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***THE CAREER OF  
ALLI BALOGUN OF LAGOS  
(1840-1933)***

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*Dele Adeoti*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The man Alli Balogun played a significant role in the economic, political and social life of Lagos between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He remains a fascinating figure even if controversial character in the Lagos society of his days. Undoubtedly, a scholarly evaluation of his contribution would help illuminate the history of the recent past of Lagos.

Alli Balogun is one of the many leaders who never left for posterity an account of his contribution to society; and no serious attempt has been made by scholars who write about him. This lack of information concerning one of the most important Muslim leaders and economic giants of yesteryears is not in the best interest of the society.

The first half of the twentieth century was particularly a chaotic period in the history of Lagos. This era was characterized by social and political crises such as the 1908 water rate agitation, the 1915 central mosque crisis and the Eleko Affair, among others. Alli Balogun was among the many important personalities that were previously involved in these events. In this work, an attempt is made to delve briefly into the involvement and activities of Alli Balogun with a view to assessing his contribution to the socio economic and political growth and development of his society.

## **HIS EARLY LIFE AND INFLUENCES**

No one is really sure as to when Alli Balogun was born. Oral sources however posit that he was born in Lagos during the time of Oba Oluwole who reigned between 1834 and 1841. His father was one Mallam Abubakar, a Nupe from Palcwanji in Bida Emirate of the present day Niger State of Nigeria, whilst his mother was madam Oni, who hailed

from Chief Oluwa court in the Isale Eko area of the Lagos Island.'

When he attained the age of three, he started attending an Arabic school at Agbo Ile Pedro in Oko Awo, in the suburb of Lagos Island (Isale Eko), where he picked up a rudimentary knowledge of the Arabic language.<sup>2</sup> It was during his pupilage at the school that Alli Balogun came under the influence of one Mallam Sara, a marabout.<sup>3</sup> Mallam Sara, a well known Muslim cleric, had predicted, through the art of divination, that young Ali was destined to become a successful businessman later in life.<sup>4</sup> The mallam, loved and gave him all the necessary support even more than he would for his own children. This suggests that Alli was a very disciplined and dependable boy. These virtues, perhaps were not lost on his elder brother, Buraimoh Onilereke who reckoned that the boy would be very helpful in his business enterprises. He would not allow him to rot away in an Arabic school. Alli was subsequently withdrawn from school, thereby denying him the only opportunity he had to acquire a sound knowledge of Arabic education.

## **HIS CONTRIBUTION**

Alli assisted his brother Onilereke, in running his business. Initially he and his brother engaged mainly in buying and selling food items: yam, yam flour, maize, garri, among others. They were well known in many parts of Lagos. Most times business took them to as far away as Ejinrin, Ito Ikin, Ikosi and Ikorodu markets in the Ijebu waterside of the present day Ogun State.<sup>5</sup> Alli Balogun proved himself as a successful trader. He soon turned around his brothels business and by the time he came of age the business had grown tremendously and beyond his brother's imagination. He grew with the business and acquired a great deal of business acumen. This perhaps endeared him to his brother who vowed to keep him as a business partner in perpetuity. They both pooled all their resources together and set up a joint business outfit with elder brother Onilereke as senior partner. It would appear there were no concrete agreement between the two brothers on the modalities for running a joint business venture. Buraimoh Ondereke would appear too bossy and self serving to the chagrin and discomfiture of Alli Balogun. AM accused his elder brother of selfishness and cheating, a development that soon led to separation between the two brothers. Alli parted ways with his elder

brother to float his own business organization.<sup>6</sup>

Before the close of the nineteenth century, Alli Balogun had emerged as a big time merchant known and respected in Lagos and its environs. He set up his own trading stores where he sold assorted articles like tobacco, liquor, drinks, building materials, local sea salt, fish, yam, maize, palm oil, palm kernels and native clothes. His business network traversed the whole of the riverine areas of Lagos and Ijebu, just as his agents were known in the hinterland.<sup>7</sup>

Besides, Alli Balogun carried his trading activity beyond the shores of Nigeria as he took part actively in the international trade. He maintained trade links with the leading European merchants and companies such as Messrs. Witt & Busch, G.L. Gaiser (German), S.A. Williams, the United Africa Company (UAC) Patterson Zochonis (PZ), and J.B. Russets (Britain), among others. In the spirit of the legitimate trade which characterized this period of the nineteenth century, Alli exchanged raw materials from Nigeria for European finished products—tobacco, indigo, spirit, iron sheets, umbrella, clothing materials, guns and gunpowder. In this process, Alli Balogun became one of the trusted and reliable middlemen between the European and other African merchants in Lagos and the interior.<sup>9</sup>

Alli Balogun was a sophisticated and dynamic trader who understood the economics of business. As a multifaceted trader he saw the need to diversify his business. He engaged in haulage business activity on the Lagos Lagoon. He acquired several boats many of which he used for his own business.<sup>10</sup> The importance of boats in promoting the economy of Lagos can be better realized when it is recalled that before 1821, the evacuation of palm produce, food crops and fish from Ikorodu and its surrounding settlements to Lagos depended on the rowing boats.<sup>11</sup> Thus Alli's boats helped to boost lagoon transportation during the colonial time. The boat service encouraged not only the evacuation of goods but also movement of people between Lagos and Ikorodu. In fact, many migrants from Ijebu and its environs went to Lagos by boat in search of better employment opportunities in trade and in the civil service.<sup>12</sup> As for trade Lagos remained the commercial seat of Nigeria. In 1920, not less than forty Lagosians were described as successful African traders in Lagos. Many of them including Alli Balogun were recognized agents of European

firms. Ikorodu people served these traders as apprentices from which they also established in the trade. He hired out many of his boats to other upcoming traders who could not afford to buy their own.<sup>13</sup> Alli's towering influence in using boat for haulage and transportation won him the soubriquet, Alli Oloko, literally translated to mean Alli the boat owner. His boats were known by their distinctive colours in the creeks of Lagos Lagoon and Ijebu waterside.<sup>14</sup> Apart from haulage, Alli Balogun was into estate business. He built shops and houses in strategic and commercial areas of Lagos. These he rented out to needy petty traders at reasonable rates. Such shops were located in places like Obun Eko, Ereko, Faji, Onitolo, Ebute Elefun, Ebute Ero, Onileke and Alaro, all in Lagos Island. His houses littered the whole of Lagos Island.<sup>15</sup> His ubiquity within the business community of Lagos probably explains why a market was named after him (Alli Balogun market) in Lagos.

Alli was also into money lending business. By 1900 he was already well known as a leading moneylender in Lagos. He was widely patronized by young traders in need of financial base from every part of Lagos. His house was always a beehive of activity as borrowers and creditors trooped in and out.

Alli was a shrewd businessman. He was always out to maximize profit which he later ploughed back into his business enterprises. He would charge compound interest on any amount he lent out, a situation that eventually plunged many borrowers from his account into debt crisis, thereby making it impossible for his debtors to pay up their debts. As many as those who reneged on their promises to pay their debts had their property, particularly their houses and land confiscated and sold by the agents of Alli Balogun.<sup>16</sup> No doubt, Alli Balogun had an idea of usury, practiced in medieval Europe—ruthless exploitation of the peasants by the Lords of the manor. Alli, like the Lords in the manorial system ruthlessly cashed in on the desperation of the poor to advance his own business empire. While this attitude may be rationally justified in economics, it was not so among many Lagosians of his day. Alli Balogun lost the respect of many people who saw him not only as selfish and callous, but also as a ruthless and mean businessman. No wonder Lagosians in their characteristic manner of indicting self-serving individuals often warned those who showed tendencies to exploit like Alli Balogun to desist from such act.

Thus the popular saying in Lagos:

Makanjuola, Titilola, Agbo kii kan Ilekun;  
Mafoya, bikose eni to waya,  
*yi o je eni to wa son.'*

This literally means:

Do not be in a hurry to acquire wealth. Wealth is  
**e v e r l a s t i n g .**

The ram does not knock on the door. Fret not. It is either he who wants to borrow or he who comes to pay his debt.

Alli **Balogun** is a name that thrives in controversies. While many are of the opinion that the man Alli Balogun was callous and selfish because of the ways and means usually adopted to retrieve his hard earned money from debtors, some say that he was not a traditional money lender who would demand a pound of flesh, whether or not his debtors paid up." The above shows his humanity and controversial nature. Nonetheless, the fact remains that Alli Balogun was a shrewd businessman who understood well the nitty gritty of business despite his lack of formal education. He was a man of deep native intelligence who remains a colossus in the commercial circle of Lagos. This probably accounts for his solvency during the great global economic slump of the 1920s.

Among his contemporaries in Lagos Alli **Balogun** probably had no equal. He was rich, powerful and influential. He was perhaps the largest owner of houses and other landed property in Lagos but he made no fuss about it. In spite of his modesty his influence in the financial sector of the economy has been enormous. This was captured by a feature article in one of the national dailies of the time. According to oral sources the article carried the disagreement between one Tom Jones, a businessman and the management of the British Bank for West Africa (BBWA), his banker. Mindful of his huge deposits in the BBWA, Tom Jones had in annoyance threatened to withdraw his deposits from the bank. But in a swift reaction to the threat the BBWA management called his bluff and asked:

Shall we close down? Tom Jones could withdraw his money. So far we still have the account of Alli Balogun with us, there is no cause for alarm.<sup>o</sup>

The above reveals the stupendous wealth of Alli Balogun and its impact on the economy. He could thus be described as a silent millionaire and one of the shakers and moves of Lagos in his days. This probably explains his popularity and respect his business counterparts had for him.

Alli Balogun was an active member of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, a trade association formed in Lagos in 1888 by a group of Lagos businessmen to protect the commercial and economic interests of the European and African traders.<sup>20</sup> One important misunderstanding which threatened to spell the eclipse of the body was the question of tolls which engaged the attention of the business community in Lagos. Hitherto in Yorubaland, European firms carrying goods across the frontiers were subjected to various tolls which were reluctantly paid. Matters came to a head in 1903 when the European firms jointly opposed the tolls and put pressure on the Lagos government and the colonial office to abolish the tolls in preference to the payment of increased duties.<sup>21</sup> This had the effect of undermining the stability of African traditional governments in the interior.

In 1903 the Lagos Chamber of Commerce carried a resolution that the tolls at Ibadan should be abolished. This was endorsed by two African members—D.A. Taylor and C.A. Oni. But Alli Balogun leading other African members like R.B. Blaize, Kasumu Giwa and Seidu Olowu, vehemently opposed the resolution arguing that the proposed abolition of tolls would undermine the financial stability of the African traditional government in the interior and that any increase in the liquor duty at Lagos would hamper their commercial interests. The two African members who previously endorsed abolition had to reconsider their position and join their counterparts. As these disagreements could not be settled amicably the African members like Alli Balogun, together with the president of the body Mr. C. Tabansi, resigned and the Chamber reverted into the hands of Europeans, a situation that called to question the legitimacy and stability of the Chamber. This development brought about the collapse of the chamber and was revived until its European members recognized the need to listen to the voice of reason from their African members.

Just as Alli Balogun was well known within the business circle he was equally known in politics. It has often been said that politics and good financial standing are congruent. One influences the other. Wealth is

power. With money and perhaps idea and charisma one is at a vantage position to make his influence and presence felt in politics. Alli Balogun was charismatic, articulate, wealthy and influential. For more than three decades the influence of Alli Balogun was quite visible in the politics of Lagos. He did not stand aloof of his society. Rather, he tried to identify himself with the desires and aspirations of his people. Thus he dabbled actively into the murky waters of Lagos politics!

Alli Balogun, either as an individual or, accredited representative of different interest groups was all out against colonial exploitation and oppression in whatever guise. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was particularly a turbulent period in the political history of the Lagos colony. The era was characterized by the activities of many colonial officials and the reaction of the people to the colonial administration. Alli Balogun was one of the many prominent politicians in the traditional class who actively participated in the grassroots politics of the community. Lagos society was a stratified one. It comprised the colonial officials who constituted the ruling class and the modern and traditional class: watchdog of the toiling masses, the peasants, who were in the majority. This period also witnessed the coalition between the modern and traditional elites. This coalition formed an organic link between the colonial authority and the vast majority of the people.<sup>24</sup> By virtue of his social and economic standing Alli Balogun belonged to the traditional elite, and in this capacity played a prominent role in the affairs of Lagos Colony.

From the 1890s onward, educated African elite in Lagos began to suffer racial discrimination in the colonial civil service. Fewer Africans were promoted to the top cadres of colonial administration. In reaction several top African civil servants—engineers, surveyors, lawyers, medical doctors resigned from colonial service to be on their own. Prominent among these aggrieved Africans were J.K. Randle, Dr. Obadiah Johnson and Sir Herbert Macaulay. They left the colonial service in protest against racial injustices! This increased racial discrimination aggravated by economic discontent and political disillusion led to a new appraisal by the modern elite of their cold relationship with the traditional elite. The traditional elite also had their own grouse with the colonial authority. The British pacification of Lagos Colony and hinterland had threatened the virtual commercial monopoly of the Lagos traditional elite over the



hinterland markets that produced products sold in Lagos. As a result of increased governmental penetration land that belonged to this group of elite were ruthlessly appropriated by the government. Between 1897 and 1915, the old social distinction of Lagos—Europe Brazilians, Saro and indigenes—had become politically unreal. The blacks closed rank and forged a united (front) opposition against European colonial officials for their anti people proposals.<sup>26</sup> One of such proposals was the plan to set up the Lagos Municipality to collect rates for the improvement of health facilities. The proposal caused a storm of protests because of the threat to introduce taxation. Both the traditional and modern elite were unanimous in saying "no" to the proposal. They contended that they would rather die of filth and bad water than pay towards its improvement. The fact is that it was not that the people were unappreciative of good water but they perhaps believed it was the Colonial officials that would ultimately benefit from pipe water since majority of Lagosians were poor and could not even afford the luxury.<sup>27</sup> As Governor MacCallum could not force the municipal scheme on Lagos, the matter was rested; although not to the satisfaction of the government. Government perhaps realized lack of communication as the bane of its relationship with Lagosians. Hence MacCallum took the initiative to bridge the gap. He instituted what was known as the Native Advisory Board (NAB) which comprised chiefs and representatives of modern elite who had influence with the native community. The Board constituted a much required buffer between the government and the Lagos community! Even with this Board, the government was still not in adequate touch with native opinion as the traditional elite continued to mount opposition against what they regarded as government's unpopular measures—taxation, large scale forest alienation, ill treatment of hinterland chiefs, etc. As the area of governmental activity increased so also did the need to legitimize its authority. The need to find a compromise with the people became highly imperative. Thus, Governor MacGregor, who succeeded MacCallum, adopted a policy of "patient and painful education," as the attitude of the Lagosians was one of simple obstruction to anything and everything proposed by the government.<sup>29</sup>

The new Governor abolished the NAB and substituted it in 1900 with the Central Native Council (CNC). The council was expected to bridge the communication gap between the government and the people

just as it was expected to help diffuse opposition of the people to government policies. It was also to deliberate largely on important chieftaincy matters, among others. It was made up of 23 members—White cap chiefs, the Giwas (headmen of the wards), other market chiefs representing Lagos and its environs and the leaders of the Muslim community. Alli Balogun was a member of the body in his capacity as ward leader and one of the accredited representatives of the Lagos Muslims!

Under the umbrella of the CNC Alli Balogun was to confront frontally some of the political problems facing Lagos. One of such problems was the agitation over the forestry ordinance, an obnoxious legislation which prohibited indiscriminate poaching by hunters, felling of timber and tapping of rubber in the hinterland; it also provided for the appointment of a conservator of forest and the establishment of Forest Reserves. Lagosians of all classes massed up in opposition against the ordinance fearing it might lead to large scale land appropriation and to concessionaire plantation industries by the government. No doubt, the people's fear seemed justified in view of the fact that government had proved most unreliable and irresponsible by its past action: It had acquired and appropriated the lands given to it by some eminent Lagosians like Chief Onikoyi?

Meanwhile government had expected support from the CNC, but received nothing. With the likes of Alli Balogun, Chief Obanikoro, etc., the council ceased to serve as a place of dialogue and collaboration with the government; instead it served as a forum for opposing the government; and this continued until the exit of MacGregor and arrival of his successor, Egerton.

Egerton's regime witnessed a series of stormy protests which covered almost every aspect of governmental activity: opposition against government hinterland policy (1905), public and Ikoyi Lands Ordinance, Seditious Offences Ordinance and the water rate agitation (1908). Details of these crises have been told elsewhere and need not detain us here. Suffice it to stress that Alli Balogun, like most of his colleagues in the CNC; was particularly irked by the seditious offences ordinance, legislation aimed at muzzling the alleged anti white propaganda of the Lagos Press. The anti white feeling which the ordinance generated was so serious that many expatriates lost their most valuable property to Lagos rioters in

1908."

Members of the CNC felt that the legislation was ill conceived as it was provocative. Opposition to the Bill was unanimous. Yesufu Agoro, a member of the CNC for example said the Bill was "invidious since the government merely wished to use it to punish its opponents." On his part, Chief Asogbon, another member of the CNC, was full of condemnation of the ordinance. He condemned it in its entirety, apparently worried about the bill, Alli Balogun led the CNC on three different occasions to table the matter for discussion with a view to bringing about an amicable solution to the problem. He probably thought they could deliberate on the bill and perhaps persuade government to withdraw it. Surprisingly, Alli and his party were informed in unambiguous terms that the Legislative Council, apparently a higher body, had already passed the bill into law." This shows the weakness and limitations of the CNC. Alli Balogun and his group were of no consequence as far as this matter was concerned. An alarmed Alli Balogun in disbelief and ignorance asked rather angrily: "Is it a fact that this council has no powers to make laws or prohibit laws? If so why are we all here? Apparently there is a higher council than this which makes the laws."<sup>34</sup> This was quite revealing since Alli Balogun apparently was not aware that the CNC was merely a deliberative body. It could only advise. He had always regarded the body as a forum where laws could be made and translated to the people through the government. Even though Alli Balogun recognized the presence of Sir Kitoyi Ajasa, Dr. Obadiah Johnson and Sapara Williams as accredited representatives of the people in the Legislative Council, he never recognized them as either his equal or the authentic leaders of the Lagos people. In his words. "They are not chiefs. The chiefs are here" (referring to himself and other members of the CNC).

One other important issue which engaged the attention of Alli Balogun was, the 1908 water rate agitation in Lagos. In that year the colonial administration in its attempt to improve sanitary condition in Lagos had decided to introduce pipe borne water into the city. This was to be paid for by the people through a levy known as the water rate. The generality of the people of Lagos vehemently kicked against the proposal. Alli Balogun and his group contended that while the community was not unappreciative of the water scheme, it maintained that those who wanted

the water project should be made to pay for it Alli Balogun was particularly forthright, assertive as he was combative in his opposition to the water rate proposal. He suggested a programme of civil disobedience against the colonial government if it refused to drop the proposal. Such principled opposition from Alli Balogun, the educated elite and other members of the CNC made it impossible for the administration to have its way on the matter for quite a long time.<sup>36</sup>

However, within a few years Alli Balogun had cause to change his mind on the water rate issue. By 1915 the unanimous opposition to the water rate had fizzled out, Alli Balogun in collaboration with a few of other government apologists began to rally support for the colonial administration on the issue. It is not clear why he suddenly changed his mind or turned renegade. We can only conjecture. Perhaps he took the decision either for clever political maneuvering or for his own economic survival. No doubt Alli was a very good friend and confidant of Alhaji Ibrahim, the Chief Imam of Lagos who was a very good ally of the colonial government. For his loyalty the Imam had been awarded a colonial title, the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal, as far back as 1898 and had been identifying himself with the regime.<sup>37</sup> It is also not improbable that Dr. Obasa, his personal physician, may have helped change his mind. What is however important was that Alli Balogun suddenly sided with other government collaborators to ask Lagosians to cooperate. The tension generated by the water rate was carried to the realm of religion. The effect of this was religious polarization in which the rank and file of Lagos Muslim community split into two rival camps. This was to have a negative repercussion on the Muslims in Lagos. This manifested in the form of conflict over the management and control of the Lagos Central Mosque between the supporters of Alli Balogun (the Lemumu party or Alli Balogun party) and the Adamu Animashaun party (Jammat Party), the group opposed to the introduction of the water rate. Alhaji Ibrahim, a known conservative and supporter of Alli Balogun was accused of strictness and autocratic tendencies in matters bordering on administration of the mosque by the Jammat party; and there were moves to oust him as the chief Imam. Government intervention at a point brought the matter under control. The administrative crisis in the mosque resurfaced again in 1922 when the parties threatened another physical confrontation? Peace continued to

elude the Muslim community. The problem was compounded with the Imamate crisis of 1923, when the Chief Imam, Ibrahim, died in 1923 the problem of successorship threatened to tear the mosque apart. Alli Balogun was a major actor in the drama. There were two contestants—Tijani and Ligali—both children of the same parents (sons of Nalla). Tijani, the elder brother was deputy of the late Imam and felt he should naturally succeed to the imamate. But he was a member of the Lemomu party and for that reason his candidature was unacceptable to the Jamat party. Ligali, who was a member of the Jamat party, was favoured and was subsequently appointed chief Imam. This drew the ire of Alli Balogun and his party who in a counter reaction appointed Tijani as the Chief Imam of the same mosque. The ensuing power struggle between the two rival Imams led to a court case. Alli's group lost.<sup>39</sup> With this victory the control of the Central Mosque passed on fully into the hands of the Jamat Party, a development that almost destroyed Islamic brotherhood within the community. Not satisfied with the outcome of the court case Alli Balogun pooled his resources and single handedly built a mosque for his followers some few metres away from the central mosque. The new mosque built at a cost of about three thousand pounds sterling, was named WASIMI (come and rest).<sup>40</sup> This development attracted over two hundred members from the central mosque, thus widening the gulf between the two factions.

Alli Balogun's passion for religion was quite evident within his household. He made it compulsory for every member of his household to observe the five times daily prayer. It was also obligatory for every member to observe the Friday Jummat service. Any erring member was visited with severe sanction. Every Friday was like a festival day in his household. He would give *outzakat* to the poor and the needy, thereby observing one of the important tenets expected of a true and genuine Mohammedan. He hosted visitors in the house every Friday usually standing on the balcony of his mansion, doling out money to the less privileged who converged regularly at his residence. And as a practicing Muslim, he went on a holy pilgrimage to Mecca in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>41</sup> This earned him the title "Alhaji," a descriptive title for Muslim pilgrims while in the Holy land but which has been hoisted as a title in Nigeria. It is a status symbol rarely attained in those days and ranked Alli Balogun amongst the respected Muslim elite of his days.

Alli Balogun utilized the large resources at his disposal to elevate and propagate the religion of Islam in Lagos and its environs. He donated unspecified large sums of money to various Muslim organizations to build mosques in places like Lagos, Epe, Badagry and Ejirin, an important market town, in the Ijebu waterside, noted for attracting many traders from the Yoruba hinterland, particularly Oyo, Ekiti and Ijesa. Many of such traders were said to have embraced the Islamic religion in their trading outposts at Epe and Ejirin.<sup>42</sup> This partly explains the existence of pockets of Muslim colonies in Ekiti and Ijesaland today. News of Alli Balogun's monetary contribution to Islam within the community re-echoed in the far North and attracted the attention of Northern Emirs, especially the Emir of Bida, who in his outward show of appreciation of Alli Balogun's laudable contribution to Islam always sent his trumpeters to Lagos on every occasion of Muslim festival to celebrate with Alli Balogun.<sup>43</sup> The Emir himself may have benefited from Alli's largesse on account of his relation with Alli Balogun, whose father was of the royal family in Bida.

Alli Balogun showed broad mindedness in his dealings with adherents of other religions especially Christians. He was not a rabid fundamentalist who would refuse to see anything good in other religions. As proof of his tolerance and accommodation he gave out plots of his land to the Christian community in Lagos to build a church.<sup>44</sup> Up till today the church which is popularly called the Bethel Church, along Aroloya in the suburb of Lagos Island, is a testimony of his enduring contribution to the growth and development of Christianity in Lagos.

The respect which he had for Christianity perhaps explains his love for Western education, which he embraced and helped to promote. He encouraged many of his children and wards to go to school. Before he passed on in 1933, Alli Balogun had made enough provision for the future education of his children, grandchildren and the less privileged. A section of the will which he left behind attests to his unquenchable thirst and desire for Western education. The section reads:

I direct that any of Busari, my son, of Monamo . . .  
 Jariatu . . . Abusatu, my daughters showing aptitude to  
 learn, he or they shall be sent to Europe to be qualified  
 in the professions of law and of medicine or of civil

engineering out of my residuary trust fund.

Undoubtedly, Alli Balogun was enamoured of professions like law, medicine and engineering, fields of specialty that commanded respect of many people in those days. The exploits of professionals like Herbert Macaulay, surveyor and civil engineer, Obadiah Johnson, J.K. Randle and Obasa, medical doctors and personal physician to Alli Balogun, Kitoyi Ajasa, Egerton, Shyngle and Sapara Williams, renowned attorneys in Lagos of his day may have influenced his love and passion for future education and profession of his offspring. By this Alli Balogun bequeathed a befitting and enduring legacy to his children many of who took the advantage of this generous provision.

In our discussion, we have attempted to shed some light on the career of Alli Balogun of Lagos. From the foregoing, it is obvious that in spite of his humble beginnings, Alli Balogun, by dint of luck and hard work, rose to become one of the most successful businessmen in Lagos during the colonial time. Though highly given to controversies there is no doubt that he contributed in no small measure to the economic and social development of Lagos. We have also drawn attention to his involvement in politics. We thus see him as a man not very consistent with principles. However, as a rich, powerful and influential businessman, Alli Balogun readily identified himself with the desires and aspirations of his people. He fought relentlessly to resist colonial exploitation and oppression and at the same time, served as a bridge of understanding between his people and the colonial authority. Finally by his activities and pronouncements, Alli Balogun can be regarded as a successful agent of social change in Lagos of his day.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. Oral interview with Alhaji Jenmi Alli Balogun, 38, Bamgbose Street, Lagos 12/3/89.
3. *Ibid.*
4. The fact that Alli Balogun was born an Ige child who comes out of the womb legs Last goes to reinforce this belief. In Yorubaland, children

born under this unusual circumstance are regarded as lucky and carriers of good fortune.

5. Oral interview with Alhaji Jenmi Alli Balogun.
6. Oral interview with Alhaji K. Alli Balogun, No 4, Griffith Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos.
7. Oral interview with Mr. Moruf Kayode, aged 80, No 5 Majiyagbe Street, Pedro Somolu, Lagos.
8. *Daily Times* (Lagos) July, 14, 1933.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Oral interview with Alhaji K. Balogun.
11. See Babatunde Agiri, "Lagos Ikorodu Relations 1894 - 1950," in Ade Adefuye *et al.* (eds.), *History of the Peoples of Lagos State* Lagos, Lantern Books, 1987, p. 211.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
13. Separate oral interviews with Alhaji G.A. Alli 01Balogun and Mr. Moruf Kayode.
14. Oral interview with G.A. Alli Balogun.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Separate oral interviews with Mr. Sam Berkeley, 80+, No. 5 Hawley Street, Lagos and Mr. Moruf Kayode.
17. Oral interview with Alhaji K. Balogun.
18. Oral interview with his children, G. A. Alli Balogun and K. Alli Balogun.
19. Oral interview with Chief Kekere Ekun, 33, Queens Drive, Ikoyi, 3/3/89.
20. See Olukunie Iyanda (ed.), *The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Nigerian Economy*, Ibadan, Book Craft 1989, p. 16.
21. *Ibid.*
22. When Alli Balogun resigned his membership in 1903 he did not rejoin the body till he died in 1933.
23. See H.O. Danmole, "The Crisis of the Lagos Muslim Community, 1915-1947," in Ade Adefuye *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 290-304.
24. Patrick Cole, *Modern and Traditional Elites in the Politics of Lagos*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1975, chapter 3.
25. See *The Service* (Lagos) March to May, 1961.
26. See Cole, *op. cit.* p. 75.
27. *Ibid.* pp. 98-99
28. NAICSO 1/3/3, McCallum to Colonial Office 18, 28, October, 1897. The National Advisory Board (NAB) was a suitable medium for explaining to the people the steps which government proposed to take, for showing in what way the people can best cooperate and support the government and to lay before the Governor any cause of disquiet and unrest with a view to its removal or mitigation.
29. Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
30. *Ibid.*, p.88.



31. NAICSO 26/31154, Vol. 1, Land Policy in Lagos Commissioner of Lands to Chief Secretary to the Government, also see Cole, *op. cit.* p. 93.
32. See *African Mail* (Lagos) 31 January, 1908, *Lagos Weekly Record*, 8 January, 19 March and 7 May, 1910.
33. Cole, *op. cit.* p. 88.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 98 100.
36. *Ibid.*, p 100
37. NAICSO 26/50975 from Chief Imam Ibrahim Family Union to the Chief Secretary to the Government, Lagos, 8 April, 1947.
38. See Danmole, *op. cit.* p.296.
39. *Ibid.* p.298.
40. *Ibid.* p. 299
41. Oral interviews with his children Alhaji GA. Alli Balogun and Jenmi Alli Balogun.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. Alhaji Alh Balogun's WILL in *his* Family Library, 75 Brickfield Road, Lagos.