

HISTORY AND DIPLOMACY

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF ADE ADEFUYE

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CHAPTER THREE

THE AGE AND KINGS OF THE IJEBU KINGDOM

TUNDE ODUWOBI

INTRODUCTION

In traditions of origin among the Yoruba (of which the Ijebu are a subgroup), the process of demographic evolution is usually conflated with that of state formation. And so, as Samuel Johnson has commented with regard to the development of Yoruba kingdoms, "in ancient patriarchal times the king of a country was regarded as the father or progenitor of his people."¹ The city of Ile-Ife was regarded as the genesis of the world. For example an Ijebu war chief asserted in 1886 that it was from Ile-Ife that the first Ijebu king "went to settle in the Ijebu country... Even the English King can be shown the spot at Ile-Ife from whence his ancestors went out."² This demographic conception of Ife reflects no more than that Ife emerged as the first kingdom in the Yoruba area. In this light, this paper is a contribution to the general discourse on the foundation of the Ijebu Kingdom with special focus on chronology.³ With its capital at Ijebu-Ode, the kingdom's ruler was titled *Awujale*.⁴ It was conquered by the British in May 1892 and subsequently brought under colonial dispensation.

The earliest documented reference to the Ijebu Kingdom is a Portuguese source of late-fifteenth-century context.⁵ The age of the kingdom, however, is difficult to determine since the Ijebu, like most African societies, were pre-literate. One method of establishing a chronology is by undertaking an analysis of available king lists. In some significant respects, this may be facilitated by the availability of contemporary sources as the studies of Bradbury and Ryder on Benin demonstrate.⁶ Such sources are not available for Ijebu till the 1820s. The option then is to undertake a critical evaluation of the king lists using internal mechanisms. Such could be a consideration of the genealogical connections as a measure of ensuring accuracy in the order or sequence of reign.⁷ In this connection, reign lengths can be used to establish a general chronology. In Ijebu, there was the practice in which carved statuettes of deceased kings called *okute* were celebrated in an annual event called the *Osu* festival during the month of December and the number of years a king reigned was recalled by the

number of times he celebrated the festival.⁸ The practice was institutionalized by a religious cult, called *Asokute*, whose function was to propitiate the spirits of past kings.⁹ A similar cult headed by the official titled *Esekhurhe* existed in Benin. Bradbury describes him as the "priest of the royal ancestors, whose duties included memorizing the dynastic list and sacrificing to each oba in turn at the annual Ugigun rites."¹⁰ Indeed, a contemporary source of early nineteenth-century context mentions Ijebu palace officials called "Akamore" who "can recite the long list of *oba* [kings] who have reigned in Ijebu since the foundation of the monarchy."¹¹ The root word "aka" means reciter from the verb *ka*, to recite. Such officials, if different from the *Asokute*, did not feature in the documentary record of the colonial period. Their disappearance is probably explained by the reduction of the palace retinue in the wake of the British conquest of the kingdom in 1892.¹²

The *okute* effigies are said to have been destroyed in the 1880s by Awujale Fidipote in reaction to his expulsion from the throne, and as a symbol of the effacement of the memory of Ijebu monarchical traditions.¹³ Although the practice of carving *okute* ceased thereafter, the effigies, as mnemonic devices, established dynastic numerical traditions that survived their existence. It is instructive to note that the compiler of the regnal lengths used in this paper was the king of the subordinate town of Idowa where *okute* effigies of the town were still celebrated in his time.¹⁴ A proportion of the regnal dates offered would thus appear to have rested on some traditional basis.

In the further bid of establishing a general dynastic chronology, analysis in this paper has been extended to cover also issues concerning the rules of succession. This involves a critical examination of the principle of porphyrogenitism in Ijebu dynastic culture. The basic framework of analysis rests on four published king lists highlighted in Table I and, in what immediately follows, an attempt is made to give a brief biodata of the authors and the historiographical relevance of their publications.

SOURCES

The first of the four publications is J. A. Payne's *Tables of Principal Events in Yoruba History*.¹⁵ Payne was born in Sierra Leone on 9 August 1839. His father was a freed slave called Adepeyin whose name he anglicized as Payne.¹⁶ Adepeyin was a son to Gbelegbuwa, the Ijebu king who reigned during the second half of the eighteenth century. Payne moved to Lagos in 1862 to begin a long career, first in the administrative, and then the judicial department of the Lagos Colony (established in 1861) public service. His appointment as a judicial officer from 1869 (till his retirement in 1899) inspired his publication of historical almanacs between 1874 and 1894 on

events in Lagos and its environs. The *Tables of Principal Events in Yoruba History* is a compendium of the series.¹⁷ Payne also drew close to the land of his father's birth, and twice in the mid-1870s acted as an emissary of the British government in Lagos to the Ijebu state authorities.¹⁸ The Ijebu king list with dates published in *Tables of Principal Events in Yoruba History* starts with the reign of Gbelegbuwa, his grandfather, and has generally been adopted in published local histories.¹⁹ Considering his contacts with the Ijebu authorities, Payne seemed to have made little attempt to obtain information on the predecessors of his grandfather. As his major concern was the collection of datable data as could be deployed for judicial purposes, he does seem to have been more confident with the contemporary information available to him than making an exploration of the non-documented past.

Our second source is J.A. Olusola's *Ancient Ijebu-Ode*.²⁰ Olusola was a letter writer and a journalist in Ijebu in the 1930s. He was the publisher and editor of *Ijebu Weekly News*, which ran between 1933 and 1940. He featured thereafter in local politics in the 1940s and 1950s. His book is a motley compilation of colonial records that filtered into his hands. The collection ranges across a wide spectrum of political, administrative, historical, and anthropological issues. The king list in the book is one of them. It was one of the exhibits submitted by Awujale Adesanya to the panel of enquiry instituted by the colonial government to consider the demand by the Remo, who constitute the western portion of Ijebu, for administrative independence in 1937.²¹ The last name on the list, however, is an addendum by Olusola as it is the name of the present king, who came to office in 1960.

The third source is *Iwe Kini Ilosiwaju Eko Itan Ijebu* (A Study of Ijebu History, Book I) written by Odubanjo Odutola.²² He held the important title of *Olotu-Ifore*.²³ From the 1940s Chief Odutola became popular and well known for his vast knowledge of local history. Indeed, he often appeared in court litigations on behalf of the king as his official historian and was visited during the 1960s by a number of prominent scholars for information on Ijebu history. His book contains primarily anthropological information.

The final source is Badejo Adebajo's *Itan Ido Ijebu* (A History of Ijebu).²⁴ In actual fact, the author of the book was Badejo's father, Samuel Adebajo. With paternal origins in Ijebu-Ode, Samuel had maternal connections with the kingship of the town of Idowa (some ten kilometres away) to which he succeeded as *Dagburewe* in 1927 till his death in 1954. He was an *ex-officio* member of the *Awujale's* cabinet under the colonial dispensation and from the list of acknowledged informants in the book the king evidently had access to a wide variety of oral and documented sources. The compilation of the book ended in 1947, although Badejo took

the liberty as a later author-editor to make addenda. Thus, like Olusola, he too inserted the present *Awujale* (Sikiru Adetona, Ogbagba II) in his list. A number of typographical or copyist errors are also noticeable. The book contains varied historical and anthropological information.

THE KING LISTS²⁵

Since the purpose of this paper is to determine the age of the Ijebu Kingdom through a consideration of its kings, it will be necessary to identify and authenticate the names on the king lists. As Payne's list starts only from Gbelegbuwa consideration would, for the moment, be focused on the other three and more elongated lists.²⁶

The first two names on Olusola's list, Olu-Iwa [B1] and Oshi [B2], are to be discounted at once as these have been suggested to be fictive characters.²⁷ The traditions remain strong that the Ijebu state was founded by Obanta as reflected by Odutola [C1] and Adebonojo [D1]. Until the period of Tewogbuwa [B43, C38, D38] we may note two features in the lists. First, some names are either missing or represent duplications: from Obanta to Tewogbuwa there are forty-one names in Olusola, and thirty-eight each in Odutola and Adebonojo. Second, it is only for thirteen of the names that there is some agreement in the sequence of reigns.

In the first category is Obanla [D4] who is mentioned only by Adebonojo. Muwagana [B33] is mentioned only in Olusola. Lapengbuwa [B13 and D12] and Fesojoye [B36 and D34] are not mentioned by Odutola. Boyejo [B40, C35] is not mentioned by Adebonojo. Muwagana mentioned only in Olusola cannot be accounted for; or perhaps he is to be identified as Obanla mentioned only in Adebonojo as Obanta's son. The absence of Lapengbuwa in Odutola is probably a reflection of aberrant succession as Lapengbuwa's succession marked the first major disruption in the succession chain [Table II]. The absence of Boyejo in Adebonojo may also be similarly explained as an instance of aberrant succession. A tradition states that he refused to be properly installed and was also without a male child.²⁸ He probably died shortly after assumption of office.

Boyejo [B40] is preceded by Oniyewe [B39] in Olusola; whereas in Odutola he [C35] is followed by Oniyewe [C36]. Both rulers are, however, followed by Moyegeso [B41, C37]. In Adebonojo, where Boyejo is absent, Moyegeso [D30] is followed by Oniyewe [D31]. It seems clear that Boyejo, Oniyewe, and Moyegeso are to be associated together, and that Boyejo is to be placed between Moyegeso and Oniyewe in Adebonojo's list. A close observation of Adebonojo's list [Table II] would suggest that Boyejo belonged to a dynastic branch that had already been skipped once in the succession cycle.

Dynastic Chart

Branch I	Branch II	Branch III	Branch IV
(1) Obanta 1450-1465	(2) Obaguru 1465-1475	(3) Munigbuwa 1475-1480	
(4) Obanla 1480-1490	(5) Obaloja 1490-1502	(6) Obalofin 1502-1516	
(7) Apasa 1516-1528	(8) Obagunju 1528-1536	(9) Tewogboye 1536-1540	
(10) Obaruwa 1540-1549	(11) Ofiran 1549-1552	(13) Otutubiosun 1557-1560	(14) Ajuwakale 1560-1572
(12) Lapengbuwa 1552-1557	(16) Obajewo 1581-1596	(17) Elewu Ileke 1596-1610	
(15) Gbadisa 1572-1581	(19) Mase 1640-1645	(20) Olutoyese 1645-1655	
(18) Olumodan 1610-1640	(23) Ore-Yeye (female) 1664-1674	(25) Jadiara 1680-1695	(21) Mola 1655-1662
(22) Ajana 1662-1664	(26) Sapoku 1695-1707	(28) Mekun 1712-1722	(27) Folajoye 1707-1712
(24) Agunwaja 1674-1680	(29) Gbodogi 1722-1730	(32) Oniyewe 1775-1750	(30) Ojigi Moyegeso 1730-1745
(31) Boyejo 1745	(33) Olope Oluyoruwa 1750-1755	(35) Fesojoye 1765-1769	(42) Setejoye 1820-1821
(38) Orodudujoye 1775-1778	(36) Ore-Geje (f) 1769-1770	(39) Tewogbuwa 1778-1780	(44) Fidipote 1854-1885
(40) Gbeleguwa 1780-1790	(43) Anikilaya 1821-1854	(41) Fusengbuwa 1790-1820	(47) Adeona 1906-1915
(52) Adesanya 1933-1959	(46) Adeleke 1895-1906	(45) Tunwase 1886-1895	(51) Ogunnaike 1929-1933
	(49) Ademolu 1916-1925	(48) Adekoya 1916	(50) Adenuga 1925-1929
	(53) Adetona 1960-		

Concerning probable duplications, while we have Olope Oluyoruwa [D32] and Sapenuwa Rubakoye [D36] in Adebonojo as two figures these are broken into four characters in Olusola and Odutola, viz., Olope [B34, C30]; Oluyoruwa [B32, C29]; Sapenuwa [B38, C33]; Rubakoye [B37, C32]. The lists all agree that Ore-Yeye [B23, C16, D23] and Ore-Geje [B31, C28, D35] are female. This is implied from the prefix *ore*, which is a generic for mother. In Olusola and Odutola there is a third female, Rubakoye [B37, C32] placed before Sapenuwa [B38, C33]. Ore-Geje [D35] is the female placed before Sapenuwa Rubakoye [D36] in Adebonojo. Odutola adds a fourth female ruler [C36] Oniyewe, who is male in Olusola [B39] and Adebonojo [D31], and so may be discounted. That Sapenuwa [B38, C33, D36] is preceded by a female in the three lists is, no doubt, borne out by the tradition that he was successor to a sister. It does seem that there were only two female rulers, namely, Ore-Yeye and Ore-Geje, and that Ore-Geje and Rubakoye do reflect a single character. A similar duplication process may explain the appearance of Oluyoruwa in Olusola and Odutola for in the two lists Oluyoruwa [B32, C29] is preceded by Ore-Geje [B31, C28].

With regard to the thirteen names with instances of agreement in the sequence of reigns, they constitute the following six sets:

- (i) Obaloja [B6, C4, D5], Obalofin [B7, C5, D6], and Apasa [B8, C6, D7]
- (ii) Otutubiosun [B14, C12, D13] and Ajuwakale [B15, C13, D14].

The consensus in the second set is explicable. Both are said to be brothers. Otutubiosun got infected with a skin disease and had to leave for the countryside to be treated. The brother was called upon to act, but refused to relinquish office when the king came back. The king was implored to accept the situation. He retired to the countryside where he founded the new settlement of Idowa with the dynastic title of *Dagburewe*. Otutubiosun's position as the thirteenth *Awujale* on Adebonojo's list is also supported by tradition. At his departure Otutubiosun is said to have been granted half of the royal possessions including six *okute* effigies out of the twelve available representing the earlier rulers.²⁹

The remaining four sets are:

- (iii) Jewo [B17, C14, D16] and Elewulleke [B18, C15, D17]
- (iv) Agunwaja [B24, C19, D24] and Jadiara [B25, C20, D25]
- (v) Mekun [B29, C26, D28] and Gbogidi [B30, C27, D29]
- (vi) Olope [B34, C30, D32] and Ayora [B35, C31, D33].

A striking case of unanimity by the three lists is Obaruwa [B10, C10, D10] who appears as number ten despite the variations in the order of the preceding nine names. This is not surprising as he is generally acknowledged as the tenth ruler. His appellation is *ekewa olu*, the tenth king. The lists perforce had to reflect that tradition.

It is from Tewogbuwa [B43, C38, D38] that there is general agreement in the sequence of the reigns. This is presumably because his successors were still within living memory at the advent of the British in Yorubaland from the 1850s which marked the commencement of the documented period. The British documented a treaty with Ijebu dated 25 February 1852 which bore the name of Figbajoye, the royal name of Anikilaya.³⁰ His successor was Fidipote who was confronted with a civil rebellion at the end of 1882 and was compelled to go on self-exile to Epe where he died in 1885. After him was Tunwase during whose reign the Ijebu Kingdom lost its independence following military defeat by the British in 1892. He was succeeded by Adeleke (son of Anikilaya) who died in 1906 and then Adeona (son of Fidipote) who died in November 1915.³¹

The death of Adeona was accompanied by a succession crisis. Adenuga (son of Tunwase) who was expected to succeed to the throne was deemed too young to rule by the kingmakers. He was twenty-three years old. Members of his family protested to no avail what they considered an attempt to unduly skip over the family. In the event, the kingmakers appointed Ademolu (a son of Anikilaya), who was in his mid-seventies. The Tunwase family, however, continued to protest the denial of its rights to the local British authorities alleging that it was an attempt to revoke the royal status of the family in punishment for the ill-perceived role of Awujale Tunwase in the conquest of the Ijebu by the British in 1892. The protests eventually paid off in August 1916 when the local British officials summarily dismissed Ademolu, and installed Adekoya an elder brother to Adenuga.

The supporters of Ademolu too rose in protest and addressed a petition to the central authorities with the primary argument that Adekoya lacked the principal succession qualification. This was that Adekoya was not born to the throne, a status locally referred to as *abidagbaa*.³² It was on these grounds that Adekoya was removed by the government and Ademolu was reinstated in January 1917.

Ademolu died in 1925. Adekoya sought to revive his claims, but these were dismissed by the government because he was not an *abidagbaa*; and so, his younger brother Adenuga, who had been waived in 1915, was installed. Adenuga ruled only for four years as he was dismissed from office in 1929 on corruption charges. Again, Adekoya pressed his claims to no avail. He was told that apart from his weak eligibility status, the slot of the Tunwase was already utilized.

Next on the succession chain was the Fidipote family where the kingmakers with the active support of the local British officers preferred Ogunnaike who was an elder brother of Adeona. Ogunnaike was seventy-nine years old and was not an *abidagbaa*, having been born before Fidipote, his father, came to the throne.³³ The government only reluctantly acceded to his choice with a caveat that this contravention of the succession rule was not to be taken as precedent. But this was not to be.

Ogunnaike assumed office in July 1929 and moved by the fact that he was non-*abidagbaa* began to express support for the desire of members of the Gbelegbuwa family to have their defunct royal status revived. Earlier appeals by the family had been turned down by reason of the absence of an *abidagbaa* in the family. To make the circumstance more agreeable the family submitted a genealogical list of the children of Gbelegbuwa born to the throne and their descendants. The government eventually acceded to their request in 1930. At the demise of Ogunnaike in 1933 his successor was chosen from the Gbelegbuwa family. He was Daniel Adesanya who was heavily favoured by the local British officers because he was literate.

Adesanya died in February 1959 and it was the turn of the Anikilaya family to produce a successor. The ghost of the *abidagbaa* tradition hovered once again. The qualified candidates were uneducated and not considered suitable for the times. It would have been a retrograde step as the late king was literate. In the circumstances, the choice fell on the best educated among their sons. He was twenty-five-year-old Sikiru Adetona, who was recalled home from England where he had arrived in January 1959 to study accountancy.³⁴ He assumed office in January 1960.

REGNAL LENGTHS

The foregoing is an outline of the kings from Obanta the founder of the kingdom with an attempt to account for all the names that appear in the lists. For the dynastic chronology, this will be based on the lists provided by Adebajo and Payne. In the first instance, Adebajo's list has the advantage of supplying regnal lengths before Gbelegbuwa. Second, it is a genealogical list showing the consanguineous connections of the kings. Third, as the preceding section shows, the list is no less exhaustive than the other two by Olusola and Odutola.

The list indicates a succession cycle of three original lineal branches deriving from Obanta and his next two successors. Three points may be noted. First, the rule of succession as may be adduced from the list dictated that a branch could for some reason be bypassed as is hypothetically illustrated below:

	Branch I	Branch II	Branch III
Ruler	A	B	C
Ruler			

Ruler F is elected from Branch I instead of Branch III. The first instance of such a jump in the succession cycle was the succession of Lapengbuwa [Table II].

Second, the royal status of a branch could lapse if it had lost all its eligible candidates before its turn in the succession cycle. The Gbelegbuwa episode discussed above appears to be the sole example. Third, a new branch may evolve should two kings who were siblings born to a previous ruler be succeeded by their respective offspring as illustrated below:

	Branch I	Branch II	Branch III	Branch IV
Ruler	A	B	C	
Ruler				
Ruler				
Ruler	L	M	N	O

Branch I segments into two autonomous units. Thus as is shown in the Dynastic Chart a new branch was established from Mola (Omila) and his descendants. In this case Olumodan and Mola were brothers, each of whom produced successors.

Other instances of potential segmentation may be noted. The first is between Geje and Sapenuwa who were siblings born to Olope. A division did not occur because Geje had no direct successors. There is another between Adeleke and Ademolu, siblings born to Anikilaya; and a third between Adeona and Ogunnaike, siblings born to Fidipote. In these two cases occurring during the colonial period segmentation became foreclosed by the conversion of the lineal branches into indivisible collateral entities known as "ruling houses." A house is named after a dynastic ancestor from whose descendants of extended families a choice is made for the throne, although direct princes may receive primary consideration in the selection process.

One other noticeable feature of the list is with regard to the reign lengths of its early rulers. The succession cycle was strictly maintained for the first nine rulers [Table II]. But a suspicious pattern is also observable in

the reign lengths of these rulers. For the first cycle of rulers there was an interval of five years in decreasing order. The second cycle had a two-year interval in ascending order; while the third cycle had a four-year interval in decreasing order. It is after the well-known Obaruwa, the tenth ruler that the succession cycle began to be irregular and the reign lengths seem less arbitrary. However, the cumulative period of ninety years for the nine reigns with an average of ten years per reign cannot be considered an unreasonable number in the general dynastic chronology.

It should also be noted that since preference was usually for the eldest eligible candidate in each segment of the succession cycle, Ijebu kings were likely to assume office at relatively old age.³⁵ As has been discussed above, the principle of *abidagbaa* or porphyrogeniture received some prominence during the colonial period. However, the antiquity of this practice before the nineteenth century is hardly supported by a consideration of the dynastic genealogy provided by Adebajo [Table II]. The concept of porphyrogeniture indeed provides a means to propose a dynastic chronology on a firmer basis. If it is, for example, assumed that these kings were born during the first year of their fathers' reigns, the list indicates that out of a total of thirty-nine kings from Obanla (commencing the generation after Obanta) to Anikilaya in the nineteenth century thirty-one of them would be less than 40 years old at accession, five of whom would be below 20 years; four would be between 49 and 59 years. At the time of death (excluding Otutubiosun who did not complete his reign) twenty-eight of the thirty-nine kings would be 50 years and below; and six would be between 54 and 68 years. These relatively short accession ages and lifespan make it improbable that these kings were born during their fathers' reigns.³⁶ On the other hand, the probable ages at accession and death of a particular set four of the thirty-nine kings may be set as follows [Table II]:

Mola: age at accession — 83; age at death — 90
 Ayora: age at accession — 81; age at death — 91
 Setejo: age at accession — 110; age at death — 111
 Anikilaya: age at accession — 71; age at death — 100

To assume that each of these was not born during the father's reign would make their already advanced years before accession more improbable. It is therefore contended that, more from happenstance than the force of tradition, the *abidagbaa* who reigned before the nineteenth century were Mola and Ayora. Table II offers the explanation for this.³⁷ Mola was elected in preference to his nephew and successor (Ajana), establishing a new dynastic line in the process. Ayora had to wait for some seventy-five years before being considered for the throne.

The circumstances leading to the accession of Setejoye does appear to have been controversial. He was eleven reigns below his father's (Moyegeso), which meant the branch was about to be skipped thrice in the succession cycle. The royal name Setejoye, which means overcoming opposition to win the crown, is suggestive; and it just could be that he won the title by successfully advancing arguments which associated porphyrogenitism with special royal immanence. Such sophism might have been inspired by the knowledge that Mola, his apical dynastic ancestor, was born to the throne.³⁸

Porphyrogenitism therefore became an established requirement for succession from Setejoye in the nineteenth century. Setejoye's successor, Anikilaya (the last of the group of four mentioned above) was an *abidagbaa*. The absence of an *abidagbaa* denied the Gbelegbuwa family of the title when it was its turn after Anikilaya's reign in the 1850s, and it was Setejoye's son, Ademuyewo, who succeeded to the throne jumping the cycle by two steps in the process. His royal name, Fidipote, meaning suppressing conspiracy, is suggestive of the fact that the circumstances that attended his accession were contentious.

Compared with the other three *abidagbaa* above, the possible ages attributable to Setejoye before accession also requires examination. Again, this may be gleaned from Table II:

Mola:	accession age if born in the first year of father's reign—83
	accession age if born in the last year of father's reign—74
Ayora:	accession age if born in the first year of father's reign—81
	accession age if born in the last year of father's reign—75
Setejoye:	accession age if born in the first year of father's reign —
	110
	accession age if born in the last year of father's reign —95
Anikilaya:	accession age if born in the first year of father's reign —71
	accession age if born in the last year of father's reign—66

It is clear that Setejoye was advanced in age at the beginning of his reign which spanned just a year and during which he had a child. However, the age range of 95 to 110 years attributable to him before ascending the throne is highly improbable. Considering the age range of his two predecessors it is safe to suggest that Setejoye was an octogenarian at his accession to the throne, meaning that he was born in the 1730s.

The contention that Setejoye was an *abidagbaa* and that he was in his eighties when he became king has chronological implications in the king

lists. It means that Setejoye's father, Moyegeso, only began reigning in the 1730s, very much after 1725 when he is claimed to have died by Adebonojo.³⁹ It thus also calls into question the generally accepted date of "ca.1760" recorded by Payne as the commencement of Gbelegbuwa's reign. If as indicated by Adebonojo a period of thirty-five years intervened between the death of Moyegeso and the accession of Gbelegbuwa, then the latter began his reign not earlier than 1780. In a genealogical chart prepared by the Gbelegbuwa family in 1930, Adepeyin, Payne's father, was listed as the second eldest of the seven *abidagbaa* born to Gbelegbuwa.⁴⁰ Fixing Adepeyin's birth before 1780 would mean he was over sixty years old when he gave birth to Payne. On the other hand, if he was reckoned to be in his mid-fifties (i.e., born about 1784) when he gave birth to Payne in 1839 and if, as indeed it was likely, he was just a few years younger than his elder *abidagbaa* brother, then it is not unreasonable to suggest that Gbelegbuwa's reign only began from about 1780.⁴¹ The dating of the commencement of his reign to "ca. 1760" could just as well have been derived from an overestimation by some two decades of the number of years presumed to have elapsed between Gbelegbuwa's accession and Payne's sources when he became acquainted with Ijebu in the 1870s. As mentioned earlier, this absence of a mechanism for precise dating constrained Payne from exploring the past beyond his grandfather. For our purpose, however, the suggestion that the commencement date of Gbelegbuwa's reign be extended to 1780 would require a corresponding adjustment of Adebonojo's chronology of Gbelegbuwa's predecessors [Table III].

The terminal date of the reign of Gbelegbuwa's successor, Fusengbuwa, also requires some attention. According to Payne, Fusengbuwa's reign came to an end in 1819. Adebonojo offers the slightly different date of 1820. The latter date seems more accurate. A significant event of the reign of Fusengbuwa was the Owu War, and previous studies have generally suggested dates not earlier than 1825 as the year the war ended.⁴² Law has, however, convincingly adduced evidence to state that this is to be reviewed backwards to 1822.⁴³ It is suggested here that even this date should be drawn further back to 1820. Osifekunwe the Ijebu man who was sold into slavery in June 1820 told d'Avezac the French ethnographer in Paris that the Owu War was recently concluded at the time of his departure.⁴⁴ In fact, d'Avezac's understanding of events was that the Owu king was brought as a captive to Ijebu.⁴⁵ Osifekunwe reports that the name of the king at the time of his departure was Adejoko (written as "Ade-Yoko" by d'Avezac) and that he was successor to Gbelegbuwa (rendered as "Beleboua" by d'Avezac).⁴⁶ Osifekunwe's Adejoko is evidently Fusengbuwa, which was the royal name. It seems evident then that Fusengbuwa died sometime after June 1820. The reign of Setejoye,

Fusengbuwa's successor for a year, should therefore be dated 1820–1821 as stated by Adebonojo, and not 1819–1820 by Payne. Anikilaya, Setejoje's successor, began his reign in 1821 therefore. Yet, even the terminal date of Anikilaya's reign as indicated in our sources appears doubtful.

On the strength of the treaty document of February 1852 on which Anikilaya's royal name (Figbajoye) appeared, Adebonojo's dating of the end of his reign and the accession of Fidipote, his successor, to 1850 is to be rejected. As discussed above Ogunnaike, Fidipote's son, who was not an *abidagbaa* and who became *Awujale* in 1929 was believed to have been born in 1850.⁴⁷ Adebonojo's date of 1850 for the accession of Fidipote does seem to have been derived from first-hand information from Ogunnaike that he was less than a year old when his father became king.⁴⁸ Should this be the case, a closer look at the evidence as examined below would suggest that Ogunnaike was born from about mid-1853 and that his father assumed office some months afterwards in 1854.⁴⁹

Payne's date of 1852 as the year of Anikilaya's death and Fidipote's accession seems not to have been incontrovertibly derived from a contemporary source. Using contemporary sources of the consulate authorities in Lagos in the 1850s, P.A. Talbot, writing in the 1920s, states that a new king assumed office in April 1854, by which Fidipote, Anikilaya's successor, was meant.⁵⁰ The consulate authorities were in frequent communication with the Ijebu government from inception in view of the hostile activities of Kosoko, the deposed Lagos king, in the Ijebu town of Epe where the Ijebu had granted him political asylum. It surely would have been documented had the Ijebu king died in 1852 as Payne recorded. The lack of absolute certainty of Payne's evidence is reflected in the writings of scholars who have adopted his date in their studies of the consulate period in Lagos. Thus, for example, O.O. Ayantuga writes that "Fidipote...succeeded to the Ijebu throne **early in 1852**"; while R. S. Smith extends this forward with his statement that Anikilaya "is believed to have died **later in 1852.**"⁵¹ It seems that Talbot in the 1920s had access to official sources which have since eluded researchers. Payne's dating of the terminal period of Anikilaya's reign was presumably informed by the absence of precise documentary reference to the king beyond 1852.

To sum up, Payne's terminal dates for the reigns of Fusengbuwa and Setejoje are to be advanced from 1819 and 1820 respectively to 1820 and 1821 as recorded by Adebonojo. It is contended that the terminal dates of 1850 and 1852 by Adebonojo and Payne respectively for Anikilaya's reign should be stretched to 1854. In view of the suggestion above that Setejoje was an octogenarian during his one-year reign, it is instructive to note that if Anikilaya was born anytime between 1770 and 1775 when his father reigned he would be in his early eighties at the time of his death.⁵²

CONCLUSION

The general arguments and conclusion of this paper are summarized by Table III. The table has essentially followed the list in Adebonojo. The exception is the inclusion of Boyejo, elided by Adebonojo, who seems to have died shortly after his assumption of office. Adebonojo's regnal lengths, drawn from received traditions, have been adopted from the reign of Tewogbuwa upwards. The dating associated with Gbelegbuwa represents a discrepancy resulting from an acceptance of Payne's "written" evidence. All told, the regnal dates have generally been revised in this paper from a critical analysis of the available data. The framework of a dynastic chronology has been established which assigns the period of the primal dynastic ancestor (by name Obanta) to the second half of the fifteenth century.

The evidence is thus consistent with the Portuguese source mentioned at the start of this paper to the extent that it confirms the existence of the kingdom in the fifteenth century. Beyond that, however, Benin traditions associate the advent of the Ijebu dynastic ancestor with Ozolua either as a warrior-prince or warrior-king.⁵³ A number of studies have indeed adduced further evidence to support the Benin claim.⁵⁴ On the whole, the balance of evidence does seem to suggest that the circumstances leading to the establishment of the Ijebu Kingdom were bound up with the early stages of Benin imperial expansion, which occurred during the second half of the fifteenth century.

The need for and the importance of archaeological research in shedding greater light on these developments cannot be overemphasized. Law and Smith have relied on archaeological evidence in proposing the fourteenth century for the foundation of the Oyo Kingdom in view of the difficulty of a meaningful utilization of the Oyo king lists before the seventeenth century.⁵⁵ The implication of this is that extant Oyo king lists are to be considered foreshortened by the absence of the kingdom's very early rulers. More positive results attended Bradbury's similar endeavour on Benin, and his suggestion of the late thirteenth century for the foundation of the kingdom has more or less been supported by archaeological evidence.⁵⁶ Attempts have begun at beaming similar archaeological searchlights on Ijebu; we await the conclusive results of these efforts.⁵⁷

Table I: King Lists

	A	B	C	D
S/N	Payne (1893)	Olusola (1937)	Odutola (1946)	Adeboñojo (1947)
1		Olu-Iwa	Obanta	Obanta (1430)
2		Oshi	Monigbuwa	Obaguru (1445)
3		Obanta	Oba-Guru	Munigbuwa (1455)
4		Monigbuwa	Oba-Loja	Obanla (1460)
5		Oba-Guru	Oba-Lofin	Obaloja (1470)
6		Oba-loja	Oba-Apasa	Obalofin (1482)
7		Oba-lofin	Oba-Ganju	Apasa (1496)
8		Oba-Apasa	Tolumogboye	Obaganju (1508)
9		Oba-Ofiran	Oba Ofiran	Tewogboye (1516)
10		Obaruwa	Obaruwa (Arunwa)	Obaruwa (1520)
11		Obaganju	Oba-Adisa	Ofiran (1529)
12		Tolumogboye	Otutubiosun	Lapeguwa (1532)
13		Lapengbuwa	Ajuwakale	Owa Otutubiosun (1537)
14		Otutu	Oba-Jewo	Ajuwakale (1540)
15		Ajuwakale	Elewuileke	Gbadisa (1552)
16		Adisa	Ore-Yeye (female)	Obajewo (1561)
17		Jewo	Olumodan	Obalewuileke (1576)
18		Elewu-Ileke	Olutoyese	Obalumodan Elewu Ileke (1590)
19		Ajana	Agunwaja	Mase (1620)
20		Olutunoyese	Jadiara	Olotuneso (1625)
21		Olumodan	Mase	Mola (1635)
22		Mase	Sapo-Oku	Ajana (1642)
23		Ore-Yeye (female)	Afolajoye	Ore (female) (1644)
24		Agunwaja	Omila	Obaguwaja (1654)
25		Jadiyara	Ajano	Jadiara (1660)
26		Asapo-okun	Mekun	Sapokun (1675)
27		Afolajoye	Gbogidi	Folajoye (1687)
28		Omila	Ore-Geje (female)	Mekun (1692)
29		Mekun	Oluyoruwa	Gbogidi (1702)
30		Gbogidi	Olope	Ojigi Moyegeso (1710)
31		Ore-geje (female)	Ayora	Obaliyewe (1725)
32		Oluyoruwa	Rubakoye (female)	Olope Oluyoruwa (1730)
33		Muwagona	Sapenuwa	Ojora (1735)
34		Olope	Orodudujoye	Fesojoye (1745)
35		Ayora	Boyejo	Geje (female) (1749)
36		Fesojoye	Oniyewe (female)	Saponuwa Rubakoya (1750)

37		Rubakoye (female)	Moyegeso	Orodudujoye (1755)
38		Sapen-nuwa	Atewogbuwa	Tewogbuwa (1758)
39	Gbelegbuwa (c. 1760)	Oniyewe	Gbelegbuwa (1760)	Gbelegbuwa I (1760)
40	Fusengbuwa (c.1790)	Boyejo	Fusengbuwa (1790)	Fusengbuwa (1790)
41	Setejoye (c. 1819)	Moyegeso	Setejoye (1819)	Setejoye (1820)
42	Anikilaya (c. 1820)	Orodudu-joye	Fugbajoye-Anikilaya (1820)	Anikinaiya (1821)
43	Ademuyewo (1852)	Atewogbuwa	Ademuyewo-Fidipote (1852)	Fidipote (1850)
44	Aboki (1886)	Gbelegbuwa I (1760)	Adesimbo-Tunwase (1886)	Tuwase (1886)
45		Fusengbuwa (1790)	Adeleke-Ogbagba (1895)	Ogbagba I (1895)
46		Setejoye (1819)	Adeona-Fusigboye (1906)	Fusigboye (1906)
47		Figbajoye Anikilaya (1820)	Adekoya-Eleruja (1916)	Fesogbade (1916)
48		Ademuyewo Fidipote (1852)	Ademolu-Fesogbade (1915)	Adekoya (1916)
49		Adesimbo Tunwase (Aboki) (1886)	Adenuga-Folagbade (1925)	Fesogbade (1917)
50		Adeleke Ogbagba (1895)	Ogunnaike-Fibiwoga (1929)	Adenuga (1925)
51		Adeona Fusigboye (1906)		Fibiwoga (1929)
52		Adekoya Eleruja		Gbelegbuwa II (1933)
53		Ademolu Fesogbade (1915)		Ogbagba II (1960)
54		Adenuga Folagbade (1925)		
55		Ogunnaike Fibiwoga (1929)		
56		Dan. Adesanya Gbelegbuwa II (1933)		
57		Sikiru Adetona Ogbagba II (1959)		

Table II: Adebonojo's Chronology

S/ N	Ruler	Period	Regnal Length	Dynas- tic Branch	Probable Age at Accession if Born during Father's Reign	Probable Age at Death if Born dur- ing Father's Reign
1	Obanta	1430-1445	15	1		
2	Obaguru	1445-1455	10	2		
3	Munig- buwa	1455-1460	5	3		
4	Obanla	1460-1470	10	1	30 [1460-1430]	40 [30+10]
5	Obaloja	1470-1482	12	2	25 [1470-1445]	37 [25+12]
6	Obalofin	1482-1496	14	3	27 [1482-1455]	41 [27+14]
7	Apasa	1496-1508	12	1	36 [1496-1460]	48 [36+12]
8	Obaganju	1508-1516	8	2	38 [1508-1470]	46 [38+8]
9	Tewog- boye	1516-1520	4	3	34 [1516-1482]	38 [34+4]
10	Obaruwa	1520-1529	9	1	24 [1520-1496]	33 [24+9]
11	Ofiran	1529-1532	3	2	21 [1529-1508]	24 [21+3]
12	Lapeguwa	1532-1537	5	1	12 [1532-1520]	17 [12+5]
13	Owa Otu- tubiosun	1537-1540	3	3	21 [1537-1516]	Incomplete
14	Ajuwakale	1540-1552	12	3	24 [1540-1516]	36 [24+12]
15	Gbadisa	1552-1561	9	1	20 [1552-1532]	29 [20+9]
16	Obajewo	1561-1576	15	2	32 [1561-1529]	47 [32+15]
17	Obalewuile ke	1576-1590	14	3	34 [1576-1540]	50 [36+14]
18	Obalumo- dan	1590-1620	30	1	38 [1590-1552]	68 [38+30]
19	Mase	1620-1625	5	2	59 [1620-1561]	64 [59+5]
20	Olotuneso	1625-1635	10	3	49 [1625-1576]	59 [49+10]
21	Mola (Omila)	1635-1642	7	1/4	83 [1635-1552]	90 [83+7]
22	Ajana	1642-1644	2	1	52 [1642-1590]	54 [52+2]
23	Ore (fe- male)	1644-1654	10	2	24 [1644-1620]	34 [24+10]
24	Obaguwaja	1654-1660	6	1	12 [1654-1642]	18 [12+6]
25	Jadiara	1660-1675	15	3	35 [1660-1625]	50 [35+15]
26	Sapokun	1675-1687	12	2	31 [1675-1644]	43 [31+12]
27	Folajoye	1687-1692	5	4	52 [1687-1635]	57 [52+5]
28	Mekun	1692-1702	10	3	32 [1692-1660]	42 [32+10]
29	Gbodogi	1702-1710	8	2	27 [1702-1675]	35 [27+8]
30	Ojigi Mo- yegeso	1710-1725	15	4	23 [1710-1687]	38 [23+15]
31	Obaliyewe	1725-1730	5	3	33 [1725-1692]	38 [33+5]
32	Olope Ol-	1730-1735	5	2	28 [1730-1702]	33 [28+5]

	uyoruwa					
33	Ojora (Ayora)	1735-1745	10	1	81 [1735-1654]	91 [81+10]
34	Fesojoye	1745-1749	4	3	20 [1745-1725]	24 [20+4]
35	Geje (fe- male)	1749-1750	1	2	19 [1749-1730]	20 [19+1]
36	Saponuwa Rubakoya	1750-1755	5	2	20 [1750-1730]	25 [20+5]
37	Orodudujo ye	1755-1758	3	1	20 [1755-1735]	23 [20+3]
38	Tewog- buwa	1758-1760	2	3	13 [1758-1745]	15 [13+2]
39	Gbeleg- buwa	1760-1790	30	1	5 [1760-1755]	35 [5+30]
40	Fuseng- buwa	1790-1820	30	3	32 [1790-1758]	62 [32+30]
41	Setejoye	1820-1821	1	4	110[1820-1710]	111[110+1]
42	Anikinaiya	1821-1850	29	2	71 [1821-1750]	100 [71+29]

Table III: Revised Chronology

S/N	Ruler	Period	Regnal Length	Dynastic Branch
1	Obanta	1450-1465	15	1
2	Obaguru	1465-1475	10	2
3	Munigbuwa	1475-1480	5	3
4	Obanla	1480-1490	10	1
5	Obaloja	1490-1502	12	2
6	Obalofin	1502-1516	14	3
7	Apasa	1516-1528	12	1
8	Obaganju	1528-1536	8	2
9	Tewogboye	1536-1540	4	3
10	Obaruwa	1540-1549	9	1
11	Ofiran	1549-1552	3	2
12	Lapengbuwa	1552-1557	5	1
13	Otutubiosun	1557-1560	3	3
14	Ajuwakale	1560-1572	12	3
15	Gbadisa	1572-1581	9	1
16	Obajewo	1581-1596	15	2
17	Elewu Ileke	1596-1610	14	3
18	Olumodan	1610-1640	30	1
19	Mase	1640-1645	5	2
20	Olutoyese	1645-1655	10	3
21	Mola (Omila)	1655-1662	7	1/4
22	Ajana	1662-1664	2	1
23	Ore-Yeye (female)	1664-1674	10	2
24	Agunwaja	1674-1680	6	1

25	Jadiara	1680-1695	15	3
26	Sapoku	1695-1707	12	2
27	Folajoye	1707-1712	5	4
28	Mekun	1712-1722	10	3
29	Gbodogi	1722-1730	8	2
30	Ojigi Moyegeso	1730-1745	15	4
31	Boyejo	1745	0	1
32	Oniyewe	1745-1750	5	3
33	Olope Oluyoruwa	1750-1755	5	2
34	Ayora	1755-1765	10	1
35	Fesojoye	1765-1769	4	3
36	Ore-Geje (female)	1769-1770	1	2
37	Sapenuwa Rubakoye	1770-1775	5	2
38	Orodudujoye	1775-1778	3	1
39	Tewogbuwa	1778-1780	2	3
40	Gbelegbuwa	1780-1790	10	1
41	Fusengbuwa	1790-1820	30	3
42	Setejoye	1820-1821	1	4
43	Anikilaya	1821-1854	33	2
44	Fidipote	1854-1885	31	4
45	Tunwase	1886-1895	9	3
46	Adeleke	1895-1906	9	2
47	Adeona	1906-1915	9	4
48	Adekoya	1916	0	3
49	Ademolu	1916-1925	9	2
50	Adenuga	1925-1929	4	3
51	Ogunnaike	1929-1933	4	4
52	Adesanya	1933-1959	26	1
53	Adetona	1960-		2

NOTES

1. Samuel Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas* (Lagos: C.S.S. Bookshops, 1921), 15.
2. Ogunsigun to Moloney, 26 April 1886, enclosure in Moloney to Granville, 23 June 23 1886. British Parliamentary Papers (c.5144).
3. For a critique of the early phase of Ijebu history see, Tunde Oduwobi, *Ijebu under Colonial Rule, 1892-1960: An Administrative and Political Analysis* (Lagos: First Academic Publishers, 2004), 2-14.
4. The term Ijebu-Ode is of nineteenth-century provenance. The original title was Ode Ijebu, i.e., the capital of Ijebu.
5. This is the now well-known work of Pacheco Pereira. See J.D. Fage, "A Commentary on Duarte Pacheco Pereira's Account of the Lower Guinea Coastlands in His Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis, and some other Early Accounts," *History in Africa* (HA) 7 (1980): 65; Robin Law, "Early European Sources Relating to the Kingdom of Ijebu (1500-1700): A Critical Survey," HA 13 (1986): 246.
6. R.E. Bradbury, "Chronological Problems in the Study of Benin History," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* (JHSN) 1, no. 4 (1959): 263-87; A.F.C. Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans* (London: Longman, 1969), 46-51.

7. For the methodological issues involved in the intelligible interpretation of chronologies and king lists see the two works of David Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition: The Quest for a Chimera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1974), 1-11, *et passim*; and *Oral History* (London: Longman, 1982), 96-102.

8. See B.O. Adebajo, *Itan Ido Ijebu* (A History of Ijebu) (Lagos: John West, 1990), 30; M.B. Okubote, *Iwe Ikekuru ti Itan Ijebu* (A Short History of Ijebu) (Ijebu-Ode: Author, 1937), 54-55.

9. Odubanjo Odutola, *Iwe Kini Ilosiwaju Eko Itan Ijebu* (A Study of Ijebu History, Book I) (Ijebu-Ode: Eruobodo Press, 1946), 33-34.

10. Bradbury, "Chronological Problems," 267ff.

11. P.C. Lloyd, "Osifekunde of Ijebu," in *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade*, ed. P.D. Curtin (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 283.

12. The palace grounds, for example, gave way to local administration (government) offices from the period of the conquest.

13. Okubote, *Iwe Ike kuru ti Itan Ijebu*, 54. For the circumstances leading to the ejection of Fidipote see Tunde Oduwobi, "Rift and Reconciliation: Repercussions of the Ekitiparapo War in the Ijebu Kingdom, 1882-92," *Iroro* 9 (2003): 203-211.

14. See O. Ogunba, "Crowns and 'Okute' at Idowa," *Nigeria Magazine* 83 (December 1964): 249-61.

15. J.A. Payne, *Tables of Principal Events in Yoruba History* (Lagos: A.M. Thomas, 1893), 40.

16. See Lloyd Gwam, "John Otunba Payne," *Sunday Times*, 29 November 1964, 11 and 12; J.H. Kopytoff, *A Preface to Modern Nigeria* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), 296; O.O. Ayantuga "Ijebu and Its Neighbours, 1851-1914" (PhD diss., University of London, 1965), 195; G.O. Olusanya, "John Augustus Otonba Payne and the Establishment of Colonial Rule in Nigerian," in *West African Colonial Civil Servants in the 19th Century*, ed. Kwame Arhin (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1985), 44-56.

17. Echoing the motivation underlying Payne's historical compilations, a newspaper review observed that the *Tables of Principal Events in Yoruba History*, was intended "to enable Judges, District Commissioners, local practitioners and others, to ascertain dates and events mentioned by witnesses in their examinations in court, and so to facilitate the labours of both Bench and Bar in the discharge of their duties" [*The Colonies and India*, August 11, 1894, 20].

18. See Ayantuga, "Ijebu and Its Neighbours," 170-94.

19. Apart from the ones used in this paper see also, J.A.B. Osiyemi, S.A. Banjo, and I.O. Osopale, *Iwe Itan Ijebu Molusi Tabi Ijebu-Igbo* (A History of Ijebu Molusi Known also as Ijebu-Igbo), n.p., n.d. (1927), 4; D.O. Epega, *Iwe Itan Ijebu at Ilu Miran* (A History of Ijebu and Some Other Towns), 2nd ed. (Lagos: Ife-Olu Printing Works, 1934), 12; Okubote, *Iwe Ike kuru ti Itan Ijebu*, 78-79.

20. J.A. Olusola, *Ancient Ijebu-Ode* (Ibadan: Abiodun Printing Works, 1968), 36-37.

21. See Oduwobi, *Ijebu under Colonial Rule*, 107-133.

22. Odutola, *Iwe Kini Ilosiwaju Eko Itan Ijebu*, 5-6.

23. This occupied the fourth position on the chiefly hierarchy in Ijebu-Ode.

24. Adebajo, *Itan Ido Ijebu*, 9-21.

25. The alphanumeric numbering in square brackets denotes the placement of the corresponding king in Table I.

26. Since the king list is an "official" source the names on it are ideally supposed to be the royal names assumed by the rulers on enthronement. In Payne, the last three are

personal names. In Olusola and Odutola the royal and personal names are given from Figbajoye whose personal name is Anikilaya. Adebonojo gives the royal names of the same set of kings except Adekoya (Eleruja) and Adenuga (Folagbade). It should also be pointed out that the use of Ijebu dialect forms accounts for differences in the spelling of some of the names (e.g., Anikilaya/Anikinaiya). Standard Yoruba forms will be used in the general run of discussion in this paper.

27. Tunde Oduwobi, "Early Ijebu History: An Analysis on Demographic Evolution and State Formation," in *Yoruba Identity and Power Politics*, ed. Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 146–53.

28. Epega, *Iwe Itan Ijebu at Ilu Miran*, 44.

29. Okubote, *Iwe Ikekuru ti Itan Ijebu*, 56.

30. See Olusola, *Ancient Ijebu-Ode*, 63–66; Ayantuga, "Ijebu and Its Neighbours," Appendix A.

31. For the rest of this section see Oduwobi, *Ijebu under Colonial Rule, 1892–1960*, 66–97.

32. The birth of a prince was heralded by the sounding of the royal drum called *agbaa*. The new prince was subsequently identified as an *abidagbaa*—i.e., one for whom the *agbaa* drum was sounded at birth.

33. Resident to Secretary, Southern Provinces, 16 January 1933, CSO 26/2, file no. 15888, vol. I, National Archives Ibadan [NAI].

34. P.C. Lloyd, "Installing the Awujale," *Ibadan*, no. 12 (June 1961): 7; S.K. Adetona, *Awulale: The Autobiography of Alaiyeluwa Oba S.K. Adetona, Ogbagba II* (Ibadan: Mosuro Publishers, 2010), ch. 1.

35. Epega, *Iwe Itan Ijebu at Ilu Miran*, 26, states that the Ijebu considered anomalous any period of reign beyond sixteen years. A lengthy reign meant a branch enjoyed more than its fair share in a dynastic generation or succession cycle. This feeling was echoed by a British administrative officer in 1929 when he posed the following question to members of the *Awujale's* cabinet: "Supposing a [young man] is elected [who] reigns for 40 years. Do you think that will work well?" [Minutes of the Judicial Council Meeting, Saturday, 2 March 1929, IjeProf. 4, file no. J. 564, NAI].

36. The most extreme case is Gbelegbuwa who would have been five years old at accession and dying at age thirty-five.

37. See also the Dynastic Chart.

38. See the Dynastic Chart.

39. It may be noted that the *Alaafin* whose reign ended in the early 1730s was, like Moyegeso, Ojigi by name. Oyo tradition alludes to the intervention of *Alaafin* Ajagbo in Ijebu dynastic squabbles during the seventeenth century. It just could be that this event refers properly to Ojigi's intervention on behalf of Moyegeso in the early 1730s, and that it created an ill-feeling in Ijebu (as Ojigi became an alias for Moyegeso) resulting in an attempt to prevent Moyegeso's offspring from the kingship. Setejoye, presumably the last surviving son of Moyegeso, had to find a way to forestall this eventuality of the loss of the family's royal status. A similar apprehension of such a loss, as earlier discussed above, motivated the protests of the Tunwase to the British authorities in 1916 [See Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire, c. 1600–c. 1836* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 59–60, 135–36].

40. The seven were Kuye, Adepeyin, Adekomaiya, Onagolu, Sheelu, Okusape, and Awomade [See IjeProf 2, file no. C.17/4, NAI].

41. This means Adepeyin was not younger than seventy-eight years old when Payne moved to Lagos in 1862. It just could be that Payne's decision to move to Lagos was precipitated by his father's demise.

42. See A.I. Akinjogbin, "A Chronology of Yoruba History, 1789-1840," *Odu* (second series) 2, no.2 (January 1966): 81-86.

43. R.C.C. Law, "The Chronology of the Yoruba Wars of the Early Nineteenth Century: A Reconsideration," *JHSN* 5, no. 2 (June 1970): 220.

44. For the preferred name of Osifekunwe to Lloyd's Osifekunde, see Tunde Oduwobi, "Some Considerations concerning d'Avezac's *Notice sur le Pays et le Peuple des Yebous en Afrique*," in *The Ijebu of Western Nigeria: A Historical and Socio-Cultural Study*, edited by O.O. Olubomehin (Ibadan: College Press and Publishers Limited, 2001), 26-28. Lloyd, "Osifekunde of Ijebu," 235n38, concedes his use of "the form Osifekunde...with some uncertainty."

45. Lloyd, "Osifekunde of Ijebu," 247. There is an Owu community in Ijebu that associates its origins with the Owu War [See A.L. Mabogunje and J. Omer-Cooper, *Owu in Yoruba History* (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1971), 85-94].

46. Lloyd, "Osifekunde of Ijebu," 283.

47. Resident to Secretary, Southern Provinces, 16 January 1933, CSO 26/2, file no. 15888, vol.1, NAI.

48. As noted earlier, Adebajo was a member of the *Awujale's* cabinet.

49. Initial official sources, quite erroneously, attributed his date of birth to 1859— which would mean he was born during his father's reign ["Descendants of Fidiote," attachment in Resident to Secretary, Southern Provinces, 19 February 1929, IjeProf. 2, file no. C.17/12, NAI].

50. P.A. Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (London: Frank Cass, 1969), 219.

51. Ayantuga, "Ijebu and Its Neighbours," 68; R.S. Smith, *The Lagos Consulate, 1851-1861* (London: Macmillan, 1978), 42. Emphases mine.

52. See Table III.

53. As a warrior-prince see Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, 218; as a warrior-king, J.U. Egharevba, *Some Tribal Gods of Southern Nigeria* (Benin: Author, 1951), 12.

54. P.C. Lloyd, "The Traditional Political System among the Yoruba," *South Western Journal of Anthropology*, 10, no. 4 (1954): 378-81; O. Ogunba, "Ritual Drama of the Ijebu People: A Study of Indigenous Festivals" (PhD diss. University of Ibadan, 1967), 145; Oduwobi, "Early Ijebu History," 153.

55. Law, *The Oyo Empire*, ch.4; idem, "How Many Times Can History Repeat Itself? Some Problems in the Traditional History of Oyo," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 18, no.1 (1985): 48-49; R.S. Smith, *Kingdoms of the Yoruba*, 3rd ed. (London: James Currey Limited, 1988), 34.

56. G. Connah, *The Archaeology of Benin* (London: Clarendon Press, 1975), 243.

57. See Gerard L. Chouin and Adisa B. Ogunfolakan, *Ife-Sungbo Archaeological Project: Preliminary Report on Excavations at Ita Yemoo, Ile-Ife, Osun State and on Rapid Assessment of Earthwork Sites at Eredo and Ilara-Epe, Lagos State, June-July 2015*,
<https://www.academia.edu/17178460/Ife-Sungbo-Archaeological-Project-Final-report-on-Excavations-at-Ita-Yemoo-Ile-Ife-Osun-State-and-on-Rapid-Assessment-of-Earthwork-Sites-at-Eredo-and-Ilara-Epe-Lagos-State-June-July-2015-Updated-in-December-2016> (accessed 30 March

2017); Olanrewaju B. Lasisi and David A. Aremu, "New Lights on the Archaeology of Sungbo's Eredo, South-western Nigeria," *Dig It*, no. 3 (April 2016): 54-63.