

ARCHETYPAL/MYTHIC PATTERNS IN IZON TRADITIONAL PLAYS: A STUDY AMASSOMA SEIGBEN FESTIVAL OF BYELSA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Myths and Archetypal elements are significant to the origin and understanding of traditional Izon plays. This is because, there is hardly any Izon festival celebrated in isolation without a link to them. In fact, most Izon festivals are celebrated to unravel the myth behind certain significant events. Seigben festival of the Izon in Amassoma, Bayelsa State falls into that category. It is among many festivals celebrated in Nigeria which has helped to showcase the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of Nigeria and Africa. However, scholars have not paid much attention to its archetypal and mythic elements. Since there is the fear that salient aspects of this festival may soon be lost, this paper examines the archetypal and mythic patterns that manifest in the festival to show their relevance to society, as well as their literary qualities. The paper has done so using the archetypal and performance theory. The significance of understanding the myths behind Seigben festival as well as other Izon festivals and unveiling their archetypal elements makes the study relevant to existing scholarship on Izon scholarship. The paper concludes that Amassoma Seigben festival of the Izon is embedded with archetypal and mythic patterns which give the festival its traditional quality. Thus, the paper recommends further that studies be carried out in other Izon tradition plays. More so, components of these elements are incorporated by writers of Izon extraction.

KEYWORDS: *Archetypal/Mythic Patterns, Izon Traditional Plays, Amassoma Seigben Festival*