

INTRODUCTION

Jigawa State was created 27th August 1991 from Kano State by the then regime of General Ibrahim Babangida its capital is Dutse.

Situated in central northern Nigeria, Jigawa State covers 23.154 square kilometers and lies between latitude 11.000N 13.000N and longitudes 8.00°E to 13.00°N and longitudes 8.00°E to 10.150E.

The state shares border with Kano and Katsina states to the west Bauchi state to the east, Yobe State and Republic of Niger to the north. Jigawa topography is generally characterized by undulating land with sand dunes of various sizes spanning several kilometers in parts of the state. The southern part of Jigawa comprises the basement complex while the northeast is made up of sedimentary rocks of Chad formation.

Hausa/Fulani found in all parts of the state, Kanuri are largely found in Hadejia emirate with some traces of Badawa mainly in its north eastern parts. Even though each of the three dominant tribes have continued to maintain its ethnic identity, Islam and long history of inter – marriages have continued to bind them together.

The economy of the state is largely characterized by informal sector activities with Agriculture as the major economic activity. Over 80% of the population is engaged in subsistence farming and animal husbandry. Trade and commerce are undertaken on small and medium scale, e.g Agric Goods, Livestock and other consumer goods.

BIRNIN KUDU ROCK ART INTERPRETATION CENTRE JIGAWA STATE NIGERIA

Birnin Kudu is one of the twenty seven Local Government in Jigawa State located in Northwest Nigeria.

The Local Government its rich in historical heritage which is indicated in the Birnin – Kudu rock painting as well as the former independent state of Hadejia, Gumel and Kazaure in addition to many other.

Birnin Kudu housed different distribution of rock painting site across the Local Government extending to the North of Bauchi State where other rock painting site was discovered by British Colonials.

Rock painting is a kind of art made on the surface of rock trying to communicate a strong and intimate emotion of the painters in physical form of a figure which then speaks for itself.

The prehistoric people of Birnin Kudu depict different images of cattles, sheep's and geometric sign across the different sites.

Unfortunately, the painting images were not carbon dated and poorly documented. But earlier researchers estimated them to be around 20,000 years of its existence.

Likewise, the centre were able to protect all different distribution of the rock painting sites, rock shelters, and rock gong cave.

The painting formed strong connection of the earlier settlers of this important part of Africa through depicting various images of cattles bow and arrow and shelters in the region.

Various other ethnographical information gathered from researchers indicated profound historical connection of the community, natives and the trans-Saharan trade routes across the state as communicated through different rock images.

Ultimately Birnin Kudu rock painting allows us to construct and reconstruct the historical background of the earlier settlers of the place. Its also help student, researchers and historian understand the prehistoric people imagination skills, fashion herds and hunting ability.

Protection of this site became imminent which led the National Commission for Museum and Monument under the leadership of Mallam Yusuf Abdallah Usman to create the centre and charged them to protect and conserve the irreplaceable treasures of art against all forms of threat from vandalism and destruction.

BIRNIN KUDU ROCK ART

Can be looked at in the context of some interpretive themes, these include the following:-

- Sacred Sites:- Some rock art sites were recognized by the community as sacred and some places are still used for ritual purposes when contacting ancestors, but the above function are no longer obtainable in the case of

Birnin Kudu rock painting site. And this is due to the advent of Islamic religion which prohibits such functions.

- Shamanism:- Probably shamans in hunters gatherer prehistoric people of earlier settlers of Birnin Kudu depicted various rock painting images to communicate the connection between human and spirit words. This enables us to understand their existence in this part of the world.
- Symbolism:- Much if not almost earlier Birnin Kudu rock art involves symbolism. This is indicated in different images depicted and geometric sign displayed on the rock across some sites. Majority of the painting carried images of cattles, human, bow and arrow.
- Divine Goddess:- Understood and easily interpreted as usual communication of divine Goddess e.g Sun.

To seek blessing during rainy season and harvesting periods of Birnin Kudu prehistoric settler and different contact.

BIRNIN KUDU ROCK ART INTERPRETATION CENTRE DIFFERENT DISTRIBUTION OF ROCK PAINTING SITES AND CAVE.

DUTSEN MESA SITE:- This particular site lies at the left site of the Local Government to the west. Contained different styles of domestic cattles, but two men types are pictured a long bodied, long legged, hump less breed with long spreading or converging, sometimes lyre – shaped horns and a short hump less breed.

Tantively they have been identified as hermitic long – horned which is now extinct in Nigeria, the site was declared as National Monument on 16 February 1956.

DUTSEN MURUFU:- Situated at the center of the town across the road leading to Bauchi State by the west, the wall fence site contained images of short horned bull together with other fainter painting. It was declared as National Monument on 5 December 1964.

It's called Dutsen Murufu simply because a large rock cover occurred naturally on the top of the cave covering rock painting images.

DUTSEN HABUDE:- Located south of the Murufu site covering large area of

land housing different rock shelters and caves, rock shelter and rock gong. Understandably rock gong was used in the past to communicate messages of danger, rain or festivities of the earlier settlers and different communities of the past.

YAWOZO CAVE:- Located in a very remote area hundred kilometers from Birnin Kudu town. Access to the site by motor is not easy because of the gigantic mountain covering the area, there lies a circle shelter on top of rock. Rock Painting images were depicted inside and around the cave.

The painting images portrayed different handprint, geometry and cattle images of different sizes.

Information from the natives indicated that the area was trans-saharan trade route used in the past to conveyed goods across the country.