



A ~~Culture~~ History of Greater Agbor

By Igwabor Iduwe

This ~~is~~
the first written history of the
Ika people,
is ~~is~~ favourably dedicated to the Blessed
Memory of Ọwuuwii 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 Iduwe's descendants in Ogbe Nmụ Dein, Agbọ Ime Obi.

"Màà, Bà!"

Victor Manfredi, Boston University, 6 September 2012

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~~ ^{But} of our people. ^{we} have the right to tell our story, which for over thirty years I have been researching. 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 ~~old~~ 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 ^{how} Emuhu people made ^a ladder to worship the sky God, the flight of Uwami of Oki and Liloha of Alisimien. I shall welcome fair criticisms in order not to discourage future research. The uninformed, mostly the egoistic element in our midst, should stop ^{and respect} guessing 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 Ogane was the patriarch of our ancestors; ^{but} whence ~~that ancestor~~ ^{he} 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 Edo people as neighbours of Agbor might have 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 ~~and~~ 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 plays, marriage, death, burial, law and inheritance, shield, axe, cutlass, sword and gun-powder, ^{of} 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 patient research work. I am grateful to the elders, such as the late Eboigbodi Obiolihe, Ogun the Elema Oki, Aigbe Atalor, my aunt Onyocosi who may have lived through the reigns of six Eze Agbor, my venerable father Osahon the Eze Dibiè and Iregwáí [?] ~~Obè~~ ^{Obè} Nduw-Dein.

I am deeply grateful to M.A. Onwuejéogwu, an Anthropologist introduced to me by Obi Ikenchukwu 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 Onwuejéogwu's at University of Benin and a linguist at Harvard University, came to study Agbor intonation in 1976. That young friend of mine oversaw 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. Idewe
Obi 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 situates between the rivers Orògòdò and Ohiomor (Ossiomo), half way between Great Benin (Iduù) 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-Odon, Iyi-Ekpen, and Ezenughebe. It is also a road junction of great importance for communication and commerce in the Bendel State of Nigeria, connecting Ishàn, Sapele and Asabà. Because of the rich soil and wholesome climate, the earliest settlers were attracted to become farmers and husbandmen in the palm belt forest blossomly adorned with a variety of plant life.

Agbor state with its centre at Imeobi is surrounded by Igure and Azuwn-Agbor.

- 1. Imeobi, where the King (Obi, Eze) situates and resides with municipal authority, contains the family groups Ògbè Nmùw Dein, Ògbè Isogban, Oriru, Idumù Agbamise, Ihaikpen, Ògbè Isore, Ògbè Iwase, Obiolihe, Ihogbae and Ohumere.
- ii. Igure, the outskirts of Imeobi, consisting of Agbornta, Oki, Ozarà, Àlisimien, Ewuru, Alihami, Alihagu, Aliokpu, Aliagwa, Omumu, Alizomor, Idumù Oza, Alisor, Idumani, Alifekedè, Emuhu, Ekuku, Alidinma.

- iii. Azuwn Agbor, the backwoods, comprising the villages Owa, Olijie, Uteorikpu, Otolokpo, Isoko (or Ewohighai), Ota, Akumazi, Usonigbe, Awuw (Abavo), Igbanke, ~~the~~ (Igbanke) Ute, Ubejie, Obior, Idumuesa, Ekpun, Ibodo, Mbiri, Nmùw-Edè, Agbudu Akan. Thus ^{the whole of} metropolitan Agbor, ~~the~~ citadel and fountain-head of the Ika State.

The Òbi or Eze is the symbol of Unity, the most powerful figure in the State area. ~~Here~~ We find ^{him in} the Obicze or palace ^{with his} hierarchy of nobles in the cabinet, Ndichien Agbor. The Dein, Eze Agbor ruled through his governors posted to all the villages of his kingdom, ^{encompassing} over 50,000 inhabitants in approximately 110 square miles, ^{or} about one half in numbers and in size of ^{the area} Ika, as a whole. (Àlìh hùw kà m).

(b) The traditional Monarchy: Agbor cherishes the Ezèship institution and designates the king as Ezè or Dein. The Office of Dein Eze Agbor is hereditary from father to ~~the~~ senior son. No female ruler is allowed on Agbor throne. Every Eze Agbor is an Ogbea-Nmùw-Dein born. Every Agbor citizen is obliged to support the Eze and regard him as a brother, ^{and the} as a friend of all. Any wrecklessness ^{he} treats ^s 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 ~~our~~ the native law and custom with justice and equity, ^{as} 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

òrgwa ndichien, Idumu, or obiezè. Every village owns land and the Eze is the overlord trustee of ^{all} land held in common.

(c) Language: Agbor speaks the Ika dialect, akin to other Igbo ^{tongues, but the special vehicle of} dialects. The ~~Agbor tongue~~ represents the Ika culture and image. It is distinct and dissimilar from Edo language

and Vice Versa, even though some say that Agbor was once under the Oba's rule. This was so when Benin 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: Agbors liberated themselves before the 18th Century. "Oru asuw Igbo; Igbo asuw Ika": From this saying Agbor appears to be the cradle of the Ika dialect and the citadel of Igbo heroes.

(d) 1st Dynasty, Ògèl e, C.700 B.C.:

Ògèl e was the patriarch of the earliest native inhabitants of Agbòr 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 Ilé Ifé and Òyó and afterwards returned to settle in this place known as Agbòr. His Sanctuary in the lonely valley was marked with an egbon tree, now in a sacred grove called Uba-abor in Agbornta (formerly called Òminijé). The priest is Oriorwor whose salutation is Oriorwor Oken Eze. Thus very newly installed Eze Agbòr worships there for blessing of his office. Ogelle in his significance may be called the sun-god of our race; the ancient people used these words in his praise:

Nnam Ògèl e Okeduwe, a_gbagbara
 Anwun ama òsà.
 Owíwi Òdokwama,
 Ugi meni-oru*

"Our father Ògèl e 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. ^{and} in Ika Ògèl e is the title of the Oldest noble man in any village; no stranger however rich or powerful could be eligible to it.

Tradition is silent as to Ògèl e's native place, for ~~he~~ 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 Agbor. It may be his name that the early travellers or foreigners used in naming the Nigerian or ^{Guinea} seaboard as the ^{Guinea} ~~Coast~~ ^{or ~~Coast~~ ~~Western~~ ~~of~~ ~~Guinea~~ ~~Coast~~} ^{or ~~Coast~~ ~~Western~~ ~~of~~ ~~Guinea~~ ~~Coast~~}.

Ika was Ògèl e'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 Èken, Orié, Afór and Ìkwor, traditionally immortalised as the names of the four market days in the native four day week. By the token of Ògèl e and Ika as sea priest and priestess, those Agbòr born seldomly perish by drowning in the waters of Okunimane (Sea or Ocean) Ohimì (River Ìrìcr) and Ohiomor (Èssiomor river), and hence are called children of the sea god: Agbòr Amuwo Òlokun. Thus one Ekpwu, carrying a load of ropes over the log bridge, slipped into the waters of Ohiomor. After seven days in the river he emerged to tell his story that he reached the town beneath; where the mistress ^{appeared} ~~came~~ and enquired why ~~she~~ ^{he} came. After explaining ^{his} ~~her~~ cause ^{he was told by} the mistress: ~~and~~ "I have made covenant with your father Ogelic. I cannot keep you but if you wished to die you should go to river Oghuac or other for no Agbor born shall perish here." ^{he} ~~she~~ then found ^{himself} ~~himself~~ on top of the water and was ^{rescued} ~~rescued~~ (1940).

(e) 2nd Dynasty: Nze: The beginning of Ezechip (monarchy):

By Obieze Agbor is meant the palace of the pontiff, regarded as the shrine of the Ika nation. ~~This Obieze of all Obiezes~~ grew gradually from ^{himself} ~~himself~~ patriarchal lineage to the monarchical heritage it ~~now~~ ^{still} bears.

Obi denotes the heart or the first dwelling place of a race or the personality. Eze the head man, chief or king.

It is important to detail how Agbor has evolved a royal house, the pride of the Ika race. We are informed that Agbor had no king, but were under the rule of priests 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 Oluotu 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 ^{the} 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 ipami cult and the iwaiseh society also the agbalanze chant during the famous Osireze ~~cele~~ celebration. Nze lived at Oki near Agbornta as the Curator i.e. Oyborbon or priest in charge of Agbor antiquities some of which cannot the shrines in Oki. In the past the Iwaise 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 Orié, who had no child of her own but was lovingly kind to children, and so bore the nickname nmem Odede or nne nmunduw 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 preparations;

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

On the day of the contest all the boys gathered and shooting commenced one after the other. Then a yaws-ridden girl (Nkanka Ori) whispered to her old father that Igidi, a son of Nze was not present, so Igidi was sent for. When the messenger got to Orié'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 Ota-Oruru, and drew a broom stick, mkpisi-eziza, 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 Igolo. 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: "Iyu wuw eze! Amériwé! Iyu ni nmúw nne!" You are the prince, and with thine brethren no conquest. No enemy shall sully thee, He gave to him chalk and a curved scimitar with which to lord it over the estate. The scimitar, ^{mpama or} opin (matchet) was later called ada (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 Igolo, agbarim Igolo
baba, baba agbarim Igolo, agbarim Igolo,
Ota ejije agbarini Igolo,
Ota akan agbarini Igolo, agbarim Igolo"

"Mother, mother, I shot the star-bright target,
 Father, father, I shot the star-bright target,
 while the ejije beaded bow, the akan beaded bow,
 all missed, I shot the Igolo.

When Orié heard the voice of Igidi she was agrieved with anger thinking someone had flogged 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 foresaw the danger and decided to remove his son to a safe place. He took leave of the elders and fled with Igidi after much unrest to this ~~swamp~~ spot he named Agbor, namely the eternal city or immortal soil on which the seed of the family shall grow. Agbor means ~~a~~ swamp, and also a race or lineage. ^{There} 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 engineered by his brethren and won. The place was popularly called Ali-Igidi the land of bravery even till this day but because of its social institutions and romantic life it became known as Agbor our family city. From that time Agbor Imeobi became a place of pilgrimage and a royal court.

After some years of achievements Nze died. His burial ground is known as the Olor-Akan or Ihu Nze, the old home of Agbor 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 Ofor became the royal pantheon, the well known ofor nze. Agbornta and Oki refused to allow the body of the hero to be buried in Imeobi but to carry it to either ominijie or Oki. As that could not be done

the people cut their own Ofor-nze staff and refused to recognize Ofor-Igidi. From that time civil war and general unrest burst between the three families. Subjugated though the people were, yet they broke off and named themselves Agbörnta, small Agbor. The feud has long vanished into history.

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CHAPTER 5:

(f) 3rd Dynasty: Dein C. 1270: Dein⁴ was named Ebonka before he left home for adventure, to become a soldier in a foreign army probably in Nupe or Yoruba war. He returned home when he was declining in age. He was made Olu⁴tu or emperor to lead his people to war or to any emergency, as Ogele⁴ had established. The⁴he became known as Dein a title of a warrior under whom he served abroad named Bennedito Dein a French Officer from Timbuctu C1230 AD (this is at least one possible source of the name).

Dein ~~was~~ detested 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 Ugben the penalty of which if disobeyed was capital punishment after the day's sunset. Ugben 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 scorch of fire. This name became a legend in Agbor history that every Agbor ruler is Dein and his wife (nwunyen Dein) his children (nmaw Dein) his counsellors 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. (Iguma Ihian).

As a matter of importance Dein's rule was already 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 youngman by name Ig⁴budu (an expert harp^{ist} and singer and wrestler), popularly nicknamed "Ezeokorobia" (the king of the youngmen). He was strong like a giant. Their marriage was blissful with sons and daughters. One of them named Owu⁴wu was born with Ire-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 regalia 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 she made with agate beads to be the first queen on Agbor throne, but on the eve of her installation and coronation she saw her menstruation flow. Alas, she was forbidden to enter holy places and touch holy things of Agbor sacred institutions.

Upon this disappointment her husband Ig⁴budu 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, ^{his} crooked leg ^{covered} with sores and a wizard who had been suspected of killing children and promising youngmen. ~~So he was~~ ^{he was lynched} charged without defence ~~he was~~ mobbed. Ufu tried to quell the rioters by aid from neighbouring towns and villages but her effort proved abortive. Ig⁴budu abdicated and was forced to take refuge. With a few of his orchestra he travelled to Esan ~~or~~ (Ishan) country at Udo. According to tradition Ig⁴budu 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.

(EZE PERIODS)

The children of Dein were still ^{at} with daggers drawn; many were slaughtered, tortured and driven away for the new order their father had established. Hence we find Dein's descendants abundant outside Agbor where they are as princes and kings. Igudu died and was buried honourably outside the hero's cemetery Olor-Akan or Iyurze about 1300.

When Owuuwu returned from training abroad fully matured, his brothers made him Eze Agbor and the important properties of Oleken were transferred to him. The oldest man named Akan of Dein's children was elected as their priest of the ~~peep~~ ancestors and given the title of Irogwai, the tongue of the people. They established another tabernacle Aliogbe and abandoned that of Oleken but made Oleken's son never to touch and worship the new Ofor- Aliogbe and gave him a nickname Okworhi as his title. Till this day Okworhi is forbidden to enter the Obieze (palace) and Eze Agbor is also forbidden to enter the Okworhi's quarter in Idumugboh. Thus when Okworhi happened to enter the palace building, a sacrifice must be made to wipe away the sin of his footprint.

(a) Owuuwu the Great: First Eze period about AD 1440. After many years of republican rule Owuuwu was made eze-Agbor by his paternal brothers. He ruled with the crown on his head and sword ada in his hand as the first monarch to realise the reality of his mother Ufu'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 Oken eze, great king.

Owuuwu 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 Sapele river on the south and the Iduu 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 refractor was doomed, so Agbor had to engage in many wars. Captives and fugitives worked for the Umuw Dein. The descendants of Nze and Dein from ages past stayed thereby secure from want and molestation.

Owuuwu was wise. He is responsible for most of the Agbor legal code. The people had no Eze before Owuuwu in the real sense of the word; they resembled the Igbos 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 Agbors need rain fall they should call on him seven times with a sacrifice of one she-goat (Odegbe ewu). The stool Owuuwu used for state affairs is the symbolic Ukpo-Owuuwu in the Obieze, the sword of state is the symbolic Eze-Ada with its mysticism amidst other antiquities in the palace sanctuary or museum.

(b) SECOND EZE PERIOD ABOUT AD 1474 - AKINA: Akina succeeded his ^{brother} ~~son~~ Owuuwu 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 decadent ^{or} rule and worship. Besides Oleken was ugly, ^{of} crooked legs and fickle mind. ~~They~~ They elected Akina's brother, Akina being the oldest man and most eloquent and witty, their priest, and called him Iregwai, the tongue or spokesman in the senate (Ekueme), and the Oracle of the royal house. Thus the origin of the present Ali-Ogbe in Ogbe Nmuw-Dein priesthood.

But when the tension became high Oleken escaped through his back door. A year after his abscondment the old okpookpoo bag containing Ofor staff of the ancestors was removed and condemned. Three years after Oleken returned home from Mbiann 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 spot known as Ihyuka, 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 Idumuugbo. Orkworhi ~~may~~ may attend Ogwa Nmuw-Dein but not touch or throw kola-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 remit the sin of his foot-step.

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 owuuwu's method. During his ~~early~~ reign the law was established that stranger and bondsmen 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 Nwaigbon or Ibiedo (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 Nmuw-Dein street bears his name; ~~the~~ Ogbe Akina. His junior brother Ugbo's name is borne by another quarter, Idumu-Ugbo 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-Nmuw-Dein village.

Third Eze period About AD 1522 - Agho: Agho the third son of Owuuwu became Eze 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 ~~off~~ said condition that something worthy needs be done for him. He was the owner of the present farm read he constructed for Ogbe Nmuw-Dein in his early days of youth. He planted an Egbon tree before reaching Ebuogba of his

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memory when he was called to the throne, thus Ihyun Nmor Agbo shrine. Every farmer after harvesting ties 3 yams to serve ^{as} the shrine of his name. till this day.

Agbo's mother, Ekorma from Owerre in Ozarra, was not only beautiful; Agbo himself was handsome, courageous and upright. Every ^{one} liked his company.

On the celebration of the first Osihezi festival he was stoned with a poisonous egg but the royal physician quickly pucked it up and no harm was done. The people of ~~U~~ Idumu-Ugbo were suspected of this act because they disliked a tyrant or single ruler. At last Agbor Security Council decided to change the ~~policy~~ policy of Ichaun gangsters and the youth of any village called upon were to perform the duty of Ichaun during festival and during emergency. ~~Not~~ Not to carry dangerous weapon during the festival, but only to arm themselves with shield and cudgel. No Obi or his wife ^{any of} enters Idumu 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 old age with gift for his good services. Thus the antics of Igbantor village of Igbanke. He was sadly mourned by all, friends or foes. Agbo's family still survives as a unit in Ogbe-Nmuv-Dein ImeObi Agbor.

Fourth Eze Period - About AD 1569-Ahisama: Ahisama was installed Eze Agbor, but a man of fashion and fond of women. He befriended a harlot named Igwe who came to Agbor from Benin where she had two sons before she eloped to Agbor. But it was ~~against~~ against Agbor custom for a king to bring a whore to his harem. As this was outrageous, his many wives were ordered by Irogwai and the elders to quit the harem for the harlot. The townsmen also forsook the palace. By that time Igwe had

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conceived by the Obi and delivered a male, named Omasio, (it is good).

After a time both the couple began to feel their lonely predicament. Ahisama was obliged to go and consult an oracle in a far away divination priest. There the seer predicted a sacrifice with a strange woman a cow and 200 empty tied knots and faggots without fire. Ahisama cleverly caught a cow and prepared the empty knots when he came back home. But how and where to get a woman not Agbor born became a puzzle, because all the slaves had deserted. Eventually, Ahisama made sacrifice with a cow and the knots any how as half done. Igwe then called on the king "my dear 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 thereafter jumped into the pit already dug for the cow and started to cover herself up. As her spark of life was fading Ahisama 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 women 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 townsmen 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 ~~royalty~~ 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 beat 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 Aboh. Note that the word Agbor is erroneously called Aboh. Even in Newspaper announcement Eze Aboh is sometime quoted as Eze Agbor. The story that the Eze Aboh hailed from Iduu (Benin) is newly concocted; Agbor tradition carries a great similarity of culture between Ika and Aboh language as a matter of historical fact. It seems to me the people of the Igbo hegemony liked to claim Iduu more than Ika or Igbo 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 Nagbode - each person holds a fagot, ^{or}shrub called Ibiewere 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 ^{part} clause 3.

Ahisama lived happily until he slept with his fathers. ^{his name} ~~was~~
~~Ahisama is a name~~ ^{is commed by} of a family in Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein.

(e) Fifth Eze period - Ofuehdo About AD 1625: 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 Ibidein 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 Isimpe, Ijeme and Ahama, and to the forest now Aniocha division when there was rumour of War between the Kiree people and Aboh people. The Kiree immigrants from the East Niger (Savage fugitives) ^{a prince of the} killed the ~~son of Aboh King~~ ^{the} ~~on~~ ^{and rendered the invaders} return march sent a fleet of canoes, ~~The savages 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, Aboakpa long before the incursion of renegades from Igara domain into the jungle (Egboko Ohimi).

After some years of valiant skirmishes came the exodus of Prince Kime or Eze Chima from Agbor due to a dynastic quarrel. Prince Chima is the aegis of Onicha-Ugbo, Onicha-Olona, Onicha-Okwu, Onicha-Mirin. They still possess Ika 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.

Hitherto the strangers hardly distinguish the Agbor from Benin because of their similar names, facial marks and manners. In fact they called them all Bini probably because of the fame of the Bini King (Oba). Truly speaking no two kings can be equals in status; so the praises of one lowers the respect of the other to wit, notwithstanding that Eze Agbor was traditionally the Supreme head of the Ika kings; we are told that the last phase of homage to Agbor monarchy was when the people of Ezi came to mourn the death of Obi Obanor C. 1825, they fired many gun shots and Agbor people were marvelled and terrified because they had no such arms. From that time the Okor Eze Agbor could not go again to demand tribute from Ezi people.

(f) sixth period about AD 1650 - Oseeh Oseeh was installed Eze Agbor after he had defeated Okpwo his brother who was born same day by different mother. The birth of Oseeh was reported first to their father and the necessary rite was performed for him. The birth of Okpwo was, though first but not reported in due time; because of this dereliction Okpwo could not be heir to the throne according to custom.

After a while, Oseeh began to suffer nose pain said to be poison. It is shameful for a King to have such deformity, As a result, Oseeh decided to hand over the throne to his lineal relation who had been very kind to him in his awful plight, by name Ogwade, by public declaration; hence the adage Oseeh ~~the~~ Eze me Ohuma "Oseeh dashed away his crown".

When Ewezai the senior son of Oseeh grew up, he wanted Ogwade to leave the throne for him; his request was turned down by the kingmakers. Ewezai became annoyed and caused great unrest. His mother's relations at Alisimien sided him, but unsatisfied he took away the Ofor (Staff of Office) and hid it. He was persuaded to return it.

After all this, the kingmakers thought it expedient to reward Ewezai with the most senior executive title member in the Inner Chamber of the royal palace and include him as one of the ~~king~~ kingmaker and divider in the Council of Ndichen Agbor as a token of his father's goodwill. Oweeh 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 beachalor.

It came to pass that when Oweeh Obuseh died, Chief Mordi the Osagwe of Agbor played tricks to usurp Oweeh's title but failed. His son J.B. Obuseh, became the Oweeh in 1936.

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

(g) Seventh period About AD 1660 - Ogwade Ogwade was made Eze Agbor by his senior brother Oseeh 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 Isogban a doctor from Ozara who knew much about healing snake bite and Edide, (poisonous element of war). He allotted him a place near his paternal brother Ogbenmudein. For his name the place is known as Ogbe-Isogban where the Obi sent another man of his choice as their leader. He is the palace physician with the title of Ajaeh.

Ogwade converted the use of Ogodor manuw (palm oil well) from killing criminals to the use of the royal household. But later on, Ogodor manuw was disused when European marchants came to the coastal stations at Aboh, Itelegu and Koko in the reign of Obi Gbenoba in the middle of eighteen century when demanded 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) Eight period about AD 1698 - Adigwe: Adigwe succeeded Ogwade his father as the Eze Agbor. Before the installation Kime the son of Oseeh'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~~ for soup. She was caught and beaten mercilessly, and died next day. Kime was charged as the sender of his servant Ebu to flog the old mother, but Adigwe set Kime free and punished Ebu by hanging.

Kime later plotted against Adigwe; consequently, the people of Alisimien revolted under the pretence that their daughter's son Kime was cheated and that Adigwe should abdicate. They attacked the Obizeze (palace) and the senate house and took the Ofor Aliogbe Nmuw-Dein away. Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein, became infuriated, raided Alisimien. Kime was hotly pursued; Akuma₂1 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 surjourned to many areas around the west and East of the River Niger.

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

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

When Kime died, Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein refused to accord him burial, for his abominable act of carrying the Ofor across the stream. Ubiere the Izomor Eze Agbor went and recalled the Alisimien deserters; from that time Adigwe made him the leader of Alisimien including Ozarra Aliso and Omumu, all known as Ihu Izomor. Furthermore various quarters in Ime-Obi were given chance to settle in the place known as Alijemisi with a view to lessen constant insurrection of Alisimien in the Kingdom. The Obi sent a Chief there with the title of Ekpenike to control them after ^{Nmordu's} Nmodu'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 Adesuwa's murder by the Eze Oburu. Crossing unescorted, thus in violation of Ika national law, they were interrogated and executed (^{of} Wars, Chapter 53). Adigwe's death was mourned by all Agbor, Oru and Ozor-Igbo. Heads were shaved and markets held otherwise. His name remains a family house in Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein.

(1) The Ninth period About AD 1740 - Nmordu (The ancestors, Lead)
Nwadein Nmordu (Mordu) left home when he was young to study the arts of medicine and warfare. During his absence his father died, and his ^{half} younger brother Udu became regent. But later on Nmordu returned

Nmordu or Mordu the ninth period about 1740 AD. Nwadein Mordu became Eze Agbor 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 Adigwe ascended the throne and his mother too never slept in orinze Oweh's house with his father before the obishop installation and coronation which preceded Iguekum cult in the harem by the Ipami society according to ancient custom and only a son thereof should be heir apparent. The Ipami members are the composition of Iwaise cult of the Orbonbon family from Ihu Iyase, Ihu Ozomo, Imeobi and Idumue Ugbala in Owa-Aliro.

However Mordu mother's name was Ukpere a daughter of an Ika herbalist from Irebor 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 successor to Agbor throne.

Hitherto, Nwadein 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. *the* Chief Eunuch was charged of corruption and was hanged publicly.

Albeit Agbor hierarchy of noble elders tried to intervene into the dispute but to no avail; Udu notwithstanding vehemently plotted assassination of Mordu. Iworkpo the Chief Eunuch was charged of corruption and hanged publicly, in view of which the wisemen 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 "Ekpenike" i.e. bushman in Bini 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 Agbor.

Thus from the episode we find Ihogbe Ihaikpen and Ogbe akina or Ogbe akaka and other words Ogbe and Idumu Agbor names of quarters and streets in the city of Benin.

Mordu introduced Bini system of government with such titles Uzama, Igbaigho and Ifiorkpo. *in the new government.* But the old system of the Ika organisation gerontocracy remained unaltered that is orkwa-ukpo, Orkwa-Obe ebuo, orkwa obe-etor (institution)

Mordu also changed the office of Idofin to oviah like Olihc of Benin in Uzama. There was a slogan kwofu K'oviah me dian Idofin while it was trick by the Idibodein to award the Ifofin title to oviah the king's loyal friend from Alisimicn as the priminister with the title of Oviah to be greeted Eteruma instead of Idofin the counterpart of Olihc of Benin in Uzama class.

Mordu made Udu's son as the duke of Alijemisi a village close to Ogbenmudein fraternity and conferred to him a title of Ekpenike which name the Oba of Benin ~~pre-derived~~ derided Udu his father at the tribunal but to be his foot stool while on the throne till this day, ~~an~~ Mordu's reign of terror. Mordu's supporters were victimized consequently many took refuge to villages and towns as we trace ^{down a stream} them in the ^{country side} neighbourhood. Mordu named his

first son Obano that is like Oba his friend. Frankly speaking mordu was a powerful ruler he used to send some of the things he received as tribute to the Oba as a reflection of friendship *and courtesy* but later on the people of Agbor ~~she~~ rebelled against Mordu for his act of sending things to Oba Benin. During the insurrection Mordu contrived artificial tabernacle at Ihogbe in the quarters of Obis retired servants and another at Obiolih the quarters of his friend, ^{until his day} when Ogbenmudein elders ^{showed} him, but at last ^{reconciled} reconciled with his brethren ^{by peace and harmony before he} that is Mordu slept with his fathers ie (Mkpme otiggi or Ufere cfeh or Ihen amasi). Mordu was buried in the famous Ihyu-Nze the kings cemetery and was survived by many wives and many children of which the author's grand mother ^{named her} ~~was~~ ^{was} his last daughter ^{and she died in 1906.}

(j) The tenth period, About AD 1820 - Obanor: Obanor reigned after Nmordu, ~~around~~ 1820. Obanor had his training locally. He was kind and sympathetic, black and stout, and wise. From childhood a keen farmer, and a hunter, he developed leadership qualities. He kept the prestige of Agbor supreme authority despite wars and molestations. Agbor was constantly at war with Igara people who used to molest people along the river Ohimi. At that time Eze Obior was the vassal lord of that area of Agbor Kingdom now called Asaba division while Eze Aboh on the other side paid tribute to Agbor as supreme head. When Umoru Magijih one of the leaders in Othman Danfodio's army of Muslim crusade sent a message of his coming to Ika, the Dein of Agbor informed all the Ika sub-towns to send 140 men each to meet him when it was learnt Umoru was coming to war them.

Obano lived so long on the throne that his son Igbenije sent his own grey hair to him. On receipt of it the fortunate old king became angry of his son's anxiety to be the king of Agbor. So he prepared a poison and put it into the vessel which he used for washing. The son inherited the property of his father including the vessel already poisoned, and in the seventh month of his succession he was afflicted with sickness as a result of which he died.

Obanor was an upright king; there was peace and prosperity throughout his long reign. He was buried in the Olor-Akan. Men, women and children, townsmen and villagers, attended his mourning with presents. He was survived by many children and grandchildren. Thus his image, the family of Nmuw-Obanor in Ogbe Nmuw-Dein.

(k) The eleventh period, About AD 1855 - Igbenije: Igbenije succeeded his father according to the pertinent rule of primogeniture which was invoked following the dispute and caos which had plagued Nmordu's succession to the throne.

(l) Igbenije 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 issued, he was quite old before he reigned. He was not mourned as much for his short period and unpleasantness. His son Oddin was also becoming old.

(1) The twelveth period - AD 1860 - Oddin: Oddin succeeded his father Igbenije 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 Obanor to Eze Oburu his daughter named Onyedumeku was given to Oddin in marriage and she begot a son named Obenoba, (I rely on Oba), a meaning reflecting the result of Oba's tribunal to his grandfather Nmordu.

Oddin was a tall slender man, eloquent and shrewd. He liked fighting and wished his son to be warlike too, in order to exercise greater influence in the kingdom. Brave and valiant Oddin was: he attacked Egbudu Akan, whose Eze by name Iroh harboured a murderer named Osahon and for refusing to answer the king's call for a judgment of the murderer whose wife was arrested by creditors sons over husband thus kill one of them with a gun shot and rescued his wife and ran to Iroh's house.

When Agbor besieged Egbudu and razed their houses, their streets littered with blood of the dead and wounded. Because of the ruthlessness and forcidity of Agbor warriors the people of Egbudu Akan never forgot the pangs of their defeat; wished British by request in 1915 to separate them from Agbor district administration for reason of past maladministration see clause 4 Agbor Military Campaigns page.

After sometimes Owa Ofien 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 begged for mutual settlement by sending cow, goats and other things to Agbor for the misconduct of his people.

Oddin wanted Ihu Iyase to subscribed boys and girls in their turn for royal service. When they refused, he went there to ascertain their grievance but at Agbornta he was attacked. He fought back in defence and killed two men with a gun shot. After sometime peace was reastored. Itamozun was also destroyed by his order because the inhabitants became a menance to travellers and traders in the area between Emuhu and Mbiri.

His brave name was Enwuwn Agba 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 Ihyu Nze. Market (afia Ogologo) held and hair shaved for mourning according to custom.

(a) Thirteenth Period, About AD 1890 - Gbenoba: Gbenoba ascended on the throne at forty in 1890. ~~His reign~~ His reign was eventful and turbulent. Had 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 viasage, so much reputed in wars, though aggressive to a foe and quck 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 Eluma claimed to be the first born and successor of their father on the throne.

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

and quarrel.

Gbenoba was trained in the hands of strongmen in different places but lastly at Nmuw-Ede, Chief Osian'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 Gbenoba was recalled back home his friend Irabor accompanied him, and was made a regular consultant, but without a royal title with his appellative name Uroko a mere title (of his giminastic dance).

His main faults were the die-hard youngmen he selected as his body guard known as the royal scrvante (Ibiogwai) some of whom he equipped with weapons muskets (adaka) with which unjustifiable crueltics 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 Ofien envoys to his court because some of them were oracle priest attire thus appearing conspirational. In 1894-5, he besieged and conquered Igbanke for the murder of his Chief Ozomor. The conflict started when an Igbanke 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 Ozzi-agbu-Okor 'messenger is not to be killed.' This ordeal made his people very angry and anxious for revenge. It was then that Igbanke took advantage of an Ozomor entourage passing to a neighbouring village.

In 1896-7, came Gbenoba's onslaught of Agbornta, sparked by their delay in sending boys as palace servants, as was the customary arrangement of tribute. In the same year Edeki the wife of Ojel of Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein, Akina family was mobbed because she profiteered by selling a leg of a stag (oruw-mgbadan) for 30 cowries instead of 20 against the order of the senate (Ogwa ndichken Agbor). Her three daughters were betrothed to the lords Ovia, Akpara and Otiku in nwnyen marriage.

Subsequently came the fight between Ogbe-Etor and Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein because women of the latter who went to fetch firewood from Nmuw-ekel's village farm were assaulted and their wood seized. In the fight Irabor Ijeruma was wounded with a crossbow arrow but died after four days for which the Obi prevailed on Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein to call out the shooter for trial as a murderer. Ndihie refused on the ground that the victim did not die instantly or on that very day he was shot; they became desperate and revolted against the stern order and injustice, drove Nmuw-ekel away from their home. They ran away burning resentment from Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein land including the Obi's palace ground to live with their extraneous relative Ogbe-Isore. The insurrection lasted for more two years. The Obi having lost the divine service of his brethren went away on voluntary exile to Akumazi his mother's home town but the people of Nmuw-Ede appealed to him and gave him a royal shelter until they and Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein negotiated for peace. All village heads and important personalities took part in the negotiation before Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein called the shooter by name Nmorka. Egwelegwe to commit suicide for sake of peace and order. Afterwards the Obi returned to his palace.

Prince Eweka of Benin was seen at Ozara village as fugitive. He was apprehended and taken to the Obi of Agbor who after careful probe ordered the Prince to go back to Benin without further molestation. After sometime the same Prince was seen passing by Ogbe-Nmuw-Dein men while in meeting in their senate house Ughere. They halted the prince and his followers as offenders without escort for unlawful entry. The intruders were beaten up and taken to the Palace. Prince Eweka after narrating his story about his father Overami's exile by the British the Obi shared sympathy and upbraided his men for their action and instructed one of his chiefs Mgbor of Ogbe Isore to house the Prince until armed youngmen escort him back to Iduu. But on reaching Benin the party was detained. When Bini Chiefs distorted the incident, the colonial officer then despatched police constables to Agbor- thus the

leaders were arrested and some were imprisoned.

Unexpectedly traders and missionaries came one by one, European goods spread and some men and women were converted to christianity. This time a British patrol took place to Agbor. Agbor kingdom was brought under the British rule and became the administrative station for the Ika, Asaba, Kwale and Isan peoples. A school was opened for boys and girls and other government offices in the frontage of the palace ground in 1901. In 1906, the first Agbor District Commissioner Mr. O.S. Crowe was murdered at Owanta. That caused a great set back in the progressive administration of Agbor district. Later, on however, churches were built. Telegraph, P.M.D. Hospital, prisons 1903 - 1907.

Obenoba fell ill and died in 1909¹². Men and women including all the village rulers in the kingdom shaved their heads, the markets held on streets (afia ogologo) for mourning according to ancient custom. He was survived by many children and grandchildren. (n) Fourteenth Period About 1914 - Agborbu: Agborbu reigned as Eze Agbor in 1914-29. He was educated in Agbor Government School. He could not preserve the custom handed down to him due to British interference. Many of the villages traditionally under his control broke away some to Benin, to Isan, to Aboh, to Asaba divisions for this and that, Agbor sphere of authority became pale; each village claimed independence of its clan head. The British participated actively in the divide and rule in Agbor.

Agbor District was amalgamated into Asaba division in 1918 when Igbanke, Orta, Olijic, Ogan and Usonigbe broke away. Ekpon to Isan and Obior and Egbudu to Ogwashi-Uku Districts respectively; Agbor no longer enjoy its former authority from that time.

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Disorder arose between villages about boundaries. In 1926 Owanta claimed a portion of farmland belonging to Agbor Aliorkpu; and Agbor Ibaikpen situated in Boji-Boji's area. Otta and Ogbemudein had boundary disputes in 1936. The first world war and epidemic (influenza) reged in 1918. Fire destroyed Agbor district office records in the same year. Chief Ovia murdered his wife Egwor and committed suside in 1919. Poll Tax was introduced in 1921.

Agborbu was on the throne for 15 years and was survived by 20 wives and 15 children. He was burried in Royal Cementary Olor Akan.

(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 Egwun's place. His uncle John Ekaeze was appointed regent (Onu-Obi). The period of interrqqmm 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 Nwaagbor raised glaom 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, Ijebuode, Ibadan, Ille-Ife, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Port-Harcourt, Calabar and Onitsha. 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 or the former village heads who styled themselves 'Obi' instead of Ayuwe (Chief) Obika stoutly refused to listen to the unfair policy and would not attend council in whcih his subordinates would meet him as his equals.

In the late Routies political parties sprang up. He remained neutral for sometimes, while his subjects supported the two parties NCNC and AG. The majority became NCNC partisan. They wanted him naural rulers to support them but this honourable ruller heaitated 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.G. to increase taxation. They marched to his Palace, caused damages to his car and property and attacked some of his chief Akpara, Oguden 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 becine A.G. partisan.

In the election of 1959 he showed himself as an able leader and won for the A.G. 5 seats out of the 14 seats in his clan and majority in Ika Local Council of 42 seats in which A. G. won 22 against N.C.N.C. 20. The Obi was therefore congratulated and the Western Government made him a Minister of State without portfolio and Edward Anuku 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.N.C. during the Campaign for the Creation of Mid-West, 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 Obliging. When the people of Ota encroached upon a part of Agbor Ogbemudein land, he stired the sleeping lion to wake; the two sides engaged in bloody

fight. Oge-Nmuw-Dein fighters chased the opponent away and damaged their fortresses by burning, capturing and looting. H.H. Obika sought quick aid of the Police to quell the situation. He helped the needy and patriotic. At last the government ordered that pegs be put to demarcate their boundary to avoid further encroachment.

Obi Dein Obika was sagacious and of calm disposition. He only observed the Agbor yearly Osihesi festival 10 times instead of 32 during his reign, due to high cost of things. Land tenure was not properly controlled because he the Obi was selfish and rapacious. He did not sell village land which he held as the chief trustee. At any time he wanted the usage of land he applied to the village land owner. He had rubber plantation at Ozarra, Akuku, but the one at Emuhu and Ogbemudien bush caused quarrels between two

However, Obika commanded the respect of his people. His heir apparent Usialele died prematurely which had never occurred before; it was attributed to his simplicity or carelessness over the conduct of his son who was found of smoking cigarettes, drinking and lusting after girls more than his age. Obika fell ill on 15th November 1965. Suddenly, he was dumb. He was carried to Benin, E, u and Ibadan, then returned home unimproved before he slept with his fathers on 29th March, 1967 (akpume-etigi). His death was mourned by all ~~the~~ his subjects, who shaved their hairs except pregnant women and Nwunyen wives. All the Obis paid the last homage of 200 cowries or cash equivalent, 6 yards white cloth and 1 eagle feather. Any Obi who failed to attend or obey was penalized by Agbor Supreme Council. Obika was survived by 41 children, 18 grand-children and 12 wives.

(p) Sixteenth Period, 1968 - Ikehukwu: Ikehukwu son of Obika born 2nd December 1938 ascended on the Agbor throne on 19th

December, 1968. Prince James Ikehukwu was educated in Agbor 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 Okwa-Ukpo Ndichion grade with the Uzama title of chieftaincy, before his father's last breath; it had not been performed for him. Rather it was Prince Usialele who had done the first stage of ceremonies as the heir apparent.

The installation and coronation of Ikehukwu was marked with the greatest enthusiasms ever witnessed in Agbor, despite the cloud of the civil war which had begun in 1966. On this day Agbor 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 them the joys of the day. His Highness Ikehukwu appeared to be an ideal ruler. He proved himself a patriot during repressive incidents in the civil war. Ikehukwu could be called a saviour of his people and the strangers within his gate. He has introduced radical changes with promises to rebuild Agbor to a modern citadel of 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 ~~the~~ there was unrest in the kingdom. 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 Ogbemudien people and Alijemisi.

SECTION 4

CULTURE

(a) PERSONAL DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL CONDUCT:

Agbor is the cradle of Ika civilisation where the Dein popularly called Obi of Agbor sits erect with ~~great~~ dignity. In every hamlet there is a chief known as Eze. Agbors are law abiding but hate oppression and crooks. Agbor people collectively obey one king called Obi. In this respect, an Agbor citizen is different from Igbos of the East who look at the custom of natural rulers or monarchy with disgust. On the other hand Agbor people cherish it as the grandest part of their social edifice.

The dialect of Agbor is the standard language of the Ika people, also the traditional custom and mode of life of the Ika area. Here we find the Ika image which has stood the test of time.

In custom juniors regard their seniors with respect and use the greeting Uweh-oma 'good life and prosperity' as a reflexion of moral behaviour. Children greet their parents, seniors, teachers Uweh-oma in the Morning, after sleeping, after meals, after work or travel by day and night and wives their husbands likewise. The person greeting must be in a respectful mood and if need be on a bended knee and hat off the head, in humble manner. Other greetings are title names such as Uweh-oma Idii or Odii (young ~~person~~ panther) along or Uweh-oma Oweeh or Oweeh only and so on for any title holder. The Obi alone is greeted 'Do Dein or Do Obi'. Aghun (leopard) Eka Oghal 'unrestrained hand', Agwor Ekelikà (multicoloured snake), Ogi Azuwn gbome Ohimi 'he who turns his back on the Niger (i.e. to face his entire domain)', Nwa tutu (Sons of terrible). A herbalist or oracle priest is greeted Ogbu-ebulu (ram killer). A carver, marker, woodworker or an artist is greeted Urkawina or Omenkan including a writer clerk or a teacher, (akanwe is derived from Yoruba word Akowe or Ode ehuhor). To one in pain, the greeting is Ndo. When one returns from farm or so the greeting is Alua 'return'. When one receives a gift the greeting is 'Yameke' - 'you do much' or 'Mbelè'.

When one is working the greeting is mbele or 'daaruwn.' When a woman gives birth to a child the greeting is 'Omaw-eghor - Joyous delivery'.

A housewife is forbidden to strike the 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 othertimes 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, or okwa, agidi, ewa, ihiehie, akara, Ukpeke, oloka, okpor, akasi etc. Soup materials are okoro (alete) ujuju (leave) afufa, Utezi osen egusi or iroro, nnu, ogiri, ofigbon, ekuru, agbolor, izec, azuwn, Iroma, anuwn 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 Uweh-oma or his title word (see 4(a) above).

(b) MARRIAGE FORMS:

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

Mgba 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, 'Mgba' 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 ~~own~~ property under 'Mgba' 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 elelia nedia, arina nma, '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 are" 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 Nwunyen 'wife'.

Such wives are called Nwa Adan. They are considered daughters ^{given in an} of the mgba marriage. For the same purpose elders sometime make sacrifices with goat to invoke to approve marriage within the kindred group, but the relationship 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 the husband while the body of a wife under ~~Nwunye - marriage is always~~ always 'mgba' - 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 nwunyen wife is 'nwan-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 oeiheze, Iwe and Iwagi.

In some places outside Agbor 'nwan-adan' is the first born female of a man. nwunyen in Ika can become 'mgba' Idegbe' if circumstances arise by consent of the husband relative to slaughter a she goat (Odegbe) for sacrifice in nullification ceremony to the ancestor cult (Ofor) this sacrifice is called Igbufu-ewu.

It is forbidden to marry one's sister or wife's sister or nwunyen wife without sacrifice. In ogbe-nmuw-dain a widow can never be married abomination; in olden time, penalty was death or pulling off the roof of his house and destroy his barn 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-Igban or ibiehdo, and a slave or stranger does not enjoy social equality in his age grade.

Since the introduction of the native court system the old order 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 'mgba'- 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 enquiry 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 a barrier provided the suiter 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 chiefs, wealthy men and women and it is done with a wooden coffin or a decorated box or Iroko (ogin) in the former days. The significant rite is Ibu-Ozun fon.
- (ii) The Okpukpu Ndichien is for the Obi, old men and women and youths who have a child or have entered into the age grade known as Ije-ihien and it is done with the back of ojo tree now a coffin.
- (iii) Infants are buried without ceremonial rites. The corpse is wrapped and carried to the burial ground called 'Ikpskpe'.

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 thing and have the belly or so washed and sown in order to get rid of such trouble as would prevent good re-incarnation. Ozun-okor and ozun-okpukpu have two ceremonial rites. One is performed immediately after death occurs, called Iserualih, and the other imen izu. In the former days richmen were sometimes kept to dry for more days and months before burial, known as ituw-mgbidi.

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 rearing of the 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 of 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 Oror 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 ~~take oath~~ ^{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 Otwa onyisi idumu 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 Agbor citizen is distinct but resembles Bini and Ishan designs. Agbor uses Uche - knives 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 Ishan and Agbor.

Facial marks were ~~also~~ designed for slaves in the early days. But after sometime a freeborn of Agbor 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 Agbor freeborn began to have marks except the prince (Nwan-dein) for any Eze Agbor must not be deformed. In case of deformity by illness after accession he was bound to abdicate peacefully. When an Agbor girl is matured she is given marks on the belly. If not marked before joining her husband she was subjected to penalty by the osigun - markers guild, and if not by her husband. She is considered defiled, and her child will not be circumcised until she pays the penalty. Nowadays tribal marks are no longer of useful purpose. But every Agbor citizen is bound by the law of circumcision after 8 days of birth.

(e) RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY AND MYTHOLOGY:

Agbor 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.

Udame, Ezeuku or Ezeuku, Nwa-obui Onicha;aki and other antiquities such as ukpo-owuwu, the ihuu ajamuka, the eze ada, the cry or signal of an invisible bird at the approach of danger, war or plague. We consider them as messengers of God who made all things. Whosoever violates nature's laws and forbidden things shall be punished by these deities. Ose is God Almighty called osnobue or osolobue is the giver of man's soul and destiny. We offer sacrifice to Him in spirit through deities in our devotions. We fear oselobue for our soul and government for our body. Ojuwu, eze-amo, King of the dead, is firm and merciless; he is as eaten the devil in the Christian dogma.

There is a saying "Ihien onyen ~~me~~ ~~seen~~. This is the concept of retributive justice 'eye for eye and tooth for tooth.' In order to repent when bad is done we consult the oracle of a priest predicts well and the messenger of God accepts, our offences 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 ~~efeez~~ of a wooden staff which represent a the soul of departed parents is a means of enforcing obedience and respect for our elders. With the ofor nze, the king of Agbor holds a warrant of supremacy over all in his domain. Thus any ruler who did not get ofor nze chalk from Eze Agbor cannot be recognised as eze-ali but an impostor in the Ika dynasty.

Another ~~ancient~~ of Agbor religion is the Temple of ose known as ~~me~~-ose at Ozara. It has been a sacred Shrine for Agbor pilgrims yearly for more than ten centuries since the ebon tree was planted as a symbol.

Besides the olokun Shrine no other shrine in Ime-Obi is proper of worship. We believe and worship olokun Shrine because ogelle our earliest patriarch was the oheren (Priest) probably before he left Agbor to unknown. Eze Agbor represents the olokun priest which made him the supreme head of Agbor Ika family. The flights of Liloha of Alisimien and Uwamih of Oki with their body and soul into heaven respectively are Ika my thology. We are informed that owuuwu the first king never tasted death but turned into a stone which is to be found in the Obi's palace - museum (Ukpo Owuuwu).

Ominigbon threw one of the charms at the Obi and changed him to Stone. Ominigbon 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. Ominigbon ordered her arrest and beheading, proclaiming that a man on the throne is the king; why is she surprised? Seven days later, Ominigbon died. He was buried outside the kings' cemetery in a sepulchre known as Ihyu ajamuka Shrine in a sacred grove by olor-akan where the stone remains a mystic relic. His followers left behind at Ufe could not trace his whereabouts, so they found a shelter and called the sopt Ehimia 'one's angel knows' which is today Erima village near Ilesha. Ominigbon has joined the royal pantheon of Agbor.

(f) CALENDAR AND MARKETS:

In Agbor four days are celebrated as the week days. On these days all the citizens observe certain customary rites. Markets are held ^{with} on the names of each of the days namely: eken, oric, afor and nkwor. The myth about the names of the days was that Ogele 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 Ominije now Agbornt. The four children after glorious wars were consumed by fire from heaven according to divine providence. The people of Agbor opened

two markets. Igbudu opened afor market and owuuwu opened eken market. Hence we in Agbor have those two markets as Afia Igbudu and Afia Owuuwu.

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 Aboh came to exchange slaves and goods from interior, also many wars were conducted from the neighbourhood. The two markets closed down at the dawn of the European interference. Now we have Afia Ogboma as Nkwor, Ozara Ooogo as Eken. Balcke as Oric, Ogebe as Nkwo Nnuw-Ede, Oric-Alero, Oric Ekuku and Nkwor-Udomi; our afor market is Idumu-Uku Alisimien.

Before the capitalistic impact of the British, trade by barter, silent and open trade existed in Ika 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 eventhough the seller was away until he or she returned afterward. The iron rod was a nwapmmo (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 sales 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 smithers (okpu-ozuwn). Open markets were held only by broad day that is before sunset. Night market was a wrong practice in order 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 coinage, the cowry system dwindle into obscurity, though it retains symbolic value in tribute.

What was in circulation was sterling but now naira and kobo. Both systems are current in daily reckoning, though sterling holds conceptual primacy with our elders.

(g) MAIN RITUAL CEREMONIES:

(i) Osih-ezi: The Osih-ezi (friend of outside) is the anniversary in which the departed souls of the Eze Agbor and the ancestors of all Agbor are commemorated. It is a period of national thanksgiving and prayer. The palace (obiese) is the forum for owowor dance, izebu dance and agbala chants. The Ichnasun keeps watch over the town by night and Iwase by day over the palace. Generally nine days after o_gbe-iso_gban village had offered sacrifices known as iruanmor, o_gbe-iso_gban, the Eze Agbor, his counsellors (idibodein) and Adichien Agbor will proclaim that osih-ezi will be on the first new moon day between August and September.

The great osih-ezi starts thus:- O_gbe-Nmuw-Dein of Idumu-Ugboh will clear their road and all o_gbe-nmuw-dein clear Ozor nmuw-adan road. I_gbukpor O_gbe Uku. Then on Afor Oj_gebemudu 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 nkwor igwor ishi on which orinze ojeba blesses the dein's head and orinze eribo blesses elewu male and elewu female and ukp-ohumu heads in turn with these things 4 kola-nuts, 1 coconut and chalk in oku-ogih. A cow and a she goat are used for dein's blessing. The cow is marched upon to 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 Umoroo song and dance. In the evening Alihagu men of ichasun start the note of singing agbala chant with drum for the occasion known as ikpotu agbala which means calling on the agbala nze to come down.

(ii) ON EKEN IS - IFAE EHU OPIA: All nmuw-adan in o_gbe-nmuw-dein gather to purify the palace. Orinze isehure sets down the Ofor nze before the dein which all present kneel down in prayer. In this occasion two of dein's wives are nude. At mid-night orinze ojeba performs the Ikpotu - nmor that is inviting the dead ancestors.

(iii) ON ORIE IS - ISI AKASI: All women start to cook akasi (cocoayam). Iregwai goes to the Ihyu I_guye shrine to sacrifice and Ebbe to Ugbo Ihajuokun and to the ancestors. In the mid-night the dein with the Idibo-Dein proceeds to Olor-Akan with Owowor dance.

Iregwai first cooked akasi, sacrifice it before Obi sacrifice begins. They first proceed to Ihu Uru shrine of the first queen mother with mashed cooked Akasi (cocoayam) for sacrifice. Secondly to the shrine of Igudu the father of Owowoo the first king father with sacrifice. They in mood return to Uru Shrine and there a he-goat is sacrificed. They again go back to Igudu shrine and sacrificed a she-goat by Isehure the priest.

They then turn to Ihyuki where the okpookpoo containing Oror Oleken was buried here the Orinze Ojiami as the priest of the royal gods is despatched to invite Oleken family of Idumu-U_gbo quarter to make sacrifice on the spot. They come reluctantly with a feeling but Ojiami continues to obey and beg them to come. They come wearing war dresses sluggishly to waste the waiter's time the Isehure kills a she goat as they come near and they besiege the body of the slaughtered goat with akpan (shield) the meat is shared in fury and nobody to see them sharing it. When they finished with the sacrifice they stage the orworwor dance while oseeh family beaded by Orinze Owach lit the traditional palmoil lamp called ukpe-origbon and they exit from the spot.

After all these the doctor Oj_gebemudu sets down the Efa oracle before the Dein to foretell events of the occasion while Isehure slaughters a dog and spots the dein's leg with its blood mixed with nzuw (chalk). Isehure carries the dead away. The dein with the retinue retires to the palace with Iseru dance. Then the dein enters the sanctuary chamber known as Iban Nzuw in U_ghe Agbala while Owowor dance marks the joyous day. The Dein returns to a chamber known as Igbejie where the orinze otomi 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 u_ghe agbala behind the traditional opia (carved images of past Obis). During this occasion the Iregwai and fellow elders of O_gbe-Nmuw-Dein pay homage to the the dein who gratefully entertains them with kola and drinks.

(iv) ON AFOR IS IRUANMOR: The heads of each family begin to offer sacrifice with mashed Akasi to their ancestors. The Iregwai is always the first to do it to Ofor Aliogbae Shrine before the Dein to the past Obis. In this instance very wife offers her husband money and meat (Oruw Mgbadan).

(v) ON NKWOR IS IKURU AGEALA: The festival starts in full mood. The idibo-dein and other nobilities put on their best attire to attend the palace to dance with the Obi at least once a day on eken and orio. Indeed the palace is always thronged with gay ladies and gentlemen and children to witness a most thrilling osih-ezi dance.

(vi) ON AFOR - IFON OGBE: This day the dein offers sacrifice to Ohenye and calls on ogbe-nmuw-dein elders to eat the meat on close door to keep away other elements from it before he goes out from the sanctuary for public parade. He puts on best dress befitting the occasion with pomp and pageantry. The nobles are as well in gay mood also men women and children with signs of great day. They accompany dein to osceh Shrine (Ihun-Nmor) in owch's house thence to Alih-ino_bae thence to ali-obiolihe in charge of ovia's thence to aliho_be ogbe-nmuw-dein and retires finally to his palace.

(vii) ON NKWOR DAY IS IGBA EBENI: The dein displays the ebeni sword. He puts on the regalia called Kpakpasimagan accompanied by his courtiers and others, men, women and people in gay mood, all chanting agala and umoroo dance.

(viii) ON EKEN IS ICHAN OKPA: The dein enters ezilekun (harem). Each of his wives brings okpa fruits, kola nuts, cowries and the senior wife, oboi by title brings one azon-isi, one azon efec and kola nuts and 4 okpa fruits. The dein brings cowries and money then the ovia takes a handful of the cowries, fish, okpa, kola nuts he throws them outside in prayer and sacrifice in the presence of ndichien Agbor, ede, ojefa, owach, odii, ojeba, ojiami and otiku. The dein offers cowries or 40 Naira as a token of joy.

(ICHU NLOKOR;) In the evening orinze ojefa starts the ceremony of sending away the spirits of the ancestors from the show, by 12 p.m. It is on this day the memory of Kime (Eze Chima) who ran away with oror ali-ogbe across the stream which Agbor custom forbids is done sacrifices in order to appease the deities for the abomination done thereof.

(ix) ON ORIE IS IGBA OGBE: All youngmen gather in ogbe-uku to wrestle and so doing mark the end of the festival.

IGWE: The festival is an anniversary of the heroine Igwe in memorial. She died by saving the people of Agbor from social disorder (see Section 3(d)). The day of its observance is fixed by the ndichien a_bor in December new moon, starting on nkwo. Igwor-isi rite. - Dein provides a she-goat while aliorkpu, alia_gwa and alihami provide a cow all for sacrifice to the gods. The Obi performs the rite known as "itan ekwa" on eken day in ibeghenta palace chamber.

The youngmen of every village participate in the sacrifice they do the ilu-ubi on the compounds and streets with prayer to god to remit their sins and grant peace while ibiegwai use half burnt wood to beat ground around palace and streets thereof. The chant is ewere-ewere nagbode.

IWA-GI: This feast of new yam harvest is observed on afor. Orinze issa slaughters a he-goat and a hen for sacrifice to Ihaokun, the god of the farm while after iyenmedein Obi's wives offer each a hen to ifon mgbon shrine - every idibe-dein begins to eat new yams which break the "fasting" period of three months. Called iche-onu. Feast continues for four days.

MGBEOSE: The Mgbese festival is a remembrance season spirit boy ridden with yaws appeared in Agbor. He is called ose (god) who instituted a ritual and established his Alter at ozara in which we worship him in spirit. The dein accompanied by his wives and people to make sacrifice with a bullock, kola nuts, year after year to the shrine while nwanmor his page puts on kingly dress also accompanied by men and women with a she-goat for sacrifice to ose'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 oheren ose 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.

(Crown Prince)

(h) LIFE - CYCLE OF EZE AJBOR: The birth of the nwa-dein, is normally announced by ^{report of} cannon shot and sound of trumpet ^{and} ofudu (elephant horn) accompanied with ritual sacrifices ^{and} ceremonies by the Idibo-Dein and the Ndichien Agbor. At this, the baby lying on the ground is lifted ^{and} presented ^{to} him with a boy and a girl as a token of honour ^{because due the first born son after his father's installation, the son becomes a Crown Prince, and is initiated into ndichien Agbor grade under the title-ship of Uzama class. From that day he is no longer to be called a boy, and he remains the member until his father's death. In such case in okwa ukpo he is the first in rank.} He is given the eagle feather on his head. ^{if} In case two boys ^{are} born the same day the one whose report comes first to his father receives the blessing of a prince while the other becomes a duke. In the event of ^{unusually} death of the ^{first} son, the second son is formally recognised on condition he is ^{not} deformed, and is free from facial marks except circumcision

which occurs at the age of 8 days ^{to} every male in Ika traditionally (if the babe's health permits) ^{INSTALLATION} ^(Resolving falls only a short period of time by which no further ceremony is observed, a later work, the day of a prince's life, not with first to the first born in case of the father's untimely death, or) A prince is deemed fit to be on the throne after 16 years of ^{age} but in case of dispute the one not wanted may be given facial marks or ^{split} his front tooth?

* Customarily only the first born son retains the salute even though not born by the Igwekin (Queen). After 7 days the prince is circumcised + smeared/53.

*They procure cowrie, 20 cote nuts, eagle feather, chalk and 4 bottles of gin. The elder pray for the prince and Igbafia pins the eagle feather to his head. ^{he} belly owech to go and make all necessary arrangements for installation + coronation. ^{with Ovinde Ovie (the prince's uncle) to assemble} Agbor disqualifies an ugly person as their ruler, who must not have any physical deformity. But a ruler should not be on the throne with unmarked belly and uncircumscised. He should have a spouse before installation starts. The heir should be of sound health, & stately, strong and agile, professionally trained as blacksmith, harbalist, carpenter and traditional medicine man (dibiè). As a rule the senior Idibo-Dein ~~would~~ meet to inform the appropriate quarters of Agbor about the age of the prince. ~~The Obi~~ ~~is~~ ~~in~~ ~~Ugwa~~ ~~by~~ ~~senior~~ ~~members~~ ~~of~~ ~~10~~ ~~kinna~~ ~~Nmaw~~ ~~ob~~

Obi-Nmaw-Dein ^{is} ^{applied} ^{by} ^{Idibo-Dein} that the prince is ^{to} ^{be} ^{installed}. ^{the} ^{Obi} ^{from} ^{his} ^{father} ^{is} ^{granted} to be installed. ^{ndichion} ^{Agbor} ^{accomps} with the kingmakers to fix date for the installation. And arrangement made to clear roads and streets and purify the palace by Nmaw-Adan from Ogbc-Nmaw-Dein in particular. The Isehure and Nmaw-Adan do their duties in the presence of Orinze, Ojeba, Ojiami, Otonmi, Ajeeh, Otiku, Ojebemuda and Oheren-Olokun. ^{On Ekan day} The Prince in full regalia ^{and}

^{Carrying} Ada + Ebein stake sword wrapped in a mat, holds the sword and with his spouse proccous to Owach's house to receive marital blessing. ^{On the day} ^{They} ^{sleep} ^{there}. In the morning of ^{the} ^{day} ^{the} ^{prince} ^{is} ⁱⁿ ^{his} ^{sanctuary} ^{then} ^{send} ^{the} ^{couple} ^{back} ^{to} ^{the} ^{palace} ^{where} ^{Orinze} ^{Ovia} ^{holds} ^{him} ^{and} ^{sits} ^{him} on the okposi stool and carries his spouse to his legs with prayers for prosperity on the throne. ^{From Owach's house to the palace, the prince holds} ^{with} ^{his} ^{wife}

^{Ada + Ebein} ^{unfurled} ^{the} ^{prince} ^{then} ^{retires} ^{to} ^{Inner} ^{Chamber}. At noon he puts on ^{and} ^{comes} ^{to} ^{high} ^{Agbata} ^{symposium} ^{before} ^{the} ^{people} ^{including} ^{the} ^{Obi} ^{Dein} ^{and} ^{other} ^{princes} ^{and} ^{princesses} ^{for} ^{the} ^{coronation}. ^{Orinze} ^{Ovia} ^{calls} ^{him} ^{seven} ^{times}; ^{not} ^{having} ^{answered} ^{he} ^{sits} ^{on} ^{the} ^{throne} ^{amidst} ^{shouts} ^{and} ^{cannon} ^{shots} ^{of} ^{joy} ^{and} ^{grets} ^{him} ^{Do} ^{Obi} ^{Dein}, Agwor-ekelikà, ògàzùw-òbome-òhìmi, ~~and~~ nwa-tùtu. On the third day the prince proceeds to Agbornta to receive blessing from Orinze Oriorwor in Ogele's shrine where he is lashed and admonished. The fifth day is rest. On the sixth day the Dein goes to Alisimien to receive blessing from ^{the} ^{Eze} ^{Aliogor}, Orinze Alaza. On the seventh day ^{to} ^{the} ^{Obi} ^{Nmaw-Dein} to receive blessing from Iregwai in ^{the} ^{Obi} ^{Alio} ^{bc}. Finally, ^{to} ^{the} ^{Obi} ^{Alihagu} to receive blessing from Orinze Igbokoje in Idumu-Obc ^{at} ^{convenience}.

^{The} ^{death} ^{of} ^{the} ^{prince} ^{is} ^{announced} ^{as} ^{akpume} ^{eti} ^{ig}. ^{He} ^{is} ^{laid} ⁱⁿ ^{his} ^{egun} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{inner} ^{chamber} ^{of} ^{the} ^{palace} ^{until} ^{elders} ^{of} ^{Obc-Nmaw-Dein} come to confirm that no more breath in him before it is disclosed to public; it can be immediately or other time by the descretion of the elders. It is only on this occasion Okwohi enters the palace rooms. He takes away the senior king's wife to a hut in the jungle where she may be at the mercy of

& It is contrary to custom to say he died like an ordinary mortal man./54.

wild beast according to her deed in the harem. Then Oriorwor and Ekpenike ^{are} ^{informed}, the man sent by oriorwor sits on the throne while ikoro ogbe-nmuw-dein calls the senior son to pin eagle feather to his father's head. After ikoro alijemisi join ikoro ogbe-nmuw-dein to perform the burial service. His corpse must not exceed hours on the state. He is laid on ikoro (ogyn) coffin and the oriban among the idibo-dein do the burial while ichasun gangsters guard the conveying the body from public sight to his sepulcre in olor-akan always at mid-night. Two live she-goats are laid beneath the head and a live he-goat beneath the legs instead of human beings in the former days. The wives are confined for three months and markets held on the streets instead of the usual sheds; such marketing is known as afia ogologo.

Second phase of the funeral ceremonies, on the next day of his demise, the funeral is started by ogbe-nmuw-dein, alijemisi, aliogor and idumu-erue of agbornta. It lasts seven days with pomp and pageantry. All Obis in the kingdom come to pay him the last respect by shooting of gun and every Agbor citizen shaves the head except pregnant woman and nruyen wives. ^{Any} ^{Argume} ^{(village} ^{elder)} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{kingdom} ^{who} ^{fails} ^{to} ^{shave} ^{is} ^{liable} ^{to} ^{penal} ^{punishment}. ^{The} ^{Obi's} ^{widow} ^{cannot} ^{remarry} ^{any} ^{man} ^{of} ^{Obc-Nmaw-Dein} ^{under} ^{pain} ^{of} ^{abominable} ^{pen}.

PALACE CODE OF CONDUCT:

- The obizee is kept sacred and regarded as shrine of Agbor state. The most important thing to observe is purity, discipline and confidence; that reason anyone who is admitted into the inner-chamber must first take oath of alligiance.
- 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? orinze owach 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 owach or umadan 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.

* It may be of interest that when Oba Idun (the Oba of Benin) dies, the reigning Obi of Agbor is the only person in the whole of Ika to shave his head.

4. Before a title of Idibodein is conferred to any person the senior members of the innerchamber must be consulted in order 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 Ndichien Agbor title is conferred the receiver pays N60.00 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- age to be a leader of villages must be of the royal descent nwa dein.

8. MAINTAINANCE:

It is vitally important to upkeep and support the obi from want. Towards that end, every title holder idibodein or ndichien Agbor 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 - osiezai, iwagi and igwe, when money, animals and food stuffs are made available to the king.

9. MARRIAGE:

The dein is eligible to marry one or more wives provided they are Agbor Ika born. They are nwayen marriage customarily; concubinage is forbidden in the obicze harem (ezilekun). Iyemodin 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 move 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 idumu-ugbo and idumooza 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 unauah in charge of the harem with other members of uriere official or junior unauahes and Obi.
- (b) It is a belief that no Agbor woman had given birth to a prince of Agbor nor Obi to have a brother but women from out-side imeobi and igure. Every eze Agbor first born has been a female and must not be the queen over since lady ufu the mother of owuuwu 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 Obicze Agbor are:-

1. Ibebo	Private	10. Ughchahuru	Public
2. Egwun	"	11. Ughc Eweer	"
3. Ughoguen	"	12. Ughc Agbala	"
4. Igbegwai	"	13. Ughc Aliorkpu	"
5. Ibejie	"	14. Ughc Uku	"
6. Ughc Nmudein	"	15. Orwa	"
7. Ughc Nnobi	"	16. Orwa Idibodein	"

5. Political Organisation:

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

The rule of Agbor is firm although not without fault. But every good citizen deserves favour and every bad behaviour is punishable. The office of the Obi of Agbor 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 ogwa ndichien Agbor and ogwa idibodein Agbor. The former consists of only noble elders, some of whom are king makers, the ancestral shrine priest and state messengers or Idibodein. The latter consists of title holders some of whom are Obi's counsellors and others his messengers. The two houses are responsible for the life and property of the citizen. The chief of the inner-chamber is titled oweh; 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

...../58.

observe the osieze and other festival ceremony. As a rule he carries the Ebeni sword not the Ada which is the prerogative of Obi Agbor alone. The social and industrial institutions are called okwa viz okwa-Dibia (Doctors) Okwa-Ozun (Smithers), Okwa-Orkawina (craftsmen) Okwa-Ihere (worshippers or priest). Witchcraft, lies, murder, theft, idleness are among crimes punishable by Agbor law. It was the supreme aim of every citizen the initiate 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 Agbor 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 Agbor peace and liberty without impunity.

Agbor government permits movement, settlement and immigration of the citizen, provided the right did not interfere with the heritage, 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 Agbor 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 in Ika land is a subject to the village council elders who granted him land to dwell or farm.

Agbor land means land used by Agbor citizen but no individual has right over any piece of Agbor land; it is communal. For fear of nepotism Agbor 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

...../59.

materials for service and mutual aid are farm produce animals, money, allowing ones 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 farms from the day the child was born and to compare with his age grade and other events. The eldest 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 isinwa following his offsprings oyierh, uhichien, sakpamagbori and onyemuan or Ghabiona, any person who sees his or her sakpamagbori is said to be old indeed. The age grade in Agbor social organisation are:-

- 1. Okwa-Ukpo. (2) Okwa-Obe-ebuo,
- (3) Okwa-Obe-ctor, (4) Okwa-Ihaimc
- (5) Otu-Ikoro (6) Ikahi and Igbaniibe.

(ii) 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 Ighaigho and 21 Ifioorkpor and the Ihaimc/idibodein members who are the advisory body to the Obi dein.

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

(a) The uzama members are orkwa ukpo ndichien namely; ovia, edac, ojer, jangbe, iyase, ozormor, Agbaosorgwu, Inc-Ektuku, Ohazama, Iregwai and nwan-dein (crown Prince).

(b) Ighaigho members are the advisory body to the elders namely: Obi, Akpara, Ebbi, Akweeh, Ekpaeh, Oguden, Ojisi-Agbornt, Ojisi Ozara, Elema Oki, Elema Omumu, Ero, Ekpenike, Alaza Emuhu and Igbokoje of Alihagu.

(c) Ifioorkpor members are the ancestral priests in all Agbor villages and quarters namely: Iregwai, Ajach, Oriorwor, Ojefa etc. They come with Ofor staff when attending palace Meeting called Oka-Afor.

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

- 2. Ojeba, keeper of the royal wardrobe.
- 3. Odi leader of the Dein's legion and deliverer of the royal gifts.
- 4. Otiku Caretaker of the royal harem;
- 5. Elewu: Caretaker of the Royal provisions;
- 6. Ojiami: priest of the Royal shrine;
- 7. Inne: junior member of Uriere-Ugben Taboo;
- 8. Ihaza: junior member of Idibodein;
- 9. Isama: junior member of Idibodein;
- 10. Okasien: junior member of Idibodein;
- 11. Olave: Senior member of Idibodein;
- 12. Ezenigbede: junior member of Idibodein;
- 13. Oriri: junior member of Uriere;
- 14. Ojenebe: junior member of "
- 15. Ohan: senior member of Idibodein;
- 16. Ajae: senior member of Idibodein;

The various chambers in obieze Agbor are

- 1. Igbaebo; 2. Eguwn;
- 3. Ugheguen, 4. Igbegwda;
- 5. Igbejie, 6. Ughe Nmuw-Dein;
- 7. Ughe-Nne-Obi 8. Ibeghenta,
- 9. Ughe-Ikengan, 10. Ughe ahuru.

- 11. Uche-Ewech,
- 12. Uche agbala;
- 13. Uche Aliorkpu
- 14. Uche uka,
- 15. Ogwaa,
- 16. Orgwaa Idibo-Dein.

(a) Igbacbo House: This house has administrative function composed of royal descendants. Virtually they need no title more than they are Ihaimc Eze Abor among whom are Viceroy and Okonedualis. The main officers are Owach, Ekpach, Obascki, Odiio¹⁹⁴⁹ Olaye, Obazuaye, Obiwu-Uyii Ayobahan etc.

(b) Ezube - Private Chamber of the Inner Chamber: The important members are:- Ojeba, Ajach, Ojiami, Ohan, Oloaghirin, Elwu, Egebe, etc., but no one of a royal blood.

(c) Ucheguch - Private Chamber of the palace harem: The chief officers are ^{Eshodin} Oloadin or Otiku,, Oriri, Ojonebo, Inne, Oba desagbon, also ~~B~~ members.

(d) Ibeogwai is the ~~private chamber of the~~ Royal kitchen: The Officers are:- Isaa, Elwu, Ezenigedo, Obadagboyi composed of junior members of Idibo-Dein and Ibeogwai.

Ibeogwai house museum of the royal medicine and antiquities. The Chief Officers are Otomi, Akuegbute and Isehure (B C D) ~~and unuchs~~

Remarks: Owach except otherwise admits new entrant to the ~~at~~ Inner chamber and ~~administers~~ the oath of faithfulness loyalty and secrecy and Ojeba is the master of the house during Obi's absence.

No office is hereditary except Owach and few Uzama, Ighaigho and Ifiorkpor 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 Ihaimc.

Any Eze of any village is classified among the Ighaigho grade in Agbor council.

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

The names of Irogwai in Ogebe-Nmaw-dein from 1900 - 1968.

- 1. ~~Uke~~ Ile - 1900
- 2. Igbedion - 1903
- 3. Anyihon - 1906

- 4. Osahon - 1910
- 5. Akuzi - 1931
- 6. ~~Ajuebon~~ ^{Ajuebon} - 1954
- 7. ~~Amorka~~ ^{Amorka} - 1958
- 8. Agnasi - 1958
- 9. Ordiasac - 1959
- 10. Imudia - 1944
- 11. Kiyem - 1947
- 12. Okoh - 1949
- 13. Emefiele - 1955
- 14. Idion - 1957
- 15. Nedo - 1959
- 16. Okuwe - 1968

When Irogwai dies three months after another Irogwai 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 assent ~~be~~ ^{and} also give him a feather and chalk as a mark of respect ~~and~~ ^{honour} to his senior brother.

(b) JUDICIAL SYSTEM, ANCIENT:

The ancient judiciary is a natural wisdom of untrained judges who at times were influenced by relatives and acquaintances and untowardly received something (bribery) in order to prevent the cause of justice and equity. But it is far from a rule in which might 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 Orwa Onyisi Idumu or Onyisi Obae. Serious crimes as murder, homicide, theft, cases involving bodily harm and other misdeeds are tried by the body of society definitely affected by such 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 fine of a fowl, a goat, a sheep or cowries while that of serious offences hanging, crucifixion or beheading; only the Obi with his hierarchy of nobility the Ndichien Abor Uzama had the jurisdiction. A suit which began by the injured party, is complained through his onyen isi o-be to the village head who sends his Agha 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 of 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 life time; 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 became 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, kolatree, cocoa nut tree, gun, machet, 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 anger as a result of wickedness or damage so repeated. 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 begged 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, machets, gun, clothes, wives (kwuyen) children, domestic animals etc. It must be made clear that children born by maba marriage are shared between the husband and the wife but not so in kwuyen marriage the children are bona-fide property of the husband and his hier. (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 Aghaa to do so. It became the duty of the Oluotu or Ikahi to arrest or trace the murderer. When captured he was taken to the Obi's palace. The trial took place before the Orwa Ndichien Abor Council.

The relative of the murdered person appears to describe the crime. The evidence is gone thoroughly into, and if the murder is found to be deliberate the penalty was death by hanging or beheading. The murderer is given the opportunity of hanging himself, but if he does not do so within a reasonable time the Oluotu of the village would hand 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 of a young girl to the Obi and cows, goats to the Ndichien Abor 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 was heavily fined. The Obi receives his usual young girl, the council their cow, the Village council their goat; and a girl from the criminals family is handed over in marriage to the head of the family or the dead man that is Ikuochuw.

Incest: The crime is reported to the Ovren-isi-Obe and dealt with at a village meeting; should the criminal prove innocent and without any knowledge of the near relationship of the girl or so 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 Oluota or the Ikahi is instructed to destroy his house and confiscate his yams in his farm; penalty is aluwa - If she is Nwuyon wife, they seize six or seven goats one for the husband for sacrifice, one for the Idumu shrine of the husband. In the case of Lu-ba or Idogbe wife the penalty is less; the husband must sacrifice a she goat to repair his house gods with fine imposed on the guilty man.

Rape: 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 ~~or~~ or farm is defilment and the punishment was great.

Theft: 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 flogging, repayment and being led out of the Village by women and men with drum for public scandal.

(c) Recent Administrations:

After the Bini expedition of 1897, Strangers from coastal

towns chiefly Isekiri, Abon, Asaba, Bonny began to enter Agbor domain as traders and missionaries.

The Christians preached and presented the image of Jesus Christ. The R.C.M. and the C.M.S. built Churches at Eme-Obi near the Obi's compound and at Ozara about 1902 and 1908 respectively. Then followed the British patrol officer escorted by Benin Chiefs.

By this way the people of Agbor began to change drastically. In 1901 Agbor became the administrative station under the commission: Mr. O.S. Crewe Reads. He controlled most important towns from Agbor. These are Asaca, Kwale, Ishan and Kukuruku now Auchi. In the frontage of Obieze (Palace), the office and the School, telegraph office and native Court were opened. Later on, Prisons, Hospital, Military, Police, Soldier barracks, judicials were opened in 1906 before the district commissioner was murdered at Owa while on official tour. The cause was rough handling of an oldman to carry police loads back to Agbor as Eze Owa failed to provide them with carriers. The son of the old man said his father being treated badly as he was returning from farm his released his gun and fired the policeman and wounded him. The policeman had to use his gun and the youngman shot dead. Thereafter Owa Oyibu men began to chase the tourist and the commissioner was wounded. He managed to escape and his cartridge exhausted before reaching Owanta where he was fired again to death. His dog hid but when the policeman came the dog directed them to the spot his master was killed and buried, the body was recovered and carried to Agbor.

Thereafter British soldiers came and attacked Owa and Agbor people became ^{afraid} but the Obi's condition of ill-health and his three sons at Benin Government School upset them to fight against the enemy openly while the bench-men volunteered and kept the soldiers from entry into Owa and when the strategy was detected Agbor was warned by burning of their houses before they gave way and Owa was taken in August, 1906. The Obi with 15 of his chiefs was captured and taken to unknown destination. As it were the Ikas could not maintain complete neutrality thus Agbor, Umunede, Utcorkpu, Ekuku, Igbanke all enlisted their sympathy in Owa's struggle.

The attempt to supply water by sinking a well at Ihogbe failed due to an out break of the war in the village at Owa. In the struggle seven British Officers and numerous soldiers were killed and wounded. All the Bini Chiefs that came with European ran away and some unfortunate were massacred. In 1908 the governor, Sir, Walter Egerton touring on bicycle from Lagos to Calabar noted in his diary that he was glad to get clear of Agbor where the attitude of the native was hostile and trivalent. During the war Agbor

people ~~sent this song:~~ people sang this song:
sent this song:

people sang this song: Obi seni enyi ogor, nke enyi egu agbada, ye enyan - meaning if not the Obi's ill health these boys of Benin we could not tolerate to see soldiers fighting Owa people we could have pierced our eyes with sword (i.e. shown our bravery).

In ¹⁹¹²1909, Obi Ebanoba died. His son Agborbu was too young to reign until five years of interregm. The prince was trained by Chief Oko Ujermor of Ihogbae and later in Chief Egun's the Inne of Agbor at Ogbu-Nmuw-Dein quarter. In 1912, the District native Court and council hall were built with two faces tower clocks for the chief from Asaba, Auchi, Kwale and villages to attend. The telegraph line Agbor-Ubiaja was constructed after 1906 but line from Lagos to Asaba before 1904. In 1914, Agborbu 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 chief's for Court and Council: Ajaah, Agbae, Osahon, Ajueborn-Atigo Elewu, Oshodi, Egun, Orudia Odobu, Nmorka-Agbasogun, Ekpanike, Akpara, Ojisi, Orzormor, Alaza, Emuhu, Elema Oki, Eze Aki, Eze Akumazi, Eze Nmuede, Eze Orta, Eze Olijie, Eze Abavo, Eze Uteorkpu, Eze Orbior, Eze Mbiri, Eze Igodo, Iyeko, Eze Ogan, and council of Chiefs was created to accomodate those of Asaba, Ogwashi-Ukwu, Issale-Ukwu, Oburu-Uku, Ebonkpa, Ishan and Kwale, The native Court were built at Agbor, Igbanke and Igodo. Eze Agbor was the president of the Court and Council.

In 1916, the people of Igbanke pledged their loyalty to Chief Osula Leadership who annexed them to Benin administration. Ogan, Ota, Olijie followed suit carelessly from Agbor their native home. Later on, Ubiaja and Kwale 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 Ika District and each village became known as clan instead of village whereas in district there should be no two kings 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 seat with Chiefs under his suzerainty and considered it as an accentric procedure by petitioning the Government which after a while was cancelled. The Obi of Abavo hesitated but said he would at any rate be glad to be a president of the Ika coun

of the Ika council even for a day even though the procedure is contrary to custom. Thus the village Chiefs or the district declined to pay homage to Eze Agbor and no one asked them for anything for fear of British interference.

Such redundant act of the government in its policy has brought down the glory that was for the Eze Agbor. Indeed we hear that among equals some are more equal even among beasts and trees.

NEW JUDICIARY: Before the murder of the District Commissioner in 1906, the native court was opened in the frontage of the Obi's Palace. The Court was later transferred to the present site of the Government Station in 1912. The Chiefs from Agbor, Kwale, Ishan, Kukuruku (Auchi) districts were members until 1918 when Court hall was built at Owa, Awuw, Nmuw-Ede, Igodo, Akumazi, Otolokpo, Ute-Okpu, Mbiri, Emuhu that of Agbor having jurisdiction over all with grade "B" power. On the death of the Obi Ekaeze his brother took his place as the Regent. The members were 181 of these 13 were members of the village court and 3 members as the clan Court.

The work of the Agbor Cour was praised as satisfactory. The report said some of the members showed an aptitude for judicial work and the court judgements are usually fair and unbiased. It was proposed that each village should have a court of limited "D" grade from which an appeal would lie to the Clan Court. The personnel of the Court to be the same as that of the village councils, that is the village head as president with the Orkwa Orkukpo and the Orkwa Abeebor and the Oluotu ^{and} Ikahi as court officers. Every suit will commence by the payment of a fixed fee of 5/- the complainant to pay direct to the village head who also issues receipt.

There was a change in the Court system; at first court clerks and the judges were clan heads with Chiefs. The administrative supervised the records of cases and affairs. Later, the appointment of Magistrates and Lawyers to advocate thus the judiciary in Agbor as other Urban towns have under-gone changes through the years. In conclusion old customary law was more of inhuman than the present jurisprudence.

(d) AGBOR PATRIOTIC UNION:

The Agbor patriotic Union was inaugurated in 1926 1st May at Lagos by men from Agbor, Igbodo, Igbanke, Owa, Akumazi and Umunede prominent among them were Mr. P.B. Egun - Accountant, P & T, as the Chairman, Mr. A.M. Weeks - Custom Clerk as the Secretary, Mr. A.E. Iduwe - Headmaster, St. Paul R.C.M. School Ebute-Metta as the ~~See~~ Financial Secretary, Mr. Ogbekile Cook as the Treasurer; others are John Ebensme, John Ojebase, George Opu, Alexander N. Okoh, etc. At that time not many of our village men were literate to wit.

The APU (Agbor 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; in fact, 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 hamper the progress of the union and more anon village unions began to emerge vize Owa Patriotic Union, Umunede Progressive Union even in Agbor herself thereon Agbor District became automatically Ika District towards 1951 instead of Agbor District.

The manifesto of the APU became a stunt done to discord 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 protest 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 meetings, 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, obscenity, disrespect to poor and old, cheating, pomposity and divided interest of the citizen members.
- (10) To speak the Agbor or Ika language in the organ of the Union.

(6) AGBOR 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 Niger river on the eastward and the Kingdom of Benin on the westwards. According to tradition Oelle was the patriarch of the earliest inhabitants before the birth of Christ. Another important personage among them was Eze the father of Agbor. Igidi the hero of the kingdom and political father of kings. Still another Dein or Dei who also emerged as the first emperor to spurn the rule of patriarchs 1270. His son the successor Owuwwu the Great whose tongue was like the fish tail and whose word was a bond, was the most powerful mortal man of his days in the Kingdom. He ascended on Agbor throne carefully prepared by his mother named Ufu said to have hailed from Yeruba or Nupe dynasty 1250. Agbor in the mud of ages and the passage of time appeared numerically the strongest, historically and politically the most important in the Ika ethnology. The kings have been renewed with the title of Eze Agbor (Dein) who by the grace of God have wielded great power over lives and properties of the subject people without rivalry. As is obvious, the significant palace building (Obieze) is still a relic of the dignity and glory that was Agbor traditional arts and organisation among the forest rulers of Bendel 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 expansion of the Benins the Oba of Benin became a monster in our communal forest which he grabbed without opposition.

Inevitably one without arms cannot oppose one with arms.

(ii) The influx of republican villagers from the East Niger: Igbo who, driven by Aro Chukwu 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.

(iii) Administrative laxity and struggle for independence among subject villages: Agbor rulers lost control of their dependant villages on account of the strange ideology of the Igbo in our midst, who having become our court clerks, carpenters, cooks and stewards, coaxed us native to obstinately interrogate administrative principles. Consequently each village head claimed independence and called himself Obi of his section. Under such social and political instability the Agbor patriotic union at home and abroad resolved and approached the erstwhile government to withdraw the Igbos from the native courts for the sons of the soil and the appeal was heard and reorganization resulted late in the thirties.

(iv) Intertribal wars within the kingdom: The people of Agbor waged war against some of the villages before the coming of war whiteman, and because of that ancient grudge, anarchy and chaos reared its ugly heads in the social and constitutional organization of the kingdom. Consequently homage and tribute discontinued and the role of the Oker, equal or governors of the village among the numbers of the royal family gave way to mediocrity 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.

(v) Eze Agbor Authority vindicated: 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 (akpon) in the old eken market square by the Obieze (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 order hanging only. If otherwise the village ruler would be executed by Eze 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 organised 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 Ndichien against any village that flouted the king's authority or broke village rule defiantly and sometimes fought for prestige. Every Eze Agbor was customarily bound to invite war to fight in order to prove his courage before or after three or more years of his accession to the throne.

Before the coming of the whitemen Agbor kingdom was regarded as a city of refuge in this part of the coast (Bendel State) on account of her formidable warriors and excellent social organization that belligerent nations 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 Orkayorber, Odogwu, Iyase and Oluotu (highest) officer of the youngmen numbering hundreds in every village. And when a war is tribal or out of the Dein's control the war chiefs Agbasogun, Uboh, Ozormer, Iyase and Ogbuobodo with Dein and his legion take the command over the battle front. But generally Omuw (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 (Ogbodor), bow and crossbow (Ota and akpede), poisonous arrow (Obara edida) shield (Akpan), matchet (opia), gun (Ayanzuw, Adaka). The outfits are Okpu-akih and Ewuru izagyn which are dyed and smoked to prevent matchet cut or arrow pierce to wound a wearer. Afterwards in about 16th and 17th centuries steel weapons were introduced by the Portuguese ^{first} who came to Benin City in about 1485. With the use of steel weapons such as ~~guns, pistols~~ as pistols gun-powder matchets, the Binis used them to conquer their opponents with greatest cruelty. Thus the Oba of Benin became tyrannical; human sacrifice was practiced at large. His men ruled other people in his name. In spite of the fear of whitemen 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 Chiefs.

1. Ogbuobodo; 2. Iyase; 3. Orzomor; 4. Uboh

There are several officers, Oluotu, 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 pays ransom Ikuw Ocuw. In civil war the fighters were allowed only to capture or wound his opponent. But if an Agbor citizen's blood 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.

(i) Obe-Nmuw-Dein and Orta; Obe-Nmuw-Dein and Orta fought because Orta villager encroached upon their farmland. After all Orta was subjugated 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

and fined each. In 1937, the government surveyed the area in dispute and pegs fixed as boundary demarcation between them.

(ii) Agbor and British Aggression: After their Benin looting expedition in 1897, British patrol to Agbor took place in 1900 and Agbor District administration was established in 1901. The Officer to open the Office came and he was accompanied by Bini Chiefs - honourable Osula and others as hosts and they were given lodging according to Customary ~~hospitality~~ hospitality in Agbor kingdom. Mr. I.T. Palmer (Agbor friend) was present who inspired the Oba Dein to send his sons to School at Benin, The Oba sent three of his sons namely: Adajie, Idemiye and Abaje among others; the prices were given each a page.

The people of Agbor were not pleased with the presence of the Bini Chiefs because of their arrogance and treachery before the British came both were inimical to one another after they have buried alive 40 Bini warriors passing through Agbor defiantly to wage war against Oburuku for revenge for Adesua murdered by Eze Oburu. 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 youngman named ~~@@~~ Jete Agbor henchmen could not maintain neutrality but the Oba 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 Okpalam Warriors came as volunteers they met the soldiers suddenly so they were horribly killed. Hitherto, near river Iyama on the south flank of Agbor the soldiers met with stubborn resistance before Agbor were warned to desist and not long they entered into Owa and overthrow them; the king and his chiefs were captured and executed.

(iii) Agbor and Igbanki: ~~AND AND IGBANKI~~ Igbanki was besieged and conquered in 1895 for the vengeance of Chief Ozomor of Agbor murdered at Igbanki. The world was convinced that Gbenoba made their yoke heavy and for his high handedness his innocent Chief Ozomor was made a scape goat. But after bloody conflict and severe resistance

they surrendered. Their leader named Nmorka of Idumu-iru escaped to Ewhohimi he was pursued by henchmen Omoroje Nmor, Aghaolor-Ogbu, Inkpa, Omole-Atibaza and Osegi Okpukponga. He was forced to die and his head brought to Agbor. Ibanke paid ransom for the Agborman killed named Irabor Egebe and the orchu paid were arowohe and Gumedia. The people of Ibanke resumed their loyalty to Eze Agbor until 1916 when Eze Aki pledged to become Benin Administrative subject, because of the past war against them.

4. AGBOR AND EGBUDU AKAN- AGHA IROH:

Egbudu Akan was in Agbor domain but because for the internecin war caused by their chief Iroh when he disobeyed to surrender a murderer by name Osaahon to Agbor supreme head according to custom for trial. It was bitter fight. The Obi's legion devastated E Egbudu despite that the inhabitants resited very strongly, climbing the roof of their houses to prevent Agbor warriors from burning them. At last they were defeated and the murderer was forced to commit suicide. The ruler of Egudu fled to waylay the return of the Obi of Agbor with face to face cutlass fight. Iroh himself was as a brave man as his master Odin Eze Agbor popularly known as Enwun-agha-Ebuw. Iro fell, the King Odin told his body guard to remove him to Ekuku for Uboh to give him treatment because Iro as Eze Egbudu was always a victim for the burial of Eze Agbor. Later, Iro became a leper through the wounds he sustained from the King's Ada - sword, called Umuzo 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. AGBOR AND UWORU MAGIJI AT EKPOMA ISHAN:

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

with the arrival of Agboe warriors the enemy soldiers made no more advances. Umoru Magiji fled at Ekpoma in 1844 where Ishan and Agbor 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 Bida caught fire and damaged by and from unknown causes.

Agbor warriors returned with many captives, horses and donkeys which the Eze Agbor distributed to his friendly rulers in the kingdom. At that time Agboe shere of influence extended to River Niger and Aboh including Kwale. Some of the captives, ~~were~~ returned because of their bad attitude from Onitcha-Ugbo, Isele-Uku etc. where those of Onitcha-Ugbo were stored at Umunede later driven to Agboe where the Obi kept them in Ogbae-Nmuw-Dein farmland known as Emuhu. The remainants of the muslims soldiers gradually spread the muslim religion in Ishan territory.

Some returning Agboe soldiers came to establish at Ekpun, Awta, Oligie and Mbiri and Itamozun as Agbor buffer state. Sons of former Obis were sent to be governors and viceroys of any village in Agbor kingdom, thus Eze Orta by the son of ~~Ogbae~~ ~~1880~~ ~~Itamozun by Okor-eduali named Etuokwu of the Agboe~~ ~~withdrawn when Itamozun was burnt down by Ogbae-Nmuw-Dein in 1885~~ Ogwade in 1650, Oligie by the son of Adigwe in 1698, Mbiri by the son or Obano in 1820. Itamozun by Okor-eduali named Etuokwu of Ihogbae but withdrawn when Itamozun was burnt down by Ogbae-Nmuw-Dein in 1885. The village of Ekpu was wrongly spelt Ekpon. Ekpu was a soldier from Agbor to war in Ishan. He founded this village among other ethnic groups. His wife was a strange woman who could neither speak Ika or Ishan properly. By this manner her offspring adopted a medley tongue of Ika and Ishan for the Ekpon dialect. The ~~200~~ Eze Ekpon was tributary to Agbor until the whitemen came but now under Ishan administration.

6. AGBOR AND ITAMAZUN:

Itamozun was village between Emuhu and Mbiri. The villagers practised highway robbery, trader and travellers complained so that His Highness Obi Oddin sent to warn them from further molestation. After sometime they learnt of the Dein's tour to Umunede so they planned to waylay him. When the Dein was

going they waylaid him but not harmed. When the news reached Agbor, Ojisi of Agbornta with his few men was despatched by the war officer to go and return the king.

But Ojisi returned from the way and said the road was blocked by Itamozun plunderers. When the news reached Obe-Nmaw-Dein quarter the Irekwai became annoyed of his son's flight and informed the Olotu to summon the youngmen to go and escort back the King from Umunode. The Omorden the Olotu ordered the buglers 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 after-noon and before four the youngmen have gathered and marched forward to Umunode and to meet and bruise the buccancers. They passed through without obstruction on reaching Umunode they sang this war-song 'achoko Nwanem'. The Dein on hearing the sound of his men bugle he got up from his seat and saw them marching towards him with joy marched into the column of the crusaders. They after 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 destolate till today, thus some of them escaped to Lbiri, Amuhu and other neighbouring villages to which they dispersed.

7. AGBOR AND AWU (ABAVO):

Agbor warriors took vengeance on Awu because they killed an Agbor woman when she born a twin babies which was a taboo in Awu. This atrocity culminated serious invasion of Awu in the reign of Obi Odin.

The people of Awu did not resist so much but Eze Awu quickly sued for peace in order to avoid bloody war. He said he would come to Agbor with a fan instead of armour and gave his beautiful daughter Okunya to Eze Agbor beside the men and women already kidnapped and sold. The Obi betrothed Okunya to his knight Osunde the Owach for his bravery and faithful service. The woman is the grandmother of Chief J.E. Obusch the Owach of Agbor. She died in 1941.

8. OGBE-NMUW-DEIN AND OGBE - ETOR GROUP:

The Ogbc-Etor is a community of three quarters in Agbor

Ime-Obi. They and Obe-Nmaw-Dein clashed when the latter's women were assaulted by Nmaw-Eke family. Fighting ensued and a man by name Irabor Ijeruma was shot with bow and arrow; he died after four days. The Obi and Council called on Obe-Nmaw-Dein to surrender the murderer but they refused. They said the man did not die on the same day but the Obi insisted and there was a break down of law and order in the administration of Agbor.

After a long time the Obi took to voluntary exile to his mother's home town Okumazi. He was begged to return before Ogbc-Nmaw-Dein people agreed to surrender the man, Nmorka Ekwelawe and was told to take his feet off the ground to end the disagreement between them and Obi and council.

9. AGBOR AND BENIN: Agbor and Benin have had series of simple warfare due to social and political or ideological differences. The Benis were selfish and proud because of the whitemen behind who gave them firearms and steel weapons with which they over-ride their neighbour states and encroached upon their heritage. It goes without saying that Agbor at certain period fell under Benin yoke after the advent of the Portuguese which declined two centuries later with the decay of trade. Agbor constant revolt drained the city of Benin into ruins. Agbor dare not tolerate such undue influence eventhough they have no firearms but determined to live without oppression and tribute to a king not of their own man. And that was why there were constant wars and skirmishes which depopulated and ruined the City of Benin.

Thus also we read the story told in 1702 by Lr. P. Maury Talbot the Resident of Benin Province in the Peoples of Southern Nigeria vol 1. that the Oba of Benin had killed two of his lords for their over-grown riches and the third man who stood on his way was timely warned and accordingly took his flight to Agbor for protection accompanied with three fourths of the Bini inhabitants "however tradition confirms the story that the fugitives were received and absorbed into Ika society by Agbor supreme council - (David Van Nyendeel).

At another time 1778 - 1787 the French captain J.F. Landolphe stated that Agbor revolted and was conquered by the Ojomo.

Again in 1896 in the same book that Agbor rebelled against Bini rule and expedition was about to go against it but in December Acting Consul General Philips decided on peace mission to Benin. Well it goes without saying that before such time 1896 the people of Agbor have heard rumours of Oba Osemde's invasion which made

them prepare very strongly against the ~~invader~~ invader. Skirmishers were sent to the most important strategic points viz: Ekuku (big jungle) covering Alidinma and Usonibe or Urbonibe and the flank of Owa Ikake near Ugonoba Benin Road. At long last Oba Osemende came through Sakpoba and he was encountered at the spot of Usonibe by AGBOR warriors under the command of Generalissimo Ubo. Osemende with his weary troop was compelled to retreat. Many killed, wounded and captured. Of the ten men from Uson Village among the captive beheaded in A_bor dialect were spared and the camp bears their name in Bini language I_be Uson or I_be Urho doors. Thus the ridicule war song (Sec 6 D. 14).

Furthermore, Mr. Jacob G. Esharevba in his history of Benin States' that the Oba built a war camp (Eko) at a village called Obadan and ordered every town and village in his domain to send him soldiers. Over ten thousand were recruited and stationed at Obadan to be trained so that they might be used in A_bor and other campaigns which he proposed to undertake'. If ~~that~~ the story be true, yet A_bor is a fortress of two rivers Ohionio and Orogoode that no enemy could enter to fight in addition to another barriers such as the impenetrable forests, unbridged rivers, long distance between A_bor and Benin which had made war somehow impossible to both.

That might be why it took a long time for the Oba to decide an expedition to A_bor after the murder of Adesua a Bini damsel by Eze Ubuluku about 1750 when A_bor apprehended 40 Benin warriors passing secretly to wage war against Ubuluku and they were buried alive in obedience to Ika law that no tribe could defiantly arrange their warriors to pass through another tribe or town to war without impunity. If the Oba of Benin had intended to recruit ten thousand soldiers from Obadan or Ibadan surely the Ikas with their brothers in the east and west of the Niger viz the Aros, the Abame, the Okas the henchmen of Asaba, Ogwashi-Ukwu and Ubuluku could never be silent to see A_bor perish by the Benin campaign.

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

There a lad named Iduu was captured among others. Iduu was a son of an A_bor 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 founded the spot we called Ali or Obode

Iduu (Benin City). For many centuries the place bears his name until Fortuose came and it was changed to this name Iini. Tradition says Iduu was the Ojiso in title, so famous in our atutuw ilu literature. His wife was an Alahin. However Ojiso regime was remarkable and very historical. U_bocka was over-run some took refuge in the vicinity Isoko, now Ewohighai, U_o, Awu, U_boko, Ewoso at a later date ~~perhaps~~ perhaps during and after Bini expansion in the 16th century AD.

U_bo-Ika situates on the south and was described as the farmland of the Ika people or the farmland of our mother who lived at Oki after the death of Ojelle although tradition said Ojelle did not die in A_bor but perhaps in the west (Ile-Ife) for whose tomb early A_bors went on pilgrimage to his tomb for cult services. It goes without saying that A_bor too at certain period was under Bini yoke but revolted and liberated long before the Bini massacre of 1897.

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

(d) DOMAINS:

1. A_bor Ime-Obi - Pop 23070 in 1952: A_bor Ime-Obi is the seat of the Obi Dein, Eze Agbor; it comprises:
 - (a) Ojbe-Imuw-Dein including the Obicze, Boji-Boji, Ojbe-Isogban, Oriru and Idumu-A_bamise called Idumu-Etor.
 - (b) Other quarters are Iho_bac, Obioline, Ojbe-Isorc, Ojbe-Iwase, Ihaikpen Ohumere, Alirekede called Ojbe-Etor;
 - (c) Emuhu, Ekuku, Alidinma, Obii Idahon with others; inclusive.

The communities around Imeobi called Ijuru comprising of A_bornata, Oki, Alihagwu, Idumuoza, Ozarra, Idumeni, Ewururu, Alia_gwa, Aliorkpu, Alisimic, Alihami, Alisor, Aliorzombr and Omumu are the fountain head of A_bor Imeobi, and form A_bor council. Thus Mr. Macrae Simpson Administrative Officer A_bor 1935 wrote in the Intelligence report that "the A_boc clan of the Ika speaking people is wholly contained in A_bor district and there are no other tribes permanently residing in the district."

He further declared that the A_bor Clan is capable of developing along its well organised village councils and its full representative clan council forms an admirable machinery for a real broad clan administration."

The origin of Boji-Boji

Prior to the out-break of War in the district as a result of the murder of the District Officer at Owa in 1906 the area now called Boji-Boji was Abor farmland. But after the soldier barrack was built near the Orojodo stream the wives of soldiers and strangers were given a site to stay and a market opened for them with slaughter house. The place soon becomes infested with vultures that the native called it Idumu Udele that is vulture place. After sometime the name was changed to Boju-Boju lastly Boji-Boji ~~was~~ derived from the Yoruba word *meaning* (wash face). 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 Abor and Owa began to live with the strangers for economic reasons. In 1926 Owa and Abor who resided there fell out on account of tax payment. The dispute was taken to Court and after wards the area was divided into two parts one side for Abor and the other side for Owa through the trunk road; and each began to collect taxes accordingly from the people in their side. Boji-Boji is now an Urban township of the Ika Division.

Abornta, Population 1452 in 1952 Census

Abornta formerly called Ominije is the cradle of Abor Ika civilisation. There Ojelle or Ojane 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 Ijbo family of people because of our language and custom are very similar.

Among the ancestors was a great man named Nze who we are told founded the spot of Imeobi he named "Abor" which means a family citadel, as a shelter for his son, the begrudged victor of the proverbial Igolo contest. It is surrounded by numerous villages and towns, the Ika sion. After hundred of years the patriarchal rule of Ojelle and Nze was replaced by Oriowor who is greeted Oken-Eze, Great King. Through years of achievement and revolution he led the social affairs of the land later became 'Orbonbon' a priest in

charge of the ancestors antiquities, medicine and crafts. However, the priestly power of Oriowor waned when Eboka or Dien became the emperor of the people. Thus we find Oriowor the sanctionary among other traditional kingmakers called Okwa Amanze, namely Iregwai of Nnudein family, Eze Aliorgor of Alisimien, Igbokeje of Alihiagu, Owach of Ihaikpen and Ovia Olike of Obiolihe (preminister). After the death of Nze the people of Ominije revolted because Abor Ijidi did not permit them to carry his father's corpse back to Ominije village for burial according to custom.

Upon this deadlock Ominije people renamed themselves Abornta in protest as the affairs changed and Abor-Ijidi became Abor-Uku. Abor buried his father on the spot called Ihunze (King's cemetery). Thus the funeral of Nze connotes the 'Oshēzi festival, denoting 'friends outside' because his family Ominije could not come to the funeral ceremony. Afterwards the two families Abor and Ominije (alias Abornta) reconciled coalesced in a united family with a common idea.

In Abornta there are four great families - Oruc, Adjei, Ebwei and Udua, known as their shrine, Of these Udua came late as a refugee.

- (a) The oldest man in Oruc is greeted with the title, Oriowor Oken-Eze *Great King Oriowor.*
- (b) In Ojbe-Adjei the oldest man is greeted with the title Erije.

In Ebwei the oldest man is greeted with the title Erije and in Ojbe Udua as the Udua, Oriowor is the senior of the elders while Ojisi of all Abor title holder presides over them in their village meetings. During the reign of Ekenoba the people of Abornta mutinised against the king request for boys for ~~the~~ his servants, the people attacked him and in it the Obi killed their leaders with pistol. On revenge Aliorkpu men went and killed nine Imeobi 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 enigma of our history is near the river Ohāomo. The People of this village belong to Abor in the comity of the Ika tribe. They speak a different language which is neither Ika nor Edo. We believe Iduu the founder

of the present Linn City was an Ozara man (Ozalite). Benin history tells us that Oba Ojiso met some people to whom Eini owe their language. We believe that Ozara language is the language of the first inhabitants of this area.

The word Ozara in Ika dialect means open field.

Ozara and Agbor have the same social life. We worship Ose (God) in a traditional temple known as Ube Ose shrine which commemorates the time Ose visited us in the shape of a boy ridden with yaws, though a mysterious old man.

Ose appeared first in the Obicze Agbor but fear did not allow the Obi to see him; seeing Obi's weakness he disappeared and appeared at Oaara in a tattered cloth at Idumu Iwan 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 him 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 Ose again asked for water to drink; the husband told his wife to go and fetch water for the man to drink. After drinking the water brought by the wife in a clean calabash plate (Oban) ^(Oban - gba, calabash in prose) the strange man told the husband with his wife to follow him thither. They obeyed implicitly. When they reached a spot the old man Ose halted and made signs and the grasses and trees began to fall and cleared magically. There came many people before the old man whose appearance and action was surprising and they reared to speak clearly the Ika Agbor tongue for which tradition says they spoke minimini tongue i.e. mixed dialect.

Next thing he did when the Eze Agbor came was to get an ebon stick and a small pot of water which he planted with the pot by it. He said, this is a covenant for love and peace between you and me and I will be with you for ever but make sacrifice with a white young cow year after year and

with dance and doxology, that the year for the Eze did not come send a man like me in a kindly attire known as Nwanomo with a white young cow goat accompanied with dance and doxology in the same manner. Each year, the Obi goes there to worship in the shrine known as Ube-Ose.

Hitherto, Ose established an Altar with an Ebon tree and a small pot of water for us his people to worship Him with. The Ebon is immortal; It would not grow or die despite rain and sun. All other trees by it grew big and withered, from over a thousand years ago for that we cannot imagine the origin of Agbor less than the Christian era.

During the anniversary the Oheren Ose (the husband with his wife) sprays the water of the small pot (kwududu) into seven calabash vessels with chalk and odon leaves which the servants carry to sprinkle in to every house in Agbor Ime-Obi for the remission of their sins. They first touch Obicze, then other doorways. They return to Ajeh's house. The Obi worships it and Iwa-nomo in alternative years accompany him with dance and doxology.

Ozara is the Mecca or Jerusalem of Agbor. There we have the chalk mines upon which Ose stepped: Nzun Wuni Ozara chike; ~~that is~~ "Chalk makes ^{the} Ozalite 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 title/Ojisi, a member of Orwa Ndichian Agbor also a war leader (captain). He is responsible for assembling the populace for peace and war. The quarters in Ozara are Idumu-Iwan, Aliebi, Ali-Ibodo, Owerre, Iwbulcha and Owuwu. These villages quarters did not establish one time or by one ancestor but they form a unified entity of Ozarra. At

of a king's demise, but only the return of his corpse to a particular chamber enroute to Ihu Eze. From this function, the curator is known as Orborbon among the royal physicians of the Iwase society.

Here Ika the first lady of our land the amiable wife of Oelle the Patriarch lived in the Idumu Ika quarter, and her farmland peopled by Ubo-Ika Community. Here too one Uwami or Uchede ^{march} priest was ~~bel~~ believed to have flown into the sky with both body and soul by the power of medicine identified with Iwase 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 Elema Oki who sent him to Eze Agbor for service. After Iduu had become a man he left the palace and was said to have founded ^{called} Alih Iduu now inappropriately Benin City. Our tradition says that many centuries after the Oba of Benin was given a girl a daughter of Elema Oki and it was she that be^ot O^uwn for the Oba of Benin. O^uwn (medicine) reigned with the title Eware as the Oba or Oⁱso of Benin.

In 1937 surveyors from Benin City came to Oki bush trying to pe^o between Oki and Isoko or Ewahighai (Edo speaking people) the people of Oki resented this and fighting ensued between them and the surveyors who they said encroached upon their land but the powers that be made the people of Oki to suffer imprisonment arbitrarily. After this Oki two was found near the disputed area to prevent further encroachment. Oki consists Oki-Uku, Idumu-Ika and Idumu-Ekpeka. The Chief of all is Ekuagba or Elema, and sits in Ogwa Ndichien Agbor.

5. Aliahāgu or Alihāgu Pop 1485 (1952)

This village was probably established after tyrannical rules of former kings, since the inhabitants named their place Aliahgu ^(no person's land dur neg come to finish) which is meant man's home shall ever exist on earth. The quarters are the head families of Idumu Obeah, Idumu Iwaise and Armahia. But a secondary etymology came about thus: Ihagu was Obi Nmordu's mother. After her son defeated his brother Udu, he became Eze Agbor and sent her to live at the outskirts of Ime Obi Agbor. The original name of the village was confused to his mother's name Ihagu. She was given the lghasun gangster body-guard to keep her from the attack of his enemies. The duty of lghasun gangsters is thereby reformed instead of other village youngmen by turn it is assigned to Alihagu alone which is carried out when there is emergency and during Osikazi festivity the palace, houses and streets are guarded against lawlessness.

No dangerous weapons are allowed to be used by them, other than harmless ones to keep peace by right only when "Oloma" is proclaimed. Oloma means nobody to come out to see (i.e. curfew).

When Idumu-Ube became unreliable and dangerous Agbor council of elders decided to transfer the Ichansun duties to Alihagu about 1522 AD. The head of the village Idumu Ogbech was given a responsible title Igbokeje by Nmordu and made a kingmaker, A new Obi pays curtesy visit to Obech shrine to receive blessing.

6. Ewuru Pop 363 in 1952 Census:

Ewuru village lies outskirts of Imobi the clan headquarter. It consists of three quarters: Ewuru, Idumueni and Idumuoza.

It is believed that the village was established by trademen probably before Owuuwu the great ascended on Agbor throne about 1311 AD. The ancestors of this village were noted for clay pot making thus the saying Ewuru orkpuite just as Idumu Oza produced bronze bangles and state 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 Uwairo'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 age grades of age parity viz: Orkwa ~~Ugo~~ Ukpo first grade, Orkwa - Obebor second grade, Oluotu grade and Ikahie class from each village. When all the three villages meet in council, Iyase from Idumueni is regarded as the governor of them all, Oki, Agbornta, Ali-Okpuw, Aliagwa, Alihami, Alihagu and Ewuru. Iyase is a member of Uzama class in the hierarchy of Agbor Chieftain.

7. Idumueni and Idumu-Oza Pop 411 in 1952:

Idumueni 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 Agbor has been a place for refuge through her military organization.

Hence we may credit the tale that Owuwu brought the men who formed Idumu-Oza from the west, and the village of Idumu-Eni of the Ika indigene joined them in making Ada, Eboni and other ornaments of brass and bronze.

There was no blacksmithing in Agbor until refugees of Ishan were absorbed during the reign of Nmordu, of the immigrant one, Agbor of Obe-Isere taught many lads how to smith cutlasses (Opia) knives (mmah), (oloden), (ukoti), (olar) and so on until last fifty years when Igbo of Oka and Nkwere smithers of Iron, penetrated into Ika fold to ply their craft. Note the difference between the honorific ^{title} Ojoozun and the professional Okpu ^(anvil-powder) Uzuwa. ~~note the difference~~

8. Alia_gwa Pop 1487 (1952):

Alia_gwa was founded by a captive named Agwa who was kept under Oriorwor by the Eze Agbor after a war in Oru country (Kwale). In those days any captive or bondsman was kept to work in the village Chief's house or farms. Some were used according to the Obi's pleasure. After sometime Agwa 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 Agwa presented the plate he carved much better than the first, followed by staves and other officies which his master had to send annually to the Obi Dein. The king praised the work and loaded, him with presents. Agwa became an instructor to many youngmen. They began to produce many fanciful art works, images and so on. From that time they lived apart as an artists' colony honorifically called Alia_gwa village.

9. Alihami Pop:

Alihami was founded by Ihami, the brother-in-law to the Obi the father of Okpuw by his sister Ebigu-Ihami was a good man, he kept Okpuw his nephew when Osech took over the throne. It was from his place Okpuw built his house not far from his host but later Ihami was suspected by Okpuw as the carrier of his deeds to Imobi where he had enemies of his relative.

However, he was loyal and died the hero of Alihami, as its Ibiagwai.

10. Ali-Okpuw Pop:

Ali-Okpuw was the first settlement to be founded by prince Orkpu after his brother Osech or Osebor had defeated him in their contest for the throne emptied by the death of Obi Anisama. Okpuw squandered the legacy of his step sons (Omobor) Ofien and Ekei by the widow Owa, wife of Orinze Ebi Agbor. To avoid trouble he abandoned Imcobi with his family to meet his uncle Ihami at Alihami. He again began to suspect Ihami for carrying his words to Imcobi where he had many enemies and so left his uncle to seek abode nearby.

Meanwhile his children began to die and to avoid the ken and anger of his foes he again abandoned it to found another place over the river Oro_odo bearing his name Ute-Okpuw because of the fine mats obtained from his village. Ali-Okpuw being founded by a prince his son became a head of Alihami and Alia_gwa in the society of Agbor with the title Ero. His descendants' mats are used to pay tribute to Eze Agbor during Osih-Ezi Festival for royal servants to sit on.

11. Ali-Ozomor Pop 224 (1952):

This village was established by a refugee from Benin City named Ubiere. he was chief Ozomor of Iduu. According to the chronicle of the ~~the~~ pioneers of Benin history (Talbot page 168 People of Southern Ni_eria) ^{p 168} the Oba had killed two of his chiefs but the ~~oboe~~ third man was timely warned and he escaped to Agbor with three quarters of the Benin citizens. Or perhaps his was a failed revolt. In either case, the people of Agbor received him warmly and protected him. They made him Ozomor Eze Agbor and gave him a place to live near to the palace.

Ubiere held the first Ozomor title in Agbor, ~~and~~ ~~was~~ a valiant man of war (Eze-A_gha) and reputable in charms. But the people of Alisimien rose against his appointment ^{which made him to} ~~to~~ ^{himself} supersede their leader the warchief Agbaso_guwa, formerly a king. They became repulsed and some packed away to Akumazi in Ozor-Igbo area. Their movement worried the Obi's mind. This powerful man Ubiere told the Obi to be quiet and he would persuade the runaways to return peacefully. Indeed Ubiere went and convinced the indignant mob. The Obi and the elders of Agbor thanked the Ozomor and made him leader of Alisimien Ozara and Alisor known as Ihu-Ozomor. Till this day, he is the governor.

After the re-organisation Agbor hierarchy sent his next man to Owa with large number where they formed a village known as Ali-Ozomor, Owa. Some Agbor men mostly from Alisimic found a home they called Alisimien in Owa.

Before the British came to Ika country the two villages had been fraternising with Agbor. The people of Uzumu were the followers of Ubiere from Uhi near Benin City.

Ubiere returned triumphantly and the Obi and his nobles praised Ubiere and was promoted as the Governor of Ozarra, Alisimien, Alisor and Omumu- thus the origin of the word Ihu Orzormor while the other section was called Ihu Iyase. The title name was never before the Bini refugee came to Agbor and it came to show that a stranger cannot supersede a native in such a class of honour and distinction. So Oluetu Idumu Eni was appointed to senior the Orzormor.

12. Omumu Pop 449 (1952)

This village came to Agbor protection through Chief Ubiere's leadership when he persuaded three for-the of his Benin townmen and Uhi Villagers to accompany him to Agbor.

It is these refugees that introduced Bini ideas and names into Agbor, although they integrated in Agbor society. Thus Iregwai the oracle of the royal house of Agbor is otherwise called Ihama as in Iduu the Ndichien as Odiowers and many of the title names also adopted. The Chief of Omumu is Elema greated Ekuagba. He is in the rank of Ighaighe in Ogwa Ndichien Agbor.

Some of the refugees were accordingly distributed to Igbanke, Mbiri, Olijie, Nmuede and Awuw. Some was left in Imcobi. But at Ogan the new comers of Omumu misbehaved and the oracle Ezuku suffered them that they introduced its worship thus Ezuku Omumu. There is a new round Village called Aifekede or artificial, its inhabitants 267 in 1952.

13. Emuhu Pop 1,275 (1952)

The village was said to have been established after the campaign in Ishan when Umoru Magiji was coming to Ika to fight and convert them to muslim faith. Agbor infantry with Ishan warriors forced the invaders to retreat from Ekpoma.

The men and horses captured were distributed to the Onogice and Obis. This time the Obi of Agbor sent them to Akumazi and Onicha-Ube. After sometimes, the people of Onicha-Ube drove them away because they acted differently. They returned to Agbor from whence they went. They harboured at Nmuw-Ede northward where they clashed with their neighbouring people. See Agbor then told Obe-Nmuw-Doin elders to harbour them. These wardens are kept on the farm Zone after Orogo Stream. Later, he sent a Chief in his family to control them with the title of Alaza and made him a divider in the assembly of Ndichien Agbor. They lost their muslim faith and became animistic thus the Aki Emuhu Shrine, but still remember the yearly Fulani festival in which they flog one another with wip. The same custom prevails at Akumazi where some of the captives were also sent. Emuhu ke mgbakala jon Igwere is the story of the captives from North; probably in the Koran it is like the Bible's tower of Babel. The people of Emuhu as they are named have mingled with Agbor society for over two centuries. In 1934-36 the erstwhile government wanted to grant their request for a separate native court but seeing the inadequacy of their revenue, their request was turned down and they were told to continue with the Agbor court and cultural loyalty.

14. Ekuku Pop 2530 (1952):

Agbor territorial boundary can be said Agboh on the South East, Sagole River (Ethiopo) on the South. When Osemede became the Oba of Benin he began to threaten Agbor for the vengeance of his father who was slain in the battle in which his palace was destroyed with fire during the insurrection about 1770. In this fight many Agbor people were killed and the rumour stirred Agbor authorities to send warriors to the big jungle Ekuku-uku because Osemede's troop would come through the south flank or through Ishan on the northward. Parapets were set on other direction to await the enemy. Thus the foundation of Agbor Ekku or Ekuku by the various group of Agbor villagers under the command of General Uboh.

Accordingly Osemede's army came and they encountered the formidable Agbor warriors at the spot afterwards called Usonigbe now Urhoniobe where he and his troop were forced to retreat with lamentation. When the enemy ran back Agbor sang this satiric war song:-

Osemode ya Osemode, Ya Yo
 Nmadu meye kola
 Osemode meni ife na akpo ozuwn
 ka afia kmadu meye kola

Shame to Osemode 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 Agbor. Ten men from Uso begged and promised to be loyal to Agbor in plain and humble Ika tongue. Uboh the commander of Agbor army ordered the ten men to live with the Agbor soldiers thus by the captive number the sept named as Usonigbe 'ten doors'. The persons of Agbor origin remain still as the Ika quarter and as the leadership of the village. In the past any of their males found venerable in age was bound to return to Ojbc-Nnuw-Dein Agbor to be installed as Iregwai or Ikii Amor Ebon as it is for Agbor Ekuw and Alidinma men.

Lany Agbor ^{cut} posts established after this period these are Alidinma, Isimpe Owa-Ajuga, in Alidinma Zone and Owa-Ikeke near Ugoniki Benin Road. Ekuku is astride the main trade route to the Creeks and attracted settlers from neighbouring towns and villages. It is divided into three main quarters Ojbc-Agidi, Ojbc-Abantin and Ojbc-Okoro. These are again divided into Idumu or quarters founded by settlers from different villages. In Ekuku we find a veritable example of Ika organisation. Here every Idumu is represented in the village assembly.

15. Alidinma pop 987 (1952)

Alidinma is a small village situated right in the Kwale boundary nearly thirty miles from Agbor imeobi the headquarter or citadel of the Ika tribe.

It is composed of two quarters Imobi and Idumu-Eni. This village was founded after Agbor and Benin war and militantly under the Uboh the etuelugbu of Ekuku Agbor.

It lies on the bank of river Umoo which forms the trade route between Agbor and Oru, Kwale people.

The oldest man of the whole village become Onyisi or Ojele, Beyond the junior grades Oluotu and Ibanigbe ~~and~~ class ('workboys' 12 to 45 years), there are four age grades of whom the first is Okwa-Ukpo, the second Okwa ~~Obc~~ Obe-cbuor, Okwa obeto, then the Ikahi and otu Ikoro. This follows the Ojbc-Nnuw-Dein pattern. In the village council the Onyisi Idumu of all presides.

(a) Agbor Extended Lineages:

No one can tell the exact dates of the establishment of the various groups or families of Agbor in Awuw, Owa, Ute-Obeje, Amuzazi, Obior, I_bodo, Otolokpo, Mbiri, Nnuw-Ede, Onicha-Ugbo Isele-Uku, Oburu-Ukwu Ojwashi-Uku, Azi, Eodu, Ahama, Onitsha, Ota, Olijie, I_bankih, Ekpon, Ojan etc. There is the fact that many of them have Agbor emigrants and settlers in their midst for in those days of old persons would easily abandon their homes to seek abode elsewhere nearer to their relatives or friends but no person or persons could reside bodily without the consent of the village elders to whom he would pay allegiance. The Obi of Agbor had the largest loyalty of the people residing in the area of the West and of the Niger while the Village Chief's Eze Alinta received smaller loyalty of the subject under them.

Nowadays some renegades claimed Benin prestige while the ancestors were Igbo, Ika or Ishan. The use of the royal symbol Ada Swords was not for them merely because they are Villages heads. Neither the Oba of Benin nor the Obi of Agbor had allowed or granted Ada to be carried by a peasant. In Agbor kingdom only Viceroys or chiefs carry Eboni swords. Furthermore, persons not of royal blood cannot be eligible to display Eboni during Osih-Eze festivity but villages head can carry it in their place to their council.

1. About 1630 Owa ¹⁴¹⁶⁶ ~~278~~ and Ute-Okpuw Pop 6174 (u/1952)

The people of Owa and Ute-Okpuw are offsprings from Agbor. Owa sits on the south east from Ime-obi Agbor township. Tradition says Owa was a daughter or an oracle priest from Igbo-land and business (mbien) in the centuries past. After sometime the doctor died leaving his only daughter who became a wife to a Chief the Ebii of Agbor by name Kiyem. Owa had two sons Ofien and Eke. When Kiyem died prince Okpuw took Owa as wife. Later on, Okpuw began a dynastic dispute with his brother Osech; at long run Okpu was defeated. In the litigation he squandered the property of his step sons; that sparked fraternal conflict with Kiyem's brothers. Okpuw fled to Aluhami where his sister was Ihami's wife. But after sometime he began to suspect his warden Ihami who he said was too frequent to Imeobi where he has many enemies of his relatives he decided to build his own house.

He founded the site known as Ali-Okpuw not far from Alihami. After some years his children began to die very often; he again abandoned the cottage to live across the stream in order to avoid troubles and backbiting of his enemy brothers. He was a hunter and established a settlement of his name again which afterwards described as Ute-Okpuw on account of the mats made there by which the ancestor paid his tribute to Eze Agbor for his royal servants to use during the Osih Ezi festivity.

At the point Ofien was handed to the Obi, while Eke and his mother lived with Okpuw in the new abode. After sometime Ofien retired from the palace of Agbor; he was given benefit of his service a wife by name Iruo the mistress of the quarter Iruo known as Owa Iruo. As a family man he founded a home nearby known as Owa Ofien. It is important to note that the Original founders of Owa are Offspring from Agbor royal houses because their father Kiyem was Chief Ebi of Agbor nobility. Thus Iruo daughters are virtually Nmuw-Adan Obicze Agbor till today because Iruo was betrothed to Ofien as Nmunye wife; they purify the palace before Osih Ezi is celebrated according to custom.

Ekei the second son of Owa also founded a homestead known as Owa Eke. We are told Owa was an enterprising woman she had many more children for prince Okpuw the aegis of Ute-Okpuw. She became a popular mistress of the area thus Owa Ofien, Owa Iru, Owa Ekei, Owa Aliro, Owanta, Owa-Alisimi, Owa-Alizomor and so on wherever they are. All fraternise at Owa Oyibu as their capital.

Irien having been trained in the Obicze Agbor maintained the dignity of self respect loyalty to his master who conferred on him the title of Ayuwe as Eze Owa: Thus, Owa was made Agbor Asylum. From past event any Agbor renegades witch and wizard not killed were sent there as the asylum, hence we find many witchcrafts; wizards and native doctors in Owa well known in history. However, Owa Ofien is no more the seat of the king but Oyibu. Before the arrival of the British Eze Owa had been tributary to the Dein Eze Agbor. The okor-eduali for Owa was Agbor Chief by name Omorjie-Nmor.

In Aliro the quarter Idumu-Ugbala family still have important duty to perform in the Obicze Agbor particularly during funeral ceremonies of the Obi, they belong to Iwase family known as Ipami cult among whom were the Orbobon priest of Eze Agbor. In the trail of the Bini expansion some of her refugees fled to Agbor for protection on which some were distributed to Owa (see above).

In 1892, Gbenoba caused the massacre of Owa tributaries who came to his court with oracular priestly dresses ~~contrary~~ contrary

to custom; the doors were closed against them. But among the victims were priests of Orheyen Ute, whose death was abominable. Agbor leaders did not support Bein's action and the matter was allowed to rest because Owa begged for peace. Sacrifices were made at last to appease the anger of their deity. Agbor supreme council rebuked the Obi for the barbarious act.

In 1926, Owanta and Agbor Alihami and AliOkpu disputed about boundary of farmland between them in the Boji-Boji area. Surprisingly, the main road from Bein Asaba was used as demarcation. Such artificiality is unjust.

2. Awuw or Abavo Pop ⁴⁸⁶¹ (1952):

Awuw is a verile community of nine villages in Ika tribe; foreigners incorrectly named them Abavo. The foundation of this ancient place could be dated from the Uboika fugitives when Agbor wages devastating internecine war against them. Uboika was Agbor backwoods including Ugboko-Uson, Isoko and Ugo. They were all Ika nationals before the Benin expansion in the 17th century. However, the people of Awuw remained loyally unswerved from the Ika fold among others in Uboika vassalty. This in Ika commonwealth the Obi of Awuw keeps a veritable court in Agbor pattern are Udomi, Igbojili, Ekuma, Ekueze Ekuoma, Azuowa, Okpe, Obiayinma and Oyoko.

In the olden days the market at Udomi was the forum of slave trade, middlement from important towns in Igbo, Kwale, Agbor and Iduu met there for their requirements. We are told that an Agbor woman who went to the market delivered twin babies', she was murdered because the people of Awuw considered twin birth as pollution of ther soil. When the report reached Agbor, arrangement was made to wage war against Awuw but Eze Awu quickly submitted, regretting pleaded for forgiveness and to prevent Agbor offensive war against his people, for that he betrothed his ~~daughter~~ daughter Okunya to Eze Agbor; Eze Agbor betrothed her in turn to Osunder his brave knight the Oweh, the grand father of the present Owch Agbor. As punitive war was averted Agbor made a chattel of their men and women who were seized and sold as slaves until Eze Awuw concluded a treaty saying it would be better for him to come to Agbor with a fan instead of armour i.e. Agbor was difficult to enter.

The people of Abavo are conscious of education having elementary schools and ~~Oba~~ Charles College (R.C.M.), communal efforts and privileges, lawyers and other professionals.

3. Nmuw-Ede or Umunedo About 1668 Pop 7708 (1952)

This city-state was originally named Nmuw-Ede but foreigners now called the place Umunedo by a kind of metathesis stimulated by the Igbo word for patrilineage. It was inhabited by prince Ac, A Son of Adigwe, he predated the wife of his father Obi Ogwado and this is an abomination. Adigwe did not allow the man to be prosecuted according to law but was led by executioners out of the town and to the wilderness across a stream Orogodo. This he did but died suddenly after his sojournment. His sons and daughters in Obédience to the law and order of Agbor lived with him until he died and their names constitute the three quarters viz; Ileje, Ille and Oban. After their place became well peopled, the Obi of Agbor initiated the senior son as the Ayuwe whose palace sits in the heart of the town. As time went on the children sought plenary indulgence from the royal family of Agbor Obe-Nmuw-Dein who had refused the burial rites of their father Ede.

The people of Nmuwe have the same social life with Agbor royal family Obe-Nmu-Dein who forbid to eat certain things and certain animal meat. They observe the same Osiczi feast immediately after the celebration in Agbor.

From time immemorial the people of Nmuw-Ede have been fraternising with Agbor for peace and war. They observe the name Osih Ezi festival though not simultaneous but after Agbor had celebrated accordingly to custom so also with Igwe. They forbid things Agbor forbid.

The people are not only industrious and loyal, they are keen in commerce and education. They have elementary Schools and St. Ignatious of Loyola College. There are already sub-post Office, water supply, general hospital and electricity project towards making a beautiful township.

4. AKUMAZI POP 5953 (1952)

This village was founded by a recluse named Akuma who according to folklore hailed from Iboland. He was a servant of Eze Agbor but after his retirement he could not trace back his place of origin. As he wandered, a hunter from Nmuw Ede saw him and brought him to his house where he led the vagabond back to the Obi from whose compound he had left. The king and his people welcomed Akuma and his hunter, giving him another wife to his comfort and returned him with the hunter.

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Akuma thereafter 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 (innuendo). Howbeit his wife named Orubor alias Olubor became a popular figure in the village. Thus her eponym Owerre-Olubor in Akumazi.

Akumazi adopted the same organization of Agbor society and like other Ika towns kept a veritable Obicze. Long ago after the war in Ishan country some of the captives sent there by the Obi introduced their custom of whipping one another during festival they called "Ibnaabon" like their counterpart of Emuhu ultimately a Fulani idea from Umoru Magiji's missionary war. There are elementary Schools, market, postal agency, and native Court of justice. They have produced beautiful Igbaaba including the mothers of Agbor Kings. The present ruler is H.H. Osaje, the name of the first woman in the Nigerian senate and first president of the customary court is Mrs. Kerry a citizen of Akumazi. The mother of His Highness Ikenchukwu I, the Dein Eze Agbor is Mburu Ichion, of Akumazi origin.

5. IGBODO POP 4035 (1952):

The foundation of Igbedo is dated with the expansion of the Ika race in the last century. The exodus of Nwa Eze Kime alias Eze China led the Agbor scouts and because of the fine scenery populated with natural plants called Igbedo some of them settled down theirs and some to Onicha-Ubo. The place bears the plant name Igbedo Akun meaning Igbedo is very useful.

They developed the same social life which is at Agbor. In the year 1910 a customary court was built there and one citizen by name Iyeke made an Assessor to attend Courts at Agbor and Igbanke. Iyeke was conferred an Eze title by Eze Agbor in 1918, now among the Ika Kings (Obis). The missionaries (C.M.S.) built a School which has produced illustrious sons and daughters of Igbedo on their journey towns civilization. It consists of a village called Irebor or ~~Ilabor~~ Ilabor.

6. UTE+OJBEJAE POP 2322 (1952):

This clan was founded by a hunter named Ojbeje the son of a famous Ika man. Without gain said Ojbeje could not have settled down there if he has no connection with Obior people. A stranger man cannot do otherwise. Later, other fugitives from the environment came in one by one among these was Oko, Ujomer's mother from Agbor royal house, the lineage of Ofulus the

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retired court messenger Boji-Boji A_bor. Much cannot be said of the village history as no record was kept before. The amenities are School, Maternity a native court hall and a Market. Little is known of their achievements but as Ika they are closer to the soil than trading.

7. OTOLOKPO POP 2905 (1952):

The clan of Otolokpo is a streamline of Ika race and made up of Mmuw Ede, Utc-Okpuw and A_bor indigene. There is a saying that Otolokpo and Mmuw Ede made sacrifice with a ram to stop sun from setting for them to finish the day's work assigned to them but the sun ate the ram and set normally. They sighed. It tells us their unity and diligence towards works of life. Thus we find the effort of Otolokpo recently manifested in the building of a magnificent townhall by self effort and so the people of Umunede. The traces of the founders families are none to dispute. Their population has aptitude of growth. Their Eze court is humble with loyal subject.

8. IDUMU-ESA POP 2097 (1952):

The village of Idumu-Esa was formed by refugees from seven quarters (Idumu-Esa) to A_bor owing to her well organised social structure in those days of warfare, human sacrifices slavery and man's inhumanity to man (which of course continues). Some said the seven men were followers of the Chief Ubiere the Ozomor from Benin City while others said they were from the neighbouring Villages 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 Ika.

In other words they have organised a peculiar social structure based on very ancient Ika custom of Ibo hegemony without king, Eze to be the head rather a government by old man in seniority of age (gerontocracy). Thus the Okparan of Idumu-Esa instead of Obi as it is in other Ika clans. Hitherto the Office of Okparan is not hereditary from father to his son but by and large based on parity of age grade by seniority.

In some years past a man from Idumu-Esa appealed to the Obi of A_bor to elect him as Eze Idumu-Esa but His Highness Obi A_borbu having scrutinised his request on the line of ancient custom and tradition refused to elect him. The applicant further went to the Obi of Owa who also denounced him. However the people of Idumu-Esa have long detested the rule of Oba or Obi and title system.

9. MBIRI POP 2478 in 1952

The village of Mbiri was founded by hunters many many years ago, by four friends from neighbouring Ika Villages. They are the ancestors of the Idumu or quarters in Mbiri; the most senior of them was the O_ele in charge of the Village sanctuary or the Ancestors. The Elders sit in order of seniority in his Or_awa for civil duties. These elders are responsible for their family affairs.

Their social order is Okwa Ukpo Okwa Obebor, and Okwa Obetor. Below them are the Ikoro who are responsible for all the labour such as burying of the dead, clearing the Village roads, war when it occurs. There is another class known as Eze as the head of the clan. His Office is hereditary from father to his son. Before the arrival of the British he was tributary to Eze A_bor who sent him there. There is Agriculture farm established by the State Government, also School Maternity and Market.

The towns that are out of the Ika fold are Olijic, Ota, Igbanke O_gan, Ekpon, Obior, Egbudu-Akan. They still possess Ika language custom and culture, but historical chances have alienated them politically. A case in point is -

IGBANKIH POP 14684 1952

This community was called Igbonki or Igbanki. They belong to Ika 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 Ibo orthography of the amateur F.J. Adams. Tradition says the ancestor of Igbantor was a retired servant of Eze A_bor from Mbiri in A_bor kingdom and not a bought slave. Later on, a prince named Mekuye went there to settle but refused to acknowledge the servant as his equal and alighted him a naked slave or Igbon-otor simply because he was his father's sword bearer. Therefore, the titles Eze Akih meaning King rules and or Eze I_gon meaning slave king became a sequence in the community: Igbankih.

Hitherto, Igbankih and A_bor have a common heritage in language, custom and religion e.g. the worship of Nsobu by Eze A_bor. But in the reign of Obi Gbenoba the people of Igbanke murdered Chief Orzomor of A_bor and with this barbarity A_bor had no alternative than to besiege them. Punitive war ensued and Igbankih was reduced to subjection in 1895.

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However, before the arrival of the British Igbankih and Agbor had began to fraternise as eternal friendship and brotherhood when Agbor district court of justice was established in 1901, three native courts were built in Agbor, Igbanki and Igodo for all the warrant chiefs to attend each court in turn week by week. The Obi of Agbor as the president. Later on, a son of Eze Aki ~~g~~ appealed to Eze Agbor to sanction him as the overlord of all Eze Igbankih. The Obi of Agbor told him that was contrary to Ika traditional rules and regulation. Eze Igbanki was autonomous in their domain. He there~~after~~, appealed to Chief Osula from Benin to Ogada and his request granted but all Eze ~~Ogoda~~ Igbanke 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.

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CHAPTER 51:
ORTA AND OLIJE
POP 1953 In 1952 CENSUS

It is said that two friendly hunter Orta and Olijie founded the two villages after their return from Ishan campaign against a missionary crusader who had aimed at spreading Moslem faith in Ishan and Ika countries. Strictly speaking they succeeded partly in Ishan country but utterly failed in Ika. However, as the villages developed the Obi of Agbor sent his grandson to Orta as duke; afterwards the brave and loyal Olijie was also recognized as the Ayuwe or Eze Olijie. It is the reason why the people of Orta observe with the people of Agbor the ritual ceremony of Osih Ezi at the same season while Olijie observes theirs later in order to prevent enemy disturbance while Orta are in the festival mood.

CHAPTER 52:
OGHAN OR OGAN POP 1671 IN 1952 CENSUS

The name Oghan alias Ogan signifies the den of elephant where Agbor hunters found such beasts in the wilderness close to Ohiozo river, thus the saying "Okeme eyin, ola Oghan" meaning after work elephant retires to its den.

Tradition says hunters formed the cottage called Ogan. After some years a native doctor from Ozoi_bon Ubulu-Uku by name Eze Uku came there on Ibian business i.e. as a herbalist. ~~After~~ After some years of toil he died without anybody to inherit his things or manage his medicine with sacrifices but at long last 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 Agbor who without delay contributed a sheep and money to the people for the appeasement. The medicine became a shrine called Ezuku or Eze-Uku-Ogan. The sacrifice continues every year till this day. A story of Oba's son named Ogun came to be a drama in Benin and Agbor history.

Ogun's mother was an Agbor 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 Agbor her former town. The mother was a daughter of an Oki man of Ikpami cult in a family of the royal physician Nmuw Obonben.

The mother appealed to doctors and priests for help to her son to be the Oba of Benin. She handed O_{un} to Oheren Ezuku (priest). O_{un} served the priest very well as a good hunter and taught him the Ika arts and science as *uibe*. Hereafter, O_{un} was called back to Benin to be the Oba. He went and became the Oba with the title of Eware. He was grateful to his warden and offered him the Ada sword which is yet in the shrine of Ezuku O_{an} as a token of gratitude to his warden. Thus from Eware's reign to Overami the mothers of the Obas were foster mothers of A_{bor} people who by and large sheltered them as honourable guests and received their presents which were shared to the Oba on the throne.

APPENDIX I

LANGUAGE: Ika Numerals

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Ohu (Cardinal), Ebuw (ordinal) | 18. Nmesator |
| 2. Ebuor | 19. Nmetenci |
| 3. Etor | 20. Nmeri or O _{hun} |
| 4. Enor | 21. O _{hun} ni Ohu |
| 5. Isen | 22. O _{hun} ni Ebuor |
| 6. Ishiin | 23. O _{hun} ni Etor ... |
| 7. Esa | 38. O _{hun} ni Nmesator |
| 8. Esator | 39. O _{hun} ni Nmesator Nmetenci |
| 9. Itenci | 40. O _{hun} ni Nmiri or O _{hunnai} |
| 10. Iri | 41. O _{hunnai} ni Ohu |
| 11. Nnanai | 42. O _{hunnai} ni Ebuor |
| 12. Emebuor | 43. O _{hunnai} ni Etor ... |
| 13. Nmetor | ... 58. O _{hunnai} ni Nmesator |
| 14. Nmenor | 59. O _{hunnai} ni Nmitenci |
| 15. Nmeisen | 60. O _{hun} Etor |
| 16. Nmeishiin | 61. O _{hun} etor ni Ohu |
| 17. Nmesa | 62. O _{hun} etor ni Ebuor |
| 63. O _{hun} etor ni Etor ... | 600. Nnuwn ni O _{hun} iri |
| 78. O _{hun} etor ni Nmesator | 700. Nnuwn ni O _{hun} Nnisen |
| 79. O _{hun} etor ni Nmitenci | 800. Nnuwn nai |
| 80. O _{hun} Enor | 900. Enuwn nai ni O _{hun} isen |
| 81. O _{hun} eno ni Ohu | 1000. Nnuwn nai ni O _{hun} iri |
| 82. O _{hun} enor ni Ebuor | 1200. Nnuwn Etor |
| 83. O _{hun} eno ni Etor ... | 1600. Nnuwn Enor |
| 98. O _{hun} enor ni Nmesator | 2000. Nnuwn Isen |
| 99. O _{hun} enor ni Nmitenci | 2400. Nnuwn Ishin |
| 100. O _{hun} isen | 2800. Nnuwn Esa |
| 200. O _{hun} Iri | 3200. Nnuwn Esator |
| 300. O _{hun} Nnisen | 3600. Nnuwn Itenci |
| 400. Nnuwn | 4000. Nnuwn Iri |
| 500. Nnuwn ni O _{hun} Isen | 8000. Nnuwn O _{hun} |

160,000 Ujeri

(b) IKA GRAMMAR: - Pronoun:- I/We, You, He/She, They/Them
 Nme Iyu, Uwe Enyin
 We/Us, Nme/my/Our, Your, Nken Nkenyin, Nkei
 Yours/Their
 Nkewe

Demonstrative Pronoun

This, Huni	That Huahu	These, Ndini	Those, Ndaihu
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Relative Pronoun

Who Onye	Which Elchu	What Kini	When Elenbe/Eleo
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Active Verb:

Do:

I do Nme me	He does Iya me	You do Iyu me	They do, Uwe me
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COMPOUND PERFECT

I have done, Nme me	He has done, Iya me	You have done Iyu me	They have done, Uwe me
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Future

I shall do, N' nme me	He shall do, N' Iya me	You shall do, N' iyu me	They shall do, N' uwe me
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COMPOUND FUTURE

I should have done Nke Nme me	He should have done, Nkiyueme	You should have done, Nke iyu me
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Imperative:

I do, N' nme	He does, Iya me/Nime	They do, N' ime	We do, enyin me
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Nkebe Owe

- Ahua -
- Akahu -
- Akaile -
- Ifon Ohu -
- Ifon Ebuoriwan -
- Iza -
- Owohi -
- Efinai -
- Otutu -
- Enyasi -
- Uhihi -
- Tani -
- Ozanhu -
- Taitor -
- Eki -
- Nwencki -
- Ogetor -
- Eken -
- Oric -

Division of Time:

- A year
- last year
- Next year
- One month
- Last month
- A week (four days)
- A day
- Noon
- Morning
- Evening
- Night
- Today
- Yesterday
- A day before yesterday
- Tomorrow
- Next Tomorrow
- Nine/Eight days of @ a week
- Market day
- " "

Afor - Market Day
Nkwor - " "

(d) SOME IKA PROPER NAMES

1. Abiamawe - I come to enjoy
2. Aghaelor - Home war
3. Akoebo - White man idea
4. Amanian - I know not
5. Ajuwa - He or she is rejected
6. Alika - Townsman greater
7. A_boe_boulem - A_bor save me
8. Aliagu - Country never finish
9. Amaaku - No knowledge of
10. Amaokuije - No knowledge of where we go
11. Aluka - Lan's effort
12. Ataguwu - Say Yes
13. Angantih - Shut your ear
14. Arimokwu - I dislike quarrel
15. A_borma - A_bor knows
16. Apaokuzo - ~~God is greater~~ Disobey not king's word
17. Azolem - Forget ~~me~~ me not
18. Azoebon - Forget not your Town
19. Alimele - I rely on my people
20. Benibe - Be with comrade
21. Bayenim - Be useful to me
22. Bionese - I pray to God
23. Chukwuma - & God knows
24. Chiedu Kiedu - God leads
25. Chukwuka - God is greatest
26. Cnidozi - God keeps well
27. Chiedozi - God is the repairer
28. Chi-odu Kodu - God rules
29. Chukucku - ~~God is greater~~ God says
30. Chika - God's is greater
31. Dibic - Doctor
32. Dumbiri - Stay with me
33. Dunnodih - Live with me
34. Dunku - Help me to say
35. shiwarior - God is to be begged
36. Ehimarior - I pray to God
37. Ebonka - Family is greater
38. E_bule - Do not harm
39. E_giwe - Do not kill foe
40. Elucme - World worriers
41. Elucmeibewe - World worrics one another

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42. Elucmele - World do not do
43. Etuoku - Careless of words
44. E_wabor - So journey's blessing
45. Ekawuku - Hand is wealth
46. Emeye - Effort made
47. Emenin - I do not do
48. Ero_u - Think not all
49. E_ecka - King is great
50. E_ghocbi - Money does not itself make a hot
51. Emaaleosih - Laughter is no friendship
52. Etunim - I care not
53. Ebundom - Put no blame on me
54. Egwun - Fear
55. Ekpenisi - Pray head for long life
56. Ekufu - Out spoken
57. E_hononychan - One's decision
58. Ekuniazor - Said and forget
59. Eme_hai - Do right
60. Emeriele - Do not evil
61. Echenim - I do not think so
62. Eruemolor - I reach home
63. Efenwom_bce - Wealth has no time
64. Eoic - He lives
65. Ebite - Live far
66. Elele_u - Care not all
67. Ekugum - Say few
68. Eucbic - Laughing ends
69. Ehiwue_u - You is medicine
70. Aluma - World knows
71. Ekawole - Look at ones hand
72. E_laronma - Think good always
73. Ebi_u - As life ended
74. Ebcwebiru - Life is long
75. Efaeh - Wealth
76. Handome - Decision is ~~own~~ external
77. Iwebuko - Enemy is many
78. Iweriebon - Hater is within family
79. Iwenya - Hate is in the eye
80. Iwagu - Hatred never ends
81. Isibor - Head blesses
82. Iyama - Knows
83. Ihichaonye - One's own
84. Iwaka - Enemy is many
85. Iwerunne - No fear in heaven
86. Idc_beku - Wife talks
87. Iwe - A faithful woman
88. Isitor - Long live your head
89. Ibe - Comrade
90. I_begbulem - Comrade do not kill me
91. Iaconyi - The strength of friendship
92. Ijeamaka - Travelling is ~~well~~ good
93. Ijedinma - Travelling is well
94. Ikenchukwu - The power of God
95. Ikenor_wun - Power of fighting
96. ~~E~~ Kiku - God is greatest
97. Kaliku - What the people say
98. Kiyem - God gave me
99. Kimokuzi - What ~~the~~ can I say again
100. Kinsch - What have I done
101. Kimoku - What can I say
102. Kelubia - Now would be
103. Konyehan - As one is
104. Kunoou - Talk and remain
105. Kubei - Stop talk
106. Lator - Let it be
107. Laokutor - Leave word along
108. Madom - Save me
109. Lesia - Look at it
- 110.

1101	Lebei	-	Do no more
111.	Melekwo	-	I look at it
112.	Keje	-	Try to do
113.	Okuye	-	Let me say
114.	Okukoy	-	The ancestors say
115.	Imosinku	-	The ancestors made to say
116.	Imosiare	-	Ancestors made me to live
117.	Okoka	-	The ancestors are greater
118.	Imorkadiken	-	Ancestors are higher than man
119.	Amorai	-	The ancestors are
120.	Nmorma	-	The ancestors know.
121.	Okokaorwun	-	Ancs. are greater than medici.
122.	Imorsinkpe	-	" God led me to say
123.	Awachokor	-	A child keeps seeking
124.	Akeonyasua	-	One loves his own
125.	Okoki	-	Tomorrow's part
126.	Nkemeti	-	My own is
127.	Nwambor	-	Damsel
128.	Nwabunwun	-	A child separates fighting
129.	Nwapali	-	child raises parent
130.	Nwafuru	-	Child fits (parent)
131.	Nwanchonedie	-	Child like the father
132.	Onyechie	-	Who thought it so (ie the wor
133.	Onyekpe	-	Come again
134.	Ooianke	-	He come for himself
135.	Omeko	-	Thanks be to God
136.	Olemeku	-	How many I can say
137.	Okuku	-	God says
138.	Oghonim	-	The child denied for me
139.	Omezi	-	No more to happen
140.	Onwuwemele	-	Death no more
141.	Onwucheri	-	Death conquers
142.	Ororonwan	-	Pride of a child
143.	Ckaa_u	-	No more back bite
144.	Omole	-	How many have I
145.	Ckadike	-	People talk of brave men
146.	Okuonyechie	-	Each person has his word
147.	Oche	-	He wait me
148.	Onyechinke	-	Each person has
149.	Onyechibi	-	Who has no difficulty
150.	Onukuozor	-	Word of mouth can forget
151.	Oriachi	-	It is a destiny
152.	Oboi	-	Lay it be so
153.	Oya-amasi	-	Eau is unbearable
154.	Okurunbeh	-	When the time come
155.	Ozuor	-	One who cares nothing
156.	Onyeiwalehi	-	A hater is not God
157.	Onyewene	-	Who can endure
158.	Okurwan	-	It is because of child
159.	Okoro	-	Young man
160.	Orumbe	-	When the time due
161.	Osiobuni	-	Friends are few
162.	Ckagu	-	Back word ends
163.	Osuonyeokelo	-	Greeting if you like
164.	Onwuaru	-	Death causes ruin
165.	Osiobu	-	Friends sometime kills
166.	Onwabuonya	-	Death causes regret
167.	Tasime	-	Try again
168.	Uweru	-	One who is blessed overrides
169.	Uwagu	-	Wealth never finishes
170.	Uwezirin	-	Honest living
171.	Wczukue	-	They say in secrecy
172.	Nwaakenyen	-	Man's son

MY LIFE CAREER - My father Iduwe and my mother Onyechie told me that I was born in February 1900 at Alidinma, a Village on the bank of River Umoo in Aboor district. I was named "Egwabor" meaning a sojourner's fortune as a token of my father's prosperity in farming and in trade, on ivory, elephant tusks, camwood and slavery. I was the sixth and youngest of my mother's children and twelfth of my father's (who was polygynous).

Meanwhile, my parents decided to return home (Imeobi, the Royal City of Aboor), to see to the welfare of their ageing parents but also because the slave trade had become contraband and was declining. Before that time, my senior brother Idia and I had been sent home to the care of our grandmother the daughter of Obi Naordu of the ninth period. Indeed the then successor Obi Ehenoba was quite kind and generous to our old mother's existence. On the other hand my father's father Osahon was the Eze Dibia, a potent personage of no mean order ^{who} controls all herbalists and priests in Ika land. His large compound consisted of 125 men, women and children; I was one of ~~the~~ five grandsons detailed to his chamber.

We served Osahon day and night, kept the kindled fire that warmed him burning steadily, pured his palm wine, loaded ~~his~~ his pipe, ran errands and served kola nuts to his visitors among whom were the sages, moralists, priests, sorcerers, and distinguished personalities of all works 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 things which have animated our custom, laws, culture and folklore. Ultimately, I became a genial historian of the Ika. Besides I practised rudely how to dance, sing and play ^{alpin} happy tomtom, Uke ^(b.w) and drum.

In 1910, my grand father Osahon, attaining a venerable age, was honoured with the title of Irewai or Obe-Nkuru-Dein, ^{in other words} Oracle of the Royal House of Aboor. He died in 1920, my father in 1927 my mother in 1931, all of blessed memory. ^{By} ^{had} 1913 I entered Aboor government School and in 1914 into Otu-Ibanibe (Workboys age-grade). In 1919 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 whence I was made a head teacher and catechist.

My desire for book learning knew no bound. I enrolled as an oversea student in the normal College of Precceptors London for Arithmetic, English, and History, determined to be a proficient teacher. In the December 1924 holidays I went to Lagos where

Parish father Cado_an helped me in my desire. I was admitted into St. Gregory Grammar School (now College): but after a while ^{accounted to} ~~illness~~ ^{no} ~~no~~ ^{no} lodging and no financial aid. I appealed to Rev. Father Taylor who reengaged me as a teacher and posted me to St. Paul's Catholic School Ebutetta. In October, 1926, I entered into the Railway Traffic and Commercial Training School then called Daisy Villa. In 1927, I passed out and was sent to Kaduna Junction as a full fledged, Railway employee. I served the department in the North, East and West.

I married first in 1928, and now have 24 gifts of God, 14 male and 10 female. All attended School; Nine of the male attended Secondary School, two of them ^{are} Overseas, one of them female. Four females are in the elementary. Seven are working in different departments. I have a shelter in the centre of Imeobi. I suffered some ruburif's when my first wife died in 1934. Two years ^{then} ~~after~~ after I went to Kano General Hospital for an operation of acute appendicitis.

During these years of toil and moil I was always an ardent lover of books passionately reading novels and some classical books from Thinker's Library. I undertook Economics and book-keeping from Benett College, London, but for frequent transfers from station to station I could not obtain any academic letters behind my name for all my endeavours in the field of learning. Withal, I dislike stories told without thorough research, told by idiots from unqualified beliefs. For this reason I have to question things and know the truth from old and young.

When I came home on vacation leave in 1944, I was conferred the chieftain's title Odii by His Highness Dein Obika for my patriotic spirit. I retired voluntarily from the service of the Nigerian Railway Corporation on pension in 1959, after 33 years of faithful service. ~~As~~ I entered into social and political life of my people on the platform of the Action Group party. Thus I was appointed a board member of the N.B.C. Western Region and sometimes arter to the Income Tax Tribunal of Asaba Division.

In 1971, I was made Oluotu Obe-Nmuw-Dein. Ever since I have relentlessly endeavoured to reform my people's social and economic instability. My people being the aristocratic quarter of A_bor it is incumbent upon any of her patriots to encourage movement free from fear and slavish loyalty. To that watchword

I was cursed, scorned, railed at as a troublemaker.

I would like to vent my feeling on this matter like the patriot who said out of the night that cover me, black as a pit from pole to pole, I thank whatever gods there be for my unconquerable soul.

A. Egwagor IDUWE