Photographie

Honorè Feliciano DE SOUZA, CHACHA VIII in the memorial of Chacha I, Ouidah.

LO CALZO, NICOLA (1979-....) Bénin

Description

Honore Feliciano de Souza is the current head of the Aguda community and the direct heir of Don Francisco Felix de Souza, Chacha I (1754-1848), the foremost middle-men in the slave trade between the Kingdom of Dahomey and the Europeans, early XIXth century. To honor their ancestor, the family has a memorial in Singbomey, with the tomb of Chacha I. This memorial existed for many years, but became accessible to the public only in the 1990s. Paradoxically, slavery heritage official projects also helped to promote the memory of the slave merchant Francisco Felix de Souza. According to Honore Feliciano‘s unlikely opinion, “the Chacha was not involved in such a slave trade as this. At the time when the Kingdom of Dahomey was killing people, he preferred to take them to Brazil to make them work. He was in fact saving people and that is the reason why today there is some admiration for him,” he says. “Nowadays, no one would want to be a Chacha. Being Chacha is facing many hardships. I haven’t chosen to be one. On October 1995, everyone gathered here and I was appointed Chacha VIII, I cried that day. It’s a life-long mandate.” Ouidah, Benin.

Informations

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