

PDF - THE ADVENT OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS IMPACTS ON TIV RELIGIOUS CIVILIZATION -  
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To understand the Advent Christianity in Northern Nigeria (NN), one must return back first to 19th Century Great Britain and look at the relationship between Laissez-Faire Capitalism and Evangelicals. The Great Britain had become the leading industrial Nation of the world under the guidance of Laissez-Faire capitalism. The Capitalism was very individualistic; everyone was urged to do his own economic thing. The purpose of the business was first of all to make a profit and also competition-oriented.

Evangelicals were very much part of it all. They believed in the above doctrines as God inspired, though they rejected the evolutionist interpretation of the origin of creation and man but adhere to an evolutionistic interpretation of History without recognizing the common source behind the two. Our every Square inch, vol.2, pp.210-211

The social economic structure of Great Britain changed under the impact of industrial Revolution, raw materials for production became a problem, and therefore, Great Britain needed a way to solve the problem, so, Great Britain entered Nigeria, that was the basic impulse of Colonialism, it was for them produce these two, raw materials and Market, the Great Britain interest were represented by a number of Companies especially by the Royal Niger Company that was later taken over by Lever Brothers.

In the beginning Nigerians were abused and used when the Britain needed Nigerians, they trained them, when it was in their favor to eliminate them, they would freely do so. By 1960, Nigeria Economic was totally in foreign hands.

The Evangelicals in Great Britain were wholly in favor of their domestic Capitalist economy because they themselves had done well under it, so they expected of colonialism Livingstone inspired many Evangelicals, at the very time the attention of British business was down to Northern Nigeria. It begins slowly with the southern Baptists leading the pack in 1855 to be followed by Anglican Church missionary Society and Wesleyans around the 1880s. But towards the end of the century new attempts were made that were eventually to morph into Churches that are now blossoming in Northern Nigeria Anglicans, Sudan interior mission, ECWA, Sudan United Mission, TEKAN, and Southern Baptist.

The Sudan United Mission (SUM) was a Conglomeration or umbrella of different Mission Societies whose Missionaries came from all the Caucasian dominated Nation of the common wealth as well as the USA. It included my own Mission, the Christian Reformed Church (SUM/CRC) that eventually partnered with three different denominations. Boer, 1979, pp.85-85, 1984, pp32-33.

#### **2.4. History of Christianity in Nigeria:**

*'In 1485, the Portuguese Missionaries were the first to visit Nigeria. The Oba of Benin sent an appeal overseas that some Missionaries be sent to his Kingdom, some Spanish and Italian Capuchins also visited Benin. Being Catholics they were able to convert the Oba and his royal family. Also some Missionaries of the sacred Congregation of propaganda in Rome came to Benin and Warri. In Warri the Olu and his Sons were baptized. He later sent his son Domingos to Portugal for studies. In Benin and Warri many people were converted, Churches were built and Christian worship was actively promoted'. (Dauda andGbule: 60).*

In 1771-1806, the course of the Niger River had been discovered by Mungo Park and other explorers, it was know that this River held the vast and populous area. A come together commercial and philanthropic objectives for the introduction of European Civilization on the Niger was undertaken.

In 1840, was the Niger expedition promoted by Buxton. Although the first voyage was not successful, subsequent voyage opened the Niger area to Philanthropic efforts and inspired subsequent endeavors in other parts of the continent in later years, such as the Africans Lakes Company in the Lake Nyasa region and the East African Scottish Industrial Mission in Kenya. (Falk 1997:123,124).

In 1841, Samuel Ajayi Crowther took part in the Niger expedition aimed at Christianizing the people of Nigeria. (Nnaji 2009:28).

The Portuguese main interest was in Commerce, thus, Commerce, Christianity and Colonialism combined to achieve missionary activities in Nigeria.

In 1842, some liberated Slaves had become Christian in Sierra Leone who pleaded with the CMS to start missionary activity in Yoruba land. The Slaves were as five hundred freed Nigeria origins that came back from Freetown to Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta. And also September 1842, Methodist Church volunteered and sent T.B Freeman to visit the people at Badagry and Abeokuta, William De Graft a Methodist Missionary was made responsible for the Ministry of Badagry and Abeokuta too.(Falk 1997:126),(Fleck 2013:44),(Rubingh1969:47). Henry Townsend founded a (CMS) residence mission at Abeokuta 1846, extended to some parts of Yoruba land like Lagos 1852, Ibadan 1853 and Oyo 1856.(Benue State in Perspective 2003:209),(Dauda and Gbule 2000:67).

In 1844, Townsend came back to Abeokuta with C.A.Gollmer, his wife and Samuel Crowther to commence a Ministry in Abeokuta, Shodeke, chief of Abeokuta died in. After his death, Dahomey took the Egba post on the route to Badagry, he closed transportation between Abeokuta and the port, the Church Missionary Society concentrated its efforts at Abeokuta while the Methodist Mission worked at Badagry.Shodeke favorable attitude opened Yoruba Country to Missionary work at a time when Dahomey rejected Missions. (Falk 1997:126).

In 1846, the Church Missionary Society and the Methodist Missionary began Ministry on the Niger River and inland from Lagos, the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland began a Mission in Calabar to East of Lagos. In 1847, the Society made important literary contribution, Hugh Goldie, who arrived Calabar compiled a dictionary of the Efik. (Falk 1997) .In 1853, A.C. Mann began a work at Ijaye and also Bowen returned with his bride and two other couple.However, upon arriving at Abeokuta, they contacted Malaria. The J.L. Lacy were incapacitate and sent home, and the J.S. Dennards both die within a year. (Falk1997:129). In that same year, Samuel Ajayi Crowther landed at Badagry.

There was a trial to found Mission stations in Niger during the second expedition of 1854, which Crowther was a member of the crew under the leadership of Rev J.C.Taylor an Ibo Liberated Slave who was ordained by the CMS in Sierra Leone.

The CMS missionaries to Nigeria founded Christianity in Onitsha, Bonny became the Headquarters, and some stations were also opened up in Niger and Lokoja, now Kogi State.

In 1841, a man name Samuel Ajayi Crowther took part in the Niger expedition aimed at Christianizing the people of Nigeria.

He was ordained in England as a minister of the Gospel and sent back to Freetown to evangelize his own people in 1843.The Church Missionary Society (CMS) then sent him to work as a Missionary in Nigeria. He started his Missionary Exploits first, among his own people, the Yoruba's.

Samuel Ajayi Crowther landed at Badagry with a team of other Missionaries. He first went to Abeokuta and joined a European Missionary Henry Townsend and wife who had set up a school for the CMS at Abeokuta.

They teamed up and converted many people to the Christian faith. At Badagry and Abeokuta, they labored for the numerical growth of the Churches.

In 1853, he (Samuel Ajayi Crowther) left Abeokuta for Ibadan on another Missionary work. He worked hard with David Hinderer and co who was sent as European Missionaries. He was very much encouraged to meet this couple and they worked hard to win many converts to Christianity.

Samuel Ajayi Crowther took part in another Niger Expedition in 1857. This Expedition nearly cost his life because their boat had almost drowned but God delivered them through the locals. In spite of this threat, he persevered and carried the gospel to the people of Jebba and met with the EtSU of Bida to convert him to Christianity.

In 1864, he was consecrated the first Bishop and Pioneer Missionary of the Anglican Church in Nigeria. As a Bishop, he took up the responsibility of overseeing the clergy and the Catechists, as well as the growing Churches and the converts, through his missionary activities. The CMS spread further to the South. Church Missionary Society schools like D.M.G.S saint. Augustine's Grammar school Nkwerre, saint. Marks T.T.C Nise, Awka, and WTC Umuahia to mention a few started by the Missionary.

In 1876, the intrepid Mary Slessor arrived Calabar and through a Missionary was appointed vice-consul by the Government which saw in her the only means of gaining cooperation with the people. The tie of temporal and spiritual authority was not unnatural to the African, and the attempts of Missionaries to separate the two at great pains have not impressed the African to his day (Rubingh 1969:48). In 1880, the CMS could count eleven stations and a thousand adherents, from Badagry, Abeokuta and Calabar, the Missions pressed inland.

By 1891, the CSM reached Isikwe-Achi, Oji River-Enugu State from where it spread to neighboring towns like Awlaw, Inyi, Udi, Ngwo, Nsukka, Nike, Agbani, Awkunanaw, Okigwe, Owerri, Mbieri and Calabar and so on. Bishop Ajayi Crowther spent his time and efforts to translate the whole Bible to Yoruba Language to enable his people understand God's word. Before his death in Lagos on 31st Dec, 1891, he had left a landmark for his generation in Nigeria and Nation. (Nnaji p.28-29).

By 1889, they penetrated Hausa land; founding a mission in Zaria 1902. In 1930 other missionary bodies like the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM), the Baptist Church of Scotland and Wesleyans had occupied different parts of Nigeria.

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