

The Ijo of the Mangrove

Linguistic and Cultural groupings ^{UNDP 2006}
_{five groups}

The Ijoid \Rightarrow All the ijo speaking people is Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Ondo, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States

\Rightarrow Edo'id - comprises mainly the Edo, the Isoko and Ughosho speaking peoples

\Rightarrow Delta Cross comprises of the Ibibio, Oron and Ibeno ppl's of Akwa Ibom, the Obolo/Andoni, Odual, Ogbia and Ogoni ^{ppl's} of Rivers

\Rightarrow Igbo'id consist of Ikwuanu' of Delta State, Egbema, Ekpeye, Ikwerre, Ndani and Ogbia ^{ppl's} of Rivers State

\Rightarrow Yoruboid group are the Itsekiri, Ujale and the Ikale ppl's of both Delta and Ondo States.

The Ifo of the Niger

Ifo People (2)

— Has the longest Settlement history in Niger Delta.

⇒ Has the largest population among the ethnic nationalities in the Niger Delta.

* Economic life of the Ifo people
→ Predominantly fishermen/women
'cos of abundance of water bodies
⇒ The Anasoma (Cigdom of Central Niger Delta means of livelihood are determined by environmental conditions.
— Farming, animal hunting, weaving, canoe carving, Palm wine tapping and gin distillation are economic activities that defines the local economy of the people.

— Salt manufacturing, from water and roots of the mangroves

⇒ Water transportation
— Trading with neighbouring communities
— Piracy, Kidnapping is also predate petroleum economy.

(3)

Political Relations of the Ijo

⇒ No centralized pol institution, on the contrary they have pol organizations based on village, clan or group system. Largely autonomous of each other, it was said that the Ijos had over 40 pol groupings with independent pol institutions.

⇒ Ijawini clan of western Niger Delta for instance each village has a council system comprises of 12-15 members. The village council along with Ama Okosnowei (the most eldest man in the village) constitute the town council that adjudicate in all ^{dispute} cases.

⇒ Among the ^{Ijo} Anassoma Kingdom of Central Delta Zone, the Amarananowei (the King) along with his council of chiefs administer the kingdom. Most of the chiefs are heads of families/communities within the ~~town~~ kingdom whose selection was not base

④

on Primogeniture system or hereditary. Selection is based on the understanding of the clan's customs and traditions.

⇒ Among the Ifo of the Eastern Delta zone, ~~hitherto~~ existed villages like Okrika, Isan and Ketabari transformed into City States, trading states territorially based on a central city headed by a King (Amanyanabo) with authority radiating to hinterland states — The King is appointed on the basis of descent but not age.

* Religious life of the Ifo

Generally the Ifo traditional religion recognizes the existence of a Supreme Being, called by several names Temearo (She who creates), Ti'barau / ~~Ti~~ Zibaran (~~to~~ ~~the~~ She who gives birth). The Nleuse title called God Wa-Diara (our mother). The feminine perception of God indicates that

God is not just a ^⑤ ~~Creator~~ but but also
a Procreator

Religions of the yor reflect their environ-
mental exposure

Among the Central Delta, there are
three types of divinities which
influence affairs of man

- ① Beni-otu - water deities which
resides in water. The top
hierarchy is Beni-KuruKuru (King
of the water)
- ② Bon-otu (forest deities) with
Bon-Snowei (King of the forest
herbalist & diviners take power from
her. Among the Itsekiri)
- ③ Egbesu - Thunder & lightning represents
by lion & leopard, good for war 'cos
of its protective prowess.