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European Missionaries and Traditional Institutions: A Clash of Two Cultures

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Abstract

One of the most important traditional institutions which performed various functions in the communities of South- Eastern Nigeria before the advent of European Missionaries was *Ekpe institution*. The functions of *Ekpe* were so pervasive that its influence could hardly have gone unnoticed by the European Missionaries. Although the latter had co-operated with *Ekpe* members and used the institution to advance their cause, but the early romance turned sour. Hence, the European Missionaries gradually launched attack on *Ekpe* institution and this consequently led to the modification of the role of *Ekpe*.

Introduction

The European missionaries arrived South-Eastern Nigeria before the second half of the nineteen century and Efik land served as the springboard from whence they reached the hinterland communities. Like the British merchants, the Christian missionaries although they had co-operated with African rulers and the people at their early contacts, gradually launched attack on *Ekpe* institution. The converts of the “new faith” in South-Eastern Nigeria also preached against membership of *Ekpe* institution as well as identification with other African culture and moral values. They dismissed these with oracular authorities and spared no thought on their intrinsic importance and value as features which gave the Africans a sense of people hood. The missionaries and their proselytes therefore, viewed traditional institutions, like *Ekpe* with spectacle of subjectivism. Little wonder they could not have a proper focus, vision and comprehension of the image of the traditional institutions, including *Ekpe*. The “outside-in” perspective which they hastily adopted beclouded their sense of reasoning and perception of the true image of *Ekpe*, a pivot on

which all else revolved in African traditional setting in South-Eastern Nigeria, before the advent of European. From the pedestal of their preconceived notions and biased assessment of *Ekpe*, Christian missionaries like the British Merchants and Consuls, although they had variously used *Ekpe* at one stage or another to advance their purposes at the initial stages of their relations with the African people, gradually began intense attack on *Ekpe* practices and belief system.

Attempt by the missionaries to accomplish the task of christianizing the people of South-Eastern Nigeria in *Ekpe* controlled communities led to interference in matters of internal self-government and indeed a clash of two cultures. As rightly observed by E. A. Ayandele:

Christian missionaries, fired by the idealism of a faith to which they ascribed rightly or wrongly, the enlightenment, progress and technological achievements of their countries, perceived no wisdom in compromising with indigenous customs and institutions. The new wine of European Christianity had to be put into new bottles. Furthermore, missionaries sought to convert individuals whose soul's relation with God was all that mattered, whilst the unprivileged classes were the object of their solicitude. They sought the creation of a completely new social order which would wipe away most of the old society. Allied with, and in many cases inseparable from the British secular arm, at least until the beginning of twentieth century, missionary enterprise resulted politically in the suppression of Nigerian chiefs by enterprises resulted politically in the suppression of Nigerian chiefs by “Christian” white officials. For declared a missionary “the substitution of a civilized authority for the accursed despotism of pagan and Mohammedan powers is a divine and gracious interposition.”

Against this backdrop, we shall examine the European missionaries and *Ekpe* institution in two dimensions, namely; areas of co-operation and areas of conflicts and changes.

The Advent of Christianity in Calabar, Oron and Ibibio Land

From the last decade of the first half of the nineteenth century up to the years of the colonial interlude in Nigeria which ended in 1960 and even after independence, European missionaries of different persuasions and callings made in-road into the Nigerian landscape in general and the communities of South-Eastern Nigerian in particular. For instance, in Efik land, the ball was set rolling by the Church of Scotland Mission and mission stations were established in Creek Town and Duke Town in 1846. Church meetings were generally held in the palaces.²

Similarly, in Oron area, the introduction of Christianity was primarily the responsibility of the primitive Methodist Missionaries from England. According to S. K. Okpo, in 1893, Rev. Robert Fairley, the Minister-in-charge, of the work at Santa Isabel, toured the land around the Rio Del Rey River and visited Oron³. In 1897, Rev. W. J. Ward opened a station at James Town, then flourishing fishing port.

Through the assistance of Messrs C. F. Gill and Nathaniel Boocock, he opened a congregation at Afaha Eduok where the chiefs and people gave land for the missionaries to settle. From Afaha Eduok, the Church spread to other villages within the Oron vicinity⁴.

Ibibio land was dominated by Qua Iboe Mission. It was in Ibemo that Samuel A. Bill started the Qua Iboe Mission in Nigeria. In the late 1881, there was a factory known as the “African Association” established at Ibemo. Consequently, the European merchant who was the agent of this company lived at Ibemo. The indigenes of the area called this European Ukuangiton (twisted neck). This name was given to him because of the way he walked. When rumours of war came, the Ibemo chiefs asked this European how they could stop war in the area. The only advice the European gave them was to have a missionary who would protect them. Before this, it was said that there had been two preachers from Calabar who had come to preach to the Ibemo people. They were Boko and Sam Ene Ntiha⁵. However, they did not satisfy the Ibemo people and as such could not establish any mission there at Ibemo.

In the light of the above, the Ibemo chiefs wrote a letter to Mary Slessor through one Akpan Oku. Mary Slessor in turn forwarded it to England where it was received and read to students of Harley College where Samuel A. Bill studied. This suggest that Ibemo Chiefs were really

interested in having a missionary in their midst.

There is a river that enters the sea at a place in Ibemo called Aqua-Obio, an Ibibio word meaning “Big Town”. When the early European explorers came to Ibemo, since they gave name for this particular river, they decided to use the name of the town where the river entered the sea to name the river. Thus, the river was called Aqua Obio river by the Europeans. Later on, the name was corrupted by these European and it became “Qua Iboe”. Thus the river had already been named “Qua Iboe” (Aqua Obio) before the arrival of Samuel Alexander Bill in 1887. It was because of the location of the area of his missionary work which concentrated then on the basin of Qua Iboe (Aqua Obio) river that Samuel Bill chose to call the field “Qua Iboe Mission” that is – the mission operating along the basin of Qua Iboe river. Had the name “Aqua Obio”, not been corrupted, Samuel Bill would certainly have named the mission “Aqua Obio Mission” just as the first Presbyterian Missionaries called theirs, Calabar Mission.⁶

The Cross River Igbo and the Ejagham came under the stranglehold of the Presbyterian and Catholic Missions respectively. However, despite the fact that different European missionaries carved out spheres of influence for themselves in the *Ekpe* controlled areas of South-Eastern Nigeria; they were birds of the same feather. Put differently, in spite of minor doctrinal differences, the central theme was “Jesus Christ and his teachings” and they shared the same source of authority – the Bible.

The Patronage of King Eyo Honesty 11 of Creek Town

Another common feature in the advent of Christian mission was the reaction of the Africans to their “visitors”. Evidence shows that in the *Ekpe* imperium, the missionaries irrespective of which denomination they represented were not overwhelmingly received by the people of South-Eastern Nigeria they visited. There was ambivalence in their reception; while some Africans welcomed them others expressed strong resentment from the outset in each community they visited. For example, in Efik area when the missionaries from Church of Scotland Mission arrived led by Rev. Hope Waddell, there was mixed feeling among the Efik as depicted by the reception accorded them by Chief Eyamba of Duke Town and King Eyo Honesty 11 of Creek Town. King Eyamba never liked missionaries and did not want them to have a foothold in Calabar. On the contrary, King Eyo

embraced Christianity. While King Eyamba was trying to get missionaries to pack and go, King Eyo his contemporary in Creek Town was bent on making their stay very pleasant and comfortable.⁷

According to E. U. Aye, the death of Eyamba V of Duke Town left King Eyo Honesty the sole guardian and patron of the new religion. In the early days, his yard permanently housed the Church meeting in Creek Town until a permanent Church building started in 1850. Rev. Hope Waddell added that "he would come to the service on the dot and taking his seat put on his spectacles for the hymn", and King Eyo himself was very often the interpreter.⁸

As the enthusiastic King Eyo showed his open romance with the missionaries they latter supported the former and used him in advancing their enterprise. King Eyo's new faith entailed change of attitude from the traditional norms and introduction of reforms at instigation of the missionaries and the first target of these changes was *Ekpe*.⁹

King Eyo with whom the political and social implication of missionary activities among the Efik revolved between 1846 and 1858 was an astute politician who had wanted to use the missionaries to extend his dominion over the rest of the Efik clans.¹⁰ According to Daniel Offiong, King Eyo was a very wealthy man, having profiteered in the trade with the European merchants. The missionaries made no mistake in their dealings with King Eyo because they had recognized him as "undoubtedly being the principal ruler in the country" and as such they must respect him. For example, Hope Waddell advised his lieutenants as follows: "Our Christian principles, the interest of the country, the welfare of the mission station, require of us to respect him as a ruler of his people".¹¹

Little wonder, in 1850, for Eyo to support their enterprise, the missionaries encourage him to declare himself king of the entire Calabar. His protégés, the missionaries then urged him in the interest of "humanity and the gospel to abolish the immolation of slaves": This practice was a scared institution whereby the people believed the slaves killed accompanied their master to the other world and served him over there. This was a practice prevalent in much if not all of Africa. This practice... goes a long way to confirm African's belief in immortality which is not conflict with the Christian tenet.¹²

Therefore, through the instrumentality of *Ekpe* and at the instigation of the missionaries, King Eyo banned all immolation. That action rendered the master's power of life and death over their slaves impotent. However, it was agreed between Eyo and the missionaries that criminals were the only persons to be executed, not by their masters but by *Nsibidi* after due trial and conviction.

The forgoing development in Efik land, an important commercial centre; the first centre of Christian missionary activities in *Ekpe* controlled areas and an administrative headquarters at the time had its effects on the neighbouring communities of the Ejagham, Ibibio, Oron and Cross River Igbo, where immolation of slaves was a common practice. *Ekpe* laws were in many respects contrary to Christian teaching. At first they thought of breaking down the authority of *Ekpe* and perhaps entrenched Christianity in its place. However, when they found the invulnerability of *Ekpe* power and its sanctity in the people's culture they decided; with the support of the European merchants, to seek *Ekpe*'s support in their religious and social reforms. With the co-operation of Eyo, in 1850 *Ekpe* edits were promulgated against these social practices.¹³

Evidence shows that although Eyo had patronized missionary enterprise with the sole purpose of increasing his political status and thereby carried out the most revolutionary programme in a relatively short time, once reforms had been set in motion, it would no longer be reserved. Therefore the support by King Eyo Honesty in Efik land served as a reference point in the activities of other Christian missions in the course of evangelism in the communities of South-Eastern Nigeria. After all, Christian missions of all the churches had a common goal, salvation of the alleged benighted Africans through the eradication of all traditional practices and ethos which did not conform to Christian ethics. For the missionaries, the soul must be saved for the heavenly kingdom in all nooks and crannies of *Ekpe* imperium. On this premise, although the chiefs and people of Ejagham, Ibibio, Oron and Cross River Igbo were not parties to the agreement signed between Efik king and people, all of them became victim of King Eyo Honesty reforming passion. Even King Eyo Honesty as shown by evidence was not spared from the reformist task of the missionaries. His supremacy over his people was challenged because from then on the missionaries had taken over the initiative and were doing whatever they wanted with impunity.

Christianity Confronts *Ekpe* Institution

The use of *Ekpe* by the missionaries at the early period of their contact with the people of South-Eastern Nigeria, as shown by evidence was not limited to Efik community but had applicability in other areas within the *Ekpe* imperium. For example, at Oron, just as the case in Calabar there was a sort of compromise between the Church and *Ekpe* initially to the effect that Christians could go about their religious activities without any molestation. At the initial stage, individual churches and their ministers persuaded the chiefs to protect them and they paid homage to the chiefs as they depended on them for their protection. So, through some chiefs in Oron certain agreements were worked out so that Christians could embark on their enterprise without let or hindrance. For example, at James Town, Rev. Ward reported that in order to attend church service when *Ekpe* was playing, Christians had to:

Carry for their safety, a boot, stick or some other well known article belonging to the native king. Through time a part of the street was roped off along which they could travel without fear of being molested... In most of the out stations a worshipper was perfectly safe if he carried a Bible and hymnal either in his hand or on his head during the walk to and from the Church.¹⁴

It has been stressed that despite the compromise, missionaries were still bent on annihilating *Ekpe*. But fortunately for *Ekpe* and other traditional societies attempts by the missionaries to get the support of the colonial government to force the submission of the people and their institutions initially failed. For instance, in a response to the request by Rev. Grove of Primitive Methodist Church, the Lieutenant Governor, Major Ruxton made it abundantly clear to the missionaries that the question of government's interference with the traditional societies was one of "considerable import" and that generally "government is averse to attempting to control such societies unless they can be shown to be actively mischievous"¹⁵

Thus, the colonial administrators somehow in the past showed restraint than the missionaries were willing to concede. Evidence shows that as the missionaries mounted pressure on the political administrators on the negative effect of *Ekpe* practices and their hindrances to the course of evangelization of the African which also meant eradication of some aspects

of their cultural values and norms that were considered antithetical to the new religion, the administrators among other factors later supported the missions against *Ekpe*.¹⁶ Little wonder, soon after the *Ekpe* edicts which abolished some of the social practices, the supercargoes and missionaries took over the land. Ostensibly, they formed the Society for the Abolition of Inhuman and Superstitious Customs and for Promoting civilization in Old Calabar and its Environs. For them, the gospel must reach all corners of the globe including *Ekpe* controlled areas in South-Eastern. The various Christian missions were determined that the African must be redeemed from barbarism – a task which Christian missionaries irrespective of their church affiliation undertook. They became the watchdogs of *Ekpe* law and set out to destroy trial by esere beans, infanticide twin murder and substitutionary punishment among other customs.

The result was that ideologically and in practice a potentially violent intrusion was made into the social and political world of the Nigeria people with the advent of Christian missionaries.¹⁷ According to Offiong, the missionary enterprise brought into focus a period in the Nigeria evolution by which the dynamics of social cultural and political changes were to be increasingly more exogenous than endogenous.

Missionaries and Social Reforms in Old Calabar

One of the practices which the missionaries accused the *Ekpe* members of was the immolation of slaves at the burial of *Ekpe* title holders. Even though *Ekpe* had in 1850 enacted a law against this practice, the missionaries were not convinced that the practice of immolation had been stooped by the *Ekpe* chieftains. This became one of the fundamental causes of conflict between the missionaries and the people in the *Ekpe* enclave. The missionaries always spoilt for war without finding the true position of things whenever suspicion arose that *Ekpe* member engaged in human sacrifice.¹⁸ For example, in 1855, Old Town was bombarded on the allegation that there was immolation of about fifty slaves at the burial of King Willy Tom, an *Ekpe* Chieftain. It should be noted that although king Eyo had proposed that force should be used in settling the Old Town issue as there was a traditional method of punishing violation of *Ekpe* law of 1850, and suggested that the town should be fined twenty slaves and that the interdict which forbade the burial obsequies of the late king, be removed.¹⁹ But on the contrary, the

supercargoes who were hands in gloves with the missionaries urged the arrest and deportation of two of the principal men involved in the incident and recommended the destruction of the town. Accordingly, On 19 January, 1855, Old Town was shelled for nearly an hour by the war steamer antelope, after which the Kroomen and marines were sent on shore to fire every part of the town. Since the reason given for the destruction was the immolation of slaves, the Old Town people naturally believed that there must have been some collaboration between the missionaries and the supercargoes. Consequently the feelings against the missionaries mounted high.²⁰

The use of the esere beans and oath taking on itiat Ekpe (*Ekpe* stone) was another custom among the *Ekpe* members which attracted the aversion of the missionaries. It was a common practice in the *Ekpe* imperium for a suspected witch to be given esere beans on the belief that culprits would not survive the ordeal. The missionaries on the other hand did not believe in the efficacy of this method since the esere beans had been poisonous substance which could harm even innocent persons. They preached against administrations of esere beans in Old Calabar and that gradually destroyed the adoption of that method in detecting suspected witches and wizards in *Ekpe* Imperium.

Mission House and Cultural Alienation

The view of the mission house or station by the missionaries as an “embassy” or a state within a state did not receive the acceptance of the Africans and this often led to conflicts. For the missionaries, the mission house was a “center of civilization” a city of refuge, around which they gathered small bands of adherents. It housed criminals and fugitives from traditional laws, who were taken to the house by missionaries to learn English, attend classes, and live the lives of English men and to remove them from the traditional environment.²¹ It was hoped that constant touch with the missionaries would inspire students to greater things while making it possible for the missionaries to select more promising youngsters for mission work. Such youngsters became personal wards of the missionaries. Besides, the mission house set itself as an establishment above the law of the land. K. K. Nair, for example, reported that “missionaries ceased to depend upon *Ekpe* as a machinery for enforcing reforms and preferred to rely upon their own resources”.²²

Evidence shows that the chiefs and people of *Ekpe* controlled areas refused to accept the argument that the mission house ought to be independent of the traditional society and be considered as a sort of an embassy with diplomatic immunities; in other words, a state within a state. The Africans were strongly against political asylum granted by the mission to those who ran away from trial by ordeal, harbouring of twins and their mothers who traditionally are considered social misfits to be dumped in the forest.

For example, King Eyo, in 1855 conveyed the disagreement of his people as regard happenings in the mission house to Hope Waddell and suggested that it would be better for the Creek Town community if the church was built outside the town. In total rejection of the atrocities committed by the missionaries for converting the mission house into hideout for those who violated traditional norms, Duke Ephraim of Duke Town in May 1856 “blew *Ekpe*” on the mission house.²³ What led to the misunderstanding was that two men and a woman were accused of having caused the death of a little boy through witchcraft and were therefore called upon as tradition demanded them to prove their innocence by submitting themselves to trial by ordeal. This entailed taking the esere beans. The mission having preached against such practices, Anderson at pleading with the missionaries declared that the *Ekpe* sanction was “ungodly” and refused to obey the order to release the fugitive for trial. However, when missionaries noticed that the sanction was so effective that “no one came to church and when Anderson approached the people they ran away as if they had seen a specter”,²⁴ they came to terms that Efik men still upheld *Ekpe* sanctions.

Through the intervention of the Consul, *Ekpe* was dispatched to reverse the proclamation against the mission house and to announce the restoration of the liberty to visit the missionaries, attend school, go on church and supply provision to the mission houses. In other words, the right of the mission house as a state within a state with diplomatic immunities was sanctioned by the consul as *Ekpe* interdict was lifted. It should be noted that there was a threat of a naval force in event of non-compliance to the consul's order and *Ekpe* law gave way to exercise of Consular authority. This suggest that with the support of the consuls, the missionaries grossly undermined *Ekpe* power in the determination of issues hitherto considered to be within the exclusive jurisdiction of the *Ekpe* title holder and members.

Administration of oath through *itiat Ekpe* (*Ekpe* Stone) usually practiced by *Ekpe* members was another factor which soured the relationship between the missionaries and *Ekpe* members. The act of swearing by *itiat Ekpe* (*Ekpe* stone) at initiation ceremonies was to ensure that the entrants became bound from divulging *Ekpe* teachings to no-members and thereby guaranteed the sanctity of *Ekpe* and apparent secrecy of the institution.

An informant stated that even today the oath of secrecy in *Ekpe* is as obtained in any other Association where the inner teachings of such Association or clubs and even churches are meant exclusively for members. These seemingly "secret" aspects of *Ekpe* for example, the art of *mboko* sound which European referred to as "blowing *Ekpe*" are kept secret and only known to disciplined *Ekpe* members of certain titles who cannot reveal it to non-members.²⁵

Another knowledgeable informant added that even *Ekpe* entrants and women members are not taught the art of *mboko* sound and other inner teachings like the rationale of *Ekpe* adepts being required to drink *Ekpe* urine, *ikim-Ekpe* at higher stages of initiation as *Ekpe* title holder.²⁶

Therefore, it was such inner teachings among others which remained the rights and privileges of *Ekpe* members that European attempted to pry into and when *Ekpe* members persistently refused to reveal such teachings and practices which gave *Ekpe* its essence of being as a highly revered institution, the missionaries hastily dubbed *Ekpe* a "satanic cult".

The practice of polygamy by *Ekpe* members also brought them into conflict with the missionaries who preached against such practices in Sunday sermon. Traditionally Africans are polygamous. The act of marrying many wives suited their socio-political milieu and enhanced economic prospects in the pre-colonial era. The wives of African men in the communities of South-Eastern Nigeria served a status symbol. A man was accorded some status supremacy in his community depending on the number of wives and indeed children he had. These wives and children served as labour hands in the farms and performed other social functions for the head of the household. On the other hand, the Christians opposed polygamy as they emphasized on one-man, one wife, in accordance with the western culture. Many African converts found it difficult to do away with their wives

especially the younger ones, in order to be "good Christian". Many of them who could read evidence of polygamy in the Old Testament sat on these texts in self-defence.²⁷

The moral work of the missionaries in this aspect it has been said was made more difficult by some European traders and ship captains who themselves had concubines on the Nigerian coast and supported Africans by saying that the Bible was "cooked".²⁸ Faced with such difficulties and discouragement, the Christian churches prevented such men from taking communion and holding any post in the church while some were excommunicated. Ostensibly, "good Christians" divorced their numerous wives except one who was often taken to the church and subsequently church wedding or marriage blessing by the church became the order of the day for African couples. It also became fashionable for African converts to be given baptismal names, derived from the Bible as mark of identification with the new religion. Thus, African converts preferred names like John, Paul, Peter, Sarah, Christiana etc. in total disregard of their African names despite the traditional meanings and relevance of such names in African cosmology.

Conclusion

The missionaries were vociferous in the classification of *Ekpe* as a secret society. For the missionaries, *Ekpe* was a secret society and Christians were supposed not to have any dealings with it as it was rebellion to God. Little wonder some Christian Churches preached against membership of *Ekpe*. Rev. Ward, for example, described *Ekpe* among the Oron people as "a glorification of the devil". In contrast, Akak wrote that "Ekpe is often referred to as a secret cult, but although generally regarded as such, its aims and objectives apart from certain unpolished activities of the past contain nothing secret as termed".²⁹ Another Nigerian scholar reported that, the use of the word "secret" for *Ekpe* institution by the white men often stemmed from the fact that the organizers gave the society absolute powers which allowed the white men no room for penetration and making concrete records.³⁰

Against the background of missionary attack on *Ekpe* institution, it became customary for *Ekpe* members to often retort: "Abasi Ikpaha, Ekpe Ikpaha" !! meaning "God is immortal, *Ekpe* is Immortal" !! This terse

statement was considered by the missionaries and African converts as blasphemous when taken on its face value. An informant, Etubom U. U. Asuquo, stated that the complete statement was Abasi Ikpaha, Ekpe Ikpaha koro ekeda Ekpe eto iko Abasi ke isong Efik, meaning “God is immortal, *Ekpe* is immortal” !! for *Ekpe* was used in planting Christianity in Efik land”³¹ This suggests that despite attempts to stigmatize and stifle it, *Ekpe* institution survived the onslaught of the European missionaries.

Endnotes

¹ Emmanuel Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842 – 1914* (New York: Humanities Press 1966) p. 4.

² D. A Offiong, *Continuity and change in some Traditional Societies of Nigeria*, (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press 1989). p. 58.

³ S. K. Okpo. The coming of Primitive Methodist Missionaries in *Brief History of the Methodist Boys' High School Oron 1980*, p. 5

⁴ O. E. Uya. *History of Oron People of the Lower Cross River Basin* (Oron: Manson, 1984) pp. 106 - 128

⁵ A. O. Anwana. “Ekpe Imperium in South-Eastern Nigeria, 1600 – 1900”, Ph.D Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar. August 2002, pp. 200 – 201

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⁷ D. A. Offiong, *Continuity and Change in some Traditional society of Nigeria*, p. 55.

⁸ E. U. Aye. *Old Calabar Through the Centuries*, (Calabar: Hope Waddel Press 1967), p. 161

⁹ D. A. Offiong. *Continuity and change in some Traditional Society in Nigeria*, p. 59

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 54

¹¹ Ibid, p. 59

¹² Ibid, p. 60

¹³ E. U. Aye. *Old Calabar through the centuries*, p. 165

¹⁴ D. A. Offiong, *Continuity and Change in Some Traditional Societies in Nigeria*, p. 65

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ A. O. Anwana. “Ekpe Imperium in South-Eastern Nigeria”, p. 208

¹⁷ E. A. Ayandele. *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria* p. 5

¹⁸ K. K. Nair. *Politics and Society in South-Eastern Nigeria 1841 – 1906: A Study of Power, Diplomacy and Commerce in Calabar*. (London: Frankcass 1972), p. 98.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 100

²⁰ Ibid, p. 102

²¹ Ibid, p. 100

²² Ibid, p. 111

²³ Ibid, p. 103

²⁴ J. F. A. Ajayi. *Christian Mission in Nigeria, 1841 – 1891*, (London: Frankcass 1965), p. 120

²⁵ Chief Patrick Ekuri Interviewed 9/6/99

²⁶ Chief Akpan Eda. Interviewed 5/3/99

²⁷ E. U. Aye, *Old Calabar through the Centuries*, p. 131

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ E. O. Akak. *Efik of Old Calabar: Culture Superstitions. Vol. III* (Calabar: Akak, 1982), p.10

³⁰ E. E. Effiong. “Moral Evaluation of Ekpe Cult among the Uruan of Akwa Ibom, Nigeria” MA Thesis, Department of Pastoral Theology, Catholic Institute of West Africa. Port Harcourt, 1998, p. 16

³¹ Etubom U. U. Asuquo, Interviewed 16/1/99