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"Between the Honey and the Poison": An Assessment of Sacred Sites in the Post-Independent Nigeria

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Abstract The thrust of the paper is the assessment of the place of sacred spots in the contemporary Nigerian society. The paper appraisingly evaluates the pre-colonial and colonial status of the sacred sites and lucidly highlights the pride of place they once enjoyed. The incursions of the proselytizing religions, especially Christianity and Islam virulently challenge the sacred places today. As a result, this paper adopted historical, analytical and eco-ethical approach leading to the fact that the civilizing tendencies the West brought to Nigeria, particularly the globalizing and imperial forces like the Christianity have helped in no small measure for the high disregards for them. It is absurd to say that the roots of our environmental trouble are so largely religious, because from the post-independent Nigeria till now, Christian missionaries have been chopping down sacred places, which to them are idolatrous. Christians believe that sacred spots are alien to Christianity and to the ethos of the West. Consequently, the spirits inhabiting natural objects, which formerly had protected nature and humans, have now evaporated. The paper, therefore, concludes that since sacred places are seen as spiritual resources needed to maximize our essence of existence, then the challenge, which is rather poisonous to our common existence should be discountenanced. To this end, the paper postulates that contemporary Nigerian society recognizes the sacred sites as its subscribed resume and savouring relish of the honey than the poison.

Keywords: African Religion, Sacred sites, Honey, Poison, and Post-Independent Nigeria

Introduction

The indigenous Nigerians strongly believe in one world of visible and invisible dimension. Within the ambit of the visible is human habitation, while the invisible houses the supersensible beings. These supersensible beings inhabit sacred places. Therefore, sacred sites are where the deity is believed to have been housed or enshrined. Thus, these sacred sites had once enjoyed the pride of place in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Yet, the post-independent era has not been predisposed to the sacred sites. Instead, sacred sites have been chopped down by Christian missionaries and Muslim clerics. Some euro-centric scholars even viewed them as fetish, devilish, superstitious, irrational and anti-development. However, these sacred spots that have been arrogantly and virulently debased and destroyed are now receiving global attention as a result of their innovative spirits which are relevant to African people in the modern world. These innovations conduce to the appropriate and necessary amendments and refinement which have been made relevant to African modernity. Consequently, the intention of this paper is to assess the indigenous religion within the context of sacred sites in the post-independent Nigeria.

African or Indigenous Religion: A Brief Account.

African Religion embraces all aspects of all life. Dopamu (2005) attests to the fact that Africans do not know how to exist without religion. Religion plays a leading and major role in their lives. According to him, "Africans do not know how to live without religion. They celebrate life religiously and they never embark on everything without bringing in religion." (p.1). The foregoing reveals that Africans are incurably religious hence they bring in the understanding of God and His vicegerents in the theocratic rule of the universe. Africans start off from religion and their lives terminate at the point of religion. Put differently, Africans transit with religion. Thus, African understanding of the universe points to the fact that there is one universe

that accommodates the tangible and intangible, sensible and super sensible, material and immaterial.

For Africans, religion is simply life and life is all about religion. This assertion critically supports Kungs' (1993) interpretation of religion thus:

A believing view of life, approaches to life, way of life, and society, humankind and the world, through which is a person, though only partially conscious of things and experiences, thinks and feels, acts and suffers, everything. It is a transcendently grounded experience and immanent operative system of co-ordinates by which human beings orient themselves intellectually, emotionally and existentially (p.xvii).

For Africans, religion is a far more exceeding way of life or an approach to life as directed by a holy writ. It is a way of life and life itself, where there is no dichotomy between religion and human nature and existence.

Gaiya (2004:p.32) emphasizes that a study of the beliefs and practices of the African peoples lead to the theological understanding that African Religion is a religion of salvation and wholeness. As a matter of fact, African Religion is careful in analysing both worldly and spiritual salvation. Africans believe that life is a complex web of relationships that may either promote and preserve life or diminish and destroy it (p.33). According to Gaiya

The goal of religion is therefore, to maintain those relationships that protect and preserve life. For it is the harmony and stability provided by these relationships, both spiritual and material that create the conditions for well-being and wholeness (p.34).

Therefore, the condition for well-being and wholeness depicts religious credential and tonality of African Religion. As is the case for most other people, religion is the keynote and keystone of the people's cultures. Hopfe and Woodward (1998:p.55) assert that "a basic understanding of African Religions will provide knowledge of customs and attitudes toward the family, society at large, the environment, and death and the life beyond." The above elucidates the essential features of African Religion, but African Religion is not many, we only have one African Religion. It is wrong for Hopfe and Woodward to think that Africans have many religions. However, it is true that there are varieties and diversity in African beliefs. Dopamu (2006: p.18) nevertheless argues that varieties in African Religion must not be taken to

mean a diversity of fundamental beliefs rather he assuringly avers that these varieties are underlying affinities running through them. Corroborating Dopamu's statement Magesa (1997) writes:

Varieties in African Religion must not be taken to mean a diversity of fundamental beliefs....Much has been made of the differences within African Religion based on the distinctive lifestyle of the peoples of Africa. It is not possible to deny that these lifestyles affect the religious symbols of the people. Yet to conclude that there is therefore no internal essential unity in the various expressions...is to exaggerate...if we study African Religion in a special place among a special ethnic group, as many scholars have done and still do and, indeed as it is necessary to continue to do it is for the sake of depth and should not be used to support the argument that African Religion is not a generic whole (pp.17-18).

African Religion has actually had sizeable proportion of effect with the incursion of proselytising religions of Islam and Christianity. Gaiya (2004:p.35) observes with precision that the arrival of Islam and Christianity in Africa, the whole scenario of Nigerian perhaps African religious wholeness and experience metamorphosed into series of changes. Thus, the religious structures or institutions that held the African people together into various communities went through drastic form of transitional experience. It is an irrational and inadvertent experience that created and thus creates tension, mutual suspicion among ethnic and religious groups that make up the continent. Through this obvious fact, religious wholeness of the Africans has been tampered with severely. Despite the current trends, many values of African Religion will continue; the emerging Islam and Christianity in Africa have distinctive African qualities (p.35). As long as the religion continues to speak the language of the people, it will survive.

An Account of Sacred Sites

The word 'Sacred' is connected with God, or a god or considered to be holy (Hornby 2000: p.1034). Sacred places therefore mean a particular holy site or holy spot, building, temple connected with God or a god. In traditional African belief, sacred places or sacred spots are a matter of course and reality. Idowu (1991:pp.165-179), the doyen of African Religion correctly asserts the beliefs in Divinities, spirits and Ancestors as some elements of

African Religion. On their own, Awolalu and Dopamu (2005:p.157) categorize these Divinities into triadic departments. Suffice it to say that they emphasize Primordial, Deified and Personified divinities (p.158). No doubt, the duos argue that in the category of the primordial divinities are pantheon that are said to emanate from the Supreme Being from creation and are saddled with various responsibilities and port folios. Some of which are *Orisa Nla, Orunmila, Esu, Olokun and Ogun* (p.159). Under the province of the deified are those who once lived as human beings with spectacular and extra-ordinary feats coupled with powerful and mysterious lives on earth, and after their death, they were canonized. Sango, Sokogba and among others are in this category (p.159).

Lastly in the category, which is our *nitty-gritty* are the personified divinities. Awolalu and Dopamu describe this category of divinities as objects of natural phenomena which inhabit sacred places such as Hills, Grooves, Rock, Forest, Creek, Lagoon, Streams, Sea, Trees and so on. Examples are Oke-Ibadan, Olumo Rock, Osun grooves, Orosun forest, and Akoko creek. (p.160). They are all dedicated to the divinities and spirits inhabiting these sacred spots. In fact, these sacred places are actually inhabited by the Supersensibles and they remain forever sacred because people are not allowed to tamper with them. In strong terms, Priests, Priestesses, community leaders, cultic functionaries, guilds of hunters and concerned citizens place taboo in these sacred places since the spirits are said to occupy these areas. This must have formed the background against which *The Forest of God* by Fagunwa was written. Thus, the forest of God is believed to be peopled by supernatural creatures and remained sacred, void of deforestation (Bamgbose 2007: p.8).

Sacred places are spots and spatial locations in African Religion that have special and peculiar attributes from timeless immemorial to the present generation which mark them as somehow extra-ordinary. Usually, sacred places bring about awesome feelings of the mysterious and transcendental power that merit special attention and treatment. A handful of persons could experience the manifestations of the sacred places in different manners as sites of fascination, connectedness, attraction, danger, ordeal, healing, ritual, meaning, identity, revelation and transformation. Sacred places cut across many natural elements and phenomena that are considered as sacred in many cultures and regions.

Ecologically, these sacred places are regarded as part of the ecosystem right from the pre- historic period to the present. Historical, cultural and spiritual aspects of the ecology of indigenous societies are grounded in the biodiversity, ecosystems and land forms in their habitat. The historical people did not separate the sacred spots from biodiversity and conservation. Consequently, the entire environment becomes holistic to the people and must be preserved. The concept of the sacred was a tool in the hand of the people in antiquity to preserve their environment. The indigenous cosmological views of life in which humans live close to nature and recognized the connectivity and interdependence of all living things have received the attentions of scholars. The notion of the sacred creates the impression of an innate idea in the perception of man that it is life-sustaining. Therefore, life-sustaining effects of sacred places have positive effects on ecosystems.

In African religious environment, totem and taboo are synonymous with sacredness. Essentially, these areas dedicated to the divinities, spirits, ghosts and other Super sensible entities at times include the animals inhabiting these areas. And where these totemic animals are found in African environment, taboo is associated with them. Thus, Totem means "a person or thing treated with very great or too much respect" (Hornby, p.1263). While, Taboo depicts "a cultural and religious custom that forbids people to do, touch, use or talk about a certain thing" (p.1213). The implication of this is that, where totemic animals are found, such environment is sacred, and no harm will come upon such areas or animals. Consequently, these areas and animals flourish in their environment and again, the supersensibles which inhabit these areas enjoy the environment and as well the areas are preserved for convenience, and the people are better off for it.

Idowu (1996:p.128) opines that certain rocks, trees, plants, lakes, rivers, streams, the heavenly phenomena become unmistakable repositories of the presence, which are deliberately marked as sacred spots by community. Thus, these sacred spots discovered by the whole community as a result of common beliefs that come into existence. Idowu (1996) further buttresses that the

social character of worship inevitably results in the putting up of sacred buildings or places to hold such emblems of the divinities as

should be kept secret and preserved from the common touch or the weather...They exist in all places which are traditionally connected with the presence of the divinities, or such places as have been consecrated to them. Therefore, they are found in traditionally sacred forests. There are divinities which people believe should be better worshipped there than in the towns or houses. Several species of trees are regarded as habitual residence of certain spirits; prominent among these are Iroko...and Egungun. While certain sacred trees are more often than not associated with incorporeal, though powerful spirits, there are others which are usually the sacred emblem of certain principal divinities (p.129).

It is strongly believed that these sacred spots inhabited by the divinities are central to the well being of the community and more or less part and parcel of domestic life which cannot be ignored.

Again, Idowu (1996: p.130) still believes that there are certain sacred grooves connected with spirits of Masquerades, such as *Oro, Ogun* and *Egungun* among the Yoruba, *Igue, Irepa, Uchi, Ukpako, Okpujoro, Ohimiyan, Obazu, Uda, Igbo* and *Otu* among the Edo; *Mnuo* in Igboland and *Adae* among Akan, of which in the main, their cults are secret (Alamu, 2006:p.52). In these cults, like every other area, women are excluded while men become members through initiation. Idowu adds that "usually the simple grove is a clearing in the bush; this holds the shrine, and only the initiates may enter there. Often the sacred emblems are kept in a small mud building into which only the Priest, or the priest with one or two co-officiants usually enters" (p.131). Here, it must be mentioned that the sacred places which hold the most sacred emblems are a place forbidden to all except a very few highly privileged people. In fact, Idowu appositely asserts that large communal groves may have up to three 'apartments'. The first entrance is an open place, where all and sundry may come. But the second and the third, it is a place for the initiates and the officiants (p.132).

Benefits and Significance of Sacred Sites

In demonstrating the religious benefits of the spirits of masquerades and their sacred spots, Imasogie (1985: p.36) opines that it is a veritable demonstration of the Nigerian belief in reality not only of the spiritual realms, but of the unbroken intercourse between man and the spirits. The

form in which the worship is conducted bears this out. With some variations in various parts of the country, this worship is usually conducted by the male members of the ethnic groups especially the initiates who constitute themselves into a sort of secret cult for this purpose. Imasogie again recalls that;

Once a year, at the stated period lasting from seven to fourteen days, the selected members of the cult dress up as masquerades and, accompanied by followers, parade the streets. Among the Yorubas the most representative of the cult of the dead is called Egungun. These Egunguns or masquerades are supposed to be 'materialized' spirits of the dead; hence the identity of the men behind the Masks is kept in top secret (p.36).

Sequel to the above, the spirits of the masquerades and their sacred spots are essential for religious relics and beauty which give us reason to think of things sacred. These religious values are institutions deigned to serve the schema of a religious ceremony celebrated among the people (Alamu, 2007: p.107).

Buttressing further of the benefits of these spirits as well as their sacred sites, Awolalu (1981:p.46) affirms that these spirits are revered principally by those who dwell near rivers, lagoons or the sea, and who believe that the spirits, if suitably provided and cared for, can in return provide man's needs. He lists out the benefits that may be derived by people if the pride of place of these riverine and littoral spirits is recognized. According to him, "they control abundance of fish, they prevent the capsizing of canoes and river accidents; some of the spirits supply children to the barren" (p.47). From the foregoing, it can be briskly deduced that personified divinities are objects of natural phenomena which inhabit sacred places of the Africa. These sacred places are dedicated solely to them and these areas are highly preserved for their well-being. Meanwhile, we registered the fact that where totem and taboo are found, such environment is sacred both to the supersensibles and animals. Likewise, the environment blossoms, flourishes and remains ever-green. In addition, sacred places inhabited by these divinities, spirits and ghosts become essentialized because of the pride of place occupied by them, coupled with the blessings of the divinities received by the people or community, and the preservation of the environment in which both the sacred and profane as enunciated by Rudoff Ottoh in his *Idea of the Holy*

become a meeting point without syncopated rhythms. In Mircea Eliade's theory of the sacred and the profane, Pals (1996: p.172) observes that:

Archaic claims do not set up villages for the sake of the convenience of the site rather a village must be founded where there has been a hierophany (sacred appearance) once it has been confirmed that this particular place has, in fact been visited by the sacred perhaps in the form of a god, or ancestor, the location receives local blessing which establishes it as a center point of the world. Around this center the inhabitants perceive a sense of security and design.

As a matter of fact, it is argued that the relevance of the sacred spots was for solution to problems of all kinds within the human situation. The belief is that somewhere beyond the known world there exists a power that can make right the difficulties that appear so insoluble and intractable here and now (Morinis, 1992; p.1). Morinis (1992; p.1) again observes that one common denominator amongst these places is what we might think of as their spiritual Magnetism. That is, the power of the place to attract devotees. This spiritual Magnetism is developed through association with various combinations of miraculous cures, apparitions of supernatural beings, sacred geography and difficulty of access. It is of interest to note that those who visit these sacred places are pilgrims. These pilgrims show their love to God, get near something that is really sacred, show god their gratitude and loyalty (Olsen and Guleke, 2014; p.596). In fact, a handful of people visited these sacred spots in order to maintain an identity, while others tried to satisfy the feelings of nostalgia to experience the transcendent or to fulfil the teachings of particular faiths (p.597).

Besides, these historical or sacred sites have spiritual, economic, social and environmental significance. Spiritually speaking, human beings believe that there exists a power that is greater than them which can make right the difficulties that appear so insoluble and intractable here and now. Of a truth, these powers are the resources needed to sustain and maximize our existence so as to have meaning. Economically, people perform pilgrimage either annually or once life time. During this period, the economic activities of the host of the historical or sacred places bloom and bumper harvest is received which contributes to the economic development of the environment. On the social aspect, marital vows are being exchanged, strained relationship is settled during this period and a strong re-union is

maintained. Lastly, the environmental significance is imperative because it helps to preserve the environment. This 'eco-ethics' which is regarded as ethics of ecology, has greater respect for the ecosystem right from the pre-historical period to the present. All the aspects of the ecology of indigenous societies are grounded in the biodiversity and ecosystems. Therefore, sacred spots did not separate themselves from biodiversity, conservation and preservation.

Sacred Sites in the Pre-colonial and Colonial Nigeria

It is apparent that sacred sites are locations where a deity is said to live or be 'housed' or any site that is seen to have special spiritual powers. Wotogbe-Weneka (2005: p.172) asserts that sacred sites are places where deity is believed to have been enshrined. They gained a high and spiritual status endowed with powers, which other places don't have.

In the pre-colonial era in Nigeria, indigenous religion of the people attached spiritual importance to holy places; the place of birth or death of indigenous saints or to the place of their calling or spiritual awakening, or of their connection (visual or verbal) with the divine, or to location where miracles were performed or witnessed. Such sites had been commemorated with shrines or temples that devotees have been visiting for their own spiritual benefits, for healing or for having questions answered or for achieving some other special benefits (Preston, 1992, p.33). It is not out of place to state that people of these periods revered these sacred spots. They jealously guided these environments and avoided them to be engulfed with fire. Some volunteers took this as their preoccupation in order to preserve the values, practices and heritage of their forebears.

Sacred Sites in the Post-independent Nigeria

It is worthy of note that sacred spots in the Post-colonial Nigeria assumed dangerous dimension. During this period, radical departure was experienced and these sacred places were no longer regarded and respected. Thus, the incursion of Christianity and Islam did not help issues. Rather, these proselytizing and Semitic religions disregarded African credentials and values thereby chopping down these revered spots and grooves. From the 20th century till now, Christian missionaries have been

hurling down sacred spots, which to them are idolatrous, and inhabited by evil spirits. These sacred areas destroyed by the missionaries are today used for churches and retreat grounds. Christians believe that sacred places are foreign to Christianity and to the ethos of the West. Consequently, the spirits inhabiting these sacred spots, which formerly protected nature and humankind, had evaporated and old restrictions to the exploitations of nature crumbled (Schaeffer 1972: p.108).

In the post-independent Nigeria, some people became afraid of these sacred spots because they believe that these spirits make terrible sounds at interval. Imàsogie (1985:pp49-50) opines that these sacred spots inhabited by spirits and divinities become mysterious to men thereby creating fear among them, because they believe that their machinations are impregnated with evil. Often, it is their nature to prowl around in search of prey either because they are hungry or in the service of one's enemies. In fact, since men live in a world pervaded by spirits, ghosts and their human allies, they are constantly exposed to danger.

Again, some Nigerians both the learned and Christians are not helping matter in the regard. Because, they seem not to see anything good emanating from Nigeria, they become armchair critics criticizing everything as though they are bad in totality. Direct and indirect indoctrination has been so effective in many areas that the aborigines have come to see themselves as mentally despising whole-heartedly their own native cultures and religious values, and ultimately abandoning them and forgetting their basic tenets and practices (Idowu, 1991: p.80).

Furthermore, in the post-independent Nigeria, sacred places have suffered so much because they have been callously and frequently despoiled by ignorance of the ethos of the West and some aboriginal Nigerians. It is of interest to note that a handful of these values and heritage has almost been given extinction to wear by the people. The exploitations of these sacred spots have left their detrimental marks on the cultures of the Nigerian people as endogamous and exogamous gristles become interestingly and frequently entertained.

Besides, some Nigerians buzzed with sentiments began to share false imagination conspired with ignorance and prejudice to furnish the outside world with false but entertainingly welcome picture of Nigerian sacred places (Idowu, 1991: p.86). A post-independent period indeed when

confident ignorance and false certainty were exhibited as breakfast and lunch, as bizarre, the detractive and the disparaging couched the dinner respectively. This was the era so described as unprecedented cultural imperialism. However, Idowu (1991: 88) argues appositely that to study the religion or worldview of people you are not familiar with, caution and high-way code must be applied. Thus, this high-way code includes honesty, charity, sociableness, experiential sympathy, participant observation and so on.

Grounds for Negotiation between the Honey and the Poison

It is worth-asserting that today apart from African religion, other world's living religions have their various historical or sacred sites where adherents in their thousands throng to for pilgrimage. For instance, among the Hindus, there is River Ganges where the Hindus visit for miracles and other curative purposes either annually or once in life time. Among the Jews, there are historical sites like Temple in Jerusalem. In Christianity, the tomb of Jesus, Mount Olives, Transfiguration, the Temple, the Synagogue and among others serve as sacred sites. For Islam, Mecca and Medina are historical cities and Kabbah is a sacred place located in Mecca. To some adherents, it is obligatory to perform pilgrimage while some followers do not.

Having observed the various sacred spots in other religions, it will be puerile at this level of scholarship, to debase and label certain sacred spots as devilish, while the sacred spots in Christianity and Islam are thriving and celebrated. Rather than debasing the sacred spots in African religion, it should be emphasized that a middle line between the honey and the poison has to be followed. In this connection, it is not everything in Africa that is out of place. That is, there are modern innovations and radical changes that have taken and are taking place so as to progressively bring about enhancement and fulfilment of human life in the age of globalization. There are some enduring and evolving elements in Nigeria that are compatible with the modern societies. In line with above, Gyekye (2006: p.172) makes a thought-provoking submission as regards transition to modernity. According to him:

Making a transition to modernity involves profound, and perhaps also radical, changes in several aspects of the culture of a people. The changes must also be sufficiently progressive to bring about the enhancement and fulfilment of human life. The idea of profound

changes suggests the conviction that modernity must be seen in terms of the innovative spirits-of an unrelenting commitment to innovation. This leads on to the need for a society to commit itself unreservedly to making such necessary changes in its values, practices, and institutions inherited from the past as to make them really worthwhile and functional in the contemporary world. An innovative spirit is the most outstanding feature of modernity; but the foresight to perceive which aspects of cultural life of a people should be brought within the scope of the innovative enterprise is equally important. The far-reaching consequences of the activity of a dynamic innovative spirit will be the attainment of a new stage in cultural development, characterized by advanced forms of human knowledge, techniques, socioeconomic structures, and so on...It emphasizes the conviction that modernity is in many respects compatible with tradition and that it therefore does not represent a break with tradition as such. It would be true that every society in the modern world has many traditional elements inherited and accepted from previous, that is, pre modern, generations, that every modern society takes pride in several of these elements and builds on them (pp.173-174).

It is clear from the foregoing quotation that with the wave of globalization, every system, institution, culture and nation has begun to adapt to the prevailing situation. Instead of the Nigerian people to remain static, dynamism has become their hallmark of modernity. Arising from that fact, Nigerian people in the post-Independent era have radically occupied themselves with progressive and positive changes, transformation and acculturation of unrelenting commitment to innovation. In fact, all these are done in order to preserve our values, practices and institutions inherited from the past so as to make them worthwhile, functional, modern and contemporaneous with innovative spirits. This innovative enterprise becomes imperative because it includes all forms of development especially cultural development. Also, it is crystal clear that some Nigerian traditions are compatible with modernity and some of her values are competing with the western world.

In recent times, it is a known fact that 'Osun osogbo' groove in Nigeria is a place to visit for pilgrimage as a result of the way Susan Wenger, an Austrian artist had adorned and beautified the groove with current innovative strategies and upgrading (Awolalu and Dopamu, 2005:p.267). A handful of

people visit this groove daily to solicit for blessings and other necessary spiritual assistance. In line with the submission of Gyekye, 'Olumo rock', which the people of Abeokuta believed sheltered and protected them during the inter-tribal war days, is today elevated and innovated to world standard. Today, there is a 'modern lift' to assist people to get to the top. There are permanent priests and priestesses who attend to people every day. In fact, they are not only historical sites but also sacred places where people go for spiritual exercise and fortification, miracles, blessings, and among others. Mention must be made of Oke-Ibadan, (Ibadan Hill) which cosmic story is similar to Olumo-rock. Orosun forest and Akoko creek are sacred areas that cannot be forgotten in haste. Today, these sacred places are being thronged in by calibre of people with challenges as solutions and blessings are provided and these sacred sites become fascinated to the incredulous. Here, it must be emphasized that the framework for an interpretation and assessment of the place of sacred sites in a scheme of African modernity is the functionality of the past ideas, values, and practices, which can play any meaningful and effective roles in the attainment of the goals and vision of the present; that is, they can be considered suitable in the contemporary world (p.173).

Conclusion

The paper has exposed us to the fact that sacred places in Nigeria are the much needed spiritual resources that optimize our common essence and existence. Also, the study revealed the fact that these sacred spots once enjoyed a pride of place in the pre-colonial and colonial periods, while the post-independent Nigeria did not favour the sacred spots as they were chopped down by Christian missionaries, Muslim clerics, some Nigerian Christians and some euro-centric scholars who never saw anything good about sacred places in Nigeria and subsequently labelled these sacred places as devilish, superstitious, irrational, anti-development and anti-progress. However, the study has x-rayed that despite the virulent attack and challenge received by the sacred places, the fact remains that some of these sacred spots in Nigeria are receiving global attention because of their innovations that conform to modernity. These innovative pills are progressively bringing about enhancement and fulfilment of human life in the age of globalization. They are enduring and evolving elements in Nigeria that are compatible with modernity. Therefore, it is not everything that is

out of place in Nigeria because the sacred places today are the Nigerian values, credentials, subscribed résumé and savouring relish that Nigerians still hold on to as the honey than accepting nothing less as poison.

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