

A BRIEF HISTORY OF IPETUMODU

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN

IPETUMODU is one of the ancient towns in Yorubaland. Reliable traditions have it that is as ancient as Ile-Ife, popularly regarded as the cradle of the Yoruba race.

One of such traditions states that the following three main dynasties have ruled in Ipetumodu.

1. The Orunmila/Obatala/Igbo dynasty;
2. The Akalako dynasty; and
3. The Apetumodu dynasty

Orunmila and Obatala were believed to be colleagues of Oduduwa. Their group fought and drove away the Igbo aborigines of Ile-Ife who left their original homeland to settle at a site near the river Sasa in Ipetumodu from where they came to invade Ile-Ife.

Obatala and Orunmila later left Oduduwa at Ile-Ife and came to Ipetumodu to fight the Igbo settlers there. But the Igbo pleaded with them not to trouble them or drive them away from their new abode. Obatala was nicknamed "Osere Ma 'gbo" which when translated to the Igbo language means "Ezema Igbo. Orunmila earned the title "Bara Ipetu, Ajana Ife" in spite of the pleading by the Igbo, they were finally driven out of Ipetumodu.

The Akalako dynasty was an off-shoot of the Orunmila/Obatala/Igbo dynasty. It was founded by Akalako, Son of Obatala. Akalako's mother was Adetinuwe, daughter of Oduduwa, his brothers were Sunkungbade and Asosanyin. While Akalako ruled in Ipetumodu, Sunkungbade became the Olowu of Owu Ipole while Asosanyin who originally settled at Wasinmi near Ikire later migrated to ground Iseyin-Odan. These three brothers had crowns made of "Sese Efun" since they were children of Obatala (also known as Oosa Nla).

The Apetumodu dynasty was an off-shoot of the Akalako dynasty. This has been the Fagbemokun and Aribile till date.

Another tradition states that Akalako popularly regarded as the founder of Ipetumodu, was a contemporary of Oduduwa.

The tradition states further that he was among the Oduduwa - led band of warriors that conquered ancient Ife. He was sent to Ile-Ife while other part was retained to cater for the group at the gate. After some time, the tradition states further, Akalako established an independent town name Ipetumodu at the gate. He then became the first Apetumodu of Ipetumodu.

One silent fact which traditions of Origin of the Ipetumodu people have established is that the town is not a recent creation as some historical propagandists will tend to make us believe. It is as old as Ile-Ife.

Another points is that the popular opinion among Ipetumodu indigene is that Akalako is the founder of the town.

Agreed that there could be some other ruling dynasties before his, Akalako however appeared to be the one who organized a effective political administration that transformed a hitherto small community large and centralized.

Even the tradition that indicated the establishment of the Orunmila / Obatala/ /igbo dynasty before that of Akalako stated further that because Obatala and Orunmila were not interested in divination. Akalako, son of Obatala was believed to have been the one left behind in Ipetumodu to carry out the task of administering the place.

Historical Link with Other Yoruba Towns

According to traditions, the Ife Princes – Oba l'Oyo, the Awujale, Alake Onisabe, the Olupopo, OluNana, and the Orangun visited Ipetumodu during the reign of Akalako. Both the visitors and their host agreed to be making future contacts.

A rock called Pinhun Asewele, still standing at Oke Isasa, represented their symbol of agreement, Oyo Alaafin has continued to honour that pledge. Indeed, up till today, an Alaafin elect has to perform some traditional rites at the Apetumodu's palace before the Alaafin is crowned.

History had it that both Akalako and Orangun (Fagbamila) –later called Orangun of Ila were of the same mother, Adetinuwe, though not of the same father. As already stated, Ipetumodu has historical links with Owu Ipole and Iseyin-Odan which were both founded by Akalako's brothers, Sunkungbade and Asosanyin respectively. Since the time of Oduduwa, Ipetumodu has continued to have a very close and cordial links with Ile-Ife.

There are family ties while both towns celebrate similar annual festivals. During the 19th century Yoruba civil wars, Ipetumodu and Ile -Ife had a strong military understanding and suffered similar fate. For instance, they jointly fought in the Owu and Gbanamu wars.

Ipetumodu and the 19th Century Yoruba Wars

During the Owu War (1812-1822), Isope and Iwaro, two Ipetumodu villages, were attacked thereby causing the exodus of many people. It was after the war that the two

villages were rebuilt. Ipetumodu witnessed the arrival of large number of war refugees from Apomu during the Gbanamu war. The refugees deserted their town in order to escape the impending invasion by the Ibadan army. The people of Ipetumodu repelled most of the military advances of the Ibadan into their territory.

During the Yamarao war (also called Hukuhuku war) between 1839 and 1848. Ipetumodu had its own share of the Fulani attack in their effort to "dip the Koran in the sea". The 'Fulani secretly entered Ipetumodu from Osogbo end and succeeded in killing several people including the military head of Ipetumodu, Balogun Adewusi. So tough was the invasion that the reigning Apetumodu, Oba Folasade Ajiga, with many chiefs and families, had to flee to Ile-lfe for safety. He died in exile in 1842. It was Lafiani, "Arakatampo po Hukuhuku" (He who used crossbows to the Hukuhuku) that led the remnants of the Ipetumodu warriors to dislodge the Fulani from Ipetumodu. He arrived from Rogborogbo (an Ipetumodu village) where he was doing his hunting business and settle at isale Apata quarters in Ipetumodu. It was Olakanmi Okoro Giesi (1848-1626), Ajiga's successor, that carried out the reconstruction of the war-ravaged town.

Not only did the 19th century war lead to loss of lives, depopulation, influx of refugees to Ipetumodu from the Origbo towns of Imulekere, Baakun, Ilaje, Isope Kulede, and Afunnimogbo, the town lost a large percentage of its land. Over five-sixth of Ipetumodu territory (beyond the Isasa River, was seized by the Ibadans.

The 1886 Peace Treaty

The 1886 Peace treaty initiated by the British to put an end to the Yoruba civil strife also had some traumatic effects on Ipetumodu. The treaty had stipulated that the Modakeke, who had been at constant wars with their Ife hosts, would be resettled temporarily in Ipetumodu, Moro and Edunabon and other Origbo towns before their final resettlement by the Osun- Odo Oba confluence between Iwo and Ibadan.

The British authorities, however, failed to implement the treaty to the letter early enough and on the 27th of March 1909, some Modakeke refugees settled in Owu Ipole, Gbongan Edunabon, Ede, Lasole and Akanle while many others, led by the reigning Ogunsua, settled in Ode-Omu (which was originally part of the farmland of the Ipetumodu people). On Sunday 18th July 1909, the Modakekes suddenly and surreptitiously displaced the Ipetumodu farmers who had gone to celebrate the annual "Egungun festival" from their farms.

The British authorities later endorsed the permanent settlement of Modakeke refugees Ipetu modu land without any Compensation.

Recent Political History

Between 1943 and 1947, Ipetumodu belonged to the Origbo People's Assembly where it was represented by six(6) members, the highest number in the Assembly. The Assembly was succeeded by the Origbo Subordinate native Authority in 1948 and lasted till 1954. In the Authority, Ipetumodu had nine (9) out of the twenty three(23) members.

From 1955 to 1966, Ipetumodu was the Headquarters of one of the four components of the Ife Divisional Council then known as Ipetumodu Local Council comprised Ipetumodu (21 members), Ashipa (4 members), Akinlalu (3 members) and Yokooyo (2 members) Six (6) members of this Council could represent it at the Ife Divisional Council level.

Ipetumodu and the other Origbo towns remained in Ife Division Council until 1980, when Governor Bola Ige's administration grouped them as Oranmiyan North Local Government area. The Headquarters was in Ipetumodu. The Local Government was phased out in 1983 when the Buhari Military Administration came to power. But since 1989, when the Ife North Local Government was created, Ipetumodu has continued to be the Headquarters of the Local Government.

Ipetumodu indigenes are noted to be hardworking, industrious, hospitable, brave and peace loving. The traditional occupations of the people of Ipetumodu are farming and trading. Today, the major striving industry that is sustaining the economic, cultural and political developments of the town is education. The people so much appreciate and cherish education which explains why many of their children today are in high echelon of Civil Service, Commerce, Military, Manufacturing Banking and Entrepreneurial sectors. The town today has both state and federal establishments among others.