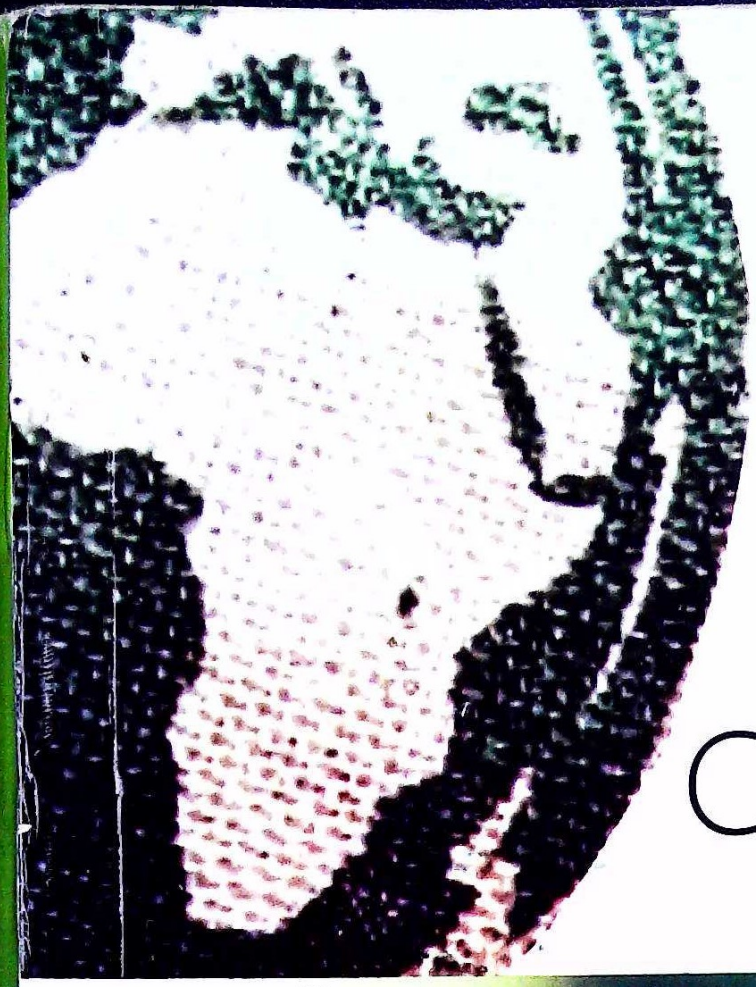


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THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MALETE DISTRICT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This paper examines the historical impact and significance of the present Malete District, which is otherwise regarded in the history as the old-Oyo empire, on the development and expansion of Islam in Ilorin metropolis, which is one of the key towns in Yoruba land, and a gateway to the north and south of Nigeria.

The historical relationship of the two sides is believed to have contributed immensely to the present situation of Islam in Yoruba land. Its critical observation will serve as the key of understanding to most of the hidden facts about the origin and development of Islam both in Ilorin and the entire Yoruba land.

The paper further examines the personality of Sheikh 'Alimi, the leader of Islamic revolution in Ilorin in particular and Yoruba land in general, in connection with his missionary aspiration in Malete district and his final residence in Ilorin township.

INTRODUCTION:

Past studies have shown that there are some connections between the Ilorin Metropolis and the present Malete District, but little has been done in the area of the past history of Malete District and its significance to the spread and development of Islam in Ilorin township. Thus, this work investigated the past history of the present Malete District and its significance to the development of Islam in Ilorin township.

History is an effective tool to understanding the occurrence of the past and the present, through which the clear picture of the future is predicted. However, the origin and evolution of Islam in Yoruba land could not be traced back in history other than to the relationship between the present Malete District which is otherwise known as Oyo-Ile and Ilorin Township.

It is an established fact that Islam in Yoruba land is as far back as 1550 CE, where the first Mosque was built in Oyo-Ile by Islamist from Nupe land during the reign of King Ajiboyede , whereas the origin of Islam in Ilorin could not be traced back other than to the establishment of the Oke-Sunnah village around 1770 and 1800 CE. Al-Ilory,(1986).

Consequently, the relationship between the two sides cannot be overemphasized in the history of Islam in Yoruba land in general. The highlighted points of this paper are as follows:

- Malete in the eyes of history
- Ilorin as an entity
- The Significance of Malete-District to the Development of Islam in Ilorin metropolis.
- Conclusion

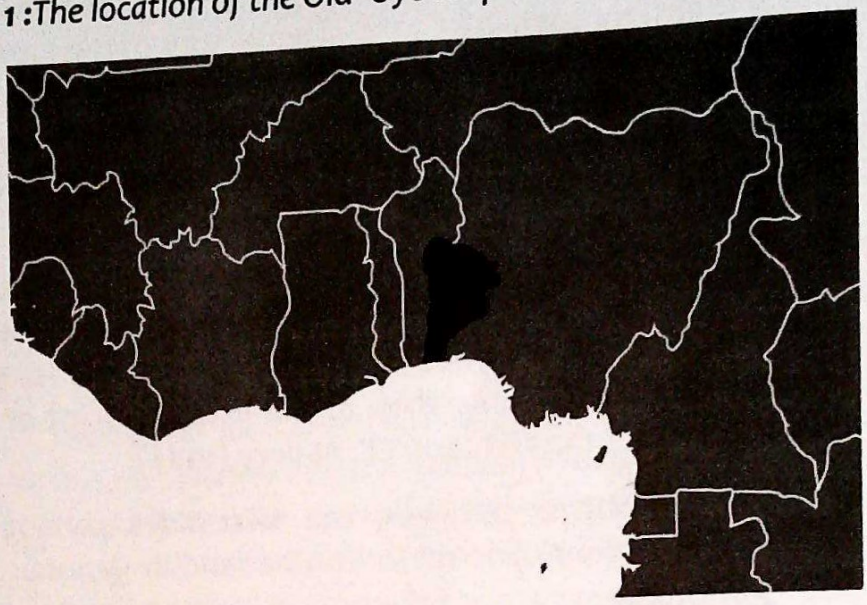
MALETE IN THE EYES OF HISTORY

The history of the so called Malete District today can be divided according to the stages of its existence, the past and the contemporary history.

The Past History of Malete District

Numerous facts made it known that Oyo Empire was established in the 14th century and later grew to become one of the largest West African States encountered by pre-colonial explorers... and that Oyo Empire was the most politically important State in the region from the mid-17th to the late 18th century. Holding sway not only over most of the other kingdoms in Yoruba land but also over nearby African States – notably, the Fon Kingdom of Dohomey in the contemporary republic to the West.

Fig. 1 :The location of the Old- Oyo Empire in the West African Map.



Source: http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilorin, *retrieved on 16-02-2013*

Oyo-Ile with its huge influence was later ruined by series of wars which resulted into total disintegration of the Empire. Discipline in the Oyo Empire broke down, Provincial Chiefs, as well as the Nobility in Oyo resisted control.

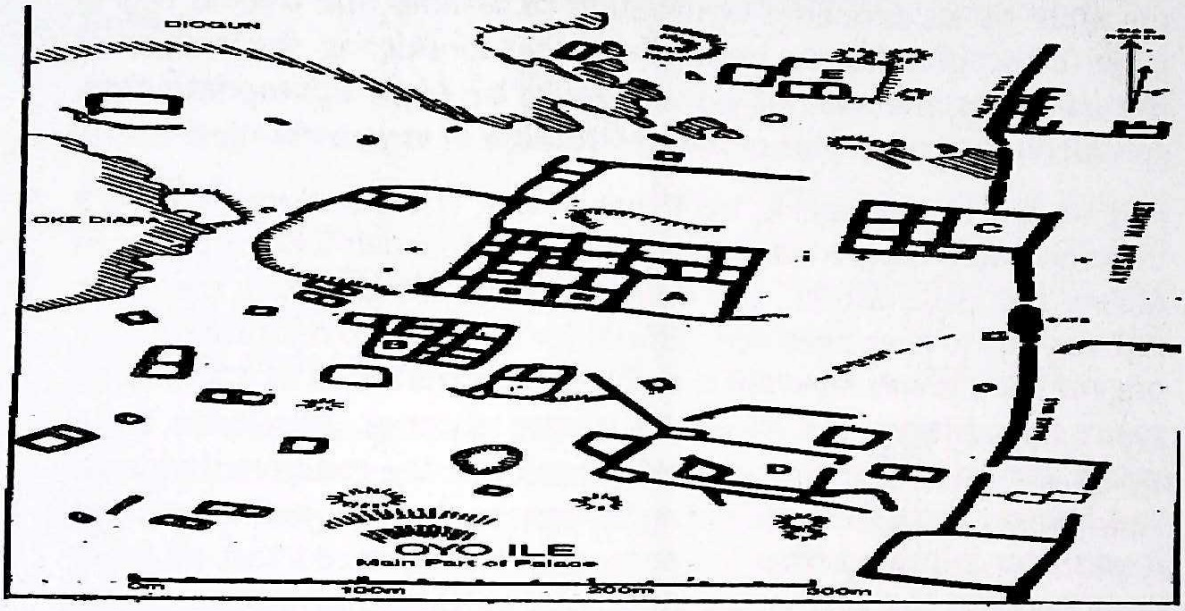
Jimba (2008) in an article titled "Ilorin, its wars, its warriors and its Emirs (XVII)" asserts that:

> "Old Oyo was never rebuilt to this day; rather, its ruins are still there. In fact, the Federal Government has acquired the area and made it a National Tourist Centre. Although, the Old-Oyo area is now in Malete District of Kwara State, some 80 or 20 kilometers from Ilorin Metropolis, it is reachable from Igbeti where the office of the management of the Centre is situated".

It is clear from this extract that the location of Old-Oyo that is prominent in the history of Africa is nowhere to be found today other than in Malete District of Kwara State. This assertion was confirmed by an eye witness from Malete District who mentioned that the said Oyo is presently near a village called *Omingbangba* in Malete District, he further

mentioned that the spot of the then palace of Alaafin of Oyo is distinct up till today.(Ibrahim,interviewed 2012).

Fig. 2: *The Old Oyo Plan, the palace of the then Alaafin of Oyo.*



Source: *http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Oyo, retrieved on 8-02-2013.*

I like to include here that, in a published article written by L.A.K Jimoh titled : ARE MORO PEOPLE YORUBA?, in the Democrat newspaper, on Monday, 17th , October 1994, page eight, in answer to another article previously written and published in page eight of Nigeria Tribune, Wednesday 5th October,1994, by Oyetunji, secretary, Moro Elders Forum, under the caption: "MORO PEOPLE ARE YORUBA". He assumed that:

> " Oyo-Ile the capital city of Old-Oyo empire was situated in an area that is today known as paiye district in Moro local government of Ilorin Emirate, and that the entire Moro L.G.A stretching from Paiye to Shao to Jebba at the

bank of River Niger constituted a major part of *Ekun Osi* (Eastern province) of the Old-Oyo Empire"(Jimoh,1994)

If it is accepted that the eastern province of Oyo-Ile covered the entire Moro Local Government, and it is firmly established that the palace of Alafin of Oyo-Ile was near *Omingbangba* in Malete District, it would therefore be an erroneous observation to assume that Oyo-Ile was in Ipaye District of today, the reason being that considering the location of the palace as the seat of power would be more appropriate than considering any other part of the empire without any justification.

It is worthy of mentioning here that among the discovered Oyo-Ile`s traditional surprise is a metal- rod(*Omo-Owu)* found in a place between Malete and Ipaye district , precisely in a village called *Jokoro*, the metal rod was said to have been very difficult for everyone to relocate from its original spot. It was reported that foreign tourists heard of it and came to try its carriage , but all efforts proved abortive. This made some young islamists in the area to decide to relocate the rod from their area to a faraway place. They strived and exercised their spiritual talents and it was later relocated from the spot, only to be noticed that all those participated in the exercise were seriously attacked by illness , where nothing could be done to heal them other than to return the rod to its original place.

An eye witness testified to the fact that the metal-rod can still be found up till today in its ancient spot. It is a place worths visiting by all and sundry. (Ishaq, Oral interview, 2012)

All the above mentioned facts made it difficult to ignore the connection of the present Malete District with the Old-Oyo Empire.

The Contemporary Malete District

Malete District is one of the five districts in the present Moro Local Government of Kwara State, Nigeria, which was carved out of the

former Ilorin Native Authority 1976 Local Government Reformers. Malete District comprises of seven (7) village areas namely:

(1) Ajanaku (2) Aga (3) Logun (4) JeunKunun (5) Gbugudu and (6) Paku respectively and Malete being the Seventh village area and also the mother of them all.(Yusuf,2007).

There are several narrations as to the founding of today's Malete District:

Malete of today was said to have been founded by a warrior called Aliyu Ishola who was the ancestor of the present Malete Magaji's family, his people and he were believed to have come from Oyo-Ile and its surrounding areas to first settled in Ilorin about 200 years ago in Oloje area. As a warrior, when one of the sale-oja fighters in Ilorin was captured in Offa-Ilorin war at Offa, it was this said warrior, Aliyu Ishola that went alone to Offa to rescue the sale-oja fighter called Ku'ka'a'.

After the return of Aliyu Ishola from Offa, he was said to have thought of resettling at the outskirt of Ilorin with his people to enable him devote fully to his profession as a hunter and warrior, he therefore moved outside Ilorin to Oke-Aasa side, precisely at a village called Lagaa, he was believed to have been the first to settle in the area.But not quite long, due to the nature of the environment, he had to further his journey with his people in search for permanent settlement.

It was from Lagaa that Aliyu Ishola came to settle at a place in *Idi-Isin*, now in Malete. Here, one of the soothsayers was reported to have directed him and his people to another stand where they could easily be seen by the passersby, and order them to build their huts in the area. The soothsayer expressed himself in a classical Yoruba expression saying "Ema ile tente" which means "Build small huts or where it is clear over there". It was from this expression that the present Malete derived its name.

The place described for them being the area where the Malete's primary School is now built. They settled in the area for a while, then another person came to them and foretold that "here you will not have male issues, if you wish to be having male issues, you are advised to move to

another vicinity". The place to which they were finally redirected is the front of the present Daudu's residence at the centre of Malete.

Another narration claims that Malete people were said to have first settled in Ilorin and later resettled in the outskirts of Ilorin to farm under the supervision of the chief errand of the time, Abubakar Basambo called Osunlade.

However, another source stated that settlers that constitute malete were believed to have migrated from Ilorin. The founder according to this claim was a warrior who had fought series of wars along with popular warriors like Balogun Fulani, Balogun Gambari and Balogun Alanamu in support of the Alimi dynasty in Ilorin. The founder was called Gborigi, he was a hired warrior who fought so many wars in Ilorin and its environments. It was believed according to the narration that his family's house in those days was located around center Igboro area. In fact, the place used for the children hospital in Ilorin today was believed to have been his family land. Due to his skill in warfare, many people use to hire him for assistance against their enemies.

However, at a point in time, he became a war machinery due to much pressures on him on many war fronts, he decided that his children, wives, brother had to leave Ilorin town for the present place called Malete.

Gborigi, his relatives and followers were later attracted by fertile nature of Malete's land and its environment together with availability of varieties of wild animals like elephant, lions, and tigers. It therefore became difficult for them to leave such fertile environment for Ilorin where they had earlier settled. Later on, people migrated from Ilorin, Oyo-Ile and other places to join Gborigi in the area. It was reported that Gborigi was originally a pagan but later converted to Islam.

According to Abdullahi, (2013, p.5) quoting his informant, Alhaji Adebayo, "The word "Malete" was derived from certain historical coincidence. His great-great grand father whose name proved difficult to remember, migrated from Ile-Ogodu in Oloje area at Ilorin (about 600 years ago). According to the historical account granted by

Adebayo`s great grand father, Mallam Abdulmalik revealed how a seer and fortune teller told their forbearer that he would die barren if he remained at home.

The seer admonished him that he should follow a footpath northward of Oloje and walk from morning till dusk. At the spot he reach by dusk, he should stop and walk further southwards at a distance of three hundred and thirteen feet. On that spot he should build a small resident apartment translated into Yoruba as 'Ma ile tente'. It is from this Yoruba translation tthat the word 'Malete' was coined and remained the town`s name from then till today."

A critical look into the assertions on who were the first set of people to settle in Malete will logically lead us to making a comparative statement between the different narrations on the issue.

There are three different actors claimed to have been the founder of Malete according to the oral traditions mentioned above, namely: (1) Aliyu Isola, the ancestor of the magaji dynasty, (2) Abubakar Basambo, called osunlade, the progenitor of the Daudu dynasty and (3) Gborigi.

Adebayo`s narration did not mention any specific actor who championed the claim, beside, the name of founder of any town should be as the important of the town itself , famous and not easily forgotten, thus, the narration is not historically reliable, especially the date cited (600 years) is all contrary to what is obvious in the history of both Ilorin and Malete all together, that founding of the contemporary malete is not up to 600 years, coupled with the fact that this last narration have some similarities with the narration of Aliyu Ishola, which if admitted may result into duplication of historical claim which might not be scientifically and intellectually relevant.

The contradiction between the other three different assertions may also be reduced by saying that: Aliyu Ishola being the ancestor of the magaji's dynasty is obvious and that Abubakar Basambo as the ancestor of the Daudu's dynasty is undisputable in history, but according to the above mentioned history, Aliyu Ishola can further be

traced in history to his original source in Oyoile. Whereas it is not yet established that Basambo (Osunlade) was of that caliber. This implies that Aliyu Ishola was an entity representing the founder of the town while Daudu is an entity representing the interest of the Emir of Ilorin.

This deduction tallies with what is therefore believed of Daudu in the Ilorin Emirate Political System, that Daudus are representatives of the Emir of Ilorin, and to the people of malete the prevailed tradition is that Magaji founds the town.

To most of the Malete residents, Gborigi who appears in the oral assertion have no base in the founding history of Malete, because if Magajis claim to have been from Aliyu Ishola, and Dudus Claim to be from Basambo, who are the people of Gborigi in the Contemporary Malete phase?

Consequently it sounds rational that the claim of Aliyu Ishola as the founder of the present Malete could be considered as the most authentic assertion about the founding of the town.

ILORIN AS AN ENTITY

Ilorin is one of the largest cities in Nigeria and it is the official capital of Kwara State which is regarded as the leading north central state in both the geographical and political contexts. Ilorin is in-between the north and the south of Nigeria, and geographically located between latitude 8°,50 north and longitude 4°53" east. Ilorin had a population of 847,582 as of 2007.(http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ilorin)

The founding of Ilorin

There are divergent statements on the origin of what is known today as Ilorin.

The first statement states that: Ilorin of today is widely believed to have been built in the seventeenth century or late eighteenth by an itinerant hunter from Gambe near Oyo-Ile or from Ilota. The hunter was

called Ojo.Ojo was later joined by another Nupe hunter called *Emina* or *Emila* ,after which another hunter came to settle nearby at *Okelele* who was *called Dahdah*.

At the time of Ojo`s arrival, the place now known as Ilorin was mostly a virgin land inhabited only by hermit *Baruba* family at a place which is still called *Baruba* near *Idi-ape* .It was not the intention of Ojo as an intinerant hunter , to establish a settlement there. He only incidentally found, near the hut where the Baruba hermit was living, a well positioned rock that was remarkably suitable for sharpening tools and decided to erect a transit camp at the site.The rock being a good metal sharpener was called Ilo-irin, meaning "iron sharpener" by the yorubas. The name Ilorin is therefore believed to be a contraction of Ilo-irin(Jimoh,1994).

The second mythological believe was that the word "Ilorin" was a derivation of Ilu-Erin, which means "the town of elephants". This particular mythological postulation was given some authenticity by the reported killing of elephants in the year 1824 on the outskirts of Ilorin, at a place henceforth called Oko-erin, which at the present, is the location of Kwara state stasium complex (Jimoh,1992,p.26).This second historical claim cannot be underrated because at the time Afonja flew into Ilorin from Oyo-Ile, after he was defeated in Iwere war, he was said to have been received by powerful elephant hunter in Ilorin and was welcomed as a great royal warrior that was unfortunately defeated (Al-Ilori 1986,p.30).Therefore the derivation of Ilorin from Ilu-Erin is also historically considerable and reasonable.

Ilorin is an advanced Islamic city that was islamically revolutionized by Sheikh Alimi in the nineteenth century to now become a model for Islam in the entire Yoruba land. It can also be said that the advancement of Islam and the development of Islamic scholar in Nigeria, especially south of the River Niger, are largely legacies bequeathed to posterity by Ilorin. Jimoh,(1994).

The unique Islamic community of Ilorin is that of its ethnic diversity that accommodates scholars from different tribes such as *Fulanis,Malians,Sudanese,Hausas,Nupes,Yorubas* and many others,

despite that Ilorin is a Yoruba city. The inhabitants of various villages surrounding Ilorin, especially towns and villages within the Ilorin Emirate contribute to its social and religious advancement.

THE HISTORICAL SIGINIFICANCE OF MALETE-DISTRICT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM IN ILORIN METROPOLIS.

The importance attached to the relationship between Malete-District and Ilorin township cannot be overemphasized in the development of Islam in the entire Yoruba land. Relationship has been defined as the way in which two people, groups or countries behave toward each other or deal with each other. Weihmeier(2000.p.988). Relationship in general is either positive or negative in nature , but to the relationship between Ilorin township and Malete District it is neither that nor this, it rather encompass both negative and positive relationship. The negative in the past that turns to be positive in the present.

What is concretely established by the historians was that the two Ilorin historical icons were both from Malete –District, the first of whom was Afoja followed by an Islamic revolutionist called Salih popularly known as Sheikh Alimi.

The origin of the relationship between *Ilorin* and *Malete* therefore started since the flew of *Afonja* from *Oyo-Ile* , where he was planned for by the royal conspiracy, and defeated in *Iwere* war, to *Ilorin* where he was received as a powerful warrior, coupled with the fact that he was from the royal family of the capital city of the entire Yoruba land(*Oyo-Ile*) who was unfortunately defeated.

When *Afonja* later settled in Ilorin, he was able to lay his hand on the nearby areas for military control, and became the greatest warrior in the environs till the coming of Sheikh Alimi. (Al-ilori, 1986.p.30-31).This could be attributed to his bravery and nobility.

Although Sheikh Alimi, an Islamic icon both in *Ilorin* and the entire Yoruba land, was from *Tunkr* village in *Kebbi* , the northern part

of Nigeria, yet he migrated from his own area to Sokoto, later to Oyo-Ile toward the end of the eighteenth century , which was about the same time that *Usman dan fodio* began his missionary activities in *Gobir* land, in search for permanent destination for his mission. Alimi was later ejected from Oyo-Ile currently known as Malete-District due to the effectiveness of Islamic activities, where he migrated to Ilorin as his permanent abode.

"However there were muslims in Oyo-Ile, as in parts of Yoruba land, before Sheikh Alimi`s arrival. The precise time Islam was introduced in the area is not certain; But what is fairly certain is that in the seventeenth century mention was made of Muslims in Yoruba land. The mention was made by a Hausa scholar called Abdullahi Muhammad bn Massanih(died in 1667) in a book titled: *Shifa Ruba fi tahrir fucaha* which he addressed to the learned men of Yoruba explaining to them the Islamic method of determining sunset. This would suggest that there was a fairly well established Muslim community in Oyo by the second half of the seventeenth century at the latest" .Jimoh,(1994.p.48). In fact the numerous number of muslims in Oyo may be among the main reasons why Sheikh Alimi decided to choose Oyo as where to stay and made the center of his mission.

During the stay of Sheikh Alimi in Oyo he was able to impact proper Islamic practice into the life of the Oyo muslims, to the extent that Alafin of Oyo became jittery over the development. The Alafin consulted the oracle which foretold danger if Sheikh Alimi was not expelled from Oyo. By that time Sheikh Alimi had travelled extensively in the area, particularly to Oyo,Iseyin,Ogbomasho, and Kuwo, over a period of years and had devoted himself to the cause of Islamic reform,(Jimoh,1994,p.47)

Whether or not the mentioned towns are the contemporary ones the most important note is that Sheikh Alimi contributed immensely to the reform and advancement of Islam in those areas of Yoruba land ever before he was driven out of Oyo to Ilorin.

In order to cut the long story short, When Sheikh Alimi settled with the already existing Muslims in Ilorin, he exercised a very high sense of Islamic understanding. Afonja a pagan Yoruba in one side with

his people and intention of military control, and Sheikh Alimi, a Hausa, in the other side as an Islamic revolutionist , Afoja invited Alimi in line with the understanding of Yoruba ancient kings, to support him in his military aspiration, which Alimi honored. Therefore the harmonious co-existence and ethnic diversity which Ilorin is now known for, originated right from the day Alimi honored the invitation of Afonja to allied together and wage a merciless war against any alien force.

It is to be recalled that some verses of the holy Quran enjoys a Muslim to honor such invitation in order to be able to carry out da`wa (calling) obligation to Allah. Allah says in the holy Qur`an, Suratut-Taobah Ayah 6-10:

Sûrah 9. At-Taubah Part 10 | **244** | **الجزء ١٠ سورة التوبة ٩**

their way free. Verily, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

6. And if anyone of the *Mushrikûn* (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh) seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the Word of Allâh (the Qur'ân), and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not.

7. How can there be a covenant with Allâh and with His Messenger for the *Mushrikûn* (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh) except those with whom you made a covenant near *Al-Masjid-al-Harâm* (at Makkah)? So long as they are true to you, stand you true to them. Verily, Allâh loves *Al-Muttaqûn* (the pious — See V.2:2).

8. How (can there be such a covenant with them) that when you are overpowered by them, they regard not the ties, either of kinship or of covenant with you? With (good words from) their mouths they please you, but their hearts are averse to you, and most of them are *Fâsiqûn* (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh).

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ
حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝٦

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِندَ
اللَّهِ وَعِندَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدتُّمْ
عِندَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ
فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝٧

كَيْفَ وَإِن يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْقُبُوا
فِيكُمْ إِلًّا وَلَا ذِمَّةً يُرْضُونَكُم بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتَأْبَىٰ
قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ۝٨

It is also important to note that the invitation of Alimi by Afoja could not be without any return, the benefit of Alimi`s service from his support for Afonja, could therefore not be below that of Afonja`s friend, Toyeje, Bale of Ogbomasho and the then Deputy Aree Onakakanfo, whom Sheikh Alimi was said to have been so impressed by the hospitality of his

host that he buried some charms around the town and specially prayed that Ogbomasho would never be subdued militarily. Jimoh,(1994,p.50).

Following the defeat of Oyo army by Afonja who was assisted by Alimi`s soldier , Afonja seemed not complied with his treaty made, upon which Alimi was invited, by not given room for Alimi to make his targeted reform as he did in Ogbomasho and other areas of Yoruba land. This reveals the secret behind the confrontation between both sides, which eventually led to the death of Afonja, and mark the beginning of Islamic advancement in Ilorin and Yoruba land in general.

The Significance of The Current Malete-District to the Development of Islam in Ilorin

In addition to the importance of the past relationship between Malete and Ilorin, the current significance of Malete –District to the development of Islam in Ilorin started with the founding of the current Malete, where most of the narrations on how Malete was founded made it clear that the founders of Malete settled first in Ilorin before migrating to Malete. This implies that since the founding of Malete, before the colonial rule, they had been in relation with one another. It was reported that people from Malete normally brought their surplus farm products to Oja-Oba (Emir`s market) in Ilorin on regular basis , and people from Ilorin normally participate in every five days market at Malete. Yusuf,(2007).

It is important to note here that the current Malete was founded during the Islamic revolution in Ilorin, though the exert year the town was founded is not yet concluded, what is clear was that the first district head was appointed by the Emir of Ilorin to Malete in the year 1907 before he was disposed in 1916.jimoh,(1994). It is pertinent to mention that before that time Malete has been in existence and its relationship between Ilorin was partially equal because Malete enjoyed independent from Ilorin. However with the subjugation of Ilorin Emirate and the recognition of the Emir of Ilorin as the leader of Ilorin and its environment in February 1897, Ilorin began to intervene in the political and religious affairs in Malete, since then, Emir of Ilorin has the absolute power to appoint and dispose Daudu in Malete and with this the semi-

autonomy status enjoyed by the people of this area was eroded, they now look onto the Emir before any decision is taken. Yusuf, (2007)

Based on the cordial relationship between the two towns there emerges numerous compounds in Ilorin township that has their respective roots in Malete-District, that are basically Muslims, thus serving as light of truth for Islamic orientation in their respective domain, example of these compound are as follows:

No	Name of village in Malete	Name of compound in Ilorin	Location in Ilorin
1	Oregele	Oregele compound	Okekere
2	Agogo Ija	Alabere	Okelele
3	Obejimoh	Obejimoh	Guniyan Alore
4	Malete	Malete	Oke Sunnah
5	Elebenla	Elebenla	Isale banni, Alore
6	Manso	Manso	Okekere
7	Oniko	Oniko	Oloje
8	Oregele	Ile Onikahun	Gada Aluko
9	Oregele	Oregele Compound	Abayawo
10	Olofere	Olofere Compound	Okelele
11	Jeunkunnun	Jeunkunnun	Oloje

12	Kosobo	Alufa Jeje	Okekere
13	Olokotintin	Olokotintin	Abayawo
14	BBudo Are	Takan	Isalae Baani
15	Karibuje	Karibuje	Alore
16	Ita Yanyanmu	Babaita	Alor
17	Budo Oloso	Oloso	Ode-Babaita

Jimoh,(1994)

It can be seen in the above table that Malete-District contributes positively to the development of Islam in Ilorin through these compounds that are believed to have their Islamic impact on the advancement of their respective areas in Ilorin as well as in Malete.

Conclusion

It would be seen from the facts and statements presented in this paper that Malete- District is historically rich, as it was regarded in the past as Oyo-Ile, that is prominent in the history of West Africa. Malete-District is therefore important to the spread of Islam in Ilorin, because Sheikh Alimi that came to make a comprehensive Islamic revolution in Ilorin, previously settled in Oyo-Ile that is known today as Malete-District. The interactive experiences gathered by Sheikh Alimi during his stay in Oyo was very useful to him in handling the revolution, most especially in dealing with Afoja, a Yoruba royal warrior, who later became his only obstacle in his mission. In addition to the past history, another significance of Malete to the spread of Islam manifested in the founders of the current Malete who settled in Ilorin before they came to resettle at Malete. During their stay they in Ilorin, they participated in

the revolutionary war in Ilorin, such as Ilorin-Offa war, in favor of Islam and not otherwise. All these create a very strong bound between the two towns which resulted into the emergency of identical compounds in both towns, known for their Islamic faith, with their roots in one another, till the present day.

I will recommend that further research should be carried out in order to reveal the role of the Old Yoruba cities that had been ruined due to series of wars, such as old Iseyin, Old Ogbomasho, Old Oyo, because these towns connect in one way or the other, to the Islamic revolution in Ilorin and may enhance our understanding of the past more better.

Lastly, I will suggest that, so far the hero of Islam in Ilorin Emirate had laid the Islamic legacy for the generations to come, there should be a continue effort in developing it, the least of which should be the release of a more comprehensive profile booklet containing the names of the past and the present Islamic scholars who contributes tremendously to advancement of Islam in the Emirate in other to crown their efforts to be championed by Center for Ilorin Studies, University of Ilorin. In addition, imbibing in an orientation project in other to make the Islamic reform meaningful, such as founding of Islamic public library and the likes.

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