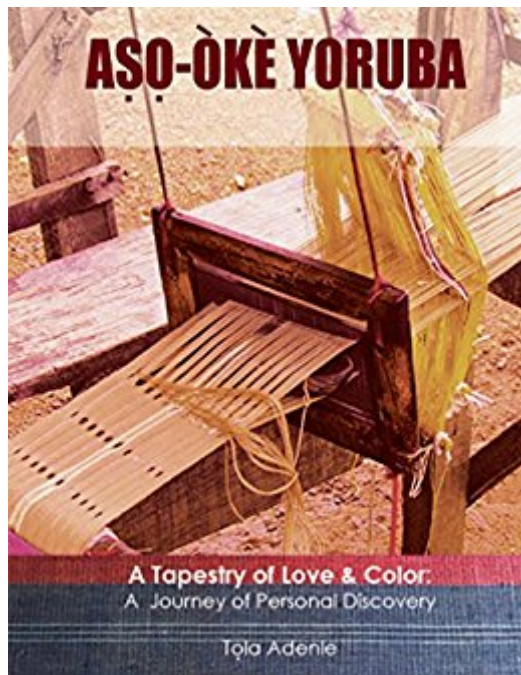


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Aso Oke Yoruba: A Tapestry Of Love & Color, A Journey Of Personal Discovery



Synopsis

Aso Oke Yoruba touches the history of the hand-woven textiles of the Yorubas who live in Southwestern Nigeria. As reference, the Yoruba homeland is the origin of the world-famous Ife Heads/Ife Marbles, bronze and terra cotta art that stunned the Western world when excavation started in the early part of the 20th Century. The pieces depicted by the Yoruba civilization were first dismissed as impossible-to-be African but must be the products of a lost European civilization because of the life-like very refined appearance of the ancient finds! The Ife Head, one of several sculptures excavated at Ile-Ife, the spiritual home of all Yorubas, is dated from over 600 years ago, and continues to wow visitors at the British Museum where it is held. The Yorubas produced many of such Heads from copper alloy and terracotta which depict their kings to astounding proportions and accuracy. Aso Oke is the bequest of the great Yoruba artists of the Medieval era to world's textile technology, textiles whose popularity has now grown beyond Nigerian shores. The textiles, especially the old and some ancient ones, are the subject of this modest but ambitious effort of a Yoruba-born writer whose great love of the textiles led her to want to share the pride of her people with the world. The modern mostly-commercial aso oke are also prominent in the book. There is a brief mention of inferior factory-manufactured imports from China which are unable to match even inexpensive hand-woven aso oke. Aso Oke Yoruba is profusely-illustrated with photographs showing various uses of the textiles, modern uses, upright and vertical loom weavers at work, including photographs from Iseyin - "Home of Aso Oke" - in Oyo North of Yorubland, and various aspects of the textiles, including photographs of magnificent male big gowns, female pieces and pieces of clothes from Yorubas' Sericulture past. While the author hints at this being planned for a coffee table book, Aso Oke Yoruba as presently published delves into many areas that will interest not only aso oke aficionados who will love the photographs but the depth of literature should make it a veritable guide for students of Yoruba History and Culture not only in Nigeria but to people of Yoruba ancestry in places like Cuba, Brazil and other such places.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Tola Adenle's Aso Oke Yoruba is everything the subtitles call it: "A Tapestry of Love and Color" as well as "A Journey of Personal Discovery". The photographs--mostly the handiwork of largely untrained photographers--are beautiful and effective, and they do the colorful and stunning fabric justice. Tola Adenle carries her readers along on her journey of self-discovery, a worthwhile and timely contribution to the never-ending discoveries that the ancient continent typically yields. This work is not only a labor of love but also a necessary and particularly timely book in many ways. It "like the efforts of ancestors such as of Fela Sowande, Ulli Beier and of recent, Sophie Oluwole" reminds us of the Yoruba people's boundless ingenuity. Bringing this reminder to the fore of our consciousness has become necessary once again in 2016 as the pressure on traditional and cultural ways nowadays is similar to what the natives experienced when the returnees and colonialists established residency in Lagos a century or so ago. Due largely to their need to dominate the natives and their natural urge to compensate for the abject lack of knowledge about their new environment, the returnees and the colonizers vividly displayed intolerance and intense dislike for everything native--the political systems, religion, arts, music, fashion and indeed the language. The schools which were run entirely by the missionaries ensured that students were thoroughly brainwashed as though cultural ways were incompatible with school learning. Within half a century, a new class would emerge, an elite, a "so-called sophisticated class with a tendency--as Fela Sowande once described them--"to forget the past and get away from their roots.

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