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MIGRANT SETTLERS IN ILORIN: A HISTORY OF THE HAUSA COMMUNITY IN ZANGO

Saliu Danlad Yusuf

Abstract

Hausa people are one of earliest inhabitants of Ilorin and they had been residing in their quarters, in the area known as Gambari before the establishment of emirate system of administration in Ilorin in 1823. They had settled there since around the beginning of 19th century. Apart from the Hausas, other ethnic groups from the northern part of the country like Kanuri, Nupe and Baruba were an integral part of the community. With time, Yoruba language became their mother tongue and their descendants still live in Gambari area today as indigenes of the town. Another wave of Hausa migrants came to Ilorin and settled in such places as Ojagboro, Pake and Okesuna, all in Gambari area around the turn of the 20th century. Among them were traders, artisans and Mallamai (Muslim Clerics). In the late 1950s, they had to move their settlement to Kulende when Zango (cattle market) was moved there. The circumstances surrounding their movement to the new location, their economic activities in the town as well as the nature of their interaction among themselves and with the host community are the focus of this study. Both primary and secondary sources are employed in this research work.

Introduction

Hausa is the name by which the people of the Hausa ethnic group call themselves, according to Adamu. Although different peoples had different local names for them, this is also the name by which they are called by many other peoples.¹ These people inhabit the north-western and north-central parts of Nigeria. The people spread further west and north into the Republic of Niger up to the edges of Sahara desert. Hausa land is marked by wide plains occasionally broken by low hills.² As regards the migration of the Hausas to Yoruba land which included Ilorin, we have to note here that the Yoruba and Hausa kingdoms seemed to exist in isolation up to the period of the outbreak of the Sokoto Jihad in terms of politics and diplomacy, yet this is not true of commerce and religion, as Adamu observed.³

However, the geographical locations of Hausa land and Yoruba land provided a sufficient basis for the development of commerce between these two distinct peoples. In this regard, Hausa land continuously received various valuable commodities that originated in Asia and the Middle East from the north due to its location at the end of one of the trans-Saharan trade routes. The Hausa traders re-exported such commodities to the south especially the Yoruba land. The Yoruba too, made various European goods that were of interest available to the Hausa as the former controlled a few major ports on the coast from which

such goods were obtained.⁴ Commerce, which we have just noted, and also the propagation of Islam, which operated *pari passu* in the history of the external relations of the Hausa people was to provide the main links between them and the Yoruba. On account of this fact, the relations were always at the private level only, according to Adamu.⁵ However, before the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were many Hausa slaves in various homes in Yoruba land and a good number of these slaves constituted the Jama'a army that came to the aid of Kakanfo Afonja in the secession of Ilorin from the Old Oyo empire. It is also very likely that some of these Hausa slaves fought in support of their masters during the Yoruba warfare of nineteenth century, as Albert opines.⁶

At this juncture, it is apposite to state that the migration of the Hausa to Ilorin in the 19th century was greatly aided by the town's strategic location in terms of commerce. Thus, granted the fact that the largest single commercial zone in pre-colonial Nigeria lay in the north, it should not be surprising that Ilorin profited immensely by being closely linked with this zone, especially from the time of Sheikh al-Salih popularly known as Alimi. Again, this commercial zone was the most extensive and the best ordered, besides the fact that it was the richest capital market in the 19th century. Thus, due to the town's geography and political ties, the caravan leaders from the north did not have to proceed further when they reached Ilorin.⁷ As regards the time the Hausa people started settling down in Ilorin, Danmole is of the opinion that Ilorin and her surroundings had attracted a large number of Hausa people, both free men and slaves, before the crisis that led to the fall of the old Oyo Empire. Most of these Hausa were employed as barbers, cattle rearers and rope makers, according to Johnson as cited by Danmole.⁸ And above all, it would be hard not to agree with Tijani that the main factor responsible for the migration of Hausa people into Yoruba land in the pre-colonial period was essentially trade and commerce.⁹

The Early Hausa Settlers in Ilorin

The earliest Hausa settlers in Ilorin were among the first ethnic groups to settle in the town, making their primary quarters, Gambari, one of the four principal communities into which the town is divided since the time of the first Emir, Abdulsalam. This is why Lloyd is of the opinion that "the present day political structure of Ilorin is a curious blend of Fulani and Yoruba concept of government". Thus, according to this scholar, the first Emir created four *Balogun* as war leaders: Fulani to represent the Fulani element in the town, Gambari to represent the Hausa; Alanamu and Ajikobi to represent the Yoruba with each *Balogun* to be in charge of that quarter of the town mainly populated by their tribal groups.¹⁰ It is however important for us to note here that the

existence of the Hausa or Gambari community under a Sarkin Gambari predated the arrival of Alimi al-Salih and his group of Hausa slaves in Ilorin as opined by Saliu.¹¹ To understand how strong the Hausa or Gambari community was, the power tussle after the death of Sheikh al-Salih is a case in point. In the aftermath of Sheikh al-Salih's death, Solagberu objected to Abdulsalami's assumption of leadership of Ilorin which eventually led to the death of the former. Following the death of Solagberu, Abdulsalami was stiffly opposed by Bako, the then *Sarkin Gambari* who himself nursed the ambition of becoming *Sarkin Ilorin*. Bako himself eventually lost out in this power tussle.¹² But the earliest Hausa community in Ilorin was not confined to the Gambari quarters only. For example, Ile Alikinla and Ile Jawondo at Ita Ogunbo, Ile Alfa Ajongolo, Ile Shiru at Ode Alfa Nda, Ile Sabaani at Ode Alausa and Idi Orombo are all Hausa by ancestry.¹³ With the foregoing, it is obvious that the earliest Hausa settlers in Ilorin, as members of the three major ethnic groups of the town are among the original ethnic groups, the indigenes, of the town. The other two being the Yoruba and Fulani. Although this is not to the exclusion of the other ethnic groups that are also aborigines of the town, especially in Gambari area that is preponderantly a mixed grill of Nupe, Baruba, Kemberi and Kanuri besides Hausa.¹⁴ Over the years all these ethnic groups surrendered their individual mother tongues and became assimilated. This is perhaps the reason why Jimoh asserts that "the consequent submergence of all other languages into Yoruba gives an illusory impression of monolithic culture by obscuring the cultural pluralism inherent in the emirate particularly in Ilorin where a substantial proportion of the indigenous population is anthropologically non-Yoruba".¹⁵ Thus, this category of Hausa had been in Ilorin before the Emirate political system was instituted in 1823. Their descendants are still based in the Gambari quarters in places like Ojagboro, Okesuna and Gambari itself. They are the first of the three categories of Hausas in Ilorin, as they are among the original indigenes. They have no relatives anywhere other than Ilorin and Yoruba was their mother tongue, their lingua franca.¹⁶

Meanwhile, apart from the category of Hausa discussed above, there were Hausa migrants whose coming to Ilorin started around the end of nineteenth century. These are the second category of Hausa in Ilorin. Whereas these Hausas and their descendants maintained and still maintain their Hausa identity, the category first discussed above had no any other mother tongue other than Yoruba language, just like the other component ethnic stocks of the town. When this second group of Hausa migrants started coming to Ilorin between the end of nineteenth century and early twentieth century, their principal aim was to trade like the Hausas that had come to trade in the town before them early in the 19th century and not really to settle¹⁷. These Hausa traders engaged in grains

business in such produce like beans, groundnut, millet and maize as well as ambulatory merchandise like horses, cattle, sheep and goats. They also engaged in avian commodities like chicks and ostrich which the Hausa call *jimina*.¹⁸ Ilorin was the natural choice for most of these Hausa traders because of its strategic position as the gateway to the Yoruba land. Again, with Ilorin natives that were of Hausa extraction in Gambari area, it was easy to transact business with these Hausa merchants.¹⁹ Thus, Gambari quarters (Gambari Ojagboro, Pake and Okesuna) was the natural choice for these settlers due to the strong factor of the indigenes of the town that were of northern extraction with their conspicuous facial tribal marks.²⁰ After settling down in the town, these Hausa immigrants were engaged in various economic activities. Among them were prominent cattle traders like Alhaji Ali Mumuni and Baba Lamari; traditional Hausa barbers like Mallam Isiaku Wanzami; Mallam Audu, the traditional Hausa shoe maker; Mallam Mahmuda, the Quranic teacher and Mallam Hamza *Maibugu*, the launder man as his name indicates. Almost all of these men migrated from Kano, except for a few of them who came from some other Hausa towns, like Mallam Audu the shoe maker who migrated from Jega.²¹ The descendants of these migrants were later known by the later Hausa migrants to the town as the *yankaka gida*, to indicate that they were born in Ilorin.²²

Establishment of Zango as a Migrants' Settlement in Ilorin

Even though, Ilorin is a Yoruba-speaking town, it presents a totally different scenario when it comes to inter-group relations between the natives and migrants of different ethnic backgrounds, especially the Hausas. Thus, while Zango was founded as a Hausa settlement in Ilorin, *Sabon Gari*, or rather, *Sabo* were founded as Hausa settlements in the major Yoruba towns. Sabon Gari means new town in Hausa language. The idea of settling the Hausa migrants in the outskirts of the town came much later in Ilorin than at Ibadan, or Ogbomoso. For instance, whereas the first *Sabon gari* was established in Ibadan in 1916,²³ the first attempt to move the Hausa migrants from Ilorin city centre to the outskirts of the town was in 1959.²⁴ Thus, as observed by Albert, *Sabon garuwa* (plural of *sabongari*), a special kind of migrant settlement, were established for Hausa immigrants in Yoruba communities, due to their unique cultural and religious lifestyles.²⁵ Even though the first sabo was established in Ibadan, nay the whole of Yoruba land, in 1916, the first step towards a separate settlement for the Hausas in Ibadan was taken on 30th January, 1899, when a request was forwarded by the Resident to the Bale that a separate quarter should be built for the Hausa people.²⁶ When Sabo was eventually set up within the walls of Ibadan in 1916, it was established on a land donated to the Hausa migrants by Bale Irefin who reigned between 1912 and 1914.²⁷ The emergence of Sabo or Hausa

quarters in Ogbomoso also has its own story. Before the 20th century, migrants from Hausaland settled among the indigenes in Ogbomoso in their quarters, especially in Isale Afon, Taraa and Oja-Jagun quarters. These Hausa migrants settled as tenants with Yoruba landlords. Many of these landlords doubled as their trade partners.²⁸ In response to the Hausa migrants request for their own farm lands in 1890, Soun Laoye, the then Ogbomoso monarch (known then as Baale) allocated a farm land that later developed into Gambari town to them in 1898. With time, this farm land developed into a fully fledged Hausa community.²⁹ Ilorin's case was somehow different in that the decision to relocate the Hausas to a location outside the town came much later in the 20th century.

Zango is an Hausa word that translates to an encampment or a trade entrepot. In the precolonial period, the word 'zango' was used to describe the trading station of the Hausa trans-saharan traders. This is also the term that is used for the primary settlement of the Hausa people in Diaspora, either as a transit camp or settlement.³⁰ Thus, Zango was an institution for either the continued voyage of a Hausa traveler or his settlement.³¹ As a matter of fact, Zango existed in the other parts of West Africa as Hausa settlements. Thus, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, not less than 44 *zangwanni* (pl) were founded by the Hausa man between the western edge of Hausa land and the land of Ashanti alone, according to Abubakar. Again, there were about 30 *zangwanni* between Salga (in Ashanti) and Kumasi. The most notable zango established by the Hausa man in the southern Nigeria is Agege in Lagos. Also, there have been Zango Cotonou in the present day Benin Republic and Zango Lome in Togo. Zango Takoradi and Zango Cape Coast were established in the coastal region of the then Gold Coast (now Ghana). However, some of the most prominent and prosperous *zangwanni* the Hausa man founded between the 17th and 18th centuries were those in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Salga (in the land of Ashanti) and Ankara (Accra), both in Ghana and that of Abidjan (in Cote d'Ivoire).³²

But why was Zango set up as an Hausa settlement in Ilorin and Sabo established in the other major Yoruba towns? Let us begin by stating here that zango in Ilorin served the same purpose sabo settlements served in the other major Yoruba towns. As sabo settlements were founded for the Hausa migrant settlers in Ibadan, Ogbomoso and other major Yoruba towns, so was zango established for the Hausa migrant community in Ilorin. Sabo or Sabon gari in both the northern and southern parts of the country were segregated settlements. For instance, whereas Sabon gari established in Ibadan was for the Hausas, studies show that natives were part of populations inhabiting the quarters in northern

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Nigeria. In this vein, Bako opines that "several studies have shown that people of Northern Nigerian origin were amongst the residents in Sabo Gari Kano". He argues that the situation is more or less the same in the *Sabon garuwa* in Sokoto and Zaria where there were Hausa and Fulani elements apart from the Yoruba, Nupe and peoples of other ethnic groups from the beginning.³³ As a matter of fact, the colonial government founded a sabo community in Ilorin, although not as a segregated community. This is because the circumstances surrounding its establishment was in sharp contrast to those of the other sabo quarters in the other Yoruba towns. Ilorin's case was different because it was a Yoruba-speaking town in Northern Nigeria (at least administratively).³⁴ Thus, when sabo was established in Ilorin in 1935, it was a small community. At the opening, a potpourri of ethnic nationalities were residing in Sabo, Ilorin. They were from Asaba, Ijebu, Ijesha and Oyo. The Sabo area was a mile from the railway station and post office, around a mile to the city centre then.³⁵

Zango was not initially meant for Hausa settlement in Ilorin as it was only meant to serve as cattle and livestock market at its beginning. As of now, the livestock market is in its fifth site in the town. The fourth site (at Kulende) that was meant for cattle market was later allocated as Hausa migrant settlement as it was in the outskirt of the town and it is known as Zango todate. So the site served the dual purpose of cattle and livestock market as well as Hausa migrant settlement. The first zango (cattle market) was established in Oke magaji (known then as *Ali Yahra*) in Gambari area. The market was in Oke Magaji between 1922 and 1925 before it was shifted to the present day Ogba Karanta which is in Pake area, not far from Ipata market. Before this market shifted to Ogba Karanta, the market had become so big that it spilled over to Isale Oloko, a place not far from Oke Magaji. The two places are in the vicinity of Isale Kannike. When the British colonial government took possession of Ogba Karanta, the market was shifted to a nearby site that was to be later known as Ipata market. This movement took place around 1930.³⁶ Ipata market started as a cattle market before it became market for sheep and goats and sheep in 1974. The first goat market in Ilorin was in Oja Oba, also known as the Emir's Market before it was moved to Ipata. The movement came about due to the decision to build a central mosque in the market.³⁷

However, when zango or rather the cattle market was moved from Ipata to Kulende and the Hausas in Ilorin were asked to move to that station in the late 50's, the Hausas that were already residing among the local people in Gambari/Pake area resisted. These Hausas resided mostly in Pake, Ile Lamari, Okesuna, Ojagboro and Gambari. They protested vehemently against this call, arguing that Kulende was too far from the city centre. This matter generated so

much controversy to the extent that the late Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello had to intervene, according to one of the witnesses. Though another source claimed that it was the Hausas in Gambari/Ojagboro axis who met and resolved to move to the new zango, rather than being forced to move. The period of the movement, according to a source, was four months before the death of the then Emir, Mallam Abdulkadir in 1959.³⁸ The source that argued that the movement was as a result of collective decision maintained that prominent Hausas in Gambari area met and decided to move. Some of these people were Alhaji Jika of Ita Ajia, Baba Lamari, Mallam Najagoro, Alhaji Inuwa Mai Amalanke, Alhaji Audu Bakabe, Sarkin Pawa Tudun Kaya, Saliu Sarkin Pawa Mallam Hamza Mabugi and others. Kulende where zango -the Hausa settlement- is located in Ilorin is along old Jebba Road. It is bounded to the north by Oyun River, in the south by the federal road, in the west by the railway line and to the east by River Bula. Kulende was made up of nine district areas in its early years. These were Ile Tuntun, Ga-Oke, Ga-Agbo, Ajelanwa, Meduku, Alagbon and the areas now known as Kulende Estate and Sango (Zango).³⁹ Whereas the cattle and livestock market were on one side of the federal road, the residential area of the Hausas is in the other. When the Hausa were asked to move to the then new zango location in Kulende, the first people to move from the Gambari quarters were Sule Egbaji (though Hausa, he was widely known with this Yoruba alias), Auta Maituwo, Mallam Ilori, Alhaji Muntari and Mallam Bala Mukadami.⁴⁰

However, Adamu's observation that "it was mainly through voluntary settlement of individual migrants that the communities of Hausa immigrants (called zango) grew up, consisting as they did, of people with hardly any blood relationship and united only by two factors, their common desire to better themselves through their own possessions and their membership of one cultural Hausa ethnic group"⁴¹ is also true of Ilorin. Thus, residential area in Zango, Ilorin was almost entirely settled by the Hausa, save for the occasional Yoruba and Nupe that are only found in pockets in the fringes of the settlement.⁴² It should however be remarked here that Zango in Kulende Ilorin no longer have the influence it once possessed as the primary base of the Hausas in Ilorin and its environs. This is as a result of the opening up of another route from the western to the northern part of the country. With most of the heavy duty trucks passing through the new Jebba Road (Olooru/Bode Saadu), Zango in Ilorin is no longer the principal base of the trucks plying their trades between the northern and western part of the country.⁴³

Thus, with truck drivers abandoning the old Jebba Road where Zango in Ilorin is situated, another trailer park spontaneously rose in Olooru. Just after Oloru is

a village called Kanbi. This closeness of these two villages makes the latter to be alternately called Kanbi-Oloru. The Kanbi people welcomed the Hausa with open arms and ever since, with the trailer park in place, the Hausa community had been growing and waxing strong. So, the implication of the development of another Hausa settlement in a village not very far from the city centre was that what Kanbi took away from Zango Ilorin was more than the trailer park. This was because many Hausas had left Zango to conduct their businesses in Kanbi. As some settled permanently in Kanbi, there were some Hausas who shuttled between Ojagboro and Zango from Ilorin on one hand and Kanbi on the other hand for various business transactions. And this is why it was always easy to get Kanbi-bound buses from Ojagboro and Zango in Ilorin. The Hausas in Zango were also moving again to Akoyo in Asa local government area of Kwara State. Though in Kwara State, (just four miles from Ilorin International Airport) Akoyo is not far from Ogbomosho, another Diaspora Hausa base, in Oyo State.⁴⁴

Leadership of the Hausa Community of Zango Ilorin

The first Zango leader among the Hausas at the beginning was Mallam Aminu Ibrahim Zaria who was then designated 'Supervisor' during the colonial period in Ilorin.⁴⁵ It is however interesting to note here that unlike what obtained in the other zangos in Nigeria, nay West Africa, the successive *Sarakunan Zango* were not from among the Hausas but from among the natives. This was because the title only denotes 'the head of the cattle market'. Thus, the first Sarkin Zango in Ilorin was Mallam Abubakar Ahmadi who founded a village not far from Oyun at the outskirts of the town. The village was named after him. He is the forefather of the Alangua family in Ojagboro area and his quarters is still known today as Ode Ahmadi (Ahmadi's open field). Mallam Ahmadi was appointed as the Sarkin Zango as well as *Alangua* (Quarter's Sub-head) by the colonial government during the time of Emir Suleiman who reigned between 1896 and 1916. As the Alangua, he was to help the colonial government collect tax from the people. As the Sarkin Zango, he was to oversee the affairs of cattle merchants and their hosts in the town. He was succeeded in this dual roles by his descendants. However, the fourth Alangua, Mallam Issa was not honoured with the Sarkin Zango title as the Kannike people of Gambari quarters contested for it. Their argument was that two titles should not be concentrated in the hand of one man or family. Thus, Mallam Yusuf, a friend of the then Emir of Ilorin, Mallam AbdulKadri (1919-1959) was the first person to be given the title of Sarkin Zango from Isale Kannike. He is on record as being the first Ilorin native to sell cattle in the town. Since then, the title of Sarkin Zango has been held by his family.⁴⁶ Even though the Hausa settlers had been heavily involved in cattle trade in Ilorin right from the beginning of 20th century, the natives were holding

the position of Sarkin Zango because they were controlling the trade in the town.⁴⁷

The first head of the Hausa community in Ilorin, known with the title of *Sarkin Hausawa* was Alhaji Ali Mumuni a cattle trader who came from Kano and was based in Pake. Pake is the area where Ipata is located. He was turbaned the first Sarkin Hausawa by the then Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Sulu Gambari not long after they were moved to Kulende. He was succeeded by Alhaji Audu Bakabe who was also turbaned by Alhaji Sulu Gambari on 9th March, 1980. Alhaji Bakabe came to Ilorin from Argungu. He was involved in the dried meat and dried fish business. Before his own movement to Zango, he was based in Oketa, an area in Centre Igboro. With his death on 22nd August 2001, there was power vacuum in the leadership of Hausa community in the town for some twelve years. Following Alhaji Bakabe's death, many contenders to the position emerged. The frontline contestants were Alhaji Ado, the surviving eldest son of the first Sarkin Hausawa, Alhaji Ali Mumuni; Alhaji Umaru Bakabe, the son of the elder sister of Alhaji Audu Bakabe, the immediate past Sarkin Hausawa and Alhaji Rabo the then *Magajin Aska* (the Chief Barber).⁴⁸ This Chief Barber died early in 2020 and was succeeded later in the year by Muhammad Bakura whose father was himself the first *Magajin Aska*. In fact, this struggle for Sarkin Hausawa position pitched the Zango camp against the town camp. For instance, whereas Alhaji Umaru Bakabe, nephew of the immediate past Sarkin Hausawa, was from the Zango camp, the heavy weight contestant from the town camp was Alhaji Ado, the son of the first Sarkin Hausawa already referred to above.⁴⁹

Now, it should be made clear that when Hausas were asked to move to Zango, some chose to stay back. One of the families that opted to stay back was that of the first Sarkin Hausawa whose son is referred to above. The family was, and is still, based in Pake. The family of the second Sarkin Hausawa was also initially based in town at Oketa, before later moving to Zango. As at the time there was the need to appoint another Hausa head, the newly settled Hausa migrants had outnumbered the original Hausa settlers in Zango and those in Gambari/Ojagboro axis. Thus, the Zango camp referred to the town based Hausas as *yan kasa* or pejoratively as *yan Kaka Gida*, the two denoting 'native Hausas', as against the first generation Hausas who migrated to Zango in Ilorin. Truly, most of the remaining town based Hausas (from Gambari/Pake) in Ilorin were born in the town, and some of these were already in their sixties and seventies. The struggle to fill this power vacuum was so intense and the contestants were to only temporarily sheath their swords due to the shocking news from the palace that there was no need for Sarkin Hausawa in Ilorin as the town was part of northern Nigeria. The voice from the palace, according to a

source, said A *Shugaba* would be appointed when the time came for the appointment of the head of the Hausa community instead of a *sarki*. The decision was suspected to be taken due to the partisan politics being played in the state by some contestants. In this vein, it was suspected by the Gambari/Ojagboro/Pake Hausas that Alhaji Umaru Bakabe wanted to use the connection of his uncle, the immediate past Sarkin Hausawa to influence the then Kwara State Executive Governor Alhaji Muhammed Lawal to use his power to effect his appointment by the Emir. It was an open secret that the immediate past Sarkin Hausawa was close to the Governor.⁵⁰ The matter was eventually brought to a close with the appointment of Alhaji Abubakar, as the new Sarkin Hausawa in 2013. Prior to his appointment, he was the Chairman of cattle dealers in Kwara State. His father who was from Sokoto was also a cattle trader.⁵¹

Economic Activities and Social Relations of Zango Hausa in Ilorin

The Hausas that initially settled in Zango, Kulende Ilorin were traders. Because the place was an extension of their enclaves in Gambari/Ojagboro/Pake, they also traded in cattle, grains, dried meat dried fish and other commodities associated with the Hausa traders especially, food items. The cattle trade in Zango was a highly profitable business at the initial stage due to the fact that the cattle market was not meant for Ilorin consumers alone but some other Yoruba towns.⁵² Whereas the natives were the commission agents responsible for helping the Hausas sell their cows, the Zango Hausas provided lodging for the Hausa and Fulani cow merchants. This is in contrast with Ibadan where the Yoruba commission agents and landlords were edged out of the control of the trade between the Hausa and Yoruba people the moment their cattle market (zango) moved to Sabo. Prior to this movement, the native Yorubas performed these dual roles in Ibadan.⁵³ Right from the time the zango was in Ipata Ilorin, the native Yorubas had been serving as commission agents and landlords. The fact that Hausas also served as landlords didn't stop the natives from performing this role as well when the cattle market (zango) moved to Kulende. In the same vein, some Hausas also served as commission agents for the Hausa and Fulani cattle traders.⁵⁴

Apart from the fact that the Zango Hausas provided lodging and served as commission agents to the Hausa and Fulani cattle traders, they themselves were cattle traders. For instance, Alhaji Ali Mumini, the first Sarkin Hausawa was himself a cattle trader and partook fully in the cattle trade when zango was in Ipata and when it moved to Kulende, even though, he stayed in Pake to the time of his death. Alhaji Muntari, son of Baba Lamari -one of the Hausa elders in Ojagboro area before they moved to Kulende- was also a cattle trader, just like

his father. Like Alhaji Mumini, he also provided lodging and collected commissions on the cows sold for the Hausa and Fulani traders. There were some others like that, who apart from being cattle merchants, also provided lodging and collected commissions.⁵⁵ At this juncture, it is important to shed light on this concept of lodging and commission collection in Ilorin cattle trade. According to Banwo, one of the features of Ilorin economy during the 19th century was the existence of a class of middle men and land lords known respectively as *Dilalai* and *Maigida*. This is as a result of the trans-national trading network in existence then. Thus, whereas the Maigida provided the trader with food and accommodation, the Dilalai served as trade agents or brokers to the long distant merchants that traded in Ilorin. The Dilalai mostly acted as the Maigida and he was given a commission at the end of every successful trade transaction.⁵⁶ The Ilorin natives of Gambari, and Ojagboro quarters supplied these Dilalai and Maigidas and the practice persists to date. Here, Maigidas still exist, performing the dual roles of Maigida (land lord) as well as Dilalai (middle) to the Hausa traders from the north that deal in cattle, goat, sheep, beans and other grains. The commission so collected is known as *laada*.⁵⁷ Laada or lada, as defined by Albert, is a broker's commission "collected by a second or third party in a commercial transaction".⁵⁸

At this juncture, it is important to stress that the Zango in Kulende Ilorin had and still has all the features found in the other Hausa settlements in Yoruba speaking towns and cities in Nigeria and even beyond. Thus, when zango was moved to Kulende, it became a meeting point for the traders and merchants moving from the northern part to the southern part of the country. This was so as Kulende became a very important Hausa motor park after becoming the location of new zango. It became a place where long distance trucks regularly called, either to offload merchandise or to rest before continuing on their journey.⁵⁹ What really gave Zango an edge as a motor park was its position around the high way between the northern and southern part of the country, hence the road was then known as Jebba Road as already observed. The road was to be later known as the old Jebba Road with the opening of the new Jebba Road that passed through Oloru/Bode Saadu in the 80's. With the opening, the old Jebba Road, and in effect Zango, lost its attractiveness for travelers between the western and northern parts of the country. But prior to the opening of Oloru/Bode Saadu route, Zango in Kulende was a beehive of activities for the Hausas transiting between the Hausa and Yoruba lands. As a result of this, Hausas of various backgrounds settled either permanently or temporarily in Zango. And of course, the resident Hausas in Zango and those in transit made the economic activities in that area vibrant.⁶⁰

The most prominent of Zango Hausas were the cattle traders. This should not be surprising as the most prominent of early migrants in town before Hausas' movement to Zango were themselves cattle traders. The names of Alhaji Ali Mumini and Baba Lamari readily come to mind in this regard. Among the later settlers, cattle merchants from Sokoto like Alhaji Abubakar Maishanu (the current Sarkin Hausawa), Alhaji Modibo, Alhaji Yusuf Maijindadikara are all prominent residents of Zango, including Alhaji Lamido, a Fulani man from Adamawa. It should however be noted here that this cattle business has not been the exclusive preserve of the Hausa merchants. For instance, there were sons of the soil especially those who were based in Gambari/Ojagboro axis who had been part and parcel of cattle trade whether as land lord or trader or both. Prominent among them were Alhaji Toyin Baruba, Alhaji Maigidansanma, Alhaji Saidu Kannike, Alhaji Yahu Isale Oloko, Mallam Saliman and Sarkin Zango Kankani.⁶¹ Even those with Hausa names among these personages were indigenes as it was common to have Hausa nomenclature or alias in Gambari/Ojagboro area.

Apart from the early cattle traders among Ilorin natives, some young men from the same Gambari/Ojagboro axis also joined the fray with the establishment of *Kara* (Cattle market) in Bode Saadu Kwara State and the Niger State section of Jebba. The two were established in the 80's, though the former was the first to come into existence. With the existence of these cattle markets, the young indigenous cattle traders were able to participate as traders rather than mere middle men in the cattle business that centered then at Zango. Apart from the cattle traders that were based in Zango, there were some Hausa traders that maintained their residence at Zango but traded in the town. A very important segment of these traders was the goat and sheep traders among the Hausas who previously traded in Emir's market before moving to Ipata in the town to trade. Also among those who moved from the emir's market were the grain traders, especially those who dealt in beans. Other traders dealt in corn, guinea corn, *jero* and *mewa*.⁶² These Hausa traders as well as those who were involved in dried meat and dried fish trade maintained residence in Zango. Among them were those who maintained permanent residence there and those who only stayed there for the duration of their business in Ilorin. Yet there was the category that stayed with their landlords that were mostly based in Gambari/Ojagboro axis. Apart from those Zango Hausas that traded in commodities, there were those who performed essential services, especially within the Hausa community. These were the services they had been performing in the town among themselves before their movement to Zango. Thus, in Zango, there were *Wanzamai* (traditional Hausa barbers), *Mallamai* (Quranic teachers) like Mallam Ilori who was among the first Hausas to move from

Gambari/Ojagboro. The immediate past *Magajin Aska*, Alhaji Rabo was Gambari based, even though he also had his own property in Zango.⁶³

Women too were not left out of the economic activities of Zango based Hausa settlers, especially in the food business. For instance, *waina* (cake made of corn with vegetable soup), a popular Hausa delicacy known to the local Yoruba people as *masa olobe*, was patronized, not only by the Hausa people, but also by the Yorubas. Even in Gambari/Ojagboro the Hausa women that sold *waina* and *tuwo* (morsel food also made of corn, with soup) were local celebrities, not only among the Hausas but the local Yoruba people. Two of the most popular of these women were Auta *Maituwo*, Asmawu *Maituwo* and Marka *Maimasa*. Whereas the first two sold *tuwo*, Marka initially sold only *masa* but later added *tuwo*.⁶⁴ This *masa* and *tuwo* business also boomed in Zango as the sellers were patronized by both the permanent residents and the traders that put up in Zango throughout the duration of their business trip in Ilorin. With the shifting of the cattle market to Okeose in 2010, Zango ceased to be a cattle market, remaining just the residential quarters of the Hausas in Ilorin. The decision to move the market was as a result of the fact that Zango in Kulende area that was once in the outskirts of the town had now been swallowed up by the metropolis. Hence the decision to shift the market to Okeose, some few miles from the city centre.⁶⁵

However, it is important to point out that the town Hausas and the Zango Hausas shared common leadership. For instance, apart from the head (*Sarkin Hausawa*) that they had in common, they also had *Sarkin Aska* (Chief Barber), *Sarkin Pawa* (Chief Butcher) and *Imam* (Leader of Muslim prayer/Religious Leader). This is still the situation today. Although, the Zango Hausas still refer to their Gambari compatriots as *Yan Kasa* (natives) at their convenience.

In terms of party politics, both the Gambari and Zango Hausas had been active participants in the Kwara State politics. As a matter of fact, in the First Republic, both the Gambari and Zango Hausas were active in politics. For instance, Alhaji Audu Bakabe who was to later become *Sarkin Hausawa* and Alhaji Mai Amalanke of Okesuna area were prominent members of NPC. This is understandable due to their ethnic affinity with the Northern Nigeria.⁶⁶ But it was a different case in Ibadan during the same period. For instance, in Ibadan, the Hausas in Sabo chose to belong to the Action Group within which they formed a pressure group in order to protect the Hausa migrants' interest in Sabo.⁶⁷ Again, in the Second Republic, Alhaji Audu Bakabe, Alhaji Mai Amalanke and some others in Ilorin were active NPN members. Due to their activeness and influence in the Hausa community, they constituted their own

group in the party with their own powerful voting bloc. As a group, they were recognized by the then Godfather of Kwara politics, the late Dr Olusola Saraki. The Hausas were not less active in the Third Republic and had been active since the country returned to the civil rule in 1999. The late Alhaji Bala Sakatare of Okesuna area and Alhaji Musa Lamari were also recognized as strong party people in their own rights. Prior to his death in 2001, Alhaji Bakabe was known to be a strong supporter of Alhaji Muhammed Lawal, the then Executive Governor of Kwara State. Due to the activeness of the Hausas in the state politics, Mallam Suleiman Tahiru, son of a prominent Hausa politician in the Hausa community was appointed as a Special Adviser. This was unprecedented in the history of Kwara State politics.⁶⁸

Summary and Conclusion

In this paper attempt has been made to shed light on the founding of Zango as the major Hausa settlement in Ilorin. The city itself, right from its early years had been a potpourri of Yoruba and some other ethnic groups from the northern part of the country, especially Hausa. Even though Sabo was established in the outskirts of the town for the late 19th century migrants like the Hausas in the other major Yoruba towns, they were not to be among the residents of the segregated quarters as it later proved to be the abode of the non-native Yoruba and some other ethnic groups. The Hausas were however asked to move to an outskirts of the town, Kulende in 1959 when Zango (cattle market) was moved to the place from Ipata. Unlike in the other Yoruba towns, Sarkin Zango was not appointed from among the Hausas but from the natives. The head of their community had been styled Sarkin Hausawa right from the beginning and this title was first held by town-based Hausa man. His successors were however Zango-based. Both the Zango and the Gambari/Ojagboro (town) Hausas had always seen, and still see, themselves as one, even though the former occasionally saw the latter as *yankasa* (natives) when they pursued separate interests.

The Hausa settlers in Ilorin had contributed tremendously to the economic development of the town. Right from the time they were only settled in Gambari/Ojagboro area, especially the cattle trade. Their economic activities were not restricted to cattle trade as they were also involved in other livestock business. The Hausas commercial interest was not restricted to just livestock as they were also involved in dried meat and dried fish and grain businesses especially beans. The town also depended on them for the supply of pepper, tomato and onion. All these traders, especially those shuttling between Ilorin and Hausa land, after conducting their businesses in various markets in the town in the day would return to their residences in Zango at night. The Hausa women

were not left out of these economic activities as the *tuwo* and *waina* sellers were prominent Hausa people in their own right. Even though the opening of Oloru/Bode Saadu route of Jebba road in the eighties made Zango to lose its pre-eminence as the ultimate Hausa settlement, the Hausa saw and still see it as their natural abode. The movement of the cattle market to Okeose did not affect it as the ultimate Hausa settlement in the town. Apart from the fact that the Hausa people, both in the town and Zango interacted well with the host community, they were active participants in the state politics. All the features of the Hausa community as discussed in this study are more or less the same, even in Ilorin of today.

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