

TRADITIONAL STONES IN PRE-COLONIAL BOMBE BAKUNDULAND (CAMEROON)

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ABSTRACT: *The research dealt with the Bakundu Traditional Stones in Pre-Colonial Bombe Bakunduland(Cameroon.) The traditions and cultures of African ethnic groups have remained the priorities in constructing and reconstructing of the legacy and heritage of the continent. The Bakundus have brandished the effectiveness of their tradition in relinquishing remnants and totems (stones)and its legacies with historical justifications for consumption. Historical sources have broadcast justifications of worth, capabilities, abilities, and belief systems of the Bakundus and their traditional stones. Such arguments set the platform through which the Bakundu ancestral shrine possessed traditional stones which equally possess spiritual metaphysical powers unveiling the traditional cults and belief systems.*

KEYWORDS; Bakundu, tradition, stones, heritage, cults, belief, systems, legacy, metaphysics.

INTRODUCTION

The knowledge of Pre-Colonial Africa in general and Cameroon in particular has exposed a wide range of relevance of traditional heritage, artifacts and equipments to the cultures and beliefs systems of the people. Traditional stones to the indigenes of the rural communities in Cameroon have been of great significance to the livelihoods, welfare and beliefs systems. People lived their lives based on the traditional norms, customs and initiatives of the native lands and elders. These customary laws and initiatives have shaped and reconstructed the beliefs of the people before the coming of the European Missionary Missions in the African continent.

These Missions brought Christianity which conflicted with native beliefs safeguarded by traditional norms and cultural rituals. The cultural and traditional settings of rural communities in the Bakunduland were characterised by symbols, and natural metaphysical creations such as 'shrine stones' which served the need of an intercessor in incantations and communications with the ancestors or the gods .These remnants have been the cultural legacies of many rural communities even though the introduced Christianity has profound effects and resemblance in the beliefs of the people.

Traditional stones are of great significance to the people of the Bakunduland. However, an idepth study of the traditional stones will unveil the hidden potentials of african ethnic beliefs

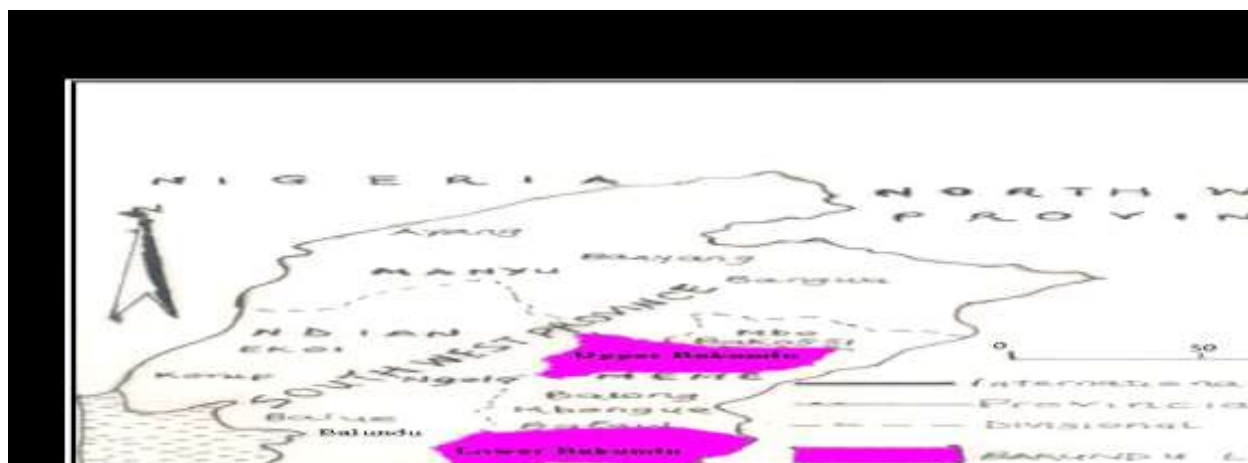
systems which have almost been vanquished by western belief systems. However, there are many communities that made up the Bakunduland. This actually revealed the platform of indepth confined scope and delimitation of the research for better understanding. In this dimension, Bombe Bakunduland was selected as the case study to deepen knowledge on the ancestral realms and shrines. The Bombe Bakunduland situated in the heart of the Bakunduland of the Mbonge Sub Division have remained a typical example of ethnic old ways of the ancestral realms. The geographical location of Bombe Bakunduland stands as the prelude to the research.

The Geographical Location of Bombe Bakunduland

Bombe Bakundu is located in the lower or southern part of the Bakunduland. Bombe Bakundu is spotted in the Mbonge Sub-Division, Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. It lies some 46 kilometers from the Regional capital of Buea and approximately 25 kilometers south of Kumba, along the Buea road. It lays at an average of about 1600-7000 meters above sea level, with a motor able road passage which runs through the village linking the Regional capital of Buea to the Divisional capital of Kumba.

Bombe Bakundu land is located at a hill top with geographical coordinates reading 4°c, 8°c and 12°c, south and east, and also bounded by Banga Bakundu to the North, Mbalangi Ekombe to the South. Bopo and Pete Bakundu to the West and kake Bongwana and kake Bokoko to the East respectively. The map of the South West Province of the United Republic of Cameroon below showed the geographical location of Bombe Bakundu embedded in the area covering the Lower or Southern Part of the Bakunduland.

Plate II: The Map of the South West Province of the United Republic of Cameroon Indicating the Location of the Upper and Lower Bakundulands



SOURCE: DEPICTED FROM TIMOTHY OKIA'S ADAPTATION FROM EYANGETAH AND R.BRAIN, HISTORY OF CAMEROON (LONDON: LONGMAN GROUP LIMITED, 1974).

This site and situation equally brandishes the priorities of the settlement patterns and systems of traditional and cultural beliefs. This paved the way for the researcher to add more meaning to the myths and legends of the Bakundu traditional heritages. In this dimension, tracing the conceived myths of the Bakundu traditional stones in the ancestral shrine would reveal the pathway of an in-depth understanding and acknowledgements.

The Bakundu Myths Of The Traditional Stones

There exist several fairy tales in regards to myths in Cameroon as the 250 ethnic groups tried to address the critical mindset of human origin and existence. The most essential folklore reflection of the traditional remnants in totems and their metaphysical worthiness was brandished through myths and legends. This unveiled the broad spectrum of tranquility in the beliefs systems of the Bakundus. The Bakundus have conceived the ideology that the traditional stones showed the rank classification in mystical possessions amongst the gods, patterns of traditional jurisdictions, roles and significances of the ancestors to the virgin land they discovered and possessed.

The wondering nature of the ancestors and gods revealed two essential delicate findings of interest. These were confines hoisting the ancestors and gods. They were known as "*moonfarm*" and "*dibando*" respectively. Such mindful cryptical revelations stridently brandished nuanced prerogatives and activities of the ancestors and gods of the Bakundus. The Bakundu settlements at the Mungo river banks exposed the comfortability and desirability of the ancestors and gods who emblazoned the traditional and cultural belief and belief systems. This was because; the entire bakundu traditional and cultural practises and livelihoods were means and entwined to the aspirations of the ancestors and gods who possessed mysterious powers to perform mystical agendas for their gains.

This revealed the proxy historical justifications pin pointing mystical happenings to the wants and desires of the ancestors and gods and not the Bakundus. This explained the forces bending the 'living generational Bakundus' to their knees to worship the ancestor and gods in order to perform different versions and tasks for them. The main request to the ancestors and gods were to serve as intercessors (intermediaries) to the '*unmoved mover*'. The Bakundus held the generational conception and perception that the ancestors and gods were represented in their confines (residences) on motherland.

The residences known to be *moonfarm* and *dibando* as mentioned above, possessed magnificent spiritual powers which manifest through its instruments (representations). On this note, the main totem or instrument representing the ancestors and gods at the traditional shrines were *stones*. The traditional *moonfarm* stones were collections of the old cultists as they were aware to be close to their grave while becoming ancestors in particular. The stones were kept in shrines representing the cult heritage for the upcoming generations. However, the *dibando* stones represented the founding fathers known to be at the brim of the gods ranking.

These traditional shrined stones have existence and witnessed by Bakundu generations over the decades. The Bakundus have held mainly the relevance of the shrined stones as lineage cultists continue to pay respects and worship their ancestral remnants. On an important note; the Bakundus paid more attention to the *dibando* than the *moonfarm*. Reason been that; the *dibando* protected the entire community and all the aborigenes of the motherland. Meanwhile, the *moonfarm* represented particular lineages of cultists(juju), who where involved and initiated into the order. For decades, the Bakundus have lived with the origin of the traditional stones and practises of veneration to the upper powerful order.

Origin Of The Bakundu Traditional Stones

The utilisation of the historical sources have made accounting and recounting an essential ingredients of historical accumulation in a bid to brandish and protect African heritages and legacies for historical justifications in construction and reconstruction essences. This has made oral transmission to be held in high esteem since it remained an essential source of draining historical facts and evidence inspite its recessions. The Bakundus of the Mungo East have guided by heritages with intense consideration and sentiments. Most of their remnants, totems, icons and folklores have gained histoical justifications oral traditon.

In this dimension, oral tradition was the main source utilised to absorb the eruption, evolutions and transitions of the Bakundu traditional stones in historical content and context. Tracing the origin of the shrine stones covered a wide and broad spectrum of versions. But, directions and justified perspective set the foundation for an indepth understanding of the forms and formats through which the shrine stones came into existence.

Many traditonanalists in Bombe bakunduland held the view the tranditional stones came into existence at the same period witnessing the fundamental origin, creation, procreation of the Bakundu clans and lineages. The parmanent settlement and establishment of Bombe Bakunduland from the migratory trends of the 18th and 19th centuries gingered the institution of ancestral customary laws which paved the way for a well structured traditional and cultural edifices. The traditional and cultural constituents were set to reflect the ethnic beliefs, believes, identity and systems of habitation. Such essences in the views of chief Rudolf Duala Itoe made it possible for traditional shrine and cults to come into existence.

However, Bakundu researchers like Joseph Ebune have deepened knowledge in traditional and cultural findings and reiterated that, the founding father(s) of the Bakundu clan and Bombe Bakunduland remained the poineers to traditional and customary installations. Other reserchers such as Timothy musima have strigently unveiled the developments in the Bakunduland under colonial rule with emphasis that the Bakundus had a well furnished adminstrative and cultural systems and settings. Historians like Dr. Nkwil Walters and Prof. Kah Henry have deepened mindsets on the remants and powerful structures of ethnic societies in the pre-colonial epoch with justifications that, African ethnic groups nutured their cultural rites and sytems to the state of maturity since contemporary practicalities revealed generational evolutions and transitions

in legacies. The diverse shrines of the traditional stones in Bombe Bakundu exposed the justifications of its existence.

The Ancestral Shrines Of The Traditional Stones In Bombe Bakunduland

There exist different traditional shrines in the Bakunduland. Most of the Bakundu activities circled around the ancestral shrines of importance. These shrines had diverse significance in respect to their worth and field of speciality. The essential shrines hoisting the Bakundu traditional stones were *moonfarm* and *two stones(dibando)*. This actually revealed that the Bakundus in Bombe Bakunduland venerated their ancestors and gods. The two shrines had several traditional stones. These stones represent diverse links with the old order of the ancestral realm, tradition and culture of the Bakundus.

The *moonfarm* shrine had traditional stones ranging from one to thirteen representing the traditional cults of the community. These stones were more fashioned to serve the virtues and vices of those involved. In this dimension, the shrine mostly reflected the activities of the *cultists* involved. The vividly brandished the essentials of a metaphysical and physical relations and interactions between the world of *forms* and that of *beings(ancestral realms and physical human realm)*.

The venerated practises of the cultists strigently exposed the structure and worth of the belief system of the Bakundus. The lineage cultists performed spiritual rites and rituals every six months at the shrine. The rituals some times went with human sacrifices. This elaborate on the essence why youths were most killed Mungo river(either eaten by crocodiles or drowning). Some of the sacrifices were bloodlines of the cultists as demanded by the lineage ancestors. Mystical occurances opened the minds of the researcher who bore witnessed to the death of; Anot Susan, Sipren, Mbarga Nicholar at the Mungo river. In search of the bodies of the sacrificial lamps at the Mungo river, *tata* Oscar Tatia, and *iya* Martha mende testified of *seeing crocodile moving with the half body of one of Susan as it floated on the top of the water body*. Such events foiled retaliations even though it was tradition.

The shrine had possessed mystical powers as all the traditional cults of the Bakundus are represented by the stones. However, the *dibando* shrine did not perfomed rituals of blood but of libation. The two stones of *dibando* always witnessed all the festivals and incantation of blessings. Libation was an essential element of gaining favour from the gods. This explained why, the *Tata Mowelle Mboka* and *Iya Mowelle mboka* (representing the male and female sexes in the community respectively) joinedly performed the libation with the use of palmwine, whisky,colanuts, calabar, calabash, and king grass. The community of Bombe bakundu had no priest. All the divine relevations and wisdom were entrusted to the trahditional ruler(chief) and the traditional prime minister(*tata Mowelle mboka*). This significantly pushed the researcher to squash the diverse varieties of the traditional shrined stones and the forces each possessed.

The Different Varieties of Traditional Shrine Stones In Bombe Bakunduland

The main alter which constitute the Bakundu traditional stones is the customary and cultural shrine kown as "*Moonfarm*". This shrine held in position one to thirteen stones which had diverse shape, size, significance and work to perform. These stones represented different *juju* cults of the Bakundus in Bombe Bakunduland. Some of the cults constitute; *matame*, *esara*, and *morimi njuma*. These cults serve the Bakundu shrine in Bombe Bakundu. The shrine was managed and controled only by those known to be members of any of the cult. There were no priests. The chief and *prime minister* were responsible for the incantations and communication with the ancestors and gods.

The traditional prime minister openly came out to dish and perform rites and rituals at the shrine mostly when there was a festival, community invasion, community cleansing, shrine cleaning and community restoration. However, the growing powers of the Bakundu traditional stones gingered the excessive manipulation and operations of metaphysical forces. For all the partakers of the cults with diverse levels of spiritual powers had to conform to the laws and regulations guiding the acquisitions, maintenance, and extenssion of their mysterious powers.

The different traditional stones equally exposed another world beneath the water belt. This was typical of the actions and aftermath of the initiated. Most of the activities of the initiated were performed at the Mungo River which was part of the eastern portion of the local community. The initiated demonstrated their traditional stony powers by transforming into creatures like crocodiles and killing of people at the river. This act however, revealed the mystical powers of the Bakundu traditonal stones in the Bombe Bakundu shrine.

However, there was also the *dibando* traditional shrine in Bombe Bakunduland. This shrine had two stones of equal, shape, size, and colour(black). These stones were the two founding fathers of the Wombe Bakunduland(that was changed to Bombe Bakundu under German colonial rule). There were the gods of the two powerful *Bokakanga* and *Ndicomboka* bloodlines. This tale had been maintained over the decades and still currently upheld by the Bakundus. These ancestors who transcended into gods were known to be *tata Elongha Ngoh* and *Botia Tua*. In this dimension, all the lineages followed the patterns of the entire clan established by the god fathers.

The two stones were implanted at the center of the Bombe Bakundu community. They were the eyes and protectors of the spiritual and physical realms of the motherland(Bombe Bakundu). The incanators always consulted the shrine stones in periods of recessions and paid respects in seasonal ceremonies. This was in respect to the tradition and cultural laws of the Bakundus as it was at the days of the old order. There have been different versions regarding the traditional stones in Bombe Bakundu. This remained another reason why the researcher digested the versions for indepth knowledge understanding and impartation of the worth, activities and legacies of the traditional stones of the Bakundus.

Versions Of The Bakundu Traditional Stones In Bombe Bakunduland

Many different versions have emerged to reveal and relate indepth knowledge on the parameters of the traditional totems and remnants reflecting the cultural history of the African ethnic group. The traditionalists, *juju* cultists, initiators, converts, and christians have nursed nuanced notions regarding the traditional and cultural shrine items of the Bakundu clan. In Bombe Bakundu, these innate perspectives have brandished the phases and painted pictures which tourists and visitors would conceived when diagnosing and digesting the traditional shrine particles. This emblazoned the remote conceived ideologies of the Bakundus in the pre-colonial era that, the traditional stones in the shrines revealed metaphysical spiritual connection between two worlds(worlds of the spirits and human beings).

This subtle conception and perception relinquished the virtues and vices of the Bakundu ancestral laws and might. Draining the versions in diverse framework strigently uncaved the emotions, intentions, ambitions and actions of the die-hearted patriots to preserve the ancestral legacies and folklore tales for future generation. The traditionalists held the view that the traditional stones remained *the symbols of the Bakundu cultural identification*. Such versions added clues to the notions of the *juju* cultists dimension relating *the traditional stones to the powerful myths and legends of the Bakundu lineages*. These consumed version manifested over the vision of continuity.

The pre-colonial epoch witnessed the active flow of traditional and cultural practises and actions of the Bakundus. This unraveled the mysteries inhaled by the outsiders who testified the mystical might of the traditional enshrined practises. The initiated and converted pritty much squashed the same version as they unveiled the view that, *the traditional stones signified the existence of spiritual power sharing between the ancestors and its representatives on planet earth*. This elaborated on the argument nursed by the converts and initiators that those involved cult shrine members obtained mysterious powers from their reflections in the spiritual world who provided directions and enforced the regulations for the cultural administration. This was because, the Bakundu traditional administration was fashioned to conform to cultural virtues.

The intra-connectedness among the spiritualists and cultists have revealed another broad spectrum of concern as it directly affected the traditional administration and community. However, the local administration operated on settings meant to brandish co-existence void of domination by a particular set of individuals who may possess metaphysical powers to conjure, measure, and install desired prerogatives. The cultural and traditional environmental patterns of pre-colonial Bombe Bakunduland was structured to denounce vices that served as conundrums to the prosperity of the community. In this dimension, the traditional shrine stones were reflecting the gods and ancestors were consulted for the evasion of any danger or plagues that threatened the livelihoods and existence of the people and community.

The decades which unfolded ushered outsiders into the community of Bombe Bakunduland. These were ethnic groups from other communities in the geographical regions of the unnamed

Cameroon. The diverse ethnic groups constitute, the Bafaws, Barombis, Mbos, Koms, Bafuts, Balis, Bakweris, Balongs and Mbonges. These ethnic groups came from their original settlements to find refuge and provisions since the Bakundu community was blessed with plenty. The population movement patterns in the 17th and early 18th century stridently exposed the non-satisfaction of the ethnic groups. This led to frequent search of necessities. Bombe Bakundu welcomed different tribal people with diverse notions about the cultures and traditions of the aborigenes.

Some of the ethnic groups were familiar with the traditions of the Bakundus while others shared no knowledge. The Mbonge people for instance, had similar cultural and traditional properties (language, juju cults, dressing, food). However, there was frequent display of traditional festivals to paint the picture that, the community eventhough inhabited by foreigners belonged to the Bakundus. The Bakundu authorities treated all kinds and types of disputes which erupted among the different ethnic groups with the traditional norms of the community. Major recessions and regressions in economic and social activities were taken to the shrines of the traditional ancestral stones for revelations and solutions. Meanwhile in the state of progression, thanksgiving to the traditional ancestral products showed and showered appreciation.

Many of the gifts to the ancestral stones were local manufactured drinks as it was believed that the ancestors and gods were mostly appeased with drinks (aforfor, matutu and palmwine). The traditional stones were fully respected by the foreign ethnic groups. And demands channeled by the ancestors through the stones were met without resistance. The different ethnic groups exposed the view *that the Bakundu traditional stones were mediums of communication with the ancestors and gods*. Such notion cajoled the diverse ethnic groups in the relation with the Bakundus in order to avoid crisis clashes which would warrant the voices of the ancestral shrined stones. This was because the demands dished out after incantations was enormous and heavy covering a huge fortune. Eventhough foreign ethnic group inhabited the Bombe Bakunduland, the powers determination was in the hands of the Bakundus.

The rapid development and growth in science and technology which gingered Western exploratory activities in Africa also brought the explorers to the Bombe bakunduland in the early periods before German annexation. These explorers at the coast of Duala, Bimbia and Victoria followed the Mungo river tributaries and channels to the Bakunduland. The German Dr, Zintgraff epitomised the journey through the Bombe Bakunduland to the upper hills of the grassfields. The explorers at the Bombe Bakundu community equally conceived another perspectives in regards to the culture and tradition of the Bakundus. In this line, the traditional products revealed the *primitive diabolical might of the locals which was in urgent need for refurbishments*. This description unveiled the introduction of another set of *Westerners* known as traders and missionaries to the Bombe Bakundu community.

The tools to be utilised to confined the notion of the explorers about the traditional totems and belief systems was the Bible. From 1879-1890, the Basel missionaries in particular had established a station in Bombe Bakundu. This station had as primary objective to evangelise

and convert the locals to christianity. The missionaries criticised the ancestral stones of the Bakundus and enforced measures for its excommunication and termination. The met with stive resistances as the ideas of the missionaries was debunked.

The resistance when wild leading to he burning of missionary chapels as Dr. Joseph Ebune reiterated. The converted locals and missionaries tend to regard the traditional stones *as instrument of devilish activites*. Such ideology didnt vanish the traditional stones form the eyes of the christian population but gingered protective mechanisms from the traditional patroits. This explained why the traditional stones are still visible with full perfomance of the Bakundu rites and rituals of concern. The traditional stones revealed the ancestral shrines of the Bakundus in the community and the mystical powers they possessed.

The Mystical Spiritual Powers Of The Traditional Stones In Bombe Bakunduland

The community of Bombe Bakundu had witnessed a lot of events through which credits were dished to the ancestors and gods. Spirituality remained a dangerous element of interest and danger to mankind. Just like other powerful traditions of the different ethnic groups in Cameroon, the symbols and totems representing the Bakundu ancestors and gods had mysterious spiritual powers which guided the institution of customary laws, rites, and rituals. The policies and principles of the Bakundu tradition and culture was encircled round the jurisdictions of the ancestors and gods.

There were stages reiterating spiritual trancensions. From beings to not beings. Not beings to ancestors. Ancestors to gods. The transitions made use of huge sacrifices which conformed to nature and mankind. Mankind like coins showed two nuanced sides of natural creation. Historical fairy tales pushed spiritual covenants and myths to the state of pogrom as domination remained a bond of contention in the minds of the Bakundus. The Bakundus had diverse stones through which they saw and touched with no adverse effects. But pondered over the decades the might of few creation of nature(stones).

The traditional stones at the shrines of the Bakundus revealed the pathways of ancestral and godly powers. This was typical in epochs of trials, plagues, invasion and tradtional stain (when the traditional rules were broken). Many people of different ethnic groups testified to the tremendouse might of the traditional stones. On an important scene, the ethnic groups from the grassfield region of modern Cameroon were typical examples in witnessing the physical manifestation of the stones spiritual stinks. In this dimension, Mr. Nini Zachary reflected on inccidents leading to the demonstration of the stones stinks;

"My grand father told me stories as to some of the things which happened in Bombe Bakundu in those days. On one occasion we nealy died said the old man. The one was went the Bakundus were moving at night and making develish sounds (what was known as *bando* in the Bakundu tradition. This always happened when cultural festivals were to be celebrated). They came to our house

and my old grand father took the hunting gun and fired at the air. This made the Bakundus to run away that night. But the next morning there was trouble. The bakundus brought yellow palmfronds, grassessm leaves, roots, and stones and threw it infront of our house. The whole night and day nobody could sleep. there were alot of witchcraft noise and a spiritual baby was crying. We ran out of the house the following morning and my father went and begged the chief to remove the stones and leaves. We paid fines alot of it".

The spontanouse tracks and manifestation of the spiritual powers of the traditional stones in Bombe Bakunduland brandished the priorities of the strength of traditional and cultural heritages. The mystical powers of the stones were also fashioned to digest an indepth respect for human rights. This placed the aspect of justice(social justice in particular) at the helm of interest and preservation. Most of the traditional stones in the moonfarm shrine were mystical and diabolical. This was because; the manner in which spiritual powers were performed required huge formidable forces and sacrifices(humans and other spiritual items). Such demonstration in the performance of the shrine duties revealed the strenght of the Bakundu ethnic group in witchcraft ranging, and the conservation and preservation of traditional and cultural priorities.

This aspect unveiled the framework of historical content and context in the field of corresponding to the mindblowing Africanisation and heritage justifications. The perspective of mystical possessions by the traditional stones were also visible in the extra ordinary happenings in the community. The Bakundu community at the banks of the Mungo river also served as a battle ground for competitors. Spiritual battles involving rivals of the different cults were demonstrated through the positioning of the stones and masterminding of recessions in seasonal production(agriculture). The mysterious deaths of animals, and humans also brandished the mystical nature of the traditional enshrined stones.

On another perspective, the tradional mystical stones equally served as family and community shields. This was typical during plagues and invasion. Plagues usually manifested in diverse manners. The main form and format of happening was through floods and diseases. The Mungo river like other large water bodies exposed properties of mankind's fractions. The Mungo river usually witnessed an over of its banks. This pushed heavy quantum of the water into the houses and farmlands of the inhabitants. In the scenes of invasion, the inhabitants of Pre-colonial Bombe Bakundu frequently clashed with neighbouring tribes at the banks of the river.

These conflicts and wars were centred on *spheres control*. The rival tribes were mainly the Barombis and Banga(s). In the midst of all these predicaments, the traditional stones utilised mystical powers to bend the enemies and made them food for hungry ominvorious hybrids especially crocodiles. Pa Elangwe Bosaka narrated series of events depicting the exact picture of happenings during wars and conflicts. In such battle event he said;

" we don't hear a lot of story from weh wa papa dem tell we about the wars dem. me self i don't take part against bangas. Time weh dem came attack we for overside mungo water, we stand di wait dem and by the time they want cross, mungo water start make their canu (boats) dem di dance (shake). Heavy awawa (rumbling and roar of the mungo river) weh de ancestors dem makam for water, makm all the banga fighters dem fall inside water and den crocodile start chop dem".

The events which unfolded actually pin pointed the diverse sides of the mystical traditional stones in Pre-colonial Bombe Bakunduland. This painted the picture that the mystical traditional stones served the interests and values of mankind. Diagnosing and consuming the mystical structure and nature of the Bakundu traditional shrine stones revealed the legacies left for the upcoming generations to squash.

The Legacy of the Traditional Stones in Bombe Bakunduland

The priorities of the Bakundus had been in the manifestation of the traditional and cultural might of their institutions and heritages. There have been mixed feelings to the activities of the Bakundu traditional stones which warranted punitive appraised legacy. Many Bakundus have different versions in regards to the legacy of the traditional stones after in-depth studies and fairy tales. The diversions in school of thoughts related the contemporary strength and values of Bakundu traditional and cultural heritages.

The Bakundu traditional stones have established a value ancestral chain connecting the *realms of earth and spirits*. This actually placed the traditional heritage at the peak of cultural consent as the policies and principles which guided the traditional authorities were centred on the basis and bases of the traditional stones. The Bakundu administration and traditional rites and rituals were prone to suit the prerogatives of the traditional shrined stones. The stones brandished all the idiosyncracies implanted around the foundations of the Bakundu existence. This stringently relinquished the priorities of generational preservation and conservation.

The preservation of the traditional stones in Bombe Bakundu equally forwarded the positive entrusted vibes of mystical possession of metaphysical strength and powers. The cultists and initiated lineages have lived to testify the possession of mystical powers of the old orders. The mystical stones provided the atmosphere *sine qua non* to the effective occupation and possession of ancestral powers. This explained the wide and lengthy link between the spiritual and physical worlds. The participants of the cult lineages have continued to be empowered by the ancestral stones with formidable spiritual powers to operate in directives of spiritual dimensions. It is in this platform, some Bakundus could manifest spiritual mystical powers which they utilised for their own selfish interest and gains. This has made the community to pay irresponsible prices of unpredicted eventual happenings. A typical of this event was the frequent deaths in two pairs every week at the month of March 2011.

The community of Bombe Bakundu at the ages of western exploration brought an element known as *memory transfer from minds to papers*. Most of the documentation of events which unfolded or performed by the enshrined traditional stones at the brim of its might were laid down to ink and paper. In another platform, the transitions in industrial development championed the exposition of African values and heritages. This revealed another similar but nuanced brand of focus which was the significance of the traditional stones to the Bakundus in the Bombe Bakunduland.

The Significance Of Traditional Stones To The Bakundus In The Bombe Bakunduland

There are several traditional stones found in the Bombe Bakunduland. These stones have different names and functions depending on the cults to which they belong. But, there were two main shrines in the Bombe Bakundu chiefdom which constitute all the varieties of stones depicted in all the traditional cults. These shrines are the 'dibando' and the 'moonfarm'. The two shrines have stones which signify cults such as, 'esara', 'morimi', 'ngania', 'matame', and 'borowa'. The 'dibando' shrine is made of two stones while the 'Moonfarm' consists a compilation of several stones. The stones of these cults have different purposes and are of great significant to the those in the cults and the entire people of population as it would be emphasised.

The traditional stones in Bombe Bakundu are significant to the people as center of communication during incantations. These incantations take the form of libation pouring in periods of ceremonies or cultural festivals and abominations. The people perform these activities for the effective commemoration of festivals and cleansing when the chiefdom has been defied by an abominable act. For example, during festivals like the 'dioni', where various cult 'juju' come out to dance and showcase the culture and tradition of the ethnic group, the chief accompanied by the traditional prime minister (mueremboka) in the advent pour out libation to the ancestral stones. Also, when the chiefdom confronts evil acts such as witchcrafts murder. This is done according to the custom and tradition of the people calling for the ancestors to bless and purify the chiefdom. Thus, the stones are of great significance to the people as all libations and festival takes place around the stones.

The stones were and are also of great significance to the people as they represent the major cultural values of the people. These cultural values signified by the traditional stones covered a wide range of signs and symbols, cultural practices, and beliefs. Beliefs are very essential as they exist a popular notion (native beliefs), which emanates from the significance of traditional stones. For instance, the people belief on the ancestral stones as the foundation of their cultural values. Thus, the traditional stones in Bombe Bakundu are of great significance to the people as they are regarded as the foundation of their cultural values.

The traditional stones also serve as the gods of the chiefdom and the main source of power (magical or sorcery). The stones are sometimes worshiped by the people of the different cults, for example, at the end of every year, the people of the 'ngania' and 'matame'

cults come together and clean the 'Moonfarm' shrine and offer sacrifices in wine and animals to the stones regarded as gods. These stones are sources of powers and alters to the people. For instance, when a chief is been sworn, he is taken to the shrine for spiritual upliftment and purification. Thus, the traditional stones are very important to the people of the Bombe Bakunduland.

The people also value the traditional stones serve as shields of defence to foreign spiritual invaders. This is a very important aspect of the stones to the people. The community which does not exist without hatred and envied from other communities experienced spiritual attacks which targeted the slowdown in the execution of planned projects and the spiritual assassination of inhabitants in the community. After several successful and attempted situations, for instance, incantations were made to the traditional stones in the shrines to serve as shields and chariots of protection against the intruders. Even in eras of low productivity in agricultural production with accusation to invaders, the traditional stones in the shrines come to the rescue and purify the community, thus, the traditional stones are of great significance to the people of the Bombe Bakundu land.

CONCLUSION

The preservation of cultural and traditional heritages have remained the main legacy and priority of the Bakundus in the Bakunduland. The remnants of the Bakundus have been visible in the traditional stones of the ancestral realms indicating the mystical spiritual powers of the diverse cults. In honouring the evolution and transitions in mankind, the African ethnic group has brandished historical facts and evidence justifying the existence of African history in content and context.

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