselves up more wholeheartedly to Christian teachings and; in a sense, more dependent upon Christianity and the politico-religious order with which it was associated, than Ido-Ani Christians who could not and would not be excluded from access to all the types of authority there were.

Agbayewa's father, Chief Agbayewa, is an example of the point in question. Although he returned to Ido-Ani a Christian, he took up the important Olori Ebi Iwa title. The effect of having access to traditional types of authority seems to have been that the commitment to Christianity and a new socio-political order was tempered by involvement in structures and institutions which were closely associated with traditional religious culture. The Christianity of individuals in this category was more opportunist.

The description of the Iyayu as 'more responsive' therefore, probably refers to the quality of converts than to the quantity, for as has already been mentioned, the numbers of African Church members quite quickly became greater than the number of members in the C.M.S. Church at Ido-Ani and probably at Iyayu too. According to Agbayewa, when the Resident visited Idoani during his tour in 1918, just one year after the African Church and school had been opened, while there were only 25 pupils at the C.M.S.

school at Iyayu, there were 75 at the African Church school at Ido-Ani. These figures relating to numbers of children in school suggest a much wider involvement with Christianity at Ido-Ani.

With the establishment of the African Church with its less uncompromising attitude towards traditional social and political institutions and religious culture, Christianity developed a broader base and a much larger community at Ido-Ani. In Peel's terms, the Iyayu early Christians lost confidence in a society which had shut them out (1968). While the early Christians at Ido-Ani, because of their continued involvement in the society, did not only not lose confidence in the society but were in a position to select from Christianity and the new order with which it was associated as well as from traditional society, what was most expedient for them. The early Ido-Ani Christians had a choice.

#### A new settlement

In 1920, the people of Idoani were taxed for the first time and the D.O. advised Alani Atewogboye to gather his people together into one settlement in order to make administration easier. This idea was supported by both the C.M.S. and the African Church, both of which hoped to benefit, at the other's expense, from the move. It was over this issue that the two denominations confronted each other in their battle for power over the community of settlements.

The idea of concentration was not new, and although local traditions often claim that it was suggested by the C.M.S. authorities or the colonial officials, it seems more likely that the idea originated with the Alani. For the establishment of Pax Britannica had not altered the fact that the status of an oba depended upon the number of his subjects; rather it had served to emphasize this point. The competitive wars between Yoruba settlements in the nineteenth century had subsided into a competition for 'civilization' consisting of such things as roads, courts, schools etc. which were distributed by the British according, it seemed, to two quite distinct criteria; population size or density and the status they accorded the community. In the settlements of north-eastern Yorubaland, about which the British knew very little, the two criteria were related. It had continued to irk Alani Atewogboye that in the twenty years of British rule so far, he and his community had been placed lower in rank to the Ido-Ani's old rivals, the Olowo and the Owo. In addition however, as we have already seen, ever since Islam and then Christianity had forged links between the different settlements, Alanis had been trying to use those links as a basis for establishing authority over all the settlements. Finally as early as 1918 Alani Atewogboye wrote to the Deji of Akure giving as an excuse for not having sent him any present, the fact that he was 'assembling his townships and making a large town of

them' The letter was written free of charge, by E. David Sodeinde, the African Church pastor stationed at Ido-Ani (15).

The suggestion that the settlements should concentrate was unpopular with the authorities of four of the other settlements; Ako, Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu. The Olupara of Iyayu appears to have been the most obstinate in this matter. In the report on Owo Division for the fifteen months ending March 31st, 1921, it is recorded that in response to a proposal by Alani that the town of Idoani should be concentrated 'early in the year 1920, the people of Yayu protested that they owed no allegiance to the Alani of Idoani' (16).

The D.O., H.D. de la Mothe ordered that the Iyayu should submit to Alani, and selected and approved a site in the neighbourhood of Iyayu around the Anglican Church. By the end of June, when Major William Thomas, relieving de la Mothe, investigated a petition from Iyayu complaining of ill treatment and persecution by Alani Atewogboye, he discovered that they had still not 'carried out the orders to submit' (17). In October of the same year, the Olupara and 'other elders' were fined £8 each in Owo Native court, having been summoned there by Alani Atewogboye for refusing to obey him.

In January 1921, Alani Atewogboye died. Apart from the conflict between himself and the Iyayu, the proposed removal had also given rise to conflicts within his own community. The strain seems to have proved too much for



him. For although he had started building his own house at the new site in the neighbourhood of Iyayu, the people of Ido-Ani had protested that a move to this site would involve abandoning their present rocky hills, to build at a site no better; and they had refused to accompany him. The Ido-Ani were reluctant to move, not solely because of the character of the terrain at Iyayu, but also because, according to Chief Owusi of Owani, Alani Atewogboye had agreed on an entirely different site with them which was at the bottom of the hill on which Ido-Ani was then situated. According to Chief Owusi, they had already started to build there when Alani Atewogboye left and went to Iyayu.

In January of 1921, only 4 weeks after Alani's death, Captain O'Connor, relieving H.D. de la Mothe, visited Idoani and was shown the site favoured by the Ido-Ani community. He agreed with the Ido-Ani community that it was a more suitable site than Oja Gbamo, which he described as rocky and possessing only a few sources of water. Ido-Ani, Ako and Isewa agreed to move to this site, but Amusigbo, Isure and Iyayu were unwilling to move so far, arguing instead that the settlements should concentrate at the site approved of by H.D. de la Mothe.

When H.D. de la Mothe returned to the area he rejected O'Connor's decision and later argued that 'from a political point of view Oja Gbamo was an ideal site for concentration' because, the Iyayu, Amusigbo and Isure would never move to the other site, and a move to Oja

Gbamo would help to avoid friction between the Olupara and the Alani (18).

Within two months of Atewogboye's death, the D.O. had been informed that James Falade, a member of the African Church and a former employee on J.K. Coker's plantation at Agege, had been selected as the new Alani (19).

Nevertheless, the D.O. established a regency council consisting of: the Olisa of Ido-Ani, the Asewa of Isewa, the Olupara of Iyayu, the Oniye of Amusigbo, the Olusure of Isure and the Alako of Ako (20). In a report on this matter to the resident at Akure, the D.O. claims to be recommending a regency council because James Falade was 'rather young'; and a regency council rather than a single chief as regent because, the 'quarters of Idoani are scattered'. Moreover, the 'Olupara of Iyayu has not shown in the past a disposition to help the Alani, whilst the Chief of Amusigbo has seemed in the present to be rather an obstructionist'.

The council was probably established, however, because the colonial administration was reluctant to allow political authority in the community to pass through Alani Falade to the African Church which they clearly regarded as subversive. That Falade was practically the only candidate, is perhaps an indication of the extent of the influence of the African Church in the community by this time (21).

The coronation of Falade in June 1921 was attended by

J.K. Coker and thirty other members of African Churches outside Ido-Ani. With him, Coker brought 2 crowns which he gave to Falade as a gift, he claimed, from the Alake of Abeokuta (22). These demonstrations which were intended to impress upon the community the extent of the influence of the new Alani and the African Church's wealth and prestige, infuriated the D.O. who wrote of Falade that 'his association with the African Church...is much to be regretted'. When he visited Idoani in 1922, the D.O. seized not only the crowns which had been given to Falade, but also his staff of office and the uniforms of his messengers, which the D.O. claimed resembled those of the official police, and for the use of which Alani had no permission. He also suspended Falade's salary threatening him with continued punishment if he continued to attend the African Church (23).

According to local accounts, Alani Atewogboye had died at Oja Gbamo, but his body had had to be returned to Ido-Ani for burial because the people of the other settlements had not known what to do with the corpse. With the death of Atewogboye and the installment of Alani Falade, the movement of the settlements to Oja Gbamo had come to a halt. The Ido-Ani community, however, continued building houses at the site they favoured at Igbo Sasa, and had even built a new palace for the new oba there. Nevertheless when the D.O. visited the area, he informed a meeting of representatives of all settlements that, since

the bulk of the population was closer to Oja Gbamo, the Alani should be there. If, the D.O. threatened, Falade had not moved to Oja Gbamo when next he visited Idoani, then he would take from him the obaship and install in his place, an oba who would do as he was told. Alani Falade is said to have moved to Oja Gbamo just one hour before the D.O.'s next visit to the area! Some of those who had followed Atewogboye to Oja Gbamo were still there, but the majority had returned to Ido-Ani when he died. Some of these now followed the new oba to this new home, but a large proportion of the population, under the influence, it is said of the African Church elite, remained at Igbo Sasa, at the foot of the Ido-Ani hill.

The Isewa came down from their hill to settle at its foot, while the Amusigbo, Isure, Ako and Iyayu communities moved gradually to concentrate at Oja Gbamo.

With his move to Oja Gbamo, Alani James Falade seems to have lost the influence he derived from association with the African Church as well as much of the traditional prestige associated with obas. He derived his authority instead, from being the colonial government's officially recognised head of the town (24). As late as 1935, he was still living in his mother's house at Iyayu (25). The promise which his youth, education and Christianity had been intended to bring to the community was never realised even though, as we shall see, he did eventually make an important bid, using Christianity as his idiom, to re-

establish the credibility of the obaship.

In addition to the political factors accounting for the relative success of Christianity over Islam, there can be no doubt that the richer economic rewards associated with Christianity were also a significant factor. It is therefore with the economic developments associated with the two religions that the next chapter will be concerned.

## Notes to Chapter 5

1. Kirun, refers to the physical aspect of Islamic ritual prayer which is performed five times daily. The literal translation of Kirun is 'to greet heaven', its common usage therefore would seem to refer to the physical motion by which this is achieved.
2. The draft of an unpublished document which tells the story of Tenabe's life was kindly made available to me by Tenabe's youngest daughter; Her Excellency, Chief Mrs. Ajasin, wife of Governor Ajasin of Ondo State.
3. Among the things which attracted the attention of the children, were the European styled clothes Tenabe wore, and the trumpet they used to summon people to services.
4. The significance of Christian teachings in this direct challenge to traditional authorities is illustrated by a song the early Christians used to chant as they marched through the settlement:  
  
Jesu n'bo l'ona      Jesus was walking down the road  
O ba esu l'ona      He met the devil on the road  
O le esu              He drove the devil away
5. The Catechists log book, which was among the belongings of the late Chief Samuel Oguntade Ajiroba, author of Iwa Itan Idoani, and was kindly lent to me by his eldest son Mr J.A. Oguntade.
6. After his return from further training at Ondo between 1901 and 1902, Tenabe was a 'full fledged evangelist' his work therefore involved and travelling around Akoko and even into parts of Bendel State (Idoani I : 2). From that point onwards therefore his contribution to the development of Christianity would have been limited.
7. (N.A.I.), Coker Papers 4/1/26 'African Church Affairs', 18 September 1918.
8. "
9. The houseboy seems to have been an institutional development of pre-existing child rearing habits which Europeans were able to exploit for domestic labour. Traditionally children were often sent to be

raised in more prestigious households than their own where it was hoped discipline could be instilled untempered by parental love and affection, and where the young person could establish contacts that he or she might exploit in later life.

10. As organiser and major patron of the African Church which had seceded from the C.M.S. in 1901, J.K. Coker had taken up financial responsibility for evangelistic work for Ikirun Oyan and Idoani (Webster 1964: 110).
11. In 1918, with the help of E. David Sodeinde, the African Church agent stationed at Ido-Ani, Alani Atewogboye wrote a letter to the Oni of Ife, asking him to make clear the position of Alani of Idoani in relation to the kings of Ekiti, in particular to the kings of Ado, Owo and Irun. (N.A.I.), Coker Papers 4/1/26: 'African Church Affairs 1918', Alani Atewogboye, Idoani to the Oni of Ife, 23 August 1918.
12. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 4/1, Annual Report on Owo Division 1920/21 'Report on the Owo Division for the 15 months ending March 31st 1921', Section F: Missions.
13. (N.A.I.), Coker Papers 4/1/26 'African Church Affairs 1918', Alani Atewogboye, Idoani to: Oni of Ife; Alafin of Oyo and Deji of Akure, 23 August 1918.
14. Note 7 for reference.
15. (N.A.I.), Coker Papers 4/1/26 'African Church Affairs 1918', Alani Atewogboye, Idoani to Deji of Akure, 23 August 1918.
16. (N.A.I.), ONDO PROF 4/1, Annual Report on Owo Division 1920/21 'Report on the Owo Division for the 15 months ending March 31st 1921', Section A: General, Political and Administrative.
17. "
18. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 1/2, OP 1295 'The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting' D.O. Owo to Resident, Akure, 3 March 1922.
19. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 1/2, OP 1295 'The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting' D.O. Ifon to Resident, Akure, 31 March 1921.
20. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 1/2, OP 1295 "The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting', D.O. Ifon to Resident, Akure, 14 April 1921.
21. Although Babumewa, brother, it seems, of Chief Ojomo

of Ifon contested for the obaship with the support of his brother and Amusigbo, Isure, Ako and Iyayu, it does not appear to have been a serious opposition. Falade had the support of all of Ido-Ani and Isewa, who had probably been in the habit of selecting the Alani with advice only from authorities in other settlements. Babumewa received the votes of a substantial majority at Isure, a minority at Amusigbo and 'one of the protesting quarters divided its votes equally between the two candidates'. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 1/2, OP 1295 "The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting', D.O. Ifon to Resident, Akure, 31 March 1921.

22. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF 1/2 OP 1295 'The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting, Resident, Oyo, 14 July 1922.
23. (N.A.I.), ONDOPROF, 1/2, OP 1295 'The Alani of Idoani: Matters Affecting', D.O. Owo to Resident, Akure, 14 June 1922 and 21 June 1922.
24. (N.A.I.), OWODIV 13/1 'District Officer's Travelling Diary, Idoani District, 1930 - 1950, 22-24 March 1931: 'The Alani seems to have no authority and no backing from his quarter chiefs, his residence is in a most disgraceful condition'. 18-20 May 1931: 'The Alani is frightfully weak and is led by Onidogun, Sashere and Odofin. Told him that he must assert himself otherwise he will never be respected'.
25. (N.A.I.), OWODIV 13/1 'District Officer's Travelling Diary, Idoani District, 1930 - 1950, 15-17 March 1935.



## CHAPTER 6

### Economic development and Religious change

The concern of this chapter is with the relationship between the introduction of Islam and Christianity to Idoani and the economic development of the community.

The significance of this relationship is not purely theoretical or historical. The role Churches, in particular, have come to play, as well as their potential role, in the economies of Yoruba communities makes its significance highly relevant to contemporary concerns about, for instance, the flamboyant displays of wealth which seem to have become an integral part of religious activities, the expense associated with Church membership, and the frequently gross differences in the living standards of clergy and the majority of the laity (1).

Comparing religious conversion in Ijebu and Buganda, Peel has argued that the power of religions is a critical element in the process of change, but suggests that religious power may be intrinsic and extrinsic (Peel 1977). For Peel the material advantages which might be a consequence of involvement in a new religion are an extrinsic power of that religion. This categorisation seems to be somewhat arbitrary, for, the fact that material advantages have been an intrinsic and very central concern of Yoruba religious culture, is well documented in the literature and its significance in the

religious culture of Idoani has already been referred to in Chapter 3 (Idowu 1962, ch. 8; Berry 1968; Peel 1968; 33). The economic opportunities associated with the religions have, therefore, played a major role in the process by which Islam and Christianity were incorporated into the religious culture of Idoani. The economic opportunities associated with Christianity have constituted a major attraction. Furthermore, the relative success of Christianity over Islam, as well as being due in part to the political developments with which the former was associated, is also due to the fact that Christianity has been associated with better economic opportunities which have also been an integral part of its political success.

The aim of this chapter which considers the relationship between religious change and the changing structure of the economy, is not to argue that economic considerations were all that motivated all converts to Christianity or Islam, or that adherence to these religions in Idoani has no spiritual basis. The aim rather is to show that to understand religious change in Idoani, a perspective which takes into account corresponding changes in the structure of the community's economy, the significance of the new religions for the structure of economic relations and vice versa, as well as the material advantages that individuals could derive from embracing new religions, is essential and provides important insights into both the pre-existing and present

day religious culture at Idoani as well as the historical processes with which this study is concerned. This type of perspective is, very close to the motivation suggested in the accounts 'converts' gave of themselves.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the economy of Idoani before the introduction of Christianity. It speculates, on the basis of the evidence available, about the character of Idoani's economy in this period, and the significance for the economy of the wars of the nineteenth century and the introduction of Islam. The second section deals with the economic significance of the introduction of Christianity, focusing on the relationship between Christianity and the structure of economic opportunity. The third section describes the occupational structure and the character of economic relations in the contemporary community. The final section examines the role of the Anglican Church in the economic development of Idoani and the structure of economic relations within the church that has established patterns from which denominations introduced later on have taken their cue.

#### The pre-Christianity economy

What evidence it was possible to collect, suggests that before the introduction of Christianity, the internal economy of the Idoani settlements revolved around slash and burn subsistence agriculture, hunting, divining and

blacksmithing. These are referred to as the basic occupations given to man by God, on which survival has depended. These occupations were supplemented, however, by a variety of crafts including: weaving, dyeing, painting and carving and some external trade.

The structure of economic relations seems to have been a function of the socio-political organisation which has been described in Chapter 2. The production of the staple food, yam, into which the most productive energy was invested, was carried out by units corresponding to the basic units of the political system. These units of production were composed of kin where authority was gerontocratic and of kin, eru and clients where authority was patriarchal. The unit of production over which Alani had patrimonial authority was composed of his eru, criminals and other social delinquents sent to reside at the palace and the Ebi Iwa who were required, it has been claimed, to spend every fourth day working at the obas farms. The Alani's farms were also manned by work contingents who, it has been claimed, were sent as tribute from the other settlements.

According to elderly men at Iyayu, in the old days men used to farm for their parents until the parent died. The people who lived together, farmed together and ate together 'from the same pot'. Discussing contemporary arrangements by which food was consumed, these elderly men attributed the break-down of the traditional system to the greed of women who did not want to do things with their

mother-in-laws but instead persuaded their husbands to farm individually so that they could cook separately. Ultimately, the old men attributed these changes to the the courts Europeans had brought, which had made it possible for women to leave their husbands for what they clearly considered to be petty grievances. The practice of individual men working their own smaller plots with the assistance of their wives and children, and the institutionalized pools of labour which have been described by Ojo are probably therefore, a relatively recent introduction to the area (Ojo 1966: 59-61).

In the units of production composed largely of kin, it seems, both men and women laboured on the farms under the supervision of their kin in the senior age grades. The head of the unit, the ba'ile functioned as the overall director of the farming operations and controlled the distribution of any surplus. The use to which the ba'ile could put any surplus depended upon the type of authority he had over his agbo'le. Gerontocratic authorities were expected to use any surplus for the benefit of the whole household while patrimonial and patriarchal authorities could use any surplus derived from production by the units they controlled to enhance their personal authority and prestige. In addition to controlling the distribution of produce from their own farms, title holders, including the oba, also controlled the distribution of produce they received in the form of tribute. This tribute came from

clients, subordinate title holders and the small holdings of any independent farmers in their constituencies.

Agricultural produce in the Idoani diet was supplemented by the meat of wild animals hunted down in the thick forest surrounding the settlements, as well as that of a variety of domestic animals including: a breed of short cattle that was immune to the attacks of tsetse fly breeding in these areas, goats, sheep and a variety of birds. Alani, title holders, and ba'ile were entitled to specific portions of the wild animals killed by those under their authority. Those portions of meat were used in the same way as agricultural surplus.

Not all title holders received tribute, but only those who were in a position to extract it from those on whose behalf they held title. Tribute was also paid, however, as a sign of respect for the recipient, to secure protection or patronage or to promote the political status of an individual in the hope that they would then promote the specific interests of those from who they received tribute. According to Oroge, this pattern of title holding and the economic relationships with which it is associated developed as a result of the collapse of Oyo (Oroge 1971). The series of conflicts which followed Oyo's collapse, Oroge argues, undermined existing structures of authority and economic relations and resulted in the establishment of states like Abeokuta, Ijaye and Ibadan in which the status of individual ologun was institutionalised. Although the size of the

households at Amusigbo, which it will be recalled was constituted of ologun like authorities, may never have rivaled those of the Ibadan ologun, the organisation of economic activities in some households of Amusigbo seems to have been similar to what obtained in the households of the Ibadan ologun. Many of the settlement's title holders are said to have been important jagun and to have had large numbers of slaves in their households. Oroge has shown how the large households of the ologun at Ibadan turned the settlement into the economic nerve centre of Yorubaland, drawing both economic and political authority away from the palaces which had occupied this position during the era when the Atlantic slave trade was at its height (Oroge 1971: 166). The economic strength of the ologuns' households was derived from their large populations consisting mainly of eru captured in raids on other settlements. Instead of being used for the Atlantic slave trade in which there is no evidence the Idoani were involved, the eru captured by the Amusigbo were probably used to work large farms from which the title holders were able to produce for export, and to transport the surplus produce to the markets where the produce could be exchanged for the arms and ammunition with which they waged war. The women of these large households were probably able to practise economies of scale in some of their occupations which, in addition to farming, included food processing, spinning, weaving, dyeing and potting, and

thus to produce surplus goods for trade. It may have been these economic activities at Amusigbo which made it possible for the settlement to threaten the position of Ido-Ani as the economic centre of the group of settlements. Furthermore it may be this economic competition which accounts for the hostility between the two settlements evident in the traditions of both Amusigbo and Owani. According to these traditions, it will be recalled, the advantage Alamusi gained over Alani, was economic in the form, according to tradition, of a woman who passed excreta of coral beads.

Among the events which must have had significance for the economy of Idoani before the introduction of Christianity are warfare and the introduction of Islam.

Until the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war Idoani had at various times prospered as a result of political instability in other areas. Its populations had been swelled by peoples fleeing from settlements in the north which came under attack from the Ilorin and the Nupe. Finding refuge at Idoani these peoples seem to have swelled the northernmost settlements in the area, mainly, it seems, the already culturally diverse settlements of Amusigbo. These shifts in population probably resulted in a greater emphasis in the political economy of Amusigbo on patriarchal households and an expansion of production for the external markets. These markets had been made more accessible by Ayorinde who, according to Johnson, opened a



trade route from Akoko through Owo to Benin (Johnson 1921; 322). As a result of hostilities with Owo, however, trade in that direction would have been interrupted. These disruptions at Ido-Ani may also, therefore, have been partly responsible for the northernmost settlements, particularly Amusigbo, becoming the economic centre of the settlements.

The havoc wreaked by the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, on the other hand, had disastrous consequences for economic activity at Idoani. The loss of populations as a result of capture and flight must have disrupted agricultural production and the transportation of export commodities. In the aftermath of the war, the focus of economic activities was once again Ido-Ani and in particular the oba's palace. Alani Atunwase, it will be recalled, was 'a rich and powerful feudal monarch who had all the people of the metropolis at Ido and the provinces at his beck and call as instruments of cheap agricultural labour and warfare' (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970; 9). The wealth and the power to which Alani Atunwase had access were derived from his command of an army composed of 150 Hausa/Tapa mercenaries with whose support he was able to assert an extremely patrimonial authority over populations which had been greatly reduced by the war.

Warfare then, had consequences for the levels of prosperity in the area as well as the relative strengths of competing types of political economy.

The economic significance of the introduction of Islam to Idoani can only be established, in the absence of any other evidence, by reference to the oral traditions and the life histories of individuals. Like the evidence about the introduction of Islam therefore, this evidence is suggestive rather than conclusive. The oral traditions at Owani suggest that early Islam was associated with an expansion of external trade, but it is not clear whether Muslims controlled or conducted the bulk of this trade. According to Imam Amuda who claimed that Islam was introduced to Ido-Ani before the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war, Mallam Sani, who was the first Ido-Ani to befriend the Hausa missionaries was, like them, also a trader and used to go to Epe and Lokoja to buy gunpowder cutlasses and 'hot drinks' which he would bring back to sell at Ido-Ani.

At Isure the introduction of Islam was associated with the introduction of rubber tapping, while at Iyayu, Alagbede senior is said to have derived considerable income from teaching the religion and the manufacture of charms.

The occupations of Muslims' fathers confirms an association between Islam and trade, the acquisition of new skills and at least one new way in which to exploit the environment, ie. rubber-tapping (see Table 6). It is probably also significant that in all 5 cases becoming a Muslim is associated with a measure of economic independence from the traditional authorities in the relations of production which characterised the political

Table 6: The economic activities of muslim fathers

Case 1: A native of Ido-Ani, this muslim father was described by his son as a soldier and a trader. The son who was about 75 years old when interviewed said his father had been one of the first to answer muslim missionaries call to Islam before the introduction of Christianity. He became involved with the muslim missionaries, who were also traders and used to come to Idoani from Hausa land, and became a trader. Eventually he gave up trading to become a soldier in the British army and fought in the first World War. After the war, he established a base at Benin by marrying a Benin woman and resumed trading between Idoani and Benin from where he used to buy pans for eating, cooking and for frying gari.

Case 2: This muslim father was also a native of Ido-Ani. According to his 82 year old son, he became a muslim outside Idoani but was taught how to be a muslim by some Hausa who came into the Idoani area to tap rubber. Rubber tapping had a very brief boom in Yorubaland, between 1895-99 which means that this muslim father is likely to have been confirmed in Islam during one of these periods (Berry 1975; 23.) In addition to teaching him Islam, the Hausa traders also taught this muslim father how to tap rubber.

Case 3: This muslim father was also a native of Ido-Ani. The son who was about 70 years old when interviewed described his father as a 'warrior' who had gone to fight at Bida, from where he became a muslim. When he returned to Ido-Ani to settle down, he took up farming and hunting. In addition however he was a professional drummer who travelled around the settlements in the Akoko district with his are.

Case 4: This muslim father was a native of Isure quarter and was captured during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju war to Ado Ekiti where he learned to make slippers and charm bags. The son who related these details was sixty five years old when interviewed. He could not say when or how his father had become a muslim except that he had met his father as a muslim. He probably learned his trade from those who taught him Islam since muslims from the north and Islam are generally associated with the working of leather and with the use of leather charm bags.

Case 5: This muslim father was a native of Isure. His son who was 60 years old when interviewed said his father was captured during the Ogedemgbe/Aduloju to a place called Afa. He was released 'when the Europeans came' and returned to Idoani. He became a muslim when a man called Siru came to Isure from Afa and made them all muslims. On his return to Idoani he started farming with the assistance of a wife he inherited from an elder brother.

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N.B. A total of 44 life histories were collected at Idoani between 1980 and 1981. In 34 cases individuals were able to state their father's religion and of these only these 5 described their fathers as having been muslims. The average age of those who described their fathers as muslims was approximately 70.4, the eldest being approximately 82 years and the youngest approximately 60 years (see Appendix VII).

economy of the pre-Christianity era.

As the result of the activities of the Muslim soldiers of Alani and the traders and preachers who lodged there, Ido-Ani had become, towards the end of the nineteenth century, an important centre for trade, culture and education in the area. By the time the settlement's concentration was being contemplated in the second decade of the twentieth century, however, the focus of economic activities in the settlements had shifted again to the northern most settlements, in particular to Oja Gbamo where people came to market from as far afield as Ifira in the north and Ibilo in the east (see Map 2). This shift seems to have been the result of the economic activities of the early Christians.

#### The economic significance of the introduction of Christianity

The introduction of Christianity is associated with profound changes in the structure of the political economy of Idoani.

For Williams the transformation of the political economy of western Nigeria was brought about by colonialism which created new economic opportunities and instituted a system of administration in which subordinates of the administration jostled with each other for the favour of the British colonial authorities (1976). While there can be no doubt that the establishment of colonialism had these effects, it is important to see why these changes came to be associated at Idoani with the

introduction of Christianity and how, therefore, the colonial administration and the economic changes associated with it were an integral part of Christianity.

It has already been established that Christianity was associated with an alternative political framework in which traditional authority was undermined and authority derived instead from the colonial administration. In this section it will be established that Christianity was also associated with an alternative economic framework which favoured youth, continuing a trend that had been encouraged by Ibadan and Ijesa involvement in the area. The alternative opportunities with which Christianity is associated, like the opportunity to join up with the ologun provided a basis from which whole groups of young men could establish their economic independence from their elders (2). Economic independence for these young men resulted in the loss of their labour from existing units of production and had unfavourable consequences for the organisation of production under traditional authorities. The vehemence with which these authorities responded to the Christians reflects the extent of the threat they felt the Christians behaviour posed to traditional authority which, as we have seen, was socio-political, religious as well as economic.

However strong the spiritual conviction which enabled the early Christians to endure the persecutions, the elders subjected them to, the economic opportunities with

which Christianity had become associated even before its introduction to Idoani, was a powerful incentive to stay with the religion despite the persecutions. These economic opportunities were: C.M.S. salaries, new craft occupations, trade and cocoa.

The new economic opportunity most directly related to Christianity, and, it seems, the most immediately attractive was the opportunity to earn a salary with the skills that could be acquired from involvement in Christianity eg. basic reading and writing. Initially, the C.M.S. was the only employer in what is now Owo Local Government Area, their operations at Idoani having been started by Isaac Tenabe who had introduced Christianity to Idoani. Between 1901 and 1902, Tenabe went to Rev. S.C. Phillips at Ondo for training in evangelical work and returned to Idoani a fully fledged evangelist. In 1910 Tenabe was succeeded as head of C.M.S. operations at Idoani by the catechist Ibileru who was a stranger. In these early years, with the exception of Tenabe, then, natives of Idoani were largely employed at the lower levels of the C.M.S. hierarchy, as houseboys and labourers to European missionaries and African clergy. As a result of their more intimate association with these elites of the C.M.S., however, their indoctrination into Christian and western European cultural traditions was more intense and it was these houseboys who were able to take up higher positions in the C.M.S., as well as in the colonial government's institutions. The progress of James Ajifola

is an example of this process.

Ajifola senior was one of the early converts to Christianity and in 1907, when Rev H.F. Gane wrote to Tenabe asking him to send 'delegates' to Ondo to help him carry his load while he inspected churches in the Owo district, Ajifola senior was one of those whom Tenabe sent. While he was on this mission, Ajifola senior persuaded the missionary Jebb to accept his eldest son, James, as a houseboy. It was in Jebb's household that James Ajifola began the education which ended in his graduation from the prestigious St. Andrews College Oyo. On graduating from this institution James Ajifola became a teacher, joining what was at that time a well paid and high status profession.

Opportunities for employment with the C.M.S., however, were limited as the experience of M.O. Agbayewa indicates (see Chapter 5).

Other economic opportunities associated with the introduction of Christianity were: the acquisition of craft and technical skills such as carpentry, tailoring, surveying, rubber tapping, cocoa and trade.

Details from the life histories collected indicates that although the skills popularly associated with the introduction of Christianity had been acquired by people who, as a result of the wars, had spent time abroad where there were opportunities to acquire them, not all sawyers, carpenters and tailors were Christians. At least one

early Muslim was a rubber tapper and Sasere of Ako, also a Muslim, was a wealthy sawyer and carpenter. Nevertheless, these skills have become associated with Christianity rather than Islam. Non-Christians found the burying of people in coffins and the wearing of tailored clothing distasteful, so that in the beginning the demand for these skills was probably restricted to the Christian community who had the cash to pay for them and whose style they were. Since the demand for these skills was limited, most of those who had these skills, like the father of Venerable Archdeacon M.O. Agbayewa, were also farmers and often traders too.

Among those named as having been responsible for the introduction of rubber tapping to Idoani were Daniel Owagbe and Fagbemito of Ako; and Adalakun Ogun and Kekere Ekun of Ido-Ani, all of whom are listed by the local historian S.O. Ajiroba as having been among those responsible for introducing Christianity to their settlements (Ajiroba 1972: 7-9). These men showed people how to tap rubber from trees growing wild in the area and then arranged for its transportation to trading centres where it could be exchanged for cash.

The association between the introduction of Christianity and the introduction of cocoa in other parts of Yorubaland is well documented and the evidence from Idoani fits what has been found to be the case elsewhere (Berry 1975; 41 ff; Peel 1983; 114 ff). Cocoa is said to have been introduced to Idoani in 1905 by Isaac Tenabe.



According to the story of his life related by his children, as Tenabe travelled around evangelising he would hold the Bible in one hand and cocoa in the other, saying this can bring salvation and this can bring you wealth. Tenabe's enthusiasm for cocoa had probably been acquired at Ondo from the Rev. Charles Phillips under whom Tenabe had trained as an evangelist between 1901 and 1902 and whose own enthusiasm for cocoa has already been documented (Berry 1975; 41). It was probably from Phillips at Ondo, that Tenabe obtained the cocoa seeds with which he started the first cocoa farm at Idoani. On what has been referred to as his 'plantation', he employed the labour of aspirant Christians and in return for the work they did for him he gave them cocoa seeds, instruction in Christianity and showed them how to cultivate the new crop. Because people from Ido-Ani did not go to work on Tenabe's farm, it is said, the settlement did not get cocoa as early as Iyayu and Amusigbo. Nevertheless, the fact that the first cocoa to be planted at Ido-Ani was brought from J.K. Coker's plantation at Agege from where Agbayewa had brought the African Church to Ido-Ani, must have confirmed the association between Christianity and the new crop in the community. Initially, the harvested cocoa had to be carried by head the long distances to Agenebode, Ondo, Ejirin, and Oshogbo to be sold. Partly because of the long distances it had to be carried and partly because at first it was thought that cocoa could only be planted on

the banks of ponds and streams, initially few Idoani seem to have taken the cultivation of cocoa seriously. Elderly members of Idoani's Co-Operative Produce Marketing Union, said that in the early days, although they planted cocoa, they did not make cocoa their work and concentrated instead on yams, maize, beans, kola and other food stuffs. In 1926 Lever Brothers started buying at Owo which made the marketing of cocoa easier, but it was not until 1935, the year King George V of the United Kingdom celebrated his jubilee and prices soared that there was a rush to cocoa at Idoani. Pa Coker of Amusigbo described how in 1935, while working as a court clerk at Isua, he visited a friend working for John Holt at Ikeram. In the store, he said, he was so surprised at the amount of money cocoa farmers were collecting from very small holdings, that in his excitement he could not sleep at night but lay awake planning a farm of his own at Idoani.

Although initially, the returns from cocoa were low and hardly sufficient to encourage serious cultivation of the crop, the cultivation of cocoa in Christian communities seems to have been motivated by young men's quest for economic independence and the need to finance the church. Both Phillips and Coker stressed independence and self sufficiency in Christian communities (Berry 1975; 45, Webster 1963; 425). At Idoani, furthermore, it was probably only in the Christian community, that young men could acquire the working capital and insurance which Berry has shown were necessary to establish cocoa farms

(Berry 1975; 55ff).

In addition to being an evangelist and a farmer, Tenabe was also a trader and it was largely from trade that the early Christian community's wealth was derived. Tenabe is said to have traded in partnership with Akinbodewa of Ido-Ani and Adewusi of Amusigbo, and to have helped many others to establish themselves in trade. The Christian traders travelled between Lagos, Ejirin, and Ayesan which, as well as being important trading centres also had strong Christian communities. At these places, they exchanged produce from Idoani, such as guinea pepper, woven cloth, palm oil, palm kernels, rubber and cocoa; for guns and ammunition, alcohol and tobacco, cloth, and other commodities manufactured in Europe, as well as Bibles and ABD Yoruba primers which were used for teaching people how to read and write Yoruba. These items were then marketed around the settlements of Idoani and beyond. It was the wealth the early Christians acquired largely through trade, in addition to their association with missionaries and colonial authorities which made them such an influential group in the community's politics and a threat to traditional authorities.

Before the introduction of Christianity, most of the long distance trade was controlled by elders and title holders. The only involvement of young men in the external trade was as porters. Since elders and title holders controlled the movements of strangers in the area

as well as any surplus agricultural produce, only they would have been in a position to organise and control the long distance trade which required teams of porters who had to be fed on the way. According to Pa Adeyanju, an elderly Christian of Amusigbo, elders used to supervise the transportation of palm kernel to Ajaokuta and Aboko, and it was with the profit from these sales that elders acquired the arms and ammunition which were their contribution to the settlement's war effort.

Christians were able to gain control of the expansion in trade which took place in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century largely because of connections they had established during captivity; their familiarity with areas outside Idoani and the ease with which they could establish trading relations with other Christians in other settlements. Of the twenty early Christians whose life histories were collected, there is evidence that thirteen had been traders; of the seven others, two were rubber workers, and since rubber was only tapped for export, this means that they too are likely to have been involved in trade. One of the others is said to have been a prosperous farmer which suggests that he was growing cash crops since in the D.O's intelligence report on Owo and Ifon Districts for 1932, the Assistant D.O. has claimed that very little farm produce was exported (Beeley 1932). Many of the early Christian traders, were also evangelists who carried the Christian message with them as they went

in search of markets for their commodities.

The significance of trade for the development and spread of Christianity was fourfold.

1. It consolidated the links between Christians at Idoani and Christians in other settlements which seemed as a result of the establishment of a Christian mission to be enjoying considerable prosperity which even non Christians could covet. According to elderly people interviewed at Idoani, among the manifestations of the prosperity these settlements were enjoying were their large markets where farmers could exchange their produce for cash and imported goods could be purchased. These markets attracted people to the settlements. Population size has remained an important criterion for assessing a community's wealth. Other manifestations of prosperity were: the large number of buildings in these settlements including houses with two storeys and corrugated iron roofs; schools in which, once educated, native sons could earn incomes to be spent in the development of their own towns; political cohesiveness epitomised by the existence of an important and wealthy oba; a long organised title structure and enlightenment referred to as olaju (for a detailed and succinct analysis of this concept, see Peel 1978).

2. Through trade Christians, especially young men had been able to free themselves from economic dependency on traditional authorities in the community. Some Christians

made loans to people interested in going into trade, but to acquire the trading knowhow of the best routes and how to purchase goods for trade etc., it was usually necessary to serve an apprenticeship with somebody already established in trade, assisting for example with carrying or the management of carriers. Serving an apprenticeship usually involved moving into the compound of the trader and as had been the case in the past, apprentices had a tendency to adopt the ritual habits of their master.

3. The prominent role of Christians in the expansion of trade and the consequent wealth in settlements where there were large numbers of Christians, firmly established an association between the new religion, and material prosperity.

4. As has already been noted, among the items which the traders brought to Idoani were Bibles and ABD Yoruba primers. These were essential equipment for aspirant Christians who had to pass a written catechism test before being baptised and thus becoming a fully fledged member of the Christian community. These literary materials in which the Christians traded intensified the extent of their involvement with Christianity and the spreading of the Christian message.

#### Contemporary occupational structure

The impact of the economic opportunities associated with the introduction of Christianity and their effect on

the structure of the economy is reflected in Idoani's contemporary occupational structure.

Table 7: Occupations at Idoani (1981)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Sex Unknown</u>	<u>Total</u>
Farmers	84	58		142
Craftspeople	30	18		48
Petty Traders	5	62		67
Wage Labourers	14	6		20
Clerical Workers	8	3		11
Teachers	14	9		23
Students	10	8		18
No Occupation	0	10		10
Non Recorded	4	10	5	19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>358</b>

NB. The total number of adults involved in the survey was 343. 15 people, 11 men and 4 women, claimed, that they had 2 occupations. It is this which accounts for the difference between the survey population and the number of occupations listed. All the 11 men with 2 occupations combined farming with something else, 7 with hunting (which has been classified as a 'craft'), 3 with other 'craft' occupations and 1 man combined farming with a wage labour occupation, being a nightwatchman. All 4 women combined petty trading with something else. 2 combined it with sewing, 1 combined it with weaving and 1 combined petty trading with farming.

Source: General Survey 1981, see source V.

The occupational categories listed in table 7 reflect the basis of contemporary economic differentiation at Idoani and the varying status of different occupations. There is a total absence of business men, merchants, professionals, bureaucrats, politicians, army officers in the occupations of the survey sample etc. There is then, a total absence among those resident at Idoani of any representatives of what Williams has referred to as the bourgeois class (Williams 1976). According to Williams,

in the political economy of post independence Nigeria, because investment opportunities and sources of capital accumulation are dominated by expatriate interests, the state, which regulates international relations plays a major role in the economy and the bourgeoisie must, therefore, achieve their economic advantages through the political process. The economic objectives of the occupational categories which characterise this structural category can only be achieved in the urban centres and so natives of Idoani in these occupational categories normally work and are resident in Nigeria's urban centres.

By far the bulk of Idoani's population are farmers and the fact that only 40% described themselves as farmers when interviewed is probably a reflection of the low status, because of the low income with which this occupation is associated in contemporary Idoani. Farmers' cash income is derived mainly from cocoa, palm products, kola, cassava, maize and yams. All of these (since yam is usually marketed in dried pieces ready to be converted into yam flour) require labour intensive processing before they are ready for marketing. The farmers' income is low, seasonal and subject to the vagaries of climate. Few farmers can afford to invest in only one of these crops. Other factors which make farming for cash an unattractive occupation because of the low returns are: the high cost of labour and transport, and the low prices that farm produce now commands in local and international markets.



All farmers, therefore, must also farm for subsistence.

The category 'craftspeople' includes the following occupations: native doctors, blacksmiths, hunters, weavers, winetappers and goldsmiths, as well as bricklayers, painters, carpenters, tailors, seamstresses, bicycle repairers, plumbers, drivers, shoemakers, mechanics and photographers. Given the low income in the community reflected in the generally low standard of living, the income derived from these craft occupations is rarely enough to live on and so most of those in this category are also farmers who farm for subsistence but also aim to convert into cash any surplus they can realise from farming activities.

The same also applies to the majority of petty traders all most all of who are women (see Table 7). Most of the women's trade is in cash crops they have processed themselves, cooked food, native medicines (to which a substantial section of the market is dedicated), or a few provisions stacked on a table outside their home which are sold mainly to other members of the household and neighbours (3). Only an elite few can deal in the more lucrative items like cloth, beer and minerals or a substantial quantity of provisions.

Only 15% of the surveyed population receive a regular cash income. These are in the following occupations: wage labour, clerical work and teaching. People in these occupations also tend to do some subsistence farming so that they have no need to purchase food items from local

farmers and can save their cash income for other purposes. Although the difference in their incomes may be very small, the status of clerical workers is higher than that of wage labourers, because clerical workers tend to be better educated and younger than wage labourers. Wage labour is also lower status because it can be irregular. The appointments of cooks, cleaners, matrons, washermen, nightwatchmen, and drivers, who account for 14 of the 20 wage labourers in the survey sample, may be permanent and regular while the appointments of agric labourers, casual labourers and road labourers is usually temporary and intermittent.

Of the 24 teachers in the sample, only 3 were secondary school teachers and all of these were men. The rest were primary school teachers. The income, status and standard of living of secondary school teachers is higher than that of primary school teachers. Although all teachers qualify for elite status within Idoani, their position in the wider political economy of contemporary Nigeria is undermined by the fact that because they are in a rural area, they have limited access to the political processes at state and national levels which determines their access to 'in service' training, rate of promotion or movement out of the rural areas to more lucrative teaching or administrative positions in urban centres.

Students have no income and their status in the community is therefore ambiguous. The ambiguity of their

status is also due partly to the fact that some of the students in the community are the sons and daughters of Idoani's bourgeoisie resident outside Idoani and partly to the fact that while they are still students, it is not clear how high they will rise as a result of the educational opportunities available to them.

With the establishment of a cash economy, the emphasis in Idoani's political economy has shifted from the production of agricultural surplus for local consumption and use for political objectives defined within the local community; to the production of agricultural surplus for the more distant national and international markets and thus to a peasant status in the political economy of Nigeria. Like political authority, economic authority now lies outside the community in the hands of state and national government which extracts agricultural surplus from communities like Idoani through taxation and fixing the price of commodities destined for the international market. It is from this agricultural surplus Williams has argued that governments have financed administration, industrial expansion and the savings intended to enhance the economy's productive capacity (Williams 1977).

There is little evidence of a specifically peasant consciousness among Idoani's farmers but in the community as a whole a consciousness of the community's low status because of its distance from the centre of government is reflected in the composition as well as the aims,

objectives and activities of such institutions as the Idoani Progressive Union and the Idoani Community.

Through the years, these bodies, and their predecessors, have persistently petitioned government for various infrastructural developments such as roads, pipe born water, electricity etc.

Such economic differentiation as there is at Idoani is related to income and based essentially on occupational differences.

That economic differentiation related to differences in the income derived from new occupations has played an important role in the development of Christianity is reflected in the development of institutional religion.

#### The economics of institutional religion

When Tenabe preached that Christianity could bring salvation and cocoa wealth, a cynical bystander able to see into the future might have commented 'and wealth you are going to need in order to get that salvation', for becoming a Christian, like taking a title, soon became an expensive business. As is the case today, expenditure was almost endless for the active Christian. Churches were and still are, built by their congregations as was the mission house where the church's paid worker (evangelist, catechist or pastor) lived. Indeed one of the reasons the Ido-Ani had been so bitter about the removal of Ibileru to Iyayu was that during his absence on leave, they had been asked to put up an expensive accomodation for him. It was

also expected that contributions from the congregation would pay the church worker's salary. Catechism classes which were necessary for baptism and confirmation and useful for learning how to read Yoruba, speak some English and write a little, also cost money. These class fees were to become a crucial measure of active membership as the years passed, and were the basis of some of the elitism in the Anglican Church.

↳ By helping others to become traders and cash crop farmers, Christians were establishing a pool of potential investors in the church. In return for their investment, the members of the church had preferential access to a network of support which stretched beyond Idoani to some of the most enlightened, most literate and wealthiest people in Yorubaland. Church membership also gave people access to patrons to back ventures, clientele for crafts and customers for wares.

Another attractive return that church members got for their investment was the assurance of an elaborate burial regardless of whether they had children to perform burial rites or of the circumstances of their family, whereas previously burial rites were a critical aspect of Idoani's gerontocratic socio-political structures. According to elderly informants, this was a major attraction. To receive this burial, an individual only had to have been a member of the church. The mere profession of faith however was not sufficient qualification for membership. ✕

A member of the church was somebody who not only professed Christianity, but who also paid catechism class fees and had been admitted by baptism to the Christian community of which the church was the institutional representation.

According to 'Tisa' Omodele of Oke Ido quarter, at the time of his father Jacob Omodele's death in 1978, even though he had been Oke Ido's Baba Egbe at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, the pastor first of all checked his records to see whether the deceased's class fees and harvest festival payments were up to date before he would agree to perform a Christian burial (4).

While the prosperity members of the church enjoyed provided an incentive for people to become members of the ijo, the church with its demands for class fees and thanksgiving offerings provided an incentive for people to become involved in the cash economy that was transforming the structure of economic relations throughout Yorubaland.

As the institutional focus of the individuals who were the agents responsible for changing the structure of economic relations at Idoani, the Anglican Church has played a critical role in economic development at Idoani, for a long time, it was the most highly organized and wealthiest institution in the community. It is partly therefore, the economic success with which the Anglican Church became associated that accounts for the success of Christianity over Islam and the development of a propensity for new groups to choose a new church, as their institutional focus. The economic success with which the

Anglican Church has been associated is also partly responsible for the proliferation of churches which is the concern of the next chapter.

X The churches at Idoani have continued to play a vital role in the economy of Idoani. Church membership continues to consume a large proportion of members' income, for as the institutional representations of specific communities, they compete with one another: to build larger and more elaborate churches; to have the most elaborate thanksgiving and other occasional services, and for memberships, particularly that of strangers. This competition, like that which goes on between the quarters keeps the cost of church membership rising.

People at Idoani have continued to pour funds into the building of churches and the maintenance of structures and organisation far removed from their situation, such as church headquarters in and outside Nigeria, even though at the same time the community has had difficulty in raising funds for critical infrastructural developments that it is clear are desperately desired.

In the next chapter which is concerned with the institutional development of Christianity and Islam up to 1981 we shall see how, although originally one attraction of Christianity was the new unity it promoted in the community of settlements, it has become, partly because of the elitism with which the Anglicans infused the new

religion, a new focus for divisions in the community which are reflected in the processes I have called 'the proliferation of churches'. It is partly the Anglicans economic superiority that has made their elitism possible.



## Notes to Chapter 6

1. On a record released in 1980, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the popular Nigerian musician pointed out that while the officials of both religions were enjoining suffering in this world for the sake of enjoyment in the next to their adherents, they themselves were busy enjoying in this world.
2. According to Venerable Archdeacon Chief D.O. Asabia, when Olowokande a popular leader of the Ido-Ani egbe whose duty it was to bring out an egun became Christian, many of his age mates followed his example.
3. Provisions are manufactured foods and household goods and includes such items as: tinned sardines, corned beef, milk, bread, chocolate drinks such as bournvita, bread, toilet soap, soap powder, candles, matches, etc.
4. In the end Omodele was refused a Christian burial because he had insisted that he be buried in his house at Oke Ido rather than in the burial ground on the outskirts of the Oke leju quarter and the town, far away from his people.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Proliferation of Churches

The aims of this chapter are to describe the growth of denominational variety and the character of contemporary religious differentiation in the Idoani community.

The chapter is divided into three sections, the first of which analyses the relationship between the Anglican and African Churches. It was, this chapter will argue, the positions these two churches adopted towards each other and towards the wider community that established the contexts for the institutional development of both Christianity and Islam. The second section gives a chronological account of how each of the fifteen churches listed in Table 8 was introduced to Idoani, a profile of their membership as well as their role and status in the community. The third section describes and analyses the development of Islam in response to the proliferation of Christian churches.

#### Anglicans and Africans

The establishment of the first African Church at Lagos was primarily a reaction to what were seen as racist and paternalistic policies of successive general secretaries of the C.M.S. after the departure of Henry Venn from that office in 1872 (Ayandele 1966: 180ff). In particular there was dissatisfaction with the relationship

that was developing between European and African clergy within the C.M.S. and the specific event which precipitated the breakaway was the C.M.S.'s refusal to have another African Bishop consecrated to succeed Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther who had supervised the Niger Diocese with Europeans serving under him (Webster 1964: 4). Instead, two Assistant Bishops were created and James Johnson, the popular candidate for consecration was humiliated.

Johnson remained with the C.M.S., but for eight hundred of his parishioners at St. Pauls in Lagos his humiliation was too much and they broke away from the C.M.S. to establish a separate church organisation. This breakaway provided an opportunity for African Christians to give expression to growing dissatisfactions with C.M.S. policy relating to the admission of Africans to membership of the church. The C.M.S. had consistently refused to baptise polygamists, or those who had not been married according to Anglican rites. They had denied sacraments to members known to have taken another wife after having been married in church, and had insisted upon literacy as a requirement for baptism. There was some disagreement among the breakaway group as to what the new organisation's stand should be with regard to these issues and there were further splits. It was the faction led by J.K. Coker that became the African Church which trained Moses Agbayewa and sent him back to Ido-Ani to establish the African Church there. This faction placed emphasis on

evangelism and upholding Yoruba social and political institutions as well as the morality associated with them. According to Webster, it was this faction which changed the European missionaries 'preach, teach, baptise' methods of spreading Christianity to a 'preach, baptise, teach' routine (J.B. Webster 1964: 47, 119). The accuracy of this observation is reflected in the speed with which the membership of Ido-Ani's African Church grew shortly after its introduction, and Agbayewa's account of how he was given authority by J.K. Coker to travel around Akoko establishing the African Church after having spent just three months at the training institution at Ifako Agege.

Because of their 'love/hate' relationship with the missionaries, however, the Yoruba creoles who founded the African Church did not innovate in doctrine at all. They emulated traditional political institutions in their organisation with church leaders enjoying a status similar to that of Yoruba obas, but their contempt for traditional religion was equal if not more than that of the missionaries (Peel 1968; 55 ff). The attitudes of Idoani's African Church pioneers like Agbayewa and Asabia, suggests that like the Lagos creoles they too secretly envied the validity which to them the Anglicans derived from their association with Europeans.

The breakaway by ten members of the Anglican Church at Ido-Ani to form the African Church was not so much a reaction to the racial politics which had inspired the

breakaway at Lagos but like the breakaway at Lagos, the breakaway at Ido-Ani had some political as well as some economic motivation. The specific incidents which prompted the breakaway were the removal of the C.M.S. agent, and the education he had been giving children at Ido-Ani, to Iyayu, and the inability of the C.M.S. to meet the educational and career ambitions of Agbayewa. Above all, the African Church provided a means by which people at Ido-Ani could be educated and Christian without subordinating themselves to Iyayu.

Because the African Church was committed to upholding existing social and political institutions, becoming a Christian was no longer a crime resulting in alienation from family and from traditional social and political institutions such as marriage, age group organisation, title taking and obaship. As a result, in addition to the ten members who broke away from the C.M.S. previously excluded authorities in the community were able to support the church and a more politically influential membership was quickly established at Ido-Ani, the most significant of these was Alani Falade I. In all but one of the other settlements, however, the African Church had no impact whatsoever. Members of the African Church at Ido-Ani have been responsible for establishing branches of the church throughout the Akoko area but there is only one other small church in their own vicinity.

The elitism which characterised the C.M.S. organisation at Lagos had become an aspect of Anglicanism

at Idoani. The economic prosperity of the Christians and their social cohesiveness made people anxious to join even though the conditions for membership had become increasingly stringent. The elitism of the Anglicans was manifest in the motto name *bo da wa* (whether or not you are good, come) which Anglicans used as an insult for members of the African Church. Today that elitism is manifest in the fact that among the members of the church are the towns most prominent and influential persons referred to as the 'elites'. These include retired professionals, senior civil servants and army officers. Of the 23 teachers included in the General Survey sample (the highest status occupational category in the survey sample), 16 (70%) were Anglicans, while of 18 students in the sample (who may be classified as aspirant elites) 13 (72%) were Anglicans. Among the lower status occupational categories, the proportion of Anglicans was much lower. Among farmers for instance, only 46% were Anglicans.

At Owani Anglicans still claim elite status, but, as an expression of opposition to the concentration of settlements at Oja Gbamo and the community there, the larger and more prestigious church at Owani is, the African Church, which like the Anglican Church at Oja Gbamo is also called Holy Trinity. That these two churches bear the same name is a reflection of the similarities in their aims and objectives and the character of the competition between them. Only 38% of

the population surveyed at Owani, however, were members of the African Church as compared to the 51% of the population that are Anglicans at Oja Gbamo. 24% of the Owani surveyed were Anglicans while 30% were members of the Christ Apostolic Church. These figures suggest that although the status of the Anglican Church at Owani has been undermined, Holy Trinity African Church has not been as successful an institutional focus for the Owani community as Holy Trinity Anglican Church has been in the larger community.

There are three reasons why, despite the fact that it made Christianity more accessible, the African Church failed to have any impact on all but one of the other settlements. Firstly, the Christian elites in each of the other settlements were vehemently opposed to any attempt by the African Church to establish churches in their settlements. In this they were supported by the colonial authorities whose opposition to the African Church was even more vehement than that of the C.M.S. officials at Owo. Secondly, the fact that the church had been introduced to the area by the Ido-Ani in opposition to a distribution of resources which favoured the other settlements, which had never been happy with Ido-Ani's claims to primacy, made the church unattractive to the people of the other settlements. Thirdly, because the headquarters of the church were at Ido-Ani, the establishment of the church in any of the other settlements would have resulted in the subordination of those other settlements to the Ido-Ani

whose claim to be the spiritual, political, and economic centre of the community of settlements, these settlements were not prepared, it seems, to concede at this time. Witness Olupara's refusal to submit to Alani discussed in Chapter 4.

How then despite the struggle for independence from Ido-Ani which seems to have characterised the relationship between the settlements at this time did the African Church come to be established at Isure within a year of its introduction to Idoani? In part, it was probably a reaction to Isure's exclusion from any significant role in the Anglican Church which was situated in between Amusigbo and Iyayu and had become the focus of C.M.S. operations in the area. This church was some distance from Isure and as a result it was the members of the Amusigbo and Iyayu communities that were the most influential in the Christian community. Isure's status in the Christian community was therefore a junior one. The establishment of the African Church at Isure was also due, however, to the personality of the individual who introduced the church to the Isure. The story of the introduction of the African Church to Isure not only illustrates the importance of the personality of the carrier to the establishment of a new religion or church, but represents the beginning of that process which was to make Christianity relevant to ordinary people with no political or economic ambitions. The story also illustrates,



incidentally, the importance to a community of its daughters and the type of influence women could exercise in Yoruba society at that time.

The African Church was taken to Isure by Joshua Akinbodewa of Ido-Ani. According to his son, Venerable Archdeacon D.O. Akinbodewa, his father was one of the earliest Christians at Ido-Ani and a trading partner of Isaac Tenabe of Iyayu and Adetuyi of Amusigbo. His association through trade with these two founding fathers of Christianity at Idoani, suggests that Akinbodewa was a wealthy and established member of the early Christian community. Unfortunately however, the wife he had married according to Anglican rites, although a mother as the result of a previous marriage, did not bear any more children and so Akinbodewa married another wife who gave birth to three children. As a result of this marriage, Joshua Akinbodewa became a sort of second class member of the Anglican Church, excluded from the sacraments and from official positions of influence in the church. Disillusioned with the C.M.S. but firmly committed to Christianity, Akinbodewa followed Agbayewa to J.K. Coker's training Institute at Ifako Agege, charged with the mission of acquiring the educational and evangelical skills which would enable them to establish a school and a church at Ido-Ani. On his return to Idoani from Agege, although he made evangelical tours around Akoko, Isure was Akinbodewa's home.

Table 8: Idoani's Churches, some vital statistics (1980-81)

Church	Quarter	Date	School established
Holy Trinity (Anglican)	Amusigbo/ Iyayu	1892	1926
St. Marks (Anglican)	Owani	1892	None
Holy Trinity (African)	Owani	1917	1917
St. Stephens (African)	Isure	1917	1917
C.A.C.	Ako	1930	1939
St. Michaels (Catholic)	Amusigbo	1945	1975
C.A.C.	Owani	1954	None
Cherubim & Seraphim	Amusigbo	1955	None
Unity Church (Methodist)	Iyayu	1962	1976
Kingdom Hall (Jehovahs Witness)	Oke Ido	1965	None
Apostolic Church	Iyayu	1965	1975
Remember Jesus Come (R.J.C.)	Amusigbo	1966	None
Celestial Church of Christ	Amusigbo	1978	None
Faith Gospel Mission	Amusigbo	1980	None

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

Table 9: Religious Differentiation according to Quarter

Ijo	Ako	Amusigbo	Isewa	Isure	Iyayu	Oke	Ido	Owani	Total
'Pagan'	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	
Muslim	4	0	0	4	12	3	1	24	
Anglican	3	47	9	14	76	8	9	166	
African	0	1	0	18	0	0	14	33	
C.A.C	2	10	3	22	12	7	11	67	
Catholic	1	0	0	2	3	4	1	11	
Cherubim & Seraphim	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	6	
Methodist	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	4	
Jehovahs Witness	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	
Apostolic	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	11	
R.J.C.	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	
Celestial Faith	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Gospel	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	
None	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
Unknown	4	1	0	0	1	2	0	8	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>343</b>	

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

Table 10: Religious Differentiation according to Occupation

Ijo	FS	CR	PTS	WLS	CWS	TS	SS	NO OCC	NR	TOTALS
'Pagan'	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Muslim	15	2	3	1	0	0	2	2	0	25
Anglican	65	19	36	6	7	16	13	4	6	172
African	15	6	5	5	0	1	1	0	3	36
C.A.C.	33	10	12	6	1	3	2	1	2	70
Catholic	3	6	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	12
Cherubim & Seraphim	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	6
Methodist	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4
Jehovahs Witness	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Apostolic	7	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	12
R.J.C.	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Celestial	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gospel	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
None	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>358</b>

key      FS = Farmers                      CR = Craftspeople  
           PTS = Petty Traders            WLS = Wage Labourers  
           CWS = Clerical Workers       TS = Teachers  
           SS = Students                NO OCC = No Occupation  
           NR = Non Recorded

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

Table 11: Religious Differentiation according to Sex

Ijo	Men	Women	Not Specified	Totals
'Pagan'	3	0	0	3
Muslim	14	10	0	24
Anglicans	74	92	0	166
African	13	20	0	33
C.A.C.	31	36	0	67
Catholic	8	3	0	11
Cherubim & Seraphim	1	5	0	6
Methodist	2	2	0	4
Jehovahs Witness	2	1	0	3
Apostolic	5	6	0	11
R.J.C.	2	1	0	3
Celestial	0	1	0	1
Gospel	0	2	0	2
Non	1	0	0	1
Unknown	2	1	5	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>343</b>

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

Table 12: Religious Differentiation according to Age

Ijo	16-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76-85	86-95	96+	Ng.	Total
'Pagan'	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
Muslim	5	3	8	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	24
Anglicans	27	33	26	26	29	12	11	1	0	1	166
African	3	9	7	3	4	3	1	1	1	1	33
C.A.C.	10	16	19	10	8	1	3	0	0	0	67
Catholic	1	4	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	11
Cherubim & Seraphim	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	6
Methodist	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Jehovahs Witness	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Apostelic	2	3	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	11
R.J.C.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Celestial	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gospel	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Non	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>343</b>

Source: General Survey 1981, Source V.

The aspects of Akinbodewa's personality which seem to have been of particular significance then, were his skill as a herbalist healer, for which he had acquired quite a reputation at Isure and in other settlements, and his generous disposition. The Idoani believe that sickness is sometimes caused by the place one is living, or the people a person is living with, so it is common for people to leave home in order to give a sickness the chance to leave them. As a result, Akinbodewa's clients often stayed with him at his farm while they were being treated, and as a result of his hospitality became quite close to him. In addition, Akinbodewa had particularly strong affinal ties with the Isure community. His first wife was from Isure and despite the fact that they had been married in church and she bore him no children, he continued to care for her. Altogether Akinbodewa married four times and two of the women he later married were from Isure. Because of his ties through marriage, his wealth and his healing skills, Akinbodewa's and his new Church were regarded as a valuable acquisition rather than a threat to Isure's independence. The fact that a substantial majority of the Isure voted James Falade of the African Church for oba in the poll conducted by Captain Dermot O'Connor in 1921 indicates, however, that the establishment of the African Church strengthened political cohesion between Isure and Ido-Ani.

Another factor which probably influenced the Isure people's decision to allow the African Church to be

established at Isure was the speed with which the African Church was establishing schools throughout Akoko. According to Agbayewa, until he went for pastoral training in 1922, he was like a travelling teacher. As soon as he had gathered a group of children together in a community, he would leave one of his comrades from J.K. Coker's training institution at Ifako Agege in the community and move on.

The African Church had some success at Ido-Ani and Isure, but its introduction did not result in the mass involvement in Christianity which characterises the contemporary religious culture of Idoani. Even though the African Church adopted a less critical attitude towards Yoruba social and political institutions making membership less difficult to obtain in theory, in fact the doctrine and ritual emphasis as well as the institutional orientation of the church remained very similar to that of the Anglican Church. In particular, the African Church at Ido-Ani soon began to imitate the elitist practices of the Anglicans and became more interested in advancing the status of their members than in spreading Christianity. As Webster has indicated the vigorous evangelising of the early years, which is incompatible with elitism, was dying out by the 1920s (Webster 1965).

The introduction of the African Church to Idoani then meant that while the basis for selection into the elite fold had changed, nothing had really been done, with the



exception perhaps in the instance of Isure, to make the practice of Christianity significant to any but those with political or economic ambitions.

### Christ Apostolic Church

The Christ Apostolic Church was institutionalised from the movement which was known from the beginning as Aladura (Peel 1968). In July 1930, at a meeting of Faith Tabernacle at Ilesa, a prophet called Joseph Babalola set in motion what Peel has called the largest mass movement Yorubaland has ever seen. For over a month Babalola preached to people who came to Ilesa from all over Yorubaland to hear him, advising them to renounce evil spirits and witchcraft, and 'to bring out for burning all their idols and juju, for God was powerful enough to answer all their needs and to cure them' (Peel 1968; 91). Individuals from Idoani witnessed Babalola's revival at Ilesa and brought the news back to Idoani. At Idoani, the news was that when witches drank Babalola's water they died away. Like many other oba in the north-east Alani Falade I sent an invitation for Babalola to visit Idoani and hold a revival, even though, according to the D.O., the Owo in whose town the D.O. had his seat, had forbidden the movement of Aladuras in the district (2). With this invitation, Alani Falade I sent Chief Sasere of Ako who is said to have been one of his closest friends. Such was the demand in the different settlements of the country for Babalola to hold revivals at that time, that Sasere

followed him around for three months while he visited all those places which had put in a request for a revival to be held in their town before Idoani, fearing that if he was not there at the time all previous engagements had been honoured, some other place might snatch Babalola away.

On his arrival at Idoani in November 1930, Babalola camped in front of the oba's mother's house where Alani Falade I was staying at that time. A soap box was erected at the centre of the clearing in front of the house and for the three weeks he spent at Idoani, morning noon and night, Babalola held the praying sessions which had earned the movement the name Aladura. As at other places where Babalola had held revivals, people were healed with omi iye - holy water and a variety of 'idols and juju' (which artistic expressions of religious ideas have been called) were brought out to be burnt. This revival was attended by members of the Anglican and African Churches, muslims and 'pagans' as well as peoples from other settlements, and was, like those which had preceded it, a huge success.

Babalola spent 3 weeks at Idoani and before he left, he told the congregation which had gathered at the spot where the revival was being held to continue praying three times daily and promised to return. A new ijo was formed. Alani Falade I, whose prestige had, as he had probably calculated, received a tremendous boost from the revival, gave the new congregation a site at Isure near the site of

the African Church where they could meet and a temporary church consisting of a set of poles supporting a thatched covering was erected.

Babalola's revival incensed the authorities of the Anglican and African Churches at the larger of Idoani's two settlements which suffered heavy losses of membership to the movement. Their anger reflects the fact that the movement represented a serious challenge to these churches claim to exclusive control of Christianity, and the power with which it had become associated, as well as, therefore, to their power and prestige in the community. In a petition to C.M.S. authorities dated 13.12.31, the Anglicans complained that

the Aladura movement nearly wrecked our church had it not been for the pastor and the District Officer whom God had used as an instrument to put down their trouble (3).

In addition to loss of membership, the African Church at Isure also had to contend with the proximity of the Aladuras to their own church. They therefore sent a delegation to the D. O. to complain that Alani Falade I had allotted land which really belonged to them to the Aladuras, that the Aladuras were too many for the land to accommodate, and that the noise they made was making it difficult for them to conduct their own services. No records were available concerning the D.O.'s response to these complaints, but the Anglicans' letter quoted above suggests that some action was taken against the Aladura. An entry in the D.O.'s travelling diary dated 22-23

October (some three weeks before Babalola's visit to Idoani) indicates that the colonial authorities were not favourably disposed towards the Aladuras, and perceived the movement as a threat to their own objectives.

It is sickening to listen to the nonsense that has been spread abroad [by the Aladuras]. The schools are empty and children told that Europeans are leaving Africa, that it is useless to learn books, that tax should not be paid and everything taught by the Europeans is rubbish. What hope is there for an embryo native administration? It is hard enough now to get Chiefs to do anything, this sort of talk makes it more difficult (brackets mine) (4).

At the Owani settlement the Aladura movement had very little impact, partly because the relationship between the African Church and traditional authorities, meant that the church was more deeply entrenched and that the movement therefore faced a more co-ordinated opposition, and partly because of the traditional hostility between the two communities. Only a few people from Owani are said to have attended the revival at the larger settlement.

One of the sanctions that the Anglican and African Churches took against the new movement was to ban all children of parents who had joined the movement from attending their schools. Some of those who had joined the movement, under this pressure from their former churches and the colonial authorities returned to their old churches, but a significant number settled down to wait for the return of Babalola. The prayer leader was Jeremiah Aiyemo of Isure.

Alani Falade I is said to have continued

surreptitiously to support the movement he had been responsible for introducing to the community, in the hope, it seems, of establishing some basis for his authority in his new home by association with what was clearly a powerful movement. As a former member of the African Church he was unpopular with the more powerful Anglican community at the larger settlement which, because of its wealth, its relationship with colonial authorities and the major role it had played in bringing about the concentration of settlements, formed a powerful and influential caucus at the new settlement. Without their support Alani Falade I's ability to exercise authority at the new settlement was seriously undermined (5).

In 1934, Babalola returned to Idoani and stayed for two weeks, during which time he is said to have baptised about one thousand people. Those who were present claim that Alani Falade I was the first to go into the water for baptism. As they came from the Odorogbo pond at Iyayu where the baptisms were performed, the Aladura danced through the town blowing a bugle and rejoicing. According to the report that was later made to the D.O., the Aladura sang that

the people must change their minds because the end of the world is getting near (6).

Anglicans who claim to have witnessed these events say that the Aladuras also sung abusive songs about the C.M.S. but the C.A.C. deny this. Whatever the case, fighting broke out between members of the Anglican Church and the

Aladuras in the course of which four Aladuras and two C.M.S. members were wounded. The Superintendent of Education, a Mr Lloyd, who happened to be visiting Idoani at the time, interceded and managed to stop the fighting, but in order to prevent further outbreaks, the D.O. sent two constables to Idoani for a week and then visited the town to enquire into the matter and settle it. He issued instructions that in future the Aladuras should not hold processions. He also ordered the Aladuras to demolish the open thatched shelter which had served them as a church and in his presence, the Alani and Council gave them another site away from any other church, on the outskirts of the town in Oke Ido, the Alani's quarter. At this rocky site, the Aladura built an impressive church with a corrugated iron roof (7), the materials for which were carried from Owo on the heads of members of the church.

In 1938, since their children were still being excluded from other schools, the Aladura began to gather children together to start their own school and in 1939 their school received government approval. These church and school building activities contradict the millennial character with which the movement was initially associated. As was the case elsewhere, this millennial character of the movement eventually gave way elsewhere to more 'worldly concerns' (Peel 1968; 99-100).

In 1949, the church at Oke Ido had become too small to hold the congregation. The Alako, who was a member of

the church, allocated the church a large plot of land in Ako on which the membership built a larger church, a Mission to house a pastor, and a shelter for those who needed a spiritual environment in order to restore their health. In the C.A.C., the use of medicine both native and 'Western European' was strictly prohibited, for prayer was believed to be the most effective and only way of maintaining and restoring health.

According to some of those who joined the Aladura movement at Babalola's revival, one of the attractions of the movement was the fact that unlike the Anglican Church, it did not require an individual to be literate in order to be baptised. The effect of this and other elitist tendencies in Anglican Church at the larger settlement where the movement had such a major impact, seems to have been to give the religion a high status and make it impossible for the churches to meet the steadily increasing demand for the elite status associated with the new religion, as the experience of Ido-Ani had demonstrated. With the increasing demand, it had become possible to extract a high price for church membership in terms of the degree of commitment and involvement as well as in cash. Until the introduction of the Aladura movement to Idoani then, with the exception of the African Church at Isure, Christianity's attraction could not be divorced from the political and economic benefits and the elite status which membership of either of the two Holy Trinity Churches conferred upon the individual.

An important attraction of Aladura Christianity on the other hand was the emphasis Babalola placed on the power of God, prayer and healing. Those who had been present at the revivals described how people were cured of all kinds of sicknesses and how women who had until then been unable to conceive, became pregnant. It was, it will be recalled, partly Akinbodewa's healing power which had attracted people to the African Church at Isure. With this emphasis, it seems, Christianity had begun to address the concerns of ordinary individuals and began to compete with traditional cults which had addressed these concerns.

The bulk of those who joined the Aladura movement are said to have been young men as had been the case with the earliest converts to Christianity, but in addition it is said that many elders and large numbers of women were becoming involved in Christianity as a result of the movement. Because of its focus on health issues, the movement was bound to be attractive to women. For young men, just as the Anglican Church had done for an the first generation of Christians, the movement offered an opportunity to acquire the elite status associated with Christianity without the burden of serving under one of the Anglican Church patriarchs. For many elders, on the other hand, the movement offered the chance to be Christian without the humiliation of a subordinate status in the Anglican Church. It was as a result of the Aladura movement that Christianity became the religion of the



majority at Idoani. According to the intelligence report on Owo and Ifon Districts for 1932, the total population of Idoani was 2,985, so that even if not all of the approximately 1000 baptised into the C.A.C. were Idoani, it seems likely that a very large cross section of the Oja Gbamo community became Christians as a result of the movement (Beeley 1932).

The establishment of other churches at Idoani has had more to do with sections of the community, and even individuals, pursuing political and economic ambitions as well as spiritual satisfaction than with the achievement of these ends for the community as a whole. The Aladura movement which became the C.A.C. reached across quarter, sex, age and other social boundaries that had become critical to the first two denominations' definition of themselves in a way that denominations introduced later on have been unable to (see Tables 9,10,11 and 12).

### The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church was introduced to Idoani in 1945 by Pa Moses Omotoyinbo, a Catholic tailor resident at Sapele. In 1944 while he was on his way back to Sapele from his home in Akoko Omotoyinbo found himself stranded at Oba. In an attempt to get to Sapele, he started walking and arrived at Idoani during the night of the last day of the year. The following morning, new years day 1945, he prayed, to thank God for having brought him safely to Idoani and decided to settle at the Oke Leju

subquarter of Amusigbo (8). Omotoyinbo started holding Catholic prayer meetings at his home together with two other strangers: Michael Adekunle, from a settlement in Bendel State, and Peter Sedu, an Igbirra farming in the Idoani area. Right from the beginning, it seems, a large proportion of those in the church have been Igbirra among whom Catholicism had already had some considerable success, and who had come into the Idoani area to farm. This large proportion of Igbirra in the church may explain why Chief Odofin, on whose land many of the Igbirra were farming, despite the fact that he had been vehemently opposed to the establishment of the C.A.C. on the grounds that there was not room for another church at Idoani, was prepared to give out land on which yet another church was to be built (9). At the time the Catholic Church was erected, Oke Leju quarter was uninhabited and, although there has been considerable development in the area since that time, the Catholic Church was the first building to be erected in the subquarter.

Some Idoani have joined the Church, which remains small, accounting for only 3% of the General Survey population (see Table 8). Of the 11 individuals this percentage represents, 4 were strangers. It should be noted, however, that since most Igbirra reside at their farms, outside the town, they are unlikely to have been adequately represented in the survey sample. The 4 Catholic strangers in the survey sample are probably not, therefore, an adequate representation of the proportion of

strangers in this church. The Idoani who are Catholics are mostly people who had become Catholic while working abroad and then decided to retain their affiliation with the church on their return to Idoani. Others who had been Catholic abroad have become members of other churches on their return to Idoani because the Catholic Church was small and of little social and political significance in the community. An example is the father of Mr. Lawrence Ogini who, on his retirement from the police force, returned to Idoani to settle down. Although he had been a Catholic at Ijebu where he had been stationed, at Idoani he joined the more prestigious Anglican Church to which his egbe - those of a similar social and economic status in relation to age - belonged.

#### C.A.C. (Owani)

In 1954, a branch of the C.A.C. was finally established at Owani. Those responsible for its establishment were Jacob Fagimiyo and Johnson Apata both of whom are natives of the quarter. Fagimiyo, a farmer and hunter, had originally been a member of the African Church. When news of Babalola reached Idoani however, he went to join the revival at Efon Alaiye. While he was at the revival, Fagimiyo claims to have been moved by the Holy Spirit and decided to establish a branch of the movement at Owani. It was not until 1954, however, having joined hands with Johnson Apata and some others that he was able to achieve his ambition. Apata had been living at Igbara

Oke and had become a member of the C.A.C. there. Of the eight male founding members of the church only four were natives of Idoani, the rest being strangers. Removed by some twenty four years from the impact of Babalola's power to heal and his charismatic personality, the C.A.C. at Owani did not attract the crowds which had gathered when the Aladura movement had first come to the area but it has managed to build a substantial membership in the quarter (see Table 9).

When the request for permission to establish the church at Owani was first put to the authorities at Owani, they had argued that the settlement was too small for four churches (10). Eventually however, Alani Falade I gave the C.A.C. permission to build a church at Owani. The fact that the Aladura at Owani had to wait 20 yrs to establish their church is a further indication of the fact that Alani Falade I had failed to reap any political capital from having been responsible for inviting Babalola to Idoani and supporting the movement. The church they built soon became too small for the C.A.C.'s congregation and they were asked to move to a new site. This time Falade gave them land close to the site of the palace he had been forced to leave when he moved to the new settlement. This site was close to the mosque at Owani, and just as the members of the African Church at the larger settlement had done, the Muslims complained to Alani that the noise of the Aladuras disturbed them. As a

result of these complaints, the church was moved further back from the main road and out of earshot of the Muslims. Unlike the mosque and the Anglican and African Churches, then, the C.A.C. Owani is not on the main road which runs through quarter, but is tucked away behind the buildings which line it.

Out of the 37 adults at Owani included in the General Survey, 9 were Anglicans, 14 were Africans and 11 were members of the C.A.C. Nevertheless, the geographical location of the C.A.C. Owani, reflects its status in the quarter relative to that of the other Ijo there, for despite the relatively large membership indicated by survey results, the church has no historic significance in the community and none of the elite personalities or families of the quarter are associated with it.

#### Cherubim and Seraphim

The Cherubim and Seraphim Church was initiated at Lagos in 1925 by Abiodun Akinsowon and Moses Orimolade who was a native of Ikare in Akoko and may have visited Idoani since he is known to have travelled around the area preaching and to have visited Owo (Peel 1968; 59). The church was introduced to Idoani in 1955 by Senior Apostle J.O. Aribanusi of Amusigbo who had become a member of the church while he was working at Kaduna. There seems to have been no opposition to the establishment of this church which suggests that by this time, such was the self confidence of the established churches that they no longer

felt other churches posed a threat either to their membership, or to their prestige and political influence in the community.

Another reason for the lack of opposition to the establishment of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church is probably the fact that in the beginning, the church consisted of the family and personal following of Senior Apostle J.O. Aribanusi: his wives and a friend; Apostle Amos who was an Igbirra from Okene. Since its establishment, however, the church has attracted a variety of other people. The church accounted for 6, that is 10% of the survey sample.

Because of its emphasis on healing with prayer and ritual procedures, the church has been particularly attractive to women seeking health care relating to reproductive processes and childhood ailments. 5 out of the 6 members of the church in the survey sample were women (see Table 10) (12). Young people on the other hand have been attracted to the church's dramatic and militant style of Christianity as well as to the prospect of taking up positions of responsibility in the church. Of great appeal to young men in particular are the 'Brigades', who, in military style white uniforms lead the church's processions through the town marching with a distinctive step while their leader swirls a baton to the beat of the church's band.

It is these emphases which have given the Cherubim and Seraphim Church its distinctive style and has

attracted members of other churches who use the church as a means of dealing with problems without becoming members. Typical Sunday services are therefore attended by casual visitors who can be distinguished from the membership of the church wearing symbolic white gowns, by their ordinary clothes and the fact that they are required to occupy the benches at the back of the church.

Only one of the members included in the survey was from Amusigbo but in fact a typical Sunday morning service is attended by a far greater proportion of individuals from Amusigbo than the survey sample implies.

Adjacent to the church is the woli's house (woli means prophet, one who has the ability to see things). Sick people or those for whom it has been seen that they are in danger from evil spirits in their own homes, are asked to stay with the woli until they are cured or until a danger has passed. The church's prophets may also foresee danger for the community as a whole and the church will then take various measures to avert disaster and or effect a cure. These measures include the saying of prayers, holding of all night revivals, processions through the town and asking members to do special things such as, for example, wearing red, etc.

The Cherubim and Seraphim Church at Idoani has certain similarities with traditional orisa cult groups, which have set it apart from the churches discussed so far. One similarity is the emphasis which is placed in

this church on prediction, healing and problem solving by spiritual means, not only for its core membership, but also for anybody who cares to use the church's services. Another similarity is the role it has assumed with regard to the town as a whole, for just as the alaworo of the cult group were, the prophets of the Cherubim and Seraphim are also concerned with the social, physical and spiritual health of the whole community.

### Methodist

The Methodist Church was introduced to Idoani, by T.O. Akinbode and Pa Esan in 1962, with the assistance of the area's superintendant at Owo, Rev. Akingbade. Both Akinbode and Esan had had become Methodists as a result of having been educated in Methodist institutions. Akinbode, who claims to have been the most dynamic in the process of getting the church established at Idoani, decided to remain a Methodist because most of the friends and contemporaries (egbe), with who he had associated while being educated outside Idoani, were Methodists. Because he was such a dynamic personality, Akinbode's friends suggested that he establish a church in his home town.

According to Akinbode, most of those who became members of the church had been 'pagans' before, and had become Methodists because Akinbode had helped them in some way or other, eg. to get a job. At a meeting to discuss the origins and history of the church, however, it was claimed by the members who attended, that most members had



been in the Anglican Church before they became Methodists, and that the Methodist Church and the Anglican Church were omo iya (children of the same mother), which is why the Anglicans were displeased with the establishment of the church and have never, since the church was established, attended any of the events they had been invited to such as Harvest Thanksgiving (13).

The first meetings of the church were held at the Local Authority school at Iyayu with the permission of the principal, Mr. Rotimi who was a native of Idoani and also a Methodist. Eventually the church was given a plot in the Ipara section of Iyayu on which to build by a member who was head of the Isolo ebiani to whom the land had belonged and from which the majority of the membership was drawn. The first church which was built with mud blocks, was washed away by heavy rain in 1975. As a result of this catastrophe many of the former Anglicans went back to their old church. Pa Esan, who together with Akinbode had founded the new church, was one of those who returned to the Anglican Church after the disaster. A factor which weighed heavily on the minds of those who decided to return to the Anglican Church seems to have been the cost of rebuilding that they would have to bear. Before this disaster it is claimed there were over two hundred male members of the church but in 1981, the church claimed a total membership of just 85 men and women. Only 4 of the survey sample were Methodists.

Between April 1980 and June 1981, the process of

gathering funds and rebuilding was still going on and services were being held only occasionally in a shed constructed from corrugated iron.

With the establishment of the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) programme, the Methodist Church agitated and wrote petitions to the local government asking for a Methodist school at Idoani. Since the Catholic Church was also agitating for a school, and under the U.P.E. scheme, Idoani was entitled to only one, the school was called the Catholic Methodist School. The Methodists only had a temporary building and so classes were held in the more sturdy Catholic Church at Oke Leju. As a result, none of the Methodist children, who are mainly from Iyayu, go to the school because the distance is considered too far for young children to trek given that there are schools in the more immediate vicinity.

### Kingdom Hall

The first Jehovah's Witnesses to come to Idoani were a group of evangelists from Arigidi Akoko who arrived in 1964 and started going from house to house around the town giving out Watchtower and talking to people. The only Idoani who joined the organisation as a result of that campaign were Alfred Oloruntola and his elder brother Samuel Ajagbinle.

In 1966, two men, Shadrak and Odunlami, were sent by the Jehovah's Witness Society to help Oloruntola and Ajagbinle establish a Kingdom Hall at Idoani. Shadrak and

Odunlami spent two years at Idoani during which time, as well as doing religious work, the two men farmed in order to feed themselves.

In 1968, a general assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses from all over Nigeria was held at Idoani, at which Oloruntola and Ajagbinle were baptised and afterwards their wives also started learning the Bible.

The first meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses were attended by about ten people of whom some were from Idogun. They were held in a building of the Local Authority Secondary Modern School at Isewa on the outskirts of the town (14). Since the first two Jehovah's Witnesses and their families constituted the bulk of Idoani's congregation, an attempt was made to obtain a site at Iyayu on which to build a Kingdom Hall, but the people in the area they selected were opposed to their building there. Alani Falade II eventually gave them the site at Oke Ido which had been vacated by the C.A.C. in 1949. At this site Kingdom Hall was erected with funds contributed by the members.

The number of Jehovah's Witnesses at Idoani remains small in relation to that of the other churches, despite the efforts the Jehovah's Witnesses of Nigeria have put into promoting the organisation at Idoani. Only 3 of the survey sample were Jehovah's Witnesses and a total membership of just 15 persons was claimed by the organisation itself. Almost half of those attending

services are strangers to Idoani while the rest are the founding members and their immediate families. Of the 3 Jehovah's Witnesses included in the sample, 2 were strangers.

There is a marked difference between the style of Jehovah's Witness Christianity and that of the churches mentioned so far. This 'style' probably accounts for its lack of appeal despite its emphasis on literacy and the Western European life style it promotes both of which seem to be popular goals in the community as a whole. There are no titles in the church, very little music and practically no symbolic action to attain practical ends. This makes it the most divergent form of Christianity from Idoani's traditional religious culture.

#### Apostolic Church

The Apostolic Church of Idoani was introduced to Idoani in 1965. It was from this church that a section led by Babalola had broken away in 1941 to form the C.A.C. (Peel, 1968: 109-112) Until 1941 therefore, the Aladuras of Idoani were members of the Apostolic Church.

According to the traditions of the church, before Babalola's visit to Idoani in 1930, a native of Idogun who had been living at Ilesa and had been cured of an illness in the Faith Tabernacle (the name the organisation was originally known by), returned to Idogun with news of the organisation and the power to cure sickness with which, for him, it had been associated. It was through this man's

efforts that the church was established at Idogun. From Idogun there were monthly evangelical excursions to other settlements.

To evangelise at Idoani, the members of the Apostolic Church at Idogun had first of all sought the permission of Alani and in 1965, a group of people, mainly from Iyayu which is, geographically, the closest of Idoani's quarters to Idogun, put their names down to indicate that they were interested in seeing an Apostolic Church established at Idoani.

The first meetings were held in the parlour of the house of Mr. Akinola of Iyayu, but eventually moved from there because the membership was not expanding. There was some trouble in acquiring land to build a church. Individuals they asked would agree to grant them land, but the family whose land it was, would refuse to give the land up to them. This difficulty in finding land was the only opposition the founding members of the Apostolic Church encountered. Eventually, a site was acquired on the outskirts of the town at Ipara Iyayu.

The Apostolic Church is an Iyayu community church. All of the 11 members of this church in the General Survey sample were natives of Iyayu and while services are conducted in Yoruba some of the hymns are sung in Iyayu dialect. Mr. Akinola is the asaju (a status equivalent to the baba egbe in other churches) even though both he and his wife (one of the biggest traders in the town) are members of Holy Trinity Anglican Church.

There is a school attached to the church which accounts for the large number of children who attend services. This school was established in 1975, to service a catchment area that includes the Ipara section and parts of Idosi at Iyayu, as well as the farms along the Idoani-Idogun road. No other school services this area which is some distance from other schools at Idoani.

Remember Jesus Come Church (R.J.C.C.)

Remember Jesus Come Church was established at Idoani by Ezekiel Ilesanmi of Amusigbo in 1966. Ilesanmi had been a member of the C.A.C. at Ife where he was trading in cassava and grinding machines. When he returned to Idoani in 1966, he held a revival and was inspired by the large numbers that attended to establish R.J.C.C. As well as being concerned with healing Ilesanmi's revival criticized the high cost of living at that time and predicted the coming of civil war. Elders of the C.A.C. charged Ilesanmi, before the council of the whole community on which each of the quarters is represented, with disturbing the peace and he was ordered not to evangelise in the area for three years. An attempt was also made to have Ilesanmi arrested by the police but the complainants were told that Ilesanmi had the right to say what he pleased as long as he slandered nobody.

Despite the community authorities' opposition to his activities, Ilesanmi was given land on which to build by Chief Odofin of Amusigbo. For this action, Chief Odofin

was criticised on the grounds that there were too many churches in the town as well as because of Ilesanmi's generally pessimistic prophecies. Some of Ilesanmi's critics felt that he not only had the power to predict disaster but also to bring them about. Although he never joined the church, Chief Odofin continued to support it through stormy times. In 1973, Ilesanmi predicted the fires which destroyed acres of cocoa in the Idoani farms and once again, he was brought before the Idoani community's council for making the prediction before the fires occurred. Since this incident, Ilesanmi claims, people have been more inclined to take his predictions seriously and he has for the most part been left in peace.

In April 1981, Ilesanmi claimed that negotiations were in progress for a merger between R.J.C.C. and the C.A.C. to which Ilesanmi feels the church really belongs.

The membership of the church consists mainly of young people especially of the students of Irekare Grammar School which is on the outskirts of Oke Leju. As boarding house residents, these students would not have featured in the survey sample which covered residential houses only. This probably accounts for the fact that although only 3 of the survey sample were members of this church the church claims a membership of some 200 persons.

Directly opposite the R.J.C.C., at the end of Oke Leju nearest to the town is the Cherubim and Seraphim Church with which Ilesanmi's church has much in common.

As is the case in the Cherubim and Seraphim, in the R.J.C.C., a great deal of emphasis is placed on symbolic action to attain practical ends and caring for the sick who are accommodated at the church if it is believed that the sickness wants the person to leave home.

#### Celestial Church of Christ (C.C.C.)

The Celestial Church of Christ was founded by S.B.J. Oshoffa, a Yoruba speaking man from the Benin Republic, who had been a Methodist. The church was introduced to Nigeria via Lagos from where it has spread to other parts of Nigeria.

C.C.C. evangelists from Owo and Ikare visited Idoani, and the Idoani branch of the church was founded in 1978 by Leader Aladase of Akure, an employee of the Agric Credit Corporation stationed at Idoani, and Senior Elder Ijidakinro of Idanre, who was a teacher at St Paul's Primary School Idogun.

The Idoani citizens who were involved in the establishment of the church were 4 young people who had been members of Holy Trinity Anglican Church. They were two women and two men. The two men, Elder Stephen Adelana and Brother Richard Babatunde, were both natives of Iyayu and students at secondary schools, while of the two women, one, Sister Toyin Ogungbe, was a native of Amusigbo and also a secondary school student, while the other; Sister Edna Ominike was of Iyayu and a seamstress. These four started by attending C.C.C. services at Owo and the first



meetings at Idoani were held, strangely enough for a movement which abhors the use of alcohol, in a palm wine bar at Amusigbo, close to where the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and R.J.C.C. are situated. Eventually the group moved to a site at Iyayu which had become the property of Chief Oshati of Amusigbo. In 1980 however, as the congregation grew too large for the building, they moved again to a site at Amusigbo on the outskirts of the town. This site, on the Ifira road, where Chief Oshati's compound is, was also given to the church by Chief Oshati who, despite the support he has given the church, is a member of the Anglican Church.

The first C.C.C. worker to be sent to Idoani arrived there in July 1979.

When interviewed, members of the church did not claim to have met with any difficulties or obstacles in establishing the church at Idoani, but the church is not looked upon favourably by many sections of Idoani, largely because it has claimed its membership out of that of other churches and because of the ease with which it is claimed the Holy Spirit enters their members who are mainly women and young people, students and apprentices.

The C.C.C. has much in common with the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and the R.J.C.C. Its similarities with these two churches includes the use of symbols to achieve practical ends, the wearing of white dress, the removing of shoes before entering the place of worship and the emphasis which is placed on healing the sick. In the

C.C.C., however, these characteristics are exaggerated to an extent which makes the rest of the Christian community suspicious and disinclined to take the church seriously. For example shoes must be discarded before stepping onto the plot on which the church stands because the grounds, not just the church, as is the case with Cherubim and Seraphim, are considered to be sacred, and some members of the church wear their church whites throughout the week, not just on Sunday. In particular people are suspicious of the fact that almost everybody in the C.C.C. is possessed by the Holy Spirit often quite violently during the course of a Sunday service. The scorn with which the church is regarded is also related to the ease with which its members receive baptism, and the tender age of the bulk of its membership (15).

That only one of the survey sample declared membership of the C.C.C. is surprising because attendance at an average Sunday service seems to be about the same as average attendance at either the Apostolic or Catholic Churches and suggests that there may have been a reluctance to admit to membership of the church.

#### Faith Gospel Mission (F.G.M.)

The Faith Gospel Mission held an inauguration service in November 1980, but was first introduced to Idoani in 1978 when the pastor of the Owo branch of the Mission came to preach to the people of Idoani. The week after the pastor's visit, eighteen people gathered together to hold

the first service and within a month there are said to have been 67 members, most of who were young people of secondary school age or strangers. Mr. Bakare of Ako, a member of the C.A.C., made a small wooden structure on his land which had been a beer parlour, available to the newly established church. and it was at this Ako site, that the F.G.M. was located until November 1980. Between April (when fieldwork commenced) and November 1980, there were only occasional Sunday meetings at the Ako site with not more than ten people attending, most of who were not natives of Idoani.

The inauguration of F.G.M. in November 1980 took place at a new site at Amusigbo given to the church by Chief Odofin and located a short distance behind his house. Among the approximately one hundred and twenty five persons who attended the service, only five of the original members of the F.G.M. were present. Why membership of the original F.G.M. had dropped off so drastically between 1978 and 1980 was not volunteered. It seems likely however, that the fate of the membership was due to the fact that most of the first set of members of the church were transient strangers or students, whose situation made it difficult for them to establish a permanent basis for the church at Idoani.

Most of those who attended the inauguration were relatives, friends or colleagues of the 5 members, or guests who had been sent invitations to the service that

was held on a Sunday evening so that members of other churches could attend.

The inauguration service was conducted in Yoruba, and translated simultaneously into English, a reflection not only of the fact that a significant proportion of the congregation were not Yoruba speaking people, but also of the orientation of the F.G.N. towards western European cultural styles. Further examples of this orientation are: the emphasis which was placed during this inauguration service, which was clearly intended to attract members in to the church, on the fact that the Faith Gospel Mission has branches all over the world; the fact that those who were conducting the services wore European dress, or the 'Up and Down' which in the complex structure of dress style codes among the Yoruba, is associated with the educated woman moving in a western European environment within Nigeria.

The Mission's leader and the most enthusiastic members were all students at local secondary schools. The oldest two members of the church who were installed as church elders at the installation service were both secondary school students. It is likely, therefore, that as these individuals finish school and move on to higher education or to larger and more urban settlements to work (which local trends indicate they probably will) the church may decline once again. There are a few young farmers in the church but since they are young, they are not in the position to bear the financial burden of

erecting a building and are unlikely to have the skills required to promote the growth of a church of this character. That this is the case is suggested by the fact that although some of these farmers had been members of the church since it was first established and were clearly still anxious to belong to it, it was the students who were responsible for its resurrection. The transient character of the bulk of potential recruits who attended the installation service and the fact that a large proportion of the members will probably be students with little or no income, means that the F.G.M., despite the apparent lure of its western European orientation, will probably not be able to develop into an ijo like other denominations in the town with its own distinctive community.

The F.G.M.'s style coincides with popular goals in the community, and is a highly attractive vehicle for developing and perfecting skills with which economic prosperity may be achieved. However, the church offers neither the prestige of an elite tradition with which the Anglican, African, Catholic and Methodist Churches are associated, nor the sense of community and concern with traditional religious questions with which the C.A.C. and Apostolic Churches are associated, or the intense spiritual experience associated with explanation, prediction and control which characterises the Cherubim and Seraphim, R.J.C. and C.C.C. Churches. As a result, it

is likely that the church will, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, have very little impact and very little significance for the Idoani community.

#### The Development of Islam (1892 - 1981)

As more Idoani have turned to Christianity, the basis of the earlier Islamisation was being eroded. Muslim leaders when interviewed attributed their loss of people to Christianity to the Christians' vehement opposition to their religion as well as to the Christians' control of western European education. To the Muslim community, it was the skills Christians acquired through education which made it possible for them to service colonialism and direct it in their own interest, as well as to extract whatever profits there were to be had for Africans from colonial exploitation. Muslims also seem to have associated the Christians' success with their organisational strategies, for in response to the success of Christianity, Muslims at Idoani have begun to establish institutions, and networks of relationships similar to those which exist in the Christian community.

The first opportunity for any responsive action to the advantage Christianity had achieved over them as a result of its control of education came, according to the Imam of Owani, from the Ansar Ud-Deen society in Lagos. Ansar Ud-Deen was a Muslim literary and educational society that was principally concerned with disseminating the advantages of western European education and culture

among Yoruba Muslims (Gbadamosi 1978: 146). Sometime in the 1940s delegations from the society in Lagos were sent to Idoani and other towns to persuade Muslims to become affiliated to the society. It was not until 1958, however, that the first Ansar Ud-Deen school was established at Iyayu, after pressure had been put on the Local Authority which had been empowered since 1955 to establish primary schools as part of the free primary education program. Although Muslim by name, Ansar Ud-Deen Primary School had to emphasise European rather than Islamic education, for this is what Muslims required in order to be in a position to compete with Christians for administrative positions and access to the political process on which, economic success now depended.

One other Ansar Ud-Deen school was established at Isure in 1975. For some time prior to 1975, the leader of the Isure Muslim community, Alhaji Ibitoye, had been attempting, through the schools' board, to secure a position as an Arabic teacher but he was never even called for an interview. In 1975 Alhaji Ibitoye changed the tactics he had been employing to try and put some Isure influence into Islamic education and began to put pressure on the schools board to establish an Ansar Ud-Deen school at Isure. According to Mr. Akingbade of Amusigbo, an Anglican teacher at the school, the Ansar Ud-Deen Muslims of Isure had only been allocated the school because no church organisation had applied. Nevertheless in the same year, Catholics and Methodists could only get a school by

agreeing to share the facility. Like the Catholics and the Methodists, the Isure Muslims were unable to raise the funds to put up school buildings, so classes were being held in an uncompleted residential building being put up by the Governor of Bendel State, who is a Muslim and whose mother was from Idoani. Of the two hundred and forty children in the school, approximately 75% are Muslims but at least half of the ten members of staff were not.

Despite increasing involvement in western European education at Idoani however, Islam did not revive, largely because of its inability to assume any critical socio-political or economic significance in the wider community. When the settlements concentrated in 1921, just as the Christians had concentrated into one church, the Muslims of all those settlements which had moved to Oja Gbamo, joined together to share a common mosque at Iyayu under the leadership of one Imam. This unity however was not critical. A small neighbourhood mosque was erected at Isure for the benefit of those Muslims in Isure and Ako for whom the mosque at Iyayu was too far a walk to perform daily prayers.

From the start, the church had assumed a completely different role in the Christian community and in the lives of its individual members than the mosque held for Muslims, even though both are referred to as ijo. It is indeed doubtful whether the term community can justifiably be used in relation to the Muslim population as it was



when Christian churches were first introduced to Idoani, since there is no evidence to suggest that there was among the Muslims the social cohesiveness which the term implies. At the time Christianity was introduced to Idoani, whatever sense of community there may have been among Muslims had dissipated as the numbers of those professing Islam increased and they became integrated into the wider community, and as the Alani who seems to have been the institutional focus of Idoani Muslims turned to Christianity. The mosque was essentially a place to perform the rituals of prayer and there does not appear to have been such intense social and economic interaction among those who attended the same mosque as, it has been established, there was in the Christian community whose focus was the church. Nor does the mosque seem to have been the focus of a level of political integration that in the Christian communities is reflected in the variety of lay titles associated with the churches (these vary from church to church). For the mosque, there was only the Imam, whose main function is to lead ritual prayers and only represents Muslims in a ritual context. His ability to exercise authority over the Muslim community itself seems to have been limited by the role the Alani initially assumed in the religion.

The development of Islam has also involved the proliferation of Muslim societies, although this has been on a much smaller scale than the proliferation of churches. The first of the two splits in the Muslim

community at the larger of Idoani's two settlements occurred in 1963 when a section of those who used the central mosque at Iyayu joined the Ahmadiyya society, disassociating themselves from other Muslims who, since the 1940s had been affiliated to the Ansar Ud-Deen Society. As had been the case with the introduction of new denominations of Christianity, the introduction of the Ahmadiyya society represented an introduction of a new style of Islam to Idoani. Members of the Ahmadiyya society were first invited to Nigeria from India in 1921, to provide Yoruba Muslims with a western European education within an Islamic framework (Fisher 1963; 97). The society was particularly concerned with reforming Islam, that is, with disassociating Islam from traditional religion by putting an end to some practices which were an aspect of the earlier indigenisation of Islam, when the religion had taken its lead from various cult groups. These practices were similar to those employed by traditional cult groups and included the sharing of food during Friday prayers and the manipulation of symbols, like the charm bag, to achieve practical ends. The basic doctrine of the Ahmadiyya society which distinguished it from other Muslim societies, was its assertion that as in Christianity the 'Mahdi', the Messiah, had already arrived. The effect of this doctrine was a more rigorous propagation of a more austere Islam.

The society was introduced to Idoani by Mr. R.A. Raji

who first heard of it on a Lagos radio station and started tuning in regularly to listen to the Ahmadiyya's preaching. Raji was attracted to the society, he said, because, recalling how as a Muslim school boy at Idoani he had been scorned and ridiculed for his faith by Christian children, through the radio programmes, the Ahmadiyya society presented 'a good defence of Islam'. Raji's desire to introduce the Ahmadiyya society to Idoani received the support of one of the few Muslim patriarchs at Idoani. Alhaji Balogun was a 'big man' who had already had a vision in which he foresaw that the society was coming. Together, the families of Raji and Balogun seem to have represented the elite of the Muslim community at the larger of Idoani's two settlements. Among their members were the most highly educated and the most prosperous Muslims and with this breakaway, those who remained loyal to the Ansar Ud-Deen Society were mainly poor, not very literate farmers. Their status continued to decline, and many left Islam altogether. According to the Imam of the Ansar Ud-Deen Mosque at Iyayu, it was a quarrel between Alhaji Balogun and the Imam which led the Baloguns and Rajis to break away to establish their own Ahmadiyya Mosque (16).

In the chaos which followed the departure of the 'big men' with their families and followings, another dispute arose which resulted in a split between Ansar Ud-Deen Muslims on the basis of quarter. The ambitious Alhaji Ibitoye of Isure was made Imam for Isure and started

holding Friday prayers held in the mosque at Isure. At Muslim festivals then, the Muslims of Idoani worshipped in four different places. The Owani Muslims worshipped at Owani while at the larger settlement, the congregations of the three different mosques held their prayers separately in three different places (17).

Soon after its introduction an easy association had developed between Islam and the existing political institutions and culture. With the growth of the power of Christianity, however, this association was discredited. Islam's response has been to adopt the patterns with which Christianity has had success. The survival of Islam at Idoani has come to depend then, on the ability of Islam to disassociate itself from traditional religion which remains publicly discredited, and its ability to provide a frame of reference within which popular goals like the acquisition of high status positions requiring a European education can be realised. The Ahmadiyya society is probably the only Islamic response to those challenges likely to achieve these goals, for the Muslims at Idoani, but the austerity it promotes both in ritual and life style is probably a handicap.

One of the factors making it difficult for the Ahmadiyya and Ansar Ud-Deen societies to keep Islam viable at Idoani is the way it isolates young Muslims from their peers. In the Iyayu community where Islam is strongest and where peer group solidarity has traditionally been

critical, in an attempt to overcome their isolation, many young Muslims attend Christian churches, with their friends, on a regular basis and some have even become members of churches - particularly the Celestial Church of Christ and the Apostolic Church - without totally discarding their Islamic identity.

The development of Islam at Idoani since the turn of the century, has largely been a response to the onslaught of Christianity.

This then is the character of religious differentiation in contemporary Idoani.

### Notes to Chapter 7

1. The evidence of this fact is the claim that just one year after its establishment the number of students attending the African Church classes was 75 as compared with the 25 of the Anglican Church. This claim is also supported by the reference in the Anglican Church catechist's 1919 log book to the greater strength of the African Church (Ajiroba 1919)
2. N.A.I., Owo Div 13/1, District Officers Travelling Diary, Idoani District, 1930 - 1950. Entry dated 22 - 23 October, 1931.
3. N.A.I., C.M.S.Y., File no. 2/2/22, Papers on Idoani Church 1931 - 32, Petition from Idoani Church Members, 13.12.31.
4. N.A.I. Owo Div 13/1, District Officers Travelling Diary, Idoani District, 1930 - 1950. Entry dated 22 - 23 October, 1931.
5. According to the entry in the District Officers Travelling Diary mentioned in note 4, Alani Falade denied having sent for Babalola.
6. N.A.I. ONDOPROF 1/1 File no 157, Miscellaneous Owo Division, D.O. Owo to Resident Akure, 28th November 1934.
7. At that time, there were fewer than 10 buildings that had expensive new corrugated iron roofs, among them were the C.M.S. and the African Churches, the private houses of Ajiroba, Odofin and Akinyemi, all of Amusigbo, and Major Bello of Isure.
8. A geographical section of Amusigbo as opposed to a political section of the type described in Chapter 2.
9. Chief Odofin may have envisaged that the Igbirra would eventually move into Oke Leju to constitute another sub-quarter of Amusigbo under his authority. During the funeral ceremonies for Alani Falade II in 1980, when the Igbirra farming on Idoani land came to participate in the rites of the dead oba, that they were expected to settle in the town was indicated when Chief Oniye and Chief Odofin invited them to start building houses in the town and indicated that this was not the first time that they had done so.
10. Already in existence at Owani there was the Anglican Church, the African Church and the mosque which, came under the rubric of the Yoruba term ijo into which

'church' had been translated. The establishment of the C.A.C. therefore would make a fourth ijo.

11. Indeed in 1955, the year after the Owani Aladura got permission to build their church, Chiefs of both settlements sent a petition to the D.O. and the Resident at Akure asking them to intervene with Alani and get him to take their advice and go into voluntary exile. N.A.I. Owo Div 1/1, File no. 149, Owo District Political; General inspection notes, Idoani People and Council to the D.O. Owo and the Resident Akure, 11.2.55.
12. Of the women who are regular members some may have declared their religion to be that of their husband or father rather than Cherubim and Seraphim, partly because this is how a woman's religious membership is usually determined, and partly because as a relatively junior church, Cherubim and Seraphim is not taken seriously by the community as a whole.
13. Generally on festive occasions such as the inauguration of the church, Harvest Thanksgiving or the installation of individuals into titles in the church, each church and each mosque at Idoani is sent an invitation, including an envelope into which they may put their thanksgiving donation. A delegation from each of Idoani's other churches attends the service for the event and is called to the altar, to present its offering and receive blessing.
14. During the period of fieldwork 1980 -1981, the buildings of this school which had become vacant with the closure of the Secondary Modern School were being utilised as a temporary site for the Federal Government College Idoani.
15. At the second Cantata (Service of Songs) in 1981, five men, three boys, four women and five children were baptised in a stream near the church by the Assistant Evangelist who had come from Ikare. The baptisms were performed after the bazar which followed the service, by which time most of the enthusiasm and energy of the congregation had waned. The candidates and the Assistant Evangelist re-entered the church with the mothers of some of the younger candidates and one or two spectators. A song was sung and some questions about the scriptures were put to the candidates as a group so that those who did not know the answers suffered no penalty. Each of the candidates was then asked with what name they would like to be baptised. A woman who wanted to use Joyce, was told that she could not assume this name as it was not in the Bible. The Assistant Evangelist then asked if the candidates were ready to give up

taking palm wine, lusting after other peoples wives, husbands and children, and keeping the company of bad people, theives and muslims. The candidates all replied 'yes sir'. The Assistant Evangelist then preached a short sermon quoting frequently from the bible, and admitted that as he and his party would soon be returning to Ikare, there was no time to read from the Bible. He placed the ends of the sash which was part of his uniform of office on the heads of each of the candidates and then took the candidates down to the stream where as they stood in the water, he pushed the head of each candidate under the water blessing them as he did so. With this act baptism was accomplished.

16. Alhaji - one who has made the prilgrim to Mecca - seems to be a more prestigious title than Imam in the muslim community at Idoani.
17. Muslim strangers at Idoani found the practice of holding Ramadan prayers in four separate places in the town shameful and abhorrent. At the Ramadan in 1980, for the first time since the first breakaway, all the muslims at the larger of Idoani's two settlements prayed together for Ramadan. All three Imams faced the congregation together, but it was Alhaji Balogun who even though he is not normally resident at Idoani led the prayers. The Imam of Iyayu's Ansar Ud-Deen Mosque who had precided over the breakaway had been replaced with a younger man who was a farmer, so that it was as the eldest and most prestigious of the Imam that Alhaji Balogun led the prayers.



## CHAPTER 8

### Conclusion

The concern of this concluding chapter will be to summarise the insights derived from an incorporation perspective on religious change at Idoani and, in the light of those insights, to examine the relationship between specific characteristics of contemporary religious culture and contemporary socio-political structure and organisation. The chapter is therefore divided into three sections. The first section reviews Idoani's traditional religious culture, the second section summarises the processes by which Islam and Christianity became relevant in the context of the traditional religious culture, while the third section examines the expression of traditional religious culture in the religious differentiation which characterises contemporary religious culture, and the relationship between contemporary religious differentiation and contemporary social differentiation.

#### Review of Idoani's traditional religious culture

The traditional religious culture of Idoani consisted of a variety of competing cults whose concern has been with the sanctioning, expression, distribution and manipulation of power. The power with which the different cults have been variously concerned was of four distinct but related types. These types are social, political and economic as well as spiritual/intellectual.

1. The social power of the cults was derived from their ability to define and sustain community which in this area seems to have been recognised as an extremely fragile entity.
2. The political power of the various cults was derived from the fact that they were the source as well as the vehicle for the expression of political authority.
3. The economic power of the cults was derived from their concern with regulating both the individual and the community's economic exploitation of the environment. That is, on the one hand, they protected the individual from the danger associated with those elements in the environment which must be exploited for economic rewards, and, on the other hand, they assisted the individual to achieve the maximum rewards from economic activity.
4. The spiritual/intellectual power of the cults was derived from their concern with the prediction, control and manipulation of fate and misfortune.

#### How Islam and Christianity became relevant

Islam and Christianity became relevant in the context of Idoani's traditional religious culture which was already predisposed to adopt new cults, by becoming associated with social, political and economic forces that were more powerful than those associated with the traditional cults.

Both Islam and Christianity became the basis for the

definition of a community consisting of all the settlements. Islam was less successful than Christianity in this respect partly because it was unable to include in its definition of community what had been one of the most powerful settlements in the group, there being no Muslims at Amusigbo. Christianity on the other hand not only managed to include all the settlements in its definition of community, but also provided a more cohesive institutional focus for its definition of community than Islam for which the politically compromised obaship had had to suffice.

At its introduction to Idoani Islam was under the control of the oba and was both a source and an expression of the power exercised by the especially authoritarian Alani Atunwase. The introduction of Christianity on the other hand was associated with the more extensive and more powerful authority of the British government. For the Idoani, Christianity and the Church were both the source and the expression of colonial authority.

Despite the relative lack of information about the economic activity associated with Islam, it does seem that Alani Atunwase, the political authority with which Islam became associated, derived economic power from his ability, as a result of the political power he exercised, to exploit the human resources of the community of settlements for agricultural production (Asabia and Adegbesan 1970: 9). Christianity on the other hand was

associated with the introduction of a new and more lucrative range of economic opportunities because it promoted the incorporation of Idoani into the international market economy from which quite different groups from the traditional authorities were able to reap more substantial economic rewards.

Right from the start, Islam at Idoani was associated with divination and the manufacture of charms, that is with the manipulation of fate and misfortune, and this seems to have been a major attraction to involvement with the religion (Gbadamosi 1978; 200). The spiritual/intellectual power of Islam could not compete with the social, political and economic power of Christianity which did not express any concern with fate and misfortune, except perhaps, in the shape of Akinbodewa's African Church at Isure, until some forty years after its introduction to the area by which time the new religion's association with the other types of power had been firmly established. It was Babalola's spectacular and dramatic revivals which demonstrated Christianity's spiritual/intellectual power and precipitated, while at the same time offering the opportunity for, the mass involvement of the Idoani in Christianity, a process which Peel has called Christianisation (Peel 1977).

## Contemporary Religious Culture and Social differentiation

Since its incorporation into the political economy of Nigeria, Idoani has seen the emergence of social classes which have their bases in the complex relationship between early wealth derived from trade, education and access to state resources (Williams 1976). The social significance of transgenerational class cultures, the antagonisms and the distinct life styles as a consequence of privilege being transmitted to children which is usually associated with the development of social classes seems to have been tempered, in rural communities like Idoani, however, partly by the continued existence in the socio-political structure of traditional forms of stratification and solidarity; and partly because of the tendency for those members of the community who belong to upper and middle classes, to live and work outside Idoani in heterogeneous urban centres where, for the resident stranger, the horizontal ties which characterise social classes are not bounded by the persistence of older forms of stratification.

+ Idoani has also seen a proliferation of churches which is manifest in the denominational variety which characterises contemporary religious culture. This denominational variety has provided new basis for social bonding as well as a new medium for the articulation of social political and economic interests in the community. *The* Denominational variety also reflects however, the institutionalisation of traditional forms of social

differentiation which have moderated the formation of social classes, as well as the different emphasis given by the various groups the denominations represent, to different types of religious power and the relative status of the different types of religious power.

1. Traditional forms of stratification, class formation and denominational variety.

Older forms of stratification have survived in rural communities like Idoani, despite the fact that the traditional institutions with which they were associated no longer have the social significance they once did, partly because they have been of critical significance to the development of contemporary religious institutions and partly because of the critical role these institutions have played in the development of the community.

With older forms of stratification privileged social categories such as elders and title holders were not as restricted as social classes between which there tends to be little movement. Age is an inherently transient form of social stratification so that categories formed on this basis cannot be closed, and the fact that wealth was counted in the numbers of followers an individual could muster, meant that any surplus to which a wealthy title holder had access was eventually redistributed and could not automatically be transferred from one generation to the next.

The Anglican Church at the larger of Idoani's two

settlements and the African Church at Owani and Isure (the older churches) have been dependent for their success upon the efforts of 'big men' like Tenabe, Agbayewa, and Akinbodewa who, although they challenged the basis of traditional types of authority, in fact defined their own status and responsibilities according to traditional concepts and criteria of social differentiation. At the same time these older churches have quite clearly been the route by which it was possible for the 'big men' to accumulate trading wealth, education and access to state resources which have become the basis of class-like differentiation. The effect of these two characteristics of early Christianity have been, on the one hand, to provide the impetus for the proliferation of churches on the basis of status differentiation, and on the other hand to set limits to the operation of a class like differentiation based on denominational variation.

Tenabe and other early Anglicans accumulated wealth by exploiting the new economic opportunities associated with Christianity, but because they sought to define their status according to traditional criteria, they were also concerned to establish public reputations and the large followings with which 'big men' had traditionally been associated. They were usually monogamous and without large numbers of dependent kin, but they nevertheless presided over large households consisting of clients, houseboys and those they employed to work their farms or carry the products in which they traded. Through

association with the new 'big men', these dependents aimed to procure patronage, education, employment or the knowledge, contacts and financial support to establish themselves as craftsmen or traders. They thus sought to release themselves from the tyranny of the gerontocratic and patriarchal authorities under which they laboured, and from which the Christians had demonstrated it was possible to escape. The structure of relations between the Christian 'big men' and their followings was similar to that which had existed between the ologun and their followings, being patriarchal and redistributive. Ostracised by their families upon whom they would normally have been dependant, followers of the early Christians were housed, fed, given cocoa seeds, 'trained' or set up in trade by the the Christian 'big men'.

Once established, the traditions of redistribution associated with early Christianity have persisted and although they do feature in other denominations, they are particularly significant in the older churches in which the most elite rub shoulders with the most poor. Members of Idoani's modern elite are usually resident in urban centres but they have retained their membership in the older churches of their home towns, which are, in many respects, monuments to their ancestors; and have continued to make substantial financial contributions to them. The elites come home from time to time to perform elaborate rites of passage such as marriage, title taking,



thanksgiving and burial ceremonies, in these older churches, bringing with them their friends and associates from the the urban centres where they live and work, whose contributions at collection time swell the church coffers.

The contemporary 'big men' of the older churches are no longer in a position to redistribute their wealth on the same scale that their ancestors who established the churches did, partly because they cannot be resident in the town and partly because of the demands on them to maintain the standards of elite life style in the urban centres where they do live. Nevertheless some of the poorer members have clearly retained their membership in these churches rather than join some of the newer more spiritually satisfying churches where they might enjoy, perhaps, some improvement in their status, partly because of the quasi-kin relations with the community's elite that they enjoy in the older churches. The poor continue to nurse the hope that well placed members of these churches will use their influence or contacts on their behalf if requested to. Whenever Idoani's elites are at home, therefore, their houses take on some of the characteristics of the 'big men' households of an earlier era as relatives, petitioners and church members who have 'helped' to celebrate whatever event it is that has brought the 'big man' home, more or less take up residence for the duration of their stay. The poor also retain their membership of the older churches because the contributions of the elites to church coffers means that

poor members can continue to attend and enjoy the benefits of a wealthy church even though they may only be able to make very small financial contributions to the church and in some cases none at all. The benefits of belonging to a wealthy church include an impressive and comfortable building in which to worship and a full time pastor able to minister to his congregation, and even to make home visits. In some of the more recently introduced churches the contribution of local members is usually much more than in the older churches and the regulations about contributions are more stringent. A contribution of one tenth of members' income is enshrined, for example, in the constitutions of the C.A.C. and Apostolic Church.

X Once the association between Christianity and the social, political and economic power associated with elite status, had become apparent, there was an increasing demand for admission to membership of the churches. The C.M.S.'s response to this increased demand was to place greater emphasis on the enforcement of the stringent regulations for admission to membership of the church that were a reflection of an increasingly racist bias of the organisation. In a bid to rebut the Anglican's charge that they were an inferior organisation, the African Church too, soon adopted elitist practices and characteristics. In addition to these restrictions, however, the opportunities for success in the endeavours in which the early Christians were involved were limited

and many of the aspirant Christians found themselves stuck with junior status for much longer than they had anticipated when they joined the Christians. What is more, without the traditional constraints on the exercise of authority, these new authorities could be even more authoritarian than traditional authorities. The failure of the Anglican and African Churches, as well as churches subsequently introduced to Idoani, to deliver independence and elite status to all has fuelled the enthusiasm not only for Babalola's movement but also for the establishment of other churches.

Whilst there can be no doubt that Babalola's revival stimulated an intellectual conviction of the spiritual power of Christianity, or that it was this which attracted a large proportion of those who joined the revival, the composition of the early membership of the ijo which formed as a result of that revival, and its organisational structure, suggest that the establishment of what was to become the C.A.C. was also, in part, a reaction to the hierarchical elitism which had become part of the traditions of the Anglican and African Churches and the failure of these churches to bring about, for the growing body of Christians, the independence and elite status with which they had become associated. A significant proportion of those who joined Babalola's movement were former contributors to the Anglican and African Churches, and indeed this was one of the sources of the antagonism

these two churches exhibited towards the movement. Among these former members of the Anglican and African Churches were: young men who, in a pattern established by the early Christians, were challenging the established authority of the Christian 'big men'; as well as older Christians who, had been condemned to junior status in these churches because they were unable to read and write. The concern of these latter, it seems, was to reclaim a traditional right to gerontocratic authority which they were being denied in the Anglican Church.

Among the young men who joined the new church was Mr. D.A. Elegiri who was to become the first secretary to the church. Elegiri has confirmed the general contention that most of the founding members of the new church were young men and that there were in addition a large number of old men. Before he could be made secretary, Elegiri, along with five other young men who wanted to be secretary, sat an exam in order to determine who would get the post. The four who were unsuccessful in that examination returned to the Anglican Church, which suggests that despite the spiritual/intellectual satisfaction associated with the new movement these young men were only prepared to join the new church if it presented a career opportunity but that they were not prepared, at this uncertain stage of the church's development (when, it will be recalled, the membership were subject to all sorts of persecution by colonial and local authorities), to sacrifice the less immediate opportunities for patronage, careers and high

status with which the older churches were associated.

Among the older men who joined the new church was the father of Mr. D.A. Okurinkoya from Isure. Although he was a regular and consistent attender of the Anglican Church and had only one wife, Okurinkoya (Sr.) was never baptised and as a result never held any title in the church, because he could not read or write. When Babalola came, therefore, he and his wife joined the new church. They were baptised by Babalola and Okurinkoya (Sr.) was made an 'Elder' of the new church.

With the success of the C.A.C. therefore, the traditional forms of stratification associated with gerontocracy were institutionalised in the status of 'Elder' which has also been incorporated into the hierarchy of the C.A.C, Apostolic Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Church and C.C.C.

As was the case in the Anglican Church, in the new church, all the quarters of the new settlement were represented, although there were only a few people from Amusigbo which the accounts indicate had monopolised the Anglican Church. According to Ajiroba, the Amusigbo were the largest group among the members of the Anglican Church and it was from that quarter that the largest amounts in class fees was submitted (Ajiroba 1972). Because all the quarters were represented in the church, in addition to addressing traditional spiritual concerns and institutionalising gerontocracy, the C.A.C. was also in a

position to define and sustain the new community for a much wider section of the community than that involved with the Anglican Church, by bringing together peoples from what had been the different settlements of the area. In the process of so doing, like the Anglican church, the C.A.C. has institutionalised the division of the community into quarters, and thus quarter solidarity. Among the means by which the institutionalisation of the division of the community into quarters was achieved, in both the Anglican Church and the C.A.C. was by each quarter being represented by its own Baba Egbe and even sweeping the church being organised among the women on a quarter basis. Obviously it is not only in the churches that the division of the community according to quarter has been institutionalised, but the fact that the churches divide the community in this way strengthens the significance of divisions on this basis, and thus quarter solidarity in the community.

With the introduction of the C.A.C., the Christianisation of Idoani was achieved and it is, it seems, in the traditions of either the Anglican Church, the African Church or the C.A.C. that most of Idoani's Christians have been socialised. It is hardly surprising therefore that the introduction of subsequent churches to Idoani has been based on similar principles to those which led to the introduction of these first three churches. The introduction of subsequent churches has been, therefore, a means by which both individuals and groups

have made a bid for independence and power, as well as a vehicle for the expression of the complex co-existence in the community of both traditional and modern forms of stratification.

The Catholic, Methodist, Cherubim and Seraphim and Remember Jesus Come Churches were all introduced by individuals who are seem to have been concerned with establishing their independence from existing authorities and building their own power bases within the community. All seem to have been rank outsiders whose claims to high status were derived from outside Idoani and whose prospects for acquiring positions of authority via the existing channels either in the churches or in the wider community seemed poor. The introduction of these new churches provided for these individuals, therefore, an opportunity to establish a basis from which to develop a patriarchal power base in the community in the same way that the introduction of the Anglican Church had done for the early Christians. Omotoyinbo who was responsible for introducing the Catholic church to Idoani was a stranger, while Akinbode who introduced the Methodist Church was a junior member of Isure, itself a junior quarter in the community. Aribanusi who introduced the Cherubim and Seraphim Church to Idoani and Ilesanmi who founded the R.J.C.C. were from Amusigbo, while Pa Esan who together with Akinbode had introduced the Methodist Church to Idoani was from Iyayu quarter. All these three seem to

x have come from families without elite traditions. They had all spent some time away from Idoani, where they had advanced their status and all seem to have been concerned to establish themselves in positions which reflected the status they felt they had acquired outside the community on their return to Idoani: Akinbode as a student activist, Esan as a teacher and Ilesanmi as a trader.

Although these four denominations seem to have been established in order to procure the advancement of individuals outside channels controlled by the established elite, they have attracted quite distinct memberships whose relative character reflects the relationships which exist between the source of the denomination's religious power and the relative significance of traditional and modern types of social stratification in a denomination.

Thus the Catholic and Methodist Churches which like the Anglican church have elitist mission traditions and have been associated with the power to transform social organisation are becoming the institutional focus for the Oke Leju community together with the Igbirra community, and the Isolo family of the Iyayu community respectively, in much the same way that the Anglican Church is the institutional focus for the settlements which became the Idoani community. In these two churches the concern has been with the denominations' power to define and sustain specific communities in which elites are linked to low status groups in a way that confirms the former's elite



status outside the established churches and gives the latter access to a smaller but more accessible group of elites. The emphasis is on the vertical ties between the community and the 'big men' who are their leaders. The relationship between this emphasis and the redistribution of wealth was illustrated at the launching of a Methodist Church building fund to which the remaining founder Akinbode, who was at that time a member of the House of Representatives, brought friends and colleagues from Lagos who made substantial contributions to the fund.

The Cherubim and Seraphim Church which derives its power from the emphasis it has placed on the manipulation of symbols to treat sickness and prevent misfortune, has attracted a large proportion of women whose status tends to be low because of their sex, as well as low status men for whom the church is a means by which low status men can acquire positions of authority. The radical politics of the R.J.C.C., coupled with its emphasis on prediction and control of fate and misfortune has also attracted low status men and women whose low status is not just a consequence of their youth but is also related to their occupation. A large proportion of the membership are students who have been categorised as aspirant elites, but since a secondary school education can no longer guarantee an individual even a wage labour occupation, and many of the students of local secondary schools like Irekare Grammar School now end up as farmers, craftspeople and

petty traders. For some students membership of R.J.C.C. is on the one hand a reflection of the belief that effort alone is not the means by which educational success is acquired and on the other hand a form of socialisation into low status. These two churches do play a role, therefore, in promoting, among people of low status, the horizontal ties which are the basis of social classes as well as attitudes which are a potential basis for the development of a class culture. The formation of a lower class religiosity or consciousness is moderated in these particular churches, however, by the fact that they are have also been the avenue by which some individuals have advanced free of control by the established elite as well as vehicles for the expression of traditional religious concerns, both these objectives have been served in these churches by the institutionalisation of traditional forms of stratification that tend to undermine the development of class consciousness and solidarity.

Both Kingdom Hall and the Apostolic Church were established at Idoani as a result of the evangelising activities of outsiders, but their socio-political significance in the community and the structure of relations between their memberships are a reflection of the quite different sorts of religious power on which they place emphasis. Like the C.A.C. to which it is closely related, the Apostolic Church is concerned with the manipulation of symbols to achieve practical ends as well as with the power to define and sustain community. It has

therefore been able to provide a Christian context for spiritual/intellectual satisfaction while at the same time giving expression to the isolation and solidarity of the Ipara community. The patrons of the church are drawn from the locally resident elite who are successful traders and members of the Anglican Church, not the community's elite from urban centres. Their role is to serve as a link between the rest of the Idoani community rather than to be 'big men' redistributors of wealth like the leaders of the Catholic and Methodist Churches. As the institutional focus of a specific community, emphasising traditional religious concerns, like the C.A.C., the Apostolic Church has focused on vertical rather than horizontal ties and X traditional rather than modern forms of stratification. The Jehovah's Witnesses on the other hand, are associated with the power of the message in the Bible and an emphasis has therefore been placed on literacy. The fact that none of the members of the survey sample were farmers, and the life style promoted by the denomination suggests that it is a means for the achievement and expression of the social status associated with lower grade clerical workers. This denomination has the potential, therefore, to represent a distinct status group but not a social class. The emphasis on horizontal ties in this denomination is associated, however, with the fact that the bulk of the small congregation are strangers as well as the evidence of a status related religiosity.

In the character of Idoani's two most recently introduced denominations which are both youth movements, in the sense that the impetus for their introduction has come from the community's young people, there is evidence of the emergence of two quite different types of low status religiosity. On the one hand there is the Celestial Church of Christ and on the other, the Faith Gospel Mission. Both are products of that tradition established by the older churches and the C.A.C., of low status as a result of youth providing a social basis for breaking away from established religious institutions but the type of religious power emphasised and the character of relations between their memberships reflects the existence in the community of two quite different attitudes towards low status.

The emphasis in the C.C.C. is on spiritual/intellectual power. The meetings are attended mainly by young women with children, but also a large number of young men. The attendants tend to be apprentice craftspeople, petty traders, wage labourers and clerical workers. There are over 25 titles in the church and although occupants of these titles reflect the youth of the church's membership they also represent the institutionalisation of traditional forms of stratification. Despite the young membership, therefore, authority in the church is in the hands of an elderly male 'Senior Leader'. Like some of the denominations that have already been considered, the response to low status which

the C.C.C. offers is spiritual/intellectual. The emphasis on the manipulation of symbols to achieve practical ends, reflects the conviction that economic success and high status are obtained by this method, while the establishment of the church itself provides for only some members, an opportunity to exercise authority and an improvement in status within the distinct community which the church represents.

The Faith Gospel Mission on the other hand is, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, associated with the power of the message in the Bible and access to literacy. The membership is mainly students but it also includes some young farmers who did belong to the C.A.C. As yet there is no evidence that there will be a large number of titles in the church, and although at the inauguration two of the young people were installed as 'Church Elders', the leader of the mission was a young man. There is no evidence of any attempt to incorporate traditional forms of stratification into the organisation. Unlike the C.C.C. the response the Faith Gospel Mission offers to low status, is the opportunity for all to improve their status through the mission's emphasis on literacy, to promote which regular literacy classes are organised, western European cultural styles, and international contacts.

The existence of these two quite different religious expressions and responses to low status summarises the ambivalent role religious differentiation has played in

the formation and moderation of class distinctions, as well as some of the complexity which surrounds status and class in contemporary rural Yoruba communities.

The complexity of the relationship between religious differentiation and social differentiation is also reflected in the relative statuses of the different churches at Idoani.

## 2. Church status.

This study has not included any systematic analysis of the relative statuses of the different churches at Idoani. Indeed the relationship which the above analysis suggests exists between religious and social differentiation has arisen as a result of the study rather than being its initial focus. The discussion which follows, therefore, is on the one hand a summary of some general impressions derived from the insights into contemporary religious culture derived from the incorporation perspective on religious change and, on the other hand, an introduction to areas which could form the basis of further research.

Idoani's churches seem to be stratified according to a complex interaction between: the denomination's own traditions, the historical significance of the incorporation of the denomination into the religious culture of the community, the church's age, who the church designates as its elite, and the type of religious power emphasised by the denomination. This latter seems to have immense significance and deserves special attention

because it seems to suggest that despite being a major attraction, the spiritual/intellectual power associated with Christianity is consistently associated with low status.

The emphasis on the spiritual/intellectual power of Christianity in the C.A.C. and the Apostolic Churches has been combined, and its significance thereby tempered, with an emphasis on the socio-political power to define and sustain community. Churches like Cherubim and Seraphim, R.J.C.C. and C.C.C. which also emphasise spiritual/intellectual religious power may not have large memberships, but their popular appeal is indicated by the fact that they have attracted in addition to their regular memberships, the involvement, and funds, of members of the established churches. Despite their popular appeal, these churches have a low status in the hierarchy of churches, which seems to be inversely related to the extent of the emphasis they place on spiritual/intellectual religious power.

Even though the C.A.C. has a large membership from which it would have derived a high status on the basis of traditional criteria of stratification, it has a junior status in relation to the African Church, not simply because of its later arrival, but also because of its emphasis on spiritual/intellectual power. Although some individuals may have improved their status in relation to other members of the church, since spiritual/intellectual

power cannot acquire either for itself or its members, the high status which the emphasis on socio-political and economic power has made the Anglican and African Churches the superior force that they have remained in the larger community and Owani respectively, the status of the C.A.C. has remained low in relation to the Anglican and African Churches and shows no signs of catching up with these two.

Among the denominations which emphasise spiritual/intellectual power, the older churches tend to have more prestige than the newer ones, but the Apostolic Church seems to elicit more respect in the community than the Cherubim and Seraphim Church which is older, perhaps because like the C.A.C. its emphasis on spiritual/intellectual power is tempered by its power to define and sustain a community. In this scheme of things, the low status of the C.C.C. is a function not just of its youth, but also of the fact that among the churches, it is associated with the most dramatic expression of spiritual/intellectual religious power.

In addition to the inability of spiritual/intellectual power to deliver socio-political and economic power the low status of spiritual/intellectual power is clearly related to the low esteem in which traditional religious culture has been held and to the cults of which the 'spiritual' churches are closely related.

Despite the prominent role which has been given to



the role of intellectual processes in the conversion of Africans to Christianity in particular, and Islam as a consequence of this perspective, then, it would seem that it is from the socio-political and economic processes with which the religion was associated that Christianity has acquired real power in Idoani. The spiritual/intellectual power with which the religion eventually became associated has been responsible for making Christianity more palatable to the masses, but the churches which emphasise this type of power have been unable to deliver for the bulk of their congregations, the socio-political and economic power with which Christianity was initially associated.

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## SOURCE I: LOCAL ORAL SOURCES

Extensive use has been made in this study of oral evidence which was collected in a variety of ways.

- I. A standard questionnaire was used to guide interviews that were intended to collect some basic historical, as well as contemporary data about all of Idoani's: Quarters, Churches and Schools.

A different questionnaire was used for each type of institution. Headmasters and principals answered my questions about Schools, while my questions about Quarters and Churches were generally answered by groups of individuals belonging to the institution.

- II. A standard set of questions were also used to collect life histories of individuals. During such interviews, conversations often turned to more general discussion of socio-historical issues, in particular about the life and times of the parents of the interviewees. Below is a list of some of the individuals whose life histories were collected by this method.

### Ako:

Oloye Agunloye.....  
Born around 1890, 'converted' to Christianity as a boy and joined Babalola's revival when it came to Idoani. He spent 20 years abroad working as an itinerant tattoist.

Elder Susi.....  
Born around 1920, one of the first set of C.A.C. students. Secretary to the C.A.C. Ako.

### Amusiqbo

Pa Adeyanju.....  
Born 1980. Retired teacher and civil servant.  
Former chairman of Idoani's Progressive Union.  
Active member of the Anglican Church.

Oloye Odofin.....  
Born around 1915. Opened the first Post Office at Idoani. Joined the police force in 1941 and retired Deputy Commissioner of Police for Western Region in 1972. In 1975 he retired to settle down at Idoani.

Oloye Obanla.....  
Born around 1912 to christian parents. Attended St. Andrews college Oyo. A retired primary school headmaster.

Mr. Timothy Aiyebusi Ola.....  
Born 1912. When his father died, his mother, a trader, remarried a Catechist stationed at Ifira, her home town. Mr. Ola grew up, in the catechists household. Worked as a shopkeeper at Ibadan and then returned to Ifira to take up osomaalo trading. Their leaders, he said were Ilesa men. When his mother died his family at Amusigbo brought him back from Ifira to Idoani. At Idoani he was a washerman to teachers and pastors until there was no more good money in it. Then he took up motor chartering, hiring transport to shift harvest for farmers.

Mr. Joseph K. Awoniyi.....  
Born 1913. Father was one of the first to become a christian. Has worked at Ibadan, Ilorin, and Jos. Retired to Idoani in 1976.

Oloye Oyebata (Samuel Ogundele).....  
Born 1925. Joined the army in 1942 and served in India from 1943 - 1946. His grandfather was the Oyebata who moved with Alani Atewogboye to Oke Ido. His mother was from the Iye family of Amusigbo. Although he has taken an Oke Ido title he lives in the Oke Leju section of Amusigbo.

Oloye Awoden.....  
Born 1911. Member of the Anglican Church and Egbe Ewedaiyepo.

Oloye Alamusu.....  
Born around 1907. Never went to school, started farming with his father when he was a boy and eventually made a farm of his own next to his fathers when he got married. He has always been a farmer.

Oloye Oshati.....  
Born 1915. Started working as a teacher but gave it up because the salary was too low. Eventually returned to teaching combining it with trading until he entered Ondo Boys Secondary School. Retired Court Registrar. His father was one of Tenabe's first followers, he challenged the Egun Upe and as a result was disowned by his father even though he was an only son.

Oloye Osere.....  
Born 1906. Raised at Ipetu, his mothers town. Returned to Idoani in 1934 to start farming on his fathers land.

Olori Awo S.O. Arala.....  
Born 1930, Head of the Idoani branch of Egbe  
Ewedaiyepo and member of the African Church.

Isewa:

Oloye Elekpen. Born 1902. Has been a farmer all his  
life. He started going to Church in 1919.

Oloye Owoka.....  
Born 1891 started going to Church in 1918. Started  
working on the roads to pay taxes in 1921, but quit  
in 1929 when he realised there was money to be made  
from growing cocoa.

Rev. Canon J.I. Eko.....  
Born 1917. His father was an alaworo to Alani.  
Vicar of St. John's Church Ilupeju.

Oloye Asewa.....  
Born 1921. Schooling interrupted by an 8 year bout  
of yaws. Eventually finished school and was a  
teacher for 3 years, but had to come home to care for  
aged parents. At Idoani, he became a cocoa farmer.  
In 1965 started preparing to take the Asewa title,  
which he took ten years later.

Isure:

Oloye Olusure.....  
Born 1909. No schooling but went to Lagos to learn  
carpentry. Returned home because of a sickness that  
could only be cured by his father's agbo (tea:  
various leaves and barks boiled in water).

Oloye Eleyinmi.....  
Born around 1892. Went to Lagos around 1924 to be a  
'steward' to Europeans. Returned to Idoani in 1930  
and planted cocoa.

Mr. Dayo Aro.....  
Born 1941. Born at Moniya Ibadan where his father,  
an Isure man, worked as a clerk. His mother, a  
daughter of the Asewa, brought him home in 1947 to  
attend school. A secondary school teacher who is  
resident at Lagos.

Oloye Ojomo.....  
Born 1916. Father was a muslim. Attended Holy  
Trinity School Idoani for 3 years. He was forced to  
leave school when his father died. He started going  
to farm but fleeing witchcraft he went to Ibadan to

work and joined U.N.A. Church there. He returned to Idoani in 1977 and was once again going to the Mosque. He had started going to the Anglican Church, but in 1981 was still studying the religion.

Oloye Elegiri.....  
Born around 1914. Was born a christian. Started school in 1925 but was expelled when his father joined the Aladura. Was secretary to the C.A.C. Idoani.

Oloye Egbedi.....  
Born around 1908. Did not go to school but assisted his father in the farm and with his work as a babalawo.

Mr. Jimoh Ajakaiye.....  
Born 1920. A muslim farmer. Father was captured and taken to Afa where he was used as a farm slave. His father became a muslim when he was an old man after his return to Isure.

Madame Marianne Omowamide.....  
Born around 1880. She became a christian as a young woman when she saw everybody else was doing it.

Mr. N. Oguntuwase.....  
Born 1921. African Church Catechist. His father was a blacksmith.

Iyayu:

Pa Samuel Adesina.....  
Born 1915 to christian parents.

Mr. D.O. Agara.....  
Born 1910. He got his Standard 6 Certificate in 1930 and did secretarial work for a trader. In 1934 he came home to Idoani and became a produce buyer. He quit this work in 1939 to become a secretary to C.F.A.O. at Akure. When in 1939 the company folded because of the war in Europe he returned home and started farming.

Pa Joseph Akingbemigun.....  
Born around 1880. He started going to Church because he was impressed with the behaviour of the christians in general, but to one another in particular. His becoming a christian so angered his father that he had to leave Idoani to go and work at Ondo as a labourer.

Mrs. F. Ajasin (nee Tenabe).....  
Born 1914. The youngest of Issac Tenabe's children

she started school in 1920, then taught for 3 years before she married Adekunle Ajasin of Owo who became Governor of Ondo State 1979-83.

Mrs. Maryanne Aladekoba.....  
Born around 1905. Her brother sent her to school for 2 years. She then farmed with her father until she became the 3rd wife of Josiah Aladekoba who was a policeman at Oka.

Owani:

Oloye Owusi.....  
Born around 1892. His father had been carried to Ado Ekiti during the Ogedemgbe Aduloju war.

Mr. E.B. Tenabe.....  
Born around 1919. He is a retired teacher who recalled how when he was at school in Owo between 1933 and 1936 they used to trek home every weekend to get the food they would eat for the coming week.

Mr. N.B. Ogunware.....  
Born in 1936. Primary School Headmaster at a school in Kwara state. His parents were already christians when he was born. His father was an interpreter to Europeans before he was brought home to marry and have children. His mother was a well to do trader. He started teaching in 1948 when he was just 12. A special stool was constructed to enable him to write on the blackboard.

Madame Florence Alonge.....  
Born around 1918. Daughter of a wealthy trader and **babalawo**. Teachers used to come and prostrate before her father and beg him to send his children to their school, and so he sent them, male and female. She studied to Standard 4, but did not want to go any further, and so she went to Ijebu and learned how to sew.

Mr. S.O. Atewogboye.....  
Born around 1910. Son of Alani Atewogboye. When his fathers body was brought home from Oja Gbamo he carried the lamp that lit their way back to Owani. Attended school up to Standard 6 but was removed by his brother before he had finished to go and learn tailoring. Later became an apprentice mechanic driver and worked for E.C.N. (Electric Company of Nigeria) for 7 years. When Alani Falade died in 1957, he was called home to contest the obaship but the family eventually decided to submit Adegoke Falade for installation. As a result of the temporary break in employment with E.C.N., he lost

his seniority and some pension. Retired and came home to Idoani in 1980.

Alhaji Mohammed Alabi.....  
Born around 1905 to a pensioned soldier who lived at Benin but was a native of Idoani. Although he came from a muslim family, he went to the African Church School and was taught by D.O. Asabia. In 1933 he went to Ghana where he worked as a freelance painting contractor, married and had property. He returned to Idoani in 1969 with practically nothing when all foreigners were expelled from Ghana. Presently working as a nightwatch man.

Oloye Agbayewa.....  
Born around 1896. It was he that the Ido-Ani christian community sent to find out about Ijo Aniyan Dudu (The African Church).

Oloye Olisa (S.O. Asabia).....  
Born around 1896. An African Church pioneer responsible for spreading the Church all over Akoko. One of the two authors of Idoani Past and Presnt.

Oloye Owanikin.....  
Born 1914. Attended school up to Standard 5 and was keen to go and study nursing but was asked to stay home and look after his ageing father. He stayed to manage his fathers farm and has been a farmer ever since.

III. In addition to information gathered in structured interviews with the above individuals whose life histories were collected. Some life history details and socio-historical information was gathered in conversations which took place over extended periods with a number of people, including the following:

Ako:

Oloye Alako - head of Ako quarter, a farmer.

Oloye Ojumu - a non resident native who made frequent visits home.

Amusigbo:

Oloye Oniye - head of the Iye subquarter.

Oloye Awoden - head of Odorogbo subquarter.

Oloye Alasan - head of Owalasan subquarter.



Oloye Akinyemi - lawyer/politician with business interests at Idoani. Resident in Lagos. Makes frequent visits home.

Oloye Aro - head of the Odegbamo subquarter.

Pa Eto Ayitoye - a hunter.

Mr. Oguntade - son of local historian Oloye Samuel Oguntade Ajiroba. Civil servant with Ondo State Ministry of information. Resident at Akure.

Mrs. Jeanette Akinbode - junior wife to Mr. T.O. Akinbode of Isure.

Mr. Ogini - of Isure but resident at Oke leju subquarter Amusigbo. Teacher at the Community Grammer School Idoani.

Mr. and Mrs. Adugbe - members of the Catholic Church. Joint proprietors of an Health Supplies outlet, provision store and beer parlour at Oke Leju quarter.

Misses Funmilayo and 'Dupe Adugbe - students at Epinmi teachers training college and Irekare Grammer School Idoani respectively.

Mr. Akingbade - headmaster at Holy Trinity primary school.

Mrs. Akingbade - teacher at the AUD primary school.

Mr. Akingbade - a farmer.

Brother Mathew - Catholic Church Catechist

Senior Apostle S.O. Aribanusi - founder of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church.

Prophet Okoko - Cherubim and Seraphim Church Woli native of Benue State.

Pa Aiyeku - one of the two secretaries to Amusigbo quarter meetings.

Isewa:

Mr. Bayode - teacher at Holy Trinity Church Primary School.

Ms. Gladys Bayode - matron at Federal Government College Idoani.

Mrs. Ruth Bayode - a junior wife, native of Idogun.

Pa Julius Atewogboye - son of Alani Atewogboye.

Mrs. Aro - daughter of the previous Asewa

Rev. E.O. Eko - non resident who makes regular visits home.

Isure:

Oloye Obasiya - farmer. Member of age grade preparing to become Irare.

Alhaji Ibitoye - Imam of the muslim community at Isure.

Mr. T.O. Akinbode - member of the House of Representatives. Community activist. Has been principal of Irekare Grammer school. Resident at Lagos but makes frequent visits home.

Mrs. Akinbode - native of Ilesa. Senior wife of Mr. T.O. Akinbode. Primary school teacher, trader and member of the Ladies Social Circle.

Mr. Okurinkoya - teacher at Irekare Grammer School. Elder of C.A.C. (Ako).

Mr. Bakare - teacher at C.A.C./African Church Primary School.

Oloye Owagboriaiye - an Irare and senior chief.

Oloye Alabi - accountant resident at Lagos with an interest in local history customs and traditions. Makes occasional visits home.

Staff Olubade - soldier in Nigerian Army. Resident at Ibadan. Makes frequent visits home to monitor the progress on building and to hunt.

Iyayu:

Mrs. Akinola - proprietor of the Decent Food Canteen. Trader in cloth, beer and minerals. Anglican, patron of the Apostolic Church. Member of Ladies Social Circle.

Mr. Akinola - contractor. Anglican, patron of the Apostolic Church.

Magistrate Alonge - magistrate at Akure. Makes frequent visits home.

Major General Olutoye - retired. Resident at Akure. Has built a house at Idoani, and makes occasional visits home. An omo mane as a result of intermarriage between Alani and Iyayu.

Miss Vero Balogun - young muslim woman.

Mr. Omoge - retired teacher. Resident at Ikare but making preparations to settle at Idoani. Makes frequent visits home.

Mr. Ojo -

Mr. R.A. Raji - muslim contractor resident at Lagos.

Colonel Raji - officer in the Nigerian Army stationed at Jos in Plateau State. Makes occasional visits home.

Captain Daji - officer in the Nigerian Army stationed at Lagos. Makes frequent visits home to hunt.

Mr. F.A. Fadele - teacher at the Apostolic Church Primary School.

Mr. Aro -

Mr. Aladekoba - banker resident in Lagos who makes occasional visits home. Has children attending the Federal Government College Idoani.

Pa Ibrahim Alagbede - elderly muslim farmer.

Mr. A. Oloruntola -

Pa Daniel Ogunloye -

Mr. Moses Obatuyi -

#### Owani:

Oloye Ohunorun - elderly female chief.

Rev. Dadamu - pastor of the African Church. Native of Oka.

Imam Amuda - Imam of the muslim community at Owani.

Oloye Ajana - medical officer. Resident at Idoani. Community activist.

- Mr. Alonge - anglican. Headmaster of Holy Trinity Primary School Owani.
- Mr. (Prince) Atewogboye - civil servant in Federal Ministry of Education. Resident at Lagos. Makes frequent visits home.
- Mr. S.O. Agbayewa - member C.A.C. Owani. Works at First Bank Idoani.
- Mr. David Apata - originally from a town in Bendel State. Blacksmith and farmer. Member of C.A.C.

## SOURCE II: LOCAL DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

### I. Published Sources

Idoani Past and Present by D.O. Asabia and J.O. Adegbesan of Owani quarter. (Ibadan, Ibadan University Press, 1970).

Iwe Itan, Bi Esin Iqbagbo tabi Ihinrere Jesu Kristi ti se wo Ilu Idoani ati Agbegbe re ni Odun 1892 by Chief Samuel Oguntade Ajiroba of Amusigbo. (Ikare, Oladare Press, 1972).

### II. Unpublished Sources

'Idoani - The Facts You Must Know', by Mr. T.O. Akinbode. Manuscript written in 1970 as a rejoinder to Idoani Past and Present.

'Intelligence Report on Owo and Ifon Districts, Owo Division, Ondo Province' by Assistant D.O. J.H. Beeley. Compiled in 1932.

### III. Private Papers

Mr. T.O. Akinbode (Isure)

Community activist who has been:

Secretary then president of the Idoani students Union;  
Secretary of the Idoani Progressive Union Home Branch;  
Headmaster of Irekare Grammer School (the first Secondary School at Idoani);  
Member House of Representatives for Owo II F.C., 1979-83.

Mr. Timothy Aiyebusi Ola (Amusigbo)

Oniye Family historian;  
Secretary to Amusigbo Quarter.

Chief S.O. Ajiroba (Amusigbo)

Local historian, known for recording birth dates;  
Catechist;

Baba Egbe of the Anglican Church; Died 1978;  
Among his papers, his son, Mr. J.H. Oguntade discovered the catechists logbook his father had kept for 1919 and gave it to me to examine.

### III. Church Records

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Idoani      Baptismal Records 1952-1969.

Irohin Ise Ijo Olorun ni Anglican  
Church District Council Idoani  
1973-1975.

St. Andrews Anglican  
Church, Owo

Baptism Registers 1909-  
1916.

SOURCE III: NATIONAL ARCHIVES (NAI)

Papers from:

Ondo Provincial Office (ONDOPROF)  
Owo Divisional Office (OWODIV)  
C.M.S. Yoruba Mission (CMSY)  
J.K. Coker (COKER PAPERS)

SOURCE IV: CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY (C.M.S.) RECORDS

I. C.M.S. Yoruba Mission Records deposited at the University of Birmingham Library:

CA1/0215 Correspondence of Rev. Henry Townsend.

II. C.M.S. Missionary Publications deposited at the C.M.S. headquarters in London:

Church Missionary Recorder (CMR) a monthly publication for friends of the C.M.S. Volumes covering January 1930-February 1852.

Church Missionary Intelligencies (CMI) a monthly journal of missionary information. Volumes covering May 1849 - October 1875.

Church Missionary Intelligence and Recorder (CMI & R) a publication which represented the merging of the above two publications, covering February 1877 - March 1891.



## SOURCE V: GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

A demographic survey of Idoani was conducted in April 1981 to obtain a general profile of the population.

The sample of the population surveyed was obtained by including every 10th residential house listed in the Idoani Tenement Rate Book for 1980. Some general questions were then asked about each of the adult residents in that house.

The Survey was conducted by three interviewers. These were:

Mr. S.A. Alonge, native of Owani, headmaster of Holy Trinity Primary School at Owani quarter.

Mr. O. Tokunbo, member of the royal family, native of Oke Ido quarter, court clerk for the Grade II Customary Court at Idoani.

Mr. F. Omueti, a native of Igarra in Bendel State, teacher at the Federal Government College Idoani.

These interviewers were given 3 pre-survey orientation seminars lasting approximately 2 hours each in which the aims and objectives of the survey were presented and discussed. The interviewers were advised to speak to the individual adults about who the information was required, when this was not possible, other household members were asked to provide whatever information they could.

The houses to be included in the Survey were then divided among the interviewers so that each interviewer surveyed houses from each quarter.

The survey was conducted over a period of one week.

A total no. of 91 houses were included in the survey:

3 from Isewa  
4 from Ako  
6 from Oke Ido  
11 from Owani  
15 from Isure  
19 from Amusigbo  
33 from Iyayu

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91 Total

Details were collected from 88 houses and about 343 adults. It was not possible to collect information from only 2 of the sample houses. The members of one of the household were both school teachers and strangers to Idoani, they refused to participate. In the other case,

despite repeated visits over a week nobody was available for interviewing.

The following information was requested:

Sex

Age

Marital Status

No. of Wives/Wife No.

No. of Children (we found people reluctant to 'count' children but little significance is to attached to these figures in the study)

Education

Occupation

Religious affiliation

Titles

Town of origin.

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