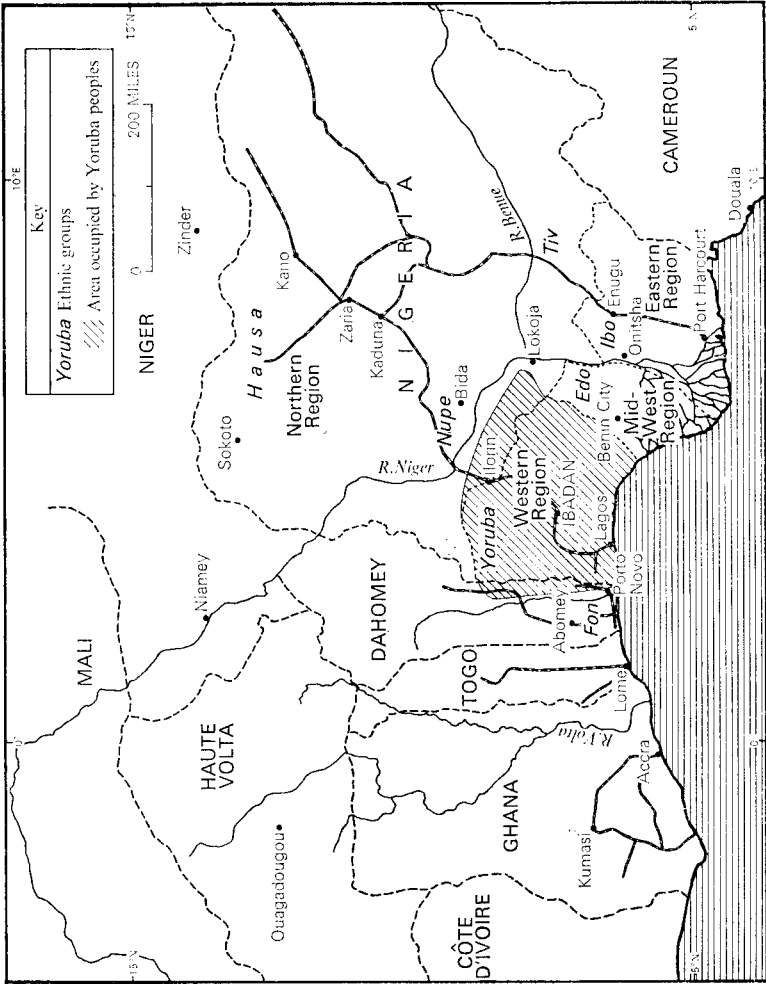


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## I. THE CITY

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MAP I. WEST AFRICA.

## 1

## INTRODUCTION

*by* P. C. LLOYD

Ibadan is a city-village. It is a city of a million inhabitants; the capital of a Region of eight million people and is a larger and more wealthy territory than many African states. Yet the core of Ibadan, settled in the nineteenth century, is peopled by farmers, traders and craftsmen living in large compounds organized on principles of common descent—a society more resembling the villages of Africa than the urban areas of the modern world.

The Yoruba towns are among Africa's ethnographic anomalies. Other ethnic groups have had higher densities of population and yet live in dispersed settlements; others again have had more highly developed political systems yet the capitals of their kingdoms have been small. Several existing Yoruba towns were in existence before the first Portuguese visits to West Africa—Ile Ife and Ijebu Ode are proven examples. But Ibadan does not belong to this group. Though, as the discovery of stone axes indicates, men have been settled in the area for centuries.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, Ibadan was a relatively small town of the Egba people. This was destroyed in the fighting between rival kingdoms and the site occupied by an army, driven southwards by the collapse of the Oyo empire and Fulani incursions into Yoruba territory. As Bolanle Awe shows, from this war camp developed the town we now know. By the end of the nineteenth century Ibadan's population was already numbered in hundreds of thousands; it had grown larger than any other known Yoruba town. With Ijaye, twenty miles northwards, and founded in a similar manner, Ibadan was heir to the power of Oyo. In 1862 Ibadan crushed her rival and became supreme. Success attracted to Ibadan an increasing flow of immigrants though the other towns along the forest margins—Iwo, Ede, Oshogbo, Ogbomosho—were also enlarged by the southward-moving flow of refugees. In the second half of the century, Ibadan's population grew with the addition of domestic slaves seized in raids eastwards into Ekiti and Akoko.

Around the nineteenth century town the administrative, commercial and modern residential quarters have recently been developed. Most of Africa's capitals are towns of recent construction; the government

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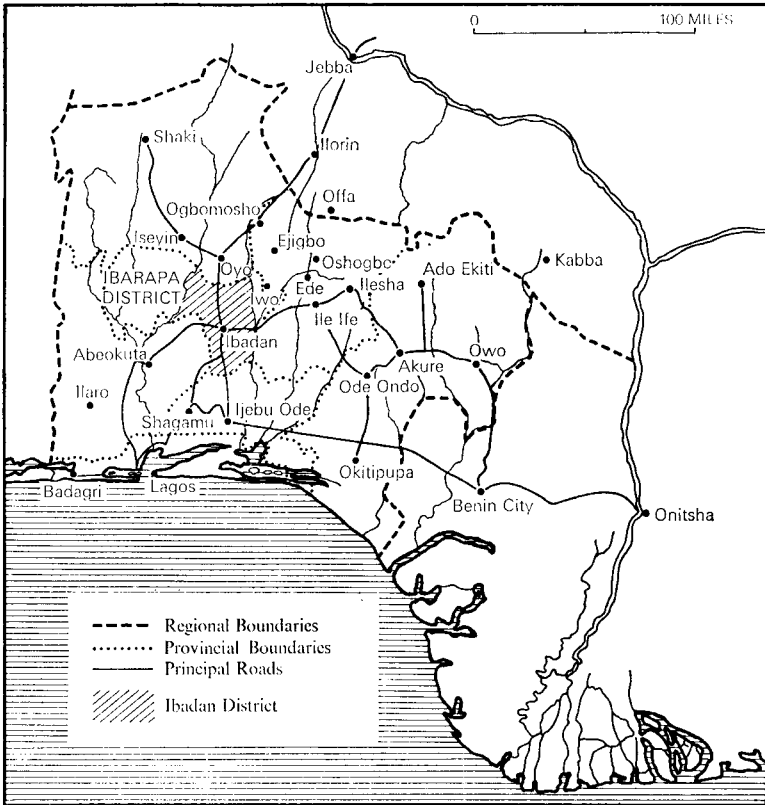
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buildings and the main shopping centres form the core, closely encircled by the homes of the new educated African élite and the expatriate community, with the settlements of the working population far on the outskirts. In Ibadan the sequence is reversed. Furthermore, indigenous Ibadan remains a largely rural settlement. Over half its total of adult males were, in 1952, engaged in agriculture; even a third of those



MAP 2. WESTERN NIGERIA.

resident in the city at the time of the census claimed to be so employed. It is of course difficult to define a farmer when all the members of the indigenous compounds hold rights to land and when many who are craftsmen, traders or clerks, work a small plot to help maintain their families. Those who are full-time farmers live for much of the year in one of the three thousand and more hamlets which lie on Ibadan land within twenty or thirty miles from the city. These, and their town-dwelling kin, regularly commute between compound and farm. At the

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times of major religious festivals the town's population swells; at the height of the farming season it shrinks.

Indigenous Ibadan is fairly typical, in its social structure, of most northern Yoruba towns. Our special interest lies in the relationship between the nineteenth century town and its twentieth century additions around it. To a large extent these remain separate settlements, the social life of one scarcely impinging on the other. Yet economically they are dependent on one another, and the fortunes of the older area are becoming increasingly associated with those of the newer.

### *Traditional Ibadan*

Ibadan's people live in huge compounds, often containing several hundreds of inhabitants. In the past these were structures of a series of enclosed rectangular courtyards; today only one such intact compound remains in Ibadan—that of Aremo at Adeoyo. Modern buildings which tend increasingly to face towards the road have replaced the older structures, yet the pattern of co-residence and the concept of the compound remains. In a compound live, with a few exceptions, the descendants in the male line of one of the more powerful immigrants of the early or mid-nineteenth century, together with their wives, selected mostly from nearby compounds. A description of the composition of one quarter in Ibadan, that of Oje, is given below by Barbara Lloyd.

The lineage is a strongly corporate body of men and women. In it are vested rights, amounting to ownership, in both town and farming land. Its members elect from among the male members a *mogaji* who represents their interests in the traditional governing councils and who aspires to a chieftaincy title, setting him on the ladder towards the highest political offices.

Farming is characterized by a simple technology—the hoe, cutlass and axe are the main tools. There is a considerable variety of staple food crops, the rotation of which, together with the matching of soil to species calls for considerable skill. All the farming is carried out by men; their wives in the hamlets are engaged in gathering food for domestic use or in preparing manufactured products for the market. The great distance between farm and town compound, together with degree of specialization practised by the farmers, gives rise to the complex pattern of markets described by Hodder. A yam may pass through three or more markets between producer and consumer. Through the same series of markets the imported goods pass from the Ibadan merchants and wholesalers to their ultimate purchasers both in the city and at the farm. Craft industries were highly developed among the Yoruba. Many of

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these were, and still remain, hereditary occupations within certain lineages.

The traditional political system of Ibadan differs from that of other Yoruba towns. Ibadan has no sacred king or *oba*—a fact which may be explained by the peculiar origin and early growth of the town. Men, usually the *mogaji* of their lineages, are appointed by the chiefs to vacant titles of the lowest rank. As each chief dies, those ranked below him rise in theory one place, thus creating a vacancy at the bottom (in practice some leapfrogging of places is recorded). At the top of the ladder is the office of the Bale—since 1935, termed the Olubadan. Such a system results in the highest political offices being held by elderly men. In the twentieth century this is an undoubted handicap as it excludes from the traditional governing councils of the town those who are educated and of wider experience in contemporary affairs. The incompatibility between needs of modern Ibadan and its traditional system of government is a theme of Jenkins's chapter.

In his chapter on religion in Ibadan, Idowu has briefly outlined the principal traditional cults. To describe them in any detail or with any degree of completeness would require more than one book. Each lineage has its own cult, usually brought to Ibadan by the immigrant founder. Some of these are of the major deities of the Yoruba pantheon, whilst others are little known. All the lineages participate in the *egungun* celebrations—a type of ancestor cult. Ibadan's main festival is, however, associated with *Oke Ibadan*, a hill near the Eleyele waterworks which legends connect with the founding of the town. To the Oke Ibadan deity is ascribed the function of creating fertility.

*Modern Ibadan*

As a major party in the wars of the late nineteenth century, Ibadan was politically important in the eyes of British consular officials. Yet it did not become an administrative centre until the late 1930s when the former Southern Provinces, with their headquarters at Enugu, were divided into Western and Eastern Provinces. Before 1951 Ibadan was not even a provincial headquarters for, being traditionally subordinate to Oyo, it had been placed within the administrative province which had almost the same boundaries as the ancient kingdom. It was, however, the headquarters of the largest Division of the Western Provinces—an area embracing the present Ibadan Province.

In the 1950s not only did the administrative machinery of the Regional Government grow rapidly, but government became much more highly centralized in the capital than in the colonial period. The Secretariat

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area has gained many new buildings. The senior civil servants, now almost all Western Nigerians, form the largest proportion of the new educated élite which overflows from the designated government residential areas into the privately developed suburbs. Only a small proportion of this élite is Ibadan born, though most are Yoruba. I have described some of the characteristics of the élite style of life. They constitute one of the most important groups in the town, for it is the educated élite which is creating the new patterns of behaviour and values appropriate to the modern world into which all Nigerians are being drawn.

Ibadan was an important commercial centre long before it became politically significant. The railway from Lagos reached Ibadan in 1901 and the major expatriate commercial firms and banks soon made the town their headquarters. As Hodder shows, the wares of their stores are distributed throughout the Region. Conversely Ibadan is one of the main centres for the collection of cocoa and palm kernels. It is only in Ibadan that Lebanese traders have been allowed to settle in any numbers. They were formerly engaged primarily in the retailing of imported cloth; they have now entered new fields—dealing in the provisions and electrical goods required by the élite.

The development of manufacturing industry in Nigeria is largely a feature of the past-colonial period. The Western Region government hoped that Ibadan would attract industries and it offered inducements to persuade them to come. It had the advantage of having a large, if unskilled, labour force and a network of good roads to all parts of the Region. But Lagos with its port facilities and other advantages has proved too strong a competitor for Ibadan.

Ibadan has been more successful in attracting the new social services. For many years its secondary grammar schools have drawn their pupils from all parts of the Region. In fact, in many of the leading schools, the sons and daughters of Ibadan men are in a small minority. An early suggested site for Nigeria's first university was Abeokuta, but Ibadan, offering a site of two and a half square miles to the north of the town was eventually selected; the University College admitted its first students to its temporary buildings (an ex-army hospital) in 1948. Since the Ibadan Native Authority hospital at Ade Oyo could not be recognized by London University as fulfilling the requirements of a teaching hospital, the University College built its own 500-bed hospital on the northern edge of the town. Although the doctors now trained at U.C.H. work in all parts of Nigeria, its patients are drawn predominantly from Ibadan. A small part of the land granted to the University College was used for

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the Ibadan branch of the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology; the buildings of the latter college later became the Ibadan campus of the regional University of Ife. Thus, for a period, Ibadan has had two universities.

These economic and political developments have led to a substantial immigration into Ibadan from all parts of Nigeria. Unfortunately neither the 1952 census, nor that of 1963, indicates what proportion of the Yoruba residents in the town are from other parts of the Western Region. Of the 30,000 non-Yoruba, the Hausa and the Ibo (with Ibibio) each accounted in 1952 for 30 per cent of the total; other substantial minority groups are in decreasing order of size, the Edo, Nupe and Urhobo. Most of these non-Yoruba immigrants are resident in Ibadan city—yet even here they accounted for only 5 per cent of the total population normally resident. Only the Hausa are represented in any numbers in the rural area—they live in the principal market centres, engaged in the kolanut trade.

Of these immigrants only the Hausa, described by Cohen, are ethnically segregated—in Sabo (or Sabon Gari). Other migrants from Northern Nigeria tend to live together in Mokola, just across the road from Sabo. The Ibo and other southern Nigerian peoples are more widely dispersed through Ekotedo and Oke Ado quarters of Ibadan. For the Hausa the most important factor in producing cohesion as a community is the Islamic religion; they have no ethnic association based upon town or clan. Such associations are, however, extremely highly developed among other immigrants; many men and women have few close ties of friendship with any but members of their own ethnic group. The activities of one such association is described by Okonjo in his chapter on the Western Ibo of Ibadan. Even the Yoruba immigrants, as Mabogunje's description of the Ijebu shows, have their own ethnic associations and participate but infrequently in associations representing the total population of the town and thus having an Ibadan majority.

Within the past few years one particular form of immigration has attracted attention. Free—and it was hoped universal—primary education was introduced in the Western Region in 1954. In 1960 the increased numbers of scholars began to leave school seeking non-agricultural jobs, preferably as clerks or artisans. They began to come to Ibadan, seeing in this city not only the bright lights of a modern way of life but also the best opportunities for employment. But, as Callaway shows, these opportunities have not existed on the scale hoped for; the rate of growth of administrative organizations has slowed down, new industries have not been established. These youths, the 'applicants',



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stay in the town, living off relatives or in extreme cases by petty theft, until the hopelessness of their position forces them back to the provinces

*The Impact upon Traditional Ibadan*

The new offices, shops, factories and schools have almost all been built on the periphery of the old city. Yet the latter area is not without its changes. Cocoa farming, introduced to the Ibadan area quite early in the century, has brought a considerable cash income to the town. This is most easily apparent in the number of two-storey houses which have been built, usually within the owners' own compounds and thus scattered throughout the town, forming no single suburb of wealthier citizens. It is significant that of the occupations of Oje men those connected with building are so prominent. The new wealth, not only from cocoa but also from wage employment and trade, has contributed to the development of new craft industries. These are organized largely upon the guild principle and not within lineages. However important they may be in training men in rudimentary mechanical skills it seems, as Callaway suggests, unlikely that they could be developed into minor industrial enterprises.

Neither cocoa growing, wage labour, crafts nor trade, has resulted in a substantial change in the pattern of landholding within the nineteenth century town or in a marked displacement of population. And thus, in the second half of the twentieth century, we still find that the lineage and compound are the basis of social organization.

Furthermore, one has the impression that the people of Ibadan have failed to seize the opportunities presented to them. In 1953 only 20 per cent of their children were attending primary schools—one of the lowest proportions in the whole Region (cf. 70 per cent in Ijebu and Ekiti Divisions). Their traditional rivalry with the Ijebu was exacerbated when it was found that the latter were developing the margins of the city and realizing the profits from building houses for renting to the newly immigrant. Part of this conservatism of the Ibadan people may derive from their preference for basking in the fading glories of their nineteenth century dominance; some would assert that Islam, the faith of two-thirds or more of the indigenous Ibadans, has been partly responsible. For although Christianity, as Idowu shows, came to Ibadan in the mid-nineteenth century, Islam, as chronicled by El-Masri, was even earlier. One could well claim that life in Oje had changed no more in the present century than that in any other Yoruba town.

Ibadan is thus two towns—that of the indigenous people and that of the strangers. In the former men and women are organized in their

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lineages, in the latter in exclusive ethnic associations. The Ibadan élite of traditional chiefs, wealthy but often non-literate traders, a few local schoolmasters and officials of the City Council has few contacts with the educated, and regional or national élite, of senior civil servants, secondary school and university staff, and political leaders. Few associations unite the two groups. Thus in attending the churches nearest to their homes, Ibadan people belong to St. Peter's, Aremo or St. David's, Kudeti; while the strangers attend St. James' Pro-cathedral at Oke Bola. The division between the two communities impedes the flow of new ideas into the traditionally-oriented Ibadan society and is probably a serious brake on its development.

But however much divided in their social life, indigenes and modern Ibadan are but a single city—and moreover a capital city. Both Mabogunje and Jenkins, from their different viewpoints, discuss the problems of administering and developing such a metropolis. Conflict arises between the City Council and the Regional government over their respective areas of competence. Town planners, engineers, doctors despair of transforming the heart of Ibadan into an area which befits its status as the centre of a Regional capital.