

ANCIENT BENIN: WHERE DID THE FIRST MONARCHS COME FROM?

Dmitri M. BONDARENKO, Department of Cultural Anthropology, Centre of Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences,
30/1 Spirinodovka street, 103 001 Moscow, Russia
Peter M. ROESE, Nibelungenstraße 227, 64686 Lautertal, Germany

One of the most mysterious episodes of Benin history, namely the establishment of the so-called “1st (*Ogiso*) dynasty” in the end of the 1st millennium A.D., is discussed in the paper. The authors argue that the first *Ogiso* could come (and bring the monarchy as a form of supra-chieftdom political organization to Biniland) from the Yoruba town of Ife. Not Benin City, but the settlement of Udo situated on the way from Ife to Benin could well be the first capital of the country, that is the seat of the founder of the *Ogiso* dynasty and Benin Kingdom.

The time of the so-called “1st (*Ogiso*) Dynasty” – probably the early 10th – first half of 12th centuries, is one of the most mysterious pages in Benin’s history. The sources on this period are not abundant. Furthermore, it is obvious that the rather scarce archaeological and ethnohistorical evidence should be supplemented by an analysis of different records of the oral historical tradition, although it is well known that this kind of source is not very reliable. However, on the other hand, it is generally recognized that it is unreasonable to discredit it completely.¹ Though Benin students have confirmed this conclusion and demonstrated some possibilities of verifying and correcting its evidence,² a reconstruction of the early Benin history will inevitably contain many hypothetical suggestions and not so many firm conclusions.

For the Bini themselves, in their perception the *Ogiso* time is the period of social creation of the world, comparable to the creation of the land. That is why, not only due to the lack of true historical data, native recorders of the oral tradition have not even attempted to give dates of different *Ogiso* reigns. For them

¹ See, e.g., Vansina *et al.*, 60–64; Vansina 1965; 1985; Ryder 1970; Bejlis 1977; 1986, 16–42; L’vova; Miller; Akinola 1981–1982; Kubbel’

² See, e.g., Bradbury 1959; Ryder 1961; Dark; Wolf 1963; Kalous; Akinola 1976; Tunis; Darling 1988, 129–134; Eisenhofer 1995 a; 1995 b; 1996; Ben-Amos, 1999: 18–21

the linear concept of time only applies to the era starting with the establishment of the present, 2nd dynasty. The previous rulers live in a timeless semi-mythical space. The very title *Ogiso* means "the king from the sky" or "the king of the sky." All the aforesaid corresponds to the specifics of the archaic vision of the universe, the most important part of which is the people's own society. The *Ogiso* period in records of the oral tradition represents the chronicler's attempt to "overthrow" history into timelessness (so characteristic of the mythological consciousness and picture of the universe), where history loses its main distinctive feature: its duration in time. For the Bini, all the *Ogiso* reigned in immemorial times, before the Moon and the Sun appeared,³ prior to the social creation of the world (that is before the establishment of the present, 2nd dynasty in the early 13th century) and that is why they are felt as contemporaries of each other in their common timelessness.⁴ It is generally accepted by Benin native historians that altogether 31 *Ogiso* "kings" ruled, but this figure, of course, may be conventional, hardly more. Above all, the *Ogiso* lists made by different native historians are not completely identical in terms of the length of the *Ogiso* period, the rulers' names and the order of their appearance on the throne.⁵

There is but little known of the coming to power and reign of the first *Ogiso*, Igodo. Maybe he is a purely mythological figure. The most prominent native historian, Jacob U. Egharevba, relates on this point: "... one of the prominent leaders, Igodo, was made *Ogiso* or king".⁶ The version of the oral tradition offered by politically engaged local historians further tells that he lived long and had a great number of descendants. However, Darling writes: "... Benin's territorial and political rights have been transposed back in time to legitimize later conquests – new termed «rebellions» within its subsequent kingdom area. ... Udo – an independent rival kingdom until its early 16th century conquest by Benin – is regarded as having been rebellious since *Ogiso*... times...".⁷ In the light of this, we may suppose that coming to power of the first *Ogiso* and the establishment of the very institution of the *Ogiso* was far from being peaceful. It looks very much as if in reality Igodo was not "made" the *Ogiso*, as Egharevba, as well as another Benin court historian, Eweka⁸ wrote, but "became" him.

Someone getting acquainted with the Benin history may be misled by the outstanding role of Benin City and think that the Bini society was being built around her from the very beginning. In reality, the process of growth and integration of chiefdoms and communities occurred in different parts of Biniland and not less than ten proto-city settlements had appeared at the time of chief-

³ Butcher, 249-52

⁴ Bradbury 1959, f. 3; Stride and Ifeka, 308; Bondarenko 1995, 46-47, 204-05

⁵ Cf., e.g., Egharevba 1960, 3; Eweka 1989, 12; 1992, 4; Akenzua, 7

⁶ Egharevba 1960, 1

⁷ Darling 1988, 131

⁸ Eweka 1989, 11

doms' rapid growth, by the brink of the 1st and 2nd millennia.⁹ They struggled with each other for the role of the sole place of attraction for the overwhelming majority if not all the Bini, the focal point of their culture in the broadest meaning of the word, their political and in connection with it sacro-ritual centre. The one hundred and thirty Bini chiefdoms and great number of independent communities drew towards different proto-cities. Finally, Benin City gained the victory.¹⁰ Due to the obtaining of the exclusive political function and position, she grew and eventually became one of the most important urban centres of Upper Guinea while the other proto-cities went down to the level of big villages.¹¹

That was also the fate of Udo, the settlement situated about 24 km to the north-west of Benin City, which was her most violent rival for many centuries.¹² However, some versions of the oral historical tradition suggest that Udo was probably the original settlement of the *Ogiso*. The period of the Bini chiefdoms' flourishing is associated with their coming to power, and its reign gave an additional impetus to their further appearance and growth.¹³ This was also the time of the first attempt at establishing not only supra-communal, but also supra-chiefdom authority in the country; to be distinct, in the part of Biniland round Benin City, the appearance of which predated the 1st dynasty.¹⁴

Since numerous references concerning the early time of Benin point to Udo, it is clear that this settlement must once have been of considerable importance. By some informants Udo is described as the first capital and at least the part-time residence of the first *Ogiso* ruler. A British visitor to Benin of the late 19th century, Cyril Punch reports that Benin City was not the first capital, but "... a town farther north called Ado though not the Ado... in the Lagos Colony".¹⁵ This was definitely Ado-Ekiti. Ado is most probably identical with Udo which is situated to the north-west of Benin City. Talbot had no doubts that the first *Ogiso* (whose name was Igudu or Igodo, Ogodo) once lived in Udo.¹⁶ In another passage he points out that Udo is, "from all accounts, a far older town" than Benin City.¹⁷ Macrae Simpson argued that "it is possible that Ogodo penetrated as far as Udo village, which shows every sign of being a far older town than Benin but tradition accounts for its origin in a different manner".¹⁸

⁹ Darling 1988, 127; see also Onokerhoraye, 297

¹⁰ Talbot, 153, 156-57; Egharevba 1949, 90; 1960, 11-12, 85

¹¹ Darling 1988, 133

¹² Talbot, 160; Macrae Simpson, 10; Egharevba 1964, 9

¹³ Bondarenko 2000, 95-104

¹⁴ Roese 1990, 8; Aisien, 58, 65

¹⁵ Roth, 9

¹⁶ Talbot, 153

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 157

¹⁸ Macrae Simpson, 10

However, contemporary inhabitants of Benin City consider Udo only the second large settlement of the Bini by the time of foundation.¹⁹ Their position may well be explained by the "natural" tendentiousness of the pro-Benin version of the court oral historical tradition which has formed in the time of the 2nd dynasty and must not confuse the scholar. The *Oba* of course wished to persuade each and everyone of the "primogeniture" of their capital. The importance of the factor of temporal primacy for Africans is not less evident in the pro-Udo version of the oral tradition related by Chief F.A.O. Iyamu of Isikhukhu (east of Udo) which argued in 1975: "When founded by the *Ogiso*, Udo was intended to be the «centre of the world» with an access route via the Siluko River and Siluko village, 14 km WNW of Udo."²⁰

Further information was obtained in Udo by Darling in the 1970s and early 1980s. In particular, he heard from one of his informants that the first *Ogiso*, Igodo, descended from the heavens and governed Udo before leaving her for Benin City.²¹ At another place Darling writes that Udo once owned the land between the Osse and Siluko rivers. The settlements there paid tribute in leopard skins, etc. to the Iyase (governor) of Udo. Archaeological research in the area of his own led Darling to the conclusion that the old Talbot and Macrae Simpson's hypothesis is worth supporting: really "Udo is an ancient place; the oldest town in the whole area".²²

The following description about the founding of Udo and Benin City is a condensed version of the traditions collected by Darling. It describes the events as seen by Udo informants.²³ The founder of Udo was a certain Ugbe who, together with his wife, came from the east. They had at least two sons of which the elder was called Itebite. The name of the younger brother has not been handed down to us. Itebite moved with his wife, Iteque, into the vicinity of today's Benin City and founded Igodomigodo while the younger brother remained at Udo to rule from this place. Finally Itebite had to pay tribute to Udo intended to make sacrifices to the father. Therefore it can be presumed that Ugbe, the founder of Udo, was already dead. This is another hint in view of the ancestor cult which plays such a prominent role in Benin.

It seems that some tension developed between the two brothers because Itebite finally ordered the younger brother to come to Igodomigodo and pay homage to him. However, the people of Udo did not consent to this proposal and it probably came to an armed conflict. The people of Udo had to give in and a transfer of power took place from there to Benin City. Itebite finally became the ruler (*odionwere*) of Igodomigodo.

¹⁹ Egharevba 1964, 9

²⁰ Maliphant *et al.*, 122

²¹ Darling 1984, I, 152

²² *ibid.*, II, 479-80

²³ *ibid.*

This legend reflects some basic features of the Bini culture, such as the perception of different kinds of relations in the kinship categories and the exceptional part of the ancestor cult.²⁴ The understanding of this gives a chance to reveal the historical background of the legend. We may conclude that early Udo and Benin City rulers' brotherhood possibly refers to some historical or even genetic relation between the two settlements. Thus, the motif of the founders of Udo, Ugbe and Oyo's parenthood might be a sign of the chronological primacy of that town. The observation of an ancestor cult is a right and duty of the eldest son. The relation that the cult of Ugbe was first observed by the younger one, might be witness of the initial dominance of Udo over Benin City. Itebite's victory probably reflects the ending of Udo's superiority by Benin City and the establishment of "proper" (in the Bini's viewpoint) relations between the two settlements: the elder brother surpassed the younger one. Evidently, such an "historical justification" the inhabitants of Udo invented for themselves already in the times of Benin City's dominance.

Thus the retold legend may represent a mythologization of real events of a remote past. But another possibility there is. The Udo version may even be further from the truth than the Benin one being a response to the latter's claims for primacy and thus hegemony. A good example of such a "war of legends" is that between the Ife story of the foundation of different cities, Oyo among them, by sixteen sons or grandsons of Ife's first ruler (the *Oni*) Oduduwa, and the Oyo legend telling that the first *oni* of Ife was Adimu, a redeemed slave of Oduduwa while Oyo was founded by a son of Oduduwa, Oranyan.²⁵

So let us proceed with the reviewing and testing evidence of the Udo-Benin relations. Their old rivalry still lingers on in the Emobo ceremony in Benin City.²⁶ It was preceded by the Igwe (Igue) ceremony, during which the head (*uhunmwun*) as the seat of the power of judgement, the senses, etc.,²⁷ is offered sacrifices. Evil powers which remained for any reasons in Benin after the sacrifices were chased away during the Emobo ceremony. The festivities ended with the Esogban (eventually the *Iyase* or *Osuma*) calling in a loud voice: "Any spirits that have not received offerings should go to Udo and eat."²⁸ In this way the spirits were chased to Udo.

Another tradition which in Darling's opinion affirms Udo's "motherhood" towards Benin City is that Benin women, including wives of the Obas (the *iloi*) leave the city for Udo to give birth to their first-borns in their mothers' villages. And the Obas' mothers lived in Udo, there where the first *Ogiso* Igodo's mother originated from.²⁹

²⁴ See, e.g.: Bradbury, 1965; 1973, 229-50; Willett & Picton; Dean; Aghahowa; Bondarenko 1995, 24-31, 194 *et al.*; 1997

²⁵ Johnson, 11, 24-25; Willett, 124-25; Law; Beier, 29-32, 72; Smith, 15-16; Apter, 13-34

²⁶ Its detailed description see in Melzian 1955, 104

²⁷ Bradbury, 1973: 271-72

²⁸ Ben-Amos 1980, 93

²⁹ Darling 1984, I, 154-57

The aristocracy of Udo has the same titles as found in Benin City, among them *Iyase* (*Iyashere*), *Eribo*, and *Ogiefa*.³⁰ Furthermore, Dennett mentions in 1906 the "OGYUDO having died intestate..."³¹ According to Darling, the mothers of most of the *Ogiso* and of the first Obas came from Udo.³²

There is also archaeological evidence of greater antiquity of Udo in comparison with Benin City. The most significant of them is the older age of the Udo town walls. During botanical field work (1947-48) at the Okomu Forest Reserve south of Udo, Jones made some interesting observations. It should be stated Jones was, as far as is known, the first to map the wall and ditch surrounding Udo. This is therefore the first of its kind which became known outside the Benin City wall complex.³³ Digging trenches for taking soil samples, Jones discovered numerous charcoal fragments and potsherds. The position of the trenches was about in the centre of the approximately 40x40 km Okomu Forest Reserve. Part of the charcoal fragments were identified to be kernels of fruits of the oil palm (*Elaeis*). It is remarkable that, apart from a few specimen near human habitation, no other oil palm trees could be found.³⁴

During the digging of the foundation of a new rest house, also situated roughly at the centre of the Forest Reserve, further findings came to the light. These comprised two nearly complete pots and an iron knife with a curved blade.³⁵ Furthermore, a number of earthen mounds were discovered. Jones was not sure if they were made by humans or not. They may have been heaps of clay obtained from nearby creeks or even the Okomu River. This material is usually stored for 1-2 years before being used for manufacturing clay vessels.³⁶

At the time Jones did his fieldwork the area was only sparsely populated. The numerous findings led to the conclusion that the population density must have been much higher in former times. In connection with the earthen mounds he writes: "If the mounds are man-made, they are likely to be the work of people who preceded the present Binis..."³⁷ Darling assumes that the imposing wall and ditch system (*iya*) of Udo is older than that of Benin City.³⁸

Finally, the style of bronze casting in Udo differed considerably from that in Benin, on the one hand, and was more archaic, on the other hand.³⁹

³⁰ Dennett, 184; Bradbury s.d., BS 201; Darling 1984, II, 479

³¹ Dennett, 184

³² Darling 1984, I, 148

³³ Jones 1955, 567

³⁴ *ibid.*, 570; *idem* 1956, 101

³⁵ *idem* 1956, 102

³⁶ *ibid.*, 103

³⁷ *ibid.*, 103-04

³⁸ Darling 1984, II, 480

³⁹ See, e.g.: Chernova, 160

All in all, it is really reasonable to arrive at the conclusion that Udo is a more ancient settlement than Benin City. It is also evident that her stable and long might must have been rooted in the pre-dynastic period. But let us listen to the other party too. Its depositions as regards the origin of the *Ogiso* dynasty are not less interesting, but at the same time more contradictory and difficult to interpret.

Egharevba's relation, already quoted above, is quite indefinite and even somehow naive: "... one of the prominent leaders, Igodo, was made *Ogiso* or king." As he wrote, at that time the part of the Bini's lands that gravitated towards Igodomigodo was named after the focal settlement.⁴⁰ And "Igodomigodo", Egharevba explains, means "town of towns" or "land of Igodo".⁴¹ But what is felt in this explanation, is the court chronicler's desire to give an additional argument to the idea of primogeniture and supremacy of Benin City over all Bini settlements. The reader can compare Egharevba's statement with the history of the Igodomigodo's origin popular in Udo.

According to Egharevba and other Benin historians, Ebohon and Omoregie, Igodo was Bini and his residence was situated not in the biggest settlement, the future Benin City, but just a few kilometers south-eastwards, in the still existing settlement of Ugbekun. There Igodo died.⁴² The moving of the palace and with it the seat of government from Ugbekun to the area of today's Benin City is credited to the second *Ogiso* Ere.⁴³

There is no any doubt about the antiquity of Ugbekun and her significance in the context of the history of the 1st dynasty. As a result this settlement has always stayed an important religious centre: it contains a lot of holy places, shrines, oracles, etc., some of which are still in use today.⁴⁴ It is enough to say that just here the "magic farm" is located. This was one of the most important places for the whole Biniland. Right there the rulers of the kingdom, together with some of the highest-ranking dignitaries, planted yams every year to ensure the fertility of the whole country.⁴⁵ No doubt, that rite was an important means of legitimizing the supreme ruler.

Among religious sites in Ugbekun there are those which hold the memory of the *Ogiso* and their time, for example, Osun-wuigbede where the oracle of the god of medicines live. They say, this shrine was founded by *Ogiso* Igodo.

According to a legend,⁴⁶ on the spot where Ugbekun is now situated, a servant of a certain priest once descended from the heavens by a rope tied to

⁴⁰ Egharevba 1960, 1

⁴¹ idem 1965, 18

⁴² ibid., 13; Ebohon, 80-83; Omoregie, III

⁴³ Egharevba 1956, 3

⁴⁴ See Ebohon, 82-83

⁴⁵ See Curnow

⁴⁶ Akenzua, 12-20

his belt (note that the very word “ugbekun” means “belt”). The servant went from Ugbekun to Benin City. But while he was in the heavens, all whom he knew on the Earth grew old and died. The servant resided in Benin City, built a palace and proclaimed himself the *Ogiso* under the name Owodo. He turned out to be the last ruler of the “1st dynasty”.

Ugbekun is, even today, still the residence of the *Ohenso* (*Ohen-iso*), the priest of the shrine of the *Ogiso* (*aro-iso* means “altar of the sky”).⁴⁷ The reference about the *Ohenso* leads to the conclusion that he might be a descendant of the *Ogiso*. However, his pedigree may also have been traced to the priest assigned by the second *Ogiso*, Ere, to take care of the ancestor cult for his deceased father Igodo. In particular, the sword (*ikhu*) made of iron *akpada* means “iron stone”) according to Egharevba, hailed from the Igodo’s shrine.⁴⁸ However, it is known that the altar of the *Ogiso*’s ancestors was of rectangular shape while the *aro-iso* is semicircular. Maybe later the rulers of the 2nd dynasty had their own way and pushed through the semi-circular structure.

The first rulers of the 2nd dynasty continued to perform ceremonies at Ugbekun personally. But in the mid 15th century Oba Esigie cut this practice down and appointed the *Ohenso* to be priest of the *Ogiso* altars. From this time on every new supreme ruler sent his sword-bearers, called Emada, with the ceremonial sword (*eben*) and gifts for sacrifices during coronation ceremonies to the *Ohenso*. The Oba avoided offending the *Ohenso*, because otherwise it was believed harm and illness would come upon the nation. In the case of disagreements sacrifices had to be done immediately at the *aro-iso* shrine.

At the same time, the late South African archaeologist A.J.H. Goodwin, who was accompanied by Egharevba, did not manage to find anything relevant on the spot where the Igodo palace supposedly once stood while conducting fieldwork in Benin in the 1950s. However, Goodwin admitted that the poor result was due to the impossibility, for different reasons of extensive excavations in that part of the settlement.⁴⁹

Thus, the connection of Ugbekun with the *Ogiso*, even the possible rule of the first of them there, of course do not mean *a priori* that the 1st dynasty appeared right there. Really, even besides the Udo tradition statement that Igodo started ruling in that town, there is some evidence of the Benin origin which is worthy of attention.

In the 1940s P.R. Page recorded a Benin myth that Igodo was not proclaimed Bini, but a genetic link of the *Ogiso* dynasty with Ife was being established.⁵⁰ In the 1960s this myth was mentioned (but not retold) by Jungwirth.⁵¹ Not all the

⁴⁷ See Jungwirth 1968 b, 68; Ebohon, 80; Roese 1993, 455

⁴⁸ Egharevba 1965, Preface

⁴⁹ Goodwin, 82-84

⁵⁰ Page, 166

⁵¹ Jungwirth 1968 b, 68

versions of the Bini oral historical tradition support the story about the rule of Igodo in Ugbekun. In particular, the relation recorded by Macrae Simpson completely contradicts narrations made by local historians engaged by the Oba's court. According to Macrae Simpson, there have been raids by Yoruba groups. "These raiders, entering Benin from the North-west, in the neighbourhood of present day Siluku, gradually penetrated Benin where they eventually established themselves in complete mastery. The first raid was led by Ogodo.... He made little headway, but his son *Ogiso* appears to have had more success."⁵²

Talbot was of practically the same opinion. He called the first Yoruba chief Igudu, who, as has already been mentioned, lived at Udo. Then, as Talbot has it, came Erhe, a son of the *Oni* of Ife, with a group of followers. However, though the Yoruba invaders managed to establish themselves in Biniland, the Erhe's son and heir *Ogiso* finally went back to Ife.⁵³ Within the context of precisely this version of the oral tradition, which looks the most plausible one on this point, it becomes clear why the processes of chiefdom formation and urbanization in the Udo area, situated between Ife and Benin, started earlier than in the Benin City area. It is very possible that the inhabitants of Udo outstripped other Bini groups of that time in the rate of socio-political evolution, and were able to be the first to rise to a new level. That was the level on which the concentration of power reached the level at which the appearance of "monarchs" became necessary. Just then the "1st dynasty", the *Ogiso* rulers turned out.

Note that in Ife the first *Ogiso* is regarded as a son of Oduduwa, the mythical progenitor of the Yoruba, whose children left their native city of Ife for the founding of various Upper Guinean kingdoms.⁵⁴ It is most possible that in the end of the 1st millennium Udo, situated in the lands of the Bini was rather a self-dependent, «autonomous» outpost of the Ife power from which the Yoruba raided neighbouring territories. The transition of the Igodo's residence from Udo to another settlement, Ugbekun, that is outside the realms of the Ife power may testify to serious success of that ruler: the establishment of his power in the central parts of Biniland and his dropping out of obedience to the ruler of Ife. The change of residence from Udo to Ugbekun could also mean the gaining of full independence by Udo.

The struggle between Benin City and Udo did not come to an end with the legendary Itebite's military victory, establishing the *Ogiso* and even the *Oba* dynasties, traditionally mighty and significant for Bini sociopolitical history that town was for many centuries. Udo remained strong, not weaker than Benin,⁵⁵ and her severe opposition lasted for hundreds of years. Darling even supposes that Udo conquered Benin in the middle of the 15th century⁵⁶ before Udo was

⁵² Macrae Simpson, 10

⁵³ Talbot, 153

⁵⁴ Fabunmi, 402

⁵⁵ Talbot, 157; Egharevba 1962, 10; Darling 1984, I, 143-67

⁵⁶ Darling 1984, I, 157-63, II, 336

finally subjected, again by force at the beginning of the 16th century. And this event, as well as the pre-dynastic clash, found reflection in the Benin title nomenclature, fine arts, rituals, the oral historical tradition, and legends.⁵⁷

We have already noted that in the Bini's perception the *Ogiso* time was the time of social creation of the world. From the "objective", social anthropological point of view, the *Ogiso* period was really that of the creation of glorious "Great Benin" as an integrated supra-communal society. Furthermore, that was also the time of the first attempt to establish not only supra-communal, but also already supra-chiefdom, royal authority and office.

We suppose that this became possible because the first Benin monarchs were foreigners from Ife who brought the very institution of kingship to the Edo. But the chiefdom level was the objective limit of the sociopolitical organization for the Bini by the time of the *Ogiso*'s establishing. They were not ready to accept adequately the political innovations brought from Ife, where the kingdom had existed for a few centuries by that time. Thus initially the institution of kingship was simply imposed on the Bini multiple independent communities and chiefdoms without any genetic, organic connection with them, their social structures and political institutions, well elaborated and acceptable enough for the existence just on these levels of social being. But once the institution of the supra-chiefdom supreme ruler was introduced, it was to be "filled" by concrete people. If the story tells the truth, the third *Ogiso* became the last in the Yoruba, Ife line. He returned to Ife, but by that time the very institution of the supreme supra-chiefdom ruler had already been established firmly enough in Benin.

...When the interregnum of the second half of the 12th century resulted in the invitation of an Ife prince Oranmiyan by local chiefs, it looks like they had an additional argument for choosing precisely him as the founder of the new, 2nd dynasty. For the Bini it might be a continuation of the *Ogiso* line. The Ife prince was to symbolize the restoration of the situation before discredited, unpopular order of the interregnum time, the transition of the supreme authority from the *Ogiso*, as a compatriot of the first rulers of that line. This fact could ensure him recognition by the people, decrease the feeling of serious changes in their minds and hearts and, all in all, pacify the society.

⁵⁷ Talbot, 157, 160; Macrae Simpson, 10; Melzian 1937, 5; von Sydow, 108-15; Ajisafe, 21; Egharevba 1949, 79-81, 90-91; 1951 a, 12-13, 18; 1951 b, 14; 1952, 11, 12; 1960, 24-28; 1964, 9; 1965, 21; 1969, 13, 14-15; Sidahome, 164-96; Ebohon, 36; Nevadomsky, 41; Eweka 1989, 19, 23; also see: Bradbury 1957, 20; Wolf 1961, 730-36; Jungwirth 1968 a, 158-59; 1968 b, 72-73; Ryder 1969, 3; Ayeni, 41-42; Maliphant *et al.*, 121-22, 128; Darling 1984, I, 154-57, 163-67, II, 337; Roese 1984, 204, 208-09, 216-17; 1992, 383; Eweka 1992, 90-94, 163, 164, 167-68; Akenzua, 27-40; Ben-Amos 1999, 7

REFERENCES

- Aghahowa, D.O.: The Ancestors and Their Roles in Human Life; A Case Study of the Bini People of Bendel State of Nigeria. – Lagos, 1988. (Nigeria Magazine, Vol. LVI, No 3-4, pp. 63-68)
- Aisien, E.: Benin City: The Edo State Capital. – Benin City 1995
- Ajisafe, A.K.: Laws and Customs of the Benin People. – Lagos 1945
- Akenzua, C.A.: Historical Tales from Ancient Benin. Vol. I. – Lagos 1994
- Akinola, G.A.: The Origin of the Eweka Dynasty of Benin: A Study of the Use and Abuse of Oral Traditions – Ibadan, 1976. (Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. VIII, pp. 21-36)
- Akinola, G.A.: Towards a Definition of Traditional African Philosophy of History – Ibadan, 1981-1982. (Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. XI, pp. 67-74)
- Apter, A.: Black Critics and Kings. The Hermeneutics of Power in Yoruba Society. – Chicago / London 1992
- Ayeni, P.M., ed.: Festivals of Bendel State, Nigeria. – Benin City 1975
- Beier, U.: Yoruba Myths. – Cambridge etc.: 1980
- Bejlis, V.A.: Problemy ispol'zovanija ustnoj traditsii dlja rekonstruirovaniya istorii narodov Afriki (Problems of Use of the Oral Tradition for Reconstructing the History of African Peoples). – Moskva, 1977. (Istochnikovedenie afrikanskoj istorii [Study of Sources on African History], ed. by A.B. Davidson, pp. 67-93)
- Bejlis, V.A.: Traditsija v sovremennykh kul'turakh Afriki (po materialam zapadnoj i afrikanskoj literatury) [Tradition and Modernity in African Cultures (by Western and African Literature)]. – Moskva 1986
- Ben-Amos, P.: The Art of Benin. – London 1980
- Ben-Amos, P.: Art, Innovation, and Politics in Eighteenth Century Benin. – Bloomington 1999
- Bondarenko, D.M.: Benin nakanune pervykh kontaktov s yevropejtsami. Chelovek. Obshchestvo. Vlast. (Benin on the Eve of the First Contacts with Europeans. Man. Society. Authority). – Moskva 1995
- Bondarenko, D.M.: Krugi afrikanskogo mirozdanija (po materialam edojazychnykh narodov Juzhnoj Nigerii) (Circles of the African Universe by the Edo-speaking Peoples of Southern Nigeria Data)]. – Moskva, 1997. (Mir afrikanskoj derevni. Dinamika razvitiya sotsial'nykh struktur i dukhovnaja kul'tura [The World of African Village. Social Structures and Dynamics of Culture], ed. by N.A. Ksenofontova, pp. 92-126)
- Bondarenko, D.M.: Benin (1st millennium BC – 19th century AD). – Moscow, 2000. (Civilizational Models of Politogenesis, ed. by D.M. Bondarenko; A.V. Korotayev, pp. 87-127)
- Bradbury, R.E.: The Benin Kingdom and the Edo-speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria. – London 1957
- Bradbury, R.E.: Chronological Problems in the Study of Benin History. – Ibadan, 1959. (Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. I, No 4, pp. 405-419)
- Bradbury, R.E.: Father and Senior Son in Edo Mortuary Ritual. – London etc., 1965. (African Systems of Thought, ed. by M. Fortes, pp. 97-115)
- Bradbury, R.E.: Benin Studies. – London etc. 1973
- Bradbury, R.E.: BS 44, BS 201, BS 221. Unpublished Field Notes. – Birmingham, University of Birmingham Library. Hesslop Memorial Room, s.d.

- Butcher, H.L.M.: Four Edo Fables. – London, 1937. (Africa, Vol. X, No 3, pp. 342-352)
- Chernova, G.A., «Iskusstvo Benina» [Benin Art]. – Moskva, 1975. (Iskusstvo narodov Afriki. Ocherki khudozhestvennoj kul'tury s drevnosti do nastojashchego vremeni [The Art of Africa. Essays of Artistic Culture from Antiquity to Modernity], ed. by M.A. Korostovtsev, pp. 153-162)
- Curnow, K., Art of Fasting: Benin's Ague Ceremony. – Los Angeles, 1997. (African Arts, Vol. XXX, No 4, pp. 46-53, 93-94)
- Dark, P.: [Review of: A Short History of Benin. By Jacob Egharevba. Ibadan, 1960, 3rd ed.]. – London, 1962. (Africa, Vol. XXXII, No 2, pp. 300-301)
- Darling, P.J.: Archaeology and History in Southern Nigeria. The Ancient Linear Earthworks of Benin and Ishan. Pt. I-II. – Oxford 1984
- Darling, P.J.: Emerging Towns in Benin and Ishan (Nigeria) AD 500-1500. – London etc., 1988. (State and Society. The Emergence and Development of Social Hierarchy and Political Centralization, ed. by J. Gledhill; B. Bender; M.T. Larsen, pp. 121-136)
- Dean, C.: The Individual and the Ancestral: Ikegobo and Ukhurhe. – Los Angeles, 1983. (The Art of Power, the Power of Art: Studies in Benin Iconography, ed. by P. Ben-Amos; A. Rubin, pp. 33-40)
- Dennett, R.E.: At the Back of the Black Man's Mind. Notes on the Kingly Office in West Africa. – London 1906
- Ebohon, O.: Cultural Heritage of Benin. – Benin City 1972
- Egharevba, J.U.: Benin Law and Custom. – Port Harcourt 1949
- Egharevba, J.U.: Benin Games and Sports. – Sapele 1951 (a)
- Egharevba, J.U.: Some Tribal Gods of Southern Nigeria. – Benin City 1951 (b)
- Egharevba, J.U.: The City of Benin. – Benin City 1952
- Egharevba, J.U.: Bini Titles. – Benin City 1956
- Egharevba, J.U.: A Short History of Benin. – Ibadan 1960
- Egharevba, J.U.: Marriage of the Princesses of Benin. – Benin City 1962
- Egharevba, J.U.: The Origin of Benin. – Benin City 1964
- Egharevba, J.U.: Chronicle of Events in Benin. – Benin City 1965
- Egharevba, J.U.: Descriptive Catalogue of Benin Museum. – Benin City 1969
- Eisenhofer, S.: Jacob Egharevba und die Rekonstruktion der Geschichte des Reiches Benin (Nigeria). Vortrag zur Tagung: Zur Geschichte der Afrikaforschung. – Leipzig 1995 (a)
- Eisenhofer, S.: The Origins of the Benin Kingship in the Works of Jacob Egharevba. – Madison, 1995 (b). (History in Africa, Vol. XXII, pp. 141-163)
- Eisenhofer, S.: Jacob Egharevba und die Rekonstruktion der Geschichte des Königums von Benin (Nigeria). – Frankfurt am Main, 1996. (Paideuma, Bd. XLII, S. 151-168)
- Eweka, E.B.: The Benin Monarchy (Origin and Development). – Benin City 1989
- Eweka, E.B.: Evolution of Benin Chieftaincy Titles. – Benin City 1992
- Fabunmi, M.A.: Notes on Ile-Ife. – Lagos, 1969 (Nigeria Magazine, No 100, pp. 400-404)
- Goodwin, A.J.H.: Archaeology and Benin Architecture. – Ibadan, 1957. (Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. I, No 2, pp. 65-85)
- Johnson, S.: The History of the Yorubas. – London 1921
- Jones, E.W.: Ecological Studies on the Rain Forest of Southern Nigeria. IV. The Plateau Forest of the Okomu Forest Reserve. Pt. I. – Oxford, 1955. (Journal of Ecology, Vol. ILIII, pp. 564-594)

- Jones, E.W.: Ecological Studies on the Rain Forest of Southern Nigeria. IV. The Plateau Forest of the Okomu Forest Reserve. Pt. II. – Oxford, 1956. (Journal of Ecology, Vol. ILIV, pp. 83-117)
- Jungwirth, M.: Benin in den Jahren 1485-1700. Ein Kultur und Geschichtsbild. – Wien 1968 (a)
- Jungwirth, M.: Gedanken zu einer Ethnohistorie des Benin Reiches. – Wien, 1968 (b). (Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien, Bd. IIC, S. 67-74)
- Kalous, M.: A Contribution to Some Problems of Benin Chronology. – Praha, 1970. (Archiv orientální, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 431-436)
- Kubbel', L.E.: Istoriografija afrikanskoj ustnoj traditsii [Historiography of the African Oral Tradition]. – Moskva, 1988. (Obshchestvennye nauki za rubezhom [Social Sciences Abroad]. Series 9, No 3, pp. 98-101)
- Law, R.: The Heritage of Oduduwa: Traditional History and Political Propaganda among the Yoruba. – London, 1973. (The Journal of African History, Vol. XIV, No 2, pp. 207-222)
- L'vova, E.S.: «Ustnaja istoricheskaja traditsija kak istoricheskij istochnik (sovremennoe sostojanie problemy)» [Oral Historical Tradition as a Kind of Historical Sources (The Modern State of Problem)]. – Moskva, 1977. (Istochnikovedenie afrikanskoj istorii [Study of Sources on African History], ed. by A.B. Davidson, pp. 94-106)
- Macrae Simpson, J.: A Political Intelligence Report on the Benin Division of the Benin Province. Pt. III. Unpublished Reports by District Officers. Ministry of Local Government. – Benin City 1936
- Maliphant, G.K.; Rees, A.R.; Roese, P.M.: Defense Systems of the Benin Empire – Uwan. – London, 1976. (West African Journal of Archaeology, Vol. VI, pp. 121-130)
- Melzian, H.: A Concise Dictionary of the Bini Language of Southern Nigeria. – London 1937
- Melzian, H.: Zum Festkalender von Benin. – Berlin, 1955. (Afrikanistische Studien, Lukas, J., Hrsg., S. 87-107)
- Miller J.C., ed.: The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition and History. – Folkestone 1980
- Nevadomsky, J.: Kingship Succession Rituals in Benin. Pt. 2. – Los Angeles, 1984. (African Arts, Vol. XVII, No 2, pp. 41-46)
- Omoriegie, O.S.B.: Great Benin. Vol. I-XI. – Benin City 1992-1994
- Onokerhoraye, A.G.: Urbanism as an Organ of Traditional African Civilization: The Example of Benin, Nigeria. – Bruxelles, 1975. (Civilisations, Vol. XXV, No 4, pp. 294-305)
- Page, P.R.: Benin Arts and Crafts. – Ibadan, 1944. (Farm and Forest, Vol. V, No 4, pp. 166-169)
- Roese, P.M.: Das Königreich Benin – von den Anfängen bis 1485. St. Augustin, 1984. (Anthropos, Bd. LXXIX, S. 191-222)
- Roese, P.M.: Benin City. Eine Stadtansicht aus Olfert Dappers Werk "Naukeurige beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche gewesten..." (1668). – Berlin, 1990. (Abhandlungen und Berichte des Staatlichen Museums für Völkerkunde Dresden. Forschungsstelle, Bd. ILV, S. 7-40)
- Roese, P.M.: Kriegsführung und Waffen im alten Benin (Südnigeria). – Berlin, 1992. (Ethnographisch-Archäologische Zeitschrift, Bd. XXXIII, Ht. 3, S. 364-392)
- Roese, P.M.: Palastbedienstete, Zünfte, Heilkundige, Priester und weitere Gruppen sowie Einzelpersonen mit spezifischen Funktionen im ehemaligen Königreich Benin (Westafrika). – Berlin, 1993. (Ethnographisch-Archäologische Zeitschrift, Bd. XXXIV, Ht. 3, S. 436-461)

- Roth, H.L.: Great Benin. Its Customs, Art and Horrors. – Halifax, 1903
- Ryder, A.F.C.: [Review of: A Short History of Benin. By Jacob Egharevba. Ibadan, 1960, 3rd ed.]. – Ibadan, 1961. (Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. II, pp. 286-287)
- Ryder, A.F.C.: Benin and the Europeans. 1485-1897. – London – Harlow 1969
- Ryder, A.F.C.: Traditions and History. – London, 1970. (Africa Discovers Her Past, ed. by Fage, J.D., pp. 32-38)
- Sidahome, J.E.: Stories of the Benin Empire. – London – Ibadan 1964
- Smith, R.S.: Kingdoms of the Yoruba. – London 1988 (1969)
- Stride, G.T.; Efeka, C.: Peoples and Empires of West Africa. West Africa in History 1000-1800. – London etc. 1971
- Sydow, E. von.: Im Reiche gottähnlicher Herrscher. – Braunschweig 1943
- Talbot, P.A.: The Peoples of Southern Nigeria. A Sketch of Their History, Ethnology and Languages. Vol. I. – London 1926
- Tunis I.: The Benin Chronologies. – Los Angeles, 1981. (African Arts, Vol. XIV, ? 2, pp. 86-87)
- Vansina, J.: Oral Tradition. – London 1965
- Vansina J.: Oral Tradition as History. – Madison 1985
- Vansina, J.; Mauny, R.; Thomas, L.V. Introductory Summary. – London etc., 1964. (The Historian in Tropical Africa, ed. by Vansina, J.; Mauny, R.; Thomas, L.V., pp. 1-103)
- Willett, F.: Ife in the History of West African Sculpture. – London 1967
- Willett, F.; Picton, J.: On the Identification of Individual Carvers: A Study of Ancestor Shrine Carvings from Owo, Nigeria. – London, 1967. (Man. New Series, Vol. II, pp. 62-68)
- Wolf, S.: Zwei Benin-Arbeiten im Staatlichen Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden: Vogelstaltiges Zeremonialgerät und Reliefplatte mit Vogel. – Berlin, 1961. (Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig. Veröffentlichungen, Bd. XI, S. 719-738)
- Wolf, S.: Benin-Königslisten. – Prague, 1963. (Annals of the Náprstek Museum, Vol. II, pp. 193-218)