

# INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATION OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY AMONG THE YORUBA IN THE NINETEETH CENTURY

By  
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## Introduction

Maintenance of the security of life and property in society enhances both public peace and mutually productive ways of life. With public peace achieved in society, a myriad of opportunities exist to create commercial and industrial openness and thereby attract productive entrepreneurs. The more secure productive entrepreneurs feel about their lives and property, the greater the confidence they have in receiving reasonable returns from their investments. Productive entrepreneurs are further enhanced when operational rules effectively lower transaction costs and thereby facilitate increasing possibilities for most participating individuals to reach more mutually acceptable contractual agreements. Economic development is more likely in such a political economy (North & Thomas 1976; de Soto 2000).

Hardly can Yoruba communities accomplish this task without drawing upon love of equality, as envisioned by Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*. Principles of equality enable individuals to use their entrepreneurial inventiveness to evolve a living process of cooperation such that individuals can enjoy recognized rights to handle specific problems and opportunities and can join with other individuals in dealing with problems of general interest. When such ingenuity both takes cognizance of and is rooted in the shared values through which individuals with conflicting interests justify their political orders, most participating individuals are more likely to have a shared understanding about the security of their community as a common interest.

In this regard, the level of public peace and order among the Yoruba of Nigeria will reflect how much shared understanding individuals have about the conceptions upon which the institutional arrangements for organizing their life are based. This is because “[t]he peace and security of a community is produced by the efforts of citizens...Collaboration between those who supply a service and those who use a service is essential if most public services are to yield the results desired” (V. Ostrom 1994:189).

This paper specifically aims to explain how the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta organized and maintained the security of life and property in the nineteenth century. The three communities are located in the same ethno-ecological zone, as shown in Figure 1.

I will begin the discussion that follows by looking at the conceptions each Yoruba community drew upon in organizing defense and security in the nineteenth century. The importance of conceptions as organizing principles rests on how they shape shared understanding and sense of impartiality among individuals about their political orders.

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The prevailing ordering principles also determine what amount of freedom individuals and their local units have in meeting specific and general security needs. Specific attention shall also be given to how the dominant conceptions in each Yoruba community influenced the nineteenth century roles of blacksmiths and women. This will help us to understand what constraints and opportunities confront productive entrepreneurs among the Yoruba people of Nigeria as they seek technological breakthroughs and increasing security of life and property in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Conceptions for Organizing Defense and Security among the Yoruba**

Human communities need at least two levels of ordering rules to achieve the security of life and property for mutually beneficial entrepreneurs. First, the constitutional rules in any community should be flexible enough to enable individuals to independently develop rules to handle specific security problems in their respective smaller collective-choice units including compounds, neighborhoods, sections, professional associations, and villages. This is more likely where individuals have autonomy and enjoy the right to organize, make and modify rules based on their specific conditions and interests. Second, institutional arrangements are also required at the community level to bring individuals and their local units together and make them see and pursue the defense of their entire community as a common interest. The ultimate objective is to get most participating individuals to engage in cooperative action in order to achieve an appropriate time-and-space match between the problems of defense and security they face and the institutional arrangements needed to confront those problems. The way all these got put together in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century was largely shaped by the dominant conceptions upon which human relationships in the three communities were (still are) based.

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta differ in terms of conceptions of constitutional arrangements. In Ile-Ife, most Ife elements believe that Ile-Ife is the cradle of creation and civilization for the entire Yoruba people, and a sacred community that must not be attacked by any Yoruba<sup>2</sup>. Most Ife elements perceive themselves as lords over Oyo elements. Many Oyo elements moved to Ile-Ife around 1827. Ife elements treat most Oyo elements as tenants and do not recognize the rights of Oyo elements to operate independent problem-solving arenas such as neighborhoods and villages (Akinjogbin 2002).

The constitutional inequalities in Ile-Ife have turned Ife elements into individuals who are not at all enterprising. They have been unduly given to leisure to the extent that they are popularly known as palm wine drinkers (*emu ni Ife mu*) (Oladoyin 2001:210). In the nineteenth century, for example, most Ife elements did not seek to achieve distinctions in warfare and other related crafts. This was a period when the sacredness of Ile-Ife had started to gain declining respect from other Yoruba communities. Institutional modifications were also required at the time to accommodate the interests of Oyo elements to generate mutually productive cooperation between Ife and Oyo elements in pursuit of public peace in Ile-Ife. Ife elements instead sought to control Oyo elements both as mercenary soldiers and as a source of cheap labor on their farms (Ade-Ajayi and

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<sup>2</sup> Oral interviews with a senior staff at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, and Member of a Landlords' Association in Ile-Ife; a professor of African Languages; compound leader in Ile-Ife

Smith 1971: 72). Oyo elements however believe in the principles of equality as the underlying basis of rule-ordered relationships. Members of both groups have seen each other as enemies rather than equal associates due to lack of common agreement about how they regard one another, what they consider to be fair, and how they distinguish right from wrong<sup>3</sup>.

In sharp contrast, most different Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta have related to one another as equals, taught love of equality to their members, and had a shared understanding about the basis of their relationships since the early nineteenth century when both communities were established. As equals, most Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta have recognized and respected the rights of individuals to acquire security and defense capabilities from individuals of their choice. Mutually recognized freedom also exists for individuals to deal with the security problems of their respective local units. There are, in addition, agreed-upon arrangements to bring individuals together and take actions to jointly pursue the defense of their respective communities and trade routes as a shared interest. The Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta specifically have a shared understanding that individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds, owe their progress to their personal talents and achievements rather than their birth (Ade-Ajayi 1965:79).

The ingenuity of the Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta in responding to changes has been very dynamic. Rather than as an obstacle to the craft of warfare, many inhabitants of the two communities were quick to take the advent of Christianity and Islam as an opportunity to be exploited to their mutual advantage. Warrior and hunters in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, through the efforts of Christian missionaries from the middle of the nineteenth century, began to see the defense and security of their respective communities as events in which the Abrahamic God had an interest. Instead of putting confidence in charms (*oogun*), warriors in Ibadan and Abeokuta started to have recourse to regular prayers and church services. They believed that the Abrahamic God, rather than lesser gods (*orisas*), would supernaturally assist them in the defense and security of their respective communities (Ade-Ajayi and Smith 1971: 226-227). Those who embraced Islam also put confidence in the Abrahamic God for victories in battles. These historic incidents cast doubt upon the speculations that institutions crafted by Africans based on their experiences and beliefs may be unable to response to changes and challenges from their external environments<sup>4</sup>.

The dominant conceptions shaping the organization and maintenance of the security of life and property in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are first taught to individuals within the family (immediate families and compounds) as part of the prevalent socialization process. This will be made clear with the examination of security needs and acquisition of defense and security capabilities in each of the three Yoruba communities.

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<sup>3</sup> Oral interviews with a professor of African Languages; Secretary of a Landlords' Association in Modakeke-Ife

<sup>4</sup> See The World Bank, 1992. "Indigenous Management Practices: Lessons for Africa's Management in the 1990s" Washington D.C. Africa Technical Department.

## Security Necessity and Training among the Yoruba

Provision of the security of life and property began to attract increasing attention in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta following the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire and the resultant internecine conflicts among the Yoruba early in the nineteenth century. The collapse of the Old Oyo Empire and the defeat of its subordinate communities were sealed with successful invasions from the Fulani in the opening years of the nineteenth century. The resultant state of insecurity led to southward migration of many Yoruba refugees. The situation was later aggravated by the outbreak of the Owu war in 1821, which set most Yoruba communities against one another. According to Akinjogbin (2002: 43), “In 1827 A.D., the social picture in all Yorubaland was one of hundred of thousands of Yoruba peoples running helter-skelter seeking refuge wherever they could get.” Some Oyo refugees went to settle in Ile-Ife. Many more Yoruba refugees founded a new community (Ibadan) on the brow and shoulder of Mapo hill around 1829. Displaced Egba and Owu elements in 1830 found refuge around the Olumo Rock from which they derived the name “Abeokuta”, under the rock.<sup>5</sup>

In the face of these disturbing circumstances, the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were confronted with defending their respective territories against invasions from the Fulani. Protection against the Fulani army was intended to hinder the Fulani from imposing their authorities over the whole Yorubaland. This task was naturally made possible through the rainforest that sealed off Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta against the Fulani.

The common defense goal of protecting the Yoruba nation against invasions from the Fulani did not however unite most Yoruba communities. The Yoruba people in Abeokuta, for example, were afraid of the inhabitants of Ibadan who were determined to create a trade route through Abeokuta to the coast. The trade route policy of Ibadan was seen by the Yoruba people in Abeokuta as a gross encroachment on the integrity of Abeokuta and as capable of jeopardizing their economic interests. They also feared Ibadan as a den of kidnappers that might use its intending trade route to decimate their population (Ayo 2002: 194). Ile-Ife had also faced increasing attacks from Yoruba communities such as Ilesa and Owu (Akinjogbin 2002). In the nineteenth century, the need to prevent external slave raiders and create and protect trade routes consequently imposed an additional challenge on each of the three Yoruba communities to strengthen its defense against hostile Yoruba communities.

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were also faced with certain internal security problems. In the nineteenth century, many individuals in each of the three Yoruba communities operated as slave raiders (*onisunmoni*) and kidnappers (*gbomogbomo*). Their activities made life and property insecure within each Yoruba community. While Oyo elements were accusing Ife elements of kidnapping their children as sacrifices to lesser gods (*orisas*) (Adeyemi-Ale 1999: 10), there were some individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta who waylaid and seized even the children and women of their kinsfolk (Falola 1984: 24-25; Ajisafe 1998: 104). The range of internal security problems in each of the three Yoruba communities was further extended by theft and violation of single and married women.

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<sup>5</sup> Although Ibadan and Abeokuta were unclaimed places in the early nineteenth century, some Yoruba (Ife elements in Ibadan and Itoko and other Yoruba elements in Abeokuta) had been living in the initial sites of Ibadan and Abeokuta before the arrival of the refugees (Morgan 1971; Biobaku 1991:16).

Solutions to these problems require entrepreneurial ingenuity in developing appropriate institutional mechanisms. In the nineteenth century, the Yoruba people in the three communities responded to their internal and external security problems using various methods. Acquisition of defense and security capabilities in particular struck at the root of various approaches taken to ensure the security of life and property in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century.

### **Acquisition of Security and Defense Capabilities in the Nineteenth Century**

Acquisition of security and defense capabilities in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century was not based on the tradition of age-grades, unlike the Yoruba communities predominantly settled by Ekiti and Ijebu elements (Fajana 1966). Interest in acquiring defense capabilities was essentially voluntary. Interested individuals acquired the ability to defend themselves and their respective local units or/and communities by serving as apprentices to either their parents/relatives who were hunters/warriors or successful unrelated war chiefs within and/or without their respective communities. Many female warriors like Omosa of Ibadan and Tinubu of Abeokuta acquired their warfare skills under their parents as part of their socialization (Ajayi 1965; Awe and Olutoye 1998).

The extent to which individuals could receive training in the craft of warfare outside their respective compounds, neighborhoods and communities in the nineteenth century reflected how much freedom existed for individuals to take advantage of better training opportunities from individuals of dissimilar backgrounds or local units. The two training options will be examined in turn to understand how they applied to the defense and security of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, starting with childhood training in the craft of hunting.

### **Childhood Training and Acquisition of Defense Capabilities in the Nineteenth Century**

In the nineteenth century, Yoruba children began to acquire the ability to defend themselves, their respective local units and communities through a long apprenticeship under their parents who were hunters/warriors. As they grew up, the children-apprentices were gradually introduced to various *oogun* (charms) or *ifunpa* (amulets) such as *aki-iya* (charm worn to become very bold), *egbe* (wildwind charms for mysterious disappearance from scene of danger), *oogun ifoju* (a supernatural means of inflicting blindness), and *okigbe* (a protective charm worn against cuts) (Akinjogbin 1998).

Parents/relatives, especially fathers and male relatives, usually exploited occasions of hunting apparently to test both the efficacy of the charms on their children and the amount of experience acquired in the use of weapons including clubs, strings, catapults, bows, arrows, swords, and locally made guns. After a while, the children would be sent out to do hunting on their own. If they succeeded they became independent hunters, who might be hired or used to guard neighborhoods, markets and other public places (Ade-Ajayi 1965).

Without taking to hunting, individuals could otherwise acquire skills in the use of clubs to deal with unwanted guests. Hunting nevertheless offered opportunities to children-apprentices to become increasingly familiar with specific terrains of different categories of animals, learn how to move as close to wild animals as possible, and give

signals to experienced hunters, or use weapons to ambush or attack wild animals either from the top of trees or on ground. For individuals training to be warriors in the nineteenth century, wild animals served as proxy human enemies.

At different stages of hunting apprenticeship, individuals were taught certain principles that regulated their behavior as hunters and that would enable them to be of good character (*omoluwabi*). The principles revolve around the terms of covenantal relationships among hunters and the way different groups of Yoruba elements related to one another in their respective communities in the nineteenth century. Covenantal relationships among hunters forbade hunters to defile the person of the wife of another hunter. The covenantal relationships required a hunter who helped the wife of another hunter in a secluded place to inform the woman's husband about the entire transaction, otherwise the act was deemed to have involved sexual immorality. Sexual immorality was also committed when a hunter shares the same seat with the wife of another hunter. Without appropriate remedies, there was a shared belief that violation of these principles was capable of leading to death either through accidental gun discharges, attacks by wild animals, or other shameful misfortunes (Akinjogbin 1998).

Hunters in Ibadan and Abeokuta experienced themselves as equal covenanters and were free to combine together in hunting expeditions. This was rooted in their conceptions that were supportive of equality and freedom of associations among diverse individuals. The situation was however different in Ile-Ife where fundamental inequalities inherent in the constitutional order of Ile-Ife set Oyo and Ife elements against each other as enemies and hindered hunters from both groups from working together. These different bases of human relationships were directly and/or indirectly taught to hunters-in-training.

### **Warfare Training, War Ethics and Weapons**

Hunting wild animals provided initial training in daring, patience and persistence in stalking and gathering intelligence information about an enemy (Ade-Ajayi 1965). Training in hunting largely remained in-house production. In the nineteenth century, contracting-out was largely considered a better option in building on hunting experience to become a competent warrior. Young men who desired to be warriors in the nineteenth century took conscious steps to build on their hunting experiences by moving out of their parents' compounds to serve under famous war chiefs as war boys. Much as this is mostly true of Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century, most young men among Ife elements<sup>6</sup> in Ile-Ife did not move beyond being hunters. As a result, most Ife elements were not enterprising. They saw Oyo elements among them as mercenary soldiers to depend on for warding off external aggressions (Ajayi and Smith 1971).

Many more young men from other Yoruba communities, along with women like Efunsetan (a woman of Abeokuta ancestry), came to Ibadan for military training and trade because of shared beliefs that Ibadan *o ki se ile baba enikan* (Ibadan is nobody's ancestral home) and *Ibadan kii gba onile bi ajeji* (Ibadan never blesses the natives as much as the strangers). In Ibadan, the ability to defend oneself and one's community, rather than any connection to a particular ancestor, confers honor and bestows respect.

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<sup>6</sup> Few Ife elements such as Maye Okunade, who appreciated warfare exploits early in the nineteenth century, voluntarily went to settle in Ibadan and join its army.

Similarly, an open door policy operated in Abeokuta where the principle of attracting people of talents has been based on the belief of *Egba a*: welcome him/her as a member of our family (Lawoye 1984; Biobaku 1991; Ajisafe 1998).

From the third decade of the nineteenth century, the flexibility that characterized the constitutional arrangements in both Ibadan and Abeokuta encouraged many young men to learn warfare from successful warriors such as Ibikunle, Oderinlo, Ogunmola and Latosa in Ibadan; and Sodeke, Ogunbona Agboketoyinbo, Somoye, John Okenla, Majekodunmi, Agbo, Matiku, and Ege in Abeokuta. Each successful war chief in both Ibadan and Abeokuta usually trained his war boys in small private raids (Falola and Oguntomisin 2001).

War boys were trained to master the effective use of weapons such as *kumo* (clubs - used either as cudgel or as a throwing stick), *akatampo* (sling and catapult - simple missiles for hurling pebbles against a target), *ida* (swords - meant for close-quarter fighting and suitable for stabbing, cutting and slashing the enemy), and *ifunpa* (amulets serving uses earlier highlighted). They also learned how to lay ambushes and pounce on the enemy with appropriate weapons.

Correlation existed between weapons in use and the duration of wars in the nineteenth century. When the main weapons were bows and arrows, the army was essentially the militia type. The militia could be raised quickly and cheaply in the event of a war whose period of engagement was brief. As warfare became more complex, the demand for better-quality weapons, such as swords with steel blades and firearms became more obvious (Akinjogbin 1998).

As part of warfare training, war boys, warriors and war chiefs alike were required to observe certain war ethics in the nineteenth century. It was a weighty matter of ethic in the nineteenth century to release prisoners of war after the war. Hausa field commanders captured by Ibadan war chiefs and about 12,000 Ife prisoners of war captured by Oyo elements in Ile-Ife were released on the declaration of peace. War chiefs among prisoners of war in particular were required to be treated with respect and dignity. But traitors were to be summarily killed, as did Ibadan war chiefs to members of their army who allied with the Fulani. Also as part of war ethics, both war boys and their leaders were free to own their weapons and feed themselves according to their own taste and means. If a fighting war chief found his supplies getting low, he was free to return home along with his war boys to purchase fresh supplies before returning to war actions. It was also important that prayers be offered for soldiers before and after war (Olutobi & Oyeniya 1994:3; Akinjogbin 1998: 192-195).

Further, warfare training and technologies were not stagnant in the nineteenth century, especially in Ibadan and Abeokuta. The kind of innovations that characterized military technologies in the two Yoruba communities have some important implications for how conditions and love of equality, which Tocqueville (1966) looks upon as a viable basis for increasing prosperity, can chart a living course for technological breakthroughs among the Yoruba and other humans. Blacksmithing and warfare were two occupations that were closely related in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century. Before the advent of firearms, blacksmiths had mainly preoccupied themselves with manufacturing iron swords, cutlasses, clubs, and arrow points. Changes occurred with the introduction of new weapons such as firearms in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the mid- nineteenth century.

When dane (Danish) guns from Europe were introduced in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century, children-apprentices and war boys in the two Yoruba communities were trained to fire accurately. In the case of war, war boys were consequently trained to stream to the front, fire over a longer range to inflict a great devastation on the enemy and then turn and flow back to the rear. This was tremendously different from the use of swords (*ida*) for close-range fighting.

The new ammunitions were made up of bullets or bolts of bar-iron of different sizes imported from Europe and Boston in the United States. In light of the overwhelming import burdens, blacksmiths in Ibadan and Abeokuta in no time revised blacksmithing technologies and invented new ways to use local materials to manufacture firearms including guns and bullets. The attendant import burdens were afterward reduced (Ade-Ajayi 1965:77; Ade-Ajayi & Smith 1971:17-19).

The ability of blacksmiths in Ibadan and Abeokuta to quickly cope successfully with the new challenges derived mainly from the prevalent conditions of equality in their respective communities that enabled individuals to try out new things, unlike Ile-Ife where it took a while to take advantage of the invention. *The innovative developments in both Ibadan and Abeokuta were not different from how equal standing and equal liberty for most participating individuals in free European cities laid foundations for innovative entrepreneurships that later led to the gradual transformation of horse-carriages into horseless carriages in Western Europe in the eighteenth century when the first car rolled out on the streets, especially the Benz vehicles of 1886 in Germany.*

Consistent with a conjecture shared by Tocqueville (1966), Nicholson (1993) and V Ostrom (1994), it is obvious that communities with constitutional orders ensuring equal standing and equal liberty for individuals and their local units are more likely to allow for greater opportunities to facilitate adaptive process for increasing prosperity. It is therefore not out of place to argue that conditions of equality are fundamentally an inevitable forerunner of technological breakthroughs in human society, otherwise individuals may not be able to take ownership of their technologies.

### **Organization of Internal and External Security in the Nineteenth Century**

Acquisition of security and defense capabilities by individuals has served as a prelude to the organization of defense and security in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta since the nineteenth century. Erection of walls, and contributions from blacksmiths (local weapon producers), traders and farmers (food suppliers), drummers and women also tremendously complemented and reinforced the efforts of hunters and warriors in maintaining the security of life and property in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta before many inhabitants of the three Yoruba communities began to have separate houses away from their compounds as a result of contacts with Europeans. Contacts with Europeans later brought about some changes regarding the organization of the security of life and property. In this paper, our focus will be limited to the organization of security in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century.

### **Internal Security in the Nineteenth Century: Compound**

Most Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta lived in compounds in the nineteenth century. A compound (*agboile*) in the three Yoruba communities consisted of a set of apartments clustered together. Each apartment was occupied by an immediate



family and consisted of at least two rooms. The whole collection formed a rectangle or square enclosing an open space at the center.

There was (still is) a common understanding that maintenance of security in the compound was solely the internal affairs and responsibility of members of the compound. Different strategies were adopted in ensuring the security of property and life at the compound level. One of the strategies involved semiotic tags (*alile*) placed on land, farm produce, economic trees and other properties to prevent unauthorized use or entry (Ayo 2002). The semiotic tags could be statutes of lesser gods and/or ancestors under which many compounds put their members to discourage domestic violence, especially between husband and his wives, and co-wives. *Alile* were (still is) believed to have supernatural powers representing the protective roles of ancestors and lesser gods. Ancestors and lesser gods were believed to be capable of inflicting punishments such as misfortunes, incurable diseases and death on individuals who encroached on whatever was put under *alile*.

For the security of life and property within the compound, a wall was erected around each compound through the joint efforts of its members (Lloyd 1967; Fadipe 1970). On the wall was a single entrance with strong double doors. The doors were closed each night to prevent uninvited guests, such as thieves and marauders/kidnappers, from coming into the compound. Many male members were usually armed with clubs and slings to dispense appropriate punishments to uninvited guests. Their efforts were complemented by hunters/war boys in each compound who were on alert to meet force with force in warding off thieves, marauders and kidnappers (Falola 1984; Ajisafe 1998).

Extramarital sexual acts and incest were also part of security issues at the compound level in the nineteenth century. These acts were capable of weakening mutual trust and destabilizing the peace of the compound. Their occurrence became more likely under the cover of darkness. The wall built around the compound served as a barrier to prevent men and women from using the cover of darkness to come into the compound and engage in extramarital sexual acts with members. Incest was prevented among members of the compound through an arrangement whereby children of tender age and females slept with their mothers. Grown-up male children slept in the compound's verandah.

In the nineteenth century, the provision and production of the security of life and property within most compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were usually an in-house strategy. Members of each compound were required to check the menace of thieves, marauders, kidnappers, and other unwanted guests. This method was effective because it was much easier to monitor one another within the compound. An exception was training in warfare skills that tended to be contracted out to individuals outside the compound. In the nineteenth century, the choice between in-house and contract-out strategies as links between provision and production of the security of life and property benefited mainly from the strategies that offered better results (Falola 1984; Ade-Ajayi 1965).

### **Security of Neighborhoods, Sections and Farmlands in the Nineteenth Century**

The security threats posed by thieves, slave raiders and kidnappers were not limited exclusively to the compounds among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The problems spread over to neighborhoods. A neighborhood is a collection of

compounds. Different arrangements were in place in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to defend neighborhoods.

For example, neighborhood security in Ibadan in the nineteenth century was organized by leaders of each neighborhood. Nearly every neighborhood in Ibadan was headed by *Babaogun* (military patron) and conducted its activities without external interference. Most individuals recognized the authority of their *Babaoguns* and heads of the compounds in the neighborhood to mobilize their war boys to watch over the security of the neighborhood and prevent thieves, slave raiders and kidnappers. To avoid opportunistic behavior, a shared understanding existed among most inhabitants of Ibadan that slave raiders and kidnappers caught would either be summarily executed or be sold into slavery (Falola 1984).

Most neighborhood leaders in Ibadan did not exercise unlimited authority in protecting their members. Individual members of neighborhoods in Ibadan were free to move to other neighborhoods if they felt insecure under their neighborhoods' *Babaoguns* (heads). To avoid losing men and women of distinction, most *Babaogun* acted to be of good character by protecting their respective members. *Babaoguns* of good character in Ibadan were said to have more compounds and successful individuals than those under the leadership of few *Babaoguns* of bad character (Falola 1984; Watson 2003).

The distinction between hunters and warriors in most neighborhoods in Ibadan was blurred. Hunting and warfare, however, were two separate specialized professions in Abeokuta. As discussed in chapter 4 of this study, hunters and warriors in Abeokuta have separate associations. Both hunters and warriors cooperated closely with one another in the nineteenth century in working out solutions to the security problems of their neighborhoods.

Members of the hunters' association (*Ode*) in each neighborhood in Abeokuta were responsible for guarding most markets in their neighborhood. They also undertook public work including construction and maintenance of roads. Hunters and warriors in most neighborhoods nevertheless combined together in the defense of their neighborhoods against slave raiders and kidnappers from other neighborhoods. The sectional associations of hunters and warriors in each of the four sections in Abeokuta similarly handled the security problems shared by their constituent neighborhoods without interfering in the specific security matters of individual neighborhoods and compounds.

In addition, most participating individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta cooperated in the nineteenth century to extend the land areas of their respective communities up to between 20 and 30 miles from their initial sites: Mapo Hill for Ibadan and Olumo Rock for Abeokuta (Mabogunje 1961:267; Eades 1980: 44). Farmlands were set up in the new areas in each community. Hunters and war boys protected individuals who worked on the farmlands against slave raiders and thieves. Since the farmlands in each section of Abeokuta were considered part of each section, sectional associations of hunters and warriors were responsible for protecting their sectional farmlands (Ajisafe 1998). This function was fully the responsibility of individual neighborhoods in Ibadan. Members of compounds, neighborhoods and sections in both Ibadan and Abeokuta were able to solve their security problems because their membership terms were considered fair by most individuals and their autonomy and independence were mutually recognized

and respected by inhabitants of each community. Most individuals also recognized the authorities of their leaders to enforce rules over them.

Compounds and neighborhoods in Ile-Ife were also able to govern themselves in the nineteenth century except that their self-governing and self-organizing capabilities were largely weakened by the hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional order in Ile-Ife. Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife mobilized hunters to guard their respective neighborhoods against thieves. Unlike Ibadan and Abeokuta, the ability of most individual compounds and neighborhoods in Ile-Ife to solve their specific security problems in the nineteenth century depended largely on *Modewa*.

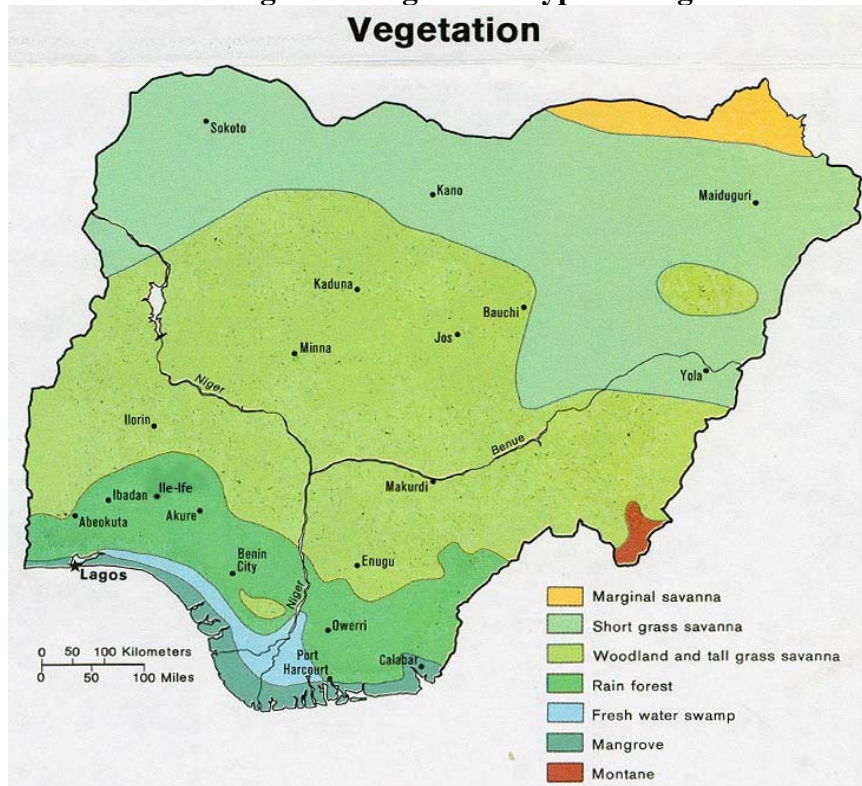
*Modewa* are descendants of the royal lineage who ran two security cells in the nineteenth century to carry out the interests of *Ooni*. One security cell guarded *Ooni*'s palace and the other served to break up perceived and real "civil unrests" (Akinjogbin 1992). It was obligatory for nearly every neighborhood head to dedicate his eldest son to the security cell meant for dealing with civil unrests. The other security cell was made up of the children of *Modewa* (most loyal to the *Ooni*) to form a corps of royal guards for the protection of the *Ooni* (Akinjogbin 1992: 295-299).

The activities of *Modewa* were however not recognized by most Oyo elements that began to work out alternative ways from 1847 to ensure the security of life and property in their neighborhood. The disagreement between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife about the rule of submission and their membership terms hindered their combined efforts to defend Ile-Ife against external aggression in the nineteenth century (Akinjogbin 1998: 394). This is examined in the next section along with how defense against external aggressions was carried out in Ibadan and Abeokuta.

### **Environmental Barriers as Natural Defense against External Aggression in the Nineteenth Century**

Both environmental barriers and the constitutional bases of human relationships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta influenced defense against external aggressions in the nineteenth century. The most important environmental barrier was the rainforest which sealed off Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta against attacks from the Fulani army from the north. Ile-Ife in particular had an advantage over Ibadan and Abeokuta. Ile-Ife was located right at the heart of the rainforest, as Figure 1 illustrates. The rainforest ringed and secured Ile-Ife against the Fulani who are from the savanna area of current Northern Nigeria (Ojo 1967: 123-124).

**Figure 1: Vegetation Types of Nigeria**  
**Vegetation**



Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/nigeria\\_veg\\_1979.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/nigeria_veg_1979.jpg)

Ibadan and Abeokuta were also located in the rainforest. Their respective locations were however closer to the woodland and tall grass savanna, as Figure 1 depicts. As a result, both Ibadan and Abeokuta were more vulnerable to attacks from the Fulani in the nineteenth century than Ile-Ife was. To strengthen their military capabilities and reinforce the advantage of the rainforest as a natural protection, initial settlers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta sought hilly topographies in the rainforest. The Yoruba people in Ibadan settled around the brow and shoulder of Mapo Hill, which is at the center of Figure 3. The crest of Olumo rock, as depicted in Figure 2, was occupied by Egba and Owu elements in Abeokuta as a hide-out against potential enemies (Ojo 1967).

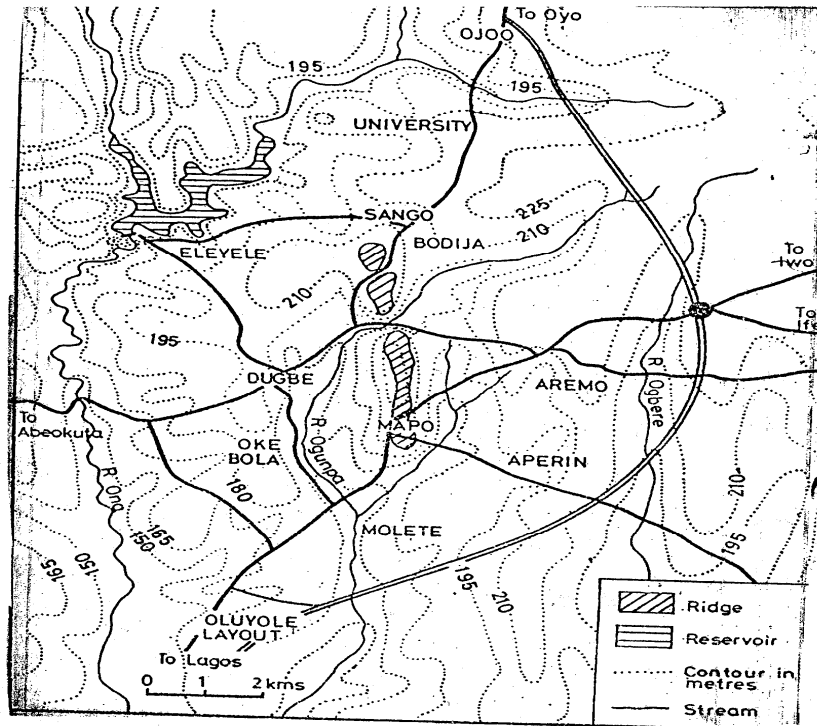
**Figure 2: Hide-Out of the Yoruba People in Abeokuta under the Olumo Rock**



**Source: Fieldwork 2004**

The summits of the hills provided a good spot from which the surroundings of both communities could be watched. Hunters and warriors strategically positioned themselves on the crests of the hills for appropriate actions against external aggressions. The thick forests at the bases of the hills in Ibadan and Abeokuta served as a natural protection. River Ogun in Abeokuta, as shown in Figure 4, offered additional protection on the west for Egba and Owu elements in Abeokuta.

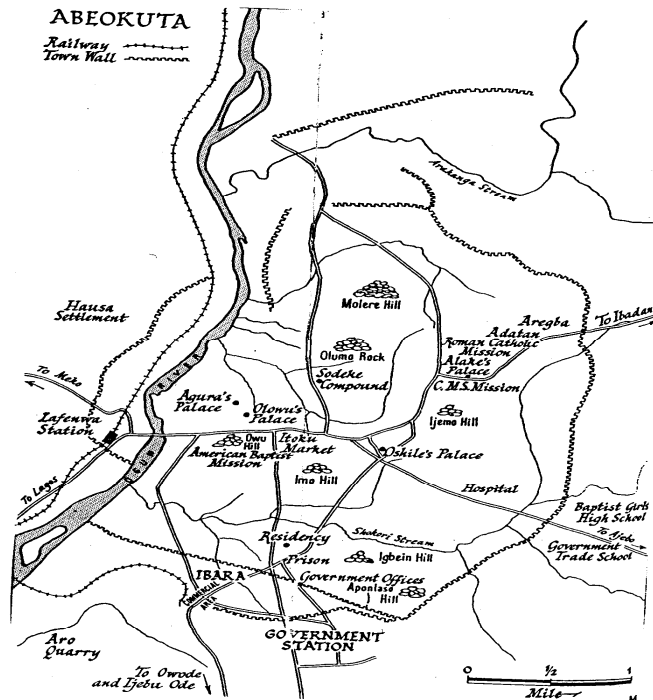
**Figure 3: Some Features of the Plain and Ridge Complex of Ibadan**



**Source: Yinka Rotimi Adebayo 1985**

The rainforest ringing Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta was very important as a natural defense in the nineteenth century in two respects. First, the rainforest was impenetrable to the Fulani who derived considerable advantage from the mobility of their well-mounted horsemen. The farther south the Fulani moved the thicker and less penetrable the rainforest became and the slower their pace, making them more vulnerable to ambushes in the rainforest. Second, a virulent species of tsetse-flies (*Glossina longipalpis* and *Glossina palpalis*) in the rainforest so menaced the Fulani's horses that they were compelled to stop behind the rainforest (Ojo 1967: 112).

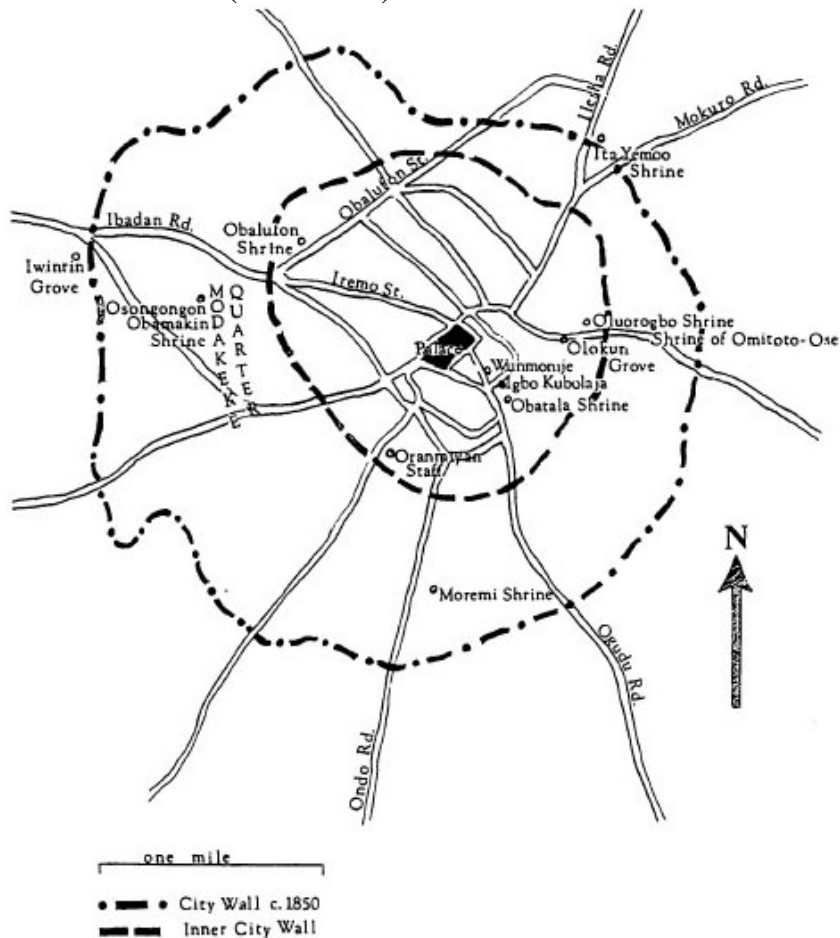
Figure 4: Wall of Abeokuta and River Ogun



Source: Lloyd 1962

Barriers such as walls were also built around each of the three communities to supplement the protection offered by their environmental conditions. The walls served to strengthen defense against slave raiders from hostile neighboring Yoruba communities. Ibadan and Abeokuta each had a single protective ring wall. As illustrated in Figure 5, Ile-Ife had two walls: inner and outer walls. The wall in each community was a broad-topped mud wall of about 20 feet in height with corresponding deep ditches and several gates. Each gate had a custom house for the collection of tolls and was manned by hunters/warriors. The outer wall in Ile-Ife and the single walls in Ibadan and Abeokuta provided a first line of defense behind which the home army could form before an attack (Ade-Ajayi & Smith 1971: 23-26).

**Figure 5: Outer and Inner Walls of Ile-Ife with Oyo Elements (Modakeke) located between the Two Walls**



**Source: Suzanne Preston Blier 1985**

The walls were usually repaired or rebuilt during periods of relative peace. One of such reconstructions was carried out with the introduction of firearms in the nineteenth century. To make the walls serve as a support for warriors using guns and thereby enable them to fire more conveniently, the old walls, especially those in Ibadan and Abeokuta, were structurally modified from predominantly broad-topped walls of 20 feet in height to lower walls of about five to eight feet high. The two walls in Ile-Ife had however been put in place through communal efforts several hundreds of years before the migration of Oyo elements to Ile-Ife. The inner wall enclosed the area settled by Ife elements. The outer wall protected farmlands and supplementary sources of water. The walls were usually about 100 yards from each other (Ade-Ajayi & Smith 1971). Oyo elements



(Modakeke) were in 1847 moved to a location between the inner and outer wall due to brewing internal problems over the standing of Oyo elements.

### **Basis of Human Relationships and Defense against External Aggressions in the Nineteenth Century**

As from the third decade of the nineteenth century, it had become apparently necessary for Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to raise their own independent armies for the protection of their trade routes and prevention of expansionist policies and slave raiding activities from neighboring Yoruba communities. Much as the Fulani were unable to fight in the rainforest, the hostile neighboring Yoruba communities around Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were well familiar with both the rainforest terrain and ways to attack walled communities. The sacredness of Ile-Ife as a Yoruba community that must not be attacked had also begun to suffer declining recognition. The rainforest and the mud walls thus began to be insufficient as defense barriers for Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in warding off external aggressions.

Mobilization of experienced and daring warriors then became more inevitable in a circumstance where each Yoruba community began to serve as a home to diverse Yoruba elements. The challenge for Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta subsequently became how to bring diverse individuals together and use diversity, as Ludwig Lachmann (1978) points out in *Capital and Its Structure*, to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes such as public peace. It has been argued that this is more likely in social settings that are open to more diverse ways of assembling diverse individuals and achieving effective complementarities promoting a living process of cooperation among diverse jurisdictions co-existing and competing in solving problems (Berman 1983:5-10; Lutz 1988; Vincent Ostrom 1994: 253).

On the other hand, when membership terms in any given community favor some individuals at the expense of other individuals given little choice or voice in governance and property relationships, the disadvantaged may have little incentive to collaborate with the advantaged in the provision of public peace and security. Public disorder is most likely in such settings (V. Ostrom 1987) because “[t]he peace and security of a community is produced by the efforts of citizens...Collaboration between those who supply a service and those who use a service is essential if most public services are to yield the results desired” (V. Ostrom 1994:189). The amount of shared understanding participating individuals have about the basis of their relationships reinforces long-terms cooperation, which affected the defense of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century as discussed in the next sub-section.

### **Constitutional Order and Organization of Defense in Ile-Ife in the Nineteenth Century**

Between 1810 and 1815, before the arrival of Oyo elements, Ile-Ife had almost been overrun by the Yoruba people in Owu. Owu was a Yoruba community located immediately west of Ile-Ife (Akinjogbin 1992: 149-150). This was due mainly to the failure of Ife elements to reconcile themselves with the declining respect from other

Yoruba communities for Ile-Ife as a sacred Yoruba community. Also served as a major defense weakness was Ile-Ife's weak army usually hurriedly put together and armed mainly with large bundles of ropes as major weapons to attack and tie captives. Armed with clubs, slings and swords, the warriors of Owu did not meet much of a challenge from Ife elements as they always gave a good account of themselves by overpowering the Ife army. Owu warriors, for example, once went as near as ten miles within Ile-Ife to badly decimate and disgrace Ife elements. Occasional invasions of Ife farms by Ijesa slave raiders also paralyzed economic activities in Ile-Ife.

The security situation in Ile-Ife was however turned around with the coming of Oyo elements. Most Oyo elements were seasoned, tested and brave warriors under the Old Oyo Empire. On arrival in Ile-Ife, Oyo elements helped Ife elements in defeating both the Owu army between 1825 and 1833 and driving away Ijesa slave raiders from Ife farms in the mid 1830's (Akinjogbin 1992: 151-152; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001: 233).

As a twist of fate, the initial cooperation between Ife and Oyo elements had turned sour by 1835. With relative peace achieved through the support of Oyo elements, Ife elements began to treat most Oyo elements as strangers and tenants who must submit to the *Ooni* and Ife elements. The plights of Oyo elements became aggravated with the defeat of Maye Okunade (an Ife element) and his Ife colleagues in Ibadan. The Ife elements that supported the authoritarian leadership of Maye in Ibadan returned to Ile-Ife and convinced their Ife counterparts that the elimination of Maye Okunade from Ibadan was an attack on Ife elements by Oyo elements anywhere. These developments alerted Oyo elements that they were not regarded as citizens of Ile-Ife (Akinjogbin 1992: 153). According to Olaniyan (1992: 268), "The auspicious beginning in peaceful co-existence soon changed to one of disaffection between the host and the immigrant population. By 1835, relations had deteriorated to the extent that...the Oyo group began to suffer persecution, degradation and ill treatment, and many were used as slaves."

Oyo elements (Modakeke) were in 1847 moved out of the inner wall to a location between the inner and outer walls (Akinjogbin 1992: 153), as shown in Figure 5. In their new location, their status as strangers did not (has not changed) change as Oyo elements were required to be headed by an Ife element, occupying the office of *Obalaaye* (head of strangers). They were also required to submit to the tenancy conditions determined by Ife elements whose compounds claimed to own the land on which they settled. Oyo elements neither accepted these fundamental inequalities as fair rules nor recognized the rights of Ife elements to enforce submission over them. As a result, Oyo elements began to have no incentives to pursue the defense of Ile-Ife as a shared interest with Ife elements.

The internal crisis between Ife and Oyo elements, coupled with lack of warfare skills by most Ife elements, exposed Ile-Ife to attacks from many neighboring Yoruba communities such as Ilesa and Ibadan before 1886 when internecine wars ended in Yorubaland. Ibadan in particular took advantage of the internal crisis between Ife and Oyo elements to turn Ile-Ife into its vassal (Olaniyan 1992:270). Oyo elements as professional warriors could not offer any help because their few years of cooperation with Ife elements had left them with virtually no sense of fair distribution of property rights in land, autonomy, and protection against slave raiding activities from Ife elements.

The repressive constitutional order in Ile-Ife continued to set Oyo and Ife elements against each other as enemies as from the fifth decade of the nineteenth century.

Lack of mutually beneficial accommodation of diverse interests in Ile-Ife limited entrepreneurial inventiveness by individuals. Life and property consequently began to be more insecure. Many slight provocations from either side were usually exploited to foment violent conflicts. As summarized in Table 1 in the back of this paper, such violence included the violence of 1849-1878 over local autonomy and kidnapping of Oyo elements, 1948 violence over outrageous land rents Ife elements imposed on Oyo elements, 1981 violence over unequal allocation of property rights in land that disadvantaged Oyo elements, 1983 violent conflicts over local autonomy and property rights, and 1997-2000 violence over local autonomy and property rights in land. Unfair membership terms and lack of autonomy and rights for most Oyo elements to organize, make, modify and enforce their own rules based on their interests and needs were at the root of this series of violence.

The lesser status of Oyo elements (Modakeke) is still very much alive today. According to one Ife Chief in 1997, "Ifes would fight with the last drop of their blood because nobody would allow Modakeke to take any of Ifeland" (Kevin Holbrook Ellsworth 2003: 164). Consistent with predictions about the negative relationships between repressive constitutional orders and development (Nicholson 1993; V. Ostrom 1994), Ile-Ife, as depicted in Table 1 in the back of this paper, lacked commercial openness in the nineteenth century due to insecurity generated by its constitutional order. As depicted in Tables 1, 2, and 3 in the back of this paper, Ile-Ife has not been able to boast of industrial estates, manufacturing companies, and the huge business investments found in both Ibadan and Abeokuta examined as follows.

### **Constitutional Order and Organization of Defense in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the Nineteenth Century**

The prevalent circumstances in both Ibadan and Abeokuta as from the nineteenth century have been different from those in Ile-Ife. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, most diverse individuals take one another into account through the processes of competition, cooperation, conflict and conflict resolution. Individuals and their local units have been able to solve their own problems<sup>7</sup> and have a shared understanding about the basis of their relationships with one another. In the nineteenth century, most individuals in each Yoruba community also believed that the effective defense of their respective community would lead to greater productive entrepreneurships within their local units.

As part of the shared bases of human relationships in both Ibadan and Abeokuta in nineteenth century, there was (still is) a belief that promotions were owed to personal achievements rather birth. As a result, leaders in both Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century owed their positions to their personal achievements rather than their birth. Regarding warfare, less competent warriors were not promoted above those regarded as more competent. Senile leaders were removed (Falola & Oguntomisin 1984: 55). The circumstances in both Ibadan and Abeokuta made most of their hunters, war boys and war chiefs more daring as they preferred death to ignominy. They were so fearless that they were not prepared to give way to anything in defending their respective communities against potential aggressions (Johnson 1921:74). Enlistment of warriors and war boys was voluntary and offered attraction to daring individuals. Their motivation

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<sup>7</sup> See Harry A. Gailey 1982. *Lugard and the Abeokuta Uprising: The Demise of Egba Independence*. London: Frank Cass and Company Limited. P7

rested on the belief that wars waged to defend one's community conferred honor and bestowed respect.

In the nineteenth century, mutually recognized arrangements were put in place in Ibadan and Abeokuta to protect trade routes and wage war against hostile neighboring Yoruba communities harboring slave raiders and expansionist policies. The Yoruba people in both communities believed that the efforts would enable them to take greater advantage of opportunities within and without their respective communities. A council of war chiefs was recognized as having the authority to undertake the task in Ibadan. Federated associations of warriors and hunters from the four autonomous sections of Abeokuta combined together in ensuring the defense of Abeokuta.

Each war chief in both communities bore a senior or junior war title signifying both the nature of his command and the place of himself in battle and those of his followers and war boys. The most senior war chief was *Balogun* (commander-in-chief) who fought at the center of battle. He was assisted by a number of war chiefs such as the *Otun* (commanding the right wing), the *Osi* (commanding the left wing), and the *Asipa* (their equal). Next to *Asipa* in order were *Ekerin* (fourth-rank commander), *Ekarun* (fifth-rank commander) and *Ekefa* (sixth-rank commander). Younger chiefs and their war boys were grouped separately under the *Seriki*. War boys were responsible for carrying on their heads the arms, ammunition, beds and provisions of war chiefs (Ade-Ajayi and Smith 1971).

Specialization also characterized the activities of hunters and warriors in both Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century. During wars, hunters watched over the security of the community, guarded markets and trade routes and, when necessary, organized night watches. In times of war, hunters acted as scouts and gathered intelligence information. Reconnaissance tasks were assigned to hunters because of their thorough knowledge of diverse terrains and their natural endowments to move as close to the enemy territory as possible. The information hunters gathered about the enemy was brought back to war chiefs. War chiefs used the information to map out an effective operation. They also planned the order of filing into battle based on the nature of the environment. The order of moving in the forest area was generally in a single file (Akinjogbin 1998).

Before any war was declared in the nineteenth century, *Ifa* diviners were consulted. After getting the go-ahead from *Ifa*, the next move could be to arrange spies to bury charms and magical substances in the enemy territory to neutralize the enemy's magical preparations and possibly spread some infectious diseases among members of the enemy community. Sacrifices were also made for the protection of warriors. Soldiers were armed physically and magically. Abeokuta in particular took the lead in switching from relying on *Ifa* diviners and charms to depending on the Abrahimic God for spiritual support following the advent of Christianity in 1843. This change later spread to Ibadan over the remarkable successes Abeokuta recorded in warfare due to its reliance on the Abrahimic God (Ade-Ajayi and Smith 1971, Ajisafe 1998).

The defense of Abeokuta and Ibadan was not limited to warriors and hunters. War chiefs in both communities also realized that successes in warfare would depend on complementary contributions from farmers and traders, blacksmiths, specialists in war songs, and drummers. In this regard, trade and farming activities were organized to ensure regular supplies of ammunition and food during war. Blacksmiths in particular

were of immense importance because they worked in close cooperation with hunters and warriors to replace exhausted stock of arrows, mend damaged spears and swords, manufacture iron bullets from pieces of waste iron, repair guns, and thereby supplement imported ammunitions. The involvement of specialists in war musics provided both encouraging war songs to warriors and derogatory songs to weaken the enemy. Drummers were engaged to use drums to communicate orders from one command to another, and to deceive the enemies into believing that the drummers were part of their reinforcement and in the process change the course of the battle against the enemies (Ade-Ajayi 1965).

### **Constitutional Order and Roles of Women in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the Nineteenth Century**

In both Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century, defense against external aggressions was not restricted to men alone. Women were also involved, unlike Ile-Ife where women played insignificant role in the governance process (Akinjogbin (1992). Fighting men from the most senior war chiefs downwards in Ibadan and Abeokuta were permitted to feed themselves according to their taste. Many women usually came to the rear to sell food to warriors. Wealthy women in Ibadan and Abeokuta also made contributions to support war efforts. The gestures had come in form of donations of ammunitions to the community and the extension of credit facilities to the warriors. The women expected to be paid back in spoils of war at the end of the war. Some of the women included Iyaola (the first *Iyalode*, most senior female chief of Ibadan), Efunsetan, Omosa, Yade, Efundunke and Olojo in Ibadan; and Tinubu and Jojoola in Abeokuta. Most of these women became *Iyalode* (the most senior female chief) in recognition of their contributions to the defense of their respective communities.

Many women also actively participated as warriors to break tradition and assume unconventional roles. A noticeable example was Omosa. She was a wealthy woman and daughter of Basorun Ogunmola (a successful war chief in Ibadan). Omosa had huge catches of guns and gun powder which she quite frequently fell upon to prevent the Ijebu invasions of Ibadan when most of the Ibadan war chiefs were fighting in the Ekiti area. She valiantly mobilized members of her compound, gave her followers guns, donned her late father's (Ogunmola) battle dress, and personally carried clubs and a sword to daringly take the lead in saving Ibadan from two Ijebu invasions. She eventually became *Iyalode* of Ibadan based on her unconventional feats as a successful female warrior. Also in Abeokuta, Tinubu wore warrior clothes and fearlessly took a position at the Owu gate to turn back deserters and supply the warriors with food and ammunition on a continuous basis. Tinubu (Abeokuta) eventually became the first *Iyalode* of Abeokuta in recognition of her personal contributions to the defense of Abeokuta. These women were able to achieve these impressive feats because their constitutional orders gave them freedom to use their talents to achieve honor (Awe & Olutoye 1998).

### **Implications of the Nineteenth Century Political Arrangements for Defense and Productive Ways of Life in Ibadan and Abeokuta**

One of the main incentives of the constitutional orders in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century was a shared understanding that individuals owed their promotions and social mobility to their personal talents and achievements rather than their birth or

communities of origin. Efunsetan was a woman of Abeokuta origin. She migrated to Ibadan in mid-nineteenth century and later became *Iyalode* of Ibadan (most senior female chief of Ibadan) due mainly to her personal contributions to the defense of Ibadan rather than her birth. Her progress in Ibadan was not hindered by the enmity between Abeokuta and Ibadan during the period. Similarly, some individuals who were of Ijebu origin became war chiefs and leaders in Abeokuta in the nineteenth century by their personal achievements. Ijebu was an enemy community to Abeokuta during the nineteenth century (Ade-Ajayi & Smith 1971; Ajisafe 1998). In Ile-Ife, social mobility was however based on birth rather than talents. To be a leader in Ile-Ife, the individual must be an Ife element from the father's line. Oyo elements were treated as permanent strangers\lesser beings. The constraints inherent in how Ife and Oyo elements related to each other in the nineteenth century prevented most Oyo elements from drawing on their personal talents to cooperate with Ife elements in the provision of public peace in Ile-Ife.

The contrasting situations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta suggest that wherever the Yoruba people have freedom to take advantage of better opportunities through the use of their self-organizing and self-governing capabilities, they will do so to achieve distinctions for their mutual benefits. The Yoruba people in Ibadan, for example, were able to extend the boundaries of Ibadan towards the western and north-western territories in the nineteenth century. These were areas in the Yoruba community of Ijaye ruled by Karunmi. Karunmi was an autocratic leader who afflicted his subjects with fear and terrors in the nineteenth century. Ijaye was later destroyed by Ibadan war chiefs.

Ibadan war chiefs also established a major regional market (*Oja'ba*) and encouraged strangers to come and settle in Ibadan. The strangers included Hausa from current Northern Nigeria through whom war chiefs in Ibadan established trade links with the major commercial centers in the Sokoto caliphate. Successful efforts were also made by Ibadan war chiefs to obtain regular supplies of firearms through the Lagos-Ibadan trade route negotiated with Captain Glover, the British Governor of Lagos. The complementary efforts in Ibadan so much facilitated the exchange sector that many people from Ibadan could go to other Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities to trade. Many individuals outside Ibadan were also able to come to Ibadan to pursue various commercial interests (Falola & Oguntomisin 1984).

In the case of Abeokuta, its diverse individuals also jointly made successful efforts to check advances and attacks from the Ijebu army, the Ibadan forces, the Dahomian army, and slave raiders from other neighboring communities. The Yoruba people of Abeokuta were also able to create and protect a trade route to the coast. The trade route greatly facilitated their economic interests. They combined together in fighting and extending the boundaries of Abeokuta in nearly all directions (Ajisafe 1998; Sofela 2000).

Cooperative efforts by diverse individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta subsequently led to the provision of relative public peace and security that facilitated the relations of production and access to means of production in both Yoruba communities in the nineteenth century. This was facilitated by the presence of fair membership terms, and mutually recognized autonomy and rights for most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta to organize, make, modify and enforce their own rules based on their interests and needs.

While Ile-Ife lacked commercial and industrial openness throughout the nineteenth century for insecurity, the flexible constitutional orders in both Ibadan and Abeokuta facilitated a high degree of specialization in several crafts during the same period. This was due to the necessary public peace provided through nested enterprises organized by their respective war chiefs who drew upon the opportunities offered by their self-governing capabilities in circumstances where most participating individuals enjoyed equal standing and equal liberty in achieving distinctions in various productive entrepreneurships (Falola 1984, Biobaku 1991).

The differing patterns of development in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta reinforce an argument that increasing prosperity is more likely to occur in social settings where there is a living process that enables institutional channels of cooperation among diverse individuals and their local units (Berman 1983; E. Ostrom, L. Schroeder & S. Wynne 1993: 63), such as in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century.

### **Conclusion**

The bases of human relationships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta played an important role in shaping patterns of interactions among diverse individuals and their local jurisdictions in the nineteenth century. In Ibadan and Abeokuta, most participating individuals shared (still share) a common agreement about their institutional arrangements as fair ordering principles. This generated inter-jurisdictional cooperation that consequently facilitated the security of life and property in the nineteenth century. The resultant peaceful conditions from relations among diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta enabled their respective inhabitants to produce of their best in the nineteenth century. This pattern of cooperation also benefited from lack of threat to the resultant freedom individuals and their respective local jurisdictions had in solving their own problems.

Similar achievements were (still are) absent in Ile-Ife due to the disagreement between Oyo and Ife elements over the fundamental equalities inherent in Ile-Ife's constitutional order. The failure to accommodate diverse interests in Ile-Ife for mutual benefits led Oyo and Ife elements to see each other as enemies in the nineteenth century, and prevented (still prevent) them from cooperating in ensuring the security of life and property in Ile-Ife. The prevalent circumstances in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta reinforce the assertion that mutually productive cooperation is more likely to be created and sustained in constitutional orders supportive of a sense of selfhood and agency, equal standing, and equal liberty for most participating individuals (Berman 1983, V. Ostrom 1994, Verba 2003).

The existence of different jurisdictions for the tasks of internal and external security in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century has an important implication for problem-solving in Nigeria. In both communities, smaller and larger jurisdictions undertook the maintenance of internal and external security. Internal security was in particular undertaken by smaller collective-choice units, such as compounds, neighborhoods and sections, based on their specific needs.

This suggests that the tasks of defense and policing will have to be handled using different methods in order to match problems with solution efforts. Drawing from the experiences of Ibadan and Abeokuta, a larger jurisdiction such as the national army in Nigeria may be more appropriate for the defense of the whole country, which affects

individuals within the country. Policing however varies with the needs of individual constituent units such neighborhoods, villages, and cities. To match problems and solution efforts within these smaller units, policing should be left for the component units to address as they choose. It will therefore be a misplaced priority to continue to use one single-policing system in Nigeria to solve varied internal security problems and to think that local units, either on their own or in collaboration with others, are incapable of having their own local police in Nigeria.

In addition, technological breakthroughs achieved by blacksmiths in Ibadan and Abeokuta, who used local material to manufacture firearms in the nineteenth century, reinforce the fact that when individuals experience themselves as equals and engage in mutually productive competition, they are more likely to try their hands on new things. It is against this background one begins to understand why the centralized Nigerian state has not been able to create opportunities for healthy competition among its administrative appendages: state and local governments.



## Appendix

**Table 1: Impacts of the Constitutional Order in Ile-Ife**

| Pattern of Associational Life  | Pattern of Violent Conflicts from relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements   | Pattern of Commercial and Industrial Openness   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Exclusionary Bonds:</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> Strong intra-group loyalty:</p> <p>(a) Systematic discouragement of intermarriages between Oyo and Ife elements</p> <p>(b) Membership in Modakeke Progressive Union and Modakeke Youth Movement is open most exclusively to Oyo elements.</p> <p>(c) Membership in Egbe Omo Ibile Ife, Olojo Festival, and Ife Day is open mainly to Ife elements.</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Absence of networks to develop inter-group cooperation:</p> <p>(a) Occupational/Trade and Landlords' associations (neighborhood development associations) among Ife and Oyo elements do not combine together to solve problems of general interests,</p> <p>(b) No Regional (State-wide) forum for cooperation between Oyo and Ife elements.</p> | <p><b>Insecurity:</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> Violent Conflicts between Oyo and Ife elements in 1849-1878, 1949, 1981, 1983, 1997-2000.</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Destruction of Ile-Ife between 1849-1878 with about 12,000 prisoners of war, and destruction of about 15 farmlands and over 200 houses, primary and secondary schools in the 1997-2000 violence.</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> About 30,000 deaths since 1849.</p> | <p><b>Absence of Commercial and Industrial Openness</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> Absence of individuals of distinction in Ile-Ife, unlike Ibadan and Abeokuta that began to have distinguished women and men in occupations like warfare, trade, blackmithing and other professional activities as from the nineteenth century.</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Increasing insecurity of expectations for productive entrepreneurs from series of violent conflicts since 1849.</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> No Company with a paid-up share capital of about 500,000 Nigeria's naira (see Appendix V).</p> <p><a href="http://www.travelsyt.com/osun-state.htm">http://www.travelsyt.com/osun-state.htm</a></p> |

**Note:** Estimates of deaths and destroyed property were obtained from key actors interviewed during the 2004 Fieldwork.

**Sources:** 2004 Fieldwork, IFE DIV 1/1 1930, Sunday Tribune December 1, 1985, Olutobi & Oyeniyi (1994), the 1998/1999 Edition of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria, Nigeria (2000), Albert (2001), Falola & Oguntomisin (2001), Oladoyin (2001), Ayo (2002).

**Table 2: Impacts of the Constitutional Order in Ibadan**

| Pattern of Associational Life   | Pattern of Violent Conflicts from relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements  | Pattern of Commercial and Industrial Openness.   |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Inclusive Bonds among Diverse Individuals:</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> Nineteenth-Century Council of Chiefs for Defense Organization was open for most successful individuals to join through open competition.</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Cooperation exists among most Occupational and Market Associations in Ibadan through coordinating Committees</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> At least five landlords' associations (neighborhood Development Associations) cooperate on policing and other shared interests through District Community Development Committees,</p> <p><b>(iv)</b> Eleven Area Community Development Councils bring Districts Community Development Councils together to lobby local government officials for support in pursuit of shared interests.</p> <p><b>(v)</b> Area Community Development Councils meet at the Regional Level to share experiences about policing, waste management and other shared interests, and lobby state government officials for support.</p> <p><b>(vi)</b> Intermarriages are encouraged among most groups of Yoruba elements in Ibadan.</p> <p><b>(vii)</b> Membership in Ibadan Descendants' Union and Omo-Ajorosun Fans Club is open to most indigenes of Ibadan (born in or migrated to Ibadan).</p> | <p><b>(i)</b> One (1) violent conflict in the 1830s to remove an autocratic leader (Maye Okunade, an Ife Element).</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Relative public peace and security of life and property from the 1840s to date from inter-group relations in Ibadan.</p> | <p><b>a) Openness to new ideas</b> in Ibadan <b>(i)</b> gave young individuals in Ibadan the early opportunities to acquire western education to become distinguished individuals like Victor Omololu Olulonyo (the first Yoruba to hold a doctoral degree in mathematics); <b>(ii)</b> enabled its blacksmiths to modify their technologies and use local materials to produce firearms in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; <b>(iii)</b> enabled women like Omosa to assume unconventional roles as distinguished warriors in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; <b>(iv)</b> enabled Ibadan along with Abeokuta to produce the greatest number of distinguished warriors in 19<sup>th</sup> century Yorubaland; and <b>(v)</b> facilitated the innovative change of Yoruba inheritance law in 1858 for the promotion of devotion to duty.</p> <p><b>(b)</b> Over 45 companies each with a paid-up share capital of more than one million Nigeria's naira are located in Ibadan (see Appendix V).</p> <p><b>(c)</b> Increasing security of expectations for productive entrepreneurs from Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities due to security of life and property from inter-group relations in Ibadan.</p> |

**Sources:** Interviews with and Documents from key actors during the 2004 Fieldwork, library search, Falola & Oguntomisin (2001) the 1998/1999 Edition of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria, and Documents from Oyo State's Ministry of Commerce and Industries, officials of Oyo State's Department of Community Development and Local Government units in Ibadan.

**Table 3: Impacts of the Constitutional Order in Abeokuta**

| Pattern of Associational Life  | Pattern of Violent Conflicts from relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements             | Pattern of Commercial and Industrial Openness  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Inclusive Bonds among Diverse Individuals:</b></p> <p>(i) Each neighborhood/township has representatives in sectional associations for judiciary and legislation (Ogboni), commercial (Parakoyi), military (Oloroogun) and policing (Ode) matters,</p> <p>(ii) Each of the four sections of Abeokuta has representatives in the four associations at the community level</p> <p>(iii) At least 28 neighborhood development associations (labelled in Abeokuta as community development associations) form an area community development council to handle policing, provide members with information about the capital market and the modalities for acquiring shares in companies and managing waste disposal.</p> <p>(iv) Abeokuta south and north each has a zonal community development council for cooperation among their respective area community development councils to handle common interests and lobby local government officials for support on development projects.</p> <p>(v) Most neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta have representatives in the regional (Ogun State) Community Development Council to handle matters about waste disposal and management and lobby state government officials for support on development projects and waste disposal.</p> <p>(vi) Intermarriages are encouraged among most groups of Yoruba elements in Abeokuta.</p> | <p>Relative public peace and security of life and property from the 1830s to date</p> | <p><b>a) Openness to new ideas</b> in Abeokuta (i) gave young individuals in Abeokuta the early opportunities to acquire western education to become distinguished individuals like Bola Ajibola (former judge of International Court of Justice at the Hague), Wole Soyinka (winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize in literature), Olukoye Ransome-Kuti (one of the best African medical practitioners), Thomas Adeoye Lambo (renowned psychiatrist in Africa and eminent United Nations administrator), and Moshudi Kashimawo Olawale Abiola (successful international business tycoon with huge business interests in the Middle East, Europe and Africa); (ii) enabled its blacksmiths to modify their technologies and use local materials to produce firearms in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; (iii) enabled Abeokuta along with Ibadan to produce the greatest number of distinguished warriors in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and (iv) enabled women like Tinubu to assume unconventional roles as distinguished warriors in 19<sup>th</sup> century Yorubaland.</p> <p><b>(b)</b> Over 15 companies each with a paid-up share capital of more than one million Nigeria's naira are located in Abeokuta (see Appendix V).</p> <p><b>(c)</b> Increasing security of expectations for productive entrepreneurs from Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities due to security of life and property from inter-group relations</p> |

**Sources:** Interviews with and Documents from Key actors during the 2004 Fieldwork, Falola & Oguntomisin (2001), the 1998/1999 Edition of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria, and Documents from Ogun State's Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Ogun State's Department of Women Affairs and Community Development, Abeokuta North and South Local Governments, and <http://www.egbaegbado.org/egba13.htm>.