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Trade by Barter: *Trading in Pre-Colonial Igboland*

By Chizobem Chinedu Opiah

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FEATURE
IMAGE

Onitsha, 1889, Photographer possibly by G. F. Packer credited with other photos from the Niger and Öníchà (Onitsha)

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TRADE BY BARTER

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Trade-by-Barter “Trade-by-Barter” was a common practice in all the markets in Ala Igbo before the introduction of the cash economy. People exchanged goods like farm produce, livestock, crafts, and services without using money. Goods were exchanged based on their perceived equivalent value, determined by supply and demand. Barter trade took place on designated market days,...

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Trade-by-Barter

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Two women at Achala market, Igboland

Barter trade took place on designated market days, usually every four or eight days. Common trade items included yams, palm oil, kola nuts, goats, chickens, and woven baskets.

Services like blacksmithing, weaving, and pottery were also exchanged for goods.

Barter trade fostered social relationships, cooperation, and mutual support within the community. Prices were negotiated based on the quality, quantity, and demand for the goods. Trust and reputation played a crucial role in successful barter transactions.

Trade by barter in Igbo land reflects the resourcefulness, resilience, and community spirit of the Igbo people.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chizobem Chinedu Opiah

Chikwere is a passionate history blogger dedicated towards sharing fascinating stories and untold tales of Igbo history and culture. I am also a Graphic Designer and a Tech enthusiasts. I developed a deep love for Igbo culture and tradition since my teenage age. So far I've learnt alot about Igbo History and Culture and I'll share the knowledge acquired so far in this space of Igbo History and Culture. Daalu.



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