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Anioma Igbo Title heirachies and the emerging of Europeans: *How Colonialism impacted Anioma's Structure socially*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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FEATURE
IMAGE

The Queen of England's visit to Anioma during precolonial era

Article image · caption retained from the published Ozikoro article

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Prior to British rule, the communities in Anioma all had traditional systems whereby males could get to the seat of authority and merit status through attaining titles such as Ozo and Eze titles, people with these titles are granted respect and political influence, and they mostly have a place in the leadership of the towns.

Although, the coming of traders from Europe, European missionaries, and colonial government of the British started to transform things in the system.

Traders most times would negotiate with these title holders, thereby increasing their prosperity and status in the society. Although European missionaries considered some of the rituals that takes place during the process of title taking, like the sacrifices involved and the burial rites of the holders as not in accordance with Christianity, for this reason, numerous families in Anioma through religious influence began to drift apart from these title systems.

The colonial rule of the British government continued to disrupt the structure of these title systems as they introduced warrant chief seats, while excluding these people with traditional titles that had gotten their authority and respect via process of taking titles.

The warrant chiefs appointed by the British colonial government lacked the social and spiritual prowess of ndi ichie and Eze title holders, this diminished the power of the traditional leaders.



Colonialism played huge role in reshaping the political structure of Anioma people.

Even though these title systems are still present in Anioma today, they have lost huge influence and power, and now more of symbolic than practical traditions.

Ohadike, D. C. (1994). Anioma: A social history of the western igbo people. Ohio University Press.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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An enthusiast in tech with deep passion for studying and showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of southern Nigeria . Combining my skill with my obsession towards African history and traditions to create contributions that impacts the digital space.



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