
Aboriginal Bonny Kingdom of Niger Delta in the Framework of the Kingdom's Primordial House System of Governance and Natural Law towards Sustainable Development in the Kingdom

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37745/gjpsa.2013/vol11n13167>

Published: 10th March 2023

Citation: Bristol-Alagbariya E.T. (2023) Aboriginal Bonny Kingdom of Niger Delta in the Framework of the Kingdom's Primordial House System of Governance and Natural Law towards Sustainable Development in the Kingdom, *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, Vol.11, No.1, pp.31-67

ABSTRACT: *As expressed in the first edition of this article, the Primordial House System of Governance of Primaeval Niger Delta's Bonny Kingdom (also known as Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom or Grand Bonny Kingdom [Ibanise]), enhanced by natural law, serves as the bedrock of the civilization and good governance (GG) in the Kingdom. In Bonny Kingdom, the House System of Governance (also called the House System of Government or simply the House System) is a form of Public Sector Governance, which was originated, institutionalized and practised by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom. The initial period of this system of governance was the primaeval, primordial or aboriginal era of the Kingdom, which lasted from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD (namely a period of well over Seven Centuries). At the apex of the three levels or tiers of Bonny Kingdom's Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance were three hierarchical categories of Paramount Natural Rulers. Simply put, these Paramount Natural Rulers were and still remain the Ikpangi-Sibidapu (Institutionalized Lineage Heads), Amadapu (Community/District Heads and helpmates to Kings/Monarchs [Amanyapanu]), and Amanyapano (owner of the land/King). These hierarchical positions of paramount natural rulership, which have been in existence from time immemorial in Bonny Kingdom, are those of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship. These positions were established, systematized and formally institutionalized by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom, towards the wellbeing of the people, Houses (House Communities) and entire Kingdom. This study employs socio-legal methodology to examine the*

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House System of Bonny Kingdom and the role of natural law, namely proto-natural law, during the primordial era of the Kingdom, which era ended about One Hundred and Thirty Years before the establishment of Opobo Kingdom from its parent Bonny Kingdom, during the Bonny Kingdom Civil War of 1869/70. The study discusses the Premier Paramount Natural Rulers of Aboriginal Bonny Kingdom, and the identified Four Generations of Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie, meaning 'Bonny Kingdom (Ibanise), as comprised of its Fourteen Lineages/Families/Houses'. From a historiographical background therefore, the study makes a case for GG, fair play, social justice and other harmonious ways of life in Bonny Kingdom, based on good, transparent, responsible and accountable stewardship of the Kingdom's traditional rulers, towards the wellbeing of the people and sustainable development of the Kingdom, particularly in the realm of the apex traditional rulers, who are paramount administrators of the three levels of government of the Kingdom. These are namely the (i) organized, formally institutionalized and systematized Lineages (comprised of immediate blood relatives or closer family units), known as 'Ikpangis' ('burusus') of each Country House; (ii) wider extended family units, known as the Country Houses or Country House Communities; and (iii) the kingdom-wide (central level of) government. Besides, the study demonstrates how the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom underscores the Kingdom as a classic African primordial sovereign state and civilization, as well as the pride of Ancestral Ijaw nation, which contributed to the development and advancement of Primaeval Niger Delta region and beyond.

KEYWORDS: Aboriginal Bonny Kingdom; Ancient Niger Delta Region, Bonny Kingdom's Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance; Three Categories of Paramount Natural Rulers of Bonny Kingdom; Natural Law; Good Governance; Wellbeing; Sustainable Development; *Duawaris, Opuwaris and Kalawaris* of Bonny Kingdom

INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

It should be stated from onset that this is a revised edition of the first version an article entitled 'Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom of Niger Delta in the Framework of its Primordial House System of Governance and Natural Law towards Sustainable Development in the Kingdom'.¹ This revised version of the article updates identified misprint of certain numbers of generations of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*, indicated in the article, which has now been corrected. As the study explains, in Ibani language of Bonny Kingdom and Opobo Kingdom, the term *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie* means Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*), as comprised of its Fourteen Lineages, Families or Houses. It is therefore pertinent for the reading public to consider this

¹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom of Niger Delta in the Framework of its Primordial House System of Governance and Natural Law towards Sustainable Development in the Kingdom', [2022], 10 (3), *Global Journal of Politics and Law Research*, 1–32.

revised edition of the article as a more authentic version of its examination and analysis. Accordingly, references here are updated, to make this revised edition of the article to be more relevant and useful.

Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, Grand Bonny Kingdom or Bonny Kingdom is also traditionally known as (*Ibanise*).² The Kingdom, which is the same as present day Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers State, is situated in the Eastern Niger Delta, along the Atlantic coast thereof, that is, the Bonny Estuary or the Bight of Bonny.³ The Kingdom is part of present day Rivers State, and thus one of the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the State, in the south-south geopolitical zone of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, otherwise referred to as the Southern Minorities (Ethnic Minority) area of Nigeria.⁴

² Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Archives, TITLE: File No: CALPROF 5/3, *Synopsis of the Reigns of the Monarchs of the Kingdom of Grand Bonny (AD 1200 – 1878)*; British Colonial Intelligence Report (Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria) entitled *The Intelligence Report on Bonny District, Owerri Province, File No: MINLOS 6/1/10, EP 8691, 7–8*; British Colonial Administration in Nigeria; NIGERIA: British Colonial Intelligence Report entitled *The Intelligence Report on the Ndoki Clan of Aba Division, by C. T. C. Annals, Assistant District Officer (ADO), File No: EP 10298, item 24*; Bonny Kingdom Historical Society, *The History of Bonny* (Bonny Kingdom Historical Society, 2011); E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo, *A Chronicle of Grand Bonny* (Ibadan University Press, 1972/Onyoma Research Publications, 2001); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, *Governance Towards Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Role of Strategic Assessment of Decisions & Actions* (CEPMLP/ Dundee University Press [DUP], 2013), 101 0 103; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, *Participation in Petroleum Development: Towards Sustainable Community Development in the Niger Delta* (CEPMLP/DUP), 105–107; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed), *Historiographical & Natural Law-based CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE from the DUAWARIS to their Blood Brother & King: His Majesty, King Edward Asimini William Dappa Pepple III, CON, JP, Amanyanabo of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom* (LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022), v, lxxv, 1, 33, 39–47, 61, 128–129, 134, 178 and 192; G. Finapiri, *Forgotten Heroes of Grand Bonny* (CSS Press, 2001); O. Y. Buowari, *The People and Culture of Grand Bonny Kingdom: The Ibani Cultural Heritage, Vol. 1* (Masterpiece Resources, 2014); C. T. Oruene Fombo Hart, *Aspects of Bonny in Perspective* (Soteria Publishing House, 2014); K. I. Abbey, *A Spot Light on Grand Bonny* (K. I. Abbey, 1991).

³ Bight of Bonny Act, No. 4 of 1975, Cap 34 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 1990, Cap B7 LFN 2004; Google Arts & Culture, 'Bight of Bonny' <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/bonny-estuary/m0gg55_n?hl=en>; ResearchGate, 'Map of the Bonny Estuary showing the Transect Locations at Iwofe (T1), Port Harcourt (T2), Okrika Creek (T3), Okrika Jetty (T4), Ford Point (T5) and Bonny (T6)' <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-Bonny-Estuary-showing-the-Transect-Locations-at-Iwofe-T1-Port-Harcourt_fig1_309212163> both Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁴ Southern Minorities Movement, *Roots, the Struggle and the Future* (Southern Minority Movement 1995); Southern Minorities Movement, *Appraisal of the Nigerian Crisis and Solution* (Southern Minority Movement 1995); Southern Minorities Movement, *What All Southern Minorities Must Know* (Southern Minority Movement 1995); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Primordial Niger Delta, Petroleum Development in Nigeria and the Niger Delta Development Commission Act: A Food For Thought!' [2020], 10 (3), *Developing Country Studies*, 106–107 and

Primaeval, Primordial or Aboriginal Grand Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*) was one of the Ancient Ijaw City/Trading States of Primordial Niger Delta, from which the Opobo City/Trading State was established between 1869 and 1870, in the event of the Bonny Civil War of 1869/70.⁵ As such, Aboriginal Grand Bonny Kingdom, that means, the aboriginal era of the Kingdom), refers to Bonny Kingdom, from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD, when the Kingdom was made up of its proto-Ijaw folks (from founding generation and their blood-descendants; before the creation of War Canoe Chieftaincy Houses [*Opuwaris*] in the Kingdom). Put differently, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom, which covers from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD (namely a period of well over Seven Centuries), is an era of the Kingdom from before about 1000 AD up to about One Hundred and Thirty Years before the establishment of Opobo Kingdom from its parent Bonny Kingdom, during the Kingdom's Civil War of 1869/70. Therefore, employing linguistic aid, namely Ibani language of the people of Bonny Kingdom and Opobo Kingdom, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom may be described as an era when Ibani people had only one Kingdom (long before Opobo Kingdom was established from its parent Bonny Kingdom).⁶

Apart from Bonny and Opobo Kingdoms, other Ancient Ijaw City/Trading States of Primordial Niger Delta were Elem Kalabari (New Calabar) Trading State and Okirika (*Wakirikese*) Trading States of Eastern Niger Delta, as well as Nembe (Brass) Trading State of Central Niger Delta. The rest of the Trading States of Primordial Niger Delta were the Itsekiri (Warri) Trading State

124; My Destination Nigeria, 'South South Region Guide' <<http://www.mydigeria.com/nigeria-travel-information/nigeria-regional-information/south-south-nigeria-region-guide/>> Accessed 3 March, 2023; M. T. Akobo *et al.* (Southern Minorities Movement)/The Willink Commission, *NIGERIA Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into The Fears of Minorities and The Means of Allaying Them* (Southern Minorities Movement [SMM] [reprint] 1996).

⁵ C. Ogolo, *Opobo Kingdom: 150 Years After ... Socio-Economic Dynamics for New Horizons* (Biz Pages Publishing and Printing Company, 2020); K. Pepple and T. Oko-Jaja (eds), *Contemporary Historical Perspectives on Opobo* (Opobo Watch Publications, 2015); G. N. S. Ogolo, *Opobo Excerpts (An Insight into An African Kingdom)* (Etuk Concepts, 2012). Hence, given certain ongoing unpleasant, in fact, obnoxious state of affairs in Bonny Kingdom and Opobo Kingdom, some illustrious indigenes, which include an elder statesman, *Alabo* (Sir) G. T. G. Toby, remark that neither Bonny Kingdom nor Opobo Kingdom has so far proved to have learnt considerable significant lessons from the 1869/70 Bonny Civil War, towards fair play and the overall wellbeing of the entire people and Houses of these Kingdoms and the Ancient *Ibani* nation at large.

⁶ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Africa's Bonny Kingdom Sans the State of Nature! How the Origin of the Kingdom was Synonymous with the Birth of Its Sustained House System of Public Sector Governance' [2023], 11 (1), *International Journal of African Society, Cultures and Traditions* (IJASCT), 1–60; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–ix, 3–8, 15, 29–32, 45, 73 and 76–77, especially 5; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlviii–l, lxxii–lxxiv, 58–63, 67, 96, 99, 107–108, 112–113, 141, 165, 169–170, 174–175, 194, 197–199, 202 and 284.

of Western Niger Delta and the Efik (Old Calabar) Trading State, which was comprised of contemporary Cross River and Akwa-Ibom States of Nigeria.⁷

Bonny Kingdom, Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers State, is situated about 45km downstream from Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State.⁸ The Kingdom is thus a neighbour to Andoni in the East; Kalabari (Elem Kalabari/New Calabar Trading State) in the West; and then Okrika (*Wakirikese*/Okrika City State) towards the East, and Port Harcourt towards the East-West; as well as the Bonny Estuary (Bight of Bonny), towards the Atlantic Ocean, in the South.⁹

The vernacular or traditional name of Bonny Kingdom is *Ibanise*, which means the ‘ethnic nationality of Ebeni’ *vis-à-vis* the nation and/or ‘people of Ebeni’, popularly known or referred to as ‘Ancient *Ibani* nation’.¹⁰ Thus, the people of Bonny Kingdom and its sister Kingdom (Opobo Kingdom) are known as *Ibani* people, and their language is known as *Ibani* language. It is essential to emphasize that Ebeni is the common consanguineous Ancestor of the Founding Ancestors of Bonny Kingdom, who the Kingdom was cogently, honourably and effectually named after. He (Ebeni) and his blood descendants (the Founding Ancestors of Bonny Kingdom) were members of the Isedani Royal (*Aseme*) Lineage of Okoloba, in Kolokuma (Kolokuma Okoloama), in present day Kolokuma-Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Central Niger Delta. Kolokuma Communities of Ijaw ethnic nationality of modern Nigeria include Igbedi, Kaiama, Odi, Okoloba and Seibokorogha (Sabagreia).¹¹

⁷ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]), 103; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 106; Vanguard Newspaper Viewpoint entitled ‘Oil: The ‘City States’ of the Niger Delta, the South-South and Nigeria’ <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/05/oil-city-states-niger-delta-south-south-nigeria/>> Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁸ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]), 100–101; Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, ‘Bonny River (River, Nigeria)’ <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Bonny-River>>; Google Arts & Culture, ‘Bight of Bonny’ <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/bonny-estuary/m0gg55_n?hl=en>; ResearchGate, ‘Map of the Bonny Estuary showing the Transect Locations at Iwofe (T1), Port Harcourt (T2), Okrika Creek (T3), Okrika Jetty (T4), Ford Point (T5) and Bonny (T6)’ <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-Bonny-Estuary-showing-the-Transect-Locations-at-Iwofe-T1-Port-Harcourt_fig1_309212163>; Area of the Official Website of the Bonny Historical Society, captioned ‘Geographical Location’ <<http://bonnyhistoricalsociety.com/about-bonny-kingdom/>> all Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁹ *Ibid*; Bight of Bonny Act, No. 4 of 1975, Cap 34 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 1990, Cap B7 LFN 2004.

¹⁰ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), v, lxxv, 1, 33, 39–47, 61, 128–129, 134, 178 and 192; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]), 103; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 103.

¹¹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, *Law & Ethical Conducts on Energy Resources Operations in Nigeria: Spotlight on Petroleum Development Operations* (LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2021), v; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]), v.

From the foregoing, aboriginal Grand Bonny Kingdom was an integral part and parcel of the Ijaw ethnic nationality of primordial Niger Delta region.¹² Primordial Niger Delta region refers to the Primaeval era of the historic, geographic and cartographic ethnic minority Delta region of Nigeria, which is distinct from the artificial Niger Delta region created by the artificial and politically motivated Niger Delta region created by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act, 2000.¹³

Accordingly, it is significant to emphasize that the aboriginal era of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom refers to the Ancient Kingdom from time immemorial (circa before about 1000 AD) to about the second half of the 18th Century AD, particularly from about 1740 AD onwards. The aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom witnessed the reign of Thirteen Monarchs (*Amanyapanu*: 'owners of land' of the Kingdom. These are namely the four Premier, Primaeval or Primordial Monarchs (*Tari Amanyapanu*) and nine other Kings of the Kingdom. The four Premier Monarchs are (i) Ndoli-Okpara (Okpara-Ndoli/Ndoliye-Okpara), (ii) Opuamakuba, (iii) Alagbariye (Alagbariya/Alagbarigha/Kala-Ebeni) and Asimini (Asikunuma). Others are (v) Edimini, (vi) Kambasa (Ediminiba Kambasa), (vii) Kumalu, (viii) Opu Dappa, (ix) Amakiri, (x) Appia, (xi) Wari, (xii) Halliday-Awusa and (xiii) King Perekule I (Captain Pepple [the Thirteenth Monarch of the Kingdom]).¹⁴

¹² E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlviii–l, lxxii–lxxiv, 58–63, 67, 96, 99, 107–108, 112–113, 141, 165, 169–170, 174–175, 194, 197–199, 202 and 284; E. J. Alagoa *et al.*, (eds), *The Izon of the Niger Delta* (Onyoma Research Publications, 2009); E. J. Alagoa, *A History of the Niger Delta: An Historical Interpretation of Ijo Oral Tradition* (Ibadan University Press, 1972/Onyoma Research Publications, 2005); The Ijaws, *The Ijaw Genesis (A Short Discourse)*; The Ijaws, *The Ijaw Genesis: The Original Ancestors and Genesis of the Ijaws*; The Ijaw National Alliance of the Americas, 'Ijaw History' <<https://www.ijaw-naa.org/ijaw/home.htm>> Accessed 3 March, 2023; G. I. Jones, *The Trading States of the Oil Rivers: A Study of Political Development in Eastern Nigeria*, International African Institute (Oxford University Press, 1963/James Currey Publishers, 2000).

¹³ Section 1 (2) (b), Niger-Delta Development Commission (Establishment Etc.) (NDDC) Act, No. 6 LFN 2000, Cap N86 LFN 2004; Section 4 of the NDDC Act; Section 30 of the NDDC Act; Niger Delta Development Commission (Establishment, Etc.) (NDDC) Amendment Act, 2017; Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan (NDDC 2006) 49–50, 53–55, 60–67.

¹⁴ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlviii–l, lxxii–lxxiv, 35–38; 58–63, 67, 96, 99, 107–108, 112–113, 141, 165, 169–170, 174–175, 194, 197–199, 202 and 284; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Natural Law as Bedrock of Good Governance: Reflections on Alagbariya, Asimini and Halliday-Awusa as Selfless Monarchs towards Good Traditional Governance and Sustainable Community Development in Oil-rich Bonny Kingdom' [2020], 10 (3), *Developing Country Studies* (E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14a]), 73; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Natural Right of Blood Descendant-Females of the Founding Ancestors of Bonny Kingdom to Leadership Positions: Spotlight on Queen Kambasa and Legacies of Her Reign' [2020], 10 (3), *Developing Country Studies* (E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14b]), 96.

It is however remarkable that King Perekule I belonged to the aboriginal era of the Kingdom as well as the succeeding era, which he (King Perekule) midwived and masterminded from about 1740 AD onwards, after his (King Perekule I's) creation of the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe House. In the parlance of the historiographical term, '*Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*', when King Perekule created the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe House *vis-à-vis* Major Created Chieftaincy House (*Opuwari*), marked the birth of the Third Generation (the immediate past generation) of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*. The *Duawaris* (Founding & Aboriginal Royal Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom), representing the Founding Ancestors/Generation of the Ancient Kingdom, exclusively made up the First Two Generations of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*, whose era spanned from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD. The *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom are six in number. These are namely (i) Bristol-Alagbarigha Royal House (Founder of Grand Bonny: *Okoloamakoromabo*); (ii) King Halliday-Awusa Royal House (Predecessor of King Perekule & Founding House of Grand Bonny Kingdom); (iii) King Perekule Royal House (Successor of King Halliday-Awusa); (iv) Dublin-Green House (Lala, Ebie, Prince Asimini-Oruakpa Lineage); (v) Prince Oruasawo Tolofari Royal House (Kumaluya-Ndende Omuigbem Lineage – Founding House of Grand Bonny Kingdom); and (vi) Buoye-Omuso (Brown) Major House (Prince Kongo Lineage – Founder of Ikpakpayo/Finima).¹⁵

The term *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie* means Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*), comprised of Fourteen Lineages/Families/Houses. The *Duawaris*, courtesy E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, examined this term in the course of the scholarly work entitled 'SPOTLIGHT: From Kolokuma Okoloama to *Ibanise* (Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom), as a Primordial African Sovereign State'. In the course of that scholarly work, E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya employed the doctrine of the melting pot of civilization to examine the trend of the rise, continuity and eventual fall or decline of the primordial Ijaw blood-related Lineages, Wards, Families or Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom. Hitherto, the historical background of this doctrine is the 'Fertile Crescent' (within the neighbourhood of the Rivers Tigris, Euphrates and Nile that once generated an abundance of riches, which ironically became an area known for depleting resources due to the Middle East strife).¹⁶ In the

¹⁵ The youngest of these six *Duawaris* is number (iii) above, namely the King Perekule Royal House; G. I. Jones (n12), 56, 61, 62, 161, 172, 174, 176, 198 and 202; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 39 and 48; Association of *Duawaris* - Founding and Aboriginal Royal Houses - of Grand Bonny Kingdom, with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) of Nigeria Registration Certificate Number CAC/IT/No. 100619, dated 13 September, 2017; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), lviii–lix, 8–9, 52–53, 137–138, 143, 178–179, 212 and 235–236; Article 20 (1) and Articles 28 and 30, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948; Section 40, 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) (as amended), captioned 'Right to Peaceful Assembly and Association; Article 10 (1), African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act, No.3 1983, Cap A9 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2004.

¹⁶ R. C. Nelson, *Middle Eastern History: History of the Middle East: Melting Pot - Holy Wars & Holy Cities - From the Sumerians to the Ottoman Empire and Today's ... and Egypt - Shaping the Near East History* (CreateSpace

framework of this doctrine, reinforced by distinct peculiarities of the dynamics of the concepts of supervening events, intervening events and transformational change in the historiographical context of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the *Duawaris* of the Ancient Kingdom, courtesy E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, identified and established Four Generations of '*Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*', which are associated with the history and historiography of Bonny Kingdom, from earliest times to the present.¹⁷

The appellation 'grand' was given to Bonny and in turn Bonny Kingdom because of the historic impressive beauty and formidable greatness of Bonny and subsequently Bonny Kingdom,¹⁸ in the primaevial era of the Kingdom, centuries before the evolution of modern Nigeria, as a sovereign state comprised of its component pre-colonial kingdoms, tribes (ethnic nationalities) and peoples.¹⁹

By and large, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom underscores the fact that traditional governance in the Kingdom was synonymous with the origin of the Kingdom, when proto-natural law prevailed in the Kingdom; that means, from the reign of the Kingdom's Premier Monarchs (*Tari Amanyapanu*), along with the rulership of *Tari Amadapu* (Premier Community/District Heads and helpmates to each reigning Monarch) and *Tari Ikpangi-Sibidapu* (*Tari Wari-Ikpangi-Sibidapu*: Premier Heads of Institutionalized Lineages, Wards or Family Units of a Country-House) to the end of the first phase of the reign of King Perekule I (about 1740 AD). Put differently, in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the period when proto-natural law prevailed, preceded the succeeding era of positive law (which came into existence through positive international law), which began to govern relations between the Ancient Kingdom and

Independent Publishing Platform/R. C. Nelson, 2016); British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 'CULTURE: The Ancient Place Where History Began' <<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20161202-the-ancient-place-where-history-began>>; National Geographic Society, 'Fertile Crescent' <<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/fertile-crescent/>>; History.com Editors, 'Fertile Crescent' (A&E Television Networks, 20 December, 2017) <<https://www.history.com/topics/pre-history/fertile-crescent>> all Accessed 3 March, 2023; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 47–48; C/f P. Gleason, 'The Melting Pot: Symbol of Fusion or Confusion?' [1964], 16 (1), *American Quarterly*, 20–46; *Ibid*; W. B. Quandt, 'The Middle East Crises' [1979] 58 (3), *Foreign Affairs*, 540–562; A. I. Ahram, *War and Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa*, Polity Press, 2020.

¹⁷ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), li–liv and 157–159; C/f Bonny Kingdom Historical Society (n2), 88; G. N. S. Ogolo (n5), 132–135.

¹⁸ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–viii, 3–8 and 15–16.

¹⁹ K. O. Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830–1885: An Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria* (Greenwood Publishers, 1981); M. Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (Faber and Faber, 1978); O. Ikime (ed), *Groundwork of Nigerian History* (Heinemann Educational Book [Nigeria]/Historical Society of Nigeria, 1980/2004); E. J. Alagoa and A. A. Derefaka (eds), *The Land and People of Rivers State: Eastern Niger Delta* (Onyoma Research Publications, 2002), 324–326; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 105–134, particularly 129–130.

the other Ancient Trading States of primordial Niger Delta region on one hand, and the Western European imperialist trading partners of these States on the other. So, positive law began to prevail in Bonny Kingdom during later part of the Atlantic trade in the trading states of the Niger Delta region, namely from about the second half of the 18th Century AD. It may be stressed and accentuated that the second phase of the reign of King Perekule I (from about 1740 AD onwards) marked when positive law began to prevail in naturally sovereign Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.²⁰

Accordingly, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom underscores the contributions of Bonny Kingdom, along with the contributions of other Primaeval ethnic nationalities of Primordial Niger Delta region, towards the development and advancement of the region, the rest of Primaeval ethnic nationality areas that eventually constituted modern Nigeria and beyond. Hence, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom underlines and accentuates the Kingdom as a model African primordial sovereign state and civilization, as well as the pride of Ancestral Ijaw nation, which contributed to the development and advancement of ancient Niger Delta region, and by extension the rest of Primaeval ethnic nationality areas that eventually made up modern Nigeria and beyond.²¹

The Origin of Bonny Kingdom and its Evolution as a Classic Primordial African Welfarist Sovereign State, based on its Civilization Premised on its Primordial House System of Governance

Based on historical-linguistic evidence provided hereunder, Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*) originated before about 1000 AD, when the Kingdom was founded by its Founding Ancestors (known as the Alagbariye founding group or team), led by its Founding Patriarchs and four Premier Monarchs. These four Premier Monarchs (*Tari Amanyanyapu*) were Ndoli-Okpara, Opuamakuba, the above-named Alagbariye and Asimini.²² Also, among the Founding Patriarchs of the

²⁰ K. O. Dike (n19); A. Oyebo, 'Treaties and the Colonial Enterprise: The Case of Nigeria', [1990], 2 (2), *African Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 17–36; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Nigeria: The Role of Law in Nation-building' [2016], 1 (1), *UNIPORT Journal of Public Law*, 122–123.

²¹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 39–207, particularly xlvii, li–liv, lxxiii–lxxiv, lxxvii and 58–60; E. J. Alagoa, 'Long-Distance Trade and States in the Niger Delta', [1970], 11 (3), *The Journal of African History*, 319–329.

²² E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 3–8 and 15–16; Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Archives, TITLE: File No: CALPROF 5/3, *Synopsis of the Reigns of the Monarchs of the Kingdom of Grand Bonny (AD 1200 – 1878)* (n2); M. A. G. Leonard, *The Lower Niger and Its Tribes* (Franks Cass & Co., 1968), 23–24 and 47.

Kingdom was Kongo, who was the Premier *Amadabo* of Ikpakpayo/Finima and leader of the Kongo founding group.²³

Whereas the founding team led by the four Premier Monarchs (otherwise called the land route team as well as the Alagbariye team) migrated to found the Kingdom by land route, the team led by Kongo, made up of his (Kongo) blood descendants (otherwise called the sea route team as well as the Kongo team) migrated by sea route and arrived at a place called Ikpakpayo (Finima). So, whereas land route founding team is popularly known as the Alagbariye team, the sea route founding team is accordingly known as the Kongo team. As already stated above, the entire members of both founding teams were blood descendants of a common consanguineous Ancestor, known as Ebeni, of the Isedani Royal Lineage of Okoloba, in Kolokuma (Kolokuma Okoloba), in present day Kolokuma-Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Central Niger Delta.²⁴

Bonny Kingdom originated at Orupiri (also known as old Bonny town), where the first two Premier Monarchs (Ndoli-Okpara and Opuamakuba) reigned over the Kingdom, as the Kingdom's first and second Monarchs. So, it was while at Orupiri, as the capital and centre of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom that the founding ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom established the Kingdom's ingredients of sovereign statehood, certainly natural sovereign statehood.²⁵ These ingredients of sovereign statehood are (a) permanent population; (b) defined territory; (c) system of government (based on Lineage, Family, Ward or House System (also known as the 'Canoe House System'); and (d) ability or capacity to enter into foreign relations with other sovereign states (within and outside Primaeval Niger Delta region (among the primordial sovereign states of modern Nigeria), as well as, from the 15th Century AD, with Ancient Bonny Kingdom's Western European counterparts.²⁶ So, regarding language, which confirms the origin of the *Ibani* language of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*), before about 1000 AD, E. J. Alagoa and

²³ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 41–45 and 187–190; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6; E. J. Alagoa (n12), 215; *Finima Amadapu (Finimadapu) Dupuyo* (Graveyard of the *Amadapu* of Finima), where Kongo (circa 1180 AD) is described as the leader of the sea route movement of the Kongo group, which migrated from Okoloba, in Kolokuma (Kolokuma Okoloba), in the Central Niger Delta, to the Eastern Niger Delta area of Ikpakpayo (present day Finima), in Bonny Kingdom. Finima is situated beside or along Grand Bonny Island (the capital city of Grand Bonny Kingdom and Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria; *Official Opening of the Palace of the Amadabo of Finima & 1st Coronation Anniversary of the Incumbent Amadabo of Finima (Aseme-Alabo [Engr.] Dagogo Lambert Brown, Chief & Head of Buoye-Omuso Brown House, Amadabo of Finima, Kongo XVII), Thursday, 12th January, 2023, Palace Ground, Finima, Bonny Island, Rivers State* (Printing Solutions, 2023).

²⁴ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2021 [n11]), v.

²⁵ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 77–78, 81–82 and 130–135.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 77–78.

A. Fombo, in their scholarly work of 1972 entitled *A Chronicle of Grand Bonny*, remark as follows:

One way of estimating the length of time a people have been removed from their place of origin, is to compare the language spoken at that homeland with that spoken at the new settlement. Comparison between Kalabari and Kolokuma (the Ijo dialect of the general area in the Central Delta from which the Ibani and Elem Kalabari came) suggests a time of separation of over a thousand years. That is, the Kalabari and Ibani have probably existed as separate dialects from Kolokuma before about AD 1000.²⁷

After the reign of the first two Premier Monarchs (Ndoli-Okpara and Opuamakuba), when the High-Priest of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, foremost leader of the founding team (foremost Patriarch) and a famous hunter, Alagbariye, discovered a virgin Island, 'Ókoloama' (meaning 'the land or home of curlews', 'curlew town' or 'curlew homeland'),²⁸ the Alagbariye founding group moved over from Orupiri to 'Ókoloama'. The early European explorers and visitors to Bonny Kingdom Anglicized the name 'Ibani' to 'Bonny', and thus referred to *Ibanise as Bonny Kingdom*. Accordingly, due to the magnificence and outstanding greatness of Bonny Island, the European explorers and visitors referred to it as 'Grand Bonny Island', as well as 'Grand Bonny'.²⁹ Accordingly, given that Bonny Kingdom is very ancient like other primaeval modern Nigerian Kingdoms, particularly other Ancient Niger Delta Trading States and Primordial Kingdoms and beyond, such as the Elem Kalabari [New Calabar] Kingdom and Trading State and the Efik [Old Calabar] Kingdom and Trading State, the Kingdom became popularly known as Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.³⁰ It is also pertinent to highlight that Okoloama (Grand Bonny) is variously called, referred to or known as Bonny, Bonny Island, Grand Bonny Island, Bonny Island City, Bonny Island Community, Bonny Community, Bonny Town, Metropolitan Bonny, *et cetera*.³¹

At the city centre in Grand Bonny, known as Ikuba *Nungo* (Ikuba Square), Alagbariye (otherwise known as Alagbariya, Alagbaria, Alagbarigha, Kalabeni [Kala-Ebeni], *et cetera*) was installed by the rest of the Founding Ancestors of Bonny Kingdom, as 'Amakoromabo', that is

²⁷ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 5; C/f R. Horton, 'From Fishing Village to City-State: A Social History of New Calabar', [1969], *Man in Africa*, 37–58.

²⁸ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 4, 6–7; 60 and 67; Bonny Kingdom Historical Society (n2), 20, 27 and 50.

²⁹ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–viii, 3–8 and 15–16.

³⁰ Bonny Kingdom Historical Society (n2), G. Finapiri (n2); O. Y. Buowari (n2); K. I. Abbey (n2); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 105–125; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]), 103.

³¹ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–viii, 3–8 and 15–16; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 103.

‘Okoloamakoromabo’, meaning, ‘Founder of Grand Bonny’.³² At the same time also, he (Alagbariye) was enthroned as the successor of Opuamakuba, who had become too old to bear the burden of apex public sector rulership, namely kingship.³³ It was during the reign of Alagbariye that the Alagbariye land route founding team (the Alagbariye team) met with the Kongo sea route founding team.³⁴

As both founding teams (the Alagbariye’s and Kongo’s) realized that they were blood descendants of a common ancestor, Ebeni, from the Isedani Lineage of Okoloba, in Kolokuma, they decided to unite and became a common, expanded, harmoniously and mutually united Founding Group, from which the *Duawaris* (Founding & Aboriginal Royal Houses of the Kingdom, representing the Founding Ancestors/Generation of the Kingdom) evolved. Hence, it may be noted that the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom were the first members of the fold of the *Duawaris*.³⁵ Also, it is noteworthy that the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise KoromaTaduapu*) are equally the owners of the Kingdom (*Ibanise YanaTaduapu*), which Kingdom became a collective heritage of the blood descendants of the Founding Ancestors, and eventually the foster natives and their Families (Houses [*Opuwaris*]) of the Ancient Kingdom.

Accordingly, whereas Ndoli-Okpara, Opuamakuba, Alagbariye and Asimini were Premier Monarchs (*Tari Amaynanapu*) of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, Premier Prince Kongo featured as a Primordial paramount community head/ruler, namely Premier *Amadabo* (*Tari Amadabo*) of the Ancient Kingdom, who ruled over *Ikpakpayo* (Finima). Hence, he (Kongo) is accordingly known as *Tari Ikpakpayodabo* (*Tari Finimadabo*), meaning, the first *Amadabo* of *Ikpakpayo* (Finima).³⁶ By and large, from time immemorial in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom,

³² K. O. Dike (n19), 24 and 196; E. J. Alagoa *et al.*, (eds) (n12), 362–363; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 7; E. J. Alagoa (n12), 150–151; G. Finapiri (n2), v, 7–9. Bonny Kingdom Historical Society (n2), 20; Y. Buowari (n2), 7–8 and 189; A. O. Hart, *Traditional Institutions, Multinational Corporation and Community Development in Bonny Local Government Area (1996 – 2018)* (Pearl Publishers International, 2020), 20; M. A. G. Leonard (n22), 23–24 and 47; K. I. Abbey (n2), 1; B. A. Obuoforibo, *Topics in Bonny Church History* (CSS Press, 2001), 259; O. Imoagene, *Peoples of the Cross River Valley and Eastern Delta: Know Your Country Series Handbook of Nigeria’s Major Culture Areas* (New-Era Publishers, 1990), 50.

³³ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6.

³⁴ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 44–45.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 44–45 and 187–190; Association of *Duawaris* - Founding & Aboriginal Royal Houses - of Grand Bonny Kingdom (n15).

³⁶ *Finima Amadapu* (*Finimadapu*) *Dupuyo* (Graveyard of the *Amadapu* of Finima), where Aboriginal Prince Kongo (circa 1180 AD) is described as the individual, to whom the genesis and leadership of Finima is traced. He was the leader of the sea route movement of the Aboriginal Prince Kongo group, from Okoloba, in Kolokuma, in the Central Niger Delta, to the Eastern Niger Delta area of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom. This area is beside or along Grand Bonny Island (the capital city of Grand Bonny Kingdom and Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers State,

in both cases of *Amanyano* (singular) and *Amadabo* (singular), the prefix *ama*’, refers to the entire Kingdom (*Ibanise*).

Essentially, the origin of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom is intertwined with the origin (birth, beginning or commencement) of the Kingdom’s Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance, which is based on service (stewardship) to the Kingdom and its people, premised on brotherhood, truth, fairness and social justice. At the time, the Kingdom’s House System of Public Sector Governance was led by three hierarchical sets of Paramount Natural Rulers, who governed (superintended over) the affairs of three tiers of government of the Kingdom. These three tiers of government of the Kingdom were (i) organized and formally institutionalized and systematized Lineages/Wards (comprised of immediate blood relatives or closer family units), known as ‘Ikpangis’ (‘burusus’) of each Country House; (ii) wider extended family units, known as the Country Houses or Country House Communities; and (iii) the kingdom-wide (central level of) government) that was and still remains made up of (i) and (ii) above. Accordingly, the paramount rulers, apex heads or leaders of the above-stated three levels or tiers of governance were the (i) *Ikpangi-Sibidapu* (*Wari-Ikpangi-Sibidapu*), otherwise now also known as *Burusu-Sibidapu*; (ii) *Aseme-Alapu* (*Amadapu*) (Community/District Heads and helpmates to Kings/Monarchs [*Amanyano*]), who, as *Substantive Amadapu*, were distinct from regents [who only exist whenever there is no incumbent *Amanyano* after the aboriginal era]; and then (iii) *Amanyano* (owner of the land/King). Hence, the nature or degree of how the three hierarchical categories of Natural Rulers are paramount differs, ranging from the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu* upwards to the *Amadapu* and then ultimately the *Amanyano*. So, whereas from the bottom (the level of the organized and formally institutionalized and systematized Lineages/Wards) to the apex level or tier of government in the Kingdom, the three hierarchical categories of Apex (Paramount) Natural Rulers exercise power harmoniously in the public interest, such that the degree of authority, power and influence of the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu* does not extend beyond those of the *Amadapu*. Accordingly, the degree of the authority, power and influence of the *Amadapu* does not extend beyond those of the *Amanyano*, who is the topmost (supreme or ultimate) paramount ruler that reigns over the entire Kingdom, so as to ensure the wellbeing of all and in the generic interest of the Kingdom. We may thus liken Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom to a federation of three tiers of government (namely ‘wards’, ‘states’ and ‘central government’) in the following manner: (i) the level or tier of organized and formally institutionalized and systematized Lineages (comprised of immediate blood relatives or closer family units), known as ‘Ikpangis’ (‘burusus’) of each Country House, which level of government was ruled by an *Ikpangi Sibidabo*; (ii) the next (state or second) tier of governance (made up of wider extended family unit, Country House or Country House Community), which level of government is like that of the state of a federation, governed by an *Amadabo*, along with

the Ikpangi Sibidapu (who were subordinate rulers and hence helpmates to the *Amadabo*); and then (iii) the kingdom-wide (apex, central, peak or ultimate tier of government), ruled by an *Amanyano* and *Amadapu*, who made up the *Ibanise KoromaTaduapu Kubiri* (Council of the Founding Ancestors and Aboriginal Owners of the Kingdom). This is why the *Amadapu* were also known as *Se-Alapu* (Heads of Country-House Communities), while the *Amanyano* was the topmost, supreme or ultimate Paramount Natural Ruler of the Kingdom. This was how from time immemorial, the Founding Ancestors of Bonny Kingdom established the Kingdom's House System of Governance (herein called the Primordial House System of Governance) and institutionalized public service, based on the House System of Public Sector Governance, anchored on three tiers of government, which were led or headed by the above-stated Three hierarchical categories of Paramount Natural Rulers, who occupied their respective positions of Honour, Natural Rulership, Traditional Public Service, Trust, Social Responsibility and Statesmanship.³⁷ The House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom was thus properly designed and effectively institutionalized by the Founding Ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom to cater for the wellbeing of the people and Houses of the Kingdom as well as the entire Kingdom. Given that the Founding Ancestors were classic *primaeval* statesmen and women and model patriots of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, it is obvious that their vision and mission were to guarantee the wellbeing of the entire Kingdom, through sustainable development (SD), progress, advancement and prosperity, as well as a sustainable future of the Kingdom's future generations.³⁸

³⁷ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xl–xli, 3–4, 57–62, 65–68, 165–166 and back cover preview; V. S. Walsh, *Nations of the World, Their Rulers and Statesmen: Being an Account of the Origin of the Nations, Their Present Government, Rulers, Political Parties and Statesmen; Together With Enough of Their Recent History to Indicate the Questions Now Before Them for Settlement* (E. L. Kellogg & Co., 1993/Palala Press, 2018); C. Ray, *Defining Statesmanship: A Comparative Political Theory Analysis* (Lexington Books, 2019).

³⁸ The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) set-up in 1983 (after the UN Conference on the Human Environment of 1972) and chaired by a former Norwegian Prime Minister and former Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, entitled *Our Common Future*, defines SD as the development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. WCED, *Our Common Future* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 168, 171 and 181–189; homepage of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on Sustainable Development, <<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>>; UN, 'Sustainable Development Goals: About the Sustainable Development Goals' <<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>>; UN Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform, 'Sustainable Development Goals' <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>>; UN Development Programme, 'Sustainable Development Goals' <<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>>; homepage of the Earth Charter Initiative <<http://earthcharter.org/>>, all Accessed 3 March, 2023; P. B. Corcoran (ed), *The Earth Charter in Action: Toward a Sustainable Development* (KIT Publishers, 2006); UN Association of Australia (UNAA), *The Earth Charter* (UNAA, 2017); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2021 [n11]), xxxv, 21, 24, 74, 84, 88–89, 95 and 109; T. Jackson, *Prosperity without Growth: Foundations for the Economy of Tomorrow* (Routledge, 2016); T. Jackson, *Prosperity*

Therefore, by virtue of the inherent welfarist nature of the primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the hierarchical Paramount Natural Rulers of the Ancient Kingdom rendered public service centred on good stewardship, towards the wellbeing of the people, in a public-spirited manner, namely in a socially responsible, transparent and accountable manner. The Paramount Natural Rulers rendered such a manner of public service in the interest of the people and the entire Kingdom, based on available resources and/or opportunities in the Ancient Kingdom.³⁹ Such a dedicated form or degree of public service to the people and entire aboriginal Bonny Kingdom demonstrates the pragmatism and binding force of the social contract of governance between the governed (the people) and government (Paramount Natural Rulers [Public Officers]: *Ikpangi Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanymanabo*) of the Kingdom.⁴⁰

Hence, from time immemorial, the three public service positions of *Ikpangi Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanymanabo* of Bonny Kingdom have been those of three aspects, dimensions, spheres or realms, namely the realm of (i) honour (esteemed and/or revered by the people); (ii) trust (requiring honesty and fair play [fairness]); and consequently (iii) social responsibility (towards public-spirited service, premised on good stewardship to the people). Put differently, the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny originated and institutionalized the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom, based on a welfarist philosophy, whereby all the people of the component Wards, Lineages, Families or Houses of the Ancient Kingdom and their above-stated respective Paramount Natural Rulers (*Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanymanabo*) collaborated to harmoniously govern the Kingdom in a public-

without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet (Earthscan, 2011); T. Jackson, *Prosperity without Growth?: The Transition to a Sustainable Economy* (Sustainable Development Commission, 2009).

³⁹ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6–8, 15, 45 and 60–67; G. I. Jones (n12), 198.

⁴⁰ E. Malemi, *The Nigerian Constitutional Law* (Princeton Publishing Company, 2012), 12–27; J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Wordsworth Editions, 1998); J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right* (Aziloth Books, 2011); M. Lessonoff (ed), *Social Contract Theory* (Basil Blackwell, 1990); the Preamble and Section 14 (2) (b), 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) (as amended), which provides that the security and welfare of the people are the primary purposes of government; Section 14 of the 1999 CFRN (as amended) is captioned ‘The Government and the People’; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6–8, 15, 45 and 60–67; C. Renwick, *Bread for All: The Origins of the Welfare State* (Penguin, 2018); D. Garland, *The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2016); J. Bartholomew, *The Welfare State We’re* (Politico’s Publishing, 2006); A. Venkataraman, The Crisis of the Welfare State [1994], 55 (2), *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 159–165; M. Moran, *Crises of the Welfare State* [1988], 18 (3), *British Journal of Political Science*, 397–414; C. Pierson, *The Next Welfare State?: UK Welfare after COVID-19* (Policy Press, Imprint of Bristol University Press, 2021).

spirited manner, so as to efficiently cater for the wellbeing of all the people and the entire Kingdom.⁴¹

Thus, to realize or achieve the welfarist philosophy of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Grand Bonny Kingdom, the entire aborigines, namely the Kingdom's entire homogenous proto-Ijaw stock and their three hierarchical categories of Paramount Natural Rulers, partnered to harmoniously cater for the welfare of the people, as well as the wellbeing of the Kingdom at large. This was how the aborigines, indeed the autochthons, of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom conscientiously lived in a welfarist manner, in truth and fairness, as well as in a sincere, harmonious, mutually delightful, respectful, beneficial, progressive, morally sound and cohesive, united and peaceful manner between and among themselves, towards the equitable and socially just wellbeing of all the people and all-embracing good of the Ancient Kingdom, during the aboriginal era of the Kingdom.⁴²

It may also suffice to highlight at this juncture that during the aboriginal era of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the entire people of the Kingdom were blood descendants of their consanguineous Ancestor (Progenitor), Ebeni (of the Isedani Royal [Aseme] Lineage of Okoloba, in Kolokuma and thus people of proto-Ijaw stock, all of whom were known and recognized by the title or appellation, *Aseme*', such as *Aseme-Ikpangi-Sibidapu* (Lineage Heads of royal pedigree) and *Aseme-Wariseniapu* (Elders of royal pedigree). Accordingly, *Asemes* adorn themselves with *Ikaki bite* ('Cloth of the Tortoise', signifying that they constitute 'Alayingi

⁴¹ R. Prescott-Allen, *The Wellbeing of Nations: A Country-by-Country Index of Quality of Life and the Environment* (Island Press 2001); P. Bartelmus, *Sustaining Prosperity, Nature and Wellbeing; What Do the Indicators Tell Us?* (Routledge 2018); Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), UK, *Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009: An Update of the UK Government Strategy Indicators* (DEFRA, 2009), 119; Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries, 'Research Statement' <<http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/welldev/research/aims.htm>>; Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries, 'Working Papers' <<http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/welldev/research/working.htm>> both Accessed 3 March, 2023; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'Sustainable Development Law and Multidisciplinary Sustainable Development-oriented Efforts towards the Wellbeing of Humans and Overall Resources of Nature' [2020], 81 *International Affairs and Global Strategy* (E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n41a]), especially 69–73, 78–79 and 82–88; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'The UN Global Compact as a Soft Law Business Regulatory Mechanism Advancing Corporate Responsibility towards Business Sustainability and Sustainable Development Worldwide' [2020], 94, *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization* (E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n41b]), particularly 27, 29–30, 35 and 37–38.

⁴² E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlii–xliii, xlvi–xlviii, li–liv, lxxvii–lxxix, 6–7, 65–66, 165–166 and 200–207; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 15; Article 28 and 29 (7), African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act, No.3 1983, Cap A9, LFN 2004.

Furo': 'mother royal status') in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.⁴³ Essentially, the entire proto-Ijaw *Aseme* kindred group of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom were harmoniously engaged in the decision-making and decision-implementation processes of the Ancient Kingdom in the framework of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom. So together, they (the proto-Ijaw *Aseme* kindred group) piloted the affairs of the Kingdom in a united, collaborative, amicable, cordial, socially just, peaceful and progressive manner. On this note, Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom advanced as a model primordial African sovereign state and civilization as well as the pride of Ancestral Ijaw nation, which contributed to the development and advancement of Primaeval Niger Delta region and beyond.⁴⁴ Hence, the Founding Ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom prominently engaged in international relations beyond primordial Nigerian ethnic nationalities. They (Founding Ancestors) entered into foreign relations, whereby they exchanged Ambassadors with their Western European counterparts, beginning with the Portuguese explorers and merchants, with whom these Ancestors first established friendly and cordial foreign relations. At the time, in the 15th Century AD (about 1450 AD), the First Ambassador of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom to Portugal was the son of Premier King Asimini, Aboriginal Prince Abagy. Thus, while giving account of this historic state of affairs, with regard to the significant and strategic roles played by Primordial High-Priest and Premier King Alagbariye (Founder of Grand Bonny: *Okoloamakoromabo*), E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya in 'Natural Law as Bedrock of Good Governance: Reflections on Alagbariya, Asimini and Halliday-Awusa as Selfless Monarchs towards Good Traditional Governance and Sustainable Community Development in Oil-rich Bonny Kingdom' (2020), succinctly states, as follows:

Forthwith, Alagbariya had to stand gallantly in an international style, to crown his brother, Asimini, with a new Portuguese branded crown. Hence, some inexhaustibly refer to Asimini as the first crowned King.

⁴³ The *Asemes* of the Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom adorn themselves with *ikaki bite*, particularly during festivities and special or dignifying occasions. *Ikaki-bite* was more often generally used during festivities and special or dignifying occasions by female aboriginal Ibani folks, even up to present day in the Ancient Kingdom. Thus, from time immemorial, dating back to and/or stemming from the era of the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, especially the aboriginal *Amanyapanu* and *Amadapu* of the Kingdom, wearing, dress-in as well as adorn themselves in or with *ikaki bite* is a natural right, certainly a fundamental right, of the people of the Ancient Bonny Kingdom. E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xxii, xxviii, xxx, xxxv, l, liii–liv, lxiv–lxv, 39, 42, 45, 52, 61–63, 72–74, 84, 86, 103, 105, 160–161, 164, 173–174, 177–180, 192–193, 196, 218, 229, 274, 276, 281, 284 and 316–318, especially liii–liv and 72–74; M. G. Anderson and P. M. Peek (eds), *Ways of the Rivers: Arts and Environment of the Niger Delta* (Regents of the University of California, 2002), 251–267; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14b]), especially 97; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14a]), 74–75; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6.

⁴⁴ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlii–xliii, xlvii–xlvi, li–liv, lxxvii–lxxix, 6–7, 65–66, 165–166 and 200–207; E. J. Alagoa (n21).

Lessons from the reign of Alagbariya thus demonstrate that a good leadership attribute is to keep to promises made in public interest, as Alagbariya personally upheld and singularly enforced his promise to ensure that his brother, Asimini, succeeded him, while he (Alagbariya) was still alive and awake to his responsible stewardship as the Premier High-Priest of the Kingdom.

Furthermore, when Asimini had become King, Alagbariya harmoniously joined him to muster courage and support, to ensure King Asimini's son, Aboriginal Prince Abagy (Abazie), became Bonny Kingdom's Ambassador to Portugal in the late 15th Century AD.⁴⁵

The foregoing may therefore suffice as a background of how Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom was founded and administered in the framework of its characteristic Welfarist House (Ward/Lineage/Family) System of Public Sector Governance, which was boosted by the regime of natural law, to feature as a classic Primordial African Sovereign State, during the aboriginal era of the Ancient Kingdom, namely before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD.

The Primordial House System of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom and Natural Law

This sub-heading is designed to discuss the House System of Governance (also called the House System of Government or simply the House System) in the context of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom. The sub-heading is essentially intended to discuss the Primordial House System of Governance, which is a form of public sector governance of the Ancient Kingdom, and natural law. Nevertheless, in order to highlight the natural law-based features of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom, the sub-heading would first consider the subject-matter of natural law.

Natural Law: With Particular Reference to Positive Law and in Relation to the Affairs of Bonny Kingdom

Natural law presupposes the relationship of humans (including human society) to God divine (the divine world) and thus the law linking human society to divine law, which accordingly means the natural law component of law.⁴⁶ Natural law is therefore interpreted to mean the law

⁴⁵ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14a]), 80; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 78–80; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 7.

⁴⁶ C. F. Alford, *Narrative, Nature, and the Natural Law: From Aquinas to International Human Rights* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); J. Crowe, *Natural Law and the Nature of Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2019); J. Koperski, *Divine Action, Determinism, and the Laws of Nature* (Routledge, 2020); I. M. MacKenzie, *God's Order and Natural Law: The Works of the Laudian Divines* (Routledge, 2018); R. L. Thompson, *God and Science: Divine Causation and the Laws of Nature* (Govardhan Hill Publishing, 2004); J. A. Jacobs (ed), *Reason, Religion, and Natural Law: From Plato to Spinoza* (Oxford University Press, 2012); A. Passerin d'Entrèves and C. J. Nederman, *Natural Law:*

governing human society, that is centred on spirituality, reason and ethics (ethical conducts) in society.⁴⁷ The regime of natural law is associated with natural rights,⁴⁸ natural justice (prevalence of social justice)⁴⁹ and fairness (fair play)⁵⁰ in society. So, natural justice⁵¹ may be considered as a synonym of natural law. Accordingly, due process in the framework of natural law or natural law-based form of due process may be considered as normal, ethical or morally-inclined form of order, process or procedure of things in society.⁵² Natural law may thus be considered as a bedrock or foundation of good governance (GG)⁵³ in society. In effect, natural law as an instrument of natural order of things *vis-a-vis* due process, is a fundamental mechanism of social

An Introduction to Legal Philosophy (Routledge, 2017); P. E. Sigmund, *Natural Law in Political Thought* (University Press of America, 1981); G. K. Meffe (Savannah River Ecology Laboratory, University of Georgia), 'Sustainability, Natural Law and the "Real World"' *The Georgia Right FORUM*, 48–52
<<http://www.georgewright.org/104meffe.pdf>> Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁴⁷ M. H. Kramer, *Where Law and Morality Meet* (Oxford University Press, 2004); A. Gomez-Lobo, *Morality and the Human Goods: An Introduction to Natural Law Ethics* (Georgetown University Press, 2001); J. Budziszewski, *Written on the Heart: The Case for Natural Law* (InterVarsity Press, 1997); C. E. Rice, *50 Questions on the Natural Law: What It Is and Why We Need It* (Ignatius Press, 1999); J. D. Breshears, *Natural Law: The Moral Foundation for Social and Political Civility* (CentrePointe Publishing, 2016); B. W. Johnson, *Natural Law: Morality and Obedience: Volume 1* (Tesko Publishing/Eduka Solutions, 2017); K. Haakonssen, *Natural Law and Moral Philosophy: From Grotius to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge University Press, 1996); Salem Press, *Ethics: Questions & Morality of Human Actions* (H.W. Wilson Publishing Co., 2019); J. Kemp, *Reason, Action and Morality: International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method* (Humanities Press, 1964); J. Kemp, *Reason, Action and Morality: Routledge Library Editions; Ethics* (Routledge, 2020); W. Quinn, *Morality and Action: Cambridge Studies in Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2003); B. Sachs, *Explaining Right and Wrong: A New Moral Pluralism and Its Implications* (Routledge Studies in Ethics and Moral Theory (Routledge, 2017); G. Spielthener, 'What Makes Actions Morally Good?' [2005] VII (1), *Etica & Politica/Ethics & Politics*, 1–13; J. Sacks, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2020); B. Herman, *Morality as Rationality: A Study of Kant's Ethics* (Routledge Library Editions: Kant) (Routledge, 2017).

⁴⁸ J. Finnis, *Natural Law & Natural Rights* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴⁹ L. L. Weinreb, *Natural Law and Justice* (Harvard University Press 1990); G. E. McCarthy, *Marx and Social Justice: Ethics and Natural Law in the Critique of Political Economy* (Haymarket Books, 2019); G. Chartier, *Economic Justice and Natural Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2009); H. Rommen, *The Natural Law: A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy* (Liberty Fund Inc., 1998).

⁵⁰ S. Gregg, *The Essential Natural Law* (Fraser Institute, 2021).

⁵¹ L. L. Weinreb (n49).

⁵² The Right Honourable Lord Denning (Master of the Rolls), *The Due Process of Law* (Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁵³ C. Roosevelt, *The Science of Government, Founded On Natural Law* (Nabu Press, 2014); R. F. L. Girard, *Hugo Grotius: Natural Law and Social Contract Theory* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014); M. Okilo, *The Art of Government and the Okilo Administration* (Riverside Communications, 1992), particularly ix and 1; the Preamble and Section 14 (2) (b), 1999 CFRN (as amended).

engineering, positive change and dynamic progress in society.⁵⁴ By and large, natural law has the potential to strengthen governance towards GG, so as to enhance sustainable growth, development and advancement of society.⁵⁵

Natural law may therefore be distinguished from man-made positive law theory or legal positivism, which is essentially a reaction to the natural law school of thought.⁵⁶ Positive law theory of law considers law as an obligatory mode of conduct made by human authority.⁵⁷ This theory of law argues that natural law theory exaggerates the relationship between law and morality. It presupposes that there is no need to use reason, morality, justice or fairness (fair play) to determine the nature and validity of law. Positive law theory advocates and contends that law is a collection of valid rules, directives, commands or norms of a sovereign, sovereign authority or sovereign state, which may lack moral, just, fair or rational attributes or content,⁵⁸ the breach of which attracts sanction.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2021 [n11]), xxix, xxx, xxxiv, 5, 94, 103 and 107; A. J. Harding, 'Law as Social Engineering in Singapore: #smart' Laws in the Intelligent Island' [1995], *Law Department, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies*, <<https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/484691>> Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁵⁵ H. Clark, *The Importance of Governance for Sustainable Development* (The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies [ISEAS] Publishing, 2012); P. J. Cooper and C. M. Vargas, *Implementing Sustainable Development: From Global Policy to Local Action* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]); P. B. Corcoran (ed), *The Earth Charter in Action: Toward a Sustainable Development* (KIT Publishers, 2006); K. Ginther et al. (eds), *Sustainable Development and Good Governance* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1995); W. M. Lafferty (ed), *Governance for Sustainable Development: The Challenge of Adopting Form to Function* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2004); Glasbergen et al. (eds), *Partnerships, Governance and Sustainable Development: Reflections on Theory and Practice* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2007); R. Reid, *Sustainable Development: An Introductory Guide* (Earthscan, 2009); N. Roorda, *Fundamentals of Sustainable Development* (Routledge, 2017); J. F. Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (University of Columbia Press, 2015); B. C. Smith, *Good Governance and Development* (Palgrave Macmillan 2007); C. Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1983) particularly 1–3; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2021 [n11]), xxx, xxxv, 10, 46–47, 90–91, 101–102 and 107.

⁵⁶ S. I. Shuman, *Legal Positivism: Its Scope and Limitations* (Ulan Press, 2012); T. Spaak and P. Mindus (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Legal Positivism* (Cambridge University Press, 2021); D. Westberg, 'The Relation between Positive and Natural Law in Aquinas' [1994-1995], 11 (1), *Journal of Law and Religion*, 1–22; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 'Legal Positivism' <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/legal-positivism/>> Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁵⁷ B. A. Garner (ed), *Black's Law Dictionary* (West Group, 1999), 1182.

⁵⁸ D. Westberg, 'The Relation between Positive and Natural Law in Aquinas' [1994-1995], 11 (1), *Journal of Law and Religion*, 1–22; A. Oyeode (n20); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (n19).

⁵⁹ P. Eleftheriadis, 'Law and Sovereignty' [2010], 29 (5), *Law and Philosophy*, 535–569; J. B. Murphy, *The Philosophy of Positive Law: Foundations of Jurisprudence* (Yale University Press, 2005); P. Minkinen, *Sovereignty, Knowledge: A Glasshouse Book* (Routledge, 2009); R. Jackson, *Sovereignty: The Evolution of an Idea (Key Concepts Series)* (Polity, 2007); Law Teacher, 'Legal Positivism' <<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law->

Positive law prevailed in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom and other trading states of primordial Niger Delta region, during the era of the Atlantic trade in the region, which covered from about 15th Century AD to the 19th Century AD, in the course of foreign relations between the Niger Delta trading states and their Western European imperialist trading partners.⁶⁰ In Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, revolutionary changes occasioned by the regime of positive law, through positive international law, began to take place from the second phase of the reign of King Perekule I (the Thirteenth Monarch of the Kingdom), namely from about 1740 AD onwards.⁶¹

Highlight on How the House System (as the Basic Social System) of Bonny Kingdom Originated from the Primordial House System of Governance of the Kingdom

This sub-heading is simply intended to demonstrate how the continuing House System of Governance of Bonny Kingdom Originated from the Primordial House System of Governance of the Kingdom, as the basic social system of the Kingdom. In order to do so, we note that we have already given a background of the House System of Public Sector Governance of Bonny Kingdom, which was originated (established) and institutionalized by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom, led by its Four Premier Monarchs. That background indicates that the House System of Public Sector Governance is the basic social system of *Ibani* people (*Ibanise*), which may be described as a hierarchical form of representative democratic governance.⁶² It is important to note that the Premier Monarchs of Bonny Kingdom were assisted in the framework of the House System of Public Sector Governance by their subordinates and helpmates, namely the Premier *Amadapu* of the Kingdom, such as Kongo (Premier *Amadabo* [*Tari Amadabo*] of *Ikpakpayo/Finima*) and Anju (Premier *Amadabo* [*Tari Amadabo*] of the Alagbariye lineage, in Grand Bonny (*Okoloama*). Accordingly, the Premier *Amadapu* of the Kingdom were assisted at the Lineage level or tier of public administration of the Kingdom by the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, who are loosely called *Wari-Seniapu* (elders of the House) along with other elders of the House in the realm of the House System of Public Sector Governance.

It is significant to highlight that the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and each reigning *Amanyano* were hierarchically the apex, peak or Paramount Natural Rulers of their respective tiers of public

essays/jurisprudence/legal-positivism.php>; Legal Dictionary, 'Definition of Positive Law'

<<https://legaldictionary.net/positive-law/>> both 3 March, 2023.

⁶⁰ K. O. Dike (n19); N. Briggs *et al.* (eds), *The Economic Development of Rivers State: In Commemoration of Port Harcourt Centenary Celebration 2013* (Port Harcourt: RSEAC/Onyoma Research, 2013), 67–85; E. J. Alagoa and A. A. Derefaka (eds) (n19), 277–284; A. Oyebo (n20).

⁶¹ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 54–55 and 75.

⁶² E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 105–134, particularly 107; T. Parsons, *The Social System (Classic Reprint Series)* (Forgotten Books, 2015); T. Parsons, *The Social System* (Quid Pro Books, 2012).

administration of aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.⁶³ The intertwined and harmonious relationship of the people and the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and each reigning *Amanymanabo* indicates that these three posts or offices of natural rulership are positions of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship. Accordingly and particularly so, the interwoven and mutually collaborative mandate and relationship of the *Amadapu* and each reigning *Amanymanabo* in the course of the public service (natural rulership) of Primaeval Grand Bonny Kingdom, underscore the fact that the actual owners of the Kingdom's land were collectively (altogether) the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom.⁶⁴

Therefore, from the foregoing and from time immemorial to present day, in the framework of the properly designed, systematized, institutionalized, implemented and/or successfully practised House System of Public Sector Governance (put differently, regime of natural public sector rulership) of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, without the commitment and support of the members of each organized and formally institutionalized and systematized Lineage, the Lineage Heads, cannot function, more so be efficient, in the delivery of public service at the tier or level of each Lineage of the government of the Ancient Kingdom. Accordingly, the *Amadapu* functioned and continues to function, even so effectively with the existence and aid of the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, as well as the *Amanymanabo*, who functioned and continues to function, even so efficiently with the existence and help of the *Amadapu*.⁶⁵ In the process, the four Premier, Primaeval or Primordial Monarchs of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom reigned and led the Ancient Kingdom as exemplary Servant-Leaders. Consequently, the entire tiers and cream of Paramount Natural Rulers of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom, which was well equipped and boosted by the regime of natural law, became Servant-Rulers and/or Leaders, who distinctly and severally piloted the affairs of the Kingdom in a collaborative manner towards the wellbeing of the entire people and Houses/House Communities of the Kingdom, as well as the Kingdom at large.

By and large, as indicated above, the period from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD, witnessed the reign of Thirteen Monarchs of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom. This implies the reigns of the Four Premier Monarchs of the Kingdom up to the reign of King Perekule I (Captain Pepple), who succeeded King Halliday-Awusa. Considering the changes, which took place after the aboriginal era of the Kingdom (circa from 1740 AD onwards), when King Perekule I introduced the revolutionary change of creating the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe (Major Chieftaincy) House and installing Allison-Nwaoju as the Head of this Created Chieftaincy House,⁶⁶ it is important to emphasize that the *Ibani* (Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom's) House

⁶³ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), lxi, 69 –71 and back cover preview.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 56–57 and 81–88.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 55–58.

⁶⁶ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 54–55 and 75.

(Ward/Lineage/Family) System of Public Sector Governance started as the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance. Accordingly, it is significant to underscore and accentuate that other Major War Canoe Houses (*Opuwaris*) of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom were created after the reign of King Perekule I. The *Opuwaris* were created for foster descendants of the Ancient Kingdom, who made remarkable supportive contributions towards the advancement and wellbeing of the Kingdom, from the period of King Perekule I onwards.⁶⁷ This also demonstrates that the *Opuwaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom came into existence after well over Seven Centuries of the founding of the Ancient Kingdom and the establishment and institutionalization of the Kingdom's House System of Public Sector Governance by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom.⁶⁸ Otherwise put, the *Opuwaris* and their Chiefs became members of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom from about 1740 AD onwards, when (in a revolutionary circumstance), King Perekule I (a member of the fold of the *Duawaris* and the Thirteenth King of the Ancient Kingdom) created the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe House and installed Chief Allison-Nwaoju as its Head. Thereafter, all other Major War Canoe Houses (*Opuwaris*) were created for other foster descendants (ex-slaves) of the Kingdom, by successors of King Perekule I. Hence, before the creation of the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe House by King Perekule I, the *Opuwaris* and their Chiefs were yet to be members of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.⁶⁹

It is also important to state that King Perekule I divided his Lineage (the aboriginal Perekule Lineage) into two, in favour of his two sons, namely Prince Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple and Prince Adum-Opubughu (Opubo) Annie (Anna) Pepple, whereby the Princely Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple House and Princely Opubo Annie Pepple House of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom evolved. However, the erstwhile princely Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple House and erstwhile princely Opubo Annie Pepple House became *Opuwaris* of the Ancient Kingdom, when Prince Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple and Prince Opubo assumed the office or position of

⁶⁷ Apart from the Allison-Nwaoju Major House, the *Opuwaris* of Bonny Kingdom created from the Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple House are the Captain Hart (*Adango, Akunnayi*) Major House, Jumbo (*Sinaminasobo-ofori*) Major House, Banigo (*Ibaningo, Iringeresibo*) Major House, Wilson Pepple (*Oju-Igbe, Nkwerre*) Major House and the Long-John (*Amonibienye-ofori*) Major House. Besides, there is the *Ibiama* (Finecountry)/Ibiama-Finecountry Major House, which was created in favour of Igweyi, a foster son of King Bereibibo Alagbariya (whose maternal relatives poisoned to death, during cut-throat governance dispute in the Kingdom). Igweyi was thus a member of the King Bereibibo Lineage of the Bristol-Alagbarigha Royal House. Accordingly, the Igweyi group of Houses (Ibiama-Finecountry Major House and its Minor Willie-Pepple House and Jackmay House) originated from the King Bereibibo Lineage of the Bristol-Alagbarigha Royal House. The next created Major Chieftaincy House is the Wilcox (*alias* Wirikoma, Egede or Egede-ye Buruwi House, whose ancestor originated from Ancestral Ijaw Ancient Bille Kingdom and thus stands distinct between the *Duawaris* and the *Opuwaris* of Bonny Kingdom. E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlv–xlv and 124–125; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 45–59 and 75.

⁶⁸ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–viii, 3–8, 15–16 and 45, especially 5 and 45.

⁶⁹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlviii–l, lxxii–lxxiv, 107 and 197–199.

Kingship consecutively, and thereby left their respective Houses in the care and custody of their foster descendants (ex-slaves) and returned to their aboriginal King Perekule Lineage/Royal House of the Kingdom.⁷⁰

Therefore, it may, in a way, be indicated that the *Opuwaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom are younger Major Houses to the *Duawaris* of the Kingdom. Otherwise put, the *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom are Older or Senior Major Houses to the *Opuwaris* in the realm or framework of Families (Houses) of the Kingdom. So, considering Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom as a family, the *Duawaris* are elderly to the *Opuwaris* in realm of the family of the Major Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.⁷¹ Moreover, considering the *Duawaris* as blood-descendant Houses of the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, especially from the background of natural law and the God-given inalienable and inviolable natural rights of members of *Duawaris*, they (the *Duawaris*) may be described as those who bear (carry) the Crown as well as those who wear the Crown of the exalted Throne of Kingship of the Kingdom.⁷² Generally, based on the primaeval customary and traditional practice of the *Duawaris* and the sacredness of upholding such a customary practice, the *Duawaris* usually participate in the installation ceremony or ceremonies of Heads of each of their component units. Hence, in the realm of present day Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the *Duawaris*, being blood-descendant Houses of the Founding Ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom, are blood-related Major Houses, which constitute the first category or group of Major Houses of the Kingdom. Accordingly, the *Duawaris* constitute the First Two Generations of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*.⁷³ The *Duawaris*, which are comprised of six Houses, are also known as ‘Freeborn Houses’ (certainly, ‘Big Freeborn Houses’),⁷⁴ whose key members are ‘blood descendants of the

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 115–119 and 157–158; C/f A. A. Allison, ‘King Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple (1730 – 1792 and Adum-Fubara Manilla Pepple House [‘The Big House’] of Grand Bonny Kingdom’, [2013], 3 (1), *Journal of Niger Delta Studies*, 146–158.

⁷¹ However, by and large, currently, the Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom may be broadly categorized as *Duawaris*, *Opuwaris* and *Kalawaris* (Minor Houses). These Houses may also be more broadly categorized as Major Houses and Minor Houses of the Kingdom. The Minor Houses were created from the *Duawaris* and *Opuwaris* of the Kingdom. Bonny Chiefs’ Council/Amanyababo-in-Council of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, ‘Programme of Events of the 20th Coronation Anniversary Celebrations of His Majesty, King Edward Asimini William Dappa Pepple III, CON, JP, Perekule XI, Amanyababo of Grand Bonny Kingdom’, dated Sunday, 18th – Sunday, 25th December, 2016, 14–15; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), lv, lxxvii–lxxix, lxx–lxxiv, 94–95, 97–100, 107–108, 113–116, 138–139, 185–186, 194–199 and 290–291.

⁷² E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 5 and 10–26; Articles 5, UN UDHR, 1948, which provides that *no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*.

⁷³ *Ibid*, li, 101 and 133–138.

⁷⁴ N. Wariboko, *Pattern of Institutions in the Niger Delta: Economic and Ethological Interpretations of History and Culture* (Onyoma Research Publications, 2007), 190.

Founding Ancestors' of the Kingdom, and their Chiefs (*Se-Alapu*) are known as 'Big Freeborn Chiefs'⁷⁵ as well as aboriginal and substantive '*Amadapu*' of the Kingdom. The *Duawaris* also produce the *Amanyapanu* (Kings/Monarchs) of the Kingdom.⁷⁶ Accordingly, on issues of the God-given heritage of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom (not being a Republic), both within the respective Houses (House Communities) and concerning generic affairs of the Kingdom, blood descendants of the Kingdom's Founding Ancestors have inalienable and inviolable natural right and thus priority right and interest. Ironically, the five older *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom (which are Houses [House Communities] of the Uncles and Older Cousins of King Perekule I) are, in the ongoing era of SD, being rendered voiceless and thus gravely marginalized, neglected and deprived in the affairs of their own aboriginal homeland (the Ancient Kingdom).⁷⁷

From the foregoing, based on the already given background of the Welfarist Lineage/Ward/Family or House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, it is pertinent to state that this System of Governance commenced in Bonny Kingdom, with its first four wards. Thus, in his Seminal Book (*The Trading States of the Oil Rivers: A Study of Political Development in Eastern Nigeria*), G. I. Jones, while tracing the origin of the Lineage, Family or House System of Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, clearly and succinctly states that the First Four Wards of the Ancient Kingdom were respectively derived from the Premier Monarchs of the Kingdom, namely Primaeval High-Priest and Premier King Alagbariye (Alagbariya) and Premier Kings Opuamakuba, Asimini and Ndoli Okpara. G. I. Jones puts this in the following words:

According to Bonny tradition, the community consisted originally of four wards, derived respectively from Alagbaria [Alagbariye], Opu Amakuba [Opuamakuba], Okpara Ndoli and Asimini.⁷⁸

Notably, after the founding of Grand Bonny (*Okoloama*) by Primordial High-Priest and Premier King Alagbariya, the Alagbariya founding group met with one of their kinsmen (Kongo) and his blood descendants, and realized that they were all blood descendants of the same ancestor, Ebeni (of the Isedani Royal (*Aseme*) Lineage of Okoloba in Kolokuma, in the Central Niger Delta). While the Alagbariya group migrated to found Orupiri (primordial Bonny) and later-on Grand Bonny (*Okoloama*), the descendants of Kongo found Ikpakpayo (Finima), which is situate beside

⁷⁵ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 17.

⁷⁶ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), lv, lxxii-lxxiii, 105-107, 197-199 and 276-280.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 125-126, 182-185, 215-216 and 220-222; Association of *Duawaris* - Founding and Aboriginal Royal Houses - of Grand Bonny Kingdom' (n15); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]); H. Clark (n55); J. F. Sachs (n55); B. C. Smith (n55).

⁷⁸ G. I. Jones (n12), 198.

Grand Bonny. In the process, they (both groups) united as the common founding group of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom (otherwise called the Ancient *Ibani* nation). In due course, the Kongo Lineage became the next (namely Fifth) Lineage of the Kingdom. This was how the original Families, Lineages, Wards or Houses of Bonny Kingdom became Five in number.

Hence, the account of how the original Families, Lineages, Wards or Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom grew from Four to Five in the course of continuities and changes in the post-settlement era of the Ancient Kingdom was succinctly recorded by E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, in his ground-breaking scholarly Book (*Participation in Petroleum Development: Towards Sustainable Community Development in the Niger Delta*), in the following words:

These four wards (of Bonny Kingdom) grew to become five after the founding of Grand Bonny ('Okoloama') by Alagbariya. At the time, the founding group, led by Priest-King Alagbariya, met with one of their the blood descendants (Kongo [and his blood descendants]), and realized that they all migrated from the same Central Niger Delta Ijaw homeland. The blood descendants of Kongo were then integrated into Bonny Kingdom as one of its founding units recognized as the Kongo ward.

From its Original Four, and later Five Wards, Bonny Kingdom grew after its post-settlement era onwards, to play a significant middleman role in the Atlantic trade, which started in the fifteenth Century. ...⁷⁹

In the course of subsequent continuities amidst rational and constructive changes during the post-settlement period of the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, punctuated by the reign of the Four Premier Monarchs (Ndoli-Okpara, Opuamakuba, Alagbariye and Asimini) and the Aboriginal *Amadapu*, the Ancient Kingdom became comprised of its First (Original) Fourteen component units, popularly known as 'Okoloama IngieKiri Fajie', which means Bonny Kingdom (*Ibanise*), as comprised of its Fourteen Wards, Lineages, Families or Houses. These initial or original Fourteen component Units/ Wards/Lineages/Families/Houses evolved during the era of the Kingdom's Four Premier Monarchs, namely *Tari Amanyapapu* Ndoli-Okpara, Opuamakuba, Alagbariye and Asimini.⁸⁰ The *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, courtesy E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, state that among the identified Four Generations of 'Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie', two belonged to the aboriginal era of the Ancient Kingdom, namely from the stock of the *Duawaris* of the Kingdom.⁸¹

⁷⁹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2010 [n2]), 108.

⁸⁰ E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), vii–viii, 3–8 and 15–16.

⁸¹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), li, 101 and 133–138; Association of *Duawaris* - Founding and Aboriginal Royal Houses - of Grand Bonny Kingdom' (n15); G. N. S. Ogolo (n5), 132–135.

In the process of the origin and evolutionary trend of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, three hierarchical institutional settings (Natural or Traditional Ruling Councils) of the System came into existence. These were the Lineages, Wards or Family Units of a Country-House of the Ancient Kingdom, which was headed by an *Ikpangi-Sibidabo*. In the process, a group of *Ikpangi Sibidapu*, along with an *Aseme-Alabo (Amadabo)* made up the *Amadabo-in-Council*. Accordingly, a group of *Amadapu*, along with the *Amanymanabo* constituted the *Amanymanabo-in-Council*, which commenced as 'Ibanisekoroma Taduapu Kubiri' (Council of the Founding Ancestors of Ancient *Ibani* nation), led by the Kingdom's Four Premier Monarchs. These three hierarchical sets of Natural Ruling Councils were and still remain positions of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship, embedded in the Heads (Paramount Natural Rulers) of each of these positions of public service, namely *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanymanabo*. So, the hierarchical headship, apex or paramount natural rulership positions of *Ikpangi-Sibidabo*, *Aseme-Alabo (Amadabo)* and *Amanymanabo* in the Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom were and still remain positions of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship in the Ancient Kingdom.

It may be highlighted that the above-stated three hierarchical offices of natural rulership are essentially positions of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship in the realm of the administration of the land and people of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, namely the House System of Public Sector Governance of the Ancient Kingdom. Hence, the appellation, designation or title of an *Ikpangi-Sibidabo* (Head of an organized and formally institutionalized unit of immediate blood [family] relatives) connotes headship of the *Ikpangi-Sibidabo*'s set of closely related Lineages, Wards or component Family units in the framework of the Kingdom's House System of Public Sector Governance. Accordingly, the office of *Amadabo* signifies wider traditional rulership than that of an *Ikpangi-Sibidabo* in the administrative framework of the land and people of the Ancient Kingdom, while the post of *Amanymanabo* denotes the position of ultimate Apex Natural Ruler, whose jurisdiction covers the entire Kingdom. Consequently, in the framework of natural rulership, the entire Kingdom is considered as a tree, meaning a collective whole, which is hierarchically administered by the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and an incumbent *Amanymanabo*. Hence, in the context of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the degree of authority, power, influence and responsibility or obligation of an *Ikpangi-Sibidabo* (as the Head of his organized and formally institutionalized immediate [closely related] set of Lineages, Wards or component Family units of an aboriginal Country-House Community of the Kingdom) has from time immemorial been limited or subject to the somewhat overlordship of an *Amadabo*, as the Head of an entire aboriginal Country-House Community as well as a subordinate ruler to and helpmate of a reigning *Amanymanabo*. The same form of limitation applies to an *Amadabo* in the framework of the administration of the entire Kingdom, concerning

the relationship of the *Amadabo* to an incumbent *Amanyanyabo*, who reigns supreme over the entire Kingdom and thus accordingly owes greater social responsibility as well as displays utmost standard of Servant-Leadership and statesmanship in the Kingdom more than the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu* and *Amadapu* respectively.

Therefore, by and large, since rights are associated with their corresponding obligations, duties and/or responsibilities, such that rights and duties are inseparable,⁸² even in the framework of the House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, it is the inherent duty, responsibility and/or obligation of the *Ikpangi Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and every reigning *Amanyanyabo* of the Ancient Kingdom to protect the rights of the people of the Kingdom, particularly in order to achieve equitable and socially just wellbeing of all the people, Houses and all-embracing good of the Kingdom towards SD in the Kingdom.

It is also important to note at this juncture that primaeval, primordial or aboriginal Grand Bonny Kingdom was gender sensitive concerning female folks and their role in public administration at all levels of public administration (the governance) of the Kingdom. Hence, the key importance of women in terms of participating in government, such as in the form of advising their respective *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and a reigning Monarch (*Amanyanyabo*), was crystal clear and thus not in doubt at all. So, on the whole, based on natural right of succession to leadership positions in the Kingdom, women could be Monarchs (*Amanyanyapu*), as was the case of Queen Ediminiba Kambasa (popularly known as Queen Kambasa),⁸³ a contemporary of Queen Amina

⁸² H. T. Terry, 'Legal Duties and Rights' [1903], 12 (4), *The Yale Law Journal*, 185–212; D. Lyons, 'The Correlativity of Rights and Duties' [1970], 4 (1), *Noûs*, 45–55; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xxix, lxii, lxiii–lxiv, 179–180, 226 and 228–229; Article 27, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act, No.3 1983, Cap A9, LFN 2004. Hence, it is the inalienable and inviolable right of the *Duawaris* (particularly in the parlance of natural law, natural right and natural justice), to inherit the legacies of the heritage of their blood ancestors (the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom), which includes bearing their aboriginal Ibani names, titles and/or appellations, and also the corresponding duty, responsibility and/or obligation of the *Duawaris* (especially blood descendants of the Founding Ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom), to preserve the aforesaid legacies, even by duly defending the preservation of the same, in their aboriginal homeland (the Ancient Kingdom). John 8: 35; Ephesians 3:15; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 37 and 75; J. Finnis (n48); L. L. Weinreb (n49); G. E. McCarthy (n49); G. Chartier (n49).

⁸³ B. Awe (ed), *Nigerian Women in Historical Perspective* (Sankor/Bookcraft 1992), 11–23; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 8–10, 73 and 89; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n14b]), 93–105; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya, 'The Role of Women in the Wellbeing of Society', being a paper delivered at a Symposium Organized by the Old Girls Association of Government Girls Secondary School (GGSS), Finima, Bonny, with the Theme 'Celebrating 40 Years of Educating the Girl-Child (The First Ever All Old Girls Homecoming (1981 – 2016))', Friday, October 20, 2017, @ the GGSS, Finima, Bonny.

of Zaria.⁸⁴ Accordingly, the feature of collective and harmonious decision-making and decision-implementation processes, towards the overall good and wellbeing of the people, characterized primaeval, promordial or aboriginal Grand Bonny Kingdom, as one where gender equity, parity, uniformity and equality obtained inviolate. This was how the proto-Ijaw people of the Ancient Kingdom related among themselves as blood descendants of the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom, even in terms of governing the Kingdom.

No doubt, the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom originated and institutionalized the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Ancient Kingdom in such a form and manner that the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Aseme-Alapu* (*Amadapu*) and each reigning *Amanyenabo*, cooperated to rule the Kingdom harmoniously along with the rest of the blood-related, united and harmonious autochthonous Ijaw population of the Kingdom. So, based on the inherent welfarist nature of the *Ibani* House System of Public Sector Governance, the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanyenabo* rendered service to the people, centred on good stewardship, namely in a duty-bound and committed welfarist-oriented form (in a welfarist-oriented responsible, transparent and accountable manner), based on available resources and opportunities in the Ancient Kingdom, and the endeavours of these rulers at the three hierarchical levels of public administration of the Kingdom. On this note, for instance, Premier King Alagbariye and Asimini provided their daughters, Premier Virgin Crown Princess Osunju Alagbariye and Premier Virgin Crown Princess Ogbolo Asimini, for BLOOD SACRIFICE, towards the wellbeing of the people and the survival and sustainability of the entire Kingdom.⁸⁵ Based on the belief system of the time, while Premier Crown Princess Osunju Alagbariye was monumentally and painfully sacrificed to the deities of Bonny land in order to obtain good drinking water and peace in Grand Bonny, Premier Crown Princess Ogbolo Asimini was sacrificed to the Bonny estuarine deities, for the Bonny River Estuary to open-up for external relations, especially external trade, which started from the arrival of the Portuguese explorers and merchants in the early 15th Century AD and still ongoing, to the benefit of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom and the entire modern Nigeria. In this way, the above-stated three categories of Paramount Natural Rulers engaged the entire people in decision-making and decision-implementation processes of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, in a cordial, morally-sound and

⁸⁴ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 'Zaria: Historical Kingdom and Province, Nigeria'

<<https://www.britannica.com/place/Zaria-historical-kingdom-and-province-Nigeria>>; BBC News, 'Queen Amina: Nigerian Warrior Queen' <<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-44888718/queen-amina-nigerian-warrior-queen>> both Accessed 3 March, 2023.

⁸⁵ British Colonial Intelligence Report (Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria) entitled *The Intelligence Report on Bonny District* (n2); British Colonial Administration in Nigeria; NIGERIA: British Colonial Intelligence Report entitled *The Intelligence Report on the Ndoki Clan of Aba Division* (n2); E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 6–7.

socially-just manner, based on the regime of proto-natural law, and thereby painstakingly provided for the wellbeing of the people and the Kingdom at large.

Essentially, governance, particularly authentic, good, responsible, transparent and accountable governance, is key towards SD.⁸⁶ Certainly, among other aspects, parts, pillars or spheres of SD, such as its economic, social, environment and governance pillars, as well as its ecological and cultural spheres, GG is very crucial, key, compelling and most inevitable.⁸⁷ So, GG and SD are considered to be indivisible, as SD cannot be achieved without GG.⁸⁸

By and large, it was based on the inherent welfarist nature of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom that the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom established the Kingdom's civilization as a classic Primordial African Sovereign State, which continues to feature, in the course of the history and historiography of African civilization, as the pride of Ancestral Ijaw nation and the entire Ancient Delta region of modern Nigeria. Hence, it is on the framework of Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance, enhanced by the regime of proto-natural law, that aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom made contributions to the development, advancement and progressive sustenance of the civilization of Primordial Niger Delta region and beyond.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2013 [n2]); E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n41a]), 69, 78–79 and 85–89; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (2020 [n41b]), particularly 27 and 37–38.

⁸⁷ WCED (n38), x–23, particularly 9; L. K. Yew, *From Third World to First: Singapore and the Asian Economic Boom* (HarperBus, 2011); W. Tanthapanichakoon, *The Charismatic Leader, Lee Kuan Yew and the Rise of Singapore as an Asian Tiger: How His Exceptional Leadership turned Singapore into One of Wealthiest Countries in the World* (Kindle Edition, 2015).

⁸⁸ *Per* the Seventh UN Secretary-General (1 January, 1997 – 31 December, 2006), Kofi Annan, UN, 'Meetings Coverage and Press Releases: Good Governance Essential to Development, Prosperity, Peace, Secretary-General Tells International Conference, Press Release SG/SM/6291/DEV/2166' <<https://www.un.org/press/en/1997/19970728.SGSM6291.html>> Accessed 3 March, 2023; K. Ginther *et al.* (eds), *Sustainable Development and Good Governance* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1995); M. C. Segger and A.

Khalifan, *Sustainable Development Law: Principles, Practices, and Prospects* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸⁹ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), xlii–xliii, xlvii–xlviii, li–liv, lxxvii–lxxix, 6–7, 65–66, 165–166 and 200–207; E. J. Alagoa (n21); S. Aderinto (ed), *African Kingdoms: An Encyclopedia of Empires and Civilizations* (ABC-CLIO, 2017); J. G Jackson, *Introduction To African Civilizations* (Citadel Press Inc., 2002); Captivating History, *Ancient African Kingdoms: A Captivating Guide to Civilizations of Ancient Africa Such as the Land of Punt, Carthage, the Kingdom of Aksum, the Mali Empire, and the Kingdom of Kush* (Captivating History, 2020); S. A. Ajayi (ed), *African Culture & Civilization* (Ibadan Cultural Studies Group, 2005); A. J. May and C. H. King, *A History of Civilization: The Story of Our Heritage* (Scribner, 1956); P. N. Stearns *et al.*, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience: Combined Volume* (Pearson College Div., 2015); P. N. Stearns *et al.*, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience: Volume I - Beginnings to 1750* (Pearson College Div., 2004); F. R. Willis, *World Civilizations*

Consequently, while discussing Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, a Doyen of Nigerian History, K. O. Dike, describes the Kingdom in an appropriate and vivid manner, by stating that ‘... Bonny was undoubtedly the first among the ‘great powers’ of the Niger Delta. ...⁹⁰ Furthermore, K. O. Dike succinctly declares as follows:

Bonny was the economic and political centre of the Niger Delta during the greater part of the nineteenth century, and even its successor from the 1870s, Opobo [Kingdom], was an offshoot of the older Kingdom.⁹¹

Certainly, Bonny Island (the capital of Bonny Kingdom and Bonny LGA) was the economic and political centre of the historic, geographic and cartographic ethnic minority Niger Delta region during the period of the Atlantic trade in the region. This state of affairs was so, until the second decade of the 20th Century, when Bonny Island was eclipsed by Port Harcourt, as the economic, political and government administrative nerve centre of the Niger Delta region, and beyond, especially due to the construction of a new railroad that linked Port Harcourt to the hinterland areas thereof, at the time.⁹²

Given that the foregoing comments about Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom attest to the nature of the Ancient Kingdom’s civilization as a model Primordial African Sovereign State, it is obvious that the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom, aided by the regime of natural law, constituted the bedrock of GG, which promoted generic public good, towards the overall wellbeing of the people, Houses and entire Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, during the aboriginal era of the Kingdom (from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD). This was the state of affairs in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom before positive law began to prevail, through positive international law, which governed relations between the Kingdom, along with other Primordial Niger Delta trading states, and their Western European imperialist trading counterparts, during the later period of the Atlantic trade in Bonny Kingdom and the rest of the Niger Delta trading states, about the 18th Century AD, which period coincided with the second phase of the reign of King Perekule I, from about 1740 AD onwards in the Kingdom.⁹³

As a passing remark beyond the aboriginal era of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, it is pertinent to state that Christianity was introduced in 1861, in the Kingdom by one of its Monarchs (King

(D. C. Heath & Co., 1982) R. W. Winks, *World Civilization: A Brief History* (Collegiate Press, 1993); W. W. Hallo *et al.* (eds), *Heritage: Source Reader: Civilization and the Jews* (Educational broadcasting Corporation, 1884).

⁹⁰ K. O. Dike (n19), 41.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 31; E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 81.

⁹² A. McKenna *et al.* (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica), ‘Bonny’

<<https://www.britannica.com/place/Bonny>> Accessed 3 March, 2023; N. Briggs *et al.* (eds) (n60), 148–210.

⁹³ A. Oyeboode (n20).

William Dappa Pepple [of blessed memory]), when he returned from exile in London.⁹⁴ Thus, it is expected that Christianity would, through God's WORD, expressed in the Bible, promote and invigorate ethical ways of life embedded in the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Ancient Kingdom and the regime of natural law in the Kingdom, towards rekindling GG and enhancing fair play, harmony, social justice, enduring peace and the overall wellbeing of the people and entire Kingdom, in the ongoing era of SD around the globe.

By and large, the account of Bonny Kingdom's Primordial Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance serves as the contribution of the Kingdom to the development and advancement of civilization in the Ancient Niger Delta region and beyond, as well as the monumental contribution of the Primaeval (Aboriginal) Paramount Natural Rulers of the Kingdom to natural law and SD, based on GG and fair play, towards the wellbeing of the people of the Kingdom and beyond.⁹⁵

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

So far, this study discusses Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, simply called Bonny Kingdom, as one of the Ijaw trading states of Primordial Niger Delta region, as well as the economic and political centre of the region, being about the foremost of the region's 'great powers'. It discusses primaeval, primordial or aboriginal Bonny Kingdom (Ancient Ibani nation: *Ibanise*) as comprised of present day Bonny Kingdom and Opobo Kingdom.

The study identifies the House (Canoe House, Lineage, Family or Ward) System of Governance of Bonny Kingdom as a form of Public Sector Governance, which was originated, institutionalized and successfully practiced by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom. On the strength of earlier scholarly history and historiographical works, the study highlights that the initial period of Bonny Kingdom's House System of Public Sector Governance was the Primaeval, Primordial or Aboriginal era of the Kingdom, which lasted from before about 1000 AD to about 1740 AD (namely, a period of well over Seven Centuries).

⁹⁴ Before King William Dappa Pepple arrived Bonny, he got to Finima, where, from 1861 to 1864, *Aseme-Alabo* Omoni Jack Brown, *Amadabo* (Governor) of Finima, successfully mediated between the King and the aggrieved *Se-Alapu* of Bonny Kingdom, to ensure the smooth return of the King to Bonny, as the Monarch of Bonny Kingdom. Thus, when Christianity started in Bonny, *Aseme-Alabo* Osai Bereibibo Bristol-Alagbariya provided the first place of worship for the initial Bonny Christian converts. E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 5, 15, 127–128 and 289–290; E. J. Alagoa and A. Fombo (n2), 24–27; area of the *Finima Amadapu* (*Finimadapu*) *Dupuyo* (Graveyard of the *Amadapu* of Finima) on *Aseme-Alabo* Omoni Jack Brown.

⁹⁵ E. T. Bristol-Alagbariya (ed) (2022 [n2]), 39–207, particularly xlvii, li–liv, lxxiii–lxxiv, lxxvii and 58–60.

The study emphasizes that the House System of Governance (also called the House System of Government or simply the House System) is the mode of public sector governance of Ibani people (Bonny Kingdom: *Ibanise*), the rest of Ancient Ijaw Trading States and other Kingdoms of Primordial Niger Delta practising this system of governance. Other Trading States of Primordial Niger Delta practising the House (also known as the 'Canoe House') System of Public Sector Governance include Nembe (Brass), Elem Kalabari (New Calabar), Okirika (*Wakirikese*), Itsekiri (Warri) and Efik (Old Calabar).

The study particularly examines the inherent welfarist nature and/or character of the House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, which was originated, institutionalized and practised by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom. In the process, we described the House System of Public Sector Governance as the basic social system of the Ancient Kingdom that is practised as a hierarchical form of representative democratic governance. The study proceeds to demonstrate how in the course of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Bonny Kingdom, which was boosted by proto-natural law, the entire homogenous proto-Ijaw stock of the Kingdom harmoniously and peacefully inhabited the Kingdom, on the basis of brotherhood, truth, fairness (fair play) and social justice, during the Kingdom's aboriginal era, from about before 1000 AD to about the second half of the 18th Century AD, particularly from about 1740 AD onwards. The aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom ended about One Hundred and Thirty Years before the establishment of Opobo Kingdom from its parent Bonny Kingdom, during the Bonny Kingdom Civil War of 1869/70. In other words, Opobo Kingdom was came into existence about over Eight Hundred and Seventy Years (circa Nine Centuries) after the founding of its parent Bonny Kingdom.

From 1740 AD onwards, underscores when the regime of Created Chieftaincy Houses *vis-à-vis* War Canoe Houses came into existence in Bonny Kingdom, by virtue of the revolutionary nature of the creation of the Allison-Nwaoju Major (War Canoe) House and installation of Allison-Nwaoju as the Head of this House, by a member of the fold of the *Duawaris* and Thirteenth King of the Kingdom (King Perekule I [Captain Pepple]), during the second phase of his reign. Thus, the study affirms, reaffirms or corroborates the finding of previous academic researches that the creation of the Allison-Nwaoju Major War Canoe House marked the commencement of the Third Generation (immediate past generation) of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*, which means Bonny Kingdom [*Ibanise*], as comprised of its Fourteen Wards, Lineages, Families or Houses. Other Major War Canoe Houses (*Opuwaris*) of Bonny Kingdom were created after the reign of King Perekule I. The *Opuwaris* were created for foster descendants of the Kingdom.

Inter alia, the study notes that currently the Houses of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom may broadly be categorized into *Duawaris*, *Opuwaris* and *Kalawaris*. These Houses may also be more broadly categorized as Major Houses and Minor Houses of the Kingdom. We described the

Opuwaris as Major War Canoe (Created Chieftaincy) Houses, which were established for foster descendants (ex-slaves) of the Kingdom, from about 1740 AD onwards. We also described the *Kalawaris* as Minor Houses, which were created from the *Duawaris* and *Opuwaris* of the Kingdom. Then, we described the *Duawaris* in many ways, including the fact that they are the blood-descendant Houses of the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom and thus the Founding and Aboriginal Royal Houses of the Kingdom. As such, unlike the *Opuwaris*, they (the *Duawaris*) are blood-related Major Houses. Moreover, we accentuate and emphasize that the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, who are the First *Asemes* (Primaeval Royals [Original Individuals of Royal Pedigree]) of the Kingdom, were the first members of the fold of the *Duawaris*. Furthermore, we emphasize that the *Duawaris* made up the First Two Generations of *Okoloama Ingie KiriFajie*. They are also known as Older or Senior Major Houses to the *Opuwaris* in the framework or realm of Families (Houses) of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom. Besides, the *Duawaris* are popularly known as 'Freeborn Houses' (certainly, 'Big Freeborn Houses'), given that their key members are 'blood descendants of the Founding Ancestors' of the Kingdom. The Chiefs of *Duawaris* are known as 'Big Freeborn Chiefs' as well as aboriginal and substantive *Amadapu* (Community/District Heads and thus helpmates to Kings/Monarchs [*Amanyapanu*]), while a member of the kindred group of the *Duawaris* occupies the supreme natural rulership position of *Amanyaboship* (kingship) in the Kingdom. Otherwise, simply and precisely put, the *Duawaris* are the producers of the *Amadapu* and *Amanyapanu* of the Ancient Kingdom. As such, members of the *Duawaris* bear the Crown as well as wear the Crown of the exalted Throne of Kingship of the Kingdom. Also, they, beginning with the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom, contributed to the development and advancement of Primordial Niger Delta region, and by extension the rest of Primaeval ethnic nationality areas that eventually formed modern Nigeria and beyond. On this note, the Founding Ancestors of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom prominently engaged in international relations, whereby they exchanged Ambassadors with their Western European counterparts, beginning with the Portuguese explorers and merchants, with whom they exchanged Ambassadors between the Kingdom and Portugal, by the 15th Century AD (about 1450AD). Therefore, it is the finding of this study that the aboriginal era of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom underscores the Kingdom as a classic African primordial sovereign state and civilization, as well as the pride of Ancestral Ijaw nation, which contributed to the development and advancement of Primordial Niger Delta region, and by extension the rest of Primaeval ethnic nationality areas that eventually formed modern Nigeria, and beyond. Consequently, we emphasize that the *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom are obviously older than the *Opuwaris*, which came into existence in Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, after well over Seven Centuries of the founding of the Kingdom and the establishment and institutionalization of the Kingdom's House System of Public Sector Governance by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom.

Besides, it is a significant finding of this study that the five older *Duawaris* of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom are, in the ongoing era of sustainable development (SD), ironically being rendered voiceless and thus gravely marginalized, neglected and deprived in the affairs of their own aboriginal homeland (the Ancient Kingdom), whereas, based on the primaeval custom and tradition of the Ancient Kingdom and divine natural law on issues of the God-given heritage, within the respective Houses and concerning generic affairs of the Kingdom, blood descendants of the Kingdom's Founding Ancestors have inalienable and inviolable right and priority interest. Accordingly, it is the finding of this study that as the economic, political and government administrative centre of the ethnic minority Niger Delta region, during the period of the Atlantic trade in the region, Bonny Island (the capital of Bonny Kingdom and Bonny LGA) gave way to Port Harcourt within the second decade of the 20th Century.

Essentially, the study further affirms, reaffirms and/or corroborates the finding of previous studies that the interwoven and mutually collaborative mandate and relationship of the *Amadapu* and each reigning *Amanymanabo* in the course of the public service (natural public rulership) of Primaeval, Primordial or Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, underscore the fact that the actual owners of the Kingdom's land were collectively the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom. In other words, for purposes of public administration (public sector governance) in Primaeval, Primordial or Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, land was held in trust for and on behalf of the entire Founding Ancestors of the Ancient Kingdom by the *Amadapu* and each reigning *Amanymanabo* of the Kingdom. Clearly, reference hereof is to the entire sovereign landmass that comprised the territorial integrity of Primaeval Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, which has from time immemorial been inherited by the Houses and people of the Ancient Kingdom, from generation to generation.

Our examination of the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom in relation to the aboriginal era of the Kingdom also reveals that the three hierarchical and systematic positions or offices of natural rulership of *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and *Amanymanabo* were originated and institutionalized by the Founding Ancestors of the Kingdom as those of honour, traditional public service, trust, social responsibility and statesmanship. Accordingly, in the framework of the properly designed, institutionalized and successfully practised House System of Public Sector Governance, otherwise put, regime of natural public sector rulership of Primaeval, Primordial or Aboriginal Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, the *Amadapu* functioned, even so effectively with the existence and aid of the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, as well as the *Amanymanabo* functioned, even so efficiently with the existence and aid of the *Amadapu*; and from time immemorial, this state of affairs has been so in the Ancient Kingdom. In the process, the four Premier, Primaeval or Primordial Monarchs (*Tari Amanymanapu*) of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom reigned and led the Ancient Kingdom as exemplary Servant-Leaders. Indeed, the entire tiers and cream of Paramount Natural Rulers of

the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of the Kingdom, which was well equipped and boosted by the regime of natural law, became Servant-Rulers and/or Leaders, who distinctly and severally piloted the Kingdom in a collaborative manner towards the wellbeing of the entire people and House Communities of the Kingdom, as well as the Kingdom at large, and hence towards SD.

So, the aboriginal era of Bonny Kingdom serves as the bedrock of the Kingdom's civilization, premised on its Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance, and good governance (GG) generated by that system of governance, which engendered yet unparalleled good stewardship of the Kingdom's Four Premier Monarchs (*Amanyapanu*) and their successors, as well as the *Amadapu* and *Ikpangi-Sibidapu* of the era. GG, based on yet unparalleled good stewardship, underscores the three categories of aboriginal Paramount Natural Rulers of Bonny Kingdom (the *Amanyapanu*, *Amadapu* and *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*), who were paramount administrators of the three levels of government of the Kingdom, as exemplary leaders, namely Servant-Rulers of the Kingdom.

Hence, based on the amiable footprints of the homogenous primordial Ijaw folks of Bonny Kingdom, as exemplified by good stewardship accomplished and bequeathed by the Kingdom's primordial Paramount Natural Rulers to the people and future generations of the Kingdom, the aboriginal era of the Kingdom features as a classic era, which contemporary and future traditional rulers, House Communities and people of the Kingdom should emulate, towards GG, fair play, social justice and other forms of harmonious and admirable ways of life for all and sundry in the Kingdom. These harmonious and admirable ways of life would in turn promote and actualize overall wellbeing of the people and House Communities of the Kingdom, as well as sustainable peace and SD in the Kingdom, in the ongoing global march towards environmentally-sound, ecologically-centred and socio-economically just and equitable SD around the globe.

It is also the finding of this study, and we emphasize, that since rights are associated with their corresponding obligations, duties and/or responsibilities, such that rights and duties are inseparable, even in the framework of the House System of Public Sector Governance of Bonny Kingdom, it is the inherent duty, responsibility and/or obligation of the *Ikpangi Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and every reigning *Amanyapanu* of the Kingdom to protect the rights of the people, especially, so as to achieve equitable and socially just wellbeing of all the people and House Communities, as well as the all-encompassing good of the Kingdom, in the ongoing global march, led by the UN, to achieve SD all over the world.

Essentially, the account of Bonny Kingdom's Primordial Welfarist House System of Public Sector Governance serves as the contribution of the Kingdom to the development and

advancement of civilization in the Ancient Niger Delta region and beyond, as well as the monumental contribution of the Primaeval (Aboriginal) Paramount Natural Rulers of the Kingdom to natural law and SD, based on GG and fair play, towards the wellbeing of the people of the Kingdom and beyond. We therefore assert that this study serves as a fundamental contribution to the development and advancement of African civilization, GG and SD, from the Ancient Niger Delta.

Accordingly, we recommend that Christianized Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, led by its traditional rulers, especially the Heads of its hierarchical three tiers of public sector government, namely the *Ikpangi-Sibidapu*, *Amadapu* and every incumbent *Amanyano*, should abide by the yet unparalleled GG footprints of the Kingdom's Founding Ancestors, led by its aboriginal Paramount Natural Rulers, and thereupon honour GOD's WORD, as enshrined in the Bible, by implementing the same, through excellent stewardship, towards fair play, harmony, social justice, enduring peace and the overall wellbeing of the people, House Communities and entire Ancient Kingdom. Doing so, would contribute to the wellbeing of humanity in the Ancient Kingdom, and thereby boost the Kingdom's overall sustainable growth and/or development, particularly environmentally-sound, ecologically-centred and socio-economically just and equitable SD and prosperity in the Kingdom, in the ongoing era of SD around the world.

We reiterate that, so far, we have affirmed and corroborated the works of previous cutting edge history and historiographical scholars of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, that the Ancient Kingdom has from time immemorial been a Welfarist Sovereign State, which was originally governed by its Premier and other Primordial Paramount Servant Natural Rulers and/or Leaders, who enthroned GG to actualize the overall wellbeing of the people and the Kingdom at large. We emphasize, accentuate, echo and insist that the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance originated, established and institutionalized by the Classic Socially Responsible Servant Aboriginal Paramount Natural Rulers of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom and promoted by the entire homogenous, supportive, collaborative, harmonious, morally sound, united, socially just and peaceful aboriginal Ijaw stock of the Ancient Kingdom, on the framework of natural law, serves as the bedrock of GG in the Kingdom. We therefore recommend that the Primordial House System of Public Sector Governance of Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom, which was boosted by natural law, should be promoted to flourish as the footprint *vis-à-vis* greenprint of GG, towards sustainable development, sustainable advancement and sustainable prosperity of contemporary Christianized Ancient Grand Bonny Kingdom.