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The Role of Non-Yoruba Groups in the Transformation of Ilọrin, 1790s-1820s

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Abstract

Up to about 1797, Ilọrin was a small settlement within a region now described as northern Yorubaland. Between c.1797 and c.1823, it witnessed dramatic transformation, first, into a military stronghold of AfÍnja, the rebel generalissimo of the Old Qyọ Empire, and then to a multi-ethnic community inhabited by such groups as the Baruba, Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri, Nupe and Yoruba, among others. As a consequence of the presence and activities of Muslim clerics, most importantly the religious movement initiated by Shaikh Alimi, an itinerant Fulani cleric, the Muslims were unified and brought under the influence of the ideology of Shaikh Usman Dan Fodio's Jihad. They launched a Jihad in c. 1823 and, thus, transformed Ilọrin into an emirate, which was subsequently incorporated into the Sokoto Caliphate. In the developments that characterized the transformation, the role played by the non-Yoruba groups has been widely acknowledged. However, there exists a need for a historical analysis of various aspects of their involvement. Therefore, this paper examines the roles of non-Yoruba groups in the socio-political transformation in IlỌrin between the 1790s and 1820s. It draws attention to how the presence and activities of the non-Yoruba impacted on the actions and inaction of the leading actors involved in the transformation.

Introduction

During the period covered by this paper, Ilọrin was transformed from a small, non-Muslim settlement, into a large heterogeneous Muslim community. This was largely a consequence of developments associated with the disintegration of the Old Qyọ Empire, and the religious movement in northern districts of the empire initiated by Shaikh Salihu bn Janta widely known as Shehu of *Aafa* Alimi. Within Ilọrin, the events that unfolded involved different groups and key figures such as Afọnja, the Yoruba generalissimo; the Kanuri scholar-trader, Abdullahi At-Tahir, widely known as Sọlagbọ̀ru; Alimi, a Fulani scholar; and a Hausa leader, Ibrahim Bako, the Sarkin Gambari. Between c.1797 and c.1823, their presence, activities, influence, and an initial mutual understanding among them contributed to the survival of Ilọrin and various changes in its ethno-religious character. By the late 1820s, the settlement had been transformed into the nucleus of the emergent emirate and "a town of prodigious size," whose extent, population and wealth had reportedly surpassed those of ÌyÍ-Ile, the capital of the Old Qyọ Empire.[1]

The involvement of non-Yoruba groups in Ilọrin during the period under examination was closely associated with Afọnja and his rebellion against the Old Qyọ. However, in analysing such involvement, there is a need for a clarification of the dating and chronology of some of the key events central to such participation, especially Afọnja's recruitment of the Hausa, Fulani, Nupe, etc. And particularly the Fulani cleric, Shehu Alimi. This is usually treated as a singular event, associated with the reign of Alaafin Aole and the outbreak of a slave/Muslim revolt in Qyọ, both being dated, more often than not, to c.1817. On the one hand, Alaafin Aole's reign has been calculated to have lasted between c.1789 and c.1796 rather then extending to c.1817 suggested in some

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[1] C. Hugh. *Journal of Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Soccatoo* (London: John Murray, 1829), 28; Richard Lander, *Records of Captain Clapperton's Last Expedition to Africa*, I (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 96-97; Richard and John Lander, *Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger* I, (London, 1832), 189-190.

sources.[2] On the other hand, several local sources indicate that there were at least two contacts between Afọnja and Alimi, and that the Kakanfo had involved Hausa recruits in his revolt earlier than 1817.

By late 18th century, when Afọnja's revolt began, Alimi was already preaching in northern Yorubaland. AfÍnja's reported first contact with the Fulani cleric, reportedly made through Toyejọ, the Baalọ of Ogbomọsọ, the deputy Kakanfo, was in connection with an invasion of Ilọrin by Ojo Agunbambaru, dated to c.1797. While Alimi's consequent arrival in Ilọrin in response to the appeal is suggested to have been at "the beginning of the 19th century," the Kakanfo's victory over Ojo is variously explained to have been won with the spiritual power provided by Alimi and/or military help rendered by his followers.[3] There are indications that Hausa recruits (known as the *Jamaa*) into Afọnja's army were involved in his punitive expedition against Irọsa for supporting Ojo's unsuccessful invasion.[4] This earlier involvement of non-Yoruba elements in Afọnja's career in Ilọrin is partly corroborated by the Lander's report in 1830 that the flight of a 'considerable number of Hausa slaves' to Ilọrin "took place as far back as forty years" (i.e. c.1790s), and that a Fulani group was involved in encouraging such flight.[5]

The second contact between Afọnja and Alimi was reportedly made through Sọlagbọru, the leader of the Muslim settlement of Oke-Suna, located on the outskirts of Ilọrin. This was around 1817, when Alimi

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[2] *Cf*. S. A. Crowther. *A Grammar of the Yoruba Language* (London: Seeleys, 1852), v; Samuel, J., *The History of the Yorubas from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of British Protectorate* (Lagos: C.S.S. Bookshop, 1921), 194-5; Hogben, S. J. and Kirk-Greene, A. H. M. *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of their Historical Traditions* (Oxford University Press, 1966), 285; Law R.C.C. "The Chronology of the Yoruba Wars of the Nineteenth Century: A Reconsideration," *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria* (*JHSN*) v, No. 2 (1970), 211-222; Smith R. S. *The Kingdoms of the Yoruba* (London: James Curry, 1988), 144.

[3] L.A.K. Jimoh, *Ilorin: The Journey So Far*, (Ilorin: Atoto Press, 1994), 49, 50-53; Safi Jimba, *Iwe Itan Ilorin* (Ilorin: Jimba Books Productions, 1990), 122.

[4] Johnson. *History*, 194, 196.

[5] Lander. *Journal*, 189-190; Johnson, *History*, 193, 196.

was at Kuhǫ, a settlement where Sǫlagbʋru had been a chief before moving to Oke-Suna. This contact could be interpreted to be the one that was intended to make Alimi to serve as AfÍnja's priest in order "to strengthen his [Afǫnja's] hand in the enterprise he was about to undertake."[6] Since Alimi, according to Johnson, 'made Ilǫrin his home,' it was this particular contact that resulted in the cleric's settlement at Ilǫrin, which has generally been dated to c.1817. By the latter date, there were already in Afǫnja's army Hausa and other non-Yoruba recruits who had contributed to the success of the twenty-year old rebellion. This clarification suggests that the involvement of the non-Yoruba groups such as the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, etc. in the developments in Ilǫrin during the era of Afǫnja clearly began earlier than the year 1817, and therefore, requires a detailed historical analysis.

The Role of non-Yoruba Groups in pre-emirate Ilǫrin, c.1790s-c.1823

Discussions on history of IlÍrin before Afǫnja's advent have largely focused on the origin of the settlement, etymologies of its name, and the identities of its founders or early settlers.[7] Suffice here to note that, one of the extant accounts on the pre-emirate Ilǫrin credited a non-Yoruba group, the Baruba, with its founding or early settlement.[8] However, apart from the reference to a sub-section of the town named "Baruba", now in the Idi-Apʋ quarters, there has been no adequate record of the activities of the group or their role in Ilǫrin prior to c.1796.

By the latter date when Afǫnja could be said to have begun his Ilǫrin career, the Kakanfo was probably not unfamiliar with the

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[6] Johnson. *History*, 193.

[7] See, for instance, Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 18, 25-27; Saliu, H. A. and Jawondo, I. A. "Ilorin Emirate: Its People and Politics," in *Ilorin: Centre of Learning* (ed.), Jimoh, S. A. (Ilorin: Jimson Publishers, 2006), 1-3; Salihu O. I., "Traditional Histories and Historical Reconstruction of the Origin and early History of Ilorin: a Reexamination," *KWASU Journal of Humanities* 1, No. 1 (2018), 43-70.

[8] Jimoh. *Ilorin*, 17-18, 25; *cf*. Olumoh, A. L. *Managing Ethno-Political Relations in Nigeria: The Ilorin Example (1823-2003)*, (Lagos: University of Lagos Press and Bookshop, 2015), 64-5.

settlement. While some sources variously state that he was "a native of Ilọrin"; that he had traded there; that he was stationed there as the Commander-in-Chief of the Old ÌyÍ cavalry force, others state that he had left ÌyÍ-Ile to settle at Ilọrin.[9] Whatever was the nature of Afọnja's relations with Ilọrin changed after he had had led a mutiny of the Qyọ army at Iwere, the overthrow of Alaafin Aole in c.1796, and an abortive attempt for the throne.[10] The latter event was followed by the outbreak of rebellions and empire-building ventures by some provincial military chiefs including Afọnja, Opvlv, the chief of Gbogun, and Adegun, the Onikoyi of Ikoyi. Afọnja's rebellion led to the transformation of Ilọrin into a military stronghold for the pursuit of his ambition, which has been explained to be to carve out an empire for himself from the 'Sick Man of Yorubaland,' which the Old Qyọ Empire had become by the 1790s. This, as Law submits, was after a frustrated attempt to be appointed Alaafin after the overthrow of Aole in c.1796.[11]

By the latter period, what was known as "Ilọrin" was reportedly an 'uninhabited bush' or at most "a small village" or "little hamlet."[12]

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[9] Ahmad, A., *Ta'lif akhbar al-qurun min umara bilad Iluri* (Ibadan: Centre for Arabic Documentation, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, 1912), Chapter One; Johnson, 199; NAK SNP Vol. I 1/45/365 Emir's Council Ilorin: Letter of petition from Saliu Magaji Are and Alfa Belo Babasale, 27th October, 1936; Saka A. Balogun, "Gwandu Emirates in the 19th Century with Special Reference to Political Relations, 1817-1903" (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Ibadan, 1970), 139; Saka A. Balogun, "Historical Significance of Ilorin: A Preliminary Survey," *Confluence: An Academic Journal of the Kwara State Council for Arts and Culture* 1, No. 1 (1978), 7-25; Stefan R., "Imam Umaru's Account of the Origins of the Ilorin Emirate: A Manuscript in the Heinz Solken Collection, Frankfurt", *Sudanic Africa iv* (1993), 155-173.

[10] Crowther. *Vocabulary*, v; Stefan, "Imam Umaru's Account," 168; Law, *The Oyo Empire*, 249, 250.

[11] Law, *The Oyo Empire*, 250, 253.

[12] Danmole H.O. "The Frontier Emirate: A History of Islam in Ilorin" (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980), 61-2; Gbadamosi T.G.O. "The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908" (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 1968), 21, 27-8; Balogun, "Gwandu", 60; Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 9, 51; Stefan, "Imam Umaru's Account," 168; Sulu, M. History of Ilorin, (Unpublished Typescript; Rhodes House, Oxford, 1953); Ahmad, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One.

These descriptions of the settlement would indicate that its population was insignificant when Afọnja settled there with some "tiny forces" having apparently lost a number of soldiers in the mutiny at Iwere.[13] Also, with the dispersal of the other rebelling provincial military leaders and their troops to pursue their respective ambitions,[14] Afọnja was no longer in control of the entire Qyọ forces. Thus, on arrival at Ilọrin, he could be said to have had neither a formidable force to sustain his rebellion nor large local population from which to obtain new recruits. The situation must have been responsible for three successive defeats that his troops suffered at the hand of Ojo Agunbambaru's army.[15] Consequently, with Ojo in command of an 'immense army' reportedly recruited from various parts of the Old Qyọ empire, the alternatives available to the Kakanfo were the non-Yoruba elements, mostly Muslims, domiciled in the empire.

The initial non-Yoruba groups in the northern districts of the kingdom recruited by Afọnja included Hausa and Nupe slaves; pastoral Fulani, and the Muslim inhabitants of Oke-Suna led by Sọlagbọ̀ru. It has been suggested that "an important development of [Afọnja's] revolt was the way [he] cast about for support to strengthen his forces," and that it was with the help of Alimi and Sọlagbọ̀ru that he had succeeded in forging an alliance with the Hausa and other Muslims in the Qyọ Empire.[16] Among the first Muslims that AfÍnja established an alliance with were those at Oke-Suna. Oke-Suna[17] (literally meaning 'Abode or Quarters of [Sunni] Muslims) was a distinct and largely autonomous Muslim settlement. The exact period of its establishment is presently unknown. However, some sources and pieces of archaeological

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[13] Ahmad, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One.

[14] Johnson, *History*, 191-3.

[15] Johnson, *History*, 194-5.

[16] Gbadamosi. "Growth", 21-22; Ajayi J.F.A. "Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo," in *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade* (ed.), Philip, D.C. (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1997), 294-5.

[17] Gbadamosi explains that "Oke-Suna" was 'the name the Yoruba gave to an area inhabited mostly by Muslims,' and that early Muslim communities in Yorubaland were multi-ethnic in composition. GbadamÍsi, *Growth*, 6, 19.

evidence recently uncovered from its site[18] indicate that its establishment predated the advent of Afọnja in Ilọrin and strengthened a submission that it was probably the first Islamic centre in Yorubaland.[19]

By the early 1800s, the ruler of Oke-Suna was Sọlagbẹru who has often been identified in some sources as a "Yoruba Muslim", "the powerful Yoruba Muslim chief," and "a leader of the Qyọ Muslims."[20] However, various local sources have identified Sọlagbẹru as of Kanuri origin while several prominent individuals with him at Oke-Suna included those that were of Kanuri, Baruba, Nupe, Fulani, Yoruba, etc. origins.[21] The initial identification of Sọlagbẹru and his Oke-Suna

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[18] H. B. Hermon-Hodge. *Gazetteer of Ilorin Province* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929), 67; Onikoko, S.A. *A History of Ilorin Emirate* (Ilorin: Sat Adis Press, 1992), 2; Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 52; Ismail, Otukoko Salihu, "Ilorin Potsherd Pavements and the Reconstruction of the Culture History of a Frontier City: the Historical Significance of some Neglected Artifacts," *West African Journal of Archaeology* 44, No. 2 (2014), 21-52.

[19] Z.I. Oseni. "Arabic and Islamic Scholarship in Ilorin," in *Ilorin: Centre of Learning* (ed.), Jimoh, 46.

[20] Johnson. *History*, 198, 201; Hogben and Kirk-Green, *Emirates*, 286 *cf*. 289; Ajayi, "Samuel Ajayi," 294; Danmole, "Frontier," 17.

[21] A. Adam. Al-Ilory, *Lamahat al-balurri fi mashahir 'ulama' Ilurin* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 1982), 20; Olokode, I.A.A., SÍlagbọru, A.B., *et al.* Memorandum of the descendants of Solagberu on the need to accord the Solagberu family a chieftaincy status in IlÍrin emirate of Kwara State, submitted to the Secretary, Kwara State Committee on Grading of Chieftaincy Institutions, Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development, Ahmadu Bello Way, G.R.A., Ilorin (undated); Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 10, 70, 419-421; Onikoko, *History*, 2, 10-11; Jimba, *Iwe Itan*, 37, 83; Stefan, R., "A Sacred Community: Scholars, Saints and Emirs in a Prayer Text from Ilorin", *Sudanic Africa* 6 (1995), 41, 43-5; Stefan, R., "Literary Culture and Arabic Manuscripts in 19th century Ilorin," in *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade: Manuscript Culture, Arabic literacy and intellectual history in Muslim Africa 3*, eds. Graziano, K. and Ghislaine, L. (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 213-239; Kalla A.Y.G., *The Kanuri in Diaspora: The Contributions of Kanem-Borno Ulama to Islamic Education in Nupe and Yorubalands* (Lagos: CSS Bookshop, 2005), 182-3, 190-207; Solagberu A. Oba, interviewed by the author, Solagberu Compound, Ilorin, 23/04/2010; Mekabara A. Yusuf, interviewed by the author, Mekabara Compound, Ita-Kudimoh, Ilorin, 20/04/2013.

as "Yoruba" has definitely influenced the interpretation of their role in the events that unfolded during the period under study as that played exclusively by "Yoruba Muslims."

Available evidence on the presence of people of Kanuri and other origins at Oke-Suna indicate that several of the non-Yoruba inhabitants there must have resided in different parts of Yorubaland before moving to join Sọlagbọ̀ru there, and had adopted aspects of Yoruba culture like names/monikers that overshadowed their non-Yoruba or Muslim names. The appellation "Sọlagbọ̀ru", for instance, was derived from "A-Se-Ọla-Gba-Ọ̀ru," meaning 'the one whose demonstration of majesty wins him slaves' or 'the one who demonstrates majesty and received slaves by it.' It suggests that Abdullahi At-Tahir, the Kanuri trader-scholar who became widely known as Sọlagbọ̀ru, was in some ways associated with slaves, including the possibility of being a slave dealer, a receiver of slaves as gift, or involved in ransoming enslaved persons.[22] There is no doubt that Sọlagbọ̀ru used his credentials as a Muslim scholar-trader, slave dealer and/or liberator, and chief, first at Kuhọ and subsequently at Oke-Suna, to attract fellow Muslims from different settlements to boost the population of Oke-Suna. This was at about the same time that other settlers, especially non-Muslim Yoruba, were being attracted to Ilọrin under Afọnja.[23]

It has been variously suggested that Afọnja's alliance with Sọlagbọ̀ru "may have conceivably grown in the contest of the sale of slaves towards the south," or that he probably helped the Kakanfo to appeal to discontented "Hausa" (and other non-Yoruba) slaves to move to Ilọrin.[24] The Kanuri identity of Sọlagbọ̀ru and some of the other settlers with him at Oke-Suna strongly shows that, in addition to Hausa (and other northern) slaves, some Kanuri elements were among the non-Yoruba groups earlier recruited by Afọnja and those that played key role in the unfolding of events at IlÍrin during the early 19th century.

It should be noted that many among those enslaved in the Old Qyọ had begun to seize the opportunity of the crisis in the empire during

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[22] Johnson, *History*, 203.
[23] Johnson, *History*, 194; Lloyd, *Development*, 40-47.
[24] Danmole, "Frontier", 18; Ajayi, "Samuel Ajayi", 295.

the late 18th century to revolt against their masters and to flee to freedom in places like Ilọrin. Their flight at the time was closely related to the growing insecurity of life and property in the Old Qyọ kingdom since before the overthrow of Alaafin Aole in c.1796. Apart from the reported case of a Hausa trader whose property, including a copy of the Qur'an, was confiscated at Qyọ-Ile during Aole's reign, there were probably several similar other unreported incidents at a period characterised by cruelty, oppression, confiscation, man-stealing, and plunder.[25] Thus, the condition of Hausa slaves and free traders, as well as other non-ÌyÍ residents could better be imagined. The flight of the ex-slaves and others to the Ilọrin region had, therefore, started from the late 1790s. While some had probably found their ways to freedom through activities of Sọlagbọ̀ru and Alimi in the Qyọ region, several definitely found their way into Afọnja's army and contributed to ensure victories for the Kakanfo and the survival of Ilọrin.[26] Their military role in Afọnja's victories seems to have started with the final repulsion of Ojo's invasion between c.1797 and the early 1800s.

Apart from to military services rendered by the Hausa, Nupe and other recruits, the contributions of the non-Yoruba Muslims to Afọnja's military activities had included the production of the 'extra [magical] power' in forms of the 'efficacious' victory prayers, charms, and amulets, which Muslim clerics like Sọlagbọ̀ru and Alimi, among others, must have supplied through their "*Asiri*" (Arabic: *sirru*, meaning 'secrets' or mystical powers).[27] Thus, behind the military prowess and victories of AfÍnja, and the security that such afforded in Ilọrin, were the roles played by the non-Yoruba elements who had become a considerable

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[25] Johnson, *History*, 188-90.

[26] Johnson, *History*, 193-4; Crowther, *Grammar*, vii; Landers, *Journal*, 189-190; Hogben & Kirk-Greene, *Emirates* 286-7; Mahdi, A., "The Spread of Hausa Culture in West Africa," *Savanna, A Journal of the Environmental and Social Sciences* 5, No. 1 (1976), 3-13; Mahdi, A., *The Hausa Factor in West African History*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1978), 128.

[27] Johnson, *History*, 195; Atanda, J. A., "The Fall of Old Oyo: A Reconsideration of its Cause, *JHSN* v, No. 4 (1971), 477-490; Danmole, "Frontier", 34; Mahdi, *Hausa Factor*, 127, 131.

part of the population of Ilọrin, Oke-Suna, and indeed of Afọnja's army by the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century.[28]

In addition to the widely known ex-Hausa (and other) slaves, there is also evidence of the presence of other northern elements that made up what was to eventually become known as the "Gambari" community in Ilọrin. These included northern traders, artisans, and cavalrymen who had settled in Ilọrin much earlier than c.1817. Two examples may suffice to buttress this point. First, there was Ibrahim Bako, the first Sarkin Gambari in Ilọrin, who had settled with his group(s) sometime before 1817.[29] Bako was the leader of a group whose members belonged to the tradition of organised long-distance Hausa or Gambari traders that often numbered several hundreds, and usually led by a *Sarkin Hausawa*.[30] Also, among the residents of the Gambari area then were Islamic clerics such as Alfa Salihu Gobir and Alfa Abdul-Mumini, Kanuri scholar who was the Imam for the community.[31]

Secondly, there was Ali Pakumo Doshe (also Dose or Duse), 'a seasoned soldier,' variously said to have been of Nupe or Hausa (Katsina) origin and had lived with Ibrahim Bako. Before his death around 1825, Doshe had reportedly fought in various pre-emirate wars as a soldier and commander in Afọnja's army; his military credentials under Afọnja must have been so impressive to have informed his appointment by the first Emir of Ilọrin, Abdul-Salami (reigned c.1823-c.1836), as the first Balogun Gambari as well as the first Commander-in-Chief of Ilọrin emirate army.[32] Doshe's evidence corroborates Johnson's account,

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[28] Danmole, "Frontier", 4-5.

[29] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 474; Jimba, *Iwe*, 49; Hogben & Kirk-Greene, *Emirates*, 288; Sulu, History.

[30] On such groups, see Albert Olawale, "Hausa Political System in the Diaspora: The Sarkin Hausawa Institution in Ibadan, 1914-1993," *African Notes* xxi, Nos. 1 & 2 (1997), 43-74.

[31] Jimoh, *IlỌrin*, 474.

[32] Johnson, *History*, 194, 196, 200-202; Jimba, *Iwe*, 43, 64; Jimoh, *IlỌrin*, 356-7; Mohammed S., *History of the Emirate of Bida to 1899 AD*, (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press Ltd., 2011), 91, 92-99; Dupigny E.G.M., *Gazetteer of Nupe Province*, (London: Waterlow & Sons, 1920), 30-31; K. V. Elphinstone, *Gazetteer of IlỌrin Province,* (London, 1921), 30-31; Stefan, R. "A Manifold

which indicates that after Ojo's defeat (c.1797-8 or latest c.1800), Afọnja's army was dominated by "Hausa" recruits (the *Jamaa*) who were involved in the subjugation of several settlements in the vicinity of Ilọrin and beyond.[33]

Apart from the Hausa, Kanuri and Nupe elements, there are also strong indications of the presence and involvement of some Fulani in pro-Afọnja's activities before 1817, and also before other Fulani arrived from Sokoto and Nupeland in c.1820-1. The Lander brothers, who passed through Yorubaland in 1826, documented the involvement of "a party of *Falatahs*" (i.e. Fulani) in the propaganda that encouraged slaves and discontented persons in the region to "flee from the oppression of their masters" to freedom in Ilọrin.[34] One of the early Fulani groups known to have been with Afọnja was headed by Ibrahim *Bijodia*, widely known as Olufadi. He had moved to Ilọrin from Irẹsa, one of the settlements that AfÍnja attacked and relocated their population to Ilọrin area after Ojo's defeat.[35] Apart from Olufadi, another Fulani whose presence belonged to Afọnja's period was Jagbara, identified as "a leader of [a] Fulani group" that had spent 'many years' at Irẹsa before moving to Ilọrin.[36]

The evidence of Olufadi and Jagbara corroborates reports of the presence of pastoral Fulani in northern Yorubaland from the late 1780s.[37] Although it is not on record that members of the Olufadi, Jagbara and their Fulani groups served as propagandists for AfÍnja, Olufadi reportedly acted as interpreter between various groups that settled in IlÍrin from 1817.[38] Given the mobile nature of their pastoral

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Heritage: Glimpses of a Family Collection of Arabic Manuscripts in Ilorin (Nigeria) and its Transregional Links," in *Manuscript Cultures*, eds. Michael F. and Jörg Q. (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2017), 85.

[33] Johnson, *History*, 194, 196-7.

[34] Landers, *Journal*, 189-90.

[35] Johnson, *History*, 196, 200.

[36] Jimba, *Iwe*, 43.

[37] Balogun, "Gwandu", 259; Crowther, Grammar, iv-v; Smith, *Kingdoms*, 42-71.

[38] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One.

activities, it is plausible that some Yoruba-speaking pastoral Fulani had served as agents of propaganda for AfÍnja prior to the settlement of Alimi in c.1817. Apart from possible involvement in the spread of propaganda that encouraged the flight of slaves and discontented persons to Ilorin, as reported by the Lander brothers, Smith has also suggested that 'long before' the rise of IlÍrin emirate, pastoral Fulani probably played a role in the anarchy that prevailed in northern Yorubaland "as clients of the rebel chiefs."[39]

The eventual appointment of Jagbara as the first Balogun Fulani in the emirate army further suggests that he must have been an experienced warrior who had probably participated in some military activities either in Afọnja's warfare or elsewhere prior 1817. Some of the ways in which AfÍnja incorporated the ex-slaves and pastoral Fulani into his army and got them actively involved in his rebellion during the period are further described by Crowther thus:

> He allowed them to make whatever use they like of their plunder in battle; taking nothing from them, either for himself or for the King and thus encouraged them to war. By this means, such slaves as were not satisfied with their situation deserted their maters, and joined Afọnja at Ilọrin, on doing which they were declared free and independent. The Felatah, who had hitherto contented themselves with pastoral life, began now to see themselves as great warriors.[40]

During the twenty-year stalemate (c.1797-c.1817) between Qyọ-Ile and Ilọrin, the presence and roles played by the non-Yoruba groups must have made AfÍnja to appreciate their military, spiritual, and other contributions, which had helped him to sustain his rebellion. Among others, they had been actively involved in various developments that had characterised the twenty-year old rebellion such as the declaration and sustenance of Ilọrin's independence, the successful repulsion of Ojo's invasion, the subjugation of territories under the Old Qyọ, as

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[39] A. Smith. "A Little New Light on the Collapse of the Alafinate of Yoruba." In *Studies in Yoruba History and Culture* (ed.), Olusanya G. (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1983), 51.

[40] Crowther, *Grammar*, vi-vii.

well as the isolation of Qyọ-Ile by Afonja's *Jama'a* army.[41] By 1817, when the Kakanfo decided to embark on a 'new enterprise,' his appeal for the services of the Fulani cleric, Alimi, as a "priest", towards success in the venture was, therefore, not without some bases.

In view of the absence of any record of an imminent or actual invasion of Ilọrin by Qyọ-Ile during this time, and granted that securing the ÌyÍ throne was 'impossible of attainment,' as Johnson observes, the goal of the new undertaking must have been to end the long stalemate, sack Qyọ-Ile, and put an end to the empire.[42] This would be in line with the postulation that the year 1817 marked a major turning point in the revolts in early 19th century Yorubaland as it ushered in a period when the rebel chiefs decided to effect 'a permanent change' by 'converting their revolts into revolutions.'[43] The above interpretation of "the enterprise," which necessitated Afọnja's invitation of Alimi in c.1817, must have been informed by developments associated with the end of the interregnum that followed Maku's reign (c. 1797), which Akinjọgbin argues had lasted some twenty years, i.e. from c.1797 to c.1817.[44]

First, there was probably the appointment of a new Alaafin who embarked on efforts to restore some order including addressing the rebellions ravaging the tottering empire, as Law suggests.[45] Secondly, there was the rebellion of Muslims in the Qyọ kingdom, apparently occasioned by such developments as the persecution of Muslims, the

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[41] On these developments, see, for instmace, Ajayi, J.F.A. and Akintoye, S. A. "Yorubaland in the nineteenth century," in *Groundwork of Nigerian History* (ed.), Obaro I. (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books, 1999), 280-302; Akinjogbin I. A., "Prelude to the Yoruba Civil Wars of the 19th Century," *ODU* 1, No. 2 (1965), 34-37; Law, "Chronology"; Law R.C.C., *The Oyo Empire c.1600-c.1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 246-8, 252-255; Smith, "New Light"; Gbadamosi, "Growth", 21-22; Akinjogbin, I.A. "Wars in Yorubaland, 1793-1893: An Analytical Categorization", in *War and Peace*, ed. Adeagbo, 37.

[42] Johnson, *History*, 193, 196; Law, *ÌyÍ Empire*: 246-8, 252-55.

[33] Akinjogbin, "Wars in Yorubaland," 39-40.

[44] Akinjogbin, "Wars in Yorubaland," 37.

[45] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 255.

expulsion of Islamic clerics (including Alimi) from Qyq-Ile, and the massacre of some Muslim preachers there.[46] It is not unlikely that Afqnja, a major rebel leader at the time, was quite aware of those developments, and must have decided to exploit the growing anti-ÌyÍ feelings among the Muslims for his own agenda. Indeed, the Kakanfo is believed to have instigated an uprising of the Muslims at Qyq in c.1817.[47]

Alimi's settlement at Ilqrin in c.1817, prospects of freedom for other slaves, and other opportunities in the town, among other reasons, provoked new waves of influx of revolting slaves and discontented Muslims into Ilqrin. It should, however, be observed that, rather than 'recruiting bands of Hausa mercenaries from the north' for Afqnja, as often suggested in some accounts, it was the Kakanfo who found the Hausa slaves or followers of Alimi useful as soldiers, and, therefore, recruited them into his army.[48] Those among the revolting slaves that Afqnja recruited into his army in c.1817 combined military services with campaigns of vengeance against their erstwhile Yoruba masters.[49] Their lawlessness and recklessness, overtly licensed by Afqnja, was not supported by Alimi who attempted to leave Ilqrin but was prevailed upon to stay in order 'to act as a check on Afqnja,' and eventually requested to send for his children at Sokoto to join him at Ilqrin.[50]

The arrival of Alimi's sons, Abdul-Salami and Shitta, from Sokoto coincided with that of groups of Fulani and Nupe fugitives from Nupeland. The latter groups, including one led by Idris Jimada, a claimant to the Nupe throne, sought refuge in Ilqrin after their expulsion from the Nupe kingdom following the civil war there in c.1819. Both the Sokoto and Nupe Fulani groups arrived at Ilqrin around 1820-1 or 1822, after they had, respectively, been "active in the army of the Sokoto

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[46] Balogun, "Gwandu", 73; Law, *ÌyÍ Empire*, 256-7.
[47] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 245, 250, 255.
[48] Johnson, *History*, 193-5.
[49] Johnson, *History*, 197-8.
[50] Johnson, *History*, 202; Balogun, "Gwandu", 153; Sulu, History; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One.

Caliphate" and in the conflict in Nupeland.[51] These included those that had been described variously as 'warlike and troublesome' and 'fanatical Fulani Jihadists.'[52] Their arrival marked another major turning point in Ilọrin history. It changed the composition of the Muslim population, their ideological orientation and attitude towards the non-Muslims as well as the role of the non-Yoruba in the transformation of Ilọrin.

By c.1823 when Alimi died, there were three major Fulani groups involved in developments in Ilọrin. These included the multi-lingual, local pastoral, non-Jihad conscious Fulani represented by Olufadi and Jagbara; the scholarly-missionary and mystic Fulani represented by the "well-respected" Alimi; and, thirdly, the "fanatical," pro-Sokoto Jihad groups represented by Abdul-Salami, Shitta, the Dendos, Malikis, Manzumas, and other militant elements from Nupeland. While the activities of the first group had not been religious-oriented, Alimi had initiated a non-militant religious movement described as part of the process of "*Tajdid*". The latter, as Danmole explains, involved 'periodical renewal of Islamic enthusiasm and purification of Islamic practices through education and re-education' and was different from Jihad aimed at converting the local ruler, subverting his authority or overthrowing him.'[53] Thus, Alimi's attitude towards local authorities were likely to have been quite different from those of the Fulani that arrived Ilọrin around 1821-2, especially those that had been part of the culmination of Dan Fodio's *Tajdid* into a successful Jihad, and were, therefore, bent on launching a similar revolution in Ilọrin.

While Alimi was alive, he succeeded in restraining the pro-Jihad party from such a venture.[54] With his death in c.1823, and the

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[51] Dupigny, *Gazetteer* 9-10, 30-32; Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 30-31; Law, *Oyo Empire*, 285; Stefan R. and Razaq, D. A., "Ilorin and Nupe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in Hunwick, J.O. (comp.) *Arabic Literature of Africa* II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 439-458; Idris A. A., *Political Change and Continuity in Nupeland* (Ibadan: Caltop, 1998), 28; Mohammed, *History*, 88-90.

[52] Sulu, History; Smith, "New Light," 50.

[53] Danmole, "Frontier", 19-20, 39-44.

[54] Balogun, "Gwandu", 130, 152-6.

appointment of his son, Abdul-Salami, as Emir, the Jihad party quickly transformed his movement into a Jihad, clashed with, and vanquished, the non-Muslim party, thereby transformed IlÍrin to an emirate.[55] Thus, while Jihad might not have been a driving force in Alimi's religious activities before c.1817, it surely began to play some role in the post-1820 period. By then, the influx into the Ilọrin area of various groups of northern origin from within and outside Yorubaland had been well under way. Their arrival changed the population make-up of Ilọrin, the ideological orientation of the dominant Muslim groups, and greatly influenced the political transformation in the town.

It should be noted that the foundations for the presence and growth of Islam and Islamic education in IlọÍrin, and its eventual transformation, as a consequence of the activities of Alimi and his followers, into what is popularly known as *Ilu Aafa* or a city of religious scholars and of Islamic worship and scholarship, were laid by various Islamic clerics including Yoruba and non-Yoruba in the region prior to 1823. This was attained through their pioneering efforts in the practice of Islam, establishment of mosques, centres for Islamic learning such as Qur'an and '*Ilmi* schools, teaching, preaching and production manuscripts, among other activities. Prominent among those scholars included Alfa Salihu Gobir and Abdul-Mumini (at Gambari), and others at Oke-Suna including Sọlagbọ̀ru, described as 'a great Koranic Mallam with many students'; Imam Umaru Matashe, Shaykh Abdul-Qadir Ìnagun, Ilyas bn Mekabara, and Shaykh Abubakar as-Sunni (all said to have been of Kanuri origin); and Shaykh Muhammad al-Amin Munabahu (a Yoruba scholar), and Imam Ibrahim Bature, from Agadez.[56]

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[55] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two; Sulu, History; Johnson, *History*, 194; Danmole, "Frontier", 19-20, 39-44; Balogun, "Gwandu", 129-161.

[56] Sulu, "History"; Stefan, "Sacred Community"; Ismail Otukoko Salihu, "Ilorin: An Introduction to its History and Tradition of Islamic Scholarship" in Jimba, M.M. (ed.) *Arabic Manuscripts in the Ilorin Emirate,* (Ilorin: Kwara State University Press, 2019), 41-43, 47.

The non-Yoruba Groups and the Political Transformation of Ilọrin

Not much is known about the political situation at Ilọrin prior to c.1797, for while Johnson refers to three successive 'rulers' from Laderin's lineage before Afọnja, who is described as his grandson, 'took over',[57] early local sources are silent on any tradition of political leadership. Again, while Laderin is claimed to have been the 'first Qyọ Empire Ajẹlẹ' in Ilọrin,[58] the title of Baalẹ has also been suggested for the pre-AfÍnja 'rulers' identified by Johnson.[59] The unclear political situation, however, changed with the emergence of Afọnja and the transformation of the settlement into his military stronghold and eventually into a Muslim-dominated multi-ethnic community.

In spite of other developments that attended his advent and activities such as outlined above, Kakanfo Afọnja is not reported to have assumed any civil or political title throughout his era and career Ilọrin. It has been submitted that the Kakanfo did not stay in the town 'for long stretches of time,' and that during the frequent periods of his absence, it was his brother, AgbÍnrin (eventually addressed as the Baba Isalẹ) who attended to matters arising.[60] Apart from Agbọnrin, other 'chieftains' such as the *Lapini, Ikọlaba*, Q*na-Isokun, Arẹ Ago,* and *Ìtun Ago* who were with him at Ilọrin are described as 'cultist' titleholders who played no administrative roles.[61] As may be inferred from functions performed by similar titleholders elsewhere in Yorubaland, they would seem to have operated within a structure meant for the non-Muslim Yoruba section.[62]

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[57] Johnson, *History*, 199-200.

[58] Saad Y. Omoiya, "The Dynamics of Culture and its Impact on Political Transformation: The IlÍ„rin Example", *ALORE, IlÍ„rin Journal of the Humanities* 15 (2005), 186.

[59] Danmole, "Frontier", 6.

[60] Saka A.Y. Aleshinloye, *Serving the nation- a journalist's experience with 4 Nigerian leaders*, (IlÍ„rin: Berende Printing Works, 2003), 8-9; Jimoh, *IlÍ„rin*, 393-4.

[61] Jimba, *Iwe*, 10; Onikoko, *History*, 3.

[62] Johnson, *History*, 16, 29-30, 42, 67-68, 71, 134.

Furthermore, sources also suggest that prior to 1823, rather than a centralisation, there was a decentralisation of political leadership in the Ilọrin region, with the Idi-Apọ quarters inhabited mainly by the non-Muslim Yoruba family and other supporters of Afọnja, apparently under the leadership his brother, AgbÍnrin, the Baba Isalọ. By 1823, the two other major settlements within Ilọrin, Gambari and Fulani quarters, had grown to become fairly large, distinct semi-autonomous ethno-political units with their recognised heads; the former being under the Sarkin Gambari, while the latter was initially led by Olufadi. The changes in the composition and the activities of the Gambari community, headed by Ibrahim Bako, had brought about a change in the existing political relations. Bako's reported ancestral connection with the Zamfara royal family,[63] and his roles as head of the Gambari community, similar to those performed by the Sarkin Hausawa elsewhere in Yorubaland,[64] conferred prestige and influence on him among the Gambari or Hausa settlers. Bako's singular use of the *Kakaki* and *Tambari*—royal trumpet and drum respectively—shows his considerable power, prestige, influence, and the degree of autonomy enjoyed by his community before and after Alimi's settlement in c.1817.[65] These must have contributed to Bako's contest for the Emirship after Alimi's death in c.1823.

Within the Fulani quarters, Olufadi was the recognised head of the pastoral Fulani. This also suggests that the group enjoyed some degree of autonomy. However, it does not appear that the Fulani chief had acquired as much prestige and influence as the Sarkin Gambari prior to 1817 or thereafter. Between 1817 and 1823, the Olufadi-led pastoral Fulani were brought under the religious influence and authority of Alimi, and the ideological orientation of the Sokoto Jihad brought by the Fulani groups that arrived around 1820-21. Therefore, from c.1817, Alimi's

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[63] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 76, 354.

[64] On this, see Olawale, "Hausa"; Cohen, A. "The Hausa," in *The City of Ibadan* eds. Lloyd P.C., Mabogunje A.L. and Awe, B. (Cambridge University Press, 1967), 112-127.

[65] Hogben & Kirk-Greene, *Emirates*, 288; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 66.

presence and profile appear to have eclipsed whatever influence Olufadi would have exercised among the pastoral Fulani hitherto.

Furthermore, from 1817 to 1823, Muslims in the different settlements were gradually drawn together for various religious purposes and activities. This paved way for the gradual unification of the Muslim communities in the Ilǫrin region and the building up of Shehu Alimi's religious leadership within the emergent unified Ilǫrin Muslim community. The acknowledgement of the Shehu as the most learned Islamic scholar (i.e. '*Alim*, hence the nickname *Alimi*) and his emergence as the religious leader (*Imam* or *Amir*)[66] were facilitated by his personal qualities and the extant tradition at Oke-Suna. At the latter Muslim settlement, the tradition of the resident '*ulama* (religious scholars) was to choose the most learned and pious cleric among them to lead and preside over the settlement of disputes.[67] Although Alimi reportedly declined to take up any position of authority when requested or persuaded to do so, his being acknowledged as the most learned Islamic scholar around paved way for his religious ascendancy over the Muslim community. This implies that the leading '*ulama* at Oke-Suna had conceded religious leadership to Alimi although the settlement continued to retain its political autonomy as Sǫlagbʋru maintained his political leadership there.

The growth of the Muslim population, of Islam, and its influence in the Ilǫrin region transformed the roles played by Alimi beyond just leading the Muslims in their daily or Friday congregational prayers. The decentralisation of political leadership, due to the absence of a widely-acknowledged central political authority, made the widely accepted religious authority a major unifying force among the Muslims.

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[66] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 467-8; Ibrahim A. Jawondo, "The Socio-political Effects of the Conferment of Titles in IlÍrin Emirate in the 20th Century." *Journal of the Nigerian Association of Teachers of Islamic Studies* 8 (2005), 41-51.

[67] Y.A. Isiaka. "Alkali courts in Ilorin" (B.A. Research Essay, Islamic Studies Department, University of Ilorin, 1985), 11-13; Ajetunmobi M. A., "The Scope of Islamic Law in Ilorin Traditional Courts, 1900-1980: an Analytical Survey," *ALORE* 3 & 4 (1987/1988), 55-67; *cf.* Gbadamosi T.G.O., "The Imamate Question among Yoruba Muslims," *JHSN 6*, No. 2 (1972), 229-237.

As would be expected, rather than refer matters arising to the non-Muslim Baba Isalv, the Muslims would have preferred taking their matters before Alimi, a well-respected Islamic scholar, for his opinions or guidance as it had been the tradition at Oke-Suna. This situation probably informed the reported suggestion by the Muslims that Alimi should assume the political leadership of Ilqrin.[68]

Another development that would have informed the invitation of Alimi to assume the overall leadership of the town by early 1820s was the tensed political situation, which was characterised by the restlessness of the fugitives from Nupe, the pro-Jihad tendencies of the Fulani from Sokoto, the excesses of AfÍnja, and the lawlessness and recklessness of his militant *Jamaa*. To contain these sources of tension must have required the presence of a widely respected, less ambitious, and less troublesome religious leader like Alimi.

Rather than military, the role that Alimi played in Ilqrin from c.1817 to c.1823 was regulatory, namely restraining the various groups from their excesses through "ordaining what is right and forbidden what is evil" and 'putting the fear of God in AfÍnja as there was none else to whom he would defer.'[69] This was borne out of Alimi's attitude to political leadership: while he had been "a pious, shy, and humble cleric" and had 'cooperated' with local rulers, those other Fulani with Nupe and Sokoto connections were ambitious to replicate the Sokoto Jihad in Ilqrin.[70]

Thirdly, Alimi's religious leadership of the Ilqrin Muslim community made him to exercise some considerable influence. On the one hand, this became a major cause of the disaffection of Afqnja's non-Muslim followers who, therefore, reportedly hatched an unsuccessful plot to eliminate the Fulani cleric.[71] On the other hand, the influence and authority wielded by Alimi made his position more revered and

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[68] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 52. 58, 69.
[69] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One; Johnson, *History*, 202; Balogun, "Gwandu", 153.
[70] Danmole, "Frontier", 19-20, 39-44; Ajayi, "Samuel Ajayi".
[71] Oral interview with Saad Laofe; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter One.

appealing to other Muslim leaders in Ilọrin. This was obvious when his death in c.1823 was followed by three different internal contestations that marked the last phase in the political transformation of Ilọrin during the period.

First, there was the contest for the position of the *Amir*. This was to fill the vacuum in the religious leadership of the Muslim community. The contest was essentially between Abdul-Salami, Alimi's son, Ibrahim Bako, the Sarkin Gambari, and Sọlagbọ̀ru. The latter eventually supported Abdul-Salami's emergence as the first Emir of Ilọrin.[72] The second contest, which was for the control of IlẹÍrin, was between AfẹÍnja and the new Emir, while the third, a contest for supremacy in the IlẹÍrin region, was between the new Emir and Sọlagbọ̀ru.

By 1823, the social transformation in Ilọrin had had some implications on the alliance and relations between Afọnja and his Muslim allies as well as on the political situation in the emergent town. Due to the growth of Islam and the Muslim population, there had been a continuous dwindling of AfẹÍnja's supporters and the increasing following of Alimi and, after him, the *Amir*.[73] The development had also brought about a broadening of the sphere of the influence and religious authority of the *Amir*, which meant a decline in the influence of the Kakanfo or Baba Isalọ̀. This implies that the exercise of any authority by Agbọnrin or Afọnja would have to depend on the strength of the existing alliance with, and the good will of, each of the ethno-political heads of the different non-Yoruba communities in the IlẹÍrin area. It also implies that the retention of the support of the Muslim allies would depend on the attitude and support of the overall leader of the Muslim community.

By 1823, the Kakanfo had lost the friendship and goodwill of his Kanuri friend and ally, Sọlagbọ̀ru, and his Oke-Suna community. He was also no longer in effective command of the loyalty of his non-Yoruba recruits many of whom had defected to the new Emir's side.[74]

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[72] Jimoh, *IlẹÍrin*, 75; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter two; Al-Ilori *Lamahat*, 20-21.
[73] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter two.
[74] Johnson, *History*, 198-9.

The attitude of the local Fulani led by Olufadi but under the influence of new Fulani arrivals is better imagined. In spite of an initial cooperation, which is implied to have existed between Abdul-Salami, the new leader of the Ilọrin Muslim community, and AfÍnja, mutual suspicion and conspiracy apparently characterised their relations before things fell apart sooner than later.[75]

By c.1823, therefore, the balance of power had tilted in favor of the multi-ethnic Muslim community and its religious leadership. It must have been at this point that "some principal headmen in Ilọrin" reportedly 'began to be too strong for AfÍnja,' and when the "people of Illorin [sic] being mostly Mahomedan, did not think it proper to be subject to a pagan king, but became independent."[76] This indicates that religion (Islam) was being considered a major factor for the eligibility to the rulership of the town. Thus, by the time the Muslims finally took control of Ilọrin in c. 1823-4, a marked social transformation, characterised by changes in the population, ethnic configuration, and the religious orientation, of the inhabitants of the town had taken place.

First, Ilọrin had been transformed from a small and an essentially "pagan" Yoruba-dominated settlement to a large multi-ethnic community in which Muslims were numerically dominant. Secondly, the town was polarised into two antagonistic religious groups—the Muslim and the "pagans" against whom Abdul-Salami "had been anxious to fight [a Jihad]."[77] Given the posture of Abdul-Salami-led Muslim party, AfÍnja took certain steps to address the situation. Some of these were directed at his *Jamaa* and others at the entire non-Yoruba Muslims. His actions, however, accentuated the tension between the two camps.

For instance, AfÍnja did not only warn and publicly threaten to suppress, disband, and annihilate his "Hausa" recruits (the *Jamaa*) but also suggested that his Muslim allies should evacuate Ilọrin and settle

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[75] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two.
[76] Crowther, *Grammar*, vii.
[77] Gbadamosi, "Growth", 23-24; Sulu, History; Balogun, "Gwandu", 130, 152-6.

outside the town.[78] None of these was effective: to the suggestion of leaving Ilọrin, the non-Muslim Yoruba reportedly expressed their disapproval thus:

E ma pe wa l'alejomo	Desist from calling us strangers
Awa yin l'anilu.	We all are co-owners of the town[79]

What probably informed that response were the roles, which the non-Yoruba groups had played in the survival of Ilọrin since the late 1790s. It may also have been due to the fact that many of the non-Yoruba had arrived and settled in Ilọrin at about the advent of Afọnja and the time that other Yoruba began to settle there. As such, they were no longer willing to accept being treated as "strangers" or "guests." It should be observed that, later in the late 19th century, the Fulani in Ibadan reportedly sang a similar song while "seeking to be accepted as full-fledged Ibadan thus: "*e ma pe wa l'ajoji moo, a jo ni le yi ni.*"[80]

While Abdul-Salami's decision to assume the position of the power on the throne rather than that behind it was influenced by the Muslims' numerical advantage, Afọnja seems to have seen the attitude of the Muslim allies as unacceptable of 'guests' invited to 'fight in his cause'.[81] The refusal of the non-Yoruba groups to accept the status of "guests" and an indirect expulsion 'order' must have informed Afọnja's secret message to the Onikoyi and other Yoruba chiefs to join him in a surprise attack to dislodge the non-Yoruba Muslims from Ilọrin.[82] The leakage of Afọnja's plan to the Muslims led to an armed clash with the Kakanfo, who by then was left with only a handful of followers. The numerical

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[78] Johnson, *History*, 198; Law, *Oyo Empire*, 259; Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 16.

[79] Oral interview with Alhaji Yusuf AdewÍle Ologbin, Ologbin Compound, Adeta, Ilorin, 2003.

[80] I.A. Akinjogbin. "Keynote Address" delivered at the opening session of the Centenary Conference on the Kiriji Peace Treaty held at Oduduwa Hall, University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife), on 22 September 1986, in *War and Peace*, ed. Akinjogbin, 5.

[81] Balogun, "Gwandu", 141, 145; Balogun, "Historical Significance."

[82] Johnson, *History*, 198; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter two.

insignificance of his 'faithful few' supporters[83] ensured victory for the Muslims in the ensuing military contest.

One of the major contributory factors to the numerical superiority of the Muslim party, and a major boost to Abdul-Salami's military strength vis-à-vis Afǫnja, was the presence of the Fulani from Nupeland. Their possible role in the defeat of Afǫnja has remained neglected. It is known that those Fulani only returned to Nupeland to take over political power and establish emirates there after an unsuccessful invasion of Ilǫrin by the combined forces of the Alaafin and Etsu Majiya II shortly after AfÍnja's death. Indeed, the reference to "Emir's brethren" involved in AfÍnja's defeat could well have included the Fulani from Nupeland.[84]

Furthermore, although, as a Muslim, Sǫlagbvru was not expected to support a non-Muslim against fellow Muslims, the presence of the fugitive Fulani from Nupeland could have also contributed to his refusal to help Afǫnja and his neutrality during the armed conflict that led to the fall of the Kakanfo. Sǫlagbvru's subsequent challenge to the authority of Emir Abdul-Salami must have been encouraged by the departure of the Fulani brethren around 1825-6 and its implications on the numerical strength of the new emir. Similarly, the emir's initial toleration of Sǫlagbvru's alleged 'arrogance' and 'excesses,' such as demands that Ilǫrin's citizens and army should pay him homage, and that the emir should visit him,[85] must have been informed by his appreciation of the precariousness of his military strength vis-à-vis Oke-Suna.

Since the presence of the multi-ethnic Oke-Suna had represented a potential rival 'emirate', and the posture of its leader had constituted serious obstacle to the supremacy of the emir, the defeat of Sǫlagbvru and his allies at Ikoyi eventually contributed to a siege of his settlement by the Emir's forces. This lasted for not less than seven months, and being aided by severe famine, resulted in the fall of Oke-Suna.[86] The

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[83] Johnson, *History*, 198; Crowther, *Grammar*, vii.

[84] Law, "Chronology"; Johnson, *History*, 200-201; Mohammed, *History*, 91, 92-99; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two; Sulu, History.

[85] Balogun, "Gwandu", 177; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two.

[86] Johnson, *History*, 204; Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two.

fall of Sqlagbvru, the complete destruction of his settlement, and the relocation of several of its survivors to different parts of IlqÍrin facilitated the consolidation of the nascent emirate and Emir Abdul-Salami's political authority and supremacy.[87] The formal recognition of Abdul-Salami as "*Amir of Yarba*" by Gwandu in 1829, and, thus, of Ilqrin as an emirate of the Sokoto Caliphate, brought the three-decade process of transformation of the settlement to a close.

Conclusion

In the transformation of Ilqrin from c.1796 to c.1826, changes in the size and composition of its population brought about changes in the fortunes of each of the key personalities involved in developments during the period. It also altered the pre-existing socio-political relations and hence the eventual collapse of the alliances, which had sustained Ilqrin from the late 1790s. Key factors in these developments, which also influenced the course of Ilqrin history, included security, which Afqnja's presence and activities had enhanced; Islam, which the presence and activities of Islamic clerics like Alimi and Sqlagbvru had strengthened; the ideology of the Sokoto Jihad, which was brought into Ilqrin from the post-Jihad Hausaland; and the numerical advantage, which the influx of new settlers had conferred on the Muslim groups and which, by 1823-24, had tilted the balance of power in favour of the Fulani-led Ilqrin Muslim community.

The analysis shows that, although the transformation of Ilqrin during the period owed much to the presence and military prowess of Kakanfo Afqnja, the presence and support he had received from non-Yoruba groups and their leaders were crucial to the processes of transformation and the actions and inactions of the key figures involved. Thus, in addition to the Yoruba Kakanfo, the roles played by such non-Yoruba groups and leaders as the Fulani cleric, Alimi and his followers, Olufadi and Jagbara and their pastoral Fulani groups, the Kanuri scholar-trader

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[87] Abubakr, *Ta'lif*, Chapter Two; Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 74; Jimba, *Iwe*, 83; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 67.

and leader, Sǫlagbʋru, and his multi-ethnic Oke-Suna community, and the Hausa or "Gambari" community including early and later recruits into Afǫnja's army as well as the traders, craftsmen, and clerics under the leadership of the Sarkin Gambari Ibrahim Bako, were of considerable importance to the developments that attended the transformation.