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EDITORIAL COMMENT

This edition of the *Journal of Studies in Humanities* popularly known as the 10th Year Anniversary Edition of the Premier and Preferred University of Education in Nigeria is an indication that the College of Humanities and indeed the entire University has come of age. The University has witnessed a decade of solid foundation and transformation of human and material resources and the College of Humanities with one of the largest population of students is part of the magic wand and success story of the University.

This edition has reaffirmed the commitment of the College of effective teaching and research as well as academic excellence. It has drawn articles from within and outside the shores of the country. The articles of this edition cover various aspects of the humanities as well as challenges of human existence as well as strategies for over-coming such challenges. It is our hope that readers will benefit immensely from the contributions. We also thank those who have contributed articles for their patronage.

Prof. Alani Seriki

Editor-in-Chief

Dean, College of Humanities,

Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun.

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EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ILORIN MILITARY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

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Abstract

The discord between Aare Afonja and Alaafin Aole resulted into a new era in Ilorin's history. Afonja used the event to sever the town from Old Oyo Empire, after his insubordination against Alaafin Aole. To achieve this, the Aare had to set up a more formidable army that could withstand anticipated attacks from the Oyo authorities in his attempts to hold Ilorin under Oyo's command. Thus, he beefed up his army for the attacks ahead by recruiting runaway slaves and captives. With this, Afonja achieved independence for Ilorin, but the success was short-lived as the slave-soldiers became uncontrollable and eventually attacked and killed him. The army was thereafter restructured by the new Fulani leadership under Emir Abdulsalam to encompass the major linguistic groups of Yoruba, Hausa and Fulani with the position of military commanders firmly established for them. This was aimed at bringing harmony among the diverse groups in the new emirate and prevent internal insurrection against the new Fulani leadership. The army's tactics included espionage, diplomacy, and divide and rule. They also capitalised on the rivalry, treachery, and disunity among their enemies as evident in the Kanla, Mugbagba and Eleduwe wars. The main weapons used were swords, spears, lances, clubs, daggers, bow and arrows, while horses provided swift mobility for the calvary force. The military succeeded in its wars of survival, expansion and consolidation before eventually capitulating to a better organised British force in 1897. This study therefore discusses the offensive and defensive wars of the Ilorin military in the 19th century. The paper under scores the realism that the terrains and materials available for weapon production as well as diplomatic skills of military commanders go a long way in determining the tactics and strategy to be employed in any given war zone.

Key Words: Ilorin, military, warfare, slave-soldiers, diplomacy

Introduction

The history of Ilorin in the 19th Century largely revolves around its military. R.A Adeleye,¹ B.A Awe² among others have at various times, described the town as a city of warriors during this period. Ilorin's military can be examined under two epochs; the Afonja and Fulani periods. *Alaafin* Ojigi's desire, in the 17th century, to save the Igbomina people, whom he regarded as his kith and kin, from the Nupe ruler, who used the place as a slave reservoir, must have encouraged him to first establish his authority in Ilorin, to ease the

extension of his control over the area. Through this act, the scattered settlements in the area were united with the sending of an *Ajele* (Resident) to protect the *Alaafin's* interest in the area. Laderin, the great-grandfather of *Afonja*, was the first Oyo Empire's *Ajele* in Ilorin. In turn, the empire's *Ajele* in Ilorin passed from Laderin, to his son, Pasin and then Alagbin, *Afonja's* father and later, to the Kakanfo *Afonja* himself.³

Meanwhile, the animosity which arose between Aare *Afonja* and *Alaafin* Oyo, AoleArogangan, constituted a watershed in the emergence of a new order in Oyo-Ilorin military relations. This can be explained against the backdrop of *Afonja's* mission to assert Ilorin as an independent territory from Oyo. In doing this, the *Aare* had greatly counted on the goodwill he enjoyed from run-away slaves from Old Oyo, most of whom yearned for freedom. *Afonja* had defied his master's command to attack on Iwere, an Ife town, considered impregnable. He had explained the futility of an attack on the naturally fortified town to his army and in return, the party sent a covered empty calabash to the *Alaafin*, apparently signifying that his end had come, and customarily, asking him to commit suicide. This rebellious act obviously meant the end of *Alaafin* Aole, who thus placed a curse on the rebels. With this act of defiance, *Afonja* sought to rid himself off Oyo's authority and embarked on the more important mission of preserving the sovereignty and independence of Ilorin. In doing this, he sought the aid of *Mallam* Alimi, an Islamic cleric, who had visited a number of Yoruba communities before settling down at Kuwo. He also sought the aid of Sholagberu, a powerful Yoruba chief and Muslim leader at Okesuna, a nearby community. Also in Ilorin at this time was Olufadi, leader of a Fulani group in the town.⁴

The Slave-soldiers in *Afonja's* army

Aside the soldiers whom Aare *Afonja* controlled as the commander-in-chief of the Oyo army, a considerable size of his soldiers after the rebellion against Oyo came from the Hausa slaves. Indeed, he was encouraged by the might of his military as to have openly defied *Alaafin* Maku, who reigned after *Alaafin* Aole. The newly enthroned *Alaafin* had sent him (*Afonja*) a message: "*The new moon has appeared.*" To this, *Afonja* insolently replied: "*let that new moon quickly set.*"⁵

According to Johnson, before the crisis which led to the fall of the Old Oyo Empire, Ilorin and her surroundings had attracted a large number of Hausa and Hausa slaves, most of whom were engaged in various types of vocations in the area. He states that many of these slaves were employed as barbers, cattle rearers, and rope makers.⁶ Some of them were enslaved by non-Muslim population and used as domestic servants at home and on their plantations. It is possible to suggest that the Muslim slaves were not satisfied with their position possibly because their masters did not treat them well. Apart from that, the Muslim slaves must have abhorred their being slaves of non-Muslims. Consequently, they became ready recruits for *Afonja* in his enterprise to sever Ilorin from the rest of the Old Oyo Empire.⁷

Indeed, *Afonja* must have thought that his objective of carving a state for himself from the Old Oyo had been achieved when the Muslim slaves in Ilorin and its environs

deserted their masters and revolted in 1817.⁸ This revolt marked a significant turning point in the lives of the Muslim slaves and the history of Ilorin. Firstly, the slaves' revolt coincided with the arrival of *Mallam Al-Salih*, a Muslim preacher who visited several towns in Yorubaland including Ilorin. His presence must have increased the momentum with which the slaves carried out the revolt, although there is no record that he encouraged them. For the Muslims, it was a golden opportunity to practice their religion. Secondly, the revolt by Muslim slaves also marked the beginning of the process which turned Ilorin into an emirate, six years later.⁹ Meanwhile, Aare Afonja's confidence in, and high regard for, the slave soldiers were soon abused. The slave soldiers saw themselves as an important element to the survival of Ilorin as an independent entity. Therefore, they resorted to committing atrocities and rapacity to the extent that Fagboun, the left wing commander of Afonja's army had to draw the latter's attention to the implication of these excesses of the slave-soldiers, who were commonly referred to as Aare's servants.¹⁰ At last, realizing this precarious situation, having been isolated from his natural allies and dependent upon his Hausa troops, the *Jamaa* (disciples), he attempted to reconcile himself with the *Onikoyi* and other Yoruba chiefs.¹¹ This attempt however, was too late as the *Jamaa* rose against him. He was besieged and already deserted by some of his guards. In fact, Sholagberu, whom Afonjahad established with his followers at Oke-Sunaon the outskirts of Ilorin earlier on, also refused his plea for help. He (Afonja) however fought on until he fell indeed like a hero. "*So covered was he with darts that his body was supported in an erect position upon the shafts of spears and arrows showered upon him*".¹² Even though Afonja's authority in Ilorin was short-lived, he left an enduring legacy in Yoruba history, having established himself as an independent leader in the town after breaking away from the Old Oyo.

Afonja's demise brought Ilorin under the control of Fulani leadership and Abdulsalam was recognized by the *Sultan* of Sokoto as an *Emir* within the Fulani Empire (and flattered by his Yoruba subjects as "*Oba digi aiye*, king- mirror of the world").¹³ This also implied that the army was now in the hands of the *Emir*, Abdulsalam. It must be emphasized that religion played a prominent part in the zeal with which people joined the army during the period. For example, within six years of Al-Salih's stay in Ilorin, Afonja's influence declined considerably as most of the people he used to secede Ilorin from Old Oyo switched their allegiance to Al-Salih and his sons, Abdulsalam and Shitta. After Al-Salih's death in 1823, it was easier therefore for Abdulsalam to turn Ilorin into an emirate, of course with the support of the Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba Muslims, led by Sholagberu.¹⁴ Indeed, they must have been enthusiastic about the establishment of an emirate in Ilorin for two main reasons: firstly, to consolidate their freedom from slavery; and secondly to be free to practice the Islamic faith. As contained in UthmanDanFodio's *Bayan Wajub, Al Hijira Ala-L-Ibad*, their (Muslim slaves) participation in the Muslim revolution in Ilorin should legally confer on them their freedom.¹⁵ Religious considerations thus swelled up the Ilorin army after Afonja's demise, as wars of consolidation and expansion were embarked upon. The slave soldiers still remained vibrant under Abdulsalam. For instance in one of the battles against Oyo, Jimba, the *Emir's* chief slave, pursued the routed army, sacked Oyo and carried away various insignia of office,

including the *egungun* dress and one hundred brass pots from the Alaafin's palace.¹⁶ These were melted and converted to ammunition. The capital was deserted and the Fulani pursued the fugitives of the Oyo forces as far south as Abeokuta.

The Balogun Institution as a Factor in Ilorin Military

Before the 19th Century, the idea of professionalising the military remained obscure in Yorubaland. This was because most Yoruba societies relied on paramilitary termed *Ologun*, *Ogungbe* and *Ipampa*. They were usually not subjected to serious military training. They were rather ad-hoc groups mainly recruited from hunters and able-bodied men in times of war and often quickly disbanded thereafter. Gradually, the semi-professional army known as the *Eso* (i.e. guards) evolved in Yorubaland, forming a formidable proportion of the militia.¹⁷ Indeed, it was at this level that the Yoruba believed that one of two things befitted an *Eso*, either to be victorious or to die fighting! Virtues of bravery and tenacity at war front became highly revered in Yoruba society. Indeed, victory in war was celebrated with pomp and pageantry to the admiration of the victorious warriors, while their status became elevated in the society.

By the 19th century however, a new military aristocracy had emerged in Yorubaland, forcing the traditional political constitution to begin to change. People's concern for the security of their lives put the military in a more favoured and respected position in Yoruba societies of that time. Subjects began to question the ability and significance of the institutions that could not guarantee their safety and lean more on the military for the highly cherished protection. The well-known example of Ibadan, where 'military republicanism' evolved, is a case in point. There emerged powerful warrior- personalities, such as Oluyole, Ibikunle, Ogunmola, Latoosa and AjayiOgboriefon, who rose to prominence not by the possession of beaded crown, but of swords and guns.¹⁸ Other examples in Yorubaland are *Lisabi* rose prior to the 19th century, he emerged between 1795 and 1780, Ogedengbe in Ijeshaland, Fabunmi of Oke-Imesi to mention but a few. These men were not of royal class but their military credentials earned them respect, popularity and acceptance in their respective societies.

In Ilorin, similar examples can be seen in the military exploits of the *Balogun* Alanamu, Gambari, Ajikobi and Fulani at different periods. The roles played by YusufBale and Inakoju Ali of Alanamu, KararaBalogun of Gambari, the Maiyaki, ZarumiOgbondoroko, Jimba, Ojuekun, Oku-Ajanaku, Seniand others, are very significant in the military expeditions of Ilorin at various times. Adeleye, while writing in his *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria 1804-1906*, maintains that the major source of wealth of the town of Ilorin in the period was without doubt, war and plunder, which between 1817 and 1840, turned Afonja's rebel camp on the River Asa into a great and bustling metropolis under the dynasty of Fulani *Emirs* who fought for, and then displaced and killed its founder.¹⁹ These years, and more specifically, those between 1825 and 1840, were years of victory, when the adjacent towns of the upper Ogun River area, including the old imperial capital of Oyo Katunga, were destroyed and their inhabitants put to flight or incorporated into the new Ilorin town and state.

Ilorin thus became the first 19th century 'super city' in Yorubaland, to be followed by Ibadan, Ijaye, Ogbomoso and others, ensconced with their dependent hamlets and forming tributaries on extents of territory, where scores of smaller walled cities with smaller compounds and households had previously flourished.²⁰

However, one important step taken by *Emir Abdulsalam* in fostering unity within the army, and calming the nerves of aggrieved groups in Ilorin, after the death of Sholagberu and the atrocities of the *Jamaa*, was to identify with the leaders of the major linguistic groups and appoint them as military commanders (*Balogun*). This was a political cum diplomatic move in the internal consolidation of Ilorin as an emirate. Leaders of the major groups of Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba were co-opted as members of the Emirate council and war commander.²¹ This must have been conceived for two reasons: firstly, the consideration that Ilorin is historically a Yoruba town, formerly under Old Oyo, in which there could be disgruntled elements with grievances against the Fulani leadership in a Yoruba territory. Secondly, the move must have been intended to forestall internal insurrection, and provide a strong Ilorin army for the protection and consolidation of the young Emirate. This was indeed, a showpiece of diplomacy in the military and political development of Ilorin in the 19th Century.

Henceforth, each *Balogun* was expected to raise an army among the people of his domain. This did not only increase the size of the Ilorin army but also ensured the loyalty of the army commanders (*Balogun*) to the *Emir*. In fact, attempts by the Old Oyo to regain the town were frustrated partly due to this move. Teyeje, the *Baale* of Ogbomosho and successor of Afonja as *Kakanfo*, had raised an army to attack Ilorin. Oyo army under Teyeje had camped at Ogele in preparation for an attack on Ilorin. The Fulani leadership put this new military arrangement of *Balogun* to test by asking them to raise an army in the Ogele war. The restructured Ilorin army recorded victory not only in the Ogele war, but also in the *MugbaMugba*, *Kanla* and *Eleduwe* wars that followed.

The personalities of the commanders also contributed immensely to the military success recorded by the Ilorin forces at this period. For instance, the role played by certain YusufuBale or Alanamu in the Eleduwe war is still fresh in Ilorin's account. He was invited by *Emir Shitta* to join him in the bid to throw off Oyo's yoke. Meanwhile, Yusufu saw Shitta's invitation as an opportunity to avenge the unceremonious circumstance through which he left Oyo and settled at Reke, a place not far from Ilorin.²² Yusufu was described as a powerful warrior who had joined forces with the *Emir*, contributing soldiers to support the Ilorin army.

Furthermore, the roles of AjiaGaju and AliBalogunGambari, as leaders of the Ilorin army were emphatically shown in K.V. Elphinstone's *Gazetter of Ilorin Province, 1921*. The capture of Ajasse, Oke-Ora, Yarra, Ekiti town of Ishan, and Yagbatown of Iye, was recorded in this account.²³ It is also reported that *Emir Zubeiru* who succeeded Shittawas a "bigoted Muslim" who swore to put all pagans to death. Indeed in 1864, Zubeiru sent out an army under the *Balogun* Fulani, Alanamu, Gambari and Ajikobito drive the Ibadan out of Otun, in a bid to bring the town back under Ilorin's fold. The Ibadan authorities had installed an *Ajele*

(representative) at Otun, making the town to pay tribute to them, instead of paying to Ilorin. This move again was successful and Ilorin regained the town, with the *Ore* of Otunpaying tribute to Ilorin.²⁴

The army during the reign of *Emir Aliyu*, Shitta's son, also engaged and sacked Offa. This was a remarkable episode in the military career of Karara, the *Balogun* Gambari of the period.²⁵ Apart from the various *Balogun*, other strong warlike personalities contributed to the Ilorin army at this period. They include the Maiyaki, who were said to have come from Gobir in present Kebbi State,²⁶ the Kanneke from Borno, the Oganija who came from Ibadan (traced to Ogunmola)²⁷ and who were part of Alanamu's army, the ZarumiOlogbondoroko, whose forefather, Janju was said to have played a dual role of being an entertainer during peaceful times, and a warrior in times of war. Zarumi's forefather, Janju first settled at Edidi before moving to Ilorin. ZarumiOlogbondoroko's war effort was more prominent during the time of AbdullahiKangurun, Janju's son.²⁸

External Factor in Ilorin Military

Another angle to Ilorin military development in the 19th Century was the assistance she relished from outside. Of great significance was the help which came from Sokoto in the Eleduwue and Otefonwars. Alaafin Oluewu had been encouraged by the victory Oyo recorded against the Fulani at the Gbodo battle, that he conceived the idea of a large-scale war against his adversaries at Ilorin. This bid was favourably considered by a number of leading Yoruba Chiefs, including Atiba from AgoOja, Kurumi of Ijaye and Okere of Shaki, who all rallied to the camp which, Oluewu and Eleduwe, the Borguleaders, had formed at Otefon, about thirty miles from Ogbomoshu.²⁹ This camp grew so large that *Emir* Shitta of Ilorin, in addition to the internal preparation, sent to Sokoto for help, and was reinforced by the Nupe of Raba, where the Fulani had already established their ascendancy. Another source claims that the *Emir* of Gwandu, Halilu himself, led a combined Sokoto-Gwandu force in support of Ilorin against the Oyo-Borgu army, which ended in a victory for Ilorin.³⁰

Another aspect of the external influence was the alliance system, in which Ilorin participated, particularly, during the Yoruba warfare of the 19th Century. The Ekitiparapo Grand Alliance against Ibadan seemed more significant to Ilorin during this period. For Ilorin, this alliance was essentially intended to clip the wings of Ibadan, which had in the course of its expansion, subdued several Yoruba kingdoms. It was also considered a means of obtaining booty, but the more important reason was to re-impose Ilorin's control on her former Igbomina vassals, and bring Ekititowns under her political sphere. This intention had been subtly expressed in Ilorin's message to Aare Latoosa, ruler of Ibadan in 1878 in this way: "If a man's wife deserted him and afterwards repented and comes back to him, is not the husband justified in receiving her back."³¹ This reply sums up Ilorin's ambition in the alliance and shows the role of intrigues and treachery in winning, as alternatives to physical combat. It would be recalled that Ilorin's southward advancement into Yorubaland had earlier been halted by Ibadan in 1840 at the battle of Osogbo. This alliance thus represented part of

Ilorin's diplomatic maneuver and external factor in the course of the Yoruba warfare in the 19th century.

Military Tactics and Strategies of the Ilorin Army

War is a huge venture which requires painstaking planning and execution. R. Smith describes war, technically, as a state of open hostility between nations.³² This can be extended to include hostilities between one part of a nation and another. In other words, a war can take place between people of the same nationality, as witnessed in the Yoruba civil wars of the 19th Century. The enormity of the tasks which are involved in war situations makes planning an inevitable precondition for success, as in other human endeavours.

European writers have always described the wars among African communities in the pre-colonial period as mere skirmishes and civil disturbances, lacking any serious organization, planning and strategies. This view however, needs to be reconsidered, given the nature and magnitude of the 19th Century wars among African societies. Indeed evidences abound that precolonial wars were relatively well organized and executed, and had clear motives, ranging from economic, political and social. Indeed, as rudimentary as the societies were, their wars were precipitated by no less important factors as those of European societies.

The view is strongly held that success in war depends more on superior organization and morale than on superior weapons. In 1726 for instance, the Oyo cavalry, armed with lances, defeated Dahomean forces armed with muskets. Apart from the noise of the Dahomean guns, which frightened the Oyo horses initially, new and superior as they were to Yoruba warfare, the guns did not appear to have helped the Dahomeans avert defeat. Also in 1829, a large Ijebu army, equipped with snider rifles and abundant cartridges, was defeated by a small British force. Furthermore, during the Kiriji wars, from 1880-1884, the Ekitiparapo possessed superior firepower, yet they were unable to defeat the Ibadan forces. In the same vein, the Ilorin army lost to a better organized British force in 1897.³³ These instances above buttress the point that military organization, tactics and war strategies are far more important determinants of success at battles than the size of an army or its weapons.

The army always made some planning before embarking on their military campaigns. The strategy largely revolved around studying the strength and weakness of their opponent. This, according to Alhaji Musa Maiyaki, was done by sending spies to enemy territories and camps to assess them prior to the campaign.³⁴ After studying the enemy, the army would then base their plan on the knowledge of the opponent. Soldiers would discuss the tactics that could assist in the battle and how they would move. Another strategy involved sending an advance army (team) to the battlefield. This was merely to distract their opponent as the advance team was not the main army, which would come later and bombard the opponent.

Another very effective strategy was diplomacy, which involved making friends with the opposing groups, and playing one community against another. The Fulani used this to a great extent against the Yoruba. For instance, Ilorin authorities allied with Lanloke, the chief of Gbodo against Oyo. Indeed, the pally between Ilorin and Lanlokeled to a heavy defeat of Oyo, which thereafter, became a tributary of Ilorin.³⁵ The treachery, rivalry, and lack of unity

of the Yoruba communities, were greatly exploited as advantage by the Ilorin authorities. In the Kanla war, the secret of the Yoruba strategy had been obtained by the Fulani through one of such "calculated friendship".³⁶

Sometimes, the nature of opponent's defences determines the strategy to be used in attacking them. Claperton, in 1829, as quoted by R. Smith, made the following documentation of an attack by the Fulani, on an Oyo community in 1825; the Fulani, Clapperton was told, mounted an aerial incendiary attack against a group of Yoruba villages near Oyo-Ile. Clapperton writes:

*Algi consists of three walled villages, and before it was burnt down, had been of considerable size; they pointed out a rock close to the south of the town, from whence the Fellatas (Fulani) flew the pigeons to set fire to it. The mode of doing it was by making combustibles fastened to the tails of the birds, which on being left loose from their hand, immediately flew to the tops of the thatched houses, while the Fellatas kept up a sharp fire of arrows to prevent the inhabitants from extinguishing the flames.*³⁷

This description relates to attack by incendiary arrow, a method well known to the Fulani. This also goes to suggest that there was no single strategy that was most effective in all situations; rather the approach to every battle was dictated by the prevailing circumstances of the war period. The fact that the village was walled must have prevented the Fulani soldiers from gaining entrance, hence the use of aerial incendiary attack, which merely involved sending combustibles from afar into the closed enemy territory.

The character of fighting in the field was also largely determined by the contrasting nature of the country. In the open savannah, cavalry was predominant while in the forest of the south as the Fulani learnt, horses were hindered in their movement and decimated by disease. Commanders were however able to exercise some control over their men by giving out orders and information on their war-drums which could also be used for deceiving the enemy.³⁸ The Ilorin military, in the 19th Century, was a combination of infantry and cavalry. Indeed, cavalry was used extensively because of the savannah nature of the environment. It proved successful in the Ogele and Mughamugba wars. This however became difficult in the densely forest region southwards.

Weapons and the Cavalry in the Ilorin Army

An important component of any military is its weaponry. Given the primordial nature of the period under consideration, the main weapons were traditional and rudimentary. The major weapons were swords of various sizes. The heavier, single bladed and eccentrically curved *agendengbe* and the other usually double bladed, either with an elongated leaf shaped blade or approximately similar to European or near Eastern types. Other varieties of swords

and knives were also used, such as the short *Jomo*, the *Tanmogayi*, *Ada*, *Obe* (dagger), and spears of various kinds.³⁹ A common weapon used in Ilorin was the *Masi* (a broad bladed throwing spear), which once thrown on the opponent, penetrates and sticks to the victim. Others were bow and arrows, lances, clubs (of wood and metal) and slings.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, one important industry which served as an aid to the military in most Nigerian societies in the 19th Century was blacksmithing. Most of the weapons used by the military during this period were made of iron, thus necessitating a steady relationship between the smiths and warriors. In fact, blacksmiths worked in close co-operation with the armies, replacing exhausted stock of arrows, mending damaged spears and swords, fabricating iron bullets from pieces of waste iron and repairing guns. The frequency of warfare, between Ilorin and other communities during the period, prompted the authorities to search for means of acquiring weapons to equip the military. Indeed it is said that iron and iron weapons were initially brought to Ilorin by the immigrating groups in the 19th Century.⁴¹ As the various groups converged on the town, blacksmithing became a notable industry among its people. Some of the earliest blacksmithing centers in Ilorin are Idi-Ape, Adangba, Pakata, Banni, Oloje, Sefura, and Kuntu. However, pig iron, which constituted the main raw material in the industry, was brought to Ilorin from other places such as Jabata, Nupe (known as Tapa in Ilorin), Ogbomoso and Igbomina areas.⁴²

Furthermore, the military success recorded by Ilorin army in the 19th Century was partly facilitated by its cavalry force. Earlier assaults on Ilorin by its adversaries were met without the cavalry force. For instance, in the battle of Ogidi, in which Ojo Agunbanbaru attacked Ilorin under Afonja, and the Nupe invasion of the town led by Majia, the town's army had not been fully organized. It was not yet a unified entity, rather a confederacy of troops contributed by each ward and separately commanded by the respective *Balogun*. Troops from Fulani Ward were commanded by Jagbara; those from Ajikobi by Usman; those of Alanamu by Seni; and the ones from Gambari ward were commanded by Doshe. These four commanders thus became the first set of *Balogun* appointed in Ilorin after the death of Afonja. Doshe was appointed overall commander of the army and charged with the responsibility to chase the Majia invasion, although he died in the battle.⁴³

However, by the time of the Ogele War, which was Old Oyo's first major attempt to reclaim Ilorin, cavalry had been developed and put to use by its military. To the north, Fulani had overrun and occupied most of the Yoruba proper, and their cavalry continued to raid in all directions. But the forest of the south proved as great an obstacle to their progress as the regrouped remnants of the Yoruba armies. Thus it was southwards, towards these forests that many of the inhabitants of northern Oyo fled for shelter.

Therefore, the marauding cavalry force of Ilorin was a significant factor in the southward movement of many old Oyo people. Infact, this was a factor in the emergence of new Oyo at Ago-Oja, and by extension, loss of territory by the Asipa family, which previously held sway in the area. The fact that cavalry force was seriously hampered in the forest region underscores the impact of geography and natural defence mechanism on

warfare. For the cavalry, the forest not only hindered their free movement, but the region also had tsetse fly, which decimated the number of horses.

Conclusion

The Ilorin army in the 19th Century transited from the remnant of the soldiers which Aare Afonja controlled as the Generalissimo of Old Oyo to include recruits from slaves and captives. Later, the cosmopolitan nature of Ilorin also found expression in its military as various linguistic groups in the *Emirate* contributed troops to the main army, particularly after Emir *Abdulsalam* established the position of *Balogun*. This move gave greater strength and cohesion to the army and allowed various warrior personalities in the *Emirate* to display their military prowess. It also enlisted their trust and facilitated harmony between the Fulani authority and leaders of the other groups. More importantly, the army succeeded not only to ward off Oyo's influence, but also in its wars of expansion and consolidation in the 19th century. The Ilorin army eventually capitulated to a more organised British force in 1897.

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