Ritual Warfare and Colonial Conquest of the Eggon*

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A great deal has been written about the colonial conquest of Africa, from the perspectives of the conquerors and the conquered. Primary resistance has come and gone as an 'in' topic in African studies. Yet, to the extent that such literature deals with the impact of colonial conquest, it has been within the structural-functionalist framework , focusing on social, political and economic factors. (1) Possible cultural and psychological impact have been relegated to the occasional vague comment. Moreoften, these latter elements have tended to be assumed, rather than demonstrated, and then generally in the hindsight of nationalist manipulation of oral traditions in the process of decolonization.

At the beginning of this century, the Eggon, mistakenly referred to as the Mada Tudu (Hausa for "Hill Mada"), were largely confined to the Mada Hills of central Nigeria, where they practiced a system of intensive terraced agriculture. This paper examines the impact of colonial conquest on the Eggon, in terms of a reconstruction of indigenous institutions of warfare, in particular, Eggon concepts of ritual warfare and its functions. (2) What met in the Mada Hills was not merely two disproportionately armed fighting forces, but two different military ideologies (for want of a more apt phrase). The impact of that confrontation was such that it has been transformed into an architype myth encompassing the colonial experience of all Eggon, not just those involved in the Wulko hills campaign.

Some thirty miles southwest of the Jos Plateau, the Mada Hills rise abruptly 6oo to 1,000 feet from the surrounding plains. To the northeast, the Arikya River cuts within a few hundred yards of the hills, in a section known locally as the Wulko or "Gakwu" (Garko) hills. To the west, the hills are skirted by the Mada River. The plains, particularly those south of the hills, were etched with numerous tributary streams and covered in thick bush at the beginning of this century. The dominant fault lines of the hills themselves appear to run from the northeast to southwest. The northwest portion of the hills

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1. O Ikime, The Fall of Nigeria; The British Conquest (Ibadan, 1977). M. Crowder, West African Resistance; The Military Response to Colonial Occupation (N.Y., 1971).

2. The distinction between ritual and secular warfare which I develop later in the paper has been influenced by Karl Heider's work on the Dani and the film Dead Birds. Karl Heider, Grand Valley Dani; Peaceful Warriors (N.Y., 1979).

is very broken, with several peaks in excess of 2,800 feet. In the southeast the land is more open, forming a high bluff with percipitous sides dropping 600 to 800 feet to the plains. Finally, there is a line of isolated hills, 1,200 to 1,340 feet high, extending eastward from the Mada Hills. It was this topography which provided the spatial parameters of Eggon identity. While arable land on the hills was finite, my focus is not on ecological factors but on cultural determinants. Though individuals and small groups often farmed and even lived on the plains, it was the hills and specifically territorial entities therein which were the significant foci of Eggon community definition.

At the time of European contact early this century, the Eggon were divided into two sub-groups or clans; the Eholo who inhabited the mountainous northwest of the hills and the Anzo Eggon who occupied the more open southeast, each with their own distictive facial markings but sharing a common language and culture. (3) The relevant myth of origin, the Eggon have several, assert that Abro (alt. Agbu), the founder of the Eggon, migrated from the east. (4) Some say he was accompanied by his 'brothers', Jada Oku and Ubina, founders and folk-heroes of the neighbouring Rindiri people. Jada Oku and Ubina crossed the Arikya River while Abro remained south, turning west and eventually founding Aragwadu on one of the outlying eastern hills. Abro had three sons, Abe, Anzo and Affro. Legend has it that while hunting near the Arikya River, Abro found a lost boy whom he took into his household, giving him the name Eholo. Later, in a classic Essau and Jacob story, Eholo was to trick the blind and aged Abro into bestowing his blessing and the gift of his bow and acha seed. Another version says that Eholo, or alternatively his son, Izi, stole the bow and acha seed from Abro, mortally wounding Abro with a poisoned arrow in the process. Abro crawled to a cave where his sons found him dying when they returned from the fields. Abe and the youngest son, Affro, stayed to care for their father's grave, while Anzo went in pursuit of Eholo and Izi, who fled to the mountainous part of the Mada Hills and founded the settlement of "Wana", also known as L'izi. Anzo is said to have established "Alongani", one of the major Anzo Eggon settlements of the eastern hills. Thus Eggon do not share a common genealogy and, in practice, few informants could trace their ancestry back more than three generations on their paternal side, i.e. to a depth pertinent to the rules of exogamy. Individuals and family groups were bound to others by ties of kinship but what defined Eggon community was not lineage but territorial co-residence.

Nomen such as "Wana" and "Alongani" referred to both specific clusters of compounds and broader territorial units containing a number

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3. A.S. Lawrence, Assessment Report, Mada District, Lafia, 14 April, 1913, National Archives, Kaduna (hereafter cited as NAK), SNP 10/ 338p/ 1913. Today the Eggon living near the outlying hills to the east are often said by Eggon to be independent of Anzo, constituting an autonomous sub-group. As 'proof', they point to slight differences in pronunciation, e.g. most Eggon call maize agube ebo; Eggon Erro add an r-sound, agube ebro. However such localized variations in language appear to have been fairly common in the past (according to early missionary translation notations) and Erro practices may merely reflect their relative isolation from the homodialectical influences of missionary education, catachist classes and Eggon Bible tracts. A key factor appears to have been colonial administrative practice of dealing with the outlying eastern Eggon as a sub-district.

4. P.F. Masterton-Smith, Notes on the Eggon, 15 November, 1929, NAK, SNP 15, Acc. No. 175. Masterton-Smith's report drew heavily upon information supplied by the Rev. Ivan Hepburn, the first European Eggon speaker.

of similar household clusters bound together by common residence expressed in shared ritual. What was said to be the oldest settlement in an area, allegedly named after its founder or some legend associated with the first settler, gave its name to the territory. Thus Wakama in the extreme northwest of the hills consisted of five clusters in the early years of this century; Wakama, Anyedzege, Uggurem, Alube and Jato (?), containing 119, 78, 65, 35, and 104 households, respectively. (5) What distinguished the territorial unit of co-residence from its constituent household clusters on the one hand and the wider clan bonds on the other, was its unique possession of a communal ritual site or sacred grove, the anva ashim. Periodic ritual activity within the anva ashim was the principal focus of community identity and definition, as well as the paramount political arena.

The Eggon were a 'chiefless' society based on a number of complementary institutions. (6) Socio-politics functioned on the basis of adult male consensus, with the elders or Andakpo using their influence , their power, to shape the outcome. The power of the Andakpo rested on a combination of kinship loyalties, personality and ritual knowledge, as well as the more narrowly defined powers as patriarch of a family unit. Knowledge of ritual medicine/magic (agum) could be used to kill, as well as cure, while the powers of the fortune teller (ehu) or witch-detector (akiki) could be used for witchcraft (embuga). A powerful elder was a potential ari oholo or 'throat-catcher' (witch). Ritual knowledge was varied and complex, requiring considerable time, effort and expenditure on initiation and other ritual fees and often imposing onerous taboos in terms of travel, sexual and dietary abstinance. Such ritual acquisition provided an arena for competition amongst the Andakpo, the ultimate accolade being recognition as the community's Adang Ashim, "Father of Ashim". The Adang Ashim performed the ololo ritual for curing, sickness being attributed to witchcraft and spiritual intervention. (7) Together with the Adang Ubben, the Adang Ashim carried out communal ojile ceremonies to placate the dead (angba ashim) , the ancestors (ashim adegu) and various local spirits of the land. The office of Adang Ubben or "Owner of the Land" was vested in the senior lineage within each territorial unit, the original settlers, and was responsible for dealing with the spirits of the land. It was the Adang Ubben who undertook the first planting and harvest. It was he who announced the coming of the rains. In other words, the not unfamiliar duality of complementary ritual functions of the 'owner of the land' and 'priest of the people', of 'nature' and 'society'. These two elements were united when the Adang Ashim and the Adang Ubben participated in the annual cycle of community rituals (e.g. the likiya post-harvest festival at

5. J.F.J. Fitzpatrick, Assessment Report, Mada District, Keffi Div., 13 June, 1913, NAK, SNP 572p/ 1913.

6. What follows is a reconstruction based on numerous fieldwork interviews conducted over five months between July and December, 1982, many with indigenous religious practitioners knowledgable in agum and who still practice ololo curing ceremonies. See also, J. Hunter-Shaw, Intelligence Report on the Eggon, 26 Jan., 1935, NAK, JOSPROF 488, vol. II.

7. The fear and social tensions engendered by witchcraft beliefs is dramatically attested to in the judical records of early this century; e.g. Rex vs Abili of Awgwingi, NAK, SNP 13 O/PC 296/ 1919; Rex vs Kutuga of Ume, NAK, SNP 13 O/PC 130/ 1919; Rex vs Saku of Lezin Lafia, NAK, SNP O/PC 96/ 1919.

Bekyeno Kasa and Aragwadu) (8) or came together at the sacred site, the anva ashim, for extraordinary ojile rites in times of disaster such as famine, drought or epidemic disease. These public rituals were distinguished from individualistic private curing ceremonies (ololo) not only by the range of participants but by the appearance of spirit masqueraders who came out of the sacred grove to dance amongst the fields and dwellings to the alleged terror of the 'uninitiated' (i.e. women and children).

Ritual reaffirmed the unity of the community. On the personal level, disase was attributed to witchcraft; someone "catching one's shadow" (vu amu). The prime suspects were one's mother's brother and father's brother, that is, kinsmen who should be supportive but who were not so perceived. Their participation in magico-theraputic ololo against the affliction helped restore social harmony within and between kin group, if not always the health of the afflicted. In the social dislocation of death, burial rites helped restructure and reaffirm the intra-communal bonds of the living. The more socially significant the deceased, the more elaborate the burial ceremonies, with ashim masqueraders dancing at the funeral of Adang Ashim and Adang Ubben. Similarly the annual ritual cycle at the anva ashim provided a focus for communal solidarity and cooperation amongst the Andakpo (patriarchs), reinforcing internal bonds of affinity. (9) What defined the boundaries between territorial units was ritual warfare and its attendant ceremonies.

Prior to the colonial conquest, Eggon engaged in two forms of warfare; secular warfare primarily against external enemies, such as Hausa slave raiders, and ritual warfare mainly against each other. Just when the Eggon came to live on the hills is impossible to say. (It is hard to believe the sophisticated intensive terraced agriculture which the British encountered had evolved in a century of slave raiding from Lafia and Keffi.) Yet the hills provided natural fortifications against slave raiders, who appear never to have ventured into the hills. Slaving took the form of small parties seeking to kidnap unsuspecting Eggon who had ventured onto the plains to hunt, forage or farm. Those Eggon settlements not on the hills, such as Bekyeno Kasa and Aragwadu to the east and Ginda to the west, relied for their protection upon stought thorn-bush and rubble stone fences, combined with periodic payments of tribute in kind and captives to Lafia and Keffi, respectively. (10) There are tales of smaller Eggon groups who settled out on the plains disappearing during one of the few occasions when the rulers of Keffi or Lafia sent out a large force, however most Eggon were simply not accessible and hardly

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8. Luku Jatau, Egbi Angba et al, Bekyeno Kasa, 22 Sept., 1982.

9. I stress the elements of affinity and cohesion, for they were relatively few and tenuous in a society where the centrifugal forces of fear and violence was never far from the surface. These latter aspects are clearly articulated in the court records of testimony; e.g. Rex vs Kwenza of Ame, NAK, SNP 13 0/PC 93/ 1917. Rex vs Azga et al, NAK, SNP 13 0/PC 62/ 1919.

10. Interviews with, Malle Ajegone, Hakim of Ginda, 24 Sept., 1982. Moh. Dameka, Aren Bekyeno Kasa, 22 Sept., 1982. Audu Egga, Aren Aragwadu, 23 Sept., 1982.

warranted such enterprise. Thus secular warfare against external enemies was not generally on a very large scale and mainly involved those Eggon living on the periphery. Moreover, the object of such raids was to capture, not to kill, unlike ritual warfare in which the object was to take the head of an opponent.

From oral accounts, it would seem Eggon spent as much, if not more, time fighting each other as outsiders. The main causes of contention were 'land disputes' and conflicts over women, especially retaliation for wives running away with or being kidnapped by a man from another group. (11) Such raids were frequently preceded by beer drinks and accompanied by much blowing of ashim horns and shouted insults. The broken boulder-strewn landscape made any pretense of battle lines impossible and the general conflict was more a series of small engagements. The Eggon bow was not particularly strong and their flightless arrows not very accurate. Each man carried a large quantity of poisoned hardwood-tipped arrows which he let fly in the direction of the opposition. Knives, hatchets and spears were reserved for the dispatch of wounded opponent.

The object was not to sieze territory which, in effect, would have constituted a redefinition of the socio-political units. Such intra-Eggon secular warfare was probably not uncommon, as demographic pressures led to local adjustments. However oral traditions function to obfuscate alterations in the past in the interest of existing realities. On the other hand, ritual warfare was sacrificial, sepecifically the decapitation and dismemberment of fallen opponents. The death or wounding of a few individuals appears to have been sifficient for both sides to withdraw to mourne their losses or parade their trophies.

The taking of a human head brought prestige to its captor and his group. (12) However it also placed the perpetrator in spiritual danger which could only be ritually absolved by the Adang Ashim. (13) During the ritual, the spiritual power embodied in the head was incorporated into the communal anva ashim, thereby enhancing its poteney, while at the same time bring the spirit of the deceased under the ritual control of the Adang Ashim. On the other hand, it was the Adang Ubben or 'owner of the land' who presided over the ritual settlement of inter-territorial disputes, the subsequent 'blood payments' and the reaffirmation of the ritual and socio-political boundaries between the communities. The taking of heads and the subsequent peace settlement were episodes within a ritual drama, defining the 'community' vis-a-vis its neighbours.

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11. In many ways, Eggon women enjoyed considerably more freedom in pre-colonial society than they do today, a subject I intend developing in a forthcoming paper on the impact of colonialism and Christianity. Europeans were particularly disturbed by what they regarded as female promiscuity and the frequency with which women abandoned their husband for a better provider. Eggon ashim and clitoridechtomy (asheng untsen) were in large measure designed to give men ritual power over women, upon whom they could not exercise very effective authority.

12. Rex vs Anu et al, SNP 13 O/PC 317/ 1917.

13. Interview with Agbu Ebuga, Sar. Wowen, 1 Nov. 1982.

Other parts of the body- the arms, legs and penis- were also removed from the corpse. The penis appears to have been retained by the killer or exchanged with an Andakpo to be incorporated into "fertility" or "love magic", to attract women from another area. The arms and legs do not appear to have been retained by the murderer or his residential cluster but distributed to "allies", not necessarily within the territorial unit. To what extent distribution was determined by kinship or affinal obligations is difficult to reconstruct. However men did take wives from outside their own territorial unit and were expected to send 'gifts' to their wife's father and mother's brothers. Conversely, "sister's sons" were not expected to take up arms against their own maternal kin and, by extension, acted as peacemakers and 'go-betweens'. (14)

In summary, pre-colonial Eggon was a chiefless society based on territorially defined co-residence which found expression in communal ritual focused on the anva ashim (communal ritual site) and the complementary ritual offices of Adang Ashim or "Priest of the People" and Adang Ubben or "Owner of the Land". Ritual warfare and the taking of heads served to define and maintain the cohesion and territorial integrety of these units vis-a-vis their neighbours. It was not a socio-political system readily comprehensible to a British colonial officer of the early twentieth century.

Before the First World War, British colonial administration in the area between Lafia and the Jos escarpment was slight. Their knowledge of the peoples was superficial and tended to mirror the pejorative image of the local Hausa-speaking Muslim establishment of Keffi and Lafia (i.e. those who had long raided the area for slaves). The Eggon, referred to as the South Mada or Mada Tudu (Hill Mada) were confused with the linguistically and culturally distinct Mada peoples to the north and west, the so-called Mada Kasa (Plains Mada). To the brash inexperienced colonial officers who were posted to the backwaters of Keffi and Lafia, the local 'pagans' were murderous truculent savages, to be brought under British authority by military force. That their superiors refused to provide adequate troops for the task, the West African Frontier Force being engaged on more pressing punitive patrols elsewhere, was a constant cause for complaint. (15) It was the speculative mining boom of 1910-1914, based on tin but fueled by dreams of gold and another Witwatersrand in Nigeria, which led to the 'opening up' of the area. (16)

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14. No such restrictions applied to a wife's kinsmen per se, since a wife was a 'stranger' and apt to decamp at any time. The advantage of marrying a woman from within one's territorial unit was the network of pressures and influences which could be brought to bear through other cross-cutting ties with her kinsmen to maintain the marriage. On the other hand, the greater the 'distance' between one's mother's brother and father's brother, the less apt they were to cooperate in one's bewitchment. It was a play-off between a greater measure of marital stability and advantages which would accrue to one's sons.

15. C.F. Arden-Clarke Papers (private papers in the possession of Lady Arden Clarke), letters written home from Nigeria, 1921- 1927.

16. Bill Freund, Capital and Labour in the Nigerian Tin Mines (Harlow, 1981). C. Raeburn, The Tinfields of Nassarawa and Ilorin Provinces; Geological Survey of Nigeria, Bulletin No. 5 (London, 1924).

In May, 1913, two British prospectors, Poole and Campbell, were attack by the Eggon of Ende Wulko, just northeast of the hills. It is clear from Poole's subsequent account of the events leading to Campbell's death that the Eggon were freightened by the erection of survey beacons;

> After about a half hour, I packed up my (survey) instuments and got my boys to collect a few stones. At this the pagans (Eggon) began to get excited and said "I was making bad medicine or juju" for their country. Then on fixing a small stick on the beacon, their excitement increased. On my fixing a small piece of white cloth to the stick, they became very excited and told me that they would pull it all down after I had gone. I then called for a hammer and marked three of the large rocks around the spot. During this time the Hausa-speaking pagans were endeavouring to pacify them and explain to them, but it was futile. They (Hausa-speakers who had been employed by the prospectors) told me I had better go away, as the pagans were going back to their homes for their swords to drive us off...'. (17)

The Eggon had experienced bad harvests the previous year due to poor rains and the onset of the 1913 rainy season had not been very good. (18) Poole reported the incident to Campbell, who appears to have regarded the Eggon attitude as a challenge not to be ignored. Hence Campbell and Poole returned to the same site the following week and commenced survey work anew;

> Two of our boys were cutting down a branch of a tree nearby, for the beacon, but we had not commenced to collect any stones for the same. Mr. Campbell took a few readings, when suddenly within a quater hour of salutations given us by the two (local) chiefs (Andakpo), there seemed a commotion among the pagans about 100 to 150 yards away. The two boys ran in from cutting the beacon sticks. One of our interpreteres called out, "They are going to shoot an arrow at us". One pagan ran down the hill, to within 60 yards of us, knelt behind a rock and fired a poisoned arrow at us. As soon as the commotion started, we ceased our work and watched the pagans. On seeing the pagan fixing his arrow, Mr. Campbell called for his rifle. Immediately the arrow was fired, he replied with a bullet--- but missed. The pagans now began to advance... '. (19)

Campbell and Poole became separated in the ensuing flight, the latter eventually reaching the District Headquarters at Wamba, in Rindiri country, and raising the alarm.

Several days later a patrol, led by newly appointed Assistant Resident Mair, came upon the body of Campbell;

> I found and buried the trunk of Mr. Campbell, the head and limbs had been severed and distributed among the neighbouring villages". (20)

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17. James Goldsworthy Poole, Statement, 21 May, 1912, NAK, SNP 20/ 79p/ 1913.

18. Lt. Governor, Charles Temple, to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Harcourt, 1 July, 1912, NAK, SNP 2726/ 1912.

19. Poole, Statement, 21 May, 1912, NAK, SNP 20/ 79p/ 1913.

20. W.D.K. Mair to Resident, Nassarawa Province, 17 Oct. 1913, NAK, SNP 520p/ 1913.

Death from disease or even native attack was part of the reality and excitement of early colonial service in Nigeria. What shocked the British was the mutilation of Campbell's corpse. In their imaginations, they conjured up horrific fantasies of his final hours. From Eggon accounts, supported by contemporary colonial reports, (21) it would seem that when his ammunition was exhausted, Campbell fled to a 'friendly' compound and tried to hide in a goat shed, but was dragged out by his pursuers and dispatched on the spot in the passion of the moment.

Within days, Mair had been superceded by a more senior officer, A.S. Lawrence, whose instructions from Resident, H.D. Larymore, set the tone of British response;

> '... the enormity of the crime, and the entire district must learn once and for all that the whiteman shall be regarded as sacred. To tie a European up, who has harmed them in no way, who is moreover not even assessing them and to foully murder him cannot be permitted to pass without the severest punishment. It is reported that other villages, besides the one which actually attacked, gathered and witnessed the orgies held while the unfortunate whiteman was tied up in their midst and these must suffer as well'. (22)

There had been previous punitive patrols against Eggon communities in the course of initial tax assessment and as punishment for the murder of Hausa traders. In 1908 Alega and part of Alongani were destroyed. (23) In December 1910 a patrol encountered opposition near Wana, the 'enemy' being driven off with 10 killed and an expenditure of 120 rounds of ammunition. (24) However the punitive expedition following Campbell's death was unparalleleed in its severity. The British followed their standard practice of burning the thatched-roofed compounds and seizing grain and livestock;

> 'Since my arrival..., I have taken every opportunity to thoroughly destroy the villages implicated. I have sent into Wamba (District Headquarters) nearly 600 bundles of guinea-corn... and rationed all soldiers and camp followers, etc., on looted stock and grain'. (25)

Remembering that the area had already suffered from drought, such depredations proved disasterous. Over a year later, localized famine directly attributed to the military operations gripped the Wulko area. (26) However famine was not unfamiliar to the Eggon. What left its mark on the collective psyche and oral traditions, was the savagry of the reprisals.

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21. W.D.K. Mair to Resident, Nassarawa, 26 May, 1912, NAK, SNP 2812/ 1912.

22. H.D. Larymore to A.S. Lawrence, 19 May, 1912, NAK, SNP 2726/ 1912.

23. A. Campbell-Irons, Gazetter of Lafia Beri-Beri, 15 November, 1911, NAK, SNP 4710/ 1912.

24. Lt. E.C. Feneran, Report on the Mada-Nungu Patrol, 14 January, 1911, NAK, SNP 4641/ 1910.

25. A.S. Lawrence to Resident, Nassarawa, 29 May, 1912, NAK, SNP 2812/ 1912.

26. Resident Nassarawa to Secretary, Northern Provinces, Mada District Famine, 11 July, 1913, NAK, SNP 10/ 399p/ 1913.

The British constantly pressed the attack, with Maxim Gun, rifle and bayonet;

> On emerging from Lendum, a large number of the enemy were seen collecting on the opposite ridge, the East end of Awulko. Here I sent for the Maxim Gun which so operated on our left flank. Awulko was attacked at once, keeping the right flank well forward. A stubborn resistance was offered, the enemy taking up three successive positions all of them strong and fortified. Finally at 7:15 a.m. the enemy were driven into a corner the only retreat from which was a precipitous descent of over 200 feet. It was here that Lt. Garnier, who had been leading his half-company with great dash, got wounded. The enemy made a most determined stand, a number of them being bayonetted. It took some time to clear the enemy out of the rocks and holes in which they had taken cover. Part of Awulko was then occupied and burnt. At 10:30 a.m. I moved off to attack Waieme... '. (27)

On that day, 125 Eggon were estimated killed. In the end six villages were burnt and countless killed. Lt. Governor Temple wrote the usual bland report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, infirming him of the recovery of Campbell's body, '... the villages chiefly concerned were punished, a slight resistance was encountered and Lt. Garnier was wounded by a poisoned arrow, fortunately without any effect'. (28) Sadly, by Nigerian standards of the first decade of conquest, it was not a particularly large, important or bloody campaign. The eventual conquest of the Hills, in 1917, when the assault was preceded by artillery and rocket attack, was much more devistating in terms of the area and numbers affected. However it is the Wulko campaign which became the myth of colonial conquest and of colonialism for the Eggon.

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27. Capt. J.O. Hopkinson, Report on the Mada Hills Punitive Patrol, 4th June, 1912, NAK, SNP 20/ 79p/ 1913.

28. Unfortunately for Temple, the campaign was reported by Reuter's agent in Nigeria, got into the British Press, questions were asked in Parliament, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies came under pressure from the Slavery and Aboriginal Protection Society. Governor Lugard, never himself averse to punitive measures, used the incident to discredit Temple, whom he resented as being of better social breeding and saw as a potential rival "Nigerian Expert". The Secretary of State defended the government's action in Parliament but informed Lugard that though, '... I had previously formed a high opinion of Mr. Temple's capacity, I have now felt compelled to omit his name from those I am considering for promotion to higher posts which are vacant or about to become vacant. (Secretary of State to Governor Lugard, 11 February, 1913, NAK, SNP 20/ D/ 20/ 1913 confidential.) Temple subsequently took early retirement, wrote a stinging parody of Lugard's Indirect Rule; C.L. Temple, Native Races and their Rulers (Cape Town, 1918) and ended his days in sublime eccentricity in the south of Spain. (Gerald Brenan, South from Granada, pp. 274- 278).

Mair, the District Officer in charge, also suffered a black mark against his record, ironically for being too lenient with the Eggon and not enforcing the fine of 6,500 bundles of guinea-corn levied on the villages at the conclusion of the campaign. (J.C. Sciortino to Secretary to Government, 15 July, 1913, NAK, SNP 520p/ 1913.)

When soliciting Eggon accounts of the colonial period, informants invariably began with a version of the British distruction of Wulko, often presented in the first instance as events which had occured within the immediate vicinity of the story teller. In subsequent discussions informants could differentiate between the Wulko campaign and the conquest of their area, but the distinction was not particularly significant for them as the Wulko campaign has become the architype. In particular, informants repeatly referred to a massacre of women and children who had sought refuge in a cave (ewala). According to the story, when the British attack Wulko, the women and children hid in a large cave. Unfortunately their secret was given away by the crying of a baby. The British forces shot and threw explosives into the mouth of the cave, killing everyone inside. Such was the destructive power of their weapons that the outline of their victims are still allegedly visible, painted in their own blood upon the walls. (29) In another version, a lone woman and babe-in-arms survive the massacre but died shortly thereafter '... because of seeing so much death'. (30) Or, as another recounted, "The Europeans pursued them to their hiding place and killed all of them. There was blood from Ashim to the sea." (31)

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29. Versions of this tale were collected during fieldwork in 1974, 1976 and 1982. Initially I thought the human outlines might have been neolithic cave paintings and therefore spent some time trying to locate the cave(s). The Mada Hills are Young Granites and, though not classic limestone cave geology, are often broken by deep fissures and undercut by wind and water erosion to form overhanging clefts not unlike the rock-painting sites at Birnin Kudu with which I am familiar. I never located the caves, however their physical 'reality' or otherwise is immaterial to their cultural 'reality' in the context of Eggon reconstruction of their past.

30. Interview with Agbu Ebuga, Sar. Wowen, 1 Nov., 1982. Women were prohibited from watching ritual warfare as it was believed the sight of blood and killing would cause them to sicken and die.

31. Interview with Ezhim Abundaga at Kagbu, 21 Sept., 1982. This same informant explained how the people of Wowen, who had protected Poole's equipment and were regarded by the British as 'friendly', survived the massacre;

> From Wulko, the Europeans came to Wowen. There there was another cave where Wowen hid. Then a hyena (egbi) lay down outside where the Eggon hid. When the European soldiers came and saw the hyena lying there, they did not kill it but said they had come for war. Then they passed the cave without touching any Wowen. So as to today, the Wowen are called Wowen Egbi and they do not kill any hyena even if they see one. One cannot even wear hyena skin in their area without they would fight that person. They then passed Wowen to Egibi, where they fought the Egibi people. There was also war with Ogye. They fought in Ogye from morning till night... '.

And so this version continues until all Eggon was brought under British hegemony, thus extending the Wulko campaign into the conquest of the Eggon Hills and collapsing a series of punitive patrols between 1912 and 1917 into one.

The wanton distruction and slaughter of women and children, not just the killing of men in battle, marked a new level of barbarity, a blood-lust beyond the bounds of Eggon ritual and civilization. What had started out as a meaningful response to threatening European behaviour and an attempt to bring the European under ritual control, had evoked a cataclysm. Just as ritual warfare had dramatized the boundaries of territorial units, so the Wulko campaign defined the indigenous past from the colonial era. Thereafter life was never the same.

While the traditional roles of Adang Ashim and Adang Ubben were not totally negated, a significant element of Eggon ritual practice was outlawed; the cycle of ritual warfare and reaffirmation was terminated by the British prohibition of inter-village fighting. The healing powers of ololo ceremonies and witchfinding retained their validity for many Eggon, despite the impact of missionary medicine, and thus that aspect of the Adang Ashim remained prominent. It was the position of the Adang ubben which became more ambiguous. A combination of factors, beyond the scope of this paper, led to Eggon abandonment of their hills and the creation of new settlements on the surrounding plains. (32) In the process, the initial settlers often came to be regarded as the Adang Ubben of these new areas, but their role and functions were generally less well defined than that of the Adang Ashim. Moreoften as not, one of the Adang was incorporated into the colonial political hierarchy as "Village Headman", so much so that today the Adang Ubben is popularly regarded as equivalent to the concept of 'chief" (ari), essentially a colonial creation. The ritual complementarity of the "Owner of the Land" and "Priest of the People" has been superceded by a political/religious division modeled on the perceived relationship between the colonial administration and the missionary church. A significant element in Eggon response to Christianity has been its role as a focus for communal ritual action and the definition of 'community', but that is another story.

In summary, British colonial conquest of the Eggon resulted in the cessation of the cycle of inter-community ritual warfare which was central to Eggon communal definition. A cycle of continuity gave way to an epoch of change and uncertainty, the transition being marked by a violent event (the Wulko campaign) which has become the architype for that transition and the subsequent 'colonial experience'; the levies of Eggon forced labour for the construction of the Eastern Nigerian Railway, the arbitrariness of tax assessment and market prices, the public executions (33) and the humiliation of an Andakpo who somehow offended a European official.

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32. D.C.Dorward, "Innovation among the Eggon; Colonial Impact on a Nigerian Hill-Farming Society", paper presented to the African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific, University of New South Wales, 25 Aug., 1981.

33. Nearly every early capital offense was the subject of protracted colonial debate as to the justice of executing someone for an offense not so regarded by local custom, natural justice and the concept of mens rea, the reasonable man. To the Eggon their own actions were often seen as just. They admitted the act but did not see it as 'wrong', their testimony providing valuable insight on Eggon beliefs and attitudes at the beginning of the colonial era and before the advent of the missionaries.