

**PRESERVATION AND DIGITIZATION OF AFRICAN CULTURAL
HERITAGE: A REFLECTION ON OSUN-OSOGBO HERITAGE SITE IN
NIGERIA.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Attempts to preserve historical cultural heritage have gained prominence among historians and other practitioners worldwide. Keeping cultural heritage safe have both economic, historical and cultural process undertone. The importance of conservation of cultural heritage through digital tools has really gaining consciousness in Nigeria. Reason being that this cultural heritage has become an income generating asset to the nation's economic development through tourism. Cultural heritage is part of the communal treasures and historical artifacts of a people worth preserving for the sake of continuity and use of the future generation. Be that as it may, the economic benefits of preservation of this heritage are inconsequential compared to the intrinsic historical value of the heritage which is being preserved. Oral traditions, libraries, achieves, and museums are replete with similar collections in a variety of ways, presenting a vast body of knowledge accumulated over the years with the purpose of making these, collection accessible to the intended users. UNESCO, has been at the frontline of identifying World heritage sites globally, and have designated Osun-Osogbo in Nigeria as one. This site is considered as very important for hoisting some of the most spectacular natural monuments in Nigeria. Osun-Osogbo contain the heritage of humanity; the record of triumphs and failures, its intellectual, scientific, artistic achievements and its collective memory. While the indigenous preservation strategy is acknowledged, there is need for a more lasting and modernized form of preserving these priceless monuments and tradition for posterity sake. With digitization this cultural heritage materials (images, pictures, artifacts, texts) are converted from analog format to a format that can be read and analyse with the aid of digital tools such as digital cameras, audio-visual tools, and computer assisted methods. The emergence of digital technology has indeed changed the

approaches historians practice their profession and disseminate knowledge today. The question then is, how is this priceless cultural heritage (Osun-Osogbo) preserved through digital tools and what are the benefits? This paper examines digital preservation of the Osun-Osogbo cultural Heritage in Nigeria to ensure permanent documentation with the aids of audio-visual tools, photography, and computer assisted methods. This paper also examines the methodology and theoretical contributions of the application of digital tools in the preservation of Osun-Osogbo cultural heritage in Nigeria. Examines how digital history relate to the area of traditional historical scholarship and the importance of digitization of this historical cultural heritage in Nigeria.

KEY WORD: Conservation, Digitization, African Cultural Heritage Resources, Osun-Osogbo, Digital tools, Nigeria.