

## Traditional Terms, Spaces, Forms and Artifacts in Cultural Semiotics of Southwest Nigeria

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**Abstract :** The paper examined local terms used for spaces, forms and building practices in southwest Nigeria as cultural semiotics. Housing has more cultural meaning than mere shelter as shown in building terms such as 'roof over my head'. The study is significant in the study area because its people were traditionally orally centered until 'culture contact' led to graphical presentation and appreciation in the form of drawings which is a modern language of architecture. This semiotic study will facilitate the understanding of the wholesomeness of traditional building practices and thoughts. This is in the culture of the traditional multi-sensory appreciation of architecture, urban design and the arts. It will analyze traditional aphoristic words and terms which are like proverbs which are significant in language because of their metaphorical essence. Many of such terms in the dominant Yoruba language of the study area are oftentimes phenomenal reducing universal terms like the earth and heaven to the simple module of housing. These words could be worth investigating because they are symbolic serve as codes which are cultural tool of regional ethnic significance. Sussure's and Peirce's concepts of Semiotics in line with Eco's concept of semiotics of metaphor shall be deployed.

**Keywords :** traditional terms, spaces, forms, artifacts, cultural semiotics, southwest

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