

Benin culture and history

1. One of the greatest empires that flourished in pre-colonial West Africa was the Benin Empire. The greatness could be measured by the very large number of groups that were influenced politically and socially. At the peak of her achievement in 17th century. The empire was far from getting to the present Lagos State, Oyo, Akure and Ondo in western Nigeria. The Benin developed a sophisticated system of government. The Benin Monarch, the Oba, was the focal point for white form and development of the Lsdok and eventually the empire. The title was highly venerated because it was believed that he represented a link between the living and the ancestors.

2. Igbo-Ukwu culture

Igbo-Ukwu is located in Anambra state of the South-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Thurstan Shaw, an archaeologist, conducted archaeological excavations at three sites in Igbo-Ukwu between 1959 and 1964. They are

1. Igbo Isaiah
2. Igbo Richard
3. Igbo Jonah

The sites excavated at Igbo-Ukwu were dated to the middle of the 9th century A.D. The people of Igbo-Ukwu were farmers, traders and crafts

3 Benin Culture shows its high level of artistic sophistication.

a Benin produced great sculptures, such as carvings and brass work.

c Benin culture revealed that Benin had been inhabited since the late Stone Age.

4 The occupation ~~are~~^{people} farmers, herders and craftsmen.

5 Ile-Ife Culture

a Ile-Ife is the centre of migration to other parts of Yorubaland

b Ife is regarded as the Cradle of Yoruba Civilization

c Ife artworks brought fame to Ile-Ife

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Igbu-Ukwu Culture

1. The Igbu-Ukwu finds helped to show the existence of a rich culture in the area.

The Igbu-Ukwu produced artistic styles different from those of the old Benin. It might have been imported from the Igbu world.

The Igbo-Ukwu finds equally gave an insight into the social and economic organisation of the area.