

IBADAN HISTORY FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE BRITISH COLONIAL PERIOD

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- **INTRODUCTION**

The ‘Ibadan-Oyo Relations’ described in this paper takes a fresh and unprejudiced look at events as recorded by tradition, old documents and products of conventional studies by eminent scholars including written accounts of Ibadan and other Yoruba local historians. A good number of them witnessed some of the events, which they narrated and also collected firsthand information from those who participated in the events that they described.

Historically, Ibadan people had one time or the other settled at different places like other Yoruba “**community of ancient people**” after the founder had migrated from the cradle, Ile-Ife. It later became a war-camp and rose to the level of city-state, and then an empire in the nineteenth century. Its success in transforming Yoruba hereditary political institutions and adapting them to a new age free, just, and egalitarian society without a hereditary system of leadership during the same nineteenth century was remarkable.

Thus, the history of Ibadan could be generally divided into periods. The old settlement established by Lagelu which endured from about **1520A.D.** to **1824A.D.** it was followed by the transition period when Ibadan became a war camp, or era of civil wars and controlled by the allied armies of Ife, Ijebu, Oyo and Egba refugees between **1824-1832**. Next came the full control of Ibadan by the Oyo-Osun elements of Yoruba subgroups till today.

Benito Mussolini on October 21, 1935 opined that: “certainly there would be history without wars, but it would be a much different history than what we know. By and large it is war which has shaped the boundaries of today’s nations. Often it is war which over throws one ruler and puts another ruler into power, or unseats one form of

government and replaces it with another. The great empires of the past were built upon the successes of war. They fell when victory faded into defeat”

- **LAGELU ERA OF CIVIL WARS AND OYO IMPERIALISM**

Rev. Samuel Johnson in his book “The History of The Yorubas” described the Balogun as a contraction from ‘Iba-li-Ogun, that is, “The Lord in War”. In time of war and generally in the camp, the Balogun was also above all laws. The Baloguns Otun and Osi (right and left wings) were also the Otun and Osi of the town and of the army, they commanded respectively the right and left wings, and they ranked next to Balogun.

The princess and war-chiefs led by the Baloguns from Ile-Ife left the city to establish new towns and settlements where they became Oba or Bales. Ogedengbe was the Balogun, the military general for Ilesa, and later led the Ekiti-Parapo warlords. He later also became the Obanla of Ilesa. Sodeke was the military general for Egba people. He provided the necessary security throughout the migration of the Egba people to Abeokuta in **1830** from Ibadan.

According to Chief Dr. J.A. Ayorinde (1983), “*Lagelu was the first legendary traditional and crowned head of Ibadan who picked up the title of Olubadan*. This title was resuscitated as a result of gradual evolution in 1936 at the time of the reign of Olubadan Alesinloye who was first Bale from **1930-1936** before becoming Olubadan”

Oba Okunade Sijwade Olubuse II (1980-2015) stated in the Nigerian Tribune of Friday, 30 January, 2009 that Prince Adio Lagelu was a direct son of Luwo Gagida who founded Ibadan in **1410A.D.** However, Prince Adelegan (2009) in “IFE: The Sources of Yoruba Civilization” that Ibadan was founded by Lagelu in the **16th century**. Chief M.K.O. Adebayo (2015) stated that Lagelu was the grandson of Orunto (Obalufe) of Ife and his mother was the first daughter of Chief Obaloran one of the 16 chiefs of Ooni of Ife, who got married to Ooni Luwo Gbagida. In short, Lagelu was from Royal families of Ife and was entitled to a beaded crown.

Chief M.K.O. Adebayo went further that Lagelu and his men, shortly after founding Ibadan, took part in the war between the Tapas and Oyo that led to the desertion of Oyo-Ile. The capital of Oyo kingdom was deserted after the attack by Tapas during the reign of Alaafin Onigbogi (1530-1542) and not Alaafin Dada Ajuwon. Alaafin Onigbogi fled to Gbere, in his mother's homeland for refuge. Gbere is in Ibariba kingdom. (J.A. Atanda, 1980).

The desertion of Old Oyo capital led to many emigrants to Egba, Egbado, Ibolu, Oke-Ogun and Ibarapa areas. This was during the reign of Nupe king, Etsu Jibraila (see Iwe Itan Oyo by S.O. Ojo, Bada of Saki, p. 47 n.d.)

Also during the Egungun festival, the Alaafin of Oyo raised Yoruba army to attack the first settlement of Ibadan founded by Lagelu for revealing the secret of Egungun masquerade (the spirit of the dead). This was around (1698-1774) between the reigns of Alaafin Ojigi and Abiodun Adegolu. Alaafin Ojigi, who was warlike in disposition and his reign also attended by success. He waged wars against Borgu (Ibariba) and a section of Igbomina and Dahomeans and defeated them, Alaafin Gberu, Amuniwaye and Onisile did not achieve much until the reign of Basorun Gaha (1754-1774).

The period between c. 1754 and 1774 was the most distressing in Oyo history. It witnessed the constitutional upheaval of great magnitude in which Gaha raised five Alaafins to the throne, but with Cuming and subversion, killed four of them. The victims were Alaafin Labisi (1750), Alaafin Awobioju (1750), Alaafin Agboluaje (1760-1772) and Alaafin Majeogbe (1772-1773). Nemesis did not catch up with Gaha until 1775 during the reign of the fifth Alaafin, who outmaneuvered and outwitted him, that is Alaafin Abiodun Adegolu who reigned between (1774-1789).

Ibadan was forced to seek refuge on Eleyele Hills at Awotan after its destruction late in **17th century** when Oyo Empire was at its zenith before they finally settled at Oriyangi (now Oja'ba) while Ijaiye was not re-occupied by Kurunmi and other warlords

until after losing Ilorin to the Fulani Jihadist in the 19th century around the same time Ibadan was occupied aftermath of the Owu wars in the 1820s.

There are three prominent hills on the plateau of Awotan namely: **Igbo Oke'badan (Oke'badan forest), Oke Oso and Oke Odo Eleyele**. It was at the peak of Igbo Oke'badan that a masquerade leading an Egba invasion, according to Baale Awotan, (2003) who is a direct descendant of the legendary Lagelu, which attacked Ibadan on the hills in the **18th century** and the masquerade was eternally destroyed. Legend has it that Lagelu, was forbidden from setting eyes on any masquerade. From the valley where he stood, he commanded the masquerade leading Egba invasion to be swallowed inside the bowels of the mountain. When the invading forces saw what happened, they scampered in different directions for safety.

With the death of Alaafin Abiodun ended the universal and despotic rule of the Alaafins of Oyo in the Yoruba country (Johnson p. 187). He was the last of the kings that held different parts of the kingdom together in one universal sway and with him ended the tranquility and prosperity of the Yoruba country. The revolution ensued, leading to tribal independence, with the loss to Yoruba the Tapa and Bariba, and Dahomey provinces, and the Popos later on, which continued till the 19th century. In other words, with Abiodun ended the unity of the Yoruba country

The Egbas under **Lisabi of Itoku** (Agbein) revolted and killed the Ilaris of the Alaafins; **Amosu of Ikija**, in Oke-Ona; **Arinokotu of Ojoo** and **Akila of Ido** joined Lisabi in the revolt. Assembled at Abeokuta in about **1830**, they competed with Ibadan and Ijaiye for hegemony.

All these Egba towns surrounded Ibadan at Awotan and Oriyangi which made Johnson to described Ibadan at page 13 of "The History of the Yorubas" as an original Egba village, then the military station of the confederate army which destroyed the city of Owu and the Egba villages, and afterwards a settled Oyo town, and by means of its

military force assumed the lead not only even in the Epo district, but also over a large area of the country as well.

The crack in the strength of old Oyo Empire and the eventual end of Oyo hegemony in Yoruba history began with the declaration of independence by the Nupe and Ibariba from Oyo Empire between 1785 and 1791. Before this period too, the Egba, the Yoruba group that had been incorporated into the Oyo Empire also successfully revolted under the leadership of Lisabi. By 1796 AD, political authority had broken down in Oyo. A new Alaafin could not be elected after the death of Maku. Without a central authority in Oyo, chaos started in the provinces spearheaded by Afonja, the Aare Ona-Kakanfo at Ilorin, the Onikoyi, Toyeye the Otun Aare-Ona Kakanfo and the Baale of Ogbomoso. The crisis snowballed into the Owu wars worsened by the incursion of the Fulanis into the Yoruba country between 1810-1826

The civil wars that engulfed the entire Yorubaland contributed immensely to the growth of many Yoruba towns while a great number of towns and villages including the Oyo-Ile were completely destroyed or moved to new locations like the Egbas 1830 and the Oyos in 1837.

The refugee population from destroyed Yoruba towns moved to the remaining towns in the kingdom such as Iwo, Ibadan, Ede, Oshogbo and Abeokuta. Where the refugee population was large enough, they establish a new settlement or enlarge the existing ones such as Ago-Oja, Ogbomoso, Okeho and Ibadan, while the new ones established were Abeokuta and Owu-Ijebu.

According to Akinjogbin (2002), where the refugees were few in number they were integrated into existing towns but in very many cases they could not be integrated. Therefore, in order to survive, the refugees tended to be more dynamic than the old existing settlements, consequently, rivalry developed between the refugees and the old settlers. This legacy is still with us in Yorubaland till today and the most intractable

example is that between Modakeke and Ile-Ife. Similar cases also exist in Ijebu, Oyo, Ogbomoso, among the Ekiti, Igbomina and so on.

However, there are a number of positive legacies. As the saying goes ‘ There is soul of good in things evil, first was the formation of large urban centers such as Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ogbomoso, Ago-doyo (new Oyo), Osogbo, Ikirun etc.

- **THE RISE OF IJAIYE AND IBADAN TO MILITARY STATES**

After the Fulanis seized Ilorin and Old Oyo kingdom collapsed between 1835-1836, the key events of the Yoruba Race revolved around the strongest towns that emerged, these of course were the **sister towns of Ijaiye and Ibadan**. Both were military states in the middle of nineteenth centuries, both towns were jealous of each other, and fought each other often instead of fighting the real enemy. **In 1840A.D. Ibadan army defeated Ilorin/Fulani and turned back racial clock. This halted the advance of the Fulani Jihad into Yorubaland and shattered Fulani dreams of Yoruba conquest for a while. (A.O. Olubunmi, 2007 and J.A. Atanda, 1979 pg. 41)**

The result was that until the British (Pax Britannica) subjugated of the Yoruba Race in **1893A.D.** all Yoruba cities south of Ilorin had an overwhelming majority of Yoruba citizens. This important Yoruba victory over the Fulanis, according to A.O. Olubunmi (2007), stands in contrast to several failures of the old Oyo multi-racial army to defeat other wars fought to regain Ilorin. It emphasis the power of uniformity against staggering odds

After an interregnum which followed the death of Oluewu and the eventual desertion of Old Oyo, Atiba, the son of Abiodun, was appointed the new Alaafin in about 1837. Atiba did not make nay attempt to rebuild the old capital, in spite of the urge by the

people that he should do so. Instead, he made **Ago Oja** (that is New Oyo), where he had lived for some years, the new seat of government (J.A. Atanda, 1979).

With Ago Oja renamed Ago d'Oyo (Ago has become Oyo). **Atiba planned to revive the Old Oyo Empire.** He made certain arrangements to achieve his aim. In this, he relied on two chiefs in the southern part of the Old Oyo Empire who had grown militarily powerful as a result of the trouble which followed the fall of the empire. **These were Kurunmi of Ijaiye and Oluyole of Ibadan.**

Partly in keeping with the promise which he made to both of them during the Eleduwe war and partly because of their strength as military leaders, Atiba made Kurunmu and Oluyole the Are Ona Kakanfo and Basorun respectively (J.A. Atanda, 1979 pg. 40).

- **HOW IBADAN PROTECTED OYO CROWN IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

As a matter of fact, Ibadan enjoyed its freedom and autonomy (self-rule) and grew from a war camp to a city-state through its policy of openness and magnanimity. The choice of leadership was based on merit as discussed earlier. It derived its strength from diverse population of Yoruba ethnic's subgroups who assembled in Ibadan in the 1830s which informed the leaders to develop a Republican Traditional System of Government based on merit.

From all historical records, all Ibadan leaders from inception; Lagelu, Maye, both of Ife origin, Oluyedun from Ilorin, Lakanle, both from Oyo-Ile; Opeagbe from Ogbomosho and Baale Oyesile Olugbode from Kuta (1851-1864) were installed as Olubadan or Baale without reference to or consent/approval of the successive Alaafins. Even Latosa of Ibadan usurped the title, Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yorubaland in 1871 from the incumbent Ojo Aburumaku (from Ogbomosho).

Under Baale Oyesile Olugbode (1851-1864), Ibadan authority initiated "**Alabaja Conference**" to maintain peace in Yorubaland and as well encourage the first son and

other children of warlords inherit their properties instead of members of the family which was hitherto the practice. Before Alaafin Atiba consented to the law, he made Ibadan chief to swear that they would not allow his Crown Prince die with him according to the tradition.

Thus, Alaafin Atiba with the support of Ibadan replaced the age-long tradition whereby the crown prince died (literally murdered) with the Alaafin Kurunmi opposed the new law, and when eventually Adelu the crown price of Atiba was installed the Alaafin of Oyo. Another war broke out between Ijaye and Ibadan (1862-1864) which led to the destruction of Ijaye by Ibadan army led by Balogun Ibikunle, Otun Balogun Ogunmola, Osi Balogun Osundina (died in the war) and Asipa Balogun Akere.

After this war, Ogunmola became the head of Ibadan but he refused to be called Baale, instead he request Alaafin Adelu to give him the tittle of Basorun while a Basorun of Oyo was still alive at Oyo town.

Micheal Crowther and Obaro Ikime recorded that **as a result Ijaye War** (second after Batedo war during the reign of Basorun Oluyole):

“Except in name, it (Ibadan became Alaafin’s master, too. Indeed, outside Oyo town and a few villages around it, the Alaafin had nowhere to exercise his authority without a challenge from Ibadan (Tomori, Lola, 2004, P.36)

In the process of ensuring that Alaafin Atiba’s wish was realized, Ibadan provided refuge and accommodation for Prince Adelu Agunloye, the crown prince of Alaafin Atiba at **Oke-Aremo**, Ibadan (the Hill of Aremo), which retains the name Oke-Aremo till today. “Oke Aremo” is the shortened form of **Oke Aremo Adelu Agunlyoe** (Jide Fatokun, 2011 p. 322)

While not formally renouncing its allegiance to Oyo, Ibadan was not prepared to continue the ‘age-long allegiance’ to Oyo hegemony; but Oyo had no control over it. By

the 1860s after Ijaiye war, in fact from **1855**, the fear was that Ibadan might even absorb Oyo as attested to by Rev. J.B. Wood, Secretary of the CMS, based at Abeokuta, in an account of his visit to Ibadan via Oyo in July – August 1863:

“After what I saw and heard, I should not be surprised if the Ibads before very long, make and destroy Oyo and have a Yoruba king in Ibadan; their policy is clearly an aggressive one” (Atanda, p. 43)

As a show of military might in 1867, Basorun Ogunmola of Ibadan sent to Alaafin Adelu Agunloye (1858-1875) to send him **Ahayan** posts (hard word used by only the great and mighty) and **Beere grass** for his **Kobi**. Kobi was a bay projecting from the house, usually with a **conical top** higher than the top of the roof. The king (Alaafin) Adelu ordered both to be sent (Johnson, p. 372). **The fact that Alaafin tolerated this humiliation showed that the (Alaafin) perceived himself powerless in relationship to Ibadan**

Also, when Prince Lawani, the Crown Prince of Adelu lost to Alaafin Adeyemi I, as the 39th Alaafin of Oyo (1875-1905), he (Lawani) and his son, Sinyanbola Ladigbolu, were provided asylum at Oke-Aremo by Aare Latoosa (1871-1885) of **Ibadan Empire**; they lived in exile in Ibadan for thirty years till Alaafin Adeyemi died in 1905.

By 1870, Ibadan had established the largest empire in the nineteenth century Yorubaland, comprising most of Oyo-Yoruba tons and villages, and areas in the north-east (Toyin Falola, 1989 p. 11)

- **BRITISH INFLUENCE IN YORUBALAND**

According Dr. J.A. Atanda and later a Professor of History- “While not formally renouncing its allegiance to the Alafin of Oyo, Ibadan wielded power independently of Oyo over what was left of the former territories of the Old Oyo Empire. Ibadan also included in its empire areas not originally under Oyo. The Ijesa, Ife and Ekiti areas were case in point until 1878. In that year the Ekiti and the Ijesa revolted against the power of

Ibadan. With that revolt came the Kiriji or the Ekitiparapo war, a war which was ended in 1893 only through the intervention of the British.

However, the important point for our purpose is that Ibadan was by far stronger than Oyo by the time the British come. The British, too, according to J.A. Atanda (1979 p. 44), initially seemed to have recognized this fact. This explains why they granted to Ibadan, by the Agreement of 1893, the internal administration of most of what remained of the Alafin's territories. *But later, they decided to take history back to the eighteenth century by attempting to restore to the Alafin his ancient powers for purpose of local administration.*

Consequently, Yoruba history was distorted in pursuit of this policy, and contrary views, even by officials, were ignored especially by Capt. W. Ross, the Resident which actually transformed the Alafin to a god after 1912. There was deliberate interference by the colonial administration in the chieftaincy matters of Ibadan. It meddled in the disputes among the chiefs and became active in the selection, promotion and deposition of chiefs, especially from 1907 onward when the Resident asked Baale Dada Opadare to resign his appointment. Two methods were employed in achieving this interference (Toyin Falola, 1989 p. 51)

- It co-opted the Alaafin of Oyo in the selection of candidates for promotion. The involvement of Oyo was based on the premises that the Alaafin was paramount over the Baale of Ibadan and several other Oba in Yorubaland
- Alaafin gave the final decision in the tussle for the post of Baale between Otun Baale Opadare and Balogun Apampa in 1905.
- In 1912 Ross requested the Alaafin Ladigbolu to decide between Otun Baale Irefin and Balogun Situ (Omo Are) for the vacant post of Baale. The Alaafin played a leading role in Irefin installation and all the high-ranking chiefs who received the support of the Alaafin were compelled to pledge their loyalty to him.

- The **second** method of intervention was through the order that a Baale could legitimately lay claim to his title only if Governor in Lagos recognized his right to the throne. Without this recognition, the Baale could not preside at any council meeting and was not entitled to any salary. For example: -
 - Apampa who became the Baale in 1908 was made the scapegoat of this rule. He was forced to accept Alaafin as his overlord before his appointment could be ratified by the Governor of Lagos after nine months.
- The hegemony of the Alaafin which reduced the status of the Baale manifested itself in other ways:
 - After 1912, Ibadan and the territory which it was supposed to govern were submerged under the Alaafin's territory. After 1914, the administrative unit of this region, the Oyo Province, centered on Oyo which became the provincial headquarters while Ibadan was a district headquarter
 - Some towns which were subordinate to Ibadan in the 19th century passed to Oyo notable examples were Ilero and Iluwa. In 1913, Captain C.H. Elegee compiled a list of these '**colonies**' and their overlords.
- Ross carried further his fight against any tendency to encourage Ibadan's independence of Oyo or to recognize the Baale of Ibadan as an Oba. Thus, in the year 1925, he excluded the Baale of Ibadan from the list of the paramount chiefs of Yorubaland to receive the Prince of Wales in April that year, even though the Durbar, commemorating the occasion was held at Ibadan (Jide Fatokun 2011).
- After the payment of direct taxes began and the Treasuries of the Native Authorities were somewhat stronger, Ross unilaterally raised the grant of £200 per annum payable to the Alaafin from the Ibadan Treasury to £2,400 per

annum to augment the salary of Alafin in his bid to enhance the status of the Alafin of Oyo. Consequently, Ross managed to raise the Alafin's salary to £4,500 per annum. The £2,400 taken annually from the Ibadan Treasury formed part of this salary. The remaining £2,100 came from the Oyo Treasury (J.A. Atanda, 1979 p. 145)

But after some years, the amount taken from the Oyo Treasury was increased to £2,400. Consequently, the Alafin's salary finally stood at £4,800 per annum. With this figure, Atanda said, the Alafin received the next highest salary which was £4,800, Ibadan was on £2,400 per annum; while the Oni of Ife, the Owa of Ilesa, and the Orangun of Ila received £1,400, ₦1,400, and £560 per annum respectively.

- **THE BREAK-UP OF THE NEW OYO EMPIRE (1931-1934)**

According Dr. J.A. Atanda (1979), Captain Ross left Oyo and Nigeria for good on 1 September, 1931. Barely three years after his departure, was the New Oyo Empire, which he spent a quarter of a century building up, no more

The role of the educated elements, particularly those of Ibadan, in demanding changes in the structure of Oyo Province paid off. Ibadan found favour in the new government policy that the jurisdiction of a Native Authority must be based on the consent of the people. Ward Price, Ross's successor as the Resident of Oyo Province, had to press that the power of the Alafin as the sole Native Authority over Oyo and Ibadan Division be broken. **For the Ibadan had not willingly consented that the Alafin should rule over Ibadan Division.**

The application of this principle of new indirect rule based on consent of the people meant that the people who had been forcibly subordinated to Oyo on the ground

that at one time the authority of the Alafin must have extended to that area would be liberated.

Consequently, the Government in Lagos accepted Ward-Prince's recommendation to establish Ibadan Division as a Native Authority independent of the Alafin. Ibadan people were also asked to continue to pay their own annual share of £2,400 of the Alafin's salary throughout the life of Alafin Ladigbolu (J.A. Atanda, 1979 p. 268) who died in 1944.

Toyin Falola (1989 pg 242) noted that in spite of the opposition by the Alafin and the elite, especially members of the Oyo Progressive Union, the era of the Oyo Empire was over, and was never revived after 1934. What followed were the re-organizations of the Native Authorities, and every area, no matter how small, struggled to become autonomous. The immediate changes were that the Alafin only had the Oyo Division to control, the others-Ibadan, Ife, Ilesa and Ila became autonomous (see Supplement to the Nigeria Gazette Extraordinary, No.17 of April 1934, pg 1 and 11.)

Ibadan chiefs responded to the 1934 reform as Oliver twist would do; they demanded other changes. What became their second major grievance was the title of Baale which they now wanted to change to the Olubadan which carried with it the aura of an Oba and not that one of a village head. To them, the Baale title had become a derogatory one for the status of their ruler and too common, because it was borne by heads of tiny villages, palm wine sellers, and farmers guilds. In making a request for a change in July 1936, they indicated a preference for the OLUBADAN and alluded to other related issues in order to obtain the consent of government (Toyin Falola, 1989).

J.A. Atanda at page 281 of "the New Oyo Empire" (1979) said- "However, in 1936, they (Ibadan) scored a significant success in their struggle to be on equal footing with Oyo. They succeeded, in spite of Alafin Ladigbolu's opposition, in having the title of their head chief changed from 'Bale Ibadan' to 'Olubadan'. This change was probably

in reaction to a taunt in 1934 by Alafin Ladigbolu that they (the people of Ibadan) can never have a higher title than Bale of Ibadan.

- **THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE OYO STATE COUNCIL OF OBAS AND CHIEFS**

If we take a quick look at the history of the world, we shall find that it is a record of a continual process of change. It is a record of the great Empires and civilizations which have lasted for a time and then passed away. Egypt, Greece and Rome are examples of these great civilizations that have passed away as a result of wars of conquest by stronger and sometimes less civilized tribes and nations.

Ibadan in the **sixteenth (16th) century** and its destruction and relocation twice before founding a permanent settlement late in the 18th century was influenced by the civil wars in the old Oyo Kingdom. Alaaḡin Onigbogi (1530-1542) records the worst pressure, as pointed out earlier when the old Oyo capital was attacked by the Nupes. The desertion of Oyo, according to S.B. OjO in *Iwe Itan Oyo* at page 47, led to many emigration to Egba Egbado, Ibolu, Oke-Ogun and Ibarapa areas. The Alaaḡin Onigbogi also field to Gbere in Ibariba kingdom, his mother's homeland.

The quest for imperial expansion and establishment of unique military institutions of 17th and 18th centuries were prompted mainly by hostilities of invaders from Nupe and Borgu before the famous capital of Oyo-Ile was moved to Igboho where four Alaaḡins were buried.

Internal strife and self-defeating competition among the various Yoruba groups in the 19th century led to the easy subjugation of the country by a greater and stronger power and lose of Ilorin to the Fulanis, including Offa and some Igbomina towns.

Similarly, with the destruction of Ikoyi, Igbon, Iresa and others, the representatives heads of the family completely became subject to the ruler of the town of refuge, be the Bale or a king. Thus ***“the Olugbon at Ogbomosho is subject to the Bale of Ogbomosho. The Aresa to the king of Emir of Ilorin and the Olowu at Abeokuta is***

nominally subject to the Alake of Ake, the primus of the Egba Chiefs (Rev. Samuel Johnson, 1921)”

The civil wars in Yorubaland also forced relocation of many towns such as Ede, and Oyo while new ones were founded like Abeokuta many Obas took refuge in towns where they could be protected or join forces to strengthen their base. According to Professor I.A. Akinjogbin (2002), “for purpose of defence, the Egba discarded the old norm whereby two Obas could not reside in a single town. They accepted that each of the community making up their composite town could retain its own Oba. Thus you had in Abeokuta four or five Obas. A similar situation occurred in Ogbomosho, you had the Olugbon, the Aresa and the Onpetu. Similarly Ilupeju in Ijebu Kingdom had about seven Obas.”

Thus the civil wars of the 19th century had reduced to the barest minimum the powers, the positions and the influence of the Obas. Consequently. The military Chiefs who before the 19th century were not particularly given any prominence in the civil societies except in Oyo became the centre of power and wealth in Yorubaland in the 19th century.

Indeed, by the end of the 19th century the military were installing the Oba in various towns and controlling their activities. During the period, no Oba within the sphere of influence of Ibadan could be installed without the express approval of Ibadan military leaders. Any one of them so installed was strictly controlled by the Ibadan Ajele, without whose consent, he could take any action in his area (I.A. Akinjogbin, 2002)

The dream of Alaaḥin Ladigbolu I of New Oyo Empire was shattered when the New Oyo Province created in 1914 was split into five independent Native Authorities instead of a province where the Alaaḥin was the most powerful paramount Chief in 1934. This was published in the Supplement to the Nigeria. Gazette Extra-ordinary, No. 17 of 3, April, 1934, pp. I and II. The Alaaḥin was left with only Oyo Division (J.A. Atanda, 1973, 1979 p. 268).

The principle of Rotation was initiated by the Colonial Administration in 1930s to resolve seniority crisis among Yoruba Obas and Chiefs. The Alafin of Oyo, the Oni of Ife, Olubadan of Ibadanland, the Alake of Abeokuta, the Awujale of Ijebu-Ode and Oba Benin hosted Obas meetings in respectively. (J.A. Atanda, Toyin Falola).

The Action Group Government gave a legal backing to the creation of Council of Obas and Chiefs in 1959 referred to as Law of Western Region No. 38 of 1959. Since then, no permanent Chairman of the Council had been appointed.

Cap. 29 Laws of Oyo State which originated from Governor Jembewon's Amendment to the Council of Obas and Chiefs Edict No. 4 of 1977 amending the original Law W.R. No. 38 of 1959 provided that the *“Chairman of the Council and the deputy Chairman shall be appointed by the Executive Council from amongst the members, and the member of the Council shall hold the office for such period as may be determined by the Executive Council”*.

Colonel Rotimi, according to Governor Omololu Olunloyo's statewide Broadcast, refused to be dragged into making statutory legislation as to who, whether in person or ex-officio should be the Chairman. It clearly emerged that the appointment of Chairman of the Council was the prerogative of the government of the day.

Brigadier David Jembewon went a step further by arranging the names in alphabetical order to avoid any seniority protest which could elicit acrimony.

The Alafin of Oyo, Oba Adeyemi III, the Olubadan of Ibadanland and Soun of Ogbomosho resisted the attempt of Governor Bola Ige to make the Ooni of Ife, permanent Chairman of Council of Obas and Chiefs and they even went to court.

The Government of Dr. Omololu Olunloyo also returned to the **original practice of two years** tenure of office for the Chairman of the Council of Obas and Chiefs. He also decided that *“there shall not be a permanent automatic Chairman appointed ex-officio his title or in person”*.

When Governor Abdulkarim Adisa approved the rotational system for the present Oyo State via Amended Edict No. 6 of October 30, 1991 published in the Oyo State Extra-ordinary Gazette, No. 45, Vol. 16 schedule II, the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Adeyemi II was the first beneficiary and was succeeded by Oba Emmanuel Adegboyega Adeyemo Operinde I, the Olubadan of Ibadanland between December 1994 and December, 1995.

The controversial change came with the Oyo State Gazette No. 27 Vol. 26 of July 16, 2001, which carried the views of the military government of Colonel Ike Nwosu on the 1995 White Paper on Chieftaincies and Prescribed Authorities.

The restoration of the Rotation of Chairmanship of the Council of Obas and Chiefs by Governor Adebayo Alao Akala is a welcome development but this should be followed by classification of Obas and Chiefs as it exists Ogun State, Ondo State, Ekiti State. Alaafin of Oyo, Olubadan of Ibadanland and the Soun of Ogbomosho by their roles in the 19th century are paramount Obas in the present Oyo State. Other ancient Obas, Oyomesi and Ibadan High Chiefs are first class Obas and Chiefs