

**THE CONSTITUTION OF ORDER AMONG THE YORUBA OF NIGERIA**

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree  
Doctor of Philosophy  
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Department of Political Science,  
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This work is dedicated to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has connected me to great intellectuals and problem-solving research through the late Professor Samuel Bamidele Ayo in consistent, trusted and respectful collaboration with Professor Dele Olowu who initiated and achieved my successful connection with the Ostroms.

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Finally, I am fully responsible for all errors of fact and judgment.

## **ABSTRACT**

Oyebade Kunle Oyerinde

### **THE CONSTITUTION OF ORDER AMONG THE YORUBA OF NIGERIA**

Understanding how human beings constitute order to affect productive ways of life is one of the central concerns of scholars. This study examines why three Yoruba communities of Nigeria - Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta - differ in the extent to which their diverse groups of Yoruba elements engage in inter-group cooperation, resolve conflicts, and encourage commercial and industrial openness. The prevailing biophysical conditions and beliefs and past experiences in the three communities are first considered in order to come to terms with the particular contexts within which governance and property relationships are shaped.

In each community, the dominant beliefs and past experiences have served as the main sources of institutions for governance and property relationships. In Ile-Ife, most Ife elements believe that they are the individuals who can claim an ultimate descent from the presumed founder of the community. They serve as lords over most non-Ife elements such as Oyo elements. Most diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta, however, regard one another as equals in governance and property relationships. They see themselves as descendants of diverse groups of oppressed individuals that jointly founded their respective communities to be able to open up growing ranges of productive opportunities for most individuals.

Unlike Ibadan and Abeokuta, the failure to treat most individuals as equals in governance and property relationships in Ile-Ife has led Ife and Oyo elements to relate to each other as enemies and to use violence as a means to process their conflicts. The

resultant insecurity of life and property has incapacitated Ile-Ife from having distinguished individuals, industrial estates, manufacturing companies and the substantial business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta.

These differences show that mutually productive ways of life can be precariously at risk when individuals relate to one another based on principles of inequalities rather than through principles of self-responsibility and mutual agreement among associates working with one another in self-governing communities of shared relationships. Ecological conditions, conflict types, cleavage structures and exposure to national political affairs are relatively similar across the three Yoruba communities and play little, peripheral role in explaining the different outcomes.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### PATTERNS OF ORDER AMONG THE YORUBA OF NIGERIA

"As useful and as important as the anthropological studies are, they contain an important methodological flaw. This flaw centers on grouping Africa's sociopolitical organizations into two more or less opposing categories: communities with strong government (autocephalous communities) and those without government or stateless societies, which are generally referred to as acephalous communities. As such the tendency is to ignore the dynamic pattern of interaction between the acephalous and the autocephalous societies" (Ayo, 2002: 51)."

#### 1.1 Introduction: THE PROBLEM

Why do communities sharing the same ethnic backgrounds, located in the same ecological zone, equally subject to national political affairs and having faced similar conflicts over the years experience varied patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness? Understanding how human beings constitute order to affect productive ways of life is one of the central puzzles in Political Science and policy research in "developing" societies. The purpose of this dissertation is to explain how Yoruba patterns of order differ to influence patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness among the Yoruba of Nigeria. Commercial and industrial openness is specifically used in this study to refer to the extent to which any given community can create and maintain a political economy where individuals can cash in on a growing range of opportunities and develop their capabilities and talents for mutually beneficial outcomes and where business investments can be attracted from productive entrepreneurs within and without the community.

The problem of understanding patterns of order is apparently more profound in Africa where social anthropologists and many other scholars from diverse intellectual orientations have generally grouped African "ethnic" or "tribal" societies broadly into



acephalous and autocephalous political orders (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940; Bascom 1944, 1969; Schwab 1955; Lloyd 1962; Smith 1988). Acephalous institutional structures are usually used to refer to stateless societies without centralized authority or a single head. In stateless societies, decision-making power is diffused among multitudes of independent and autonomous local units, where individuals and their leaders relate to one another as colleagues/associates.

On the other hand, autocephalous societies have, more often than not, been classified as "states" with centralized government institutions. Admittedly, this classification is based on Hobbes' criteria for describing the state: territorial sovereignty, centralized authority, monopoly of instruments of force, and the concentration of decision-making power in a single head such as an *Oba*, *Emir* *Obi* (king or warrant chief), military or "civilian" head of state issuing orders and commands for his subjects to obey in a master-servant relationship.

Predictably, these principles have obviously informed the constitution and operation of the institutional structures of the colonial and post-colonial Nigerian state. In the colonial era from about 1870 (Ayo 2002:5), the style of administration was mainly centralized while indigenous systems of governance were allowed to continue as part of the centralized colonial administration through the system of indirect rule. In Yoruba communities with *Obas* (kings), such as Ile-Ife and Oyo, the indirect rule approach was applied to allow *Obas* (kings) and their chiefs (*Ijoye*) to serve as native authority councils and to bear responsibilities for governing their people on behalf of the colonial administration.

The *Obas* (kings) in particular were accorded the status of sole native authorities and kept their positions during the colonial era for as long as they were prepared to take orders from the colonial administrators posted to their localities. The *Obas* as sole native authorities were given “powers of appointment to the native authority council, power to make bye-laws, to control any activities of the community which appeared to the *Oba* to be a threat to order and good government, power to recommend appointment, suspension and dismissal of chiefs, and power to recommend members of the native courts and their salaries” (Oyediran 1988:150). For example, the *Ooni* (king) of Ile-Ife was recognized by colonial officials as the sole native authority in Ile-Ife, with his chiefs and most ordinary individual in Ile-Ife treated as the subjects of the *Ooni* who in turn took orders from the colonial administrator posted to Ile-Ife (Oyediran 1988).

In addition, the position of the most senior chief in Ibadan was erroneously misunderstood as that of an *Oba* and was “officially” upgraded by the colonial officials to the status of sole native authority. This was carried out in contradiction to a dominant belief in Ibadan that individuals are their own governors and nobody’s servants. Deliberate repression of autonomy of individuals and their local units also occurred in Abeokuta where colonial officials recognized the most senior chief in the Ake section as the single head of Abeokuta. According to Olowu (1996:13), “...genuine efforts to build modern legislative and judicial structures around traditional authority structures in Abeokuta and Lagos were forcibly suppressed by the colonial administration...” Nevertheless, many individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta mounted strong resistance against the political corruption sponsored by the colonial administration against their patterns of political order. With the exception of the positive impacts of Christian

missionaries on education for many ordinary individuals, a vast majority of individuals in most Yoruba communities were effectively kept out of the centralized colonial political order (Price 1933; Oyediran 1988; Olowu 1996; Ayo 2002; Blair 2002; Watson 2003).

Nigerian political elites have continued with the centralized legacies of the colonial era since 1960 when Nigeria obtained independence from Britain. After independence in 1960, Ile-Ife, Ibadan, Abeokuta and other Nigerian communities have been administered through local government officials within the superordinate-subordinate pattern of relationships, where local government officials take orders from officials of the national government. *Obas* and chiefs that are loyal to the national government have been involved in the administration of their communities to the gross neglect of their subjects. Much like during the colonial era, ordinary individuals in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, Abeokuta and other Yoruba communities have been neglected by officials of the Nigerian state. As the Nigerian state increasingly becomes a fiction in governance, most individuals in Yoruba communities have had to fall back on different institutions they craft to order their relationships with one another (AJID 1996; Ayo 2002). The differences in such institutions have reflected the differences in the fundamental beliefs and perspectives of the universe and past experiences in individual communities.

On the whole, the institutional structures of the Nigerian state have been progress-hindering in nature and have allowed Nigerian political elites to become “used to centralization, concentration and personalization of political power - the central defining elements of modern despotism.”<sup>1</sup> Uniform policies made by Nigerian political elites in

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<sup>1</sup> Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the current Vice President of Nigeria, made this remark on August 25, 2005 at a two-day National Conference on “Election 2007: Protecting the Peoples’ Mandate” where he observed, “Nigeria has experienced decades of military and authoritarian rule which has left deep imprints in our political culture. Consequently, our political elite have become used to centralization, concentration and

running the whole country have largely incapacitated the Nigerian state from achieving an appropriate time-and-space match between boundaries of problems and solution efforts through policies grounded in the locally generated knowledge of problem-dwellers/owners. One globally known achievement Nigerian governing elites have succeeded in securing for Nigerians is the ranking of Nigeria as the second poorest and the third most corrupt country in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, many scholars such as Esman (1963), Apter (1965), Aboyade (1968), Huntington (1968), Mabogunje (1980), Oyovbaire (1985), Mkandawire (2001), Bujra (2002:41-43), Edigheji (2005), and Obiyan (2005) have uncompromisingly mustered support for both the development of a state-centered mode of analysis and the legitimization of the role of governing elites in Nigeria and other parts of Africa as “capable” policymakers that would spread democratic values and development among ordinary individuals. While Sawyer (1992), Wunsch and Olowu (1995), Ayo (2002), Olowu and Wunsch (2004) have separately alerted us to the progress-hindering nature of the centralized African state, the focus of this dissertation is mainly on institutions crafted by the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta.

Regarding institutions crafted by individuals in various Nigerian communities, the Yoruba of Nigeria in particular have been considered an ethnic group operating autocephalous political orders. All institutional structures among the Yoruba of Nigeria are believed to be at best roughly patterned after the hierarchical order of command and

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personalization of political power – the central defining elements of modern despotism” <http://naijanet.com/news/source/2005/aug/26/1000.html>: visited on August 26, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> "World Bank Rates Nigeria Second Poorest Nation" by Chinedu Uwaegbulam [www.nguardiannews.com](http://www.nguardiannews.com) (Guardian Newspapers of September 16, 2005); <http://www.thisdayonline.com/nview.php?id=29274> about how Nigeria public officials have been stealing public funds; <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0781359.html> for Nigeria’s corruption rank

control in Ile-Ife, the cradle of the Yoruba. Also, the *Ooni* (king) of Ile-Ife is regarded as having supreme authority over the authority of any other institution not only in Ile-Ife but in all Yoruba communities. Scholars that have studied institutional arrangements among the Yoruba have consequently focused on Ile-Ife. They have used their findings as the basis for understanding how institutional arrangements affect interdependent relationships in other Yoruba communities of Nigeria (Price 1933; Bascom 1944, 1969; Schwab 1955; Lloyd 1962; Coker 1966; Smith 1988; Adeyemi-Ale 1999; Akinjogbin 2002; Soyinka-Airewele 2003:281-284).

We are therefore advised to put all of the Yoruba people of Nigeria into one class. We are supposed to regard them as having the same institutional structures that regulate the conduct of individuals within collective-choice arenas or local units such as immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages and occupational associations, and that yield the same patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness in all Yoruba communities of Nigeria.

The idea of institutional homogeneity across the Yoruba people of Nigeria is however misleading. Strong exclusionary associational life and violent conflicts have characterized the relationships between Oyo and Ife elements in the Yoruba community of Ile-Ife from the third decade of the nineteenth century. Membership in Modakeke Progressive Union and Modakeke Youth Movement, for example, is open mostly to Oyo elements while Egbe Omo-Ibile Ife, Ife Day and Olojo Festival (social associations/forums) are open mostly to Ife elements that see themselves as lords over Oyo elements. Also, in the violence between Oyo and Ife elements since 1849, over 30,000 people have been killed, approximately 10,000 people critically injured and

maimed, and houses, farmlands and other property destroyed. About 12,000 individuals were captured as prisoners of war in the 1849-1878 violent conflict alone. The violence caused Ile-Ife to lay in ruin for some years in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Olutobi & Oyeniya 1994; Albert 2001; Oladoyin 2001). Insecurity of life and property has consequently been a major feature of Ile-Ife: a characteristic of a less open institutional structure where people who are subject to dominance and thereby denied the right to organize and solve their own problems are more likely to develop capabilities for violent resistance. As shown in Tables 1.1 and 4.1, Ile-Ife has been unable to boast of industrial estates, manufacturing companies, and the huge business investments found in other Yoruba communities.

In sharp contrast, other Yoruba communities of Nigeria like Ibadan and Abeokuta have not experienced similar violence even though they have shared with Ile-Ife relatively similar ecological conditions, equal exposure to national political affairs, and similar conflict types. Both Ibadan and Abeokuta have also served as homes to diverse Yoruba elements. Ibadan and Abeokuta have instead moved up the ladder of entrepreneurial progress, thereby eclipsing Ile-Ife by virtue of their mutually beneficial inclusive (bonding and bridging) associational life (Falola 1984, Biobaku 1991, Ayo 2002, Watson 2003) and their increasing levels of commercial and industrial openness.

Openness to entrepreneurial opportunities and innovations in Ibadan and Abeokuta, as from the nineteenth century, gave many young individuals in both communities the early opportunities to acquire Western education to become distinguished professional and business luminaries. These include Victor Omololu Olulonyo (Ibadan man and the first Yoruba to hold a doctoral degree in mathematics), Bola Ajibola (Abeokuta man and former judge of the International Court of Justice at the

Hague), Wole Soyinka (Abeokuta man and winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize in literature), Olukoye Ransome-Kuti (Abeokuta man, former deputy director-general of the World Health Organization and one of the best African medical practitioners), Thomas Adeoye Lambo (Abeokuta man, renowned psychiatrist and eminent United Nations administrator), and Moshudi Kashimawo Olawale Abiola (Abeokuta man and successful international business tycoon with huge business interests in Africa, Europe and the Middle East)<sup>3</sup>.

Conducive environments for innovative ideas that Ibadan and Abeokuta have promoted also allowed their blacksmiths and women to achieve remarkable successes in the nineteenth century, and enabled Ibadan in particular to take the lead in adopting a more mutually beneficial inheritance law in 1858 (Johnson 1921, Ade-Ajayi 1965, Ade-Ajayi and Smith 1971, Awe and Olutoye 1998). Many blacksmiths in Ibadan and Abeokuta were incredibly innovative in the nineteenth century. The freedom they enjoyed to try their hands on new things enabled them to succeed in reducing the burden of importing firearms from Europe and the United States by using local materials to produce firearms. Many women in the two Yoruba communities, such as Omosa in Ibadan and Tinubu in Abeokuta, also took advantage of the freedom their respective communities offered. They energetically participated as female warriors in the nineteenth century to break tradition and take on unconventional roles. During the same period, Ibadan and Abeokuta, unlike Ile-Ife, were each able to boast of a large number of distinguished male warriors.

Contacts with Europeans in the nineteenth century further exposed the Yoruba in Ibadan to a more mutually beneficial European inheritance law whereby children are the

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<sup>3</sup> <http://ibadan.org/ChieftaincyHistory.htm>, <http://www.egbaegbado.org/egba13.htm>

primary beneficiaries of the property of their deceased parents. The pre-1858 inheritance law among the Yoruba had made siblings from the mother's line the principal beneficiaries of the deceased's property. Prior to the new inheritance law, most of the younger siblings of wealthy individuals had grown passive to both devotion to duty and being enterprising. They had preferred to wait for the death of their enterprising older siblings to inherit their considerable wealth. As an unparalleled innovation in Yorubaland, Ibadan took the lead in 1858 to modify the inheritance law in order to promote devotion to duty and productive entrepreneurships among individuals. The new inheritance law began to make children the primary beneficiaries of their deceased parents as from 1858.

In addition, associational life in Ibadan and Abeokuta is mostly inclusive. Ibadan Descendants' Union and Omo-Ajorosun Fans' Club in Ibadan, and federated associations like Ogboni (judges and legislators), Oloroogun (warriors), Parakoyi (trade chiefs), and Ode (hunters/scout/police) in Abeokuta are open to most inhabitants of the two Yoruba communities. As shown in Tables 4.2 through 4.3 in chapter 4 of this study, public peace has not been disrupted by the interdependent relationships among their diverse Yoruba elements. Many industrial estates, manufacturing companies and huge business investments, as depicted in Tables 1.1, 4.2 and 4.3, are also present in both Ibadan and Abeokuta.

These differences are scientifically puzzling. They cast doubt about the assumption of institutional uniformity among the Yoruba of Nigeria to reflect inadequate understanding of Yoruba institutions in the existing literature. The weak understanding of the variations in Yoruba institutions has in particular left us unable to identify different



patterns of order among the Yoruba through systematic, in-depth comparisons involving Yoruba communities where institutional structures have enabled mutually productive ways of life and those where they have not.

In line with Vincent Ostrom (1997), the differences in the patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness among the Yoruba of Nigeria appear to suggest that mutually productive ways of life can be precariously at risk when societies are constituted through the principles of command and control rather than through principles of self-responsibility and mutual agreement among colleagues/associates working with one another in self-governing communities of shared relationships. An understanding of the institutional differences may well be most appropriate to make sense of the variations in the patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the differences in Yoruba institutions and their impacts on interdependent relationships in Yoruba communities. This effort will help us to come to terms with indigenous and non-indigenous conditions and values that enhance or distract from the self-governing capabilities of the Yoruba of Nigeria in the problem-solving process given their environmental circumstances and fundamental beliefs about their relationship with one another. The task in this study obviously goes beyond rising romanticized calls to return all of Africa to indigenous institutions (Adama Doumbia and Naomi Doumbia 2004). This dissertation rather gives careful consideration to sorting out constructive and destructive aspects of institutions crafted by individuals in Africa starting with Yoruba institutions. This study is not only timely, but that its current

urgency will provide a window into some more abiding problems of political and economic development in Yorubaland in particular and in Africa in general.

The basic question this study explores is: How do Yoruba institutions differ to affect patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness in individual Yoruba communities of Nigeria. Against this backdrop, the key argument in this dissertation is that a given constitutional order affects patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness in any community dependent on its impact on institutions for governance and property relationships. The institutions for governance and property relationships among the Yoruba involve those for defining and regulating the standing of individuals and their actions, reactions and interactions within and across local units, the distribution of authority relationships among local units, allocation and enforcement of property rights in land, organization of defense and security, and conflict resolution.

Along this line, this study seeks to answer the following specific questions: Why absence of exclusionary associational life, violent conflicts and lack of commercial and industrial openness in the relationships among diverse individuals in some Yoruba communities and not in others? How have Yoruba beliefs and past experiences influenced terms and conditions of governance (constitutional arrangements) in individual Yoruba communities? What is the level of shared agreement among the Yoruba people about their institutions for governance and property relationships and how has it impacted on actions, reactions and interactions among the Yoruba within and across local units in individual Yoruba communities? How do Yoruba institutional arrangements affect definition, allocation and enforcement of land rights? That is, who

determines access to land, how is it determined, what are the range of privileges on the land? Why do diverse jurisdictions (local units) within some Yoruba communities cooperate to ensure the security of life and property and not in other Yoruba communities? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? To what extent have Yoruba institutional arrangements enabled conflicts to be processed to nurture and foster mutually constructive relationships among most participating individuals? What lessons and threats do the constitutional arrangements among the Yoruba of Nigeria raise for the development of mutually productive civilizations among the Yoruba in particular and in Africa in general?

## **1.2 Institutional Arrangements and Mutual Relationships**

To answer these questions, this dissertation draws upon the analytical tools in the works of scholars such as Ayo, Berman, Boulding, Clark, Coleman, de Soto, Deutsch, Follett, Greif and Laitin, Kemp, Lasswell, Michael McGinnis, E. Ostrom, V. Ostrom, Putnam, Amos Sawyer, and Tocqueville. The works of these scholars have facilitated in-depth comparative analyses of the link between institutional arrangements and interdependent relationships in diverse social settings in Africa, Asia, South and North America, and Europe. Their works are discussed below to enlighten the attempt to explain how Yoruba institutional arrangements facilitate or militate against mutually productive relationships that in turn affect patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

Institutions are artifactual constraints human beings develop as artisans to regulate social conduct. They may facilitate or militate against stable relationships that make

interdependence possible and productive for most individuals in the political economy. Institutions are essentially contained in a shared language to specify the action that are required, prohibited, or permitted, and the sanctions authorized against rule-infractions.

Given people's physical environments, the configuration of institutions in any social setting reflects the way people think and relate to one another (Tocqueville 1966; Lasswell 1971; V. Ostrom 1994; Brunner 1996; Clark 2002), and embraces constitutional, collective-choice and operational arrangements (V. Ostrom 1987a; Ostrom, *et.al*, 1994; McGinnis 1999a & b; E. Ostrom 2005). Constitutional arrangements define the terms and conditions of governance, which can either support or weaken the foundations for mutually productive relationships. Collective-choice arrangements set out what governing units<sup>4</sup> may or may not do within the framework of the terms and conditions of governance specified by the constitutional arrangements. Operational arrangements reflect how the constraints specified in both constitutional and collective-choice arrangements affect the daily decisions and activities of the individuals most directly affected. Much as the three sets of institutions may be identifiable in a shared language in some social settings, they may be indistinguishable in other settings.

Having institutions expressed in a shared language with the best of linguistic and legal expertise is however no guarantee for their effectiveness. The ability of institutions to yield mutually productive relationships requires common understanding and common agreement, the long-term glue that productively and innovatively ties operational and collective-choice arrangements to constitutional arrangements. If they are not understood as social orderings, institutions will most likely become ineffective (V. Ostrom 1971: 65-

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<sup>4</sup> Governing units among the Yoruba include immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages and occupational associations as well as neighborhood development associations.

67) and probably set stages for destructive conflicts. Institutions are more likely to be understood and accepted by participating individuals when the affected individuals can communicate and interact regularly with one another as colleagues in multiple arenas of polycentric order.

Common understanding of institutions is important for their effectiveness. Individuals may however not comply willingly with rules without regular monitoring and enforcement, whose processes, together with rule-making processes, must be commonly understood and agreed upon by participating individuals for rules to be effective. As regular monitoring and enforcement occur, the sense of legitimacy of institutions is strengthened and effective constraints can be imposed on individuals as rule-followers. It is also important that the scope of command for individuals with rulership prerogatives be kept at a minimum so that all-important conflicts can be resolved through impartial judges (V. Ostrom 1998:1078).

Loyalty and close-knit proximity advantages of the family tend to make the family an important place to subject individuals to rules and thereby facilitate mutually beneficial entrepreneurships among them (Pollak 1985). Achievement of order for greater productive potentials also requires institutions that can facilitate mutually productive interactions among diverse individuals in the larger political economy. This is more likely to be realized when the institutional structure both allows the teaching and practice of love of equality (Tocqueville 1966) and is open to more diverse ways to assemble diverse individuals in order to achieve effective complementarities among diverse jurisdictions (V. Ostrom 1994). With the existence of more than one source of rules and effective constraints on individuals having leadership prerogatives, rules are more likely

to be regarded as superior to political authorities. Also, the affected individuals are more likely to relate to one another as colleagues in exercising constitutional choice within multiple autonomous arenas.

These conditions work together, in all likelihood, to create a living process that enables and promotes institutional channels of cooperation among diverse jurisdictions co-existing and competing in solving problems (Berman 1983). Put differently, participation in such institutional circumstances is more likely to lead to productive reciprocity, mutual trust and effective communication for cooperation in the pursuit of common interests that can further facilitate greater entrepreneurial opportunities and constructive resolution of conflicts for most individuals within the political economy (Follett 1944; de Soto 2000; Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1988; Coleman 1988; Putnam 1993; Fukuyama 1995; McGinnis 1999a; Greif and Laitin 2004).

The effectiveness of institutions in creating greater potentials for most individuals can however be hindered in the presence of unlimited leadership prerogatives and/or marginalization of some groups of individuals. If individuals with rulership prerogatives to impose rules are not subject to effective limits, they may impose laws containing their own interpretations of order. As a result, the ruled/disadvantaged are more likely to be marginalized and denied the right to make and match rules to the problems they confront. This may degenerate eventually into a circumstance where the disadvantaged make operational and collective-choice arrangements that are not tied to the prevailing constitutional order, and use violent resistance, in the absence of more agreeable means, to seek recognition for their institutional arrangements. The resultant destructive relationships can in the final analysis prevent both inclusive associational life and public

security required for mutually productive ways of life (North and Thomas 1976; Putnam 1993; V. Ostrom 1994, 1997; Ayling and Kelly 1997; Alston, Libecap and Mueller 1999; de Soto 2000).

It can admittedly then be argued that constitutional orders may have either constructive or destructive influences on patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness through their impacts on operational and collective-choice arrangements for governance and property relationships (Banfield 1958; North and Thomas 1976; Kemp 1981; Yang 1987; Field 1989; Duany 1992; Sawyer 1992, 2005; Berman 1993; Netting 1993; Nicholson 1993; V. Ostrom 1994, 1997, 2005; McGinnis 1999a & b; Gellar 2005; E. Ostrom 2005; Shivakuma 2005). The factors identified above are part of Tocquevillian analytics that enables us to understand how society functions by giving attention to people's *environmental conditions, institutions, and habits of the mind (beliefs, myths and past experiences)*.

It is important to indicate that many scholars (such as Idowu 1962; Ekundare 1969; Awolalu 1979; Falola 1984; Ajisafe 1998) have attempted to explain various aspects of life among the Yoruba of Nigeria from perspectives such as fundamental beliefs, property rights systems, family structures, single-case analysis and so on. The studies are however fragmentary, dated and narrow-minded. In the previous studies, each issue was treated in isolation of the others. The pattern of mode analysis in the extant literature about the Yoruba people prevents us from making comparative sense of the configurational link between the Yoruba's environmental circumstances, habits of the mind and heart, and institutions, along with their interactive impacts on patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness within and

across individual Yoruba communities. The importance of this study is adaptively to use the three components of Tocquevillian analytics to undertake a comparative analysis of how Yoruba institutional arrangements in three Yoruba communities of Nigeria, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, differ to affect patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness.

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

#### **1.3.1 Case Selection**

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were intentionally selected for in-depth, comparative analysis. The selection ruled out a methodology that could have produced a random stratified sample throughout Yorubaland, Southwestern Nigeria, where the three communities are located. Rather, the selection of the three Yoruba communities was based mainly on the following criteria.

The first criterion rested apparently on the logic of the comparative method requiring case selection to be based on variation on the independent variable in order to avoid selection bias and inference problems (King, Keohane & Verba 1994). Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were selected for study because their respective institutional structures vary, which explains the differences in their respective patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness.

Individuals in Ile-Ife, for example, are differentiated in terms of their genetic distance from the presumed founding father of Ile-Ife, *Oduduwa*. Most Ife elements in Ile-Ife believe that they are the individuals in Ile-Ife who can claim a descent from *Oduduwa*. As a result, they claim to have the exclusive right to specify the terms and



conditions of governance and property relationships for individuals. Non-Ife elements, such as Oyo elements (Modakeke), are perceived by Ife elements as having an obscure link to *Oduduwa*. Most Oyo elements have consequently been assigned lower status as permanent migrants or tenants, and are required to submit to the *Ooni* (king of Ile-Ife) and Ife elements who serve as their lords.

The institutional structure in Ile-Ife has therefore been largely a hierarchical, authoritarian order of command and control where the standing (*ipo* or *eto*) of individuals and their local units depends mainly on where they are in the entire political economy. For example, Ife elements, through *Ooni*, have the ultimate say in selecting heads of villages and neighborhoods/wards in Ile-Ife, including the villages and the ward/neighborhood occupied by most Oyo elements. In addition, most Ife elements have the opportunity to hold any bundle of land rights such as access, withdrawal, management, exclusive and ownership rights. Most Oyo elements are however not allowed to hold exclusive and ownership rights because of their constitutional status as permanent strangers or tenants. Many Oyo elements nevertheless enjoy access, withdrawal and partial management rights on Ife land that they work as permanent tenants.

Instead of relying on submission, passive obedience and tenancy, most Oyo elements, whose ancestors moved to Ile-Ife around 1827 after the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire, however believe in the principles of equality, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations as the underlying basis of their relationships with Ife elements. As a result of the failure to resolve their disagreement constructively about how they regard one

another, what they consider to be fair, and how they distinguish right from wrong, inter-jurisdictional cooperation has been absent between local units belonging to both groups.

Against this backdrop, leaders have socialized their respective members to develop exclusionary bonds and norms of revenge and violence against members of the other group. This has led both groups of Yoruba elements in Ile-Ife to relate to each other as enemies. Intermarriages between Oyo and Ife elements have been strategically discouraged. In addition, Oyo elements have had no incentives to cooperate with Ife elements in ensuring the defense and security of Ile-Ife. Rather, Oyo elements have since 1849 developed violent capabilities as a way to reject the fundamental inequalities inherent in Ile-Ife's institutional structure of command and control. Most Ife elements have similarly reacted. Public peace has consequently been fragile in Ile-Ife, increasing insecurity of expectations for productive entrepreneurs and thereby preventing Ile-Ife from having industrial estates, manufacturing companies and the huge business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta as shown in Table 1.1 and Appendix V in the back of this dissertation.

Unlike Ile-Ife, most Yoruba elements in both Ibadan and Abeokuta relate to one another as equals. The initial settlers in both Yoruba communities adopted principles of equality to accommodate diverse interests following the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire, the aftermaths of the Owu war, and the breakdown of Maye Okunade's autocracy in Ibadan. After the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire and the outbreak of the Owu war in 1821, many Yoruba refugees fled their former communities affected by these incidents to found Ibadan in 1829. Most of the refugees included Oyo, Ife, Ijebu and Egba elements. Shortly thereafter, Maye, an Ife element, emerged as an autocratic leader in Ibadan and

terrorized non-Ife elements in the new community. Among the individuals Maye oppressed in Ibadan were *Egba* elements that later fled to establish Abeokuta in 1830. The other oppressed Yoruba elements in Ibadan combined together to terminate Maye's autocracy in 1833.

The traditional constraints of submission under the Old Oyo Empire and Maye's autocracy did not accommodate diverse interests. The repressive traditions incapacitated the disadvantaged Yoruba elements from pursuing better opportunities (Biobaku 1983; Falola 1984). In light of their past experiences of oppressions and repressions, most oppressed Yoruba elements in Abeokuta and Ibadan as from 1830 and 1833 respectively began to share an understanding that the relationships between *Eleda* (the Creator) and man on the one hand, and among human beings on the other hand, are covenantal. This is expressed in sayings such as: *olukaluku lo nse ijoba ara won ni Ibadan* (individuals are free to be their own governors in Ibadan), *Ibadan o ki se ile baba enikan* (Ibadan is no man's ancestral home), *Egba o loba, onikaluku lo nse bi Oba* (the *Egbas*, the Yoruba people in Abeokuta, do not have kings, every *Egba* man acts as his own king), and *a jo ja te Abeokuta do ni* (we all fought together to found Abeokuta). Individuals in both communities subsequently switched innovatively from the rule of submission to covenantal relationships and mutual agreements relying mainly on the principles of equality, fairness, and mutual behavioral expectations.

This institutional innovation has enabled the constitutional orders in both Ibadan and Abeokuta to accommodate diverse interests in a complementary way. The principles guiding the choice of occupation and allegiance to families and groups were relaxed in both communities in the nineteenth century such that most individuals began to enjoy

more freedom than was available in most other Yoruba communities. Most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta also enjoy equal standing in governance and property relationships. For example, social mobility is based on personal achievements rather than birth. Most individuals have the opportunity to hold any bundle of land rights. Individuals are free to move to local units where their interests can best be realized. They are also free to join associations of their choice, thus making local units to be constructively competitive as individuals engage in processes of competition, cooperation, conflict and conflict resolution (Imoagene 1976; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001).

The freedom allowed for most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta has deemphasized the importance of groups of Yoruba elements in favor of giving most individuals equal chances in governance and property relationships. The resultant institutional inventiveness has enabled most inhabitants of the two Yoruba communities to combine together in ensuring the security of life and property in their respective communities. This was more evident in the nineteenth century when each of the two Yoruba communities successfully developed capabilities for security and defense through the creation and maintenance of increasing levels of inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Due to inclusive association life and public peace achieved from relationships among most of their diverse Yoruba elements, Ibadan and Abeokuta have promoted commercial and industrial openness such that both communities have industrial estates, manufacturing companies and the huge business investments that are absent in Ile-Ife, as shown in Tables 1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and Appendix V in the back of this dissertation.

The second selection criterion was based on the practical reality of my research that demanded that I choose communities where my proposed respondents speak the

language with which I am most familiar. Yoruba is the common language of most individuals in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Being a native speaker of the Yoruba language and having spent most of my life among the Yoruba of Nigeria, the selection of the three communities enabled me to capture their Yoruba nuances that might be difficult for non-native speakers to understand.

The third selection criterion revolved around the need to control for potentially competing explanations for the differences in the institutional structures in the three Yoruba communities. Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta provided a relatively natural control for ecological, population, cleavage (ethnic, dialect and religious) factors, conflict types, and national government influences that could affect how the inhabitants of the three communities organize their relationships with one another.

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have similar ecological conditions. The three Yoruba communities are located within the major cocoa-growing region of Southwestern Nigeria. The cocoa-growing region corresponds to the rainforest belt of Southwestern Nigeria and experiences two rainy seasons and two dry seasons of varied spans in the year. The region is well-drained and has rich heavy loamy soils that offer favorable conditions for most inhabitants of the three communities to engage in similar agricultural production involving the cultivation of tree crops (cocoa, kolanut, palm produce etc), root crops (cassava, yam, cocoyam, etc), grains (rice, beans, maize and so on), hunting, and timber extraction.

Each community, in addition, serves as a home to diverse Yoruba elements such as Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife; Oyo, Ife, Ijebu, Egba elements and descendants of freed slaves (from transatlantic slavery) in Ibadan; and Egba, Owu elements and

descendants of freed slaves (from transatlantic slavery) in Abeokuta. These diverse Yoruba elements belong to the same ethnic group (Yoruba) and predominately speak Yoruba as a common language. Members of each Yoruba group practice religions such as Christianity, Islam and traditional religion (idol worship), with each Yoruba group having its own dialect.

The three communities have also been relatively equally exposed to national political affairs and policies in Nigeria. The land and decentralization policies of the Nigerian state, for example, have been similarly applied not only across the three communities but throughout Nigeria. This does not mean that the Nigerian state has not been a major obstacle to the self-organizing and self-governing potentials of individuals in Nigeria. As Ayo (2002) has detailed, the Nigerian state has greatly limited productive relationships among most individuals in Nigeria through the despotic and corrupt attitudes of officials of its local, state and national governments whose boundaries of operations have not matched the boundaries of problems throughout the country.

Three main differences exist distinctively across the three Yoruba communities. First, principles of equality and fairness have been used in both Ibadan and Abeokuta to deemphasize the importance of groups of Yoruba elements in favor of constructive resolution of conflicts among their respective inhabitants who relate to one another as equals. In sharp contrast, fundamental inequalities have characterized the interdependent relationships between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife, which have been at the root of violent conflicts in the community since 1849. Put differently, the three communities have experienced similar conflicts including those about the standing of individuals. But

they differ in the extent to which their respective institutional arrangements have allowed for constructive resolution of those conflicts.

Second, population densities in the three communities are greatly different. Ibadan is the most densely populated community with a population density of 529 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. Abeokuta and Ile-Ife have population densities of 161 persons per km<sup>2</sup> and 151 persons per km<sup>2</sup> respectively (Akinjogbin 1992, Nigeria 2000; Oyo State 2000). The differences in the population densities of the three Yoruba communities are not a threat to this study. As depicted in Tables 4.1 through 4.3 in chapter four of this study, violent conflicts have been breaking out in Ile-Ife with the smallest population density rather than Abeokuta with a higher population density or Ibadan with the highest population density.

Third, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, as depicted in Table 1.1, are 171.35 kilometers, 117.62 kilometers and 77.61 kilometers respectively from Lagos. Lagos has been a major coastal center of commercial and industrial development in Nigeria for several decades (Ayo 2002). It is apparently not unlikely that communities closest to centers of commercial and industrial development quite frequently have better chances of attracting business investments than can be attracted by communities farther away from such industrial centers. Since Ile-Ife is farthest away from Lagos, as shown in Table 1.1, its inability to attract huge business investments might be attributed to its distance from Lagos. On the other hand, huge commercial and industrial presence in Ibadan and Abeokuta could be credited to both their closer proximity to Lagos and their political status as state capitals.

As shown in Table 1.1, many other Yoruba communities, however, have huge business investments even though they are farther away from Lagos than Ile-Ife is. Save Osogbo (194.86 kilometers from Lagos), such communities have not served as state capitals. These are Ede (182.55 kilometers from Lagos) and Ilesa (196.14 kilometers from Lagos) in Osun State; Igbara-Odo (217.92 kilometers from Lagos) in Ekiti State; and Ikare-Akoko (285.27 kilometers from Lagos) in Ondo State. Ilesa, which has served as local government headquarters like Ile-Ife, nevertheless surpasses Osogbo (capital of Osun State) both in number and in variety of manufacturing companies, as depicted in Table 1.1 and Appendix V. Also, before Ibadan and Abeokuta began to serve as state capitals as from the twentieth century, each of the two communities had since the nineteenth century developed into an urban center attracting increasing business investments from productive entrepreneurs within and without each community (Falola 1984; Biobaku 1991). Since this study focuses on Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, further research will be required to investigate why these other Yoruba communities have been able to attract the huge business investments not found in Ile-Ife.



**Table 1.1 – COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL OPENNESS IN TERMS OF NUMBER OF COMPANIES WITH PAID-UP SHARE CAPITAL OF AT LEAST ONE MILLION NIGERIA’S NAIRA (ABOUT \$11,254.9 AT THE JANUARY 1999 EXCHANGE RATE OF \$1 TO 88.9 NAIRA)**

<b>Community</b>	<b>Distance from Lagos in Kilometer</b>	<b>Political Status in the Nigerian State</b>	<b>State/Geopolitical Region</b>	<b>Number of Companies</b>
<b>Abeokuta</b>	77.61	State Capital	Ogun State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>17</b>
<b>Ibadan</b>	117.62	State Capital	Oyo State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>50</b>
<b>Ile-Ife</b>	171.35	Local Government Headquarters	Osun State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>NONE</b>
<b>Ede</b>	182.55	Local Government Headquarters	Osun, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>1</b>
<b>Osogbo</b>	194.86	State Capital	Osun State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>3</b>
<b>Ilesa</b>	196.14	Local Government Headquarters	Osun State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>7</b>
<b>Igbara-Odo</b>	217.92	Local Government Headquarters	Ekiti State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>1</b>
<b>Ikare-Akoko</b>	285.27	Local Government Headquarters	Ondo State, Southwestern Nigeria	<b>2</b>

**Sources:** First Edition 1998/99. Goldstar Publishers (Nigeria) Limited. 1998. 13/1b5, Osolo way, Ajao Estate, Isolo, P.O. Box 51699, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria. Tel: 01- 522530. Ogun State’s Ministry of Industries, Commerce and Cooperatives; <http://www.mapcrow.info>; <http://www.travelsyt.com/osun-state.htm>  
Also see Appendix V in the back of this dissertation.

### **1.3.2 Data Collection Methods**

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta for six months from March 2004 to August 2004, during which time both historical and contemporary data were collected. No prior comparative research had been done on the

basic link between the Yoruba's environmental circumstances, fundamental beliefs and institutions along with their interactive impacts on patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness. Thus, intensive and extensive library research was first undertaken while in Bloomington prior to field research. Archival research was undertaken in the field to unearth data about environmental circumstances, fundamental beliefs, and institutions, and their impacts on mutual relationships among the Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The data from these sources were supplemented by data from unstructured and semi-structured interviews with community leaders, knowledgeable experts, and leaders and members of neighborhood development associations<sup>5</sup>. Interview data were collected to understand changes in patterns of order among the Yoruba in the three Yoruba communities from 1827 to the present (2006).

The time frame for this study began from 1827. 1827 was an historic point when Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta experienced great influxes of Yoruba refugees following both the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire in the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the resultant patterns of warfare in Yorubaland from 1821 (Biobaku 1983) <sup>6</sup>. From 1827, diverse Yoruba elements began to live together in the three communities (Akinjogbin 2002:43). The three Yoruba communities have since then been confronted with the

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<sup>5</sup> Neighborhood development associations are called Landlords' Associations in both Ile-Ife and Ibadan. Neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta are called community development associations operating as landlords' and tenants' associations. This type of community development associations in most neighborhoods in Abeokuta is different from another type of community development associations (CDA) in Nigeria that Enemu (1990) describes as "a confederation of voluntary mutual aid associations formed by individuals from a particular rural community but resident in different towns in the country and at times outside it".

<sup>6</sup> Some other accounts indicate that some Oyo elements had migrated to Ile-Ife before 1827, precisely from 1796 when the Old Oyo Empire began to crumble (see Olutobi & Oyeniya 1994; Adeyemi-Ale 1999). 1827 is more appropriate as the starting point for this study because, 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."

challenge to work out ways to accommodate diverse interests (Falola and Oguntomisin 2001).

### **1.3.2.1 Archival Data**

The 2004 fieldwork began with the examination of archival resources on the campus of the University of Ibadan where the National Archive Center, the Kenneth Dike Library, and the African Studies Center are located. The same exercise was undertaken at the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) in Ibadan; the Mapo Hall in Ibadan; the Simeon Adebayo Library in Abeokuta; the Archival Unit at the Olumo Rock in Abeokuta; a branch of the National Library in Abeokuta; and the Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. Documents, reports and minutes of meetings, files and newspaper cuttings were also obtained from community leaders, knowledgeable experts, leaders and members of neighborhood development associations, and officials of local, state and national governments in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta.

Archival resources were collected from these locations in the first two months of the fieldwork to generate historical data about patterns of organization of life among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The exercise enabled data collection for this dissertation to go beyond the data already published in journals and books. The archival resources and the data already published were used to identify environmental circumstances, conflict cases and their key actors, fundamental beliefs, patterns of interactions among local units, inheritance law, rules for allocating property rights in land, organization of security and changes in the organization of life among the Yoruba

in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta from 1827 to the present (2006). The trouble case approach was used to identify the conflict cases in this study and their key actors including conflicting parties, judges and witnesses to enable analysis of rules in action at the boundary points between legal and illegal action. These sources provided the basis for formulating questions for unstructured and semi-structured interviews.

### **1.3.2.2 Interview Data**

The institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have undergone changes. To capture the changes, in-depth, unstructured interviews were conducted with community leaders, members and leaders of neighborhood development associations. The individuals interviewed were selected to represent both the traditional (core) part and new extensions in each community as well as its various groups of Yoruba elements. Knowledgeable experts who have sound understanding of the organization of life in each community were also interviewed. Seventy-eight (78) individuals were interviewed on the whole: twenty-two (22), twenty-four (24) and thirty-three (33) in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan respectively. A list of their positions, interview dates and assigned numbers used to identify them in this study is in Appendix I in the back of this study.

The respondents were asked questions generated from the examination of archival resources and published data. The questions touched on issues that had to do with the conduct of individuals within immediate families, compounds, neighborhood development associations, sections, wards and villages. Views of the selected respondents were specifically sought about causes of conflicts and how they were resolved, organization of neighborhood security, interactions among compounds,

neighborhood development associations, wards/townships/quarters, and sections, allocation of property rights in land, and changes in their fundamental beliefs.

In addition, a number of statements were formulated and administered in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to understand whether the Yoruba people agree or disagree that their political orders are similar. The statements were designed around seven ordinal institutional variables such as equality in participation, autonomy of local units, distribution of land rights, inter-group trust and cooperation, sense of shared community, and public security. The design of the statements was essentially influenced by the data initially gathered from intensive archival research and in-depth interviews in each of the three Yoruba communities.

The respondents for the semi-structured interviews were not randomly selected. Rather, the selection exercise targeted leaders of local units in each of the three Yoruba communities, such as compounds, neighborhoods, sections and neighborhood development associations. The questionnaire was administered on ten (10) people each in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta. Twenty-five (25) people were considered for questionnaire administration in Ibadan because Ibadan's population size is more than twice as big as the population size of either Ile-Ife or Abeokuta, as explained in chapter 2 in this study. A list of their positions and assigned numbers used to identify them in this study is in Appendix III in the back of this study. The selected respondents were asked to rank each statement from most disagreed (1) to most agreed (6) to form an average scale of respondents' perceptions for each of the seven individual variables and each of the three institutional structures, as horizontally and vertically set out respectively in Appendix IV in the back of this dissertation.

Every individual interviewed was assigned a number to ensure confidentiality. Assignment of numbers to the individuals interviewed was not based on any alphabetic order so as to preserve their anonymity. Individuals interviewed in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were identified in this study with a “F”, an “I” and an “A” respectively. Lists of the people interviewed and their positions based on the numbers assigned to them are provided in Appendixes I and III in the back of this dissertation.

### **1.3.2.3 Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this study is largely qualitative to generate a rich understanding of the differences in patterns of order and their effects on mutual relationships among the Yoruba of Nigeria. To break away from the assumption of institutional uniformity among the Yoruba, description and interpretation of the meanings the Yoruba attach to their relationships with one another were considered appropriate in the analysis of the data for this study. This made it possible to generate a clear picture of latent and underlying issues that in turn facilitated the revelation of complexity of governance and property relationships among the Yoruba, the assessment of causality as it actually played out in each Yoruba community, and the construction of a logical chain of evidence. The present verb tense is used to describe what occurs within the time frame from 1827 to the present (2006).

Details from archival materials, data published in journals and books, and interviewees’ responses about organization of life in each selected community were analyzed using analytic memos, content and document summary sheets. For each respondent, a content summary sheet was written discussing pattern of order in each

community as featured in the opinion of each respondent. Document summary sheets were also generated for the data from documents and published materials about rules of relationships within local units in each community.

Broad and specific themes emerged from the analysis. The first broad theme that emerged resolved around the link between fundamental beliefs and constitutional arrangements in each community. The second broad theme had to do with rules for the conduct of individuals within local units and their links to the dominant constitutional arrangements in each community. It was from the second broad theme that specific themes were generated.

The specific themes include patterns of associational life and intermarriages, authority relationships among local units, property rights in land, organization of security, and conflict resolution in each selected community. Each of these specific themes was further broken into sub-themes. Analytical memos were then developed first to integrate sub-themes, specific and broad themes for each community, and then to bring together corresponding themes across the three communities for comparative purposes. As the variables of interests were clarified and related, context charts, flow networks, clustering and matrices were constructed to identify patterns for comparisons across the three Yoruba communities. The Mann-Whitney test procedure was used to analyze the quantitative data from the semi-structured interviews. Without assuming a normal distribution, the Mann-Whitney test procedure was employed because the responses are ordinal levels and the sample from each community is independent.

#### **1.4. Analytical Framework**

Past experiences, myths of migration, and shared notions of the universe are basic ingredients the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have drawn upon to specify their terms and conditions of governance and property relationships in their respective communities. The prescribed terms and conditions of governance represent constitutional rules in each Yoruba community. Ecological conditions and the dominant constitutional rules in each Yoruba community shape allocation of land rights, inheritance law, process of socialization, mechanisms for conflict resolution, arrangements for defend and security, and monitoring and enforcement within individual collective choice arenas (governing units) in the community.

Collective-choice arenas among the Yoruba include immediate families, compounds (*agboilẹ*), neighborhoods (wards in Ile-Ife, quarters in Ibadan, and townships in Abeokuta), neighborhood development associations, villages (*abule*), traditional mutual aid associations, trade and occupational associations, and community councils of chiefs/elders. Rules made in collective choice arenas are applied in operational-choice arenas where individuals undertake daily decisions and activities that directly affect them. Farms (*oko*), war scenes (*ojuogun*), individual apartments in compounds, individual houses and/or compounds in neighborhoods and in villages and spaces (*iso*) for individual marketwomen and marketmen in market places are few examples of operational-choice arenas among the Yoruba.

The amount of autonomy and independence individual collective-choice arenas enjoy in specifying their respective operational rules are influenced by the dominant constitutional rules in each community. An understanding of patterns of interaction



within and among individual governing units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta creates immense possibilities for us to appreciate outcomes such as patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness, and their effects on the ecological and sociopolitical environment each Yoruba community represents.

#### **1.4.1. Tocquevillian analytics, IAD, and Policy Sciences Approaches**

Tocquevillian analytics is primarily applied in this study to analyze the differences in the patterns of order in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. This approach has been formulated into the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework, shown in Figure 1.1. The IAD framework, developed at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at the Indiana University, is specifically useful in understanding how ecological conditions, attributes of a community, and rules crafted by individuals shape patterns of interaction among individuals in particular sociopolitical and ecological environments to yield outcomes reflecting the robustness extent of their institutional structures.

The specific variation of the IAD framework used in this study is combined with elements of the Policy Sciences approaches<sup>7</sup> to under the causes of varied patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta. The basic elements of the Policy Sciences approaches adapted into the variation of the IAD framework applied in this study include social process, decision process, and problem-orientation (see Clark 2002 for further discussion of these elements).

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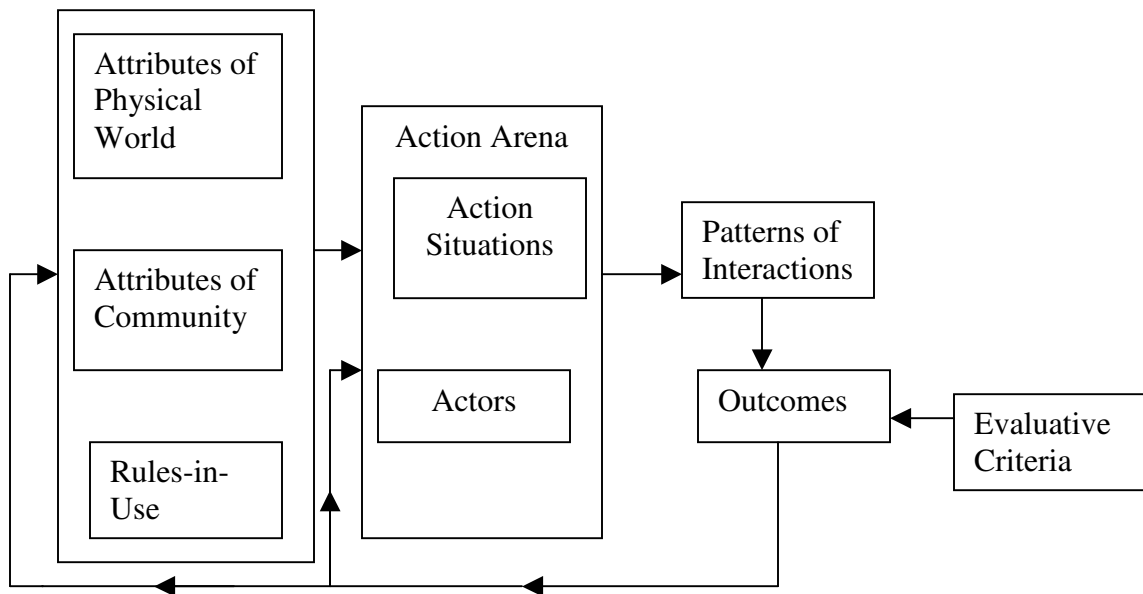
<sup>7</sup> Harold D. Lasswell and his colleagues developed the Policy Sciences approaches at the Yale University.

Social process as applied in this study consists of (i) perspectives that embrace past experiences, myths of migration, and shared notions of the universe held by the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, (ii) base values that include preferences, constitutional standing, inclusive or exclusionary bonds, standards of good character, skills, and resources that individuals bring to the action arena (both collective-choice and operational choice), (iii) strategies that cover patterns of interaction among individuals in each community that may be collaborative or exclusionary, (iv) outcomes such as patterns of associational life, violent conflicts and commercial and industrial openness produced by institutional structures, (v) effects that focus on feedback onto the ecological and sociopolitical environment, (vi) situation conceptualized as the collective-choice and operational choice arenas where individuals as actors or participating individuals influence their governing units and and make decisions that directly affect their daily activities, and (vii) actors in this study include Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife; descendants of freed slaves, Ife, Oyo, Ijebu, Egba and other Yoruba elements in Ibadan; and descendants of freed slaves, Egba and Own elements in Abeokuta. In chapter 3, I draw upon elements of the social process to understand how people’s perspectives shape their constitutional terms and conditions of governance and property relationships, the decision process and problem-orientation within collective-choice and operational-choice arenas. This is because the ultimate authority in society to make rules “rests in the perspectives of living members of the community – their identification, demands, and expectations...” (Brunner 1998: 46).

Elements of the decision process in the Policy Sciences approaches applied in this study include (i) intelligence adapted as knowledge required to make appropriate rules

based on local conditions, (ii) promotion viewed as the socialization process for promoting shared social values and perspectives, (iii) prescriptions conceptualized as rules-in use in collective and operational choice arenas, (iv) innovation looked upon as the task of matching rules inventively to local conditions, and (v) application seen as rule enforcement. The problem-orientation aspect of the Policy Science approaches, as used in this study, focuses adaptively on preferences and values desired by participating individuals as conditioned by their shared socialpolitical and ecological conditions. These elements of decision process and problem orientation help me to understand configurational ways in which participating individuals affect and are affected by the activities within their collective-choice and operational -choice arenas.

**Figure 1.1: Framework for Institutional Analysis**



Adapted from E. Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker (1994: 37)

### 1.4.2 Design Principles as Evaluative Criteria

The differences in the environmental conditions, beliefs, myths of migration, notions of the universe, and past experiences in individual Yoruba communities are more likely to lead to different institutions for governance and property relationships. In reality, such diversity is not an aberration in organizing human relationships. With different institutions for governance and property relationships, individuals tend to face immense possibilities to cash in on their differing social, economic and environmental conditions to promote productive interdependence and public peace and security. To understand how successful and robust the institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are in the provision of public peace and security, this study adapts and uses seven design principles developed by Elinor Ostrom (1990) to evaluate the robustness of CPR<sup>8</sup> institutions.

The seven design principles are (1) clear definition of boundaries of resource users and the resource in ways that both CPR users and the boundaries of the CPR are clearly specified, (2) proportional equivalence to ensure that CPR institutions match local needs and local conditions (environmental, social and economic) of the affected users, (3) autonomous collective-choice arrangements to allow most individuals affected by CPR institutions to participate in modifying their institutions, (4) minimal recognition of the right of individuals to organize, make and modify rules, (5) effective monitoring by the affected individuals and/or their leaders using graduated sanctions, (6) access to low-cost conflict resolution mechanisms, and (7) nested enterprises or multiple-layer organization of property rights, jurisdictional relationships, conflict resolution mechanisms, and monitoring and enforcement rules for solving larger scale problems. Based on mounting

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<sup>8</sup> CPR denotes common pool resource that is “a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use” (Elinor Ostrom 1990:30).

empirical findings about CPR institutions, it has been argued that individuals are more likely to make and modify robust CPR institutions when they are able to design their own institutions to be enforced by them or individuals accountable to them using graduated sanctions that specify who can benefit from the CPR given their local conditions (Elinor Ostrom (1990).

The seven design principles have been found to apply not only to common pool resources (CPRs) but also to public goods<sup>9</sup> including the peace and security of a community (Peter Larmour 1996). Public peace and security in any community generates benefits that jointly affect individuals living in the community. To enable most individuals to commit themselves to the provision of public peace and security in their community, institutions for governance and property relationships have to be devised and enforced in ways that motivate most individuals in the community to collaborate, have a feeling of belonging together, and have a sense of fair distribution of property rights and jurisdictional authorities in governance. This is more likely in communities where constitutional arrangements nurture and foster fair membership terms that in turn give equal standing to individuals in governance and property relationships and that allow more diverse ways to assemble diverse individuals and achieve effective complementarities among diverse jurisdictions. 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 1987b)

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<sup>9</sup> Public goods are the goods whose beneficiaries cannot be excluded from their consumption, and benefits of the goods are completely non-subtractible in nature (V. Ostrom 1994: 164-172).

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” (1994:189).

The way institutions for governance and property relationships operate in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has been fundamental to the provision of public peace and security needed to facilitate commercial and industrial openness. This study adaptively uses the seven design principles in looking at the robustness of the institutions for governance and property relationships in the provision of public peace and security in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. To be able to adapt the seven design principles more effectively to the explanation of the robustness of the institutions for governance and property relationships in the three Yoruba communities, the first design principle, clear definition of boundaries of resource users and the resource, is recast as clearly defined and fair membership terms. By fair membership terms, it is meant membership terms that give most individuals in any given community equal standing in governance and property relationships such that no individual is discriminated against by virtue of his/her family and group backgrounds.

The adaptive version of the seven design principles for this study is set out as follows:

Design Principle 1: Clearly defined and fair membership terms that give most individuals in a community equal standing in governance and property relationships such that no individual is discriminated against by virtue of his/her family and group backgrounds.

Design Principle 2: Proportional equivalence that ensures that individuals can match institutions for solving specific problems to their local needs and local conditions (environmental, social and economic).

Design Principle 3: Autonomous collective-choice arrangements that allow most individuals affected by public peace and security to participate in modifying their institutions.

Design Principle 4: Minimal recognition of the right of individuals to organize, make and modify rules within their local units.

Design Principle 5: Effective monitoring by the affected individuals and/or individuals accountable to them using graduated sanctions.

Design Principle 6: Access to low-cost and integrative conflict resolution mechanisms.

Design Principle 7: Nested enterprises or multiple-layer organization of membership terms, property rights, jurisdictional relationships, conflict resolution mechanisms, and monitoring and enforcement rules for solving larger scale problems such as the provision of public security and peace.

Design principles 1, 3, and 4 are particularly woven through chapters 3, 5, and 6. Much of what is discussed in chapters 4 factors in design principles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7, with design principle 6 used in chapter 7. Chapter 8 recaps the key findings in this study around the seven design principles. Having regard to these adaptive principles, this study argues that provision of public peace and security needed to promote commercial and industrial openness is more likely to be facilitated in communities where most individuals enjoy equal standing in governance and property relationships (design principles 1 and

6), are motivated to collaborate with individuals outside their local jurisdictions in solving shared problems (design principle 7), and have mutually recognized autonomy (design principle 3) and rights (design principle 4) to organize, make and modify rules to be enforced by them or individuals accountable to them using graduated sanctions (design principle 5) based on their shared interests within their local governance units (design principle 2).

## **1.5 Organization of Chapters**

The basic purpose of this study is to address the puzzling position about institutional structures among the Yoruba of Nigeria and thereby come to terms with their differing impacts on mutual relationships. Tocquevillian analytics provides an appropriate approach to pursuing this purpose to fruition by looking at the configurational connections between the Yoruba's biophysical circumstances, habits of the heart and mind (beliefs and past experiences) and institutions. The link between these three factors provides us with a rich understanding of how various political economies or communities among the Yoruba operate to affect patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness. As earlier indicated, the Tocquevillian analytics is supplemented with the Policy Sciences approaches, and the design principles adapted from Elinor Ostrom's (1990) research on common pool resources. With the use of Tocquevillian analytics, Policy Sciences approaches, and the design principles, the subsequent chapters in this study undertake a systematic, in-depth analysis of how biophysical circumstances, fundamental beliefs and institutions for governance and



property relationships interact to affect mutual relationships among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

Chapter 2 examines features of biophysical settings in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The effort is not a geological or ecological survey. Rather, it is a description of climatic, relief, vegetation, soil features, population diversity, and socioeconomic activities suitable to the environmental conditions in each setting.

In chapter 3, attention is given to fundamental beliefs among the Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta about their relationship with one another and how they conceptualize their universe. Since their biophysical settings are similar, the differences in their fundamental beliefs create a sense of patterns of common understanding about constitutional order in each of the three Yoruba communities. In addition, non-parametric analysis is used in chapter 3 to test the hypothesis about the institutional homogeneity in the conventional wisdom in the existing literature.

The discussion in chapter 3 also lays out a foundational framework about how constitutional arrangements in each Yoruba community influence the conduct of individuals within and among local units and law of inheritance (chapter 4), allocation of property rights in land (chapter 5), organization of defense and security (chapter 6), and conflict and conflict resolution (chapter 7). Chapter 8 summarizes the findings of this study, draws lessons for mutually productive ways of life among the Yoruba, and proposes directions for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BIOPHYSICAL CONFIGURATION OF YORUBA HOMELAND

“Man decides where to live; the earth decides whether to allow it” (BBC News, January 8, 2005).

#### 2.1 Introduction

The biophysical features of the homeland of the Yoruba are crucial to their existence. The features generate conditions that substantially influence their patterns of life, especially agricultural activities that further complement and support other occupations such as blacksmithing, weaving, trading, and other productive activities. Many aspects of the biophysical configuration of the Yoruba homeland are fixed over a long period of time. A challenge then arises for the Yoruba people to pattern their life to fit their environmental conditions and adapt to them.

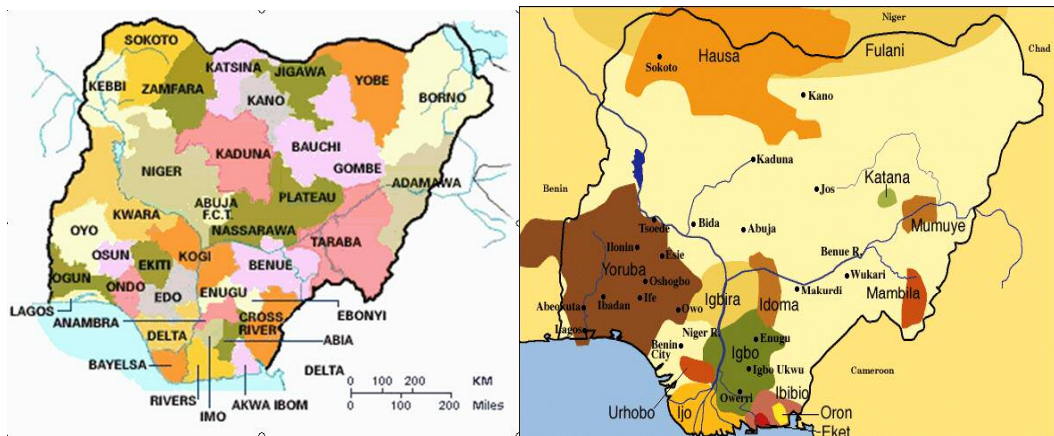
This chapter aims to describe the opportunities and constraints the environmental conditions of the Yoruba homeland provide for the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The environmental conditions facing the three Yoruba communities are subsets of the general biophysical configuration of Southwestern Nigeria. To contextually come to terms with the major elements of the three biophysical subsets, I will first lay out a general description of Southwestern Nigeria where Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are located. This will then be followed by a specific biophysical picture of the three Yoruba communities.

#### 2.2 General Description of Southwestern Nigeria

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are Yoruba communities located respectively in Osun, Oyo and Ogun states in Southwestern Nigeria. As shown in Figure 2.1, the Yoruba

predominantly inhabit the whole of Southwestern Nigeria. They can also be found in some parts of Kwara and Kogi states of Nigeria. Altogether the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria roughly lies between latitude  $5.86^{\circ}$  and  $9.22^{\circ}$  north, and longitudes  $2.65^{\circ}$  and  $5.72^{\circ}$  east with a total land area of about 97,100 square kilometers (Eades 1980:3) and an

**Figure 2.1: Maps of Nigeria with 36 States and Major Linguistic Groups**



Source: [http://www.waado.org/NigerDelta/Maps/Nigeria\\_States.html](http://www.waado.org/NigerDelta/Maps/Nigeria_States.html)

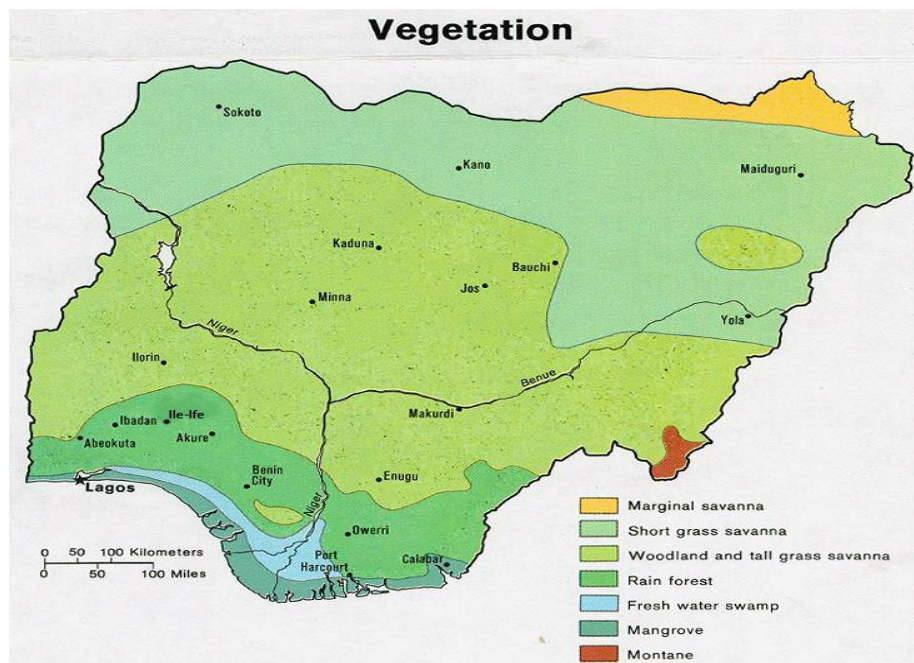
estimated population of 20 million.

Though united by the Yoruba language, the Yoruba people of Nigeria are individuals living in different ecological settings and are characterized by a myriad of dialects. A given dialect defines a group of Yoruba elements such that there exist Yoruba groups like Awori, Egun, Oyo, Owu, Ife, Egba, Ekiti, Ijebu, Ijesa and other groups of Yoruba elements. Awori and Egun elements occupy the mangrove and the fresh water swamp. This area is part of the coastal belt of Nigeria. North of the coastal region, as Figure 2.2 depicts, lies the rainforest belt where Ile -Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are located.

The rainforest zone corresponds to the major cocoa-growing area of Southwestern Nigeria. It is narrow in the west where Yoruba communities such as Abeokuta and Ilaro are located. The vegetation zone is however wider as it spreads in a west-eastern

direction to cover Yoruba communities like Ibadan, Ijebu, Ile-Ife, Osogbo, Ilesa, Akure, Ondo, Ikare-Akoko, Igbara-Odo, Ado-Ekiti and Owo. The Yoruba elements in this region include Ijebu, Egba, Ondo, Ife, Owu, Ekiti, Ijesa and Oyo elements along with descendants of freed slaves following the end of the transatlantic slave trade. Most of the main south-flowing rivers of Southwestern Nigeria, such as Yewa, Ogun, Shasha, Oni and Oluwa, run through this region. The rivers empty into lagoon and creeks in the coastal belt. Rich and well-drained heavy loamy soils from *complex basement rocks* characteristic of *the western uplands* and the prolonged rainfall in this region provide favorable conditions for agriculture. In the nineteenth century, the rainforest used to seal off these Yoruba communities against the Fulani army who successfully conquered and subordinated many other Yoruba communities in the open grassland zone of northern Yorubaland.

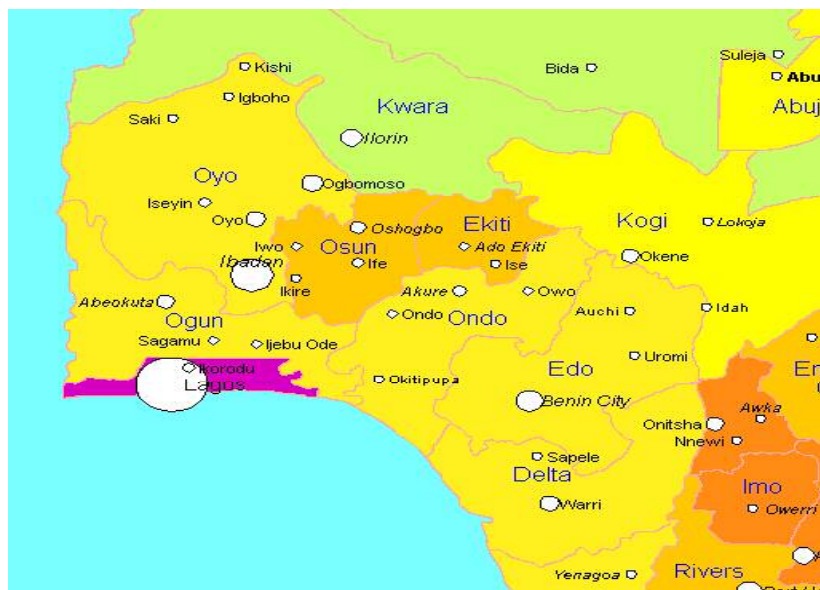
**Figure 2.2: Vegetation Types of Nigeria**



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

As the rainforest region is left behind, the terrain becomes increasingly hilly with rocky outcrops and series of domed hills and occasional flat topped ridges adorning the Guinea savannah zone of Southwestern Nigeria. Yoruba groups like Igomina, Igbolo, Yagba and many Oyo elements occupy the Guinea savannah belt. Most of the rock outcrops and hills in this region are located in Yoruba communities like Eruwa, Lanlante, Iseyin, Shaki, Igbajo, Ilero, Oyo and Okeho.

**Figure 2.3: Map of Population Densities of Nigerian Cities and Towns**



**Source: Thomas Brinkhoff: City Population, <http://www.citypopulation.de>**

The Guinea savannah zone of Southwestern Nigeria is a belt of mixture of trees and tall grasses in the south, with shorter grasses and less trees in the north. Predictably, the soils in this zone are lighter and become a mixture of laterite and fine-grained loamy and humus materials which support poorer vegetation and the cultivation of grains like maize, guinea corn and millet along with root crops like yam and cassava (Nigeria 2000).

Estimates of the populations of the Yoruba people of Nigeria are however problematic. This has been essentially due to the political and administrative difficulties surrounding the conduct of censuses in Nigeria. In the absence of reliable data sources, the censuses conducted by the national government nevertheless remain virtually the only sources to depend on. Based on the Nigerian population censuses of 1953, 1963 and 1991, Yoruba populations in Southwestern Nigeria and parts of Kogi and Kwara states were 5,369,000 in 1953; 11,833,000 in 1963; and about 22 million in 1991.

### **2.3 Study Sites: Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta**

It is however difficult to estimate the population density of each Yoruba group. Some data nevertheless are available to estimate the population densities of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta on which this study focuses. Land areas of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are 1630.72 km<sup>2</sup>; 434.501 km<sup>2</sup>; and 781.16 km<sup>2</sup> respectively with corresponding populations of 246,774; 1,228,665 and 374,843 (Akinjogbin 1992:1; Thomas Brinkhoff: [http](http://); Nigeria 2000; Oyo State 2000). Based on these data, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have population densities of 151 persons per km<sup>2</sup>; 2,823 persons per km<sup>2</sup>; and 480 persons per km<sup>2</sup> respectively. The land area and population figures for Ile-Ife cover both its urban and rural areas. Taken the rural areas of Ibadan and Abeokuta into account, the rural and urban land areas of Ibadan and Abeokuta are 3,468.03km<sup>2</sup> and 4,877.7km<sup>2</sup> respectively with corresponding populations of 1,835,302 and 811,053 (Nigeria 2000; Oyo State 2000). These figures yield population densities of about 529 persons per km<sup>2</sup> and 161 persons per km<sup>2</sup> for Ibadan and Abeokuta respectively.

The figures and the population densities illustrated in Figure 2.3 indicate that Ibadan has the highest population density followed by Abeokuta and Ile-Ife in that order. While the three Yoruba communities differ on their respective demographic sizes, they share certain similarities both in terms of serving as homes to diverse Yoruba individuals and in terms of their climatic, drainage and relief structures, and soil and vegetation types.

In terms of attributes of community, as shown in Figure 1.1, each of the three Yoruba communities is made up of different individuals. Both Ife and Oyo elements inhabit Ile-Ife. Ibadan provides home to descendants of Oyo, Ife, Egba, Ijebu elements and freed slaves. Abeokuta, for its part, consists of descendants of Egba (Egba Ake, Egba Oke-Ona and Egba Gbagura), Owu elements and freed slaves.

### **2.3.1 Climate**

Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta also exhibit fairly similar climatic, relief and vegetation features, which are attributes of physical worlds as shown in Figure 1.1. The climate of the three Yoruba communities, much like that of Nigeria, is determined by the interaction of two air masses (Baker 1993; Nigeria 2001). One of these air masses is the relatively warm and moist tropical marine mass which comes from the Atlantic Ocean and is associated with Southwest winds. The second is the relatively cool, dry and relatively stable tropical continental air mass that originates from the Sahara Desert. It is associated with the dry, cool and dusty north-east trades.

The boundary surface area between the two air masses is known as the Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) or the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). The ITD

migrates north and south, bringing rainfall or dryness to different areas of the country at different times of the year. Its northward movement brings the wet season, with annual rainfall totals ranging from over 3500mm in the south to less than 400mm in parts of the extreme north (Nigeria 2001). The long dry season is ushered in with the southward migration of the ITD during which maximum temperature is seldom much above 100° F., seldom much below 80° F.

The seasonal patterns of climatic conditions over Nigeria give rise to two seasons: one dry and one rainy season a year in Northern Nigeria, and four seasons a year in Southern Nigeria where Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are located (Nigeria 1998, 2001, 2003). The four seasons in Southern Nigeria are two rainy seasons and two dry seasons of varied lengths. These seasons determine when, where and what to plant, weed and harvest. The long rainy season in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in particular begins around March and lasts to the end of July with a peak period in June followed by a short dry season in August for about three or four weeks. The short dry season in August allows the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to harvest and plant fast-growing varieties of grains and food crops such as maize, guinea corns, cassava and melon. Cocoa beans are also harvested on a small-scale during this time.

The second but short rainy season begins from early September to mid-October. The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta devote most of the short and long rainy seasons to planting and tending crops as well as weeding their farms. The end of the short rainy season ushers in the long dry season that starts from late October and lasts to early March with peak dry conditions between early December and late February. This period usually witnesses massive harvesting of cocoa beans, oranges (*osan*), and kolanut



(*obi*), which occurs between October and early December. Harvesting of palm products reaches the peak in late February and early March. Vegetation growth between December and February is generally hampered. During this period, grasses are dry, leaves fall from trees, and lips are dry and cracked due to reduced moisture.

During the long dry season, swampy terrains and banks of rivers and streams in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta however offer opportunities for some individuals to engage in the cultivation of vegetables such as a variety of spinaches (*efo*), tomatoes (*timaati*) and peppers (*ata*). In addition, cultivation of rice (*iresi*) takes place on swampy terrains and banks of rivers virtually all year round. These activities are visible on the banks of streams and rivers like Opa, Oyewere, Agbara, Erinta Ahanran and Makun in Ile-Ife; Ogunpa, Ona, Ogbere and Kudeti in Ibadan; and Ogun in Abeokuta.

### **2.3.2 Relief, Drainage and Soil Structures**

Each of the three Yoruba communities is also characterized by relatively similar relief features. Ile-Ife in particular is fairly plain toward its southern bounds. This topographic picture however changes to become a mixture of plain and ridge complex to the eastern and north-western parts of Ile-Ife with undulating landforms to its western part. The ridges in Ile-Ife are dissected and eroded into low hills and narrow short ridges (Jeje 1992). The hills include Okemogun, Okesoda and Arubidi. Unlike initial settlers in Ibadan and Abeokuta who settled on the brows and shoulders of hills and rocks, virtually none of the hills in Ile-Ife was occupied as either a hideout or a military camp for planning military strategies against potential external aggressions in the nineteenth century.

The summits of the hills and ridges in Ile-Ife are covered by shallow rock outcrops. On the upper hill-side slopes, soils are thin and skeletal becoming thicker and finer. Both the thick and skeletal soils on these ridges are heavily covered by cocoa and kolanut farms. Generally, Ile-Ife is endowed with high clay content that enables the soils to retain moisture and nutrient, with the high porosity and friability facilitating good drainage and root penetration to great depths (Jeje 1992).

Likewise, Ibadan and Abeokuta are each located within a wide area of undulating landforms within the western upland region of Nigeria and are each characterized by plain and ridge complex. Unlike Ile-Ife, the initial sites of expansion in both Ibadan and Abeokuta are not plain. The point of expansion in each community is an unfavorable topography strategically chosen for defense purposes in the nineteenth century. The

**Figure 2.4: Some Parts of the Plain and Ridge Complex of Ile-Ife**



**Source: 2004 Fieldwork in Ile-Ife, Nigeria**

topographies are not good for agricultural activities.

Ibadan, for example, began to expand from the brow and shoulder of Mapo Hill. Its initial settlers regarded Mapo Hill as a good military base from which they could

organize themselves and plan military strategies and tactics to protect themselves (Ojo 1967). As Falola (1984) noted, the earlier settlers in Ibadan in the nineteenth century believed that it was easier for the enemy army to conquer communities built on open grasslands without hills, slopes, valleys rocks, caves and other natural protective features. The experience was learned from how the Old Oyo Empire located on open grassland had

**Figure 2.5: A View of Ibadan from the Top of Mapo Hill**

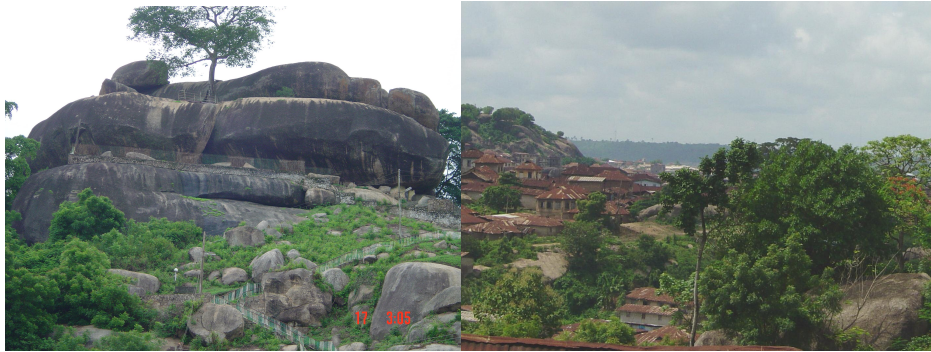


**Source: 2004 Fieldwork in Ibadan, Nigeria**

been easily defeated by the Fulani with futile resistance. Mapo hill, the starting point of expansion in Ibadan, was believed to provide a great deal of security. As Figure 2.5 illustrates, its summit was an excellent spot from which surroundings could be watched. In addition, its base was covered with a thicker forest and offered natural protection against the Fulani who rode on horses and who were used to fighting mostly on plain terrains.

Much like Ibadan, Abeokuta is a community built among rocks and protected on

**Figure 2.6: Olumo Rock and a View of Abeokuta from the Top of Olumo Rock**



**Source: 2004 Fieldwork in Abeokuta, Nigeria**

the west by the river Ogun. It particularly displays some scattered outcrop inselbergs, such as the Olumo rock, as shown in Figure 2.6, the Igbein hill, the Ijemo hill and so on. This unfavorable hilly topography was turned into practical military advantage in the nineteenth century. This is explained further in Chapter 6 of this study. Most initial settlers in Abeokuta first lived on the slopes and summit of the Olumo rock from which they were able to watch for and plan against external aggressions. The shoulders of the Olumo rock and other hills in Abeokuta also served as useful hideouts for its inhabitants during the nineteenth century warfare in Yorubaland (Ojo 1967).

The hilly topographies of the sites where the earlier settlers in Ibadan and Abeokuta first occupied are not good for agricultural activities. This does not imply that most Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan are unable to engage in agricultural activities. In fact, hilly features can also be found in Ile-Ife, as Figure 2.4 illustrates, but were not put to the same use as in Ibadan and Abeokuta. The inhabitants of both Abeokuta and Ibadan cashed in on their defense capabilities to secure large tracts of

fertile land with well-drained loamy soils around their respective communities. As a result, they were able to spread beyond their unfavorable initial sites and set up farmlands on the annexed land extending up to between 20 and 30 miles from the initial location of each community (A5; I10; Mabogunje 1961:267; Eades 1980: 44).

By and large, the landforms in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are similarly well-drained (Nigeria 2000). The main rivers traversing the three Yoruba communities are Oni with tributaries such as Opa, Oyewere, Agbara, Erinta Ahanran and Makun in Ile-Ife; Ogunpa, Ona, Ogbere and Kudeti in Ibadan; and Ogun in Abeokuta. These rivers take their sources further north, flow in a north-southern direction and empty their deposits into creeks and lagoons in the coastal area of Lagos.

One main implication of the climatic, relief and drainage conditions of the three Yoruba communities is that they are endowed with rich and well-drained heavy loamy soils from complex basement rocks characteristic of the western upland area of Nigeria and prolonged rainfall. These conditions provide favorable conditions for the cultivation of both tree crops such as cocoa, kolanut and palm produce, and food crops such as maize, yams, cassava and pepper. These conditions have influenced the vegetation structure in each of the three Yoruba communities, as laid out as follows.

### **2.3.3 Vegetation**

The ecological zone where Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are located is the rainforest belt of Nigeria and corresponds to the major cocoa-growing area of Southwestern Nigeria, as Figure 2.7 shows. The vegetation is a reflection of the climatic, relief and drainage conditions of the zone, which are characterized by long rainy season

and rich heavy loamy soils. The vegetation zone is however currently covered by secondary forest regrowths with the development of tree crop cultivation. Hence, the natural tree species have given way to cocoa, kolanut, palm trees (*elacis guinniensis*), gmelina and dense thickets.

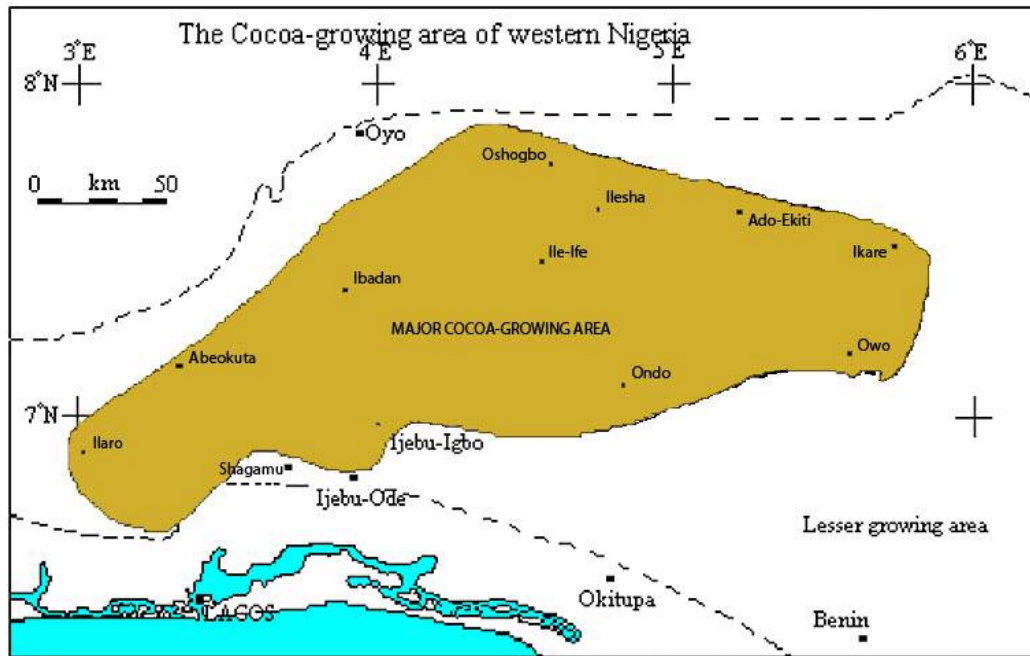
Mature forests still exist within the territories of the three Yoruba communities, providing the basis for timber extraction and hunting activities. The forests include Ife Area Five Forest in Ile-Ife, Gambari and Alalubosa Forests in Ibadan, and Olokemeji Forest in Abeokuta. The tree species in these forests include the mahogany (*Khaya entandrophragma*), obeche (*Triplochiton*), iroko (*Chlorophora*), ekki (*Lophira alata*) and tropical cedar. Their fauna species include grass-cutters (groundhogs), antelopes and bush pigs (warthog) (Oyerinde 1998; Nigeria 2000).

The interaction between the climate, relief, drainages, soils and vegetations of the ecological zone where Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are located have set natural conditions that significantly influence patterns of human activities regarding agricultural activities and defense as explained further in chapter 6 of this study. Agricultural activities, which are part of the main occupations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, have been organized to fit the prevailing environmental conditions.

Based on the natural processes, agricultural activities in the three Yoruba communities have involved the cultivation of tree crops (cocoa, kolanut, and palm produce) in areas with rich heavy loamy soils; root crops (cassava, yam, and cocoyam) and grains (rice, beans, and maize) in both cocoa-growing and light soil areas; and hunting and timber extraction in sparsely and densely forested areas. Tree crops are perennial crops which take at least seven years before they can be harvested. Food crops

(root crops and grains) can be planted and harvested at least twice a year. For the cultivation of root crops and grains in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, the farming practice is still predominantly rotational bush fallow. Today, most farming activities take place in

**Figure 2.7: Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the Cocoa-Growing Area**



Source: <http://antbase.org/ants/africa/nigcocoa.htm>

the rural parts of the three Yoruba communities.

In addition, the environmental conditions in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta served as a natural protection against external aggressions in the nineteenth century. The rocks, caves and hills in the three communities offered natural defenses, especially for the Yoruba in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century.

Since the Fulani were used to fighting on open grasslands with horses, the dense forests that surrounded the three communities also made it extremely difficult for the Fulani to launch successful attacks against the communities in the nineteenth century. A

virulent species of tsetse-flies (*Glossina longipalpis* and *Glossina palpalis*) characteristic of the rainforest region made military exploits more problematic for the Fulani. The tsetse-flies menaced the horses of the Fulani the further south they advanced, thus sealing off Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta against the Fulani whose invasion from the north of the Yoruba homeland, an open grassland area, led to the final collapse of the Old Oyo Empire in the opening years of the nineteenth century.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The environmental conditions of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, as explained above, have constituted a major influence on agricultural and defense activities. The three Yoruba communities are located within the major cocoa-growing region of Southwestern Nigeria. The cocoa-growing region corresponds to the rainforest belt of Southwestern Nigeria, and experiences two rainy seasons and two dry seasons of varied spans in the year. The region is well-drained and has rich heavy loamy soils that offer favorable conditions for the development of cocoa, kolanut, palm produce plantations and food crops.

To respond creatively to the natural conditions of their biophysical configurations, the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta engage in activities suited to their environmental conditions. The activities include the cultivation of tree crops (cocoa, kolanut, palm produce and so on), root crops (cassava, yam, cocoyam, etc), grains (rice, beans, maize and so on), hunting and timber extraction.

The environmental conditions of the three Yoruba communities also played a major role in their defense in the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, the



rainforest around the three Yoruba communities offered them a natural protection against the Fulani who had successfully overrun the Old Oyo Empire located in the Guinea Savannah belt with a mixture of trees and tall grasses. For Ibadan and Abeokuta in particular, their respective points of expansion are unfavorable topographies strategically chosen for defense against hostile Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities. Through the defense capabilities of Ibadan and Abeokuta, more favorable land was acquired beyond their respective initial hilly locations. Chapter Six (6) throws more light on how the environmental conditions of the three Yoruba communities affected their defense strategies in the nineteenth century.

On the whole, the biophysical conditions of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta provide us with an important understanding of their respective ecological configurations and potentials that are capable of serving as bases for facilitating productive entrepreneurships. Despite the good conditions the three similar environmental settings provide for productive ways of life, Ile-Ife cannot boast of public peace, men and women of distinctions, industrial estates, manufacturing companies, and the huge business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta, as depicted in Tables 1.1, 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, and Appendix V.

Since the three Yoruba communities, as has been laid out earlier, are similar biophysical settings, we can focus more on the differences in their respective sociopolitical orders to explain why Abeokuta and Ibadan have moved up the ladder of entrepreneurial progress and Ile-Ife has not. To this end, an understanding of the differences in their respective constitutional arrangements is made clear in chapter 3. Chapter 3 specifically lays out how shared cognitive frameworks in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and

Abeokuta differ to affect their patterns of constitutional choice with implications for their patterns of associational life, violent conflicts, and commercial and industrial openness.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS AND CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AMONG THE YORUBA

“People always bear some marks of their origin. Circumstances of birth and growth affect all the rest of their careers” (Tocqueville 1966:31); and that “...the shared community of understanding that people have about how they regard one another, what they consider to be fair, how they distinguish right from wrong, and how the aggregate orders of human societies and of nature get put together in what may be conceived as a universal order” affect the way that human beings experience themselves and relate to one another (V. Ostrom, D. Feeny, and H. Picht 1993: 448).

#### 3.1 Introduction

The fundamental beliefs the Yoruba people of Nigeria cleave to are essential resources for us to gain insights into how they experience themselves and their relationships with others as well as how they conceptualize the universe, which alternatively are perspectives in the Policy Science approaches. These are specified as attributes of community in Figure 1.1. The main task of this chapter is to explain how the fundamental beliefs in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta shape their respective constitutional orders, constitutional rules-in use.

Individuals tend to develop certain social values to reflect their shared experiences and similar notions of the universe. The social values/perspectives individuals have in common underlie and structure what their common cognitive frameworks forbid and require or permit. Ultimate authority to make rules can therefore be claimed to rest “in the perspectives of living members of the community - their identification, demands, and expectations...” (Brunner 1996:46). Understanding what individuals are constitutive of then becomes relatively easy to achieve with reference to their similar notions of the world.

Human beings, however, experience themselves and their constitutional arrangements quite differently. Social and historical circumstances are not fixed for all times and spaces, as are the beliefs to which individuals clutch to justify their relationships with one another. The existing shared beliefs in any given social setting are more likely to be challenged by newcomers who hold dissimilar cognitive constructs. Human beings then face the challenge to vary their terms and conditions of governance and property relationships to suit their changing circumstances and accommodate diverse interests (Tocqueville 1966; V. Ostrom 1987b, 2005). Samuel Bamidele Ayo (2002) also poses this challenge quite clearly in his effort to understand the general patterns of human relationships among the Yoruba people of Nigeria; a challenge his sudden death in April 2001 did not allow him to take up but instead leaves open for interested scholars to resolve.

Conceptions of constitutional arrangements should therefore be expected to vary, at least in some degree, across human societies, including those that look seemingly similar on the surface but may be different with the benefit of in-depth comparative analyses. Ile-Ife, Abeokuta, and Ibadan are examples of “similar-surface” communities among the Yoruba people of Nigeria. The Yoruba people in the three communities differ greatly in their experiences and conceptions of the universe. The differences have influenced their terms and conditions of governance and property relationships.

In Ile-Ife, the standing (*eto* or *ipo*) of individuals and their local units depends essentially on where individuals are within Ile-Ife’s hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional order presided over by the *Ooni* (king of Ile-Ife) as a single head. On the other hand, individuals in Abeokuta and Ibadan get involved in problem-solving through

covenantal relationships and mutual agreements relying mainly on the principles of equality, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations without reference to a single head.

Abeokuta and Ibadan are, however, not the same in all respects. The two Yoruba communities can be somewhat differentiated in terms of their disparate socio-political organizational structures. Institutions for the conduct of individuals within collective-choice arenas or governing units such as craft guilds, immediate families, compounds and neighborhoods/townships in Abeokuta are creatively nested within the institutions for governance and property relationships in each of the four autonomous and independent sections into which Abeokuta is broadly divided. The four sections are Egba Ake, Egba Oke-Ona, Egba Gbagura, and Owu Egba.

The four independent sections are constituted for issues of general concern exclusive to each section's local units. Each section functions to recognize the autonomy and independence of its local units. By and large, individuals are free to move across sections and live in the section of the community where they feel their interests will best be realized. While recognizing their jurisdictional integrity and limitations, the four sections have developed ways to combine together and address issues that affect the whole community of Abeokuta.

Hundreds of craft guilds, compounds and neighborhoods, however, exist in Ibadan. They function as autonomous and independent collective action units. The collective action units serve as provision entities and mostly join forces together in matters of common interest through individuals who have proven their integrity, strengths, and talents formerly in warfare and currently in trade and other forms of productive entrepreneurs. Much as similar principles inform the standing of

individuals in Abeokuta and Ibadan, their organizational structures and collective-choice arenas are different.

These differences suggest that it will be counter-intentional and counterintuitive to think that mutually beneficial constitutional orders will have the same form across space and time. To have a good grasp of the differences in institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, these communities have to be carefully studied, appreciated, understood, compared, and contrasted within their respective socio-cultural and historical settings. Having regard to this, understanding of any phenomenon such as constitutional orders then depends on the context<sup>10</sup> where we can come to terms with how people's shared myths, beliefs and experiences influence their rule-ordered relationships and the set of choices they can exercise in solving problems of interdependent relationships. "All social relations – the whole texture and the very being of society – are myth-sustained, and...all changes of the social structure are mothered and nurtured by appropriate new myths. Myth is the all-pervading atmosphere of society, the air it breathes" (MacIver 1947: 39). An understanding people's shared myths, beliefs and experiences can possibly enable institutional learning fundamental to innovating and adapting constitutional arrangements as human beings and their circumstances change (Tocqueville 1966:277-315; Lasswell 1971; Lasswell and McDougal 1992; Clark 2002:21-55).

Subsequent discussion in this chapter shall proceed as follows. Beliefs about universal order among the Yoruba will first be explained in order to come to terms with the basis for the principles of good character (*omoluwabi*), clear conscience (*eriokan*) and the moral bases of law as a link between their beliefs and constitutional arrangements.

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<sup>10</sup> The context is depicted as attributes of physical worlds, attributes of community, and rules-in use in Figure 1.1.

The importance of these concepts lies mainly in their impacts on how the Yoruba people of Nigeria organize their institutions and their relationships with one another. I shall then proceed to elaborate systematically on how these principles are expressed in the various structures of rule-ordered relationships among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta before the concluding section in this chapter.

### **3.2 Beliefs about Universal Order among the Yoruba**

A common recognition exists among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan that a Supreme Being plays an important role in the creation of men and women. Additionally, one of the lesser gods is believed to share with the Supreme Being the continuing task of creating men and women. Ancestors and the lesser gods (*orisas*) the Supreme Being created are believed to serve as intermediaries between the Supreme Being and man. Some Yoruba still claim that the intermediaries are mystically empowered to protect man and punish rule-infractions (Awolalu 1979). Addressed as *Olodumare* or *Eleda* (the creator), the Supreme Being is believed to be the source of the moral order on which the Yoruba people of Nigeria base their conceptions of good character (*omoluwabi*) in order to live in harmony with one another. While the three Yoruba communities share certain beliefs in common, they can be distinguished from one another about their local particularities about standards of good character. I shall first discuss the similarities in their conceptions before looking at their differing beliefs in order to understand the dominant local senses of good character in each of the three Yoruba communities.

### 3.2.1 General Beliefs about Creation among the Yoruba

Beliefs about the creation of man and the family<sup>11</sup> institution constitute a major similarity across the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta, and Ibadan. The task of creation involves a division of labor between *Eleda* and one of the divinities called *orisa-nla*, the god of witness or the arch-divinity. *Orisa-nla* is believed to have the task of molding human forms and keeping them lifeless. It is claimed that *Orisa-nla* continues this task in the wombs of women of child-bearing age. *Orisa-nla*, however, lacks the power to give life to the molded forms. The life-giving power is believed to reside exclusively in *Eleda* who occasionally comes and breathes life into the lifeless forms to become men and women.

*Eleda* is also believed to sanction the matrimonial relationship between man and woman to become husbands and wives for the purpose of facilitating the task of procreation. To avoid disorder after the creation of mankind, *Eleda* is believed to have given human beings moral values to follow to be of good character (Idowu 1962: 39-40; A3, F12, I13<sup>12</sup>). The moral values probably extend the complementary division of labor between *Orisa-nla* and *Eleda* to the matrimonial relationship between husband and his wife (wives). The husband has the duty to provide for his wife (wives) and children in clothing, food, and shelter. His wife (wives) perform(s) the complementary duties of bearing children and supporting his profession(s), which may be farming, hunting, blacksmithing and/or other crafts. Children are required to obey their parents and support

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<sup>11</sup> Family is used in two senses in this dissertation: such as immediate families and compounds. The immediate family consists of a man, his wife (wives), children and siblings from the mother's side. The compound is made up of about nine immediate families as its constituent units.

<sup>12</sup> A list of the people interviewed and their positions based on the numbers assigned to them, such as A3, F12, I13 above, is provided in Appendix I in the back of this dissertation.



their occupations as well. Individuals within the family that act against the moral values of *Eleda* stand the risk of losing support from their relatives and other human beings of good character. Rule-violators are also vulnerable to punishments from lesser gods, ancestors, and *Eleda*.<sup>13</sup>

The Yoruba also believe that *Eleda*, as the life-giver, is able to do all things. Things are possible only because they are ordered by him and are impossible when he does not allow them. He gives different talents to human beings and positions them differently that some individuals are men, some women, some children, some *oloris* or *agba* (leaders or elders), some widows, some priests, some warriors, some blacksmiths, some farmers, and so on.

### **3.2.2 General Basis of Good Character (*Omoluwabi*) and Clear Conscience (*Eriokan*)**

*Eleda* possesses some other attributes which further demonstrate the Yoruba people's idea of him as the source of the moral order according to which the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta, and Ibadan organize their political institutions and their relationships with one another. He is referred to as *olododo* (the righteous one), *ooloto* (the faithful God), *Oba mimo* (the pure king with no blemish or immoral traits), *alaanu* (the merciful), *oludabobo* (the protector), and *Oba adake dajo* (the impartial judge).

Humans as *Eleda*'s children are required to bring the moral values inherent in his attributes to bear on their conduct. Variations in the application of the moral values nevertheless reflect local traditions that will be discussed later in this chapter. *Olododo* implies that *Eleda* desires the Yoruba people to do right or to be in the right rather than

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<sup>13</sup> With the advent of Christianity and Islam, the belief in lesser gods and ancestors began to be deemphasized in favor of the belief in the Abrahamic God.

do wrong things. *Olooto* indicates that *Eleda* requires the Yoruba people to speak the truth and be faithful. He abhors stealing, lies and hypocrisy.

As a pure king, *Eleda* is holy and moral. Men and women, whether married or unmarried, are required to abhor and avoid immoralities before and during marriage to reflect the holiness attribute of *Eleda*. It is probably difficult to determine the chastity of single men before marriage. Nevertheless, it is forbidden for a man to seduce another man's wife. Violation of this rule usually leads to imposition of sanctions including, in some cases, sales of the offender's property and, in more serious cases, permanent expulsion from the community.

Less difficulty is however encountered in assessing the chastity of women before marriage. Every single woman is forbidden to have sexual intercourse before marriage. A rule-infraction occurs when a woman is found to be unchaste on the night following her wedding ceremony. The violation of this rule does not necessarily lead to the termination of the marriage contract. The woman, however, will command less respect from members of both her family and her husband's family. At any rate, the husband is required to display mercies toward his wives and children to reflect the merciful nature of *Eleda*.

Based on his protective nature, *Eleda* also desires husbands and *oloris* (leaders) to protect and care for their wives and children, with widows and the weak cared for both in war and peace times. Children in particular are not to be disregarded in the family because they are believed to be adults in babyhood. Many children are therefore believed to be *iya* (mothers) or *baba* (fathers) rather than mere babes. Individuals also have the

obligation to respect elders, show kindness and hospitality to others, avoid selfishness<sup>14</sup>, and maintain good conscience and honesty in public and private dealings (I13).

As *Oba adake dajo*, *Eleda* gives impartial judgment even if men are partial in their judgments. Based on the locally acceptable standards of good character in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, elders<sup>15</sup> are required to give impartial judgments when they get involved in resolving conflicts. Whenever misfortunes befall partial judges, the Yoruba believe that such individuals are under the judgment of *Eleda*.

These moral values are dominant as components of good character (*omoluwabi*)<sup>16</sup> in the Yoruba people's thought of *Eleda* (Idowu 1962, Awolalu 1979). If they always act to be of good character, individuals are well able to predict the behavior of one another. To enable the Yoruba to conform to the ethical values inherent in his attributes, *Eleda* has put in them the standards of *omoluwabi* (good character) as the oracle of the heart (that is, *Ifa aya*) to help them maintain clear conscience (*eriokan*) and to guide them in determining the right qualities of a person. When an individual follow the law, he is considered to be of good character and fit to be called a person. When a person deviates from the law, he is considered to be of bad character and not qualified to be regarded as a person. It is believed that good will follow right conduct and evil will hunt down wrong doers (Idowu 1962; A5, F12, I13). The moral order from *Eleda* thus provides the

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<sup>14</sup> The idea of avoiding selfishness is commonly applicable within local units across the three communities.

<sup>15</sup> Elders include parents and heads of compounds, neighborhoods and sections, and are also called *oloris* (leaders).

<sup>16</sup> Standards of good character are used in this study to refer to basic values which are an element of the social process in the Policy Sciences approaches, such as respect for elders, showing kindness and hospitality to others, avoiding selfishness, impartial judgments, and moral chastity.

foundations on which the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta generally justify and explain their constitutional arrangements.

The commitment of the Yoruba people to follow *Eleda's* moral order indicates their obligation as social artisans to create local conditions for providing orderly living. The local conditions represent the charters/principles<sup>17</sup> that shape the constitutional standing of individuals and their local units, distribution and enforcement of property rights, distribution of authority relationships among governing units, sense of rights and wrong, and punishments for wrong doers. An understanding of the local principles and their bases in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan is thus important in appreciating specific components of good character, *omoluwabi*, in the three communities.

### **3.2.3 Particular Beliefs, Good Character and Constitutional Standing among the Yoruba**

#### **3.2.3.1 Particular Beliefs and Good Character (*Omoluwabi*) in Ile-Ife**

In Ile-Ife in particular, the dominant fundamental beliefs are those of Ife elements. Most Ife elements generally regard themselves as *omo ore*, descendants of *Oduduwa*. They claim that the creation of the world is not directly undertaken by *Eleda* (the creator). *Eleda* is believed to have delegated the task of creation to *Oduduwa*, a “son” of *Eleda* and a lesser god (Aremu Bello 1999: 14-16), who allegedly descended from heavens through a chain let down in Ile-Ife<sup>18</sup> along with 400 *orisas*<sup>19</sup>. *Oduduwa* is claimed to be the 401<sup>st</sup> god.

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<sup>17</sup> The principles are used in this study to mean prescriptions which are a component of the decision process in Policy Sciences approaches.

<sup>18</sup> Ile-Ife is believed to have been an island surrounded by a large body of water.

*Oduduwa* undertook the task of creation with the use of tools including a lump of soil in a snail shell, a hen, and a pigeon. After *Oduduwa* had thrown the soil upon the water, the hen then spread out the soil on the water to create the rest of the dry land that would be earth's surface. The pigeon assisted in confirming the fitness of the created earth for habitation by living and non-living things. *Eleda* later gave *Oduduwa* the ownership of the earth along with men and women<sup>20</sup>, plants, birds and animals to fill the whole earth.

*Oduduwa* established his kingdom in Ile-Ife and became the first *Ooni* (king of Ile-Ife) (Akinlawon 1996:1). Most religious and secular authority is believed to reside in *Oduduwa*. *Oduduwa* is revered as *Oluaye* (the lord of the earth) and an *orisa* or *oonirisa* (a lesser god). *Oduduwa* is believed to have the power to bless and curse as the divine agent empowered to specify what is right as opposed to wrong behavior. *Oduduwa's* name reflects his divine power, which can be broken into *Odu* (the source), *du* or *da* (create), *wa* or *iwa* (behavior), that is *iwa tito* (proper behavior) (Aremu Bello 1999:2). Accordingly, most Ife elements believe that *Oduduwa* along with his successors is the divine representative who brings proper behavior into existence and determines what is right in governance and property relationships.

Most Ife elements also believe that they are the individuals in Ile-Ife who can claim a genetic descent from *Oduduwa*. As a result, they claim to have the exclusive right to specify the terms and conditions of governance and property relationships for

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<sup>19</sup> According to the current *Ooni* of Ile-Ife, Oba Sijuwade, "...*Oduduwa* descended directly from Heaven through a chain to a spot known as Ife today in company of four hundred deities" (The Comet, Saturday, May 8, 2004, page 21).

<sup>20</sup> *Orisa-nla* or *Obatala* is believed to be the one that created the human beings handed over to *Oduduwa* to fill the earth.

individuals. Whenever an Ife element ascends to the throne of Oduduwa, he is believed to operate in the image of *Oduduwa*. His decisions regarding what is right are sacred. Divine rulership prerogatives of *Oduduwa* and former reigns are thus automatically revived in the hands of every living Ooni. The *Ooni* mystically receives the divine power at his installation (Idowu 1962: 73).

The people the *Ooni* rules over are required to submit to his authority. This is justified on the ground that the authority of the *Ooni* carries the spiritual powers of *orisas* (lesser gods) and must be obeyed. The *Ooni* can hardly be questioned because he is *Iku Babayeye Alase Ekeji Orisa*<sup>21</sup>, the second in command to gods. The *Ooni* takes precedence when his interests and those of his subjects are in conflict. He is in the right to be *baba* (father) to every human<sup>22</sup>, and rule over his subjects as a divine ruler ensuring justice for humans in collaboration with other lesser gods (Aremu-Bello 1999:92-95). Individuals within immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods and villages are permitted to govern themselves. This permission remains in force as long as the interests of the *Ooni* as a sacred ruler are not in conflict with those of his subjects (F12).

As long as this father-child relationship is maintained, Ife elements from the father's side will remain untouchable. On the other hand, most Oyo elements (Modakeke) in Ile-Ife are perceived by most Ife elements as having an obscure, doubtful link to *Oduduwa*. They (Oyo elements) have consequently been assigned lower status as permanent migrants or tenants since their migration to Ile-Ife in the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Oyo elements are required to submit to the *Ooni* and Ife elements who both

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<sup>21</sup> A tradition exists among the Yoruba that an *Orisa* cannot be challenged (see E.B. Idowu 1962; J.O. Awolalu 1979).

<sup>22</sup> While this may be controversial among scholars, I am interested only in the kind of beliefs that Ife elements fall upon to justify their superiority over Oyo elements.

serve as lords over them. The membership boundaries drawn between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife on the basis of distance from *Oduduwa* resonate with the fact that “People use words and other symbols to draw boundaries and show their relationships or affiliation to other individuals or groups, that is, how they identify with society as a whole or with various institutions or groups” (Clark 2002: 36). Acceptance of these inequalities by most individuals in Ile-Ife represents the fulfillment of local requirements of good character in ensuring orderly living.

### **3.2.3.2 Dissimilar Beliefs and Disagreement about Constitutional Order in Ile-Ife**

There is however neither shared understanding nor common agreement between Oyo and Ife elements about the dominant sense of good character (*omoluwabi*) in Ile-Ife (F2, F7, Akinlawon 1996: v-vi). This began to be a serious institutional problem when the collapse of the old Oyo Empire and the resultant patterns of warfare in Yorubaland as from 1821 turned many Yoruba people into refugees and led diverse Yoruba elements to live in the same community as in the case of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta (Ajulo 1989).

As Falola and Oguntomisin (1984: 30-31) note, the main issue then was what should be the basis of the standing of individuals in governance and property relationships. There is no questioning the fact that “When considering new alternatives or different perspectives, some people are open and flexible, whereas others are rigid and predisposed to maintain the status quo” (Clark 2002: 18). Ibadan and Abeokuta responded creatively to these developments as from 1833 and 1830 respectively by putting in place principles or prescriptions of equality as part of their membership terms. In both communities, most participating individuals began to enjoy equal standing

without any regard to their family or group backgrounds. Personal achievements, rather than hereditary rights, also became both an aspect of good character (*omoluwabi*) and a basis for social mobility. However, Ife elements in Ile-Ife refused (still refuse) to change their hierarchical political order to accommodate the different experiences and conceptions of the universe held by most Oyo elements whose ancestors migrated to Ile-Ife around 1827. The refusal has been based on membership terms that Oyo elements are permitted by Ife elements to live in Ile-Ife as permanent strangers.

Oyo elements in Ile-Ife, however, believe that all humans are equally created by *Eleda* to whom they are equally accountable, and that all humans are similarly subject to moral sanctions from ancestors, lesser gods and *Eleda* (F15; F25). While they are not sure of the place where humans first lived, most Oyo elements believe that their fore-parents along with other Yoruba families migrated as wanderers from the East to settle first in Ile-Ife before they moved to occupy some communities under the Old Oyo Empire. The southward migration of their great-parents back to Ile-Ife is seen as a return to their ancestral home to which most Yoruba people are believed to have equal rights, rather than Ife elements alone.

Instead of relying on submission, passive obedience and tenancy, most Oyo elements believe in the principles of equality, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations as the underlying basis of rule-ordered relationships and fair membership terms in Ile-Ife. Yet, the presumption of inequality before *Eleda* in terms of who exercises delegated divine authority prevails in Ile-Ife, gives individuals unequal standing, dominates the locally acceptable conception of good character, and specifies what actions are required or permitted and what actions are forbidden among inhabitants of Ile-Ife.



The dominant myths and beliefs about creation and moral order in Ile-Ife have implications for the constitution of order. First, *Oduduwa*<sup>23</sup> (along with his successors) and his subjects are not created equal. Second, a hierarchical structure of superior-subordinate relationships is regarded as indispensable to regulating the relationships between the *Ooni* and his subjects (including Oyo elements) on the one hand, and between Ife and Oyo elements on the other hand. Thus, the dominant constitutional charters in Ile-Ife are treated as the rule of submission between the *Ooni* and his subjects on the one hand, and between Ife and Oyo elements on the other hand rather than as devices for protecting individual rights through principles of equality, fairness, and reciprocity.

Third, people are differentiated based on their genetic distance from *Oduduwa*. As part of the clearly defined but unfair membership terms<sup>24</sup> in Ile-Ife, most Ife elements as children of *Oduduwa* can own land in Ile-Ife with most Oyo elements treated as permanent tenants for their obscure link to *Oduduwa*. Headship of collective action units such as neighborhoods, villages and other governing units is restricted to most Ife elements. Fourth, challengers of the dominant local traditions in Ile-Ife are considered not to be of good character (*Omoluwabi*) and are subject to expulsion from Ile-Ife. Fifth, different conceptions of constitutional order held by most Oyo elements indicate that the authority of Ife elements to establish and enforce rules over individuals in Ile-Ife is not commonly shared. This shows that monitoring and enforcement of rules may not be

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<sup>23</sup> The *Ooni* is implied.

<sup>24</sup> The membership terms in Ile-Ife are inconsistent with a requirement for the provision of public peace and security specified in Design Principle 1 discussed in chapter 1. While the membership terms are clearly defined, the terms favor most Ife elements and disadvantage most Oyo elements in governance and property relationships.

effective except when undertaken by the affected individuals and/or individuals accountable to them using graduated sanctions (Elinor Ostrom 1990; see Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1).

The fundamental inequalities inherent in the constitutional order in Ile-Ife have consequently led to an unresolved disagreement between Ife and Oyo elements about how they regard one another, what they consider to be fair, and how they distinguish right from wrong. Efforts by Oyo elements to challenge the dominant political order in Ile-Ife have led Oyo and Ife elements to see each other as enemies rather than associates in creating harmonious and peaceful conditions for productive ways of life. Consistent with the findings of the social capital literature and game theoretical analyses about collective action (E. Ostrom 1990:3-18; Putnam 1993; E. Ostrom, *et.al* 1994:105-128; Berkman and Kawachi 2000:175; Colletta and Cullen 2000; E. Ostrom and Ahn 2003; E. Ostrom and Walkers 2003: 50-51; Greif and Laitin 2004: 642), the use of norms of uncooperative behavior, unfairness and partiality has been the order of the day in Ile-Ife where each group has developed a strong exclusionary bond<sup>25</sup> against the other (F7, F2). The extent to which the circumstances in Ile-Ife have enabled or disabled individuals in unlocking their potentials for productive entrepreneurship will be addressed later in this chapter and in subsequent chapters in this study.

### **3.2.3.3 Particular Beliefs and Good Character (*Omoluwabi*) in Abeokuta and Ibadan**

Prevailing situations in Abeokuta and Ibadan, however, differ remarkably from what obtains in Ile-Ife. Unlike Ile-Ife, most Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta share

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<sup>25</sup> This type of bond is conceptualized as strategies: an element of the social process in the Policy Sciences approaches.

a common understanding that the relationships between *Eleda* and man on the one hand, and among human beings on the other hand, are covenantal. Their conceptions of covenantal relationships are rooted in their particular beliefs about creation and their past experiences as descendants of oppressed individuals. Most Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan commonly believe that the earth was created directly by *Eleda* (the creator) without the assistance of any human agent or a lesser god such as *Oduduwa*. They nevertheless recognize Ile-Ife as their original home, which forms the basis of brotherhood that bonds them together with other Yoruba people (Falola 1984; Biobaku 1991).

Most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta claim that individuals, initial settlers and strangers alike, are equal before *Eleda* and his law. They believe that after death individuals, not minding their ages, positions and other attributes for classifying human beings, will equally stand before *Eleda*. They approach *Eleda* as an all-seeing God and *Oba a dake dajo*, the king who sits in silence and dispenses justice impartially. The extension of equality to strangers/newcomers as part of the dominant membership terms<sup>26</sup> in Ibadan and Abeokuta bears a great similarity to how Israelites were required to treat strangers: “if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself” (Leviticus 19:33, 34). For *Eleda* to bless them as his children, most individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta share that individuals must be of good character in terms of the general standards of good character explained earlier on. Man’s well-being

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<sup>26</sup> The dominant membership terms in Ibadan and Abeokuta are consistent with a requirement for the provision of public peace and security specified in Design Principle 1 discussed in chapter 1. The membership terms fair because they give most individuals, initial settlers and strangers, equal standing in governance and property relationships.

here on earth then depends upon his character. For human beings to live in harmony with one another, they have to act to take account of themselves and consider the interests of others. This shows that “People’s behavior and interpersonal interactions in social processes directly reflect their perspectives” (Clark 2002: 35).

Most Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta also regard themselves and others as equals because they see themselves as descendants of oppressed individuals that jointly founded their respective communities to be able to open up growing ranges of productive opportunities for individuals (A5, A11, I3, I4, I16). Their past experiences derived mainly from their oppressions under the rule of submission in the Old Oyo Empire where their former communities served as subordinate units, the outbreak of the Owu war in 1821, and Maye’ autocracy in Ibadan up till 1833. Their experiences of oppressions are explained below in regard to how the experiences innovatively facilitated the adoption of conditions of equality and covenantal relationships in Ibadan and Abeokuta in 1833 and 1830 respectively.

Ibadan, for example, was unclaimed<sup>27</sup> by anyone before its occupation early in 1829. It apparently thus easily became a place of refuge for oppressed Yoruba families and restless soldiers after the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire between 1796 and the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the resultant internecine wars that destructively destabilized the Yoruba nation as from 1821. Ibadan was first occupied by wandering families of restless soldiers from the Old Oyo Empire who were later joined by outcasts from Ile-Ife, Ijebu and some other Yoruba communities. Many Egba elements also sought refuge in Ibadan after the outbreak of Owu war in 1821 (Biobaku 1983). While some of

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<sup>27</sup> Some individuals from Ife and other places had established the first and second Ibadans before 1829. But both collapsed for lack of security (K. Morgan, 1971. *Akinyele’s Outline of Ibadan History*). The focus in this study is on the third Ibadan.

the refugees had benefited from the hierarchical structures in Ile-Ife and the Old Oyo Empire, the outcasts among the refugees were those who had been treated badly by their own people, and who as much disliked positions of subordination, as did most of the restless soldiers.

Shortly after Ibadan was founded in 1829, Maye Okunade, an Ife element, emerged as an autocratic leader. He had a strong fascination with the rule of submission. Under his autocracy, Maye treated his Ife supporters as superior to other Yoruba elements who were greatly disadvantaged in the governance process. Predictably, Maye's autocracy did not accommodate diverse interests in Ibadan. Most oppressed Yoruba elements in Ibadan later mobilized to terminate Maye's reign of terror in 1833. To be able to accommodate the interests of the diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan and to overcome the problems of fundamental inequalities inherent in the hierarchical constitutional order of the Old Oyo Empire and the autocracy of Maye Okunade, most diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan in 1833 adopted equal standing for individuals and their local units. This was reinforced by their shared notion of creation as explained earlier.

With the success of crushing the autocracy of Maye Okunade in favor of rules of equality, Ibadan began to be unbound by the tradition of superiority of leaders over the ruled. Ibadan also began to offer more scope for achievements than was available in both the Old Oyo Empire and Ile-Ife. Most diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan subsequently began to cooperate with one another in providing security in and around Ibadan to enable individuals looking for better opportunities to pursue their trade. Many more refugees, outcasts, and daring and adventurous individuals from Abeokuta, Ijebu and other Yoruba communities consequently pursued their way to Ibadan for its defense and security

capabilities. Among them were ambitious young men eager to achieve success, craftsmen and craftwomen such as Ogunmola (a successful Ibadan warrior but originally an *Ifa* priest and herbalist from Fesu under Iwo in the current Osun State), and Efunsetan (a successful woman-trader from Abeokuta), and many other rich men bored with life in their own communities. A handful of Sierra Leoneans and Brazilians, descendants of those formerly carried into transatlantic slavery, also found their way back to Ibadan.

Different Yoruba elements in Ibadan, including Oyo, Ife, Ijebu, Egba and freed slaves, largely see one another as co-founders of their community, with virtually nobody making any exclusive claim as the founder of the new land. They freely mix together to form independent compounds and neighborhoods comprising people related by blood, marriage and friendship ties. Membership of the local units is in most cases based on successes in craft industry, trade and warfare. In each compound and neighborhood, leadership is provided by courageous men and women who can offer protection to their members. Individuals that suffer displeasure in a particular compound are free to dismember themselves to either form new compounds or join existing compounds. This is based on their shared belief that when freedom is allowed to grow, men and women will be able to try out new things for their mutual benefits (I3, I11, I10, I20, Awe 1964, 1967; Falola 1984; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001).

Local nuances or perspectives by which conditions of equality of man are nurtured and fostered in Ibadan bear similarities with those embedded in the past experiences of the Yoruba people in Abeokuta. Abeokuta was founded jointly by highly heterogeneous Yoruba elements commonly identified as the *Egba*. According to Lloyd (1962: 228), “There are no myths suggesting any common ancestry of the Egba people.”

They migrated from Ile-Ife as wanderers searching for better opportunities. They settled first in the *Egba* forest where they formed over one hundred and forty autonomous neighborhoods/townships (Biobaku 1991). In the *Egba* forest, a set of autonomous compounds usually combined together to constitute a township in dealing with common problems. The townships later federated together in the *Egba* forest to form three sections such as Ake, Oke-Ona and Gbagura.

In the *Egba* Forest, each Egba township had an imitative *Oba* (king) probably to mimic the institution of *Obaship* (kingship) in Ile-Ife. To create more scope for freedom, the township *Obas* were eliminated in the *Egba* Forest, leaving each of the federated sections with an *Oba* selected on the basis of ascription from the families who could trace a direct link to *Oduduwa* and/or some past ancestors having some blood connection to *Oduduwa*<sup>28</sup>. None of the sectional *Obas*, however, had authority beyond his section. They were regarded neither as supreme law-makers nor as ultimate judges. Rather, the sectional *Obas* were (still are) first among equals with effective limits exercised on them by their sectional *Ogbonis*, specialized associations of judges and legislators. Membership of *Ogboni* is open to individuals within, and sometimes without, each section (A2, A11).

The sectional *Obas*<sup>29</sup> later lost their positions when the *Egba* (initial settlers in Abeokuta) came under oppressions both from the Old Oyo Empire up to the later part of the eighteenth century, and from Ile-Ife, Ijebu and their allied Yoruba communities

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<sup>28</sup> Johnson (1921) argues that sectional *Obas* among the *Egba* are descendants of *Eso* (representatives of *Alaafin*, king of the Old Oyo Empire).

<sup>29</sup> To grease their orchestrated policy of expropriation and/or probably due to their blatant ignorance of the contextual development of democratic traditions in free European cities, Colonial officials disrupted the process of democratic evolution in Abeokuta and vigorously campaigned for the installation of sectional *Obas* in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the Ake sectional *Oba* exalted over the others.

during the first three decades of the nineteenth century (I3, A5, A10, Adeola 1980, the Genesis 2002). Egba elements who fled to Ibadan after the outbreak of the Owu war in 1821 were also terrorized and forced out of Ibadan by Maye Okunade around 1830 (Biobaku 1983). On the whole, the *Egba* were so oppressed and suppressed during these periods that hardly could anyone among them claim superiority over others.

Even leaders did not call themselves leaders. They mostly operated as comrades and equal partners jointly seeking liberation from their common enemies. In matters exclusive to individuals, each *Egba* man consequently constituted, still constitutes, his best judge. In other words, each *Egba* man is his own governor and the best judge of his own affairs in matter affecting him alone. He nevertheless combines with others in dealing with issues of common interest (A11, A16). Hence the saying that *Egba o loba, onikaluku lo nse bi Oba*, that is, the *Egba* do not have kings/masters, every *Egba* man acts as his own king/master (Johnson 1921).

Having suffered and fought together, the *Egba* combined together to found Abeokuta in 1830, to which no single individual could lay any claim as its founder (Tejuoso 1991). In regard to their past experiences of oppressions and to accommodate diverse interests, they began to relate to one another as equal associates and share an understanding that none of them, along with freed slaves that later joined them, is a landless or inferior person in Abeokuta.

Unlike Oyo elements in Ile-Ife, the Owu people<sup>30</sup> who fled from oppressions from similar enemies sought refuge in Abeokuta and are not relegated to any lower status. Owu elements were well received, allowed to form the fourth section of Abeokuta, and

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<sup>30</sup> The Owu people are not *Egba* and did not live with the *Egba* in the *Egba* Forest but maintained friendly relationships with the *Egbas* in the Forest.



have been left alone to operate as their own lords as long as they do not pose any danger to other Yoruba elements in Abeokuta. This rests on a shared belief that Abeokuta is home to every peace-loving, courageous and enterprising person (A5, A11, A16). All these features added together support conditions of equality of man and covenantal relationships as part of the local standards of good character and membership in Abeokuta as in Ibadan.

#### **3.2.3.4 Shared Values and Organization of Human Relationships in Abeokuta and Ibadan**

Values of reciprocity and freedom among the Yoruba people in both Ibadan and Abeokuta revolve around such sayings as, *olukaluku lo nse ijoba ara won ni Ibadan* (individuals are free to be their own governors in Ibadan), *Ibadan o ki se ile baba enikan* (Ibadan is no man's ancestral home), *Egba o loba, onikaluku lo nse bi Oba* (the *Egbas*, the Yoruba people in Abeokuta, do not have kings, every *Egba* man acts as his own king), and *a jo ja te Abeokuta do ni* (we all fought together to found Abeokuta).

The traditions of reciprocity and freedom found among the Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta are attributable to institutional learning most initial settlers in both communities had achieved within the compound and voluntary traditional mutual aid systems<sup>31</sup> (such as *aro*<sup>32</sup> and *owe*) during their periods of oppressions (A11; A15; I10).

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<sup>31</sup> These also include a custom where traditional consumption units (such as villages and neighborhoods) call on their members to assist in manual labor to take care of paths, pools, wells, and drying grounds they use together. They may undertake such tasks exclusively on their own or engage the expertise of non-members for agreed upon considerations.

<sup>32</sup> *Aro* is the traditional contracting system of working for each other by turns, in regard especially to farming. Once a person joins the group and is assisted, he must return the service to others. It is *owe* when the affected individuals do not work for each other by turns but assist members of their village hoping that they will return the service in future.

During their years of travails, most initial settlers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta engaged in face-to-face interactions within the compound and joined together in mutual aid associations to provide themselves with collective goods and services.

They were thus able to learn how freedom and acts of reciprocity among members of more successful compounds and mutual aid associations presented their members with better ways to provide mutually beneficial goods. The experiences had taught most initial settlers and their descendants in Ibadan and Abeokuta the benefits of adaptive potentials associated with increasing freedom for individuals in sustaining long-term commitments and productive complementary relationships. This is consistent with Barbara Allen's (2005:131) argument that participation in voluntary associations is capable of teaching "the habits of the heart" that a vital democracy requires – a public philosophy developed through common action and the beliefs these experiences inspire."

These experiences later shaped their existing covenantal relationships with one another and components of good character (I6, A5). Impartiality, covenant-keeping, respect for elders, devotion to duty and readiness to rise to the defense and security of the two Yoruba communities are commonly understood as basic values and requirements individuals have to fulfill to be of good character (*omoluwabi*) in Ibadan and Abeokuta. There is also a common understanding among them that conflicts are required to be resolved for the main purpose of maintaining cohesion rather than apportioning blame to any party.

Respect for elders in particular does not however imply loss of equal standing and liberty for children. Adults, not minding their leadership positions, are required to regard children as adults in babyhood. Most children have equal chances and freedom to decide

what they want<sup>33</sup> to become in life without any interference from their parents. Children are permitted to challenge elders including leaders if the need arises. The shared understanding among the Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan about the constitutional standing of children reinforces the golden principle that requires individuals to do unto others as they would have others do unto them.

Also, biological age is not the only basis for determining elders (*agba*) in Abeokuta and Ibadan. Bravery and productive entrepreneurship in crafts of warfare, trade and farming are some of the tests of leaders. Leaders are also regarded as elders in Abeokuta and Ibadan. These qualities are open to most individuals to acquire. (I3, I6, A5, A11).

### **3.2.3.5 Conceptions and the Problem of Constitutional Choice among the Yoruba**

The differences in conceptions among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have important implications for constitutional choice. By constitutional choice, it is meant a legal capability enjoyed by individuals to constitute and reconstitute mutually productive associations (V. Ostrom 1987b).

In Ile-Ife in particular, the revival of the divine rulership prerogatives of *Oduduwa* and former reigns in the hands of the living *Ooni* indicates a unity of law that is compatible with uniformity. Unity of rule in Ile-Ife does not appreciate both the limits of human nature and the need for error-correcting procedures that can facilitate institutional accommodation and learning among most individuals.<sup>34</sup> This situation has in particular

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<sup>33</sup> In the problem-orientation aspect of the Policy Sciences approaches, this refers to preferences.

<sup>34</sup> Vincent Ostrom's (1997:147) *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerability of Democracies: A Response to Tocqueville's Challenge*; and Bryan Jones (2001: 191-193) *Politics and the Architecture of*

limited the constitutional choice that most Oyo elements can exercise in setting, maintaining and altering the terms and conditions of governance and property relationships in Ile-Ife<sup>35</sup>. Most Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan, in marked contrast, see one another as having equal standing. This has enabled them to build adaptive and error-correcting procedures into their institutional arrangements, and to take one another into account through the processes of cooperation, competition, complementarity, conflict and conflict resolution.<sup>36</sup>

In addition, formation of smaller units of shared interests such as compounds, neighborhoods and villages in Ile-Ife is subject largely to the divine prerogatives of the *Ooni*. Most Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan however regard this as a process of covenanting with one another and mutual agreements with one another such that they are able to use their constitutional rules to organize new associational relationships based on shared understanding of the specific problems and opportunities they face<sup>37</sup> (I4, I12). The differences in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta give us a clear sense of the standing of individuals and their collective action units in governance and property relationships.

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*Choice: Bounded Rationality and Governance* both clearly argue that open and adaptive error correcting procedures are required as a fundamental part of any constitutional order to enable institutional arrangements to appreciate the limits of human nature and allow individuals to learn to govern themselves.

<sup>35</sup> This is inconsistent with the cooperative requirements in Design Principles 2, 3, and 4 discussed in chapter 1 for collaboration among individuals in the provision of the peace and security of the community.

<sup>36</sup> These processes, as further illuminated by V. Ostrom (1994: 225,252-254), enable individuals with diverse backgrounds, attributes and interests to achieve effective complementarities by combining and covenanting with one another.

<sup>37</sup> This is innovation in the decision process aspect of the Policy Sciences approaches by which actors or participating individuals match their rules to their specific conditions.

### **3.2.3.6 The Standing of Individuals and their Collective Action Units**

In Ile-Ife, where the dominant presumption of social order favors fundamental inequalities among individuals, a hierarchical-aristocratic pattern of relationships is considered normal. The standing of individuals and their compounds and neighborhoods in governance and property relationships thus depends mainly on where they are in the ruler-ruled hierarchical relationships (F2, F7, F12, Eades 1980).

Most Ife elements occupy positions of inferiority to the *Ooni* and his chiefs, but positions of superiority over most Oyo elements. Ife elements may engage in intermarriages with Oyo elements, with the children of such relationships treated as Ife elements if the father is an Ife element. Children with an Ife mother and an Oyo father are not regarded as Ife elements and may not have any right to property (including land) from the mother's line. By and large, most Oyo elements are considered permanent tenants with no right to own land. Most Oyo elements have extremely limited grounds to contest against wrongdoings from the *Ooni* and Ife elements, especially in land matters and decision-making for the provision of mutually beneficial goods and services. Submission to the *Ooni* is then seen as the root of most virtues, which serves as the link between the fundamental beliefs in Ile-Ife and its hierarchical order. So long as most individuals accept and maintain the integrity of the hierarchical-aristocratic arrangements and conduct their affairs accordingly, serious conflicts between superiors and inferiors can easily be avoided.

What is normal in Ile-Ife, however, is apparently an abnormality in both Abeokuta and Ibadan. The presumption of equality of man before ancestors, lesser gods and *Eleda* (the creator) gives most individuals equal standing in the establishment of non-

hierarchical patterns of order in Ibadan and Abeokuta. Within the two Yoruba institutional environments, most individuals are their own superiors and no one else's superiors or inferiors. Individuals have freedom to associate with other individuals in the two communities. For example, individuals can contract marriage with non-members of their Yoruba groups. Most of the fruits (children) of the relationships have the right to property from both their fathers' and mothers' lines. Individuals are also entitled to fair hearing and impartiality in the process of conflict resolution.

Sectional *Obas* (imitative kings) in Abeokuta, as resurrected by colonial officials for expropriative purposes, are however positions confined to members of certain families. The sectional *Obas* in Abeokuta are nevertheless first among equals, and limits are imposed on their behavior by their sectional *Ogboni* associations, judges and legislators (A5, A6, A11). Leadership positions in Ibadan<sup>38</sup> are open to most individuals. Acting to be in the right in Abeokuta and Ibadan depends on the ability of individuals to maintain conditions of equality of man, which associate their rule-order relationships with their fundamental beliefs and past experiences.

### **3.3 The Idea of Law among the Yoruba**

Different experiences and conceptions about good character and the standing of the individual in the three Yoruba communities serve as sources of general principles which individuals can use as a guide in making specific rules that are applicable in smaller collective-choiceunits. Actions consistent with the dominant principles in each of

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<sup>38</sup> Colonial officials, by commission or omission, disrupted the democratic evolution in Ibadan and consequently regarded the council of chiefs in Ibadan as a hierarchical order with the most senior chief erroneously seen as the single head of Ibadan: an institutional aberration (see Watson 2003).

the three Yoruba communities are permitted and wrong actions are forbidden, thus establishing specific rules for resolving conflicts.

A common understanding of both rules and the processes of making and enforcing them is required for rules to effectively impose limits on individual behavior and bring their actions into conformity to the accepted standards of good character, *omoluwabi*. Expression of the idea of law can then be seen in the legal systems of the three Yoruba communities where their diverse inhabitants face different bases of laws as connections between their fundamental beliefs and rule-ordered relationships.

### **3.3.1 Legal Foundations of Human Relationships**

Two distinct bases of legal relationships are discernible among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. They are the tradition of deference (*juba*) in Ile-Ife, and covenanting (*imule/majemu*) in both Abeokuta and Ibadan. Local standards of good character and proper behavior are maintained when the dominant foundation of legal relationships prevails over everything else. An explanation of the differing ideas will facilitate our understanding of the nature of commitments characterizing human relationships among the Yoruba people of Nigeria.

In Ile-Ife, relationships of the *Ooni* to his subjects on the one hand, and of Ife elements to Oyo elements on the other hand, are based mainly on the tradition of deference (*juba*). The word *juba* means to regard or acknowledge someone as superior. When an individual defers to a person, the person showing deference submits (*foribale*) to and obey (*foribale*) the authority of the person who receives deference. The tradition of deference in Ile-Ife reflects a set of pre-ordained rules that the *Ooni* (and Ife elements in

relation to Oyo elements) draws upon to exact obedience from his subjects and to assess rule-infractions and appropriate sanctions. Agreements between Ife and Oyo elements in particular are unilateral contracts, the terms of which are dictated by Ife elements and are binding on Oyo elements that have no voice in such agreements (F7, F10, F13). Much as the tradition of deference is required as the basis of human relationships in Ile-Ife, it does not enjoy shared agreement between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife as opposed to the prevailing circumstances in Abeokuta and Ibadan.

In the ethical systems of the Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan, covenant<sup>39</sup> plays an important role as a connection between their beliefs, past experiences and constitutional arrangements. The act of covenanting with one another in Abeokuta and Ibadan strikes at the root of maintaining order and law among equals. To covenant with one another means *mule*, that is, literally drinking the earth together.

This act is undertaken as follows A shallow hole is dug in the ground and water is poured into it with a kola-nut split and cast into the water. The people entering into the covenant kneel face to face with the hole in between them. They will say in turn that the earth should come and preside as a way of binding themselves by the covenant. It is a commitment that forbids improper behavior and allows proper behavior in order to maintain harmonious relationships. The whole of person-to-person and divinity-to-person relations among most Yoruba in Abeokuta and Ibadan thus have their basis in covenants.

Covenants are not limited to ritualistic forms. To be trusted by a friend, to be close friends, to go to war together, to farm together, to trade together, to be received

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<sup>39</sup> Covenants are mutual agreements establishing “enduring relationships that could not be exited unilaterally...Those who covenanted accepted the responsibility to act as judges, monitoring their relationships, showing self-restraint, demanding just treatment from their partners, and holding a similar place in the eyes of other parties” (Barbara Allen, 2005:16-17).



hospitably as a guest, to live together, or to combine together in undertaking collective tasks, is to enter into a covenant. This inherently involves moral obligations that are mutually and equally binding on the affected individuals. Most Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan also share a belief that oaths and rules established through combining with one another serve as sources of authority and the basis of their relationships one-on-one in immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, occupational guilds/associations, villages, and the larger community. Covenants among most individuals in Abeokuta and Ibadan means, negatively, that they must do no evil against one another's body, relatives or property; positively, that they must cooperate in collective action for their mutual benefits.

Among hunters/warriors, for example, it is forbidden for a hunter to have anything to do with the wife of another hunter in a secluded area. If it becomes inevitable for a hunter to assist another hunter's wife in a secluded place, the hunter must inform her husband about the kind of assistance he rendered.

Violation (*daale*) of terms of covenantal commitments is believed to be capable of bringing punishments which could be withdrawal of support by other covenanters, isolation, or death. To avert punishment, the covenant-breaker must confess to his co-covenanters and renew his commitment to put up proper behavior. Other covenanters are expected to show mercies, consistent with the merciful attributes of *Eleda* (the creator), by accepting the genuine plea of the covenant-breaker. A sacrifice of shedding animal blood may be performed in the case of ritualistic covenants (I6, I3, I10, I19, A5, A6, Idowu 1962).

### 3.3.2 *Eto*: The Rule of Right Behavior

The rules inherent in the bases of human relationships in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan define what constitutes *eto* (right behavior) for individuals. *Eto* is the root word of *l'eto* (to have *eto*), and implies being in the right among the Yoruba. To have *eto* is to act to be of good character (*omoluwabi*). Being in the right and being of good character both define what moral and legal rights an individual has in relating to others. In resolving conflicts between two individuals, the individual that is considered to have *eto* is a person who conducts himself according to the prevailing bases of human relationships in any given Yoruba community. The word *eto* varies in application across the three Yoruba communities due to the differences in their bases of human relationships and standards of good character.

The *eto* that an individual has in Ile-Ife depends on whether the person has met the requirements of the tradition of deference. While the *Ooni*'s subjects have no *eto* to question him, most Oyo elements as tenants and lesser beings have no *eto* to own land and make decisions in their neighborhoods without the approval of the *Ooni* and his Ife subjects. Most Ife elements as well do not have any *eto* to make and carry out many decisions in their neighborhoods without seeking the approval of the *Ooni*, at least through his chiefs. The *Ooni* has *eto* as a divine ruler to exact obedience from his subjects. Any deviation from the local traditions in Ile-Ife denies *eto* to the affected individual and does not make the person to be of good character (*omoluwabi*). This is consistent with the hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, which emphasize fundamental inequalities. What amounts to *eto* for individuals in Abeokuta and Ibadan is however different from what obtains in Ile Ife

Individuals who maintain the requirements of the non-hierarchical orders in Abeokuta and Ibadan have *eto*. To maintain the integrity of the constitutional orders in the two Yoruba communities, individuals are required to observe equality of individuals in property relationships and to respect the independence and autonomy of local collective action units in solving their problems. Having *eto* in Abeokuta and Ibadan does not have anything to do with whether one is a child, an adult, or a leader. It largely depends on whether one follows the mutually accepted codes of conduct through which one can be of good character (*omoluwabi*).

### **3.4 Expression of Dominant Beliefs in Yoruba Institutional Structures**

Dominant senses of *eto* in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta indicate the prevalent sense of justice in each community. This is reflected in ways the dominant beliefs are expressed in Yoruba institutional structures for handling conflicts and other collective problems. This section considers how these beliefs are articulated in the institutional structures of the three Yoruba communities to specify the terms of incorporating strangers or new migrants and to define the conditions under which leaders (*oloris*) as rule-enforcers at various levels of aggregations in each community can keep and lose their positions as they enforce shared rules.

#### **3.4.1 Incorporation of Strangers**

Incorporation of strangers or newcomers in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan is based on different rules. In Ile-Ife, most Ife elements have the right to own land and aspire to leadership positions subject to the *Ooni*'s authority for approval and revocation

(Fasogbon 1985: 17-23; Akinjogbin 1992: 289-290). This is based on the belief that the land belongs to *Oduduwa* (the first *Ooni*) and his children (Ife elements or *omo ore*). Strangers, especially Oyo elements who are descendants of refugees from the Old Oyo Empire, are permitted to live in Ile-Ife as permanent tenants. They are also required to maintain the integrity of the hierarchical institutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, which relies on submission. The basis of assessing their good character rests essentially on the extent to which they (strangers) defer to the *Ooni* and Ife elements in governance and property relationships<sup>40</sup>.

Rules for incorporating strangers in Abeokuta and Ibadan, however, enable strangers to enjoy equal rights with initial settlers. As part of their efforts to address defense and security problems at the inception of Ibadan and Abeokuta, most initial settlers in both communities developed open door policies to attract newcomers and give them freedom from traditional restraints inherent in hierarchical institutional arrangements which tend to discourage initiatives by individuals (Imoagene 1976; Falola 1984).

Strangers have as many choices as initial settlers possess in both Abeokuta and Ibadan. Based on mutual agreement and complementary relationships, strangers may join existing local collective-choice units in Ibadan and Abeokuta or form their own independent local collective-choice units such as compounds and neighborhoods. Since there is no lineage land in Abeokuta and Ibadan (Imoagene 1976), strangers are permitted to acquire and own land. The *eto* (moral and legal rights) of individual strangers rests on

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<sup>40</sup> The membership terms in Ile-Ife are inconsistent with a requirement specified in Design Principle 1 discussed in chapter 1 for collaboration among individuals in the provision of public peace and security. Though clearly defined, the terms are unfair because they discriminate against most Oyo elements and favor most Ife elements in governance and property relationships.

their competence to observe the terms and conditions inherent in the covenantal relationships and mutual agreements relying mainly on the principles of equality, fairness, and mutual behavioral expectations.

### **3.4.2 *Oloris* (Leaders) as the Embodiment of Good Character**

Incorporation of strangers is an important responsibility in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Other responsibilities are also recognized among the Yoruba people to ensure their survival. These are farming, crafts, trading, internal security and defense, and conflict resolution. In performing these tasks, the Yoruba people believe that some individuals have to serve as *olori* (leaders) in the process of enforcing rules<sup>41</sup> and imposing sanctions against rule-infractions within immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages, mutual aid associations, and occupational associations. Such individuals are required to possess leadership attributes.

Leadership qualifications required of *olori* vary across Yoruba communities. In Ile-Ife, the oldest male member heads the immediate family and the compound. Since the compound is made up of immediate families, head of any given compound along with heads of the immediate families that constitute his compound runs the affairs of the compound. Compound leaders command the respect of their members when they work together in seeking the welfare and well-being of their members, and when they are able to enforce shared rules impartially (F7; F12).

Various functions that compound *oloris* (leaders) perform to continue to assert their leadership roles include ensuring that compound members (Ife elements) have

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<sup>41</sup> This is application in the decision process aspect of the Policy Sciences approaches discussed in chapter 1

sufficient land for farming, mobilizing their members for worship of the compound's ancestors and gods, and resolving disputes between compound members. Compound leaders among Oyo elements perform similar functions except that they have to negotiate with Ife elements for rights of tenancy for their compound members. To be of good character, leaders and members of compounds are required to obey the lawful orders of the *Ooni* and his chiefs (Price 1933; F7).

Disputes that cannot be resolved at the compound level are handled by neighborhood chiefs (*Bale*). Their titles are hereditary exclusively within the compounds of Ife elements and are conferred on individuals who maintain the integrity of the hierarchical arrangements in Ile-Ife. Each neighborhood chief (*Bale*) presides over a neighborhood comprising a number of compounds. He is assisted by heads of compounds (*Baale*) in his neighborhood in the governance process. Neighborhood chiefs (*Bale*) are also required to collect tolls in their neighborhoods for the *Ooni* and to integrate strangers into the community subject to the consent of the *Ooni*. They are permitted to allocate land that is not claimed by Ife compounds.

For spiritual functions, *Isoro* (spiritual priests) are responsible for ritual sacrifices and festivals on behalf of the whole community of Ile-Ife with the consent of the *Ooni*. Outside chiefs constitute a council of neighborhood chiefs (*Iharefe*). The council considers disputes that cannot be resolved at the neighborhood level. Members of the council (*Iharefe*) do not meet with the *Ooni*. The *Ooni*'s insider chiefs (*Modewa*) serve as intermediaries between the council of outside chiefs (*Iharefe*) and the *Ooni*.

*Modewa* are descendants of the royal lineage who sit in the council of outside chiefs to represent the interests of the *Ooni*. Their main task is to ensure that there is no

conflict between the decisions of the council and the interests of the *Ooni*. In promoting the interests of the *Ooni*, *Modewa* also act as the *Ooni*'s linksmen with spiritual priests, occupational guilds and other constituent units in Ile-Ife. They collect tolls for the *Ooni* and carry out policing and intelligence services for him. Whenever it becomes difficult to command the loyalty of outside chiefs, it is incumbent on *Modewa* to muster grassroots support for royal policies and, if the need arises, cause division among the neighborhood chiefs (*Iharefe*) (Akinjogbin 1992).

To this end, *Modewa* run two security cells to protect the *Ooni*. It is obligatory for every neighborhood chief to dedicate his eldest son to the security cell meant for dealing with civil unrests within the community. The other security cell is made up of the children of *Modewa* (who are most loyal to the *Ooni*) to form a corps of royal guards for the protection of the *Ooni*. The *Ooni* presides over the whole Empire and possesses the exclusive right to approve or revoke the appointment of any chief (Akinjogbin 1992: 295-299).

Articulation of conceptions in the institutional structures of both Abeokuta and Ibadan are however different from what prevails in Ile-Ife. Abeokuta and Ibadan constitute independent and competing sub-groups of individuals from different backgrounds. The different groups of Yoruba elements in the two communities relate to one another as equals. An *olori* (leader) in any given compound in Abeokuta and Ibadan does not impose himself on others. Rather he must be a successful warrior or craftsman who is generous within his means and capable of offering security and protection to members of his local units. For him to command the respect of others and enforce rules effectively, he has to be a man of honesty and impartial judgments that takes the interests

of others into consideration. *Olori* (leaders of compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages and occupational guilds in Abeokuta and Ibadan) who are short of these leadership qualifications stand the risk of losing respect from the ruled while their decisions cease to be enforceable. When leaders were of good character during their lifetimes, their children are usually addressed by their titles even though such titles are not hereditary (Falola 1984; Sotunde 2002: 36-37).

Each compound in Abeokuta and Ibadan operates as independent and competing collective-choice entity. Head of any given compound coordinate the activities of the whole compound with the assistance of heads of his compound's constituent immediate families. Self-sufficiency is a goal of most compounds in both Abeokuta and Ibadan. To realize this goal, compound leaders have the duty to attract and integrate into their compounds people of distinctions from different occupations, such as soldiers, traders, craftsmen, farmers, weavers, diviners, and native "doctors". They also mobilize resources to send their members to learn new skills from other individuals and/or compounds noted for specialized skills<sup>42</sup>.

Above the compound level, there are some other functionaries that perform certain tasks in Abeokuta and Ibadan within multiple independent agencies or collective-choice units without reference to a single head. In Ibadan, neighborhood chiefs or father-protectors oversee the security of their neighborhoods, settle inter-compound disputes and mobilize their members to contribute to the prosecution of war against external

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<sup>42</sup> Both Oakerson's (1999) *Governing Local Public Economies*; and Elinor Ostrom's (2004) presentation about "Unlocking Public Entrepreneurship and Public Economies" at EGDI and UNU-WIDER Conference on Unlocking Human Potential: Linking the Informal and Formal Sectors 17-18 September 2004, Helsinki, Finland explain that multiple autonomous governing units, such as compounds and neighborhoods in the case of Abeokuta and Ibadan, tend to facilitate learning and enable individuals to have more effective choice in selecting goods and services most important to them.



aggression. These chiefs are usually military chiefs (*Babaogun*). Each compound has the liberty to change its allegiance from one *Babaogun* to another if their *Babaogun* becomes wicked, miserly and not influential among his colleagues. Within each neighborhood are people called *Adajo Adugbo* (neighborhood judges) who assist the neighborhood chief with resolution of disputes between their members. A council of war chiefs (*igbimo ologun*) coordinates the activities of the community and map out strategies in fighting against external aggression (Falola 1984; I6, I10).

There are four distinct classes of *olori* (leaders) in Abeokuta that perform different but complementary tasks at the neighborhood, sectional and community levels. They are *Ogboni* (judges and legislators), *Olorogun* (military leaders), *Parakoyi* (market leaders) and *Ode* (police/internal security chiefs). Although governed by its own rules, each class of leaders functions in relation to other groups to make cooperation possible and easy. The commitment of each class of leaders to the cause of the community and cooperation among various associations are based on a system of traditional oath of allegiance and blood oath. A breach of the terms of the covenantal relationships may attract severe misfortunes for the betrayers, which include death (Sotunde 2002: 59; A2, A5).

Members of *Ogboni* are judges and legislators. They are responsible for administration of justice and law making. Military and security policies for handling external aggressions are the main tasks of members of *Oloroogun*. Members of *Oloroogun* perform these functions in collaboration with members of *Ode*. *Ode* members are primarily responsible for undertaking efforts for internal security/policing. *Parakoyi*

members undertake tasks including promotion of commerce and trade by ensuring appropriate prices and measures, and settlement of disputes in market places.

*Ifa* priests (*Babalawo*) play a similar role in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan even though these Yoruba communities operate different institutional environments. The main role of *Ifa* priests is to consult *Ifa* oracle (divinity of wisdom) on behalf of individuals and the community as a whole in order to seek direction and guidance from *Eleda*. Before a child is born, *Ifa* oracle may be consulted and certain rites may be performed. For some individuals today, directions are sought from *Ifa* oracle at every stage of life from puberty to betrothal through marriage and regarding other decisions about choice of careers, building houses, going on journeys, and choosing leaders. *Ifa* oracle is also consulted for medical prescriptions when an individual has serious illness. The role of *Ifa* priests is important for many Yoruba because they are believed to be skilled in guiding man to know *Eleda*'s mind whose dictate is law.

### **3.4.3. Small-Scale Governance among the Yoruba**

Efforts to look upon the role of leaders within the dichotomy between hierarchical and non-hierarchical orders can be grossly misleading. A dichotomous analysis raises an erroneous implication that small-scale governance is possible only within the non-hierarchical order while individuals within the hierarchical system may be wrongly presumed to depend wholly on the commands of a single head.

Individuals, however, tend to be motivated by similar interests and combine together to solve shared problems in smaller groups such as immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages, mutual aid associations, and occupational

guilds. Harmonious relationships require shared rules and common agreement about the rules by most participating individuals. The authority of leaders of smaller units to enforce rules is also fundamental to establishing rule-ordered relationships in the productive pursuit of common interests and conflict resolution.

Clustering within smaller groups of shared interests is inherent in diverse political orders. Non-hierarchical and hierarchical modes of relationships have been found to interact with each other in a complex and dynamic way in more hierarchical-autocratic societies (Netting 1972; Southall 1988, 1989; McIntosh 1999; Ayo 2002). Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan are not exceptions as individuals in these communities organize within immediate families, compounds (*agoil*), neighborhoods (*adugbo*), sections, villages, mutual aid associations and craft guilds to pursue common interests. These small scale governance units are explained further in chapter 4 of this study.

If immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, and mutual aid associations among the Yoruba are regarded as self-governing entities, and shared understanding about what actions are forbidden and permitted or required is sufficient for achieving harmony in these local units, it is obvious that local small-scale units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are capable of governing themselves even though the three communities have contrasting institutional environments.

The hierarchical order in Ile-Ife, for example, is fraught with some permissible provisions supportive of the idea of small-scale governance. The provisions are meant to bridge the gap between rulers of hierarchical order and the ruled in local units.

Limits on human nature make it practically less feasible for the *Ooni* and his chiefs to solve all problems within Ile-Ife. Immediate families, compounds,

neighborhoods, villages and occupational associations are permitted to govern themselves as long as their interests do not run in conflict with those of the *Ooni* and his chiefs. Strangers such as Oyo elements are not excluded as they are permitted to carry out activities that do not conflict with the rule of submission. Individuals recognize and respect the shared rules they make in their smaller units. The permission to organize within smaller groups of shared interests in Ile-Ife yields itself to the notion of small-scale governance.

Similarly, the conceptions of the universal order in Abeokuta and Ibadan support the notion of small-scale governance rather than active government as further explained in chapter 4 of this study. Individuals in the two communities enjoy equal standing in the constitution of shared relationships. The terms and conditions of their relationships are widely shared and understood as individuals respect the rights of others and the autonomy and independence of various multiple governing units in governing themselves.

If Yoruba local units can govern themselves through common understanding and agreed-upon rules, productive civilization among the Yoruba will have its roots in local self-governing units and will continue to face threats from the ills of centralization. Development will then tend to thrive and expand its boundaries when the lessons learnt in local self-governing units are extended to constitute larger communities of shared relationships. Also, if it is correct to argue that development refers to the expansion of choice sets for most individuals to engage in productive reciprocity, every development then turns on local development.

Any attempt to neglect the family and other local units as important small-scale governance units in Yoruba society then constitutes a missed opportunity in the process of building alternative political arrangements for mutually productive ways of life. In addition, conflicts are bound to occur as individuals engage in interdependent relationships. The discussion that follows turns attention to how conflicts and punishment of wrong doings are handled among the Yoruba, and their effects on patterns of interactions among diverse Yoruba elements and their local units.

#### **3.4.4. Handling of Conflicts**

Effective handling of conflicts makes interdependent relationships productive and enables people to live in harmony. Conflicts within immediate families and compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are handled through the principles of *alajobi* (consanguinity), *alajogbe* (co-residentship), *eriokan* (clear conscience), and *omoluwabi* (good character). These principles interact with people's conceptions of ancestors, lesser gods (*orisas*), and *Eleda* (the Creator) and are shared and understood by members of local units.

In cases where conflicts are too difficult to resolve, family ancestors who died as *omoluwabi* (good character) may be consulted. The affected members sometimes go to the burial ground of their dead parents when conflicts involve allegations of falsehood. If one lies concerning an issue in family conflicts taken to the burial ground of an ancestor, it is believed that the person is going to die. Ancestors are believed to take an interest in their family affairs and in watching over their living children. They protect those who are of good character and expose individuals with bad character to dangers (A5, F12, I3).

The goal of conflict resolution within local units is to make peace and achieve cohesion rather than apportioning blame. This rests on the principle that *ka ja ka pari e niyi omoluwabi* (the mark of good character is demonstrated when we dispute with each other and quickly reconcile). Conflicting parties are required to tell the truth and the judge must be impartial. Partial judges and disputants who give misleading evidence are believed to be capable of attracting severe punishments including sudden death reflecting the wrath of the spirits of ancestors. It is believed that those who do not want conflicts to be resolved are wicked and liable to the second death. If one does wickedness by not making peace with others, that person is going to die all over in heaven (that is, hell in Yoruba) (I3).

The processes of conflict resolution outside local units, as further explained in chapter 7 of this study, are not the same in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Local standards of *omoluwabi* (good character) in Ibadan and Abeokuta require judges to be impartial and honest, and disputants to speak the truth. The belief in impartial treatment of conflicts at various levels of aggregation in Ibadan and Abeokuta is apparent in a common saying that *agba osika lo ngbejo enikan* (that is, only a wicked judge bases his judgment on the evidence of a single person). The goal of conflict resolution in both Ibadan and Abeokuta is to sustain the existing friendship and achieve cohesion among individuals within the framework of principles of equality<sup>43</sup>.

One major difference between Ibadan and Abeokuta is that disputants in Abeokuta are required to pay *esun* (hearing fees) to the judges (*ogboni*). But this tradition does not exist in Ibadan. The fees are not bribes to distort judgments. Rather they are

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<sup>43</sup> This is part of desired values that are regarded as preferences and values desired by participating individuals in the problem-orientation aspect of the Policy Sciences approaches discussed in chapter 1.

required for administrative purposes that have to do with carrying out thorough investigations. It is an age-long tradition which is commonly understood by the Yoruba people in Abeokuta. The defendant usually pays half of the fees the plaintiff pays. Payment of the fees by the disputants indicates their confidence in the judges and their willingness to accept the outcomes of conflict resolution (A5). The standing of the individual in the process of resolving conflicts outside immediate families, compounds and other local units however depends on where the person is in the hierarchical arrangements in Ile-Ife. Oyo elements in Ile-Ife have no *eto* in matters of landownership. But they can negotiate tenancy fees with their Ife lords. Tenants (in matter of land) who seek the cancellation of tenancy conditions are subject to expulsion from Ile-Ife (Olaniyan 1992).

#### **3.4.5. Punishing Wrong Doings**

The processes of conflicts and conflict resolution may involve wrong doings. Inadvertent mistakes and wrong doings are however different. If an individual makes a mistake in any of the three Yoruba communities, the individual as *omoluwabi* (of good character) is required to make an open/honest admission. Punishment is averted when an appeal is made to the individual wronged and, at times, to ancestors and lesser gods.

Deliberate actions against what the local standards of good character specify as *eto* (being in the right) in each of the three Yoruba communities are regarded as wrongdoings (*ibi*). An individual who acts in ways that harm the right of another person or/and the autonomy of governing units in Ibadan and Abeokuta commits a wrong doing.

In most cases in Ibadan and Abeokuta, individuals are held responsible for their own actions (Falola 1984; Sotunde 2002).

In certain circumstances in Ile-Ife, collective responsibility however represents a rule of punishing wrong doings. Challenge of the fundamental inequalities inherent in the hierarchical system in Ile-Ife is forbidden and thereby amounts to a wrong action. Aspiration for the right to own land and assertion of neighborhood autonomy by Oyo elements constitute a challenge of the integrity of the dominant political order in Ile-Ife. When an Oyo element embarks upon any of these forbidden actions, members of his group may be collectively held responsible (Akinlawon 1996, F1, F7). How conflicts and wrong actions are processed in each Yoruba community has affected the pattern of interactions among its inhabitants, conceptualized as strategies in the social process aspect of the Policy Sciences approaches. Attention is given to this in the next subsection.

#### **3.4.6. Patterns of Interactions within Yoruba Institutional Structures**

Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan constitute collections of individuals from different backgrounds and with diverse interests. Diversity in itself is a positive challenge, rather than a destructive obstacle, whose resolution can be cashed in on to civilize creative potentials. Handling of diversity becomes productive and facilitates order when rule-ordered relationships enable individuals to consider the interests of others as they engage in the processes of competition, cooperation, conflict and conflict resolution. Interdependent relationships however tend to be counterproductive when some



individuals cannot pursue their interests as a result of an unfair, repressive constitutional order.

Further, many scholars who think that the Yoruba operate similar patterns of order often overlook different ways in which diverse Yoruba elements interact within their institutional structures, which have resulted in different outcomes in terms of patterns of associational life, violent conflicts and mutually productive entrepreneurships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The differing outcomes are analyzed later in this chapter, discussed in subsequent chapters, and depicted in Tables 1.1, 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, and Appendix V.

Individuals that make up Ile-Ife in particular do not share common understanding and agreement about their constitutional arrangements. The prevailing circumstances have meant unfair treatment to Oyo elements that have been regarded as permanent tenants/lesser beings by Ife elements (F7). The failure to find alternative arrangements to blend Oyo and Ife elements together for mutual benefits has not enabled the development of rich, dense networks of voluntary associations that can take account of diverse interests in Ile-Ife. This is further explained in chapter 4. Opportunities for inter-group cooperation and learning have been limited as Oyo elements would not accept their lower status that requires them to obey the system of hierarchical order disallowing them from having autonomous governing units and holding land as equals with Ife elements<sup>44</sup>.

Persistent hostility and hatred have consequently characterized the relationships between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife and limited choice sets for individuals to learn

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<sup>44</sup> Vincent Ostrom's (1994: 258). *The Meaning of American Federalism* clearly articulates that the existence of autonomous decision-making units allows greater opportunities for productive innovation. The prevailing circumstance in Ile-Ife is inconsistent with requirements in Design Principles 3, 4, and 7 discussed in chapter 1 for collaboration among individuals in the provision of public peace and security.

better ways in which local units on each side of the divide have solved certain collective action problems. Members of either group can neither move to the other group's neighborhoods nor live there or join with individuals from the hostile group to form neighborhood associations in order to take advantage of goods and services most important to them. Rather than cooperating and acting with reference to one another, exclusionary bonds and destructive competition and rivalry have become the basis of interdependent interactions between Ife and Oyo elements. This has in turn hindered mutually productive entrepreneurships. The situation in Ile-Ife is analogous to how the institution of amoral familism produced entrepreneurial backwardness in a town in southern Italy where individuals would not cooperate with one another outside the boundaries of their kin-based collective-action units (Banfield 1958).

Abeokuta and Ibadan are however more open in allowing their respective diverse inhabitants to have broader choice sets in constituting multiple autonomous governing units for mutually beneficial ways of life. The independent governing units such as immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections and occupational guilds take one another into account. They respect the autonomy of one another in dealing with problems of exclusive interest to their respective local units and in combining together to address common concerns across their local units<sup>45</sup>.

Conflicts usually occur as members of compounds, neighborhoods, sections and occupational guilds move to other places within Abeokuta and Ibadan. Such conflicts do not lead to destructive relationships. Leaders of these governing units confront the conflicts by taking advantage of their connections with successful units to learn more

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<sup>45</sup> This is inconsistent with the cooperative requirements in Design Principles 3, 4 and 7 for collaboration among individuals in the provision of the peace and security of the community.

about better ways to be more competitive. War boys<sup>46</sup> in both Yoruba communities in the nineteenth century, for example, had a choice to obey either their masters or parents. War boys made their choice based on where they could best satisfy their economic and other interests (I6, A16; Falola 1984; Lloyd 1962). This is consistent with their fundamental beliefs that enable most individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta to engage in problem-solving through covenantal relationships and mutual agreements.

Unlike Ile-Ife, both Ibadan and Abeokuta have consequently developed and maintained increasing levels of inclusive associational life, relative public peace, and industrial and commercial openness, as explained in chapter 1 of this study and in further discussions in this chapter and subsequent chapters in this dissertation. The prevailing circumstances in Ibadan and Abeokuta are consistent with the argument that when most individuals in any given community interact with one another as equals, they tend to have a shared sense of fair distribution of property rights and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving. Consequently, norms of reciprocity tend to develop among participating individuals to strengthen sentiments of mutual trust and effective communications required for collective action and cooperation for mutually beneficial ways of life (Coleman 1988; Putnam 1993; Fukuyama 1995; Colletta and Cullen 2000, Uphoff 2000; E. Ostrom and Ahn 2003; Greif and Laitin 2004; E. Ostrom 2005).

### **3.5. Contacts with New Beliefs and Social Order among the Yoruba**

Contacts with Europeans, Christianity and Islam have brought about modifications in Yoruba beliefs about the roles of ancestors, lesser gods and *Eleda*. Some

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<sup>46</sup> They were apprentices in warfare in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Ibadan and Abeokuta.

of these changes have been supportive of the existing moral values with others introducing moral corruption of Yoruba social orders.

Many Yoruba worshippers of ancestors and lesser gods embraced Christianity and Islam when they came in contact with adherents of the two religions. The Yoruba people who embrace these new faiths began to regard the God of Abraham as *Eleda* and disregard the roles of ancestors and lesser gods. Both religions are supportive of the equality of man before God and rules.

Interestingly, a link exists between the Yoruba traditional beliefs and the new-found faiths, especially the advent of Christianity in Abeokuta. The Yoruba people of Abeokuta believe that *Ifa* oracle (divinity of wisdom that reveals the mind of *Eleda*) instructed them to embrace a new religion that "...would raise the Egba nation on the proposed site" (Ajisafe 1998: 61).<sup>47</sup> According to *Ifa* oracle, the new religion would enable them to experience prosperity and increased enlightenment in their new place of refuge. A warrior leader among them thereafter saw in a dream the picture of a carrier of the new religion (Ajisafe 1998:82; The Genesis 2002:4), who on arrival in Abeokuta around 1843 introduced Christianity to the Yoruba of people in Abeokuta. Through the Abrahamic God, the Yoruba people of Abeokuta began to be liberated from their various enemies including the Dahomey and began to be exposed to new ideas including formal education. Ibadan next received Christianity which later spread to Iwo, Oyo, Ile-Ife and other Yoruba communities.

Some Yoruba people also came into contact with Islam through interactions with individuals from present Northern Nigeria. Christianity in particular supports the

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<sup>47</sup> Rev. Ladi Thompson's presentation on OGTV (Ogun State Television) at 6pm on Friday, May 21, 2004 also supports Ajisafe's account.

attributes of *Eleda* as the Merciful, Impartial and Holy God, which represent the general basis of standards of good character among the Yoruba. Much as both Christianity and Islam support equality of man before *Eleda* (the Creator) and his rules, the embrace of Christianity and Islam by Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife has not changed the fundamental inequalities inherent in Ile-Ife's hierarchal-aristocratic order.

Many people that practice the new found-faiths are however not sincere to their professions that otherwise should instill in them the urge to obey law. This has contributed substantially to weakening the moral basis of written rules introduced by Europeans among the Yoruba in particular and other peoples of Nigeria in general.

Formalized, written rules are another change the Yoruba experienced with the advent of colonialism under the British authorities. With the coming of the British as colonial masters, rules began to be written and formalized across the Yoruba nation such that local particularities were hardly considered. One major change that came with formalization is the rule of conflict resolution. The Yoruba people, especially those in Abeokuta and Ibadan, believe that conflicts are to be resolved in ways that promote friendship rather than apportion blame. In contrast, new formalized rules of handling conflicts rest on resolving conflicts by apportioning blame to one party. This is strange to the Yoruba people because they believe that *a ki ti kootu bo sore* (we do not come back from the government court and remain friends). Europeans sponsored more political corruption by repressing the self-governing capabilities of the Yoruba people through the imposition of some individuals as single heads over non-hierarchical communities like Ibadan and Abeokuta. They also strengthened the existing hierarchical order such as in Ile-Ife.

Nevertheless, formalization of rules and political corruption sponsored by the British during the colonial era, and inherited by Nigerian political elites after independence in 1960, has not stopped the Yoruba people from developing new patterns of human relationships. The basic unit of the neighborhood in the 19th century used to be the compound. Efforts to extend beyond the traditional frontiers of Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan have led to the development of new neighborhoods since the start of the twentieth century, the basic unit of which is the immediate family consisting of a man, his wife/wives, children and relatives. Some restrictions however exist in Ile-Ife where Oyo and Ife elements cannot move to and live in the neighborhoods belonging to the hostile group.

### **3.6. Non-Parametric Analysis of Institutional Structures among the Yoruba**

It can be argued, based on the foregoing discussion, that institutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are not the same. This is contrary to the conventional wisdom in the previous literature that political orders among the Yoruba of Nigeria are autocephalous, uniform, or at best roughly patterned after the hierarchical constitutional order of submission in Ile-Ife (Price 1933; Bascom 1944; Schwab 1955; Lloyd 1962; Akinjogbin 2002; Soyinka-Airewele 2003:281-284).

A number of statements were formulated and administered to key actors in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to further understand whether the Yoruba people agree or disagree that their political orders are uniform. The statements were designed around seven ordinal institutional variables such as equality in participation, autonomy of local units, distributions of land rights, inter-group trust and cooperation, sense of shared community,

and public security. The design of the statements was essentially influenced by the data initially gathered from intensive archival research and in-depth interviews in each of the three Yoruba communities.

The respondents were not randomly selected. Rather, the selection exercise targeted leaders of local units in each of the three Yoruba communities, such as compounds, neighborhoods, sections and neighborhood development associations. The questionnaire was administered on ten (10) people each in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta. Twenty-five (25) people were considered for questionnaire administration in Ibadan because Ibadan's population size is more than twice as big as the population size of either Ile-Ife or Abeokuta as explained in chapter 2. A list of their positions and assigned numbers used to identify them is in Appendix III in the back of this study. The selected respondents were asked to rank each statement from most disagreed (1) to most agreed (6) to form an average scale of respondents' perceptions for each of the seven individual variables and of the three institutional structures, as horizontally and vertically set out respectively in Appendix IV.

The responses represent ordinal levels of measurements of respondents' perceptions of the institutional structure of each Yoruba community in terms of (i) equality in participation for diverse Yoruba elements, (ii) recognized autonomy for diverse Yoruba elements and their local units, (iii) fair distribution of land rights among diverse Yoruba elements, (iv) inter-group trust and (v) cooperation among different groups of Yoruba elements, (vi) loyalty to the community over loyalty to individual groups of Yoruba elements in the community, and (vii) security of life and property from relations among diverse Yoruba elements in the community.

Table 3.1 shows respondents' average perceptions of individual institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan as aggregates of the seven ordinal variables. Put differently, an average perception of a given individual institutional structure is the addition of the scores for each respondent divided by the number of questions answered by each respondent.

**Table 3.1: Respondents' Perceptions of Institutional Structures in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan - Column 9 in Appendix IV**

S/N	Ile-Ife	Abeokuta	Ibadan
1	3.14	4.29	5.43
2	1.71	6.00	4.29
3	2.29	5.43	4.29
4	1.86	4.71	5.71
5	2.17	5.86	5.14
6	1.33	4.71	6.00
7	2.00	4.57	4.43
8	1.40	5.14	5.57
9	1.33	4.86	5.29
10	2.14	5.43	5.57
11			4.86
12			5.14
13			4.14
14			4.14
15			4.86
16			4.71
17			4.86
18			5.43
19			4.71
20			5.57
21			4.43
22			4.29
23			5.86
24			5.14
25			5.00

Three Mann-Whitney statistical tests were run using the data in Table 3.1 to examine the difference between the institutional structures in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta (Test 1), Ile-Ife and Ibadan (Test 2), and Abeokuta and Ibadan (Test 3). The Mann-Whitney test procedure



was used because the responses are ordinal levels and the sample from each community is independent. The tests performed and their outcomes are discussed as follows.

**Test 1:**

**Table 3.2: Test Results for the Difference between the Institutional Structures in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta**

Community	Number of Respondents	Median	Point Estimate for ETA1-ETA2	95.5% Confidence Interval for ETA1-ETA2	The Mann-Whitney (W) statistic	p-value
Ile-Ife	10	1.93	-3.20	(-3.71, -2.57)	55.00	0.0002
Abeokuta	10	5.00				

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife (ETA1) and Abeokuta (ETA2) are similar.

**Alternate Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife (ETA1) and Abeokuta (ETA2) are not similar.

From Table 3.2, we are 95% confident that the respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta are different. The difference, as represented by their respective medians, is greater than or equal to -3.71 and less than or equal to -2.57. Since zero (0) is not within the confidence interval and the p-value (0.0002) is less than 0.05, we can reject H<sub>0</sub> with 95% confidence and conclude that the two institutional structures are not similar. This result confirms that the perceptions of leaders of local units in Ile-Ife and Abeokuta differ from the conventional wisdom in the existing literature that all institutional structures among the Yoruba of Nigeria are patterned identically after the institutional structure of command and control in Ile-Ife.

## Test 2

**Table 3.3: Test Results for the Difference between the Institutional Structures in Ile-Ife and Ibadan**

Community	Number of Respondents	Median	Point Estimate for ETA1-ETA2	95.3% Confidence Interval for ETA1-ETA2	The Mann-Whitney (W) statistic	p-value - level of significance
Ile-Ife	10	1.93	-3.06	(-3.52, -2.57)	55.00	0.0000
Ibadan	25	5.00				

**Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ):** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife (ETA1) and Ibadan (ETA2) are similar.

**Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ):** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife (ETA1) and Ibadan (ETA2) are not similar.

From Table 3.3, we are 95% confident that the respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife and Ibadan are different. The difference, as represented by their respective medians, is greater than or equal to  $-3.52$  and less than or equal to  $-2.57$ . Since zero (0) is not within the confidence interval and the p-value (0.0000) is less than 0.05, we can reject  $H_0$  with 95% confidence and conclude that the two institutional structures are not similar. Just like Test 1, this result confirms that the perceptions of leaders of local units in Ile-Ife and Ibadan differ from the conventional wisdom in the existing literature that all institutional structures among the Yoruba of Nigeria are patterned identically after the institutional structure of command and control in Ile-Ife.

### Test 3:

**Table 3.4: Test Results for the Difference between the Institutional Structures in Abeokuta and Ibadan**

Community	Number of Respondents	Median	Point Estimate for ETA1-ETA2	95.3% Confidence Interval for ETA1-ETA2	The Mann-Whitney (W) statistic	p-value - level of significance
Abeokuta	10	5.00	0.14	(-0.43, 0.57)	190.50	0.7150
Ibadan	25	5.00				

**Null Hypothesis:** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Abeokuta (ETA1) and Ibadan (ETA2) are similar.

**Alternate Hypothesis:** The respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Abeokuta (ETA1) and Ibadan (ETA2) are not similar.

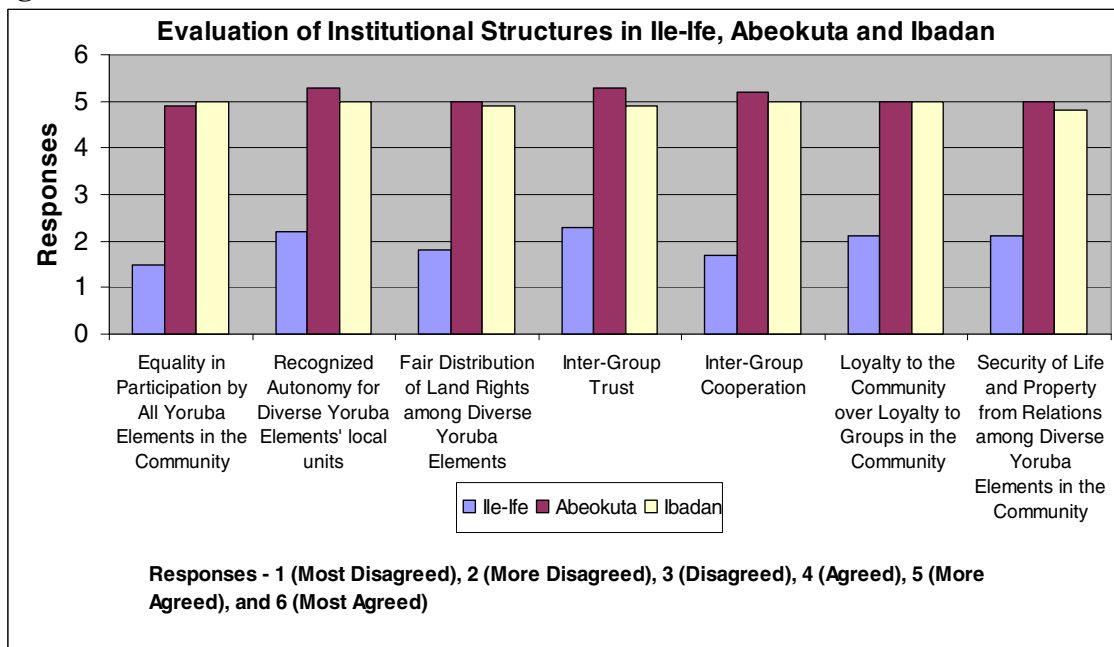
From Table 3.4, we are 95% confident that the respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Abeokuta and Ibadan are similar. The similarity, as represented by their respective medians, is greater than or equal to -0.43 and less than or equal to 0.57. Since zero (0) is within the confidence interval and the p-value (0.7150) is greater than 0.05, we can accept  $H_0$  with 95% confidence and conclude that the two institutional structures are similar. This result both confirms that the perceptions of leaders of local units about the institutional structures in Abeokuta and Ibadan are similar and that both Ibadan and Abeokuta base their constitutional orders on similar principles other than principles of inequalities in Ile-Ife.

The differences in the respondents' perceptions of the institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are further illustrated in Table 3.5. The data in Table 3.5 are represented graphically in Figure 3.1.

**Table 3.5: Respondents' Perceptions of individual Institutional Variables - Average Ratings of Individual Variables in Appendix IV**

Variable/ Community	Equality in Participation by most Yoruba Elements in the Community	Recognized Autonomy for most Diverse Yoruba Elements' local units	Fair Distribution of Land Rights among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the Community	Inter-Group Trust	Inter-Group Cooperation	Loyalty to the Community over loyalty to groups in the community	Security of Life and Property in Relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the community
Ile-Ife	1.5	2.2	1.8	2.3	1.7	2.1	2.1
Abeokuta	4.9	5.3	5	5.3	5.2	5	5
Ibadan	5	5	4.9	4.9	5	5	4.8

**Figure 3.1**



From Figure 3.1, the respondents in Ile-Ife approximately more disagreed that the institutional structure in Ile-Ife allows for equality in participation for diverse Yoruba elements, recognized autonomy for diverse Yoruba elements' local units, fair distribution of land rights among diverse Yoruba elements, inter-group trust and cooperation among

diverse groups of Yoruba elements, loyalty to the community of Ile-Ife over loyalty to the individual groups of Yoruba elements within the community, and security of life and property from relations among diverse Yoruba elements. On the other hand, the respondents in both Abeokuta and Ibadan approximately more agreed that their respective institutional structures promote equality in participation for diverse Yoruba elements, recognized autonomy for diverse Yoruba elements' local units, fair distribution of land rights among diverse Yoruba elements, inter-group trust and cooperation among diverse groups of Yoruba elements, loyalty to the community of over loyalty to individual groups, and security of life and property from relations among diverse Yoruba elements in each community.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

From the foregoing discussion, it has been shown that the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan do not operate the same constitutional arrangements due to the differences in their conceptions of the universe and past experiences. As opposed to the assumption of institutional homogeneity among the Yoruba people in earlier studies, the different conceptions in the three communities have yielded varied sets of local charters that define the standing of individuals and their local units in governance and property relationships.

The dominant presumption of constitutional inequalities in Ile-Ife has led to the establishment of a hierarchical-aristocratic pattern of relationships where the basis of human relationships rests on the tradition of deference to the *Ooni* by his subjects, and to Ife elements by Oyo elements treated as tenants. Abeokuta and Ibadan however present a

distinct institutional contrast to Ile-Ife. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, the presumption of equality of man gives most individuals (initial settlers and strangers alike) equal standing in the establishment of non-hierarchical patterns of order. Virtually every individual is his own superior and no one else's superior or inferior, has freedom to own land and associate with members of other Yoruba groups in the two communities, and is entitled to fair hearing and impartiality in the process of conflict resolution. This is also corroborated by the non-parametric analysis undertaken in this chapter. Unlike Ile-Ife, the institutional environments in Ibadan and Abeokuta have enabled individuals to have the opportunity to use their constitutional rules to organize new associational relationships based on shared understanding of the specific problems they face, thereby facilitating inclusive associational life, relative public peace, and commercial and industrial openness, as shown in Figure 3.1, Table 1.1 in chapter 1 and Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in chapter 4.

However, the differences in the institutional structures in Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan have not ruled out small-scale governance. As explained in the foregoing discussion, individuals are at least able to organize around common interests within local units where they share common understanding of the problems they face and jointly recognize the authority of their leaders to enforce rules. This suggests that development will tend to thrive and expand its boundaries when the lessons learned in local self-governing units are extended to constitute larger communities of shared relationships. Since Ibadan and Abeokuta have experienced inclusive associational life, relative public peace and mutually productive entrepreneurships among their respective Yoruba elements, it can be concluded that hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional orders are

repressive of efforts to use the lessons learned in local self-governing units for building mutually productive civilization.

By and large, this chapter has laid out a foundational framework within which subsequent chapters in this dissertation can be understood in terms of how the issues raised and discussed in subsequent chapters are affected by the differing constitutional orders in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to have varied implications for outcomes in terms of the prevailing pattern of associational life, violent conflicts and commercial and industrial openness in each Yoruba community. Chapter 4 in particular begins to show these contrasting patterns by giving attention to family institutions and associational life among the Yoruba people.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FAMILY INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNING STRUCTURES AND PATTERNS OF ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE AMONG THE YORUBA

“Improvements in the entrepreneurial opportunities of all members of a political economy depend critically upon creating institutional arrangements that facilitate transactions among nonkin” (E. Ostrom, L. Schroeder & S. Wynne 1993: 63).

#### 4.1 Introduction

The family<sup>48</sup> serves as the primary school for learning social values that affect constitutional orders among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. It is within the family that the Yoruba people begin to gain consciousness of themselves and learn the acceptable ways to relate to others. The acceptable ways serve as standards of good character (*omoluwabi*) among the Yoruba and reflect their fundamental beliefs about how they experience themselves and their relationships with others as well as how they conceptualize the universe. The beliefs, though different among the Yoruba as explained in chapter 3 of this dissertation, are used to justify their family institutions and other networks of relationships as part of their political orders. The Yoruba family is then to governance like the elementary school to science.

Another importance of the family among the Yoruba lies in the nature of goods that family institutions and their effects represent. Family institutions serve as either public goods or bads for the entire community. This depends essentially on whether they generate positive or negative effects. Yoruba family institutions are available for most individuals to use without any one’s use of them capable of diminishing the total stock of the institutions. Similarly, the effects of the socializing role of the family on public peace

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<sup>48</sup> The lessons learned in families, for example, “encouraged voluntarism and enhanced public life” in the United States studied by Tocqueville (Barbara Allen 2005:195).



and security affect the whole community<sup>49</sup> such that the amount of peace enjoyed by an individual does not reduce the total amount of peace available for others to experience.

Against this backdrop, when individuals within a given community learn what Tocqueville (1966: 279) calls “a love of equality” and practice, their political institutions would flourish and yield mutual benefits for participating individuals. When members of the Yoruba family accept and maintain love of equality as part of the standards of good character (*omoluwabi*) taught within the family, they can develop strong family loyalty and feel closest to one another in solving collective action problems. Loyalty and close-knit proximity advantages of the family make the family an important place where the Yoruba people can develop means of minimizing transactions costs associated with establishing, legitimatizing and monitoring rules and agreements, facilitating mutual help, resolving conflicts, maintaining local traditions, and punishing wrong doings. Also, achievement of peace and order within Yoruba communities tremendously reflects how shared values learned within the family legitimize and enable equality of man, productive reciprocal trust, and fairness in transactions among individuals of different family backgrounds. *Every attempt to understand what influences the problem-solving capabilities of the Yoruba people of Nigeria would be wise not to ignore the Yoruba family as an indispensable unit of political order for solving collective action problems.*

On the other hand, individual families among the Yoruba cannot on their own completely solve all problems of collective action. Certain services and goods required for the consumption of members of the family may be exclusively provided and produced within the family. In such circumstances, the family tends to be simultaneously a

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<sup>49</sup> V. Ostrom and E Ostrom’s (1994: 164-172) “Public Goods and Public Choices” look upon public goods as the goods whose beneficiaries cannot be excluded from their consumption, and benefits of the goods are completely non-subtractible in nature.

consumption, production and provision<sup>50</sup> unit. *Other problems of collective action such as the provision and maintenance of peace and security for mutually beneficial exchange relationships, however, require a resource mix beyond what is available within the family.* An absolute reliance on the kin-composed family or kin-based network of relationships for handling problems in settings with individuals from diverse kin backgrounds can create substantial inefficiencies for individuals and the whole community (E. Ostrom, L. Schroeder, & S. Wynne 1993: 63-65; Pollak 1985: 588).

Working out complementary institutional arrangements remains an inevitable option. This requires constitutional terms and conditions under which diverse individuals can combine together as associates and engage in mutually productive relationships. Efforts to meet these collective needs among the Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have lead to the development of networks of relationships beyond the family. The networks include nineteenth-century neighborhoods (wards, quarters or townships), sections, villages, craft guilds, mutual aid associations, and twentieth-century neighborhood development associations.

These networks have operated in Ibadan and Abeokuta to facilitate the development of norms of reciprocity, mutual trust and effective communication among individuals of dissimilar backgrounds. As they identify themselves more as members of the community than as members of individual groups in the community, diverse individuals in both Yoruba communities have been able to achieve relative success in

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<sup>50</sup>Provision arrangements in any given Yoruba community include immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, craft guilds and twentieth-century neighborhood development associations. They refer to institutional arrangements for collective choices that determine what problems to be addressed as collective action issues and what to remain problems of individuals and lower-level provision arrangements; and how to regulate individual activities and raise resources to pursue collective interests. I adopted this definition from Oakerson's (1999:7) *Governing Local Public Economies*.

matching<sup>51</sup> their institutional arrangements to the problems they face at different levels of aggregation<sup>52</sup>. These developments are much like Venice's constitutional experimentation under the Holy Roman Empire. The people of Venice successfully drew upon principles of equality and fairness to develop non-kin institutions. The resultant ordering principles promoted mutually productive behavioral expectations, contained destructive inter-clan rivalry, and enabled members of different clans to identify themselves more as citizens of Venice than as clan members. The institutional environment subsequently led to increasing commercialization and prosperity for inhabitants of Venice (Greif & Laitin 2004: 640-644).

It has however been difficult to develop institutional networks that facilitate norms of reciprocity, mutual trust and effective communication between Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife. Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife, much like individuals in Genoa under the Holy Roman Empire (Greif & Laitin 2004: 640-644), identify themselves more as group members than as citizens of Ile-Ife. As a result, Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife, like inhabitants of Genoa, have not been able to combine together in providing public peace and security required for their mutual benefits.

It is therefore not out of place to argue that diverse groups of individuals who have the traditions of equality of man, mutual trust, and close-knit communities, as in the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta and not in Ile-Ife, are more likely to combine together, craft

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<sup>51</sup> This also aligns with the polycentric problem-solving approach of Moses in Exodus 18: 25-26, "And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves."

<sup>52</sup> Institutional arrangements for providing particular collective goods and services are appropriate when their boundaries correspond to the spatial or geographical extent of an area (such as immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections and the whole communities as shall be made clear in the case of the Yoruba people of Nigeria) directly affected when the goods and services are provided or not provided.

and nurture successful institutional arrangements that can expand opportunity sets for the benefit of the affected individuals (Tocqueville 1966; Putnam 1993; N. Dolsak & E. Ostrom 2003:6).

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the differences and similarities in family institutions and other networks of relationships among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, and how they have impacted on the development of norms of reciprocity, mutual trust and effective communication required for cooperation and collective action for the common good of the Yoruba. An understanding of networks of relationships among the Yoruba is important in efforts to illuminate the prevailing pattern of associational life in each of the three Yoruba communities, to throw light on whether or not institutions based on people's experiences and conceptions of the universe are able to respond to changes and challenges from their external environments<sup>53</sup>, and to contribute to unravelling relevant knowledge for sustainable development in Africa.

In expatiating on networks of relationships among the Yoruba people, I will first explain structural re-arrangement of the Yoruba family through marriage, the socializing role of the family and kinship formation in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Since the three Yoruba communities differ in how they experience themselves and their relationships with others, attention to their family institutions can enlighten us about how the institutional techniques and processes embedded in their shared values affect the constitution of the Yoruba family and its connection with other networks of relationships. I will then examine the networks of relationships beyond the family. In each of the three

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<sup>53</sup> The Mamadou Dia-led AM 90s research project at the World Bank alerts us to the fact that indigenous institutions may be unable to respond to changes and challenges from their external environments if they cannot take advantage of information from their external environments. See The World Bank, 1992. "Indigenous Management Practices: Lessons for Africa's Management in the 1990s" Washington D.C. Africa Technical Department.

Yoruba communities, I look upon family institutions and other institutions for governance and property relationships as social infrastructure/capital that may facilitate or impede opportunities for people to join with one another to take collective action and choose goods and services that meet their specific needs. Herein lies what makes for building a living process of stimulating channels of cooperation or enmity among diverse individuals.

## **4.2 Family Institutions among the Yoruba**

The institution of the family is believed to have originated from *Eleda*, the creator. As explained previously in chapter 3, the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta share a belief that *Eleda* as the life-giver created men and women and sanctions the matrimonial relationships between them so that they can be husbands and wives for the purposes of helping each other and procreating like human beings.

The differences in the fundamental beliefs in each of the three Yoruba communities, as discussed in chapter 3, have had tremendous influences on the structural re-arrangement of the family through marriage. The differing influences can be appreciated by examining marriage contracts and patterns of intermarriages in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta.

### **4.2.1 Marriage Contracts and Patterns of Intermarriages among the Yoruba**

Marriage represents an important means of kinship formation and re-arrangement of family relationships among the Yoruba. There is a general rule<sup>54</sup> among the Yoruba

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<sup>54</sup> E. Ostrom's (2005) *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (Chapter 5) distinguishes between rules and norms. A norm defines when and where actors' behavior is forbidden and required or permitted without

people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta that individuals of marriageable age are required to get married. The need to get married essentially revolves more around the premium placed on procreation of children and having someone to look after one's domestic concerns than on romance. To refuse marriage is against the desire for humans to fulfill the procreative will of *Eleda*. Individuals who refuse to get married also expose themselves and their relatives to sanctions including social humiliation.

Up until contacts with Europeans and Christianity, sexual impotency did not in any way detract from the prerequisites to get married among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. A sexually impotent man got married to save himself from ignominy. To raise children of his own, the impotent man was required to get an alternate husband on agreement to perform the sexual role on his behalf (Fadipe 1970: 65-66). The alternate husband was usually the impotent man's confidant who might be his intimate friend or a trusted relation. Such a relationship was purely a tripartite agreement among the three parties. The children born in this type of marriage belonged to the legal husband (the impotent man). A sterile woman could also get married without imposing any burden of childlessness on her husband. Yoruba traditions support polygamy through which a man can marry more than one wife and raise children through non-sterile wives.

Contacts with Europeans and Christianity have however brought about some changes. With the acceptance of Christianity and European cultural values, monogamy began to be promoted among the Yoruba. In addition, many Yoruba people are now largely inclined to contract marriage based on the ability of the man and the woman

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any consequences to be suffered by doing the forbidden or by not doing the required. If certain enforceable consequences are however to be suffered for non-compliance with a norm, a rule exists. A rule normally goes explicitly or implicitly with the statement "OR ELSE".

directly involved to raise their own biological children. Impotency or sterility is thus a ground for calling off many marriage contracts and intentions to get married.

A socially acceptable marriage cannot be contracted without meeting some other essentials<sup>55</sup>. First, as a general rule among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, efforts to cast around for a potential spouse begin after puberty. Men and women may not remain unmarried at the age of thirty and twenty-five respectively. Second, none of the families of the intending couple must have quarrelsome, idle, debt - incurring and incontinent dispositions as well as hereditary diseases such as insanity, epilepsy and leprosy. Third, single women and men are required to be chaste before marriage. Fourth, when a blood relationship<sup>56</sup> can be traced, whether on the fathers' or the mothers' lines of the intending couple, both parties cannot proceed to have a socially acceptable marriage (Ayo 2002: 58). Marriage is also forbidden between a man and a woman that are co-residents in the same compound (*agboile*) even though they are not related by blood. Co-residence in the same *agboile* (compound) is believed to approximate blood relationships. Marriage between individuals related by blood and/or sharing co-residence is believed to be capable of leading to an incestuous relationship (A11; F21; F25; I3; I4; Schwab 1955: 353).

To be of good character (*omoluwabi*) and thereby avoid misfortunes, the requirements for an acceptable marriage contract are basic rules that have to be followed.

Incestuous relationships and marital associations with individuals having incontinent

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<sup>55</sup> These are prescriptions in the decision process aspect of the Policy Sciences Approaches discussed in chapter 1.

<sup>56</sup> Blood relationship in regard to the capacity to marry ends after three generations especially among Ife elements (Fadipe 1970: 71). Schwab (1955: 353, 361) suggests that blood relationship among the Yoruba becomes irrelevant as a marriage requirement after between five and nine generations with other authors indicating no limit on tracing blood relationships (Ayo 2002: 58).

dispositions can make sexually moral partners and their children sexually immoral. The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta believe that sexually immoral individuals are not *omoluwabi* (good characters) but wrong doers. *Eleda* is believed to be holy and moral. He gives favor to those who please him as *omoluwabi* by, among other things, being sexually moral. It is believed that good will follow right conduct and evil will hunt down wrong doers. To put up right conduct and enjoy good from *Eleda* is to avoid immoral marital relationships. If a single woman is not chaste before marriage, she also opens up herself to commanding less respect from both her husband and husband's relatives. The healthy spouse or the children of a marriage may be affected when a marriage is contracted with individuals having hereditary diseases. In addition, when a man marries a woman who is a debtor or from a debtor-family, the man takes full responsibility for his wife's part of the debt.

With the fulfillment of these essentials along with parental consent, a stage is set for contracting a socially acceptable marriage among the Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta. An additional requirement must however be satisfied before negotiating an acceptable marriage contract between individuals of good character (*omoluwabi*) in Ile-Ife. Intermarriages between Ife and Oyo elements are forbidden actions. The differences in patterns of intermarriages in each Yoruba community are illustrated in Figures 4.1 through 4.3.



**Figure 4.1: Patterns of Intermarriages in Ile-Ife**

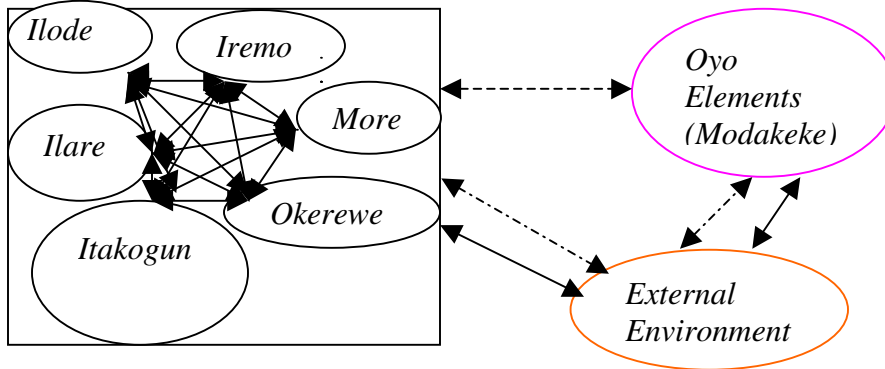


Figure 4.1 consists of a rectangle enclosing six circles representing five similar divisions of individuals that consider themselves Ife elements and that have used the myth of being children of *Oduduwa* (the first *Ooni*) to constitute themselves into a core lineage in Ile-Ife. Intermarriages can occur among individuals in these circles if no blood relationship can be traced based on the accepted number of generations that can be traced backward. Oyo elements and the external environment (the rest of the world) of Ile-Ife are represented respectively by the upper-outer circle and the lower-outer circle to the right of the rectangle.

Oyo and Ife elements are connected with each other by a dash-dotted line indicating a fragile inter-group marriage bond between Oyo and Ife elements. This bond implies a rule that intermarriages between Ife and Oyo elements are forbidden actions or else the affected spouses and their children living within the area controlled by the hostile group risk being killed and losing their property whenever violent conflicts erupt. In the alternative, the affected couples and their children may have to find somewhere else to live outside Ile-Ife. Children of such inter-group marriages are less trusted and considered suspects in times of inter-group violent conflicts (F7, F20).

Both Ife and Oyo elements are connected with the external environment by a solid line and a dash-dotted line indicating that members of either group may or may not marry from the external environment. Members of either group may marry individuals from the external environment if those individuals do not belong to either side or else such marriage contracts expose the affected individuals to the same sanctions specified earlier.

Few individuals from both sides who have risked intermarriages between the two groups and lived in Ile-Ife have suffered consequences such as loss of property, children, and spouses from the hostile group. Some individuals have wittingly chosen self-exile outside Ile-Ife as a safety measure (F1; F14; F20). The trouble case that follows buttresses the pattern of intermarriages in Ile-Ife:

Alabi (a man who is an Ife element) had proposed to Bola<sup>57</sup> (a woman who is an Oyo element) in 1994, three years before the 1997-2000 violent conflict broke out. The family of Alabi vehemently rejected the proposal. The strong love between the two lovers made them seek help from some individuals to persuade the family of Alabi to allow him to marry Bola. None of the efforts of the two lovers yielded any fruit until 1997 when a series of violent conflicts broke out between Ife and Oyo elements. Perceiving extreme deprivation, Oyo elements had taken up arms in 1997 against Ife elements to challenge the inequalities inherent in the hierarchical constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife. The violence scattered the two lovers, and their fostered marital intention of three years was abruptly terminated. Alabi later contracted a

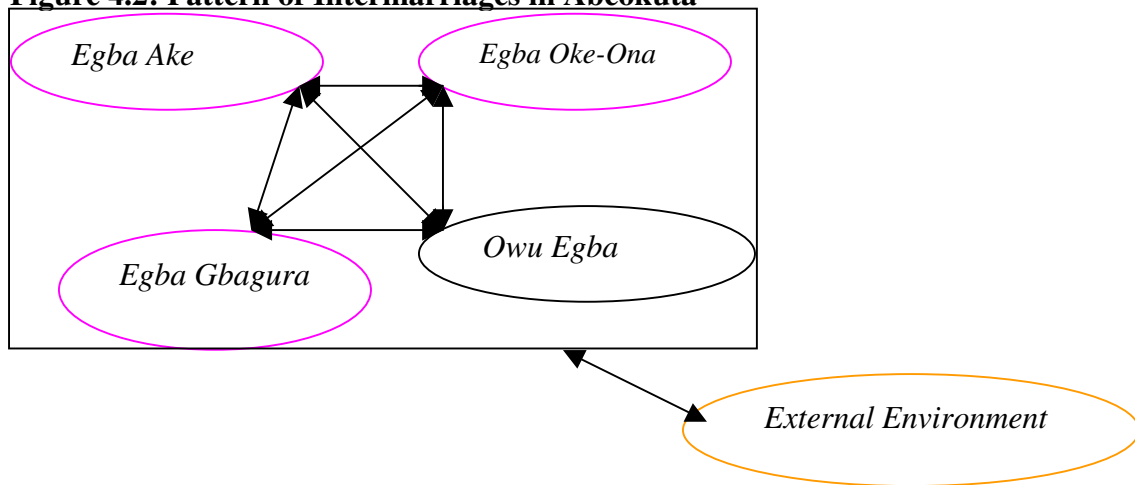
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<sup>57</sup> The names are not the real names of the parties involved

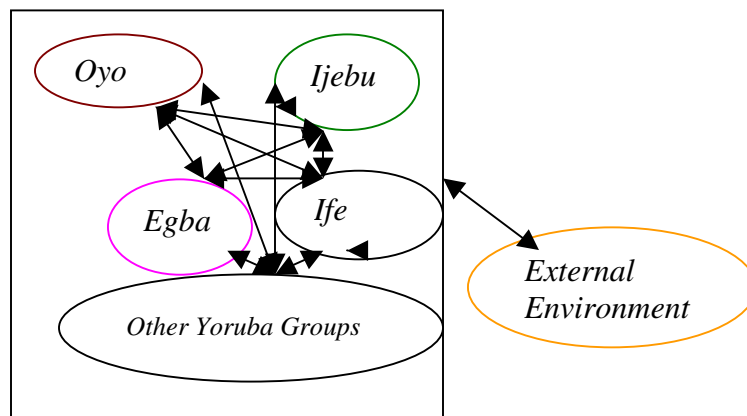
marriage with an Ife woman while Bola is still casting around for a husband (an anonymous email: December 6, 2004).

The pattern of intermarriages between Oyo and Ife elements is unequivocally an expression of distrust between the two groups (F7; F14). At the root of this distrust is their unresolved disagreement about their terms and conditions of governance and property relationships, as explained in chapter 3. The pattern of intermarriages in Ile-Ife is however different from those in Ibadan and Abeokuta as Figures 4.2 and 4.3 depict.

**Figure 4.2: Pattern of Intermarriages in Abeokuta**



**Figure 4.3: Pattern of Intermarriages in Ibadan**



The circles in the rectangles in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 represent the diverse groups of individuals that make up Abeokuta and Ibadan respectively, without considering their non-Yoruba inhabitants. The *Owu* group in Abeokuta in particular is not an *Egba* group just as Oyo elements in Ile-Ife are not Ife elements. Members of the *Owu* group prefer to be addressed as *Owu Egba* to identify with the *Egba* people. The *Egba* divide into three sections such as *Egba Ake*, *Egba Oke-Ona* and *Egba Gbagura*. The diverse groups in Ibadan may be more than four in number, hence the inclusion of the circle representing other Yoruba groups. The external environment of each community stands for the rest of the world.

As illustrated in Figures 4.2 and 4.3, the same pattern of intermarriage relationships is practiced in Abeokuta and Ibadan. Intermarriages take place both within the diverse groups in each rectangle and between the diverse groups and their respective external environments as long as the rule of blood and residential exogamy and other general requirements specified earlier are met.

Similar patterns of intermarriages in Abeokuta and Ibadan reflect mutual trust among their diverse inhabitants and shared agreement about their ordering principles. This pattern of trust and shared agreement finds expression in their past experiences and conceptions of the universe that enable them to experience themselves and other individuals as equal citizens and to have equal freedom to associate with people of their choice through such means as marriage contracts (I2; I6; I20; A10; A11; A16; R. Smith 1969: 94-100). Given the differences in patterns of intermarriages in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, Akinjogbin's (2002:133) position that marriage system and other social

systems in Ile-Ife are the same as those in other Yoruba communities cannot be empirically sustained.

#### **4.2.2 Negotiations of Marriage Contracts, Claims and Obligations**

Despite the differences in the requirements for a socially acceptable marriage among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, marriage is generally a union of two families and not just of the principal parties to the relationship. As a result, the search for a socially acceptable woman for a young man and investigations into the family backgrounds of the two parties are obligations members of the affected families have to carry out. Investigations are mainly based on the requirements both families consider to fit into their cognitive frameworks.

Individuals of good character (*omoluwabi*) willing to get married must have the consent of their families<sup>58</sup>. When a woman is found for a man or a man finds a woman that he loves, the man must receive the consent of his family before proposing to the woman. The woman must have indirectly indicated her interest in the man. The intending groom receives his family's consent after open and/or secret investigations by his family members have shown that the requirements for an acceptable marriage have been satisfied. A process of negotiation is then set in motion to secure the consent of the woman's family. The woman's family could be approached directly by the intending groom's family members or through an individual who is very close to and respected by the woman's family.

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<sup>58</sup> Many people call this parental consent. But it is better called family consent since the consent is an indication of what the family wants.

The woman's family members also carry out similar investigations to ensure that acceptable essentials are met. If the outcomes of the investigations by the woman's family are satisfactory, the intending groom and his family will be asked to pay the consent-fee (*owo ijohun*) (Ajisafe 1946:47-49). The woman will then be permitted to start the process of courtship with the man. The consent fee includes equal numbers of kegs/cases of palm wine/gins each for the bride's father and his relatives and for the bride's mother and her relatives. The consent fee also involves sixteen kolanuts (*obi ajopa*: an emblem of security for the two parties) to be given to the bride's father who shares them out among his relatives and friends. Other aspects of the fee are sixteen bitter kolanut (*orogbo*: a symbol of long-life) and a pint of *oyin* (bee's honey: an emblem of sweetness and happiness). The payment of the consent fee marks the start of the formal betrothal period. The betrothal period (engagement) may last for about ten years but may not go on when the woman is twenty-five.

During the betrothal period, the husband-to-be has a number of obligations to fulfill toward his fiancée's family. First, the man is required to give the best quality of his farm products to his fiancée's parents on an annual basis. Second, the man is expected to give money, goods and services to his prospective in-laws on special occasions including the death of his fiancée's parents or paternal or maternal grandparents.

Third, the groom may also be called upon by his fiancée's parents to help with the building and rebuilding of houses. The groom usually goes with his *egbe* (mutual aid association) to assist his fiancée's parents. In Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, *egbes* are not institutionalized age-groups or age-sets. Institutionalized age-sets, much like those in many places in East Africa (Duany 1992: 200-205; Mwangi 2003: 42-48), are part of the

institutional heritage of the Yoruba communities such as Ijebu and Ekiti (Fajana 1968: 232-239). A groom's *egbe* in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is an association of individuals who move within more or less an exclusive group based on common interests<sup>59</sup>. Members offer mutual help to one another in turn (*aro*) or in the hope that the service will be returned in the future (*owe*). The association may break up whenever its members do no longer share common interests. One important difference is that in Ibadan and Abeokuta, members of the groom's *egbe* (association) may come from the diverse groups of individuals in his community. In Ile-Ife, membership of the groom's *egbe* is however limited to the jurisdiction of his Yoruba group because of the distrust between the different groups in Ile Ife: Ife and Oyo elements (F1; I3; I6; A5; A15).

On the part of the would-be bride, certain obligations are essential to be performed for her to demonstrate that she is of good character (*omoluwabi*). She must not have sexual intercourse with the groom or any man before her wedding. Her groom, as a man of good character (*omoluwabi*), contributes to the observance of this obligation by staying away from her during the betrothal period. If it is impossible to avoid a meeting with her groom, the woman must cover her face with a cloth. This may occur when she is asked by her prospective parents-in-law to come and greet them. Payment of the consent fee gives the groom a claim of remedy against any man that has a sexual relationship with his fiancée during and after the betrothal period.

The betrothal period formally ends when the wedding (*igbeyawo*) occurs. Before the wedding, the groom and his family pay a dowry in a ceremony called *idana*, the making of *ana* (acceptable marriage kinship). The dowry involves forty *obi ajopa* (kolanut) as a symbol of security, forty *orogbo* (bitter kolanut) as an emblem of long life,

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<sup>59</sup> The interests may resolve around farming activities and other crafts such as hunting, blacksmithing, etc.

*oyin* (bees' honey) as a symbol of happiness, *atare* (alligator peppers) as a symbol of fruitfulness, and local drinks (Ajisafe 1946). *Owo ijohun* (consent fee) and dowry as well as the services the groom and his family render during and after the wedding constitute bride-price among the Yoruba. Wedding ceremony usually takes place after the payment of dowry. ***Despite the differences among the three Yoruba communities, the provision of marriage contracts corresponds to the scale of their effects since the negotiation of the contracts mostly involves the affected families without any reference to a single head.***

As a result of contacts with Europeans, marriages among many young Yoruba people of today are however contracted with the mutual consent of the man and the woman involved without much regard for preliminary investigations by their families. The general rules for contracting and insuring acceptable marriages have thus been turned into norms. Young Yoruba people of today are less concerned about the consequences they may suffer if the marriage requirements described earlier are disregarded. In the case of Ile-Ife, the rule that forbids marriages between Ife and Oyo elements remain in force. However, many Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta still base socially acceptable marriages on some of the general conditions highlighted earlier. These are the traditions of seeking the blessing of parents and payment of bride-prices that have a lot to do with marriage stability as explained in the next sub-section.

#### **4.2.3 Marriage Stability**

Bride-price serves as a mechanism for ensuring marriage stability among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. It both represents the commitment to the



marriage by the families of the couple and serves as a safeguard against breaking the commitment. It is a huge investment which may be very difficult for an unfaithful woman or/and her family to refund. When a woman is found cheating on her husband, her parents, as individuals of good character (*omoluwabi*), have the obligation to disown her outright. The unfaithful woman usually finds herself in a situation where no man of good character (*omoluwabi*) will want to marry her. The difficulty of paying back the bride-price and the resultant shame the woman may bring to herself and her family usually compel Yoruba women in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to be morally faithful to their husbands.

The belief of the Yoruba people against re-marriage also contributes substantially to marriage stability. The first man a woman is married to remains her legal husband for life. Subsequent “husbands” are regarded as her concubines. The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta believe that a woman who is of good character (*omoluwabi*) cannot be married more than once in a lifetime. When there is a conflict between a man and his wife, the families of both parties usually intervene to save the marriage rather than have the relationship dissolved. This rests on the belief that *a ki mo oko omo ka tun mo ale e* (we cannot first know the husband and then the concubine). In addition, *orogbo* (bitter kolanut), which is part of the bride-price, supports the belief of the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta against divorce. Bitter kolanut signifies that the marriage is for life. Divorce is however popular among many married Yoruba people of today since formalized rules under the “modern Nigeria state” enable individuals to break up their marriage contracts without incurring huge costs or suffering social shame.

In addition, bride-price establishes the woman's husband as the father of her children, whether or not the children are biologically traceable to the man. This is buttressed by a proverb, *eni to ni obi loni omo inu e* (the owner of a kolanut tree owns its fruits). The proverb simply means that the man who paid the bride-price over a woman is the legal father of her children. However, bride-price does not give an open ticket to the man to maltreat his wife/wives. The husband is required not to be cruel to his wife. He may lose the huge investments he has made to marry the woman whenever she moves out of his house for his cruelty.

A man may nevertheless resort to some extreme measures to prevent persistent sexual infidelity by any of his wives. *Magun*, don't assault sexually, is a common extreme mechanism for making married woman avoid sexual infidelity. *Magun* is a highly effective charm used by a man on his wife who is suspected of sexual infidelity. It could be a charmed thread or broomstick put across the path of an unsuspecting infidel woman. Once the woman crosses the charmed object, she becomes a mobile human poison. If the woman and her secret lover have sexual intercourse within seven days, her secret lover will die, otherwise the woman will die (Ayo 2002: 196). To avoid such a dire consequence, Yoruba woman in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta usually avoid sexual infidelity that can create marriage instability.

The existence of children is another cause of marriage stability among the Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The Yoruba people attach great importance to having children as a major reason for marriage. When a marriage tie produces children, the Yoruba mother will not want to divorce her husband even in the face of serious conflicts. The desire among Yoruba mothers in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is to endure diverse

situations and keep their marriage ties. This is to enable them to contribute to the process of enculturation for their children and thereby help to open the children to the acceptable local traditions so that they can participate meaningfully in the life of the community. Significant differences however characterize the socialization process<sup>60</sup> in the three Yoruba communities. The differences can be understood by looking at childhood training and enculturation in the three Yoruba communities.

#### **4.2.4 Childhood Training and Enculturation among the Yoruba**

Childhood training and enculturation among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is an important process of learning locally acceptable standards of good character that affect both the social and intellectual development of an individual. The process also opens young Yoruba to occupational training. The provision of childhood training and enculturation among the Yoruba is a co-productive responsibility<sup>61</sup> that goes beyond a child's parents. The Yoruba believe that *enikan ni bimo, gbogbo aye ni ba a a wo o* (that is, while a child is born by one woman, his full training is the co-productive task of many individuals). The strategy of co-producing childhood training and enculturation among the Yoruba is important because what an individual grows up with shapes how he participates in the life of his community. Common means often adopted in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta to teach young Yoruba the prevailing beliefs, virtues and

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<sup>60</sup> This process is promotion in the decision process aspect of the Policy Sciences Approaches through which shared values and perspectives are promoted.

<sup>61</sup> Drawing upon E. Ostrom's (1996) definition of co-production in her article: "Crossing the Great Divide: Coproduction, Synergy, and Development" in *World Development* 24, no. 6 (1996): 1073-87, I similarly use the concept of co-productive responsibility to mean the process through which inputs used for childhood training and enculturation are contributed by individuals who are not in the same immediate family.

common rules include the use of songs, myths, past experiences, proverbs, folktales, folklore, tribal marks, poems, and so on (Fadipe 1970; Ayo 2002).

A large part of the early training of a child is the direct responsibility first of the mother and next of other members of the immediate family including the father, the father's wives, his full and half siblings as well as cousins living in the same or different compounds as the case may be. Other individuals assume indirect responsibility, and they include unrelated co-residents in the child's father's compound (*agboile*) and members of the child's father's neighborhood (F15).

Children of the Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta are at liberty to receive socialization from either maternal or paternal relatives or both, not minding what Yoruba groups the relatives associate with or belong to. This may occur when the mother of such children dies or when there is a serious conflict between their parents that prompts maternal or paternal relatives or both to take custody of the children. Difficulty however exists in Ile-Ife for the children of intermarriages between Ife and Oyo elements to receive childhood training from their maternal relatives in the area controlled by the hostile group. Persistent hatred generated over the constitutional standing of the individual, which has been stoked by growing sense of group loyalty in Ile-Ife, has limited childhood training and enculturation to the father's side (F2; F7).

Beginning with the mother of the Yoruba child and his immediate family, the process of childhood training and education helps him to develop the acceptable cognitive framework associated with his immediate family. The mother has the duty to acquaint the child with knowledge of the acceptable linguistic dialect of the Yoruba language along with sanitary and aesthetic rules, norms and rules of relating to others.

One of the most important aspects of the training involves learning to communicate with the mutually intelligible dialect of the Yoruba group or community in which the child finds himself. Abeokuta alone has four mutually intelligible dialects with slight group variations across the four sections into which Abeokuta is broadly divided. The equivalent of the English “Yes”, for example, is differently expressed among the four groups as *Ba wa* for Egba Ake, *Beni* for Egba Oke-Ona, *Beni re* for Egba Gbagura, and *Bawun ni* for Owu Egba. They, however, use *Are* or *kide* as a common exclamation remark along with many expressions that give members of the four diverse groups a strong sense of shared community as citizens of Abeokuta rather than as group members. The sense of shared community finds expressions in a common saying that *Egba o ki jara won ni yan* (that is, the Yoruba people of Abeokuta share common understanding or do not disagree with one another) (A3;A14; A16).

Similarly, Ibadan is an agglomeration of diverse individuals with different Yoruba dialects. A relatively homogenous dialect has been evolved in Ibadan (Ibadan dialect) to solidify a great sense of shared community among its diverse inhabitants. This has benefited from the beliefs that Ibadan *o ki se ile enikan* (Ibadan is no man’s ancestral home) and *Ibadan kii gba onile bi ajeji* (Ibadan never blesses the natives as much as the strangers) (I3; I31; Falola 1984; Watson 2003).

In sharp contrast, Ife and Oyo elements identify with Ife dialect and Oyo dialect respectively. The dialect polarization has promoted group loyalty rather than shared community. *Ewuro* (bitter leaves), *enu* (mouth) and many other words are pronounced differently between Ife and Oyo elements<sup>62</sup>. Most individuals from either Ife or Oyo

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<sup>62</sup> I lived in Ile-Ife from 1986 up until 2000 when I left for the United States for graduate studies. I became a refugee in May 2000 and was evacuated to a refuge camp on the Obafemi Awolowo University Campus

group in Ile-Ife thus remain exclusively identified with their fathers' dialects without a common dialect to instill a sense of shared community in members of the two groups (F2).

The mother teaches the relevant dialect to her child with the use of songs and vocal communication. Through the use of his Yoruba group's linguistic dialect, a child is able to understand the behavior of the people in his environment.

Playful analogies are also used by mothers and older siblings to enable a child to develop and increase his knowledge of numbering, such as *eni bi eni* (one is one), *aji bi aji* (two is two), *eta ntagba* (three is like stinging a calabash), *erin woroko* (four is crooked), etc<sup>63</sup>. As Yoruba children in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta grow up, errands for parents and older siblings serve to instruct them in carrying objects and in finding neighborhood locations. The social skills needed for verbal and commercial transactions in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are also learned in the process of running errands.

Yoruba children also learn more about shared beliefs, virtues and common rules through the efforts of their parents, older siblings and neighbors. Parents, older siblings and neighbors, either individually or jointly, help in teaching children to respect older siblings, elders and leaders, to abhor lying, and to speak the truth.

Relevant proverbs are used to drum into the ears of the erring child the gravity of his action. Disrespect to elders, theft and sexual impropriety are punished sometimes by flogging and, in most cases, by warnings against a recurrence. To strengthen rule-

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following a complete breakdown of law and order from the violent conflicts between Oyo and Ife elements. I had followed events in both Ibadan and Abeokuta before 2000.

<sup>63</sup> Ayo's (2002: 122) *Public Administration and the Conduct of Community Affairs among the Yoruba in Nigeria* gives a general view about this aspect of child education that can be generalized to Ile-Ife, Abeokuta and Ibadan.

conformance, individuals are made to believe in the potency of blessings and curses for being in the right and in the wrong respectively. Young Yoruba are made to believe that such blessings and curses proceed from *orisas* (lesser gods), *Eleda* (the creator), and ancestors who were of good character during their lifetimes.

Personal observations are another means by which Yoruba children learn shared beliefs, strategies, norms and rules for developing team spirit with others. Children observe and imitate how the people of their ages and those who are older behave in given circumstances. When a man has more than one wife, each wife has to look after the interests of her children. The man's children and their mothers nevertheless learn to see one another as belonging to one family in many ways. Adult children must eat from the same bowl. Their mothers (the wives of the man) must share the same water pot. It is forbidden for any of the wives to have a separate water pot. A wife who keeps a separate water pot or does not allow her children to eat together with the children of other wives may otherwise be regarded as a witch or a suspect whenever a family member dies in mysterious circumstances. Combining together as a team within the immediate family thus serves to instruct young Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in appreciating the value of cooperation with members of their families.

The equality of children with older individuals is also emphasized in the process of enculturation. Hence the sayings, *agba ti o je ajewehin ni yio ru igba re de ile* (an elder who consumes everything without leaving a remnant will himself carry his calabash home) and *Baale ile ti o ba nba omo ile ja/binu, idobale re yoo din kan* (family/compound head that gets angry with or cheat family/compound members will suffer diminishing respect). These sayings imply that individuals (children and elders

alike) are required to do unto others as they would have others do unto them (Akinjogbin 2002). This is applicable largely within the family units among Ife and Oyo elements but not in the relationships between Oyo and Ife elements, the golden rule characterizes human relationships at most levels of problem-solving in Ibadan and Abeokuta where individuals relate to one another as equals.

Some differences also characterize the shared values taught to individuals in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Among Ife elements in Ile-Ife, children are brought up knowing that they are the children of *Oduduwa* (the first *Ooni*), that they are to submit to the *Ooni* and his chiefs as community fathers (*awon baba ilu*), and that they are lords over Oyo elements who are considered mere laborers and lesser human beings. Treating Oyo elements as laborers to work their land, Ife elements are, as a result, “not at all enterprising, being unduly given to leisure” to the extent that they are popularly known as palm wine drinkers (*emu ni Ife mu*) (Oladoyin 2001:210).

The failure to put in place commonly understood and agreed upon constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife has led Oyo and Ife elements to adopt hatred-laden sayings as shared strategies in shaping the cognitive abilities of members of their respective groups. Oyo elements instruct their children with the saying, *bi e ba ri omo ejo, e maa see loore*, meaning, if you see the children of a snake (that is, Ife elements), kill them. On the other hand, Ife elements have reciprocated by educating their children with the saying, *akoniloro ni awon Modakeke (Oyo elements) ti a ko gbodo gba laaye*, that is, Oyo elements are looters of Ife elements’ riches/property and they (Oyo elements) must not be given any breathing space (F2). Mutually destructive enculturation in Ile-Ife has reinforced the development of the basic value of exclusionary bonds by each group such



that Oyo and Ife elements do not share the same associations that can nurture inter-group cooperation (F7).

In sharp contrast, the basic goal of the co-productive task of childhood training and enculturation in Abeokuta and Ibadan rests on promoting increased enlightenment and productive entrepreneurships among individuals who experiences themselves as equals (I10; A5; Imoagene 1976; Falola 1984). The mutually beneficial process of enculturation in the two Yoruba communities have benefited greatly from the emphasis placed on equality of individuals and freedom from the traditional constraints of the rule of submission. As a result, inhabitants of Ibadan and Abeokuta have been open to new ideas, which in particular enabled them to accommodate freed slaves who were literate in both Yoruba and English in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The freed slaves used their potentials to affect childhood training and enculturation in both Yoruba communities (Awe 1964; Ajisafe 1998).

Occupational training is another aspect of the process of childhood training and enculturation among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. To be hard working and distinguish oneself in a chosen occupation is to be of good character (*omoluwabi*). Deliberate efforts are usually made to teach young Yoruba specific occupational skills along with the virtue of devotion to duty (Fadipe 1970; Ayo 2002).

Common occupations among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta include farming, native surgery and midwifery, hunting, warfare, blacksmithing, processing of indigo dye-materials, weaving, soap-making, pottery, wood-calving, drumming and dancing, and trading in various products. While every immediate family engages in farming, many compounds (*agboiles*) identify largely with certain

occupations. It is not uncommon to find among the Yoruba *agboiles* (compounds) such as *agboile onilu* (drummer-compounds), and *agboile jagun* (warrior-compounds), *agboile alagbede* (blacksmith-compounds) and so on.

Specialization by individuals in some of these occupations was largely based on sex before contacts with Europeans. Hunting, warfare, and drumming were mostly for men. Women undertook such tasks as weaving, soap-making and pottery. Today, many of these occupations are no longer conterminous with sex boundaries as men and women now acquire skills in similar occupations.

Most Yoruba children begin occupational training as apprentices in their parents' occupations around the age of six (F2; I6; I23; I37; A11; Fadipe 1970). This can be made clear by examining training in farming, blacksmithing and some other occupations identified in the discussion that follows.

Children of farmers, for example, usually begin their training as early as the age of six. Male children<sup>64</sup> start their apprenticeship in farming by carrying light burdens of farm products and firewood (fuel wood) to and from the farm. As they become mature, around the age of ten in particular, farmers' children are assigned hoeing tasks. They are also familiarized with the science of soil and crop types, the appropriate direction of the sun and varied intensities of rainfall for planting specific crops, seasonal variations, and systematic instructions in what, when, where and how to plant and harvest.

Blacksmiths' male children also begin their training as early as six or seven years by helping their fathers to carry tools to the workshop, blowing the bellows, and observing the father at work. Between the starting age and age ten, blacksmiths' children

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<sup>64</sup> I started my farming apprenticeship under my maternal grandfather, Pa Samuel Abati Popoola, at the age of six and elementary school at the age of seven.

are expected to acquire some amount of blacksmithing technology. They may begin to apply the technology from age ten by trying their hands on making small knives and repairing traps for animals such as rats (*ekute*), rabbits (*ehoro*), grass-cutters or groundhogs (*oya*), and so on.

Many female children, on their part, learn the occupations of their mothers, which may be soap-making, weaving, pottery, preparation of indigo for dyeing, and processing of palm fruits (*ope*) into palm oil (*epo pupa*) or palm-kernel oil (*yanko*). Female children learn these skills first by helping their mothers in carrying things and later by testing their competence in carrying out more complex tasks relating to the occupations under consideration.

Acquisition of these occupational skills enables young Yoruba to have means of providing for themselves when they are old enough to be on their own. Children may however adopt occupations other than those of their parents, either before or after marriage. The liberty for young individuals to adopt preferred occupations exists more in Ibadan and Abeokuta than in Ile-Ife.

The number and types of occupations in which individuals can acquire skills have increased with contacts with Europeans and Christian missionaries. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, interchanges with Europeans and the attendant commercial activities triggered off a process whereby many young Yoruba began to acquire new occupational skills to become university professors, elementary and high/secondary school teachers, lawyers, accountants, tailors, bricklayers or builders, carpenters, vulcanizers, electrical rewirers, welders and so on (Ayo 2002). This is reflected in particular in the terms and conditions under which the Yoruba people in Abeokuta related to Europeans from 1848: “We wish

for lawful traders to trade with us. We want also those who will teach our children mechanical arts, agriculture, and how things are prepared...” (Ajisafe 1998: 90).

Unlike Ile-Ife, openness of the Yoruba people in Abeokuta and Ibadan to new ideas and newcomers gave young individuals in the two Yoruba communities the early opportunities to be the first set of the Yoruba people to acquire Western education to become individuals of distinction. Examples include Victor Omololu Olulonyo (Ibadan man and one of the first Yoruba to hold a doctoral degree in mathematics), Bola Ajibola (Abeokuta man and former judge of International Court of Justice at the Hague), Wole Soyinka (Abeokuta man and winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize in literature), Olukoye Ransome-Kuti (Abeokuta man and one of the best African medical practitioners), Thomas Adeoye Lambo (Abeokuta man, renowned psychiatrist, and eminent United Nations administrator), Moshudi Kashimawo Olawale Abiola (Abeokuta man and successful international business tycoon with huge business interests in the Middle East, Europe and Africa). Few individuals such as Wole Soyinka and Thomas Adeoye Lambo have productively married western education with their childhood training.

The diverse circumstances in the three Yoruba communities is consistent with Tocqueville’s (1966: 279-283) argument that when most participating individuals experience themselves as equals, they are more likely to have one common aim that can positively affect the process of childhood training and enculturation and that in turn enables the development of a flourishing political economy, as in the case of Abeokuta and Ibadan but as opposed to the situation in Ile-Ife

### **4.3 Kinship Formation and the Conduct of Individuals**

The process of childhood training and enculturation, as explained above, is a joint responsibility that goes beyond the immediate family. The immediate family is located within the compound (*agboile*). The compound (*agboile*) in the three Yoruba communities consists of a set of apartments/buildings clustered together, and represents a network of relationships beyond the immediate family. Exclusive attention to the immediate family, constituted and re-arranged by marriage, may distort our understanding of patterns of inheritance, mutual help, conflict resolution and land tenure as well as contributions of individuals outside the immediate family to childhood training and enculturation among the Yoruba. This can be made clear by examining kinship formation and its relevance to other networks of relationships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta.

Kinship serves as a basis for recognizing distant relationships; evoking cooperation, mutual help and loyalty in undertaking collective action; and shaping property relationships among kinfolks in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Marriage constitutes one way of forming kinship among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Kinship by marriage reaches out to the distant relatives of the man or woman to whom one is married or betrothed. Other types of kinship among the Yoruba people in the three communities are blood kinship and kinship by friendship ties. Kinship by blood embraces individuals to whom blood relationships can be traced both in the paternal and maternal lines. Kinship by friendship ties is based on the choice of both parties rather than by blood or marriage ties.

Relationships among kinfolks are characterized by certain terms such as *baba* (father), *iya* (mother), *egbon* (older siblings), *aburo* (younger siblings), *oko* (husband), *iyawo* (wife), *ana* (in-laws), *iyako* (husband's mother), *iyaale* (senior co-wives of the same husband by marriage in the same compound), *orogun* (co-wives of the same husband), *omo* (child), *omokunrin* (young boy), *omobirin* (young girl), *omo baba* (children of the same man but may be of the same or different women depending on the number of wives the man has), *omo iya* or *origun* (children of the same woman and the same man), and *iyekan* (children of the same woman but of different fathers).

Kin terms specify the order of seniority among kinfolks in Ile -Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Seniority among married Yoruba women in the immediate family is based on the order in which they were married into the immediate family. But seniority among the children in the family is by birth. The two types of seniority also automatically extend to the relationships in their husband's compound (*agboile*) where his wives and children live.

Individuals who are younger or junior by order of being in the family/compound by birth or marriage are required to show respect to older or senior ones. A man who has children from three wives, for example, has three separate *origuns* in his apartment (*ode*). The three wives share equal status as *oroguns* (wives of a polygamous man). But the most senior wife by order of marriage is both an *iya* (mother) and *iyale* (senior wife) to the other two wives. The most senior wife assigns duties to her junior wives. The second wife by marriage is *iyale* (senior wife) to the woman married into the family after her.

A married woman addresses the children born before her marriage into the compound as *oko mi* (my husbands), and the children address her as (*iyawo*). This is

because a woman is married not only to the man that has an exclusive sexual claim on her but also to the family. The relationship between a married woman who is *iyawo* and the children born before her marriage is reciprocal. The woman is required to respect her young *okos* (the children born before her marriage, male and female) with her young *okos* required to be nice to her.

An understanding of kin concepts also provides insights into property relationships among kinfolks in each community, especially as from 1858 when the law of inheritance was fundamentally modified. A man's siblings mainly from the mother's side (his *origun* and/or *iyekan*) can inherit his wives after his death. Children of the same woman but of different fathers relate to one another as *iyekan* but do not all constitute a single *origun*. Such children constitute separate *origuns* in their respective fathers' houses. Additionally, step-fathers are under no obligation, as a matter of Yoruba traditions, to give part of their property to their step-children<sup>65</sup>. The children of the same man but of three different women, for example, constitute three *origuns* in the man's apartment. No matter the number of children in each *origun*, the man's property is equally shared based on the number of his *origuns* (women that bore him living children). Other than what her husband gave her while he was alive, a childless woman inherits nothing upon her husband's death.

Children of the same mother in Ibadan and Abeokuta but of different fathers are equally entitled to their mother's property. The situation in Ile-Ife is however different regarding the question of inheritance from the mother's side. Children of an Ife woman who is married to a man that is an Oyo element, for example, cannot inherit land and

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<sup>65</sup> The step-father may willingly give his step-child whatever he (the step-father) desires, but such property may be reclaimed by his children.

houses their mother inherited from her Ife father vice versa. Their mother may sell the property and share the proceeds among her children. The right of the children to inherit such immovable property from the mother's side is unaffected if their father and mother belong to the same group in Ile-Ife.

The use of kin terms may however be imprecise in some situations and may not make any sense to a non-Yoruba speaker in distinguishing kinship formation by marriage, blood and friendship ties and assimilation. A child, for example, may address his uncle or an unrelated<sup>66</sup> co-resident as either *baba* (father) or *egbon* (which connotes elder relative or co-resident, male or female, brother or sister, cousins). Similarly, a man may call any of the children of his younger siblings and unrelated co-residents *omo mi* (my child). An English individual may mistake this for his biological child. *Baba* is used to address father and father's father when both are alive. Generally, a man's male cousins and unrelated co-residents in the generation above are grouped with his father along with the latter's brothers and are mostly addressed as *baba*. Similarly, a person's female cousins and unrelated co-residents in the generation above are categorized with his father's sisters as *iya*. A person refers to members of the generation below him as children, whether his own children or his nephews and nieces.

Of the three types of kinship described above, it is blood kinship that largely provides the basis for understanding the constitution of a lineage (*idile*) among the Yoruba. An *idile* (lineage) comprises of individuals (males and females) who are able to trace relationships by a series of accepted genealogical steps through the male line to their founding ancestor. Membership of an *idile* is not solely based on blood

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<sup>66</sup> Unrelated co-residents are individuals whose compound membership is based on friendship ties or assimilation without any blood and marital relationships.



relationships. Marriage contracts are other important tickets for membership of an *idile* among the Yoruba. When a woman is married, she becomes a member of her husband's *idile* without losing her membership of her father's *idile*. A controversial question among scholars of Yoruba kinship and networks of relationships beyond the immediate family revolves around whether membership in an *idile* is the primary determinant of an individual's social, economic and political role in all Yoruba communities.

#### **4.3.1 *Agboile* (Compound): Network of Relationships beyond the Immediate Family among the Yoruba**

Social anthropologists like Price (1933), Bascom (1944), Lloyd (1955, 1962) and Schwab (1955) were among early researchers that shared a similar conclusion about the relationship between Yoruba kinship and networks of relationships beyond the immediate Yoruba family. They felt that networks of relationships beyond the immediate Yoruba family can be understood by focusing on corporate lineages into which, according to these scholars, all Yoruba communities divided. Land, an important economic resource, was believed by these scholars to be held corporately by the lineage which exercised exclusive control over inheritance of land, conflict resolution, negotiations of marriage contracts, and mode of enculturation for lineage members. This is, however, an erroneous understanding of the complex and dynamic patterns of social networks among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. These scholars failed to consider the interactions between kinship by marriage, blood and friendship ties along with the recruitment of individuals of distinction in constituting non-lineage networks of relationships.

There is no questioning the fact that Yoruba kinship in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has a patrilineal emphasis with a virilocal pattern of residence on marriage. By

a virilocal pattern of residence, the husband and his wife/wives and children live together in an apartment located in the husband's compound. In Ibadan and Abeokuta, *agboiles* (compounds) were however founded by diverse sets of oppressed individuals (men and women) that were brought together by the need to seek better socioeconomic opportunities. Even though members of some compounds shared blood, marriage and friendship ties, the basic objective in Ibadan and Abeokuta was (still is) to attract men and women of distinctions. Most compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the 19<sup>th</sup> century extended open welcome to strangers, and allowed them to take up residence in their compounds and to enjoy equal rights with initial settlers. Thus, most compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta were (still are) heterogeneous comprising individuals related by blood, marriage and friendship ties. In the nineteenth century, the largest numbers of members of such compounds were admitted based on their daring, adventurous and distinctive abilities in warfare, craft industry and trade (Watson 2003:28; Fadipe 1970:100; A5; I10) as opposed to the assumption of homogenous lineage patterns among all the Yoruba people of Nigeria.

*Agboiles* (compounds) and lineage groups (*idile*) are not totally coterminous even in Ile-Ife that approximates the findings in the conventional wisdom. Strangers have been incorporated into some neighborhoods among Ife elements. Most Ife elements nevertheless base membership in their compounds on blood kinship and marriage ties. Strangers are permitted to form their own compounds even though they are required submit to the hierarchical system of obedience in Ile-Ife (Akinjogbin 1992:289). In addition, the part of Ile-Ife occupied by Oyo elements is made up of compounds founded by individuals from the Old Oyo Empire.

Co-residence in the compound as a small-scale governance unit, rather than genealogy, is therefore crucial in undertaking a comparative analysis of the networks of relationships beyond the immediate family in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. A compound (*agboile*) in each of the three Yoruba communities may consist of nine or more immediate families living together and cooperating together in managing negotiation of marriage contracts, inheritance, socialization, conflict resolution, land administration, and other issues of general interests that individual immediate families cannot handle.

Compounds in the three Yoruba communities share a number of similarities. The physical structure of the compound is similar across the three Yoruba communities. A nineteenth-century compound was an agglomeration of apartments (*ode*) adjoining each other with a common wall between adjacent apartments. The adjoining apartments formed a square enclosing an open space in the middle. Each apartment was occupied by an immediate family. The number of rooms in each apartment depended on the number of wives in the immediate family (Fadipe 1970). Today, a typical compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is a set of at least two buildings within which each wife may be entitled to a room.

Each compound manages its own interests. Every immediate family in the compound nevertheless confines its attention first to its own part of the compound and then to the rest of the compound (F25; I6; A11). The husband has a room. Each of his wives is also allocated a room. Children of tender age and females sleep with their mothers while grown-up male children sleep in their compound's verandah or the long passage inside in the compound. The husband provides food, clothing, and shelter for his immediate family. He supports his wives with some capital to start independent trade,

and encourages his children to acquire occupational skills. In some cases, the wives sell what their husbands produce and have a share of the proceeds for their efforts. The products may include farm products by farmer-husbands, hoes and knives by blacksmith-husbands, and animals from hunting expeditions by hunter-husbands.

Members of most compounds in the three Yoruba communities see themselves as belonging to unified individual sociopolitical units and engage in mutual behavioral relationships with one another. While blood tie and residential exogamy prevent individuals living in the same compound from engaging in marriage with each other, individuals within the compound eat and talk in the full view of everybody and share with members in need. Being of good character makes it incumbent on older members of any given compound to correct a child indulging in bad habits (I6). Intervention from members of the other immediate families in the compound may be necessary when co-wives quarrel. The peace-makers are required to be impartial in their judgments, and they are entitled to deference and respect in return for their impartial interventions.

Male children greet older individuals in the compound with flat prostration, and female children properly kneel down. This mode of deference implies neither passive obedience nor man worship among the Yoruba. It is rather reciprocal. Younger individuals may deny this mode of deference to any older individual who is not of good character (*omoluwabi*). Such an older individual is at the risk of receiving contemptuous looks.

The feeling of close-knit solidarity is strongly developed among members of compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Household utensils such as calabash bowls and pestles are freely lent and borrowed by members from the same and different

immediate families in the compound. Joint efforts are mobilized within the compound to maintain the compound's path. Members of neighboring compounds join in the regular maintenance of the rivers, streams and wells they use in common. When a man or a woman leaves some farm products or clothes to dry while away in the farm or market, adult individuals left in the compound have the duty to take care of the items when it rains. If they fail to take care of the items when it rains, they are treated as evil-minded individuals. Repetition of this kind of bad behavior puts the affected individuals at the risk of being denied cooperation and assistance from other members of the compound (Fadipe 1970).

Members of the compounds in each of the three Yoruba communities also support one another by offering help to their members in farming, building and rebuilding houses. Other forms of help include gifts for marriage, naming and funeral ceremonies of members.

Members also engage in *aro* and *owe* (traditional mutual aid associations) with one another and/or with non-members. *Aro* is a traditional mutual aid association of individuals of equal strength. Members are required to render services to one another in turn. These associations are common among farmers who call on their members to assist in planting, clearing, harvesting and doing other specified tasks. While there is no fixed order of rotation, members must reciprocate when called upon because their relationships are covenantal.

*Owe* is another traditional mutual aid mechanism that members of any given compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta can use to mobilize labor for undertaking tasks such as the building and re-building of a house and clearing land. A man's friends,

his sons-in-law (*ana*) and members of his compound may be involved. Like *aro*, the man is required to provide food for the participants. Unlike *aro*, the services rendered are voluntary. The host acts to be of good character when he honors calls from his friends and members of his compound for similar help. A man with slaves and *iwofa* (peons: his debtors who became his slaves until the debts were paid up) in the nineteenth century also had a ready source of labor for his occupation (Johnson 1921). *Aro* and *owe* may be formed by members of diverse Yoruba groups in Ibadan and Abeokuta (A3; A10; I2; I6). Mutual aid associations and other forms of inter-compound cooperation are however intra-group affairs in Ile-Ife where Oyo and Ife elements have developed exclusionary bonds, as depicted in Table 4.1, and mutually destructive relationships against each other (F7; F15; F21).

As members of the compounds in the three Yoruba communities combine together in helping one another, many of them specialize in specific tasks. The situation in Ile-Ife regarding occupational specialization is as much maneuvering as it is intriguing. Most compounds among Ife elements concentrate generally on farming and lending out their land to “incorporated” strangers and Oyo elements (unincorporated strangers) on a tenancy basis. A paltry number of Ife elements acquire skills, though not on a competitive basis, in occupations such as weaving, blacksmithing, wood-calving, dyeing and other crafts. Tested warriors are lacking among Ife elements as opposed to Oyo elements in Ile-Ife who are professional warriors and hunters. In spite of the repressive institutional environment, Oyo elements were more enterprising in the nineteenth century as they encouraged members of their compounds to acquire skills in warfare, hunting, farming, and blacksmithing before contacts with Europeans, Christianity and Islam (F7; F25).

The way constitutional arrangements shape inter-compound relationships among diverse groups in Ile-Ife has limited individuals in moving to compounds where they can best realize their potential, disabled mutually productive inter-compound competition, and allowed most Ife elements to own, control land, and exclude non-Ife elements from land. The situation in Ile-Ife is consistent with one of the findings of Amos Sawyer (1992: 49) about the Mel- and Mande-speaking societies in Liberia. Productive entrepreneurs have been limited in the Mel- and Mande-speaking societies in Liberia due to their principle of hierarchical control that defines the standing of individuals in the governance process and property relationships based on distance from the core lineage. It is on this basis that the lower status of Oyo elements in Ile-Ife can be understood vis-à-vis Ife elements that are members of the core lineage in Ile-Ife and that see themselves as superior to Oyo elements.

Most compounds in Abeokuta and Ibadan are however a mix of individuals with blood, marriage and friendship ties along with those assimilated on the basis of their distinctiveness in warfare, craft industry and trade. Unrelated members of compounds in Ibadan are more than those related by blood (I2; I4; I16; Falola 1984: 45). Many freed slaves from the transatlantic slavery trade and unrelated individuals were absorbed in most compounds in Abeokuta as equal associates (A3; A5; A6; Lawoye 1984; Lloyd 1962: 231, 255). Full rights enjoyed by original settlers are continually extended to newcomers since there is a common understanding that human beings were equally created by *Eleda* (the creator) and are equal before his law. Within the compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta, both consanguinity (*alajobi*) and co-residentship (*alajogbe*)<sup>67</sup>, as

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<sup>67</sup> Consanguinity (*alajobi*) and co-residentship (*alajogbe*) describe rules of association respectively in settings formed by blood kinship and settings constituted by friendship and covenantal relationships.

a result, are simultaneously at work as blood kin and unrelated members interact with one another as covenanters.

Many of the compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta also identify exclusively with specific occupations such that there exist *agboile alagbede* (blacksmith compounds), *agboile balogun/jagun* (warrior-compounds), *agboile afingba* (calabash-calving compounds), and *agboile onilu* (drummer-compounds). Unlike Ile-Ife, the Yoruba people of Abeokuta and Ibadan enjoy freedom to dissociate themselves from their fathers' compounds or adopted compounds and attach themselves to compounds of successful individuals in trade, warfare and craft industry. An individual may move to his mother's compound, his father's mother's compound, or his mother's mother's compound if he feels the new compound will enable him to achieve distinction in his preferred area of productive entrepreneurship.

It does not follow that all compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta have always based membership on prospective candidates' talents. The obvious fact is that the extent to which entrepreneurial opportunities have been improved for individuals in compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has been greatly affected by the degree of membership choice and openness (I10; I3; A5). Few compounds in Ibadan like those of Are Ona Kakanfo Oluyedu and Otun Kakanfo Lalanle (two great compounds of the 1830s) that based their membership exclusively on blood kinship, for example, became unpopular after the death of their founders and consequently passed into oblivion. Their kin-based institutions disabled them from attracting distinguished men and women in warfare, craft industry and trade (Falola 1984: 45-46).

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Akinsola Akinwowo's (1980) *Ajobi and Ajogbe: Variations on the Theme of Sociation* provides more useful details on these two types of rules.



In sharp contrast, most compounds in Ibadan such as those of Ogunmola at Ojaba, Oderinlo at Ojaba and Are Latosa recruited their members based on individuals' prowess in warfare, trade and craft industry rather than blood/consanguinity ties. These compounds also mobilized resources to support their young members to acquire skills in different occupations, and engaged in productive competition with other compounds. As a result, these nonkin-compounds were able to boast of men and women of successful accomplishments in trade, warfare, farming, and craft industry in the nineteenth century (I6; I16; Falola 1984: 54-56). In the same way, openness to freedom for nonkin to join most compounds in Abeokuta has produced results similar to those in Ibadan (A3; A11; Lawoye 1984).

The relatively similar circumstances in both Ibadan and Abeokuta are supportive of the conjecture that greater residential choice tends to promote increasing productive competition and efficiency among local governance units (V. Ostrom, Tiebout & Warren 1961; Oakerson 1999: 109). The contrasting circumstances in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are also in line with the argument that institutional arrangements that enable transactions among nonkin are more capable of improving entrepreneurial opportunities for members of any given political economy, be it a compound or the entire community (E. Ostrom, L. Schroeder, & S. Wynne 1993: 63).

If specialization can be conceptualized as a process enabling individuals to accumulate capabilities and skills in particular tasks they can do better than others, the pattern of occupational specialization in Ibadan and Abeokuta is a serious challenge to the logic of domination in the development literature that the centralized government is the most important means by which specialization and participation in the economic

activities can be facilitated (Esman 1963; Apter 1965; Almond and Powell 1966; Abovade 1968; Huntington 1968; Mabogunje 1980; Akeredolu-Ale 1985; Oyovbaire 1985; Mkandawire 2001; Bujra 2002:41-43; Edigheji 2005). The logic of domination proposed by these scholars as the most important foundation for economic development is a reflection of inadequate understanding of how a huge diversity of complex institutional arrangements in human societies affects conditions for mutually productive ways of life.

Other differences and similarities that characterize Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta can be understood by looking at inheritance law, roles of compound leaders and other governing units. I will first consider inheritance.

#### **4.3.2 Law of Inheritance**

The law of inheritance is part of the constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Things that can be inherited are clothes, cutlasses, swords and hoes, widows, slaves, peons, guns, rights to farmlands, houses and other moveable and immoveable property (Coker 1966). Individuals may inherit property from their living parents. The question of who can inherit becomes more important when an individual dies. It is forbidden in the three Yoruba communities for older individuals to inherit what their dead younger relatives left behind. The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta regard the death of their younger relatives as a disaster. In order not to witness such a disaster, the Yoruba people usually pray, *ki iku ma pa eleye wa loju wa* (may death not take away our younger relatives while we are alive). Individuals who show an

interest, remote or distant, in inheriting what their younger relatives left behind tend to be treated as evil-minded.

Up until 1858, the principal beneficiaries of a deceased person (male and female) were his younger siblings from the mother's line. Individuals who contributed to the funeral of the deceased could also benefit from his possessions. In the case of a deceased man, his wives were part of the property to be inherited. The younger siblings of the deceased who inherited his wives automatically assumed full responsibility for the women's children. If a widow was not pleased with a particular sibling, the widow had the right to attach herself to a preferred sibling (Ajisafe 1946:76; Coker 1966:36).

The deceased's children had no right to their father's property other than his farmland. The farmland the deceased left behind was divided up among his children. The step-father used as his own the portions of the land allocated to his step-children: the children of the woman he inherited. The land was usually turned over to the children when they got married.

In a twist of fate, contacts with Europeans radically triggered a fundamental modification of the law of inheritance in Ibadan in 1858. The innovation later spread to Abeokuta and Ibadan. Before 1858, many younger siblings of distinguished warriors, traders, craftsmen and craftwomen had developed less regard for devotion to duty. Their unproductive attitudes rested on the fact that they were traditionally guaranteed the right to inherit the considerable wealth their enterprising older relatives would leave behind. From the middle of the nineteenth century, a growing number of the Yoruba people in Ibadan began to appreciate the Euro-Christian idea that makes the children the primary beneficiaries of their parents, thus seeing the existing law of inheritance as capable of

discouraging younger siblings from engaging in productive entrepreneurships (Johnson 1921: 326).

At a deliberative meeting in 1858, the Yoruba people in Ibadan unanimously put the flexibility of their constitutional arrangements to test. They undertook an unprecedented institutional innovation that began to make the children of deceased persons the principal beneficiaries of their property as from 1858. This was to encourage younger siblings to have regard for devotion to duty and thereby accumulate wealth that their children can inherit when they die. The institutional change in Ibadan is in line with a view shared by Nicholson (1993) and V Ostrom (1987b, 2005) that mutually productive innovations are more likely to occur when a constitutional order, as in the case of Ibadan, enables open deliberations among individuals who relate to one another as equals. The change was immediately accepted in Abeokuta and later in Ile-Ife.

The new law supports equal division of a deceased man's possessions according to the number of women that bore him children. An exception in the application of the new inheritance law, as earlier explained, is in the case of the children of women who are married to men from the hostile group in Ile-Ife. Such children may not inherit from their mothers' sides.

This unparalleled institutional change is however contrary to the fear raised by the Mamadou Dia-led AM 90s research project at the World Bank that institutions based on people's experiences and beliefs may not be capable of responding to changes and challenges by taking advantage of information from their external environment. Not only did the flexible constitutional order in Ibadan allow its inhabitants to take advantage of the Euro-Christian idea, it also motivated the people of Ibadan to successfully convince

other Yoruba communities to embrace the new inheritance law. There is then a need for research to sort out progress-hindering institutions crafted by individuals from those that are useful and can adapt productively to information from the external environment.

### **4.3.3 Selection, Duties and Privileges of Compound Heads**

Common understanding and shared agreement about rules are important for their effectiveness. Individuals within the compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta commonly understand the rules for regulating their behavior including the 1858 inheritance law. The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta also believe that some individuals have to serve as *oloris* (leaders) of compounds and be saddled with the task of enforcing rules and imposing sanctions against rule-infractions.

In Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, each compound has an *olori* (head). They are addressed as *Baale* in Ile-Ife, *Mogaji* in Ibadan, and *Mogaji* or *Baale* in Abeokuta. Age is largely the main ticket for being a compound head in Ile-Ife. Success in warfare or other crafts is an important qualification for compound headship in Ibadan and Abeokuta. Interested candidates are also required to seek the support of their compound members and go through processes of nomination and election at the compound assembly. The candidate with the simple majority support in the election emerges as the compound head in Abeokuta and Ibadan (A5; A11; F16; Albert *eta.al* 1995:26). While details have been given in Sub-Section 3.4.2 in Chapter 3 about other criteria an individual must meet to be a compound head, head and elders of any given compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta form a collective-choice arena for making operational rules for their members, resolving conflicts, enforcing rules and imposing sanctions against rule-infractions.

Consistent with Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1 of this study (also see Elinor Ostrom 1990, 2005), this explains why relatively effective and accountable monitoring is found to characterize most compounds as small-scale governance units in Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ile-Ife. This is explained further in subsequent discussion.

The compound head carries out a number of functions with support from elders and heads of the immediate families in his compound. Members of the compound recognize the authority of their compound head to discourage and punish antisocial behavior such as theft, incest and adultery. The compound head may order any member of his compound to flog young members indulging in theft and sexual waywardness. Repeated offences might be punished in the nineteenth century by imprisoning the offender in the compound's dungeon (Fadipe 1970). The compound head commands increasing respect in punishing antisocial behavior like theft when he and his compound elders ensure that adult male members of the compound have a means of livelihood<sup>68</sup>.

With the assistance of immediate family heads, the compound head also resolve serious conflicts between members of the same compound. This offers access to low-cost arenas for conflict resolution for members, which is a condition for cooperation as specified in Design Principle 6 discussed in chapter 1 of this study. In Ibadan and Ile-Ife, disputants are not required to pay any fee to the compound head and elders in return for their role in conflict resolution. But disputants may give compound heads in Abeokuta some presents (a bottle of gin) after he has successfully resolved conflicts (A13; Blair 2002). The head and elders of any given compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has full jurisdiction in conflict resolution when members of their compound are involved.

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<sup>68</sup> Based on the adapted Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1, the possibility of effective monitoring and enforcement of rules within the compound rests on the direct involvement of the affected individuals or their leaders using graduated sanctions.

Conflicts involving members of different compounds are handled by heads and elders of the affected compounds. Collection of levies for compound festivals and military levies is another responsibility of the compound head.

With duties come reciprocal privileges. The compound head enjoys a number of privileges. He can call on members of his compound to help in carrying out farming activities including clearing, planting and harvesting. In recognition of his leadership role, members of his compound give him gifts including farm products along with animals and fowls.

The ability of any given compound head to continue to enjoy the above privileges and enforce rules can be weakened through his persistent failures to meet the expectations of members of his compound. Poor performance may induce members of any given compound to compare their head with his predecessors and colleagues in other compounds, usually to his disadvantage. In Ibadan and Abeokuta, dissatisfied members of any given compound may move to another compound or found a new compound without losing full rights of citizenship including aspiring to leadership positions and owning land. Among Ife elements, members of any given compound may move to their maternal compounds but their rights to land and leadership positions can mostly be exercised in their fathers' compounds. Most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife do not stand to lose any access to land when they move to another compound. They can negotiate tenancy rights in their new compounds.

#### **4.4 Neighborhood, Sectional and Community-Wide Governance**

The foregoing discussion has shown that no single individual or few individuals in any given Yoruba community can handle most issues that affect different individuals and their local units. As members of different compounds engage in transactions, conflicts are bound to occur. Without appropriate mechanisms for conflict resolution and effective enforcement of secure property rights, relations of production and access to means of productions among members of diverse local jurisdictions in any given community can be substantially impaired. Institutional arrangements must then be created to provide and maintain the necessary conditions for peace and security for the overall development of the community.

In analyzing successful conditions for addressing collective action problems, Elinor Ostrom (1990: 90) argues that conditions for mutually productive collective action tend to be facilitated where most participating individuals enjoy the right (Design Principle 4) to design and maintain appropriate (fair) boundaries for membership (Design Principle 1) and congruent rules (Design Principle 2) in autonomous and independent collective-choice arenas (Design Principle 3) to achieve effective monitoring and graduated sanctions (Design Principle 5) and to enable most individuals to have access to local low-cost mechanisms for conflict resolution (Design Principle 6). These conditions work together to create a living process that enables institutional channels of cooperation (Design Principle 7) among diverse jurisdictions co-existing and competing in solving larger-scale problems such as public peace and security, with most individuals within the larger political economy standing to gain in some way (Berman 1983:5-10).



#### 4.4.1 Neighborhood and Sectional Network of Relationships

Substantial differences characterize how constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have enabled or disabled these necessary conditions. The differences can be clearly understood by examining patterns of relationships outside the compound in the three Yoruba communities.

As explained earlier in this chapter, inter-compound conflicts in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta cannot be addressed with the intra-compound network of relationships. Compounds affected by certain problems of collective action will have to combine in handling the problems. Neighborhoods were created to handle such problems in the three Yoruba communities but with different terms and conditions of relationships reflecting their differing constitutional orders. Each neighborhood in the nineteenth century consisted of a set of compounds. To be able to understand the differences in the neighborhood network of relationships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, I will look at each community in turn starting with Ile-Ife.

##### 4.4.1.1 Ile-Ife

Compounds in Ile-Ife are grouped into *adugbo*<sup>69</sup> (neighborhoods) based on geographical contiguity. The neighborhoods, alternatively called wards, include Iremo, Moore, Ilode, Ilare, Okerewe, Itakogun and Isale-Ife. Most Ife elements live in the first six. Most Oyo elements occupy Isale-Ife, also known as Modakeke.

Among Ife elements, each neighborhood has a number of (*ogbon*) sub-divisions. Head of the neighborhood directly appoints a compound head in his neighborhood to

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<sup>69</sup> Neighborhoods are regarded as wards in Ile-Ife, townships in Abeokuta and neighborhoods in Ibadan. I choose to refer to all them as neighborhoods.

conduct the affairs of an *ogbon* on his behalf. The *ogbon* head can be removed at will by his neighborhood head in case of unresolved conflicting interests between the former and the latter. The oldest kingline compound in a given neighborhood supplies the neighborhood head. The appointment of the neighborhood head is subject to the approval of the *Ooni* (the king of Ile-Ife).

The compound heads in any given *ogbon* and the head of the *ogbon* form its collective-choice arena and handle inter-compound conflicts within the *ogbon* on the terms and conditions specified by the *Ooni* through their neighborhood head. The neighborhood head holds a court on a regular basis with his *ogbon* and compound heads to settle serious conflicts that cannot be handled within the *ogbons* in his neighborhood. To be of good character (*omoluwabi*), members of each neighborhood are required to obey the lawful orders of their neighborhood head who rules on behalf of the *Ooni* (Fasogbon 1985; Akinjogbin 1992: 292).

As previously explained in chapter 3 of this dissertation, neighborhood heads constitute a council of chiefs (*Iharefe*) that consider issues including land disputes and chieftaincy conflicts. *Modewa* (palace/inside chiefs) sit on the council to ensure that the interests of the *Ooni* are not compromised. Membership of *Iharefe* is open mostly to Ife elements. Apart from the fact that the *Ooni* has the ultimate authority to approve their appointment, *Iharefe* (neighborhood/ward heads) rule over their neighborhoods with delegated authority from the *Ooni*. The *Ooni* can withdraw the authority of any of the chiefs who goes against his interests. Not only is mutually productive competition hindered, the range of choice sets the chiefs and their subjects enjoy in addressing issues of particular interest to their respective neighborhoods and compounds is also extremely

limited. This problem is reflected in other aspects of the conduct of community affairs in Ile-Ife.

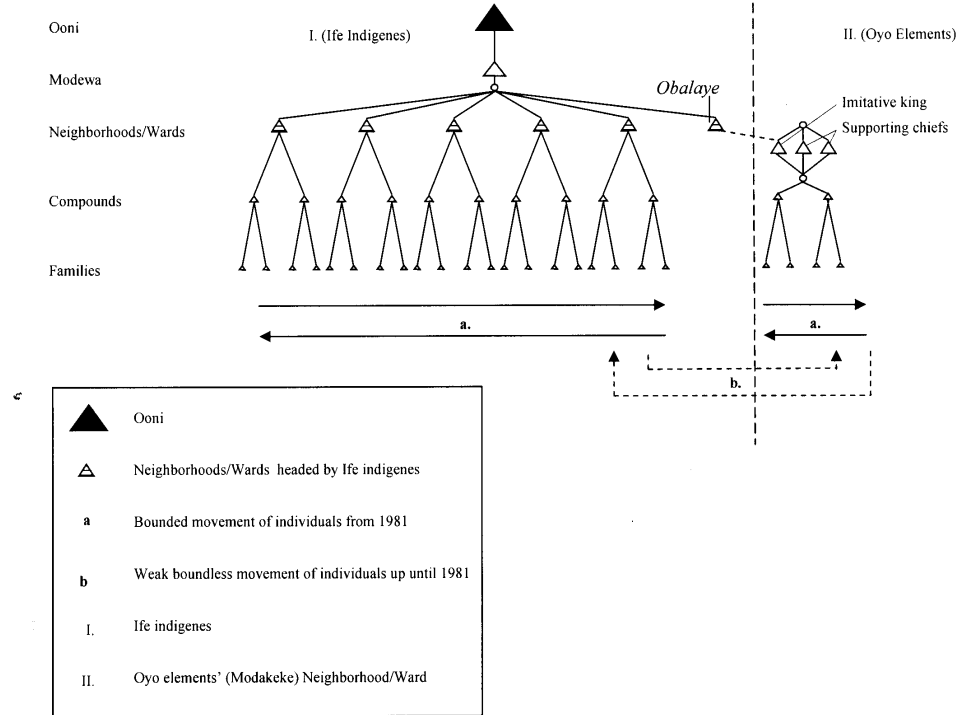
Women affairs are particularly assigned to female chiefs such as *Yeye Loja* (head of traders) and *Yeye Ojumu* (head of women). *Modewa* (the *Ooni*'s inside chiefs) ensure that women's leaders do not pursue interests that conflict with the *Ooni*'s. As a result, women's leaders in Ile-Ife play insignificant roles in the governance process. This is unlike Abeokuta and Ibadan where women and their leaders have autonomy to assert themselves and positively affect their respective political economies. This will further be explained in chapter 6 of this study. As explained in chapter 3 of this study, the *Ooni*'s inside chiefs (*Modewa*) oversee internal security, which may otherwise be left for individual compounds and neighborhoods to organize based on their specific security problems.

By virtue of their lower status, Oyo elements are required to give obedience to the system of hierarchal order in Ile-Ife. An Ife element is appointed as *Obalaye* (head of strangers), as shown in figure 4.4, to rule Oyo elements' neighborhood/ward on behalf of the *Ooni*. Consequently, the rule of submission in Ile-Ife has not facilitated the needed freedom for individuals to design and match their own institutional arrangements to their shared interests within their neighborhoods<sup>70</sup> (F5). Most compounds and neighborhoods among Ife elements are nevertheless nested within Ile-Ife's hierarchical constitutional order of control and command as represented on the left side of the perpendicular line in Figure 4.4.

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<sup>70</sup> This is contrary to conditions of proportional equivalence, autonomy and minimal recognition of rights in Design Principles 2, 3 and 4 discussed in chapter 1.

Figure 4.4: Hierarchical Authority Relationship and Bounded Associational Life in Ile-Ife



However, most Oyo elements neither have any shared understanding and common agreement about the hierarchical constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife as the fair basis of human relationships nor recognize the authority of the *Ooni* and Ife elements (including *Obalaye*) in enforcing the dominant constitutional arrangements over them<sup>71</sup>. In demonstration of their resentment against the rule of submission in Ile-Ife, Oyo elements have developed a different pattern of governance based on conditions of equality (F22; F25; F28)<sup>72</sup>. This is represented on the right side of the perpendicular line in Figure 4.4 with a relatively horizontal line signifying the rejection of the authority of the *Ooni* and

<sup>71</sup> As specified in Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1, monitoring and enforcement of rules are effective when rules are monitored by the affected individuals or individuals accountable to them using graduated sanctions. The situation in Ile-Ife makes this less likely.

<sup>72</sup> The institutional disconnection between Oyo and Ife elements is inconsistent with Design Principle 7 discussed in chapter 1 that collaboration among most individuals in a community is more likely when their institutional arrangements are nested together in such a way as to allow them to work out ways to address larger-scale problems including the provision of the peace and security of the community.

*Obalaye*. The perpendicular line in Figure 4.4 specifically shows the institutional disconnection between Oyo and Ife elements.

Based on their notions of human relationships, Oyo elements have organized their compounds into autonomous smaller groups of compounds within which inter-compound disputes are handled. Members of compounds and groups of compounds select their heads based on merits. Irresponsible heads are summarily dismissed after several warnings. Individuals within each group of compounds combine together and take actions to pursue joint interests. Compounds and groups of compounds enjoy autonomy and independence in dealing with their own affairs without any reference to a single head.

Mutually recognized autonomy for lower-level political units has created a living process for cooperation among Oyo elements in dealing with shared problems within their neighborhood or community (Modakeke). Some distinguished warriors and craftsmen among Oyo elements are constituted into a council of chiefs. The council *oversees the maintenance of peace and security among Oyo elements* without cooperating with *Ife elements in pursuit of public peace for the whole Ile-Ife*. Much like the selection onto the Ibadan council of chiefs, the arrangement operates on a promotion basis from a lower title to a higher title in the *Balogun* (military) line. In most cases, distinguished warriors compete to join the *Balogun* line. Whenever a chief dies or is dismissed for irresponsibility or declining military ability, the chief below him moves up by one step.

The same selection arrangement has been developed for the *Oosa* (spiritual) and the *Iyalode* (trade) lines of chiefs. Successful craftwomen/traders can join the *Iyalode* line. Spiritual chiefs do not go to war but provide spiritual and material support for the

war chiefs. Supplements are mobilized by trade chiefs. As a matter of constitutional conditions of equality, none of the leadership lines is the birth right of any given compound among Oyo elements. The three lines of chiefs are open to successful Oyo elements in different specialized tasks such as warfare, craft industry, trade and divinity (Olutobi and Oyeniya 1994: 46).

However, most Ife elements do not recognize the institutional arrangements that Oyo elements have developed<sup>73</sup>. The creation of different institutional arrangements by Oyo elements is regarded by most Ife elements as a gross violation of the dominant constitutional charters punishable by expulsion of offenders from Ile-Ife.

The failure of Ife elements to constitutionally expand choice sets for Oyo elements has consequently imposed a horrifying deadweight on the peace and security of Ile-Ife, as depicted in Table 4.1. The institutional problem has led Oyo and Ife elements to see each other as enemies rather than associates and to develop and use shared strategies of exclusionary bonds against each other<sup>74</sup>. Membership in Modakeke Progressive Union and Modakeke Youth Movement, for example, is open mainly to Oyo elements while Egbe Omo-Ibile Ife, Ife Day and Olojo Festival are open exclusively to Ife elements that see themselves as lords over Oyo elements (also see Table 4.1 for more details).

Also, efforts by Oyo elements to challenge the hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional order in Ile-Ife have led to series of breakdowns of law and order including

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<sup>73</sup> The failure to recognize the autonomy and right of Oyo elements to organize and make rules is contrary to Design Principles 3 and 4 discussed in chapter 1. This explains the absence of the condition in Design Principle 7.

<sup>74</sup> This is the pattern of interaction between most Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife generated by the impacts of the sociopolitical context on diverse action arenas, as generally specified in Figure 1.1 in chapter 1,

the violent conflicts of 1849-1878, 1948, 1981, 1983, and 1997-2000. In each of these violent conflicts, as summarized in Table 4.1, dangerous weapons including sub-machine guns, locally made guns and bombs, and cutlasses were used. Over 30,000 people have been killed since 1849, approximately 10,000 people critically injured and maimed, and houses, farmlands and other property destroyed. About 12,000 Ife elements were captured as prisoners of war in the 1849-1878 violent conflict alone that caused Ile-Ife to lay in ruin for some years in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rest of Ife elements were forced to find refuge in Isoya and its environs during the period. Although re-absorbed between the second and third decade of the twentieth century, Oyo elements were ejected from Ile-Ife around 1910 as part of the resolution of the 1849-1878 violence (F2; F2; Olutobi & Oyeniya 1994).

Productive ways of life have consequently been disrupted. Education for primary and secondary students has been disrupted in the series of violent conflicts. Students from either group have been unable to attend schools in the hostile area. As a result of insecurity, Ile-Ife cannot boast of industrial estates, manufacturing companies, and the huge business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta (the First Edition 1998/99 of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria; Nigeria 2000; Albert 1999; 2001; Oladoyin 2001: 215-216).

**Table 4.1: 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: (a) Systematic discouragement of intermarriages between Oyo and Ife elements (b) Membership in Modakeke Progressive Union and Modakeke Youth Movement is open most exclusively to Oyo elements. (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: (a) Occupational/Trade and Landlords' associations (neighborhood development associations) among Ife and Oyo elements do not combine together to solve problems of general interests, (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 & Oyeniya (1994), the 1998/1999 Edition of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria, Nigeria (2000), Albert (2001), Falola & Oguntomisin (2001), Oladoyin (2001), Ayo (2002).



#### 4.4.1.2 Ibadan

The situation in Ile-Ife contrasts quite sharply with relatively institutional successes in Ibadan and Abeokuta inhabited by diverse groups of Yoruba elements examined one after the other as follows. In Ibadan, compounds are organized into *adugbo* (neighborhoods) to be able to use inter-compound cooperation in dealing with inter-compound matters. Such matters include neighborhood security, inter-compound conflicts and serious intra-compound conflicts as well as matters that exclusively affect the commercial interests of the neighborhood. Each neighborhood is headed by a *Babaogun* (military patron) whose selection is based primarily on his successes in warfare and his ability to organize effective neighborhood security and to impartially enforce shared rules. When there is more than one candidate for the leadership position, the interested candidates are subjected to support of members of the neighborhood. The candidate with simple majority support becomes *Babaogun* (I2; I10; I16; I37).

*Babaogun* does not exercise unlimited leadership prerogatives. Any *Babaogun* who is wicked, declining in military ability, stingy or partial is not regarded as of good character (*omoluwabi*). Another successful warrior may be selected by members of his neighborhood to replace *Babaogun* of bad character if he does not heed warnings from his members. In the alternative, compounds under *Babaoguns* of bad character are free to move into neighborhoods with *Babaoguns* of good character. Authority to establish new compounds resides in members and leaders of each neighborhood rather than a single head. To avoid losing men and women of distinction, *Babaoguns* have to act to be of good character, and welcomes new members by giving them full rights of citizenship including equal access to impartial mechanisms for conflict resolution and means of

production such as land. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, *Babaoguns* of good character had more compounds than compounds under the leadership of *Babaoguns* of bad character (Falola 1984; Watson 2003).

In each neighborhood, the *Babaogun* (military patron) and *Mogajis* (compound heads) constitute *adajo adugbo* (neighborhood judges). They regularly sit at least once in between five and seven days to interpret their shared rules and resolve conflicts brought before them. The goal of conflict resolution is cohesion rather than apportioning blame to a disputant. Just as members of a given compound give gifts and render services to their heads, *Babaogun* also enjoys similar privileges from his neighborhood members. Under the leadership of *Babaogun*, members of compounds and neighborhoods maintain their own internal peace and security, and appoint and dismiss irresponsible leaders without reference to any single head. Consistent with Design Principles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, members of most neighborhoods in Ibadan largely enjoy autonomy and the right to make and modify their own rules based on their local needs and conditions, and their leaders are accountable to them in enforcing their shared rules and providing low-cost arenas for conflict resolution.

Craftmen and craftwomen, traders and farmers also have recognized freedom to organize independent occupational guilds. Members of each occupational guild/association are usually from different groups of Yoruba elements in Ibadan. Such occupational guilds are built around crafts like hunting, farming, blacksmithing, weaving and trade. Members enjoy recognized autonomy to design their own mechanisms for disciplining members and appointing their leaders.

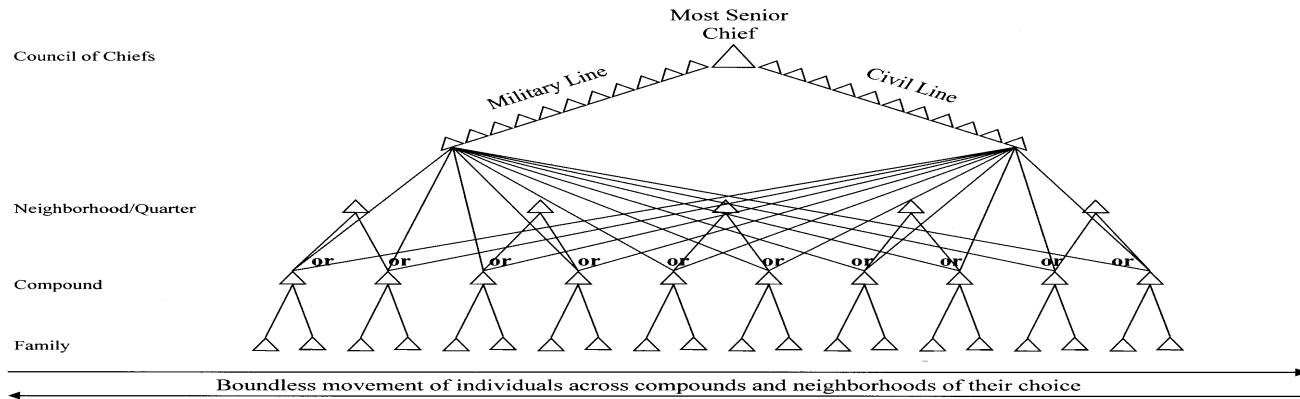
Unlike the destructive relationships between Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife, members of compounds, neighborhoods and occupational guilds in Ibadan take one another into account through the processes of competition, cooperation, conflict and conflict resolution. As summarized in Table 4.2 and consistent with Design Principle 7 (Nested Enterprises) discussed in chapter 1, most individuals in Ibadan partner with one another in pursuing shared interests such as defense and commercial interests of general importance to the whole community of Ibadan. This has been made possible through mutual respect most individuals have for the autonomy and independence of their respective local units or collective-choice arenas for problem-solving.

Through covenantal relationships and mutual agreements among the Yoruba people of Ibadan, a council of chiefs is saddled with coordinating the political and economic interests of general importance. The creation of the council with jurisdictional limits has enabled compounds, neighborhoods, and occupational guilds to concentrate on their internal affairs. The council of chiefs is made up of three lines: two for men and one for women. Selection onto the Ibadan council of chiefs is not hereditary but rests on a promotion basis from a lower title to a higher title in each of the lines, as depicted in Figure 4.5.

The two lines for men, as shown in Figure 4.5, divide into civil and military lines and meet at the top to produce the most senior chief on a rotational basis. If the most senior chief is from the military line, his successor automatically comes from the civil line on the death of the incumbent. *Iyalode* (most successful female trader) is the most senior chief in the women's line. There are also spiritual leaders who perform necessary rituals. Whenever a chief dies or is dismissed for irresponsibility or declining military

ability, the chief below him moves up by one step in each of the three lines. Successful individuals from most compounds and neighborhoods, as depicted in Figure 4.5, are free to compete to join the three lines of chiefs by taking the lowest title. It is important to note that the phrase “the most senior chief” does not in any way connote an autocratic head. The most senior chief can be dismissed for incompetence and overbearing attitude. As a matter of shared understanding among the Yoruba in Ibadan, the most senior chief has no right to interfere with the internal affairs of local units (I2; I5). With the exclusion of *Iyalode* line and occupational guilds, Figure 4.5 depicts the relationships among the autonomous diverse jurisdictions in Ibadan.

**Figure 4.5: Jurisdictional, Problem-Solving and Associational Relationships in Ibadan**



or - Each compound competes to join council of chiefs from either the military or civil line; and each compound's candidate (its head - *Mogaji*) is accountable to his compound members who can remove him when he is short of the acceptable standards of good character (*omoluwabi*).

Each Neighborhood/Quarter is headed by a *Balogun* who is the head of one of the compounds in the Neighborhood, and has a set of experienced war chiefs as neighborhood judges (*Adajo Adugbo*)

The council of chiefs, guilds' leaders, and spiritual leaders relate to one another as associates in organizing the defense of the whole community to facilitate access to means of production and relation of trade within and without Ibadan. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the council mobilized warriors for the defense of the community in the nineteenth century. Their efforts were complemented with support from guilds of blacksmiths, farmers, hunters and traders who supplied weapons, food, security services and revenue respectively to enhance defense and security capabilities. With limited interference, officials were appointed in the nineteenth century to oversee internal exchange relationships along with the security of the created trade routes to Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities such as Lagos, Ijebu, Abeokuta, Eruwa, Badagry, the Nupe area, and Port Novo.

These complementary efforts so facilitated the exchange sector in the nineteenth century that the inhabitants of Ibadan could go to other Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities to trade. Individuals from other communities were also able to come to Ibadan to pursue diverse commercial interests. Through mutual respect for the autonomy and independence of their local jurisdictions, the Yoruba people in Ibadan have been able to develop a living process of institutional channels of cooperation as a shared strategy in their interaction with one another. This process has enabled participating individuals to provide collective goods and services in such a way that their institutional arrangements at different levels of aggregation match the scale of effects associated with the provision, production and consumption of those goods and services.

According to Falola's (1984: 34) account about the positive relationship between Ibadan's constitutional order and productive entrepreneurship, numerous farmers in

Ibadan in the nineteenth century in particular “operated far above the subsistence level; its military rulers provided the necessary peace and control over the economy; and its exchange sector allowed for the distribution of surplus local items and imports”. As a result of its mutually beneficial institutional environment, Ibadan has rapidly grown into a big urban center where the first university in Nigeria is located along with over forty-five (45) manufacturing companies each with a paid-up share capital over one million (1million) Nigeria’s naira (the 1998/1999 of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria). Ibadan is not the only Yoruba community that has achieved these impressive successes. Similar accomplishments have characterized Abeokuta as subsequent discussion makes clear.

**Table 4.2: Impacts of the Constitutional Order in Ibadan**

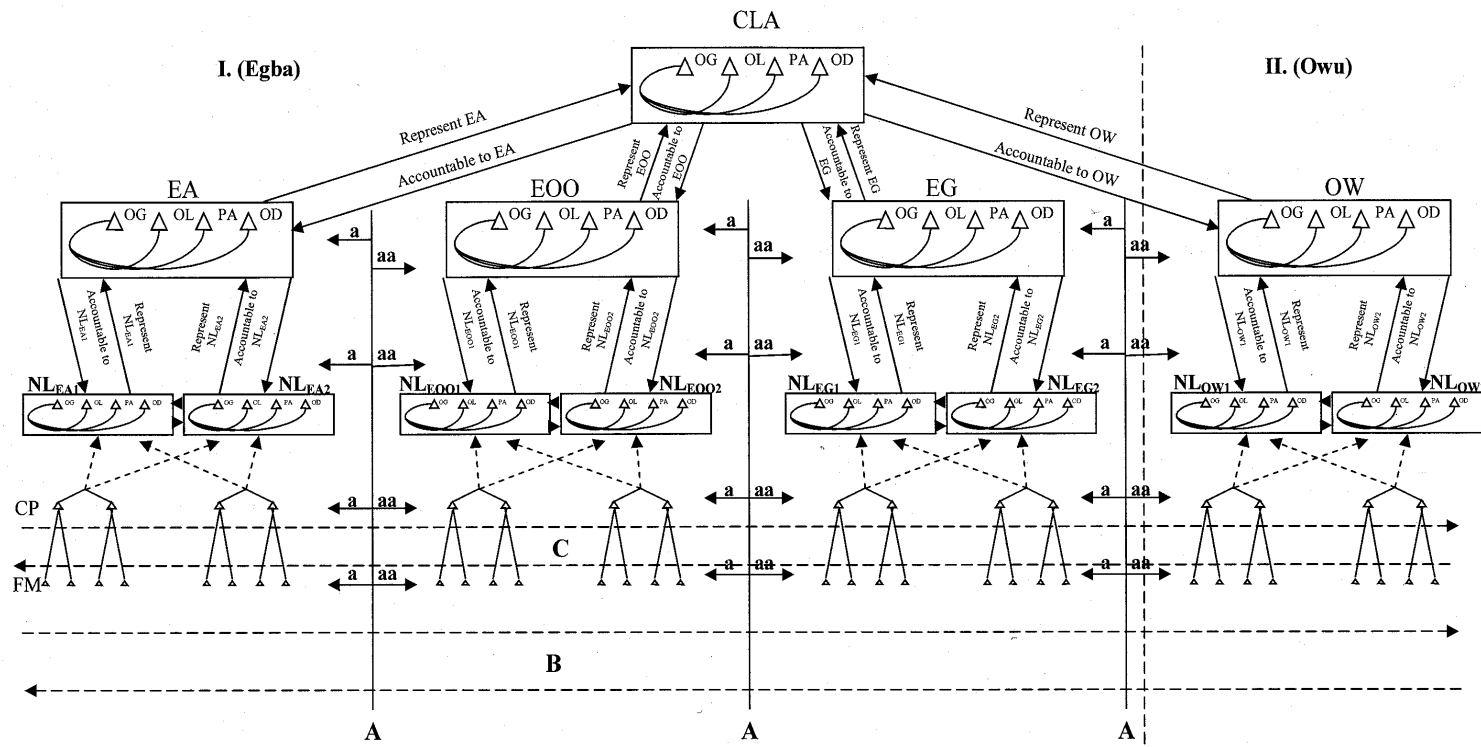
<b>Pattern of Associational Life</b>	<b>Pattern of Violent Conflicts from relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements</b>	<b>Pattern of Commercial and Industrial Openness.</b>
<p><b>Inclusive Bonds among Diverse Individuals:</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> Nineteenth-Century Council of Chiefs for Defense Organization 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</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</p>



Fans Club is open to most indigenes of Ibadan (born in or migrated to Ibadan).		entrepreneurs from Yoruba and non-Yoruba communities due to security of life and property from inter-group relations in Ibadan.
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**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.

**Figure 4.6: Jurisdictional, Problem-Solving and Associational Relationships in Abeokuta**



I. - The Egbas; Egba Alake, Egba Oke-Ona, and Egba Gbagura	A. - Conflict Resolution Line
II. - The Owus Living Among the Egbas	a. - An individual in a particular section can seek conflict resolution at any jurisdictional level within the section
CLA - Community leaders responsible for issue of general interest to the four sections of Abeokuta	aa. - An individual from any particular section may seek conflict resolution at any jurisdictional level of a section of his choice
OG - Ogboni (lawmaking and judicial body); OL - Olorogun (Military Association); PA - Parakoyi (Chamber of Commerce); and OD - Ode (Hunters Association)	B. - Boundless movement of individuals across different parts of Abeokuta where their interests can best be realized
Four Sections in Abeokuta: EA - Egba Alake; EOO - Egba Oke-Ona; EG - Egba Gbagura; OW - Owu Egba	C. - An individual is free to move to any section or compound of his choice in Abeokuta to be a leader or a member
NL - Neighborhood; CP - Compound; FM - Family	

#### 4.4.1.3 Abeokuta

The conduct of public affairs outside the compound in Abeokuta occurs within the political organizational structures different from those in Ibadan. Figure 4.6 demonstrates the polycentric relationships among the diverse autonomous collective-choice jurisdictions in Abeokuta.

Just like Ile-Ife and Ibadan, compounds in Abeokuta are organized into neighborhoods<sup>75</sup>. There are forty-four (44) in Egba Ake, eleven (11) in Egba Oke-Ona, nineteen (19) in Egba Gbagura and five (5) in Owu Egba (Tejuoso 1991:139-140; Yemitan 1998: 48-51). As depicted in Figure 4.6, governance from the neighborhood to the sectional through the community levels in Abeokuta is based on division of labor among four autonomous specialized associations: *Ogboni* (judges and legislators), *Oloroogun* (war chiefs), *Parakoyi* (trade chiefs) and *Ode* (hunters). The love for autonomy and independence has motivated the Yoruba people in Abeokuta to organize the four specialized associations at various levels of governance (A1; A2; A5; A17; A18; A19; Abeokuta 1985; Biobaku 1991; Blair 2002).

Individuals assume membership of any of the four associations by taking up vacant positions. Certain positions at federal (community) level are zoned among the constituent units in Abeokuta. At the community level, for example, *Ogboni* positions such as *Oluwo* of Egba, *Lukosin* of Egba, *Odofin* of Egba and *Ekerin* of Egba are zoned to Egba Ake, Egba Oke-Ona, Egba Gbagura and Owu Egba respectively. Positions in the four associations at the neighborhood, sectional and community levels are not hereditary, but are competed for among interested candidates.

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<sup>75</sup> They are called townships but I prefer to regard them as neighborhoods

Individuals may however compete for vacant positions that have once been held by their relatives. Individuals may also compete for positions outside their neighborhoods, sections and community position zones, either by personal achievements or through their maternal or paternal connections to the affected neighborhoods, sections and federal position zones. Examples are Chief Toyé Coker from Egba Ake and Chief (Mrs.) Bisoye Tejuoso from Egba Oke-Ona. The two individuals assumed Ogboni positions outside their sections and community (federal) position zones both by their personal achievements and maternal connections. Successful candidates for vacant positions are individuals who meet the specific requirements of the affected associations, are of good character, and are able to pay position fees fixed by the affected associations (Folarin 1934; Abeokuta 1985; Biobaku 1991; Tejuoso 1991:5; Ajisafe 1998; Blair 2002; Sotunde 2002). Starting with *Ogboni*, the discussion that follows considers how the associations evolved from the neighborhood to the community (federal) level.

*Ogboni* (judges and legislators): Each neighborhood has its *Ogboni*. Membership in any given neighborhood's *Ogboni* is drawn from successful men and women who are trustworthy and impartial in judgments. Freed slaves and freeborn individuals have equal chances of becoming members as long as contribution of wisdom is possible from prospective candidates (Folarin 1934). Members meet every seventeen days to consider issues of general interests to the neighborhood. Specific duties they perform include interpreting and making rules, and resolving serious intra-and inter-compound conflicts.

*Oluwo* (leader of the association), *Iwarefa* (six most senior members after *Oluwo*), and *Apena* (spokesman and convener of meetings) and *Omo Apena* (*Apena*'s messengers) are in charge of the day-to-day affairs of the association. *Apena* in particular

conveys the decisions made by the neighborhood's *Ogboni* to members of the neighborhood. The association has an *oro* (ancestral cult organization), which was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to arrest criminals and execute condemned criminals. The neighborhood's *Ogboni* considers cases that affect different occupations including hunting, trade, and farming. As a result, heads of *Oloroogun* (warriors' association), *Parakoyi* (association of trade chiefs) and *Ode* (hunters' association) in the neighborhood automatically are members of their neighborhood's *Ogboni* association.

Unlike Ile-Ife and Ibadan, conflict resolution by the *Ogboni* in Abeokuta involves payment of *owo esun* (hearing and summon fee) by the disputants. The fee is an age-long tradition about which the people of Abeokuta share common understanding. The plaintiff comes to the neighborhood's *Ogboni* court to file his/her case and pay the hearing and summon fee. The defendant usually pays half of what the plaintiff pays. After the plaintiff has paid *owo esun*, *Apena's* messengers will be asked to inform the defendant and ask him/her to report at the *Ogboni* court house. The plaintiff and defendant will be allowed to talk. Their respective witnesses are also given the benefit of telling their own stories, as further explained in chapter 7. After hearing both sides, members of the neighborhood's *Ogboni* will carry out careful and thorough investigations. Inspection/investigations are usually carried out by selected members who are required to give their own reports to other members of the *Ogboni*. Judgment is given based on unanimity. The disputants have the right to appeal the judgments in the *Ogboni* court at either the sectional or community level. Individuals also have the liberty to bypass their neighborhoods' *Ogboni* courts and take their cases to the *Ogboni* court at the sectional or community level.

*Oloroogun* (association of warriors) is another association with primary specialization in handling military matters. Each neighborhood has its own *Oloroogun* (association of warriors) for its defense. Members are selected based on their battle successes, among other requirements as discussed earlier. *Jagunna* (one who fights in the center of the road) serves as the leader of the association. *Jagunna* is usually the most successful warrior in the neighborhood. Members of each neighborhood's *Oloroogun* meet every thirty-third day to discuss military matters, and make and interpret rules for the conduct of wars. Special meetings may be convened in situations of emergency. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, members of the association played a significant role in mapping out military strategies for the protection of their neighborhoods against slave raiders and against "external surprise" attacks from other neighborhoods.

Some differences characterize the appellation of the leader of *Oloroogun* across the four sections of Abeokuta. While heads of *Olorooguns* in the Egba Ake section holds the title of *Jagunna*, Akogun (a strong man in battle) is the title of heads of *Olorooguns* in the Owu Egba sections. Head of each neighborhood's *Oloroogun* is assisted by some selected members of the association.

*Parakoyi* is the trade chiefs' association established to facilitate the commercial interests of each neighborhood. Members are experienced men and women in trade and different occupations in the craft industry. They meet every seventeen days at *Ile-Aje* (merchants' court). Led by *Olori Parakoyi* (head of trade chiefs), members of the association direct and regulate the trade concerns of their neighborhood by resolving conflicts among traders, making rules to ensure just prices, and protecting the standards of workmanship in their neighborhood. Today, market associations or market women's

associations, farmers' associations, barbers' unions, and other occupational associations have assumed the role of *Parakoyi* and operate largely on their own. Members of some of these associations however approach Ogboni and Parakoyi associations for conflict resolution (A12).

*Ode* (hunters' association) is in charge of the maintenance of internal security and roads in each neighborhood. Members of each neighborhood's hunters' association consist of brave young individuals. They were of great importance during war times in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when they served as war boys or scouts to reconnoiter enemies' positions and report to their neighborhood's *Oloroogun* whose members planned military tactics to confront the approaching enemies, as further explained in chapter 6. Members select their own officers to run their day-to-day affairs.

***Sectional and Community Associations:*** Through covenantal relationships and mutual agreements among its constituent neighborhoods, each of the four sections in Abeokuta has a sectional *Ogboni* association, a sectional *Oloroogun* association, a sectional *Parakoyi* association and a sectional *Ode* association for handling legislative and judicial, military, commercial and security matters respectively that affect the neighborhoods in the section. Similarly, the four sections of Abeokuta combine together by mutual agreement to constitute the four specialized associations for handling issues that affect the whole community of Abeokuta. The associations at different levels of aggregation take one another into account. They respect their jurisdictional autonomy and independence without interference in the internal affairs of one another<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> The relationships between higher- and lower-level jurisdictions reflect the conditions in Design Principles 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Each jurisdiction enjoys autonomy and rights to make, modify and enforce rules for conflict resolution and property relationships based on the interests and needs of its members.

Members of each of the four associations at the sectional level are selected largely from the relevant associations in each section's neighborhoods through a competitive process. Each neighborhood in any given section has the power to withdraw or suspend its irresponsible representatives from the sectional associations. When a representative at the sectional level falls short of his/her neighborhood's expectations, members of the affected neighborhood can demand the appropriate association in their neighborhood to suspend the irresponsible representative from its meetings. The suspension of the representative will remain in force until the individual has reconciled with members of his neighborhood or a new representative is sponsored for his replacement.

As illustrated in Figure 4.6, the same lines of responsibility and accountability apply in the relationship between members of the associations at the sectional and community levels. Members of each section are mutually recognized to have the power to withdraw their irresponsible representatives at the federal/community level. Representatives at the sectional and community levels are usually cautious to not compromise the interests of their lower-level units to avoid being replaced and disgraced out of office (A3; A5).

The commitment of members of the four specialized associations at the neighborhood, sectional and community levels to the cause of the community and inter-jurisdictional cooperation are based on the traditional oath of allegiance and blood oath. Violation of the terms of the covenantal relationships attracts severe misfortunes for the betrayers, which could be expulsion and death. For members who are Christians and Muslims, the oaths have been replaced with beliefs in the Abrahamic God.



Through mutual respect for the autonomy and independence of local units in Abeokuta, the Yoruba people in Abeokuta have been able to put in place a living process for the promotion of inclusive associational life and cooperation among their diverse jurisdictions. In consistent with Design Principle 7 (nested enterprises), this has in turn enabled most diverse Yoruba elements in Abeokuta, unlike Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife, to join with one another and pursue the defense and security of Abeokuta as a shared concern as from the 1830s.

The complex system of the institutional channels of cooperation put in place in Abeokuta in the 19<sup>th</sup> century greatly influenced foreigners, especially Europeans that described Abeokuta as the “cradle of civilization” and the hopeful centre or “Sunrise within the Tropics” from which commerce and mutually productive civilization would spread to other parts of Nigeria and Africa (Biobaku 1991: 37). As a result of the security of life and property in the community, many European companies were established in Abeokuta by 1901. Abeokuta’s pioneering status in the development of western education has also made the community the homestead of the largest proportion of eminent Nigerians of international repute, as summarized in Table 4.3. Its current *adire* (traditional wax-print cloth) industry, which is the most developed textile production in Yorubaland, began to be a complex and dynamic industry from the nineteenth century. The textile industry has relied on the integrated activities of a wide network of farmers, dyers, and other related craftsmen and craftwomen (Abeokuta 1985; Ajisafe 1998; Byfield 2002). Abeokuta has over twenty (13) manufacturing companies today, with each company having a paid-up share capital of over one million Nigeria’s naira (the 1998/1999 Edition of the Major 5000 Companies in Nigeria).

The situations in Ibadan and Abeokuta is consistent with an argument by V. Ostrom (1994: 253) that a community that is open to more diverse ways of assembling individuals with diverse interests and of achieving effective complementarities is the one that allows for greater productive potentials.

**Table 4.3: 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><b>(i)</b> Each neighborhood/township has representatives in sectional associations for judiciary and legislation (Ogboni), commercial (Parakoyi), military (Oloroogun) and policing (Ode) matters,</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> Each of the four sections of Abeokuta has representatives in the four associations at the community level</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> 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><b>(iv)</b> 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><b>(v)</b> 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</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 <b>(i)</b> 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); <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 Abeokuta along with Ibadan to produce the greatest number of distinguished warriors in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and <b>(iv)</b> enabled women like Tinubu to assume unconventional roles</p>

<p>government officials for support on development projects and waste disposal.  <b>(vi)</b> Intermarriages are encouraged among most groups of Yoruba elements in Abeokuta.</p>		<p>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>
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**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>.

#### **4.5 Changes and Institutional Responses**

Colonial officials and agents of the Nigerian state have however sought to stifle Yoruba institutions. They have dismissed Yoruba institutions as primitive. In the face of the repressive influences of the Nigerian state, as discussed in chapter 1 of this study, the Yoruba people have kept alive the spirit of their problem-solving capabilities by undertaking institutional innovations to suit their changing circumstances.

Co-residence in the compound has remained the basis of relationships in the core (traditional) parts of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Contacts with Europeans and the attendant creation of salaried jobs have however caused many individuals to live far away from their compounds or communities. Such individuals live in different parts of their communities or in other Nigerian communities. This pattern of inter-community migration has led to inflows of new immigrants into Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta from many Yoruba-speaking and non-Yoruba speaking communities of Nigeria.

Yoruba immigrants in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta nevertheless maintain strong ties to their compounds as the final security if all else fails. Most of the new immigrants in Ibadan and Abeokuta feel at home in both communities (I3; A14). Their counterparts among Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife are however ill at ease because of the enmity between the two groups that has heightened insecurity of life and property in Ile-Ife (F7). All the same, new immigrants and members of the diverse groups in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta combine with one another and organize neighborhood development associations as a neighborhood-based response to state failure in addressing common problems. The discussion that follows examines the structures of the associations and

how the dominant fundamental beliefs in the three Yoruba communities have influenced their organization and operations.

#### **4.5.1 Neighborhood Development Associations: Similarities**

The neighborhood development associations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have come as an institutional supplement to the compound. In neighborhoods among Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife, individuals within default neighborhood<sup>77</sup> organize themselves into a number of landlords' associations (F1; F5; F7; F15; F16; F21; F24). Most neighborhood development associations in Ibadan operate as landlords' associations. Owning a house in the neighborhood is the most important ticket for membership of the neighborhood's landlords' association in Ile-Ife and Ibadan. The remaining associations in Ibadan are organized as landlords' and tenants' associations where both tenants and landlords have equal chances of becoming members (I7; I8; I9; I10; I15; I25; Albert *et.al* 1995).

Most neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta are however organized as "community" development associations. They operate like landlords' and tenants' associations in Ibadan to give tenants and landlords equal chances of becoming members. Heads of the immediate families in each neighborhood are members. Members relate to one another as equal partners, whether they are tenants or landlords or members of *Ogboni* (association of legislators and judges), *Oloroogun* (war chiefs' association), *Parakoyi* (trade chiefs' association) and *Ode* (hunters' association) (A9; A11; A13).

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<sup>77</sup> Default provision units in this study are those that operated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They are immediate families, compounds, nineteenth century neighborhoods (wards in Ile-Ife, quarters in Ibadan and townships in Abeokuta), sections, villages and craft guilds/associations. Optional provision units refer to neighborhood development associations created in the twentieth century to supplement or replace default units.

Most of the neighborhood development associations were established in the twentieth century following open deliberations among members. Their broad aim is to improve the well-being of their members through the provision of mechanisms for conflict resolution, security, electric and water supplies, waste disposal, construction and maintenance of neighborhood roads, and raising health awareness. These associations also serve as avenues for practicing democratic processes through the promotion of the participation of members in problem-solving.

The diverse occupational backgrounds of members and the size of their neighborhoods have contributed substantially to the organizational ingenuity that permeates their problem-solving activities (F1; I5; A13). Members of neighborhood development associations in each community include farmers, traders, teachers and university/college professors, lawyers, accountants, bankers, bricklayers, carpenters, engineers, town-planners, and civil servants. With a pool of different occupational talents, problem-solving is usually undertaken through the committee system. As a problem/project arises a committee is formed. Each committee consists of members having the relevant skills to handle problems.

In addition, many big neighborhoods have been sub-divided into cells. The move is intended to offer most members the close-knit proximity advantages that enable quick decisions in handling problems specific to each cell. Members of each cell meet at least once a week and work together to solve problems of exclusive interest to them. Each cell bears full responsibility for the election of its officers and has at least a representative on the central executive of the neighborhood association. Issues that affect the cells are handled mostly through the relevant committees of the neighborhood development

association. Decisions made by the committees are subjected to the unanimous acceptance of members at their general meetings held at least once a month. A set of elected officers run the day to day affairs of each association.

Members of each association are required to monitor one another. In addition, many neighborhood development associations have a task force committee to ensure that members carry out their duties. In the Amolaso neighborhood in Abeokuta, there is a task force committee which carries out duties such as disconnecting the electric supply lines of members that fail to contribute money towards the procurement of electric cables, poles and transformers. The task force is also empowered to prevent members from holding night parties and to impose a fine of 5000 Nigeria's naira on offenders. A fine of 500 Nigeria's naira is imposed on any member blocking drainages. The task force also ensures that houses in the neighborhood have toilets/restrooms (A13). Similarly, the landlords associations studied in Ibadan and among Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife have some members as rule-enforcers or task force members who are empowered to ensure that their members follow their shared rules<sup>78</sup>.

#### **4.5.2 Neighborhood Development Associations: Differences**

Significant differences, however, characterize the operation of neighborhood development associations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The differences reflect their differing ordering principles and have meant varied implications for collective action. As an unwritten rule in Ile-Ife, chairmen of neighborhood development associations must be members of the group within whose territory the neighborhoods are located (F1; F5; F7;

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<sup>78</sup> This is to ensure effective monitoring by the affected individuals as specified in Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1.

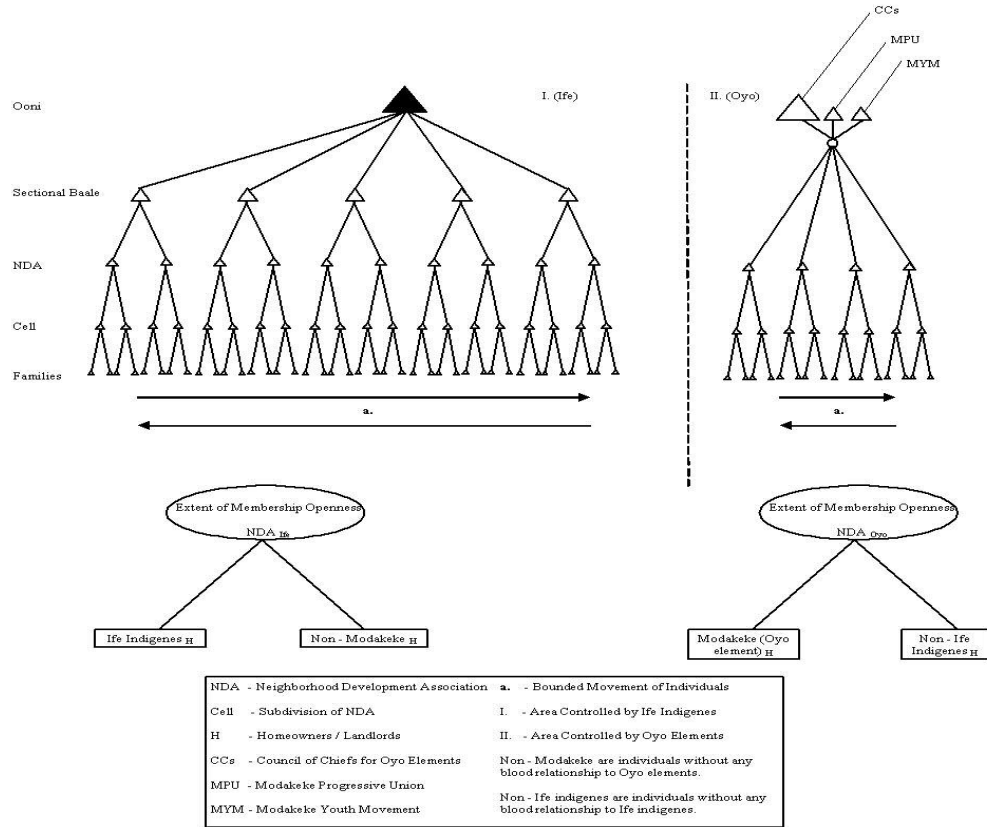


F21). Most adjacent neighborhoods in each group find ways to cooperate and address common concerns such as maintenance of shared facilities including electric transformers, bridges and roads. As summarized in Table 4.1, individuals are however not free to move to hostile neighborhoods and live there to take advantage of goods and services most important to them.

Neighborhood development associations among Ife elements operate with reference to heads of default neighborhoods (wards) where they are located. Heads of the default neighborhoods are chiefs who rule their neighborhoods on behalf of the *Ooni*. As the hierarchical relationships in Figure 4.7 show, the chiefs ensure that nobody pursues interests conflicting with those of the *Ooni* and his chiefs. There is virtually no forum for neighborhoods among Ife elements to address what they share in common. Nevertheless, certain socio-cultural associations such as Egbe Omo-Ibile Ife, Ife Day and Olojo Festival have been formed to deal with cultural issues that have nothing to do with the activities of the neighborhood associations among Ife elements. As summarized in Table 4.1, members of the socio-cultural associations are mostly Ife elements (F5).

On the other hand, cooperation takes place among most adjacent neighborhood development associations among Oyo elements. Also, most neighborhoods among Oyo elements have representatives in Modakeke Progressive Union and Modakeke Youth Movement. The two federated community development associations are open mostly to Oyo elements and work with the council of chiefs among Oyo elements in dealing with general problems including security. As shown in Figure 4.7 and Table 4.1, neighborhood development associations among Oyo elements do not have anything to do with those among Ife elements.

Figure 4.7: Optional Problem-Solving Relationship and Hierarchical Order in Ile-Ife

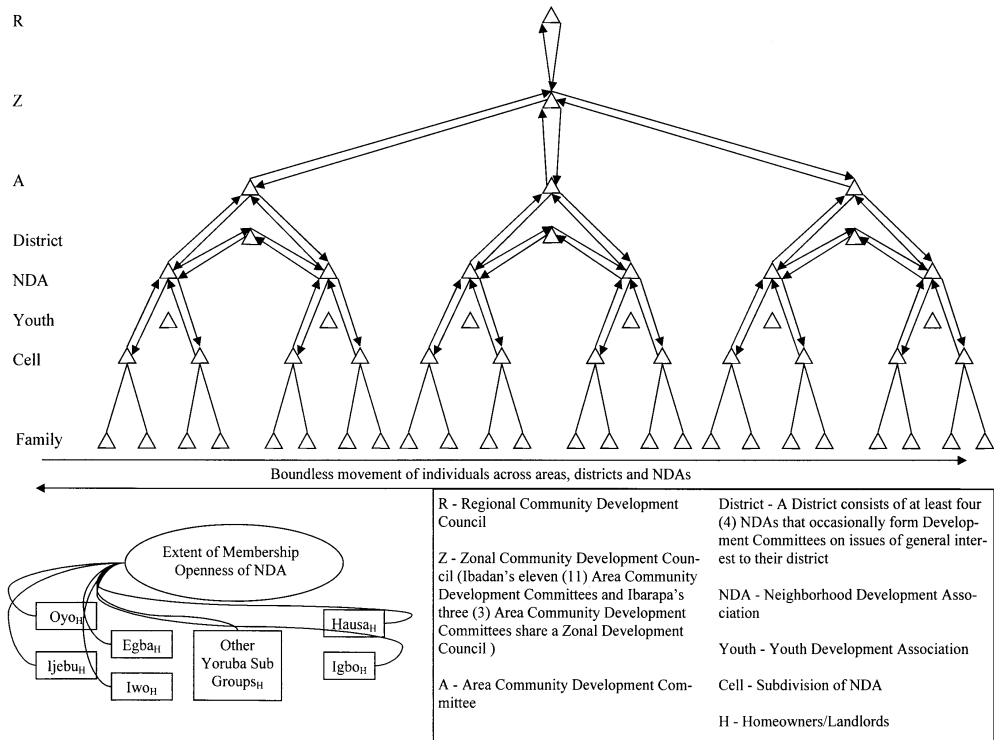


Unlike Ile-Ife, members of most neighborhood associations in Abeokuta and Ibadan have equal chances to compete for offices in their associations. Also, there are common forums for most associations in each of the two communities to meet and solve shared problems. In Ibadan, for example, there are district, area and zonal community development committees/councils that handle common problems affecting diverse individuals at different levels of aggregation. About five or more neighborhood associations constitute a district in Ibadan to address shared problems such as management of waste disposal sites and security maintenance. In addition, most neighborhood associations under each of the eleven local government areas in Ibadan, as

depicted in Figure 4.8, form an area community development council to discuss and work out ways to deal with problems that affect their neighborhoods.

The Ibadan/Ibarapa zonal community development council provides a forum for members of neighborhood development associations in Ibadan to interact, identify shared problems, and find ways to deal with the problems. These optional institutional arrangements co-exist and compete with default institutional arrangements in problem-solving. Most of the governing units respect and recognize the autonomy and independence of one another and accommodate the interests of diverse groups of individuals (Yoruba and non-Yoruba), as summarized in Table 4.2. Also, federated associations like Ibadan Descendants' Union and Omo-Ajorosun Fans' Club handle issues of common interests to most inhabitants of Ibadan. Membership of the associations is open to inhabitants of Ibadan. The problem-solving relationships among neighborhood development associations and their higher-level problem-solving jurisdictions in Ibadan are shown in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Optional Jurisdictional, Problem-Solving and Associational Relationships in Ibadan



Similarly, most neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta have worked out alternative arrangements to deal with shared problems. These are area, zonal and regional community development councils as shown in Figure 4.9. About twenty-eight (28) neighborhood development associations constitute an area community development committee to address shared problems. Two or three community development committees form a zonal community development council to handle most of the problems shared by most neighborhoods in each zone.

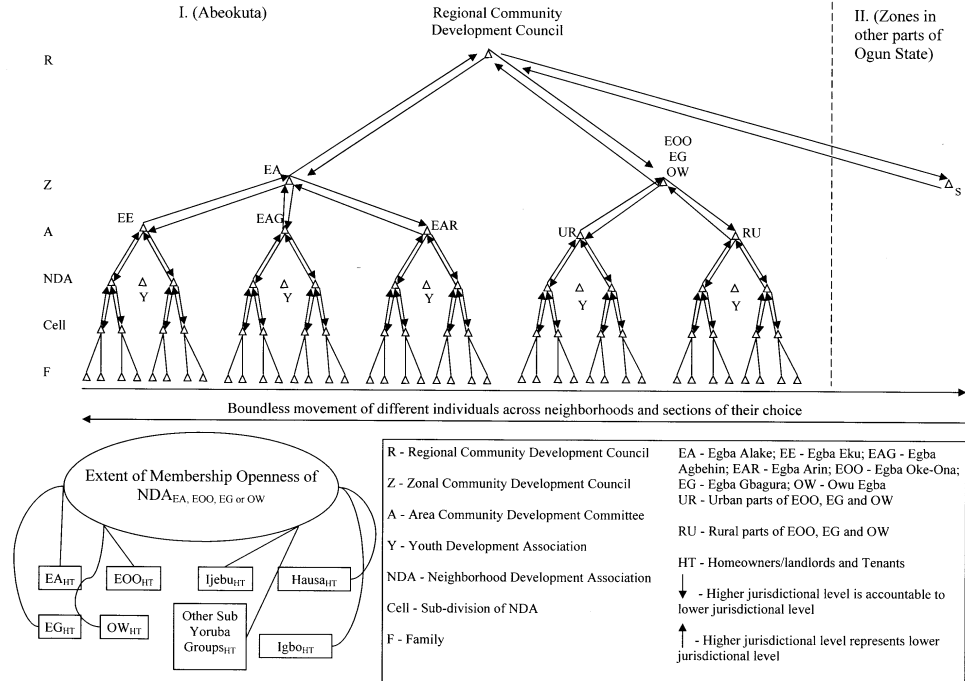
A regional community development council provides an avenue for dealing with problems that affect most neighborhood associations in Abeokuta and other Yoruba communities in Ogun state. Waste disposal management is an example of problems



shared by most neighborhood development associations in Ogun State. The problem has been left for the regional community development council to handle. To tackle this problem, the regional community council made a rule that requires every house to have an OGEPA trash bag (shown in the picture to the

left) and pay a weekly fee of ten (10) Nigeria's naira for the collection of wastes. As part of the shared rule, the waste collection contractor for each neighborhood must be a member of the neighborhood. A minimum of 1000 houses/buildings constitute a waste collection unit. Neighborhoods with less than 1000 houses merge with nearby neighborhoods of the choice of their members. The contractor is paid from trash fees contributed by members of her/his neighborhood. The contractor collects wastes from his neighborhood and dumps them in specified sites for proper treatment. The approval and removal of the contractor is the sole responsibility of his neighborhood. Most of the neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta and their higher-level collective-choice arenas co-exist and compete as autonomous and independent jurisdictions in problem-solving. As summarized in Table 4.3, most of the associations are inclusive as their members include members of diverse groups of Yoruba and non-Yoruba in Abeokuta (A11; A13; A15).

**Figure 4.9: Optional Jurisdictional Problem-Solving and Associational Relationships in Abeokuta**  
I. (Abeokuta)



## 4.6 Conclusion

The differences in patterns of associational life in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta reflect their respective constitutional orders. Inclusive associational life has been promoted in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as depicted in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. The respective constitutional orders in Ibadan and Abeokuta accommodate diverse interests and enable most individuals to have freedom to associate with individuals and local units of their choice. The circumstances have consequently enabled most individuals and their problem-solving jurisdictions in both communities to operate to facilitate the development of norms of reciprocity, mutual trust, strong sense of shared community, rather than group loyalty, and effective communication among individuals of dissimilar backgrounds. This was more obvious in the nineteenth century when each Yoruba

community had to develop capabilities for security and defense through the creation and maintenance of increasing levels of inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Due to inclusive association life and public peace achieved from relationships among their diverse Yoruba elements, as summarized in Tables 4.2 and 4.3, commercial and industrial openness has been promoted in Ibadan and Abeokuta such that both communities have individuals of distinctions, industrial estates, manufacturing companies and the huge business investments that are absent in Ile-Ife.

Lack of mutually productive entrepreneurships in Ile-Ife is due to the fundamental inequalities inherent in its constitutional order. Most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife have been disadvantaged. Ife elements treat Oyo elements as lesser beings. The failure to constructively resolve the institutional problem has led both groups of Yoruba elements to relate to each other as enemies. As Table 4.1 and Figures 4.4 and 4.7 depict, strong exclusionary associational life, rather than inter-jurisdictional cooperation, has consequently resulted between the two groups. Most Oyo elements have developed capabilities for violent resistance to seek liberation from servitude under Ife elements. Ile-Ife has consequently been unable to boast of individuals of distinction, industrial estates, manufacturing companies, and the huge business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta.

These contrasting circumstances corroborate the argument that diverse groups of individuals who have the traditions of equality of man, mutual trust and close-knit communities, as in the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta and not in Ile-Ife, are able to combine together, craft and nurture successful institutional arrangements that can expand

opportunity sets for the benefit of most individuals (Tocqueville 1966; Putnam 1993; V. Ostrom 1994, 1997; N. Dolsak & E. Ostrom 2003:6; Verba 2003; Greif & Laitin 2004).



## CHAPTER FIVE

### INSTITUTIONS AND PROPERTY RIGHTS IN LAND AMONG THE YORUBA

“...the formulation and regulation of tenurial arrangements is an expression of the political, *constitutional*<sup>79</sup> order of society (Kemp 1981:1). “Further, how any of these property regimes operate in practice depends, to a large extent, on the types of relationships that participants have established among themselves” (Elinor Ostrom 2001:137).

#### 5.1 Introduction

Land serves a variety of purposes among the Yoruba people of Nigeria. Land is largely used for purposes such as agricultural and hunting activities, building houses, locating markets, constructing paths/roads, and raising sacred groves. Rivers, streams and pools located on land also serve the Yoruba people as sources of fish catches and water for domestic uses, and irrigation for the cultivation of vegetables during the long dry season (I27). Much as these land-related resources compel us to reject Lloyd’s (1962:13) definition of land among the Yoruba solely as “the solid part of the earth’s surface”, a complex relationship exists between the Yoruba people and land as a major source of livelihood.

The proper functioning of human-land relationship would depend on the level of shared understanding most participating individuals have about their dominant ordering conceptions shaping the definition, allocation and enforcement of land rights, and the mechanisms for conflict resolution. As explained in chapter 3 of this study, shared conceptions among the Yoruba spell out the operational rules governing the relationship of a man with his wives, children, siblings from the father’s and mother’s compounds, parents, and compound leaders. Shared conceptions among the Yoruba also clarify the

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<sup>79</sup> The inclusion of the word “constitutional” is strictly my own emphasis.

constitutional standing of strangers in relation to initial settlers, and give a sense of the terms of authority relationships among diverse jurisdictions within which rules governing property rights in land are intricately nested.

In a similar sense, constitutional arrangements define what categories of *eto* (rights) in land the Yoruba people exercise either as collectivities or private individuals, initial settlers or newcomers/strangers. In her cutting-edge research on bundles of property rights, Elinor Ostrom identifies property rights relevant to land as access, withdrawal, management, exclusion and alienation rights (Elinor Ostrom 2001, 2003).

In this chapter, an effort will be made to analyze how constitutional orders in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have influenced the regulation of property rights (*eto*) in land to affect public peace and productive entrepreneurships in the presence of changing circumstances the Yoruba people have had to confront since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Following the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire and the resultant internecine wars in Yorubaland, diverse Yoruba elements began to live together in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta from the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Without doing much of history, I shall first discuss various rights associated with land using Elinor Ostrom's schema of bundles of rights. This is aimed to address the confusion in the literature, including studies by Famoriyo (1979), Igbozurike (1980), Udo (1990, 1999), that have become the basis of land reforms in Nigeria. In the previous studies about property rights in land in Nigeria, no clear distinction was made regarding various bundles of rights in land on the one hand, and the intricate relationship between the regulation of property rights in land and the prevailing bases of human relationships in individual Yoruba communities and other Nigerian communities on the other hand.

The importance of clarifying the relationship between property rights and constitutional order in this chapter is fourfold. **First**, that the regulation of property rights in land is effective and efficient when it both promotes enhanced public peace and increases mutually productive entrepreneurships. **Second**, that how the regulation of property rights in land influences public peace and productive entrepreneurships depends on the nature of constitutional order. **Third**, that individual tenure for land is not the most important means of achieving economic growth and should not be the main focus of reforms to the neglect of other types of property rights institutions and the structure of each community's constitutional order. **Fourth**, that shared ordering conceptions held by most participating individuals, and the attributes of land and its flows of benefits, such as food and tree crops from farmlands, determine whether a given property right in land should be exercised as private or common.

With the property rights schema developed by Elinor Ostrom, I will examine the distribution and enforcement of property rights in agricultural and housing land in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The analysis will be pursued along with how the use of the solid part of the earth's surface for agricultural purposes interacts with the employment of land-related resources such as rivers, streams, pools and hunting grounds.

## **5.2 Bundle of Rights and the Intricate Challenge of Property Rights Rules**

Land consists of bundles of rights. The rights in land some individuals enjoy spell out the actions they can take in relation to other individuals. A given right held by an individual then imposes a corresponding duty on another individual to observe the right. In her cutting-edge research on property rights, Elinor Ostrom (2001, 2003) identifies

five categories of rights that are relevant to land, such as access, withdrawal, management, exclusion and alienation rights. Drawing mainly on Elinor Ostrom's research on property rights, these rights are defined in succession as follows.

**Access Right** is the right to enter a defined physical area and enjoy non-subtractive benefits such as recreational and sight-seeing activities on farmlands, sacred groves, and banks of rivers/streams. When an individual or a group holds this right, the holder is an authorized entrant.

**Withdrawal Right** refers to the right to obtain/harvest products of a resource system, such as yams, rice, cassava roots and trees, okra, and cocoa beans from farmlands; catch fish and water from pools, streams and rivers; and games from hunting spots/farmlands. Holding the withdrawal right along with access right qualifies an individual or a group to be an authorized user. The rules determining access and withdrawal rights and their transfer are made by those holding the management and exclusion rights within the limits allowed by their constitutional arrangements or ordering principles, as discussed in chapter 3.

**Management Right** is the right to regulate the internal use patterns of resource systems such as land, and to transform the resource by making improvements. The right enables farmers, for example, to determine what, when, where and how to plant, weed and harvest along with limits on harvesting. Either jointly or individually, management right empowers individuals or groups to decide maintenance activities in relation to paths, pools and streams on agricultural land as well as individuals that can use resource systems, modes of use, and limits on use. When this right is held in tandem with access and withdrawal rights, the holder is an authorized claimant. If the dominant constitutional

arrangements leave an authorized claimant with the possibility of exercising exclusion and/or alienation rights, either individually or collectively, regarding at least a piece of individually or collectively owned land, he is an authorized claimant-member, otherwise he is an authorized claimant-tenant. More light will be thrown on these characterizations as our discussion proceeds.

**Exclusion Right** refers to the right to determine who have an access right, and how that right may be transferred given the dominant constitutional order. Exclusion right borders much more on designing boundary rules that define membership criteria. When this right is held along with the first three sets of rights, the holder is a proprietor.

**Alienation Right:** Given what a particular constitutional order allows, the alienation right is the right to transfer exclusion, management, withdrawal, or access rights through sales, lease or transfer in form of a gift or inheritance. A full owner is an individual or group who holds this right with exclusion, management, withdrawal and access rights. But when the holder has the alienation right with one of the other sets of rights, the holder is a partial owner.

It is not impossible for an individual or a group to hold one or more of these rights. This depends much more on the nature of the resource system, its flows of benefits, and the dominant basis of relationships among the affected individuals. For subtractive flows like yam, rice and cocoa beans from resource systems like farmlands, assignment of private rights may be appropriate simply because exclusion of potential beneficiaries from these flows or resource units is not usually a problem. For unsubtractive benefits from recreational spots such as banks of streams and rivers and sacred groves, rules may be made to impose toll fees so as to avoid destructive

congestion. Where exclusion is difficult or costly for resource units and/or systems subtractive in consumption, a common property rights institution may be appropriate for the management of the resource system. The bottom-line is that no particular property rights institution serves as the one-size-fit-all formula (Elinor Ostrom 2001, 2003).

The relationship between property rights institutions and constitutional order is essential to the regulation of property rights in land in pursuit of public peace required for mutually productive ways of life. In actual fact, this can be realized where the constitutional order generates property rights institutions that can lower transaction costs through effective constraints for sanctioning agreements and increasing security of expectations for productive entrepreneurs (Kemp 1981; Field 1989:334). Rules for defining, allocating and enforcing bundles of land rights and resolving conflicts relating to the rights would then facilitate mutually productive entrepreneurships in any given community when the rules are shared as fair ordering principles (Design Principle 1 discussed in chapter 1) by most participating individuals and when most of the affected individuals recognize the authority of some individuals to enforce their shared rules over them (Design Principle 5 discussed in chapter 1). These relationships will now be examined regarding regulation of property rights in agricultural and housing land in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta.

### **5.3 Rights in Agricultural and Housing Land**

In Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, most land was initially held exclusively by compounds (*agbole*) in the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The land belonging to a particular compound was shared out among its members, especially heads of its

constituent immediate families, for agricultural purposes. It was managed as a common property. Private rights were assigned to the yields on the land. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta had begun to hold land independently of their respective compounds.

The respective constitutional orders in Ibadan and Abeokuta in particular have allowed freedom for most individuals to specialize in crafts other than farming. Inhabitants of these communities are also open to new ideas, which have enabled most of them to take advantage of better opportunities as their circumstances change. Since most of the Yoruba people in both Ibadan and Abeokuta mutually recognize their ordering principles as fair rules, growing populations and increasing specialization in other crafts along with contacts with European traders intricately interacted positively with their respective constitutional orders in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to allow private ownership of land as from 1860 (A11; I28; Price 1933, Mabogunje 1961; Lloyd 1962; Falola 1984). The institutional change in both Ibadan and Abeokuta has however not exterminated compounds as landowning units. Many individuals and compounds still hold land today for agricultural and housing uses. The same transformation in agricultural land in particular, however, did not and has not occurred in Ile-Ife where most landowning compounds among Ife elements have concentrated generally on farming and lending out their land to “permanent” and “temporary” strangers (*alejḡ*)<sup>80</sup> (A5; A11; F7; F15; F12; I10; I6; I16).

Many other purposes land is used for in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta include raising sacred groves and construction of roads/paths, markets and town halls for holding

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<sup>80</sup> Permanent strangers are those who have come to stay for good in Ile-Ife. Individuals who have other places they can call their homes are temporary strangers.

meetings. The discussion that follows will however focus mainly on agricultural and housing land. This is simply because the way property rights in agricultural and housing land is allocated and enforced in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta will enable an understanding of how the relationship between the regulation of property rights in land and constitutional order in each community has affected public peace and productive entrepreneurship since 19<sup>th</sup> century. The discussion that follows begins with the analysis of rights in agricultural land.

### **5.3.1 Agricultural Land**

For security reasons, most agricultural activities in the 19<sup>th</sup> century took place within the current urban parts of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. With security guaranteed further away from the center of each community, their rural parts began to serve as agricultural land, where farmlands are located for the cultivation of food and tree crops. The food crops involve maize, yams, cassava, pepper, cocoa-yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, okra, beans, pawpaw and groundnuts. Food crops are temporary/annual crops. They are planted and harvested at least twice a year. Cocoa trees, kolanut trees, palm trees and orange trees are perennial/permanent crops taking at least seven years before they can be harvested. Some individuals however engage in farming food crops on a small-scale in the urban areas of the three Yoruba communities.

Most of the agricultural land, as earlier indicated, was initially shared out among the constituent compounds in the three Yoruba communities with the exception of Ile-Ife where compounds of Oyo elements have been exclusively classified as and remained local units comprising **permanent tenants/strangers** since their arrival around the first



two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (A11; I27: I29). The situation in Ile-Ife finds expression mainly in its constitutional order where blood ties from the father's side of Ife elements serve as a more important ticket for membership in landowning compounds. Put differently, to be born by a male Ife element automatically guarantees membership in a landowning compound, and by a male Oyo element, a permanent tenant/landless person in Ile-Ife.

The arrangements in Ibadan and Abeokuta have however been largely flexible. Strangers are free to join the existing landowning compounds or form their own compounds with a full landowning status. Initial settlers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta in the 19<sup>th</sup> century willingly waived property rights (*eto*) in many portions of their land to newcomers so that newcomers could have land to cultivate and thereby form landowning compounds (Mabogunje 1961; Toyin Falola 1984). Initial settlers in Ibadan and Abeokuta maintained this attitude then because they regarded (still regard) newcomers as their equals and would not want to do onto others what they would not want others to do onto them. The way the constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has affected the functioning of property rights institutions for land is examined in detail below starting with the compound as the landowning unit.

#### **5.3.1.1 Compound: Landowning Unit**

The landowning unit in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is the compound consisting of a number of immediate families. The land under the control of any given compound belongs to its members. Each head of the immediate families in a given landowning compound is entitled to hold a fair share of the compound's land. He determines how to

use his share for agricultural purposes. Although members of landowning compound share an understanding to contribute in farm products toward the celebration of their compound's festivals, they are not under any obligation to pay anything back for the use of their respective shares of their compound land. Every individual claimant in the compound is also allowed to allot to his married sons parts of the plot he controls as the head of his immediate family (A11; F12; I6; I10; I27; Price 1933).

If continually used, the land cannot be taken away from the claimant and his children. There is a shared understanding that the persistently used share passes from one generation to the other in that line. But if he abandons the land for many years, the leaders of his compound has mutually recognized authority (*eto*) to transfer the share to someone else in the compound in much the same way the man himself can give an allotted part abandoned by one of his sons to another son who needs it (Price 1933; Fadipe 1971).

### **5.3.1.2 Authorized Claimant-Member and Private Property Institutions**

The head of each immediate family exercises full control over the use of his share of the compound land. He however cannot lend/give out an unused part to non-members without the consent of the leaders of his compound. This arrangement gives the head of each immediate family the status of an authorized claimant-member because of the shared belief that he exclusively exercises private control over the rights that have to do with access to his portion of the compound land, the withdrawal of the yields thereon, and the management of his portion. If he rents the land from another landowning compound, he is an authorized claimant-tenant to the lending compound. As an

authorized claimant-tenant, he can exercise full access and withdrawal rights along with a partial management right<sup>81</sup> (A11; F7; F12; I10).

As an authorized claimant-member, the head of each immediate family regulates the internal use of his plot. He fully determines what, when, where and how to plant, harvest and weed. These sets of private decisions are usually taken to suit the climatic, relief and drainage conditions of the land, as explained in chapter 2 of this study. Tree crops like cocoa, kolanut, oranges and palm produce are planted in areas with thick and rich loamy soils. Food crops are often cultivated on land with light soils and, sometimes, in tree crop-growing land. Most of these decisions depend on the preferences of the authorized claimant-member as moderated by the dominant environmental factors.

The yields of the land are largely the exclusive property of the authorized claimant-member (Price 1933; Lloyd 1962; Falola 1984). The authorized claimant-member has the exclusive authority to decide on whom he wants to share his access and withdrawal/harvest rights with. As discussed in chapter 3 of this research, the head of any given immediate family in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has the duty to provide for his wife (wives) and children in clothing, food and shelter while they in turn are required to support his profession. Against this background, his wife (wives) and children have an obligation to support the implementation of his decisions about the internal use of the land. They also enjoy both access and withdrawal rights as *authorized users* by having a fair share of his crops for their survival. The provision of enough food by a man for his wives and children enables him to conform to the protective attribute of *Eleda* (the

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<sup>81</sup> An authorized claimant-tenant exercises a partial management right. He decides how, when and where to plant, weed and harvest on his rented plot. The lending compound determines what he can plant: permanent or temporary crops or both.

creator), which is a shared aspect of the standards of good character (*omoluwabi*) in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta.

The same requirement of good character imposes an obligation on the authorized claimant-member to care for his parents and his compound's leaders who are too old to till the ground. He has a similar obligation towards siblings from both his mother's and father's sides rendered incapacitated by unfavorable life circumstances. These individuals become *authorized users* if they are strong enough to go to the farm and harvest food crops. The authorized claimant-member may also allow his *creditors* access and withdrawal rights regarding certain crops in paying back his debts. Also, *hunters* may be permitted to kill games on the land. In most cases, the authorized claimant-member however has a full claim to the animals his traps caught on his farm (A11; F12; I6; Price 1933).

The solid part of the earth surface, as indicated earlier on, is an aspect of land among the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Other aspects include pools of water, streams and rivers (I27). Some authorized claimant-members may have pools on the land allocated to them by their compounds. For some other authorized claimant-members, rivers and streams may pass through their land or their land may share boundaries with rivers and streams. In a circumstance where an authorized claimant-member has a pool of water on his land, he has full control over the pool for the benefit of himself and his relatives. He may allow non-relatives to use it on specified terms. Generally, such pools are preserved as sources of drinkable water and rarely used for fishing purposes.

In the case of rivers and streams, the authorized claimant-member has full right to use their banks. In most cases, banks of rivers and streams in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are used for planting vegetables during the long dry season and, sometimes, rice throughout the year. It is the responsibility of the authorized claimant-member to take proper care of his own side of the river/stream and to do no damage or harm to the people in the downstream areas. Misfortunes are believed to happen to individuals who intentionally do harm to others. The same rights and duties apply to most swampy areas on the land belonging to any authorized claimant-member. The rights of the authorized claimant-member are secure if the land is persistently used.

Furthermore, both relatives and non-relatives of the authorized claimant-member must abide by agreed-upon rules for securing his rights or else face misfortunes. As explained in chapter 6 in this study, an authorized claimant-member may put semiotic tags (*alile*) on his land and farm produce to prevent unauthorized use or entry. The semiotic tags could be statutes of lesser gods and/or ancestors under which compounds put their members to prevent shirks, free-riding behavior, theft, and other forms of wrongdoing (*ibi*) by any member to other individuals (Ayo 2002).

The rights (*eto*) of authorized claimant-members are mostly secure. There is a mutual understanding that wrongdoings (*ibi*) to other individuals compromise the standards of good character (*omoluwabi*) and attract loss of support from one's compound's members, loss of protection of the compound's ancestors, and misfortunes from *Eleda* as the ultimate judge to whom humans are accountable after death. The respect associated with this shared belief imposes effective constraints on individual behavior (A3; F2; I6; Price 1933; Ayo 2002). As will be further explained in chapter 6,

many compounds, neighborhoods and sections in Abeokuta and Ibadan also organized joint security to protect their farmlands from thieves in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **5.3.1.3 Constitutional Order and Authorized Claimant-Members**

The key question then revolves around who can be authorized claimant-members of landowning compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The determination of an authorized claimant-member of any given landowning compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta generally reflects how the Yoruba people in each community experience themselves and their relationships with others.

The hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife are supportive of Ife elements and their descendants from the male line as *omo ore*. *Omo ore* are descendants of *Oduduwa*, the presumed delegated creator and owner of the earth including Ile-Ife. As *omo ore*, most Ife elements constitutionally enjoy the exclusive right (*eto*) to be authorized claimant-members of the landowning compounds in Ile-Ife. As authorized claimant-members, Ife elements pay no rent for the use of their compound land and enjoy full access, withdrawal and management rights to their allotted plots. The blood tie requirement as an important ticket for membership in the landowning compounds in Ile-Ife denies most Oyo elements (Modakeke) and their compounds the landowning status. It is on this basis, most Oyo elements have continued to be experienced as permanent authorized claimant-tenants required to pay *ifo* (land rents) to Ife elements who own the agricultural land they (Oyo elements) work. More light will be shielded on temporary and permanent authorized claimant-tenants later in this chapter.

The ordering arrangements for the operation of property rights in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, however, are different from those in Ile-Ife. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, initial settlers and strangers/newcomers relate to one another based on covenantal relationships and mutual agreements relying mainly on the principles of equality, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations. The basis of this pattern of relationships is the golden rule: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you”. The golden rule provides the motivation for regarding no individual as landless in Ibadan and Abeokuta.

Strangers/newcomers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta are free to join the existing landowning compounds or form their own compounds with a full landowning status. As a result, most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, unlike in Ile-Ife, are members of landowning units. Adult male children in Ibadan and Abeokuta can also inherit land from their mothers’ sides and keep it as long as they put the land to use continually (Mabogunje 1961; Lloyd 1962; Imoagene 1976; Toyin Falola 1984).

#### **5.3.1.4 Constitutional Order and Common Property Institutions**

As earlier pointed out, an authorized claimant-member in any given compound in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta cannot transfer any part of his land without the full consent of his compound’s leaders. Most of the heads of the immediate families in any given landowning compound are leaders of the compound. They have mutually recognized authority to decide and enforce collective-choice decisions on behalf of their members. Before 1860 when sales of agricultural and housing land to individuals and corporate bodies began to gain currency in both Ibadan and Abeokuta (Price 1933:94; Mabogunje 1961:258; Lloyd 1962:242), the constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and

Abeokuta enabled most heads of immediate families, who are also authorized claimant-members, within any landowning compound, to share common proprietorship of their compound land.

With the beginning of land sales in Ibadan and Abeokuta, most authorized claimant-members began to share common ownership of their compound land. The level of specialization equal standing and equal liberty have been facilitating in crafts other than farming in both Ibadan and Abeokuta has led individuals not interested in farming to sell off or give away parts of their land (Price 1933). Land sales in both Ibadan and Abeokuta have consequently begun to enable many private individuals to hold agricultural land and to have the right to sell the land without the consent of anybody. The tradition about land as a sacred memory of Ife elements' ancestors has however continued to prevent sales of most of the agricultural land in Ile-Ife where the desire to achieve distinction in various crafts has been low.

Based on their respective constitutional arrangements, the collective responsibilities of compound leaders in landowning compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta require them to exercise the management, exclusion and alienation rights in relation to their compound land. They also handle conflicts between their members and tenants. While the three sets of rights interact with one another in ways that are sometimes virtually indistinguishable, they have been broken down as clearly as possible as follows.

First, leaders of landowning compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have the authority to plant a bunch of *peregun* trees (*dracaena fragrans*) to mark boundaries of their compound land. In some cases, lines might be drawn between *peregun* trees to



delineate the identifiable limits of the land of any given compound. The physical boundaries provide an enforcement basis for dealing with problems of encroachments from members of adjoining landowning compounds (Price 1933; Lloyd 1962: 248).

Second, there is a mutual understanding that leaders of any given landowning compound have the right to allocate to another member of the compound the land abandoned by an authorized claimant-member of the compound. Third, with shared understanding about the sales of agricultural land from 1860 in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, compound leaders in the two Yoruba communities must give their consent before any member can sell, lease or give out as a gift his share of the compound land. This requirement is meant to protect the rights of buyers and sellers (I16).

Fourth, leaders of the landowning compound have the right to oversee the sharing of the plot of any deceased authorized claimant-member among his children based on the shared values for justifying their relationships with one another. The prevalent conditions of equality in Ibadan and Abeokuta have enabled freedom for most children to inherit from both their fathers' and mothers' lines. Most children of Oyo elements with Ife mothers however lose the right (*eto*) to inherit from their mothers' side in Ile-Ife. This is a reflection of the fundamental inequalities inherent in the hierarchical-aristocratic institutional arrangements in Ile-Ife where most Oyo elements are experienced as landless individuals.

#### **5.3.1.5 Constitutional Order and Authorized Claimant-Tenants**

Inheritance of agricultural land is not the main issue affected by the differences in the institutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The prevalent institutional

arrangements in the three Yoruba communities affect the circumstances where strangers/newcomers and initial settlers can exercise management, exclusion and alienation rights.

In Ibadan and Abeokuta where there is a shared belief that no individual is landless, most individuals (strangers and initial settlers) belong to landowning compounds (Imoagena 1976; Falola 1984). Nevertheless, many authorized claimant-members with insufficient land may approach members of other landowning compounds for agricultural land. In Ibadan and Abeokuta, land may be granted to any man not necessarily from the grantor's compound, neighborhood or section. If the land is not given out as an outright gift, the grantee becomes an authorized claimant-tenant to the grantor and his compound, and may be required to pay *ifo* (land rents) on a regular basis (A11; I10; Lloyd 1962; Fadipe 1971; Famoriyo 1979; Falola 1984). Serving mainly to remind the tenant that the land does not belong to him, payment of *ifo* (land rents) may be in farm products or cash.

In addition, the grantee may be classified and limited in the internal use of the rented land based on the type of crops he is allowed to plant. He is a temporary authorized claimant-tenant when the granting compound/individual permits him to use the land mostly for cultivating food crops. The grantee is a permanent authorized claimant-tenant when the tenancy deal permits him to use the land for the cultivation of both temporary and permanent crops such as cocoa trees, kolanut trees, palm trees and orange trees. If a temporary authorized claimant-tenant plants permanent crops on his rented land in Ibadan and Abeokuta, he may be evicted following a series of warning. Ife

elements may also be authorized claimant-tenants to other landowning compounds in Ile-Ife (A11; F12; I6; I10; Price 1933, Lloyd 1962).

Irrespective of the tenancy conditions in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, the authorized claimant-tenant has full control over the yields of his rented land and over the decisions as to when, where and how to plant and harvest. Leaders of the landowning compound determine his access to the land, what he can plant in terms of food (temporary) or/and tree (permanent) crops, and the transfer of his tenancy rights. In most cases, many tenants are allowed to transfer their rights to their children. Many well behaved tenants in Ibadan and Abeokuta have been allowed to have their rented land as full owners after many years. Many tenants who act to be of bad character are denied rights after series of warnings. Tenants of bad character may be asked to quit any time but must be given enough time to harvest their crops (A11; I6; Price 1933; Lloyd 1962).

Much as both initial settlers and strangers/newcomers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as shown in Table 5.1, largely face equality of conditions in holding most categories of rights in agricultural land, the prevalent circumstances in Ile-Ife is fundamentally a contrast. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, once an authorized claimant-tenant indicates intention to be part of the community, he may be allowed to claim full ownership over the rented land (A11; I6; Price 1933). Most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife have however been treated as permanent authorized claimant-tenants since they arrived in Ile-Ife in the opening years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most Oyo elements are regarded as permanent authorized claimant-tenants because they are of lesser status in relation to most Ife elements and are permitted to plant both food and tree crops.

Much like authorized claimant-tenants in Ibadan and Abeokuta, Oyo elements, as authorized claimant-tenants to landowning compounds in Ile-Ife, have full control over the yields on their farms. Unlike Ibadan and Abeokuta, the long period of stay of most Oyo elements has not motivated Ife elements to accord Oyo elements the rights of full citizenship including equality of conditions in holding management, exclusion and alienation rights in agricultural land (F7), as depicted in Table 5.3. The situation in Ile-Ife, as earlier pointed out, is an expression of Ile-Ife's constitutional order that enables Ife elements from the fathers' sides to have the exclusive right to own land and be lords over Oyo elements who must abide by the tenancy conditions determined by Ife elements.

#### **5.4 Constitutional Order and Housing Land**

The institutional arrangements in the three communities also influence what rights strangers and initial settlers can exercise regarding housing land. As explained in chapter 4 of this research, most Yoruba people used to live in compounds where they shared access, withdrawal (use), management and exclusion rights to their compound. In the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta, as Table 5.2 shows, most strangers and initial settlers likewise fully owned the land on which they had houses before 1860 when land sales began to be a shared tradition. This was based on the constitutional conception that treated both strangers and initial settlers in the two Yoruba communities as equals. During the same period, as depicted in Table 5.4, most Oyo elements were mere tenants as the land on which they had houses belonged fully to Ife elements who could ask them to quit anytime (Akinjogbin 1992). With the start of land sales in 1860 in Ibadan and

Abeokuta and as some Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta began to live away from their compounds, land began to be sold to many categories of individuals.

Significant differences characterize the three Yoruba communities regarding whether transfer of land for housing purposes, either by sales or as a gift, amounts to full ownership of housing land. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as Table 5.2 illustrates, transfer of housing land to most individuals give them full ownership (I6; I10). Such individuals can sell their land without the consent of the initial sellers. Most land bought by Oyo elements for building houses in Ile-Ife are however still regarded as the property of Ife elements who reserve the exclusive rights of eviction. While land sales currently occur among Ife elements, as illustrated in Table 5.4, Ife elements are now forbidden to sell land to Oyo elements for housing purposes. The situation in Ile-Ife reflects the conception that land in Ile-Ife represents the memory of ancestors of Ife elements who alone can exercise full ownership over most land in Ile Ife (F7).

## **5.5 Property Rights in Land and the Problem of Constitutional Standing**

The impact of the distribution and enforcement of property rights in land on public peace and productive entrepreneurship in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has reflected how fair the respective constitutional orders are to most participating individuals. Instances supportive of this claim will be examined later in this study. As a matter of fact, this relationship is not limited to the three Yoruba communities. Quite a number of scholars have, for example, argued that the nature of constitutional order in any given community is important because when the constitutional order is based on principles of mutual respect, trust, reciprocity, impartiality, openness and equal standing

for most individuals, it is more likely to enjoy the support of most participating individuals, lead to impartiality in allocating and enforcing property rights, enable individuals to turn their conflicts into productive outcomes that leave everyone better off and promote security of expectations given acceptable conditions of risk.

For its part, impartiality in allocating and enforcing property rights both strengthens the sense of legitimacy of institutions for regulating property rights and is capable of generating a living process of cooperation for achieving public peace. Public peace in turn reinforces security of expectations for entrepreneurs and increases reciprocal specialties in complex enterprises among diverse individuals. With public peace achieved, most individuals will be able to make more investments and capture the returns from their investments.

A given constitutional order may however hinder mutually beneficial ways of life when the institutions for regulating property rights marginalize some individuals. With the absence of impartiality in the allocation and enforcement of property rights, individuals with the capabilities to impose sanctions may interpret institutional arrangements to their own benefits and thereby exploit others. The more extreme the deprivation, the more willing the disadvantaged individuals become to use extreme measures in the absence of means to achieve more agreeable solutions. Such a repressive constitutional order is more likely to decrease possibilities for reaching more mutually acceptable contractual agreements, increase transactions costs for investment-making, lower security of expectations, and consequently undermine mutually productive entrepreneurships (North & Thomas 1976; Kemp 1981; Berman 1983; V Ostrom 1987b;

Field 1989; Nicholson 1993; Ayling and Kelly 1997; Alston, Libecap and Mueller 1999; de Soto 2000).

### **5.5.1 Ibadan and Abeokuta**

In line with this shared perspective, the structures of constitutional orders in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have greatly influenced the extent to which the regulation of property rights in land has contributed to public peace and mutually productive undertakings. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta in particular, the presumption of equality of man before ancestors, lesser gods and *Eleda* (the creator) give most individuals equal standing, as illustrated in Figure 3.1 and Tables 5.1 and 5.2, in holding most bundles of rights in land associated with the positions of authorized claimant-members/tenants, proprietors and owners. Most strangers in the two Yoruba communities have as many choices as initial settlers have<sup>82</sup>, thereby contributing to mutual trust and impartiality in property rights allocation among diverse Yoruba elements in both communities. In addition, the co-existence of private and common property rights have not led to any disruption of public peace in Ibadan and Abeokuta because individuals in these communities have shared understanding about their ordering principles, as discussed in chapter 3.

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<sup>82</sup> In line with Design Principle 1, this is made possible by the clearly defined and fair membership terms for individuals in both communities.

**Table 5.1: Bundles of Rights in Agricultural Land Associated with Constitutional Standing/Position in Ibadan and Abeokuta**

<b>Position/ Right</b>	Owner (after 1860)	Proprietor (before 1860)	Authorized Claimant (Tenant and Member of Landowning Compound)	Authorized User	Authorized Entrant
Access	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>	<i>Open to Entrants Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>
Withdrawal	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>	
Management	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements		
Exclusion	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements			
Alienation	Open to Most Yoruba Element				

- Notes** (i) “Most” includes strangers and initial settlers since most individuals are members of landowning compounds. Today, these positions can also be assumed by non-Yoruba elements.
- (ii) Private Property Institution for the Rights of Authorized Claimants before and after 1860.
- (iii) Private Property Institution for Individual Owners of land from 1860.
- (iv) Common Property Institution for the Exclusion and Management (before 1860), and Alienation (after 1860) Rights for Compound land.



**Table 5.2: Bundles of Rights in Housing Land Associated with Constitutional Standing/Position in Ibadan and Abeokuta**

<b>Position/ Right</b>	Owner (after 1860)	Proprietor (before 1860)	Authorized Claimant	Authorized User	Authorized Entrant
Access	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized jointly by Claimants &amp; Proprietors or Owners</i>	<i>Open to Users Authorized jointly by Claimant &amp; Proprietors or Owners</i>
Withdrawal	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by jointly Claimant &amp; Proprietor or Owner</i>	
Management	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements		
Exclusion	Open to Most Yoruba Elements	Open to Most Yoruba Elements			
Alienation	Open to Most Yoruba Elements				

- Notes** (i) “Most” includes strangers and initial settlers since most individual are members of landowning compounds. Today, these positions can also be assumed by non-Yoruba elements
- (ii) Private Property Institution for Individual Owners of Housing land from around 1860.
- (iii) Common Property Institution for Access, Withdrawal, Management and Exclusion Rights (before and after 1860) for Compound Houses

As illustrated in Table 5.1 and Figure 3.1, most strangers and initial settlers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta have equal chance of being an authorized claimant-member and sharing communal property rights of management, exclusion (before 1860) and alienation (after 1860) in connection to their compound land since most individual belongs to at least a landowning compound<sup>83</sup>. Following the start of land sales, most individuals in both Abeokuta and Ibadan have been facing equal opportunities in holding agricultural and housing land as private property as depicted in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.

With effective mechanisms for enforcement in place and shared understanding about their respective constitutional orders, most individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta supported transition from shared communal proprietorship to the concomitant existence of private and communal ownership of land. The flexible constitutional orders in Abeokuta and Ibadan enabling equal standing and equal liberty for participating individuals and their local units have come as a source of motivation for most individuals to support their property rights systems: private and common.

Since equality has not been denied to most individuals or groups in holding any particular property right and in solving problems of exclusive interests in the constituent local units, living channels of cooperation have been created and enhanced among the diverse elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta. As will be further explained in chapter 6, the constitutional orders in both Ibadan and Abeokuta have enabled most participating individuals to jointly pursue public peace and other general interests in order to take advantage of better opportunities. Unlike Ile-Ife, both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as illustrated

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<sup>83</sup> This meets the cooperative condition in Design Principle 1 about giving most individuals equal standing in governance and property relationships such that no individual is discriminated against by virtue of his/her family and group backgrounds.

in Tables 4.2 and 4.3, have consequently grown into big urban centers of attraction to productive entrepreneurs, where there are many manufacturing companies (see Tables 1.1, 4.2 and 4.3) each with a paid-up share capital over one million Nigerian naira.

These developments are consistent with an argument that communities with economic progress and increasing industrial and commercial openness are those where most participating individuals have equal opportunities to participate in decision making and to hold property. These constitutional conditions in turn facilitate the development of norms of reciprocity, mutual trust and effective communication required for cooperation and collective action for the common good (Coleman 1988; Putnam 1993; Fukuyama 1995; Verba 2003; Greif and Laitin 2004).

### **5.5.2 Ile-Ife**

The constitutional order in Ile-Ife, however, allows for fundamental inequalities where most Ife elements are allowed to own land and thereby be authorized claimant-members. Most Oyo elements (Modakeke) are treated as permanent tenants/landless individuals<sup>84</sup>. With respect to agricultural land, as illustrated in Table 5.3, the constitutional order in Ile-Ife enables most Ife elements to exercise access, withdrawal, management and exclusion rights. Oyo elements as authorized claimant-tenants cannot enjoy beyond access, withdrawal and partial management rights. When sales of housing land became popular in Ile-Ife, as depicted by Table 5.4, such transfer does not confer outright ownership on Oyo elements.

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<sup>84</sup> In sharp contrast to Design Principle 1 discussed in chapter 1, unfair membership terms in Ile-Ife are responsible for this pattern of relationships.

The allocation of property rights in agricultural and housing land in Ile-Ife has been a major obstacle in the way of public peace and mutually productive ways of life in Ile-Ife. Much as most Oyo elements prefer a constitutional order that supports equal treatment for individuals, most Ife elements express an uncompromising preference for the rules of inequalities in holding land. This circumstance has set Oyo and Ife elements against each other as enemies. Mutual distrust has prevailed to aggravate mutually destructive socialization processes between members of the two groups. Group leaders socialize their members to internalize loyalty to their respective groups and the norm of revenge against the hostile group<sup>85</sup>.

As predicted in studies by Putnam 1993, Fukuyama 1995, Uphoff 2000, and Greif and Laitin 2004, the absence of mutually productive reciprocity, mutual trust and mutually effective communication between Oyo and Ife elements has offered them no motivation to come together in solving problems of collective interests (F2; F7). The refusal of Oyo elements to combine with Ife elements as associates was worsened in the late 1940s when Oyo elements renewed their quest for equal treatment in holding land and having freedom to govern themselves. The request was met with two unfavorable options that required Oyo elements to choose between (i) accepting their status as permanent lesser beings/tenants or (ii) selling their houses and the crops in their farms in Ile-Ife to Ife elements and then moving out of Ife land (Olaniyan 1992: 278). The then incumbent *Ooni* (king of Ile-Ife), Oba Adesoji Aderemi warned Oyo elements that “whosoever chooses to farm in another man’s land must pay the inevitable fee” (Olaniyan 1992: 276). The situation left most Oyo elements with no other means of

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<sup>85</sup> Promotion of increasing group loyalty by each group corresponds to effects on the sociopolitical environment, which is part of the decision process aspect of the Policy Sciences Approaches discussed in chapter 1.

achieving acceptable solutions than the use of violence that erupted in 1948 and claimed life and property (F7; Akinjogbin 1992; Albert 1999). As depicted in Table 4.1 in chapter 4, the atmosphere of increasingly fragile peace has consequently hindered Ile-Ife from developing industrial and commercial openness to attract productive investors.

**Table 5.3: Bundles of Rights in Agricultural Land Associated with Constitutional Standing/Position in Ile-Ife**

<b>Position/ Right</b>	Full Owner	Proprietor	Authorized Claimant	Authorized User	Authorized Entrant
Access		Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>	<i>Open to Entrants Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>
Withdrawal		Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Authorized Claimants</i>	
Management		Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements		
Exclusion		Most Ife Elements			
Alienation					

**Notes:** Land sales are forbidden, but most children of Ife elements enjoy the right to inherit their parents' shares of their compound land. Ife elements allow Oyo elements to transfer their tenancy rights to their (Oyo elements) children.

**Table 5.4: Bundles of Rights in Housing Land Associated with Constitutional Standing/Position in Ile-Ife**

<b>Position/ Right</b>	Full Owner (with land sales)	Proprietor (before land sales)	Authorized Claimant	Authorized User	Authorized Entrant
Access	Most Ife Elements	Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Claimants, Proprietors and/or Owners</i>	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Claimants, Proprietors and/or Owners</i>
Withdrawal	Most Ife Elements	Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements	<i>Open to Users Authorized by Claimants, Proprietors and/or Owners</i>	
Management	Most Ife Elements	Most Ife Elements	Ife and Oyo Elements		
Exclusion	Most Ife Elements	Most Ife Elements			
Alienation	Ife and Oyo Elements				

**Notes:** Alienation – Most land in Ile-Ife is believed to belong to the compounds of Ife elements. Though not recognized by Ife elements, many Oyo elements sell housing land among themselves in the area under their control (F7; F14; F21; F22).

### **5.5.3 The 1978 Land Reform and the Problem of Standing**

The influence of constitutional order on the regulation of property rights in land in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta can also be illustrated with how each community responded to changes in land administration in 1978. A new land law was enacted in 1978 by the Nigerian state and applied similarly throughout Nigeria. The 1978 land law led to the

wholesale transfer of landownership from compounds/families to the Nigerian state. Management of water bodies such as rivers was also part of the transfer. State and local governments, the subordinate units of the Nigerian state, were delegated the authority to hold land in trust for the national government and approve access to land for individuals and groups through issuance of certificates of occupancy.

Fundamental ambiguities however characterized the provisions of the 1978 land law. Section 36 of the land law in particular simultaneously recognized the communal rights of landowning groups (landowning compounds among the Yoruba) to their land and the rights of occupiers (including tenants) of the land being used for agricultural purposes to be entitled to possession of the land for agricultural purposes as if a right of occupancy had been granted to the occupiers (Igbozurike 1980:20; Udo 1999:37, 63, 80). By this provision, tenancy technically became an illegal act. This was later clarified in 1979 when Brigadier David Jemibewon, the then military governor of Oyo State (current Oyo and Osun States) indicated that customary tenancy was illegal by the 1978 land law (Ajulo 1989: 56; Adeyemi-Ale1999: 162). By virtue of the clarification by the military governor, tenants (permanent and temporary) could then take full possession of their land as full owners based on section 36 of the land law. The conflicts that arose following the enactment of the land law were treated differently in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta.

#### **5.5.3.1 Ibadan and Abeokuta**

When the land law came into existence, there was no public demonstration or rioting against the policy change in Ibadan and Abeokuta. Their respective constitutional arrangements do not treat anybody as a landless individual (Udo 1999:45). Predictably,

reactions to the land law in the two communities had come in more peaceful ways. Many landowning compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta reacted to the new change by dividing up the unused parts of their compound land, which were quickly planted with crops in order to become “legal occupiers/holders” as provided for in section 36 of the land law.

In other instances, non-members bought unappropriated land from some landowning compounds in Ibadan and Abeokuta and developed it by either building houses on it or planting it with crops. They eventually took advantage of the weak enforcement mechanisms of the Nigerian state by backdating transaction documents to dates before March 1978 when the land law came into existence. In addition, a number of landlords in Ibadan and Abeokuta entered into “gentleman” agreements with their respective permanent tenants to enable the latter to take over the full possession of the land. In places where state officials cannot reach, many affected individuals have not bothered to get legal documents from the Nigerian state (I6; I10; A11; A15; Igbozurike 1980: 45-46).

This does not mean that the promulgation of the land law did not create disputes and problems in Ibadan and Abeokuta. The apparent ambiguities in section 36 of the land law led to disputes over simultaneous declaration of title to the same land by some landlords and their respective tenants (Udo 1999: 80). Such individuals made use of both state-owned courts and their community leaders in resolving their disputes instead of resorting to violence. In many of such disputes, resolution efforts were targeted at keeping the existing friendship relationships between the disputants, which reflects the integrative condition for conflict resolution in Design Principle 6 discussed in chapter 1. Whatever the rulings of the state-owned courts, many tenants were said to have appealed



to their community elders to help them prevail on their landlords to grant them full possession of parts of the land. As gathered in Ibadan and Abeokuta, most of the disputes were resolved with most landlords allowing their tenants to keep parts of the land as full owners. This occurred in the spirit of friendship, which the constitutional orders in both Abeokuta and Ibadan have generally enabled with a shared belief not to render any individual landless (I6; I29; A11).

On the other hand, the disregard of the Nigerian state for contexts in its policy interventions has dealt a devastating blow to the self-governing capabilities of individuals in managing rivers in both Ibadan and Abeokuta. The possession of landownership by the Nigerian state has affected the use and management of water bodies such as rivers. Weak enforcement mechanisms of the Nigerian state have turned most rivers in Yoruba communities into nobody's properties (open access resources). The banks of many rivers having downstream points in the urban parts of Ibadan and Abeokuta were carelessly reclaimed by overzealous estate agencies. In the face of lack of effective institutions, many individuals in several Yoruba communities along the rivers began to neglect the careful use of the rivers as they dump wastes into them. Barely two years after the 1978 land law was enacted, Ogunpa River was heavily choked and was forced in 1980 to burst into an unprecedented downstream flooding disaster which claimed hundreds of lives and damaged property worth over 300 millions of Nigeria's naira in Ibadan<sup>86</sup>. The banks of Ogun River in Abeokuta have also remained an eye sore as people have turned the river into a natural dumpster. These problems reflect the danger of neglecting contexts in policy interventions for managing public affairs in Nigeria.

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<sup>86</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/earthsummit/nigeriac.htm> (Date visited - May 13, 2005).

### **5.5.3.2 Ile-Ife**

While Opa and many other rivers in Ile-Ife have also been turned into dumpsters, the way the constitutional order in Ile-Ife have affected the disputes over the provisions of the 1978 land law is however different from what occurred in both Ibadan and Abeokuta. The 1978 land law and the ambiguities in its section 36 could not be handled peacefully in Ile-Ife because of the problem of fundamental inequalities already inherent in the constitutional order in Ile-Ife. As earlier explained, most Oyo elements had been treated as landless and inferior individuals in relation to most Ife elements who serve as their lords. While most Oyo elements had not supported the hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional order in Ile-Ife, most Ife elements had not compromised their position to support autonomy for Oyo elements to self-govern themselves and have equality in holding property rights in land.

The pre-1978 unequal property relationships between the two groups of individuals had to a large extent generated a weak sense of shared community, mutually destructive socialization processes, lack of trust, and lack of shared understanding about the dominant rule of submission in Ile-Ife. Because of the problem of insecurity of expectations related to the violence between Oyo and Ife elements, no reasonable investors had showed interest in investing in Ile-Ife prior to 1978.

The prevalent atmosphere of enmity was greatly worsened by the 1978 land law. Conflicting claims over land between Oyo and Ife elements immediately followed the enactment of the 1978 land law. Different parts of the ambiguities in section 36 of the law later became the potent instruments to justify the terms under which Oyo and Ife elements had wanted to relate to each other. As earlier pointed out, section 36 of the land

law ambiguously declared customary tenancy illegal, recognized the right of tenants using land for agricultural purposes as full owners, and simultaneously sought to protect the communal rights of landowning compounds to their land.

Oyo elements initially had paid *ifo* or *isakole* (land rents/tributes) to Ife elements before 1978. After 1978 most Oyo elements began to rebel against their perpetual inferior situation in which they had found themselves by refusing to pay *ifo* (land rents/tributes) (Udo 1990: 37). Oyo elements used the “illegality” of customary tenancy and the ambiguous rights of the tenant-occupiers in section 36 of the 1978 land law to justify and seek their interest in holding land and landed property on at least the same equal ground as most Ife elements, given that they (Oyo elements) had been living in Ile-Ife for about two centuries. Most Ife elements, on the other hand, disregarded the claim of Oyo elements by appealing to the ambiguous aspect of section 36 of the 1978 land law that recognized the communal rights of landowning compounds to keep their land. As an expression of the hierarchical-aristocratic constitutional order in Ile-Ife, Ife elements believe that the land law did not take their land away from them and did not change the status of Oyo elements (Modakeke) as permanent landless individuals in Ile-Ife. The position of Ife elements was further corroborated by an Ife Chief who in 1997 asserted, “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).

The refusal of Ife elements to recognize Oyo elements as citizens of Ile-Ife with the right to hold land in much the way as Ife elements has been regarded by most Oyo elements as a deprivation of rights of citizenship (unfair membership terms) against them (Oyo elements). In the absence of means to resolve the conflicting interests about the

pattern of regulating property rights in land in Ile-Ife, Oyo elements resorted to violence in 1981. The violence led to a complete breakdown of law and order in Ile-Ife and claimed life and property. The situation in Ile-Ife is supportive of the argument that inequalities in the constitutional basis of human relationships tend to lead to violence through the development of norms of revenge, mistrust and strong exclusionary bonds (Narayan 1999; Berkman and Kawachi 2000; Colletta and Cullen 2000; Greif and Laitin 2004).

The problem of inequalities inherent in the regulation of property rights in land in Ile-Ife, as reinforced by its constitutional order of repression, has also been a major part of the cause of subsequent violent conflicts that occurred in 1983 and 1997-2000. Because of the increasing insecurity of expectations related to these series of violence, productive entrepreneurs have not been able to invest in Ile-Ife, as depicted in Figure 3.1 in chapter 3 and Table 4.1 in chapter 4. The way the constitutional order in Ile-Ife has influenced the regulation of property rights in land has consequently disabled Ile-Ife from boasting of industrial estates, manufacturing companies and the huge business investments found in Ibadan and Abeokuta (see Tables 1.1 and 4.1 in chapters 1 and 4 respectively).

Variations in productive entrepreneurships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are not isolated cases. They are analogous to historical developments in Europe. Based on the accounts of North & Thomas (1976) and Berman (1983), most constitutional orders in Europe that ensured equal standing and equal liberty for most individuals and their local units, as in Ibadan and Abeokuta, experienced increasing productive entrepreneurships

while most repressive constitutional orders, as in Ile-Ife, did not (North & Thomas 1976; Berman 1983).

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The regulation of property rights in land among the Yoruba can be assessed to be efficient and effective based on its impact on mutually productive ways of life. As has been explained in this chapter, the co-existence of private and common property rights in land has not hindered public peace in both Ibadan and Abeokuta. Rather, the situations in both communities have contributed to facilitating increasing productive entrepreneurships, as Tables 4.2 and 4.3 in chapter 4 in this study illustrate. The combined effectiveness of both private and common property systems has been due mainly to their flexible constitutional orders which have promoted shared understanding about their property rights systems, and mutual trust and reciprocity in the process of governance and property relationships.

The flexibility of the constitutional orders was in particular put to test when the inhabitants of both Ibadan and Abeokuta engaged in a peaceful, successful transition from common proprietorship to the co-existence of common and private ownership of land as from 1860, and when the individuals in the two Yoruba communities peacefully processed the disputes generated by the 1978 land law instead of using violence.

Ibadan and Abeokuta however serve as a contrast to Ile-Ife where the operation of property rights has been a major cause of violent conflicts. The problem in Ile-Ife has to do with its repressive constitutional order. As has been illustrated in this chapter, the constitutional order in Ile-Ife allows for inequalities where most Ife elements can own

land. Most Oyo elements are treated as permanent tenants without the ability to own land. The use of violence by Oyo elements to achieve equality in holding land can be understood both as an expression of their displeasure against the repressive constitutional order and as an aspect of their struggle for a constitutional order supportive of equal standing and equal liberty for individuals in Ile-Ife.

Given these contrasts in Yorubaland, it can be argued that constitutional orders supportive of equal standing and equal liberty for individuals along with impartial allocation and enforcement of property rights can facilitate increasing productive entrepreneurships. Such constitutional orders will have to be compatible with the attributes of participating individuals and their prevailing environmental circumstances if only to lead to greater mutually beneficial results.

Further, the exaltation of a particular type of rights as the only best way to achieve productive entrepreneurship is also misleading. As explained in the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta, which have a more scope for productive ways of life, both private and common property institutions have long co-existed. Any reform of property rights will therefore be properly undertaken when attention is given to how a constitutional order can enhance the self-governing and self-organizing capabilities of participating individuals as they work out solutions to the problems of their daily existence within the opportunities and constraints created by their physical environments. Influences of constitutional orders on public peace are further explained in chapter 6. Chapter 6 specifically considers the relationships between constitutional order and collective action in pursuit of public peace through the organization of defense and security.

## CHAPTER SIX

### INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATION OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY AMONG THE YORUBA

“For functional specialization to give rise to urban centers, there must be a surplus of food production with which to feed...specialists...and peaceful conditions in which both the food producers and the specialists can produce of their best” (Toyin Falola 1984:32).

#### 6.1 Introduction

Maintenance of the security of life and property in any community enhances both public peace and mutually productive ways of life. With public peace achieved, a myriad of opportunities exist for any community 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 entrepreneurships are further enhanced when operational rules effectively lower transaction costs and thereby facilitate increasing possibilities for 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 any Yoruba community 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, 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 chapter specifically aims to explain how the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta organize and maintain the security of life and property. I will begin the discussion that follows by looking at the conceptions each Yoruba community draws upon in organizing defense and security. The importance of conceptions as organizing principles rests on how they have shaped shared understanding and sense of impartiality among individuals about their political orders. 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 community influenced the nineteenth century roles of blacksmiths and women. This will help us to understand what constraints and opportunities confront productive entrepreneurships 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.

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

Every human community needs at least two levels of ordering rules to achieve the security of life and property for mutually beneficial entrepreneurships. 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 (Design Principles 3 and 4 discussed in chapter 1) based on their specific conditions and interests (Design Principle 2 discussed in chapter 1). 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, in consistent with Design Principle 7 discussed in chapter, is to get 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 get put together in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has been mainly shaped by the dominant conceptions upon which human relationships in the three communities 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 (F1; F2; F12; Akinjogbin 2002). Most Ife elements perceive themselves as lords over Oyo elements. They 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.

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 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. This has been 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 (F7, F2).

In sharp contrast, different Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta relate to one another as equals, teach love of equality to their members, and have a shared understanding about the basis of their relationships. As equals, the Yoruba people in Ibadan and Abeokuta recognize and respect 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 respond to changes and challenges from their external environments<sup>87</sup>.

As discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation, 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

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<sup>87</sup> See The World Bank, 1992. "Indigenous Management Practices: Lessons for Africa's Management in the 1990s" Washington D.C. Africa Technical Department.

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.

### **6.3 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>88</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

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<sup>88</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).

Fulani from imposing their authorities over the whole Yorubaland. As explained in Chapter 2 of this study, 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.

Many of the internal security problems of the nineteenth century have remained important issues today. Extramarital sexual acts, theft and armed raids are security matters that now hold increasing attention in compounds and neighborhood development associations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Solutions to these problems require entrepreneurial ingenuity in developing appropriate institutional mechanisms. The Yoruba people in the three communities have been responding to their internal and external security problems using various methods. Acquisition of defense and security capabilities in particular strikes at the root of various approaches that have been taken to ensure the security of life and property in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta.

### **6.3.1 Acquisition of Security and Defense Capabilities**

Acquisition of security and defense capabilities in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is not based on the tradition of age-grades, unlike the Yoruba communities predominantly settled by Ekiti and Ijebu elements. Interest in acquiring defense capabilities is essentially voluntary. Interested individuals acquire the ability to defend themselves and their respective local units or/and communities by serving as apprentices to either their parents/relatives who are 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 can receive training in the craft of warfare outside their respective compounds, neighborhoods and communities reflect how much freedom exists for individuals to take advantage of better training opportunities from individuals of dissimilar backgrounds or local units. These two training options will be examined in turn to understand how they apply to the defense and security of Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, starting with childhood training in the craft of hunting.

#### **6.3.1.1 Childhood Training and Acquisition of Defense Capabilities**

Yoruba children begin to acquire the ability to defend themselves, their respective local units and communities through a long apprenticeship under their parents who are hunters/warriors (F2; I6; I23; I37; A11). As they grow up, the children-apprentices are 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).

Parents/relatives, especially fathers and male relatives, usually exploit 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, bowls, arrows, swords, and locally made guns. After a while, the children will be sent out to do hunting on their own. If they succeed they become independent hunters, who may be hired or used to guard neighborhoods, markets and other public places.

Without taking to hunting, individuals may otherwise acquire skills in the use of clubs to deal with unwanted guests. Hunting nevertheless offers 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 (F2; I6).

At different stages of hunting apprenticeship, individuals are taught certain principles that regulate their behavior as hunters and that enable them to be of good character (*omoluwabi*) (F2; I6; I23). The principles revolve around the terms of covenantal relationships among hunters and the way different groups of Yoruba elements relate to one another in their respective communities. Covenantal relationships among hunters forbid hunters to defile the person of the wife of another hunter. The covenantal relationships require a hunter who helps the wife of another hunter in a secluded place to inform the woman's husband about the entire transaction, otherwise the act is deemed to have involved sexual immorality. Sexual immorality is also committed when a hunter shares the same seat with the wife of another hunter. Without appropriate remedies, there is a shared belief that violation of these principles is capable of leading to death either through accidental gun discharges, attacks by wild animals, or other shameful misfortunes (A4; F2; I6).

Hunters in Ibadan and Abeokuta experience themselves as equal covenanters and are free to combine together in hunting expeditions. This is rooted in their conceptions that are supportive of equality and freedom of associations among diverse individuals. The situation is however different in Ile-Ife where fundamental inequalities inherent in the constitutional order of Ile-Ife have set Oyo and Ife elements against each other as



enemies and have hindered hunters from both groups from working together. These different bases of human relationships are directly and/or indirectly taught to hunters-in-training.

### **6.3.1.2 Wafare Training, War Ethics and Weapons**

Hunting wild animals provides initial training in daring, patience and persistence in stalking and gathering intelligence information about an enemy (Ade-Ajayi 1965). Training in hunting has 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>89</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.

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>89</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.

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. 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 participating individuals in free Europeans 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.

## **6.4 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. I shall first examine the organization of security in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century. This will be followed by an analysis of changes that have occurred in the three communities since contacts with Europeans, especially as from 1886 when most Yoruba communities agreed to stop fighting one another.

### **6.4.1 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 as explained in chapter 4 of this dissertation. 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).

#### **6.4.2: Security of Neighborhoods, Sections and Farmlands**

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.

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, nearly every *Babaogun* acted to be of good character by protecting his members. *Babaoguns* of good character in Ibadan had 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 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 (A5; A16).

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 most neighborhoods in Ibadan. In consistent with conditions for cooperation in Design Principles 1, 2 3, 4, and 5 discussed in chapter 1, 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 (see Design Principle 6 in chapter 1).

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 (see Design principle 1 in chapter 1) 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.

### 6.4.3 Defense against External Aggression in the Nineteenth Century

#### 6.4.3.1 Security and Environmental Barriers

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 2.2 in chapter 2 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 6.1: Hide-Out of the Yoruba People in Abeokuta under the Olumo Rock**

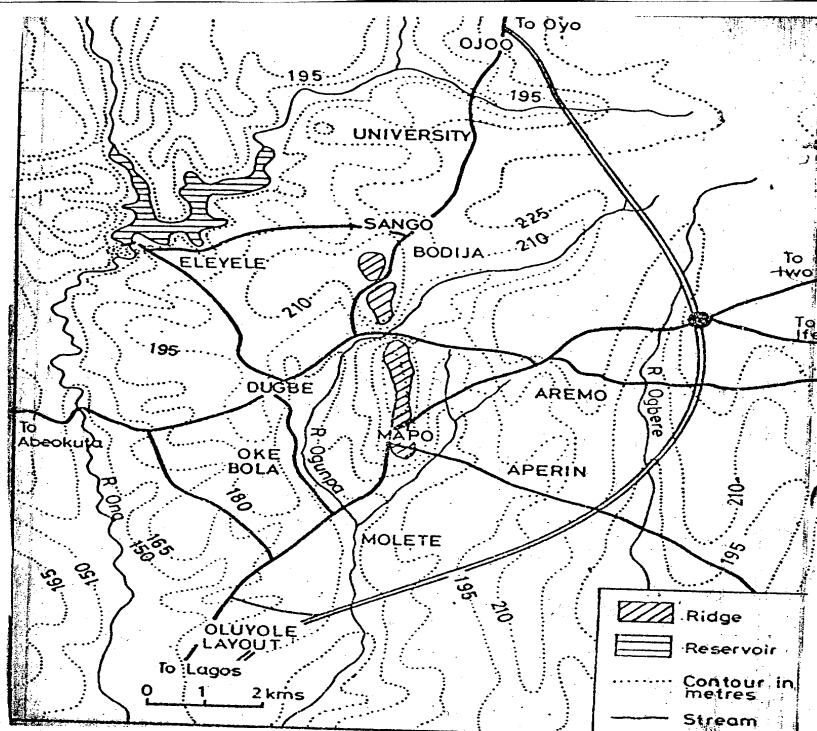


**Source: Fieldwork 2004**

Ibadan and Abeokuta were also located in the rainforest. Their respective locations were however closer to the woodland and tall grass savanna, as Figure 2.2 in

Chapter 2 of this study 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 6.2. The crest of Olumo rock, as depicted in Figure 6.1, was occupied by Egba and Owu elements in Abeokuta as a hide-out against potential enemies (A5; I3; Ojo 1967).

**Figure 6.2: Some Features of the Plain and Ridge Complex of Ibadan**



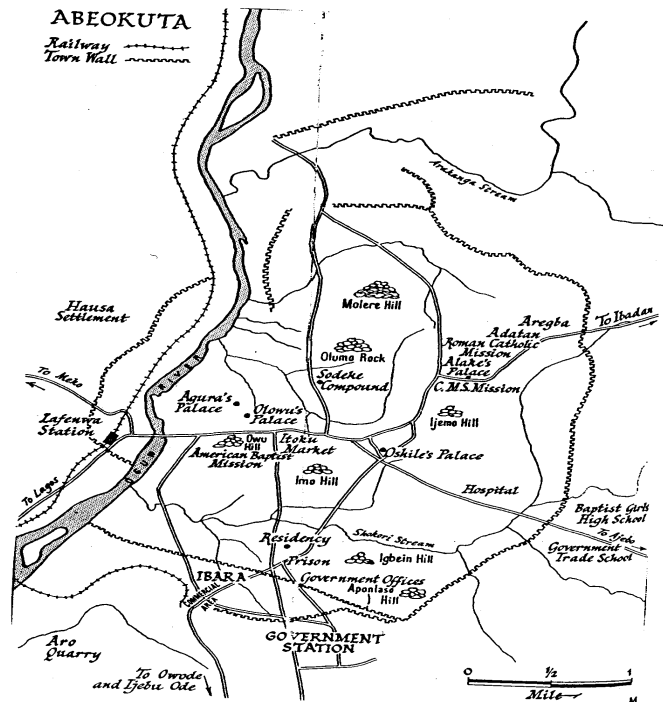
**Source: Yinka Rotimi Adebayo 1985**

The summits of these 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 6.3, offered additional protection on the west for Egba and Owu elements in Abeokuta.

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).

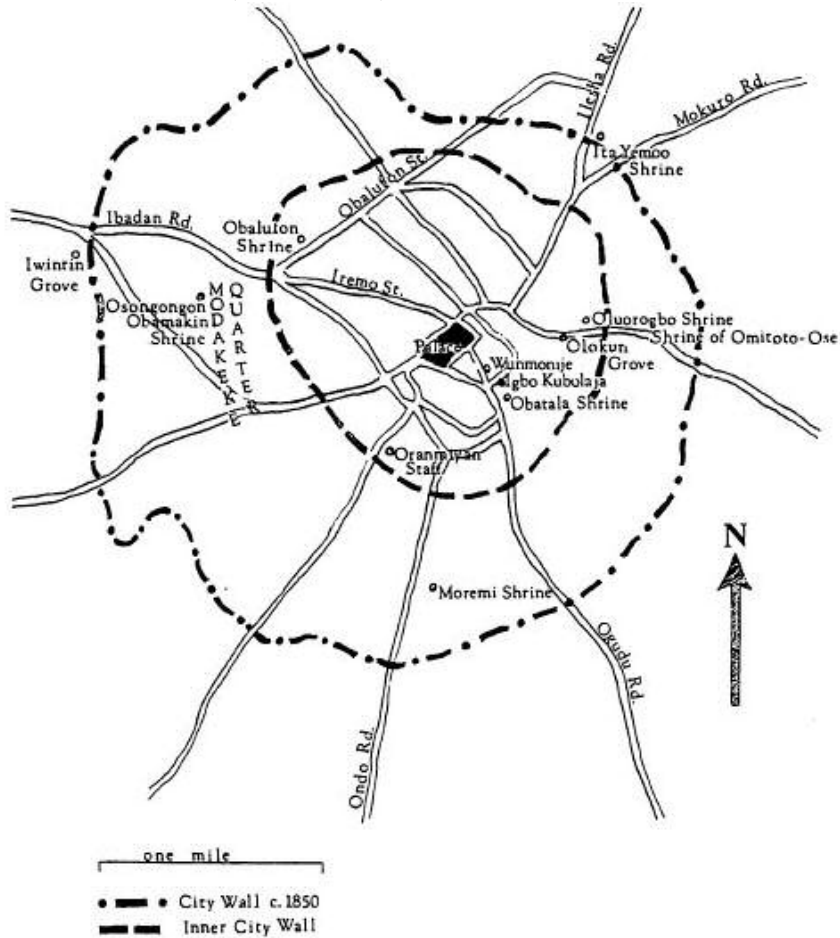
**Figure 6.3: Wall of Abeokuta and River Ogun**



**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 6.4, 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 6.4: 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 were in 1847 moved to a location between the inner and outer wall due to brewing internal problems over the standing of Oyo elements.

#### **6.4.3.2 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 (see Design Principle 1 in chapter 1) 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 1987b) 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.

#### **6.4.3.2.1 Constitutional Order and Organization of Defense in Ile-Ife**

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 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 6.4. 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), as depicted in Figure 4.4 in chapter 4 of this study. 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, as confirmed by perceptions depicted in Figure 3.1 in chapter 3 of this study.

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 had usually been exploited to foment violent conflicts. As summarized in Table 4.1 in chapter 4 of this study, 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. Lack of nested enterprises (Design Principle 7 discussed in chapter 1 for solving larger-scale problems like defense), unfair membership terms (negation of Design Principle 1), lack of autonomy and rights for most Oyo elements to organize, make, modify and enforce their own rules based on their interests and needs (negation of cooperative conditions in Design Principles 2, 3, 4 and 5) have been 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 indicated in Table 4.1 in chapter 4, lacked commercial openness in the nineteenth century due to insecurity generated by its constitutional order. As depicted in Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in chapter 4, 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.

#### **6.4.3.2.2 Constitutional Order and Organization of Defense in Ibadan and Abeokuta**

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 were able to solve their own problems<sup>90</sup> and have a shared understanding about the basis of their relationships with one another. They also believed that the effective defense of their respective communities would lead to greater productive entrepreneurs within their local units.

As part of the shared bases of human relationships in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, there was (still is) a belief that promotions were owed to personal achievements rather than 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 rested on the belief that wars waged to defend one's community conferred honor and bestowed respect.

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<sup>90</sup> See Harry A. Gailey 1982. *Lugard and the Abeokuta Uprising: The Demise of Egba Independence*. London: Frank Cass and Company Limited. P7

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).

#### **6.4.2.2.3 Constitutional Order and Roles of Women in Ibadan and Abeokuta**

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).

#### **6.4.2.2.4 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 (A10). 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 (Design Principle 1), autonomy (Design Principle 3) and rights for most individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta to organize, make, modify and enforce their own rules (Design Principles 4 and 5) based on their interests and needs (Design Principle 2).

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

(Design Principle 7) 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.

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. The next section focuses on provision of the security of life and property as from 1886 when most Yoruba communities agreed to stop fighting one another.

## **6.5 Changes and Adaptations among the Yoruba**

On September 23, 1886, the British brokered a peace treaty among most Yoruba communities. The treaty ended about 100 years of inter-community wars in Yorubaland. On the heel of the peace treaty, Britain began to impose its authorities over Yorubaland and other parts of Nigeria as a colonial power. In Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, British administrators deliberately sponsored a policy favoring monarchical hierarchical orders with single heads.

While the British succeeded in Ile-Ife, their attempts were met with stiff resistance in both Ibadan and Abeokuta where the tradition of hierarchical-autocratic orders had been (still is) an aberration (Imoagene 1976; Tejuoso 1991; Watson 2003). In the face of these tensions, the British made most Yoruba communities look like social

settings with single heads and brought most Yoruba communities under one single colonial administration. The development terminated the need for individual Yoruba communities to defend themselves against hostile neighboring communities. The colonial police was subsequently charged with the task of securing life and property.

The colonial administration and its police were essentially as much centralized as they were repressive of the deliberative process. On attaining flag independence in October 1, 1960, officials of the Nigerian state wholly inherited most of the apparatuses of the centralized colonial state including the police and the despotic attitudes of colonial officials. Ordinary individuals have virtually no say in the centralized decision-making arrangements. Most Nigerians have been tacitly neglected by the police. By and large, the officials of the colonial and post-colonial Nigerian state, who represent less than 1% of the entire population, have benefited from police protection to the neglect of a vast majority of individuals.

The failure of the police to protect most Nigerians became more noticeable immediately after the 1967-1970 civil war. Shortly after the war, many discharged soldiers turned their guns on innocent individuals and violently dispossessed them of their property. The state of insecurity reached an alarming peak in the 1980s when most Nigerians were being terrorized by armed robbers carting away money and property in the presence of the owners, assaulting women and children, and killing unlucky victims. In 1980 alone, not less than 2,381 robbery cases were reported with over 1,500 victims of armed robbers killed as opposed to 766 robbery cases in 1967. Between 1981 and 1985, about 1,000 innocent individuals suffered life-threatening injuries from armed robbers

(Tamuno 1985:10; Dambazau 1994: 81-83; Ayo 2002: 192). Loss of confidence by the people in the police was corroborated by an Ibadan resident's observation:

*We can no longer trust the police. Several times we caught thieves in the neighborhood and handed them over to the police, before mid-day we saw these thieves walking around the streets again...*  
(Albert *et. al* 1995: 54).

In the face of increasing insecurity of life and property that has come with the Nigerian state, the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have depended on their self-governing capabilities to ensure their security.

Their adaptive problem-solving capabilities have been very impressive. Some individuals still live in compounds in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Reverting to the compound system for organizing the security of life and property for many individuals appears to be unrealistic. The compound arrangements are a less appealing option because many Yoruba in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta now live far away from their respective compounds and communities. Independent immediate families living in separate houses in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have instead organized themselves into neighborhood development associations.

Neighborhood development associations are largely landlords' associations in Ile-Ife and most of Ibadan. Landlords/homeowners are in most cases members of this type of neighborhood development associations. Abeokuta is an exception where neighborhood development associations operate as community development associations. Tenants and landlords participate in this type of neighborhood development associations on an equal basis. The adaptive capabilities in the three Yoruba communities, though varied and faced with different institutional challenges, reinforce the fact that when individuals operate as problem-solvers through their self-organizing and self-governing capabilities,

they are more likely to make choices to adapt their institutions to the needs of time and space (Tocqueville, 1966).

A wide variety of strategies have been adopted to meet security needs in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Many of the strategies have involved direct participation of individuals in monitoring one another and raising alarms to scare away thieves, organization of vigilante teams, hiring guards/hunters, people-police relations or a combination of two or more of these methods discussed as follows.

Direct participation is a common strategy for maintenance of the security of life and property in many compounds and neighborhood development associations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The advantage of this method lies in close proximity that enables members to monitor one another and quickly take appropriate actions against suspects residing in their neighborhoods. In areas like Gbodo and Eyinudi in Ile-Ife and Ojaba in Ibadan, direct participation is probably the most important method in use. These areas are parts of the core of the two communities. Most people in these areas live in compounds and have benefited tremendously from the close-knit proximity advantages of kinship ties.

Direct participation and shared rules are combined together in many neighborhoods. In such neighborhoods, extramarital sexual acts between members are forbidden. No man is allowed to take another man's wife in the neighborhood. Any landlord or tenant or resident caught as a thief must move out of the neighborhood. Series of warnings are usually given to suspicious individuals before they are asked to leave the neighborhood (F1; F7; I7; A13). Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children have their own professions to prevent temptations to steal. Many years ago, for

example, a landlord who was a suspect in a robbery case was forced to sell his house and move out of the Kajola neighborhood in the area under the control of Oyo elements in Ile-Ife (F7).

Vigilante teams are also visible in many neighborhoods in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. Both tenants and landlords are members of vigilante teams. Initially, they were to supplement the efforts of the police by collecting information about suspected criminals in their neighborhoods and giving a report back to the police for use in the prevention of crime. Vigilante teams in some neighborhood development associations have dissociated themselves from the police due to the waning confidence in the police.

Vigilante activities are very high specifically in neighborhoods such as Eleyele and Oran-Ife (Ile-Ife), Ojaba and Aba-Afa (Ibadan), and Amolaso and Oke-Ola (Abeokuta). In these neighborhoods, members break themselves into groups and take turn to patrol their neighborhoods. They often arm themselves with torch lights and whistles with a few carrying dane guns that fire one shot before reloading. The whistles are blown in an agreed-upon manner to identify members' voices. This is different from how the whistles are blown to scare away armed robbers and thieves who may have planted themselves in the neighborhood (F1; I11; I15; A13; A21; Ayo 2002).

Since most of the vigilante teams do not carry guns, they are more likely to be overpowered by armed robbers who usually carry automatic, sophisticated rifles. Night guards/watchmen are hired to compensate for the unprofessional skills of many vigilante members and to relieve members whose jobs prevent them from participating in vigilante activities. The night guards could be hunters or ex-service men well-equipped to withstand armed robbers. The number of night guards for the affected neighborhoods



depends on their size. Monthly salaries are paid to the night guards from contributions made by neighborhood members.

The use of night guards is, however, not a recent development. In the 1940s when thieves terrorized the Oje neighborhood in Ibadan, most of the compounds in the neighborhood regularly contributed to the wages of two night watchmen to guard their neighborhood (Barbara Lloyd 1967:81). To facilitate the efforts of their night watchmen, members of neighborhood associations are required not to be outside their houses between the hours of 10/10:30 pm and 5/5:30 am. In many neighborhoods there are gates which are locked during this period to prevent unwanted guests.

Much as each neighborhood is responsible for the maintenance of its security, collaboration takes place among nearby neighborhoods. Most of the neighborhood development associations in the area controlled by Oyo elements in Ile-Ife quite often work together in security maintenance. There is a shared understanding among Oyo elements in Ile-Ife that whenever an alarm is raised in any particular neighborhood, hunters from other neighborhoods must rise to the occasion (F7).

In the areas under the control of Ife elements, nearby neighborhoods also collaborate in maintaining the security of their members. This is much more evident in neighborhoods in Fajuyi and Eleyele areas of Ile-Ife. Similarly, Amolaso and Kuto neighborhood development associations in the Igbehin area of Abeokuta and those in Ilupeju-Agbowo area of Ibadan work together in maintaining the security of their members (A13; I7).

The waning confidence in the police notwithstanding, members of many neighborhood development associations still collaborate with the police. In most of

Ibadan, neighborhood development associations have been constituted into several zones. Each zone is made up of at least five associations represented by their chairmen and secretaries. Each zone works with the police to form Police and Community Relations Committee (PCRC). The police and representatives of each zone use the forum to discuss common security interests and jointly work out plans to pursue the interests (I5; I7). People-police relations in Abeokuta occur through area development committees, each of which is made up of about twenty-eight (28) associations. Individual neighborhood associations are free to maintain independent working relationships with the police, if necessary (A13).

The zonal community development committee, comprising the representatives of most neighborhood development associations in Ibadan, provides a forum for members to share and learn effective security strategies from one another (I18). In the case of Abeokuta, similar opportunities are created through the zonal and regional community development committees where the representatives of many neighborhood development associations meet to discuss issues of common interest (A11; A15).

There is however no common forum where both Ife and Oyo elements share and learn security strategies from each other. Many neighborhoods belonging to both Oyo and Ife elements share boundaries in Akarabata, Oke-Eso, Iyekere and Ita-Agbon in Ile-Ife. Most of such neighborhoods hardly collaborate in dealing with shared security problems. The situation in Ile-Ife is essentially due to lack of shared understanding between Oyo and Ife elements about the fundamental inequalities inherent in the hierarchical constitutional order in Ile-Ife which have set Oyo and Ife elements against each other as enemies.

## 6.6 Conclusion

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

Similar achievements have been 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 has led Oyo and Ife elements to see each other as enemies, and has prevented 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.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### INSTITUTIONS, CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION AMONG THE YORUBA

“...people tend to make their beliefs and attitudes accord with their actions” (Morton Deutsch 1973:356). Success in conflict resolution “...clearly depends on how far the value structures of the parties in the field of conflict occupy the core...image...Thus we need to think about institutions for lessening conflict as well as for dealing with it ” (Kenneth E. Boulding 1988: 312, 324).

#### 7.1 Introduction

Conflict and conflict resolution are an integral part of interdependent relationships among the Yoruba of Nigeria. Conflicts<sup>91</sup> arise among the Yoruba when individuals pursue interests or aspirations that interfere with those of other individuals. Conflicting aspirations may range from violation of one person’s rights by another person to lack of common agreement about the terms and conditions of governance and property relationships favoring some individuals at the expense of other individuals (Coleman 1957; Kriesberg 1982). The Yoruba’s thought of the inescapability of conflicts in interdependent relationships is essentially encapsulated in the saying, *kosi awaiye maja*, that is, conflicts are bound to occur among individuals living on earth. Accordingly, the Yoruba people of Nigeria have reconciled themselves to the fact that their relationships with one another cannot ever be conflict-free.

The recognition of the inevitability of conflicts in interdependent relationships is, arguably, the first governance step the Yoruba have to take to turn their conflicts into mutually beneficial outcomes. Another crucial step is resolution of conflicts. This is a

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<sup>91</sup> Conflicts and disputes are used interchangeably in this study.

challenge that may not be successfully confronted without the use of dynamic inventiveness in developing low-cost arenas for conflict resolution, to which most participating individuals have access (E. Ostrom 1990) and by which they can come to a new, shared community of understanding<sup>92</sup>. As a matter of fact, the successful processing of conflicts into productive outcomes would in the final analysis depend mainly on how much the prevailing constitutional order enables individuals to adopt appropriate mechanisms for conflict resolution in such a way as to transform interdependent relationships into positive-sum, rather than negative-sum<sup>93</sup>, interactions, where participating individuals are left better off.

In reality, the importance of conflict resolution among the Yoruba is rooted in a belief that *kaja kapari e niyi omoluwabi*, that is, individuals are of good character when they conflict and resolve their conflicts. The conception of *omoluwabi* (good character) and methods of conflict resolution, however, differ among the Yoruba, with significant implications for public peace and productive entrepreneurships. The differences are mainly a reflection of their varied constitutional orders. The main task of this chapter is to explain how the dominant constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have affected conflict and conflict resolution to influence public peace and productive ways of life in each Yoruba community. The importance of this lies in the fact that conflicts and shared ideas about their resolution enable analysis of shared strategies, norms and rules in action at the boundary points between legal and illegal actions.

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<sup>92</sup> This condition is compatible with Design Principle 6 in chapter about access to low-cost and integrative conflict resolution mechanisms.

<sup>93</sup> Positive-sum resolution of conflicts occurs when remedies have been found that have leveled out most wrongs and restructured human relationships so that virtually everyone has been left better off. Negative-sum resolution produces winners and losers such that the gain of the former is the loss of the latter; this is more likely to encourage violence and prevent mutually productive ways of life.

The subsequent discussion in this chapter shall proceed as follows. The relationship between constitutional order and conflict resolution will first be explored in order to understand the terms and conditions of governance that facilitate or militate against mutually productive resolution of conflicts. Since much has been detailed in chapters 3 and 4 about the processes of governance and property relationships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, specific conflict cases, along with their origins and resolution, will be described in this chapter to understand how much their resolution has impacted on the achievement of mutually beneficial outcomes in the three Yoruba communities.

The trouble case approach was used to identify the conflict cases and their key actors, such as conflicting parties, judges and witnesses, from archival and library resources. Trouble cases are instances of hitch and grievance that enable analysis of rules in action at the boundary points between legal and illegal action (Hoebel 1954). The identified key actors were intensively interviewed about the origins and resolution of the selected conflict cases to understand the working rules, as experienced by them, of conflict resolution. Knowledgeable experts who knew about the conflict cases were also interviewed and their views were supplemented by the documents about the origins and processing of the conflict cases.

The conflict cases will be discussed in two sub-sections: conflicts handled within small-scale governance units such as immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, and those involving broad-based interests among diverse Yoruba elements. The discussion will also create an understanding about primary causes of violence among the Yoruba: institutions (Follett 1940; Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1988; V. Ostrom 1987b), environmental scarcities (Homer-Dixon 1999), diversity (differences in ethnic, dialect,

and religious backgrounds) (Lake and Rothchild 1998; Kazah-Toure 1999, United Nations 1999; Gurr 2000), or the centralized African state' policies and political maneuverings (Albert 1999, 2001; Oladoyin 2001; Bujra 2002; Posner 2004).

## **7.2 Conflict, Conflict resolution and Constitutional Order**

Conflict may arise when someone violates the rights of another person. Disagreements between individuals and/or their groups about terms and conditions of governance and property relationships may also serve as possible causes of conflict (Coleman 1957; Kriesberg 1982). Conflicts may be destructive or constructive, depending on what methods a given constitutional order allows for in processing them. Three broad methods of conflict resolution have been brought to limelight, such as domination, compromise and integration (Follett 1940; Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1963, 1988; Ayo 2002).

Domination as a way of resolving conflicts tends to yield a mutually exclusive circumstance where one individual or a group of individuals are both a party and the judge in the process of conflict resolution. The other party has no voice or is somehow disadvantaged such that the resolution favors the party who is the judge and provides unfavorable remedies to the voiceless/disadvantaged party. The dominating approach, as shall be explained later in the case of Ile-Ife, in most cases yields a negative-sum game where the gain of one party is, more often than not, the loss of the other. Conflicts processed this way are in all likelihood never resolved but driven underground, making partial judgments, unfairness, distrust, ineffective communication, exclusionary bonds, norms of revenge, violence and, consequently, declining economic and political



development more highly likely in the long run (Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1963, 1988; Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Greif & Laitin 2004).

The negative-sum nature of domination is probably mitigated by compromise. Compromise requires conflicting individuals to give up some of their respective demands and keep the remaining parts in order to achieve peace and continue the activities disrupted by their conflicts. This approach goes beyond unilateral conflict resolution to enable the conflicting parties to talk things out with each other.

Compromise as a method of conflict resolution is however limited in many respects. One of the most obvious limitations of compromise probably turns essentially on lack of the desire by the conflicting parties to bring every part of their conflicts into the open. Another constraint revolves around the possibility of preparing fertile grounds for the excavation of the unresolved demands. Series of punctuated public peace are inevitable in such circumstances, which may finally deflate into prolonged periods of violence and instability, and consequently hinder mutually productive ways of life.

On the other hand, the limitations of both domination and compromise as methods of conflict resolution can possibly be prevented if the conflicting parties operate in an inclusive circumstance where they can cash in on their inventiveness as human artisans to produce a new community of shared values and interests that benefit individuals with virtually no individual having to give up anything. Integration has been found to offer bright hope in this direction. The integrative approach, as shall be elaborated upon later in the case of Ibadan, Abeokuta, and smaller collective-choice units in each of the three Yoruba communities, allows for the resolution of conflicts to accommodate the demands

of the parties such that they are able to move away from “the boundaries of two alternatives which are mutually exclusive” (Follett 1940: 33).

The *spirit* of the integrative approach, as captured implicitly by Tocqueville (1966), is *public interests properly understood* whereby mutual discussions take place among the affected individuals and innovatively lead them to pursue their self-interests by respecting the interests of other individuals. In this regard, integration tend to be more capable of processing conflicts to produce remedies that right wrongs and restructure human relationships so that everyone is left better off. Put differently, the integrative approach is more likely to enable, nurture and foster high degrees of mutual dependence, mutual trust and friendly attitudes, open and honest communication among participating individuals, recognition by one party of the legitimacy of the other’s interests, and creativity and innovations that simultaneously generate mutual benefits for most individuals and inhibit violence (Follett 1940; Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1988, 1989; V. Ostrom 1994; Ayo 2002).

Any of the three methods may be combined with the use of outside agency or outside individuals. When outside agency and domination are used together, as shall be described later in the case of Ile-Ife, the process of conflict resolution usually turns out to unilaterally force or impose submission on the disadvantaged or voiceless party through deceptive, repressive intermediaries supporting the values of the authoritarian party to the conflict. It is also not unlikely to employ domination to force compromise on the disadvantaged party. On the other hand, the combined use of integration and outside agency enables the conflicting parties to mutually agree with outside, impartial

individuals and help them reach a new, shared community of understanding based on their mutually agreeable relations and rules (Kriesberg 1982; Boulding 1988).

Having regard to the above, arenas of conflict resolution may be broadly divided into dominating/repressive and integrative environments. Each environment is broadly conterminous with a particular type of constitutional order or political economy, with the other probably operating to some extent within the constituent small/local collective-choice units of the constitutional order or political economy.

Repressive constitutional orders tend to be supportive of the dominating approach to conflict resolution. Order is achieved in such constitutional orders through submission and passive obedience to the system of command and control. The advantaged, who are parties to conflicts, are also judges in such political economies. Repressive institutional arrangements tend to motivate the advantaged to develop authoritarian personalities, seek to impose their will and values on the disadvantaged, and see the existence of differing values as threats to their persons "rather than as an opportunity for mutual learning" (Boulding 1988: 323).

Violence is more likely in repressive institutional environments. Conflicts tend to be resolved to favor authoritarian personalities at the expense of other individuals with lower standing in repressive institutional environments. An act considered to be beneficial by an authoritarian individual may be regarded by a disadvantaged individual as pernicious to his interests. Violence may be the only option the disadvantaged have to turn to in pursuing their interests (Tajfel 1978; Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Kriesberg 1982; V. Ostrom 1987b, 1997; Druckman 1993).

On the other hand, the integrative approach tends to be the basis of conflict resolution in flexible constitutional orders. In flexible constitutional orders, individuals relate to one another based on principles of equality, mutual respect, openness, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations. The socialization process in such institutional circumstances encourages most participating individuals to develop reconciling personalities and to see the existence of differing values as an opportunity for, rather than as a threat to, mutual learning. Principles of equality, open discussions and mutual learning, fairness and reconciliation interact together to make relationships among individuals to be reciprocally sustained and mutually agreeable. As long as it is undertaken based on mutually agreeable relations and rules to which most participating individuals have committed to uphold, conflict resolution tends to be achieved more quickly and without violence. Effective communication, mutual trust, public peace and productive ways of life are more likely to result in the long run (Boulding 1989; Putnam 1993; V. Ostrom 1994).

Attempts by any conflicting individual to act intransigently against the mutually acceptable norms and rules in integrative constitutional orders may cast doubt on his/her integrity and reputation. As a shared response, such behavior may be met with measures that enable most participating individuals to continue to pursue their interests by simultaneously respecting the interests of other individuals in order to maintain mutually beneficial relationships (Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Kriesberg 1982; Boulding 1988; V. Ostrom 1987b, 1994; Nicholson 1993; Pruitt 2001).

These contrasting sets of relationships between conflict resolution and constitutional order provide us with a clear basis for examining conflict and conflict

resolution in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The discussion that follows begins with conflict and conflict resolution within small-scale governance units before shifting attention to analysis of conflict and conflict resolution among diverse Yoruba elements in each of the three Yoruba communities. A table is included to summarize types of conflicts and conflict resolution in the three Yoruba communities.

### **7.3 Conflict and Conflict Resolution within Small-Scale Governance Units**

The Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, as previously explained in chapters 3 and 4 of this study, pursue relatively homogenous and shared interests within immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections, villages, and occupational associations. Interdependent relationships within these units are mostly based on mutual understanding and common agreement among the affected individuals. Membership in most local collective-choice units apparently indicates covenanting to follow the mutually recognized relations and rules of the local units.

Conflicts between individuals within immediate families, compounds, sections or villages are processed through the principles of *alajobi* (consanguinity), *alajogbe* (co-residentship), *eriokan* (clear conscience), *omoluwabi* (good character), and the shared rules derived from these principles, as explained in chapter 3 of this study. The use of *alajobi* (consanguinity) derives mainly from shared blood ties among some members of the local units. Conflicts within the units are largely over inheritance, land, marital matters, avoidance of mutually sanctioned responsibilities by parents and spouses, and other forms of violation of mutually recognized relations and rules. Within neighborhood development associations, where blood ties play virtually no role, conflicts are mostly

resolved based on principles of *alajogbe* (co-residentship), *eriokan* (clear conscience), *omoluwabi* (good character), and the resultant mutually recognized rules. Members of occupational associations draw upon principles of *eriokan* (clear conscience), *omoluwabi* (good character), and the ensuing shared rules in conflict resolution. Violation of the rights of individual members and breach of mutually recognized relations and rules are main sources of conflicts within neighborhood development associations and occupational associations.

These principles are effective in achieving order within small-scale governance units (collective-choice units) in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta. The principles are shared and enforceable by members of the small-scale governance units. Individuals within the small-scale governance units recognize the authority of their leaders to enforce their shared rules over them. Leaders (*olori*) in particular are required to facilitate resolution of conflicts among their members in ways that impartiality and fairness are ensured for conflicting parties.

This does not however prevent the conflicting parties to talk things out with each other. In any event, conflicting parties are required to tell the truth while judges are required to be impartial. Partial judges and disputants who give misleading evidence are believed to be in danger of attracting severe punishments including sudden death reflecting the wrath of the spirits of ancestors, *orisa* (lesser gods) and/or *Eleda* (the Creator) as well as loss of support from members of the local units who are of good character. To avoid these ill-consequences, the Yoruba people within small-scale governance units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta consider it to be in their best interest to resolve their conflicts (I3).

The goal of conflict resolution in the small-scale governance units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta has been mainly geared toward sustaining friendship, cohesion and mutual dependence among their members. Few instances, however, exist in each community where the approach to conflict resolution in local units has been a mix of compromise and domination, with the affected individuals probably relating to one another as enemies. Conflict resolution within most small-scale governance units in each community has nevertheless been essentially integrative. The units also afford most individuals quick access to low-cost conflict resolution arenas. In his analysis of the general patterns of human relationships among the Yoruba of Nigeria, Ayo (2002: 77-108) provides a number of cases which also corroborate how integrative the approach to conflict resolution within most small-scale governance units among the Yoruba is<sup>94</sup>. A number of conflict cases are examined below to make clear how the Yoruba people use the integrative approach in small-scale governance units. The cases have been divided into conflicts among kinfolks and conflicts within neighborhood development associations. The former is considered first on a case-by case basis.

### **7.3.1 Conflict and Conflict Resolution among Yoruba Kinfolks**

#### **Case 1: Conflict over Child Abuse in Ibadan**

**The Case:** Deronke<sup>95</sup> and Ajadi are kinfolks in Ibadan. Ajadi is a brother to Deronke's mother. Conflict occurred between Deronke and Ajadi in 2004 after Deronke

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<sup>94</sup> Rule enforcement and conflict resolution in the small-scale governance units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta reflect some of the conditions for cooperation for productive ways of life captured in Design Principles 5 and 6 discussed in chapter 1 of this study.

<sup>95</sup> All the names used in the conflict cases within small-scale governance units, with the exception of cases from secondary sources, are not the real names of the parties involved.

took Bola, daughter of Ajadi, to be her housemaid as from 2002. Shortly thereafter, Bola began to misbehave by stealing money and other items belonging to Deronke. Deronke eventually lost her temper when Deronke discovered that about 20,000 Nigeria's naira she had kept in the house was missing. Deronke had planned to use the money to boost her business. Most evidence predictably pointed to Bola as the culprit who had made away with the money. Unable to keep up with Bola's allegedly unwholesome behavior, Deronke decided to take Bola back to Ajadi with the consent of her (Deronke's) parents on March 25, 2004. But before Bola could be taken back to Ajadi, Deronke had badly beaten Bola to the extent that there were deep cuts and bruises virtually all over Bola's body. Deronke's parents did not know that Deronke had inflicted Bola with deep cuts and bruises. On March 28, 2004, Ajadi brought Bola to the house of Deronke's parents, wanting to know why Bola should be so severely treated without first informing him and/or Deronke's parents and given how strong their kinship relationship had been.

**The Resolution:** Deronke's parents were displeased when they saw the deep cuts and bruises on Bola's body. Deronke's parents characterized Deronke's action as an act of wickedness that could break the bond of *alajobi* (consanguinity) tying them together. Deronke's parents had planned to ask Ajadi to refund to Deronke the money allegedly stolen by Bola. But when they saw the bruises and deep cuts on Bola's body, Deronke's parents dropped their initial decision. They instead made it clear to Deronke that she had not acted to be in the right by inflicting Bola with deep cuts and bruises. Deronke's mother then invoked *alajobi* (consanguinity, blood ties) and asked Ajadi to forgive Deronke and continue to see Deronke as his close kin. Ajadi prostrated on the floor and indicated that the whole incident was the work of the devil, and that he would not allow



the matter to weaken their kinship tie. After thanking Deronke's parents, Ajadi left with Bola. The role of *eriokan* (clear conscience) prompted Deronke's parents to drop their initial decision to make Ajadi refund the money allegedly stolen by Bola. This is because the action of Deronke to inflict Bola with bruises and cuts was regarded as more serious than the stealing involved that could weaken or destroy their kinship relationships (I10).

### **Case 2: Conflict over Infidelity between Husband and Wife in Ile-Ife**

**The Case:** Ayede in 1997 in Ile-Ife caught Sunmola (Ayede's wife) in an act of infidelity and decided to drive her out of his house. Sunmola, a petty trader, had had four children for Ayede. Ayede was a long-distant driver who rarely stayed at home. Sunmola sometimes capitalized on her husband's long-distant trips to go out with a secret lover, a married man in her neighborhood. The alleged act of infidelity by Sunmola soon became the talks of the neighborhood. But nobody could call the attention of her ignorant husband to the alleged act for lack of concrete proof.

Trouble however started when the wife of Sunmola's new lover got wind of the alleged escapades between her husband and Sunmola. As a result, the wife of Sunmola's new lover warned Sunmola many times to terminate her relationship with her husband. Sunmola's lover's wife then determined to disgrace Sunmola since Sunmola would not give up on her new lover.

Thinking that her lover's wife was not at home on a particular day, Sunmola went for a date in her lover's house. Unfortunately, Sunmola and her lover played into the hands of Sunmola's lover's wife who caught the two lovers together in the house on that eventful day. There then ensued an exchange of words between Sunmola and her lover's

wife to the extent that the altercation came under the spotlights of many people in the neighborhood, including elders who were Ayede's relatives.

Coincidentally, Ayede returned home on the eventful day only to shockingly meet Sunmola (his wife) exchanging words with Sunmola's lover's wife. Ayede could not believe his ears when he began to hear Sunmola's lover's wife shouting on top of her voice, "*O ko le gba oko mi, gboko gboko, olee*" (you cannot snatch my husband, husband snatcher, thief).

Having confirmed that his wife had been caught in an adulterous relationship with another man, Ayede asked Sunmola to move out of his house immediately. Although Sunmola was crying profusely and begging Ayede for forgiveness, Ayede was too aggrieved to take her pleas. Members of the neighborhood could not intervene to plead with Ayede on behalf of Sunmola because the act occurred in their presence, and they had had some information that Sunmola had been in the act for some time.

**The Resolution:** When elders of both Sunmola's and Ayede's families realized that Ayede had become calm, they exploited many windows of opportunities to plead with Ayede to forgive his wife and take her back so that the children he had with Sunmola would not suffer in the absence of their mother. One of such opportunities was a joint meeting of relatives from both sides with the two parties to the conflict. At the meeting, elders of both families pleaded with Ayede to take his wife back. They asked Sunmola to beg her husband and pledge her total loyalty to him. The elders also warned her against a repeat of infidel behavior. Sunmola then pleaded with Ayede for forgiveness and pledged her loyalty to him. Convinced by his wife's pleas, Ayede took back Sunmola as his wife and assured the elders that he had forgiven her. Success in resolving the

conflict hinged more on Ayede's desire to keep intact the cord of *alajobi* (consanguinity), to combine with Sunmola in giving proper up-bringing to their children, and to comply with the shared act of forgiveness which enables the Yoruba to display the merciful attribute of *Eleda* (the Creator) in their relationships with one another (F3).

### **Case 3: Conflict over Property (House) between Co-Residents in Abeokuta**

**The Case:** Grandchildren of Olawale and Abolade share a house in the Ijeun neighborhood of Abeokuta. They had a conflict in 2004 over the ownership of their house. Several years ago, Olawale migrated to the Ijeun neighborhood in the Egba Ake section of Abeokuta and became a close friend of Abolade. Abolade later decided to take Olawale into his house as a full member. Thus, Olawale and Abolade began to live together in the same house. They both had children under the same roof and lived together without anybody suspecting that they were not related by blood. Olawale and Abolade later died with their children continuing to live together as one single family. Both sides have buried their relatives around the house. They regard one another as brothers and sisters.

It happened that the house in which they were living nearly fell into ruin. The grandchildren of Abolade were less successful and could not raise money to restore the house. The grandchildren of Olawale then took up the responsibility of renovating the house after which they (grandchildren of Olawale) began to claim ownership of the house, a 4-bedroom house. The grandchildren of Abolade brought the case before the Ogboni of the Ijeun neighborhood.

**The Resolution:** After both parties had paid *owo esun*, hearing and summon fees, members of the Ijeun Ogboni listened to their stories. Some members of the Ogboni were

later saddled with the duty of carrying out an investigation into the genuineness of the stories of both sides. The investigations confirmed that the house was built by Abolade, and that Olawale was Abolade's friend who had lived in Abolade's house. With the desire to keep their friendly relationships, members of the Ijeun Ogboni appealed to both sides not to destroy their long relationship since love brought their grandfathers together. When both parties agreed to continue to live together, the Ijeun Ogboni unanimously ruled that the grandchildren of Olawale take one room and the grandchildren of Abolade take the remaining three rooms. Both parties accepted the ruling and began to live happy life together once again (A5).

#### **Case 4: Conflict over Inheritance between Children of the Same Father in Ibadan**

**The Case:** Ebun was the only child Afolake had for Folorunso in the Sumura area of Ibadan. Afolake was Folorunso's second wife. Ebun was a little baby when Folorunso died in 2003. His two houses in the Sumura area of Ibadan were inherited by Folorunso's two male children from his first wife. Ebun was not given anything. To protect the right of her daughter, Afolake decided to challenge the unfair sharing formula at the Oja'ba/Mapo customary court in Ibadan and asked for her daughter's rightful share. Afolake called witnesses while the other two male children of Folorunso did not call any witness.

**The Resolution:** The judges invited relatives and friends of Folorunso to verify whether Folorunso was the father of Ebun. The invited witnesses and Ebun's half-brothers admitted that Afolake was Folorunso's wife and had Ebun for Folorunso. In view of the evidence and given a belief among the Yoruba that a deceased man's property must be shared equally based on the number of women that bore him children,

the court agreed that Egun have the right to have a share in the property of Folorunso. The court then ruled that Egun have one of the houses while her half-brothers take the second house. Right of appeal was thrown open for 30 days. Egun's half-brothers did not appeal because they realized that they had initially acted against the generally shared belief about inheritance (Case No 347/2003, Oja'ba/Mapo Grade C Customary Court, Mapo Hill, Ibadan) (I14).

#### **Case 5: Conflict between Children of Different Parents in the Same Compound in Ibadan**

**The Case:** On February 27, 2003, two children (between 6 and 8 years of age) of different parents in a compound in Ibadan fought over a toy. The parents of the two children were not in the compound when the incident took place. Also, none of the two children reported the other to the elderly relatives in their compound before they used their fists to settle the scores.

**The Resolution:** The two children were whipped by an elderly relative for turning to violence in settling their scores. The elderly relative took this action in the absence of the children's parents because of the shared belief that conflicts are resolved through discussions rather than violence or use of the fist, and that the up-bringing of children is the co-productive responsibility of their parents, relatives, and neighbors (I6).

#### **Case 6: Conflict between a Child and his Parents in Ile-Ife**

**The Case:** Agbabiaka and his parents, inhabitants of Ile-Ife, had a dispute over the payment of Agbabiaka's final examination fee in 1995. Agbabiaka was a secondary/high school student about completing his secondary school education in 1995. Agbabiaka had asked his parents for money to pay off his final examination fees, a request not met by his parents. Agbabiaka revealed that his parents refused to pay the fee

because their utmost priority was to save up money and organize the funeral ceremony of Agbabiaka's paternal grandfather. When Agbabiaka could not convince his parents to change their priority and pay his examination fees, Agbabiaka decided to approach some elders in his neighborhood who later invited Agbabiaka and his parents to a meeting. After Agbabiaka had narrated his own story at the meeting, the father was asked to explain his own version of the story. The father admitted that he had not paid Agbabiaka's examination fees due largely to lack of money. The father did not however say that his failure to pay the fees was due to the expected funeral ceremony because that would have meant that he did not have any interest in giving a productive future to Agbabiaka.

**The Resolution:** Since the final examination was fast approaching, the elders advised the father to look for money immediately and pay the fees. The father was said to have looked for money shortly after the meeting and paid Agbabiaka's examination fees. While Agbabiaka's father's compliance with the decision of the elders was prompted by *eriokan* (the oracle of the heart), the involvement of the elders demonstrates both the use of *alajogbe* (co-residentship) in conflict resolution and a reflection of childhood training among the Yoruba as the co-productive responsibility of parents, relatives, and neighbors (F4).

#### **Case 7: Divorce in Ibadan**

**The Case:** Bolanle of Gbelekale, Orita Aperin, Ibadan, in 2002 asked the Oja'ba/Mapo customary court for a divorce from his wife (Temitope) for her violence against his mother. The court dissolved the marriage and decided that Bolanle must be

bringing to the court a monthly allowance for Temitope to take care of their young children with her, a decision Bolanle accepted.

**The Resolution:** When Bolanle came to the court to give the second monthly allowance to Temitope, Korikosun advised Bolanle and Temitope to settle their dispute so that they could live together as husband and wife and thereby prevent the negative consequences their separation could have on the up-bringing of their children. After the ensuing discussion among Korikosun, Bolanle and Temitope, Bolanle agreed that he would take Temitope back if she would change her behavior. Temitope indicated that she would change. Temitope was made to sign an undertaking to support her promise after which her husband took her back. They both began to live together as husband and wife again (I14 and Ojaoba/Mapo Grade C Customary Court, Mapo Hill, Ibadan).

#### **Case 8: Conflict over Compound Land between Kinfolks in Ibadan**

**The Case:** A land conflict arose in 1978 between Ajao and Bambeke, members of the same compound in Ibadan. The disputed land, about thirteen hectares in Koroboto Village, Ibadan, had been set aside for a joint farming activity to take care of the shared interests of their compound. Ajao, Bambeke and some other members of the compound lived in the village and the rest lived in the city of Ibadan. Ajao and Bambeke were chosen by members of their compound to manage the land. Ajao took ill later and had to stay away from the village to take care of his health problems. In the absence of Ajao, Bambeke colluded with some members of the compound in the village to divide up the land into privately owned plots. On returning to the village after his recovery, Ajao was shocked to find that the compound land had been divided into privately owned plots among Bambeke and his allies. Ajao insisted that all the people who had shared the land

must vacate the land partly because it was a compound land and partly because there was no meeting where members and leaders of the compound agreed to share the disputed land among the people involved. Bambeke in particular stood his ground, refused to turn over his own plot, and asked the other beneficiaries not to turn over their plots.

**The Resolution:** When the conflict could not be resolved between Ajao and Bambeke, it was brought to one of their compound meetings. At the meeting of the entire compound, Bambeke and his allies were asked to return the compound land. Bambeke was not happy with the decision. The whole land was nevertheless taken back from Bambeke and his allies. Bambeke later went and allegedly buried charms on the land apparently to kill whoever stepped on it, during which Bambeke was said to have mistakenly stepped on the charms and developed a mysterious illness that allegedly killed him in 1984. Before his death, Bambeke was said to have confessed that his illness was from the charms he put on the disputed compound land. Bambeke's illness and subsequent death were said to be a punishment for his stubbornness to break the cord of *alajobi* (consanguinity) that binds members of the compound together (I23).

#### **Case 9: Conflict between Husband and Wife over Choice of Dwelling Place in Ile-Ife**

**The Case:** Olalekan (a carpenter) and Comfort (a marketwomen) are husband and wife respectively in Ile-Ife. They had five children: one boy and four girls. In 1993 Comfort was able to procure a piece of land on which she had a house built from her trading business. After the completion of the house, she asked Olalekan, her husband, to move into the house with her, convincing him that whatever she had was his. At first it was as if Olalekan would yield to his wife's persuasions. Somewhere along the line,



Olalekan changed his mind and refused to move into Comfort's house. Comfort then reported the matter to Olalekan's relatives.

Elders of Olalekan's compound later summoned the couple with a view to settling the conflict. The elders reached a consensus that for their son to live in a house built by Comfort would amount to living on the dunghill (*aatan*). The elders characterized Comfort's house as a dunghill to Olalekan because if Comfort re-marries later for whatever reason and has children for the new man, her property can in all likelihood be inherited by her children rather than by her former and new husbands. As a result, the elders advised that Comfort should pray for her husband to be able to build a house where they could both live together in harmony. In addition, Comfort was advised to rent out her house to tenants and continue to live with her husband in their rented apartment until Olalekan was able to build a house. The decision did not go down well with Comfort. But she complied with the decision because of the shared belief about inheritance and shared idea about the provision of family accommodation by the husband.

**The Resolution:** Just before the commencement of the violent conflict between Ife and Oyo elements in 1997, Comfort had supported Olalekan to build a house in his name on a borderline between Oyo and Ife elements. The house was however burnt down when the crisis broke out in 1997. Comfort and Olalekan were left with the option to move into the house Comfort had earlier built in 1993 for the fact that it was far removed from the battle line between Oyo and Ife elements. Both Olalekan and Comfort admitted that the destruction of Olalekan's house showed that *Eleda* (the creator) desires them to live together in Comfort's house. The couple began to live in Comfort's house with nobody complaining (F8).

### **Case 10: Conflict between Kinfolks over Compound Land in Ibadan**

**The Case:** Fatima and Sule are members of the same compound in Ibadan. They had a dispute over a part of their compound land in August 2003. Fatima was building a house on the compound land when Sule sold the land to Gbenleke (non-member of the compound). The matter was brought before some compound members who could not resolve it because both parties insisted that they had a right to the land as members of the compound.

**The Resolution:** The matter was eventually brought to a meeting of the entire compound in April 2004. It was clarified at the meeting that both Fatima and Sule had the right to use the compound land for erecting personal houses and/or agricultural purposes. It was also clarified that Sule did not have the right to sell part of the compound land without the consent of the compound through the *Mogaji* (compound head). It was decided that no member of the compound must sell any part of the compound land without the consent of the entire compound, that Fatima should continue building her house on the land, and that Sule should within two weeks look for another piece of land for Gbenleke to whom he had sold the land and should report back at the next meeting of the compound. Sule was in particular strictly told not to return the money to Gbenleke except Gbenleke wanted his money back rather than a new piece of land. The latter part of the decision was taken to protect the image of the entire compound by ensuring that Gbenleke was not cheated. The resolution also served as a warning against a repeat of “illegal” land sales by members of the compound. On a follow-up on May 8, 2004, Sule had found another land for Gbenleke (I6).

### **Case 11: Conflict over Leadership Position between Two Kinfolks in Ibadan**

**The Case:** A dispute arose in 1982 in Ibadan over who should be the *Mogaji* (compound head) of the Sodun compound between Ogunsola and Bakare. Members of the compound were unable to resolve the issue internally as neither candidate wanted to step down for the other. The matter was eventually taken to the Ibadan Council of chiefs where each party was asked to come with his followers from the compound. The dispute also proved too difficult for the council of chiefs to resolve because each candidate had about the same number of followers from the compound.

**The Resolution:** The conflict was resolved when the Ibadan council of chiefs unanimously decided that two *Mogaji* posts be created in the Sodun compound so that each of the disputants became a *Mogaji* (Albert, *eta.al* 1995:26).

#### **7.3.2 Integrative Conflict Resolution among Yoruba kinfolks**

Integration was at the root of the resolution of most of the conflict cases above. Conflict Cases 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7, for example, involved, either explicitly or implicitly, rights/interests of children or dependants that were not old enough to fend for themselves. As laid out in chapter 3 of this study, the Yoruba believe that children or dependants have equal chances as adults, and their interests must be protected. It is also part of mutually recognized relations among the Yoruba that the right of children to proper up-bringing is best protected in cooperative circumstances not compromised by marriage instability including divorce and separation of parents. In resolving conflict cases 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7, most adults involved put up reconciling attitudes. Most of the achieved resolutions also respected the interests of both direct and indirect parties such as children. Conflict case 5

involving two children, for example, was processed in a way to socialize children to develop reconciling attitudes and use open discussions, rather than violence, in conflict resolution.

Further, most of the judges involved in the resolution of the conflict cases based their judgments largely on mutually recognized relations that most of the affected individuals had committed themselves to uphold in promoting friendly attitudes and mutually beneficial relationships in their local units. Conflict cases 9 and 11 in particular demonstrate how the integrative approach to conflict resolution can facilitate creativity in achieving a mutually acceptable resolution that moves away from “the boundaries of two alternatives which are mutually exclusive” (Follett 1940: 33).

In conflict case 9, elders in the conflict case acted within the framework of their mutually recognized relations that Olalekan, rather than Comfort (Olalekan’s wife), must be the owner of the house where the couple should live. The resolution did not however integrate the desire of Comfort. Comfort had desired that she and her husband should live in the house she had built. Their mutually exclusive demands were nevertheless resolved creatively by their shared belief in the impartial intervention of *Eleda* in conflict resolution. Similarly, the creative decision of the judges involved in conflict case 11 led to a solution that simultaneously met the desires of the affected parties.

Conflict case 8 is a case involving an individual who did not want to honor his commitment to follow the mutually recognized rules in his compound. To encourage members of the compound to follow their shared rules, the resolution of conflict case 8 was undertaken within their joint relations and rules that most individuals had committed to uphold. Consistent with Follett 1940, Deutsch 1973, Comaroff and Roberts 1981,

Boulding 1988, and Ayo 2002, conflict resolution among Yoruba kinfolks has been generally integrative and served to encourage most individuals to rekindle their commitments to uphold their mutually recognized relations and rules in order to promote friendly attitudes and mutual dependence in their relationships with one another.

### **7.3.3 Conflict and Conflict Resolution within Neighborhood Development Associations**

#### **Case 1: Violation of Shared Rules in a Neighborhood in Ile-Ife**

**The Case:** Members of a neighborhood development association in Modakeke-Ife, Ile-Ife had a rule that if any tenant or landlord in their neighborhood was found to be a thief or robber, the person must sell his house and move out of the neighborhood. Some years ago, Ojuogbebikan, a landlord in the neighborhood, was arrested and found guilty of burglary by an agency of the Nigerian state.

**The Resolution:** After serving his punishment terms from the Nigerian state, Ojuogbebikan was made to sell his house and consequently asked to move out of the neighborhood. The incident convinced most residents of the neighborhood that the association meant business and would not condone crimes that could weaken mutual trust among its members and compromise the security of life and property (F7).

#### **Case 2: Conflict between Neighbors (Landlords) in Abeokuta**

**The Case:** Aremu and Peju were homeowners and members of a neighborhood development association in the Igbehin area of Abeokuta. They had a conflict in 2003 over inappropriate throwing of dirty water in front of Aremu's house by Peju's tenants. Aremu took the conflict to leaders of the association, who referred it to their peace committee. Aremu was asked to pay 500 Nigeria's naira as *owo esun*, hearing and

summon fee. Peju also paid 250 Nigeria's naira after Peju appeared before the peace committee on invitation. Both parties were then asked to appear before the peace committee to afford them the opportunity to narrate their stories. At the hearing, Aremu narrated that whenever tenants in Peju's house threw dirty water from their windows, the water and the dirty materials in it usually fell in front of his house. Aremu indicated that he had tried unsuccessfully to ask Peju to stop her tenants from throwing dirty water in front of his house. Aremu added that he brought the matter to the executive of the neighborhood development association when he could no longer bear the situation. Peju did not deny Aremu's story but added that she had warned her tenants to refrain from throwing water in front of Aremu's house.

To come to terms with the technical parts of the conflict, the peace committee involved some professionals that were also members of the neighborhood. The professionals included town-planners, surveyors, lawyers, and bricklayers. The peace committee, with assistance from the invited professionals, found that Peju did not leave enough space to meet the Nigerian state's requirements for the space that must exist between adjacent houses, such as between Aremu's and Peju's. The committee also noted that if Aremu were to involve the town-planning agency of the Nigerian state, Peju would almost certainly be asked to demolish her house (A13).

**The Resolution:** To avoid the huge loss Peju could have incurred if the town-planning agency of the Nigerian state had been involved in dealing with the matter, the peace committee unanimously decided that Peju should use mesh frame of fine wires (mosquito nets) to cover the windows in her house and asked her tenants to remove the dirty materials they had dumped in front of Aremu's house. After the resolution, Peju

went ahead to cover the windows in her house with mosquito nets and warned her tenants to stop throwing water in front of Aremu's house. It was gathered that there had not been any complaint from Aremu since the conflict was resolved (A13).

### **Case 3: Conflict between New Neighbor and Leaders of a Neighborhood in Abeokuta**

**The Case:** Members of a neighborhood development association in the Eleta area of Oke-Aro, Ibadan procured and installed an electric transformer to boost electric power supplies in their neighborhood. The association had a rule that every new landlord/homeowner in the neighborhood was required to pay a connection fee before having his/her house connected to the power line being boosted by the transformer. Offenders were to be punished by having their houses disconnected from the power line. Ade was going to be a homeowner in the area when he began building a house in the neighborhood in 1997. Before he completed his building, Ade had asked an electrician to connect his house to the power line in the neighborhood without paying the mandatory connection fee.

The matter was brought to the attention of members of the neighborhood association. Leaders of the association then asked the association's task force committee to remove Ade's cable from the power line forthwith. When Ade came to his site some weeks after and learned that members of the neighborhood development association in the area had disconnected his house from the power line, he called in members of the Nigeria police to arrest the chairman of the neighborhood association. The chairman was released after the intervention of some members of the association. The incident later heightened tensions in the area.

**The Resolution:** Jare, an elderly member of the neighborhood association invited Ade and leaders of the association including the chairman to his house for the resolution of the conflict. Jare indicated that the conflict would not have arisen if both sides had taken time to draw upon effective communication. In addition, Jare informed Ade that it was a rule of the neighborhood that every new homeowner must pay the connection fee before connecting his/her electric cable to the neighborhood's power line. Jare appealed to both parties not to base their relationship on enmity. Jare specifically asked Ade to pay the said fee. Not only did Ade agree to pay the connection fee, he also accepted to become a member of the neighborhood development association and to fulfill related mandatory obligations. At the end of the meeting, Ade embraced each of the people in attendance including the chairman (18).

#### **Case 4: Conflict between Neighbors in a Neighborhood in Ibadan**

**The Case:** In 2003, some goats belonging to the wife of Sepo (a landlord) entered the garden of Are (a landlord) in a neighborhood in the Eleta area of Ibadan and ate up virtually all the flowers planted there. The incident was annoying to one of Are's son who saw the goats and beat one of them till it had broken legs. The development led to a conflict between the two landlords and members of their immediate families. As a twist of relationship, relatives of both parties were no longer on talking terms. The matter was later brought to one of the general meetings of their neighborhood development association where both parties laid out their stories.

**The Resolution:** Members at the general meeting pleaded with both sides to embrace peace and refrain from allowing their conflict to degenerate into strained relationships. In addition, each party was asked to apologize to the other. Sepo



apologized to Are for the flowers destroyed by his wife's goats, and Are did the same to Sepo for the injuries caused to Sepo's wife's goat by Are's son. Both parties later thanked the association for its intervention and for restoring their friendly relationships. Also, the association made a rule that members that built fences around their houses would be permitted to rear domestic animals (including goats) within those fences or else the owners of strayed animals should not mind what befell their animals (I8).

The resolution of conflict cases 1 to 4 above was based largely on the mutually recognized relations and rules of the affected neighborhood development associations. The eviction of Ojuogbebikan in case 1 was a decision taken both to prevent criminals from having a safe haven in the neighborhood and to ensure the security of life and property for residents of the neighborhood. Regarding cases 2, 3 and 4, the interests of most affected parties were accommodated. Consistent with Follett 1940; Deutsch 1973; Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Boulding 1988; and Ayo 2002, the integrative approach to conflict resolution within neighborhood development associations in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta is largely at the root of mutual dependence and friendly relationships facilitated among the affected individuals.

#### **7.4 Conflict and Conflict Resolution among Diverse Yoruba Elements.**

Relatively similar patterns of conflict resolution within most small-scale governance units among the Yoruba demonstrate that not only can small-scale governance units among the Yoruba govern themselves through common understanding and agreed-upon rules, but mutually productive relationships among the Yoruba will have its roots in local self-governing units. Beneficial relationships will thrive and expand their

boundaries among the Yoruba when the lessons learned in local self-governing units are extended to constitute larger communities of shared relationships and to turn conflicts into productive outcomes for most individuals.

The overall impacts of conflict resolution on public peace and productive entrepreneurships in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta do not depend exclusively on the amount of cohesion, mutual dependence, and friendly relationships achieved within their constituent small-scale governance units where interests are relatively homogenous. The amount of mutual trust and friendly attitudes generated in resolving conflicts among diverse Yoruba elements in each community is also important in influencing levels of public peace and productive ways of life. Much as Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are similar in patterns of conflict resolution within their constituent small-scale governance units, the three Yoruba communities differ greatly regarding the amount of mutual trust, cohesion and friendly relationships achieved in resolving conflicts among their diverse Yoruba elements. The resultant patterns of inter-group relations have impacted public peace in the three Yoruba communities. The differences can be made clear by turning attention to the origins and resolution of conflicts between their respective diverse Yoruba elements starting with Ibadan.

#### **7.4.1 Ibadan**

##### **Case 1: Case 1: Conflict over Superior-Inferior Relationship**

**The Case:** As various Yoruba elements in Ibadan were making efforts to make Ibadan a more secure community, Egba elements among them began to feel increasingly insecure. Their plight revolved around how they were being treated as slaves by Maye

Okunade, an Ife soldier. Maye had strategically supported Ife elements to systematically exterminate Egba elements by kidnapping them and selling them into slavery. Egba elements however made a number of overtures to Maye in order to live as free citizens with the other Yoruba elements in Ibadan. Peace-attempts by Egba elements consequently fell apart when violence broke out between Ife and Egba elements at a public meeting in the third decade of the nineteenth century.

**Resolution:** Unable to withstand the authoritarian/autocratic personality of Maye, Egba elements abandoned Ibadan and fled to establish Abeokuta in 1830 (Falola 1984:18; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001:240). Consistent with Follett (1940), Deutsch 1973 and Boulding 1988, this was a case of conflict resolution achieved by a victory of one side (Maye and his Ife colleagues) over the other (the Egba elements), which does not support mutual dependence among diverse individuals.

### **Case 2: Continuation of Conflict over Superior-Inferior Relationships**

**The Case:** With the departure of Egba elements from Ibadan, Maye Okunade, an Ife soldier, eventually emerged as the most senior war chief in Ibadan and had become a highly autocratic, bad-tempered and partial leader. Having Ife elements on his side, Maye succeeded in establishing an autocratic constitutional order in Ibadan where Ife elements were superior to the other Yoruba elements. Whenever Ife elements were in conflict with members of non-Ife groups in Ibadan, Maye usually processed such conflicts to favor Ife elements. He also filled important offices in Ibadan with Ife elements and encouraged Ife elements to kidnap non-Ife elements and sell them into slavery or offer them as sacrifices to their gods.

Predictably, non-Ife elements in Ibadan regarded his days as unfortunate and later combined together to stop him. Maye reached the limit of his authoritarian behavior when an Oyo element and an Ife element quarreled in the market place, now known as *Oja'ba*. As the leader of the growing community, the conflict was brought to Maye for resolution. Maye instantly killed the Oyo element without investigating the matter. Sensing an imminent annihilation, non-Ife elements in Ibadan mobilized themselves against Maye and successfully expelled him and his ardent Ife supporters from Ibadan in 1833. The desire to establish friendly relationships among diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan motivated many winning non-Ife elements to make various attempts to bring Maye back to Ibadan. The overtures yielded no fruits as Maye was not ready to let go his authoritarian and bad-tempered attitudes. Maye instead set himself the task of re-imposing himself in Ibadan. The tensions that followed degenerated into violence where Maye was killed (Morgan 1971: 59-67; Falola 1984: 18-19; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001:240).

**The Resolution:** What was really at issue in Ibadan was the problem of authoritarian tendencies creating unequal standing in the relationships between Ife and non-Ife elements. After the removal of Maye and his allies, diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan drew upon their inventiveness as human artisans to evolve the political philosophy of *onikaluku lo nse ijoba ara re*, that is, every individual is free to govern himself/herself as long as no harm is done to others. In line with Boulding (1988), Deutsch (1973), Follett (1940), and Vincent Ostrom (1994), this is an innovation characteristic of integration as a way to resolve conflicts productively and come to a new, shared community of mutually beneficial relationships. The new political philosophy not only

began to enable most Yoruba elements in Ibadan to relate to one another as equals and respect impartiality in the process of conflict resolution, but it also started to base social mobility on personal achievements rather than birth or hereditary connection with any particular group of Yoruba elements<sup>96</sup>. A rule was also made to forbid kidnapping with violators facing the death penalty.

Despite the fact that Maye was an Ife element, the resolution did not lead to the expulsion of Ife elements from Ibadan, most of whom had developed authoritarian personalities and could possibly serve as a threat to the other groups of Yoruba elements. In line with Boulding (1988), the diverse backgrounds and interests of the Yoruba elements in Ibadan were instead seen as an opportunity for, rather than a threat to, mutual learning. Ife elements, for example, were allowed to stay back in Ibadan as long as they would act to conform to the principles of equality and respect the interests of others while pursuing their own interests. Many Ife elements, including Labosinde, a respected Ife warrior and Ifa priest, chose to remain in Ibadan after the defeat of Maye. Most Yoruba elements in Ibadan regarded Labosinde in particular as part of them for his personal achievements. Labosinde eventually emerged as the chief adviser and the chief priest for the whole Ibadan (Morgan 1971: 59-67; Falola 1984: 18-19; Falola and Oguntomisin 2001:240).

Consistent with Follett (1940), Deutsch (1973) and Boulding (1988), the integrative approach (as in Design Principle 6 in chapter 1 of this study) adopted in the resolution of the conflict about the standing of the individual enabled most Yoruba people in Ibadan to come to a new community of shared relationships where individuals

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<sup>96</sup> This began to make membership terms in Ibadan fair for most individuals, consistent with fair membership terms indicated in Design Principle 1 in chapter 1 of this study as a condition for cooperation in solving shared problems such as public security.

began to be encouraged to base their relationships on forgiveness, mutual respect, trust, openness, fairness, and mutual behavioral expectations.

### **Case 3: Conflict over Violation of Rule of Equality**

**The Case:** Oluyole was an Oyo element who had emerged as the most senior chief in Ibadan in the 1840s. He systematically nurtured the desire to re-establish autocratic leadership partially reminiscent of the days of Maye Okunade. Unlike Maye, Oluyole did not have any support from Oyo elements except for members of his own family. In fact, most Yoruba elements were against him and sought ways to remove him. To establish his reign of terror and fear, Oluyole built a strong private army for himself, made major decisions without consultation with other leaders, sponsored disunity among war chiefs, killed war chiefs who were potential threats to his ambition such as Bankole Alesinloye, Lajubu, and Akintuyi, expelled many leaders from Ibadan like Chief Elepo, condoned the excesses and lawlessness of his children who also dubbed as his ardent supporters, and prevented farmers and traders from competing with him in domestic trade regarding products from his farms.

**The Resolution:** Most Yoruba elements in no time combined together against Oluyole to prevent him from successfully launching a comeback of the autocratic era of Maye. Many uprisings were staged by ordinary individuals against his regime. War chiefs also undertook conscious and decisive efforts to remove him, in one of which Oluyole mysteriously died after he fell from a horse. The incident was believed to have been caused by a charm made by war chiefs favoring equality and mutually productive competition among most individuals. As soon as Oluyole died, his lawless children and followers were barred from holding civil and military offices in Ibadan so as to prevent a

re-establishment of autocracy and to serve as a strict warning that autocratic tendencies have no place in Ibadan (Toyin Falola and Oguntomisin 2001: 34-35).

#### **Case 4: Conflict over Intolerance between Individuals of Diverse Interests**

**The Case:** In the 1860s, a man inadvertently killed a goat which strayed into his farm and ate his corn. The man pleaded with the owner of the goat for forgiveness. The owner of the goat refused all pleadings and instead demanded £3 (three pounds) for the dead goat. The unyielding insistence of the owner of the goat did not create room for any of the local units to process the conflict. The owner of the goat had believed that he would have his way if the most senior chief in Ibadan was involved. He not only reported the case to Ogunmola who was the most senior chief in Ibadan at the time but also bribed Ogunmola in order to receive a judgment in his favor (Falola and Oguntomisin 2001: 43-44).

**The Resolution:** At the hearing, Ogunmola predictably blamed the defendant for killing another man's goat and ordered that he pay the £3 as demanded by the owner of the goat. Being a poor man, the defendant pleaded for lenience. Ogunmola later came to the defendant's rescue and gave him the money to pay the owner of the goat. When the defendant was about to leave, Ogunmola asked me to come back and said, "...you are a stupid man, aren't you? The owner has got his own money; aren't you going to ask him to pay you for your own ears of corn. Suppose you ask him to pay you £3 for each ear of corn the goat ate?" This sounded well to the defendant who immediately complied with Ogunmola's suggestion and then asked the owner of the goat to pay him £3 for each of the estimated 40 ears of corn the goat ate.

Ogunmola then ordered the owner of the goat to pay £120 and ended his judgment thus, “Listen all of you and learn a lesson from this case. As long as I live, and as long as I sit in judgment over cases, I will always be just and fair to all. Three days ago, the owner of the goat came to offer me a bribe of fifteen shillings so that I may give judgment in his favor. Here is his money. I do not need it. Bribery is not good, it is worse than poison for it destroys in the end. Listen, every one of you, if anyone of you attempts to bribe me again, I shall punish him severely” (Toyin Falola and Oguntomisin 2001:43-44). Ogunmola thus solidified the principles of forgiveness, reconciling attitudes, fair hearing, good justice, maturity, honesty and impartiality, which strike at the root of the flexible, integrative constitutional order evolved after the collapse of Maye’s autocracy.

#### **Case 5: Conflict between Members of Different Occupations**

**The Case:** During the period of Ogunmola as the most senior chief in Ibadan, Bioran, a common soldier, found a dead deer on his farm and took it. The deer died on Bioran’s farm after it had been fatally shot by a group of hunters. The hunters who killed the deer took the case to Ogunmola who immediately sent for Bioran. Bioran did not deny that the hunters actually killed the deer. He however put up a sentimental case to defend why he took the deer and why the deer should not be retrieved from him. In his defense, Bioran said, “...When important war chiefs fell in the thick of the battle, it was I, Bioran, who always risked my life by going forward in the battle line to carry the bodies back to camp. Now, a few days ago, as I was walking over my farm, I saw a dead deer, near the boundary of my farm. So I thought to myself, if I can carry a dead man between cross fires on the battle line, why should I not carry a dead deer lying between two farms? So I went and carried the dead deer home”. Bioran’s defense greatly



impressed Ogunmola and tasked the dexterity of Ogunmola in ensuring justice to the hunters (Falola and Oguntomisin 2001: 42-43).

**The Resolution:** In order to boost the morale of warriors and war boys in Ibadan, Ogunmola not only ordered Bioran to eat the deer but also gave him a bottle of gin to drink. On the other hand, Ogunmola pleaded with the hunters and gave them presents in exchange for their deer. The hunters were well pleased with the maturity Ogunmola brought to bear on handling the conflict. Soldiers were also pleased with the judgment. The morale of soldiers was greatly boosted because the judgment indicated that their leaders recognized their sacrifices in the defense of Ibadan (Falola and Oguntomisin 2001: 42-43).

#### **7.4.2 Abeokuta**

##### **Case 1: Conflict over Unfair Treatment of Egba Elements by Ife Elements in Ibadan**

**The Case:** In the nineteenth century, many individuals operated as kidnappers in Abeokuta. This degenerated into a state of insecurity of life and property.

**The Resolution:** A rule was made to punish kidnapping with death penalty. In view of the problem of autocracy experienced by the Egba under Maye (as in Case 1 for Ibadan) and the Old Oyo Empire, the Yoruba people (Egba) of Abeokuta renewed their commitment to honor and respect equal standing for most individuals (Imoagene 1976; Biobaku 1991; Ajisafe 1998: 104).

##### **Case 2: Conflict over Mutually Agreed Relations**

**The Case:** An undated conflict arose between Itoku and Igbehin neighborhoods/townships in the Egba Ake section of Abeokuta. Igbehin neighborhood

was reputable for its efficiency in salt trade. As a result, most neighborhoods in Abeokuta ceded salt trade to Igbehin. There was also a shared rule that stealing of salt from Igbehin was punishable by death. Ogedepagbo, an Itoku man was involved in the salt trade in Igbehin neighborhood. One day, after he had left Igbehin and arrived at Itoku, Ogedepagbo was charged with stealing some salt from Igbehin. The Yoruba people in Igbehin then sent to Itoku and demanded the execution of Ogedepagbo based on their shared rules. The request was turned down by the Itoku people who claimed that the charge was completely false and malicious. The Igbehin people were so grieved that they went and plundered Itoku farmers, killing many of them. The Itoku people responded in a similar way such that the peace of the Egba Ake section was greatly threatened and many other townships in the section almost began to take side with either party.

**The Resolution:** Knowing fully well that bloodshed would not bring peace to their section, the matter was taken up by their sectional Ogboni (body of judges and legislators) involving the representatives of most townships/neighborhoods in the Egba Ake section. It was unanimously decided at the meeting of the sectional Ogboni that the culprit, Ogedepagbo, be executed based on their shared rules. Peace was restored after Ogedepagbo was executed (Biobaku 1991:11; Ajisafe 1998: 45-46).

### **Case 3: Conflict over Standing among Individuals of Different Religions**

**The Case:** Uneasiness had pervaded Abeokuta early in the 1932s about whether Christians and Muslims would continue to be members of Ogboni (judges and legislators), Parakoyi (trade chiefs), Oloorogun (war chiefs) and Ode (police) in Abeokuta. The people in the opposition believed that the associations were an exclusive preserve of worshippers of *orisa* (lesser gods). Christians in particular who had become

members of the associations were at a fix regarding their fate. They wanted to know whether they would no longer be able to practise their Christian faith by assuming membership in any of the four associations (Folarin 1934).

**The Resolution:** It was decided that representatives of various religions, neighborhoods/townships and sections in Abeokuta should meet to address the problem. The meeting was convened on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1932. It drew representatives from most diverse interests including Christians, Muslims, worshippers of *orisa*, and members of townships and sections in Abeokuta. In the discussion that ensued, representatives in attendance did acknowledge that before Christianity and Islam arrived, members of the four specialized associations were worshippers of lesser gods. With the advent of Christianity and Islam, some interested Christians and Muslims were said to have been accommodated as members of the associations. Instances were in particular cited of past and present members who had distinguished themselves and whose membership did not compromise their respective religions. These included the late Otun of the Egba (Tairu - Muslim), the then Otun of the Egba (Christian), and the late Osi of the Egbas (Muslim). Most of the representatives unanimously agreed that religions should not prevent anybody from being a member of any of the associations. What mattered, as most people at the meeting claimed, was the success of members which depended largely on their character.

At the end of deliberations, most representatives agreed that (i) personal achievements and good/exemplary character should be the basis of taking membership and promotions in any of the four specialized associations, (ii) title was one thing and religion was another and the two should not be mixed together or misconstrued, (iii)

Christians and Muslims who were members must not be required to worship *orisa* (lesser gods), (iv) deceased members of the associations should be buried according to their religious beliefs, only that death fees were required to be paid to their associations by their relatives, and (v) members should recognize and respect the prevailing customs in their respective neighborhoods/townships and sections regarding the use of regalia and assuming membership.

The meeting closed with an appeal that Christian members of the four specialized associations should look at sincere Christians and “promote peace as Jesus has taught...”, and that any member found to be creating disturbance in any part of Abeokuta would forthwith have his/her title withdrawn (Folarin 1934: 27-37). The resolution produced outcomes that benefited most diverse interests, and encouraged individuals to develop reconciling personalities and to see their differences as an opportunity for, rather than a threat to, mutual learning. Consistent with Boulding and other scholars, public peace was further strengthened in Abeokuta through the resolution (Folarin 1934) that integrated most diverse interests, as indicated in Design Principle 6 discussed in chapter 1 of this study.

#### **Case 4: Land Conflict between members of Different Neighborhoods/Townships**

**The Case:** A family from the Oorun Township in the Egba Gbagura section of Abeokuta had buried a relative on a piece of land on a borderline between Oorun and Oje-Ile townships. The land belongs to another family in the Oje-Ile Township in the same section. The Yoruba people from the Oje-Ile Township were not pleased with this development because they feared that the relatives of the deceased could later claim the

land as their property. The matter was brought to a highly respected member of the Ogboni of Oorun in 2003.

**The Resolution:** Members of the family from Oorun admitted that the land did not belong to them and they never intended to usurp the ownership of the land by burying their relative there. They added that they had buried their relative on the disputed land with the consent of the family that owns the land partly because the disputed piece of land is closest to their compound and partly because it was difficult for them to find a place within the jurisdiction of their compound in their own township. They then signed an undertaking that they would never seek to take ownership of the land. The promise was accepted by the people of Oje-Ile. The mediator, the Ogboni member, thanked them for their cooperation and desire to seek peace between the two townships (A11)

### **7.4.3 Ile-Ife**

#### **Case 1: Conflict over Standing between Ife and Oyo Elements**

**The Case:** By the middle of the third decade of the nineteenth century, most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife had raised series of complaints of inhuman treatments against their Ife counterparts. The insecurity of Oyo elements in Ile-Ife became aggravated as their kidnapped colleagues were either sold into slavery or offered as sacrifices to Ife gods. Their plights further increased with the defeat of Maye Okunade and his Ife colleagues in Ibadan as Case 1 for Ibadan depicts above. After the death of Maye, some Ife elements in Ibadan stayed back and accepted to live as equals with other categories of Yoruba elements in Ibadan. Many Ife elements that supported the authoritarian leadership of

Maye 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.

Most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife were consequently singled out for more hostile treatments to avenge the defeat of Maye and his Ife colleagues in Ibadan. Many Oyo elements were kidnapped and sold into slavery. Oyo elements who were farmers began to lose the right to farm on Ife land. The move to use physical separation in 1847 to reduce the chances of further conflicts between Oyo and Ife elements did not yield any meaningful result. Most Oyo elements continued to face inhuman treatment in the hands of Ife elements that had declared themselves as lords over Oyo elements. Ife elements would not allow Oyo element autonomy to govern themselves in their new location (Akinjogbin 1992:153; Olaniyan 1992:266-286; Olutobi and Oyeniya 1994:2-6; Albert 2001:59-60).

**The Failed Resolution:** Since "[p]eople who are subject to dominance will find capabilities for resistance" (V. Ostrom 1997: 286), Oyo elements engaged Ife elements in violent conflicts between 1849 and 1878 for lack of means to secure a mutually acceptable resolution. Not only did the whole of Ile-Ife lay in ruin during the turbulent period, Oyo elements, as tested warriors, also took about 12,000 Ife elements as prisoners of war. The rest of Ife elements abandoned Ile-Ife and fled to neighboring Yoruba communities including Isoya.

Yoruba leaders from Ibadan and other places including colonial officers (British) intervened to reconcile the two sides in order that they could live together peacefully. But Ife elements and their leaders uncompromisingly insisted on the compulsory evacuation of Oyo elements from Ile-Ife. Because of the respect most of the intermediaries had for

the *Ooni*, they sided with Ife elements and drew a peace treaty in 1886 to relocate Oyo elements from Ile-Ife to Odeomu. Odeomu is located within the territories of Ibadan but nearer Ile-Ife than Ibadan. While the evacuation of Oyo elements took place in 1909 (Olaniyan 1992:266-286; Olutobi and Oyeniya 1994:2-6), the roles of Yoruba leaders and colonial officials show how domination combined with outside agency can be used to impose submission on the disadvantaged in processing conflicts. Consistent with the problem of conflict resolution based on domination (Follett 1940, Deutsch 1973, Boulding 1963, 1988, Greif & Laitin 2004), the conflict over the standing of the individual in Ile-Ife was not resolved but driven underground as a “sleeping conflict”. It eventually began to prepare fertile grounds for unfairness, distrust, ineffective communication, exclusionary bonds, and norms of revenge as elements of the uncooperative pattern of interactions between Oyo and Ife elements.

### **Case 2: Continuation of Conflict over Standing between Ife and Oyo Elements**

**The Case:** Many Oyo elements however sought permission from Ife elements to return to their farms. The request was granted early in the 1920s on the condition that Oyo elements would be tenants on Ife land. As from 1922, Oyo elements began to return to their farms in Ile-Ife. About ten years later, conflicts began to occur again between Oyo and Ife elements. In 1934 Oyo elements demanded to have their own Imam and independent mosque. Ife elements however “insisted on the supremacy of the Imam of Ife” despite the fact that the subordinate position of Oyo elements’ Imam is contrary to the Koran (Akinjogbin 1992:274). Oyo elements were in addition reminded that they were never granted any independence when they returned to Ile-Ife as from 1922. Oyo elements also presented their position to the colonial District Officer who clearly

responded, "I doubt this argument and so do the *Ooni* and chiefs". Having no option left, Oyo elements accepted the Ife Imam as the Chief Imam and the Ife Central Mosque as the Chief Mosque. Tensions continued to rise as Oyo and Ife elements related to each other as enemies.

The fragile peace was worsened with another conflict over *isakole* (land rent) in 1946. As earlier indicated, Oyo elements were received back in Ile-Ife as tenants who occasionally gave farm products to their Ife landlords. Many of the Ife landlords included the *Ooni* and Ife chiefs who made major decisions and who most Oyo elements saw (still see) as partial arbiters and exploiters (Akinjogbin 1992:198). A significant change in the existing tenancy relationship occurred in the 1940s when prices of cocoa beans greatly increased in the international market. The hike in the prices of cocoa beans prompted Ife elements to demand for the first time an annual land rent of 10% of the proceeds derived from the Ife land worked by Oyo elements.

In stern protest at the outrageous rent, Oyo elements combined together to resist the new land rent. They revived the religious aspect of their problem of standing, began to boycott most activities that usually brought them together with Ife elements, and started to develop a strong exclusionary bond. For example, Oyo elements established their own mosque with an independent Imam, openly asked for autonomy to govern themselves, refused to have representatives on the Ife council of chiefs, and boycotted the Olojo festival which usually brought together most inhabitants of Ile-Ife (IFE DIV 1/1 113 Vol II, 113<sup>B</sup> and 433 Vol 1; Akinjogbin 1992:197-199; Olaniyan 1992: 266-286; Olutobi and Oyeniya 1994:2-6).



**The Failed Resolution:** After many protests and the violence of 1948, Ife elements asked Oyo elements to choose between two options: either (i) to pay *isakole* (land rent) and remain in Ile-Ife or (ii) sell the products on their farms and houses to Ife elements and move out of Ile-Ife. Oyo chose the first option and tensions continued to build up along with other related problems such as mutually destructive socialization, ineffective communication and norms of revenge. The conflict over the problem of unequal standing was driven underground once again (Olaniyan 1992:266-286; Olutobi and Oyeniya 1994:2-6).

### **Case 3: Continuation of Conflict over Standing between Ife and Oyo Elements**

The sleeping conflict about the problem of unequal standing between Oyo and Ife elements was resurrected again following the enactment of the 1978 land law. Oyo elements believed the land law had freed them from the payment of land rents to Ife elements who in turn claimed that nothing had changed. The conflict was so carelessly exploited by politicians that it contributed to another outbreak of violence in April 1981. The failure to resolve the conflict for the mutual benefit of both sides fueled the violence of 1983 after Oyo elements had been prevented from mobilizing resources for the development of their own part of Ile-Ife.

The problem of unequal standing also came back to life when Oyo elements were denied in 1997 from having a separate local government after the Nigerian national government had created a local government unit with its headquarters in the area controlled by most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife. The headquarters of the new local governmental unit was later moved into the part of Ile-Ife under the control of Ife elements. Most Oyo elements believed that Ife elements were behind the change in order

to deny them (Oyo elements) autonomy. The displeasure of Oyo elements over how Ife elements contributed to the denial of autonomy for them was expressed by taking up arms against Ife elements from 1997 to 2000.

Property and life were lost in the violent conflict. Between 1997 and 2000 alone, farmlands such as Molodo, Anididun, Toro, Oyi-Alogun, Alabamata, Apamu, Oku-Omoni, Bowaje and Ogudu were totally destroyed. About 50,000 individuals<sup>97</sup> moved out of Ile-Ife following the 1997-2000 violence (F2; F7; Olaniyan 1992:266-286; Olutobi and Oyeniyi 1994:2-6; Adeyemi-Ale 1999:125-150; Albert 2001:58-62).

**The Failed Resolution:** The council of *Obas* (kings) in Osun State intervened in the course of the 1997-2000 violence to resolve the conflict. The council came up with the following decisions that: (i) most of the *Obas* in Yorubaland saw the *Ooni* as having supreme authority over the authority of any other institution not only in Ile-Ife but in the whole of Yorubaland; (ii) the absolute submission of Oyo elements to the *Ooni* is not up for negotiation, and Oyo elements must submit to the *Ooni* unconditionally and comply with whatever his wishes are as the overlord; (iii) Oyo elements should accept that all land in Ile-Ife belongs to Ife elements to whom they must continue to pay land rents; and (iv) it would be wrong for Oyo elements to seek autonomy under any guise in Ile-Ife.

The resolution went on to aggravate the violence which was suspended in 2000 and went back to its status as the sleeping conflict of unequal standing. Efforts to address recurrent series of violence in Ile-Ife have not solved the problem of unequal standing that has disadvantaged most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife. One main exception was an unheeded position of a national reconciliation committee that Ife elements should

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<sup>97</sup> Also see “Non-indigenes flee” and Schools now refugee camps in Ife in *Nigerian Tribune*. No. 11,604 Thursday, September 25, 1997, and No. 11,605 Friday 26, 1997

recognize the autonomy of Oyo elements to govern themselves and stop treating them as tenants or serfs (F7, Adeyemi-Ale 1999:125-150).

While the conflict over unequal standing between Oyo and Ife elements has not been resolved, there is an instance where qualified success has been achieved in challenging the authority of Ife elements. Case 4 below provides further illumination in this direction.

**Case 4: Conflict between Ife and Other Elements over the Rename of an Ife Farmland**

**The Case:** Olode village is a farmland owned by some compounds of Ife elements and worked by tenants from various parts of Nigeria. Ife elements who claim to own the village have determined how the inhabitants of the village have to govern themselves. For example, the Ife elements have reserved to themselves the right to appoint an Ife element to head the village.

The inhabitants of the village were tired of being dominated by Ife elements. They decided to unite together and form a common front to fight for their liberation from Ife elements. They undertook a successful effort after the *Ooni* decided at one of his anniversary ceremonies between 1979 and 1983 to rename Olode village as Awolowo town, after Chief Obafemi Awolowo (late Nigerian politician) (Okotoni 1997:124-125).

**The resolution:** The inhabitants of Olode regarded the *Ooni's* move as a unilateral action as the *Ooni* did not carry them along. As a counter-threat, the inhabitants of the village also undertook a unilateral move to retain the name "Olode" despite the fact that Ife elements and inhabitants of Olode supported the same political party, the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria (Okotoni 1997:124-125). The village has retained its initial name, Olode, up till the present moment.

Case 4 is an interesting challenge to the authority of Ife elements. Dialogue is however needed between the two parties to resolve the conflict to their mutual benefits instead of driving the conflict underground through threats and counter-threats. Conflicts resolved through threats and counter-threats under domination, as Boulding (1988) has argued, tend to produce fragile peace that can completely collapse in the face of future provocations.

Having regard to the above, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta differ in methods of resolving conflicts among their respective diverse Yoruba elements. In both Ibadan and Abeokuta, the integrative approach has been the method of conflict resolution. This has been made possible by their flexible constitutional orders that accommodate diverse interests, enable individuals to have quick access to arenas for conflict resolution, and encourage most participating individuals to develop reconciling attitudes, consistent with a cooperative condition in Design Principle 6 discussed in chapter 1 of this study. Integrative conflict resolution has consequently contributed to promote growing levels of mutual dependence and public peace in both Ibadan and Abeokuta.

In sharp contrast, Ile-Ife has not been able to replicate what prevails in Abeokuta and Ibadan. Its constitutional order supports the use of domination that tend to favor most Ife elements in resolution of conflicts between Ife and non-Ife elements including Oyo elements, as conflict cases under Ile-Ife above have shown. This is contrary to integrative conflict resolution mechanisms (as specified in Design Principle 6) needed for cooperation among most participating individuals in solving shared problems. As a result, mutual distrust and norms of revenge have characterized the relationships between Ife

and Oyo elements in particular. Table 7.1 below summaries the types of conflicts and conflict resolution in each community.

**Table 7.1: Types of Conflict and Conflict Resolution**

<b>Community/ Conflict Type</b>	<b>Ile-Ife</b>	<b>Ibadan</b>	<b>Abeokuta</b>
Conflicts among Yoruba Kinfolks	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>
Conflicts within Neighborhood Development Associations	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among the affected individuals <b>(Integration)</b>
Conflicts about terms and conditions of governance and property relationships among diverse Yoruba Elements	Resolution mostly in favor of Ife Elements against Oyo Elements <b>(Domination)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among all diverse Yoruba Elements <b>(Integration)</b>	Resolution based mostly on mutually recognized relations and rules to foster mutual dependence and friendly attitude among all diverse Yoruba Elements <b>(Integration)</b>

**Notes:** Columns are organized by communities and rows by types of conflicts. Entries in cells represent types of conflict resolution.

## 7.5 Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it has been explained that conflicts can be turned into mutually productive outcomes when constitutional orders enable most participating individuals in any given political economy to develop reconciling personalities and pursue self-interests while respecting the interests of others. Abeokuta and Ibadan, as explained above, are instances of such political economies among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

The adoption of the integrative approach to conflict resolution in Abeokuta and Ibadan has not only enabled their respective inhabitants to draw upon open communication and friendly attitudes in resolving their conflicts as equal partners from the third decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but has also enhanced public peace to facilitate incredible innovations and mutually productive entrepreneurships at most levels of aggregation in both Yoruba communities. It is along this line it becomes clear why Abeokuta and Ibadan have both moved up the ladder of entrepreneurial progress (as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3), while Ile-Ife has not but has instead been experiencing violent conflicts since 1849. The dominating, repressive approach to conflict resolution between Ife and Oyo elements in Ile-Ife provides an understanding about insecurity and the resultant lack of industrial and commercial openness in Ile-Ife, as depicted in Table 4.1.

The contrasting institutional environments are consistent with the argument that domination tends to drive conflicts underground and make fragile peace or violence more likely in the long run, while integration promotes mutual trust and friendly attitude, open and honest communication among most participating individuals, recognition by one party of the legitimacy of the other's interests, and creativity and innovations that

simultaneously generate mutual benefits for most individuals and inhibit violence (Follett 1940; Deutsch 1973; Boulding 1988, 1989; Ayo 2002).

In addition, patterns of violent conflicts in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta raise doubt about environmental scarcities, diversity (ethnic, dialect, religious differences), and centralized African states' policies as the primary causes of violent conflicts in all developing societies. Percival and Homer-Dixon (1998), Homer-Dixon (1994, 1999), for example, argue that environmental scarcities such as those of freshwater, croplands and forests are more likely to lead to violent conflicts in places with high population densities. This argument is less persuasive in relation to the above-discussed patterns of violence among the Yoruba of Nigeria. First, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta have relatively similar environmental conditions, with population density highest in Ibadan, followed by Abeokuta and Ile-Ife in that order as explained in chapter 2. Second, violent conflicts have been occurring since the 1840s in Ile-Ife with the smallest population density, rather than Ibadan that is more likely to be predicted to be prone to violent conflicts given its highest population density.

Also, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are homes to diverse Yoruba elements with distinct dialects and different religions (including Christianity, Islam and idol worshipping/traditional religion). The argument that linguistic, religious and ethnic differences are the primary cause of violent conflicts in all developing societies (Lake and Rothchild 1998; Kazah-Toure 1999, United Nations 1999; Gurr 2000) is weakened. Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are inhabited by Yoruba elements belonging to the Yoruba ethnic group, As earlier explained, Yoruba elements in each of the three communities

have different dialects and practise different religions. However, Ile-Ife has remained the community experiencing violent conflicts since the 1840s.

In addition, the prediction of violent conflicts based primarily on the influences of centralized African states in terms of political coalition-building and changes in land and centralized decentralization policies that favor some groups and disadvantage other groups in the same communities (Albert 1999, 2001; Oladoyin 2001; Bujra 2002; Posner 2004) cannot explain why violent conflicts in Ile-Ife and not in Ibadan and Abeokuta. Violence has been occurring in Ile-Ife since 1849, before the birth of the Nigerian state in 1914. The three Yoruba communities have been similarly subjected to the influences of the Nigerian state. The land policy of 1978 that eventually led to violence in 1981 in Ile-Ife was applied similarly not only in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta but also throughout Nigeria. Violence did not break out among diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta following the enactment of the 1978 land law.

The annulled presidential election of June 12, 1993 that almost tore Nigeria into pieces is another example of the Nigerian state's influences on diversity/cleavage problems. Before 1993, precisely since the start of the colonial era in Nigeria, Egba Oke-Ona, Egba Gbagura and Owu (three sections in Abeokuta) have been in conflict with Egba Ake over attempts by colonial officials, military and civilian governments to impose an *Oba* (king) from Egba Ake as the single head of Abeokuta to whom individuals are expected to defer. The annulled election was presumably won by the late M.K.O Abiola, Yoruba man from the Egba Gbagura section of Abeokuta. Instead of forming a national government based on the 1993 election, Chief Ernest Shonekan (Yoruba man from the Egba Ake section of Abeokuta) was installed in 1993 by the



military as the head of the interim national government set up to conduct another presidential election. Most Nigerians, including the Yoruba people in the four sections of Abeokuta, however, protested against the interim government and demanded that Abiola be sworn in as the president of Nigeria.

The implicit cleavage problems in the 1993 political manipulation was not seen by the Egba Oke-Ona, Egba Gbagura and Owu Egba as a tool to fight the repressive constitutional order masked behind the intention to impose a single head from the Egba Ake section on the Yoruba people in Abeokuta. Instead, the internal conflict over single headship in Abeokuta and the 1993 political maneuverings by the military were seen jointly by most Yoruba people of Abeokuta as a disrespect for their shared belief that *Egba o loba, onikaluku lo nse bi Oba*, that is, the *Egba* do not have kings/masters, every Egba man acts as his own king/master. Rather than yield to these threats and have recourse to violent conflicts, the Yoruba people in Abeokuta, save local dictators imposed and supported by officials of the colonial and post-colonial Nigerian state, have continued to relate peacefully to one another as equals (A5).

The situation in Abeokuta is not different from what prevailed in Venice, Italy starting from 1032 when the principles of equality were used to weaken the importance of clans and to give equal standing to most individuals, leading eventually to increasing economic progress (Greif and Laitin 2004:644). Environmental scarcities, diversity or cultural cleavages and centralized African states' policies may however serve as triggers (Maxwell and Reuveny 2000:303) rather than the primary causes of violent conflicts. As elaborated upon in relation to Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ile-Ife, more attention needs to be

paid to how people's institutions structure their relationships to affect the origin and continuation of violent conflicts.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PATTERNS OF ORDER AMONG THE YORUBA OF NIGERIA: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

"We cannot practice true federalism *in Nigeria* with only one constitution, it is not possible. We cannot practice federalism with centralized local government system" (Mike Ahamba's interview in the Sun News, Thursday June 23, 2005)<sup>98</sup>. "The first order of priority in learning the craft of citizenship as applied to public affairs needs to focus on how to cope with problems in the context of family, neighborhood, village, and community. This is where people acquire the rudiments for becoming self-governing, by learning how to live and work with others" (Vincent Ostrom 1997:x) "...[W]e can conclude that...one of the most important threat is the effort to impose uniform rules and large boundaries on systems so they are more comprehensible to academics and policymakers" Elinor Ostrom (2005:257).

#### 8.1 Introduction

Diverse interests among the Yoruba of Nigeria can be exploited either positively or negatively in shaping interdependent relationships. If institutional arrangements accommodate diverse interests among the Yoruba and other African peoples, diversity would become a positive, rather than destructive, tool to civilize problem-solving in Africa. This would inevitably involve the use of ideas to pool, rearrange, and integrate existing interests in constituting new, shared patterns of relationships to cope with the exigencies of life through reflection and choice in self-governing communities of shared understanding (V. Ostrom 1997: 290).

Institutional structures with multiplicities of nested and autonomous centers of decision making are fundamental to such a process. Its organizational machinery is an expression of the sovereignty of the people (Tocqueville 1966, V. Ostrom 2005) rather than the sovereignty of *Obas*, *Obis* and *Emirs* (kings or warrant chiefs), local dictators, "educated" political elites, or the centralized government and its officials. Put differently,

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<sup>98</sup> <http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/politics/2005/june/23/politics>, Visited on June 23, 2005

success in governance would be facilitated in most of Africa when people, like those in Abeokuta and Ibadan, as discussed in previous chapters in this study, are their own governors. The principles of equality underlying the sovereignty of the people, however, draw a sharp contrast against Hobbes' centralized constitutional order evident in Ile-Ife where decision-making power has been centralized and concentrated in Ife chiefs on behalf of Ife elements.

These contrasting constitutional orders, as have been explained in previous chapters in this study, present the Yoruba people of Nigeria with a major challenge to reflect and choose the terms and conditions of governance on which mutually productive alternatives are available. This concluding chapter summarizes the findings of this study, draws lessons for mutually productive institutional change and adaptation among the Yoruba and other African peoples. It also proposes directions for future research.

## **8.2. Research on the Political Order s in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta Before this Dissertation**

Before 1870<sup>99</sup>, the Yoruba people in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta had governed themselves through institutions based on their respective conceptions of the universe and experiences. The Yoruba people in the three communities differed, still differ, greatly in their experiences and conceptions of the universe. The differences, as explained in chapter 3, influenced their terms and conditions of governance and property relationships before 1870.

In Ile-Ife before 1870, the standing (*eto* or *ipo*) of individuals and their local units depended essentially on where they were within Ile-Ife's hierarchical-aristocratic

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<sup>99</sup> 1870 has been taken by many scholars as the starting point of the colonial era in Nigeria (Ayo 2002: 5-6).

constitutional order presided over by the *Ooni* (king of Ile-Ife) as a single head. On the other hand, individuals in Abeokuta and Ibadan got involved in problem-solving through covenantal relationships and mutual agreements relying mainly on the principles of equality, fairness and mutual behavioral expectations without reference to a single head. These differing patterns of order, as explained previously in this study, have been misunderstood by many scholars who have argued that all institutional structures among the Yoruba are similar or at best roughly patterned after the institutional structure in Ile-Ife.

With the start of the colonial era in 1870, the diverse patterns of order in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta began to be forced to take on a homogenous outlook through the indirect rule approach. The style of the colonial administration was mainly centralized while indigenous systems of governance were allowed to continue as part of the centralized colonial administration. For example, the *Ooni* (king) of Ile-Ife was recognized by colonial officials as the sole native authority in Ile-Ife, with his chiefs and most ordinary individuals in Ile-Ife treated as the subjects of the *Ooni* who in turn took orders from the colonial administrator posted to Ile-Ife (Oyediran 1988).

The position of the most senior chief in Ibadan was erroneously misunderstood as that of an *Oba* and was officially upgraded by the colonial officials to the status of sole native authority. This was carried out in violation of a dominant belief in Ibadan that individuals are their own governors and nobody's servants. As explained in chapter 1, the *Obas* as sole native authorities were excessively empowered against their subjects to make bye-laws and to prevent activities in their communities that appeared to them as a threat to order and good government under the colonial administration (Oyediran 1988).

While many individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta mounted strong resistance against the political corruption of the colonial administration, most ordinary individuals in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta were effectively kept out of the centralized colonial political order (Price 1933; Oyediran 1988; Olowu 1996; Ayo 2002; Blair 2002; Watson 2003).

However, the colonial administration facilitated the development of transportation and communication networks between the three Yoruba communities and their neighbors during the colonial era. It is important to indicate that the transportation networks were compatible with the imperial policy of moving cash crops to the ports for export to the colonial metropole. The colonial administration was also said to have provided security for Christian missionaries to facilitate the development of education in Yoruba communities and other parts of Nigeria. Much as many scholars have doubted the involvement of the colonial administration in the development of education among the Yoruba, it remains unquestionable that Christian missionaries took the lead, either on their or arguably with the support of the colonial administration, in the development of schools, hospitals, and medical centers in many Yoruba communities, which benefited many ordinary individuals during the colonial era (Falola 1984; Biobaku 1991; Olowu 1996; Ayo 2002).

Nigerian political elites have continued with the centralized legacies of the colonial era since 1960 when Nigeria obtained independence from Britain. After independence in 1960, Ile-Ife, Ibadan, Abeokuta, and other Nigerian communities have been administered through local government officials within the superordinate-subordinate pattern of relationship, where local government officials take orders from officials of the national government. *Obas* and chiefs that are loyal to the national government have been

involved in the administration of their communities to the gross neglect of their subjects. Much like during the colonial era, most ordinary individuals in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, Abeokuta and other Yoruba communities have been neglected by officials of the Nigerian state.

As explained in chapter 1, the institutional structures of the Nigerian state have been progress-hindering in nature and have allowed Nigerian political elites to become used to centralization, concentration and personalization of political power to the neglect of most ordinary individuals. As the Nigerian state increasingly becomes a fiction in governance, ordinary individuals have had to fall back on institutions they craft based on their beliefs and experiences, which are the main focus of this study. Many scholars who have attempted to study such institutions among the Yoruba have argued that all institutional structures among the Yoruba are similar or at best roughly patterned after the institutional structure in Ile-Ife.

This assumption of institutional uniformity among the Yoruba has been puzzling given the profound differences in the patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness in Ile-Ife, Ibadan, and Abeokuta, as explained previously in this study. It is against this background that chapter 1 in this study began with the question, “Why do communities sharing the same ethnic backgrounds, located in the same ecological zone, equally subject to national political affairs and having faced similar conflicts over the years experience varied patterns of associational life, violent conflict, and commercial and industrial openness?” The findings of this study about this question and their theoretical implications are summarized as follows.

### **8.3 Summary of Study Findings and Theoretical Implications**

The design principles discussed in chapter 1 and woven through this study are adopted to sum up the key findings in this dissertation in the following order: (i) clearly defined and fair membership terms, (ii) proportional equivalence, (iii) autonomous collective-choice arrangements, (iv) minimal recognition of rights to organize, (v) effective monitoring and graduated sanctions, (vi) low-cost, integrative conflict resolution mechanisms, and (vii) nested enterprises.

**Clearly Defined and Fair Membership Terms:** This study finds that the terms of membership in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, as explained in chapter 3, are expressed in their dominant beliefs or perspectives about how they experience themselves and their relationships with others as well as how they conceptualize the universe. As elaborated upon in chapter 3, membership in Ibadan and Abeokuta is open to most individuals on a more equal basis. As a move toward equality of social conditions, the laws guiding the choice of occupation and family and group allegiance were relaxed in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century such that most individuals began to enjoy more freedom than was available in other Yoruba communities. Most participating individuals in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as explained in chapter 5 in this study, also have equal chances to hold land rights. Given their clearly defined and relatively fair membership terms, most individuals in the two communities have consequently been motivated to experience one another as equals and to develop mutual trust as they associate with individuals of their choice. As illustrated in Figure 3.1, membership terms in Ibadan and Abeokuta have created a shared sense of fair distribution of property rights in land and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving. These conditions have served to motivate



most individuals to combine together in pursuing common interests including public peace that has in turn facilitated mutually productive ways of life, as illustrated in Figure 3.1 in chapter 3, and Tables 4.2, and 4.3 in chapter 4 in this study.

Much as membership terms are clearly defined in Ile-Ife, the terms and conditions of membership in Ile-Ife have been based on fundamental inequalities and particularism in the allocation of property rights to land, as explained in chapters 3 and 5. Ife elements are lords who largely determine conditions and terms of membership for most Oyo elements treated as tenants and permanent strangers since the 1830s. Ife elements require Oyo elements to give obedience to the constitutional order of command and control. Oyo elements have however rejected these membership terms as unfair rules for the distribution of property rights in land and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving. Oyo elements instead prefer conditions of equality and fairness as the basis of their membership in Ile-Ife. The failure to seek mutually beneficial ways to achieve more open, fair membership in Ile-Ife for most individuals has consequently lead to exclusionary associational life between Oyo and Ife elements and series of violent conflicts that have prevented Ile-Ife, as shown in Table 4.1 in chapter 4, from having industrial and commercial openness found in both Ibadan and Abeokuta.

The differing institutions from the different beliefs and past experiences in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are supportive of the fact that ultimate authority to make rules generally rests “in the perspectives of living members of the community - their identification, demands, and expectations...” (Brunner 1996:46). In addition, what prevails in Ibadan and Abeokuta closely follow the predictions of studies of governance and property relationships by scholars such as Tocquville (1966), Putnam (1993), V.

Ostrom, Feeny and Picht (1993), Vincent Ostrom (1994), Fukuyama (1995), Colletta and Cullen (2000), Uphoff (2000), Elinor Ostrom and Ahn (2003), Greif and Laitin (2004), Elinor Ostrom (2005).

These scholars argue that when institutional structures yield clearly defined and fair membership terms that give most individuals in a community equal standing in governance and property relationships, they are more likely to have a shared sense of fair distribution of property rights and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving, increasing productive reciprocity, shared sense of belonging together, mutual trust and effective communication supportive of cooperation and mutually beneficial ways of life, as in the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta. However, imposed constitutional terms and conditions of membership under any guise in any given community may not be acceptable to the individuals disadvantaged by the dominant membership rules. As these scholars argue, the disadvantaged are less likely to have a sense of fair distribution of property rights and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving. If the imposed terms and conditions are enforced, as these scholars argue, they may not lead to cooperation between the advantaged and disadvantaged in the provision of public goods such as the public peace, as in the case Oyo and Ife elements in Ile-Ife.

**Proportional Equivalence:** It is found that proportional equivalence characterizes the relationships among most diverse jurisdictions in Ibadan and Abeokuta where most immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, sections and occupational associations, as explained in chapter 4, have mutually recognized autonomy to solve their specific problems. As illustrated in a clustering form in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 in chapter 4, the condition of proportional equivalence has facilitated mutual trust in terms of

intermarriages and more inclusive associational life among diverse Yoruba elements in Ibadan and Abeokuta. The denial of autonomy to Oyo elements and their jurisdictions has prevented most Oyo elements from having mutually recognized autonomy to make rules that match their specific circumstances and needs. This has been at the root of distrust, exclusionary bonds and series of violent conflicts between Oyo and Ife elements since 1849.

This finding suggests that for individuals to trust others and to take ownership of their problems and solutions to the problems, their constitutional arrangements have to enable them to match the boundaries of their institutional arrangements to the boundaries of problems they face at different levels of aggregation. This conforms to an argument by both Oakerson (1999) and Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2005) that proportional equivalence contributes to developing and strengthening mutual trust among most participating individuals and thereby minimizing opportunistic, free-riding and shirking behavior. This is because the affected individuals are more likely to have a shared sense of fair distribution of property rights and jurisdictional authorities in problem-solving, abide by the rules they design, and contribute to solution efforts.

**Autonomous Collective-Choice Arrangements:** This study finds that most local units in both Ibadan and Abeokuta, as explained in chapters 3, 4 and 6, are autonomous, and individuals within the local units conduct their affairs through agreed-upon rules acceptable to most individuals. In Ile-Ife, on the other hand, Oyo elements in particular are required to conduct their affairs by giving obedience to the constitutional order of command and control where Ife elements are lords. The denial of freedom to Oyo elements disables them from having mutually recognized autonomy required to match

rules to local-specific circumstances. This finding closely follows an argument shared by V. Ostrom, Feeny and Picht (1993), Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2005) that individuals are better able to devise fair rules and match them to their local-specific circumstances (**proportional equivalence**) if their constitutional arrangements enable them to participate in making and modifying their own rules.

**Minimal Recognition of Rights:** This study also finds that most individuals and their local units in Ibadan and Abeokuta have mutually recognized and secure rights to organize, make their own rules, and govern themselves. This is not the case in Ile-Ife where most Ife elements do not recognize the rights of Oyo elements to organize autonomous local units, make their own rules, and govern themselves. As Berman (1983), Vincent Ostrom (1987b, 1994) and Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2005) argue, cooperation for common interest is more likely to be achieved when most participating individuals have mutually recognized and secure rights to organize, make their own rules and govern themselves.

**Monitoring and Graduated Sanctions:** Relatively effective and accountable monitoring is found to characterize the small-scale governance units in Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ile-Ife, as explained in chapters 3, 4, 6 and 7. These units include immediate families, compounds, neighborhoods, villages and occupational associations where the affected individuals recognize the authority of their leaders to enforce their shared rules and impose varied sanctions on rule violators based on the seriousness of rule-infractions. In addition, relatively effective monitoring and enforcement have facilitated the productive relationships among most diverse Yoruba elements at higher levels of aggregation in Ibadan and Abeokuta because diverse individuals share common understanding about the

terms and conditions of their membership and recognize the authority of their community leaders to enforce their shared rules.

The situation in Ile-Ife is however different. This study finds that most Oyo elements in Ile-Ife do not accept the fundamental inequalities inherent in the hierarchical constitutional order in Ile-Ife that has treated them as inferior to Ife elements. As a result, Oyo elements have refused to recognize the authority of Ife elements to enforce rules of submission over them. The condition of effective monitoring is thus considered weak in Ile-Ife. This finding is consistent with an argument shared by Vincent Ostrom's (1987b, 1994) and Elinor Ostrom (2005) that mutually productive collective action requires monitors inside and outside governance units to be accountable to their members with sanctions varied with the seriousness and contexts of rule-infractions. The importance of monitoring is that it both facilitates rule-enforcement and gives legitimacy to rules of interdependent relationships when graduated sanctions are applied impartially.

**Integrative Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** Within small-scale governance units in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, this study finds that interests are relatively homogenous and individuals have access to low-cost arenas for conflict resolution. The objective of conflict resolution within the small-scale governance units is the maintenance of the existing friendly relationships. This objective, as explained in chapter 7, mostly characterizes the resolution of conflicts among diverse individuals in Ibadan and Abeokuta, among whom conflicts are resolved to achieve mutually beneficial interdependence. Ile-Ife is, on the other hand, found to be different because the processing of conflicts between Oyo and Ife elements is found to be based on the rule of domination that favors Ife elements and disadvantages Oyo elements, as explained in

chapter 7. The amount of unfairness this has meant to Oyo elements has promoted distrust and exclusionary bonds between Oyo and Ife elements. This finding closely follows the prediction of studies on conflict and conflict resolution by Follett (1940), Coleman (1957), Boulding (1963, 1988), Deutsch (1973), Vincent Ostrom (1994, 1997), and Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2005). These scholars predict that participating individuals are more likely to engage in mutually beneficial interdependent relationships when they have access to low-cost arenas for integrative conflict resolution. This rests on the fact that conflict resolution mechanisms tend to promote mutually productive interdependence, trust and friendly attitudes among individuals if most participating individuals use open discussions/deliberations to resolve their conflicts and simultaneously pursue their self-interests by respecting the interests of other individuals.

**Nested Enterprises:** This study finds that the condition of autonomy most individuals enjoy in Ibadan and Abeokuta to make and enforce rules within their autonomous local units have facilitated the development of living channels of cooperation among their respective diverse individuals and their local units. This has also enabled their rules to be nested in multiple layers, as shown in context charts/Figures 4.5, 4.6, 4.8 and 4.9 in chapter 4. As explained in chapter 6, members of the local units in both Ibadan and Abeokuta combined together in the nineteenth century to protect and defend their respective trade routes and communities. This was due to the freedom that individuals and their local units had to solve their specific problems, which consequently enabled them to anticipate greater entrepreneurial opportunities through cooperation in ensuring the defense and security of their respective communities.

On the other hand, institutional arrangements among Ife elements are found to be nested within the hierarchical order of command and control in Ile-Ife, as illustrated in Figures 4.4 and 4.7 in chapter 4. The institutional arrangements developed by Oyo elements based on principles of equality, as explained in chapter 4, are however not nested within Ife elements' constitutional order of command and control. This study finds that the two institutional structures are not compatible, leading to exclusionary associational life between Oyo and Ife elements. Oyo and Ife elements could not consequently combine together in the nineteenth century to defend Ile-Ife as their joint community. This eventually exposed Ile-Ife to plunders and attacks from neighboring communities during the period.

This finding is closely consistent with an argument shared by Berman (1983), Vincent Ostrom (1994), Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2005) that cooperation in solving larger-scale problems requires membership rules, property rights rules, jurisdictional relationships, conflict resolution mechanisms, monitoring and enforcement rules and other governance activities to be organized and connected constructively with one another in multiple layers of nested enterprises. Constructive nesting occurs where individuals and their local units have at least a minimal right to organize and ground their rules in locally generated knowledge to match the boundaries of problems (McGinnis 1999a). This finding can be applied to understand how institutional change and adaptation can enable members of any given community to combine together to achieve public peace and promote mutually beneficial productive ways of life.

As Table 8.1 also summarizes, this study generally finds that the cause of exclusionary associational life, series of violent conflicts, and lack of commercial and

industrial openness in Ile-Ife is mostly its dominant hierarchical order of command and control that treats most Oyo elements as lesser beings in relation to most Ife elements in membership terms and conflict resolution (Design Principles 1 and 6), and that denies mutually recognized autonomy (Design Principle 3) to most Oyo elements to organize, make and modify their own rules (Design Principle 4) to be enforced by leaders accountable to them (Design Principle 5) based on their shared interests within their local governance units (Design Principle 2).

On the other hand, this study finds that mutually beneficial inclusive associational life, relative public peace, and increasing levels of commercial and industrial openness in Ibadan and Abeokuta are as a result of their respective institutional structures that give most individuals equal standing in conflict resolution and property relationships such that most individuals are not discriminated against by virtue of their family and group backgrounds (Design Principles 1 and 6), and that ensure mutually recognized autonomy (Design Principle 3) for most individuals to organize, make and modify their own rules (Design Principle 4) to be enforced by leaders accountable to them (Design Principle 5) based on their shared interests within their local governance units (Design Principle 2). As explained previously in this study, Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta are found to belong to the same Yoruba ethnic group located in the same ecological zone, equally subject to national political affairs and having faced similar conflicts over the years.

These findings differ from the predictions of the existing literature that argues that all institutional structures among the Yoruba of Nigeria are uniform. If Yoruba institutions are uniform, they must yield similar outcomes. The findings of this study however differ from the outcomes predicted by the conventional wisdom in the existing



literature about the Yoruba. On the other hand, the differing institutional outcomes from the three Yoruba communities are consistent with Vincent Ostrom's (1997) argument that mutually productive ways of life can be precariously at risk when societies are constituted through the principles of command and control rather than through principles of self-responsibility and mutual agreement among colleagues/associates working with one another in self-governing communities of shared relationships. The findings of this study can be used to understand the process of institutional change and adaptation not only among the Yoruba of Nigeria but also in communities outside Yorubaland, such as Nigerian communities in Igboland, Hausaland, Ibaribaland, Edoland, Iroboland, Ijawland, Garaland, Nupeland and other African communities.

**Table 8.1: Summary of Findings - Design Principles and Institutional Performance in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta**

Design Principle/Community	Fair Membership Terms	Proportional Equivalence	Autonomous Collective Choice Arrangements	Minimal Recognized Rights to organize and make rules	Effective Monitoring and Graduated Sanctions	Integrative Conflict Resolution mechanisms	Nested Governance Units	Outcomes
<i>Ile-Ife</i>	No	No	No	No	Weak (Strong Only in Small-Scale Governance Units)	Weak (Strong Only in Small-Scale Governance Units)	No	Exclusionary Associational Life between Oyo and Ife Elements; Series of Violent Conflicts; and Lack Commercial and Industrial Friendliness
<i>Ibadan</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Integrative Associational Life among most individuals; Relative Public Security; and Presence Commercial and

								Industrial Friendliness
<i>Abeokuta</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Integrative Associational Life among most Individuals; Relative Public Security; and Commercial and Industrial Friendliness

Design Principles adapted from Elinor Ostrom's (1990) *Governing the Commons*, and (2005) *Understanding Institutional Diversity*.

#### **8.4. Policy Implications: Lessons for Institutional Adaptation**

Important governing possibilities have been considered in this dissertation. Many of the possibilities are constructive and have to be realized. The destructive ones have to be overcome in order to engage in mutually productive relationships in Yorubaland in particular and Africa in general. Both sets of possibilities raise certain lessons for the development of productive civilizations and institutional adaptation.

One of such lessons has to do with the potentials the family among the Yoruba offers for the development of beneficial civilizations in Africa. Despite the differences in constitutional arrangements in Ile-Ife, Ibadan and Abeokuta, this study finds that that the Yoruba family in each of the three communities has been able to govern itself through common understanding and agreed-upon rules. This suggests that productive civilization among the Yoruba and other African peoples will have its roots in local self-governing units and will continue to face threats from the ills of centralization. Development will then tend to thrive and expand its boundaries in Africa when the lessons learned in local self-governing units are extended to constitute larger communities of shared relationships where most individuals can relate to one another as colleagues.

The danger of over-centralization is however obvious in Ile-Ife where the self-governing lessons learned in local units have not led to the transformation of its constitutional terms and conditions of governance and property relationships. The inability of Ile-Ife's hierarchical order of command and control to stimulate transformation is a critical challenge against the argument that the centralized government is the most important means by which development can be facilitated (Almond and Powell 1966; Huntington 1968). On the other hand, the challenge Abeokuta

and Ibadan pose to this conventional wisdom is more serious given that without a centralized government, Abeokuta and Ibadan have been able to achieve inclusive associational life, non-violent relationships among their respective diverse Yoruba elements, and commercial and industrial openness to attract productive entrepreneurs.

This evidence challenges us to rethink the exaltation of the nation-state as the most important tool for development in Africa; the role it has played to bring catastrophic disasters to most parts of Africa (Sawyer 1992; Wunsch and Olowu 1995; Ayo 2002; Olowu and Wunsch 2004). The nation-state is not the only obstacle to development in Africa. As has been indicated above, some institutions based on people's experiences and beliefs in Africa are destructive because they have not allowed individuals to realize their potentials. Such institutions, including the hierarchical order of command and control in Ile-Ife, need to give way to constitutional circumstances where contestations can be productively cashed in on to civilize human relationships as individuals engage in processes of competitions, cooperation, conflicts and conflict resolution as equal associates. With the teaching and practice of love of equality, ethnicity or tribalism in African can also become mutually beneficial tools in constituting communities of shared understanding that can benefit from careful borrowings from outside and that enable Africans to take ownership of their problems and solutions to the problems.

Further, outbreaks of violent conflicts in Africa are a reflection of institutional failure but compounded by ethnic/tribal diversity. Ile-Ife is a good example that has experienced series of violence since 1849 between its two diverse groups of Yoruba: Oyo and Ife elements. As this study finds, Ibadan and Abeokuta are also made of diverse groups of Yoruba. The equivalent group of Oyo elements in Ile-Ife, for example, is the

Owu group in Abeokuta. While members of the Owu group in Abeokuta are not Egba people, the three groups of Egba (Egba Alake, Egba Oke-Ona and Egba Gbagura along with descendants of freed slaves) relate to members of the Owu group as equals and do not interfere in the internal affairs of the Owu group. Ibadan itself is made up different groups of individuals such as Ife, Oyo, Egba and Ijebu elements as well as descendants of freed slaves. Yet these diverse groups of individuals cooperate as equal associates to support the provision of peace and security as a shared concern that has affected the relations of production and access to means of production for most individuals in Ibadan. Thus, explanations of violent conflicts based on ethnic or tribal profiling/discrimination are less persuasive.

Regarding property right institutions, the exaltation of a particular type of rights as the only best way to achieve productive entrepreneurship can be misleading. As explained in the case of Ibadan and Abeokuta in chapter 5, both private and common property institutions have long co-existed to facilitate mutually productive ways of life. This suggests that reforms of property rights will be more properly undertaken when attention is given to how a constitutional order can enhance the self-governing and self-organizing capabilities of participating individuals as they work out solutions to the problems of their daily existence within the opportunities and constraints created by their physical environments.

The existence of different jurisdictions for the tasks of internal and external security in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the nineteenth century also 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 units, such as compounds, neighborhoods and sections, based on their specific needs as explained in chapter 6. 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 as neighborhoods, villages, and cities. To match problems and solution efforts within these smaller units, policing is more likely to be undertaken if 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. There is no questioning the fact that further research is needed on this issue.

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 such as state and local governments.

There are certain threats to address not only among the Yoruba but also in the whole of Africa if productive civilizations are to evolve. To begin with, the exaltation of

the Obaship (kinship) institution<sup>100</sup> as the single headship institution in Ibadan and Abeokuta as well as other parts of Nigeria, first by the colonial officials before 1960 and later by both military and civilian governments in Nigeria from 1960 when Nigeria gained independence from Britain, is a misleading acknowledgement that domination is the best way to achieve order. Many *Obas*, *Obis* and *Emirs* (kings) who have served as single heads of their communities throughout Nigeria have collaborated with officials of the Nigerian state to impose terror and deprivation on ordinary individuals and to loot the national treasures through controversial gifts/allowances, state-sponsored overseas trips, and inflated, poorly implemented, or unimplemented contracts for which they are usually fully paid upfront. The glorification of the single headship institution is not only a major threat to the self-governing potentials of the Yoruba people but also capable of imposing reigns of deception, terror and fear where ordinary individuals can best operate as timid beings devoid of freedom to innovatively express their talents.

In many neighborhoods in Ibadan, landlords have been accused of using their neighborhood development associations to charge outrageous house rents and thereby harass their tenants. Unlike Abeokuta, membership in such neighborhood development associations in Ibadan is open largely to landlords. The situation has incapacitated the affected neighborhoods from nurturing and fostering the necessary cooperation between landlords and their tenants for the development of their neighborhoods (Albert, *et.al* 1995, 15). For mutually productive ways of life to be achieved, the affected neighborhood development associations in Ibadan need to be more open by allowing most residents

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<sup>100</sup> The effort is yet to succeed in Ibadan and Abeokuta as strong resistance has been mounted to reject the single headship institution in both communities as alien to their local traditions based on principles of equality.



(landlords and tenants alike) equal participation in much the same way as has been done in Abeokuta.

It will be grossly unproductive to compel neighborhood development associations in Abeokuta to assume the same structure as the Ogun State government is trying to impose on them to reflect its (the state government's) subservience to the national government in Nigeria. Members of the neighborhood development associations have enough potential as problem-solvers to be the best judges of the composition, functions and structures of their associations. The situation in Ile-Ife requires a fundamental overhauling to allow individuals to relate to one another as colleague in solving their specific and general problems.

### **8.5 Future Research Agenda**

The process of institutional change and adaptation is a work in progress. This study has attempted to understand this process by focusing on three Yoruba communities and by bringing out lessons for institutional change and adaptation among the Yoruba and other African peoples. There are other concerns this study has raised for future research. The concerns resolve around the following questions: How can local units in Yorubaland and other Nigerian communities be recognized as the building blocks of durable democracy? How can the local units be allowed to evolve larger jurisdictions to solve common problems until a new Nigeria society evolves from the productive "chaotic webs" these units stand to represent? What is the nature of school curriculums among the Yoruba? How can the beneficial values inherent in foreign and Yoruba languages be blended in efforts to develop productive civilization among the Yoruba? How are Yoruba

villages governed? What implications does proximity to Lagos, a major Yoruba coastal commercial center, have for economic development in Yoruba communities farther away from Lagos? How do traditional credit institutions, such as *esusu*, affect productive entrepreneurship among the Yoruba?

There has been growing misleading scholarship about local governance units and federalism in Africa. Experts in “the national constitution” in Nigeria, for example, have not helped matters as their emphasis is on the uniform system of local governance within a “three-tier federal system”. They usually compound issues whenever they call for the creation of more local government units while the state and/or national governments are urged to transfer power to the local government units (Nwabueze 1983; Oyovbaire 1985; Adejumobi 1995).

What these scholars have been oblivious of is the possibility that the power-giver can still take back its power and thereby render the local government units as mere helpless administrative appendages. This is because the composition, structure and functions of local government units are affected by the political beliefs of those who have authority and responsibility for determining the main features of local government system (Alex Gboyega 1987:1). The political beliefs of such individuals in Nigeria revolve around despotic tendencies involving centralization, concentration and personalization of power<sup>101</sup>. Many officials of the local government units have also imbibed these tendencies in their interactions with ordinary individuals to whom they are

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<sup>101</sup> Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the current Vice President of Nigeria, made this remark on August 25, 2005 at a two-day National Conference on “Election 2007: Protecting the Peoples’ Mandate” where he observed, “Nigeria has experienced decades of military and authoritarian rule which has left deep imprints in our political culture. Consequently, our political elite have become used to centralization, concentration and personalization of political power – the central defining elements of modern despotism” <http://naijanet.com/news/source/2005/aug/26/1000.html>: visited on August 26, 2005.

unaccountable. In addition, officials of local, state and national governments have converted these levels of government as means of giving vent to their anger and settle scores against their perceived enemies (Olowu 1996, 1997; Mukoro 2000; Olowu and Wunsch 2004).

Also, many studies on the local government system in Nigeria have been undertaken without clarifying what principles should guide reforms. At best, the studies have only supported local government as a matter of the state governments and called for more local governments units using over “80,000 local governments units in the United States” to justify their claims. The evaded question revolves around how the American local government units were created and how the operation of the American local units has affected the evolution of democracy in America. These issues have not received much attention in scholarship on local government in Nigeria.

Democracy in America evolved from local institutions. Individual families first solved their problems and later combined together to form the township government to handle problems they shared together. As individual townships functioned, it became clear that neighboring townships shared certain problems in common for which counties were later established. State governments came later to address problems shared by the counties within the jurisdiction of each state government. The creation of the union or the national government found expression in the search for a limited jurisdiction that can handle the problems those individuals and their jurisdictions in the United States share together. On the whole, the evolutionary pattern of ownership of various problem-solving jurisdictions flows from below much like the European institutional revolution that

occurred through the self-organizing and self-governing potentials of individuals in free European cities (Tocqueville 1966, Berman 1983).

In Nigeria, the national government, rather than the people, created and own local and state governments over which its officials use fiscal and despotic tools to dominate against ordinary individuals. The whole country is ruled by one constitution designed by national political elites despite the fact that each state government in United States has its own independent constitution, with local governance units governed by their independent charters that also pass for constitutions. While the boundaries of lower-level governmental units in Nigeria are too big, they have been unable to interact with the national governments through mutually productive and healthy processes of competition, cooperation, conflict and conflict resolution<sup>102</sup>.

As a result, Nigeria has a centralized local government system that does not reflect local diversity and local inputs characterizing the creation and operation of local governments elsewhere. In the United States for example, local government units are “organized in more than 50 different ways because the laws providing for their establishment and general control derive primarily from the 50 state constitutions and from legislation enacted by each of the states” (V. Ostrom, Bish and E. Ostrom 1988:1). Virtually all the 50 states and diverse local government units are autonomous and independent in determining how to solve their specific problems. Also, many states have “home rule” that allow local residents to design charters (constitutions) for their local governance units.

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<sup>102</sup> Some information about superior-subordinate relationships between national and lower-level governments in Nigeria is available on <http://www.socialistnigeria.org/NCP/2005/260805.html>. Visited on September 8, 2005.

Home rule has greatly increased the diverse forms of local governance units within many of the states in the United States, which include counties, townships, municipalities, school districts and other special districts rather than a uniform system throughout the United States. Services they provide involve police, fire protection; education; public transit, streets and highways, airports and seaports; sewage and solid waste collection and disposal; public health and hospitals; public welfare; parks and recreation; housing, urban renewal, and land use-control; public records and courts; water supplies; and many different public utilities (V. Ostrom, Bish and E. Ostrom 1988:1-2). Where people/problem dwellers have formed their own units of government the way they deem fit, boundaries of such jurisdictions have matched the scales of effects of the problems the problem-dwellers face (Oakerson 1999; McGinnis 1999b). This shows that individuals are the best judges of their own affairs rather than officials who operate from the headquarters of big jurisdictions<sup>103</sup>.

Much as it is wrong to continue with the despotic features of the local government system in Nigeria, it will amount to a monumental crisis to imitate a foreign model. Rather, there is a need to carefully look inward and draw upon evolving productive patterns of problem-solving jurisdictions including neighborhood development associations, youth development associations, villages; local religious congregations; market associations; campuses of polytechnics, colleges of education and universities; guild and professional associations and so on. This is consistent with a Yoruba saying, *Ile ni a n wo ki a to so omo l'oruko* (we should look before we give a name to a child or do

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<sup>103</sup> Due to poor understanding of how multitudes of diverse local governance units operate in the United States, some scholars have called for a centralized local government system throughout the United States. Prominent among who is H.P. Friesema. 1966. "The Metropolis and the Maze of Local Government." *Urban Affairs Quarterly* Vol. II, No. 2, (December). pp: 68-90.

anything). Since self-governing potentials are inherent in human society, these diverse forms of local governance units will serve as building blocks for evolving constructive order in Nigeria. Individuals within these units should then be allowed to determine the composition, functions and structures of their problem-solving units, and create more units where necessary.

As a follow-up to the findings of this study, I plan to conduct future research about how these local units can be recognized as the building blocks of durable democracy among the Yoruba and other Nigeria peoples and how they can be allowed to evolve larger jurisdictions to solve common problems until a new Nigeria society evolves from the productive "chaotic webs" these units stand to represent. Herein lies bright grounds for hope for the possibility to subject individuals and their leaders to effective limits within increasing multitudes of autonomous decision-making arenas without reference to a single head or a body of individuals as superiors.

Further, the contents of teaching in arts and sciences in most schools in Yoruba have greatly served to disconnect most Yoruba students from the positive values and potentials in their cultures. The teaching of the Yoruba language has been worse hit despite the fact that every language is in itself a bundle of arts and sciences, containing ideas for taking advantage of local medical, technological and normative ingredients. While intelligence may not be measured by the ability to speak and write flawlessly in a local language and/or foreign languages, the productive use we make of a local language in a beneficial blend with foreign languages matters a lot in developing constructive civilizations and increasing greater entrepreneurial opportunities.

The importance of learning one or more foreign languages for constructive borrowings from outside cannot be overemphasized. It is however erroneous and egregious to think that the development of school curriculums to facilitate proficiency in people's local languages is tantamount to inferiority/backwardness and lack of self-governing capabilities/democratic values. The basic fact is that self-governing potentials are inherent in human society. The potentials form the building blocks for durable democratic values and institutions, and are sustained by the productive ingredients inherent in people's values, languages, traditions, mores, adaptive capabilities, physical environments (Tocqueville 1966; Gellar 2005) and careful borrowings from outside. Losing a local language or failing to benefit from a language will amount to blocking countless generations of human beings from taking advantage of the ingredients inherent in the language. The danger is that if people succeed in transplanting values from outside, they may not succeed in transplanting the spirit that gave those institutions life. According to a Yoruba saying, *ile lati ko eso rode*: charity begins at home rather than from outside. This saying also means that mutually beneficial development is first grounded in constructive local values and ingredients before borrowing from outside.

The language problem has been more critical in post-secondary schools including polytechnics, colleges of education and universities in Yorubaland where undergraduate and graduate students, who are Yoruba but not in the Yoruba department, face curriculums that offer them little or no motivation to acquire proficiency in speaking, reading and writing in the Yoruba language. In the process, most of them have abandoned the Yoruba language for foreign languages which have strategically dislinked them from the positive local potentials in the Yoruba language. In an attempt to understand the

development of productive civilizations among the Yoruba, I plan to undertake future research about how the values inherent in foreign languages can be productively combined with the beneficial values in the Yoruba language.

Also, of important consideration for future research are questions of village governance among the Yoruba, the implications proximity to Lagos, a major Yoruba coastal commercial center, has for economic development in the Yoruba communities farther away from Lagos, the relationship between traditional credit institutions (such as *esusu*) and productive entrepreneurship among the Yoruba, and the link between political and policy development and the Christian faith.



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## APPENDIX I

### LIST OF INTERVIEWEES FOR IN-DEPTH, UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

**This list corresponds to the respondents cited in this study**

#### **Abeokuta: Position of Interviewee and Interview Date**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Interview Date</b>	<b>Position</b>
A1	May 15, 2004	Ogboni Chief from Ijeun, Abeokuta
A2	May 15, 2004	Ogboni Chief from Itori-Oke, Abeokuta
A3	May 16, 2004	Palace Officer, Abeokuta
A4	May 15, 2004	Palace Officer, Gbagura, Abeokuta
A5	May 19, 2004	Senior Chief of the Federated Egba Ogboni in Abeokuta
A6	May 17, 2004	Secretary of an Egba Section's Council of Chiefs
A7	May 18, 2004	President of a Market Association in Abeokuta
A8	May 17, 2004	Principal Head, Community Development Department, Abeokuta
A9	May 20, May 2004	Oloroogun Chief; Chairman of an Area Community Development Committee, Abeokuta
A10	May 21, 2004	Owu Prince, Abeokuta
A11	May 26, 2004	Executive Officer of the Ogun State Community Development Council
A12	May 18, 2004	President of a Provision Sellers' Association, Abeokuta
A13	May 20, 2004	Member of the Task-Force Committee of a Community Development Association in Abeokuta
A14	May 27, 2004	Member of the Task-Force Committee of a Community Development Association in Abeokuta
A15	May 25, 2004	Zonal Executive Chairman of a Community Development Association in Abeokuta
A16	May 29, 2004	Oloroogun Chief and Secretary of a Community Development Association, Abeokuta
A17	1995 Research Note	Ibara Chief, Abeokuta
A18	1995 Research Note	Public Relation Officer, Oke-Ona, Abeokuta
A19	1995 Research Note	Ogboni Chief from Owu
A20	June 1, 2004	Public Relations Officer of a Youth Development Association, Abeokuta
A21	June 1, 2004	Financial Secretary of a Youth Development Association
A22	May 26, 2004	Oloroogun Chief from Gbagura, Abeokuta
A23	June 1, 2004	An Officer of the Community Development Department, Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Welfare and Community Development, Abeokuta, Ogun State
A24	May 26, 2004	Principal Head, Community Development Division, Abeokuta



**Ibadan: Position of Interviewee and Interview Date**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Interview Date</b>	<b>Position</b>
I1	March 6, 2004	Member of a Compound in Oja Oba, Ibadan
I2	March 6, 2004	Palace Officer
I3	March 22, 2004	Retired Professor of African Languages, Consultant, and Member of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I4	March 13 & 30, 2004	District Leader in Ibadan
I5	April 2, 2004	Research Associate, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ojoo, Ibadan
I6	March 6, April 8, 2004	Public Relations Officer of a Compound in Oja Oba, Ibadan
I7	March 13, 2004	Secretary of a Landlords' Association in Agbowo, Ibadan
I8	March 24, 2004	Member of a Landlords' Association in Oke-Alaro, Ibadan
I9	March 24, 2004	Chairman of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I10	March 4-6, 2004	Secondary (High) School Principal; Adviser and Elderly Member of Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I11	March 6, 2004	Member of a Compound in Oja Oba, Ibadan
I12	March 15, 2004	Treasurer of a Market Association in Ibadan
I13	March 29, 2004	Mogaji (Compound Head), Ibadan
I14	April 5, 2004	Customary Court Officer, Ibadan
I16	March 6, 2004	Mogaji (Compound Head), Ibadan
I17	March 29, 2004	Secretary of a Market Association
I19	April 8, 2004	Treasurer of an Ibadan Federated Association
I20	March 25, 2004	Mogaji (Compound Head), Architect in Ibadan
I21	March 26, 2004	Vice-President of a Market Association
I22	March 25, 2004	Vice-President of a Market Association; Female Leader of a Compound in Ibadan
I23	April 5, 2004 May 8, 2004	President of an Ibadan Federated Association
I24	March 26, 2004	Member of an Ibadan Federated Association
I25	March 29, 2004	Treasurer of a Youth Development Association in Ibadan
I26	March 9, 2004	Elderly Neighborhood Adviser in Ibadan
I27	March 3, 2004	District Head in Ibadan
I28	March 22, 2004	Member of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I29	March 17, 2004	Village Head in Ibadan and Holder of a PhD Degree
I30	March 21, 2004	Member of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I31	April 8, 2004	University Professor and Head of Department of History
I32	March 25, 2004	Treasurer of an Ibadan Federated Association

I33	June 16, 2004	Chairman of a Community Development Council
I34	March 3 & 16, 2004	Retired Auditor of the Oyo State Government
I35	March 31, 2004	Accountant
I37	March 13, 2004	Female leader of a Compound in Ibadan

**Ile-Ife: Position of Interviewee and Interview Date**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Position</b>
F1	April 17, 2004	Senior Staff at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, and Member of a Landlords' Association in Ile-Ife
F2	April 28, 2004	Professor of African Languages
F3	April 22, 2004	Market Women's Leader in Ile-Ife
F4	April 23, 2004	Village leader in Modakeke-Ife
F6	April 20, 2004	Leader of a Youth Association in Ile-Ife
F7	April 21, 2004	Secretary of a Landlords' Association in Modakeke-Ife
F8	April 22, 2004	Officer of the Modakeke Progressive Union, Modakeke-Ife
F9	April 17, 2004	Senior Female Chief in Ile Ife
F10	April 25, 2004	Senior Ife Chief
F11	April 17, 2004	Archeologist
F12	March 8, 2004	Compound leader in Ile-Ife
F14	December 6, 2004	Lecturer, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
F15	April 16, 2004	Compound leader in Modakeke-Ife
F16	April 23, 2004	Neighborhood Leader in Ile-Ife
F18	April 21, 2004	Senior Staff at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
F20	December 8, 2004	Lecturer, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
F21	April 24, 2004	Modakeke Leader in Modakeke-Ife
F22	April 15, 2004	Officer of the Modakeke Progressive Union, Modakeke-Ife
F23	April 26, 2004	Modakeke leader in Modakeke-Ife
F24	April 16, 2004	Member of a Landlords' Association in Ile-Ife
F25	April 23, 2004	Modakeke Leader in Modakeke-Ife
F28	April 15, 2004	Officer of the Modakeke Youth Association, Modakeke-Ife

## APPENDIX II

### QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Every individual has equal chance to do what (s)he desires without harming other individuals in your community.  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
2. All families, compounds, neighborhoods, wards, quarters, sections, villages and associations conduct their activities without fear of interference from an Oba or those who claim to be founders of your community.  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
3. Every individual (either stranger or initial settler) is recognized to have the freedom to buy, sell, own and control agricultural and housing land.  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
4. That every individual has equal chance to do what (s)he desires without harming other individuals has promoted mutual trust among members of different Yoruba groups in your community  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
5. Every individual in your community see himself/herself more as a member of the community than his/her Yoruba group.  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
6. All individuals can share associations with individuals that do not belong to their Yoruba groups  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed
7. Peaceful resolution of conflicts has facilitated public peace to promote increasing access to economic opportunities in your community.  
(a) Most Agreed, (b) More Agreed, (c) Agreed, (d) Disagreed, (e) More Disagreed, (f) Most Disagreed

### APPENDIX III

#### LIST OF INTERVIEWEES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This list corresponds to the respondents cited in this study

##### **Abeokuta: Assigned Number and Position of Interviewee**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Position</b>
A1	Principal Head, Community Development Department, Abeokuta
A2	Senior Chief of the Federated Egba Ogboni in Abeokuta
A3	Palace Staff
A4	Owu Prince, Abeokuta
A5	Member of the Task-Force Committee of a Community Development Association in Abeokuta
A6	Oloroogun Chief; Chairman of an Area Community Development Committee, Abeokuta
A7	Oloroogun Chief and Secretary of a Community Development Association, Abeokuta
A8	Executive Officer of the Ogun State Community Development Council
A9	Engineer; Oloroogun Chief from Gbagura
A10	President of a Provision Sellers' Association, Abeokuta

##### **Ile-Ife: Assigned Number and Position of Interviewee**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Position</b>
F1	Officer of a Landlords' Association in Ile-Ife
F2	Member of a Landlords' Association in Ile-Ife
F3	Modakeke Leader in Modakeke-Ife
F4	Archeologist
F5	Leader of a Youth Association in Ile-Ife
F6	Officer of the Modakeke Progressive Union, Modakeke-Ife
F7	Market Women's Leader in Ile-Ife
F8	Officer of the Modakeke Progressive Union, Modakeke-Ife
F9	Village leader in Modakeke-Ife
F10	Compound leader in Modakeke-Ife

**Ibadan: Assigned Number and Position of Interviewee**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Position</b>
I1	Treasurer of an Ibadan Federated Association
I2	Secretary of a Landlords' Association in Agbowo, Ibadan
I3	Retired Professor of African Languages, Consultant, and Member of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I4	Elderly Neighborhood Adviser in Ibadan
I5	Female leader of a Compound in Ibadan
I6	Member of a Landlords' Association in Oke-Alaro, Ibadan
I7	Female Elder of a Compound in Ibadan
I8	Female Elder of a Compound in Ibadan
I9	Compound Head's Senior Wife in Ibadan
I10	Mogaji (Compound Head) in Ibadan
I11	Research Associate, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ojoo, Ibadan
I12	Chairman of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I13	Vice-President of a Market Association in Ibadan
I14	Member of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I15	Member of a Compound in Oja Oba, Ibadan
I16	Public Relations Officer of a Compound in Oja Oba, Ibadan
I17	Palace Officer
I18	District Head in Ibadan
I19	Compound Head in Ibadan
I20	Accountant in Ibadan
I21	Architect and Compound Head in Ibadan
I22	Retired Auditor of the Oyo State Government
I23	Female Elder of a Compound in Ibadan
I24	Officer of a Landlords' Association in Ibadan
I25	Village Head and Holder of PhD Degree

**APPENDIX IV**

**RATINGS OF YORUBA INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES**

**ILE-IFE**

Ordinal Variable/ Respondent (1)	Equality in Participation by all Yoruba Elements in the Community (2)	Recognized Autonomy for all Diverse Yoruba Elements' local units (3)	Fair Distribution of Land Rights among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the Community (4)	Inter-Group Trust (5)	Inter-Group Cooperation (6)	Loyalty to the Community over loyalty to groups in the community (7)	Security of Life and Property in Relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the community (8)	Average of Columns 2 to 8 (9)
F1	1	6	3	3	3	3	3	3.142857
F2	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	1.714286
F3	2	3	3	3	1	3	1	2.285714
F4	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	1.857143
F5	3	1	1	3	2	3	..	2.166667
F6	1	1	1	1	3	..	1	1.333333
F7	2	2	3	..	2	1	2	2
F8	1	1	1	1	..	..	3	1.4
F9	1	1	1	3	1	1	..	1.333333
F10	2	3	2	3	1	1	3	2.142857
Average Rating of Individual Variable	1.5	2.2	1.8	2.33333	1.7778	2.125	2.125	

**ABEOKUTA**

Ordinal Variable/ Respondent (1)	Equality in Participatio n by all Yoruba Elements in the Community (2)	Recognize d Autonomy for all Diverse Yoruba Elements' local units (3)	Fair Distribution of Land Rights among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the Community (4)	Inter-Group Trust (5)	Inter-Group Cooperation (6)	Loyalty to the Community over loyalty to groups in the community (7)	Security of Life and Property in Relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the community (8)	Average of Columns 2 to 8
A1	4	4	4	5	6	3	4	4.285714
A2	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
A3	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	5.428571
A4	4	6	4	4	6	5	4	4.714286
A5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	5.857143
A6	5	4	4	5	5	4	6	4.714286
A7	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4.571429
A8	6	6	4	4	6	4	6	5.142857
A9	4	4	6	6	4	6	4	4.857143
A10	5	6	6	6	4	6	5	5.428571
Average Rating of Individual Variable	4.9	5.3	5	5.3	5.2	5	5	

**IBADAN**

Ordinal Variable/ Respondent (1)	Equality in Participatio n by all Yoruba Elements in the Community (2)	Recognize d Autonomy for all Diverse Yoruba Elements' local units (3)	Fair Distribution of Land Rights among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the Community (4)	Inter-Group Trust (5)	Inter-Group Cooperation (6)	Loyalty to the Community over loyalty to groups in the community (7)	Security of Life and Property in Relations among Diverse Yoruba Elements in the community (8)	Average of Columns 2 to 8
I1	6	4	6	6	6	4	6	5.428571
I2	4	6	4	4	4	4	4	4.285714
I3	4	6	4	4	4	4	4	4.285714
I4	6	6	5	6	6	5	6	5.714286
I5	6	4	5	6	6	3	6	5.142857
I6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
I7	4	5	6	4	4	4	4	4.428571
I8	6	5	6	6	6	4	6	5.571429
I9	6	4	5	6	6	5	5	5.285714
I10	6	5	5	6	6	5	6	5.571429
I11	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4.857143
I12	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	5.142857
I13	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4.142857
I14	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4.142857
I15	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.857143
I16	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4.714286
I17	4	6	6	4	4	6	4	4.857143
I18	6	5	4	6	6	6	5	5.428571
I19	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4.714286
I20	5	6	6	5	5	6	6	5.571429
I21	4	6	4	4	4	4	5	4.428571
I22	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4.285714
I23	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	5.857143
I24	5	5	4	5	5	6	6	5.142857
I25	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5



Average Rating of Individual Variable	5.04	5.08	4.92	5.04	5.04	4.84	5
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**APPENDIX V**

**COMPANIES IN YORUBA COMMUNITIES WITH PAID-UP SHARE  
CAPITAL OF AT LEAST ONE MILLION NIGERIA'S NAIRA  
(ABOUT \$11,254.9 AT THE JANUARY 1999 RATE  
OF \$1 TO 88.9 NAIRA)**

S/N	Business Name	Business Type	Address
<b>ILE-IFE, OSUN STATE (171.35 kilometers from Lagos)</b>			
	NONE	NONE	NONE
<b>Major Manufacturing Firms in Cities around Ile-Ife in Osun State or further away from Lagos than Ile-Ife is from Lagos</b>			
1	Adediran Steel and Wire Industries Limited	Manufacture of Steel Products	Ilesa, Osun State <b>(196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
2	Lawrence Omole and Sons Limited	Grain Processing (Malting)	B. 218, Okesa-Benin Road, P.O. Box 75, <b>Ilesa, Osun State</b> , Tel: 036-460237 <b>(196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
3	Abiobe Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Plastic Containers	Opposite Osun State College of Education, Ife Road, P.O. Box 1065, <b>Ilesa, Osun State</b> , Tel: 036- 461740 <b>(196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
4	International Breweries Limited, Ilesha	Brewing alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks	Omi Asore, PO Box 104 <b>Ilesa, Osun State</b> , Telephone: 36 461500 <b>(196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
5	Madesco Nigeria Limited	Agricultural consultancy services. Export Agro Allied products such as Cassava chips, Maize, Dry Cassava and other farm products. Supply raw materials for manufacturing Companies. Construct Farm Processing Machines for companies	No1 Fagbola Junction, Isokun ,P.O.Box 1334, <b>Ilesa, Osun State (196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>

6	Flexible Packaging Plc	Manufacture of Paper Packaging materials	Kayanfada Estate, Oromu Layout, P.O. Box 805, <b>Ilesa, Osun State</b> . Tel: 036-461509, <b>(196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
7	Ori-Ire Weaving Industry Nigeria Limited	Design and Weaving of cloths. Manufacture of shoes.	SW8/1376, Olawale Street, Anfani Layout, Ibadan. Tel: 02-313098. Subsidiary: Ire-Ayo Weaving Center, <b>Ilesa, Osun State (196.14 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
8	Emidson Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Steel Products	Osogbo, Osun State <b>(194.86 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
9	Osogbo Steel Rolling Mills	Manufacture of Steel Products	Osogbo, Osun State <b>(194.86 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
10	Nigerian Machine Tools Limited	Manufacture of a variety of machine tools	Osogbo, Osun State <b>(194.86 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
11	Cocoa Products Industries	Processing of Cocoa Beans	Ede, Osun State <b>(182.55 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
12	Petadel and Company Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Soap. Fabrication of Agriculture Machinery	River Owuruwuru Industrial Estate, P.O. 76, <b>Igbara-Odo, Ekiti State</b> . Tel: 034-232088 <b>(217.92 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
13	AFROW-MUSCO Pharmaceutical Company Limited	Marketing of Pharmaceutical Products	Hospital Road, P.O. 383, <b>Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State</b> . Tel: 050-67077 <b>(285.27 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
14	AEI Foods Industry Limited	Manufacture of Tomato Paste	2, Oke-Adura Street, Arigidi-Akoko, P.O. Box 33, <b>Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State</b> . Tel: 050-670090 <b>(285.27 kilometers from Lagos)</b>
<b>IBADAN, OYO STATE (117.62 kilometers from Lagos)</b>			
1	Abdulai and Awolowo Construction Company Limited	Building Construction	Providence Court, Ajibade Bus-Stop, Mokola, P.O. Box 671, Ibadan. Tel: 02-8101356
2	Ablafot Med-Equip Limited	Manufacture of Medical Furniture. Importation, Sales and Service of Medical Electronics	SW9/678B, Tomori Avenue, Off Ring Road, G.O.P, Box 12484, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2312461
3	Adecentro Nigeria Limited	Construction and Civil Engineering	Idiroko Challenge, P.M.B. 5201, Ibadan: Tel: 02-

			2313561
4	Adegoke Motors Limited	Manufacture and Sales of Steel Products	Lagos Expressway Roundabout, Challenge, P.M.B. 5201, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2315614
5	Aitak Industries Limited	Manufacture of Plastic Furniture and Household Wares	Km 8, Old Lagos Road, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2311938
6	Aoraic Batteries Limited	Production of Automotive Batteries	Opposite Sanyo Factory, Ibadan/Lagos Expressway, P.O. Box 4739, Ibadan. Tel: 02-713711
7	Ashod limited	Manufacturing of Soap	6, Ososami Road, Oke-Ado, GPO. Box 1556, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2316327
8	Ashmina Limited	Manufacturing and Marketing of Pharmaceuticals	Head Office: Lagos Main Factory Site: Dana House, 8A, Olubadan Industrial Estate, Off New Ife Road, Ibadan. Tel: 02-716556
9	Askar Paints (Nigeria) Limited	Manufacturing, Marketing and Distribution of Decorative Paints, Industrial Paints and Chemical Products. Contact Painting	Head Office and Main factory Site: Askar Paints Road, Eleyele Bus-Stop, P.M.B. 5616, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2410933
10	Assiaplast Limited	Manufacturer of Footwears	Head Office: Lagos Main Factory Site: Km 12, Old Lagos Road Ayetoro Village, P.O. Box 18, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2314526-7
11	Atlantic Carpets (Nigeria) Limited	Manufacturing of Carpets, Rugs and Velvet Upholstery	Head Office and Main Factory Site: Km 8, Olodo New Iwo Road, P.M.B. 005, Agodi Ibadan: Tel: 02-711582-3
12	Bolaji Metal Engineering Company Limited	Manufacturing of Chrome-Plated Furniture, Zinc-Plated Bucket handles and Household Plasticwares	Head office and Main Factory Site: Old Lagos Road, Podo, P.O. Box 12681, Ibadan: Tel: 02-2312748
13	Black Horse Plastic Industries Limited	Manufacturing of Plastic products	Km 12, Old Lagos Road, P.O. Box 18, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2310302

14	Bolyn Construction Company Limited	Manufacturing of Machines for Moulding of Blocks, Concrete Roof-Tiles and Bricks	Lagos
15	CAPS Feed Limited	Production of Poultry Feed. Marketing of Poultry feed Ingredients. Consulting Services	Ola-Ogun Bus Stop, Old Ife Road, GPO Box 2721, Ibadan. Tel: 02-8100993
16	CITECO Technical Company Limited	Manufacturing of Synthetic Rubber Products an Conveyor Belts. Sales, Installation and Maintenance of Industrial Machinery	Abeokuta Road, Citeco Bus-Stop, Apata-Gangan, Ibadan: Tel: 02-2316175
17	Conpole Energy Nigeria Limited	Manufacturing of Pre-Stressed Electric Poles (H Type), Culverts and Beams, Fence Posts, Concrete Rings and Road Kerbs	Otun Agbaakin Village, Moniya, P.O. Box 19773, Ibadan
18	Crown Trust Limited	Civil Irrigation Engineering, Manufacturing of Tarpaulin, Carpets and Leather Products. Production of Palm Oil	Crown Trust Building, GPO Box 12623, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2413685
19	Diamond Foods Limited	Production of Various Brands of Biscuits	15 Creek Road, Apapa, Lagos.  Main Factory site: Km 17, Old-Lagos Road, Alomaja village, Ibadan
20	Energy Foods Company Limited	Manufacture of Biscuits and Confectioneries	9, Obafemi Awolowo Road, P.O Box 516, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2412120
21	FAAGOL Instruments Limited	Manufacture of scientific instruments, Agro-Allied Machines and Industrial Plants. Metal Fabrication	Faagol Complex, Ibi-Ose, After IITA, Ibadan-Oyo Road, U.I.P.O. Box 9390, Ibadan. Tel:P 02-8103115
22	Ferodo Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Motor Brake Linings, Disc Brake Pad and Automotive Gaskets	Head office and Main Factory Site: Oluyole Industrial Estate, Scheme 2, Off Lagos-Ibadan Epressway, Behind Methodist High school, P.O. Box 5722, Ibadan. Tel: 02-

			317217
23	Fix well Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Automotive Rubber Parts, Glass Packing Fingers and Industrial Machinery Rubber Parts. Production of Industrial Machinery Spares	Head Office/Main Factory Site: 2, Ashanike Layout, Beside Yanathy Flour Mills, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, P.O. Box 12633, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2311178
24	Lonpey Ventures Limited	Manufacture of furniture	59, Oyo Road, Coca-Cola Area, P.O. Box 1862, Ibadan. Main Factory Site: 3, Bola Adeniji Street, Kongi Extension, New Bodija, Ibadan. Tel: 02-8100695
25	Moju Industries Limited	Processing of Agricultural Products	6, Ganiyu Bello Street (Behind Dutum Station), Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Felele, P.O. Box 23663, Mapo Ibadan. Tel: 02-2311629
26	NIPOL Limited	Manufacturer of Plastic Products	Moor Plantation, P.M.B. 5445, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2312949
27	Nuyi Knitting Industries Limited	Manufacture of knitted Wears, Knitted Accessories and Specialized Fabrics. Tailoring Services	Sw9/832, Dogo Road, Apata-Gangan. G.P.O. Box 1844, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2323694
28	Harvard Foods Limited	Manufacturer of Sweets and Confectionery	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Oluyole Industrial Estate, 7up, Bus-Stop, Ring Road, Ibadan. Tel: 022-310195
29	Industrial Printing and Packaging Products	Printing and Manufacturer of Packaging Products	Plot 1-4, Block K, Alafin Avenue, Oluyole Industrial Estat, P.O. Box 18730, Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 022-314355
30	Interpak Limited	Manufacturing of Packaging Products	Zard Building 9, Obafemi Awolowo Road. P.O. 516 Dugbe, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2410440
31	Isoglass Industry Limited	Manufacture of Motor Vehicle Safety Glass	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Plot 17, Block E. Oluyole Industrial Estate.

			P.O. Box 833, Ibadan: Tel: 02-2317526
32	Lamch International Limited	Manufacture of Mass-Transit Buses	Elephant House 239/241, Ikorodu Road Ilupeju, Lagos. Main Factory Site: 5, Abatakan Road, Ojoo, Ibadan. 02-8104815
33	Lash Akins Nigerian Enterprises	Manufacturing of Building and Agricultural Implements	Head Office/Main Factory Site: 16/18, Adebisi street, Joyce 3 Road, Ring Road, G.P.O. Box 473, Ibadan. Tel: 02-311283
34	Olba Nigeria Enterprises	Agricultural Production	1, Plot 10, Akinade Layout, Iwo Road (Iyana Church), P.O. Box 29109, Secretariat Ibadan
35	Ori-Ire Weaving Industry Nigeria Limited	Design and Weaving of cloths. Manufacture of shoes.	SW8/1376, Olawale Street, Anfani Layout, Ibadan. Tel: 02-313098. Subsidiary: Ire-Ayo Weaving Center Ilesa
36	Owumi Glass Industries Limited	Manufacture of Glass Louvres, Mirror Glasses and Photo Frames	Head Office/Main Factory Site: NW/197, Fajuri Road, Adamasingba, Ibadan. Tel: 02-415579
37	Poly Ventures Limited	Manufacture of Flexible Packaging (Woven Sacks)	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Km 7, Old Lagos Road, Podo Village, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2310812
38	Quality Foods Manufacturing Enterprises Limited	Food processing	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Km 4, Industrial Estate, Monatan, Iwo Road. P.O. Box 1188, Agodi, Ibadan. Tel: 02-714070
39	Rolay Engineering Company Limited	Manufacturing of Solar Energy Equipment, Electronic and Electrical Equipment, Electronic Tools and Components. Payphone Operations	32, Iwo Road, P.M.B. 39, Agodi, Ibadan. Tel: 02-712492
40	Rosebud Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Furniture and Joinery. Interior Decoration	1, Abeokuta Road, Dugbe, U.I.P.O. Box 19815, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2424784 trosebud@infoweb.abs.net
41	S. Adis Steel	Manufacturing of	U.T.B., Olodo, Oganla,

	Work Limited	Agricultural and Food Processing Machines	U.I.P.O. Box 9069, Ibadan. Tel: 02-8103727
42	Sumal Foods Limited	Manufacturing of Chewing Gum and Confectioneries	Head Office/Main Factory: Plot 2A, Block 1, Oluyole Industrial Estate, Town Planning Way, Off Ring Road, P.O. Box 2033, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2310186
43	Tunse Company Limited	Manufacturing of Wrist-Watches and Wall-Clocks	26 Lebanon Street, Old Gbagi, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2413897
44	Unique Jeweries (Nigeria) Limited	Manufacturer of Imitation Jewellery	Head Office/Main Factory Site: NW6/336 Onireke Road, Dugbe. P.O. Box 2111, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2417234
45	Universal Rubber Company Limited	Manufacturer of Automotive/Industrial Rubber Products	Lagos Expressway Roundabout, Challenge, P.M.B. 5201, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2318001
46	Ventolite ASF Nigeria Limited	Manufacturing of Venetian and Vertical Blinds	NW 4/62, Salvation Army Road, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2413802
47	Vina International Limited	Manufacturing of Furniture and Porta Kabins	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Plot 4,5,6 First Road, Oluyole Industrial Estate, P.O. Box 260, Ibadan. Tel: 02-2315083
48	Vital Foods Limited	Manufacturing and Marketing of Toffee Sweets	Plot 2B, Block 1, Oluyole Industrial Estate, Ring Road, P.O. Box 2033, Ibadan. Tel: 022-315579
	Whilzy Industries Nigeria Limited	Manufacturing of Plastic Products, Agro-Allied Business. Poultry Husbandry. Food Processing	Sakutu Ogbegbe, Isale Oyo, P.O. Box 766, Oyo. 038-230022
<b>ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE (77.61 kilometers from Lagos)</b>			
1	Apex Paints Limited	Manufacturing and Marketing of Industrial and Decorative Paints, Marine Paints and Wood-Finishing Paints	Km 93, Abeokuta-Lagos Road, P.O. Box 2073, Abeokuta. Tel: 039- 240714
2	Architectural	Manufacturing of	Km 8, Abeokuta-Lagos



	Products Limited	Roofing Sheets and Holloware Accessories	Road, P.O. Box 2222, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-230288
3	Abeokuta Commercial and Industrial Company Limited	Manufacture of Foam Products and Soap. Distribution of Soap-Making Chemicals. Importation of Industrial Machines, Lanterns, General Merchandise and Chemicals for Soap and Foam Production	Bolaji Adekunle Street/Joseph Ewuoso Street Asero Industrial Estate. P.O. Box 2088, Sapon, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-230980
4	Adetrudes Nigeria Limited	Construction. Food Processing. Agriculture	32, Tinubu Street, Oke-Sokori. P.O. Box 2015, Sapon, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-240602
5	Alanco Agricultural Enterprises Limited	Production of Poultry Feeds and Equipment. Farm Fumigation	19A, Oke-Itoku Street, Idi-Aba, P.O. Box 084, Idi-Aba, Abeokuta: Tel: 039-240025
6	Bio-Organics (Nigeria) Limited	Fortification of Locally Processed Foods and Beverages with vitamins and Minerals. Production of Vitamins/Minerals and Trace Elements for Livestock Feeds. Consultancy in Micronutrient Nutrition for Baby Foods, Health Drinks and Livestock Feed Additives	Factory: Abeokuta  Lagos e-mail: bio-organics@linkserve.com.ng
7	Hakasurs Nigeria Limited	Production and Design of African Textile Fabrics	8, Quarry Road, P.O. 179, Ibara, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-241710
8	Industrial Projects International (Nigeria)	Manufacture of Household Products	Head Office: 3, Oyefeso Anenue, Off Ikorodu Road, Obanikoro, P,O, Box 5632, Shomolu, Lagos. Main Factory Site: Km 8, Abeokuta-Lagos Road, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-241273
9	Goal Company (Nigeria) Limited	Production of African Fabrics and Garments	37, Kuto Road, P.O. Box 1577, Sapon, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-243752
10	Kabiotire Nigeria Limited	Manufacture of Plasticware	24, Sabo Road, P.O. Box 1250, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-

			230806
11	Obasanjo Farms Nigeria Limited	Livestock Farming (Poultry and Piggery), Crop and Animal Feed Production	Head Office: Agbe L'oba House, Quarry Road, Ibara, P.O. Box 2286, Abeokuta: Tel: 039-242062 Main Factory Site: Km 5, Idiroko Road (Behind Ota General Hospital) Ota
12	Olumo Agro-Allied Company Limited	Farming and Processing of Agricultural Products	Head office/Main Factory Site: 2 Alhaja Shonekan Street, Suru-Lere, Ita-Eko, Abeokuta
13	S & D Farms Limited	Poultry Farming and Breeding Cropping	Head Office/Main Factory Site: Km 15, Abeokuta-Ibadan Road, Itesi Ajegunu Village, P.O. Box 2606, Sapon, Abeokuta. Tel: 039-240108
14	Metoxide (Nigeria) Limited	Zinc Oxide	Head Office: Km, 8, Abeokuta/Lagos Road, Abeokuta
15	Midland Galvanizing Products Limited	Galvanized Plain Steel Sheets, Corrugated Co Roofing Sheets and Purloins	Head Office: Km. 10 Abeokuta/Lagos Road, Abeokuta
16	Ocean Five Industries (Nigeria) Limited	Ceramic Mugs, Cups, Plates and Flower Vases	Head Office: Ogunmakin Village, Odeda Road, Abeokuta
17	Porcelainware Industries Limited	General Wall Tiles, Sanitary Wares and Steel Baths	Head Office: Km 90, Lagos/Abeokuta Road, Abeokuta

**Sources:** First Edition 1998/99. Goldstar Publishers (Nigeria) Limited. 1998. 13/1b5, Osolo way, Ajao Estate, Isolo, P.O. Box 51699, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria. Tel: 01- 522530. Ogun State's Ministry of Industries, Commerce and Cooperatives; <http://www.mapcrow.info>; <http://www.travelsyt.com/osun-state.htm>

## Curriculum Vitae

**NAME:- OYEBADE KUNLE OYERINDE**

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**Telephone (Office): 812-855-0441**

**Telephone (Home): 812-334-1569**

**KEY QUALIFICATIONS:**

Ph.D. in Public Policy from School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) and Department of Political Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; Spring 2006 Research Fellow, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; 2005 Recipient of Excellent Writing Award sponsored by CIPEC (Center for the Study of Institutions, Population and Environmental Change) and Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; 2005 Ostrom-Skytte Prize Fellow; 2003 Compton Peace Fellow; and 1999 Laureate of CODESRIA's Governance Institute, Dakar, Senegal.

**EDUCATION:**

Ph.D. Public Policy, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, United States, April 2006.

M.Sc., Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, June 1998.

B.Sc., Politics, Philosophy & Economics, (Combined Degree Program), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, December 1992.

**LANGUAGES:**

Yoruba (native) and English

**GEOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE:**

Africa: Nigeria, Senegal

Europe: The Netherlands

North America: United States

**FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION**

Public Policy, Comparative Politics (Political Science), Environmental Policy

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Institutional Analysis, Policy Formation, Property Rights Theory, Public Goods and Public Choices, Political Development in Western and non-Western Societies, Governance and Conflict, African Politics, Roots of American and European Democracy, Environmental Policy

**TEACHING INTERESTS**

Comparative Politics, World Politics, American Government and Politics, Local and State Government Politics, Policy Analysis, Public Administration, Comparative Public Administration, Institutions and Democracy, Political Development in the Third World,

Political Theory and Research Methodology, African Politics, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, and Environmental Policy

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

1) **Spring 2006: Political Science Instructor**, Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington, Indiana

#### **Teaching Responsibilities:**

(a) Introduction to American Government and Politics: It covers roots of democracy and civil liberties in the United States, public goods and American federal structure, the constitutional standing of the individual, public opinion and social movements, and the United States' foreign policy.

(b) Introduction to World Politics. It generally investigates the interaction of modern international political institutions, leaders, and events, using a variety of theoretical tools to examine how processes of cooperative or conflictual, economic, diplomatic, and military relations are linked together into a larger configuration of relationships in the global system.

2) **February 1998- August, 2000. Assistant-Lecturer**, Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

#### **Teaching Responsibilities:**

(a) **Graduate Courses Taught Independently from 1998 to 2000**

(i) PAD 740 - Statistics for Public Administration – for Graduate Diploma Students in Public Administration

(ii) PAD 755 - Quantitative Methods for Public Decision Making – for Masters Students in Public Administration

(b) **Graduate Course Assisted in Teaching from 1998 to 2000**

(i) PAD 737 – Comparative Public Administration- for Masters Students in Public Administration

(c) **Graduate Course Assisted in Grading from 1998 to 2000**

(i) PAD 739 - Local Government Administration and Management - for Masters Students in Public Administration.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

i) September 2004 and November 2005. **Graduate Assistant** to Professor Maria Grosz-Ngaté, Associate Director, Africa Studies Program, Indiana University. Responsible for (a) generating data from UNICESO, SPESSA and other databases to build a coherent database on African education, (b) giving talks on African issues on behalf of the African Studies Program of the Indiana University, Bloomington, and (c) assisting in raising a four-year budget proposal for the African Studies Program.

ii) August 2000-December 2005, **Graduate Research Assistant** to Professor Elinor Ostrom, Co-Director Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, and Professor Amos Sawyer, Co-Director, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,

- iii) Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. **Provided** assistance for professional-level research related to institutional analysis in Africa.
- iv) February 1998- August, 2000 **Senior Research Fellow**, Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. **Provided** editorial assistance for the publication of the book on *indigenous governance systems in Nigeria*, 1997, and **contributed** efforts to research on local institutions and socioeconomic development in Nigeria: a research project funded by the Ford Foundation (West Africa).
- v) April 2000 **Resource Person**, First Regional Workshop on Remote Sensing Applications organized in April 2000 by African Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria (English) affiliated to the United Nations.
- vi) July 1999 – September 1999. **Laurel**, COEDERIA’s 1999 Governance Institute, Dakar, Senegal. **Participated** in the discourse on the state and taxation in Africa.
- vii) September 1995- January 1998: **Research/Administrative Officer**, Research Group on Local Institutions and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria, c/o Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. The Project was funded by the Ford Foundation (West Africa). **Responsible** for (a) data collection from different parts of Nigeria on community-based institutions, (b) correspondence with local and foreign researchers, (c) supervision of research staff, and (d) custody of research facilities and equipment.
- viii) December 1992-November 1993. **Audit/Accounting Officer** under the supervision of Chartered Accountant A.A. Okeke, J11 Ibrahim Taiwo, Road, P.O. Box 807, Kaduna, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Responsible for auditing companies’ accounts, and preparing and filing company tax assessment forms.

## **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

### **A. Publications**

#### **Dissertation/Thesis**

“The Constitution of Order among the Yoruba of Nigeria”, *PhD Dissertation*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 2006.

"An Institutional Study of the Administration of Forest Reserves in Osun State", *M.Sc.* Ile-Ife, Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo University, 1998.

#### **Book/Journal Articles/Reviews**

- i) **Review** of *the Way of THE ELDERS: West African Spirituality & Tradition in African and Asian Studies*, Volume 4, Number 3 (2005: 429-431).
- ii) "**Administration** of Ago-Owu and Ife Forest Reserves in Osun State: Its Implications for Governance" in, *Ife Research Publication in Geography*, 2001, vol. 8, pp. 42 – 52.

- iii) **“Quantitative Tools for Data Analysis in Public Sector Management”** in A. Mukoro. ed. *Institutional Administration: A Contemporary Local Government Perspective from Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2000
- iv) **With** Dele Olowu and John Erero, 1997 "Indigenous Federalism in Abeokuta" in Dele Olowu and John Erero (eds.) *Indigenous Governance Systems in Nigeria*. Ile-Ife: Research Group on Local Institutions and Socio-Economic Development, Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University

***Work in Progress***

“Property Rights in Land among the Yoruba” to be presented at a Conference in April 2006.

**B. Presentations**

- i) “Institutions and Organization of Defense and Security among the Yoruba in the Nineteenth Century” Paper presented on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2006 at a Working Conference on Designing Constitutional Arrangements for Democratic Governance in Africa: Challenges and Possibilities Cosponsored by the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, African Studies Program, and Office of International Programs, Indiana University.
- ii) “The Multi-Dimensional Crisis of Democratic Transitions in West Africa” Paper presented on July 14, 2005 at the Indiana University’s 2005 International Teacher's Summer Institute.
- iii) "Constitutional Order and Patterns of Associational Life among the Yoruba of Nigeria” Paper Presentation on March 29, 2005 in the African Studies Program Department, Indiana University, Woodburn Hall 221 Bloomington, IN 47405.
- iv) “Fundamental Beliefs, Socialization and Violent Conflicts” A Paper Presented on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the Graduate Student Conference on Issues in Education Policy, School of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.
- v) “Institutions, Cooperation, and Violent Conflicts in African Communities”. A Paper Presented on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at a Colloquium in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (Coordinated by Professor Roger Parks, SPEA, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA
- vi) “Land Conflicts and Challenges Facing Indigenous Institutions among the Yoruba of Nigeria”. Presented at the 2003 (September) Compton Fellows Workshop, Miniwanca Education Center, Michigan
- vii) “Land Conflicts and Agricultural Development in rural Nigeria”. Presented at the 2003 Global Center Summer Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.
- viii) “Conflicts over Agricultural Land and Indigenous Institutions for Conflict Resolution in Rural Yorubaland (Southwestern Nigeria).” Presented at the Institutional Analysis and Development Mini-Conference and TransCoop Meeting, Humboldt University/Indiana University, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and

- ix) 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.
- x) "The Role and Relationship of Social, Economic and Environmental Factors in Creating Healthy Communities in Southwestern Nigeria" - a paper presented at the Fifth Annual Community Research Network Conference on "Building Healthy Communities: Overcoming the Social, Economic, and Environmental Barriers with Community-Based Research." at Loyola University of Chicago (June 13-16, 2002), USA.
- xi) "The Role of Educational Institutions in Sustainable Forest Administration in Nigeria". A paper presented at the First Regional Workshop on Remote Sensing Applications organized in April 2000 by African Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria
- xii) "The Nigerian Federal System and the Exercise of the Taxing Powers of Nigerian Local Governments Between 1980 and 1991" A paper presented at CODESRIA's 1999 Governance Institute, Dakar, Senegal.

#### **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND/OR AWARDS**

- i) Fall 2005 Dissertation Fellowship from Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America.
- ii) 2005 Award for Excellent Writing sponsored by CIPEC (Center for the Study of Institutions, Population and Environmental Change) and Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America.
- iii) Spring 2005 Ostrom-Skytte Prize Fellowship for Dissertation Research from Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America.
- iv) 2003 Compton Peace Fellowship for Fieldwork in Africa from the Compton Foundation, CA 94025, United States.
- v) 2000-2003 Fellowship Award for Joint PhD Students in Public Policy, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America.
- vi) Laureate, CODESRIA: 1999 Governance Institute, Dakar, Senegal.
- vii) Research Grant for M.Sc Field Research, Research Group on Local Institutions and Socioeconomic Development in Nigerian, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria (Funded by the Ford Foundation, West Africa ).
- viii) The Best Student in the Final B.Sc. Degree Examination in Politics, Philosophy & Economics, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria - (1992).
- ix) The Best Student in Business Management at the Oyo State College of Arts & Sciences, Ile-Ife (1988).
- x) The Best Student in Accounting at Baptist Grammar School, Orita-Eruwa, Oyo State (1985).

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION:**

American Political Science Association

**REFEREES:**

- i) Professor Elinor Ostrom (Dissertation Committee Chair), Co-Director, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, and Professor, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Tel: 812-855-0441. Fax: 812-855-3150. Email: [ostrom@indiana.edu](mailto:ostrom@indiana.edu).
- ii) Professor Matthew Auer (Dissertation Committee Member), School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Tel: 812-855-5058. Fax: 812-855-6234. Email: [mauer@indiana.edu](mailto:mauer@indiana.edu)
- iii) Professor Vincent Ostrom (Dissertation Committee Member), Founding Director, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Tel: 812-855-0441. Fax: 812-855-3150. Email: [ghiggins@indiana.edu](mailto:ghiggins@indiana.edu)
- iv) Professor Rafael Reuveny (Dissertation Committee Member), School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA. Email: [rreuveny@indiana.edu](mailto:rreuveny@indiana.edu)
- v) Professor Amos Sawyer (Dissertation Committee Member), Former President of Liberia and Co-Director, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Tel: 812-855-0441. Fax: 812-855-3150. Email: [asawyer@indiana.edu](mailto:asawyer@indiana.edu).
- vi) Pastor/Apostle Kim Norris, Senior Pastor of my Church, Cherry Hill Christian Center, 417 E 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Bloomington, IN 47408, Tel: 812-336-5958. Fax: 812-336-5998. Email: [pr@cherryhillchristiancenter.com](mailto:pr@cherryhillchristiancenter.com).
- vii) Professor Henry E. Hale (Progress Review Member), Department of Political Science and International Affairs, George Washington University, Old Main 413J 1922 F. Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20052. Tel: 202-994-4810. Fax: 202-994-7743. Email: [hhale@gwu.edu](mailto:hhale@gwu.edu). Formerly of Department of Political Science, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- viii) Professor Maria Grosz-Ngaté, Associate Director, Africa Studies Program, Indiana University, Woodburn 221, Bloomington, IN 47405. Phone 812-855-5081. Email: [mgrosz@indiana.edu](mailto:mgrosz@indiana.edu)