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Research

Ìgbájọ, Kíríjì and Yorùbáland, an End of History

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Abstract: The Yoruba is an ethnic group in Nigerian with a plethora of intragroup histories of war and peace. One overbearing pan-Yoruba war fought in Ìgbájọ town was the Ekiti-Parapọ war, otherwise dubbed Kíríjì which locked the Ibadan imperial army with the freedom fighters of Ijesha and Ekiti subgroups. The war, which eventually got stalemated, was unmatched in magnitude as it engulfed, destabilised and polarised the entire Yorubaland. Extant literature point to the record immenseness of the war but scantly expatiated on its nitty-gritty, vis-à-vis the cause-and-effect. Notably, the unsophisticated precolonial Yoruba held warmongering as industry and livelihood, hence, like the Hobbesian 'state of nature' the society was largely restive and fearmongering. In this paper, we affirm that the Kíríjì was not just extraordinarily vast in reach and involvements, it marked a watershed in Yoruba history. The war ended a customary norm and gave rise to a new sociopolitical norm. The ensuing British intervention resulted in the dual leapfrogging of Yoruba into colonial subjugation and a modernism of law, order and institutions. A major finding is that Ìgbájọ, the battlefield, would have been obliterated were it not for its choice to actively align with the invading Ibadan army, against its kit and kin Ijesha. The paper adopted the historical and thematic methods, and utilised both the primary and secondary data. It concludes that while Kíríjì ended a history of chaotic norms for Yoruba, it kick-started a progressive order for the people.

Keywords: Yoruba, Kíríjì war, Ìgbájọ, Ekiti-Parapọ War, Ibadan.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The names Ìgbájọ and Kíríjì are significant for marking a watershed in the history of the Yorùbá. While the latter ended an ordeal that triggered another, the former served as a venue for its history. Ìgbájọ is an ancient settlement of historical significance to the Yorùbá because of its multiple, unique, and epochal experiences. Situated in southwestern Nigeria in the Bólúwadúró Local Government Area, Osun State, Ìgbájọ shares geographical borders

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with towns such as Ìrèsì, Ìlá-Òràngún, Òkè-Ìmèsí, Òkè-Ìlá-Òràngún, Adà, Ìmèsí-Ilé, and Ikóro-Èkìtì. With a population of over twenty-five thousand (25,000) in 2015, Ìgbájọ is precisely located 199 miles (321 km) southwest of Abuja, the Federal Capital City. The people of Ìgbájọ are Yorùbá by tribe, language, and traditions (culture and customs). An account claims that Ìgbájọ was founded in 300 AD by a son of Oduduwa, the progenitor of the Yorùbá race. In the Yorùbá language, Ìgbájọ means "the assembled." Its variant, agbára-wajọ, means "we assembled together." Ìgbájọ stemmed from the descriptive word gbájọ, meaning "gathered," or its variant àgbájọ ènìyàn, meaning "assemblage of peoples," to denote the deliberate cohabitation of myriad peoples from diverse Yorùbá sub-groups, though some non-Yorùbá people also settled with them. The early settlers adopted Ìgbájọ as a name to reflect their diverse natures, origins, and agglutination. The name depicted an ensemble of diverse nationalities, a melting pot town where disparate peoples agglutinated. Ìgbájọ is thus formatively unique in Yorubaland.

Today, however, Ìgbájọ is renowned as the battlefield of a pan-Yorùbá Civil War dubbed Kíríjì or Èkìtì-Parapọ in the late 1800s. Kíríjì was a conflict that pitched the allied forces of Ìjèshà and Èkìtì Yorùbá sub-groups against Ibadan (the dominant sub-group). Kíríjì could be dubbed a pan-Yorùbá World War because the warring parties extended far beyond the main sub-groups, as many others (especially Ìjèbú, Ègbá, Igbómìnà, and Ilorin) aligned with either side, either for vendetta, vested interests, or camaraderie. Another historical account states that Ìgbájọ was the only place where ten princes and their sons met during migrations to found their kingdoms. The meeting was held on a rock that is now preserved for tourism. The kings are: Òràngún of Ìlá, Ọlóyañ of Òyañ, Ajerò of Ìjerò-Èkìtì, Alárá of Arámoko, Ọwá of Òtan-Ayégbajú, Olójúdõ of Ìdõ-Èkìtì, Ọwálàrè of Ìlàrè, Onírè of Ìrè-Èkìtì, Òwòrè of Òtùn-Èkìtì, and Ọwá of Ìgbájọ. They left for different places thereafter, leaving ten sacred commemorative stones at the spot. The study, Ìgbájọ, Kíríjì and Yorùbáland: An End of History, delved into Ìgbájọ's history from cradle to Kíríjì, a watershed in the developmental histories of the Yorùbá people.

Literature Review, Methodology and Scope of the Study

Extant literature reveals Ìgbájọ as most renowned for its involvement in the 19th-century Kíríjì or Ekiti-Parapọ War, the most historic of all Yorùbá wars. Virtually all accounts relate Ìgbájọ and its unfortunate situation with the War. Ogunfolakan, who has published extensively on Ìgbájọ and its environs, notes that the entire area, as an entity, does not have a collectively written history; however, the area gained prominence during

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the wars concerning Ekiti-Parapọ. Hence, Akintoye similarly asserts that most books relating to the area, especially Ìgbájọ, deal with Kíríjì and not with its early era. Thus, Ìgbájọ is mostly renowned as a battlefield for Kíríjì and as a centre for political and military history in Yorùbáland. Ogunfolakan also notes that the peoples of the area are united by overlapping socio-cultural institutions, traditions, religion, and world view, and that they have always intermingled before, during, and after the Yorùbá Wars. This led to the emergence of three Yorùbá sub-groups distinguished by dialectal variances: the Òyó Yorùbá group of Ìkìrun, Ìrágbìjí, Òyañ, and Así; the Ìjèshà Yorùbá group of Ìgbájọ, Ìrèsì, and Òtan-Ayégbajú; and the Igbómìnà Yorùbá group of Ìlá-Òràngún, Ajaba, and Òkè-Ìlá.

Oral histories of the people either claimed that they migrated from Òyó or Ilé-Ifè. Many towns in the environs were formed by an admixture of peoples who migrated from diverse areas to live together. In such towns, each migratory group maintained its original identity in its familial quarter or compound. For instance, some Ẹdẹ people migrated to settle at Ìlá-Òràngún in an area known today as Oke-Ẹdẹ. They are also found in Ìgbájọ, Ìmèsí-Ilé, and Òtan-Ayégbajú. Ìgbájọ also experienced an interesting relationship of peoples coming together to live under the same polity while maintaining their original identities. This study aimed to account for how conflicts led to the dispersal of peoples from one town to another and how this influenced the growth of Ìgbájọ, with special attention to its socio-cultural practices, denoting the settler families or compounds and their origins. The main aim is to understand the criticality of Ìgbájọ to Yorùbá history, particularly the raisons d'être for partnering with Kíríjì, and the extent and impact of its involvement in Yorùbá's most brutal and longest war. Other objectives were to document Ìgbájọ's historical roots and its socio-economic and political development. Finally, the study explored the intrusion of Britain into Yoruba affairs and the consequent fate of the Yoruba world.

Primary and secondary data were utilised. The primary data consisted of oral accounts from, and interviews conducted with, individuals considered to be Ìgbájọ elders and authorities. Secondary data were sourced from books, journal articles, dissertations and theses, anniversary pamphlets, speeches, documentaries, and internet-based materials. Data were thematically analysed using the historical method. However, a work such as this in semi-literate societies faced challenges such as a paucity of evidential materials and authentic information, as little documentation had been made about ancient issues despite their significance to Yorùbá developmental history. Nevertheless, the autobiographies,

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books, research materials, and oral interviews provided by the indigenous elders were sufficient and meaningful. Additionally, the data were thoroughly cross-checked to ensure that the output was fair, factual, and objective.

The study began with a background, purpose, objectives, scope and methodology, as well as a brief but compelling literature review. It then explored the founding of Ìgbájọ, accounting for the various Yorùbá sub-groups that cohabit in the ancient settlement. The section classified the various families and compounds based on their towns of origin and listed the names of Ìgbájọ kings from cradle to date. It examined the socio-political administration of Ìgbájọ from early times, in relation to the Ọwá (King) of Ìgbájọ and the Council of Chiefs, and accounted for its developmental experiences, especially its bitter wars, firstly with Ìjèshà and then Kíríjì, where it aligned with Ibadan against the Ìjèshà-Èkìtì alliance. The work concluded by discussing the post-war developments that effectively altered the history of the Yorùbá.

ÌGBÁJỌ: From Foundations to Traditions

Given the myriad versions accounting for its formation, it is hazy to ascertain the origin of Ìgbájọ, an ancient town. However, as is customary for all Yoruba, wherever they may be, to proudly legitimise their first-order origin as being from Oduduwa of Ilé-Ifè, their commonly held progenitor, a popular Ìgbájọ account enunciated by Ranti Ojo states that Ìgbájọ's founder originated from Ifè, being one of the 27 children of Oduduwa, leading other migrants to a place that became Ìgbájọ. The migrants were divided into four groups known as: Ọmọ-Ọwá, Ọmọ-Ẹjẹmu, Ọmọ-Oníbayan, and Ọmọ-Olu-Ifè, each with its leader. Upon arriving at the place, strategically situated for its accessibility, the migrants settled in different sections, with one at Ilọrọ (named after the Ilọrọ in Ilé-Ifè). The Ìgbájọ area became their administrative headquarters. All groups met constantly to discuss issues of joint interest. A gong was used to invite the settlers to converge at the approach of every meeting, and palm wine was also served at the end of the meeting. The meetings often dragged into the night, requiring them to light lamps. This routine, according to the Ọdọfin-Ìgbájọ, High Chief Ojo Fasoro, led to the popular appellation: Ìgbájọ Ilọrọ, ọmọ alagogo memu, ọmọ atanna muti ale (Ìgbájọ Ilọrọ, descendants of those who struck the gong to drink palm wine; who lit lamps to sip wine in the evenings).

Tunde Busari opined that, on account of its strategic location, Ìgbájọ became a meeting point and, indeed, a safe haven for many Yorùbá families who were victims of war or internal discontent in their respective towns and communities. Thus, Ìgbájọ is an

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amalgam of sub-ethnic peoples from Ifè, Ìjèshà, Igbómìnà, Òyó, and Èkìtì. Given this, Busari affirmed that it is not unusual to see an Ìgbájọ native easily adjusting to the dialects of any of the five towns—an uncommon act among the indigenes of other Yorùbá towns. Other migrants from Ìrésà, Ìrèsì, Òtan, Ìlá-Òràngún, Ìmèsí, Adó Èkìtì, Ìjerò, Iléshà, Òffà, Òyó, Ẹdẹ, Òrè, Àkókó, and Nupe later joined the early settlers. The table below shows migrants to Ìgbájọ by compounds from diverse parts of Yorùbáland and beyond. However, the different cultures and traditional identities of these people can still be felt in the day-to-day interactions of the people to this day. Some families with peculiar tribal marks on their faces can be easily traced to their ancestral towns of origin. But despite their diversity, a great attribute of the people is their cooperative ensemble.

S/N	Place of origin	No of compounds	Percentage of Total
1.	Ilé-Ifè	37	31%
2.	Ìlá-Òràngún and Igbómìnà towns	24	20%
3.	Èkìtì, Òwò and Àkókó towns	20	16.7%
4.	Òyó, and Òyó speaking towns	20	16.7%
5.	Iléshà and other Ìjèshà towns	9	7.5%
6.	Irèsì	3	2.5%
7.	Òtan-Ayégbajú	4	3.1%
8.	Nupe (Tapa)	3	2.5%
	Total	**120**	**100%**

Source: Ranti Ojo, Ìgbájọ: History, Culture and Development, 1250-1990.

Also, despite their dialectal diversity, Ìgbájọ indigenes evolved a distinct dialect that is neither Òyó, Èkìtì, Ìjèshà, Ifè, nor Igbómìnà. Although many believe that the Ìgbájọ people are Ìjèshà by their intonation, others opine that their Yorùbá is a conflation of the Ifè, Ìjèshà, Èkìtì, Òyó, and Igbómìnà dialects. The 1980 inauguration brochure for the Oòni of Ilé-Ifè, Oba Okunade Sijuade, listed the Ọwá - Ìgbájọ as the 15th grandchild of Oduduwa; yet, Tugbiyele claimed that the Ọwá of Ìgbájọ was rated 14th among the Yorùbá Obas. Another account attributes the founding of Ìgbájọ to one Adegbola, who was said to have led others from Ilé-Ifè to Ìgbájọ but slipped and died while riding his horse. He was succeeded by his son Olasinmi, rechristened Ajiboye due to the accidental circumstances of his ascendancy. He reigned for 60 years. Additionally, the Ìgbájọ people were said to have

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been driven by wars to many locations, including a place called Mayin, near Akure, before settling at the present site. This might be indisputable given the notoriety for warmongering in Yorùbáland.

The Importance of Esilè in Ìgbàjò History

The history of Ìgbájọ would be incomplete without mentioning the legendary Esilè, who had been deified. An Ìgbájọ community book reputed Esilè's maternal grandfather to be from the Igala tribe in Idah. Another account claimed he was Nupe. At the death of a Ọwá, it was Esilè's turn to reign. As the king must also be able to lead in war, he felt he must arm himself with powerful charms; hence, he travelled to Nupeland for charms. However, upon his return, he discovered that someone else had been installed and that the people were in a festive mood. He turned back angrily, and then the town blacksmith, known as Bamigbowu's father, followed him with an anvil and a hammer to Irèsì. On the way, the elderly blacksmith begged the then Olójà (King) of Irèsì, named Ebekun, to join him in his effort to bring Esilè back. Both of them pursued Esilè into the forest; however, the three never returned. Ebekun's chain, along with the blacksmith's hammer and anvil, were later found at a spot in the forest. To appease Esilè, Ìgbájọ consequently defied him. He is annually venerated with a cow in May during the Orókè Festival. Busari asserts that the festival brings together the ruling houses to celebrate their progenitors by killing a cow, which is shared among them in a lively atmosphere. Members of the royal families are escorted to the Orókè shrine by drummers who enhance the occasion with music and panegyrics in a nostalgic recall of the old Ìgbájọ. The Ọdọfin-Ilọrọ of Ìgbájọ doubles as the Chief Priest, and the natives heartily embrace the festival for its cultural, spiritual, and ancestral significance.

The List of the Past Kings (Ọwá) of Ìgbàjò

The list below is the names of the past Ọwá of Ìgbájọ.

Adegbola Akeran
Adosun (Olasimi) or Ajiboye
Oranyan
Lailomo
Ojikutu
Adewu (the Ọwá nominee died during ascension rites, so, he never reigned)
Adebiyi
Adejinle
Gbeleru
Ọwá kurumgbon
Folaseke
Otutubiosun (Oba Adebagbo)
Omokan
Agbon-Abudi
Odemirin
Fasosin
Ọba dudu
Ọfin
Orisatusin
Ajiboye
Ajila

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Olatise
Famodun (1822 - 1892)
Latilo (1892 -1910)
Awodola (1910-1913)
Ajeigbe (1913 -1924)
Ojo Adebiyi (1924 -1956)
Isaac Adelani Famodun (1957 -1988)
Adeniyi Olufemi Fasade – Akeran IV (1990 -2020)

The Bicker Relations Between Ìgbàjò and Ìjèshà (Iléshà)

An account claimed that the Ọwá of Ìgbájọ and the Ọwá of Iléshà were of the same mother, both begotten by Oduduwa. The Ọwá of Iléshà, named Ajibogun, was the elder brother of the Ọwá of Ìgbájọ. The Ọwá of Iléshà was said to have settled in Iléshà when the Ọwá of Ìgbájọ moved further to settle at a site thought to be Oko Omu. The brothers later fell apart and became unfriendly, leading to frequent hostilities against one another. The late Ọwá of Ìgbájọ (1957-1988), Oba Isaac Adelani Famodun, alluded to this during the 1986 centenary celebration of the cessation of the Kíríjì War at Ibùdó Kíríjì, near Ìgbájọ, when he responded to a speech by the Ọwá of Iléshà, saying:

"You are my senior brother. I have never seen where two brothers' enmity is so fierce to the extent of militarily pursuing one another into this hilly area. When this enmity became so unbearable, I had to come to where I am today, and I embraced the Òyó. It has been with the support of these Òyós that I live to this day, and we are now Òyó."

Family Compounds in Ìgbàjò and Their Places of Origin

The list below is of the various family compounds in Ìgbájọ and where they migrated from.

Compound	Origin
Ile Ọdọfin-Ilọrọ	Ile – Ifè
Ile Osolo	Ile – Ifè
Ile Lojua (kigboye)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Agbojuomi	Ile – Ifè
Ile Olorin (Faniyan)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Olorin Oke Oja	Ile – Ifè
Ile Legiri	Ile – Ifè
Ile Gbeleru	Ile – Ifè
Ile BabaỌwá	Ile – Ifè
Ile Fajite (Oyigi)	Ile – Ifè
Ile LỌwámosi	Ile – Ifè
Ile Onigemo	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ofunmolegberu	Ile – Ifè
Ile Oluju	Ile – Ifè
Ile Nikeju (OnIfáre)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Aworo Osun	Ile – Ifè
Ile Akinfin	(Though the royal family is from Ikinfin) Ile – Ifè
Ile Olorin Oguru	Ile – Ifè
Ile Olukoyi	Ile – Ifè
Ile Loye Oke Odo	Ile – Ifè
Ile Loye Ilọrọ	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ẹjẹmu Odo Ilọrọ	Ile – Ifè
Ile Obala Ilọrọ	Ile – Ifè
Ile kajodun Ilọrọ (Erunran)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ẹjẹmu Ijemu	Ile – Ifè
Ile Lemikan Ode Arin	Ile – Ifè
Ile Jagun	Ile – Ifè
Ile Lagbaa (Olumo)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Lofemu (Omikunle)	Ile – Ifè
Ile Kulukulu	Ile – Ifè
Ile Onitegun	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ajumole	Ile – Ifè
Ile Adugbo	Ile – Ifè
Ile Apasikoto	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ajale	Ile – Ifè
Ile Eminiwa	Ile – Ifè
Ile Oluode	Iresa
Ile LỌwá – Ikan	Owo
Ile AjÌlá	Ìjerò
Ile Oloje	Adà
Ile Olota	Ìlá Òràngún

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Ile Giriyesi	Òtan-Ayégbajú
Ile Obala Ìgbájọ	Aramoko
Ile Ọdọfin Ìgbájọ	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Salaro	Ìjerò
Ile Kojodun Eyindi	Tapa (Nupe) / Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Enuromi	Tapa (Nupe)
Ile Kojodun Oguru (Pompola)	Òyó Aláàfin
Ile Lejofi	Iléshà
Ile Otun (Ògún ru)	Ajase–Ipo
Ile Esakiran	Ìlá-Òràngún
Ile Loriawo (Okeresi)	Iléshà
Ile Logunde (Okeresi)	Iléshà
Ile Leise	Apa & Aramoko
Ile Lofemu Loriawo	Ẹdẹ (Ìlá Òràngún)
Ile Alawe	Igbeti
Ile Ẹjẹmu Isao	Òtan-Ayégbajú
Ile Eesawe	Ìrésà & Ìjerò
Ile Poro	Ikole
Ile Oloba	Oba Ile (near Osogbo)
Ile Amugba	Oba Ile (near Osogbo)
Ile Akogisegeun	Oba Ile (near Osogbo)
Ile Bara	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Aworo Ògún	Ado Èkìtì
Ile Olobe	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Balogun	(Adeniji Oke Ogo) Ikoyi Ile
Ile Faronbi	Osogbo
Ile Onikoro	Ikoyi Ile
Ile Elemu	Ibà near Ikirun
Ile Agberako	Ire Èkìtì
Ile Osunji	Ido Ajinare
Ile Asawo	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Anigbedu	Ido Ajinare
Ile Akio	Òyó Aláàfin
Ile Joriki	Irèsì
Ile Alapa	Apa
Ile Abada	Otan Ayegbaju
Ile Jokoto	(Ile Ìrókò Gogoro) Ìlá Òràngún
Ilo Olori Alulu (Aluganganun)	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Edun	Ede (Ìlá Òràngún)
Ile Akeke	Ile – Ifè
Ile Ake	Òyó Aláàfin
Ile Aluko	Ìmèsí-Ile/ Èfòn Aláayè
Ile ketuopo	Ile Òràngún
Ile Fasin	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Laditan (Afunimogbo) (Onikoyi to Èfòn Aláayè, re-migrated back to Ìgbájọ)	
Ile Asere	Ìlá Irèsì
Ile Aro – mayan	Tapa (Nupe)
Ile Ese	Òyó Aláàfin & Ìjerò
Ile Bogileje	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Agbore	Okemesi- Èkìtì
Ile Awanibaku (Badeku)	Ado Èkìtì
Ile Lofemu Loriawo	Ẹdẹ Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Eleyele	Ede (Ìlá Òràngún)
Ile Ogbo	Ìgbétì
Ile Faro (part of Ile Aworoogun)	Ado Èkìtì
Ile Ọdọfin Ikan	Èfòn Aláayè & Ipetu –Ìjèshà & Òyó
Ile loriogbón	Òtan-Ayégbajú
Ile Elero	Irèsì
Ile Olodu	Ìjerò
Ile Esorun Oguru	Arámoko
Ile Aro Ìgbájọ	Ado – Èkìtì
Ile Lorisa	Arámoko
Ile Osunji	Ido Ajinare
Ile Apesikiti	Ìjerò
Ile Obaloja	Arámoko
Ile Arode	Esa – Oke
Ile Jadiogun (Omidiji)	Ada
Ile Laate	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Ari	Ẹdẹ (Ìlá Òràngún)
Ile Fagun	Ore (Odò-Òtìn)
Ile Igi Ege (Ọdọfin Ketu opo)	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Lamilekan	Ode Oke Ìmèsí Ile
Ile Laage	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Oge	Aramoko
Ile Saba	Ada
Ile Balogun OnIfáde	Ede (Ìlá Òràngún)
Ile Lawole	Erin –Ile
Ile Buju	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Lokinran	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Obala Oke Oja	Ado Èkìtì
Ile Apa	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Salotun	Òtan & Òyó
Ile Eleyele	Ẹdẹ –Ìlá
Ile Loriawo (Atiba)	Ìlá- Òràngún
Ile Losare	Iléshà
Ile Lorisa	Arámoko
Ile Ayan (Ile Otun Pidan)	Ìlá Òràngún
Ile Ésawè	Ìrèsì and Ìjerò

The Socio-Political Administration of Ìgbàjò

Like most Yorùbá settlements, the administration of Ìgbájọ revolves largely around Àrègbájo, the King. Ìgbájọ has two royal houses from which the King is selected. The

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Àrègbájo, later designated Ọwá, was at the head of the political hierarchy. The kingmakers who select Ọwá are drawn from families that originated from these five towns (Ifè, Ìjèshà, Igbómìnà, Òyó, and Èkìtì) to ensure his acceptance and legitimacy in such a diverse society. This has promoted peaceful coexistence among the people. In an oral account by High-Chief Ojo Fasoro, the traditional chiefs, comprising civil and war chiefs, were arranged hierarchically and by the significance of their duties when selecting a king. The kingmakers are called Afobaje or Èhàrèfà. Once a Ọwá is pronounced (usually in consultation with the Ifá oracle), he proceeds into seclusion for requisite rites and briefings at the Apasikoto compound (now Abisa). High-Chief Fasoro claimed that there had never been any dispute about which family is next in succession to the throne, as there are clearly stipulated procedures for the selection.

Ọwá is the law-giver and Second-in-Command to the gods. A crucial paraphernalia of the Ọwá was Adé (Crown), which gave him the inalienable authority as the final arbiter over his people. His other royal instruments are Ọpá Ìlẹkẹ (beaded staff), Ìrùkẹrẹ (flywhisk), Bàtà Ìlẹkẹ (beaded shoe), neck-beads (Ìlẹkẹ Ọrùn), and wrist-bangles (Àkún). His administrative hall is called Ààfin (Palace), where issues relating to the community are discussed. Although the Ọwá has 'semi-divine' power, he was never an absolute ruler, as there were checks and balances. Often, he carried out the day-to-day administration of the town through a Council of Chiefs (Ìgbìmò Ìlú). Usually, the king rarely appears in public due to his special status, except at festivals. However, he is revered as the spiritual head and the custodian of their history and culture. His authority extended beyond the township to villages and farmsteads in his domain. That was the situation until after Kíríjì when Ìgbájọ came under the British Protectorate in accordance with the 1886 treaty of peace. High-Chief Fasoro claimed that kingship is hereditary among male children born in the two royal houses, and a new ruler is elected from among the eligible candidates.

The Ọwá is closely followed in hierarchy by the Èhàrèfà. They are the traditional title holders and senior chiefs. They serve as the main advisors to the king on crucial matters relating to Ìgbájọ and the subjects. They also act as links between the subjects and the king. Apart from assisting the Ọwá in running the administration of the town, they also make laws and settle disputes. In the event of serious cases, they retire into an inner room in the palace to handle them, but the Ọwá-in-Council usually has the final say. The king's inner council includes Ọbãla-Ilọrọ, Ọbãla-Ìgbájọ, Logun-Lemilekan, Sàlórò, Ọdọfin-Ilọrọ, and Ọdọfin-Ìgbájọ. As the most senior, Ọbãla-Ilọrọ is the Prime Minister and

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second-in-command. Ọbãla-Ìgbájọ presides over the customary/native court. Adorned in special regalia, Logun-Lemilekan coordinates the Egúngún and Ògún festivals. Sàlórò is responsible for keeping and caring for the Ọwá's crowns and certifies the Ọwá's bed before the king sleeps on it. Sàlórò is also the finance officer or treasurer of the chiefs. Ọdọfin Ilọrọ is the head of the Omo Ọwá Ilọrọ. He executes the installation of a new Ọwá and coordinates the Orókè festival. The Ọdọfin-Ìgbájọ performs traditional rites at the conferment of chieftaincy titles to beneficiaries approved by the Ọwá and his inner council.

All the High Chiefs also had a line of title holders (hierarchically organised) under them. These lesser chiefs perform various but similar functions in their different quarters. They assist the High Chiefs in the day-to-day administration of their wards. They also carry out tasks entrusted to them and ensure peace and stability in their communities. Additionally, the High Chiefs have their own courts where they dispense justice with assistance from lesser chiefs. These courts try civil cases involving persons within their wards' jurisdiction, sanctioning the guilty, usually with fines. Unresolved complex cases, especially those involving two or more wards, go to the final court of appeal headed by the Ọwá. Ìgbájọ is divided into five wards known as Ọgbón for easy governance and administration. The five Ògbón are Ògùrú, Àtìbà, Ilọrọ, Isàò, and Òkè-Ọjà. Each ward is headed by an Olórí-Ọgbón, an office rotated among major compounds in a ward. It is neither hereditary nor peculiar to any family. Customary to the Yorùbá, the Ìgbájọ people worship Ṣàngó, Ògún, Egúngún, Ifá, and Orò, among others. The gods are invoked when settling disputes, so some of them serve judicial purposes.

Town meetings were held in Ìgbájọ in ancient times, where issues concerning public interests were discussed. The meetings were often summoned by the Ọwá, who was usually represented by his deputy. Members often regaled themselves with palm wine at the end of deliberations, as noted in their panegyric Ìgbájọ-Ilọrọ, ọmọ alagogo memu; ọmọ atanna muti ale. There are age-grade activities for different age groups in the town. The middle-aged are involved in communal work such as road construction and food farming, and they constituted the bulk of soldiers during wars. The elders were known for rendering wise counsel and useful ideas towards the socio-economic development of the town. The economic activities of the people revolve largely around agriculture, hunting, blacksmithing, and trading within the town and surrounding areas. Men also engage in palm wine tapping and animal husbandry, while women engage in palm oil processing and cloth weaving (Popoki) using hand looms;

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however, Ìgbájọ's main occupation is farming, with the primary produce being yam, kolanut, cassava, walnut, and cocoa.

ÌGBÁJỌ AND KÍRÍJÌ WAR - THE ORIGINS OF KÍRÍJÌ WAR

Yorùbáland experienced a series of devastating wars in the 19th century, and Ìgbájọ had its worst share of those conflicts. The wars that directly involved the Ìgbájọ people during this period were two, the first being the war between Ìgbájọ and Ìjèshà. According to Johnson's account, Iléshà (the Ìjèshà chief town), with Chief Loro leading other chiefs, waged war against Ìgbájọ in contravention of the wise counsel of Chief Ọdọle, the next authoritative chief after Ọwá. Ìgbájọ was almost defeated when their 'save-our-soul' message to Ibadan came to the rescue. At a pre-combat meeting, Abayomi, the Osi (Commander of the Left), led some Ibadan boys on a successful reconnaissance that infiltrated the Ìjèshà camp, slaughtering their war leaders who were caught unawares while lounging without guards and protection. They set the camp on fire, which caused the Ìjèshà invaders to panic and flee. Most were pursued and killed, with the pursuit and killings reportedly carried out even within Iléshà Township. According to Samuel Johnson, the Ìjèshà people in Lagos had to appeal to the Colonial Governor in Lagos to intervene so that the Ibadan army would not destroy their town. The Ọwá of Iléshà sent presents to appease Bashọrun Ògúnmọla in Ibadan to withdraw his warriors from Iléshà. The withdrawal was effected, and the war ended in 1867. However, in the short term, the defeat only strengthened the resolve of the Ìjèshà people to bitterly resent Ibadan's imperial hegemony, in synergy with other embittered subgroups, which had already extended over a sizable part of Yorubaland – Ìbàràpá, Òkè-Ògùn, Ìjèshà, Èkìtì, Òffà, Yàgbà, Àkókó, and others. Clearly, Ibadan had become the awe of Yorubaland. By this time, the Old Oyo Empire had begun to collapse under sustained attacks from nomadic Fulani invaders, a non-Yoruba group seeking to subjugate others to establish a Caliphate. Meanwhile, the fear was palpable among all Yoruba that Ibadan was brutally ambitious to take over the waning empire, and they were unwilling to be dominated.

The Remote and Immediate Causes of the Kíríjì War

The most devastating conflict that engulfed the country was the Kíríjì War (1870-1886). The 16-year brutal war showcased the largest array of military hardware in West Africa at that time. It involved Ibadan, Ìgbájọ, Èkìtì, Ìjèshà, Igbómìnà, and even Ilorin. It should be recalled that a war ensued between Ìgbájọ and Ìjèshà earlier in 1867, during which many Ìjèshà leaders were killed or captured by Ibadan. Among the important Ìjèshà warlords affected were Ishòlá Fabunmi of Ìmèsí-ile and Ògèdèngbé of Iléshà. By the time of

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the conquest, Ibadan had extended its suzerainty over Ìjèshà and Èkìtì lands by imposing its Ajélè (Residents) and court messengers over their vast territories. It was three years later that the Kíríjì War broke out; therefore, the memory of the Ìjèshà-Ìgbájọ war was still fresh. Oyekunle (2019) described Ibadan as a relatively new establishment that had the honour of filling the oversized shoes of the former Òyó Empire as the protector of the Yorùbá nation against external attacks. However, the streak of military successes and wealth that followed Ibadan's military expeditions soon posed serious challenges. The remote causes of Kíríjì were attributed to the unbridled ambition of Ibadan to forcibly extend its suzerainty over all Yorùbá. Typical of superpowers globally, Ibadan soon began to expand its conquests over Yorùbáland, but its Ajélès quickly abused their offices by oppressing the people and selling them into slavery. Many Ajélè became tyrannical, corrupt, and power-drunk, demanding frivolous homages and tributes, including the expropriation of the wives and daughters of their subjects. Despite Ibadan's heroic sacrifices to resist the Fulani's subjugation of Yorùbáland, a sizable number of Yorùbá were equally determined to resist Ibadan's imperial ambition. Thus, the cruelty of the Ajélès was an immediate cause of the Kíríjì War.

Various accounts agree that the war broke out as a result of the resistance of the people of Ìjèshà and Èkìtì against the tyranny of Ibadan Ajélès, which led to the agitation for freedom and liberty. They waited for the right time, which came when Prince Ishòlá Fabunmi, a great and powerful warrior of Ìmèsí-ile, asked his wife to prepare his food. As the food was being prepared, Ibadan's power-drunk Ajélè seized it and, in the process, also rough-handled the wife. Fabunmi was said to be distraught at this, and he angrily beheaded him. Another account attributes the spark to a feud between Fabunmi and Awópetù, the Ibadan Ajélè who allegedly disrupted Fabunmi's annual celebration of the Erinlẹ festival. The act reportedly provoked the Èkìtì and Ìjèshà peoples, who had endured oppression from Ibadan's Ajélès. They swooped in and massacred every Ajélè resident in their respective domains. The murders of the Ajélès meant that a battle line had been drawn and war was inevitable with Ibadan. Fabunmi thereafter contacted the various kings in Ìjèshà and Èkìtì lands to brace themselves for a war of liberation from the oppressive Ibadan. They formed an Èkìtì-Parapọ confederacy and declared their independence from Ibadan. Consequently, a revolutionary war erupted, marking the beginning of the Kíríjì War, which lasted 16 years.

For Ibadan, allowing such treason to go unpunished would encourage sedition from other subjugated peoples. However, the leadership in Ibadan was initially reluctant to declare war; rather, they demanded that Fabunmi repent and respect the Ibadan lordship. This he

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refused, with the backing of kings and warlords in Ìjèshà and Èkìtì lands who were prepared to cast off Ibadan's burden once and for all. Ibadan communicated to Fabunmi that his beheading of the Ajélè did not matter so much, but that he must not defy its authority. He was asked to apologise, but he refused, vowing to end the Ibadan government. Ibadan could no longer tolerate the insolence of a stubborn subject and was poised to punish him. For Oyekunle, most Yorùbá subgroups wanted a decentralised structure where all the federating units would autonomously plan their political future based on their heritage, but Ibadan preferred a centralised political system with a central economy, military command, and a forced united Yorùbá Nation.

Fabunmi encouraged the Èkìtì Obas (Kings) to revolt, and they quickly proceeded to Oke-Ìmèsí for war. The anti-Ibadan revolt was so popular that the Èkìtì-Parapọ alliance included war leaders and warriors from Ilesha and virtually all Ekiti towns, but notably their chief towns – Èfòn, Òtùn, Ìkòlé, Ìjerò, Arámoko, and even Ìlá and Akure, extending to distant Yoruba-speaking areas of Yàgbà and Àkókó, and more. Many were led by their Kings to demonstrate their resolve to be free of Ibadan. The Èkìtì-Parapọ alliance was jointly led by both Fabunmi and Ògèdèngbé. The Baálè of Ibadan declared war under the Òsì, Chief Ìlòrí, Commander of the Left, with Ìkìrun as the initial field of battle. Later, the Séríkí, a more senior war commander of Ibadan, took over and engaged the Èkìtì/Ìjèshà army. After several battles, the Èkìtì-Parapọ forces retreated via Ìgbájọ and were driven beyond it. The Ibadan army camped a mile beyond Ìgbájọ while the Èkìtì-Parapọ camped at Ìmèsí-Ile. It should be noted that the war became protracted between the two sides, resulting in a huge loss of life. Ìgbájọ opted to fight alongside Ibadan. The people of Ìgbájọ, over whose land the battle raged, were said to have exhibited uncommon courage and bravery while supporting Ibadan. War chiefs from surrounding towns of Ìkìrun, Irèsì, Iree, Ìrágbìjí, Òtan-Ayégbajú, Eripa, òròrúwò, Áágba, and Osogbo, among other towns, aligned with Ìgbájọ and Ibadan in the war. As the war remained protracted with neither side capitulating, and coupled with the great loss of life and property, a new twist was introduced by the Ìjèshà people living in Lagos and Abeokuta. They purchased European rifles for Ìjèshà warriors led by their Séríkí (commander) Ògèdèngbé. The guns were far superior to Ibadan's. They had even formed Èkìtì-Parapọ solidarity associations in Lagos and Abeokuta to garner support for their people back home. Johnson reported that "These educated Ìjèshà in Lagos and Abeokuta learned to operate these breech-loading guns, came to Ìmèsí-Ile to teach their men the use of the guns, and to organise their soldiers exactly on the European pattern." By dint of the weaponisation,

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Ibadan lost a sizable number of fighters and commanders, which pointedly undermined their performance. Ibadan also enlisted the support of their sons in Lagos for similar weapons, which thereby stalemated and prolonged the bloody war.

ÌGBÁJỌ: THE THEATRE OF KÍRÍJÌ WAR

Ìgbájọ became the theatre of Kíríjì neither accidentally nor forcefully, but by circumstance, necessity and strategy; however, the people opted not to confederate with Èkìtì-Parapọ despite their cultural and dialectal affinities. There exists a familial link between Ìgbájọ and Ìjèshà, particularly as a large chunk of the Ìgbájọ population were Ìjèshà stock. In fact, the title Ọwá of Ìgbájọ takes after that of the monarch of Iléshà. Notwithstanding, Ìgbájọ suffered relentless aggression from Iléshà. Thus, without any sentiment for affinities, Ìgbájọ took the Ibadan/Ìjèshà enmity as their opportunity for liberation, revenge and security, and allowed Ibadan the use of their territory as a camp to fight Èkìtì-Parapọ. At any rate, Ìgbájọ stood no chance to resist should Ibadan pick its territory as a battlefield. Also, given the axial proximity, if Ìgbájọ had pitched tent with Èkìtì-Parapọ, they would not have been spared since Ibadan forces marched in via Ìkìrun. There is even no guarantee that Ìjèshà would cease hostilities with Ìgbájọ after Kíríjì. For Ibadan, the Ìgbájọ gesture gave them an advantage to engage the enemy directly within its own territory. Ibadan never took that loyalty lightly. By aligning with Ibadan, Ìgbájọ played safe and ensured itself against Ìjèshà. Today, Ìgbájọ gratefully owes its survival to Ibadan, as noted above in late Oba Isaac Adelani Famodun's speech that "It has been with the support of these Òyós (Ibadan) that I live till today." By strategy (not fate), Ìgbájọ offered its territory as a war theatre to the most deadly Yorùbá civil war. The act also became a reference that prolonged the war, as Ìgbájọ's fate after the war became hotly contested by the opposing armies.

The Various Efforts at Ending the War

As the war became stalemated, protracted, and ruinous, the resolve and bravery with which the Èkìtì-Parapọ warriors prosecuted it, coupled with their possession of superior munitions, absolutely baffled and rattled Ibadan. The former desperately connived with Ilorin (Fulani), Yoruba's common enemy, to synergise with their alliance and boost their chances of defeating Ibadan. Ultimately, both armies were wearied, and neither could win nor abandon the war for fear of reprisals. An external intervention was the only way to bring the war to a close. Efforts were made by Oba Adeyemi, the Aláàfin and Head of the Oyo Empire. He communicated with colonial authorities through Revd. Daniel Olubi (of the Christian Missionary Society, Ibadan) to intervene, but unsuccessfully. In vain, Revd. David Hinderer,

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the pioneer Anglican priest in Ibadan, also wrote letters to the sons of both warring sides in Lagos. It was Rev. J. B. Wood who made a rare but successful effort by visiting the warring sides to sue for peace. However, the Èkìtì-Parapọ declined Ibadan's quest for Ìgbájọ to be granted to them in the peace treaty, insisting that Ìgbájọ was an irrevocable part of their land. Ibadan feared that if Ìgbájọ was not ceded, it was only a matter of time before Èkìtì-Parapọ brutalised them as traitors.

But there were other proxy conflicts, which complicated Kíríjì as a pan-Yorùbá war and needed to be inclusively resolved. Virtually all Yoruba had been wary of Ibadan's ambition to dominate; thus, they conspired to smash it once and for all. In the anti-Ibadan conspiracy, Ilorin went to war with Ibadan over Òffà, which was under Ibadan's protectorate. Èkìtì-Parapọ had indeed encouraged the Ilorin-Fulani to seize Òffà to distract and stretch Ibadan thin militarily and weaken it. Additionally, Abeokuta would sell ammunition to Ilorin but not to Ibadan. Ile-Ife also seized the opportunity of the Ibadan army being bogged down at Kíríjì to battle Modákéké, a town of Oyo refugees that had migrated there decades earlier after Fulani invasions. A third major conflict involving Ijebu is also allied to the general anti-Ibadan sentiments. From Johnson's account, it was during the governorship of Mr Alfred Moloney that some measures of success were achieved to end the war. Governor Moloney sent Revd Charles Philip to the battlefield to request that the combatants sign an agreement to end the war. This was followed in 1886 when Fred Evans, Acting Governor of Lagos, sent a delegation to the war fronts to explore the prospects of ending it. The effort yielded fruit because Èkìtì-Parapọ agreed to their request to cede Ìgbájọ to Ibadan. The war came to an end on 23 September 1886, with the warring parties signing a peace treaty to that effect. By the treaty, both sides agreed to decamp simultaneously at noon on 28 September 1886 at the sound of a gun. However, due to its complexities and mutual distrust, it was not until March 1893 that the last set of combatants (Ilorin and Ibadan) could be safely dispersed from the Odò-Otìn area. The Ibadan army arrived home on 22 March 1893.

Kíríjì was the last major war that plagued the entire Yorùbá country; hence, it marked the end of its major war histories. The involvement of Britain also facilitated the eventual colonisation of Yorubaland. The sounds of the breech-loading guns deployed by Èkìtì-Parapọ informed the war's label, Kíríjì. They thundered Krrr-hí-jhì, rebounding through the mountains. The guns clearly gave a combative advantage to Èkìtì-Parapọ; yet, they could not triumph. Additionally, the collusion of Ijebu, Egba, and Oke-Igbo to embargo Ibadan from procuring ammunition clearly robbed the latter of victory. Nevertheless, they held their

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ground within the enemies' territory while equally engaging proxy enemies elsewhere. Like all war profiteers, Johnson reported that the Ijesha merchants made a fortune from gun supplies and were thus reluctant to end the war. In fact, they initially hardened Ògèdèngbé's heart against peace, but the war-weary man later accepted peace. On the whole, it took the entire Yoruba conspiracy to halt Ibadan's imperialism forever. Even sworn enemies shelved enmity briefly in alliance against Ibadan as war chiefs from multiple places teamed with Èkìtì-Parapọ. Thus, when the gamut of conspiracy is appraised, the allied opposition ought to be termed Yoruba-Parapọ. Kíríjì shattered the entire Yorubaland as people rose against one another as a mark of loyalty for or against Ibadan.

The Impact of Kíríjì War on Igajo and Yorubaland

Generally, in well-worn territories, the consequences of Kíríjì are horrendous and enormous. Ìgbájọ bore the full brunt, as virtually all areas of life endeavours were affected. Apart from the massive loss of life and population displacement, the town was almost ruined. According to High Chief Ojo Fasoro, Kíríjì was a bloody campaign that resulted in a major reduction of the population of Ìgbájọ, as many indigenes were either killed or captured and sold into slavery, while others fled to other towns. The town of Ìgbájọ was abandoned, and farmlands and houses were all burnt. In a yet-to-be-published work on Ìgbájọ by historian Layi Onipede, the Kíríjì or Èkìtì-Parapọ war was one of the bloodiest wars in Yorùbáland and the most prolonged, as it directly involved more than half of Yorùbá territory in today's Nigeria and indirectly affected other parts, either through sympathetic support or by economic impact. For Yorùbáland, a major fallout of the war was general political and economic destabilisation. As the period marked the outset of British colonial occupation of the larger territory that later became Nigeria, a new political system was introduced by the British to Ìgbájọ, for instance. This strange system included forced taxation and labour. The situation resulted in civil disorder, for which the king (Ọwá Latilo, 1892-1910) abandoned his palace to settle in a place called Ọgẹdẹ-wọwọ in the Òkè-ọgọ area of the town. It was the quick intervention of Captain Robert Lister Bower from Ibadan that restored peace and reinstated Ọwá Latilo back to his palace. The war devastated the fortunes of Ìgbájọ and Yorùbáland at large. It brought untold hardships, deprivations, famine, diseases, and deaths.

However, Kíríjì did not bring only calamities. Many new developments were introduced to Yorùbáland as attention was directed towards new activities and life endeavours, such as blacksmithing for firearms and implements, as well as new areas of commerce, trade, and even culture. An interviewee, Mr. Akintola Onipede – an indigene and

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former Editor of the Nigerian Tribune – asserted that the people of Ìgbájọ were exposed to foreign culture, not from abroad, but from Ibadan. This is explicable by the fact that thereafter, Ìgbájọ became socioculturally inclined towards Ibadan. Additionally, more dialects and traditions from other Yorùbá towns were introduced. The aftermath of the war brought foreign house designs to Ìgbájọ from 1886 when a Brazilian house, referred to by the locals as Ile-Oyinbo, was built for Captain Ross and his contingent who settled after the war. The design was quickly adopted by the wealthy in Ìgbájọ for their homes. Many warriors from either side of the war settled permanently in Ìgbájọ, as they did not return to their original towns and villages, while those who either fled or were displaced started new families in their towns of refuge, such as Ido, Osogbo, Ìkìrun, and Ìbòkun. For instance, due to the resulting migrations, the Ìgbájọ people in Osogbo constitute a sizeable part of the population to this day.

The famous Àrẹ Látóòsa, Commander-in-Chief of the Ibadan Army, took ill and died at an Ìgbájọ farmhouse called Ajowu, which is also known as Ibùdó Kíríjì (Kíríjì War Site). A large rock close to the site was named after him - Okuta Látóòsa (Rock of Látóòsa), which is now corruptibly referred to as Okuta Olaosa. Much of the site is currently farmed. Two major relics of Kíríjì are notable. The first is the Faragbota tree (bullet-absorbent tree), reputed to have absorbed thousands of bullets, which fell soon after the centennial celebration of the Kíríjì peace treaty in 1986. It was deemed mysterious for its notable role during fierce battles. Ibadan warriors always hid behind it for safety, as the tree absorbed bullets from the direction of the allied forces. People believed the tree could not survive beyond a hundred years due to the huge number of bullets embedded in its trunk. The Fèjèwè Stream (bloodbath stream) is also significant in Ìgbájọ history. The stream got its name for turning red following large-scale killings and bloodletting. The wounded gladly bathed in the polluted water, believing it had cleansing powers to heal. Thus, its water was also used to remove bullets from victims. Initially named Eleriko Stream, it supplied drinking water to the two armies. A wounded Èkìtì-Parapọ washed his bloody face with the water and was cleansed. When they inquired how he had been healed, he told them about the water, and thenceforth, it became known as Fẹjẹbọjú Stream, used for cleansing victims.

Ìgbàjọ and the Memory of Kíríjì War

It could be claimed that Ìgbájọ, in their many generations, would live in the shadows of Kíríjì. An interview conducted by Clement Adeyi with the Léjọkà of Ìgbájọ, Chief Sunday Akerele, revealed much about the mysteries of the relics and the site. For example, it is held

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to this day that Fẹjẹbọjú Stream still has its cleansing and therapeutic powers; hence, people still use it with respect. Additionally, the Léjọkà claimed that it took them a lengthy period in the post-war years before farmers could boldly farm the area. They held the site to be sacred, believing that the gods and the ghosts of war victims had taken it over. According to him, "Our forefathers told us that they had to go and appease the gods of the place fondly called ànjànnú (evil spirits) before people could venture there. And when people started going, people from Ìgbájọ stayed away due to their ancestral connection. Going there was considered abominable; however, Ìgbájọ neighbours – Eripa, Iree, Ìkìrun, Adà, Òkukù, and Iléshà – were already venturing there. The Léjọkà claimed, "our forefathers told us that it was tragic; even more tragic, calamitous, and catastrophic than the Nigerian civil war (1967)" because many Yorùbá people lost their roots as they were caught in the throes of the war and had to flee their original settlements for faraway places to survive.

Ìgbàjọ Economy and Religious Landscape in the Post-War Years

Ìgbájọ people from the earliest times were predominantly farmers, but they also engaged in commercial enterprises. Ìgbájọ's centre of commerce is the Ilọrọ market, named after that of Ife, and trading activities occur every five days. Ìgbájọ is bordered by towns that specialise in diverse goods and farm produce, brought for sale at Ilọrọ market. Nearby towns such as Iree are famous for onions, Òtan-Ile for palm oil, Ikóro Èkìtì for hand-woven mats, Irèsì and Oke-Ìmèsí for clay pots, and Ìmèsí Ile and Òtan-Ayégbajú for yams. Ìgbájọ farmers specialised in vegetables and locally woven baskets and cloths. The women travelled to Ejìnrìn in Ìjèbú waterside to purchase salt in exchange for woven cloths. Though Kíríjì was brutal, the post-war economic recovery was not difficult as Ìgbájọ was ushered into new profitable prospects. The people were introduced to trading in multiple kinds of goods ranging from salt to planks, saw-milling, and other forms of trade that resulted from interactions with non-natives, as induced by the war. After the war, a sizeable number of Ìgbájọ people migrated to Ibadan for its friendly overtures. Ìgbájọ people became renowned for their expertise in the plank business and were reputed to pioneer plank markets in Ibadan, Osogbo, Ife, and Ilesha. A popular plank market in Ibadan is named Ìsọ Pákó Ìgbájọ (Ìgbájọ Plank Market) at Sango. Ibadan significantly contributed to Ìgbájọ's development as those who visited there brought back new business ideas. Also, between 1908 and 1910, some young men left Ìgbájọ for Lagos to work as cooks and stewards.

Similarly, within a decade of the Peace, Christianity penetrated Ìgbájọ. Tugbiyele claimed that Christian evangelists brought with them not only their religion but also

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education and Western civilisation. The Baptist mission was the first to arrive in 1902, led by Mr James Awoyale, who had been converted by Rev Smith; he also assisted the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) and the Catholic Church to take off in Ìgbájọ. By 1908, Dr George Green brought the first Baptist pastor, Mr Odejayi, who married an Ìgbájọ woman and left for Osogbo in 1909. Revd John Adigun Lafinhan led the church in 1911 and started a Baptist school in 1912. The African Church came into Ìgbájọ through Messrs Adesina and Agboola after a feud within the Baptist laity. The Christ Apostolic Church also took off, but there was no record of Islam in Ìgbájọ until much later during colonial rule.

The British Peace and Ìgbàjọ in Sociopolitical Context

For the peace, all stakeholders in the war signed a treaty on September 23, 1886, although final dispersal did not occur for seven years. The treaty was signed, sealed, and delivered by stakeholders in the presence of two Special Commissioners, Henry Higgins (Acting Colonial Secretary) and Oliver Smith (Queen's Advocate), with Revds. Charles Philips and Samuel Johnson (Clerks in Holy Orders) as interpreters (all four were co-signatories). The Twelve Articles of the treaty were inserted into a bottle, sealed, and buried in a hole approximately six feet deep, with Samuel Johnson, Clerk in Holy Orders, interpreting the proceedings in Yorùbá. The Twelve Articles of agreement are conspicuously inscribed as plaques on a monolith to this day. The treaty officially ended the pan-Yorùbá internecine war but gave Britain the opportunity to penetrate Yorùbáland. For Tugbiyele, the "Yorùbá civil war provided the necessary impetus for Britain to colonise Yorùbáland." Posing as a peacemaker and persuading the factions to sign the Peace Pact, Britain converted Yorùbáland into its protectorate and imposed its rule, thus ending the Oyo Empire. The land became divided into administrative units of provinces, districts, and divisions. Ìgbájọ was in Òyó province in Osun district under Ibadan division. Ìgbájọ's internal administration became subject to the general administration of Ibadan colonial authorities, which gave Ibadan direct control over Ìgbájọ, financially, legally, and politically. Once Ìgbájọ came under the British protectorate, the King's powers were curtailed, but not his authority over the chiefs and his people. He could no longer initiate any policy or programme without full consultation with the District Officer or his permission, or that of his agents, but he was made the chairman of the Town Council and President of the Native Authority. Willy-nilly, Ọwá Latilo accepted British rule during his reign (1892-1910). While the role of Ọwá in Ọwá-in-Council was curtailed, his role in the Town Council remained intact, as he retained power over internal administration within its area of jurisdiction to deal with all matters affecting his people.

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Yorubaland in the Post-British Peace and Kírìjì Era

Kírí̀jì and the intrusion of Britain changed Yorubaland forever. Its magnitude, impact, and mode of resolution (British intervention) not only made warfare a part of history but also permanently altered the sociopolitical landscape of Yorubaland. The war generated widespread disturbances across the country and particularly wearied Ibadan, the most restive Yoruba hegemon. It also completely exasperated the resolute Èkìtì-Parapọ̀ and other peoples that acted in solidarity with either party. Kíríjì caused a country-wide destabilisation that spurred massive displacements and migrations of Yoruba peoples for survival. Like Mfecane—'scattering' in reference to a period of acute warfare, destabilisation, and forced migrations in southern and central Africa in the 1820s and 1840s—Kíríjì spawned the Yoruba version of Mfecane, though undocumented by world historians whose attention was rather focused on southern Africa for its prospects in gold and diamond mining. Kíríjì forcefully displaced countless people from their places of origin forever. The dispersed peoples either moved to secure settlements or formed new towns. It was an era when the Ibadan population swelled geometrically. Countless migrants (Yoruba and non-Yoruba) flocked to Ibadan for its security and prospects; moreover, it was the abode of Captain Bower, the pioneer Colonial Resident/Travelling Commissioner to the Interior (1893–1897). He enforced British peace and imposed law and order that brought peace and progress to Yorubaland. This led Ibadan to emerge as the ultimate centre for Yoruba politics. Interestingly, today, the once restive Ibadan has become extremely calm and rapidly expanded to rank among Africa's three largest cities.

Incidentally, Kíríjì coincided with the Berlin Conference, where European powers partitioned Africa into their colonial territories. A key resolution was physical occupation to authenticate any colonial claim over African territories. Britain had consolidated its hold on Lagos while covertly and overtly planning further incursions and occupation of the hinterland when Kíríjì occurred. Thus, their invitation to resolve the stalemated war was the icing on the cake, as they gained the prospect to lay the groundwork to colonise Yorubaland and other areas. A major step in that direction was to post Residents, usually military personnel, in key towns under the guise of fostering peace, law and order, and preventing another war. Indeed, the officials were to erect and supervise structures that would facilitate colonial subjugation. Residents began to curtail the powers of the Kings, as noted with Ọwá. British rule shattered the sacred absolutism of the Kings (Kábíyèsí), who were now required to obtain the approval of Residents on many matters. Without such curtailments, of course, restless states would not have ceased warmongering, but it was a precursor to colonial subjugation.

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After Kíríjì, the restive powers (Ibadan, Ìjèshà, and Ilorin) had neither the reason nor the interest for peace, but its enforcement decisively calmed them all. Now, Ilorin resumed its campaign to subjugate Yorubaland to the Islamic Caliphate (as the Hausas did) to further the 1804 Usmanu Dan Fodiyo Jihad. Its Emir had even audaciously embedded his Residents in Ìkìrun and Osogbo. The Ògèdèngbé boys (Ìpàyé) and Fabunmi foot-soldiers also resumed banditry and kidnapping for the booty, causing mayhem in their parts of the country. For Ibadan, war was an expression, fun, and industry. The hegemony it provided assured a stream of fortune in tributes such as farm produce, livestock, materials, women, slaves, and others. Ibadan had appointed new leaders who needed new wars to prove their mettle. They deemed the Fulanised Ilorin a menace to Yorubaland. Ilorin was also the only power that Ibadan had not directly engaged. Thus, they craved an Ilorin campaign and approached Captain Bower to approve the war.

As the country was set to re-boil, Bower audaciously moved to enforce peace with his few but better-armed Hausa soldiers. He swiftly arrested Chief Ògèdèngbé to disorganise his Ìpàyé and also confiscated their armoury. His ally, Chief Fabunmi, was also arrested to curb his foot soldiers. Bower personally drove away the Ilorin residents from Osogbo and Ìkìrun (but colonial authorities had to fight Ilorin before they could be calmed). Bower also turned against his hosts, Ibadan. He ignored their request for war with Ilorin and sought the arrest of its new ruler. In some way, the Ibadan chiefs rallied against the sacrilege, appeased Bower, and aborted any preparation for war. However, they felt very awful for not being allowed to rid Ilorin of Fulani elements. Ilorin was originally Yoruba until a Fulani cleric, Alimi, seized it by jihad. Since war was a livelihood for Ibadan warriors, they became broke and unruly due to the lack of military expeditions. Thus, by strategy, the colonial authorities gainfully recruited them for use in the north of Niger, for the same end they used Hausa soldiers in Yorubaland. The Yoruba people finally succumbed to the new foreign power, and calm was restored. The British peace has since endured, while Captain Bower had a tower built in his honour at Ibadan in 1936.

CONCLUSION

The Kíríjì or Èkìtì-Parapọ War was significant to Yorùbá historicity because of its immense impact. It terminated many long-standing norms in the lives of Yorùbá people and society, marking an end of history, and its ripples ultimately closed the waning Oyo Empire, subjugating Yorubaland to British colonisation. The post-war developments introduced an alien sociopolitical civilisation and a legal order that tamed the caprices of man for the rule of

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law, justice, and retribution. Remarkably, it instituted a new dispensation of economic endeavours and prosperity, moving away from traditional occupations such as warmongering, farming, and hunting. Ìgbájọ is nonetheless critical to the episode, not just because it sacrificed itself for the most brutal Yorùbá war, but for its resolve to protest, despite the existential threat, in support of an alien army against its kin, Ìjèshà. Ìgbájọ would perhaps have a dimmed history if it had not actively allied with Kíríjì, and the war may have taken a different turn. By dint of survival strategy, Ìgbájọ rightly pitched its tent; otherwise, as a frontal state, it stood no chance against the invading armies. For Ìjèshà, Ìgbájọ would be cannon fodder for the war since it was deemed worthless to them. Indeed, Ìgbájọ survived and thrived due to Ibadan's returned loyalty and hard negotiation in the tortuous peace treaty. For the Yorùbá, the post-Kíríjì introduction of education and western civilisation led to a radical shift in socio-cultural traditions, as Christianity took hold, outpacing indigenous religions. Additionally, Yorùbá kings lost their traditional authority, though they were still revered as Kabiyesi. The rule of law replaced the rule of thumb, and authority was now vested in a triad structure of government, constitution, and institutions. As the Nigerian state evolved, comprising disparate ethnic groupings, the Yorùbá adjusted to intergroup politics for national stakes, and ultimately, their previous history was terminated for a new epoch.

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