Oral Origin of the Village

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Abstract
He invited the warrior to the palace and asked him if he would consider going away. The King did not have to give his reasons as the warrior already knew what his fate was if he stayed. The warrior left with an entourage and made his way on the road leaving behind his home and everything he knew and fought for. When they came to a resting point, he would send one of his entourage back to the palace to ask the King if he was far enough? And the King would reply “a little bit further” this went on until he sent the last member of his entourage with a message claiming he will rest his bum under this tree he is tired. *Mo ma fi di it, O ti su mi.*

So here goes the legend of the creation of the village of Fiditi, Oyo state, Nigeria.

Once upon a time, there was an Agunbiade boy who was training to be a shaman. His father was a shaman, so was his father’s father, and his father’s father’s father, and so their fathers were shamans even before.

The Agunbiade boy went on to become an Anglican priest, his son followed the faith, and his son, and his son’s son, and so it goes. Currently there is a first son of this line of sons, he’s the only one, he is not yet a priest. The original Agunbiade son settled on some land, married, had children and led his life. He built a church and a school, both still in existence, both still very active. The land he settled on is known as Agunbiade Village. His descendants are not exiled from his land of origin. His son’s son’ son is buried there, so is his son.

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Village comprises architectural photographs from two rural villages and a homestead in Yorùbáland, Nigeria, taken mostly in 2018. The villages are elegantly preserved and maintained in a way that is sympathetic to the history and heritage of their past inhabitants. They are an intentional/ unintentional museum of a world long gone, accessed only through the conditions of modern technologies such as satellite dishes and mobile telephone towers. These villages have a rather unique concept because the people who inherit the land of their ancestors do not wish to erect new immaculate retirement homes, which are the norm in other rural villages. These two villages are evidence of the native ways and the influences of colonial rule, featuring beautiful churches and mosques, available on visits for burials and occasions when those who are part of the diaspora return home to claim their inherited titles and chieftaincies.

These chieftaincies wield no significant power or influence, although the title remains one of the last traces of traditional precolonial self-governance and access to a bygone era. The homestead, situated along the express way between two very big cities, offers a little glimpse of nature and calmness in an otherwise hectic metropolis.