A Cultural History of Greater Agbor

By Segwabor Duwe

This, the first written history of the Ika people, is given in favourably dedicated to the blessed memory of Adurewiri the great, the first Monarch of Agbor, and to the glorious role of all Ika kings down the ages past.

Note. This typescript was entrusted to me by the author 30 years ago, after we edited it together. (The first 8pp. redundantly list the chapter headings and are omitted here.) We still wanted to clarify the pronunciation of names and other non-English words whose spelling in the ms. is ambiguous, but now I'm taking sole responsibility to post it to the internet as it is. I do so in respectful memory of the author—a wise, courageous and kindhearted man. Anyone interested to publish this work on paper should contact Iduuwë's descendants in Ogbe Nmụ Dein, Agbọ Ime Obi.

"Màà, Bà!"

Victor Manfredi, Boston University, 6 September 2012
PREFACE

This book of Ika history and culture is the first ever written and revised, completely revised from my earlier drafts. The desire for it has long been felt and it is almost overdue. I started researching and writing it from 1940; progress has been very slow indeed because I have visited every village in Ika and Agbor as my other work and many responsibilities permitted. Unhappily, many comrades of mine have died with that same desire unfulfilled, among them J.K. Nsietie, former tutor, St. Gregory College, Lagos, Charles E. Osaje, former government schoolmaster Agbor, and J.B. Ekoji, former Inspector of Police, Lagos. After such unfortunate losses, I decided to pursue fearlessly the writing of the history inasmuch as we could wait no longer for a historian or an anthropologist to do it. Furthermore, our older men and women who can tell us the stories of the dim past are passing away. The little I have endeavored to write may be a stepping-stone for our children and students toward further research on the culture and language of this famous place of ours. Like others, we live in the footprints of our fathers and have our place to find in Nigerian history. Agbor is rich in oral tradition and literature, so rule out stories told by idiots.

Many have asked me to tell the origin of Agbor or Ika. My answer is that Agbor is very ancient and as no tradition states where we came from such information can better be deduced by studying our culture, society and language, and comparing them with that of other places.

There has been wild speculation about Agbor origin; some say we are from Benin City while others believe that is historical blunder. Our ancestors had established an autonomous kingdom based on the Eze title, long before our contact with Idua Kingdom in the 18th century.
Indeed the exaggeration of Benin importance by European writers and the pompous writing of Benin historians has deceptively played down the history of our people. We have the right to tell our story, which I have been researching for over thirty years.

The first thing to recognise is that Agbor is the eternal citadel of Ika heroes who have been the native inhabitants of this part of the coast for many centuries.

Hitherto, I am indebted to my fellow citizens who have encouraged me in the production of this history. I apologise to the readers for any errors, omissions and mistaken conclusions that may be found in its pages. It has been a tedious work. Indeed, some traditional stories are coloured by other considerations and unless re-arranged and analysed will be considered by modern historians as grotesque tales. Likewise some narratives that are fantastic and funny, such as Amaha people made ladder to worship the sky god, the flight of Uwami of Oki and Aholo of Alismien. I shall welcome fair criticisms in order not to discourage future research. The uninformed, mostly the agnostic element in our midst, should stop supposing and distorting Agbor origin, the noble deeds of our forefathers and the rights of our citizens.

No one can tell the origin whence our primitive ancestors came. That being so, we can still determine the origin of Agbor from her social structure, language and custom. Here tradition tells us that Ogele or Oge was the patriarch of our ancestors; whence that ancestor came from we do not know for certain. Even the Benin, who claim him as their own, confess to the mystery of his exact association with them. Better to know the man from his deeds among us, as I have recounted. We believe that early Agbors have some cultural affinity with the East Niger - Igbo peoples, and that the Aho people as neighbours of Agbor might had derived some of their culture from ancient Ozara which also influenced our culture. Cultural influence is a two way business: we imitated them and they imitated us. But borrowing aside, Agbor race has been conscious of the social, political and economic autonomy of its domestic institutions: weaving, spinning, carving, smithing, farming, national costume, etiquettes, religion, medicine, healing, moonlight play, marriage, death, burial, law and inheritance, shield, axe, cutlass, sword and gunpowder, which above all, we cherish the institution of our kingship - the Eze or Obi. This is our distinctive and stabilising focus in the welter of historical adaptations.

I have written this short history and culture of the Ika not as a specialist or highly educated somebody but as someone who must put down the result of our thirty years of research work. I am grateful to the elders, such as the late Ebo Ebi Ogbodo Obi and Ogun Eka Oki, to my aunt Onycisi who may have lived through the reign of six Eze Agbor, my venerable Father Osanisi the Eze Bible, and Igbalokwe Obi.

I am deeply grateful to M.A. Onwucogwu, an Anthropologist introduced to me by Oba Ikenechukwu when he came to study Agbor palace organisation in October, 1970. He advised me to publish my manuscript, which by that time was complete in first draft. V.B. Manfredi, an associate of Onwucogwu's at University of Benin and a linguist at Harvard University, came to study Agbor intonation in 1976. That young friend of mine overawed the synthesis of my first and second drafts. The two scholars have committed themselves to seeing this history in print, and with the awakening interest of my neighbours I have large hopes for Ika social studies on its foundation.

Chief A.E. Idowe
Eze of Agbor
Agbor-Obi 1979
SECTION 2

AGBOR ORIGIN, FOUNDATION AND DYNASTIES

(a) The earliest history of the Ika race (prehistory):

Agbor represents the earliest wave of forest dwellers in this part of the Coast of West Africa many centuries ago from Semi-Bantu Stock. By Agbor is meant a race a metropolis or a seed on which a family grows; biologically a swamp.

Geographically, Agbor sits between the rivers Oráchoko and Ohiomor (Osemo), half way between great Benin (Ida) on the West and the River Niger to the East. It lies in the centre of villages amply dotted in the Orchard forest of the Ika country intersected by rivulets — Iyi-Odun, Iyi-Expen, and Egneuhlwe. It is also a road junction of great importance for communication and commerce in the Bendel State of Nigeria, connecting Ishan, Sapole and Asaba. Because of the rich soil and wholesome climate, the earliest settlers were attracted to become farmers and husbandmen in the palm belt forest blossoming with a variety of plant life.

Agbor state with its centre at Ihiede is surrounded by Isure and Azuh-Agbor.

1. Imedobi, where the king (Obin, Ezee) resides and contains the family groups Ogbe Nsaw Dein, Ogbe Isogban, Oritu, Idumu Agyemise, Ihaikpen, Ogbe Iseore, Ogbe Iwase, Obolihe, Ihogboe and Ohamere.

2. Isure, the outskirts of Imedobi, consisting of Ayeboma, Oki, Ozara, Allilimien, Ewuru, Alinni, Alinhagu, Alickpu, Alinwun, Omumu, Alimosor, Idumu Oza, Alisor, Idumani, Alifeke, Emuwu, Exuku, Alidina.

(iii) Azuh Agbor, the backwoods, comprising the villages Owa, Oliji, Uteorokpo, Otokpo, Isoko (or Ekohighai), Ota, Akumaz, Usongbe, Anwun (Abaro), Igbakwado.

Uhe, Urucile, Obor, Idumahas, Epun, Ibodo, Wbiri, Umaw-Ezu, Agbulu Akan.

Thus, metropolitan Agbor, is the citadel and fountainhead of the Ika State.

The Obi or Eze is the symbol of Unity, the most powerful figure in the State area. He is the Obicze or palace in hierarchy of nobles in the cabinet, Adichen Agbor. The Dein, Eze Agbor ruled through his governors posted to all the villages of his kingdom, over 50,000 inhabitants in approximately 110 square miles, about one half in numbers and in size of the Ika state as a whole.

(b) The traditional Monarchy: Agbor cherishes the Ezeehip institution and designate the king as Eze or Dein. The Office of Dein Eze Agbor is hereditary from father to son. No female ruler is allowed on Agbor throne. Every Eze Agbor is an Oben-Esau-Dein born. Every Agbor citizen is obliged to support the Eze and regard him as a brother or friend of all. Any recklessness is treated with impunity, for he is the supreme head of our state who rules through a hierarchy of noble elders and titleholders. These men in council uphold the native law and custom with justice and equity, the custodians of Agbor culture, lives and properties; they also enact laws and have the right to execute them justly under democratic principles. All offences are treated in the native law, Ezeehip, Idumu, or Obicze. Every village owns land and the Eze is the overlords trustee of land held in common.

(c) Language: Agbor speaks the Ika dialect akin to other languages, but the special vehicle of the Agbor language represents the Ika culture and image. It is distinct and dissimilar from Edo language.
and Vice Versa, even though some say that Aabor was once under the Oba’s rule. This was so when Benu was the first to acquire firearms from the Portuguese, and with which they terrorised the neighbouring states. But this state of affairs lasted for only a short time: Aabor liberated themselves before the 18th Century. “Omu agu Ibo; Igbo n’wa n’ika”. From this saying Aabor appears to be the cradle of the Ika dialect and the citadel of Ibo heroes.

(d) 1st Dynasty: Ogel c. C.700 B.C.: Ogel c was the patriarch of the earliest native inhabitants of Aabor land. From whence the ancestors came no one knows but exponent historians said they were war mongers from the East to West when Sudan invaded Ilf C and Gy’ and afterwards returned to settle in this place known as Aabor. His Sanctuary in the lonely valley was marked with an agbon tree, now in a sacred grove called Ibu-abon in Aabor Native. The priest is Oriorwor whose salutation is Oriorwor Okun Eze. Thus very newly installed Eze Aabor worships there for blessing of his office. Ogel c in his significance may be called the sun god of our race; the ancient people used these words in his praise:

Nman Ogel c Okesunu, Agbaekara
Anwu osu Oba.
Owiti Okwunwe,
Ugi aeni-ora.

“Our father Ogel c is the benefactor and sunshine over mankind, as he scatters (literally spoils) and he gathers, the flood-tide and ebb-tide that gives succour to the strangers on the coast.” The relics of the walls of the ancestors are still extant. In Ika Ogel c is the title of the oldest nobleman in any village; no stranger however rich or powerful could be eligible to it.

Tradition is silent as to Ogel c’s native place. For whom had an adventurous life as a hunter and was carried away by sea waves, drifted ashore and wandered about for several days until he found a suitable spot to settle down, between two rivers, afterwards known as Aabor. It may be his name that the early travellers or foreigners used in naming the Nleri rian seaport on the coast as the origin of the two contastations of Calabar.

Ika was Ogel c’s wife, the first lady of our land to whom we owe the dialect we speak as the mother tongue. Her four children were named Okon, Oko, Ator and Akwo. Traditionally immortalised as the names of the four market days in the native four day week. By the token of Ogel c and Ika as sea princes and princesses, those Aabor born seamen perish by drowning in the waters of Okunise (sea or Ocean) Ogul (river Uyo) and Ohimbor (Besaimor river), and hence are called children of the sea god Aabor N’wa Okun. Thus, one Okpuwu, carrying a load of ropes over the log bridge, slipped into the waters of Ohimbor. After seven days in the river he emerged to tell his story that he reached the town beneath, where the mistress appeared and enquired why she came. After explaining her cause the mistress said: “I have made covenant with your father Ogel c. I cannot keep you but if you wished to die you should go to river Ohimbor or other for no Aabor born shall perish here.” He then found himself on top of the water and was rescued.

(e) 2nd Dynasty: Nce: The beginning of kinship (Monarchy):

By Obicoze Aabor is meant the palace of the pontiff, regarded as the shrine of the Ika nation. This union of all obices grew gradually from a patriarchal lineage to the monarchical heritage. It has hence.
Obi denotes the heart or the first dwelling place of a race
or the personality. Nze the head man, chief or king.

It is important to detail how Agbor has evolved a royal
house, the pride of the Ibe race. We are informed that
Agbor had no king, but were under the rule of priest of the
ancestors. This condition of the people so displeased the
holy father Ogelle that he told his men that he would choose
somebody as Onuatu to control their affairs for good. He
arranged a shooting contest with bow and arrow for the boys
between seven and fourteen years of age. He promised that
anyone who shot the object will be the prince of the land.
Ogelle and elders fixed the date of shooting.

Nze was one of the early men of Agbor. He was a warrior
and a spiritualist of great character. He led social affairs
to the East and West whence Agbor was oriented. He introduced
the ipam cult and the iwe seal society also the agbaloko chant
during the famous Osireze celebration. Nze lived at Okp
near Agbor as the Curaor i.e. Onorbon or priest in charge
of Agbor antiquities some of which cannot be the shrines in Okp.
In the past the Iwe members used to shave one side of their
head and they alone ate tiger meat while other Agbors forbade
it. It was a wonderful cult.

Nze had a son named Igidi surnamed Agbor whose mother
died soon after his birth. The baby was nursed by his
father's sister Ori, who had no child of her own but was
lovingly kind to children, and so bore the nickname Onu
Odede or one amsunolu i.e. mother of (all) children. Igidi
was about the age of ten when Ogelle the patriarch proclaimed
his shooting contest and promised the winner one half of his
estate. Because of this great promise the mothers of the
boys made anxious preperations;

some decorated their bow with beads and medicine, but Agbor
and his tek mother did nothing, in fact Ori was old and poor
unlike the other mothers. Nze never ceased to set bow and
arrow for his motherless son.

One day the context all the boys gathered and
shooting commenced one after the other. Then a yawa-ridden
girl (Nkanke Ori) whispered to her old father that Igidi, a
son of Nze was present, so Igidi was sent for. When the
messenger got to Ori's house she was startled to hear that
Igidi was wanted in the stadium with his bow and arrow. Odede
looked up and down and tears rolled down her cheeks. She took
the bow she was using to spin cotton Ono-Oruru and drew a
broom stick, mkplele-cighe, as an arrow. She gave them to Igidi,
whom the messenger conducted to the stadium. When the spectators
saw him, they burst into laughter not for sake of his body but
for the ugly composition of the bow and arrow he held.

Igidi took his stand boldly and discharged his arrow of
broom and it staggered and stuck to the target, a tiny bright
object like the star Mars, called Lolo. There was a loud
applause from the crowd who rushed forward and carried
Igidi shoulder high to the noble elders as the victor. Ogelle
received him and blessed him and made him the master of one
half of the realm, uttering the following words: "Iyuu waw
excl: kweiwel)lyu ni maw nnci. You are the prince, and with
these brethren no conquest. No enemy shall defy thee. He
gewe to him chalk and a curved scimitar with which to lord
the estate. The emblem Onu (matchet) was later
called ede (or ida) 'state sword', a name of Yoruba origin.
Igidi then left the elders to report to his mother with the
following song, still popular in our ballad:

"Nene, Nene, agbarim Lolo, agbarim Lolo
Nene, Nene, agbarim Lolo, agbarim Lolo
Ona ejije agbarini Lolo,
Ona ekwag agbarini Lolo, agbarim Lolo".
"Mother, mother, I shot the star-bright target,
Father, father, I shot the star-bright target,
while the ojije beaded bow, the akan beaded bow,
all missed, I shot the Igolo.

When Orie heard the voice of Igidi she was grieved
with anger thinking someone had flayed the boy. She gazed
sternly at the doorway and beheld a large crowd behind the
fortunate young archer jubilating. The boy embraced his
mother and she rejoiced to see her son come back with the
gift of victory.

Now the mothers of the other competitors in jealousy
began to plan to kill the prince. Nze the father foresees
the danger and decided to remove his son to a safe place. He
took leave of the elders and fled with Igidi after much un-
rest to this spot he named Asbor, namely the eternal city
or immortal soil on which the seed of the family shall grow.
Asbor means a swamp, and also a race or lineage. Nze and Igidi
lived, and owing to his power in medicine and science the
little place attracted great popularity. Igidi was as brave
and sagacious as his father. He fought against all odds
gineered by his brethren and won. The place was popularly
called Ahi-Igidi the land of bravery even till this day but
because of its social institutions and romantic life it
became known as Asbor our family city. From that time Asbor
Imeobi became a place of pilgrimage and a royal court.

After some years of achievements Nze died. His burial
ground is known as the Okor-akan or Ibu Nze, the old home
of Asbor or Nze's tomb. Nze's was the most pompous funeral
ceremony ever before accorded to a hero. He became the
father of all rulers in Ika land. His Okor became the royal
pantheon, the well known Okor Nze. Asbornta and Oki refused to
allow the body of the hero to be buried in Imeobi but to
carry it to either ominije or Oki. As that could not be done
CHAPTER 5:

(1) 3rd Dynasty: Dein C 1270: Dein was named Eshoma before he left home for adventure, to become a soldier in a foreign army probably in Nige or Yoruba war. He returned home when he was declining in age. He was made Oluqutu or emperor to lead his people to war or to any emergency, as Ochille had established. The title became known as Dein a title of a warrior under whom he served abroad named Benne.AP to Dein a French officer from Timbuctou C1230. This was at least one possible source of the name.

Dein seized the rule of priest and determined to rule as a Monarch by uniting the various families to his court for appeal. In order to make his idea effective he manipulated a law called Ugbun, the penalty of which if disobeyed was capital punishment after the day's sunset. Ugbun law is a taboo to stop anybody from doing anything further either forward or backward, fighting, quarrelling, or trespassing by order of anyone in Dein's name. The exercise of this law made many people run away from the town and Dein's name was dreaded like a scourch of fire. This name became a legend in Agbor history that every Agbor ruler is Dein and his wife (mwunyem Dein) his children (mwun Dein) his councilors and servants (idibo Dein). As it were all that relate to the royal house bear Dein's name. Another form of punitive measure not exclusively royal, is ostracism.

(Ugbun Imuk).

As a matter of importance Dein's rule was sedentary despotic and most remarkable in Agbor life but short because he was already old. Immediately he died the people returned to theocratic anarchy and every village began to manage its own affairs. But after about two or three decades a woman by name Ufu came to Agbor and emerged a public figure. She was beautiful and intelligent an advocate of Monarchism like Dein of the blessed memory. They said she was a princess of the Yoruba or Nupe dynasty whose father's kingdom was destroyed by war around 1260.

Ufu was married to a handsome young man by name Igbudu (an expert harpoon singer and wrestler), popularly nicknamed "Kokoro" (the king of the young men). He was strong like a giant. Their marriage was blissful with sons and daughters. One of them named Owayaw was born with Iwe-njata (a tongue like a fish tail). Indeed the child was an extraordinary mortal. At the age of seven he was sent abroad to be trained in the arts of medicine and magic. During his long absence from home his mother transformed Agbor society, having prepared the ronaini and other paraphernalia for the glory and splendour of the throne. Ufu was ambitious and intelligent, astute female politician. She resolved to wear the crown and made with a stone beads to be the first queen on Agbor throne, but on the eve of her installation and coronation she saw her conception flow. Also, she was forbidden to enter holy places and touch holy things of Agbor sacred institutions.

Upon this disappointment her husband Igbudu became the autocratic head of the new reformation but other heads of families rose in rebellion against him. Fighting ensued between them and Dein's children. It was observed that Oleken, the high priest of the ancestors was the brain behind the rebellion because he opposed the idea of a single and absolute ruler. Oleken was ugly, he had crooked leg with sore and a wizard who had been suspected of killing children and promising young men, was accused without defence, he was maimed. Ufu tried to quell the rioters by aide from neighbouring towns and villages but her effort proved abortive. Igbudu abdicated and was forced to take refuge. With a few of his orcas he travelled to Benin at Ihean country at Udo. According to tradition Igbudu was elected as the regent when the king of Udo died. But after the Benin had raided Udo he came back to Agbor after eight years of voluntary exile.
The children of Dein were still alive when they were driven away. Many were slaughtered, tortured and driven away for the new order their father had established. Hence we find Dein's descendants abroad outside Agbor where they are as princes and kings. Igoda died and was buried honourably outside the hero's cemetery Olor-Aken or Iyamze about 1300.

When Ozuwu returned from training abroad fully matured, his brothers made him Eze Agbor and the important properties of Dein were transferred to him. The oldest among them named Akan of Dein's children was elected as their priest of the people. They established another temple Agboh and abandoned that of Okeken but made Okeken's son never to touch and worship the new Ogo-Agotha and gave him a nickname Okworni as his title. Till this day Okworni is forbidden to enter the Oboke (palace) and Eze Agbor is also forbidden to enter the Okworni's quarters in Iduanlogbo. Thus when Okworni happened to enter the palace building, a sacrifice must be made to wipe away the sin of his footprint.

SECTION 3
(ZIKY PARLIONS)

(a) Ozuwu the Great. First Eze period about AD 1440.

After many years of republican rule Ozuwu was made Nko-Agotha by his paternal brothers. He ruled with the crown on his head and sword nda in his hand as the first monarch to realise the reality of his mother Usa's dream, and the intent of his great grandfather Dein, in whose name he was greeted as a token title to stand for all Agbor kings (Dein had died many years before), signifying oke eze, great king.

Ozuwu the Great was powerful. He extended the boundaries of his influence without rival in the area which stretches to the river Niger on the east, Olokun Sapela river on the South and the Idu Kingdom (Great Benin) on the West and North. The peoples so bounded he made his tributaries. He posted his servants, some of them his blood relatives, to the conquered zones as priests to new temples to which he contributed his quota in annual sacrifice, and sent his father's sons as village governors. These officers from the centre who secured the buffer states are the predecessors of the present Ika kings. All paid homage, and any refector was doomed, so Agbor had to engage in many wars. Captives and fugitives worked for the Omu Dein. The descendants of Nko and Dein from ages past stayed thereby secure from want and molestation.

Ozuwu was wise. He is responsible for most of the Agbor legal code. The people had no Eze before Ozuwu in the real sense of the word; they resembled the Igbo to their last in republicanism. He introduced the bronze and brass smithing arts and other village industries such as weaving and carving. Before his death, he proclaimed an edict, that
When Agbars need rain fall they should call on him seven times with a sacrifice of one she-goat (Odogba enu). The stool Owuwa used for state affairs is the symbolic Uko-Uwuwa in the Obiase, the sword of state is the symbolic Esie-Afia with its mysticism amid other antiquities in the palace sanctuary or museum.

(b) Second Ese Period About AD 1474 - Akina: Akina succeeded his brother Owuwa on the throne. Oleken the priest of Dein's descendant opposed the idea of a single ruler of tyrant, but the other members of the family liked Akina, supported him, and determined to overthrow Oleken's descendant from rule and worship. Besides Oleken was ugly, with crooked legs and fickle mind. They elected Akina's brother, Akin being the oldest man and most eloquent and witty, their priest, and called him Iregwai, the tongue or spokesman in the senate (Akume), and the Oracle of the royal house. Thus the origin of the present Ali-Ogbe in Ogbe Nsam-Dein priesthood.

But when the tension became high Oleken escaped through his back door. A year after his descendant the old okpoopoo bag containing Ofor staff of the ancestors was removed and condemned. Three years after Oleken returned home from Akina as he said. He was not allowed to worship in the new Aliogbe shrine purported for the king and his relation. Later on Oleken was charged for incestuous misconduct and as a present danger to Dein's family; and without defence he was mobbed and buried in his backyard. His Ofor staff was buried in the sopt known as Ihyuk, by Olor-Akan kings' cemetery. His son after long time was given a nickname "Orkworhi" instead of Oleken title and he is only to worship in his shrine known and called Ali Idemugbo. Orkworhi may attend Ogwa Nsam-Dein but not touch or throw cola-nut on the Ofor Ali-Ogbe; thus he is relegated to the background. The king is forbidden to enter Orkworhi's quarter or accept any offer of contribution. When Orkworhi enters the palace building immediate sacrifice is made to rectify the sin of his footstep.

Akina was a good ruler; there was prosperity; he kept the tradition of love your neighbour and encouraged great deeds. He was not long on the throne being quite old to ascend it but the great character of his maturity made his rule epochal. He kept the dignity of Agbor tradition strictly according to Owuwa's method. During his reign the law was established that stranger and bondmen who have lived seven years become free political citizens, but never to be family head of Ogelle or Iregwai, in any village; in case he is senior in age, he is to be in third position in the grade order of seniority. If a slave man marries a slave woman, the offspring is called Nwaghon or Ibedo (slave child). On the other hand the hand the offspring from a mixed marriage is a free citizen of Agbor in that the Agbor blood redeems the child from slavery.

He lived well and without major conflicts. The main quarter of Nwaghon Dein street bears his name, Ogbe Akina. His junior brother Ugbo's name is borne by another quarter, Idemugbo where the priest of the ancestor was slain. Akina's son Nta had so many wives and children that he founded the quarter Ogbe Nta in Ogbe-Nsam-Dein village.

Third Ese period About AD 1522 - Agho: Agho the third son of Owuwa became Ese Agbor after Akina whose senior son was a drunkard and somehow weak. The second issue was a female. Agho was chosen by the Elders to ascend the throne, the rule of primogeniture was not strictly followed and later abolished. The people were able to reject an unfit candidate just as they had disposed off the decadent rule of Oleken, the priest.

Agho never hoped to be king. He was a keen farmer and hunter. Among the wild beasts he killed was tiger, thus by bravery fulfilling the oral and condition that something worthy needs be done for him. He was the owner of the present farms read he constructed for Ogbe Nsam-Dein in his early days of youth. He planted an Egbon tree before reaching Ebogba of his
memory when he was called to the throne, thus Ihyun Amor Agbo shrine. Every farmer after harvesting rice 3 years to serve at
the shrine of his name. Till this day.

Agbo’s mother, Akome from Owere in Ozurue, was notably beautiful; Agbo himself was handsome, courageous and upright. Every liked his company.

On the celebration of the first Osheze festival he was stoned with a poisonous egg but the royal physicians quickly puckered it up and no harm was done. The people of Igwari-
Ugbo were suspected of this act because they disliked a tyrant or single ruler. At last Aygbor Security Council decided to change the policy of Ihesan gangs and the youth of any village called upon were to perform the duty of
the festival and during emergency. They not to carry dangerous weapon during the festival, but only to arm themselves with shield and cudgel. No Obi or his wife’s enters Igwari Ugbo quarter till this day.

Agbo was an admirable ruler for his generosity and there was prosperity in his reign, inhuman acts were ruthlessly treated. Servants were freed after 13 years with gift for his good services. Thus the egigis of Igbo- Isiakor village of Igbanke. He was sadly mourned by all friends or foes. Agbo’s family still survives as a unit in Obi-Nnuw-Dein Ise Obi Aygbor.

Fourth Era Period - About AD 1569-Ahisama: Asisama was installed as Aygbor, but a man of fashion and fond of women He bartered a harlot named Igwe who came to Aygbor from Benin where she had two sons before she eloped to Aygbor. But it was against against Aygbor custom for a king to bring a whore to his harem. As this was outrageous, his many wives were ordered by Iregwai and the elders to quit the harem for the harlot. The townmen also forsook the palace.

By that time Igwe had conceived by the Obi and delivered a male, named Omeso, (it is good).

After a time both the couple began to feel their lonely predicament. Asisama was obliged to go and consult an oracle in a far away divination priest. There the orid predicted a sacrifice with a strange woman a cow and 200 empty tied knots and fagots without fire. Asisama cleverly caught a cow and prepared the empty knots when he came back home. But how and where to get a woman not Aygbor born became a puzzle, because all the slaves had deserted. Eventually, Asisama made sacrifice with a cow and the knots any how as half done. Igwe then called on the king “my dearest husband please make me the victim of the sacrifice for I am the strange woman being foretold but kindly save my son from destruction as your law would disallow the illegitimate child to live”.

The husband objected to make her a victim. Igwe therefore jumped into the pit already dug for the cow and started to cover herself up. As her spark of life was fading, Asisama had to utter the words of prayer over the dying woman so that peace may return to his domain. The woman died. No sooner this awful event happened than woman coming from market saw the great sacrifice done with a woman and a cow side by side. They felt surprised and went home saying that such could not have been done by the king alone and that the townmen had deceived each other in coming to the Obi secretly. The spreading news made some men go and see what really happened. They met the Obi with the motherless child in sorrowful manner. They greeted him, he answered and told them to take their seats. Meanwhile, many came one after the other and the palace was thronged with towns men and women. So the effect of the sacrifice was manifested. The rebellious elders and Idibo-Dein and Obi’s wives began to return and resume their proper royalty and obedience and service.
Ahisama later narrated his experience to the people and all admired the faithfulness of his lover Igwe. Thus she became a heroine, and her memory a festival known as Igwe day. Thus the origin of Igwe yearly festival in Agbor kingdom. It is conjectured that the activity spread to Benin kingdom through the sons of Igwe best before coming to Agbor.

Omasio, Igwe's son by the Eze Agbor, was not killed but sent away to Oru country and without hesitation recognised as ruler of the people of Abih. Note that the word Agbor is erroneously called Abih. Even in Newspaper announcement Eze Abih is sometimes quoted as Eze Agbor. The story that the Eze Abih hailed from Iduu (Benin) is newly concocted; Agbor tradition carries a great similarity of culture between Iduu and Abih language as a matter of historical fact. It seems to me the people of the Igbo hegemony liked to claim Iduu more than Idu or Abih origin due to prestige of early Benin history written by the European pioneers.

In consideration Igwe's day is commemorated as an important anniversary in Agbor kingdom and which spread to Benin kingdom. The song of the ceremony on this day is Ewere-Ewere Nkobodo - each person holds a fagot, shrub called Ibiekere and the young men pray, knocking coconut branches on the ground along streets and around compounds: May God remove confusion, trouble from the town and give us rest and plenty (Ise).

For details of Igwe's festival see Chapter 9, page 3.

Ahisama lived happily until he slept with his fathers. Hene is remembered by

*e* Fifth Eze period - Ofuehdo About AD 1622: Ofuehdo the second brother of Ahisama was chosen as Eze Agbor. The first son, named Ibeagu, was a simpleton and ugly, unsuitable to the throne. Indeed, Ofuehdo was much beloved for his eloquence and upright character at about the age of 40, besides he was a renowned wrestler and a social figure, such that no meeting of his age grade was complete without him. He made the son of his father's slave his royal page and afterwards ordered him to accompany the Executioners as one of the junior Ibeagu with the title Oguden, carrying the property of persons condemned, hanged or beheaded to the Obi's court.

Ofuehdo waged war against the people of Kwale and detailed warriors at Isiopa, Ijosa and Ahsana, and to the forest now Aniocha division when there was rumour of war between the Kires people and Abih people. The Kires migrants from the East Niger (Savage fugitives) killed the son of Abih King and killed the younger warriors in return march sent a fleet of canoes. The fugitives were rendered to submission. In order to check the advances of the savage element Agbor warriors established the guard posts known as towns and villages of Ogwashi, Oburuw, Ise, Ezi, Okpalam, Abokpa long before the incursion of renegades from Igara domain into the jungle (Agboko Ohim).

After some years of valiant skirmishes came the exodus of Prince Kina or Eze Chime from Agbor due to a dynastic quarrel. Prince Chima is the aegis of Onicha-Ugo, Onicha-Olona, Onicha-Oku, Onicha-Mirin. They still possess Idu ideas, custom and culture, despite that they intermingled with the immigrants along the coast of the Niger River driven from the East by the Aro-chuku vandalism.
After all this, the kingsmakers thought it expedient to reward Ewuzal with the most senior executive title member in the Inner Chamber of the royal palace and include him as one of the kingsmaker and divider in the Council of Ndichen Agbor as a token of his father's goodwill. Owoee confers Idibo Dein title on the Obi's approved candidates. He acts as first to the wedding of the new Obi installation as the Obi must not be a beachelor.

It come to pass that when Owoee Obuesh died, Chief Kordi the Osewe of Agbor played tricks to usurp Owoee's title but failed. His son J.B. Obuesh, became the Owoee in 1936.

One of Owoee's sons, Esele, was sent as governor to Isele-Uku when Owoee died he was buried in his compound instead of the Kings' cemetery. The descendants of Owoee is family in Obue Nkwa-dein.

Seventh period About AD 1660 - Ogwade Ogwade was made Eze Agbor by his senior brother Owoee who after his installation became diseased; through his physical deformity in his nose he decided to abdicate.

Ogwade was a crafty old man of about 60 years and was the sixth son of his father Ofuehdo. He received a great reward for his kindness to the sick king. He encouraged good and great deeds. Ogwade brought Isogben a doctor from Ozara who knew much about healing snake bite and Edibe, (poisonous element of war). He allotted him a place near his paternal brother Ogbenmudein. For his name the place is known as Ogbe-Isogben where the Obi sent another man of his choice as their leader. He is the palace physician with the title of Ajueh.
Ogwade converted the use of Ogodor manu (palm oil well) from killing criminals to the use of the royal household. But later on, Ogodor manu was disused when European merchants came to the coastal stations at Abob, Isenugu and Koko in the reign of Obi Ogbonwa in the middle of the eighteenth century when demand for palm produce made it so great a commodity for export trade. There was prosperity in Ogwade's reign. He was mourned by all his friends and foes when he died and was buried in the king's burial ground.

(h) Eighth period about AD 1598 - Adigwe: Adigwe succeeded Ogwade his father as the Eze Agbor. Before the installation Kime the son of Ogwade's senior daughter hoped to become heir to the throne as the succession was not rigidly hereditary from father to senior son. Contemptuous of Adigwe's mother in the farm when she went and plucked Ujuju leaves and ate for soup. She was caught and beaten mercilessly, and died next day. Kime was charged as the sender of his servant Aba to flag the old mother, but Adigwe set Kime free and punished Aba by hanging.

Kime later plotted against Adigwe; consequently, the people of Aliesium revolted under the pretense that their daughter's son Kime was cheated and that Adigwe should abdicate. They attacked the Obioze (palace) and the senate house and took the Ofor Allogbe Nmu-Nau Dein away. Ogbe-Nau-Dein, became infuriated, raided Aliesium. Kime was hotly pursued; Akumazi people stopped them while Kime had fled to a hiding place at Obior. At last the Ofor was recovered from him but refused to return to Agbor under any threat not long he became ill and died. That is after he fled and surjourmed to many areas around the west and East of the River Niger.

Kime's children formed the group called Nmu-Eze-Chima in the eastern section of Agbor Kingdom.

In Agbor kime's exodus is remarkable during the Osib-azi festival. In the palace founded by his children, Agbor ideology is not lost. It is a historical jargon that Chima (Kime) came from Benin. One can compare other corresponding names, e.g. Eki (echi), ki-obi to disprove the claim. Kime or Chima does not occur in Mbo Oral tradition.

When Kime died, Ogabe-Nau-Dein refused to accord his burial for his abominable act of carrying the Ofor across the stream. Ubier the Izomor Eze Agbor went and recalled the Aliesium deserters; from that time Adigwe made him the lender of Aliesium including Ozerra Aliso and Osumu, all known as Ihu Izomor. Furthermore various quarters in Isu-Obi were given chance to settle in the place known as Aligemisi with a view to lessen constant insurrection of Aliesium in the kingdom. The Obi sent a chief there with the title of Ekoenike to control them after Nmordu's reign.

Ede, youngest son of Adigwe and grandson of Ogwade, founded Nmuw-Ede with his three sons.

Adigwe was a noble and kind ruler. He caused forty Iduu men to be buried alive, the revenge party enroute to Oburu the site of Adesue's murder by the Eze Oburu. Crossin unescorted, thus in violation of Iku national law, they were interrogated and executed (Ekwere, Chapter 53). Adigwe's death was mourned by all Agbor, Oru and Ozor-Ijebu. Heads were shaved and markets held otherwise. His name remains a family house in Ogbe-Nau-Dein.

(1) The Ninth period (About AD. 1740 - Isuordu (The ancestors Lead) Nwadinma Nmordu (Mordi) left home when he was young to study the arts of medicine and warfare. During his absence his father died, and his younger brother Umu became regent. But later on Nmordu returned
Nwadiri or Mordu the ninth period about 1740 AD. Nwadiri Mordu became Eze Aghor about 1740 AD after a dynastic dispute with his half brother Udu about succession to the throne, the elders of the ruling family contended that Udu could not be the heir to the throne why because he was born before his father Adigho ascended the throne and his mother too never slept in orizie Oghoho's house with his father before the obiship installation and coronation which proceeded Igueakun cult in the heres by the Ipeam society according to ancient custom and only a son thereof should be heir apparent. The Ipeam members are the composition of Iwirice cult of the Orbonbon family from Ihu Iyase, Ihu Osomo, Imeobi and Idueme Ugbal in Owa-Aliro.

However Mordu mother's name was Ukpere a daughter of an Iwe herbalist from Irobor Village. She was shrewd and enterprising stood firmly behind her son canvassing against Udu (her son's opponent). She exposed Udu as half blind and ugly looking in conformity with deformity of a success to Aghor throne.

Hitherto, Nwadiri Mordu was said to have left home on adventure to Benin City where he had many friends of princes and prominent personalities strictly speaking most people at home did not know the background of Mordu's contention until the dispute arose between the claimants which consequently led to a pitched battle.

Udu though was beloved by the circle of palace officials who had committed themselves to his favour as the heir apparent. Chief Emejo was charged of corruption and was hanged publicly.

Chief Aghor hierarchy of noble elders tried to intervene into the dispute but to no avail; Udu notwithstanding vehemently plotted assassination of Mordu. Ijolikpo the Chief Emujo was charged of corruption and hanged publicly, in view of which the wise men of the ruling house concluded arrangement to send the contestants to Benin tribunal where firearms, steel weapons and human sacrifice were abundantly practicable as evidence by Europeans visitors and Benin was most fearful state in this part of the country.

Mordu has the advantage of his old acquaintances and then Udu appeared in the tribunal they were startled the Oba nicknamed him in derision "Ekpeneke" I.e. bushman in Edo language. Nevertheless Prince Mordu-after he returned with his supporters triumphantly and Udu was detained with some of his supporters to avoid further conflict at Aghor.

Thus from the episode we find Ihogbe Ihaike and Ogbe akina or OgbeEke and other words Ogbe and Idamu Aghor names of quarters and streets in the city of Benin.

Mordu introduced Edo system of government with such titles Usama, Igabogho and Ijolikpo. But the old system of the Ika organisation gerontocracy remained unaltered that is orkwa-ukpo, Orkwa-Oba ebuo, orkwa obe-ecor (institution)
Ibenije was an upright man but died after a short reign of seven months.

He was buried in the king's burial ground, Olor-Akan. Survived by four male and two female issue, he was quite old before he reigned. He was not mourned so much for his short period and unpleasantness. His son Oddin was also becoming old.

(1) The twelfth period - AD 1660 - Oddin succeeded his father Ibenije at the age of sixty. He had spent most of his time in hunting and farming awaiting his opportunity, jeered at by some incredulous citizens. Because of the former good turn of Obon to Eze Onu his daughter named Onyejwinsi was given to Odnin in marriage and she begot a son named Ibenije (I rely on Oba), a son reflecting the result of Oba's tribunal to his grandfather Haomdu.

Odnin was a tall slender man, eloquent and skilled. He liked fighting and wished his son to be war-like too, in order to exercise greater influence in the kingdom. Brave and valiant Oddin was; he attacked Agbudu Akan, whose Aka by name Iroh harboured a murderer named Ushon and for refusing to answer the king's call for a judgment of the murderer whose wife was arrested by creditors and was overthrown in her house with a gun shot and resecured his wife and ran to Iroh's house.

When Agbor besieged Agbudu and razed their houses, their streets littered with blood of the dead and wounded. Because of the ruthlessness and ferocity of Agbor warriors the people of Agbudu Akan never forgot the pangs of their defeat; wished British by request in 1925 to separate them from Agbor district administration for reason of past maladministration etc clause 4 Agbor Military Campaigns page.
After sometimes Owa Orien habalists were found passing to Benin City to make war Medicine for the Oba and his chiefs. They were arrested and charged for conspiracy by Agbor Council to avoid war, Eze Owa being for mutual settlement by sending cow, goat, and other things to Agbor for the misconduct of his people.

Oddin wanted Ihu Inese to subscribed boys and girls in their turn for royal service. When they refused, he went there to ascertain their grievance but as Agborite he was attacked. He fought back in defence and killed two men with a gun shot.

After sometime peace was restored. Itemozun was also destroyed by his order because the inhabitants became a menace to travellers and traders in the area between Emuah and Okiti.

His brave name was Eriowu Akpa Ebuw 'The bee that stings in public.' Oddin had few children and who survived him. He died and was buried honourably in the Olor-Akan or Ihu Nze. Market (afia Ogologo) held and hair shaved for mourning according to custom.

(a) Thirteenth Period. About AP 390 1890 - Obenoba: Obenoba ascended on the throne at forty in 1890. He was tall and fair. His reign was eventful and turbulent. He but adhered to the elders' counsel in accordance with tradition, his achievements could have won admiration in our history. He was brave, handsome about five feet in height with a giant like strength, fierce visage, so much reputed in war, though aggressive to a foe and quack to reward a friend. He was the last vestige of Agbor monarchy in the Ika world highly respected without rivalry being a man of great character.

His half brother Kluma claimed to be the first born and successor of their father on the throne.

Kluma's mother was afraid to die if and when Kluma should be crowned for custom forbids the queen mother to remain alive while the son is on the throne; she split Kluma's front tooth unknown to her husband the king so as to disqualify him. Thus Obenoba became heir to the throne. Kluma was ordered to take courage or stay with his mother at Alismien in order to avoid bitterness and quarrel.

Obenoba was trained in the hands of strongmen in different places but mostly at Nkwa-Kede, Chief Osien's warden.

He popularly made a name in the national dance as Obu-ozor (Oye - first place) while his friend Irabor gained a second title Uroko Oye. When Obenoba was recalled back home his friend Irabor accompanied him, and was made a regular consultant, but without a royal title with his apppellative name Uroko a mere title (of his gymnastic dances).

His main faults were the die-hard young man he selected as his bodyguard known as the royal servants (Ibiagwai) some of whom he equipped with weapons muskets (ndaka) with which unjustifiable cruelties were committed in his name, consequently leaving poor opinion and memory of a reign of terror. One can only instance the atrocities committed within a decade of his reign. He massacred Owa Orien envoy to his court because some of them were oracle priest stirs thus appearing conspirational.

In 1894-5, he besieged and conquered Isbnaka for the murder of his Chief Ozomor. The conflict started when as an Isbnaka envoy had sought the release of a girl the Dein had seized for his wife from among tribute bearers to his court. This barbarous action contravenes the maxim Oszi-akpu-Okor 'messenger is not to be killed.' This ordeal made his people very angry and anxious for revenge.

It was then that Isbnaka took advantage of an Ozomor entourage passing to a neighboring Village.

In 1896-7, came Obenoba's onslaught of Agborite, sparked by their delay in sending boys as palace servante, as was the customary arrangement of tribute. In the same year Ikéki the wife of Ojei of Ogbak-Nkwa-Dein, Akino family was mobbed because she profited by selling a leg of a stag (orwu-akaba) for a cowries instead of 20 against the order of the senate (Owa ndlichii Agbor). Her three daughters were betrothed to the lords Ovia, Akgara and Otiaka in nwhunye marriage.
Subsequently came the fight between Ogbemotor and Ogbem-\nNawo-Dein because women of the latter who went to fetch firewood \nfrom Nawo-ekel's village farm were assaulted and their wood seized. \nIn the fight Ikbor Ijenu was wounded with a crossbow arrow \nbut died after four days for which the Obi prevailed on Ogbem-\nNawo-Dein to call out the students for trial as a murderer. Nukiko \nrefused on the ground that the victim did not die instantly or \non that very day he was shot; they became desperate and revolted \nagainst the stern order and injustice, drove Nawo-ekel away from \ntheir home. They ran away burning resentment from Ogbem-Nawo-Dein \nland including the Obi's palace ground to live with their \nextraneous relative Ogbem-Isore. The insurrection lasted for more \ntwo years. The Obi having lost the divine service of his brethren \nwent away on voluntary exile to Akuzazi his mother's home town \nbut the people of Nawo-Ede appealed to him and gave him a royal \nshelter until they and Ogbem-Nawo-Dein negotiated for peace. All \npeople heads and important personalities took part in the \nnegotiation before Ogbem-Nawo-Dein called the student by name Nsorka \nEgwege to commit suicide for sake of peace and order. Afterwards \nthe Obi returned to his palace.

Prince Kwege of Benin was seen at Osara village as fugitive. \nHe was apprehended and taken to the Obi of Abbor who after careful \nprobe ordered the Prince to go back to Benin without further \n molestation. After sometime the same Prince was seen passing by \nOgbem-Nawo-Dein men while in meeting in their senate house Ughere. \nThey halted the prince and his followers as offenders without \nescort for unlawful entry. The intruders were beaten up and taken \nto the Palace. The Prince after narrating his story about his \nfather Overami's exile by the British the Obi shared sympathy and \nupbraided his men for their action and instructed one of his chiefs \nAbor of Ogbem Isore to house the Prince until armed youngmen \nescort him back to Iduu. But on reaching Benin the party was \ndetained. When Ebi Chiefs distorted the incident, the colonial \nofficer then despatched police constables to Abbor—thus the

leaders were arrested and some were imprisoned.

Unexpectedly traders and missionaries came one by one, \neuropean goods spread and some men and women were converted to \nChristianity. This made a brilliant patrol took place to Abbor. \nAbbor kingdom was brought under the British rule and became the \nadministrative station for the Ika, Akait, Kwalu and Ijaw peoples. \nA school was opened for boys and girls and other government \noffices in the frontage of the palace ground in 1901. In 1906, \nthe first Abbor District Commissioner Rev. O. C. Cross had been \nmurdered at Osuala. That caused a great set back in the progressive \nadministration of Abbor district. Later, on however, churches \nwere built. Telegraph, Police Hospital, prisons 1903-1907.

Johnsone fell ill and died in 1909. Men and women including \nall the village rulers in the kingdom shaved their heads, the \nmarkets held on streets (ala ogosoro) for mourning according to \nanctural custom. He was survived by many children and grandchildren. \n
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\nNineteenth Period About 1914 - Abboru: Abboru reigned as the \nAbbor in 1914-29. He was educated in Abbor government school. He \ncould not preserve the custom handed down to him due to British \nterference. Many of the villages traditionally under his control \nbroke away some to Osuala Benin, to Ijebu, to Abbor, to Akait divisions \nfor this and that, Abbor's sphere of authority became pale; each \npeople claimed independence of its clan head. The British \nparticipated actively in the divide and rule in Abbor.

Abbor District was amalgamated into Osuala Division in 1918 \nwhen Ihehuku, Orta, Obiwe, Ojide and Ushai broke away. Ekpen \nMessiah and Obbor and Aboru to Osuala-Uku Divisions \nrespectively; Abbor no longer enjoy its former authority from \nthose times.
Disorder arose between villages about boundaries. In 1926 Owanma claimed a portion of farmland belonging to Agbor Aliorkpa; and Agbor Ihaikpen situated in Bogi-Bogi's area. Otto and Ogbemudiein had boundary disputes in 1936. The first world war and epidemic (influenza) raged in 1918-1918. Fire destroyed Agbor district office records in the same year. Chief Ovia murdered his wife Egbor and committed suicide in 1919. Poll Tax was introduced in 1921.

Agboru was on the throne for 15 years and was survived by 20 wives and 15 children. He was buried in Royal Cemetery Olor Akun.

(c) The Fifteenth period Obika; Obika was born 16th March 1916, his rather died when he was under age to reign, and was trained in Chief Gwun's place. His uncle John Ekaeze was appointed regent (Onu-Obi). The period of interregnum lasted 6 years.

Obika was educated in Agbor Government School. The people of Agbor wanted him to attend the King's College Lagos, but his mother named Nwanagbor raised claim that the regent determined to usurp her son's right. She cried aloud and the aim for Obika's further education was abandoned and so he was installed Eze Agbor promptly. And after he was sent to study the system of native administration at Benin City. Thereafter he was sent to know many important towns in Nigeria namely Lagos, Abeokuta, Ijebu, Ibadan, Ille-Ife, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Port-Harcourt, Calabar and Crossh. He was recognised as the Benin Eze Agbor by the government in July 7th 1935.

Obika began to reign as the dein Eze Agbor the head of the Agbor District Council and the native court until a change in the administrative policy in which all the villages under him were made independent clans with equal status; in 1952.

This sophisticated and divisive arrangement was designed to forestall his native authority in Ika.

His Highness Obika no longer enjoyed the confidence of the former village heads who styled themselves 'Obi' instead of Ayuwu (Chief). Obika stoutly refused to listen to the unfair policy and would not attend council in which his subordinates would meet him as his equals.

In the late forties political parties sprang up. He remained neutral for sometimes, while his subjects supported the two parties NCHC and A.I. The majority became NCHC partisan. They wanted him neutral rulers to support them but this honourable ruler hesitated to support any political party, as he is the father of all. They then victimised him with the false slogan that he caused the Western Nigerian Government whose party was A.I. to increase taxation. They marched to his palace, caused damages to his car and property and attacked one of his chief Akpasa, Ogudu and others and drove them into the woods. The leaders of the party were arrested and jailed in 1954. Obika's character undaunted despite all his worries, He was obliged to become A.I. partisan.

In the election of 1959 he showed himself as an able leader and won for the A.I. 5 seats out of the 14 seats in his clan and majority in Ika local council of 42 seats in which A.I. won 22 against N.C.H.C. 20. The Obi was therefore congratulated and the Western Government made him a Minister of State without portfolio and Edward Anaka a junior minister in the ministry of Economic Development and planning. But because of the crisis of 1962 in which the government of Western Nigerian was seriously involved the Obi crossed carpet to N.C.H.C. during the campaign for the creation of Ika-Ika, the Obi won for his new party great support for the Midwest Region. The government of the new Region made him to continue as Minister of State.

Obika was intelligent and Obedient. When the people of Ota encroached upon a part of Agbor Ogbo-Akwa Odein land, he stirred the sleeping lion to wake; the two sides engaged in bloody
December, 1968. Prince James Ikenchukwu was educated in Abobo Government School and later Lagos City College. He worked in the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation and was a keen athlete (football, table-tennis and lawn tennis). The Prince was recalled home when his father was in a critical condition of death. He arrived and was initiated into Okwu-Ukpo Nduichon grade with the Uzama title of chieftaincy, before his father's last breath; it had not been performed for him. Rather it was Prince Usieele who had done the first stage of ceremonies as the heir apparent.

The installation and coronation of Ikenchukwu was marked with the greatest enthusiasm ever witnessed in Abobo, despite the cloud of the civil war which had begun in 1960. On this day Abobo sons and daughters at home felt happy and proud with their new king. In the assembly are distinguished personalities and representative of governments both at home and foreign, chiefs, natural rulers, members of the armed forces, the press, teachers, traders, farmers and individuals from all walks of life shared with these the joys of the day. His Highness Ikenchukwu appeared to be an ideal ruler. He proved himself a patriot during repressive incidents in the civil war. Ikenchukwu could be called a saviour of his people and the strangers within his gate. He has introduced radical changes with promises to rebuild Abobo to a modern citadel or Ika tribe in the state. He has constructed new roads and streets in the ancient town for the improvement of communication and commerce thus making a beautiful township.

It is hoped that he reigns long with love and peace over us with abiding fear of God to avoid nepotism, oppression, chicanery, selfishness or cruelty noted with most rulers.

At last after the third year he became a despotic oppressive and Abobo was without a voice. He died on 29th April 1979 survived by 4 daughters and two sons of 2 and 1 year old. He was not given usual burial ceremony but his son was untimely crowned privately by his palace chiefs without the knowledge of his royal family Obemudein people and Alijemisi.
When one is working the greeting is obele or 'darnown.' When a woman gives birth to a child the greeting is 'Omu-agboh - Joyous delivery'.

A housewife is forbidden to strike her husband or use indecent word or abusive language under any circumstances. The husband must be kind and gentle to her, as she is a weaker vessel. Both must be dutiful, clean and smart. They must be hospitable and kind to children and animals. Under any circumstances, a wife is a subject of her husband and both are under the rule of law. It is also an offence for a wife to shake hands with another man openly or secretly except a relative. For every marriage dowry is paid to acknowledge the economic link between the families and the blessing of the parent or guardian is always a necessity. Any Agbor woman is a wife, harlotry is a crime and a disgrace.

It is incumbent upon a mother or wife to prepare any eatable food for the husband and children in the morning, afternoon and evening or at any other time of the day as the case may be. A good mother or wife is honoured in the way and manner her meals are prepared and served clean and quick. Agbor principal foods are yam, cassava, garri, coco-yam, plantain, maize, okra, ogidi, ewa, ihehe, akara, ukpa, okro, akasi etc. Soup materials are okoro (alete) ujuju (leave) afuwa, Utesi esem agusi or iroro, nnu, ogiri, ofigbon, akara, agolor, izee, azum, ircle, amau and so on.

Before the coming of the Europeans the plates were made of wood and calabash; these kept meat and tidy each time food is served. The server must be neat. Soup on the right hand side and food plate on the left side of the person taking the food of any kind, with water for drinking and for washing hand. After eating the wife greets the husband with Uwéh-omn or his title word (see 4(a) above).
(b) MARRIAGE FORMS:

Agbor has two forms of marriage, 'Nwunye' and 'Idegbe' or 'Igbaha.' In principle the two have legal sanction. It is not simple to differentiate between them in practice where love and harmony rule the couple.

'Igbaha' marriage is more common in that it is flexible. The girl is not fettered by the tie of marriage as she is in the case of Nwunye; in other words, 'Igbaha' was considered as concubinage before the reform of marriage law in 1920. The idea behind it is to allow freedom of conscience and to enable lower class to have partner and discourage immoral practices. Be it so, some parents do not like to part with their daughters in the way and manner Nwunye marriage is contracted. It is sufficient that man is kind to his wife and dutiful to the wife's parent, his Ogor. One essential difference noticeable is that the wife's property under 'Igbaha' or 'Idegbe' marriage is not the right of the husband alone. In the olden days the children were shared between the wife and husband, but if there happened to be one child he or she belonged to the wife. She would send the child to her parents and the child must serve the real father without hinderance. Or the child could choose to do so. In any case we say Nwa selema medie, arina nne, 'A child disregarding his father cannot prosper.'

Nwunye marriage is more or less a form of coercion or slavery. Hence a general saying that "Nwa we kwa di, we re aro" that means that the daughter given out as Nwunye marriage is virtually sold. Thus most parents do not like it. An exception is where the village authorities wish to embark upon it as a means of retaining the purity of the kindred group. They would order parents to give their daughters to the men of the village as Nwunye 'wife.'

Such wives are called nwa Adan. They are considered daughters of the nwa marriage. For the same purpose elders sometime make sacrifices with goat to invoke to approve marriage within the kindred group, but the rule between girls and boys must exceed three generations (i.e. is too close). The wife under Nwunye - marriage is always bona fide property of the husband who paid the bride price or after the contract when she dies her body is buried in the compound of her husband while the body of a wife under Nwunye-marriage is always 'Igbaha' - marriage is taken back to her parents for interment (here we again differ from the Igbos, where the parents always reclaim her).

The daughter of Nwunye wife is 'Nwang-Adan' in the home of her father. She is eligible to act as a priestess for purification ceremonies. When one ate a forbidden thing and before sacrifice is offered to the ancestor cult or festivals of these, i.e. and Iwagi.

In some places outside Agbor 'Nwang-Adan' is the first born female of a man. Nwunye in Ika can become 'Igbaha' Idegbe' if circumstances arise by consent of the husband relative to slaughter a a goat (Idegbe) for sacrifice in nullification ceremony to the ancestor cult (Ofor) this sacrifice is called Igbaruswu.

It is forbidden to marry one's sister or wife's sister or Nwunye wife without sacrifice. In ogbe-mawuin a widow can never be married abomination; in olden time, penalty was death or pulling off the roof of his house and destroy his ben in the farm; otu-ikoro rendered him useless that is to say he was punished at home and farm. In Agbor, marriage with non-native is allowed whether a slave or free; a slave child is called Nwan-igbon or ihibo, and a slave or stranger does not enjoy social equality in his age grade.
Since the introduction of the native court system the old ord. has changed. In both marriages dowry is paid and divorce is permissible. The bride price was N20.00 but it has gone up to N80.00 after the demobilization of the soldiers at the end of the last war.

Methods of courtship differ as between the two forms of marriage in the case of 'ma' marriage the boy applies and when accepted he would be told to bring a 'load' containing kolanuts, palmwine, meat and yams. The father or the guardian of the girl performs the ceremony, if the articles of the 'load' were accepted, before giving their acceptance the parents would undertake a thorough enquirey into the history of the intending husband family. If there is dreaded disease and bad reputation such as leprosy, lunacy, stealing, laziness etc. marriage with such a family was considered undesirable. In the nwunyen form of marriage such considerations are not considered as barrier provided the suitor can pay the bride price demanded.

The law was rigid, but both forms of marriage have been reformed in more recent years.

(c) BURIAL AND INHERITANCE:

Every dead person is buried according to customary rite. The burial rites are okoor and okpukpu,

(i) The okoor burial is for chibers, wealthy men and women and it is done with a wooden coffin or a decorated box or Irokpo (ogin) in the former days. The significant rite is Ibu-Ozun fon.

(ii) The Okpukpu Abichien is for the Obi, old men and women and youths who have a child or have entered into the age grade known as ije-inien and it is done with the back of ojo tree now a coffin.

(iii) Infants are buried without any ceremonial rites. The corpse is wrapped and carried to the burial ground called 'Ikwkpue'.

Before the dead of (i) and (ii) is interred a special person is called to examine the dead body if there is internal trouble that caused his or her death (i.e. coroner). He cuts it open in order to remove the belly and have the belly or so washed and sewn in order to get rid of such trouble as would prevent good re-incarnation. Ozun-akor and ozun-okpukpu have two ceremonial rites. One is performed immediately after death occurs, called Isereuna, and the other men izu. In the former days richmen were sometimes kept to dry for more days and months before burial, known as ituw-mbidi.

The property of a deceased is shared by the children. These are clothing, money, gun, matchet, yam, rubber trees, cocoa tree, kola trees, house chairs, box, land and so on. Every child of the deceased has the right to own his or her father's or mother's property but the senior son is privileged to sit upon some of the property before sharing according to the decision of the father's or mother's closest relative, authoritatively the presiding elder. The senior likewise inherits the care of the rest of the b children.

All children of different mothers stand separately as a unit to share the property of the deceased. For example, if a man has five wives and each has children the first child stands to bear the expenses or burial on behalf of his or her junior ones. But the most senior brother of them all takes charge of the father's home. If female is the only one she assumes responsibility but if no child, the Oor is held by her lineal brother or uncle who buried the deceased.

If the father had given anything to any of his children with knowledge of other children by relative, such gifts are legal but if no one witnessed anybody who confirmed the gift takes oath; if not other children will refuse to approve the gift.
In case of dispute the matter is taken to the family of the deceased or Otw onyi is idum or to Obi-Eze. The child who wore the eagle feather is the head to inherit the father's or mother's property and responsible to pay debt thereof with his or her blood relation.

(d) ETHNIC MARKINGS (OR TATTOO)

The facial marking of an Aigor citizen is distinct but resembles Bini and Ibadan designs. Aigor uses uche - knife to cut lines about 3" by 1" on each cheek and one on the forehead. Those of Edo differ being longer and wider; a Bini man has several lines on the forehead only, while a Bini woman has marks on both cheeks and forehead as do both men and women of Ibadan and Aigor.

Facial marks were also designed for slaves in the early days. But after sometime a freeborn of Aigor was difficult to know or discover when kidnapped or killed at war, while a slave with marks was easily traced by the master. By this tragedy Aigor freeborn began to have marks except the prince (Nwan-dein) for any Eze Aigor must not be deformed. In case of deformity by illness after accession he was bound to abdicate peacefully. When an Aigor girl is matured she is given marks on the belly. If not marked before joining her husband she was subjected to penalty by the osigba - marker guild, and if not by her husband. She is considered derided, and her child will not be circumcised until she pays the penalty. Nowadays tribal marks are no longer of useful purpose. But every Aigor citizen is bound by the law of circumcision after 8 days of birth.

(e) RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY AND MYTHOLOGY:

Aigor myths support the things we believe and worship. We believe that there exist god and other deities who are human beings beyond our sight in the unseen world. The deities exist by our words of prayer.

Umez, Ikwe or Ezeki, Nno-chi, Osisi, Nkwu, and other antiquities such as Okwu-ekwu, the inu ajusika, the eze nde, the cry or action of an invisible bird at the approach of danger, war or plague. We consider them as messengers of God who make all things. Whoever violates nature's laws and forbidden things shall be punished by these deities. One is God Almighty called Poseidon or Poseidon, the giver of man's soul and destiny. We offer sacrifices to Him in spirit through deities in our devotions. We fear Poseidon for our soul and government for our body. Ojumu, osisi-nde, King of the dead, is firm and merciless; he is as Satan the devil in the Christian dogma.

There is a saying: "Ihe na mgbasa a". This is the concept of retributive justice "eye for eye and tooth for tooth." In order to repent when and if done we consult the oracle of a priest predicts well and the messenger of God accepts, our offence are forgiven, if not one suffers or dies. The ancient say that a man dies 14 times and is born 14 times in each of the planets of transmutation. We believe that they go and come towards becoming eternal as the stars, as rivers spirits or as animals and trees according to individual merit. The use of efor ofo a wooden staff which represent - the soul of departed parents is a means of enforcing obedience and respect for our elders. With the efor nze, the king of Aigor holds a warrant of supremacy over all in his domain. Thus any ruler we did not get efor nze from the Aigor cannot be recognised as eze-ali but an impostor in the Ikpe dynasty.

Another aspect of Aigor religion is the Temple of oso known as a-ba-eze at Umar. It has been a sacred shrine for Aigor pilgrims yearly for more than ten centuries since the aigor tree was planted as a symbol.
Besides the olokun Shrine no other shrine in Ile-Obi is proper of worship. We believe and worship olokun Shrine because ogalle our earliest patriarch was the obereen (Priest) probably before he left Aboyor to unknown. Ode Aboyor represents the olokun priest which made him the supreme head of Aboyor Ile family. The flight of Liloma of Aliscimien and Uwamih of Oki with their body and soul into heaven respectively are like my theology. We are informed that Owuwwu the first king never tasted death but turned into a stone which is to be found in the Obi's palace-museum (UKpo Owuwwu).

Ominibon threw one of the charms at the Obi and changed him to stone. Ominibon sat upon the stone as the throne. Soon one of the Obi's wives came in and was surprised to find a strange man on the throne. Ominibon ordered her arrest and behind him, proclaiming that a man on the throne is the king; why is she surprised? Seven days later, Ominibon died. He was buried outside the kings' cemetery in a seculore known as Ihu ajamuke Shrine in a sacred grove by orisori-akan where the stone remains a mystic relic. His followers left behind at Use could not trace his whereabouts, so they found a shelter and called the spot shiam 'one's angel knows' which is today a shrine village near Ilesha. Ominibon has joined the royal pantheon of Aboyor.

(1) CALENDAR AND MARKETS:

In Aboyor four days are celebrated as the week days. On these days all the citizens observe certain customary rites. Markets are held on the names of each of the days namely: eken, oric, afor and akwor. The myth about the names of the days was that Odelc brought some people from various parts of the world to live with him but later they became antagonistic to his children and for that the first wall was built around the city of Ominigc now Abober. The four children after glorious wars were consumed by fire from heaven according to divine providence. The people of Aboyor opened two markets. Ilobuda opened after market and Owuwwu opened Aken market.

Hence we in Aboyor use those two markets as Afia Ilobuda and Afia Owuwwu.

The two markets lasted many hundreds of years. They were centres of all articles of trade. During the slave trade days dealers from Benin City Warri and Abob came to exchange slaves and goods from interior, also many were conducted from the neighbourhood. The two markets closed down at the dawn of the European interference. How we have Afia Ojamba as Akwor, Osara Ojamba as Aken. Ealke as Oric, Ojamba as Akwor Amu Edc, Oric-Alcro, Oric Aku and Akwor-Udami; our afor market is Iduwu-Oka Aliscimien.

Before the capitalistic impact of the British, trade by barter, silent and open trade existed in Ile towns and villages; such articles were arranged for sale on streets, frontage of houses and market squares. Princes were set in cowries with seeds and iron rod to indicate to buyers the sum or to be paid even though the seller was away until he or she returned afterward. The iron rod was a nwamono (god of iron) to guard the articles against dishonest practices. The fear of god was extreme in the minds of our primitive brothers and sisters.

Trade by barter system was the exchange of one article for another as there was no money in circulation but with the growth of western civilization the old practice of exposing articles for sale without the presence of anybody was abandoned why because not only the iron-rod would either be thrown away but also be sold to metal smiths (Okpu-ozuma). Open markets were held only by broad day that is before sunset. Night market was a wrong practice inorder to allow market women to prepare food for their husbands and households. In the day of slave trade markets were the forum of warfare and villagers were always alert on market session day.

Since the introduction of metal coins, the cowry system dwindled into obscurity, though it retains symbolic value in tribute.
what was in circulation was sterling, but no naira and kobo. Both systems are current in daily reckonings, though sterling holds conceptual primacy with our elders.

(c) WAAL RITUAL CEREMONIES:

(i) Oshin-ezi: Oshin-ezi (Friends outside) is the anniversary in which the departed souls of the Eze Abo and the ancestors or all Abo are commemorated. It is a period of national thanksgiving and prayer. The palace (Obiere) is the forum for owom dance, ijesu dance and a solo dance. The Igman keeps watch over the town by night and leaves by day over the palace. Generally nine days after oshin-ego, the Igman had offered sacrifices known as Iru mushroom, obi-2-obo, the Eze Abo, his councillors (Idiobodo) and Echi Abo. AIB will proclaim that oshin-ezi will be on the first new moon day between August and September.

The great oshin-ezi starts thus: Obei-Obi of Idumu Abo will clear their road and all obei-Obi clear the Obi of the road. Ibo-kpor Obei. He will then enter the Chief Priest and his men bring the medicine leaves for the dein to wash followed by a sacrifice for which a he-goat and a she-goat are slaughtered. On akwu Igbo on which orinze ojebu blesses the dein's head and orinze eribo blesses the head male and female and ukpochumma heads in turn with these things 4 kola-nuts, I cocoon and chalk in oku-goih. A cow and a she-goat are used for dein's blessing. The cow is onched on death without using knife. Orinze hodor cuts off the dead cow's neck with a knife and raises his two hands to the dein in words of prayer. Then the Idibo-dein start off the Usoro sona and dance. In the evening Alihu men of obasi start the note or singing asaba-ala and drum for the occasion known as ogotu asaba which means calling on the asaba ara to come down.

(ii) ON EKBN 18 - IPAI KPO OPII: All Obi-Obi in obei-Obi-dein gather to purify the palace. Orinze Ishure sets down the Obi once before the dein which all present kneel down in prayer. In this occasion two of dein's wives are nude. At mid-night orinze ojebu performs the ogotu - mor that is inviting the dead ancestors.

(iii) OGE 18 - IBA ABAI: All women start to cook akasi (coconut). Igegeli goes to the Ihu Lannya shrine to sacrifice and Abi to Ugbo Ihejioke and to the ancestors. In the mid-night the dein with the Idibo-Dein proceeds to Olor-Akin with Owowor dance.

Iro. Eyi first cooked akasi, sacrifices it before Obi sacrifices go. They first proceed to the Uru shrine of the first queen mother with marshed cooked Akasi (coconut) for sacrifice. Secondly to the shrine of Iyubudo the father of Owowo the first king with sacrifices. They in mood return to Uru Shrine and there a he-goat is sacrificed. They go back to Iyubudo shrine and sacrificed a she-goat by Osheure the priest.

They then turn to Iyuku where the okpuku containing Olor Okeke was buried here. The Orinze Ojia as the priest of the royal rods is despatched to invite Okeke family of Idumu-Uobo to offer sacrifice on the spot. They come reluctantly with a feeling that Ojia continues to obey and go then to come. They come wearing war dresses shakishly to waste the waiting time for the sacrifice and as they come near and they begin the body of the slaughtered goat with Ipeki (shield) the meet is shared in fury and nobody to see them sharing it. When they finished with the sacrifice they stage the oworodo dance while Owowor family headed by Orinze Owowor lit the traditional palm oil lamp called wuke-origbon and they exit from the spot.

After all these the doctor Ojeke-Awudui sets down the fire oracles before the Dein to foretell events of the occasion while Orinze Eshure here a de-goat and spots the dein's leg with its blood mixed with nzu (chalk). Osheure carries the dead away. The dein with the retinue retires to the palace with Iecri dance. Then the dein enters the sanctuary chamber known as Iben Nzuwu in Obi Abo while Owowor dance marks the joyous day. The Dein returns to a chamber known as Ibeigie where the orinze ojia and his fellows perform their duty for the occasion. The dein, arrayed in traditional attire with pomp and majesty, dances at least once or twice a day in uhe asaba behind the traditional opia (carved images of past Obis). During this occasion the Iro. Eyi and fellow elders of Obei-Obi-Dein pay homage to the Dein who gratefully entertains them with kola and drinks.

(iv) ON APOR 18 IRU-JAIPOR: The heads of each family begin to offer sacrifice with marshed Akasi to their ancestors. The Iro. Eyi is always the first to do it to Otor Alionu shrine before the Dein to the past Obis. In this instance very wife offers her husband money and meat (Ozwu Lebaden).
The young men of every village participate in the sacrifices they do the iku-obi on the compounds and streets with prayer to God to remit their sins and grant peace while ibiwe (two) use half burnt wood to beat the ground around palace and streets thereof. Shout is eke-eke aroye nyake.

IYAA-ID: This feast of new yam harvest is observed on afor. Grinze ise slaughtered a bo-goat and a hen for sacrifice to Ibaarok, the god of the farm while after iyemede-Ibi’s wife offer each a hen to iton ogbe shrine – every idibo-dein begins to eat new yam which break the “fasting” period of three months. Called ioko-nu. feast continues for four days.

EMUSE: The Emuse festival is a remembrance season spirit boy ridden with yawa appeared in Agbor. He is called ode (god) who instituted a ritual and established his altar at ozara in which we worship him in spirit. The dein accompanied by his wife and people to make sacrifice with a bullock, kolanute, year after year to the shrine while another his page put on king’s dress also accompanied by men and women with a she-goat for sacrifice to ode’s shrine. It is a most important festival in Ozara; the observance lasts for seven days. Thus Ozara is the holy place of pilgrimage in Agbor religion. The priest known as oherrone arranges to sprinkle the holy water from the small pot into seven calabash vessels to be carried to all houses in Agbor for the remission of their sins committed.

(Irvin Prince)

(h) LIFE - CYCLE OF EKE AJOR: The birth of the new-born is normally announced by afor cannon shot and sound of trumpet of a (elephant horn) accompanied with ritual sacrifice and ceremonies by the Idibo-Dein and the Ndichen Agbor. At this, the baby laying on the ground is lifted presented him with a boy and a girl as a token of Non-peace. The new-born is bathed in a cross-shaped container initiates into the society of the royal blood. ADUN RIKE. ADUN RIKE. ADUN RIKE. ADUN RIKE. ADUN RIKE. ADUN RIKE.

In which case in order not to be the first in front, he is given the eagle feather on his head. In case two boys born the same day the one whose report come first to his father receives the blessing of a prince while the other becomes a duke. In the event of death of the first born, the second son is formally recognised on condition he is not deformed, and is free from facial marks except circumcision which must start at the age of 6 days by every male in the family, traditionally if the baby’s health permits.

The festival is an anniversary of the heroine Iwa in memorial. She died by saving the people of Agbor from social disorder (see Section 3(a). The day of its observance is fixed by the Ndichen Agbor in December new moon, starting on akoko. Idibo-isi rite. Dein provides a she-goat while alikwu, alikuwa and alina provide a cow all for sacrifice to the gods. The Oba performs the rite known as "iteg edeco" on akoko day in the Ahanta palace chamber.

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wild beast according to her destiny in the harem. Then Orioror and Okpeniké informed the empress by orioror on the throne while Ikoro ogbe-mauw-dein calls the senior son to pin eagle feather to his father's head. After Ikoro all-jiliemel join Ikoro ogbe-mauw-dein to perform the burial service. His corpse must not exceed hours on the state. He is laid on Ikoro (ogwu) coffin and the orishan among the idibo-dein do the burial while ikeolu gaiters guard the conveying the body from public sight to his sepulchre in olor-anm alway at midnight. Two live she-goats are laid beneath the head and a live he-goat beneath the logs instead of human beings in the former days. The wives are confirmed for three months and markets held on the streets instead of the usual sheds; such marketing is known as afina agolo.

Second phase of the funeral ceremonies, on the next day of his demise, the funeral is started by ogbe-mauw-dein, all-jiliemel, all-jiliemel and idumo-oru of agbonoma. It lasts seven days with pomp and pageantry. All Obi in the kingdom come to pay him the last respect by shooting of gun and every Agbor citizen throws the head except pregnant women and women whose. Any person will be fined for such indecent or improper act. Is a penalty of 20 cowries or 4 gallons of palm wine and 20 kolanuts.

PALACE CODE OF CONDUCT:

The obese is kept sacred and regarded as shrine of Agbor state. The most important thing to observe is purity, discipline and confidence; that anyone who is admitted into the inner-chamber must
first take oath of allegiance.

1. Any applicant whose father has been a member of the inner-chamber pays small entrance fee - and a cock.

2. Any applicant whose father had never entered and is not of a royal family (mwa-dein? orineo eche) conducts him to the obi through the recommendation of his village peer or idibo-dein. When his candidature is approved pays higher entrance fee and a cock the Obi then instructs owo or umadum sword bearer to administer the oath.

3. After the admission of any member he goes back to his village or quarter to entertain the old members there with the sum of N20.00 (twenty naira) and 4 gallons of palm wine and 20 kolanuts.
4. Before a title of Idibodein is conferred to any person, the senior members of the inner chamber must be consulted inorder to examine the character of the candidate for unanimous approval. A man of stained character or leper is disallowed.

5. The fee is N80.00 and entertainment of Idibodein. When Ndichieh Aebor title is conferred the receiver pays N50.00 to Idibodein.

6. Idibodein.

TRIBUTES:

(i) Any tribute either money or kind shall be shared into two parts between obi and idibodein.

(ii) In case of money realised from lease of land to any company the amount is shared into three parts among the obi landowners and general fund.

(iii) Any money realised in the palace shall be shared into three parts (a) for development purposes (b) for the obi (c) for the idibodein.

7. MISBEHAVIOUR:

Any person of the temple found guilty of stealing in the law court or divulging palace secrets or making himself a public disgrace is liable to a penalty or expulsion. The only person to be a leader of villages must be of the royal descent nwa dein.

8. MAINTENANCE:

It is vitally important to keep and support the obi from want. Towards that end, every title holder idibodein or ndichieh Aebor are under obligation to contribute annually four bundles of five big yams each and those without title two bundles of 5 big yams each. Other contributions are at the occasion of festivals - osiezi, iwa and igwe, when money, animals and food stuffs are made available to the king.

9. MARRIAGE:

The obi is eligible to marry one or more wives provided they are Aebor like born. They are married customarily; concubinage is forbidden in the obize harem (eziehun). Iyeneoghi as the wives are called are under restraint. They are

(a) not to clad their breast with buba other than cover up the breast with wrapper or shawl.

(b) not to love outside the harem alone without a page boy or girl either by day or night.

(c) not to draw water from well.

(d) not to enter idumma uobo and idumma oga quarters during the life time of the husband.

NOTE: HAREM:

(a) Only men and women of the Obi's relations are permitted to enter the harem after the sunset. Oshodi is the officer or chief warden in charge of the harem with other members of uriere official or junior unaches and Obi.

(b) It is a belief that no Aebor woman had given birth to a prince or Aebor nor Obi to have a brother but women from out-side are allowed. Every eze Aebor' first born born has been a female and must not be the queen over since lady ufu the mother of owuowu was disappointed.

The crown prince must not have a brother his mother was to be killed or exiled so as not to disturb her son in the state administration.

The various chambers in the Obize Aebor are:-

1. I. ubo Private 10. U. he shuru Public

2. Aebor 11. Ugohe Izuor

3. Ugohe Ezuzum " 12. Ugohe Ezubala "

4. Ugohe Ezuzum " 13. Ugohe Ezuzum "

5. Ugohe Ezuzum " 14. Ugohe Ezuzum "

6. Ugohe Ezuzum " 15. Owa "

7. Ugohe Ezuzum " 16. Owa Ezu Idibodein "

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5. Related Organisation:

(a) Principles of Government: The people of Aador had evolved a system of government superior to any other in Ika nation long before the impact of British Interests in Nigeria. Aador kingdom is different from benin kingdom (see section 6 below). There are several clans, each is governed by an ace known as 'Aya' who is responsible for keeping the peace of his village and collection of duces for tribute; the duces are either in money or in kind.

The rule of Aador is firm although not without fault. But every good citizen deserves favour and every bad behaviour is punishable. The office of the Obi of Aador is hereditary: to avoid dispute, the first son of the Obi succeeds him. The reign of female rulers was cancelled in the kingdom long before our time. There are two houses or council known as ogwu ndichien Aador and ogwu idibodein Aador. The former consists of only noble elders, some of whom are kings makers, the ancestral shrine priest and state messengeors or Idibodein. The latter consists of title holders some of whom are Obi's counsellors and others his messengeors. The two house are responsible for the life and property of the citizen. The chief or the inner-chamber is titled ochn; he is the head of the Idibodein and is responsible for conferring titles on anyone who had served the king and his country.

The Obi is the traditional head of the council. When the Obi's stool is vacant by death and "Onuobi" is appointed as a regent. The person appointed, to act before the Obi's first son comes to the age of reigning must be of the royal blood but must not wear the crown or seat on the throne or observe the osieze and other festival ceremony. As a rule he carries the 'abani' sword not the ade which is the prerogative of Obi Aador alone. The social and industrial institutions are called okwa viz okwa-Ditee (Doctors) Okwa-Gsun (Smiths), Okwa-Orkewina (craftsmen) Okwa-Ihore (worshippers or priest).

Witchcraft, lies, murder, theft, idleness are among crimes punishable by Aador law. It was the supreme aim of every citizen the initiates as a member of one or more of the above class or profession. Without it, a citizen is considered a plebeian or a commoner. It can be said that Aador was conscious of her social institutions though interfered by the foreign influence, when her sovereignty was impaired by the subordinate relation to British Crown, the dominating power in Nigeria. In the past no nation was bold enough to interfere with Aador peace and liberty without impunity.

Aador government permits movement, settlement and immigration of the citizen, provided the right did not interfere with the heritance, that is, any person who is residing in Ika land is under the obligation of Ika laws and custom. Otherwise he who has eloped from Aador kingdom has no right to his former property on the land he left because no one can serve two masters. All kings are not equal as a matter of fact. Anyone an Ika land is a subject to the village council elders who granted him land to dwell or farm.

Aador land means land used by Aador citizen but no individual has right over any piece or Aador land; it is communal. For fear of nepotism Aador custom forbids Obi's mother to be alive while her son is on the throne. It was believed she could disturb the Obi to act honestly and impartially. The...
materials for service and mutual aid are farm produce
animals, money, allowing one child to serve the Obi or elderly
persons for some period as a token of loyalty and love.

To know the age of a person was the counting of births from
the day the child was born and to compare with his age grade
and other events. The oldest person is always respected as well;
as those who took title from the Obi. To know an old person is
a guide first born is called iseinwa following his offsprings osiern,
uhichien, sakponamhori and onyemum or ohshiona, any person who
sees his or her sakponamhori is said to be old indeed. The age
grade in Agbor social organisation are:-

(1) Gkwa-ukpo.
(2) Gkwa-Obe-ebo,
(3) Gkwa-Obe-otu,
(4) Gkwa-Ighino
(5) Gtu-Ighoro
(6) Ikahi and Igbanihe.
(11) Administrative structure:

The government is administered in Dein’s name by the
ndichien Agbor council among whom are the classified Chiefs
consisting 10 Uzama 14 Ighinhe and 21 Ifōorkpor and the
Ihaino/idibodein members who are the advisory body to the Obi
dein.

The two groups of ndichien (elders) and idibodein (titholiers)
control Agbor affairs. Village council of elders and adults
among whom are the smiths, doctors, craftsmen, shrine priests
organised day to day running of the villages under Agbor.

(a) The uzama members are okwau ukpo ndichien namely;
Ovia, edac, GbiAjangbo, iyase, ozornor, AGBasonwu, Inc-Akuku,
Ohazama, Iregwai and nwan-dein (crown Prince).

(b) Ighinhe members are the advisory body to the elders namely:
Obi, Akpaca, Ibibi, Akefhe, Akaehe, Ogudun, Gjisi-Agborni, Ojisi
Ozara, Elema Oki, Elema Omu, Ero, Ine-ene, Alasa Emu and
Igboke of Alihu.

(c) Ifōorkpor members are the ancestral priests in all Agbor
villages and quarters namely; Iregwai, Ajaehe, Oriorwor, Ojeif
etc. They come with Oforo staff when attending palace meeting
called Oka-Afor.

(d) Idibodein means the servants and counsellors of the Obi
Dein namely Owex leader of the Idibodein and a divider in
ndichien Agbor council.

1. Ojabe, keeper of the royal wardrobe.
2. Odii, leader of the Dein’s legion and deliverer of the
royal gifts.
3. Othia, Caretaker of the royal harem;
4. Eke: Caretaker of the Royal provisions;
5. Ojieni: priest of the Royal shrine;
6. Inne: junior member of Uriere-Ugbele Taboo;
7. Ihase: junior member of Idibodein;
8. Ewe: junior member of Idibodein;
9. Idiwu: junior member of Idibodein;
10. Osanji: junior member of Idibodein;
11. Olave: Senior member of Idibodein;
12. Ezochide: junior member of Idibodein;
13. Orii: junior member of Uriere;
14. Ogenehe: junior member of 
15. Oben: senior member of Idibodein;
16. Ajae: senior member of Idibodein;

The various chambers in obieze Agbor are
1. Igbele;
2. Ugbe;
3. Ugbe-Ama;
4. Igbeaman;
5. Igbeje;
6. Ughe Nwun-Dein;
7. Ughe-Nne-Obi
8. Ibe-Samele;
9. Ughe-Ikongan;
10. Ughe Aburu.
11. Ohe-iseche
12. Ohe a-bala;
13. Ohe Alorokpa
14. Ohe um,
15. Ovwaa,

(a) Igbonebo House: This house has administrative function composed of royal descendants. Virtually they need no title more than they are Iheime and Among whom are Viceroys and
Omaduns. The main officers are Gwach, Ezemp, Onwuch, Odor
Ulaya, Onanwe, Obiwa-Uyi Ayobahan etc.

(b) Ibejile - Private Chamber of the Inner Chamber: The important members are: Ojek, Ajeech, Ojiam, Owan, Ongibinir, Erwa,
Kolo, etc., but no one or a royal blood.

(c) Ubejan - Private Chamber of the palace herons: The chief
Officers are Ojiak, Otu, Giri, Igbonebo, Innay, Obinse, etc.,
also members.

(d) Ibejile is the official royal kitchen: The Officers are: Ijeje, Erwa, Ezem, Oba, Obadi Boyi composed of junior members of Idibo-Dein and Ibejile.

Ibejile house museum of royal medicine and antiques.
The Chief Officers are Omen, Akuegbute and Izeheme (E C D) and others.
Remarks: Gwach except otherwise admits new entran to the Ibejile chamber and administers the oath of faithfulness loyalty and secrecy
and Ojek is the master of the house during Obi's absence.

No officers is hereditary except Gwach and few Usana,
Ighinhe and Ifiorikpor titles.

But in the village councils the members sit in order of
seniority or age grade. Title holders sit in order of date titles
are conferred to them known as orkwa Iheime.

Any 2 or any village is classified among the Ighinhe
grade in Agbor council.

Any The hierarchy of Chiefs hold meeting in the palace on
Agor any that is every 8 days or a month.

The names of Igbonebo in Obe-Nawu-Dein from 1900 - 1958:

1. Ojek Ibe
2. Igbinedon
3. Erwa

when Igbonebo dies three months after another Igbonebo is
installed. The one next to him would present an eagle feather
three yards white cloth, 20 kola nut and 21 cowries before the
dead man is interred. The elders install him and later show
him to the Obi for ascent be also give him a feather and chalk
as a mark of respect and honour to his Senior brother.

(b) JUDICIAL SYSTEM, ANCLIGHT:

The ancient judiciary is a natural wisdom of untrained judges
who at times were influenced by relatives and acquaintances
and untruthfully received something (bribery) in order to prevent
the cause or justice and equity. But it is for from a rule in
which light was right. Any complaint in a family circle is
settled by the elders of the family if not on appeal the village
elders at the Urhuan Omen Ighinhe or Omen Ibejile. Serious crimes
as murder, homicide, theft, cases involving bodily harm and other
misdemeanors are tried by the body of society definitely affected
by each crime while those interfering with the life of the village
are tried by the village council or by the Obi's tribunal if not
amicably settled.
The penalty for the guilty is invariable for minor offences. The man of a fowl, a goat, a sheep or cowrode while that of serious offences hang, crucifixion or burning; only the Obi with his hierarchy of nobility the Adichin A. or Onyezoha and the jurisdiction. A suit which begins by the injured party, is complained through his onye ise o be to the village head who sends his ahia or divider to summon the defendant before the next meeting of the village. The proceedings are informal and any one who has an idea on the matter can come forward to air his views. If the case concerns the rights and privileges or the women of the village then the head woman is to be present before the elders.

Debts: Assets and liabilities are in Ika custom inheritable when a debt can not be paid by a man or woman during his or her lifetime; such debts pass to the children squarely by the first son or to one who took the burial responsibility. In most cases all the children help to pay the debt at pleasure. But on the contrary the debtor become onyibe - under the creditor or to one who paid the debt for him or her until it was refunded. But if the debt was too much, the children or so could refuse to pay and renounce any claim to any of his or her inheritance of property - wives, clothes, Aolatree, cocoa nut tree, um, hatchet, yam etc. In such a case the debt became a bad debt. If a slave or stranger or onyibe dies without a child the man who bought the slave or the sponsor of the debtor or stranger inherited the property otherwise the Obi inherited his debts and liabilities.

Bad Child: A child who is bad to his father can be disowned in on, or as a result of wickedness or despicable conduct. The father may slaughter a goat to his ancestral shrine and pronounce that from henceforth this son or daughter is no longer his child. If

he did that and the quarrel was not settled before his death, the next son would take precedence. Such a bad child had no claim to the dead man's property except the son blessed the elders to intervene. Invariably they came to pour oil on the troubled waters and slaughter a goat to renounce all he had said and done. In addition a heavy fine was then inflicted on the stubborn child.

Inheritance: The inheritable properties are yams, economic trees, hatchets, um, clothes, wives (Ikezie) children, domestic animals etc. It must be made clear that children born by ahia marriage are shared between the husband and the wife but not so in Ikwez marriage the children are bona-fide property of the husband and his heir. (see section 4 (c) above).

Murder: The relative of the murdered person reports to the village head who at once notifies the Obi by sending his Ahia to do so. It became the duty of the Obalute or Ika to arrest or trace the murderer. When captured he was taken to the Obi's palace. The trial took place before the Obi and Adichien A. or Obor Council.

The relative of the murdered person appears to describe the crime. The evidence is gone thoroughly into, and if the murderer if found to be deliberate the penalty was death by hanging or burning. The murderer is given the opportunity of hanging himself, but if he does not do so within a reasonable time the Obalute or the village would hang him in public. No compensation is paid to the family of the murdered man or woman but the murderer's family has to make costly sacrifice to the shrine of the other's ancestors and pay ransom or a young girl to the Obi and cows, etc. to the Adichien A. or Obor Council.
and a goat to the Village Council. Should the killing of a man or woman be the result of an accident the death penalty is not exacted but the culprit is heavily fined. The Obi receives his usual young girl, the council their cow, the village council their goat; and a girl from the criminal family is handed over in marriage to the head of the family of the dead man that is Ikogosi.

Incest: The crime is reported to the Eni-isti-Obi and dealt with at a village meeting; should the criminal prove innocent and without any knowledge of the near relationship of the girl or he is treated leniently and fined only two goats, one for sacrifice to the ancestors and one for the village head. If the crime be committed with full knowledge of the near kinship both the criminal and the woman are put to death.

Adultery: The report of the husband to the head of the family is treated in the village meeting and finally at the palace. If the accused is found guilty the Oluoti or the Ikobi is instructed to destroy his house and confiscate his cattle in his farm; penalty is plough - If she is hrumi widow, they seize six or seven goats for the husband for sacrifice, one for the Iduma shrine of the husband. In the case of hibi or Ikobi wife the penalty is less; the husband must sacrifice a goat to repair his house with fine imposed on the guilty man.

Klee: The procedure in rape is the same as in adultery and the fines are similar but the husband has the privilege of killing the criminal without paying any compensation to his family. Rape committed in the bush house and farm is defilement and the punishment was great.

Abert: A habitual thief is sent to the Obi where he is sentenced to death without consideration or ceremony, and his family called to pay heavy penalty to the Obi's Council. Minor theft is punished by Ikobi, repayment and being led out of the village by women and men with drum for public scandal.

(b) Native Administration:

After the mini expedition of 1897, Strangers from coastal . . . . . .
people sang this song: *Obi enyi ogor, nke enyi egwu ego*,
ye enya — meaning, if not the Obi's ill health these boys of *Eniri*
we could not tolerate to see soldiers fighting. Our people we could
have pierced our eyes with sword (i.e. shown our bravery).

In 1909, Obi Uesnobe died. His son *Agboru* was too young to
reign until five years of interim. The prince was trained by
Chief Oka Ujeaguru of *Ihiebene* and later in Chief *Akan*’s the Inner
of Agbor at Ogbu-Obiau-Obin quarter. In 1912, the native court
and council hall were built with two faces tower clocks for
the chief from Asaba, Auchi, Kwalen and villages to attend. The
telegraph line *Agbor-Umena* was constructed after 1906 but line
from Lago to Asaba before 1904. In 1912, Agboru ascended on
Agbor throne. The world war broke out Agbor district people
provided carriers who were sent to Cameroun and East Africa by the
British Officer at Agbor.

Around 1915, some important men were appointed as warrant
chiefs for Court and Council: Ajah, Abde, Osayon, Ajuebor-Ariko
Keluwa, Oshodi, Akan, Odogu, Odeki, Oluku-Aka, Opara, Ojifor,
Orzoror, Okwu, Akwu, Eke, Oke, Oka, Akumazi, Eke Amade, Eke Orta,
Eke Ulije, Eze Abua, Eze Otor, Eze Orbior, Eze Kiri, Eze Ibo, Iyeke,
Eze Okey, Eze Ogan, and council of
chiefs was created to accommodate those of Asaba, Ogbakwu-Okwu,
Isele-Uku, Oburu-Uku, Okonko, Ishan and Kwaile. The native
Court was built at Agbor, Igbanke and Igbo. Eze *Agbor* was the
president of the Court and Council.

In 1918, the people of Ibakwa pledged their loyalty to Chief
Osani Leadership who annexed them to Benin administration. Ogan,
Oto, Oji, and Ojuje followed suit carelessly from Agbor their native home.
Later on, Ubenja and Kwalen District Offices were opened. This
changed the power and sphere of Agbor influence.

In 1918, the Agbor District Office was burnt by unknown person
and old records damaged. This event is regretted as Agbor
historians will have no records of the past to refer.

In 1951, Agbor district constitution was changed to *Ike*
District and each village became known as clan instead of village
whereas in district there should be no two kinds of equal status
in which instance the clan heads rotated the post of presidency
in the district council. However, Eze *Agbor* and his people
rejected the constitution on the ground that Eze *Agbor* cannot
rotate sent with Chiefs under his suzerainty and considered it
as an eccentric procedure by petitioning the Government which after
a while was cancelled. The Obi of Abua hesitated but said he would
at any rate be glad to be a president of the *Ike* coun
(d) **Agor Patriotic Union:**

The Agbor patriotic Union was inaugurated in 1926 lst May at Lagos by men from Agbor, Igboodo, Ibanke, Owa, Akumai and Umunede prominent among them were Mr. P.B. Ekun – Accountant, P & T, as the Chairman, Mr. A.M. Weeks – Custom Clerk as the Secretary, Mr. A.K. Idwe – Headmaster, St. Paul B.C.M. School Eshutu-Betto as the Sec. Financial Secretary, Mr. Ogbekele Cook as the Treasurer; others are John Ibeneme, John Obi, George Ohu, Alexander N. Okoh, etc. At that time not many of our village men were literate to wit.

The APU (Agor Patriotic Union) was the foremost movement of Agbor kindred in abroad and at home. For over 30 years it championed the cause of the bottom dog. Its voice was heard every nook and corner of the district; infant, children were born to it with aspirations and social candour who are the noblest and best in the realm.

In the conference of 1949 agitation arose to change the Agbor Patriotic Union to Ika Patriotic Union and this was put in the agenda. At length majority voted for Ika name against Agbor as the word Ika is generous and apropos to their tribal nomenclature, though Agbor elite felt they hit them below the belt but accepted the challenge with impudence. Later, on the effect of the change of name began to harass the progress of the union and more union village unions began to emerge vize Owa Patriotic Union, Umunede Progressive Union even in Agbor herself the Agbor District became automatically Ika District towards 1951 instead of Agbor District.

The manifesto of the APU became a stunt done to discard stirred by leaders of the newly formed village Unions.

The APU has become defunct.

Let me state the APU manifesto in 1927:-

1. To foster love unity and service;
2. To promote and encourage education, art, industry trade and happiness.
3. To preserve and protect Agbor District heritage, custom, culture, tradition, laws, sacred institutions, obedience to our seniors and those in authority and put God first.
4. To fight and suppress injustice, oppression, chicanery, selfishness, idleness, vanity all forms of moral ailments.
5. To support the poor and needy financially and morally.
6. To hold meeting, conventions (privately or publicly) and conference yearly or otherwise.

(7) To subscribe money, opinion freely for the well-being of the Union.

(8) To encourage social equality, fraternity, brotherhood and sisterhood of our tribe.

(9) To avoid quarrelling, fighting, obscurity, disrespect to poor and old, slandering, pomposity and divided interest of the citizen members.

(10) To speak the Agbor or Ika language in the organ of the Union.

(e) **Agor Kingdom:**

(a) **Extent:** The Agbor kingdom embraces all the villages of the Ika speaking people with camps of settlers in its region Agbor lies between the Nciver river on the eastward and the kingdom of Benin on the westward. According to tradition Oshiek the patriarch of the earliest inhabitants became the chief of Agbor. Another important personage among them will be the father Ighali, the hero of the kingdom and political father of kings. Still another Benin or Del who also emerged as the first emperor to spurn the rule of patricians 1270. Awele became the successor.

Ouwuu the great whose tongue was like the fish tail and whose word was a bond was the most powerful mortal man of his day in the kingdom. He ascended on Agbor throne carefully prepared by his mother named Ufu and said to have hailed from Yoruba or Ukpata dynasty 1250. Agbor in the land of agbor and the passage of time appeared numerically the strongest, historically and politically the most important in the Ika ethnology. The kings have been renowned with the title of Oba Agbor (Benin) who by the grace of God have wielded great power over lives and properties of the people without rivalry. As is obvious, the significant palace of building (Obiezzi) is still a relic of the dignity and glory that was Agbor traditional arts and organisation among the forest tribes of Benin State of Nigeria.

(b) **Factors leading to the decline of Agbor Kingdom:**

1. Late arrival of firearms to Agbor in the hinterland.

The people within the coastal line acquired firearms and steel weapons from Europeans by which they terrorised Agbor people and encroached upon their heritage. Furthermore with the entry of the Beninas the Oba of Benin became a monarch in our communal forest which he grabbed without opposition.

.../70
Inevitably one without arms cannot oppose one with arms.

(11) The influx of republican villagors from the East Niger: Ibo who, driven by Are Chukuwu vandals, fled to Agbor kingdom for protection. These renegades too had firearms acquired from europeans by whose influence they became arrogant to discipline and loyalty to Agbor king so much revered in Ika society because they knew not what is meant by natural ruler.

(11) Administrative laxity and struggle for independence among subject villages: Agbor rulers lost control of their dependent villages on account of strange ideology of the Ibo in our midst, who having became our court clerks, carpenters, cooks and stewards, coaxed us native to obstructingly interrogate administrative principles. Consequently such villages had gained independence and called themselves Obi of his section. Under such social and political instability the Agbor patriotic union at home and abroad resolved and proceeded to the erstwhile government to withdraw the Iboes from the native courts. For the sons of the soil and the appeal was heard and reorganization resulted late in the thirties.

(iv) Intertribal war within the kingdom: The people of Agbor waged war against some of the villages before the coming of our whitesmen, and because of that ancient grudge, anarchy and chaos reared its ugly heads in the social and constitutional organization of the kingdom. Consequently harrass and tribute discontinued and the role of the Oke, oduneni or governor of the villages among the numbers of the royal family gave way to mediator of the warrant chiefs appointed. The warrant chiefs themselves became so tyrannical, oppressive and cruel that common people were denied justice. Between 1902 and 1934 these chiefs became so selfish and arrogant that Agbor traditional history was distorted to suit their whims and caprices with resultant effect that Agbor kingdom fell into decadence.

See Agbor Authority vindicated.

(11) The suzerainty of the Obis of Agbor from the past ages has shown itself beyond doubt with the skull of men crucified on the top of the cotton tree (ekpon) in the old Iken market square by the Obice (palace), besides those hanged and beheaded in those days of old. The tree with skulls was of an age which might have lasted 700 years before it fell down on 28th July, 1944. Strictly speaking no other ruler but the Obi of Agbor had such power to crucify and behead bad men in this part of the coast. Other rulers judged and ordered hanging only. If otherwise the village ruler would be executed by the Ika Agbor.

(c) MILITARY CAMPAIGNS: The citizens of Agbor have been peace loving and law abiding; they prefer the dignity of labour rather than be warlike. The hate oppression and man's inhumanity to man. They organized themselves to fight war when their national liberty and freedom were threatened. Individuals would die by hanging or drowning or escape if their liberty and freedom were denied them. However some of the past wars were waged by order of the Obi or Adichen against any village that flouted the king's authority or broke village rule definitely and sometimes fought for prestige. Every Ika Agbor was customarily bound to invite war to fight in order to prove his courage before or after three or more years of his assumption to the throne.

Before the coming of the whitesmen Agbor kingdom was regarded as a city of refuge in this part of the coast (Benin State) on account of her formidable warriors and excellent social organization that belligerent nations could or rebellious villages feared to challenge her pride. That in borne out by the presence of the families who had sought the protection of Agbor from the neighbouring kingdoms between 16th and 20th centuries. Nevertheless those renegades have been absorbed into Ika citizenship. In Agbor particularly and Ika generally all males from 21 years of age and upward are militia or fighters under his village war leaders called Orkayoror, Odogwu, Iyane and Olutu (highest) officer of the young men numbering hundreds in every village. And when a war is tribal or out of the Dein's control the war chief's Agbasogun, Uboh, Osormor, Iyane and Ogbuobodo with Dein and his legion take the command over the battle front. But generally Osamu (palm fronds) are put across a road between disputing villages are considered a blockade; no entry or passage until settlement is reached.
A soldier’s weapons of war were wooden - spear (obo), sword (agada), bayonet (Ogborod), bow and crossbow (Ota and ekpe) and poisoned arrow (Oburra edada) which were dyed and smoked to prevent matchet cut or arrow pierce to wound a warrior. Afterwards in about 16th and 17th centuries steel weapons were introduced by the Portuguese who came to Benin City in about 1485. With the use of steel weapons such gun-powder matchets, the Benin used them to conquer their opponents with greatest cruelty. Thus the Obi of Benin became tyrannical; human sacrifice was practiced at large. His men ruled other people in his name. In spite of the fear of white men in their place Benin City the Ika of Agbor could not submit but continued to resist against any form of cruelty that where they met fighting ensued until the arrival of the British in 1901 - 1906 to Agbor kingdom.

The people of Agbor have passed through years of ruthlessness, human sacrifice and slave-dealing; she is alive and never conquered.

For purposes of war Agbor was divided into four divisions such under a war Chief.


There are several officers, Okiotu, incharge of village warriors. The Eze Agbor is the commander in Chief. When Agbor warrior killed his enemy during tribal conflict he was honoured in law but in civil conflict he was charged as a murderer to die or pay ransom. Eka Ocou. In civil war the fighters were allowed only to captimed or wound his opponent. But if an Agbor citizen’s block is shed by a neighbouring tribe it meant Agbor was invited to wage war. Thus Agbor had stories of past wars both civil and tribal but the most recent ones which showed examples of their military might may be quoted.

(1) Be Nauw Doin and Orta: Obe-Nauw-Doin and Orta fought because Orta village encroached upon their farmland. After all Orta was subdued resulting 12 captured, two killed, many wounded and their houses were set on fire and looted before police and the administrative officer with Eze Agbor came into the scene to calm the rioters. Some were arrested and charged.

(II) Abor and British Occupation: After their Benin looting expedition in 1897, British patrol to Agbor took place in 1900 and Agbor district administration was established in 1901. The Agbor was opened the office came and he was accompanied by Mini Chiefs - honourable Osula and others as hosts and they were given lodging according to Customary hospitality in Agbor kingdom. Mr. I.T. Palmer (Agbor friend) was present who inspired the Obi Dein to send his son to School at Benin. The Obi sent three of his sons namely: Adegbe, Isimiko and Adaje among others; the prices were given such a page.

The people of Agbor were not pleased with the presence of the Mini Chiefs because of their arrogance and treachery before the British came both were inimical to one another after they have buried alive 40 Mini warriors passing through Agbor defiantly to wage war against Oburaka for revenge for Adegbe murdered by Eka Ocou. The soldiers were arrested. At that time too the people of Agbor have begun to think about war with the British interference and their followers. But when the outrage burst at Owa domain that the Officer incharge of the District was murdered by a young man named Eka Jete Agbor henchmen could not maintain neutrality but the Obi and his Chiefs warned them against fighting with British on account of his three sons at Benin government School whose lives would be at danger if war is declared. However, British soldiers attacked Owa and during the operation Agbor was warned salutarily with burning of their houses. When the news of Agbor at war spread the Okpala warriors came as volunteers they met the soldiers suddenly so they were horribly killed. Hence Agbor the soldiers met with stubborn resistance before Agbor were warned to desist and not long they entered into Owa and overthrom them; the king and his chiefs were captured and executed.

(III) Agbor and Ibejiki: Ibejiki was besieged and conquered in 1895 for the vengeance of Chief Ozor of Agbor murdered at Ibejiki. The world was convinced that Ozor and his high handedness his innocent Chief Ozor was made a scapegoat. But after bloody conflict and severe resistance...
they surrendered. Their leader named Akpata of Idumu-Iru escaped to Akhonisi he was pursued by henchmen Osoroke Akor, Aghasoro-Oghu-Aghuokpo, Osone-Ahilli and Osigje-Oghuokpo. He was forced to die and his head brought to Akpor. Igbakine said reason for the Akpata man death named Ijabor Nkpe and the orchas paid were crooses and umedio. The people of Igbakine resumed their loyalty to Eze Akpor until 1918 when Eze Afika pledged to become Benin Administrative subject, because of the past war against them.

4. AKPOR AND EHIDU UAKAN- AHI IROH:

Ehidu Uakan was in Akpor domain but because for the internecine war caused by their chief Iroh when he disobeyed to surrender a murderer by name Osuambe to Akpor supreme head according to custom for trial. It was bitter fight. The Obi's legion devastated Ehidu Uakan despite that the inhabitants resisted very strongly, climbing the roof of their houses to prevent Akpor warriors from burning them. At last they were defeated and the murderer was forced to commit suicide. The ruler of Ehidu fled to waylay the return of the Obi of Akpor with face to face endless fight. Iroh himself was a brave man as his master Odin Eze Akpor popularly known as Mwen-ahsah-ikwu. Iroh fell, the King Odin told his bodyguard to remove him to Ikuku for Uboh to give him treatment because Iroh as Eze Akpor was always a victim for the burial of Eze Akpor. Later, Iroh became a leper through the wounds he sustained from the King's Ada-sword, called Umuoto and not unlike Arthur's Excalibur in legendary power.

When Odin slept with his fathers, Iroh could not be used for burial of the King he being a leper. Later, about 1911 Iroh died unsung and unwept.

5. AKPOR AND UMUNU MBOIJI AT EKPOH ISHAN:

The muslim crusader wished to establish muslim faith in Ika according to Nupi gazette; he sent message from Hida to Eze Akpor of his intending visit. But later on, it was learnt from Ishan rulers that an invader was fighting at Agenebode and Akbede but Akbede was tough for him to conquer. On hearing this, the collaborate with the traditional invisible singal bird crying nightly for an approach of danger with prophesies of men and women, Akpor was leaders met and despatched a good number of able men of war age to Ishan rulers in order to help them prevent the invader from conquest.

with the arrival of Akpor warriors the enemy soldiers made no more advances. Umoru kajiji died at Ekpon in 1884 where Ishan and Akpor forces met to vanquish the foe. The muslim general retreated not only that his men, horses, donkeys, were killed and captured so much but news came to him that his house at Hida caught fire and damaged by iron unknown causes.

Akpor warriors returned with many captives, horses and donkeys which the Eze Akpor distributed to his friendly rulers in the kingdom. At that time Akpor shores of influence extended to river Niger and Akpor including Kwale. Some of the captives were returned because of their bad attitude from Onitsha-Uche, Isiakie-Iku etc. where those of Onitsha-Uche were stored at Umuneo later driven to Akpor where the Obi kept them in Ogbene-New-Deln orchard known as Eshu. The remnants of the muslim soldiers gradually spread the muslim religion in Ikaen territory.

Some returning Akpor soldiers came to establish at Ekpon, Akwa, Oligie and Mbiri and Itamozun as Akpor buffer state. Sons of former Obis were sent to be governors and viceroys of any villages in Akpor kingdom, thus Eze Orta by the son of Obase Akpor-Imomon by Osok-eduani named Okpomozun. The house was withdrawn when Itamozun was burnt down by Akpor-New-Deln in 1885. Ogbene in 1650, Oligie by the son of Adiwe in 1656, Mbiri by the son or Obune in 1670. Itamozun by Okor-eduani named Kwoaku of Ihe-oba but withdrawn when Itamozun was burnt down by Ogbene-New-Deln in 1885. The village of Ekpon was wrongly spelt Ekpon. Ekpon was a soldier from Akpor to war in Ika. He founded this village along other ethnic groups. His wife was a strange woman who could neither speak Ika or Ishan properly. By this manner her orspring adopted a mediator tongue of Ika and Ishan for the Ekpoy dialect. The Eze Ekpon was tributary to Akpor until the whites came but now under Ishan administration.

6. AKPOR AND ITAMOZUN:

Itamozun was village between Esamu and Mbiri. The villagers practiced highway robbery, trader and travellers complained so that His Highness Obi Odin sent to warn them from further molestation. After sometime they learnt of the Delin's tour to Umuneo so they planned to waylay him when the Delin was...
Join, they waylaid him but not harmed. The news reached Abor, Ojise of A. bornta with his few men was despatched by the war officer to Jo and return the king.

But Ojise returned from the way and said the road was blocked by Itamozun plunderers. When the news reached O. be-hor, QPainter became annoyed of his son's plight and informed the Olotu to summon the young men to Jo and escort back the king from Uwanede. The Omo of the Olotu ordered the bukers to climb the palm trees and blow the trumpet clarion call and that was done, he swore that the king must return to his palace under any circumstances today.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon and before four, the young men gathered and marched forward to Uwanede and to meet and bruise the buccaneers. They passed through without obstruction on reaching Uwanede they sent this war-song, 'echoko Awannde'. The Omo on hearing the sound of his men built he got up from his seat and saw them marching towards him, with joy marched into the column of the crusaders. Then after 30 saluting the host marched back home on reaching the way to Itamozun village three-fourth of them reaching entered Itamozun and set fire on their houses and drove the inhabitant into the woods with cruelty. Consequently Itamozun was laid desolate till today, thus some of them escaped to Ebi, amhui and other neighbour villages to which they dispersed.

7. ABOOR AND BENIN (ABOVE):

Abor warriors took vengeance on Aw aw because they killed an A. bor woman when she bore twin babies which was a taboo in Awaw. This atrocity culminated serious invasion of Awaw in the reign of Obi Odin.

The people of Awaw did not resist so much but there was a quick send for peace in order to avoid bloody war. He said he would come to Abor with a few instead of armour and save his beautiful daughter Okunya to be Abor beside the men and women already kidnapped and sold. The Obi betrothed Okunya to his knight Ogebe the Warri for his bravery and faithful service. The woman is the grandmother of Chief J. B. Obuesi the Warri of Abor. She died in 1941.

8. OBE-HOR, OBE-IRI AND OBE-BOR - BOR GROUP:

The Obe- Hor is a community of three quarters in Abor
then prepared very strongly against the invading. Skirmishers were sent to the most important strategic points via skuku (Bia, Jumla), covering Alidima and Useni Obe or Urbunu Obe and the Flank of the road near Ulogbala town road. At last, the Obi began to march through Sokoto and he was encountered at the spot of Useni Obe by Aibon warriors under the command of General Asei Ubo. General with his army troop was compelled to retreat. Many killed, wounded and captured. Of the ten men from been village alone, the captive buried in Aibon village were spared and the enemy burnt their town in Alidima and 1 Obe Useni or Obe Urbunu doors. Thus the middle men song (Isac 6 p. 16)

Furthermore, E. Jacob U. Sharron in his History of Benin States tells the Obin built a war camp (Eko) at a village called Obanien and ordered every town and village in his domain to send him soldiers. Over ten thousand were recruited and stationed at Obanien to be trained so that they might be used in Aibon and other commands which he proposed to undertake. If true, the story could be true, yet Aibon is a fortress of two rivers Oko and Eko, where no enemy could enter to fight in addition to other barriers such as the impenetrable forests, unbridged rivers, long distance between Aibon and Benin which had made war impossible to both.

Thus the story is true, but it took a long time for the Obi to decide to send an expedition to Aibon after the death of Asea a Benin son killed by Eko Uboluku about 1750 when Aibon apprehended 40 Benin warriors passing secretly through the area, they were buried alive in obedience to Ika law that no tribe could be attacked in their territory. These passed through another tribe or town to escape without injury. In the Obi's domain had intended to recruit ten thousand soldiers from Obanien or Obanien surely the Ikas with their brothers in the east and west of the area, the Akan, the Gbesi the men of Asea, Obashi Uboluku and Uboluku could not be silent to see Aibon perish by the Benin commands.

10. AIBON AND AIBOKA: The earliest known Aibon war was the one against Aiboka when they rebelled. At that time they were under the sway of the Obi of Aibon. They served him with specified class of the bush annual meat they killed. Aiboka consisted of six villages. When they discontinued with the cult services Aibon assisted them.

There was a local name Iduu was captured among others. Iduu was a son of an Aibon woman from Ozara, he was kept by the Obi. He grew to manhood before he left the palace to look for a living, and in his adventure as a hunter he rounded the spot called Ali on Aibon.

Iduu (Benin City). For many centuries the place bears his name until Fortu, in 1852 and it was chan, to this name Iduu. Tradition says Iduu was the Obin in title, so famous in our national literature. His wife was an Alidima, however, Obin re-ism was remarkable and very historical. Ebeokure was over-run some took refuge in the vicinity Iseko, now Amiri, Obi, Uba, Uboke, Eseke at a later date. Perhaps the Alidima after Iduu expansion in the 10th century.

Ubeoke sits on the south and was described as the farmland or the Ika people or the farmland of our mother who lived at Oki after the death of Obi, the tradition said Obi did not die in Aibon but perhaps in the west (Ile-Ife) for whom tomb early Aibon went on Ila-Ijebu to his tomb for cult services. It does not mean that Aibon too at certain period was under Ika yoke, but revolted and liberated long before the Ijebu massacres of 1607.

I have ended the stories of wars and bloody deeds with those of the primitive age. Today like in the past there are wars everywhere. Human nature has not changed and war is power-politic. Iam remains a political animal; for war is inevitable. All we need is peace by the yoke of God.

(d) DOMAINS
1. Aibon-Ije-Obi - 1807 in 1852: Aibon Ije-Obi is the seat of the Obi Ije-Obi, Eko, Aibon; it comprises:
(a) Obe-Okanni-Oketi including the Obi's quarters, Eje, Oje-Ije, Ogo-Ije, Oriu and Iduu.
(b) Other quarters are Obi-Ila, Ikoli, Ebeokure, Ila-Ije, Oje-Ije, Oje-Ije, Ikoli.
(c) Iduu, Iduu, Alidima, Obi Ije-Obi with others.

The communities around Ije-Obi comprised of Aibon, Oki, Alidima, Iduu, Obi, Iduu, Obi, Alidima, Iduu, Obi, Oje-Ije, Obi, Obi, Ije-Obi, and Ozum, Ijeban, Oje-Ije, Alidima, Alidima, Alidima, Aibon, Alidima, and Ozum are the mountain head of Aibon Ije-Obi, and form Aibon council. Thus E. J. E. Simpson, Administrative Officer Aibon 1935 wrote in the Intelligence report that "the Aibon clan of the Ika-speaking people is wholly contained in Aibon district and there are no other tribes permanently residing in the district."

He further declared that the Aibon Clan is capable of developing along its well-entrenched villages council and its full representative clan council forms an admirable machinery for a real broad clan administration."
The origin of Abohar

Prior to the outbreak of war in the district as a result of the murder of the District Officer at Owa in 1366 the area now called Agji-Agji was Abohar Territory. But after the soldier barrack was built near the Oporodo stream, the wives of soldiers and strangers were given a site to stay and a market opened for them with slaughter houses. The place soon became infested with vultures that the native called it Iduwu Udole that is vulture place. After sometime the name was changed to Agji-Agji. Lastly Abohar Agji is derived from the Yoruba word meaning, when facey. It was said that whenever soldiers went late to work their excuse to their officer was they went to wash their face in the stream.

After some years the natives of Abohar and Owa began to live with the strangers for economic reasons. In 1926 Owa and Abohar who resided there fell out on account of tax payment. The dispute was taken to Court and after words the area was divided into two parts, one side for Abohar and the other side for Owa through the trunk road; and each began to collect taxes accordingly from the people in their side. Agji-Agji is now an Urban township of the Ika Division.

Aboharoma Population 1952 in 1952 Census

Aboharoma formerly called Ominijie is the eradic of Abohar Ika civilisation. There were or were lived as the great priest or patriarch. As the ancestors began to increase they founded Alisimien, Oki, Ozara and other places. Tradition is mute as from where the ancestors came and whether by a single family or by migration, no one knows. We believe we belong to the Ibo family of people because of our language and customs are very similar.

Among the ancestors was a great man named Aze who we are told founded the spot of Imozi he named "Abohar" which means a city citadel, as a shelter for his son, the beheaded victor of the proverbial Loko contest. It is surrounded by numerous villages and towns, the Ika sion. After hundred years of patriarchal rule of Oze and Aze was replaced by Oiriwor who is created Okun-Aze, great King. Through years of achievement and revolution he led the social affairs of the land later became "Orbanon" a priest in charge of the ancestors antiquities, medicine and oracles.

However, the priestly power of Oiriwor waned when Ebe and Obi became the emperor or the people. Thus we find Oiriwor the sanctuary among other traditional kin-makers called Okun Amnazi, namely Iruwari of Amadeo family, Eze Alier of Alisimien, Lokoje of Alisimien, Owo of Ika and Ode of Obi (minster). After the death of Obi the people of Ominijie revolted because Abohar Ibo did not permit them to carry his father's corpse back to Ominijie village for burial according to custom.

Upon this deadlock Ominijie people reminded themselves Aboharoma in protest as the affair chan ce and Aboharoma became Abohar-Oka. Abohar buried his father on the spot called Amnazi (Obi's cemetery). Thus the funerals of the Osinisi festival, daniotin (friend outside) because his family Ominijie could not come to the funeral ceremony. Afterwards the two families Abohar and Ominijie (Obi Aboharoma) reconcile, coalesced in a united family with a common idea.

In Aboharoma there are four great families - Obre, Adjei, Aze and Uda, known as their shrine, Of these Oba came last as a refugee.

(a) The oldest man in Obre is created with the title Oiriwor Okun-Aze (Mediator) "Oriwor Agji Oiriwor".
(b) In Oze-Adjei the oldest man is created with the title Eri-Aze.

In Aze the oldest man is created with the title Eri-Aze and in Oze Udia as the Udia, Oiriwor is the senior of the elders while Ojise of all Abohar title holder presides over them in their village meeting. During the reign of Ojise the people of Aboharoma submitted against the king's request for boys for his servants, the people attacked him and in it the Oba killed their leaders with pistol. In revenge Alorokwu men went and killed nine Imozi men and women in the farm road. There was deadlock until Lt. Palmer came and the dispute was settled.

Ozara Population 3302 in 1952

Ozara, the end of our history is near the river Oboto. The people of this village belonged to Abohar in the county of the Ika tribe. They speak a different language which is neither Ika nor Bia. We believe Iduwu the founder...
or the present Uben City was an Ozara ike (Osalite). Benin history tells us that Oba G.ihe named some people to whom he gave their lane_ne. We believe that Ozara lane_ne is the lane_ne of the first inhabitants of this area. The word Ozara in Ika dialect means open field.

Ozara and A.ber have the same social life. We worship Oce (god) in a traditional temple known as Bece Bece shrine which commemorates the time Oce visited us in the shape of a boy ridden by yawo, through a mysterious old man.

Oce appeared first in the Obicca A.ber but fear did not allow the Oba to see him; seeing Obe's weakness he disappeared and appeared at Ozara in a tattered cloth at Idanu Iban quarter. When he saw a woman drawing water from well, he asked her for water to drink. The woman in a humble manner told him "sorry" that she is under menstruation flow, she cannot give her water to drink nor food to any man as she is unclean. So the spirit man went away and came to see a man and his wife sitting in Orwa. He Oce again asked for water to drink; the husband told his wife to give and fetch water for the man to drink. After drinking the water brought by the wife in a clean calabash plate (C.ber), the Bece Bece man told the husband with his wife to follow him thither. They obeyed implicitly. Nothing they reached a spot the old man Oce halted and made signs and the passages and trees began to fall and cleared magically. There came many people before the old man whose appearance and action were surprising and they feared to speak clearly the Ika A.ber ton_ne for which tradition says they spoke minimi minimi ton_ne i.e. mixed dialect.

Next thing he did when the Bece A.ber came was to get an c.ber stick and a small pot of water which he planted with the pot by it. He said, this is a convenant for love and peace between you and me and I will be with you forever but make sacrifice with a white yam on year after year and with dance and dolo. White yam that the year for the Bece did not come send a man like me in a kind of attire known as Ikonne with a white yam and past accompanied with dance and dolo in the same manner. Each year, the Oba goes there to worship in the shrine known as Bece Bece.

Hitherto, Oce established an Alter with an a.ber tree and a small pot of water for us his people to worship him with. The a.ber is immortal, it would not die or die despite rain and sun. All other trees by it die and whithered, from over a thousand years ago for that we cannot imagine the origin of a.ber less than the Christian era.

During the anniversary the Ochere Oce (the husband with his wife) sprays the water of the small pot (Ikonne) into seven calabash vessels with chalk and odum leaves which the servants carry to sprinkle in to every house in A.ber Ima-Obi for the remission of their sins. The first touch Obicca, then other doorways. They return to A.ber's house. The Oba worships it and awo-owo in alternative years accompany him with dance and dolo.

Ozara is the Bece or Jerusalem of A.ber. There we have the chalk mines upon which Oce stepped: Nsurn Nuni Ozara chike, the Chalk makes Osalite rich. Chalk has priority as it is used for medicine, food for blessing for sacrifice drinking, painting, rubbing and other things of life, sold as a commodity. The Chief of Ozara is titles/Ojiri, a member of Orwa Ebiwhi A.ber also a war leader (captain). He is responsible for assembling the populace for peace and war. The quarters in Ozara are Idanu-Iwa, Aliobi, Ali-Ibodo, Owere, Ijawule and Owu. These villages quarters did not establish one time or by one ancestor but they form a unified entity of Ozara. At
of a man's demise, but only the return of his corpse to a particular chamber enroute to Iha. From this function, the curator is known as Oweremere, the royal physicians of the Ijaw society.

Here lies the first lady of our land, the amiable wife of Ubo, the patriarch lived in the Iduma Oba quarter, once her foremost people by Ubo-Ika Community. Here too one Oba Okun or Ubo-hedje march towards a priest was believed to have flown into the sky with both body and soul by the power of medicine. Identified with Ijaw cult in those days. He had his funeral rite performed in advance.

We are told that when Ubo-Ika people rebelled Iduu their son was captured and kept under the eldest Oba who sent him to Eket Abor for service. After Iduu had become a man he left the palace and was said to have founded Aja Iduu who inaccurately Benin City. Our tradition says that many centuries after the Oba or Benin was given a girl a daughter of Esema Oki and it was she that beget Oluwa for the Oba of Benin. Oluwa (meaning) replaced with the title of Aja the Oba or Olobo of Benin.

In 1937 surveyors from Benin City came to Oku bush to map the land between Oku and Esema or Owhehiahi (Ijaw speaking people) the people of Oku resented this and fighting ensued between them and the surveyors who said they encroached upon their land but the powers that be made the people of Oku to suffer imprisonment arbitrarily. After this Oku two new found the disputed area to prevent further encroachment. Oku consists Oki-Oku, Idumu-Ika and Idumu-Obiekpe. The Chief of all is Eke Obi or eldest, and sits in Oku Adichie Abor.

5. Allahu or Alhau Pop 1662 (1722)

This village was probably established after tyrannical rules of former kings, since the inhabitants named their place Alhau, which is meant man's home shall ever exist on earth. The quarters are the head families of Idumu Obiekpe, Iduu Iwaise and Armahin. But a secondary etymology came about thus: Thau was Oba Hordu's mother. After her son defeated his brother Udu, he became Oba Eket Abor and sent her to live at the outskirts of Ijaw Ubo Abor. The original name of the village was confused to his mother's name Ijawu. She was given the Ishuan master bodyguard to keep her from the attack of his enemies. The duty of Ishuan master is thereby removed instead of other village children by turn it is assigned to Alhuau alone which is carried out when there is emergency and durian-Orihuni Festivity the palace, houses and streets are guarded against lawlessness.

6. Aruru Pop 163 in 1922 Census;

Aruru village lies outskirts of Ikobi the clan headquarter. It consists of three quarters: Aruru, Idumweni and Idumwu.

It is believed that the village was established by Ijawmen probably before Owu the great ascended on Abor throne about 1331 AD. The ancestors of this village were noted for clay pot making and the saying Aruru or kpujé just as Idumu Oso produced bronze bells and steel swords. But the pot industry collapsed when iron cooking vessels came into use. Here too we find a famous medical home for treatment of fractured bones by Owuo's family.

Cases of broken limbs are being brought for treatment from far and near and a house for the business was built in 1963. To him go our unqualified collective thanks.

There are four grades of Aja parity viz: Orkwa Oja Ukpe first grade, Orkwa - Obo Abor second grade, Olootu grade and Ikahin class from each village. When all the three villages meet in council, Iyase from Idumweni is regarded as the governor of them all, Olu Obornu, Ali-Ogwi, Ailme, Alhahin, Alhau and Aruru. Iyase is a member of Usama class in the hierarchy of Abor Chiefdom.

7. Idumweni and Idumu-Oso Pop 411 in 1922:

Idumweni became Idumu-Eni by misuse of the word. The origin of the two industrial villages is lost in memory of the modern historians. But we must remember that Abor has been a place for refuge through her military organization.
Hence we may credit the tale that Gwamu brought the men who formed Idumu-Oza from the west, and the village of Idumu-ani of the Ika indigenes joined them in making Abo, Ebeni and other ornaments of brass and bronze.

There was no blacksmithing in Abo until refugees of Ishan were absorbed during the reign of Adana, or the immigrant one, Adana or Oko-Isere taught many lads how to smith cutlasses, knives, adze heads, and so on until last fifty years when Obi of Oko and Nkwere smiths of Iron, penetrated into Abo to try their craft. Note the difference between the honorific, Oke, and the professional Okpu Ezwu.

5. Abo Was Founded 1487 (1952):

Abo was founded by a captive named Awa who was kept under Oriorwor by the Eze Abo after a war in Ora country (Kwa). In those days any captive or bondsmen was kept to work in the Chief's house or farms. Some were used according to the Obi's pleasure. After sometime Awa showed his master a plate of his private carving skill and the master was very pleased with the design. He gave him chance and materials to make another.

After a while Awa presented the plate he carved much better than the first, followed by statues and other objects which his master had to send annually to the Obi Doin. The king praised the work and loaded him with presents. Awa became an instructor to many young men. They began to produce many fanciful art works, images and so on. From that time they lived apart as an artist's colony honorifically called Abo village.

6. Allhami Pop:

Allhami was founded by Ishami, the brother-in-law to the Obi the father of Okpewu by his sister Edugu-Thami was a good man, he kept Okpewu his nephew when Obieh took over the throne. It was from his place Okpewu built his house not far from his host but later Ishami was suspected by Okpewu as the carrier of his decease to Imobi where he had enemies of his relative.

However, he was loyal and died the hero of Allhami, as itself/Thiegun.

....../92.

10. All-Ogoaw Pop:

All-Ogoaw was the first settlement to be founded by prince Okpewu after his brother Ogoaw or Uchabor had defeated him in their contest for the throne coveted by the death of Obi Allhami. Okpewu squandered the legacy of his step son (Uchabor) Iruan on his kinswoman's wife Ewe, wife of Orinze Ebi Abo. To avoid trouble he abandoned Imobi with his family to meet his uncle Ishami at Allhami. He amin bkan to suspect Ishami for carrying his words to Imobi when he had many enemies and so left his uncle to seek asylum nearby.

Meanwhile his children began to die and to avoid the ken and anger of his foes he amin abandoned it to found another place over the river Oraode bearing his name Ubo-Ogoaw because of the fine mate obtained from his village. All-Ogoaw being founded by a prince his son became a head of Allhami and Allhami in the society of Abo with the title Ero. His descendants' mate are used to pay tribute to Eze Abo during Osu-Abo festival for royal servants to sit on.

11. All-Osamor Pop 228 (1952):

This village was established by a refugee from benin city named Ubire. He was elder Osamor of Iwa. According to the chronicle of the Osu pioneers of Benin history (Yelobupe olopeople of Benin) the Oba had killed two of his chief's but the Ubire third man was timely warned and he escaped to Ebeho with three quarters of the Benin citizens. Or perhaps his was a failed revolt. In either case, the people of Abo received him warmly and protected him. They made him Osamor Eze Abo and gave him a place to live near the palace.

Ubire held the first Osamor title in Abo and was a valiant men of war (Eze Abo) and reputable in chamas. But the people of which made him to Allehin, rose against his appointment of the powerful men Ubire told the Obi to be quiet and he would persuade the runaway to return peacefully. Indeed Ubire went and convinced the indigent men. The Obi and the elders of Abo thanked the Osamor and made him leader of Allehin Orleans and Allehin known as Ihu-Osamor. Till this day, he is the governor.
After the re-organization of the hierarchy sent his next man to Oba with a large number where they formed a village known as Ali-
Ugodari, Owa. Some Aboh men mostly from Alisimieh found a home they
called Alisimieh in Owa.

Before the British came to Akwari country the two villages had
been connected with Aboh. The people of Osu were the followers of
Obi from a near fon in a city.

Ubiere returned triumphantly and the Obi and his nobles praised
Ubiere and was promoted as the Governor of Iseare, Alisimieh, Alisier
and Osu. — thus the origin of the word Ima Ovoke while the other
section was called Ima Lyase. The title name was never before the
Bini returned came to Aboh and it was to show that the stranger
cannot surpass a native in such a class or honour and distinction.
So Oluolu Iduma Ebi was appointed to senior the Ovoke.

12. Omuwa Pop 449 (1955)

This village came to Aboh protection through Chief Ubiere’s
leadership when he persuaded three for the of his Benin townmen and
Uni villagers to accompany him to Aboh.

It is these people that introduced Bini ideas and names into
Aboh although they inter-acted in Aboh society. Thus Ima was the
oracle or the royal house of Aboh is otherwise called Ima as in
Iewa the OVOKE as Oives and many of the title names also
adopted. The Chief of Omuwa is Ewea created Kukuku. He is in
the rank of Iseaiko in Owa Ndeichie Aboh.

Some of the re, u, u, u were accordingly distributed to Ibanke,
Ubiril, Oliasie, Omu a and Uwe. Some was left in Ileobi. But at
Obi the new council of Oumu was convoked and the oracle of the
Iwea suffered them that they introduced its worship thus Kukuku Omuwa. This is
a new found village called Alisimieh or artificial, its inhabitants
267 in 1952.

13. Kukuku Pop 1275 (1958)

The village was said to have been established after the campaign
in Ihean when Osomur ukwali was coming to Ileobi to fight and convert
them to Muslim faith. Aboh infantry with Ihean warriors forced
the invaders to retreat from Ekpoma.

The men and horses captured were distributed to the Osu, Iseare and
Obi. This time the Obi of Aboh sent them to Akwari and Ouche-
Ubiril. After sometimes, the people of Osu, Ubiril drove them away
because they acted differently. They returned to Aboh from
where they went. They harboured at Iwea northward where they
clashed with their neighbours people. The Aboh then told
Obe-onu-Aboh to labour them. These villages are kept on the
River Zone after Crocodile Stream. Later, he sent a Chief in
his family to control then with the title of Alasa and made him
a divided in the assembly of Osu. —


Aboh territorial boundary can be said Aboh on the South
East, Omu a River (Ethiopia) on the South. When Omu a became
the Oba of Benin he began to threaten Aboh for the ven revenge
of his father who was slain in the battle in which his palace
was destroyed with fire during the insurrection about 1770. In
this flight many Aboh people were killed and the rumour stirred
Aboh authorities to send warriors to the big jungle Ekuwuku
because Osu’s troops would come through the south flank or
through Ihean on the northward. Parapets were set on other direction
to await the enemy. Thus the foundation of Aboh Ekuwuku
by the various group of Aboh villagers under the command of
General Ubiril.

Accordingly Osu’s army came and they encountered the
formidable Aboh warriors at the spot afterwards called Ureningbe
now Umehi-Aboh where he and his troop were forced to retreat with
lamentation. When the enemy ran back Aboh sang this satirical
war song:

...../91
Osemende ya Osemende, Ya Yo
Nanu moye kola
Osemende meni ife na akpo ozun
ka afia nanu moye kola ....

Shame to Osemende after his noise and boast of invasion. He went away like the noise of market. Man's effort is truly limited.

The captives were sent to the supreme commander the Eze Abor. The men from the land were ordered and promised to be loyal to A−bor in plain and humble like tongue. Uboh the commander of A−bor army ordered the ten men to live with the A−bor soldiers thus the captive number the sojourns as Usoniye, 'ten doors'. The persons of A−bor orin in remain still as the Ika quarter and as the leadership of the village. In the past any of their males found venerable in A−bor was bound to return to O−bc−Nnau−Dein A−bor to be installed as Iro−udal or Isi−orin Eban as it is for A−bor Ekwu and Alidina men. cur.

Lany Abor posts established after this period these are Alidina, Isiaga Owa−Aluwa, in Alidina Zone and Owa−Ikoke near Ukonika Benin Road. Ekuu is astride the main trade route to the creeks and attracted settlers from neighboring towns and villages. It is divided into three main quarters O−bc−A−idii, O−bc−Abantin and O−bc−Oko−Ike. These are again divided into Idumu or quarters founded by settlers from different villages. In Ekuu we find a veritable example of Ika organization. Here every Idumu is represented in the Village assembly.

15. Alidina pop 987 (1952)

Alidina is a small village situated right in the Kwaale boundary nearly thirty miles from A−bor Imoobi the headquarter or citadel of the Ika tribe.

It is composed of two quarters Ileobi and Idumu−nde. This village was founded after A−bor and Benin war and militantly under the Uboh the eteluji of Ekuu A−bor.

It lies on the bank of river Umu which forms the trade route between A−bor and Oru, Kwaale people.

The oldest men of the whole village became Onyihi or O−ele. Beyond the junior Urobi Oluto and I−benin age class (workboys 12 to 45 years), there are four O−ele grades of which the first is Oka−Okpo, the second Oka−ebu, Oka−ebu, the Ikahi and Otu−Iko. This follows the O−bc−Nnau−Dein pattern. In the village council the Onyihi Idumu of all presides.

....../93.
He founded the site known as Ali-Ogwu not far from Alimani. After some years his children were born to die very often; he abandoned the cottage to live across the stream in order to avoid troublins and backbiting of his enemy brothers. He was a hunter; he established a settlement of his name in which afterwards described as Oto-Ogwu on account of the nets made there by which the ancestor paid his tribute to Ozu Aboh for his royal servants to use during the Oshul Eazi festival.

At the point Oto was handed to the Obi, while she and her mother lived with Ogwu in the new abode. After sometime Oriens retired from the palace of Aboh; he was given benefit of his service a wife by name Iru the mistress of the quarter Iru known as Owa Iru. As a family man he founded a home nearby known as Owa Oriens. It is important to note that the original founders of Owa are Oriens from Aboh royal houses because their father Kiyem was Chief. Oriens, of Aboh nobility. Thus Iru daughters are virtually kwu-Adan Obi of Aboh till today because Iru was betrothed to Oriens as Amuye wife; they purified the palace before Oshul Eazi is celebrated according to custom.

Ekoi the second son of Owu also founded a homestead known as Owa Iru. As are told Owu was an enterprising woman she had many more children for prince Ogwu the sages of Oto-Ogwu. She became a popular mistress of the area thus Owu Oriens, Owa Iru, Owu Ekoi, Owa Aboh, Owu, Aboh, Owu, Aboh army and so on wherever they are. All fraternity at Owa Ojiru as their capital.

Iriens have trained in the Obiace Aboh maintained the dignity of self respect loyalty to his master who conferred on him the title of Awuwe as Ezee Owu: Thus, Owu was made Aboh Asylum. From past event any Aboh renegades witch and wizard not killed were sent there as the asylum, hence we find many witches; wizards and native doctors in Owa well known in history. However, Owu Oriens is no more the seat of the king but Ojiru. Before the arrival of the British Ezee Owu had been tributary to the Dein Ezee Aboh. The okor-otuai for Owu was Aboh Chief by name Ossame-Uku-Ekoi.

In Aliro the quarter Iwuzu-Ubohi family still have important duty to perform in the Obiace Aboh particularly during funeral ceremonies of the Obi, they belong to Iwuzu family known as Iwuzu cult among whom were the Orbobon priest of Ezee Aboh. In the trail of the Bini expansion some of her refugees fled to Aboh for protection on which some were distributed to Owu (see above).

In 1892, Ubeneba caused the massacre of Owa tributaries who came to his court with Bini priestly dresses contrary to custom; the doors were closed against them, but among the victims were priests of Ezee Ubohi whose death was abominable. Aboh leaders did not support Bini's action and the matter was allowed to rest because Owu beheaded for peace. Sacrifices were made at last to appease the enem or their deity. Aboh supreme council rebuked the Obi for the barbarous act.

In 1926, Owano and Aboh Alimani and Ali-Ogwu disputed about boundary of farmland between them in the Ebi-Ogwan area. Surprisingly, the main road from Benin Asaba was used as demarcation. Such artificiality is unjust.

2. Awu or Aboh Poy 1757 (1952):

Awu is a veritable community of nine villages in Ika tribe; erroneously incorrectly named them Aboh. The foundation of this ancient place could be dated from the Ubohi Poy's times when Aboh was devastating intercommunal war against them. Ubohi was Aboh backwoods including Ubohi-Uben, Esako and Ubohi. They were all Ika nationals before the Edo expansion in the 17th century. However, the people of Awu remained loyally unanswered from the Ika folding others in Ubohi vassalage. This in the commonwealth the Obi of Awu keeps a veritable court in Aboh pattern are Udoemi, Lodoiti, Eko, Esako-Akoh, Esako-Akoh, Ezee and Qoko.

In the olden days the market at Udoemi was the forum of slave trade, middletowns from important towns in Ibo, Kanle, Aboh and Idu met there for their requirements. We are told that an Aboh woman who went to the market delivered twin babies, she was murdered because the people of Awu considered twin birth as pollution of their soil. When the report reached Aboh, arrangements were made to wa-c war against Awu but Ezee Owu quickly submitted, perceiving plighted for tolerance and to prevent massive war again his people, for that he betrothed his daughter Owuwe to Ezee Aboh; Ezee Aboh excreted her in turn to Osunder his brave knight the Obi, the grand father of the present Ochini Aboh. As punitive war was averted Aboh made a chattel or their men and women who were seized and sold as slaves until Ezee Owu concluded a treaty saying; it would be better for him to come to Aboh with a fan instead of armament, i.e. Aboh was difficult to enter.

The people of Aboh are conscious of education having elements schools and Osabie Charles College (R.O.C.I.), communal efforts and privileges, lawyers and other professionals.

***/96.
Akuma therefore went back to his camp with his wife. He had children and settlers increased that his place was named Akumazi i.e. the home of the gentleman (Innumoso). Howbeit his wife named Ogbur alias Gbulo became a popular figure in the village. Thus her cognomen Gwerrre-Gbulo in Akumazi.

Akumazi adopted the same organization of Anbor society and like other Ika towns kept a veritable Osisi. Long ago after the war in Iken town some of the captives sent there by the Obi introduced their custom of whippin, one another during festival they called "I. ba. ba" like their counterpart of Akunu. Ultimately a Fulani idea from Usoro ka i.e. missionary war.

There are elementary schools, market, postal service, and native court of justice. They have produced beautiful I. ba. ba including the mothers of Anbor Kings. The present ruler is O.A. Osaje, the name of the first woman in the Ikhran senate and first president of the customary court in Mrs. Konya a citizen of Akumazi. The mother of His H.I. Gege Ikenchauku I, the Dein Ege Anbor is Khorishch, of Akumazi origin.

5. Iboho POP 1056 (1952):

The foundation of I. ba. is dated with the expansion of the Ika race in the last century. The exodus of Eze Nkem Iba the third Son—Eze Chinwo led the Anbor scouts and because of the fine scenery populated with natural plants called I. ba. some of them settled down Amirs and some to Onicha-Uba. The place bears the plant name I. ba. Akum meaning I. ba. is very useful.

They developed the same social life which is at Anbor. In the year 1910 a customary court was built there and one citizen by name Iyake made an ascension to attend Courts at Anbor and Ibebeke. Iyake was conferred an Eze title by Eze Anbor in 1918, now among the Ika Kin-sh (Obie). The missionaries (E.I.S.) built a school which has produced illustrious sons and daughters of I. ba. on their journey towns civilization. It consists of a village called Ikuri or Ilabor. Ilabor.

6. UTUEREJAB POP 2322 (1952):

This clan was founded by a hunter named Obajo the son of a famous Ika man. Without mention Obajo could not have settled down there if he has no connection with Obior people. A stranger cannot do otherwise. Later, other families from the environment came in one by one on these was Oke, Ujeser's mother from Anbor royal house, the line of Ofulue.

.../97.
retired court messen_ or boji-boji A_bor. Much cannot be said of
the villa_e history as no record was kept before. The ancien
tics are school, maternity a native court hall and a bazaar. Little is
known of their achievements but as Ike they are closer to the soil
than Otokpo.
7. OTOKPO FOR 2-92 (1952):
The clan of Otokoko is a streamline of Ike race and made up of
now ade, Ugo-Ekpe and A_bor indi_one. There is a saying that
Otokoko and Iiwu ade made sacrifices with a ram to stop sun from
setting for them to finish the day's work assi_ne to them but
the sun ate the ram and set normally. They si_hed. It tells us
their unity and dili_ence towards works of life. Thus we find
the effort of Otokoko recently manifested in the buildin_e of an
significant townhall by self effort and so the people of umune_e.
The traces of the founde_r families are cun dtu to die. Their
population has aptitude of growth. Their Ese court is humble with
loyal subject.
5. IDUKU-ESA POP 2047 (1952):
The villa_e of Idumuu-Esa was formed by refugees from seven
quarters (Idumuu-Esa) to A_bor owing to her well organised social
structure in those days of warfare, human sacrifices slavery and
men's inhumanity to man (which of course continues). Some said
the seven men were followers of the Chief Ubiere the Osunor of
Benin City while others said they were from the neighbouring
Villa_ and Towns after the immigration of the Chief. However,
the A_bor supreme council gave them place to settle where they are
as loyal subject of A_bor in Ike.
In other words they have organised a peculiar social structure
based on very ancient Ike custom or I_lo ho_omony without kin_e,
Ese to be the head rather a government by old men in seniority of
a_e (_enteocracy). Thus the O radar of Idumuu-Esa instead of Obi
as it is in other Ike clans. Hitherto the Office of Okadaren
is not hereditary from father to his son but by end lon_e based
on parity of age graded by seniority.
In some years past a man from Idumuu-Esa appealed to the Obi
of A_bor to elect him as Ese Idumuu-Esa but His Hi_Hness Obi
A_bor bu having scrutinised his request on the line of ancient
custom and tradition refused to elect him. The applicant further
went to the Obi of Osa who also denounced him. However the people
of Idumuu-Esa have lon_e detected the rule of Oba or Obi and title
system.

4. EHIKI POP 2473 in 1952
The villa_e of Kiri was founded by hunters many years ago,
by four friends from neibhbourin_ Ike Villa_es. They are
the ancestors of the Idumu or quarters in Kiri; the most senior
of them was the O_ele in charge of the Villa_e sanctuary or the
Ancestors. The Elders sit in order of seniority in his Oon, we for
civil duties. These elders are responsible for their family
affairs.
Their social order is Ojakwe Ukpe Okwu Obecor, and Okwu Obocor.
Below them are the Ikpo who are responsible for all the labour
such as buryin_ of the dead, clearing the Villa_e roads, war when
it occurs. There is another class known as Ese as the hand of
the clan. His Office is hereditary from father to his son. Before
the arrival of the British he was tributary to Ese A_bor who sent
him there. There is A_riculture farm established by the State
Government, also School maternity and Market.
The towns that are cut of the Ike fold are Oliji, Oto, I_banke
O_ar, Enwon, Obor, E_wu-Adak. They still possess Ike lan_u_e custom and culture, but historical changes have alienated them
politically. A case in point is

I_BINIKH POP 34684 1952
This community was called Igbaniki or I_banikhi. They belong
to the race of the A_bor family. The alteration of Aki to Ake
was a mistaken deliberation of the youth in the 1946 annual conference
based on the impossible I_lo orthography of the ancstor P._ Adem. Traditio
sees the ancestor of I_bantor was a retired servant of
Ese A_bor from Kiri in A_bor kingdom and not a bought slave. Later
on, a prince named Ukuwune went there to settle but refused to
acknowled_e the servant as his equal and all_ated him a naked
slave or Igba-on-onor simply because he was his father's sword bearer.
Therefore, the titles Ese Akhi meaning Kin_e rules and or Ese lon
meaning slave Kin_e became a sequence in the community: I_boniki.

Hitherto, I_bonikhi and A_bor have a common herita_ in
language, custom and religion e., the worship of Nechu by Ese
A_bor. But in the realm of Obi Somebe the people of I_banikhi
murdered Chief Ormonor of A_bor and with this beaterity A_bor had
no alternative than to beseech them. Fruitive war ensued and
I_bonikhi was reduced to subjection in 1895.

....p.105.
However, before the arrival of the British I benki and A bor had been to fraternity as eternal friendship and brotherhood when A bor district court of justice was established in 1901, three native courts were built in A bor, I benki and I edo for all the warrant chiefs to attend each court in turn week by week. The Obi of A bor as the president. Later on, a son of Eze Aki appealed to Eze A bor to sanction him as the overlord of all Eze I benki. The Obi of A bor told him that was contrary to Ika traditional rules and regulation. Eze I benki was autonomous in their domain. He thereafter, appealed to Chief Osula from Benin to O jada and his request granted but all Eze Osula I benke refused, so the matter of him to own and carry the Ada failed yet he induced each one after the other to become a Benin citizen. Thus Ota and Olijie were also persuaded in the early thirties to Benin native administration as strangers.

CHAPTER 51:
ORTA AND OLIJIE
POP 1571 IN 1952 CENSUS

It is said that two friendly hunter Orta and Olijie founded the two villages after their return from Ibenne campaign against a missionary crusader who had aimed at spreading Islam faith in Ibenne and Ika countries. Strictly speaking, they succeeded partly in Ibenne country but utterly failed in Ika. However, as the village's developed the Obi of A bor sent his grandee to Orta as duke; afterwards the brave and loyal Olijie was also recognized as the Ayara of the Obi Olijie. It is the reason why the people of Ota observe with the people of A bor the ritual ceremony of Osin Eki at the same season while Olijie observes theirs later in order to prevent enemy disturbance while Orta are in the festival mood.

CHAPTER 52:
OKHAN OR OJAN POP 1571 IN 1952 CENSUS

The name Okhan alias O jah signifies the den of elephant where A bor hunters found much beasts in the wilderness close to Ohana river, thus the saying "Okeme oyin, o la Okhan" meaning after work elephant retires to its den.

Tradition says hunters formed the cotta called O jah. After some years a native doctor from Oge-ken Ubulu-Uku by name Eze Uku came there on business i.e. as a herbalist. After some years or so he died without anybody to inherit his thing's or name, his medicine with sacrifices but at last lost his medicine for lack of sacrifices pestilence began to harm the inhabitants of the village so they went and reported the cause and effect to Eze A bor who without delay contributed a sheep and money to the people for the appeasement. The medicine became a shrine called Eku-Uku-O jah. The sacrifice continues every year till this day.

A story of Oba's son named Ogun came to be a drama in Benin and A bor history.

Ogun's mother was an A bor woman betrothed to the Oba of Benin in those days of old. The woman bore a son to the Oba and received a name Ogun meaning medicine. It happened that Ogun disputed with his half brother about who was to be the heir to the Benin throne. As it were Ogun had no helper in the dispute so his mother left the city with her son to A bor her former town. The mother was a daughter of an Oki man of Ikpam cult in a family of the royal physician Nwaa Obonon.
The mother appealed to doctors and priests for help to her son to be the Oba of Benin. She honored O-un to Orhor ozuku (priest). O-un served the priest very well as a good hunter and taught him the Ika arts and science as able. Henceforth, O-un was called back to Benin to be the Oba. He went and became the Oba with the title of Wear. He was grateful to his warden and offered him the Aden sword which is yet in the shrine of Emuku O-un as a token of gratitude to his warden. Thus from Wear's reign, to Overseal the mother of the Oba were honorary guests and received their presents which were shared to the Oba on the throne.

APPENDIX I

1. Ohu (Cardinal), Lahu (ordinal)
2. Abuar
3. Etor
4. Enor
5. Ison
6. Ishin
7. Ee
8. Eeater
9. Itenci
10. Iri
11. Muanai
12. Abbeor
13. Aeter
14. Amorer
15. Jimose
16. Maceister
17. Maceister ni Etor ...
18. Maceister ni Maceister ...
19. Maceister ni Akunon
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1. Ohu (Cardinal), Lahu (ordinal)
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World do not do
Careless of words
So journey's blessing
Hand is wealth
Effort made
I do not do
Think not all
Kin is great
Money does not itself make a hot
Leather is no friendship
I care not
Put no blame on me
Fear
Pray head for long life
Out spoken
One's decision
Said and forget
Do right
Do not kill
I do not think so
I reach home
Health has no time
He lives
Live far
Care not all
Say few
Lau, jin, and
Sea is medicine
World knows
Look at ones hand
Think: Good always
As life ended
Life is long
Health
Decision is good or evil
Energy is high
Water is within family
Hate is in the eye
Laughter never ends
Head equally
Knows
One's own
Energy is high
No fear in heaven
Life talks
A faithful woman
Long live your head
Corrugate
Corrugate do not kill me
The strength of friendship
Travelling is well done
Travelling is well
The power of God
Power of fighting
Life is greatest
What the people say
God love me
What can I say
What I say is what I am
What can I say
Now would be
As one is
Talk and remain
Stop talk
Let it be
Leave word alone
Save me
Look at it
APPENDIX 2

MY LIFE CA$HER — By father Idanre and my mother Onyeochie told me that I was born in February 1920 at Alikina, a Village on the bank of River Uzoo in Abir district. I was named "Abirha" meaning a sojourner as a token of my father's prosperity in farming and in trade, on ivory, elephant tusks, cowwood and slavery. I was the sixth and youngest of my mother's children and twelfth of my father's (who was polygamous).

Meanwhile, my parents decided to return home (Anchon, the royal City, Oron), to see to the welfare of their ancestors. But also because the slave trade had become controversial and was declining. Before that time, my senior sister Idia and I had been sent home to take care of our grandmother, the daughter of Obi Isokwu of the ninth period. Indeed the then successor Obi Obinna was quite kind and generous to our old mother's existence. On the other hand my father's father Anchon was the 3rd Zobu, a potent personage of no mean order who controlled all herbalists and priests in Iku land.

His large compound consisted of 125 men, women, and children; I was one of the five grandsons detailed to his chamber.

He served Anchon day and night, kept the kindled fire that warmed him burning steadily, poured his palm wine, loaded his pipe, run errands and served kola nuts to his visitors among whom were the senior moralists, priests, sorcerers, and distinguished personalities of all walks of life, of that time. Indeed, I had the rare opportunity and privilege to listen to the stories told by them of our men, women and those which have animated our custom, laws, culture and folklore. Ultimately, I became a scribe historian of the Ikpa.

Besides I practised rudely how to dance, sing and play songs, totem, and dance.

In 1910, my grand father Anchon, attaining a venerable age, was honoured with the title of Irobo or 0 Be-Idah-Anchon, the Oracle of the Royal House of Abir. He died in 1920, my father in 1927, my mother in 1931, all of blessed memory.

In 1913 I entered Abir government School and in 1914 into Otu-Aron, be (Workboys' or Arobe). In 1916 I was baptised in the Roman Catholic Church, in 1922 becoming a teacher. In the same year I was transferred to Burutu when I obtained first position in the pupil teacher's examination which I was made a head teacher and catechist.

By desire for book learning knew no bound. I enrolled as an overseas student in the normal College of Preceptors, London for Arithmetic, English, and History, determined to be a proficient teacher. In the December 1924 holidays I went to Lagos where
I was cursed, scorned, reviled as a troublemaker. I would like to yell at people on the street like the patriot who said out of the six thousand blacks, black as a fit would say, 'from pole to pole, I think whatever else there be for my meaningless soul.