

**Itan Ido Ijebu by Dr. Badejo Oluremi Adebajo,
First published in 1990 by John West Publications Ltd.**

IJEBU-REMO

SHAGAMU:

Akarigbo is the head of all the Kings in Remo land. The first Akarigbo was Igbodein, child of Aka, who was married to Onigbo. Onigbo was one of those that followed Obanta into Ijebuland originally. King Igbodein's poetic praise (oriki) was: "Owa Mojo-nmogun ofin." After he settled down at Oke Iyemule, he was quoted as saying: "Ore mo!" This was because he relocated to the new home in anger around the year 1450.

It was Aroyewun Akarigbo who moved the people out of Iyemule and relocated them to orile Ofin. The other Akarigbos at this early time were: Luyoruwa, Radolu, Koyelu, Muleruwa, Tewogbuwa, Arioko, Liyangu, Otutu bi Osun, Erinjugbotan, Faranpojo, Igimisoje (who was renowned for leading his people (in 1872) to settle in the place now known as Sagamu, on a land owned by a man named Bammowu, after the Makun war of 1862. Shortly after this settlement, the people of Imakun came back from their hamlet and found Akarigbo, Alara, and Alado. After that, the Elepe, along with his friends, also arrived and settled. Shortly after, there was a dispute between Akarigbo and Elepe over crown and this resulted in war. It was during this battle that Akarigbo was quoted as saying: "Bi n ko tile ju osandie, emi ni Oloja Remo."

This new settlement, at that time, was called Sagamu because it was close to a river. After this era, Deuja became the Akarigbo in 1880. In 1895, Oyebayo became the Akarigbo, and it was during his era that another war ensued between him and the Elepe (in 1903) over the ownership of a crown. This war was so fierce that then Governor, the Hon. William MacGregor, had to intercede and mediate. During the mediation, then the Ooni agba Olubuse was called as a witness and he gave a testimony to the effect that he did not know who the Elepe was, but he knew Akarigbo, and as a matter of fact, he received fifty pounds (£50) from the Akarigbo before giving him the crown in dispute.

The governor eventually settled the rift and seized the crown from the Elepe. It was later reported that one Mr. E.S. Ajayi (B.Sc.), on his return from studying abroad, affirmed that he personally identified the crown on display at a museum in London. It was not too long after this incident that there was a conspiracy against Akarigbo Oyebajo and he was removed from the throne and banished to Calabar in 1914. Then Oba Awolesi became the Akarigbo in 1916.

MAKUN

This was the name Ewusi named his settlement, and being a prince, because he was the son of Awujale Obaruwa, used that influence to become the King of Makun. It was the war that raged in his home town in 1862 that made him to settle at Imakun. Little is known about the names of previous Ewusis. However, history had it that Ewusi Sotinwa was dethroned in 1929 during the Folagbade disturbance. Olukokun came after him, but he was also dethroned. The next king was S. Asaye and he was well liked by then Awujale Daniel Adesanya Gbelebuwa II. It was out of this likeness that the Gbelebuwa presented him with Apete (coronet) in 1939. Oba S. Asaye became deceased on June 22, 1952.

ODE REMO

Alaiye Ode was one of the children of Awujale Geje. He was a sibling to the Onibeju of Ibeju. It was recorded in history that one of the Alaiye of Ode, by the name Oshinloye, was accused of murder in 1902 and was found guilty by the Sagamu court and fined £150. After Osinloye, Dipeolu became king, but was dethroned in 1928 with the charge that he opened the doors of his palace and made negative remarks about the town masquerades (Oloro).

IPERU

Alaperu, who founded this town, was a grandchild of Awujale Ofiran. However, historical records show that the Elepe argued, at some point, that it was him that founded Iperu. There is scanty information regarding previous Alaperus. In 1915, Alaperu Owokalade was crowned and it was him that Awujale Folagbade gave the "Apete" in 1926. Later, Soyebo became Alaperu until 1939 when he was deceased. After him, Abraham Okupe was installed as "omowe, borokinni olowo soke dile" in 1940.

OGEERE

Ogeere was a settlement established by Ologeere, child of Lipakata (Agbenimadehin). He was one of those who followed Obanta to Ijebuland, but later established his own domain at Ogeere. Every year, a cow is killed at Ogeere as part of a ritual for the Awujale. In 1945, Alfred Ashaye (Olowo soke dile) was crowned the Ologeere.

ISARA

The Odemo, who founded this town, was an important member of the entourage of Obanta to Ijebuland, and just like others, he also later established his own domain at Isara. There have been many Odemos crowned since the town was founded but the first popular Odemo; Oba Samuel Akinsanya-Saki was crowned in 1944. Prior to becoming the Odemo, Oba Akinsanya was a popular politician in Lagos.

IGBORE (ABEOKUTA)

Asa, one of the female children of Awujale Oba Jadiara Agbolaganju, with her husband, went to Abeokuta and established a new domain, now known as Igbore. The family-of-origin poetic praise (oriki) is as follows: "Asa ara Igbore omo Oba Ganju, Afota modi."

ISEYIN (OYO)

Adaba, another female child of Awujale Oba Jadiara, went on a long journey out of town with her husband, Ebedi. Adaba was known to be heavily involved in cracking kernels (eyin) a lot. She used to crack kernels for long periods without rest (both day and night) to the extent that she was nicknamed "Aseyin," which became Iseyin till today. This was how the people of Iseyin in Oyo were given the following poetic praise (oriki): "Omo Adaba ku osun sese da apa si; Omo Erelu Ijebu; Omo Ebedi-Moko."

IFE-IJEBU

History of this town has been scanty because it was ritually decreed, in earlier times of its founding, that the history of the town must not be told. However, around 1920-1921, during the controversy between Chief Jewo Oropo and the Ajalorun of that time, as well as the later rift of 1932 between Balufo and then Ajalorun, some of the history of the town came to light.

Ekun Tete was the first King of Ife-Ijebu. He was known to like idol worshipping a lot, being the head of the "agbohun ona-orun" in Ile-Ife.

Before he left town because of his idol-worshipping habit, it was he who asked Balufo Ijaogun to make sacrifice for "Aija ni orun." This was how Ekun Tete became the Ajalorun, thus earning the poetic praise (oriki) of: "Ajalarun Ekuntete." It was this Balufo whose name was changed to "Orunto Olufe" of Ile-Ife for which he is known till today. It was during the reign of Awujale Oba Moyegeso (1710-1725) that the Ajalarun came to Ijebuland.

However, in 1937, during the rift between Remo and Ijebu-Ode, then Ajalarun, Oba Olugboyega, was reported to have claimed that Ajalarun was the replacement to Oduduwa of Ile-Ife and also that he came to Ijebuland before Obanta. After Olugboyega, Asani Mabadeje became the Ajalarun in 1943. It was during the reign of Oba Asani Mabadeje that the ambitious claims of the Ajalarun were curtailed.

IJEBU-IGBO

Ademakin or Orimolusi, whose poetic praise (oriki) was "Adoro Oke", was from the Osimore family and was a very strong hunter. It was while he went on a hunting expedition to the eastern area of Ijebuland that he met a man named "Ogu Ogun Elegi", who was an "Olode" from Imusin. Both of them started

hunting together and came across an elephant. Instantly and simultaneously, they both shot at the elephant, killing it. As they carved the elephant, a scramble ensued for some of the precious parts, but Ademakin exercised restraint and said: "Erin mo Olusi." It was this incident that made Ademakin's wife (Sopen) to advise him to relocate and he did.

So, after he relocated, the story was that whenever people from out-of-town came looking for Ademakin, Ogun Elegi would tell them as follows: "Orimolusi Ijebu, o wa ninu igbo lokankan." - meaning Orimolusi Ijebu is in the forest ahead. This was how Ademakin became the Orimolusi of Ijebu-Igbo. Later, Ogunelegi left this forest and re-settled in an area known till today as "Idode". The seat of Orimolusi is at "Oke Sopen".

Over time, more people came to settle in the area, and among these people, some named their area "Ojowo", while others named theirs "Atikori", "Okeagbo", and "Japara". Total settlements in this forested area were five in number. Other villages like: Asigidi, Igboaire, Awa, and Odo Molu later merged with them. Each of them had their own village heads, but they all accepted the Orimolusi as the overall head.

It should be noted that some other people of Ijebu-Igbo origin had argued that a person named Onoyelu was the first to settle at Ijebu-Igbo, and that he was the "Oloja Igbo". It was after him, this historical version stated, that Ikudeinde, Adefisibe, Ikupakude, Ojumiri and Adetuga, all became kings. Then, there came a long period when Ijebu-Igbo was without a king. During this period, Ijebu-Igbo was ruled by village chiefs (Bale) until a man named Shittu was removed as village chief (Bale) in February 1929, and a man named Adesemowo was crowned as the king in 1930.

ODOGBOLU

A man by the name "Elesi Ekun Ogoji" was credited to have first stumbled into this town while hunting, and settled at "Efiyan". Then, one Chief Ogbolu was sent from Ijebu-Ode to be the overseer, and he settled at "Odo-gbolu". But because of his lackluster attitude, another person named Chief Layanra or Madegun (a friend to one of the children of then female Awujale), was sent to replace him. Chief Layanra settled at "Odo Layanra". Since that time, no other replacement was sent until 1943, when Onasanya was installed as chief. One day, Elesi went hunting in the forest and ran into a man named Aderohunmu, who was a child of Oba Awujale Ajano (1642). Prince Aderohunmu was reported to have been banished from Ijebu-Ode for lying. However, the condition in which Elesi found him in the forest was so pathetic that on getting back home, he went directly to the Awujale and reported that while hunting in the forest, he ran into a dark complexioned man behind river "omen" ("okunrin dudu lehin omi omen") who claimed to be the Awujale's son, and pleaded for clemency for the prince.

The Awujale, apparently still bitter about what his son did, was not as sympathetic and even joked, saying: "O mo le da ni" meaning, that's what you get for being a traitor. It was since then that this prince became known as: "Moloda" (Okunrin dudu ehin Omen). Elesi was so filled with pity for Prince Aderohunmu that he pleaded with the prince to leave the forest and come and stay with him. So, in 1850, Prince Aderohunmu obliged to leave his settlement at Orule Iloda, and relocated to Odogbolu, and named his new area "Iloda", which later became one of the prominent areas in Odogbolu.

It was since this time that Odogbolu had known no peace. This was because of the claim that the area known as "Moloda" should be the center of leadership for the entire Odogbolu area, but Oremadegun disagreed, thus creating a tug-of-war over territorial supremacy. This rift dragged on till 1903 when General Reef Talker had to intervene. Also in 1915, General Moorhouse intervened. In 1916, Mr. Sawyer, the District Administrator also intervened; same in 1924 by General Major Rockson. It was at this time that the Moloda made up the story he received his crown from Ile-Ife. As a result of this apparently false claim, he was dethroned.

In March 1929, Oba Dagburewe of Idowa, Idi Mobulejo, accompanied District Commissioners Rowel Jones, and T.B. Dew, undertook an investigation into the records of Odogbolu indigenes regarding the Moloda matter. During the investigative proceedings, Oba Dagburewe advised the Odogbolu people to consider merging the three royal titles (then existing) into one and then rotate ascendancy to the throne among the three areas. This advice was rejected. Then in 1930, Awujale Fibiwoga decreed that the three competing areas (Remadegun, Elesi and Moloda) would form the leadership for Odogbolu. This was how Odogbolu became a town with three leaders! It was after this that James Idowu became the chief of Moloda. In 1939, Odogbolu became separated from Idowa and Eyinwa became part of Odogbolu. Then in 1944, Chief Mobaranku became the head of Moloda.

Source: Itan Ido Ijebu by Dr. Badejo Oluremi Adebajo, First published in 1990 by John West Publications Ltd., John West House, Plot "2" Block "A", Acme Road, Ogba, P.M.B. 21001, Ikeja, Lagos,