NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT (NJPSM)

European Gunboat Diplomacy: A Survey Analysis of Edo-Udo War (1504-1520)

Vivian Oghomwen Osaretin
Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Nigeria
vivian.osaretin@uniben.edu (08067886835)

Abstract
The relationship between Udo and Edo is complex, particularly regarding Edo's political exploitation of Udo. They are approximately 48 kilometers apart, with travel primarily by foot and canoe, highlighting the dangers of communication. This study explores the origin legends of the Benin and Udo peoples, some traced back to 900 A.D., with an emphasis on their connections to Europe. Following Esigie, attention shifted primarily to Benin-Udo relations, highlighting their historical context prior to political exploitation. The focus will be on the conflicts known as the Benin-Udo wars. European contributions to weaponry during the 16th century played a significant role in the Edo-Udo wars, impacting combat despite appearing minor by modern standards. This study employs a secondary method of data collection, reviewing relevant literature and selected internet sources, using Theory of Classical Realism, as articulated by Morgenthau, which emphasizes the significance of human nature in shaping international policy. It claims that humans are inherently sinful, egoistic, interest-driven, and aggressive, highlighting the importance of understanding the objective laws governing human nature for analyzing International Relations. The findings indicate that this was a period of active trade between Benin and the Europeans, affecting the balance of power between rival elements in Edo, Udo was challenged sequentially by Oba Oguola, Ewuare, Ozolua, and Esigie. Among these figures, Aruanran of Udo and Esigie of Benin are notable; folklore suggests both are sons of Ozolua. Aruanran was described as large, while Esigie, previously known as Osawe, carried the title Okezinowe before adopting the name Esigie. This contact had perhaps given some advantages to Edo over Udo that had before now developed almost paralleled kingdoms

***Keywords*:** Diplomacy, Edo-Udo, gunboat, survey, war

Introduction

Since the beginning of human history, conflict has existed. It is, nevertheless, a noticeable aspect of human society. Margenthau asserts that even in the absence of firearms or other kinds of aggression, men will fight with their bare hands. A man's path of conflict begins when he screams at birth. As he gets older, when he is angry, he chews or scratches himself with his tiny fingers or teeth. This is based on the notion that males will fight if they experience anything that could make them feel either love or rage. to experience joy or anger, happiness or sadness. Men will constantly disagree since they have distinct objectives, and disagreements might result in confrontation or conflict. Tradition often lacks explanations for the military achievements of warrior kings in Edo and Udo, instead highlighting the magical powers they wielded to safeguard their people and vanquish foes. Udo's earlier dominance over Edo, which seems to have shifted during Oba Esigie's reign, a period marked by significant European interaction. This raises intriguing questions about whether Edo's ultimate success might be associated with European influences.

According to Margenthau (1948), Mao B.O. and Okeke Uzodike (2015) characterize conflict as the existence of disagreements or non-compatibility between two actors, which can be individuals, groups, organizations, or nations, regarding interests, values, beliefs, emotions, goals, space, positions, and scarce resources. Consequently, conflict resolution aims at limiting, mitigating, and containing violent conflicts through both forcible and non-coercive means to

prevent humanitarian emergencies from occurring or recurring. The Kingdom of Benin, renowned as a major forest state in West Africa, played a significant role in the region's history. Prior to European colonization, conflicts were a common occurrence among pre-colonial governments in West Africa and similar areas around the globe.

Now, *war* is military aggression or armed conflict (commonly between nations, tribes or between other groups). State versus tribe war, of secessionism is termed rebellion. Hence, an *aggressor* is generally held to be that state which is the first to declare/commit war, invasion, or provision of support to armed bands formed in upon any territory/property of another State (Bierman & Gold, 1970, pp. 210-217). Aggression is the energetic activity of deploying military apparatus in proper assertion of forceful act or morbidly expressed in bullying, masochism, or destructiveness (as applicable in the work) (Watson, 1978). But the war that happened between the Edo and neighboring Udo community 1504 and 1520 raises critical issues about the role of external agents in the prosecution of warfare.

Statement of the Problem

There is extensive literature on the history of Benin, particularly focusing on the pre-colonial period and the monarchy. However, there is limited research on the social-political development of Udo and Edo. Conflicts between maintaining familial ties and national independence have historically influenced battles between these two groups, with the Udo people instilling enough fear to intimidate the Oba of Edo. Knowledge of the Ogiso period remains scarce, and archaeological findings from this time are still emerging. According to Graham Connah (1975), pre-sixteenth-century Benin was an enigma for archaeologists, with knowledge primarily preserved in folklore relating to the Edo kingdom's second dynasty. Key events remembered by Edo-Udo traditional historians include conflicts involving Udo's Auranran and Edo's Oba Esigie, as well as Udo's Akpanigiakon and Oguola. Notably, Esigie, who succeeded Ozolua, led two significant wars: one against Udo, where his brother established power, and another against the Atta of Idda.

Research Question

The article explores the military successes of warrior kings in Edo and Udo, emphasizing that traditions do not explain these outcomes but highlight the magical powers protecting subjects and defeating enemies. It suggests that Udo initially dominated Edo until a historical shift during Oba Esigie's reign, influenced by European contact. This may have also impacted military relationships between Edo and Udo under Oba Ozolua and Esigie. The indigenous military systems of both territories, which were similar and developed in the same geographical context, favored Edo in particular. Both societies lacked a standing army, raising soldiers as needed, and Udo had an age-grade system with groups like Eroghae, Ighele, and Edion, involving communal tasks as boys matured.

Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

- Examine Edo and Udo relations from origin to separation,

- Identify the major impacts of the Edo-Udo wars including European factors from 1485-1520, Analyze the military systems, arms, and defense strategies of Edo and Udo,
- And highlight key events in the Edo and Udo conflict.

Conceptual clarification

The conflict between the need to maintain familial connections and the desire for independence contributed to the hostilities between the Udo and Edo groups. While there were multiple disagreements, only a few notable events are documented. Osemwegie indicated that the Udo instilled such fear in the Edo that even the Oba was intimidated by the prospect of an Udo incursion. The historical record from the Ogiso period concerning the Edo and Udo remains limited, with archaeological insights still in the early stages. Graham Connah (1968) remarked that pre-sixteenth century Benin is largely unexplored in terms of excavation. The knowledge preserved in the folklore of the Edo kingdom, specifically during its second dynasty, highlights two major events. These include conflicts involving Aruanran of Udo against Oba Esigie of Edo, and Akpanigiakon of Udo opposing Oguola of Edo. Historical accounts, such as those by Marshall, indicate that during Esigie's reign, significant battles occurred, notably the war against Udo, where the Oba's brother held prominence, and a subsequent conflict against the Atta of Idda. An analysis of these battles aims to deepen understanding of the Edo-Udo dynamics during this historical period. Talbot and Egharevba provide differing historical dates for the reigns of Oguola and Esigie. Talbot attributes the years 1400 AD and 1520 AD to Oguola and Esigie, respectively. In contrast, Egharevba assigns 1280 AD to Oguola and 1504 AD to Esigie. This highlights the discrepancies in historical records regarding these figures.

Conflicts in politics typically arise from the competition for political power and resources, reflecting Harold Lasswell's view that politics revolves around "who gets what, when, and how." Many of these conflicts are rooted in political origins and are ultimately resolved through public policy. B. Onuha (2011). Conflict in pre-colonial Benin stemmed from political issues like boundary disputes and succession. The absence of natural boundaries led to frequent boundary conflicts, while succession concerns persisted throughout Benin's early history until it evolved into an empire. It is important to note that contemporary international political systems do not apply, as early systems were limited in scope and utilized regional terminology influenced by historical ties. Oghi, F.E. (2014). This article investigates the origin myths of the Benin and Udo peoples, specifically considering European influence and events post-Esigie.

The kingdom's history is a complex tapestry formed from art history, archaeology, and folklore, with ongoing scholarly debates surrounding its origins and the Eweka dynasty. Most researchers rely on four key narratives to propose that the Edo and Udo peoples may have shared a common ancestry, despite differing interpretations. Duze M. (1973). Some scholars argue that the founders of both kingdoms were not siblings, noting that the Edo and Udo populations stemmed from distinct origins, tracing one group's journey from the Congo to Edo. This group, after crossing the Benue River, identified themselves as the "Ire" people. A second wave of immigrants from Sudan, known as the Ibobo, also contributed to Edo's demographics after their migration from a point near Lokoja. Such historical accounts shape the understanding of Benin's rich legacy and identity. Egharevba, (1968). Ryder (1977) argued the opposite in his book Benin and the Europeans. There, he backed the motion that the success of Edo's

expansion was not at anyway related to or caused by their interaction with the Europeans at this time in history. Ryder's viewpoint would require evaluation or adjustment given its impact on Edo-Udo ties.

Literature Review

This section reviews the literature concerning the history of Edo-Udo relations, Efforts to trace the early history of the ancient Benin kingdom began with J.U. Egharevba, who claimed that the Benin people originated from Egypt after a brief stay in Sudan and Ile-Ife. However, his findings have been challenged by scholars, leading to doubts about their authenticity. A.E. Afigbo later commented that such claims of Middle Eastern origins align with similar narratives among various West African peoples, suggesting that they should not be considered credible by serious historians given the current understanding of West African history.

According to Graham Connah (1975), pre-sixteenth-century Benin remained largely misunderstood by archaeologists. Knowledge from the folklore of the region pertains mainly to the second dynasty of the Edo kingdom, highlighting two key events: the encounters between Udo's Auranran and Edo's Oba Esigie, and Udo's Akpanigiakon and Oguola. America. Anene and Brown (1977). The origins of the kingdom remain ambiguous, intertwined with travelers' accounts, traditions, art history, and archaeology. Discrepancies persist among scholars regarding the monarchy's origins, especially concerning the Eweka dynasty, with four primary narratives identified by historians attempting to reconcile these contradictions. Oguola, upon becoming king, initiated a three-year project to build trenches around Benin to deter enemies, notably Akpanigiakon of Udo. This effort led to the creation of the title Ighizamete, meaning "I will pay no heed to invaders or rebels," reflecting the protection provided by the completed trenches. Despite these defenses, Oguola remained concerned about threats from Udo.

The book "The Benin Kingdom and The Edo-speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria" by Bradbury explores the Benin Kingdom's relationship with other Edo-speaking groups. It analyzes various aspects such as location, demographics, environment, traditions, economy, social organization, and political systems. Bradbury particularly highlights the Oba's role, suggesting that the Oba's power is rooted in the mystical values associated with the kingship and the palace (eguae). Partridge notes that a full state council, called Iguobaziro, convened to address significant matters such as the adoption of new laws, warfare, festivals, title formation, special taxes, and rituals to prevent epidemics. The council included the Uzama, both Eghaevbo classes, and lower rank titles in a supporting role. Mbaeyi (1973) suggests that the shared geographic setting of Edo and Udo influenced their choice of similar military equipment and facilitated social interactions that encouraged borrowing. Both territories did not maintain a permanent army, instead raising soldiers as needed. In Udo, the age-grade system organized society, with the Eroghae, Ighele, and Edion being the three main groups.

Omoregie states that a man must be at least forty-two to qualify for Odion, while Ighele candidates should be between twenty-one and forty-two. The "young Edion" can participate in combat during significant campaigns; otherwise, they provide military advice, support the families of Ighele fighters, and manage food supplies. Ryder A.F.C. notes in "Benin and the Europeans" that the latter half of the 15th century marked the arrival of the first Europeans in

Benin, specifically the Portuguese Ruy de Sequeira in 1472 during Ewuare's reign and Affonso de Aviero in 1484 during Ozolua's reign. Benin became the first kingdom on the west coast of Africa to exchange ambassadors with a significant European power.

O.B. Osadolor's Ph.D. thesis, "The Military System of Benin Kingdom, c.1440-1897," explores the military framework of the Benin Empire throughout various pre-colonial periods, including its origins, the era of warrior kings (c.1440-1600), the height of military power (1600-1800), political challenges (1800-1897), and the impact of British invasion in 1897. Osadolor argues the origins of the Benin people and highlights the Oba as the supreme military leader within the Empire's military structure. D.N. Oronsaye's "The History of Ancient Benin Kingdom and Empire" provides a comprehensive overview of the Ancient Benin Kingdom, spanning from Ancient Egypt to the era of the Ogiso rulers, detailing its administrative system and the narrative of Ekaladeran, concluding with the British conquest and the fall of Benin's independence. The book includes a dedicated chapter on the restoration and consolidation of the monarchy, analyzing the Obas from Eweka I's dynasty, particularly focusing on Oba Ewuakpe and his significant contributions to the kingdom, emphasizing the importance of the rule of primogeniture.

Elizabeth M. McClelland's "The Kingdom of Benin in the Sixteenth Century" provides a comprehensive overview of Benin, including its urban and rural life, economy, and cultural beliefs. The eighth chapter focuses on the Oba of Benin, highlighting his absolute power and the strict governance of his reign, as noted by McClelland. This work serves as a valuable resource for the study of Benin's historical context.

Feinman and Marcus refer to Benin as a substitute for the state, organizing socio-political structures into four concentric circles—extended family, community, chiefdom, and kingdom—forming what is described as "a mega community." According to Earle, the distinction between Ogiso and Oba, as well as chiefdom types, is crucial. The Ogiso lacked formal coercion mechanisms, unlike Oba and chiefdom rulers. This difference explains why complex chiefdoms often fragment into independent communities instead of evolving into states. Rather than causing disintegration, mega-communities may serve as a form of "positive" evolution.

Theoretical Review

In examining international relations and Benin's history, the study emphasizes that no academic field exists in isolation. It asserts that rights are natural, critiquing the current global political framework as historically regionally focused. Egharevba Jacob's "A Short History of Benin" complements this view by detailing pre-colonial Benin's growth and discussing the Bini family's emigration from Egypt, which ties into the controversial Hamitic hypothesis, highlighting the complexities of Benin's historical context and its role in international relations. The writer conducts a thorough analysis of the Ogiso Era, presenting the first scholarly review of Benin's history, detailing approximately fifteen Ogiso monarchs. The study draws on Igbafe P.A.'s 1972 work, covering Benin's history from its mythical origins to the ruling dynasty's establishment, while addressing the complexities of its historical study, notably in the context of pre-colonial Yoruba conflicts. The author highlights challenges for foreign researchers and cites Ryder A.F.C.'s 1977 publication, which offers a brief history of the Benin people, noting their

mythic origins and a common migration tradition from the east seen in various West African groups.

There are disagreements regarding the ancestry of the Benin people, particularly highlighted in Igbafe P.A.'s (1977) work, which addresses the mixed origins and potential historical mistakes surrounding Benin's lineage. Additionally, Okeaya-Inneh, K. S.'s 2007 publication, "Benin Native Law and Custom at a Glance," offers insights into Benin national law and culture and outlines conflict resolution principles involving palace chiefs and the Oba. The writer posits that the Oba serves as both the traditional and political leader of the pre-colonial Benin Empire. Udo, located in modern-day Ovia South West Local Government Area, borders Warri, Delta State, and was historically owned by the indigenous community. According to Patridge D. B. (1975) and referencing Marshell H.F.'s (1939) Intelligence report, many older villages in the region acknowledge that they received land from Udo, offering traditional gifts like leopard skins to the Iyase of Udo. The area is rich in high forests suitable for timber and agriculture, and fishing is abundant due to its riverine nature. Udo, although a peaceful village with wandering black dwarf cattle (Mutaru), holds a significant role in the ritual and traditional history of Benin.

Esigie's mother, Idia, was married to a powerful Oba. Upon learning of Aruanran's birth, the Oba anticipated dynastic conflicts. Aruanran grew to be a formidable warrior, credited with quelling uprisings, particularly defeating Okhunmwun and receiving the unique coral bead Ivieokpagba-uru, symbolizing the rightful king. This conflict occurred around 1418, linked to the Ekiadolor Distance. The bead allowed its owner to select a town as the nation's capital. Consequently, Esigie and Aruanran fought over the bead, as Esigie's brother, Arhuaran, rebelled against the Oba, prompting war for the ceremonial bead "Ivieokpagbauru." The Oba's mother sent slaves to aid him in a prolonged conflict, indicating her vested interest in the outcome. Aruanran received royal regalia, including the sceptres Ada and Eben, and a unique coral bead from his father Ozolua. Many titled chiefs from Edo were assigned to Udo after he became "Duke of Udo," leading to discord among Edo's influential chiefs. A saying emerged in Udo and Edo encouraging dissenting chiefs to support the new kingdom. Ozolua also established shrines for deceased obas, including Ewuare, at Udo. Maternal ancestry of the first Igodo ruler and notable Obas such as Oguola and Orhogbua is linked to Udo, while figures like Ewuare are associated with "Esi." Udo plays a significant role in the cultural aspects of the Bead (Ogie-Ivie) and Egute festivals in Benin and nearby regions.

Eweka, (1992) posits that Udo continues to be perceived as a threat to Benin, a notion supported by its strong traditions of conquest by several Obas, including Oguola and Ewuare. Ezele J. (1985) contributes to this narrative by stating Udo's tradition identifies Itebite as the founder of Benin, and notes the tributes paid by Itebite to his father-in-law Ugbe, founder of Udo. This acknowledgment reflects Udo's historical status as a former capital of the old Benin kingdom, countering Benin's silence about Udo's dominance. Additionally, Macrae Simpson (1936) provides a European perspective by interpreting early Benin's history as influenced by Yoruba raids, with Ogodo, the leader of the first raid, associated with creation myths and potentially linked to Udo's various origin stories. His account suggests Udo's ancient settlement status, further complicating the narratives surrounding the origins of both locations.

It is noted that various informants in Benin recount an Ogiso-style tale about Igodo, who reportedly descended from heaven to rule in Udo for 25 years before relocating to Benin. This account, provided by Udo informant Omorodion John, emphasizes the contrasting views on the origins of Udo and Edo. Darling P.J. (1984) suggests that while the early name for Benin was Igodomigodo, Benin contests Igodo's status as the originator of the Ogiso kings. Prominent Benin historian Egharevba J.U. (1968) installed a notice board at what he identifies as Igodo's palace in Ugbekun, southeast of Benin. The debate over the origins of both kingdoms demonstrates the lack of consensus among scholars on oral traditions. Some, like Talbot P.A. (1969), maintain that Udo should be understood as (Oedo), highlighted in earlier records of Benin's forest kingdom. Conversely, others such as Dapper and Barbot argue 'Oedo' references Udo, perceived as an older city than Benin. The etymology of these names remains unclear, with historical accounts often placing Udo in present-day Edo, further complicated by inconsistencies in 17th and 18th-century maps that conflated Udo's location with Edo. Thus, the origins of Udo and Benin manifest the typical disputes characteristic of many African pre-colonial societies, where reliance on oral traditions and folklore, coupled with minimal documentation, hampers historical reconstruction.

Empirical Review

Felix Ejukomenu Oghi's article "Conflict Resolution in Pre-Colonial Benin" (2014) identifies key conflict sources in pre-colonial Benin, including witchcraft, adultery, theft, inheritance, succession, and property disputes. Citing Shedrack Gaya Best's book "Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa" (2006), he discusses the "Ubuntu" philosophy used for dispute resolution, emphasizing that such practices are not only prevalent but crucial to African culture. However, Oghi notes that his paper lacks the detailed information needed for comprehensive research on dispute resolution in pre-colonial Benin. Additionally, Best's book includes essays that illuminate the nature of conflict and resolution methods in West Africa.

In "Benin Under British Administration," Igbafe (1972) discusses the existence of a structured legal system in pre-colonial Benin, emphasizing conflict resolution practices that were managed at the village and quarter levels. Disputes were typically adjudicated by elders within the community and overseen by the village chief and council, who held combined judicial and executive power. The term "conflict," derived from Latin "confligene," emphasizes the collision of interests or ambitions between parties, a notion supported by theorists such as Galtung (1976), Lussier et al. (2008), and Zartman (2000), who view conflict as arising from opposing values or competing claims for limited resources and power. Otite (2001) noted that the intensity of disagreements correlates with perceived threats by the parties involved. While traditionally seen as negative, J.P. Lederach (1995) argues that conflict can serve as a beneficial force within society, even leading to economic opportunities through the proliferation of arms and related industries. The study acknowledges that while conflicts in pre-colonial Benin have generally been destructive, the outcomes are significantly influenced by the methods employed in their resolution, as indicated by Deutsch and Coleman (2006).

Deutch, M. & Coleman, P. T. (2006) and others emphasise that when disagreements are handled thoughtfully and effectively, chances for personal growth and the change required to

enhance interpersonal relationships may be created. Conflicts between members of the same ward in pre-colonial Benin are taken to the Odionwere or the Onogie of the village rather than the Odiowere of the ward in question, as was noted by Bradbury, R. E. (1952), failing to handle conflicts with care and tact could result in civil unrest or full-scale war between warring communities or nations. The primary value of the ward in such village's rests in the establishment of dancing and playgroups, as well as the more intensive informal collaboration that exists between ward members in particular ceremonial circumstances. It is also important to keep in mind that the Edo do not view the relationships between the Onogie and the Odionwere in terms of possible conflict, but rather as opportunities for mutual adjustment and collaboration in protecting the community. Moreover, relating the peace process to the causal faction Conflict is based on three tenets, according to Dibie R. (2014), notably in pre-colonial Benin. These include the concept that socio-political institutions are at the root of social and political problems, and that using direct violence to bring issues to the attention of authority figures can be effective. It's also vital to remember that power struggles and possession issues frequently lead to conflict. According to Ryder's account of the political history of the Edos, the Oba and his powerful chiefs (Uzama) engaged in a power war for more than five centuries (12th–17th century A. D.), with a century of respite (between 16th–17th A. D.) in between. However, there were also brief intervals of reprieve or effective coercion between the 12th and the 15th centuries under the rule of Oba Ewedo, Eware, and Esigie. (Ryder, 1977).

The observations of Bradbury R. E. (1952) highlight intra-group conflict in pre-colonial Benin, emphasizing that open fighting often aligns with specific social cleavages. Conflicts arise particularly in situations involving perceived betrayal, such as a betrothed girl being given to another man or accusations against a woman's ancestors regarding her husband's desertion. In these contexts, extended families and their associated lineages act as corporate entities, necessitating intervention by the Onogie or Odionwere. Notably, such conflicts rarely disrupt the broader village community.

Galthun, (1970) highlights three essential stages of conflict resolution: peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Understanding the specific nature of a conflict is crucial before applying these stages, as noted by Bestas, who emphasizes Africa's cultural and religious diversity, which influences traditional methods of dispute resolution. Each community possesses unique approaches to resolving conflicts, with intra-communal disputes more readily addressed in egalitarian societies, such as those found in the Delta provinces. In these societies, multiple channels for conflict resolution exist, where elders act as effective mediators. Additionally, age groups play a significant role in regulating norms and values, with peer groups setting behavioral standards for their members, as stated by Morrish. This structured community engagement facilitates conflict resolution within these traditional societies. The growth of pre-colonial Benin's military, as discussed in Roth L.'s book "Great Benin: Its Customs, Arts, and Horrors" (1956), underscores its fundamental role in the establishment of a powerful empire. The military was pivotal in transitioning Benin from a collection of villages into a significant empire by effectively addressing internal and external threats. Igbafe, in "Benin under British Administration," notes that the military structure relied on an age-grade system predominantly comprised of individuals aged 30 to 40, with various roles within this framework. This military organization extended to vassals, particularly within the Bini-speaking communities. Over time,

the army was led by different commanders, beginning with the Ogiso, and later including military leaders such as Ezomo Iyase and Ologbose, while the Oba consistently held the highest leadership position.

In an article published in Benin in 1975, Olfert Dappers analyzed the strength and combat tactics of the Benin army. He noted the army's unique dress code, highlighting that chiefs and commanders wore red caps and scarlet cloth, adorned with elephant and leopard teeth sewn into their helmets. The success of the military mission was significantly supported by the guide responsible for the army's equipment. Ryder noted that many vessel provinces claimed to have immigrated from various locations. In "A Textbook on West Africa History 1000 to the Present Day," Ola Abiola (1981) explores the emergence of ancient Benin, occupying territory southeast of the Yoruba kingdom, situated between the Niger River and the city of Benin. The empire likely developed in the ninth or tenth century, coinciding with the establishment of the Yoruba kingdom and was inhabited by the Edos or Binis, who share common origins with the Yoruba of Yorubaland.

In the analysis of ethnic migration around Benin, Afigbo A.E. (1981) in "The Bini Mirage and the History of Central Nigeria" suggests that historical migration alone is not enough to validate various assertions regarding origins, questioning the classification of these narratives as genesis tales. Meanwhile, Chris Garuba (1998), in his work on crisis management in Africa, explores the dynamics of conflict in pre-colonial Africa, positing that conflicts stem from diverging interests and ideals, which are inherent to human civilization. He emphasizes that if these conflicts are mismanaged, they can lead to severe consequences either within nations or on an international scale.

The origin of the Benin kingdom, as explored in Igbafe's article "Benin in pre-colonial era" (1974), emphasizes that the kingdom's expansion was gradual rather than the result of a convergence of villages or towns. Igbafe challenges Eghareba's claim regarding the historical continuity of various wards in Benin, suggesting that the narrative of migration from Egypt is a constructed means for Nigerians to engage with Egypt's historical prestige, thereby undermining the Egyptian origin theory. Upon the arrival of the British, they were astonished to find a meticulously organized capital city, which had been previously documented by Portuguese and other early European historians as a world-class urban center. This perspective is echoed by Okosun in "Glory of Benin Kingdom and Shame of British Empire" (2009), which notes that early European visitors spoke highly of the ancient Kingdom of Benin, explaining why "Benin City" was used as a term for the geopolitical hub of the kingdom as early as the 15th century. Resolving disputes in plural societies presents significant challenges primarily due to the influence of cultural and linguistic symbolism. Airuch and Black caution that minimizing the role of culture in conflict resolution is a risky approach. In a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural context, culture can act as a barrier to conflict resolution, despite its role as an indicator of social distinctions.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Classical Realism, as articulated by Morgenthau (1999), posits that human nature is crucial in shaping international policy. Realist scholars argue that humans are inherently sinful,

egoistic, interest-driven, and aggressive. Drawing from Carr and Morgenthau, the theory emphasizes the need to understand the objective laws governing human nature to effectively analyze International Relations (IR). Realists view states as rational actors adhering to specific rules to achieve their goals, asserting that human nature is the foundational element in international relations. This theoretical perspective underlies the framework of the paper.

According to the Hamitic hypothesis, the inhabitants of Benin migrated from Egypt and settled in Ile-Ife before reaching their current location. This reflects a now-discredited notion that attributed African civilization to lighter-skinned people from the Sahara. Seligman (1966) stated that during the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt, these so-called Hamites were considered to have transformed into Caucasians, although they were believed to be black prior to the 16th century. An alternative theory suggests that the Benin people migrated in three waves during the colonial era, which was popularized by European authors.

Buzan & Waever (2003) propose that amity/enmity patterns are regionally clustered, leading to stronger security interdependence within regions compared to inter-regional ties. Their earlier research with de Wilde (1998) expands this analysis through the concept of securitization across various sectors, including military, political, economic, societal, and environmental domains.

Ozolua was succeeded by Esigie, during whose reign two significant wars occurred: one against Udo and another against the Atta of Idda. The nature of Edo-Udo relations during this period will be examined through these events. Talbot (1926) suggested that Oguola and Esigie's reigns were from 1400 to 1520 AD, while Egharevba (1968) dated Oba Esigie's reign to 1280 AD. Egharevba noted that Obuobu and Oguola were sons of Oba Ewedo. Obuobu, a warlike prince, led battles against the Igbo but went missing. Consequently, Oguola became king, assuming Obuobu had died, only for Obuobu to return three years later and become Ogie of Avbiama.

In the historical context of Edo and Udo, the military strength of warrior kings is often attributed to their magical abilities, rather than traditional justifications. During this period, Udo is believed to have ruled Edo prior to significant changes under Oba Esigie, who had connections with Europeans. This situation raises questions about Edo's successes, which some, like Ryder (1977), argue were independent of European influence. Ryder's thesis suggests that Edo's expansion was not a result of European interactions, which could complicate Edo-Udo relations. The first Portuguese expedition led by Ruy de Sequeira in 1472 did not lead to immediate exploitation of findings due to warfare between Portugal and Castile, delaying further involvement until peace was reached in 1479.

Portuguese interest in the gold trade in the Costa da Mina region influenced activities in the Bight of Benin, leading to expeditions to the slave Rivers Rios do Escravos for purchasing slaves as part of payment in gold. It is believed that early Portuguese acquired these slaves near the Benin River or Forcados River. Afonso d'Aveiro initiated contact with the City of Edo (Benin) in 1485, with Ozolua being the first to meet the Portuguese, who expressed interest in local culture and arranged for the Chief of Ughoton to visit Lisbon for further cultural exchange (Ryder, 1977).

After exploring the European influence on the relationship between Edo and Udo during the reigns of Oba Ozolua and Esigie, an analysis of local military systems is warranted for understanding Edo's advantages. Udo informants lacked knowledge of their pre-colonial military structure prior to Esigie's overthrow, though surviving descriptions suggest a resemblance to Edo's system. Additionally, periodizing these events is complicated by the lack of focus from related disciplines on Udo's historical context. Osemwegie asserted that the fear of the Udo people was so intense that it even frightened the Oba at the mention of a potential invasion. However, knowledge about the Ogiso period in the history of Edo and Udo remains limited, and archaeological evidence from this era is still developing.

In the context of Edo history, significant conflicts arose between Aruanran of Udo and Oba Esigie of Edo, alongside the competition between Akpanigiakon of Udo and Oguola of Edo. Marshall (1939) highlights two notable wars during Esigie's reign: one against Udo, where the Oba's brother was involved, and another against the Atta of Idda. To further understand the Edo-Udo dynamics, an analysis of these events will be conducted. Talbot and Egharevba provide different timelines for Oguola (1400–1520 AD and 1280 AD, respectively) and Esigie (1520 AD and 1504 AD from Egharevba).

Oguola initiated the construction of trenches around the city to guard against adversaries, particularly Akpanigiakon of Udo, after taking the throne. This project, which lasted three years, led to the creation of the title Ighizamete, symbolizing the security achieved. Despite these defenses, Oguola remained concerned about Udo. To ensure peace, he arranged for one of his daughters to marry Akpanigiakon; however, she refused and fled to Edo, provoking Udo to declare war on Edo. In response, Ogiobo, an Edo warlord, organized an expedition to defend the city.

To challenge the dictator, as noted by Egharevba (1968), a fight led to Akpanigiakon's death at Urhoezen, with Udo's elders being tried and executed in Edo. Oba Oguola rewarded Ogiobo with Akpanigiakon's crown for his victory. The account from Udo is detailed and consistent among informants, with minor variations. While Akpanigiakon dug a trench for Udo, Oguola excavated one for Edo, where he was a prominent warrior.

In a historical context, the practice of sending envoys to assert authority over regional rulers prior to military action is discussed. When a monarch defied commands, a war was declared, and upon capture, the extraction of the two front teeth was a common punishment. This reflects similar traditions in Edo, where the Oba symbolically asserted dominance by distributing white chalk to subject villages. Rejection of these symbols was interpreted as insurrection, leading to military intervention. A prominent figure, Oguola of Edo, received a message from Akpanigiakon of Udo, demanding allegiance. Akpanigiakon, known for his might during Oba Ewuare's reign, had famously collected the teeth of rival Onogies to create a crown. However, his request for a tooth from the Oba resulted in his execution, which prompted natural calamities. In response to this situation, Oguola gathered his advisors to strategize on averting the impending conflict with Akpanigiakon, a figure whose reputation instilled fear across neighboring territories.

It was proposed to the monarch that his daughter marry into Akpanigiakon to achieve two goals: to prevent an invasion by the Udo ruler and to enable the girl to infiltrate Akpanigiakon as a spy. By violating the taboos associated with war charms, she was expected to discover the source of Akpanigiakon's power and disrupt its war charms. Following the completion of her mission, she would be taken away, allowing Udo to launch an attack. This situation reflected a customary practice where Oguola's daughter had no choice but to accept the marriage, contrasting with the traditional expectation that an Edo father would select a suitor for his daughter. The information comes from Igbafe (1970).

One regulation prohibited women from entering their husbands' homes or cooking during their menstrual period, particularly if the husbands were warriors or men of title. Violating this rule was believed to expose the man to defeat and undermine his protective charms. Some households in Udo still observe these customs. Oguola's daughter, upon learning these taboos, sought to weaken Akpanigiakon's abilities in a manner akin to Delilah's betrayal of Samson in the Bible. After executing her plan to undermine him, she fled to Edo, which provoked Akpanigiakon's fury and led him to attack Edo. This raises questions about whether Udo was aware of their ruler's strengths and weaknesses before conflicts arose.

Conclusion

In the context of royal succession, the narrative of Aruaran's birth, marked by trauma and transformation, aligns with the traditions surrounding Eweka's birth, as noted by Marshall (1939). The principle of primogeniture seemingly influenced succession during Oba's reign, with Osawe reported as a viable heir due to a smooth birth. Yet, despite this system, conflicts among princesses regarding seniority persisted. Ryder (1977) highlights the confusion in a royal structure with multiple wives and dispersed birthing locations, lacking precise birthdate tracking. Patridge (1975) further asserts that prior to Oba Ewuakpe (circa 1700), succession hinged on the sons' ability to amass support, often leading to conflicts and warfare to determine the rightful heir. Before the invasion of Udo by Oba Esigie, the political organization of Udo did not alter much from its military system This occurred as a result of the administrative staff's multifaceted duties. In times of peace, they carried out what could be referred to as the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of modern politics. In times of conflict, they served as soldiers either as advisors or as individuals who fought alone.

References

A. F. C. Ryder, "A Reconsideration of the Ife - Benin Relationships". *Journal of African History*, (1965).

Abiola, E.O, (1981). *A Textbook of West Africa History A.D. 1000 to the Presence Day* Ado-Ekiti, Omolayo Standard Press.

Afigbo, A.E. (1980) "Igboland before 1800" in O. Ikime (ed.) *Groundwork of Nigeria History,* (Ibadan: Heinemann,

Afigbo, A.E. (1981). "The Bini Mirage and the History of Central Nigeria" in Nigeria Magazine, No. 137,

Amao, O. B. and Okeke-Uzodike, U. (2015). *Nigeria, Afro-Centrism and conflict resolution*, Africa Studies Quarterly:

Anene, J. and Brown, G. (1974). Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries Ibadan, Ibadan University.

Best, G.S. (2006 (ed.) Introduction to peace and conflict studies in West Africa; Abuja Spectrum Books Limited.

Bierman, A. K. and Gold, J. (eds.) (1970). *Philosophy for a New Generation,* New York: The Macmillan Company.

Bradbury, R. E. (1956). Benin Studies; Edited Sections of University of London.

Bradbury, R.E (1957) *Benin Kingdom and the Edo speaking People of South-Western Nigeria*, London: International African Institute,

Buzan, B. & Wæver, O. (2003). Regions and powers: The structure of international security. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Buzan, B., Wæver, O. & De Wilde, J. (1998). Security: A new framework for analysis. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Cannah, G. (1963). "Archaeological Research in Benin City 1961-1964" Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 11 No 4; 473.

Chris, A. G. (1998). *Capacity Building for Crisis Management in Africa,* Lagos Apex Press.

Connah, G. (1975). "Benin" Nigerian pre- history and Archaeology, in Shaw (Ed) History of Benin; (Ibadan, Ibadan University Press.

Darling, P.J. (1984). Archeology and History in Southern Nigeria, African World Press

Deutch, M. and Coleman, P. T. (2006). The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory Diplomacy Occasional paper, http://imtd.org/imtd/ops.pdf,

Dibie,R. (2004). Public Administration, Politics and changes in the Principles of Governance in Nigeria. Lagos: Mbeyi and Associated press (Nig.) Ltd,

Duze, M. (1973). Primary Atlas for the Mid-West State of Nigeria. Hong Kong,

Earle, T. K. (1991) "The Evolution of Chiefdoms". In Earle, T. K. (ed.), *Chiefdoms: Power, Economy, and Ideology* Cambridge, etc.: Cambridge University Press.

Egharevba, J.U. (1968). A Short History of Benin. Ibadan, Ibadan University Press.

Eweka, E. B. 1992. *Evolution of Benin Chieftaincy Titles*. Benin City: Uniben Press.

Gathung, J. (1976). Three realistic approaches to peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, Peace Building, "Impact of Science on Society" 103-115.

Igbafe, P.A. (1974). "Benin in the pre-colonial era" in Tarikh vol,5.

Igbe, S.O.U. (2009). *From Birth to Death: A Benin Cultural Voyage*, (Benin: New Dawn international.

Ikime, O. (1982). "Intergroup Relations in Pre-Colonial Nigeria: A call for re-examination of Political Relations among Nigerian Peoples in the period up to C. 1900", Seminar paper presented at the University of Benin.

Lasswell, H. D. (1990). Politics: *Who gets what, when, and how*. New York, Peter Smith Publisher.

Lussier, R. N. and Achua, C. F. (2007). Effective Leadership. Mason, Ohio: Thomson, South West. Macmillan Press.

Macrae, S, (1936). A Political Intelligence Report on the Benin Division of the Benin province, 26 April 1936; 5.

Marshall, H. F. (1939). Intelligence Reports on Benin- city, August 1939 (2) 78

Marshell, F.H. (1939). Intelligence Report on Udo and Siluko district, Benin province,

Mbaeyi, P. (1973). British Military and Naval Forces in West African History, 1807-1874, New York.

McClelland, E.M. (1971) *The Kingdom of Benin in the Sixteenth Century,* London: Oxford University Press,

Morgenthau, Hans, (1948). *Power and Ideology in International Politics*. New York: Alfred A.Knopf.

Nzemeke, A.D. and Erhagbe, E.O. (2000) (Eds). Nigerian Peoples and Culture (University of Benin Press.

Oghi, F. E. (2014). Conflict Resolution in Pre-Colonial Benin. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science*; 14(6):6-14.

Okosun. A. (2009). "Glory of Benin Kingdom and Shame of British Empire," *Journal of African History,* Vol.12, No.3.

Olfert, D. (1975). "Benin at The Height of Its Power" in T. hogkin (ed) London: London University Press.

Omoregie, O.S.B. (1985). "The Oneness of the Edo People" paper presented at the Annual Convention of National Union of Benin Students (NUBS), held at the University of Benin, August 9-11,

Onuoha, B. (2011). Power, Conflict and Consensus Building in Africa: Ideology revisited. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*; 11 (2): 8-3.

Oronsaye, D.N (1995) *The History of Ancient Benin Kingdom and Empire,* Benin: Oransaye Publishers

Osadolor, O.B. (2001) *The Military System of Benin Kingdom, c.1440-1897,* A Ph. D thesis,

Osemwegie, E. (1986). Significance of Orhue in Edo; Our Culture Heritage. Ibadan, Ibadan University Press.2-4

Otite, O.(2001). Aspects of conflicts in theory and practice in Nigeria: Community Conflicts in Nigeria. Otite O and Albert I. O. (eds.), Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.

Patridge, D. B. (1975). Reports of Investigation into the Roles of Chiefs in the Mid- Western state divisional Report in respect of Benin East and Benin west division. Benin city (4);5.

Roth, L. (1956) *Great Benin its Customs, Arts and Horrors* London: F. King and Son Ltd.

Ryder, A.F. (1980) "Benin Kingdom" in Ikime. O. Groundwork on Nigeria history Heinemann Educational Books.

Ryder, A.F.C. (1977). *Benin and the Europeans 1485-1897* (London: Longman.

Seligman, G.C. (1966). Races of Africa. London. Oxford University,

Talbot, P. A. (1926). The peoples of Southern Nigeria Vols 4, London. Oxford Press.

Watson, O. (Ed.) (1978). *Longman Modern English Dictionary*.

Zartman, W. I.(2000). Traditional cures for modern conflicts, African Conflict