

AESTHETICS AND SEMIOTICS OF ADO EKITI MASQUERADE COSTUMES: FOCUS ON AGBO, EFON AND AGBE MASQUERADES

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has a robust masquerade tradition which is a key aspect of the country's arts heritage. However, it is observed that this robust cultural product is not being deployed as a relevant commodity in the contemporary global tourism and entertainment market for purposes of boosting the nation's GDP. One of the reasons responsible for this is the limitations of the masquerade costumes which are perceived to be mythical, ritualistic, easily perishable and cumbersome to transport. Consequently, this study argues for a contemporary reproduction of these costumes through technology. It is however pertinent, that the background to, and the characterization of these masquerades must be understood for any relevant and meaningful technological reproduction to occur. To provide this background and the character portrayal, an Aesthetic and Semiotic Discourse is inevitable. This paper therefore offers the Aesthetic and Semiotic analysis of these masquerades costumes. It also assesses their weaknesses and strengths, using Ado-Ekiti – the capital town of Ekiti State as case study.