

MARKETS AND ITS ORIGIN IN ONITSHA BEFORE 1900

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Abstract

Economic activities are the main spring and life blood of any society. As such; an elaborate and organised exchange of various goods had been in existence many years before the beginning of money economy. Market is therefore, the environment in which the forces of supply and demand of these various exchange operate; it is also seen as a place where two or more parties can gather to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. The parties involved would usually be buyers and sellers. The market may be physical like a retail outlet where people meet face-to-face, or virtual like on-line market where there is no direct physical contact between buyers and sellers¹. Over the years, the bulk of the society has been kept in the dark about the origins of markets in Onitsha. The paper is an attempt to bridge the gap as it aims to examine the origin of physical markets in Onitsha. The methodology of this paper is based on descriptive analysis of available data, using primary and secondary sources. The findings of the paper indicate that markets in Onitsha may have begun with the presence of the first settlers in Onitsha. The study recommends that local history should be documented to serve as a source of knowledge to the society.

Keywords: Onitsha, market, trade, Igboland, Nigeria

Introduction

In many parts of Igboland (Onitsha inclusive) markets seem to have developed along with the communities². As a result, tracing their origins and history may be difficult. The existence of markets in Onitsha was, however, intimately bound up with the gathering of the first people to inhabit the area. The phenomena of settlement in village units and trade have thus a common socio-economic basis. Arthur E. Smailes is of the opinion that “from the relations between human societies and the land upon which they are settled, city and civilization gave rise to the emergence of common conditions without which neither can exist”³. Moreover, the need to satisfy some basic wants and needs of the people, which gave rise to the exchange of goods and services, albeit through barter in the pre-colonial time, led to the creation of open spaces where

the exchange of goods and services took place. These were the first stages of market development⁴.

Onitsha is a town strategically located in terms of its geography and as a result occupies a strategically strong economic position as a large commercial centre with well-developed links to other market centres in Igboland and beyond. Such other market centres include Ossomari, Oguta, Nnewi, Awka, Ekwulobia and Asaba, to mention but a few. It is said that before 1500, the settlement at Onitsha had engaged in trade with settlements along the Niger northwards beyond Idah and southwards beyond Aboh⁵. By the second half of the seventeenth century, the *Otunkwo* market at the bank of the Niger River had come to develop at a fast rate and was visited by traders from far and wide. The coastal city-states of Nembe and Kalabari, as well as the city-states of Aboh had long established trade relations with Onitsha and their traders were known to have constantly visited the *Otunkwo* market. This development undoubtedly enabled Onitsha to indirectly participate in the growing trans-Atlantic trade during the period. Through traders from the Savanna states along the Niger and the Benue, who were also in attendance at the *Otunkwo* market in Onitsha, goods brought in by the trans-Saharan caravans were able to find their way into Onitsha market. As a result, the Onitsha market developed into an inter-state market⁶. At this time the sitting king of Onitsha would always ensure that the market was protected from the Aboh slave raiders, who were at the time terrorizing traders by firing cannons into the market⁷.

Despite wars which broke out from time to time between Onitsha and its immediate neighbours, traders from the hinterland still found their way to the Onitsha market. The presence of foreign goods at the Onitsha market brought through the river and the fact that local goods were quickly sold at a higher profit margin in the Onitsha market made both the middle men and traders from the coastal states to troop to the Onitsha market to trade. This enhanced the Onitsha market at a time when precarious situations at the trade routes in those days hindered trade in other territories. Gradually, the trade area of the Onitsha market widened. Inland, it extended beyond the Anambra River basin to a good part of northern Igbo land and to most parts of Awka-Orlu uplands and the Udi plateau. The Onitsha market thus became the main outlet for goods from those areas and the port through which foreign goods from the coast and from the western Sudan reached the people in these areas. As a result of the commercial activities held at the Onitsha market, Onitsha grew into a river port town, performing important river port functions for a fairly wide hinterland⁸.

It is, therefore, safe to assume that markets in Onitsha were already well established as trade between Onitsha and other centres had been going on for a long time before contact with the Europeans in the 19th century. It can thus be

argued that the markets in Onitsha in the early times were both for economic and social basis, like most markets in Igboland in the early times. They also operated on the four traditional markets days, namely: *Eke, Oye, Afor* and *Nkwo*. Each of these markets was held on a rotational four-day basis known as *Izu*⁹ (the Igbo word for the traditional week).

It is said that the markets that existed in Onitsha prior to British colonial rule were often named after a deity or held in honour of the area. They could also be named after the area in which the markets were located, or after an important personality¹⁰. That explains the reason why the Megafu Market, that is situated along Oguta Road (by the Ekene Dilichukwu Junction) in Onitsha was named after the man who owned the location of the market space. The *Otunkwo Eze* Market was also named after the traditional ruler of Onitsha, the *Obi* of Onitsha, because it was a common belief in Onitsha tradition that the market belonged to the traditional ruler¹¹. Apart from the Megafu market and the *Otunkwo* market, there were other markets that existed in Onitsha before the European contact with Onitsha. These markets included the *Ogboye* and the *Ogbommanu* Markets. Below are the details of these markets:

The Otunkwo Market

It is believed that the first market to exist in Onitsha was the *Otu Nkwo* Market. This market, like many markets in Igboland at the time, was held on every fourth day of the Igbo traditional week known as *Izu*. The market was situated at the *Otu Okwodu* water front (the bank of the River Niger) where the indigenes would bring articles of trade every fourth day to be exchanged through the barter system¹². The *Otunwko* Market also referred to as the *Otunkwo Eze* or the *Ukwu Ebenebe* Market, was a modified type of the beach market of the coastal town. It was located close to the bank of the River Niger where the canoes from distant markets landed, and the main business transactions were carried on. A beach market, in this context, included a harbour or safe anchorage for ocean going ships, as well as the pebble or sand-strewn sea shore, or just the shore between high and low water mark with adjoining market place¹³.

The market was situated at the bank of the Niger River, where the present *Ose* Market is located. Even though the main residential areas were some distance inland, it is at this location that the major commercial transactions of Onitsha were carried on in the pre-colonial era. This is because, as discussed earlier, the strategic location of the market made it possible and convenient for traders from far and wide to troop to the market for business transactions of various degrees.

By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the expansion of the slave trade, the volume of trade at the *Otunkwo* market also expanded. To this end, the *Otunkwo* market regularly attracted traders from Obosi, Nkpor, Oba, Nnewi, Nsugbe, Nteje, and from the Agbaja towns of the western Udi areas, and from further afield¹⁴. This explains why the River Niger at the time was both a source of danger and a source of opportunities – a source of danger as a result of the numerous risks involved in the long distance trade embarked upon by traders from the hinterland and beyond; a source of opportunities as a result of the numerous gains and profits acquired from trading at the *Otunkwo* market. Thus, different towns reacted to it differently¹⁵.

The *Otunkwo* market was formerly held on the *nkwo* market day, hence the name *Otunkwo*. On every *Nkwo* market day (every fourth day of the Igbo week (*izu*)) the market received and accommodated traders from the hinterland had brought in their articles of trade to the market for business transactions. With the passage of time, however, and as a result of the number of traders that visited the market, the *Otunkwo* market became a daily market and was attended by traders from the Igala area; coastal city-states; Nupe state; and Aboh; in addition to traders from all parts of Igboland¹⁶. While discussing the size and structure of the beach market, T.O. Okoye observes that although there was daily activity in the market, the market was fullest on stipulated market days, during which it attracted traders from distant places¹⁷. This was the case of *Otunkwo* market as every *nkwo* day saw the market in its busiest motion. Trading canoes from the hinterland markets would land on the river bank where the trade goods were finally sorted out and business transactions were carried on. The size and importance of the *Otunkwo* market in Onitsha could be estimated from the account of Ajayi Crowther during their visit to Onitsha, when he noted that:

The shore of Onitsha offered a curious sight; the river was full of native canoes, and on the shore was a great crowd, motley and busy, coming, going, talking and gesticulating, and sometimes appearing greatly excited. It was market day and the canoes had brought men belonging to the Neighbouring tribes of Onitsha to exchange their products for European wares which was the black traders sell either on their own account or on that of the factories they represent, standing or sitting, the women were exhibiting their wares; at one place calicoes, at another beads, here jugs or bottles of gin or rum, and everywhere large calabashes of salt. The men walked about among the groups, making exchanges with palm oil or ivory or the merchandise they wanted; or soldiers made their purchases with cowries. The traveler is everywhere struck¹⁸.

The above observation is a report made by Bishop Ajayi Crowther on his arrival at the bank of the River Niger with his team from the Church Missionary Society. Crowther must have observed, with great admiration, the trading activities at the *Otunkwo* market at Onitsha at the time of his observation.

The articles of trade at the market varied from household equipment, to cooking utensils, herbs for local medicine, clothing items and other foreign goods from the coastal states. During the era of the slave trade, the shore of the river became a commercial centre where the locals and traders from the riverain areas of the Niger; from Lokoja to Brass, exchanged goods including the slaves¹⁹.

The control of the *Otunkwo* market, prior to the British conquest and eventual colonisation of Nigeria was vested in the hands of the *Omu* society. The Obi of Onitsha had no control over the market or trade, and even the chiefs could only participate in trade through sponsoring their wives and daughters²⁰. The only aspect of trade in which the chiefs took direct part and which was not controlled by the *Omu* society was the slave trade. Even in this, the women were also involved²¹.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the *Omu* was allocated a special seat in the market and trade in the market could not begin any day without her first occupying her special seat. In other words, if the *Omu* was not present and seated at the market, trading activities would not begin, no matter what was at stake. The *Omu* and her chiefs regulated the products to be sold in the market, by whom and at what price. Market disputes among individual traders were also settled by the *Omu* and her councillors who levied fines or required suspected offenders to take a ritual oath. The market women and foreign male traders, who were granted permission to trade at the market at the time, were mandated to pay stipulated amount of money as dues to the *Omu*²².

With later development, which will be discussed in the next chapter, the *Otunkwo* market was moved to a new location by the British government and renamed the Onitsha Main Market. The Onitsha Main Market grew by leaps and bounds during the colonial period. It was during this period that *Omu Okwei*, a renowned business woman, up till 1923, emerged and was involved in various business activities at the Onitsha Main Market²³. At the time also, trading in most parts of Igboland was considered a preserve for the womenfolk. Trade was mostly in agricultural produce and, therefore, entailed very limited travelling and risks; the educated men were more respectably engaged by the firms as clerks, store-keepers and interpreters²⁴. This was in line with the observation of George T. Basden, who lived in Eastern Nigeria for forty years

and whose knowledge of the life of the Igbo people were unparalleled. Basden has noted that in 1920, the whole indigenous trade among the Igbo was in the hands of the women and by them markets were controlled²⁵. Thus, between 1910 and 1930, Onitsha produced a group of rich women who traded directly with the European firms and handled the bulk of the goods that were imported by these European firms. These women, of which Omu Okwei of Ossomala, until her demise in 1931, was ranked the most prominent, were the precursors of the present generation of women merchants who controlled the vast system of wholesale marketing and distribution of the Onitsha Market²⁶.

Although, these pioneer women traders may have all been dead, their legacies still speak to this day. In the course of the field research, the researcher was privileged to come across one Mr. Chukwuemeka Innocent Nwosu, who is a notable name in the textile business. During an interview session, Mr. Nwosu, whose business name is "Nomaco Resources Investment", informed the researcher that he commenced his business career after the secondary school education with the sum of four thousand Naira (₦4, 000. 00) only, handed over to him by his aged mother who had been an active trader at the Onitsha Main Market in the 1980s. He was said to have always visited the market as a young student during the weekends to help his mother out at her shop. When the mother eventually retired from active business after his secondary education, she gave him the said sum, and probably with his earlier exposure to trading, he has been able to grow his business to the admiration and envy of many. Over the years, the name "Nomaco Resource Investment" has become a household name and a sought after in the textile business. Both retailers and wholesalers come from far and near for varying degrees of business transactions²⁷.

As a result of the movement of the Main Market to its present location, stalls were built. During this time, too, the stalls were made of rows of makeshift dwarf shelters of simple structures, open on all sides with the thatch or raffia palm mats (*akanya*) roofs, intended to provide shelters for both the sellers and their wares, and protect them from the rain as the need might be; in the later years, however, shops and stores were built of more durable materials. The era of shops and stores in the market paved the way for lock-up shops or stores as they were commonly referred to²⁸. The new stalls were unambiguously arranged and the allotment of positions were planned in such a way that identical or similar commodities were grouped together in a section of the market to make it easier to locate, especially for people who may not be regular traders in the market. Sectional grouping of stalls in the market vis-à-vis the articles of trade was referred to as *odu* (position or line); for example, *odu* cosmetics, that is cosmetics line. The *odu* system has survived the test of time and is now a permanent feature of markets in Onitsha in particular and

Igboland in general²⁹. This system of grouping of traders with common wares or commodities inadvertently promoted ingenious marketing strategies and resulted in the formation of commodity unions in order to set and dictate prices of goods³⁰.

From the cradle, trade in Onitsha used to be by barter, that is the exchange of goods, property, services and so on, for other goods or services without the use of money, but as the society advanced, the use of local currency known as cowry (*ego ayolo*) came into being and the barter system was phased out³¹. The cowry was prominent as the medium of exchange and unit of account. Thus, one could buy a tuber of yam for five cowries, a portion of roasted peanut for three cowries or one to two balls of bean cake for four cowries and so on. However, with the advent of the British, the use of modern currency and coins became the only acceptable medium of exchange, and the cowry faded into oblivion³².

During the colonial and immediate post-colonial periods, the Onitsha Main Market seemed to have been the only major daily market that serviced the people from Awka and Nnewi which were also semi-urban centres. The articles of trade in the market were multifarious. These included an assortment of textiles, cosmetics, hardwares, Chinawares, kitchenette, stationery and books, food, grocery medicine, electronics and electrical goods, chronometers and clocks, fashion and fancy wares, second-hand clothings, bags, footwears and leather goods, tailoring materials, hair weaving and cobbling services, electronic repairs, and so on³³. People from within and outside the old Anambra State and beyond would therefore troop to the market to purchase choice items. This also led to the migration of many people from the rural areas to Onitsha which, as it were, had become an urban³⁴ centre at the time, as a result of the volume of trade going on in the city and the number of settlers who had migrated there, struggling to eke out a living.

Also, parents in the rural areas at this time began to give out their male children to traders of means at the Onitsha market to serve as apprentices (*nwa boy* or *odibo*). The apprentices were to serve their masters for a defined period of time ranging from seven years to ten years, depending on the agreement reached between the parents or relations of the apprentices and the masters (*oga* in the Igbo parlance). With this development, there was still more influx of people into Onitsha. And the Onitsha market has been filled with a lot of these apprentices even until the period of this research³⁵. Another group, known as the sales girl, has been added to the pool of migrants in Onitsha. The sales girls help out business owners to attend to the teeming customers who trooped to their shops on a daily basis for business transactions. These sales girls were, however, paid on monthly basis and could leave or be disengaged at will³⁶.

The Megafu Market

The Megafu Market is situated along Oguta Road, by the Ekene Dilichukwu Garage junction in Onitsha. An account has it that the market space was originally owned by the Megafu family, an influential family in Onitsha³⁷. According to the account, the release of the market space was necessitated by the need to bridge the gap caused by the location of the *Otunkwo* Market which was further away from the hinterland, and the need to ensure that people who were unable to visit the *Ogboye* Market (in the Inland Town) for one reason or the other, would still have the opportunity to buy and sell, before the next *nkwo* or *orie* day. In other words, the establishment of the market (Megafu) filled a vacuum and allowed the people greater and easier access to trade³⁸. The market was an open space market and was visited by people living within its vicinity. It was formerly an evening market, where people who could not travel the distance to the Otu Nkwo market or those who were unable to visit the *Ogboye* market on the *Orie* days, converged for trading activities.

The articles of trade at the Megafu Market included yams, cocoyams, fufu and other cassava products; maize and legumes such as black eye beans, soya beans, gonga beans, and *akidi*; vegetables like *ora* leaf, bitter leaf, water leaf, *ugu*, *ukazi*, *uziza* and *anara*; the melon seed, *igogo*, *tim-tim*, *anyu-nda* as well as *ogbono*. There were also condiments for cooking soups like peppers and spices. They included *ose kilikiti*, *ose okpokpo*, *ogili-ugba* or *ogili-ishi* and *ogili okpei*- these were used for seasoning³⁹. Other articles of trade at the market included sea foods like smoked fish, smoked shrimps, crayfish, live crabs, snails, and so on. Other goods included items used for domestic purposes. These included soaps and brooms, and an assortment of roots, tree barks, leaves, and ornaments used by traditional healers and medicine men; materials required by diviners and fortune tellers which included live or dead alligators, lizards, chameleons, grotesquely plumaged white cockerel, white kaolin, as well as other mundane substances⁴⁰.

Generally, articles of trade were displayed in a simple, haphazard manner; many of these articles were commonly laid out on bare ground inside the *ukpa* in which they were brought to the market, exposed to unhygienic conditions, and the perishables festered by flies⁴¹. Traders (many of whom were mostly women) would be seen trudging on foot to the market on market days, with their wares on their heads. It is said that before the inception of modern money, traders exchanged goods through the barter system; however, with the introduction of cash system, goods were traded in exchange for money⁴². The sweeping and general sanitation of the market were carried out by the market women, who were shared into groups and would take turns to oversee to the general cleanliness of the market environment⁴³.

As at the time of writing up this research, the Megafu market was still a daily market, although the space of land allocated to it had been reduced considerably, due to urbanization and the need to erect more residential buildings. Residential and office buildings could now be seen around the market location. Also, road construction has had the effect of dividing the present Megafu Market into the two sides of the Oguta Road. As a result, the articles of trade have been reduced to perishable goods and foodstuffs⁴⁴.

The Ogbo-Mmanu Market

At the decline of the slave trade in Nigeria and other parts of Africa, the trade in the palm oil began to boom⁴⁵. The rise in the palm oil trade was attributed to the Industrial Revolution in Europe in the late 18th and 19th centuries, which necessitated a large demand for fats and oils for culinary and edible purposes. There was also a rising demand for the palm oil among the industrialists for the production of soap, candle, tinning flux, and for use as lubricants on the industrial machines⁴⁶. The palm kernel oil, on the other hand, was used for the manufacture of vegetable margarine, while the residue was compressed into cattle-cake or was utilised as cattle meal⁴⁷. As a result of these, the palm oil became one of the principal raw materials for export to Europe by the mid- 19th century.

The *Ogbo-Mmanu* Market in Onitsha was thus a collection centre for the palm oil and palm kernel trade. Giant stores for the purchase of the palm kernel and palm oil were located in the area popularly known as *Ogbo-Mmanu*, by the junction of the Old and New Market Roads, Upper New Market Road and the Old Cemetery Road⁴⁸. The article of trade at this market was strictly palm produce such as the palm kernel and palm oil. The market was established in the early part of the 19th century, when exportation of the palm oil and palm kernel was at its peak. It was said to be a popular and large market at the time, and reputable traders from the interior would converge at the market to trade their wares. The market thrived as a result of the high demand for the palm oil and palm kernel both in the local and international markets, and the need for subsistence consumption⁴⁹.

At present time, however, some major parts of the market have been converted into a residential area. As a matter of fact, only a small street market now exists in a small portion of the then market space. The rest of the land has since been converted into a residential area and high-rise buildings have replaced the lock-up market stalls as was the case in the past⁵⁰.

Also, the market at the *Ogbo-Mmanu* centre at present, is a daily market where perishable food items like all varieties of vegetables, fresh tomatoes, pepper,

meat, ice fish, smoked fish, dried fish, stock fish, ripe and unripe plantains, fruits like paw-paw, pineapple, avocados, water melon, cucumber, rice, beans, maize, melon seed, ogbono, red oil, vegetable oil, maggie, crayfish, and other items are sold⁵¹.

The Ogboye Market

The Ogboye Market is situated in the Ogbolieke Village, at the heart of modern day Inland Town of Onitsha. The market is said to be one of the earliest markets to have started in Onitsha, around the 16th century. As the name implies, the market was located around the Ogbolieke village square, where both social and religious functions were held, hence the name ogbo which is the indigenous name for field or square. The market would usually trade on every *Oye* day in the past, hence the name ogbo-oye (market located in the field that trades on oye days)⁵². The market is believed to have arisen as an alternative to the *Otunkwo* market, where traders, who were unable to attend the *Nkwo* Market or who had need to have business transactions before another *Nkwo* market day, would go for their business⁵³.

The articles of trade at the time included varieties of consumables, household wares, roots and herbs, perishables, and so on. The market was also an open space market and the articles of trade were largely consumables⁵⁴. At present dispensation, however, part of the market square houses modern residential areas, a semi-stadium/village square where the local community gathers for social events, and only a small portion of space is set aside for a daily market⁵⁵. Articles of trade found at the present *Ogboye* market range from all forms of perishables like carrot, cabbage, tomatoes, fruits, ice fishes, fresh fish, smoked fish, dried fish, beef, frozen chicken and turkey, life chicken and turkey, to mention but a few. Other articles of trade include provisions, food stuff, cooked foods, clothing materials, tailoring shops, barbing and beauty salons, and so on⁵⁶.

The Ochanja Market

The Ochanja Market was a daily market, which traded only at night in the pre-colonial Onitsha community⁵⁷. Because trading activities held at night at the market, traders who engaged in buying and selling at the Ochanja Market were made to use naked light known and referred to as *Mpanaka* or *Ochanja* in Igbo dialect, as there was no modern electricity at the time. At the time, the market was named as *Afia Ochanja*, which when translated in English means the market where naked light was used to illuminate everywhere when trading⁵⁸. The *Ochanja* Market was formerly situated in an open space owned by the

Mgbelekeke family of Onitsha, which is the present Old Market Road, at the location where the old Onitsha General Post Office is at presentsituated⁵⁹.

The *Ochanja* Market also served as an alternative market where people in Onitsha community would easily run to, for the purchase of items which they needed for their immediate use. Mrs. Lynda Egbuche, in trying to explain the usefulness of the market to the community at the time quoted her grandmother as saying that “someone can put water for cooking soup at night on the fire and rush out to the market to purchase the needed items for the soup preparation”⁶⁰.

The market also served as a trading outpost where farmers sold their harvested farm produce on daily basis. The fishermen, who engaged in fishing activities during the day, would come to the market with their catch to sell to prospective customers. Artisans, who felt the need to sample their work, would also bring their wares to the *Ochanja* Market to possible buyers⁶¹.

The articles of trade at the market included the following: perishable goods of all kinds like vegetables of all kinds – spinach, *ora* bitter leaf, *okazi*, *ugu*, *uziza*, *utazi*, to mention but a few; fresh fish, dry fish, smoked fish ice fish, snail, cow meat, pork meat, and so on; tubers like yam, cocoyam, potatoes, cassava, cassava flour, *garri*, *fufu*, and so on⁶². Other articles of trade included food seasonings like salt, crayfish, *ogili igbo*, *ogili okpei*, salt, oil palm; fruits like soursop, orange, pineapple, mango, banana; and other household needs like soap, pomade and so on. The means of exchange at the time was the barter system and much later, the use of cowrie and other forms of exchange were introduced⁶³.

The *Ochanja* market was, however, in 1958 transferred from the Old Market Road to a present location⁶⁴. The new location is owned by the Umuesele family of Onitsha, which is bordered by the Modebe Avenue, Iweka Road, Zik Avenue and Menax Road. The reason for the relocation of the market to a new site, according to Sir Ikechukwu Udechukwu, was probably because the government at the time needed the market space in 1958⁶⁵. The new site of the *Ochanja* Market has a bigger expanse of land surrounded by bushes. This ultimately gave room for more traders to trade in the location. As a result, the present *Ochanja* market has further enlarged and developed into an ultra modern market known as the *Ochanja* Central Market⁶⁶. The market is known for the sale of different shoes designs, ranging from babies, children (girls and boys), ladies and men. Other trade articles like food stuffs, provisions and the likes are also found in the modern day *Ochanja* Market.

Conclusions and Recommendation

From all indications, the study serves as an eye opener on how markets in Onitsha have evolved. Markets play a vital tool in fostering economic and social development and relations among peoples of diverse backgrounds. Many decades after the establishment of the local markets in Onitsha, the markets have continued to grow and spread in their leaps and bounds. Some of these local markets like the Otunkwo market and the Ochanja market have over time, been transformed into large and modern markets of national and international reputation, while the others like the Megafu market, Ogboye market, have been reduced in size as part of the space have since been known to have housed a number of residential and office buildings. As a result, the markets have remained a street market, restricted to the sale of daily needs and perishables, only serving the people who live around the area.

On that note, it is recommended that the activities of the markets should be properly documented to serve as a source of knowledge to the general society.

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28. Hezekiah Dike, *Awka: 1800 - 2000 ...*, 131.
29. Hezekiah Dike, *Awka: 1800 - 2000....*
30. Bosah Ndiwe, (70 years), as cited in Stella Aladi, "The Contributions of Onitsha Main Market to the Economic Development of Anambra State, 1980 - 2009", 26.
31. P. Hezekiah Dike, *Awka: 1800 - 2000....*
32. Hezekiah Dike, *Awka: 1800 - 2000*
33. An interview with Godwin Ubaka Okeke, Business Mogul, (70 years plus), at Onitsha, on 19th December, 2022, 5.30pm.
34. T.O Okoye, *The City in South-Eastern Nigeria*, (Onitsha: University Publishing Company, 1996), 56.
35. Interview with Sir Gozie Ubakwelu, (55yrs), CEO Gozac Enterprises, Onitsha, 15th December, 2022, 2pm.
36. Interview with Sir Gozie Ubakwelu, (55yrs)....
37. Ven. Paul Enweonwu, (69yrs), Anglican Priest, oral interview, Onitsha, 29th August, 2022.
38. Mr. Dennis Osakwe, (46yrs), Business man, oral interview, Onitsha, 28th August, 2022
39. Mrs. Esther Odiari, (78yrs), oral interview, Onitsha, conducted 28th August, 2022.
40. Ven. Paul Enweonwu, (69yrs)....
41. Allan Mcphee, *The Economic Revolution in British West Africa* (2nd ed.), (London: FrankCass and co. Ltd, 1971), 81.

42. Allan Mcphee, *The Economic Revolution...*
43. Mrs. Esther Odiari, (78yrs), Onitsha, 7th February, 2022, 1pm.
44. Mrs. Bridget Egbuche, (68yrs), Tutor College of Nursing Sciences Iyi-Enu, Oral interview, Onitsha, 31st August, 2022.
45. Allan Mcphee, *The Economic Revolution...*, p8.
46. Allan Mcphee, *The Economic Revolution....*
47. Allan Mcphee, *The Economic Revolution....*
48. S. I. Bosah, *Groundwork of the ...*, 96.
49. S. I. Bosah, *Groundwork of the*
50. Mr. Onyebuchi Odita, (45yrs), Business man, Oral interview, Onitsha, 1st September, 2022, 3pm.
51. Mrs. Lynda Duru, (55yrs), former Banker, Oral interview, Onitsha, 3rd September, 2022, 11am.
52. Dr. Olisa Mbah, (42yrs), Historian, Oral interview, Onitsha, 1st October, 2022, 2pm.
53. Mrs. Ogbogu Catherine, (75yrs), Retired Banker, Oral Interview, Onitsha, 5th September, 2022, 2pm.
54. Ven. Paul Enweonwu, (69yrs)....
55. Mrs. Ogechukwu Enwozor, (50yrs), trader, Oral interview, Onitsha, 3rd September, 2022, 3pm.
56. Mrs. Ogechukwu Enwozor, (50yrs), trader....
57. Sir Ikechukwu Ubachukwu, (62yrs), Astute business man and one time President of Ochanja Market Association, Oral interview, Onitsha, 28th February, 2023, 3pm.
58. Sir Ikechukwu Ubachukwu, (62yrs)....
59. Sir Ikechukwu Ubachukwu, (62yrs)....
60. Mrs. Lynda Egbuche, (55yrs), former Banker....
61. Mrs. Chioma Emegakor, (70yrs), Retired Teacher, Oral interview, Onitsha, 5th September, 2022, 5pm.
62. Mrs. Chioma Emegakor, (70yrs)....
63. P. Hezekiah Dike, Awka: 1800-2000....
64. Sir Ikechukwu Ubachukwu, (62yrs)....
65. Sir Ikechukwu Ubachukwu, (62yrs)....
66. Interview with Chief Collins Obiukwu, (70+) Patron of Ochanja Central Market, Onitsha. 23rd February, 2023, 12pm