

Did you know?

Over time, a number of the bronzes sculptures have been sold. In 1984, one piece was sold for £25,000!

THE KINGDOM OF BENIN

Year 6 Summer Term



Timeline

AD 900	AD 1100	AD 1180	AD 1300- 1700	AD 1489	AD 1553	AD 1897
The kingdom begins, boundaries are established around Igodomigodo in what is now Nigeria.	The last Ogiso of Igodomigodo, Owodo, dies and there is nobody to rule	Eweka becomes the new ruler and changes the name Igodomigodo to Edo. He calls himself the Oba	The 'golden age' of Edo. It has a large, powerful army and skilled craftspeople.	The Edo people begin trading with the Portuguese, who call the place 'Benin'.	The first British ships arrive in Benin.	The British enter Benin City. This is the end of Benin.

Key Vocabulary

Ogiso	The title used by the early rulers of Igodomigodo. It means 'kings of the sky'. It is thought that there were around 31 Ogiso rulers.
Oba	The title used by Eweka and subsequent rulers. Eweka was from the Yoruba people and Oba is the Yoruba word for 'king'.
Edo	The name given to the kingdom of Igodomigodo by Oba Eweka. The people also became known as the Edo people
Yoruba	The name of the people from the holy city of Ife. The histories of the Edo and Yoruba people are closely linked
moot	A deep and wide trench around the rampart of a fortified place
animists	People who believe that humans, animals and objects all have souls or spirits.
legacy	Something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor
conglomerate	Villages coming together.
Igodomigodo	Early Kingdom of Benin.
dynasty	A succession of rulers of the same line of descent .

Did you know?

People believed that, after death, Osanobua (their god) would decide their fate. They would either be reincarnated as another person or would join the spirit world. Spirits would live in villages together, watching the behaviour of their families and punishing bad behaviour.

The Early Period (AD 900-1300)

Benin Kingdom begins as a small groups of villages (conglomerates) in West Africa. In order to trade and protect themselves people build a moot. They are ruled by a dynasty of kings (Ogisos). People mostly work as craftsmen and farmers.

AD1180: Ogiso and his family are exiled. People start to fight. Eweke becomes king and begins a new dynasty rulers (the Obas). Benin starts to flourish.

The Golden Age (AD 1300-1700)

Benin is rich and powerful. The Obas control large amount of land in West Africa, trading high quality goods. Europeans start to arrive and envy Benin's impressive arts and crafts as well as exotic crops.

The Period of Decline (AD 1700-1897)

Benin declines in power and wealth. People start to fight, the trade is suffering as the Europeans stop trading with Benin.

The British invade Benin City. The troops burn down the city and loots its valuable artworks before exiling the Oba and taking control. The area would later become part of independent Nigeria in the 1960's

Significant people



Oba Eweka:

Eweka was the first Oba (king) of the Benin Empire from 1440 until 1473



Oba Esigie:

The first king of Benin who established relationship between Africa and the Europeans.



Oba Ozolua:

Ozolua, original name Okpame, (died 1504), African king, the greatest warrior-king of Benin. Ozolua was able to extend the boundaries of Benin.



Oba Orhogbua:

Oba Orhogbua was the son of Oba Esigie. He chose to become an Oba after his father's death, instead of becoming a Catholic priest



Oba Eghengbuda:

Son of Oba Orhogbua. He was burnt during a battle which left scars on his body. This became body marks which every Edo adult had to acquire to be able to participate in royal and court activities of the land. The markings also served to identify the Edo person for protection during the slave trade.

Significant People

Who were the key figures that shaped the world in this period?

Community

How has this historical period affected our local area?

Equality & Justice

How were different groups of people treated during this time?

Environmental Responsibility

What legacy did this period leave behind and how are we preserving it?