

THE FOREST STATES IN WEST AFRICA

The forest states were states that were founded in the forest region of West Africa and the Guinea coast.

A number of states developed in this region and they include Oyo, Benin, Dahomey, Asante, Niger delta states, Hausa states, Wolof Empire.

THE EMPIRE OF OYO.

ORIGIN:

- ❖ The Empire of Oyo was the earliest state to emerge in the forest region.
- ❖ It was created by the Yoruba people of present day Nigeria.
- ❖ The Yoruba are believed to have come from Ethiopia or Arabia.
- ❖ It is believed that Oyo was founded in the second half of the 14th century with its capital at Ile Ife.
- ❖ It is believed that the Yoruba first settled at Ile Ife under their king Oduduwa and they founded the Yoruba dynasty.
- ❖ After the death of Oduduwa, he was succeeded by his son Okanibi who is said to have given birth to seven sons.
- ❖ The youngest of Okanibi's sons was Oranyan who is believed to be the founder of Oyo Empire.
- ❖ Oyo started as a small kingdom under its king's titled Alafin's who went on conquering different areas to expand the empire.
- ❖ Oyo started as a small kingdom under its kings titled Alafins who went conquering different areas to expand the empire.
- ❖ According to customs and traditions and tradition, it is believed that Oranmiyan went for a military expedition in the north of Ile Ife where he was defeated.
- ❖ Among the Yoruba people when a prince, king, army commander was defeated in war, he was forced to commit suicide or stay at the border of the empire.
 - ❖ However, to avoid the humiliation and death, Oranmiyan would suffer when he returned, he decided not to go back to his father's empire and he stayed in the North of Ile Ife.
 - ❖ He established his capital at Oyo Ajak and started to build his own empire in the area.

- ❖ After his father's death, Oranmiyan conquered his father's kingdom and joined it with his own kingdom to create a large and strong empire of Oyo.
- ❖ He is therefore believed to be the founder of the empire.
- ❖ Other six sons of Okanibi created Yoruba states like Owu, Sabe, Popo, ILA, Ketu and Benin.
- ❖ The empire of Oyo started expanding to different areas and it conquered areas like the Guinea coast, Ware, Badagry among others.
- ❖ By 1790, Oyo was the largest state in the region.

Qtn: Describe the origin of Oyo Empire.

How was the empire of Oyo established?

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF OYO.

The empire of Oyo expanded due to a number of factors which were political, social and economic.

- The empire was located in the fertile area which facilitated agriculture and provided food for the increasing population.
- The empire was also located in the forest region which acted as a natural defensive barrier against external attacks.
- Oyo was situated along trade routes running from the south to the north and this enabled the Yoruba to act as middlemen in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade from which they acquired wealth to develop the empire.
- The Yoruba people were great iron workers and they made military weapons like spears, arrows as well as agricultural tools like hoes, axes which developed agriculture and created a strong army.
- The empire had a well-developed art and craft industry from which they manufactured different quality products e.g. jars, necklaces, jewelry, dyed clothes which were sold in trade to get income to develop the empire.
- The Yoruba custom of committing suicide by army commanders who lost in the battle made the commanders more determined to win every battle and manage to conquer many territories.
- The introduction of horses from North Africa led to the building of a large cavalry which was used to defend the empire from internal and external attacks.
- The empire led a strong economy based on trade, iron working, agriculture and tributes from vassal states. All this revenue was used to develop the empire.
- The empire was surrounded by weak neighbours who were easy to conquer and expand the empire's size.

- The empire had a good system of succession which were patrilineal and this reduced succession disputes.
- The Yoruba people had the same origin and language which united them and they were able to build a strong empire.
- The empire had powerful leaders e.g. Oranmiyan who founded and other leaders who followed him like Alafin Ajak and Alafin Abija who handled the administration of the empire and made it great.
- The empire had an efficient system of administration which was centralised where the empire was divided into two i.e. metropolitan and provincial Oyo with the king as the top most leader which made administration easy.

Qtn: Explain the factors that led to the rise of the Yoruba dynasty or Oyo Empire.

ORGANISATION OF OYO.

The empire of Oyo was organized politically, socially and economically.

- ✓ **Politically**, Oyo had a centralised system of government headed by a king.
- ✓ The king had a title of Alafin and he was greatly respected.
- ✓ The king ruled with a cabinet of ministers and the highest of them was the Prime Minister (Bashorun).
- ✓ Oyo also had a council of elders called the Oyomessi who were the highest in rank and they would check on the powers of the king.
- ✓ The empire had its capital at Ile Ife and was divided into seven wards and each ward was under a member of the Oyomessi.
- ✓ The empire was divided into two parts i.e. metropolitan and provincial Oyo for effective administration.
- ✓ Metropolitan Oyo was the central government ruled by the Alafin while provincial Oyo comprised of the conquered states but they were both under the powers of the Alafin.
- ✓ Provincial Oyo was divided into chiefdoms which were ruled by chiefs called Obas.
- ✓ The Oba was responsible for collecting taxes and contributing an army for the kingdom during War

✓ The Alafin/king was supreme in authority and his powers were checked by a council of elders known as the Oyomessi.

✓The powers of the Oyomessi were checked by the Ogiebonie cult which was a secret society of free men who were linked to the earth's goddess and its role was to mediate between the Alafin and the Oyomessi.

✓The system of succession was patrilineal i.e. from father to son.

✓ However, when the king died, according to the customs, his eldest son (Alemo) and the king's best friend were always buried with him and from the rest of the sons, a successor was elected by the Oyomessi.

✓ Justice was maintained in three sets of courts i.e. the Bale court which dealt with conflicts between members of the same compound.

✓The ward court dealt with cases from members of the same compound but different wards.

✓ The Alafin's court was the highest court of appeal and it tried out all criminal cases.

✓ Oyo had a standing army but every able bodied man was ready for war.

✓During war, each Oba was expected to contribute an army to defend the empire.

✓ However, the whole army was commanded by a field Marshal known as Konkafo and incase he was defeated in war, he had to commit suicide.

✓The army was divided into two i.e. infantry and cavalry.

✓**Socially**, the Yoruba had a common language, culture and religion i.e. ATR and Yoruba language.

✓ The Yoruba were very religious and they believed in the Almighty god called Duran who was believed to be the creator.

✓They also believed in many gods e.g. Sangu (god of lightening) and Ogun (god of war) and each god had a cult with religious and political roles.

✓They also believed in life after death and worshipped the spirits of the ancestors.

✓There was respect for elders, religious leaders because they were believed to have wisdom and experience.

✓ In their leisure time, they carried out art and craft and made items e.g. jewelry, jars, necklaces, dyed clothes, etc.

✓**Economically**, the economy of Oyo depended on agriculture because of the fertile soils and good climate and they grew crops e.g. Kola nuts, pepper, maize, millet and palm oil.

✓ The Yoruba carried out cattle rearing especially in the Northern part of Oyo.

✓They carried out iron working and they made tools e.g. pangas, axes, spears for agriculture and defense.

✓They also participated in local trade with neighboring empires like Benin and exchanged items e.g. clothes, kola nuts, guns, clothes, horses and salt.

✓They also participated in the trans-Atlantic slave trade where slaves and kolanuts were exchanged for European products e.g. sugar, guns, mirrors, beads.

✓ Oyo collected taxes and tributes from the conquered states e.g. Dahomey paid Oyo tribute of 40 guns, 400 loads of cowrie shells and 40 men women as slaves.

WHY OYO SURVIVED FOR SO LONG.

The empire survived for long because of a number of reasons which were political, social and economic and military.

- The empire had an efficient system of administration which was centralised with the king who was assisted by cabinet ministers.
- The empire was located in the forest region which provided a natural defensive barrier.
- The empire was also located in the fertile area which made agriculture possible and this ensured food security for the ever increasing population hence surviving for long.
- The empire had able leaders who maintained its administration and expandedboundaries making it stronger e.g. Oranmiyan, Ajak, Abija.
- The empire also participated in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (T.A.S.T) from which a lot of revenue was obtained to sustain the empire.
- The empire was surrounded by weak neighbours therefore it was not attacked hence surviving for long.
- The Yoruba had a common origin and they spoke the same language which brought about unity in the empire hence surviving for long.
- The empire had a well-established art and craft industry from which a number of items were made e.g. jewelry, jars, necklaces, dyed clothes, etc. which were exchanged in trade to get income that was used to sustain the empire.
- The role of the Oyomessi which consisted of elders who gave advice to the king and this maintained the empire hence its survival.
- The Yoruba people carried out local trade with the neighbours from which a lot of revenue was obtained to make the empire survive.
- The empire collected tributes and taxes from vassal states which was used to develop and maintain the empire.
- The empire had a clear system of succession which was patrilineal and this reduced succession disputes hence surviving for long.

➤The custom of killing the army commander (Konkafo) who was defeated in war encouraged them to fight harder hence expanding the empire and making it survive for long.

QTN: Why did the empire of Oyo survive for so long?

WHY THE EMPIRE OF OYO DECLINED.

The empire of Oyo declined due to internal and external factors which include the following:

- The empire was too big to be effectively administered hence its collapse.
- There was a constitutional crisis where there were conflicts between the Oyomessi and Alafin since the king did not want to recognize the powers of the Oyomessi and vice versa.
- The death of capable leaders led to the rise of weak and incompetent leaders who could not effectively administer the empire.
- The breakaway of the vassal states also contributed to the decline of empire because they attacked the central administration and weakened it e.g. Dahomey and the state of Egba.
- There was decline in the strength of the army due to fighting numerous wars and therefore it could not defend the empire effectively.
- The abolition of slave trade contributed to the decline of Oyo since the Yoruba were the leading suppliers of slaves in the T.A.S.T.
- The breakaway of the state of Ilorin by Afonja who was the Konkafo and he declared it as an independent state prompted other vassal states to break away and become independent.
- The rise of Dahomey disintegrated Oyo because it took the advantage of internal weaknesses in the empire to breakaway which encouraged other Yoruba states to also declare themselves independent.
- The empire was attacked by the Fulani who conquered the capital and reduced the empire's size hence its decline.
- The Yoruba civil wars of the 19th century also played a big role in the decline of Oyo because the vassal states fought each other leading to a decline in trade and weakness in the central administration hence decline of the empire.
- Oyo lost a number of horses during the wars which weakened the empire for the army needed horses to defend the empire.

- The scramble and partition of West Africa in the 19th century brought an end to the empire of Oyo because it became British colony.

Qtn: What led to the decline of the Yoruba dynasty?

Why did the empire of Oyo decline?

THE YORUBA CIVIL WARS (1821-1893).

The Yoruba civil wars were between the provincial states of Oyo and took place the 19th century.

The provincial states included Illorin, Dahomey. Owu, Ijaye, Ibadan and Abeokuta and Ijebu.

The wars were as result of the internal weaknesses of Oyo which made the vassal states to fight for their independence while others were fighting to control the empire.

The wars lasted for 72 years i.e. from 1821-1893 and the causes were political, social and economic.

CAUSES OF THE YORUBA CIVIL WARS.

- ❖ The weakness in the central administration of Oyo due to the rise of weak leaders gave chance to the vassal states to break away and become independent leading to the civil wars.
- ❖ The breakaway of the state of Illorin by Afonja who was the Konkafo (army commander) of Oyo showed a bad example to other vassal states to also fight for their independence leading to the wars.
- ❖ The weaknesses of the army of Oyo increased the wars for it could not effectively defend the empire leading to the revolts from the vassal states.
- ❖ The struggle for independence by the vassal states increased the wars for many states started attacking each other to increase their boundaries e.g. Ijebu allied with Ife against Owu.
- ❖ Some wars were caused by constitutional crisis in Oyo where the Oyomessi forced many Alafins to commit suicide which brought about a leadership vacuum in Oyo which led to succession disputes hence the civil wars.
- ❖ The wars were also caused by the death of Alafin Atibu who was succeeded by his eldest son (Aleemo) yet according to the customs of Oyo, the eldest son had to die with his father.

This made the state of Ijaye recognize him while the state of Ibadan refused to recognize him and when they failed to resolve the issue peacefully, it resulted into Ibadan-Ijaye war.

❖The interference with the trade routes to the coast by the coastal middlemen mainly the Egba of Abeokuta and the Ijebu blocked the interior states like Ibadan from accessing the coastal trade to acquire European goods. This resulted into a war with the people of Abeokuta.

❖The development of the transatlantic slave trade increased the demand for slaves since it was the major item. This made the Yoruba to raid one another to acquire slaves which increased the wars.

❖The rise of Dahomey as an independent state increased the civil wars because Dahomey attacked other Yoruba states to increase its size leading to the wars.

❖The conquest of the Fulani in the Northern Yoruba states resulted into the wars because Oyo refused to recognize the Fulani leadership among them and they chose to fight against them leading to the wars.

THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH IN ENDING THE YORUBA CIVIL WARS.

The Yoruba intervened to end the Yoruba civil wars because of political and economic reasons.

➤ The British came into the aware that wars were having an adverse effect on the Lagos trade.

➤ In 1861, Lagos had become a British colony and the British governor depended on the customs dues from this trade to maintain the Lagos administration.

➤ The trade in Lagos was to continue only if the British intervened to stop the endless war in Yoruba land.

➤ The British extended their political influence to the hinterland in order to end these wars.

➤ Opportunity for British intervention came when Egba which was being oppressed by Ijebu appealed to the British governor to place them under British protection.

➤ In 1890, governor Molony established a small British garrison at Illaro (Egba's capital).

➤ This marked the beginning of British military occupation of Yoruba land.

➤ In 1892, a punitive expedition was sent against Ijebu and the Ijebu defeat was the most significant step in the British occupation of Yoruba land.

➤ In 1893, Abeokuta entered into a treaty with a British governor Gilbert Carter.

- By this treaty, Abeokuta agreed to submit all disputes between the Egba and the British to the governor's Arbitration.
- Abeokuta was also to allow free trade and abolish human sacrifice.
- The treaty was to be made possible if the independence of Abeokuta was guaranteed.
- A similar treaty was signed with the Alafin of Oyo and by this treaty, the British were granted free access to the whole of Yoruba land.
- The British were also promised free trade, abolition of human sacrifice and the spread of Christianity.
- The Yoruba were not to enter any other treaty with other powers without the permission of the Lagos governor.
- In the same year, Ibadan accepted a similar treaty because her independence would not be compromised.
- The treaty made Ibadan the headquarters of the British in Yoruba land and a British resident and a small force was stationed there.
- These treaties in effect made Yoruba land a British protectorate and undermined the Alafin's authority.
- Nevertheless, the British restored peace in Yoruba land and led to prosperity of legitimate trade.

Qtn: Explain the role played by the British in ending the Yoruba civil wars.

EFFECTS OF THE YORUBA CIVIL WARS.

The effects of the wars were many.

The effects of the Yoruba civil wars were internal and external.

They were political, social and economic.

They were positive and negative.

- i. The civil wars led to the massive loss of lives because a number of people were killed.
- ii. The wars led to the decline of Oyo Empire in the 19th century.
- iii. The wars led to the foundation of new states e.g. Dahomey, Ilorin.
- iv. The wars led to the increase in slave trade due to the increased slave raids by the Yoruba people.

- v. The wars led to the decline in the economy because during the civil wars, trade, agriculture came to a standstill.
- vi. There was increased insecurity in the region because the wars took a very long period of time (72yrs).
- vii. The wars led to displacement of people because many became refugees.
- viii. There was destruction of property during the wars e.g. buildings, towns, plantations.
- ix. The wars led to the increased disunity among the Yoruba people because of the increase in slave trade.
- x. There was decline in the military power of Oyo because the army could not suppress the numerous wars that were fought.
- xi. The wars led to the British colonization of Oyo because the people were already weak and disunited.
- xii. There was also introduction of legitimate trade due to the stopping of slave trade.
- xiii. The wars also opened way for Christian missionaries in Oyo to stop slave trade and spread Christianity.
- xiv. There was a decline in African Traditional religion due to the spread of Christianity.

THE EMPIRE OF DAHOMEY

ORIGIN:

- Dahomey was one of the four forest states and others were Oyo, Benin and Asante.
- The founders of Dahomey originated from Alladah and they were Fon people.
- The origin of Dahomey however is not clear.
- Its origin is traced from oral traditions and myths.
- The date of the foundation of Dahomey is around 1620 when the king of Alladah died.
- This bred power struggles among the three princes which led to the disintegration of the Agasu dynasty.
- One unsuccessful candidate to the throne led his followers and they settled at Porto-Novo.
- Another claimant Do Aklin led his followers and settled at Abomey plateau.
- Do Aklin declared himself king and built a palace on Da's grave.

- Do Alkin named his kingdom Dahomey meaning a house on Da's belly.
- Therefore Do Alkin is believed to be the founder of Dahomey.
- The location of the new kingdom had certain advantages like fertile soils, good climate and reliable rainfall which favored agriculture.
- Besides, the empire participated in trade especially Trans Saharan and T.A.S trade.
- Thus, by the 17th century, a strong centralised Fon state had been established.
- Dahomey was strong enough to challenge Oyo attacks with support of a strong army together with able leadership e.g. Do Aklin, Dako, Trodo.

Qtn: Describe the origins of the kingdom of Dahomey.

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF DAHOMEY.

The factors for the rise of Dahomey were numerous.

They were internal and external.

They were also political, social military and economic.

The rise and expansion of Dahomey was gradual.

- ❖ The empire expanded because of the able leaders e.g. Do Alkin, Trodo, and Dako.
- ❖ The empire's geographical location in the forest region which provided a natural defensive barrier against external attacks.
- ❖ The empire was located in the fertile region which encouraged agriculture and this ensured food security.
- ❖ Dahomey had an efficient system of administration which was centralised with the king as top most leader.
- ❖ Dahomey participated in the T.A.S.T from which they acquired a lot of wealth to expand their empire.
- ❖ The empire acquired fire arms and food ware from the Europeans which they equipped with their army to improve security.

- ❖ Dahomey collected taxes from traders which also boosted her economy hence expanding.
- ❖ The empire had a strong army which was used to expand and defend the empire's boundaries.
- ❖ The empire had a clear system of succession which was patrilineal and this reduced succession disputes.
- ❖ Dahomey started as a small kingdom and therefore it made its leaders easily administer it.
- ❖ Dahomey expanded because of the decline of Oyo which gave chance for Dahomey to break away and become independent.
- ❖ It exercised a policy of Dahomenisation where the conquered states were forced to adopt the cultures and practices of the Fon / Aja people which brought about unity.
- ❖ The diversion of trade routes from Oyo to Dahomey gave the empire the chance to control trade activities in the region and also act as middle men in the T.A.S.T from which a lot revenue was obtained to develop the empire. The empire had a strong economy based on agriculture, trade, tributes from vassal states, mining and local industry which enabled the empire to expand.
- ❖ The empire was surrounded by weak neighbours who were easily attacked to expand the empire.
- ❖ Dahomey had a harsh and unfriendly relationship with the Europeans which prevented European domination in Dahomey.

Qtn: Explain the factors that led to the rise and expansion of Dahomey.

ORGANISATION OF DAHOMEY.

The organization of Dahomey was elaborate.

The empire was organized politically, socially and economically.

✓ Dahomey had a highly centralised system of administration with the king as the top most leader.

✓ The king's seat was at Abomey which was the capital of the empire.

- ✓The king had religious powers and was taken to be semi divine.
- ✓The king had absolute powers over all officials for promotion, demotion and dismissal.
- ✓ Succession to the throne was patrilineal and only for the sons of the royal wives.
- ✓The king would nominate his successor or heir before he died and this reduced power struggles.
- ✓Below the king were the chiefs who formed the executive council.
- ✓The executive council comprised of the Prime Minister (Migan), Minister of agriculture (Tokope) and treasurer and army commander.
- ✓The most important were the army commander and treasurer.
- ✓ The empire was divided into six provinces for easy administration e.g. Allada, Abomey, Whydah, and Zagnado.
- ✓Each province was administered by a governor who was answerable to the king.
- ✓The governor had to keep law and order in the provinces.
- ✓The governors also passed the king's decree (order) to the people in the provinces.
- ✓ Female officials (Naye) were attached to the ministries for spying purposes.
- ✓The women (female officials) in the empire also kept all records of the departments
- ✓Dahomey had a police institution for intelligence system and spread of national propaganda.
- ✓There was also a relay of communication runners.
- ✓There was also a policy of Dahomenisation where all the conquered states were assimilated for unity.
- ✓ The empire had a strong army for defense, expansion, keeping law and order.
- ✓ The empire had a planned economy which was based on agriculture, mining, trade, local industry and tributes from vassal states.
- ✓ The Fon participated in the T.S.T and T.A.S.T from which a lot of revenue was obtained.
- ✓ The Fon also exported slaves, palm oil, and ivory among others to get some income.
- ✓They imported fire arms, clothes, glassware from Europeans.

✓ The Fon carried out agriculture and they grew crops like palm oil, maize, and beans among others.

✓ Local industry was also carried out e.g. wood curving, cloth weaving, mining among others.

✓ There was worship of ancestors who were greatly honored and respected.

✓ There were cultural festivals that were celebrated e.g. birth rites, funeral rites.

Qtn: how was the empire of Dahomey administered/organized?

How were Fon people organized?

THE ROLE OF AGAJA TRODO IN THE RISE AND EXPANSION OF DAHOMEY.

AgajaTrodo contributed numerously to the rise, expansion and development of Dahomey.

His contributions were political, social and economic.

Trodo is also known to be the greatest ruler of Dahomey.

- He greatly expanded Dahomey through military conquests.
- Under his reign, Dahomey reached its climax.
- He captured important cities like Alladah, Whydah, and Porto Norvo among others to expand the empire's size.
- He established a strong army for defense, security and for expansion of the empire.
- He set up a military training school for the boys of Dahomey which created discipline in the army.
- He equipped his army with guns and drums and it comprised of men and women Amazons.
- He put in place an efficient network for war intelligence (Naye).
- The spying network also spied on other states and spread national propaganda.
- He promoted national unity through the policy of Dahomenisation.

- Under the policy of Dahomenisation, he assimilated the conquered people for uniformity.
- He worked and promoted the economy of Dahomey through participation in slave trade and encouraging the participation of the Fon in the Trans Saharan Trade.
- Due to the fertile soils and ideal climate, he promoted food production.
- He gave emphasis on local industries e.g. mining, iron smelting, weaving, art and craft among others.
- He put in place a system of revenue collection e.g. from salt makers, grave diggers, butchers among others.
- He instituted a national economic census after war raids for people and livestock.
- Agaja ruled Dahomey with ministers' e.g. Prime Minister (Migan), minister of agriculture (Tokope), treasurer etc.
- He instituted a relay communication system of fast runners known as "Half heads".
- In every department, he placed a female officer known as Naye who spied for the government.
- He divided Dahomey into six provinces for easy administration.
- He placed a governor in each province who administered it on its behalf.
- The governor was responsible for the collection of taxes and tributes plus ensuring law and order.

Qtn: How did AgajaTrodobuild the empire of Dahomey?

WHY DAHOMEY DECLINED.

Dahomey's decline began in the 19th century. Dahomey declined due to a number of factors.

The empire declined due to a political, social and economic factors.

The factors for the decline of Dahomey were also internal and external.

The decline of Dahomey followed a gradual process.

- Dahomey's continued war with Egba weakened her military strength hence the decline.
- The continued slave raids weakened Dahomey by draining her human resource.
- Later, the abolition of slave trade broke the economy of Dahomey hence its decline.
- Dahomey took time to time to adjust to the new form of trade (legitimate trade) since palm oil growing took a lot of time.
- The decline in the revenue collected due to price fluctuation of palm oil weakened the empire's collection.
- Dahomey experienced natural disasters e.g. small pox leading to death of many people.
- The European scramble and partition of West Africa where the French took over Porto Novo contributed to the decline of Dahomey.
- The French occupation of Dahomey led to disunity due to the varied response to French imperialism e.g. king Gelele collaborated with the French and he said "Why fight wars we cannot win".
- Dahomey had a weak army against the French who had superior weapons, strong army hence its defeat.
- When the French occupied Dahomey, Gelele committed suicide which created a leadership vacuum in Dahomey.
- Behanzin who replaced Gelele took on to resist the French but he could not manage hence his defeat.
- The capture and exiling of Behanzin to the West Indies for failure to deny his claims over the coastal areas created a leadership vacuum hence decline of Dahomey.
- The decline in local industry e.g. agriculture, mining, art craft created a weak economy leading to the decline of the empire.
- By 1893, Dahomey was declared a French directorate hence its final decline.

Qtn: What caused the decline of Dahomey / Fon Empire?

THE EMPIRE OF BENIN

ORIGIN:

- Benin was one of the forest states of west Africa - Alongside Oyo, Dahomey and Asante.
- The origin of the empire is not clear.
- The early history is full of myths, legends and traditions.

- The empire started as a small state on the western banks of the Niger delta or Benin.
- The founders of this empire were Edo a Bini speaking people.
- The Edo are believed to have migrated from the area around R.Niger.
- The Edo established this state between 900-1300AD.
 - According to tradition, Benin was ruled by a line of kings called Ogiosis. (kings of the sky)
 - Altogether the kings were ten i.e. 8 kings and 2 queens forming the Ogisor dynasty.
- The Ogisor dynasty lost popularity because it was oppressive and dictatorial. - It was consequently overthrown and republican government was set up.
- But the republican government was equally unpopular and it was overthrown. - The Edo appealed to Oduduwa the founder of Yoruba ancestry for a leader.
- In response, Oduduwa is said to have sent his grandson Oranmiyan to restore order in Benin.
 - Because of the troubled nature of the state, Oranmiyan named it "Illelbenu" (the land of trouble) or vexation.
 - The name was later shortened to Ubinu and finally Benin.
 - In order to legitimize his rule, Oranmiyan married the daughter of a local chief.
 - The result of the matrimony/marriage was prince Eweka I.
 - Oranmiyan then left for Yoruba land where he is said to have helped to establish the empire of Oyo.
 - Eweka I then ascended to the throne of Benin as the first king/Oba.
 - Eweka I soon embarked on territorial expansion e.g. he extended Benin from Lagos to the Niger region.
 - The geographical location of the empire had certain economic advantages e.g. fertile soils, reliable rainfall good climate that favored the development of the empire.

Qtn: describe the origin of the empire of Benin.

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF BENIN EMPIRE.

The empire expanded due to a number of factors which were political, social and economic.

- The empire was strategically located in the forest region and this forced the people of Benin to stay in small communities close to each other to form one state.

- The forest also acted as a natural defensive barrier against external attacks hence rise and expansion.
- The empire had fertile soils and a conducive climate which facilitated agriculture and this ensured food security.
- The empire was blessed with strong and able leaders e.g. Eweka and Ewale who greatly expanded the empire.
- The empire had an efficient system of administration which was centralised and this ensured good administration, peace and security.
- The existence of the Benin- Yoruba art made the empire famous through a number of items which were produced e.g. jars, pots, jewelry which were sold in trade to get revenue hence developing the empire.
- The empire had weak neighbors who disorganized and could not rise up and defeat Benin.
- The empire participated in the T.A.S.T where a lot of revenue was obtained to develop the empire.
- Through trade, Benin acquired guns which increased the strength of the army to maintain security and peace for the empire.
- Benin had a strong economy which was based on trade, agriculture and art and craft hence development of the empire.
- The empire had a clear system of succession which was patrilineal and this minimized succession disputes.
- The empire had early contacts with early Europeans at the West African coast which created diplomatic relations and trade links with Europeans from which they obtained guns to strengthen their army.
- The people of Benin were united and every member in society had a role to play in the kingdom e.g. cleaning of roads, defending the empire, public works among others.

Qtn: Explain the factors that led to the rise of Benin.

ORGANISATION OF BENIN.

The organization of Benin was elaborate i.e. it was organized politically, socially and economically.

- The empire had a centralized system of administration with the king as the top most leader.
- The king had a title of Oba and was greatly respected.

- The Oba was assisted by a state council comprising of 3 categories of people i.e. Uzama chiefs, palace chiefs and the town chiefs.
- The Uzama chiefs were the highest in ranking and the oldest of the elders dating from the Ogiso dynasty.
- The Uzama chiefs were nobles and were highly respected in the empire.
- The palace chiefs looked after the Oba's finances, his wives, children and they arranged the Oba's appointments.
- The palace chiefs also could represent the Oba in the village functions.
- The town chiefs also included the prime minister and the leader of opposition who performed administrative duties and military duties in town.
- The empire was divided into two i.e. metropolitan Benin and provincial Benin for easy administration.
- Metropolitan Benin consisted of the Benin City where the king presided.
- Provincial Benin comprised the conquered states and the vassal states were under their traditional leaders but they had to pay tribute to the central government.
- The empire was divided into provinces and each province was made up of a number of villages.
- Each province was under an appointed governor who represented the king and was to collect taxes and tributes.
- The empire had a clear system of succession which was patrilineal (from father to son) and this reduced succession disputes.
- The empire did not have a standing army but it would raise about 10,000 men within 24 hours to defend the empire.
- The empire had a prominent commander in chief who stationed at the capital and he commanded the army during war.
- The staple food for the people of Benin was yams which were widely grown throughout the empire.
- The people of Benin lived in trading settlement organized in villages.
- The people of Benin lived in well decorated houses because of the art and craft skills they had.
- The king was a religious leader and was regarded semi divine.
- The people of Benin believed in ATR and they greatly respected their ancestors.
- They also respected their cultures and customs which were expressed through their works in Art.
- The people of Benin had great respect for elders whose advice was highly respected.
- The Benin City was an important city in the empire and was surrounded by a great wall of about 3m high for protection purposes.
- They carried out agriculture and grew crops like yams, pepper, lemons, corn, and oil palm among others.

- They also carried art and craft and made items like jars, jewelry, lamp holders, and pots among others which they sold in trade to get revenue.
- They also carried out trade with their neighbours e.g. oil.
- Vassal states or conquered states paid tribute a symbol of loyalty to metropolitan Benin.

Qtn: how was the empire of Benin administered / organized?

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BENIN – YORUBA ART.

- ❖ The art and craft industry was very important in Benin and it brought income in the empire because a number of items were sold in trade.
- ❖ The works of art included making wood carvings, jars, dyed cloth, pottery and iron working.
- ❖ Art and craft provided employment to the people because it was a source of survival.
- ❖ The people were able to live a settled way of life since they lived in one place and therefore it was easy to develop.
- ❖ The art and craft industry strengthened diplomatic relations between Benin and other states through exchange of items and this promoted peace.
- ❖ Through the exchange of art items, the people of Benin acquired fire arms which they used to defend their empire.
- ❖ The works of art strengthened the cultures and customs of the people to make weapons e.g. Spears arrow out of iron which were used to defend the empire.
- ❖ Art and craft encouraged agriculture through the manufacture of agricultural tools e.g. hoes etc.
- ❖ Art and craft encouraged tourism in the empire because many Europeans were attracted to come and appreciate the real culture.
- ❖ People's way of lives were improved because they were able to develop themselves through the income they got in art and craft.

Qtn: Explain the importance of the Benin- Yoruba art to the development of Benin

WHY BENIN DECLINED.

Her decline started in the 17th century but it finally collapsed in the 19th century.

The factors were political, social, and economic as below.

- The abolition of slave trade in the 19th century making Benin lose her middle man's role.
- The attacks from the Fulani (external attacks) in the North who wanted to occupy the area in the North weakened the empire.
- The numerous slave raids in search for slaves increased wars in the empire creating insecurity and weakening the army.
- The acquiring of guns from Europeans increased attacks between different states and hence vassal states broke away.
- The diversion of trade routes from Benin to other states e.g. Asante made Benin lose revenue hence its decline.
- Benin experienced succession disputes during the 17th century which weakened the empire.
- The breakaway of vassal states like Lagos greatly weakened the empire's strength.
- The empire lacked a strong army and was easily attacked by neighbours.
- There was a lot of corruption among some leaders hence the empire declined.

THE EMPIRE OF ASANTE.

ORIGIN:

✓The origin of Asante is not clear.

✓The origin of Asante is derived from myths and legends.

✓ The empire of Asante was one of the four forest states alongside Oyo, Dahomey and Benin.

✓ Asante was also known as Ashanti Empire.

✓ The Asante originally settled around Lake Bosomtwi and this place was known as Amanse.

✓This was to mean the birth of the nation or the Beginning of the Nation.

✓ Here, the Asante built Asante Manso around 1660 (17th century).

✓ With time, the population increased and a number of towns started to develop e.g. Dwaben, Bekwai, Mampon, among others.

✓ Each of these towns grew into an independent state but they all regarded themselves as Asante people.

✓ This unity was brought about by the fact that they had a common origin.

✓ The Asante became prosperous through trade and agriculture and they established their capital at Kumasi.

✓ The Asante were invaded by Denkyira whose rule became oppressive and they over taxed the Asante people.

✓ There was also an influx of the Doma migrants.

✓ OtiAkanten took steps to unite the Asante into a loose military union in 1650.

✓ Unfortunately, OtiAkanten died and was succeeded by ObiriYeboa who pursued the policy.

✓ ObiriYeboa was a great diplomat and a military genius.

✓ ObiriYeboa was assassinated by the Doma people around 1660.

✓ ObiriYeboa was succeeded by Osei Tutu who completed the unification of the Asante states and is believed to be the founder of the Asante.

Qtn: Describe the origin of Asante Empire.

FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF ASANTE

The empire of Asante expanded due to a number of factors which were political, social and economic.

The rise and expansion of Asante was gradual.

- ✓ The empire expanded because it was located in an area where gold and kola nuts were found and these were highly demanded by the Europeans in trade which brought a lot of income to the empire.
- ✓ The empire was located in the forest region which acted as a natural defensive barrier against external attacks.
- ✓ The forest region provided fertile soils which encouraged agriculture and this ensured food security for the growing population.
- ✓ The oppressive rule of the Denkyira forced the Asante states to unite into one empire to defeat it hence creation of Asante.
- ✓ The formation of military alliance under Osei tutu created a large strong army which was used to expand the empire's boundaries.
- ✓ The empire had an efficient system of government which was centralised which made administration effective.
- ✓ The empire had able leaders e.g. OtiAkanten, ObiriYeboa, Osei tutu who handled the administration of the empire effectively.
- ✓ The empire participated in T.A.S.T from which a lot of revenue was obtained through tax collection to strengthen the empire's economy.
- ✓ The empire also acquired guns from the T.A.S.T which were used to strengthen the army for defense and expansion of the empire.
- ✓ The unity of the Asante people enabled them work together and build a strong empire.
- ✓ The desire of the Asante to gain access to the coast made them create a strong army which was used to control the trading activities at the coast.
- ✓ The empire had a strong economy based on trade, agriculture and mining and tributes from vassal states and the revenue sustained the empire.
- ✓ The empire had an efficient succession system where only members from the line of Obiri Yeboa and Osei tutu would rule and this reduced succession disputes.
- ✓ The empire was surrounded by weak neighbours who were easily conquered to expand the empire.

ORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE.

A. POLITICAL.

- The empire had a centralised system of administration with the king as the top most leader.
- The king had a title of Asante Hene.
- The Asante Hene occupied the golden stool which was a symbol of power, strength and wealth of the Asante.
- The king had absolute powers and was considered semi divine.
- The government was divided into two administrative units i.e. Metropolitan and Provincial Asante for effective administration.
- Metropolitan Asante was the central government ruled by the king in the capital of Kumasi.
- Provincial Asante comprised the conquered states by traditional leaders but had to pay tributes to the Asante Hene.
- The king ruled with a council of chiefs who helped him in the administration and monitored all activities in the empire.
- The chiefs had a special relationship with the Asante Hene and they had their own courts and army.
- The Asante had a strong army which was responsible for defending the empire as well as expanding it.
- The army was divided into four wings i.e. front wing, rear wing, left wing and right wing.
- All the able bodied men in the empire were supposed to serve in the army whenever their services were needed.
- The king appointed a commander in chief who was called “KanteHene” who commanded the army during war.
- There were military chiefs who lived in the provinces and these organized armies in case need arose.

B. SOCIAL.

- The people were divided into social classes represented by the symbol of the golden stool.
- The vassal states remained independent but they were ruled according to the rules of Asante Hen
- The people of Asante Hene believed in A.T.R, customs and norms.
- They also had an annual festival (Oduila festival) which was celebrated throughout Asante and it brought people together.
- During the Oduila festival, prayers were said, problems facing the empire were solved, future plans were drawn and vassal states renewed their loyalty to the Asante Hene.

- Succession was matrilineal and princes from the line ObiriYeboa or Osei tutu would come to the throne.

C. ECONOMIC.

- The empire depended on agriculture and grew crops like maize, yams, kola nuts, pepper which were grown for food and for sale.
- The empire participated in trade with the Northern states and exchanged items like gold, ivory and slaves.
- The empire took part in the T.A.S.T from where they acquired guns from the Europeans.
- The people of Asante carried out mining especially gold which was highly demanded by the Europeans and this earned them a lot of revenue.
- The empire collected taxes from the traders who passed through the trade routes of Asante.
- The conquered states paid tributes to Metropolitan Asante.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF OSEI TUTU.

- Osei tutu was the founder of Asante empire and he ruled from 1680-1717.
- Osei tutu was a nephew of ObiriYeboa and he came to power after his death.
- He grew up at the DenkyiraHene's court yard but was forced to run away because he had a love affair with the DenkyiraHene's sister.
- He came back to Asante after the death of ObiriYeboa who was killed in the battle at the state of Doma.
- Osei tutu was liked as one of the prominent rulers of Asante and it was during his reign that Asante reached its peak.
- He brought about permanent political union of all the Akan states into one strong empire that survived for many years.
- He initiated the title of Asante Hene i.e. the supreme political and religious head.
- He brought about military union of all the armies of the Akan states to create a strong army.
- He divided the army into four wings, i.e. the front, rear, left and right wings to form a square formation of fighting.
- He initiated the idea of the golden stool with the chief priest of Akwamu and this worked as a symbol of wealth, power and strength.
- He is also remembered for having drawn a constitution of Asante union with the Asante Hene as the king.

- He established Kumasi as the capital city of Asante.
- He greatly expanded the empire with a newly created army.
- He divided the empire into two administrative units' i.e. metropolitan and provincial Asante.
- He appointed governors and chiefs who helped him run day to day activities of the empire.
- He introduced the Oduila festival which was annual and in it the problems facing the empire were solved.
- He created a strong economy where revenue was obtained from mining, trade and taxes, agriculture and was used for development of the empire.
- He initiated a tax called Apeato which was paid as a tribute by every vassal state and the income was used to maintain the empire's administration.
- He established a high house at Kumasi and it was only the king to occupy the house and it's where the golden stool was found.
- He died in 1717 while suppressing a revolt by Akyem.

Qtn: Why is Osei tutu remembered in the history of Asante?

WHY THE EMPIRE OF ASANTE DECLINED.

- The decline of Asante was gradual
- The empire also declined due to internal and external involving women.
 - Especially adultery/infidelity and insubordination.
 - The Bourba's mother/sister had a number of villages under her authority/control and these paid tributes to her in kind or in form of services.
 - There was a caste/class system, consisted of four categories.
 - The royalty, the free born and the slaves.
 - The royals were direct descendants of the founder father of the empire i.e. NdyadayeNdyaye.
 - The nobles were people of great military achievement or renowned business men.
 - The free born included farmers, leather workers, weavers, craftsmen, blacksmiths.

- The last group were slaves and were of two categories.
- Domestic slaves often regarded as family members could sometimes rise to important administrative positions.
- Secondly were the prisoners of war or purchased slaves, these were subjected to factors.
- The death of Osei tutu in 1717 who was the greatest leader led to the decline of the empire.
- The empire experienced weak leaders e.g. Anokye who destroyed the constitution which dis united the Akan states.
- There were succession disputes after the death of Osei tutu which brought about insecurity and economic activities came to a standstill.
- The scramble and partition of West Africa also contributed to the decline of Asante because the area was colonized by the British.
- The empire had become too big to effectively be administered by weak leaders.
- The economy of the empire had also declined due to the constant wars which disrupted trade.
- There was outbreak of small pox which greatly affected the empire because many people died.
- The 19th century Jihads also affected the empire because it was attacked by the Muslims in attempt to spread Islam which disrupted trade.
- The asante-Fante wars which were fought between the Asante and Fante states affected and weakened the empire.
- The abolition of slave trade affected the empire's economy hence its decline.
- In conclusion the empire of Asante declined due to political, social and economic factors

Qtn: what led to the led collapse of Asante Empire?

THE ASANTE – FANTE WARS.

The Fante were a group of Africans who lived at the coast of West Africa and this gave the ancestors trade with the Europeans from which they got a lot of income.

The Fante therefore attained the middleman role and got a lot of Revenue and guns and they blocked other Akan states from accessing the coast which led to the wars between the Asante and Fante.

CAUSES OF THE ASANTE – FANTE WARS.

- The refusal of the Fante to allow the Asante to access trade at the coast with the Europeans made Asante to lose the profits in the trade which created a sour relationship.
- The Asante fought the Fante because they wanted to keep all coastal under their rule yet the Fante wanted to be independent.
- The Fante wanted to maintain their middleman role in the T.A.S.T and they could not allow the Asante to participate in the trade which made the Asante to fight against them
- The Fante gave refuge to the criminals from Asante and refused to surrender them when Asante demanded for them. This caused conflict between the two states leading to the wars.
- The Fante used to mix dust with the pure gold from Asante and the Asante lost a lot of profits and therefore decided to fight the Fante.
- The British supported the Fante and they gave them protection against the Asante which increased the Fante moral to fight the Asante.
- The Asante continuously accused the Fante for sponsoring the breakaway of the vassal states of Asante which annoyed the Asante and decided to fight the Fante.
- The Fante wanted to fully control Port Elmina which was the major trading port at the coast since they wanted to ensure regular supply of fire arms yet the Fante wanted to control the same port.
- The Asante used to be the strongest in the region and therefore they wanted to maintain their status by expanding the boundaries hence attacking the Fante.
- The Fante always rejected that the Asante were the most powerful in the region therefore they allied with other coastal states to fight and defeat the Asante.

Qtn: What were the causes of the asante-fante wars (1806-1900)?

EFFECTS OF THE ASANTE-FANTE WARS.

- 1) The empire of Asante was reduced to metropolitan Asante.
- 2) There was decline in the economy of both the Asante and Fante because trade came to a standstill.
- 3) Most vassal states of Asante broke away and regained their independence e.g. Denkyira and Akyem.
- 4) There was decline in Asante's military power due to the constant wars.
- 5) There was loss of lives due to constant attacks.

- 6) There was depopulation due to massive loss of lives.
- 7) There was destruction of property e.g. buildings, crops, towns among others.
- 8) There was outbreak of famine due to destruction of crops.
- 9) The wars led to the abolition of slave trade by the British who introduced legitimate trade.
- 10) The wars led to the British colonization of Asante.
- 11) Kumasi which was the capital of the Asante was burnt down by the British.

Qtn: How did the asante-fante wars affect the people of West Africa?

ANGLO – ASANTE WARS.

The causes of anglo-asante wars were many.

The causes of the anglo-asante wars were also internal and external.

- ❖ The British capture of the golden stool of Asante which was a symbol of strength, power and wealth to the Asante made them fight the British in order to regain the golden stool.
- ❖ The British support of the Fante against Asante increased the conflicts between the Asante and the British.
- ❖ The British control of port Elmina which was a major trading port of the Asante made the Asante to lose out on the supply of guns which forced the Asante to attack the British.
- ❖ The British disrespected the culture and norms of the Asante calling them primitive and they wanted to spread their Christianity which the Asante could not allow therefore they decided to fight against the British.
- ❖ The British encouraged the rebellious states of Asante to break away which increased tension between the British and Asante.

- ❖ The British threatened Asante's power and strength which they had enjoyed for a long period time therefore decided to attack the British in order to maintain their position.
- ❖ The Asante Hene refused to accept the British in Asante and instead demanded for more privileges which annoyed the British and they decided to use force to colonize Asante.
- ❖ The British wanted to stop slave trade and introduce legitimate trade yet slave trade was more profitable to the Asante therefore they chose to fight.
- ❖ The British wanted to reduce the prices of goods by removing taxes in trade which the Asante refused and they decided to fight.
- ❖ The Asante signed a treaty with SamoriToure of the Mandika Empire who was a resistor to French colonialism and this threatened the British and they became more determined to fight against Asante.

Qtn: What were the causes of the Anglo-Asante wars?

Why did the British fight against the Asante in the 19th century?

EFFECTS OF THE WARS

- ❖ The British colonized Asante after the wars.
- ❖ They led to the formation of the Fante confederation which was a union of all the coastal states into a defensive united kingdom to guard themselves against colonial rule.
- ❖ The vassal states of the Asante broke away and gained their independence.
- ❖ Asante was reduced to the metropolitan administration since the Asante were defeated.
- ❖ There was decline in the military power of Asante due to the continuous wars.
- ❖ There was introduction of legitimate trade after the abolition of slave trade.
- ❖ There was spread of Christianity in the region due to British missionary influence.
- ❖ There was a lot of insecurity due to the constant wars.
- ❖ There was massive loss of lives due to the wars
- ❖ There was depopulation of loss of lives.

- ❖ There was destruction of property e.g. crops, houses, plantations, buildings due to the wars.
- ❖ There was outbreak of famine due to destruction of crops.
- ❖ There was displacement of people due to the wars.
- ❖ There was suffering and misery because many people died.
- ❖ The efforts of the Anglo-Asante wars were political, social and economic as well as positive but largely negative.

THE FANTE COFEDERATION

The Fante confederation was an alliance of the coastal states into a defensive united kingdom to fight against opposition from the British.

The coastal states included Akwan, Akyem, Denkyira, and Wassa&Fante.

The confederation was formed in 1868 at a meeting held in Mankessim by the Fante chiefs and other educated leaders of the coastal states who agreed to come together and form a united kingdom.

WHY THE CONFEDERATION WAS FORMED

- ❖ The coastal states wanted to defend themselves against British imperialism and their continued intervention in the political, economic and judicial matters of the Fante.
- ❖ The Fante wanted to defend themselves from any further aggression of the Asante.
- ❖ The coastal states were protesting against the British takeover of port Elmina which was their major trading port and therefore they wanted to recover it from the British.
- ❖ The coastal states wanted to preserve their newly acquired independence.
- ❖ The coastal states wanted to preserve their cultures and customs which the British regarded as primitive. They wanted to promote unity amongst themselves since they were all Akan people.
- ❖ The confederation was formed to protest and oppose the wine tax which was introduced by the British in 1864.
- ❖ The coastal people were opposing the arrest of king Aggrey by the British and they demanded for his release.

- ❖ The British treated themselves as superior to all other races which threatened the existence of the coastal states and they were forced to unite into a confederation.
- ❖ The British defeat of the Asante threatened the coastal states and they united for self- defense against the British.
- ❖ The coastal states wanted to improve on their leadership skills in order to prepare for self.

Qtn: Why did the Fante convene at Mankessim?

What led to the formation of the Fante confederation?

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FANTE CONFEDERATION.

- The confederation managed to secure the independence of the coastal states from the British since it acted as the first nationalist movement against the British.
- The Fante confederation formulated an administrative structure for the coastal states which was headed by a king and assisted by an army which provided security.
- The federation formulated a civil service comprising of educated members of the states who were running the activities of the coastal states.
- The confederation also established a representative assembly consisting of 2 members from each coastal state i.e. 1 chief and another educated member.
- The confederation drew up a constitution comprising of 47 articles and this promoted democracy since all the states and people were equal.
- It formed an army of 15000 men which was able to defend the coastal states against the Asante and British.
- The confederation formed a supreme court which dealt with cases from different states.
- The confederation formed friendly relations among the coastal kings which later promoted nationalism during the struggle for independence.
- The confederation united the coastal people together which eliminated internal conflicts for some time.
- The confederation promoted education among the Africans by constructing schools to teach people how to read and write.
- The confederation improved transport and communication network by building or constructing roads which enhanced people and goods transportation.
- The confederation exposed African capabilities and leadership skills which increased their sense of pride.
- The confederation proved to the British that even collaborating states can resist once their interests are not met.

- In conclusion, therefore in line with the objectives of the confederation, it established political, social and economic achievements

Qtn: What were the achievements of the Fante confederation?

WHY THE CONFEDERATION DECLINED.

The confederation declined due to a number of factors.

The confederation declined due to political, social and economic factors.

- The British weakened the administration by arresting and imprisoning the executive members.
- Even after releasing the executive members, the coastal people could not re-unite which weakened the confederation hence its collapse.
- There was bribery which broke out among the different chiefs especially those that were powerful in the region e.g. king Edu who divided the people leading to the collapse of the confederation.
- The confederation army was weak compared to that of the British which was well trained and had superior weapons.
- There were power struggles between the different chiefs of different states which weakened the administration of the confederation.
- There was lack of enough resources to maintain and sustain the confederation's economy.
- There were also differences in the cultural set up of the different coastal states which caused disunity leading to the collapse of the confederation.
- In conclusion, the confederation collapsed because of the British hostile attacks on the coastal states because they saw the confederation as a challenge to colonialism or imperialism.

Qtn: What led to the collapse of the Fante confederation?

HOW GEORGE MACLEAN ADMINISTERED THE GOLD COAST.

- George MacLean was an administrator of the gold coast from 1830-1843.
- He was sent by the London committee of merchants (LCM) as a governor of the gold coast.

- He worked so hard to normalize the Anglo Asante- Fante relations in the region.
- He extended British influence inland i.e. 60km into the interior and 240km along the coast.
- He kept peace and allowed free trade in the interior.
- He signed the MacLean treaty of 1831 where the coastal states were to allow free trade and promote legitimate trade.
- He also established a British system of justice which brought about law and order.
- He fought against undesirable customs e.g. human sacrifice, slave trade and raids on peaceful traders.
- He condemned forceful attacks on debtors and their property.
- He also used force against chiefs who violated human rights and freedom e.g. king Nzima who could not do away with slave trade.
- He promoted agriculture especially the growing of palm oil, maize, cotton and cocoa.
- He promoted legitimate trade hence fighting slave trade and poverty.
- He built roads and railways which improved transport and communication.
- He encouraged missionary work at the coast which led to the spread of Christianity.
- He used missionaries to fight against undesirable practices like human sacrifice and slave trade.
- He established schools which promoted education at the coast.
- He promoted western civilization with the help of the Wesleyan Methodists Missionaries.
- He built a strong army to protect the colony from external attacks.
- He built commercial ports e.g. Accra and Cape coast which promoted trade.
- He encouraged missionaries to build medical centers to improve people's health.
- In conclusion therefore, George Maclean by 1843 his administrative effects were political, social and economic, his administration came to an end in 1843 when he was accused of so many failures and he was demoted to court assessor.

Qtn: How did George MacLean administer the gold coast between 1830 and 1843?

PROBLEMS FACED BY GEORGE MACLEAN DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION.

- Maclean faced a number of problems in administering the gold coast.
- The problems he faced were political, social and economic as well as internal and external.
- He faced severe criticism from the British when he applied British laws over non British subjects.
- He faced resistance from the traditional chiefs whose traditional system of justice was undermined.
- He was accused of not being strict on slave traders.
- At times, he administered severe punishments to wrong doers e.g. chief Nzima and chief Kwaku.
- He extended British influence far beyond the limits of the forts allowed by the company. (Royal Niger Company).
- He failed to create total peace at the gold coast e.g. Denkyira and Wassa.
- Stubborn chief Nzima continued with slave trading and he attacked peaceful traders which disrupted trade.
- He was accused of so many failures which led to the R.R Maiden Commission of 1841.
- In conclusion, George MacLean was later demoted from a governor to a court assessor due the findings of the R.R Commission.

THE WOLOF EMPIRE

ORIGINS OF THE WOLF EMPIRE.

- Empire located in the Sene – Gambia region between the Senegal and the Gambia River.
- Its origin is rather unclear and are embedded in myths and traditions e.g. claims that the empire was formed by a voluntary association of independent units which included Boal, Cayor, Tolof/Djolof, Saloum, Sine and Walo.
- It's believed that these states quarreled over wood as they quarreled a mysterious figure emerged from the lake.
- And is said to have divided the wood fairly.
- In appreciation of this, he was offered marriage and kingship he then reported this to the king of Sine and was given a name Ndyadaye (Ndyaye).
- Thus Ndyadaye became the pioneer/founder king of the Wolof Empire.

- Using diplomacy, he united the petty states/ groups of the Wolof people into one unit and became the famous Wolof Empire and this took place about AD 1300.
- The original states were Baol, Cayor and Walo (in the North).
- By the 15th century, these had formed a federation with Jolof/ Djolof as the metropolitan/central state and Linguere as the capital/base.
- These states were later joined by Salum and Sine.
- About the 14th century Wolof had been driven into this region by the Fulani and Berbers.
- In turn, they themselves conquered the Serer and the Mandika people and subjected them to a tributary status, thus establishment of the Wolof Empire had been accomplished.
- There was thriving trade with the western Sudanic states i.e. Ghana, Mali and Songhai and also with the Tekrur and Berbers (of N. Africa).
- Such trading links made the empire strong / stable/ prosperous estimated to have had about 100,000 infantry/foot soldiers.
- Strong army divided into infantry and Cavalry for defense, law and order.
- Reliable rainfall/climate.
- Fertile soils which favored agriculture.
- Efficient leaders e.g. Ndyadaye, Jolof etc. who made the whole state so strong.

ORGANISATION OF THE WOLOF EMPIRE

- The empire was efficiently/well organized in a number of ways due to a combination/variety of ways.
- Politically, militarily, socially and economically.
- The empire was monarchical/headed by a king who was in overall control.
- Took the title BourbaJolof/Bourba.
- His office was not hereditary but appointive.
- The Bourba was chosen by 3 or 4 Lords/ nobles but the Bourba had to come from the noble family.
- Initially, the Bourba ruled/reigned by the grace of 3/4 lords, they could easily dispose him.
- So to guard against this, the Bourba gradually made himself powerful.
- He appointed important officials and local chiefs who were expected to be loyal to the Bourba, and would oppose the powers of the nobles since they owed their "appointment" to him.

- Thus the powers of these “king makers”/lords would be trimmed/controlled/neutralized.
- But by taking this position the Bourba ultimately became autocratic/dictatorial.
- The local chiefs appointed ruled over villages and were usually of humble origin/commoners.
- The Bourba also had religious powers and his death was often kept secret possibly to avert unnecessary political tension.
- Each component Wolof state had its own sub king and government.
- Each maintained its local sovereignty/independence and was not obliged to pay tribute to the Bourba.
- Women held responsible positions.
- Were headed by the Bourba’s mother or his sister e.g. presided over/settled disputes the wishes of their masters e.g. could be resold or severely punished.
- Another important group (of officials) were Grits, these occasionally recited the achievements of their masters, rulers or any other heroes.
- They did this either vocally or used musical instruments, sometimes through poetry and diction.
- Intermarriage across social classes was strictly forbidden.
- Sound economic organization i.e. revenue collection from tributes, taxes imposed on trades in return for their protection (by the Bourba).
- Chiefs collected taxes in form of cattle, grain and native cloth in return they were given wives as part of the taxes they collected.
- Agriculture was also an important economic activity but was largely subsistent.
- However, the Portuguese later played a major role in Wolof society particularly with the development of the coastal/trans-Atlantic trade.
- Took sides in succession disputes with the aim of advancing their trade/ economic interests.
- The trade made Cayor strong/wealthy/prosperous.

THE NIGER DELTA STATES.

ORIGIN OF THE NIGER DELTA CITY STATES.

- They were located in the territory between the estuaries of Benin River to the west and cross river to the east of river Niger.
- They were linked together by estuaries of river Niger such as Benin, Brass and Bonny Kwa-Ibo, the cross and other separate streams.
- The Niger delta region was a great center of slave trade from the 16th to the 19th centuries and then the palm oil trade afterwards.
- As slave trade boomed, city states emerged along the coast.
- Later on, people from hinterland villages migrated to the Delta fishing villages to take advantage of trade with Europeans.
- In a short time the population of the city states increasing importation of slaves.
- Many city states developed in the area such as Warri, and Sapele inhabited by the Itsekeri and Urhobo, Brass, Akasa town and Nembe inhabited by the Ijaw, Buguma, Abonnema and Bakana inhabited by Ibent Greek town, Henshaw town, Henshaw town and Duke town in Calabar inhabited by the Efiks.
- The city states of the Niger Delta saw remarkable political and economic changes in the 19th century.

HOW WERE THE NIGER DELTA STATES ORGANISED

- They were socially, politically and economically organized.
- The social and political organization of the Niger Delta city states was based on the house system.
- The house was a trading corporation that developed during the era of slave trade. It was between freemen and slaves.
- Each house was under a chief or head of a house.
- The chiefs or heads of houses made up an advisory council presided over by the king of a city state.
- Each city-state was divided into different houses.
- The houses acted as a unit of local government.
- The head of each house was responsible for administering law and order on his own section of the city.
- The king of any city state had his power limited by the advisory council comprising of heads of different houses.

- The king however, exercised overall control over houses. The king of the city-state was responsible for solving disputes between different houses.
- The election of the head of a house was confirmed by the king of a city state.
- The king also controlled foreign affairs office, relations with other city states, regarding war, peace and commercial policies especially with regard to European merchants.
- The house was also the basis of organization of trade both with Europeans and people of the interior.
- Each house had its own market in the interior or hinterland of palm oil belt.
- All the interior markets owned by the houses of a city state made up its trading empire in which citizens enjoyed monopoly of trade.
- Bonny had its own trading empire along the Imo River, Kalabari along Sombrero River Itsekeri and Benin River.
- The houses competed for political and commercial supremacy that sometime led to civil wars.
- Bonny and Kalabari were under a strong monarchical system while others like old Calabar and Brass had their administration largely based on houses.
- Power was given on merit of achievement to those who excelled in trade, agriculture and war.
- Social respect was given to those who had accumulated a lot of wealth.
- In the interest of promoting trade, the commoners, free born aristocrat was carried out mixed freely with slaves.
- The basic economic activity carried out was trade although to a small extent agriculture.

WHAT LED TO THEIR COLLAPSE IN THE 19TH CENTURY?

- The constant struggle for political and commercial supremacy between various houses made for internal instability and civil wars.
- Because the house system attached more importance to commercial success than birth, many men of humble origin rose to positions of eminence in the city states hence they seized power and destroyed the royalists and free born citizens.
- The death of able leaders like Jaja of Opobo, Nana of Itsekeri, William DappaPepple and Ann Pepple created a leadership vacuum.
- The abolition of slave trade in the 19th century politically and economically weakened the city states that depended on its survival.

- The British never allowed the Niger Delta city states to gain full advantage of the new palm oil trade and the legitimate trade.
- The British commercial penetration into the interior of the country especially along river Niger the Africans could not compete with the strong British traders like Macgregor Laird and Sir George Goldie of the royal Niger company.
- By 1886, the Royal Niger Company had taken over monopoly of trade in the area hence displacing Africans.
- After the abolition of slave trade, men of humble origin like Alali weakened the city states and the house system.
- The size of the city states was very small hence they could not put up strong resistance against the British.
- The 19th century partition and scramble undermined African political independence in West Africa including that of the Niger Delta city states.
- The houses started breaking into small political entities hence weakening the city states e.g. in Kalabari and Amakiri dynasty and its supporters broke away and founded Buguma, Barboy house broke into Bakana and Abonnema.
- The abolition of slave trade created opportunities for the British to interfere with the internal affairs of the Niger Delta region. African chiefs were persuaded to sign treaties against slave trade and to promote the legitimate trade. When they violated such treaties the British conquered them by gun boats.
- As the palm oil trade developed, the British became more determined to seize the middle men position from the Delta middle men. They created consuls who interfered with local politics.

THE MANDIKA EMPIRE IN THE 19TH CENTURY

HOW SAMOURE TOURE ORGANISED THE MANDIKA EMPIRE

- The empire was organized politically, socially and economically.
- It was highly centralised headed by a king called ALMAMI.
- The king was the supreme military commander having supreme political, judicial and religious powers.
- Empire divided into 10 provinces.
- They were under provincial governors who were appointed by the Alamami.
- The governors were answerable, loyal and paid allegiance to the king.
- The empire was further divided into 162 districts or cantons headed by canton or district chiefs.
- These were elected traditionally i.e. held honorary positions.

- It was further sub divided into villages headed by village chiefs also traditionally chosen.
- The powers of the village chiefs were however limited by the village Imams i.e. the judicial rights.
- They had a state council of provincial leaders who comprised the Alamami's close friends and relatives.
- These helped in decision making and in the running of the empire.
- The Alamami's appointees either provincial, canton or village level were responsible for raising troops and supplies in their areas of control on his behalf.
- The empire was governed on three lines of authority, traditional, military and religious.
- But the overall authority was the Alamami.
- There was strong, well trained, professional and equipped army of over 3000 sofas.
- Each war chief had over 200-300 sofas under him.
- The army was divided into 10 regiments.
- The king was the supreme military commander assisted by the war Lord.
- Military office was held on merit and promotion in the army depended on one's ability to display a high level of military skills.
- Socially, Islam was the state religion.
- It acted as the unifying factor among the Mandika people.
- Education was highly encouraged among the Mandika i.e. Quranic schools and mosques were established in each village.
- In the army, faith and elementary literacy skills were taught to the sofas plus discipline and national loyalty.
- The Sharia law was greatly used to ensure justice, unity and good governance based on Islamic practices.
- Judicial laws based on Islamic principles were put in the empire headed by the Quadis (judges) who ensured fairness in cases.
- Each village, canton had such courts.
- Grave matters which could not be solved by the Quadis were referred to the Alamami and the state council who passed the final judgment.
- Economically, trade was conducted.
- Both local and international trade with the foreigners like French.
- Agriculture especially food crop production and a little cash crops.

- Agriculture was favored by the fertility of the soil as the empire lay in the Niger region.
- Revenue from taxes from trade- imports and exports.
- Mining of gold.
- Local industry-weaving, art and craft, black smithing items like hoes, baskets, pangas, sculptures, guns.

THE HAUSA STATES

ORIGINS OF THE HAUSA STATES

- Origins not clear but based on legends.
- The most popular legend was the Daura legend.
- Daura was the first of the Hausa states to be founded.
- Founded by one of the daughters named Daura of a grandson of Canaan's family and settled in Libya.
- During the reign of one of her successors, the son of the king of Baghdad arrived in Daura with his followers after having lived in Bornu.
- He is said to have killed a big snake that had prevented people to fetch water from the well except on Fridays.
- Queen of Daura was so pleased with Abuyazidu's courage and bravery and married him.
- They gave birth to a son named Bawo.
- Bawo himself had seven sons who founded the seven Hausa states called Hausa "Bokwa".
- These were Daura, Kano, Rano, Zaria, Katsina, Biram and Gobir.
- Later seven more states i.e. Zamfara, Kebbi, Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Kwarafa, and Ibrin.
- These were founded by those sons whom Bawo had with other women.
- These states were called Hausa Banza.
- From the legends, it can be concluded that the original Daura state was founded by the invaders from North East probably of Berber origin.
- These states were founded over a long period probably between AD 600 and 900.

- With trade, the influence of Islam, good climate and fertile soils for agriculture, the Hausa states grew strong.

ORGANISATION OF HAUSA STATES.

- Organized politically, socially and economically.
- Had efficient system of government
- State was headed by the chief of government.
- Whose title was Sarki (king).
- The heads of the absorbed villages became subordinates to the Sarki (king).
- Religion provided spiritual bond which strengthened the political unity of the state.
- With the coming of Islam from the 15th century, the Hausa adopted the Muslim system of government and law.
- Each Hausa state was governed by the Sarki.
- Was helped by the council of ministers and territorial officials drawn from the hereditary aristocracy/nobles/upper class.
- Though Sarki had immense powers, his powers were limited.
- He could not act without the approval of his council of ministers or influence of nobles.
- Mohammed Rumfa of Kano had to offer titles to castrated men (eunuchs) and slaves as a means of checking of peers of the hereditary nobility.
- The madowaki (commander in chief of the army) was next in importance to the king.
- He advised the king in appointment or dismissal of title holders.
- Replied to the king's address on ceremonial occasions.
- Summoned meetings of chief councils.
- And with them (councilors) chose a new king in office.
- In some states, the Waziri or chief minister, performed the functions.
- There was also the magaji (head of the king's body guard and the Sarkin Yan Doka (chief of the police also the in charge of prisoners).
- Each state was divided into villages and districts for purposes of local administration.
- Local administration was carried out through village and district heads appointed by the king (usually from the traditional rulers of the area).

- These enforced the orders of the king in their locality and collected taxes.
- Each village or district head had a representative in the capital through whom he had reported events in the locality to the king.
- With the introduction of Islam, Muslim judicial system was introduced.
- The king was the supreme judge of the state.
- He had final decision in important cases like land, murder and man slaughter.
- He did this with the advice of the chief Alkali and his jury of legal experts.
- Lesser judicial matters were settled by Alkali and his jury.
- In all cases, the Malik code of Muslim law was applied.
- In the districts there were local courts.
- From where appeals could be sent to the alkali's court at the capital.
- In the villages, the village head exercised the judicial authority on minor offences.
- To meet the cost of administration taxes were imposed on income, livestock, crafts men, butchers and prostitutes.
- Practiced agriculture, cultivation/livestock.
- Had strong economy based on trade, local industry, taxes, tributes etc.
- Had a strong army, for defense, expansion, keeping law and order and enforcing payment of taxes.