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Anioma Market Priestess : *The Economic and religious Power of the society*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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FEATURE
IMAGE

**Wealthy Market women in Onicha.
G. F. Packer, 1880s. Pitt Rivers
Museum.**

Article image · caption retained from the published Ozikoro article

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ANIOMA MARKET PRIESTESS

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Women in Anioma played key roles in the religious and economic sphere, especially as priestesses of marketplace. This special position don't just enable women to be in charge of spiritual authorities but also take part in economic authorities, showcasing the intertwined nature of commerce and religion in Anioma culture.

The market wasn't just a place for buying and selling but also a sacred place where the physical and spiritual realms meet. Women that are majorly traders held important opinions on the day to day activities of these marketplaces and mostly served as priestesses that oversees the rituals and making sure the marketplace was prosperous and blissful.

The women's authority based on religion allowed them to control every shrine and traditional cults associated with commerce, rekindling women's status as community leaders.. As religious leaders, the women also facilitates the spiritual activities that was important for buying and selling in the marketplaces.

The also conducted rituals to call blissfulness on the traders, including their goods and services, making sure everyone witness sales bountifully and guiding the marketplace from badluck and evil.

Also, Otu Omu was another women Council that was included among market priestesses, they regularly joined hands in making political decisions that affects local trades.

Their ability in making sure that fines are imposed on those who were

found disturbing the marketplace didn't just maintained peace and order but made sure women's voices are heard.

The women of Anioma through these mediums displays an important interplay between trade and faith.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chukwunwike Ossai

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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