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AN EXAMINATION OF EGUNGUN MASQUERADE
IN OGBOMOSOLAND:
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR
CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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CONCLUSION

Now that we are approaching the 21st century, cults such as Oro, Egungun, Agemo or of any kind ought to have died out. With the coming of civilization Christ has been made known to us and we have seen that Christ is the truth. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "I am the truth, the light and the way, no one cometh to the Father except by me."¹⁰ But surprisingly, the cult of Egungun is not dying out simply because of the satanic nature that is involved.

Young boys used to be involved when they want to harass any lady they approach for love affairs. If the lady turned their request down, during the Egungun festival, such a lady will be their object of attack. Since the lady will not know who wears the Egungun mask, in most cases, these Egungun (known as Kunduke) molest these young ladies innocently.

Some owners of the Egungun have also become so tired of them that they want to throw the masks away. But surprisingly each attempt is foiled. After throwing the masks away, before they would get home, the mask would be found there again. It is only prayer, sincere prayer to God

can set houses free from these types of spirits.

One of the researcher's brothers, Rev. Jacob Adesiyan Adeyemi was preaching many years back when he was talking about the Egungun belonging to his own father. He said the praise name of that Egungun was

Adeyemi baba Adesiyan
Baba Ajibade
Oloko lodo kogi
Oko Iya Oleru ara orun
Kin kin

meaning, "Adeyemi the father of Adesiyan, the father of Ajibade, farm owner at Kogi River; the husband of a woman who deals in ashes the citizen of heaven."

He was preaching to disprove the validity of Egungun and Egungun being a citizen of heaven or visitation of an ancestor. He said a spirit from heaven cannot be a husband of a living woman and also have an earthly farm that he will plant and harvest annually; hence Egungun is not an "ara orun" (a citizen of heaven) as claimed by the worshippers. Eniyan ni gbe Egun ara orun o wa ye ri meaning "it is human being that wears the mask, a heavenly visitor can never come the world before." If anybody ever came to the world from heaven and went back with the hope of returning, that person is nobody other than Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Another incident happened long time ago that called for a caption on a daily newspaper. The caption was in Yoruba: "Mato opa Egungun kia ara orun di ara aiye nigbati ojade ninu Eku" meaning an Egungun was hit by a motor

immediately a heavenly citizen became an earthly being when he removed his mask. Even though the writer does not have the details of the particular newspaper that reported this news, but this could be true. And it established the fact that he (the Egungun) was not a spirit in the first place. Christians should not patronize the worshippers of all these other gods. They (Christians) should preach the Gospel. They should thank God for various approaches to the preaching of the gospel through so many ways such as the radio, television, news media, public sermons, etc. Those preachings should be more serious and should by all means dissuade people from confiding in what cannot help them in time of trouble or even in time when there is no trouble. Psalm 115:3-8 should be a guide:

But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; they have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They who make them are like unto them; so is everyone who trusteth in them.

Christians should preach using the above passage and other relevant passages like until the whole world is won to Jesus Christ.

Christianity came to Africa through so many ways, but three ways are so prominent which no one can disprove. The very first that was famous to the extent that it has a biblical record behind it: the encounter of Philip with the Ethiopian eunuch. The eunuch was baptized by Philip.

Philip left the eunuch as directed by the Holy Spirit while he returned to his country. The story is recorded in Acts 8:26-40. This was the first African Christian missionary encounter. But how much of the work of evangelism was done by the Ethiopian eunuch, nobody knows. May be much was done and the claim that black civilization was destroyed may also be the point of the destruction of Christianity in Africa.

The next was the coming of the Portuguese and the Spanish who again introduced Christianity to Africa the second time. Specifically the Portuguese and the Spanish came as traders and missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but their work also did not yield any serious fruit. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the American Baptist came to Nigeria, not only the Baptist denomination, but other denominations also came, and since then Christianity had spread tremendously. Although Islam has been on the soil of Africa as far back as the seventh and eighth centuries and fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the impact of Christianity was felt more later. Even up till today what Christianity has done on African soil cannot be compared with any other known world religion.