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Ancient Igbo Door Found in Awka

By Chuka Odiwe

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The portal to an Igbo compound with a wooden carved door or gate and relief figures in earth from Northern Igbo communities, as captured in a photograph by J. Stocker in the early 20th century, highlights the rich architectural and artistic traditions of the Igbo people. Such doors and gates were often intricately carved with symbolic motifs, representing deities, ancestors, and elements of the community's worldview.

The wooden doors served as both functional and symbolic entrances to compounds, particularly those belonging to prominent families or leaders. These relief carvings, crafted from wood and sometimes enhanced with earth or clay, often depicted scenes of historical importance, spirituality, or cultural values. The figures and designs were deeply meaningful, illustrating the connection between the physical structure and the spiritual or social life of the Igbo people.

In Northern Igbo regions, these carved entrances also emphasized the community's artistic skills, showing the fusion of functional craftsmanship with aesthetic and symbolic expression. They stand as a testament to the rich heritage of the Igbo people, reflecting their belief in the protective and communicative power of art, architecture, and ancestral spirits.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR****Chuka Odi**

I'm a dedicated civil engineer with a passion for infrastructure development and community empowerment. With a strong background in engineering, my work focuses on creating sustainable solutions for urban and rural development projects. Outside of my professional career, I'm deeply interested in Igbo history and culture. I actively explores ways to impact society by using historical lessons to inspire and educate others about the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo people, aiming to bridge tradition and modern development.



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