

IMPACT OF POLITICS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF GAMBARI QUARTERS SINCE 19TH CENTURY

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Gambari quarter is one of the quarters that constituted the Ilorin Emirate. Its major occupants were the Hausa who first inhabited the quarter. They were awarded the title of Balogun Gambari because of their role as warrior. The quarter was headed and controlled by the Balogun. Through migration other ethnic group from diverse origin arrived and inhabited the quarter such as the Nupes, Barubas, Yorubas, Fulanis etc. They were accommodated, absorbed and integrated into the Gambari, Political system despite their differences in languages, culture and traditions. The gesture from the host group (Hausas) promoted political development and integration within the quarter. Therefore, the paper will examine the political development and political integration in the quarter since 19th Century, the existence of diverse ethane groups within the confine of the political leadership of Balogun Gambari, the political developments particularly during the March towards independence and the emergence of party politics in the pos colonial period; impacts of politics an integration in the Gambari quaters of Ilorin Emirate sicne 19th Century.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of political development and integration are Intergral part of every society, economic and social Political development have revealed that people of different cultures assimilated through certain polices by the ruling class or as a result of interactions between groups within the community therefore, the prevailing political circumstances as well as the desire of the people to accommodate one another often determined the level of integration that usually take.

- * Place¹ By political development, it mean all forms of changes that took place across any named geo political entity over a number of years. The concept of integration on the other hand has been found to be the co-existence of diverse groups of people in a given society, or can be said to be an act of representing the cumulative effect of individual allegiance to and identification with society and it.
- * Goal ²: This means integration was perceived as bridging the gap between groups by subsuming their narrow interest, in terms of culture language and ethnic affinity to the larger interest of national community.
- * Unity ³ therefore integration could thus be seen as attempt by which people of different cultures, co-exist and work together as one for the purpose of peaceful and positive socio-political development.

Integration as a political concept acknowledged the presence of diversities in a geo-political settings and tends to be mostly associated with the newly independent states. This is because most of these states were created out of the multi-ethnic people with distinct cultures, histories and belief systems. In this, light, sklar in relation to Zolberg for example, posits that integration contemplates the creation of higher loyalties that supersede parochial loyalties to sub-national communities, tribes, languages groups or religions ⁴. Integration has also been seen as a “resocialization process into the symbols of the new large political community to create a people in the sense of those who in the words of Karl Deustch have learned to communicate will each other well beyond the mere interchange of goods and services”⁵.

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These expressions are quite relevant to development in the Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirates during the period under consideration. Political integration in this context therefore means attempt at uniting or bringing together the hitherto multi-ethnic groups of people with diverse cultures, histories, languages, religions and belief system into one which would eschew primordial, parochial and subordinate loyalties and sentiments to the tribe. The relationship between political development and integration deserve an academic appraisal, particularly in a multi-cultural society as Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirate. This is because to integrate the diverse groups of people has not be an easy task bringing about integration in the Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirate some conditions have been identified. These includes the sharing of political power the spread of Islam which later become the religion of the majority by the end of the nineteenth century, diffusion of culture which brought the different ethnic groups together, inter marriage across ethnic lines which helped cemented relationship in the Gambari quarters. All these played an important mediatory role in the political development and integration of Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirate.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD 1800-1900

one of the chieftaincy title that is well recognized in Ilorin is the Balogun, they are important as well respected probably because of the role they played in the in history of Ilorin. The Balogun are warlords who are involved in various wars. They ward off various attacks both internal and external that are made on Ilorin in order to safe the town from being conquered by various invaders.

The Balogun are four in number namely, Balogun Alanamu, Ajikobi, Fulani and Balogun Gambari. All these Balogun were appointed by the Emir as the head of their respective wards⁷. The office of the Baloguns came into existence with the establishment of Ilorin Emirate and the division of Ilorin wards for administrative purposes.

The first set of Balogun in Ilorin were military commanders who led the hurriedly assembled army that for instance, successfully warded off the Nupe lavation of Ilorin about the year 1808. During the invasion troops from Ajikobi were led by Mallam Usman, Alanamu led by Mallam Se'eni, Fulani led by Jagbara and Doshe led the troops from Gambari⁸.

Doshe who was a seasoned soldier since the days of Afonja was appointed as the overall commander of the army with Aliyu and other Baloguns as Sub-Commanders. Thus Mallam Usman became the first Balogun Ajikobi, Se'eni the first Balogun Alanamu, Jagbara the first Balogun Fulani and Doshe the first Balogun Gambari. Balogun remained strictly military commanders throughout Shehu Alimis life time unit after 1828 when Emir Abdulsalam reorganized the administrative set up of the Emirate following his recognition as Emir by the Sokoto caliphate. He then vested in the Baloguns the dual responsibility of being both the political and military head of their respective wards, aside from administrative convenience also perhaps as reward for their contributions towards the successful establishment of the Ilorin Emirates with the title of Balogun the Hausa were well recognized in the Emirate, during the process of migrating being as Hausa migrant who arrived Ilorin he first resided at the Gambari community where he deservedly took control of the leadership of the Hausa community because the community was, dominated by the Hausas after a while the community began to accommodate people from diverse origin all of whom were later integrated and absorbed into the Gambari political system⁹.

POLITICAL LEGITIMACY OF THE BALOGUN GAMBARI OF ILORIN

The appointment of Balogun is the exclusive right of the Emir in Ilorin Emirate based on the fact that a person who want to become a Balogun must be a member of a family which has a

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long history of residence in the ward concerned in the case of Balogun Gambari the candidate must be descent from the northern part of Nigeria which are generally known as Gambaris or the Hausas. The Balogun is strictly military commander who led group of army in the war front in which had successfully fought various Invations and attack in Ilorin both internal and external. Doshe who was the first Balogun was an experience soldier and was appointed as the overall commander of the army during the days of Afonja as well as the political head of his ward.

Balogun Gambari being the head of Gambari quarters he also served as the chairman of the traditional council within his community, which included the areas control by his chiefs such as the Magajis, Alaguas, Daudus and Bales. Apart from having effective jurisdiction over areas under them they also had villages in which they control at the district level. As the political head and the overall controller of their district and villages the Balogun enjoyed very large power because they have the power to appoint some lesser chiefs that will be under their control who were to serve them and stand as their representatives as well as to manage the affairs of the districts on their behalf ¹⁰.

Meanwhile, the duties and responsibility of these lesser chiefs to the Baloguns were firstly to maintain peace and stability in their districts, secondly to collect taxes for the Baloguns, thirdly to send war booties to their master as well as collection of dues for onward transfer to the Balogun in the metropolis. Also the Balogun shoulder the responsibilities of maintaining peace and orderliness in their ward by settling all forms of disputes among his people and within his area of jurisdiction and incase of escalated dispute within the jurisdiction of his chiefs such will also be referred to the Balogun who has overall authority on the people and the areas control by the chiefs. The Balogun being the political head of the Gambari quarters is also the spiritual had because the Imam of Gambari is responsible to the Balogun should incase of dispute or misunderstanding in the Mosque the Imam will report to the Balogun who will invite the concerned members of the mosque to settle their differences.

Also if a new mosque is to be erected within the quarter the Imam will notify the Balogun for approval e.g. the erection of Jummat mosque and the appointment of Imam Ratibi withih the quater¹¹.

In addition to the offices under Balogun Gambari is the Qadi-al-Qudat (the grand Khadi) the chief legal adviser to the Balogun. Aside from minor penal offences which were tried locally, cases of major offences involving technical interpretation is brought before the Balogun. At Gambari quarters there persent is area count around Ojagboro Known as the (Ile Alkali) any case appeal from this court will be transfer to the Balogun who has his own council and any case appeal in Balogun council will be referred to the Emir's court. In this regard the Emir was still the highest Judicial authority in his ward under Emirate administration.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE GAMBARI QUARTER

The Balogun Gambari is the head of administrative unit. Aside from the Balogun there are other subordinate chiefs who are ward district or provincial Chiefs, some of these recognized titles are, Serkin Gobir, Magaji Maiyaki, Balogun Baare, Ajia Opel, Kure, Alangua Sango, Alaugua Ibagun, Serkin Karuma, Sarkin Hausawa, Mejindadi, Serkin Maikafo, Bale Dada etc ¹². These chiefs were appointed from diverse ethnic groups for example Sarkin Gobir is from the Hausas, Alaugua Ibagun is from the Yorubas, Kure from the Fulani etc. closely associated with office of the Balogun is the Magajis who were the immediate officials to the Balogun and hence discharge responsibilities as may be assumed by the later, including military under this arrangement the Magajis themselves often demanded large follower including war title holders like Alaugua, Ajia

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among others. These ward or provincial chiefs were appointed in order to assist the Balogun in carrying out the day to day activities in their domain they act as representatives that will act on his behalf. Some of those chiefs in turn have under them the Alangwas and Bales e.g. the Serkin Gambari controls Alaugua Pake, Oyun and Sango, Bale Maya, Ile Apa Okeose Alalubasa etc. The chief Imam is the spiritual leader of the Gambari quarters he leads in congregational prayers, funeral, Nikkah, Naming ceremony etc. He appoints the sub Imams (Imam Ratibi) subject to the approval of the Balogun, he settle disputes among the inhabitants of the area.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN BALOGUN GAMBARI QUARTER SINCE 19th CENTURY

The emergence of NPC northern people's congress and the introduction of other political parties such as A.G. Action Group, N.Y.M Nigeria youth movement, NNDP Nigeria National Democratic Party etc. opened a room of opportunities to make choice among the people of Gambari quarters in particular, in the sense that individuals stand the chance of making choice of any of the political parties and become member of such parties. The formation of political parties was the beginning of participation of some individual in politics in the Gambari quarter.

Some of these individuals made the choice of belonging to any of these political parties though the most popular among the people of Gambari quarter was N.P.C. Northern people's congress and it was the party of the majority within the quarter¹⁵.

There are some notable members of this great party who later emerged as prominent politicians some of the members are Alhaji Amuda Kanike, the father of Honorable Kanike who was a House of representative member in the 8th assembly, Alhaji Toyin Baruba of Baruba area in Ilorin, Alhaji Oba Bolanta, Alao Madibo, Alhaji Oba Ajibade Alala Ojagboro, Kawu Lawal a close friend of Emir Sulu Gambari, Alhaji Obakonta etc. belongs to N.P.C. the majority party. Also there are other people that belonged to other party. A.G. Action group the rival and the minority party the personalities includes Alhaja Onikepe Alaso at Isale Gambari, Alhaji Sanda at Akerebiata, Buhari Sada and a host another's, they are minorities they operated as opposition party as at that time.

None of the name mentioned held a key positions in political offices but they were active, well recognized and respected member of their parties except ALhaji Oba Bolanta who was a onetime countor but they were all grass root politicians who could not be ruled out at all time in the history of politics in the Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirate. These grass root politicians had contributed in one way or the other to the political development and integration of the Gambari quarters through their activities. They have been able to bring large numbers of people together through persuasion and enlightenment campaigns¹⁴.

A good example was when Alhaji Oba Bolanta was to contest for the part of counsellorship under zero party in 1975. He was engaged in comparing from one place to another within the Gambari quarter by making people to realize the divided of democracy they stand to gain of the was elected. When he was elected he did as promised by extending the divided of democracy to various parts of the quarter such as the tap water at the Balogun, the drainage system at Ojagboro leading to Duma for easy passage of erosion, tap water at Ode Gbagba, drainage system at Isale Gata etc. aside from these development he was involve in the gathering of people from diverse origin for political meeting from time to time this serve as educative and enlightenment forum as well as creating sense of belonging among the diverse groups which promoted political development and integration among the diverse groups within the Gambari quarters¹⁵.

IMPACT OF POLITICS ON DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION IN THE GAMBARI QUARTERS SINCE 19TH CENTURY

The effects of political development on integration in the Gambari quarters cannot be underestimated because it manifested in various aspects of the quarter, where communal groups with substantially different cultures traditions, history co-exist together as a community under on one single head. People from diverse origin such as the Hausas, Fulanis, Barubas, Yorubas, Beriberis, Kanuris etc. were able to leave together despite their differences under the rullership of the Hausa who was their host and the first occupants of the quarter, thereby forming a community and the idea of a community always implies integration the creation of sense of unity that eliminates subordinate parochial loyalties. It is noteworthy they that traditional histories had revealed that the Gambari descendants were Hausas from time immemorial but with migratory influence of different cultural groups to the Gambari quarters¹⁶.

Meanwhile, the Hausas were able to develop the quarter politically due to understanding, peace and harmony exersesed by the diverse groups and the gesture established strong political affinity which transcended non-tribal sentiments due to hospitality demonstrated by the Hausas to the other groups by accommodating them to leave together as one big family.

Inclusively, the other ethnic groups were carried along on the ruuning affairs of the Gambari traditional institution appointing them as the cabinet members, which gave them sense of belonging, some of them were appointed as ward, distict of province chiefs¹⁷.

For instance, the Fulani were awarded the title of Kure Ameda, the Yorubas were awarded the title of Alangua Ibagun, the Nupes were awarded the title of Chief Imaam etc. their appointment was to assist the Balogun in running the day to day activities of the Gambari quarters. The Hausas were awarded the title solely because of their contributions towards the political stability of Balogun Gambari quarter. The Gobir were Hausa by tribe they migrated from Alkalawa in Sabo brini of Sokoto State, when Shehu Alimi wanted to migrate to Ilorin he seek the support of the Gobir because he believed they are was lords and brave fighter they assisted Sheu Alimi to fight various wars from one community to the other before they were compensated with the title Serkin Gobir who was also the chief adviser to Balogun Gambari. Apart from these the Hausa has other title in Gambari such as Seriki Maikafo and Seriki Snago etc. all of which complemented the effort of the Balogun in the running of the Gambari Administration and it fostered the political development of Gambari quarter ¹⁸.

Another important titles in the Gambari quarters is the Kure Ameda which belongs to the Fulanis they were awarded because they are warriors, he was lieutenant to Balogun Gambari his responsibility was to fight war to protect the Balogun's territories. They migrated from Sokoto alongside Shehu Alimi they occupied Ita Ajia where they host their people and their cattles. They are close associate of the Balogun their relationship and loyalty to the Balogun promoted political development of the Gambari quarters.

The Nupes were not exempted from the administrative unit of Gambari quarters because the title of Imam Gambari was given to them he is the spiritual leader who leads the prayers for the Jamah and also the head of all Imam Ratibi within the quarter. He perform other functions such as setting dispute among the members (Jamah) when the needs be, he is also the spiritual adviser to the Balogun¹⁹.

The Yorubas were awarded the title of Magaji Ibagun because of their loyalty to the Balogun they were also recognized because they maintained peaceful co-existence with the Hausas and other tribes despite the fact that they are descendants of Afonja with the Scenaro that

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transcended between Alimi and Afonja they still demonstrated loyalty to their land lord. Therefore they were also carried along which makes them feel among and recognized. This development fostered unity peace and tranquility among the diverse groups and it promoted strong political affinity which transcended non-tribals sentiments. This manifested in the existence of these diverse groups who lived together in peace and harmony. One way of achieving this at least in the thinking of successive community was by creating traditional offices or constituent unit for each of the ethnic groups with a self government and local authority so that the process of development and integration can proceed without threatening the cultural framework of personal identity²⁰.

CONCLUSION

The evoluntary history of Ilorin was transformed though migration of individuals and groups of varying cultural background, from a settlement of scattered hamlets and at various stages into rebel camp, political sanctuary, city state and an Emirate. It traverse these stages with diversity, dynamism and processes of interplay of political, economic cultural and religious forces an influence on group relations, it should be stressed that people of diverse origin came together in the Gambari quarters of Ilorin Emirate to leave and co-exist as one entity regardless of their differences in languages culture and tradition. The integration of cultural groups in the Gambari quarter under the traditional political system is illustrative of an important aspest in the socio-cultural integration to people that pre-colonial empire performed. This is particularly true because they promoted immigration intermarriage and assimilation in various form and at all levels which is greatly different from the disintegrative policies of ethnocentric classification and exclusion that colonial powers pursued.

Meanwhile, it is possible to identify and explain that migration history and the perceived sequence of settlement by groups has been a determinant factor in the relations between the people of the Gambari quarter of Ilorin Emirate, regards claims of ownership of the land and invariably who should control the polity. Political development in the Gambari quarters has contributed a lot to the unity, solidity and harmony that took place with the quarter solely because the Hausas who are the dominant group accommodated other groups and co-opted them in the administration of Gambari system regardless of their differences. The co-habitance of the diverse group in the quarter promoted socio-political development considerably.

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