

WHO ARE THE EDO?

BY

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(a contribution to a discussion on Edo Nation)

Dear All,

The answer to this question is a good starting point to start solving the various problems facing us as a people. Who are the Edo is the question. The answer will vary depending on various parameters. Our patriotism, our desire for unity, our upbringing to be truthful in the face of all odds will come into the equation in answering such a question in the present dispensation of Edo politics.

Nowa's definition of who the Edo are is nearly sacrosanct but the use of the word Benin or Bini Kingdom or Empire has brought a flaw into it. By Ewuare Ogidigan's decree on his assumption to the throne of his forebears that Ubini should be Edo negates the use of the word Benin or Bini Kingdom or Empire as the case may be. The Benin Empire is the creation of earlier of publication on our people. Our people are Edo and our Empire is the Edo Empire.

If the Edo wrote their history, then we would have not had this problem. We would safely have called our kingdom the Edo Kingdom or the Edo Empire. Unfortunately we did not write our history. Now that we are of age we should start correcting the mistakes made by foreigners who wrote our history on our behalf.

You all know and agree that our Oba is Oba n' Edo Uku Akpolokplo. He is not Oba n' Benin or Oba n' Bini. Our Oba is the Oba of Edo land from beginning to the end. His jurisdiction in traditional terms extends throughout Edo land which is all of Edo State today and beyond. The English language translation of Oba n' Edo to mean Oba of Benin is wrong and its use should gradually be discouraged. As Edos we should insist on the correct appellation which is Oba n' Edo. It therefore follows that the correct designation for Benin Empire is Edo Empire.

The Edo who live in Benin City live in Oredo. Following that can we then say Oba n' Oredo? The appellation will also be wrong in meaning and in dimension. My appeal is that those of us in a position in the appropriate university faculty should produce papers to correct this anomaly. It is our duty to do this now that Edo are catching up in educational terms with our colleagues in the West of the country.

We should follow Omo n' Oba's example in correcting our history for the future generation of our people in print and electronic publication

Thank you for asking the question in the first place.

Stephen Ogbonmwan