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who were attending the annual New York meeting of the American Physical Society at Columbia University, released their statement just four days after President Truman ordered construction of the hydrogen bomb.

63. Palmer and Perkins, *International Relations*, 755-56.
64. C. Sulzberger, 'Dispatch from Geneva'. New York Times, August 8, in N. Palmer and H. Perkins, *International Relations*, 755.
65. W. Laurence, 'Dispatch from Geneva', New York Times, August 7, in N. Palmer and H. Perkins, *International Relations*, 755.
66. Ibid.
67. Palmer and H. Perkins, *International Relations*, 749.
68. Art, and Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 471.
69. J. May, *The Green peace Book of the Nuclear Age: The Hidden History, the Hidden Cost*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 346-47.
70. Ibid
71. Palmer and Perkins, *International Relations*, 755.
72. Ibid
73. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 265.

A HISTORY OF NUPE SETTLERS IN ILORIN AND THEIR SETTLEMENT PATTERN: 19TH CENTURY TO 20TH CENTURY

Saliu, Danlad Yusuf*

Abstract

Ilorin is an heterogeneous community with people of such ethnic backgrounds as Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and Nupe, constituting the community. Even though, the Yoruba language is without doubt the lingua franca of Ilorin people, tribal marks, family names and compound names are enough testimonies to the ethnic background of almost all indigenes of the town. The aim of this paper is not only to identify the families that are of Nupe background in Ilorin, but also to describe the process of their integration into the community. In this context, the indigenes with Nupe antecedents would be distinguished from the later settlers, who are the first or second generations of their families in Ilorin. Thus, this paper adopts an analytical and structural approach to trace the history of the people of Nupe background in Ilorin. The research work traces the history of the first Nupe settlers to the town, during its formative years, and those who came after them. Again, brief histories of important personages in the history of Ilorin among these people are discussed. It is important to stress here that the latter Nupe settlers, who are not the principal focus of this work, are briefly discussed for the purpose of historical clarity on the theme of Nupe migrants as settlers in Ilorin.

Introduction

To have a good grasp of the history of the people of Nupe origin in Ilorin, it would be appropriate to discuss, even if briefly, the history of Nupe people in the political entity that would later be known as Nigeria, as well as the emergence of the Yoruba-speaking state in Ilorin, that would later come under the sphere of the influence of Sokoto caliphate. Let us start with the history of the Nupe people.

Even though there are various versions of the history of Nupe people, there is still the need to say whatever our little research reveal to us as a version on these people is not peculiar to them. We only need to strive and try our best to sift the fact from fiction as far as the history of Nupe

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people is concerned. As indicated by available linguistic and archaeological evidence, the people of Nupeland who know themselves as "Nupechichi (plural of Nupe people) appears to have lived in the area of the middle Niger valley for a long period as observed by Jimada¹. Elphinstone believes the Nupe came from Atagara on the lower Niger, and settled around the Kaduna river during the seventeenth century. He is also of the opinion that Tsoede was the first Etsu Nupe, and that he lived at Nupeko, which is close to the town now known as Muregi². Still, traditions and assumptions abound as regards the origin of the Nupe speaking people, other than the one referred to above. For instance, in the *Palmer's Papers*, as cited by Jimada, the Nupe inhabited Katsina area, and were driven southwards to their present abode during the reign of Sarkin Katsina Korau (1445-1495AD)³. This Katsina origin is also supported by a Arnett-translated work of Arabic and Clapperton. In *inFaaq al-Maisur* translated by Arnett, it is claimed that the inhabitants of Nupeland are Katsina in origin, and also a mixture of Kanawa and Zagzagawa. In this vein, Clapperton, as cited by Jimada from Armstrong's work states: "the people of Nupe came originally from Katsina and their prince Thoodyar (Tsoede) from Atagher i.e. (Idah)". Interestingly, it is the same Palmer whose paper we referred to above as stating that the Nupe people were from the Zaria Karashi region as part of the people he termed Apa, who according to him included Kwararafa, Jukin, Idah, Wukari and the Igala were parts of the Apa states of the Kwararafa, Igala and Igbira⁴.

However, one would be tempted to agree with Jimada that the Kyadya and the Batati, were the earliest possible settlers in the area now occupied by the Nupe people. The argument that the groups came to inhabit the flood plains of the area over the centuries, and that they were attracted by economic opportunities in the area are highly plausible. Thus, whereas, the Kyadya engage in fishing and canoe ferrying, Batati mainly engaged in farming. In this vein, Chankyadya and Yankyadya North of Jebba were the earliest settlements of the Kyadya. From these places, they dispersed and founded settlements along the banks of the middle Niger river, from Jebba to the confluence of the Niger-Benue rivers at Lokoja. And above all, apart from the fact that these groups' tradition of origin shows that they have inhabited the area for so long, as argued by Jimada, they have no any tradition that states that their ancestors came from outside

the Nupeland⁵. Among their neighbours, the Nupe are known over the years by various names. For instance, among the Hausa, they are known as *Nufawa*, while they are known as *Abawa* among the Abari of Kuta. Nupe are known as *Anupeyi* and *Anufawhei* among the Gbari of Paiko and Birnin Gwari. Among the Yoruba, Nupe are known as *Takpa*. They are known as *Anupecwayi* by the kakanda⁶. To the Igala, they are known as *Onugba*⁷. Today, there exist five markedly different Nupe dwellers and they are Nupe proper, Ebe, Zitako, Bassa and Kupa⁸. Politically, however, Nupe people are scattered over several political units. The largest of them being in the Bida emirate, the heart of the ancient Nupe kingdom, whose present rulers are still known as Etsu Nupe. Some other Nupe kingdoms, though smaller compared to Bida, are Patigi, Lafiagi, Agaie and Lapai. Other similar Nupe states are Shonga and Tsaragi. Outside Nupeland, the people are a minority, living side by side with such diverse people as Yoruba, Hausa, Gbari, Yagba, Kakanda and Ebira⁹. In Nigeria of today, Nupe are found principally in Niger, Kwara and Kogi states, as well as the Federal Capital Territory, where their kingdoms are scattered since the pre-colonial period.

As regards the early history of Ilorin, there are various versions. But let us start with its geographical location. Ilorin, in the word of Balogun, is in a transitional zone between the open savannah belt of the north, and the forest area of some distance to the south¹⁰. Ilorin as a Yoruba settlement, is believed to have been built in the 17th century, by an itinerant hunter named Ojo, from Gambe, near Oyo Ile. According to Jimoh, at the time of his arrival, the place now known as Ilorin was virtually a virgin land populated by a Baruba family, at a place still called Baruba near Idi ape. Ojo was to find a well positioned rock suitable for sharpening tools and decided to settle at the site. The rock, which was a good metal sharpener was called "Ilo-irin" which means in Yoruba language. The name Ilorin is believed to be a contraction of Ilo-Irin¹¹. It is Balogun's opinion that local tradition associates the name of Ilorin with some of its occupational activities such as hunting elephants, which were commonly found in Ilorin, or where people engage in iron works¹².

However, there is no evidence as regards the exact date of the establishment of Ilorin. According to Balogun, the place had existed as a village for some time before Afonja made it popular, about the last decade

of the 18th century, as three generations of the Afonja family had lived there, before the time in question. In this vein, Afonja was already familiar with Ilorin at the time he was posted to the place following his appointment as Are Ona Kakanfo, the Commander-In-Chief of the empire's provincial army by Alafin Awole in about 1796¹³. However, the political troubles of old Oyo that culminated in its collapse in the 19th century, was perhaps the reason why Balogun is of the opinion that, "Ilorin was destined to emerge as an emirate as a result of a crisis situation in Oyo"¹⁴. Of course, the revolt of Afonja, the Are Ona Kakanfo, was one of such challenges faced by Oyo. Apart from the support of other leading chiefs at Oyo, enjoyed by Afonja in his rebellion, he also had the support of a few Muslims led by Alimi, a Fulani cleric¹⁵. It is important to note here that Mallam Alim Al-Salih referred to above as Alimi came to Ilorin in 1817 the same year Hausa slaves in Oyo Ile revolted. It is also important to note that several of the Hausa slaves joined in their support for the defence of Afonja in Ilorin¹⁶. Within a short period of time, Afonja fell out with his Fulani allies and eventually, the contest for the control of Ilorin ensued. But Alim Al-Salih was able to patch things up with Afonja until the former died about 1823, after a stay of six years in Ilorin¹⁷. After the death of Al-Salih, Abd Al-Salam his son and Bako, the then head of the Gambari quarters, were involved in succession struggle that ended in the former's victory with the support of Solagberu a Yoruba Muslim leader in Ilorin. Thus, with his father gone, Abd al-salam struggled for the political leadership of Ilorin. Of course this was unacceptable to Afonja. Eventually, Afonja was accused of plotting against Abd al-salam and the latter was attacked. Even though he fought with bravery, Afonja was overwhelmed and he fell¹⁸. With time, Solagberu fell out with Abd al-salam and the former was to suffer the same fate as Afonja, as he lost his life in the struggle with the latter. It should be noted here that Abd al-salam achieved this victory over Solagberu, with the support of Sokoto and Gwandu. Thus, with the death of Afonja and Solagberu the position of Abd Al-Salam could hardly be challenged in Ilorin¹⁹. In this regard, with the failure of Yoruba Muslims led by Solagberu to control the town, the Fulani emerged as the controller of Ilorin, making it an outpost of the Sokoto Caliphate²⁰.

At this juncture, it is important to note that Ilorin was formerly a conglomeration of distinctive hamlets, with each having its distinctive

head. Ojo Isekuse, for instance, was the head of Okelele Hamlet, Olufadi was the head of Gaa Halmet, while Solagberu was the head of Okesuna hamlet. Idiape Hamlet was headed by Afonja, while Sarki Gambari headed Gambari hamlet²¹. This was the political structure of Ilorin before the emergence of Abd al-salam as the first Emir of Ilorin in 1823.

Now, as regards Nupe settlement pattern in the development of Ilorin as a town, the first wave of Nupe settlers were artisans, who engaged in such productive activities as, bead making, weaving, rope making, farming, blacksmithing etc., immediately after the collapse of Oyo Alafinate. This was the period Ilorin developed into the most important entrepot in the trade involving the savannah North, and the forest region to the South. Then, Gambari market, which served as a meeting point for traders from various backgrounds, most especially from opposite sides of the region, as observed by Bowen and cited by Adebayo, developed into an important market in the region during this period²². It is equally important to note here that during the period under discussion, Ilorin, according to Suleiman, was to have had the largest slave market in the region. On account of this, some Nupe slave dealers preferred to settle down in the vicinity of the slave market. This explains why Gambari- Ojagboro area was occupied around this time, by the Nupe slave dealers²³. Besides the categories of the Nupe settlers referred to above, the political development in Nupeland also had to do with the trend of Nupe settlement in Ilorin during the time under discussion. For instance, as former allies, Majia and Dendo, who were allies when the former contested for the vacant seat of Etsu Nupe with his brother, following the death of their father, became bitter enemies. The former was incensed that Shehu Alimi granted asylum to Dendo and his associates, and as such, he was determined to wipe out Fulani influence from Nupe forever. This resulted in heavy fighting at a place near Sobi hill (the Northern gate to Ilorin town) and Majia was eventually defeated. The Nupe captives of the war, were automatically added to the existing pool of Nupe population in Ilorin²⁴. Let us now examine the trend and pattern of Nupe settlement in Ilorin over the years.

The Early Nupe Settlers in Ilorin: Their Pattern of Settlement

Locating every household with Nupe ancestry in Ilorin could really be a daunting task, as people of Nupe origin are scattered across the town.

Be that as it may, some families' Nupe origin is easily betrayed either by their family names, or the compound they occupy. On account of this, some compounds are generally known to be occupied by people of Nupe ancestry. Opinions, however, differs on the number of the principal traditional Nupe compounds in Ilorin. Whereas some people of Nupe ancestry are of the opinion that they are sixteen, some others who are also descendants of Nupe settlers, are of the opinion that the major Nupe compounds in Ilorin are just nine. Thus, in Nupe parlance, they talk of the compounds as Akatas (Zaure in Hausa language). It is important to note here that even though most of the Akatas are scattered in the present Ilorin East and Ilorin South Local Government Areas of Kwara state, one of them is located in Ilorin West Local Government of the state. Those who believe that the *Akata* are nine name the following as the traditional principal Nupe compounds in Ilorin: (i) Gbodofu (ii) Malefu (iii) Danbanfu (iv) Segbafu (v) Sakufu (vi) Yerefu (vii) Kutigifu (viii) Niankofu and (ix) Shotafu²⁵. Those who believe the Akatas are sixteen could not account for all the sixteen compounds. However, besides the above nine compounds, they identified, Gboifu, Ile Onimasa, Dankosin, and Alalubosa in their list²⁶. Besides these, however, families of Nupe ancestry still have compounds scattered in Ilorin East. For instance, there is Ile Tapa in Makaranta, in Okesuna area and Ile onisana in the same Okesuna. We also have Isale Tapa in Ojagboro area, as well as Koro, and ile Bolugi in Gambari area. Also, we have people of Nupe ancestry in Iso ori compound, in Isale koko Ndarabi compound in Karuma, Ile Onimewa in Okesuna, Bolanta Compound in Ile Film area, and above all, Imam Gambari compound in Gambari known as Ile Liman²⁷. All of these compounds, are in Gambari/Ojagboro axis in Ilorin East. In Ilorin West, there are people of Nupe origin as in the case of Kijan and Alakuko families of Oke Apomu, people of Nupe-Fulani origin of Agbaji, and above all, Malefu compound that is now popularly known as Nda Salati compound. All these are in Alanamu quarters of Ilorin West Local Government of Kwara State. In Ilorin West Local Government, is also Ile Tapa compound of Pakata area²⁸. It is, however, interesting to note here that even though, the forefathers of these people did not migrate to Ilorin from the same town, their kinship tie is so strong that they always see themselves as one. They believe their forefathers are one, as they shared the same language and culture. All the

major Nupe compounds see themselves as one, and as such they celebrate together and grieve together. For instance the current head of Ile Yerefu claimed that, whenever there was any ceremony, most especially marriage ceremony in Yerefu, all the nine *Akata* or *Katanba* would be in their presence. Yet not all of their forefathers were from the same town, though, most of those ancestors were from Bida. It is equally interesting to note here that though at the beginning, these families scattered in Ilorin, they had no common ancestry, most of the Nupe families in the town, especially those in Ilorin East and South, including the Malefu families, trace their roots to ode Alfa Nda in Ilorin West, are closely related due to inter marriage. As we shall see in the course of our discussion. It is, however, important to note here that though some of the forefathers of these Nupe people came to Ilorin around the time the institution of Emirate was established in the town, most came later after Abd al-salam became the Emir. Most of the first generations of Nupe people that came to Ilorin in the 19th century were scholars and spiritualists. The reason why the current heads of the nine major Nupe families, referred to earlier in this paper, are themselves scholars/ spiritualists, and this is also why they adopt the title "Khalifah". Let us now examine some of these families in terms of their arrival in Ilorin.

According to the current head of Gbodofu family, Sheikh Ahmad Rufai, the progenitor of the family had been in Ilorin before the establishment of the emirate system in the town. That is to say that the first Emir of Ilorin ascended the throne, as the story goes, Hassan the founder of Gbodofu family in Ilorin, came from Bida on the invitation of the Sheikh Alim al Salih. The latter wanted Mallam Hassan to assist him to build Ilorin. The invitation came as they already knew each other at Gwandu. Of course, both of them were students of the same scholar, Sheikh Abdullahi of Gwandu. Even though Mallam Hassan's family was at the time in Bida, his ancestors were originally from Timbuktu, before they settled at Bida. It is to the credit of Gbodofu family that they produced the first Mufassir (Alfa Tafsir), that is the Chief Examiner of Imam Gambari mosque in the person of Sheikh Buhari, a young brother to the first head of Gbodofu family in Ilorin, Mallam Hassan. Mallam Buhari was renowned for his vast knowledge and both the Nupe and Hausa scholars learnt at his feet. Mallam Buhari was a former

of Mallam Abdullahi of Girandu. The family compound of Mallam Hassan in Bida is also known as Gbodofu. After his death, he was succeeded as the head of Gbodofu family by his brother, Shehu Buhari, also known as Mann Baba MaiTafsiri. After his own demise, he was succeeded as the head of Gbodofu family by Mallam Hassan's first son, Mallam Abdulkadir Yayansasa. The current head of Gbodofu family, Shehu Usman Ibn Ahmed Rufai Nda Imam, is himself a great scholar, well learned and highly respected. His title as the 11th head of Gbodofu family is Khalifah. He is the father of Dr khalil Usman Gbodofu of Arabic Department, University of Ilorin²⁹. The Maimasa family of Ojagboro is currently headed by Khalifah Ibrahim Maimasa. As explained earlier, his title as the head of Maimasa family is "Khalifah", just as we have in the case of Gbodofu family. The first head of Maimasa family was Umaru who came known as Ilorin from Tsonga. He was from the family of Magaji of Lubosafu in Tsonga. In Ilorin, he had a son, to Mallam Salihu, the father of Mallam Ibrahim Kologboya. Mallam Ibrahim Kologboya was the father of Mallam Muhammed Ibrahim Maimasa. He was popularly known as Mallam Mamman Maimasa. He was widely read, and as such, he was well respected as a Muslim scholar. His fame transcended his immediate environment, as he was acknowledged in his days as one of the leading lights in Ilorin in terms of being vast in religious knowledge and Arabic language³⁰. The current khalifah, Sheikh Ibrahim Muhammed Maimasa is his son. Khalifah Ibrahim Maimasa is a popular scholar and spiritualist in his own right, as he is known far and near, and is highly consulted in matters pertaining to the religion of Islam. The progenitor of Maimasa family in Ilorin, Mallam Umaru, came to the town during the reign of the second or third Emir of Ilorin before the close of the nineteenth century³¹.

Meanwhile, when we talk of *Akata* (in Hausa *Zaure* and *Agode* in Yoruba), the picture created in the mind is that of one compound with one entrance. From the early nineteenth century when one *Akata* stood for a Nupe family, we now have chains of connected or even disconnected buildings standing as a 'compound'. For instance, in Kutigifu, there are four to five families of different ancestries with just Nupe ancestry as the bonding factor. An instance of this is the fact that people of Ile Onikuli and Alhaji Musa Ndagi Compound of Kutigifu trace their ancestry to Ejidongari in Moro Local Government Area of Kwara State. Ejidongari is a

Nupe word. People of Arowasi compound of Kutigifu on their own, trace their ancestry to Bida. The family of Alhaji Saka, a politician born in Kutigifu also traced its origin to Bida³². Kutigifu is in Isale Maliki area of Ilorin South Local Government Area. The root of Arowasi family of Kutigifu in Ilorin is Mallam Abdullahi, who came from Bida. In Bida, their family compound is Mann Tukur Compound. "Mann" is the shortened form of "Mallam" in Nupe. His sons were Mallam Mahmud and Mallam Muhammadul Awwal. Though the latter was the younger brother, he was the most renowned of his generation in Kutigifu. When they stepped out of their *Akata*, Mallam Mahmud always followed his better known brother, a younger one for that matter, in deference to him. Mallam Muhammadul Awwal's fame rested on his scholarship and his position as the "Arôwasi" of Imam Gambari mosque, and also a preacher of the old Ilorin Central Mosque at Idiape early in the 20th century. Mallam Muhammadul Awwal was also known as "Mann Gangayo" which means "Mallam asked me to tell you the audience"³³. In Hausa, this expression is "Mallam Yace ngayamaka". The Yoruba speaking preachers also use the expression "Alfa ni kin so fun yin". The expression is still in use today by some conservative preachers among the Yoruba, Nupe or Hausa speakers in Ilorin. Mallam Muhammad Awwal "Mann Ganyayo" had three children; one son and two daughters, according to Alhaji Lukman Armiyau Arowasi. The son, Mallam Lukman is the father of the current Imam of Arowasi compound. To Mallam Mahmud were born three sons and one daughter. One of the sons, Mallam Hudu was the penultimate Imam of Arowasi compound of Kutigifu³⁴. Also in Kutigifu, is Ile Maliki Alfa Maliki of Maliki compound was the third Imam of Arowasi mosque in Kutigifu. Alfa Maliki's people came from Gana Gaji near Lafiagi. Following Alfa Maliki's death in 1968, his son, Mallam Abdullah Baba Eleni also became the Imam of Arowasi mosque. Also in Kutigifu is Ile Tetengi that produce Alhaji Saka the grassroot politician. Tetengi family also trace its root to Bida³⁵, not far from Kutigifu is Ile Onileke, whose forefather also came to Ilorin from Bida. The first Nupe to settle in Ile Onileke, Okesuna area was Sheikh Muhammad, who was based in Danbanfu, sometime between the 19th century and early 20th century. Sheikh Ahmed Zaruq was an erudite scholar who at a point, became the Mufassir of Oke Ode, when his patron, Mallam Mahmud was the Head of Oke ode District. As the family name indicates,

the Onileke people are known for bead making and at their ancestral home in Bida that is, Mashaga area, bead making was popular. The current head of Mashaga in Bida is known as Nah Masaga. It is believed that the family was originally from Mali³⁶.

The first Nupe settler in Yerefu in the vicinity of Akalanbi was Mallam Muhammed Sanni, who migrated to Ilorin from Bidah in the period which, according to this writer's informant fell around the early decades of 20th century. His family compound in Bida is Gbogbonfu. Mallam Muhammed Sanni was a great scholar and spiritualist. He had many sons but few daughters. His sons were Salisu, Abdulkareem, (Yaya, Ibadan) Abdulkadir, Umar, Tajudeen and Mahmud. Alhaji Ibrahim Yerefu and Alhaji Imam Shuaib Yerefu, both of the Tapa Yerefu, are the current head and Imam of Ile Tapa compound, respectively. The two are among the descendants of Mallam Muhammad Sanni who migrated to Ilorin from Bida in the early 20th century. As earlier stated, Mallam Muhammad Sanni was a great scholar and spiritualist in his days. As a matter of fact, the then future Emir of Ilorin, prince Abdulkadir, used to visit him in his abode in Yerefu to seek spiritual assistance in ascending the throne of his forefather. Then, prince Abdulkadri would want to meet him in his house but Mallam Muhammad Sanni, would then send to him not to bother to come to his abode through the bush path, but rather stay outside in the vicinity of the mosque to meet him as a mark of respect for the prince. Prince Abdulkadir was to later become the 8th Emir of Ilorin³⁷.

At the core of Gambari is Ile Liman which is now the Imam Gambari compound as alternatively called. The Imam Gambari family is of the Nupe origin. According to a source, the progenitor of Imam Gambari family, Abdulmumini Dogo, came to Ilorin from Bokani, a Nupe town to join Doshe, who was to become the first Balogun Gambari of Ilorin. Abdulmumini Dogo's family was originally from Kano before being assimilated to Nupe in Bokani³⁸. Yet, another source, Mallam Deji Gambari claims that Mallam AbdulBaki, the first imam Gambari of Ilorin was appointed during the time of the third Emir of Ilorin, Mallam Zubayro Dan Abdulsalami, who reigned between 1860 and 1868³⁹. The current Imam Gambari is Alhaji Dele Imam.

Although, there are various families with Nupe origin scattered across Ilorin, it is very important that no area of Nupe traditional

residential quarters in the town is left untouched in a paper of this nature. Among the most prominent Nupe families in Ilorin is Ndasalati family of Malefu in Alanamu quarters. As a matter of fact, the family "Akata" is no longer known as Malefu, but Alfa Nda compound, due to the popularity of the scholar and spiritualist bearing that name. The founder of Malefu was sheikh Abubakar who came to Ilorin from Bida. He first came to Gbodofu in Balogun Fulani area, before migrating to Balogun Alanamu quarters to found Malefu. He was the father of sheikh Nda Rufai, who was later known as sheikh Nda salati⁴⁰. Sheikh Nda Rufai acquired the name due to his love for the Arabic poem which goes thus: "Salati Wa Tasli mi..."⁴¹. Sheikh Nda Salati was a well known scholar and spiritualist up to the time of his death in 1966. He lived in Abeokuta and also Lagos. While alive, he was the leader of Quadriya Brotherhood in Ilorin. In the same vein, the progenitor of the Kokewu Kobere family in Nuankofu was Mallam Sanusi, who came to Ilorin from Bida, probably during the reign of the second Emir of Ilorin, Mallam Shita Dan Salih Alimi, who reigned between 1842 and 1860. Mallam Sanusi's son, that is Mallam Muhammed Salisu was the first Kokewu Kobeere in Nuankofu, Isale Koko, Ojagboro Ilorin. He acquired the title "Kokewu Kobeere" from the song he was fond of reciting "Kokewu Kobeere Yio tise la..." which means "He who does not attend school for Islamic education and did not ask those who know, how would such person succeed...". Due to his popularity as a preacher, he was given the title, "Oba Oni waasi" which means the "Chief Preacher of the town" by one of the early Emirs of Ilorin. He traveled wide proselytizing. He was well known in all Yoruba land in his days as a popular Islamic preacher. As a preacher, he travelled extensively within West Africa to countries that would later be known as Benin Republic, Togo, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, and even Gabon before the advent of, and in the early years of colonialism in the region. He was succeeded after his death by his son, Mallam Abdulkadir as "Kokewu Kobeere". The ninth Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Zulkarnain added the Title of "Alfa Rabana," to the title of the second "Kokewu Kobeere", Mallam Abubakar. The current Kokewu Kobeere, the fifth holder of the title, who is also the current Alfa Rabana is Alhaji Yahaya Obansola, a grandson of the first kokewu kobere⁴².

Some other Nupe families in Ilorin include that of Ile Tapa, Makaranta in Okesuna, Ilorin, whose progenitor is Mallam Abdulrahman

who came from Bida. He had a son and two daughters. The son Mallam Ibrahim was the father of that popular scholar and spiritualist, Alhaji Shittu of Ile Tapa, Makaranta. Mallam Ibrahim's other sons were Mallam Zakariyah, Alhaji AbdulRahman, Mallam Yusuf and Mallam Muhammad Boriji⁴³. Not far from Ile Tapa is also Ile Onisana whose founder also came from Bida. The current head of the family, Alhaji Ibrahim is a grandson of Gbodofu the founder of the family⁴⁴. Families with Nupe ancestry are also found in Pataki (from Tsonga) Ile Olororo, Sakama (from Bida), Alore, Baruba (Alfa Takuti in Ajibade compound was from Bida)⁴⁵.

Features of the Early Nupe Settlers in Ilorin

One of the most important features of the families of the early Nupe settlers in Ilorin is that most of their descendants do not speak Nupe language. This is unlike the latter Nupe settlers, and their children who speak Nupe and Yoruba languages well.

Another important features of the early Nupe settlers, is that, the first settlers or their offsprings were in most cases, scholars/spiritualists. Examples abound as the current heads of almost all the major Nupe Akata in Ilorin. For instance, the first migrant to Gbodofu, Mallam Hassan was a scholar invited to Ilorin by Sheik Alimi Al-Salih. Mallam Hassan's brother, Mallam Buhari was himself a famous Islamic scholar in his own right, as he was the first Alfa Tafsir (Chief Exegete) in Iman Gambari mosque⁴⁶. The present head of Gbodofu family is himself a muslim scholar, in the same vein, the son of the first settler in Niakofu, Isale koko, Mallam Salisu popularly known as Kokewu Kobere, was not just a scholar, but a renowned proselytizer of Islamic faith, whose name was as familiar to the Muslims in the West African sub region, as to the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria⁴⁷. The current head of Kokewu Kobere family is also known with the title of "Alfa Rabana". Similarly, the Nupe Family of Malefu which is now known as Ode Alfa Nas, is known for the exploits of Sheikh Nda Rafai Salati, the son of the first settler, Mallam Abubakar. Also the Maimasa family of Ojagboro is known as a family of scholars /spiritualists, starting from the time of the first settler, Mallam Umaru. His great grandson, Mallam Muhammad (Mamman) Maimasa was acknowledged in Ilorin and environ as a great scholar to whom other

scholars flock from far and near. In Yerefu too, the IleTapa family is known for its Islamic scholarship.

The other families with Nupe ancestry like Imam Gambari family, Ile Onileke, Ile Boluji, Ile Nda Rabi, Ile Alfa Koro, Ile Takuti, and so on, are known for their Islamic scholarship. Most of these families have their "Makaranta Allo" or "Ilekewu" (elementary Islamic school) that survived into the 1990s as this writer himself can testify.

Another important feature of the early Nupe settlers in Ilorin is that apart from intra family weddings common among the Nupe people, there is intra group marriages. That is to say young men and women from the Nupe families discussed here were married to one another. For instance, Mallam Soliu the son of Mallam Umoru, who founded Maimasa family in Ojagboro married the younger sister of Mallam Aminu, the first Imam Gambari. The woman's name was Fatima Wodu, the mother of Ibrahim Kologboya already discussed above⁴⁸. In the same vein, the mother of Mallam Muhammad (Mamman) Maimasa known as Rabiatsu Keso Bije was from Gbodofu. She was the daughter of Yaya Makanta from Gbodofu. Similarly, the mother of Alfa Nda Salati already discussed above, was also from Gbodofu. In fact, the woman called Saadatu was the senior sister of Rabiatsu Keso Bije mentioned above. One of Mallam Mamman Maimasa's wives, the mother of the now Late Mallam Sheu, was from Yerefu in Akalanbi⁴⁹. The woman known as Rabiya, married at Oriatan after divorcing Mallam Mamman. She eventually Married Alhaji Musa Ndagi of Kutigifu for whom she had a son and a daughter. Again, one of the daughters of Mallam Abdulrahman, the first settler in Ile Tapa Makaranta Okesuna, married at Ile Bolugi, also a Nupe compound in Karuma area⁵⁰. The list of such intra group marriage is long among the families of early Nupe settlers in Ilorin.

And lastly, almost all the early Nupe families belong to Quadriyya order, as Shehu Ahmad Rufai Nda Salati was the leading light of the brotherhood in Ilorin before his death. Be that as it may, all the families or compounds mentioned so far, have long been integrated, as they have nowhere to call home except Ilorin, just as we have in the case of the first Hausa settlers, who were principally based in Ojagboro/Gambari area of Ilorin⁵¹. It is, however, interesting to note that across the families of early Nupe settlers in Ilorin, some members still maintain link with their family

compounds in Nupeland and speak Nupe language fluently. But there are some who did not bother to find out their ancestral home, but maintain close relationship with the Nupe families that settled in Ilorin around the middle of twentieth century, or a decade or two, before this time. For instance, the current head of Shotafu family in Isale Asa Area of Opomalu, Alhaji Abdulmumini Otolorin, stated that their own fathers used to go to their family house in Bida and spoke Nupe fluently. He stated that his own generation did not partake in such ventures, that his son generation also could not speak Nupe. He clarified that he could only speak Nupe, because he had worked as a grinder in Share and environs as a young man⁵². In similar vein, Alhaji Ibrahim Ile Tapa of Yerefu stated that there were some family members, who had gone back to Gbodofu, their ancestral home in Bida to settle down⁵³. Before concluding, it is important to remark that the only noticeable facial mark that reminds people of the Nupe ancestry of the people discussed above, is one vertical mark on each side of their face and between three and five on their chin as observed by this researcher. This is noticeable among family members of Nuankofu (their daughters), and Ndarabi family, and some others of their ilk based in Gambari/Ojagboro axis. On the either side of the face of Nuankofu (Kokewu Kobere) boys are two vertical marks.

The later Nupe settlers in Ilorin

The later Nupe settlers in Ilorin are the Nupe families that migrated to Ilorin around the middle of Twentieth Century, as distinct from the group discussed above, who migrated to Ilorin between the middle of Nineteenth Century (or even earlier) and the close of Nineteenth Century. Although some came to Ilorin as Mallams, while some migrated to Ilorin as traders, those that are focused in this paper are those that migrated to Ilorin as public servants and they are prominent in Ilorin, especially among their neighbours. One of the most prominent families in this group is Jimada family in the vicinity of Kutigifu, which is not far from Okesuna area. The late head of Jimada family, Alhaji Jimada Patigi, the late Lakpene of Patigi, whose title was also Nakodi came to Ilorin in 1930. He was an educationist who first taught at the Provincial Secondary School (P.S.S.) Ilorin which was known as Ilorin Middle School, and later as Government Secondary School Ilorin. He became the Head Teacher,

Okesuna Elementary School in 1943. His fellow Nupe men that came to Ilorin around the time he came were Alhaji Muhammed Rifun, Alhaji Alhassan Patigi and Alhaji Audu Patigi. Alhaji Jimada Patigi was so close to the 8th Emir of Ilorin, Mallam Abdulkadir. This is because of his initiative that assisted parents in Ilorin to have their children educated. He was the one that initiated the idea of pupil-teacher among Ilorin people, and this made it possible for Ilorin girls to be educated during this period. Due to the Emir's likeness for him he was invited to the palace to be living with him. But as a Patigi prince, Alhaji Jimada Patigi declined. The Emir then gave him a house in the vicinity of Okesuna in 1955, where his family resides to date. He rebuilt the house to his own taste. Before this time, he was living at Centre Igboro area of Ilorin. As a teacher in the Provincial Secondary School, he was known as "Mr Science" as he taught Sciences and Mathematics. He was also the Game Master. He later went to Kaduna where he was appointed Chief Public Enlightenment Officer in charge of Adult Education. He held this post between 1963 and 1966. He was later appointed Chairman, Council for Arts and Culture for Northern Nigerian before Kwara State was created. When the state was created first as West Central State and later North Central State, he was Chairman State Council for Arts and Culture and later Commissioner of Agriculture. He also served at a point as Commissioner of Works. He later retired from the public service in 1967, after which he established farms in Ilorin and Patigi. Alhaji Jimada died on 12th December 1989⁵⁴.

Alhaji Jimada Patigi was survived by four wives and many sons and daughters. One of his sons, Dr. Aliyu Jimada, the Turaki of Patigi, retired as a Director at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where he served with the Police Affairs. Another son, Dr. Usman Jimada, the Fogun of Patigi, retired as a director, Federal Character Commission in Abuja. Both Alhaji Umoru Jimada and Alhaji Ilyasu Jimada, the Sarkin Yaki of Patigi retired as Assistant Directors in the Kwara State public service. Alhaji Ilyasu Jimada is based in the Jimada family house in Ilorin while his brothers are in Abuja, Kaduna, Lagos, and so on. Most of his sisters married in Patigi. Adjacent to Alhaji Jimada Patigi's house is a house belonging to another Nupe man, Alhaji Shafi from Tsaragi. He served with Ilorin Local Government as a Government Sanitary Officer. He first lived at Bolanta before constructing his house near that of Alhaji Jimada Patigi

in Okesuna area. Alhaji Shafi's son is Alhaji Yinusa, the father of Alhaji Abdulsalam Yunusa, who is currently with the Federal Ministry of Aviation. He built his own house next to that of his grandfather⁵⁵.

However, another Patigi prince, Alhaji Jibril Taka Pategi, who was born to the family of late Etsu of Pategi, Etsu Usman Baba Kpatakao, and late Hajia Ayishat Usman Baba Kpatakao came to Ilorin in 1976⁵⁶. He first lived at Oke Aluko when he came to Ilorin⁵⁷. Alhaji Jibril Pategi, a holder of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria Diploma in Law, joined the services of the Judiciary in the then Northern region. He worked in Bauchi, Sokoto and Kaduna states before transferring his service to Kwara State Judicial Service Commission. He was with the state when the Kwara State Sharia Court of Appeal was created in 1981, and he was transferred there on the same rank of Assistant Chief Registrar. He was later promoted to the post of Deputy Chief Registrar and he eventually rose to the position of Chief Registrar in 1987. Alhaji Jibril Taka Pategi retired as the Chief Registrar of the Kwara State Sharia Court of Appeal in 1992. Before his death, he held the title of Nakodi of Pategi, the same title Alhaji Jimada Pategi held, before his death. Among the late Jibril Pategi's sons is Engineer Usman Baba Jibril, the Baraje of Pategi, who has been serving as the General Manager of the Kwara Road Maintenance Agency (KWARMA) since its establishment in 1904⁵⁸. Alhaji Jibril Pategi built his own house in Fate area of Ilorin. At his death, many of his children were already university graduates. Another of his sons, Mallam Jimada Jibril is currently a senior assistant registrar at the Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin.

In Ojagboro area is the house of Alhaji Ishaq Turakin Lafiagi who was popularly known as workmaster in the area. Late Alhaji Ishiaq, came to Ilorin in the late 1940s. He was a product of Katsina Teachers College, and worked at the Ogba Karanta Office of the Native Authority. He eventually rose to the position of the Supervisor, Works Department. Ogba Karanta is around Pake area between Ipata market and Amilegbe. His position as the Works Supervisor was responsible for his fame as the Work Master. Initially, he was staying in the house of his one time teacher, Mallam Usman⁵⁹. This Mallam Usman was reputed for being a teacher to the late Head of State, General Murtala Mohammed⁶⁰. Alhaji Ishaq Turakin Lafiagi popularly known as work master, retired from the public service, and moved to his own house which he acquired since the late 1960s. The

house is located near Ile Obasanlu in Ojagboro area. It remains the families house in Ilorin to date. Before his death, he had four wives and children. Only one of his children, Alhaji Shehu Abdulrahman is a male. Almost all his daughters married at Lafiagi⁶¹. Alhaji Shehu AbdulRahman graduated from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria with a B.A. degree in English in 1975. He had his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from the Lincoln University, San Francisco, U.S.A. He started his Civil Service career with the Kwara State Government as an Administrative Staff III and eventually rose to the post of Director General in 1992. Before then, he was the Principal Private Secretary (PPS) to the Military Governor of Kwara State between 1985 and 1991. He became the Head of Service in the Kwara State Civil Service in January 1991⁶².

It is important to note at this juncture, that one of the most important rallying programmes for the Nupe families is the Tafsir at Jimada compound, the family compound of Alhaji Jimada Patigi. The Tafsir started in the house of Alhaji Jibril Taka Pategi about whom we have discussed above. At the instance of Alhaji Jimada Pategi, the Tafsir was shifted outdoor; it was then shifted to a mosque at Ita Aodu before it was finally moved to Jimada Compound near Kutigifu in Okesuna Area. The first Mufassir was Mallam Muhammed Tahiru, later a justice and eventually the Chief Imam of Pategi. He was succeeded by Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Onileke of Onileke compound.⁶³ The present Mufasir of Jimada mosque is Sheikh Muhamad Ndasunnah Onileke, who was appointed to the position on 20th May, 2015. In fact, over the years, the Jimada mosque Tafsir has become the affairs of all Nupe families, that falls under the category of later Nupe settlers in Ilorin. Even, the Arowasi family of Kutigifu, who are not under this category are always supportive of the activities surrounding the Tafsir, and they always have a say on who becomes the next Mufassir. The Tafsir always come up between 4 0'clock in the afternoon and 6pm during the month of Ramadan. The tafsir always end on 26th day of Ramadan and it is always a big event. In fact, it has become a meeting point for long lost friends, among the Nupe people of Ilorin. The Ilorin Nupe people in diaspora and those at home in Ilorin (The Nupes under this category) always look forward to this day. Friends and families always meet at the Jimada mosque on every 26th day of Ramadan to witness the last day of Tafsir. All prominent Nupe people in Ilorin are

active participants⁶⁴. It is however important to note here that the prominence of the Ramadan tafsir attracted some important positions. The positions are apart from that of Mufassir, the exegete who translate and explains verses of the Holy Quran. There are (i) Head of Tafsir (ii) Ajanasi and (iii) Arowasi. Whoever is the chief Imam of Arowasi compound of Kutigifu always play important roles in the Ramadan tafsir. For instance, the current Imam of Arowasi compound, Alhaji Armiyau Kutigifu is the third Ajanasi of Jimada Mosque Tafsir. The same thing with Onileke compound. The third Imam of Onileke mosque, Sheikh Muhammad Ndasunna Onileke was the second Mufassir of Jimada mosque⁶⁵. The third Mufassir late Imam Sheikh Ahamad Ibrahim Onileke, and the current (5th) Mufassir Sheikh Zakariyah Ibrahim Ndasunna Onileke are from Onileke family. The second Arowasi of the Jimada mosque tafsir is Sheikh Shuiab Bokanni, one of the sons of Mallam Ishaq Bokanni, a popular scholar in his lifetime, whose house is near Ile Onisana in Okesuna. The current head of the family is Alhaji Issa Bokanni. They belong to the family of late settlers. As regards the tafsir headships, the first head of the tafsir was, of course, the late Alhaji Jimada Pategi. He was succeeded by Alhaji Jibril Taka Pategi from whose house the tafsir began. Alhaji Muhammad Shinaba Koro is the current head of Jimada mosque Tafsir. Alhaji Muhammad Shinaba Koro, from Koro town of Pategi Local Government, was a one time permanent secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and National Resources in Kwara State. He was head of service/SSG to the Kwara State Military Government in the late 1990s. He lives at his CocaCola road residence in Ilorin⁶⁶.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the Nupe people were part and parcel of those people that settled in Ilorin in its formative years, and as such, they are important components of Ilorin town as any other people of, either Yoruba, Fulani or Hausa background. Even though they always identify with people of Nupe origin in whatever they are doing, their sons now marry from outside the Nupe families, just as people of other ancestry in Ilorin marry their daughters. Above all, they are recognized as authentic Ilorin indigenes without any reservation. In fact, the existence of the Nupe people that are dubbed, "Later Nupe Settlers" in

Ilorin are incorporated into this paper to emphasize the fact that the Nupe families that came to Ilorin in the 19th century are Ilorin indigenes and Yoruba speaking. Only a handful of family members of those of the earlier settlers can speak Nupe language. In the case of the later Nupe settlers, they are bilinguals as they speak both Yoruba and Nupe languages fluently. In fact, most family members of the later Nupe arrivals speak Yoruba with Nupe accent. This is not so with the families of the nine "Akatas" in Ilorin, most of whom barely speak Nupe language at all.

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