

REGBE-REGBE: MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF CLOTH AND COLOUR IN OJUDE-OBA FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

Ojude Oba festival is celebrated annually in Ijebu-Ode, a Yoruba town in Southwestern Nigeria. The festival, which has its roots in the entrance of Islamic religion into the town, is celebrated two days after the Muslim Eid-el-Kabir festival, known as Ileya, among the people. The Ojude Oba, which began over a hundred years ago, has since become a display of culture, cohesion, healthy rivalry, wealth, opulence and development with a dynamic touch of modernity for Ijebus at home, and in diaspora. The cynosure of Ojude Oba still remains the glamour, glitz and opulence demonstrated by the usage of textiles in the dressing and display by the participants at this festival. Textiles are maximally employed to identify the different groups as they flock together in a parade one after the other to pay homage to the *Awujale*, king of Ijebu Ode. Ojude Oba brings colorfully-dressed people from all works of life together in the age grade system, regberegbe. This most striking feature of Ojude Oba festival however remains unstudied. This paper, an art historical study, focuses on the origin of Ojude Oba, in context of the people's dynamic political and socio-cultural life. Through participatory observation, audio-visual recordings and the few available sparse literature materials, the impact of textile and color in this annual grand festival is put to the fore.

KEYWORDS: *Regbe – Regbe*, Age - Grade, Ojude – Oba, Ijebu – Ode, Cloth and Color