

## Review Article

# Reconsidering Intergroup Relations: the Historiography of Igala And Neighbouring Societies in the Niger-Benue Confluence.

*Musa Abdulkarim Itodo*

<sup>1</sup>Department of History and International Studies, Federal University Lokoja, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

## I N F O

**Email Id:**

Musakarim162@gmail.com

**Orcid Id:**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0619-1422>

**How to cite this article:**

Itodo M A, Reconsidering Intergroup Relations: The Historiography Of Igala And Neighbouring Societies In The Niger-Benue Confluence.. *J Adv Res Humani Social Sci* 2026; 13(1): 18-29

Date of Submission: 2026-01-17

Date of Acceptance: 2026-02-19

## A B S T R A C T

This research explores the Igala people's perceptions of their neighbours, offering an impartial perspective on interethnic relations. Although social science scholars have primarily researched culture and civilisation, their methodologies often establish hierarchical classifications, which hinder dialectical reasoning and marginalise African perspectives in their historiography. Ake (1981) argues that this trend is linked to slavery, colonialism, and Eurocentric narratives that have shaped African historical studies. Despite being insufficiently researched, the Igala are frequently reduced to their opposition to British imperialism in the 19th and 20th centuries and their marginalisation in Nigeria. Pre-colonial Igala society had a sophisticated understanding of neighbouring communities, classifying them based on occupation, cuisine, and location, which contrasts with Eurocentric civilisational models that depicted Africans as primitive. This study advocates a humanistic, multidisciplinary approach that democratises research by incorporating the perspectives of the communities studied, which is essential for historical objectivity. It introduces the "Igalanisation" approach, emphasising solidarity and collective humanity in addressing societal challenges. The research employs historical ethnography, combining oral interviews and descriptive analysis to construct a more comprehensive account. By focusing on Igala perspectives, this paper challenges existing paradigms and underscores the importance of indigenous knowledge systems in reconstructing African history.

**Keywords:** Historiographical, Group Dynamics, Igala, Niger-Benue Confluence, African history.

## Introduction

The examination of the genesis, evolution, and related dynamics of many civilisations has engaged scholars in the humanities and social sciences, albeit with varying interests and emphases. While humanities scholars have sought to investigate the distinct origins and functions of many societies, social science researchers have focused more on

the comparative sophistication of one society relative to another. In essence, it pertains to function for the humanities and fundamentally to structure for the social sciences. The aforementioned does not imply that humanities scholars lack interest in their functionality. Although such divides are promoted in the quest for knowledge, particularly in contemporary academic discourse, Kasuslis (2002) argues that one should prioritise what each society regards as

pertinent, authoritative, or mainstream rather than employing metrics from a different context to evaluate the lifestyles of individuals in a specific study area.

This paper aims to examine West African civilisations through the lens of centralised and non-centralised societies that have been little explored within civilisation studies. It would assess the criteria available in European or Western frameworks for classifying societies, to enhance knowledge and enrich our comprehension of others, particularly those in Africa, rather than competing with them in an attempt to impose perceived ideals. According to Ikime (1979),<sup>1</sup> this is the paramount objective of historians in sub-Saharan Africa, which encompasses the Igala civilisation, the focus of our discussion. Therefore, conducting micro-studies of specific environments to enhance scholarly comprehension of diverse populations will undoubtedly deepen our awareness of others and contribute to the collective body of knowledge that academic scholarship seeks to develop, maintain, and extend.

### Conceptual Clarification

Civilisation etymologically originates from the Latin term *civilis*, signifying “of the citizens.” The term originated with the Romans to differentiate themselves as members of a cosmopolitan, urban-centric civilisation from the “inferior” populations residing in woodlands and deserts at the periphery of their Mediterranean realm. This pertains to the disposition of the Colonial Roman authorities towards the diverse populations they had forcibly subjugated, particularly in their African provinces of Mauritania Caesariensis and Mauritania Tingitana, which functioned as the agricultural hub of the Roman Empire (Schraeder, 2004, p. 50).<sup>2</sup> The Greeks previously distinguished themselves from speakers of non-Greek languages. The Greeks categorised strangers as ‘barbarians,’ a term denoting ‘those who cannot speak Greek,’ viewing them as loquacious individuals. Consequently, two fundamental ideas in civilisation studies are ‘citizens’ and ‘barbarians,’ which serve as socio-cultural criteria for differentiating groups, rather than biological distinctions, as misinterpreted by subsequent pseudo-scientists of the 18th and 19th centuries. Europeans then employed the epithet ‘savage’ to characterise African peoples as devoid of innovation and ingenuity. Numerous academic perspectives exist about the definition of civilisation.

Since its inception, its meaning has evolved to accommodate the changing circumstances or perceptions of the participants. (Stearns et al. 2001).<sup>3</sup> assert that civilisations are civilisations that produce surpluses above basic survival requirements, hence fostering diverse specialised occupations, increased social stratification, and extensive regional and long-distance trade networks. This also stimulates urban expansion and the establishment of formal

states. The author’s conception of civilisation is economically orientated, commencing with the achievement of surplus production, the specialisation in diverse professions, and the establishment of markets for the sale of created goods. Civilisation studies, as articulated by Miller 2005, are equivalent to cultural comparison. It pertains to the comparative analysis of culture in terms of sophistication and complexity. Efforts to define civilisation over the years have primarily focused on how a specific group or society is more sophisticated than others across various domains of their pursuits. (Miller 2005).<sup>4</sup>

As the concept originated in Europe, it has predominantly been influenced over the years by scholars with a Western perspective. In other words, there has been a unilateral discourse over the implications of this ‘overused’ concept. It is crucial to acknowledge that, although previous historians interpreted it as European supremacy and conquest, subsequent thinkers, following African freedom, have promoted cultural collaboration and unity. However, this occurs after the conclusion of several phases of their discriminatory and exploitative practices, which have evolved into neo-colonialism since the 1960s. To a mind seeking unity of thinking, these contrasting stances of Western intellectuals may appear perplexing. Nonetheless, uncertainty is unnecessary. The concept has only progressed to embrace a nuanced form of ‘mental’ supremacy and imperialism. This is evident in academia, where international standards are established without consideration of the unique characteristics and limitations of Western education in Africa, as well as the substantial contributions of African researchers in formulating and assessing these benchmarks.

Historians in Europe and the United States have identified the emergence of civilisations as the genesis of the modern world (Duiker & Spielvogel, 2004).<sup>5</sup> This interpretation suggests that the trajectory of established urban existence and technological progress of humanity has been linear, progressing directly from the advent of agricultural societies in ancient Mesopotamia to the emergence of advanced industrial societies in Europe and North America (Coffin & Robert, 2005).<sup>6</sup> This undoubtedly reflects a pronounced misunderstanding of the activities in West Africa and other regions. Consequently, in the absence of a feasible alternative, the perceptions of individuals in Europe and America are utilised to represent others. This would undoubtedly be perceived as an effort to impose a Eurocentric development paradigm as a standard for assessing societal progress. (Stearn et al.1993).<sup>7</sup> asserted that civilisations are communities that produce and utilise an economic surplus beyond fundamental survival requirements. This role appears to facilitate capital accumulation and exploitation, as evidenced by the following: it has endowed human societies with the

ability to fundamentally alter their environments and exert dominance over other living beings. This history of civilisations encompasses the entirety of humanity, including their literature, formal scientific discoveries, art, music, architecture, and inventions, as well as their most advanced social, political, and economic systems; their brutality and destruction resulting from conflict; their exploitation of other species; and their environmental degradation, a consequence of technological and economic advancements (Stearn et al, 1993).<sup>8</sup>

The preceding analysis illustrates the kleptomaniacal and hypocritical stance of the capitalist West, which consistently alters the rules of engagement mid-transaction. Environmental pollution, the production and sale of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear and biochemical warfare equipment, deforestation, climate change, and numerous other issues impacting humanity have been instigated by European entities in their pursuit to exploit both human and natural resources of various regions and populations. During this process, the value system of individuals concerning their relationship with nature is discarded.

Africans have established regulations to safeguard wildlife, prohibiting the slaughter and poaching of animals and plants, particularly for commercial interests. If we do not regard these as measures for environmental protection and conservation, then nothing can be characterised as such. Social scientists refer to these restrictions as 'taboos and pollution,' implying that such regulations are of an inferior standard compared to their own. (Hendary, 1999).<sup>9</sup> The demand for elephant tusks, lions, chimpanzees, gorillas, different snakes, and other species for commercial purposes is infringing upon their natural habitats. The emergence of colonialism dictated the parameters of life for the Igala specifically and African peoples broadly, governed by regulations set by the British. The Igala people were perceived to be analogous to their neighbouring groups, particularly the Nupe, Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba. British anthropologists and sociologists sought proof via numerous intelligence reports conducted throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s to subordinate the Igalas to other groups.

Historians recognise how such attitudes entailed the employment of coercion and deception in European imperialism. These Eurocentric perspectives disregard the intelligence, dynamism, and humanity of several civilisations that they intentionally marginalise (Coffin & Robert, 2005).<sup>10</sup> These measures are implemented to prevent other regions from employing the strategies that facilitated their progress, hence preserving the existing global international system. European researchers' works depict civilisation as an endeavour to position human existence, particularly that of Africans, at the nadir of the hierarchical spectrum. Initially,

it was predicated on language and attire, subsequently evolving to encompass colour (Hendry, 1999).<sup>11</sup> It served as a pretext to establish colonialism as a 'civilising mission.' This implies that Africans lacked culture, history, and a historical narrative. This is evident in the perspectives articulated by Eurocentric scholars such as Trevor-Roper, David Hume, A. P. Newton, Fredrick Lugard, and Friedrich Hegel, among others, whose pseudo-scientific notions of European and white superiority served as a rationale for European exploitative endeavours (Uya, 1984; Ayandele, 1979; Omeroa, 2019).<sup>12,13,14</sup> Individuals classified as civilised exhibit the following societal attributes.

- Documented accounts that encompass the inception, evolution, and subjugation of others;
- A centralised administration, particularly a monarchy or theocratic leadership that embodies state authority in a singular figure; and
- Architectural advancements are categorised as the seven wonders of the world. The aforementioned parameter failed to recognise the ingenuity and dexterity of others, particularly those in Africa, as it aligns solely with previously stated notions.

Before their interaction with Europe through the River Niger and River Benue, Igala society and other civilisations possessed distinct ways of life; should the study of civilisation focus on the 'advancement' of one society relative to another? The assertion by intellectuals that Africans lack civilisation has been discredited by Afrocentric historians as fundamentally flawed and intellectually unsound. Furthermore, it has been determined that written documents do not represent the sole, unequivocal source of history. Written sources are derived from oral sources unless they are fictional and do not stem from reality. Consequently, in the absence of an oral source, a written one cannot exist. In conclusion, the analysis of civilisation reveals that settled European 'urban' life, referred to as 'civilisations,' is not inherently superior to other societies. Nomadic societies have frequently exhibited significant ingenuity in technology and social interactions, while fostering global connections more vigorously than sedentary populations. The Incas, who possessed no written language before the European encounter, exemplify this case (Stearn et al, 2001).<sup>15</sup>

An alternative perspective on civilisation studies from a conservation standpoint is the concept of nativism. Initially, it was a concept advocating for the preservation of the American way of life; nevertheless, the exchanges among diverse global populations through trade and migration have ramifications for its analysis (Knoll, 2010).<sup>16</sup> A nativist approach would primarily invoke the issue of being conflated with xenophobia and racism (Guia, 2016).<sup>17</sup> This would signify a scenario characterised by

the complete exclusion and isolation of individuals. The Igalas were not isolated in their 'traditional' habitat. They engaged with their neighbours and established cultural connections. The focus of historical discourse is on 'what humanity possesses and has accomplished.' If Euro-African relations are analysed through the lens of these collective efforts, historians would encounter no objections. When chronicles are intentionally created by one group to not only record their interactions with others but also to justify the actions of those others, without the consent or input of the individuals being represented, such profiling of individuals as 'smart,' 'clever,' 'dull,' 'beautiful,' 'intelligent,' 'wise,' or 'more sophisticated' is discriminatory and undermines the promotion of 'goodwill' in research endeavours.

This is the representation constructed in documentaries (both written and oral) by non-Igala researchers regarding the people. They are infrequently referenced throughout comprehensive studies of Nigeria specifically and Africa broadly. Nativism, furthermore, does not serve as a concept for nation-building. (Guia 2016) contends that it arose primarily as a means to alter the pre-existing constructs of nationhood along 'native' and 'non-native' distinctions. Applying this to historiographic research implies that the Igalas perceived and characterised their neighbours as 'outsiders' and that there were efforts to deny others access to specific privileges within the Igala kingdom, which was not fundamentally accurate. Research indicates that pre-colonial Igala communities facilitated the integration of individuals through acculturation. The renowned Achadu was recognised as an Igala and received all privileges accorded to a 'native,' notwithstanding his Igbo heritage (Dike, 1956; Jones, 1963).<sup>18,19</sup> The Igala pursuit of resource control and self-determination inside the Nigerian state has been evident since 1952 (Interview with Attabo, 2025).<sup>20</sup> The Igala people have seldom requested their neighbours to vacate the Igala kingdom; however, they have championed the enforcement of local content policies regarding economic activities on the Niger and Benue rivers, particularly concerning multinational mining in Ankpa (Coal miners) and oil companies in Ibaji. They seek to mitigate environmental pollution resulting from mining exploration and exploitation, as well as assert ownership of natural resources in the region, as failing to do so would unjustly reduce the Igala people to a mere by-product of British imperial enterprise, which is inaccurate. This arises from the fact that the concepts of 'native' and 'non-native,' as well as 'indigene' and 'settler,' exemplified by Attah Igala's claim to the ownership of Ajaokuta, Lokoja, and Koton-Karfi in the nineteenth century and thereafter, are constructed and exacerbated by colonialism.

### **West Africa Civilisation: A Historiographical Interrogation**

West Africa, or the western region of Africa, is also referred to as 'sub-Saharan Africa.' The name Sahara refers to the expanse that delineates North Africa, stretching from

the Red Sea to the Mediterranean and encompassing Central Mali, Chad, and Sudan. The Sahara is the largest desert globally, covering more than a quarter of Africa and spanning around 3,500,000 square miles (9,065,000 square kilometres). This region is highly significant and strategic in analysing the North-South interaction in African history. This barrier did not inhibit interaction among the diverse populations on either side of the split. The trans-Saharan trade facilitated the enduring cross-fertilisation of civilisations among the diverse peoples in the region. The Niger-Benue Confluence Area, located within the Sahara Desert, hosts over a thousand ethnic groups, the majority of which have distinct customs. The ethno-linguistic composition comprises the Afro-Asiatic, Indo-European, Khoisan, Niger-Congo, and Nilo-Saharan language families. The ethnic nations in the region include, but are not limited to, Nupe, Idoma, Asante, Wolof, Ijaw, Urhobo, Kri, Mandingo, Akan, Aku, Itsekiri, Bifada, Dendi, Dagbani, Ewe, Fon, Ga, Jola, Mende, Ibibio, Chamba, Birom, Papel, Hausa, Serer, Kanuri, Yarma, Jukun, Tiv, Igala, and Benin (Edo). Before interaction with other regions of the world, the diverse populations of West Africa were structured according to their clans and kingdoms. The Igalas, Nupe, Jukun, and Alago communities were characterised by a centralised system, whilst the Idoma, Epira, Tiv, and Okun-Yoruba operated under a non-centralised system.

There are various academic perspectives on the study of West African civilisation. Two categories of such works exist about the West African sub-region and its populace. The first is authored by Arabic, European, and African-American experts, whilst the second is composed by West African scholars of African descent. Before the twentieth century, the narrative of Africa, especially West Africa, predominantly revolved around the accounts of Arabs and Europeans on the continent. The civilisation of West Africa were defined by their written or spoken assertions of what constitutes culture. The perspectives of West Africans were disregarded in the creation of these works, which depicted the diverse populations in a highly contemptible manner. The absence of a written documentation system among the diverse populations of West Africa led to the misconception that they possessed no history. Consequently, Arabs and Europeans dismissed the primary and most essential source of history, namely the oral tradition employed by West Africans to safeguard their historical narrative. This has prompted philosophical enquiries regarding writing as a historical record. Scholars, including E. H. Carr and Collingwood, have addressed the enquiry: Can history exist independently of the historian? In other words, can history exist without the practice of writing? This debate has been sufficiently addressed within the field of historiography.

The Arabs were the initial group to engage with West Africa and, consequently, to document the diverse populations and their cultures. Nonetheless, their ideas were fundamentally rooted in theological beliefs that favoured

Islam and regarded God (All) as the origin of all actions. Societies that embraced Islam were favoured, while others were overlooked (S. A. Ajayi.<sup>21</sup> focused group discussion, 15/4/2010). Human agency was unacknowledged, as it was just 'God' who rendered the many Islamic practising kingdoms affluent and invincible in warfare. Despite the right arrangement of these texts (chronological and utilising primary sources), they nonetheless exhibited bias against regions such as the Igala society, which had not adopted Islam, labelling such groups as 'infidels,' akin to the European notions of 'barbarians' and 'savages.' In her work, *Native Administration in Nigeria*, Margery Perham discusses the inhabitants of the Niger-Benue Confluence region, including the Igala, Nupe, Jukun, Epira, Idoma, Tiv, and others, as an "Independent Pagan Area", based on the same European notion. (Margery, 1937, pp. 145-149).<sup>22</sup> Europeans encountered the West African region in the 13th century. They are arriving in this region solely to circumvent the Arabs who dominated the trade routes in the Mediterranean and across the Sahara (Dike, 1956, p. 1).<sup>23</sup>

The core stance of Eurocentric historiography on West African populations can be effectively understood through the notion of the 'Hamitic Hypothesis.' Africans were classified as Negroes and descendants of Ham. Consequently, Europeans asserted lineage from the other progeny of Abraham as per the Hebrew legend. They asserted that Africans are destined to 'service' other nations and that the African fate should be determined by external forces (Eliasu, 2017, p. 20).<sup>24</sup> This perspective facilitated the exploitative trans-Atlantic slave trade and European colonial endeavours in Africa. A taxonomy of the human family was established, excluding Africans from humanity and asserting that 'blacks' lacked common ancestry with Europeans (Seligman, 1930).<sup>25</sup> Academics, including Norton Cook, Alan Burns, Margery Perham, and others, characterised Africa as a black continent. Africans lacked awareness of their surroundings and identity. Consequently, Europeans were compelled to uncover it independently. For instance, statements like "Mugo Park discovered the Niger" and "Mary Slessor halted the killing of twins" exemplify this (Imbua, 2013; Banigo, 2009).<sup>26,27</sup>

Research on West African civilisations predominantly emphasises centralised systems over non-centralised ones in various historical analyses. Ade Ajayi J. F. and Crowder, M. (1971; 1974).<sup>28</sup> *History of West Africa*; Vansina, J. (1996).<sup>29</sup> *Kingdoms of the Savanna*; Smith, A. (1971).<sup>30</sup> *The Early States of the Central Sudan*; C. R. Niven, *Sudan*, examined empires including ancient Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kanem-Bornu, and the Hausa States, with particular emphasis on the Sokoto Caliphate and Yoruba States. The previously stated states are designated as 'Sudanese States' and are depicted in this literature as 'civilisations' originating

from West Africa. The implication of the aforementioned is that other regions, particularly the Igala, Jukun, and Nupe Kingdoms in the Niger-Benue Confluence Area, were omitted, consequently branding those excluded as 'barbaric' and 'backwards' territories. West African historians in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s devoted their efforts to reaffirming African identity and culture, which had been undermined by colonialism, via rigorous intellectual inquiry. West African researchers may be excused for that neglect, as the history of the diverse peoples of West Africa cannot be comprehensively examined in a single attempt. Nevertheless, the flawed and prejudicial Hamitic concept extended to regions classified as Centralised and non-centralised systems inside the Niger-Benue Confluence Area. This is known as 'divide and rule.' Subsequent research has perpetuated this bias towards regions excluded from European civilisation metrics. Consequently, scholars in the humanities and social sciences exacerbate this division even in their intellectual pursuits. In educational institutions in Nigeria, when civilisations are discussed, students are primarily introduced to Greek, Chinese, Roman, Indian, and other civilisations, often at the expense of African civilisations.

Duiker and Spielvogel (2004, pp. 222-224).<sup>31</sup> allocated chapter 8 of their publication to early civilisations in Africa; nonetheless, there was minimal discourse on West Africa, other than the dissemination of Islam to the region and a succinct overview of the ancient Ghana and Mali empires. This is undoubtedly a remnant of the Arabic and Eurocentric perspective of the region. They neglected to explore the study region to ascertain if there were any discrepancies beyond the previously stated observations. This implies that religion must originate from beyond Africa to be deemed suitable for recording and archiving, and so worthy of human study and inquiry. Similarly, Iftikhar (2001, p. 82).<sup>32</sup> examined *Trading States and Kingdoms in Africa* in Chapter 4 of his work. Nevertheless, the empires of ancient Ghana, Mali, and Songhai warrant attention due to the impact of Arabic historiography that advanced Islam in these regions. The sole state referenced in contemporary Nigeria is the Benin Kingdom, notable for its bronze artistry and its conquest of 201 cities and villages in Ekiti, Ikara, Kukuruku, Eka, and Ibo regions. The European-looted bronze head of Queen Idia and other significant artworks from the Benin Kingdom have perpetuated discourse on the creativity of its people. This is mostly attributable to the financial benefits that tourism has provided to the colonial industry. European scholars could minimally acknowledge that Benin constituted a civilised state.

The twentieth century experienced the fervour of the democratic campaign advocated by the United States of America (USA) as the optimal way of life proposed to the world. The irony lies in the fact that, despite the recognition

of democratic systems in West African societies that are still in practice today, African scholars have not critically examined their contexts to address the fundamental issues of the European-imposed nation-state system, thereby hindering its adaptation to their cultural milieu. This would have facilitated the liberation of Africans from the psychological and mental stigma of being perceived as backwards. Franz Boas (1896). asserts that all cultures are equal yet distinct, and therefore, they can only be accurately comprehended through their norms and values. Evans-Pritchard (1965).<sup>34</sup> emphasises that societies function as systems solely due to humanity's necessity to rationally organise the world, and scholars ought to examine the structural order to derive meaning within the context of that specific culture. Henry's (1999).<sup>35</sup> analysis directly confronts the issue of discrimination, asserting that it is now wholly unacceptable to refer to individuals as 'savages' or 'primitive people', as all societies, regardless of their technological advancement, possess intricate, rational thought systems and offer significant contributions to global knowledge and wisdom.

This article on Igala civilisation will adopt a distinct perspective, diverging from the prevalent emphasis on centralised and non-centralised state systems, with particular focus on the Igala civilisation. Two reasons may be proposed for this. Initially, despite being the seminal area of inquiry in Nigerian historiography, with K. O. Dike's (1956).<sup>36</sup> Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, which concentrates on the Niger Delta, Dike's work established foundational historiography for Nigerian riverine societies, subsequently impacting later research on the Niger-Benue confluence. This has garnered insufficient attention regarding structural analysis. Although numerous studies have been conducted in this domain, including J.S. Boston's "The Igala Kingdom" and J. N. Ukwedeh's "History of the Igala Kingdom C.1534-1854: A Study of Political and Cultural "Integration in the Niger-Benue Confluence Area of Nigeria," which examine the origins, migration, settlement patterns, and culture of the Igala people, they do not address their conceptualisation or profiling of neighbouring groups and other peoples in the manner that European profiling has been conducted.

Secondly, the Igala society exemplifies a community founded on equity, fairness, and justice, countering biased assertions. Consequently, this paper does not contest the established canon regarding the Igalas, particularly about centralised and non-centralised states in the Niger-Benue Confluence Area. This is because such perspectives, lacking public involvement, are anti-democratic and hinder comprehension of the populace. This is essential for enhancing understanding and eliminating detrimental misconceptions that could adversely affect national integration, particularly in Nigeria.

## An Igalanise Study Of The Igala Civilisation

The primary issue to address is the concept of Igalanise. This originates from the Igala understanding and interpretation of collective identity. The starting point is the interpretation of the term from the populace's viewpoint. The term Igalanise originates from the Igala culture, as shown through ethnographic research. The Igala concept encompasses two aspects. The initial reference pertains to individuals. In other terms, they identify and refer to themselves as Igala people. Their spoken language is referred to as Igala. The Igala language. The term Igala is frequently employed to denote the Igala people. The phrase Igala is purportedly an anglicised version of Igara, as noted by European authors. Consequently, the diverse records of Igala signify the Igala populace (Odih, 2025, oral interview). Conversely, the notion is rendered as 'truth'. For instance, an Igala individual seeking assurance of the reliability of the supplied data may ask, Omi inabali keneyi duwa yi ogecha ichée? (Is the information provided accurate?)

The inference is that the Igala, whether as a collective or as individuals, are bound to uphold truthfulness in their actions. This is a hallowed doctrine that the worldwide principles of individualism, propelled by imperialist capitalism, have relegated to obscurity. As awareness of the economic, material, and social inequalities imposed by the capitalist nation-state increases, so does the impetus to seek solutions to these difficulties. The realisation is that 'fighting and dying for the truth is preferable to living under oppression.' This principle has shaped their perspectives and behaviours in the quest for recognition alongside the Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba as the principal ethnic groups in Nigeria throughout the past two centuries. Historically, it is established that the Igala traditional authority, the Attah Igala, presided over a kingdom that thrived both before and after the 14th century, remaining independent from the Hausas, Ibo, and Yoruba. The connection between the subjects of study and scholars, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, is the pursuit of truth. Consequently, the Igalanise model is being promoted as it fosters objectivity, empathy, and fairness towards the subjects or individuals under examination. Consequently, it may be deduced that any scholar or anyone who has adopted the Igala characteristic is an Igala citizen. In other words, Igala citizenship possesses a global dimension, despite its apparent status as the ninth largest ethnic group in Nigeria, which is rather minor in the context of the world's population.

Every society possesses a culture. Consequently, every society possesses a civilisation deserving of examination, as the focus is primarily on a comparative analysis of cultures. The Igala ethnic nationality is regarded as the ninth largest ethnic group in Nigeria. They inhabit the riverbanks and adjacent areas of the Niger and Benue Rivers in Africa.

They are located in states such as Kogi, Benue, Delta, Edo, Enugu, Anambra, Nassarawa, Niger, and others. The Igala civilisation can be characterised as “a civilisation of the waters and uplands,” since the riverine and upland aspects of its environment have significantly shaped the lives of its people (Edimeh 2013, p.45).<sup>37</sup> Their engagement with a tough environment and their ability to coexist peacefully warrant rigorous scholarly examination across all disciplines. This study cannot adequately address all domains to meet the diverse expectations of scholarship. Nonetheless, it can, at most, highlight issues and advance the conversation regarding the Igala people, with a strong emphasis on fostering understanding and soliciting ideas from this community that may inspire solutions to global difficulties.

From the above account of the Igala nation-state environment, we can infer that their political, social, economic, and religious frameworks were tailored to accommodate their specific context. Despite their extensive dispersion across Nigeria and the African Diaspora in Europe, America, and the Caribbean, our emphasis will be on their ancestral homeland in the Niger-Benue confluence region. The Igala civilisation is the most ancient in Nigeria. Linguistic evidence indicates that the Igala language predates the Yoruba, Igbo, and Benin (Edo) languages by 5,000 years (Jacob, 2018, p.11).<sup>38</sup>

Idah serves as the ancient homeland of the Igala. It serves as the capital of the Igala kingdom. Many other ethnic groups refer to it as the most remote location on Earth. Occasionally termed the apocalypse. Egypt is characterised as the hub of civilisation in Africa. Archaeological discoveries indicate that the history of Idah, the capital of Igala country, is located in regions between the Nok sites, where evidence now suggests iron production dates as early as 1000 BCE, and the areas west of the lower Niger around Igbo-Ukwu, which show a subsequent period of iron production and trade connections with western Sudan from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries CE. Bernard Fagg, *Nok Terracottas*. 1977 Lagos: Released by Ethnographica for the National Museum, 1977 J. F. Jemkur, *Aspects of the Nok Culture* (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello). In the Igala language, “Idah” signifies “a place where everything concludes.” Historically, the Igbo were wholly encompassed by the Igala kingdom. (Jacob, 2018, p. 74)

The primary and most advanced creativity of the Igala civilisation is seen in their architectural skill, exemplified by the Attah’s palace, a multi-story edifice of significant height constructed from mud and palm oil, referred to as *odogo* in the Igala language. This building executed multiple functions. An oral source indicates that the building *Odogo* served as a lookout for adversaries or traders navigating the Niger River, and it was also employed for the collection of customs duties from Northern merchants travelling

south. Traditionally, the death of the Attah was symbolically signified by the removal of *Odogo*’s roof. Thirdly, it was utilised for the mummification of the Attah as a rite of passage to the *Oja-Ayina* (designated burial ground for the Attahs) for final interment, a practice analogous to those seen in Egypt and other Eastern countries in Europe. Architectural expertise is evident in their diverse habitation patterns and boat construction (Jacob 2018, p. 13).

The Igala society may not have generated towering edifices or high-speed motorboats. Their capacity to harness nature’s “gifts” to address daily issues exemplifies the inventiveness and creativity of the populace, contradicting the Eurocentric Hamitic hypothesis that posits “Africans lacked any creativity.” The populace exhibited proficiency in dye-works in various regions of Igala state. A minimum of twelve circular pits, approximately six feet deep and four feet in diameter at the opening, are excavated near one another; at the perimeter of each pit stands a tall forked stick, with a long pole balanced in the fork, one end of which is weighted while the other end supports pieces of cloth intended for dyeing. Chunks of raw indigo are cast into the pits, and water is added until it reaches the brim of the pits. Wood ashes are subsequently incorporated, and fermentation occurs. Once the impurities are removed from the surface and the blue dye is prepared for application, the cloth is immersed in the dye, periodically lifted to assess its progress. A comparable system is observed in Egypt and several Oriental nations for extracting water from wells. Jacob (2018, p. 43).

The indigenous Igala people’s existence predominantly revolves around agriculture. Their livelihoods and activities are focused on the agricultural, hunting, and fishing aspects of their surroundings. In addition to their esteemed reputation as boat builders, they possess expertise in the fabrication of iron and metals. Ukwede observes that the mechanism for managing social friction and rivalry inside the Igala kingdom was an iron instrument known as *Udulugbo*. (Ukwede, 2001, pp. 135-42).<sup>39</sup>

The Igala term for water is *Aji*. This includes the concepts of river and stream (*Aji-Ohimini* or *Aji-Ucha*), river (*Ohimini*), and swampy area or stream (*Efu-Echa* or *Aji-Ucha kekele*). The *Ibaji* people of Igala have a profound understanding of aquatic life, as evidenced by their nomenclature for several fish species (*eja-ohi* or *eja-ayiloo*, *eja obobo*). Consequently, the majority of individuals participated not only in fishing but also in hunting other aquatic organisms for sustenance. The inhabitants of the River Niger and River Benue are involved in salt production and engage in the trade of this commodity inside the internal market alongside neighbouring communities (Ukwedeh, 2001, pp. 135-41).<sup>40</sup> The pre-colonial Igala society was governed by the *Igalanise* paradigm, wherein commercial transactions

were conducted with the highest honesty and a devotion to sustaining connections.

The Igala civilisation exhibited a less stratified society that permitted mobility between social strata. For instance, an individual referred to as Adu within her community can attain emancipation and ascend to the pinnacle of societal hierarchy. This is a result of that individual having fulfilled the requirements for citizenship in the community. Descendants of slaves, such as Oma-Odoko, Achadu Oni-Gbo, and Ochuma Gede, exemplify individuals who attained respect within Igala society (Chief Labaran, Oral interview). If the issue of 'indigene' vs settlers were to emerge, such an accomplishment would have been exceedingly difficult, if not unattainable, in an independent Nigeria. The Igala political structure is inherently democratic. There existed a monarchical (Attah) or centralised authority with decentralised clan systems. Individuals convene at events to engage in discussions regarding issues pertinent to them within their respective constituent assemblies. The hamlet of Efu-ewo has the Ujo Abo-Efu-ewo (village assembly) and Onu (a collection of Ama Onuh) connected by kinship (Ukwede, 1982).<sup>41</sup> Decision-making involved greater agreement-building rather than the imposition of opinions on others. Indeed, individuals perceived as not contributing to the resolution of societal difficulties are regarded as unworthy of inclusion. Consequently, all individuals were expected to engage in matters of societal significance.

There exists a fallacious myth that the Igalas lacked a concept of "God" worship, rendering them a people devoid of religion. The Igala notion of "God" is Ojo Ochamachala, Ojo olichoke nebuwa (Ojo ki choga). For the Igalas, "God" is omnipotent and omniscient. The commencement and conclusion of an individual are dictated by a reciprocal agreement between the divine and that person. (Miachi, "Masquerade Phenomenon in Igala"; Miachi, "Masquerades as Agents"; Murray, "Idah Masks.") An ethnographic analysis of the worldview of the populace reveals that the entities they venerate as deities are, in fact, manifestations of arch-divinities, which these images have assumed as intermediaries to "God." For instance, when the Igalas seek forgiveness for transgressions, they typically invoke the identified divinities. In the realm of conflict resolution and administration, the Igalas possessed adept conciliators, mediators, and arbitrators. Rules were established on the administration of justice and the conduct of professional solicitors within communities (Itodo, 2024, p. 167).<sup>42</sup> The art of battle, referred to as Ogwu, is approached with considerable contemplation and focus before its execution. However, they believed that solutions to issues always existed without resorting to violence. The absence of written records of such wars does not imply that there

were no intra- or inter-ethnic conflicts involving the Igalas. What is more significant is that, as long as conflicts exist, there are also numerous methods for mediation, resolution, and management.

In the health sector, Africans, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, have demonstrated their capacity to address the difficulties of their era. The Akan and Igala peoples possessed concepts of health, disease, and cure. Through a diagnostic method termed ego, they successfully identified the sex of a kid, illnesses, and many maternal and child care concerns (Itodo 2019).<sup>43</sup> The economy of Igala societies was systematically designed and organised. It possessed the essential concepts of market (ajah), credit (Ome), payment (era), money (oko), iche-ukpo jo (inexpensive), and iche kpuna (expensive) before European contact. Abdulkadir posits that the Igalas possessed a well-structured and organised economic trade system that rendered them dominant outside the Niger-Benue confluence area (Abdulkadir, 2014, 94).<sup>44</sup> The Igala state of Idah, Gbobe, Ejule, Ankpa, and others established their political dominance through their economic and commercial advantages as intermediaries in trade both within and beyond their region. For instance, the Gbobe market is recognised as one of the most significant markets in the pre-colonial confluence. The market had many trade commodities, including slaves, palm oil, ivory, yams, pepper, and native beer (burukutu). Udoh characterised the marketplaces at the confluence as "...terminals where oil from the adjacent hinterland was gathered for transport to the Delta ports..." (Udoh, 1970, p. 49).<sup>45</sup> The Igalas developed payment methods, import and export rules, customs duties, a trust system, fixed pricing, and negotiation, among other trade-related matters. Concerning cash, Abdulkadir observed that Portuguese transactions in the Rio Real region involved the exchange of bracelets (Manilas) for slaves. During the period of James Barbot, two currencies existed: the trade money and the local currency utilised in market transactions between traders of the Niger River and the Benue River and the hinterland populace. The indigenous currency in the Igala nation comprised cowries and Manillas. Abdulkadir (2014, p. 94).

It was evident that the Igalas and their neighbours safeguarded their economic interests and ensured mutual advantages for all parties involved. No discrepancies in modifications needed reconciliation due to internal measures ensuring uniformity. Nevertheless, the Igalas lack the mercantilist inclination to exploit others and amass surplus capital, which is often regarded as a hallmark of being "civilised" in Western contexts. The interaction between Europeans and the populations of West Africa, particularly those around the Niger-Benue confluence, posed challenges in reaching a consensus on exchange

methods and other matters about their commercial dealings. Rather than pursuing a synthesis of ideas, Europeans opted to force their perspective on the partnership, resulting in a consistently one-sided dynamic thereafter.

### The Igala perception of her Neighbors

The Igala possessed a comprehensive understanding of their immediate neighbours, including the Igbo, Igbira, Idoma, Nupe, Kakanda, Okun and others. It is essential to recognise that, from their perspective, the Igala people did not establish a classification or hierarchy of sophistication for their neighbours. The view of her neighbours was shaped by indigenous colonisation, geography, food habits, and the predominant occupations of the individuals within her vicinity. The nearest neighbours to the west are the Igbira Kakanda, Okun and Nupe, while to the east are the Igbo and Idoma. Nevertheless, Benin and Delta encompassed a minor segment of their population within the contemporary Edo and Delta States. The Igala people, residing in the Eastern and Central Niger-Benue confluence, appear to possess a restricted understanding of their neighbouring communities. Consequently, only the former will be taken into account.

For the Igalas, the Igbo are perceived as *ama je emi* (individuals who predominantly consume vegetables). This is influenced by the predominantly agrarian characteristics of the Igbos and the predominantly landlocked region they inhabit. The Igalas predominantly consume meals rich in cereals, *Obo egwa*, and *obo akpa* (soup prepared from beans and maize), which are reflective of their environmental context and distinctly differentiate their cuisine from that of the Igbos (Amanyi Isah, 2025, oral interview).<sup>46</sup>

In the realm of indigenous colonisation, J.S. Boston's research juxtaposed the Igala with their surrounding Igbo ethnic groups, with whom they had maintained centuries of interactions. In discussing this diffusive contact, Boston also addresses specific issues such as masquerades and other artistic forms that exemplify the wide and pervasive character of these contacts. P.A. Ogughua and Chike Dike jointly affirm the enduring relations between the Igala and Igbo communities. Adiele Afigbo contradicted Austin Shelton's assertions, affirming the supremacy of the Igala over the Igbo. Afigbo, a product of the Ibadan School, emphasised "cultural nationalism," aligning with that heritage by prioritising one's own ethnic or national group. Consistent with this ideological perspective, Afigbo sought to integrate and subordinate the Igala within the political and cultural dominance of the Igbo. Afigbo noted the enduring business links that existed in pre-colonial times between Igala and Igbo merchants, notwithstanding such shenanigans. (Afigbo, A. 197, 77-90.) [47] He describes the presence of commercial channels that facilitated these interactions. Nwando Achebe's recent study, akin

to Shelton's, elucidates this link and asserts the Igala supremacy over some Igbo communities along the Nsukka Igbo axis. (Nwando Achebe, 2005, p.90).<sup>48</sup>

Austin Shelton, in advancing the Igala-Igbo connection and characterising it as a form of "indigenous colonialism," determined that the Igala kingdom of Idah colonised Igbo villages in the Nsukka region under its political and ritual dominion. He perceives these hegemonic influences and their intermingling as a manifestation of an African colonising order, characterised by the dominance and imposition of Igala cultural, ritualistic, and artistic forms upon Igbo communities, resulting in evolving cultural paradigms, supremacy, and prolonged Igala influence in the Nsukka region. (Shelton, 1971, p. 211).<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, Shelton references the traditions surrounding Onoja Ogboni (Oboni), an Igala warlord and conqueror, as further validating the historical supremacy of the Igala in this region. (Shelton, 1968, pp. 243-57) The preceding depiction was not intended to diminish or disparage Igbo culture and tradition, as Eurocentric perspectives have done. The Igalas abhor pride (*ejuna egba* or *ehi-olane*) and did not mistreat their neighbours. The Igbo are well integrated into the Igala regions of Ibaji, Ete, Ankpa, Idah, Akpanya, Anyigba, and other areas of Igala territory.

The Igalas perceive the Idoma and Ebira as identical groups (Mrs Ele-Ojo, oral interview). They are designated as the families of the Kwararafa confederacy. The Ebira (Igbira, Igbirra, and other forms) constitute a prominent ethnic group within the Niger-Benue confluence. The Ebira comprise three principal groups: Ebira Tao (Okene), Ebira Etuno (Igarra), and Ebira Panda (Koton Karifi), in addition to minor communities occasionally residing in clusters throughout the region. All three principal Ebira factions assert migratory roots from Kwararafa (Jukun) and simultaneously proclaim colonisation connections with the Igala Kingdom of Idah. (Paula Brown, 1955-1957).<sup>50</sup> The Ebira Tao assert in their oral history that they settled in Idah alongside the Idoma and other groups before their subsequent migration to their current sites (Constanze Weise, 5-24-2009).<sup>51</sup> This translates to 'those among the brothers.' These ethnic groups are located on the western flank of the Igalas, connected by marriages, trade, and religious activities. They are perceived as inhabiting the territorial regions that extend into the domains of the Igala people.

The Igala neighbour, Okun Yoruba in the western flank, exemplifies "indigenous African colonialism, for example, the Oworo, Bunu, Ikiri, Owe, Ijumu, and East Yagba maintain vibrant cultural practices and oral traditions, indicating that the Okun of Ikiri is among the dynasties asserting that their ancestors originated from Idah or that their authority is legitimised by the Attah Igala. The cultural practices of the Igala can be discerned. These encompass the funerary

rites of Iro (Abinu) and Ilo (Igala), as well as cultic practices like Abure (Abinu and Ijumu) and Abule (Igala). Edimeh (2013, pp. 22-23).<sup>52</sup>

The Kakanda were an additional neighbouring group of the Igala. They were part of the riverine politics that recognised the Attah as their sovereign and rendered tribute until the mid-19th century. This acknowledged an Igala commonwealth that ensured freedom of navigation and trade security in the Niger-Benue confluence region (Edimeh, 2013, pp. 22-23). This does not lead the Igala to perceive the Okun and Kakanda as inferior or unequal to themselves.

Oral traditions and recorded evidence concur regarding the colonisation of Nupe by the Igala. The Tsoede mythology states that the progenitor of a centralised Nupe realm was the offspring of an Igala monarch and a Nku (Nupe) woman. Before this period, the Nupe regarded Idah as a wellspring of inspiration and a hub of civilisation. The scenario was further augmented by the novel concepts and symbols that Tsoede brought from Idah. (Edimeh, 2013, p. 27).<sup>53</sup> From the various examples above, this does not lead the Igala to perceive the Igbo, Idoma, Ebira, Okun, Kakanda, Nupe and other neighbours as inferior or unequal to themselves. For the Igala people, existence was not characterised by competition. It was, rather, a manifestation of 'live and let live.'

The pseudo-scientific theories of European thinkers advocating 'might is right,' 'survival of the fittest,' and 'civilising the uncivilised' incited the mission to exploit Africa broadly and the Igala people specifically. The objective is to establish a world in which the affluent persist in their privilege while the impoverished are condemned to a life of incessant servitude, subjugation, and oppression. The international political economy is characterised by a North/South dichotomy, where the North assumes a dominant position and the South is subordinate; hence, the Igalas, as part of the African context, encounter a dual hazard predicament. They were a marginalised minority within the Nigerian state, extending to its numerous provinces and regions. This is supplementary to being part of the globally exploited South. The Igala's perception of their neighbours has not been dehumanising or disparaging. It has been predicated on their apparent differences about cuisine, geography, and profession. Their non-aggressive disposition has rendered them as meek, laid-back, and regressive individuals until the late 20th and early 21st centuries, when they became recognised as one of the principal ethnic groups in Nigeria, advocating for self-determination.

## Conclusion

The article seeks to enhance our comprehension of civilisation by examining the characteristics of non-centralised societies. This paper utilises the Igala society

as a case study to illustrate that the Igala worldview perceives humans as equals. It solely distinguished individuals using descriptive parameters of the fundamental characteristics of the ethnic group, particularly regarding attire, cuisine, and geographical location. It did not engage in discrimination against others as being 'inferior beings' to her. Consequently, the Igala perspective of others was not intended to regulate their neighbour. The Igala's descriptive perspective on the Igbo is founded on the latter's characterisation as vegetative, though not due to any superiority. Conversely, the Igalas were regarded as the predominant inhabitants of the centre region of the Niger-Benue confluence or those residing within the Niger River basin. The Igala have demonstrated that the world can improve if the principles of equity, fair play, and tolerance are diligently upheld. Nevertheless, Nigeria has neglected to examine classic democratic societies, such as centralised and non-centralised systems, which include fundamental characteristics of its governmental structure. Therefore, Nigeria must understand the intricacies of the diverse civilisations and leverage the valuable knowledge derived from them. This has already been presented as a hint regarding the nation in the proverb, 'wetin you de find for Sokoto dey for your shokoto.' The Igalanise approach is thus endorsed for the secular and academic spheres. This should serve as the foundation for our daily interactions, fostering Igala citizens at a global level. This would undoubtedly foster fairness, equity, and justice in the interactions of all individuals globally.

## References

1. Abdullahi, J. (2018). *The First Nigerian People*, 2nd Edition. Anyigba: Winners Studio Press.
2. Afigbo, E. A. (1973). Trade and Trade Routes in Nineteenth-Century Nsukka, *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 7
3. Ajayi, S. A. (2010). Focus group discussion with postgraduate students. University of Ibadan.
4. Ake, C. (1981). *A Political Economy of Africa*. London: Longman.
5. Alagoa, E. J. (1972). *A history of the Niger Delta*. Ibadan: University Press.
6. Appiah-Kubi, K. (1980). The Akan concept of human personality. In Ade. Adegbola, E. A. (Ed.), *Traditional religion in West Africa*. Ibadan: Sefer Books.
7. Attabo Ochidi (2025). Oral interview, 78+, Alloma.
8. Awotua-Efebo, E. B, et al. (1999). Transport and communication. In Alagoa, E. J. (Ed.), *The land and people of Bayelsa, Central Niger Delta*. Port Harcourt: Onyoma.
9. Ayandele, E. A. (1979). The task before the historian. *JHSN*, 9(4), pp. 1-12.
10. Banigo, Y. (2009), *Capita, religion and conflict in 19th-century Nembe-Ijo: Chief Christopher Iworari, 1834-1879*. *Journal of Intra-African Studies*.

11. Boston, J.S. (1968), *The Igala Kingdom* (Ibadan: Published for the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research by Oxford University Press, Oxford,
12. Brisibe, W. and I. Brown (2017). Understanding the planning and settlement patterns in selected Ijaw migrant fisher folks' camps. Retrieved 3 Jan. 2019,
13. Chike Dike (1982), *Origins of the Pre-Colonial States of Africa: The Case of Igala*", *African Notes*, 9, from [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net).
14. Coffin, G. J. & Robert, C. S. (2005). *Western Civilisation*. New York: Norton and Company.
15. Constanze Weise, Field Interview with the Otaru of Igarra, 2009, 5/24/2009; Field Interview with Dr Hassan, Koton Karifi, 06/01/2009.
16. Dike, K. O. (1956). *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta*, London: Clarendon.
17. Duiker, W. J. and Spielvogel, J. J. (2004), *World History*. United States of America: Thomson Wadsworth. 4th ed.
18. Edimeh, O.F, (2013). *The Aj'Ocholi Provenance in Igala History*. Ankpa: Roma Publisher
19. Eferebo, I. & Ekewe, E. E. (2017). Scientific influences on historiography: An interrogation of interdisciplinary approach to historical scholarship. *Kaduna Journal of Humanities*, 1(3), pp. 1-17
20. Eferebo, I. & Ekewe, E. E. (forthcoming). The idea and practice of dispute resolution in Africa: a case study of the Ijaw society to B. Okaba et al. (Eds.), *General studies (GES): Book of reading*. Institute of Foundation Studies, Federal University, Otuoke.
21. Elisau, V. (2017), *Evaluation of the Eurocentric view of African History*. *Kaduna Journal of Humanities*, 1(3), pp. 18-32.
22. Ele Achimugu, 2025. Oral Interview, 50+, Okula
23. Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1965). *Theories of primitive* Oxford Clarendon.
24. Guia, A. (2016). *The concept of Nativism and Anti-immigration movements in Europe*. European University Institute Library. Retrieved 3 Nov 2019, from [www.cadmus.eui.eu](http://www.cadmus.eui.eu).
25. Hendry, J. (1999). *An introduction to social anthropology: other peoples' world*. Hampshire: Macmillan.
26. Huntington, S. P. (1997). *The Cash of Civilisations: Remarking on world order*. New York: Touchstone
27. Iftikhar, A. et al (2001). *World cultures: A global mosaic*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
28. Ikime, O. (1979). *Through changing scenes, Nigerian history, yesterday, today and tomorrow*. Inaugural Lecture, University of Ibadan.
29. Imbua, D. L. (2013). *Robbing others to pay Mary Slessor: Unearthing the authentic Heroes and heroines of the abolition of twin-killing in Old Calabar*. *Journal of African Economic History*, 41, pp. 139-158.
30. Itodo, M. A. (2019). *The Igala Nation and Nigeria's Sociopolitical Realities: A Saga of Missed Opportunities*. Ibadan: University Press.
31. Isah Amanyi. (2025). Oral Interview. 52+, Ugbamaka Agojeju.
32. Jones, G. I. (1963). *Trading states of the Oil Rivers*. London: Oxford Press.
33. Knoll, B. R. (2010). *Understanding the 'new nativism: Causes and consequences for immigration policy attitudes in the United States*. PhD thesis, University of Iowa.
34. Labaran Adah. (2025). Oral Interview. 65+, Ejule.
35. Mcintosh, P. (2007). *White privileges: Unpacking the invisible knapsack*. In Podolefsky, A. & P. J. Brown, *applying cultural anthropology: An introductory guide*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
36. Miller, B.D. (2005). *Cultural anthropology*. Boston: Pearson Education.
37. Miachi, T. A. "The Masquerade Phenomenon in Igala Culture: An Anthropological Analysis." PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1991; Miachi, Thomas Ajayi. "Masquerades as Agents of Social Control among the Igala", in *Masquerade in Nigerian History and Culture* (1983): 460-88; Tom A. Miachi, *The Incarnate Being Phenomenon*
38. M.S. Abdulkadir. (2014). *An Economic History of Igala Land, Central Nigeria: 1896-1939*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.
39. Nwando Achebe, (2011). *The Female King of Colonial Nigeria: Ahebi Ugbabe* Bloomington: Indiana University Press; Nwando Achebe, (2005). *Farmers, Traders, Warriors, and Kings: Female Power and Authority in Northern Igboland, 1900-1960*, *Social History of Africa* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
40. Odih, D.N. (2025), Oral interview. 50+, Lokoja
41. Omoera, O. S. (2019). *Human Rights Issues in the Nigerian films October 1 and Black November*. In Hjort, M. & JØrhalt, E. (Eds), *African cinema and human rights* (pp. 237-255). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. doi.org/10.2307/J.CTV9HVRJZ.17
42. Perharm Margery (1938) *Native Administration in Nigeria*. London: Oxford University Press.
43. P. A. Oguagha (1984). *The Beginnings of Igbo-Igala Relations up to c. 1650 A.D*, *Nigeria Magazine*.
44. Paula Brown (1955). *The Igbira*" in Daryll Forde ed., *Peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence*. London: International African Institute, 57.
45. R.K. Udoh (1970). *Geographical Region of Nigeria*, Ibadan: Heinemann Books.
46. Schraeder, P. J. (2004). *African politics and society*, 2nd ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
47. Seligman, C. G. (1930). *The races of Africa*. New York: Thornton Butterworth.

48. Stearns, P. N., et al (1993). *World Civilisations: The Global Experience*. New York. HarperCollins College Publishers.
49. Stearns, P. N. et al (2001). *World Civilisations*. Vol. 1. New York: Longman.
50. Ukwedeh Joseph N. (2003), *History of the Igala Kingdom C.1534-1854: A Study of Political and Cultural Integration in the Niger-Benue Confluence Area of Nigeria*, Arewa House Studies Series. Kaduna: Arewa House, Ahmadu Bello University.
51. Ukwedeh, J. N. (2001). *The Udulugbo War Technology in the Igala Kingdom: Historical-Archaeological Implications*, Nigerian Heritage, vol. 10.
52. Uya, E. O. (1984). *Perspectives and methods of studying African history*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing
53. Williamson, K. (1969). *Language of the Niger Delta*. Nigeria Magazine 97, pp. 124-139.