

PDF - ART AS A VEHICLE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE - researchcub.info **ART**
AS A VEHICLE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE
(A- CASE STUDY OF EZEAGU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA)

ABSTRACT

Ezeagu is among the tribe that produces art in Enugu State. Most of them are now Christians, yet the old traditions still have a powerful influence in the life of Ezeagu people. It is better for one to trace the history of his people and pass it on to the younger ones.

The Art of Ezeagu people suffered much humiliation and neglect at the advent of western civilization. The effect was felt more on the sculpture which comprised carving and molding. Such an event will deny generations to come the knowledge and pleasure of seeing what their forefathers and fathers did in the past. Traditional Ezeagu Artist creates some of his art mainly as instruments by which to make contact with supernatural forces which help him to overcome the danger of their environment. These art objects being created are ritual pots, birds, plants, carved doors and images, ofor, masks, mound, paintings for religious worship. Some of these art works could be found in village squares, shrines or altars, evil forest, hands of individual persons. For instances, "ofor" is handy and is seen on the hand of any man who calls himself a father in the traditional religious group.

The producers of these works are traditional artists, priests and medium men. Some of these works when completed are used as very powerful oaths. In modern churches, there are art objects and their uses, for instance, in the catholic and protestant churches.

My finding revealed the role of art in traditional religion, identification of tools and materials used in the production of art pieces, and its utility.

In carrying this investigation, traditional artists were interviewed and their works examined. Traditional religious priests, common men were also interviewed. The rest of the information was obtained from books, journals, magazines, archives and libraries.

At the end of this discussion, one should be able to know the importance of Art in Religious education in Ezeagu Local Government Area.

CHAPTER ONE

**ART AS A VEHICLE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE A
CASE STUDY OF EZEAGU L. G. A**

BACK GROUND OF STUDY

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Ezeagu is located some twenty kilometers south west of Enugu, the Enugu State capital of Nigeria. Bounded on the north by Uzo-uwani Local Government of Anambra State and on the east and south by parts of Udi L.G. A., then on the west by Awka- North L.G.A. The entire area is liberally watered by the River Ajali, which is the factor upon which the Greater Ajali Water scheme of the Enugu capital Territory is derived. Occupying a land area of over 630 km², the greater part of its geographical area is low-lying with savannah – like vegetation. It has an estimated population of about 200,000 based on the 1991 census.

ETHNOGRAPHY:

Ezeagu traces her ancestry to an itinerant farmer and hunter who settled at Imezi Owa. The man known and called Owo or Ezeagu, (literally, "King of the farm") was the name he earned following his unprecedented success in the cultivation of the land and hunt for game Eze meaning King and Agu

meaning wilderness.

The man Ezeagu married Mgboli who bore him three sons, who were, in order of birth, Owa, Oghe and Oghu. He later married a second wife Udeagu from Nkanu, by whom he got a son, Umana alias Ananwa, who became Ezeagu's second son in order of birth. Umana got two sons Obeleagu and Awo (Umana Ndiuno, Umana Ndiagu and Umana Agba). The Umana extraction often referred to as the Umana neli has ten villages with Obeleagu having six and Awo had two sons, Obunofia and Umumba. Today, all bona fide descendants of Ezeagu owe their direct ancestry to Owo alias Ezeagu and his fore children who later spread out to the four corners of the clan to found new homes for themselves. Grand and great grand children soon followed and these were to be the sires of the many antonymous communities which today answer the collective name of Ezeagu clan.

The Olo and Oha groups (called Umudiaba) later immigrated from the west and settled on the western slope beside the clan following inter-marriages, social and cultural interactions with the Ezeagu people, these immigrants acculturated and gradually melted into the Ezeagu complex.

OCCUPATION AND CULTURE OF EZEAGU PEOPLE:

Ezeagu is endowed with a rich cultural traditional festivals and dances announce the arrival and departure of traditional festivals of the various seasons of the year. The people are predominantly farmers, cassava on the low-lying plains the river banks.

The swampy regions of Olo and Mgbago-Owa areas have been identified as suitable for rice cultivation, and the Enugu State. Government ministry of Agriculture is already making experiment on cooperative large scale rice farming there.

Ezeagu has, traditional festivals amongst others like Ogugo – chi, Akanu, Ibono – okochi, Ibono Udu – Mii, Mgba une n' une, Mgba Ogwu and Atilogwu. Successful farmers also take titles of Ozo and Ekwu dosing specific periods of the year. The influence of Christianity in Ezeagu has brought a lot of change in the people's life. Fanatics have found the spread of Christianity to destroy one cultural identity and should approach this with caution because no nation ever survived without cultural identity.

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