

Reflections on the History of Nigeria

The Peoples of Nigeria

Nigeria has large population and it is the most populous country in the African continent. The current population stands at 197 million according to the National Population Commission projection. There were over 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria who speak different languages. Three main ethnic groups constitute the majority of the population. The Hausa located in the northern savannas, account for roughly 21 percent of the population, while the Yoruba, located in the southwestern part of the country, make up 20 percent, and the Igbo of the southeast 17 percent. Other ethnic groups with relatively large populations include the pastoral Fulani of the savannas, the Ijaw of the Delta region, the Kanuri of the Lake Chad region, the Ibibio in and around Calabar in the southeast, and the Nupe and Tiv of the Middle Belt region. Each ethnic group occupies a distinct and continuous territory and most of the smaller groups had very little contact with other groups before the coming of Islam and imposition of the colonial rule. However, there was reasonable and considerable trade and cultural contacts between the major grassland groups namely; Hausa, Fulani, Nupe and Kanuri. In the southern part of Nigeria, especially in the forest belt, there is a long standing historical link that existed between the Edo of Benin with the Yoruba of Ife and Lagos. The Delta people whose territory was too swampy for cultivation and who, in consequence, produced mainly fish and salt, carried on large-scale trade with the forest peoples who supplied them with basic foodstuffs in exchange for fish and salt.

Polities, Politics and Political Organizations in Pre-colonial Nigeria

The peoples of Nigeria lived in communities and had developed a well-structured social organizations and political system even before the coming of Europeans. In the pre-colonial period there were various states in Nigeria which existed independent of one another. Some of these states had centralized system of government while a number of them were acephalous (decentralized). There were many powerful and historic empires, kingdoms, principalities, chieftaincies, caliphate and emirates that existed in different parts of Nigeria. Emperors managed the affairs of empires, kings headed the kingdoms, emirs administered the emirates and caliph was the overall leader of the Sokoto Caliphate. The major empires were Kanem-Borno, Oyo, Benin and Jukun. In the north, there were powerful kingdoms of Daura, Kano, Katsina, and Zaria which metamorphosed into emirates in the 19th century as result of the Islamic reform movement spearheaded by Shaykh Usman bn Fodio who established the historic Sokoto Caliphate. These empires and kingdoms used to have strong machinery of administration and centralized system of government. Authority in these centralized states concentrated in the hands of few individuals who wielded enormous power and controlled the forces of productions. The major stateless societies were Igbo, Ibibio and Tiv. The political structures in these states were highly fragmented. Most of these stateless societies lived in areas that were highly crowded; hence, they experienced acute shortage of farmland. There was a stiff competition for the control of land in most of the stateless societies.

Nigeria and Outside Worlds before the coming of Europeans

The peoples of Nigeria, especially those in the north, had contact with the outside world as early the eleventh century when people of Kanem-Borno came into contact with Muslim missionaries and embraced Islam. The first ruler of Kanem to convert to Islam was Mai (King) Humai. Islam was introduced to the Hausaland in the 14th century by Wangarawa traders who migrated from Mali. The first Hausa ruler to convert to Islam was Yaji of Kano. The other Hausa states also accepted Islam between 14th and mid 17th centuries. Islam further connected Kanem-Borno and Hausaland and to the larger Islamic world through political and trade relations. Islam strengthened the power and influence of the Hausa states and Borno both at home and abroad.

Trans-Saharan trade was an important factor that connected economies of Nigerian areas with the outside world. Trans-Saharan trade was carried out across the Sahara desert. Originally, donkeys were used and subsequently camels were introduced and proved to be more efficient because of their ability to traverse sand energetically and to travel long distances without water. According to some scholars, the trans-Saharan trade existed well before the emergence of the Hausa states and Borno and continued to occupy important aspect of the economies of savanna and Sahelian states until the twentieth century. The trade reached its peak between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. During this period, gold and slaves were the major articles of trade. Gold became increasingly valuable from the eleventh century when many Islamic states turned it as their primary form of currency. In the kingdom of Ghana and forest zone of Africa, to the west of modern Nigeria, there were large gold deposits. Apart from slaves and gold, salt, leather goods, weapons, horses and textiles were also traded as far as North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Kano was famous for the quality of its textile products which were exported to far distance places in West and North Africa. The Hausa states served as the southern termini of the trans-Saharan trade; therefore, they became rich and powerful as a result of the trade.

Nigeria's External Relations with Europeans

Nigerian areas have long existing relationships with Europeans and these relationships were multifaceted in nature and dimension. The people of the coastal areas were the first to come into physical contact with Europeans. The first Europeans to arrive on the West African coast were the Portuguese, who had established a trading post in Benin Kingdom at Ughoton. The first European to visit Benin was Joao Affonso d'Aveiro who reached Benin in 1486. Initially, the trade between Europeans and people of the coastal areas centered on luxury goods such as cloths, beads, pepper and ivory, with slaves constituting a small percentage of the overall trade. In the beginning, slaves were transported to Sao Tomé Island and worked on the plantations of Portuguese Jews, exiles and convicts. A number of the slaves were taken to Lisbon to serve as domestic workers. Moreover, the discovery of Americas and establishment of plantations made slaves to occupy a central position in the economic relations between Europeans and Nigeria especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The purchase of slaves from Africa and their transportation across the Atlantic Ocean to work on the plantations in Americas came to be known as Tran-Atlantic Slave Trade. The Portuguese dominated the slave trade and subsequently other Europeans traders notably the Dutch, the English and the French joined the trade because of its lucrative nature. New trading stations and

ports were opened such as Grand and Little Popo, Whydah, Offra, Jakin, Epe, Apa, Porto Novo, Badagry, Elem Kalabari (New Calabar) Bonny, Calabar (Old Calabar) and Lagos. The slaves were captured in the hinterland and sold to Europeans by the middlemen and local rulers. Most slaves were captured in wars and raids conducted by Africans in the interior and were then transported to the coast to be sold to traders. Millions of slaves were captured, transported to Americas and forced to work on the plantations.

Trans-Atlantic slave trade had serious social and economic impact on Nigerian communities. It changed the demography of many communities, especially in the southern parts of Nigeria. Slave trade depopulated Igbo and Ibibio communities because a substantial number of the people who were captured and sold came from these areas. Slave trade contributed in the decline of many kingdoms and empires in Nigeria such as Oyo Empire. The trade engendered inter-state warfare and destruction of communities. Trade rivalry caused war among the neighbouring states: Lagos against Badagry, Bonny against Andoni and New Calabar against Okrika. From the 18th century onwards the slave trade helped in supplying weapons that made these conflicts more destructive. Many wars were fought purposely for slave raiding. Another consequence of the trade was the loss of many thousand men and women kidnapped and taken away at their prime age. The trade led to the introduction of two vital subsistence crops namely: maize and cassava.

In the late 18th century there was a growing pressure and call for the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade by different groups and associations in Britain. The philanthropists and humanitarians were at the forefront in the condemnation and agitation for the stoppage of slave trade and slavery. They condemned the practice as inhumane, cruel, obnoxious and immoral. These people were influenced by evangelical and humanitarian ideas and concerns. The leading agitators for the abolition of slave trade in Britain were Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson, Henry Thornton, William Wilberforce, Fowell Buxton and James Stephen. It was these people who formed the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in May 1787 and the British Anti-Slavery Society in 1823, and it was these two societies which conducted the campaign against the slave trade. They mobilized branches and people throughout the country purposely to sensitize them about the evils of the slave trade and slavery. The British Parliament finally abolished the slave trade 1807 and outlawed slavery in 1833. Many scholars tend to believe that the pressure put on the British Parliament by the humanitarians was responsible for the abolition of the slave trade, but there is a group of scholars who opposed to this view. A number of historians opined that the British abolished the slave trade basically for economic reasons. It is argued that by the eleventh century, the British West Indian islands had had all the slaves; therefore, they no longer needed more slaves. Moreover, the British West Indian planters and slave masters began to support the abolition because they started to lose economic power and relevance. It was clear that Brazil and Cuba were producing sugar in greater quantities and more cheaply during the nineteenth century, hence, British West Indian sugar could not be sold on the continental markets. The accumulation of surplus sugar in England and the need to stop further over-production contributed in passing the abolition bills in 1807 and 1833. The British tried to persuade other European nations to stop the slave trade but they refused a situation that made the British government to station naval squadron on West African coast to intercept any ship that

attempted to transport slaves to West Indies across the Atlantic. Legitimate Trade was introduced to replace the trade in human beings.

Explorations and Explorers in Nigeria

With the introduction of the so-called legitimate trade, the traders and industrialists developed the desire to find ample sources for raw materials and markets for the products of their new industries. Africa in general and Nigeria in particular had provided solution to this new demand. Unfortunately, the British knew little or nothing about the interior parts of Nigeria; therefore, Sir Joseph Banks spearheaded the formation of African Association in 1788 specifically to organize the exploration of the interior of Africa. African Association sponsored explorers to find a route through which they could penetrate into the interior parts of Africa, to gather information about the economic potentials of the communities, to spy on the military strength, formation and hardwires, to observe the hygienic condition and finally to bring information about the available resources, demographic distribution and resources.

Among the explorers that visited the Nigerian area were such important figures like Mungo Park, Hugh Clapperton, Walter Oudney, Dixon Denham, Lander Brothers, Henrich Barth and Baikie. The main objective of these explorers was to discover inland highways in order to promote the course of trade in West Africa. Thus, most of these explorers were particularly concerned with the exploration of River Niger which they believed would be the gateway to the riches of the interior countries. Accordingly, they were specifically interested in finding out the direction of the flow of the river and its source and its outlet.

One of the greatest Nigerian explorers of the Nigerian area was Mungo Park who was sent out by the African Association in England to explore the Niger River. He made two journeys into the interior of West Africa. The first trip took place between 1795 and 97. This expedition was crowned with a success as Park sighted the Niger at a place near Bamako and discovered that the river flowed eastwards rather than westwards as widely believed in Europe. The second journey was carried out between 1805 and 1806. The mission of the second expedition was to discover the outlet of the river. Mungo Park traveled 1,000 km down the Niger by boat from Sansanding to Bussa in Nigeria area where he lost his life without discovering the source of the river.

In 1820, three explorers from Britain namely Dr. Walter Oudney, Major Dixon Denham and Captain Hugh Clapperton crossed from Tripoli and reached Lake Chad and Borno in Nigeria area. the main reasons for their exploration across the Sahara were to search for the mouth of River Niger to clear the mysteries of lake Chad and find out information about Borno and Hausaland. These explorers discovered that Lake Chad was neither the outlet of River Niger nor the “sink of Africa” as it was erroneously believed in Europe. They arrived the land of Borno where they were warmly welcomed by the Shehu (traditional ruler of Borno). Denham went back to Europe while Clapperton and Oudney crossed over the Hausaland. Oudney died in between Katagum and Kano. Clapperton later went back to England and reported about the successes of their travel into the Nigerian hinterland.

Furthermore, between 1825 and 1827, Hugh Clapperton and Richard Lander were in Northern Nigeria via the coast in search of the riddles of the River Niger. Clapperton died during this second journey at a place near Sokoto in 1827. While Richard Lander returned to England. In 1830, Richard Lander returned to Nigeria accompanied by his brother, John Lander, to continue with the search for the outlet of the Niger River. Lander Brothers, as Richard and John came to be addressed in most books of history, traveled from Badagry in the South to Bussa in the North. From Bussa they sailed downstream to Niger Delta and proved that the River Niger entered the sea through the Oil Rivers.

The discovery of the outlet of River Niger resulted in sending many more expeditions to the interior of Africa. Among these expeditions were those headed by Dr. William Balfour Baikie in 1832 and Dr. Henrich Barth in 1849-55. Dr. Barth traveled extensively in Borno and Sokoto Caliphate. He crossed the Benue River and gave detail description of the geography and people of Northern Nigeria, especially Borno, Adamawa, Kano, Katsina, and Sokoto. The results of these expeditions of the explorers had two main effects: the spread of Christian mission and the expansion of trade in the interior.

Christian Missionary Activities and Penetration

Missionaries also played important roles in the furtherance of European penetration of Nigeria. Prior to the nineteenth century, missionary activity was confined to areas near the coast and recorded limited and often temporary successes. With the changing pattern of Euro-Nigeria relations in the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries did not only intensify their activities in the areas near the coast but also moved into the interior. The aim was to spread Christianity so as to expose the evil in the slave trade and assist in the change to the legitimate trade.

Thus, between 1842 and 1892 many missionary societies mostly from Britain, France, and the United States were able to establish themselves in different parts of Southern Nigeria. The first batch of the Christian missionaries to arrive in Nigeria in the nineteenth century were the Wesleyans, later renamed the Methodists, who landed at Badagry in 1842.

In 1845, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) opened a station in Abeokuta. Mission stations were later established in Ibadan and Ijaye. In south-eastern Nigeria, the Presbyterians reached Calabar in 1845. In 1857, CMS established itself at Onitsha. In the 1860s, the CMS reached the Niger Delta. In the same period, the Roman Catholic Missions found strength in Lagos, Ibadan, Onitsha, Owerri and Aba. Some missionaries ventured far into the interior and carried out their activities in the areas along the lower reaches of the Niger. Examples of such a missionaries was Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowder of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) who succeeded in establishing mission stations in the north. However, very little success was made in the north due to the strong presence of Islam.

By and large, the work of the Christian missions revolved around conversions, building of schools, hospitals and clinics as well as the promotion of legitimate trade through setting up of plantations and farms. In addition, the missionaries supplied the British government and nationals with information about the peoples, politics, cultures and the possibilities of trade in the Nigerian

hinterland. In this case, the missionaries were explorers in their own right and had served the cause of British imperialism in Nigeria.

Trade, Traders and Commercial Penetration

The European traders were another group of intruders into the Nigerian area. between the 16th and 18th centuries, the European merchants were attracted to west African coast by the prospect of trade in pepper, ivory, gold and slaves. The activities of the European traders during this period were largely limited to the Nigerian coastal areas where they relied on the middlemen for the supplies.

In the first half of the nineteenth century when slave trade was abolished, trade in raw materials was expanded and intensified. In the Nigerian coast the interest of the European traders was principally on palm oil and other agricultural products. The demand for the palm oil arose because it was needed in Britain and other industrialized nations of Europe as a lubricant for industrial machines and as a raw material for making candles and soap.

Consequently, various European firms and merchants supported by their home government competed with one another for the control of West African trade. By 1850s, there were over one hundred small trading firms in West Africa competing to control the overseas trade. In the ensuing cut-throat competition amongst the European traders in Nigeria area a big commercial concern, the United African Company (UAC) emerged in 1879. The architect of the company was Sir George Taubman Goldie who when faced with French rival companies amalgamated various British firms into one big company. In 1882, Goldie increased the capital of UAC and changed its name to the National Africa Company (NAC). Again faced with the threat of the colonial expansion of the French and German into Nigeria area, Goldie obtained a royal charter for the NAC which then became the Royal Niger Company (RNC) in 1886.

The charter empowered the company to promote, advance and control the British commercial spheres of influence in the area that later became Nigeria. Consequently, the Royal Nigeri Company established the monopoly of British influences in most of the Nigeria area. from southern Nigeria the trading company penetrated into the hinterland and established contact with the emirates of Sokoto Caliphate.

In essence, the information gathered by the explorers, missionaries and traders and their activities had cleared the ground for the British colonial conquest and rule in Nigeria. by 1880s and 1890s the British activities in Nigeria became part of the new phenomenon that characterized the relationships between Europe and Africa described as Scramble and Partition of Africa.

The scramble was essentially the race or rush by the industrialized and industrializing nations of Europe to take possession and exercise political control over African territories. It arose when European countries realized they needed to establish effective political control over their trading spheres of influence.

The scramble involved European companies, merchants and governments struggling in different ways to grab as much territories as they could from the coastal possessions into the hinterland. Thus in the Nigeria area the scramble was carried out in three major stages. The first stage of the scramble involved the penetration of European traders into the hinterland and signing of the treaty of trade, friendship and protection with local rulers on the Nigerian coast. By 1884, for example, a British trading firm, the National African Company (NAC) had signed more than seventy treaties with local rulers on both banks of the Niger up to Lokoja. The second stage of the scramble was characterized by the act of sharing and partitioning of African territories on paper by the European imperial rivals at the Berlin Conference. At this conference held between 1884 and 1885 and attended by every nation in Western Europe except Switzerland, the British claims over the territories controlled by the NAC were recognized and accepted. Thus in 1885 the British government proclaimed protectorate over the oil Rivers later known as the Niger Coast Protectorate.

In 1899 the British Government revoked the charter of the Royal Niger Company. On January 1, 1900 the government took over the administration of areas controlled by the RNC North of Idah and proclaimed the protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Frederick Lugard was appointed High Commissioner for the Protectorate.

The third and final stage of the scramble had British conquest and occupation of Nigeria carried out in phases. Between 1851 and 1900 recorded the fall of Southern Nigeria, while between 1900 and 1914 was the period that saw the British conquest of Northern Nigeria. We shall examine this final stage of the British penetration of Nigeria and its consequences in some details.

The British Conquest of Nigeria

The greater part of Nigeria area fall under British rule between 1885 and 1906. The British occupation of the country took place into two phases. The first phase occurred between 1851 and 1900. It began with an attack on Lagos in 1851 and the subsequent occupation of other parts of Southern Nigeria. The second phase occurred between 1900 and 1914 and it involved the occupation of the Sokoto caliphate, Borno, and their neighbours in the northern parts of the country.

Phase One of the British Conquest of Nigeria: The Fall of Southern Nigeria (1851-1900)

Lagos was the first victim of the British military conquest of Nigeria. In 1851 the city of Lagos was bombarded by the British navy. The British expelled Kosoko, the king of Lagos on the ground that he was a notorious slaver who had prevented the growth of legitimate trade in the area. Akintoye who the British recognized as friendly towards them was installed as the new ruler of Lagos. Ten years later in 1861, the British government declared Lagos a colony of the British. Thus, Lagos became the first area colonized by the Britain in the present day Nigeria.

From Lagos the British moved inland into the Yorubaland. By 1890s treaties of protection and agreements between the British agents and several Yoruba local chiefs were signed. Consequently, the greater part of the Yorubaland was brought under British control through negotiation and

diplomacy except Ijebu-Ode which resisted the British penetration. Ijebu was the only Yoruba Kingdom after Lagos to have resisted the British conquest. The British accused the rulers of Ijebu of obstructing free trade between Lagos and Ibadan. Hence, a military option had to be used on Ijebu. In May 1892 the Ijebu resistance to the British was broken and was brought under the British rule. By 1893, the entire Yorubaland fell under the British imperial control and a British Resident Consul was placed in Ibadan to administer the Yoruba countries on behalf of the British government.

However, the most violent episode in the British conquest of Southern Nigeria took place in Benin. Prior to the fall of Yorubaland in 1892, Benin remained effectively an independent state. In 1892, a treaty of protection was signed between the Oba of Benin and the British. However, in spite of this agreement, the Oba refused to permit free trade in his state. Accordingly, the British used the trade restriction or obstruction as an excuse to occupy the Benin Kingdom. In January 1897, an expedition sent by the British deposed the Oba. The people of Benin resisted and killed the British soldiers including the leader of the expedition, Mr. J. R. Phillips, the Acting Consul General. Having been outraged by the January incident, the British launched second attack on Benin in February 1897. The British forces numbered 1,500 men sacked Benin, killed several people and looted Benin's treasures including Oba's ivory pectoral mask which was later used as the symbol of Festival of Arts and Culture popularly known as FESTAC 77. Benin resistance to this second attack, which lasted from February until August 1897, has been aptly described as heroic but futile. Thus after the second encounter, Benin fell to the British and so had become formally under British colonial rule.

The Igboland and Ibibio communities east of Benin proved much more difficult to occupy than Ijebu and Benin. The reasons are both political and geographical. The Igbo and Ibibio peoples were both fragmented into numerous autonomous villages and lived in a thickly forested terrain. On account of these factors the conquest of Igbo and Ibibio communities took many years because each of the innumerable autonomous villages had to be dealt with or occupied independently. Here the British found themselves up against the fighting forces of several village communities and as one village community had been conquered, it rose up against the British invaders once it had passed on to other villages. This sometimes meant that even villages which had been conquered before had to be re-conquered a second or even third time. Thus from the late 1890s when the British began their assault against the people of the hinterland, it took them about two decades of almost unbroken war before the resistance of Igbos and Ibibios of the eastern Nigeria was finally broken and colonial rule effectively established.

Phase Two of the British Conquest of Nigeria: The Fall of Northern Nigeria (1900-1914)

On 1st January, 1900 the British proclaimed Northern Nigeria a "Protectorate" and Colonel Frederick John Dealtry Lugard was appointed its High Commissioner. However, Lugard knew that the protectorate of Northern Nigeria was at that time nothing but a mere cartographical claim as it did not exist beyond Lokoja. Hence, as from 1900, Lugard and his lieutenants had to busy themselves with the conquest of the emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate, Borno and their neighbours. The emirates and states of Northern Nigeria did not fight as a single unit. They fought and were defeated one by one by the British invading forces.

The Southern emirates were the first to be brought under British rule and thus paved way for the eventual conquest and occupation of other parts of northern Nigeria. It is important to note that the British military challenge to the Sokoto Caliphate provoked four main responses: (a) Submission (b) avoidance (*Hijra*) (c) alliance, and (d) armed resistance. The emirates where the British met with armed resistance included: Bida and Ilorin in 1897 and again Bida in 1901, Agaye, Lapai, Kontagora and Yola in 1901, Keffi and Abuja in 1902, Kano and Sokoto in 1903 and Hadejia in 1906. On the other hand, the emirates where they met with little or no physical resistance or those that opted for submission without fight were Ilorin in 1900, Bauchi, Gombe, Zaria and Gwandu in 1902, and Katsina and Katagum in 1903.

In all the cases of armed confrontations against the British in the emirates the fall of Sokoto and the battle of Burmi appeared to be the most significant resistance to the British penetration of Northern Nigeria. After the fall of Kano emirate, the British moved to Sokoto, the capital of the Caliphate. Opinion was divided in Sokoto over how to meet the British invaders. Some groups were for submission, some supported the idea of military confrontation, and some to which Caliph Attahiru I belonged felt that they should migrate---that is to perform *hijra*.

Before a consensus was reached, the British forces invaded Sokoto on 15 March, 1903. The Sokoto army led by the Caliph himself put up a gallant fight but the Sokoto resistance was soon broken and the Caliph and many of his followers fled towards the east rather than submit to the British rule. In the *Hijra*, the Caliph Attahiru I was joined by many people across the emirates of Northern Nigeria. The people saw *hijra* as a continuation of his struggle against the British. The British forces pursued the fleeing Caliph and he was eventually entrapped at Burmi near Gombe. There were two main battles in Burmi between the Caliphate forces under the command of Caliph Attahiru I and the British. In the second battle which took place on 27 July, 1903 the Caliph was killed by the British force. Also some 600 men were killed in the battle. Those who died came from across the Caliphate. The second battle of Burmi was not only one of the bloodiest encounters with the British in northern Nigeria, but the longest battle. It went on from 11:00am right up to 6:00pm. In the end the battle of Burmi marked the final collapse of the Sokoto Caliphate.

In 1902, Abubakar Garbai in the neighboring state of Borno accepted the British rather than the French or Germans who were struggling to occupy the ancient state of Borno. By 1906, with the suppression of the Satiru and Hadejia Revolts, major polities in Northern Nigeria had been effectively brought under the British rule. But in the areas outside the Sokoto Caliphate and Borno, military campaigns went on up to 1914. For example, in the Middle Belt, the British conquest of Tivland occurred over a relatively longer period from 1900 until 1914. The reason for this was not because of Tiv bravery but because the Tiv, unlike the Kanuri or Hausa-Fulani, lived in fragmented and autonomous communities where each faced the British alone. By 1914, the British penetration of Nigeria's hinterland had been achieved and Nigeria had been practically brought under the British rule.

Nigeria under British Rule

The British imposed a system of administration that endured the political, economic and social domination of the country. That system was known as the Indirect Rule. The system of indirect rule refers to a mode of colonial administration in which the British used local or indigenous rulers to run the affairs of Nigeria. In essence, the indirect rule system was a system of local government under which the colonized people were administered by their traditional authorities under the watchful eyes of the British political officers. For instance, all instructions from British political officers had to reach the Nigerian people through the various indigenous rulers. In theory, therefore, under indirect rule system the British officials can only be seen but not heard. They had no any direct dealing with the people except through the Nigerian traditional institutions.

However, in the operation of the system there was little or nothing indirect about the indirect rule system. It was clear that the British political officers were superiors or masters of the traditional rulers controlling and commanding them throughout the colonial period. The reasons for the adoption of Indirect Rule in Nigeria were many and varied. These include: vastness of the country, shortages of funds and personnel, poor communication network and reluctance of the people to accept British rule. Also it was claimed that the indirect rule system was adopted in order to protect and preserve Nigerian indigenous culture and institutions. In addition to these factors, the British also found the indigenous political institutions of Nigeria, especially the emirate system in Northern Nigeria suited for indirect rule. In other word, indirect rule system was adopted in the country as a political administrative strategy in order to overcome the practical problems faced by the British at the time of conquest. Thus, it was used in order to consolidate the British conquest of Nigeria. This is why it is right to accept the notion that indirect rule was a continuation of British conquest of Nigeria by other means.

Indirect Rule System in Practice

Indirect rule system was introduced in Nigeria by Lord Frederick Lugard. It was practised first in Northern Nigeria and later extended to Southern part of the country. Thus, every part of Nigeria experienced indirect rule. In northern Nigeria Lugard found a highly developed and efficient system of administrations, especially in those parts that constituted the Sokoto Caliphate and Borno. In Sokoto caliphate, the government was headed by the Caliph at the centre and the emirs in the provinces or emirates. Also, there was a direct taxation policy called *Kharaj* and *Jangali*. The people of the emirates accepted the authority of the emirs to impose and collect such taxes. Similarly, there was a well-established judicial system based on the Sharia utilizing Alkali courts and native police for the maintenance of law and order in the emirates. It was this system that Lugard found suitable and conducive for the practice of Indirect rule system in northern emirates. He, therefore, had no hesitation in adopting indirect rule system in northern Nigeria.

Consequently, the protectorate of northern Nigeria was divided into provinces each under a British political officer called Resident. Who was responsible to the High Commissioner. The provinces were in turn divided into Divisions and each was placed under a British District Officer (D.O) responsible to the Resident. The Division comprised of one or more emirate/chiefdoms depending on the size and economic importance of the emirates/chiefdom. The emirates were headed by the

emirs. In this administrative structure, the emirs were designated Native Authorities in their respective emirates and were responsible to the Divisional officer. In areas outside the Caliphate, village elders or chiefs of various grades were appointed Native Authorities. Under the indirect rule system the emirs and chiefs owed their positions to the British who appointed them as Native Authorities or heads of the local government unit also known as Native Authority Areas (N.A).

Other important institutions connected with the operation of indirect rule system in northern Nigeria were the Native Authority Treasury, Native Authority Courts, Native Authority Police and Native Authority Prison. Emirs or Native Authorities collected taxes in their areas of jurisdiction. Part of the money collected was paid in the Native Treasury for the payment of salaries and other developmental projects. British political officers and clerks helped in the preparation of annual budget and record keeping as well as auditing the monies kept in the Native Treasury.

Native Courts were established and graded A, B, C and D. The grade 'A' Courts were at the headquarters of each N.A area; while grade B, C and D were established in District headquarters. All the courts administered native law (or Islamic law) within the limits allowed by the colonial government. This was because certain aspects of the Islamic law were not approved by the British and so were discarded.

In all these courts Emirs, Alkalis and District Heads were responsible for the administration of justice in their areas of jurisdiction. The British political officers acted as supervisors in the operation of Native Courts. The indirect rule system was applied throughout northern Nigeria. it worked well in the emirates and Borno, areas that had tradition of strong central authority and regular tax collection. It failed to work at all in areas that are classified as "stateless" societies like Tivland where traditionally there were no chiefs or any central authority and taxation was not collected. Lugard who amalgamated Nigeria in 1914 and made the first Governor General of Nigeria extended the northern Nigeria model of indirect rule (also called) the "Lugardian system" to the southern part of the country. He extended the northern system to the south because of his belief that it was the ideal form of indirect rule which should be adopted in the whole country. However, it must be emphasized that before 1914 respective colonial officers had practised their own forms of indirect rule in the south.

From 1914, all the three pillars of Lugardian system of indirect rule namely: the institution of Native Authority, Native Treasury and Native Courts were systematically extended to the western provinces and later to the eastern provinces of Nigeria. in Yorubaland, for instance, the Native Authorities were established around the Obas, Alafin and other Yoruba chiefs. The grades A, B, C, and D Native Courts were also introduced with the traditional rulers or Native Authorities as presidents. As in the North, the Native Authorities were subordinated to the British political officers namely: the Residents and District Officers. Native Treasuries and direct taxation were created and imposed.

Unlike in the emirates of northern Nigeria, the Lugardian system of indirect rule was faced numerous operational problems in Western provinces. The institution of direct taxation and the

growing authoritarian posture of Obas were resented and resisted by the people. Despite these problems, the Lugardian system recorded some degrees of successes in western Nigeria.

In the Eastern Nigeria, the Lugardian model of Indirect Rule could hardly work at all because communities in this part of the country had neither central authorities nor the institution of direct taxation—two important pillars of the Lugardian indirect rule system. The British in the Eastern provinces sought to create Native Authorities or paramount chiefs among the segmentary societies such as the Igboland and the Urhobo communities. Also, the British sought to establish Native Treasuries with revenue derived mainly from direct taxation. Some of these measures were difficult to implement in the eastern Nigeria because of the socio-political organization of the segmentary groups like the Igbos, Efik, Ijaws and other people in the eastern provinces. For example, the institution of Sole Native Authorities were completely absent in the area since there was no real equivalent of the emirs or the Obas there. The British as a result had to handpick some elders and appointed chiefs and by so doing offended the people's conception of power and society. The appointed chiefs who were given certificates called Warrants were known as "Warrant Chiefs". They became so authoritarian, repressive and corrupt.

Furthermore, the introduction of direct taxation in the eastern provinces caused considerable tension and resentment among the people in the area. The Aba women riot of 1929 typified people's resistance to the institution of colonial taxation in eastern Nigeria. In the end, Warrant Chief System did not work in eastern provinces, hence, failure of indirect rule system or more correctly the Lugardian system of indirect rule in the area.

Economic and Social Aspects of Colonial Rule

The main objective of British colonization was economic exploitation of the colonies. They came to exploit to the maximum Nigeria's resources and markets at a minimum cost. Thus all aspects of the social and economic policies in colonial Nigeria were primarily designed to serve the needs of the Britain and contributed to Nigeria's underdevelopment. For example, British interest in the development of agriculture was geared toward the production of raw materials which was meant to service British industries. Thus respective parts of Nigeria were made to specialize in the production of certain so-called cash crops or agricultural produce. Groundnuts, cotton, and hides and skins were produces in Northern Nigeria. Palm oil, cocoa, rubber and timber were produced in southern parts of the country. In exchange for these export crops the European imported cheap manufactured goods like cotton print, print, cloth, salt and soap among others. Consequently, Nigerians were forced to give more attention to the production of these export crops at the expense of food crops as colonial taxes were paid in European currency which could only be obtained through the sales of the crops.

In the final analysis, the way colonial government took little interest in the encouragement or increase in the production of food crops and the modernization of the techniques and methods of agricultural production in Nigeria revealed the extent to which colonial economic policy was designed to suit European rather than Nigerian needs.

The commercial policy under British rule in Nigeria was also geared towards promoting export trade. That is, it was primarily designed to encourage Nigerians to sell their agricultural produce and minerals to European firms at prices fixed by European buyers. Also the industrial policy of the colonial government was aimed at serving the economic interest of Britain and not that of Nigeria. That is why only industries that helped the British to extract or take away Nigerian products were started rather than manufacturing industries that would produce commodities for the benefit of Nigerians.

The result was that mining was the major industrial activity of colonial Nigeria. Even this was restricted to products that were needed in Britain. These include: tin mining located on the Jos Plateau which began in 1904 and coal mining in Enugu which began in 1911. Moreover, petroleum, which was not discovered in commercial quantity until 1956, became one of the Nigerian resources exploited by the British. Indeed, the mining industry was a good example of the colonial administration's skill in exploiting Nigerian resources. Again in a bid to ensure maximum economic exploitation of Nigeria, the colonial administration built railway, roads and seaports. In fact the building of railways in particular brought the greatest changes to Nigeria. The rail-roads were built in order to facilitate the evacuation of raw materials to Europe. The improvement in communications during colonial period and the introduction of new portable currency in the economy were intended to facilitate external rather than internal trade. The benefit to indigenous people or local economy were entirely incidental.

As for the social aspects of colonial rule, the British introduced western type of education and provided social services in Nigeria but they were all intended first and foremost to benefit the European not the vast majority of Nigerians. The western-type of education was introduced in Nigeria by the Christians missionaries. From the 1840s, Mission schools were opened in southern Nigeria. The missionary schools were opened for the purposes of converting children and young adults to the Christian faith. Consequently, the spread of western education in Nigeria was closely associated with the spread to Christianity. In other words, from the beginning colonial government did not do much to promote the development of western education in Nigeria. In fact up to 1882 the colonial government paid little or no attention to the provision of education and that endeavour was left to the missions.

Indeed, the first government primary school was established in 1899 in Lagos. And among the first secondary schools established in southern Nigeria were King's College Lagos in 1909, Government College Ibadan in 1909 and Government College Umuahia in 1929. The British also established University College Ibadan in 1948. In northern Nigeria the first government elementary school was opened in 1909 by Hans Vischer at Nassarawa in Kano. Katsina College, which was established in 1922, was the first secondary school in northern Nigeria. Since then the colonial government did little to encourage the real growth and expansion of western education in the protectorate of northern Nigeria.

The Christian missions were excluded or restricted in the Muslim areas of the Northern provinces. The result was that while the missions became the leaders of educational development in the country,

their impact was least felt in the Northern Provinces that is colonial educational policy was such that made Northern part of the country lag behind its southern counterpart. Hence, the educational imbalance and inequality between the north and the southern parts of the country became glaring and obvious.

On the whole, the colonial educational policy was geared towards production of clerks and technical assistants necessary for the colonial exploitation of Nigeria. Indeed, throughout colonial period in Nigeria there were few schools and especially higher schools because there was little demand for clerks trained beyond the primary level. In fact at the time of self government in northern Nigeria in 1959 there were only five graduates in the whole region.

Like in the case of education, colonial government paid little attention to the provision of health facilities especially hospitals, dispensaries and clinics. The few hospitals and clinics built across the country were mostly intended for the Europeans rather than the Nigerian population. By 1917, there were 17 hospitals in Nigeria. In 1936, in the whole country only 3,053 hospital beds were available for Nigerian patients. In 1951, there were only 157 hospitals across the country most of which were located in the few urban and semi urban centers. Therefore, in addition to the low number of hospitals and clinics, there was also the problem of uneven distributions of the facilities. Many rural areas were alienated hence had no hospitals. All these constitute the main characteristics of health care development in colonial Nigeria.

One other important social aspects of colonial Nigeria was the growth of some new towns and the expansion of old urban centers across the country. Some of the new cities or towns emerged due to various influences created by the colonial situation. These include Port Harcourt which started as a seaport for the overseas trade, Kaduna which started because of the declaration of the area as an administrative headquarters of Northern provinces, Enugu and Jos gained their emergence and growth due to the establishment of mining centers in the areas, Jos as a tin-mining town while Enugu had coal.

Similarly, among the pre-colonial urban centers that expanded due to colonial situation were Kano and Ibadan. European trade, railways, migration and other administrative arrangements influenced the expansion of these pre-colonial urban centers in Nigeria.

In the end what have emerged from the above brief survey of colonial policy is the fact that colonial rule was a cheap rule with little commitment to the social welfare of the colonized. In this regard, an assessment of the impact of colonial rule in the country is imperative.

Impact of Westernization on Nigeria's Indigenous Culture and Norms

One of the objectives of colonization was to Europeanize the African way of life and thought. Accordingly, the British colonization of Nigeria had enormous consequence for every segment of the Nigerian society. In this section, we shall briefly highlight European impact on Nigeria and Nigerians, focusing on political, economic and social fields and underlining both positive and negative aspects of the Europeans impact.

The first positive impact was the formation of modern Nigerian state. The country was created by the British in 1914 from the pre-existing nations and states. The result of this was the generation of a sense of nationalism. The entire diverse groups that made up the country see themselves as Nigerians. It is significant to note that Nigerians fought a Civil War (1967-1970) in order to defend the boundaries and corporate existence of the colonially created Nigerian structures.

The second positive political impact of colonialism was its introduction into Nigeria of some vital modern institutions such as a new bureaucracy of civil servants, a new judicial system and a national army and the police as well as the written constitution and other political structures.

The negative political impact can be found in the legacies of indirect rule. The indirect rule system isolated the North from the rest of the country and consequently sowed the seed of suspicion as well as slowed down integration and national unity. Another negative political impact paradoxically was the creation of Nigerian state itself. The Nigerian state that was constructed in 1914 brought together unequal geo-cultural regions in spite of their unequal natural resources and potentialities, hence, sowed the seed of the current conflict over resource control and allocation of revenue.

The European impact in the economic sphere as in the political sphere was equally a mixed one. The most important economic benefit was the provision of infrastructural facilities such as railways, roads, seaports, airports, postal services and the telephones. A second important economic impact was the development of the primary sector of Nigeria's economy such as cash crops production and the modern scientific mining and exploration of mineral resources and petroleum products. The British established Marketing Boards which bought groundnut, cotton, cocoa, and palm oil and exported to Europe. These marketing boards generated revenue for Nigeria during colonial period and in the post independence Nigeria. Another significant impact was the introduction and spread of money economy in Nigeria. With this development came the modern banking activities which have become a major feature of Nigeria's economy. British established Bank of British West Africa (BBWA) which later metamorphosed into the First Bank of Nigeria.

The sum total of the economic impact of colonialism was the integration and incorporation of the Nigeria's economy into the world capitalist economy. The economic reforms introduced by colonialism had some negative impact. First, the infrastructural facilities provided during colonial era were not only inadequate but were also very unevenly distributed in the country. The railways and roads were by and large constructed to link areas with the potential for cash crops and or mineral deposits with the sea or the world market. In other words, the infrastructure was meant to facilitate the exploitation of the natural resources but not for the economic development of Nigeria.

Secondly, colonialism neglected industrialization and destroyed the pre-existing indigenous handicraft industries in the country. This negative consequence of colonial rule partly explains Nigeria's present technological backwardness and over dependence on foreign goods and technologies. The European impact in the social field had both credit and debit sides. In the first place, the most important social benefit of colonialism was the spread of western education and

Christianity. The spread of western education was initially a preoccupation of missionaries later on it became the responsibility of the colonial government.

The western type of education despite its weakness was responsible for producing the educated elite who later spearheaded the overthrow of the colonial system and also constituted the backbone of the civil service of modern Nigerian state. The other legacy of western education was the acceptance of English language as the official language and also the main medium of communication among the multi ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Finally, the western education which emphasized personal achievement for success has created an avenue for social mobility. The poor and the under-privileged who have distinguished themselves could attain the position of political and social importance in the society. Another major social benefit revolves around urbanization. There were some pre-colonial towns and urban centers that became expanded and more urbanized while new centers emerged following the establishment of colonial rule in Nigeria. The quality of life in the urban centers had relatively improved through the provision of pipe borne water, hospitals, dispensaries and better sanitary facilities.

On the debit side the social impact of colonial system appears to be equally pervasive. First, the colonial system was responsible for laying the foundation of the huge gap that still exists between the urban and rural areas. In fact, all the modern facilities, social services including employment opportunities were concentrated in the urban centers. This consequently, created the irrepressible problem of rural-urban migration and other urban vices. Secondly, the negative effects of western education were even more considerable. The system was predicated on strict western values and norms. Hence, the products of western school system were, with few exceptions people, completely alienated from the indigenous Nigerian society becoming basically individualistic and materialistic in outlook and character. They preferred the nuclear family system which is less burdensome and more convenient than the traditional extended family structure. They were people who embraced European culture equating it with civilization and looked down upon their own culture and norms.

But the last and most serious negative impact of colonialism has been psychological. This is seen first in the creation of colonial mentality among westernized educated elite. The mentality manifests itself in the condemnation of anything traditional in preference for imported goods and western ideas. Traditional institutions, festivals, rituals and entertainments are considered primitive. Western form of dressing, foods, using western language in speech, living in a western model house, driving flashy cars and acquiring a certain level of western education are their ideals and dreams.

Again their habits are characterized by competition, selfish considerations, accumulation, display of wealth and engaging in modern sporting activities, organizing and attending parties, and listening to modern music. In short, the products of western education tended to be enslaved to be neither Nigerian nor western, displaying confusion of ideas that was unhelpful to national development.

Nigeria in Post-colonial Period

British colonized and ruled Nigeria for many decades; they controlled and exploited both the resources and people of the country. The level of exploitation coupled with other factors made educated elites to begin to demand for self-determination. The demand for self-rule translated into nationalism and nationalist movement in Nigeria. There were many reasons that triggered nationalism in Nigeria which include Pan-Africanism, activities of West African Student Union, First and Second World Wars, colonial exploitation and segregation among others. Constitutionalism and constitutional development and formation of political parties prepared the ground for the attainment of self-government in Nigeria. There were many constitutions drafted in Nigeria which include 1922 Clifford Constitution, 1946 Richard Constitution, 1951 Macpherson Constitution, 1954 Lyttelton Constitution. Based on 1954 constitution, Nigeria became a Federation consisting of the Northern Region, the Western Region, the Eastern Region, the Southern Cameroon and the Federal Territory of Lagos. It is important to note that this constitutional development and amendments contributed to the formation of political parties. The first political party formed in Nigeria was Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1922 followed by the Lagos Youth Movement in 1934 (it was renamed Nigerian Youth Movement in 1936), National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon (NCNC) in 1944, Northern People Congress (NPC) in 1951, Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) in 1951, Action Group (AG) in 1951 and United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). These parties dominated politics at regional level; Northern Region was the base of NPC, NEPU and UMBC, Western Region became the stronghold of AG, while NCNC dominated the political space in the Eastern Region.

Constitutional development did not end in 1954, there was another review in 1957 in London which paved way for the appointment of Prime Minister for the Nigerian Federation. The most important outcome of the 1957 constitution was the granting of self government to the Western and Eastern Regions. In 1958, constitutional conferences were held and important decisions were taken among which were granting of self-government to the Northern Region and fixing of the date for the independence of the Federation of Nigeria. In 1959 a general election was held to determine the make-up of Nigeria's first independent government. Based on the outcome of the election, NPC got the largest number of seats and it formed a majority government through NPC-NCNC coalition. The AG became the biggest opposition party in the country. Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa emerged as Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikiwe became first indigenous Governor-General of Nigeria. On 1st October, 1960, Nigeria became a fully sovereign and independent state in the British Commonwealth. Tafawa Balewa addressed the nation in the square in central Lagos and thanked the British for their cooperation and expressed his gratitude to the nationalists for their selfless, dogged and patriotic work and pursuits for self-determination.

On 1st October, 1963 Nigeria became a Republic. After the first four years of Nigeria's independence, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa conducted election in 1964 in which he re-emerged as the winner. He continued to manage the affairs of the country at the Federal level up to January 1966 when the first military coup d'état staged in Nigeria which resulted in the death of the Prime Minister and other important politicians among who were Sir Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto, the Premier of Northern Region, and Samuel Akintola, the Premier of Western Region. The coup

was led by the “five majors” namely: Kaduna Nzeogwu, E. Ifeajuna, D. Okafor, C. I. Anuforo, and A. Ademoyega. They toppled the civilian administration which brought the first military ruler, Major General John Aguiyi-Ironsi, in Nigeria. Ironsi outlawed political parties and appointed military governors in each of the regions. He ruled Nigeria for few months and a counter-coup was staged on July 29, 1966 by military officers mostly of northern origin. The leading northern officers selected Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon as the supreme commander of the armed forces and the new head of state. The Igbo were not happy with the new development and the countercoup, hence, started preparation to secede from Nigeria. With the creation of 12 states by Gowon and the attempted secession of the Igbo’s Eastern Region under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Ojukwu, Nigeria plunged into Civil War in 1967 which lasted for two and a half years and culminated in killing more than one million Nigerians. The war was brought to a decisive end in 1970 and the military regime of Gowon introduced reform program. The military government of Gowon was toppled on 29 July, 1975 and another military officer, General Murtala Ramat Muhammad emerged as head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian armed forces. Muhammad was assassinated on 13th February, 1976 and General Olusegun Obasanjo became the head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian armed forces. Obasanjo handed over power in 1979 to a democratically elected president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, who was voted on the platform of National Party of Nigeria (NPN). Shagari became the first President under Second Republic and finished his first tenure successfully. He was re-elected as Nigerian President in 1983 and overthrown in a military coup on 31 December, 1983. After the overthrow of the Second Republic, Major General Muhammad Buhari became military head of state and commander-in-chief of the Nigerian armed forces and was overthrown on 27th August, 1985. General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida came into power in 1985 as president and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and ruled until 1993 and handed power to an Interim Governing Council under the leadership of Chief Ernest Shonekan who was removed by the military after few months in office. General Sani Abacha became military president and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces immediately after the overthrow of Shonekan. Abacha died mysteriously on 8 June, 1998 and another military officer, Abdussalami Abubakar took over power. Abubakar handed over power to Olusegun Obasanjo who was elected as civilian president of Nigeria in 1999 under the platform of People Democratic Party (PDP). He served for eight years and power transited to another democratically elected president, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar’adua in 2007. Yar’adua led Nigeria for three years and died in office in 2010 after protracted illness. Goodluck Jonathan, who was the vice president to Yar’adua became president in 2010. In 2011, general election was conducted and Jonathan emerged as the winner and continued as president until 2015 when he was defeated by Muhammad Buhari in another general election. Buhari contested on the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC) and assumed office on 29th May, 2015 and finished his first tenure in 2019 and was re-elected to serve his second term in the same year.