

# **The Myth and Reality: A Historical Appraisal of the Master -Servant Relationship between the Igala and the Nupe**

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## **Abstract**

This study provides a political, cultural, and social history of Nupe and Igala. This work differs from other histories in that it marks the first exploration of lingering facts about the earliest relationship between the Igala and the Nupe ethnic groups. Basically, the work investigated the aspect of "Master-Servant" relationship that had existed between the Igala and the Nupe. The study reflects debates on state formation and socio political religious of power. These findings posit a new approach towards understanding the roles that pre colonial political institutions and rituals played in early African history as well as their relationship to a religiously defined material basis. It demonstrates that the Niger-Benue Basin were long characterized by a political order that valued ownership and control over rituals as a source of power and a sign of legitimacy. The expressions of sovereignty changed throughout time in response to local and regional power shifts. Based on the findings, it is important to appreciate the fact that prior to the emergence of Tsoede as an important historical figure, there existed various groups of peoples and principalities in Nupe land on one hand and the existence of master servant relationship between the Nupe and Igala on the other hand. Also, the discussion has dispelled claims by both local and foreign peoples who regarded Tsoede as the genesis of the Nupe as a group and nation.

## **Introduction**

Although Nigerian history in general is a well-researched and published field, it is obvious that less attention has been given to the central Nigerian area. Scholars of Nigerian history, both Africans and Europeans have shown more academic zeal to the histories of popular kingdoms, like the Kanem Borno Empire, and the religious revolution that created the Sokoto Caliphate in the North. In the south, the Benin and Yoruba kingdoms, and the coastal city states have all attracted a lot of attention

in terms of research and publications<sup>1</sup>. Undoubtedly, until recently, the central Nigeria has been looked upon by many researchers as a residue region that only reacted to events happening outside it, such as the impact of Sokoto Jihad.

Although pockets of attention has been directed at some centralized politics within the region, such as Kwararafa, the Nupe and the Igala kingdoms, most of these are anthropological studies and published accounts of travelers and colonial administrators.<sup>2</sup>

Also it is important to acknowledge the fact that several scattered attempts have been made to establish the relationship between the Igala and the Nupe peoples. This research work however, is an attempt to determine the aspect of “master –servant” relationship between the Igala and the Nupe peoples respectively. Two of the most important personalities associated with Nupe and Igala history were Tsoede or Edegi and Ayangbaldoko. These personalities have been given much emphasis by traditions and the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century European writers, Christian missionaries and later, colonial administrators.

### **The Myth Surrounding the Traditional Origin of Nupe and the Igala**

The socio-cultural practices among the Nupe and Igala, just as it is with other groups can be said to have been as old as their history. Evolution of such practices might have been an attempt to solve both individual and general problems of existence very much related to the environment in which they found themselves. In achieving this, resort was made to the institutionalization of religious belief systems centered on cults and rituals.<sup>4</sup>

Oral interview granted by retired Col. Ali revealed that majority of the tribes in Nigeria migrated from Yemen via different groups and at different times. The Igala belongs to the member of Kwararafa clan which was an offspring of Jukun kingdom. It is worthy of note that the Jukun empire expanded their political conquest over their Hausa neighbors, but one feature of the Jukun empire was their limited zeal for power and as such they appeared to be a weak conqueror. It is also important to acknowledge the fact that up till today all the guards of the Emir of Kano are said to be of Jukun origin<sup>5</sup>.

According to Ali, the Igala kingdom is an offshoot of Jukun empire. He further revealed that the Jukun Empire migrated from Yemen through Sudan to Northern Nigeria. In the course of the mass movement away from the Jukun, the empire witnessed disintegration. The migration continued southward until they reached Kororofa in the present day Nasarawa state and that was where the Jukun Empire witnessed a notable disintegration. The Igala kingdom and the Shendam peoples continued their movement until they found a fertile land in their present abode. It should be noted also that the AttahIdoko was a Jukun hunter and that is why the most referred ceremony in Igala land is called the *Ocho* Festival<sup>6</sup>.

Another tribe that disintegrated from the Jukun during this period was the Idoma ethnic group. The word Idoma is an adulterated Jukun word “*Idiama*” i.e “*we are gone*”. Also, to corroborate further, the word ‘*baga*’ is peculiar to the Nupe, Igala, Shendam and Idoma peoples.<sup>7</sup> This is a clear indication that all these ethnic groups were an offshoot of the Jukun Empire. In order to further buttress

the above point, the word 'Iga la' is said to be a Jukun word meaning 'we have parted company'<sup>4</sup>. There are other semantic relationships between the Jukun and the separated tribes. For instance, the word 'Baga' (a Jukun language) is often found on the lips of the aforementioned tribes. In Igala kingdom for example, the Attah is referred to as "Agabaidu". Today nearly all the traditional chiefs in Nassarawa state are being saluted as 'Bagaidu'. The EtsuBida, Lafiagi, Patigi, Agaie, Lapai and other Etsus in Nupeland are being saluted "Bagandozhi" (*Man pass man*).<sup>8</sup>

In a related development, other oral accounts held the view that there was never a time in history, when Nupe as a body was a slave to the Igala but it is aware that the person who publicized Nupe kingdom before the emirate system came from one of the offspring of an Igala head and he is called Tsoede. He is said to have originated from Igala land. However, the sources further strengthened that as far as the history of Nupe land is concerned, in terms of a united and organized people, that have an organized leader who act as the umbrella for the entire Nupe land, one can hardly forget the role played by Tsoede. But it was not a case of Igala land conquering Nupeland.<sup>9</sup> There was a period in history when Nupe land was paying tribute to Igala land, and naturally in any historical account, once a particular land was paying tribute to another empire, that particular land that was paying tribute is automatically a subject of that empire they were paying tribute to. So with this submission, the sources unanimously agreed that the Nupe were once servant to the Igala kingdom<sup>10</sup>. The account further reiterated their similarities of tribal marks observed in the two groups. This was mythically believed to be in memory of the injury Tsoede sustained when he was trying to catch the palm fruits. However, a certain section of the Nupe argue that the annual tribute to Idah from Nupe was not a sign of master-servant relationship, but that of respect and solidarity shown to the Nupe elderly people left at Idah area as a result of their inability to continue their migrating journey.<sup>11</sup>

However, available archeological and linguistic evidences suggest that people including the Nupe had inhabited the area of the middle Niger valley for a long period. The origin of the name Nupe itself is shrouded in mystery<sup>12</sup>. Both Dupigny and Temple apparently using the same source claimed that the name was corrupted from 'Nufiu', the name of a fugitive from Arabia who settled among the people in pre historic times.<sup>13</sup>

Ibn Batuta mentions of 'Yufi' where the Nile flows, and one of the biggest cities of the blacks has been questioned by Mason, as probably referring to somewhere else in East Africa,<sup>14</sup> but judging from the way the name had been applied to the people living in that region prior to the derivation of central political authority in Nupe, one could say that the name had been applied by the eighteenth century at least, rather than the nineteenth century suggested by Mason.<sup>15</sup> Our argument is based on chronological evidence presented by different sources from the neighboring areas. The Kano chronicle made mention of trade relationships between a people called Nupe and Kano in the reign of Sarkin Kano Daudu (1421-38) and Sarkin Kano Yakubu (1452-63) where kolanuts were said to have been exchanged for horses. Sarkin Yakubu was said to have sent ten horses to Sarkin Nupe

in order to buy eunuchs<sup>17</sup>. Reference was also made to the Nupe group as having been attacked by *Sarkin* Katsina Korau in 1320. The relationship between Nupe and Zazzau was especially strong in the reign of Queen Amina (1421-83) and the periods before and after<sup>14</sup>. In the same periods a group called Nupe maintained trade and other forms of relationships with the Gobirawa and the people of Kebbi<sup>18</sup>. Also, as earlier stated, the earliest settlements in Idah area were founded by the ancestors of the people now known as the Igalamela but the traditions in which the Igalamela meaning the Nine Igala have been presented as if the various groups that made up the Igalamela settled in their various location within the metropolis of Idah at the same time are questionable.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, previous accounts of Igala oral tradition have used the Igala king list as though they are basically equivalent to the linear time scale employed in European Historiography and they have attempted to translate the legends that record the origin and foundation of the ruling house by the concept of sequence and historical development that are associated with this times of scale.<sup>20</sup> The principal objection to regarding the Igala king lists as an exact dynastic record is that their total time span does not coincide with the much longer span of time which seems reasonable for the history of the kingship on other historical grounds

According to Clifford<sup>21</sup>:

The tradition most favoured with the ruling house is that the chiefdom was founded by their ancestress EbeleEjaunu the daughter of AbutuEje a noble of the Jukun court of Wukari, who for some reason, had migrated westwards along the south bank of the River Benue and had settled in the vicinity of Amagede. At his death EbeleEjaunu is claimed to have assembled his followers and led them south wards through virgin bush till she reached Idah where she was installed as chief with the title of Attah and met and married Omeppa, an Aro slave, on whom she conferred the title of Achadu.

The foregoing traditions on the Jukun origins of the Attah kingship seem to belong to a perspective on the history of the Igala state engendered by H.R. Palmer and others under him, in order to impose a Hamitic origin on the Attah, through the Jukun, apart from the ones already cited above.

C.K. Meeks writes that the Kona tribe claims that the chief of the Bata and Bachama belonged originally to the same tribal stock as the Jukun, who after separating from the Kanuri, proceeded down the Benue to Kororofa. Some elements even proceeded later to Idah, where they drove out the Yoruba ruler and established the kingdom of Igala. Meek's tradition points to the possible existence of earlier rulers associated with Yoruba speaking people, Palmer still comment

Atagara is a native name for Idah on the Niger, where the Ata (King) is an Apa Jukun by descent and rules over people called Igara or Gara<sup>22</sup>.

### **Tsoede Birth and the Surrounding Myth**

One of the most important personalities associated with Nupe history was Tsoede or Edegi<sup>23</sup>. This personality has been given much emphasis by traditions and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century European writers, Christian missionaries and later colonial administrators. Their works have given impression that there had never been Nupe history prior to the emergence of Tsoede. Both Ndagi and Obayemi lament this erroneous view. According to the latter

The overwhelming belief and commitment to the Tsoede factor in the history of Nupe has enjoyed political and cultural supremacy so much that it has obscured the identification insight and study of the pre-Tsoede Nupe history.<sup>24</sup>

In discussing the foundation of Nupe kingdom therefore the personality of Tsoede occupies a commanding position. Our understanding of this phenomenon becomes imperative to enable us re-examine the myth or historicity surrounding Tsoede in the early history of Nupe land, particularly with regard to its relationship with Igala land and other neighbor's in general. Different names have been assigned to Tsoede. Clapperton calls him "Thoodyer", Crowther "Shorgede" Baikie names him "Tsado" while Frobenius calls him 'Edegi or Ededi'<sup>25</sup>. For the purpose of clarity we have adopted in this work the most popular name Tsoede.

A number of erroneous accounts are said to have existed on the myth surrounding the birth, formative years and the emergence of Tsoede as the founder of Nupe kingdom.<sup>26</sup> Due to the problem of documented records and that of chronology, characteristic of early periods, it is hardly possible to incontrovertibly determine Tsoede's date of birth. There are however conflicting suggestions that put his birth at Nku in 1429, 1452 and 1463. Another source puts Tsoede's death in 1591 after having lived for 120 or 128 years. Taking this to be correct, then, Tsoede must have been born in 1463 or 1471- the former<sup>27</sup>, corresponding with one of the dates mentioned above.

In the absence of any agreeable and acceptable date for Tsoede's birth, it will be historically safe for us to conclude that he was born of a Nupe woman in the 15<sup>th</sup> century at Nku – one of the original Bini settlements in Nupeland.

As for Tsoede's parents, most traditions, with one or two exceptions, linked his father to prince Ayangba the son to the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Attah of Igala land called Idoko<sup>28</sup>. Ayangba used to travel to *Kin*Nupe on hunting and magical expedition. It was during one of such expeditions that he was said to have got married to an Nku princess called Mama- one of the daughters of EtsuNku, the king of Nku, called Zubairu Gana<sup>29</sup>. Prince Ayangba had to travel back to Idah on hearing about the sickness of his father, Idoko. He left behind his pregnant wife at Nku to whom he gave a charm and an identification mark (a piece of red cloth) to hang on the child whenever it was born, so goes the tradition.

On the death of Attah Idoko, Ayangba became his successor at Idah. It had been the traditional practice that annual tribute in the form of slaves would be sent to Idah from subject areas including Nupe land. At the age of thirty years, Tsoede,

together with others happened to be among the tribute sent to Idah from Nupe. On getting there, the Attah, the acclaimed father, recognized his son Tsoede who was said to have been singled out for special favour to the jealousy and dislike of other half-brothers. Tsoede is reported to have performed wonders and magical feats to save his father from sickness and imminent defeat of Igala land by the Jukun, who were at war with each other. One of the achievements that the tradition ascribed to Tsoede was his bravery of catching a bunch of thorny palm fruit. He is said to have sustained some injuries including the cutting and splitting of his upper lips known in Nupe as Tsoede.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to some other injuries and scars on his stomach and cheeks. Since that incident, any child with a split upper lip in Nupe land is called Tsoede. To a very large extent people born within the royal nobility, particularly section of Nupe – Patigi, is given bold tribal marks on one of their cheeks Eyesa and chin /jaw called Nungbeka. This to identify them as descendants of the eclipsed Tsoede ruling dynasty which was regenerated in Patigi In 1898 by establishing a separate emirate out of Bida's<sup>31</sup> Fulbe emirate by the British colonial administration in Bida. The practice may have been dying down or reduced to the barest minimum, perhaps due to the influence of Islamic religion and western culture.

However, it is a convention in the writing of Nupe political history to begin with the name Tsoede. "This convention has been current at least since the early years of colonial rule, when we find Tsoede or Edegi as he is also called, being credited with the founding of kingdom whose successive rulers can be traced up to the present. The clearest expression of the place of both Tsoede and the king lists which his name heads comes from the standard study of Nupe society. Sheshi<sup>28</sup> explains that the early history of Nupe centers on the figure of Tsoede or Edegi, the cultural hero and mythical founder of the Nupe kingdom. The genealogies of the Nupe kings which are presented in many places in Nupe country, which have also found their way into the earliest written records of Nupe history which were compiled by "Mohammedan" scholars and court historians, place his birth in the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

If we are to consider the evolution of the Tsoede story, the first account we know of that refers to the question of Nupe origins is that of Clapperton. Among the documents which were included with his papers was an Arabic manuscript which translated, thus:

The people of Nupe came originally from Katsina and their prince, Thoodyar, from Atagera.<sup>33</sup>

So far as we can tell, the original version of this manuscript has disappeared and no other written source dealing with this subject exists either from this period or earlier. The only other nineteenth century accounts even conceivably dealing with the genesis of the political kingdom are those of Samuel Crowther and his companion Balkie. Crowther's account seems to be from an oral source and tells us that "once, a man named Shorgede came by a canoe from Ata of Igara and made his abode at Raba. He died and left a female child (after whom Raba was named)<sup>34</sup>.

Baikie's information is even more tentative. His kinglist begins with one Tsoede a name as much like Tsoede as either Thoodyar or Shorgede.

Another account has it that, based on the traditional brotherly relationship between Igala and Nupe, the exchange of occasional visits used to be the practice between, the two areas. It was in this process, as the tradition goes, that a prince from Idah called Aliyu most probably the same as Ayangba earlier mentioned, became a regular visitor to Nku in Nupe land as Tsoede might have been to Idah in Igala land. The prince is said to have become very close to Etsu Nku's daughter-princess Mama. Traditions differ on the nature of the closeness. One state that the Idah prince got married to the Nku princess and the marriage was blessed with a son called Saba or Mohammed Saba<sup>34</sup>, but later Tsoede, while the other believes that there was no marriage between the two. That the Idah prince, being a hunter and magician was approached by the princess, when she became pregnant, to pray for her to have surviving child(ren) after having lost all her previous six children<sup>35</sup>. The Idah prince obliged. The first-tradition appears more popular and generally acceptable to the Nupe and Igala.

In each case, however, it is generally an accepted tradition that the prince prepared a charm with an instruction which he gave to the pregnant princess when he was leaving Nupe for Idah on the news of his father's sickness. Prince 'Aliyu' succeeded his father as the new Attah of Igala after the former Attah's death. But to what extent can these claim stand as historical facts cannot be determined. Rivers, Niger and Kaduna provide easy access between the two areas and traffic on the two rivers meant human contacts as well as trade and commerce.

#### **Traditional Belief on Nupe Tribute to Igala Land**

During the fourteenth century what is known now as Nupe land was ruled by a number of minor Bini chiefs, under the chief of Nku, a small town near the confluence of the Niger and Kaduna rivers. According to the traditions, all these chiefs were subject to the Attah of Igala. They paid annual tribute to him, in the form of one male child per each household, to work on his farm<sup>36</sup>. One other aspect of the pre-Edegi administration worth mentioning has to do with the external relations of Bini Confederacy. Oral tradition common amongst the Nupe recognizes the dominance of the Igala kingdom over the entire Nupe land.<sup>37</sup>

Given the various versions on the birth of Tsoede and his relationship with Idah, certain features can be noted. That Tsoede lived in Igala land before the evolution of a central dynasty recognized as Nupe by neighbours such as Hausa, Gbagi and Yoruba. Also, another account speaks of Nupe-speaking people being resident in the middle Niger region for over a millennium before the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>38</sup>. Though, details of pre-Tsoede polities in Nupe land may not be elaborately available to us, our speculation may be premised on the fact that human habitation has been known to have existed in the Middle Niger region, where Nupe is situated, from the remote past. Such an existence must have been facilitated and sustained by evolving certain political economic and socio-cultural systems and practices.

In the same vein, if we must go by mason's suggestion that if Tsoede must be regarded as an historical figure at all, then, such a figure must have lived several centuries before the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries generally assigned to him<sup>39</sup>. This by extension would mean that the timeline of the Bini Confederacy which pre-dated Tsoede, must also be shifted by several centuries. Accepting all these to be true may raise serious historical implications on the Igala-Nupe master-vassal relationship. For it appears doubtful, if by that early period of the supposed Nupe history, Igala kingdom with its Attah-ship had emerged. If not, then, such a "servant-master relationship traditionally widely held, remains questionable as stated earlier.

Other similar or divergent traditions with Tsoede Idah relationships exist. Boston, for instance, suggests that Tsoede was a Nupe hunter, warrior and magician<sup>40</sup>. He might have used these talents to assist his hosts at Idah to cure the Attah of an ailment in addition to his heroic participation on the side of his hosts to free Igala land from the imperialistic tendency of the Jukun. A recent tradition collected from Nupeko by work<sup>41</sup>, states that from the remote past a brotherly relationship existed between Nupe land and Igala land based, not on slave- master relationship respectively, as is commonly believed. The legend claims that on the migration of the Nupe from the East, Saudi Arabia, the eldest of the migrating group, after several years of travel from the east, could not continue due to old age. He decided to settle and founded a settlement in Igala land. The other members of the group continued until they reached Nku which traditions claim to be the first Bini settlement in the entire Nupe land.<sup>42</sup> From there, emerged other Nupe settlement such as Doko, Gaba, Essan, Tafien, Nupeko, Tuwagi and Bida-Bani which according to the same tradition, formed the nucleus or the aboriginal Bini towns or settlements.

The homage and annual payment of tribute to Idah, therefore, was not and should not be taken as master servant relationship, but rather as a symbol of respect for seniority for which Nupe has been known<sup>43</sup>. Tsoede only escorted the tribute to Idah, but was never a slave himself, so this legend claims. That, Tsoede was never a son to an Igala prince – Idoko, as it is generally and traditionally believed. Both his parents and grandparents were Bini-from Nku settlements. Names of ZubairuGana and princess Mama have been given as Tsoede's father and mother respectively.<sup>44</sup>

Another source argues against the servant master relationship commonly believed to have existed between the Igala and the Nupe. It argues that prior to the emergence of Tsoede, there existed in central Nupe land powerful polities such as 'Atagara' empire and Bini Confederacy-the former being older and greater than the latter. This is why the Nupe traditions in the story of Tsoede maintain that the Bini confederacy had to pay tribute to the Atagara. According to the source, the ancient Atagara Empire in central Nupeland of old was mistaken for the modern Atagara of Igala land with headquarters at Idah, claiming that it was the king of the Atagara of Nupe that was Tsoede's father, hence referring to Tsoede as the son of Atagara<sup>45</sup>.

However, based on the traditional brotherly relationship between the Igala and the Nupe, the exchange of occasional visits used to be practiced between the two areas. It was in this process, as shown previously, that a prince from Idah,



called Aliyu or Ayangba, became a regular visitor to Nku in Nupe land as Tsoede might have been to Idah in Igala land. The Nku's daughter – princess Mama is said to have become very close to Ayangba. Traditions differ as to the nature of the closeness. One states that the Idah prince got married to the princess and the marriage blessed with a son called Saba or Mohammed Saba<sup>46</sup>, but later Tsoede. The other believes that there was no marriage between the two. That the Idah prince, being a hunter and magician was approached by the princess, when she became pregnant, to pray for her to have surviving child(ren) after having lost all her previous six children<sup>47</sup>. The Idah prince obliged. The first-tradition appears more popular and generally acceptable to the generality of the Nupe and the Igala. In each case, however, it is generally an accepted tradition that the prince prepared a charm with an instruction which he gave to the pregnant princess when he was leaving Nupe for Idah on the news of his father's sickness. Prince 'Aliyu' succeeded his father as the new Attah of Igala after the former's death. But to what extent can these claims stand as historical facts cannot be easily be determined with certainty. However, contacts between Nupe and Igala land from the early time, especially or commercial and trading activities, cannot be dismissed. Rivers, Niger and Kaduna provided easy access between the two areas and according to Ohiare<sup>48</sup>, traffic on the two rivers meant human contacts as well as trade and commerce.

It is for instance reported that Nupeko- 'Great Nupe', one of the Bini settlements situated at the confluence of Niger and Kaduna Rivers, among others riverine areas, was an important market centre. Peoples from the upper and most probably, from the lower Niger, including Igala land, used to come to the great and popular market at Nupeko to purchase slaves among other goods from Nupe land.<sup>49</sup>

It should be noted that during that early period, various groups speaking various Igaloid and Nupoid dialects mingled despite much differentiation on ethnic and linguistic basis<sup>50</sup>. It should be noted also that African kingdoms in the past shared political and economic relations just like the Nupe and Igala did. There is hardly any impeccable evidence to suggest that Tsoede was an Igala prince.

Also, considering the various account on the emergence of Tsoede and his relationship with Igala land, certain points can be noted, that Tsoede lived in Igala land before the evolution of the central dynasty called Nupe Kingdom recognized by the Nupe and their neighbours, such as Hausa, Gbagi and Yoruba.<sup>51</sup> That, so far, to the best of our knowledge, no concrete evidence to suggest Nupe-Igala servant-master relationship respectively. We are not aware of Igala sending emissaries to supervise activities, or appointments and, or confirmation of rulers in Nupeland by the Attah of Igala in the past, as was the case between Nupe and Gwandu, during the emirate period in the former. Nupe tradition acknowledges Tsoede as a prominent figure who conquered and unified the various hitherto independent polities and Nupe-speaking peoples into a powerful central kingdom. He was believed to have started his conquest from Nku, after dethroning his maternal uncle, the then Etsu of Nku, before declaring Nku as his initial capital.

### Conclusion

Our discussion of the early history of the Nupe and Igala has enabled us to understand and appreciate the fact that prior to the emergence of Tsoede as an important historical figure, there existed various groups of peoples and principalities in Nupe land on one hand and the existence of master servant relationship between the Nupe and Igala on the other hand. Also, the discussion has dispelled claims by both local and foreign peoples who regarded Tsoede as the genesis of the Nupe as a group and nation. Certain “basic structures” or most consistent themes” that might suggest the historicity of Tsoede story, some of which Mason<sup>1</sup> himself is reported to have identified, include the Tsoede Idah connection. Others are the coming in a canoe upstream and the acknowledgement of Tsoede as a prominent figure who conquered and unified the various Nupe sub-groups to found a new and larger political system. Notwithstanding some discrepancies in the narratives on Tsoede as highlighted previously, Obayemi opines that there is still enough stability in them (the narratives) for a meaningful and serious reconstruction to be attempted <sup>2</sup>. Appropriately arguing for a possible historicity of Tsoede in Nupe history Nadel avers

The myth of Tsoede’s delivery of Nupe from the Yoke of Idah may well contain a kernel of historical truth... The foundation of an independent Nupe kingdom might have been one of the historical results of the disintegration of Benin (Edo) and its vassal states. The ancient contact of Idah and Nupe are undoubtedly historical. The tradition of Tsoede is as well- known in Idah, as in Nupe.<sup>3</sup>

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35. 43. Oral interview with Dr. Sheshi T.S at Federal College of Education, Kontagora, 7<sup>th</sup> – August,
36. 44. Oral interview with Alhaji Musa (ShaabaPatigi) at Patigi on 16- August 2017
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38. S.T Sheshi "History of Nupe"... *op.cit* p.207
39. Oral interview by NdadefienNupeko 91 years, on 04 August, 2017
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- i. Dr. Muhammed Mann Shaaba, 60 years, civil servant, interviewed at Federal College of Education, Kontagora on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2017.
- ii. Alhaji Musa Baba Umar, age 77 years, Shaaba Patigi, retired civil servant, interviewed at Patigi on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2017.
- iii. Umar Muazu, Maigari of Nupeko village, 91 years interviewed at Nupeko village on 15/8/2017.
- iv. Dr. Sheshi T. Sidi, 65 years interviewed at Federal College of Education, Kontagora on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2018.
- v. Danjuma Abubakar, 38 years, Health officer at Nupeko village, he was the interpreter at Nupeko village on 15/August/2017.
- vi. Col. Senator (Dr.) Ahmadu Ali, former PDP National Chairman, 82 years, interviewed at Maitama Area, FCT Abuja, on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2017.

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