COURSE OUTLINE

1. a. Nigerian Social and Religious Life before the advent of Christianity (Book)

b. Earlier Missions to Nigeria/West Africa by the Portuguese (Book).

2. a. The Origins and organization of the nineteenth-century Missionary Movement.

b. The protestant and catholic revivals in Europe and North America leading to the formation of the Missionary Societies in the 19th Century.


4. The C.M.S Yoruba and Niger Missions of 1843 and 1857 (Book).


6. Other Missions to Nigeria

i. The Methodists

ii. The Scottish Presbyterian Mission

iii. The Baptist Church

7. The Missionary factor in Northern Nigeria 1870-1918 (i.e. The Missionary activities in Northern Nigeria).

8. The medium of conversion and missionary activities employed by the various missions (Book).

9. Missionary collaboration with colonialism in Nigeria (Book)

10. The Expansion of Missionary activities in various parts of Nigeria.
2A. THE ORIGINS AND ORGANIZATION OF THE 19TH CENTURY MISSIONARY MOVEMENT.

Overwhelmingly the early Christian missions in Africa, both Catholic and Protestant, were merely the religious arm of an increasingly secular intrusion, a decadent echo of the Medieval union between Church and State.

In the case of the Roman Catholic this system was destroyed in a series of attacks inspired by rationalist criticism of Catholic philosophy and privilege. In France the early missionary societies were suppressed by Napoleon in 1809, the year after he had entered Rome, exiled the Pope and forcibly dissolved Propaganda Fidei. It was only later, when the Vatican began the slow process of reconstruction, that this series of disasters was seen in fact to have cleared the way for a completely fresh missionary impulse, responsive to Rome’s direction and dependent no longer on the secular powers.

BI) PROTESTANT AWAKENINGS: Origin and main features of 19th century Missionary movement.

Major ideological change: People began to develop their emotional feelings; beauty was being appreciated and the heart started to govern the head. This Romantic Movement, as it is popularly known had a great effect on Christian mission as a whole and not restricted to those who followed the ideals of Methodism. The Romantic Age Society and the Evangelical Revival in the Christian Church went hand in hand.

John Wesley’s challenge to the established Anglican Church led not to anti-clerical attacks, but to evangelicalism, which demanded a renewed
zeal and commitment on the part of the individual Christian, and a deep concern for a personal act of conversion. As with German Pietism which had produced the Moravian missions, Wesley’s emphasis greatly strengthened the deepest motives for missionary work, creating an impelling sense of gratitude for the gift of the Gospel and a desire to extend its influence.

But before the evangelical movement in England was able to arouse a new interest in Protestant missions, it had to overcome a formidable degree of hostility and apathy. Then the formation of the missionary societies:

1792 The Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)
1795 The London Missionary Society (LMS)
1799 The Church Missionary Society (CMS)

The Wesleyan Methodists and Scottish Presbyterians etc followed.

Features: By itself this chain-reaction introduced into the organization of the missionary movement a completely new element of independent strength and unity.

II) CATHOLIC REVIVAL

Similar factors influenced the revival of Catholic missions, and here again the nature and organization of the new movement amounted to a revolutionary break with the past. Widespread support was mobilized with fresh sources of finance, new societies and more recruits, and at long last the Vatican established an effective central direction over Catholic
missions, independent of secular control. In many ways the most remarkable of the new organizations was the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, an immense fund-raising scheme, which developed from the initiative of a young Frenchwoman in the town of Lyons, who in 1819 began organizing small groups of ten persons committed to contributing a coin a week to the missions; within three years an association based on this idea was founded in Paris. It spread rapidly. The Association’s role was limited to fund-raising, it itself sent no missionaries overseas; but it provided vital support at a time when the traditional financial resources of the Papacy were seriously disrupted. It included influential laymen on its national committees and like the new Protestant societies, it appealed to the artisan and middleclass laity, and thus tapped new sources of independent wealth to take the place of royal subsidies and feudal revenues. In particular it greatly helped the work of the new Catholic missionary societies, such as the Holy Ghost Fathers and the society of African Missions, and in 1878 it supported Cardinal Lavigerie when he launched the White Fathers into the interior of equatorial Africa.

Rome itself took time to recover from the Napoleonic upheaval, but it was only under Cardinal Cappellari, who was appointed Prefect of Propaganda in 1826 and later, in 1830, became Pope as Gregory XVI until his death in 1846, that the Vatican began to play a crucial role in the reorganization of the missions. Some indication of this intervention can be seen in Gregory’s creation of more than 70 new ecclesiastical divisions in the mission areas. Previously vast territories were ruled by a Portuguese Bishop often absent or even un-appointed; now these powers were rapidly broken up and assigned to representatives of the vigorous new societies.
Sometimes owing their existence to propaganda’s support, there were soon over 50 new Catholic missionary societies, with recruiting houses scattered throughout Europe and North America. Generally they were far more responsive to Propaganda’s control than the older orders with their entrenched traditional allegiances and territorial interests. Thus it is no coincidence that they were the favoured instruments for Rome’s intervention in Africa, and in the 20th century there were about forty Catholic societies at work there.

3. **THE NIGER EXPEDITION AND ‘CIVILIZING’ MISSION OF 1841**

In 1840, Thomas fowell Buxton, a member of the anti-slavery movement in London, suggested the exploration and cultivation of the interior around the Niger water way in an attempt to turn the minds of the African people from slavery to agriculture. The scheme he advocated was for:

- A government sponsored expedition of the Niger which would make treaties with the local riverain rulers in which they will agree to abandon the slave trade and receive compensation in form of legitimate commerce.

- He advocated that missionaries and teachers should take the ploughs and hoes into the land and make agriculture flourish. Agricultural experts would be settled at Lokoja, the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers, to set up a model farm to teach Africans how to grow cotton and other crops and detailed reports would be made of economic prospects, desires for missionaries and language of the riverain peoples.
Buxton in this scheme, mixed evangelism with business and commence. He anticipated the time when these agents of commence and Christian teachers, missionaries and artisans would encourage the cultivation of crops which would be shipped to Europe and then returned to the area as finished products for sale.

The expedition was jointly undertaken by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Basel Missionary Society. The expedition consisted of three ships, well equipped with all kinds of gadgets for making observations on plants, animals, soil, weather, etc. There were specialists among the group to study these phenomena as well as the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of the people. There were also missionaries of the two denominations mentioned above who were to explore the possibility of missionary work, and agricultural experts and British government officials who were to sign treaties and establish diplomatic relations on behalf of the British government. It therefore seems that this plan was one of the early strategies of the British government to penetrate the hinterland of Nigeria.

Of the 144 Europeans and some Africans who went on this trip, 48 died of malaria and other illnesses. The expedition went up the Niger to Lokoja where a model farm was established. At Aboh and Igalla, treaties were signed with local chiefs. Though the expedition failed to record its objectives, nevertheless, the failure of the 1841 expedition had important effects.

3 B. A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE CIVILIZING MISSION OF 1841

Due to the failure of the 1841 civilizing mission, the proponent, Buxton was roundly and bitterly criticized by the British parliament, press
and public. He was dubbed a man of visionary ideas and extravagant hopes. The Africa Civilization Society which was earlier formed by Buxton for that purpose was roundly ridiculed, and a few months after the failed expedition, the society was dissolved. Buxton, its founder, did not long survive its ending.

The failure of the expedition notwithstanding, it could be argued that the history of Christian missions in Nigeria is in essence the story of the development by various Christian denominations and individual missionaries of Buxton’s doctrine about the civilization of Africa. Buxton could thus be praised as a real visionary.

The treaties concluded with the rulers along the Niger had some positive outcome. The Niger kings has definitely told the British delegates that adherence to the treaties must be a two-way affair. The Niger rulers must abandon the slave trade but the British Government must see that an alternative trade was quickly developed in its place.

Other positive achievement from the expedition on the political level was that just as Buxton published the Niger in many parts of the world during the planning so also the expedition spread the name of Britain in the River valley and beyond.

Also it should be noted that the British ‘Apostles’ of Civilization at that time which included a number of liberated Nigerians like Simon Jonas, William Johnson, Granby, Thomas King, Yarriba George, Harvey and Finlay constantly preached to the Nigerians that the expedition was principally undertaken ‘for the benefit and happiness of the Africa race.’

The commercial agents also benefitted immensely in that they were able to advertise their wares to the Niger kings which stimulated the demand for these products. The missionaries in the expedition especially
the C.M.S. will also not agree that the expedition was a total failure in that they were able to gather a great amount of information about the Niger valley. Also that something has been learnt about the languages of the Niger peoples which must be reduced to writing for successful work of evangelization and civilization.

The missionaries carried Buxton’s theme of ‘native agency’ to its logical conclusion. The expedition has demonstrated beyond doubt that the employment of European agency was not feasible; while on the other hand, the Africans on the Niger had shown their readiness to learn from their own countrymen. Everything seemed to point to the necessity of training the indigenous people for the development of their country.

Above all the 1841 expedition, in its personnel and equipment, had set the pattern for subsequent British operations in the Niger Valley. Henceforth missionaries spreading the Gospel, Merchants bearing manufactured goods and envoys concluding treaties with Nigerians became the major ‘civilizing’ forces with which the British were to invade, and eventually to subjugate, the river basin.

4. THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY (C.M.S) YORUBA AND NIGER MISSIONS OF 1843 AND 1857 (SEE BOOK)

5. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Society of the African Mission (S.M.A) was purposely formed with a view to spreading Catholic influence to West Africa. Having failed to make progress in Sierra Leone, the society turned its attention to Dahomey which was by then under French influence and not too far from Fernando Po with its more suitable and stable Church life. The work at Dahomey was began by Father Borghero with 2 other assistants.
The Roman Catholic mission came to Nigeria via Dahomey. The Italian Roman Catholic Father, Borghero mentioned above was stationed at Whydah in Dahomey. In 1860, he visited Abeokuta and Lagos. Freed slaves from Brazil had settled in Lagos. They were mostly Roman Catholics. Father Borghero again landed in Lagos in 1862 and was surprised at the number of Brazilians who at some time in their history had been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church. At this time, it was impossible to make Lagos autonomous as a Mission station with a resident Priest. Thus Lagos was treated as an out-station of Whydah in Dahomey.

In 1862, the Roman Catholic Mission in Lagos was making strides under Catechist Padre Antonio who was born in Sao Tome Island and sold as a slave to a trader who took him to Brazil where he was brought up by the Prior of the Carmelites at Bahia. He baptized children, taught the people the faith, prayed with the dying, buried the dead. Thus within ten years of Father Borghero’s visit to Nigeria, the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria had become so well established that it was separated from the Roman Catholic Church in Dahomey.

In 1868, Father Pierre Bouche arrived as the first resident Priest of this mission in Nigeria. A chapel was built and in 1869, two Irish brothers started a school in Lagos. From these beginnings, the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria was to spread and by 1885, this Church has gone further inland, thanks to father Lutz who worked around Onitsha. Another missionary, important in the spread of the Catholic Church in Nigeria was Bishop Joseph Shanahan from Ireland.
THE METHODS AND IDEOLOGY OF THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS IN EASTERN NIGERIA 1885-1905.

The Holy Ghost Roman Catholic Fathers that evangelized Eastern Nigeria used and applied various methods toward ensuring the success of their mission:

I. THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGE

The principal method of evangelization employed by the Holy Ghost Roman Catholic Missionary society in the last quarter of the 19th century in their mission stations in Africa was that of the Christian village. It involves the buying up of the slaves and forming them into Christians. From these uprooted victims of the slave trade the missionaries believed (alongside envisaging them as an inexpensive pool of labour, that they could fashion the African evangelist of Africa.

This method was adopted by the Holy Ghost Fathers in Eastern Nigeria and the Pope directed that missionaries engaged in evangelization in Africa were to use the money collected every 6th January in all Roman Catholic Churches throughout the world for the buying back of slaves in Africa.

By 1900 there were three Christian villages established by the Holy Ghost missionaries, the most flourishing being that of St. Joseph of Aguleri, a settlement 20 Kilometers north east of Onitsha. In this Christian village there were sixty-five families living around the mission. In 1902, in his report to Paris on the state of the mission, the then Superior Leon Lejeune was complaining that of the 500 Christians left in his charge at Onitsha, the majority were ex-slaves bought by the mission.
II. THE UPPER CLASS

Following the problems encountered with the Christian village method of evangelization, another method had to be devised. The use of the upper class was the next available option. This method was resorted to with the hope that “once the head has been won the whole body will follow”. With this in mind and in 1891, the Onitsha mission was able to convert Idigo, chief of the Aguleri, and he was placed in charge of the Christian village of St. Joseph’s Aguleri, which by 1900 boasted of sixty-five Christian families. It was not till 1900 however, that a consistent policy was outlined for converting the chiefs and leaders of the people with this policy in view. The biggest scoop in this direction was the conversion of Samuel, Obi of Onitsha.

The conversion of Idigo and Samuel were followed by those of other influential members of the society. Ephraim, an Anglican Deacon and ‘Prince heretier’ to the throne of Onitsha came into what they termed the ‘true’ church after a dispute with C.M.S. Pastor over the meaning and interpretation of St. John’s Gospel chapter 6, concerning the Eucharist. Jacob, an Anglican Catechist, joined the Roman Catholic Church because he found the doctrine of transubstantiation both rational and in accordance with scripture and ‘refused to be bought off by Miss Maxwell and Reverend Dennis at Onitsha. “Other similar incidents of defection from the Anglican to the Roman Catholic mission occurred at the period probably stemming from the effects of the Crowther crisis and of the attitude of the missionary Davis of the C.M.S at Onitsha. He appointed ‘foreigners’ instead of local people to the key positions in the Parish.

Some other Chiefs who were also notable slave dealers were also converted and were asked not to free their slaves but to Christianize them
and thus set up Christian villages. Another distinguished convert was the
king of the important oil and trading center, Buguma.

III. THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Lejeune during his period as the Superior of the Roman Catholic
Mission, soon realized that the Obi and the elite in general were not as
powerful as he believed them to be. Thus he concluded that the Catholic
cause and incidentally, the destruction of ancestor worship, human
sacrifice and slavery could only be furthered by an alliance with the
government and by education. The method of evangelization by means of
the school system was Lejeune’s major contribution to Roman Catholic
enterprise in Eastern Nigeria. He started it and then Shanahan furthered it
considerably.

Several factors forced Lejeune to think seriously about the method of
evangelization through the schools. The type of persons produced by the
Christian village never climbed to any higher position in government service
than that of Clerk, customs officer on interpreter. These positions were not
sufficiently influential for the occupants to further effectively the Catholic
cause. Also the products of the Christian village, because of their poor
education, were unsuitable as catechists.

Furthermore, the Roman Catholic method of evangelization through
the schools has to be seen against the background of interdenominational
rivalry. According to Lejeune “it is perilous to hesitate, the Christian village
must go and all our concentration must be on the schools otherwise ‘our
enemy, the protestants will snatch the young.’ In his own argument,
Shanahan, Lejeune’s successor, asserted that he would use the Roman
Catholic Schools ‘to strike the last blow at the Presbyterians and others.’
Thus the ‘catch them young’ policy through the school, was necessitated by interdenominational rivalry.

It was therefore through the school system of evangelization that the Roman Catholics succeeded in challenging the predominant influence of the Protestants in Igboland, though the Protestants had preceded them by thirty years.

6 OTHER MISSIONS
I. THE METHODISTS

In 1842, in response to the Macedonian call from the returnee Yoruba ex-slaves who wrote and requested for the services of a Priest. The Methodist Mission sent a team led by the Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman who came to Abeokuta from Gold Coast and founded a mission there. Thomas Birch freeman, the English son of a Negro father and a European mother, was prompted to become ordained by the appalling death rate of the Wesleyan European missionaries on the Gold Coast. (i.e. present Ghana). So it was he, who responded first to the appeal of the Creoles in Abeokuta, establishing missions in Badagry and Abeokuta.

Before the disastrous Niger expedition of 1841, some leading Yoruba settlers in Freetown, Sierra Leone had petitioned the Queen of England to allow them establish a colony in Badagry. They also asked that missionaries be sent out to preach the Gospel of Christ. A number of Yoruba from Freetown went to Badagry in 1840 but not under British protection and not accompanied by a missionary. In 1841, these people sent letters to missionaries in Sierra Leone urging them to come and settle with them at Badagry. Some Sierra Leone Church men welcomed this idea and started to solicit support and assistance for this scheme. It was the
Methodists who first sent Missionaries to Badagry, led by this Reverend Thomas Birch Freeman. He was accompanied by Wllaim de Graft, one of the earliest educated Ghanaians and they arrived Badagry on September 24, 1842. Freeman immediately began work in earnest. He built a mission house and started prayer – meetings on Sundays for the emigrants who had invited the missionaries to Badagry.

He visited Abeokuta and on his return to Badagry, he found that a lay minister of the C.M.S. Henry Townsend and two Egba ex-slaves from Sierra Leone had just arrived there to explore the possibility of establishing a mission in that area with a view to serving the spiritual needs of their denomination emigrants from Sierra Leone. Freeman soon returned to the Gold Coast but his companion, De Graft stayed at Badagry where he cared for the Methodist people as well as for those in Abeokuta. But Freeman continued to make regular visit to Nigeria from time to time while De Graft remained on the spot until he was replaced by a European, Samuel Annear who had worked for the Methodist Mission in Sierra Leone.

In 1870, the Methodists opened a mission in the Island of Fernando Po. Until Eastern Nigeria became conducive, many missions used this Island as their base. The Mission also continued active work in the Lagos and Abeokuta areas, working in harmony with the Anglican and Baptist Churches; in 1879, the Wesleyan missioners, John Miluni, Williams and Sharpe began expansion inland toward the Lake Chad region. At Egga in the Nupe area, they were joined by M.J. Elliot whose ambition was to extend mission work into the area of Lake Chad; but owing to illness, the journey ended in failure.

The Methodists also operated in an area between Nigeria and the Cameroons which was yet untouched by Christian mission. In 1893, a
mission station was opened at Archibong on the Akwayafeo river and close cooperation with the Scottish mission was firmly established. Next, a station was opened at Obio Utan at the request of the Chief who had already started a school there. The station soon became a valuable base for the expansion of mission inland, between the Qua Ibo and Scottish mission area.

II. THE SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANS

These missionaries operated in the Calabar area in Eastern Nigeria and were somewhat isolated from other missions. This area was a center of trade, especially in imported alcoholic drinks and an area of much drunkenness. It was also an area with ritual practices such as murder and killing of twins. The mission here was started by the interest of the people in Jamaica for the people of West Africa. At the instance of a Sea Captain who had personal knowledge of old Calabar and encouraged them to go and work in Calabar. A special meeting of the presbytery was called in 1844 and agreed that a new mission under H.M. Waddell should start there.

In 1846, the party which consisted of Hope Waddell the leader, his wife, another couple who were Scottish and seconded from the West Indian mission, together with the West Indian men set out. Ironically, Hope Waddell and his party found that king Eyo and his son were already literate in English and that they were versed in reading, writing and arithmetic. Waddell realized that neither the teacher nor the carpenter he had brought could match the competence of the royal couple in the 3Rs. The party faced different kinds of dangers and difficulties including the opposition from the drunkards and believers in ritual practices. In 1860, there was a strong desire to expel the missionaries from the area. This action was from
the people who acted as middlemen in the trade from inland and feared that their business would be taken over by the missionaries.

In 1874, a Christian was appointed Chief of Creek Town and he tried to govern in accordance with Christian principles. In 1868, the whole of the Bible had been translated into Efik and also John Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim’s progress’ which later became popular with the people.

In 1872, Esien Ukpabio, the first Christian convert there and the first African teacher, was ordained into the ministry and so the work continued to expand. The mission very quickly established a strong political influence, supported by ex-slaves and strengthened by the fear of slave rebellion among the rulers. A reformist spirit soon began to manifest itself and earlier in 1850, the ruling Ekpo secret society itself enacted a law that human sacrifice and killing of twins should cease.

After the exploratory journey to Calabar coast a mission was opened at Ikotana and under the influence of James Luke, another station was opened at Uwana. After 12 years service at Calabra, Mary Slessor found her way to this area. She had her first base at Itu in 1888. She attacked certain barbaric and unpleasant practices among the people of Aro. These included constant wars between the Aro people and their neighbours and between the villages of Aro people themselves. They also practiced “Trial by Ordeal” by eating the Calabar bean, a strong poison that could cause death. The people believed in the justice of this trial that an innocent person eating it would survive while the guilty one eating it would die. Mary Slessor used persuasive method to stop this practice, and recommended making of oaths instead.

Here too, it was a custom to kill Twins at birth and later to kill their mother as well or remove her from the society. This is because they
considered the birth of Twins as abnormal. Mary Slessor did everything possible to save the life of the victims of this custom and in most cases by taking them into her own custody and bringing the infants up. Also practiced in the area are human sacrifice and cannibalism. She devoted time and energy to saving those captured from suffering this unpleasant fate.

Mary Slessor also attacked the practices of polygamy and domestic slavery, though without success as these continued to be common practices in this area and other parts of West Africa. On the whole, she did a lot to bring a more rational and civilized way of living to the people of Calabar area. She preferred to demonstrate the Christian way of life to theoretical preaching, hoping that this example would change the people.

She encouraged education and she was running schools in some villages without any help she also went round to supervise education and worship services, administered local justice and rescue of the victims of the crude and ancient customs. She acted as vice-consul for the area with responsibility for maintaining law and order and even presiding at the native courts of justice.

III. THE BAPTIST CHURCH

Earlier Baptist missions from 1841 which would have visited Nigeria rather settled at Fernando Po. For instance, an exploratory visit was made in 1841 by Rev. John Clarke and Dr. S.K. Prince on behalf of this mission. They arrived at Fernando Po which was then a base for the British Naval patrols. Because of the British association with the Island, there were many English-speaking Africans, mostly the Kru and creoles from Sierra Leone, as well as Nigerians from Calabar in the population. English was the common language. The party met the Niger expedition headed by Crowther
and Schon, but they already had a lot of work to occupy their attention in the Island, especially among the English speaking people and those of the Bubi tribe.

For the Nigerian mission proper, the American Baptist missionary Thomas J. Bowen, arrived in Badagry in 1850 with the aim of establishing mission there, but political unrest forced him to stay in Abeokuta for about one year. He tried to established missions in Ketu and Iseyin without success and finally settled at Ijaye where he built his first station. Other missionaries joined Bowen there. He established a mission in Ogbomosho in 1854. In the same year, Harden, who joined the Baptist group established a Baptist mission in Lagos and the mission later extended its influence to Oyo, Shak, Igboho and Ilorin.

7. THE MISSIONARY OPERATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA, 1870-1918

In the 19th century several Christian missionary bodies from different foreign missions in Britain, the United States, Canada and Italy expressed their desire to begin missionary work in Northern Nigeria. These included the Wesleyans who in 1880 commenced work in the Nupe country under the superintendence of one W.A Allakura Sharpe, an ex-slave of Kanuri origin, whose burning desire was to establish a mission in Bornu. He pleaded with his mission to act with urgency and commence the training of Hausa, Tapa, Kanuri and Fulani Christian evangelists. In 1899 the foreign Board in London seriously considered sending two missionaries with medical and industrial skill to Kano or Katsina or Sokoto. In 1881 the American Board of commissioners for foreign missions expressed the wish to introduce Christianity to Yola district. Two Roman Catholic missions that
were described as having imperialistic motivations also attempted to enter Northern Nigeria during the period. In 1884, two French priests of the society of African missions arrived in Lokoja, in the hope that Nupe kingdom would be assimilated into the French Empire. Eight years later the Onitsha – based society of the Holy Ghost Fathers, also composed of French nationals, attempted to extend its activity to Ibi on the Benue, allegedly with the financial taking of the French Government, to advance French imperial interests on the Benue.

Some reasons were proffered why so many missionary bodies regarded Northern Nigeria as the most potentially promising area in the Sudan for the spread of Christianity. One reason was that missionaries accepted too readily and with eagerness the idyllic picture of the racial characteristics of the Hausa people and the Hausa country, pointed by many explorers, the Hausa Association and Sir George Goldie that in intelligence, physiognomy, material culture and literary achievement, the Hausa were not only superior to the Southern Nigeria peoples but surpassed the Chinese; that Hausa civilization could compare favourably with that of the Europeans. This racial and cultural superiority, it was contended, would make the Hausa perceive the metaphysical truths of such a higher religion as Christianity, which many missionaries had begun to feel was beyond the understanding of the supposedly inferior coastal people; among other reasons which of course have now proved to be fallacious.

The Missionary enterprise passed through three distinct phases in Northern Nigeria during the period under review. The first phase, 1870-88, was one of relative success for missions. Their achievement, limited as it was, was owned to their tactics in winning the affection of the traditional rulers and in
convincing the latter that they, the missions, were not torchbearers of imperialism.

Then came the next phase, 1888-1900, when missionary enterprise and British imperialism seemed to the Northern Nigerian rulers as one and the same thing. In these years, for the potentates, i.e. the rulers, missionaries were discredited.

In the last phase, 1900-18, the British administration dissociated itself from missionaries and, as time went on, declared opposition to the missionary enterprise, not only in the predominantly Muslim areas but in the ‘pagan’ districts as well.

I. THE FIRST PHASE 1870-88: THE ERA OF RELATIVE SUCCESS

The modest achievement of the missionaries during this first phase 1870-88 was due to their tactics in winning the affection of the traditional rulers and in convincing them that they, the missions were not torch-beaten of imperialism. The central figure in this era was Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, head of the Niger Mission founded in 1857.

By 1870 Bishop Crowther and his team succeeded in overcoming the suspicion of the traditional rulers, that they were heralds of alien. They carried out their activity within customary laws and traditional politics; they recognized and respected the authority of the chiefs and courted their favour and influence for the progress of their enterprises.

Bishop Crowther made friendliness with the Etsu of Nupe an essential aspect of his policy. He thus became the most powerful external influence on the Muslim rulers of the Nupe Kingdom between 1869 and 1888. Every year, the Bishop visited Bida, telling the Emir about the adoption of European technology and ideas in Egypt and the middle East
and the advisability of prospecting for minerals in his territory; he made presents frequently and offered political advice.

The confidence of the Emir of Bida having been gained, he became disposed to consider Crowther's missionary programme for the Nupe Kingdom. Bishop Crowther then selected focal caravan points for mission stations. Kipo Hill where a station was opened in 1875 was on the direct route of the Hausa irony traders from the North and North-east, with connections with Keffi, Zaria and Yakoba. In 1878 the Emir wrote letter to the Emirs of Nassarawa and Yola advising them to allow the Bishop to begin missionary work in their territories as well as to other territories and cities in the North.

Thus, during this 1st first, the Muslim rulers of Northern Nigeria entertained no religions fear of the missionaries. What they dreaded were the imperialistic accompaniments of the missionary enterprise. From religious viewpoint none of the three Christians missions which attempted to spread Christianity in Northern Nigeria during the period won a single convert to Christianity.

II. THE SECOND PHASE 1888-1900:

THE ERA WHEN MISSIONARY ENTERPRISES AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM SEEMED AS ONE AND THE SAME TO THE NORTHERN NIGERIA RULERS.

Following Staudinger declaration that the Royal Niger Company was not trade but Christianization of Northern Nigeria, the moving of the military headquarters of the Company to Lokoja, and the arrival in 1890 a group of twelve missionaries of the C.M.S. known as the Sudan Party for the purpose of evangelization and condemnation of African missionaries
especially Crowther’s work by the European missionaries, the Emirs began to fear that they were political spies.

This new situation in Lokoja increased the unpopularity of Maliki who was blamed for having signed a treaty with the Niger Company in 1885. Maliki then asked the Missionaries to withdraw from his Country in anticipation of a seeming general uprising against the missionaries and the company, over half the population of Lokoja left the town.

The apprehension of the Fulani Emirs about the political and religious danger of the Royal Niger Company were not entirely unfounded. Goldie for example wished the Bible translated into Hausa and distributed throughout Hausaland and he shared the anti-Fulani feelings of the C.M.S. missionaries in the Nupe country. He was convinced that the Fulani Emirs were likely to regard the Company as Christian proselytizers and that the Mahdism of the eastern Sudan might spread to Northern Nigeria. It was his hope that when the Company had sufficient revenue to enable the enlistment of 10,000 Sikh troops, Wurnu, the capital of the Sokoto caliphate, would be occupied and the people rescued from the ‘superstitious dread of the magical powers of the Sultan of Sokoto,’ in which, he said, the Fulani held them under subjection.

The missionaries wanted the British to remove the Fulani obstacle by force with a view to paving the way for the massive conversion of the Hausa. Thus they hailed the 1897 expeditions against Ilorin and Bida which they claimed were aimed at removing the Fulani rulers for direct British rule and for the termination of the slave trade. A campaign for funds was launched immediately and an appeal for thirty missionaries made. While
the government officials were of the opinion that Christians were more loyal to the British administration than non-Christians, apart from the fact that missionaries produced clerks for government and commercial concerns, the missionaries believed that by winning the north for the British, the Christianization of the territory would be hastened. It is against this background that the trip made to Kano in the first half of 1900 by five C.M.S. missionaries should be understood. The Hausa Party, as they were known expected the Fulani to accept British occupation. Because of their anti-Fulani propaganda, the Nupes who had little love for their Fulani masters welcomed them as deliverers from Fulani yoke. The pagans who had been driven to hills by the slave-raiding activities also welcomed the missionaries as the harbinger of Liberty and greater joys. In their judgment it was partly because they had explained the purpose of British advent in Northern Nigeria, that is, to deliver them from the oppression and tyranny of their rulers that the masses welcomed the British Soldiers in the areas crossed by the missionaries.

The missionaries were thus warmly received in Zaria because they needed British military help against Sokoto and Kotangora, which illustrated the disunity of Fulani rulers in face of external danger. The mission experience in Kano is quite different. Here they were not well received; rather they were regarded as intruders, infidel, for which the people had little regard. Besides, by the time of their visit, Islam had become a heritage in which the Hausas had a great deal of pride, apart from being a bond of unity, producing cultural unity to a high degree and a sense of distinctiveness.

III. THE THIRD PHASE 1900-1918:
THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION DISSOCIATE ITSELF FROM MISSIONARIES AND DECLARED OPPOSITION TO MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

Although Lugard was not a good Churchman, he believed that Christianity produced higher material civilization than Islam, and that a Christian was likely to be more loyal to the British Raj than a Muslim. Thus all that Lugard attempted to do was to advise missionaries about the foolhardiness of hoping to convert Muslims to the Christian faith. He would have wished them to divert their resources in men and money to the pagan areas where they were much more likely to have greater success.

In order to assure the Emirs that the administration would not interfere with Islam, and to convince the missionaries themselves that they should not make an undue claim to the backing of the administration, Lugard chose to be neutral by insisting that Emirs were free to invite missionaries if they wished. And the evidence shows that during his first tenure of office many Emirs desired to have missionaries to give them Western education.

It is essential to add that in the period 1900 to 1906, there were no complaints by the missionary world about the Northern Nigeria administration restricting Christian enterprises in the territory. This was why many of the Christian missions expressed appreciation to Lugard for his policy and why the largest of them, the church Missionary Society, regretted the termination of his authority in 1906. It was not until after Lugard that the British administration began to adopt a new policy, and that the public began to be told that missions were being restricted by anti-Christian, administrative officers in Northern Nigeria.
Evidence is plentiful to show that after 1906, the administration of Northern Nigeria became decidedly anti-missionary. Under Lugard's successor, Percy Girouard, indirect rule became a sort of natural law, against which it would be dangerous to behave. The customs and institutions of the people began to receive at first sympathy, then sentimentality and veneration, and their exposure to and contact with the outside world began to be regretted. Education along Western lines was frowned upon as a disintegrating and demoralizing agency; the presence of all foreigners - Europeans, Southern Nigerians and Saros - was regarded as a necessary evil, and it was in order to minimize their danger to what was considered as the true interests of the Northerners that the Sabongari system was designed by C. L. Temple.

But the sentimental attachment which many of the Residents claimed they had for the traditional culture of Northern Nigeria would not explain fully their propaganda. One other reason is that by 1906, many of them had become autocrats dictating to the Emirs and in several cases taking decisions without the formality of consulting the rulers. A missionary was likely to be rival to the Resident’s influence and, as a man close to the poorer classes, was likely to be the tribune of the oppressed. The British missionaries in these years were more than religious teachers they saw themselves as watch-dogs of Britain’s interest and they never hesitate to bring to the notice of either the Colonial Office, or the public, acts of oppression and injustice committed by administrative officers in Nigeria. On the other hand by 1905 some of the Residents had begun to deplore the doctrine of equality of all peoples before God which they alleged the missionaries were teaching.
It also became the practice of the residents to explain their anti-missionary attitude on the grounds of fear of a Mahdist uprising, though there was no evidence to show that there was any connection between Mahdism and missionary enterprise. In any case, the two centres of Mahdism in the years under review, Sokoto and Burmi, were completely outside the influence of mis-missionary propaganda. In the areas where Christian missions operated, there was not a single instance of Muslim rising against Christian adherents, in a period when in Southern Nigeria, ‘religious wars’ raged fiercely in the Ekiti and Ijebu territories.

From 1906 onwards, the policy of the British administration in Northern Nigeria became more reactionary than that of the Eastern Sudan. The missions were not encouraged to do institutional work. The School for Emirs’ Children and Malam proposed by the C.M.S. in 1906 foundered on the opposition of the Residents. Not a penny was given to Christian missions for the very little educational work they embarked upon. Even the traditional Koranic Schools received no encouragement. Thus in Northern Nigeria, not a single northerner in 1920 was sufficiently educated to fill the most minor clerical post in the office of any government department and a nationalist awakening had not begun to show itself. Almost every year after 1906, the administration rejected C.M.S. application to establish itself in Kano, and it was not until 1924 that an application was granted to the effect that the society should content itself with having its station in the Sabongari districts only. In Zaria, where the response to Christianity among Muslims was the most encouraging, many malams who were members of the sect known as the Ansa invited missionaries to work among them in Zaria province. At the beginning of the mission in Zaria City, weekly and
evangelistic meetings were held in the house of friendly malams and there was a time when the number of Churchgoers rose to 130.

Persecution by Emir and Resident began after 1906. Christian adherents were removed to distant places to work for the Public works Department and when the Christian adherents demanded sites for separate settlements, they were either refused any site or offered place notorious for tragedy. In Zaria the mission compound was boycotted; boys and girls were forbidden to go there even for medical aid.

Apart from the fact that missionaries were prevented from working among the Maguzawa, who were placed under Muslim rulers, many administrative officers became hostile to missionary work in ‘pagan’ areas. A pro-missionary chief, Dekina was removed from the throne to give way to a reactionary. In Kabwir, an able successor to the throne was deposed simply because he was a Christian and refused to perform ‘pagan’ ritual associated with his office. Those who professed the Christian faith were ordered to go to farms on Sundays.

At Kataeregi in the Nupe Country, a British officer, B.K. Line ordered a C.M.S. School to be pulled down without any complaints against the mission by the inhabitants. In 1918, a Resident in the Igara province, Captain Rowe, ordered the rulers that they should never grant land for schools or Churches, except with his approval. Even in the Kabba province a Resident became so hostile that in 1912 he flogged a pastor publicly on the alleged grounds that his activity tended to ‘denationalize’ the people among whom he was working. Other factors that mitigated against missionary operation in Northern Nigeria included the missionary mistake
of directing their campaign against Muslim areas instead of pagan areas, lack of sufficient human and financial resources over the wide areas, and slow economic development brought into being by the British rule.

Nevertheless, the missionaries made important contribution to the study of many Northern Nigerian Languages especially Hausa and Nupe in which Bibles and Dictionaries were written.