

WEEK EIGHT (8)

TOPIC : NON-CENTRALIZED STATE – IJAW

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN

The Ijaw were one of the ethnic groups found today in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. In the earliest time, the Ijaw were identified with three settlements of Bonny, Nembe and Kalabari.

According to history, the Ijaw like many other tribes, had many traditions of origin, The first being the one that claimed three men were involved, These were OLODIA, ONYO and OBOLO. They were said to have come from Benin,

The second set of immigrants were led by Ogidigba, who was a descendant of Ginuwa, the founder of the Itsekeri kingdom, while the third group of immigrants founded the coastal ports of Akassa and Twon.

Another version of the origin of the Ijaw linked it to some Nembe rulers, in which the mostly remembered was Kala-Ekule through which seven rulers were identified, The last ruler was Busua who after his death, succession disputes arose between his two sons; Ogbodo and Mingi, This later led to a civil war which resulted into two lines of kingship in Nembe (brass)

THE SOCIO- POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF IJAW

1. **THE LINEAGE GROUP** : this group was headed by a chief who first discovered the land of new settlement instead of the oldest male in the land.
2. **THE VILLAGE ASSEMBLY** : the oldest man from the lineage of founding ancestor was a leader. He was the Amanyabo, who presided over the village assembly.
3. **THE HOUSE SYSTEM**: Ijaw was established as a large family founded by influential during the slave trade era. The head of each house exercised some absolute power.

THE ECONOMY OF IJAW

The economy of Ijaw includes;

1. **TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES** : they had industries that manufactured salt, boat building, cloth weaving, brewing of local gin, pottery, and fish production.
2. **MARINE TRANSPORTATION** : water transportation was used for both social, economic and commercial use. Goods were transported to other areas through water.
3. **TRADE**: both internal and external trades, were practised. They exchanged their smoked fish and food crops for domestic animals from hinterland traders.
4. **AGRICULTURE**
5. **FISHING**
6. **BREWING OF GIN**
- 7.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the political organisation of Ijaw people.
2. What factor made the Ijaws more influential than their neighbouring counterparts.