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Abstract

Iman Ibom people of Akwa Ibom State lived in a traditional society before the advent of the European traders, colonial administrators and Christian missionaries. These imperial agents engineered socio-economic changes in the area as they did in other parts of Africa. The changes manifested in diverse areas such as the belief system, marriage, education, public governance and the economy. The Christian missionaries introduced Western type of education which produced elites in Iman Ibom, and a missionary hospital. In addition, the prevalent in-human traditional practices like the killing of twins, human sacrifices, slavery and slave trade were opposed by the missionaries. In the sphere of economy, it is observed that quite unlike in the traditional society where the economy was subsistent and primarily agrarian, economic change brought innovations such as plantation economic enterprise, oil palm mills, European trading stations and banking services. Moreover, the administrators introduced the Native Courts and other means of administration, opened roads, and built bridges, thereby linking Iman Ibom with the outside world. This paper examines socio-economic changes in Iman Ibom, society from 1885, when the British government declared a protectorate over the Niger District, which the area of study formed a part to 1960, when Nigeria achieved her independence. It concludes that Iman Ibom community has been transformed by the colonial enterprise and that the noticeable changes entrenched by the factors discussed have remained irreversible. It adopts a historical narrative method.

Keywords: *Socio-economic changes, society and Iman Ibom*

Introduction

All societies exist by virtue of ceaseless interactions between peoples and institutions which maintain social relationships and in which changes take place. At any given time, the socio-economic structures of a people represent the outcome of daily adaptations to powerful external influences and foreign mode of life. In Iman Ibom, the predominant external forces that significantly impacted on the society, worth examining were the European traders, the colonial administrators and the Christian missionaries.

Like other groups in Nigeria, Iman Ibom has passed through an acculturation process and subordination to colonial power. However, this does not mean that the management of change was successfully directed by the colonial masters. Colonial cultural values and socio-economic sanctions did become deeply ingrained in the society. As this study reveals, the changes manifested in areas such as religion, marriage, education and economy like plantation economic

enterprise, oil palm mills, European trading stations and banking services (Ebong, 1991; Akpan, 2016).

This paper is divided into seven sections. Section one is the introduction, sections two and three examine the concepts of social and economic changes respectively, section four discusses the characteristics of Iman Ibom traditional society, section five examines the role of the Christian missionaries in socio-economic changes in Iman Ibom, section six discusses patterns of economic change in Iman Ibom while section seven is the conclusion.

The Concept of Social Change

Social change has been defined in a number of ways. Some definitions lay emphasis on certain aspects of change as its magnitude or scale; others place emphasis on other aspects such as its continuity throughout time and space. In spite of the difference in emphasis, different theorists of social change agree that every social system is subject to change.

Moore (1963), defines social change as “the significant alteration of social structures including consequences and manifestations of such structures in norms, values and cultural products and symbols”. Ebong (1991), opines that social change is the process by which alterations occur in the structure and function of a social system. The social system in this context may be a social group, a community, a city, a region or a nation. Any change that occurs either in ideas, norms, values, roles or social habits can be referred to as social change, while Ekong (2003) views social change as the significant alteration of social structures (i.e. of patterns of social actions and interaction), including consequences and manifestations of such structures embodied in norms (rules of conduct), values and cultural products and symbols. John (2004) adds that social change can be described with the aid of the magnitude of change, time span, direction, rate and change and amount of violence involved.

Economic Change

Economics deals with the production, distribution and consumption of resources. In a given system, economic activities are directed towards these goals which are seen as prerequisites for the existence and stability of the system, (John, 2004).

Economic institutions have been regarded in almost all societies as fundamental to the survival of such societies. They have the capability of influencing political and other institutional decisions. Thus, changes in economic activities are bound to affect and bring about change in other related institutions. Many changes which have been observed in the economic institutions have occurred mostly in the areas of production and consumption. Both areas have been affected by Nigeria's contact with colonialism. As a result of this contact, traditional patterns of production especially in the area of agriculture and craft were modernized. With the introduction of cash crops, there was a shift from the traditional subsistence food cropping to a more modern system of agriculture oriented towards the production of raw materials for the European markets and the employment of few skilled people and large numbers of migrant workers. Private capital came from abroad and

the profits also went there. The colonial period witnessed the development of a small white-collar work force in the civil service, (John, 2004).

Characteristics of Iman Ibom Traditional Society

Iman Ibom people live mainly in Etinan and Onna Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State, (Akpan, 2016). The clan is made up of four groups, namely: Afaha; Nnung Oku Itina; Nnung Oku Ubo and Nnung Asuna. Prior to the advent of colonialism, the people practised traditional ways of life that were transmitted to them by their forebears. In Iman Ibom, traditional society was a man's society in which women generally had an inferior position and were not allowed to share dominant or comparative roles with men. Also, the economy of the people during the era was mostly agricultural. Most areas of everyday endeavour were in some way related to the belief – system or religion of the society. Religious practices found forceful expression in sculpture, wood and stone, music and poetry some of which have survived and are extant. Except in rudimentary writing which the Ibibio (including Iman Ibom people) developed in connection with religious practices and for the preservation of the ancient lore of some secret societies, the society was mostly traditional. In the traditional philosophy of Iman Ibom people, the individual was not perceived as having any intrinsic worth. What counted as the worth of the individual was the extent of his contribution (actual in adults, potential in children) to the survival, happiness and welfare of the society. The welfare of the group or society had precedence over that of the individual. Whereas, in the Western thought, the group exists so that the individual may survive, whereas, in the African thought, it is the individual who exists so that the group may survive. The needs and choices of the individual often must be subordinate to the collective will and interest of the group. To assert the interest of the individual above those of the group is considered undesirable and deviant, (Esen, 1987).

The Christian Missionaries and Social Change in Iman Ibom

Generally, religion is a great dynamic force in social life. Vital changes in civilization are always linked with changes in religious beliefs and ideals. According to Ebong (1991), even the most incisive of the social influences which are economically or politically determined receive their stamp primarily from religious sources. There is no wonder therefore, that of all the

agencies which have contributed to the regeneration and development of Ibibioland (including Iman Ibom), missionary efforts have been the most important of the three groups of intruders – missionaries, administrators and traders. Not only did the missionaries precede the other groups, they were the closest to the people. (Ayandele, 1966; Akpan, 2016).

Prior to the advent of the Christian missionaries, Iman Ibom people, like other Africans, were remarkably religious. Religion permeated all aspects of their lives. The religion of Iman Ibom people, being part of a vast corpus of African traditional religion, shares the principal features of the African traditional religion, which include, the belief in God, belief in divinities, belief in the spirits, belief in ancestors, as well as the practice of magic and medicine, each with its own

attendant cult. The cult involves the performance of rituals and ceremonies (or worship), and the existence of religious personnel or functionaries, (Utin, 1987; Akpan 2016).

Social institutions were very significant to the lives of the people of Iman Ibom as they guided their morals, behaviour and mode of interactions. Such institutions existed for the men, women and youth. Though not all the members of the community joined these social institutions, their activities strongly affected the people as a whole. Most of these social institutions were secret in nature and included: *idiong*, *ekpo*, *atat*, *ekpri*, *akata*, *ebre*, and *mbopo*. In addition, there were other judicial instruments such as: *mbiam*, *idiong*, *afia* (ordeal), *nmuk enin*, (elephant tusk), *eyei* (palm frond), *eyeyen* (grand children of daughters), *ukot* (in-law), *imaan* (ally), *ebre/iban isong* (women's government) (Udo, 1983). All clans in Ibibioland had their taboos, for instance Iman Ibom people do not eat rabbit, wherever such taboo was broken, it was believed that death would befall the offender (s). It should be added that polygamy, human sacrifices, killing of twins and related social practices were common in the traditional Iman Ibom society. The foregoing represents a synopsis of the social background on which the Christian concepts were superimposed

The Qua Iboe Mission was the pioneer Christian denomination in Iman Ibom. The first missionary in Iman Ibom was Rev. John Kirk who began his missionary enterprise in the area in November, 1898. Later other Christian groups like the Roman Catholic, the Apostolic Church, the Methodist, the Lutheran among others came into the area. The early church was under perpetual persecution. For instance, the increase in the number of Christians and some of their teachings and activities caused considerable alarm in the camp of influential secret societies like *ekpo*, *idiong*, *ekong*, *atat* and *ebre*. Members of these secret societies feared that they would lose their members and that the ancestors would visit the people with calamity if they abandoned the traditional form of worship. Among the Christian teachings objected to by the traditionalists, was the teaching that twins and their mothers should not be ostracized and the denunciation of the slave trade and slavery. One practice introduced by the missionaries for the women particularly displeased the members of the *ekpo* society, and that was the practice of wearing *ewura*. *Ewura* was a flowing sleeveless robe with long wide skirt. The *Ekpo Nyoho's* objection of the robe was that it makes a woman to resemble *eka ekpo* (mother *ekpo*). For a woman to dress like that was in their view an abomination against *ekpo* (Ekere, 1998).

Other areas that the missionaries had problems with the people were their condemnation of polygamy and the consumption of alcohol. The consumption of alcohol was considered by the missionaries as being responsible for serious moral decadence and laxity among the people. At the Qua Iboe Church United Conference held at Etinan on the 26th of January, 1915, a resolution was unanimously adopted; prohibiting the taking of the following intoxicating liquor by members: schnapps, whisky, brandy, kola wine, ginger wine, quinine, port and sherry wines, gin, daret and beer, because of their known intoxicating qualities. (Ekpa, 1980). Another Conference resolution was that no teacher should engage in any native play. In addition, no worker was allowed to do any form of work on Sundays. They were expected to attend church services in their respective stations

and pay Church dues. The worst kind of rule, by modern standard was that connected with morals. The authorities of Qua Iboe Mission banned their teacher's sisters and female relatives from living with them at their stations. This was done to prevent teachers from having sexual relations with their sisters and female relatives, a strange regulation for Iman Ibom people who already considered such act as being sacrilegious, (Ekpa, 1980).

On his arrival in Etinan in 1898, Rev. Kirk started a night school which used to last from 7.30 p.m. to 8. 30 p.m.; with 30 pupils, all of them were adults. In 1915, the famous Etinan Institute, the first post-primary school in Ibibio land was established. By 1960, which this assessment ends, Etinan Institute was the only post-primary school in the Iman Ibom. Although the introduction of Western education seriously undermined the indigenous system of education, it paved the way for modernization. Those who attended the early mission schools became the new elite, distinct from the traditional masses. By 1960, many of Iman Ibom elites ventured into politics, medicine, law, civil service, religion, business and education. Indeed, the beginnings of the greatness and high positions occupied by Iman Ibom indigenes can be traced to the sound moral, religious, disciplined and balanced education received from the mission schools, (Ebong, 1991; Akpan, 2015).

Rev. Kirk believed in grooming young persons to grow up and contribute meaningfully in the development of the society. Some of these stalwarts included Obong Sampson Udo Etuk, the founding President-General of the phenomenal Ibibio Union and indeed, one of Nigeria's most outstanding educationists and statesmen, (Udoma, 1987; Akpan, 2015). Obong Sampson Udo Etuk, whose parents were among the first set of converts of the Qua Iboe Mission, lived with Rev. Kirk and received his early education. Pastor Joseph Ekandem who was the pioneer indigenous evangelist of the Qua Iboe Mission in Iman Ibom and its environs was also trained by Rev. Kirk. Others included Chief J.S.B. Ikpe, an outstanding Education Officer, a one-time Secretary of the Ibibio Union and the second Clan Head of Iman Ibom, Chief Hanson Udo Akpabio, an educationist and Minister in the defunct Eastern Region. Mr. Jumbo Saul Etukudo, the proprietor of Uyo City Polytechnic, and Obong Charles Ekere, a secretary and acting secretary to the defunct Eastern Regional government, (Akpan, 2015).

Other prominent Iman Ibom sons and daughters who were trained in mission schools before 1960 and also came out to make significant contributions to nation building included, Chief (Dr.) Clement Isong, Governor of the Central Bank and first civilian Governor of old Cross River State. Nsubom John Ekwere, a renowned broadcaster, Obong Ufot Ekaete, onetime Secretary to the Government of the Federal Government. Prof. Essien Udosen Essien Udom. Prof. Ignatius Ukpogon, Obong Asuquo Etukeyen, Prof. Etienne Essien, Elder Esemie Essien (the last five persons served as Secretary to State Government in South Eastern State, Cross River State and Akwa Ibom States). Others included Mrs. Nne Isong (wife of Dr. Clement Isong), Deaconess Eme Essien among others.

The Qua Iboe Mission also established the Qua Iboe Mission Hospital. Etinan in 1927, and the Qua Iboe Mission Leprosy Hospital, Ekpene Obom in 1932. These Western oriented health institutions consolidated the shift from traditional system of medicare to the modern one. In 1928,

the Qua Iboe Printing Press was established at Etinan. For many years, this press was the only source of supply of religious tracts, vernacular readers, hymn books, catechism, primary readers, school syllabuses, lesson notes and so on. This venture created new line of skills and employment opportunities to the indigenes of Iman Ibom and its environs (Ekpa, 1980; Akpan 2015)

Rev. Kirk carried out some of the judicial functions such as the Clerk of the Native Court amongst other roles on-behalf of the Consul who resided at Eket. He taught the people of Iman Ibom to seek redress for wrong not by violence and vengeance, but by judicial process. He helped to check trafficking in slaves. It was the practice at that time to expose twin babies to death and to isolate their mothers from the community. He taught the people that twin and their mothers should be given normal treatment accorded to other babies and women. He also preached against human sacrifices. This development marked a turning point in the judicial system in Iman Ibom. The changing has culminated in the present court system and the subordination of the traditional judicial institutions earlier mentioned.

Some developmental projects were embarked upon by the colonial authorities during the era of Rev. Kirk which have helped in the evolving urban scenario of some Iman Ibom communities like Etinan in Etinan Local Government Area and Abat in Onna Local Government Area. For instance, a colonial source in the 1930s described the present Etinan Local Government Area thus:

The area is well supplied with motor roads. Running north and south is a road which links up Uyo with the Etinan Native Court and then continues to join the Ndiya-Opobo P. W. D. road. There is a pontoon across the Qua Iboe River at Ekpene Ukpa. Branching off the above road at Ikot Ekan, where a Government School is situated, a road runs through to Abak. Three other short motor roads leave the main Uyo-Etinan road, one going to the factory at Ekpene Obom the second linking the Etinan Native Court with the Nnung Udofe Native Court and third running to the Mission Hospital at Etinan. Bush paths abound and are kept in excellent order by the villages. The area is plentifully supplied with water by the Qua Iboe and Akpa Ubom Rivers and their many tributaries, with the exception of an area in the extreme north around Ekom and Ikot Ekan. (Wetherell, 1932).

Economic Change in Iman Ibom Society

Simply, economics deals with the production, distribution and consumption of resources. So, with a given social system, economic activities are directed toward these goals which are seen as perquisites for the existence and stability of the system. Specifically, economics has been defined as "the study of how people and society end up choosing with or without the use of money, to employ scarce productive resources that have alternative uses to produce various commodities and attribute them for consumption, now and in the future among various people and groups in

society, (Samuelson, 1964).

Economic institutions have been regarded in almost all societies as fundamental to the survival of such societies. They have capability of influencing political and other institutional decisions, thus, changes in economic activities are bound to affect and bring changes in other related institution. Many changes which have been observed in the economic institutions occurred mostly in the areas of production and consumption. Both areas have been affected by Nigeria's contact with colonialism. As a result of this contact, traditional patterns of production especially in the areas of agriculture and craft were modernized. With the introduction of cash crop, there was a shift from the traditional, subsistence food cropping to a more modern system of agriculture aimed at the production of raw materials for the European industries, (John, 2004).

Colonialism and the Economic Change in Iman Ibom People.

The Iman Ibom traditional economy was anchored primarily on agriculture, trade and local craft before the entrenchment. However, the wind of change that accompanied the establishment of colonial rule triggered significant changes that have been recorded in the different segments of the economy, especially, in the areas of agriculture and trade. For a deeper understanding of the change, some aspects have to be discussed.

Agriculture: Colonial rule generated tremendous undercurrents that brought a lot of changes in the field of agriculture. During the pre-colonial period, agriculture was mainly at subsistence level and majority of Iman Ibom people were farmers who depended on their farm produce for livelihood. The government encouraged the production of cash crops for export and as such, tremendous emphasis was placed on the production of cash crops like palm fruits. Efforts were made to improve and sustain the production of oil palm trees by initiating certain incentives for increased production. (Omon, 1986).

Initially, the colonial government, through the Native Administration, assumed the ownership of all natural resources and accordingly issued oil palm production regulations which were meant to protect oil palm trees that grew in the area. Under the regulation, the people were forbidden to cut down palm oil trees or pluck unripened palm fruits. The government's measure emphasized the economic importance of palm oil tree while palm oil production became major economic occupation of the Iman Ibom and many other Ibibio people. In 1956, the then Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation (ENDC) established two pioneer oil mills in Iman Ibom, one at Iwo Eto and the other at Ekpene Ukpa. The pioneer oil mills apart from serving as source of employment to many people in Iman Ibom, helped to step up the production of palm produce as producers could sell their palm fruits without waiting for market days. Unfortunately, the two pioneer oil mills were closed down during the Nigerian Civil War. (Akpan, 2016).

Plantation: In the area of plantation, the United African Company (UAC) opened rubber plantations at Awa Iman, Ikot Akpan Ishiet, Ikot Obong Ishiet, Ikot Udo Esang and Abak Ishiet as well as Okat in Oniong Nung Ndem clan in Onna Local Government Area. Labourers were employed to work in these plantations and most of them were from Iman Ibom. When the UAC

later abandoned the plantations, the Bata Company took over. It managed the plantations for some years and later abandoned them. Some Iman Ibom indigenes then took over the management of those plantations to process and sell the rubber sheets to interested buyers. Some people in Iman Ibom also established their own rubber plantations for example, the ones in Mbioto II were established by Chief Tom Nda, Tom Inyang and Mbat Udobong. The one at Ikot Umiang Ede was established by Bishop John Edidaha, and the one at Ikot Mfon was established by Chief Itiaba Umoren. In addition, some Europeans as well as Iman Ibom people attempted to grow cocoa which was also in high demand, but this was not very successful as much attention was focused on the production of palm produce, (Omon, 1986)..

Colonial Trade: With the abolition of slave trade, the beaches in Iman Ibom formerly used by the slave dealers became occupied by European trading companies as trading depots where they bought palm oil, palm kernel, piassava and related commodities instead of slaves. For example, United Africa Company (UAC) operated at Esuk Awa, Ikot Udo Esang, Ekpene Ukpa and Ekpene Obom, while Oil Nut Company operated at Ekpibe Awa. In Awa Iman, the abandoned warehouses of these companies are still visible today. There was also a German Trading Company at Obot Inwang in Abak Ishiet. Those companies employed many Iman Ibom indigenes as labourers and as middle level staff. Apart from buying our products, these companies had stores filled with such items as stock fish, tin fish, soap, salt, matches, tobacco and cloths, which they sold to people. Moreover, some Iman Ibom people who were rich enough opened their own buying stations where they bought palm oil, palm kernel and piassava. Those purchase stations were located at Ikot Obio Eket, Ikot Etekpo, Mbioto Ekpene Ituen, Ikot Umiang Ede, Etinan, Ekpene Obom (Omon, 1986, Akpan, 2016).

The European trading stations in Iman Ibom were often visited by small ferries as the water was not big enough to accommodate large vessels. The wreckage of the fort used by such vessels is still visible today at Ikot Udo Esang. As the water was not big enough to accommodate large vessels, the European buyers usually send their produce to Ibagwa, Eket or Opobo, through pontoon and Iman Ibom produce buyers also sent their goods through the same process. One canoe could carry seven barrels of oil; it is also made known that sometimes the products were sold for cash and sometimes for items of goods such as tobacco, soap and salt. The produce sold for goods yielded more gain than the one sold for cash, (Shute, 1932; Akpan, 2016).

Between 1879 and 1880, Mr George Watts, a merchant at Old Calabar was negotiating with Ibeno people for the establishment of a trading station at the mouth of the Qua Iboe River. By the beginning of 1881, a store had been built there. This aroused the jealousy of King Jaja of Opobo, who claimed a monopoly of all trade in this region. It was owing to this hostility that Messrs Miller Brothers withdrew their Agency from the Qua Iboe Rivers. (Shute, 1932)

On the 11th of April 1881, some fifty of Jaja's canoes flying the British flag and armed with cannon and rifles, bombarded, burnt and sacked the Ibeno villages and broke into Mr. Watt's store, destroying or carrying off a great part of his goods. Over a hundred Ibeno people were taken to

Opobo as prisoners and murdered there in cold blood. During the years that followed, Mr. Watt penetrated further up the Qua Iboe River and took steps for the importation of arms to prevent a recurrence of Jaja's raid. In 1889, "treaties" were made both with Ikot Akpa Atek and Okat, signed by Mboso and Ofong Ekpo Otu, the heads of Oniong and Nnung Ndem groups respectively, together with other chiefs, by which George Watt was nominated and appointed "suzerain" over their countries with exclusive trading rights and complete freedom from taxes and the right to impose and form duties on any traders who might come into the river (sic), (Shute, 1932).

Part of the treaty reads:

In consideration of many infallible proofs of friendships and goodwill shown towards our people and country by the said George Watts in that he has during the past seven years (1) created and developed a trade in our river which has been productive of great manifold benefits (2) by his efforts and influence brought before Her Majesty's Government the ravages and atrocities perpetrated by Jaja's people on our country. (3) Obtained the recognition of our rights and independence by the British Government (4) secured us from the fear of any future incursion, thus, bestowed upon us the blessings of peace (5) promoted and encouraged the cultivation of new products and generally interested himself in all things to increase our happiness and welfare" (Shute, 1932).

From 1880 to 1895, Fredrick Holder, who lived on the sailing ship "Anna" in the Qua Iboe River, south of the mouth of the Awa Creek, where the sunken hull still lies, and who was acting on behalf of George Watts, made agreements with Okat and Ndon Eyo of the Nnung Ndem group and Ikot Akpa Atek of Oniong for cocoa plantations on a co-operative basis. The chiefs provided the land and George Watts provided the cocoa seed. For the first three years, the chiefs received one manilla, the indigenes money, for each healthy cocoa seedling on their land. When the cocoa came into bearing, George Watts was to ship and market it and the proceeds were to be divided between himself and the chiefs on equal basis. This scheme apparently met with little success and "there is ... no cocoa grown for export in this area, the erstwhile cocoa plantation being planted up with rubber trees" (Shute, 1932).

For trade to be effective, a number of steps were taken by the colonial government in Nigeria. They included improving of water ways, building of roads, and construction of railways as well as the issuance of currency. The improving of water transport and construction of roads. Through the proclamation, government was given the authority to use local unpaid labour in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure in the region. Before he finally left Southern Nigeria, he laid the foundation for the construction of the road system and regular maintenance of the system of water communication, which till today, has remained the main economic arteries of the region. (Omon, 1986).

With regard to currency, Moor regarded the indigenous exchange system as unsatisfactory

because, it was anachronistic, inefficient, cumbersome and encouraged some of the “evil practices”. He had complained in 1897 that the use of brass rods and manillas “lead to a waste of time in counting, and of energy in carrying such currency about in the country. In order to promote British economic transactions, the colonial government set up the West African Currency Board in November 1912, to make uniform coins and paper money for use in British West Africa. The headquarters of the Board was in London and the Accountant-General of Nigeria was the Local Currency Officer, (Omon, 1986).

With introduction of new currency, traders were able to carry with them large sums of money as opposed to manillas which was very heavy. Thus, they were able to buy more goods and pay carriers when and where necessary. Secondly, the construction of roads linking villages in the hinterland with urban centres, enabled such trade to be carried out effectively, thus, complementing initial water-ways which served the main artery of transaction

Wetherell in his Intelligence Report on Iman asserts thus:

The main physical feature of Iman “country” is the swift flowing Qua Iboe River which roughly divides the clan into two. The land lying west of the Qua Iboe is also divided into two, by stream which flows into the Qua Iboe River at Ndon Utim. The Qua Iboe River carried a tremendous amount of trade down - stream mainly to Eket. The three United Africa Company factories at Ibagwa, Ekpen Obom and Ekpen Ukpa also use the river for the transport of their produce. The last two factories were situated in Iman villages on the river bank (Wetherell, 1932).

According to Jacobs the prices offered for palm produce by the UAC at Ikot Udo Esang and Awa Iman, in present day Onna Local Government Area, were better than what was imposed outside suppliers. In effect, traders from the hinterland gained little while those at the ports benefited more because traders from distant places incurred heavier transport cost than traders living nearer to the port. Most of the Opobo (Umani) people who were formerly slave dealers changed to trade on commodities. Some traded on some items like periwinkles and snuff, while others took part in the buying of palm produce either for themselves or for European companies. The Aro settlers in Iman Ibom also changed to “legitimate trade”.

Due to the gains associated with trade in palm produce, many people in Iman Ibom, increased number of men and women, were involved in the production process. The system of buying palm fruits from men to extract oil and kernels for sale was known as “udep-utem”. The palm oil was often carried in tins while the palm kernels were carried in bags. At the buying centres the oil was measured in an open kerosene tin known as *nkubo* while palm kernels were measured in a box known as *ikpe*. One full bag of palm kernels that would fill such a box was known as *ikpe-isip*. There were two types of measuring basket for the purchases of palm fruits. The makers of these baskets were so skillful to see that the measurements were correct. Initially, all the “udep-utem”

women were extracting oil with the use of their hands; but later on, some rich ones began to use hand press in extracting oil. With the use of hand press a woman could, with the help of others, produce six tins of oil a day, (Ufot, 2015).

The oil they bought was often measured in three containers such as *nyin oko ukwak*, *itiaita oko ukwak* and kerosene tin. Two "*nyin oko ukwak*" made one "*itiaita oko ukwak*" and three *itiaita oko ukwak* made one tin. Another petty trading associated with palm produce was "*utapa-isip*", and used by young men and young women who went from house to house, especially, in the morning of a market day, buying palm kernel. For the measurement of the palm kernel that they bought, they used a bowl known as *oboroboro* and sometimes they used mug known as "*ekpat*" in some part of Iman Ibom. The increasing trade in palm produce intensified the weaving of climbing ropes "*ikpo*" both within the clan and outside. It also intensified the weaving of basket and the carving of "*akwa*," the wooden tubs and the special mortar for pounding the boiled palm fruits, (Omon, 1986).

Long Distance Trade: The extent to which Iman Ibom people interacted with the other people through trade was tremendously facilitated by availability of the Qua Iboe River. This development was very crucial to trade, particularly, long distance trade. In any case, during this period, there were few roads and few vehicles to transport goods and services from one point to another. All these conditions made the maritime routes to be very important in Nigeria.

Apart from the long distance trade carried out with the use of canoes, the opening of roads to link villages and clans and the introduction of new currency gave Iman Ibom people the interest to engage in long distance trade as the new currency was portable enough. They trekked down to Aba to buy cloths; Itam to buy pepper and stones for cracking palm kernels, sharpening matchet and for grinding tobacco. They also trekked to Oron to buy fish and crayfish, and to Ifiayong market to buy yams. Some women in Iman South trekked to *Mkpafi* market in Northern Iman and *Ekponwa* market in Nsit clan among other markets. Some commodities like, limestone, *akang* could be purchased from *Urua Udo Inyang* in Ikot Ikpe, Okon Clan, Eket Local Government Area, Ukam in Ikpa Ibom clan, Mkpaf Enin Local Government Area and *Obo Umoren* in Iman Ibom Clan in Etinan Local Government Area. (Akpan, 2016).

Garri could be bought from *Urua Ukam* in Ikpa Ibom and *Urua Ndiya* in Nsit clans respectively, while periwinkles mostly came from *Urua Ndiya*. The periwinkles in *Urua Ndiya* were often very cheap and this resulted in a saying among Iman Ibom people *abak nte mfi Ndiya* (which means as cheap as Ndiya periwinkles). They were often brought in large canoes by the Umani people. The men and women of Iman Ibom clan were noted for strength, as they could trek to any market of their choice to buy the needed commodities or to sell what they had. It is reported that, they did most of the carrying by themselves and scarcely did they employ the paid carriers. The situation became improved, following the introduction of bicycle and lorries. With these means of communication, the Iman Ibom people found it much easier to travel to long distance market. (Akpan, 2016).

Trade and the Profits: Trade on different commodities in Iman Ibom was very lucrative and money generated from the venture was partly used in marrying new wives. As a result, children by the individuals concerned were often named after the commodities of trade. That was why we find people in Iman Ibom clan bearing names of commodities such as *akang, ofong, ntokon, udia, itiat* and so on, (Omon, 1986).

As mentioned earlier, there were large markets in Iman Ibom, and in the neighbouring clans too where traders went to sell or buy their commodities. Each market had its own separate day except where the distance was far then two or more markets could operate in different clans on the same day or in the same clan on the same day, especially in large clans. Here are most of the markets, their days and locations, attended by Iman Ibom people.

Locations of Important Markets attended by Iman Ibom people

Days	Markets	Locations
<i>Fiongetuk</i>	Urua Idiong, Urua Ndiya, Urua Ekpo Nnwa	Mbioto II in Iman Ibom clan, Ndiya in Nsit clan, Edebom I in Nsit clan
<i>Ederebo</i>	Urua Udo Okop	Ikot Akpatek in Oniong Nung Ndem
<i>Obo</i>	Obo Umoren, Urua Ekpo	Ndon Utim Iman Ibom Clan, Awa in Iman
<i>Uruaobom</i>	Local markets	In many villages
<i>Fiongaran</i>	Urua Ukam, Urua Mkpafi, Urua Ndiya	Ukam in Ikpa Ibom clan, Ikot Isong in Iman Ibom, Ndiya in Nsit clan
<i>Ederitaha</i>	Urua Udo Inyang	Okon clan Iman Ibom, Eket L. G.A.
<i>Uruaekpe</i>	Urua Ndem Ikpe	Ikot Inyang in Iman Ibom
<i>Uruaukat</i>	Urua Okat	Okat in Nung Ndem clan

Source: Akpan, U. (2016). (A History of Iman Ibom People. Uyo: Quincy Kings Publishers, p. 520).

Financial Organizations

The financial arrangement in Iman Ibom during the early years of colonialism depended on the pre-colonial financial institutions. This was because the services of banks were limited to larger urban areas. Iman Ibom people then had to embark upon financial organization known as *efe-etibe*, whereby members contributed together, a certain sum of money on a certain market day. Each

member contributed according to his or her financial strength, the amount so contributed went to the members in rotation each market day, till all the members claimed their shares. Rich people could become members in two or more *efe etibe*. With money from this association, traders improve their trade. Men could marry more wives, build houses, buy bicycles, get initiated into secret societies or start trade. In addition to these three people, they were share holders whose duty was to ensure that contributions from the members of their group were made regularly. *Efe-etibe* could be organized either in the market or in the house. However, with the introduction of modern banking, the Standard Bank (now First Bank) was opened at Uyo where some elites in Iman Ibom saved their money, (Akpan, 2016).

Various Trades:

With the opening of roads and the introduction of other forms of social amenities, Iman Ibom people started to learn various trades such as tailoring, shoe making, bicycle repairing, carpentry, masonry, bakery, blacksmithing, etc. Most of these trades were carried out on the road sides in every nook and crannies of the clan. Tailors and traders from Abriba in Igbo area came into many parts of Iman Ibom clan going about sewing clothes and selling related items. People from Nsit, Ikono, Ikpa Ibom also came into Iman Ibom area to transact businesses while some Iman Ibom indigenes migrated to some urban centres in the country, (Akpan, 2016).

Other Economic Establishments

In early 1930s the Qua Iboe Mission opened a bookshop at Mbioto II in addition to the one at Etinan, and a printing press. These establishments served as sources of employment to Iman Ibom people. (Ekpa, 1980). In the 1950s co-operative thrift and credit societies were established in different villages in Iman Ibom such as Ikot Akpan Ishiet and Awa Iman in Onna Loal Government Area and Mbioto II. Iwo Eto, Etinan village in Etinan Local Government Area to name only a few. Those co-operative societies had as their main functions of financing trading activities. accepting deposits from the members and granting of loans to members at low interest rates.

Iman Ibom also experienced some element of “industrialization” made possible through the establishment of the ceramic industry at Ikot Abasi No. 1, in Etinan Local Government Area in the 1950s through community effort. The outfit was formerly known as the Iman Pottery Production. The company was later taken over by the Eastern regional government because the government deemed it necessary to cut down the importation of foreign products that the company could produce. Nine persons were sent on an induction course at Okigwe to learn the modern technique in pottery. Up to 90 percent of the raw materials in Etinan Ceramic Industry were sourced locally, since the factory depended more on the nature of clay available in places like Ikot Abasi No. 1, Afaha Iman, and Ekpene Obom. Completed ceramic wares were taken to markets for distribution or exchange between Etinan villages and other Ibibio groups. Men and women from Iman Ibom were fully involved in the distribution of the products. (Japhet, 1995).

Conclusion

Before the advent of colonialism, Iman Ibom society was a traditional one. The people had functional mechanisms that regulated law and order. Some of the governmental institutions included *ekpo*, *ekong*, *idiong*, *ekpri akata*, *ebre* and so on. In addition, there were virant law enforcement agencies such as *mbiam* (juju), *afia* (ordeal), *nnuk enin* (elephant tusk) *eyei*, (palm frond) *ukot* (in-law), *imaan* (ally) and *nka* (age grades).

The socio-economic changes that have occurred in the society were primarily engineered by three external and imperial forces, namely, the European traders, European colonizers and the Christian missionaries. The introduction of Christianity overwhelmed the existing African traditional religion, and related practices such as human sacrifices and the ostracization of twins and their mothers. Due to the influence of Christianity, most Iman Ibom people had to do away with their names and bore foreign ones. Western education and Western oriented health services introduced by the missionaries have replaced the indigenous system of education and health care delivery. Through the instrumentality of Western education, Iman Ibom has produced many elites including Governors, Commissioners, and administrators, doctors, engineers and so on. The colonialists also introduced Western legal and judicial system which has substituted the authority of *ekpo*, *idiong*, *ekong*, *mbiam* and so on.

The economic scene also witnessed the replacement of the subsistent agrarian economy. Through the activities of the European traders, innovations were recorded in areas such as plantation economic enterprise, oil palm mills and European trading stations. Iman Ibom has evolved from the days when market transactions were carried on by means of barter as well as a period when copper rods and manillas were widely used, to the period of English currency, which was in vogue by 1960, when the scope of this study ends. With the introduction of general purpose money, trade increased vastly and Iman Ibom economy became part of the world's economy. It should be noted that some aspects of the economic structure particularly the *efe etibe*, a traditional method of savings still endures with some modifications. In all, Western values and social sanctions have become deeply ingrained in the Iman Ibom social life.

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