

UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN



THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY- NINTH (159th) INAUGURAL LECTURE

“CHRISTIANITY AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN YORUBALAND, NIGERIA: AN ACCOUNT OF A CHURCH HISTORIAN”

By

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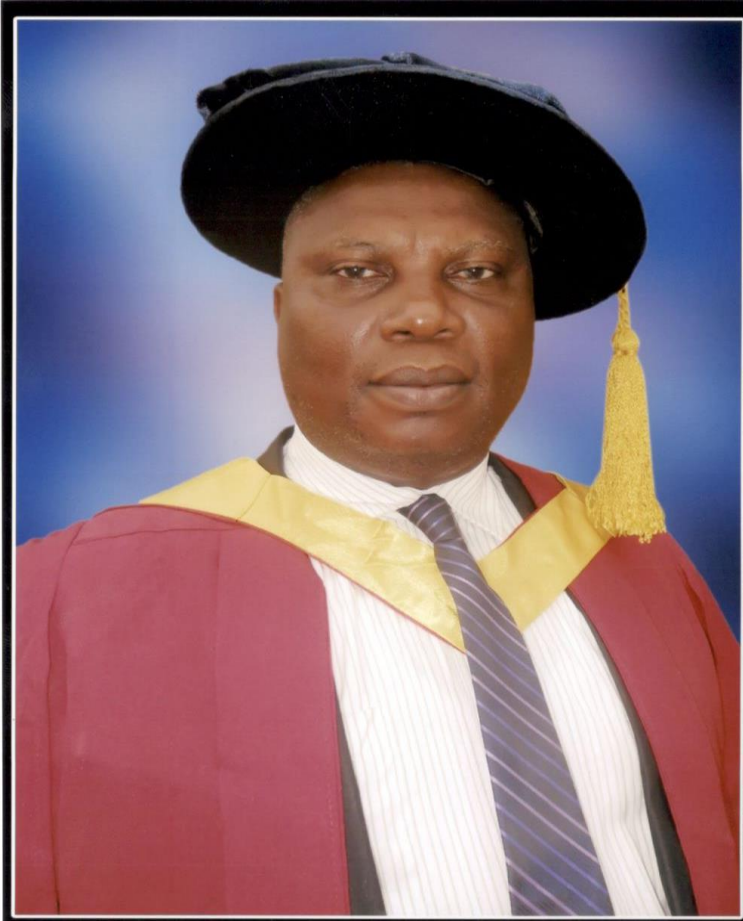
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My dear wife, children and grandchild,
My Lords spiritual and temporal,
Members of Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Baboko, Ilorin,
Gentlemen of the press,
Great Students of the University of Ilorin,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

Preamble

The Bible says in Psalm 92:1 “It is good to give thanks to the Lord”. I thank God the Almighty, Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has made it possible for me to stand before you this evening to present the 159th inaugural lecture of the “Better by Far” University, today 25th June, 2015. I became Professor of Christian Studies in October 2012. I looked for a suitable, memorable and significant date in my life to present my inaugural lecture. I checked my diary in 2013 and I realized that I would be 53 years old on 25th June, 2015. Coincidentally, the date is a day earmarked for presentation of inaugural lectures in the University. So, the inaugural lecture being presented today is dedicated to mark my 53rd birthday anniversary.

My Humble Background

I was born on 25th June, 1962 at Erin Ijesa, Oriade Local Government, Osun State. My father was the Late Chief Nathaniel Omotoye, the Sajowa of Erin Ijesa and Late Chief (Mrs.) Victoria Arinola Omotoye. They were itinerant *Osomaalo* traders, who traversed the length and breadth of Yorubaland. They coupled trading with spreading the Christian gospel wherever they found themselves; hence, my concentration on Yorubaland in this presentation. I attended United Anglican Primary School, Erin Ijesa (1968-1973), Erin Community Grammar School, Erin Ijesa (1974-1979), Ilesa Grammar School, Ilesa for Higher School Certificate (HSC, 1979-1981), Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife (B.A., 1982-1985; M.A., 1986-1989), University of Ibadan, Ibadan, (1991-2000) for my Ph.D. degree. I also attended Ecumenical Institute, Bossey,

Geneva, Switzerland, between September-December, 2000 (Diploma in Ecumenical Studies). I started teaching at Christ International Divinity College, Erinmo, Osun State 1991-1993, Osun State College of Education, Ilesa (1993-1994) and joined the services of the University of Ilorin, Ilorin in February, 1994 as an Assistant Lecturer and rose through the ranks to the esteemed and exalted position of a Professor in 2012.

My area of specialization is Church History. I am the first Professor of Christian Studies and the first Church Historian to present an Inaugural Lecture in the Department of Religions.

Mr. Vice -Chancellor sir, permit me to quote from the Inaugural lecture of my Head of Department, Professor Mrs. Oyeronke Olademo which she presented on 23rd June, 2014. She stated that “This is the 20th Inaugural lecture from the Faculty of Arts, the 8th from the “old” Department of Religions, and the 5th from the Department of Religions as presently constituted.”¹ Sir, let me say clearly that my Inaugural lecture is the 22nd in the Faculty of Arts and 7th in the new Department of Religions.

Church History

Mr. Vice-Chancellor sir, A question may be asked at this juncture: Why Church History? In answering the question, I developed interest in History because I lived with my maternal grand-father, Chief Simeon Wonari Ajayi, who died at a ripe age of one hundred years in 1984. He diligently served for over forty- four years as a community leader in Iro Odo, Erin Ijesa. Even though, he was not learned in Western education, he was a repository of local history in the community. He took time to narrate

the history of the community and family matters to me. I took interest in history because of my interactions with and closeness to him.

I believe that history as a discipline can resolve inter-tribal wars, family, inter-communal disagreements and mis-understandings not only in the micro and macro communities but also in churches especially when history is properly interpreted without subjectivity and distortion of facts. In my secondary school days at Erin Community Grammar School, Erin Ijesa, I was a good student of History and Christian Religious Knowledge. However, I preferred the former to the latter. I passed all my subjects including the two subjects in my West African School Certificate (WAEC) in 1979 and at Higher School Certificate (HSC) in 1981.

It was my intention to read Political Science at the University of Ife now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in 1981 but as fate would have it, I was admitted for Religious Studies. I accepted the admission reluctantly with the hope of changing the course to History. I took all the compulsory courses in the Department of History as available at that time. Unfortunately, I was not released by the Department of Religious Studies to the Department of History. Today, I thank God for my lecturers who counselled me to continue with Religious Studies as a discipline. I also thank God for His favour and the wisdom granted unto me in my area of specialization as a Church Historian. I made Second Class Upper Division grade in Religious Studies and that gave me the opportunity to benefit from the Postgraduate Fellowship Scholarship in 1986 at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Introduction

I must say that most of my research works since I joined the Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Ilorin have been on Christianity in Yorubaland in particular and Nigeria in general. In fact, in most of the international conferences which I attended in the United States of America, Europe, North Africa, etc., I spent much time discussing the introduction, growth and development of Christianity in the nooks and crannies of Nigeria. The religious, political and socio-economic impacts of Christianity are also taken into consideration in my research. It is therefore deliberate that I focus my attention on Christianity as a catalyst for political and socio-economic change in Yorubaland.

Yoruba People

The Yoruba people have been well researched into with no less than three thousand five hundred works.² They are found in the present states of Oyo, Ogun, Ekiti, Osun, Ondo, Lagos, some parts of Kwara and Kogi. The sub-ethnic groups found in Yorubaland are Ijebu, Oyo, Ife, Ijesa, Ondo, Ekiti, Akoko, Ikale, Ilaje, Egbado, Okun, and Igbomina. They are also found in other countries, such as the Republic of Benin and Togo. The Igala and Itsekiri speak languages closely related to Yoruba. The Yoruba in the diaspora are also found in Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad and other places in the Caribbean.³

The Yoruba people are religious by nature. According to Bolaji Idowu, “the keynote of their life is their religion. In all things they are religious. Religion

forms the foundation and the all governing principles of life for them”⁴.

Christian Missionary Enterprise The First Attempt

Omotoye opines that “the first contact and attempt to Christianize the geographical area of Benin and Warri in the present Edo and Delta states respectively was in the fifteenth century”⁵. The Catholic Portuguese missionary enterprise in the areas was regarded as a failure by some Church historians. The efforts of scholars such as Ryder, Erivwo, etc. are recognized in this regard. Many reasons have been advanced as factors that were responsible for such a failed exercise. The major inhibiting factors include: language problem, insufficient personnel, financial constraint and the introduction of obnoxious and illegitimate slave trade.

Some local Church historians in Yorubaland often claim that the Christian missionaries visited Ile-Ife; however, up till date, there is no concrete evidence and facts to justify such claim⁶. One can understand such a claim because Ile-Ife is regarded as the source or *orirun* of civilization amongst the Yoruba people. Omotoye had argued elsewhere that the first attempt of the introduction of Christianity in Benin and Warri was not a total failure in the history of Christianity in Nigeria. I believe that the missionaries that came in the nineteenth century must have learnt some lessons from the pitfalls, challenges and mistakes of their predecessors⁷. The Yoruba people often say “*Eni to jin si koto ko ara yooku logbon*” (he who falls in a ditch, would serve as a lesson to others).

It is germane to mention that the Atlantic slave trade experience occupied about three hundred years

between the 15th -18th centuries. It was a traumatic and dehumanizing experience for the African people. It came to an end officially in 1807 with the abolition of slavery in Britain. However, it did not end until 1833 in spite of the activities of the anti- slavery squads that were appointed to arrest slave traders on the sea. Unfortunately, the action led to the untimely death of the slaves.

The reasons for the abolition of slave trade have been given different interpretations by Church Historians; some believe that it was the willingness and love of African people by the white slave traders and the British Government that led to the abolition of slave trade. Omotoye has consistently argued in his teachings and presentation at the international conference held in 2013 at the University of Texas, Austin, United States of America, that the religious, political and socio-economic situation in Europe necessitated the abolition of slave trade in the 18th century⁸. For instance, the development of technology, humanitarian activities, religious revival and American war of independence all contributed to the abolition of slavery in Europe. The African slaves were no longer needed and were seen as unwanted and abandoned property that must be evacuated and disposed off in their society.

Second Attempt

The abolition of slavery led to the evacuation and re-settlement of ex-slaves in Sierra-Leone. It is necessary to mention that some slaves did not have the European experience because their ships were intercepted on the highways and diverted to Sierra-Leone by the anti-slavery squad. A section of the Yoruba ex-slaves in Sierra-Leone were known as *Aku*. According to Omotoye, *Aku* was a

term of salutation and greeting common amongst the Oyo people of Western Nigeria. Another set of Yoruba ex-slaves in Sierra-Leone were called *Lucumi*, translated as *Olukumi*.⁹ These were people from Ijesa and Ekiti districts. The two Yoruba groups were identified through their dialects and intonations. The Christian missionaries seized the opportunity of these ex-slaves who belonged to the two worlds of Europe and Africa to propagate the gospel. Many of them had become Christians, educated and were interested in going back home. However, we should note that they had become “hybrids;” they had imbibed the Christian religion as against African traditional religion. They saw the European culture and religion as superior to African culture. They could speak the white man’s language –English. Some of them were opportuned to attend Fourah Bay College, Sierra-Leone, which was the first western institution of learning in West Africa.

According to Omotoye, “one of such privileged ex-slaves was Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, who later played a prominent role in the propagation and growth of Christianity in Yorubaland”¹⁰. He was born in the year 1808 in Osogun, a town near Iseyin, Oyo state. He was captured as a slave and sold into slavery in 1821. He was educated by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and later became the first African Bishop in 1864. He had an opportunity of attending Fourah Bay College, Sierra-Leone before he proceeded to England for further studies. He served the church creditably and diligently until his demise in December, 1891. Omotoye opined that other ex-slaves that played important roles in the spread of the gospel in Yorubaland were Isaac Babamuboni, Helena Doherty and Mary Oja Ode (all in Ekiti land)¹¹.

A major factor that contributed to the survival and growth of Christianity in Yorubaland was the use of Yoruba language in the spread of the gospel¹². The ex-slaves became intermediaries between the converts and the missionaries. Coupled with this was the translation of English Bible to Yoruba by Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther. It gave the Christian converts the opportunity of reading the Bible in their native language. It is necessary to mention that Ajayi Crowther was assisted in the translation assignment by other missionaries such as Thomas King, J.S. Schon, Charles Gollmer, David Hinderer, D.O. Williams and Adolphus Mann.¹³

Some ex-slaves from Sierra-Leone came to Nigeria and invited Christian missionaries to preach to them and their communities. The efforts of the pioneering missionaries became a success story which we are witnessing today in Yorubaland. According to Peel, Christianity in Yorubaland has been seen as a “catalyst for social change”¹⁴.

The wind of change started in Badagry which served as a slave port in Yorubaland. The first white Christian missionary to be sent to Badagry was Revd. Thomas Birch Freeman, a Wesleyan Methodist. He landed in Badagry from Sierra-Leone on 24th September, 1842. According to Omotoye, Christianity was first preached under the popular *Agia* tree which was located in the centre of the town¹⁵. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), known as the Anglican Church today followed suit with the coming of Revd. Henry Townsend on 17th December, 1842. In fact, both Thomas Birch Freeman and Henry Townsend celebrated Christmas eve together on 24th December, 1842 in Badagry. Omotoye said the event marked the beginning

of the history of ecumenism,¹⁶ affection and unity between the Methodist and Anglican missions in Nigeria. No wonder, some churches and institutions are jointly owned by the two denominations. However, the growth and development of Christianity in Badagry was rather too slow when compared with other towns like Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ondo, Ilesa and Lagos. The inhabitants of Badagry did not show much interest in Christianity in spite of having the first group of white Christian missionaries in their domain. Nevertheless,, it is on record that the first storey building in Nigeria was built in Badagry in 1845. It was in the town that Henry Townsend and Gollmer continued the study of Yoruba language, while Crowther continued with the translation of the Bible and the Anglican Book of common prayer into Yoruba.

The next focus of the missionaries was Abeokuta which eventually became “sunrise within the tropics”¹⁷. Thomas Birch Freeman led the Methodist mission and Henry Townsend led the CMS to the town and they got a warm and positive reception from Sodeke, the traditional ruler of the community.

It is necessary to note that the attitudes of traditional rulers to the missionaries in Yorubaland could be categorized into two:¹⁸ The first group were those who welcomed the missionaries; while the second group were those that refused to embrace them. The traditional chiefs that welcomed the missionaries did so not necessarily because of their convictions to be Christians but because of some other factors such as political, social and economic. On the other hand, the second group of traditional rulers were suspicious of the white men. It was feared that the

white missionaries might disturb and devalue their tradition and sovereignty and appropriate their land.

According to E.A. Ayandele, the traditional rulers believed that the white missionaries belonged to the world of spirits because of their skin, which was white and so were thought to be unnatural¹⁹. For example, the Ijebu were disturbed by the mere sight of James White of CMS mission. In order to appease the gods, goats, sheep and fowls were sacrificed for allowing white people to move about in their land. It was reported that the Awujale, the traditional ruler, refused to shake hands with him. The traditional people believed that any community that allowed the white man to settle would suffer destruction from the wrath of the gods of the land. Apart from this factor, many communities in Yorubaland were already enjoying a high sense of tranquility, peace and orderliness before the coming of the white man. They believed that if they were allowed to stay in their communities, their independence and sovereignty would be lost. It was believed that, all social laws and traditional institutions would break down, and as a matter of course, sovereignty would disappear before British customs and rules. The Ijebu people valued and treasured their traditional values and institutions so they did not want any external intervention.

According to Omotoye, Oba Adeyemiwo, the Awujale of Ijebuland (1851-1886), saw his relationship with the missionaries from the economic perspective²⁰. He encouraged the neighbouring towns such as, Ondo, Egba and Ibadan to drive away the missionaries from their domains. However, the Ijebu eventually submitted to the

imperial authority and missionaries after the *Imagbon* war of 1892.

The scenario for the acceptance of Christianity in Abeokuta was different from the situation stated about the Ijebu people. Sodeke, the traditional ruler in Abeokuta, was enthusiastic in accepting the Christian missionaries in his domain. He allowed Thomas Birch Freeman of the Methodist Mission to settle in his territory because of the war between Abeokuta and the Dahomean people. Henry Townsend of the C.M.S. also got settled in Abeokuta and was deeply involved in the political and socio-economic affairs of the community. He became influential and seized the opportunity to acquire choice areas for his church in *Ake*, *Igbein*, and *Igbore*; all in Abeokuta. The *Iwe Iroyin*²¹ was published by him through reportage of news of the church and of the state. This achievement was unprecedented in the history of mass communication in Nigeria. It was therefore observed that Sodeke was concerned with the gains which his community would benefit from the Christian missionaries.

It was from Abeokuta that other Christian missionaries started moving to other towns in Yorubaland.

David Hinderer an Anglican cleric was sent to Ibadan in 1851. Thus, he became the first white Missionary in the community. He and his wife Hannah contributed significantly to the religious, political and educational development of Ibadan. He consequently sent some missionaries to Ile-Ife, Modakeke, Ilesa, and Ondo. For instance, Mr. Williams was sent to Modakeke, Henry Thomas to Ile-Ife, Green to Osogbo, G. A. Vincent to Ilesa and Charles Phillips to Ondo²². The latter became a superintendent of the CMS mission in eastern Yorubaland.

The Methodist mission equally sent some missionaries to other parts of Yorubaland such as Lagos, Oyo, Ibadan and Ilesa before the end of the 19th century. For instance, Ademuyiwa Haastrup, a native of Sagamu, a class teacher and a local preacher played a prominent role in the evangelization of Remo land in the present Ogun state. Other Methodist missionaries were Rev. Henry J. Ellis, J. Bond and W. J. Overs, Rev. T. E. Williams and Williams Hoad. Oliver Griffin worked assiduously in Oyo and Ilesa. He got the help of Fredrick Kamokun, Adedeji Haastrup Ajimoko 1 who later became the Owa of Ilesa²³.

The Catholic Mission also came to Yorubaland before the end of the 19th century. Father Borghero landed in Lagos on the 8th September, 1863. He was fortunate to meet some ex-slaves who had become Christians in Lagos. He visited Ikorodu, Epe, Ijebu and Abeokuta. Father Theodore Holley, another missionary, was recognized as the pioneer of missionary work in Abeokuta. He was in Oyo in 1884. Several attempts were made to establish a Catholic Mission in Ibadan which were not successful. However, in 1894, Father Paul Pellet and Father Joseph Pied succeeded in the establishment of a mission there. Even though, the Baale of Ibadan was reluctant, his people persuaded him because “they were attracted by the quiet and gentle missionaries”. Oke Are Ibadan which was regarded as a “bad bush” was given to the missionaries to live in; It was hoped that the site would be rejected by the missionaries. It was a surprise that the missionaries successfully lived and interacted with their converts without any adverse effect on them. The Catholic missionaries eventually sent some missionaries from Ibadan to Ilesa, Ondo, and other Ekiti towns and villages²⁴.

The Baptist mission was pioneered in Yorubaland by Rev. Thomas Jefferson Bowen. He arrived at Badagry in Nigeria on August 5, 1850. The first Baptist Church to be built in Yorubaland was at Ijaye in 1854; while the first Baptist Church in Lagos was dated 1855 under the leadership of Rev. J. M. Harden.

Third Attempt

Apart from the activities of the mainline churches mentioned above, the next Christian scheme in the history of Christianity in Yorubaland was the emergence of the African Church in the first decade of the 20th century. The church came into existence as part of the decolonization process and resentment of the unscriptural racist behaviour of white missionaries in Yorubaland.²⁵ Towards the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, the educated elite became antagonistic and opposed the domination of the church by the white missionaries. Many Yoruba Christians regarded white men's names as cultural enslavement. Thus, European and Hebrew names were dropped. David Brown Vincent became Mojola Agbebi, Edmund Macaulay became Kitoyi Ajasa, and Joseph Samuel became Adegboyega Edun. According to Omotoye many of them did away with European dresses which were replaced with African dresses. For instance, Mojola Agbebi and Oguntola Sapara began to wear Yoruba dresses²⁶. Cultural renaissance centered on shedding off the European aspects of the versions of Christianity brought to Nigeria.

The educated elite started demanding realistic education that would make them pursue professional courses. They expressed their displeasure with the type of

education which they had hitherto been receiving which did not develop their innate physical and mental ability. They also requested for the establishment of a University in Nigeria. The nationalists and educated elite began to preach the doctrine of African personality. Africa became the centre of their concern. The English prayer book was set aside; prayers were said in the native language and for Nigerian leaders instead of the Queen of England. The prayers reflected the situation in Nigeria. Songs which expressed their joys and happiness were composed in Yoruba language. The political terrain in Yorubaland had its effect on the religious life of the people.

Fourth Attempt

It was at this point that the African Independent Churches (A.I.C.), otherwise known as *Aladura* Churches came into existence in Yorubaland. These were the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, founded by Prophet Moses Tunolase Orimolade (1925); the Christ Apostolic Church led by Pastor Ayo Babalola (1930); Church of the Lord (*Aladura* 1930) established by Pastor Josiah Oshitelu and the Celestial Church of Christ founded by Pastor Samuel Bileowu Oschoffa (1950).²⁷ The *Aladura* Churches are churches founded by indigenous persons and run under indigenous leadership. The *Aladura* Churches in Yorubaland filled the vacuum of cultural relegation created by the Mission Churches. The Churches emphasized some features which are relevant and valued by the Yoruba people such as, prophecy, healing, prayer, vision, dreams, and the use of sacred objects. These features are found in African milieu. It made the Africans to feel more involved and alive in worship, as they clapped and danced. Within

few years of existence, *Aladura* Churches had grown phenomenally in the nooks and crannies of Yorubaland and beyond. Incidentally, the leaders of the four *Aladura* Churches mentioned above were Yoruba people. The history of the four Christian denominations dominated the space between the 20s and 70s (twenties and seventies) in Yorubaland.

Fifth Attempt

There was a dramatic change in religious space in Yorubaland from the 70s, because of the emergence and phenomenal growth of Pentecostal Churches in Yorubaland in particular and Nigeria in general. They often claim an exclusive repository of the Holy Spirit. However, we believe that such claims are not justified because the promise in the book of Prophet Joel 2:26 and Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2 are meant for all Christian believers in Jesus Christ. The Churches often started as “Christian fellowship” centres before they metamorphosed into Churches. Some of these include the Deeper Christian Life Ministry also known as Deeper Deeper Life Bible Church founded by Pastor W. F. Kumuyi with headquarters in Lagos; the Redeemed Christian Church of God, founded by Pastor Josiah Akindayomi and being presently led by Pastor Enoch Adeboye with the headquarters located at the Redemption Camp, kilometre 46, Lagos/Ibadan express road, Mowe, Ogun State; the Living Faith Church (Winners) founded by Bishop David Oyedepo with her headquarters in Ota, Ogun State; the Latter Rain Assembly founded and being led by Pastor Tunde Bakare in Lagos; the Sword of the Spirit based in Ibadan with Bishop Wale Oke as founder of the Church; and the Trumpeters Church

in Ilesa, Osun State which has Pastor T. Oludare as her founder²⁸.

Many Pentecostal Churches were founded in Ilorin metropolis as well. The New Testament Church founded by Pastor M. Rahman Popoola; Rhema Church founded by Pastor George Adegboye; the Dominion Church at Gaa Akanbi started by Pastor Bode Amoo; Search the Scripture Church established by Evangelist Professor Timothy Opoola, the President of Kwara State Christian Association of Nigeria (C.A.N.); Canaan Ministries founded by Pastor Adedayo Oset; Chapel of Regeneration International a.k.a. (wakati adura) founded by Professor Bisi Ogunsina and the Word Commission founded by Pastor Isaac Omolehin.²⁹ A feature common to all these Pentecostal Churches is aggressive evangelism and use of technology in the spread of the gospel.

Pioneering Roles of Yoruba Descents in the Propagation of Christianity

Omotoye remarked that “Charles Phillips spent thirty years as a pioneer of modernization in Eastern Yorubaland”³⁰. He was a son of Thomas Phillips, an ex-slave in Sierra-Leone and was born on 16th April, 1847. He later came to Yorubaland as a Priest in the service of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). He served as the Superintendent of the C.M.S. Church in Ondo, Ile-Oluji, Okeigbo, Ile-Ife, Ijesaland and Ekitiland between 1877-1906³¹. He was known as an Apostle of Christianity in Ondo in particular and eastern Yorubaland in general. This was as a result of his commitment and service to the people. He contributed significantly to the religious, educational and socio-economic development of Ondoland.

It is necessary to mention some other ex-slaves that contributed to the expansion of Christianity in their local domains. Isaac Babamuboni and Charles Jemiriye in and around Ado-Ekiti; Helena Doherty Fatoregun in Ijero; Oba Oyinbolaja, Daddy Payne; Samuel Omojola of Ikole, Abraham Ogunlohunju of Ido-Ajinare, Paul Fasakin and Solomon Daramola of Ikere; Awodumila and Mary Oja of Ode; Daniel Kolade of Emure; Asefon of Ilawe; Samuel Akinluyi of Aisegba; Samuel Ogunsakin of Igbomoba (later Ilumoba); Daniel Ojo of Efon Alaye and Moses Aina Daramola of Iye. Others were Daniel Adenitan and Jonathan Oderinde of Okemesi; Emmanuel Bankole of Ijan; David Kumoluyi and Olu Ajayi of Ido Faboro and Olofintuyi (later Olofin) of Usi; all in Ekitiland. Joseph Adejuyitan and Daniel Adewumi operated in and around Ilesa³².

The most distinguished ex-slave who became an agent of Christianity in Ekitiland was Isaac Babamuboni. His name before he became a Christian was Ifamuboni. He was an indigene of Iyin Ekiti, a few kilometres to Ado-Ekiti. He was converted to Christianity at Ibadan. After his release from slavery, he visited Ado-Ekiti in 1894 to preach the Gospel.

The evangelistic efforts of Isaac Babamuboni yielded fruit when towards the end of 1894 two Anglican Church workers namely Bishop Charles Phillips and James Johnson visited Ado-Ekiti. The whole town was in a great excitement because it was on Erekesan market day. The market broke up in confusion due to the appearance of the two 'strange men', who had arrived unannounced at the market square. In the confusion, Babamuboni, a returnee of Kiriji war and ex-slave from Ibadan intervened. His

intervention was a surprise to everyone because he spoke to the ‘strange men’ in a different language which the local people did not understand. He introduced himself to them as an evangelist and led the visitors to the Ewi’s palace.

The Ewi –in –Council was busy consulting the Ifa oracle on how to have peace in the domain. Oba Daniel Anirare Aladesanmi I, the Ewi of Ado-Ekiti gave the following eyewitness account in his autobiography:

In 1894, Bishop Johnson and Bishop Phillips toured some part of Ekiti. Incidentally, their call at Ado-Ekiti fell on the same day the Ewi and his chiefs and the town herbalists were consulting the Ifa oracle for peace in town. Not willing to leave his task, the Ewi asked the visitors to come back with this words ”go and tell Babamuboni and his people that I am busy with Ifa oracle finding how Ado-Ekiti would never again witness war”³³.

The Evangelist had the opportunity to preach to the Oba and his Chiefs from the Holy Scripture: John 8:32. “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free”. The missionaries enjoined them to rely on the power of God in order to enjoy peace and stability in the community.

The unyielding Babamuboni contended that the visitors had actually brought a powerful ‘talisman’ capable of averting wars. On hearing Babamuboni’s response, the Oba became fascinated and interested in hearing and welcoming the visitors. In view of this favourable response of the Ewi to the visitors, Charles Phillips and James Johnson promised to send more evangelists to Ado-Ekiti to

complement the work of Babamuboni. Charles Phillips, actually made some recommendations to the C.M.S authorities in Ibadan demanding more agents. The request led to the coming of Sowumi and Olulode to Ado-Ekiti as Evangelists.

Among the first Christian converts in Ado-Ekiti were Abraham Kayode, James Adejuwon, Isaac Osho and Jonathan Ogundipe. Sowumi lived in the house of Elemo in Mogun Idegbe until 1896 when the first mission house and church were built. The first Church was formally dedicated by Charles Phillips on 16th March, 1896.

Babamuboni through his exemplary Christian devotion and activities was able to bring the Ewi and his Chiefs to attend Emmanuel Anglican Church, Ado-Ekiti regularly. However, at the directive of Babamuboni that the Ewi must always remove his crown whenever he was in the church, a sharp misunderstanding arose between him and the community. The instruction given by Babamuboni was a sign of respect to the Almighty God, whereas, the Chiefs of Ewi saw the instruction as a way of ridiculing their Oba. Again, it was believed that an ex-slave from a suburb village gave the instruction to insult the Ewi. As far as the Chiefs were concerned, Babamuboni had over-stepped his bounds³⁴.

Oral method of Evangelism

The mainline churches adopted the oral method of evangelism at the commencement of the Christian mission in Yorubaland. The missionaries visited the nooks and crannies of Yorubaland, singing, drumming and engaging in house-to-house teaching. Some songs were composed in

the local dialects of the people. This method was used to attract the converts to Christianity.

Charles Phillips who was stationed in Ondo and who incidentally became superintendent of C.M.S. (Anglican) Mission in 1877 in Eastern Yorubaland, composed a song which has been christened as Ondo Christian ‘national anthem’ till date.

Bi ola bi ola o
Adodo fusi seti omi
Jesu ma fusi s’Ondo
Ola bi bokan waye o o³⁵

Greatness! Greatness!!
Flower adorn the river side
Jesus is becoming great in Ondo
Our country is becoming better for us

Charles Phillips and the early Christians in Ondo visited neighbouring towns and villages, such as Okeigbo and Ile-Oluji. Many Yoruba converts were won into Christianity through the house- to- house method of evangelization.

The Establishment of Schools

It is pertinent to note that the establishment of schools was a major policy of the various missions in Yorubaland. It was a strategy adopted by the early missionaries to win converts from traditional and Islamic religions. This strategy was successfully adopted initially; however, there was a resistance later by the Muslims in some communities in Yorubaland.

The method of conversion was adopted in the nooks and crannies of Yorubaland to win souls for Jesus Christ and to educate the new converts.

The first “day school” in Yorubaland was established by the Methodist mission in Badagry, however, many other Christian missions have contributed significantly to the establishment of schools at the primary, secondary, teacher training, college of education and of recent, at university levels. Even though, it was the Church that started the provision of western education in Yorubaland, there is no doubt that this has been complemented by the government, Muslims and private individuals.

In the 19th Century, as soon as a church was built in a community, at least a primary school would be opened nearby to educate the children of the converts. For instance, Omotoye in his earlier study said that in Lagos, the pioneering primary schools included: St. Paul's Bread Fruit, St. Peter's Faji and Holy Cross, Olowogbowo. In Ilorin metropolis, the following schools were the early Christian primary schools: St. Barnabas Anglican primary school, Sabo-Oke (1917), St. Mary's Catholic primary school, Sabo-Oke and First Baptist Primary School, Surulere. In Ado- Ekiti, the first primary school was Emmanuel Anglican Primary School, which was established in 1896. The Anglican Church opened another primary school in Ijero Ekiti in 1896.³⁶

Omotoye opined that in Ondo, Bishop Charles Philips was instrumental to the establishment of St. Stephen's Anglican Primary School in 1890. The first primary school in Okegbo in the present Ondo state was named St. Luke's Primary School, located at Okejege in

1895. In Ile-Oluji, the first primary school was founded by the Anglican Church and named St. Peters Anglican Primary School. In Ijesaland, the first primary school was founded by the Anglican Church and named St. John's Primary School, Iloro, Ilesa. The Methodist Mission established Methodist Primary School at Otapete; while the Roman Catholic followed suit with the establishment of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ifofin, Ilesa.³⁷

Christianity was embraced by the people of Ijebu-Ode after the Imagbon war of 1892. It was thereafter, that formal education began with the introduction of how to read and write through the study of "ABD" -the Yoruba primer. Ijebu indigenes such as, Bolujoko, Payne, Ogunmefun, Kuti, and Bamiro who were converts and teachers from Ibadan, Abeokuta, Lagos, etc. were used by the missionaries to establish primary schools in the area. Thus, St. Saviours Anglican Primary school was established in 1892; while the seed of the gospel was sown at Iwade, Ijebu Ode by Mr. S.E. Eliot. The Christ Church School, Porogun, Ijebu-ode was established in 1893 under the leadership of Rev. E.W. George, while St Matthew's Primary School, Ojowo, Ijebu- Igbo was founded in 1893. Other primary schools were founded at Isonyin, Ago-Iwoye, Ijebu-Igbo and Ijebu-Ife respectively.

The history of secondary school in Nigeria started with the establishment of C.M.S Grammar school in 1859 in Lagos. This was closely followed by St. Gregory's College, established in 1876 equally in Lagos by the Roman Catholic Church. The Methodist mission established Methodist Boys' High School in Lagos in 1878 and Methodist Girls' High school, Lagos in 1879. The Baptist Boys High School was established in Lagos in

1885. The C.M.S. initiated the establishment of Abeokuta Grammar School and Ijebu-Ode Grammar School in 1913. In Ondo, the establishment of the first secondary school was initiated by the Anglican mission and later known as Ondo Boys High School in 1919.

In the Yoruba speaking areas of Kogi and Kwara states, some pre-independence Christian Mission Secondary Schools include: Titcombe College, Egbe, founded in 1951, ECWA Girls Secondary school, Omu-Aran, founded in 1948; and Bishop Smith's Memorial College, Ilorin founded in 1957. The Roman Catholic Church founded Mount Carmel College and St. Anthony's College in 1962 and 1968 respectively³⁸.

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, permit me to showcase the contributions of the Diocese of Kwara Anglican Communion, where I am serving as the Education Secretary to the development of western education in Kwara state.

Anglican Primary Schools taken over by the Government:

St Barnabas LGEA School A, Sabo Oke, Ilorin; St Barnabas LGEA School B Sabo Oke, Ilorin. Bishop Smith's LGEA School A, Ilorin; Bishop Smith's LGEA School B, Ilorin; St Matthias LGEA School, Erin- Ile and Emmanuel LGEA School, Erin- Ile.

Anglican Private Primary Schools:

Women Nursery and Primary School, Gaa Akanbi, Ilorin; St Paul's Nursery and Primary School, Baboko, Ilorin; All Saints Nursery and Primary School, Taiwo, Ilorin; St Barnabas Nursery and Primary School, Ilorin;

Holy Trinity Nursery and Primary School, Kulende, Ilorin and Adewole Archdeaconry School at Aiyekale, Asa Local Government.

Anglican Junior Secondary Schools taken over by the Government:

St Barnabas Junior Secondary School, Sabo Oke; Bishop Smith's Junior Secondary School and Emmanuel Junior Secondary School, Erin Ile.

Anglican Private Junior Secondary Schools:

Anglican Grammar school, Ilorin and Anglican High school, Gaa Akanbi.

Anglican Senior Secondary Schools taken over by the Government:

Bishop Smith's Senior Secondary School, Ilorin and St. Barnabas Senior Secondary School, Sabo Oke, Ilorin.

Anglican Private Senior Secondary school:

Anglican Grammar School, Ilorin.³⁹

It is necessary to mention that more Anglican Churches are still planning to establish primary and secondary schools in the Diocese. For instance, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Adeyemi Adedayo laid the foundation of St Paul's Anglican Secondary School on 20th March, 2015 at Eyenkorin. Another secondary school is to be established within the premises of St. Barnabas Cathedral Church, Sabo-Oke, Ilorin in the next few months.

With the emergence of African Churches in the first decade of the 20th century, more schools were established in Yorubaland. For instance, African Grammar School,

Ilesa; African Comprehensive Grammar School, Ilorin; African Grammar School, Epinmi, Akoko and African Secondary School, Ifako, Agege, Lagos.

The African Independent Churches (Aladura) established the following schools, the Cherubim and Seraphim Grammar School, Ilesa; Cherubim and Seraphim College, Ilorin; Babalola Memorial Grammar School, Ilesa; Christ Apostolic Grammar School, Ilorin; Babalola Memorial Grammar School Odo-Owa, Kwara state; Christ Apostolic Grammar School, Ado-Ekiti; and Christ Apostolic Grammar School, Ibadan⁴⁰.

In the last four decades, we have witnessed an astronomical growth in the establishment of primary and secondary schools as a result of the emergence of some Pentecostal churches earlier mentioned. For instance, the Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel) established Faith Secondary Schools and Heritage Primary Schools in all the state capitals in Yorubaland. In Ilorin, the schools are in Ita-Alamu. The Deeper Christian Life Ministry has equally established at least a secondary school in each state capital in Yorubaland. In Ilorin, the church established her school along old Eyenkorin/ Ogbomoso road.

The Influence of Christian Missionary Education in the Development of Western Education in Yorubaland

The early acceptance of Western education in Yorubaland made the ethnic group to surpass other geographical zones in the country in educational development. By 1890, when no other people in Nigeria had the luxury of post-primary schools, the Yoruba had in their midst, in Lagos, four secondary grammar schools which had earlier been mentioned in this lecture.

The Yoruba people were able to produce the 'firsts' in many professions and maintained an educational gap amongst other major ethnic groups in Nigeria because of the early opportunities provided by the Christian missionaries. E. A. Ayandele, observed that the first medical doctor in Nigeria in 1876, Dr. Nathaniel Thomas King was a Yoruba; while the first medical doctor in Igboland qualified in 1935 in person of Francis Akanu Ibiam⁴¹

The first University graduate in Igboland, Nnamdi Azikiwe got his degree in the thirties of the twentieth century; while Yoruba had produced in 1878 the first two Nigerian graduates, in persons of Isaac Oluwole and Obadiah Johnson.

The Yoruba produced the first Nigerian lawyer, Sapara Williams in 1880 and had produced the first Negro Bishop in modern Africa, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, in 1864. The first 'Half Bishop' of Igbo, A. C. Oyinabo, was not produced until 1937, long after the Yoruba had the 'Half Bishops' -Isaac Oluwole, Charles Phillips, James Johnson, A.W. Howells, Alexander Akinyele between 1894-1934. The situation in the core Northern States was more critical because they could not produce University graduates until the later years of the 20th century⁴².

Educational opportunities were further strengthened in January 1955, when the Premier of Western region, Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, introduced the Universal Free Primary Education in the region. In an address to mark the silver jubilee of the introduction of the programme at the Lagos State House of Assembly on Tuesday, 22nd January, 1980, Chief Obafemi Awolowo said “by a providential coincidence, today also marks the beginning of a

revolutionary extension of free education to all levels of institutional instruction and learning”⁴³. The region also celebrated the 60th anniversary of the programme in 2015. The programme brought about a tremendous progress and an accelerating development of education in Yorubaland. Awolowo believed “that only a thoroughly enlightened citizenry can liberate a society”. The foundation laid by Chief Awolowo was built upon by the government of the Unity Party of Nigeria in the former states of Ogun, Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, and Bendel in the second republic in Nigeria. Education was made free in the states up to secondary school between 1979-1983.

Many primary and secondary schools, technical colleges, polytechnics, colleges of education and state universities were established in Yorubaland by the Civilian governments in Yorubaland. The graduates from these institutions have contributed significantly to manpower development in Yorubaland in particular and Nigeria in general.

The Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of the former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was quite aware of this educational imbalance and gap between the North and South. The Government, therefore, for political reasons, decided to establish seven Universities in 2014 and many *Almajiri* schools in the Northern states with the intention of bridging the gap between the Northern and Southern states.

The educational gap between the North and South is becoming more elastic and alarming because of the establishment of Christian and Islamic private universities in Yorubaland. For example, the Seventh Day Adventist church established Babcock University at Ilisan Remo,

Ogun state. The Living Faith church founded the Covenant University at Sango Ota, Ogun state and Landmark University in Omuaran, the hometown of Bishop David Oyedepo the founder of the Church. The Baptist church established Bowen University at Iwo, Osun State. Other Christian Universities in Yorubaland are: Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, established by the Anglican Church; Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun State; Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji (JABU), Redeemers University, Ede, McPherson University, Ajebo, Ogun State; Wesley University of Technology, Ondo, Mountain Top University, Ogun State, Kings University, Ode- Omu,⁴⁴ etc. In all, there are fifty- nine approved and recognized private universities in Nigeria. At least, thirty- one of the universities are located in Yorubaland. Fifteen of the universities are owned by Christian Missionaries; while four were established by the Muslims. In fact, the Muslims in Yorubaland have succeeded in establishing three functional Universities in Yorubaland namely: Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Fountain University, Osogbo, Osun State and Crescent University, Abeokuta, Ogun State. The fourth Islamic university named Summit University is about to commence operation in Offa, Kwara State soonest. Many products of these schools were pacesetters in the social and economic developments of Yorubaland.

The technological and scientific developments in the construction of railway lines in the 20th century in Yorubaland contributed to the spread of Christianity in some communities. The railway constructed from Ibadan to Ilorin assisted in this regard. Ilorin, a community formerly seen as “no go area” for the Christians became a stronghold of Christianity in the 20th century. Railway workers from

Eastern and Western Nigeria came to Ilorin. The Christians amongst them organized themselves into a Christian group. According to Omotoye, “the construction of railway lines by the colonial government in the early 20th century from Southern to Northern Nigeria was a contributory factor in the expansion of Christianity to Ilorin⁴⁵ .

Printing Technology

The introduction of printing technology was also a contributory factor in the expansion of Christianity in Yorubaland. This was started by the C.M.S. in 1848 with the introduction of *Iwe Irohin* in Abeokuta by Henry Townsend. Later, the C.S.S printing press became a big venture for the printing of Christian books in Nigeria. The Pentecostal churches took much interest in the printing of tracts, Christian novels, literature and writing of articles in national dailies. Two important magazines are being printed by the Deeper Life Bible Church and the Redeemed Christian Church of God; these are: *Christian Women Mirror* and *Life*⁴⁶ respectively. The magazines are meant for encouragement, edification and spiritual upliftment of Christians and non-Christians alike. Every Sunday Rev. W. A. Badejo, Pastor H. L. Elijah, Pastor S. S. Jemigbon, and the Most Revd. J. A. Akinfenwa, the Lord Bishop of Ibadan Diocese, write in the Nigerian Tribune. Other dailies like *The Guardian*, *Daily Times*, *Champion*, and *Herald* have such columns which are meant for Christian writers.

Coupled with the above methods are issues of revival, camping and crusades. At times, the members of some churches spend some days together in teaching and preaching of the gospel. For instance, Diocese of Kwara

Anglican Communion spends six consecutive Saturdays annually as Easter retreat at St. James Anglican Church, G.R.A. Ilorin for such an exercise. The Deeper Christian Life Ministry increased phenomenally after the introduction of Easter and December retreats by the Church. The members of the church in each State and Region are expected to gather in designated camps at least twice in a year. They are fed by the church free of charge during the duration of the programme. Jesus Christ demonstrated this attitude when he fed five thousand people.

Media Houses

Omotoye observed that the radio and television methods of communication are common phenomena today⁴⁷. Many Pastors have regular and appointed times to preach the gospel on the radio and television at the Federal, State and private stations. For example, Pastor T. O. Obadare of the World Soul Winning and Evangelistic Mission featured regularly in the seventees on radio and television till the time of his demise in 2013. Pastor Mike Bamidele of Victory Life International Ministries, Ilesa, Osun State started preaching on Osun radio for fifteen minutes over twenty years ago everyday. Pastor Isaac Omolehin of the Word Commission, Ilorin preaches on Kwara Radio every Sunday morning at 7:30am and Kwara Television every Sunday at 2:00pm, while Pastor George Adegboye, Pastor Joseph Mohammed Alli and Pastor Moses Rahman Popoola are found on the Nigerian Television Authority, Ilorin, every Sunday. The sermons of the above mentioned preachers are also streamed on the Internet and available worldwide. They are able to reach thousands of Christians and non-Christians through this

medium. This is a great improvement on the oral or house-to-house evangelism.

The gospel is also being preached to people through audio and video cassettes, compact disks (CDs) and films. Recorded sermons, especially in the Deeper Life, are a common phenomenon whereby every District Church as they are named would listen to a prepared sermon of the General Superintendent of the church, Pastor W. Kumuyi.

The Mount Zion Film Ministry in particular has taught and converted many people to Christianity through various films such as: *The Ultimate Power*, (*Agbara Nla*), *the Great Mistake*,⁴⁸ *Lost Forever and the Storm of Life*, *Blood on the Altar*, etc. Many lessons are learnt in viewing these films.

Technological and scientific development in the 20th – 21st centuries have contributed to the extension of the gospel. Pastors and Christians have started using computers, mobile phones and e-mail to disseminate the gospel to the people. Many pastors send words of consolation, encouragement, greetings, every morning to the members of their churches, via these media.

Health Care System

Among the Yoruba of Nigeria, magic, medicine, religion and science have survived till today. Each concept playing different roles and adapting them to new situations. Omotoye had extensively discussed the use of African traditional medicine, Orthodox medicine and Christian Faith healing in Yorubaland in his research in 2013.⁴⁹ He concluded that the three methods of healing in Yorubaland are being patronized for the purpose of the well-being and good health of people.

The efforts of the Christian Missionaries in the field of western medicine are highly appreciated, especially, at the end of the 19th century and beyond. The various Christian denominations made efforts to establish medical hospitals in order to cater for themselves and their converts. It was a strategy of conversion and to showcase their technological development in Nigeria.

According to Omotoye “the medical healing efforts of Revd Adolphus Mann (C.M.S) and J. T Bowen, an American Baptist, can never be forgotten in Ijaye. They played prominent roles in safeguarding the lives of the people by providing them with adequate and necessary medicine when the Ibadan army, under the leadership of Ogunmola, sacked the town. Mann spent much of his time in providing medical care for the sick and the needy”,⁵⁰

The Roman Catholic Church established a hospital at Oke-Ofa in Ibadan; while the Methodist built Wesley Guild Hospital at Ilesa; the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital at Ile-Ife; Sacred Heart Hospital was stationed at Abeokuta; and the Evangelical Church For Winning All (ECWA) established SIM hospital at Egbe, Kogi state. The medical services rendered in these hospitals have greatly improved health care system in Yorubaland.⁵¹

Agriculture

Agriculture has been a predominant feature of the economy of Yorubaland from the earliest times. Agriculture played a significant role in the emergence of the Yoruba as builders of the oldest and largest urban settlements in the forest region of West Africa.

Traditional agriculture in Yorubaland reached its peak in the 19thC. Travellers and missionaries like T. J.

Bowen and W. H Clarke attested to this by the second half of the 19thC. The demand for produce like palm kernel, rubber, cotton and cocoa by the European market accentuated this process. The Christian missionaries in the 19thC brought about improvement in the economic fortunes of the Christians by introducing new cash crops such as, cocoa and cashew. Omotoye in his studies on Ondo remarked saying: “if the church was to be independent and economically viable, there was a need for financial support from the local congregation”⁵². Charles Phillips, the leader of the C.M.S. Church in Ondo (1877-1906) encouraged the Christian farmers to engage in the planting of cocoa seedlings.

Church organizations and individuals took up the challenge and it improved their economic viability and stability. It is interesting to note that the Western government of the late sage Chief Obafemi Awolowo benefited immensely from this initiative. This eventually led to the establishment of some cocoa plantation in Western Nigeria. However, there was a decline in the product because the subsequent government neglected cocoa production as a result of oil.

In Yorubaland today, many church members are encouraged to organize cooperative societies, so as to enhance and improve the economic lives of their members. For example, there are three viable and functional cooperative societies at Saint Paul’s Anglican Church, Baboko, Ilorin. These are Ike Oluwa Cooperative Society (1999), Ife Oluwa Cooperative Society (2009), and Aanu Oluwapo Cooperative Society (2014).

The missionaries also demonstrated their level of scientific advancement in architecture. The mission houses

at the end of the 19thC were the most beautiful, and well ventilated with corrugated iron sheets. In Ondo, Charles Phillips was the first to use corrugated iron sheets for the roofing of the church Chapel. "Phillips himself travelled to Lagos to purchase the iron sheets which were brought to Ondo on the 23th August, 1892."⁵³ This was a sign of modernity and social improvement. Other Anglican churches and individuals within and outside the community strove to change their roofs from thatched leaves to corrugated iron sheets.

Peace Moves by Christian Missionaries and British Intervention in Ekitiparapo/Ibadan War

The Vice-Chancellor Sir, permit me to discuss the Peace Moves by Christian Missionaries in the settlement of the internecine war in Yorubaland in the 19th century. Peace initiatives came from four main quarters: the indigenous powers in the hinterland, the modern educated in Lagos, the Missionaries and the Lagos colonial government. According to Omotoye, frantic and consistent efforts were made in finding an amicable solution to the war. The activities of the Christian missionaries, such as J. B. Wood, David Hinderer, Daniel Olubi, Samuel Johnson and Charles Phillips all played active roles in the settlement of the conflict. They appealed to the warriors on both camps for the cessation of the war⁵⁴.

During the critical peace negotiation, both Johnson and Phillips played multifarious roles as private secretaries, roving diplomats, interpreters, translators advisers and even instructors. They played these roles creditably. As there were no typewriters in those days in Yorubaland, these gentlemen wrote in beautiful longhand and many sensitive

issues were handled by both of them with great care and tact.

The restoration of peace was very important in the religious, economic, political and social history of Yorubaland. The slaves who were kept by the Ibadan warlords became free and returned to their various homes in Ekitiland and Ijesaland. Many of them had embraced Christianity in Ibadan, Lagos and Abeokuta.

The cessation of war led to economic development in Yorubaland. There was a free flow of trade and commerce. It also led to the establishment of schools by the different missionary bodies.

Contributions to the University Community

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, I have been opportuned to serve in various capacities at different times and levels in the University. I was the Acting Head of Department of Religions, in 2006/2007 academic session.

I won the Religion Library Project Award at Benet House of St Edmund's College; Cambridge, United Kingdom in 2012. The award attracted over three hundred volumes of books to the University Library of the University of Ilorin. I am representing the Faculty of Arts at the University Ethical Committee and Chairman Dress Code Committee in the Faculty of Arts.

It is interesting to mention that i initiated and facilitated the on-going Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Institute of African Studies, University of Georgia, Athens and the Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin. The Collaboration is to be signed and finally extended to all Faculties in the University. The unfortunate Ebola episode in the country delayed the visit of a

delegation from the University of Georgia, Athens to the University of Ilorin in 2014.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor sir, I took active participation in the management of Cooperative societies in the University. I was appointed as the public relations officer of the Academic Multi-purpose Cooperative Society in 1996 and elected as the President of the Society in 2007. I successfully completed my tenure in 2010. I was elected the President of the University of Ilorin Union Cooperative Society in 2011. I am about to vacate the position as soon as an election is conducted by the Kwara State Ministry of Commerce and Co-operative in few weeks' time. The Management of the Union Cooperative Society in conjunction with other Primary Co-operative Societies built fifty-one suits hostel rooms for male students in the University in 2013. During the period of my Presidency as three other cooperative societies were able to build student hostels to alleviate accommodation problems on campus.

I am a member of the Board of Directors of the University of Ilorin Microfinance Bank, representing the University of Ilorin Cooperative Societies.

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, I am happy to report that I have succeeded in supervising four Ph.D. students in Church History and three others are about to complete their theses.

Conclusion

Christianity has brought about civilization, enlightenment and progress to the Yoruba people in spite of the fact that it has affected the culture and tradition of the people. Christianity brought about western education which the Muslims and Government later complimented in the

establishment of schools from primary to university level. The Church was a pacesetter in the establishment of hospitals and provision of health facilities. In the area of agriculture and introduction of crops which is serving as economic boost, the church played a prominent role. In the political and social life, the Church has assisted tremendously to improve the life of the Yoruba people.

Recommendations

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, permit me to make the following recommendations:

- My experience in research has shown that many religious centres lack diaries for historical events. In view of this, every Church or religious organization must document her history;
- Church historians should note that the political and socio-economic history of the nation should also be documented because they are inter-related to religious matters;
- If development is to be sustained and change effected in Nigeria, there is a need for an enduring sense of history;
- Lack of moral values is a problem in the political and socio-economic life of Nigerians; therefore, there is the urgent need of making religious studies a compulsory subject at the secondary school level. This will equip young minds against such vices as bribery and corruption;
- The religious leaders, irrespective of their religion and political leaders in Yorubaland must continue to maintain religious understanding and peaceful co-existence in the area;

- Archives where diaries of religious and political leaders are to be kept for posterity must be built by the Government, and be made available to Church historians and other scholars for documentation;
- Church historians should be given priority in sponsorship to local, national and international conferences, so as to make the history of Churches and their contributions known to the outside world;
- Nigerian Church historians and Church historians in Diaspora should intensify their efforts in documenting the religious activities of Nigerian preachers in foreign countries.
- Many Nigerian historical Church documents kept in foreign archives should be retrieved to Nigeria for accessibility to Church historians in Nigeria;
- Church historians should avoid distortion of historical facts in pleasing a particular denomination; and
- Church historians in tertiary Institutions in Nigeria should hold annual academic conferences.

Acknowledgments

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, it has become a tradition to appreciate and acknowledge some people who have contributed immensely to one's achievements when an inaugural lecture is being presented. I will only mention some of them.

I must first and foremost thank the Almighty God for His favour and mercy to witness this day. My academic career was made possible because of the grace the Lord Almighty has granted unto me to rise to the pinnacle and climax of my academic pursuit.

1. I thank the immediate past Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ishaq Olanrewaju Oloyede, a distinguished member of the Department of Religions for appointing me a Professor of Christian Studies in 2012. I also appreciate the incumbent Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abduganiyu Ambali for granting me the privilege to deliver this lecture and all the Principal Officers of the University.
2. I am grateful to my mother, the late Chief Mrs. Victoria Arinola Omotoye and my sister, Mrs. Aduke Kikelomo Daramola for their financial support when I was in the University. I must thank my elder brothers, Mr. Titus Omotoye, Mr. Folorunso Omotoye and Mr. Abiodun Omotoye, for their care and love which I enjoy always.
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12. I must thank all the Presidents and members of the various primary cooperative societies at the University of Ilorin for their support on cooperative matters in the University. I thank Professor O. E. Abdullahi who is my mentor in cooperative society matters in the University. I commend and appreciate my predecessor,

Professor Mrs Alice Jekayinfa, who served diligently in office as the President of the cooperative union.

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