

## **Jacob Egharevba's story of Eweka**

The Ogiso Dynasty ruled Benin in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Oba (the King) Owodo, the last Ogiso ruler banished his only son Ekaldherhan from Benin, after lies were told about him by Esagho his senior wife. Three years later the lies told about him were found to be untrue and messengers were sent to ask him to return home but he refused. He even dug pits to protect himself and many soldiers were killed when they fell into them. The people of Benin had hoped that he would become the next Oba but gave up this idea on hearing what had happened to the soldiers.

Owodo did not rule over his people very well and they eventually banished him. For the next few years they did not have an Oba but they asked Evian, one of the most important men in Benin to look after them. However, the people were not happy when Evian tried to make his eldest son the next ruler saying that only an Oba could do this. The people of Benin asked Odudua, the powerful Oba of a neighbouring city called Ife, to send one of his sons to be their ruler.

In about 1170 A.D. Odudua sent Prince Oranmiyan, his son, to rule over the people of Benin. Oranmiyan lived in a palace which was built for him in Benin, married a beautiful lady called Erinwinde and had a son called Eweka. However, Oranmiyan said that only someone born in Benin should rule it and made his son the Oba. This was to be called the Eweka dynasty.

## Challenging Egharevba's Story

After wandering in the forest Ekalderrhan came to Ife where he won the hearts of the people

His knowledge of how to rule, magical powers and kindly bearing led to him becoming the ruler of Ife.

Some years later his father asked him to return to Benin. He refused but sent his son Oranimiyan in his place.