

**OLOTA MYSTERIOUS YORUBA POWER: ITS CHALLENGES
TO CHRISTIAN FAITH IN IRAGBERI, OSUN STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This was an investigation of Olota Mysterious Yoruba Power: Its Challenges to Christian Faith in Iragberi, Osun State. As an inheritance mysterious power, Olota stone provide avenue for the people of Iragberi to display their power among Yoruba ethnic group. Combinations of methods were used to achieve the purpose of this work. These were historical, descriptive and interview approaches to collect and collate information. The collection of data involved fieldwork during which interviews were conducted. Since the research is historical, the researcher distributed an interview guide to 35 people who are members of the royal families. A total number of 35 interview guide were described among these people; while a total number of 32 interview guide were returned. The interview questions focused on the challenges of Olota Mysterious Power to Christian Faith and how challenges could be met. It also focused on Olota worship and its shrine. Also relevant textbooks, journal articles and magazines were consulted in addition to relevant Bible passages.

The study discovered that the cultural heritage of any community is as natural as the mother's milk to a child. Also this study discovered that Iragberi people had the idea of God in their traditional religion. The study went further to discover both origin of Olota and how it is worshipped in Igbo-Ile. The impacts of Olota on the people of Iragberi was also highlighted. Furthermore, this study analyzed the beginning of Christianity and the Baptist work in Iragberi. This study critically looked into some of the major challenges that confront the Christian Faith in Iragberi and how these challenges could be tackled. Above all, the study concludes with recommendations that will help the reader of this work to know more about Iragberi.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The cultural heritage of any community is as natural as the mother's milk to a child. Despite the fact that Islam and Christianity have become the major and dominating religions in Iragberi, it is difficult to abandon the indigenous religion totally and separate the people from their culture.

Up till the present day in Iragberi; whenever Olotá is mentioned. Some Muslims and Christians still acknowledge this powerful stone as the power of the land and heritage of their fore-father. The inhabitants still acknowledge the contributions of Olotá, the mysterious power towards the establishment, existence and survival of Iragberi as a settlement. This celebration of Olotá in Igbo-ile usually bring up the exhibition of Iragberi cultural heritage. For instance, dressing of people society by society; chanting of traditional songs by old women. These made the festival remain and stand strong in the mind of some youths. Despite the challenges post by Olotá in Iragberi evangelistic rally and discipleship method adopted by Christian clergy as won many souls for Christ. Even today, everybody want to be called Christian.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Having researched into the “Olota Mysterious Yoruba Power: Its Challenges to Christian Faith in Iragberi, Osun State,” it is imperative to make the following recommendations:

1. The culture of our people cannot be ignored and it is impossible to run away from it. Therefore, any part of the culture of our people that are not against Christian faith should be accommodated.
2. Syncretism should be avoided in Christian churches. Christian should avoid mingling with Olota worshippers during their yearly festival, given them money is part of paying homage to Olota.
3. Exemplary Christian Leadership should be encouraged in Iragberi land. It is the opinion and recommendation of the writer that Christian leaders should maintain very high Christian moral standards. Christians are expected to be model in the environment in which they live.
4. The purpose of Christian worship should not be overlooked. The purpose of worship is to enable Christians to be in communion with God in an attractive way. Therefore, the writer recommends that any act on the part of the worshippers that will hinder true worship should be avoided.
5. Though there was no record of conflicts between Christian and Olota adherents in Igbo-ile; but the writer recommends that the Christian should avoid been too familiar with Olota adherent this may lead to compromise.
6. More research in the area is necessary. This research does not claim to have exhausted discussion on all mysterious powers and cultural challenges of the land. Therefore, the writer recommends that research can be carried out on Igbo-ile and the

mysterious bell. This could be done by anyone especially Christian who are concerned with evangelism and bringing people to Christ fold.