

HELSINKI JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
A Scientific Publication of Helsinki University, Finland.
Volume: 10 Issue: 5 October, 2026
Pages: 149-158, 2026; Publication No: HJSSH.49072
ISSN: 3442-3567

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

FROM PERIODIC EXCHANGE TO COLLECTIVE MARKET GOVERNANCE: THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF ONITSHA MAIN MARKET AND THE EMERGENCE OF OMATA, C. 1857–1948

Ekenedirichukwu Shulammite Chineyenwa
Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.
chineyeekene@gmail.com

Ismaila Yusuf Usman PhD
Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.
ismailayusman@nsuk.edu.ng
yusufkeffi29@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2249-4469

Mahammad Kabir Aliyu PhD
Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.
mkaliyu2@yahoo.com
mkaliyu@nsuk.edu.ng

Abstract

This article examines the historical development of Onitsha Main Market and the emergence of the Onitsha Market Amalgamated Traders Association (OMATA), focusing on the relationship between indigenous commerce, colonial economic change, urban growth and collective organisation. It argues that the market did not originate through a single act of establishment; rather, it developed through the gradual concentration and reorganisation of commercial activities around Onitsha's strategic position on the River Niger. Indigenous periodic markets, regional exchange networks and local commercial knowledge provided the foundations. From the mid-nineteenth century, expanding riverine trade, missionary and European commercial contact, export demand for palm produce, colonial regulation and urban migration altered the scale and institutional setting of trade. By the 1940s, the growing density of commercial activity and the need for representation, dispute management and coordinated market administration encouraged traders to organise collectively. The paper identifies 1948 as the reported date of OMATA's emergence, while recognising that the precise circumstances, founding membership and initial constitution require corroboration from contemporary records and oral testimony. The study draws on oral interview material, participant observation and published historical works. It contributes to the history of African markets by interpreting market development not as a simple colonial creation, but as an outcome of interaction between indigenous agency and colonial restructuring. It also highlights the importance of source criticism where oral traditions, retrospective accounts and inconsistent dates intersect.

Keywords: Onitsha Main Market, OMATA, Indigenous Trade, River Niger, Colonial Economy, Market Governance, Igbo Commercial History.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

INTRODUCTION

Onitsha Main Market is one of the most significant commercial institutions in southeastern Nigeria. Its historical development is closely associated with Onitsha's strategic position on the eastern bank of the River Niger, its connections with neighbouring communities, and the growth of regional and long-distance commerce. However, the market should not be regarded simply as a physical trading centre established at a particular date. Rather, it evolved through the interaction of indigenous exchange systems, river transport, and migration, changing commodity demand, colonial economic policies and the organisational initiatives of traders. The history of Onitsha therefore illustrates how geography, commercial networks and human agency combined to shape an important centre of economic activity in southeastern Nigeria (Basden, 1921; Isichei, 1976).

Before the consolidation of British colonial rule, commercial exchange in the Niger region was sustained by local markets, itinerant traders and networks connecting agricultural communities with riverine settlements. These systems facilitated the circulation of foodstuffs, fish, salt, craft products and other commodities. Onitsha's location offered opportunities to connect communities on both sides of the Niger, although its commercial prominence depended not on geography alone but also on the relationships, trading practices and institutions developed by the people who used the town as a centre of exchange. The broader history of Igbo society demonstrates the importance of local enterprise, social networks and changing patterns of production and trade in shaping economic life (Afigbo, 1981; Isichei, 1976).

Colonial rule subsequently altered the conditions under which commerce operated. New administrative arrangements, expanding cash-crop production, imported merchandise and changing transport connections affected the movement and volume of goods. These developments created opportunities for commercial growth but also intensified competition, increased the need for market regulation and brought traders into closer contact with colonial and later local authorities. Colonial economic transformation should therefore be understood as a process that reshaped existing commercial systems rather than one that created indigenous commerce from nothing (Hopkins, 1973).

The emergence of the Onitsha Market Amalgamated Traders Association (OMATA), conventionally dated to 1948 in the material examined for this study, represents an important development in the institutional history of the market. As commercial activities expanded, traders had stronger reasons to coordinate their interests, address shared problems and establish a collective voice in dealings with public authorities. The precise circumstances surrounding OMATA's formation, however, require confirmation through contemporary association records, colonial correspondence, newspapers and oral testimony.

This article addresses three related questions: how did Onitsha's commercial geography and indigenous trading practices influence the development of its market; how did colonial economic change affect the scale and regulation of trade; and what circumstances encouraged traders to organise collectively by 1948? It argues that the growth of Onitsha Main Market and the emergence of OMATA were connected but distinct historical processes. The market developed through longstanding exchange networks and subsequent commercial expansion, whereas the association represented a further effort to organise traders within an increasingly complex commercial environment. By examining these processes together, the study highlights traders as active historical agents who adapted to changing economic conditions and negotiated the institutions governing their livelihoods.

Onitsha's Origins and Commercial Geography

Onitsha's origins are commonly explained through oral traditions that associate the

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

community with migration from the Benin area. Ezechima or Chima and Obi Oreze feature prominently in accounts concerning the establishment of Onitsha Ado N'Idu, although traditions differ over migration routes, settlement chronology and the circumstances surrounding the community's formation. Such accounts are important historical evidence, but they should be critically assessed alongside linguistic, archaeological and documentary materials rather than treated as conclusive proof of precise dates. Studies of Igbo history demonstrate the importance of oral tradition in reconstructing the past while recognising the need to compare different accounts and interpret them within their historical contexts (Afigbo, 1981; Isichei, 1976).

Onitsha's geographical position along the River Niger provided a significant foundation for its commercial development. The river connected settlements, facilitated the movement of people and commodities, and linked inland communities with wider trading networks. Onitsha consequently benefited from opportunities to exchange locally produced goods and receive merchandise transported from other parts of the Niger region. Nevertheless, its location alone did not guarantee commercial prominence. The development of an important market also required traders, producers, transporters, consumers and social networks capable of sustaining regular exchange. The wider historical literature on Igbo society demonstrates that commerce developed through the interaction of geographical opportunities, local institutions and the economic initiatives of communities themselves (Basden, 1921; Isichei, 1976).

The commercial significance of Onitsha therefore emerged through the relationship between location and human agency. Traders connected agricultural production with consumer demand, while established relationships with neighbouring communities facilitated the movement and exchange of commodities. River transport supported these interactions, although the precise contribution of individual commodities and trading groups to the market's early expansion requires further investigation through local oral histories, archival records and contemporary accounts.

This perspective provides an important foundation for understanding the later transformation of Onitsha Main Market. Rather than presenting the market as a product of colonial intervention alone, its development should be situated within a longer history of indigenous commerce that colonial rule subsequently reshaped. The distinction also clarifies why the emergence of OMATA in 1948 should be examined separately from the earlier growth of the market itself: commercial activity could expand over time before traders established a more formal association to coordinate their collective interests.

Indigenous Exchange and the Foundations of the Market

Before the emergence of a centralised modern market, Onitsha's commercial life was sustained by indigenous market institutions, agricultural production and regional trading networks. Across Igboland, periodic markets commonly operated according to the four-day cycle of Eke, Orie, Afor and Nkwo, although local arrangements varied between communities. These markets were organised institutions governed by customary practices, established schedules and social relationships that regulated exchange and brought producers, traders and consumers together (Afigbo, 1981; Isichei, 1976).

Agriculture, fishing and craft production formed important foundations of this early economy. Farmers supplied yams, cocoyams and vegetables, while fishing communities and craftspeople contributed fish, pottery, baskets, mats and tools. Traders connected communities with different productive resources, facilitating the circulation of goods across local and regional networks. Barter, reciprocal exchange, cowries and other means of payment could coexist, depending on the commodity, location and nature of the transaction. This diversity cautions against portraying indigenous commerce as a simple transition from barter to monetary exchange (Hopkins, 1973).

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

The names Otu Nkwo, Otu Nkwor Eze and Otunkwo-Eze, which appear in accounts of Onitsha's early market traditions, require careful historical treatment. Their variation may reflect differences in pronunciation, transcription or the identification of related market spaces. Without corroborating evidence, it would be premature to assume that all three names referred to precisely the same place. Nevertheless, these traditions suggest that commercial activity preceded the later concentration and expansion of trading in Onitsha Main Market. Establishing the market's precise chronology and location requires comparison of oral accounts with documentary and other historical evidence.

Commercial exchange also depended on trust, reputation, kinship and the transmission of business knowledge. The Igbo apprenticeship system, commonly known as igba-boi, illustrates how commercial skills and relationships could be reproduced across generations. Apprentices learned to assess goods, negotiate prices, manage stock and maintain customer relations under the guidance of established traders. Depending on the arrangement, an apprentice might later receive assistance in establishing an independent business. Although the system should not be assumed to have operated uniformly across all periods and trading groups, it demonstrates how mentorship and social obligations could support enterprise and the continuity of commercial networks (Isichei, 1976).

For example, a trader who trained an apprentice in negotiating with suppliers and maintaining reliable customer relationships transferred not merely technical knowledge but also the reputational practices essential to repeated transactions. Such relationships help explain the resilience of indigenous commerce. However, apprenticeship and social trust alone cannot explain commercial success; access to capital, transport, merchandise and profitable markets also mattered. These indigenous foundations provide the necessary context for understanding how Onitsha's commercial institutions subsequently responded to European contact and colonial economic transformation.

European Contact and Colonial Economic Transformation

The arrival of the Niger expedition led by Dr William Baikie at Onitsha in July 1857 marked an important phase in the town's relationship with European missionary and commercial interests. The expedition included Samuel Ajayi Crowther, while John Christopher Taylor remained at Onitsha to establish the Church Missionary Society's mission. The choice of Onitsha reflected its strategic position along the Niger and its potential as a centre for wider regional engagement (Basden, 1921; Nwabara, 1971). Historical accounts confirm the expedition's arrival in July 1857 and the establishment of the mission at Onitsha.

During the nineteenth century, growing European demand for palm oil and palm kernels encouraged commercial expansion in the Niger region. African producers and traders participated as cultivators, brokers, carriers and merchants, linking local production to overseas demand. Onitsha's riverfront location facilitated the movement of produce and imported goods, strengthening its role in regional distribution. The expansion of this trade nevertheless produced unequal outcomes, as European firms increasingly influenced commercial terms and the distribution of profits (Hopkins, 1973; Nkem-Onyekpe, 2008).

The transition from the Atlantic slave trade to so-called legitimate commerce was neither immediate nor socially neutral. Existing trading relationships adapted to changing demands, while the growing export trade in agricultural commodities created new opportunities and pressures. The expansion of commerce should therefore be understood as a transformation of established African economic systems rather than the introduction of trade into an otherwise inactive society (Hopkins, 1973).

The Royal Niger Company, which received its royal charter in 1886, became an important instrument of British commercial expansion along the Niger. Its activities, alongside those of other European firms, contributed to the penetration of merchant capital

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

and changes in local production and exchange. Research on the colonial West Niger Igbo area shows that expanding palm-produce trade stimulated production but also exposed African traders and producers to unequal trading relationships and the influence of large commercial companies (Nkem-Onyekpe, 2008).

Colonial economic integration also increased the circulation of imported textiles, household goods and other manufactured products. African merchants responded by adapting their businesses, developing new trading relationships and pursuing opportunities created by changing consumer demand. However, access to capital, transport and suppliers remained uneven, meaning that commercial expansion benefited some traders more than others. Colonial taxation, administrative regulation and the growing use of currency further influenced how traders priced goods, accounted for transactions and participated in cash-based economic activities (Hopkins, 1973).

Transport was central to these developments. River traffic connected Onitsha with settlements upstream and downstream, while expanding road networks improved links with inland communities. These connections widened access to merchandise and markets, although colonial transport and commercial policies were also shaped by administrative and export priorities. The overall effect was therefore double-edged: colonial integration expanded trading opportunities while placing local commerce within an economic structure increasingly influenced by British commercial interests (Nkem-Onyekpe, 2008).

For Onitsha Main Market, these developments created the conditions for greater commercial concentration and more complex trading relationships. As the number of traders, the volume of transactions and the range of commercial interests' increased, collective organisation became increasingly valuable. This context helps explain the significance attributed to OMATA's emergence in 1948, while leaving the specific circumstances of its formation to be established through direct documentary and oral evidence.

Urban Growth, Migration and Commercial Competition

By the early twentieth century, Onitsha's growing commercial importance was reinforced by urban expansion, population growth and migration. Traders from neighbouring communities and other parts of Nigeria, including Hausa, Yoruba and Nupe merchants, participated in the town's expanding commercial networks. The reported presence of Syrian, Armenian and Indian merchants by the 1930s further illustrates Onitsha's connections with wider regional and international trading circuits. Such interactions diversified the supply of commodities, expanded consumer markets and encouraged commercial partnerships across ethnic and linguistic boundaries. However, the specific trading roles of these groups require further verification through contemporary records.

Migration also intensified competition for trading spaces, commercial opportunities and political representation. As Onitsha developed into a major trading centre, the interests of indigenous inhabitants and migrant residents increasingly intersected with questions of urban administration and resource allocation. The formation of the Ibo Union in 1941 provides a relevant context for understanding the growth of collective organisation in southeastern Nigeria, although its direct influence on OMATA's establishment requires documentary evidence. More broadly, colonial urbanisation encouraged new forms of association through which occupational and community groups pursued shared interests (Hopkins, 1973).

Women also contributed significantly to Onitsha's commercial expansion. Their participation in trading networks, commodity distribution and business relationships challenges the assumption that early twentieth-century commerce was predominantly a male enterprise. Research on African women's economic activities demonstrates their important roles in regional trade and market organisation (Van Allen, 1972). Further investigation is nevertheless necessary to establish the extent of women's participation in OMATA's

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

founding, membership and leadership.

Increasing urban density also created practical challenges involving stall allocation, rents, storage, sanitation, security and dispute resolution. These pressures provide a plausible explanation for the growing need for collective market governance. For example, traders facing inconsistent stall-allocation practices could benefit from common rules and representatives capable of negotiating with property owners and public authorities. Although the precise arrangements in Onitsha require archival confirmation, the relationship between commercial expansion and institutional organisation provides an important framework for understanding OMATA's emergence.

The Emergence of OMATA in 1948

The available source material identifies 1948 as the year the Onitsha Market Amalgamated Traders Association (OMATA) emerged. This date marks an important distinction between the longstanding history of indigenous market exchange and the subsequent organisation of traders into a formal association. OMATA's emergence can be examined against the expanding scale of Onitsha's commercial activities and the increasing need for coordination, collective representation and the protection of traders' interests.

Several factors plausibly encouraged this development. First, the expansion of trade increased the need for mechanisms to manage disagreements, communicate decisions and coordinate commercial activities. Second, traders required effective channels for negotiating with colonial and local authorities over taxation, licensing, market regulations and access to trading spaces. Third, the maintenance of an orderly commercial environment required cooperation in matters such as security, sanitation and the settlement of disputes. Finally, the growth of indigenous entrepreneurship provided incentives for traders to protect their investments, commercial reputations and access to customers.

OMATA may therefore be interpreted as an emerging institution of market governance, potentially linking individual traders, collective commercial interests and public authorities. Its development also fits within the wider history of African associational life during the colonial period. Occupational, ethnic and community associations provided avenues for mutual assistance, negotiation and collective action in response to changing political and economic conditions (Hopkins, 1973). Nevertheless, this broader context does not establish that nationalist activities directly caused OMATA's formation in 1948.

The term amalgamated suggests an intention to bring different trading interests under a common organisational structure. However, it does not establish that all traders were represented or that OMATA immediately exercised authority throughout the market. A fuller institutional history must establish the identities of its founders, membership arrangements, original constitution, leadership structure and relationship with traditional authorities and colonial officials. Contemporary newspapers, association records, colonial administrative reports and corroborated oral interviews would be particularly valuable in addressing these questions.

In view of the foregoing therefore, OMATA's reported emergence in 1948 can be situated within the broader transformation of Onitsha into a growing commercial and urban centre. Its establishment plausibly reflected the need for collective representation and coordination amid expanding trade and increasingly complex commercial relationships. However, the relative importance of administrative pressures, internal market disputes, security concerns and nationalist influences remains to be established through primary evidence. This distinction between historical context and verified institutional facts is essential to producing a credible account of OMATA's origins.

Indigenous Agency, Colonial Change and Market Governance

The history of Onitsha Main Market challenges two simplistic interpretations of

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

African commercial development. The first presents the market as a product of colonial rule, overlooking the indigenous periodic markets, trading networks and commercial knowledge that existed before British occupation. The second portrays it as the uninterrupted continuation of an unchanged indigenous institution, neglecting the transformative effects of colonial regulation, imported commodities, monetisation, transport development and urban migration. A more convincing interpretation recognises the interaction between indigenous commercial agency and changing colonial economic structures (Hopkins, 1973).

Indigenous traders were not passive recipients of colonial economic change. They adapted established commercial relationships to new commodities, markets and opportunities while negotiating the constraints imposed by colonial authorities and European trading firms. Urban expansion and the arrival of traders from diverse backgrounds further complicated commercial relations, increasing the need for coordination and collective representation. Within this context, the reported establishment of the Onitsha Market Amalgamated Traders Association (OMATA) in 1948 can be examined as part of the evolving relationship between commercial expansion and market governance, although its precise founding circumstances require confirmation from contemporary records.

Market institutions also perform important social and political functions beyond facilitating economic exchange. Rules governing trading spaces, dispute settlement, security and representation influence relationships among traders and determine how authority is exercised within the commercial environment. Although traders' associations may promote cooperation and protect collective interests, they may also exclude non-members or concentrate influence among established merchants. Understanding OMATA's historical significance therefore requires examining both its contributions to commercial coordination and the distribution of power within its organisational structure.

For contemporary debates on African entrepreneurship, Onitsha provides a useful example of the relationship between indigenous institutions, commercial adaptation and economic resilience. Successful trading systems depend not only on favourable locations and physical infrastructure but also on networks of trust, access to suppliers and customers, mechanisms for transferring business knowledge, and institutions for managing collective interests. The Igbo apprenticeship system, particularly its Igba-Boi tradition, illustrates how commercial skills, business relationships and entrepreneurial knowledge can be transmitted across generations (Nwankwo & Ifejiofor, 2014). Traders' associations, meanwhile, offer a potential means of collective representation and dispute resolution. However, neither institution should be assumed to operate equally nor efficiently in every circumstance; their historical significance lies in how they developed to address practical economic challenges while shaping access to opportunity and commercial authority.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of Onitsha Main Market demonstrates that major African commercial institutions emerged through the interaction of indigenous enterprise, geographical advantage and changing political-economic conditions rather than through colonial intervention alone. Its foundations lay in pre-colonial periodic markets, established trading networks and the commercial knowledge of local communities. Onitsha's strategic position along the River Niger facilitated the movement of people and commodities, while nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments—including European commercial expansion, the palm produce trade, colonial regulation, monetary change, transport development and urban migration—reconfigured existing patterns of exchange. These transformations expanded commercial opportunities but also generated new challenges involving competition, market access, representation and institutional coordination.

The reported establishment of the Onitsha Market Amalgamated Traders Association (OMATA) in 1948 is particularly significant because it directs attention from the growth of

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

commerce to the organisation and governance of commercial life. Its emergence can be interpreted as part of the search for collective mechanisms through which traders could coordinate their interests and respond to the demands of an increasingly complex market. However, the historical significance of OMATA must not rest solely on the plausibility of this interpretation. Its founding circumstances, membership, leadership, constitutional arrangements and relationship with traditional and colonial authorities require further investigation through archival documents, association records, contemporary newspapers and corroborated oral evidence. Such research is essential to establish which functions OMATA performed at its inception and how its authority developed over time.

The principal contribution of this study is its argument that Onitsha Main Market represents neither a colonial creation nor an unchanged survival of indigenous commercial practice. It is better understood as a historically evolving institution shaped by indigenous agency and external pressures, with traders actively adapting inherited commercial practices to new economic opportunities and regulatory environments. This perspective challenges interpretations that portray African traders as passive participants in colonial economic transformation. It instead positions them as economic actors whose decisions, networks and organisational initiatives helped shape the institutions through which commerce developed.

More fundamentally, the history of Onitsha Main Market demonstrates that commercial expansion and institutional development are interconnected but distinct processes. A market may grow because of favourable geography, transport connections and increasing demand, yet its long-term viability also depends on mechanisms for managing disputes, negotiating with public authorities, regulating access and coordinating competing interests. Traders' associations can contribute to these functions, but their effectiveness and inclusiveness must be established historically rather than assumed. The experience of Onitsha therefore raises important questions about who exercises authority within commercial institutions, whose interests are represented and how collective organisation affects access to economic opportunities.

Ultimately, the significance of Onitsha Main Market extends beyond its position in Nigeria's commercial history. It offers a valuable framework for understanding how indigenous institutions respond to economic transformation, negotiate external intervention and generate organisational solutions to shared problems. By situating OMATA within this longer history, the study advances an interpretation of African commercial development that recognises both structural change and local initiative. Its strongest historical claim is not that every aspect of OMATA's emergence has been conclusively established, but that understanding the association requires examining the relationship between indigenous commercial foundations, colonial-era transformation and the evolving governance of trade. Establishing this relationship through further primary research would deepen scholarship on Onitsha and contribute to wider debates on entrepreneurship, institutional change and African economic history.

REFERENCES

Afigbo, A. E. (1981). Ropes of sand: Studies in Igbo history and culture. University Press.

Associational records: Records of the Ibo Union and other contemporary organisations, where evidence establishes their relevance to Onitsha's commercial and political environment.

Basden, G. T. (1921). Among the Ibos of Nigeria. Seeley, Service & Co.

Colonial administrative records: Reports on Onitsha market administration, taxation, commercial regulation and relations between traders and colonial authorities, particularly for 1940–1950.

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

Contemporary newspapers: Nigerian newspaper reports from 1940–1950 documenting market activities, traders' associations and the reported establishment of OMATA.

Dike, K. O. (1956). Trade and politics in the Niger Delta, 1830–1885: An introduction to the economic and political history of Nigeria. Clarendon Press.

Hopkins, A. G. (1973). An economic history of West Africa. Longman.

Irenea, B., Chukwuma-Nwuba, E. O., Lockyer, J., Onoshakpor, C., & Ndeha, S. (2024). Entrepreneurial learning in informal apprenticeship programs: Exploring the learning process of the Igbo Apprenticeship System (IAS) in Nigeria. Cogent Business & Management, 11(1), Article 2399312. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2399312

Isichei, E. (1976). A history of the Igbo people. Macmillan.

Iwara, I. O., Amaechi, K. E., & Netshandama, V. (2019). The Igba-boi apprenticeship approach: Arsenal behind growing success of Igbo entrepreneurs in Nigeria. Ubuntu: Journal of Conflict and Social Transformation, Special Issue 1, 227–250. https://doi.org/10.31920/2050-4950/2019/SIn1a13

Jajere, Z. M. (2009). Family Planning and Abortion in the Face of the Shari'ah. Unimaid Journal of Women Studies, 2, 85.

Jajere, Z. M. (2026). FAITH-BASED RESOURCES AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS: ISLAMIC SOCIAL FINANCE AND THE PROTECTION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA. Multi-Disciplinary Research and Development Journals Int'l, 8(2), 1-36.

Jajere, Z. M. (2026). Gender Inequality in Maiduguri: An Islamic Perspective. Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity, 51, 23-29.

Jajere, Z. M., & Abdullahi, A. S. (2025). Muslim Women in Environmental Stewardship: Afforestation Initiatives and Socioeconomic Impact in Muslim-Majority Regions Sahel Region of Africa. African Journal of Earth and Environmental Science, 7(1).

Jajere, Z. M., & ISHAQ, R. N. (2024). ISLAMIC VIEW ON ORPHANS, WIDOWS AND LESS PRIVILEGE IN ECONOMIC HARDSHIP. EKERE JOURNAL OF RELIGION (EJR), 2(1), 71-86.

Jajere, Z. M., & ISHAQ, R. N. ISLAMIC VIEW ON ORPHANS, WIDOWS AND LESS PRIVILEGE IN ECONOMIC HARDSHIP. EKERE JOURNAL OF RELIGION (EJR), 85.

Judicial and local government records: Relevant Native Court proceedings and local administrative records concerning market disputes, trading rights and commercial regulation.

Nkem-Onyekpe, J. G. (2008). Trade as exploitation: Perspectives on the political economy of colonial West Niger Igbo area, c. 1886–1930. Lagos Historical Review, 8, 1–19. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/lhr/article/view/32563

Nwabara, S. N. (1971). Christian encounter with indigenous religion at Onitsha (1857–1885). Cahiers d'Études Africaines, 11(44), 589–601. https://doi.org/10.3406/cea.1971.2785

OMATA records: Constitution, founding documents, minutes of meetings, membership registers and records of early leadership.

Oral interviews: Recorded interviews with former market leaders, long-standing traders, their descendants and other knowledgeable community members.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

This Open Access article is Under a Creative Commons license

Van Allen, J. (1972). “Sitting on a man”: Colonialism and the lost political institutions of Igbo women. Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines, 6(2), 165–181. https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.1972.10803694