

**CONFLICT, WAR, DISPLACEMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARTS OF OSUN
STATE, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

By

BENJAMIN ADISA OGUNFOLAKAN

(Matric No. 68943)

B.A. Archaeology (Moscow, Russia)

M.A. Archaeology (Moscow, Russia)

M.Sc. Archaeology (Ibadan, Nigeria)

M.Phil. Archaeology (Ibadan, Nigeria)

A thesis in the Department of

ARCHAEOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY,

Submitted to the Faculty of Science in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Of the

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

1 **NAME:** Benjamin Adisa **OGUNFOLAKAN**
2 **MATRIC. No.:** 68943
3 **TITLE:** **CONFLICT, WAR, DISPLACEMENT AND**
4 **ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARTS OF OSUN**
5 **STATE, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**
6 **ABSTRACT**

7 Most archaeological works in southwestern Nigeria are concentrated in Ile-Ife,
8 Esie, Old Oyo and Owo. In these areas, the focus of archaeological studies had been on
9 different works of art in bronze, terracotta, wood and stone. Studies on cultural themes
10 related to the issues of conflict, war and displacement which have implications for
11 landscape archaeology of the area are often relegated to the background. The main goal
12 of this research was to highlight how conflict, war and displacement impacted on the
13 settlement history of parts of Osun State, southwestern Nigeria. The study also appraised
14 human interactions with the environment and the concomitant effects on emergent
15 settlement configurations.

16 Oral and written data were collected from Ile-Ife, Ikire, Ipetumodu, Ila-Orangun,
17 and Ajaba to generate anthropological data. Investigations aimed at identifying and
18 collecting surface artifacts involved reconnaissance and detailed surveys of the studied
19 sites. Excavations were carried out on potsherd pavements at Ajaba and Asi and on a
20 refuse mound at Ajaba. Artifacts from surface collections and excavations were classified
21 according to types, decoration and functional attributes. Analysis of Mo, Cu, Pb, and Ni
22 of sherd samples was done using inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry. Ten thin
23 sections were made from selected sherd samples for determination of pottery fabric and
24 inclusions. Palynological analysis of soil samples collected from different depths of the
25 excavated mound was carried out using a microscope with an attached camera.

26 Decorative motifs such as single twisted cord impression were common to all
27 sites. With exception of sherds from Ila-Orangun, those from other areas were related in
28 terms of types, fabric and functional attributes. Some of the sherds bore striking
29 resemblance to those documented for Old Oyo and Ile-Ife with regard to type, decoration
30 and function. Stylistically, the potsherd pavements at Asi and Ajaba were similar to those
31 documented for Ile-Ife. A C-14 date of AD 1263 was obtained from charcoal at a depth
32 of 80cm from the Ajaba mound excavation. Maize cob decoration was absent which
33 indicated that Ajaba site was occupied prior to 16th century when maize was introduced
34 into West Africa. Pollen of forest species and ornamental plants of Asian origin, such as
35 *Lagerstroemia indica*, *Casuarina equisetifolia* and *Delonix regia* was identified from the
36 excavated mound. These were abundant at the lower levels of the excavated mound.
37 However, pollen of ornamental plants disappeared completely at the upper levels while
38 secondary forest species and artifacts increased in abundance which was indicative of
39 increase in human population and subsequent impact on vegetation. There was evidence
40 of increased peopling of the area from around AD 1263. Oral and written records
41 suggested that conflicts and war caused displacement and re-occupation of most of the
42 settlements.

43 Conflict and war resulted in the abandonment and reoccupation of all the sites,
44 resulting in the delineation of several historical phases of occupation. Human impact on
45 the environment was noted from the 13th century.

46 **Keywords:** Conflict, War, Displacement, Archaeological data

47 **Word Count:** 500

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people in one way or the other assisted and encouraged me to finish this work. I sincerely owe the completion of this thesis to the patience, thoroughness, intellectual guidance and fairness of my supervisor, Dr. Jonathan Olu Aleru. My heartfelt gratitude goes to him for encouraging, guiding and putting me through this work. His patience in going through the draft meticulously is worthy of mentioning. To the Head of Department Prof. Bayo Lawuyi, I say a very big thank you for words of advice and constant questions on the state of the completion of the thesis, words of the mouth are not enough to express my sincere appreciation. In addition, I thank Professor David Aremu who, not only insisted on the completion of this project by constantly phoning to remind me of the need to complete the work but also stood by me in prayers. Special thanks go to Prof. (Mrs.) M.A. Sowunmi who with the assistance of Mr. A. E. Orijemie carried out the palynological analysis and interpretation of soil samples from Ajaba. Mama, I know you are always there for us. I pray that God Almighty will grant you long life and good health.

My director, Professor Akin Ige of Natural History Museum, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife is a wonderful person, a man of God (in fact, he is an Archdeacon of the Anglican Communion) not only supported me but actually 'stood on my neck' to see that I complete the project. Professor Akin Ige not only encouraged me to be steadfast in the project but he also assisted me in the chemical and material analysis of the ceramic samples from the study area and other parts of Yorubaland for the understanding of the source of the raw material. Mr. Moshood Olayiwola and Babatunde Babalola took the soil samples for the palynological analysis. Special appreciation goes to Mr. Babalola who took active part in the excavation. Mr. Olaleye Otunla and Peter Dada provided me with all support, most especially, in drawing most of the maps in this work while Ojoniyi Timothy worked with me on the field and took most of the photographs. I will also like to acknowledge the support of other members of staff of the Natural History Museum - senior, intermediate and junior – who were all so anxious and concerned about the quick completion of this doctoral thesis.

My sincere gratitude goes to Owaloja of Ajaba, Oba Adedotun Adetoyese and his chiefs, the Edigbon of Edemosi, the Orangun of Oke-Ila and all other royal fathers who

gave me remarkable support during this exercise. My sister in-law, Mrs Modupe Popoola who introduced me to her father in-law, Chief Joshua Popoola, the Tewogbade of Iresi who in turn showed me the potsherd pavement in Ajaba and other informants from this area are worthy of special recognition. The cooperation and support of these people made this work a success. Chief Popoola actually became an advocate of cultural preservation by going round the houses of prominent people in Ajaba to explain my mission in carrying out excavations at Ajaba. He stood by us throughout the period of the excavations.

Lastly, I will like to thank my dear wife Mrs. Dorcas Olusola Ogunfolakan (Iya Adisa) and the children for their patience and understanding during my numerous field trips and when at times I had to sleep in the office. Their total support made the completion of this Ph.D work a great success. I appreciate you all, may God continue to bless you, and solidify our love for each other.

Finally, to all of you too numerous to mention, I say big thanks to you.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this dissertation was carried out by Mr. Benjamin Adisa Ogunfolakan under my supervision.

Signature.....

Date:.....

Supervisor

Dr. Jonathan Olu Aleru

Reader

Department of Archaeology/Anthropology,

University of Ibadan,

Ibadan.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty God and my loving late mother (Alhaja) Chief (Mrs.) Juweratu Abegbe Ogunfolakan who saw the beginning of this project but did not see the end. ‘Iya Muri’, I miss your motherly care. You inspired, influenced and encouraged me to become what I am today. Forever, you will remain in my heart. May your soul, rest in perfect peace.

LIST OF PLATES

Plate	1.1	A typical market day	5
Plate	1.2	Erosion washes at Iresi (Drainage)	12
Plate	1.3	Deforestation of the sacred grove	17
Plate	3.1	Potsherd pavement (Ila Orangun)	48
Plate	3.2	Oke-Ipole Shrine at Iree	50
Plate	3.3	Igbajo Old place building	51
Plate	3.4	Igbajo New palace building	52
Plate	3.5	Okuta Latosa (Kiriji war site)	55
Plate	3.6	Kiriji War Peace Treaty Site	56
Plate	3.7	Ijoko: rock chair at the entrance of the route to the shelter	58
Plate	3.8	Inside the rockshelter at Iresi	59
Plate	3.9	Oju'du shrine (Rockshelter at Iragbiji)	60
Plate	3.10	Gbekan-rukan	61
Plate	3.11	Okan yi lule o ku okan rocks	62
Plate	3.12	A building over the Iragbiji pavement	64
Plate	3.13	Iragbiji potsherd pavement	65
Plate	3.14	Motin shrine at Igbajo	74
Plate	3.15	The king making sacrifice to the ancestor during Ori-Oke festival at Iragbiji	79
Plate	4.1	Hoe blade at the mouth of the <i>ajere</i> pot (perforated pot retrieved from the exposed Ajaba pavement)	92
Plate	4.2	Petrol Station under construction on the Ila-Orangun pavement site	96
Plate	4.3	1 by 2 metres pegged for excavation	98
Plate	4.4:	Spit level one	100
Plate	4.5:	Excavation in Progress	101
Plate	4.6:	Roots and rootlets occurred right from spit level one to level 10	102
Plate	4.7:	Sterile Layer of the Excavation	103
Plate	4.8	Measuring and Drawing of the Stratigraphic Units	104
Plate	5.1	Jaw of an animal	110

Plate 5.2	Iron slag	110
Plate 5.3	Iron Object	110
Plate 5.4	Iron Object	110
Plate 5.5:	Comparing the Iron Objects	110
Plate 5.6:	Human tooth	110
Plate 5.7:	Baked clay/Fragment of Furnace?	111
Plate 5.8:	Plain	118
Plate 5.9:	Carved roulette	118
Plate. 5.10	Plain rim/Twisted cord	119
Plate 5. 11	Roulette	119
Plate 5. 12	Groove/Wavy Groove	120
Plate 5. 13	Twisted cord	120
Plate 5. 14	Incision/roulette	121
Plate 5. 15	Plain	121
Plate 5. 16	Bossing/Twisted cord	122
Plate 5. 17	Wavy/Groove	122
Plate 5. 18	Composite	123
Plate 5. 19	Burnished	123
Plate 5. 20	Burnished/Grooved	124
Plate 5. 21	Incision	124
Plate 5. 22	Perforated Pottery	125
Plate 5. 23	Painted Pottery	125
Plate 5. 24	Sherds for geochemical analysis from Iloran (Ile-Ife) ancient community	129
Plate 5. 25	A building under construction at Ita-Yemoo, Ile-Ife	130
Plate 5. 26	Cutting through potsherd pavement during excavation of a building foundation at Ita-Yemoo, Ile-Ife	131
Plate 5.27	Sherds from Ajaba Pavement excavation for Geochemical analysis	132
Plate 5. 28	Sherds from Ajaba Mound Excavation for Geochemical analysis	133

Plate	5.29	Sherds from Iragbiji for Geochemical analysis	134
Plate	5.30	Sherds from Iresi for Geochemical analysis	135
Plate	5.31	Collection of Soil Samples from each layer for Pollen analysis	147
Plate	5.32	Photomicrographs of palynomorphs (all magnification x1000)	150
Plate	5.33	Photomicrographs of palynomorphs (all magnification x 1000)	151
Plate	5.34	Section of Ajaba Wall	162
Plate	5.35	Buried Pot at a Section of Ajaba Wall	163
Plate	6.1a	Femur of an animal (a large mammal)	169
Plate	6.1b	Jaw of an animal	169

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.	1.1	Map of Nigeria showing Osun State	4
Fig.	1.2	Map of Osun State showing the study area	7
Fig.	1.3	Map showing Osun Northeast showing the study area	8
Fig.	1.4	Generalised geological map showing the study area.	10
Fig.	1.5	Soil Association of study area	14
Fig.	3.1	Kiriji War Site map	54
Fig.	3.2	Geomagnetic profiling of Ajaba Potsherd Pavement	68
Fig.	4.1	Site plan of Aganju Tapa Potsherd Pavement (<i>Aganju Tapa</i>) Excavation	87
Fig.	4.2	Sketch map of Ajaba town showing the location of the excavated mound	89
Fig.	4.3	Site Plan of Ajaba Potsherd pavement excavation	90
Fig.	4.4	Stratigraphy of the western flank of the site	93
Fig.	4.5	Plan showing the exposed excavated pavement	94
Fig.	4.6	Stratigraphy of Ajaba Mound excavation	104
Fig.	5.1	Pottery typology	115
Fig.	5.2	REE patterns of sherds normalized to chondrites and compared patterns of regolith from granite	143
Fig.	5.3	Principal component analysis and cluster	144
Fig.	5.4	Comparison of abundance of forest trees (forest resources) with Pottery abundance (index of human population) from level 100-10cm	157

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1:	Table of X and Y coordinates of most promising anomalies	71
Table 5.1:	General Artefact Inventory Ajaba Refuse Mound I.	109
Table 5.2:	Distribution of Major Pottery Decoration Types (Body)	116
Table 5.3:	Distribution of Major Pottery Decorations (Rims)	117
Table 5.4:	Major element composition of pavement samples and raw materials	137
Table 5.5:	Trace element composition of potsherds from south-western	138
Table 5.6:	Rare earth element composition of potsherds from south-western Nigeria	139
Table 5.7:	Chondrite normalized rare earth composition of potsherds and granite regoliths from southwestern Nigeria	140
Table 5.8:	Phytoecological groupings:	152
Table 5.9:	Figures of Tree Resources and Pottery	157

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii-iv
Certification	v
Dedication	vi
List of Plates`	vii-ix
List of Figures	x
List of Tables	xi
Table of contents	xii-xvi

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	1-3
1.2	Geographical Background	3
1.2.1	Location	3- 6
1.2.2	Climate	6 - 9
1.2.3.	Geology and Geomorphology	9-11
1.2.4	Relief	11
1.2.5	Drainage system	11-13
1.2.6	Soil	13
1.2.7	Vegetation	13-16
1.3	Historical Background	16-18
1.4	Previous Archaeological Investigations in the area	18-20
1.5	Scope of the Study	20
1.6	Research Aims and Objectives	21
1.7	Methods of Research	21-23

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

REVIEW

2.1:	Theoretical Framework	24
2.2:	Historical Archaeology	24-27
2.3:	Ethno-archaeology	28-29

2.4:	Oral Tradition Account	29-33
2.5:	Settlement and Settlement Archaeology	33-34
2.6:	Archaeology of Conflict and Migration	34-38
2.7:	Literature Review	38 -39

CHAPTER THREE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

3.1:	Archaeological surveys	40
3.1.1:	Archaeological surveys of Oyan, Asi, Ila-Orangun, Iresi, Ire, Ajaba	40-43
3.2:	Account of Archaeological surveys of Oyan, Asi, Ila-Orangun, Iresi, Ajaba	43
3.2.1:	Oyan	43
	(i) Potsherd pavement	43
	(ii) Town Wall	43-44
	(iii) Igbo-Ogun	44
3.2.2:	Asi	44
	(i) Igbo ‘Riro/Potsherd Pavement	44
	(ii) Igbo-Igbale	44
3.2.3:	Ila-Orangun	45
	(i) Ila Kodomu	45
	(ii) Ila-Yara	45
	(iii) Defense Trench and Embankment	45-46
	(iv) Mound (Oladotun Akanbi’s Farm)	46
	(v) Ibu Ogun (Ogun’s Water fall)	46
	(vi) Ila-Orangun (Ile Ila)	46-47
	(via) Potsherd pavement	47
	(vib) Igbo Atokun	47
	(vic) Town wall	47
3.2.4:	Iree	47
3.3:	Archaeological surveys (Igbajo, Iragbiji Oke-Ila, etc)	49
3.3.1:	Igbajo	49-53
3.3.2:	Kiriji War Site	53

3.3.3: Iresi	53
3.3.4: Iragbiji	57
3.3.4.1: Ojudu	57
3.3.4.2: Gbekan-ru-kan	57
3.3.4.3: Okan yi lu'le o ku okan	57-63
3.3.4.4: Potsherd pavement	63
3.4: Geo-physical methods of Archaeological prospecting	63-66
3.4.1: Data Acquisition	66-67
3.4.2: Data Processing	67-69
3.4.3: Data Interpretation	69-70
3.5: Summary of Collected Oral Tradition	70
3.5.1: Oral History of Igbajo	70-77
3.5.2: Oral History of Iragbiji	77
3.5.3: Oral History of Edemosi/Ajaba	78-80
3.5.4: Oral History of Asi	80-81
3.5.5: Oral History of Ila-Orangun	81-83
3.5.6: Conclusion	83-84

CHAPTER FOUR: EXCAVATIONS AT AJABA AND ENVIRONS

4.1: Excavations at Ajaba and Environs	85
4.1.1 Excavations of potsherds pavement at Aganju Tapa near Asi	85-88
4.1.2 Excavation at Ajaba Pavement site (KJAJ)	88-91
4.1.3 Excavation at Ipetumodu (IPIS)	91-95
4.1.4 Excavation of Potsherd pavement at Ila Orangun	95
4.1.5 Ajaba Mound Excavation (KJAJ RM1)	95-99
4.1.6 Stratigraphy Description	106-107

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSES OF FINDS

5.1. Analyses of Finds	108
5.1.1 General Artifact Inventory	108
5.1.2 Pottery Analysis	112

5.1.3	Pottery analysis KJAJ RM1	112-113
5.1.4	Pottery Decoration Classification	113
5.1.5	Pottery Typological Classification	113-114
5.2.	Geo-Chemical Mineralogical Analysis	114-127
5.2.1	Materials and Method (Pottery Description for Geochemical Analysis)	127
5.2.1.1	Ile-Ife	127
5.2.1.2	Ajaba	127-128
5.2.1.3	Iresi	128
5.2.1.4	Ila Orangun	128
5.2.1.5	Ipetumodu	128
5.3	Geo-Chemical Analytical Methods	128-136
5.3.1	Results and discussion	136
5.3.2	Mineralogical Analysis	136-141
5.3.3	Geo-Chemistry Description	141-142
5.4	Palynological Analysis	145-146
5.4.1	Material and Method of palynological analysis	146
5.4.2	Palynological Analysis Methods	148
5.4.3	Palynological Analysis Result	148-149
5.4.4	Palynological Analysis Discussion	153-156
5.4.5	Ornaments in Palaeo-ecological studies	156-160
5.5	Other Archaeological Feature	160-161

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1.	Discussion	164-171
6.2.	Conclusion	172-174
6.3.	Future challenges	174-175
	References	176-186
Appendix 1	Glossary of Yoruba Words	187
Appendix 11	List of Informants	188-189
Appendix 111	Geo-Magnetic data readings	190-205

Appendix 1V	Geo-magnetic data graph	206-255
Appendix V	Data Interpretation Tables	256-272
Appendix VI	Calibrated Date result	273-274