

A WORLD WAR VETERAN
AND THE MAKING OF COLONIAL IBADAN CITY
(NIGERIA): CHIEF THOMAS ADEOGUN OJO

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Colonial cities in the Africa of the twentieth century witnessed political and economic changes that aided infrastructural development. The First and Second World Wars also played significant roles in the social, political, and economic changes that occurred before the 1950s. Ibadan, a Yoruba city in south-west Nigeria, was greatly influenced by British colonialism. In the making of the city, several personalities contributed to its growth and development. Therefore, this paper examines the role of a World War veteran in the making of Ibadan city. The work analyses how one war veteran, Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo (known as Ojo'Badan), contributed to social, political, and economic developments in colonial Ibadan. The work adopts the historical method by using the life and times of Ojo'Badan to explore changes in Ibadan city. Oral interviews, archival materials, books, and journals were used.

Keywords: Ibadan, First World War, Second World War, Ojo'Badan, Nigeria, Yoruba, colonialism

Introduction

Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo (hereafter referred to as Ojo'Badan), was the first African Sergeant-Major in the Royal West African Frontier Force.¹

¹ The nickname Ojo'Badan originated during his service in World War I, as there were several bearers of the name Ojo from Yorùbáland. He was thereafter distinguished as Ojo

His life history is examined as a World War veteran in colonial Ibadan city in south-western Nigeria. Biography writing is a field in history that employs the craft of the historian to situate a subject's life in the context of society. The historian works with a wide range of sources to uncover the person's life and contribution to society.² Adesina identifies what it takes to write a biography in the Nigerian context as a professional historian: it is seen as a vital tool for understanding the trajectory of change and development in human society.³ Hence this article examines the life of Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo as a World War veteran in Ibadan society. Michael Benham's methodological patterns of researching biography reveal the history of a person as a pathway to understanding society.⁴

Fashioning Ojo'Badan's life history along the lines of Benham's construct proves the fact that consciousness of the past matters in understanding not only the person but also the society in which he or she existed. Several Nigerian personalities and legends contributed to the growth of society, especially in the twentieth century when western methods of documentation began to emerge. There are several historical biographies written by African-based academic scholars, and they are a recognised tool for understanding Nigerian history. This is evident in Obaro Ikime's inaugural lecture, in which he maintained that the inability to identify and document men and women throughout the ages who have made significant contributions to their communities, their age, and their country, is a glaring gap in our understanding of our function as historians in a society which does not boast novelists and journalists inclined to engage in the writing of biographies.⁵ In the historiography of Africa, there is a dearth of scholarly works on the biography of ex-soldiers, although their biographies contribute significantly to knowledge about the realities and dynamics of wartime. Hence, the life history of Ojo'Badan is a scholarly subject to add value to the knowledge gap in Nigeria's historiography. Also, the biography of ex-servicemen provides a milieu in which the interface between modernity and tradition emerges in

from Ibadan. From the National Archives, London, his medal card reads thus: Medal Card of Ojo Katala Badan. Corps: Nigeria Regiment No: 7012. His rank was that of private, and it was indexed in the Service Medal and Awards of First World War sourced from National Archives UK, w0372/15/47638, Nolan. P. and Pickening S. M., Medal Card of Ojo Katala Badan, Regiment 7102, (War Office, 1914 – 1920).

² LLOYD, E. A. *Writing Biography: Historians and their Craft*, p. 12.

³ ADESINA, O. C. "A Terrain...Angels Would Fear to Tread": Biographies and History in Nigeria. In *Southern Journal of Contemporary History*, 2020, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp.6–29.

⁴ BENTON, M. Reading Biography. In *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 2007, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp.77–88.

⁵ IKIME, O. *Through Changing Scenes: Nigerian History Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, p. 20.

society before and after the war. Mordi's analysis of the life of veterans after World War II shows that nationalist agitators failed to reckon with ex-servicemen in the struggle for self-government.⁶ Similarly, Killingray pointed out that there is little evidence that ex-servicemen mattered in the national system of West African societies, with an emphasis on the Gold Coast, which was unlike the situation in East Africa.⁷ In the case of Nigeria, ex-servicemen were scarcely involved in the socio-political life of their society. Hence, this article argues that despite the isolation of ex-servicemen in the process of internal self-rule and nation-building in Africa, Ojo'Badan's case was different as he negotiated and defined his own terms to contribute to the making of the Nigerian state. The paper used sources such as oral interviews with descendants of Ojo'Badan in Nigeria and diaspora, Ibadan divisional papers from the Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan as well as books and journals. The sources are relevant as they reveal Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo's pre-war, war, and post-war life in Ibadan. Oral interviews were conducted with family members, church clerics and family associates of Ojo'Badan. They were interviewed because of their knowledge of Ojo'Badan, who died in 1954 while they were young and growing up in Ibadan. Some of the informants gave information based on oral accounts passed on to them. Furthermore, archival sources about Ojo'Badan's work in the colonial forest service and Ibadan's traditional political system add to our knowledge about the making of Ibadan city in the twentieth century

Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo in Ibadan History

Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo was an illustrious Yoruba man and a Christian whose family migrated to Ibadan during the nineteenth-century internal civil wars in Yorùbáland. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were turbulent, and as scholars have established, there were outside factors that aggravated the wars.⁸ The wars emanated from the fallout from the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, leading to an internal political crisis. It was at this period that Ojo'Badan's father migrated from Ile-Ife to settle in Ibadan.⁹ Ojo'Badan's father settled in Aawaye village of Ibadan in the 1850s.¹⁰

⁶ MORDI, E. N. We Cannot Suffer in Burma and Return to Face Trials on Our Own Country. In *Journal of African Military History*, 2020, Vol. 4, Nos. 1–2, pp. 97–132.

⁷ KILLINGRAY, D. Soldiers, Ex-Servicemen, and Politics in the Gold Coast, 1939 – 50. In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1983, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 523–534.

⁸ ATANDA, J. A. *An Introduction to Yoruba History*.

⁹ Mama Bola, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Alakia, Ibadan, 17 June 2020.

¹⁰ Mama Bola, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Alakia, Ibadan, 17 June 2020.

Locating the family of Thomas Adeogun Ojo in the context of Yorùbá history in the nineteenth century is simplified in the accounts of scholars in Yoruba studies. Bolanle Awe analyses the rise of Ibadan as an expression of Yoruba power, underlining the formation of a new settlement in Ibadan in the nineteenth century. He took the migration of Thomas Adeogun Ojo's family as an example of the new formation.¹¹ This analysis supports the emergence of Thomas Adeogun Ojo's family in the nineteenth century. In the account of *The Church Missionary Intelligencer in 1863*,¹² the rivalry between Egba and Ibadan was intense. Both towns were nineteenth-century formations, and the Egba people were displaced by Ibadan before 1830. The Egba moved to Abeokuta and were still determined to retrieve their ancestral space from Ibadan who displaced them.¹³ The displacement occurred in 1829.¹⁴ The rivalry between Ibadan and Egba was economic because the Egba were no longer in possession of their farmlands since they had been displaced by the former in 1829. The new settlers in Ibadan had to contend with this in the Ibadan-Ijaiye wars, where the Egba used Ijaiye as a base to fight Ibadan. Hence, warriors from the new settlements were drafted to defend Ibadan from Egba encroachment through Ijaiye. For the missionaries, consultation with the war chiefs to sheathe the sword was important for maintaining peace. Peace was also important for the European traders who engaged in the commodity trade of palm oil in Southern Nigeria in the bid to navigate and negotiate trade. Ibadan had emerged as a state governed by settler warriors responsible for maintaining security against external invasion from Yoruba towns that were participants in the Trans-Atlantic trade. This was the milieu in which Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo was born in the 1860s. At the time, the Yoruba wars were at their peak as several battlefronts lasted till the 1890s.

Orirun in the Yoruba language is a site of origin, and it is historically used to describe the origin of a person, family, and community. As in Ibadan in the nineteenth century, newly formed villages had ancestral links with old Yoruba settlements. Malomo (Ojo's father) settled at Awaye during his hunting sojourn, and he formed a new independent lineage. The wars were fierce as military men in Ibadan offered a safe haven for refugees displaced from other Yoruba towns. The accounts of the encounter between Ibadan war chiefs and Ekiti warriors, especially at Igbajo evidence the way relocations were

¹¹ AWE, B. *The Rise of Ibadan as a Yoruba Power in the Nineteenth Century* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis.).

¹² The newspaper was a publication of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). CMS was responsible for the spread of missionary activities in Yorubaland from the 1850s. (Church Missionary Intelligencer, 1863).

¹³ FALOLA, T. *Ibadan: Foundation, Growth and Change, 1830 – 1960*.

¹⁴ AKINYELE, I. B. *Iwe Itan Ibadan*.

inevitable.¹⁵ Ajayi and Smith admit the chaos in Yorùbáland, where there was dislocation and depopulation, which led to the insecurity of lives and properties.¹⁶ The war plunged Yoruba societies into chaos, such that security issues were a challenge to everyday life. Invariably the formation of Ibadan as an agglomerate of warriors was a safe haven as new villages and settlements emerged to avoid dislocation and encroachments. Ibadan was a safe haven with hills that made it conducive for new settlements.¹⁷ This strategic geography of Ibadan influenced the formation of new families, lineages and cultures as several spots were located by hunters and warriors in the Ibadan of the nineteenth century.

The explanation given above fits into the kind of everyday life at Awaye when it was founded in the early 1860s. It was one of the Ibadan village settlements that enjoyed the benefit of protection from warriors because of its remote location away from the attack of aggressors targeting Ibadan. The ability to bring together and protect settlers in these villages subsequently remained true for the population and geographical strength of Ibadan even before colonial rule.

Family mobility at this time mostly from the nineteenth century indicated that there were indigenous road paths linking Ibadan settlements, which the missionaries also used to spread Christianity. As was common in the newly founded villages of Ibadan of the nineteenth century, young boys were socialized into working on farms and moved around for hunting expeditions. Through his father Malomo Ojo, Ojo'Badan understood the dynamics of navigating paths in the forests and gradually learned the indigenous sciences and technologies associated with hunting and farming.

Career in the Military and Participation in the World Wars

According to Ukpabi, the Royal West African Frontiers Force (RWAFF) was founded in 1900 as the military arm of the colonial state but plans to establish it started in 1897.¹⁸ It was structured to raise local armies in Nigeria to tackle the French invasion of British territories within West Africa. The regiments were structured around the British colonies of West Africa. It was vital to the protection

¹⁵ OGUNYEMI, T. *Ibadan Empire: Republicanism in a Pre-colonial African Nation*, p. 67.

¹⁶ AJAYI, J. A., SMITH, R. S. *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 52–53.

¹⁷ Anonymous. Settlement Patterns and Security Institutions in Ibadan of the Nineteenth Century. In OLUKOJU, A., ADESINA, O., ADESOJI, A., AMUSA, S. (eds.). *Security Challenges and Management in Modern Nigeria*, pp. 82–97.

¹⁸ UKPABI, S. C. The Origins of the West African Frontier Force. In *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 1966, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 458–501.

of British colonies, and soldiers were recruited continually to protect British territories against French encroachment in West Africa.¹⁹ Ojo'Badan's experiences in the two world wars illustrate the realities of African involvement.

In British West Africa, the two military formations consisted of the West African Regiment (based in Sierra Leone) and the West African Frontier Force (WAFF). It is important to note that the recruitment process was based on informal meetings to convince village chiefs to release their sons to work for the British army.²⁰ The former was headed by British officers, while the latter was under the control of the colonial office. The WAFF was largely dominated by Hausa men and only a few others were recruited from other ethnic groups. It is important to stress that Hausa men were co-opted because of their links with the trans-Saharan trade routes and their preparedness to fight.²¹ Unlike the Hausa recruits, Ojo'Badan's enlistment in the WAFF was based on the nineteenth-century war experiences in Ibadan and the fact that Ojo'Badan's father (Malomo Ojo) was a warrior and hunter. Suffice it to say that Ojo'Badan witnessed the era of Aare Latoosa's reign in Ibadan as a young boy in Awaye. Aare Latoosa strived to maintain Ibadan's hegemony in the 16-year long Kiriji war that ended in 1893. From Ojo'Badan's early years, he experienced the Kiriji war as a young boy and must have taken part in hunting expeditions with his father. The armament culture evident in the Kiriji War trained Ojo'Badan in what it takes to engage in a war.²² Also, as Fafunwa has emphasised, the indigenous form of education socialised boys to learn from their father's vocation.²³ In addition, war was communal as leading warriors moved with men from their families and villages to fight in the nineteenth-century Yoruba wars. The socialised experience of learning in indigenous Yoruba wars encouraged Ojo'Badan's enlistment into WAFF in 1903. During this period, Britain was interested in recruiting on a voluntary basis, but because the chiefs were anxious to choose among those eligible, they became actively involved. Ojo'Badan volunteered on the recommendations of the people of Awaye, as communalism constituted a collective aspiration in traditional African settings. The villages in Yorùbáland. were spaces of socialisation and also the point of contact for the colonial state. Hence, the head of the village was at

¹⁹ BIRMINGHAM, D. *The Decolonization of Africa: Introductions to History*.

²⁰ Mama Bola, descendants of the Ojo'Badan family, Alakia, Ibadan, 17 June 2020.

²¹ NJUNG, G. N. West Africa. In UTE, D., GATRELL, P., JANZ, O., JONES, H., KEENE, J., KRAMER, A., NASSON, B. (eds.). *1914 – 1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, pp. 1–13.

²² This period covers the growing-up phase in the life of Ojo'Badan. Scholars of Ibadan history, such as Toyin Falola and Bolanle Awe, have confirmed the veracity of these events in their works.

²³ FAFUNWA, B. A. *History of Education in Nigeria*.

the helm of affairs.²⁴ British officials appealed to the chiefs and village heads for the need to release their sons to the WAFF. While Ibadan territories were safe from external encroachment from other Yoruba towns, the campaign for recruitment was welcomed though some other Yoruba towns resisted.

Chief Thomas Adeogun Ojo in the First World War

The Nigerian Regiment was part of the coalition that served in the Cameroons Expeditionary Forces of December 1917. Nigeria's overseas contingent also entered the campaign in Tanganyika while thousands of soldiers were retained to manage Nigeria's northern and eastern borders.²⁵ The returned soldiers brought back new customs, such as the use of English as a language of communication.²⁶ Ojo'Badan's language skills were honed by his experience in the army. Some soldiers received instruction in English, although the Hausa language featured prominently as the local language of command.²⁷ After the war, there was a set of new elites who made a fortune from the pay received from the army. Like other ex-soldiers, Ojo'Badan invested much of his pay in building a new house. He also married more wives and acquired land for farming. The younger wives of Ojo'Badan were occupied in the family after World War 1. The acquisition of new wealth increased the popularity of returned soldiers, since they had resources to expand their families. Ukpabi explains that most soldiers learnt how to read and write during their military service.²⁸

Education in the army was an all-round one. New and urgent situations resulting from the war made it necessary to provide basic education to make all soldiers fitted for all eventualities. Learning took various forms, so that some African soldiers became especially familiar with mechanical technology. Through the Nigerian Railway Department, intensive training in driving and mechanical maintenance was given to 280 Yoruba soldiers in preparation for their service with the West African Motor Transport Division. In December 1916, 500 Southern Nigerians were recruited by the Royal Engineers for the Inland Water

²⁴ LITTLE, K. *West Africa Urbanisation: A Study of Voluntary Associations in Social Change*.

²⁵ MATHEWS, J. K. World War I and the Rise of African Nationalism: Nigerian Veterans as Catalysts of Change. In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1982, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 493–502.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

²⁷ BOURNE, R. *Nigeria: A New History of a Turbulent Century*, p. 16.

²⁸ UKPABI, S. C. Military Recruitment and Social Mobility in Nineteenth Century British West Africa. In *Journal of African Studies*, 1975, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 87–107.

Transport Section and sent to Mesopotamia in early 1917 as boatmen, mechanics, and dock hands. Other Nigerians received special training as operators and linesmen for the Signal Section; as sappers, miners, and engineers for the Pioneer Company; and as medical assistants for base and field hospitals. The high incidence of casualties during the war meant that large numbers of men spent time in hospitals, where they witnessed advanced medical techniques, including amputations, prosthetics, and plastic surgery.²⁹

From this experience, Ojo'Badan and his counterparts from World War 1 acquired a basic general knowledge in engineering, healthcare, disease control, vaccination, driving, and intelligence gathering, among others. After being reunited with his family, a number of his newly-born children were offered the privileges of the time.

The learning encounters were quite an advance on the traditional learning culture acquired in Awaye. The interface of the pre-colonial with colonial period was thus a learning process in the life of Ojo'Badan. Learning to speak the English language was compulsory because soldiers were from diverse African backgrounds. The English language training was a policy that reinforced even the sense of Nigerianisation from World War I. Despite the fact that the English language had unified them, their ethnic affiliations did not contribute to forging anti-colonial alliances. The returned soldiers were immediately occupied in such ways that they did not think of many political or self-help alliances, which was typical in the village life of pre-colonial times. The colonial state had a well-planned programme for returned soldiers. For example, the colonial state introduced a textile development scheme for ex-servicemen to boost the production of textiles and enhance mass production.³⁰

As a returned soldier, Ojo'Badan was well accustomed to the new elite class, that is a new set of enlightened persons. They were only proud of their contributions and worked towards forging a national identity devoid of political machinations. However, it is important to note that the first Nigerian political party was founded by Herbert Macaulay in 1922.³¹ Hence, it is quite unlikely that politics and party politics were manifest in a national sense, except for traditional politics in towns and villages.

²⁹ MATHEWS, J. K. World War I and the Rise of African Nationalism: Nigerian Veterans as Catalysts of Change. In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1982, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 494.

³⁰ AJAYI, A. T. Industrial Advancement and Policies in Nigeria: A Case of the Colonial Textile Scheme of 1945 – 1950. In *European Journal of Political Science Studies*, 2017, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 38–53.

³¹ EGBETOKUN, B. *Herbert Macaulay: An Ibadan Man in Lagos Politics*.

Settling in Oje Community in Ibadan City

Ojo'Badan settled in Ibadan city after the First World War. This decision not to return to the village should not be misconstrued as Ojo'Badan abandoning his extended family but rather as a bold move to seek new opportunities in the city since he could leverage on being a returned soldier. He chose to live the "civilised" life in Oje, a prominent socio-economic sector of Ibadan. Oje emerged in the nineteenth century as a settlement in Ibadan when Delesolu, a nineteenth-century warrior from Ogbomoso, settled in the area.³² Continuous peopling enabled Oje to develop into a commercial and market centre in Ibadan. Falola has identified Oje market as one that emerged in the nineteenth century and was located in front of Delesolu's house.³³ From the pre-colonial era, the market became a centre of convergence for all itinerant traders and mapped Ibadan as a commercial space for exchange in Yorùbáland. This innovation in Oje survived into the colonial era, and it made it more populated and popular not only for economic reasons but also as a social centre for the performing of arts and entertainment. Oje remained a traditional market that emerged in the nineteenth century. It was a market space made from traditional gatherings of trade and it lived on as a traditional market in an urban setting.³⁴

On his return from World War 1, he made use of his friendly alliances with Chief Delesolu of Oje to acquire land to build his house and by any standards, it was a lineage family house that connected with Awaye village. Ile Ojo'Badan (Ojo'Badan's House) at Oje was indeed a centre of attraction for all the vicinity in Ibadan from the 1920s. First, the advent of the Delesolu family settlement opened up the market and the community. Second, Ojo'Badan's arrival added value to the existence of Oje. Ile Ojo'Badan had around it the Ayunre tree, which had been a centre of arts and entertainment since the nineteenth century, where the community converged in the evening to play games, sing, drink and discuss general issues.

Ojo'Badan's house around the Igi Ayunre was a point of convergence of people aided by the socio-economic life at Oje, because it boosted the communal worth of having a returned soldier whose experiences were useful for understanding the newness of colonial life in the city. Oje was also a cluster of settlements of chiefs who had transited to Ibadan in the nineteenth century. Also,

³² LLOYD, P. C., MABOGUNJE, A. L., AWE, B. *The City of Ibadan*.

³³ Delesolu was one of the warriors of the nineteenth century who founded Oje community in Ibadan. His generations head the community till contemporary times. See FALOLA, T. *Ibadan: Foundation, Growth and Change, 1830 – 1960*.

³⁴ FALOLA, T. *Ibadan: Foundation, Growth and Change, 1830 – 1960*.

there were the early twentieth-century groups of Ojo'Badan, Akinloye, among others, who built houses in Oje.

As it was the late 1920s, Ojo'Badan settled in Oje at a time when Ibadan villages were still attractive for settlement. The colonial economy had a harsh effect on the city, and as such many resorted to the villages to make a living.³⁵ Being an *Ara-Okò* (village dweller) was inevitable because cocoa farming was profitable, and the villages were a safe haven to keep large families and communities knit together.

In the Colonial Forest Service of Ibadan

After Ojo'Badan left the colonial army shortly before the 1930s, he was immediately taken on by the colonial Forest Department in charge of South-western Nigeria. The forest areas in South-western Nigeria covered by Ojo'Badan extended as far as Igbo (an Ijebu town), and his work was enhanced by the experience he had gained from the protection of British territories in the First World War. He epitomised a personality loaded with indigenous knowledge of the colonial forests. Any accounts of forest policies of the colonial state in Southern Nigeria is incomplete without recourse to the indigenous personnel that managed it. Ojo'Badan grew up in Awaye village and Oja Igbo (his maternal family home). Between the two locations were forest areas with criss-crossing pathways. His understanding of the terrain, especially the navigation of the pathways made him familiar with all the villages in the Ibadan vicinity. All this were possible because Ojo'Badan was a son of Malomo Ojo, a hunter and warrior. The two professions were synonymous with the indigenous geographical understanding of the environment. This involved reconnaissance expeditions and adventures. Schooled in this non-formal environmental education, Ojo'Badan developed the skills that even prepared him for the colonial army and beyond. In pursuit of imperial interests, returned soldiers like Ojo'Badan were deemed worthy of protecting British interests in the forests of West Africa. The internal political crisis and disorder were mistaken as a threat to the forests, which the colonialists had marked out for expropriation and management. For this, the services of Ojo'Badan, a returned soldier, were valued. In the forestry services of the Ibadan Native Administration, the kings and chiefs in Ibadan/Oyo provinces promulgated laws for the Native Administration forest reserves. These laws guided the operations of the indirect rule policy of the colonial state, where the chiefs were used as instruments to establish and implement British political and economic interests. Within this scheme, the services of Ojo'Badan were deemed

³⁵ BERRY, S. S. *Cocoa, Custom, and Socio-Economic Change in Rural Western Nigeria*.

worthy to serve in the colonial forest service, since he was an ex-soldier with native knowledge.

Work in the forests in the lifetime of Ojo'Badan from the 1930s signified years of experience from growing up in Awaye and Oja Igbo until joining the Army. He started working as a forest officer on the prerequisite qualification of being a First World War veteran. Also, the name he had attained as 'Ojo Katala Ibadan' in the roll call of honour was evidently sufficient and relevant to the growth of an emerging colonial city.

The details of Ojo'Badan's work entailed the regulation of tree-felling activities and monitoring the use of permits. However, to the colonial state, issuance of permits was a way of generating revenue, as it was expected that there was a demand for timber and other uses of trees. Work at the forests further developed Ojo'Badan's knowledge of the geography of various Yorùbá towns and colonial reports gave an idea of the socio-economic realities that were prevalent in the late 1920s. His management of the forest reflected his administrative skills in mastering the rules and regulations of forest resource management. In a letter to the conservator of forests on October 4, 1930, he accounted for his movements around the environs of Akinyele along Oyo-Ibadan, where he inspected planks and ensured compliance in the process of cutting down trees.³⁶ From the letter, two things emerged about Ojo'Badan's personality: his diligence and his mastery of forest resource management skills. Even though he rarely studied geography in a formal setting, his experiences during the First World War enabled him to showcase skills in navigating the forests. He monitored the use of permits in cutting down trees, which showed that he stood for discipline. His truthfulness and unrivalled diligence were acknowledged in a letter written by the conservator of forests' office Oyo Circle on 29 September 1930 to the Dominions Office, which highlighted Ojo'Badan diligence and loyalty to the colonial civil service. At that time, he was of the view that the British model of administration in the colonies was the most desirable for a modern and civilised society.

In the work of managing forest resources, there were challenges related to permits to explore the forests. The phenomenon of '*Igi-Oba*', (Forest Reserve) was common as it depicted the legality of tree conservation and licences to explore. Tree stamping was one of the regulations for forest resource management. Ojo'Badan was well placed to understand the dynamics of getting sawyers to use stamps. Between the legal system and forestry management, the details of Ojo'Badan's work involved understanding the attitudes of dispositions among sawyers and in relation to the colonial state because he was saddled with

³⁶ NAI, Oyo Prof 1, 914, *Training of Forestry Technical Staff*, n. d.

the responsibility of bringing offenders to court.³⁷ The colonial state found him worthy of this responsibility being an ex-soldier. This was also coupled with the fact that he was from the Yoruba ethnic group, with the knowledge of its culture and mindset. Furthermore, the details of Ojo'Badan's work, especially as stated in the correspondence, showed how subjects of conflict arose between the citizens and the colonial administration. Laying out the facts in the "Tours of Inspection", he reported how overbearing the colonial policies were to the natives in a language that combines tact and diplomacy.³⁸ However, the conservator of the forest office was not convinced that the claims were true. Nevertheless, Ojo'Badan found it imperative to maintain respectability by recognising the authority of the Baale (head of the village). Tree felling and permit acquisition was of interest to the colonial state because it reduced the revenue base. The colonial state forcibly applied legal sanctions against offenders through fines and jail sentences by 1932. In this new legal dispensation, the Alaafin of Oyo was a major power holder whose office was considered important in the application of fines for offences committed.

From the Ijebu forests to Oyo, Ojo'Badan had the opportunity to interact with monarchs and chiefs, while he also had in his control the Akoda (Native Administration Police). In his capacity as a ranger, he also coordinated the allocation of forest exploration permits and wood trade licenses. Ojo'Badan's work in forest resource management was caught up in the web of indigenous and colonial politics. This was largely because saw-mills were usually partnership businesses between the sawyers and the traditional kings and chiefs. Hence the monitoring and regulatory work of Ojo'Badan was complicated. Still, he was considered influential in the indigenous and modern politics of the Oyo and Ijebu Provinces of Western Nigeria. For example, Ojo'Badan encountered challenges in maintaining the due process in timber exploration. The sawyers were also close associates of kings and chiefs in various Yoruba towns. Invariably, Ojo'Badan could not escape capitalist relations because the sawyers operated plank markets, from which the kings and chiefs derived "informal revenues".

While Ojo'Badan worked in the forests, forestry science evolved in the administration of forest reserves. Vocational training in forestry became imperative in light of population pressure. Staff were recruited, having attended forestry school and been trained to work in the Forestry Department. This was a transformational shift that occurred in the 1930s when the work experience of Ojo'Badan had served as a model for understanding the requirements of a standardised forestry service. In Memorandum No. 6 of the forestry Ordinance in the 1940s, it was stated that,

³⁷ NAI, Oyo Prof 1, *Forest Officers Matters*, n. d.

³⁸ Ibid.

In the past, there have been a number of Forestry Ordinances or other legislation passed with the object of preserving the Forests or legalizing certain activities on the science of forestry necessary for the welfare of the country. In those days, little was known of the forests of the country, of their extent, or of their contents, and it is generally admitted that the legislation might be described, in some cases at any rate, as makeshift.³⁹

Invariably, in 1932, the forestry survey scheme was initiated as a plan to map out the scientific features of the forest. This was at a time when the reports submitted by Ojo'Badan were crucial to improve the science and technology of forest management in Nigeria⁴⁰. Given the reports submitted by Ojo'Badan to the forestry department, it was further realised that the "Communal forestry Area System" was introduced to effectively administer the Native Administration forest reserves.

Ojo'Badan's work as a chief and court leader was at a time when H.L. Ward-Price was the president of Oyo Province. His instructions enhanced Ojo'Badan's work, he said,

I enclose some simple rules, as drafted by the conservator of forests, Western Circle, and I shall be glad if you will have copies made and sent to every Native Court with an instruction to the Judges that they are to be read out by the court clerk in court at every sitting when a forestry case comes up and at least once a month in any case.⁴¹

By implication, the forestry ordinance was recognised by the Native Court. At court proceedings, the court clerk read the forestry rules to timber stakeholders in the Yoruba language. This enhanced the judicial roles of Ojo'Badan in the courts, and it was a carryover experience from the era of military service to the forestry department. The suggestion was imperative because Ojo'Badan had been a Native Court leader in Oja'Iba which already had the powers of a Grade 'B' court and was fully qualified to adjudicate forestry cases.⁴²

The colonial state in Ibadan complicated land as an object of contestation. The establishment of health and education infrastructures deprived some people of their settlements. The villages were reformed or relocated to new areas. Hence, several settlements extended towards Akinyele, Lagelu, Ona-Ara, among others. The newly formed villages experienced disputes over land with the result that

³⁹ NAI, Oyo Prof 1, *Forest Officers Matters*, n. d.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Prof. Wale Oyemakinde, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Barika, Ibadan, 15 April, 2020.

land cases became prominent in the Native Courts.⁴³ Being a forest officer and Ibadan chief, it became imperative that Ojo'Badan took part in land disputes at Ganran, Oja-Iba Native Court.⁴⁴ The case of a man who appropriated land for himself became controversial in Ojo'Badan's court. Extant laws stipulated that the punishment for this offence was a prison sentence. However, Ojo'Badan pointedly argued that the man should be left alone because Africans should be free to access land. His position was based on an anti-colonial mindset that questioned the continued influence of British rule in the judicial process. Gifford and Roger agreed that the period was vital as it created changes that shaped the thinking of Africans against Europeans, to help bridge the inequality gaps.⁴⁵ After all, he was of the view that "it is not their fatherland, but ours".⁴⁶ This thought reinforced the nationalist interests that manifested themselves after World War II. The campaigns of "win the war" had waned. Fresh ideas about decolonising lifestyles emerged in the era of internal self-rule of the early 1950s. Ojo'Badan ensured that Ibadan indigenes, chiefs, and people from other parts of Western Nigeria had access to land. The forestry department in colonial Nigeria was structured to serve imperial interests, yet Ojo'Badan used his power to assure indigenous access to land.⁴⁷

Chieftaincy in Ibadan Traditional Politics

Having served diligently in the colonial forestry department, the chiefs in Ibadan recognised Ojo'Badan's meritorious and selfless service to the management of forest resources.⁴⁸ His experience contradicts several accounts of how ex-servicemen were neglected and rarely impactful in society. Korieh has noted that the post-WWII period transformed into the decolonisation process but the ex-soldiers were not under obligation to struggle for a new Nigerian state, nor did they have a sense of obligation to unfolding events of internal self-rule.⁴⁹ In spite

⁴³ FALOLA, T. *Politics and Economy in Ibadan, 1893 – 1945*.

⁴⁴ Mama Bola, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Alakia, Ibadan, 17 June 2020.

⁴⁵ GIFFORD, P., ROGER, L. (eds.). *Decolonization and African Independence: The Transfer of Power, 1960 – 1980*.

⁴⁶ Pa Sunday Ojo, descendants of the Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

⁴⁷ His family members recount how his vast farmlands had been given out gratis before his death and how he facilitated access to resources in control of the colonial state.

⁴⁸ Archival records of his work in the colonial forest service indicate his dedication to regulating and preserving the forests.

⁴⁹ KORIEH, C. J. *Nigeria and World War II; Colonialism, Empire, and Global Conflict*, p. 262.

of this, Ojo'Badan displayed a sense of belonging to the modernisation of Ibadan society as he interfaced with the colonial state in infrastructural development. For example, his hectares of farmland were offered to the colonial state to build the University College Hospital in Ibadan.⁵⁰

Many ex-servicemen had served in the world wars, but Ojo'Badan appeared charismatic and immersed in community development. Thomas Adeogun Ojo was considered "Omoran" (of the indigenous intelligentsia) who understood the dynamics of the global order and its effect on the growth of Ibadan. In Yoruba culture, being a person of charisma was considered important for image and prestige. Hence, the classification of Ojo'Badan as *Omoran* showed the category of the elite he belonged to in Ibadan's traditional political system. The power status of Ibadan warriors was challenged and subdued under colonial rule. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the treaties of commerce, peace and friendship signed with Ibadan marked the beginning of a transition and transformation as the previous warlords became chiefs and new categories of elite emerged.⁵¹ But the changing dynamics of colonialism also offered new ways of negotiating power. The chiefs had the new power vested in them by Indirect Rule. Mostly, the chiefs accepted their subjugated status to colonial rule, which offered a paradigm shift to their new power status and legitimacy. The paradigm shifts in power emerged because the chiefs could not successfully revolt against colonialism, and for economic reasons they accepted the administrative arrangements. Being an Ibadan indigene and a veteran of World War I and having participated in World War II within West Africa, he was revered for his experience. In honour of his contribution, he was offered a chieftaincy title in 1935.⁵² World War I was a European War, it meant a lot for the new geographies of colonial Africa. For Ibadan chiefs, welcoming Ojo'Badan to the chieftaincy rank was desirable mainly because he understood the interests of the British, and the chiefs urgently needed to understand British colonial politics in the peripheries. Ojo'Badan enhanced Ibadan's traditional politics by offering himself as an example for study to Ibadan chiefs in order for them to navigate colonialism. Around the time that Ojo'Badan was installed as a chief in the Ibadan chieftaincy line, the era of civility began to take shape in Ibadan society. It should not be forgotten that this was an era when the Mapo Hall had the attraction of being new,

⁵⁰ Pa Sunday Ojo, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

⁵¹ ADEBOYE, O. *The Ibadan Elite, 1893–1966* (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of History).

⁵² ADEOTI, E. O. Wuraola Esan as Educationist. In *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2014, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 82–94.

and its aesthetics were well represented on postcards titled Ibadan Council Hall.⁵³ The establishment of Mapo Hall defined the social relations among the elites, including the Chiefs; the hall was a point of convergence around the time Ojo'Badan became chief in 1935. Throughout the 1930s, the aesthetics of civility was recast in Ibadan's traditional politics, especially under the influence of H.L. Ward-Price. New chiefs were installed to gradually replace the old chiefs. The level of enlightenment, featuring among the new chiefs as the concept of *Olaju* (colonial-induced enlightenment/civilisation), was emphasized in their approaches to society. Hence, as the proposal to celebrate Mapo Hall with festivals emanated from the colonial office in August 1934, it also offered an opportunity to present the thoughts of the chiefs to a new civic order in Ibadan. The cooperation of Ojo'Badan and other chiefs with the colonial state signified new forms of enlightenment as the infrastructures of the colonial state were considered imperative for modern Ibadan.

In the Second World War

According to Byfield, Brown, Parsons and Sikanga, Africans were more involved in aiding their colonial authority to win the war.⁵⁴ Beyond recruitment into the army, resources were mobilised in the colonies. In this regard, Ojo'Badan had been a chief and member of Olubadan-in-Council since 1935, before World War II started. The council consisted of fellow chiefs who were categorised as junior or senior. Despite his old age, he rejoined the army and became a member of the 4th Battalion.⁵⁵ His involvement signified the nationalistic sense and loyalty to the Empire imbued in him since his enlistment in 1903. Ojo'Badan took part in the Second World War to fulfil the "Win the War" campaign in the British colonies. The "Win the War" propaganda was widely publicised in Ibadan, with the Olubadan-in-Council going around markets and villages to encourage an economic system suitable for donation, taxation, and personnel to support the British.⁵⁶ Ojo'Badan's zeal for involvement in World War II was part of the imperial structure and class status as he was poised to demonstrate nostalgia for past experiences in World War 1. Ex-servicemen were caught between two

⁵³ WATSON, R. *Civil Disorder is the Disease of Ibadan's Chieftaincy & Civic Culture in a Yoruba City*, p. 139.

⁵⁴ BYFIELD, J. A., BROWN, A. B., PARSONS, T., SIKANGA, A. A. (eds.). *Africa and World War II*.

⁵⁵ MARINO, J. 4th Nigerian Rifles. In *World at War*, pp. 68–71.

⁵⁶ Anonymous. *The Women Went Radical: Petition Writing and Colonial State in South-Western Nigeria, 1900 – 1953*.

identities: being African and also being part of the imperial structure.⁵⁷ While Ojo'Badan ensured the support of Ibadan for the cause of British interests in World War II, war books and magazines were distributed to the reading rooms in Ibadan to popularise the campaigns.⁵⁸ Fostered in the "win the war" campaign was the sense of loyalty displayed by Nigerians. The *West African Pilot* reported in an editorial entitled "Nigeria Replies" the determination to support and win the war for Britain.⁵⁹

The 4th Battalion in 1942 was meant to defend local territories from Vichy France's threats and training of new recruits. Ojo'Badan was stationed locally to defend British interests. During his service, a popular chant synonymous with Ojo'Badan's marching skills went thus, "Lefu Rete Rete Lefu, Oyinbo Ojo'Badan Lefu Rete Rete Lefu!" Lefu (Left, Right, "White man" Ojo'Badan).⁶⁰

The marching exercise was toured through Jubilee environs in Ibadan to the colonial army base at Mokola. The colonial army stationed at Mokola conveniently enabled the Olubadan-in-Council to mobilise activities for the "Win the War" campaign. Marching was quite symbolic for motivating and keeping up the spirits of British forces in the War. At primary and secondary schools, Empire Day was celebrated annually to sensitise students.⁶¹ War literature was also distributed to schools for teachers and students. Furthermore, it is important to emphasise that Ojo'Badan's marching skills became a popular chant for routine physical exercises in primary schools in Western Nigeria. The commonly chanted "lefu-rete Ojo'Badan" signified the extent of his popularity in the civic culture of Ibadan city. The chant affirms his role in shaping everyday civil conduct in Ibadan as an ex-soldier.⁶² This was manifested in the early morning marching skills imposed on children in schools to groom them for a nationalist cause.

Ojo'Badan ensured the preparedness of Ibadan for the British cause as all spheres were mobilised. Shortly before World War II, the Ibadan king was installed with a crown and this added to its honour among Yorùbá towns. This

⁵⁷ OLUSANYA, G. O. The Role of Ex-Servicemen in Nigerian Politics. In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1968, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 221–232.

⁵⁸ NAI, Oyo Prof 1/3/140, Information Officer, Lagos Letter to Oyo Resident, 22 April 1943.

⁵⁹ *West African Pilot*, 9 March 1942.

⁶⁰ The caption was derived from a history-conscious Facebook poster by Odolaye Bàá Waki Aremu. In 1979, the legendary march practice of Ojo'Badan was depicted on NTV Ibadan where Olumide Bakare (an actor) who played the role of a soldier mimicking Ojo'Badan memento of march practice.

⁶¹ ADERINTO, S. Empire Day in Africa: Patriotic Colonial Childhood, Imperial Spectacle and Nationalism in Nigeria, 1905 – 60. In *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, pp. 731–757.

⁶² Alagba Sunday, Ojo descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

honour accorded to Ibadan encouraged the Olubadan-in-Council to listen to the counsel of its chiefs, especially Ojo'Badan, whose experience shed light on how best to serve the colonial state.

For Ojo'Badan, participation in World War II was not for the remuneration per se, but it was an expression of loyalty to the British cause, whence his support for the mobilisation of the community for compliance. By this time he was in his early 80s, and research has shown the wage discrepancy between African soldiers in the British army and the whites, whose pay was higher.⁶³ Scholars have divided the responses to imperialism and the colonial state into two categories: legitimization and rejection. These dynamics are studied in the works of Cooper and Stoler⁶⁴, Lawrence, Osborne and Roberts⁶⁵ and Mann⁶⁶, who describe the positions of acceptance and resistance to colonialism. Some ex-servicemen accepted the values of British modernity in everyday life, while others displayed resistance, mostly for economic reasons. Ojo'Badan's outlook was neither of these two extremes. He was passionate about community service to Ibadan, and he indeed created an ideal that welcomed British culture and also upheld Ibadan tradition.

Chiefly Roles and Salt Provision in Ibadan City in the 1940s

There was a scarcity of food and necessities during World War II. Demand for local foodstuffs was high as the military struggled to harness farm produce for military supplies. The Olubadan-in-Council went around Ibadan villages to urge farmers to produce food to ensure the "win the war" campaign. The list of scarcities cuts across various food commodities such as cocoyams, salt, garri, yams, beans, among others. Ojo'Badan made salt available in Ibadan city. He made use of his connections as a veteran to coordinate the supply of salt in Ibadan in the 1940s.⁶⁷ He coordinated this from the vicinity of his home around Oje market. Accounts of his life refer to his philosophy of ensuring equity due to the scarcity of supply, whereby he supervised the queues and regulated the distribution. Arthur Boreham, a colonial officer with the Nigerian Regiment,

⁶³ *Digital Memoir of Africa's Forgotten World War II Veterans* [online] [cit. 24 July 2020]. Available from <https://www/dw.com/en/africas-forgotten-world-war-ii-veterans/a-533581>.

⁶⁴ COOPER, F., STOLER, A. L. (eds.). *Tensions of Empire*, p. 3.

⁶⁵ LAWRENCE, B. N., OSBORN, E. L., ROBERTS, R. L. (eds.). *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa*.

⁶⁶ MANN, G. *Native Sons: West African Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century*.

⁶⁷ Alagba Sunday, Ojo descendants of the Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

reported in his memoir that the shortage of salt nearly led to riots in Ibadan and other Nigerian cities.⁶⁸ This observation confirms the narratives of the scenario in which Ojo'Badan made salt available to all and sundry in Ibadan, where citizens queued to buy salt at a subsidised rate to cushion the effect of wartime hardship. The coordinated and subsidised sale of salt supervised by Ojo'Badan was in accordance with the Food Control order enacted in 1942.⁶⁹ Due to wartime survival strategies in the colonies, rationing and regulation were the basis of the food control order, as there were internal trade restrictions. As part of ensuring the compliance of Ibadan with the campaign to "win the war," Ojo'Badan followed the order to show equity in the supply of salt.⁷⁰ On the other hand, the colonial state ensured that a series of regulations were implemented to punish offenders who disobeyed the food price control.⁷¹ In the Nigerian Defence Regulation of 1941 (No. 75 of 1941), it was stated that the prohibition of the sale of British salt (Oyo Provinces) should apply by 1 June 1945, whereby the sale or purchase of British salt of United Kingdom origin was prohibited till further notice.⁷²

The order created an intense scarcity, as Ibadan city experienced a tumultuous imbalance in demand and supply. The order came at the end of World War II when the colonies were adopted the Colonial Development and Welfare Act (CDWA). Hence the sources of supply were tightened to allow the liberal capitalists' agenda of the United Africa Company (UAC) to sell non-UK salt. The dichotomy between government regulations and private commercial interests worsened the availability in Oyo province. The complicated scenario necessitated Ojo'Badan's intervention to facilitate the supply of salt in Ibadan city at a subsidised price to ease household consumer needs.⁷³ Invariably, salt became gold as a result of the hardships caused by World War II as the supply was diverted to more pressing needs.

The extent of Ojo'Badan's intervention should be understood in the rationing apportioned to Oyo Province. The ration per person was six ounces a month in

⁶⁸ BOREHAM, A. C. *Saga of a Suffolk Soldier*.

⁶⁹ NAI, DCI/4041/s.17/C, Rationing of Salt Revised Scheme, Vol. 1, n. d.

⁷⁰ FALOLA, T. Salt is Gold: The Management of Salt Scarcity in Nigeria during World War II. In *Canadian Journal of African Studies/ Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 1992, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 412–436.

⁷¹ OYEMAKINDE, W. The Pullen Scheme: A Trial in Food Price Control in Nigeria, 1941 – 1947. In *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria*, 1973, Vol. 6. No. 4, pp. 413–423.

⁷² NAI DCI/4041/s.17/C, Rationing of Salt Revised Scheme, Vol. 1, n. d.

⁷³ Alagba Sunday, Ojo descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

1941 and 1942.⁷⁴ By implication, the rationing affected small-scale business activities, such as commercial food vendors and agricultural workers. Also, citizens in the villages embarked on voyages to the city to seek salt. Falola noted that local retailers sought a permit to sell salt and they got a small allocation.⁷⁵ Ojo'Badan was influential in that he engaged the local retailers to access salt, which was sold to fulfil his civic responsibilities and avoid hoarding as a community leader in Ibadan. The supplies, in the words of Falola, involved how the chiefs played central roles in getting supplies from retailers. In fact, the chiefs had a list of retailers in the towns and villages, who were tasked with acquiring salt; thence, they supervised the flow of sales and purchases.

In spite of the fact that Ojo'Badan used his experiences to enable Ibadan to comply with British colonial rule and the imperial structure, it was also evident that he identified the asymmetrical identities and class system created by wartime. The lower classes in society were more concerned about survival and not really interested in the imperial ideology. Hence, the availability of salt as provided by Ojo'Badan appealed to the sense of honour of Ibadan's masses. Of course, this added to his credentials and popularity among the masses despite his elite status.

Ojo'Badan and the Evolution of Salem Baptist Church

Towards the mid-nineteenth century, the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) and the Baptists were gaining influence in Yorùbáland. Ibadan, being a new settlement, embraced Christianity as it was practised in Awaye, Ojo'Badan's village.⁷⁶ Being a Christian, Ojo'Badan was a member of the Baptist church. Ajayi explains the features of growth of Baptist churches in Nigeria where founders and members are important, though there are conflicts over theological differences, governance, and styles of worship.⁷⁷ This influenced quite differently the role of Ojo'Badan in the establishment of a new Baptist Church in the vicinity of Oje. After World War II, Ojo'Badan's eminent status (*Otokulu*) became widely celebrated in Ibadan. He was very influential in the community and the church.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, Ojo'Badan was ageing and in his late 80s. The camaraderie of

⁷⁴ FALOLA, T. Salt is Gold: The Management of Salt Scarcity in Nigeria during World War II. In *Canadian Journal of African Studies/ Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 1992, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 412–436.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

⁷⁶ Mama Bola, descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Alakia, Ibadan, 17 June 2020.

⁷⁷ AJAYI, A. S. *Baptists of Nigeria: Their Genesis, Identity, Doctrinal Beliefs and Practices*, p. 79.

⁷⁸ Alagba Sunday, Ojo descendants of Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 15 June 2020.

riding horse and travelling with his family entourage to the First Baptist Church, Idikan on a weekly basis became burdensome. And as a committed Baptist Christian, he preferred to take part in all church activities, including the evening service. Such a commitment confirmed the fact that he was socialised into the Baptist Christian tradition from a younger age in Awaye and so he preferred to live by it and ensure the growth of the church in Ibadan.

In his old age, he was engrossed with the thought of establishing a Baptist Church in the vicinity of Oje to facilitate regular church attendance for his spiritual fulfilment and for spreading the gospel. Ojo'Badan and other elderly church members who resided in Oje vicinity decided to speak to the management of the First Baptist Church of Idikan to seek their permission to found a new church.⁷⁹

In 1945, precisely at the end of World War II, Ojo'Badan and his friend Deacon G. O. Ogunsola among others, were at the forefront of the plan to establish a new church. The central role of Ojo'Badan in the process was the proposal to buy a piece of land very near his residence to build a small church because he did not want to miss both morning and evening services at Idikan Baptist Church, but as he was advancing in age, he could not attend the evening service at Idikan. He acquired a piece of land at Yemetu Aladorin.⁸⁰ The role of Ojo'Badan in establishing the church was based on his wish for spiritual convenience. Considering the fact that the area of Yemetu area was a mixture of residential properties and farmland at that time, Ojo'Badan had farm ventures around Alaadorin and his associate Pa Salawu of Yekere Compound was ready to sell land to the Church through the friendly alliance they had.⁸¹ Indeed, Ojo'Badan's farm ventures were nearer to the location of the church. His vegetable farm around Oritamefa had much to do with the choice of Yemetu Aladorin as the church site because it ensured accessibility to the farm and the church. In the trade networks of Ibadan, produce from the farm was important for commodity flows at Oje Market.

In furtherance of his contribution to the growth of Ibadan city after World War II, Ojo'Badan discussed with his friend Salawu Yekere of Yemetu Alaadorin the purchase of the latter's land for the construction of the proposed church.⁸² In transforming Ibadan city from tradition to modernity, his perception of the role of the church as reflected in the decision to purchase this land was tabled before the executive committee of the First Baptist Church of Idikan. Chief D. O.

⁷⁹ Pastor Asinwa, Pastor of Baptist church, Salem Baptist Church, Ibadan, 19 June 2020.

⁸⁰ Anonymous. *The History of Salem Baptist Church*.

⁸¹ Alagba Sunday Ojo descendants of the Ojo'Badan family, Oje, Ibadan, 16 June 2020.

⁸² Anonymous. *The History of Salem Baptist Church*.

Okunlola supported the idea that Ojo'Badan should purchase the land.⁸³ It is obvious that the church was a public institution that belonged to society. Despite the individual or collective interest, the trust for the management of the church was collaborative. By 1950, the general body of the Baptist mission wished to add to the number of its churches in Ibadan city and the church located at Idikan was one of the few extensions in existence. Some members of the proposed Salem Baptist Church organised an executive committee for building the church. Among the members were Chief Thomas Ojo, some members of Ojo'Badan family, Chief Akindele, Mr. S. O. Togunde and Adelere Ojo.⁸⁴ By 1950, Ojo'Badan had aged since the time when he had expressed an interest building the church in 1945. Though he was no longer one of the church officials, he remained a major force behind the formation of the church.

Conclusion

Ojo'Badan was employed in the imperial army to serve the Pax Britannica. After World War 1, ex-soldiers were engaged in maintaining order in their home towns. They became policing agents to manage British interests in the peripheries. Ojo'Badan understood policing and law enforcement in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The profession matched his charismatic personality as '*Oloye*' and *Omoran* (Intellectual and Thinker). Having enlisted in 1903, he spent 25 years in the British colonial army.⁸⁵ He became literate through this process. The colonial government re-engaged Ojo'Badan by appointing him a Forest Guard. Ojo'Badan's wartime careers created a new class of men useful for political re-engineering.

Within Africa, soldiers were retained during the Second World War as part of the troops assigned to protect British territories from encroachment. The African troops were used to guarantee internal security and to organise farming or manage commodities. This was particularly necessary in order to guarantee supplies to feed the troops. In the post-war era, ex-servicemen like Ojo'Badan became important actors in their indigenous society.

⁸³ Anonymous. *The History of Salem Baptist Church*.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ ADEOTI, E. O. Wuraola Esan as Educationist. In *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2014, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 82–94.

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