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Igbo-Ukwu and a possible Eri link

By Chuka Odike

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Igbo Ukwu archaeological site may hold a connection to the Eri lineage through Umunri oral tradition. According to legend, Nri, Eri's first son, was instructed by Chineke (the Supreme Being) to sacrifice his first son and daughter. From their graves, cocoyam and yam sprouted, symbolizing agricultural fertility.

An 11th-century CE altar found at Igbo Ukwu, originally part of Oraeri land, may corroborate this origin story. The altar features male and female figures bearing facial marks resembling ichi marks, traditionally given to firstborn sons and daughters among Umunri. These marks signify connection to the sun, moon, and agriculture, echoing Nri legend.

This discovery suggests a deep cultural and historical connection between Igbo Ukwu, Umunri, and the Eri lineage, highlighting the importance of agriculture in Nri mythology.

The Igbo-Ukwu and the Eri Myth – Elizabeth Isichei (1977)

Igbo-Ukwu: An Account of Archaeological Discoveries – Thurstan Shaw (1970)

The History of the Igbo People – Adiele Afigbo (1981)

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR****Chuka Odi**

I'm a dedicated civil engineer with a passion for infrastructure development and community empowerment. With a strong background in engineering, my work focuses on creating sustainable solutions for urban and rural development projects. Outside of my professional career, I'm deeply interested in Igbo history and culture. I actively explores ways to impact society by using historical lessons to inspire and educate others about the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo people, aiming to bridge tradition and modern development.



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