

THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONS OF CITY WALLS
IN THE SAVANNA BELT OF THE NIGERIAN AREA

BY
BALA ACHI

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Achi Billyok.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that it is the record of my own research work. It has not been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations are distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information are specifically acknowledged by means of references.

NAME: Bala Achi

SIGNATURE: Bala Achi

DATE: 25th July, 1985.

A E S T R A G T

The purpose of this dissertation is to trace the development and discuss the major functions which city walls performed in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area from (1100 A.D, to 1503 A.D.) During this period, the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area witnessed the development of many cities and the construction of city walls. This made such walled settlements quite prominent in the history of the Nigerian area. This development coincided with the period when such settlements were undergoing significant demographic, economic, political and religious changes. Despite these, obscurity still shrouds much of the history of these walled settlements. The construction of the walls, materials used, the building techniques and the changes in the sizes and shapes of the walls which reflected changes in population, technology and culture of the society of the Savanna region, have hardly been studied.

It is suggested in this work that the consolidation of the power of the Sarki, the evolution of the city and the construction of the city walls are positively related to the developmental process. The increase in the power of the Sarki was shown by the extent and elaborateness of the walls of his city and towns. Thus, cities that grew to become state capitals with extensive trading networks, stratified social classes with communitarian values in labor relations and relatively advanced technology, built very extensive, high and thick walls. The size and nature of the walls built are a reflection of the power of the Sarki, the functions they were meant to serve, the nature and extent of the society's technology, its values, beliefs and of its geographical environment. In most cases, the walls served defensive,

economic, political and religious functions. Attainment of security made possible by the walls enabled the walled cities, to expand at the expense of relatively weaker areas. This political expansion increased the power of the Sarki and the economic base of the city through booty, enslavement and the attraction of skilled craftsmen from relatively unstable areas.

The work is limited to the Savanna belt, an area of open vegetation, relatively enabling easy inter-communication and contact between societies. Although the study focuses more on Kano, Zaria and Oyo-Ile, I have drawn upon data that are related to other city walls, stockades and Manorial Castles both in Africa, Europe and Asia because their development and functions had a number of similarities. The development and functions of city walls in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian Area cannot be understood in their true perspective without a proper study of the emergence and the consolidation of the power of the ~~Sj3E~~^{Sarki}, sources of wealth and of labour of the city and the types of relationships which existed between the city and the peripheral towns and villages. It is suggested that the emergence of the Sarki and the consolidation of his power, helped to tilt the balance between the rural areas and the political centres in favour of the latter. This went hand in hand with the construction of the walls, territorial expansion by the political centres and the emergence of states with the walled cities acting as the states' capitals. This prominent role of some of the walled cities continued up to 1903 when the British forces shelled the walls and shifted the centre of power from the walled city to the newly created towns.

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ZARIA

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P R E F A C E

This thesis deals with the military history of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area, especially the development and functions of the city walls. In the study, attempt was made to trace the factors responsible for the development of the city walls and the functions they performed over time. It examines the factors responsible for the prominence of the walled cities in the history of the Nigerian Savanna belt and how this development eventually led to the rise and development of long, enduring states from the 15th century to 1804 A.D. when the Sokoto Jihad merged these states together into the Sokoto Caliphate.

Though the study centres on the military history of the Savanna cities, yet it is revealed that the prominent roles played by the Savanna cities was mainly a combination of factors ranging from political, religious, economic and military.

In approaching the study, the analysis is in three stages. The first three chapters form the first stage and they concern themselves with a general survey of the geographical, economic, religious, political and military factors responsible for the evolution of the Savanna Cities and of their walls.

The focus from chapters four to six is on the analysis in historical depth of three cases of pre-colonial Savanna city walls. It looks into their processes of urban growth, the construction of their walls, structure of the walls, technology employed and the functions of these walls over the years.

The third stage which forms the last chapter is the Conclusion

The findings have shown that cities evolved at different times in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. In all, mud was the chief building material, though, stones were sometimes preferred. It is found that the functions of the city walls changed through time and these were closely related to the socio-economic base, military and political needs of the various societies.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. B. U.	- Ahmadu Bello University
B.S.O.A.S.	- Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
C.N.C.S.	- Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies.
C.U.P.	- Cambridge University Press
I.F.A.N.	- Institut Francais de l'Afrique Noire.
I.U.P.	- Ibadan University Press
J.A.H.	- Journal of African History
J.H.S.N.	- Journal of the History Society of Nigeria.
K.C.	- Kano Chronicle
N.A.K.	- National Archives Kaduna
N.N.P.C.	- Northern Nigerian Publishing Company.
N.D.	- No Date
O.U.P.	- Oxford University Press
P/p	- Page
Pl.	- Plural
S/sing	- Singular
S.N.P.	- Secretariat Northern Provinces
S.O.A.S.	- School of Oriental and African Studies.
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organi- zation.
Vol.	- Volume
ZAP	- Zaria Archaeology Papers

A GLOSSARY OF NON-ENGLISH TERMS

Singular (S)	Plural (P)
Adda	- Matchet
Adugbo	- Compound
Afin	- Palace
Agbo-Ile	- Flock of houses
Ajele	- Chief of conquered town
Alafin	- Chief of Palace
Alkali	- Judge
Are-Ona Kakanfo	- Commandant of the army
Azara	- Palm tree split into parts used for roofing.
Badala	- Battlement
Bakan Borno	- Representative of the Mai of Borno stationed in tributary states
Bale	- Head of compound
B _a naga	- Slave leader of pathfinders
Barandami	- Fighting Knife
Barde	- Commander of heavy cavalry
Birni (s)	- Walled city
Birane (p)	
Bori	- Magic
Dagachi	- Village head
Dawakin Zagge	- Cavalry force used as reserve in battle
Dimajai	- Children born into slavery
Dogari (s)	Local Administrative Police
Dogarai (s)	
Edi-eleru	- King's wall
Elese	- Foot soldiers
Elesin	- Horsemen

Eni-oja	- Chief of Market
Esos	- Slave officials next to Oyomesi
Fada	- Palace
Fadama (s)	- Marshy area used for cultivation.
Galadiman kira	- A title of an official of the blacksmith's administration.
Galma	- Large bladed hoe
Gandu (s)	- Large agricultural estate
Gandaye (p)	
Ganuwa	- Mud wall
Garena	- Import duty
Gari (s)	- Walled town
Garuruwa(p)	
Garkuwa	- Shield
Gatari(s)	- Axe
Gatura (p)	
Gayya	- Communal labour
Gida (s)	- Household
Gidaje (p)	
Gwalgwal	- Deep ditch containing water
Idile	- Lineage
Ilari	- Gate keeper
Ile-Mele	- Chief Mason
Iskoki(p)	- Spirits
Iska (s)	
Iwefa	- Eunuch
Iwofa	- Labour provided as debt payment
Iya	- Mother of the King
Jarumi (s)	- Knight, braveman
Jarumai (p)	

Kafi	- Stockade
Kaguwa	- Leather shield
Kansakali	- Sword
Kasar Dawakai	- Land of horses
Kauyuka (p)	- Villages
Kauye (s)	
Kibawu (p)	- Arrow heads
Kibiya (s)	
Kudin fito	- Fishing toll
Kufin K _a rofi	- Dye tax
Kunkeli	- Small round shield.
Kurada	- A small axe
Kusoshi (p)	- Nails
Kusa (s)	
Kuyambana	- Cavalry Commander
Kwalkwali	- Helmet
Kyaure (s)	- Plates of metal rivetted together to form iron doors
L _a so	- Cement for sealing roofs and dye pits
Lauje	- Sickle
Lifidi	- protective quilting for cavalry
M _a daki	- An administrative title
Madawaki	- Commander in chief of the army and of its cavalry.
Magauda	- Carved Axe.
Magajiya	- Priestess
Magayaki	- Leader of reconnaissance force
Maigida	- Household head
Mai anguwa	- Ward head
Masu (p)	- Spears

Mashi(s)	-
Masu Bori	- Owners of Bori Cult.
Ona Iwefa	- Eunuch In charge of Judicial Matters
Osi Iwefa	- Eunuch in charge of administrative affairs
Otun Iwefa	- Eunuch in charge of religious affairs
Oyo-mesi	- Council of chiefs
Rangongon	- Magic
Ribat	- Walled stronghold
Sana'a	- Craft
Sango	- god of thunder
Sangwami	- Digging axe
Salka	- Water bag
Sarakuna (p)	- Kings
Sarki (s)	
Sarkakiya	- Thicket
Shamaki	- Official in charge of Emir's stables.
Shamakin gini	- Official title of Mason's administration
Sulke	- Chain armour suit
Takuba (p)	- Double edged-swords
Takobi (s)	
Tama	- Iron ore
Tambari	- Drum
Tammami	- Long curving sword
Tausa	- Voluntary contribution
Tubali	- Sun-dried bricks
Ubandawaki	- Head of cavalry
Unguwoni (p)	- Wards
Unguwa (s)	

Uwar dawa	- goddess of corn
Uwar gona	- goddess of agriculture
Wanzamai (p)	- Barbers
Wanzami (s)	
Wukake (p)	- Knives
Wuka (s)	
Yan bada gari	- Traitors
Yan bori	- Bori initiates
Yan tauri	- People believed to be unaffected by weapons of metal
Zabira	- Food bag
Zanna	- Fence made of reeds.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The practice of walling settlements is widespread and has a long tradition in the Nigerian Savanna area. This development has however, received little attention from historians. Most of the writings on these walls have been done either by linguists or archaeologists. Among the non-historians who have written on some of the city walls of the Nigerian Savanna are H.L.B. Moody, a linguist who wrote on the Kano City walls. J.E.G. Sutton, an archaeologist, wrote on the Zaria walls. R.C.C. Soper, another archaeologist has written on the walls of Oyo-Ile.

Most of these studies have concentrated on city walls. They have tended to look at the development of cities and city walls in pre-colonial Nigerian Savanna belt from the existing and larger walls without consideration for the simple and sometimes, abandoned walled or stockaded settlements. They have failed to look into the factors that aided the development of urban centres in certain areas and how this led to the construction of walls, their expansion to cope with increasing population and modifications over time. It is also impossible to study the Savanna walls satisfactorily without knowing about the technology, values and belief systems of the peoples who surveyed, designed and built the walls and their various functions through time.

Since the earlier studies have not taken these issues into consideration, they have made many wrong conclusions about pre-colonial Nigerian Savanna walls. In the first place, it often leads to the conclusion that small village walls are recent and therefore, insignificant compared to the large city walls. This evolutionary trend is often taken to exemplify the history of the evolution and development of city walls in the Nigerian Savanna belt.

Secondly, it leads to the assertion that these complex mud wall structures must have been introduced into West Africa together with iron smelting from some "more advance civilizations" from across the Sahara.¹ Thirdly, it conceals much of African architectural genius. This architectural genius could be seen in the effective exploitation of available building materials to build durable walls which they could maintain themselves.

Cities which are equated with the present sizes of their walls may not tell us much about their origins, for in most cases, the walls were not contemporaneous with the settlements such that, the origins of the settlements cannot be equated with the building of the walls.² The present Nigerian cities did not start off as cities but gradually grew from small settlements into large settlements. The fact that most of these earlier settlements were sited near hills indicates their small beginnings since not many people could be accommodated on hills tops. The continuous growth and development of the hilled settlements led to the erection of larger walls

1. Moughtin J., "The Friday Mosque, Zaria City" *Savanna* Vol, I No. I, 1972 pp. 143 - 166.

2. Bala C.D., The Later Archaeology of Zaria Region with Special Attention to the Inselbergs. M.A. Thesis (Archaeology) University of Legon, Ghana, 1977 p.74.

that enclosed more land to accomodate the whole population.³ Kano for example, had to annex lands to the south and South-West of Dalla hill and extended the walls twice indicating her periods of territorial expansion. The first expansion was during the reign of the famous Muhammadu Runfa in the 15th Century and the second expansion was during the time of Muhammadu Zaki in the 16th century.⁴ Zaria on the other hand, started from the simple and small Madarkaci and Kufena walls but with increase in the power of the Sarki and consequent expansion of Zaria, she was forced to build newer and larger walls of Amina and the present Zaria walls. To focus our attention only on the present walls as regards to their sizes and structure will be misleading.

Contrary to the view that the practice of mud architecture in the Nigerian Savanna area was introduced from outside, it depicts the ancient glory and wisdom of the Savanna peoples. It was the changing needs of society as would be made clear later, that compelled them not only to build the walls, but also to modify them over time using new building materials and new building techniques. The constructional techniques employed in building the walls was mainly adapted

3. Achi B, "Military Technology, Population Growth and City Walls: The Case of Kano C1200 - 1625 A.D." Departmental Seminar, Department of History, A.B.U., Zaria February 1983 pp. 1-20.

4. Sa'ad H.T., "Hausa Traditional Architecture in a Historical Perspective", Paper presented at the International Seminar on Hausa Studies, University of Sokoto, Sokoto, October, 1983 p. 6.

from the techniques used in constructing their mud houses.

The fact that this constructional technique is indigenous to the peoples of the Nigerian Savanna is shown in the names of the structures erected. The name Ganuwa and Kafi by which the mud walls and stockades are known in Hausaland, do not sound foreign in origin. These names conceal the descriptive significance of the structures. The names of some of the city gates are indications of their antiquity and the particular functions they performed for their societies. It is not disputed that there was foreign influence in the wall architecture of some of the Nigerian Savanna City walls, but that this was long after the establishment of many of the walled settlements. In Kano area for example, Santolo, Sheme Gano and Dalla were very important walled settlements long before C1350 A.D.⁵ In Zaria, the walls of Karigi, Kufena and Madarkaci most probably date back to C1300 A.D.⁶ Though the revolt against the Habe rulers by the Jihadists in Hausaland in the 19th century could have influenced Hausa wall architecture,⁷ as could have been seen in the Ribat system⁷ yet, the pre-19th century walls were

5. Palmer H.R., "The Kano Chronicle" in Sudanese Memoirs 3 volumes in I, London, 1928 pp.25-26. Also during a personal communication with P.J. Darling, Kano, January 1984.
6. Sutton J.B.G., "Population Estimates from Selected African Iron Age Sites". African Historical Demography. Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh 1981 p. 640.
7. Hiskett M. "Kitab al-Farq; A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to Uthman dan Fodio" BSOAS 23, 3 (London 1960) p.570.

mainly a culmination of a long process of architectural development so as to meet internal needs. If the wall architecture of the Nigerian Savanna were completely alien to the social , cultural and environmental conditions of the peoples of the area, these would not have stood the test of time nor would they have performed the important functions they did.

In this study, while emphasis is laid on the city walls and on defense as a major function of these walls, attempt is also made to understand the evolution of settlements in the Nigerian Savanna and the relationships that existed between cities and their rural hinterland. The emergence of Kingship and its role in the expansion of the city and the construction and annual maintenance of the walls is also looked into. This, it is hoped, will enable us to see the variety of walled or stockaded settlements in the Nigerian Savanna belt and their development over time. Some of these walled settlements like Sheme, Gano, Santolo, Kwiambana, Surame and Oyo-Ile have since been abandoned. Others like Zaria, Kano, Katsina, and Daura have continuously been occupied. For a proper understanding of the evolution of the Savanna cities and the development of city walls, it is important to take a look at the basic characteristics of a city and what makes it different from the town and village.

I THE CONCEPT OF CITY

The concept of city is difficult to define because an accurate line showing where the town or village leaves off and where the city begins cannot be easily drawn. This is made more difficult by the fact that the process of the transition from one to the other differs from one area to another. One cannot say precisely when settlements were villages and the exact time they evolved into towns and cities. The concept of city, therefore, changes in its meaning from time to time and from one place to another.

In dealing with this problem, one characteristic of a city often used by writers is population density: that is, cities have higher population concentration than towns and villages. Some writers have fixed the population aggregate for distinguishing between a village and a city to be between 1,000 and 5,000 people.⁸ It is true that the concentration of population in a relatively small area can bring new ideas and discoveries. They can, when faced with external threats, concentrate economic and technical skills and build protective fortifications. They can also establish an army and colonise other relatively weaker groups. But a city cannot be defined solely in terms of number, for population alone cannot turn a village into a city. If the figure 5,000 people per square mile can represent a city, this then means that any isolated

8. Larson O, "Rural Society" International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences Vol. 13 (New York, 1968) pp 580 - 588.

built-up area with that population constitutes a city. There are however cases in which numerically large settlements are villages lacking in city characteristics. Others also exist which are numerically small but are cities, having such city characteristics like advanced technology, diversified economy, centralised administration and city wall. Nupe country is often regarded as an area of low population density due to slave raids and wars. But in the 19th century, Clapperton recorded that in Koolfu town there were between 12,000 to 15,000 people, while in Tabra, there were between 18,000 to 20,000 people.⁹ Yet, none of these towns was ever classified as a city because of their low level of technology, absence of city walls and of a variety of specialised services.

Broad statistical analysis cannot therefore be used as an objective criterion for differentiating between city, town and village. This will not enable us to know the specific character of settlements in different areas of the Nigerian Savanna, nor can it tell us the fundamental qualities and varieties of cities. Some places are called cities for reasons that have nothing to do with population. It is therefore not impossible for cities to have developed in areas with low population densities. The word 'city' in the context of the history of Hausaland derives from the

9. Clapperton H, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Socatto* (London, 1829) p. 128.

word 'birni', Probably, of Kanuri origin which means 'walled town'. It is mainly the mud wall and not population size or diversity of occupations that was used to classify an area as city. Later, when many areas began to build the wall round their settlements, other criteria like diversity of occupations and centralised administration were used in distinguishing a city.

To the sociologists, size and heterogeneity are the basic traits that distinguish a city from the town and village.¹⁰ That is, because cities attract people from a variety of backgrounds, this makes them larger and heterogeneous settlements. Mere increase in size may not however, necessarily imply technological or economic advancement beyond the level of village farming community. If the term 'size' is taken to mean the size of the built up area and of its population, then it is very difficult to estimate the sizes of most pre-colonial Nigerian Savanna cities. There were cities without walls. There were also other cities whose populations could have spilled over their walls, thereby, making the walled area an inaccurate reflection of

10. Sjoberg G., "The Rise and Fall of Cities: A Theoretical Perspective" in Gerald Breese (edited) The City in Newly Developing Countries. Readings on Urbanism and Urbanization. Eaglewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Prentice Hall (U.S.A. 1966) p. 220. See also R.M. Adams, "The Origin of Cities" in C.C. Lamberg - Karlovsky, (edited) Hunters, Farmers and Civilizations. Old World Archaeology, Freeman and Company, (San Francisco 1979) pp. 171 - 177.

city size. For example, in Kano by the 15th century, the walled area could not accommodate the whole of the city's population. Many people were compelled to live outside the wall in such places like Dorayi, Zango and Madabo.¹¹ It was the extensions made on the wall in the 15th and 16th centuries by Muhammadu Rumfa (C1463-99) and Muhammadu Zaki (C1582-1618) that enabled these settlements to be incorporated into the walled area.¹² There can be no fixed size which an area must attain before it is regarded as a city. For cities differ in size at different periods of their historical development. Thus, the size of the city is relative and it is not a necessary criterion for the classification of an area as a city or town. In Hausaland, the size of the city was simply the area enclosed by the walls no matter how big or small.

People like Childe hold the view that the art of writing is an essential element in the categorization of a city. To Childe, the presence of writing indicates that a non-agricultural class has emerged and has the leisure to develop the art of writing which forms the core of civilization

11. Recorded interview with Alhaji MUHAMMADU SANI (AMS) Madakin Gini, Kano 27th January 1984. Though this information sound suspicious, it is however supported by the map of 13th century Kano in Figure I chapter four where these settlements are sited outside the wall.

12. Frishman A, "The Population Growth of Kano, Nigeria" African Historical Demography. Proceedings of a Seminar Held in the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, (Edinburgh 1977) pp. 212 - 218.

with which cities are associated.¹³ This means that there can be no city without the art of writing. In a largely agrarian society like that of pre-colonial Savanna area of Nigeria, the spread of literacy among such peasant class would not have necessarily helped to improve their techniques of production, nor agricultural production, which are indexes of socio-economic development. If functional literacy means "the ability to read and write word symbols at a level of competence adequate for carrying out the individual's functions in his social system,"¹⁴ then, the significant role of literacy in the evolution of cities holds true only to a limited level. Literacy can only create a major transformation in social order and more rigorous systems of thought when it is mass and functional literacy and not confined to a leisured elite. Sheer achievement of literacy is clearly not a pre-requisite to the development of any society to an urban conglomerate. The basic questions one has to ask regarding the role of literacy in the transformation of an area into a city must include, what kind of literacy does the society acquire, what level and in what quantity.

It is also true that cities are not present in all literate societies, nor is a literate bureaucracy to be found in all cities. In the Nigerian Savanna, large and enduring

13. Childe G.V., "Civilization, Cities and Towns" Antiquity 31, 1957 pp. 36 - 38.

14. Rogers E.M. with Lynne Svenning, Modernization Among Peasants: The Impact of Communication Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, (New York 1969) p. 92.

political systems were built dating back to the 11th century A.D. without the use of a literate bureaucracy.¹⁵ This does not mean that such centres were not cities till the emergence of a literate class. A literate class therefore, is not essential in the evolution of cities. Oral transmissions by various specialists in the Nigerian Savanna made the area capable of maintaining technological skills and social organization of pre-literate urban life. This made such skills to persist despite the absence of literate elite, leading to the evolution of cities.

With the firm establishment of the Savanna cities, various specialists migrated into such centres. Groups of specialists like leather and bead workers, blacksmiths, weavers, smelters and builders, moved into the cities where their goods and services were most patronised. It was therefore these groups of professionals who thought, planned and created the luxury items which went to satisfy the high tastes of the ruling class.¹⁶ The economic specialization of these professionals sustained the cities and helped in creating towns and rural hinterland. The technological change and economic advancement brought about by the specialists contributed to the evolution of the Savanna cities.

15. Smith A, "The Early States of the Central Sudan" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder (edited) History of West Africa Vol. I Longmans (London 1971) pp. 38 - 56. See also T. Hodgkins, Nigerian Perspectives. An Historical Anthology (2nd edition) OUP, (London 1975) pp 23-24.

16. Childe G.V., "The Urban Revolution" in Walton and D.E. Carns, Cities in Change, Studies in the Urban Condition (Boston, 1977) pp 12-18.

The pre-colonial Savanna cities could therefore be distinguished from their towns and villages mainly in terms of the wall and the functions the centre performed. The morphology of the city also differed from that of the town or village. The walls surrounding the cities helped the inhabitants to interact freely since the inhabitants constituted a community brought together by common needs, especially, the need for security. The city therefore was a centre for the integration of various groups of people. In Kano for example, Adarawa, Arawa, Arabs, Yoruba, Nufawa, Fulani, Kanembu, Bornawa and many other groups were highly integrated into the social life of the city to the extent that they became part and parcel of the Kanawa. Though different peoples lived in different wards according to their occupations, yet this was no basis for the discrimination of any group of people as discrimination based on place of origin or religion was ruled out. This occupational division encouraged interdependence between the different wards in the city. In some cases, this settlement pattern is an indication of city planning. This planning is evidenced in the location of, for example, the palace, market place and central mosque in the prominent parts of the city. The morphology of the Savanna cities was a reflection of the social stratification in the societies.¹⁷ Through this organization, it was easy for the Sarki to coordinate the activities of the various specialists in the city. The functional complementarity and interdependence between the various wards in the city and between the city and the rural areas, linked the rural hinterland in a subservient position

17. Ibid, pp. 12 - 18

to the cities. This led to the exploitation of the latter by the former. Thus, the present alienation of the rural areas of Nigeria from the political economy of the cities has a long tradition, traceable to the evolution of cities. This dependence on and exploitation of the rural areas by the cities for the supply of food and raw materials, and as consumers of their goods and services, can be seen in the relationship between the rise and fall of cities and the rise and fall of the rural dependencies. The collapse of the political power of the city often eliminated the economic base which supported the large non-agricultural city population.¹⁸ The fall of Oyo-Ile in 1836 for example, led to the total collapse and disintegration of such peripheral dependencies of Oyo-Ile like Diogun, Kusu, Ijanna, Igboho and Molete.¹⁹ In 1715, the collapse of Surame led to the abandonment of such areas like Gungu, Gonde and Inname which were previously linked to Kabi.²⁰

The terms 'city', 'town' and 'village' are therefore units of settlements which differ mainly in their complexity

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18. Netting R.M., Ecosystems in Process: A Comparative Study of Change in Two West African Societies in D. Damas (eds). Contributions to Anthropological Essays National Museums of Canada Bulletin (Boston 1977) pp. 109-110.
 19. Law R., The Oyo Empire 1600-1836. A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade OUP, (London 1977) pp. 8-26. See also H. Clapperton, op. cit., pp. 86-87.
 20. Manuga M., Surame, 1515-1715: The History of a Hausa Capital. History Department Research Essay. A.T.C. Zaria June, 1984 pp. 12-18.

of organization distinguishable by the power of their kings and the size of their walls. In the city, land and labour were very important for its existence and continued development. This is partly why some of the Savanna cities were located in areas with extensive fertile lands, areas with substantial deposits of iron ore or in areas with charcoal-making trees for smelting. This area had to be jealously guarded. There was also the need to protect the labour force needed for production. Hence, the construction of the wall or the stockade. The security the wall afforded the city inhabitants helped to draw other peoples into the walled settlements, especially, rural populations that could not build walls for protection.²¹ The walls therefore represent collective will for defence due to the sensitive awareness of the misery of war. Whether a city was the victor or vanquished, it still had to defend itself. This does not mean that the Nigerian Savannan societies were inherently militaristic people. Though they admired martial powers, it was not the only desirable quality. It was only necessity that forced them to mould themselves on militaristic lines and to give military affairs their studious attention. Thus while the control of labour was important in the construction of the wall and production, control of land was equally important in production of food and technology of a society. The fact that the city controlled both its land and labour and those of the villages and towns under it made the continued development of these satellite areas almost impossible.

21. Trigger B., "Determinants of Urban Growth in Pre-Industrial Societies" in Peter J. Ucko (eds) Man, Settlement and Urbanism. Gerald Duckworth and Company Limited, (London 1972) P. 980.

In the Nigerian Savanna, there existed different types of walls. These ranged from village town to city walls. Each had its own officials with different roles, power and limitations in the building craft. In this study attention will be focussed on the city wall which was the stronghold of the political class that controlled the productive activities of both the city and peripheral towns and villages. This is to enable us understand in depth the reasons behind the large size of the city wall, the labour force and of its continued modifications over time.

II. CONSTRUCTION OF CITY WALLS.

City walls were constructed by well-organized societies that could mobilize enough manpower to undertake such a demanding task. This was so because most of the work from the beginning to the end was manual and the mass of materials employed needed much handwork. The size and elaborateness of the wall therefore depended on the size of the population under the control of the King and his power to mobilize these all over his kingdom for the work. Force sometimes had to be employed by the Sarki to mobilize labour for the construction and maintenance of the Savanna city walls.²² In Zaria for example, by the 18th century, it was not only people of nearby villages that were required to participate

22. Most of my informants in Kano and Zaria unanimously agreed that since the construction and maintenance of the walls was in the dry season, most people were unwilling to take part in it because they preferred to travel to far away places to seek for part-time jobs. Hence the use of force in the 19th century.

in the building programme, but also some of the peoples from the area now known as Southern Zaria were raided and captured to provide labour for the construction of the Zaria walls.²³ The use of force to obtain enough hands for the wall construction was a later development with the consolidation of the power of the Sarki. This was necessary, especially from the 16th century as in the case of Kano, due to the large size of the wall and the speed with which the building programme was undertaken. In most times, the walls were built by all members of society. Toward this end, skilled builders were organised into an occupational guild with a hierarchy of officials. It was these officials that mobilized the needed labour for the construction and annual maintenance of the walls.

Other occupational guilds related to the wall construction were also employed. The blacksmiths were required to manufacture such tools used in digging the earth like galma and Sangwami. Others manufactured iron doors (Kyauraye) and locks used to close the city gates. Wood carvers also carved drums used in mobilizing labour and entertaining the workers at the building site. This social stratification enabled the peoples of the Nigerian Savanna to become adept at devising suitable building techniques and materials.

23. Recorded interview with IBRAHIM BAGUDU (IB) Madauchin Zazzau. Zaria 10th June, 1983.

Some people hold the opinion that the walls of Kano were uniform because they were built by the same group of slaves.²⁴ The walls were not just built by slave labour as we have seen. It is not also true that the Kano walls were uniform. While all the gates in the southern and western portions of the wall were, by the 16th century, built in a re-entrant angle to aid defence, some of those in the northern and eastern sections were not. In the late 19th century, Damagaram in what is today Niger Republic, posed great security problems to Kano. The people of Damagaram raided Kano. This compelled the people of Kano city to effect great changes in the northern and eastern gates where the attacks were severe.²⁵ These modifications included thickening the wall, widening the ditches and provision of more informants and security guard who kept vigil at the gates.

Another factor that helped to determine the non-uniformity of the Savanna city walls was that various people with varying building skills were assigned different sections of the same wall to build. Moreover, the topography helped in determining the alignment of the walls. They were built according to the way the ground, hills and rivers would lend themselves for defence.

24. Larymore C., A Resident's Wife in Nigeria Routledge, (London 1908) p.77

25. Dunbar R.A., Damagaram (Zinder, Niger) 1812 - 1906: The History of a Central Sudanic Kingdom. Ph. D. Thesis, University California (California, 1970)p.22.

Materials for the wall construction differed from one area to another and from time to time. The important determining factor for the material used was the availability of the material. In some areas like Surame, stones were used throughout in the construction of the wall.²⁶ In Zaria, Kano and Oyo-Ile, the early walls were built of mud. Later, the peoples realised the short durability of mud and began to employ relatively durable materials like sun-dried bricks and boulders.²⁷ These materials enabled the builders to increase the height and thickness of the wall. The wall was tapered upwards and thickened at the base. This building technique helped in upsetting the structural weakness of the mud work. It also enabled the fortifications to withstand the breach action of invaders.

Water for the construction was obtained from the streams that took their sources from the hills where most of the cities were located. Sometimes, the water was from the deep and wide moats from which the earth used in building the walls was extracted. In the dry season when some of these sources of water dried up, deep wells were sunk.

26. Manuga M, Op. cit., pp. 15-18.

27. The use of durable materials led to the preservation of certain gates today. Kofar Bai and Kofar Gayan in Zaria where sun-dried bricks and stones were used are fairly preserved today. See S.K. McIntosh and R.J. McIntosh, "Finding West Africa's Oldest City" National Geographics Vol. 162 No. 3 September, 1982 pp. 396-418.

The circumference of the wall was never static. Walls were gradually expanded to cope with the changing demands of the society. At times, this expansion was to enclose rich farmlands or areas of mineral deposits. At other places, the expansion was necessitated at particular critical historical periods to accomodate more people. The six concentric walls of Oyo-Ile which enclosed an area of sixteen kilometres exemplify this.²⁸ The walls performed defensive functions and were employed for safe cultivation of food crops. In terms of defence, the innermost wall and the outmost walls mostly performed this role. At the outermost wall, gates were built along the main lines of communication between Oyo-Ile and outside towns. Gate keepers controlled informants that gave early warning of the approach of hostile forces as well as sentinels that patrolled the wall itself.²⁹ The defence management of the entrances could also be seen in the way vigilant look-outs were provided on the outer wall.³⁰ In Kano, the 15th and 16th centuries extensions were aimed at enclosing rich agricultural land and to provide space to cater for yearly immigrants, rural refugees and captured slaves.³¹ Zaria in the 15th century was forced to build the

28. Olubode M.A., City Walls and Embankments in the Savanna and Forest Areas of Nigeria. B.A. Archaeology Project, Department of Archaeology, University of Ibadan, June, 1979 pp. 13-16.

29. Ibid pp. 15-17.

30. Ibid, p. 17.

31. Frishman A., op. cit. pp. 212-218.

Amina and Zaria City walls which were different from and larger than the earlier ones.³² It is not clear whether the large concentric walls of Zaria bore any close relationship to the actual population size of the city at this time. The constructions were most likely, a true reflection of the population size of Zaria for no state could afford to build a capital that she could not easily defend nor maintain.

The constructional techniques of these walls differed from one area to another. Some were near perfect circles. The walls of Madarkachi, Kufena and the 12th century wall of Dalla took this pattern. Others were fairly rectangular. These included the Kona wall and that of Surame. These structural differences were due to differences in traditional prejudices of the builders and the methods and materials of construction which were conditioned by local geography.

The pre-colonial cities of the Nigerian Savanna thus emerged as a result of factors ranging from the emergence and consolidation of the power of the Sarakuna, the wars of expansion and of consolidation, the development of agriculture and the effective control of the inhabitants of the cities by a centralised bureaucracy. The consolidation of the power of the Sarki and territorial expansion went hand in hand with the

32. See for example, R.A. Adeleye, Hausaland and Borno, 1600-1800" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder, op. cit. p. 490;

construction of the mud city walls.³³ As a result, larger resources were diverted to building, expanding and modifying city walls on yearly basis. The wall served as a barrier against enemy penetration. Cavalry men lost mobility once they climbed down the horse to fight walled cities. The wall therefore symbolised the application of society's imagination and ingenuity to the specific military, political and economic situations. Wall building became a science where materials for its construction were consciously chosen and building methods were tactically devised and adapted to the type of topography and the type of the enemy. The wall marked the relative security of the city and hence, its (city's) economic prosperity. This is why the evolution of the Savanna walls and the development of the cities was closely related to the evolution of political states. Because most of the rural areas could not protect their subjects against invasion, they could not engender in them any real patriotism or national pride. The city on the other hand, could extend its security functions to the totality of its human interests. This military accomplishment brought popular national pride and tended to consolidate these cities into states. The emergence of the city was therefore an important stage in the evolution of the state.

33. Achi B., "Hausa Traditional Architecture: The Wallsoof Kano and Zaria" Paper presented at the Seminar on African Art in Historical Perspective. University of Lagos, Akoka 11th - 15th December, 1984 pp. 2 - 4.

CHAPTER TWO

GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND TO THE EVOLUTION
OF CITY WALLS IN THE SAVANNA BELT OF NIGERIA

Geography has played an important role in shaping the history of the Savanna peoples of Nigeria. It is the geographical setting that has helped in creating the conditions out of which the Savanna cities and city walls evolved and developed. For a proper view of the historical developments of the area, we must understand the interplay of physical, climatic and biotic factors.

The Savanna belt of Nigeria lies roughly between 7° and 12° latitude north. This geographical position between the eastern and western Sudan and between the great trading states of North Africa and those of West Africa like Gonja, Asante and Dahomey, helped in the development of the states of the Nigerian Savanna. They became meeting places between peoples and ideas. Its strategic location also enabled the area to play pivotal roles in commercial and political organization. The flourishing commerce on which the prosperity of the Savanna cities depended was fostered and protected by the powerful rulers of the Savanna cities. Because of the openness of the Savanna area, there was the need for security for traders along the trade routes and in the cities. Large caravans were organised as against individual itinerant traders, for safety. Walls were also built round the cities to protect the business life of the cities and to help the Sarki regulate trade. Thus, the peculiar geographical

characteristics of the Nigerian Savanna belt necessitated the fortifications and political and commercial organization.

This zone in East Africa supports the greatest diversity and density of wild life. It has so far produced the earliest remains of man to be found anywhere in the world.¹ In Nigeria, the Savanna belt has so far, produced the earliest evidence of iron-working in sub-Saharan Africa and the earliest evidence of urban life.²

The Nigerian Savanna belt is divided into two zones. These are, the Guinea Savanna and the ~~Sudan Savanna~~. Although it is difficult to delimit these zones since there are few clear cut lines in nature, yet, an attempt can be made using the major plant communities and climate as distinguishing features.

The Guinea Savanna forms the transition between the Forest belt and the Savanna belt. It is divided into the Southern and Northern Guinea zones both of which cover an area of about 249,600 square kilometres.³ As one moves northwards, the conditions in the successive zones become drier with fewer trees. This is why this zone has been

1. Connah G., Three Thousand Years in Africa. Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge: 1981) p. 12.

2. Ibid, p. 12.

3. Kowal J. M., and D.T., Knabe, An Agriclimatological Atlas of the Northern State of Nigeria with Explanatory Notes. A.B.U. Press, (Zaria 1972) p. 10.

referred to as a 'land without trees but with much grass either tall or short.⁴

The Southern Guinea Savanna has a thick vegetation of barked trees which are as high as 40 to 50 feet. There are also pockets of forests within this vegetational zone. Some of these pockets of forests include Dogon Kurmi, Kurmin Dangana and Kurmin Bonu.⁵ In the 19th century some of the peoples in the Southern Guinea zone were concentrated in these forests for defence.

The northern Guinea zone on the other hand, has relatively shorter grass and is densely settled. There is a variation in the types of crops produced in the two zones. The major crops grown in the Southern Guinea have been yams, cotton, soya beans, swamp rice and cassava, while those of the Northern Guinea include sorghum, millet, groundnuts, cotton and cowpeas.

The Sudan Savanna zone covers an area of 148,800 square kilometres,⁶ and provides one of the most favourable conditions for the production of livestock and grains. The main crops grown in this zone are millet, cow peas, beans, sorghum,

4. Bourliere F. and M. Herley, "The Ecology of Tropical Savanna" Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics 1, 1970 pp. 125-152.

5. Jones E.W., "The Forest Outliers of the Guinea Zone of Northern Nigeria" The Journal of Ecology Vol. 51, 1963 pp. 415-434.

6. Kowal J.M., and D.T. Knabe, op. cit. pp. 10-12.

cotton and groundnuts. The zone in most parts is relatively fertile. This is as a result of the deposition of fertile soils consisting of clay, silt and loam from the hills. There are also deliberate attempts at fertilization of individual plots by the farmers of this zone. There are, however, poor soils in the zone like the lateritic and latosolic soils which are heavily leached of soils and silica leaving the upper layer with much aluminium and iron oxides.⁷ These acidic soils lack the essential mineral nutrients and therefore, unsuitable for cultivation. This uneven distribution of soils made it possible for some areas to attract more people than others. This greatly affected population spread in the Nigerian Savanna. Areas like Birnin Kano and Birnin Zaria, established on fertile lands near large rocks were able to support dense and concentrated population, thus, encouraged the growth of large political units.⁸

The differences in population distribution in the Nigerian Savanna could also be explained in terms of differences in vegetation and amount of seasonal distribution of rainfall. The Savanna area is characterised by a strongly seasonal rainfall. Since rainfall reaches the area from the Atlantic

7. See for example, Klinkenberg K, "Soils" in M.J. Mortimore, (eds) Zaria and its Regions. Occasional Paper No. 4 A.B.U. Press, (Zaria: 1970) pp. 57-58.

8. Grove A.T., Africa (3rd edition) O.U.P. (Oxford, 1978) p. 148. See also Mortimore M.J., "Population Distribution, Settlement and Soils in Kano Province, Northern Nigeria 1931-62" in Galdwell J.C. and C. Okonjo, (edited) The Population of Tropical Africa Longmans, (London: 1968) pp. 298-306.

Ocean, areas close to the Ocean experience two rainy seasons. This pattern of rainfall is complicated by relief. Mountainous areas receive more rain than the sheltered valleys.⁹ While the Sudan Savanna receives rainfall amounting between 400 and 1,000 mm (16-40 inches) per annum falling between June and September,¹⁰ the Guinea zone has an annual rainfall above 1,000mm a year starting from April to October.¹¹ These differences in rainfall distribution in the Nigerian Savanna belt is an important factor in determining the pattern of agriculture in the area. The same factor could have helped in the development of trade between the different Savanna zones and between the Savanna peoples and distant places.¹² This favoured the growth of larger communities.¹³ There is therefore, a close relationship between environment, climate and urbanism.

The Savanna belt is characterised by hills, plateaux and rocks dotted all over the area. These include, Kufena, Turunku and Madarkaci in Zaria, Dalla, Gwauron Dutse, Fanisau and Tanagar in Kano, Kwatar-Kwashi in Sokoto, Jos Plateau and Idiogun, Odunfa, and Agbaka in Oyo-ile. Many of the ancient

9. Grove A.T., op. cit., pp. 13-14.

10. Ibid, p. 148.

11. Ibid, p. 148.

12. Usman Y.B., The Transformation of Katsina 1796-1903. The Overthrow of the Saranta System and the Establishment and Evolution of the Emirate Ph.D. Thesis A.B.U. Zaria 1970, p. 24.

settlements in the Nigerian Savanna belt were established on or near these hills. In Hausaland, the hills attracted many people because they were believed to be the abodes of the Iskoki that could bring prosperity or misfortune to the people. In Zaria, the hills of Kufena and Madarkaci were believed to have been occupied by spirits held to be responsible for the fertility of soils below them.¹⁴ Such spirits like Dangaladima, Sarkin Ruwa and Sarkin Rafi were believed to inhabit the hills and these were worshipped.¹⁵ The hills also helped in the security needs of those who settled on or below them (hills). The religious and defensive functions of the hill settlements attracted more people and created the conditions for the emergence of the Sarki. The early walls constructed round these hills were relatively small depicting the extent of the powers of the Sarakuna who ordered for their construction. The Kufena wall, one of the earliest walls to be built in the Zaria walling sequence, covered only one kilometre in circumference with little space for a large population.¹⁶ The consolidation of the power of the Sarki enabled him to order for the construction of larger walls.

14. Recorded Interview with MALLAM BUHARI (MB) Kwarbai, Zaria City 12th January, 1984.

15. Ibid.

16. Sutton J.E.G., "Population Estimates from Selected African Iron Age Sites" African Historical Demography: Vol. 11, Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, (Edinburgh: 1981) pp. 639-640.

The 15th century walls of Ibadan and Zaria testify to the existence of a large labour force that could build and maintain these walls.

Hill settlements were not only peculiar to people of the Nigerian Sudan Savanna. Even in the Guinea Savanna, people lived on hills or remote parts of forests. They continued to live on these inaccessible areas until the establishment of British colonial administration in the 20th century, which through certain policies, discouraged settlement in remote areas. Because of the relative isolation of the Guinea Savanna peoples, coupled with their sparse populations and the apparent absence of centralised administration, they are regarded as stateless.¹⁷ States are also said to be absent here because of the result of the development of hard lateritic crusts which are deficient of minerals and therefore, could not encourage large population concentration in the area.¹⁸ This implies that the peoples of the Guinea Savanna were incapable of developing a complex economy so that differential in wealth, specialization of labour and social stratification, which are essential in state formation, could

17. Horton R, "Stateless Societies in the History of West Africa" in J.P.A. Ajayi and H. Crowder, (edited) op.cit pp. 72 - 73.

18. Pritchard J.M., Africa. A Study of Geography for Advanced Students. Longman, (London: 1969) p. 58.

not take place on a large scale basis. But the peoples of this zone were not incapable of adopting techniques to increase soil fertility since they intensively cultivated lowlands and terraced hills.

States have also evolved among the peoples of the Nigerian Guinea Savanna. Though the various peoples of the Guinea zone were not united politically throughout their pre-colonial history, yet they exhibited several types of state formations. In this zone, there was the system in which various sections of people performed different functions for the well-being of their communities. The form of government was essentially gerontocratic. It was a government by council of elders. Members of this council consisted of heads of lineages. Also, religious priests and age grades were used which affected changes in the political set up. Thus, kingship was rooted in almost every society in the Nigerian Savanna. In the so called "stateless" societies, it was rooted in religion in which the priest-king became the carrier of the will of the spirits and of the ancestors in the community. Differences in the political organization among the peoples of the Nigerian Savanna were therefore, mainly cultural and not racial or biological.¹⁹ The present

19. Armstrong R.G., State Formation in Negro Africa Ph.D. Thesis. (University of Chicago, 1952) "The Development of Kingdoms in Negro Africa" JHSN Vol. 2 No. 1 1960 pp. 27-38.

high rate of linguistic fragmentation and political disintegration could also have been due to the abundance of food in this zone and not as a result of differences in natal endowment between the Guinea and Sudan Savanna peoples.

I. VEGETATION

The vegetation of the Nigerian Savanna belt as it is today, has degenerated. It has not always been so. The presence of Savanna types of vegetation such as cacti, baobabs, shrubs and short grasses is an indication of climatic change which greatly affected the vegetation. The dessication of the Sahara which began as far back as 2,000 B.C.,²⁰ was a very very gradual process which took hundreds of years. It was the first serious development that indirectly affected the original vegetal cover of the Nigerian Savanna. This period witnessed a decline in average annual precipitation and a drastic rise in temperature. Areas close to the Sahara which had been under water began to dry up. This development affected the growth of vegetation and partly contributed to the present environmental conditions prevailing over the West African region as a whole. The evidence of rock painting at

20. Grove A.T. and R.A. Pullan, "Some Pleistocene Paleogeography of the Chad Basin" in F.C.H. Wells and F. Bourliere (eds) African Ecology and Human Evolution. Routledge and Kegan Paul, (London: 1964) pp. 1-15. See also T. Shaw, "The Pre-history of West Africa" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder op. cit. pp. 33-71.

Birnin Kudu in Kano²¹ and at Bauchi, depicting hunting bands, humped and humpless cows, indicate that in the past, prior to the desertification of the Sahara, this area of the Savanna belt which today is hot and dry, most likely had thick vegetal cover that gradually dried up.

The activities of man and animals have also helped in destroying the vegetation. Continuous cultivation and bush fires by man have led to open grassland and the growth of fire-resistant trees. The size of the population also affects the vegetation. In the Savanna where population has been highly concentrated, the vegetation has been equally affected. In Oyo-Ile up to 1836, the area was an open Savanna country because it was mainly the centre of population and of economic activities. But by the late 19th century, Oyo-Ile had grown into a thick vegetation,²² because the city had been abandoned giving room for the growth of thick vegetation. On the other hand, continuous cultivation in their new areas pushed the limits of the dense forest southward.²³

21. Mahadi A, *The State and the Economy: The Saranta System and Its Roles in shaping the society and economy of Kano with particular reference to the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries.* Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, A.B.U. (Zaria: 1982) pp. 146-149.

22. Law R., *The Oyo Empire 1600-1836. A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* Oxford University Press, (London 1977) p. 8.

23. Lloyd P.C., *Yoruba Land Law* Oxford University Press, (London: 1962) pp. 51-52.

The Savanna belt is also the main cattle rearing zone of Nigeria so that overgrazing often results, leading to soil deterioration and the southward expansion of drier conditions.

Because of the destruction of the vegetation and soil by man and animals, some people hold the opinion that the human population and that of animals must be reduced if desertification is to be checked.²⁴ In an ecologically fragile environment, high population density and the role of animals may lead to the deterioration of the habitat. Their effects can however, be controlled by man. The Kano Close-Settled zone for example, supports greater population densities on soils where intensive agricultural methods are used. The ability of the soils of the close-settled zones of Kano, Katsina, Zaria and Daura to support high population densities is not only because the soils are derived from underlying rocks of the granitic Basement Complex,²⁵ but also because the inhabitants have over the years, intensively applied manure. The application of animal dung on the soil by nomads of the Nigerian Savanna, is also an attempt by this

24. Brown L, "World Population and Food Supplies: Looking Ahead". United Nations World Population Conference (Bucharest, 1974) p. 166.

25. Mortimore attributes the fertile soils of the close-settled zones of the Nigerian Savanna mainly to factors that are natural. Mortimore M.J., "Population Distribution", p. 302.

group to preserve the ecological balance. Thus, the reduction of human and animal population is not necessary since, despite disturbance of the vegetation and soils, they at the same time help in soil regeneration through fertilization. The existence of a varieties of trees in the Nigerian Savanna is a testimony to the fact that man is not a deliberate destroyer of the vegetation. These range from *Adansonia Digitata* (Kuka), *Parkia Filicoidea* (Dorowa), *Acacia Arabica* (Gaboruwa), Shea butter tree (Kadanya), Silk-cotton tree (Rimi), Baobabs and Date palms.²⁶ The products from these trees are highly exploited for the production of materials ranging from mortars, pestles, pillows, to drum hollows for the use of the society.

II. RESOURCES AND HUMAN ACTIVITIES TO C1850 A.D.

The Savanna belt has for long been an area of high productivity because of man's ability to exploit the resources available within his area. The availability of fish in rivers and streams like Rivers Niger, Benue, Kaduna and Rima and in the lakes like Lake Chad, led to fishing activities. Vegetable gardening has also been practised along the lake shores, river valleys and along the banks of streams.

26. Jackson G, "Vegetation Around the City and Nearby Villages of Zaria" in M.J. Mortimore (edited) op. cit. pp. 61-71. See also H.V. Lely, The Useful Trees of Northern Nigeria (London: 1925) pp. 1-9.

Herding is also practised in this zone. The availability of grass and the absence of tsetse-flies that are a menace to cattle, were important factors that attracted a large number of pastoralists into the Nigerian Savanna.²⁷ Cattle, sheep, goats, horses, donkeys and camels are grazed, especially, in the Sudan Savanna. The relevance of these animals to the economy of the Nigerian Savanna could be seen in the way certain sections of the city walls were so created where cattle could be safely guarded.²⁸

Agriculture has been the mainstay of the society. The employment of shifting cultivation was related to the fertility of the soils and population density in different parts of the Savanna belt. It was easy to engage in shifting cultivation where population pressure was low and where land was not a scarce commodity. Because of the seasonal nature of rainfall, farming in most parts of the Nigerian Savanna has been seasonal, except for places near rivers and lakes where irrigation has been practised. This seasonal nature of agriculture in the Nigerian Savanna means that in the dry season, farmers had spare time to engage in other part-time jobs. Such jobs included building, blacksmithing, smelting,

27. Grove A.T., op. cit. p. 148.

28. Denham D, (et al) Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa 1822-1823 (London: 1926) p. 51. In the city walls, cattle herders were provided with enough areas for safe herding and sometimes got cheap labour.

weaving, military activities, scholarly pursuits and trade. These later became full-time employments and helped in the development of the Nigerian Savanna. The mobilization of the builders and blacksmiths for the construction of city walls and rivetting iron gates and locks, helped in the development of building technology and blacksmithing in the Savanna cities.

The smiths did not only rivet Kyauraye and manufacture locks used for locking the city gates, they were also required to manufacture various war-related implements and agricultural tools. War and war-related implements which the blacksmiths of the Nigerian Savanna were required to manufacture included Mashi, Kibiya, Takobi, Wuka, Gatari, Barandemi, and horse trappings like bridles, bits, stirrups, and spurs. Agricultural tools manufactured by the blacksmiths used on royal plantations and for the production of surplus by the peasants to support the ruling hierarchy included, Galma, Fartenya and Sangwami. They also manufactured craft implements. Many important blacksmiths therefore emerged in the Nigerian Savanna that occupied very sensitive positions in the hierarchy of administration in most of the Savanna cities because of the relevance of their implements in the military expansion, agricultural production and craft production in the Nigerian Savanna belt.

The iron ore for this job was obtained from Tama. In Kano, areas like Gaya and Dalla were famous for mining and

smelting of iron in the early period of Kano history.²⁹ The uneven distribution of iron ore and other resources and features like rich soils, rivers, hills, and the location of the cities, accounted for the differences in population distribution of the Savanna area, and hence, the growth and development of certain areas into industrial and commercial centres.

Other trades that were carried out in the Savanna cities included butchery, tanning and leather-working because of the presence of domestic animals. Mat-making, wood-carving, pottery and basketry were also important industries in the Nigerian Savanna area. These various economic activities were also organised into occupational guilds and helped in the early development of the Savanna cities.

Thus the effective exploitation of the available resources in the Nigerian Savanna and the organization of the human resources into specialized occupational guilds led to the evolution of the Savanna cities and the development of city walls. While the physical condition of the Savanna have influenced human activities, the human activities on the other hand have affected the physical conditions of the Savanna area and affected population distribution and settlement patterns.

29. Jaggar P, "Kano City Blacksmiths: Pre-Colonial Distribution Structure and Organization" Savanna Vol. 2 No. 1 June 1973, p. 14.

III. PEOPLES, POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS TO C1850 A.D.

The Savanna belt of Nigeria was settled by man at an early stage of history. Evidence testifies that man has been living here since the Early Stone Age.³⁰ There are more ethnic groups in this than in any other zone in the Nigerian area. The more numerous groups are the Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi, Tiv, Yoruba and Nupe. Other prominent groups in the zone but comparatively fewer in number include the Kambari, Jukun, Bariba and a host of others. The main ethnic groups connected with this study are however, the Hausa and Yoruba.

The Hausa have had a long history of living together in large groups. Their settlement pattern took the form of Garuruwa (towns) and Birane (walled cities) surrounded by smaller Kauyuka (villages) and Unguwoni (hamlets). The basic social units were the gidaje (households) headed by the Maigida (household head), who was usually the oldest man in the household. A house (gida) was composed of immediate kins and sometimes, distant relatives and slaves, depending on the social status of the Maigida.

In Oyo-Ile, the traditional unit of settlement was the Agbo-Ile (flock of houses), consisting of members of a patrilineage.³¹ These fairly large compounds were sited

30. Shaw T, op. cit. pp. 33-71.

31. Ojo G.J.A., "Traditional Yoruba Architecture" African Arts Vol. 1 No. 3 1968 pp. 14-15.

with an eye to ease of production because the more the number of farmhands, the easier it was to produce surplus. From these settlement patterns, it would seem that the evolution of the Savanna cities was a gradual process. Settlements gradually grew into cities and later became larger and more complex thereby attracting many people. Population of the Savanna cities therefore, did not out-grow food and water supply at any given time.³² This is why rather than people migrating from the cities to the rural areas, it was the other way round.

The present settlement patterns and population distribution in the Nigerian Savanna are therefore not a direct reflection of the earliest patterns. The desiccation of the Sahara which took place about 4,000 years ago,³³ affected the settlement patterns and population distribution in the Nigerian Savanna. The desiccation forced some groups of people to move in search of new sources of water. The new settlements came to be established near reliable sources of water, especially, near rivers or hills where the water table is high enough for shallow wells to be dug. The cluster of settlements in the Kano close-settled zone around existing streams or at the base of hills, is an indication of the role

32. See for example, B.Achi, "Military Architecture and Warfare in Hausaland: The Walls of Kano and Zaria" a Departmental Seminar. Department of Sociology, University of Jos 25th April, 1985 pp.8 - 10

33. Grove A.T. and R.A. Pullan op.cit pp. 1 - 15

of water and fertile soils in urbanization.³⁴

The concentration of population in the Nigerian Savanna cities was also associated with the availability of resources like iron ore, wood, cotton and wool. Location of the cities, especially, near lines of communication, was an added advantage for the attraction of peoples from various areas. This enabled cities not only to assemble raw materials for manufacture, but could also easily distribute goods to the respective markets. Such cities therefore grew to become centres of exchange and of improvements in production techniques. This is why specialised crafts in the industry and the guilds that institutionalised them were first formed as city organizations.

The construction of formidable walls created security for the city and tended to attract people especially, those that could not build such protective fortifications, into the walled area. Thus, some of the rural areas that were often targets of attack by the invaders of the city were abandoned. Increased rate of warfare in the Nineteenth century Nigerian Savanna saw the abandonment of many settlements that were

34. Mortimore M.J., "Land and Population Pressure in the Kano Close-Settled Zone" in R.M. Prothero, (edited) People and Land in Africa South of the Sahara. Oxford University Press, (London 1972) pp. 60-70.

inadequately protected. This led to the increased rate of urban growth of the Savanna cities. The extensive city walls of Kano, Zaria, and Oyo-Ile are therefore a mirror of the existence of large population concentrations. This does mean that warfare was a prime mover of the city walls in the Nigerian Savanna.³⁵ Warfare was not however the only factor in the development of the city walls as will be made clearer in chapter three. Oyo-Ile however, seems to have been more of a military state. Here, increased dependence on warfare for the survival and the development of the state led to the conquest and integration of many areas into the metropolis.³⁶ The densely settled forest areas of Yorubaland today, in contrast to the densely settled open Savanna in the pre-19th century, points to the fact that it is warfare that created insecurity and compelled people to congregate together in areas with natural defence.³⁷

35. See for example J. Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna*. University of Wisconsin Press, (Madison: 1966) *Passim*. Also J.D. Fage, "Some Thoughts on State Formation in the Western Sudan Before the Seventeenth Century", *Boston University Papers in African History* Vol. I (Boston: 1964) pp. 19 - 34. He holds the opinion that the States in the Sudan were the result of some "civilized" invaders from North Africa. This diffusionist view does not hold true for the Savanna cities of the Nigerian area. They were the result of internal developments.

36. Law R, *op. cit.* pp. 8 - 10

37. *Ibid* pp. 8 - 10

The distribution of population in the Savanna belt of Nigeria up to the 1850s was therefore dictated by the availability of adequate water supply, fertile farmlands and other natural resources and the provision of adequate defensive walls. In 1900, this pattern of population distribution was changed when the British colonial administration deliberately created new towns where modern amenities were concentrated. These new centres attracted many people from both the villages and the old walled cities. A wide disparity was created between the old walled cities, the rural areas and the newly created towns. Yet, some of the old walled cities like Kano, Zaria, Ife continued to prosper. Their prosperity despite the new centres of commerce was a result of the fact that the old cities themselves had been centres of administration, religion, learning and of commerce. Some of the old walled cities like Daura and Katsina began to decline.

The Savanna area has also been a corridor of migration and cultural contacts. Before the advent of the British and the construction of motorable roads and rail-lines, many communication networks existed. These connected all villages, towns and cities and therefore encouraged interactions of peoples, exchange of ideas and of commodities. In the Guinea Savanna where there are many thick forests and hills the tracts skirted round these features. These routes were not natural phenomenon but were deliberately created by man. Increase in the volume of trade and the development of the Savanna cities helped in the increased importance which these routes assumed and consequently enabled the cities to

develop through their ability to actively participate in trade. Thus while the existence of the cities encouraged trade and led to the development of trade routes, the trader routes on the other hand helped in the expansion of trade and development of the cities. They ^(city inhabitants) could buy different items from traders. They were also encouraged to manufacture products for exchange. The cities therefore became centres of production, collection and of distribution. This location also made possible for people from different areas to exchange ideas. The rate of exchange depended on the frequency of contacts and on the duration of contact. This helped in improving the quality of products, administration and security. The location also made possible for the cities to be sustained by the rural farmers since they relied on these for raw materials, though they (cities) also grew theirs both within and without the walls.

Writers like Mabogunje are of the view that the Savanna area had always made man an imperialist. That because of the expansive nature of the terrain, people of this zone were tempted to conquer and dominate other peoples.³⁸ But nature hardly creates routes for people anywhere to easily move out to conquer other people. In the Nigerian Savanna, wars of conquest were waged not for the love of war but were aimed at dominating the economy and human resources of relatively weak states.³⁹ It can hardly be established with any

38. Mabogunje A., "The Land and Peoples of West Africa" in Ajayi *op. cit.* p.6

39. Achi B., *Military Technology*, p.4

certainty that the peoples of the Savanna belt could move more easily than those in the forest belt, by say, the 14th century when serious wars of conquest were waged in the Nigerian Savanna.⁴⁰ Without an exact knowledge of when the climatic differences came to exist between the forest and Savanna belts, we cannot, therefore, state categorically whether it was the terrain that helped in the formation of states in the Savanna belt of Nigeria. It would seem that the desire to conquer and dominate others does not lie in the environment alone but also depends on the sophistication of a people's political organization, the level of their technology and their economic base. Though the environment influences the economic base, political organization and technology of a people, it hardly wholly determines peoples' actions and temperament. If terrain alone were the main determining factor in empire building, then it would have been hardly possible to expect to find such large empires in the deep forest like Ile-Ife and Benin which have a long history of existence. The development of cities and states in the Nigerian Savanna belt cannot, therefore, be attributed to the terrain alone but also, to the combination of factors ranging from economic and political to the technological base of the society and the advantage of strategy.

40. Morgan W.B. and R.P. Moss, "Savanna and Forest in Western Nigeria" in Prothers (ed). Peoples and Land in Africa South of the Sahara: Readings in Social Geography (O.U.P., Ibadan, 1972) p. 21.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EVOLUTION OF CITIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF CITY WALLS IN THE SAVANNA BELT OF THE NIGERIAN AREA

1. INTRODUCTION

The history of cities and city walls the remains of some of which we still see in many parts of the Nigerian Savanna, dates back to at least the 9th century A.D.¹ This historical antiquity of the cities and their walls has been made known to us through songs of dynasties, travellers' accounts, the files of colonial administrators and the work of archaeologists. The city wall of Daura, the legendary centre of the seven Hausa States, is said to have been constructed many decades before the Hausa era. It is said to have been started by a Daura ruler, Yan Tsawani, who reigned in the 9th century.² This makes the Daura wall one of the oldest known city walls in the Nigerian Savanna. The city wall of Kano is said to have been started during the reign of Gijimasu dan Warisu (c1095-1154 A.D.)³ The wall was expanded on two different occasions. First, during the reign

1. See for example, H. T. Sa'ad, Hausa Traditional Architecture in a Historical Perspective" Paper presented at the International Seminar on Hausa Studies, University of Sokoto, October, 1983 p.7.

2. Ibid pp. 6 - 7.

3. See for example H.R. Palmer, op. cit pp. 25 - 26. See also A Dokaji, Kano ta Dabo Cigari, NNPC, Zaria 1978 p.13.

of the famous and powerful Muhammadu Rumfa (C1463-1499 A.D) and the other occasion was during the reign of Muhammadu Zaki (C1582-1618). The wall of Katsina was built during the reign of Ali Mirabu (C1568-1572 A.D), the third ruler of the Korau dynasty.⁴ The belief in late 16th century construction of the Katsina wall is strengthened by the comment of Leo Africanus when he visited Katsina in 1516. He only talked about Songhay attack on Katsina without making any reference to the city wall.⁵ Indicating that the wall was not yet in existence then. All these point to the fact that the Savanna cities and their walls are of great antiquity.

Settlements in the Nigerian Savanna however, did not start off as cities. The evolution of cities and the development of city walls were complex processes which took hundreds of years to accomplish. The fusion of many small clusters of settlements into towns and cities was gradual and it was not easy for would be powerful individual rulers to establish control over the whole community in a short period. Most cities in the Nigerian Savanna therefore, had to pass through certain evolutionary stages. It must also be stressed that the evolution of settlements and the development of city walls was not uniform in all cases. While some evolved slowly and

4. Ibid pp. 185-186.

5. Africanus L, A History and Description of Africa. Translated by John Porry, 1600. (New York: Burt Franklin 1963) pp. 11-16.

directly from simple agricultural villages into large and complex cities, others grew into towns, stagnated and later withered away and disappeared. Some of those that disappeared included Turunku, Durbi ta-Kusheyi, Santolo, Kwiambana and Surame.

Evidence exists which testifies to the early occupation of the Savanna area especially, where the city walls were constructed. In Kano, Zaria and Oyo-Ile, there is evidence of pot sherds, grinding stones and broken stone axes indicating a stone Age habitation. The continuous habitation of these centres is backed up by the presence of stone circles with mud buildings located on the hills, said to have been the foundations of granaries and of dwelling homes.⁶ These various stone circles could have been different independent gidaje, each headed by the Maigida. Each of these gidaje was most probably, inhabited by family groups having kinship ties. The early nucleated families might have recognised no other central authority apart from the immediate authority of the Maigida. In some parts of the Nigerian Savanna however, certain individuals exercised spiritual powers over large territories long before the emergence of states in the formal sense. Barbushe in early Kano for example, exercised

6. Obayemi A.M.U., "Aspects of Field Archaeology in Hausaland" Zaria Archaeology Papers (Vol. I, A.B.U., (Zaria 1977) p. 2.

authority over a large territory. This power was derived from religion.⁷

In the course of the evolution of the society over many centuries, the patrilineal authority of the Maigida was superceded by a political system based on territorial authority which incorporated many family groups into a city and later into a state.⁸

It was the development of lineage settlements into wards and wards into villages and later, into cities in response to threats posed to the inhabitants, either by enemies or natural disasters like prolonged droughts and famines, or the desire to exploit available resources of a given area, which led toward the evolution of the birni type of settlements. In Kano for example, some of such early settlements that were later merged to form birnin Kano included Dalla, Gwauron Dutse, Zage, Dorayi and Madabo.⁹ From the 15th century, other settlements founded by immigrants were incorporated into the city. These included Zango, Goron Duma, Makama, Shatima, Chediya, Chingau, Sheshe, Darma, Tudun Nufawa, Dambazau, Makwarari and Cigari.¹⁰

7. Dokaji A, Kano to Dabo Cigari NNPC, (Zaria 1958) p. 11. See also H.R. Palmer, The Kano Chronicle in Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 33, 1908 pp. 64-67.

8. Smith A., "The Early States of the Central Sudan" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder, op. cit. pp. 185-188.

9. Padan J.N., Religion and Political Culture in Kano. Berkeley, (U.S.A: 1973) p. 19.

10. Recorded Interview with Alhaji MUHAMMADU INUA (AMI) Kofar Nassarawa, Kano 15th January, 1983.

Some of these Savanna settlements grew and continued to prosper. The Dalla settlement prospered due to the existence of natural resources like iron ore and charcoal-making trees in the area.¹¹ Dalla was also the centre of traditional religion which attracted worshippers from all parts of Kasar Kano in order to offer sacrifices to the god of Tsumburburai for blessing. This created a central authority in the person of Barbushe who became the mediator between the spirit world and the living population of Kano.¹²

The location of Dalla on relatively fertile soils consisting of silt and clay,¹³ enabled the production of grains, cotton, groundnuts, tobacco and cattle. This helped in the economic prosperity and political development of the Dalla settlement. Her strategic location in the central Sudan and along the trans-Saharan trade routes made her to prosper. By tapping the resources of this trade, she was encouraged to also produce goods for exchange and continued to grow. Between the 15th and the early 19th centuries, other settlements occupied by immigrants, sprang up in the Dalla area and helped

11. Darling P.J., "Iron Smelting in and Around Hausaland, Northern Nigeria" Paper presented at the 9th Congress of the Pan African Association for Prehistory and Related Studies. National Museum, Jos. 11th-17th December, 1983, pp. 1-4.

12. Dokaji A., op. cit. p. 11

13. Mortimore M.J. and J. Wilson, "Land and people in the Kano Close-Settled Zone" Occasional Paper No. 1 A.B.U. (Zaria 1965) pp. 677-687.

in diversifying the economy of Kano City. Such centres included Madabo, Tudun Nufawa, Dorayi, Shatima, and Danbazau. The immigrants who occupied these settlements came from the Western Sudan, Borno, Agades, Supeland and Yorubaland.¹⁴ Some of these immigrations especially, by the Wangarawa, Beriberi, Fulani, Nufawa and by people from neighbouring states like Damagaram, are recorded.

In 1432 for example, one Othman Kalnama, a deposed Borno prince, is reported to have settled in Kano with about 1,200 followers.¹⁵ They were settled in Dorayi.¹⁶ This early immigration of Bornawai into Kano was due to political instability in Kanem and Borno. Subsequent immigrations of Bornawa into Kano in the 18th century were the result of severe drought which hit the area.¹⁷ These immigrants settled mainly in the

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14. Perchonock N., "Occupation and Residence in Kano City", Paper presented at the Seminar on the Economic History of the Central Savanna of West Africa, A.B.U. (Zaria 1976) p.10.
 15. See for example A. Dokaji, op. cit. P.18. He dates the arrival of the Borno prince to Kano to late 15th Century. See also Frishman A, "The Population Growth of Kano, Nigeria" in African Historical Demography: Proceedings of a Seminar Held in the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1977) pp. 216 - 217. Frishman estimates the number of people who came from Borno to have been 1,200 based on the size of the area they occupied. He did this based on Clapperton's assertion that in Kano City, one-third of the area was occupied while the remaining two-thirds was left for farming and herding.
 16. Ibid pp. 216 - 217
 17. Lovejoy P.E., and S. Baier, "The Desert-side Economy of the Central Sudan" The International Journal of African Historical Studies Vol. VIII, No. 4, 1975, p. 570.

eastern and southern parts of Kano in such places like Birnin Kudu, Rogo, Rano, Zarewa and Gwarzo.¹⁸ Some of them occupied such wards in Kano City like Beriberi, Gabari, Zangon Beriberi, Yan Doya and Fagge.¹⁹ It was these Bornean immigrants who established lodging houses for long distance traders, sold horses, salt, potash and slaves. They therefore, helped in diversifying the economy of Kano and also in the development of the city.

In 1463, Wangarawa immigrants from the Western Sudan under the leadership of Abdal-Rahman Zagaiti arrived Kano with 3,636 people who were stationed at Madaba.²⁰ These early immigrants were associated with Islamic work and administration. Later, most of these immigrants came to be associated with manufacturing and long distance trade.²¹ They settled in Kano city producing such items like footwear, bags, loin clothes, cushions and fans. These Wangarawa also sew expensive gowns for Sarakuna.²²

18. Smith M, Baba of Kano: A Woman of the Muslim House. Faber, (London: 1954) p. 37, 181.

19. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 118.

20. Al-Hajj M, The Asl-al Wangariyin. Translated as "A Seventeenth Century Chronicle on the Origins and Missionary Activities of the Wangarawa" Kano Studies Vol. I, No. 3 1968 pp. 7-16. See also Anonymous, Hausawa 'da Makwabtansu NNPC (Zaria 1971) p. 29; and Dokaji A., op. cit. p. 23. It is not however certain that the number of people given actually reached Kano.

21. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 112.

22. Ibid. p. 113.

The Fulani also moved into Kasar Fano from the West. They arrived in Hausaland between C1452 and C1463.²³ In the 16th century, Leo Africanus^{is} reported to have seen a great number of cattle in Kano.²⁴ This indicates that by that time, many Fulani have settled in Kano. Most of the Fulani settled in areas where there was rich pasture. In the city, the presence of such rivers like Jakara, Gosau and river Tukurawa and the reservation of a walled area for safe herding, attracted many Fulani. Such wards in Kano city like Kuri, Danbazau and Yolawa,²⁵ were settled by Fulani. In the 18th and 19th centuries, with increased insecurity faced by Kano from Ningi, Hadejia and Maradi, a policy of sedentarization of the Fulani was pursued where they were given free land, seeds and also exempted from corvee labour.²⁶ These favourable conditions attracted a large number of Fulanis to settle in Kano city. Here they could also get cheap slave labour for the development of estate agriculture and

23. Palmer H.R., op. cit. p.110
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24. Africanus I. op. cit. p. 29. It is however, highly doubtful that Leo Africanus did actually visit Fano. His information about the Central Sudan was gathered from other people who had visited the area.

25. Mahadi A., op.cit. pp.114 - 115

26. Hiskett M., "Kitab al-Farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdom Attributed to Uthman dan Fodio" B.S.O.A.S. 23, (London: 1960) pp. 482 - 493. See also M. Last, "Some Aspects of Caliph Bello's Social Policy" Kano Studies No. 2, July 1966 pp. 57 - 59.

for cattle rearing. Their dairy products were also sure of being sold in the Kurmi market. The Fulani also settled outside the city wall in such towns like Shanono, Bebeji, Kiru, Jahun, Kunya, Sankara, Danbatta, Ringim and Birnin Kudu.²⁷

Nufawa also started to settle in Kano in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.²⁸ They settled in Tudun Nufawa, Dalma, Madungurum and Marmara wards in Kano city. They specialised in weaving, dyeing and the production of Saki gowns.²⁹ It was these specialised immigrants from the Western, Eastern and Central Sudan who linked Kano commercially with the markets of the Middle Niger, confluence region, Borno and other areas of West Africa. The city of Kano developed to the extent that it came to provide a logical setting for economic specialization, storage, exchange and redistribution.

To Abdullahi Smith, it was the result of the immigration into the Savanna area by peoples from far-away places, rather than the result of natural increase, which aided the evolution of the birni.³⁰ Immigration however, does not seem to have

27. Mahadi A., op. cit. pp. 114-115.

28. Greenhill C.J., Languages of Africa Bloomington. Indiana University Press, 1966, p. 6.

29. Mahadi A., op. cit., pp. 119-120.

30. Smith A., op. cit. p. 187. See also M. Last "Early Kano: The Santolo-Fangwai Settlement System" Kano Studies VVol.1, No. 4, 1979, pp. 7-8.

been the only factor in the evolution of the Savanna birane. Though peoples from a variety of backgrounds migrated into the Savanna area at different times and offered opportunity to the city inhabitants to acquire new ideas and skills, this does not mean that immigrants were responsible for the development of the Savanna cities. There were very many centres in Kasar Kanu for example, that attracted a large number of immigrants and yet, did not evolve into cities. In fact some of them declined while others even withered away. Santolo and Gaiya were famous in iron smelting. The inhabitants from these towns were also actively engaged in the trans-Saharan trade. Peoples like the Bornawa, Agalawa, Tuaregs and Wangarawa settled in both of them.³¹ By the 16th century, Santolo had collapsed and was abandoned while Gaiya continued to exist though not a prosperous town. Birnin Kudu and Gadawur were also centres of dyeing and of the production of high quality indigo and cotton. They were also famous for the production of guinea corn, locust beans, and wood carving.³² They both attracted dyers and grain dealers from Agades, Auyi and Gobir. Yet, none of these ever evolved into a city.

It was not only a matter of dense population that transformed some parts of the Savanna area into cities but was also due to the security such centres enjoyed coupled with

31. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 36.

32. Ibid, pp. 34-36.

economic prosperity, technological development and the dynamism of the central administration. Cities of the Nigerian Savanna were therefore, not created overnight through expansion of the population as a result of immigration, nor was it through the work of powerful conquering hordes from the Middle East.³³ They were, rather, the result of a long process of the conscious efforts by the peoples to adapt to their peculiar historical, economic and geographic situations.

II. THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE EVOLUTION OF SAVANNA CITIES

The course of the evolution of cities in the Nigerian Savanna belt was directly influenced by technological progress. The technological change from the use of stone and wood to the use of iron dating back to the 7th century in both Kano and Zaria,³⁴ aided the development of farming skills and permanent settlements. It was an important factor in the rise and development of cities and city walls.

Some of the walled cities of the Nigerian Savanna were located in places with large iron ore deposits having high laterite grade. In Kano for example, such areas where

33. Dokaji A., op. cit. p. 11.

34. Willet F., "A Survey of Recent Results in the Radio Carbon Chronology of Western and Northern Africa" JAH XII, 3, 1971 p. 366. For Zaria, See J.E.G. Sutton, "Iron Working Around Zaria" ZLP 8 1977 pp. 1-20.

extensive mining and smelting activities took place included, Dalla, Gaiya, Sheme, Kazaure and Bichi.³⁵ In the Dalla area, the iron rich lateritic cap of Dalla hill was one of the main sources of ore. It led to a flourishing iron industry from a very early date.³⁶ This iron ore was exploited for the manufacture of such tools like Sangwami, galma and gatari which helped in the construction of the walls. With the construction of the walls, there was the need to manufacture iron gates and locks. In the case of Kano and Zaria, this was a 16th century development. In Oyo-Ile however, gates were made from palm timber. Remains of timber gates have been observed in one of the gates.³⁷

Iron ore was also exploited for the manufacture of agricultural tools like fartanya, galma, lauje and adda for cultivation. The use of these agricultural tools brought iron-working technology into a close relationship with the economy of the Savanna societies. With the utilization of iron implements, more land area was cleared especially in Oyo-Ile that was in the Guinea Savanna, and more crops could be grown as a result of this development. It helped in the creation of agricultural surplus. This could have helped in

35. Darling P.J., op. cit. pp. 1-4.

36. Ibid p. 2.

37. Olubode M.A., op. cit. p. 15.

freeing labour from agricultural pursuits to other jobs such as knitting, pottery trade, weaving, smithing and basketry. These later became full-time occupations. This specialization encouraged competition between different professional groups and led to the employment of relatively advanced technologies in the production of high quality goods. There gradually emerged technical and stylistic advance in the manufacture of iron goods - iron doors and locks, iron pales, cutlasses, hoes, knives, javelins, arrows and spears for utilization in building construction and for wars of expansion.

The level of iron-working technology which was attained helped to determine the ability of the Savanna cities to wage wars. This helped in the physical expansion of the city. The manufacture of such war implements like the bow and arrow and the adoption of the spear, sword, lance, horse and horse stirrups in the 14th century in Hausaland and in the 16th century in Oyo-Ile,³⁸ were necessitated by the military needs of the time. These weapons revolutionised the striking power of the inhabitants of Kano, Zaria and Oyo-Ile and led to the conquest and control of areas that had not adopted the new

38. Smaldone J.P., Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate. Historical and Sociological Perspectives. Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge: 1977) p. 14. For Oyo-Ile see I.A. Akinjogbin and E.A. Ayandele "Yorubaland to 1800" in O. Ikime (edited) Groundwork of Nigerian History. Heinemann Educational Books, (Ibadan 1980) p. 129.

technology and tactics of warfare. In Oyo-Ile, the adoption of the new technology in the 16th century was manifested in the conquest of such towns like Kusu, Gbere, Igboho, Paiye and later, the Bariba and the Tapa.³⁹ In Kano, such conquered territories included Santolo, Fangwai, Fanisau, Tanagar and Gaiya.⁴⁰ In Zaria, iron slag was excavated at Tsauni and Samaru consisting of furnaces and slag heaps near the occupation debris,⁴¹ which indicates a close relationship between the exploitation of iron ore and the development of urban centres. Other places in the Zaria area where there were extensive concentrations of iron-bearing laterite included Dumbi, Kufena, Unguwar Karfe and Unguwar Makera near Kufena.⁴² The smelting and smithing activities helped in transforming Zaria city. It attracted large human populations. Wars of expansion were also fought. With the new weapons, Zaria was able to conquer such areas like Kargi, Igabi, Kwassalo, Ricifa, Fatika, Zangon Aya and later, some parts of the area now referred to as Southern Zaria.⁴³ Closely related to the weapons of war were the weapons for building the city wall. These included levers for moving the earth, ladders for climbing to the top of the wall, the Magirbi for breaking the earth, the salma for mixing the earth and the kurada for clearing the building site. Thus, the ability of the peoples of the Nigerian Savanna cities to utilize iron

39. See for example, R. Law, op.cit. pp. 31 - 40

40. Palmer H.R., op. cit. pp. 66 - 68.

41. Obayomi A.M.U. op. cit. pp. 1 - 20

42. Recorded Interview with GOMA MAKERI (MK) Dumbi, Zaria 15th July, 1983.

43. N.A.K. SNP 17/2/17224.

ore for the different needs of their societies, encouraged greater degree of specialization and the growth and development of the city and city walls.

Without technological development it would have been hardly possible for the Savanna peoples to master their environments and create suitable conditions for economic specialization and political centralization. The employment of iron technology to a large extent, helped to minimise the effects of some of the calamities of the Savanna such as drought. The tendency of people to migrate out to other areas, especially during drought, was reduced particularly, in the cities.⁴⁴ This technological development also helped in checking the destructive effects of such calamities on the human population.⁴⁵ It was as a result of the important role of iron technology in the growth and development of cities and city walls of the Nigerian Savanna that blacksmiths were organised into guilds in order to ensure that the technological needs of the city were met.⁴⁶ Thus, the rulers of the Savanna cities took over the control of the production and the distribution of iron tools especially, farming tools and war weapons.⁴⁷

44. Recorded interview with Alhaji YUSUFU AHMAD (AYA) Sarkin Kofar Dukawuya, Kano City, 18th January, 1983.

45. See for example K.W. Butzer, Environment and Archaeology An Introduction to Pleistocene Geography Chicago University Press, (Chicago 1964) p. 466.

46. Jagger P., op. cit. pp. 11-26.

47. Makeri, G., op. cit.

Technology therefore was an important factor in the rise and expansion of the Savanna cities. Expansion brought about the need for effective defence and hence, the construction of the city walls. The continued modifications of the city walls to cope with new techniques and weapons of violence, was a manifestation of the changes in technology. Where technology failed, religion was often resorted to.

III. THE ROLE OF RELIGION

As has already been stated, there existed a close relationship between the growth and development of cities and city walls of the Nigerian Savanna and religion. Despite the early adoption of iron technology by the inhabitants of these cities, they still had to grapple with other problems of life and those of their environment. Since society was agricultural, coupled with poor soils in certain areas of the Savanna, continuous cultivation could have led to the exhaustion of the soil. The progressive dessication of the Sahara resulted in low annual rainfall in what is now the Savanna area. It led to a decline in the humus content of the soil and poor crop yields. The same factor could have led to increase in the period when land was allowed to lay fallow. Added to this agricultural problem was that of the environment itself.

Sleeping sickness, malaria and river blindness were very rampant diseases in the Savanna area. In the dry season, the Savanna area was noted for such epidemics like cerebro-spinal

meningitis, small pox, leprosy and louse-borne typhus.⁴⁸ In the rainy season, strong thunder storms used to kill people, destroyed buildings, crops and vegetation.⁴⁹ It was in this type of social environment that religion developed and religious elites emerged in the Nigerian Savanna. Bori priests in Hausaland became the intermediaries between the spirit world and the community. Religion therefore became part and parcel of the reality of the people's every day life. Though they believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, he was held to be so remote from earth that he could only be approached and appeased through the medium of spirits and their human representatives. The spirits were believed to inhabit special areas like high hills, forests and on top of big trees. This is why pre-Islamic populations in Hausaland tended to congregate near such geographical features. In early Kano for example, the priest of Tsumburburai, Barbushe, is said to have lived on top of Dalla hill, on a tree called 'Shamus'. Here also, the earth spirit, Tsumburburai lived.⁵⁰ The area where the Kurmi

48. Onwujeugbu M, "The Cult of the Bori Spirit Among the Hausa" in Mary Douglas and Phyllis Kaberry, Men in Africa (New York, 1971) p. 280.

49. Badejo P.A., Bori-Spirit Possession. Religion as a Dance Event: A Pre-Islamic Hausa Phenomenon. M.A. Thesis University of California, (Los Angeles: 1980) pp. 3-17.

50. Dokaji A., op. cit. pp 7-8

market was established also provided a convenient place for habitation by lesser spirits. The priest descended the hill only once a year to communicate to the people the will of the spirit.⁵¹

Religion therefore was used to explain super-natural forces which were a mystery to the society. Religious specialists emerged that handled the supernatural powers in order to ensure better agricultural production,⁵² and to cure illnesses. This is why the spirits of the earth connected with agriculture were worshipped both in Kano and in Zaria.

In Zaria, ceremonies were held to appeal to the spirits for rain through marshalling of Yan bori (cult initiates) who danced in the streets as they called for rain.⁵³ Sacrifices offered included ~~black~~ cows, black goats, white chickens and virgin girls.⁵⁴ Such wards in Zaria city which were noted for this practice included Madarkaci, Kusfe, Kofar Danza, Zagi-Zagi and Magajiya.⁵⁵ Also, during ploughing and harvesting periods,

51. Ibid, p. 8.

52. Shaw T., "Towards a Pre-historical Demography of Africa" African Historical Demography. Proceedings of a Seminar Held at the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, (Edinburgh: 1981) p. 598.

53. Buhari M, op. cit.

54. Bagudu I., op. cit.

55. Personal communication with Mallam ALIYU SARKI (AS) Anguwar Zagi-Zagi (Anguwar Katuka) Zaria City, 2nd July, 1984.

libations and first fruits were offered through Inna or Uwar Dawa, who was the mother of grains and principal giver of good crops. Uwar Dawa and Uwar Gana (goddess of the farm) were believed to be responsible for the protection of the farmlands of the whole community and of their properties.⁵⁶ Other officials of the cult included the Magajiya, who was an overseer of the Bori cult and was later to become the keeper of a brothel for men.⁵⁷ There were also Masu bori and Yan bori.

In the Katsina area, Kwatarkwashi emerged as a religious centre where Magiro was worshipped because of the direct influence he was believed to exercise on human affairs.⁵⁸ By the 19th century these non-Islamised Hausa that inhabited the centres of religion were termed Maguzawa, by the Jihadists. Majis in Arabic means 'fire worshippers' or 'magicians' and to the Maguzawa themselves it means ja'ala who 'fled'.⁵⁹ They were so castigated because they tenaciously stuck to their traditional religion and were therefore seen as inferior to the Islamised Hausa.⁶⁰

56. Greeberg J.H., "The Influence of Islam on a Sudanese Religion". Monographs of the American Ethnological Society No. X (New York: 1946) p. 140.

57. Badejo P., op. cit. pp. 1-15.

58. Usman Y.B., op. cit. pp. 7-8.

59. Personal Communication with P.J. Darling, op. cit.

60. Badejo P., op. cit. pp. 1-15.

In Oyo-Ile, religion also helped in the evolution of the city and the construction of the walls. The god of Shango, said to have been the third king of Oyo-Ile,⁶¹ is identified with thunder and lightning because of the fierce tornadoes which used to sweep across the area. Death by lightning strikes was attributed to Shango. The Alefin had to ensure that Shango was appeased with sacrifices of shea butter, fowls, rams, palm oil and salt.⁶² Shango priests had to carry imitation axes symbolising thunderbolts and lightning.⁶³ This increased the power of the Alefin. In Kano, Zaria and Oyo-Ile, the priests and other religious intermediaries were, in most cases, the elders of the society. These could not be challenged by anybody because they saw themselves and were so regarded, as the only link between the living population and the departed ancestors and the spirit world. Thus, age was an important criterion for election into a religious office and was exploited in the manipulation of the consciousness of the community. This conferred a lot of authority on the elders and helped them to mould the character and control the activities of the communities in and around the cities.⁶⁴

61. Johnson S., The History of the Yorubas Lowe and Brydone Printers, (Great Britain: 1976) p. 34.

62. Ibid, p. 34

63. Ibid, p. 34.

64. See for example, L. Mumford, The City in History, Its Origins, Its Transformations and its Prospects (London 1961) p. 49. He asserts that the elders who took charge of religion made it possible for cities to develop because they were the guardians of public morality by punishing offenders who had to atone for their offences with purification rites.

This was achieved by imposing sanctions which prevented people from committing crimes. It was these religious institutions that first helped in the maintenance of law and order in the Savanna societies and created the conditions for the emergence of political elites. Through the imposition of sanctions and taxes, priests were able to control the surplus products of the society thereby, becoming richer and more powerful than the common people. They could live well off; above the ordinary citizens. The religious kings also ensured that farms were properly managed through manuring. They also arranged for the proper distribution of products from different ecological zones between the cities and the rural areas.⁶⁵

It would seem that by the beginning of the 14th century, some of the leading cities were poised against one another because of their acquisition of weapons of violence.⁶⁶ This development was also heightened by the introduction of Islam, when a serious rift developed between the new comers who wanted to impose the new faith and the autochthonous population.⁶⁷ In Kano for example, the arrival of the Wangarawa in the 15th century, increased the rate of warfare between the Gaudawa and such settlements like Dalla, Santolo, Fangwai and Gaiya.⁶⁸

The fact that these Wangarawa were merchants and missionaries indicates the close relationship which existed between trade and religion. Availability of local articles for trade sustained contacts between Muslim merchants and Hausaland which eventually exposed the area to varying degree of Islamic influence.

65. Shaw T. Towards a Prehistorical Demography pp. 47 - 48.

66. See for example E.M. Hiskett, Wakar Bagauda ta Kano NNPC (Zaria: 1972) pp. 1 - 27; Palmer H.R. op.cit. p.66

67. Hiskett E.M., "City of History: The Story of Kano" West African Review, 28, 1957 p. 580 See also Palmer H.R. op.cit. pp. 71 - 72

The help which the Wangarawa rendered to the Dalla settlers led to the destruction and incorporation of other settlements into what later became Kasar Kano. It also led to the overshadowing of traditional religion by Islam. These new threats seem to have created the need for the Savanna cities to harmonise religious and secular power. Religious priests were compelled to measure their power not only in terms of their wealth and ability to intercede with the gods for the people, but also in terms of possession of arms. The priest was now not only the defender of the faith but also, the commander of the army. His power could only be legitimised only when he actively participated in wars with outstanding performances.⁶⁹ Military prowess became an admirable and desirable quality.

By the 16th century, with the firm establishment of Islam, especially in Kano and Zaria, there came into existence a clear distinction between secular and religious power. Islamic Mallams and Alkalis were appointed by the Sarakuna. These took charge of religious and administrative affairs. It was therefore not accidental that the famous cities of the Nigerian Savanna were also centres of religion and of political power. Because of these, cities attracted scholars and students and this helped in the expansion of the cities. It

69. In Kano, there emerged war-like rulers like Kanajeji dan Yaji (1390-1410) and Muhammadu Rumfa (1463-1499). In Zaria, legendary leaders like Queen Amina, Zaria and Bakwa Turunku were also war-like leaders. In Oyo-Ile, Shango and Orompoto were also noted for their war-like disposition. This martial spirit helped in the wars of expansion and expansion of the walls.

was therefore impossible for international trade routes to by-pass such cities since they provided security for traders and were also centres of production. The exchange of goods through trade helped in building up the wealth of the cities. Over many centuries, Kano became a centre of attraction to peoples of West and North Africa, notably, Nupe, Kanuri, Fulani and Arab/Berber immigrants. This led to the expansion of the city walls.

IV. THE ROLE OF TRADE

It could hardly be stated with any certainty when trade developed within the Savanna and between the Savanna and other areas of the world. It is likely that trade developed as early as societies were established and when problems of the environment forced people to import some of the essential goods not available in their immediate environments. In order to trade with other areas, local industries were encouraged. This therefore, resulted in division of labour. The division of labour created the need for effective organization and additional labour force. This helped in the development of the city. Organized exploitation of raw materials now became significant and complex marketing arrangements arose between the city, town and village; between the farmer and herder and between the blacksmith and farmer; leading to a high degree of economic interdependence and political integration. This high degree of economic interdependence helped in the development of the Savanna cities. The level of economic interdependence between the various specialists in society is graphically

put by Bascom:

The carver depends upon the blacksmith for tools, and upon the farmer, the hunter and the trader for food. The blacksmith depends upon others for food and upon the weaver for clothing. The farmer depends on the smith for his hoe, machete, and axe and on the weaver for his clothing. The weaver depends on the farmer for his food, and on the farmer, the spinner, and the dyer for his cotton thread. Each of these, moreover, must rely upon the herbalist, the priest, the potter, the drummer, the chief, and other specialists for goods and services which they cannot provide for themselves.⁷⁰

This specialization and interdependence which was a major feature of the Savanna region, widened trading contacts. It called forth institutions to mediate between the various trades in the society. Kingship came into existence. With increased sophistication of the society, the power of the king was consolidated through increase in the range and extent to which he could appropriate surplus. This is why the largest market in the state was established in the city,⁷¹ to enable the king to control trade and appropriate surplus by collecting 'gifts' and imposing tolls on traders trading within the city walls. The kings of old Ghana and Mali, for example, became very rich by controlling the routes to the

70. Bascom W.R., The Yoruba of South-Western Nigeria (New York: 1969) pp. 24-25.

71. The Akesan Market in Oyo-Ile was the largest in the empire and was enclosed within the safety of the King's wall.

sources of gold and the amount of gold carried outside their territories.⁷² So also, the Kings of Kano, Zaria, Oyo-Ile and Borno received 'gifts' and imposed tolls on traders who used their markets. In these cities, the King's market was bigger and different from the other markets in the state. Here, every item of trade was taxed. In Borno empire in the 17th century, state officials like Zanna and Argirama were authorised to accommodate North African traders.⁷³ These traders paid not only for being accommodated but also for the security they enjoyed and for being permitted to trade in the capital city. The officials of the Mai (King of Borno), supervised exchange in the market and had to buy all important items on behalf of the Mai before any citizen was allowed to trade with the North African traders.⁷⁴ In Oyo-Ile, in the 18th century, no citizen of Oyo was allowed to trade directly with the European merchants at the coast. Only the Alafin and his agents had the power to sell and buy directly from the European exporters.⁷⁵

The major role of trade in the development of the Savanna cities and city walls is that it stimulated the organisation of agricultural and industrial products.

72. Ievtzion N. Ancient Ghana and Mali (London: 1973) p.116

73. Adeleye R.A. "Hausaland and Borno 1600 - 1800" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder, op.cit. pp.556 - 601

74. Ibid, pp. 558 - 600

75. Akinjogbin I.A., Dahomey and Its Neighbours 1708 - 1818 Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge: 1967) p. 146.

different regions, thereby, generating wealth that facilitated the development of the cities. The wealth attracted greater population and led to the demographic expansion of the cities. This is exemplified by the fact that before the 15th century when the great trade routes connecting West Africa with North Africa and Europe skirted Hausaland, cities did not develop here to the extent to which they did at the turn of the 16th century. At this period, Hausaland was brought to the mainstream of international trade. In Kano, Gaiya which laid athwart the trade routes first developed more than Dalla. But by the 16th century, Dalla replaced Gaiya as an important terminus on the Borno route and over-shadowed other rivalling centres like Santolo and Rano to become the capital city of Kano.⁷⁶

The development of trade was therefore, a major factor in the transition that led to the growth of cities and the centralization of the authority of the king over the city's population. This political centralization ensured the security of both the city inhabitants and the traders in the market and along the routes. Thus, the ruling class maintained order, peace and security. In the villages for example, it was the head of the family who wielded authority over the occupants of the compound. In a large and complex community like the city however, an effective central government had to be established to perform this role. This means

76. Last M., "Early Kano" pp. 16-18.

that the development of the Savanna cities was closely related to the development of trade and the emergence of powerful kings.

It was this privileged group that encouraged economic specialization through the production of luxurious items to meet their tastes. The fine bronzes of Ile-Ife and those of Benin seem to indicate that they were cast to meet the demands of the rulers because most of the bronzes depict kings in costly apparels. This is why the kings set up guilds for the various trades. The guilds heads set standards and prices for their products and also regulated the quantity to be produced by each member.⁷⁷ This organization aided the easy exchange of products in the markets so that cities came to attract various specialists. The immigration of peoples of various trades stabilized the economies of the Savanna cities and promoted new methods of production and trade.

With the development of the Savanna cities, security became a priority. Trade routes and cities, which enjoyed magnificent commercial control, became targets of attack by bandits. Trade routes became impassable at times. This situation was not propitious for trade.⁷⁸ Groups of caravans were now organised instead of single itinerant traders for

77. Jeggar P, op. cit. pp. 11-26.

78. Johnson M., "Periphery and Centre: The Nineteenth Century Trade of Kano" in B.M. Barkindo, Studies in the History of Kano, Heinemann Educational Books (Ibadan: 1983) pp. 128-129.

security. The city wall was also built in the defence of the city and a permanent military force had to be trained to be employed in times of war. These were trained and maintained by the state.

The city army and the city wall thus became essential for the political stability and economic prosperity of the city since these helped the Sarki to repel external aggressors and to quell internal threats. It was the same army aided by the city wall that was used to extend the power of the Sarki by conquering other peoples and dominating not only their territories, but also their resources.

V. THE ROLE OF THE ARMY

Writing on the role of the city army in the general process of state formation and development Mabogunje concluded thus:-

The institution of a city army was thus an important concomitant of the rise of an urban centre. With time, the city which could develop this institution to a relatively higher level liquidated such institutions in neighbouring states, provided its own "pax" and created a nation or an empire. A national army then replaced a number of city armies and the presence or absence of stable conditions over the whole area became related to the vigilance and internal condition of the conquering city.⁷⁹

79. Mabogunje A.L., *Urbanization in Nigeria* (London 1968) p. 37.

In 1550, Oyo-Ile was sacked by the Papa. But with military organization based on cavalry and the principle of maintaining long-service troops by the State, Oyo-Ile was able to re-establish herself and expanded the Kingdom at the expense of relatively weaker states.⁸⁰ In Kanem Borno, Mai Idris Alooma (1571-1583), consolidated Borno by establishing a regular force of musketeers, a quasi regular cavalry and a non-regular infantry. He also introduced a special camel cavalry that could penetrate deep into the scrubs and desert to the north and north-west of Borno empire. These were regularly trained in the art of warfare and led by the Mai himself.⁸¹ In Kano, Muhammadu Rumfa formed a regiment under his close command.

This does not mean that the Savanna cities relied exclusively on the army for their survival. Though military conquest meant wealth, slaves, and security, yet it was not the only determining factor in the development and continued prosperity of the Savanna cities. It was rather a combination

80. Davidson B., Africa in History, Themes and Outlines. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, (Great Britain: 1968) p. 151. See also Smith R.S., Kingdoms of the Yoruba Methuen and Company Ltd., (London: 1976) p. 42. Alafin Orompoto is reputed to have formed a large army consisting of 1,000 horsemen and 1,000 foot soldiers.

81. Hunwick J.C., "Songhay, Borno and Hausaland in the 16th Century" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder, op. cit. p. 208. See also, J.E. Lavers "Kanem and Borno to 1808" in O. Ikume, (edited) op. cit. pp. 193-194.

of the security the walls and army afforded and the wealth generated through trade. This was clearly demonstrated in 19th century Katsina. In 1804 when the Jihad forces struck in Katsina, so much insecurity was created that its merchants had to flee to Kano, thereby making Kano the most important commercial centre in the Central Sudan in the 19th century.⁸² The relationship between trade, security and the development of the Savanna cities is noted by Jan Vansina:

The development of long distance trade seems to have been related to political development. For while political centralization may not have been indispensable for trade to develop and flourish, the development of trade in some areas favoured the creation of centralized political systems. And these in turn contributed in large measure to the further development of trade by providing organization and security for markets and caravans. A close link between long distance trade and state organization must then be assumed in many states.⁸³

Without proper organization, long distance trade would not flourish because it needed capital, security and very rich individuals who could give credit to traders. Because of the distances involved and the cost of transporting the goods, most of the items of international trade were very

82. Adamu N.U., "Some Notes on the Influence of North African Traders in Kano" Kano Studies, Vol. 1, No. 4 1968 pp. 43-49.

83. Vansina Jr., (ed's) The Historian in Tropical Africa. O.U.P., (London: 1964) p. 85.

costly when they eventually reached the cities. International trade therefore served mainly the rich as could be seen in the trade goods. These included, beads, slaves, leather goods, horses, ivory, and embroidered gowns. Thus, city walls were built not only to protect trade but also to boast the power of the Sarki.

IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CITY WALLS

The city wall is one of the oldest and simplest form of traditional military architecture in the Nigerian Savanna belt. This architectural work has its basis in the peoples' cultures, their values and perceptions. Stockades were also built. These were built with living plants especially, Kaguwa, (*Euphorbia sepium*), of the cacti family.⁸⁴ In North eastern Kano for example, most of the fortifications surrounding towns and villages were of stockades. The reason why some settlements preferred stockades to mud is not clear. But it would seem that this was more of a cultural practice and the exploitation of available materials. According to certain people, the presence or absence of a wall in an area in the Nigerian Savanna, indicates the type of occupation of the group. They assert that where the people's way of life was trade and agriculture, these sedentary people had to build walls or stockades in fear of predatory raids and to

84. Barkindo B.M., "The Gates of Kano City: A Historical Survey" in B.M. Barkindo, op. cit. p. 8.

channel trade.⁸⁵ On the other hand, it is held that those who were extensively tied up with agriculture or smelting activities like the rural Maguzawa, had no need for walls because they had to move from place to place in search for fertile soils, or raw materials for smelting iron.⁸⁶ This explanation is rather too simplistic. In Kano for example, the Maguzawa formed a substantial part of the population of Kasar Kano and throughout Kasar Kano are to be found abandoned walled towns as well as those still being occupied. The Maguzawa must have built and occupied most of these. The difference in military architecture was mainly a factor of geography and the methods of construction employed.⁸⁷

The walls are related to the consolidation of the power of the Sarki. The more powerful the Sarki, the larger and

85. See for example K. Chang, The Archaeology of Ancient China. Yale University Press, (New Haven 1972) pp. 351-355. This view was also elaborated by P.J. Darling during a personal communication on the 15th January 1984 at Bayero University Kano. Rather than the walls demarcating the basic occupations of the various peoples of the Nigerian Savanna, they manifest the increased instability of trade routes and centres of commerce with increased international trade in the 15th and the 16th centuries in the Nigerian Savanna. The types of attack and the materials at the disposal of the various areas influenced the type of fortifications which were built. Hence, Barth in 1851 reported of increased violence along the trade routes of Kasar Kano. See H. Barth, Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa in the Years 1849-1855 Vol. I, Frank Cass, (London: 1965) p. 513.

86. Chang K., op. cit. p. 354.

87. Archi B., "Hausa Traditional Architecture", pp. 8-9.

more complex the wall built. Political centralization therefore implied a relatively high level of socio-economic attainment and the ability of the Sarki to mobilize a large labour force to construct the wall. This is why the large walls of 15th century Zaria like the Amina and Zaria walls, were named after the two powerful individuals who initiated or built them.

The early walls seem to have been built by piling up earth to make ramparts. Gaps were left at some convenient points to serve as access to the city. With time and with increase in tactics of warfare and military technology, the plans and sizes of the walls were modified to cope with these. By the 16th century, gates were built by twisting the entrances inside so as to direct or lure attackers into a narrow front.⁸⁸ For effective security, iron doors and locks were also provided for locking the gates. Ditches were dug outside the walls and these were widened and deepened to retain water throughout the year thereby performing the functions of moats (gwalalo). This is why a form of bridge had to be provided across the moat at each of the entrances. This bridge could be easily removed when all the inhabitants were inside. Thorn thickets, Sarkakiya, were encouraged to grow between the moat and the wall to make access to the wall difficult. On the wall itself, battlements were added to shelter defenders of the city and pitch-holes were provided

88. Smaldone J.P., op. cit. p. 66.

for firing weapons on assailants of the city.⁸⁹ This meant an increase in the height of the wall. Its base was also thickened while it tapered upwards. This technique helped in offsetting the structural weakness of the wall thus ensuring its continued stability.

While developments in military tactics and weapons influenced the structural developments of the walls, the developments of the walls equally influenced the developments of tactics in warfare and military technology. For example, the planting of thickets led to the provision of leggings and chain mails for the cavalry, while the construction of high and thick walls led to the introduction of high horses in warfare.⁹⁰

Societies that were able to build walls could limit attacks on them by mounting pitched battles outside the city walls. Here, a trial of strength, tactics and discipline were required. But it was not all societies that could fight pitched battles. These required the maintenance of an army to sustain long battles on the battlefield. This meant a diversion of sufficient human and material resources toward this end. This would imply political centralization, economic

89. Recorded interview with USMAN DAN AUDU, (UDA) Sarkin Kofar Na Isa, Kano City 7th January, 1983. It will however seem that these modifications were not effected at once. The yearly maintenance of the walls involved certain modifications added on them.

90. Law R., "Firearms and Political Power in Pre-Colonial Africa" African History Seminar School of African and Oriental Studies, London 1973.

viability and a sizeable population.

Political centralization was essential because of labour mobilization for the construction and maintenance of the city walls and for the continued defence of the city. This defence required a well-armed force with up^{to} date weapons. This meant a considerable amount of expense. This is why Borno in the late 16th century is reported to have maintained 3,000 cavalry force even though she was indebted to North African Merchants who supplied the horses.⁹¹ It was therefore, mainly among the well centralized and economically rich cities that elaborate walls were built and up to date weapons used. Unorganised and weak groups were unable to build and maintain large walls. Nor were they able to wage wars of expansion and annexation of territories.⁹² This does not mean that societies which had relatively low economic standards did not possess cavalry forces. The Kataf people in Zangon Kataf District of Kaduna State, did possess so many horses in pre-colonial times for which reason the area was referred to as Kasar Dawakai⁹³ (Land of horses). They also surrounded their compounds with cacti (stockades). This means that even though a group could possess horses, these were not the only determining factors for success in warfare and the emergence of the state. It involved centralised administration, active participation

91. Smaldone J.P., *op. cit.*, pp. 8-13.

92. Shaw T, "Towards a Demography of Africa" p. 597.

93. NAK, Notes on Zangon Kataf, 1922-33 No. 607.

in 'international' trade, the construction of defensive walls and the adoption of new weapons and tactics of warfare. These weapons as stated earlier, were costly. The horses, lances, stirrups, swords and spears, needed to meet the new military situation, were usually above the reach of poor and disorganised groups. Horses, in addition, eat large quantity of corn and stalk. In times of slender agricultural production, they therefore created additional problems to feeding the human population. This problem could not be easily solved by poor societies that could ^{not} raid others for booty. These and other problems always forced many ill-organised communities to opt for migration either to naturally defensible areas or to the walled city or town. Hence, ill-organised communities were forced to take shelter in forests or inaccessible hills. The Kagoro people who were militarily strong but numerically few, had to take shelter at the foot hills of the Kagoro hill. They used cacti, which grew to a height of fifteen feet, to surround their compounds.⁹⁴ Other relatively weaker groups in the Guinea Savanna, who could not afford to build protective walls, had to take shelter in forests.⁹⁵ It is therefore no surprise that the evolution of cities and the development of city walls were possible only among well-

94. Smith R.C., Warfare and Diplomacy in Pre-Colonial West Africa (London: 1976) p. 130.

95. Lamb A.F.A., "The Kurmis of Northern Nigeria" Farm and Forest III, I 1942 pp. 187-92.

established and well-organised groups.

In the early stage of the evolution of cities and the development of city walls in the Nigerian Savanna, importance was attached to the various political economic, technological and social forces. The combined effect of these forces helped in the development of the Savanna Cities. The development of specialists was also an important factor in the evolution of the cities and city walls. The specialists provided the basic needs of the society and particularly, the needs of the rulers. These rulers came to gain considerable wealth through ⁹⁶appropriation of surplus. It was the control of these surpluses by the non-productive elites of the society that enabled them to consolidate their power which in turn helped in the growth of the city. This relationship between the control of surplus by the elites and the growth of the city is clearly stated by M.D. Coe:-

A surplus is surely a pre-condition of civilization, for lacking it a society cannot support the non-producing specialists (like priests and artisans) who are the creators of civilization.⁹⁷

96. A. Achi, "Military Architecture and Warfare in Hausaland" pp.6 - 12.

97. Coe M.D., "Social Typology and Tropical Forest Civilizations". Comparative Study in Society and History Vol.I. 1961, p.83

It would therefore seem that the Savanna cities were the chief consumers of agricultural surpluses produced mainly by the rural farmers. The cities were also centres of the accumulation of wealth. This is why they became the chief targets of attack by external invaders.⁹⁸ As a result, static fortifications became necessary. In order to secure the necessary hands for the construction and maintenance of the walls, force was used, at times, to recruit labour. Conquered populations during wars also became additional sources of human labour. Armed conflict therefore emanated among established political systems mainly as a struggle for political domination and for the economic and human resources of the conquered. This is why the growth of the city was closely related to the power of the king, progress in economic development of the city and the technological advancement of the society.⁹⁹ The development of the city walls on the other hand, followed closely the development of techniques and tactics of warfare. The increased confrontation among established states also necessitated the expansion of the city walls to admit rural refugees, captured slaves and to provide enough farmlands and grazing lands within the safety of the walled city for secure pursuits of economic ends of the city by its inhabitants.

98. See for example, J.E. Spencer, Land and people in the Philippines (Los Angeles: 1954) p. 120. He traces the increased confrontation among cities to the wealth which such cities commanded.

99. Achi B., "Military Technology", op. cit. pp. 5-18.

The foregoing is expected to provide a foundation for discussion of the growth of the Savanna cities and the development of their walls over time. In the chapters that follow, the changes which the cities and their walls underwent are examined in relation to the changing circumstances of each of the selected areas of the Nigerian Savanna belt.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EVOLUTION AND FUNCTIONS OF KANO CITY

WALLS: C1100-C103 A.D.I. INTRODUCTION

Kasar (land of) Kan of which Kano city is a part, lies between Latitude $10^{\circ} 30'N$ and $13^{\circ}N$ and Longitude $7^{\circ} 40'E$ and $10^{\circ} 15'E$, while the city proper lies at $12^{\circ}N$ and $8^{\circ} 12'E$. The origin of the name 'Kano' is not certain. Tradition however, refers to it as the name of a smith who came to Dalla for iron stone.¹ The dominant position which the area around the Dalla hill came to occupy vis a vis other hilled areas in Kasar Kano cannot be fully understood until we come to a full grasp with the factors which aided the evolution of settlements in Kasar Kano from the early times to the end of the 19th century.

Numerous Settlements were established in Kasar Kano at an early date. It is difficult without archaeological excavation, to say exactly when such early settlements came into existence. It would however seem that differences in location, availability of natural resources and population concentration tended to affect the evolution of each area in Kasar Kano. In the Northern and North-eastern region, Settlements were established as far back as the first millenium A.D.² These consisted of Miriya, Dungas, Washa, Illele, Kofan Kano and Gannau,³ which were highly populated. In the

1. Hiskett E.M., Water Bageuda ta Kano NNPC Zaria 1969, 1972 p. 114.

2. Mahadi A, op. cit. p. 137

3. Ibid p. 137.

South-eastern region, early Settlements like Gaiya, Dutsen Gadawur and Birnin Kudu were early established settlements. These Settlements are believed to have been founded before Dalla hilled Settlement. Gaiya for example, is dated back to the Late Stone Age.⁴ Gaiya emerged as a centre of iron ore mining and smelting. W.F. Gowers reports that there was widespread migration of blacksmiths from Gaiya to Dalla.⁵ This could be as a result of low amount of iron ore in the Gaiya area. The Gaiya area also lacked the needed charcoal for iron smelting and their blacksmiths had to rely on charcoal from Dalla.⁶ This could have been one of the important reasons why Dalla tended to attract more people than Gaiya.

In the Southern region, Jaji emerged as one of the earliest and heavily populated settled area in Kassar Kano with hills providing natural fortifications.⁷ Other early Settlements were Rano, Tarai and Durba which are believed to be older than Kano city.⁸ The Western and South-western region had relatively fewer Settlements. Among these are

4. Soper R., "The Stone Age in Northern Nigeria" JHSON Vol. III, No. 2 1965 p. 192.

5. Gowers W.F., "Gazetteer of Kano Province" in Gazetteer of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria Vol. I. The Hausa Emirates Frank Cass, (London 1921) p. 8.

6. Palmer H.R., Borno, Sahara and Sudan, London John Murray 1963 p. 139.

7. Mahadi A., op. cit. pp. 149-150.

8. Ibid, p. 152.

Tschuwar Karaye and Tschuwar Getse which are both deserted. Each of them had a wall. Tschuwar Getse emerged as an important place of refuge for people of the surrounding neighbouring plains during raids into the area.⁹ It was also an important centre of iron smelting in Kasar Kano and therefore attracted many people. It was however deserted due to an outbreak of an epidemic.¹⁰

In the central region, the existence of hills led to the clustering of early settlements around these durable landmarks. Dalla and Santolo emerged as very important centres of population concentration in the central region. Each developed into a political unit with satellite settlements, that were linked to it.¹¹ Some of the dependent satellites of Dalla were Gwauron Dutse, Magwan, Jigirya. Others were Fanisau and Tanager.¹² Though this was not the oldest settled site in Kasar Kano, as has been shown, certain factors facilitated its evolution. Dalla emerged as the dominant area in Kasar Kano from the 11th century to the present period.

II. FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE EVOLUTION OF DALLA

The availability of adequate water supply throughout the year, good vegetation for pastoralists, iron ore and good

9. Ibid p. 153.

10. Ibid. p. 154.

11. Last M., "Early Kano" pp. 7-8.

12. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 140.

soils facilitated the growth in population in the area and its establishment as the centre of power in Kassar Kano. Availability of water supply throughout the year in a particular place is the most important environmental factor influencing the distribution of population in the Nigerian Savanna.¹³ In the Dalla area, such rivers were Jakara, and Tukurawa. There were also seasonal tributaries like Gosau and the Jakara pool. These sources of water were very important in the life of the people and of their animals. Pastoralists could easily feed their animals. At the same time, water was important in the construction of the city wall. It was used in mixing the mud with which the wall was built. It was also used for many other domestic purposes like drinking and washing. This made the Dalla area to be more favoured in terms of settlement in Kassar Kano.

The relatively high rainfall also influenced the vegetation of the area. The Dalla area consisted of a marshy area especially, where the River Tukurawa took its source. There was also a thicket near Dalla hill and a grove of trees including a large tamarind tree between the thicket and the Dalla hill.¹⁴ It was on this tree that the god,

13. Udo R.K., Geographical Regions of Nigeria. (London: 1970) p. 174. Here, he talks specifically about the Rima Basin in the Sokoto Area. He stresses that availability of portable water is a factor affecting population distribution in the Rima basin.

14. Palmer H.R., 1928, op. cit. p. 25.

Tsumburburai, was believed to have resided.¹⁵ This vegetation was therefore important to the people of Dalla in their pre-Islamic religious beliefs and in their economy. The undergrowth consisted of shrubs and tufted grasses used mainly for grazing. This attracted many pastoralists into the Dalla area.¹⁶ It also harboured wild animals which were easily hunted. This initially appeared to have attracted many people to the area.

The Dalla area had light, freely draining sandy loams derived from acid crystalline rocks.¹⁷ This fertile soil enabled the people of the area to produce grains, cotton and tobacco at an early period. This agricultural wealth of the area attracted greater population and led to the demographic expansion of the Dalla area. The reference to this area by Mortimore as the 'Kano Close-Settled Zone' is a reflection of the nature of its soils and vegetation in attracting large concentrations of population from early periods.¹⁸

The rock clusters of the area of Dalla and Gwaron Dutse were inhabited by different clans, each ruled by its respective chief with a large following.¹⁹ Mention has been

15. Ibid. p. 25.

16. Deham D, (et al), Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa 1822-1823 (London, 1962) p. 51.

17. Mortimore M.J., "Land and Population Pressure" pp. 60-70

18. Ibid, pp. 60-70.

19. Palmer H.R., 1928, p. 25.

made of the spiritual influences of certain individuals like Barbushe, the chief priest of Tsumburburai in the Dalla area. This enabled him to gain control over basic resources and imposed sanctions which prevented people from committing crimes against the leader. Priests eventually started to control the surplus products of the society thereby becoming richer and more powerful. Even at this early stage of development, there was division of labour. Leading professionals in the area came to be recognised and given titles like Sarkin Samarai (Leader of the Youths), Sarkin Noma (King of farming), Sarkin Makadala (Chief drummer), Sarkin kira (chief blacksmith) and the chief herbalist.²⁰ This reflects the intensity of economic activities in the area.

III. THE EMERGENCE OF THE STATE OF KANO CENTRED AT DALLA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALLS

The establishment of the various clan chiefs was an important development in the origin of the ruling class in the Dalla area. Bagauda, one of the early and powerful clan heads to settle here, was able to occupy an influential position because of his wealth.²¹ One of the factors for his dominant position over the other clan heads was the availability of iron ore and the ability of the people in the Dalla area to smelt and smith it into tools. The Dalla smiths could manufacture farming implements, weapons and

20. Ibid, p. 25.

21. Mahadi n., op. cit. p. 156.

craft tools. Such agricultural tools like galaa, fartanya and adda were produced. This development in agricultural technology made Dalla capable of supporting large and permanent population concentrations. The weapons also gave her an edge over other areas that lacked such advantage. The production of such weapons like spears, swords, knives, axes, arrows and later, bridles, stirrups, iron doors, locks and nails, helped in changing the military balance in favour of the forces of Bagauda and his successors.²² This increased the tempo of conquests of the neighbouring settlements. The wars between Dalla and such neighbouring settlements as Reno, Santolo, Fanisau, Fangwai, Gaiya, Dutsen Godawun and Sheme which lasted for over a century,²³ is an indication of the power which Bagauda now gained. Infact, some of these settlements began to decline while Dalla continued to rise to prominence. Some of these like Sheme, Reno, Fangwai and Gano were quickly incorporated into the Kano State centred at Dalla. This territorial expansion by Dalla went hand in hand with the construction of the Dalla wall. This was to help in consolidating the power of the Sarki.

22. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 159.

23. Hiskett M, "The City of History" pp. 849-856.

IV. CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL

Gijimasu (C1095-1134), the third Sarkin Kano started the construction of the wall of Kano city.²⁴ Because of his limited powers he could not use force to mobilize enough labour for the work. In order to win the support of the people to build the wall, he distributed gifts to them. He is said to have slaughtered one hundred cattle on the first day of the work.²⁵ However, it was at the time of Tsaraki (C1134-94), that the first wall was completed. This first wall was provided with eight gates and built in a circular form to aid defence. It is said to have been built anticlockwise:

They began the wall from Raria....

They continued the work to the gate of Bazugi, and from there to the water gate and on to the gate of Adama and the gate of Gulan, then past the gates of Waika, Kansakali and Kowungari, as far as the gate of Tuji.²⁶

This information on the anti-clockwise construction of the wall is supported by that in Labarun Hausawa da

24. Disagreement still exist as to who actually started the construction of the wall. According to the Kano Chronicle, Gijimasu is reputed to have started the work on the wall after he had received the consent of his people to build a wall from "Raria". Others asserted that it was his son, Tsaraki, who started the work. See Palmer H.R., 1928, pp. 25-26.

25. Ibid, pp. 100-101.

26. Ibid p. 100.

Makwabtansu where it is stated that the construction of the Kano wall started at Kofar Mazugar and went anti-clockwise to Adama, Kofar Gadon Kaya (though a 17th century gate), and ended at Kofar Tuji.²⁷ But in another source titled 'Kano ta Dabo Cigari',²⁸ the gates of Kano wall are listed clockwise and the names of the 12th century gates are confused with those built in the 15th century. It is thus stated:

He (Giji masu) started from Raria (between Dan Agundi and Kofar Na Isa) and continued to Kofar Adama up to a certain gate in the vicinity of the present Kofar Kansakali.²⁹

The confusion in the names of the gates and the mix up of the 12th century gates with those of the 15th century, is an indication that the writer was not certain about the origin of the wall nor was he clear about the direction where the first construction started. This means that the version in the Kano Chronicle is most likely to be more reliable while the other two versions are merely variants of it. Since the population of the city in the 12th century was concentrated between the Jakara pool and Dalla hill where there was abundant water supply and iron ore, the construction of the wall could have started from that direction, especially, where the Jakara river cut through the wall between Kofar Mazugar and Kofar Tuji

27. Last E.M. Labarun Hausawa da Makwabtansu, NNPC, Zaria 1958) pp. 4-5.

28. Dokaji A., Kano ta Dabo Cigari Gaskiya Corporation Zaria 1978, p. 13.

29. Ibid, p. 13.

as shown in Figure 1. This could have continued northward to enclose the twin hills of Dalla and Gwauron Dutse in the northern and western portions of the city.

In constructing the first wall, mud, the immediate and cheap source material for building in the area, was exploited to full advantage. The use of mud enabled the fortifications to withstand the ravages of the rains, while the later employment of bricks enabled the walls to withstand the breach actions of invaders of the city. The walls enabled the various Sarakunan Kano to consolidate their power and with this power, they could force people both within and outside the wall to accept their authority.

This circular wall was constructed with eight gates located at strategic sections of the wall. These 12th century gates were Mazugal, Kofar Ruwa, Kofar Adama, Kofar Gudan, Kofar Waika, Kofar Kansakali, Kofar Kwungari and Kofar Tuji.³⁰ Each of the gates was constructed to serve specific functions for the inhabitants of the city and the immigrants. In constructing the gates, traditional medicinemen and fortune tellers were called to offer sacrifices to please the spirits of the gods. These sacrifices are said to have consisted of a young man and

30. For details on the names of the first eight gates of Kano, See Palmer, Kano Chronicle, pp. 100-101.

virgin girl who had to be bricked up in the wall to solidify it and please the spirits to help in protecting the city inhabitants.³¹ Charms were also placed under the city gates to protect the city population. Charms and amulets were also given to each individual warrior to embolden him and make him invincible to the weapon of the enemy. These could lead to the defeat of the enemy by setting him in total retreat. The increase in the use of charms and amulets in Kano in the 19th century, was only an escalation of an age old practice.³²

One of the gates which received attention in terms of charms is the Waika gate. Here, a tablet was found buried under the gate with an inscription in Arabic.³³ The inscription on the tablet is in a jumbled form 'supposed to have been magical powers to ward off evil' because this gate is known to have been continually harassed and attacked by raiders.³⁴ Waika is the name of a river that took its source from Gwauron Dutse but

31. This information was gathered by me from some informal enquiries I made from some elders at Kofar Ruwa and Kofar Waika, Kano on the 15th January, 1983. This strange practice could have been pre-Islamic. The same strange information was received at Zaria.

32. In the 19th century, devout Muslim warriors wore amulets some of which were inscribed with koranic verses for protection from harm and wounds. There were also charms against poison and weapons. For details on these developments, see J.P. Smaldone, *op. cit.* p. 51.

33. Moody H.L.B., "A Kano Mystery: The Waika Tablet" *Nigeria Magazine* 97, 1968, pp. 63-64.

34. *Ibid.* pp. 63-64.

has since dried away. In or near the valley of the Waika river was a settlement known as Unguwar Dabai. This gate therefore might have ^{been} constructed to serve the inhabitants of Unguwar Dabai who constantly used the gate.³⁵

Kofar Ruwa, one of the eight gates of the first wall, was also an insecure gate. This gate was constructed to enable the water from River Tukurawa, a tributary of River Jakara, to drain out of the city. Though the Conservation of water inside the city was essential for the survival of its inhabitants, it would however seem that the construction of a gate that could be guarded at this spot was necessary. Here, the autochthonous population seem to have continued to exercise their autonomy. They continued to worship the god of Tsibiri at this gate.³⁶ In 1885 and 1931, the gate bursted where water animals like crocodiles, snakes, fish and other aquatic animals were found.³⁷ This bursting of the gate could have been an age old occurrence that could have led to the worship of the god of Tsibiri at the gate.

35. The testimonies of some oral informants interviewed at Kofar Waika indicate strongly that the village, Unguwar Dabai, still exists and is about three kilometres away from the gate.

36. Barkando B.A., op. cit. p. 16.

37. Ibid. p. 16.

The Mazugal gate is one of the first gates to be built. Maguji, one of the sons of Buguia, is said to have built the gate and that he was a miner and smelter of iron, hence, the name Mazugal.³⁸ This place could have been related to the mining and smelting activities in the Dalla settlement said to have started in the 7th century A.D.³⁹ This could have formed one of the earliest settled site in the Dalla sequence. It is therefore not unlikely that the gate was built to control the mining and smelting activities, thereby increasing the powers of the Sarki, Tsaraki.

Other early gates of the early wall like Kofar Gudan and Kofar Adama were named after some villages outside the wall who used such gates into the city.⁴⁰

Kansakali gate is said to have been the spot where Sarkin Kano, Tsaraki, used to share out swords to his warriors fighting to defend the South-eastern portion of the city against such settlements like Kargya, Getso and

38. Ibid. p. 15, Mazuga in Hausa is a place where bellowing (smelting) takes place. The name Mazugai, given to this gate is most likely related to the early smelting activities at this gate.

39. Willet F., op. cit. p. 366.

40. The names of some villages were often given to certain gates in Kano depending on the relevance of such villages to the Dalla Settlers. It would however seem that the villages of Gudan and Adama have since been abandoned as my informants could only point to the directions where they once existed.

Godiya.⁴¹ It is not however, likely that the sharing of swords actually took place in the 12th century. It could have taken place in the 15th century or even later. Though swords were manufactured and distributed in Kano,⁴² this does not mean that they were necessarily distributed at this gate.

Tuji was the name of a renowned warrior of Tsaraki and the gate appears to have been named in his honour.⁴³ This name continued after Tuji. The change in name from Tuji to Na Isa in the 15th century could have been due to the emergence of another rich and powerful figure called Na Isa at the time.

The first eight gates were therefore built to serve different functions. Some were in honour of distinguished military officials of the state. Others were smithing centres, while some were the names of certain villages. The gates could have been nothing more than gaps provided as passage ways. There is little evidence as to what was initially used in locking the gates. It would seem that gumagumai (logs), thorns or animal skins could have been used as locking devices.⁴⁴

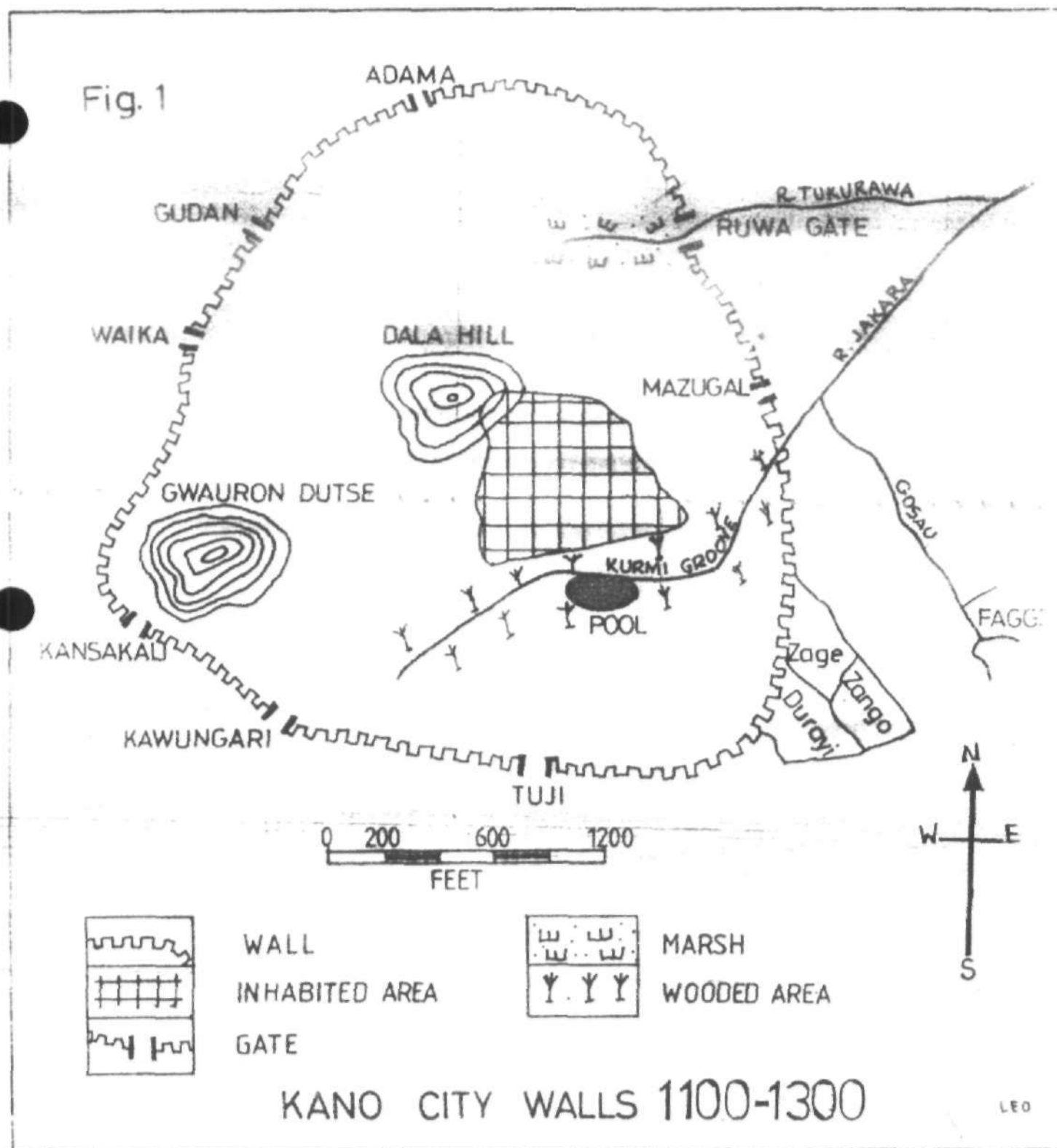
The circular wall and the gates followed the terrain

41. Recorded interview with Alhaji BAI (M) Kofar Kansakali, Kano, 12th January, 1983.

42. Garba C.Y., Tarihin Bawo (Evans Brothers Limited, Ibadan 1980) p. 9.

43. Barkindo B.M. op. cit. pp. 18-19.

44. Ibid. p. 8.



Source: Fig 1-III Alan Frishman, "The population Growth of Kano, Nigeria." African Historical Demography Edinburgh, 1977 pp 216, 220 and 221 respectively.

In certain areas, the wall was projected outward to enclose Gwauron Dutse while to the north east, the wall is curved inwards as it approaches river Tukurawa. This was probably an attempt to avoid the river where the current was high or where the river was wide. The circular shape of the wall and the projections was to aid defence or to enclose features thought to be imbued with powerful spirits or deities. The Sarakunan Kano based at Dalla now used the wall to establish their authority over the central region. In fact, one of the main reasons for starting the construction was the attainment of such objectives. Tsamiya (C1307-1343), was able to consolidate his power through the conquest of all the groups within the area that had hitherto succeeded in maintaining their autonomy.⁴⁵ In order to help strengthen the authority of the Sarki, a centralized system of administration was devised. Occupational specialists were recruited into the administration. Offices like Jarmai, Madaki, Galadima, Sarkin Tsibiri and Alkali were created.⁴⁶ With time and more conquests, some of these, like Sarkin Dawaki Magara and Wambai Giwa, amassed so much wealth that they became more powerful and wealthier than the Sarki.⁴⁷ At the time of Sarki Umaru (C1410-1421), some of these wealthy individuals operated independent of his control and even

45. Mahadi A., op. cit. pp. 165-166.

46. Ibid, pp. 166-168.

47. Last M, op. cit. pp. 7-23.

dictated the policies of the state.⁴⁸ It was only during the time of Muhammadu Rumfa (1463 - 1499), that the excesses of these rich and powerful individuals were checked and the Sarauta system consolidated.

V. THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE SARAUTA SYSTEM, IMMIGRATION AND THE EXPANSION OF THE WALL

In the attempt to consolidate his power, Muhammadu Rumfa exploited the experiences of Islamic scholars and employed Islamic principles to rule Kano. Muslim scholars began to receive wide privileges. Some of them who were close to the nobility were settled in estates acquired by the state through conquest.⁴⁹ One Habibullah, a Wangara scholar, is reported to have been given fief-lands by the ruler of Karaye in the Western part of Kano, as a reward for his blessing.⁵⁰ By choosing the most loyal and outstanding among the scholars, Muhammadu Rumfa was able to draw a large portion of the Islamic scholars closer to the nobility in such a way that these would identify with the nobility to a great extent. It gave the state monopoly over the selection and appointment of titled officials into sensitive positions in the

48. Mahadi A., op. cit. p.166

49. Last M. "From Sultanate to Caliphate: Kano 1450-1899" in B.M. Barkindo, op. cit. pp. 6 - 74

50. Al-Hajj M., op. cit. pp. 10 - 12.

administration of the state. The appointment of such title-bearing officials of the state like Galadima, Madaki, Sarkin Bai, Barde, Wombai, Makama, Turaki and Sarkin Dawaki Tsakkar Gida⁵¹ by Muhammadu Rumfa was aimed at consolidating the power of the Sarki because these titled officials were people of slave origin. The aim of using slaves in important positions, both in the army and in the administration, was to forestall the possibility of a rebellion if free-born natives and princes were recruited.

Rumfa also introduced a standing army. The Dawakin Zaggi was a permanent cavalry force that was used by him in battle as reserve when the need arose.⁵² These innovations by Rumfa consolidated the position of the Sarki and enabled him to extend the city walls. Rumfa extended the city wall from Kofar Dagachi to Kofar Mata and to Mofar Gatawasa and Kofar Kawayi. From Kawayi, the wall was extended to Kofar Na Isa and to Kofar Kansakali.⁵³ The extension helped to increase the economic base and military strength of the city. This extension was also made possible through an increase in the city population.

The size of the city at any time was a major factor in determining the size of the wall itself because of the close relationship between the size of the population and that of

51. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 178

52. Ibid, p. 179.

53. Mahadi, A. op. cit. p. 180.

the wall. Any considerable increase in the size of the city population also led to a corresponding increase in the size of the wall. As population increased, Kumbfa was compelled to expand the city wall to create enough space for settlement, farming and herding, within the safety of the walls. This does not mean that the city population lived solely on agriculture. It can not, however, be denied that the city population heavily relied on agricultural products for their sustenance. There was the need therefore to incorporate farmlands and land for herding for safe cultivation of crops and rearing of cattle in times of long sieges.⁵⁴

Mention has been made of some of the important migrations into Kano in the 15th century which necessitated the extension of the wall.⁵⁵ There were also movements of people from the rural areas of Kano that were often targets of attack. Because of the increased costs of military defence with the introduction and use of the cavalry, some of the rural people that could not afford the new shock weapons and the prolonged wars fought by the established states, were forced to migrate into the well-defended walled city of Kano for security.⁵⁶ People from such areas like Nassarawa, Dawanau, Unguwar Dabai (Waika), Dosayi, Rijiyar Zaki, Karaye, Kiru, Kongi, Birchi and Kabe moved into the city

54. Denham D. op. cit. p. 51.

55. Refer to Chapter three pp. 49-53.

56. Informant Alhaji BALA op. cit.

during raids on them bringing with them their families, grains and animals.⁵⁷ These and other immigrants helped in swelling the city population and called for the extension of the wall. This extension led to the increase in the number of gates from eight in the 12th century to twelve in the 15th century. Some of the gates of Kano began to bear the names of the villages that constantly used the gates as shown in figure II.

The 15th century wall and gates of Kano were a modification of those of the 12th century. This later wall and the gates were built with sun-dried bricks.⁵⁸ In Jenne-Jano, the practice of using baked bricks in building the city walls dates back to the second century. A.D.⁵⁹ In Hausaland, bricks were made of mud mixed with dried grass and animal dung and they were then fashioned into the shape of a cone.⁶⁰ These were allowed to dry for two or more days before they were used for building. Brick-making therefore needed specialists who knew the type of earth to use, the size of the bricks, the moulding processes and the materials needed to mix the earth with in order to produce hard bricks. These (brick moulders) formed part of the building specialists. The mobilization of these professionals was done through the hierarchy of the building specialists.

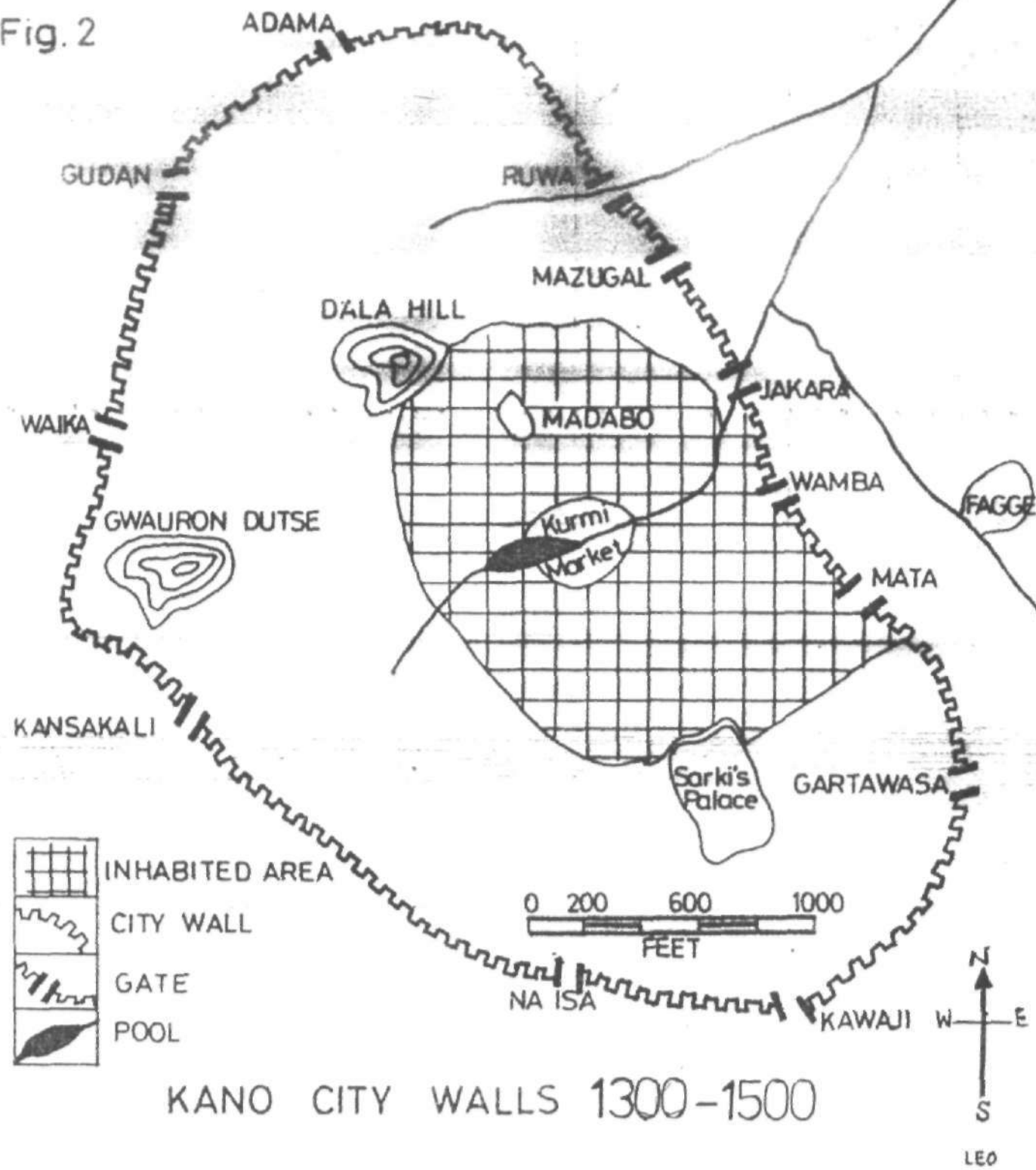
The use of bricks instead of mud became necessary due to its durability and high quality. This durability and quality of the bricks ensured the security of the wall. The security provided by walled towns was not limited to Kano alone. Other walled towns like Getso, Gwarzo, and Dutsen Dan Bakoshi became centres of refuge for people fleeing from raids launched by Katsina, Gobir and Maradi. People tended to take refuge in the nearest

57. Recorded Interview with Uba Mohammed (UM) Kofar Mata, Kano City 6th January, 1983.

58. Barkindo B. M., *Op. Cit.*, p.8

59. McIntosh, S. K. and McIntosh, R. J. "Finding West Africa's Oldest City" *National Geographic* Vol. 162 No. 3, 1982 pp 396-418.

Fig. 2



walled settlement. This made it highly difficult for a breach to be made in the wall. It will therefore seem that the 15th century modification in the architecture of the Kano wall was dictated by developments in military technology and warfare tactics.

It is most likely that by the 12th century when the first wall was built, weapons used consisted of clubs, sling, bow and arrows, sword and javelin. With these offensive weapons, the mud wall could be counted upon to offset the offensive capabilities of their assailants. By the 15th century however, techniques of breaking and scaling through the wall were developed in Savanna warfare where such shock weapons like the long, double-edged sword, the digging knife, the spear and the shield were used.⁶¹ These were employed in destroying, penetrating and surmounting the walls. For example, the digging knife, Sangwami, was used in digging the thin walls to make a tunnel in order to gain entrance into the city. The development of this new military technology affected the pattern of economic, military and political organization of Kano.

Added to these was the use of the horse and its trappings. The horse was first domesticated in the Ukraine of South-West Russia in the 3rd millennium B.C. and by the 9th century A.D. the cavalry force was generally employed in

61. See for example J.P. Smaldone, op. cit. pp. 11-12.

the Middle East.⁶² The short Donquila breed which was, most likely, the first to be used in the Nigerian Savanna, could have been introduced in the 11th century A.D.⁶³ They were introduced through trade and were probably not used in warfare till the early 14th century.⁶⁴ In Kano, horses were first brought to the area during the reign of Yaji (C1349-1385), and by the time of Kanajeji (C1390-1410), quilted armour (Lifidi), iron helmets (kwalkwali), and suits of chain armour (sulke), were being in use in warfare in Kano.⁶⁵ The use of these shock weapons was the very beginning of military professionalism because it required much training and skill. The high stirrups (Likofa), and saddle (sirai), supported the rider and made it possible for him to remain firmly on the back of the horse during rapid charge while the protection of the hives of the horses enabled them to travel faster. The helmet, shield, sword and leggings,

62. Ibid. pp. 6-8.

63. Ibid., p. 6.

64. The use of the horse as instrument of war combined with the technology of war revolutionised Savanna warfares. This is clearly stated by Robin Law in his paper titled "Horses, Firearms and Political Power in Pre-Colonial West Africa" Presented at the African History Seminar, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 5th December, 1973. See also J. Frisher, "He Swalloweth the Ground with Fierceness and Rage": The Horse in the Central Sudan II Its Use", JAH, XIV, 3 (1973) pp. 355-379.

65. Palmer, H.B., op. cit. pp. 71-72.

chain mail and lance, gave the rider an advantage over his enemies armed with bows and arrows, because he could fight at a close range with the enemy and could deliver a decisive blow.⁶⁶ He could also easily pursue and overtake the defeated enemies.⁶⁷

It was these new weapons and new tactics in warfare that could have compelled Rumfa to modify the walls of Kano in the 15th century. The wall now measured about 30 feet high and about 40 feet thick at the base⁶⁸ so that assailants could not easily climb the wall into the city, nor could a breach be easily made.

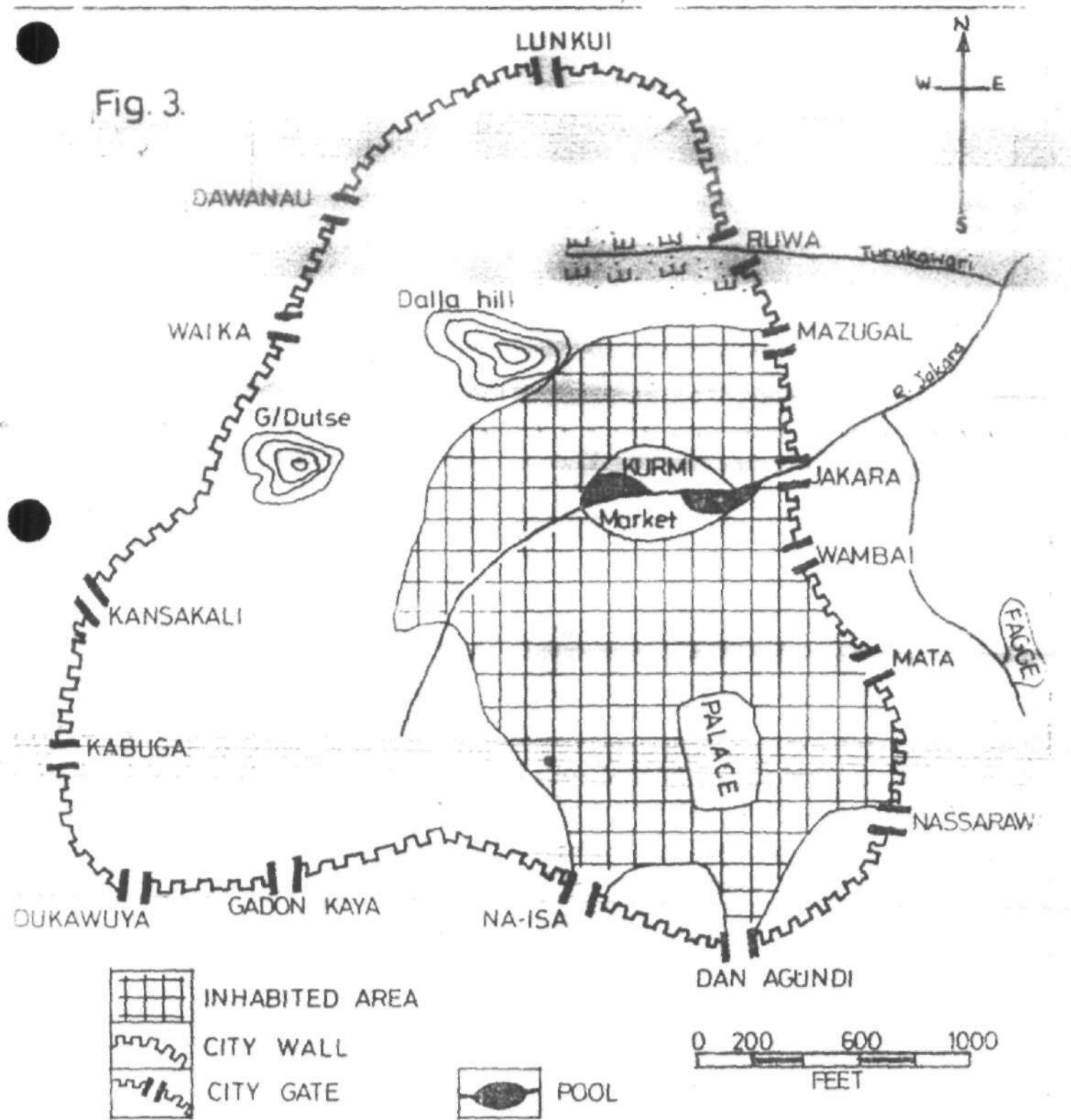
Muhammadu Rumfa also established a permanent ruling house for the kings of Kano by building the Gidan Rumfa.⁶⁹ The extension of the wall and its modifications and the establishment of a residence for the Sarki are indications of the wide powers he now enjoyed. It also indicates the increasing need for security during this period. The need for security increased in the 16th century. Sarki Muhammadu Zaki (c1582-1618), in his attempt to curb this development, established a special group of uniformed security men known as dogarai. These were to impose and

66. Turney-High H.H., Primitive War: Its practice and Concepts, (Columbia University of South Carolina Press, 1949) p. 12.

67. Otterbein K.F., The Evolution of War, A Cross Cultural Study (HRAF Press, 1970) p. 55.

68. Morgan P., "The Wall City of Kano" Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 1929 p. 402. See also H.L.B. Moody, The Walls and Gates of Kano City. Historical and Documentary References, A Preliminary Survey Kano Studies No. 3, 1967, p. 12.

69. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 180.



KANO CITY WALLS 1500 TO PRESENT

FIGS. 1 TO 3 AFTER FRISHMAN A. 1977.

LED

execute royal commands, apprehend highway robbers,⁷⁰ and to protect the people from commercial fraud like general deceits in weights, measures and sizes or counterfeiting wares.⁷¹ This increase in the rate of crimes in the city was a reflective mirror of the changing society. It was a reflection of the existing contradictions in the life-styles between the ruling classes and the talakawa. This distinction between the members of the ruling family and the nobility on the one hand and between these and the talakawa on the other hand was widened during the reign of Sarki Kutumbi (1623 - 1648) who had to be accompanied by 100 eunuchs, 40 mounted drummers, 25 mounted trumpeters and many other musicians on every ceremonial occasion.⁷² It would also seem that the final extension of the city wall was done during his time by Wambai Giwa. Wambai Giwa was a renowned warrior in 17th century Kano but when the Sarki went to war against Katsina, Wambai Giwa could not go with him because of ill-health. He used this time to mobilize the people of the city who extended the wall of Kano from Kofar Na-Isa to Gadon Kaya, Dukawuya, Kabuga and to Kofar Kasakali.⁷³ Kutumbi built a number of royal houses in different places. Because of the power which the Sarki now wielded, he could use force to mobilize people to work for him. Force was used to recruit labour for work on the walls and palaces.⁷⁴ The excessive power of the King and other ruling classes created much fear in the talakawa

70. Ibid p. 185

71. Recorded Interview with MALAM YAKUBU (MY Kofar Dan Agundi, Kano 5th January, 1983.

72. Mahadi, A., op. cit p. 186

73. Palmer H.R. op.cit. pp.117-118

74. Recorded Interview with ALHAJI AHMADU SUMAILA (AAS) and Alhaji IBRAHIM (AI) Kofar Hassarawa Kano, 16th January 1983. One is not however certain whether these informants are in a position to know what actually

(commoners) to the extent that some preferred to travel to far away places during the dry season to remove themselves from these excesses.⁷⁵ It is, therefore, no wonder that there was increase in the use of force to recruit labour with the increase in the size of the wall. Since the building was manual, coupled with the speed with which the work was carried out, it became necessary for the Sarki to devise a hierarchy of building officials for easy mobilization of the needed labour. These officials were, Sarkin Magina, Madakin gini, Galadiman gini, Shamakin gini, Makaman gini, and Turakin gini.⁷⁶ The Sarkin gini for example, was the supervisor of builders and gave mobilization order to the Madakin gini. He also surveyed, designed and determined the alignment of the wall using the topography of the area. The Sarki Maginas was also responsible for rewarding builders who excelled in the building craft and punished recalcitrants who refused participation in the work. The Madakin gini on his part, assigned each region under the control of the city a certain number of work force to be brought to the city. He did this by taking into consideration the size of the region, its estimated population and the estimated able-bodied men and women.

⁷⁵ Recorded interview with Alhaji MUHAMMADU INUSA (AMI) Kofar Kabuga, 10th January, 1983. See also B. Ichi, Military Architecture and Warfare in Hausaland. The Walls of Kano and Zaria". Paper presented at the Department of Sociology, University of Jos, 25th April, 1985 PP 6 - 7.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Recorded interview with Alhaji MUHAMMADU SANI (AMS) Madakin gini, Kano city, 27th January, 1983. See also H.T. Sa'ad. Between Myth and Reality: The Aesthetics of Traditional Architecture in Hausaland. Ph.D. Thesis (Architecture) University of Michigan, 1981 P.118.

who were legible for conscription. It was then left to the Galadiman gini to consult the Sarkin gini, of all satellite towns and villages. The Makaman gini assigned the building work to the regional guild chiefs and their subject members.

This means that though the city had a hierarchy of officials in-charge of building, these exercised their authority through their subordinates bearing similar titles but residing outside the city. It was the duty of each of these subordinates to collect the needed manpower in his region and put them under the Sarkin gini of that particular town with instructions to converge to the city with their working tools, sleeping mats and sufficient food to last them for as long as they were required to remain in the city for building the wall or its maintenance.

It was the building specialists who helped in building the wall according to specifications, using such materials like mud, stones, bricks and azara, to withstand new military technology and tactics of warfare. Thus the wall construction helped in producing builders who were adept at devising suitable building materials and techniques to enable the fortifications withstand prolong sieges. This development in military architecture was matched by an aggressive spirit to conquer others and because of the security the city now enjoyed, many economic specialists began to filter into Kano. Streams of Arabs, Arawa, Kanebu, Bornawa, Adarawa and Fulani who moved into Kano between the 14th and 16th centuries, necessitated the expansion of the city wall. This expansion was done by Wambai Giwa during the reign of Kutumbi. The expanded section included Kofar Kabuga, Kofar Dukawuya and Kofar Gaden Kaya, bringing the number of gates to fifteen.⁷⁷ New improvements were also effected on the wall and

⁷⁷ Palace of the Emir of Kano, p. 117.

gates. These included battlements, loopholes and lockable iron doors.⁷⁸ This means that the inhabitants of the walled city could fight their enemies using the battlements and loopholes. They could stand on the battlements and could clearly view their opponents through the loopholes. The battlements and the high wall protected the defenders of the city from the deadly missiles of the enemy while the loopholes were used to fire missiles at the advancing enemy.⁷⁹

The tactic of rushing the gates or of setting them on fire, since the early gates were covered with tanned hides or logs,⁸⁰ called for their modification. Wall entrances were convulated to channel attackers of the city into a narrow front to make them vulnerable to the missiles of the defenders.⁸¹ Iron doors replaced the hides and logs. These were made by hammering plates of metal and their flat ends were firmly fastened together to form the iron doors (Kyauraye).⁸² These doors were set deeply into the walls forming dark recesses so as to conceal the defenders stationed inside the city.⁸³

Furthermore, outer ditches (gwalalo) were widened and deepened to retain water throughout the year. This made it

78. Smaldone J.P., op. cit. p. 86

79. Ibid p. 66.

80. Ibid pp. 66, 68

81. Ibid p. 66.

82. Some of these gates like that of Nassarawa, are still in site and are kept at Gidan Makama in Kano.

83. Larymore C, op. cit. p. 25, 70.

impossible for both cavalry and infantry to get near to the wall and gates except through the narrow roads that led to the gates. As has already been stated, impenetrable thorn thickets were also allowed to grow on certain sections of the wall. From Kofar Gadon Kaya (Bed of thorns gate) to Kofar Dukawuya, through Kabuga, Kansakali, Waika, Dawanau and up to Kofar Lunkui, the wall was lined up with these thickets (surkuki)⁸⁴ This impressive and awe-inspiring wall helped in providing security for the sarakuna and the inhabitants of the city. Larymore for example, commented on the defences of Hadejia in this way:

The gateways were huge, and so cunningly arranged with rectangular approaches that no armed force could possibly rush them, - indeed, not more than three or four men at a time could cross the narrow bridge, and, were any attempt at defence being made inside, these would probably not cross them alive⁸⁵.

All these were designed to strengthen the security needs of the state. With the acquisition of the needed security, the inhabitants of the city became offensive by launching expeditions in different areas for the acquisition of slaves and booty. These raids for booty, slaves and for the imposition of taxes for the support of the administration

84. It would seem that the thickets were allowed to grow in areas of the wall that needed no further modifications. This could have been in the late 17th century.

85. Larymore C, op.cit. pp. 91 - 92

in Kano dates back to the 12th century. Tsaraki (1136-1194), for example, is said to have raided neighbouring rural areas and compelled the peoples to pay taxes.⁸⁶ His son, Naguji (C1194-1247 A.D), "collected a land tax of one-eighth of crops from all farmers."⁸⁷

In the 17th century, when there was an increase in the number of non-agricultural officials of the state, Kutumbi is said to have intensified the collection of tributes and taxes from subordinate territories within the state of Kano. He also diversified the sources of revenue to cope with the increasing cost of the administration by introducing Jangali (cattle tax) and created a new office of Sarkin Shonu for this task.⁸⁸ These resources were also required for the procurement of camels, horses, donkeys, swords, spears, shields, chain mails and by the 19th century, for the procurement of muskets. There were also ceremonial and decorative materials needed by the state. These included trumpets, drums, flutes and exotic dresses for the Sarki and his courtiers.

In order to meet these financial obligations, the state began to wage wars for the acquisition of slaves some of whom were settled on gandaye. The 'Bauchi region'

86. Palmer H.R., op. cit. p. 101.

87. Ibid pp. 101-102.

88. Ibid p. 101.

became an important area where Kanu directed her raids for the acquisition of slaves.⁸⁹ The use of some of the slaves on large agricultural estates established throughout the state,⁹⁰ helped in the production of surplus. The products from these farms promoted the economy of the state by stimulating industry, commerce and trade. One of such estates that contained thousands of slaves was that established by Daudu, one of the Galadiman Kanu at the time of Sarki Abdullahi Burja (C1438-1452).⁹¹ Kutumbi (C1623-1648 A.D) was also reported to have established such large *gandaye*, cultivated by slaves, at Indabu, Gandu, Takarawa and Rimin Kwashe.⁹²

The building of the wall therefore was to help in creating the necessary economic infrastructures. This is why skilled craftsmen and other professionals were encouraged to live in the city. The need for war-related equipments for the state, like horse reins, leather-finishings on saddles, sword and dagger sheaths, whips, amulets, clovers for warriors, *Salka* (water bags) and *Zabira* (food bags) for warriors, attracted a large number of leather-workers in Kanu city. Wood carvers producing wooden handles for weapons and for hoes used on royal and non-royal plantations, hollow wooden cylinders of drums for

89. Mahadi A., *op. cit* p. 88, 190.

90. *Ibid* p. 190.

91. *Ibid* pp. 192-193.

92. *Ibid* p. 193.

wars and state music, were also attracted into the city. Blacksmiths who specialised in the production of hoe blades, manufacture of the great city gates and the doors of the palaces, locks and nails, swords, spears, axes, arrows, stirrups and bridles were also patronised by the state.⁹³ These were also required to follow the army to the battlefield to repair broken weapons on the spot to supplement the stock.⁹⁴ It is therefore, no wonder that most of the skilled craftsmen lived in the walled city of Kano where their services were most required. By organising them into occupational guilds and devising a leadership for each guild, the state ensured the effective production of needed materials for local use and for external trade.⁹⁵ Thus, the walled city ensured a ready and large market for the products of these specialists.

At the beginning of the 18th Century, there was an intensive programme of wall construction all over Kasar Kano. Sharafa, said to have been a wall builder, ordered the construction of walls around Gaiya, Takai, Tsekuwa, Rano, Dawaki and many other towns.⁹⁶ This ensured that the security earlier enjoyed by the city which aided her

93. Jaggar P., op. cit. p. 19

94. Ibid, p. 19.

95. Achi B., "Hausa Traditional Architecture" pp. 8-9.

96. Palmer H.R. 1928 op. cit p. 123.

prosperity was now extended to a wider area under the control of Dalla.⁹⁷ By the 19th century, the required size of the wall had since been attained. What was now needed was the labour for the regular maintenance of the existing structures and to effect minor changes, especially, at the gates. Between 1900 and 1903 with the news of the advance of British colonialists, Kano took certain defensive measures. In 1902, the walls were rebuilt and strong gates were erected, while towns in Kasar Kano were ordered by the capital to rebuild their walls and redig the trenches surrounding them.⁹⁸ Thus, the construction, continued maintenance and modifications effected on the Kano walls were dictated by the king and security needs of the state.

VI. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CITY WALL AND GATES OF KANO

The functions of the wall and gates of Kano changed from time to time, depending on the needs of the state and society. The functions of the 12th century wall was to help in consolidating the power of the state through the establishment of its authority over other areas. The wall was therefore expected to help in making the Dalla area a point from where the succeeding Sarakuna could reach out to dominate other

97. Barkindo B.M. op. cit. p. 8

98. Adeleye R.A. Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria 1804 - 1906. The Sokoto Caliphate and its Enemies Longman, (London 1977)p. 262.

areas. This is why Tsaraki in the 12th century was able to undertake military expeditions to the South-East of Dalla, including such areas like Karaye. He succeeded in bringing many areas to submission.⁹⁹ The power of the priest of Tsumburburai within the walled area was brought under the control of Dalla. So also were other independent settlements like Gaiya, Fenisau, Rano, and Sheme which were conquered by Dalla in the 14th Century. One area that continued to constitute an obstacle to the southward expansion of Dalla was Santolo. It was difficult to conquer Santolo because she also had formidable walls with a wide and deep moat.¹⁰⁰ Dalla however, succeeded in conquering and incorporating Santolo into the State of Kano in the 14th century. The security of the walls enabled Kanajeji (c1390-1410) to launch series of expeditions against the neighbouring and independent state of Zazzau. He invaded the plain of Zazzau up to Turunku but was forced to retreat. After a short time, he mounted a second expedition which fought the King of Zazzau at Gadaz (Kufena?), killed him and many of his subordinate chiefs, occupied the town of Zazzau near the Kubanni river, as far as Shika and prevented the people from cultivation for eight months. He later retired to Kano laden with booty.¹⁰¹

99. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 162.

100. Palmer H.R., 1928 op. cit. p. 66.

101. Ibid, p. 108.

Abdullahi Burja (C1438-1452) also conquered areas in the north as far as Miga.¹⁰² The wall therefore enabled the Kano Kings based at Dalla to expand territorially and to firmly establish and consolidate the position of the Sarki.¹⁰³ By fortifying the area, the Sarki could force the people enclosed within the wall to accept his authority and he could raid other independent areas.

The walled area became the centre of population concentration. People moved into the well-defended walled city for security, especially the ill-organized groups that could not resist the central authority for long. There were also forced migrations of some people to the metropolitan centre of the state as slaves. The relative stability and security afforded by the walled area led to the immigration of people for religious and economic purposes. These helped in swelling the population of the city. Concentration of population in this area helped in the development of the state of Kano. The immigrants brought in new skills, ideas, crafts and capital into the city thereby creating markets for the products of Kano in their former areas since they continued to maintain contacts with these regions.¹⁰⁴

102. Mahadi A., op. cit. p. 169

103. Hiskett, E.M., *The City of History* p. 580. See also Last M., op. cit. p. 723.

104. Mahadi, A., op. cit. p. 103.

The wall also performed economic functions. Mention has been made of the establishment of Dogarai in the city. Merchants could now conduct businesses in the city without fear. Vital industries like weaving, tanning, smelting, cloth-dyeing and smithing were also protected. By patronising their products and giving them the necessary security, the Sarakuna provided the impetus for rapid economic development of the city. Some of the markets established by the state which facilitated the effective exchange of goods included Kasuwar Karabka established by Dagachi in the first half of the 15th century and the Kurmi market established by Muhammadu Rumfa.¹⁰⁵ This increased the rate of exchange between the city and rural areas of the state and between Kano and other states. Thus local goods like grains and raw materials for industries were acquired. In the external trade, Kano acquired slaves, horses, potash, salt, natron and camels. This facilitated the development of specialization and led to the physical expansion of the city.

The wall enabled the imposition of taxes on various craft products in the city. Taxes like Kudin galma, Kudin Karohi, and Kudin fito were imposed on the various occupations. The method of collecting these taxes was through the hierarchy of officials appointed for each occupation by the Sarki. In the case of the blacksmiths for example, the Sarkin Makera

105. Ibid, p. 202.

Babaku was appointed and presented with a turban and large gown as regalia of office.¹⁰⁶ He in turn selected and appointed blacksmiths from the city and rural areas to subordinate ranks under his authority. These included Madakin Kira, Galadiman Kira, Turakin Kira and Mukaddashin Kira. These were engaged in the annual collection of agricultural implements from the rural blacksmiths while the city blacksmiths manufactured military hardware for the state.¹⁰⁷

The walls enabled its inhabitants to cultivate their crops and herd their animals safely especially during periods of conflicts.

The cultivation of such crops like guinea corn, cotton and indigo ~~inside~~ the walled area indicates the utilization of the walled area as a safe refuge for the cultivation of especially essential crops. The wars of expansion in which Kano was engaged, especially, those waged against neighbouring states and vice-versa, could have prevented many farmers from using farmlands outside the walled area. The rural farmers who specialised in the production of grains and other raw materials, that went to support the non-agricultural sector of the city and their industries, were often the first targets of attack by the raiders. Since the city population heavily

106. Jaggar p. op. cit. p. 17.

107. Ibid p. 17.

relied on the food crops and raw materials from the rural areas for their sustenance and for the proper functioning of their industries, a means had to be found to incorporate enough farmlands into the city wall. This was to avoid a situation whereby the city population would be starved and their industries brought to a halt during a long period of siege. Hence, the expansion of the walls in the 17th century, mostl likely, giving it its present shape. Some of the wars which necessitated this expansion included the wars fought against Katsina, Kwararafa and Ningi as well as the Jihad wars.

During the reign of Abubakar Kado (C1565-1573), Katsina is reported to have defeated Kano at the very gates of the city and caused a lot of devastation.¹⁰⁸ It is likely that the Katsina forces succeeded in penetrating into the city. After a few years, in 1660 and 1671, the Kwararafa also attacked Kano and caused so much insecurity that the then Sarki and many of his followers were forced to flee to Daura and returned only after some time.¹⁰⁹ The insecurity which the state now faced, forced the central authority to be concerned with the security of a wider Kano. In order to prevent the raiders from reaching the city of Kano, and to protect other members of the society, the settlements which

108. Palmer H.R. 1928 op. cit. p. 114.

109. Ibid p. 116, See also Dokaji A., op. cit p. 26.

were situated in the direction from which the raiders reached Kano wereo ordered to construct or maintain their walls. Mention has been made of Sarki Sharafa (C1703-1731) who ordered that walls be built around Gaiya, Takai, Tsokuwa, Gano and Dawaki.¹¹⁰ This development was encouraged by the rulers of Kano in the 19th century as we shall later see.

These walls also enabled Kano to crush internal rebellions. In the 19th century, Kano was faced with internal rebellions and external threats. In 1893, succession disputes in Kano between Tukur and Yusuf led to an open rebellion and war. This followed the denial of the throne to Yusuf who is believed to have rightly deserved it by caprice of the Sultan of Sokoto.¹¹¹ Yusuf and his supporters moved to Takai,¹¹² and spread his control over the countryside. The Waziri of Sokoto could not deal with the situation militarily and this continued till 1895 when Tukur was murdered and Aliyu, Yusufu's brother was able to force his way to the throne as Emir of Kano before reconciling with Sokoto.¹¹³

There were also external threats from Damagaran, Ningi and Borno. In the 19th century, communications in South-eastern portion of Kano were disrupted by the Kingdom of

110. Ibid, p. 123.

111. Adeleye R.A., *Power and Diplomacy*, p. 86.

112. Gowers W.F., op. cit., pp. 13-14.

113. Ibid p. 14.

Ningi, while Damagaran (Zinder) attacked towns South of Kazaure and captured Fayem-Fayem and Gabro Maji and in the process acquired livestock, crops and trade goods.¹¹⁴

These and other threats compelled the Kano rulers to construct ribats (fortresses) in addition to the fortifications of pre-existing settlements. Some of the walled strongholds situated on the frontiers founded by the 19th century rulers of Kano included Babura, Dambatta, Gezawa, Gwarzo, Gwaram and Tudun Wada.¹¹⁵ These ribats were to help in the promotion of security in the state. From these walled strongholds, the ^{city} inhabitants were warned of an impending attack. These ribats were also used in delaying the enemy's advance to enable the Sarki to mobilize enough soldiers to ward off the attack.¹¹⁶

The wall also helped in the sedentarization of many Fulani and also in the social and economic development of the emirate. Fulani were required to settle permanently in the ribats. Here, they were sure of cheap slave labour and accessible to market for their products.¹¹⁷ In order to encourage them to settle down permanently, they were given

114. Dunbar R.A., op. cit. p. 22.

115. Fika A.M., The Kano Civil War and the British Over-rule 1882-1940 (O.U.P. Ibadan, 1978) p. 42.

116. Hiskett M., "Kitab al-Farg: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to Uthman dan Fodio" BSOAS, 23 (London 1960) p. 105. See also D.M. Last "Some Aspects of Caliph Muhammed Bello's Social Policy" Kano Studies, No. 2 July 1966 pp. 57-59.

117. Denham D., op. cit. p. 51.

free land for settlement, farming and herding, free seeds and were exempted from forced labour.¹¹⁸ Thus, the walled area had to provide enough land for farming and herding. This is why Clapperton in 1824 estimated that only one-third of the total area of 50,000 acres of the walled city was inhabited. The rest, two third, of the total area was left for farming and cattle rearing.¹¹⁹

The gates on their part performed important functions for security and in the generation of wealth for the state. The recruitment of gate-keepers was to help towards this end. Gate keepers had to scrutinise all who passed into and outside the gate to ensure that thieves and robbers were not allowed in or out of the city.¹²⁰ In 1855, Staudinger met a strong opposition from the gate keepers of Kano since his curiosity to inspect the wall and gates made the gate keepers to suspect that he was a spy as he states thus:

Two gate keepers with a lot of shouting threw themselves upon me and would not allow me to proceed - they insisted that it was not permitted to ride along the wall: that would give me an opportunity to spy out the weakest places, and they supposed that I would call an army to capture the town.¹²¹

118. Mahadi A, op. cit. pp. 129-130.

119. Denham D., op. cit. p. 5.

120. Barkindo B.M., op. cit. p. 11.

121. Staudinger P., In Herzen der Haussalander (Berlin, 1889). For translation see Moody J.E., "Paul Staudinger: an Early European Traveller to Kano" Kano Studies, No. 3, 1967, pp. 38-53.

The wall and gates also regulated the control of slaves. Runaway slaves were stopped at the gate and were taken back to their masters. Lost children and stray animals were caught at the gate and handed over to their owners.¹²² Anyone leading a lonely camel, cow, donkey or child was a suspect and was arrested by the Sarkin Kofa and taken to the palace where he was seriously interrogated.

Because of the important roles of the Sarakunan Kofa, some of these began to receive gifts from the users of the gates in appreciation for their services. This situation was later exploited by the state by introducing the policy of collecting tolls on all goods passing through the gates. The revenue thus collected from the gates, was sent to the state treasury to meet the needs of the administration. The gate-keepers and their dependants were also supported from this revenue.

But some gate-keepers were richer than others because the amounts each gate keeper collected at the gate depended on the accessibility of the gate to traders and on the period. For example, the location of the northern and southern gates in the directions where traders from Damagaram, Borno, Katsina, Yorubaland, Nupe, and Gonja entered Kano city, made

122. During the field interviews, the gate keeper of Kofar Waika, Alhaji Abdullahi Muhamman was discovered to be in possession of two children whom he found moving aimlessly at the gate. These were sent to the palace where their parents would collect them.

gate-keepers stationed at these gates to accumulate alot of wealth apart from what they were paid by the state. For example, one Turaki Kuka Allandayi, the Mai Anguwa (ward head) of Kofar Kabuga was removed by Rutumbi (C1625-1648). This removal from office eliminated the Mai Anguwa's main source of accumulating wealth to the extent that he was greatly disturbed.¹²³

In 1903 the British forces, using the reports of 19th century European travellers to Kano, were able to shell the Kano wall at Kofar Kabuga and took over the control of the state.¹²⁴ From this time, the functions which the wall and gates earlier performed, gradually ceased. The wall was employed as a physical barrier between a relatively homogeneous population of the walled city and a complex, heterogeneous population of the newly created Settlements of Sabon Gari and Bompai.¹²⁵ The walls were therefore used to help in preventing the infiltration of new ideas and cultures. The reason for this was not to help peoples of the walled city to develop along native lines. It had to do with the policy of divide and rule pursued under the guise of protecting Muslims from Southern (Christians), influence. This policy slowed down the receptability of the walled population to

123. Palmer H.R., 1928 op. cit. p. 116.

124. Adeleye R.A., Power and Diplomacy, p. 262, 270.

125. Olasanya G.O., "The Sabon Gari System in Northern Nigeria" Nigeria Magazine 94, 1967, pp. 242-248.

western ideas and innovations. Prior to the arrival of the British on the scene, the walled city of Kanb had been the centre of diffusion of new ideas, skills and innovations. Thus, neither the wall nor the functions it performed was ever static. Just as the walls changed in shape with time, their functions also changed in response to the security and economic needs of both the ruling classes and the society at large.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EVOLUTION AND FUNCTIONS OF ZARIAWALLS C1300 - 190 A.D.I. INTRODUCTION

Zaria city lies between Latitude 11° 4' North and Longitude 7° 24' East in the midst of a gently undulating plain. It is surrounded by such inselbergs as Kufena and Fukur-ukur in the West, Dumbi and Hange in the South and Madarkaci in the north-east. The origin of the name 'Zaria' is not quite certain. Tradition however refers to it as the name of a legendary leader and warrior female named 'Zariya' who was said to have been driven from Kufena by her senior sister, Amina and forced to establish the settlement of Madarkaci which she later renamed Zaria.¹ The prominent roles in the military and political history of Zazzau which Amina and Zariya are reputed to have played can hardly be true. The fact that their names are associated with the construction of walls not only in Zaria but also all over Hausaland and beyond, suggests

1. Traditions concerning Amina and Zariya are not clear. Both are said to have been daughters of Bakwa and lived at Kufena after having left Turunku. Another version has it that it is Bakwa who left Turunku to establish Kufena. See Hogben and Kirk-Greene, The Emirates of Northern Nigeria (London, 1966) pp. 215-6; Anonymous, Amina Sarau Sarauniyar Zazzau (NNPC Zaria, 1954) pp. 1-7. But in the Kano Chronicle, 'the town of Zazzau' already existed near River Kubanni in the 15th century and not 16th century when Amina and Zaria existed. See Palmer op. cit. p. 108.

eponymous traditions.² They should not be taken as literal history without more rigorous examination.

The name Zazzau by which the state came to be known is said to have been derived from a sword that was worshipped in the 15th century Zaria.³ The care-taker of the state sword was called Madau Zazzau.⁴ It is from this name of the state that the inhabitants of Zaria were named Zagi-Zagi or Zazzagawa.⁵

In order to understand the nature and processes of the evolution and development of Zaria, it is necessary to study the evolution of other settlements in the area so that more light can be thrown on the processes, nature and functions of early urban centres of the state of Zazzau. This is necessary if any meaningful understanding of the roles which Zaria city played in the history of the state is to be obtained.

II: THE EVOLUTION OF SETTLEMENTS IN KASAR ZAZZAU

It is difficult to explain the nature of evolution of settlements in Kasar Zazzau. Archaeological investigation has not been thorough enough in the area to enable us to

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2. Amina is said to have built the Kufena walls and those of Katsina. She is also said to have conquered for 35 years and took tributes from the Nupe, Kwararrafa Gwari, Katsina, Kano, Doma, Yeskwa, Atagara, Kwato and Adama. (See Anonymous op. cit. pp. 7.
 3. Pate H.A., The Construction and Functions of Kofar Bai in the History of Zaria N.C.E. Research Essay. A.T.C/A.B.U. Zaria June 1984 pp. 6-8.
 4. Abubakar S, A Historical Account of the Zazzagawa. N.C.E. Research Essay A.T.C/A.B.U. Zaria, June 1974 pp 6-7.
 5. Ibid, p. 6-7.

state categorically the sequence of the evolution of settlements. Written records on the evolution of pre-colonial settlements in Kasar Zazzau are almost absent. It is therefore difficult to draw any meaningful picture about pre-colonial settlements in Kasar Zazzau. It would however seem that settlements evolved in Kasar Zazzau at a very early date.

In this work, an attempt will be made to treat settlements in each area as a unit and to attempt a synthesis of how these settlements evolved as a whole. In the Northern and North-eastern area of Zaria there existed such early settlements like Makarfi, Hunkuyi, Danja, Kawuri, Igabi, Rikochi, Gadaz and Karigi. Karigi lies about 110 kilometres to the north east of Zaria. It is believed to be one of the earliest settlements of the Hausa people of Zaria.⁶ According to the Kargi Manuscript, Madaki Gungumi was the first Sarki at Kargi and then a rival to and at war with Gunguma, the Sarkin Zaria.⁷ Eleven Sarakuna are said to have ruled at Kargi before the 19th century Jihad.⁸ It was a walled settlement which enclosed an inselberg where the palace was situated.⁹ It is not known when Kargi was first settled.

6. Beachie-Ansah J., "A Brief Report on Kargi" ZAP. Vol. V 1983 p. 55.

7. Obayemi A., "The Kargi Manuscript and its Perspective on Pre-Jihad Zazzau" Post Graduate Seminar, Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria 1979/80 session, p. 6.

8. Ibid, p. 4

9. Beachie-Ansah J., op. cit. p.55.

It is however tentatively suggested that it could have been occupied as far back as 1600 A.D.¹⁰ This suggestion is based on the finds excavated at the site which included cowrie shells, pottery and smoking pipes.¹¹ It is not however likely that these materials were used as soon as the area was settled. The settlement could have pre-dated the use of the materials. This is supported by the fact that Madaki Gungwai, the first Sarki at Kargi is said to have been contemporaneous with Sarki Gunguma, the first Sarkin Zaria who reigned in the 14th century.¹²

Gadaz was another independent settlement established very close to Kargi. Here, an early Sarkin Kasa existed as far back as the early 14th century though it was smaller than Turunku, Kargi and Kufena. It seems to have predated the establishment of Zaria.¹³

To the East of Zaria city were such settlements as Rikoci, Dutsen Wai, Wuciciri, Soba, Kawuri, Pambegua and

10. Ibid, p. 56.

11. Ibid, p. 56.

12. Obayemi A., op. cit. p. 2. See also Arnett, op. cit. p. 9.

13. Arnett, op. cit. p. 9. See also "A Smith, Some Notes on the History of Zazzau Under the Hausa Kings" in K.J. Mortimore, Zaria and its Regions. Occasional Paper No. 4, Department of Geography, A.B.U., Zaria, 1970 p. 97.

Maigana. Most of these were established near inselbergs. Anchau, Kuzuntu and Haskiya were said to have been dependent centres of Kargi which acted as 'legitimising agents' in the establishment of settlements and village dynasties.¹⁴

According to the Kargi Manuscript, 'the founders of Zaria settled first at Kawuri. Then at Rikochi. Then Wuciciri. Then at Turunku. Then at Kufena and finally at Zaria'.¹⁵ This shows a close relationship between the city of Zaria and some of the early independent states. Each of these states had full powers over its area. In the case of Kargi, it is said to have had many other dependent settlements.¹⁶

In the Southern part of Zaria, some of the settlements which predated Zaria and had local autonomy included Turunku, Hange and Dumbi. All of these were established on or at the base of hills. Turunku is situated about 25 kilometres south of Zaria city. It had complex walls of different kinds. These were used for both defence and for demarcation of boundaries, using natural features like rock outcrops or an edge of an inselberg.¹⁷

On the western side of Zaria city were such important independent settlements like Kufena, Shika, Yakawada and

14. Obayemi, op. cit. pp. 6-8.

15. Arnett op. cit. p. 9.

16. Obayemi op. cit. pp. 6-8.

17 Hooper A., "A Note on the Functions of the Walls at Turunku, Kaduna State". *Nigeria in Antiquity* Vol. 1 No. 1 1982 pp. 72-73.

Fatika. Kufena and Turunku most likely, developed at the same time and both could have pre-dated Bakwa.¹⁸ These were centres of effective political power in Zazzau just as Kargi, Gadas, Turunku and Shika were. The extent of the walls of Kargi, Turunku, Kufena and later Zaria indicate a process towards state formation in Zazzau since only through the control of a large labour force by a centralised authority could they have been constructed.¹⁹

It was in the late 15th century that Zaria emerged as a dominant political and economic force in the history of Zazzau and overshadowed all the other earlier independent settlements.²⁰ The wars of expansion undertaken by Zaria which led to the defeat of Kargi²¹ and necessitated the transfer of government from Turunku to Kufena and later to Zaria²² indicates the dominant power of Zaria. The fusion of these separate and independent settlements made Zaria a large cluster of settlements. The dominance of Zaria as state capital was due to its location, political, commercial and social importance.

18. Smith A., *op. cit.* p. 98.

19. Boachie - Ansah J, "Archaeological Study of Some Ancient Settlements of North-Eastern Zazzau: A Proposal" *ZAP* Vol. III, 1981 pp. 83-84.

20. Smith, *op. cit.* p. 97. See also R.A. Adelaye, "Hausaland and Bornu 1600-1800" in J.P. Ajayi (eds) *op. cit.* p. 490.

21. Obayemi, *op. cit.* pp. 3-6.

22. Arnett, *op. cit.* p. 9. See also M. Adamu, "The Economy of a Hausa Capital: Zaria in the 18th and 19th Centuries" *Departmental Seminar*. Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria, 1982, pp. 1-4.

III. FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE EVOLUTION OF ZARIA CITY WALLS

The evolution of Zaria city and the development of its walls was a product of its environment, rich soils and the availability of fresh water. These helped to provide the ideal conditions for the growth of a technologically-based farming economy and thus, of a settled community.

Zaria city is situated on the north-central highland with many rock inselbergs of varying shapes and dimensions surrounding it. These include Kufena, Tukur-Tukur, Hanwa, Dumbi and Madarkaci. The soils below the inselbergs are relatively fertile compared to those away in the plains because of the weathering processes on the hills which provide the necessary nutrients to the soils below.²³ The soils of the numerous fadamu are also mostly dark grey clays. These are fairly rich in nutrients and have good water supply that is continuous even in the dry season.²⁴ These soils are used for the cultivation of cotton, groundnuts, sugar cane, vegetables and grains.²⁵ This is partly the reason why people were attracted to settle on or below these hills for cultivation. This is not to say that all the soils in the Zaria area are very rich. Infact, the soils are generally poor and

23. Bala C.D., "The Archaeology of Zaria Inselbergs" Public Lecture. Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies, A.B.U. Zaria, 1977, pp. 1-4.

24. Klinkenberg K., "Soils" in Mortimore M.J. (eds) op. cit. pp. 57-58.

25. ibid., p. 58.

cannot therefore sustain intensive agriculture for long periods without the use of fertilizers.²⁶ Due to local differences in parent rock, there are also differences in the soils. In some areas, grey clay soils are found and may contain calcium carbonate, while others exist, especially at the higher parts of Zaria, where the soils are characterised by a lateritic iron pan,²⁷ which is very hard for the proper growth of root crops. The poor soils of Zaria could have been the reason why people who had the knowledge of the laws of production like fertilization or rotation, occupied very important positions in the society.²⁸ Totemic rituals for improving soils and increasing production of crops were held. Important positions as Uwar gona (goddess of agriculture) and Uwar Dawa (Corn-Queen) were held by people with knowledge of proper management of farms and for good harvest.²⁹ The organisation of communal agrarian pursuits also led to the appointment of Sarkin noma, and uban farauta (father of hunting).³⁰ These developments led to the clustering of unguwoni in the fertile parts of Zaria city through the

26. Ibid pp. 57-58

27. Ibid p. 57

28. Shaw T., Towards a Prehistoric Demography of Africa. Seminar on African Historical Demography. University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1981) p. 598.

29. Ibid pp. 597-598.

30. Smith A., op. cit. p. 82.

concentration of population.³¹ This led to the establishment of a political authority of the Sarkin gari, King of the town, who became the Sarkin kasa, the ruler of the state of Zazzau and could have led to the walling of the settlement.³²

Another factor which led to the concentration of human populations near the hills and which created the need for the construction of the Zaria walls was the availability of iron bearing laterite in and around Zaria. The availability of iron ore and the ability of the people of Zaria to utilize it as a practical basis for the development of Zaria, laid the foundation for industry and agriculture. There existed a relatively high quantity of iron ore deposits in the Zaria area that was extensively exploited dating back to the 7th century.³³ Settlements in the Zaria area that had extensive concentrations of iron-bearing laterite included Dumbi, Kufena, Tsauni and Samaru where evidence of slag heaps, furnaces and tuyeres were found.³⁴ This means that in these areas, smelting was carried out where the iron was mined.

31. Ibid p. 82.

32. Ibid p. 85.

33. Obayemi A.B.U., Aspects of Field Archaeology in Hausaland ZAP Vols I and II, A.B.U. (Zaria, 1977) p. 1. See also J.E.G. Sulton JEG "Iron-Working Around Zaria (with a Preliminary Account of the Excavations at Samaru West)" ZAP Vols I and II, A.B.U. (Zaria, 1977), pp. 1-20.

34. Ibid. p. 2.

Other areas where iron was smelted into tools included Unguwar Kari in Zaria city, and Unguwar Makars near Kufena. Iron implements helped in the transformation of Zaria into a city and was to lead to the walling of the settlement. Agricultural tools, craft and war implements were manufactured in Zaria city and helped in diversifying the economy and for the expansion of the state. These iron tools included Takuba (swords) ƙasu (spears) Kibawu (arrows) Garmuna (Hoes) Kusoshi (nails) ƙukake (knives) Magauna (Axe) and lauje.³⁵ All these attest to high level of technological attainments of the inhabitants of Zaria in this early period. The walling of Zaria therefore was made possible by the possession of these implements which gave her an edge over other settlements that did not have them. She eventually became a dominating centre over other neighbouring areas. She began to expand territorially by imposing her authority over other hitherto independent settlements.

Availability of water in the Zaria area was another important factor for its evolution and the development of its walls. The major rivers in the Zaria area which provide water throughout the year are River Galma, River Kubanni and River Saye. These major rivers and their tributaries which, though, dry up in the dry season, help in supplying Zaria city

35. Smaldone J.P., Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate, pp. 11-12.

its water requirements. The tributaries include Kusfa, a tributary of River Saye and Kamacha, a tributary of River Galma. These attracted many people to settle in Zaria city since it provided a good basis for agriculture. It aided the construction of the walls of Zaria. Below the hills near which Zaria is situated, considerable amount of moisture is retained leading to high water table.

The hills near which Zaria city emerged were important religious centres in the history of the state.³⁶ The hills were believed to be imbued with supernatural powers. That is why it was believed that the soils below them were fertile.³⁷ This religious idea owed its origin to the helplessness and ignorance of society in face of the forces of nature. Thus, forces that were not fully understood were personified. Hence, the walling of the area. This religious function of the early walls is seen in the way by which they enclosed only the inselbergs with little space left for human habitation round them.³⁸ These developments led to the evolution of the city through its attraction of many people. It led to the emergence of a sarauta system with the Sarki as the head; surrounded by a group of fief-holders. Some of these fief-

36. Urquhart A.W., Planned Urban Landscapes of Northern Nigeria, A.B.U. Press, (Zaria, 1977) p. 8.

37. Smith A., op. cit. p. 83.

38. Sulton J.E.G. "Population Estimates from Selected African Iron-Age Sites" pp. 639-640.

holders that acted as advisers to the Sarki included Galadima, Wambai, Dallatu and Madawaki.³⁹ Others were Dangaladima, (heir to the throne), Iya, (mother to the king) and Sarauniya (daughter of the king).⁴⁰ It was the need to support these non-agricultural groups in Zaria that the king had to encourage economic activities in the state as well as expand territorially⁴¹ after building the walls. This helped in the consolidation of the power of the Sarki and the formation of the state of Zazzau.

IV. THE EMERGENCE OF THE STATE OF ZAZZAU CENTRED AT ZARIA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALLS

The establishment of the Sarautu system was an important development in the origin of the State of Zazzau centred at Zaria. Amina, one of the early rulers of Zaria was able to dominate other established leaders because of control over the exploitation and effective use of iron ore in the Zaria area.⁴² Iron tools and weapons increased the level of agricultural and craft production and was also a factor in changing the military balance in Zazzau in favour of the

39. Bello S., "Birnin Zaria" in G. Aishiwaju (edited) Cities of the Savanna: A History of Some Towns and Cities of the Nigerian Savanna. Nigeria Magazine. No Date, p. 77.

40. Ibid, p. 77.

41. Ibid p. 77

42. Though Iron was exploited in the Zaria area as far back as the 7th century A.D., it would seem that it was in the 15th century that it was brought into effective use.

forces of Amina and her successors. The bigger walls which came to overshadow the smaller and earlier ones testify to the fact that the 15th century was a period of conquests and incorporation of settlements. Such large walls that replaced or encircled smaller ones included Kufena, Amina and Zaria walls. These overshadowed the smaller ones like those of Madarkaci, Tukur-Tukur and those of Turunku and Kargi. It is also clearly shown by the close link which developed between one wall and another in the Zaria walling sequence. The Kufena, Amina, Tukur-Tukur and Madarkaci walls were now politically brought under the orbit of Zaria. This points to some degree of political organization and expansionism with its base at Zaria city.⁴³

Zaria city also played a dominant position ⁱⁿ the economic life of the people of Kasar Zazzau. It was an important entrepot for trade from North Africa, Nupe, Kano, Borno, Oyo and Katsina.⁴⁴ Such trading items as horses, natron, salt, kola nuts, eunuchs and slaves were received. This trade helped in consolidating the power of the Sarki and in the development of the economy of the state. Thus, the central market expanded to become the hub of all economic activities

43. Ambinche J.A. The Development of Walling Systems in Hausaland: The Madarkachi Wall of Zaria City B.A. Thesis (Archaeology) A.B.U., Zaria, 1983 p.18

44. Mahdi A., "Some Essential Features of the Economy of Hausaland, 1500 - 1804". Sona Seminar Papers Vol. I, A.B.U., No Date, pp. 34 - 35.

of the state. This attracted many occupational specialists into the city who established wards near the market. Dyers' and tanners' wards were established very close to the market.⁴⁵ Others were the blacksmiths of Anguwar Kofe, Leather workers of Mazangudu and weavers at Rimi Bindiga. Those settlements were also sited near cheap sources of their respective raw materials.⁴⁶ The goods produced by these and other specialists generated trade. Leather-workers for example made such items like shoes, leather bags, garkuwa (leather-shield), leather loin clothes and leather carpets. The trade generated by the manufactured items led to the accumulation of wealth by a few people in the city. The ability of Zaria to dominate other settlements could have been due to her domination of the trade and ability to accumulate more wealth. As in Kano, taxes began to be levied on the various commodities. These taxes included, Kudin Sana'a (tax on crafts) garana (import duty), gargali (cattle tax), Tausa "voluntary" contribution mostly in kind and with the construction of the wall, Kudin kofa (tax paid on commodities taken into the city through the gates), was imposed.⁴⁷ It is this economic

45. Most of the wards in Zaria city as in Kano city were based on occupation. The occupations that had direct connection with trade had their wards very close to the market.

46. Uguhart A.W., op. cit. pp. 18-19.

47. Mahdi, A., The Economy of a Hausa Capital, pp. 6-7.

prosperity of Zaria in the late 15th century which led to the construction of the Zaria city walls to provide security for trade and other economic activities in the city.

V. CONSTRUCTION OF THE ZARIA CITY WALL

Zaria presents a complex series of walls within a limited area. It is not yet clear when each of the various walls of the Zaria area was built and it is difficult to have a clear chronology and sequence of their construction without extensive archaeological excavations.⁴⁸ It is however clear that the present wall of Zaria city is not the earliest wall in the Zaria urban sequence. The wall as it now stands, would seem to have been an amalgamation of earlier walls in the Zaria area. The earliest walls in the Zaria urban sequence seem to have been those at Kufena, Madarkaci and Turunku which ^{were} built around rocks or boulders. These walls could have been contemporaneous. The materials used in their construction are similar and their present state of appearance tend to suggest that they were built at the same time because both walls and their ditches are oblique.⁴⁹

48. Archaeological Research on the Walls of Zaria has been largely confined to observations and mapping of the walls and not excavations and dating of finds. Thus, the nature of the defences, methods of construction, renovations and dating are obscure.

49. Sutton J.E.C., "The Walls of Zaria and Kufena" p. 8.

Sutton dates one of these, the Kufena wall to c1300 A.D.⁵⁰ This then would mean that these early walls were of 14th century constructions. They were built by piling soil dug out of the ditch.

It is difficult to associate any name with their construction. It is most likely that the Madarkaci wall was built by the first Sarkin Zaria, Gunguna, while that of Kufena could have been built by Bakwa.⁵¹ These early 14th century walls could have been built for religious purposes. Their construction around hills believed to have been the abode of spirits tends to favour this assertion.⁵² These earlier and relatively smaller walls could have been later unified to form the larger city walls of Amina and Zaria which seem to have been contemporaneous, based on their large size, thickness and height. The Amina wall, for example extended from Kufena and went round Tukur-Tukur village, reaching the Madarkaci hill of Zaria city covering an area

50. J.E.G. Sutton, "Population Estimates from Selected African Iron Age Sites", p. 640. It is very difficult to say how Sutton arrived at this date. The date is however, corroborated by local tradition which states that Gunguna, the first Sarkin Zaria was an early 14th century. It is likely that he first built the Kufena wall. See A. Obayemi op.cit p. 2, 6.

51. We are not however, certain whether we are dealing with real dateable historical figures or not.

52. One version of the tradition asserts that Amina and Zaria was one person. Amina was nicknamed Zaria on account of her beauty though she had a sister named Amina who was a military conqueror associated with building of walls. See Mahadi A. "The Economy of a Hausa Capital". p.2.

of 24 kilometres in diameter.⁵³ These imposing walls, associated with important personalities indicate the emergence of the state of Zazzau. The construction of these large and modified walls in the 15th century,⁵⁴ was most probably, in response to raids from Kano. Kanajeji (C1390-1410), credited with the introduction of horses and chain mails in Kano, is said to have invaded the plain of Zazzau.⁵⁵ His defeat of Zaria could have increased the rate of urbanization through the development of larger and more secure walls.

In building these 15th century walls, local materials were fully exploited. Mud and sun-dried bricks were used in building the walls.⁵⁶ The use of mud is shown by the very deep ditches surrounding the walls from where the mud was extracted. The ditch of Zaria city wall measured five metres deep while the height of the wall might have been about five metres above the ground level.⁵⁷ Laterite and granites materials were also used especially, at the gate flanks. Layers of stones were alternated with layers of clay in order to create a well-bonded wall. One of such

53. Seidensticker, "Zaria City Field Maps" CNCS A.B.U. Zaria 1976 collections.

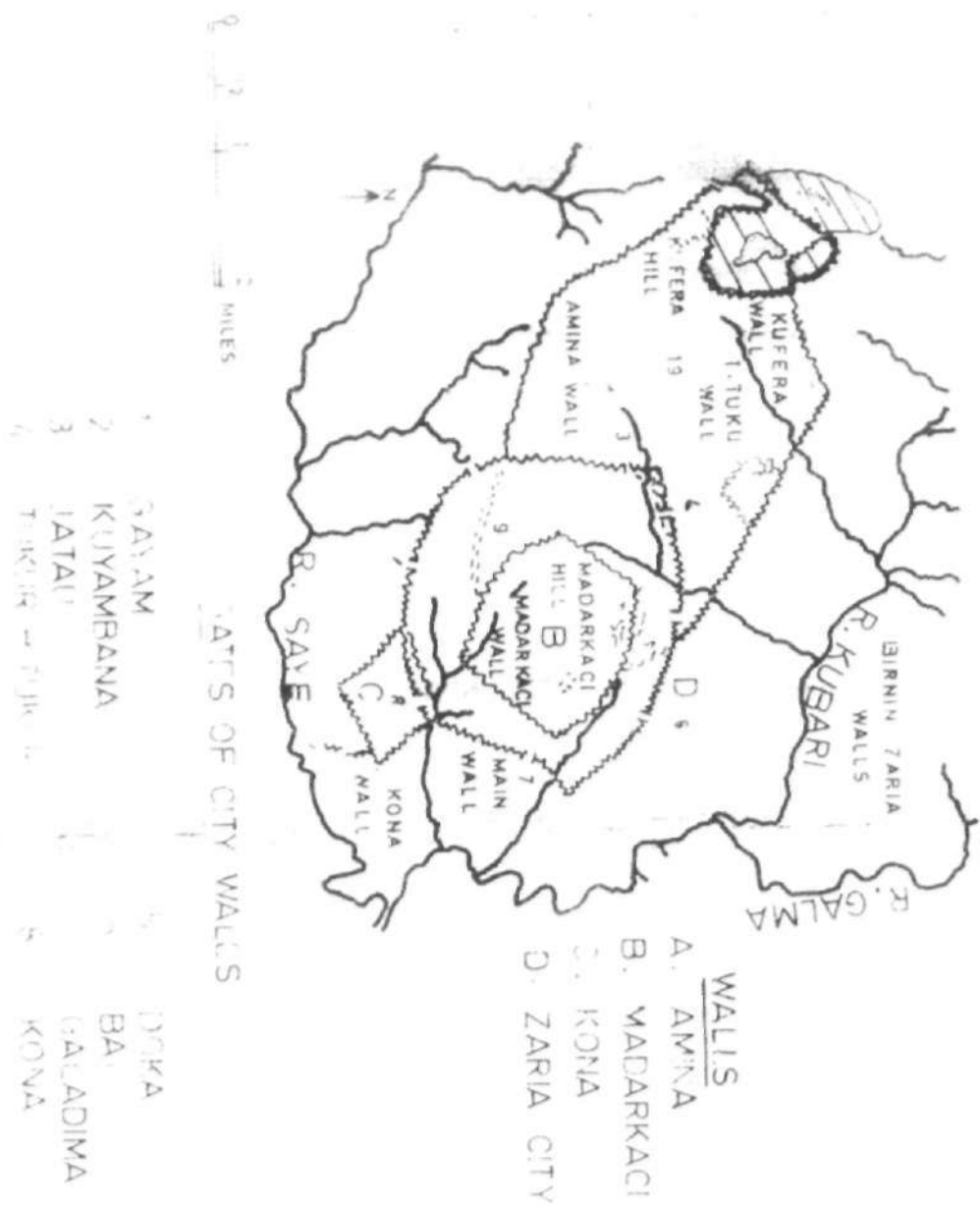
54. Smith A., op. cit. p. 97, also R.A. Adeleye, op. cit. p. 490.

55. Palmer H.R., The Kano Chronicle, p. 108.

56. Sutton, J.E.G., The Walls of Zaria and Kufena pp. 1-9.

57. ibid. p. 3.

SOURCE : IROUJHART 1977 PAGE 12



areas where granites and laterites were used in constructing the Zaria wall is at Kofar Bai in the north-eastern section of the city wall. Here, the Kamacha stream, a tributary of River Galma, swiftly flows down, cutting through the wall at Kofar Bai. Stones had to be used in building the gate. This made it one of the best preserved gates of the Zaria city wall. Also, in order to effectively defend the area, a strong guard had to be permanently stationed here.⁵⁸ This indicates that the 15th century walls which are named after some important personalities in the state, were mainly defensive fortifications. The use of stones, mud and bricks in building them, in contrast to those of the 14th century where only mud was the chief building material, shows that the 15th century walls were actually an improvement on the earlier ones.⁵⁹ They were tailored to the defensive needs of the inhabitants of the city.

The improvements on the walls could have led to the beginning of military offensives by Zaria against independent states in the 16th century. The attacks by Zaria on Kwararafa, and Bauchi areas for slaves and on Kano and

58. Bature, "Within a city Wall: Story of Zaria" Nest African Review 26, 1955 pp. 539-545.

59. Bala C.D., "The Wall System Around and on the Inselbergs of Zaria Region" Annual Conference of Nigerian Archaeologists, (Ibadan, 1978) p. 5.

Katsina in the late 16th century,⁶⁰ are most likely a reflection of the security which the Zaria walls now afforded to the inhabitants. It would however seem that this attempt at conquest to the north was blocked because at this time, Kano and Katsina were similarly expanding.⁶¹ Zaria was therefore forced to turn her attention Southwards and Westwards.⁶² Some of the areas or communities said to have come under the control of Zaria in the 16th century included Gwari, Gwandara, Doma, Yeskwa, Kwato, Adama, Kwararrafa and Attagara.⁶³ The extent of the control of Zaria over these territories is however, not certain. It seems that Zaria could not establish a permanent political control over these areas. It was only able to draw booty and receive tributes from them. This loose political control over other regions in the 16th century could have been the reason why the Kwararrafa, one of the supposed dependencies of Zaria, was able to attack and defeat Zaria in the 17th century.

The Jukunawa from the Gongola valley conquered Zaria in the 17th century.⁶⁴ They camped at a place now called Tudun

60. Smith A., "Some Notes on the History of Zazzau", pp. 85-86.

61. Adeleye, *op. cit.* p. 5.

62. Smith, *op. cit.* p. 85.

63. *Ibid*, p. 85. It is however doubtful that these conquests could be attributed to Amina who was a 15th century figure and not 16th century. See Adeleye *op. cit.* p. 490.

64. Meek C.K., *A Sudanese Kingdom* Vol. I (London, Kegan Paul, 1931) p. XXXII.

Jukun, which is one kilometre north of the famous Kano gate.⁶⁵ They raided the surrounding villages for food and succeeded in blocking the external food supplies for the city inhabitants thereby, starving them. The Jukun were mainly interested in the immediate booty they could get and not in the political control of Zazzau. They also did not impose continuous payment of tribute on Zaria.⁶⁶ This 17th century defeat of Zaria could have led to some developments both in relation to the wall and the military hierarchy. It is also most likely that the effective exploitation of the walled area and those areas immediately adjacent to them forced the city inhabitants to engage in the use of artificial fertilizers on their plots.⁶⁷ Thus the walls began to play a dominant position in the economic life of the people of Zaria. It is also likely that Kudin Kofa (tax paid on commodities taken into the city through the gates),⁶⁸ was introduced at this time. This seems to be supported by the

65. Ibid p. XXXII.

66. For a fairly detailed account of the war between the Jakun and Zaria in the 17th century, see C.L. Temple (edited) Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria (London 1955) pp. 172-173. See also S. Abubakar "Peoples of the Upper Benue Basin in the Bauchi Plateau Before 1800" in O. Ikime (edited) Groundwork of Nigerian History (Heinemann Educational Books, Ibadan 1980) pp. 168-169.

67. Urquhart, op. cit p. 4

68. Mahdi A., "Some Essential Features of the Economy of Hausaland 1500-1800" p. 35.

new boost which the wall and gates received in terms of improvement and yearly maintenance. Battlements (dakai), were provided at the gates with pitch-holes. As was the case in Kano, the entrances of the gates were twisted inwards to channel attackers to a narrow front and gate houses were provided.⁶⁹ The deliberate planting of thorn thickets round the wall was also carried out in Zaria.⁷⁰

These improvements on the wall were matched by an improvement on the weapons of war. Light and portable manual missiles like daggers, pikes, lances and swords were employed in Zaria warfare at this time in large numbers.⁷¹ These were all edged weapons mostly effective in harrying tactics and for close combat. These were hurled at any attacker of the city.

The military was also re-organised. At the head of the military was the Ubandawaki.⁷² The main core of the infantry

69. The best preserved gate with a twisted entrance today is the Kofar Gayan in Zaria city.

70. The thickets surrounding the Zaria city wall indicate that they were deliberately planted when there was no need for further extension of the wall.

71. Law R., "Horses, Firearms and Political Power in Pre-Colonial West Africa" *Past and Present* No. LXXII, 1976 pp. 112 - 132.

72. See M.G. Smith, Government in Zazzau. A Study of Government in the Hausa Chieftdom of Zaria in Northern Nigeria From 1800 to 1850 (London, OUP 1960) pp 42-48. Intreating the military set up of pre-colonial Abuja, Smith suggests that this could have been a reflection of pre-jihad military set up of Zaria. This indicates the role of the cavalry in the military history of Zaria in the 17th century.

consisted of professional hunters. These worked hand in hand with the Magayaki (head of the scouts).⁷³ The use of scouts in 17th century Zaria (who performed spying duty of an enemy territory) indicates the adoption of organised warfare. This enabled Zaria military forces to have fore knowledge about the enemy's dispositions and strategic resources.

Despite these developments effected on the Zaria walls, it would seem that they could not prevent the Bornan forces from over-running the areas outside the city in the 18th century, thereby forcing the walled inhabitants of the city to surrender. In 1734, the Bornan forces succeeded in defeating Zaria and forced her to pay tribute through an official of Borno known as Baken Borno or Kachalla.⁷⁴ He was stationed at the court of Sarkin Zazzau. Muhammad B. Handun (C1731-47), the then Mai of Borno, is credited with making Borno a military power at this time.⁷⁵ He is said to have invaded not only Zaria but also Kano in the 18th century. This was in the attempt to prevent any state from becoming a military power superior to Borno.⁷⁶ This defeat

73. Ibid pp. 42-48.

74. Hassan and S. Naibi, A Chronicle of Abiya (New edition), Lagos, 1962 p. 4, 73.

75. Lavers J.E., "Kanem and Borno to 1800" in O. Ikime, op. cit. p. 203.

76. Ibid p. 48.

of Zaria also led to the establishment of a religious office of the Magajin Mallam who confirmed the selection and appointment of the Sarakunan Zaria to ensure that the rulers of the state were Muslims.⁷⁷ It also led to the construction of a wall for the Bornoan immigrants in Zaria city. This was the Kona wall. Part of this wall lay inside the Zaria wall but a greater part of it lay outside the city wall. The fact that the Kona wall is associated with an Islamised community can be seen in the way Muslim clerics from this wall were utilized by the nobility in Zaria city. These Mallamai were summoned at the verge of war to say prayers against the enemy. They prepared charm gowns with Arabic scripts and written characters to protect the wearer from evil spirits and from the weapons of the enemy.⁷⁸

J.E.G. Sutton however, argues that the Kona wall by far predated the Zaria wall, though he does not provide a date when it was constructed.⁷⁹ That at the intersections between the Kona and the city walls, the Kona wall was taken over and trenched through by the bank and ditch of the Zaria city wall respectively.⁸⁰ He continues that the higher bank, deep and wide ditch of the Zaria wall are an indication that the Zaria wall was a later improvement on the earlier wall.

77. Smith A., "Some Notes on the History of Zazzau" p.9

78. Recorded Interview with Ibrahim Bagudu (IB) Madauchin Zazzau, Zaria city. See also D. Heathcote, "A Hausa Charm Gown" Man, JRAI Vol. 9 No. 4 1974 pp.620 - 624.

79. Sutton J.E.G., "The Walls of Zaria and Kufena" p.3

80. Ibid p. 8

of Kona.⁸¹ It could however be that the continuous changes and modifications effected on the same Zaria city wall over the years, from the 14th century when it was first constructed to the 19th century, when serious modifications were effected, could make the wall of Zaria city appear like a recent construction. Unlike the other walls in the area, the Zaria wall was the main point of defence and therefore was given the greatest attention in terms of skills, imagination and modifications.

The 18th century defeat of Zaria weakened her militarily and economically. This defeat seems to have forced many changes in the military set up of Zaria. Henceforth, each warrior was required to possess a war-like spirit and leaders were now chosen on the basis of their military qualities. The emergence of such reputed warrior Sarakuna like Sarkin Zazzau Aliyu (C1767-1773), and Sarkin Zazzau Jatau (C1788-1806) indicate the role of militarism in the survival and continuous development of Zazzau in the 18th century. An elite corp was established mounted on

81. Ibid p. 8. Wall construction and its maintenance required a large number of people every year. This implies that an area must have a powerful central figure who could mobilize this labour. The Kona wall seems to have lacked this advantage since the leadership was mainly religious. The zeal to build the wall was their but after, maintenance could have been poor.

light cavalry. To complement the military efforts of the leaders, the walls were improved and the gate houses were repaired. These developments seem to have helped in consolidating the power of the state and enabled Zaria to extend the area of her domination where she could draw labour, slaves and booty. Some of the areas conquered and incorporated into Zazzau in the late 18th century included new Karfi, Igabi, Kwassalo, Bicifa, Fatika and Zangon Aya. These became "fiefs" of Zaria.⁸³ "Fiefholders" were appointed at these places to represent the Sarkin Zazzau in their various "fiefs" and were responsible for the mobilization of men and materials which had to be sent to Zaria as yearly presents.⁸⁴ Although we do not have the full details, it is also most likely that the area now known as Southern Zaria could have come under the control of Zaria at this time. These included Kauru, Kajuru, Kachia and Zangon Kataf.⁸⁵ Many of the slaves captured as a result of the raids and conquests were settled in the city. These helped in boosting the economy of Zaria. Gandaye (slaves farms) were established both within and outside the walls. One of such wards in the

82. Smith M.G., Government in Zazzau, p. 96.

83. NAK, SNP 17/2/17224

84. Ibid.

85. These areas have for long had substantial Hausa settlements who established 'Zangos' for their intenerant traders moving from Zaria to the south.

city where a slave farm was established is Banzazzau (Bayin Zazzau-Slaves of Zazzau). These slaves were settled here and they produced food crops that went to meet the needs of the administration^{and} of the numerous horses which were now used in warfare. Influential individuals also acquired slaves and settled them on gandaye.⁸⁶

These economic activities and the security provided by the walls attracted many more people of different occupations into Zaria city. In the 18th century, the Mallawa group migrated from Kano and Katsina into Zaria.⁸⁷ Some of these were scholars, others were weavers, and there were also merchants and farmers among them.⁸⁸ Some of the farmers acquired farmlands in Likoro Village, 20 kilometres north of Zaria city.⁸⁹

Professional warriors also migrated into Zaria in the 18th century. There was Garga Babarbare who was one of the warriors of Sarkin Ringim Ada who rebelled against Sarkin Kano Kumberi (C1731-43), and moved to Zaria city for safety.⁹⁰

86. Kuyambana and Galadima for example, are said to have been professional warriors in Zaria who used the slaves they acquired to establish large gandaye.

87. Sani S.A., The Foundation of Fulani Rule in Zaria 1750-1855. B.A. Research Essay, Department of History A.B.U., Zaria, 1972 p. 18

88. Ibid, p. 18.

89. Ibid p. 18

90. Usman Y.B., "A Reconsideration of the History of Relations Between Borno and Hausaland Before 1804 A.D" Borno Seminar, A.B.U. Zaria 1973, p. 32.

These and other immigrants helped in expanding the population of Zaria. Despite this however, the size of the wall was not increased. This is because large and adequate tracts of land had been incorporated into the city wall in the earlier periods. In spite of the phenomenal increase in the population, and building construction in Zaria from the end of the 19th century to date, the spaces enclosed within the walls are yet to be filled up. The increase in population also helped in the commercial development of the state. These developed cooperative efforts and reciprocal specialization between the city which was mainly occupied by craft and other specialists, and the villages and towns, occupied mainly by farmers who produced grains and raw materials needed in industries. Thus, meaningful exchange came to exist between the city and the predominantly agricultural rural areas.⁹¹ For example, Dambo village which lies six kilometres east of Zaria city, was founded in 1795 A.D. by one Fulani called Badambo from Burum-Burum.⁹² This village specialised in the production of grains, meat and milk which

91. See for example, D.L. Clark, "Towns in the Development of early Civilizations" Analytical Archaeologist, Academic Press, London 1979 p. 440. He sees economic specialization between the rural areas and the urban cities as an important factor in trading relations.

92. NAK 17/2/17224

were exchanged for hoes, clothes, leather goods and potash in Zaria city.⁹³

Trade increased the wealth of the Sarki, and hence, his power. This is why by the 19th century, Zaria became the chief slave market in the central Sudan.⁹⁴ The walls enabled the Sarakuna to raid other areas for slaves and booty. In 1862, Baikie described Zaria city as one of the great centres of commerce in Hausaland; frequented by merchants from Borno, Adamawa and Nupe.⁹⁵ He also estimated that the number of slaves brought daily to the Zaria market for sale was not less than 4,000.⁹⁶ With more slaves, many more state farms were established in the 19th century. The largest of these gandaye was established at Taban Sani in 1846 along the present Zaria-Kano road which held over 3,000 slaves.⁹⁷ Slave farms were also established at Bassawa, Hanwa and the present Government Reserved Area.⁹⁸ These

93. Ibid.

94. Mahdi A., "The Economy of a Hausa Capital" p. 5

95. Baikie W.B., "Notes on a Journey from Bida in Nupe to Kano in Hausa Performed in 1862" Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, 37, 1867 p. 95.

96. Ibid p. 95.

97. Hogben S.J., and A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, The Emirates of Northern Nigeria pp. 224-225.

98. Ibid. p. 225

slaves produced agricultural commodities for the maintenance of the non-agricultural group of the ruling families. These slaves were also used for raiding other settlements.⁹⁹ This is why slaves came to occupy important positions in the military hierarchy of 19th century Zaria. For example, the Madauchi and the Galadima and the whole police corps, Dogarai, were all of slave origin.¹⁰⁰ After the 1808 Jihad in Zaria, more slaves were acquired and appointed into sensitive positions. The Banaga, Sarkin Bindiga, Sarkin Baka and Kunkeli were of slave origin including the Dimajai (children born into slavery) who formed the core of the infantry.¹⁰¹ These were used in raiding non-Islamised areas and therefore, helped to expand the economy of the state thereby consolidating the power of the Sarki. This created the security necessary for effective trade and commerce in the state. It also encouraged the immigration of specialists into Zaria.

During the 1804 Jihad, Katsina was sacked and many people were forced to flee. Among those who left Katsina to Zaria were the Katsina Yan Doto, Fulanin Wunti and the Toronkawa.¹⁰² There was also the building specialist,

99. Smith M.G., Government in Zazzau p. 36.

100. Ibid pp. 36-38,

101. Ibid pp. 36-38

102. Ibid p. 80.

Baban Gwani, who left Katsina to Zaria during the reign of Emir Abdullahi (1873-78), and was turbaned as Sarkin Magina in Sokoto.¹⁰³ He is reputed to have built the Zaria Mosque and the Emir's Palace.¹⁰⁴ The wall of Zaria therefore helped in attracting peoples from different areas of the Sudan and thereby boosted the economy of the state and the powers of the different Sarkuna from the 14th century to the 1903.

VI. FUNCTIONS OF THE ZARIA WALLS

The walls of Zaria performed different functions at different historical periods; some of which have already been mentioned in the discussion of the evolution of the city walls. The 14th century walls built around the hills of Kufena, Madarkaci and Tukur-Tukur, seem to have performed religious functions. The hills round which the walls were built were believed to be inhabited by spirits.¹⁰⁵ They were built to protect the spirits so that they could be adequately venerated for provision of abundant crops. Up to the 19th century, these hills continued to perform this religious function even though at this time, some

103. See M. Ahmed, Recorded Interview with HARUNA SARKIN MAGINA (MSM) Zaria, February, 1976.

104. Ibid,

105. Badejo P, Bori Spirit Possession pp. 3-17; Smith A., "Some Notes" p. 91.

of their walls had collapsed. In Zaria city, some of the wards that continued with this practice were Anguwar Iya, Anguwar Magajiya, Kusfa and Anguwar Zagi-Zagi.¹⁰⁶ The Danza gate (later, Sabuwar kofa), between Kofar Jatau and Kofar Turkur-Tukur, is believed to have been a centre of magic, Rangongon.¹⁰⁷ Near the gate was a silk-cotton tree (Rimin Danza), where the spirits of Kusfa stream were believed to have inhabited. Fortune tellers, diviners and traditional medicinemen divined for the city at this gate especially, in times of crises.¹⁰⁸ In 1807 when the Jihadists entered Zaria, they first sealed up this gate and destroyed the remaining vestiges of traditional religion in Zaria. In this period (the 19th century), the Danza gate and the silk-cotton tree were no longer centres of yearly sacrifices.¹⁰⁹ Anguwar Zagi-Zagi was physically occupied by the jihad forces and the name of the ward was changed to Anguwar Katuka reflecting the fiefholder of the Emir incharge of the area.¹¹⁰

106. Recorded interview with IBRAHIM BAGUDU (IB) op. cit.

107. Recorded interview with ISA SADAU (IS) Kofar Tukur-Tukur Zaria City, June 1983.

108. Ibid

109. Ibid.

110. Recorded interview with MUHAMMADU SARKI (MS) Anguwar Katuka, Zaria City, January 25th 1984.

The 14th century walls of Zaria which were larger and named after their builders, also performed defensive functions. This is why they enabled Zaria to expand at the expense of other areas. This led to the emergence of the state of Zazzau. The construction of gate houses with battlements, pitch-holes and the planting of thorn thickets round the walls, indicate that the walls were employed as defensive mechanisms.¹¹¹ These structural improvements on the 14th century walls were also matched with changes in weapons. Iron technology was integrated into the military needs of the state. Weapons manufactured included spears, arrows, swords, Nagauda, knives and axes.¹¹² These helped in the wars of expansion of Zazzau in the 15th and 16th centuries. The employment of Yan Tauri and Wanzamai in warfare (people who were believed to be invincible to metal weapons),¹¹³ indicate the level to which the state was prepared to provide security to the society. Thus, military affairs received both scientific and magical attention. Charms and amulets were planted at strategic corners of the city to incapacitate raiders from raiding the city.¹¹⁴ In this way,

111. Sulton J.E.C., "The Walls of Kufena and Zaria" pp. 1-2.

112. Smaldone J.P., Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate pp. 11-12.

113. Recorded interview with DUNI DUMBI (DD) Sarkin Wanzamai, Dumbi, July 1983.

114. In Kano, charms and amulets were worn by warriors mainly in the 19th century. In Zaria, this practice was not limited to individuals alone but also planted on the walls to protect the whole city.

the walls aided the evolution of Zaria into a state. The evolution of the socio-political structures of the state of Zazzau is therefore a direct result of the security the walls provided. Even though this security was sometimes breached during periods of external attacks and internal threats, yet, the walls helped in the emergence of a powerful monarchy that became the focal point of a complex network of feudal relationships by which the authority of the Sarki was extended throughout the 'plains of Zazzau and as far as beyond the Kaduna river and the upper Gurara valley'.¹¹⁵

By the 1870^s, Zaria introduced a new force into their defence in addition to the walls. This was the musketeer force which used muskets and gunpowder bought from Nupe traders.¹¹⁶ In order to check individuals from possessing the dreadful weapons, the Sarki took complete control of the acquisition and use of firearms.¹¹⁷ The control which subsequent Sarakuna wielded over weapons and men made them extremely powerful and wealthy since they now could raid and tax their subjects more than before. Emir Abdullahi (C1873-78) stationed small forces in Kachia and Kudara to enforce the collection of taxes from subject areas.

115. Smith A., "Some Notes on the History of Zazzau" p. 84.

116. Smaldone J.P., "Firearms in the Central Sudan: A Revaluation" JAH, XIII, No. 4, 1972, p. 597.

117. Ibid p. 597.

These were also used to terrorise and enslave recalcitrant groups.¹¹⁸ Emir Uthman Yero (C1890-97), monopolised firearms and organised many detachments of slaves who were used as a ready reserve to be employed against any internal and external threats.¹¹⁹ Without the walls, the internal security enjoyed by Zaria which brought about political stability and wealth, would have been difficult to achieve. The security also provided an incentive to peaceful commercial transactions in the city and the consequent immigration of various occupational specialists. This ensured the economic prosperity of Zaria.

The walls encouraged and enabled the inhabitants of Zaria city to engage in intensive farming and herding within them. The large size of the walls which measured 15.8 kilometres in diameter,¹²⁰ was not really an indication of the size of population of Zaria city. It was so built to provide adequate space for farming and herding.¹²¹ Thus, the walls protected agricultural lands and therefore aided the production of sufficient food stuff and industrial raw materials. This was necessary because the rural areas that specialised in the

118. Smith M.G., *op. cit.* p. 77

119. *Ibid* p. 77

120. Obayemi A., "Aspects of Field Archaeology in Hausaland" p. 5.

121. Urquhart A.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

production of food crops and raw materials which went to support the city, were often the targets of attack by foreign aggressors. Even as late as the 1880s, the Ningi under Sarkin Ningi Haruna, invaded Zaria city by first attacking Dambo and Tukur-Tukur villages.¹²² After ransacking the countryside, they then marched triumphantly into the city and took about 5,000 of Sambo's subjects as captive, and a lot of booty.¹²³ These kinds of attack on the rural areas that sustained the capital city, created uncertainty about supplies of food stuffs to the inhabitants of Zaria city and this necessitated the utilization of farmlands within the city. Some of the wards like Kwarbai, and Juma'a had the largest concentration of farming population in Zaria city.¹²⁴ Other wards like Kaura, Iya and Banzazzau were mainly settled by farmers while the fadamu of Kamacha and Tukurua and that near Madarkaci hill, were also intensively cultivated.¹²⁵ The economic prosperity resulting from intensive cultivation of land enclosed within the walls helped to increase the population of the city. Thus, in 1893, Robinson estimated the population of Zaria city to be

122. Recorded Interview with JUME ALI (JA) Tukur-Tukur, Zaria, August, 1983, See also M.G. Smith, op. cit. p. 183.

123. Ibid p. 183.

124. Urquhart A.W., op. cit. p. 20.

125. Ibid p. 20-21.

30,000 people apart from those of the outlying villages.¹²⁶ This increase in population was not so much the result of internal expansion as that of immigration. Immigration was a prominent factor in the expansion and economic prosperity of Zaria.¹²⁷ Mention has been made of the recorded instances of migrations into Zaria. There are numerous others that were not recorded but whose population helped in boosting commerce and industry in Zaria.¹²⁸ Limancin Kona was inhabited by immigrants from Borno. These specialised in teaching the Quran, weaving, building, spinning and rope making.¹²⁹ Other immigrants like the Nufawa had large concentrations of weavers, leather workers, blacksmiths, builders and traders.

Of all the wards in Zaria city, the area occupied by the city market witnessed the greatest concentration of economic activities and has been more cosmopolitan in terms of its inhabitants. Here, Hausa, Nupe, Yoruba,

126. Robinson C.H., Hausaland or Fifteen Hundred Miles Through the Central Soudan (London, 1900) p. 86-87.

127. Smith H.C.F., "Some Considerations Relating to the Formation of States in Hausaland" JHSN 5, 1970 pp. 329-346.

128. The arrival of the Nupe, Yoruba, Tuaregs and Arabs into Zaria who lived and worked in the city was not recorded even though the existence of their separate wards like Nufawa ward, is a testimony of their large numbers in Zaria.

129. Urquhart A.H., op. cit. p. 19.

Tuaregs, Arabs, Fulani and a host of many others, lived and worked. Specialised occupations like trading, weaving, dyeing, blacksmithing, leather-working, building, shoe-making, thatching, tanning, carpentry, drumming and spinning were practised.¹³⁰ Thus, wealth was highly concentrated in the city. This could have hardly happened in the countryside which was faced with security problems. It led to the imposition of a number of taxes based not on individuals but on the various occupations practised. The various gates made the enforcement of taxation on goods possible. Officials stationed at such gates like Bai, Galadima and Kona on the eastern flank of the city collected gate tolls from traders coming from such areas like Kauru, Kajuru, Zangon Kataf, Karigi, Soba and Maigana.¹³¹ To the north, Kofar Kano (later Kofar Doka), and Kofar Tukur-Tukur served traders from Kano, Katsina, Damagaram, Borno and from nearby towns like Hunkuyi, Makarfi and Kudan.¹³² To the West, Kofar Jatau and Kofar Kuyambana, served areas like Fatika, Kuyambana, Karau-Karau, Gangara, Giwa, Shika and many others.¹³³ To the South, Kofar Gayam served areas like Kachia, Keffi, Nupe, Oyo, Gonja and

130. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

131. Recorded Interview with IBRAHIM BAGUDU.

132. *Ibid.*

133. Recorded interview with MUHAMMAN LAWAL (ML), Kofar Kuyambana, Zaria July, 1983.

Gayam village itself.¹³⁴ The names of some of the towns whose inhabitants constantly used the city gates are reflected in the names of the city gates. Gates like Gayam, Tukur-Tukur, Kano and Kuyambana are names of towns and villages in the directions where the gates are located. Some of the gates however, bear the names of some important slave officials or slave settlements. Galadima was the name of a slave official in charge of the state police, Dogarai¹³⁵ In the 19th century Kuyambana became a title bestowed on the commander of the cavalry force in Zaria.¹³⁶ This title first went to a native of Ikulu who was converted to Islam in Zaria city.¹³⁷ Kofar Bai was a reflection of Banzazzau, a settlement of royal slaves used on royal gandaye.¹³⁸

Despite the important religious, military, political, social and economic functions which the city walls and gates performed from the 14th century to the 19th century, they started to suffer from neglect as from the late 19th century. This is why in 1893 when Robinson reached Zaria, he noted that the Zaria city wall was already neglected and out of

134. Ibid.

135. Smith M.C., op. cit. pp. 36-38.

136. Ibid p. 170.

137. Ibid p. 170.

138. The terms Bai, Wambai and Banzazzau are not very clear in the history of Zazzau but it seems they are related to a slave settlement.

repairs so much so that it could little protect the people from raiders.¹³⁹ By 1903, some of the gates were broken down and expanded to provide for noticable roads. The earth in some parts of the wall had been extracted for building houses. The decline of the Zaria wall in the late 19th century was mainly due to the introduction of European Muskets and ammunitions in warfare in Zaria and by the enemies of Zaria in the 1870s. These new weapons of violence had longer range, were relatively accurate and speedier. They could break the city wall and cause serious panic among the hitherto protected city dwellers. This transformed warfare by destroying the defensive capability of the wall. Despite this, the capital city continued to maintain its control over the areas she had been dominating since the 14th century. This was possible because the walls had enabled the various Sarakuna over the years to consolidate their positions and since only the rich could buy guns, Zaria remained powerful.

CHAPTER SIX

THE EVOLUTION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE
OYO-ILE WALLS: (C1500 TO 1836 A.D)

I. INTRODUCTION

Oyo-Ile¹ is situated on latitude $8^{\circ} 59^1$ North and longitude $4^{\circ} 19^1$ East in the Guinea Savanna belt of Nigeria. The origin of Oyo-Ile is shrouded in mystery. According to tradition, Oyo-Ile was founded by Oranmiyan, Oduduwa's youngest son. He is said to have built the city after having left Ile-Ife, "named it 'Oyo', meaning the slippery place where his horse had slid and stumbled on the hill-side".² It is not only Oyo-Ile that is claimed to have been founded by a descendant of Oduduwa. Other royal dynasties in Yorubaland and Benin are also said to have descended from Oduduwa through his children or grandchildren.³ This would suggest that Oyo-Ile was founded in the 16th century when

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1. Oyo-Ile was also referred to as 'Katunga' or 'Katanga' by the Hausa because of the large size of her walls. See R. Law, *The Oyo Empire*, p. 3.
 2. Smith R.S., *Kingdoms of the Yoruba* (London, Nethuen and Co., 1976) pp. 36-39.
 3. It is very difficult at this stage to categorically state the number of Kingdoms founded as a result of migrations of the sons and grandsons of Oduduwa. The number of these kingdoms vary from seven to twenty six. This uncertainty is mainly due to the need for legitimacy by some groups. The more they claim descent from Oduduwa, the more they think they are accepted in the society. See for example R.S. Smith, *ibid* p. 38; J.U. Eghareuba, *A Short History of Benin* (I.U.P. Ibadan 1968) pp. 1-4.

horses were introduced here.⁴ This 16th century habitation of Oyo is supported by archaeological evidence. At the centre of Oyo city are numerous caves.⁵ One of the caves which was excavated revealed an accumulation of Yoruba pottery and other debris up to three feet thick, overlying a late Stone Age occupation deposit, consisting of quartz microliths.⁶ The excavated pottery is dated to 1500 A.D.⁷ It would however seem that Oyo and other areas were simultaneously inhabited. One of such was Oko, which though today is unidentifiable, is said to have been close to the River Niger.⁸ It is Sango, the third Alafin of Oyo who encouraged the immigration of people from other settlements to Oyo Koro or Oyo Ajaka.⁹

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4. Law R., "A West African Cavalry State: The Kingdom of Oyo" *JAH*, XVII, 1, 1975 pp. 2-3. The combination of Oyo's historical migration in the 16th century with the myth of origin from Oduduwa and Ile-Ife could have been a later rationalization of the Oyo's claim of legitimacy. It is also impossible for Oranmiyan to have single-handedly founded Oyo-Ile and Benin simultaneously.
 5. Smith R. and D. Williams, "Research Note: A Reconnaissance Visit to Oyo-Ile" *ODU* Vol. 3 No. 1, 1966 p. 59.
 6. Willet F., "The Microlithic Industry From Old Oyo, Western Nigeria" *Actes du ixe Congres Pan Africain de Prehistoire et de L'etude du Quaternaire*. (Tervuren, 1962) ii pp. 261-272.
 7. Willet F., "Recent Excavations at Old Oyo and Ife Nigeria" *Man* 58, 1959 pp. 95-100.
 8. Law R., *The Oyo Empire C1600-C1835* p. 3.
 9. Akinjogbin I.A. and E.A. Ayandele, "Yorubaland up to 1800" in O. Ikime, op. cit. p. 128.

II. THE EVOLUTION OF SETTLEMENTS IN OYO KINGDOM

A knowledge of early settlements could form a good source of information about the geographical and demographic past of the Oyo area. But due to the constant shifts in population in the area, even the few towns that are known to have existed are difficult to locate.

To the north of Oyo-Ile, some of the ancient settlements which most likely, predated the establishment of Oyo were Ika, Gbere, Kusu, Shaki and Igboho. Some of these, like Kusu and Gbere were Bariba towns where the Oyos took refuge during the Tapa attack on Oyo.¹⁰ Onigbogi, the then reigning King of Oyo was allowed to settle at Gbere with his host. Later, they moved to Kusu situated on the banks of the Okin stream for security.¹¹

Igboho was also founded during the years of wanderings by the Oyos due to the continued attacks by the Nupe.¹² After they left Kusu and settled for a few years at Shaki, they eventually moved to settle in an area between two streams. This provided natural defence. The area was strengthened

10. Akinjogbin I.A., "The Expansion of Oyo and the Rise of Dahomey, 1500-1800" in J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder (eds) *op. cit.* pp. 373-412.

11. Smith R.S., *op. cit.* pp. 44-42

12. *Ibid* p. 42.

with tripple walls to enable them resist the persistent menace from the Nupe and later, the Borgu and Shaki, their (Oyos) hosts. Thus, settlements to the north and east of Oyo were sited with an eye to ease defence.¹³

In the east of Oyo, such towns like Ekiti, Akoko and Yagba were located in good defensive positions. Their locations in relation to areas with natural obstacles,¹⁴ increased their security. Up to the late 16th century, these settlements overshadowed Oyo. It was in the 17th century with the establishment of Oyo-Ile as the capital of Oyo Kingdom and the expeditions carried out by Oyo into these areas for slaves,¹⁵ which created wealth for Oyo and consolidated the power of the Alafin.

In Southern Oyo, settlements which were established at a very early date included Iseyin, Ede, Ikoyi, Ikirun, Igbeti and Iresa. Some of these like Odunfa, Ikinin and Igbeti were built earlier at the foot of hills bearing such names. By the 19th century, increase in cavalry raids forced these settlements to move to the top of the inaccessible hills.¹⁶

13. Morton Williams P., "The Oyo Yoruba and the Atlantic Trade, 1670-1830" *JHSN* III, I 1964 pp. 27-29.

14. *Ibid*, pp. 28-29.

15. *Ibid* pp. 29-46.

16. NAK 688, Oyo-Ilorin Boundary North of Illa.

In Western Oyo, the opposite was the case. Settlements were sited not with an eye to ease defence, but to make communications between them as easy as possible.¹⁷ This is seen in the way settlements tended to avoid hill tops and broken country.¹⁸ These included, Ekun Otun, Iwere, Sabe and Saki.¹⁹ It was in the 19th century that settlements in Western Oyo were sited with an eye to defence.²⁰

Thus, the pattern of population distribution in pre-19th century Oyo area seems to indicate that most of the population was concentrated in the Savanna to the north rather than in the forest to the South.²¹ Such ancient towns like Ijanna, Ede, Kusu and Oyo with large population concentrations were estimated by 19th century European travellers to have ranged from 5,000 in Ijanna to 50,000 in Ede.²² By the late 19th century, urbanism in Yorubaland was mainly necessitated by the wars of expansion waged by the Nupe and

17. Morton-Williams P, op. cit. pp. 27-28.

18. Ibid p. 28.

19. See Map of Pre-19th Century Yoruba Kingdoms in R.S. Smith op. cit. p. VII

20. Morton-Williams P., op. cit. pp. 27-28.

21. Lander R., Records of Captain Clapperton's Last Expedition to Africa. (London 1830) p. 95, R.Law, The Oyo Empire, p. 8.

22. See for example, A.L. Mab gunje, Urbanization in Nigeria (University of London Press, London 1968) pp. 86-87.

the Bariba. These wars forced more and more people in the open Savanna of northern Yoruba, to congregate together in naturally defensible areas. This forced urbanism in northern Yorubaland and later, in the whole Yorubaland, has been taken to mean that the Yoruba people were traditionally urban dwellers.²³

There is no doubt, some urban centres existed in Yorubaland before the 16th century. But it was mainly from the 16th century to the 19th century that urban centres like Oyo-Ile, Oyo-Igbobo, Kusun, Ekiti, Akoko and later, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ogbomoso, Ijebu-Ode, Modakeke and Iwo emerged.²⁴ Certain factors, apart from the military factor, made the evolution of the 16th century settlements possible. In this study, our attention will be paid to Oyo-Ile.

III: FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE EVOLUTION OF OYO-ILE WALLS

The wars of survival which Oyo had to wage in the 16th century, led to the development of the city. The location

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- 23. Oyo G.J.A., Yoruba Culture: A Geographical Analysis (University of Ife Press, Ile-Ife 1966) pp. 104-105.
 - 24. Law R., "Towards a History of Urbanization in Pre-Colonial Yorubaland" African Historical Demography: Proceedings of a Seminar Held at the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, (Edinburgh 1977) pp. 260-271.

of Oyo in the midst of rocky outcrops and an impenetrable thorn thicket indicates the defensive needs of the settlement. The hills which surrounded Oyo and helped in her development included, from the north to south, Diogu, Olonawe, Diara, Abu. Arin or Alin, Mejire at the centre of the walled area and Kojomona with Agbaka just outside the walled city to the south.²⁵ These hills form a conspicuous feature of Oyo-Ile. They provided an inaccessible barrier from invaders of the city and made it possible for the immigration of many people to the city. In the centre of Oyo-Ile are numerous caves.²⁶ Evidence from archaeological excavations carried out at Oyo has revealed the existence of large population concentrations, especially in the caves located at the bases of the numerous hills of the city.²⁷ This occupation of the city is dated to 1500 A.D.²⁸ This helped in the consolidation and development of Oyo. She could not only defend herself but also carried out wars of expansion against other settlements. Thus the security provided by the hills helped in the evolution of Oyo by attracting many people. This also enabled Oyo to wage

25. Smith R., and D. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 60.

26. Willet F., Recent Excavations at Old Oyo and Ife, p. 100.

27. Willet F., "Investigations at Old Oyo, 1956-1957: An Interim Report" *JHSN* Vol. 2, No. 1, 1960 pp. 59-77.

28. Willet F., Recent Excavations, pp. 95-100.

offensive wars against the neighbouring territories.

Another factor for the evolution of Oyo-Ile was its relatively fertile soils which was suitable for farming. The weathering effect of the heavy rains on the granites of the area helped in producing fertile soils.²⁹ These minerals enriched the soil of the surrounding farmlands and was an incentive to farmers. Many farmers were therefore attracted to Oyo-Ile. This is substantiated by the archaeological evidence which testifies to the existence of a large agricultural population that inhabited Oyo-Ile.³⁰ Many crops were cultivated. These included millet, maize, yams, sassava, oil palm and kola trees.³¹ These crops helped in the economic development of Oyo.

During the dry season, when farming was off-peak and forests of fallow land are thinner and grasses of derived Savanna are scorched, hunting was carried out. Because of the availability of streams that flow north to the Moshi River and South to the Ogun River, many forests existed in Oyo-Ile. These forests were inhabited by different herbivores like cane rats, squirrels, monkeys, bush cows,

29. Bascom W., "The Fall of Old Oyo or Katunga" Presence Africaine, 24-25, 1959, p. 321.

30. Willet F., Investigations at Old Oyo, pp. 59-77.

31. Law R., The Oyo Empire C1600 - C1836, pp. 201-202; Ojo G.J.A., op. cit. pp. 32-43.

porcupines, lions, and hyenas.³² These were hunted by using wooden clubs and long bows and arrows. Hunting helped in the economic development of Oyo. Hunters had to give a portion of their prey to the Alafin especially, during the annual Jelepa hunting expedition at Oyo.³³ The hunters, because of their skill in shooting formed the first rank of Oyo's soldiers and medical specialists.

The location of Oyo-Ile was also an important factor in its evolution. It is located between Hausaland and Yorubaland on the way to Gonja. This aided the easy mobility of men and ideas. The great influence which the Tapa (Nupe) Bariba (Borgu) and Hausa exercised in Oyo-Ile in terms of political and military set up and the reliance on officials of slave origin, is an indication of this exposure.³⁴ This greatly helped in the development of Oyo.

The strategic location of Oyo-Ile also enabled it to take active part in the trans-saharan and trans-Atlantic trades. In order to trade effectively with the outside world, Oyo had to develop her local products. These included leather works, textile materials, carved and decorated calabashes, beads, iron implements, palm oil, shea butter and kola nuts.³⁵

32. Ibid, pp. 32-43.

33. Ibid, pp. 40-44.

34. Smith R., "The Alafin in Exile: A Study of Igboho Period in Oyo History" JAH, VI, I, 1965, pp. 55-57.

35. Ojo G.J.A., op. cit, pp. 57-98.

This helped in diversifying Oyo's economy. In exchange for these items, Oyo got salt from the coast, European clothes, wines and later, guns. From the north, Oyo received such trading items like horses, slaves, hides and cotton from Nupe, natron from Borno, unwrought silk and beads of Venetian manufacture from the Sahara.³⁶ This helped in the expansion of Oyo's market, the Akesan market, the largest in the Kingdom.³⁷ Oyo therefore controlled the flow of trade from the Atlantic coast to Nupe, Hausaland and Borno. Trade was also channelled from Conja, Gao, Timbuktu and Jenne to Oyo-Ile to the extent that Oyo became a leading trading centre south of the Niger.

These factors helped in the development of Oyo-Ile and the consolidation of the power of the kings of Oyo.

IV. THE EMERGENCE OF THE KINGDOM CENTRED AT OYO-ILE.

The emergence of the kingdom of Oyo centred at Oyo-Ile was made possible after the emergence of Kingship. The political system of Oyo-Ile was founded on the lineage (idilo) that occupied a common compound (Adugba).³⁸ Each

36. Law R., *The Oyo Empire 1600 - 1836* pp. 212 - 228.

37. Soper R., "Carved Posts, Old Oyo" Nigerian Field, Vol. 43, No. 1, 1978, pp. 12 - 21.

38. Law R. op.cit., p. 63

of the compounds was headed by a Bale who maintained law and order and adjudicated disputes within the compound.³⁹ The power which the Bale exercised was a factor of the size of the ward and the wealth of such ward.⁴⁰ The emergence of Oyo city was therefore a result of the development of the federation of the various wards under the different Bales. This development favoured the emergence of the Alafin, king of the palace. This development seems to have taken place in the early 16th century.

Oranyan, the first King who 'founded' Oyo is said to have ruled for a few years and left to found Oko where he is said to have ruled for a long time.⁴¹ The next Oba was Ajaka who took over the rulership of Oyo after the departure of Oranyan. It would seem that at this time, militarism and heroism were glorified. All Obas were expected to be brave and warlike for the survival of the state.⁴² Ajaka who was too mild for the warlike spirit of the time was deposed.⁴³ This frequent change in leadership indicates that the Obaship at the initial stage was not yet consolidated.

39. Ibid, p. 64.

40. Ibid, p. 64.

41. Johnson S., *The History of the Yorubas* Lowe and Brydone Printers, Norfolk, 1976, p. 144.

42. Atanda J.A., "The Military in the Politics of Old Oyo Empire" paper presented at the Accra Conference, August 1975, pp. 1-15.

43. Johnson S., op. cit. p. 148.

Sango, Ajaka's younger brother, became the King. He was a powerful warrior leader and he succeeded in establishing Oyo as an independent Kingdom by removing his kingdom from Oko where Oranyan stayed, to Oyo Ajaka.⁴⁴ This helped in consolidating the power of the King and increased the extent of the Kingdom. His ability to acquire the myth of being the incarnation of Sango, god of thunder and lightning, enabled him to possess excessive powers.⁴⁵ He reigned for seven years and built a palace at the foot of a hill called Oke Ajaka.⁴⁶

The deposed Ajaka was later to become the fourth King. Having learnt his lesson, he now became militarily aggressive. He waged wars of expansion against the Tapa and established his internal power all over again by military force.⁴⁷ He therefore helped a great deal in consolidating the power of the King. In their attempts to consolidate the power of the king and establish the kingdom on a solid foundation, other kings like Aganju, Kori, Oluasa and Onigbogi continued to expand the kingdom of Oyo.

44. Akinjogbin I.A., and E.A. Ayandele, op. cit. p. 128.

45. Johnson S., op. cit. p. 150.

46. Ibid, p. 150.

47. Akinjogbin I.A., and E.A. Ayandele, op. cit. p. 128.

It would however seem that by the 1550^s, during the reign of Ofinran, successor of Onigbogi, the Tapa invaded Oyo and drove them out to the Bariba country and the Oyos were forced to settle in Gbere.⁴⁸ Ofinran attempted to go back to Oyo-Ile through Kusu. He however died at Kusu.⁴⁹ In their continued effort to go back to Oyo, Egugunju who took over at Kusu had to camp at Igboho which was relatively secure. While here, they built three concentric walls as additional defences. This was to enable them resist the menace of their neighbours, the Tapa and Bariba.⁵⁰ This is the first time the Oyos seem to have built a wall.

During the reign of Orompoto, the Bariba attacked the Oyos at Igboho and these Bariba were defeated. This defeat was due to the defensive roles of walls and military organization engaged in by Orompoto. He formed a large army whose rearguard alone consisted of 1,000 horsemen (elesin), and 1,000 foot soldiers (elese).⁵¹ These helped in consolidating the power of the King and in the expansion of the Kingdom. This is seen in the way the Oyos were able

48. Smith R.S., op. cit., pp. 41-42.

49. Johnson S., op. cit., pp. 159-160.

50. Morton-Williams P., op. cit., pp. 27-29.

51. Smith R.S., op. cit. p. 42, Johnson S., op. cit. p. 161.

to curtail the menace of the Tapa and Bariba which enabled them under Abipa, to return to Oyo Ajaka towards the end of the 16th century.⁵²

It is most likely that the evolution of the titles of Alafin, Bashorun and Oyomesi could have started in the late 16th century with the re-establishment of Oyo-Ile. The holders of earlier titles of Oba, and Bale were now subordinates under the Alafin and Oyomesi. Below these was the Oloja, incharge of the market place. Thus, the wars of survival and later, of expansion waged by the Oyos from the beginning of the 16th century and lasting for almost one hundred years, created a cohesive group⁵³ and led to an effective organization of the government and the military. This helped in the evolution of the city centred at Oyo-Ile and aided the construction of the walls in the late 16th century.

V. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALLS OF OYO-ILE

The high level of political centralization and military organization in Oyo, in the 16th century, under Alafin Orompoto, could have led to the construction of the inner

52. Akinjogbin I.A., and E.A. Ayandele, op. cit. p. 129.

53. Ibid, p. 128-129.

MAP OF OLD OYO WALLS AND GATES 182




 Gates
 Walls
 Roads
 Iselbergs

SOURCE:- R. SOPER, "CARVED POST
 OLD OYO" NIGERIAN FIELD
 43, 1, 1978 P. 13

fortifications. This inner wall numbered as wall 2 in figure 5, is most likely the first wall to be built in the Oyo-Ile walling sequence. This is supported by the fact that the earliest evidence of the use of cavalry in Oyo goes to Orompoto. In the 16th century, he used cavalry to end Nupe and Bariba threats to Oyo.⁵⁴ He might not have used cavalry against other walled settlements without first building a wall round his capital. This wall enclosed the many settled wards in Oyo-Ile.

The outer wall, numbered as wall 3 in figure 5, could have been built around the middle of 17th century by Alafin Ajaigba. He is credited with the creation of the office of the Are-Ona Kakanfo, commander of the Army.⁵⁵ The wall was built of clay and measured about 20 feet high and surrounded by a deep dry ditch.⁵⁶ The ditch measured roughly eight metres in width and tapers downwards to a width of 1.2 metres at the bottom.⁵⁷ The sides of the ditch are very steep, cut round nodular laterite. The wall was also provided with pitch holes and a level shelf or berm. The berm acted as sentry post for the defenders of the city while the pitchholes were used for hurling weapons on the advancing

54. Law R. , op.cit. pp. 31 - 40.

55. Johnson S., op. cit. pp. 168 - 169.

56. Willet F., Investigations at Old Oyo pp. 59-64; See also Smith R. and D. Williams, Research Note, p. 59.

57. Soper R. op.cit. pp. 12 - 21.

assaillants. The outer wall was provided with seven massive wooden gates. From these gates, roads led to neighbouring towns and the gates were named after the most important towns to which they led.⁵⁸ Each gate had a gate house and a gate keeper. On the other hand, the inner wall had ten gates.

The apparently well built outer walls indicate that the Oyos were influenced, to some extent, by the Hausa and Nupe wall builders. The height of the wall, the provision of the berm, pitch-holes and a wide and tapering ditch, are indications that cavalry was used in warfare against Oyo-Ile. The construction of an innermost wall, called *edi eleru*, King's wall, enclosing the *Afin*, palace and the largest market in the Kingdom, *Akesan market*,⁵⁹ indicates the security problems faced by *Alafin Ajaigbo* as a result of the several wars he waged against many states.⁶⁰ The *Afin* alone occupied one square mile, 640 acres which indicates the power of the *Alafin* who could draft large labour force to build and maintain a befitting palace and wall for him.⁶¹ The *edi eleru* encircles the upper part

58. Mabogunje A.L., *op. cit.* pp. 99-100.

59. Soper R., *op. cit.*, pp. 12-21.

60. Johnson S., *op. cit.*, p. 169.

61. Ojo G.J.A., *Yoruba Palaces*. (London, 1966) p. 24.
See also H. Clapperton, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Sokoto* (London, 1829) p. 58.

of Mejiro hill. It is built of baked bricks and alternated with layers of stones reaching a height of 4 feet in some places.⁶²

The northern loop, which forms wall 6 in figure 5 is apparently, a later addition. It was probably built in the late 18th century by Alafin Abiodun. This could have been mainly to demarcate Oyo's territory to the north. This was the period when Oyo's power reached its greatest extent and could therefore engage in building walls not for defence but also for demarcating their farmlands.⁶³

The size and number of Oyo walls indicate the large number of people the Alafin could mobilize at any given time for the construction and maintenance of the walls. Acquisition of labour was essential for the wealth, power and security of the Kingdom. This labour could be free or servile. What mattered was its control and concentration. By the 16th century when Oyo-Ile had not engaged in forceful acquisition of slaves, the labour used in building the first wall was derived mainly from Oyo-Ile itself. In order to obtain the needed hands, all free men and women and even children were considered liable to provision of labour for

62. Soper R.C.C., "Archaeological Work at Oyo-Ile, 1978 and 1979, Interim Report". University of Ibadan, 1979, pp. 1-5.

63. Morton-Williams P., *op. cit.*, pp. 27-64.

building the wall. Women and children fetched water and provided refreshments for the workers on the building site.⁶⁴

By the 17th century when the second wall was built, slave labour was used.⁶⁵ For the effective mobilization of labour from villages and towns under the control of Oyo, the Kingdom was divided into areas of jurisdiction called Ekun,⁶⁶ consisting of free and conquered territories. The Bales were in charge of free territories while the Ajele were responsible for mobilization of men and materials from the conquered territories. Some of the free territories which were autonomous but whose rulers were crowned by the Alafin and therefore owed allegiance to him included, Iba, Igbeti, Offa, Okoko, Ikitu, Igboho, Onoja, Maleta, Paiye,⁶⁷ and Iseyin. They provided labour through the Bale for the construction of the walls and also raised levies in the form of grains, cowries and slaves in support of the metropolis.

Oyo-Ile also relied on slave labour obtained from

64. Clapperton H., op. cit. p. 58.

65. Morton-Williams P., op. cit. pp. 25-26.

66. Morton-Williams P., "The Yoruba Kingdom of Oyo" in Daryll Forde and P.M. Kaberry, (edited) West African Kingdoms in the Nineteenth Century. (Oxford University Press, London 1967) pp. 37-40.

conquered territories. Oyo-Ile seems to have preferred slaves of northern origin for constructing the outer and the innermost walls. These slaves were regarded as people possessing specialized skills in which most of the local people were not qualified.⁶⁸ These skills included the ability of slaves of northern origin in handling horses, were skilled in the martial arts of their areas and also were skilled builders. The close resemblance of the Oyo-Ile outer walls to the walls of Kano city, especially in the materials employed and in the style of construction, could have been due to the influence exerted by these slaves of northern origin on the construction of the Oyo Walls. The very high ranks which eunuchs (Iwefa), always associated with Nupe history, occupied in Oyo administrative hierarchy, is a testimony of Oyo's reliance on slaves of northern origin. These did not only guard the Alafin's wives and children but also performed the roles of porters, builders and blacksmith. Among the chief eunuchs were the Opa Iwefa, Otun Iwefa, and Osi Iwefa who took charge of judicial, religious and administrative matters respectively.⁶⁹

The specialized skills possessed by the slaves enabled them to build durable walls. This could be seen in the way the labour force for the work on the walls was divided into different groups according to their specialization. There

67. NAK, 688 Oyo-Ilerin Boundary.

68. Law R., op.cit. pp. 202 - 206

69. Ibid. p. 64.

were those responsible for moulding and drying bricks, some for carrying mud, bricks and stones and others for building under the supervision of the chief builder, ile-mele.⁷⁰ The ile-mele, who probably was of slave origin, instructed builders on the type of materials to be used. This division of labour ensured effective performance and orderliness. It also ensured proper modification of the walls and gates to withstand new tactics of warfare. Gates that were often assaulted by enemies of Oyo-ile received greater attention in terms of maintenance and modifications. For example, the northern gates measured between 9 metres and 10 metres in width and the walls were as thick as 8 metres. The western section of the wall which was not so frequently attacked, does not appear as thick as the northern gates. It measures 3.5 metres thick and 5 metres high while to the north-east, the walls were baked hard with sundried bricks and still survive to a height of 4 to 5 metres.⁷¹

The modifications effected on the 17th and 18th centuries walls enabled Oyo to become a strong point for dominating other areas. Apart from consolidating the power

70. Alanda J.A., The New Oyo Empire: Indirect Rule and Change in Western Nigeria, 1894-1934. Longmans, 1973, p. 20.

71. Soper R.C.C., op. cit., pp. 3-5.

of the Alafin, the walls enabled Oyo to grow food crops within and also at the gates, tolls could be collected from passing traders.

VI. FUNCTIONS OF THE OYO-ILE WALLS

Over the centuries, the rulers of Oyo-Ile built four concentric walls. The various walls served different functions. As has already been shown, the common function which all the walls performed was defence. Oyo-Ile, was essentially a military state whose establishment and development depended on her ability to defend herself and expand at the expense of other states. The wars of survival which Oyo had to fight against the Tapa and the Bariba forced her to re-organise the army and to build defensive walls. This re-organization involved the integration of the army into the political structure of the state and the creation of new offices. Alafin Orompoto for example, imported horses and trained horsemen.⁷² To complement the military force he also built the first wall in Oyo. With these, he was able to establish Oyo by defeating the Nupe and Borgu. By the mid 17th century, Alafin Ajaigbo created the office of the Are-Ona Kakanfo, who became the commander of the army.⁷³

72. Smith R.S., op. cit. p. 42. See also Johnson S., op. cit. p. 161.

73. Johnson, op. cit. pp. 168-169.

The choice of the Kakanfo depended on his possession of certain attributes. He had to be talented, fearless, imaginative in the adoption of new tactical methods in warfare and keep up a sturdy opposition even in the face of unpleasant surprises. This is why on appointment, the Are Ona Kakanfo had to swear an oath of allegiance and that he must either conquer an enemy territory within three months or he be brought back dead to Oyo-Ile.⁷⁴ The encouragement of these martial virtues coupled with the construction of the fully thought out defensive walls indicate the reliance of the leadership on effective defence. This was to help consolidate the power of the Kings and for the continued development of Oyo. Oyo therefore emerged into a powerful state in the 17th century to the extent that she could conquer and integrate other areas into its Kingdom. These included Sabe, Ketu, Egba, Egbadò and Porto-Novo. Others were Ikoyi, Nupe, Bariba and Oshogbo.⁷⁵

The offensive posture of Oyo which was encouraged by military strength and the security of her walls widened the circle of her enemies. The Nupe, Borgu and Dahomey began

74. Ibid, p. 191; G.N. Uzoigwe, "The Warrior State in Pre-Colonial Africa" in Ali Mazrui. (eds), The Warrior Tradition in Modern Africa (London, 1977) pp. 20-47.

75. Merton-Williams, p., The Yoruba Kingdom of Oyo, pp. 37-39. The extent of Oyo's Kingdom in the 17th century is not very clear. But it seems that Oyo conquered far and wide since it was in this period that she reached her peak of territorial conquests.

to attack Oyo. They did this by destroying her farmlands and ransacking some of her dependent territories.⁷⁶ This deprived Oyo of most of her sources of food supplies and disrupted the trade routes linking the state capital and other trading centres. This forced Oyo into greater defensive effort. She also had to create enough space within the safety of the walls for the production of food crops. The outer wall and the northern loop could have been built to enable the Oyos to grow food within the safety of the walls. Between the outer wall and the inner wall, a space of several square kilometres was provided all round. This space was used for farming by the city inhabitants.⁷⁷

The northern loop, which ~~Oyo-Ile~~ ^{Oyo-Ile} ~~was~~ ^{was} a territorial expansion due to Oyo's victories in the 17th century, was built to delineate her acquired land for farming.⁷⁸ This was necessitated by the boundaries which Oyo-Ile shared with the Nupe and Borgu, her most serious northern rivals. These successive additions of areas to the initial area demarcated by wall 2 as shown in figure 5, was due to the rapid population expansion which Oyo witnessed in the 17th and 18th centuries. It created the need for Oyo-Ile to rely increasingly on farming lands which were within the

76. The construction of the Northern loop which coincided with the re-emergence of Oyo's enemies shows the relationship between attacks on Oyo's farms and the building of the outer loop

77. Bascom W., op. cit. p. 321

78. Soper R., op. cit. pp. 12 - 21.

security of the walls, since these (farmlands) were the basic ingredients of Oyo's power.⁷⁹ The construction of fire-proof mud walls where combustible substances were removed, except the wooden gates, led to a change in the strategy of war. Mention has been made of the use of fire in warfare in the Savanna. A close blockade was employed. This was to divert resources from the rural areas to the city in order to starve the city inhabitants to the point of submission. Labour was provided through family labour and sometimes by Iwofa labour and slave labour. The Iwofa labour was that provided by people indebted to others. The debtor had to devote one day in every five days to work for the debt as payment.⁸⁰ Slaves were also acquired by the rich and by the state and used in production since the Oyos were essentially agricultural people. At the time of Abiodun, especially during the mid 18th century, more attention was paid to the acquisition and use of slaves as farm labourers and for sale.⁸¹ Thus by the end of the 18th century, there grew up in Oyo-Ile a large number of people of slave origin who were as numerous and as powerful as or more powerful than the free-born natives.

79. Oho, G.J.A., Yoruba Culture, pp. 28-29.

80. Johnson, op. cit. pp. 126-127.

81. Morton-Williams P., The Yoruba Kingdom of Oyo, p. 37.

Most of the military and civil title holders of Oyo were people of slave origin. The seventy Esos who constituted the noblemen of the second class next to the Oyomesi were people of slave origin, apart from the Kakanfo.⁸² Though the aim of appointing slaves in sensitive positions was the need for absolute obedience by the Alafin in order to consolidate his position, and to forestall the danger of a revolt, yet, this proved disastrous for Oyo in the long run. It led to the overthrow of the ruling caste by the slaves and the decline of the Kingdom.⁸³

The walls of Oyo-Ile also helped in channelling trade by providing security and by making it possible for the rulers to establish many markets within the walls. The existence of the akesan market, the largest in the Kingdom, and six other smaller markets within the walls,⁸⁴ indicates the role played by the walls and the leadership in encouraging trade and commerce in the capital city. This was so because some of the reigning Alafins from the 17th to the 19th centuries, were professional traders. However, because

82. Johnson, op. cit. p. 73.

83. Akinjogbin I.A. "The Oyo Empire" JHSN III, 3, 1966, pp. 449-460; S.N. Eisenstadt, "The Cause of Disintegration and Fall of Empires: Sociological and Historical Analysis" Diogenes No. 34, 1961, pp. 87-112.

84. Soper R., op. cit. pp. 12-21.

of their position in the society, they could not openly participate in the trade. They had to assign some members of the royal family the responsibility of trading for them. For example, Alafin Abiodun encouraged trade in the capital and with other states so much that he founded a flourishing slave market in 1777 at Abomey Calvi which was stocked and controlled by Oyo.⁸⁵ The control over trade which the walls afforded the reigning Alafins reached an extent where all Oyo traders within the walls and in the whole Kingdom could not trade directly with the European merchants at the coast. They were compelled to sell their slaves and other items of trade only to Alafin's traders who alone could resell them to the European exporters.⁸⁶ In this way, the Alafins controlled trade and became very wealthy. This wealth enabled them to live far beyond the reach of the common people. The wealth was displayed in various ways. Alafin Onisile, for example, made seven silver doors for the seven entrances of his sleeping apartment.⁸⁷ In addition, the crowns worn by all the Oyo Kings were made with cowrie and later with beads.⁸⁸ This manifests the extent of their wealth and power.

85. Akinjogbin I.A., Dahomey and its Neighbours, 1708-1818. (C.U.P., Cambridge 1967) p. 146.

86. Ibid, p. 146.

87. Akinjogbin I.A., and E.A. Ayandele, op. cit, p. 135.

88. Clapperton H., op. cit. pp. 13-14.

The accumulation of wealth was not limited to their participation in trade. They also accumulated wealth by taxing all items of trade that were brought into the city for sale at the gates or in the market place. Traders who lived in the city had to pay tolls through the Eni Oja. He was entitled to enjoy part of the emoluments that accrued from the tolls.⁸⁹ At the gates, were booths where Ilaris were stationed. The Ilaris collected gate tolls from traders from outside the city who went through the gates to the market. The Ilaris divided the proceeds from the tolls between them and the Alafin for their maintenance.⁹⁰ Thus, the walls provided a means of livelihood for the Ilaris and Eni oja and their families and through the wealth accumulated by the Alafin, this made him very powerful.

This wealth created the belief that the Alafin was the companion of the gods and was a successor of the reputed founder of Oyo-Ile.⁹¹ Hence, the construction of his palace away from the houses of the generality of the people with a distinct wall, the edi eleru. This belief enabled the Alafin to control the conscience of the people to his advantage. The Alafins exploited the situation and

89. Johnson, S., op. cit., p. 59.

90. Ibid, p. 62.

91. Ibid, p. 40.

enforced the worship of Sango, the third King of Oyo who was believed to have been a god of thunder and lightning.⁹² Any death caused by lightning in Oyo was attributed to Sango. The Alafin, the companion of the gods, had to ensure that the gods were appeased at such times. Sacrifices of shea butter, guinea fowls, rams, salt and palm oil had to be offered. In reality however, these items went to enrich the Alafin.⁹³ The walls therefore enabled the Alafin to control religion and the behaviour of people in the city.

The power which the Alafin wielded however, largely depended on the cordial relationship between him, the Oyomesi and the military officers as allowed by the constitution. The increase in wealth and power of the Alafin tilted the balance in his favour and made him despotic. This created a rift between the Alafin and the other tiers of government. While the Alafin wanted a halt in military expansion so that an effective exploitation could be made of the already conquered territories, the military officers on the other hand, wanted continued conquests to acquire more wealth and to glorify themselves.⁹⁴

92. Ibid, p. 150.

93. Ibid pp. 34-35.

94. Akinjogbin I.A., The Oyo Empire, pp. 449-460.

The walls of Oyo-Ile began to decline in the late 18th century. One of the reasons for this decline was the weakening of the Oyo army since they no longer waged any wars of expansion. This resulted in neglecting the maintenance and modifications of the walls. This shows the close relationship which existed between defence and offence. Ability to raid others depended on Oyo's ability to defend herself and Oyo being in the Guinea Savanna proper had to constantly maintain her walls because of the destructive effects of rain. One other reason for the decline of the walls in Oyo was the acquisition and use of guns by the Oyo army at this time. Though it is very doubtful that guns at this time could determine the outcome of battles in favour of those who possessed such, yet, these affected the nature of warfare.

The result of the decline of the Oyo walls was that tributary states seized the opportunity to declare their independence. In 1783, the Bariba declared their independence from Oyo. The army sent by Oyo to bring the Bariba to Oyo's allegiance was easily defeated.⁹⁵ The Tapa also defeated the Oyo army in 1790 and 1791 which made it possible for another dependent territory of Oyo, Egba, to declare its independence.⁹⁶ The more the once dependent states of Oyo declared their independence, the less tributes Oyo-Ile received from dependent territories. This led to a decline in her wealth and in the power of the state.

In a desperate attempt to equip the cavalry force, local horses were bred. These were, however, of very poor quality and could not effectively be put to use in the battle field. The attempt by Alafin Aole in 1817 to dispose his most serious rival, Afonja of Ilorin, who was the principal war chief of Ilorin, led to mutiny of the army.⁹⁷

95. Akinjogbin I.A., Dahomey and its Neighbours, P. 175

96. Ibid P. 175

97. Ibid P. 175

This was followed by a wave of massacres of the King's representatives and the besiege of Oyo-Ile by the army. They forced the Alafin to commit suicide in 1817.⁹⁸ The political instability that followed paved the way for the Fulani jihadists who finally sacked Oyo-Ile in 1836. The Oyo walls were completely abandoned as people sought for new settlements in the forests and on hills in such places like New Oyo, Ibadan and Abeokuta.⁹⁹

The evolution of the Oyo walls was therefore, related to the development of Oyo-Ile into a city and later, into a kingdom. The functions which the walls performed were determined by the security and economic needs of the kingdom. In this way, the walls helped to consolidate the power of the Alafin making him very wealthy and despotic. It was the attempt to check the excessive power of the Alafin that led to a transfer of power to the army. Even before this was achieved, the walls were already in the decline.

Insecurity in Oyo-Ile forced her traders and all the inhabitants of the city to migrate to safer areas, leading to the total collapse of the Oyo kingdom.

98. *Ibid*, pp. 321-327.

99. Law R., *Towards a History of Urbanization in Pre-Colonial Yorubaland*, pp. 260-271.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

In this study, an attempt has been made to examine the development and functions of city walls in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. In the existing literature, the walls have been treated as defensive mechanisms and their builders portrayed as aggressive, war-like people who thrived on war booty.¹ As a result, the processes in the development of the Savanna City walls and the historical functions which these walls performed have been overlooked.

As we have pointed out earlier, the walls of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area, built largely around rocky outcrops, served different functions in the different periods of their development. Their construction was a consequence of the emergence of economically viable and centralised political systems. The development of each walled settlement into a metropolis of a political unit, with satellite settlements, that were linked to it, was an important step in the economic development of the city. The degree of wealth enjoyed by the city was shown in the degree of specialised professionals of the city and the extent of the walls. City walls therefore came to be associated with rich and powerful states that could afford to mobilize a large labour force for the construction and continuous maintenance of the city walls. The walls therefore aided the formation of states. The walled area was often a strong point for dominating the country side. The wars for territorial expansion aimed at controlling human population and economically viable areas, often necessitated developments in warfare technology and in military architecture. The development

1. See for example, Uzoigwe G.N. "The Warrior State in Pre-Colonial Africa" in A Mazrui *op cit* pp 20 - 47. The polarisation of societies between the weak and strong since the time when weapons of violence were known and used was not peculiar to the peoples of the Nigeria Savanna.

of heavy cavalry provided the walled cities with the means of conquest. The horse became the predatory arm of states. This resulted in the economic development of the states and the impoverishment of relatively weaker areas. This offensive or expansionist function of the walled cities led to the continuous modifications and extension of the walls to cope with improved techniques of war and of increased population. These factors intersected in a complex fashion and helped in the development of states with the walled areas emerging as the seats of governments and capitals of the states.

Over the period covered in this study, there were various indications of common historical interactions that drew many societies of the Nigerian Savanna together. One of the factors involved in this process was the development of wide networks of commercial relations between the Savanna cities, North Africa, Western and Eastern Sudan. This integrated the economies of the Savanna area into the international market system. There were also social relations like migrations of economic specialists into the cities leading towards the emergence of urban centres, due to an unusual concentration of population within restricted areas. Immigration of economic specialists helped to diversify the economies of the Savanna cities. The cities consequently emerged as centres of production, specialization and of exchange. This was because the Emirs fostered competition among craftsmen and each strove to achieve recognition and reward. Hence, the spirit for the exhibition of ingenuity in building technology, craft production, military technology, in the tactics of defence and in food production. The development of the Gandu (Agricultural estate)

system, both family gandu and gandun arki (royal estate) was one of the responses to the food needs of the walled cities. This necessitated the creation of officials to take charge of production, storage and distribution of grains produced from the gandaye. These included Shagarki, Sarkin Hatsu and Sarkin aiki,² though most of these estates were located outside the city wall. The common problems of insecurity and food which the walled inhabitants faced was a major factor that aided the creation of a sort of national attributes and welded the city inhabitants together under the sarki. It should not be assumed that areas that had no walls did not witness the occurrence of these phenomena. Shaka was able to build the Zulu nation through the employment of new weapons and tactics of warfare without building city walls. He however had to be on the offensive in order to acquire booty for the sustenance of his forces. In the savanna belt of the Nigerian area, the walls were defensive and the inhabitants therefore tried to possess adequate means from within for supplying food, munitions and materials.

The development of the Sokoto Jihad of 1804 swept away the states of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area and in their place, the Sokoto Caliphate took over. Some of these states became emirates under the Caliphate while others like Oyo-Ile, were completely deserted.

2. Achi, B. Military Architecture and Warfare, pp. 3 - 12

... was used in giving ... the city of the ...

Despite this, the walls continued to receive attention from the jihadists. Infact new walls were ordered to be built in certain areas to act as vigilant look-outs for raiders. They were used in giving early warning to the city of the approach of hostile forces. This defensive function of the walls in the 19th century, compelled the Savanna builders to be adept at devising suitable bulding materials and techniques to enable the fortifications withstand the test of time and prolonged sieges. This explains why new building materials were often introduced in building the city walls depending on the differences in traditional prejudices of the buildres conditioned by local geography.

But from the point of view of certain writes, African building types including military architecture, are not recognised as deserving the term 'architecture',³ because these were not built of durable materis like marble, stone, metal or brick. This view is however highly ~~contradicted~~ by the durability of most of the city walls of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. In certain cases, some of these walls have been in existence for eight centuries. This proves the fallacy of such a view. The materials used were by no way fragile. Though they were a creative response to what was locally available in specific environment yet, there were instance where people had to travel long distances inorder

3. See for example, Paul Oliver (edited) Shelter in Africa (Parager, New York 1971) Oliver hold the view that African building types do not merit the term 'architecture' since the materials used are of shor durability. He therefore refers to them as shleter.

to carry stones on their head to the building site. Thus the building craft became a speciality. Only professional builders were conversant with the reliability or otherwise of the building materials. They could predict and calculate the durability of the materials they were dealing with. This helped in the continuous initiation of new changes in the building of the city walls between 1200 A.D. and 1370 A.D. It was in the period between 1897 and 1902 that these developments in military architecture, military technology and in economic development, were forcibly suppressed by the British Colonialists.

Towards the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, internal insecurity became a critical problem in the Savanna cities while external threats from the Europeans finally brought the downfall of the Sokoto Caliphate. The British adopted the strategy of piecemeal conquest starting with the southern Emirates of Nupe and Ilorin. The eminence of British attack forced Zaria and Kano to take more defensive measures. In Zaria, the walls were constantly patrolled and

the gates were put under heavy guard. Kano on her part began to rebuild the walls and erected strong gates. The walls were rebuilt to a height of between 30 ^{to} 50 feet ^{high,} 40 feet thick at the base, with a ditch running round them. At the top, the walls were 4 feet thick with loop holes through which defenders could fire at the enemy.⁴ The Emir also ordered towns and villages under his emirate to rebuild their walls and redig the ditches surrounding the walls in order to force the British advancing forces to retreat. As a result, the British forces could not easily breach the walls or gates of Kano city by gunfire, though they could easily defeat villages and town along the Zaria-Kano road. It was at Kofar Kabuga that the British forces finally succeeded in blowing the gate open with shell-fire and the city fell prey to the superior weapons of the British invaders.

Thus, pre-colonial warfare in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area resulted in the concentration of population in relatively secured walled cities. This helped in easy mobilization of labour for construction and for war. It was also an important factor in the high rate of economic specialization witnessed in the cities and thus, of trade. This led to the development of the states. In all of the areas treated, the wall was employed for defensive purpose, though performed economic, offensive, political and religious functions as well. In Kano and Zaria, Islam by the 16th century, played an important role in state formation. Contact with Muslim merchants from North Africa, Western Sudan and the Eastern Sudan helped in the political and economic development of these states. Muslim clerics linked Kano and Zaria with

4. Adeleye, R.A., op. cit. P.272

sources of horses, weapons and armour. They prayed for success in war and prepared charms for the warriors. In Oyo-Ile, skilled archers and hunters who were also medicinemen prepared medicines for the Oyo army against the weapons of the enemy.

The development of tactics and strategies affected the walls in a great way. In Kano and Zaria Kvaurave were now used in closing the gates while battlements and pitch-holes were provided. ~~At~~ the same time, informants who were mounted at the expense of the state were stationed at the gates. In Oyo-Ile wood was used in making the gate doors while only a favoured elite informants were mounted.

Despite these the British invasion reversed the process. Fortified settlements were in most cases, the target of attack since they were held to be centres of authority and of commerce. This often resulted in the depopulation of some of the the walled areas as people moved outside the walls in fear of British expeditionary forces. The creation of new towns that became centres of authority and commerce, ^{and} the ~~impow-~~ ^{British} sition of taxes forced some people to abandon the walled cities either to seek for jobs or to take up extensive farming outside the walls.

The walls therefore gradually began to cease to play their traditional economic military, political and social roles that

were vital to the development of the states. The British now employed the wall as a physical barrier between the inhabitants and the immigrants in the newly created settlements, of the Sabon Garis and Tudun Wadas. The walls were used to help in preventing the infiltration of new ideas and western culture. This had much to do with the British policy of divide and rule pursued under the guise of protecting Muslims from southern(christian) influence. This gradually aborted the receptability of the walled population of the cities to new ideas and innovations and greatly inhibited the unity of what later became Nigeria. Before this time, the walled cities were centres for the diffusion of ideas, techniques and of skills. They were also centres for the integration of diverse groups of people and therefore encouraged immigration. Thus, the function of the pre-colonial walls of the Savanna cities of the Nigeria area were never inimical to the interests of the walled inhabitants nor of the immigrants. But today the reverse is the case.

NOTES ON THE SOURCES

The relevant written sources on the city walls especially, before the 16th century are inadequate. This is made more difficult by the fact that the earlier walls have been seriously altered and the accurate records of their previous conditions are lacking. It is therefore not an easy task to attempt an estimation of the size and composition of the work force, methods of construction and the functions intended from one historical period to the other.

In this thesis, an attempt is made to reconstruct the walls through a systematic reconnaissance of the remains of the walls, through document and through field interviews. This is to help illustrate the diverse forms and functions of the city walls of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area.

Field work involved walking over and round the different walls several times to identify and map out the different appearances of the walls, gates, ditches and thickets. This field work served to show the exact locations, sizes and patterns of the walls. The depth, height and width of the walls could be obtained through this method. In certain cases however, the materials employed could not be easily understood without soil analysis nor could the methods of construction be known through mere observation.

Oral interviews supplemented the field surveys. In a topic of this nature where written sources are limited, oral tradition becomes a portent source. This is because

the study centres on city walls which were the hand work of different groups of people. These walls and their gates were spectacular features in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. This made them to feature prominently in the local traditions and in European travellers' accounts. Since the officials associated with the construction and annual maintenance of the walls were assigned by the Sarakuna, most of those interviewed were traditional title-holders, like building specialists, gate-keepers, professional blacksmiths concerned with rivetting Kyauraye, and locks for the city gates and traditional warrior title-holders. A careful selection of informants was however, made to avoid a situation whereby paid officials connected to the ruling houses would fabricate facts to please the interviewer. Thus, my informants were mainly elders who, to an extent, know the history of the settlements in which they live and the history of the walls.

In order to get the full co-operation of the respondents, they were assured that the research was mainly for academic purpose and that their responses will be confidentially treated and used for that purpose alone. Despite this, some still insisted that they be paid before they could give me any information on the walls. Infact, they asserted that researchers are given large sums of money to be given as 'goro' to informants in the field. Though I vehemently denied this, yet I had to give goro to some of my informants before they could co-operate with me.

Because the study focuses on the development and functions of city walls in the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area,

the interviews centred on the following sub-topics:

- (a) The origins and construction of the walls.
- (b) The role of Sarakuna in mobilizing labour, sources of labour and the estimated number of people involved in the work.
- (c) The role of professionals in the construction and maintenance of the walls.
- (d) The different types, shapes and materials used in the construction of the walls.
- (e) Periods and duration of the construction.
- (f) The functions of the walls over time
- (g) The walls today.

In all, thirty one people were interviewed and the information obtained helped in corroborating and supplementing the written source. Below are some details about the informants interviewed by me in the field.

1. LGM Lawal Goma Makeri, Dutsen Abba - 50 years

Lawal Goma Makeri was interviewed by me on Tuesday, 26th July, 1983 in his smithery. His occupations are blacksmithing and farming. Mallam Lawal acquired his information from his grandfather and father who were also blacksmiths before him.

2. MIB Mallam Ibrahim Bagudu, Madauchin Zazzau, Zaria City - 83 years

Mallam Ibrahim Bagudu is one of the custodians of the traditional history of Zazzau and his title M_adauchi, has been held by him for over 30 years. The interview was held on the 10th and 11th of June, 1983 at his residence. Because of the long hours involved, we sometimes

drove out to such sites like the city walls, the market and various places of Zaria City. I was able to gain from him several useful points about the history of Zazzau before and after C1604 AD Jihad. He acquired his knowledge about Zaria history from his connection with the court at Zaria, at school and from his parents and elders of the city.

3. AB. Alhaji Bala, Sarkin Kofar Kasakali Kano City - 55 yrs

I interviewed this informant on the 12th January 1983 at the Kasakali gate of Kano City. The interview centred on the construction and functions of the city walls and gates of Kano. But the informant was unwilling to say much but only pressed that I should talk to the Federal Government at Lagos about their low salaries. I was not able to gain much from him.

4. AAM. Alhaj Abdullah Muhammad, Sarkin Kofar Waika - 50 yrs

He was interviewed by me on the 7th January, 1983 at the Gate house of Waika, in Kano City. He inherited this work from his father and during the course of the interview some children who were lost but found, were brought to him to be returned to their owners. He therefore said that one of the major functions of the walls and gates was to help in controlling the movement of bad people and to identify lost children and cattle. He seemed to know a lot about the history of the city walls.

5. AUM. Alhaji Uba Mohammed, Sarkin Kofar Ruwa, Kano - and Usman Na Hodi - 51 years. Group Interview

My informants Alhaji Uba and Mallam Usman were jointly interviewed. The venue of the interview was the house of Alhaji Uba, the gate keeper. The gate has no house since it has been broken to make a modern motorable

road. The questions I asked the informants centred on the gate of Ruwa and why the name Ruwa gate.

6. ASS. Alhaji Ahmadu Samaila, Sarkin Kofar Nassarawa Kano - 55 years

I interviewed Alhaji Ahmadu on the 16th January, 1983 at the gate house. His father Mallam Samaila about 105 years was also there. The interview lasted for about two hours and covered a variety of issues from the origins of Kano to the history of the settlements around Kano, the establishment of the Kingship and the role of the Kinship in the construction of the walls.

7. UDA. Usman dan Audu Sarkin Kofar Na Isa-45 years.

The interview was held in the gate house of Na Isa Kano City on January 7th 1983. The respondent was the Sarkin Kofa himself. The interview was largely focussed on the organization of the leadership of gate keepers, builders, the military and blacksmiths of Kano and their role in constructing the wall and gates of the city.

MA. Mallam Abdullahi, Sarkin Kofar Wambai, Kano 40 years.

This interview was held in the house of the gate keeper located away from the gate. The discussion during the interview centred on issues as the early settlers - Dalla and Gwauron Dutse, occupations of the area and local religious practices associated with the hills of the area.

9. AYA. Alhaji Yusufu Ahmad, Sarkin Kofar Dukawuya Kano, 45

I interviewed Alhaji Yusufu at the gate house of Dukawuya on 18th January 1983. Alhaji Yusufu who was the gate keeper got his information from his father who was the gate-keeper before him (Yusufu). The interview was centred on the meaning of Dukawuya, the periods of the

construction of the gate and its functions through time. The interview was however, brief lasting for 50 minutes. This was because the gate-keeper could only outline the general functions of the gate and did not know when it was built.

10. AYK. Alhaji Yahaya Kabuga, Sarkin Kofar Kabuga, Kano 70 years.

Like the interview with Alhaji Yusufu, the one with Yahaya was also on the functions of the Kabuga gate and the walls of Kano. Unlike the former interviewees however, the respondent in this interview was able to identify at length the functions of the walls and gate and the settlement outside the city that benefitted from this gate. The interview was held in his house on the 20th February, 1983.

11. MYD. Mallam Yakubu Dan Agundi Sarkin Kofar Dan Agundi, 55 years.

The interview with Yakubu was held at his gate house very close to the Dan Agundi gate, Kano. He was able to throw some light on the relationship between religion, political centralization and the construction of the walls of Kano. He is very versed in Kano history.

12. GLZ. Group Interview, Zaria.

The interview was held in the tailoring shop of Mallam Ashafa. The informants at the Group included Alhaji Sambo Rabi'atu, Embroider, 75 years old, Sani Bello, Embroider, Kofar Kuyambana, Zaria 60 years and Mallam Ashafa, tailor, Kofar Kuyambana, Zaria 75 years. Ashafa Kuyambana was the principal informant. Ashafa told me how the warrior Kuyambana of Zaria derived his wealth from the capture of slaves. He is from the Kuyambana family of Zaria. During the interview, I also gathered the role

played by professionals in the economic development of Zaria City.

13. MS. Muhammadu Sani, Madakin Gini, Kano - 52 years

Muhammadu Sani is the Madakin Gini, an administrative title for one of the building specialists in charge of mobilizing labour and designing building patterns of palaces, mosques and city walls. I did obtain some useful information about sources of labour for the wall construction, annual maintenance and the role of building specialists in modifying the wall to cope with changes in weapons and warfare tactics. His access to western education most likely enabled him to have access to some written documents on the history of Kano and its walls.

14. AI. Alhaji Ibrahim, Sarkin Gini, Kano - 60 years

Alhaji Ibrahim is the chiefbuilder of Kano State. The title Sarkin Gini, has been traditionally held by his family. I held the interview with Alhaji Ibrahim on the 16th January, 1983 at his residence in Kano City. I obtained a lot of information and insight about the materials for the construction of the walls, the structural changes effected in the walls construction, changes in the names of the various gates over the years, changes in sizes and functions of the wall over time.

15. AM. Alhaji Muhammadu, Sarkin Kofar Dawanau, Kano - 50 yrs

Alhaji Muhammadu is the gate keeper of Kofar Dawanau, Kano. My interview with him was a very long one and concerned the changes in names of the gate, the various materials used as locking devices over the years, the beneficiaries of the gate and its functions over the years.

16. AIL. Alhaji Idris Isa, Sarkin Kofar Gadon Kaya,
Kano - 40 years

Alhaji Isa is the gate keeper of Kofar Gadan Kaya. He lives at the gate house. He inherited this work from his father. During the interview, I enquired into the origin of planting of thorn thickets round the city wall and why this gate in particular bears the name of thorns gate. I also focussed on the digging of ditches round the wall, construction of bridges across the ditches near the gates and the functions of all these in the military history of pre-colonial Kano.

17. HA. Hamza Audu, Sarkin Kofar Mazuga, Kano - 35 years

Hamza Audu is the gate-keeper of Kofar Mazuga. My interview with him centred on the relationship between this gate and the bellowing activities at Dalla hill and on the time of the construction of the Kano wall and the Mazuga gate. Though relatively young, Hamza knows a lot about the history of the early settlement of Dalla and its development over the years.

18. AIS. Alhaji Isa Sadau, Anzuwan Zaria, Zaria City -
27 years

He is a scholar and farmer in Zaria City. I interviewed him in his Zaure, which lay outside his house and which he uses as his makaranta (school). The interview with him centred on the construction of Kofar Tukur-Tukur, the role of the people of Tukur-Tukur village in the construction of the city wall, the names of the different walls of Zaria and their relationship with mythical leaders like Bakwa, Amine and Zaria. He was introduced to me as one of the most knowledgeable on the subject and the interview yielded much.

19. AMI. Alhaji Muhammadu Inua, Kofar Nassarawa, Kano
90 years

Alhaji Inua is a very old man. The interview with him was held at his Zaure in Kano City. During the interview he was able to throw some light on the relationship between Kano city and the peripheral settlements. He stressed that by the 19th century, the people of the City were no longer used in constructing or maintaining the city walls but subject people from dependent territories. He recited some proverbs about the glory of Kano.

20. ADD. Alhaji Duni Dumbi, Sarkin Wanzamai Dumbi - 80 yrs

The interview with him was held on the 15th July, 1983 at his residence in Dumbi. He inherited this title of Sarkin Wanzamai from his father. During the interview I gathered a lot about the relationship between warfare and the use of traditional medicine. He stressed that Wanzamai were very important in Zaria especially during war. He even brought out some of the charms used to protect warriors from weapons of the enemy. As a traditional medicine man, he knows a lot of the various protective medicines used over the years in Zaria.

21. SD. Shehu Dumbi, Dutsen Abba, Zaria 60 years old.

Shehu is a farmer and the interview with him was held in one of his farms on the 18th July, 1983. He knew a lot about the different wars fought between Zaria and Ningi, Zaria and the Kwararafa and between Zaria and Borno. He said he acquired his information from his father who was a renowned warrior.

22. ML. Muhamman Lawal, Kofar Kuyambar² Zaria - 82 years.

Muhamman Lawal is an ex-bridegroom from Kuyambar. The

During the interview I gathered much about the various immigrations into Zaria city and the role of immigrants in the development of the economy of Zaria.

23. AUI. Alhaji Usman Ibrahim, Late District Head of Kauru, 94 years.

The interview with Alhaji Usman was held on the 15th of April 1981. It centred on the relationship between Kauru, Karigi, Kargo and Zaria and between Kauru and Zangon Kataf. He is well versed in the traditional history of Kauru and knows a lot about Zaria. His position as the last of the Kauru Chiefs to rule Zangon Kataf enabled him to know a lot about the mobilization of labour and materials from Zango to Zaria for the construction or maintenance of the city walls.

24. HM. Hajiya Maimuna, Kofar Kona, Zaria - 65 years.

The interview with Hajiya Maimuna was held on the 27th July, 1984 in Zaria City. It centred on the role of women in the construction of the city wall and on the relationship which existed between the occupants of Kona wall and those of Zaria City wall. Hajiya Maimuna claimed to have obtained her information from her parents and her late husband.

25. MB. Mallam Buhari, Kwarbai, Zaria City 70 years.

Mallam Buhari is a primary school teacher in Zaria City. His wealth of knowledge about the history of pre-jihad Zaria, especially the role of traditional religion in the development of Madarkaci and the use of slaves for economic production by the rich is immense.

26. KNT. Kude Nka, Tagama, Zangon Kataf - 75 years

I interviewed the late Kude on the 18th April, 1981 at his residence at Tagama. The interview centred on the role of the Kataf people in the building of Zaria City walls. During the interview I learnt that some people were used in solidifying the wall at some spots considered to be imbued with evil spirits.

27. MA. Magaji Ayok, Magaji of Anguwar Gaiya, Tagama, Zangon-Kataf - 80 years

The interview with Magaji Ayok was held on the 20th April, 1981 at his palace at Tagama. The interview centred on walls in the Zangon Kataf area and their relationship with the Zaria walls. He stressed that Zaria sometimes ordered walls to be constructed in some of her dependent satellites that were often targets of attack by raiders.

28. MAS. Mallam Aliyu Sarki, Anguwar Zagi-Zagi, Zaria, 95 years

Mallam Aliyu Sarki was of the Zagi-zagi clan and lived at the Zagi-zagi ward which in 1807 was changed to Anguwan Kataka. The late Mallam Aliyu informed me about the roles of the Magajiya, Uwar Dawa and Uwar Gona in the development of agriculture in pre-jihadic Zaria. He stressed that the earliest settled sites in Zaria area were Kufena and Madarkaci.

29. MJ. Muhammadu Jilme, Tukur-Tukur, Zaria 85 years

Muhammadu Jilme is a farmer in Tukur-Tukur. The interview with him centred on the raids carried out against Tukur-Tukur by the Ningis, the construction of the Tukur-Tukur wall and the relationships between Tukur-Tukur and Zaria City. The interview with him was

30. Mr. Maccido Ahmed, Kashim Ibrahim Library, ABU
Zaria - 30 years

Mallam Maccido is a civil servant but knows a lot about Zaria history because of the researches he carried out in Zaria. He also had a close working relationship with researchers on Zaria City like Professor Mahdi Adamu, and Dr. Seidensticker. During an informal interview with him which was conducted near Kofar Tukur-Tukur of the Zaria City wall, I learnt a lot about the different palaces built by different sarakunan Zazzau, the role of the jihad in restructuring the walls and the various gandaye established by the sarakuna to help boost agriculture for the sustenance of the non-agricultural sector of the society.

31. HSM. Haruna Sarkin Magina, Zaria City

This recorded interview was conducted by Maccido Ahmed. In the interview, a lot is mentioned about the role of the walls in creating building specialists especially Babban Gwani, the grand father of the respondent himself and the annual repairs effected on the city wall of Zaria.

Another source used is the written traditions or chronicles. These include the Kano Chronicle translated by H.R. Palmer and the Chronicle of Kano written by Hassan Njimi. Using these chronicles, it was possible to estimate the time of the construction of the walls. This is possible because the walls were sometimes attributed to the reign of a particular ruler. The walls of Zaria, Amina and Kufena (Bakwa) are named after legendary rulers supposed to have ordered for their (walls) construction.

Through reference to these rulers, it is likely to get a good grasp of the chronology of the walls. One is not however, unaware of the dangers inherent in acquiring historical information through written traditions. In the first place, it is not clear when some of these chronicles were written though it seems they were compiled over a long period of time. The reliability of the Kinglists, especially for dating, becomes progressively uncertain as one extends backward in time beyond living memory.

Secondly without some form of independent confirmation, say by archaeological dates, it is difficult to accept the dates for the construction and extension of the walls as traditionally recorded in the chronicles. In the Kano chronicles for example, the incredibly detailed dates of the chronicle are suspect. Bageuda, the founding figure, is said to have reigned for sixty six years, exactly twice as long as his successor who is said to have reigned for thirty-three years. The two add up to a century.

Despite these weaknesses, the chronicles present us with a version that is quite different from the official Fulani and Colonial versions of pre-jihadic and pre-colonial history of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. They provide us with the history of the origins of the Hausa states and the nature of relations between the different states from the 12th century to 1808. Most of the materials in these chronicles for example, the wars of expansion, are corroborated by local traditions of the states themselves. These texts indicate that their

authors lived long in the Nigerian area and displayed a high degree of non-partisanship.

Archival Materials were also used. All the Archival materials used are located in the National Archives, Kaduna (NAK). They are documents of the Secretariat Northern Provinces (SNP) series and Annual Colonial Reports. These were mainly despatches to and from the British Colonial Office by military and administrative officers. They contain mostly, official reports on the boundaries between different provinces, economic activities of the people and other related matters.

From the 16th Century, European travellers passed through this part of Africa and write down some invaluable accounts of some of the the walls of the Savanna belt of the Nigerian area. Some of these travellers were fairly thorough in their observations and often drew sketches of the walls. They wrote down the heights, thicknesses and widths of the walls, the depth of the ditches, the locations of the thickets and the nature of the gates. Their main concern in doing this was to study the defence systems of the area for an eventual military invasion.

Despite their zeal for observation and "exact recording" of their observations and interviews, these travellers were handicapped by language barrier and recorded wrong informations. Leo Africanus who travelled through the Central Sudan in the years 1513 - 1515, described 15 Kingdoms of the region. However, the reliability of his source of the history of the Hausa States is questionable. His claim that Askia Mohammed of Songhai

conquered Gobir, Katsina, Kano and other Hausa states have been found to be incorrect. Also, Heinrich Barth, despite his 'accuracy' could not name the Kano gates correctly. There was also the tendency among this group of European travellers to exaggerate the sizes of the walls and populations of the various areas they visited.

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LIST OF INFORMANTS

LAWAL GOR. BIKERI (LGM) Dutsen Abba
 MALLAM ISMA'IL BILGUDU (MIB) Zaria City
 ALHAJI BEL (AB) Kano City
 ALHAJI ABDULLAHI MUHAMMAD (HAM) Kano City
 ALHAJI UBU MOHAMMED (UM) Kano City
 ALHAJI ABUDU SAMIIL (AS) Kano City
 USMAN DAN AUDU (UD.) Kano City
 MALLAM ABDULLAHI (ML) Kano City
 ALHAJI YUSUFU AHMED (AYA) Kano City
 ALHAJI YAKA KADUGA (YK) Kano City
 MALLAM YAKU D. S. ANGUNDI (MYD) Kano City
 GROUP INTERVIEW: Zaria (GIZ) ZARIA CITY
 MUHAMMADU KINI (MK) Kano City
 ALHAJI IFRIM (IF) Kano City
 ALHAJI ABU MOHAMMAD (AM) Kano City
 ALHAJI IDRIS ISA (II) Kano City
 HAMZA AUDU (HA) Kano City
 ALHAJI IS. S. DNU (IS) Zaria City
 ALHAJI MOHAMMADU INUWA (MI) Kano City
 ALHAJI DUNI DUMBI (ADD) Dumbi, Zaria.
 SHEHU DUMBI (SD) Dutsen Abba, Zaria
 MUHAMMAD L. M. L (ML) Zaria City
 ALHAJI USMAN IBRAHIM (UI) Kaura
 HAJIYA MIFUNA (HM) Zaria City
 MALLAM BULARI (MB) Kwarbai, Zaria City
 KUDE NKA TAGAMA (KNT) Tagama, Zangon Kataf
 MAGJI AYOK (MA) Tagama, Zangon kataf
 MALLAM ALIYU SARKI (MS) Anguwar Zogi-Zogi, Zaria.
 MUHAMMADU JILMA (MJ) Tukur-Tukur, Zaria
 MACCIDO ABUD (MA) Kwarbai, Zaria City
 HARUN. SALAMIN MAGINI (HSM) Zaria City

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