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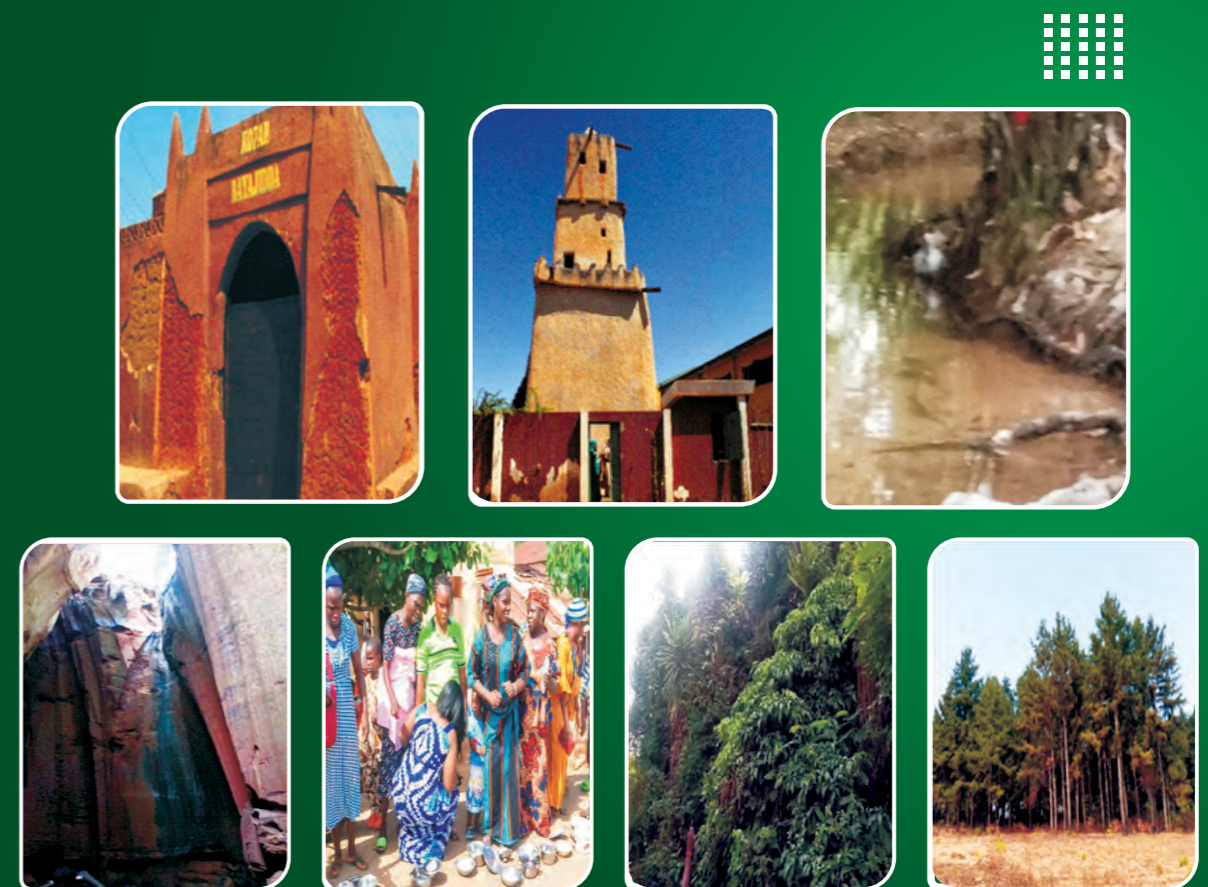
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Photographs copiously displayed in the book are to aid readers' emotional connection or reconnection to the stories.

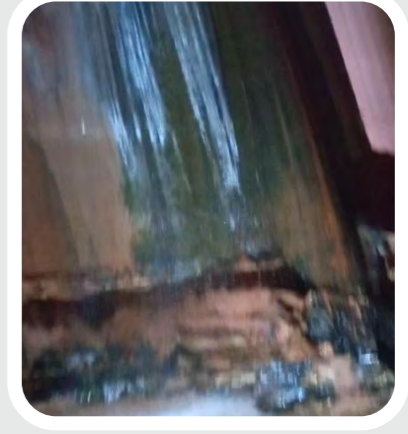
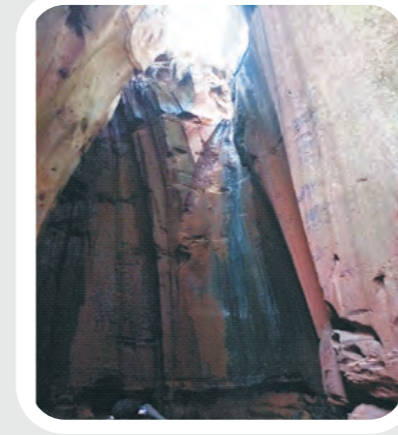
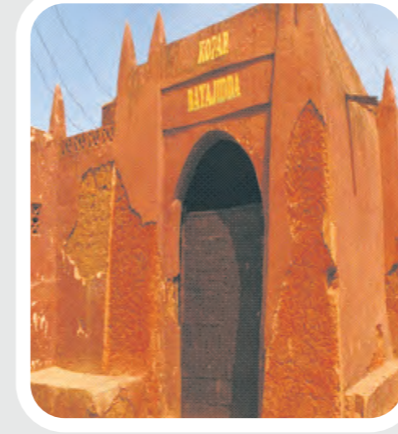
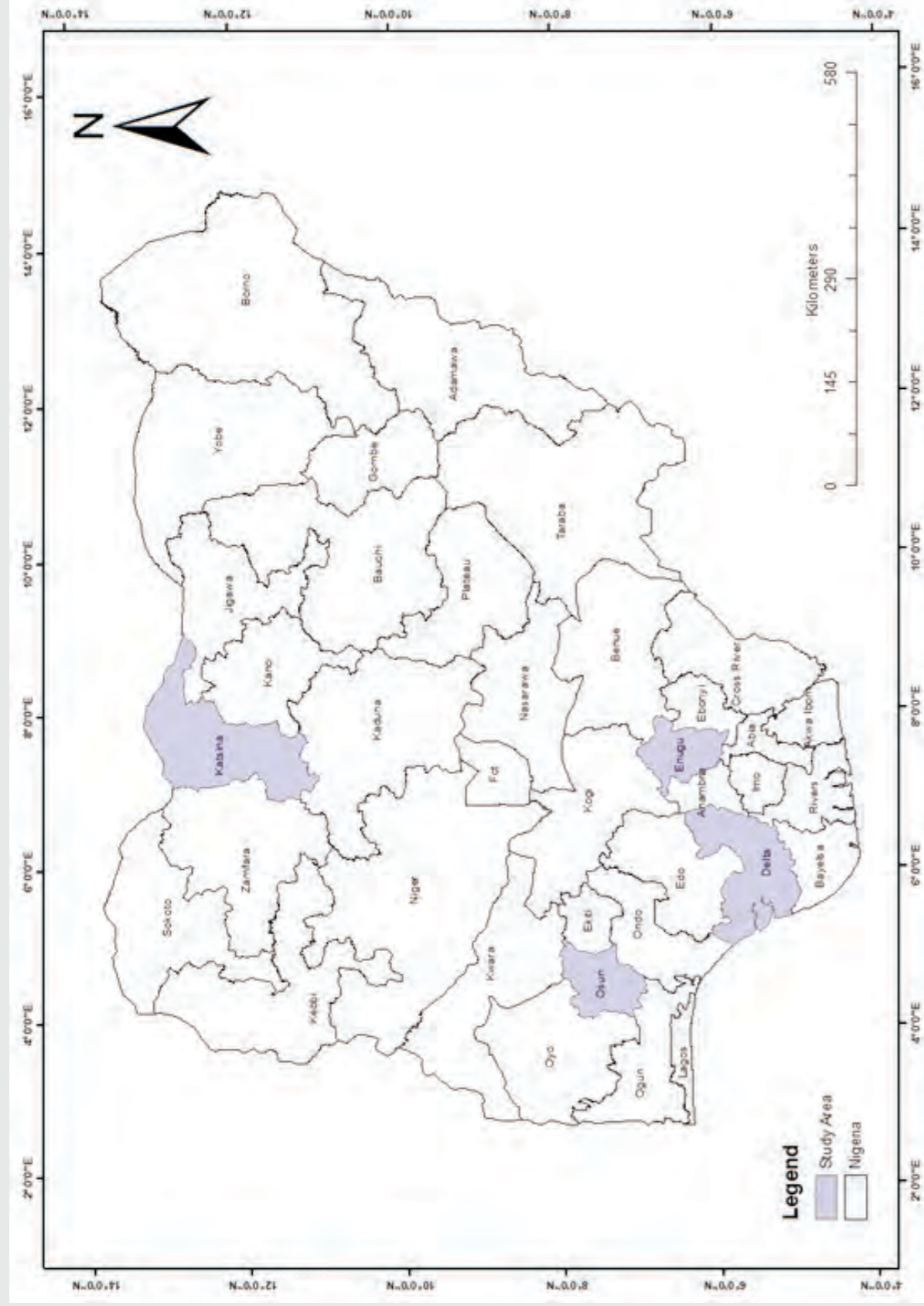


NIGERIA'S RICH AND DIVERSE CULTURAL HERITAGE: OUR PRIDE

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CHINWE VERONICA ANUNOBI 
Mistura Kikelomo Abdulazeez



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A collection of newly documented historical places, monuments and events

Edited by

Chinwe Anunobi and Mistura Abdulazeez



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The project committee would like to thank all those who have contributed to the success of this work. We are most grateful in particular, to the royal fathers and the people of the communities covered; The Emir of Daura, Katsina, Galadima of Durbi Takusheyi, Owalare of Ilare, Oparuku of Umuaja and Onyeisi ala Ozalla. We also thank Dr. Tope Abiola, Mrs. Nkem Agu, Pastor (Mrs.) Carolyn Ndeme, Chief C. Onyema, Abubakar Magaji Fada, Pastor Innocent E. Chikwuka and Alhaji Dennis Efebele Ahmad. Their valuable contributions, support and advice are highly valued.



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Published by

National Library of Nigeria

Sanusi Dantata House,

Plot 274, Central Business District, P.M.B 1, Garki,

Abuja

ISBN: 978-978-797-810-8

Printed by Ebeco Integrated Limited



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National Library of Nigeria, 2023

National Library of Nigeria Cataloguing in Publication Data

NATIONAL Library of Nigeria

Nigeria's rich and diverse cultural heritage: our pride/National Library of Nigeria

- 1. Nigeria – History 2. Nigeria – Manner and custom**
- 3. Nigeria- Guidebook I. Anunobi, Chinwe II. Abdulazeez, Mistura III. Title**

DT 515.57N277

2023

966.9

ISBN: 978-978-797-810-8

AACR2

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FOREWORD

This book is the outcome of effort by National Library of Nigeria to present and draw attention to tangible and intangible aspects of our undocumented cultural heritage. An attempt aimed at highlighting unique aspects of our culture which could promote unity and national integration and definitely not a repeat or reconstruction of history.

It is structured in a way its use as reference tool for scholarship, lifelong learning and tourist's guide, is facilitated for people from all walks of life. A reader is assured a fulfilling experience as coloured box on each page provides additional information on historical places, photographs, events, and people.

Everyone appreciates how sometimes we struggle to find exact words to express our thought. Drawbacks associated with translation and transcript from local language to English were minimized by ensuring that interviewers were selected based on competence in written and spoken abilities in the local language of the community. Excerpts of interviews are contained in the CD attached to this book. Photographs, which are still-life images and effective documentation tools in digitization and restoration of materials have been extensively used in this book to aid readers' emotional connection to captured images.

It is hoped this book excites the interest of the scholars, information managers, policy makers, librarians, and tourists. The book will therefore, be found worthy of their time as we continue to produce more titles documenting materials of historical importance.

However, it is available for free download in Portable Document File (PDF) on our website:



Prof. Chinwe Veronica Anunobi

National Librarian/ Chief Executive Officer

1.0

INTRODUCTION

Unarguably documenting the historical sites, monuments and events, which are of significant value in terms of religious beliefs, history and myths, could be very fulfilling experience for the people. National Library of Nigeria's decision to walk the talk by being more responsive and alert to her responsibility as custodian of documentary cultural heritage, is a clear demonstration of her commitment to promptly and constantly meet the dynamic needs of her patrons.

Documenting newly discovered historic sites, monuments and events affords the nation the opportunity to tell stories relating to her people through her own prism. This book therefore, aims to provide concise and accurate information about all aspects of our cultural heritage, which were hitherto un-sung, undocumented or inadequately exploited for national development and cohesion. Also, the book explains how promotional activities in the tourism sector can exploit local culture and nature to boost the sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through improved travel consumption by foreign and local visitors.

The importance of accurate information is evident by the recent misrepresentation or better still, misinformation about Eyo masquerade in Lagos through a movie titled, "Gangs of Lagos" which drew the ire of Lagos State government as the movie does not reflect in any way the facts about the masquerade. While the excesses of the producers of the movie can be excused, one can conveniently blame the misrepresentation on inadequacies of verifiable information about Eyo masquerade. This book fills the gap created by lack of accurate information over the years about historical sites, monuments and events associated with the culture of the people. This explains why cultural heritage, includes tangible and intangible assets, which are mainly artefacts, monuments, tools, language, customary beliefs, social norms, dress, food, music and dance-style of a religious or social group passed from one

generation to another. These are of diverse historic, symbolic, aesthetic, and archeological significance.

For long it has been a misnomer or sheer misinformation referring to Mungo Park as discoverer of *River Niger* when people have lived in the area for ages. In the same token it will be a futile attempt at reinventing history for anyone in the future to lay claim to the discovery of the source of *River Ethiopie*, which has continued to excite indigenes of Umuaja and the facts of the Onyia's discovery has remained incontrovertible.

The need to provide policy makers with verified and balanced information about the type or nature of intervention needed to preserve and conserve historic materials of tremendous benefits to the people, is imperative. It makes this book, an essential companion for anyone interested in updating his or her knowledge of Nigeria's diverse cultural heritage. How past and current information about historical places is recorded, organized, interpreted and managed, is one duty National Library of Nigeria (NLN) is determined to prioritize. The unique methodology adopted in the project ensures that both tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage as experienced by the people are proudly portrayed as their own stories.

The common trajectory in the stories associated with historical places visited is the positive contribution of women in the provision of quality leadership and emancipation of the people. The exemplary leadership women have displayed over the years in all the places selected, shows clearly the capacity of women to be the last persons standing when the chips are down. They have passionately occupied the driver's seat when necessary. From Ilare, Durbi Takursheyi, and Umuaja to Enugu, women had provided leadership to save their respective society from the brinks of collapse.

It is the duty of National Libraries worldwide to ensure that historical materials collected are preserved and their useful life extended before they are lost. This makes restoration less cumbersome, where possible. Monuments, buildings and sites connected to history and way of life of the people have been lost to wars, and also, uncontrolled land use practices in the past. Numerous sites of historical values destroyed by wars abound in countries across the world. Ancient cities of Bosra and Palmyra; both in Syria, Timbuktu monument in Mali, Buddhas of Bamiyan, Afghanistan and the Jonah's tomb in Iraq are examples of places and monuments of great historical values destroyed by wars. A National Library owes the country the trust to ensure that a conducive environment is available, where diverse cultural expression is encouraged and cherished values are shared and promoted.

It is incontrovertible that irrespective of the success level recorded in the restoration of undocumented historical material, lost aesthetic, social and economic values might never be regained. It is interesting to note that a photograph could prove handy in a restoration effort, where no other records are available. It is important people are able to relate monuments, historical sites and events, which connect them to their history and define their national or ethnic identity. It is no wonder traditional and governmental institutions do create agencies to preserve and conserve such national historical sites and monuments.

Therefore, National Library of Nigeria (NLN) is committed to the creation of a *Nigeria Register of Historical Places and Events* with the view to providing access to information on historical materials, documenting unrecorded historical places and promoting events, which are of value to scholarship. The overall essence of information organization, analysis and presentation of undocumented historical materials, places and events is to facilitate access in a sustainable way.

2.0 SOURCE AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF RIVER ETHIOPE IN DELTA STATE

2.1 Umuaja and history

Several reports about the source of River Ethiope in Umuaja, Delta State, its history and cultural heritage are already documented in newspapers, tourist's guide and other reliable information sources. The reason the river takes its source from the foot of silk-cotton tree remains a mystery. Rivers naturally take their source or what is called headwater from either rainwater, snowmelt in mountain or sometimes water bubbles from the ground. River Ethiope is reputed to be the cleanest in Nigeria as it is not muddled with decaying leaves or contaminated with any substance and it is about 50 km long. According to reports it is the deepest inland waterway in Africa but its purity and cleanness give a false sense of its shallowness.

During the dry season water level in most rivers will naturally be low because the flow rate from the aquifer discharge is usually slow as infiltration and surface runoff ceased. Interestingly, in the wet season it is expected that differences in water pressure resulting in cracks in the riverbed move water to the surface. However, the reverse is the case with River Ethiope in both seasons as the water level is usually low in the wet season and high in dry season.

Whether the scientific principle underlying the natural process of aquifer recharged and discharged at the River Ethiope is understood or not, what matters to thousands who see the reverse of the natural phenomenon not only as weird but one of the ingenious creativities of nature. Hence, the reasons Nigerians from all walks of life daily throng to Umuaja for spiritual deliverance. The belief of the people in spirituality of the source of River Ethiope is responsible for the small 'Mecca' people have turned Umuaja into; either to fetch the water (usually at a cost) or take a bath in the water for spiritual breakthrough (Plates 1, 2 and 3).

River Ethiope like many other rivers, empties into the Sea at Sapele via Abraka where it has become wide enough to accommodate vessels. River Ethiope runs through four local governments in the present Delta state, including: Ukwuani, Ethiope East, Okpe and Sapele with an estimated population of 1.7 million people. Umuaja is a prominent town in Ukwuani local government and lies at Longitude 006° 14' - 006° 19' E and Latitude 05° 56' - 05° 58' N (Figure 1). According to the City Population¹ by 2022 the figure for Ukwuani Local Government stood at 163,100.

The River played great role in the economic development of the area and the surrounding hinterland during the colonial era as it runs its course. It attracted the interest of the British colonial government whose administration put River Ethiope under protection in 1894. According to a newspaper report², the colonialists made the proclamation with a view to preventing Nana Olomu, an Itsekiri chief from using the river to gain commercial advantage over others in the hinterland. The British colonial power saw Nana Olomu, Jaja of Opobo and Ovonramwen of Benin, collectively as huge threat to her economic interest³. Historians have in numerous accounts documented how the colonialists unfairly exploited Africa's resources for economic developments of their home countries. This epitomizes what Walter Rodney⁴ tried to portray in his book to the effect that colonialism was a clear subjugation of Africa for Europe's economic benefits.

Passive restoration and investigation into how hydro-morphological pressures allow natural succession in the river's ecosystem, are geomorphological issues that must be appreciated. It is also important to know the influence of human activities on the ecological status of River Ethiope.

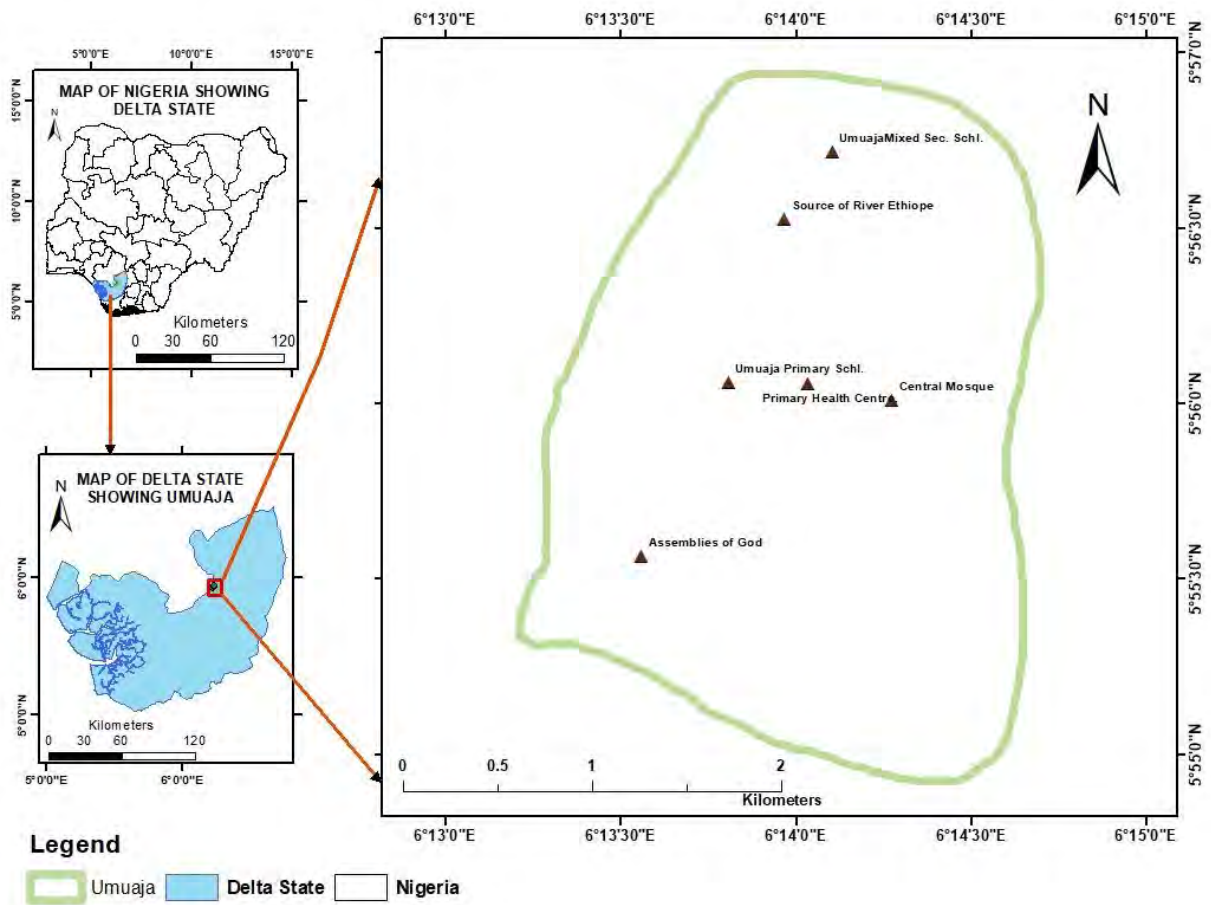


Figure 1: Map of Umuaja, Delta State.



Plate 1: The Silk Cotton tree “source of River Ethiope” at Umuaja in Delta State

Plate 2: The Priestess performing spiritual bath for a worshipper at a designated spot in the river.

Plate 3: Some worshippers who daily throng to the river for spiritual deliverance.

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1. City Population. https://citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/NGA010_delta/ (Accessed 23/6 2023)
 2. The Nation Newspaper 2012. Umuaja, home of River Ethiope Nigeria news and current events 6th October, Publisher: Vintage Press Limited.
 3. Lobban, M. 2021. Imperial Incarceration. In *Imperial Incarceration: Detention without Trial in the Making of British Colonial Africa* (Studies in Legal History, p. I). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. The author narrates the detention of Kings Jaja of Opobo Nana Olomu and Ovonramwen of Benin, who had earlier in 1884 signed standard form for treaty of protection. Although, Jaja struck out a clause permitting free trade, so many were not surprised by the reprisal action of British colonial power to place him on exile to Accra.
 4. Wadlter, Rodney. 1972. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. The book describes predetermined plan by Europeans to exploit Africa’s resources for their development.

Efforts by the Earth Law Center and the River Ethiopie Trust Foundation (“RETFON”) in 2018 to push for the recognition of River Ethiopie as legal entity with the view to protecting it from abuse and pollution is therefore, commendable. This move was a novel attempt to ensure that any restoration effort produces a natural succession in the river’s ecosystem.

The essence of recognition of River Ethiopie as legal entity is based on the inherent and inalienable rights of nature to restoration, which sustain her capacity to contribute to the provision of ecological services life depends on. In New Zealand and Colombia, Whanganui River and Altra River, respectively had been recognized since 2017 as “legal entities” with a view to ensuring sustainability in the provision of ecological services. Grant Wilson of the Earth Law Centre says “Establishing legal rights for rivers and other natural systems is the next great rights-based movement,” which will dominate the landscape around the world in the future. The anthropogenic activities such as run-off from agricultural land, oil spills and other abusive use of the river might have in one way or the other compromised the natural beauty of River Ethiopie. Some environmentalists believe that the jeremiads about environmental degradation of land and water bodies around the area would stop with strong advocacy for the recognition of River Ethiopie as legal entity.

The aesthetic value of the source of River Ethiopie might be difficult to estimate but the premium people are willing to place on the satisfaction they derive from the River’s landscape might be handy in the push for government’s intervention. Aesthetic quality refers to the potential of a landscape to provide fulfilling or pleasing sensory experience. This makes the visual presence of water important for landscape aesthetic value. Experts have asserted that aesthetic value, together with recreation, is a key ecosystem service which encourages the people to preserve nature and restore degraded ecosystems. They have established correlations between

aesthetic quality and river features in places with a higher sense of naturalness and landscape diversity. Therefore, assessment of aesthetic quality of river landscapes says a lot about the relationship of the people with river and how the community benefits from river's ecosystem services.

2.2 Origin of Umuaja people

Oral narrative centres on a hunter called Onyia from Akuko, who discovered the source of River Ethiope and returned to his settlements to break the news about his findings. Few days later he announced to compatriots, his decision to migrate with his family and some other people to the place, where the source of River Ethiope was discovered. The only public primary school in Umuaja, is named after the discoverer of the source of River Ethiope (Plate 4). This simple gesture has been effective in making the people from young age, connect with their history and conscious of who they are. The attempt by Onyia to cut the tree to prevent the water body from being muddled with decaying leaf drops, resulted in a rude shock as the tree had magically sprouted the next day to his original size and shape before the cutting. This is responsible for the reason cutlass had never again been used to trim the tree. The healing power of the source of River Ethiope began to be recognized when Onyia's wife who had been struggling to conceive for years became pregnant two months after she bathed in the source of River Ethiope.

There are three quarters in the town: Ugbedueze, Umugo and Umuachukwu, which take turn to present the Chief Priest and Priestess, who are the custodians of the shrine dedicated to the worship of the River's gods and goddess, collectively called Onoku. The community appoints assistants to serve the Chief Priest and the

Priestess, who are traditionally their mouth-piece. Interestingly, while the Chief Priest serves as the main custodian of the shrine, the Princess conducts spiritual bath



Plate 4: Onyia Primary School, Umuaja, Delta State

for men and women, so no gender discrimination with respect to who she bathes.

An appreciable number of Umuaja people have converted to Christianity, while only a few are now Muslims. However, conversion to any religion does not in any way prevent them from participating in the worship of River Ethiope' source. The road leading to the shrine is well paved with interlocks appropriate for such terrain and beautiful vegetation on both sides (Plate 5).



Plate 5: The road leading to the River Ethiope's source



Plate 6: From left, the Priestess, Chief Priest and their two aides at the shrine

One of the practices the people of Umuaja still engage in, is the self-restraint a mother imposes on herself; not visiting the river three months after she gives birth. Before she could visit the river for any activity she must offer sacrifice to the gods

of the river, which involves touching the child's head with items such as white Kolanut, native chalk, coins (preferably perforated coin), and soft drinks, which are thrown one after the other into the River. According to the oral tradition, the child becomes dedicated to the gods of the river from that date.

2.3 Ogbanje and Ebu Moji belief System

Ogbanje belief system is common in the southern parts of Nigeria especially among the Yorubas, Igbos, and the Urohbos. In Umuaja the cosmology which shapes the belief system about Ogbanje is different. Though the principal objective, which is to protect the child from untimely death, remains the same. In Yoruba land, the *Ogbanje* belief system is based on the perceptive that a child who has un-impressive knowledge about his/her sojourn on earth will be eager to return to the spirit worlds. The parents will attempt all they can to make sure the child stays alive. This explains why names such as Aja, Malomo, Kokumo, Durojaiye, Ayedun still exist, but not as common as before. This misplaced priority was partly responsible for high infant's morbidity and mortality rates in the Southwest in the sixties and seventies as people were unaware of importance of genotypes, health and environmental risks factors, which reinforce *Abiku* or *Ogbanje* belief system. It was later clear to all that unhealthy behaviour accentuates the spread of child's communicable diseases, which were the common causes of high infants' mortality rates at the time.

In Umuaja, the *Ogbanje* belief is based on a different system, which involves commissioning of a traditional practitioner to invoke the spirit of the gods of the river for the protection of a child. This involves dressing a child in white with red stripping and asking to dig up whatever the 'spirit' directs him/her to find in the riverbed. The dug object will be dressed to become the symbol of the idol he/she carries around. The people either rightly or wrongly believe that a child, so fortified with Ogbanje idol will not die at infancy but live to old age.

Plate 6 shows the General Overseer of the Holy Ghost Foundation, Pastor (Mrs) Carolyn Udeme at her church narrating her experience about Ogbanje and Ebu Moji belief system in Umuaja. According to her, every Umuaja' child borne in the town, has been inadvertently dedicated to the water spirit because of the supposedly covenant their ancestors had made with the gods of the River. This again reaffirms the importance of the rituals a mother performs prior to her visit to the river three months after she puts to bed. This practice is quite distinct from 'Mammy Wata' belief system, experts have described as a practice, which creatively combines social practice and material culture in a variety of ways and context across ethnic groups in certain parts of South-South and South East Nigeria.



Plate 6: Pastor (Mrs) Carolyn Udeme narrating at her church the perspective of her people about Ogbanje and Ebu Moji belief system

Also, related to *Ogbanje*, is the *Ebu Moji* belief system, which involves a woman with first pregnancy paying homage to a deity at Akoku, where people of Umuaja migrated from. According to Umuaja's oral tradition, a woman with first pregnancy cursed the community when she was callously offered as sacrifice to the gods. In keeping with the tradition of appeasing her spirit, every woman with first pregnancy goes to Akoku to offer sacrifice to the deity. Investigations have shown that more people are jettisoning the practice and some are merely conforming not because of their conviction about the "effect" of *Ebu Moji* but the apprehension to avert reprisal action of the gods, so that refusal to participate in the rituals would not be described as churlish.

However, the poems by both Clark, J. P.⁵ and Wole Soyinka⁶ express belief in reincarnation, which was the basis of their respective style of presentation. Aniemeka⁷ describes Clark's work as microcosmic of culturally - held belief about the intractable spirit child myth of African weltanschauung. The work provides more details about belief system in Southern Nigeria. What science or traditional belief system has not resolved about *Ogbanje or Abiku*, is the mystery surrounding the reincarnation of a child returning with marks inflicted on his remains before burial. The inability of the people to obtain a clarity on issue of child reincarnation, which people have experienced, makes their sensibilities unassuaged. This exposes them to the exploitation of traditional medicine men and women.

5. Clark J. P. 1965. "Abiku", *A Reed in the Tide*, London: Longmans, 1965, p. 5.

6. Soyinka, W. 1967. "Abiku", *Idanre and Other Poems*, New York: Hill and Wangs, 1967, p. 28

7. Aniemeka, N. P. 2017. An Anthro-po-semiotic Reading of John Pepper Clark's 'Abiku. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics* 33 (1):1-8.

2.4 Umuaja: a spectacular scenery

The source of River Ethiope has become a vast open space at Abraka to harbour vessels meant to sail into the ocean. The Umuaja is a quiet rural community with no public water and electricity supplies connected to the national grid. This has not in any way distract from social and commercial lives of the people. The community is about 65 km from Agbor, and as one approaches the town, changes in the vegetation warns one about the great work of nature at Umuaja. The good road network around the town was built specially to suit the terrain's soil structure. The involvement of women in economic and other productive activities in the community lends credence to the belief that women in most parts of Niger-Delta, are major players in the socio-economic development of their respective community. They are involved in all activities ranging from agriculture, food processing, and transportation to commerce like their male counterparts as shown in Plate 7.



Plate 7: A typical market day at Umuaja with various wares on display by women

Umuaja is one community, where identification with history and culture is held in high esteem. They are very accommodating and consider no one as foreigner but as potential chum that must be cared for and educated about their history. The principal language spoken in the town is Ukwuani but an average Umuaja man would prefer to communicate in pidgin to give a non-Ukwani speaker, a sense of security and brotherhood. Everyone in the community has gotten interesting story to tell about the mystery and magical healing power of the source of River Ethiope. They will tell anyone that cares to listen, the faithfulness of gods of the River as no Umuaja indigene has ever drown or die in the river.

The community is also unique because of its leadership structure. It is one of the few communities in Africa where leadership is based on gerontocracy. Interestingly, a new leader for the community is about being installed due to the death of the former Oparuku, late Chief S. Isusu, who died in 2021. Presently, a group of senior indigenes, including the elder statesman to be installed as the community's head, is responsible for the day to day running of the community and represents the highest decision-making body in the town. Plate 8 presents the picture of the next person to be installed as the *Oparuku* of Umuaja, Chief Ignatus Itodu. There are several prominent indigenes of the community based at home and abroad, whose communal efforts at self-development could only be paralleled by few rural communities in Nigeria. Hence, the prayer of the community is that it should be connected to the national grid for electricity power supply.

There is a fair blend of traditional belief practitioners and Christians with just a family practicing Islam but peaceful co-existence, mutual respect and harmony exist in a once religiously homogenous community. According to Alhaji Mustapha, the Chief Imam of Umuaja, a Muslim is prohibited from associating or partaking in any

form of deity or idol worship. Hence, the non-involvement of the indigenous Muslim family in the worship of the River, is excused.



Plate 8: The Acting Oparuku, Chief Ignatus Itodu



Plate 9: Chief Ignatus Itodu at the far right with some elders being interviewed by NLN' staff

The nature of the cordial relationship, which exists among the traditional belief practitioners, small Moslems and large Christian's population in the community, epitomizes a model for peaceful co-existence. A majority of the population is not deterred by the religious faith they profess, so they participate actively in the rituals associated with the worship of deity. The cord of love and spirit of togetherness, which bond the community is so strong and interwoven to the extent that religious harmony is one thing that is taken for granted in the community. For example, the present Priestess, who is fully dedicated to the worship of the source of River Ethiope and Pastor (Mrs.) Udeme are siblings. They are also cousins to the Mustaphas.

However, despite differences in their religious beliefs they proudly see themselves as one and cooperate on anything that bothers on the collective interest of the

community. To them their collective interest is the main thing, which promotes overall wellbeing of the people.

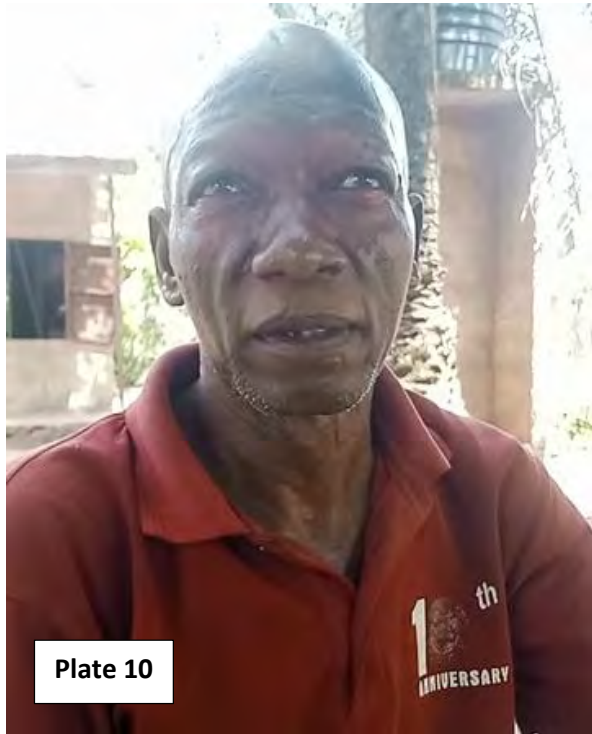


Plate10: The Chief Imam of Umuaja



Plate 11: Umuaja Central Mosque

The community could boast of a public primary school modestly furnished and big enough to accommodate children of primary school age. An equally well-equipped library funded and maintained by Delta State Library Board, serves the public and records important events in the community (Plate 12).



Plate 12

Plate 12: A branch of the Delta State Library Board in Umuaja.



Plate 13

Plate 13: NLN' staff interacting with operatives at the holiday resort in Umuaja built by Delta state government

2.5 Umuaja: an irresistible tourist's destination

Tourism industry is one way economic growth can be stimulated. It is capable of driving development in rural communities by exploitation of opportunities hitherto unrecognized to create off-farm jobs. Attempts aimed at stemming the tide of rural migration to urban centres could begin with effort to build local capacity at the village level with a view to identifying opportunities in the nature-based tourism. Several job opportunities could conveniently be created around activities at the source of River Ethiope's shrine. Empowerment of the rural trading population with soft loans and grants, establishment of Restaurants and Bars, Resorts, Hotels, and Financial institutions, are social facilities, which could stimulate economic activities and provide jobs to stem rural urban migration.

Some countries in Europe make VAT returns to foreigners at the point of exit, a policy aimed at boosting the local tourism industry. Nigeria could also adapt this policy to make Nigeria a destination of choice, given her unexploited numerous tourists' sites and undocumented historical places. Also, connection of Umuaja to the national grid will engender commercial activities and night life. The multiplier effects of these efforts on the socio-economic life of the entire Niger-Delta region can be better imagined.

The recent example by Delta State government to grant concession for the management of a resort recently built in the community to an indigene is one sure way to mobilize and encourage private investment in the tourism industry. The source of River Ethiope at Umuaja can attain its full potential, if critical stakeholders come together to facilitate its development into one of the major tourists' destination in the world. Although, vigorous campaigns through show-casing of Nigeria's tourism potential at local and international fora have been embarked on, what is needed now is deliberate action to follow Delta State's example for the development

of the tourism industry. This could be coupled with documentation of cherished traditions for posterity. The creation of conducive environment and collaborative effort between public and private sectors to attract investors with reasonable returns guaranteed, will surely do the magic.

6.0

CONCLUSION

The project demonstrates NLN's commitment to her statutory responsibility as the custodian of documentary and cultural heritage of the country. She owes the nation duty to gather data, organize, analyze, interpret, present and preserve information about undocumented historical sites, monuments and events, with a view to facilitating access for posterity. Honesty, loyalty, commitment to the communal good, and mutual respect for each other's culture, are virtues, which promote peaceful coexistence and social harmony.

From Umuaja, Durbi Takusheyi, and Ilare to Ngwo Enugu, the pre-requisite to hope for any good from the "gods" is the freedom from diabolical tendencies towards anyone. Taboos in these communities are meant to engender orderliness and promote the general well-being, so norms and traditions are well-respected by all.

Holiday resorts built through public private partnership and a functional transportation model to move people around the designated historical sites will go a long way to attract tourists from around the world. Cultural youth exchange programmes among states with similar inspiring messages, could be initiated for mutual benefits in the national integration effort. Initiation of lecture series to dwell on issues, which promote national cohesion and development, is important.

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