



Full Length Research

Accession to the Throne of the Olowu of Ancient Owu Kingdom: A Case Study of Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II

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Abstract: Kingship institutions headed by traditional rulers have been in existence for centuries before the advent of colonialism. Indubitably, the presence of colonialism paved ways for different political structures, from the independence of Nigeria in 1960 till the return of governance to civilian rule by the military regime headed by General Abdul-Salam Abubakar in 1999, all these changes in the political structures of Nigeria, had a lot of effect on the status and position of the traditional rulers; from a position where they were the chief executive of their domains to advisers in the present political dispensation in Nigeria. Be that as it may, traditional institutions still show utmost resilience in the face of various political changes it has passed through, as the traditional rulers are being accorded a high degree of legitimacy in the eyes of the populace. This paper, therefore, presents discussion on the accession to throne in Yorubaland, the stool of the Olowu of Owu in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria, with reference to the processes involved in the selection, initiation, coronation and installation of Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II, as the 13th Olowu of Owu kingdom. The discourse relies on oral interviews and supplemented with secondary data. In the main, the paper presents that there are six ruling houses in Owu kingdom which are: Akinjobi, Akinoso, Amororo, Ayoloye, Lagbedu, Otileta and that the basis of rotation was to be adopted in selecting a new king whenever the stool is vacant. The study further discovers that when it was the turn of Amororo dynasty, six persons jostled for the coveted stool out of which Oba Olusanya was successfully chosen by the Kingmakers as the best candidate. The study concludes that initiation which is needed to be done for a new king came in a different dimension for late Oba Olusanya, although he entered “Ipebi” seclusion but no form of traditional rituals or rites was performed for him and on him.

Keywords: Kingship Institution: Colonialism: Owu Kingdom: The Stool of Olowu of Owu: Ruling Houses: Initiation: Nigeria.

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1.0 Introduction to the Study

Kingship institution headed by the tradition ruler (king) “Oba” in Yoruba context formed the nucleus of governance in Yorubaland (Tonwe & Osenwota, 2013), before the advent of colonial rule in Nigeria. Hitherto, the traditional rulers were considered as the repository of legislative, executive, judicial and religious functions (Tonwe & Osenwota, 2013). However, the advent of colonial rule and the numerous political dispensations that accompanied it, such as the Nigeria’s independence in 1960, the political crises of the first republic, the military rule which paved ways for the local government reforms of 1976 coupled with the return to civilian rule in 1999, had paved ways for the reduction in the political autonomy and hegemony of the traditional rulers. These changes had offered the traditional rulers new roles: as nominal authorities, advisers, ceremonial rulers and not leaders of their territories which they had been prior to the advent of colonial rule (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009). Nonetheless, the position of a traditional ruler is still much respected by the inhabitants of different Yoruba territories most especially by those who are members of the traditional ruling houses, as they fiercely contest for the stool whenever it is vacant in some communities in Yorubaland, and also by people who still believe in the traditional authority of the king as the second in command to the gods and absolute controller of his domain. The accession to the throne of Olowu of the ancient Owu kingdom in Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria, with the study of the emergence of Oba Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II, as the Olowu of Owu kingdom is chosen as a case study to present a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in the selection of traditional rulers in Yorubaland in general and Owu kingdom in particular in order to understand the modifications that has been ushered in by civilization in the process of selection, installation, initiation and coronation of a new Oba. The paper used the descriptive and interpretive approach to present its discussion. Primary data was sourced from in-depth interviews conducted with purposively selected respondents who are knowledgeable on the History of Owu kingdom, and on the processes involved prior to the emergence of Oba Olusanya Dosunmu Amororo II, as the Olowu of Owu kingdom while useful pieces of information garnered from books, journals; material from the internet formed the secondary data.

2.0 Background to the Study

The term kingship has its root from the word “King”, which is basically attached to the statehood of a king (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009). In this paper, a king is identified as a legitimate representation of his kingdom. Hence, a king is the most supreme-being in his domain, who is not only a human being but an embodiment of the gods (Oladumiye & Kahim, 2012). He is however referred to as the death lieutenants of God: terror personified and the supreme judge who apportions punishment to erring citizens. The king is regarded as a powerful spirit who is not to be looked up to directly in the eyes by the subjects for fear of being harassed or punished (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2012). The king as the occupant of the traditional stool in any kingdom is recognized by their subjects as both their spiritual head and chief custodian of their culture and tradition. The king gives injunctions, sanctions to the people’s social life as well as direction to the economic initiatives and activities of the people (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009).

In Yorubaland, kings and their offices were to be accorded utmost respect by their subjects who must always act in tandem with the will and commands of the king. Generally, the Yoruba people are of the believe that acting in contrary to the will and commands of the king, which are mostly in line with the demands of traditions could lead to punishment and wrath not only from the king but the gods (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009). However, while kingship refers to the ruler in a kingdom, in Yoruba context the king is addressed as Alase Ekeji Orisa “king, the ruler and deputy of the gods” (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009). He is also addressed as Kabiyesi, an expression which is a contracted form of the statement “ki a bi nyin kosi” (there is no question of anybody querying your authority or action) (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009). In Yoruba kingdom, the king assumed absolute dignity on the day of coronation. The king “Oba” having been fortified with traditional powers, the king was also given insignia of royal office (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022). Among these were crown, robes, sceptre, horsetail and umbrella (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022).

Prior to the advent of the British colonial rule in Yorubaland, Yoruba kingdoms maintained a unified and a well structured political system which is still in operation till date (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022). Ostensibly, its political structure was made up of central (headquarters), local towns and villages, the political administration at the central level was majorly headed by the king “Oba” who was assisted by groups of chiefs and other political figures including a priest whose divination guides the kingdom (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022). The subordinate units are headed by Baales who are saddled with the main function of overseeing the affairs of the towns and villages, the Baales also have a handful of chiefs that assisted them in running the affairs of the local towns or villages (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022) the Baales are entitled to pay homage “Isakole” to the king at the central level (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022), however, any erring Baale could be removed, sanctioned or punished based on the discretion of the king, but with the consent of some other principal officers in the kingdoms (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022). In the same vein, during this period the traditional leaders were important institutions, who dictated and played pivotal roles in the day-to-day administration of their domains and in the lives of their subjects (Falode & Mustapha, 2022). Hence, the king maintained absolute authority and autonomy in his kingdom which was in line with the existing checks and balance system as dictated by the tradition of his kingdom (Adedayo & Ibitoye, 2009).

However, in recent times traditional institution, has experienced unpleasant changes in leadership and socio-cultural hurdles, among these are revolutions, wars, the colonial rule (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022), the involvements of Nigerian elite class in politics which led

to her independence in 1960, that was subsequently accompanied by the military rule which paved ways for the introduction of local government reform in 1976 which detached the traditional rulers from politics and officially assigned them advisory roles in the decision-making process at the local level through Traditional/Emirate Council (Tonwe & Osenwota, 2013), however, more often than not the advice of the traditional rulers is not binding on the democratically elected local government actors (Tonwe & Osenwota, 2013). Even at that, the institution of the king "Oba" is still much adored, respected and venerated in Yorubaland (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022), as the traditional ruler maintains a father figure in their respective domains.

2.1 Selection and Making of a King in Yorubaland

The selection of a king "Oba" is carried out through a rigorous and elaborate process as laid down by the criteria that are implicit in the tradition and discretion of the people of the kingdom. In most Yoruba communities, there is more than one ruling house, such as that of Owu kingdom, whose accession to its traditional stool of the Olowu of Owu kingdom forms the crux of this paper. In some communities in Yorubaland, the choices of the selection could rotate among the ruling houses, it is worthy of note that some towns or cities do not have that privilege (Oluwasegun & Ajayi, 2022). From time immemorial, the selection of an Oba has been the sole responsibility of the Ifa Oracle "Traditional consulting deity" which is consulted by the Kingmakers through the Ifa priest (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). It is believed by the Yorubas that the Ifa Oracle has the ability to foresee future events and uncover past events and secrets (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013) the deity was to be consulted by the Kingmakers having obtained necessary information from the candidates (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013).

As started earlier, the consultation of the Ifa Oracle is done by the Ifa priest, during this process a stone or cowries is giving a special marking for each candidate and the chief in charge will in turn whisper the name of the candidate to the stone or cowries after which it will be handed to the heads of the Ifa priest who will help in consulting the Ifa Oracle (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013), the heads of the Ifa priest will then hand over the cowries or stone, which promises to be most potent to the community to the Kingmakers and the head of the Kingmakers will then announce the name of the king elected (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). After the announcement, the traditional rite follows immediately, the king will then be empowered with various kinds of supernatural powers, the most significant event during the course of initiation and fortification of the king elected, is the eating of the preserved heart of his predecessor which in Yoruba language means "Okan", while the Oba elect is eating the heart of his predecessor, every other persons will prostrate in submission, acceptance and in unison they would say "may the king live long" (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013).

Thenceforth, he becomes recognized as the rightful king to the sacred throne, it is believed that the eating of the heart of the previous Oba enables the king elected to take over completely from the dynasties of the previous kings (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013), through this process the king elected becomes transformed as a being and a spirit and the father of the kingdom and after eating the heart, he is presented Horn of bulls which is known as "Ase" which is presented by the chief priest to the Oba immediately after eating the heart, to enable him use is supernatural power to command things as he wants, whenever there is a dire need for him to do so at anytime (Oluwasegun & Ajayi, 2015). Having undergone the process of initiation and fortification, it is believed that the new king has now become transformed beyond an ordinary being and could call upon his forefathers while conducting the affairs of his divine office (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). As part of the ritual process, the destiny of the king is put to test by asking him to choose from items kept in a basket such as salt, pepper, honey, gun, cutlass, and snail (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). The items are symbolic and the Yoruba people believe that whatever item he chooses determines his reign as the king of the kingdom. Calabash of salt and honey is a good omen for the kingdom as it represents pleasant governance and prosperous administration laced with prosperity of the town (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). The choice of pepper, cutlass, and gun predicts evil reign, which symbolizes war, bad omen. The choice of snail points to peace in the town (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). After fulfilling all these processes, an elaborate coronation ceremony is mostly put in place to welcome the new king (Oluwasegun & Ajayi, 2022). As part of the coronation exercise, the king is presented with instruments of power and authority, such as crown, beads and cow's tail referred to as "Irukere" in Yorubaland. The crown is the most significant paraphernalia of the position of a king; it outrightly depicts the sacred royal power of the king (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022).

In recent times, the role of Ifa Oracle in the selection, coronation and installation of a new Oba is more of theory than in practice. Apparently, the consultation of Ifa Oracle which was a major prerequisite for selecting a viable Oba in any given kingdom in the past is now a thing of choice in contemporary times, in most communities in Yorubaland. Although, some communities still believe that it is better to do things as it was done in the past so as to avoid the wrath of the gods, their forefather, and to ensure that things go well in the land, in these set of communities the consultation of Ifa Oracle is still being hold in high esteem in the selection of a new king, thereby protecting the tradition of the land by choosing the right choice through the help of the Ifa Oracle (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). It is worthy of note that in most communities in Yorubaland, kings are now being selected without consulting the Ifa Oracle, this is as a result of civilization which has taken away the sacred function of the gods in nominating who ascends the throne. However, the idea of allowing civilization to dictate the ways of doing things, which is now the order of the day in most communities in Yorubaland, has been of help to some communities, thereby paving ways for unprecedented developments and putting an outright end to some barbaric forms of rituals in those community, but in most places it has paved ways for lack of integrity and good values in the land (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013).

It is imperative to state that in recent times in most communities that have set aside the consultation of Ifa Oracle in the selection process of a new king; the Kingmakers are sometimes corrupt as some of them tend to demand for money from the aspirants of the

stool (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013). The coveted position of an Oba as a result of the negligence, corruption on the part of some Kingmakers are sometimes given to the person, who can offer the highest in term of money and other benefits to them. Notably, this has raised the integrity error in most communities (Oladosu & Olaiya, 2022). Without no iota of doubt, the Yoruba kingship system and monarch in contemporary times could be referred to as a representative system considered as a constitutional monarch (Oladumiye & Kashim, 2013).

2.2 A Historical Perspective of Owu Kingdom

Although, the tradition of origin of Owu kingdom is not the aim of this paper, it, however gives us an insight into the background of the kingdom which is needed to understand the accession to the throne of Olowu of Owu: A case study of Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II, which is the focal point of this paper. According to Akintoye (2010) the Olowu was the earliest amongst Oduduwa large family to establish a settlement outside Ile-Ife. He recounts that the father of Olowu was a priest in the palace of Oduduwa and he got married to Oduduwa's eldest daughter and their wedlock birthed Olowu who was the progenitor of the Owu people. He further posits that the Olowu moved westwards in the forest of Ile-Ife and founded Owu ipole (Akintoye, 2010). This aligns with the claim of Biobaku (1973) on the progenitor of the Owus, according to him the first born of Oduduwa was a female (Princess) who later got engaged to a priest and they gave birth to Olowu; the progenitor of the Owus. The above views were further substantiated by Tomori (2017), Ajibosin also known as (Asunkungbade), the first Olowu, was the grandson of Oduduwa through her mother, who was the eldest daughter of Oduduwa. He posits that while Ajibosin was young he was used to wearing his grandfather's crown and whenever it was time to be removed from his head he wept uncontrollably, to the extent that his grandfather "Oduduwa" had to let go of his crown and he instructed his daughter to keep the crown for her son who was later nicknamed "Asunkungbade" (Tomori, 2017). Further, he notes that Olowu Ajibosin established Owu in a grassland, and from there Owu wielded her authority over other territories such as the rising kingdom of Oyo and Igbomina, that is why the Owu's are referred to in their anthem as "Owu Lako dao, bie de Ife, e bere wo" literary meaning Owu was the first to be established, inquire when you get to Ife (Tomori, 2017). Ogundele and Ebonine (2010) submits that the Owus are a sub-ethnicity of the Yoruba race in southwestern region of Nigeria and that Orile-Owu (meaning the original settlement site of Owu), was derived from the word Owu "Cotton", however the region was originally known as Owu-Ipole which later metamorphosed to Orile Owu (Ogundele & Ebonine, 2010).

Furthermore, the Olowu's kingdom of Owu-ipole became geographically and strategically important in terms of trade and military. Its strategic location made it easy for her to participate and benefit from the trade that flows from Ijebu in its south to Ile-Ife In the east and Oyo in the north (Akintoye, 2010). The Olowu extended his influence over other Owu subgroup, to the extent that kingdoms in the Owu sub-group could be nothing more than the subject of the Olowu (Akintoye, 2010). However, whatever authority the Olowu deprived the other Owu subgroup from, was returned to them in affluence and in the pride of been ruled by the Olowu (Akintoye, 2010). The Olowu was for sometimes regarded as the most influential king in Central Yorubaland, therefore the Owus were popularly known for their military prowess, a reputation of aggression and sternness. Akintoye, postulates that Owu became powerful and it subjected Oyo to tributary for many years, till the period of the emergence of Alaafin Sango who successfully brought an end to the payment of tribute to the Olowu. Alaafin Sango took over from Alaafin Ajaka, who relinquished his position as an Oba for his brother Sango who was expected by the chief to put an end to the incessant attack of Oyo citizens by the Nupe and Bariba, which he did to a very remarkable extent. Opaleye (2020) put it more succinctly that Alaafin Sango succeeded his brother Alaafin Ajaka, who was overwhelmed by leadership responsibilities. According to him Alaafin Sango, was a veteran warrior blessed with supernatural power, one of the very first thing Alaafin Sango did was that: he put an end to the payment of tributes to Owu by the Alaafin Oyo and his subjects, Alaafin Sango succeeded in freeing Oyo off the shackles of the Olowu by expelling all the Owu forces that had hitherto stayed around Oyo, thereby making Oyo an independent territory with its own formidable military (Opaleye, 2020).

In line with the discourse, Akintoye (2010) affirms that as the Yoruba kingdom continue to flourish in the Niger area, they became subjected to stiff threats and opposition by their Nupe and Bariba counterparts, these oppression amongst other reasons, compelled the Owu to move towards the southern hemisphere of Yorubaland. However, Owu finally flourished towards the west of Ile-Ife, but there are evidences that their first location was to the North in the Ogboro area and that it was pushed southward by the Bariba. Furthermore, one of the consequences of the incessant attacks on Yorubaland was that, the Yorubas had to let go of some of their territories and people in the southern bank of Niger, places like Jebba and Mokwa territory which were hitherto inhabited by Yoruba were absorbed by the Nupe. Akintoye (2010) emphasizes that, by the late 16th century Oyo-Ile regain her lost power and her point of influence and military prowess transcended to the Igbomina and Ila to the extent that Oyo-Ile was able to free Igbomina and Ila off the yoke of the Nupe, the Nupe's attack on Oyo-Ile did not stop but it was reduced to the barest minimum as it had no significant effects on the empire (Akintoye, 2010). Following the above, Akintoye (2010) posits that from the 17th century upwards, the Atlantic Slave Trade began to take shape on the coast of West Africa, thenceforth slave raiding began effectively most especially by the Nupes who invaded the territories of their neighbors such as the Gbagyi in the north of the Niger and the Yoruba south of it (Akintoye, 2010). He further enunciates that by the 18th century, Oyo-Ile supremacy and authority began to fade and the relentless Nupe and Bariba utilized the internal crises and other problems in Oyo to penetrate and overhauled other territories that were hitherto under the dominance of Oyo-Ile (Akintoye, 2010). Several other territories also declare their independence, he however, notes that the problems in Oyo paved way for the re-emergence of Dahomey as a veritable kingdom, thereby giving it a freehand to have a firm

hold over most Yoruba territories that were hitherto shielded by the authority of the Alaafin. Akintoye (2010) postulates further that as times went on, the raiding and attack by the Nupes continued to skyrocket, in fact, so many people had to vacate their original place of settlements and settled in a more conducive environment, where they could be free from the attack of the Nupes as a result of the topography of their new settlements, especially hilly places (Akintoye, 2010)

While explaining the adverse effects of the fall of Old Oyo Empire in the 19th Century, had over other Yoruba territories, Ikime (2012), submits that the 19th century was a period of unprecedented changes in the History of Yorubaland, the changes began with the problems in Oyo Empire which subsequently paved ways for the incursion of the Hausa-Fulani into Yorubaland thereby having a foothold on some territories which had hitherto been under the absolute control of the Alaafin (Ikime, 2012). Territories such as Ilorin and several other territories began to free themselves from the shade of Oyo Empire, and that necessitated the movement of its inhabitants into several other territories in Yorubaland and also paved ways for the wars of supremacy that became rampant in other Yoruba territories in the 19th century (Ikime, 2012). It is in this kind of tense atmosphere that the Owu war broke out.

On the account of the Owu war, Akintoye (2010) submits that the Owu war, directly or indirectly, was propelled by the unrest in the Old Oyo Empire which subsequently led to her collapse in the early 19th century (Akintoye, 2010). Further, he states that the most important remote factor which necessitated the outbreak of the war was the attack on the Ife market town of Apomu in 1793, by the Oyo Army, Alaafin Awole who ordered the attack, as a result of the weakness of Ile-Ife then, Ile-Ife could not quell the attack (Akintoye, 2010). He further claims that, the Baale of Apomu who was hell-bent on preventing his territory, lost his life during the attack and subsequently as the power of Oyo continued to deteriorate, Oyo traders plying the route of Apomu to Ijebu or elsewhere and those trading in the market were subjected to all sorts of attacks and harassments by the people of Apomu and other nearby Ife villages, who were determined to avenge the death of the Baale of Apomu and the destruction caused by the attack in 1793 (Akintoye, 2010). He expatiates that Alaafin could not help the situation. However, two of his chiefs namely Adegun (the Onikoyi of Ikoyi) and Toyeye (the Baale of Ogbomoso) sought the assistance of the "Olowu of Owu, Akinjobi" towards putting an end to the attack on Oyo subjects in Apomu and its environs, subsequently the Olowu ordered the attack of Apomu and the attack led to a fracas which later degenerated into a full blown war between Ife and Owu in 1812, whereby the Ife army was defeated and Ife sought the support of the Ijebus who were already at loggerheads with Owu over her excessiveness on the trade routes that connected Ijebu with most part of Yorubaland. (Akintoye, 2010) submits further that the Ijebu and Ife formed an alliance and declared war on Owu in 1817.

In addition, Ikime (2012) states that Owu war started around 1821 and by 1825 the three large towns of Owu namely; Owu, the capital, Erunmu and Ogbere had been annihilated. Further, he posits that the Owu war was the most severe war the Owu had fought ever since they left Ife, he claimed that the remote cause of the war was the attack of Apomu in 1793, by the Oyo Army, the reason for the invasion was that Alaafin Awole who later became the Alaafin claimed that while he was a prince he was tortured by the Baale of Apomu for slave trading and human trafficking, in retaliation of the act, when he became the Alaafin he ordered the invasion of Apomu, the attack of the Apomu met the displeasure of others who made use of the market such as Ife, Ijebu etc (Ikime, 2012). Ikime (2012) recounts that, the immediate cause of the war was that "Olowu Amororo" attacked Ife in the second half of the 19th century and the attack of Ife had devastating effects, as so many lives and properties were lost, he opines further that the Olowu was made to attack Ife by Adegun (the Onikoyi) and Afonja (kakanfo) on the pretext that slave raiding was going on within Ife territory (Ikime, 2012). He stresses further, that another possible cause of the Owu war, was the war of supremacy over which town will control the market town of Apomu between Ife and Owu, in the course of the fight, Owu won and took charge of the affairs of the market and Ife in an attempt to turn the tide, collided with the Ijebus and was also joined by a large number of Oyo refugees who were seeking for a better environment to stay, together they laid a siege to Owu and shut all forms of supply to the kingdom, thereby starved it out completely and destroyed it and after the destruction of Owu, the allied forces turn to the Egbas who were accused of providing assistance to the Owu during the siege, their territories were destroyed and they were compelled to relocate to Abeokuta (Ikime, 2012).

In the same vein, Akintoye (2010) gives a more elaborate account on the Owu war, according to him; the valiant Owu warriors came out of their highly defensive wall to fight the allied forces. However, they were forced back by the allied forces that were superior to them in terms of number and ammunitions (Akintoye, 2010). Further, he submits that the Owu were armed with cutlass and other local weapons, as a result of these they were forced to fall back into their defensive wall of Owu-Ipole, as the allied forces began to grow in leaps and bounds, as they were joined by the Oyo refugees who were seeking new abodes, the allied forces broke into the kingdom and the Owu people were forced to flee out of their fortified wall around 1822, they moved towards the Egba territory and were chased by the allied forces to the Egba territory and the allied forces destroyed one Egba territory after the other as a result of the fact that they were helping the Owus with supply during the period of the siege laid by the allied forces on Owu-Ipole, the Owus and the Egba moved westwards till they got to the Olumo Rock in the western part of Egbaland and they settled in the area they named Abeokuta (Akintoye, 2010). In line with the discourse, (Adegbola, 2009) argues that the Owu war was fought between 1820-1825, and that the war was a landmark events in the 19th century, Yorubaland. He further submits that after the destruction of Owu Ipole by the allied forces, their main point of attack was the Egba who had provided succor to the Owu during the five years siege by the Allied forces (Adegbola, 2009). Their territories were destroyed and a large number of the Egbas were sold into slavery and those

who escaped later settled in Ibadan, which was also the base of the allied forces, while there they were subjected to all kinds of maltreatment and they subsequently found their way out and later settled in Abeokuta in 1829/1830 (Adegbola, 2009).

In a similar vein, Tomori (2017) gives a more elaborate account on the events that accompanied the Owu war and the fall of Owu-Ipole. According to him, after the fall of Owu-Ipole, the Owu people embarked on movements for survival, albeit, every movement of the Owu was often times caused by war (Tomori, 2017). But they did not fight Ibadan, this was as a result of the fact that the Ibadan leader who was aware of their imminent attacks, had presented to them a peaceful emissaries (Tomori, 2017). Further, he affirms that the Owu people led by Olowu Akinjobi were given a place to settle after Ibadan and it was known as "Ahoru Owu" and subsequently called "Owu Ogbere" the name was derived from Ogbere River (Tomori, 2017), hostilities later came up between Olowu Akinjobi and the descendants of Lagelu, over the alleged sacrifice of his wife who was the first daughter of Olubadan Olukiran, the first son of Lagelu, to appease the goddess of Oba river, the incident was subsequently followed by war which led to the destruction of Owu ogbere (Tomori, 2017). However, the incident sent the Owu parking and they later settled at Erunmu. Ibadan subsequently attacked Erunmu and the Owu were compelled to move to a more secured territory, a large number of the Owu marched across Ogun river from Erunmu and later arrived at Oke-Ata in Abeokuta, they were persuaded to stay in Abeokuta by the Egba war general "Balogun Sodeke" and they finally settled in 1834 and Erunmu and Apomu are now part of Owu settlement in Abeokuta.

More importantly, the presence of the Owus in Abeokuta in the early 1830s compelled the Owus to fight side by side with the Egba in the "Makun war", and other wars against the Ado-odo and Dahomy in 1842-18845 (Tomori, 2017). However, the settlement of the Owus in Abeokuta and Ijebu were not as a result of the supremacy of the Owu over them but mostly on friendly agreement. Incontrovertibly, OWUS ARE NOT EGBA NOR ARE THEY IJEBUS (Tomori, 2017). In addition, Abeokuta became an area comprising many kingdoms, namely the Owu under the Absolute control of the Olowu, the kingdom of the Egba Alake, The Egba Gbagura and the Egba Oke Ona (Akintoye, 2010). Furthermore, with the successful settlement of the Owus in Oke-Ata, Abeokuta in 1834, after some years, it became expedient for them to have a new king who oversaw the affair of the kingdom as well as ensured that developments were been fostered in the kingdom. In respect to this, a new king was made through the help of the Kingmakers and the Ifa Oracle, the king was selected out of the six ruling dynasties whose origins were traced to the progenitor of the Owus known, as "Ajibosin" and they were as follows: Akinjobi, Akinoso, Amororo, Ayoloye, Lagbedu, Otileta (Mustapha, 2021).

The title "Olowu of Owu" was retained by the head of the Owu kingdom in Abeokuta to maintain the previous title which was used in their homestead. The title "Olowu of Owu kingdom" a unique name that was linked to the origin and occupation of the Owus. The throne of Olowu of Owu kingdom in Abeokuta has been occupied by various kings chosen from the aforementioned dynasties, since Pawu who reigned between 1855 and 1867. The accession to the throne has occurred in the following order: Oba Adefowote (1867-1872); Oba Aderinmoye (1873-1890); Oba Adepegba (1893-1905); Oba Owokokade (1906-1918); Oba Dosunmu (1918-1924); Oba Adesina (1924-1936); Oba Adelani Gbogboade (1938-1946); Oba Salami Gbadela Ajibola (1949-1972); Oba Adebowale Oyegbade (1975-1980); Oba Micheal Oyelekan (1987-1987); Oba Adisa Lagbedu (1993-2003) and Oba Dosunmu Amororo (2005-2021), (*Egbeyemi, interviewed respondent*) whose process of selection, coronation, installation to the throne of Olowu is the focal point of this paper.

2.3 Accession to the Throne of the Monarch

The accession to the throne of Olowu of Owu, was not entirely smooth-sailing and without opposition for Oba Olusanya, but with the factors of divine sanctioning, grassroots appeal and acceptance, dedication to community services, coupled with his widespread love, his quest for the throne was accomplished (*Egbeyemi, interviewed respondent*). The need for the selection of a new Oba became imminent, after the demise of the 12th Olowu of Owu, Oba Adisa Olawale Odeleye, Lagbedu 1, who reigned between (1993-2003) (Mustapha, 2021). The process for the selection of a new Oba is a rigorous one, as established in the convention of succession to the throne of Olowu of Owu, Six ruling dynasties were recognized and the basis of rotation was to go between them. As earlier noted these ruling dynasties are as follows: Akinjobi, Akinoso, Amororo, Ayoloye, Lagbedu, Otileta (Mustapha, 2021). When it was the turn of Amororo ruling dynasty, which Oba Olusanya represented, five other persons who were also members of the Amororo ruling dynasty also jostled for the position and they were subsequently presented to the Kingmakers (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). At inception the Kingmaking houses "Idile Afobaje" were majorly six in number, which were as follows: Akogun, Obamaja, Orunto, Oyega, Osupori, Omolasi and subsequently Olosi and Balogun were added to the Kingmaking houses and Balogun was made the head of the Kingmakers (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). The Kingmakers are saddled with the responsibilities of examining the contestants, and therefore, select the most suitable for the stool of Olowu of Owu among the contestants for the coveted throne, in unison, the Kingmakers, successfully selected Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu as the best candidate among all the contestants, after fulfilling all the requirements (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). *Olori Bosun Dosunmu* recalls:

One of the greatest requirements for anybody to become an Olowu, is that, the person must be a direct male descendant of a previous title holder (An Oba), his great grandfather, grandfather or his father must have become an Oba, before such a person could become an Oba, it is only when a direct male descendant could not be found, that is when a female direct descendant of a previous Oba could be considered and his male son or grandson could become an Oba, out of all the six contestant it was only Oba Olusanya that met the aforementioned requirement, his

grandfather was the 6th Olowu of Owu (Oba Olasunmbo Dosunmu, Amororo I, who reigned between (1918- 1924) (Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent).

Before, contesting for the vacant stool of Olowu, the then Prince Olusanya was conferred with the title of Omolafe of Owu, in 1968, by Oba Salami Gbadela Ajibola Ayoloye II (Mustapha, 2021). He was also installed as the Omoluberin of Owu kingdom in 1975, courtesy of Oba Adebawale Oyebade, Akinjobi I, and he also became the president of the Council of Owu, titled ‘Princes and Princesses’ during the tenure of his predecessor, Oba (Dr.) Olawale Adisa Odeleye, Lagbedu I (Mustapha, 2021).

After his successful selection by the Kingmakers, letters were written to the effect to both local and state governments, and they in turn thumbed up his candidature and ordered for his Installation without further delay (Mustapha, 2021). Oba Olusanya Dosunmu was gazetted on the 4th of July 2005 (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*), thereafter, following the government approval, the Oba-elect, Oba Olusanya Dosunmu and according to the Owu tradition on the installation of a new Oba, went into seclusion “Ipebi” a traditional house where some traditional rite are performed on the new Oba (*Adelani, interviewed respondent*), while in “Ipebi” according to the Owu tradition, the new Oba will be admonished by the kingmakers on how to address all issues such as: what an Oba is expected to be involved in, how an Oba relates with his Chiefs, the duties of an Oba, and it is where all forms of traditional rites would be performed on the king and for the king amongst other things (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). Indubitably, the Oba must be in seclusion “Ipebi” for three months, it was after then that the ceremonial coronation, where the new Oba would be presented to the public, would be performed (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). While in seclusion (Ipebi), it is worthy of note that no form of traditional rite was performed on Oba Olusanya, and this was because he believed that the period of seclusion, albeit, very necessary was more of an induction, as against the performance of traditional rituals on him which he considered to have been anti-progressive, due to his enlightenment, exposure and believe in Christ (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). Kabiyesi as a pastor, that he was during his life time was of the opinion that no other forms of sanctification could prevail over the sanctification done on him by the Almighty and he also believed that the greatest form of sacrifices had been performed religiously by God and that no forms of sacrifices could prevail over the sacrifice made by God (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*), who sacrificed his only son, Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of his followers which kabiyesi was one of them (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). Oba Olusanya corroborated it further in his words:

I have seen it all... I have been born into this royal family. I have seen some of these practices you are talking about and I have had the opportunity to examine them critically as an enlightened person to see that the concoction which they put inside the crown may be a hindrance to my proper thinking. I just made a decision that I would not have such inside the cap I would wear... Fortunately for me, I was older than the people in the traditional setup that was supposed to be performing traditional whatever on me... I did not have to condemn them, that was what they knew. What I know is different from theirs; my exposure is different. I believe they could benefit from my exposure... Therefore, when the kingmakers came that night, they thought I was not going to allow them inside the house... But the Palace is the house of the public and I have chosen to live there. Anyways, the men came in and I greeted them. They sat down... I started asking their culture and the things they wanted to do. They told me. I told them about my own belief. They said that was my own belief but they were there to perform certain things on me. I said who? Me? I told them it wasn't going to happen. I told them I would need to explain to them why it shouldn't happen. I told them and somehow, I think they were persuaded. They said if I wasn't going to do it their ways, I should buy it with money. I refused. I told them they would not perform anything on me and that was that... (Ojoye).

After the completion of the inductions in seclusion (Ipebi) which lasted for three months, the completion was accompanied with the ceremonial installation and coronation of Late Oba Olusanya Dosunmu Amororo II as the 13th Olowu Of Owu Kingdom, on the 30th of October 2005, Kabiyesi was presented the official staff of office by the Ogun State Government under the amiable leadership of His Excellency, Otunba Gbenga Daniel (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). The occasion was graced by people from all walks of life and Oba Olusanya carefully chose his royal appellation “Kangunere, Amiwo Aja, Akobi Oodua, Amororo II” His circumspectly chosen appellation extolled the virtues of the ancestral heroes of Owu Kingdom as well as, displayed royalty, dignity, valor, strength, love and peace that were clearly depicted in the Olowu Kangunere’s royal symbol of authority (Mustapha, 2021). Having successfully emerged as the 13th Olowu of Owu, the Late Oba Olusanya became a member of the Council of Obas. There are two Councils of Obas; one is the traditional council in Egba Division which is known as Egba Traditional Council and the other, the State Council of Oba which is known as Ogun State Traditional Council, (Mustapha, 2021) for an Oba to attend the meetings at the State level, he has to be a member of the Traditional Council (*Obimakinde, interviewed respondent*). The welfare of the people, town and state are being discussed at the meetings of the Obas’ in Council at both the Divisional level and State level (Mustapha, 2021).

2.4 Legal Cases Charged at the Court of Law against the Emergence of the Monarch

Without any iota of doubt the victory of Late Oba Olusanya Adegboyega did not go unchallenged in court, as several forms of litigation processes accompanied his installation as the 13th Olowu of the ancient of Owu kingdom, by one of his other contenders “Prince Tayo Fadairo” who also jostled for the throne (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). The plaintiff, Prince Tayo Fadairo had the right to contest for the throne, as he is from a female lineage of Amororo ruling dynasty, however, considering the noble background of the defendant: Oba Olusanya, as a grandson of a previous Oba in the kingdom, that was the 6th Olowu of Owu kingdom, Oba Adesunmbo Dosunmu who reigned between 1918-1924 (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). Oba Olusanya had an edge over his other contenders for the stool (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*), which Prince Tayo Fadairo never wanted to succumb to and therefore took legal actions against Oba Olusanya, by leveling vilifying accusations against him at the Court of Law, some of the allegations were that the Late Oba Olusanya Dosunmu was crippled and blind and that the Olowu stool is, therefore, not meant to be occupied by a disabled person (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). In due time, the hearing of the case commenced, after series of judicial promulgations, as part of the litigation proceeding, in 2018, the defendant, was summoned to appear at the Ilaro High court, where the final verdict on the legal tussle that was between him and the plaintiff, Prince Tayo Fadairo, was promulgated by the Judge (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*).

In the course of the hearing, the presiding judge directed Oba Olusanya, to stand at the witness box for interrogation, while standing at the witness box in the court of law, the presiding Judge instructed him to read a particular paragraph in a book without the use of glasses, which he did flawlessly showing no sign of been visually impaired (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). Afterwards, the Judge also ordered him to walk within the court without the use of walking stick. Oba Olusanya worked briskly (Mustapha, 2021). Subsequently, after hearing from the plaintiff and the defendant, the presiding judge enunciated that all the allegations levelled against Oba Olusanya were unsubstantiated and he was convinced to nullify the suits filed against him, he therefore struck the case out of the court (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*), and legally declared the Late Oba Olusanya Dosunmu, as the 13th Olowu of the ancient Owu Kingdom (*Mrs. Dosunmu, interviewed respondent*). This final verdict successful put an end to the legal tussle between Prince Tayo Fadairo and the 13th Olowu of Owu, Late Oba (Dr.) Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II. As evident based on the pieces of information provided above the case lasted for more than 10 years at the court of law.

3.0 Research Methodology of the Study

Data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were sourced through oral interviews with some chiefs and the wife of Oba Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II. Secondary data explored for the purpose of research included: textbooks, periodicals, journal, and internet materials that amplify the tradition of Origin of Owu kingdom, kingship institution in Owu kingdom in particular and Yorubaland in general. The methodology of research was qualitative and it used a deductive and interpretative approach, which required the extraction of relevant information from available sources and interpreting them in a manner that would suit the desired purpose.

4.0 Conclusion of the Study

This paper has presented the utmost relevance traditional rulers had in the lives of their subjects and on the development of their community before the advent of colonial rule in Nigeria coupled with these resultants effect that were ushered in on the status and position of an Oba which were as a result of the advent of colonial rule, the Independence of Nigeria in 1960; the crises of the first republic, the military rule and the return to civilian rule in 1999. Be that as it may, the kingship institution remains resilient in face of daunting challenges. Apparently, in Nigeria traditional rulers are still being accorded a high degree of veneration and legitimacy in the eyes of the populace. Apparently, the dire need to tap on this and incorporate the traditional institution into their rightful position in the governance structure in the country cannot be over emphasized, the traditional rulers should be giving positions whereby they would not serve as mere advisers in the decision making process but active participant in policy formulation and implementation in the country. As earlier observed, the Owus settled in Abeokuta in 1834 after they were persuaded to stay in Abeokuta by the Egba warrior Balogun Sodeke, an appeal which they consented to by settling in Oke-ata. After establishing a new settlement in Abeokuta, it became imminent for the Owus to have a new king in the area, by 1855 Oba Pawu was crowned as the 1st Olowu of Owu kingdom in Abeokuta and after him several Oba were installed as the Olowu of Owu with Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II, as the 13th Olowu of Owu kingdom. Oba Olusanya Adegboyega Dosunmu Amororo II, emerged as the best candidate among several other five members of the Amororo ruling dynasty, after he had been selected in unison as the best candidate by the Kingmaker having fulfilled all the requirements to be met in order to be eligible to contest for the stool of the Olowu of Owu kingdom, as stated earlier. However, as expected of a new Oba in most Yoruba communities after been selected by the Kingmakers what was next was to go into seclusion where the new Oba would be initiated and fortified with traditional rituals and rites. In sum, the initiation process of Oba Olusanya, came in a different dimension as it was dominated by moral admonition on the part of the Kingmakers and Christian religious prayers on the part of the king who was seeking Divine guidance and supports needed towards a successful reign over his kingdom. That said, no form of traditional rituals and rites were done on him and for him, due to his enlightenment coupled with the fact that he had a vast knowledge in Christianity, as a pastor he believed that no form of sanctification and sacrifice

surpasses the one that was done by the Lord Almighty who sacrificed His son for mankind. Not unexpectedly, his emergence as the 13th Olowu of Owu kingdom was accompanied by several litigation processes as he was charged to the Court of Law by one of the other five contestants to the throne of Olowu of Owu kingdom, in person of Prince Tayo Fadeiro. The final verdict that legally declared Oba Olusanya as the 13th Olowu of Owu was presented at the Ilaro High Court, Ogun State, Nigeria, in 2018, after the case had lasted 10 years at the court of law.

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