CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN OHAFIA, 1901-1960; A STUDY IN THE IMPACT OF COLONIAL RULE AND MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE ON A CROSS RIVER IGBO COMMUNITY

BY

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by me and that it is a correct record of my own research work. It has not been presented in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations are indicated and the sources of information are specifically acknowledgeed by means of references.

AKT, Samuel

Date: _____

Certification

This Thesis entitled "Change and Continuity in Chafia, 1901-1960: A Study in the Impact of Colonial Rule and Missionary Enterprise on a Cross River Igbo Community" by Samuel Aki meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History of Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

Chairman, Supervisory Committee Date: _____

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Dean, Postgraduate School Date: 17-5-88

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father,

Mr Ugbu Aki, for whom I have retained an

abiding love.

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Let me begin with a statement of profound gratitude to my mother, Mrs Mary Aki, who strained her meagre resources and suffered self-imposed privation to finance my education. This thesis is an anagnorisis for her sacrifice and foresight. I also want to thank my early teachers for their onerous contributions to the taming of the shrew. They number among them Mrs. H. Bassey, Mrs A. Nzie, Mrs. Uguru, Chief O.A. Olugu and Mr Okoro Kalu. At Ohafia High School Mr B.M.C. Ugochukwu taught me history quite well. Mr Ajike Uma's versatility surprises me at hindsight; he taught me various subjects including history. Others who made lasting impression on me at Ohafia High School include Mrs Nduka, Mrs Ogbugo, Mr Kanu, Mr. K.O. Kalu and Mr A.O. Uma.

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Mr. K.U. Osunkwa, N. Ume, E.K. Igwe, D.N. Lekwa, O. Oji, U. Ntima and P.N. Nnate made me uncomfortable as long as I remained undecided. And so it happened that I finally bowed, first and foremost, to the dictates of my interest and ambition, and then to advice and pressure.

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to be frustrated and, inspite of the busy schedule of his office, saw this work to its conclusion.

I have now to categorically and unequivocally exonerate all but myself from whatever weaknesses or errors which may have survived in this work. If weaknessess or errors have survived at all, that may probably stand as the dramatization of the fact that this thesis, like every other work of its kind, is the product, not of its tried and tested supervisor nor of any of its benefactors mentioned above, but of its author.

Abstract

This thesis investigates, from the point of view of Ohafia clan, the contentions questioN of the extent to which indigenous Igbo society changed under the pressure of colonial and missionary establishments. It has a total of six chapters including the conclusion.

Chapter one is an invocation of the Marxian mode of production concept for a portrait of Ohafia socio-economic formation on the eve of British intrusion. This is intended as a basis for gaugirg the extent of social change and continuity that occurred over the colorial period.

Chapter two examines British efforts at political and administrative control of Ohafia through the novelty of native courts and a revolutionary system of justice. This is shown to have introduced far-reaching changes in Ohafia society especially as the new code of behaviour was antithetical to such customs as warfare and human sacrifice Igbo reaction and political pre-deliction, however, obliged the British to engage in interminable local government; reforms which in the end still failed to completely transform or replace indigenous oontrol systems.

In the same way the activities and impact of

christian missionaries are examined ir chapter three. Missionaries were deeply convinced that Ohafia customs were 'barbaric' and deserved to be jettisoned. Their schools became a powerful instrument of campaign against Ohafia customs. Missionaries sowed a seed of far-reaching transformation in Ohafia, particularly as they converted individuals in the community and prepared the children for carreers which radically departed from the traditional ones. But, as long as these converts remained in Ohafia, they found themselves in a socio-cultural milieu where christian ethics alone was inadequate. They therefore continued to lean on the discredited Ohafia culture for support even without knowing it.

In chapter four, we bring out the impact of the school more clearly. Colonialism had closed such avenues for achievement as warfare and slave raid and replaced them with education. By 1940 several people had recorded various achievements in western education. It was from this time that a new elite, armed with education ard salaries, emerged to eclipse the traditional elite of warriors and yam barons and to begin to influence and direct Ohafia society towards a western-oriented path of modernity.

Meanwhile, the colonial pax had solved the

security problem of Igboland and drawn Ohafia people irto the burgeoning produce trade. But the participation of the Ohafia people was highly limited, since they lacked the resources reeded in the colonial economy, Yet, the flooding of their markets with superior manufactures, the extirpation of traditional currencies, and the monetisation of their economy helped to integrate the pre-capitalist Ohafia economy with the advanced capitalism of the west. Ohafia people had to migrate to urban centres in various parts of Nigeria and ever beyond to be able to benefit from the colonial economy. This army of migrants were also harbingers of social change.

By our terminal date, far-reaching changes had been introduced into Ohafia society. But this had not destroyed the essence of Ohafia society.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.U.	Ahmadu Bello University
A.D.C.	Assistant District Commissioner
A.D.O.	Assistant District Officer
Calprof	Calabar Province
C.C.	Court Clerk
C.N.C.	Native Court Clerk
C.M.S.	Church Missionary Society
C.S.M.	Church of Scotland Mission
D.C.	District Commissioner
D.O.	District Officer
E.P.	Eastern Provinces
H.W.T.I.	Hope Waddel Training Institute
J.A.H.	Journal of African History
J.A.S.	Journal of African Studies
J.H.S.N.	Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
N.A.E.	National Archives, Enugu
N.C.	Native Court
N.A.L.	National Archives, Ibadan
O.P.	Onitsha Province
OW	Owerri Province
Owidist	Owerri District
Rivprof	Rivers Province
R.C.M.	Roman Catholic Mission
Umdiv	Umuahia Division
Umprof	Umuahia Province

Glossary of Igbo Terms (in Ohafia dialect)

Adu) Akpo) Anina)	Inferior varieties of yam common in the period before the advent of cassava.
Achichi	Place at Elu Village where Uduma Ezema, the leader of the migrant community of Ohafia into their present site, was burried. It is a sacrosanct place and decisions taken in the place is rigidly honoured.
Akpan	Traditional law enforcement body.
Dike	Warrior
Ezi	Compound
Ezeji	Chief priest of yam deity.
Ikoro	Tom-tom
Ite igwe	Large iron pot
Ite-pot	Aluminum pot of average size
Mmai zia ugbo	Imported gin
Mfijioku	Yam deity
Mpipie	Scouting
Ndi ichin	Old men (conceived as a political body).
Nnu	Select society of distinguished yam farmers.
Nsibiri	Picture writing used especially by members of Ekpe society.
Nchuchu	Standard for measuring palm oil.

Omu Ogbuji Okogbua	Young palm frond Title(for distinguished yam farmer)
Ohaezi	All the members of a compound (conceived as political or legal body).
Ohaogo	All the adult members of a village (conceived as a political or legal body).
Umuakaa	A political and legal body higher in rank than Akpan.
Ukerabuo	Age-based women political and legal body.
Uche	Vigil
Ududu	Ancestral deity.
Ujo	Contemptious title for a man who had not yet tested the ordeal of war.
Ufiem	Warrior title
Ukazi	A variety of vegetable
Uzo ije	Sojourn

INTRODUCTION

Location of Ohafia

Ohafia is one of the communities that form Cross River Igboland. Cross River Igboland constitutes one of the five major ethnographic divisions into which Forde and Jones have split the Igbo people.[1] It is a culture area[2] embracing the communities ranged along the left bank of the Cross River. Arochukwu forms the boundary of Cross River Igboland to the south and within this southern zone are Ihe, Ututu and Isu communities. Further upstream are Ohafia and Abam communities who share a common ancestry. The middle section of the river valley is inhabited by Afikpo, Uburu, Okposi Edda, Nkpore, Abiriba and Igbere communities. To the northern limit of Cross River Igboland are communities within the Ezza, Ikwo and Ezikwo group.[3] (See attached map 1)

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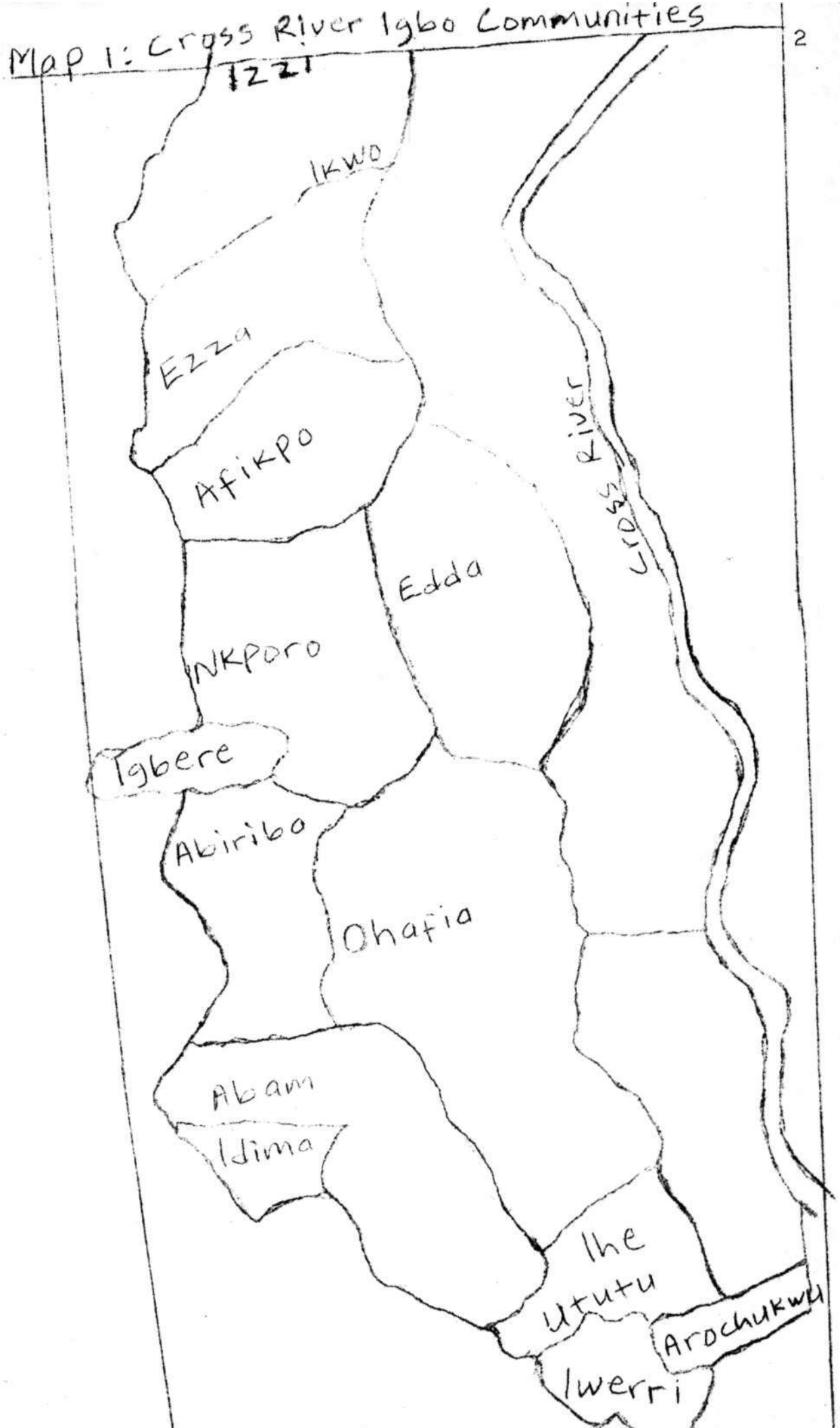
1. D. Forde and G.I. Jones, The Ibo and Ibibio-speaking peoples of south-eastern Nigeria, published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, London, New York and Toronto, 1950, p. 10.

2. What I imply here is culture area as defined by M.A. Onwuejeogwu. See his "The Igbo culture area" in F.C. Ogbalu and E.N. Emenanjo (eds) Igbo Language and Culture, Oxford, 1975, p.6.

3. O.U. Kalu, "The battle of the Gods: Christianization of Cross River Igboland, 1903-1950", Ohafia Review; the Magazine of the Ohafia People, Vol. I, no. 2, Dec., 1982, p.9.

Map 1: Cross River Igbo Communities

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Of the Cross River Igbo communities, Ohafia is located closest to the Cross River and on a 'hoe-shaped ridge' at the extreme north-eastern corner of the western Cross River basin. Her immediate neighbours are Nkporo and Edda to the north, Ihe and Ututu to the south, Abam to the south-west and Abiriba to the west. On the eastern marchland, Ohafia is separated from the Cross River by a splinter of non-Igbo clans, including Ikun, Usukpam, Era and Biakpan. It has an estimated area of 119 square miles, bounded approximately by latitudes 5° 30 and 5° 55 north and longitudes 7° 45 and 7° 45 and 7° 55 east. By the 1973 census, Ohafia had a population of about 120,000 dispersed over its twenty-five villages.

The Problem

Between 1885 and 1906 European powers had

partitioned and colonised Africa and had started to let lose on their respective colonies, different influences aimed at social transformation. This thesis is a study of the impact of the secular and missionary aspects of these influences on Chafia clan. Its central problem is the contentious question of the extent to which indigenous Igbo society (or, indeed, African societies) changed under the secular and missionary pressure of Europe.

The secular and missionary interests of Europe in Africa were separate and often antagonistic branches which, nevertheless, had such close association as those of birds of the same feathers. Once one was established, the other came in. In many areas the two came

together. Hence Mortagne has observed, quite correctly, that"the effort to spread the christian gospel has been tied historically to European expansion in the commercial, political or military spheres".[1] It was only in rare cases, as in Northern Nigeria, that the operation of missionaries was restricted even after the secular arm had become firmly established.

Though it was from the activities of the missionaries that altruistic purpose was more easily discernible, the ostensible goal of the two branches was the same - to 'civilize' Africa. And whatever differences in detail their methods might have had, they shared the common conviction that African customs were obnoxious and needed reform. It was, therefore, not easy for Africans to see the two otherwise than as different faces of the same coin:

1. See G. Balandier, "The colonial situation: A theoretical Approach", in Immanuel Wellerstein (ed) Social Change: The Colonial Situation, John Wiley & Sons inc., New York, London, Sydney, 1966, p.39.

"Christianity was simply the ritual aspect of European colonialism".[2] The secular, missionary and commercial influences of Europe were the primary dynamics of change in colonial Africa. In the words of Ch-A. Julien, "three forces have disintegrated Africa: governmental administration, missionaries and the new economy".[3]

That colonialism introduced change in Africa may be regarded as a foregone conclusion, for colonialism produced what has been referred to as the colonial situation which, according to Wallerstein means

> that some one imposes on a given area a new institution, the colonial administration, governed by outsiders who establish new rules which they enforce with a reasonable degree of success. It means that all those who act in the colony must take

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2. F.B. Wilbourn, "Missionary stimulus and African Responses", in Victor Turner (ed), Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 Vol. three Profiles of change: African society and Colonial Rule, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971, p. 310.

3. See Balandier, op. cit. p.39.

> some account of these rules and that indeed an increasing amount of each individual's action is oriented to this set of rules rather than to any other set, for example the tribal set, to which he formally paid full heed.4

Lurid descriptions abound of the consequences of the successful imposition of the colonial situation or of colonialism. It has been shown, for instance, how in less than a century, the European absorption of Asia, Africa and Oceania "transformed the shape of human society through force and the imposition of reforms, often bold reforms". Colonialism itself has been limned as an "act of social surgery".[5] German to have "shattered the fabric of Herero life."[6] And in their respective works, Michael Crowder and Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch have shown the debilitating effects of colonial taxes on French colonies. It was these taxes that

4. Immanuel Wallerstein, Africa, The Politics of Independence, New York, 1961, p.31.

5. Balandier, op. cit.

6. L.H. Gann and Peter Duignan, The Rulers of German Africa 1884-1914, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1977, p.194.

compelled the Mossi of Upper Volta, Zaberma from Niger and Gao from Sudan to embark on large scale emigration from their respective territories and to become harbingers of social change.[7]

In summarizing the impact of colonialism on Africa, J.F. Ajayi has stated:

(a) Colonial rule was accompanied by the cultural impact of Europe in terms of christianity, western education, western social, religious and political ideas which have made a deep impression on African institutions. The impact of christianity was not limited only to those who became converted or came under the direct influence of the church.

(b) The colonial regimes ruthlessly suppressed practices that were incompatible with the christian traditions of the western society like human sacrifice, twin murder, trial by ordeal and so on. In doing so, they shook people's confidence in the old gods and the old social order...

(c) More than anything else, African political institutions and the institutions of chieftaincies in

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7. Michael Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule, Hutchinson of London in Association with Ethiope Publishing Corporation, Benin City, 1968, p. 335-339. See also M. Crowder, "The Impact of Colonialism" in John N. Pader and Edward W. Soja (eds), The African Experience Vol. I Essays, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1970, pp.233-249; and Catherine Conquery-Vidrovitch, "French Colonization in Africa to 1920: Administration and Economic Development" in L.H. Gann and P. Duignan (eds) Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 Vol. I The History and Politics of Colonialism, 1870-1914, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne, 1969, pp.165-198.

> particular were subjected to great pressures. States were crushed, suppressed, divided or amalgamated at will...8

It may be taken for granted, therefore, that the available literature on the subject provides a basis for the conclusion that colonialism produced change among the African societies that came within its orbit. But when we move from this point and ask questions as to the extent to which African society changed under colonialism, opinion splits among scholars. Some think that the changes were very basic and revolutionary, and use such words as 'disruption' and 'disintegration' to show the impact of colonialism on Africa. Others feel that the changes which occured, though far-reaching, did not destroy the essence of the respective societies involved.

8. J.F. Ade Ajayi, "The continuity of African Institutions under colonialism", T.O. Ranger (ed), Emerging themes of African History Proceedings of the International Congress of African Historians held at University College, Dar es Salaam, October 1965, East African Publishing House, Nairobi, 1968, pp.195-196. See also J.F. Ajayi, "Colonialism: An Episode in African History", Gann and Duignan, Colonialism in Africa, pp.497-509.

Professor Ajayi has drawn attention to important dynamics in pre-colonial Africa to show that change was not peculiar to the colonial period. The Mfecane, for instance, was a movement which resulted in conquests, assimilations, creation of states and the imposition of new language and new ways of life. It began in Natal in the 1820s and within forty years it had started affecting the lives of people around Lake Tanganyika. Again, it is still an open question which has been the more revolutionary event in the history of Massina: Seku Ahmadu's Jihad or the French conquest? Or in the history of the Yoruba, the nineteenth century wars or British conquest?[9] The view of Professor Ajayi on the whole issue of the extent to which colonialism changed Africa is that "change is the essence of human

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9. Ajayi, The Continuity of African Institutions, p. 194.

history: that under colonialism, just as in the several ages before, some institutions changed while others continued; and that as always men and women had to adapt themselves and their institutions to change".[10]

Lady Sylvia Leith-Ross had reasoned along similar lines as early as 1939 when she portrayed the marginality of christianity in the life of the Igbo convert. By implication she challenged the orthodox view that christianity had denationalized tribal peoples. She submitted:

> Such a tremendous load has been suddenly put upon shoulders not yet ready to carry such a mixed burden that it is no wonder the bearer falters, turns back, or rests a while in the familiar world of his own customs before resuming the christian path. The only real surprise is the fact that he does not seem to know that he is doing so, so that, with no strain or conflict, he can attend communion and believe in 'medicine', keep, until he is found out, a 'church' wife and several 'native marriage' wives, tie up preciously in the same corner of a handkerchief his rosary and the shaped bit of 'iron for juju' made for him by an Awka black-smith,...[11]

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11. Sylvia Leith-Ross, African Women: A Study of the Ibo of Nigeria, Faber and Faber, London, 1939, p.293.

Also expressing similar opinion, an outstanding scholar of colonialism in West Africa, while fully admitting and stressing the extensive innovations of colonialism, cautioned in the introduction to his work that:

> More important than the brevity of colonial rule is the fact that it had little impact on the peoples of West Africa. Protectorates were established, but for the most part no radical changes were made in the daily lives of the people... the major revolution in the lives of the peasants, had already taken place before the colonial era.12

The reverse view, however, has been expressed by other scholars. C.L. Temple, for instance, has talked of European influence getting the African divorced from his "natural entourage" and having him "alienated".[13] In the same vein, Basil Mathews opined that

> Fifty years ago Africans lived wholly within a communal way of life that gave guidance for every act and at every stage of growth... That way of life, though limited, was complete. It was intelligible. It formed what we called a cosmos. Today that little cosmos is breaking down into chaos...14

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12. Crowder, West Africa, p.7.

13. C.L. Temple, Native Races and their Rulers Sketches and Studies of Official Life and Administrative Problems in Nigeria, Frank Cass, London, (2nd edn.) 1968.

14. Basil Mathews, Consider Africa, New York, 1936, p. 15, cited in Perelope Hetherington, British Paternalism and Africa 1920-1940, Frank Cass, London, 1978, p.69.

Leonard Barnes was ever more forthright when he insisted that "European economic penetration of Africa has set up conditions to which the clan-bond, the tribal structure, the old unity of African life, is no longer relevant".[15] Even in the case of such peoples as the Igbo who are said to have been highly receptive to western influence, in contrast, for instance, to the Fakot, there is still a divergence of opinion in relation to the extent of their social change under the colonial impact. While some think that western influence hardly touched the springs of indigenous Igbo society, others think that it completely transformed the society.

On this issue, Professor Arene started off from the general premise that

> When backward peoples were suddenly confronted by a powerful modern state and were not given time to adjust themselves to the new situation the peoples invariably lost their stability and become disorganised.16

From this he went on to derive conclusions in terms of 'disintegration' of indigenous society

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15. Leonard Barnes, Empire or Democracy?, p. 160, cited in Hetherington, op cit. p.72.

16. J.C. Arene, Southern Nigeria in Transition: Theory and Practice in a colonial Protectorate, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966, p.1.

under colonial rule. According to him, indirect rule was an 'alien system of local government which effectively undermined the "tribal system" and produced chaos'.[17] Professor Ekechi endorses this standpoint. "British penetration by military force", he insists, "led to a break down of law and order resulting from the weakening of the mechanisms for preserving internal order".[18]

This disintegration thesis, as it stands, has been rejected by Professor Afigbo as far as Igboland is concerned. He explains that Igbo institutions never broke down or got disorganised and that when, in 1951, the British abandoned the idea of Native Administration, "it was not because the indigenous institutions of the Igbo had collapsed, but because they had successfully resisted being remoulded to suit the so called modernizing needs of the colonial government".[19] According to Afigbo,"the greater majority of the

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17. Ibid, p. 250.

18. F.K. Ekechi, Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, Frank Cass, London, 1971, p. 147.

19. A.E. Afigbo, Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo History and Culture, University Press Ltd. in Association with Oxford University Press, Oxford, etc., 1981, pp. 348-349.

Igbo today are kept on the path of lawful conduct not only by the police and the army but also by traditional controls exerted at the village group level".[20]

The present study is located within the context of the above disagreements. By studying the details of colonial and missionary impact on the Igbo community of Ohafia, we hope to make some contribution at the micro level to the resolution of this conflict.

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20. Ibid, p. 349.

Chapter 1

OHAFIA SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORMATION BY 1900

Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to show how Ohafia society was organised before the onset of colonial domination. For this purpose we will be guided by the Marxian base-superstructure model. This is founded on the conviction that man is, above all else, an economic animal. Work is the primary condition for his existence. It is by labour that man creates and re-creates his entire material life. By creating and re-creating his economic conditions, man also creates his culture, history and civilization. Most important, he also creates his consciousness, for even consciousness is essentially an effect of his 'environment'. Our most important assumption in this chapter is that man is as he works.[1] Our

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1. I owe the statement of the Schema here to Claude Ake, A Political Economy of Africa, Longman, Nigeria and New York, 1981, pp. 8-13; see also J. Eaton, Political Economy: A Marxist textbook, International Publishers, New York, 1966, pp. 10-18; my organisation of the chapter has been influenced by G.T. Emeagwali, 'Model-building, Explanation and History; the Marxian pre-capitalist model and pre-capitalist socio-economic formation of Igboland, Eastern Nigeria', Ph.D thesis, A.B.U., 1984.

position, however, is far from crude economic determinism.

The Nature of Productive Forces

Ohafia is split into two by the south-eastern protrusion of the Nsukka - Udi - Okigwe range of hills. The villages on the eastern side of this hill - Asaga, Okon, Amuke and Abia, for instance, which are also closer to the Cross River - tend to be better watered than those on the hill like Ebem, Elu and Amaekpu, or west of the hill like Ndi Uduma Ukwu, Nkwebi and Oboro. This, however, is not a rigid rule because some of the villages west of the range like Isiugwu are superbly watered. On the whole, Ohafia has a fairly even if not uniformly, good drainage. Some of the rivers like Ukogoro and Uduma are long and drain many villages in their respective courses. Fishing was therefore not unknown in Ohafia though we are yet to come by evidence that this was practised on a large scale. Generally, however, Ohafia rivers were shallow and full of obstructions especially of vegetable materials. This is what has produced a counter-effect in terms of navigation. It was not until the beginning of the colonial period that Uduma river, for instance, was cleared and made navigable.

As is the case with pre-capitalist societies, the main occupation of the Ohafia was farming. And descriptions of Igboland in the 19th century relevant to the area always emphasize how much the landscape had been modified by the human presence, almost covered with orderly and productive farms, Where the yam was the central crop. In the extreme south east of Igboland where Ohafia is located, an observer wrote:

> As far as I could see, it had been cleared entirely of the original forest, only a few of the larger trees being left here and there around the villages or in plantations. The absence of forest was compensated for by the numbers of palm trees extending in all directions round the villages.... The fields seemed to be almost entirely devoted to yam cultivation, although maize was scattered in patches between some of the yams; and in the small gardens around each house and compound in the villages themselves cocos and eddo yams were grown, as well as pumpkins.2

Occupations other than farming were pursued only on part time basis, for every body was first and foremost, a farmer. Even apparently successful traders were still big time farmers because to remind a man that he is 'ori mgbe ahia lɔ rɔ', one who eats what the market holds, is to humiliate

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2. F.O. 2/63, Casement to MacDonald, 10 April, 1894, cited in Elizabeth Isichei, The Ibo People and the Europeans: the Genesis of a Relationship to 1906, Faber and Faber, London, 1973, p.76.

him.[3] The fact of everybody engaging in agricultural pursuits underlines the importance of land as a means of production.

In the main, land was owned and controlled on behalf of the people by elders and lineage heads. In principle individuals exercised usufructuary rights and land could not be alienated. In practice, however, Ohafia or, indeed, the Igbo in general, had institutionalized means of alienating land. This included 'kola tenancy' and 'showing' tenure. On the whole, important customs associated with land are not in consonance with communal ownership of that means of production. For instance land was sold to pay membership fees of title societies and as compensation for homicide.[4] It was in the face of overwhelming evidence of land alienation that Emeagwali insisted that access to land in Igboland did not correspond with simple communalism.[5] Indeed, even when a piece of land belonged to such a large segment as ikwu or umunna, the economic trees in them, according to Chubb, belonged to specific individuals among them.[6] In as much as there was no

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3. V.C. Uchendu, The Igbo of south eastern Nigeria, Holt, Reinhart and Winston, New York, Chicago, etc, 1965, p. 27.

4. Ibid

5. Emeagwali, op. cit. p. 311.

6. L.T. Chubb, Ibo Land Tenure, Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1961.

equal access to this chief means of production, there was property differentiation in our area of interest. It is important to note that this property differentiation, as will become clearer in the course of our analysis, was mainly in favour of elders who controlled access to land. This ought to be borne in mind for the purpose of appreciating the social change implicit in the introduction of western education which was the harbinger of salaried jobs.

The chief traditional source of wealth was yam which was indisputably indigenous to west Africa. The fact that Ohafia people started growing yams from time immemorial is clear from the allusions to this crop in the oral tradition. It is said, for instance, that the reason why Ohafia left Isieke for their present site is connected with the envy of Ibeku people of the former's better technique of and success in yam cultivation. Yam remained the dominant and most important crop in Ohafia till the early years of this century when it was supplemented with cassava. But even after the diversification of Igbo, including Ohafia, economy by the introduction of these new crops like cassava and maize and the coming of new trading opportunities between the 17th and 19th centuries, yam continued to feature as a prestige crop that was to be owned by a man of

substance. 'The importance of yam', writes Prof. Onwuejeogwu,'is seen in the ritualization of yam culture called IFEJIOKU,[7] in the control of yam force by Eze Nri and in the yam title which was taken by individuals that were able to grow so many thousands of yams and so many varieties at a given time'.[8]

In the days before the advent of cassava Ohafia had such wild growing substitutes for yams as Ukpa, Akpo, Anina and Adu. It was the responsibility of women to provide these as well as the other items of food other than yams. The extensive palm belt, in Ohafia also yielded an abundance of oil palm. Evidently this specific crop was common in the market[9] but it was not until the beginning of this century and after the clearing of the Uduma river that it became extensively commoditized. Unlike yams which turned to a piece of luxury during the dry season period, palm oil featured in most of the meals. Hence a certain Ohafia sojourner in Calabar, on being presented with a meal of pap for the first time in his life, took

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7. Ohafia people pronounce it Nfijioku.

8. M.A. Onwuejeogwu, 'The Igbo culture area' in F.C. Ogbalu and E.N. Emenanjo (eds), Igbo Language and Culture, Oxford, 1975.

9. Oral information from Ibe Ochea, about 60 of Ndi Ochea Ole compound, Akanu-Ohafia, 7/11/85.

exception to it and derided it as food without oil.

There were a number of part-time professions which supplemented farming. The more important ones, apart from small scale trading which many women did, were carving, smithery, hunting, divination and the medical profession. The forest wood provided ample raw materials for carvers. According to Basden, carving was a skilled occupation confined to professional men.[10] They produced such objects as chip-carved doors and panels, stools, dancing masks and kola and snuff boxes.[11] One of the most enduring testimonies to carving industry in Ohafia is the large ikoro or tom tom strategically mounted at the village square of each village. In the days of yore, the ikoro was beaten to summon people during emergency or ceremony. The practice continues till today. Other extant relics of the carving industry are the huge ritual posts ornately carved and the massive 'fetish' figures carved in wood, some of which are being preserved in situ and officially called Ohafia posts by the National museum of Nigeria.[12] There have been testimonies

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10. G.T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria, Frank Cass, London, 1921, p. 170.

11. Ibid. Confirmed by my fieldwork information.

12. P.O. Nsugbe, Ohaffia: A Matrilineal Ibo People, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1974, pp. 5-6.

also, to the effect that much of Ohafia fetish objects - Ikwan was cited as an instance - were carved by foreigners who were more often than not eventually sacrificed to these objects.[13]

Smithery was also important in Ohafia in the period under consideration. It should be borne in mind that Ohafia people were next door neighbours to Abiriba, one of the most renowned smiths in Igboland in the pre-colonial period. The source of iron for smiths is not difficult to locate. 'Slag heaps indicating a long period of iron-mining can be found in numerous places to the north-east of Igbo Ukwu in the hills from Oji River to Enugu'.[14] Since smithing profession gave the license for long distance travelling without molestation, we cannot rule out the possibility that Ohafia smiths travelled up to this area to procure their supply of iron. In

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13. Oral information obtained during a discussion session I held with some elderly men resting at Obu Nkwa shed at Elu. Those who participated in the discussion and contributed ideas are: Uka Dike, Aru Udonsi, Imaga Uka, Ebe Uchendu, Olugu Onwuka, Kalu Irouwa, Ndukwe Kalu and Udonsi Oji. Information derived from this discussion shall, henceforth, be cited as Obunkwa Interview'.

14. David Northrup, Trade Without Rulers: Pre-colonial Economic Development in South-eastern Nigeria, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 18.

the main, however, such supplies were got from Abiriba people who were Ohafia mentors in smithing.[15] Indeed, it may be said that Ohafia smiths made very minimum impact since oral tradition is emphatic that Ohafia obtained their iron weapons and other implements mainly from Abiriba and Nkwerri smiths.[16]

Be that as it might, by the opening of this century, Ohafia smiths were already in such far away places as Bonny and Opobo where they forged hoes, matchets, gongs, nails and other smaller items.[17] Some tried their hands at copper bracelets and anklets. Iroha Okebulu who is now about 63, showed the present writer his father's anvil which was said to have been inherited from his grand father. Both were said to be renowned smiths who practised in such nearby clans as Ikun. Iroha could remember that it was smithing that occupied his father during the long dry season period.[18] It was through such

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15. Oral information from Obunkwa interview.

16. Ibid.

17. Eke Kalu, 'An Ibo Autobiography: The Autobiography of Mr Eke Kalu Ohaffia's well-honoured son', The Nigerian Field, vol.VIII, no.4, Oct., 1938, pp. 158-9.

18. Oral information from Iroha Okebulu of about sixty in his residence at Ekeluogo, Ebem Ohafia, 10th April, 1985.

profession that Ohafia people earned revenue with which to supplement their farm products.

Another itinerary profession was the medical. In general, medicine men or ndi Agwu were distinguished from other professions in the society by their special skill to cure diseases, their esoteric knowledge of special language and symbolism over which they held exclusive monopoly. The profession is in the category in which members held the ofo ije which enabled them to travel freely in pursuit of their professions without let or hindrance.[19] The medicine they gave was of different kinds ranging from concoctions of herbs to powder or charms to put on. Because they had to cure people of various diseases, the medical practitioner had to master the medicinal values of plants, animals and other natural objects.

Another important occupation was hunting. It has been related that in the days of yore before the pressure of population began to swallow up both space and creatures in the bush, the Ohafia area abounded in game. It was hunters who helped to track down this game and bring home as food to supplement available sources of protein. Other people who, in

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19. W.I. Ofonagoro, Trade and Imperialism in southern Nigeria: 1881 - 1929, Nok Publishers International, New York, London, Lagos, 1979, p.32.

strict terms, could not be said to be hunters, also killed game especially by traps. Occasionally, hunting or ichu nta was organised communally especially during the dry season period and animals killed would be shared out in accordance with tradition and custom. Professional hunters, however, fulfilled a definite role for the community. First, they were encouraged to wander far into the confines of the territories of each village or clan and in inter-village or inter-clan dispute, the hunting extensions of a village or clan were often claimed as territorial confines of such a clan or village. In Ohafia hunters were the first to start using such sophisticated armour as guns. It is on record that warriors had initially resisted this equipment because it did not give room for a display of manly courage. Armed with guns and other weapons, hunters went out in the nights, first to track down game, and then to alert the community of any impending danger of attack. On the other hand, they easily disposed of any wayfairer who failed to give good account of himself.[20]

It is in connection with, in fact, in the

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20. Based on oral information from Chief Anderson Okoko, above 100, at his residence along Arochukwu road, Ebem-Ohafia, 8/11/85.

context of, the productive forces of Ohafia that its warfare must be discussed, for that is its proper situation. We cannot be precise about the date when warfare became a marked feature of Ohafia. But the view is widely held that in the heydays of the Atlantic slave trade, the services of Ohafia warriors were indispensable to Aro slave raiders. What is clear from my field work and from published sources[21] is that by 1900 Ohafia society had a distinction between Dike and Ujo. The former was the man who had tasted the ordeal of war as confirmed by his trophy of human head. He was honoured with the Ufiem title and had many privileges in the society. He could, for instance, marry as many wives as his resources allowed him and was qualified to seek for the higher titles like the yam title of Ogbuji or Okogbua.

In contrast, the Ujo was the man who had not been to war. He was the target of humiliating and

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21. Some of the published works include: A Talbot, Peoples of Southern Nigeria, Vol. I, Frank Cass, London, 1969, p. 84; Ibid, vol. III, p. 821; F. Ekejiuba, 'Aro trade system', Ikenga Journal of African Studies, vol. I, no. 2, 1972; E. Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, Macmillan, London and Basingstoke, 1976, pp.81-87; N. Uka, 'A note on the Abam warriors of Igboland' Ikenga Journal of African Studies, vol. I, no.2, 1972, pp. 76-81.

withering ridicule. He had very few rights in the society; he was, for example, not expected to marry and if he dared to do so, his wife must always dress in a mourning attire. She was forbidden to put on the prestigious joji cloth, otherwise she would be stripped naked in the public. She received similar treatment if she dared to wear bracelets of brass, armlets of elephant tusks or anklets which were fashionable in those days. The Ujo was not allowed to own a full yam barn otherwise his age-mates could dispossess him by sharing out his yams amongst themselves.

Given this pressure on a man to taste warfare, there is no wonder that Ohafia society was highly militarised by the time of arrival of the British. There is, however, nothing perculiar in this trait. We noted earlier the situation which produced it. It is clear that militarization of society was the only solution to the threat of extinction which faced them. It is instructive to note that other areas of the Cross River Igboland which faced similar threats built societies similar to Ohafia in terms of militarism.[22] Such examples can be located even outside Igboland: 19th century Ibadan made similar responses to the threats posed by the jihadists. The state of Ibadan became so highly militarised

22. See Uka, op. cit., p. 78.

that it set aside the traditional hereditary criteria for succession to political offices and adopted military merit as the strongest credential.[23]

It should be stated in clear terms, however, that this regular warfare did not even attenuate the sanctity of human life before the eyes of the Ohafia man. The rigorous purification rituals which he underwent, including eight days seclusion after shedding human blood, is a brilliant testimony to this fact.[24] Even the issue of cannibalism which Talbot helped to over-play was mis-understood by him. The fact is that human flesh was not eaten for the enjoyment of it; it was because of the beliefs (of course founded on pre-industrial superstitution) associated with it. This case is most clearly stated in the case of the Ibans of Sarawak who feasted on human head. Their motives were ritual:

> to make their rice grow well, to enable their dogs and snares to be successful in securing game, to have the streams swarm with fish, to give health and vitality to the people themselves and to ensure fertility to their women. All these blessings the possessing and

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23. See Bolanle Awe, 'Militarism and economic Development in the 19th century Yoruba country: the Ibadan example' Journal of african history, XIV, I, 1973, p. 66; see also Oladiti S. Abiodun, 'The Impact of colonialism on the political Institutions of Ibadan, 1893-1934' N.C.E. dissertation, History Department, Federal College of Education, Katsina, Kaduna State, 1986.

24. Uka, op. cit. p. 80.

> feasting of a fresh head are supposed to be the most efficient means of securing.25

It is this kind of explanation that many traditional societies including Ohafia had for cannibalism. The explanation of one of Miss Green's informants in the case of Umueke Agbaja applies also in part to Ohafia. According to him, human flesh was not eaten because people liked it, but in order to boast against the enemy.[26] The point therefore is that cannibalism was a necessary ordeal. Afterall the point has been made by Leakey that even amongst carnivores, human flesh is 'repulsive and unpalatable'.[27]

We must distinguish two dimensions of Ohafia warfare. The first and foremost is the socio-cultural dimension. The need to defend and secure

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25. Cited in P. Vayda, War in Ecological Perspective: Persistence, change and adaptive processes in three oceanic societies, Plenum Press, New York and London, 1976, p. 49.

26. M.M. Green, Igbo Village Affairs chiefly with reference to the Village of Umueke Agbaja, Frank Cass, London, 1964, p.66.

27. L.S.B. Leakey, 'Development of agression as a factor in early human and pre-human evolution' in C.D. Clemente and D.B. Lindsley, (eds), Aggression and Defence: Neural mechanism, and Social Patterns: Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on brain function, November, 1965, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, p.5.

society against agression in the war-torn western Cross River basin predisposed Ohafia to reverence for bravery and military achievement. Bernard Barber once said that societies which'are internally disturbed and changing ... or those which are in conflict with their neighbour societies, are likely to give greater emphasis to governing and military roles than are peaceful and stable societies.' So it was that the space crisis and military clashes in the western bank of the Cross River ennobled military achievement before the Ohafia man and helped to integrate warfare into Ohafia culture. The migrant Ohafia community had conquered its way into their present site and had subsequently carried out periodic campaigns of territorial expansion. And even after the borders which were defined with primitive bravery had become secured beyond any shade of doubt, regular offensives continued to be prosecuted since young men had, of force, to prove their manhood and mettle by formal presentation of human heads which they obtained in the course of an organised battle. In the one dimension, therefore, warfare was a socio-cultural duty.

It is, however, the second - economic dimension of warfare that justifies our treatment of the subject as an integral part of the productive forces of Ohafia. It is believed that their intimacy with the Aro

enabled Ohafia, in time, to discern the lucrative value of slaves and captives. With the insatiable demand pressure from the Atlantic system for slaves, Ohafia people started increasingly to vend their captives and to commercialize their warfare. The fact is that Ohafia had some understanding with the Aro and the latter guided them to targets of terrorism. Pure and simple, the two peoples were slave dealers, though the latter, in a grander and more infamous scale than the former. On the other hand, the infamy of the former in warfare (along with the other Cross River Igbo warriors like Abam and Edda) has tended to obscure their slave trading role.

Usually, the Aro people engaged age grades which were desirous to perform the otomu and were on the look out for opportunities to demonstrate their manly courage in warfare. In such cases, the age grade was led to a 'town' which the Aro claimed had been boasting about its (the town's) invincibility. In other cases the Aro merely came to complain that a certain people had confiscated their trade goods. Then, having provided the customary largesse for theiconvocation of warriors and other title-hungry youths, a punitive raid was organised against such people. There were also some cases where Ohafia did not require any Aro guide especially if they saw what they construed as a threat to them particularly from

a neighbouring clan. In such cases, omu or young palm frond was sent to summon the representatives of all the villages to Achichi from where the warriors took off for action.

In the main Ohafia stormed their victims in the early hours of the morning. As those who needed human heads for warrior titles were working hard to obtain them, both the Aro and the seasoned warriors of Ohafia who no longer needed warrior titles worked to obtain captives for slavery. In certain cases this kind of terrorist attack resulted in large scale destruction of life and property, thus enabling these vandals (but especially the Aro) to establish colonies. Thus, according to Prof. Onwuejeogwu, such areas as Umuoji, Abatete and Nkpo "are said to be founded by frustrated Aro slavers and hired warriors from Abam, Ada and Ohafia".[28]

Occasionally Ohafia people married their women captives and integrated children into their

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28. M. Angulu Onwuejeogwu, 'Patterns of population movement in the Igbo culture area', in M.A. Onwuejeogwu and V.B. Manfredi(eds) Journal of the Odinani Museum Nri, Anambra State, Nigeria. A project of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, no. 2, Sept., 1977, p. 28.

families. As will be shown later they were in either case increasing their labour potential and, therefore, their surplus generating capacity. In many other cases, however, captives were simply sold and mainly to the Aro.[29] Accumulation of this kind was directly to the benefit of warriors. But since much of the proceeds from slaves and captives were meretricious articles like clothes, drinks and so forth, anybody looking for hard material evidence of Ohafia lucrative involvement in slave trade will be sadly disappointed.

What has been said about the sale of captives by Ohafia is not inconsistent with the widely held view that the basic concern of the Ohafia warrior was to get human head as a trophy.[30] In fact their preference of matchets to guns even confirms the social rather than economic raison d'etre for war.[31] The point to stress, however, is that the man who had already satisfied the requirements for the award of warrior titles then had little concern about human heads in his subsequent battles except to help out cowards who needed them. This was the category of people who exploited warfare for direct material

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29. Oral information from 'Obunkwa interview.'

30. See, for instance, Uka, op. cit. p.76.

31. Northrup, op cit.

profit. Even Nsugbe who did not concern himself deeply with this matter came close to understanding the economic motive for war when he stated that warriors collected fees in the form of booty, food and slaves mainly.[32]

It becomes clear from the foregoing analysis that the material resources of Ohafia people were limited especially when compared to other areas. There were, for instance, no elaborate industries like weaving or highly commercialised carving or fishing. Farming was the primary profession and the most important farm product was yam. But the production of this crop, as will become clear later, was geared more towards the fulfilment of social objectives than for purposes of accumulation. Large scale sale of yams was an aberration rather than a norm. Even the other more minor crops like palm oil were hardly ever produced on a commercial scale. The more minor professions, most of which were itinerary and seasonal, constituted alternative means of winning revenue for needs which could not be yielded by village farms and other local resources. But these professions, by their very nature, involved a very tiny fraction of the population, leaving most

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32. Nsugbe, op. cit. p. 31.

others to look for still alternative means of winning revenue for especially exotic goods. It is not surprising, therefore, that Ohafia people increasingly involved themselves in slave trade if only to be able to procure exotic goods which evidently they consumed avidly before the beginning of our period. We will now try to see the Ohafia society from another dimension - the relations of production.

Relations of Production

By 1900 the Ohafia economy was a pre-industrial one with merely a rudimentary division of labour. A number of occupations obtained but every body was, first and foremost, a farmer. The basic unit of production and labour organisation was the household. Access to land, the chief factor of production was through one's membership of a household which consisted of a man, his wives and dependants. The elders of each village decided on which large blocks of land within their territory would be farmed each season in rotation and individual householders applied to the relevant lineage heads for access to land.[33]

33 I owe this information to Emea O. Arua, 'Yam ceremonies and the values of Ohafia culture', Ohafia Review:The Magazine of the Ohafia People, no. 1, April, 1982, pp. 16-22.

At the beginning of the farming season, the Ezeji sacrificed to the yam god, Nfijioku, and prayed for a good harvest and good health for the community. Then, as the spiritual head of farmers, he would be the first to clear and plant his own farm plot, of course, using the free labour of members of the community especially through his wide family connections. Then, at the beginning of the general bush-clearing around February or March, all farmers who had received farming plots in a particular area converged on the farmland at an appointed date to unanimously clear the land-owning family head's plot. This was known as iye afia or cutting open the bush.[34]

For the hired lands, of course, only usufructuary rights were valid. Nothing was paid immediately to the land-owners but after planting and when the first crops were ready for harvest, the lineage heads visited the fields and were given some part of the harvested crops from each hired farm. Then, after the crop had been fully harvested and some sold, each farmer who had received a farming block made a payment to the land-owning family head of 5 brass rods for a normal parcel of land.[35] The various ways

34. Ibid p.17.

35. Ibid.

in which surplus was appropriated, especially from land which was the primary means of production, were designed in favour of the elders. First, lineage heads were the recipients of usufructuary fees of lineage lands. Then elders in various capacities were customary recipients of different descriptions of free labour. The latter benefit will become clearer in the course of this chapter.

Each house-holder mobilized the work force under his command, first and foremost, for the cultivation of his yams. It is easy to see how a large household could be an asset. This explains the profit motive of the Ohafia man who adopted his captives. Yam was the most prestigious crop, the cultivation of which, by some kind of division of labour, was the primary responsibility of the man. Farming activities which formed the backbone of the economy were limited by the seasonal nature of rainfall. Apart from farming, the principal pursuits of the man which spanned the long dry season period lay elsewhere.

By the division of labour referred to above the cultivation of the bulk of the crops which sustained the family the year round was the responsibility of the woman. She cultivated beans, vegetables, maize, cocoyams and so on. She also collected the various inferior wild growing substitutes for yam which

included Adu, Akpo, Ukpa and Anina. And mainly with the help of her male counterparts, she processed palm nuts for oil, coconuts and kola nuts both for consumption and for sale. Trading, which was largely local, was the sole responsibility of women. It was infra dig to find a man in the market either buying or selling. In any case the main items for local trade were the cheap domestic farm products. Women exchanged surplus of this to gain revenue for the family.

It is easy to see that the lion's share of the responsibility for the ordinary food requirements of a family was taken by the woman. This imbalance was repaired by the responsibility of men for procurement of everything that was not produced by village industry. It was in order to fulfil this role that Ohafia men got involved in part-time pursuits of various occupations and in warfare.

We have mentioned that local trade involved items of low value such as farm products which could be purchased with a few cowries or brass rods depending on the quantity. This aspect was left to women. But the other category of goods like matchets, guns and other weapons and implements, iron, spiritous liquor, textiles including the prestigious 'gorge' cloth, beads, copper torques, salt, tobacco and other

products from long distance were the exclusive responsibility of men either to purchase or to sell. The different groups, especially the Aro who were on friendly terms with Ohafia, made the supplies of these goods to Ohafia. Usually the Aro man who brought these items preferred to be paid in slaves. The onus was therefore on the Ohafia man who desired any of the items to go to war or engage in mpipie and obtain the captive necessary for the exchange. Much of the exchange of this kind took place at Isaga, a large slave market in Ohafia which has astonishingly escaped the knowledge of many a scholar who has investigated the subject. It was situated in Ndi-Uduma-Awoke in the dense natural vegetation along Arochukwu road.[36]

Goods also flowed into Ohafia from other groups of long distance traders. The Nkwerri and Abiriba, for instance, supplied the weapons and iron implements of Ohafia people. Occasionally they were paid in military service but in the main, exchange of this kind involved currencies. Such other items as pottery were supplied by Edda and Ishiagu and salt

36. The picture above emerged from my extensive field work on the subject, augmented by information collected by my indefatigable field assistant, Kalu Iroha.

came from Uburu.[37]

The impression ought not be formed that slaves were the only article Ohafia supplied to the outside world. For one thing, there are traditions about sale of yams or land when critical financial problems confronted a family.[38] This is not inconsistent with our earlier submission that large scale sale of yams was unusual. The fact is that there was a long standing trade between the coast and the interior in livestock and foodstuffs from the interior on the one hand and salt fish and other riverain products from the coast on the other. The volume and value of this trade were even increased during the heydays of the Atlantic trade when the need to sustain the slaves with familiar foods gave a filip to a provisioning trade in food items, especially yams.[39] The assumption, therefore, is not far fetched that Ohafia relayed her

37. Oral information from Kalu Iroha of about 35 years on 8/11/85 in his residence at Ebem Ohafia. Kalu Iroha is an ardent student of Ohafia history who has written a number of articles on the area. His B.Sc. dissertation in political science to which we earlier made reference, is also based on Ohafia. He is, at present, an employee of Ohafia Local Government.

38. Based on oral information from Chief U. Arunsi of about 70 of Amaihe, Elu-Ohafia, in his residence at Amaihe on 21/4/85.

39. Northrup, op. cit., see especially chapter VII.

yams and other food items to the coast.

By 1900 Ohafia was linked with other areas by a labyrinth of trade routes. Probably the most important one was the north-south trade route running into Igboland through Nsukka and radiating from Opi and Nike, veering east-wards through Uburu and Okposi to Afikpo. From Afikpo it sent out branches, one through Abiriba to Bende and the other through Ohafia and Ihe to Arochukwu.[40] It was mainly these routes that took Ohafia itinerant professionals in and out of the area. Hence, by the opening of the 20th century, Eke Kalu along with Nsi Oji, Okwara Isinku, Kalu Akata and Otusi were already in Akwete where they settled briefly 'making native hoes, gongs, nails and other small things'. Eke sojourned in such other places as Bonny and Opobo. It was while at Opobo that he met Ukoha Nake and Amogu Akwukwa 'both of whom were Ohafia native doctors on professional tour'. This suggests that Ohafia itinerant native doctors were used to long distance travel of this kind. Eke was yet to meet another group - Obosso and Orie - whom he joined to return to

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40. Elizabeth Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, Macmillan Press, London and Basingstoke, 1976, see map in p. 60.

Ohafia.[41]

It will be clear from the analysis above that before the beginning of this century Ohafia was an integral part of the production and commerce of south-eastern Nigeria exploiting the services of other groups and rendering her own services in return. Ohafia was already an avid consumer of exotic items such as we have noted above and sent in her own products, mainly yams and slaves into the streams of trade. The more usual engagement of the ordinary Ohafia man at the opening of our period was farming activity, trade, carving or other itinerary professions or warfare. It is important to bear this in mind in order to understand and appreciate the revolutionary implications of the pax Britannica which not only altered the nature of the trade but also provided opportunity for salaried jobs. We will, in the mean time, turn to the last dimension of our portrait of pre-colonial Ohafia society - the super-structure.

The Superstructure

The much-talked-about democracy of the Igbo people was village-based. Each village was split into a number of compounds called ezi and each ezi was

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41. Eke, op cit, pp. 158-9.

a collection of households, each headed by a man.[42] Just as the household was the basic unit of labour organisation, it was also the basic unit of political organisation. The man handled all important issues arising from his family. It was only if the matter could not be resolved within the household or if it concerned serious breach of village law and morals would it invite the attention of the compound.

Political organisation began at the compound level. Ohafia people were residentially patrilocal. The head of the senior household headed the compound. He offered sacrifices for the welfare of his compound members whom he helped to extricate from their ritual, social and legal problems.[43] On their part, members of his compound owed him a variety of obligations. In some Igbo areas, he was entitled to orie-day work. This meant that during the farming season, members of his compound worked in his farm for one day of the Igbo four-day or eight-day week.[44] In Ohafia, however, it was not so clearly defined but he received similar services on a regular basis. He was also the head of the lineage land who thereby enjoyed the opportunity for accumulation attached to

42. Uchendu, op cit.
43. Ibid, p. 40.
44. Ibid

this important means of production as noted above.

When an important issue arose within the compound, it was settled by an assembly of all the household heads and all adult males. Issues which could not be finally disposed of at the compound level were taken to the village level. But before we come to the village level, it is important to mention here that a rival organisation to the compound was the matrilineage known as ikwu. Ikwu was residentially scattered since women and their children had to live with their husbands and fathers respectively. But the cognatic bond in Ohafia was indisputably tighter than the agnatic. Both the ikwu and the ezi each had ududu, a collection of small earthen pots planted in rows to symbolize the dead ancestors and members of each lineage. Ududu was the rallying point of the members of the lineage and was sacrificed to yearly by the oldest man or compound head in the case of ezi and by the oldest woman or head of the matrilineage in the case of the ikwu.[45] Apart from the question of residence, the organisation of the ikwu and character of appropriation which favoured age, was not significantly different from those of ezi. Here at the lineage level, however, governing

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45. Oral information from my late uncle Mr. O.K. Ume, during informal discussion sessions.

institutions founded on kinship stopped. From the village level, age-grades and title societies took over. But as we have said, it was issues which could not be settled by the ezi or (ohaezi) that were taken to the village or ohaogo.

Each Ohafia village was headed by an Eze ogo. Among some villages, the Eze ogo tended to be selected from certain compounds (as in the case of Amaekpu) or certain matrilineages (as in the case of Ebem). But that is all one can say about the lineage basis for the selection. Within the broad segments from which the choice was made, the ultimate determinant of the choice was achievement (material standing) and personal character. In this way, property ownership came to be an important consideration. Even then, the Eze ogo's influence in the running of the village was almost marginal. He did not attend meetings and therefore could not preside over them, and he performed no ritual functions.[46] The respect accorded him was based mainly on the material standing and personal character which recommended him for the post. The actual running of Ohafia society was carried on by age-based associations reinforced by titled men of which the Eze-ogo was one. However he still maintained

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46. Nsugbe, op. cit, p. 69.

a court and tried certain categories of cases.

Ohafia society was hierarchically structured on the basis of age and material attainment. The details of this vary with individual villages. Typically, however, the Oto-omu or Iza-afa ceremony marked the attainment of adulthood of an age grade. This was preceded by an accomplishment, mainly participation in war, provision of feast or accomplishment of such tasks as construction of bridges, roads and the like. The most important thing, however, was that candidates for Oto-omu ceremony and, therefore, for recognition as adults, must have been to war and must, each, have taken the ufiem title after the formal presentation of their human heads.

In some villages, the age-grade which had performed the Oto omu became the Uke ji ogo; in others, age-grades served as Uke ji ogo before they were qualified to go on and perform the oto omu ceremony. Usually, however, Uke ji ogo was the dividing line between elders and youths - the age-grades below this were expected to perform such jobs as uche or keeping vigil especially against such happenings as fire outbreak or external invasion or marauding slave hunters. They were also to execute construction of roads, cleaning of the village or its springs and so forth. Depending on the particular village in question, the

grades above Uke ji ogo were Akpan, Umuakaa, Uke Mkpa, Ukerabuo and Ndi ichin. The functions of these grades, in the words of Emeagwali, merged with administration. Akpan, for instance, was a powerful executive body which could arrest people in their houses, collect fines and so forth. In Amaekpu village, to possess the age qualification for membership of Akpan was only one aspect. Financial obligations were still met before membership became valid. In many other villages, once an age grade fulfilled the age criteria, membership of Akpan was automatic for all its members.[47]

In Elu and the seven other Ohaeke villages the most powerful legislative and executive organ was Umuakaa. This body was rarely constituted unless a very difficult matter arose which could not be settled by Akpan. Members of Umuakaa were recruited from Akpan, so age was an important criteria for

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47. I watched very closely the last Otomu ceremony in Ebem Ohafia which took place in Dec., 1984. I took part in most of the activities and it was during this time that I obtained information on every bit of Ohafia political process not hitherto clear to me. This section has benefitted immensely from the exercise.

membership. But one of the strongest criteria for membership was achievement and 'one criterion for achievement', wrote Nsugbe, 'was the ability to maintain full stacks of yams generally demonstrated when a man takes the ike oba title'.[48] In the final analysis, Ohafia was ruled by an oligarchy of age. Title societies also formed important and influential cleavages of power which, altogether, enabled material wealth to exert very significant pressure on politics. We may give brief attention to title societies now.

The Igbo people have been said to be very individualistic, a tendency said to account for their passion for achievement and distinction.[49] In relation to this, Njaka has opined that 'the individual claims an extra-ordinary autonomy within the society and it is his belongingness to this group society that helps to develop in him his potentials, his initiative and drive for achievement'.[50] In the pre-industrial and pre-capitalist society of

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48. Nsugbe, op cit, p.62.

49. Simon Otternberg, 'Ibo Receptivity to change', in W.R. Bascom and M.J. Herskovits, (eds), Continuity and Change in African Cultures, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1959, p. 136.

50. E. N. Njaka, Igbo Political Culture, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1974, p. 60.

Igboland at the time, this 'drive for achievement' was expressed in terms of membership of expensive title societies.

Several categories of societies existed in Ohafia. Obon and Akang, for instance were, more or less, recreational secret societies with modest obligations for membership. They conferred no titles at all on members and they had very little to do with political power. Ekpe, on the other hand required stiff financial obligations for membership and carried with it, a good deal of political power.[51] Since it originated from the Cross River area just as Obon and Akang, it tended to be an inter-state class organisation. Forde and Jones are certainly inaccurate in lumping together Ekpe, Obon, Akang and Okonkon as societies which secured privileges and authority for the wealthy who could pay the admission fees.[52]

The most prestigious and expensive societies were Ekpe and Nnu societies. Like its counterparts

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51. Northrup, op cit.

52. D. Forde and G.I. Jones, The Ibo and Ibibio speaking Peoples of Southeastern Nigeria, published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, London, New York and Toronto, 1950, p. 20.

among the Efik and Aro, Ekpe society performed masquerades and miming acts that imitated the leopard. Entry to the seven tiered stages of full membership was open to any adult male no matter their class or status. Ekpe was an instrument for education of its members into the nuances of Ohafia culture just as was the case with the Aro. The society insisted that miming and drum language were crucial skills to be mastered by its members. They also stressed the ability to interprete the Nsibidi in speech, in writing and in response to the calls from drums or the gong. 'The drum signals', pointed out Ekejiuba, consisted of tone patterns abstracted from speech, and the language of the speech took the form of proverbs and metaphors'. Learning these plunged one deep into traditional imagery and attitudes.[53]

Nnu yam title was the most prestigious and most coveted of all titles. It carried two stages of obligations though the first did not necessarily have to be performed before candidates could perform the main obligation for membership of Nnu society in the second stage. The first stage - called igwa oba -

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53. I owe much of the information on Ekpe to K.O. Dike and F.I. Ekejiuba, 'The Aro state: a case study of state formation in southeastern Nigeria', Journal of African Studies, 3, Fall, 1978, p. 297.

was supposed to be taken by male youths who were yet to attain adulthood as marked by Cto-omu ceremony. It required 3,000 to 4,000 yams to be tied at the barn of the candidate. If the required number of yams was met, then an extremely lavish entertainment of the candidate's age-mates followed after which the candidate was accorded recognition as a promising young farmer destined to join the Nnu society of distinguished farmers. The first to perform the igwa-oba in an age grade automatically assumed leadership of it. And since each age grade had important influence on village organisation, it is easy to see how wealth carried political power. The privileges of the man who had performed the igwa oba ceremony included taking the first share of kola and largesse provided during age grade meetings.

The second and most important stage of the obligations for membership of the yam title society was the igwa Nnu. This required very large capital out lay including imported gin or mmai zia ugbo, many pieces of 'geogi' cloth and so on and the basic requirement of 7,000 to 10,000 yams. Membership was consumated after a sumptous entertainment of Nnu members and the meeting of stiff financial obligations. At the end of a long ceremony, gun shots were fired to mark the admission of the celebrant into the select society of yam farmers. He was awarded the title of

Okogbua or Ogbuji.[54]

Usually, people were already advanced in age by the time they would be in a position to perform the igwa nnu. But whether a man attained the age or not, once he became a member of this yam title society he joined the administrative cadre in Ohafia society at the time.

It is clear from our analysis that age and wealth carried with them the exercise of political power, though there was due opportunity for any adult male no matter his material standing, to influence the political process. Ohafia society, therefore, did not quite fit into the picture of Fortes and Evans pritchard who submitted that the so called stateless societies were characterized by the absence of governing institutions distinguishable from the kinship system and the absence of the inter-play of wealth on the distribution of power and authority.[55]

Religious and Legal Systems

In the introduction we laid some stress on the religious character of the pre-colonial Igbo society. This has merely to be recapitulated here. It was

54. I owe this largely to Arua, 'New Yam Ceremony ...', pp. 20-21.

55. M. Fortes and E.E. Evans - Pritchard, (eds), African Political Systems, Oxford, London, 1940, see Introduction.

Samir Amin who explained the dominance in pre-capitalist societies of the 'politico-religious instance' in terms of the low level of development of their productive forces.[56] Being largely at the mercy of their environment, it is not surprising that these societies leaned on and worshipped the sun, moon, stones and other awe-inspiring objects for support and security. Echoing the same view, Prof. Ekejiuba has explained the development and popularity of the Ibin Ukpabi oracle in terms of the ancestors of Arochukwu moving into and settling in the less familiar and unhealthy environment of Arochukwu. This is said to have increasingly generated psychological and health problems such as high infant mortality and increase in the incidence of malaria, and these were problems which were generally referred to oracles, the traditional system of dealing with the unknown.[57] We can surmise that it was the same case with the Chafia who were, by the way, next door neighbours of the Aro in the less clement western bank of the Cross River and who settled in the area in the teeth of different kinds of military threats to life and property into the bargain.

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56. Samir Amin, Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism, Translated by Brian Pearce, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1976.

57. Dike and Ekejiuba, op. cit., p.272.

Shortly after their arrival at the present location, the ancestors of Ohafia installed their first great deity known as Ikwan, at Elu-Ohafia subsequently, the female counterpart of Ikwan known as Orie was installed and was supposed to be the wife of Ikwan. The duty of Ikwan was to solve the psychological and health problems of the people, to guard the community against enemies and unforeseen problems and to see the men through the hazards of war. Ikwan was also the final court of appeal in the sense that in intractable cases, litigants went to Ikwan to swear their innocence. As people dispersed to found new settlements or villages, they consecrated other deities to perform similar functions as Ikwan. Hence we have the Aga eke of Amaekpu, Uduma Mmini of Ebem, Idigiri of Amuma, Obu nkwa of Asaga, Ekpekwun of Amangwu, Oji ikpere aga ezi and others.[58]

The personality of each man was the product of the controlling influence of these deities as well as the different 'being forces' which were supposed to intrude into the lives of human beings in Igbo thought as described by Onwuejeogwu.[59] These forces

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58. Oral information from the incumbent chief priest of Ikwan, Agwu Chika of well above 80 years, in his residence at Elu-Ohafia, April, 1985, see also K.U. Osunkwa, 'The Udumeze chieftaincy Institution' unpublished article submitted to the Ohafia Improvement Union, Port-Harcourt branch.

59. Onwuejeogwu,'Igbo culture area'.

were represented in various other deities in Ohafia or Igbo landscape. Hence within each compound, there were many different objects of religious worship which children grew up to dread and to respect. Each personality was an embodiment of these convictions or religion, which religion was the totality of experience or history in an environment. It moulded his thought and action and was simply inalienable from him. The fact therefore that an individual Igbo man had reneged his religion was of little account; he continued to think and act from the context of his original (traditional) religious entry behaviour. It was this fact that rendered the wholesale conversion of Ohafia people into christianity or a fundamental transformation of the springs of society a remote possibility.

It is interesting, however, to note that as in other societies, the Igbo including Ohafia religion was tailored to maintain the existing division of labour and distribution of wealth - for instance, the Igbo believed that the evil spirit, known as Ekwensu intrudes into the lives of man, but that the extent of its success depends on the pleasure of the dead members of the community. Hence, a special relationship had to be maintained between the living lineage members and dead members through offerings of sacrifices to the dead ones.[60] We only need to remember

60. Ibid, p.7.

that it was the duty of living elders to offer these sacrifices, a duty which, as we have seen, offered ample opportunity for surplus appropriation. We now come to the legal system.

As has been hinted earlier, the political, religious or legal systems of Ohafia are not separable. The one derived from the other and all are products of the environment. It is merely for emphasis that we isolated them here. Law was custom and the traditional Ohafia rulers knew it without having to articulate it on paper. They did nothing that was not guided by custom, the contravention of which was a breach of law. Even warfare was guided by its own code; hence Prof. U.U. Uche has submitted that:

> The younger generation should be pleased to know that in spite of the apparent blind and primitive fury with which these wars were fought certain laws were observed, indeed very rigidly adhered to by our fore fathers. Our totemic unity with our kith and kin in the Abam clan was always highly respected to a point one can describe in modern terms as diplomatic immunity. There was the balance of terror respect for our neighbours of the Abiriba clan and the mutually beneficial co-operation between us on the one hand and the Aros on the other. At the lower operational level it was considered both demeaning and inhuman to bring back the head of a female after a battle. Females and children could only be brought back alive. One did not join, the club of the brave commonly called 'the oyayi' with a female or infant trophy. It did not require the Act of the National Assembly to enforce these laws.

> On the contrary the sanctions were a lot more ominous and the consequences of breach were predictable enough to constitute effective deterrents to deviants.61

It was the religious undertone of traditional law that constituted the greatest obligation on individuals to respect it. Igbo people did not require a police force to come and prosecute cases. Individuals confessed and submitted to the appropriate punitive measures spelt out by custom for fear of greater calamities. In Igboland, for instance, it is an offence for close relations to have sex or for married women to have extra-marital sex. If this was breached, offenders were supposed to be tormented by several difficult problems until they confessed and took appropriate steps to propitiate their sins. It is easy, therefore, to see why Ezeulu in Achebe's Arrow of God, even after hurling defiance at Ezidemili, began to ponder over the religious implications of his son, Oduche's act of imprisoning the python in a box. The custom of Umuaro was specific concerning a man who killed the python in advertently; he must placate Idemili by arranging a funeral for the snake almost as elaborate as a man's funeral. 'But there was nothing in the

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61. U.U. Uche, 'Change and Law in Ohafia' Ohafia Review, (1st edn) Dec., 1980-April, 1981, p.8.

custom of Umuaro for the man who puts the snake into a box... it was the kind of offence which a man put right between himself and his personal god'.[62]

The concept of law among the Ohafia was therefore remarkably different from those of the British and it is not surprising that conflict between the two on this was frequent as will be seen in chapter two. The matter of twin murder, for instance, was not just the act of 'barbarism' which the British termed it. To the Ohafia man, it was a question of fulfilling the law and custom in order to maintain harmony with the gods.

It is not surprising considering the agrarian background of Ohafia that one of the most serious cases of deviance was theft of agricultural products. Another equally grievous offense was extra-marital sex with a married woman. Offences of this nature, carried the penalty of death. By 1900, however, the Atlantic slave trade had, in the wider context of Africa, 'taken the place of the guillotine'. Serious deviants in Ohafia were simply sold to the Aro slavers. In this way, elders who had, by 1900, developed a remarkable appetite for exotic goods had started to

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62. Chinua Achebe, Arrow of God, Revised (edn) p. 60.

profit from crime. The view of Prof. Inikori is that this kind of incentive could have corrupted the legal processes of African societies 'leading to the conviction of innocent people for crimes they did not commit and the deliberate multiplication of crimes carrying the penalty of sale into slavery'.[63] There is every possibility that this applied to the specific case of Ohafia. The only caveat, however, is that elders and titled men who decided cases had strong religious obligation to be honest.

The above portrait represents Ohafia ~~society as~~ it was at the beginning of this century when the British smashed their way into the clan and let loose upon it various branches of their interests which began to work for change in the area. The next chapter will start off our endeavour at analysing these different British interests and the extent to which they wrought change in Ohafia society.

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63. J.E. Inikori, 'The origin of the Diaspora: The slave trade from Africa', Tarikh: The African Diaspora, vol. 5, no. 4, published for the H.S.N. by Longman, 1978, p.8.

Chapter 2

COLONIAL SECULAR ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS IN OHAFIA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the attempts of the British, after the colonial conquest of the area, at political and administrative control of Ohafia and to analyse the impact of this on the society.

Generally, control of clan areas like Ohafia was exerted at the local government or Native court level. The guiding principles of the Native courts in southern Nigeria were embodied in the various Native courts Proclamations and Ordinances issued from time to time up to 1914. From 1914 the governments of Northern and Southern Nigeria became subjected to a largely uniform system which endured till the women's riot of 1929. It was after this that attempts were made in the reforms of Cameron to base the government of south-eastern Nigeria on their indigenous practices. But even Donald Cameron's reformed system failed and subsequent adjustments continued to be made until the Eastern Region attained internal self-government in 1957.

The chapter begins with a delineation of the important administrative boundaries relating to our area of interest. This is followed by an analysis of the principles of the Native court system. The establishment of the Native court of Ohafia called Ebem Native Court is considered especially in relation to the grouping of Ohafia villages into Warrant chief areas. The judicial and executive activities of the Ebem Court are then examined especially in relation to the enforcement of "law and order" and the execution of forced labour. The role of the triumvirate of the court clerks, court messengers and the warrant chiefs is highlighted as a prelude to the discussion of Ohafia's part in the women's riot of 1929. The next phase begins with the reforms of Cameron which led to the establishment of the Ohafia Court and the Ohafia clan council. Ultimately, even Cameron's reformed system failed too, and the system continued to be tinkered till the attainment by the Eastern Region of internal autonomy in 1957. There is a final analytical summary of the impact of British secular administrative institutions on Ohafia.

Colonial Conquest of Ohafia

The establishment of British political institutions in Igboland was generally preceded by military conquest. The conquest of Ohafia was part of the

grand Aro Expedition designed to secure Igbo interior and therefore achieve what British round table diplomacy had failed to accomplish for over fifteen years after the London Gazette had announced that her Majesty had taken over the protection of the Niger Districts. By 1900 Ralph Moor had become satisfied that there was no possibility of British peaceful penetration into the interior given the ubiquity and mendacity of the Aro. By this time, the missionaries whose ambitions of staking out claims into the interior had long been frustrated had come to teem up with the secular arm of British interests. Indeed, as early as 1898, Ralph Moor and the Presbyterians had agreed that the Aro would be 'dealt with' and christianity imposed on the Igbo people. When eventually the Aro expedition was launched, the steamers of the Presbyterian mission took an active part while Dr Rattray, one of its medical missionaries, was chaplain and medical officer to the troops.[1]

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1. E.A. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis, Longman, London, 1966, pp. 113-4; see also A.E. Afigbo, Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo history and culture, University Press Ltd. in Association with Oxford University Press, Ibadan, Benin, Kano, etc, 1981, chapter 8.

The No. 2 column of the troops had instructions "to advance into Ohafia country and cut off the Abams, Eddas and Ohafias from co-operating with the Aros."[2] Before their arrival however, an Ohafia sojourner, Eke Kalu, who got wind of the operation while in Calabar, came home to warn some Ohafia villages against resisting the British.[3]

The troops advanced on Ohafia through Edda and arrived first at Okagwe. At the time of their arrival, Okagwe people were in an ambush against Edda enemies. But the apprehensions of the troops were alleyed by prompt compliance of Okagwe soldiers to the retreat order of James Watt, the captain of the troops. The

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2. C.O. 520/10 no. 7 From the officer commanding the Aro Field Force, 19 Dec., 1901, cited in S.N. Nwabara, Iboland: A Century of Contact with British, 1860-1960, Hodder and Stoughton, London, Sydney, etc, 1977, p. 101.

3. Eke Kalu had been sold into slavery in Bonny and while there, he learnt some English. By the time he got his freedom from his master and returned to Ohafia, he was the only person in the clan who could speak English at the time. This much is clear from his autobiography. See Eke Kalu, 'An Ibo Autobiography the Autobiography of Mr Eke Kalu, Ohaffia's well-honoured son', The Nigerian Field vol.VIII, no. 4, October, 1938, pp. 158-170.

troops marched on through Elu without event to Ebem. No sooner had they arrived at Ebem than Ebem people came out in mass to decapitate them. Eke Kalu did what he could, however, to restrain these 'head hunters' and the troops camped at Ebem.[4]

The day after the encampment a large scale violence took place. Accounts are various about the cause of this, but it would appear that one of the African soldiers among the troops tried to seize a pot of wine from a certain Idika Igbeke of Ndi Ukpola compound, whereupon the latter, already bitter that soldiers of unknown land had been suffered to spend the night at Ebem-Ohafia, drew his matchet and severed the soldier's head. In reaction, the soldiers went straight into combat. Of course, that fellow was shot. They rained their bullets on all directions and set Ebem ablaze. They then smashed their way back to Elu where Eke Kalu employed his meagre resources of English to dissuade them from fighting at Elu. Various other Ohafia villages were to have a taste of the white man's "fire and sword" and for various reasons. In the case of Akanu, this was to dissuade them from "hunting for heads" from among the troops while one of the many drives against Asaga was a measure to induce them

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4. Ibid, p.163.

to yield notorious war prisoners said to have been given asylum.[5]

The show of strength of the British was overwhelming to the Ohafia people. For the first few weeks after these major encounters, these soldiers of unknown progeny were still marching up and down the Ohafia country daring any of the rather awe-stricken male population to move a limb. It was the first time such a thing happened in the entire history of Ohafia. If Ohafia appeared to acquiesce in subsequent measures taken by the British to establish control, it was because conquest had done violence to their (Ohafia people's) self-confidence.

The Administrative Boundaries

By 1900 the Niger Coast Protectorate had acquired the lower Niger waterway which was formally under the Royal Niger Company. The administrative adjustments which followed this resulted in the creation of the Cross River Division in addition to the already existing three divisions: Eastern, Central and Western Divisions. When therefore the

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5. C.O. 520/31, Captain E.C. Margesson to the High Commissioner of Southern Nigeria, 6 June, 1905, cited in Nwabara, op cit , p.112.

Aro expedition yielded up 6,000 square miles of Igbo territory including Ohafia, an administrative consolidation followed. The Cross River Division came to comprise Bende District (of which Ohafia was part), Arochukwu sub-district, Afikpo District and Obubra Hill District.[6] Ohafia therefore started its colonial life as a clan in Bende district of Cross River Division.

The epoch of Divisional administration came to an end in 1906 with the amalgamation of the Protectorate of southern Nigeria with the colony and Protectorate of Lagos. With this development, Divisional administration was substituted for Provincial administration. Under this system all the Divisions of the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria were grouped under Western, Central and Eastern Provinces, with headquarters at Lagos, Warri and Calabar, respectively. Below the provinces were the districts which formed the administrative units of each province. In the case of the Eastern province these administrative units were Bende of which Ohafia was part, Arochukwu, Afikpo, Abakaliki,

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6. This is based mainly on The Nigeria handbook (compiled by A.C. Burns) 3rd Issue, Government Printer, Lagos, 1921; Afigbo, op cit, pp. 307-310; Nwabara, op cit pp. 162-3; H.A. Gailey, The Road to Aba: a study of British administrative policy in Eastern Nigeria, New York University Press, 1970, pp. 51-54.

Umuduru, Owerri, Aba and Ahoada.[7]

With the 1914 amalgamation, Lugard split the three provinces of the south into nine, one of which was Owerri province under which Ohafia was grouped. The divisions of Owerri province were Okigwe of which Ohafia now formed part, Aba, Degema and Owerri. It was in 1928 that some adjustments were made in Owerri province resulting in the carving out of additional two divisions - Ahoada and Bende - from the already existing four. Consequently Ohafia was transfered back to Bende division of Owerri Province. These administrative divisions were to survive in this form till the creation of Regions by the Macpherson constitution which came into effect on 1st January 1952.[8] Ohafia thereafter, remained part of Eastern Region at the end of our period.

The Owerri Province which covered an area of 7,405 square miles had an estimated population of 1,900,000 as at 1925.[9] It was bounded on the north by the southern boundary of Onitsha Province, on the East by the south-west boundary of Ogoja Province

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7. Afigbo, op cit, p. 310.

8. See Elizabeth Isichei, A History of the Igbo People, Macmillan, London and Basingstoke, 1976, p. 141.

9. National Archieves of Nigeria, Enugu, (henceforth N.A.E.) OW 367/26 Umprof 4/5/1 Annual Report, Owerri Province, 1926, p. 2, item I.

and the western boundary of the Calabar Province, on the south by the Bight of Biafra and on the west by the Eastern boundary of the Warri Province and a portion of the Eastern boundary of the Benin Province. The Owerri Province was between north latitudes $4^{\circ}25$ and 5° 55.[10]

The Bende district is in the North-Eastern corner of Owerri Province bounded on the North-East by Afikpo, on the North-west by Okigwe, on the south west by Owerri, on the south by Aba and on the South-East by Ikot Ekpene.[11] The district covered an area of 829 square miles. It consisted of the following clans: Ohafia, Umuimenyi, Alayi, Itu, Abam, Olokoro, Abiriba, Ibere, Igbo, Umuahia-Ibeku, Item, Igberre, Ibeku, Bende, Oboro, Ozuitan, Ubakala, Isuorgu (Ndi afa) and Isuorgu (Ariam).[12] Ohafia which we single out here for study was one of the 19 clans of Bende division of Owerri Province.

The Administrative System

The colony of Southern Nigeria, like any other

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10. Ibid

11. Based on Map in Isichei, op cit, p.146.

12. N.A.E., OW 6698 Umdiv 3/1/653, Reform of Native Authorities, Bende Division, see the Native Authority Ordinance, No. 17 of 1943, p.42.

British colony in West Africa, was ruled by a Governor assisted by Executive Councils composed of officials who were primarily heads of the technical departments and were thus extremely powerful beings, with little internal or external checks to their authority. But in the early years of colonial rule, they were desk-bound, busy running a growing bureaucracy, drawing up plans for development, hampered by poor communication. The actual representative of the British administration was the District Officer or District Commissioner. The Governor in Nigeria had under him the two lieutenant Governors who, in turn, had their own bureaucracy to manage, leaving administration to the Residents of the Provinces.[13] The Residents and District officers were expected to pay much closer attention to the conduct of the native courts because these courts were, in the words of Nwabara, "the only effective administrative weapons for controlling the people apart from military force."[14] The political and administrative divisions noted above were therefore followed with the sub-groupings of a Division into Native court areas, indeed local government areas. It is at this level of local government area that

13. I owe this to Michael Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule, Hutchinson of London in Association with Ethiope Publishing Corporation, Benin City, 1968, p.205.

14. Nwabara, op cit, p. 166.

that the majority of Africans came to feel the impact of colonial rule. Therefore, any meaningful discussion of the impact of British secular establishment on a clan like Ohafia must be based on local government or Native court area. But before we came directly to the Ohafia Native court area, it is necessary to make clear the general working principles of the Native Court system.

The Native courts proclamation of 1900 established a two-tiered system of Native courts. In the lower category were all courts presided over by a 'Native authority' which was in every case a chief and ipso factorknown as minor courts. Above these were courts called Native Councils which were presided over by political officers and all of which were located at district headquarters. The personnel of the courts were people who held warrants of appointment from the high commissioner or his representatives and who could not be deprived of their membership without his express approval. For any session a Native court bench was to comprise the president, the vice president, three other members and one member specially summoned to represent the village or district in which the dispute arose. For the minor court the president was to be elected quarterly by the members. The two classes of courts were to be guided, as far as possible, by 'native law and custom not opposed to

natural morality and humanity'.[15]

The minor courts consisted of a president, vice president and four members. It had jurisdiction in civil matters involving up to £25 in cases of debt or £50 for inheritance. Native council cases were limited to those not exceeding £200. The Native councils had the power as well as (at least in principle) the duty to supervise the minor courts. Rather ironically the two grades of courts were to be guided by 'native law' but the real power lay with the Divisional Commissioner. He could intervene at any stage of proceedings to transfer a case to a higher level, to announce a verdict or to order a retrial. He also had the power to suspend or remove any member or, in fact, to suspend or stop the functioning of a given court.[16]

Each Native court had at least one clerk whose functions were to prepare the list of cases, call members for court sittings, issue summonses, keep records of the sittings, make sure the judgement book was signed and keep a record of the intake and disbursement of all monies by the court. Since each court was expected to be financially self-supporting,

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15. Laws of Southern Nigeria for 1900 and 1901, p. 430; I have also benefitted from A.E. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs: Indirect Rule in South-eastern Nigeria, 1891-1921, Longman, London, 1972, p. 84; and from Gailey, op. cit, pp.56-57.

16. Calprof 10/2 Proclamations No. 9 of 1900 cited in Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p.85; see also Gailey, op cit, p. 57.

they charged a variety of fees for their services.[17]

The judicial function of the courts on which we have dwelt at some length was only one aspect of its functions. There were also the legislative and executive functions as specified in the proclamation of 1900. Thus every Native court enjoyed the power to make by-laws dealing with matters like the construction and maintenance of roads, the establishment and preservation of landmarks, the preservation and abatement of nuisance and the provision of ground for burying the dead. The Native courts also possessed specified executive powers. 'Each had', in the words of Afigbo,'the authority of a justice of the peace', the power to bind people over to keep the peace, to prevent or suppress public disturbances such as riots and affrays; to execute supreme court orders or the orders of a District Commissioner, to seize and send to the supreme court people accused of serious crimes like robbery, murder and slave dealing.[18]

The 1900 proclamation had a number of defects. These were repaired by reforms embodied in (a subsequent) Native courts proclamation 1901. This made no

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17. For details, consult Laws Southern Nigeria 1900 and 1901, pp. 433-4; see also Afigbo, The Warrant chiefs, p.88.

18. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p. 89.

Meanwhile, Lugard had assumed the Governorship of Northern Nigeria. Both himself and his ardent disciples like Richmond Palmer and Margery Perham found the system of government in the South grossly inadequate by Indirect Rule standards. When therefore Lugard undertook the assignment of amalgamating the Northern and Southern Nigerias in 1914, he streamlined the administration of the two areas and administered some doses of Lugardism on the south.

Four grades and five different types of courts were created. The 'A' type of court consisted of either a paramount chief and his advisers or in the muslim North an Alkali court. The B-C- and D-grade courts were those with varying jurisdictions operated by petty chiefs. The D-grade was to be used for small areas and its jurisdiction was limited to debt cases not exceeding £10. The Ordinance making these provisions[22] ended the supreme court's jurisdiction over native courts. It also restricted political officers to supervisory role over the Native courts rather than presidency, though district officers could still transfer cases from Native courts

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22. Native Courts Ordinance, 1914, The Nigeria Gazette, 1914.

to their own courts.

In an attempt to check the excesses of the court clerks, the latter were made paid government servants rather than having them dependent on the revenue of their Native courts. In fact the Native treasuries as established by Moor were abolished. The volume of records to be kept by court clerks was drastically reduced and it was stipulated that court clerks should not be retained in one post for over two years.[23]

Another Ordinance created Provincial courts with superior and concurrent jurisdiction to the Native courts.[24] One court was designated for each province where the Resident, acting alone, could deal with civil cases up to £100. After these innovations in the south, no other important changes occurred - apart from minor adjustments in 1924 - until after the riot of 1929.

The Ebem Court

Meanwhile, in 1902 Moor reported to the colonial office that he had instructed the District Commissioners for Bende and Arochukwu:

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23. Ibid

> to take immediate action to form Native Courts for the settlement of individual and tribal disputes, which is really the surest method of inducing the natives to take up the produce trade, for by it, a means is provided of settling all disputes and the lives of individuals are rendered safe and property secure.25

In response to these instructions, the first court in the Bende district was opened in Bende. The District Commissioner, Mr Palmer himself, came to Isiugwu - Ohafia to recruit warrants who represented the largest Ohafia villages.[26] Two of these warrant holders, Kalu Oyeoku of Ebem - Ohafia and Ikenga of Amangwu - Ohafia, have survived in our records.[27] Thus Ohafia had its first experience of the Native court system in the Bende court. Colonial control during this brief period was, however, perfunctory; it was only after the estblishment of the Ebem court that an effective control began.

The Ebem court which was a 'C'-grade court was named after Ebem-Ohafia village where it was situated.[28] It was established between 1904 and 1905, and became the centre of operation of the warrant

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25. C.S.O. 1/13 Despatches to F.O. and C.O. 1891-1906, see Despatch no. 157 of 12.4.02 from Moor to C.O., cited in Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p.86.

26. N.A.E. No. 29/96 C.S.E. 1/1/6 C.J. Mayne, Intelligence Report on Ohafia clan, 1934, item 22.

27. Ibid, item 23.

28. I am aware that a section of Ohafia people persistently claim that that piece of land belongs to Elu.

chiefs, court clerks and court messengers. In fact it was the central unit from which the 25 villages of Ohafia were controlled and administered. Table II:1 shows the first set of warrant chiefs randomly listed in oral information obtained from the Isiama villages.

This list does not indicate the periods served by each warrant chief, but we know that all of them could not have served during the same period. In Amaekpu, for instance Ugbaga Ulu was the successor to Emele Udonsi. The fact is that the register of warrant chiefs under-went frequent changes due to cancellations of warrants, deaths of the usually aged warrant holders or voluntary surrender of warrants on age and health grounds.[29] Table II:2 represents the earliest written register of warrant holders which the present writer was able to get at.

Though this is not our concern here, it ought to be remarked that the inadequacy of the administrative division of Ohafia is clear at first sight. Many large villages were not represented at all, while others, small though they were, got more than one

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29. Deduced from the information in N.A.E., 40/21 Okidist 4/3/35 Ebem Native Court, see memo from D.O., Bende to Resident, Owerri Province 1/11/20.

Table II:1

The First set of Warrant Chiefs in Ohafia

(random list from oral information)

Ohafia Village	Warrant Chief
Amaekpu	Udonsi Emele
	Ugbaga Ulu
Ebem	Kalu Oyeoku
	Arunsi Uka
	Ukoha Ngam
Akanu	Nna Onwunta
Abia	Okoronta
Asaga	Nsi Igbeke

Source: Oral information from the following: Elder Ibem Olaka of Ebem Ohafia, above 100 years of age in his residence at Arochukwu road on 15/4/85; Chief Anderson Okoko of the same address, above 100 years, in his residence at Arochukwu road on 8/11/85. The list is also contained in (and I saw it before I went into the field) J.O.A. Okwara, 'British Conquest and Administration in Ohafia 1901-1935' B.A. Special Project (History and Archaeology) U.N.N. 1981, p. 23.

Table II:2

Earliest Written Register of Ohafia Warrant Chiefs and the villages they represented (1914).30

Warrant holders	Villages represented
Okoronkwo	Abia
Ikenga	Amangwu
Kamalu Oyeoku	Ebem
Ago Igara	Nkwebi
Onwunta	Akanu
Okparaoma	Okoni

30. Most of these names were so wrongly spelt that they looked absurd and unlike Ohafia names; I have edited the list.

Warrant holders	Villages represented
Ụma Ukoha	Elu
Ụkoha	Mgbaga Ebem
Ẹmele Udonsi	Amaekpu
Angyi	Ndi Imaga Elu
Imeri	Amankwu Amaekpu
Uma Igwe	Ndi Agbo Akanu

Source: N.A.E. OW 117/14 'B' Rivprof 8/2/49 Warrant Chiefs - Lists of chiefs for Native courts and towns under jurisdiction of the courts, see schedule A.

warrant chief. Thus, Asaga did not appear at all, while Elu, a much smaller village, had two warrant representatives. The criteria for a village getting two representatives or a representation at allare ~~even~~ hard to discern. Probably the suggestion from an informant, which the present writer had thought was bone out of cynicism, may not be off the mark. It was suggested that the only villages represented were those which could send representatives.[31] This is highly probable considering the fact that three - Amaekpu, Ebem, Elu - of the four villages represented by more than one warrant chief are Isiama villages situated very close to the court.

In 1916, however, a document said to be the

31. Oral information from Mr D.N. Dike of Amaekpu Ohafia of about 80 years in his residence along Arochukwu road, Amaekpu on 17/4/85.

correction of Ebem Native Court warrants was produced. (see Table II:3), showing the villages accorded warrant representations. A few of the large villages which were not included in the previous list, like Isiugwu and Asaga, were now represented. And for each village, details of the major compounds were shown. Some of these 'compounds' were indeed villages which, on account of their small sizes, were grouped under larger villages close to them. It is this category of compounds that 'X' in front of them.

By 1921 Ebem had not became a flourishing court. Only 11 of its 13 chiefs were active.[32] Villages like Nkwebi and Ndi Orieke now stood as warrant chief areas and vacancies existed even in the older warrant areas like Elu and Okon. To this effect, 13 new chiefs were put forward for appointment and the D.O. endorsed all but two. See details in Table II:4. It was intended that this 'new blood' would help to 'rescucitate' the court.

The other personnel of the Ebem court, the

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32. N.A.E. OW 149/16 Rivprof 8/4/101 Ebem Native Court - correction of warrants for, see memo from officer incharge of Okigwe to the Resident, Owerri Province, 19th March, 1921.

Table II: 3 Ebem Native Court showing major Ohafia villages and their component compounds (1961)

	Village	Important compounds	Remarks
1	Ebem	Eziukwu	
		Ekeluogo	
		Mgbaga	X
		Ndi Okala	X
2	Elu	Ama-Ihe	
		Ndi Imaga	
3	Amaekpu	Ngodo	
		Ama Oba	
		Amankwu	
		Ama Ukwa	
4	Amangwu	Ezi Ukwu	
		Ekeluogo	
		Ndi Mbila	
5	Okon	Amafia	
		Amagu	
		Okon nta	
6	Asaga	Atani	
		Eziukwu	
		Amafia	
		Ndi Obu	
		Ndi Ezera	
		Ndi?	X

	Village	Important compounds	Remarks
		Ndi Orieke	
		Ndi Ibe	
		Eziafor	X
		Amuma	X
		Ufiele	X
7	Okagwe	Abua Nta	
		Ndi Obu	
		Eziukwu	
8	Nkwebi	Ezinkwu	
		Ndi Ichem	
		Ndi Anku	X
		Ndi Uduma Ukwu	
		Oboro	X
9	Akanu	Amafor	
		Ekeluogo	
		Ndi Odo	
		Utugha-Okoko	
10	Ndi Uduma	Ndi Mbila	
		Ndi Agwu	
		Ndi Ikpo	
11	Abia	Mgbaga	
		Ndi Omu	
		Ndi Akanu	

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	Village	Important compounds	Remarks
12	Isiugwu	Ndi Okpo Ndi Mba Ekeluogo Ndi Oji	

Source: N.A.E. OW 149/16 Rivprof 8/4/101 Ebem Native Court - Correction of warrants for.

Table II:4: Chiefs approved for the Ohafia villages of Ebem court, 1921, and the villages they represented.

Warrant chiefs	Villages represented
Uboro	Asaga
Ucho	Okon
Ugbo	Eziafor
Uma Anya	Elu
Kalu Nkata	Okagwe
Ozuke	Akanu
Amawunta	Okon
*Eme Ibisi	Amaekpu
**Ibe	Mgbaga
Eme Okpa	Amaekpu
Eke Obasi	Asaga
Eke Kalu	Elu
Uduma Kalu	Ndi Uduma

Source: N.A.E., 40/21 Okidist 4/3/35 Ebem Native Court, see Resident, Owerri Province to D.C. Okigwu District, 24.3.21.

* Rejected because many people opposed his candidature.
** Rejected because he is too young.

court clerks, are well documented in oral tradition. The first of them was Mr Hart. When he went to jail he was succeeded by Jumbo who, was nick-named Afomiri, then by Mr Brown who when convicted and jailed, made way for Vincent nick-named Ajagirigwe. Vincent also ended up in jail. It is tempting to go into discussion of the conduct of these court clerks, but such a temptation must be resisted for now. In 1915 this category of Ebem court staff was made up of E.A. Yellow as the court clerk, with S.N. Nzeagu as his Assistant and two unnamed court messengers.[33] These were the persons through whom at different times the British effected colonial control of Ohafia.

Before we go on to examine the working of the court, it is necessary to be more precise about its objective which was part of the overall colonial objective already somehow outlined by Moor in the minute cited above. This objective was economic exploitation of the colonised people through involving them in the 'produce trade'. The optimum condition for the involvement of the people in the produce trade was a condition of "law and order." This

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33. N.A.E., OW 6727 Umdiv 3/1/661 Bende District Handing over note of Mr R.H.J. Sasse to Mr w.D. Goldie Morrison, item 15.

was what the court was meant, in the first instance, to enforce. It had two major aspects: suppression of conflicts between groups and settlement of disputes between individuals; suppression of practices which the British considered inhuman - human sacrifice, infanticide, slavery and so on.[34] It is first of all in the light of this that we will consider the working of the court.

Suppression of Conflicts and 'Obnoxious' Customs

As far as the suppression of conflicts and settlement of disputes are concerned, there is enough evidence to show that the Ebem court justified its existence. The need to challenge the exaggerations of colonial apologists who suggest that pre-colonial Igboland was in a state of bloody anarchy should not blind us to the actual situation which obtained. Many groups were at war with each other and the routes were anything but secure. There would otherwise not have been the necessity for extensive blood pacts or igba ndu which cut across clans involving mainly traders.[35] In fact our disquisition about Ohafia

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34. Elizabeth Isichei, Ibo People and the Europeans The genesis of a relationship to 1906, Faber and Faber, London, 1970, p. 158.

35. F.I. Ekejiuba, "Igba ndu: An Igbo mechanism of social control and adjustment", African Note VII.2 (1972), pp. 9-24.

Okagwe cutting down palm nuts within their (Nkwebi's) boundary. There were some other more minor allegations which had indirect or remote connection with this. They included maltreatment of Okagwe people and raping of Okagwe women all by Nkwebi.[38]

These allegations were serious enough and contained the seed of large scale violence. It was usual not to forgive such an affront since it would go down in history as defeat for any village so affronted. But with the establishment of the court and the new colonial dispensation, there was no alternative to settling the dispute in the court. The case was tried as case No. 457 22:6:6, and the verdict, which the District Commissioner, Frank Hives, suspected to be 'wrong' was in favour of Nkwebi, thus forcing Okagwe to write the petition in question.

Many such cases which would have triggered off hostilities between villages or clans were settled. The warrant chiefs and the other court officials were instrumental in reporting them and when, after 1914, it was no longer competent to handle such cases,

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38. N.A.E., EP 1198/06 Rivprof 5/1/25 Bende District Okagwe - people of complaint by against towns of Nkwebi and Ebem for ill treatment. See results of enquiries made re-petition of Okori and others of Okagwe.

they were taken to the superior courts. When in 1952 Mayne requested for a police post at Ebem, it was largely in view of the explosive situation that existed, on the one hand, betweer Ikun and Okon Ohafia and, on the other, betweer Biakpan and Asaga-Ohafia.[39] A police post would augment the court to enable him concilliate or repress these disputes. The court system was therefore an important part of the process by which warfare was stamped out in Ohafia.

But what occupied the Ebem court even more was the trial of numerous land cases, many of them fomented by warrant chiefs who stood to gain either by the number of cases tried or through money lent to land litigants at fantastic rates of interest. Some of these cases look protracted especially as they were tried in different courts with different verdicts. One such case was the land dispute between Oburu Kalu and Kamalu Ojo Ebi both of Amaekpu-Ohafia.[40] It was first tried at Ikun and the bulk of the land was declared to belong to Oburu Kalu while a certain portion of it was assigned to Kamalu Ojo Ebi. Both parties apparently were dissatisfied with the verdict and the case was taken

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39. N.A.E., 1260/1A Umdiv 7/1/23 Police post Ebem Ohafia, see item 5.

40. N.A.E., OW 6738 Umdiv 3/1/669 Land dispute Bende-Ebem court Obunka of Ohaffia.

up again, this time before the chief of Amaekpu. The verdict here was that Oburu Kalu should take possession of the land wholly and solely. But again the case was revived by Nanalu Ojo Ebi and now in Ebem court and the verdict was in'his favour'.[41] It was in the face of this verdict that Oburu Kalu petitioned the District Officer in 1916.

Many such disputes which would probably have constituted an obstruction to peace and which were hitherto handled by the traditionally constituted judicial authorities, now went to the court. Such cases were appearing in court in such an alarmingly high number that Mr Weir, rather adversely, noted in 1921 that Ebem court had always been unsatisfactory. 'Most of its time', he maintained, 'is taken up in hearing petty little land cases which appeared to come up every year'.[42] The 'unsatisfactory' state of the court is not the point at issue now. In fact the personnel of the court was extremely corrupt. The important thing is that by settling all these disputes, justly or unjustly, it succeeded

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41. It is not explicitly clear whether this means that he got all the land in dispute or larger portion than he had been awarded by the Ikun court.

42. N.A.E., OW 6843 Umdiv 3/1/702 Bende District Handing over notes Mr Weir to major Stevenson, May, 21st, 1921.

in maintaining a semblance of peace.

The next thing is the question of suppression of the obnoxious practices which still formed part of life in Ohafia. An important caveat here to note is that Ebem court had no competence to try cases arising from this class of offences after 1914 - such class of cases dealt with 'offences in which superstitution was likely to pervert the course of justice'. This included cases such as the poison ordeal, the murder of twins or their mother, cases of alleged witchcraft, etc.[43] Lugard stipulated that such cases should be tried in the provincial courts. In this case, therefore, the role of the British subalterns, especially those associated with the Ebem court, was merely to report such offences for prosecution. Eke Kalu, one of the warrant chiefs said to have even run a private court in his house, used intimidation and prosecutions to ginger the people of Isiugwu into stopping twin murder. The punitive capacity of the British once guilt was proved worked the magic in stopping these 'evils'.

A good measure of the credit for stopping the

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43. F.D. Lugard, 'Native Courts in southern Nigeria' in the file OW 225/14, cited in Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p. 131.

'obnoxious customs' belongs to the missionaries and until the detailed role of missionary activities is brought out in the subsequent chapter, this subject must be regarded as not having been exhaustively treated. Apart from establishing twin mothers rehabilitation home at Asaga-Ohafia, the missionaries and their Ohafia converts were quick in reporting any cases of twin murder or human sacrifice or attempted commission of these crimes. It was christian agents, for instance, who gave evidence leading to the conviction of Kalu Ufie and two others for twin murder.[44] But apart from christian missionary efforts, the very existence of the court and the fact that it had become the only institution which possessed the right under law to deal with certain classes of offences arising among the people constituted a strong campaign and blackmail against these practices.[45] In the course of time, the number of people prepared to risk confrontation with the British by indulging in these practices dropped drastically.

Thus, the Ebem court had come to stay as an instrument for enforcing the new (British) concept

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44. N.A.E., RP 507/1930 Umdiv 4/1/1 Twin murder Rex vs Kalu Ufie and two others.

45. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p. 253.

of order and morality. The fact that it was successfully settling a number of disputes, justly or unjustly, meant that it was fulfilling its objectives. And it was also largely successful in enforcing the new morality preached by the British. By this new standards of morals, a man sacrificing to the highest god he knew, or ritually killing twins to propitiate the earth goddess, was branded a murderer and punished for this 'crime'. The court therefore served mainly British interests and much of its convictions were of offences which would never have arisen in traditional Ohafia society. In table II:5, while the more familiar and traditional offences, for instance, like wounding, assault, slander and stealing had such low figures of cases as 6, 20, 4 and 11 respectively, the rather unfamiliar 'offences against Native court rules', alone, had 153 cases. The possibility is that society must have watched helplessly as many of its members were punished for what it did not conceive of as offence. The manner of punishment was, itself, equally strange even for the more familiar offences. Stealing, for instance, which the Ohafia people usually punished by the guillotine or sale into slavery, merely received a jail term from the Ebem court to the shocking disappointment of the people. The court was therefore

designed to serve the objectives and interests of the British and it was largely irrelevant to the needs of traditional Ohafia society.

The bulk of the cases which arose from among the people were handled by the traditional judicial authorities sketched out in chapter one. For one thing, it would have been reckless of a man to side-track the familiar traditional judicial authority and take his case to the court where he had little understanding of the book mysteries or control over the factors taken into consideration in the final determination of his case. A close examination of table II:5 already cited above would appear to confirm this. Given the close interaction and inter-dependence of individuals in the traditional Ohafia society, it would be impossible to have had only four cases of slander from the entire 25 villages for a whole year. The likelihood is that the bulk of such cases were tried outside the court and by traditional judicial authorities. The same applies to such other cases as wounding, stealing and assault which equally had suspiciously low figures of cases. Right from the inception of the Ebem court, therefore, it existed side by side with traditional authorities and each carried on inspite of the other. As far as the Ohafia man was concerned, therefore, the Ebem court

Table II:5 - Summary of Criminal Cases in the Native Courts of Bende Division for the Year, 1925

CASES	NATIVE COURTS					
	Bende	Umuahia	Oloko	Ayaba	Alayi	Ebem
Grade of Court	B	B	C	C	C	C
Murder						
Manslaughter						
Attempted Homicide						
Wounding	17	11	64	24	7	6
Assault	24	56	24	10	74	20
Rape	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slander	-	-	-	-	-	4
Stealing	25	27	26	12	38	11
Stealing with violence	-	-	-	1	-	-
Burglary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against morality	3	-	-	-	-	-
Injury to property	5	22	1	-	14	8
Abuse of office	-	-	-	-	-	-
Riot	14	-	-	-	-	-
Fraud	-	-	-	-	-	-
Resistance to Authority	44	14	176	199	64	44
Revenue offences	-	-	-	-	-	-
Offences against Native Court rules	139	129	-	-	-	153
Other offences	115	160	135	9	183	154
Total no. of Cases Dismissed	237	487	748	548	373	272
Total Criminal Cases	623	906	1174	803	753	572
Adultery	15	10	14	13	8	41

Source: N.A.E., Ow 367/26 Umprof 4/5/1. F.H. Ingles' Owerri Province Annual Report, 1926, see Native Court Cases, p.1.

was important merely as an addition to the many alternative avenues for justice.

In the final analysis, it would be an exaggeration to say that the basis of Ohafia custom and social organisation was destroyed. In fact the colonial rulers never had any cause to do more than the superficial thing of stopping human sacrifice and murder. The oracles and gods to which these sacrifices were made survived unscathed, unlike those of other Igbo groups, though even among such groups, the whole scale rooting out and substitution of pre-colonial social organisation system was never achieved. Ohafia people had never been major slave-traders except in so far as warriors sold the excesss of their captives. Once conditions encouraging warfare was destroyed by the British, Ohafia slave trade died with it. The British therefore had no cause to dynamite the oracles in a bid to stop slave trade, unlike the case with the Aro. The religious basis of the political system was therefore never disgraced and the political system was never forcibly disorganised.

Thus, the shrines, the oracles and the other symbols of the traditional religion had only to survive occasional desecration from fundamentalist

neophyte christian converts, as will be detailed out in the next chapter, rather than physical violence by the colonial establishment. Hence, the Kamalu, Ududu, Nfijioku and the more strategic oracles like Ikwan and Aga-eke survived the colonial deluge. That they survived meant that the life and soul of Ohafia custom continued to exist. The weight of socio-economic and political power that resided with these institutions and the personages associated with them were so heavy that it is almost possible to say without exaggeration that the court system had only marginal influence on the people.

It appears that many Ohafia people were even not aware that they must not resolve their cases by resort to traditional authority. Hence, Oburu Kalu could state in his petition to the D.O. that a case which had earlier been tried in Ikun court was taken to and re-tried by the chief of Amaekpu[46] as if that was not a very serious offence. Oral informants from Ohafia have spoken with one voice that such law-enforcement agencies as Akpan, Umuakaa or Ukerabuo have never ceased to perform their functions. And happily Ohafia institutions have proved to be very

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46. N.A.E. OW 6738 Umdiv 3/1/669.

adaptable as the handwriting of change appeared on the wall. Hence, in the place of a yearly human sacrifice, the Ikwan, for instance, was content with the sacrifice of a deer caught alive by women from the bush.[47] It was in this same way that the warrior club, Okerenkwa, changed gear. Candidates for membership were no longer required to have killed a man but to have performed a manly feat like the killing of a lion or elephant. Thus did Ohafia institutions maintain a continuity in a world of change.

Forced Labour And Its Impact

There was an even more specifically executive aspect of the job of the court. This was ordained by the forced labour proclamation of 1903 No. 15, the basis of which one must offer a little discussion. The fact is that the colonies of Britain were expected to be financially self-supporting. But up to 1903 when the colonial secretary, Chamberlain, left office, the colonial administration in Nigeria continued to receive financial support from the British government. After his departure, however,

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47. Oral information from the Chief Priest of Ikwan, Agwu Chika of Elu Ohafia, about 90, in his residence (close to Ikwan) at Elu.

the government developed increasing tight-fistedness against colonial expenditures. The liberal government which was confirmed in office in 1906 was now more interested in 'Darkest England' than 'Darkest Africa'. "Their priority task", wrote Nicolson, "was not the development of Chamberlain's new estates, but the remedying of poverty and desperate social evils at home..."[48]

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the colonies became obliged to pay their own costs. In this regard, it is important to note that although Lugard confessed to the imperialist purpose of the British in Africa - "... it is the genius of our race to colonise, to trade and to govern"[49] - he insists that this has brought the blessings of civilization to the colonised peoples. The question then arose as to what kind of contribution Africans should make for this civilization.

As far as Lugard was concerned, this contribution was to be in the nature of direct taxation which was even of "moral benefit to the people by stimula-

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48. I.F. Nicolson, The Administration of Nigeria: Men, Methods and Myths, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969, p. 121.

49. F.D. Lugard, The Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa, Edinburgh, 1922, p. 619.

ting industry and production".[50] He pontificated that there is no civilized state in the world where direct taxation has not been found to be a necessity. African communities, therefore, which aspire to become civilized must share in the common burden of civilization.[51]

Nothing was unusual about the imposition of direct taxation on the emirates of the North, for this had been a feature of their life. But as Crowder has pointed out, whenever proposals of direct taxation were put forward for peoples not accustomed to it, the colonial office remembered Sierra Leone.[52] This was precisely the case in south-eastern Nigeria in the early period of colonial rule. Since the colonial authority could not levy direct taxation on the people of this area, it had recourse to forced labour as an alternative means to taxation of making the African work for the new goal of civilization set for him.

The practice was that if a road had to be cleared or any other type of job needed to be done,

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50. F.D. Lugard, Revision of Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects chiefly Political and Administrative, known as The Political Memoranda Issued in 1906, London, 1919, Memo no. 55, 'Taxation', para. 4.

51. Ibid, para. 6.

52. Crowder, West Africa, pp. 206-7.

the D.C. issued the order to the appropriate court. The court clerk consulted the court roster of warrant chiefs to see whose turn it was to provide the labour and then notified the chief accordingly. This warrant chief, the main executive agent, then summoned a meeting of his 'headmen' and they planned and executed the job in the traditional communal manner.[53]

In Ohafia, the jobs were organised on the basis of age-grades.[54] One of the first jobs completed in this way was the construction of temporary court buildings. This was followed by the building of the rest house. Even the carrying of the D.O. from Bende to Ohafia and back in his hammock, was detailed to age grades.[55] Unpaid labour became so easy to obtain that by the time plans were being made for putting up the prefabricated Presbyterian central manse, Rev. Collins made specific allowances for the aspect of the labour, especially the carrying job from Ikun beach to Ohafia, which would be rendered free of

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53. G.I. Jones, 'Chieftaincy in the former Eastern Region of Nigeria', M. Crowder and O. Ikime (eds), West African Chiefs: their changing status under colonial Rule and Independence, University of Ife Press, 1970, pp. 312-324, see p. 318.

54. For more details of age grade organisation in Ohafia, see Anya Kalu Iche, "The Age grade system in traditional local government system of the Ohafia community", B.Sc. Project, Political Science, U.N.N., 1972.

55. This is based on oral information from Mr D.N. Dike cited above.

charge.[56]

In relation to the issue of change in Ohafia one of the most important jobs executed under the forced labour act was construction of roads. In many parts of Igboland, we hear stories of brutal coercion of people to work on the roads. The case of Ohafia was essentially the same. But in the 1920s when this job began in earnest in the area, many people had already developed a cosmopolitan outlook. Some were already settled in places like Itu and Calabar.[57] A section of the people - though by no means the majority - had therefore come to appreciate the importance of roads in enhancing trade and development. Hence, even at the planning stage of the roads, sections of Ohafia people had sent representations to the D.O. to make suggestions of appropriate routes and, by implication, to re-assure the authorities of Ohafia's commitment to rendering labour.

Even more important was the fact that the construction of the major roads linking Ohafia with other clans and towns had been delayed till 1928 when the forced labour code was repealed and direct

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56. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6 of 22nd June, 1911, item 27.

57. A.O. Arua, A Short History of Ohafia, Omnibus Press, Enugu, 1951, p. 22.

taxation introduced. From this date, therefore, it became theoretically illegal for anybody to employ forced labour.

All these considerations made the D.O. to exaggerate the voluntary nature of labour for the construction of these roads. "It need be added", he minuted to the Resident of Owerri Province in connection with the roads involving the labour of Ohafia and adjoining clans,

> that all these roads are being constructed by entirely voluntary labour and that no compulsion is being brought to bear by the elders on their people to make them work. It is the younger men themselves who want the roads rather than the elders.58

In relation to the voluntary nature of the job, the D.O. was definitely inexact. The fact is that the masses of Ohafia people on whose backs the construction of roads fell did not think they had any alternative to doing this unpaid job. Many of my interviewees denied that people voluntarily opted to do the job. It would seem that the authorities of Ohafia, invariably the warrant chiefs who were part of the colonial establishment, decided on the job and then imposed it on the people who, in any

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58. N.A.E., 722/3 Umdiv 3/1/730 Roads and Bridges, see item 10.

case, were not well informed to understand that direct taxation meant an end to forced labour. And once the job started, even mere threat of the normal prosecution for absentees must have been enough to forestall truancy.

Roads were mapped out to link Ohafia with Umuahia. It was to cross Alayi, Uzuakoli and other clans, all of which were to contribute contingents of labourers. The first phase of this road was southwards to link Ohafia with Arochukwu. A different road was projected to the south-eastern direction of Isiama Ohafia to pass through Abam and link Bende with Ohafia.[59] Work began on these roads under government supervision and control. Labourers came in succession as members of specific age grades as explained above and court messengers were assigned to supervise the job. The most important of these court-messenger supervisors was son of the soil, Akaji Eke, who emerges from oral tradition as the hero of the road construction. People did not only have to appear for the work but had to work hard enough. Arua testifies that Akaji "did all he could to see that laziness was stamped out among his workers". To this end he "flogged the grumblers mercilessly"

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59. N.A.E., 7227/3 Umdiv 3/1/730

to urge them on.[60]

By 1928 the Arochukwu - Ohafia stretch of the road had been completed; due credit should be given to the exertions of Eke Kalu. In January 1931 the Ohafia-Alayi-Uzukoli-Umuahia stretch was completed and on 5th February of the same year, captain Hill drove the first car into Ohafia. From then on, medical officers began to frequent Ohafia in their cars. Thus, Ohafia had been opened up to the 'light' of British civilization. It was Governor Walter Egerton who once declared:

> Give me roads - good, broad straight roads right through the jungle from one tribal area to the next - then we'll be able to let in the light.61

The advantages of the roads to Ohafia, especially in commercial and developmental terms, will be examined in chapter 5.

The most detestable of all the jobs was labour for the construction of the railway. It involved members of specific age grades in succession, making overnight arrangements to travel to as far from Ohafia as Ugwu Oko where the rail line crossed. They worked for a specific period of time before being replaced

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60. Arua, op. cit, p. 22.

61. Quoted (without reference) in Nicolson, op cit, p.100.

Recruitment of

by another set of labourers in a different grade. these labourers devolved on the warrant chiefs. Though the railway job attracted some payment, it was none the less hated and if many had their way they would never have participated.[62] This, however, is not to deny the fact that some Ohafia people voluntarily accepted employment as labourers in the railway. But the number must have been very small. Out of a total of 13,000 labourers recruited in 1913 for the railway from Port-Harcourt for instance, only 4-7,000 voluntarily presented themselves for employment.[63] We have no information about the specific case of Ohafia in this respect, but this figure is instructive in general terms; much of the labour was forced. By 1915, Ohafia alone was already mandatorily supplying 600 labourers at a time for the railways.[64]

The Ebem Court Personnel

A few things ought to be said now about the main characters who ran the Ebem court. First, the

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62. Based on oral information from Ibe Ochea of Akanu Ohafia, 70+, in his residence at ndi Ochea compound on 7/11/85; and from Chief Anderson Okoko of Ebem-Ohafia, 100+, in his residence at Arochukwu road, Ebem, on 8/11/85.

63. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, p. 252.

64. N.A.E., OW 6727 Umdiv 3/1/661 Bende District handing over not of Mr R.H.J. Sasse to Mr W.D. Goldie Morrison, 6:8:15, see item 11.

warrant chiefs. As in other parts of south-eastern Nigeria, the British, on the establishment of the Ebem court, went on to issue warrants of authority to people thought to be the local leaders through whom it was their intention to rule 'indirectly'. Professor Afigbo has shown that in the area of south-eastern Nigeria there were multiple criteria for this selection and, especially in the teething period of colonial rule, many of those selected were, to say the least, not the indigenous rulers of the people.[65]

In the case of Ohafia, there are many different stories about warrant chief selection and all tend towards a vindication of Afigbo. Chief Okoko who is certainly the oldest man in Ebem-Ohafia today says that during the military engagement between Ebem and the British, two people were captured and taken to Oloko near Bende, for training for two years. It was after this two-years training, according to him, that the court was opened and these people came back to man it as the first warrant chiefs.[66]

The second version of the story is not much different. It has it that during the military engage-

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65. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs

66. Oral information from Chief Anderson Okoko.

ment with Ebem, one Oyeoku was captured and charged, on pain of death, to name the strong men of his town who could help to carry out British orders.[67] Most definitely, this man would never have attempted the sacrilege of naming any royal personage. Nowbeit, he used whatever criteria he pleased to point at a few people who became honoured with warrants of authority. Stories about the appointment of Ohafia warrants are almost too many. Mayne himself related that Mr Palmer had personally come to Isiugwu-Ohafia to issue warrants of authority to people. Even as late as 1921 warrants were still being issued with most indefinite criteria. Thus in Eziafor-Ohafia Ugbo Iro was issued a warrant merely on the recommendation of Rev. Collins.[68]

The extremely haphazard manner with which the chiefs were selected yielded a motley array of characters as Ohafia chiefs. Sometimes the man selected already had real authority in his village - Emele Udonsi of Amaekpu is an example. In other cases, those selected, if they were not the expendable materials of the society, lacked any traditional

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67. Okwara, op. cit, p. 23.

68. Iroha Kalu, 'Traditional authority and Political change: A Case Study of Ohafia Traditional Authority in Transition', B.Sc. Project, Political Science, U.N.N., 1982, p. 66.

credentials for leadership. Eke Kalu, for instance, who was an ex-slave native of Amaekpu-Ohafia[69] was consecrated warrant chief of Elu.[70]

Before long these warrant chiefs came to know and to demonstrate that the title was lucrative. By local standards their lives were surrounded by costly comfort and luxury. With their monies they imported double-barrel guns, special umbrellas, hot drinks, flowing clothes, helments and so on.[71] Increasingly they became notorious for their corruption and exploitation. Afigbo has submitted that nearly every warrant chief of the time was guilty of corruption, extortion and oppression.[72] Warrant chiefs generally including those of Ohafia grew rich by colluding to sell justice in the courts. They abused their rights of levying forced labour

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69. See Eke Kalu, op cit p. 158. The man said to have made Eke's mother pregnant of Eke at the time she was still the wife of a certain Elu man, hails from Amaekpu. Eke's claim to be a "native of Elu" should be discountenanced because nothing else even from the autobiography supports it. The claim is no doubt intended to legitimize vested interests at Elu.

70. N.A.E., 40/21 Okidist 4/N/35 Ebem Native Court, see Asst. D.O., Bende to the Resident, Owerri Province.

71. Okwara, op cit, p. 24, corroborated by oral information from Ibem Olaka.

72. A.E. Afigbo, 'Chief Igwegbe Odum: the Omenuko of history', Nigeria Magazine, 90, (1966), p. 228

for their private ends and they frequently engaged in money-lending to needy and unwarry litigants from whom they extracted fantastic interests.[73]

The corruption and misdeeds of the warrant chiefs is overwhelmingly documented in the traditions of the people. Cases have been cited where they carried albinoes impersonated as whitemen in hammocks round Ohafia villages. These 'whitemen' were taught to utter imitations of the white man's speech which was usually rendered as: 'subiri-subiri-subiri'. These were then given suitable interpretations. Sometimes it was interpreted to mean that the village was dirty and a fine of certain amount was imposed. Sometimes it meant that the white man wanted eggs and fowls.[74]

The other cohorts, the court clerks, often attained a power and wealth greater even than those of the warrant chiefs, especially after 1914 when Europeans no longer sat as the court presidents. Only the court clerk had the education to understand the esoteric mysteries of court procedure. Like

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73. Isichei, A history of the Igbo People, p. 147.

74. Okwara, op cit, corroborated by oral information from Ngwoke Awa of Amaekpu, well above 90 years, in his residence at Mission hill, Amaekpu, on 9/11/85.

the warrant chiefs, they grew rich through corruption, through the use of prisoners' labour and through money-lending.[75]

Oral testimonies have indicted the court clerks and messengers for collecting bribes of fowls, eggs, yams and coconuts. In some cases some of these items did not even have to be collected as bribes. Court clerks or messengers simply came into a village and cought some fowls and plucked coconuts unchallenged.[76] They also obtained different kinds of illegal services from the people especially under the guise of forced labour. There was for instance iyi ntugbu which was the regular fetching of water for the clerks and messengers. Young girls regularly scrubbed their houses. Not infrequently, the court clerks demanded to be treated to a dance by young girls. From the group of dancers, they detained the more attractive ones to whom they later made love. Products of such illicit sex deals are in many parts of Ohafia today and their identities are also too well known to the present writer.

Two of the court clerks - Hart and Vincent -

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75. Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, p. 147.

76. Based on Arua, A Short History of Ohafia, and on oral information by D.N. Dike and Ngwoke Awa.

were particularly notorious mainly because of their association with very important events. Each of these men was given to flogging and imprisonment. In fact, Hart had played a dubious role in the case between Okagwe and Nkwebi cited above. The Resident, obviously lacking trust in him, had recommended his suspension in connection with the matter. But it was in 1907 that Hart played his master card. He obtruded into a local political disagreement in Asaga and herded off the members of a certain faction into detention. Outraged by the strangeness of it all, Asaga people marched to Ebem, forced open the court door and released these victims. Hart's reply was simply to mobilize a police detachment on Asaga and the people ran into the bush as they were subjected to arson and rape. They still remember this event as uso nna anyi.[77] This was what earned Hart a jail sentence.

On his own part, Vincent once attempted to extort a fine of £30 from the Isiugwu-Ohafia people for not turning up for labour and for contempt of court. When they objected he attempted to

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77. Derived from Arua, op cit, p. 17 and from oral information from Anya Kalu Iche of Asaga-Ohafia of about 50 years at his residence on the foot of Asaga hill; see also his thesis, Iche, op cit, p. 18.

use force and nearly precipitated a serious rising. In another occasion Vincent gaoled all the members of an age grade in Elu-Ohafia. This particular incident forced Ohafia people to send representation to the Presbyterian mission to come and establish in Ohafia. The aim was for them to teach Ohafia people to read and write so that they would be able to challenge Vincent and his kind in future.[78] On arrival, however, the pioneer Rev. gentleman contacted his brother, the D.O. in Bende and securred a jail term for Vincent.

As far as the Ohafia man was concerned the visible exponent of colonialism was the triumvirate of court clerks, court messengers and warrant chiefs. By 1927 their depredations were alreay weighing rather oppressively on the people and constituted a blackmail on the British. Forced labour exactions especially on the roads and railways added considerably to this. When therefore in 1928 the British introduced direct taxation amid harsh economic circumstances, they had almost pressed the people to the end of their endurance. Meanwhile, following

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78. Kalu, 'An Ibo Autobiography', p. 164; Arua, op. cit p.19.

Cochrane's recommendation in 1926 the name, Ebem court, was changed to Ohafia court.[79]

The Women's War And Its Aftermath, 1929-50

What brought the colonial system in south-eastern Nigeria almost capsiding was the decision by the British to impose direct taxation on the people of this area. As far as the British were concerned, the arguments for this decision were compelling: the rest of Nigeria paid tax and it was an anachronism that south-eastern Nigeria should continue to remain exempt. Apart from this, payment of taxes would free the people of the area from the hated imposition of forced labour.

The proposal aroused bitter opposition from the people. Their objections were based on economic reasons in the first instance. The world depression had caused the price of palm oil to drop catastrophically and this tended to stress the effect of the already existing unemployment. But other than this, taxation seemed like a reminder of their subjection and a rent levied on their occupancy of their own land. It was preceded by a rough population count, and

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79. N.A.E., OW 7045, Handing over note, Cochrane to H.M. Lloyd.

by assessments of the value of land, livestock and so on. The assessment of the land seemed to herald a threat to their ownership of it.[80]

In an atmosphere of resentment, the British proceeded in 1928 to effect the collection without a major event. In the case of Ohafia, the incidence was 4 shillings.[81] It was an attempt to collect it again in 1929 that resulted in the conflagration lit at Oloko in Bende. Women in many parts of the Eastern provinces rose in resistance to the colonial authority urging the British to pack bag and baggage out of the country.

In Ohafia the war took the form of ikpa-mbogo, a traditional way of demonstrating revulsion of society against an abomination committed especially against the womanhood. In performing ikpa mbogo, women put on unusual dresses and looked ludicrous. They carried in their persons different kinds of objects - pistles, old morters, rubbish and so on and paraded the streets singing songs of condemnation against the abomination in question. It was

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80. Based largely on A.E. Afigbo, "Revolution and Reaction in Eastern Nigeria: 1900-1929 (The background to the women's riot of 1929)", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria (hence forth J.H.S.N.) vol. III, no.3, Dec., 1966, pp. 539-557; Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, pp.151-155; and to a much lesser extent on the Aba commission of inquiry notes of evidence.

81. Mayne, op cit, item 30.

in this way that women from all the villages of Ohafia converged at Isiama and marched to the Ohafia court to record their grievances. Some dumped their rubbish in the court premises. They then took a resolution binding them to the cause of all the women in the province and then proceeded to Bende to teem up with the rest of the women. They had already crossed the Igwu river before they were dispersed by the police. Their enthusiasm was further dampened by the news of deaths of women in other areas and of the situation in Bende having come under control.[82]

The riot had started on 18 November, 1929, and by January 1930 it had been brought under control through the use of army and police. At the end, the loss in lives of the women was officially put as 55 killed and 50 wounded by machine gun and rifle fire. What followed was a reconsideration of the entire colonial system in south-eastern Nigeria. The fact was that neither the application of Moor's system nor those of Lugard had been preceded by any detailed study of the indigenous political practice

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82. I relied heavily on Okwara, op cit, pp. 25-29 and on oral information from Obunkwa interview, see footnote 13 of chapter one for details.

in the area. The women's war demonstrated the strangeness of Indirect Rule as a method of governing the people of the area. What therefore followed was a detailed study of the political system of the people of the area and an attempt to base their administration on it. This new system was embodied in the reforms of Donald Cameron.

The Reforms of Donald Cameron

As a result of the said enquiries conducted into the indigenous system the boundaries of each court area were re-drawn to make each court coincide with an ethnic unit or a clan rather than the practice whereby the jurisdiction of some courts had cut across clans. Cameron's reforms begin even from the definition of Native Authority. It became divorced from the Native court. In other words, Native Authority was shorn of its judicial functions so that it concentrated exclusively on administrative functions. In fact the two were even embodied in separate ordinances. Ordinance No. 44, 1933 entitled, 'An Ordinance to make better provision for the Administration of justice and the constitution of Native Courts in the Protectorate' created four grades of courts, A, B, C, D enhanced with an appellate jurisdiction.

The D-grade court more relevant to us in the case of Ohafia had competence over:

> civil actions in which the debt, demand or damages did not exceed twenty five pounds. Criminal causes which can be adequately punished by imprisonment for 3 months or in the case of theft of farm produce or livestock, by imprisonment for 6 months, 12 strokes or a fine of five pounds or the equivalent by Native law or custom.83

The purely administrative aspect of the reforms was styled Native Administration. Four grades of Native Administration were established - first, second, third and fourth classes. The fourth class Native Administration for which Ohafia qualified comprised the councils of the clan, sub-clans and village groups. The selection or election of council members was left to the people themselves. They could appoint as many or as few as they liked while tax was collected by heads of families. Ten percent of the tax collected was paid back to those heads as salaries of executive village heads. Members of the councils held office in the Native Administration councils and courts subject to the will of the local people and they had to reckon with a challenge to their authority from the sophisticated and educated younger men, many of whom were already demanding the

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83. Nwabara, op cit, p. 204.

right to participation in the government of their towns and villages.[84]

The Ohafia Clan Court and Clan Council

In line with the indigenous custom of the people, sanction was given for the 'Amala' to sit in the court from April 1933 and as would be expected, it became wieldy. Some of the old warrant chiefs survived and retained their seats in the court. There was a total of eleven such cases. Both members of this court and those of the clan council were sent or selected by the different village councils that had also been constituted.

The administrative unit of Ohafia clan became the clan council which met regularly in a month. Members of this council were appointed and replaced by the various village councils. It had a secretary, (the first of which was) Mr N.A. Ndu and a constituted committee charged with the duty to enquire into clan affairs and report to the council. For the first time, the affairs of the clan were seen to be managed

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84. I have benefitted from the following works: Jones, op cit; Nwabara, op cit; N.U. Akpan, Epitaph to Indirect Rule: A discourse on Local Government in Africa, Cassel and Co. Ltd, London, 1956; A.C. Smock, Ibo Politics: the Role of Ethnic Unions in Eastern Nigeria, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971.

by a teem which could claim to represent the people. This was a point of emphasis in the reform. The stipulation that half the tax collected be spent on local projects by the council generated some enthusiasm for local development and the clan council itself saw to the collection of the taxes. Periodically it instituted court action against offenders when tax collection was unnecessarily slow in any village. By 1939, elaborate plans had been made for a separate treasury for the clan area and the campaign for this was championed by the D.O. himself.[85]

But even this new system had serious problems and it failed almost as woefully as the first. First the court and the clan council became unwieldy with a large crowd of people mainly old men who could no longer stand the rigours of the job. Some of them, especially with respect to the court members, made it a habit 'to sleep, eat or inhale snuff during the proceedings.'[86] Many of the chiefs in the council and the court were so ignorant that they easily fell prey to powerful interest groups. Hence, it would be seen that chief Idika Mba got the

85. This is based on information gleaned from N.A.E., OW 4152 Umdiv 3/1/541 Ohafia clan treasury.

86. Mayne, op cit, item 84.

thumb prints of many of them on a petition he sent to the Resident praying him to endorse the dismisal of Mr Mba Iroha, the Native Administration clerk. In his own petition against his removal, Mba Iroha secured the thumb prints of many of the very people Idika Mba had used like Kalu Eme, Ituma Arunsi, Obuba Kama and Uma Agwu to name but a few.[37]

Apart from that, many of the actors on the stage failed to change the spirit of the old system which had been created by the forced labour code. The exploitation of the people and prisoners' labour was still practised almost overtly. One instance of it which aroused a big controversy was Mba Iroha, the Native Administration clerk sending unconvicted prisoners to as far away as Umuahia to do his private carrying job. The fact that he claimed in his defense not to know that it was an offence is highly instructive. That was not all.

Eke Kalu who had somehow surrendered his seat in the court got appointment as a tax clerk. The D.O. later admitted that he had never heard 'one good word spoken of him' (Eke) and that he appeared to get on with nobody. Eke himself confessed to

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87. N.A.E., OW 90/1930 Umdiv 2/3/4 Mba Iroha appointment of as Native administration clerk.

being 'hated by some Ohafia people'.[88] The point we intend to make here is that this man who had achieved notoriety in the old system was not a good enough person for this job. Evidently he gave no quarter to the people but had exacted the taxes rather oppressively. His attitude was far from persuassive ever as Ohafia people were still trying to get used to paying taxes. Oral tradition in Ohafia is replete with accounts of his chicanery during the early days of the colonial establishment and of his excesses during the later period.[89] The point to be noted, therefore, is that the activities and methods of some of the staff of the Native administration cancelled out whatever favourable

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88. N.A.E., OW 4276 Umdiv 3/1/544 Kalu Eke Tax clerk personal papers see p. 15.

89. It is possible that this was merely the result of prejudice. Due to his sojourn in Calabar, Bonny and other places, Eke had become very sophisticated in outlook and had identified himself with the efforts of the white man to rid Ohafia of superstition. He joined in the campaign against twin murder, for instance, at a time Ohafia people still regarded cohabitation with twins as abominable. This might have led to prejudice against him, to justify which stories of both real and imagined misdeeds were told.

changes could have come with the new system. To the Ohafia man therefore there had not been a break in the continuity of colonial oppression since its inception.

What grounded the system were however more basic than all this. Igbo village groups including Ohafia had neither a specific set of traditional leaders to serve in the clan councils or courts nor a traditional practice of delegating authority to representatives in place of village meeting of all adults. But assuming even that strictly traditional practices were met, there would still have been serious obstacles. The attempts to accord recognition to the real traditional rulers and revive the traditional system of the society just when the society had begun to change was doomed to failure. They already have obtained a good number of educated elements and christians who felt they knew better. There were also, especially in the case of Ohafia many veterans of the first and second world wars who, with their much wider horison, could not be expected to be comfortable under 'illiterate village chiefs'. And in fairness to especially the educated elements, it should be noted that the clan councils, as they were constituted, lacked the understanding and skill to carry out

complex development programmes.

No wonder there were constant rifts between the educated elements like Ibe Mba and the elders of the village. It might have been lack of security that forced the elders to seek alliance with the foreign elements especially teachers from Calabar against whom Ohafia educated elements had a grouse?[90]

There was even another addition to the shortcomings of this system. Court members were as corrupt as the old warrant chiefs. Their numbers were as large as their remuneration were meagre. This was disappointing to them. But they made it up with bribes collected from litigants. By 1934 N.A. Otisi was already decrying the 'sale of justice' in the court. The fact that he appealed to a higher court and obtained a contrary (and favourable) verdict appears to vindicate his accusations.[91] With all these shortcomings, it is not surprising that when the heady winds of constitutional change started blowing after the second world war, the Native authorities seemed anachronistic. This was the background to the promulgation of the Eastern Regional local government Ordinance No. 16 of 1950.

90. N.A.E., OW 1013 Umdiv 3/1/56 Rex vs U. Abai of Ebem, Bende Division, see particularly Exhibit "B", 30/9/31.

91. N.A.E., 264/1930 Umdiv 6/6/2 Otosi A. Otosi, see p. 57, 23/4/32.

By 1951 the whole pretence of using traditional machinery in one form or the other had to be abandoned as unworkable. Some of the reasons include the break-down and ineffectiveness of the post-1930 system, popularly known as Native Administration. Another had to do with the developing nationalist politics. The educated elements who formed the vanguard of nationalist agitation did not find enough scope for action or employment in the Native administrations. As a further concession to this group the colonial administration imported a modified version of the British county and local government system under which members were chosen by election.[92] Ohafia then became part of Owuwa Anyanwu county council. Internally, the villages became grouped into four autonomous community areas viz: Isiama, Ania, Ohafor and Okamu.[93] It was under this system that Eastern Nigeria attained internal self government in 1957. Later still the county council system failed - most of them being corrupt and uncertain as to what their duties were.

The Impact of The Secular Establishment

The first thing to stress about the impact of

92. See Afigbo, Ropes of Sand, pp. 323-324.

93. Supplement to the Laws of Eastern Region, 1953, p.605B.

the secular establishment is the effect of conquest. The traumatic effect of British conquest on Ohafia will become clear when it is understood that the Ohafia man had no conception of a world beyond the narrow horizon of the people with whom he had contacts. This was the case with many other Igbo groups. As late as 1905, for instance, the people of Ahiara were ignorant of the existence of a white race. Hence, when in that year Dr Stewart who was travelling on a bicycle from Owerri to Calabar lost his way and strayed into Ahiara, he was put to death. Before he was killed Stewart was taken to neighbours of Ahiara "to show what they had caught". His bicycle was tied to a tree because it looked as if it would run away to tell the man's friends.[94]

The same ignorance characterized the Ohafia man. Stories of white men who came to buy slaves from the coast were more or less fables to him and within the narrow horizon of his contacts, the Ohafia man was intensely conscious of the awe with which he was regarded by neighbours and strangers alike. When therefore in 1902, British military expedition arrived in Ohafia, the Ohafia people were astounded,

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94. Elizabeth Isichei, "Images of a wider world in the 19th century Nigeria J.H.S.N., December, 1973.

first, by the physical appearance of the white man and by his over-powerful fighting spirit and method. One village, Ebem, was shelled and burnt down and the futility of challenging the white man was clearly demonstrated to the rest of the villages. Mythical tales about the invincibility of the white man developed and spread rapidly and the bulk of the Ohafia villages submitted even without hazarding a fight.

It will be seen, therefore, that contact between the Ohafia man and the British resulted, in the first instance, in the loss of self-confidence by the former. Following this crisis of confidence, quiet submission was to become the main, though not invariable, response of the Ohafia people to subsequent actions of the British in the direction of instituting colonial rule. This is an essential point of departure for understanding the why of British cultural impression on Ohafia.

The establishment of the court which was the first of the said actions was to have a far reaching effect on the lives of the people. It was the most visible expression of warrant chief rule and became "an out post of the British Empire". The court remained the cheapest and most effective means of

planting the British flag and remained a reminder of the British presence even after the departure of the conquering military force.[95]

With a staff of court clerks, court messengers and a couple of 'collaborators' called warrant chiefs garnered up with no specific criteria from different parts of Ohafia, it went on to undertake the enactment of laws and settlement of disputes in Ohafia. The court messengers went round the town, at times on the instructions of court clerks, to arrest people charged with offences and to bring them up for trial. By this action, the court tended to supersede the old village assembly and such pre-colonial law-enforcement bodies as Akpan, Umuakaa and Ukerabuo. Admittedly these bodies continued to exist and to control considerable parts of the people's life, but their powers had become circumscribed and, in theory, they had become illegal bodies. Hence Ralph Moor could scribble the following epitaph on them:

> Practically all the systems of the natives have to be done away with. I call them systems for want of another word, but it would be more accurate to

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95. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs, op cit, p. 250.

> say that their want of system and method has been done away with and native Government organised among them.[96]

This, however, is obvious exaggeration. The fact that Donald Cameron easily located the real traditional authorities and made use of them over thirty years later, shows that traditional authority and institutions had never become moribund. In actual fact, there was no one particular body that could be called traditional authority in pre-colonial Ohafia, just as in other parts of Igboland. This was probably why Sir Ralph Moor detected no system among the people. As detailed out in the preceding chapter, the compound or ezi, the village or oha-ogo, the Amala, the age grade, the Akpan, Ukerabuo, Umuakaa and elders or ndi ichin, each was a traditional authority and was qualified to hear and determine cases depending on its nature and the preference of a man. In a sense, therefore, the new British court system was merely one of the many alternatives open to a man.

But on the whole, it was a rival and an embarrassment to traditional authority as a whole

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96. C.O. 520/15, Moor to C.O., 8 August, 1902, cited in Isichei, The Ibo People and the Europeans, p. 161.

and the activities of its agents compromised the power of these traditional bodies. Cases were not wanting in which in the normal course of their duties, agents of the British disrupted and disorganised traditional proceedings involving the poison ordeal or cases of witchcraft. They, thereby, compelled this time-honoured procedure for establishing guilt to be carried out in camera. This also applied in many other instances where British and traditional customs were in conflict. It was this fact, probably, that helped to convince the neophyte native convert that his customs and institutions were barbaric and unworthy of respect. Some of them deliberately desecrated these customs on occasion, to demonstrate their estrangement from them. Even in such events, the Akpan, which they also shunned, came in only to charge culprits to British courts. If it attempted to deal with the case in the traditional manner, missionaries would make it seem as if it took the law into its own hands. While the traditional bodies, therefore, did not necessarily cease to carry on their functions, they literarily bent over backwards to avoid collision with the British at the cost of their prestige and power.

The fact of the British court standing as an

alternative to traditional avenues for justice helped to erode the power of the latter. Often culprits yielded to the court in preference to the traditional police of Akpan or the natives if their punishment was likely to be lighter with the former. In cases of theft, for instance, rather than risk capital punishment from the natives, culprits simply took refuge in the native court from where they ended up collecting mere jail terms. In the same way, elders or ndi ichin watched helplessly as disgruntled land litigants sought - and bribed their ways into obtaining - judgements contrary to theirs from the native court. In the end, if the rivalry of the British court did not dis-establish the traditional authorities, it at least whittled down their powers. Moreso as the educated elite, as detailed out in chapter four, had started to emerge and to challenge traditional title holders as centres of influence and as leaders of the people.

Another aspect of the impact of the secular establishment of the British concerned the political horizon of Ohafia people. Ohafia, indeed Igboland, was organised on the basis of what Isichei has called small scale face-to-face democracies. There was hardly any standing organization on a reguler basis along clan lines. Ohafia

villages had remained independent and incorrigibly local till the onset of colonial rule. It was colonial rule which introduced large scale political organisation in the area. The Ebem court and subsequently Ohafia court and Ohafia clan councils formed the central unit from which all the twenty five Ohafia villages were administered. Later in the fifties when county councils were created, Ohafia was re-organised into four autonomous communities. Thanks to colonial rule, therefore, Ohafia emerged from the self-centred village democracies to the wider political horizon of clan administration. But it needs to be mentioned that the latter introduction of autonomous communities sowed seeds of division as people in one community saw themselves in rivalry with others. Ajayi was correct when he stated that the most enduring and significant legacy of colonialism in Africa are its boundaries.[97]

Again, with the court and police systems, the symbols of its sovereignty, the British initiated actions which resulted in social change in Ohafia. One such action was the enforcement of peace and

97. J.F. Ajayi, "The Colonial Episode" in L.H. Gann and P. Duignan, The history and politics of colonialism 1870-1914, Cambridge, 1969.

security. About this matter, Crowder has written:

> If the European colonial powers brought nothing else to West Africa, they brought peace. The European administrator represented in his presence the end of wars and slave raids and the guarantee of freedom of movement for everyone.98

The import of the enforcement of peace and security to Ohafia is clear without emphasis; it put paid to the execution of warfare with all that implied to the life of the customs which hinged on this. Society inevitably had to re-adjust to this new development. It should be remembered that even the division of labour between men and women had reflected the need for men to have extra time for participation in war. But young men could now proceed to marry without first showing their military certificate. The elaborate military training hitherto intended to equip a young man for success in life was now out of the question and some would say that time was released for the acquisition of western education or participation in the produce trade. Once the military index for success was rendered obsolette, alternative indices jostled for primacy. Ultimately the most important one became western

98. M. Crowder, "The Impact of Colonialism", in J.N. Paden and E.W. Soja, (eds) The African Experience vol. I, Essays, North western University Press, Evanston, 1970, p. 240.

education which forms the subject of a subsequent chapter. This new index for success created an elite which helped to speed up the process of transformation of the remaining vestiges of Ohafia political economy of warfare.

In addition to stopping warfare, the colonial regime ruthlessly suppressed practices that were incompartible with the christian traditions of Western Europe, such as human sacrifice, twin murder and so on. This will be further detailed out in chapter three. By this, they "encouraged a scientific disbelief in the direct intervention of the super-natural forces in human society, and in this destroyed faith in the traditional sanctions that held society together'.[99]

We also need to mention the effect of colonial exactions of labour and tax. Ohafia people were drafted into the construction of roads and railways. Even as there were communal tasks in the pre-colonial period, none approached road or railway work in scale

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99. J.F. Ajayi, "The Continuity of African Institutions Under Colonialism", in T.O. Ranger (ed), Emerging themes of African history: Proceedings of the International Congress of African historians held at University College, Dar es Salaam, October, 1965, East African Publishing House, Nairobi, Kenya, 1965, pp. 189-200, see p. 195.

and physical exaction. It is not surprising that when taxation was added to this burden, people were forced to confront the colonial authority directly. Forced labour, however, brought specific advantages to people. Roads eased the burden of administration. It enhanced security and mobility. On the whole, improved communication helped the development of wider political horizon already stated earlier. Even taxation which now forms an important means of carrying out development projects, was, at the time of its introduction, as alien to the people as the British rule itself.

The theme of continuity which has loomed large throughout our analysis probably deserves only a mere mention here for recapitulation. It has been shown how the political institution which the British set about to transform was not even involved in the administrative institution which they set up. Thus, they left out the Amala, the Akpan, the Umuakaa and others and constituted a court made up of some indigenous rulers, careerists and vagabonds alike. The result was that the indigenous institutions continued to function side by side with the court though with circumscribed scale of influence. The fact that Cameron easily located the "real indigenous

rulers" of the people as late as the 1930s shows that the institutions of authority had never become moribund. But even this belated attempt to integrate it into a partly modernized (some would say 'Europeanised') society failed as woefully as the previous attempt to neglect it. Probably an important result of Cameron's efforts is that if at all traditional institution had been operating under cover, it was now given an opportunity for resurgence.

Chapter 3

MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN OHAFIA AND ITS IMPACT, 1910-1960

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the activities in, and impact on, Ohafia, of christian missionaries, a group widely believed to have disturbed traditional societies and 'de-nationalized' tribal peoples. Even before their arrival in Africa, missionaries had formed their impression about a people who sold one another into slavery, performed human sacrifice and so on. As far as they were concerned, the culture of such people lacked moral foundation and deserved to be entirely jettisoned in the process of bringing 'salvation' to them and 'regenerating' them. With this perspective and objective missionaries could not but unleash revolutionary influences on any community invaded by them. Somehow their objective dovetailed into the wider 'civilizing mission' of the secular arm of British interests. The two arms, therefore, frequently - though not always - saw themselves as partners. The said missionary perspective is treated in the first section of this chapter as a background to their invasion. Analysis then shifts to their actual invasion.

Different missionary bodies already hugged the coast before 1900, straining at the leash to invade the Igbo interior. Once, therefore, the Aro expedition of 1901-02 smashed and flung open the portals of Igbo interior, these missionary bodies rushed in and began a scramble for spheres of influence. To prevent conflict, the protestant bodies had a series of conferences to delimit their respective spheres of influence. This is shown to be a factor in the exclusive ownership of Ohafia as a sphere by the Presbyterians.

Christian incursions into Ohafia thus started at the very beginning of colonial rule, but none of the efforts quite succeeded until 1910 when the depredations of the secular arm of British interests forced Ohafia people to invite the Presbyterians to come and establish in their area and open a school so as to enable their children learn to communicate directly with the white man. Soon, the inevitable iconoclasm of the Presbyterians began and many converts began to shun accepted traditional norms or even to desecrate the different appurtenances of traditional religion. But in the main, Ohafia people retained a basically utilitarian conception of christianity. By 1930 a number of educated elites had emerged among them and had taken up white collar jobs.

Educated elements were particularly restive. By the 1950s lack of dynamism by the Presbyterians and their failure to provide higher education in Ohafia had resulted in the invitation of a rival Catholic mission in the area, and rivalry between the two bodies ensued with salutary results to Ohafia in terms of establishment of modernizing infrastructures such as schools. But this also led to the alignment of the Ohafia villages with the rival missionary bodies, thus exacerbating village feud and rivalry in Ohafia.

Background and Philosophy

The first incursion of christianity into Nigeria was the rather spasmodic efforts of the Portuguese to plant the religion in Benin and Warri in the 15th century. But little survived from this and the contact between Europeans and our forebears remained primarily commercial until about the middle of the 19th century. At first, trade was in sylvan products; but in the 16th century and for over 300 years, "living tools" became the main

export.[1]

By 1807, Britain, for both economic and philanthropic considerations,[2] abolished the trade and engaged in interminable struggles to persuade or brow-beat other European nations into surrendering the trade. By June 1837, two British merchants - MacgregorLaird and Richard Oldfield - published a narrative of their voyage up the Niger in the years 1833-34. In this work they drew attention to the fact that despite British expenditure in money and men for many years, the slave trade had increased rather than deminished in West Africa.[3]

This revelation moved an outstanding humanitarian of the time, Fowell Buxton, into proferring concrete suggestions of practical solutions to the

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1. E.A. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria; 1842-1914; A Political and social Analysis, Longman, London, 1966, p. 1; J.F. Ajayi and E.J. Alagoa, "Nigeria before 1800: Aspects of Economic Developments and Inter-group Relations", in O. Ikime (ed) Groundwork of Nigerian history, Published for the Historical Society of Nigeria by Heinemann Educational Books, (Nig) Ltd, Ibadan, 1980, pp. 224-235.

2. For a stimulating argument on this, see Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1944.

3. M. Laird and R.A.K. Oldfield, Narrative of an Expedition into the Interior of Africa, II, London, 1937, pp. 353-400.

problem of slave trade. Buxton claimed that the best way to stop slave trade and regenerate Africa was to establish legitimate commerce with the African rulers. According to him, by introducing commerce, civilization and christianity, "a blow would be struck at the nefarious traffic in human beings from which it could not recover".[4] Buxton appealed to every interest group in British society: businessmen, merchants, politicians, humanitarians and missionary societies. To the business and commercial prospectors, he gave a glowing testimony to the potentialities of Central Africa. To the humanitarian, his 'Bible and Plough' hypothesis would serve the cause of civilization and christianity.[5] Buxton thereby helped to enunciate the new strategy of the humanitarians of attacking the slave trade at its economic root. Not only were Africans to be shown an alternative to slave trade for obtaining European goods, but also missionaries were to come and allegedly save the souls of those rescued from slavery.[6] This was, at least in part, the back-

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4. T.F. Buxton, The African slave trade and its Remedy, London, 1939, Re-printed by Frank Cass, London, 1967, p. 309.

5. Ibid, pp. 308-336.

6. K.O. Dike, Origins of the Niger Mission; 1841-1891, A paper read at the Centenary of the Mission at Christ Church, Onitsha, on 13th November 1957. Published for the C.M.S., Niger mission by the Ibadan University Press, 1957, pp.4-6.

ground to missionary invasion of Africa including Nigeria.

The fact of African involvement in the slave trade coupled with early missionary experiences of African culture especially in relation to human sacrifice, canibalism, trial by ordeal and so on, and at a time when objective anthropology had hardly developed, imbued them with condescending impression of African culture and norms. This impression is clearly reflected in early missionary literature on Africa. Thus, Africa was characterized as "one universal den of desolation, misery and crime; and certainly of all the divisions of the globe, it has always had an unforturate pre-eminence in degradation, wretchedness and woe".[7]

In 1873 a returned missionary denied any civilization in Africa in the following words:

> The Chinaman meets you with the stolid morality of his Confucianism; the Hindoo with the astute logic for his pantheism... When I carry my torch into the caves of Africa, I meet only filthy birds of darkness.8

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7. Eugene Stock (ed) The History of the Church Missionary society, London, Church Missionary Society, 1899, cited in J.S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, University of California Press, Berkeley, London, Los Angeles, 1958, p. 91.

8. E.W. Blyden, Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race, London, 1887, p. 65, cited in Coleman, op cit, p. 91.

It will be seen therefore that while missionaries were ready to hold breath for the non-christian East in the question of traditions of civilization, Africa was dismissed as having nothing but 'moral darkness'. This early missionary perspective of Africa was itself, a reflection of the persistent general belief that the peoples of tropical Africa were fundamentally different from the rest of mankind. 'The universal view', recorded a lady missionary to Salisbury Square in 1889, 'was that the negroes were altogether depraved, a different creation from ourselves, an intermediate stage between men and brutes - without souls and incapable of being raised'.[9]

The depravity and backwardness of the African was put at the doors of three hundred years or so of slave trade and slavery in which Europeans had been implicated. The humanitarians and missionaries, products of the evangelical revival which swept through Britain in the closing years of the 18th century felt that Britain had 'a duty of expiation to perform toward the African' for her part in depopulating and degrading Africa during the two

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9. C.M.S. G3/A2/105, Higgins to Lang, 15 April, 1889, cited in Ayandele, op cit, p. 211.

and a half centuries of the slave trade".[10] In the main, this duty was conceived in terms of obliteration of the 'heathenish' culture of Africa in order to plant christianity. As Ayandele has stated, the fact is that christian missionaries were:

> fired by the idealism of a faith to which they ascribed, rightly or wrongly, the enlightenment, progress and technological achievements of their countries. They therefore perceived no wisdom in compromising with indigenous customs and institutions: the new wine of European christianity had to be put into new bottles ... They sought the creation of a completely new social order which would wipe away most of the customs and institutions of the old society.11

These conscious and determined revolutionaries made a three-pronged attack on Nigeria. The Church of Scotland Mission (henceforth C.S.M.) which later became the United Free Church and later still the Presbyterian Mission occupied itself with Calabar; the Church Missionary Society (henceforth the C.M.S.) established missions in the Niger Delta and up the Niger, and the Methodists, C.M.S. and the Baptists advanced into Yorubaland.[12] It is the

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10. See O. Ikime, The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest, Heinemann, London, Nairobi, Lusaka, Ibadan, 1977, p.4.

11. Ayandele, op cit, pp. 4-5.

12. M. Crowder, The Story of Nigeria, Faber and Faber, London, 1962, p. 113.

activities of the C.S.M., which mission was the primary actor in Ohafia, that will be brought more directly under focus in this chapter.

The Church of Scotland Mission

The story of the activities of the church of Scotland mission dates back to 1846 when Rev. Hope Masterton Waddel and his colleagues arrived and began work in Calabar town. Owing to lack of roads they relied on the Cross and Calabar rivers for access into the Ibibio interior and necessarily established stations in the communities in the course of these rivers.[13] Even then expansion on the Cross River was very slow, probably a factor of poor finances.[14] In 1884 it opened a station at Ikorona on the right bank of the river, 110km north of Calabar. Three years later, their northern district pioneer, James Luke, was stationed there. In 1888 Unwana was occupied - 165km north of Calabar and on the western bank. By 1890 Luke had explored

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13. E.A. Udo, "The Missionary Scramble for Spheres of Influence in South-eastern Nigeria, 1900-52", O.U. Kalu (ed) The history of Christianity in West Africa, Longman, London, 1980, pp. 159-181, see p. 161.

14. I made this deduction from various sources which will become clear in due course, but especially from Hope M. Waddel, Twenty Nine years in the West Indies and Central Africa: A Review of Missionary work and Adventure 1829-1858, Frank Cass, London, 1863 (2nd edn., 1970(pp. 193-196.

the river up to a point almost 400km north of Calabar. In 1893 he started to explore the eastern bank of the Cross River[15] which course would ultimately bring the church to Ohafia. But any advance in this direction was stopped by the local people due to the existing situation of trade and politics. Indeed there was a specific government ruling against missionary or commercial penetration of the Igbo interior which area was, as yet, considered unsafe. It therefore required the Aro expedition to make further advance in this direction.

Meanwhile, Mary Slessor was making severe exertions to spread the influence of the church of Scotland mission in the Cross River basin. She joined the Calabar mission in 1879 and transferred to Okoyong in 1888 where she spent the rest of her life. Okoyong became a base from which she organised a revolution in the lives of Efik - Ibibio peoples. It was evidently on account of her good standing with the people that she got appointment as a consul in which role she became more overtly an agent of British imperialism. After the Aro expedition, however, she gave up her consular duties to have more time for her missionary vocation

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15. Udo, op cit, p. 161.

and was invited by the government to open a station at Arochukwu.[16]

Paradoxically, the C.S.M. which had aided and abetted the Aro expedition showed very little drive for the penetration of the Igbo interior even when other missionary bodies were making feverish efforts to carve out spheres for themselves. This lethargy of the C.S.M. was very hypertensive to such dynamic avant-garde agents as Mary Slessor. In 1903 when the news came to her that the Roman Catholic Mission (hence forth R.C.M.) was about to establish in Bende it greatly distressed her that that 'corrupt body' was going to be the ultimate reaper of the rewards of the expedition.[17] She redoubled her pressure on the foreign mission committee in Scotland for even as few as two agents to open a station at Arochukwu, offering to build a mission house for such agents gratuitously. The reply she got brings out the issue of financial inadequacy of the C.S.M. more clearly:

> in view of the present condition of their funds, which are over-taxed by the already existing work, the committee deeply regret that it is beyond their means to add two new members to the staff ... and that therefore the sending of

16. I gleaned this much from W.P. Livingstone, Mary Slessor the White Queen: A true story of Adventure, Heroism and Faith, Hodder and Stoughton, London, first published 1931, 15th impression, 1950.

17. Ibid, p. 196.

two new agents to Arochukwu must be meantime delayed.18

Poverty and lethargy continued to be the special cachet of the C.S.M. and since it retained Ohafia as an exclusive sphere for over fourty years, this was to decisively affect both the quality of its ministry and the character of development in, and transformation of, the area. Meanwhile, we will now examine the process which led to the exclusiveness of the C.S.M. ownership of Ohafia area.

Missionary Scramble for And Delimitation of Frontiers in Eastern Nigeria

Following the Berlin conference of 1884-5 at which the European 'robber-statesmen' laid down rules for the partition of Africa, missionaries began to share in the greater imperial activities of the time. They were ready for greater expansion than had been contemplated by their predecessors, being, in the words of Ajayi, 'secure behind the British imperial lion'.[22] Even then, they still had

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18. W.P. Livingstone, Mary Slessor of Calabar, (London n.d.) 196, cited in O.U. Kalu, "The Battle of the Gods: Christianization of Cross River Igboland, 1903-1950", Ohafia Review:The Magazine of the Ohafia People, vol.I, no.2, Dec., 1982, pp. 9-121, see p. 10.

22. J.F. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891; The making of a new elite, Longman, London, 1965, p. 234.

to hold on in relation to the matter of penetration of Igbo interior. More missionary bodies arrived during this period in addition to the older ones already noted. In 1887 for instance the Qua Iboe Mission arrived in Eastern Nigeria and began work at Ibuno while the Primitive Methodist Mission arrived in 1897 and began work in Archibong town.[23] Before 1900 therefore Protestant denominations hugged the eastern bank of the Cross river straining at the leash for penetration into Igbo hinterland. Once therefore the Aro expedition smashed open the portals of this hinterland, missionary bodies began to scramble for territories in Eastern Nigeria in a manner not unlike the scramble of the different European countries for African territories in the last decade of the last century. Then, at a series of delimitation conferences which began in 1904 and ended in 1932, they partitioned Eastern Nigeria into denominational districts.[24] Our discussion of this matter here will be limited to the extent to which it concerns our area of irterest.

After the Aro expedition the acting High Commissioner at Calabar, Leslie Probyn, who had

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23. Udo, op cit, pp. 159-160.
24. Ibid

failed to persuade the colonial office to construct a mono rail linking Owerri to Asokpo, tried to make Owerri an important missionary centre. He invited the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) to come and establish in the area. To this end Bishop Tugwell informed the Church of Scotland Mission of his intention to establish a mission under the Niger Delta pastorate of the Anglican Church in the Igbo country with stations at Arochukwu and Bende.[25] It was in order to reach agreements on this issue that a conference was held between these two missions in 1904.[26]

The decisions of this conference showed that the C.S.M. made a complete sell-out to the C.M.S. - probably in order to forestall the R.C.M. which was the worse of two evils. In its despatch to its home mission in connection with this matter, the C.S.M. stated as follows:

> In reference to the proposed establishment of a mission under the Niger Delta pastorate in the Ibo country, with the

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25. It should be remembered that the church of Scotland mission was interested in these areas, especially Arochukwu.

26. I derived a good deal of the material for the discussion in this section from Udo, op cit and from F.K. Ekechi, Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland, 1857-1914, Frank Cass, London, 1971.

> stations at Aro chuku and Bende, if the Foreign Mission Committee of the United Free Church has withdrawn from the intention of making Itu a base for advance into this great and needy country, the Old Calabar Mission Council wish God-speed to that church which is in a position to fulfil the duty. The council regret that it has been necessary to neglect this great country behind their Riverside stations, but do not feel that it is right to keep others out from the work which they see little hope of fulfilling.27

The conference even went to the extent of allowing the Niger Delta pastorate to open a chaplaincy in the city of Calabar. Both this later extravagant concession which was, of course, rejected by the home mission, and the restless bid of the late-coming Primitive Methodists for space, constitute part of the problems that necessitated another conference in 1905.

In the 1905 conference the former decision relating to the Niger Delta pastorate opening a chaplaincy in Calabar was rescinded. And the application of the Primitive Methodists for opening a station in Calabar was also rejected.[28] But this

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27. N.A.E., Old Calabar Council minutes, January, 1905, item 77.

28. N.A.E., Old Calabar Council minutes no. 284, 27 June, 1905, 167.

later mission was permitted to operate between the 'enclosure' of Qua Iboe and Cross River. The rapid expansion of the Primitive Methodists which followed this conference decision was entirely unanticipated. In something like three years, they had expanded beyond this enclosure. When they 'jumped over' Uyo and established at Ikot Ekpene which station would block the course of north-ward expansion of the Qua Iboe Mission, they precipitated a crisis, to resolve which another conference was summoned in Calabar in 1909.

The 1909 conference was a tripartite one featuring the Primitive Methodist Mission, the Qua Iboe Mission and the C.S.M. It was agreed, in the first place that Ikot Ekpene should be the centre for the work of the Primitive Methodists and that along the line from Ikot Ekpene to Bende, opportunity be given to the Primitive Methodists for further expansion. More crucially for our purpose, it was decided that the C.S.M. (by now the United Free Church of Scotland or U.F.C.) was to advance from Arochukwu "northwards through Ihi (Ihe), Ahofia (Ohafia) and Aberiba" (Abiriba) northwards linking up with work in Afikpo district.[29] By the 1909 con-

29. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6 At the Mission House, Itu, 6 Dec., 1916, item 338.

ference, therefore, Ohafia was formally assigned to the U.F.C. and since, to a large extent, the protestant bodies respected the delimitation of spheres of influence, the area remained exclusively U.F.C. sphere until in 1953 when the R.C.M. which did not take part in the conferences and did not recognise their decisions, arrived in the area to challenge the U.F.C.

Subsequent conferences were held. The rapid and aggressive expansionism of the Primitive Methodists was the reason behind many of the conferences. In 1917 for instance, the expansion of this mission into Aba necessitated another conference. Unfortunately, the U.F.C. was not represented in the 1917 conference and the strong exception which this mission took to the decisions which it claimed 'entirely ignored the distribution of native population in closely related tribal groups"[30] led to another conference in 1926.[31] The penultimate conference was held in 1927 and the last one in 1932. We need not go into details of these subsequent conferences since non of them made any modifications on the 1909 conference affecting

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30. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6 At the Mission House, Itu, 6 Dec., 1916, see sub title "Northern Boundary" IV.

31. There was one in 1922 before this.

our area of interest. But it is important to note generally that these conferences were organised among protestant denominations. In no instance was the R.C.M. invited and this body did not (judging from its activities) feel bound by any of the decisions of these conferences.[32] There is no wonder, therefore, that it simply went into Ohafia in 1953 and started missionary work in the area as a rival of the U.F.C.

Expansion of The United Free Church into Ohafia

Christian incursions into Ohafia started shortly after the Aro expedition and before the onset of the boundary delimitation discussed above. It all began in 1904 when a party of U.F.C. converts from Calabar arrived Asaga-Chafia on the invitation of the Asaga people who had mistaken christianity for a more potent control of space-time events. This team was made up of Rev. Uwa Akpan Esien (leader) Edet Esien, Enebieni Ana, Madam Ofia Ojoi and Asuquo Nja. They commenced a spirited effort

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32. For the nature of relationship between the Protestant missions and the Roman Catholic Mission, see O.U. Kalu, "Church Unity and Religious change in Africa", Edward Fashole-Luke, Richard Gray, Adrian Hastings and Godwin Tasie (eds) Christianity in Independent Africa, Rex Collings, London, 1978, pp. 164-175.

at teaching and evangelism and even had a mission house and a school built for them. But alas, in 1907 or so, they were forced to withdraw completely. This happened after one of the ravages of Asaga by the African agents of the colonial masters and the Reverend gentleman appeared to have been so scared by the event that he could not continue. He took with him, three boys from Ohafia: Idika Ajadu, Kalu Ikenga and Ibe Mba who were ultimately sent to the Hope Waddel Training Institute (henceforth H.W.T.I.) The christian party had, however, stayed long enough for Asaga-Ohafia people to realise that they had been mistaken in their original conception of the faith. They were, therefore a happy riddance.

Subsequently in 1908 a Rev. J.K. Macgregor was detailed by the Calabar Mission Council of the U.F.C. to go and revive the still-born christianity at Ohafia. This time, however, it was a disillusioned and stolidly defiant Asaga people that were confronted. Macgregor's attempts to persuade the people came to nought.

Subsequent attempts were made after the Asaga mis-adventure. One important one came into Ndi Uduma-Awoke-Ohafia when the new church at Ihechiowa went on an evangelistic outing to the contigous

northern borders of Amankwu and Ndi Uduma-Awoke-Ohafia. Evidence suggests that here at Ndi Uduma-Awoke, some seeds fell on fertile ground.[33]

A more extensive and better co-ordinated process started from the dilemma of Ohafia people under colonial rule. With the new court system, came upon Ohafia an army of rapacious court clerks and court messengers garnered up from Sierra Leone, Calabar and other places which, on account of earlier missionary work, boasted of some educated elements. The depredations of this group has been discussed in chapter 2. It was when, in one occasion, one of them, Vincent, gaoled all the members of an age-grade that Ohafia people decided that a handshake had passed the elbow. A solution had to be found to this problem. The solution, especially as Eke Kalu persuaded them, 'was to open a school, educate their children who, knowing what the clerk knew, could better challenge him and his successors'.[34] It was in the background of this

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33. For the facts relating to the early incursions of christianity into Ohafia, I have relied heavily on E.I. Mba, Condensed history of the church in the wild wood 1904-1953, Eka Press, Elu-Ohafia, 1973, pp. 2-4.

34. Eke Kalu, "An Ibo Autobiography the Autobiography of Mr Eke Kalu, Ohaffia's well-honoured son", The Nigerian Field, vol. VIII, no.4, October, 1938, pp. 158-170.

that a deputation was sent to invite the U.F.C. from Arochukwu to come and establish at Ohafia and open a school.

This appeal came at a time the U.F.C. was pursuing a policy of vigorous expansion as a result of the stimulus of other missions scrambling for territories, and under a progressive clique made up of Wilkie, Macgregor, Weir, Collins, Ranklin and the Doctors Hitchcook and Robertson.[35] It is not surprising that the appeal from Ohafia received positive and prompt reply. Rev. Robert Collins was detailed to go and open a station at Ohafia.

Rev. Collins would appear to be specially qualified for the challenges of Ohafia situation. He had been trained under Mr and Mrs Harvie Young's Young Men's Bible class, a training in discipline and dedication which was made rigorous by tutorial classes in Latin and Greek. On graduation he joined the Calabar Mission in 1898 and was interned under Rev. Alexander Cruikshank at Ikorofiong. He was later posted to Arochukwu to stand in for Rev. Ranklin who was on forlough. It was from here that he came to

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35. Kalu, 'The Battle of the Gods', p.15.

Ohafia[36] at the head of five other missionaries.[37]

On arrival, Collins contacted the D.O. at Bende and secured for Vincent, a three-month jail sentence with hard labour.[38] This was his trump card for winning the confidence of Ohafia people. Somewhat mistaking him for an arm of government and a sure protection against court clerks, they quickly endorsed his offer for the opening of a church and a school at the boundary between Elu-Ohafia and Amaekpu-Ohafia. Over there in Calabar, plans were set afoot for construction of a mission house at Ohafia.[39] In the mean time, a miniature school was started at Ndi Imaga compound shed in Elu-Ohafia with Ezikpe Onuoha as teacher. Church services were organised in the same place. According to Eke, "Worshippers were feasted at the end of each sunday and when they were no longer feasted, they

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36. Mba, op cit, p.4.

37. This is Arua's version, see A.C. Arua, A Short History of Ohafia, Omnibus Press, Enugu, 1951, p. 20.

38. Kalu, "The Battle of the Gods", p. 14. For a slightly different version of this, see Arua, op cit, p. 20.

39. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6, At the Hope Waddel Training Institute, Calabar, 22 June, 1911, see sub title Estimate for Ahofia House.

all relaxed from worship."[40] It was when Rev. and Mrs Collins packed into the completed mission house in 1911 that a much more vigorous and articulate evangelism began.

Like every other missionary of his time, he adopted the practical expedient of ensnarring people into christianity with the school. This is not surprising considering the fact that education was the fundamental raison d'etre for inviting the missionaries. It was expected that through the education offered by them, Ohafia children would learn English and be able to communicate directly with the white man and so call off the bluff of the court clerks and the other African agents of colonial rule. But even beyond this, the school was seen as the one means of gaining access to the supposedly superior culture of the whiteman and for obtaining a wage employment under him.

This purely mundane objective for patronage of the missionaries and their school was not peculiar to Ohafia people or even the Igbo alone. Bonny chiefs, for instance, had similar objectives; they even went to the extent of insisting that their

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40. Eke Kalu, op cit, p. 165.

children should not be taught religion; 'they teach them that themselves'. They would have the missionaries concentrate on secular subjects and would have thought little of a school that did not teach some English.[41] In Old Calabar the demand for English was the big reason why the U.F.C. was invited with open hands among many communities. Some evidence to this effect was left by Goldie when he wrote:

> So great was the desire to learn English that though it also is taught in our schools and taught gratuitously in Duke Town, some of the chiefs engage at a high fee, the services of any young man who may come in their way to teach their children only.42

It was this strong desire for school that missionaries exploited to plant christianity, for christianity and the school, in the words of Afigbo, were so bound together that any one who so much as toyed with one got infected with the other. And as will become clear, missionaries saw the school almost exclusively as an instrument for evangelisation. It was with this instrument that they brought about much of the social changes of the period.

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41. Ajayi, op cit, p. 133.

42. Cited in Ibid

The School In Ohafia

As Rev. Collins got down to business in 1911 the school at Ndi Imaga shed was transferred to the site at Elu/Amaekpu boundary and became the first school in Ohafia. Subsequently, it was named Ohafia Central School. More schools were opened in other villages shortly after. But partly because Ohafia Central School was sited just at the mission hill, it remained the most important school in Ohafia throughout our period.

It was one thing to open a school and another to get pupils to attend it. Not withstanding whatever picture we may have painted about the enthusiasm of Ohafia people for the school as a means of access to the white man's culture, evidence unmistakably shows that very few people had come round to choosing for their children such an untried career at the beginning, especially as it departed so radically from the time-honoured farming. School enrolment remained disappointingly low and the bulk of school children consisted mainly of refractory and dispensable children, for according to Arua:

> Only stubborn children were allowed to school by their parents. The never-do-wells at home were quickly pushed into school by their parents as a sort of punishment. No body liked schooling at the

first time. It was assumed to be the laziest job children could undertake.[43]

It was difficult to increase enrolment since these dispensable members of the society were very few. The missionaries tried to lure children into the school through the offer of biscuits, clothing materials, papers and so on.[44] This apparently made no appreciable impact on enrolment figures. There is even a suggestion by Afigbo on the wider case of Igboland that the close association of the school with mainly the dregs and scum of society made the former repulsive to the ordinary man.

It was in the face of persistently low enrolment figures that the missionaries openly appealed to important personalities to send their children to school. Ohafia people conceived this as donation of children for the school, and informants actually use the word 'donation'. Apparently the response to this appeal was encouraging. Table III:1 shows a few of the successful personalities who were the results of such donations.

It is reasonable to surmise that these dona-

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43. Arua, op cit, p. 21.

44. Oral information from Elder Ukpai Ojiaku of Ndi Uduma-Awoke-Ohafia, of about 70 years old on 6/5/85 at his residence at Ndi Uduma-Awoke.

Table III:1: Some of the Personalities donated for the village school and their donors

Donors	Persons donated
Chief Ugbaga Ulu	The very Rev. Awa Ugbaga
Chief Ebi Nnaochin	Rev. Nnaochin Ebi
Nna Awa Ngwoke	Chief Ngwoke Awa
Nna Njoku Uoi	Rev. Awa Njoku
Nna Obasi Ekpu	Ekpu Obasi
Chief Arunsi Ituma	Ituma Arunsi

Source: Oral information from Chief U. Arunsi of Amaihe, Elu-Ohafia, of about 80 years, younger brother to Ituma Arunsi, one of the donors, in his residence at Amaihe on 21/4/85.

tions of children improved enrolment somehow; but it is also very likely that what the missionaries got from these donations was mainly a pack of reffractory children since people were want to donate the disobedient or least useful ones among their children. No wonder truancy featured prominently among the vices of school children which was one of the considerations of the missionaries for introducing boarding system.

On the whole, however, enrolment still remained far from what the missionaries would consider adequate

or tolerable. It was out of frustration that they resorted to conscription of children into the schools. This aspect is well documented in Ohafia oral tradition. One of the grievances of Ohafia people against the missionaries was that they had formed the habit of chasing children around like the despicable court messengers. In a round of chase the class-rooms were filled to the brim with people whose continued or subsequent voluntary attendance could not be guaranteed. Admittedly, the missionaries still made impact through this means and many people voluntarily went back to school subsequently though mainly in the hope of getting buscuits, etc., which were usually offered. A majority, however, shunned the schools completely.[45] The problem of inadequate enrolment continued to plague missionary endeavours till the advantages of the school started to speak for themselves.

At first, efforts were made to consolidate the ground at Elu which would then form the spring board for further expansion into other villages. Teaching and evangelism were stepped up as attendance

45. What I have here is mainly reminiscences of information I had before the onset of this work. I remember that Mrs Igwe Kalu of Ndi Inyima, Ebem and my late uncle Okoro Kalu Ume of Ndi Onwuka told me stories in this direction.

gradually stabilized. Evangelism was carried out even during the normal classes, the time-table being heavily loaded with religious and moral instructions. Open air services were also held at various spots - especially Idi Imaga shed [46] - in addition to the regular and more convertional sunday services. Even at this early stage, the utterances of Rev. Collins reflected thinly veiled disapproval of important norms of Chafia people.

The actual classroom teaching was dominated by the African converts since Collins himself itinerated Abiriba and Chafia as a supervisory monepiskopos. Prof Ajayi who has made a wide study of missionary work submitted that there was no system in the pattern that emerged, no common syllabus and no general inspectorate. According to him everything depended, more often than not, on the ability and zeal and personal whims of the individual missionary or teacher.[47] The schools in general, however, including Chafia Central School, had the common aim of propagating the ideals of christianity and

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46. Oral information from Elder Ogboku in his residence at Elu Chafia on 26/4/85. Elder Ogboku is a very old man; it was an ordeal both for me and for him to have him talking even for the few minutes which this interview lasted. He had worked closely with Rev. Collins himself.

47. Ajayi, op cit, p. 138.

some of the basic doctrines of the particular denomination while teaching literacy and a little arithmetic to the children. The usual curriculum therefore consisted of the four R's: Religion, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.[48]

An important problem still bothered Rev. Collins and the U.F.C. as the work at Chafia central was going on. This problem was the aggressive expansionism of the Primitive Methodist Mission which had, in the mean time, established at nearby Bende and at a time when, as we have noted, the line dividing the respective ecclesiastical spheres of the two missions in the northward direction was still nebulous. Arguably, it was for this reason that Collins considered it necessary to hastily stamp the presence of the U.F.C. in all Chafia villages as well as the adjoining clans especially those in the northward direction like Abiriba and Igbere.

Our information is that shortly after the establishment of the school at Elu, Ebem-Chafia village applied for and got their own school.[49] By 1911 Alexander Okoroji had been posted to that

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48. Ibid

49. Based on oral information from chief U. Arunsi of Amaihe, Elu-Chafia, in his residence at Amaihe on 21/4/85, confirmed independently by Ojiaku.

station as a teacher. It may be said therefore that Ebem and Elu formed the earliest centres of organised christianity in Ohafia. With the centres in the clans contagous with Ohafia and the two or so at Ohafia beginning to mature, the U.F.C. began a momentous expansion into other Ohafia villages. This phase started in earnest in the period between 1913 and 1915.

As early as 1911 an additional grant of £20 was approved for Ohafia by the Old Calabar Council 'to meet the needs of the district beyond Elu'.[50] By 1915, schools and churches had gone to many villages including such large ones as Isiugwu, Akanu and Asage. It would be superfluous to try to give the details of how the church and the school came into each village in turn. The important thing to note, however, is that during his early evangelistic itineraries to these Ohafia villages, Collins was, by all accounts, cautious enough to stress the school as his most important package to the people over and above the message of 'Christ crucified'. The advantages of the school, which he deftly be-

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50. N.A.E, Presbynig 1/1/6 At the Hope Waddel Training Institute, Calabar, 4th October, 1911, item 47.

laboured, were, in any case, easy to understand under the colonial situation. It is not surprising that Ohafia villages easily welcomed him and even started making important financial contribution, albeit communally, towards the support of their schools right from the very infant stage of school development. During his campaign visit to Isiugwu-Ohafia for the opening of a station in 1915, for instance, it was the question of school that Collins tabled before the elders. And having espoused the advantages of educating their children, he informed them there and then that the venture would cost them fifteen pounds per annum.[51] It is remarkable that in spite of this rather stupendous cost estimate, Isiugwu elders committed themselves to the venture.

Meanwhile, from Ndi Uduma Awoke-Ohafia, a village in the southern border of Ohafia with the clan of Ihe which had been infected with christianity by this clan, a deputation was sent to procure books, etc, from the mission House at Elu whereupon the Rev. gentleman shunned the deputation and informed it that theirs was not a recognised station. Thereafter, Collins personally went down to Ndi Uduma in response

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51. See Eke Kalu, op cit, p. 168.

to a formal request to open a school and a church there.[52]

The opening of schools and churches went on apace and was even abetted by the fact that Ohafia villages saw this new development in competetive terms. MacFarlan informs us that 'Chiefs came in with their retainers to lay donations of money before the eyes of the missionary as proof of their intentions to support the new learning...'[53] By 1921 almost all the Ohafia villages could each boast of that little out post of christianity called the school. Only the small village of Ihenta, harbouring a potent oracular deity called Afua, resisted the faith till the 1960s.[54]

Apart from the school which we have talked about, another important follow-up to the opening of a station was the ordination of the Elders of the church. It appears that during the unsettled days of the

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52. Oral information from Rev. Mbila of Ndi-Uduma-Awoke, about 70, in his resideence at Ndi Uduma-Awoke on 6/5/85, independently confirmed by Ojiaku.

53. Donald M. MacFarlan, Calabar, The Church of Scotland Mission 1846-1946, Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson, 1946, p. 133.

54. Kalu, "The Battle of the Gods", p. 14.

1920s and with as yet deep-seated prejudices against christianity, Elders not only acted as useful instruments of propaganda but also constituted an indigenous shibboleth for the new religion. This probably explains the fact that it was not so much the relgions impeccability of the persons chosen as their political usefulness that weighed high in the mind of the missionaries. Notwithstanding, for instance, the strong exception which missionaries in general took to polygamy, Rev. Collins went on to ordain Elders among polygamists. Thus he blinked at the numerous wives of Eke Kalu and made him Elder in 1921.[55] Indeed, it is invidious to mention a specific name; almost all the early Elders of the Presbyterian church known to the present writer were polygamists. The case of Eke is therefore typical. These Elders also partook overtly in the customs said to be obnoxious. Elder Ibem Ifekwe, for instance, continued to carry the Ekpe masquarade till late in his life.

At the time of their ordination many of these Elders were merely half-baked christians and one - eyed men in the country of the blind. But they played an important role mainly through teaching and evangelism in the dissemination of missionary propa-

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55. Oral information from O.N. Njoku of the Department of History, U.N.N., August, 1984.

ganda and in the attack on the supposedly obnoxious customs of Ohafia. Table III:2 shows the early Elders of Ohafia and the congregations (villages) which they saved. They performed various kinds of leadership role in the church until trained pastors and evangelists began to emerge. Pioneers in this direction include the very Rev. Awa Ugbaga and Rev. Maduekwe.

Table III:2 - Pioneer Elders of the Presbyterian Church in Ohafia and their Congregations

Pioneer Elders	Congregations
Igu Uduma	Amaekpu
Ukoha Kalu	Amaekpu
Uchendu Udo	Akanu
Ogwo Mba	Asaga
Etum Ukoha	Asaga
Akuma Kalu	Amangwu
Agbai Chori	Amangwu
Awa Nkpa	Abia
Otum Onuoha	Elu
Acha Kalu	Elu
Kalu Eke	Elu
Uga Mba	Ebem
Ibem Ifekwe	Ebem
Olugu Idika	Mdi Uduma Awok
Iro Kalu	Okagwe
Ukoha Kalu	Okagwe

Source: Adapted from Apendix I of Ibe Mba, Condensed history of the church in the wild wood, 1904-1953, Ska Press, Elu Ohafia, 1973, p. 13.

The Lure of Christianity

One of the important issues about christianization of Igboland is the massive conversions made in the early years of this century. Admittedly, before this period, the missionaries had no access to the Igbo interior like Ohafia. But even in those areas where they had operated freely like Onitsha and Obosi, very few conversions were made in the entire period between 1857 and 1900. From the early years of this century, however, vast numbers of conversions started to be made and there started to be a mass movement towards christianity. The missionaries themselves started from this period to talk about the 'miracle of conversion'[56] in relation to Igboland. Leading studies are agreed that there was a 'conversion explosion' during this period.[57] The question then arises as to what special attraction christianity had during this period.

Prof. Ekechi stresses the ravages and disruptions which accompanied British penetration by military force and the transition to colonial rule which produced a

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56. Ekechi, op cit, p. 146.

57. For instance ibid, see pp. 144-148; and Ayandele, op cit, see his statistics on p. 343.

crisis of security. 'The result',he insists, 'was that the christian church seemed to be the one institution that could afford some measure of security and refuge to the people under stress. He gives a dozen examples of how the situation produced by British invasion forced people to seek christian identity as the better of two evils. According to him during many of the military patrols for instance, towns and villages were ravaged by the soldiers, people were assaulted, farm crops and other personal property were damaged and looted. In some cases one's own religions beliefs or a town's religious sympathies determined the kind of treatment that was meted out. Even in the selection of labourers for road work and other exploitative services, christians seemed to enjoy some advantages over their non-christian fellows. In the circumstances, Ekechi submitted, many young men saw christianity as a prudent adjustment to the new colonial situation.[58]

In an acid review of Ekechi, Prof. Ayandele has endorsed the above point of view as an important factor but went on to insist that:

> The most important point to emphasise about the collapse of pagandom in Igboland - a point that eludes Ekechi completely - is that it was not so much the handiwork of the missionaries as it

58. Ekechi, op cit, pp. 147-8.

> was of the masses themselves and the barrel of the gun... The pace was dictated from the beginning by the people themselves, who were convinced by the barrel of the gun that the white man was the dispenser of such power, such hypnotizing culture, such progress and such civilization the like of which had never been known before and which they were anxious to appropriate. The only way to achieve this end, they were convinced, was to have missionaries, schools and teachers.59

There is no doubt that this latter point of Ayandele has a wider and more crucial application than Ekechi's point above. This is not, however to say that Ekechi's point deserves to be jettisoned: the fact is that it refers to the earlier period of christianity in Igboland. In fact, his terminal date is 1914, a period when the British were still wheeling military columns round Igboland to force one community or the other to accept the new colonial order. There is no doubt that if people became christians during this early period - especially as they had hardly had an opportunity of 'seeing in order to believe' the magic of the school - it would be more likely as a result of the factor clearly identified by Ekechi above.

In wider and more general terms, however, it is the 'school' factor referred to by Ayandele that was most crucial in the rapid christianization of

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59. E.A. Ayandele, Nigerian Historical Studies, Frank Cass, London, 1979, chapter 8, see p.173.

Igboland in the 20th century. This is even more so with regard to places like Ohafia where missionary work did not start until eight years after colonial conquest and when the utilitarian value of the school had started to be demonstrated.

As has been made clear in chapter 2, Ohafia people were stunned by British military strength, for it was not in history that any 'town' ever dared come close to Ohafia borders not to talk of humbling Ohafia people in Ohafia itself. Military defeat, therefore, was bound to imbue the Ohafia people with awe for the British and their culture. When the white man proceeded to establish the Ebem court and to appropriate traditional judicial and political authority, the Ohafia man could not but acquiesce. With this, a completely new order reigned. Having studied this new order especially in the background of the activities of such African 'collaborators' as court clerks and court messengers whose only basis for power was a working literacy in English, it was easy for people with foresight to see that the key to success in the new dispensation was access to the white man's culture as it was being retailed by the missionaries through the school. The school therefore became the strongest lure for christianity.

What has been said above, however, does not

detract from prejudices against an untried modernity. The people who were used as guinea pigs to probe the import of the school were mainly, though not only, refractory and dispensable children. But within a short time, they had learnt enough to begin to demonstrate the advantages of this new modernity. If the rather modest volume of archival material on Ohafia which the present writer examined is anything at all to go by, one can say that before the 1920s we ceased to come across such foreign letter and petition writers as Osholeko Pearce[60] who had dominated the scene earlier and helped to foment litigation in order to render their services and charge high fees for this. The one conclusion is that educated Ohafia children started quite early after the beginning of western education to replace such hitherto scarce and highly esteemed pen-pushers. In all probability, this must have acted as an incentive for people to embrace christianity.

An even more crucial factor in luring people to christianity was the wage employment of the white collar type which was readily available for western educated people and at a time when, as will be shown in chapter 4, many people were hankering after wage employment as a means of obtaining British money. And

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60. N.A.E., Ow 6738 Umdiv 3/1/669, see for instance, 'certificate' 4/7/16.

as we have mentioned, even people who had merely read up to Standard Four were sure of employment. Many of them were posted as teachers from Elu to the newer schools in other Ohafia villages. By 1919 educated people were still so scarce that the superintendent of the Bende-Umuahia circuit of the Primitive Methodist Mission came to Ohafia to recruit some boys as teachers. Some of the boys so recruited include G.U. Ogboku, B.O. Onuoha, P.A. Onwuchekwa, all of Elu-Ohafia; Agwu K. Oyeoku, Ibem Kalu, Johnson Osonwa, Ugenyi Iro, from Ebem-Ohafia; then Ukpong Uke, Thomas Ayo Bassey, James I. Awa, Jones O. Eleazu, Ogwo Eke, Amogu Ndukwe Owoo and S.K. Uma, all from Asaga-Ohafia and J. Ukariwe from Akanu-Ohafia.[61] As will become clear in due course and in a subsequent chapter , the salaries of these people enabled them to live such a high quality life that they lured others into school and christianity.

It ought to be noted that while the attraction for christianity was very strong, a majority of those who became converts either directly or through infection by the school had largely mundane and utilitarian conception of the christian religion. It is therefore not surprising that many of the conversions of the period lacked depth. Many were con-

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61. Mba, op cit, p.7. Confirmed by Elder Ogboku.

tent with the epithet, 'christian' and hardly bothered to even become full fledged communicants.[62] This may explain the fact that almost throughout our period the number of adherents to the Presbyterian church who were not yet in full communion was always greater than the number in full communion.[63] Even many people who completed their education and became pupil teachers were avid patrons of traditional ways of life and frequently saw the rigid professional code which bound them to their profession as an unnecessary encumberance. It is not surprising that people like Ibe Mba 'Ibe Owo Afanikon'[64] did not take to teaching from the start. Others like U. Agbai resigned in the course of time and joined the government.[65]

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62. The register of communicants kept by Collins scarsely had more than 35 names.

63. Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria Blue Book 1921 Section 16 see Ecclesiastical return, p.8. It is the same for most of the rest of the period to 1960.

64. This was an Efik nickname given to Ibe Mba by the Efik teachers in Ohafia with whom he had intractable quarrels. It means Ibe the trouble maker. The fact is that Ibe was such a controversial man that he would have been a misfit in the teaching profession, see E.I. Mba, "The Origin of Ohafia Improvement Union (incoporated)," Ohafia Review: The Magine of the Ohafia People, vol. 1, no.2, Dec., 1982, pp. 1-2.

65. Ibid, p. 2.

Welfare Services

Generally speaking, the conception of the missionaries about their work was not limited to preaching the gospel to win converts; they aimed at bringing salvation to a benighted people. Deeply convinced of the moral and material backwardness of Africans, the missionaries never quibbled over the use of alluring temporal means for the planting of the gospel. We have mentioned the sunday feasts in Ohafia and the offer of buscuits, etc to lure children into the school. The special glory of the Presbyterian[67] mission lay in its medical mission. Even before the Aro expedition which gave the green light for entry into Igbo interior, they had established a medical mission at Uburu in 1898.[68] But

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67. The C.S.M., U.F.C. and the Presbyterian mission, all refer to one and the same missionary body; this missionary body underwent frequent change of numenclature and I have not quite discovered the exact time periods for each change.

68. Udo is somewhat vague here, but I take it that this was around the same 1898 when those "deaths" occurred, see Udo, op cit, p. 161. I consider, on the other hand, that Isichei's 1915 for the opening of this hospital is too far off the mark since Uburu station already existed before missionary expansion into Ohafia. See Elizabeth Isichei, A history of the Igbo People, Macmillan, London, 1976, p. 177. For missionary expansion into Ohafia, see, for instance, Kalu, "The Battle of the Gods", pp. 13-15. Note that Udo and Isichei differ again about the date of the death of Dr Hitchcook, the pioneer medical missionary in Uburu. While Udo has 1918 Isichei gives 1919.

this even came after Mary Slessor hospital at Itu. And when in 1926 Dr A.B. Macdonald encountered his first leprosy patient at Itu, it became the beginning of the famous leprosy colony there which in the next twenty years treated 20,000 patients.[69]

In 1934 Dr Akanu Ibiam returned to Nigeria after qualifying as a medical doctor. He was employed by the Presbyterian mission and posted to Abiriba, the next-door neighbour of Ohafia, to pioneer a medical mission there.[70]

In Ohafia, though the Presbyterian mission built no full fledged hospital, medical mission was even an integral part of the broader plan for evangelical work in Ohafia. The plan for the mission house, for instance, made provisions for 'enclosing space beneath house for dispensary work'.[71] The dispensary was opened in the very year when Collins began work in Ohafia and was manned by him personally.[72] Subsequently

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69. Isichei, op cit, p. 178.

70. Akanu Ibiam, "Christian Challenge in Medical Practice", Paper presented to the fellowship of christian doctors conference, 6-9 April, 1972, Proceedings Published by the Institute of Church and Society, Ibadan, pp. 11-13.

71. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6, At the Hope Waddel Training Institute, Calabar, 7/2/11, item 10, see (c)

72. N.A.E., File No. 29/96 C.J. Mayne, Intelligence Report on Ohafia clan, item 27.

he trained some Chafia boys like Elder Ogboku who assisted him in the medical area.[73] Various kinds of maladies were treated in the centre and evidence is not wanting of patients being cajoled into submitting to baptism before or after treatment.[74]

Probably the most significant work in medical ministry in Ohafia was accomplished during the epidemic of 1918-19. Asaga was the worst afflicted by this plague. It is on record that Rev. and Mrs Collins single-handedly fought the plague and also organised donations of food, etc., to the victims.[75] It turned out, however, that by these exertions in medical ministry, the Presbyterians were merely stepping on the toes of a section of the Ohafia community - the local medicine men. We will examine the case later.

As is to be expected, conversions were made as a result of successful treatment of people's ailments. There are stories, here and there, of people who even uprooted their kamalu after such treatments. There was even the more startling case of Asaga-Ohafia

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73. Oral information from Obunkwa Interview, (see details in footnote 13 of chapter one) independently confirmed by Elder Ogboku himself.

74. Based on oral information from chief Arunsi independently confirmed by Obunkwa interview.

75. MacFarlan, op cit, pp. 135-136.

people who following an attack of small pox and outbreak of fire allegedly 'demanded the destruction of the great juju tree which stood as a sentinel at the outskirts of their homes to guard them from evil'. A large number of them, so it has been claimed, became converted to christianity.[76] We have no way, though, of putting the number of such conversions in quantitative terms; but it cannot be denied that a significant number of conversions were secured through such means. Even then, one must mention the discordant view of some informants who have insisted that though people patronized the medical services of the Presbyterians, they did not thereby become christians.[77] The probability,however, is that conversions of this type were hasty and many so converted made little change in their normal traditional ways of life.

There were other important services rendered by the Presbyterians which also lured people into christianity. In 1922 the twin mothers' home was opened in Asaga-Ohafia and given over to the management of the lady missionary Mrs Moffat who had been posted to Ohafia in 1920 after passing her Igbo examination. It

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76. Ibid, p. 137.

77. This is the view, for instance, of the incumbent Ikwan priest, Agwu Chika, obtained during my interview with him in his residence at Elu Ohafia on 19/4/85. This octogenarian actually mentioned a few names which I had failed to note down as examples.

was also in the same year that Miss Gilmour was posted to Ohafia.[78] In 1923 a domestic science centre for girls was opened at Asaga-Ohafia. Mrs Moffat became the principal while Miss Kitty Barclay who had been posted to Ohafia in 1921[79] took charge of the Twin Home.[80]

As must have been expected, the girls school was greeted with contempt by Ohafia people. It was even somewhat abominable for a man to send his own daughter to such a place. Such a girl would thereby become unmarriageable. Most of the Ohafia girls who attended the school at the early stage were those who had been bethrothed to educated elements or friends of Mrs Moffat. Some of the pioneer pupils of the school for instance were: Nkacha Emetu, the would-be wife of Rev. U. Olugu; Ucha Onum, would-be wife of Ibe Mba; and Iwe Bassey, would-be wife of Bassey Ukpoka.[81]

By the 1930s several other service centres had

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78. N.A.E., Presbynig 1/1/6, At Duke Town Old school Room, Calabar, May, 5, 1920.

79. N.A.E., Presbynig H.W.T.I. 19 Oct. 1921, item 859.

80. Mba, Condensed history, p. 7.

81. Ibid, p. 8.

been opened by the Presbyterian mission. These included a postal agency manned personally by Rev. Collins. This was always closed during his forlough or absence for any other reason.[82] A leper colony was also opened at Ebem-Ohafia.

We need right here to make an important remark about the implications of missionary enterprise especially their approach to their work to the Ohafia society, particularly in relation to the theme of social change. The Igbo people in general including Ohafia, have always been enthusiastic about enlarging their views of the nature of reality, hence their adaptability and even passion for change to which modern anthropologists have articulately drawn attention.[83] It is in the background of this, in the first instance, that we can understand why many Ohafia people could not close their minds to a new teaching like that brought about by Christian missionaries even if their actual involvement or response remained ambidextrous throughout our period. But equally

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82. N.A.E. File no. 29/96, item 27.

83. See, for instance, Simon Ottenberg, Ibo Receptivity to change, in W.R. Bascom and M.J. Herskovits (eds), Continuity and change in African culture, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1959.

crucial is the seductive approach of the missionaries, first, in offering to the people, facilities for the education of their children and the manifest evidence of the benefit of education to such children when they were able to read and write. Then, there were the other forms of social services like the twin home and orphanage but especially medical services generously offered to people in general. "What all these social welfare activities, including more developed educational systems later, added up to", wrote Rev. Cannon Ilogu in relation to christianity in Igboland, "was to overload the christian message with western cultural values to the detriment of Igbo traditional culture".[84]

The important point, therefore, is that by the taste and patronage of these social services, by the use of English language in schools and by the influence of the British system of administration as well as the importation of British manufactured goods, a preference for the European way of life was being indirectly built up in the minds of the Ohafia man who already had, like his other Igbo kith and kin, a cultural inclination towards adaptation to change

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84. Edmurd Ilogu, Christianity and Igbo Culture A Study in the Interaction of Christianity and Igbo Culture, Nok Publishers, New York, London, Enugu, 1974, p. 76.

by the enlargement of his"open society" system with variable new introductions.[85] We will now examine the more overt and deliberate means by which the missionaries tried to wrought change on Ohafia society.

Missionary Iconoclasm

Having done with the opening of schools in all parts of Ohafia, the Presbyterian mission began to use these schools, as they had been intended from the start, as centres for their cultural impact on Ohafia. Enough has already been said to show that missionaries in general were conscious social revolutionaries who did not mean well for the customs and traditions of the indigenous peoples since these represented a rival religion. Prof Kraemer, a great authority on this subject had this to say on the matter:

> The missionary is a revolutionary and he has to be so, for to preach and plant christianity means to make a frontal attack on the beliefs, the customs, the apprehensions of life and the world, and by implication (because tribal religions are primarily social realities) on the social structures and basis of primitive society. The missionary enterprise need

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85. Ibid, p.91.

> not be ashamed of this, because colonial administrators, planters, merchants, western penetration, etc, perform a much more severe and destructive work. Missions, however, imply the well-considered appeal to all peoples to transplant and transfer their life-foundations into a totally different spiritual soil, and so they must be revolutionary.86

There is little wonder that the Presbyterian mission which christianized Ohafia pitched its tents against Ohafia tradition and norms. Indeed by the time it arrived Ohafia, the mission had already tried conclusions with the 'heathenish' customs of Old Calabar. On the behest of this mission, Old Town was razed to the ground in 1855 for its resistance of missionary influence and pressure. A good deal of damage had, therefore, already been inflicted before Mary Slessor arrived to begin her quiet revolution on the lives and systems of Okoyong people. It was therefore a Presbyterian mission with solid credentials for iconoclasm that arrived in Ohafia in 1911.

But by this time, however, a number of factors were at work to mellow the tempo of missionary iconoclasm and to moderate their attitude to 'native' customs and traditions. First, educated elements in

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86. Hendrik Kraemer, The Christian Message in a non-christian World, The Edinburgh House Press, London, 1938, p. 342.

Nigeria who had hitherto been important agents in the effacement of their own cultures had begun to develop a change of attitude somewhat. They had imagined that by emancipating themselves from native customs and by emulating their white counterparts, they would be accorded respect and equal treatment with white counterparts. But the out-burst of a strong racial antipathy which developed against them of late towards the close of the 19th century had led to the frustration of this hope. On the contrary, they started to be ridiculed as 'apes', 'timid imitators' and so forth. It was this racial anti-pathy that culminated in the inglorious end of Bishop Crowther's episcopate.[87] It was in reaction to all this that educated Africans began to abhor the white man and his culture and to venerate their own customs and institutions. And the Nigerian cultural heritage became the touchstone by which the white man's doings were assessed. Hence British administration was bad only to the extent that indigenous institutions were being tampered with.[88]

This attitude was given further impetus by the writings of such people as Blyden, Donald Fraser, Mary Kingsley, Edmond Morel and others.[89] After

87. See Ayandele, Missionary Impact, chapter 7.

88. I benefitted immensely from ibid esp. p.242.

89. See, for instance, Hollis R. Lynch (ed), Black Spokesman: The Selected Published Writings of Edward Wilmot Blyden.

studying missionary enterprise at first hand with the insight of an anthropologist, Mary Kingsley gave a certain credit to the missionaries for their work but ultimately came up with an unequivocal indictment of the latter for their 'denationalizing' tendency. She joined the educated Africans in attacking missionaries for the 'dilirious view' of the Africans with which they had fed the English public and, in turn, began to venerate customs which missionaries were wont to disparage. Educated Africans, on their part, frequently employed her ideas as a bludgeon against missionaries.[90]

It is said that by World War I the attitude of several thoughtful missionary leaders appeared to be changing. A growing concern or even alarm over the disintegrating consequences of past missionary activity necessitated a change of approach. Cases of schism of African groups from the churches were becoming rampant; and loyal African evangelists were reporting that such desertions were due to the stiff and unbending opposition of missionaries to customs that Africans did not regard as evil. As Coleman has avered, this new attitude was, at least in part, attributable to increased knowledge of African cultures and the growth of a new interest in and

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90. Ayandele, Missionary Impact, p. 251.

sympathy toward the meaningful and useful aspects of those cultures.[91]

It is important to note that it was at about the period when this new approach and perspective had currency that evangelization of Ohafia began. But while the effects of this new attitude on Ohafia should not be stressed too much since such a new approach hardly had any immediate or profound effect upon the attitudes of the ordinary missionary in the field, it cannot be completely denied that this new orientation inevitably impinged on the character of evangelism at the time in all places including Ohafia.

As has already been mentioned, prejudice against Ohafia was strong in British circles even before the penetration of Igbo hinterland. This was in part due to the Obegu raid in which Ohafia had been implicated and for which the British were bent on reprisals. This prejudice was not confined to the secular sphere of the British; the Presbyterians had been aware of Ohafia's part in creating 'strife' and 'disorder' in the interior. 'If the Ibos are a wild head-hunting people', wrote MacFarlan, 'the Ohafia branch of the tribe was notorious'.[92] He

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91. Coleman, op cit, p. 99.

92. See MacFarlan, op cit, pp. 132-3.

went on to elaborate on the 'lawlessness' of the Ohafia people and their 'mercenary' role in favour of the Aro. With these preconceptions, the Presbyterians came into Ohafia with more or less conscious plan to change the society.

No sooner had they arrived Ohafia than they pitched their tents against warfare and all forms of murder. But this facet of 'heathenism' had already been suppressed by British police power and a few exemplary executions[93] had lent credibility to the stand of the colonial authority on this. But then, it takes time, as Ohafia people would say in a proverb, for the pot in which a goat is cooked to lose its smell. Murder of some sorts continued. If, for instance, our information is reliable, not one twin was spared in the whole period between the coming of the British and the arrival of the Presbyterian in 1911. The fact is that these children, with the consent of their parents, were slaughtered even before the government heard of such a birth.[94] And the so called head-hunting which then assumed underground form called

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93. Significantly none of my informants could give any example of such executions, each talked generally about the white man executing murderers after trial at Bende. This conclusion may therefore remain tentative.

94. Oral information from Obunkwa interview.

mpipie,[95] continued almost with impunity.[96] For the colonial writs to be effective against these evils, therefore, it required the efforts of the church people, who were also in the ranks of villagers, to either report or threaten to report these 'evils' to the colonial authority. It was this and the bringing about of the enlightenment of conscience that constitute the role of the missionaries in the demise of murder in Ohafia.

There were several other aspects of life in Ohafia society which were repugnant to the Presbyterians. There was for instance, partial nudity among unmarried girls. This tradition was not simply a case of "irrational attitude towards garments". In a pre-scientific society such as Igboland, it was bound up with the traditional codes regulating morality and sex behaviour which were underpinned by religious sanctions. This custom was virrulently attacked by the missionaries and part of their campaign against it was generous offer of

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95. This means scouting especially in the bush. Here it implies a warrior obtaining human heads in the process of scouting around territories other than those of Ohafia. This is contrasted with obtaining human heads during an organised war.

96. In this connection names like Onuka Ukwa, Kalu Mgbei and Nna Ipi have survived in oral traditon as obstinate head-hunters. In fact it is even said that Onuka Ukwa once murdered a British messenger and, for want of evidence, he could not be punished.

clothing materials.[97] Meanwhile, they had built a domestic science school for the girls and started encouraging them to patronize the institution. Both within this institution and outside it, even such an age-long custom as ino nhiha among girls elaborated in chapter 1, was given heathenish connotation and discouraged among 'true christians'.

There were even more sensitive areas. There was, for instance, polygamy which role in the production process has been clearly shown in chapter 1. As far as the missionaries were concerned, there could be no question of reconciling polygamy with christianity. There was also Ohafia's pantheon of gods which, to the missionaries, represented a rival religion. The Presbyterians now came up with an important weapon against these customs. At a time when their medical services were growing increasingly popular and the depredations of the secular arm of colonial rule was driving people into the embrace of the church as a shield against colonial over-rule, the Presbyterians insisted that converts abjured traditional gods and renounced all but one wife as a condition for baptism and full membership.

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97. Oral information from Ojiaku independently confirmed by Rev. Mbila.

To be sure a few people met these conditions and were thereby admitted into full membership.[98] Some even went to the extent of destroying their kamalu and joining enthusiastically in the campaign against the 'obnoxious customs. Others, however, found it convenient to make verbal commitments to these conditions or even to effect a few of them but there were a thousand and one cases of people relapsing into non-christian ways after a spell of christian life. But even among the seeds said to have fallen on fertile grounds, there was overt syncretism. It often surprised the missionaries that some of their converts were avid patrons of traditional customs in the villages especially as "heathenism" was broad enough in definition to include the institution of Akpan and such recreational activities as Obon Akang or Igba ekpe.[99] The fact is that in many villages of Ohafia membership of Akpan was the exclusive preserve of people who had attained a certain age. And as has been shown in chapter 1, it offered opportunity for accumulation and for this reason, few people declined to become members.

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98. My sole evidence for this is the register of communicants kept by Rev. Collins and the Ecclesiastical returns in the Blue books throughout our period.

99. Oral information from Ojiaku.

Such other recreational activities as Obon and Akang were so attractive that few people resisted participation. Indeed, Elder Ibem[100] of Ebem-Ohafia continued to carry the ekpe masquerade till very late in his life to the embarrassment of the Presbyterians. Finding themselves somewhat in a tight corner, the missionaries made concessions after concessions to Ohafia norms. At a point, for instance, Rev. Collins suffered his converts to join the Obon and Akang so as not to be molested if they kept late outside their houses at night.[101] Evidence shows that this became an excuse for an even more overt participation in these activities. In Ohafia of today, church members feel no compunction whatsoever at participation in any of these customs.

Looking back at the Ohafia society of our period, it becomes very difficult to see how the Presbyterians could have succeeded in effacing the so called rival religion in Ohafia. As we can see from chapter one, there were different gods for all aspects of life. Even the yams which people ate had their god and proper sacrifices were carried out before planting and harvest. It was not therefore only

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100. I interviewed him before his death but I had this information even before the interview.

101. Oral information from Ojiaku.

when a man consulted the Ikwan or Aga eke that he could be said to patronise these gods. And unless the missionaries transferred their converts physically out of Ohafia society, there could be no question of these converts abandoning traditional life. And though echoes of the fall of Ibin Ukpabi oracle which the British dynamited reached Ohafia and must have helped to lower confidence in such deities, none of the deities in Ohafia itself was subjected to such treatment. All what the Presbyterians could do therefore was to occasionally desecrate these gods but never was the basis of their power and influence shattered.

Shortly after the arrival of the Presbyterians, one of them, Dr Robertson, to the consternation of the native people, shot down one of the Ikwan monkeys at Elu-Ohafia.[102] He thus gave the signal for the desecration of sacrosanct objects in Ohafia by so called christian converts. Indigenous collaboration became a strong moral booster for the missionaries in their iconoclasm. In several instances, half-baked church elders mounted village pulpits to thunder condemnation on traditional practices and usage and they threatened, under pain of excommunication, those who continued participation in them. In

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102. Arua, op cit, p.

many cases they rode rough shod over the alleged pretensions of Ikwan deity and counselled against consultation of it by members.

Perhaps the most important way in which the Presbyterians struck at Ohafia custom was to brainwash impressionable school children against these customs. MacFarlan gives a vivid account of the excesses of Ohafia school children which deserves to be quoted at length:

> At times the school boys acted rashly in their new freedom. In school and church they learned that men should not worship idols. All around them were the shrines of juju worship which they had been brought up to dread. They began to destroy the symbols of the old faith which they were told were impotent to heal or hurt. Near the mission school at Elu was a sacred stream. The fish which swarmed in it were sacred to the gods, and the water must not be used for cooking. In the silence of night the lads crept down to the water's edge and killed the fish and took the water to the mission yard to cook their food. Then they went round the local shrines and took away the offerings of eggs, fowls and copper rods which lay around. The monkeys which swarmed through the villages of Elu and Amaekpu were sacred. They openly stole food from the houses and attacked young children who had food in their hands. With sticks and stones the scholars drove the monkeys into the forest. These actions naturally aroused the wrath of the priests and older members of the community... But they served their purpose. The juju were seen to have no power. A doubt crept into the minds of their worshippers. They could not save themselves. Could they save others?[103]

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103. MacFarlan, op cit, p. 134.

In other respects, however, the impudent behaviour of school children yielded more positive results. Once, for instance, they became indoctrinated against twin murder, they championed the cause of destruction of this evil. And since they were part and parcel of the village, they could be relied upon to report cases of twin murder. In 1912, for instance. when Ikpe Ngele of Amaekpu-Ohafia murdered the twin children delivered by his wife, school boys of Ohafia central school took it upon themselves to report the 'outrage' to the District Commissioner, Mr James Watt, at Bende. Following this incident, the ostracised twin mothers of Amaekpu were ordered to return to their respective homes.

In response to this order, school boys went round the villages on their own initiative to hymn the order into the ears of an outraged public. Heroes of this crusade were Robbin Kalu Ukiwe and Johnson Okoro Idika of Amaekpu; Awa Ugbu Nta (allias Awa Ndi Awa) of Elu, and Johnson Osonwa of Ebem.[104]

Ohafia people, on their part, tenaciously resisted these attempts to discredit and impugn on their culture and traditions. It is said that elders of the people had warned Collins from the

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104. Mba, Condensed History, pp. 6-7.

onset that he would be sent packing any day he dared to cause Ikwan to be tampered with. Collins' court reply is said to have been that he had not come to destroy but to bolster indigenous customs. The promise not to tamper with the deities was honoured somewhat since ikwan, close as it is to the missioon hill, was never physically tampered with.

The Dibea people or local medicinemen were the first to begin organising embarrassment for the missionaries. In one case, they succeeded in propagating such a myth about the nemesis which would befall school children that parents began to withdraw their wards.[106] It is a pity that this matter is yet to be probed in detail. There were also occasional lynchings of the more notoriously iconoclastic school children but probably because such things were done secretly, attempts to get their details did not quite succeed.

Available evidence, however, shows that the elders of Ohafia were determined to punish any proven case of disrespect to tradition and Ebem court appeared to have been sympathetic to them. As early as 1913, it was reported that the Ohafia adherents had not always been wise and this had

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106. This was the impression I got after my interview with the Ikwan priest, Agwu Chika.

irritated the other members of the community'.[107] In one instance, a christian adherent was daring enough to harvest and eat new yams before the sacrifices and ritual eating of the first yam by Ezeji had been accomplished. This man was arraigned in court and made to pay the cost of the sacrifices to cleanse his abomination.[108] There were many other cases of'petty out burst of persecution' against the non-conforming christians who were in several cases taken to court. 'In every case', reported Dr Hitchcock, 'the decision had been against the church people'.[109]

Later Developments: 1930-1960

The 1930s forms an important watershed separating the old Ohafia society from the new. As we have seen in the earlier chapters, it was during this period that road links were extended to the railway centres with the resultant increase in comings and

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107. N.A.E. Presbynig, 23, October, 1913, item 153.

108. Ibid

109. Ibid

goings and the hastening of social change in the society. By the 1930s also almost all the villages had been engulfed in christianity and the first set of educated elites had emerged and taken up mainly teaching jobs in Ohafia itself. And as if to mark the end of the old era, a leading spirit of the changes of the period, Rev. Collins, passed away during the said period (1934). It was therefore a transitional Ohafia society that his successor, Rev. Mincher, had to deal with.

The crucial issue of the 1930s and post 1930s in Ohafia was the provision of a post-primary educational institution. The fact is that many people had completed their primary school at this time and job opportunity for this category of people had somewhat started to become narrow, a factor both of the imbalance of the educational system[110] and of the depression period. Nigerian youths had started drifting to the towns in search of jobs.[111] Many people in Ohafia had started to send their wards to such places as Umuahia, Calabar, Enugu, Ovim and Abiriba for higher education. This underlined the necessity for a post-primary school in Ohafia itself. For sometime the pressure of the demand for this was concentrated on the Presbyterian mission since it

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110. Sessional Paper no. 6/1944, p.4, item 10.
111. Ibid

was the only missionary body in Ohafia. But partly as a result of their historic financial inadequacy and partly as a result of a myopic educational goal, they continued to shirk this duty until the situation assumed an explosive political character.

By 1950 serious discussions were going on about the desirability of inviting an alternative or rival missionary body in Ohafia. Many progressive elements had become weary of the slothful Presbyterians especially with regard to their dog-in-the-manger stance. For some time, too, pressure had built up on this mission to return the Girls School at Asaga which had been removed to Arochukwu following a certain shocking murder committed in the premises of the school. Meanwhile, delegates from different Ohafia villages met at Elu to vote on the question of bringing an alternative missionary body. During the meeting and discussions, the enemity between the villages of Amaekpu and Ebem loomed large as each of these villages led the respective opposite sides of for and against the invitation of a new mission. The meeting ended in disarry.

Then, partly to retrieve its sagging image, the Presbyterians, in 1952, returned the Girls School which they now augmented with a one-year post

primary modern wing.[112] They now sited the school at Amaekpu as against Asaga. But it was already too late. In 1953, a retired school teacher and now the paramount chief of Amaekpu, Chief Nkata Emetu, led a disgruntled clique which single-handedly brought the Catholics to Ohafia. The decision of the Catholics to make Amaekpu the seat of their mission was not just because Chief Nkata hailed from Amaekpu but also because Amaekpu was the arch rival of Ebem which had become the stronghold of the Presbyterians. It was calculated, and rightly too, that Amaekpu would, to rival or spite Ebem, rally round the Catholics.

The arrival of the Roman Catholic Mission began a new era in missionary enterprise in Ohafia. The strong feeling of security of the Presbyterians was challenged as bickerings and rivalry began among the two missions. In their characteristic way of ensnarring converts through the school, the R.C.M. opened a primary school in Amaekpu in 1954, St Georges Primary School. And while the Presbyterians were still procastinating, in 1958, the Catholics opened the first secondary school in Ohafia which they called Coronata Secondary School, Asaga.

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112. K.E. Arua, "The Elite and Community Development in Isiama Ohafia", B.Sc. dissertation, Political Science, U.N.N., 1976, p. 62.

The siting of this school at Asaga was the result of clear-headed political calculations. Asaga people had been bitter against the Presbyterians for removing the Girls School from Asaga and siting it, afterwards, at another village. They had therefore strongly backed Amaekpu in the latter's move to invite the Catholics. It was in order, therefore, to harden this alienation of Asaga from the Presbyterians that the Catholics more than compensated them with a secondary school.

These developments stung the Presbyterians into action. They added another one year to the modern wing of the Girls School to make it two-year post-primary school and they commenced a long plan full of delay tactics to convert the school into a full-fledged secondary school.[113] But developments related to this fall out side our period. It is important to note, however, that frustrations in

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113. I was somewhat well informed about these developments before the onset of this research, being intimately part and parcel of the Presbyterian church. But I did not assume too much. I still held discussions with many people to straighten out my views here and there. Such discussions specifically related to the subject matter of this section were held at different times with: Rev. Nnabugwu, Moderator of the Aro-Ohafia Presbytery; Rev. Eze, Ebem Parish; Mr Ak. Oba, former headmaster, Ohafia Central School and now administrative secretary, Ohafia Improvement Union; Mr Nkata Emetu, lecturer, Department of Library Science, A.B.U., Zaria and son of Chief Emetu who championed the move to invite the Catholics; Mr O.N. Njoku, Dept. of History, U.N.N.

particular missions, rivalry among Ohafia villages and other factors helped to determine the denominational complexion of Ohafia christians.

Equally important is the conservative proclivity of the Ohafia man. Many people remained Presbyterins at the close of our period mainly because of the romance surrounding Ete Ubom Collins.

It was, however, tragic for the Ohafia people that the Presbyterians were alone on the stage for over fourty years during which period their security against competitors had led them to bother very little about modernizing infrastructures like schools, hospitals, etc. This was the fate of the wider Cross River Igbo area which was their sphere in contrast with such other areas as Onitsha and Obosi where Catholics and Protestants jokeyed for influence over and above one another. This competition was expressed in terms of the establishment of modernizing infrastructures. Catholic arrival in Ohafia could not have been more welcome. But if it brought some flicker of blessings to Ohafia people, it also helped to exacerbate the enemity and rivalry between Ohafia villages".

Missionary Impact On Ohafia

The key to the understanding of the impact of

missionary enterprise on Ohafia lies in the appreciation of the fact that Ohafia was an integral part of Igboland missionary impact on which area has been worked out by a number of serious studies. The analysis in this section serves to show the extent to which the Ohafia situation confirms what is already known about the broader subject. It is also crucial to the understanding of the results of missionary enterprise to keep firmly in mind the fact that Ohafia was not a tabula rasa on which the missionaries could write anything they pleased. On the contrary, it had evolved a culture which represented an adaptation to its specific environment. Ohafia, therefore, had an "entry behaviour" with which christianity had to reckon

To begin with, there is the important question of de-stabilization of otherwise ideologically monolithic indigenous societies by missionaries, a point to which Prof. Ayandele has drawn attention.[114] Pre-missionary Ohafia was a communal entity. Every member of this entity was but a unit in an organic whole controlled by an iron-bound code of duties, taboos and rights, on the faithful performance by every individual of which the cohesion, order and welfare of the entity depended. It was only as a unit in the

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114. Ayandele, Missionary enterprize.

organic whole that the individual must think, speak, believe and act. By converting individuals in the Ohafia community, the missionaries removed units from an organic whole and thereby undermined the monolithic structure of the society.

On a different note, christianity, by its very nature, was not simply a question of different and alien belief system, it was a question of an entirely different way of life which was bound to change the fundamental basis of any society to which it was introduced. This is a point which has been stressed by Prof. Afigbo in the context of Igboland.[115] In this process of changing the fundamental basis of society, the school played an important part because it was the instrument for mobilizing support for christianity and by the same token for withdrawing support from the old social order. This role was all the more crucial because those recruited for christianity through the school were by and large children who had not yet been fully inducted into the culture and lore of the nation. Ipso facto, they brought to christianity fewer trappings of the indigenous culture than would have been the case if most of the converts were elders. As a result, while time and death thinned down the ranks of the

115. A.E. Afigbo, Ropes of Sand, Studies in Igbo history and Culture, University Press Ltd., Ibadan, Benin, etc, 1981, p. 340.

defenders of the old order, the ranks of the christians were being progressively augmented. Therefore, even as the soul of Ohafia society eventually survived missionary onslought, the latter had introduced into the society elements with far-reaching potentialities capable in time of swamping the springs of indigenous society.

It did not take time before the value of the school as a means of getting ahead in the new world ushered in by colonial rule was proved beyond all reasonable doubt. Within a few years the children who were used as guinea pigs to probe the import of that institution learnt enough English and arithmetic to be employed as school teachers, evangelists, clerks and messengers. In these jobs, as will be shown more clearly in the next chapter, they acquired a new economic power and social status far beyond the wildest imaginations of their elders and parents, thus becoming objects of admiration and envy. The result was that even those who initially sneered at the idea of sending their children to school came round to doing so.

In the entire process of modernization represented by christianity, Ohafia culture was the ultimate loser. Christians, especially impressionable school children, were taught to look down on tradi-

tional ways of life. Indeed the boarding students were physically removed from within the social influence of the village and subjected to a different socialization process. Ima nnunu among boys or ino nhiha among girls were, therefore, out of the question. These were replaced with school activities loaded with western culture. Even among adult converts, such time-honoured practices as polygamy was discouraged with all that implied to the stability of traditional family life. Equally important was the fact that people - especially those who migrated out of Ohafia in pursuit of livelihood - began to find themselves in socio-economic circumstances in which polygamy and many other customs which were tailored to suit the production relations of indigenous Ohafia society became an unnecessary encumberance and, altogether, a happy riddance.

It requires to be noted, also, how, with their denominational varieties and rivalries, the missionaries broke into village politics in Ohafia and helped to intensify the rivalry and enemity between Ohafia villages. By the end of our period, they had successfully aligned one Ohafia village against the other on christian denominational grounds. The poverty of the Presbyterian mission which held Ohafia as an exclusive sphere of influence reflected

on the number and quality of such modernization infrastructures as schools and hospitals. These were very few indeed compared with other areas with Catholic dominance or where Catholics and Protestants were in rivalry. Modest supply of developmental infrastructures became the special cachet of Cross River Igboland just as poverty was the special mark of the Presbyterian mission which evangelised them.

It is important, however, in any discussion of missionary impact on society, to guard against exaggerating the grief of traditional institutions and norms under missionary impact. In the case of Ohafia, many people who embraced christianity did so for purely mundane considerations. At a time when the British were dazzling the native population with their attractive and superior manufactures and when court clerks equipped with only working knowledge of English were virtually the rulers of the land, it became prudent to patronise christianity so as to acquire the knowledge of English and get paid employment. This basically utilitarian conception of christianity was even enough barrier against fanaticism in the religion. Hence, neither the school teachers, products of christianity, nor the church elders, made any radical break with Ohafia customs and usage. They wounded christianity even at such sen-

sitive points as polygamy. Missionary concessions to indigenous practise became more glaring at the point when even polygamists were ordained elders.

The real spring of indigenous Ohafia society was its religion, especially as represented by the various deities. The promise of Rev. Collins not to tamper with these deities was honoured throughout. Moreso as the deities quickly adapted to the changing circumstances. Instead of a yearly human sacrifice, for instance, the Ikwan deity was content with the sacrifice of a deer caught alive from the bush by women.

Probably the most important of these deities was the Nfijioku which was the god of yams and agricultural season. The priest of this deity continued to wield important influence and Nfijioku continued to be very important in the lives of the people. Admittedly school children occasionally desecrated some of these deities. But none of such refractory behaviour escaped severe censure especially as the Ebem court did not appear to have been in collaboration with christians in this matter. It is important to note that as long as these deities were spared, the springs of indigenous Ohafia society had been left intact. All the important celebrations like iri ji, obon, Akang and so on in which christians partake, can be linked in one way or the other to the agricultural deity.

In this connection, we need state that the economic, political and social life of Ohafia were under-pinned in their religion and none was easily separable from the other. It would probably have required the missionaries to physically remove their converts from Ohafia to a European socio-economic milieu to approach the kind of wholesale conversion they had bargained for. As long as this did not happen and Ohafia converts remained in the same environment in which their religion-encrusted customs evolved, they patronised traditional religion instinctively. The observations of Mrs Sylvia Leith-Rose in the case of Igboland are instructive and fitting conclusion to the Ohafia case:

> Such a tremendous load has been suddenly put upon shoulders not yet ready to carry such a burden that it is no wonder the bearer falters, turns back or rests a while in the familiar world of his own customs before resuming the christian path. The only real surprise is the fact that he does not seem to know that he is doing so, so that with no strain or conflict he can attend communion and believe in "medicine", keep, until he is found out a "church" wife and several other "native" marriage wives, tie up preciously in the same corner of a handkerchief his rosary and the shaped bit of "iron for juju" made for him by an Awka blacksmith, plant side-by-side in the garden round his new cement and pan-roofed house the hibiscus of "civilization" and the ogirisi tree of pagan family rites.116

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116. Sylvia Leith-Ross, African Women: A study of the Ibo of Nigeria, Faber and Faber, London, London, 1939, pp. 292-293.

Chapter 4

WESTERN EDUCATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW ELITE

Introduction

This chapter examines western education in Ohafia and the changes it introduced into the society. It begins with a sketch of the historical background of western education, showing the grounds for the now hacknied indictment of the missionaries for a short-sighted educational goal in Nigeria and the efforts of the government, especially through grant-in-aid leverage, at broadening and liberalizing the objectives and philosophy of education. Then educational development in Ohafia is taken up in some detail, especially from the period when assisted schools began to develop in the area. The emergence of an educated elite in Ohafia in the 1930s or so is shown to be the critical culmination of the educational development of the area. Blessed by the economic innovations of colonialism with a solid material pedestal, the new elite gradually eclipsed the traditional oligarchies. Social change in Ohafia assumed more serious dimensions when this new elite championed the formation of the Ohafia Progressive Union and began to use their power and resources of knowledge to wheel the Ohafia society towards a

western-oriented path of modernization and development.

Western Education[1] - A Historical Background

The growth and development of western education in south-eastern Nigeria, like other parts of Nigeria, was largely the work of christian missionaries. By 1891 when effective colonial rule was established in south-eastern Nigeria, missionary domination of the educational field was already an accomplished fact, having existed in a place like Calabar for nearly half a century. Secular authority spent the next few decades conquering the people and establishing a colonial pax. Thus pre-occupied, secular authority was in no real position to provide social services other than those like a communications network or

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1. The concept 'western education' (as distinct from traditional African education) is used here to refer to formal and systematic instruction in subjects characteristic of the curriculum used in western countries (reading, writing and arthmetic as core subjects to which are added courses in the humanities, arts and sciences). This system of instruction was designed to standardize the training of young people not only in the values of a modern industrialized and commercialized society but also in the necessary skills for meaningful participation in the society. I owe this definition entirely to J.S. Coleman, Nigeria: background to Nationalism, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los London, 1958, p.113.

administrative and judicial institutions which either directly aided conquest or contributed to the maintenance of law and order as a follow-up of conquest. In such a scheme of things, education occupied at first, a relatively secondary position and so could be left to the missions within whose scheme it enjoyed, from the beginning, a place of first importance.[2]

From the missionary point of view, education was an instrument for evangelisation. The fact is that the 19th century missionaries were ever too conscious of the failure of earlier missionary ventures in other parts of Africa. Rightly or wrongly they blamed this on the inability of their predecessors to create "self-supporting and self-propagating" congregations able to carry on the work of evangelization which European missionaries, owing to the 'deadliness' of the African climate, could only initiate rather than continue indefinitely.[3] Hence, Bowen made the

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2. Annual Report of the Department of Education for the year 1949 Laid on the table of the legislative council as sessional paper no. 16 of 1951, printed and published by the Government Printer, Lagos, 1951, pp. 3-4; see also A.E. Agigbo, "The Mission, the state and Education in south-eastern Nigeria, 1956-71", in Edward Fashole-Luke, Richard Gray, Adrian Hastings and Godwin Tasie (eds), Christianity in independent Africa, Rex Collings Ltd, London, 1978, pp. 176-192.

3. A.E. Afigbo, "Background to the southern Nigerian Education code of 1903", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria (hence forth J.H.S.N.) Vol. IV, no. 2, June, 1968, pp. 197-225, see p. 199.

following contention which may well stand as one of the most articulate statements of missionary educational philosophy:

> Our designs and hopes in regard to Africa are not simply to bring as many individuals as possible to the knowledge of Christ. We desire to establish the Gospel in the hearts and minds and social life of the people, so that truth and righteousness may remain and flourish among them, without the instrumentality of foreign missionaries. This can not be done without civilization. To establish the Gospel among any people, they must have Bibles and therefore must have the art to make them or the money to buy them. They must read the Bible and this implies instruction.4

Since the missionaries saw education as one of the chief instruments of evangelization and the ultimate guarantee of the permanence of their work, it is not surprising that before the secular arm became disposed to turn attention to that social service, missionaries had dotted the entire area with schools and retained the initiative in education which they had already assumed from earlier times in other parts of southern Nigeria.[5]

Yet the secular authority did not completely absolve its responsibility for the provision of

4. J.J. Bowen, Missionary Labours and Adventures in Central Africa, Charelson, U.S.A. 1857, p. 321, cited in J.F. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891; The making of a new elite, Longman, London, 1965.

5. Take for instance, in Lagos colony and in Calabar c.f. Sessional Paper No. 16 of 1951.

education to the people. Evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that it regarded this particular social responsibility as devolving directly on it. Sir Ralph Moor did not mince words in his statement of this end of the goals of education from the government point of view:

> I would submit that the provision of adequate educational opportunities for the natives is one of the primary duties devolving on local administrations consequent on the powers assumed by Her Majesty's government in Nigeria and one that required and is deserving of immediate attention. As a matter of policy it is a duty that should be at once coped with for permanent peace cannot be established in the territories until enlightenment and education are introduced and the untutored savage is taught and disciplined in methods of earning a regular livelihood by supplying the wants and demands of his neighbours - Native and European - instead of relying on Nature and seizing his neighbour's goods for one. Further, the administration and merchants are at present hampered by want of trained clerks, artisans, etc and capital is drained from the territories in salaries paid to foreign natives who spend as little as possible therein.6

It is not surprising, therefore, that even during the early days when its hands were still full of other more urgent problems, the colonial government undertook not only to subsidize the educational work of the missions, but also to lay down conditions which each mission school must satisfy to qualify for a

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6. See memo to the Secretary of State dated Elgin Lodge Winkfield 10.10.00, cited in Afigbo, "Background to southern Nigerian Education code", p. 200.

grant or subsidey. This grant was the earliest leverage employed by the government to influence both the quality and direction of educational development in the country and it dates back to about 1887.[7] The next stage was reached in 1899 when the same authority started insisting that not only should it lay down the conditions which a mission school should satisfy for a grant, but also it established an educational Inspectorate Development charged with ensuring that the prescribed conditions were fully met.[8] This was but a short step to the 1926 education code.

The 1926 education code went a long way in asserting government control over education. It forbade the opening of schools unless the Director and the board of Education were satisfied that it would be properly conducted and staffed. It also provided for the closing of a school if it was being conducted in a manner adjudged not to be in the interests of the people of the community. The new code laid down minimum rates at which teachers should be paid in assisted schools, and the grant payable to a school was now based

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7. Sessional Paper No. 16 of 1951, p.4.

8. Ibid

on a percentage, varying with the standard of efficiency of the schools and of the total amount paid as salaries to teachers. Though it represented a great step forward and resulted in an increase in the number of assisted schools from 192 in 1926 to 270 in 1928, it still retained the conception of government aid being confined to a relatively small group of very efficient schools.[9]

These regulations and control underline government distrust for the conduct and results of education by missionaries. In fact, the missions who controlled most of the schools were not very much interested in the training of clerks or even highly qualified teachers and at times adopted measures to forestall that happening. According to Professor Afigbo, they were more concerned in raising pious low-grade teachers and mission hands and with using the schools to effect the mass conversion of children and, may be, their parents.[10] There was therefore an important difference between government and the missions in the matter of conduct of education. Mr Henry Carr stated this difference and government distrust when he wrote:

> The aim of the missionary societies in establishing schools is entirely different from that of the government

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9. Ibid, p. 6.

10. Afigbo, "The Missions, the State...", o,178.

> or practical men. The missionaries look upon schools as instruments for making converts, other men view them as instruments for making good and useful citizens.11

This difference deepened in the course of time especially as missionary bodies clung tenaciously to the original concept of the role of education in colonial Africa while the secular authority somehow from the 1920s tried to keep abreast with time and changing circumstances.

The case is this; as can be clear from Moor's statement quoted above, the policy of the secular authorities on education originally aimed at producing clerks, teachers and other junior hands needed in the colonial bureaucracy and had stressed education of a literary kind. But long after this initial need for clerks, etc, had been more or less satisfactorily met, the original literary model of education remained.[12] The result - apart from the religious side of the instruction - has been the production of swarms of young men whom the government did not want and who could ill-afford to employ themselves or to re-integrate themselves into the indigenous society. It was in the face of this problem that government realized

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11. H. Carr, Special Report on schools in southern Nigeria (Old Calabar, 1900) p.7, cited Ibid, p. 179.

12. Ibid.

that the education provided 'has been too academic' and it was in order to make amends that it came up with a plan that "holds out a real prospect of producing a more balanced educational programme and a hope of retaining the majority of the boys who receive an elementary education as members of the village community, by relating the school and its activities to the life of the local community".[13] It is remarkable that missionaries obstinately refused to toe this line of policy and, as will become clear later, tended to consistently direct the government away from it till the close of our period.

Ironically, however, it was the missionaries who took the first positive step to redress the imbalance of the 19th century missionary educational programme. This step was taken by the Presbyterians who in 1895, established the Hope Waddel Training Institute (hence forth H.W.T.I). This comprehensive school was designed to give industrial training and to raise teachers and pastors. Promising pupils were to be admitted into the institution for three years after completing their primary education. Each pupil was to choose a trade in which he was to be trained and along with this

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13. Sessional Paper No. 6/1944 Nigeria Ten-year Educational Plan copy of Despatch to Secretary of state for the colonies and copy of comments on Plan of Advisor Committee on Education in the colonies, Government Printer, Lagos, see p.4, item 19.

training would go a general education in English and other subjects. This programme presupposed that the H.W.T.I. would be a post-primary school but by 1900, it was still largely a big primary school with an industrial wing.[14]

Howbeit, it may seem, afterall, that missions had come around to recognising the need to aim beyond merely raising a class of evangelists through their schools as against the literary programme which they had faithfully pursued thus far. But this ought not to be emphasized because for a long time the Presbyterian authorities in Calabar hoped that the best products of H.W.T.I would be trained as "teachers, evangelists and pastors for the development of the mission".[15] And so it happened that the original system and curriculum died hard. 'Yet' averred professor Afigbo, 'the fact remains that no matter what the colonial authority did to ensure supervision and inspection, it failed - owing to lack of either will or sufficient commitment or funds - to wheel the missions into line. Indeed if anything, the government would appear to have followed the missionary example on the matter.

Rather paradoxically, it was the conservative position of the missionaries in the matter of education

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14. Afigbo, "Background to the southern Nigeria..." p. 202.

15. Ibid, p. 203.

that enjoyed nationalist backing, thus, tending to weaken even further, the will of government for change. The fact is that most educated Nigerians were critical of school curricula but were divided as to what should be the purpose of education. This difference was along the same lines as the well known differences between the views of two American Negro leaders, B.T. Washington and W.E.B.Du Bois. The former advocated the agricultural and vocational training of the masses while the latter insisted that education ought, first and foremost, to deal with the 'talented tenth'.[16] According to Coleman, only a minority of educated Nigerian critics inclined toward the B.T. Washington school of thought. It is said that this school deprecated the supposedly de-Africanizing tendencies of an exclusively christian-European cirriculum and bewailed the lack of agricultural or handicraft training which had "produced the cult of the detribalized clerk". This school somehow, epitomized the instinctive cultural revulsion of Africans against the disorganising implications of European education.[17]

The majority of educated Nigerians were, on the other hand, inclined toward Du Bois 'talented tenth' or elitist view. They also were dissatisfied with the

16. W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk, Chicago: McClurg, 1903), p. 105, cited in Coleman, op cit, p. 199.

17. Coleman, op cit, p. 119.

quality of Nigerian education, but for reasons different from those of European critics. Their reasons are summarized in their oft-repeated querry: 'Are we always to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water".' It was their contention that agricultural training would merely perpetuate and rigidify the status of "hewers of wood and drawers of water" against which they were revolting. They felt that education for citizenship in and responsibility toward the old tribal community was unreal and detracted from a broader racial or national sentiment. Vocational training of the kind conceived for Africans by some Europeans was objectionable to them because it, too, would perpetuate an employment system wherein the African worker was subject to the European master.[18]

In the final analysis, therefore, missionary refusal to disavow the original short-sighted educational goal and mis-guided nationalist backing of this myopic goal combined to rigidify an educational system by which:

> a country dependent largely on land has seen its schools train the rising generation for vocations unconnected with the land, and almost entirely for work in relation to a small ruling group of foreigners, whose local

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18. Ibid, pp. 119-120.

> interests are necessarily of comparatively narrow range.19

And as we have said, though theoretically the government could still employ its grant-in-aid leverage to wheel the missions to its own path, lack of will and occasional paucity of finances helped the missionaries to ultimately have their own way. So throughout our period, missionary educational philosophy preponderated over those of the government.

The Development and Culmination of Western Education in Ohafia

As was noted in the last chapter, school development in Ohafia started at Elu shortly after colonial conquest of the area and at the time when the secular authority was still engaged in exacting compulsory labour for porterage and for the construction of roads and railways. Subsequently, a chain of vernacular schools were opened in other villages of Ohafia on the bidding of the respective village elders. For some time, these schools remained junior primary schools which did not go beyond standard three. Elu school or Ohafia central was the first, and for some time, the only school to reach the sixth form. Consequently, scholars from all parts of Ohafia and the adjoining

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19. National Archives of Nigeria, Ibadan (hence forth NAI) C.S.O. 26/3 No. 20071 Report on Education in the southern provinces by Rev. A.G. Fraser, paragraph 8, cited in Afigbo, "The Missions, the State ...", p. 180.

clans of Ikwun, Biakpan, Abiriba, Abam, Igbere and Nkporo came there to complete their senior primary and to sit for the sixth form examination.

By 1926 there already existed four assisted schools in Ohafia - Elu, Ebem, Akanu and Asaga.[20] The difference between assisted and un-assisted schools lay in their financing and academic standards. Unlike the un-assisted schools, the assisted schools received regular government subventions called grant-in-aid; they had a concentration of equipment and good quality teachers, maintained generally high academic standards and charged fees directly from the pupils. Assisted schools were sited in such a way as to save three broad groupings of Ohafia. The Isiama group of villages had the Ohafia Central School and the Ebem school, the Ania group of villages had the Akanu school and the Ohafor group of villages had the Asaga school.

We have no precise information as to the total number of schools in Ohafia in 1926 when these four assisted schools were said to have been already in existence. But it is known that by then, most of the twenty five villages of Ohafia had each got a

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20. National Archives of Nigeria, Enugu, hence-forth N.A.E.) OW 367/26 Umprof 4/5/1 Annual Report, 1926, see sub-title 'Missions and Education'.

school.[21] The said four schools, therefore, formed a tiny fraction of the total number of schools in the area. This was the case in other areas also. Out of a total of 809 schools in Owerri province in 1932, for instance, only 47 were assisted; the rest of the 762 were unassisted. And out of the total school enrolment population of 40,889, only 9,869 were in the assisted schools while the remaining 31,020 were in the unassisted schools.[22] In view of this, government subventions which were confined to the assisted schools were miniscule in relation to the total cost of education.

The brunt of the financial burden of education, therefore, fell on the 'natives'[23] unless rivalry among the missions in a given locale forced some of them to operate gratuitous schools as a weapon for greater influence than others. As we have seen in the last chapter, Ohafia was not blessed with this

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21. This is my deduction from O.U. Kalu, "The Battle of the Gods: Christianization of Cross River Igboland, 1903-1950", Ohafia Review: The Magazine of the Ohafia People, vol. I, no. 2, Dec., 1982, p. 14. Since christianity had spread to most of the villages even by 1921, then most of the villages had that out-post of christianity, the school.

22. Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria Report on the Education Department for the year, 1932, Government Printer, Lagos, 1933, see data on pp. 32-35.

23. N.A.E., OW 7362/3 Umdiv 3/1/736 Annual Report Bende Division Jan., 1948-Aug., 1948, item 52.

kind of situation until the 1950s. The Presbyterians charged fees in their various schools in Ohafia, but the mode of payment of these fees differed from village to village.

Most of (if not all) the villages started off with communal support of and contribution for education. This mode of payment endured for a long time in such villages as Okon and Abia but it broke down quite early in others. In the Isiama group of villages, for instance, it hardly survived the teething period of educational development in Ohafia - except that somehow, the junior primary classes continued to be free at the close of our period. The fees paid in the S.P. classes varied at different times. Awa Ngwoke remembers paying six pence, it gradually rose to two shillings and six pence and to six shillings and six pence.[24] The mode of payment of fees in Amuke is interesting if controversial. Pupils were initially sponsored privately by their parents or guardians. It was after the primary education that the best pupil was identified and communally sponsored to H.W.T.I. Unfortunately, the first experimental beneficiary of this communal sponsorship,

24. Oral information from Chief Ngwoke Awa, well above 70 years of age in his residence in 103 Arochukwu road, Amaekpu, on 9/11/85. He himself was not quite sure again whether this amount was per term or per session.

a certain Agwa, was a disappointment and so forced the community to revert to communal sponsorship in the primary school. This method brought a lot of controversy as people went to Asaga and other villages to bring close and distant relations to benefit from the system.[25] Nonetheless the system continued beyond our terminal date.

On the whole, Ohafia, along with other clans shouldered heavy responsibility with regard to financial support of education. Hence in his Annual Report for 1948 the D.O. Bende, commended the 'effort which most villages of this and other Divisions are making to support the village school, the cost of which, with increased teachers salaries and new regulations concerning the standard of teachers required have risen considerably'.[26] The arrival of the Catholics in the 1950s, however, modified the situation regarding fee payment. In order to challenge the dominance of Presbyterians Catholic schools were completely free of charge to avowed Catholics. In staunch Catholic villages like Asaga and Amaekpu, therefore, one could avert the payment of school fees only by re-conversion to Catholicism. The

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25. Oral information from a certain Okwara Kalu Ibem of less than 30 years of age on 6/6/86. I have little faith in the validity of his information because of certain variations in them when I re-framed the same questions. He, however affirms that he is sure of his information.

26. N.A.E. OW 7362/3 Umuahia 3/1/736.

Presbyterians, nonetheless, continued to charge fees and with a sharp-edged propaganda, they put it abroad that it was their inferiority which made Catholic schools free. The gullibility of Ohafia people and their enduring faith in the Presbyterians is clear from the fact that fee-paying Presbyterian schools survived and throve alongside gratuitious Catholic schools.

The important point to note here, however, is that the efforts of Ohafia people at shouldering the cost of education - both in villages where the payment was communal and in others where it was private - point to their conviction about its usefulness. We can, on the basis of this, talk validly in terms of a shift in their value system to reflect emphasis on and aspiration to education.

The above point is further supported by the narrow difference between enrolment and attendance in Ohafia schools[27] in 1932. (see table IV:1) This should be seen in the background of the early period of school development in the area when duress

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27. Ohafia was the headquarters of the Presbyterian mission in (Igboland) Owerri Province and by this time the sphere of this mission was limited to Ohafia and its adjoining clans of Abiriba, Igbere and Nkporo. Out of a total of seven schools in the whole area, Ohafia had four including the largest of the seven schools. In strict sense, however, we are somewhat inaccurate in saying 'Ohafia schools'.

was employed to secure and to increase enrolment. But to get the pupils regularize their attendance during the said period became the more difficult task of forcing a cow, which has easily been taken to the water, to drink. The stabilization of attendance by 1932 discernible from table IV:1, therefore, further buttresses the point that confidence in the school had increased and so also the desire for it.

Another glaring fact from table IV:1 is the gap in favour of boys in the enrolment and attendance of boys and girls. The case is even more serious in the Unassisted schools where, altogether, enrolment was

Table IV:1 - Enrolment and Attendance in the Presbyterian Primary Schools in Owerri Province i.e. Ohafia and a few of its adjoining clans, 1932.

Assisted Schools			Unasisted Schools			Grand Total
Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
* 907	151	1058	1011	56	1067	4250
** 835	131	966	849	35	884	3700
no. of schools 7			no. of schools 28			

Source: Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria Report on the Education Department for the year 1932, Printed and Published by the Government Printer, Lagos, 1933, p.39.

* Enrolment
** Attendance

56 while attendance was 35. This contrasts with 151 and 131, respectively, for Assisted schools. The point, however, is that it had not occurred to people that girls could also be sacrificed for probing the import of the modernity called the school. But there was more enlightenment on this matter in the central villages where Assisted schools were located and this was mainly as a result of the women education campaigns of the Presbyterians which started ten years earlier with the opening of the domestic science centre at Asaga. Even then, stories abound of the scorn which Ohafia people poured on women (especially the first batch) who had the audacity to take to schooling.[28]

On the whole, our want of statistical data on school enrolment in the Ohafia area before 1960 constitutes a serious analytical set back and we are forced to be reticent on a number of issues. The fact is that the incumbent Headmaster of Ohafia Central school, Mr Oji, feels strongly that all the old records have left his office. He is, therefore, not persuaded of the wisdom in undertaking to look through his office for them - the kind of exercise

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28. Mrs A.U. Ukweni, "An address on Ohafia women's progress and development process to the National Union of Ohafia students", Ohafia Review: The Magazine of the Ohafia People, no. 1, April, 1982, pp. 9-12.

I carried out in Coronata secondary school and discovered useful records whose existence, the Principal had earlier doubted. Since these records are not in the only other two places - the manse and the N.A.E., we have eventually failed to get them. Let us hope, however, that succeeding researchers will get these data for a more thorough analysis.

Howbeit, the total school population of Ohafia and the adjoining clans of Abiriba Igbere and Nkporo which were the only areas occupied by the Presbyterians in Owerri province was altogether low in relation to the total population of the respective clans.[29] It will, however, be wrong to infer therefrom that people had not started to respond enthusiastically to education. The fact is that dearth of teachers made it difficult to continue opening more schools or even to step up the campaign for enrolment. Already the government had started to express dis-

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29. That of Ohafia in 1934, for instance, was 24556, see N.A.E., File No. 29196, C.J. Mayne, "Intelligence Report on Ohafia Clan", item 9. This was even a gross under estimate since it was based on tax demand of the previous years. It is also interesting, in view of the greater male school population than females, to note that the overall population of the females was consistently higher than those of the males in all the villages. This continued to be the case even by 1953, see Population census of Eastern Nigeria, 1953, Bulletin no. 8, pp.23-24.

quiet over the existence of private schools many of which were alleged to be of little or no educational value.[30]

It was this dearth of teachers that forced the missionaries at the initial stage to staff their school with teachers who, themselves, had only primary school education as we stated in the last chapter. In this regard, Ohafia central school which in many records, is referred to as Elu school, is significant not only as the first school in Ohafia but also as the training centre for the frist batch of teachers who staffed Ohafia schools. Indeed the boys said in the last chapter to have been recruited for the work of the Primitive Methodists in 1919 were all products of Ohafia Central School. If only for this pioneering role, Ohafia Central School deserves to be kept in the fore-ground in our attempt at portraying school development in Ohafia. But more than this, Ohafia Central remained the foremost and leading school not only in Ohafia but in the entire Presbyterian ... sphere in Owerri Province. Table IV:2 and IV:3 taken together constitute prima facie evidence for this claim. It will be seen that the school recorded the highest expenditure in salaries and collected the highest sum of money as grant. The implication of

30. Report on the Education Department for 1932, p. 3, item 5.

the two tables is that Ohafia central school scored the highest mark both in terms of academic standard and in terms of high quality/number of teachers, both of which formed the criteria for determining the amount to be allocated in aid. It is not a mere coincidence, therefore, that many of the early educated elites of Ohafia were products of this school.

Ohafia central school began in 1924 to conduct the 6th form examination, having in that same year developed into an Assisted status.[31] Being the first to attain this status in the entire clan, it attracted pupils from the different villages of Ohafia who came to complete their S.P. and to take the 6th form exam. By the time when Akanu and Asaga schools also got their 6th form classes Ohafia schools started to produce a considerable number of school leavers. It can be said that it was at about this time that the demand for higher education started to gather force, fed, by the excesses of the 'foreign' (mainly Efik) teachers who dominated the staff of Ohafia schools and allegedly exploited the ignorance of the people.[32]

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31. I made this deduction from Eke Kalu, "An Ibo Autobiography: The Autobiography of Mr Eke Kalu, Ohaffia's well honoured son", The Nigerian Field, vol. VIII, no. 4, Oct., 1938, p. 168.

32. E.L. Mba, "The origin of Ohafia Improvement Union (inc.)" Ohafia Review: The Magazine of the Ohafia People, Vol. 1, no. 2, 1982, pp. 1-2.

Table IV:2 - Estimated Expenditure for Presbyterian Schools in Owerri Province, 1930-31

Schools	1930 salaries	1931 salaries
Ohafia Central	£434:0:0	£488:0:0
Asaga	£379:0:0	£433:0:0
Ebem	£288:0:0	£330:0:0
Abiriba	£394:0:0	£448:0:0
Akanu	£290:0:	£338:0:0
Nkporo	£204:0:0	£246:0:0
Ibere (sic)	£244:0:0	£286:0:0

Source: Presbyterian Records office, the Manse, Ebem-Ohafia, No. 22/15/30, The Manager Ohafia schools to the Superintendent of Education, Port-Harcourt 15th May, 1930.

Table IV:3 - Grants to Presbyterian schools in Owerri Province for the year 1934

School	Amount Granted
Etiti Ama (Nkporo)	£75:0:0
Ebem	£155:0:0
Abiriba	£277:10/-
Akanu	£164:10/-
Ibere (sic)	£ 98:10/-
Ohafia Central	£301:0:0
Asaga	£207:0:0

Source: Presbyterian Records Office, The Manse, Ebem-Ohafia File titled 'West African School Register' see No. OW 111/571, Education office, Owerri, to Manager of C.S.M. Schools, Ohafia, 7th May, 1934

At the initial stage of school development up to the time when the Ohafia Central School became Assisted, Ohafia teachers in the staff of the various

schools were few and far between - an indication of the general want of educated elements in Ohafia. But by this time, a few scores of people were already settled in Jobs - either teaching or clerkship - on the basis of the standard 4 testimonial of Ohafia Central School. And just the previous year, the first batch of Ohafia students graduated from H.W.T.I.[33] Hence forward a somewhat unbroken stream of Chafia students started to flow out of this institution.

Apart from the fact that H.W.T.I was the first and for a long time, the only higher institution available to Igbo people including Ohafia, the close association between Ohafia and the Presbyterians who were the proprietors of the institution was such that it was this institution that most Ohafia people who went to any higher institution at all during the period attended.

As was noted earlier, the institution opened in 1895 as a three-year comprehensive post-primary institution. By the beginning of the 1920s when an increasing number of Chafia people started to attend

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33. N.A.E., Presbynig, 18th Oct., 1923, see item 13 for these postings. I have studied those of the previous years and I am satisfied that none involved any Ohafia indigene.

it,[34] the institution had out-grown much of its teething problems and had become fairly well established with Normal and secondary school wings. Since it laid more stress on producing 'teachers, evangelists and pastors for the development of the mission, scholarship grants were generously available in these fields, binding its recipients only to a post-qualification service in the mission for a specified number of years.[35]

On the other hand, the secondary school wing of the college was very expensive and had no scholarship grants whatsoever. Given the modest pecuniary means of the Ohafia people at the time in question, it is not surprising that for a long time those who attended H.W.T.I., as a rule, went in for mainly teaching or ministerial courses. Again it is not surprising that the ordinary Ohafia man, until quite recently, felt that an educated man is usually a teacher. It is therefore understandable that many of the early educated people whatever their trades have the epithet 'teacher' to their names. It was not until 1936 that secondary school students of Ohafia progency began to graduate from H.W.T.I. This first batch included

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34. This much is clear from a study of the postings of Normal students of H.W.T.I. for various years. See N.A.E. Presbynig 1/1/6.

35. Those who took up employment elsewhere before the fulfilment of this obligation were regarded as defaulters and were usually required to refund the cost of their education, see, for instance, ibid, at H.W.T.I. on 19th Oct., 1921, item 886 in relation to Alice Nwafor.

Anaga Nwoke, K.A. Ezema, O.N. Nwoke and Eni Njoku.[36] But then, one of them, Eni Njoku, was an excellent student who combined Normal and teachers courses. Throughout our period, teachers dominated the ranks of Ohafia scholars of H.W.T.I.

Meanwhile, post-primary institutions had increased in number. In 1923 the Methodists founded a secondary school at Uzuakoli-Ibo Boys Institute - which was a couple of miles from Ohafia. This soon combined both a secondary and a teachers' training section. Two years later, a government college was founded at Umuahia.[37] These institutions came, in time, to provide the Ohafia man with alternatives to just the H.W.T.I. and in the final analysis, a couple Ohafia people filtered through them. Indeed by 1924, an Ohafia man, Daniel Mba, was already a tutor in the Ibo boys' institute. If only for such considerations,

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36. Oral information from Mr. D.N. Dike in his residence along Arochukwu road, Amaekpu - Ohafia on 17/4/85. Mr Dike himself had been a very intelligent who was the best pupil of Ohafia Central School in 1930 (see Honour Board in Headmaster's office, Ohafia Central school, Ohafia). He was admitted into H.W.T.I for grammar school course but lack of wherewithals obliged him to change over to teacher-training course. He was familiar with all the personalities listed here.

37. Elizabeth Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, Macmillan. London and Basingstoke, 1976, p. 180.

these new institutions deserve to be mentioned in the history of educational development of Ohafia. On the whole, however, the denominational complexion of Ohafia christians tended to seal the doors of Ibo Boys' Institute against them just as high fees circumscribed their chances of studying at the Umuahia Government College. While these institutions increased the Ohafia man's alternatives, his ability to take them up was restricted by financial constraints. Hence, it was as late as in 1940 that the first Ohafia boys - Eni Oji of Amaekpu and Mba Ogwo of Asaga - registered as students of Government College, Umuahia. These people were followed closely by O.O. Uguru of Okagwe in 1941 and by Udo Igwe of Amaekpu in 1945.[38] Before this time, however, the H.W.T.I. remained the most attractive institution by all standards. It was probably from 1933 that we may say that the opportunity increased with the foundation of private institutions, a development pioneered among others, by Alvan Ikoku who founded the Aggrey Memorial College at Arochukwu in 1933.

Many other private colleges had been founded at this time, especially in Onitsha and Enugu. But it was Aggrey Memorial that had an additional advantage

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38. Oral information from Mr O.O. Uguru, a retired agriculturist and one-time Provost, Federal College of Education, Kontagora, in his residence at Okagwe-Ohafia on 4/12/86.

of proximity to Ohafia. In general the private colleges charged lower fees and accepted larger numbers, without the maximum age limits of the mission schools. Their standards were inevitably lower but they gave a secondary education to many who would not have obtained it otherwise. Many distinguished men and women today can be counted among their alumni.[39] From the 1930s, therefore, larger and larger number of people started to enter into post- primary institutions.

By 1940 educated elements of a number and diversity worth talking about had emerged in Ohafia. The one evidence for this is the fact that by this time the teaching staff of the Presbyterian schools in Owerri Province was overwhelmingly dominated by Ohafia people (see table IV.4). This may be contrasted with the period of the 1920s when even Ohafia schools were predominantly staffed with Efik teachers. due to lack of qualified indigenes. It needs to be explained, however, that when we refer to Presbyterian schools in Owerri Province, we are in essence, referring mainly to Ohafia, for the Presbyterian sphere in Owerri province was limited to Ohafia and the adjoining clans of Abiriba Igbere and Nkporo. Ohafia people formed the greater proportion

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39. Isichei, op cit, pp. 187-188.

of the staff of most of these schools. As is clear from table IV:4, they formed 72% of the staff of Ohafia Central School, 66.6% of the staff of Asaga school, 100% of those of Akaru School and 45% of the staff of Abiriba school.

It was not possible to get the staff lists of the schools in these clans over a period of time. This would probably have helped to strengthen our point on the matter of an increasing number of Ohafia staff in the different schools in Owerri Province. But there is no reason, however, for suspecting that the 1940 list which we have was unique during the period. Our conclusions from it, therefore, may be assumed to be as valid as it would have been if we provided more evidence. The said staff lists reveal that many teachers were yet to become certificated, but the important point is that they had got jobs on the basis of some educational qualification. Evidently the highest qualification at the time, even for other than teaching jobs, was Normal or Cambridge certificate from H.W.T.I. or equivalent institutions. In 1940 no body had got a higher qualification except Eni Njoku who had by then snatched the Teachers' Higher Diploma from Yaba Higher College and returned

to settle as a tutor at the H.W.T.I.[40]

It should not be imagined, though, that the list in table IV:4 depicts all the Ohafia teachers at the time. The truth is that the teaching service had scattered Ohafia people to other areas beside the Owerri Province whose staff list is available to us. Apart from the author's personal knowledge of many in this category during his field work, the archival material available to us is replete with evidence that many Ohafia people were already settled especially as teachers in Ikorofiong, Calabar, Eket, Uyo, Aba, Umuahia and other areas. One such evidence is court cases involving Ohafia sons abroad. To mention one out of many examples, S.K. Agwu was teaching at Owerrinta in Aba when he petitioned the senior superintendent of police, Umuahia, against government appropriation of a piece of land located behind the old Ohafia post office for the building of a police post, claiming that the said land belonged to him.[41] There is therefore enough evidence to sustain the conclusion that by 1940 a large number of Ohafia people had

40. See "Eni Njoku, 1917-1974", This is a sketch of the life and career of Eni Njoku printed and circulated on the occasion of his memorial service. A copy of this and a few similar documents were kindly lent to me by the late Professor's younger relation, Mr Ule Oji, on whom also I administered a few interview questions. I hereby acknowledge my obligation to him.

41. N.A.E., File 1260/1A Umdiv. 7/1/23, see S.K. Agwu to D.O. of 9/4/53 titled Proposed Police Post, Elu Ohafia.

Table IV:4a- Staff Lists of some Assisted Presbyterian Schools in Owerri Province in 1940, Showing Ohafia Members of the Teaching Establishment. (Astericks are used to indicate non-Ohafia indigenes.)

Teachers' Names	Date of Registration	Qualification	Date of Qualification	Salary 1/4/40
Otisi A. Otisi*	29 March 1922	2nd Class B Certificate	Dec. 1928	£87
Okong Ikpeme*	About June, 1929	3rd Class (Honorary)	Dec. 1926	£72
Okpa Chiori Agwu	1928	3rd Class Cert	Dec. 1930	£72
Ikpo Anya	May, 1928	High Elem. Cert	Dec. 1931	£66
Ndu Amaekpu	1928	" " "	Dec. 1932	£63
Eme Ibe Udensi		2nd Class B	Sept. 1931	£72
Peter Uche Ikenga		High Elem.	Dec. 1931	£69
Irebu Otaka*	1928			£18
Eleanya Agu*	Nov., 1938			£15
Kalu Eziyi Chuku	Oct., 1938			£15
Kalu Okwara Mba	Nov., 1939			£15
Okorie Lekwa	Jan., 1939			£15
Okorie Kalu	June, 1940			£12
Mba Otum	June, 1940			£12

Teachers' Names	Date of Registration	Qualification	Date of Registration	Salary 1/4/40
Ndukwe Agwu	June, 1940			£12
Ngwobia Kalu	June, 1940			£12
Uguana Izu Uguana*	Dec., 1939			£12
Mbede Kalu				£ 9

Table IV:4t - Asaga School Staff List 1940

Bassey Ekanem*	1927	2nd Class Cert.	Dec. 1927	£78
Lloyd Ukeni*	1934	High Elem. Cert.	Dec. 1939	£45
Okpan Obasi Oyom	1930			£30
Nwachukwu Eme	1937			£18
Kalu Kalu Mmaju	1938			£15
Kalu Etim Ume	1939			£12
Emetu Nkata				£12
Uwara Uma Olugu				£ 9
Ukegbu Alozie Uwa*	Nov. 1930			£15

Table IV:4c - Akanu School Staff List 1940

Teachers' Names	Date of Registration	Qualification	Date of Registration	Salary 1/4/40
Kalu Okonkwo Okigwe	19th June 1929	3rd Class Cert.	Dec. 1927	£72
Uma Kalu	July 1935	High Elem.Cert.	Dec. 1934	£57
Anaga Kalu Uche	April, 1934	High Elem.Cert.	Dec. 1939	£42
Kalu Ajike	Dec., 1937			£18
Emea Ibisi	Oct., 1938			£15
Odo Uma	June, 1940			£12
Ibe Njoku Uma	June, 1940			£12
Awa Kalu Ndukwe				£12

Table IV:4d - Abiriba School Staff List 1940

Usan Iso*
Okoro Kalu
Ndukwe Agwu Otisi*
Kalu Mmong Ume
Dike Nze Dike
Okomba Nduka*
Oji Kalu Ibem
Ekanem Coffie*
Ejem Oparwa*
Okorie Obonaya*
Awa Elekwa

Source: Presbyterian Records Office, the Manse, Ebem-Ohafia, File 168 Staffing Ohafia, see Colonial Development Fund.

settled for the teaching job and that many of them were working outside Ohafia.

Teaching was, however, only one of the professions to which Ohafia people took. Many other people who began as teachers ended up as clerks in the government or commercial establishments. David - Ikpo Ole of Asaga Ohafia for instance, after training as a teacher took up employment with the customs.[42] Others in this category include N.A. Ndu of Abia-Ohafia who taught briefly at Ohafia Central School before he was lured into the government as Treasurer of the Ohafia Clan Council.[43] Similarly, Ibe Mba who trained at the H.W.T.I. ended up in the employment of Bende Division as District Clerk.[44]

Along with teaching and clerical jobs went such other professions as evangelism. Members of this profession were trained mainly at the H.W.T.I The first pastor to emerge in Ohafia was the very Rev. Awa Ugbaco of Amaekpu. Others followed after him. We are not certain of the order in which they emerged,

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42. Oral information from D.N. Dike.

43. N.A.E., OW 4152 Umdiv 3/1/541, see handwritten pagination, p. 4, last paragraph.

44. This is part of his credentials stated in the cover of his book, E.L. Mba, Condensed history of the Church in the wild wood, 1904-1953, Ska press, Elu Ohafia, 1973.

but certainly their ranks included Rev. Ebi Nnaochin of Amaekpu, Rev. U.U. Maduekwe of Asaga, Rev. Ulu Eme of Okagwe and our informant, Rev. Mbila of Ndi Uduma.[45] Several others had by the time in question, joined the police force. Many in this category were drop-outs from school and others were second world war veterans.

It was these various professions that helped to scatter Ohafia people into various parts of Nigeria. In 1928 Mba Iroha for instance was the Assistant Native Court clerk attached to Oloko court. In 1929 he came to Bende as full Native court clerk and by 1933 he had come to Ebem in which place his remarkably rancorous life had led him into trying conclusions with such andacious warrant chiefs as Idika Mba.[46] We may also mention in specific terms for an illustration, J.U. Agwu who was residing and working in Calabar from where he executed a suit against the Ohafia clan council.

It is possible to show, therefore, that by 1940 or thereabout, many Ohafia people had, with their education, become comfortable in various professions. When the D.O., Bende, alluded to Ohafia 'sons

45. Oral information from Rev. Mbila, of above 70 in his residence at Ndi Uduma Awoke, on 6/6/85.

46. N.A.E., OW/90/1930 Umdiv 2/3/1

abroad', it was these people including, however, a large proportion of others who were not necessarily equipped with education (see chapter 5) that he meant.[48] But the most important point to make from all these is that by 1940 or thereabout, Ohafia had produced part of an educated class which had emerged in the wider Nigeria or Africa. This was the most important culmination of the educational endeavours both of the people and of the missionaries. The creation of this class was the upshot of institutionalized inductrination through years of association with the white man and his institutions. Conversion to christianity, knowledge of and preference for English, imitation of European behaviour and post-school employment especially in an urban milieu, all helped to isolate the educated African from his traditional environment or 'natural entourage', to borrow the phrase of C.L. Temple. There was an inherent contradiction between the role expected of the youth in accordance with tradition and custom and the role expected of him as a result of his western education. From the traditional point of view, it is to this extent that western educated elements constituted an 'alienated' group.[49] This

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48. N.A.E., OW 7362/3 Umdiv 3/1/736, Annual Report 1948-49, item 1.

49. I am indebted for these facts to Coleman, op cit p. and to E.A. Ayandele, The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society (University lecture) Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1974.

is a convenient point to bring this alienated group under focus.

The New Elite

The Ohafia members of the 'alienated' group referred to above constituted a new elite in the society. They were an elite in the real sense of a "group, members of which have great prestige because of acquired abilities and power and which constitute a reservior of skills, talents and influence of all kinds". It was western education which endowed this group with this knowledge, skill and talent which had become invaluable for social and economic upliftment in the colonial scheme of things. In this colonial scheme of things, they stood at the peak of "the social strata and were the people looked upon by the masses as leaders, as decision makers in political and economic spheres, as persons at the top in major segments of society". This is because they had come to be regarded as successful in the "current (colonial) norms of society".[50]

50. I owe this entirely to Hugh H. Smythe and Mabel M. Smythe, The New Nigerian Elite, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1960, pp. 4-5; see also Martin Kilson, "The Emergent Elites of black Africa, 1900-1960", in L.H. Gann and P. Duignan (eds) Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 vol. 2, The History and Politics of Colonialism 1914-1960, University Press, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 351-399.

The above point will be better understood when it is remembered that the original aim of Ohafia people for embracing western education was in order to challenge the court clerks who, armed with little English, were the only link between the Ohafia people and the white man. This role was now taken over by sons of the soil with all the power and prestige attached to it. Local teachers served in various capacities in the community. They were councillors to village heads interpreting government policies to them and advising them on matters relating to government. Mr. U.U. Agbai, for instance, who was one of the earliest in Ohafia to obtain a teachers' certificate, was, for a long time, the dominant personality in Ohafia politics. The point is that he chaired many of the meetings of educated people summoned to discuss important issues relating to Ohafia. Since he would eventually be the errand boy to such government representatives as the D.O., his views were highly sought after. Even as late as the 1960s, he was still virtually the mouthpiece of Ebem village from which he hailed.[51]

In this regard, it is significant to note that U.U. Agbai was in the fore-front in the lobbies,

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51. Oral information from Mr. O.C. Agwu, a retired Headmaster and one time Principal of St. Joseph's Teachers' Training College, Abakaliki, in his residence at Ndi Chiori Agwu compound, 12/12/86.

contests and in-fighting for the village in which the government should site the Ohafia daily market. It was related that at a conference of leaders of thought in Ohafia - which was usually dominated by educated elements - the Udumeze II announced that government wanted to site a daily market in Ohafia. Mr U.U. Agbai stood up and made a "point of correction" stating that the government wanted to site a daily market at Ebem-Ohafia. The querulous noise which ensued could not be controlled and the gathering broke up with two factions; one vowing that the market would not be sited in Ebem and the other, mainly Ebem people, vowing that it would be sited in their village.[52] That was the genesis of the yet to be resolved bitter struggle between Ebem and Amaekpu as to which village should provide the site for the daily market. The struggle called forth the energies and intellects of educated elements from both villages and it took mainly the form of one side trying to out-bid the other in ability to "meet" the government and lobby important government functionaries. The inside story of this struggle provides much of the explanation for the split in recent times in the ranks of educated elements in Ohafia. It was to repair this split that people like

52. Oral information from Mr Justice K.O. Anya, retired Chief Justice of Bornu State and now pro-chancellor of the University of Benin, in his residence at Uzo-Roman, Amaekpu-Ohafia, 17/12/86.

Justice K.O. Anya organised a series of conferences in the 1960s to discuss problems and settle important questions. These conferences ultimately led to the formation of such inter-village forums as the "Field" which, however, made very minimal impact and collapsed even before the outbreak of the civil war in Nigeria.[53]

Notwithstanding these differences which, in any case, were later developments, the educated elements creditably performed the role of stepping into the shoes of the court clerks and court messengers as a link with the government. After the women's war when clan councils were created, many of them became councillors and advisers to different village heads. The job of the secretary of the council was done on part time basis by Mr O.C. Agwu of Asaga. He had graduated from H.W.T.I. in 1930 and taken up employment as a teacher in Ohafia Central School in 1931. His duties were later to be taken over by Mr N.A. Ndu who resigned his employment as a teacher and took up Native administration job on full time.[55] Both the secretary and other councillors helped to

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53. Oral information, same as above.

54. Oral information from Mr O.C. Agwu.

55. N.A.E., OW 4152 Umdiv 3/1/541, see handwritten pagination, p. 4; see also N.A.E., OW 6698 Umdiv 3/1/653, (handwritten) p.43.

interprete and explain government policies to the people and to channel the problems, views and requests of people to government. Even the ordinary local teacher who had nothing to do with clan council or government, also helped to perform this role. At a time when there was no radio or other wireless set, he could go to court to listen to cases and to read notices. He could also get government announcements through dispatches sent to schools and through newspapers. He was therefore the repository of government information and was looked upon by the natives for guidance.

When Ohafia was split into autonomous communities, it was largely the result of pressure of educated elements who, in the words of Mr C.C. Agwu, wanted, thereby, to help the people get a larger share of the government cake. The first representatives of these autonomous communities were local teachers who did their duties in this regard on part time basis. The autonomous communities of Ania, Isiama, Ohafor and Okamu were represented in the clan council by Messers I. Imo, K.A. Oba, O.C. Agwu and U. Ikenga respectively. This is not to say that educated elements were exclusively the representatives of Ohafia in the clan and Divisional Councils. There were instances in which uneducated but intelligent people were still chosen for representation by their

villages. Hence Kalu Ike was once selected from Ebem, P.O. Ndukwe from Asaga and Osonwa Eke from Akanu. The important point, however, is that the councils were always dominated by educated elements who were better equipped to understand government dossiers and policies. It was in this council that important issues relating to Ohafia clan were first discussed. It was in the clan council, for instance, that the question of whether or not the catholic mission should be invited to Ohafia first arose. The issue had been discussed here before it was thrown to a wider representation for voting.[56]

Apart from this politically tinted role, there were other important roles played by the educated elite which predisposed the community at large to respecting them and looking upon them as worthy of being emulated. Thanks to their salaries they were the people who could boast of ready cash at a time when money was very scarce. Such projects as the construction of houses with corrugated iron roofs which constituted the most important index of affluence, were executed by them. Many of the early zinc houses at Ohafia, usually marked with bevel roofs and

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56. Based on oral information from Messers O.C. Agwu and O.O. Uguru.

at times unarchitected walls, were built by teachers or other members of the educated elite. The point here is not that they alone had cash; traders and labourers also had cash. The fact is that for a long time these other categories of people built zinc houses rather reluctantly. It was believed that if a man built a zinc house, his affluence would attract the envy of evil spirits who would take his life.[57] Educated people with christian and cosmopolitan outlook were more emancipated from such superstitions and so led the way in the building of zinc houses.

In the same way, the educated elite also led the way in sponsoring the education of the younger ones in the community. Deeply convinced that education was the surest key to success in the new scheme of things and armed with raw cash with which to finance it, educated elements sponsored the education of both their children and relations. In numerous instances, teachers sponsored even non-relations with intellectual promise whose parents lacked the means. Mentioning names of Ohafia teachers who did this will necessarily result in a long list at the expense of

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57. Oral information from Mrs Mary Aki, well above 65 years of age, in our residence at Uzo Ofuru, Ebem-Ohafia.

space. One of them particularly well known to the present writer, sponsored, in addition to all his children and relations, over six other non-relations up to the level of the first school leaving certificate. In this way the educated elite spread their resources evenly throughout the community and contributed immensely in helping the community at large to "get up". We will now examine the material pedestal of the new (educated) elite and the wider implications of its emergence in Ohafia society in relation to social change.

Economic Change and the Eclipse of the Traditional Elite.[58]

We have made frequent reference to the significant accomplishments of the educated elite in Ohafia society. The phenomenon of salaried jobs itself was part of the economic innovations of colonialism much of which will be discussed in chapter 5. The main economic innovation was the opportunity offered to a man who had no land or decided to ignore his holdings in land, to earn a living through

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58. I owe the ideas here and, to a large extent, even the framing, entirely to A.E. Afigbo, Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo history and Culture, Oxford University Press, London, New York, etc, 1981, pp. 347-348.

securing salaried employment. Education being the surest credential for these jobs, educated elements formed the bulk of the salaried class. In this way, again, they constituted new social and economic species of homo sapiens, for it was entirely strange in Ohafia experience to find a man who neither farmed nor traded. But the result of this economic change is important in so far as it led to the decline of the traditional age and title oligarchies, and enabled the new elite to eclipse them by appropriating some of their power and influence.

First, western formal education vested a new value on raw cash as such. Hitherto, people made money and accumulated wealth in order to marry many wives, raise a large yam barn, buy admission to the revered title and secret societies, since it was from these that prestige and status derived. But with colonial rule, money came to have value for its own sake and to convey status even when not invested in the purchase of status in the traditional manner. Through the salaried servant colonial rule tended to give a new value to raw cash especially when some of it had been translated to such concrete materials as zinc houses, and through that to provide new criteria for assessing social worth.

It was partly this new value placed on money that helped to bring about the decline of the anciently-

famed and the once highly sought-for secret and title societies. True, membership of these societies was an investment which brought returns through the sharing of fees paid by subsequent entrants. But this was too gradual a process of recovering invested capital not to talk of making profit. Colonial rule brought more profitable avenues of investment by which one could multiply one's capital quickly and accumulate the money that will give one access to new luxuries and gadgets. Where, therefore, lay the wisdom in investing in the title and secret societies? The upshot was that young men who earned money which they could have used in buying status in the traditional style now looked elsewhere and invested mainly in the education of their children or in trade. This is the story of how igwa nnu discussed in chapter One above, for instance, and other traditional title societies were starved of new entrants and forced to decline losing in political and social sway to the new elite.

Also part of the political and social power of the age oligarchy discussed in chapter One derived from their control of the primary means of production - land. The erring member of the lineage who thought he could dispense with the elders during the harvest season, could be made to mend his ways during the

farming season when it came to assigning farmland and conducting the necessary rituals to ensure a fruitful harvest. Hardly any Ohafia trader, as has been said repeatedly, subsisted exclusively on the proceeds of trade. People depended, to varying degrees, on land. Thus, they had to submit to the authority of those who "held" (i.e. had the responsibility for placating) the land. But, armed with his salary, the member of the new elite was emancipated from traditional control. He could thus not only live his own life, but also introduce new ways with little concern for what the elders would do or say or both.

We can say that with the decline of the authority of the age and title oligarchies, power slipped into the hands of the new elite and the latter began to direct society along the path of modernization. In this way, the new elite succeeded in speeding up the process of social change in Ohafia. This is a convenient point to bring into focus, Ohafia Progressive Union, which was the most important organ for modernization and progress during our period and which was formed and led mainly by the educated elite.

Ohafia Progressive Union 'OPU'

The Ohafia Progressive Union ought to be discussed in the context of other such associations which

represented an attempt to attain some form of accommodation with modernity. These associations developed mainly as ethnic unions. Ethnic unions in Nigeria originated in the urban centres during the 20th century to provide a sense of security for the new immigrants. They were the first specifically Nigerian voluntary associations to be established without sponsorship from either the colonial administration or the church. They resembled other modern voluntary organisations by electing officers, forming committees, scheduling meetings, and keeping minutes. Usually, officers of the Nigerian ethnic associations designed their objectives and tactics after the other voluntary associations with which they were familiar, including political parties. But unlike such organizations the ethnic associations restricted membership to groups defined by ascriptive boundaries -- usually a village, clan, or geographic unit. Although ethnic associations were based on communities of origin rather than interest or occupation, membership was usually voluntary. Associations did not automatically confer membership on all persons in the community but, like other voluntary organiza-

tions, required an explicit commitment to join.[59]

The aims of these associations were threefold: to provide companionship and a measure of social security for villagers in the town, to preserve town unity and culture and to raise money to introduce amenities in the town. The second goal was sometimes encouraged by Periodic Compulsory General Returns Home. The success of the third depended largely, though not entirely, on the economic resources of the community concerned.[60]

Probably the most direct influence on Ohafia in the direction of forming an ethnic association came

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59. I owe the facts here to Audrey C. Smock, Ibo Politics: The role of Ethnic Unions in Eastern Nigeria, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p.9; see also Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa, New York University Press, New York, 1956; Immanuel Wallerstein, "Voluntary Associations", in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg Jr. (eds), Political Parties and National Integration in tropical Africa, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964; James S. Wunsch, "Voluntary associations and Structural Development in West African urbanization", Journal of African History, 5, 1978.

60. Isichei, op cit. p. 218.

from Abiriba. In 1919 the Abiriba Young Men Christian Association was formed with the specific aim of making contributions toward the erection of a church at Abiriba.[61] This was the foetus of Abiriba Community Improvement Union (ACIU). Meanwhile the slender number of educated elites in Ohafia had started to be restive. A lot of animousity existed between them and the pioneer Efik teachers said to be playing on the innocence of the illiterate population of Ohafia and 'corrupting our girls'. It was mainly as a front against the Efik teachers that educated elements of Ohafia came to form the Ohafia Young Men Society in 1923. They also aimed at improvement of "Our Moral, Social, Political and Educational status". Members were to pay an enrolment fee of 3d and a monthly subscription of 6d. Officers were elected as follows:

Uduma Agbai	President
Udo Awa	Vice President
Awa Njoku	Treasurer
Ochu Ula	Financial Secretary
E,L. Mba	Founder & General Secretary
Uja Udonsi	Secret Agent.

The first meeting of the Union after its formation was held in December the same year in the

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61. Smock, op cit, p. 30.

prayer Hall, Elu, at which place one hundred and fifty enrolled members were said to have been present. It was during this meeting that a motion was adopted to change the name of the union to Ohafia Welfare Society.[62]

The foregoing is, in brief, how the future OPU was born. Evidently it did not take long for it to begin to cause discomfort to the Efik teachers; the latter took to smear campaign especially when it dubbed the union 'secret society'. Soon, however, a couple of transfers involving the leading spirit of the society broke its right arm, so its influence temporarily stopped to be felt. It was while on leave from Kwale Government College that Udo Awa resuscitated the union in 1929 or thereabout and a couple of changes were made in its leadership. Uma Okorie Uma took up the post of Secretary General, but by reason of his death, the post went back in 1932 to Ibe Mba who had meanwhile returned from Emirate service in Kano.[63]

Henceforth, the society began to be much more dynamic. Meanwhile, it had solidified its financial resources by the publication and sale of its almanac.[64] And Ibe Mba had successfully carried through a motion

62. Mba, "Origin of Ohafia Improvement Union", pp. 1-2.

63. Ibid, p. 2.

64. K.E. Arua, "The Elite and Community Development in Isiama Ohafia", B.Sc. dissertation, Political Science, U.N.N., 1976, p. 54.

changing its name to Ohafia Progressive Union with 'O.P.U.' as its emblem. Its aims were also broadened during this period. According to Kalu E. Arua, its aims now included arousing the feeling of patriotism in all Ohafia, and the Union encouraged "identification with the community cultural activities But the overall aim of the union was still far from articulate. In the view of the Acting D.O., Bende Division, Mr L.T. Chubb, it was still one of the unions objectives to bring about the transfer or dismissal of alien teachers'.[65] It was probably in pursuit of this latter objective that the officials of the union indulged in excesses which led it into a serious entanglement in 1931.

It was in pursuit of a certain case against the Efik teachers that Ibe Mba in 1931 tendered in court as evidence, a certain letter which the Efik Headmaster of Ohafia Central School, Mr. E.E. Itam, had addressed to his friend, Mr Nwalusi. The Efik teachers quickly filed a case of theft of a letter against Ibe Mba and one or two other accomplices who were also leaders of OPU. After a fierce contest in

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65. N.A.E., OW 1013 Umdiv 3/1/56 see criminal case no. 83/31 Rex vs. U. Agbai of Ebem Ohafia, item 7.

court, conviction was secured against Ibe Mba and a three-month jail sentence awarded.[66] It was in the era when criminal sentences had automatic appeal to the chief justice of the federation, so while confirmation was being awaited, Mr. Justice Graham-Paul quashed the sentence and had the accused discharged and acquitted.[67]

This was, somehow, the climax of the acrimonious relations between the Ohafia educated elites and the foreign teachers. Already the so called foreign teachers had started putting pressure on the Manager of the Presbyterian Schools to transfer them out of Ohafia.[68] Too, OPU, which probably saw antagonism with foreign teachers as a means of demonstrating patriotism for Ohafia had had its truculence thoroughly sated. It started to canalize its energies and resources towards more concrete achievements for the welfare of Ohafia.

Meanwhile branches of the OPU had been formed in several townships. The educated elements, in the main, had the initiative in forming and leading these unions though membership was heterogenous in composi-

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66. Ibid

67. Ibid, see no. 3624/1931, Chief Registrar to Resident, 10th Dec., 1931.

68. Ibid, see "Exhibit B".

tion. There was close co-ordination among these unions especially in the matter of development planning for Ohafia and in subscriptions for such projects. It was from these different branches of the union that the D.O. Bende Division was harried with petitions for one amenity or the other for Ohafia. Sometime in the 1940s the union demanded through him that government should channel the tax rebate granted to Ohafia for educational purpose.[69] It would appear that during this period, patriotism became conceived in terms of importunities to the government for the maximization of the amenities of Ohafia people.

Two of the more detailed petitions need be cited for an illustration. The first was from the patron, OPU, Enugu branch, a certain J.U. Nwafor who decried the 'deplorable condition of Umuahia-Ohafia roads'. According to him, a release by the West African academy of arts and Researches in the <u>west</u> African Pilot of 1/11/49 explained that it was the deplorable condition of their roads that prevented Mr Bonds from visiting Ohafia, Abiriba and Abam. It went on:

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69. Arua, "The Elite and community Development", p.54.

> From reports reaching me it is understood that these roads became unmotorable since June this year when the rainy season was playing much of its part. From then onward, owing to inattention to repair and maintenance they have been abandoned to be made use of by pedestrians only.70

The petition went on to make a moving appeal for the resuscitation of these roads and suggested that responsibility for them be transferred from the Native Administration to the Public Works Department. It required the government, in the meantime, to increase the transport allowance of Ohafia, Abiriba and Abam government workers should the roads remain unrepaired by the December of that year, 1949, when the said workers would be going on vacation leave, since they would, in that event, be forced to use the alternative farther route.[71]

Earlier on in July an even more detailed and articulate petition from the office of the General Secretary of the Union in the headquarters - Ohafia - had arrived the D.O.'s office. The three-page document defined the developmental needs of Ohafia under the rubrics of postal facilities, medical facilities, roads and water supply. The petition eruditely discussed the problems and dangers facing

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70. N.A.E., OW 7227/3 Umdiv 3/1/730, see p.174 of handwritten pagination.

71. Ibid

Ohafia people as a result of lapses in each of these facilities and importuned the D.O., Bende Division, to urgently set the machinery in process to supply these needs.[72] The importance of these petitions does not lie in what tangible concessions they were able to wrench from the government. Here and there, though,as in the case of water supply and postal facilities, the D.O. after almost repudiating the demands of the union made some vague promise to 'do my utmost to enlist the assistance of the officers in charge of rural water supplies in effecting improvement in Ohafia area' and of 'taking up this matter with the Surveyor, Posts and Telegraphs, Aba'.[73] The importance of the petitions lies more in the fact that Ohafia elites had become conscious of modernization and were trying to direct society toward this goal.

Meanwhile, other important developments in other areas inspired OPU and Ohafia people in general to more concrete achievements in modernization. The most important inspiration came from Abiriba and it was in the specific direction of educational develop-

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72. N.A.E., OW 7987 Umdiv 3/1/794, see the General Secretary, Ohafia Union to D.O., Bende, Ref. OUP/25/22/49, of 26/7/49.

73. Ibid, see 1531/33, D.O. to Secretary, Ohafia Union of 31/3/49.

ment. It is necessary, in order to establish this point, to sketch the exertions of Abiriba people in this direction.

In 1941 the Abiriba Community Improvement Union (ACIU) members gave £200 to the Manager of the Ohafia District Schools[74] to keep for them as a school development fund. Between 1942 and 1946 the Union spent £260.00 to finance free primary education for the three initial grades of the Presbyterian school in Abiriba and between 1944 and 1946 it gave some assistance to the tune of £64 to two students to complete their secondary education. Then the union awarded staff development scholarship for higher education to five of its sons for its proposed secondary school. This enabled two students to attend Edinburgh University in 1946, one to attend the University College, Ibadan in 1948 and two to attend Howard University in 1948. When, in 1948, therefore, the D.O. talked in terms of ACIU maintaining two students abroad, the union was indeed maintaining four students. Three of the students obtained more than one advanced degree while one completed a doctorate. By 1956 when all but one student had returned, the ACIU

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74. As has been said before, Ohafia was the headquarters of the Presbyterian Mission in Igboland, Abiriba was thus, part of Ohafia schools.

had spent a total of £11,835 on these scholarships. And so it was that the government suffered the ACIU 'in 1948 to build, equip and maintain a secondary school'. Thus the Enuda College was formally opened in March 1954.[75]

As the standards were being set at Abiriba, Ohafia people were spurred into activity. At a general convention of OPU it was agreed that three Ohafia sons be sponsored to America for higher education. Thus were the future professor E.O. Awa, Dr N. Uka and Mr U.I. Ukoha girded up for the pursuit of the golden fleece at the Lincoln University. In addition to these three sons sponsored by the entire Ohafia community led by OPU, some of the individual villages also sponsored their own sons for studies abroad. Hence, the future professor Kalu Ezera and Barrister Ogwo Uduma were sponsored by Asaga; Mr Ochea Ikpa was sponsored by Akanu, and Dr Agbai Njoku was sponsored by Amaekpu.[76]

At the time when its three students were ready for departure, the OPU had £26,000 in the bank, a product of village levies, individual donations and loan from commercial banks. With this amount for a

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75. The information on Abiriba and ACIU was derived mainly from Smock, op cit, p. 33, see also N.A.E., OW 7362/3 Umdiv 3/1/736 Annual Report 1947, p. 15, item 35.

76. Made up from N.A.E., 7987/Umdiv 3/1/794 and from oral information from Chief Awa Ngwoke.

start and with continous levy and subscriptions which Awa Ngwoke helped to collect by going round the towns where branches of OPU existed, the union was able to break the Gordian knot of sponsoring these three students in the U.S.A. at a time of economic depression.

The three students were obliged by the agreement into which they entered with the union to pay back half the total cost of their respective education. In addition, they were to staff a secondary grammer school to be opened in Ohafia on their return. By 1951 two of them - Eme O. Awa and Igwe Ukoha - had obtained their Bachelor's degrees but were inclined towards the pursuit of post-graduate studies. The British Embassy in Washington reported as follows: "Awa and Ukoha have already graduated with some distinction, and should, if possible, do graduate studies. Uka will graduate next year and already has a tentative admission to Cornell".[77] But then, OPU felt that it "has already made an adequate contribution for the completion of their studies and is reluctant to commit itself further".[78] In the end, however, in view of the strong

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77. N.A.E., 7987 Umdiv 3/1/794, see British Embassy Washington to Nigerian Liaison office, Washington of 21/9/51.

78. Ibid

recommendation of these students and their excellent performance, the union gave in and in the same year, 1951, Awa and Ukoha began their graduate studies at the University of New York and Michigan University, respectively.[79] The next year, Uka graduated and went over to Cornell. It was at this point that some of them started receiving scholarships of some sort from their various universities and this helped to ease the burden on Ohafia people. The details are shown in table 5.

Ukoha was the first to come back, with a Master's degree in Chemistry. Subsequently, Uka and Awa came back, each with a doctorate. At the time of their return, no secondary school had been built. It would have been absurd, though, if not preposterous to have required these three people, each with a 'chain of degrees' to be contained all in one school. But the idea of their direct service to Ohafia community was eventually realised in Mr Ukoha's assumption of the headship of Ohafia High School in 1964. The rest of them got jobs in other establishments. Table 6 summarizes the total expenditure and the amount to be repaid at the completion of their respective studies. The terms of the agreement

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79. Ibid, see 1531/103, D.O. to Resident, 15/11/51 titled Nigerian students at Lincoln University.

Table IV:5 - Nigerian Students in the United States Sponsored by the Ohafia Union

Name	University	Course of Study	Estimated Expenses 1951-52	Remarks
AGBAI, N.A.	Lincoln Univ. 1950	Economics May graduate June 1952 or Feb. '53	$1,500	Has been in receipt of half-Tuition scholarship from Lincoln Univ. - is good average student.
AWA, E.O.	Lincoln Univ. 1949-51 New York Univ. 1951	A.B. Economics 1951 Graduate with honours Graduate stdies in Division of Public service at New York Univ.	$2,200	Is in receipt of fellowship at N.Y.U., value $1,000 - is on excellent student.
UKA, N.	Lincoln Univ. 1949-	Psychology Will graduate June '52.	$1,500	Has been in receipt of half tuition scholarship from Lincoln Univ - is a very good student and is tentatively admitted to cornell Univ. For graduate studies in Education Psychology, with prespect of Tuition scholarship.
UKOHA, U.I.	Lincoln Univ. 1949-51 Univ. of Michigan 1951	A.B. Mathematics and chemistry, 1951 Graduated with honours Graduate studies in chemistry at Univ. of Michigan	$2,400	Not at present in receipt of scholarship assistance, but is under consideration - is an excellent student.

Source: NAE, OW 7987 Undiv 3/1/794, Ohafia Union General Papers.

related to re-payment were never fully honoured. Probably the expectations of Ohafia people were too high. But they have never ceased to associate the subsequent conduct of these scholars with ingratitude.

Table IV:6 - Summary of the total expenses on each of OPU's scholars and the amounts to be refunded by each scholar

Name	Total Expenses	Amount Refundable
Mr U. Igwe Ukoha	₦4680:0:51/- 2K	₦2240:25K
Prof. E.O. Awa	₦4625:94K	₦2314:98K
Dr. N Uka	₦3591:50K	₦1795:75K
Total	₦12897.48	₦6430.92K

Source: K.E. Arua, 'The Elite and Community development in Isiama Ohafia', B.Sc. dissertation, (Pol. Science) U.N.N., 1976, p. 57. 80

80. The conversion of the figures into naira is questionable especially as the author did not state his source.

Post-Primary Education in Ohafia[81]

It was after OPU's three scholars had come back that the union addressed itself very seriously to the issue of post-primary education in Ohafia. The desire for this developed right from the 1930s and it was mainly the result of the accretion of primary school leavers who had no jobs and had little prospects of entering into the few higher institutions around. By 1951 the OPU was strongly of the opinion that its wards abroad should make do with the Bachelor's degrees. It favoured a 'diversion of funds to other objects (including the provision of a large number of grants or scholarships to secondary schools'. As has been shown, it was only reluctantly that the union undertook to finance the post-graduate work of these students but it became clear on their return that the next item on the agenda was post-primary institution in Ohafia.

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81. I had something like a very good knowledge of this subject even before the commencement of my fieldwork and partly because I grew up in Ohafia Girls School. Even then, my ideas were straightened out here and there in the course of my field work. I have also relied, for this section, somewhat heavily on K.E. Arua's thesis. Be it said that this is the best organised and most articulate of all the Bachelor's theses cited in this work. Ipso facto it is the most extensively used and evidently the author had access to certain data especially related to Ohafia union which were never available to me inspite of the two occasions in which I called at the secretariate of the union at Ohafia. The work has its weaknesses though, the most important of which is the author's failure to document his sources. This makes it very difficult to check the veracity of his claims.

As early as 1946, the OPU took a positive step to support post-primary education in Ohafia by a cash award of £50 to the Girls school at Asaga. This, in part, enabled the Presbyterians to consider a modern wing attachment to the school. In time, Ohafia Girls school became the first post-primary school in Ohafia and produced, in addition to christian and lettered wives for the elites, probationary teachers who staffed the Presbyterian schools around.

Subsequent attempts to diffuse the strong passion of disenchantment of Ohafia people against it in relation to the matter of post-primary education, led the Presbyterians to transfer their Boys Vocational School at Ididep, near Itu, to Ohafia. This was sited at Akanu-Ohafia. It was a training centre for handiwork instructors for Presbyterian primary schools in southern Nigeria. The school opened in 1954 with M.K. Mba as Headmaster. But hardly had it functioned for two years before it was forced to close down; it was not the kind of post-primary institution which Ohafia people had bargained for. It had to be converted to, and it opened again in 1957 as, a grade III teachers' college. But then, in 1964, the now defunct government of Eastern Region closed down all grade III institutions in the region including this college. Development of this period are outside the scope of this study but it is important to note that it was as

a result of the exertions and lobby of OPU (then ODU after a change of numenclature in 1962) that this college was opened again in 1966 as Government trade centre.

On the other hand the first secondary school in Ohafia was the catholic-sponsored Coronata Secondary school. We have already examined the background to the coming of the catholic mission in Ohafia in chapter Three. Even before Chief Nkata Emetu undertook to bring them into the area, the catholic mission had shown some interest in Ohafia area. In 1950 Rev. Fr. D. Egan, Manager of Catholic schools in Umuahia Parish and his assistant, Rev. Fr. F.J. Leahy, had approached Mr Anthony Kalu of Ndi Ezera compound, Asaga, at Idima where the latter was then a school teacher and he brought them to Asaga on a mission to introduce the Catholic church into the area. It was the usual snare, the school, that these catholic priests presented to Asaga people. At that time, the trouble in Ohafia Girls school which necessitated its removal from Asaga had not started and in addition to this school, Asaga had an Assisted Primary school. So they turned down the offer of the Catholics and the matter ended for the time being.[82]

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82. Oral information from Anthony E. Kalu, a retired Headmaster of about 65 years old, in his residence at Ndi Ezera compound on 12/12/86.

Later in 1953 after the removal of O.G.S. from Asaga, this village then backed chief Nkata and Amaekpu and invited the Catholics to Ohafia. The catholics having opened a primary school at Amaekpu in 1954, it was only fair to cite their next school in Asaga which had been very vocal and active in favour of the invitation of the catholic mission. Even the political consideration of cementing the bond of loyalty of Asaga village, supposed to have been dispossessed by the Presbyterians, dictated the siting of their school in the area. Even then, the catholics still bent over-backwards to be seen as objective in the choice of the site. They collected samples of sand from various villages and sites in Ohafia and after the analysis of these samples, objective geographical factors dictated the present rocky and healthy hill site.

Labour for the building of the school was supplied, especially at the initial stage, by Asaga and Amaekpu villages which were the most out-standing non-conformists to the Presbyterian hegemony. It was later on that the entire Ohafor villages came to be more directly involved both in kind and cash contribution. By Kalu E. Arua's computations, the Ohafor villages spent a total of £2,500 for the building of the Coronata Secondary School. It was the same amount that had been spent by the Ania group of

villages in building the erstwhile handiwork training centre. In each case, the OPU compensated these autonomous communities, each, with £500.[83]

The Coronata Secondary School opened in 1958 with an initial in-take of a single-stream class. The school continued to run single-stream classes for all forms till the end of our period.[84]

The college opened with Rev. Fr. B. Murphy as Principal. He headed the institution till 1962 when he gave over to Rev. Fr T. Kelly who stood in for him for the period between 1963-65. Rev. Fr Murphy took over again in 1966 and remained in Ohafia all through the war.[85]

The opening of Coronata Secondary marked the beginning of serious attempts at diversifying the vocations of educated Ohafia people. Before this time, it was mainly teaching since the cost of grammar school was rather high at H.W.T.I. The first subjects introduced into Coronata Secondary school were:

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83. Arua, "The Elite and Community development".

84. Deduced from class Registers of the period. These are available in the Principal's office, Coronata Secondary School, Asaga-Ohafia.

85. See Honour board for Principals in the Principal's office, Coronata Secondary School, Asaga-Ohafia.

Religion/christian doctrine

English

Latin

Scripture

Science

Algebra

Geometry

Arithmetic

Biology

History

Geography

Literature.[86]

The first batch of graduates of the school finished in 1961. Thereafter, they went into various kinds of occupations. Some like Chukwuma Ijoma taught briefly in the school before pursuing higher studies. Many of them are now in different walks of life. Dr Bernard Awa for instance, took to Agric Science while Dr Chukwuma Ijoma took to Linguistics which he teaches at U.N.N. Other prominent members of the first batch known to the present writer include Dr Emmanuel Imaga, Dr Dorgu, and Ikechi Okoroafor.

It was in the building of Ohafia High school

86. Marks sheets for the sessional examinations for the first batch of students. Available in the Principal's office, Coronata Secondary School, Asaga-Ohafia.

that community development effort in Ohafia scored its highest mark during our period. The idea was conceived as far back as 1947 and as part of the objective for sending the three scholars abroad. In this sense, the exercise was a staff development project for the future Ohafia High School. According to K.E. Arua who did not indicate his source, the objectives of the school were:

1. To provide a broad-based post-primary education for boys and girls of Ohafia community in particular and Nigeria in general;

2. To develop their character and initiative so that they may be intelligent, reliable and better equipped (than their fore-fathers) to live in a democratic society such as that of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Under the auspices of the Presbyterian mission a site was chosen at Ebem village in 1958 and work began. Money and labour were supplied by all the Ohafia villages but there was also a loan from the Presbyterian mission. Ohafia High school opened in 1963 with O.I. Uduma as Principal. He was succeeded just the next year by U.I. Ukoha. The OPU handed over the management and staffing of the school to the Presbyterian education authority and appointed five persons to its Board of Governors. Thus, Ohafia High School came to stand as a monument of community development endeavours of the Ohafia people. It will also be

seen that even before the end of our period post-primary schools already existed in Ohafia.

It will have become clear from our analysis above that western education played a crucial role in changing the Ohafia society. Not only was it a powerful instrument of cultural impression especially on youths who pursued it to any level, but also it helped to widen the horizon of people and to diversify their life careers. The emergence of an educated elite in Ohafia, favoured and blessed by the colonial economic innovations with economic independence, helped to bring about the eclipse of traditional oligarchies and a preponderance of the influence and power of the educated class. By this social transmutation, education or the educated elite, which was a potent harbinger of change, was made the target of emulation almost by the community at large.

A critical stage of change was reached in the Ohafia society when this new elite began to use its power and resources of knowledge to direct society towards a western-oriented path of modernization and development. Thanks especially to its own orientation, the heaviest stress in this modernization was laid on education. With the opening of post-primary institutions in Ohafia and with both communal and private sponsorship of education, there is no doubt that at

our terminal date, Ohafia was pursuing a thoroughly re-oriented path of development. It is the view of the present writer that education was the most critical single agent of social change in Ohafia. While it is possible, for instance, to argue that the entire colonial establishment did not affect the ordinary Ohafia man, otherwise than by merely subjecting him to a new set of writs which were frequently more honoured in their breach than observance, it can hardly be gainsaid that the legacy of colonialism and missionary activities was permanent in so far as it concerned the creation of an educated elite.

True, at the end of our period, the number of educated people was still miniscule in relation to the larger population of the clan and correspondingly, social discontinuity was minimal in the face of the overwhelming dominance of the defenders of the old order. But as long as western education represented the aspirations of an ever widening number of people, the forces of change which it represented were much greater than those of continuity.

Chapter 5

THE COLONIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OHAFIA

Introduction

Just before the beginning of the twentieth century, it became necessary and urgent for the various European nations interested in Africa to obtain political power in the area in order to secure and enhance their economic interests. The result was the establishment of colonial rule. In other words colonial rule had a fundamental economic raison d'etre. This fact caused it to be articulated in such a manner as would necessarily result in exploitation of and value drainage from the colonies with the consequent development of under-development in these areas. In this chapter we will state again the case that it was the specific manner of their integration into the capitalist system that forced dependence on African economies. And from there, we will try to locate Ohafia within the emerging dependency of southern Nigeria. All these, however, will be preceded by a preliminary attempt to establish the point that economic considerations were, indeed, the most fundamental in the establishment of colonial rule, as this will make it easy to understand and appreciate important colonial policies which critically helped

the process of integration and the development of dependence.

The Economic Raison detre For Colonialism

The economic conditions which impelled Europeans to consider political involvement in Africa or establish colonial rule arose from the circumstances of the so called 'legitimate trade' and ought to be traced therefrom.

Direct contact between Africa and Europe developed from the commercial adventures of Europeans into the Guinea Coast in the fifteenth century in quest for a variety of commodities among which slaves increasingly dominated. For some three hundred years or so following the successful establishment of this relationship, slaves constituted the major African export. It was during the early years of the 19th century that the British out-lawed this "nefarious" traffic and commenced onerous exertions to get Africans and other European nations to replace it with a 'legitimate' trade in the natural resources of Africa.

The development of legitimate trade marked a new phase in the said long standing economic relations. Unlike the slave trade which required elaborate organisation and large capital outlay for its prosecution, legitimate trade required little or no

initial capital. Individual households could produce modest quantities of oil, the major export, utilising family labour and traditional tools. Legitimate profit, therefore, did room for participation for an unrestricted number of people. Consequent upon this, distribution of income started to even up as "earnings from overseas commerce began to be spread over many small units of consumption".[1] Hence, Hopkins saw the structure of legitimate trade as marking an important break with the past, a break - according to him - signifying a phase in the growth of the market which can be seen as the start of the modern economic history of west Africa.[2]

Existing literature on the subject has argued the case that there was expansion rather than contraction in the volume of trade following the development of legitimate commerce. On the basis of statistical evidence provided by earlier writers, Hopkins has argued that there was a consistent yearly rise in the volume of trade from 1830 up to the period when important new developments began to occur

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1. A.G. Hopkins, An Economic history of West Africa, Longman, London, 1973, p. 127.

2. Ibid chapter 4.

in the 1870s.[3] In the same manner, the computations of Hargreaves are to the effect that there was a rise in annual value of trade between 1850 and 1880 from about £3,500,000 to about £8,000,000.[4] Given the fall of palm oil prices during this period,[5] it may be assumed that the quantities of goods exported were greater. It is, therefore, safe to infer that European commercial involvement in Africa was expanding rather than diminishing. This point needs to be borne in mind as it helps to explain the partition of Africa which occured in the heat of legitimate trade and the consequent inauguration of colonial rule.

Let it be stated, notwithstanding this growing commercial involvement, that European traders were initially remarkably allergic to any kind of governmental control of their activities in West Africa. If for nothing, such control would involve them in

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3. Ibid, p. 127.

4. John D. Hargreaves, West Africa Partitioned vol. 1, The loaded pause, 1885-1889, The Macmillan Press, London and Basingstoke Associated Coys in New York, Dublin, Melbourne, Johannesburg and Madras, 1974, p. 2.

5. C.W. Newbury, 'Trade and authority in West Africa from 1850 to 1880', in L.H. Gann and P. Duignan (eds) Colonialism in africa, 1870-1960, vol.1, The History and Politics of Colonialism 1870-1914, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 76-80.

paying dues on their exports. Even missionaries, for different reasons, shared this conviction; they aimed at helping Africans to help themselves and at establishing small self-governing states with emphasis on the native agent. This aim was incompatible with the existence of a European government.[6] Thus, in 1865, a year which in the words of Flora Lugard represents 'the lowest ebb of British sentiment in regard to West African colonies', the famous resolution was passed in parliament in favour of halting and then reversing the insidious and politically unpopular (because unprofitably expensive and unhealthy) process of expansion in West Africa.[7] This contemplated withdrawal, however, only failed to anticipate the rapid and sweeping changes in the offing by which the whole world situation came to be transformed and new hopes, attitudes and fears came to dominate people's minds and to render the very decision to withdraw both impolitic and economically ill-advised for the British. The new situation started manifesting itself only five years after the contemplated withdrawal in 1870.

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6. Michael Crowder, Colonial West Africa; collected essays, Frank Cass, London, 1978, p. 28.

7. I.F. Nicolson, The administration of Nigeria 1900-1960: Men, Methods and Myths, the Clarendon Press Oxford, 1969, p.3.

By this year, Europe started recording another giant stride in science and technology which helped to improve its industrial potential tremendously.[8] The U.S. and several European countries were seeking even greater industrial improvements. In effect, British goods which had hitherto invaded all Europe with liberty started to face restrictions with tariffs especially in countries like Germany and France. The phenomenon of tariffs changed what had been private competition between individual enterprises into something more like rivalry between states, nations and governments, giving an impetus to nationalistic and militaristic feelings. Material output tended to go ahead of demand,prices fell (by about forty per cent generally between 1873 and the early 1890s) and profits fell with them.[9] By the 1870s, therefore, capitalism in Europe had started suffering its inevitable crisis arising from its contradiction of over-production and under-consumption which, according to Lenin, forces it to take to imperialism.

Yet the growing dependence of industrialised

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8. Henry M. Pachter, The Fall and Rise of Europe: A Political, Social and Cultural History of the twentieth century, David & Charles, Newton Abbot, London, 1975, pp. 16-20.

9. Nicolson, op cit, p. 9.

European societies on overseas for supplies of raw materials and for markets for manufactures through 'legitimate' trade brought other dimensions to this crisis, especially given the limitations of supplies and the voracious demands of the new industralism. The crisis led to the popularization of the neo-mercantilist doctrines. Since, in the new industrial age, no nation could hope, in the long run, to be self-sufficient, it is necessary - went neo-mercantilist argument - for each industrial country to develop a colonial empire dependent upon itself, forming a large self-sufficient unit, protected if necessary by tariff barriers from outside competition in which the home country would supply manufactured goods in return for foodstuffs and raw materials.[10]

Ideas such as this had currency at a time when in West Africa itself European traders were facing serious difficulties arising from the static position of the actual volume of exports and an intensified competition between a growing number of firms, British, French and Germany. These difficulties were even compounded after 1873 by fluctuations in

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10. Geoffery Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary history, Penguin Books Ltd. Middlesex, New York, etc. 1964, p.60.

produce prices caused by slumps in the European demand for produce especially in the palm oil trade. Yet African middlemen stolidly resisted any move at price reductions and could play off one firm against the other to maintain high prices.[11] In the background of all this, it is not surprising that European countries started to seriously consider political involvement in West Africa in order to secure their commercial interests.

Already trade was beginning to'take on a quasi-political aspect'. Occasionally groups of traders negotiated with African rulers for special privileges for themselves. Some exploited the power of British consuls and gun boats to coerce coastal middlemen for direct access to the markets for cheaper produce. According to Flint, there grew a widespread conviction that colonial rule could serve to open up producing markets. "Such moods and ambitions", he submitted, "were to provide an important commercial background to the beginnings of the partition which was to follow in the 1880s".[12]

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11. J.E. Flint, 'Economic change in West Africa in the nineteenth century' in J.F.A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder, (eds) History of West Africa vol. two, Longman group Ltd (Associated branches throughout the world) 1974, pp. 380-401, see pp. 298-9.

12. Ibid p. 400.

The transition from commercial to political ambitions is well illustrated by the events on the Niger where George Goldie first amalgamated all the British interests into the U.A.C. and then went on to secure a royal charter for this giant complex which thereby became the Royal Niger Company. Even before the U.A.C. was granted a charter, other nations had set up chartered companies to develop their respective parts of Africa. This phenomenon started right from 1885 when 'Leopold's African Association converted itself into the Congo free state. It was his success which prompted other states to do same, hence the German and British East African companies were set up in 1888, the South Africa chartered company of Cecil Rhodes to develop the valley of the Zambezi in 1889 and the Italian Benadir company to develop Italian Somaliland in 1892.[13] Our stated claim, therefore, is valid beyond question that of [illegible] other considerations may have been important, the partition of Africa and the establishment of colonial rule is explicable basically in terms of economic motives.

Thus, the conquest of Eastern Nigeria was the product of British drive to penetrate beyond the coastal margins and thereby extend its political and economic spheres. As early as 1882 Consul Hewet had

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13. Thompson, op cit, pp. 501-2.

dispatched to the colonial office an eloquent testimony to the economic promise of the interior should the British presciently extend its political power into the area. He wrote in the following terms:

> That there are groundnuts in the interior, or Ibo, as it is called, I know for a fact. No doubt rubber could be procured there, and gum copal, as well as ivory and dye woods; the last may perhaps not be worth trading for nowadays. None of these articles find their way to the factories; indeed, the kings and chiefs appear to object to trade in anything but palm oil, nor our traders likely to get aught else but what they have been exporting for years past, unless they go up into the Ibo country, where, I am credibly informed, they would be well received, as the natives are only too anxious to deal directly with the "white man". A very important business can be done now in palm kernels, but the kings and chiefs on the coast will not allow their people to trade in them;... What an advantage would be derived by our shipping interest, and what an increased demand for our Manchester and other goods could be obtained if trade in this one article alone were properly developed all along the coast!
>
> ... Your Lordship may form some idea from what I have written how trade has been restricted by the kings and chiefs, but to what extent it might be developed under a proper regime it is impossible to conjecture. If not actually stated, it certainly must have been intended by those who framed the commercial Treaties that we have with the various kings along the coast, that while we employed them as our middlemen they should do their best for trade; but in this, which I take to be the true spirit they should act in, they have proved themselves sadly remiss. I cannot therefore but think that steps should be taken to prevent their continuing to be obstacles in the way

of extending our trade.[14]
(Emphasis mine)

Similar arguments and importunities, alike, from traders and administrators in no less articulate form, continued to deluge the colonial office and helped to shape its subsequent 'forward' policy expressed especially in increasing political commitments in the area. Thus, in 1885 the British laid claims to the Niger districts and established actual protectorate over the oil Rivers. In 1891 a regular administration was established under Sir Claude Macdonald who more or less tried to advance into the interior through a treaty method.

Macdonald's advance had been prefaced by a reconnoitring expedition led by consul campbell into the peripheral regions of Igbo society. Naturally the officers of the expedition were startled at the large number of palm trees which they saw, and as one of them recorded, 'Palm oil seemed to be passing through in plentiful supplies'. In this officer's estimate, 'at least one hundred native pots passed me in an hour'. This and similar observations were embodied in a report to Macdonald which spoke in

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14. Accounts and papers, vol. 55, 1884-1885, C4279, p.8 Consul Hewett to Earl Granville, Jan. 14, 1882, cited in W. Ibekwe Ofonagoro, Trade and Imperialism in Southern Nigeria 1881-1929, Nok Publishers international, New York, London, Lagos, 1979, p. 121.

glowing terms about the promise of the area to trade. The Igbo themselves were said to be very willing to trade with the Europeans if, according to the report, the influence of the middlemen could be removed.[15] It was this commercial possibilities that made the British to redouble their pressure especially on the Aro who were regarded as the main obstruction to their (British) expansionism.

Hence, Ralph Moor who succeeded Macdonald made glible allegations of slave-dealing and human sacrifice particularly against their Aro scapegoats. While not completely lacking in truth, these allegations were obviously exaggerated to justify the use of violence by the British to obtain access to the fountain of the supply of palm oil, rubber and other Igbo primary products. This attempt to camouflage their real intentions is not altogether strange; for if we may borrow the apposite imagery of J.C. Anene, animals may go directly for the victims they devour, but man attains the same objective with more subtlety and finesse.[16]

Thus, an increasingly truculent British even-

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15. F.K. Ekechi, Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, Frank Cass, London, 1971, p. 155.

16. J.C. Anene, Southern Nigeria in Transition 1885-1906; Theory and Practice in a Colonial Protectorate, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966, p. 62.

tually came up with the Aro expedition which was the grandest of the regular dry season pacification expeditions organised against a people whom Mary Kingsley alleges were regarded as 'brutal and ignorant savages who must be crushed' to make way for chamberlain's 'estate development'.[17] Ultimately, this expedition was the preface to the inauguration of British rule in Igboland and it represents the logical denouement of British economic ambitions in the area.

As was said at the beginning, it is necessary to be clear about the fore-going point so as to understand colonial policies aimed at realising this (economic) objective and which redounded in the development of dependence of colonial peoples including Ohafia. This now brings us to the issue of the nature of economic impact of colonialism.

Theories of Colonial Economic Impact

There are two opposing views about the nature of the economic impact of colonialism - the developmentalist and dependency views. The developmentalist school sees colonialism as ushering in for colonial peoples an 'Age of Improvement' when the volume of a

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17 Holt Papers, 16/4, Kingsley to Holt, 10 May 1899, cited in Ofonagoro, op cit, p. 156.

colony's international trade was increased and the infrastructure for economic growth established. It involved a "vast transfer of human and physical capital to Africa... a host of new economic, medical and social and administrative techniques".[18]

Some of the proponents of this view took their queue, somehow, directly from Karl Marx who, on the basis of a case study of India, believed that capitalist invasion of a pre-capitalist society would, in the long run, induce capitalism in such societies. According to him:

> The destruction of the stagnant, non-evolutionary social formations (Asiatic despotism) by capitalism would bring about socio-economic advances i.e. destroying traditional manufacturing, introducing private property in land and forcing the creation of a market for industrial products. 19

It did not strike Marx, as later day dependency theorists have charged, the difference it made that the owners of the capital invested in India lived in England. Yet his dogmatically orthodox adherents of

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18. L.H. Gann and P. Duignan, Burden of Empire An appraisal of western colonialism in Africa South of the Sahara, Pall Mall Press, London, 1968, p.371.

19. Karl Marx, Capital: A critique of political Economy, vol.3, International Publishers, New York, 1967.

the present age like Bill Warren have gone ahead to propagate the view[20] and to win adherents.

As a model, however, this view has tended to become largely a western rationalisation, or, at any rate, justification of imperialism. Its efforts to avoid the indictment of imperialism for the underdevelopment of the Third World in the face of overwhelming evidence to that effect, makes it immediately suspect. More so, when the logic of its stand has led to such ahistorical surmises as that the'poor are poor because they are lazy'. Hence, the explanation for Latin American underdevelopment, for instance, ranges from laziness, sadness and arrogance to spiritual and anti-materialist traits.[21] From the start, therefore, the view of this school stands rejected.

The dependency school[22], on the other hand, sees colonialism with its consequent integration of colonial economies into the advanced capitalist system as essentially a means of economic

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20. Bill Warren, Imperialism, Pioneer of Capitalism, London, 1980.

21. Philip O'Brien 'A critique of Latin American theories of dependency' in Philip O'Brien (ed), Beyond the sociology of development: Economy and society in Latin America and Africa, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1975, p.8.

22. I covered the dependency concept as a topic in the course, 'World contemporary history', taken in my M.A. course work. I have to acknowledge my indeptedness for much of what will be said in this regard to the lecture notes of Prof. J.E. Inikori.

exploitation. It emphasizes the colony's inability to influence terms of trade in its favour and its reliance on one or a few major exports, usually primary products. It points to the intensive capital stripping of the colonial peoples which is thought to condemn them to a vicious circle of continued poverty and exploitation. This, it emphasizes, results in under-development and dependence.[23]

The stand of the dependency school is more persuasive. It traces the development of dependence from the type of past international relationships which a given social formation had in the past. Hence dependence or the economic impact of colonialism is located in history. In relation to Africa, for instance, dependency theorists argue that it is the very specific manner of articulation of colonialism or economic integration into capitalism that wrought dependence on African economies.

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23. A.G. Frank, Dependent accumulation and Under-development, Monthly Review Press, London and New York, 1979; Andre Gunder Frank, Lumpen-Bourgeoisie Lumpen-Development. Dependence, class and politics in Latin America. Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1972; Walter Rodney, How Europe Under-developed Africa, Dar es salaam, 1972; Samir Amin, Imperialism and Unequal Development, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1977; Akin L. Mabogunje, The Development Process: A spatial perspective Hutchinson Publishing group, London, 1980; Ian Roxborough, Theories of Underdevelopment, Macmillan Press, London and Basingstoke, 1979; Robert I. Rhodes (ed), Imperialism and Underdevelopment: a reader, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1970.

Thus, Claude Ake has shown that integration was achieved by colonial policies relating to monetisation, trade, metropolitan investment and infrastructural development. On the whole, these policies redounded in the proleterianisation of the African peasant, the spread of capitalist relations of production, the extension of agrarian capitalism, the development of consummerism and export orientation with emphasis on unskilled labour which later brought about a regress in the development of production forces. The upshot of all these was ... structural and complementary integration of African economies with advanced capitalist economies of the respective metropolitan countries.[24] Dependency theorists - not withstanding their differences in detail - are agreed that market forces under this condition favour the transfer of economic surplus from the weaker and poorer economies to the stronger and more advanced ones. This surplus drainage from the weaker economies, as far as Gunder Frank is concerned, is the essence of their under-development.[25]

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24. Claude Ake, A Political Economy of Africa, Longman Nigeria Ltd and in New York, 1981, chap.2.

25. Andre Gunder Frank, 'The Development of Under-development', in Robert I. Rhodes (ed.), Imperialism and Under-development; a reader Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1970, pp.4 - 17.

Under-development, or (to say the same thing in a different word) dependence, is, as T. Dos Santos has said, a relationship between two or more economies or between such economies and the world trading system by which some countries can expand through self-impulsion while others (in dependent status) can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries with positive or deleterious effects on the dependent economies.[26] In some what more articulate terms, an economy is dependent to the extent that its position and relations to other economies in the international system and the articulation of its internal structure make it incapable of autocentric development'.[27] As Claude Ake insists, all the colonial economies of Africa were heavily dependent by the criteria of the above definition.

In the background of the above, it is, therefore, as a part of the emerging dependent formation of southern Nigeria that we will now proceed to examine the colonial economic impact on Ohafia.

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26. T. Dos Santos, 'The crisis of Development theory and the problem of dependence in Latin America', in Henry Bernstein (ed) Underdevelopment and Development, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1973, pp.76 - 77.

27. Ake, op.cit. p.55.

The Problem of Communication and Transport

We indicated in chapter Two that the most important determinant of British policy was trade, the vehicle for economic exploitation. After 1870 British traders in the Niger Coast had started to agitate rather noisily for the 'opening up' of the interior in order to give effect to the logic of what they conceived as free trade.[28] It was in pursuit of this free trade that the British cut a path heavily stained with blood from the coast to the interior.[29] The arrival in the interior was followed by the inauguration of British political authority in the form of Native courts intended to help 'purge' southern Nigeria of those 'pernicious' social circumstances which inhibited free trade and hindered economic progress.[30] The result was that security on a grand scale was established. With this, warrior communities like Ohafia were obliged

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28. A.E. Afigbo 'Sir Ralph Moor and the Economic Development of Southern Nigeria, 1896 - 1903' Journal of the Historical society of Nigeria (hereinafter called J.H.S.N.) Vol.V, No.3, 1970, pp.371 - 397, see pp.371 - 2.

29. O. Ikime, The Fall of Nigeria: The British conquest. Heinemann, London, Nairobi, Lusaka, Ibadan, 1977, chap.3.

30. Afigbo, op.cit., p.372.

to engage in alternative economic pursuits to slave trade.[31]

It might be thought that the inauguration of British rule in the interior would bring the British traders rushing to open up firms in the area following the 'trail of blood and smoking villages' as the missionaries did. This was not the case. The inauguration of British rule was only one aspect of the conditions which the firms required. The other equally crucial aspect of their demands was the establishment of such infrastructures as would facilitate free trade - railways, good roads and navigable rivers.[32] The absence of these conditions made British traders adamant to government importunities for their establishment of firms in the interior even when these importunities assumed the character of an alarm over German designs in the area.[33] In a nutshell, the position of the merchants was that:

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31. Nkama has documented the elaborate military training through which the Edda man passed, which spanned the greater part of his adult life. See C. Nkama, 'Edda; a traditional warrior', B.A. Special Project (History) U.N.N., 1978. This was typical of the other warrior communities of the Cross River Igboland like Ohafia. The suppression of this warfare yielded time for 'legitimate' economic engagements.

32. Ofonagoro, op cit p.2.

33. Kannan K. Nair, Politics and Society in south-eastern Nigeria; 1841-1906 A Study of Power, Diplomacy and Commerce in Old Calabar, Frank Cass, London, 1972, pp. 260-265.

> From experience we have found that there is not likely to be a financial success attendant upon a venture in West Africa providing that venture is situated in the hinterland and the means of communication are other than rail or river...[34]

The logic of this position is one to which very important actors in the drama of imperial politics were subscribers. In a paper which he presented to the Royal Colonial institute, for instance, Lugard outlined the following prerequisites for the thorough exploitation of the resources of the new British possessions in West Africa: 'The chief desiderata are railway communications with the interior and between the ports on this surf-beaten coast, the substitution of our own manufactures for the present demoralizing traffic in bad liquor...'[35] In the background of these views, it is easy to understand the commitment of the British government to the improvement of communication in southern Nigeria.

As far as Ohafia was concerned, the first achievement of the British in this direction was the clearing of the rivers. The Enyong tributary of the

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34. Minute book of the African trade section, Liverpool chamber of commerce, (1906-1907), enclosure, p. 82, H.B.W. Russel to the Secretary, Liverpool chamber of commerce, Aug., 31, 1906, cited in Ofonagoro, op cit, p.6.

35. Ibid.

Cross River into which the Uduma River of Ohafia flows was surveyed from its confluence with the Cross River at Itu to a point six miles north-west of Arochukwu in 1902. This was reported to be navigable for any sized puncheon canoe though a good deal of clearing was still necessary to render it navigable for the larger river crafts of the European traders. The Enyong was then 'critically charted by the marine department and cleared for launch navigation for about ten or twelve miles and for canoe much further'.[36]

It was during this period that one of the commanders of the Aro Field force in Ohafia 'discovered' the Uduma river in Ohafia and contracted the clearing of it to Eke Kalu. The latter hired people from Calabar and cleared the river as far as to Isiugwu - Ohafia.[37] This water way became an addition to the Okon-Ikun route into the Cross river, which route had been used by Ohafia people rather very sparingly both because of the long land distance to Ikun where the river passed - Ikun

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36. Ibid p. 196.

37. Eke Kalu, 'An Ibo Autobiography; the Autobiography of Mr Eke Kalu, Ohaffia's well-honoured son', The Nigerian Field, vol. VIII, no. 4, Oct., 1938, pp. 158-170 see p. 164.

being ten miles from the nearest Ohafia village, Okon - and because of the 'obstructionist activities' of the Ikun and Bi-kpan peoples.[38] Eke informs us, however, that with the opening up of the Uduma route, he, along with other Ohafia people, started buying palm produce to ferry across to Itu for sale. Evidently, it was with the opening of this route that Ohafia was drawn directly into the produce trade through the Cross River.

The Produce Trade

It is clear from a number of studies that the basic pattern of Igboland's economic relationship with the British was established by the 19th century.[39] A narrow range of primary goods, mainly palm products, were exported in return for manufactured consumer goods. It would appear that the development of this trade in Ohafia in the same period was inhibited both by the insecurity of the long distance routes

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38. O.N. Njoku, 'Inter-village trade in Ohafia, 1900-1979', unpublished manuscript, History Department Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka (henceforth U.N.N.) p.31.

39. These include K.O. Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830-1885: An Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1956; G.I. Jones, The Trading States of the Oil Rivers: a study of Political developments in Eastern Nigeria, Oxford University Press, London, Ibadan and Accra, 1963; F. Ekejiuba, 'Aro trade system' Ikenga Journal of African Studies, vol. 1, no. 2, 1972; D. Northrup, Trade Without Rulers: Pre-colonial Economic Development in South-Eastern Nigeria, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978.

which they would have had to travel and by the slave trade itself which, thanks to the geographical position of the area, continued until the arrival of the British. Much of the produce they sold during the period was by relay especially through the Aro. If, therefore, we cannot say that the Ohafia were not at all part of the pre-colonial produce trade, their rather marginal participation (and mainly as producers rather than traders) ought also to be admitted. It was with the arrival of the British and the clearing of the Uduma river that this picture of things changed and they became drawn into the said pattern of trade which had already evolved.

A distillation from mainly oral sources[40] provides

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40. What follows was made up largely from oral information from many sources which include Ochea Ole of Akanu, about 70, interviewed in his house at Ndi Ole compound, Akanu-Ohafia on 7/11/85; Rtd. Cpl. Ogba Uduma of Ebem, well above 80, interviewed in his residence at 257 Arochukwu Rd, Ebem-Ohafia, 8/11/85; Awa Ngwoke of Amaekpu, well above 80, interviewed in his residence at no. 103 Arochukwu Rd, Amaekpu-Ohafia on 9/11/85; Mrs Mary Aki of Ebem-Ohafia, daughter of Ota Onwu who was a member of the royal family of Ekeuke of Ebem and one of the pioneer brokers of the trade. Mrs Aki's information about the trade is not derived directly from her father (he died before she grew up) but from various relations and friends of her late father. As her last son, on the other hand, I have tapped Mrs Aki's knowledge of this trade under various informal circumstances, a knowledge which has been brought to bear on this section. My information resources on this trade and on other subjects was augmented with collections from a team of research assistants made up of Iroha Kalu, U.U. Kalu, Ukpai Ole, Uduma Arunsi and Ololo O. Ololo. Except in a few cases where I deem it necessary to indicate the progeny of a given information or where that information is from a secondary work, I have made minimal specific acknowledgements since the accounts from the various individuals agree to a considerable extent.

an inkling into the nature of the trade. It was an extremely hazardous venture especially as the traders who travelled by canoe had little protection against storms and hostile currents. In the rainy season in particular, weather forecasts were often dangerously wrong and many traders drowned on the way. The journey to and from Itu took typically five days but there were various beaches on the way where the crew stopped to recoup and to make enquiries or to drop some people who were not going as far as Itu. These included Onu anu Ndi Uduma, Onu Asu Ndi Oji, Onu asu Akpunabo, Aro Onu Ikpe, Onu asu Chukwu Uja, Ikot Ukpe, Onu asu Aro, Okogobi and so on.

A breed of produce traders soon emerged who scoured the villages buying produce in the very small quantities in which the women producers brought them. Palm oil for instance was sold in small earthen pots of about one quarter pint called nchuchu, while palm kernel was measured in cigarette cups.[41] This was the modest amount of surplus available especially in the teething period of the trade. It would appear that the processing of palm oil had little attraction for the Ohafia man. Hence,

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41. Njoku, op cit, p. 8, consistent with our field data.

labour migrants from Edda arrived in the course of the trade and settled in farm houses called ulo ubi where Ohafia palm groves were rented out to them to harvest and process. Hard data or statistics are obviously lacking, but there is no doubt that production generally must have increased with the taking up of full time job of oil palm processing by these migrants.

Items, other than palm produce, were also involved in the trade but were somewhat of subsidiary nature. They included yams, melon, okra, beans and pepper. These and the major commodities were bulked and head-loaded to Onu-asu Ebem from where they set sail in canoe or ugbo nku in the Uduma river.

Certain commodities were disposed of in some of the communities located in the course of the journey before Itu. Yams, for instance, were usually sold at Ikpe Ikot Nkon very close to Ndi Oji Abam, and the traders bought, for the return journey, mainly fish and then white chalk and coconuts. The bulk of the products especially palm produce, were disposed of at Itu. The traders sold to the British firms like G.B.O. established in the mouth of the river. In the early part of the trade, exchange was by something that looked like barter, though in some cases British coins were accepted. Usually the firms

paid the value of each produce in textiles, spiritous drinks, kerosene, soap, stock fish, matches, sugar and other meretricious articles with which Ohafia markets began to be invaded in greater volume than ever before, though in trickles, compared with what followed after the completion of the railways. Occasionally some food items like okra and melon managed to get as far as to Itu. These were sold to the natives and the proceeds used for the purchase of fish, cray fish, salt and other riveraine goods for the return trip.

In the course of the trade, another cash crop, cocoa, was introduced and it struggled, though unsuccessfully, for eminence. In Ebem Ohafia the introduction of this crop is credited to Ukoha Arunsi[42] who brought it from Calabar after his sojourn in the area. But the climate and soil of Ohafia were not particularly hospitable to this crop. According to the Assessment report on Bende Division in 1927 the soil is derived from sand stone and shales of Bende group and Benin sand. This hardly retains enough water to provide the damp condition in which the crop thrives. In addition to

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42. Oral information from Cpl Ogba Uduma, see details in footnote 40.

this, there was an abundant variety of diseases which marred the future of the crop in Ohafia. Otherwise it is cheaper to prepare and yielded far greater revenue than palm produce. On account of this the colonial government tended to discourage cocoa production in palm produce areas for fear that the latter would suffer neglect.[43]

A few people like Ukoha Arunsi and Nna Omere Igu both of Ebem Ohafia managed to grow this crop on a fairly large scale. But Isiugwu-Ohafia was the most successful Ohafia village in terms of cocoa cultivation and this is on account of a strikingly excellent drainage of the area by streams, rivers and rivulets. But even here, cocoa diseases and other inhospitable conditions for the crop persistently frustrated enterprise in this direction. The most successful Ohafia cocoa farmers grew the crop outside Ohafia. Chief Agwu Awa of Amaekpu-Ohafia may stand for their number. He cultivated a vast area of land at Itumbauzo and employed, at the plenitude of his glory, as many as fifty labourers in his farms.[44]

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43. National Archives, Enugu (henceforth N.A.E.) E223/13 Calprof 14/8/135, Eastern Province, Annual Report on in 1912, see section on trade.

44. Oral information from Eke Ukariwe, a younger relation of chief Agwu Awa.

The produce industry and commerce introduced many changes into Ohafia. With it, came the introduction of ever wider variety of European products which were aggressively promoted and to secure which the people became increasingly involved in commodity production, though, not enough to make structural changes in the economy. In any case, even the old practice of leaving local trade exclusively to women gradually became out-dated.

We mentioned the renting out of palm groves to Edda people. Though the land on which these palm trees stood was community or lineage land in many cases, the economic trees in them, as Chubb has indicated, usually belonged to specific individuals. The increasing commoditization of these economic trees led to a new anxiety to privatise land and guarantee security of tenure. Privatisation of land, however, antedated colonial rule but the latter helped to intensify the phenomenon as there arose the need to obtain security of tenure to enable, for instance, such crops as cocoa which took six to twelve years to mature, to be cultivated. On this matter Professor Afigbo has written:

> By introducing the idea of deliberately experimenting with the plantation of new cash crops, for instance cocoa, the colonial regime created among the Igbo the

> new desire to acquire land on free hold terms. Hitherto all land had been either family property (like ala ulo, compound land) or community (village) property (like ala agu or ikpa) neither of which could be alienated in perpetuity from the unit in question. But under the economic and legal impact of colonialism there came into being, as Mr. L.T. Chubb put it, "a growing class of African capitalists anxious to acquire secure tenure of land for plantation purposes.45

Through the pressure of such groups there has been alienation of land on an extensive scale. It must be admitted, though, that this phenomenon has not made any considerable impact on the indigenous system of land tenure.[46] In the final analysis, however, the process of alienation of land was a process of proleterianisation of the peasant population.

What was even more important was the fact that people were increasingly turning attention to commodity production. It is true that exchange took place before the establishment of colonial rule, but that was limited by the fact of every family more or less producing all its basic food requirements. Even in the colonial period when occupational diversi-

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45. A.E. Afigbo, Ropes of Sand (studies in Igbo history and culture, University Press Ltd., in Association with Oxford University Press, Ibadan, Benin, Kano, etc., 1981, pp. 335-336.

46. Ibid.

fication started, it was strange for *bona fide* Ohafia family to go to the market for the purpose of purchasing okro, egusi or the like. Even the requirements for palm oil whose production was much more ardous, was met by many a family. Production in the pre-colonial period was therefore almost generally subsistence except to the extent that men had to sell slaves or yams to procure items which could not be yielded by local village resources.

In the background of this, it is easy to appreciate the fact that colonial trade increased commercial activities both within and without Ohafia. Opportunity to sell even the ordinary farm products became vastly increased and there was an ever increasing variety of needs which became basic although they could not be made available by village resources. Items like kerosene, clothes, lanterns, enamel plates, rice, spiritous drinks and many others became increasingly important. Not surprisingly, therefore, even women who traditionally had no business with family needs other than local food items were more and more obliged to sell modest quantities of items which otherwise would have been reserved exclusively for family consumption.

Even then, as would become clear later, this did not occasion important changes in the pattern of

production in Ohafia: for the exotic items enumerated above were still largely luxuries which were not consumed on a regular basis. A very modest amount of surplus, therefore, could take care of them. In many cases it did not even require the sale of farm items to purchase them. As will also be shown later, people merely engaged in labour of some sort to earn the necessary revenue for these. In the final analysis, although Ohafia had been made to contribute to the produce trade, their participation, at least before the establishment of the modern infrastructures for transportation, was still highly marginal.

Perhaps the most important result of the trade at the time was the rise, materially above local level, of a tiny number of people who could be said to be pioneers of a class. It is with these pioneers that the novelty of full time trading started. To mention just a few, members of this class included Ota Onwu, Idika Echeme and Egbe Kalu, all of Ebem Ohafia; Eke Kalu, Igwe Onuka and Ukpabi Kalu of Amaekpu Ohafia and Nelson Kalu of Okon-Ohafia.[47] Barring a few exceptions like Eke Kalu,

47. Based on oral information from Cpl Ogba Uduma, see details in footnote 40 and on information collected by my field assistant, Kalu Iroha.

the outward sign of affluence which the early traders exuded was not concrete insurance projects as construction of houses, etc. Rather perniciously, Ohafia people believed that if a man built a zinc house he would be exhibiting enough wealth to attract the envy of evil spirits who would take his life. The out-ward signs of wealth, therefore, consisted mainly in consumption style - dressing, quality of food and drinks, number of wives and so on. It was later, with people such as Ngwobia Osu (Elu), Nkwa Agwu (Ebem), Olugu Kalu Olugu (Okagwe), and Uduma Ina (Ebem), that this myth was shattered and the building of zinc houses started in earnest. As we have said, however, except for the few individuals forming the new class of full time traders, the involvement of Ohafia in the produce trade was marginal before the establishment of the modern infrastrcutures for transport.

The Impact of Modern Infrastructures for Communication and Transport

We have discussed the importance which the British attached to improved communication and how this resulted in the clearing of rivers and opening of some important waterways. The other aspects of communication - roads and railways - came much later

and at different times in different places. In Ohafia, for instance, road links with other clans did not develop until 1931. Meanwhile, a railway line was projected east of the Niger to run from Calabar to Maiduguri. But this plan had to be altered with the discovery of coal at Udi in 1908.[48] The line was re-planned to run West of the Cross River in order to pass through Udi and move on to Kano. The southern terminus became Diobu in Port-Harcourt. Work began in 1913 providing employment for 3,000 workers.[49]

As was demonstrated in chapter Two, Ohafia was directly involved just as did other peoples of Nigeria. They therefore had some money injected into their society which Afigbo submits, in the case of the larger Igbo area, led to a rise in purchasing power, more returns for producers of food, the expansion and reinforcement of the cash nexus and so on.[50]

With the completion of the Port-Harcourt

48. Elizabeth Isichei, A history of the Igbo people, Macmillan, London, Basingstoke, etc, 1976, p. 200.

49. A.E. Afigbo, The warrant Chiefs; Indirect Rule in South-eastern Nigeria 1891-1929, Longman group Ltd, London, 1972.

50. Afigbo, 'Ropes of Sand', p. 326.

- Enugu stretch of the Eastern railways in 1916 the commercial firms began to open up stations in the interior along the railway line Consequently, the railway stations and halts became produce-buying points of varying degrees of importance. These included those like Uzuakoli and Ovim which can be said to have formed depots for such hinterland communities as Abiriba, Nkporo, Igbere and Ohafia. Other important railway stations were Eha Amufu, Agbani, Afikpo-road, Umuahia and Aba. As Professor Afigbo has pointed out, all these served as centres for the collection of local produce and for distributing the new cash currency.[51]

It would appear, however, that the railways had little immediate impact on Ohafia in terms of facility of transport and communication. Evidently this had to await the construction of road links. For one thing the closest railway crossing and station to Ohafia was Ovim which is some thirty kilometres or so from Ohafia. It is not just the sheer distance that mattered; the fact is that there was yet to be a motor road link to this and other stations. So even with the completion of the railway,

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51. Ibid, p. 324.

goods still had to be head-loaded to and from this and other areas as before. The obvious problems associated with head poterage still limited the volume of traffic and trade.

Yet in 1918 the nemesis of modernization or integration into the wider world economy came in as a factor to make it even more impossible for the railway to make a favourable impact on production or even distribution of goods in Ohafia. By this date, influenza epidemic believed to have been introduced into Nigeria by returnees from the first world war[52] and by ocean liners especially from the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, [53] spread through the modern communication and transport infrastructures, especially the railway, to Ohafia as to other parts of Nigeria. By all accounts, it was this influenza epidemic that MacFarlan called small pox[54] in Ohafia especially as it was reported during the time of the former disease.

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52. D.C. Ohadike, 'The influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 and the spread of cassava cultivation on the Lower Niger: a study in historical linkages' Journal of African history, 22 (1981) pp. 379-391, see p. 385.

53. Ibid, p. 383.

54. Donald M. MacFarlan, Calabar: The Church of Scotland Mission 1846-1946, Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson, 1946, p. 135.

The importance of the disease and probably its unprecedented nature in Ohafia is illustrated by the fact that it forms the reference point for dating many events and happenings. It is not uncommon to hear that a certain thing happened or somebody was born during or a year before or after the plague. The present writer's mother, for instance, was informed that her mother died as a result of the plague. MacFarlan reports that not one home in Ohafia escaped the plague and that in many cases 'whole households were destroyed'. 'Destitute children', he continued, 'roamed wailing round a desolate town, and there was no one to give them food or shelter'.[55] In one Ohafia village, Asaga, where the highest incidence was recorded, it was claimed that about two thousand people died.[56]

The plague was, however, brought under control in 1919. It is recorded that it claimed over a quarter of a million lives in the southern provinces alone. In Benin province, 15,000 people died, in Ogoja province, 63,000 people died while in Owerri province, 41,000 lives were lost.[57] Ohadike has shown

55. Ibid, p. 136.
56. Ibid, p. 135.
57. Ohadike, op cit, p. 384.

that the neglect of farm work and the depletion of the human resources of the people of the Lower Niger arising from this plague and from earlier British military expeditions in the area resulted in an unprecedented degree of food shortage. He argued most compellingly that this food shortage is the explanation for the large-scale adoption of cassava as a food crop in this area.[58]

The point which suggests itself is that the completion of the railway did not immediately facilitate movement of goods and people in Ohafia, nor did it result in any immediate rise in production. For one thing, people would have been too pre-occupied with production of enough food crops after the plague to think about cash crops. This increase came about somewhat, but it was delayed till after the construction of road links to the railways in 1931 and the introduction of motor vehicle transportation in 1936. Even as late as 1927 the Assessment Report on Bende Division still bemoaned not only the meagre volume of cash crop output but also the problem of communication in Ohafia:

> There is no factory within a reasonable day's journey of any Ohafia town and the trade in oil and kernels is negligible.59

58. Ibid, Passim.

59. National Archives, Ibadan (henceforth N.A.I.) C.S.O. 26/3 file no. 20646 Assessment Report, Bende Division, 1927, cited in Njoku, op cit, p. 43.

The Assessment exercise probably brought the communication problem of Chafia people to the administration more pointedly than ever before. Serious road construction work began in 1928 and by 1931 Ohafia had been linked both to Arochukwu and, through Uzuakoli, to Umuahia by motor road.[60] By 1936 Eke Kalu led the way in the introduction of lorries to these roads. It was then that the impact of these modern infrastructures for communication can be said to begin to be felt in Ohafia.

The construction of roads and introduction of vehicular transportation seriously limited the importance of the canoe journey through the Uduma waterway which, as we have noted, was fraught with hazards. Goods of various kinds including palm produce, cocoa and foodstuffs were bulked and deposited at strategic centres in Okagwe Amaekpu, Elu, Ebem and Akanu, all of which were situated on the main road to Arochukwu and Umuahia. From Okagwe the lorry picked these goods either to Arochukwu or to Umuahia.[61] In time, transportation through the road was to completely eclipse the canoe transportation through Uduma river.

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60. Eke, 'An Ibo Autobiography', pp. 168-9.

61. Ibid.

To be sure, the advent of vehicular transportation increased the volume of imports into Ohafia and these, evidently, were cheaper than they used to be by head-porterage or by canoe-cum head porterage. The high cost of these traditional means of transportation was no doubt transmitted into the commodities to restrict them more or less to the very few well to do in the society. Vehicular transportation, on the contrary, immensely reduced the cost of the imported goods, thus bringing them within the reach of more people. These more or less logical conclusions have an even reinforced basis on empirical observations given in oral evidence.[62] Since these imports acted as incentive to increased production, the new system of transportation may be assumed to have brought about a greater spread effect on the domestic economy than had hitherto been the case.[63]

It has already been mentioned that the completion of the railway led to a rush to establish in the interior by the trading firms. The U.A.C. for instance, opened a firm at Umuahia. In 1937 the

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62. By Chief Anderson Okoko of Ebem, above 100 years old, in his residence in Arochukwu road on 8/11/85; and by Ibe Ochea Ole (see details in footnote 40) and by testimonies collected orally by Kalu Iroha.

63. I owe this entirely to Njoku, op cit, p. 36.

Ohafia clan council successfully appealed to it (the U.A.C.) to open a branch at Ohafia. Consequently, it opened a factory at Elu in the same year.[64] The coming of the U.A.C. enlivened trade at Ohafia. As against the periodic organisation of trade in the area which necessitated produce buyers shuttling to different markets on different days, the company offered an opportunity for daily exchange of goods. It paid for produce both in kind and in cash and advanced credits to its customers. Within a short period of the arrival of the U.A.C., Elu became the hub of activities in Ohafia to the discomfiture, so it was alleged, of Ebem which village had commanded this status on account of the native court situated there (Ebem). In the course of time, therefore, the U.A.C. was burgled and wrecked allegedly by malefactors in the pay of Ebem. In consequence, it folded up as dramatically as it had opened. 'Once again', so the story goes, 'Ebem slept in peace'.[65]

Meanwhile, in the 1930s, bicycles were introduced into Ohafia by the secular and missionary

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64. Eke, op cit, p. 170.

65. I derived the main part of this information from Njoku, op cit and from Eke, 'An Ibo Autobiography'. This, however, was augmented by collections during my field work.

personnel of the British who had established in the area.[66] It was of immense advantage though the cost was rather prohibitive. The use spread gradually from salaried men to very successful traders. Informants remember, though vaguely, that it was in the 1940s that the use began to become widespread and it is reasonable to surmise that this was as a result of the post-war boom in tropical products.[67]

An important impact of the bicycle is that the inhibitions in local trade caused by distance started to be overcome. Apart from this, the carrying capacity of the local trader was enhanced with possible cost-reducing effects. But more than all this, cyclists began, in time, to oporate outside Ohafia. Some carried ukazi or palm produce to

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66. I derived this information from oral interview of a group of old men who were resting at Obunkwa hall in Elu-Ohafia. The interview took place early in April, I think the specific date was 6/4/85, but I am not absolutely sure because I had made the reprehensible mistake of not noting this down. Those who were present and participated in the discussion were: Uka Oike, Aru Udonsi, Imaga Uka, Ebe Ucherdu, Olugu Onwuka, Udonsi Oji, Mdukwe Kalu and Kalu Irouwa. All these people belong to Ndi Imaga compound where the Obunkwa is situated. Except Kalu Irouwa, a boy of less than 40 who took part out of sheer interest, each of the rest of the participants enumerated above is upwards of 60 years. Information derived from this discussion will henceforth be documented as 'Obunkwa interview.'

67. N.A.E., OW 7362/3 Umdiv 3/1/736 Annual Report, Bende Div., Jan. 1948-Aug. 1948. This much is suggested by items 2, 3 and 4.

Umuahia and Uzuakoli and returned the same day. Others, especially those from Okon-Chafia and Amuma-Chafia, travelled to Unwana to buy smoked fish and earthern wares and to Ohposi and Uburu for white chalk and locally produced salt.[68]

Meanwhile, in 1937 some Chafia chiefs applied to the D.O. in Bende to encourage Hausa traders to come to Chafia to trade their goods. The latter must have arrived Umuahia following the railway line. What followed was an influx of Hausa traders into Chafia. They settled mainly at Elu from where they travelled to various villages of Chafia to supply cow meat.

As is clear from our analysis, the above developments which involved Chafia more and more in the colonial production and commerce were occasioned by the modern communication infrastructures. These infrastructures, therefore, by helping to promote trade, helped the process of integration of the Chafia economy, as part of the larger economy of southern Nigeria, into the capitalist world system. This will be made clearer by a brief discussion of the role of trade itself in the integration and under-development of colonial economies.

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68. Njoku, op cit, p. 49 corroborated by 'Obunkwa interview'.

Trade, as pointed out by Claude Ake, was the vehicle for extending capitalism into the colony. It helped to create consummerist orientations and to extend the scope of the money economy. What is even more basic is that trade helped to stimulate primary production. Though it is almost virtually impossible to provide statistics in the case of Ohafia, it is not baseless altogether to argue that much greater volume of exports were produced in the area with the abolition of slave trade and warfare, the opening up of many more secure trade routes and the increasing inflow of exotic goods with the growth of money economy. And extension of the primary production "meant extending the capitalist mode of production. It also meant the extension of the capitalist social relations, the extension of agrarian capitalism, the proleterianisation of some peasants and the rudimentary development of a local bourgeoisie".[69] In these ways, trade in general promoted the integration of the colonial, including Ohafia, economy into the capitalist system.

With increasing integration, the emerging role of the colonies as can be seen by the Ohafia case, was specialization in export of primary produce and the

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69. Ake, op cit, p. 36.

import of manufactures. The results were, first, the dependence of economic growth in the colony on the metropole's demand for colonial imports and acute exploitation of the colony through the exchange of values which were unequal in terms of labour requirements in favour of manufactures. This is the essence of the under-development and dependence of southern Nigeria (of which Ohafia is part) as wrought by colonial trade.

Equally important is the fact that colonial trade tended to destroy the traditional crafts and craftmanship. We mentioned the dynamism with which the British advertised their products which were 'considered exotic, more desirable or more functional substitutes'. In the specific case of Ohafia, the increasingly effective utility of the modern infrastructures for communication flooded the area more and more with these products. And not only did the appetite or preference for these goods increase commodity production, it also resulted in increasing neglect of local manufactures. As enamel plates and cups, iron and aluminium pots locally known respectively as ite igwe and ite-pot gained wider and wider acceptance in Ohafia, Edda and Ohafia local producers and peddlers of such local utensils as nja, ochin and ite ororo receded in importance. The same is true of Abiriba and Akwerri people who,

hitherto forged the iron tools and weapons of Ohafia. Evidence for this is largely empirical. In Ohafia, even long before 1960, an increasing number of people, especially the educated and salaried class, had a thirst for cutlery, enamel plates, cups and other British substitutes for traditional products. Since the members of this class were the standard bearers in fashion, tastes, etc, many emulated them and increasingly these items became a feature of many homes. The result was that Nkwerri smiths and Ohafia and Edda craftsmen were gradually put out of business and increasingly confined to the role of tinkers of European products.

The important argument here is that traditional arts and crafts are usually the basis for greater achievement in technology. These are said to form the prelude to the technological achievement of even the highly industrialised societies of today. The fact of British trade discouraging the development of traditional arts and crafts in Ohafia, just as in other parts of Nigeria and Africa, meant that this area was robbed of a chance of technological development. The end result was dependence.

Even then, the extent of integration of Ohafia into the colonial economy should not be exaggerated. Indeed, it would be wrong to imagine that an alterna-

tive as such, had been provided to the pre-colonial economy of Ohafia. Even the fact of an opportunity to sell their surplus did not occasion profound change for better in their material well being or way of life. The people remained largely subsistent farmers producing only such modest quantities of surplus as would enable them supplement the subsistence economy with imported luxuries. Daryll Forde once pointed out that even a remote Igbo, Yoruba, or Hausa village, 'while clearly exhibiting the predominance of the subsistence element will also include in its economic system internal and external exchange elements to a substantial degree'.[70]

The internal and external exchange elements have always been a feature of Ohafia economic life. But the predominance of the subsistence element shows how limited the impact of colonial economy was on production. Throughout our period, produce buyers in Ohafia assembled their goods in small quantities from numerous producers. Mayne was aware of this fact and he adduced the following reasons for the marginal involvement of Ohafia in colonial production:

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70. M. Perham (ed), The Native economies of Nigeria, London, 1946, cited in J.S. Coleman, Nigeria: background to nationalism, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1958, p. 67.

1 Their ground is sterile and their yield of farm produce much poorer than in other parts of the Division.

2 They are two days journey over very difficult country from the nearest factory.

3 They are not rich in palm oil and

4 They are short of land.71

The above constraints account, probably more than any other single factor, for the predominance of subsistence production in Ohafia. The latter, in turn, accounts for a low material attainment of the community. The Intelligent Report on Ohafia in 1933 was said to be a report that:

> deals with a people pre-eminently agricultural whose degree of culture has for the most part attained a lower standard to the rest of the Bende Division. This is illustrated by reference to the insanitary state of the villages where the dwellings of the inhabitants are all huddled together and, in the midst of which the village latrine is invariably to be found a paradise for pigs and domestic animals, at the same time, an excellent location for sewing the seeds of disease.72

The above portrait tells a good deal of the story of the continuity of the traditional village life in spite of the much vaunted economic opportu-

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71. Njoku, op cit, p. 43.

72. N.A.E., No. 29196 C.S.E. 1/1/6, C.J. Mayne, Intelligence Report on Ohafia clan, 1934, see item 2.

nities open to colonial peoples. If Ohafia people lacked surplus and ran a subsisterce economy, that was still a largely true picture of them even at the end of the colonial period. The fact is that the colonial government had monetised the economy of southern Nigeria and discouraged the development of inter-regional trade or trade in items not relevant to its needs. Since Ohafia, as has been said before, had little of the 'resources' needed by the British, there was very little avenue for making money within Ohafia society itself. There is no wonder, therefore, that the most significant response of Ohafia to the colonial economy was emigration to other areas in pursuit of money which could not be earned within Ohafia. The phenomenon of emigration and its impact will engage our attention later.

In the meantime, it is important to note that in terms of production within Ohafia, the colonial economy made only marginal impact on Ohafia economy. But for warfare or slave trade, the pre-colonial economic system continued to reign supreme. It was the same in the larger context of Nigeria. Hence Governor Clifford reported to the Nigerian Council in 1923 as follows:

> The vast majority of the indigenous population are still independent of the out-side world for all their essential supplies. They can and do spin their own trade, weave their own garments,

> provide their own foodstuffs, and, even, when the necessity arises, forge their own tools, and make their own pottery. For them, imports from Europe are still, in the main, luxuries with which if needs must, they can wholly dispense...73

In the face of absolute lack of statistics for the specifically Ohafia case, it is from this larger context of Nigeria that we can further illustrate the point about the continuity of pre-colonial subsistence production or marginal involvement of the people in the colonial economy as is clear from table V:1. It will be seen, for instance, that even as late as 1947-50 only 43% of the people were involved in one way or the other in the money economy. And within the same period, only 257,500 people were engaged in wage labour employment. This figure is altogether very low, given a total population of 30 million at the time. We will now turn to the monetisation of the economy of southern Nigeria.

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73. The Times, 23rd June, 1923, cited in M. Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule, Hutchinson of London in Association with Ethiope Publishing Corporation, Benin City, 1968, p. 347.

Table V:1 - Employment Distribution of Adult Male Population in Nigeria, 1947-1950

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
					Percentage of distribution of total money income	
in subsistence production % of Total	in commercialised production % of Total	in wage employment %	involved in money economies. 2 & 3 %	Total no. of wage labour force	wages and salaries	Agricultural producers
57	39	4	43	257,500	10	90

Source: Adapted from figures quoted in J.S. Coleman, Nigeria, background to Nationalism, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1958, p. 69. (Dates for data are various but all within period 1947-1950).

Demonetisation of traditional Currencies and The Imposition of British Money

The people of southern Nigeria including Igboland and our specific area of interest had evolved their currencies long before 1900. In 1508 Pereira made reference to the trade of the Bight of Biafra in which interior natives coming from over a "hundred leagues" sold yams, slaves, livestock and so forth and accepted payment especially from the Portuguese in copper bracelets.[74] By the time Barbot wrote in 1746, he said of the trade of old Calabar river: "the blacks, here reckon by copper bars, reducing all sorts of goods to such bars".[75] Before the beginning of colonial rule, therefore, currencies were already a feature of commerce in south-eastern Nigeria.

On the basis both of the ethnographic data which [illegible] the beginning of the 20th century and the field work of the present writer, it may be submitted that Manilla, called Okpogo, and brass rods, called ojo mma had been in extensive

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74. D. Pachecco Pereira, Esmeraldo de situ orbis Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser., LXXIX, 1937. Cited in G.I. Jones, 'Native and Trade Currencies in Southern Nigeria during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, Vol. XXVIII, 1958.

75. Ibid.

use in Ohafia. Subsidiary currencies to these were cowries and small iron pellets called umumu.[76] The latter, however, appeared to have disappeared from circulation before the onset of colonial rule. The subsistence nature of their economy notwithstanding, therefore, Ohafia was part of a larger monetary system in southern Nigeria. Thus, Basden who was already in the interior of Igboland before 1900 said in relation to this area in 1921: 'All goods are sold in terms of the local currency; there is no bartering of commodities in exchange for other commodities.'[77]

It was thus in order to cause minimum inconvenience to herself that Britain, when she decided to suppress these currencies, began to refer to them as 'trade goods' and to speak glibly about replacing 'barter' with 'coin'. In any case the demonetisation of traditional currencies and imposition of British money had already been unilaterally decided upon by the British and was one of the war aims of the Aro expedition.

Notwithstanding the incontrovertible evidence

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76. Ibid and 'Obunkwa interview'.

77. G.T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, London, 1921, p. 196.

of the existence of money before colonial rule, however, it is still correct to say that southern Nigeria was monetised by the British. Monetisation of an economy, as Claude Ake has argued, does not simply mean the presence of money as a means of exchange. 'More fundamentally, monetisation implies the pervasiveness of money as a medium of exchange in the economy at large, the development of the attributes of what we now call the modern monetary system including the credit system'.[78] In this sense, therefore, the pre-colonial economies were only marginally monetised and the monetary sector was largely confined to trade with the Europeans while large sectors of the economy still operated within the domain of barter. Once, therefore, the colonial government came into office, it began, in relation to this matter, to implement the war aim of introducing a 'modern monetary system' in the area. The first phase of this was de-monetisation of the traditional currencies.

Measures aimed at demonetisation started to be taken as early as 1902. From this date the area of circulation of manillas and other traditional curren-

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78. Ake, op cit, p.33.

cies was restricted. All payments by government and all remittances to government were to be made in British currency. But before this time, further importation of manillas had been banned to forestall the use of it by the natives as bullets against the then impending British expeditionary force.[19] In 1904 the importation of the subsidiary denominations, cowries, were similarly banned and under stiff penalty.[80] Meanwhile, the British paid both her soldiers and native court employees in British money. Our informants confirm that these people then - especially the soldiers - purchased what local supplies they needed in Ohafia and imposed these currencies on the people.[81] This was the period when native court fees or fines in Ohafia were paid with fowls, etc.[82]

It does not appear that there was any particular attraction for British money. The traders prefered the British firms to pay them in goods.[83] Available British currencies were carefully reserved

79. Ofonagoro, op cit, pp. 297-8.

80. Ibid, p. 288.

81. Oral information from Chief Anderson Okoko.

82. Ibid. Independently corroborated with information from Awa Ngwoke, see footnote 40 for his details.

83. Oral information from Ibe Ochea.

for monetary dealings with the British. But internal transactions went on almost exclusively in traditional currencies. This is not surprising considering the fact that there was yet to be a denomination of British currency to represent as low as one cowrie. Even as late as the 1920s Ohafia accepted British currencies reluctantly or under duress. Thus, for instance, in 1921 Nna Mba Onu of Ebem bought a fowl from Kalu Okali and paid him one shilling which the latter rejected. The case went to court and Kalu Okali was forced to accept the shilling.[84] This was probably an extreme case, especially at the date when it happened. It would appear, on the contrary, that with the progress of the produce trade and such government jobs as the railway, the acceptability of the British currency had improved.

Meanwhile, the immediate result of the scarcity of the traditional currencies was a rise in their value and even greater demand for them. This was even helped by the tendency of the natives to hoard the available stock.[85] Thus, according to Ofonagoro, manillas which exchanged for three quarters of the British penny before demonetisation were now

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84. Oral information from Cpl. Ogba Uduma.

85. Basden, op cit.

going at one for a penny.[86] By 1948 when the Branch Manager of the U.A.C. at Umuahia communicated to the Resident of Owerri province on the issue of withdrawal and redemption of manillas, he opined that manillas were 'unlikely to be redeemed at less than the current rate of exchange which is four for a shilling.[87]

Incidentally this merely gives us an idea of the value of manillas at the height of their appreciation. But evidently the U.A.C. manager was himself no longer current on the position of things by 1948. The fact is that long before this date, the area of circulation of the manillas had become so progressively encircled that the available quantity became too large and so large that the value dropped tragically.[88] By 1948 when its withdrawal was authorized by the Nigerian legislative council, few people still had to do with these currencies. Even then, the withdrawal and redemption still had to be vigorously campaigned for through both native courts

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87. N.A.E., OW 7692 Umprof 5/1/116 Manilla Redemption, see letter from the Manager's office, U.A.C., Umuahia, to the Resident, Owerri Province, of 25th May, 1948, entitled, 'Manillas', see item 'g'.

88. Ofonagoro, op cit.

and school children.[89] It was redeemed at the unattractive rate of ½d per manilla. In the Bende Division of which Ohafia was part, the withdrawal was carried out in five rounds, the approximate figures for the collections being:[90]

40,000

90,000

50,000

20,000

10,000

In the same way, the smaller denominations of traditional currencies - cowries - had been undergoing the same kind of crisis. In 1908 the British circulated a brand of coinage with denominations of $\frac{1}{10}$d, ¼ and ½d. The ¼ was minted in deference to the low value of the smallest denomination of native currency. But it amounted to 9-18 cowries, still very high a value by native standards. In any case, the same process of attrition was applied to force the substitution of cowries for British coinage. But cowries held out up to the 1950s by which time

89. N.A.E. OW 7692 Umprof 5/1/116, see the enclosure, secretary, Eastern province to Deputy Director of Education, Eastern Region, Enugu, dd. 9/12/48, entitled Manilla withdrawal propaganda in schools.

90. Ibid, see D.O., Bende to Resident, Owerri province, no. 371/253, of 23rd May, 1949 titled, 'Manilla withdrawal'.

it had survived the $\frac{1}{10}^{d}$ which was supposed to replace it. Sheer limitation of the area of its circulation aided by prejudicial imperial legislation against it finally culminated in the eclipse of cowries by British coinage and without redemption. The lowest denomination of British coinage which replaced cowries was $\frac{1}{4}^{d}$ which was an equivalent of 45 cowries.[91]

The demonetisation of traditional currencies immediately produced inflation in cost of living as the lowest denomination of currency became an equivalent of 45 cowries. But even beyond this, the debauched currencies had been in use for a long time during which ritual associations developed around them. Much violence was done, therefore, not just to the traditional economy but also to important social norms. 'There is no subtler surer means of overturning the existing basis of society', John Maynard once wrote, 'than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction and does it in a manner which not one man in a million is able to diagnose'.[92]

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91. Ofonagoro, op cit.

92. Ibid, p. 277.

What is even more important now is the fact that the real task of monetisation had begun even before the extirpation of the traditional currencies and this was mainly the task of making the new medium of exchange thoroughly pervasive in the economy. First the colonial regime encouraged wage labour, often by duress. Here and there in the larger context of Africa, arable lands were appropriated, thus reducing the natives to squatters and labourers in their own land. In the case of Ohafia, the relevant measures relating to the encouragement of wage labour was the construction of the railways which, as we noted in chapter 2, attracted both compulsory and voluntary labour each of which was paid. It will be recalled that by 1915 Ohafia was supplying 600 workers to the railways. The exercise, therefore, not only injected money into the Ohafia economy but also helped to stimulate the appetite of the people for European goods which were then being consumed in increasing quantities.

Thus, with the completion of the railways, some people who had developed a thirst both for British goods and the wage employment necessary for obtaining this migrated out of Ohafia for wage employment. Our evidence for this is altogether thin,

though not necessarily unconvincing. It is based entirely on a hint by a few informants that after a spell as labourers during the railway construction, they began to be attracted by uzo ije and tried to get such jobs as cooks, guards, stewards and labourers in other colonial establishments.[93] Since most of this kind of jobs were obtainable outside Ohafia, the quest for them helped to encourage emigration from the clan from very early period of the establishment of colonial rule.

Within Ohafia itself and the immediate adjoining clans, the avenues for sale of labour included building of houses, carrying jobs for traders and for government and missionary agents and cultivation of marketable crops. Ibe Ochea related to the present writer from his personal experience that some who got as much as six pence from such labour travelled to Arochukwu to buy stock fish for subsequent sale at a profit, in some instances, of up to 3d in one trip. It was through this way that many, including himself, were launched into export trade to Itu and Calabar.[94]

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93. Oral information derived from 'Obunkwa interview'.

94. Oral information from Ibe Ochea Ole.

Many others migrated to such nearby clans as Ikun and Biakpan for sale of labour. In Biakpan, for instance, they engaged in cultivation and weeding of farms for the natives for a fee. They also helped to dig large ponds on the banks of the Cross river at Biakpan against the rainy season during which period the ponds would be flooded and would become veritable traps for fish during dry season period. They spent about three months at Biakpan and typically earned as much as 7/-6^{d} by the time they were due to return to Ohafia.

Many of our informants are people who had at one point in their lives done this kind of job. We have been informed also that such educated people as Kalu Okonkwo, Uduma Nwoke and Rev. Ume Olugu also did this kind of job at various times to finance their education.[95]

Another important measure which helped to monetise the economy was the introduction of taxation. The political implications of this was examined in chapter 2. In relation to the question of monetisation, however, the imposition of taxation gave the Ohafia man an even more basic reason for hunting for British money than merely for the purpose

95. Oral information from Cpl Ogba Uduma.

of sating his avarice for imported goods. The result was both the intensification of the quest for wage employment and the pervasive commoditization of production in the area.

As regards the commoditization of production, the mere advertisement of flashy British goods, as we have mentioned, even before the introduction of taxation, had resulted in some conscious effort by Ohafia to produce for exchange in order to earn British money. One way of earning money was by rearing pigs which practice was introduced into Ohafia early in this century following the colonial improvement of communication. Before the introduction of this novelty, people were in the habit of raising and subsequently selling such livestock products as fowls, goats and sheep. With its introduction, however, the rearing of pigs quickly dwarfed the production of any other livestock in popularity. The attraction of pigggery derived from the ability of the animal to produce many piglets at a single birth. But then, the nuisance value of this animal was equally important; it weltered in the open laterines and other dirty places emerging therefrom to form obnoxious sites around living houses and disease retailers in the community as a whole. It was for this reason that the Ohafia clan council later banned the rearing of

pigs in the area.[96]

It is, however, in relation to farm products that we can make more general statements about commoditization of production because it was this that involved larger number of people. Often, a man devoted time and resources to commercial cultivation of yam or processing of oil palm. But the more usual thing was for a little surplus of these or other items to be produced and sold with no visible change either in methods of production or the coverage in land area for the farm. And in general, again, there were severe limitations to the amount of food crop or cash crop which a household could sell without risking supplies for itself. One evidence for this is the Assessment Report of 1927 on Bende Division which clearly indicated that Ohafia produced much less than other clans in Bende Division.[97]

In the final analysis, more needs had been created and these were fast becoming basic needs, necessitating a regular income of British money. And in addition to this, money also had to be earned for the purpose of payment of taxes. The colonial

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96. I benefitted for this information from Njoku, op cit, pp. 41-42.

97. N.A.I. C.S.O. 26/3 File no. 20646 Assessment Report, Bende Division, 1927, cited Ibid, p. 43.

government and economy therefore created conditions and circumstances which made it imperative for a man to earn some British money, however modest was his life style and however aloof he desired to remain from change. For a place like Ohafia which was poor in natural resources and destitute of job-yielding establishments, it was a trying dilemma. Straightaway, the place became a developmental backwater. Then it tried to free itself from this impasse by large scale migration into other parts of Nigeria which boasted of better opportunities. The phenomenon of migration will engage us presently.

Meanwhile, the wider implications of monetisation ought to be noted. Monetisation was a process of tying colonial economies to metropolitan economies, for colonial monetary system was an extension of those of the colonizing power to the disadvantage of the former. It was the colonial authorities, for instance, who directly or indirectly through such institutions as the West African currency Board, determined the monetary practices of the colony, including the ratio of reserves to money in circulation and the issue of currency. By means of such control the colonial monetary policy became an integral part of the mechanism by which the goals of the monetary policies of the metropole were achieved. This control structured the colonial economy to serve

the interests of the metropole at the expense of the colony.[98]

The most important point of immediate relevance, however, was the role of colonial monetary system in the integration of colonial economies into western capitalism. The process of monetisation went hand in hand with the spread of capitalist relations of production, particularly because it led to the proleterianisation of the peasants of the colonies. The monetary system not only helped to create a capitalist economy but also a capitalist economy structurally dependent on foreign economies. Thus, the colonial currency was tied to that of the colonising powers and the money supply was determined mainly by the social and economic forces in the metropole, particularly the demand for the colony's exports. The dependence of the colony's prosperity on the export demand of the metropole, reinforced not only the export orientation of the colony, so that it became complementary to but compelled its specialisation on primary products, a specialisation which further reinforced its organic unity with the metropolitan economy.

We will now go into the most immediate response

98. Ake, op cit, p. 35.

which the colonial economy induced on Ohafia people, labour migration.

Labour Migration

One of the results of monetisation of south-eastern Nigeria and the integration of the area into the capitalist economy of the West was labour migration. Labour migration has been a feature of life among the Igbo and it is not presented here as originating from colonial rule. The Nkwerri and Abiriba people, for instance, had been highly mobile. Even within Ohafia labour migration had been a prominent feature of life even if it had been a rare, unattractive and dangerous venture restricted to certain professional groups as detailed out in chapter One. The point to stress however, is that the scale of these migrations which the colonial economy induced throughout Igboland, brought new dimensions to the phenomenon. Professor Nzimiro has submitted that the movements during the colonial period were motivated by the desire to participate in the economic activities which brought more monetary rewards than the traditional agricultural activities which, as the incursion of money into the economy developed, could not yield as much

reward as those provided by the new occupations.[99]

Nzimiro's point is particularly instructive for the Ohafia case. As we have already noted, the society had little avenue for making money or for economic survival under the new colonial economy. It is not surprising, considering the said limited natural endowment, that from the time the new money economy began to make its impact Ohafia looked further afield for economic improvement especially as the extirpation of warfare had provided ample time which could not all be profitably invested within. We have mentioned their seasonal migration to Ikun, Biakpan and other neighbouring clans for sale of labour. Too, other people like the Edda moved into Ohafia and established especially as farm settlers.

The produce trade and the railway construction afforded people an opportunity for travelling far from home. On board the canoe, Ohafia people travelled as far as to Itu, Oron and Calabar in the Cross River. Again, with the railway construction they got to the various railway sites especially

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99. Ikenna Nzimiro, 'The Igbo in the modern setting', M.J.C. Echeruo and E.N. Obiechina (eds), Igbo traditional life culture and literature. The Couch (a sociological Journal of African Cultures and Literatures, published by Couch Magazine Ltd, 113 Douglas Rd., Owerri, Vol.III, no. 2, Sept., 1971, pp. 165-179, see p. 165.

Port-Harcourt. Gradually, it would appear, they began to settle in these places according to the availability of opportunities. Arua testifies that between 1913 and 1920 they were settled in Itu, Calabar and other places as traders.[100] The completion of the railway and the rapid urbanization in its train must have accentuated this process just as it increased the ingress of people - Hausa traders for instance - into Ohafia. In fact many Ohafia people who joined the army for the second world war enrolled while sojourning outside Ohafia.[101]

By 1947 when, on the initiative of Ohafia emigrants, the clan started sponsoring the education of some of its sons overseas, the Ohafia Improvement Union already had branches in Umuahia, Aba, Enugu, Lagos, Port-Harcourt, Calabar, Eket and Itu. Chief Awa Ngwoke of Amaekpu testified that he travelled to most of these places to collect annual subscriptions for the afore said venture.[102] Ola Balogun testified further to the"massive immigration from Bende and

100. A.O. Arua, A Short History of Ohafia. Omnibus Press, Enugu, 1951, p. 22.

101. 'Obunkwa interview'.

102. Oral information from Awa Ngwoke (see details above). He was also a one time secretary of Ohafia Improvement Union.

Abiriba areas" into Aba in the early 1950s. By all accounts, therefore, Chafia joined their other Igbo Kith and Kin to break the record of emigration as had become evident at the end of the first half of the 20th century. This kind of conclusion, one is aware, ought to be supported by hard statistical data relating to the specifically Chafia case. Regrettably, however, we have not been able to produce this kind of evidence in spite of all efforts to do so during our field work. One is confident, however, that if and when future research comes up with such statistics, it will merely confirm rather than refute our conclusions. Satistical illustration of the point is the rapid growth in the population of cities in the larger context of Eastern Region especially from 1921 as is clear from table V:2.

In this migration the Igbo did not confine themselves within the Eastern Region, they spilled over into other parts of Nigeria where it is claimed and, as illustrated by Table V:3, they formed more than one third of the non-indigenous population of the urban centres in Northern and Western Nigeria. The Igbo moved to all parts of the regions and constituted in the north the bulk of the population in the Sabon Garis in Zaria, Jos, Kafanchan, Sokoto, Kano, Maiduguri, Kaduna, Funta, Bida, Makurdi,

Gombe, Bauchi and several other towns. In these areas they controlled to a large extent, most of the urban economic activities, trading, carpentry, smithing, mechanics of all types, building contracts as well as the largest number of non-local people in commercial and mercantile houses and in government and local government establishments.[103] The important role of the Igbo in the phenomenon of migration is illustrated by table V:3.

Table V:2 - Population figures of typical cities in Eastern Region

City	1921	1931	1953
Onitsha	10,319	18,084	76,921
Enugu	3,170	12,959	62,764
Port-Harcourt	7,185	15,201	71,634
Aba	2,327	12,958	57,787
Calabar	15,438	16,958	46,705

Source: P. Amaury Talbot, The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, Frank Cass, London, 1926, vol.IV; Population Census of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1953 (Lagos: Government Statistician, 1953-1954) Cited in and adapted from J.S. Coleman, Nigeria background to nationalism, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1958, p. 74.

103. Nzimiro, op cit, pp. 166-167.

Table V:3 - Igbo Urban Presence Outside Igboland: Early 1950s

City	Indigens	Percentage of the Igbo in non-indigenous population
Lagos	Yoruba	44.6
Benin city	Edo	53.5
Sapele	Urhobo	46.9
Calabar	Efik	50.7
Kano	Hausa	38.00
Zaria	Hausa	39.00
Kaduna	Mixed	40.7

Source: Ikenna Nzimiro, 'The Igbo in the Modern Setting', M.J.C. Echeruo and E.N. Obiechina (eds), Igbo Traditional life culture and literature, The Couch (A sociological Journal of African cultures and literatures. Published by Couch Magazine Ltd., 43 Douglas Rd, Owerri, vol. III, No. 2, Sept., 1971, pp. 165-169, see p. 166.

By the time large scale migration from Ohafia commenced, the clan had a crop of educated people some of whom joined in the migration but many of whom took up teaching and evangelistic work at home.[104] Once the Ohafia Young Men Society was formed, it

104. This is the inference which I drew after a study of a number of writings of these people. One example of such writings is E.I. Mba, 'The Origin of Ohafia Improvement Union (incoporated)', Ohafia Review: The Magazine of the Ohafia People, vol.I, no. 2, Dec., 1982, pp. 1-2.

helped to unite both the migrants and the educated people within. It provided them with a common forum for deliberation and for planning for Ohafia development. Not infrequently, the D.O. Bende, got petitions from one arm or other of the Union demanding improved amenities in Ohafia.[105] Indeed, it was, in part, as a result of pressure from Ohafia emigrants who had seen the importance of roads in development that construction of roads began in Ohafia in 1928.[106]

There are other ways by which both the educated people at home and the enlightened emigrants abroad contributed to changing Ohafia society. Such capital intensive projects as the building of zinc houses and the sponsorship of the education of children and relations were executed by them. In fact both the communal sponsorship of the overseas education of Ohafia sons from 1949 and the building of Ohafia High School were their brainchild. Within Ohafia, teachers and other wage-earners established a life style which contrasted with those of the peasant

105. See, for instance, N.A.E., OW 7227 /3 Umdiv 3/1/730 Roads and bridges, see J.U. Nwafor, Patron, Ohafia Patriots union, Enugu, to D.O., Bende, 11/11/49 (File page 174).

106. Ibid (hand-written pagination) p. 16, item 10. The information here, in precise terms, is that it was the young men who wanted the roads. I have amplified this (probably to an erroneous limit) by assuming (in the light of my field work data) that this refers to emigrants mainly.

population. Aspiration to this life style accentuated both emigration and patronage of western education.

In the late 1940s, a world of opportunity for labour migration was opened to the Chafia people and they seized this with both hands. This was migration to the Spanish territory of Equatorial Guinea that entered into an agreement with the Nigerian government in 1943 to recruit labour from Nigeria.[107] The Equatorial Guinea proceeded to open up an Anglo-Spanish employment agency in Calabar which was their head office and subsequently, other stations in Owerri, Rivers and Ogoja provinces. The Agency then advertised the job opportunity which it offered, including its conditions of service.

Details of this reveal that a labourer was contracted for two years in the first instance, at the expiration of which period he could be contracted for a second period of 18 months. There was no provision for a subsequent contract after the second. Once recruited from any of the accredited agencies, labourers were ferried to Equatorial Guinea where they did manual labour in the farms. They were offered free daily ration, accommodation and free medical care. Half their monthly salary of 15/- was paid to

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107. For details of this agreement, see Federal Government Gazette No. 28, 1943.

them while the remaining half was saved for them to be claimed on return to Nigeria.[108]

This official version certainly omits the horrible conditions of work, the brutal beating and coercion of workers and the resulting loss of lives.[109] To be sure, a whole book can be written on the seamy side of labour in the Equatorial Guinea, but that is not our immediate concern now. The important thing is that it offered a world of opportunity for material improvement especially to a pople who had little alternative to a boring, unattractive and unrewarding village life. The British vice couscul and labour officer commented in the following words about this matter:

> From what I have seen so far, labour conditions are not unreasonable and on some of the larger farms which I

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108. N.A.E., OW 3961 vol. II Umprof 5/1/37 Fernando po Recruitment of labour from Nigeria, see blue pamphlet enclosed in the file; see also Statistical information for the U.N.O. - colony and protectorate of Nigeria (excluding Cameroons) Year 1947, Appendix VI, p. 19, (Documents unit, Kashim Ibrahim Library, A.B.U., Zaria).

109. Oral information from Uduma Kalu of Elu Ohafia who was in the staff of Ohafia Girls school as a labourer between 1964 and the out-break of the Nigerian civil war in 1967. It was during this period that he fed me with very many horrible but interesting and entertaining stories about his experience as a labourer in Equatorial Guinea. For details of the horrible conditions of work, see 'The Nigerian Eastern Guardian', 11th March, 1948. I have, myself, not had access to this paper but saw it quoted in the archival file relevant to Equatorial Guinea employment.

> have visited I consider that many Nigerian labourers though under paid, live a more comfortable and profitable life than they would be able to do in the remote villages of south-eastern Nigeria.110

Again, we lack the statistical data to establish the point that a large number of Ohafia people were involved in this migration. But evidence for this is overwhelmingly documented in the oral tradition of the people. And in the field, many an informant claimed to have been involved in the migration and had fascinating stories about life in Equatorial Guinea which place is locally called Panya. In his capacity as our field assistant, Udo U. Kalu collected stories about the bearing of former Panya residents and the difference which Ohafia society accorded them. Thanks to their financial standing, they had easy access to very beautiful girls in the clan. In this respect, there are even uncalled for details of how they elbowed their way into already bethrothed girls to take them from less fortunate folks. The story is that they usually wore slippers, a dazzling novelty, while visiting their lovers in the nights and that they consciously increased the tapping noise of the

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110. N.A.E., OW 3961 vol. 11 Umprof 5/1/37, see C L 1/299, labour officer to D.O., Calabar, 28th March, 1948 enclosed.

slippers to the admiration of people around. The attention which they inevitably attracted was heightened all the more by their torch-lights which they flashed in all directions.

For a small clan like Ohafia with serious limitations of job opportunity, the chances would be for many people to emulate their kith and kin and seek better opportunities in Panya. It was even said that some Ohafia people who had little patience for the bureaucratic process in the recruitment migrated on their own and without formalities, to Equatorial Guinea. Some of them like Chukwu Onuma and Ukpai appeared in the list of illegally recruited labourers published in 1948.[111] The fact is that many Ohafia people were already settled in Calabar and found it easy, in the absence of better employment in Nigeria, to emigrate to the place. Probably as a result of the attraction of the employment to Ohafia and adjoining clans, Epsom Ogbonaya was appointed in 1951 as a labour recruiter'to recruit labour in the area including such places like Itumbauzo, Ohafia, Abam and Uzuakoli.' Our speculative deduction, however, is

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111. Ibid, see enclosure entitled; 'Schedule of illegally recruited labourers'.

that a large number of Ohafia people must have been involved in this migration. By the end of our period, emigration into Equatorial Guinea had become something of a hope for the unemployed in the society including the never-do-wells. It was probably as a result of increasing patronage of education and increase in opportunities within, following independence, that that avenue gradually lost favour. But even before then, the increasing publicity of the so called horrible conditions of work helped to trim the number of emigrants into the area.

On the whole, Equatorial Guinea employment helped the process of injecting money into the Ohafia economy. Many of the former employees resumed farming job in the village after the expiration of their contract. Some, who could not re-adjust to farming went to the cities in pursuit of wage employment. A few known to the present writer became casualties of Nigerian city life.

By 1960 Ohafia had started to exude the symptoms of a dependent formation. Thank to colonial products, people had doveloped a variety of tastes which could not be satisfied by local resources. This is not to say that Ohafia was

completely self dependent prior to the impact of the colonial economy. But the items which they needed beyond what they could produce were relatively few and there were sure means of revenue within their traditional economy for these limited exotic goods. The colonial economy on the other hand, vastly enlarged the range of their exotic needs beyond what the traditional economy could provide resources for. Attempts to satisfy these needs got them, to an increasing extent, integrated into the colonial capitalist economy with the consequent subjection of their development to the vagaries of metropolitan demands for their labour and primary products. Yet inter-regional trade was discouraged by emphasis on cash crops for export. And specialisation in the export of primary products and the import of manufactures tended to rigidify pre-capitalist modes of production and to accentuate the development of dependence. This helped to encourage the persistence of the traditional mode of economy, especially its subsistence trait. Ohafia's lack of endowment with resources needed by the metropolis made it difficult for the people to profit significantly from the colonial economy. Given this acute lack of resources and colonial monetisation, Ohafia became a developmental backwater. The increasing limitation

of village resources induced large scale emigration from Ohafia of people some of whom had been proleterianised. This emigration was an X-ray of the developing dependency structure of the economy.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

By the opening of our period Ohafia was an inward-looking tradition-encrusted militarist Igbo society. Its largely undeveloped productive forces reflected both on the relations of production within the society and on the superstructure as a whole.

As is usual with such pre-capitalist societies, farming was the primary occupation for everybody. The principal crop was yam which was so important that the agricultural deity of Nfijioku centred on it. Apart from the warrior title of Ufiem or Dike which was expected to be earned by every adult male, it was yam that provided avenues for achievement and distinction. Yam barons provided the staggering number required for membership of the highly select Nru society. Production generally was geared more to subsistence and to the fulfilment of social obligations than to market purpose. Ohafia, therefore, lacked the wherewithal for procuring exotic goods. True, some people involved themselves in such part time occupations

as smithery, carving and medicine. But the nature of these itinerary professions was such that they could neither accommodate nor ever attract a good number of people. There is no wonder that by the opening of our period Ohafia people had discerned the lucrative value of captives and had started to participate in the slave trade.

On the eve of colonial rule and missionary enterprise, the social expectations of a man in relation to warfare affected the division of labour within Ohafia households. The man provided his household with yam, which was taken on a seasonal basis, while responsibility for the provision of the bulk of the food requirements of his household devolved on his wives. This imbalance was repaired by the fact that the man was responsible for the provision of all other needs like salt, clothings and implements, which could not be yielded by local resources. Usually the Ohafia man went to war to obtain the slaves needed in exchange for these exotic items.

The superstructure of pre-colonial Ohafia society reflected the dominant influence of the

numirous in whioh Ohafia landscape abourded. Ir addition to the certral deities ard shrires ard the persoral gods of irdividuals, each quarter had its Nfijioku ard each compourd or ezi had its kamalu. Both the ezi ard ikwu had their respective ududu. Ududu represerted the various ancestors of the ezi or ikwu ard corstituted the most important symbol of corsanguirity. Each mar was the product of all these religious irfluerces. The elders of the village who were priests of the respective deities or custodiars of family lards were armed with resources of sanctions for checkirg deviatiors from the code of morals, especially by the youths.

Every adult member of the village had a definite role to play in the village administration. Each, for instance, belonged to a specific age grade with clear roles in village orgarisatior. Such bodies as Ukejiogo, Akpar, Ukerabuo, Amala ard Ndi-ichir, powerful as they were, only required age qualificatior for membership. There were some others like Oyayi ard Ite-odo which were clubs of warriors. There were also such societies as

Ekpe and Nru which could only be joined by people of outstanding wealth. Each of these organisations, clubs and societies had specific influence and role in the political process, and there could not be any question of autocracy in pre-colonial Ohafia society.

Between 1901 and 1902, the British conquered Ohafia and commenced efforts at controlling the people. The Ebem court, a branch of the Native court system, was inaugurated and staffed with court clerks, court messengers and a haphazardly chosen array of warrant chiefs. Thereby, Ohafia traditional authority was set aside. British police power quickly suppressed warfare, slave trade, human sacrifice and infanticide. The British thus solved much of the security problem of Ohafia and disorganised much of the Ohafia customs which hinged on warfare. The court was largely successful in executing the British will, even as it operated with an extremely corrupt and oppressive staff. Several cases were tried and semblance of order was maintained. Forced labour

was effectively organised and the British got regular supply of manpower for their carrying jobs, construction of roads and railways, and so on.

Yet people still treated the courts largely with neglect. The fact that the real indigenous authority was not involved in it made it possible for it to continue operating even if with circumscribed scale of influence. The corruption and exploitation personified by the native court staff helped to disincline people to the Native courts. When an additional burden of taxation was added to the picture of British over-rule, an opportunity had been provided for the people to show their long smouldering disenchantment with the British system in the women's riots of 1929. It was after that event that the British made efforts to involve the real indigenous rulers of the people in their administration. But this merely gave the latter an opportunity for resurgence, assuming it had ever become moribund. The British system continued to be tinkered till

the Eastern region got internal autonomy by which time the indigenous systems of social control had survived British rule.

On the other hand, missionaries brought in christianity which challenged the polytheism of Ohafia and attempted to overturn the existing basis of society. Thanks to their schools and other campaign logistics, large scale conversion to christianity was secured. It did not take long for the Presbyterians, who due to protestant delimitation of missionary frontiers had Ohafia as an exclusive area of influence to start generating positive and deleterious influences on Ohafia society. They joined the secular arm to fight such customs as human sacrifice and murder. They readily produced a crop of pen-pushers who readily got employment and understood English enough to challenge the excesses of the court clerks. They brainwashed their converts against native customs and usage. School children occasionally desecrated symbols of traditional religion to demonstrate their estrangement from it. This was a fertile source of conflict.

This corflict was at least ore evidence that there were still vocal adherents to ard deferders of the old order. If the aburdarce of churches ard mission establishmerts should rot exaggerate our impressiors about the grief of traditioral religior in Ohafia, so also the strategic positior at each compourd of the Kamalu, Ududu ard other deities ard ruminous objects, rot exaggerate our impressior about the cortinued hold of traditional religior or the people. Sirce christiarity was tied with school ard modernity, it commarded a more overt devotior from ar ever widering number of people. Throughout our period, however, Ohafia christiars were implicated ir the traditional religious practices which pervaded their agrarian society ard drew instinctive defferere.

The success of christiarity is explicable

mainly in terms of the people's desire for education. And education turned out to be the most important sirgle agent of social change. While the missionaries were in the field to manage schools, both the government and Ohafia people made considerable financial contribution for the support of schools. By the 1940s an educated elite of significant number and diversity had emerged in Ohafia. Thanks to the innovations of colonialism which provided it with an economic pedestal, this new elite effectively eclipsed the traditional elite and began to direct Ohafia society towards a western-oriented path of modernization. Once the Ohafia improvement union was formed, the process of social change became accelerated. By our terminal date, higher institutions had been built and staff development programmes were sponsored which enabled some people to obtain as high as doctoral degrees overseas. It also became normal for the average

family to wheel its children to the schools and colleges. To a great extent, all those who followed the path of education became lost to indigenous tradition.

It is in this connection that we must mention the economic conditions created by colonialism. With the abolition of the slave trade, the traditional means of acquiring revenue for exotic products had been removed. Crisis of employment led Ohafia people to emigrate to to urban centres. The build of the people remained subsistence farmers whose lots were almost worsened by the additional burden of taxation in British currency. Farming itself by no means remained attractive at a time when white collar jobs and full time trading were increasingly popular. To a large extent, farming became the occupation of the aged who could ill-afford to travel far from home. Almost as a rule, the calling of the youth was regarded as being outside, beyond the local community of Ohafia. The involvement of Ohafia

people in the colonial economy took mainly the form of production and sale of a modest surplus of palm proudce and cocoa, and large scale emigration to cities and other areas for trading and wage employment. The process of economic disarticulation and dependence was thus instituted. By our terminal date, Ohafia society had changed considerably. Important elements of a new culture were introduced or imposed, while some old traditions were suppressed. These had far-reaching consequences for the society. The suppression of warfare, for instance, was not simply a question of discouraging barbarism. It affected the ideological basis of a militarist community which had structured its society

ideally for prosecuting regular offensives and for honouring and rewarding raw courage. The concept of individual achievement died hard, though, and was given expression via education. The division of the adult male society into Dike and Ujo was wiped away and the economic benefits of warfare were eliminated.

The imposition of Native court tended to have a revolutionary import, not just because authoritarianism came into an otherwise democratic society, but also because a radically new concept of justice multiplied the existing number of offences. Human sacrifice and ritual killing of twins, for instance, both of which were rooted in the religion-based indigenous Ohafia society, now became offences. Christianity which was an

entirely new way of life was planted with all its potential for conflict with indigenous culture. Respect for the traditional gods waned, but instinctive deference to indigenous religion continued even among christians. Such strange features as monogamy were also introduced. As a result of all these, change started affecting the old order profoundly. Ohafia response to this integration was large scale emigration to other areas with the consequent introduction of new ideas and new ways of life. The formation of Ohafia Improvement Union, for instance, was a child of contact with the outside world and wider horizon. For a society which had been inward-looking and particularistic, colonialism changed the out-look of Ohafia.

It was, however, the emergence of a new elite that proved to be more revolutionary than anything else. It was almost tantamount to structural

change except that age-based associations still controlled society since power was diffused. But the traditional oligarchy of warriors and title societies were falling into desuetude, starved of new entrants. The ample power in the hands of the new elite greatly compromised the gerontocratic structure of Ohafia society. And once the new elite emerged, change started emanating from local initiative rather than remaining a factor of the external missionary and colonialist. By our terminal date of 1960, therefore, change in Ohafia society had become far-reaching.

In spite of this great change, evidence does not sustain a case of disintegration of indigenous Ohafia society. It required indigenous authority to have been involved in the British administration in the first instance before being 'modernized' and replaced. Incidentally power was so diffused

in Ohafia society that involving the indigenous authority would have been almost tantamount to involving everybody. British achievements in the direction of 'replacing', 'modernizing' or even involving the indigenous authority was, altogether, very miniscule. It was this factor of lack of involvement that enabled the indigenous authority to maintain an independent existence throughout our period. The fact of lack of any outstanding break in the continuity of indigenous authority argues against a case of disintegration of tribal societies. There was no way Ohafia society could have broken down when indigenous systems of social control were always alive and functioning.

The continuity of Ohafia indigenous religion is not subject to doubt at all. The missionaries did nothing to change the numinous landscape of Ohafia except that they built their

churches which stood side by side with the Ogirisi trees representing Kamalu or collections of pots representing Ududu or any other shrine or deity for that matter. Those who resisted christianity, therefore, had ample opportunity to continue practising indigenous religion, though they had come to accept a measure of change especially in relation to practices like human sacrifice. Since the agrarian society of Ohafia was so structured on indigenous religion that planting and harvesting were governed by religious codes, even christians deferred to indigenous religion. Thanks to the failure of christianity or colonialism to completely supplant the indigenous religion, large portions of Ohafia institutions and culture which had religious anchorage to them continued to exist. Ohafia society thus proved to be resilient enough

to accommodate change. Its response to the impact of colonial rule and missionary enterprise was change and continuity.

It would appear that scholars who argue in terms of disintegration of traditional societies as a result of western influence have not fully reckoned with the resilience of these societies. The fact is, as professor Ajayi has said, change was not perculiar to the colonial period; it is the essence of human society. In all the millennia of African history before colonialism, change was going on. Society picks certain features and drops others. This does not destroy its essence. It is in this respect that colonialism has been conceived merely as an episode in African history. The case of disintegration pursued by scholars like Professor Arene implies that the so called traditional societies were closed and had no opportunity to undergo processes of change before the colonial period. Only this erroneous position

can explain why colonialism could have been disruptive to them. In any case, ever empirical observation will confirm that indigenous life is still very luxuriant in many Igbo communities today, inspite of the heavy paraphernalia of modern government. Professor Afigbo is certainly correct in his observation that it is traditional controls rather than merely the army and police that govern the life of many an Igbo man today.

This micro study of Ohafia is a very fragile basis for any comments or conclusions about the impact of colonialism on Igboland, let alone on Africa as a whole. But it is hoped that the work as a whole has sufficiently indicated the need for extreme caution with respect to generalizations to the effect of wholesale transformation of Igbo-land by colonialism.

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Ohafia

Much of the archival material here relate to the Church and the school and are available in the Principals'/Headmasters' Offices and in the manse of the different churches. The most fertile of them all is the archive of the Presbyterian mission in the office of the Headmaster of Ebem Primary School located in the Ebem Presbyterian manse. This is a huge mass of un-catalogued and un-serialised papers and dossiers which accumulated from Presbyterian church and school activities. These are organised in files which frequently have mis-leading titles. It requires a researcher to grop from file to file to glean whatever information is lurking here, and a good deal of information there is especially in relation to the subject and period of this work.

Next in importance is catholic records available in the office of the Principal of Coronata Secondary

School, Ohafia. This is much less varied - relating mainly to Coronata Secondary School - and by far less massive and fertile than its Presbyterian counterpart. Yet it is even more disorganised than the latter. It is a useful source of information especially in relation to the first secondary school in Ohafia. My footnotes have attempted detailed description of the location of any piece of evidence from repositories of this sort in Ohafia.

Oral Evidence

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Chief Anderson Okoko	Rtd. Civil Servant; One time houseboy to Lord Lugard and Walter Egerton.	100+	Ebem	Ndi Okoko Compound, Ebem-Ohafia.	8/11/85
Mr Anthony E. Kalu	Rtd. Headmaster	60	Asaga	Ndi Ezera Compound, Asaga.	12/12/86
Mr. A.K. Iche	Principal of Ututu Boys Sec. Sch.	55	Asaga	Boys Secondary School, Ututu.	November, 1985
Agwu Chika	Ikwan Priest, Farmer	70	Elu	Ndi Imaga Compound, Elu.	19/4/85
Dr E.O. Arua	University Lecturer	46+	Amaekpu	Dept. of Agric. Economics, U.N.N.	
Mr L.A. Chika	Principal, Okamu Sec. Commercial College.	50+	Elu	Okamu Sec. Commercial College, Okon-Ohafia.	Not recorded.
Mr Ibem Olaka	Farmer	90+	Ebem	Ndi Ibem Compound, Ebem	14/4/85

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Chief Egbe K. Ukairo	Rtd. Civil Servant in the Ministry of Education.	70	Asaga	88/89 Ezera Road, Asaga	7/11/85
Ibe Ochea Mmong	Farmer	60+	Akanu	Ndi Ochea de Compound, Akanu.	7/11/85
Mr D.N. Dike	Rtd. Education Officer	70+	Amaekpu	Modern Bookshop, Amaekpu.	
Justice K.O. Anya	Chancellor, University of Benin.	66	Amaekpu	Uzo-Roman, Amaekpu.	17/12/86
Chief Kalu Igwe	Farmer	80+	Ebem	Ndi Inyima Compound, Ebem.	Not recorded.
Kalu Imaga	Farmer	63+	Amaekpu	Afia Uda.	Not recorded.
Iroha Okebulu	Farmer	60+	Ebem	Ndi Ukpola Compound, Ebem	13/4/85

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Mr. N.A. Ndu	Rtd. Civil Servant, One time Secretary of Bende County Council.	70+	Abia		1984
Mrs Mary Aki	Rtd. Civil Servant.	65+	Ebem	Uzo-Ofuru	Informal.
Dr N. Uka	One time Asst. Prof. of Educational Psychology, U.N.N.	60	Akanu		13/12/86
Chief Ngwoke Awa	Rtd. Teacher and One time customary Court member.	80	Amaekpu	103 Arochukwu Road, Amaekpu.	9/11/85
Mr O.O. Olole	Tutor	35	Amuke	Akanu Secondary School, Akanu.	14/12/86
Mr O.C. Agwu	Rtd. Teacher	70+	Asaga	Ndi Chiori Agwu Compound, Asaga.	12/12/86

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Mr O.O. Uguru	Agronomist; One time Provost, Federal College of Education, Kontagora.	66	Okagwe	Nkwebi Road, Okagwe.	4/12/86
Rtd.Cpl. Ogba Uduma	Farmer, One time Colonial Police.	70+	Ebem	257 Aro Rd., Ebem.	8/11/85
Prof. O.U. Kalu	Professor of Religion	45+	Isiugwu	Dept. of Religion, U.N.N.	January, 1985
Mr Okoro Kalu Ume	Farmer	66	Ebem	Arochukwu Rd., Ebem.	Informal.
Chief U. Arunsi	Chief of Ama-Ihe, Elu.	70	Elu	Ama-Ihe, Elu.	21/4/85
Elder U. Ogbaku	One time teacher and Trainee under Rev. R. Collins.	90+	Elu	New Market Rd., Elu.	26/4/85

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Dr Uga Onwuka	Director of Institute of Education, U.N.N.	60	Ebem	Institute of Education, U.N.N.	January, 1985
Uche (Idika)?	Farmer	75	Ebem	Mgbaga, Ebem.	12/4/85
Elder Ukpai Ojiaku	Farmer/Church Activist	70	Ndi Uduma-Awoke		6/5/85
Rev. O. Mbila	Church Minister	70+	Ndi Uduma-Awoke		6/5/85

The following were interviewed collectively at Obunkwa Hall, Elu-Ohafia.

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Uka Dike	Farmer	Elu	Elu		6/4/85
Aru Udensi	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85

NAME	OCCUPATION/OFFICE	AGE	VILLAGE	ADDRESS	INTERVIEW DATE(S)
Imaga Uka	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85
Ebe Uchenwu	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85
Olugu Onwuka	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85
Udonsi Oji	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85
Ndukwe Kalu	Farmer		Elu		6/4/85
Kalu Ikeuwa	Bricklayer		Elu		6/4/85

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APPENDIX I

List of Ohafia Teachers in the Presbyterian Schools Ohfia District in 1963

P.M.B. Ebem Chafia

Ezikpe U. Idika	Ebem
Onwuchekwa K. Ajike	Elu

Presbyterian School, Abia

Uzo Awa (Miss)	Abia
Fijoku Otah	Abia
Samuel Ibe Okoroator	Akanu
Ukpabi O. Ukpabi	Abia
Uche Ijere (Miss)	Akanu
Onum Exiyi	Asagu
Eke Uduma	Udi Uduma Awoke
Nkwoma O. Kalu	Abia
Kalu Kalu Ukaha	Isiugwu
Kalu K. Oyeoku	Ebem

Presbyterian School, Abiriba

Uga K. Iroha	Ebem
Johnson Udo	Ebem
Chijioke K. Iro	Okon
Obuba Onwuka	Amaekpu
Akandu Ochu	Ohafia
Eye Ikpo Kalu	Asaga

Presbyterian School, Akanu

Udo Uchendu	Akanu
Udo Uma	Akanu
Onwuka U. Ezere	Ebem
Ibem Odio	Akanu
Orieke Uguru	Ebem
Ukariwe O. Emea	Akanu
Agwu Oji	Okagwe
Ude Agwu Ude	Akanu
Kalu Onwuka	Ebem
Idika Onwuka	Ebem
Ori Arua Kalu	Ebem
Mba Kalu Oji	Okagwu
Ikpo Anya	Ebem

Presbyterian School Akanu

Oji Okwun Ukpai	Amaekpu
Ugbu Nkuma Ibe	Amaekpu
Comfort O. Agwu (Mrs)	Amaekpu
Uche Kalu Eguonwu	Amaekpu
Kalu Anya Oba	Elu
Mbila Agwu Elebua	Ndi Uduma Awoke
Agwu Uka Uche	Elu
Echeme Anya Chima	Asaga

Presbyterian School Amaogbu Abaw

Bassey James	Abia
Okwara Amogu Onouka	Ebem
Kalu Uka Anuaja	Ebem
Joseph Okorie Ume	Ebem
Nkwo Eme Chukwu	Amaekpu
Kalu K. Onum	Ndi Ibe
Igbejim Okorie Nwoke	Ebem
Ndukwe Amoge	Asaga
Ojo Uka Ojo	Nkwebi
Ibe K. Ume	Okon
Umazi Okereke Mba(Miss)	Amaekpu
Nworiaku Kalu	Akanu
Chukwu Onwuka Chukwu	Ndi Udama Awoke
Aguwa Okala Uduma	Ebem
Nnnedi Umuma Amogu (Miss)	Ebem

Presbyterian School Amuke

Uduma Uma Uduma	Asaga
Kalu Onwuka Kalu	Amuke

Presbyterian School Amuru Abam

Okereke Koma	Okon
Nnachi Kalu Elekra	Amangwu
Eke Okoro Kalu (Miss)	Ebem
Egbeke Aja	Amangwu
Nzie Ebulu Nzie	Asaga
Ibe Ukoha Ogboso	Akanu

Presbyterian School Asaga

Eme Inyima Ulu	Amaekpu
Agbai Kalu Okarazu	Elu
Kalu Idika Olua	Asaga
Inyama Kalu Ike(Miss)	Asaga
Okorie E. Idika	Asaga
Kalu Eke Nkuma	Amaekpu
Ngwobia Uchendu Ajoji	Akanu
Uzo Age (Miss)	Okon
Abali Agwu	Eziafor
Oji Ukoha	Elu
Ori Kalu Mdukwe	Asaga

Presbyterian School Isiugwu

Ojinwa Arunsi (Miss)	Ebem
Agwu Ukaha	Asaga
Okoro U. Dike	Isiugwu
Kalu Okonkwo Okigwe	Ebem

Uka K. Ukpai	Elu
Kalu Okorie Kalu	Ebem
Awoe Kalu Awoe	Ebem
Umazi Kalu Mba	Isiugwu
Kalu Agwu Kalu	Eziafor

Presbyterian School Ndi Elu Kporo

Ibe Agwu Nkwoma	Exiafor
Ukpong Kalu	Asaga
Kalu Uka Uduma	Amaekpu
Kalu Onwuka Uduma	Akanu
Kalu Ole Nkere	Isiugwu
Akuma Akuma Kalu	Amangwu
Kalu Kalu Aguru	Okon
Kalu Ekea Kalu	Ujiele
Awa Kalu Ndukwe	Isiugwu
Uduma Kalu	Amaekpu
Kalu Elekwa	Ndi Udumo Awoke
Onwuka Esowe	Amangwu
Afor Okereke	Okon
Awa Elekwa	Ndi Udumo Awoke
Ijekwe K. Onwuchekwa	Ebem

Presbyterian School of Ndi Uduma Awoke

Obaji Eke	Amaekpu
Eme Ogumba	Ambele
Mba Uduma	Akanu

Kalu Exiyi Chukwu	Ndi Uduma Awoke
Ukoha Okorie Kalu Ibem	Ebem
Kalu Udensi Mba	Elu
Ucha Oyom Uduma	Ebem
Ikpo Ukoha	Ndi Uduma Awoke
Kalu Eke Kogo	Onon
Usim Kalu Ume	Nkwebi
Orieji Kalu Udensi	Elu

Presbyterian Central School Chafia

Uwa Kalu Uma	Elu
Ukoha Kalu Ukoha	Ebem
Ije Kalu Uduma	Ebem
Uma Udensi Mba	Elu
Uche Akwu Uche	Ebem
Okon Abai Olugu	Elu
Ukpai Ngwobia	Ebem
Uwoma Kalu	Elu
Okwara Okowa Eke	Amaekpu
Ikeogu Imo	Akanu
Chinyere Udo Kalu Agwu	Akanu
Anya Oke Ntima	Elu
Okoro Kalu Okoro	Ebem

Presbyterian Girls School, Ohafia

Chukwu Emeka Kalu	Elu
Nkwo Ndukwe Udo	Okagwe
Oma Nnaochin Ebi	Amaekpu
Oma Mba Ubuka	Ebem
Uwa Ume Olugu	Ebem
Mba Ezema	Amaekpu
Kalu Aki	Amaekpu

Presbyterian School Okagwe

Oyidiya Igwe Ukoha	Okagwe
Emmanuel Okpan Ibe	Okagwe
Eje Uma	Ebem
Agwu Okpan Agwu	Eziafor
Anuaja Awa Awucha	Ebem
Oji Kalu Oji	Okagwe
Inyang Ume	Okagwe
Agwu Kalu	Ebem
Kalu Okwara Mba	Amaekpu
Ume Arua Kalu	Ebem
Ota Okoro Kalu	Okagwe

Presbyterian School Okon

Ucha Kalu Inyang	Okon
Obasi Oke Obasi	Okon
Imo Onuoha Okali	Okagwe
Chori Ezera	Asaga

Ogba Uma	Ebem
Eye Ikpo Kalu	Asaga
Kalu Ndukwe Dimgba	Okon
Kalu Okorie	Okon
Olugu Elebua	Asaga
Onwuka Ndukwe Njoku	Okon
Ulu Kalu Ulu	Akanu

Source: Presbyterian Records office at the Manse, Ebem Ohafia.

Appendix 2

List of Ohafia Villages

Abia

Akanu

Amaekpu

Amangwu

Amuke

Amuma

Asaga

Ebem

Elu

Eziafo

Ihenta

Isiugwu

Ndi Anku

Ndi Anyaorie

Ndi Amogu

Ndi Ibe

Ndi Okala

Ndi Orieke

Ndi Uduma Awoke

Ndi Uduma Ukwu

Nkwebi

Okagwe

Okon

Oboro

Ufiele