

Craft Development in the 19th Century Sokoto City: A Lesson towards Economic Diversification in the 21st Century Nigeria

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Abstract : Sokoto caliphate is the product of a hectic revolutionary movement that took place in the first decade of the nineteenth century under the leadership of Seikh Usmanu Danfodio. The movement led to the overthrow of the Sarauta system in Hausa Land, leading to the emergence of the Sokoto caliphate and Sokoto city as its headquarters. This development led to the collapse of Alkalawa (headquarters of the Gobir Kingdom) in 1808. A year later, in 1809, Sokoto city emerged as the headquarter of the Sokoto Caliphate. Due to the open door policy adopted by the leaders, the city came to experience an influx of people especially craft manufacturers from all over Hausa Land and beyond, who occupied many areas of the city and engaged in different craft production. This paper aims to highlight the development of crafts manufacturing in the 19th century Sokoto city and its contribution to transforming the city into a major economic base of the caliphate. In dealing with the above issue, qualitative research methods that mainly involve the use of oral and archival data will be adopted. Finally, the paper identified that the expansion of craft manufacturing in the 19th century Sokoto city could have resulted from the role played by the leadership of the caliphate, which favoured such development. The paper argues that if those industries were revived in Nigeria today, they would ultimately create various jobs among the younger generations, which would result in economic prosperity.

Keywords : craft manufacturing, diversification, economy, migration

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