

Call for papers for the special edition of *Ife Journal of History*. The edition is due for publication before the end of the year.

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Special Edition of *Ife Journal of History*: Call for Papers

Theme: Rituals, Myths and Festivals in a Changing Context

Writings on three related, yet distinct concepts of rituals, myths and festival continue to draw debate concerning forms and nature. Ritual in the traditional climes consisting strictly of what may appear un-academic, has gained scholarly attention especially through the works of Bell (1997, 2008) and Parker (2007) among others. These works provide new insights into the dynamics of culture, religion, and personhood, yet expose the complexities inherent in its subjection to systematic enquiries by scholars (Bell, 2009: IX). While ritual has been approached mainly from the perspective of religion, its history, though written has not been paid more attention, particularly how they evolved and the changes in forms and functions and the processes it had passed through. Usually associated with the sacred, a term itself much in dispute, ritual also encompasses all repetitive practice and rhythmic actions (Schechner, 2007).

Myths have been subject of interrogation by C. G. Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell (Ellwood, 1999). Their works deal extensively with meanings and functions of myth, especially its social use in understanding societies and its politics. Their explanations that myths provide justifications for human world and help harmonize reality remain fundamental to our experiences of the past and modern times. The role of Myths in building and preserving civilization, maintaining religious order, answering question pertaining to life and providing meaning within and beyond cannot be overemphasized. The commonality of human experiences are expressed in myths. Myths represent humanity attempt to grasp the world around, search through the ages for truth, meaning and experience of meaning, clues for spiritual potentialities of human life and for significance (Campbell and Moyers, 1991).

Festival, like myth and ritual, is also connected to the sacred; religious belief of a people. At another level, festival allows for much flexibilities and innovations of cultures to adapt to modern realities that appeal to human minds especially when their roles in urban life and their place in development are examined. The role of Festival in projecting supposedly esoteric beliefs and turning it into global consumption through tourism is ever present. The justification to commoditize festivals is increasingly hinged on the necessity to explore it as alternative source of national income. Its susceptibility to adaptation as well as its accommodation of new realities presents problems to its authenticity and reliability to create historical narratives. To what degree in the light of the above does festival represent historical narratives or becomes a mechanism for setting agenda of economic income? Festivals serve as means to generate local pride, identity and income (Crespi-Vallbona and Richards, 2007). There is no denying the fact that festivals are rooted in historical experience but are increasingly dominated by economic motives as opposed to the historical context and perspectives they represented.

Rituals and myths, which traditionally should be in the purview of the sacred are being built and adapted to becoming festivals as many cultures seek to migrate their local beliefs to the realm of the global. For a country as ethnically diverse as Nigeria, what can constitute a national festival? In the light of the above, we welcome papers/scholarly articles from scholars of history, religion, philosophy, anthropology and sociology, political science, economics and

psychology. The papers could be general and specific on rituals, myths and festivals in Nigeria and other African countries. Areas of interest include the following:

- Conceptual (theories) and definition of ritual, myth and festivals
- Expanded meanings of rituals, myths and festivals (economic, political and religious)
- Rituals, myths and festivals as credible source of historical construction, deconstruction and reconstruction
- Invention/creation of national festivals in human societies
- Rituals, myth, festivals and their decisive importance despite modernity?
- Rituals, myths, festivals and political power in historical context.
- Rituals, myths, festivals in identity (local pride) and image making
- The sacredness of rituals, myths and festivals
- Comparative analysis/studies of rituals, myths and festivals
- Rituals, myths and festivals as mechanism for agenda setting
- Festivals and the building of community and national consciousness
- The place of rituals, myths and festivals in the public space

Other themes/topics not mentioned but related can be explored. Articles should represent original contribution to knowledge. Manuscript should be typed double-spaced with notes and references consistent with the Chicago Manual of Styles (16th Edition). Recommended maximum length of each article is 8000 words including notes and references. Manuscripts should be sent to aadesoji2@yahoo.com or aadesoji@oauife.edu.ng

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