THE FORMS AND AESTHETICS OF *UDJE* SONGS OF THE URHOBO PEOPLE

BY:

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MA/ARTS/12017/2007-2008

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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**BEING A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE POST GRADUATE SCHOOL,
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS (M.A) IN LITERATURE**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
FACULTY OF ARTS
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA**

SEPTEMBER, 2011

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "THE FORMS AND AESTHETICS OF *UDJE* SONGS OF THE URHOBO PEOPLE" has been written by me and that it is the record of my personal research work. No part of this thesis has been presented in any previous application for a higher degree or diploma at any university.

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_____ Date

CERTIFICATION

This thesis titled "THE FORMS AND AESTHETICS OF THE *UDJE* SONGS OF THE URHOBO PEOPLE" by BODEYAN OGHENEVWOGAGA, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters of Arts in English Literature, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

DR. (MRS) SADE O. OMOKORE (CHAIRMAN, SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE)	DATE
DR. ABEL JOSEPH (MEMBER SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE)	DATE
DR. A. A. LIMAN (HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)	DATE
PROF. A. A. JOSHUA (DEAN OF POST GRADUATE SCHOOL)	DATE

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to God Almighty for his infinite love, care and protection which he has given unto me all through the years I have lived on planet Earth, for his grace and mercy that made it possible for me to finish this work and my enduring hope for a great future ahead and also to my beloved father Chief B.A. Bodeyan (JP) (The Omamode of Agbon Kingdom) for the support he has continued to provide in the course of my education.

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In the course of human events things always gets done with the active encouragement and support of some other people and this thesis is not an exemption. It would be insincere to keep in anonymity the numerous people that offered assistance in this research work.

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ABSTRACT

This appraisal is on Udje dance songs of the Urhobo people. The study looks at the aesthetic qualities that abound in the Udje songs of the Urhobo people. The researcher analysed songs collected from field work and some collected by G. G Darah. In analysing the songs, the contextual theory was used as its analytical frame work which eventually brought out the forms and beauty that abounds in the udje songs. The research is divided into four Chapters, the first Chapter deals with the background to the study, the historical background of the Urhobo people, its theoretical frame work, statement of the research problem, aims and objectives, research methodology, limitation to the research and its literature review. Chapter two deals with the aesthetics of oral literature, the processes involved in the performance of udje carnival, the hybrid nature of udje and the poetic functions of udje. Chapter three is its analysis and Chapter four is the conclusion of the study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Preamble

The Urhobo people have a very rich culture which is noticeable in their unique dresses, food, building technology, marriage, naming ceremony to mention just a few. Songs and dances are common features at their festivals and ceremonies, which include *Eni* festival (celebrated in honour of a hunter who killed an elephant at Okpara), it is celebrated once in every twenty five years (25 years) and the amount of *Eni* festivals an individual experiences in life determines his/her age, *Emeteyavwo* festival (clitoridectomy), *Ore* festival (ancestral worship), *Omanuku* festival (celebrated in honour of a water goddess) and the *udje* carnival which is our topic of discussion in this thesis.

The *udje* dance is as old as the Urhobo people, the origin cannot be traced since the Urhobo people cannot state exactly how it started. The *udje* dance was originally performed by seven (7) of the twenty-two clans in Urhobo land, they include Eghwu (Ewu), Okparabe, Olomu, Arhavwarien, Udu, Ughievwen and Ughwerun. The dance is performed by these communities at different times and dates fixed by their members. In most cases it is performed alongside special festivals, for instance, the Udu and Ughievwen people are respected for the passion they have in the celebration of festivals which is accompanied with the *udje* dance performance. These annual festivals include *Emeteyavwo,* (clitoridectomy) and *ore* (ancestral worship). The Ughievwen exclusively celebrates the *Ogbaurhie*. The celebration of Ore usually takes three days of which the first day is meant for sacrifice to *Ekpako-ide* (Grand ancestors), the second day is for *Esemo* (fathers) and the last day is for

the worship and sacrifice to *Iniemo* (mothers). As the gaiety and celebration of *Ore* lasts, it goes along with the *Udje* performance.

In Udu and Ughievwen, the *udje* carnival begins some few days after the performance of *Ore* festival, since the *udje* dance is used as the grand finale to their communal festivals. Udu normally celebrates the *Ore* festival in the month of May immediately after the *Emeteyavwo* which begins in February and last for three months. The Ughievwen people mark theirs in the month of July, while the *udje* carnival comes up in the month of August in Ughwerun, while in Udu, it takes place between July and August. The communities in the other seven clans that perform the *udje* carnival are free to fix the date of their carnival on a day that is more convenient to them and is accepted by everyone in the community.

The *udje* dance lasts for seven days and it creates an avenue for two communities to go into a "battle of songs" or "verbal warfare" as Darah (2005) calls it. During the performance of the *udje* dance, 'battling' communities are free to use any derogatory words on their rival in order to bring them to disrepute. At the end of the 'battle', the winner always goes home celebrating, while the loser accepts his defeat in good fate. They also go home preparing for their next 'battle' believing that they will win.

During performance, battling communities search for flaws in their rivals, these flaws are used in attacking their rivals. If a community harbours prostitutes, their rival compose a song with the theme of prostitution to bring them to a fall. The composer of the *udje* dance songs can also decide to pick on a member of his rival community, who is of high status when he discovers a flaw in him. As a result, people from the *udje* performing communities try by all means to be well behaved, so that they will not be the topic of an *udje* song and this help to keep their clans in order. Unfortunately, in recent times, the *udje* dance is no longer

celebrated as a carnival. It is now performed at funeral, wedding, Coronations, anniversaries and special occasions of the Urhobo people. This is as a result of the decline in the cultural values and norms of Urhobo people, a lot of those who are supposed to be actively involved in this celebration have neglected it for the pursuit of western culture. So, what children once enjoyed in urhobo land, have gradually declined in the society. Recently, groups from the seven clans that once performed the *udje* carnival are trying to revive the carnival and return its past glory.

Historical Background

Urhobo ethnic group is found in present day Delta State of Nigeria. It is made up of twenty two (22) clans which include Abraka, Agbarho, Agbarha-ame, Agbarha-otor, Agbon, Arhavwarien, Effurun-Otor, Eghwu (Ewu), Evwreni, Idjerhe, Oghara, Oghor, Okere, Okparabe, Okpe, Olomu, Orogun, Udu, Ughelli, Ughievwen, Uwheru, and Uvwie, in six (6) Local Government Areas of Delta State. The history of their origin is contained in different tradition. The first of these traditions is that the Urhobo people were originally created and placed in their present location by God since the time of creation. Although this tradition has no documentation or archeological records, the people believe in it. Onokerhoraye (1995:34) asserts that:

> The Urhobo people have always lived in their present location from the time of creation. They are the aborigines coming from nowhere but living in their present territories from time immemorial.

The second tradition which is popular among the people is that the Urhobo people migrated from Benin in present day Edo State. the Urhobo people believe that they are the children of Prince Urhobo, the last child of Oba Ogiso. Therefore, they are the decendants of the royal family of Binin. It happened that the Benin people, during the reign of Oba Ogiso experienced a draught that lasted for three years. Oba Ogiso consulted the gods for a

solution; the gods in turn asked that the blood of the son of the land should be sacrificed to him. Prior to that time, the blood of slaves were used for appeasing the gods. According to Edjoor (2005:10), Oba Ogiso and other top Benin chief "asked their junior (sic) brother 'Urhobo' to produce someone for the sacrifice." Urhobo was not pleased with the decision of the gods and that of Oba Ogiso, so he asked his people and children to leave Benin. This led to their migration to their present location in Delta State.

There are other traditions about the origin of Urhobo people; some believe that they originated from Ife in Yoruba land. Although, like the first tradition, this was not documented, a lot of Urhobo people hold to this tradition. Yet, another tradition of Urhobo migration states that the Urhobo people originated from Sudan and Egypt. This belief is corroborated by Arawore (1940) who is quoted in Onokerhoraye (1995:34):

> The Urhobo for the first time came from Egypt, left some of their people on the Lake of Chad, halted for a time at Ile-Ife, had a permanent abode at Benin and finally were driven to the swamp of the Niger Delta.

Urhobo people cohabit with other ethnic groups such as the Isoko to the South East, the Itsekiri to the West, Benin to the North, Ijaw to the South and Ukwani to the North East. Their major occupation is subsistence farming: food crops such as cassava, yam and cocoyam are produced. Their major cash crops are palm produce and rubber. Fishing and lumbering are also carried out on a small scale.

The Urhobo people have the family as the smallest unit of their social organisation. The combination of different families make up the quarter, the quarters combine to form the village while the combination of different villages forms the clan. At the family level, the father is the head, while at the village and quarter level, the eldest person in the community is

the head, at the clan level, the Ovie (king) is the head. Ikime (1969:15) further describes the social organisation of the Urhobo people:

> The social organization of the Urhobo and Isoko is best studied under the context of the village, for the village constituted the most effective social and 'political' unit. The Urhobo and Isoko had a system of age grade or Itu (singular Otu) as they call them.

In Ikime's assertion, each of this age grades is organized in a way that each knows their duty in the village and each has a leader. These age grade include Otu Imitete, Otu Eurawa or Uvbie, Otu lletu, and Otu Ekpako, which is the highest age grade and they also produce the leader at the village level.

About the Study Area

The two communities selected for this study are the Udu and Ughievben clans. These clans are located in the south eastern corner of Urhobo land and are both found in Udu Local Government Area and Ughelli South local Government Area of Delta State respectively. The two clans are bound by the Forcados River on the west, the Okpara Creek on the east and the Warri Ughelli highway on the northern boundary. The average Urhobo people refer to both clans as the Ughievben people, since both clan speak a similar dialect referred to as the Ughievben dialect. Their major occupations are farming, fishing, palm oil production and rubber tapping. Due to the establishment of the Delta Steel Company and Oil companies like Shell and Chevron Nigeria Limited, the citizens of this region have abandoned these occupations to work in these big firms and a lot of them have migrated to the City in search of better employment and living which is offered by these big firms. This has in turn reduced the number of youth that partake in the performance of *udje*. As such it has also affected this research work since getting those to perform the dance became a problem because of the limited number of people that take part in *udje* performance.

Statement of Research Problem

The *udje* dance songs of the Urhobo people have played a unifying and entertaining role in the economic, political and social life of the people from time immemorial. However, the present generation has neglected the rich cultural lore that is found in *udje* dance due to a strong influence of westernization in its varied forms. This eventually gave rise to the study of *udje* songs by notable scholars like G. G Darah, J. P Clark, and Tanure Ojaide. They all carried out their research on different aspects of the songs. J. P Calrk in his 1965 research examined the difference that exixts between the English poetry tradition and the oral nature of African poetry through the evaluation of *udje* songs. G. G Darah examined the songs as good examples of satire while tenure Ojaide in his study brought out the focus aim and objectives of the *udje* songs. These scholars have studied some of the aspects of udje songs but have neglected others and this thesis extends this research further by focusing on, among other things:

- Recording and translating the *udje* songs thereby preserving them from extinction
- A detailed discussion, of the aesthetics as found in the *udje* songs.
- A detailed analysis of the poetic elements found in the *udje* songs.
- This research will also hylight the various poetic forms of the *udje* songs

Aims and objectives

This thesis will focus on the aesthetic value of the *udje* songs of the Urhobo people. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Highlight the stunning beauty of the *udje* songs, by evaluating the various characteristics of oral literature that abound in the selected dance songs.
- Foreground in detail the various aesthetics of the *udje* songs.

- Highlight the generic nature of the *udje* songs
- Delineate the convergence and divergence between the earlier works of *udje* artist and the contemporary or hybridized *udje* dance songs that are presently in circulation.

Reseach methodology

In the course of the research, the primary and secondary sources of data were used. The Kashim Ibrahim Library of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Delta State University Library, Abraka were consulted; the internet was also of great help to this research work since information was also sourced from the net. The bulk of the information used in the development of this work was gotten through interviews with representatives of the *udje* communities and renowned *udje* practitioners and elders from the performing areas of the *udje* carnival. Since the *udje* dance is going into extinction, the performances were done by groups from the Udu and Ughievben communities who are trying to revive the performance back into the Urhobo communities. The choice of songs was that of the performing groups, each groups produced songs that they felt are their best composition. Songs were also gotten from recorded texts from these various groups, examples are the songs by the Onorume Musical Ladies from Egini in Udu clan and some songs performed by the Blessed Band group led by Egbeku Kenairu of Ughevwu, both in Udu and Ughelli South Local government area of Delta State respectively. The researcher also consulted and analysed some field work collections of *udje* dance songs by G.G Darah entitled *The Battles Of Songs; Udje Tradition of the Urhobo*, J.P Clark Bekederemo entitled *The Poetry of the Urhobo Dance Udje* and Tanure Ojaide's work entitled *Theorizing African oral Poetic Performance and Aesthetics: Udje Dance Songs of The Urhobo People*.

Limitation of the Study

This research work was carried out at a time when the hybrid version of the *udje* performance has gone into circulation. As such, most of the performers of the *udje* tradition are those that are trying to revive the *udje* tradition in the various performing communities and these people have also been influenced by westernization. Contact with western culture has led to the neglect of some important parts of the performance, like the ritualistic and competitive aspects. Some of the *udje* artists even go as far as calling themselves evangelists like Evang. Egbeku of the Blessed band Musical group, which was not so in the past; in fact, the original performers of the *udje* tradition were chief priests (*ose-ejo*) or loyalists to the *Uhanghwa* Shrine.

During the process of recording the field work, we also encountered some unforeseen problems. The first of these was getting someone to cover the occasion and when we finally got one and started recording, the camera developed a problem and the recorded work was lost. We had to start the recording all over again after fixing the camera. This made the *udje* performers to be tired and their best were not fully achieved during their performance, they had to neglect some of the dance steps, as such performed just the music in some of the performing sections.

Scope of the Study

This research work will focus on the *udje* dance songs of the Urhobo people. There are seven clans that perform the *udje* dance among the Urhobo people. Nonetheless, these clans acknowledge the fact that Udu and Ughievwen are the founding fathers and the best

performers of *udje* dance. As a result, majority of the songs used for this study were colleted from these clans.

Justification of the Study

The oral tradition, culture, festivals and dance of the Urhobo people are gradually going into extinction due to the influence of imperialism, which was introduced by globalisation into our society. Imperialism served as a veritable tool for the denigration and condemnation of African values no matter how useful they may be in serving local needs and solving problems peculiar to Nigerian situation and supplanting them with western socio-cultural values that are incapable of meeting local demands and inconsistent with the local orientation. Globalisation is a tool of imperialism which Nye (2002:1) quoted in Ruorke (2008:131) refers to as "the 'dynamic shrinking' of the factors that divide the world economically and socially". This shrinking means coming together, making the world a global village, the western world uses globalization to transfer their modern culture to other developing nations of the world where traditional cultures are still in vogue.Youths in developing nations copy these modern western cultures and neglect their beautiful ways of life.

This research work in turn, will help promote the *udje* traditional culture of the urhobo people, by focusing on the *udje* tradition bringing out the importance of the *udje* songs, its nature and form and the aesthetic qualities and beauty of the *udje* songs of the Urhobo people.

Contextual Approach as Analytical Framework

The study of oral literature has given rise to different theories which are used to get a better appreciation of oral literary texts and some of these theories of orature are the

structuralist, evolutionist, the functionalist, psycho-culturalist, diffussionist and the contextualist. But for the purpose of this study, we are only interested in the contextualist approach to the study of orature.

This approach was first developed in language study by J. R. Firth in association with Brownislaw Malinowski. These critics, according to Lyons (1977:607), are of the view that:

> Every utterance occurs in a culturally determined context-of-situation; and the meaning of the utterance is the totality of its contribution to the maintenance of what Firth here refers to as the patterns of life in the society in which the speaker lives and to the affirmation of the speaker's role and personality within the society. In so far as any feature of an utterance-signal can be said to contribute an identifiable part of the total meaning of the utterance, it can be said to be meaningful. It follows that not only speech words and phrases but also speech sounds and the paralinguistic and prosodic features of utterances, are meaningful.

This approach is very close to the functionalist view, in the aspect of the meaning of an utterance being the totality of the contribution to the maintenance of the pattern of life, which is one of the roles the functionalist ascribed to the study of oral literary text or orature. But in the case of the contextual critic, other than the utterance contributing to the maintenance of the pattern of life, to derive meaning from an utterance, the speech words and phrases are not the only important aspect to consider but also the speech sounds and the prosodic or paralinguistic aspects which comprises of the tone of voice, whispering or even mimicry that contribute to the meaning of an utterance.

The contextual approach to the study of oral litrature places prior attention on the need to study an oral literary text in their social environmental and cultural context. The word context is defined by Michael J. Toolan (1988:263) as:

> The non-verbal, extra-linguistic environment of that utterance which may be a crucial help to us as we try to make sense of the text. Context includes the people involved in a particular text e.g a speaker and addressees, the purpose of the speech or writing, the proximity or other wise of the participants, and so on.

Context in the above assertion means the extra-linguistic environment of the utterance, which involves the activities of the oral artist and his audience, their environment and social

organisation, which is also a determinant factor when ascribing meanings to oral texts. In fact, to understand an oral text, a scholar of oral litrature must study the surrounding world of the text, it involves the activities that the oral artist carries out in order to send a message to his audience. This can also be embedded in the utterance, it can be the situation that gave birth to the utterance, what the utterance hopes to achieve, how the utterance was made and the social environment of both the oral artist and his audience. The contextualist also emphasizes the significance of the social context in relation to the utterance, that is its place in the life of those who partake in the performance of orature and this facts must be recorded alongside the text. Bascom (1965:281) corroborates this, when he states that:

> The first point I wish to discuss is that of the social context of (orature), its place in the daily round of life of those who tell it. This is not a problem in the strict sense, but rather a series of related facts which must be recorded, along with the texts, if the problem of the relation between [orature] and culture or the function of [orature] or even the creative of the narrator, are to be analyzed. These facts include: (1) when and where the various forms of [orature] are told; (2) who tells them, whether or not they are privately owned, and who composes the audience; (3) dramatic devices employed by the narrator, such as gesture, facial expression, pantomime, impersonation, or mimicry; (4) audience participation in the form of laughter, assent or other responses, running criticism or even encouragement of the narrator, singing or dancing, or acting at parts in a tale; (5) categories of [orature] recognized by the people themselves; and (6) attitude of the people toward the categories.

Bascom in the above assertion have succeeded in mentioning the various poignant fundamental issues which a scholar using the contextual approach to the study of oral litrature should watch out for in his analysis of the oral text.

The contextual critics posit that scholars who are studying oral litrature should endeavour to study it in a way that the historical and cultural details of the text are examined. The meaning of the text should not be achieved in isolation, the oral artist and his orher audience should be given due consideration when ascribing meaning to a text, the people whose past and present environment is represented should be considered and the role of the

oral artist and the audience in the performance of the text should also be given adequate consideration.

In consideration of the above theory, a contextual approach to the study of the themes, functions and aesthetic devices of the *udje* dance songs will be more suitable for this study. Although, some of the other theories of oral literature are applicable to the study, but they only view, study an aspect of the *udje* dance and neglect the other parts. Examples are seen in the structuralist approach which study is concerned with the structure, which is quite limiting, because it neglects the social and historical context within which oral litrature operates. For the functionalist approach, it is also considered inadequate because it pays attention only to the functions of oral litrature in our society and ends up neglecting some other parts of oral litrature, like the occasions on which they are used, or knowing the age, sex and status of both the oral artist and his audience, even the context in which the oral piece appear is of great importance. The evolutionist is also not suitable because it based its analysis on the fact that oral litrature developed from a single species, there by standing or rooting their theory on Darwin's theory of evolution. These critics ended up neglecting some other important functions and aspects of orature in our society.

We thus adopt the contextual approach to our study of the *udje* songs because it will help us in bringing out the diversity of the *udje* dance in terms of its subject matter, its various aesthetics, its educative purposes, its stylistic aspects, its form and the functions it has to play in the society where the *udje* dance songs are found.

Literature Review

It is pertinent to note that not much work has been carried out on the *udje* dance songs, but scholars like J. P Clark, G.G. Darah and Tanure Ojaide in the course of their

studies have carried out some field work on the songs and have consequently published their findings in books. Clark's article titled "poetry of the Urhobo dance *udje*" published in number 87 of the *Nigerian Magazine* in 1965 was the first work on the *udje* dance tradition. In this article, Clark was out to examine the difference that exists between the English poetry tradition which he was raised during his studies at the University and the oral nature of African poetry which he was born into, by using the *Udje* dance songs for his study and at the end he brought out the astonishing beauty that exists in African oral poetry through the evaluation of the *udje* dance songs. G.G. Darah also did a field work on the *udje* dance songs in1974 which he used for his doctoral thesis for the university of Ibadan in1982 titled the *Battle of Songs: A Study of Satire in Udje Dance Songs of the urhobo of Nigeria.* He later revised the thesis and published it in the book form in 2005. In this study, Darah analysed 36 *udje* songs, looking at their inter group rivalry and also looking at the songs as good examples of satire. In February 2010, Darah presented an inaugural lecture at Delta State University Abraka titled *Udje Song-poetry tradition of the Urhobo People and Oral Literature in Africa,* which was later published in the same year. This book is a compendium of the works of J.P Clark and Tanure Ojaide. It chronicles *udje* songs that are collected and translated in recent time. Still, Darah's foregrounding of "hybrid *udje*: continuity and renewal" is noticeable in this work where Darah identified that the *udje* songs can be transmitted into the global music and entertainment industry. In 2003, Tanure Ojaide published a book titled *Poetry, Performance and Art: Udje dance Songs of the Urhobo people.* In this book, he identified the various stages involved in the performance of the *udje* carnival and also identified the themes associated with the *udje* dance songs which range from murder, prostitution, madness, greed, miserliness and a host of others. Ojaide continued

his research into this tradition and consequently in 2007 he presented his inaugural lecture at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, United States of America, titled, *Theorizing African Oral Poetic Performance and aesthetics: Udje dance songs of the Urhobo people.* This was later published by African World Press in 2009. In this book, Ojaide sets out to draw from the *udje* performance a "scheme of ideas" which one can use to explore the *udje* poetic tradition and at the end bring out the focus, aims and objectives of the *udje* tradition in its totality.

This research work stretches the study of the *udje* dance songs further by hilighting the beauty that exists in the songs through a thorough evaluation of the earlier songs collected from field by Ojaide and Darah and the contemporary/hybridized *udje* songs which will be collected from field in the course of this research work. It is pertinent to note that the various elements and characteristics found in oral literature which add to its beauty or aesthetics also contribute immensely to the aesthetics of the *udje* dance songs and the carnival in general and this will be studied alongside the formal properties that are found in the songs. The various aesthetic qualities found in the *udje* dance songs will also be considered in relation to its functions as poetry and the roles it plays among the people that perform the *udje* dance.

Hypothesis

The *udje* dance has many elements that attract intrest. These include among others, the costume of the artists, the dance performance and even the stage that is used for the performance and the aesthetic qualities of the songs. For the purpose of this thesis, the area of attention is the dance songs, which will be subjected to poetic analysis and some features of oral literature that are found in the *udje* dance songs will be critically examined in order to

bring out the aesthetic values that abound in them. As such, this thesis will answer questions like:

I. What are those elements that bring out the aesthetics of the *udje* dance songs?

II. What are the poetic devices and elements that are found in the *udje* dance songs?

III. Are these songs didactic in nature, are they correcting anything in the community in which they are performed or not?

IV. What are those elements of Oral literature that are found in the *udje* dance songs?

Although this thesis will answer the above questions, the researcher will not limit the thesis to the above areas, if other issues that will make the research work a success arise, the researcher will not hesitate to give them an elaborate discussion.

Urhobo orthography

The Urhobo language has different dialects like the Udu, Ughievwen, and Uwvie dialects. But the official orthography of the Urhobo people is the Agbarho orthography which has been adopted in this research work. The orthography has a 25 letter alphabet, 13 diagraphs and seven vowels as shown bellow.

Alphabet:	a	b	d	e	e	f
	g	h	I	j	k	l
	m	n	o	o	p	r
	s	t	u	v	w	y
	z					
Diagraphs:	ch	dj	gb	gh	ghw	hw

	Kp	mw	ny	ph	rh	sh	vb
Vowels	a	e	e	I	o	o	u.

The alphabet also has 18 consonants which are b d f g h j k l m n p r s t v w y z.

This research used the Udu and the Ughievben dialects in the translation of the texts of songs, since the songs are composed and performed in these dialects. The Agbarho dialect which is the central Urhobo dialect was used for the translation of the other Urhobo verbal words or the non-poetic materials.

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CHAPTER TWO:

THE AESTHETICS OF ORAL LITERATURE

Aesthetics can be applied or used in the study of different aspects of human life. It is the additional value, beauty and quality an object enjoys, which is unique to it and as such sets it apart from all others. Silver (2002:91), while looking at the view of people on aesthetics, argues,

> People think about aesthetics when they ask why some things are beautiful and some are not, or whether there are basic rules for creating or interpreting good printing, painting, poems and music

The questions posed by Silver in the above quotation are the various questions that prompt the study of aesthetic. Why is an object beautiful and the other is not, how do we create good printing or imaginative work and do we have any pattern or rules to follow when creating or interpreting an imaginative work? In all, creative works have a specific part that is unique to it and it is this uniqueness of creative or imaginative works that bring out their beauty or aesthetics. Answering Silver's questions in the above quotation is a difficult task, but we should note that when attempts are made to answer these questions and analyse these answers practically with creative works, one will arrive at the aesthetics of those creative works. In essence, when studying the aesthetics of any object or thing, we should try and see if there are distinctive things that the author has added to its creation, if the object has some qualities that directly distinguish or set it apart from others, or if the author used a special rule or pattern in the creation of the object, these features are what make an artistic work unique or stand out among others. It is the additional beauty of the artistic work, which is what this research work is going to explore in the *udje* Dance Songs.

The term oral literature has raised a lot of issues in the past century. Europeans have argued that oral societies have no literature since they have not invented or perfected the art

of writing. Africa and other non-European societies have been classified under this group. These Eurocentric critics forget the fact that no society is devoid of literature. Moreover, literature is not always in the written form. In fact, literature can either be in the written or oral form. Anene Boyle (2002:11) defines literature as "an art which uses language as its medium irrespective of whether it is oral or written, as language can express itself in these two forms." From the foregoing, literature remains an imaginative creation, a work of art, whether it is in the written or in the oral form, as far as it uses language as its medium of expression and creation. Oral literature, according to Okpewho (1992:3), is that literature delivered by "words of mouth." It is spoken and not written, it is transferred directly from author, composer, oral artist to his audience. This spoken form of rendition by the oral artist is also seen as one of its major aesthetics since it directly sets it apart from the written form and as such makes it unique.

Oral literature, like the written form, is divided into three major genres, which are poetry, prose and drama. Each of these genres contributes immensely to the aesthetics of oral literature through their various characteristics. The characteristics of these genres of oral literature are highly interwoven; they are connected, and they cannot be separated from each other. This point was supported by Okoh (2000:51) when he suggests:

> But the major feature of our approach here is common with showing that such characteristics are far more closely interwoven than other scholars have signified. Our approach here is based on our conception of a people's oral literature as resembling an entire package. Thus, no matter the different names designed for each of them, the genres do share a number of affinities.

So, when looking at the features of one genre, it is like considering the features of all three genres. One major characteristic of oral literature is performance, without performance the text cannot be realised. Secondly, it is from performance that every other characteristic, which also make up its aesthetics, is derived. Anene Boyle (2002:23) asserts that "the basic

characteristic of oral literature is performance." Without performance, the oral text cannot be called an oral piece and if the oral piece is also reduced to the print form, the text is devoid of materials that classify it as an oral text. Malinowski (1926:24) in his study of the Trobriand oral narratives underscores this quality,

> The text of course, is extremely important, but without the context it remains lifeless. As we have seen, the interest of the story is vastly enhanced and it is given proper character by the manner in which it is told. The whole nature of the performance, the voice, the mimicry, the stimulus and the response of the audience means as much to the natives as the text;

An oral text needs its various elements for it to be complete, the combination of all these elements are what give the text its final meaning and these elements are what set it apart from the written form; they add to its aesthetics. Malinowski (ibid) goes further to stress this fact when he states that:

> All these elements are equally relevant; all must be studied as well as the text. The stories live, in native life and not on paper, and when a scholar jots them down without being able to evoke the atmosphere in which they flourish he has given us but a mutilated bit of reality.

The written form of an oral text is a "mutilated bit of reality" because the various elements that add life, aesthetics and meaning to the oral text cannot be written down, they are missing in the text and as such the work is incomplete. Take for instance, the audience. They cannot be added to the text, and when a reader explores a text, he does it in his own confine without the presence of the audience who add to the development of an oral text during performance. When an oral artist makes a comment the audience on many occasions question, challenge and add to such comments. This function played by the audience helps in the development of the oral text and will definitely be missing in the written form. Finnegan as quoted in Sekoni (2003:139) emphasizes the phenomena of the audience behaviour as "spontaneous exclamations, actual questions….emotional reaction to the development of yet another parallel and repetitious episode." So the role of the audience cannot be neglected in the development of an oral text. The audience also determine the duration of an oral piece; if the

oral artist is able to capture the attention of the audience, retain it and put them in a propitious mood then his performance will take a longer time. Similarly, if the oral artist fails to capture, retain and place the audience in a propitious mood, the duration of his performance will be shortened. The oral artist only achieves a lengthened performance through the manipulation of the feelings of the audience during performance and at the end gain a cognitive and emotive satisfaction of the audience. By cognitive satisfaction, the performer or oral artist should create images in his performance that suggest a clear meaning to some of the problems, concerns or values of his community, which should also be encapsulated in an aesthetic form. To this, Sekoni (2003:141-142) opines:

> Cognitive satisfaction refers mainly to the ability of the narrator/performer to relate individual images to a theme or a comment on a specific aspect of human behavior in his community

While emotive satisfaction has to do with the ability of the bard to manipulate the feelings of the audience during performance and in turn increase the interest and attention of the audience on the performance, to the point that he will not want to miss a scene. This also helps in reminding the audience of some scenes in the narration long after the bard has finished his performance and it also eliminates boredom from the narration during performance. Sekoni (ibid) has this to say of the emotive satisfaction:

> Emotive satisfaction on the other hand refers to the capacity of the narrator to manipulate the feelings of the audience during performance in such a manner that the members of the audience will feel encouraged to continue to direct their attention to the narrative experience while it lasts.

To Sekoni, the retention of the audience attention is only attainable through the emotive satisfaction, so without this, the bard has failed in his performance.

Yet another aesthetic appeal of oral performance is the use of formulas by the oral artist. Lord (1973:31) defines formula as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea." A formula is made up of the opening and closing formula, but in recent times scholars now acknowledge that there

are formulas in the body of oral performance. Bards sometimes use the formula within performance, that is, they use it to develop the oral text. This formula according to Finnegan (1970:381) is called "internal formulas." the use of formula during oral performance helps to hold the audience's attention. That is, it helps to keep the audience with the bard. Magoun (1953:447) argues that "oral poetry…is composed entirely of formulas, large and small, while lettered poetry is never formulaic." The reason for this statement is to show that the formulaic expression used by the bard is an aesthetic of the oral form of literature since it is missing in the written form.

The opening formula is used at the beginning of an oral performance by the bard to win, retain and know if the audience is ready for his performance. Finnegan (1970:380) ascribes the following to the functions of the opening formula in an oral performance:

> The opening formulas serve to rouse the interest of the audience, sometimes eliciting a formal response from them as well as setting the mood for the start of the narration.

Finnegan in the above quotation, did not only describe the opening formula, but went further to state that a response is expected from the audience, the response shows the readiness of the audience. If the audience fails to reply the Bard, he then realises that he has not won their attention and then he keeps on calling until they reply. He can only start his performance when he has fully won the attention of the audience. Across the country, Nigeria and Africa as a whole, the opening formula differs from one narrative tradition to another. There are hardly any two communities that use the same opening formula. It even differs among bards. To take us further, let us take some examples from some communities/ethnic groups in Nigeria:

For the Hausas:

Narrator: *"Gata nan Gata nan"*
Meaning: "here it is here it is"

Audience: *"Tazo mu ji ta"*
Meaning: "let us hear it"

Among the Igbos, their opening formula goes like this:

Narrator: "Any of *chaakpaii !, chaakwii! Takwii……*
Audience any of you! *Haa oyoo iya*

Enuani:

Narrator: *"Enye m unu uzu"*
Meaning: "I present you white clay"
Audience: *"I gwo a o lee"*
Meaning "when you make medicine make it effective"

And among the Yorubas, it goes like this:

Narrator: *Alo O!*
Meaning: "here is a tale"
Audience: *Alo!*
Meaning: "let's have the tale"

Finally, among the Urhobos, the people of our interest in this research, it goes like this:

Narrator: *"Iku yegben"*
Meaning: "What a fantastic story"
Audience: *"Yegben"*
Meaning: "Fantastic"

The closing formula on the other hand, occurs at the end of a narration. It is used to show that the narration has come to an end, it is the conclusive statement. Anene Boyle (2002:29) is of the view that the closing formula "ends the story. It enables the oral artist hand over, as it was, his creations, which is a communal property back to the audience for appraisal."

The oral text unlike the written one has no permanent author. The moment a composer finishes composing his song, he passes it over to the community and everybody in the community is free to use the composition without permission from the original author.

The original author on the other hand does not receive the glory for composing the oral piece, since it is believed that the material for the composition is gotten from the society in which the bard finds himself. The identity of the author is then forgotten and the text becomes the property of the entire society and is passed from generation to generation through performance. So, an oral piece is a communal property. Okpewho (1992:30) supports this view when he argues that:

> A proverb, a song, or a tale was the common property of the society in which it was found. Since these texts were handed down from person to person and from one generation to the next, the question of individual authorship was considered superfluous. We should, of course be honest enough to admit that the material of a large portion of the oral literature available in any community comes from the distant past and that the original author cannot be accounted for.

The use of humour during performance by the oral artist is another characteristic that adds to the aesthetics of oral literature. The Microsoft Encarta premium 2009 defines humour as "words or action intended to cause laughter. Humor is often categorized broadly as comedy, the humour of exaggeration or incongruity, and wit, the humour of analogy and word play." Humor is introduced during performance by an oral artist in order to retain the attention of his audience and release tension from his performance. When an oral artist notices that his performance is becoming too serious and tense, he uses humour to bring back laughter and free the text of stress. In some cases, humour is introduced into serious act and this causes a situation known as serio-comic which Okpewho (1979:203) describes,

> It is conceivable that the audience would be tickled at such a detail, especially in view of the rather serio-comic mix of activities that the narrator mirrors in his tale.

This fact is made clear in J.P. Clark's oral epic *Ozidi* where a comic statement was made by Temugedegede the uncle to Ozidi when Ozidi called him father and this was his response:

> Oh you people of Orua, have you come again to laugh at me? Since I grew up, I have fathered no child. That's how I am. I've found no cunt to fuck. That is how I have lived till this day….. (41*).*

To be fatherless in an African society is a serious issue, which is considered by all in the society as a problem that needs urgent attention, but Temugedegede who feels mocked makes a joke out of it with his use of language.

Another characteristic of oral literature is the use of the rhetoric question during performance. Abrams (2005:280) argues that:

> A rhetorical question is a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which is not asked in order to request information or to invite a a reply, but to achieve a greater expressive force than a direct assertion.

From the foregoing, Abrams makes the meaning of the rhetoric question clear and goes further to state the function which is to achieve an emphasis stronger than a direct statement. The rhetorical question might not always be used in the oral text for emphases, sometimes it can be used to introduce the audience to a significant turn in the story or it may be the performer's way of wining back the interest of the audience to the performance. Okpewho (1979:210) made this clear by saying that:

> Consequently, the rhetorical line may or may not be a way of introducing us to a significant turn or moment in the story; it may simply be the bard's way of reactivating his fancy or of rekindling the flagging interest of the audience

So, this means that the oral artist can employ different techniques in his narration in order to win the interest of the audience back to his narration and the use of the rhetorical question is one of these numerous techniques.

Preparation, composition and performance of the *Udje* carnival

The *udje* carnival/festival is a rich cultural tradition; it is endowed with different aesthetic qualities that scholars can choose to do an extensive research on any of these areas. A researcher can decide to study the costume, dance and the various songs performed during the carnival. But due to the fact that the *udje* carnival is going into extinction, very few scholars have done extensive research on this beautiful tradition of the Urhobo people. Scholars like G. G. Darah have collected a great number of these songs and have done

extensive work on them, looking at them as good examples of satire in (Darah 2005). He selected and analyzed about thirty five (35) of the *udje* dance songs. Tanure Ojaide has also collected a great number of these songs which he delivered at his Inaugural Lecture at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, United States of America, in 2007, titled *Theorizing African Oral Performance and Aesthetic: Udje dance songs of the Urhobo people*.

The preparation of festivals in Urhoboland generally begins with the weeding of the major roads and pathways leading to the town and market square after which the town hall and market square which function as arena or stage for the performance are cleaned. But in the case of the *udje* carnival, before these activities take place, there are some activities that must be carried out which are similar in all the seven (7) clans that perform the *udje* dance.

The first among these series of activities is the proclamation (*ore-eyorie*) for composers to start composing their songs. The composers and lead singers are the only ones who participate at this stage of the preparation; they are expected to have meetings at the *Uhanghwa* shrine which is the spiritual body in charge of protection of all poets/composers in Urhobo land. *Aridon* the god of memory and muse in Urhobo land is also consulted. *Aridon* requires an individual's service or sacrifice to have inspiration and also retentive memory, as a result, both the composer and performer serve *Aridon* for retentive memory during performance, while the poet serves *Aridon* for protection. Each of the groups that perform the *udje* dance is expected to have one *Uhanghwa* shrine. But in some cases, two groups from one community who have the same rival may decide to have one *Uhanghwa* shrine. The *Uhanghwa* is referred to as the attraction charm (*Oreren*) or (*Use*); it attracts people to the arena of the performance and also drives stage fright from performers during performance. The proclamation takes place either in the palace of the King (*Ovie*) or the

shrine of the chief Priest (*ose-ejo*). After the proclamation, messages are sent to the various quarters that are to participate in the carnival. The quarters immediately assemble at their *Uhanghwa* to begin sacrifice and composition. At the proclamation meeting, offerings of gin and kola nuts are offered to *Uhanghwa* and *Aridon* to seek their support for the upcoming carnival. Similarly, the composers of songs are given special benediction to make them compose good songs.

The next stage of the preparation is the review of songs. After the proclamation for song composers to start composing songs, composers begin to meet with their various group members to plan for a successful carnival. During these meetings, names of those to be attacked are listed and anyone with facts or who knows an aspect of the victim's life that is worth satirising exposes them and songs are composed to bring out the vivid profile of the character's life. When a community is under attack in the battle of songs, any member of that community can be used as a "satirical mask," and this person represents the whole community. Mr. Sekogo, quoted in Darah (2005:45) describes the exercise,

> The gifted composers met regularly at a place remote from living quarters. At the meeting they planned strategies for the festival. The group would identify persons to be attacked that year. Life histories of those listed for attack were reviewed. Someone in the group might start thus; that fellow I can't understand the life he lives. And another would say: his life is a curious one: let us direct one song at him. It could be the kinsman of s composer in attendance that these things were being said about; but plans were made in strict confidence like the activities of witches. Having reviewed a person's life the group decides on the name from the rival group to mention in the song. The faults found in the character reviewed were then foisted on the person whose name was mentioned. It was only after the entire song had been made that non-composers were invited to hear it. When the songs were performed in public, only those knowledgeable in the social history of the community would be able to identify the real target of the satire.

There are cases where the composer will have to create fictitious characters and link the character with a notable person in the community and this person can be used as a missile during battle. Although the accused is innocent of the charges, the composer has used it in achieving his goals. There are other situations where the composer will have to disguise and

visit his rival community in search of information that can be used in the composition of his songs. He can visit a friend in the rival community, hide himself in a place where he will not be seen and then listen to their discussion, information gotten from such missions are then used in the composition of his songs.

The next level is the composition of the songs. The poet (*ore-ile*) takes his time to compose his songs; it can take months for him to finally finish his composition. The composer of songs uses the materials gotten from his rival community for his composition. In most cases, they are usually not satisfied with the information gotten. So, they keep on sourcing for more derogatory information from their rivals. The poet also makes sure that none of the lines he has used in his performance appears in the songs of other groups, he ensures that his songs enjoy originality. The poet does not do the composition of songs alone; he calls for the assistance of other members of his group to assist him in adding to the beauty of his songs. When the songs have been fully composed, the poet calls members of his group and their family members especially those of them that have wives from rival villages and these songs are performed before them, in the farm at night to prevent other people from hearing the songs. If these songs are appealing to the members of their families, the composer (*oro-ile*) will know that he has done a good job and if not he will have to repeat his composition. They do not stop there, the group also rehearses the songs at night and before the day of the festival they perform the song at their *Uhanghwa* where people from their community can hear the song being performed and some members of the group will stand outside, by the road side, watching if these people will also enjoy the songs. Tanure Ojaide (2003:34) emphasises this point further when he argues that the poet (*oro-ile*) also asks for

the assistance of the wives of his group members and youths during the process of composing the songs:

> The poet's song is "straightened," so to say, by members of the workshop. If by chance, according to Ogbariemu who attended many of such workshops in his practicing days, there was a word or phrase that appeared in another song elsewhere, it was removed. There was to be no copying of words, and the song had to be a purely original composition. Usually at night they went into the bush by the palm oil press and sang out the songs before their wives married from other towns. The women identified songs that had language close to theirs and such songs were re-phrased. This rigor made *udje* songs highly crafted original poems that bore the stamp of the poet or his quarter. In at least Iwhrekan's case, sometimes the youth leader, *oghwuvwie*, asked a group of two to four young men to bring songs. After each had brought his, they sang them out. These songs might not be used, but the senior poet, *ororile*, could find a phrase, metaphor, or image that he would use in another song. These youths acted as research assistants to the *oro-ile*.

The above quotation illustrates the final stage of composition by the poet (*oro-ile*) and the ways which he checks the authenticity of the songs to be performed at the upcoming carnival. It is pertinent to note that at this final stage of composition, songs can still be changed, rejected or composers can be asked to rework their songs. This is done by *udje* groups because they do not want similar performance from their rival group. So, the songs go through rigorous screening before they are performed. From the foregoing, it is assumed that the *udje* songs have authors. But, once the songs are performed by the group, they are no longer seen as an individual or group product because everyone in the community is now free to perform it and the identity of the author is sealed or remains a secret for his own safety, because if the identity of the composer is known he or she can be attacked.

The final stage of the *udje* festival is the public performance, it is pertinent to note that the aesthetics of the festival is not found in the performance alone, the costumes of the festival also add to its outstanding qualities. The carnival does not have uniformed costumes; each of the participants is expected to appear in an expensive high quality loin cloth covering the waist down wards reaching the ankle. The male expose the upper part of their bodies, they use small bell (*Igogo*) which are stringed together and tied round the waist, which

produce special melody during performance. There is also the use of a cock feather (*allele*) which is steadied on the head of the performer with a belt or a colourful cloth. They also use a hand woven woollen fan (*adjudju*) in one hand and a handkerchief in the other. Coral beads are also woren round the waist and neck.

The grand finale of the festival comprises of the performance of those activities that were once performed in secret. The songs, theatrical grandeur and organisation which were once a secret affair are now performed for the public appreciation. The performance of the festival takes four (4) to eight (8) days in an ideal situation. But in some cases, where a problem occurs in the society, such as an epidemic or threat of war, it can take less than four (4) days. There are two appearances per day, in the morning and evening. But a community might decide to increase the number of appearance, depending on the number of groups performing in the festival. Due to the fact that we cannot easily give the detailed account of the eight days performance, we shall be looking at a morning performance narrated by Mr. Akpobaro Oghenefejiro, an *udje* renowned artist from Oghwrode in Udu clan on the 27 of Feruary 2010. It is of importance to note that the performance is the same in all the clans that perform the *udje* dance and the procedures for both morning and evening performance are the same.

According to Oghenefejiro, the first stage of the performance is called *Igbe-eseho* (summoning dance). At this stage, three men move to different parts of the community to summon the participants with drumming and songs, they also put a stop to every entertainment made by generous hosts to their guests. The drumming also draws the attention of spectators and in a short time a large crowd is formed. This large crowd of drummers,

participants and spectators move to the house of the *Uhanghwa* keeper in a dancing procession.

The second stage is known as the *Uhanghwa eyeren* (paying homage to *Uhanghwa*). On arrival at the house of the *Uhanghwa* keeper, the crowd forms a circle round the *Uhanghwa*. The priest prays for a successful performance by offering special incantations which goes like this

Egbe t' owovbin oma ke rh'ohwo
Igbe ben ohori hi
Ijije a mr'opha
Ohrunghe hrunghe reho-o

English A dancer knows fatigue when he has finished performing.
The caterpillar is never tired of dancing
Everywhere the bride goes she is complimented.
A spectator's duty is to watch and not harm.

When the *Uhanghwa* priest has finished his incantation, the lead vocalist licks some oil out of the oil lamp found at the *Uhanghwa* shrine. After this, three *Uhanghwa* ritual songs are performed and the crowd dance round the *Uhanghwa* shrine. Immediately after the *Uhanghwa* ritual, the crowd dance toward the dancing arena on a processional song. This process is called the *Igbe vbo kp'ada* (procession to the arena).

At the arena, spectators are already waiting for the troop of dancers and drummers in an already formed circle. On arrival at the arena, the crowd splits and the drummers and dancers enter the circle that has already been formed by the spectators. When the dancers and drummers have taken their places in the circle, three of their songs are performed with vigorous dancing. The dancers and drummers then move to the edge of the circle for the Master of ceremony to take over. The job of the Master of ceremony at this point is to direct the performers to their strategic positions along the circle. At the end of this arrangement three circles are formed, the innermost circle is formed by the dancers, the middle by

clappers and the outermost is formed by the spectators. At the end of the arrangement, the lead singer (*ebuole*) moves into the centre of the circle and he remains there throughout the duration of the performance. This process of positioning the participants is referred to as (*Igbe erhuereho*).

After the arrangement of the performers and spectators by the master of ceremony, the performing group take over the arena. The songs are divided into two, namely the short and the long narrative songs. The short songs are performed to warm up the performers and spectators, these songs bring them to an excitement state, they bring out the life and agility in both the performers and spectators. These songs are repeated severally with mild or no drumming and finally the songs give way to vigorous drumming and dancing. The long narrative songs (*ile-eshan*) which are performed after the short ones are divided into three parts namely *unuoha* (Introduction), *okparo* (the main song) and *ifuen* (conclusion). Drumming is limited in the long narrative songs (*ile-eshan*) to allow the audience hear and understand the abusive story that is embedded in the songs; it is only at the concluding part (*ifuen*) that a little drumming is allowed after which vigorous drumming, clapping and dancing begins. It is during the performance of the long narrative songs that the best of theatrical potentials is performed by the *udje* artist. At this point, the artist or vocalist is free to use gesture, mime and facial expression in the development of his plot. These theatrical features are what the audience use in distinguishing one artist from the other and they also contribute to the aesthetics of the *udje* dance songs. The *udje* artist can also recognise and sing the praises of eminent personalities that are present at the arena during performance. This act is just to recognise their presence at the festival. These songs are also performed at

the funeral of great men in the society and songs are composed to show the life achievement of the deceased person.

After the forceful singing and dancing there is always an interlude or break which is meant for the *udje* performers to rest and this interlude is known as the *udje edjuo*. This always occurs between two exciting dance sequences. During this period, a woman referred to as the *Aje udje* (the lady of the dance) is ushered in by one of the participants, the woman appears in an expensive cloth, coral beads, trinkets and she also holds a woollen fan (*adjudju*) in one hand. She is followed in by an assistant who also dresses in similar attire and she fans the *Aje udje*. The duty of the *Aje udje* is to fan the participants as they rest. So, she moves round the circle swinging her woollen fan (*Adjudju*) in a manner to show that she is cooling sweat from the participants faces as they rest while her assistant follows her from behind, singing praises of her with the following words.

Ironron
(You are an epitome of beauty)
Tota, wo j'udu bru we-e !
(Talk on, don't be afraid)
Wo f'avbaren hron
(You are our choicest representative!)

The moment the assistant stops praising the *Aje udje*, she (*Aje udje*) starts reciting the following words which the performers respond to in unison.

Aje Udje: *udje ishaka mi ni wado*
(Young dancers, I say well done)
Performers: *Iya !*
Aje Udje: *udje Oghwrode mi ni wado*
(Dancers from Oghwrode I say well done
Performers: *Iya !*
Aje Udje: *udje ighele mi ni wado*
(Young dancers I say well done)
Performers: *Iya !*
Aje Udje: *iiiiiiiiiiiiii*
Performers: *Ijeeeeeeee*

At the abrupt end of this action, the ladies (*Aje Udje* and her assistant), remain standing and the drummers immediately start a note which the ladies and the performers start dancing to. This action comes to an end with a cheerful shout of *"iiiiiiiiiiii, ijeeeee"* by both the ladies and performers. This interlude is repeated as many times as is desired by the performing group during a performance.

The concluding part of the performance is a repeat of all the songs performed, beginning from when homage is paid to the *Uhanghwa* to the *udje edjuo*. The moment the *udje eghwie* begins, an *Uhanghwa* piece is performed and the moment this song starts, the well arranged setting changes into a mass of crowd and they all move toward the house of the *Uhanghwa* keeper.where the *Uhanghwa* song is repeated again, but this time without rituals and incantations. At the expiration of the song everyone returns home to wait for the next performance.

Hybridization of *Udje* Songs

The *udje* performance has been influenced a great deal by the young generation since the 1960s. Prior to the sixties, the *udje* performance was mainly carried out as a carnival/festival where different performing groups from rival communities came to show their prowess and mastery of the tradition. At the end of the day, a winner emerges, which was always determined by the audience.

Due to the advent of colonialism, Christianity and the subsequent introduction of western culture, the new generation of practitioners of *udje* have neglected some unique aspects of the performance and thus introduced a new way of performing the *udje* tradition which Darah (2010:71) calls the hybrid version of the *udje*. One of the areas where this difference is noticed is the ritualistic aspect of the festival. One of the most important stages

in the performance of udje is the *Uhanghwa eyeren* (paying homage to *Uhanghwa*), where the chief priest (*Ose-ejo*) prays for the peaceful performance of the festival and also for the protection of the performers during and after the performance. In recent times the *Uhanghwa eyeren* has been totally removed, they no longer pay homage to *Uhanghwa*. Egbeku F Kenairu, a practicing *udje* artist from Ughievwu, corroborates this fact in an interview with him at his residence in Owvian on the 11th of March, 2010,

> The reason why the early *udje* artist involves himself with rituals is the competitive nature of the *udje* performance in the past, but now, we use it to look for money. They do it (rituals) because may be the man that is coming from the other street may do something to harm his rival, so everyone has to be prepared. But today, we no longer have rituals since the competitive part has been removed.

To Kenairu, the major reason for the ritualistic part of the performance by early *udje* artist is for protection. But in recent time, they no longer perform the *udje* tradition for competitive purpose; they do it for monetary gain. For this reason, they do not need any protection and as such the payment of homage to *Uhanghwa* is no longer important.

Christianity and westernisation gave rise to the abolition of the ritualistic part in the performance of the *udje* tradition too. The introduction of Christianity to Urhobo land made the youths to see the ritualistic part of *udje* and other traditional festivals as 'fetish' and as such they neglect the rituals in Urhobo tradition in pursuit of the western religion and culture, which erratically affected, not only the *udje* tradition but other cultural practise in Urhobo land. They no longer believe in the rituals and as such lost hope in the protective impact of the ritualistic performance, this is as a result of the remoulding of the mind of the youths by Christianity and westernization. In support of this observation, Kenairu said,

> Ages changese things , in the past, our elders were doing what they understand, by doing all those "fertish" things. They have their belief that all those things will help them. But I really believe now

> is that the ritual depend on you that is going to perform an *udje* piece, the ritual depend on you. If you don't have that talent, if you are not sharp enough, you will definitely lose; the rituals do not contribute to your success. Let me give an example, if two communities in a battle of song prepare charms for each other, during battle, no matter what happen, its only one of them that will win even though they both prepared charms for each other. At the end of the day a winner will still emerge. As such it is not the ritual that helps them but individual talents which are from God almighty.

The above statement by Kenairu shows his lost of faith in the protective power of *Uhanghwa*. He continued by saying that he composed a song with the theme of God's supremacy and that all gifts are from God. This song shows his allegiance to the Christian faith and not *Uhanghwa* as it used to be among *udje* practitioners. When looking at the influence of Christianity on the *udje* tradition, Tanure Ojaide (2003;90) argues that the introduction of Christianity to Urhobo land, helped in blinding the Urhobo people to the extent that they cannot "distinguish between promoting their culture and serving the so called false gods." to Ojaide, that one participates in the performance of the *udje* tradition does not make him a sinner or a lesser being. Instead, he is promoting and preserving his culture.

The *udje* tradition has also gone into churches. Churches in Urhobo land especially those at Udu where the *udje* tradition is mainly practised, have introduced the performance of *udje* in their churches. This is done so that they will be able to keep their converts and win more members to their churches. The type of *udje* that also emerged as a result of this is adulterated; the abuses that were originally meant for rivals are now being directed at Satan. As Darah (2009:79) opines:

> Church organizations founded and managed by patriotic Urhobo clergy have produced hybrids of Christian music and *udje*. For example, the God's Kingdom Society (GKS) founded in the 1930s by St. Gideon Urhobo has adopted *udje* song idiom to support its music. During its annual Feast of tabernacles, *udje* dance performance is featured. Many adherent to GKS are fron Udu/Ughievwen district of Urhobo where *udje* has been premier dance form.

Another major change that took place in *udje* tradition is the conversion of songs that were once satiric in nature into praise songs. The original form of the *udje* tradition is satire,

although, there are some praise elements in the songs. When an *udje* artist tries to aver himself or a member of his group, he does this by singing praises of theirselves and condemning their rivals by bringing out the flaws that he has discovered in his rival's character during his research. But in recent times, the *udje* artist only sings the praise of people and when they eventually perform the satirical songs they do not direct them to one specific person as it used to be in the past, the satirical songs of the modern *udje* artist are always generalised. Those satiric features that were once directed to specific individuals which were either fictional or non-fictional that added to the aesthetics of the *udje* performance, are now missing in the songs that are now performed by the modern artists.

***Udje*: Serving the Purpose of Poetry.**

Literature has three major genres of which poetry is one. These genres have different functions which they perform in society. In most cases these various functions help an individual or give an individual a better understanding and appreciation of his or her historical, social and cultural milieu. These various genres of literature are facets in which a literary work appears and they are the traits that actually characterise literature. R.N. Egudu (1985:3) argues that:

> Art has a number of facets of which three are major: the novel, drama and poetry. Each of these shares in the essence of literature as method and has those traits which characterize literature. But each has its own central peculiar method of suggestion and invention: for instance, the novel suggests mainly by an invented story or series of stories; drama by an invented action or series of actions; and poetry by invented pictures or images.

Our concern here is poetry. Egudu in the above quotation has mentioned the various genres of literature and the method they use in achieving their goal, it is pertinent for us to know that each of these genres also borrows materials from each other during invention since they are all from one entity called literature. To take us further, we will be looking at the purpose of

poetry and how the *udje* dance songs effectively perform these purposes and thus stand as purposeful poetry.

Poetry as a field under literature has been defined by different scholars, each defining it from the way they perceive and understand the field. T.S Elliot an Anglo-American, as quoted in Maduka and Eyoh (2000:14), says "Poetry is the assertion that something is not true but the making of that truth more fully real to us." The truth that we try to ignore in society is pointed out by poetry. Poetry paints this truth with words or gives it better creation with the use of words that all in the society may see, appreciate and react to it. Looking at *udje*, it is defined by Ojaide (2009:2) as:

> a unique type of Urhobo poetic songs composed from often exaggerated and sometimes fictional materials about either the rival/opposing side of the community or oneself and are performed with music and dance by rival quarters, village or towns on an appointed day during a festival time with large audience in attendance.

The process of exaggeration shows that the truth is painted, that is, made "more fully real," done with the use of words as in poetry. It is pertinent to note that poetry also uses fictional materials during creation which are made to look real. With this, we come to the definition of poetry by Sir Phillip Sidney, quoted in Scott (1965:225):

> Poesy therefore is an art of imitation for so Aristotle termed it in his Mimesis, this is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth-to speak metaphorically; which this end to teach and delight.

In the above definition, the word 'counterfeiting' shows that the work of poetry can also be fictional as that of *udje*. Counterfeit according to The Micro Soft Encarta Dictionary 2009 is something "forged, made as a copy of something," it is not real, it is fictitious. Looking at *udje* it is composed from the same fictitious materials as poetry.

The major purpose of poetry is the creation of beauty, communication of thought and emotion. R,N. Egudu (1985:11) argues in favour of the above. He also says that the purpose of creation of beauty is unique to poetry:

> This purpose, therefore, of expressing thought and feeling can be considered secondary. The purpose which belongs most uniquely to poetry is the creation of beauty which generates pleasure. Earlier on, we saw that it is not the thing said, but the method or way in which it is said that characterizes poetry.

From the above quotation, Egudu mentioned the various purpose of poetry; he also mentioned that poetry does not pay too much attention to what the poet is saying but how the poet has created his work. This segment of the research will look at these various purposes and how the *udje* dance songs have perfectly performed them.

Udje songs as aesthetics

The major purpose of poetry is the creation of beauty. Allen Poe as quoted in Egudu (ibid) defines poetry as "the rhythmical creation of beauty." S.T Coleridge also quoted in Egudu (ibid) argues that "poetry has for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; it is the anti-thesis of science." That is the purpose of poetry is not to say the truth. Gerald Bruns (1974:25) argues that "the knowledge which characterizes poetry (or any other art of language) is not the knowledge of truth but skill" that is, it is not what is said but how it is said. This does not mean that we cannot find truth in poetry; it only shows that the truth in poetry is not as important as the manner and skills used by the poet. Poetic beauty is classified into expressional beauty which is realised by the special use of language especially imagery. The other is musical beauty which is achieved through the use of sound and rhythm. Imagery is the mental pictures created by poets in order to evoke memorable experience in the mind of the readers. These pictures are not created by means of drawing or painting; they are created by ornamented words.

Udje dance songs are adorned by the use of images by the artist. The songs are made up of images, which used to send message or word of abuse to rivals, and they are also used by the artist to profess his mastery of *udje* performance. They also use them in entertainment of their audience since these images evoke laughter, or create comic scene in the

performance of udje. Ojaide (2009;34) supports this statement when he says that "much of the laughter in *udje* songs derives from the imaginative figures embedded in the visual imagery." An example is seen in the song titled "Oloya" where Oloya and his wife Revukperi are satirised:

> Palm oil is Revukperi's pomade
> Which she robs on before going to bed
> Witness Oloya's love making style
> He would grip the chimney rack with one hand
> And grasp the bed frame with the other
> Rotten palm nut occupy one end of the bed
> While he lies on the other
> Bark of wood serves for his mat
> His pillow log of plantain sterm
> Ovon the fisherman dig for worms
> In Oloya's bed stead.
> Darah (2005:147)

The *udje* artist in order to bring Oloya, his rival to a fall during battle has made use of images, which are painted or drawn in the mind of the audience to show the filthiness of Oloya and his love making style. This is done to humiliate Oloya and bring him to a fall in battle. We will further discuses this element in our subsequent chapter.

Thought/Feelings

Thought and feeling are the other poetic purpose performed by poetry. Poetry as a method of artistic expression is to communicate thought or idea. Every poetic work must have some sense in them. Poets do not write because they feel like writing, they write from their inward vision, their poem must come from the depth of their unconscious, their thought. MacLeish (1960:5) argues that:

> The man about to be poet is a man lost in himself. He is not capable of outward vision but only of inward- an "eye in a fine frenzy rolling" doesn't see. He is a solipsist, a candle flame consuming its own fat, a pearl driver emerging blind and breathless from the ocean of himself.

MacLeish is saying that a poet must be someone that is lost in thought and is able to produce poetic works with sense. It must come from the innermost part of him spontaneously. According to William Wordsworth, "spontaneous overflow", pouring his thought and feelings out from the depth of his heart, soul and mind. Egudu (1985:13) opines "no sane poet says or should say nothing." And James reeves (1965:10) further opines that:

> The love of poetry must…… be an affair of the head. a two year old may fall in love with nursery rhymes for their pretty sound, but unless there is some sense in them, something to appeal to his dawnly intelligence, his love will not take root.

In all, for a poem to be appreciated by even a child, there must be some sense in it, that is, it must send a specific idea to his readers or the general public.

If we take the *udje* songs into account, we will see that the *udje* artist does a lot of brain work before he finally performs his songs in the public. The *udje* artist starts his brain work from the period of his composition, review and finally performance. The rigorous screening that the *udje* artist goes through before the songs are finally performed is a way of making sure that the songs performed make sense to the community. No *udje* song is lacking in sense, they all have an idea which is being passed to the audience. Let us consider an *udje* song titled "Christian harvest fraud"

> Another season was due and Christians called a congress
> Agreed to make annual harvest offering to God
> The harvest envelopes were distributed throughout the town
> Truly you want to celebrate annual thanksgiving!
> I am a messenger of *Uhanghwa* ; I am not afraid to sing
> I am a messenger of *Uhanghwa*; I am not afraid to perform
> It is the same God that created Christian and non-Christian
> God does not discriminate
> Yet when Christians represent non-christians, the image is always a black one
> With grotesquely elongated fingernails and toenails
> Even the nose is made deformed
> The wings too are filled with thorns; hear the propaganda of Christians:
> "When non-Christians die, they languish in everlasting fire
> But when Christians die they enter into paradise
> Where he lives in a world of bliss and abundance"

Yet news reached us that Ejaivbo who went bush burning
Was burned by fire
We have seen the whole truth, their hypocrisy is exposed
Ejaivbo the head of Christians was first to surfer hell fire!
Hear, hear a marvelous tale !
Darah (2005)

In the above *udje* song, the *udje* artist has successfully discussed private, public and universal idea. The poet starts with his own private life, by claiming and averring his position as the messenger of *Uhanghwa*, as such he is not afraid to perform, since he believes that the protective power of *Uhanghwa* is with him. The poet goes further to discuss a universal idea, which is how Christians worldwide view non-Christians, associating them with "black image." Another universal idea discussed is the issue of Christians dying and going to Paradise (Heaven) while the non-Christian die and go to Hell fire. In fact, the song is loaded with different ideas, universal, public and private ideas.

To take us further, this work will be looking at feelings/emotions; thought and feeling are so closely related that one cannot exist without the other. The poet is the mouth piece of his fellow citizens, he is not an island and he is directly involved in the happenings in his environment. As such he cannot be separated from his environment, he is a part of it and is directly involved, affected with the happenings in his environment which creates experience in him that later give rise to emotions or feelings. These emotions/feelings created can either be pleasant or unpleasant, favourable or unfavourable which eventually determine the tone of the poem. The *udje* dance songs have been able to perform this purpose of poetry perfectly; the songs at all times tell the mood, feelings and state of heart of the poet, as Egudu (1985:17) states,

> Emotion is not just as important as thoughts expressed; in fact it is more important, for it i.e feeling more than idea which commands the interest of the reader and makes him participate fully in the poet's experience

In essence, what Egudu is saying is that feelings put the reader in the position of the poet; it carries the reader directly into the world of the poet, the life experience and state of mind of the poet. The *udje* dance songs have also performed this purpose of poetry; the poets have been able to pour out their feelings in the songs they perform. Since the udje artist sings out of their environment, they sing about the happenings in their social milieu and they are also affected by these happenings and problems in their environment. This is seen in the song below titled "The woe of independence",

News came from Benin blacks will govern themselves
That the white man has exploited us for too long and the UAC folded up in retaliation
The first few years were very pleasant
No one ever thought regret would be our lot
With independence prices of palm produce
would sour, said a slogan
Rubber trade would witness unprecedented boom,
proclaimed another
Oh, with corn they have lured a fowl into a trap
When the referendum time drew near
Kinsmen in foreign were summoned home
Demo, power, Zik, okokoroko (the cock)
The more you drown a calabash the more it floats;
The campaign fever gripped all
Barely two years after the roar roar of tax raids brought sleepless night to all
The police are in town, let no one brave the streets
The naughty children would taunt defaulters:
Kikighwo, run fast!
And a stampede would begin
Those who ran into gullies were innumerable in Urhobo
Those who sustained injury were a multitude
The swift of foot escaped paying for a year
A debt does not grow mouldy withage
Soon angry murmur filled the air:
Should one defecate in the home for fear of tax?
The so called civilization is now a curse
We move stealthily like a fox prowling for a stray fowl
Independence has brought us doom
Whilst we fumed over this letters came from Benin that the government was broke

Tax receipts for four years, six years were demanded,
For the poor, living became a nightmare
Our race for progress is now at bay
Demo okokoroko, one Nigeria! (emphasis Darah's)
(Darah 2005:212-213)

The above song has the tone of disillusionment and disappointment brought about by failed leadership. The poet started by saying that "No one ever thought regret would be our lot" since there is the great expectation, hope and faith on independence. The poet is expecting that with independence, where leadership will be by his fellow black brothers, the prices of goods will be reduced, the payment of taxes will be reduced as well or stopped totally and life will become easier and more comfortable for all, which were the expectations of all Nigerians at the dawn of independence. But instead, things got worse and it appears as if the colonial leaders were better than the black brothers who deceived them with a lot of promises of good life that would come with independence. He laments by saying that "with corn they have lured the fowl into a trap" with the promises of good things that would come with independence, their fellow brothers that became leaders have lured them into a more difficult situation. And the poet regrets the eventual advent of independence since it brought more pains and problems than joy. Instead of things getting better, they became worse "Independence brought us doom" and this gave rise to the feeling of disillusionment and disappointment which was experienced at the time the song was written and transferred into the song by the poet.

Due to the drastic decline in the *udje* performance and the massive influence of westernization, this festival has gone into extinction. Oral artists in the seven (7) clans that perform the *udje* dance are now trying to revive it in their societies. But they no longer perform this dance in the pattern mentioned above. They have now modernised the

performance by removing some of the ritualistic parts like paying homage to *Uhangwa* and also removing some of the parts that make the dance a carnival in order to suit the acquired western norms and values. The oral artists have even gone as far as modernising the costume by introducing the use of a shirt (*k'olokpa*) by the male performers. This introduction has reduced the theatrical beauty that the bare chest adds to the *udje* performance and the dance is now performed only as a traditional dance and also for the purpose of making money.

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CHAPTER THREE:
THE AESTHETIC VALUE OF *UDJE* SONGS

Poetry is from the Greek word, *poiesis,* which means a "making." It is a form of literary arts that uses language for its aesthetic and evocative qualities in addition to, or in lieu of, its apparent meaning. Poetry may be written independently as discrete poems, or may occur in conjunction with other arts, as in poetic drama, hymns, lyrics or prose poetry (Wikipedia). While aesthetics as earlier stated in chapter two is the additional value, beauty and quality an object enjoys, which is unique to it and as such sets it apart from all others. That is the special quality an object enjoys, which makes it outstanding. Walter Peter as quoted in Johnson (1969:3) opines that:

> Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative; and the definition of it becomes unmeaning and useless in proportion to its abstractness. To define beauty, not in the most abstract but in the most concrete terms possible, to find not its universal formula, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of true student of aesthetics

In essence, what Walter implies is that aesthetics cannot be given a universal formula; it cannot be appreciated in the same way by different scholars, in the sense that the beauty that abounds in an object varies from others, or the formulas used in analysing an object vary drastically from what can be used in analysing another. So, a student of aesthetics must look for an adequate formula which suits his study and that which brings out the special manifestation of the object he is researching, when carrying out aesthetic study. Johnson (1969:14-15) identifies form as the important quality in the study of the aesthetics of poetry, since it is the only thing that can be nearly separated from matter. He argues that:

> form is something that can be nearly separated from matter-form, say, the subject of a poem and the attitudes it expresses – and that form, so regarded, is all that is important, as far as artistic quality is concerned.

What he is saying is that when studying the aesthetics of an object the most important aspect to give adequate consideration is form; in fact Bolton (1953:1) says "the ingredient of beauty is form". Johnson further states that form is the only thing that is almost separate from matter, which is separate from the meaning of an artistic work. And he went further in Johnson (ibid) to identify the formal properties of poetry as:

> This view assumes that there are certain formal properties – in poetry, such things as rhyme pattern, rhythmic effect, what is now called 'verbal texture', diction, imagery, - that can be appreciated entirely for themselves, independently of the thought for which they are the vehicle.

Although one can study the form of poetry separately from thought or matter to get a better understanding and appreciation of a poetic work, it is good to pick out different elements including some from matter and others from form, since a unified study of both form and matter will give us a better appreciation of the aesthetics of a poetic work. Johnson (ibid) further posits that:

> The other- more plausible- view is that in our immediate experience of art, form and matter are not clearly separable. It may be convenient, when talking about a work, to pick our different elements including some under the heading of 'form', others under the heading of 'matter'. But in our immediate response, form and matter merge in the total impression it makes upon us…….Our total experience of a poem is indivisible: even though some elements may be more highlighted...

In essence, to get a perfect aesthetic study of a poetic work, the elements of poetry under form and matter should be given appropriate consideration. Though some of these elements may be "more highlighted" and others in "shallow" or may not appear at all, poetic aesthetics cannot be adequately appreciated when one of these (form and matter) is missing. The elements of form and matter in poetry that bring out the aesthetics of poetry which we are going to study in close relation to the *udje* dance songs are rhyme, onomatopoeia, internal pattern, repetition, rhetoric, symbols, images, simile, assonance, metaphor, alliteration, satire, proverbs and dirges. Ojaide (2009:36) asserts that "The poetic resources of the *Udje* dance songs are varied in the use of hyperbole, irony, deflation, personification, and other stylistic

devices meant to elicit laughter." Ojaide in the above assertion acknowledges the fact that *Udje* dance songs are embellished with poetic resources, which invariably add to the beauty of the songs. This agrees with Clark's (1965:286) claims when he argues that "the language of each song works by images, metaphors, similes, proverbs, and a whole gamut of figures of speech". All these poetic resources which enhance the aesthetics of *udje* dance songs, will be given adequate consideration in this section of the research work.

Rhyme in *udje* song

The first among the series of elements to be discussed is rhyme. Rhyme is one of the most obvious parts of the physical form of poetry; it is the similarity of words or sounds in the same or different line of poetry. H. W. Fowler quoted in Boulton (1953:45) defines rhyme as the "identity of sounds between words or lines extending back from the end to the last fully accented vowels and not further." So, in poetry, where an identity in sound is found, we are bound to have a rhyme. It can be within the same line or between two different lines. Egudu (1985:54) identifies three different ways to determine whether or not any two or more words rhyme in lines of poetry:

> The first is that the vowel sound in the word must be identical, as in 'share' and 'spare'. The second is that the consonantal sounds following the vowels must also be identical as in 'bang' and 'clang'. Thirdly, the consonants immediately preceding the vowels must be different as in 'share' and 'spare'; 'bang' and 'clang'; 'fan and ran.' Finally, the rhymed syllables should be accented alike as in case with 'purity' and 'security'.

The steps given by Egudu in the above quotation are what actually determine whether a poetic work contains rhyme or not. As such we will analyse some *Udje* songs in close relation to these steps and at the end determine whether they actually have what is referred to in poetry as rhyme."Nana" is a song composed by the Ighwrekan community in Udu, the

song was composed to bring down an opposing lead singer by name Nana from Edjophe community in a battle.

Leader: Edjophe featured an *Udje* dance but Nana was absent
The visitors were inquisitive
Where is the famous lead singer?
The loss of a low quality cloth caused his absence
What a scandal!
Group The same dress for work, the same-dress-for-outing
Washed and spread out to dry, was taken away by a kite
Ululation rents the air: when Nana wakes up
Who is he can control him?
The only child of a barren has died
When Nana woke from sleep he raced out nude
In search of a lost dress he was in distress
Nana in tears pleaded with the kite
Oh kite I prostrate, please have mercy on me

The song shows the poverty of the Edjophe people through the character of Nana. Looking at the *udje* song above, we will notice only one rhyme in line 12 which is "in search of a lost dress; he was in distress." The line is used to show the pains that Nana went through as a result of his lost dress, the rhyme occurs between 'dress' and 'distress'. Another song to be considered is a song by Majotan from Ekakpamre titled "*Uhanghwa* take care of me":

It is time again
For singers and dancers to meet and go to the lead singer
Should they get there
and find the leader alone by the fire.
Preparing his own meal
Wouldn't you be ashamed?
Uhanghwa, give thought to my plight
(Ojaide 2009)

Majotan, an Ekakpamre *udje* exponent in the above song is complaining of his poor state of life to *Uhanghwa*, whose protective power and ability he believes can make him rich. His poor state which is a form of humiliation has discouraged him from getting married to a wife who will prepare his meal. He then asks *Uhanghwa* to bless him, since his poor state of life will bring shame to *Uhanghwa*. He makes this clear in line 7 "wouldn't you be ashamed" so

he pleads with *Uhanghwa* to give thought to his plight. In the above song the rhyme is in line two, "for singers and dancers to meet" where the rhyme is between 'singers' and 'dancers'. Although we can find rhymes in some *udje* songs, a host of others lack rhyme. When these songs are given close study, we will find that those that lack rhyme outnumber the ones with rhyme and when we find rhyme in a song, it is in most cases an internal rhyme, which comes within lines, as found in the above songs. As such, we can say that this element is not pronounced in the *udje* dance songs

Onomatopoeia

This device is used by a poet to achieve great effects on his readers; it is the use of sound to suggest meaning in real life. Egudu (1985:54) defines it as "a speech sound which imitates an actual life sound and by so doing suggests the thing that makes the sound in life". Egudu suggests that onomatopoeic words in a line of a poem can only derive its meaning with its link to real sound. The *udje* dance songs are rich in such words. Oral composers (*oroile*) use onomatopoeic words to mock or folly his opponent in the battle of songs. The following lines are from an Ophorigbala song where a family in Ighrieogun is ridiculed:

Hardship is common, but some cases are exceptional
A couple has to spread raw kernels on fire
In order to eke out a living
As the couple cracked them, the kernels groaned in protest:
"*E oooo;* we are not dry yet,
Kakaka, we are not dry yet,
Please, have pity on us to be dry before your crack"
"But we have to crack you now to pay debtors this evening"
As I observe the wretched couple
I am truly baffled and troubled
Neither of them can save the other.
When you see Husband, he is withered and dehydrated (*tihian*)
And his wife exudes the stench of poverty

The offensive odour of the couple
15 Has poisoned the air of the town… (Darah 2005:36)

From the above lines, the poet (*ororile*) while trying to show the extent to which poverty has eaten into his opponent's family, uses words like "*Kakaka*, we are not dry yet," found in line six, to show the degree of his opponent's poverty and also to show that his opponent can no longer afford food, they have resolved to eating kernel which they do not even allow to get dry before cracking them. Similarly, "*Eooo*" used in line five is to show that the kernels are even complaining, telling the couple to at least give them time to get dry. A bard may also decide to use an exclamation, that is, a sound to represent a movement or an action in a place where so many words would have been used. An example is *"kakaka"* used in describing the sound made by the kernel eaten by the opponent, which also shows the extent of their poverty and how they have refused to let the kernel dry before cracking them. Okpewho (1979:222) asserts that:

> The sound of words is particularly fundamental to such phonoaesthetic devices as onomatopoeia and idiophone. The latter is one of the most notable features of daily speech in African society and comes quite handy in most oral art…..the bard anxious to put a movement or an action in in the starkest possible relief, may use a flourish of sounds where so many words would have done the job of description.

In the quotation above, Okpewho argues that poets use onomatopoeia and idiophone to express themselves when they would have used a whole lot of words in explaining a point, so, idiophone and onomatopoeia help oral artists to use fewer words in their narrations.

Repetition

Repetition is a common feature in oral literature, Finnegan (1977:102) opines that "there is hardly any oral piece without repetition and an oral piece cannot be divorced from the wider version of repetition". The Microsoft Encarta Premium 2009 defines repetition as

"the technique of repeating something, used in many forms of thought and creative expression." This is done for a specific purpose in either an oral text or in the written one. In most cases, the oral artist uses repetition to achieve different goals in an oral piece ranging from winning and retaining the attention of the audience, sending a specific theme, giving emphasis to a point that needs to be stressed to making a feeling of anxiety or agitation. These different goals which are achieved by the oral artist and how they are achieved will be analysed in close relation to the *udje* dance songs. Repetition cannot be studied in isolation, its study gives birth to or brings about the study of other elements of poetry like refrain, alliteration, consonance and assonance which are achieved through the repetition of words, phrases or sounds either consonant or vowel in a poetic work. Similarly, the opening, internal and closing formulas which are characteristics of orature are also achieved through repetition. Consequently, these various elements and how they are achieved through repetition by the *udje* artist will be given adequate analyses in relation to the *udje* dance songs.

Repetition enhances the involvement of the audience in an oral piece during performance. In many cases, the oral artist encourages the audience to repeat a given line, phrase or words in his narration. Repetition can also occur between the soloists and chorus, which Okpewho (1977:259) in the words of Nketia terms "call and response". The call and response pattern of repetition is substantiated in the *udje* performance during the interlude (*udje edjuo*) where the *Adje udje* (the lady of the dance) enters the arena to symbolically fan the participants of the *udje* dance as they rest. The words which she recites and the performers respond to are in unison and they are also in the repetitive form; which is also in the call and response pattern as seen below.

Adje udje: *udje Ishaka mini wado*
Performers: *Iya!*
Adje udje: *udje Oghwrode mini wado*
Performers: *Iya!*

The *Adje udje* can continue repeating the word "*wado*" in a way that herself (*Adje udje*) and the performers can respond to it with a dance as shown below:

Adje udje: *mini wado! Mini wado! Mini wado! Mini wado! …….*
Performers: *Iya! Iya! Iya! Iya! ……....*
Adje udje *iiiiiiii……..*
Performance *Iya*

Repetition is also found within an *udje* song performance, it is a common feature because the *udje* artist uses it to give emphasis to a point which he is sending to the audience. In a song titled "the Oloya family" gotten from Edjophe in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State, the *udje* artist tries to show how the entire Oloya family have become useless, prone to crime and are never out of the court house. In extension, he is referring to the people of Ighwreekan who are in a "battle of song" with his community and he achieved these themes through the use of repetition, which he uses in emphasising his various points as shown below:

A child I gave a name to
The child I gave a name to
That my child's name is Oloya
That my child's name is Oloya
Recall maiden's future I ruined with a name!
Maidens' chances I ruined with a name
that my child's name is Alohio (penis sharpener)
That my child be called Alohio
Hence he sharpened his penis properly
Sharpened his penis very well
With which he squandered all earnings
Regretful life I am lost!
(Darah 2005:154)

In the above *udje* song by the Edjophe community, the artist in trying to bring the Ighreekan community down in the battle of songs ridicules the Oloya family. Oloya is seen as one of

the best performers of *udje* dance song in the history of the Urhobo people, Darah (2005:75) describes him as "one of the best in his time. He was so gifted that he combined the roles of composer, singer and dancer." But in this song, his opponent ridicules him and his family, seeing them as a useless set of people, people who squander their earnings on immoral activities. But the repetition found in the song is used to emphasise the point that Oloya's mother (Kpaeban) regrets the fact that Oloya is her child; the child who is expected to become great in life and eventually bring her joy, has decided to bring disgrace to her and her entire family by destroying "Maiden's future". The artist goes further to use pun to buttress this point by playing with Oloya's name, instead of calling him "Oloya" he calls him "*Alohio*" which means "penis sharpener". In essence, his name has affected him, he "sharpened his penis very well" "with which he squandered all earnings" as a result he can no longer save for the future or take care of his mother who is now lamenting. The artist goes further to say that Oloya's mother Kpaeban regrets the fact that she has children, because children take care of their mothers but her own children have decided to bring shame to her family and they keep incurring debt for her through their adulterous life since she has to pay charges to the people that her children defile in the community.

The next element of poetry to be considered under the *udje* dance songs which are achieved through repetition is refrain. Egudu (1985:59-60) sees refrain as repetition, but he says:

> It is repetition which occurs at regular interval in a poem. Very often it marks the end of each stanza or section of a poem. It makes for sonorous beauty and special auditory appeal, just like ordinary repetition though it has other functions in poetry which the unregulated repetition is not normally associated with.

Egudu in the above assertion sees refrain as that type of repetition that occurs at intervals in a poem that has stanzas or sections. Refrain occurs immediately after each of the stanzas.

Refrain is used in poems to carry the sense of the poem, the theme of the poem is enhanced and is found in the refrain, it pushes the meaning of the poem further and when it occurs in a poem without these functions, it renders the poem meaningless and makes it boring. Boulton (1982:94) expresses a similar idea when she argues that "the refrain that seems meaningless, or does not carry the sense or the narrative forward, can be boring or even embarrassing to the self conscious modern reader." This is true of the *udje* artist, who uses refrain to push his/her song further; he uses it in the development of his song and also in introducing a new episode/scene in his song. Refrain also carries the theme/main idea of a narration or oral performance. The song "Nigerian youth" is a hybridised *udje* dance song performed by Onorume Ladies Musical Group of Egini. The song is one among numerous examples of the *udje* dance songs which use refrain in the development of their theme and narration. The song focuses its theme on the behaviour and character of the Nigerian youth, especially those from the Niger Delta region of the country. The song is in the form of an advice, the *udje* artist discusses the various vices of the Nigerian youths and at the end advises them to change from their evil ways and embrace a new approach which will project their image and make them responsible citizens in the society in which they find themselves. The introductory part of the song is in the form of an advice to the youths in Nigeria. Below are some of the relevant lines from the introductory section:

There is progress in unity
Pride goes before a fall, you said you have known
the techniques of life
Show this technique of life and let's see.
No matter how good or bad you are
people must complain
However if you do evil
you have disobeyed the commandment of God
Do that which is of God; never mind

what people will say.
It is only at dry season that we will know
if there are fishes in the pond or not.
I have eaten the fruit of songs
by the grace of God.
If your hand could not go round a tree then
how can you climb it?
I will continue to talk 10

The introductory section of an *udje* song is always an insight to what is expected in the body of the song. Onorume musical ladies in the introduction of this song advise the youth whom they are about to ridicule in the society. The lead singer begins the song by advising the youth to live in unity and not to be proud. She further tells the youths of the disadvantages of an individual to claim that he knows all that needs to be known in one's life time as is found in the lines "you said that you have known the techniques of life", "show the technique of life and let's see" because what the youths think they know will eventually lead to their downfall. And before they (Onorume musical ladies) started discussing the vices of the Nigerian youths, they first separated themselves from the youths, saying that they are not of this generation, they are of the generation of the elders and as such have the right to talk about the youths. This is lucid in the following lines:

Even though I am a child
I have the wisdom of elders.
For that reason,
I belong not to this generation
God knows. 25

Though of this generation, the artists in the lines above has skilfully excluded themselves from the youths and this generation, as such have also exonerated themselves from the vices of this generation. Refrain is used to introduce a new dimension in the development of this song; Refrain helps the *udje* artist to move from the introductory part to the body of the song, as in this progression. Thus we find:

This is not smartness

It is all madness……
These are youths whose duty is
to keep their community clean

When a new idea is introduced in the song, the *udje* artist uses refrain to introduce this idea as is found in the above lines. The lines "these are youths whose duty is/ to keep their community clean" is used by the artist to start the body of the song and apparently the beginning of her criticism of the youths. These phrases help the artist in linking the introduction with the body. Secondly, that refrain carries the theme in a poem is also a valid fact in this song. In the above lines, we find that the artist has succeeded in hoarding the theme in the refrain; they have in few words explained the meaning of the song which is an advice to Nigerian youths to be humble and well behaved in their society and not feel that they are smart.

The next element to be discussed in this chapter is the use of formulas which has been earlier discussed in chapter two. The formulaic expression which is always used by the oral artist to win back the attention of his audience is also achieved through the use of repetition. Chinwenzu, Jemie and Madubuike quoted in Anene Boyle (2002:30) describe formula:

> as stylistic repetitions and parallelisms that are important for a proper appreciation of oral literature. They argue that it is highly valued in orature as it takes one through the climax without tedious or unnecessary diversion.

Formula in the above quotation is defined as a "stylistic repetition" which cannot be neglected when appreciating an oral text, because the oral bard cannot neglect its importance in the development of his oral piece. The formulaic expressions appear at intervals in the narration of an oral text. If it appears at the beginning of the narration it is referred to as opening formula, while occurrence in the narration is referred to as internal formula and its use at the end of the narration is referred to as closing formula. The *udje* artist has also made judicious use of formulas in his performance. At the beginning of the *udje* dance songs, the *udje* artist like other oral bards normally uses words to win the attention of his audience,

retain it and carry them along with him. In the song "Osan Omuomuo" by Onorume Musical Ladies of Egini in Udu Local Government Area of Delta State, the artist does not spear the use of formulas; the song is introduced with an opening formula as seen below:

> Load of gifts is on the way
> Life is like a story
> Meanwhile we are still inside.

The above lines are repeated twice with emphasis in the song, so that the artist will be able to achieve his goal which is to win the attention of her audience. The first line which is "the load of gifts is on the way" will invariably draw the attention of a member of the audience whose mind is far away, bring him to the performance and win his interest because he will want to hear the story of life from someone who claims to carry the load of gifts. The repetition of these lines enables the artist to win the attention of the members of the audience and at the same time carry them along with the song. The next is the internal formula, which occurs within the oral text. It helps to remove boredom from the oral piece. In most cases, it solicits the performance of the audience and apparently results to the call and response pattern in the narration, but in this case, it is between the oral artist and the audience. This is also demonstrated in the song by Onorume musical ladies titled "Osan Omuomuo". The song is about a lady who has decided to perpetrate evil on her fellow citizens because she is the mouth piece of the gods (Priestess) in her community. The song is like a story, which the artist starts by telling her audience that in this community, beautiful maidens who are still virgins are sacrificed to the gods every year, but the choice of who should be used is made by the Priestess "*Odedemare*" who in-turn chooses the children of her enemies. So if a member of the community has a quarrel with her and the person's child attains the stage of the sacrifice, that child is sure of being the next sacrificial lamb. Odedemare no longer listens to the gods for direction on who to pick for the sacrifice and because of her wickedness and the

quest to deal with those that have problems with her, she decides to pick the children of her enemies. But at the end of the day Odedemare is also a victim since her daughter commits an offence in the community and the elders decide that the girl's (Odedemare's daughter) punishment will be for Odedemare to use her to appease the gods, just as she has been doing to other people; she could not bear to see her child killed. The internal formulaic expression occurs in the following lines of the song and the *udje* artist also uses the call and response pattern, but in this case it occurs between the artist and the audience. This is expressed in the following manner:

Udje artist:	With her saying *ovo*(one), *Ive*(two), *Erha*(three),, then the people will chorus
Audience:	*"Eche-dima-dima"*

The artist keeps repeating these lines in the cause of the rendition of the song and this helps in carrying the audience along with him and also solicits the involvement of the audience in the cause of the performance. The closing formulas occur at the end of the performance, they are used to end the song. There are hardly any *udje* dance songs that do not have the formulaic expression, although they vary from song to song, community to community and bard to bard.

The Generic Nature of *Udje* Songs

It cannot be disputed that many *udje* songs are satiric in nature; *udje* dance songs have been described by Darah and Clark in their earlier study as satire, songs that are meant to ridicule an individual in a society, songs that aim to destroy their opponent in a battle. They are right but the *udje* dance songs have gone beyond being described as just satire. They can appear as praise songs when an individual tries to assert himself in the society, the hybridised *udje* songs in most cases appear as praise songs, since the contemporary *udje*

artist uses these songs to earn a living. By praising prominent people in the society, they are sure that these people will give them money as a way of appreciating the *udje* artists. The songs can also appear in the form of dirge and religious or spiritual songs. It is as a result of this that Darah (2010:38) reaffirms his statement when he argues that his:

> studies have confirmed these critical observations about the multi-generic nature of the song-poems. One factor that explains this protean feature is that the tradition is very old, having been practiced by generations and generations of artists over a century. Thus, although the central aesthetic outlook of the genre was satire and moral reform, there is room for other modes and tempers to be expressed in it. It is for this reason that I commended that "the repertory of each group contain thematic varieties such as dirge, panegyric, and invocation.

Darah now views the *udje* dance songs from another perspective, not only as satire but also as praise, dirge and religious songs. This is Tanure Ojaide's (2009:8) argument that "many *udje* songs are praise (or boast) poems, religious/spiritual songs, or dirges". They are praise songs when the *Udje* artist boasts about himself in "battle".

***Udje* songs as Satire**

The *udje* dance songs are originally in the form of satire; the songs are composed to ridicule or destroy the characters of the members of Urhobo community. Chief Dozen Ogbariemu of Iwhrekan (Ughelli South Local Government, Delta State, Nigeria) quoted in Ojaide (2009:7) argues that "*udje* songs are used to destroy or praise". In essence, the *udje* songs aim to destroy rivals and while doing this praises oneself. Satire according to Abrams (2005:284-285) is:

> Described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation…….satire derides; that is, it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt that exists outside the work itself.

The *udje* songs are not far from this definition of satire as described by Abrams in the above quotation. The songs diminish and derogate the characters of their opponents; in doing this, the songs correct a specific problem or ill that exists in the character of the individual that the *udje* artist is singing about or the ills that exist in the general public, which is the "butt that

exists outside the work". Gilbert Highet (1972:26) argues that "satire wounds and destroys individuals or groups in order to benefit society as a whole". This cannot be disputed in *udje* songs since the artist derides his opponents in songs and while doing this, corrects the vices in the community since no one will want to be the topic of a satiric song in an upcoming battle of song. The practice of satire in Urhobo land is referred to as *ekenharhon* gotten from *eken* which means insult and *harrhon* which means ridicule or deride. According to Darah (2005:18), the *ekenharhan* "exists in two forms among the Urhobo – the playful or jocular, and the serious". Darah further explains the jocular type of *ekenharhan* as "a relationship between two or more persons in which one is permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or make fun of the other"; he goes further to define the serious as one which is "intended to hurt or injure feelings"

In recent time, although the songs are still satiric in nature, they are not for battle and they are not directed at a single individual, they are generalized. Chief Atuyota Akpobomemerere interviewed at Ovian in Udu Local Government area of Delta State on the 7th of March, 2010 comes to the following conclusion about the hybridised or contemporary *udje* dance songs:

> We no longer sing for competition, or to ridicule the character of another *Udje* artist, or to show our mastery of the music. We sing for money, to ridicule the follies of the society. We can decide to pick a fictitious character which will stand for the general public, use the character to correct what we want to change in our community.

The above statement by Akpobomemerere simply suggests that the contemporary *udje* songs are not like the ancient ones where the *udje* artist engaged himself mainly for the purpose of bringing his opponent down in battle. The contemporary artist among other things corrects the ills in the society by condemning the characters of general public through his use of satire. For this reason, we are going to consider one *udje* song from the earlier *udje* artist,

those artists that performed before the sixties, during the seventies and another of the hybridized or contemporary *udje* artists. The song titled "Edjophe the town of lunatics" is a classical example of the earlier type of *udje* satire:

> Edjophe is worthless wood, a town of lunatics and filth
> Let me insult the idiot to make them behave sensibly
> Edjophe has no community hall
> Even a shrine where we worship ancestors they lack this
> The things Edjophe lacks are legion
> Is there any place in the world with a public hall?
> Even work champ in remote forests
> Have a place of worship; how much more a community?
> Edjophe's is a life without purpose

In the above song performed by the Ighwreekan community in Ughelli south local Government Area of Delta State, the Edjophe community is referred to as a community that is hopeless and worthless and he goes further to say, "let me insult the idiot to make them behave sensibly" which is the work of a satire. It derogates a character or society to make them change for good and as such, helps in making the community a better place for all. Edjophe is seen as a town without a public hall but they enjoy going to other people's hall to relax without the intention of leaving, a town where everything goes, where nothing is seen as a taboo and this leads to the desecration of the gods in Edjophe community. This song is not meant for derogating the people of Edjophe alone, but it is a sort of advice to the Edjophe community, because if they truly lack a town hall, they will do themselves good to build one. And with that, they have succeeded in improving their community and the Ighwrekan people through the use of satire have corrected a setback in the Edjophe community. To take us further, we will consider a song by the Onorumeh Musical ladies of Egini in Udu Local government Area of Delta State titled "Message". This song is more of a satire because it satirises both the leaders in Nigeria as well as the police force. The song is not pointing to

one single person, but to all the leaders and members of the Police Force. Below are some lines from the song:

The world is a big place
Nobody knows tomorrow
Don't swear, people that pray for you are more
than those that
are against you
Evil cannot be compared to good.
This world is evil and full of injustice.
Come and see the race of survival
Mother pursuing her own child
Dollar multiplies when it gets to Nigeria
Nigeria is now a money ritual ground
for those living abroad
And it is well with Obasanjo
This is the third time of Obasanjo 's leadership
in Nigeria
I was thinking that Obasanjo knows Nigeria's
problem
I thought the "oga" will be a better leader
The longer the fish stays in the river
so it is also in the pot and the leader of fishes in the river
because he knows
where there are dangers.
They dribble Nigeria like Okocha
They treat Nigeria like a local prostitute.
The body of Nigeria has been shared
They now set it on round table.
Bisecting Nigeria's intestine.

In the above song, the *udje* artist succeeds in satirising Nigerian leaders. She tries to show her knowledge of the happenings in Nigeria. She starts by criticising the value of the Nigerian Naira that keeps falling in favour of the American dollars and the European pounds in the world market. This is found in line 7 when she says that "Dollar multiplies when it gets to Nigeria", thereby making those that come into Nigeria with the foreign cash to be among the mega rich people in the country. She did not stop there, she goes further to blame Nigerian leaders for the problems in the nation, and she categorically blames former President Obasanjo, since this song was composed during his tenure as president. She goes further to

say that President Obasanjo is supposed to liberate the nation from the shackle of backwardness and shame since he knows the problem of Nigeria, having been the President of Nigeria the third time and is therefore expected that he will be more experienced in solving the problems of the nation. Instead of setting Nigeria free from the shackles, the leaders play with the nation, "they dribble Nigeria like Okacha". Okocha is an international football legend, who is good at playing and dribbling his rivals in the pitch. The *udje* artist has compared Nigerian leaders with Okocha, thus showing how the leaders are playing with the nation's wealth and the intelligence of her citizens. As is made clear in the following lines:

They dribble Nigeria like Okocha 15
They treat Nigeria like a local prostitute.
The body of Nigeria has been shared
They now set it on round table.
Bisecting Nigeria's intestine.

The *udje* artist goes further to talk about the poverty situation in Nigeria, how the average citizens are tormented by the leaders and the police. Nigeria is a country with rich mineral resources but her citizens are dying in abject poverty and they are being oppressed by the police as well. He continues with the issue of commercial motor cyclist, who are dying every day in accident because of the risky nature of their job. But they cannot quit because there is no other job for them and the government also refused to provide an alternative job or trade for them, and they keep asking them to pay levies on daily bases, looking for new ways to siphon the little money they realise from their daily meagre job as is seen in the lines "Ticket is on/while vest and helmet are on their way". These lines explain the situation that commercial motorbike operators in Delta State find themselves during the time this song was composed. Delta state government asked motor cyclists to buy vest from the state

Government at exorbitant rates. The suffering experienced by Nigerian citizens and Motor cyclist is further explored in the following lines:

Commercial motor cyclists are managing
with the little money they realise from it
with their family because there are no jobs.
Half bread is better than non
We have no choice of where to go after death
Poverty and suffering go together.
There are many victims of motor cycle accident
as a result of poverty in the land.

This song is laden with issues of the corrupt happenings in Nigeria. The poet continues by exposing the corrupt practices that take place within the police force in Nigeria. The Nigerian police are more interested in the little money they collect from drivers and commercial motorbike operators on the road, the Police neglect the duty that they were sent to perform on the roads. This is seen in the following lines "Police on their own do not give them a breathing space". The "them" in the line refers to the commercial motorbike operators who suffer on a daily basis in the hands of the Nigerian Police. The Police keep extorting money from commercial motorbike operators especially at Udu local Government Area of the State.

The *udje* artist does not stop there, she goes further to say that she is announcing this so the people of Udu, their King and the Local Government Chairman will hear and come to the rescue of their citizens which is made evident in the following lines:

I will announce this
If only you will hear what I am saying
King of Udu Kingdom
President general of Udu Kingdom
The chairman of Udu LGA
Udu leaders
Your children are suffering
in the hand of the police
I don't know if you are all sleeping

Udje dance songs are good examples of satire, the above exploration of the songs shows that the *udje* artist does not only criticise but asks that something be done to correct these ills and vices among their people. This is made clear in the song "Krikroke" performed by Ekrekrun ward in orhunghworun, Udu Local Government Area of Delta state:

> Krikroke I have confronted you
> One blessed with talent for speech ought to exercise it
> Exchange of insult improves people's conduct
> Let me reveal in songs what I know
> My song made you build a modern house
> A god that protects deserves tributes

The line "exchange of insult improves people's life" shows the role of *udje* songs as corrective tool among the Urhobo people, because as a result of the insult levelled on Krikroke, he has been able to build a modern house and has inturn improved the society. So the *udje* song, through satire has invariably served as a corrective measure in our society.

Udje Songs as Praise Poetry

The *udje* dance songs can also be studied as praise songs. This is possible because of the multi generic nature of the dance songs. Anene Boyle (2002:18) defines praise poetry as poetry:

> designed to eulogize the virtues of given subjects and therefore, stresses accepted values. It is perhaps one of the most developed and elaborate poetic genre in Africa…..it invokes the noble and heroic qualities of its subject

Finnegan (1970:111) corroborates this when she argues that the praise poem is "one of the most developed and elaborate poetic genre in Africa." This is true because African leaders and kings use praise songs to eulogise their exploits. The praise songs are also used by the urhobo people to lay emphasis on their exploits during hunting, in the farm and among their peers. In the case of *udje* dance songs, the *udje* artist in most cases invokes the noble and heroic qualities of himself while trying to bring his opponent to a fall and assert himself in

his society. According to Ojaide(2009:8) *udje* dance songs have "features of self-praise meant to spur one's side into action and intimidate the rival side". So, the *udje* dance songs cannot be devoid of praise as is seen in the song titled "Oloya the fugitive" by Edjophe clan in Ughelli south Local Government area of Delta State:

Let the *udje* tempest rage, let it rage, I am ever prepared
A human being's journey zigzags, how much more human utterance?
Let me call briefly at Oloya's place
Ighwreekan boasts it matches Edjophe in *udje*
Who is it that makes a hand bag of barrel?
The hour of challenge has come
The appointed time is up
Oloya is still performing in exile
He is yet to return home
Edjophe's songs are a snake
A snake needs no ropes to weave a pad
How would you handle this to make Ighwreekan safe?
Alias *Ogoro* turned himself into kingfisher
Kingfisher hoped to capture crocodile and
laid ambush by the river bank
when crocodile emerged fright forced kingfisher
to withdraw
retreating to peck at tiny crayfish instead
ever since kingfisher has been a refugee along banks
General Ogidigbo never comes empty-handed from a war with the Ijo
Ighwreekan I have captured you
Kingfisher rivaled the crocodile and
got lost in the swamps.
(Darah 2005:145)

Although this song is meant to show the incompetence of Oloya in *udje* song performance, the Edjophe *udje* artist has succeeded in doing this by praising himself and at the same time derogating Oloya with derogative images. The image of the "*Ogoro"* and "kingfisher" is used to show the vulnerable nature of Oloya. The kingfisher according to him boasts of capturing a crocodile but when the crocodile emerged fear forced the kingfisher to go into exile along the river bank, pecking at tiny fishes. The image of the crocodile is used to represent the Edjophe *udje* artist, who boasts of his prowess and achievements in life, who

also believes that Oloya cannot rival him in the battle of songs, since he is not as strong as he is that is why he uses the image of the kingfisher who cannot withstand the crocodile to represent Oloya. And the appearance of the crocodile has also sent the kingfisher on exile. The Edjophe *udje* artist ends up praising himself, using the crocodile to boast of his strength in "battle". The "kingfisher" which he calls his opponent is a bird that feeds on tiny fishes on the bank of swamps and rivers and cannot stand or challenge the crocodile. As such, he is too strong for the Ighwreekan people and when the Edjophe people appear on stage, Oloya and his people have no option than to run and go into exile. The Edjophe artist, while trying to derogate the Ighwreekan lead vocalist Oloya, ends up praising himself. But in the case of the contemporary *udje* artist, since their songs are not meant for "battle", he either praises himself or the achievement of an individual or group in the society, in some cases, when they satirise an individual or a vice in the society, they can also end up praising themselves and asserting themselves as being the perfect ones in the society by bringing out their outstanding qualities. The song "Otughiewven community" by Egbeku Kenairu of Ughiewvu in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State is a good example of the contemporary *udje* dance song which is embedded with praise poetry. As in the lines below:

Ughievwen is an elephant,
A great elephant from the beginning
If you need the tusk,
You meet the elephant
No matter how fat the goat is,
It is not because of the small elephant.
The giver of songs gives me wisdom
So I can sing of Otughievwen community
to the Urhobos.

Kenairu in the above song is praising Otughievwen community, he sees Otughievwen as a community with great charisma and the strength of an elephant, the Urhobo people see the

elephant as a very powerful animal and as such, they compare the strength of great men and women in their community to that of the elephant. So, Kenairu in this song uses the image of the elephant to show the strength of the Otughievwen people. As the song develops, he compares the wisdom of the Otughiewven people with a community in Edo. Showing the foolishness of that community in contrast to the wisdom that abounds among the Otughiewven people, as seen in the following line:

One village in Edo land,
their leaders are giants,
they go for charms because of leadership.
Once they hear Thief! Thief! It's beating,
but they will not ask what he has stolen
If a stranger fights with their son,
they say let's kill him for our son without asking
what happened.
They flog people without reason,
Naked men and women
Whether they disgrace people
Or defile the land I don't know
Otughievwen community don't do that

This people who Kenairu is comparing the Otughiewven people with are giants and acquired charms to help them in ruling their subjects, but they lack wisdom to do this, he showed this lack of wisdom in the way the leaders in this community carry out the affairs of the land. He goes further to say that the Otughiewven people are not like that, even if they are powerful, they also have wisdom which they use in ruling the affairs of their community. At the concluding part of this song the *udje* artist continues by mentioning the names of notable men in Otughiewven community and also praising them for their achievement and their contributions to the general well being of the community, especially the leadership of Otughiewven community led by Emmanuel Umukoro Edirinverere Kpemueki. These leadership qualities and achievements are lucid in the following lines:

The Executive am singing about,
did so many good things,
They arranged a post office,
Trained workers 135

These are some of the humanitarian activities that these leaders executed in Otughiewven community. He also mentioned the establishment of a gas plant in the community which was also made possible through the help of another set of leaders, led by Peter Amoafa. as is seen in these lines "Peter Amoafa when enthroned,/the gas plant we talk about today came" these are some of the achievements of these leaders, while they were still ruling Otughievwen community and Egbeke Kenairu has used these achievements in the composition of his praise song and in turn eulogised their names.

Udje Songs as Dirges

Copious amount of *udje* songs are in the form of a dirge, because the songs are performed during the funeral rites of notable men in Urhoboland and at the funeral of an *udje* artist. Dirge according to Abrams (2005:77) is a "versified expression of grief on the occasion of a particular person's death". The *udje* artist composes songs to mourn the death of one of them or a prominent member of their community, the songs express the pains they feel and their grief at the departure of such a person.

Death is seen by the *udje* artist as an ubiquitous terror, which no one escapes, it is what every man in this world will one day meet and it cuts short the time that one is supposed to live on this earth. In most cases, *udje* dirges inflict pathos and tragic purging on the artist as well as his audience, it helps free the pains they have. Dirges have the highest amount of survival of *udje* dance song from the sixties and seventies, the songs are mostly in

praise of the diseased. A good example is the song titled "Odili" performed by the Ighwreekan community in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State:

Group	Oh God I am horrified	
	As I grief Odili's death	
	Who has witnessed such tragedy before?	
	Odili my source of widespread fame	
	Suddenly *Erivwin* snatched him away	5
	With Odili gone, Ihien how will you manage your life?	
	Odili left me alone, accursed be the author of this crime	
	What is it you say that Odili is really gone?	
Leader	academic work is such an ordeal, yet	
	Odili patiently succeeded	
	Shortly before he was to be employed, Death killed him	
	Hear a horrible story.	10
	(Darah 2005:168) (emphasis Darah's)	

The song above starts with the pains the *udje* artist feels at the death of Odili, the tragic mood of the song is emphasised through the use of rhetorical questions. In line 6 of the song, the artist uses the rhetorical questions to show that there are people that Odili sustain their lives, people that will definitely find it difficult to carry on with life since Odili is no longer alive. Odili in the song above is praised for his achievement in the academic field but death did not allow him to work with his academic qualification. *"Erivwin"* in line 5 is an Urhobo word which means death. In the line, "Suddenly *Erivwin* snatched him away" death is personified, taking Odili away from his loved ones at the peak of his life. The poet goes further to elaborate on the last days of Odili's life and how he felt before his death, as is elucidated in the following lines:

Leader:	the mother prepared a peppery soup
	Odili please rise up and eat
	But he could not answer
	Odili shook his head feebly;
	My limbs are weary already
	Get ready to consult a diviner

May be I could survive the year
My dream causes me great sorrow
I saw in my dream last night late Gbomo
And others arrived in a boat
I am not sure if I will live much longer
After uttering this Odili reclined on the wall
And instantly gave up the ghost
(Darah 2005:169)

The above lines show that Odili was sick before his death, the Urhobo people believe in the world of the dead and that of the living, they believe that when an individual dies on earth he moves over to the world of the dead and when a sick man or an old man starts dreaming about people who have died it means that such a man will soon die. This fact is made lucid in the line *"I saw in my dream last night late Gbomo/and others arrived on a boat/I am not sure if I will live much longer"* the people he saw in the boat, according to the Urhobo people, have come to carry him over to the spirit world. Odili on his own part has even given up after this dream and this is seen in his last statement. Odili's outstanding qualities are further stated at the concluding part of the song, his fame and achievement in life are now elaborated to show his greatness in life, as we will find in the following lines:

Whenever the police came Odili would be sent for
Whenever a colonial officer visited
Odili was the interpreter
Recall his eloquence in the English language!
At the start of each day he would say: *Good morning*
At the sunset he would say: *fine evening*
His politeness knew no bounds
His cheerfulness was joy to all
When Odili died cable message went to Lagos
All Europeans in Lagos took a holiday
Government courts stopped business (Darah 2005:171)

In the above lines the artist outlines the various qualities and activities that Odili helped to execute in his community, one of which is the interpretation of the English language. The *udje* artist goes further to mention his outstanding qualities and how the colonial masters in Lagos took a holiday in honour of the death of Odili. He ends this section of the song by

saying that "Odili's death is the death of a pontiff/Regardless of how long a pontiff lives/his values to the world makes his death unforgettable" so, Odili's death is one that will be mourned in their heart for a very long time since his numerous contributions to his community are unforgettable.

To take us further, we will be considering another *udje* song from a contemporary *udje* artist. This song is titled "John Ogolo" and is performed by the Onorume musical group of Egini. The artist in this song laments the death of John Ogolo, a notable member of their community. At the beginning of the song, the artist laments the death of John Ogolo and she continues by giving a brief history of John's life beginning from his primary school days as is seen in the following lines:

> When John Ogolo was growing up,
> he finished his primary and
> entered secondary at Urhiephron,
> he was the senior prefect.
> He finished secondary school education
> in 1985.
> As a child with destiny
> He gained employment with
> Delta Steel Company (DSC) that same year
> He was a hard working person
> But the enemy deprived him of
> enjoying the fruit of his labour.

Death in line 20 is addressed directly as if it has life when we know that death is an abstract entity. This makes that line an apostrophe. The *udje* artist continues by blaming the death of John on witches, she says that "on Tues 24 June 2003 John died without ailment/The black Witch is powerful, that is African magic/Just like a dream" John Ogolo has departed from them. These lines show that she believes that the witches were responsible for John's death. She continues by stating that death continues taking notable people in their society, which she laments:

Gabriel is dead, John Ogolo again
We are still crying the death of John when
Onorogun George Dike's death occurred.
Mathew Alegbe from Okwagbe was killed
along Ovwian Express road.

The above mentioned are notable people that died at the same time and she laments that the death of these people is a great loss to the people of her community because of the role they played in the general wellbeing of their people before their death and she says that "these are philanthropists who died/one after the other", people that take care of others in their community.

At the concluding part of the song, Onorume laments that the earth and the great beyond (land of the dead) always exchange people, she continues by stating a belief among the Urhobo people that there is the spirit world which is for the dead and the earthly world which is for the living and these two worlds keep exchanging people on daily bases. As such, while we weep on earth for the death of a person, those in the spirit world are rejoicing for the birth of that same person. Similarly, while those in the spirit world are crying for the death of an individual, those on earth are rejoicing over his birth. As is seen in the following lines:

John is dead his mother in the great beyond
is rejoicing over his birth there, while his
earthly mother is crying over his death.
When the earth is rejoicing
the great beyond is crying.
The world and the great beyond always exchange.
The great beyond has exchanged John Ogolo
from the earth.

At this point, it is pertinent to note that the generic nature of the *udje* dance songs are achieved through the use of some figures of speech and poetic devices in the songs, which help in bringing out the true mood and emotion of the artist, as well as to achieve his or her goals at the end of each of the songs. These figures of speech and the poetic devices work

together to help the songs achieve their final meaning. Although we may not find all of them in one song the ones that are present help the artist to achieve his goals. So, for one to fully appreciate the *udje* song he has to have the knowledge of these figures of speech and poetic devices. To take us further, these figures of speech and poetic devices will be elucidated.

The first among the series of poetic elements which enhance the aesthetic value of the *udje* dance songs to be discussed is the use of images. Imagery is that picture created by the poet with the use of words in the process of writing his poetry. Imagery, according to Millar and Currie (1970:63), is "that part of a literary work which appeals to the senses. This includes all the senses-sight, hearing, touch, taste and smells, although image of sight usually predominates followed by images of hearing." *udje* dance songs are loaded with images, which are used to explain the different points or ideas that they want the audience to take home. For two communities to embark on the battle of songs there must be a provocation. Darah (2005:33) opines that "a given community or group seeking a partner would provoke another by attacking in songs" and Ojaide (2009:23) corroborates this when he argues that "for the battle of songs, one side provokes another with a virulent attack of its people to elicit a response" and this provocation leads to the battle which is achieved in most cases, through the association of their opponents with derogative imagery. This is evident in the song "Oloya the drifter" where the image of a filthy wife is used to describe Oloya's wife and this is done to humiliate and provoke Oloya which will invariably lead to his retaliation. This image appears in the following lines of the song:

> The lump of filth on Revupkeri's back juts out like a hillock
> Like the charge office building
> Where people obtain summon in Warri.
> Witness her pulp-tissue belly like that of *ahwin*
> With doughy muscle like a decayed *aligun* fish
> She trudges back and forth like a huge worm

With an undulating back like *Ilaje* landscape
With greasy hair like wrapping of chestnut
Oloya's filthy wife stinks
Like the beast called donkey common at Burutu port.
(Darah2005:147)

The above lines are loaded with images, which are associated with filth to show the filthy nature of Oloya's wife as we can see in the image of "decayed *aligun* fish/a huge worm/*Ilaje* landscape/chestnut/beast called donkey" all these are filthy images that have been used to describe Revukperi.

From the above lines, we will find that the artist uses simile to achieve his purpose in the battle of songs. Simile is defined by Maduka and Eyoh (2000:35) as:

> An analogy….made between two things that are essentially different and a connective (such as "like", "as", "seem", and "resembles") is used in the comparison, the figure of speech is simile.

In the song above, there is an analogy between Oloya's wife Revukperi and a host of filthy images. The connective "like" is used to bring out the similarity between Revukperi and filth in her community.

Imagery is also achieved through the use of metaphors. A metaphor is an indirect comparison between two objects, which is always on the principles of equation. Egudu (1985:21) says, "Metaphor, like simile, is comparison, but unlike simile, it is indirect comparison. It operates on the principle of equation." Metaphor occurs mostly when a poet compares something with which we are familiar with one with which we are not familiar, thus creating a mental image in the mind of the reader. Metaphor is a common feature in the *udje* dance songs. In the song "Otughiwven community" by Egbeku Kenairu, where the artist sings the praise of Otughiewven, he uses metaphor to bring out the strength of Otughiewven as we can see in these lines "Ughievwen is an elephant/A great elephant from the beginning." In the above lines Otughiewven is equated with the elephant, to show the strength of the community.

Rhetorical question is another poetic element which brings out the aesthetics of the *udje* dance songs. A rhetorical question is a sentence or question in a line of poetry or in a literary work which is not asked in order to request information or to solicit an answer. In most cases it is asked to show emphasis and also to confirm a statement and a stand in the literary work. It also changes the dimension of the story in the narration. *udje* dance songs will not be complete without rhetorical questions. The *udje* artist in most cases uses it to send a message and also to emphasize a point or an idea, as is seen in the following lines from an Igwreekan song titled "Nana". The line "who is it can console him?" is a question which shows the pain that Nana feels after his cloth has been taken away by a kite, the question emphasises the extent of the pain. Similarly, in the song "Otughiewven community" by Egbeku Kenairu, the line "Who is greater than the government?" which is also a rhetorical question is used to emphasize the strength of the government in a community and how they cannot be neglected and how the people of Otughiewven acknowledge this and do the right thing. In all, we should note that the *udje* artist uses the rhetorical questions in their songs when they want to show emphasis.

The last aesthetics to be discussed is proverb. Okpewho (1992:226) defines proverbs as:

> a piece of folk wisdom expressed with terseness and charm. The "terseness" implies a certain choice of words and a sharpness of focus, while the "charm" conveys the touch of literary or poetic beauty in the expression

The assertion above suggests that proverbs are always concise and economically phrased, they are always brief, sharp and they go straight to the point. Proverbs according to Abrams (2005:8), "are allegorical in that the explicit statement is meant to have, by analogy or by extended reference, a general application." That is they are not just there for beauty but they

are in the text to correct a vice in an individual or in the society. It then means that one should not look at the inter layout of proverbs alone when carrying out a study on it but also the external functions. James Obelkevich (1994:45) while looking at the definition of proverbs, took a functional definition of it, he says proverb:

> Is not its internal layout but its external function, and that, originally, is moral and didactic: people use proverb to tell others what to do in a given situation or what attitude to take towards it. Proverbs then are strategies for situation; but they are strategies with authority, formulating some part of the society's common sense, its values and way of doing things.

In the quotation above proverb is defined in terms of its purpose and functions in a society and this is not far from why the *udje* artists employ the use of proverbs in their songs. They use it to correct a vice in their society, and it also carries a didactic massage. A good number of the *udje* dance songs are embedded with proverbs. In fact, there is hardly any *udje* dance song without proverbs. Since proverbs in most cases are short, the *udje* artist uses them to send a point to his audience and to a large extent, his society. The song "Nigerian Youth" by Onorume musical ladies is a good example of an *udje* dance song with proverbs. In the following introductory lines, one can find a good number of proverbs:

There is progress in unity
Pride goes before a fall,
you said you have known
the techniques of life
Show this technique of life and let's see.
No matter how good or bad you are
people must complain
However if you do evil
you have disobeyed the commandment of God
Do that which is of God, never mind
what people will say.
It is only at dry season that we will know
if there are fishes in the pound or not.

The above lines are advice to Nigerian youths, in the first and second lines, "there is progress in unity/Pride goes before a fall" the *udje* artist is advising the youths to be united in all their

dealings and they should remove pride from their character and work together for the progress of their communities. She goes further to say that "it is only at dry season that we will know/if there are fishes in the pond"; this line is a proverb which means that the youth should try to hide themselves, work on their ability and characters which will be displayed by them when it is needed for the good and progress of their communities. As earlier stated, there is no *udje* song without proverbs, since the *udje* artist makes good use of the shortness of proverbs to achieve one of its major functions in the communities which is for moral reform and it also carries the major truths as well as their cultural values.

From the foregoing, we have been able to identify the aesthetics of the *Udje* dance songs by drawing analyses from both the hybridised or contemporary *Udje* dance songs gotten from our field work and also from the earlier songs collected by G.G. Darah in his book titled *The Battle of Songs; Udje Tradition of The Urhobo.* We discovered that these aesthetic features do not only add beauty to the *udje* performance but they also perform series of functions in the performance like the onomatopoeic words which are used in the performance to shorten discriptions which would have been lengthy in nature and as such make the work boring. Similarly, the aesthetic features also carry the ideas forward, hold and retain the interest of the audience and consequently develop the theme of the performance, they help in correcting the evils in the communities where they are performed. This shows that the *udje* songs inn the ancient or contemporary, have what it takes to be called poetry and they are aesthetically composed by the *udje* artists to achieve different goals in the communities in which the songs exist.

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CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSSION

As earlier stated in this work that the *udje* tradition is going into extinction; clans in Urhobo land that previously performed the *udje* tradition have neglected it due to the influence of westernisation in its varied form. Although some youth from the clans that previously performed the tradition are trying to bring it back into the mainstream of Urhobo culture, they are still influenced by the western norms and this invariably gave rise to the hybridised nature of the *udje* songs.

Scholars of reputable standing have done some field work on the *udje* tradition which were published in the book form and have also helped in the process of reviving and preserving the tradition. This research work, through the evaluation of some acient *udje* songs collected by G.G. Darah, Tanure Ojaide, and the hybridised/contemporary *udje* songs collected in the field in the course of this work, has also helped in preserving the *udje* tradition. The research discusses the aesthetic qualities of the *udje* tradition through the analysis of some selected songs. Notable and renowed *udje* practitioners were interviewed and performances were done by groups from Udu and Ughevien communities.

The collection of data precedes a general survey of the history of the Urhobo people. This was followed by the literature review. In Chapter two the aesthetics of oral literature is adequately discussed by bringing out the various characteristics that make oral literature outstanding and unique. In the cause of this research, we were able to identify the seven clans among the Urhobo people that practise the *udje* tradition. Among these clans, Udu and Ughievwen were selected for proper study since they are referred to as the best performers of the *udje* carnival a fact that is acknowledged by the other five clans that perform this festival.

A vivid description of the *udje* carnival is analysed and the processes involved in the preparation, composition and the performance of the festival are also described in chapter two. Due to the fact that the *udje* carnival is going into extinction, it was difficult to get groups that perform the *udje* dance. As such, we could only get limited number of *udje* groups who were willing to perform the *udje* dance for this research work; these groups are trying to revive the *udje* dance back to Urhobo land. From my study, these groups have neglected the ritualistic and some major aspects of the *udje* dance such as the proclamation (*ore-eyorie*), the paying of homage at the *Aridon* and *Uhanghwa* shrine, which adds to the aesthetic of the carnival. They now perform these songs for monetary purpose. At the recording session each of these groups produced what is believed to be the best of their composition and previous songs that were performed by renowned *udje* artists in their various communities were also performed.

From our study, one can say that the various characteristics that bring out the poetic beauty of poesis abound in the *udje* songs, the thesis has been able to identify them in *udje* dance songs and have invariably analysed them in close relation to the songs. Similarly, the *udje* songs can also stand as purposeful poetry since the study also reveals that the *udje* songs serve certain purposes in the society. The various generic nature of the *udje* dance songs which is discussed in this thesis has also proved that the *udje* songs can also take the various forms of poetry.

The contextual approach to the study of oral literature which is used as the theoretical frame work of this study has also helped the study in proving its stand, the contextualist's argument that meaning is not gotten from speech alone; the speech sound, its prosodic or paralinguistic aspects should also be given adequate attention. The contextualists also argue

that when analysing an oral text, prior attention should be given to the social environment and the cultural context of the text. As such, the tone of voice of the oral artist, his mimicry, whispering, the history of the oral bard and his audience, the actions of the audience and the oral bard have also helped the researcher in the process of analysing the song texts. A good example of this fact is seen in the song 'Osan omuomuo" by Onorumeh musical ladies of Egini, where we found an action between the oral bard and her audience during the interlude. Similarly, in analysing the text, the belief of the Urhobo people was also given great consideration. The song "Otokutu" by the same artist also mirrors the happenings in the community of the oral bard; as such their environment, actions and cultural context have also helped in the process of ascribing meanings to the various texts.

Through the aesthetic qualities discussed in the *udje* tradition the thesis has identified some of the astonishing functions of the *udje* dance songs such as correcting the wrong norms in the communities where they are performed, the songs carry the culture and tradition of the people, some of these songs are also embedded with the history of the Urhobo people as we can see in the song "Nigerian Youth" by Onorume Musical Ladies.

The *udje* tradition as a field of study is still open for further study; the tradition has numerous areas which have not been researched by scholars. For instance, this tradition is performed by seven clans in Urhobo land but these songs were collected from only two of these clans, the Udu and Ughievben clans. So, the other clans can also be placed on thorough research, the dramatic aspects of the tradition and the custume of the *udje* tradition are other aspects that can be studied.

APPENDIX A.

TEXTS IN URHOBO.

Ovue

Akpo na asan rode
ohwo vuovo rien ode rocha-a
wo durwe iyoriuin, ihwo re ne
erhonvwon ke we bu ne iri vwo su we
Asan vwe umuemu vwo dje erhuvwu-u
Akpo nana voupe ve Umiovwo kugbe oshenyen
Morhe ure uvwie re rhore
Oui vwo tue omo
Doclar da rhe Nigeria ko bue
Inajeria rhi hirhe phiho oto
Usigho vwo ke out rid a inoko (London)
O rhi youwi ke Obasanjo
Ouana obo rerha re Obasanjo
Vwo sue inajeria (Nigeria)
Ki mi roro ne Obasanjo rien
Ebaben re inajeria (Nigeria)
Mirori ne “o” dia omamo rosun
Obo re erin kv’urhie te
Okoye o je pha vwe evun v’evwere
Kugbe osun r’iyerin vw’urhie fikiridie
O rien osan vimuosho rayen epha
Ayen gbrighe inajerie (Nigeria) kire Okocha
Ayen vwoja ria kere igberadja.
A ghare ugboum ri najeria
Ayen rhuere kpaha imeje
A rhaphie ivun ri Nigeria
Wu’ wu!! Djerhi yo
Ughwu nageria hepha-na
Ebiko a me rere a chuko
Avwanre nerhonkwon re otovwi-i
O vwobo re obe se te-e-
A vwe asan kire ero,eye ivwrite vwo olavwo-ou
O da diane isun re inajeria rhe keurherie-e
Edokiovo emoto roye I vren ayen
Ki honre ke oma rayen
Isun re inajeria (Nigeria) tare ne e hwe iji
Ye inajeria je tene e’’hwe iji a
Tayen tiji na re hweri na
Ono tobe ma die oji?
Oghere re iji san san ye here
Isun na riabe re ughwu

Iji ke rhoma hwe iji
Oyena hyota
Ishoshi re inajeria mi mre emu
Regua olkpa hirhe phiho irheren
Ye olkpa hirhe phiho orheren
Ero me mre re
Eh oghene ero me mremu
Wo vonre ve Odiriu
Imu buebu hero re herhe isesu

Out ri vwe imoto cycle vwo kokon
Obo re ayen vwo pha hahanvwe vwo
Ke orha raye kidie iruo hero-o
Ukpe rababor ke siosfeu
Akwanre davwerho re a san ra ra
Sie rede ghwu nu-u
Obenvwen re oma-elagho usun
Out buebu she phiho ukpokpegho re
Imotor cycle vwi fiki re obevweu vwe oto na
Ojiyovwi ode re ogba-eriarieu ro
Kwe itehru vwo ruiruo
Oshare ovo her re iruo roye dia
Ohwo ro kanre irhe ke ihwo rawo
Rayen vwirhirin
O de oko rotor (car) vwe ekina
Re out evo vwe vie ye out evo hwe rhe
Ebiben re inajeria (Nigeria) diobo ro owa sa gba-a
Imoto cycle ghobho arho re ihwo buebu
Ukpokpogho buebu riarie motor cycle re vwo rueruo phiho
Out ri she eberiebe (ticket) kpokpayen
Out ri she iwun vest kugbe erhu (helmet)
Ji ghwe kpokpo
Elokpa (police) je vwo su'ayen o je ayen dame vw'uko kpahotor ghwu-ghwu
Ughwu inageria (Nigeria) hepha na
We biko vwan mo re achuko
Ikwegbe re udu o je gbe-e vwe
Uvwre re Ovwian ve Egini wo vwe
Oherhe esan re elokpa
Re evo vwo cha ye evo ro yanran
rayan vwo gborhi igho mie out re gua okada
ouana uji echo den
mi che ghwo ghwo ona
oda diene we nyo obo me tan a
ovie re ot rudu
osun rode re out rudu

ochidiagbara re ubrakpo udu
isun leader
emo wen rioja
vwe obo re elokpa
me rha rie se ovwan ejobi vwerhe-e
ebaben re inajeria (Nigeria) vren unuebo
we je bioko rakpo na h obaro re te ughwu
mi che gbikun ke ovwan fikividie Oshenye na gene
mi nyori ne olokpa ovo nene
oguoko roto ovo houre vwe motor
vwi tiki re inaira uje
oghene de brorhien na
onana oshenyen
o die ubroto ri Delda na ove ye elokpa epha-a O re Wori kuze.
O da diane e wene Olakpa rhie
Ubrotor ri Delta' kea yen nudje
Ayen mi re du vwe obe rere e je ayen ewene ne Delta na,
Fikiridie ihwo buebu vwi Delta na
Eki umiovwo ayeri chua
Ivwozighi ve elokpa vwian kuegbe ghwu-ghwu
Ughwu inajeria (Nigeria) epha na
Ebiko ovwan mo re a chuko
O da diane obe-erhare wen gbare
O fori re elokpa na siobo nuwe sie re a da fuenren nu ye o ri wori dia
Otioye-e ye o re udu ma bra
Ayen cha no wen
"O da diane ebe wen avwanre cha re"
Oma tobo vue ayen-en
T'ebe wen gbare eye O je gba
Ayen luwe igho emie-e
Ayen tobo fia igho kewe vwe idjerhe
Osho tobo mire aye-en
Nigeria gare uyovwi vioto
We biko a no ayen obo rayen she re ayen vwo tia igho ke ihwo
Olokpa ro ma hanvwe vwe eko oto kire irha
Tivo o dam re igo vwo de ayen
Bro ye a hwa ke emaravweu.
Bro ye a hwa ke ewaravweu
O da diane wo mue igho obuebu
Wan oherhe re elokpa vren
Osho ko mu we
Ghwu-ghwu
Ughwu inajeria (Nigeria) epha na
Ebiko a mo re a chuko
Umiovwo re Nigeria kpanre gangan
Oshare ovo rhie imu vwe Nigeria

Fikidie iguesun ri American rha guono o o
Issuesun re Nigeria dedire reyo ve udu esiri Ayen de jo kpe
Calabar oshare na je calabar rhite none na
Ephran ra ro ovo re rhan kugbe
Oriesa joma oto ke esa
O rha dia otioye-e esa krekren
Cha dje ne oto re obo roye na.
Uhanghwa djona phia vwe evun re une
Orheren rode yen osun re ishoshi
Idiebo yen Osun re Orhan

JOHN OGOLO

Obo re Eri kanre vwe Urhobo
Otioye ipheniyan je kanre vwe Erwere
Ughworivwi re egan ve
Omiovwon sa diovo-o
Vwe kemu kemu owhare here
Vwe o re egan orun o ye ese
O die emo-o
Me de gbikun rakpo te edje ovo
O tun ko djevwe
Wo gbi se gbikun rerhuvwu roghene-e
Komavo wo ru rien ikun esiri wen.
Mi ro ri roro kpahe uhworo sieuovo na me dam re john vwe emramren
Uyota John ogolo oborakonre ghine ghwu
O pha benben vwo ke aye ro vwo vwie
Sie ro de brate nu.
Sie re unu regbede de vwirhi nu ko be newel
O ke re eya de koko vwo ke emu egharo unueko sa kanro-o
Oke re John ogolo vwo ghwara cha
O woto ne nyono re esada
O rue college vwe urhiephrom,
Oye he okobaro re emo ri yono
O wote ne college vwe ukpe re 1985
Kere omo ve Atarhe
A da reyo phihe iruo vwe
Asan rede rue itehru (DSC) vwe ukpe yena
Ogbowian ye o rue
Ekevuovo ivwighren rha rhovwen ne o rierere rowian roye-en
Eh ughwu…
Ughwu rue okpemu rode
Vwe ediruo rive 24 emerauve resau
Ukpe 2003 Ugwu re John vwo dorhe
Orhan rohwo biebi brare o igbeneke re Africa.
O epha kere evwerhen

John epe Akpo re je mve
Ekpagha ugboma re john ghine ruoto
Vw'ede ro br'emu r'aye roye
Isolo akpososo re okwagbe
A gwuno John agbe mre-e
Egberakoren vwe asoso re egbukpe re
Avwanre je mre we-en
Mane ke war he rhi mre evwanre
Tavwe wok e yanran
Vwitikiridie wrhuru wen sie avwaure
O ke re Onorume toroh
Mo nyughwu ri John
Ko riere ne Onana ivwie.
Okiovo ro wan re avwanre de roro
Une koche Gabriel igbinoba ro ghwuru
Out royen re white table club,
Avwanre da vwe une na phia ke ukoko
John oye ugbeyan re vwo rue anu
ughwu roye
ikpagha
ugbona re John ghine druotov na
obe re Oghweta mue ughuru re John
re mosis iyasere ra rien phiho
oghweta rode re oto r urhobo
Gabriel ghururu, John Ogolo I, ghwe ghwu
Avwanre vie ughivu re John vwobo
Anegbe re ughwu re Onorogun George Dike da rhe
Mathew Alegbe ohwo re okwybe e jihwe
Vwe uroko re idjerhe r'ovwian
Orheren rode (Bishop) kaki viere gangan
Enana ihwo re vwo ruemu ri ghwuru
Ohwohwo kpahe ohwo
O da diane Akpo na kpure re e jo cliotioye
Ofun robo re phiana dje avwanre
Ekpagha…
Ugbonna re John ghine ruotor na
Re Benjamin rhi vwo te osibito (hospital)
Vo vwo mve orivwi re John otun de dje
Edo rughwu ri John da rhe ghwe
A da vie ji vwerhe gangan
Peter Tugheru re Aladja ve Jacob Ebah
Ihwo re dia uwevwi royen vwe Orhuwhorun viere
Ekpagha …
Ugboma ri John ghine ruoto na
Andrew Ojegb ada Ijolo je vie rhe
Isaiah Ighodaro, Etota re urhobo, eghewe Tenyo

Benson nyebra kugbe Alex Ubogare aye je vie rhe
Ekpagha …
Ugboma ri John ghine ruotor na
Otun ji dje John Oddje
John Ogolo se ghwae ovo re ukoko re se
Ne club 40 ri wori (Warri)
Oye osun re white club social club ne 1995 – 1996
Je ochidiagbara re
Ukoko re out ri she ihuuvwu.
Re vwo mue Orivwi re John Ogolo
Vwo te otor-udu
Orere na da rhe van mwavwe hw eve imoto v ihwo
Wo da Omo kpako voye ve emo ri cheko wo rien oke wo vwo tenyen ugo vie-e-e
Ekpaha - - -
Ugboma ri John ghine rue otor na
John ghine ghwu
Oni roye ra ghogho vwe oberivwi
Tiki re uvwie voye, ye oni avwrakpo ro vie tiki re ughwu roye.
Akpo da ghogho ye evivwi ra vie.
Akpo ve Erivwi wene ohwohwo
Erivwi wene John Ogolo reyo ne Akpo na
Johnbull ogolo ve Mathiew Ogolo.
Ovwan vwero tee mo re john Ogola
John ghwuru Onierivwi roye ra ghogho
Fiki revwie roye ye Oni-avwrakpo ra
Vie vwi tiki re ughwu roye
Akpo da ghogho ye evivwi ra vie.
Akpo ve erivwi wene ohwohwo
Erivwi wene John Ogolo reyo
ne Akpo na

OTOKUTU

Onana akpo re che ne kpo
Vwe d'ovo
Ihwevo se akpo na ome
Em… o tu dje vwe
Ekpako nab rise ne
Oseghe rotona vren o re urhhie
Mi sere gbuyota J'ouwo-o
Eta re ekpako na eta re aghivare
Otukutu me kwo mre vughe
Ukpe rohwo vwo mworhue koghwu
Abo re orhue miovwi ten a ohwo soso
Tiki regho hirhe phiho orhue
Didi oka re osono re igho yen

A nyavwe igho yena hwe kufia
Eh oghene mi kperi se we
Biko mo rhi brohien re Nigeria
Umiovwo re Nigeria kperi phia
Ihwo buebu re ghwe ekueku
Eh oghene onana gan no
Sie re avwanre de ny oghere ikun
Tiona ne ogboko cha ki tavwanre
Enwen
"O gbevwunu me vwo mre ison vwe etuegba me"
Vwe out re agbada re otukuntu, ede dje phia
Kede kede oye avwanre vwo vabo
Vughwu vwe akpo na
Oke buebu me da wan idjerhe na vren
Ye izighe na etiyi
Eh orovwohwo wo ghine sivwe
Avwanre
Oke koke me dam re oshare naa
Ki mi vwo ror orhne me rha
Vien ne ogbu-u
Mi vwo te oto re Agbada na
O de gbe rwunu
Eto ri vwrevwre reya ghwa, ibunukun,
Ephiawo ve iwum retabore re ihwo re gha motor-cycles e se keraye-en
Iwn remo ri yono ebe ve ikpu raye o je dje-e
Uyovwi romotete ve ugboma remo re vuvwuru
Irivwi ra rien phiho otor
Kere Asan va da nyore ivivwi (mortuary)
28th may, 2004
K Oghene vwo phophe Ozighe na
Ihwo re otukutu mi yere ovwan
Oletu (warriors) a hunre-e a kparabo-o
Emetogbe (deity) wo gare
Wo siode obrabra na ne avwanre uyovwi
Wo sivwi arho re ihwo buebu
Re hwe jovwo
O diane ihwehwe na vre otioye no
Ihwo ka tane
Otokutu ason ro muosho
Arwanre sien ode yena
O die ode ravwanre-e
Uyere nobo re onorume toron bre
Ighene re Otokutu kugbe Joseph Oberilo
Emu ovo ram re vaghe ne out ri
Gua motor-cycle na ayen toro asan dap he-e
O gua okada ove kpe oto re

Agbada de re ne
Sievuovo na emu ovo da wan
Uyovwi vren
O rwo guono oto roye ke odada
Re ogbu na vwo sa
Ro vwo ne obuko o dam re ogbu na
Ro guono se odada rive.
O vwo mre o dad je kea rho roye
Rde kpe otokutu re gbe obo romrere
Ighene rorere na da kparoma
Ogbu re otukutu na dad je siomenu
Me kpevwe emetogbe (deity) wo ganer
Kene e mu ogbu na
Olohore-e
Emetibiebi (police) sarp eleripvp
Egbolor na roro-o
Egada ve elalor je se rwo
Emu ovo-o
Onana ko hone ogborhuani re
Ore che vwo ruemu, o bori-i
E se vwo ruo-o
Ephe re aye koye eku kwo
Re vwo gbe egwa
Kesieye ayen ki se hwe ozighe na
Ovwo bo re ohwo gan te-e
Aye ri vwie re
Osho re ephe reya na mu vwe
Ohwihwo rotokutu na kpo re
Uyere te osioguma matthew
Oghwuvwie re Ekakpamre
Uyere te Ejenavwo William
Okiakpahe re Oghwurwie Ekakpamre
Uyere te Ojor Adinabu
Okobaro ribrotor re de sevwri vwurhos
Eguono wend a dia o re erhuvwi
Rwi Nigeria
Etiyin ikpe esan re re avwanre
Ji nyo miayen ke o gbare.
Ugbomuoshor ode re ohwo
Vwe ubogo omore Diemumesoro
Ihwo buebu diuwevwi da r'Oghene
Ke emo rayen
Out evo hevo re rori ne
Ayen hero
Pharha obo re aye vwo yeri
Ekevuovo je ayen be hero-o

Akpo ko na Deltan
Delta na kpe uko
Evanvwon she chon a
Otokutu … sho rakpo na muvwe
Oto re agbada re izighe na Diana
Ko hohe orho re erivwi
Orho ra va rede je hurhe cha
Ihwo erha a mrere vwe asan na
Ovo ddje vabo Elokpa mue ovo
Ese re oto na mue ovo
O re elokpa muru na
We je a no ayen mavo
We ru ro?
Otokutu… Akpo na orode
E de mue Ogburhi vwi Nigeria
Ke ghwoghivo ke akpo na ejobi ekevuovo
Sie re de siobo no ohwo vuovo gbe rie-en
Oke ovo vo wanre Aye ovo de hwe omotete
Vwe ekpan e de muo rwoke elokpa
Ke me vwe uphen nana vwo no Elokpa
Mavo ovwan vue aye na
Ona ke akpo eh Deltans
Delta na kpe uko na
Eranvwon she chon a
Otokutu… Osho rakpo na mu vwe
Igbunegbu nana de mue ode ive koma
Ode re ogoghene kugbe Orhue
Ozighe re muru vwe aderha ri P.T.I e muro ve ihwunu (guns) vw obo
O cha dia beubeu ra vwo dje
Iji ne Delta kakare
O re hweri vwe Ephron (Ettarun)
E muro ve ibekun, iyovwi re ihwo vwobo
Ovwan nyarhe rhe ni oka rorhue ra
Hunvwan vwi Delta
Delta … Akpo na rere
O re muru vwe idjerhe reki rode
Re isodje na vwo ta gangan,
Ayen da rhe mre vughe ne ohwo osos
Ayen dam re vughe ne iwun ive o ku phuho
O ku omamo rewun phiho obotor
Re ewun rorhue na
Delta wo ganre
Otokutu… osho rakpo na muvwe
GSM erha a mrere vwobo
Oke ra vwo nabo tuereu
Ada mre ne ero roye totor je

Ohwo ri Yoruba.
Die re soro?
Ihwo na rovwe Ebabeu
O ro ma da vwe ke ihwo ride na
Re laghe ihwo na ye
Obo se tee mo raye-en
Avwanre ejobi yen oben na
Ye wo rhoma kevwe oghwa ohohoho
Ona ka akpo Deltas
Delta na kpuko na
Eranvwon she chon a
Otokutu… osho rakpo na mu vwe
Clofford orji ji ru kirohwo ro mue
Orhue ro vwo hwe ihwo rwe eko
A ghwe uhoho voye phiho obe nene a san ejobi
O vwe ihwo rwo rhu isuya.
Vwe oke yena eki ri suya ve eranvwe
Eyayan de she vwe eko tikiridie
Wo sa herie ayen eye tene aye-en.
Out re she na rie aye-en
Elokpa ri Nigeria Cliffford rho?
Elokpa re Nigeria we dje asan re Clifford epha kevwe
O da diane oghwuru eye o akpor
Out ri church na
Muode koma rayen… omraro
Eye orheren ri hwe omoma raye
Omravo eddy ro tan ishoshi phiho
Onitsha
E mue agho vwo ke vwe Onitsha
Ekevuovo Oghene rwo tane Oteri
Ogba rode na de kpe emu diode
Oghene rode wo ghine gan
Emeshare ri Bakasi da rhie Onitsha
Ayen de mue omraro Eddy odjahou
Roye de rhie phiho nabo kerhon
Ikuegbe re omraro Eddy to phihore
Otokutu… Akpo na muosho-o
Re ayen vwo te Egodo re Eddy
Obo ra mrere vwe Otokutu
Ke Otete
Omraro Eddy asan
Re she irivwi phiho vwe egodo raye
Iyovwi re ihwo eyen ovwo ru
Hehivwo re uwevwi roye
Vwevwe re ogba ro riarie egodo
Na iyovwi rihwo o ji vwo

Muo vi
Re ihwo vwo vwe ehale vwo kue uchivwo
Ye Eddy vwe iyovwi rihwo vwo kue.
Sie ve ohwo de rue igbunu ke rwo
Dje omraro Eddy, ro vwo rue
Igbunu nana,
Yo ghwoghwo
Iyesiri re Jesu Kristi na rhe.
Ihwo re Onitsha yi ro knede kuo
"ohwo re Oghne…"
Emeshare ri Bakasi na kwo mno ayen da
Torhe kpe iwurhie
Uyere te emeshare re Bakasi vwi tiki
Rughwu re eddy
Uruemu vuovo na je rhie Delta na.
Onana kakpo Delta
Ure Delta epha na
Eranwon na gine she chore
Otokutu… Akpo na gine muosho-o
A be no-o se isun re Nigeria re
Bvare eye ihwo raye suen.
Onana kakpo Delta
Delta na kpure re
Eranvwon na ghine she cho re
Otokutu.. Akpo na ghine muosho-o.

IGHENE RE NIGERIA
Eyanbaro onho dugbe
Omerio ghe eshie cha
Whorhe
Idjedje akpo
Ije a pha a mre
Tu who yonvwri yere who muovwri
Ihwo cha nuni
Ekevwovwo iawo de whre umuovwho
Who gbe oghene kwu
Whre obo oghene tare wno
Danverhwo obota ihwo ta
Oke urwo oyen a vwo rhen
Ne ien re vwu urhe yen e jo
Me rhe ibi re ine
Vwe egba oghene
Obowen bi tu whre
Ma vno wo sowho yenre?
Me cha ta eta

Ese de nyen
Emo ri ke
Che ayen kpo, a yen nyen
Irerhu ro ushiranye
Oma vue ekpa o banphiyo,
Odavwe ke wi oni
Orhumemu che tighe ovunuynvwi
Oyen osa ro oghene
Ore re enyavwo, oyen ude ghogho ke
Kesenye ughievwen, tanye ughelli, ewu,
Urhiephron, ujeirwu ve
Olkwagbe vwe kenroyhe.
Vwo dje egba wen vwe uwheuwi
Akpo kuo ogho
Me ume yan akpo eje…
O no who ta nu who pha?
Iragwo yonvwi vwo ke oshare
Ogbu de hwe vweuwhevwi o ve
Iragw o o
Obo vwo rhe de muwhe reyo
Who che rhe orana cho
Dee vwo me vwe omo, mi vwe
Eghawre re expako
Ekeyena ne rhe
Me vwe de edje re urhenanae
Oghene rhere
Onorume ta re ne oghene re ine
Bruphiyo ke vwe me
Ode guhono bruphiyo vwo ko ohwo
Ohwo na de je ku phwia
Ohwo na je oghene re ine ku phwia
Me ta vwe okeke upho re Egini
Vwe urhe reokiamuor de de vwo
Esi obanphiyo okeji
Emuokpenu ronrye ovo
O na akpo
Onorume re ode owana ghirhe vwe
Onorume re otor re urhobo
Hwe de vwe oko biko uwe ewhen re oghene
Vwe irheruwhen ve oyen
Mo ne nu vwe rhe ghirhi vwe oranvwofa
Ome ibhro akpo
Oke oghene oyen gbaa re
Hwo di rhe owen
Hwo rhe obo re oghene roro kparo vwe
Umwemu oshare rhue o yiri nenee

Hwo sa se oshare ode
Oko, arirhi vwe oghhore
Vwo ka aye rhenye o di kidhe uwhewhi
Ogherhe a ye rhenye o gherne
Onane idjede re ogberhe
Awhare de bhre usheburo
Iwho ki roro ne awuare gharhanye
Okhrahiwo ne ocha buwenvwi
O de yan bo egenee
Ma vo oyen ocha vwo yen re
Si re ode buwenvwi na nu
O de oranwho onwavwanro edjie oyen oro
Oghene o re obuko re avwanre
Idare ne chief ogute oghwure na ono ovo
Oke ovwo akpo we
Ogbodo re ame, erhanre, yi vwe be erhenda
O vo ma gnonko?
Onorume toron o de kpanre ne
Ogbodo, iji vwo be erhanre, e yen irekwhru erhenda
Erhenda uwa yen hwo ghuorho
A san a de vwo va ame
Erkenda na iyen ru ruo
Eniaranre de tuorhan sa no
Okuovo erenda na eyen soruo
Iji di che asan
Erenda na eyen soruo
Urhobo vwo ni mon
Et a re imehgle vwo kenana
Ever obo re
Ma vo vwo niro vwi yo?
Ona de osasavwe
Onana orhue
Enana ighele re ovwanranye oyen
Avwero tu efuo re orere
Ayen vre aso ghroke
Kanye sivwe isesu orere
Tivo vwo de mre oka urhemu nana re?
Hwo de ota kanye
Ayen cha je vwe kufwa
Ayen ghwo no fe vwe kidjede kidjede
Je ayen ghwo no ghwen owiane
Ighele na rhe ye orere ranye
Phiye eki ranye
Orhie na na orhue
Onana de osasavwe
Onana orhue

Ovwo obo oshare gho van
Oje de emeghele jo vwo
Otighri je je ro
We de no ne kihwo vwo suoro
Over inighele na
Ihwo biko je omavweto
Akpobe ihwo ibenbure
Fikire imighele benbuhwu
Okenana
Asaeje vuore ve orhue
Orhue arudo
Hwo de ren nu hwo mworhue
Ki je ogbiruo vwo
Ose re olorogu Bibiere Benjamin
Muo de ko manre ne
“ode hwo se omahwe”
Oyen ihwo se hwe
Omoshare ovo yonma
Deiyen ovo okere
I breabo mekpe okere re
Hworone oshuo elokpa mwuvwe
Ogbevwunu
Ohuo yenoma vwe orukuruku
Orhue vwe egba
Orhue ghine orhue
Onane de omesa so\onana eje orhue
Egba eneghele avow vwen owpan duvwe
Okeoghwo
Oyen ovwo yanve egba gidiyo
Ayen ghwono owian waina
Ayen dey mie ihwo re mbu uwhenyi
Kayen kpe esinyi
Egba koyen avow rerge igho
Omoke kve acha ghwe
Igho kesenye ake
San yen ogbe, phephe or rue konanwo Koran vwo
Okidigbara okidiagbara asajebobi
Ve ibiaro re vwara vwoghovwogho keje ogbu
Fikije osa re otor
Orhue yen orhue
Onana de omesa so
Dedevwo ode imighele ne na ejobi
Eyen rhuosa nana
Avwahre ghono vwiane
Avwanre ghono ghwu okeneje
Ihwo nana oyen me tan a

Imighele okena ve opharo ranye
Kokoyo ke re es.
Fikine ighwuwu eganga ayen rore
Vwe opharo ranye muomuovwi
Ayen megbe ke ighwu okeneje
Orhue vwe egba
Onana de omasa so
Onana orhue
Eshape ri de benbwu
Ve itu re suen etehuranre
Ve orukuruku ke imighele
Me rhenre ne hwo rhenre obo ogba menophu ovan
Oyen nerhe oshuo re isodja ombu uwo
Imighele van biko rhan ne
Ihwonana re je kpe ofovwi
Emoranye re ovure obodoyibo yonebe
Ire ekuorore Nigeria yere denden
Emoranye vuo nene owan
Kpe obaro ofovwi?
Ugheghe ne eranvwenvwi se
Ologbo narhe honre
Oyen ota re ekpako ta re
Ighele wan biko vwe aghanre
Onana de osasavwe
Onana orhue
Dedevwo ode imighele na ejobi
Eyen rhuosa nana
Avnanre ghuhono vwiane
Avwanre gwho no ghwu okeneje
Ihwo nana oyen me te eta ke

OSAN UMUOMUO
Oghwa re iphe ori ghede
Akpo vwa kere itaye
Dedevwo avevanre je obevu
Ame a yanjovwo vwe okpotor
Oche vwagana a ovure ugbenu
Ohwo re oghene deoboje
Vwe eruo re oboriyovwiri fikiride odijovwo
Obana ve oghovoro
Oghene ma akpo gbagba
Ihwo rakpo iyen ghwogheruo
Ehwen obrabra ve urhuru
Evien ghwono suene inini ranye
Onana gbohwunu
Ode ochana chore onhumuemuvwo

Nunena oyen ororo
Oshare omuovwiri ve orodeko inuovo
Hwode mve orodeko ovure evwerhe
Omudia ne hwo mre owrenghe
Oshare ve orodeko
Merhenye ne hwo vugho oto oyenpha
Omudiaphe erhire oyonvwiri ve ohi re anovwiri
Ede buebu ore oji
Ede ovo ro ohwore ovwasana
Ede obana ihwore muovuiri ke cha hanre evwanta
Ihwo re muovwiri che epe evwanta
Evwanta chekpe ihwo re muovwiri
Ota okokodo aghanre oyen avwota
Mo ne oborephiare
Ovure orere re oba
Oghene ma akpo ve oboriyonuwiri ve utuoma
Oje na ke ohwen
Ive vwe oke
Ojena ke ohwen
Oke ouo ohwanrena oba ouo re rorere
Ovwe oghene ogor vwe
Ke egbukpe ighweren ke egbukpe ighwren
Hwo ren obo re ovwo ogor oghene na?
Eghele re omote
Ehele na oyen ovwo ge ega na
Oke re ega na di te
Ehele re emete egbukpe re
Ehnavwo ki tche rhinrentcha
Tayhe guonore yere ejuo
Ayen tcha hnavwa
Oke re eja na di te
Ighele re emete na ye ki tche koko vwe oganre oba
Aye ovo re se ne “Odedemare”
Oyen je omote ro me
Jo vwi vwe isu ranhye je
Ore je re oyen tche ghwe
Ode – de – ma - re - - - - o – o
Ede bhroghore oyen nu
Uyovwi na ode – de – ma – re
Ke vwo ege ge oghene re otor na
Ve eta kere ovo ive
Erhr, ihwona tch ke kuo
“Eche – dima – dima”
Odreghre re odedemare
De vwe omote roye vwo gega okenana
Omote re ovreghre na oyen o tcha je

Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
Otonye oyon ru
Otunye oyon rue
Otonye ogon rue
Ikombuta otonye oyon rue
Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
Ode – de – ma – re ve omote ovovo
Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
Oyono reye oshare okeyena
Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
Ode – de -ma – re ko breoba ra
Rovwo re yo iven
Re urhore omote royen ve oronvwen
Oba de ke iven a
Sine oreyan vwo kpo edeke erha (ede uje gbe ovo)
Ode – de – ma –ra enedjori
Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
O nab o se omote ro yen fia
Ve iven re oba
Ode – de – ma –re - - - - o – o
Ihwo van yanrhe kerho re ku
Iven re oba vwo kevwe ede oronvwena
Kheri, eguokhore
De mi tche rhue - eea – oba ---
Obe re ijob rovure ibalboro ijob de ta
Ne me mre obo re gbevwunu vwe akpo
Wo kpe egha re
O mavwe ghunruu
Edeki erha notore
Ugumbuemu na tch uwhevwi re
Edeovo omotena ko re
Va ame vwe urhie
Oyen iven na de tche ne ogharenye I de pyre
Oo ive re oba vwo kevwe re mi vuo vre oron vwe
Itchri, ivreri
Kide mitche rhue ee --- oba ---
Oro ghwanre de hhe iku na ode
Oghwoghwo ke orere ne ejobi
Oba orode na phiare…
Itchabo oba eje koko ri re
Ode – de – ma – re ------ ora
Ke yen se ode – de – ma – re
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - -ode
Iven re oba vwo devwe
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Orere na ghwo na yen okenana

Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ode – de – ma – re ko rhrabo
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Omose me kpe oronvwe
Ve iven na
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ka yen mouro bre ilorogu na ra
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ode mwune virho
Oo ive re oba kevwe me ghwa kpe oronvwe
Kheri, eghuoghuore
Ki de mitche rhue e oba
Avow se uyovwikoko nu ilorogu na
Ki se odede – ma – re
Omote wena atchavwo ge ega
Ka vue ode – de – ma – re na otchi phworhero ke Eghenera
Ke ro obo orhue jo vwo
Vwe uyonvwi re omote wen navwo ge ega.
Ode – de – ma – re mwe uyonvwi re omote ronye
Oyen odi cheberoto
Vwo kpe egha vwo tche
Se gbee
Odeche omote ofa
Ku vwo tche vwre ne
Eghenena iyen mwu hwen
Onana ke oke re omote wen
Dei ne vwo bei rue k obo ryo vwo
Vwo kpe egha vwo tche
Se ghee
Ihwo re ode – de – ma – re je emo ranye
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Vwo ke ega na
Ophu mwunye ejobi vwo kpanye odedemare
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Otche mue uyonvwi re omote royena
Vwo ke eghenena ke re obore rue jo vwo
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ihwo na sanro vuto kpanye obo ranye ghwonore
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ihwo na sanro vuto kpanye obo ranye ghwonore
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ona ke oboo oghwonoree
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ode mue oyeonvwi re omote rho yen
Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ovo - - - - - - - Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo

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120 . . .

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Ive - - - - - - - - - Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Erha - - - - - - - - Ode – de – ma – re - - - - - - oo
Ihwo na ke kuvwenri . . . Eche dimai dma
Eghene na ghwanre
Oru ghwanre na de mudia o data ne
Ke ti ne yanra abe ve ihwo vuo
Ige egaa, a ke re ye eranvwe vao rhuo
Ode – de – ma – re mre obarbronye
Oo iven re oba vwo ke vwe
Icheri, eghwoghwore
Kidie mitche rue – eh – oba - - -

INE RE EKOKORI MEK EGBEKU KENAIRU
Ve ogban re ine rhuonye
Orere re otughievwen
Ede re oji mwo olokpa
Mavo oyen odia Benji?
Edeyena ede re otighatighi ve ogboghwo
Mi che phe urhie re ine
Amo no rhen a san me de tcha pha
Ayan se we e vwerotayen
Aye rhen re ne vwo tche rue umuemwuu
Hwehwe olokpa re igometi
Dedevuo oji vwo pha.
Vwo kpokpe ihwo vuo vwe ruote vwote,
Vwo tche muode ke omaihwe ede ovo.
Vwo tcha mve ohwo ogan te hwe
Otione, vwo tcha mre ohwo ogan te hwe
Ughi evwen eni oyen rue
Eni rode vwo ne otonphiyo vwo rhe
Vwo de guone akon
Ki bre eni ra
Ovwo bo evwe do te
Ode itikire eni otetee
Oke ri ne kevwe agghwanre
Me sa sue ine re orere re otughievwen
Vwo ke urhobo
Mevwe ogbile re emeghele re urhobo
Me tchon unwemuu
Ota re isuensu re otughievwen,
Je bre eseride se ne omafuo who
Iji tche eghene, yanjan ye vwo
Ota de rhe
Je egheru na ghwore ko maranye
Me bre utchebro ro yonvwiri;

Isun re suen ve omamo re mwen ayen vwe omafuvwe
Eri muovwiri ke kpe ofovwi
Ukuta osa ghogho
Dedevwo ekpen ojiyo vwin
Ouo be orere do te
A yen ji vwe egeride
Osonobruhwe be vwe rot e orere
Ihwore dere orore na dere ve otete
Onana iku re ihwo re urhobo
Vwo se ne inoko rhe vwo de de ekpa
Osen de nu vwo bo oreri
Dedevwo, ayen eghwu jo vwo de nu vwo bo
Osa re emuobro ji rhe
Imere avwanre na ne oma tcha
Ne otovwiyo vwo rhe orere otughievwen
Me rhen ebe
Me vwe odafe gbidiki
Ve egba vwo do boje etinyire
Emmanuel mukoro oyen okidiagbara re
Orere na ve ihwo re nene sue
Okore na oyen san na reyo
Ede ihwe gbo esan emeranvwe erenren, ukpere udu ive nuro udu ive
Oge nana ghwe omafuwerhe
Ejagbologha ove rhuphy oyen
Je ovie re suosuo re otughievwen
Owho no nu ohwo ofa be ro
Oyen obo ro ode,
Oletu vwo ku gbe
Okpako ome droto vwo okeronye
Oreyen etota ene
Ivwo nene su vwo ne igbe ene rhe
Olorogu mariemu Aruorho, Oloeofu Basikoro
Irabo-Aruorho, olorogu chilli Ogide-Urhouro
Olojogu Bralama ideh udu vwe bo
Ihwo a ki sue Otughievwen
Okere avow ben ogwan na
Iwo ki nene owhoto ranye
Uwhevwi ayen kwunu
Oyen Acipi kwaphiyo o vo rhe
Uwhevwi vwe etchiyo ogagan.
Yagbologha vwo ru yonvwi
Yegbori ugboruvwhogho suru
Ota nuro rhue

Amodu kpemeki mukoro Baba yohuvwedje
Usuo ranye ve ogho,

Peter Ammoarfa vo mwu nu
Urhie ane regas atana oda rhe.
Okpako odje, ose oda rhe
Ve Emmanuel Toria itchabo ronye
Owini Tedje odo vanre oyen okpo ole oyen emeghere
Esusuo oyen osu re orere na,
Eran de tcho ke okpa ven
Okeren Akunu oyen
Ohwo re oghene J. Malaji Odovah rhenye oyen Ovwere Osuru
Ajen te yanbo ke.
Vwe seru ve aghwanre ode egba a,
Olorogun Block ugen, omo re Eyagbologha
Okere ovwo de osu re ighele
Orere na vwa sasasa
Hwo de de okpako re oghare yenre aye vwo ogbe
Ku vwo reye osa
Avwanre ne erhovwo re akpo grogro
Ekpako na sasaare, ayen sue ve ebe
Aghwanre oyan vwo sue
Ighwre ovo ovure gka
Isu ranye egba ride
Ayen de ebo fikire isussu
Ayen de ne edo re oji, eghwe to rmyore\ayen kha no ne de ochori
Orhorha da ghoren ve ome ranye
Ane egwe ghwu vwo ke omo avanre ayen teha no
Ober re phars.
Ayen mwen ihwo fa yangayangaa
Te ensare ve eya re banphiyo
Sa yen phophihwo
Je yenre a yen gbe oto na me rhenke
Otughievwen rhuonena
Ohwo de tche urhi
Ka ye mwuo bre igoments ra
Ameno oyen do wen ignoments?
Qranvwo re ovaranme ota ne oyen do wan
Mena otcha sag be ogbenu
Oderhe me tcha te yanbo ke
Arho ero ughwu ero
Ebgewuane arho ero ughum ero
Arho ero
Emanuel, Umukoro edirinverere kpemueki
Okidiagbara re orove re ofughievwen
Ose bwo sue
Oho ovwor suo hwe
Egbeku ane
Ughwu ero, arho ero

Eric sajini okkedum Ujea mi yenruwhe
Oyen vwo kpanye okidiagbara
Olotogu micheal semueji, osabe
Ohwo ouwor suo hwe
Egbeku ane
Ughwu ero arho ero
Sunmy droma oyonrigho,
Francise Karieka Osiobere Igho
Ohwo ovwur suo hwe
Egbeku ane
Ughwu ero arwo ero
Peter Oguli, Itchabo re Osube re igha
Francis Umukoro Oniago,
Prince Micheal Erhiari Edafe oyenyan
Avwanru kpevwosiwen
Ohwo ovwor sue hwe
Egbeku ane
Ughuru ero ano ero
Ihwo re sue me sauna
Ayenrhe eranvwo yonyovwi
Alen buansa aderfe ebe kpe moko
Ayen yoni ihwo se wenovwian
Oghirhi ebi akkpoguma obroirha rhirhi,
Obo wo dian na
Ohwo ovwor suo hwe?
Egbeku ane
Ughwu ero arho ero
Okugbe agware roral vwe ukpere union year irhirhim egbe ujone gbe irhirhin,
Patrick sito idle oyen okidiagbara
And aruanra
Ayenbe isikiru
Ayenbe as edikpirhawo
Eb beku ane
Ughwu ero arho ero
Hohn musa ophien osure otughievwen
Egbeku ane
Ughqu weo ero arho era
Ohwo ovwor sho hwo given gne
Ughwu ero and reg.

APPENDIX B

TEXTS IN ENGLISH

MESSAGE

The word is a big place
Nobody knows tomorrow
Don't swear, people that pray for you
are more than those that are against you
Evil cannot be compared to good.
This world is evil and full of injustice.
Come and see the race of survival
Mother pursuing her own child
Dollar multiplies when it gets to Nigeria
Nigeria is now a money ritual ground
for those living abroad
And it is well with Obasanjo
This is the third time of Obasanjo 's leadership
in Nigeria
I was thinking that Obasanjo knows Nigeria's
problem
I thought the "Oga" will be a better leader
The longer the fish stays in the river
So it is also in the pot and the leader of fishes
In the river because he knows
Where there are dangers.
They dribble Nigeria like Okocha
They treat Nigeria like a local prostitute.
The body of Nigeria has been shared
They now set it on round table.
Bisecting Nigeria's intestine
This is alarming
Nigeria is dying
Please let's come to her rescue.
We do not pray for war
No matter the power of a charm
You do not test it with vital parts of the body
If the leadership of Nigeria continues like this
One day her citizens will rise up and
Fight for their rights.
The leaders of Nigeria say robbers should
be killed and Nigerians says robbers should
be killed as well.
They and the robbers that are been killed
Who is more of a thief?
There are different classes of robbers
The leaders are guiltier of death.
Robbers are now killing robbers

That is true.
Nigerian churches my eyes have seen abomination
Police turn Pastors and police
turn Reverend
My eyes have seen
Oh God my eyes have seen
You have been patient
There are a lot of scenes awaiting Jesus
Commercial motor cyclist are managing
with the little money they realize from it
with their family because there are no jobs.
Half bread is better than non
We have no choice of where to go after death
Poverty and suffering goes together.
There are many victims of motor cycle accident
as a result of poverty in the land.
Ojiyovwe (its well) the name of Engineer
There is a man whose trade is to cave wood for
those with broken legs.
He has bought a car from this trade
While some are crying some are smiling
Poverty in Nigeria is unbearable
Motor bike has destroyed many lives
There are a lot of problems associated with
commercial motor cyclist
Ticket is on while vest and helmet
are on their way
Police on their own do not give them
a breathing space
This is alarming
Nigeria is dying
Please lets come to her rescue
Udu case is incomparable between
Ovwian and Egini you
have up to six police check points
While some are coming some are going,
extorting money from *okada* riders.
This is real robbery
I will announce this
If only you will hear what I am saying
King of Udu Kingdom
President general of Udu Kingdom
The chairman of Udu LGA
Udu leaders
Your children are suffering
in the hand of the police

I don't know if you are all sleeping
The poverty level in Nigeria has
passed an alarming stage.
Lets continue to paddle the canoe of life
till death
I have stories to tell because the oppression
is too much
I heard that a police man had a fight
with a tipper driver at Mofor
because of twenty naira and the case
was decided by God.
This oppression
Delta is not the only place where we
have police Warri's case is the worst.
If police men are transferred to
Delta State they will be jubilating.
Preparing charms never to be
transferred from Delta,
because a lot of persons in Delta
are into bad business.
Tugs and police are working together
This is alarming
Nigeria is dying
Please let's come to her rescue.
If your particulars are complete
the police are supposed to let you go after
inspection but the case of Warri is not so
and that of Udu is worst.
They will ask you
"If na your paper we worn chop"
They are not even ashamed
If your papers are correct or not they must
collect money from you
They even give change on the road
They are not even afraid
Nigeria has turned upside down
Please ask them what do they sell that
they are giving change for.
A recruit police officer has up to three cars
Where did he get money to buy them and
how much is your salary.
If you are caring a lot of money
through a police check point
you will be afraid.
This is alarming
Nigeria is dying

Please lets come to her rescue.
The corruption in Nigeria has reached its climax
There was a man who came to Nigeria on exile
because the American Government does not
want him there
The Nigerian Government welcomed him with
open hand and took him to Calabar and
up till date the man is still in Calabar.
Birds of the same feather flock together.
Debtors should be careful of debt
If not petty debt will send him
out of their own land.
Uhanghwa has given us the approval
to ride on with music.
Rev. Fr. Is the head of the church while
chief priest is the head of the shrine.

JOHN OGOLO

As there is Fish scarcity in Urhobo
So also is cassava flakes scarcity in Ijaw
The burial of barren person and
the fruitful person can never be the same
In everything there is a cheat.
In a barren situation the family members
are called
Not the children.
When I tell stories of life to a certain stage
I feel sorrowful
If you don't talk about the goodness of God
how will you know your testimonies.
I was deep in thought, in music suddenly I saw
John in a glance.
John Ogolo Eberakoren have really died
It is not possible for a woman to bear child
after menopause.
When a needle head is broken stitching
becomes impossible.
When women gather to share items,
It always ends up in a quarrel.
When John Ogolo was growing up,
he finished his primary and
entered secondary at urhiephron,
he was the senior prefect.
He finished secondary school education i

n 1985.
As a child with destiny
He gained employment with
Delta Steel Company (DSC) that same year
He was a hard working person
But the enemy deprived him from
enjoying the fruit of his labour.
Death o….
Death has done mischievous things
Tues 24 June 2003 John died without ailment.
The black witch is powerful i.e African magic.
Just like a dream,
John has departed to the great beyond
Ekpagha (oil bean tree)
Clapping John's body down to earth,
During the traditional marriage ceremony
of Ijolo Akpososo at Okwagbe Town
John Ogolo was nowhere to be found
Egberakoren for more than a year now
We have not seen you
You should have come to see us
before you depart
Because we are very much hungry of you
When Onorume Toroh(computer)
Heard of John's death
He lamented this is a big blow.
Sometimes ago we composed a
song for Late Gabriel Igbinoba
A member of white table social club,
And we presented the song to the club
What we heard from John was wonderful.
John is a friend to reckon with and
his death created a vacuum .
Ekpagha
Clapping John's body down to earth.
The death of John was published in news paper
by Moses Iyasere a well known
editor in Urhoboland
Gabriel is dead, John Ogolo again
We are still crying the death of John when
Onorogun George Dike's death occurred.
Mathew Alegbe from Okwagbe was killed
along Ovwian Express road.
Bishop Kaki cried bitterly.
These are philanthropist who died
one after the other.

If this world is coming to an end let lt be
We are tired of all these happening.
Ekpagha ...
Clapping John's body down to earth.
When Benjamin got to the Hospital and
saw John's dead body he was confused.
The news of the death of John escalated and
he was heavily mourned.
Peter Tugheru of Aladja and Jacob Ebah
his tenant at Orhuhworun all wept bitterly.
Ekpagha…
Clapping John's body down to earth.
Andrew Ojegbada ijolo also wept bitterly
Isaih Ighodaro, Urhobo orators, Esheme Tenyo, Benson
Nyebra and Alex Ubogare they all wept bitterly
Ekpagha
Clapping John's down to earth.
John Odje was so confused too;
John Ogolo was a member of club 40 Warri and
President of white club social club
from 1995-1996
He was also the chairman
of medicine dealers association.
When the corpse of John Ogolo
arrived Otor-udu
The town was jam-packed with cars and people
Seeing the first son Ovoke and the other
children you won't know when you will
burst into tears.
Ekpagha…
Clapping John's body down to earth
John is dead.
His mother in the great beyond is rejoicing
over his birth there, while the earthly mother
is crying over his death.
When the earth is rejoicing the great
beyond is crying.
The world and the great beyond always
exchange.
The great beyond has exchanged John Ogolo
from the earth.
Johnbull Ogolo and Mathew Ogolo you are
left to play the role of caring for
John Ogolo's children.
John is dead his mother in the great beyond
is rejoicing over his birth there, while his

earthly mother is crying over his death.
When the earth is rejoicing
the great beyond is crying.
The world and the great beyond always exchange.
The great beyond has exchanged John Ogolo
from the earth.

OTOKUTU
This is the world that we will one day
depart from
Some people are taking it to be theirs
Em… I am disgusted
The elders have said it before that there are
more dangers on land than the river,
then I didn't believe.
The words of our fathers are words of wisdom
Otokutu I now believe
I prefer death to madness
As bad as madness a normal person
pretends to be mad because of money.
What sort of money
Such money should go to hell
Oh God I call upon your name
Please come and decide Nigeria's case
The evil of Nigeria is alarming
Too many people are dying innocently
Oh my God this is too much.
When we hear such stories
from afar we feel touched
"I was surprised to see excreta in my beards"
Under the bridge of Otokut, it was confirmed
We escape death every day in this world
Most times when I pass through that road
The monster is there
Oh Lord you really saved us
Most time when I saw the Olga
I thought he was a madman not knowing
He was a killer
When I got under the bridge
I was dumb founded
Women's wig, underwear, shoes and
Okada men's coverall are uncountable.
School uniform and school bags are uncountable
A child's skull body was dried erected and
dead bodies lies on the ground
just like mortuary.

28th of May, 2004.
When God exposed the monster
People of Otokutu I salute you all
Oletu (warriors) no retreat no surrender.
Emetegbe (deity) you are very strong
You have removed bad names from us and
You have saved some other lives
That would have been killed.
If the killing has lasted more than this,
People would have said that
Otokutu is a danger zone.
We forbid to be called a name
That is not ours.
That is it
Greetings from onorume toron to
the youth of Otokutu and Joseph Oberiko .
One common thing with okada riders is that
They ease themselves anywhere.
An *Okada* man went under
the bridge to ease himself.
Suddenly he sensed something pass
By his head.
It was an arrow
Which the killer shot at him
When he looked round he saw the killer
trying to release another one.
He then ran for his life and went to Otokutu
To narrate his ordeal
The youth then sprang into action
Otokutu the killer is gone
I thank you *Emetogbe* (deity) you are powerful.
This is how the killer was caught
It was not easy.
Mobile police shot at him but the bullets
Could not penetrate through
Cutlass and stone could not do
Him any harm too.
This is like a cock that a community
Wants to use for a sacrifice,
It must crow
They demanded for a woman's urine
To neutralize his evil powers
The urine was poured on him
There and then he was machete to death.
No matter how strong a man is
he was born by a woman.

I fear women urine.
Otokutu the killer is gone.
Greetings to Osioguma Mathew
President General Ekrakpamre community
Greetings to Ejenawho Williams
V P. Ekrapkamre Community
Greetings to Ojor Adinabu
President Urhobo Oil Producing Communities
If your relation goes in search of greener
Pasture in Nigeria
For a period of six years without a word
From them, be told something is wrong.
Ugbomuoshor (fearful road) is somebody's name
From Ubogo the son of Diemumesor
(What have I done).
Some people are at home praying to God
On behalf of their children
Some victim's relatives are hoping that
They are out there
Struggling for survival not knowing that
They have been killed.
This is life Deltans
Delta is going down
Things are falling apart
Otokutu ……this world is fearful
Under the bridge where the killer dwells
is like the land of the dead.
The land of no return
Three men were found there one escaped
Police arrested one
And the gods arrested one
The one arrested by the police
Please ask them for me what have
They done with him?
Otokutu …….this world is fearful.
In Nigeria when an offender is arrested
It will be announced to the whole world but
When he is released nobody will know about it.
Some time ago a woman killed a child
at Ekpan and she was caught, later handed
Over to the police
I use this opportunity to say the police
Should be asked of the where about
of that woman.
This is life Deltans
Delta is going down

Things are falling apart
Otokutu ……this world is fearful.
These killers do give two names to themselves,
Christian name and madness
The killer caught at P.T.I junction
Lots of guns were found in his possession.
It will be difficult to eradicate robbers
from Delta
The one that was killed at Effurun
Human bones and skulls were found in
his possession.
Come and see the kind of madness in Delta
Deltans ……..this world is collapsing
The one cought at market road
When tortured by military men,
They discovered that he was a normal person
They discovered he was wearing two cloths
The normal cloth and that of madness
Deltans you are strong
Otokutu……this world is fearful.
GSM rang within a madman in Deco junction
And he was accosted.
Three (3) mobile phones were found on him.
When interrogated
He was normal and he was a Yoruba man.
What is the cause?
The people are bad coupled with hardship.
What pains me is the big man suffering
The masses and their children have never been
a victim of these killers.
We are both going through the same hardship and
You are giving me more problem.
This is life Deltans
Delta is going down
Things are falling apart
Otokutu ……this world is fearful
Clifford Orji also pretends to be mad
Killing people in Lagos
His photograph was all over the places
He was using human being for suya,
during that time the sales of suya and dry meat
went down in Lagos because one
cannot tell which is which.
The dry meat is suspicious because
the sellers don't eat it.
Nigerian police where is Clifford?

Nigerian police show us the where
about of Clifford
if dead or alive
The ones in the church have
given themselves titles……Prophet and
Reverend Killing fellow men
Prophet Eddy the founder of a church at Onitsha
He was reverend in the while of Onitsha but
when God says enough is enough your
mightiness will become nothing.
God Almighty you are great.
Bakasi boys now arrived Onitsha.
They arrested Prophet Eddy his secret were
exposed listen very well.
The story of Prophet Eddy is on the way.
Otokutu this world is fearful.
When they got to Eddy's compound,
what was seen under Otokutu
Bridge was a minor case.
Prophet Eddy has his own
burial ground in his compound
He uses human skull to lay his building foundation
Even the fence of his compound he uses
human skull for
the foundation as well.
While other people were using stones
for foundation Eddy was using human skulls.
If anybody does a miracle he will be
compared to Prophet Eddy, while
he was doing all these miracles,
he was preaching
the gospel of Jesus Christ as well.
People of Onitsha were hailing him
"Man of God….."
Bakasi boys caught him and burnt him to ashes
Thanks to Bakasi boys, over Eddy's death.
Such things have moved to Delta.
This is life Deltans
Delta is going down
Things are falling apart
Otokutu ……this world is fearful
We cannot tell if the leaders of Nigeria or
the subjects that are bad
One is fed up with the issue of Nigeria
I rest my case…….
This is life Deltans

Delta is going down
Things are falling apart
Otokutu ……this world is fearful. 230

NIGERIAN YOUTH

There is progress in unity
Pride goethe before a fall,
you said you have known
the techniques of life
Show this technique of life and let's see. 5
No matter how good or bad you are
people must complain
However if you do evil
you have disobeyed the commandment of God
Do that which is of God never mind 10
what people will say.
It is only at dry season that we will know
if there are fishes in the pound or not.
I have eaten the fruit of songs
by the grace of God. 15
If your hand could not go round a tree then
how can you climb it?
I will continue to talk
If parents are bewitching
the child that will give 20
them a befitting burial, then they are
bewitching their own burial ceremony.
A madman is not ashamed of his nakedness,
I pity you mama.
The sinner will always be confused, 25
that is the word of God……..
Festival of circumcision, Udu celebrates
before Ughievwen, then Ughelli, Ewu,
Urhiephron, Ujevwu and
Okwagbe respectively. 30
You don't show how powerful you are at home
life is all about respect.
I am everything in life …..
Who do you think you are?
Iragwo (boasting) is good for a man. 35
If a worrior kills at home he does not
boast with it.
If you are carried away with anything
you are doing, you are bound to make mistakes

Even though I am a child I have
the wisdom of elders.
For that reason,
I belong not to this generation
God knows.
Onorume said that the god of songs
has blessed him with songs
if he decides to bless anybody with it and
such person decides to neglect him
that person has neglected the gods of songs.
I have said during the time of Egini Voice
in the track titled Okiamuor even though
the pig is always naked
the value still remains.
This is life.
Onorume of yesterday has turned into
onrume of Urhoboland
If you have a friend please use a Godly mind
in all your dealings with him.
Come and eat with me has turned something else.
No hurry in life
God's time is the best
While doing your own
You don't know God's plan for you.
The evil that men do…. lives after them
You decide to be like a man who buys
boat, nets and hooks
for his wife and sit at home
waiting for the wife to feed him.
This is the road to poverty.
We are only advising,
some people think we are insulting them
A cripple thought of building a house
only to build an upstairs,
I wonder how he is going to climb the upstairs
after building it.
All that glitters are not gold.
God is behind us.
Idara asked late chief Ogute a question
when he was alive,
That flood, fire, thieves and witches
which is more destructive?
Onorume toron (computer) then answered
that flood, thieves and fire are tools of witches
and they use them for destructions.
If the place is flooded the

witches might be responsible,
If the place is burnt down by fire
the witches might be responsible,
If robbers invade a place
the witches might be responsible.
Urhobo we should be watchful
the case of youths these days
is getting out of hand.
Its like the witches are responsible.
There are problems associated with youths
all over the place
How do you look at it?
This is not smartness
It is all madness……
These are youths whose duty is
to keep their community clean
Now wake up over night,
claim leadership of their communities.
Have you seen this kind of action before?
When you advise them
they will never take to advice
They want to be rich by all means
but they don't want to work for it.
Youths now take their communities
as their business place.
Orhue na crase……Oh. (this is madness)
This not smartness
It's all madness
No matter how old a man is
he was once a youth.
There is crises over there,
if you may ask who is responsible
Nobody but the youth
You people should be careful
You are not the first to be youth
People are now fed up with life,
because of the activities of the youths
of these days
Everywhere is filled up with madness
I mean deliberate madness
If you know that you are not mad
then stop behaving as a madman.
Late chief M.V. Bibiere Benjamin's father
nick named himself
"the name you call yourself"
That is what people will call you

if you are not mad
Stop behaving as a mad man.
A boy was boasting saying that
"watin dey Okere"
"How many times I don go Okere"
"You think say I dey fear police….o"
I was surprised
Somebody boasting with crime
Madness is powerful
Orhue na crase …..oh (this is madness)
This is not smartness
It's all madness……
The strength of a youth that is supposed to
be used positively till old age
Has been converted into aggressive begging
They don't want to work
If they see anybody trying to develop
his property, they will go there
violently, to collect development levy.
Very soon we will be paying
development levy before we can
walk the street, urinate or do anything.
Chair mo…..chair mo…….reigning everywhere.
With red eyes like that of a murderer,
Because of development levy
Orhue na crase…..oh
This is not smartness
Its all madness ……
Never the less, all the youths are
not guilty of this accusation
We are not ready to work
and we are ready to die at any time
These are the ones that we are talking about
Youths of these days with their faces
looking like that of a pig
Because of hard drugs that they have taken
With their faces looking very ugly
ready to die at anytime
Madness is powerful
This is not smartness
It's all madness
Some of the notable men and
some politicians are connected with
the evil deals of the youths.
I hope you know how warriors react to things
That is why we are afraid of soldiers

Youths I hope you know that
these people who send you to war
Their children are abroad studying there and
the ones in Nigeria are living a peaceful life.
Which of their children are following you to the
battle front?
Its only a foolish rat that will
want to bell the cat
That is the word of the elders
Youths, please be wise.
This is not smartness
Its all madness….
Nevertheless all the youths are
not guilty of this accusation
We are not ready to work and
we ready to die at anytime
These are the ones that we are talking about.

OSAN UMUOMUO

Load of gift is on the way
Life is like a story
Meanwhile we are still inside.
Water that is left in a pit
Cannot have a place on a hill
A Godly person should not think of quitting
being good because if he does
The end will be very destructive.
God has created the world perfectly but
man has destroyed it.
Envy and greed
Servants want to turn lord over their masters.
This is wonderful
The wicked has forgotten tomorrow
He thinks of only today
The wicked man and serpent are brothers
If you see a serpent in your dream
It means you have seen your enemy
Man and serpent
I hope you know how they are.
It means the good and the bad spirit
Every day is for thief
One day is for the owner.
At the end the evil ones will accuse the Godly
The evil ones turn Godly while
the Godly ones turn evil.
Very serious issue must be handled with caution.

Come and see what has happened
in this *Oba's* community.
God created this world with good and bad
The choice of which to do remain yours
both has their reward.
The choice of which to do remains yours.
Sometime ago there was an *Oba* in a community.
He has a god that he offers sacrifice to
every seven years.
Do you know what is used for the sacrifice?
A maiden.
A maiden is used for the sacrifice
When it is time for the sacrifice,
The entire maiden that are up to the age
of circumcision will be invited.
Whether they like it or not
they must be circumcised.
When it's time for the sacrifice,
all the maidens will gather at the *Oba's* palace.
There was a woman called "Odedemare"
She does the selection for
the most beautiful maiden
The one she picks will be used for the sacrifice
Ode-de-ma-re……..oh
After the maiden has been beheaded,
the head will be used by Ode-de-ma-re
to appease the gods of the land
With her saying *ovo*(one), *Ive*(two),
Erha(three),, then the people will chorus
"Eche-dima-dima"
If the enemy of Odedemare
circumcises her daughter during this period,
she will choose nobody but her enemy's daughter.
Ode-de-ma-re……oh
That is what she does
That is what she does
That is what she does.
Computer that is what she does
Ode-de-ma-re……oh
Ode-de-ma-re has just one daughter
Ode-de-ma-re…..oh
She was about to get married
Ode-de-ma-re…..oh
Ode-de-ma-re went to the *Oba*
to demand for *Oba's* beads
to dress her daughter for the marriage.

Oba then gave the beads to her
to return in three market days (21 days)
Ode-de-ma-re said she has heard.
Ode-de-ma-re…..oh
She then dresses her daughter
with the beads to marriage.
Ode-de-ma-re…..oh
People of the world come and hear.
Oba's bead that was given to me to marriage,
it has fallen, it has broken,
what am I going to do…..*Eh*.....*Oba*……..
The book of Job in the Bible Job said that
I have seen what surprises me in life.
Don't go for a dance that
you are not fit enough for.
Three market days was almost passing by,
the evil was about coming back home.
One day the daughter was going to
the stream to fetch water,
when the bead fell off her neck and got broken.
Oh *Oba's* bead that was given to me to marriage,
it has fallen, it has broken,
what am I going to do…...*Eh*.....*Oba*.....
The wise one heard of the news and
announces it to the whole community.
Oba it has happened ……
All the *Oba's* Chiefs have gathered.
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
They now called ode-de-ma-re
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The bead *Oba* gave to you
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The community wants it now….
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
Ode-de-ma-re was just opening her hands
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
That my daughter has gone to marriage
with the bead.
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
She was brought before the Chiefs
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
When the bead was demanded of her
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The pieces of the bead were presented by her
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
She then started singing….

Oh *Oba's* bead that was given to me to marriage,
it has fallen, it has broken,
what am I going to do……*Eh*.....*Oba*....
After much consultation by the chiefs
They called Ode-de-ma-re
This daughter will be used for sacrifice
Because of the bead she has broken.
They then carried the maiden for sacrifice.
Ode-de0ma-re was asked to appease the gods as usual.
Use the head of your daughter for the sacrifice.
Ode-de-ma-re carried the head of her daughter and fell down.
Don't go for a dance that you are not Fit enough for.
If it were another person's daughter
You will be pretending that you are under The influence of the gods
Now it is the turn of your daughter Why not acts as usual.
Don't go for a dance that you are not Fit enough for.
Those ode-de-ma-re have chosen their children
Ode-de-ma-re …..Oh
For the sacrifice before
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
Have been very angry with her before
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
She must do this.
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
That she should carry the daughter's head
to appease the gods as usual
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The people were very serious over her demand
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The people were very serious over their demands.
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
Against her wish
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
She carried her daughter's head
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
To appease the gods
Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
Ovo (one)….Ode-de-ma-re…..oh
Ive (two)….. Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
Erha (three)….. Ode-de-ma-re…….oh
The people chorus ……..*Eche dimai dma*
(The gods are wise)
The wise one stood up to say that
hence forth humans should not be used
for sacrifice, in place, animals should be used.
Ode-de-ma-re has seen her end

Oh *Oba's* bead that was given to me to marriage,
it has fallen, it has broken,
what am I going to do……Eh….Oba……

COLLECTION FROM EGBEKU KENAIRU AND HIS BLESSED BAND

OTUGHIEVWEN COMMUNITY
It is good when a policeman catches a thief
But the day the thief catches the police.
How will it look like Benji?
There will be crises and a great turbulence
I was deep in the river of songs,
who knows where I will appear.
They call you to protect people
not knowing that you plot evil
You are a government police,
now as an armed robber.
Disturbing those you are called to protect,
One day you will name yourself.
You will meet your match,
It is so he will meet his match.
Ughievwen is an elephant,
A great elephant from the beginning
If you need the tusk,
You meet the elephant
No matter how fat the goat is,
It's not because of the small elephant.
The giver of songs gives me wisdom
So I can sing of Otughievwen community
to the Urhobos.
I am a young musician from Urhobo
I can't condole evil
The case of otughievwen kingship,
Let's meet ancestors so we can be free from it.
If a thief steals the gods we should leave them
When there is a problem,
let the gods fight for themselves.
I am good in advice;
leaders who lead with good mind will have peace.
The bad ones will leave with war.
The rock may be heavy
yet the sand is still important.
No matter the size of a town,
they still have ancestors.
Except the Lord guide the town,

The civil defense and army do in vain.
This is a story to the Urhobos.
You can come from abroad a fool.
A concubine and an inherited wife,
which do we take care of?
Because care, beautifies a woman.
Ijolo give me the answer,
If a concubine leaves it is finished
but if the inherited wife leaves,
she still holds the bride price.
Our music is with feelings now.
Otughievwen town from onset
I am more learned,
I am the richest
and more powerful don't exit there.
Emmanuel Mukoro is the chairman of
the community and his executive,
They are well selected by the town.
16th of May 1998, it is the best, gainful
and it also gave peace.
Eyagbologha was handsome and
was the first king of Otughievwen,
after him no other.
He was the head priest,
head worrior and also
the oldest man in his time
In his reign he picked four (4) spokesmen
to work with him from the four streets,
Chief Mariemu Aruorho, Chief Basikoro
Irabo-Aruorho, chief chilli Ogide-Urhouro,
Chief Bralama Ideh Uduvwebo
This people were leading Otughievwen
when the town hall was builth
and others imitated this
The house they packed from
was where Acipi packed into when he came,
the house has a solid foundation.
Yagbologha you did well,
yegbori Ugboruvwhogho lead
and there was no complain.
Amodu kpemeki Mukoro, Baba Yohuvwedje
reign were respected,
Peter Ammoarfa when enthroned,
the gas plant we talk about today came.
Okpako Odje, daddy came and
Emmanuel Toria was the deputy then

Owini Tedje alias big yam was the first youth
to be town leader,
when things goes wrong he puts them right
Okeren Akunu was his vice,
then Man of God J Malaji alias lazy man lead
and was applauded.
You lead with wisdom, not strength,
Chief Block Ugen, son of Eyagbologha
when he was the youth leader
The whole community was lively,
When you are the oldest man or woman in a street
you receive salary
We pray for long life,
The old ones are smart; you don't lead with education
but with wisdom.
One village in Edo land,
their leaders are giants,
they go for charms because of leadership.
Once they hear Thief! Thief! Its beating,
but they will not ask what he has stolen
If a stranger fights with t heir son,
they say let's kill him for our son without asking
what happened.
They flog people without reason,
Naked men and women
whether they disgrace people
or defile the land I don't know
Otughievwen community don't do that
If anyone commits an offence,
they hand him over to the government
Who is greater than the government?
Anything in the sea that says it is bigger than
the sea cannot come on the land.
If it comes I will applaud it
There is life there is death
Egbeku says there is life there is death
There is life
Emmanuel Umukoro Edirinverere Kpemueki
Chairman Otughievwen community
Sir as you are leading
whosoever stand against you
Egbeku says
There is death, there is life
Eric Sajini Okpedum Ujeya I greet you
Vice president
Chief Michael Semiteji, secretary

whosoever stand against you
Egbeku says
There is death there is life
Sunny Djoma, treasurer,
Francise Karieka Fin. Secretary,
whosoever stands against you
Egbeku says
There is death there is life
Peter Ogidi asst. Fin secretary,
Francise Umukoro internal auditor,
prince Michael Erhiori Edafe P.R.O
we appreciate you
Whoever stands against you
Egbeku says
There is death, there is life.
The Executive am singing about,
did so many good things,
They arranged a post office,
Trained workers
Barr. Ebi Akpoguma legal adviser,
As you remain,
Whosoever stand against you
Egbeku says
There is death there is life.
At the end of their conference in 1999,
Patrick Sito Ide was the chairman,
He said they should continue,
School were put in order,
They built toilets.
Egbeku says
There is death, there is life
Mr. John Musa Ophien, leader Otughievwen community
Egbeku says
There is death, there is life
Anyone that stand against you
Egbeku says
There is death there is life.

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2.	Egini	Onorumeh Musical Ladies	15/3/2010

B: **Interviews**

	Name and approximate age	Place	Date
1.	Mr. Akpobaro Oghenefejiro (75)	Ogwrode	27/2/2010
2.	Egbeku Kenairu (40)	Owvian	11/3/2010
3.	Chief Atuyota Akpobomemerere (80)	Owvian	7/3/2010

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