

Aminkeng Rufus Mencha

The Irresistible Treasure



Dedication

To

*Mencha David my dad, of blessed memory
whose life is an immense inspiration to me.*

Forward

The “Irresistible Treasure” is a fascinating story about wealth, worth many billions of francs African French Community (AFC) situated in the rich Kingdom of Mayamba in the South East province of the Republic of Makerun. All of a Sudden, a fatal mountain eruption occurs which ejects fluidal, red and extremely hot lava that destroys a significant part of the kingdom including its reigning king but miraculously spares the heir to the throne.

Then Lokowasa ingeniously discovers the immensity of the treasure and begins a relentless hunt for it, combining serious manœuvres, full scale confrontations as well as fratricidal and sororicidal battles between his gang, the police force and the highest state authorities. Each of its twenty two chapters is thought provoking, exciting and highly recommended to students, scholars and all keen readers.

The novel portrays a typical African society that prevailed between the mid eighties and the dawn of the twenty first century characterised by over qualification, a remarkably high unemployment rate, a worrisome rate of armed robbery and the resolute battle by the state authorities to eradicate these ills.

Aminkeng Rufus.

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Disclaimer

The material, characters and the majority of places in this book are fundamentally imaginative. Any coincidence with reality is simply an element of chance.

Chapter One

Kofa Division

Kofa Division, in which the kingdom of Mayamba is situated, is by far the most advanced of the six divisions that make up the South East Province of the Republic of Makerun at the advent of the third millennium. Situated in the south of the Province, its population is principally cosmopolitan due to the high degree of hospitality of the indigenes. It receives Makerunians from the North West, North East, West, North, East, South and Littleroad Provinces as well as foreigners, notably; Nigerians, Malians and Central Africans and a handful of other African nationals.

Kofa Division has fast become the nerve center of economic activities in the South East Province as opposed to Nene Division which has been hitherto the economic backbone of the Province. There is an Industrial zone in Kombe harbouring a few industries such as: New Plastics Company, Brewery of Makerun,

and The Always Expect Shortage Electricity Corporation. Many other industries are dotted in the Province like: The Number One Oil Refinery, Plantecam, Tiku Soup, Makerun Agricultural Corporation. These industries employ an appreciable number of Makerunians. The emergence of private business activities has also become very rampant in Kofa Division. Beauty salons, off and on licenses, retailing shops of varied items, cosmetic and provision stores have sprang up with unchecked geometric rapidity.

Agriculture is also highly practised in Kofa Division although the agrarian policy of the state is to an extent selective. Not only is it practised at the subsistence level where individuals plant crops like: cocoyams, plantains, bananas, and vegetables, but also plantation agriculture is en vogue in this part of the country. Almost single-handedly, the Makerun Agricultural Corporation practises plantation agriculture with cash crops like palm fruits, rubber, tea, and banana. The majority of the harvest is exported to foreign countries especially in Europe with small quantities sold locally. The produce from subsistence farming on the other hand is most of the time consumed at the family level though excesses could be sold to augment the family income.

Pastoral farming is also common and it is the primitive type where animals are allowed to roam about lackadaisically or confined in little fences.

Fishing is also done along the Atlantic Ocean, both by individuals and foreign companies. The fish caught, is sold in the local markets but a greater portion of the catch is exported to foreign countries.

A very small portion of the population practise hunting firstly, due to the fact that animals are becoming very scarce and secondly, because antipoaching laws are being draconianly reinforced by the state of Makerun.

Kofa Division has Belim as its headquarters. It has four Sub Divisions namely: Belim, Kamuyu, Gbea, and Tiku Sub Divisions with capitals being: Belim, Kamuyu, Gbea and Tiku in that order.

It has four Rural Councils namely: Tiku, Kamuyu, Nauide and Gbea Rural Councils each headed by an elected Mayor as well as one Urban Community ironically lorded by an appointed Government Delegate based in Belim.

Kofa Division is one of the most developed touristic sites of the country. Prominent on the list is the Epasamoto Mountain which in addition to its touristic attraction is the venue for the Race of Faith. The Epasamoto Mountain is a gigantic mass of igneous and volcanic rocks which have spectacularly accumulated as a result of successive violent eruptions. Its impressive height of 4010 meters makes it the highest mountain in West and central Africa and appears to be easily and directly communicating with the heavenly Gods.

Mount Epasamoto has four sloping wings each covered with dense tropical forest consisting of woody trees like mahogany, iroko and sapele but for the summit which is stony, almost treeless and extremely cold.

The soil interchanges between black and brown very fertile volcanic soils and justifies the frequent practice of agriculture on its slopes by the surrounding and indigenous population.

Its skies are during the greater part of the day covered by blue and dark rain causing nimbus clouds which when absent and on a sunny day enables the picturesque hemispherical shape of the mountain to be clearly seen from as far away as Ladoula in the Littleroad Province.

The mountain is very prone to winds which can blow to as fast as a hundred and fifty kilometers per hour. There are also many streams and rivers which criss-cross the mountain.

All these render conditions favourable for the survival and blossoming of varied types of reptiles, arthropods, pisces, mammals and birds like: crocodiles, alligators, snakes; centipedes, crabs, crayfishes; tilapias, carps; monkeys, chimpanzees; pigeons, turkeys and ducks in that order. Other inviting touristic sites in the division include: the greenish Botanic Garden, the lively Zoo, the beautiful Mese Beach all in Belim and the attractive Tiku wharf.

Despite its relatively better communication

network as compared to the other divisions of the South East Province, communication remains an acute problem in Kofa Division. The telephone system has almost completely broken down; the roads are cracked and full of large pot holes where the people are lucky to have one. The buildings are ageing and lack maintenance or repairs, a serious cankerworm which has eaten deep into the nooks and crannies of the government dependent society.

Kofa Division is endowed with some of the best schools in the country like: Saint Raphael's College Sessa-Gbea, Bishop Alfred College Gbea, Bilingual Grammar School Gbea, Sesaker Protestant College Belim, and a few higher institutions of learning prominent amongst them the University of Gbea.

Kofa Division has also contributed a great deal to the socio-political evolution of Makerun. It produced one of the very early nationalists and patriots who fought fiercely for the independence and reunification of Makerun notably: Dr E. M. "Big Head" and M. P. Miaboh.

In the domain of sports, the division is a veritable nursery, and supplies the various categories of the national team with talented players and athletes. However, its main obstacle in the domain of sports is that of sponsorship. Not only do the few companies shy away from this responsibility, but above all sporting infrastructures are visibly absent or are very insufficiently maintained when they do exist. These

make the teams from this division in particular but also from the province in general unable to sustain their stay in the national championships.

In fact, Kofa Division can without any doubt be described as Makerun in miniature and is going to remain incontestably a veritable springboard for the socio-economic and political development of Makerun in general if concerted efforts were to be undertaken on its behalf.

Revision Questions. Chapter One.

1 – Name the different foreign nationals found in Kofa Division and four secondary schools found in the same division.

2 – State four economic activities carried out in Kofa Division.

3 – What are the two most outstanding geographical features of the Division in question?

4 – Give the title of the head of the only Urban Community discussed in this chapter.

5 – Give the title of the administrative authority who heads a Division in Makerun and the name of the earliest nationalists who fought for her independence and reunification.

6 – Name two ills identified by the author in this chapter and propose plausible solutions to them.

7 – Give a concise description of the Epasamoto Mountain.

Chapter Two

The kingdom Of Mayamba

The kingdom of Mayamba is by far the strongest, the most popular and the richest kingdom that has existed in the Central African Sub Region at the dawn of the twenty first century. Wealth which has been accumulated from the exploitation of its fifteen different plantations with a minimum surface area of twenty hectares each; mining as well as slave trade activities practised for a period of over one hundred and twenty years by its fifteen past Kings amounts to five billion Makerun currency equivalent to thousands of kilograms of much cherished pure gold.

Each of the fifteen plantations is covered by evergreen woody rubber trees. Some of these perennial trees have become as tall as thirty meters in the case where they have not been regenerated. The trucks of such trees have become bumpy due to prolonged tapping by peasant workers and abrasion

by other environmental aggressions. The trees have multiple and extensive branches whose ensemble form a canopy shading the underneath from the scorching sun. The trees have long and highly penetrating tap roots which firmly hold the ground giving the rubber trees upright postures.

The underneath is filled with shrubs and grass and constitute another source of income to some kingdom dwellers as they are employed to renewably cut up these vegetation. The rubber trees are planted following perfect geometric norms with appropriate spacings between them. During the dry season, the trees shed some of their leaves and produce repeated crackling sounds when animals, humans and birds trample on them.

The whitish fluidal latex which oozes out of the stems like water flowing from a fountain when tapped is received in cubic aluminium two-liter cups which are collected two weeks later after they have hardened and formed an elastic ball. Each plantation has a monthly production capacity of ten thousand tones.

The architecture of the houses of the Mayamba kingdom is atypical. The roofs of these houses are v-shaped and consist in the majority of dried thatches carefully placed and tied to long round sticks. Only the main building of the palace belonging to the King has the privilege of being covered with corrugated zinc sheets.

The walls of almost all the houses are constructed

with red leg-beaten soil blocks. Another tiny coat of water mixed soil is used to plaster the walls giving it a very shining, attractive though fragile structure. The walls are supported by strong planks obtained from iroko trees found in the surrounding dense forest.

The floors for their part have neither an aspect of cement nor sand but well compacted soil. The doors and windows are undoubtedly made of wood and give the houses a precarious security.

An average family of the kingdom has a three apartments building. One serves as a parlour while the other two serve as bedrooms which contain both the couple and the plethora of children they have. An average family has as many as twelve children who squeeze themselves in the scarce space available.

The landscape of the Mayamba kingdom is also undoubtedly hilly indicating and reminding one of the very high mountain which overhangs the kingdom. The soil of the kingdom is in every aspect similar to that of the mountain but the vegetation contrary to that of the mountain is a blend between grassland and secondary forest which must have developed due to intense human activity. The latter harbours less ferocious animals which are regularly hunted by the villagers for meat.

The kingdom is criss-crossed by a few rivers and streams whose volumes are smaller than those of the mountain because they have naturally split up into many outlets. Of these many rivers and streams, that

which strikes the imagination is river Ngondo. This river though just three meters wide has a depth of as much as ten meters. It meanders through the kingdom and a single bridge hangs over it which permits the population of both sides of the divide to commute freely and easily. River Ngondo is extraordinarily rich in fish. Almost all species of flavourful tropical fishes like: tilapia, mbounga, mudfish as well as numerous crustaceans like: crabs, crayfishes and snails have the Ngondo as their natural habitat. These arthropods and pisces are regularly caught and killed by the villagers during fishing and hunting and constitute the principal source of protein for their staple dishes.

A variety of dishes can be found in the Mayamba Kingdom like: kwakoko, koki, ekwang, fufu and eru, plantains and beans, achu, corn fufu and vegetables, bousanatimba, fufu and bekang, mbongo chobi. However, the dish which is characteristic of its indigenes is bousanatimba. This dish is prepared using cocoyams, its fresh leaves, tomatoes, palm oil, dried fish, onion, groundnuts, salt, pepper, plantain leaves, a grater, a spatula, and seasoner. For its preparation, ten kilograms for example of cocoyams is skillfully peeled with a sharp knife then grated. To the resultant paste is added two table spoons full of salt and is well mixed by beating with the spatula. Lumps of the paste are wrapped up using the warmed plantain leaves. The lumps are placed in a pot over a good fire for forty five minutes.