

Bumps in the Night!!!!

November 2014 Issue

Paranormal "U"

What is Santeria?

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Santería is an ancient religion that combines West African Yorùbá religion and Catholicism. It is believed to have been started in Cuba and Brazil. Those who practice Santería are also known as Lukumi (friend). The Yorùbá people were captured and forced to the Caribbean as slaves. Christianity was also forced upon them as their current practices were not accepted by their owners. As they did not want to dismiss their religion, Santería began.

The Yorùbá had their own religion which was a mixture of several Afro-Asiatic religions. There are also some elements of Native American like traditions involved. Some of the Lukumi are considered to be healers and have a vast knowledge of certain herbs and often practice connecting with spirits. All are encouraged to explore mediumship and to be almost meditative when listening for a response from spirits .

The Orisha are the deities of Santería. Some have the characteristics of certain catholic saints, where others resemble deities from Yorùbá. These are some of the Orishas (Gods)

Elegua – (Holy Child of Atocha) – god of the dead or the underworld

Chango – (Santa Barbara) – The god of thunder, a lustful god

Yemaya – (La Virgen de Regala) – is a "Mother" goddess and protects women and children

Oshun – (Our Lady of Charity) – the goddess of love and beauty, fertility

Ogun - (St. Peter and St. Miguel) – a warrior of god and enemy of Chango

Oya – (Santa Virgen de la Candelaria and St. Theresa) – a goddess that has powers over spirits

Obatala – (Our Lady of Mercy) – a god who is said to be the father of man much like Adam

Oshosi – (St. Norbert) – a hunter god who lives in the wild

Orula – (St. Francis) – a god of great importance, one who knows the future of all people

Babalu – (San Lazurus) – shown as a crippled old man with 2 dogs and sores on his skin, helps the poor and crippled

<http://boricua.com/features/santeria-religion-what-is-santeria>

Some say that animal sacrifices are made to feed the Orisha. By making a sacrifice (usually a chicken), it is believed that you will receive forgiveness, good luck and purification from the Orisha. On the other hand, it is said that if you don't offer a sacrifice, it will anger the Orisha and they will make their displeasure known.

Deceased ancestors by both blood and initiation are known as Egun. Egun includes blood ancestors and the priest/priestess who initiated you. It also includes your godparents, their godparents and so on to the beginning of the Lukumi faith. The other spirits are known as Ará Orún (Citizens of Heaven). Included in Ará Orún would be those not related by blood, saints and deities.

One of the Santería practices is known as Espiritismo Cruzadio. The practice of Espiritismo Cruzadio is reciprocal in that you would pray for

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your Egun for their well-being, meeting needs and spiritual energy and in return, they would help you with guidance, empowerment, enlightenment and spiritual advancement. The overall goal is spiritual evolution for both yourself and the spirits you are trying to help.

The Traditional Lucumi Ancestral Shrine is also known as "el rincocito del muerto". This shrine is used to make offerings to your Egun. It is tradition that this shrine be placed on a lower level or ground level so it may connect with the earth. It is usually set up in a corner of a kitchen or a bathroom since the theory is that the pipes go down into the earth and will directly connect you to your Egun. Offerings at this shrine are items your Egun would enjoy. If they liked something when they were living, chances are they would like it as an offering. It is customary to offer 9 different drinks, any food they may have liked, tobacco smoke, flowers and a candle. This is when you would tap the staff of the dead (opá ikú) on the ground as you recite the Yuba (ancestral prayer). This will awaken your Egun, call them to the meal and honor them. The shrine can be tended to as much as once a week or as infrequently as once a month.

The Bóveda is the Altar of Espiritismo. This altar is used to assist in spiritual evolution. This altar is set up on the top of a dresser or table and is covered with a white sheet. There are usually 7-9 stemmed glasses of water that sit on top, with one being taller than the others. The taller glass would signify your spiritual consciousness and connection to your Spirit Guardian. Other items included on the altar would be a crucifix, statues, flowers, candles and images of saints. The prayers said at this altar are deeply catholic. The Hail Mary, the Lord's Prayer and Glory Be are the customary recited prayers. This is when you would talk to your Egan or others for guidance or assistance. Many have the ability to pick up on messages from these spirits and take this time to concentrate and interpret messages from these spirits. Before leaving, you must say the same 3 prayers you said previously and then knock 3 times on the altar. If you are going to make an offering at this altar, it is to be kept in a spiritual nature, such as fragrance, prayer, candles and flowers.

Santería is a religion that has been passed down through generations and has evolved through persecution and slavery. Its origins are said to date back to 1515 and have been in practice ever since.

Other Sources:

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