# ORAL LITERATURE AS A MEDIUM OP EDUCATION
## (The Case Of Aguata Oral Literature)

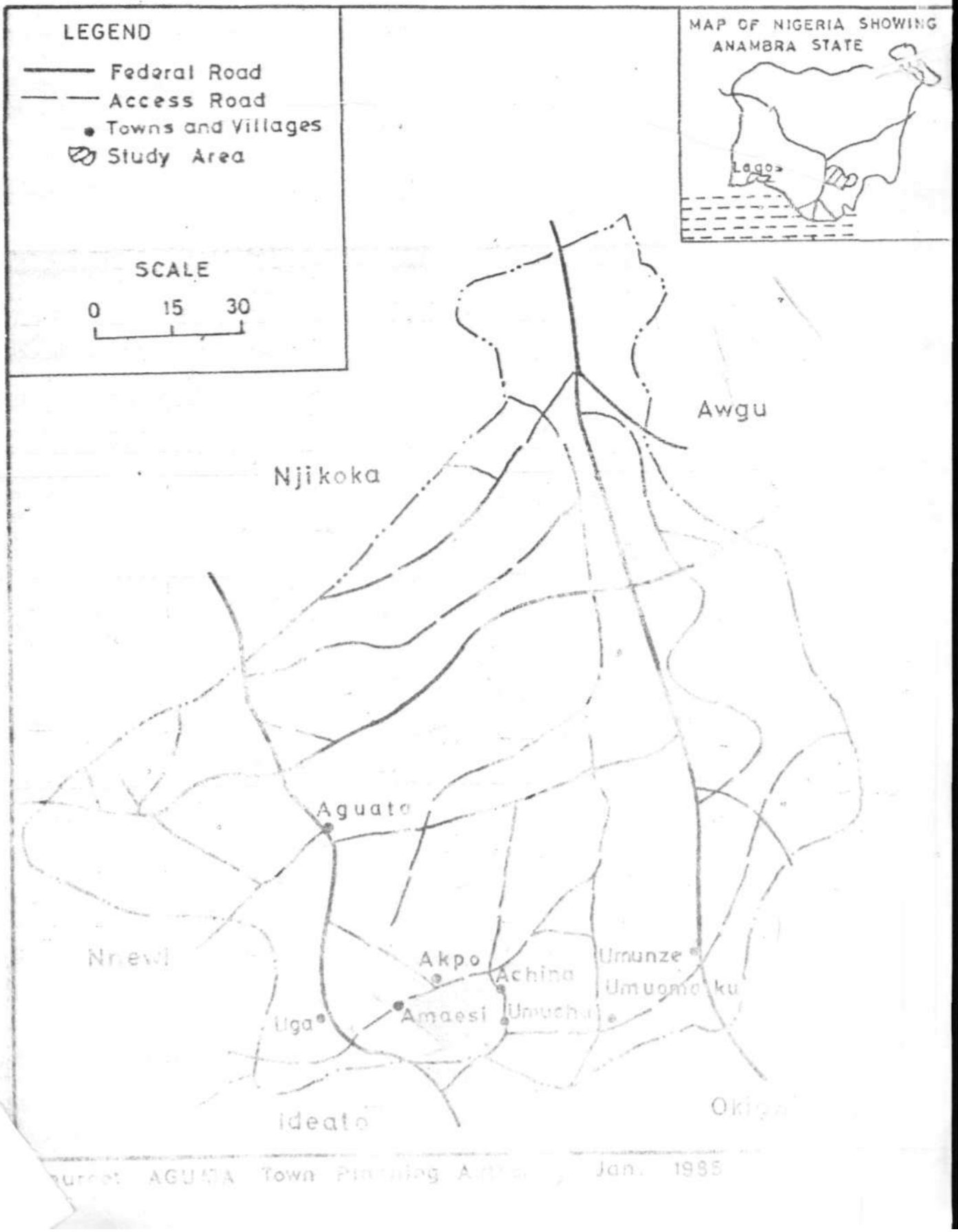
**BY**

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MAP OF AGUATA LGA SHOWING SOME OF THE TOWNS IN THE AREA OF FIELD STUDY




Source: AGUATA Town Planning Authority, Jan. 1985

## DECLARATION

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS THESIS HAS BEEN WRITTEN BY ME AND THAT IT IS A RECORD OF MY OWN RESEARCH WORK. IT HAS NOT BEEN PRESENTED IN ANY PREVIOUS APPLICATION FOR A HIGHER DEGREE. ALL QUOTATIONS ARE INDICATED AND THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION ARE SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY MEANS OF REFERENCES.

BEN ANYAEGBUNAM

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to three women: Theresa Umenwa Anyaegbu, my mother; Magdalene Uduchukwu Obiakor, my eldest sister; Ihezikanya Abaliagwughinigwe Onye Uwaoma anusi Obiagwu my mentor- the three women who, in many ways, contributed to my educational ascent, and boldly demonstrated unqualified love for me.

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With sadness and a great feeling of loss I express my gratitude to the late Madam Ihezi Obiagwu. My interest in folklore studies could not have been sustained but for the generous contributions she made towards my initiation into the masquerade cult. To my father, Fabian Anyaegbu, I owe all my achievements. I pray earnestly that I will be able to repay him for all the deprivations he suffered so that I could achieve this much. To my wife, Ngozi, and two sons who came to complement the work, Nnado and Ugonna, I am highly thankful for their forebearance during my long absences.

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For the neat typing of this work, I am indebted to Mr. Appolos Ikeya of Information and Publications, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for a neat, fast and efficient work.

## ABSTRACT

This study is the result of a field work carried out in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State of Nigeria between April and December, 1981. The **aim** is to survey the literary qualities of folktales and song's as performed within the socio-cultural milieu of Aguata. The study also aims at showing how the social, religious and economic pressures impinging on Aguata society have affected these art forms. It also will demonstrate how these art forms performed the twin functions of entertainment and socialization.

Chapter one is a survey of some earlier approaches to the study of oral literature. This begins with a global review of the studies, tappers down to early studies of the subject in Nigeria and ends with what has been done on oral literature of Aguata. Also included in this chapter is the research approach adopted in the work.

Chapter Two looks at the social and cultural context of the performances. It also explores the hopes and fears of the people as reflected in the art forms. The chapter then looks at the training, status and remuneration of artists in the society. Also included in this chapter is a look at how these art forms have Paired in the face of multi-faceted pressures coming from political, social,

economic and social changes which the society has been passing through.

The third and fourth chapters are literary analyses of the art forms. The analysis are based on whatever impressions and insights that were gained from participation in the performances during the fieldwork as well as discussions held with both the narrators and some members of the audience. The art forms are given in Igbo and English as Appendices A & B„

APPROVAL

This Thesis has been carefully read and approved as having satisfied the conditions for the award of Master of Arts Degree in African Literature in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru, Zaria, Nigeria.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

A lot has been written about oral literature in Africa. A thorough look at the vista of what has been published shows a marked segmentation into schools of thought. These theoretical studies can be categorized into three phases.

The first group comprises colonial anthropologists and folklorists. To this school belong the functionalists, the survivalists and the historical geographical diffusionists. The second school has, as members, those who, dissatisfied with the angles of vision of the first group of theoreticians, decided to approach the subject matter from a holistic viewpoint - a viewpoint which allowed for an analysis of the various aspects of the subject matter. In the third category are those scholars, especially Nigerians, who, because of their fuller understanding, have given oral literature a contextual and indepth study which has placed it in a proper perspective as a vibrant art form.

Theoretical studies into oral literature in Africa caught the attention of the intellectual world when colonial folklorists anthropologists and ethnomusicologists such as Janheinz Jahn, Chadwick, Boar Herskovists and Bowra came onto the stage. Jahn appears to be the most controversial among his contemporary researchers. This can be attributed to his claims in Muntu: An Outline of Neo-African Culture.[1] This book was published in the early sixties when the

world was hungry for information about Africa. It made many ambitions assumptions. Ignorant of the complexities of the African environment, Jahn attempted to "define what is really African", and then "to what extent African poetry, literature and art are really African, and to what extent they are not."[2] He went as far as trying to devise philosophical modalities that would help to describe African activity. This ambitious attempt made him confuse the various worldviews existing in Africa especially South of the Sahara. It is therefore not surprising that Muntu was scathingly criticised. A reviewer for the British Spectator described it as "strident with jargon and with existentialist arrogance. .... Essentially on the other hand, it is not a work of scholarship at all. Assembling a number of classifying words from several African languages, Mr. Jahn then proclaims them master concepts and selects whatever evidence he can find to fit them."[3]

Jahn was not alone in this effort to rush to generalizations about Africa. Various schools of thought held sway at certain points in time. The members of these schools fed their home audience with conclusions aimed at proving that Africa was a dark continent peopled by 'primitive savages'.

There was the evolutionist school which dominated the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These researchers approached folklore investigation from an angle which believed that there are unilinear and parallel

stages in social and cultural evolution through which all societies must pass. They held that society evolved from the crude and primitive stage which was highly communal towards a more differentiated and civilized stage. The evolutionists concluded that the stage of evolution by non-literate communities - a block into which all Africa was pigeon-holed despite every evidence of writing among the Arabs, Egyptians and Swahili speaking people for ages - could be akin to what obtained in prehistoric Europe.[4] This approach viewed folklore materials as communal and devoid of individual creativity and social relevance. This theory influenced Marian Cox in his Introduction to Folklore[5]. Cox contends that:

> "Certain usages and myths which seem intelligible when found among civilized races are the relics of a stage of thought which is dying out in Europe but which still exists among savages"6.

Another evolutionist, C.M. Bowra, in his Primitive Song[7], asserts sweepingly while discussing the composition of the songs:

> "The task of composition which is treated with such care and seriousness is helped, as in all oral poetry, by the existence of formulas, and of ready-made phrases which a man is entitled to is even expected to use when he makes a song"8.

This assertion suggests that creativity is absent in 'a primitive song' since there are already phrases and formulas which the artist can just pick up for a song to be made.

Evolutionist framework cannot be used for an adequate study of oral literature. Perhaps more because of prejudice than lack of information, evolutionists could not imagine that the 'primitive' savage was capable of artistic creation or could engage in aesthetic pleasure. In spite of Bowra's hope to "establish some illuminating conclusions about the earliest types of literature"[9], he could not realize that much as idioms and proverbs may be ready-made phrases or statements, they are no keys to artistic creation. In Aguata at least, the best user of idioms and proverbs may not necessarily be a good poet or story teller. The creativeness must be in the individual before he can use idioms and proverbs as embellishments. In literature, allusion is a medium of reinforcement of meaning; and this is just what idioms and proverbs do. This is what the evolutionists missed in their hurry to determine the rung of evolutionary ladder on which the societies they described as primitive were. They therefore failed to realize the creative force and social climate which gave (and still give) oral literature its vibrant and dynamic existence. Hence folklore materials were regarded as survivals of a very distant past - implying that oral literature is static, a very illusive concept.

Venetia summarizes the views of the evolutionists thus:

> "Folklore was held to be a survival from the past and folklorists used it to reconstruct the prehistory of mankind. They focussed on cultural data that appeared to be functionless, crude and superstitious. Illiterate peasant societies were thought to retain these fossilized survivals of a pagan detritus, souvenirs from an earlier, more primitive stage of existence. This approach which saw folklore, as in effect, archeology of the mind, reflects the view that movement of time is unilinear."10

The historical geographical or diffusionist school did not fare any better in studying folklore from an angle that would have put it into a proper perspective. This school was more interested in the patterns of distribution of similar tales. The adherents believed that by collecting variants of tales, they could trace patterns of distribution and in the long run, would be able to trace their origins.

Captain R.S. Rattray's work on folktales among the Akan - Ashanti of Ghana is a good example of a diffusionist theoretical approach. In his Akan-Ashanti Folktales, he feels that "an interesting line of research would, in fact, be a comparison of tales - in order to see the changes which have been introduced into the stories according to the peculiar psychology of the people recounting them."[11]

He is so dogmatic about the diffusion

of tales that he is convinced that:

> "Much new literature, so to speak, and many a fresh plot, found their way into Ashanti owing to this cause."[12]

and feels strongly about the possibility of a link between the Hausa stories he had earlier studied and the Akan Ashanti tales.

One major flaw of diffusionist approach is that it relegates the literary qualities of the tales and their social functions to the background, as if the origins of the tales are ends in themselves. Stories are created by societies in response to their peculiar social and aesthetic needs. The themes and forms of the stories are merely means to these ends. The ethos of a non-literate society are enshrined in an oral literary tradition. It is through this tradition that the society transmits its norms from generation to generation. The singer, the storyteller and the masquerader are at the centre of this tradition. That the diffusionist approach is inappropriate for an appreciation of oral literature and its essence and intrinsic qualities has been emphasized by Stith Thompson who contends that:

> "the origin of all folktales and myths must remain a mystery just as the origin of language is a mystery. There is of course nothing mystical about it: it is merely impossible to recapture the needed facts. And in the absence of the facts, I would wish to leave the ultimate origin of any tale or myth with a large question mark rather than with a dubious answer."[13]

A third dominant approach was the structuralist theory which was mostly concerned with the external elements of a tale such as form and structure. This approach implies that a proper study of oral literature ends with the form or structure of the material at hand. Harold Scheub is a prominent scholar in this camp.

In an introduction to Tales From South Africa by A.C. Jordan, Scheub argues that oral narratives among the Xhosa peoples depend on "a complex system of remembered cliches from which full performance can be fashioned..."[14] After his analysis of the mechanics of production, he concludes that:

> "The performance has as its dynamic centre a core-cliche, an easily remembered song or chant (which may sometimes be flattened into sayings) around which the narrative plot is constructed."15

In his The Xhosa Ntsomi, Scheub's obsession with the structure of tales becomes more manifest. He asserts:

> "The core-cliche is the remembered element of the ntsomi tradition, the stable element; it is recalled during the production by means of a complex process of cueing and scanning, whereby the artist dips into her rich repertory of ntsomi

> images and brings into performance appropriate images and image segments which combine to create the finished work."16

According to Scheub, the remembered element which is often central is a cliche - sometimes a chant or a song. As the performer sings, she remembers some images which she assembles to make the story. In his attempt to look at the ntsomi as a builder would look at a prefabricated house, Scheub ran into the mistake of regarding the refrains as the pivot of the tale. He failed to discover the real function of the songs and chants as attention getting devices in story telling. He shifted the chants from their adjunctive roles to the centre. Scheub thus analysed the stories without attention to the psyche that created them and the social context that led to their creation. Thus, what would have been a brilliant work was denied a contextual placement.

Close to the structuralists were the functionalists whose main concern was the utilitarian value of the tale at the expense of its aesthetic qualities. They saw oral literature as existing mainly to ensure the continuity and cohesion of the society. Perhaps they believed that the 'primitive' African was not developed enough to engage in aesthetic pleasure. Such colonial anthropologists as Rattray, Herskovits and Pritchard subscribed to this view.

In Akan-Ashanti Folktales, Rattray explains that the stories afford the people the opportunity for "vituperation by proxy"[17]. He explains this process as the people's use of tales or songs to lampoon an adversary or a person one cannot insult directly. He concludes:

> "Having thus relieved his pent-up feelings, the offended one professes to feel much better.... This is a discovery which should be of some value to us in all our dealings with them."[18]

The bone of contention here is not the use of lampoons or satire by the society in question. The question is whether Rattray understood the real use of these art forms. Satire has been used by non-literate peoples as a tool of social control. Making such a vital tool a means of "vituperation by proxy" or of relieving pent-up feelings is trivializing it. Rattray was looking at the surface of a satire, and having seen what he wanted to see - the mind of the native and how to handle it - he concludes that it "is a discovery which should be of some value to us in all our dealings with them."

The Herskovits espoused this functionalistic theory. In what they claimed to be a cross-cultural analysis of Dahomean narrative, they concluded that story-telling was "a mutually agreeable digression" when a delicate matter of cult detail was being discussed, especially when the supernatural founding ancestor of a clan was touched upon. If a tension rose, they felt, the best way to diffuse it was to tell a story.[19]

Rattray and the Herskovits were mainly preoccupied with establishing that tales provided escape valves for welling tensions. The fact is that such conclusions came from lack of in-depth knowledge of the particular culture of the authors, hence the inability of the authors to investigate beyond the top soil of the society so as to appreciate the aesthetic sensitivities of the people. If the authors understood the aesthetic values of the tales, perhaps the Herskovits would not have stated:

> "nor was it necessary for such interludes to focuss on humorous tales. Indeed, after these tense sessions, the elders found relaxation in telling about the royal ancestors and the greatness of the kingdoms they ruled."[20]

We are not arguing that oral literature does not serve some functions. That oral literature exists at all and has survived for many generations implies that it has been serving a function that has led to its preservation. This function, however is determined by many other social factors. This is exactly what was lost to the Herskovits. They failed to realize that they were studying a society with oral tradition where the history, tradition, wisdom and collective conscience of the people were passed from generation to generation through the agency of the story-tellers, singers and masqueraders as they engaged in their different forms of entertainment.

They did not just provide escape valves for tensions. They did far more than that.

The work done on oral literature by the colonial theoreticians was just a scratch on the surface - a classical example of blind men attempting a description of an elephant from their impressions of the parts of the animal they touched. This approach led these theoreticians to such misleading conclusions as exemplified by what the Chadwicks wrote:

> "We have, in fact, no reason to think that Africa possesses such rich literary material as the regions already studied. The literary types which call for the most sustained efforts on the part of the composer or reciter appear to be little developed or indeed wholly absent. We have not found any trace of developed narrative poetry in Africa, and oral prose saga, rarely rises above the level of folktale."21

They went further to contend that even though "composition of extempore poetry is general, the quality is not such as demands great artistic powers from the reciter or composer."[22]

This contention, to say the least, is simplistic and shows little knowledge of what goes into the production of oral performance. The Chadwicks did not know that each piece of oral literature is complete on its own and depends on the virtuousity of the performer for its quality. There is nothing like "memorization

of exact verbal tradition"[23] as they asserted because there is no text to memorize as in a written art form. The artist merely depends on his imagination and understanding of his society to create and/or perform what will generate rapport between him and his audience.

This lack of understanding of the true nature of oral literature led Cope into the kind of contradictions he runs into in his treatment of praise poems among the Zulus. In one breath he claims that there is no individuality of style in a folksong, and that the singer is "a specialist in collecting and in committing to memory and particularly in reciting the praises rather than in composing them..."[24] In another he discovers that the praise poems -

> "Provide an outlet for artistic creation. Everyone composes and the competition in praise composition sharpens creation."[25]

A traditional (oral) poet does not have ready made texts which he can commit to memory as Cope asserts. Furthermore, if all the songs lack individuality of style, competition in praise composition cannot exist since the existence of competition implies a desire to show off individual excellence. Professor C.M. Bowra grudgingly bears testimony to the act of composition in oral poetry while describing the making of sacred songs:

> "In them we can detect the same kind of selection and energy which go into the composition of

> secular songs, and we can hardly doubt that their makers are move by a truly creative desire to make the most of something which presses urgently on them and demands, to be fixed in memorable words."26

Cope's argument that there is no individuality in oral poetry and that the reciter merely collects and commits to memory pieces that already exist would imply that skill is a secondary consideration and that anybody can decide to become a poet. Babalola debunked this fallacy in The Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala. Babalola reports that all Ijala chanters he interviewed agreed that the desire to chant Ijala "beautifully took them to a master chanter as apprentices."[27]

The implication of Babalola's findings is that not every chant can pass the aesthetic test. There are yardsticks which the chanter must meet before his performance can be accepted as beautiful by the audience. He learns to meet these yardsticks during his pupillage. According to Babalola, going to a master chanter for apprenticeship is determined by whether the child shows interest and has the natural flair for ijala chanting as this primary skill is necessary for successful pupillage.

The approach of some of the theoreticians cannot provide a proper framework for an understanding of the oral art form. They have failed to see the art form in its totality, prefering to rush to conclusions

from their impressions of the aspects of oral art they studied. A proper study of oral literature must see it from its form, content within a social context in order to arrive at whatever other function it performs apart from entertainment. This awareness must have led to a total distrust of the sweeping generalizations of the theoreticians thereby giving rise to a second category of researchers into oral literature. This group, informed by data from comparative ethnological studies, feel that a contextual and holistic approach is a more appropriate way to investigate the nature of oral literature. Ruth Finnegan, Ulli Beier, John Mbiti have, all in their different writings, borne testimony to the appropriateness of a contextual approach to the study of oral literature.

In an incisive study of folktale among the Gbaya people of Cameroon, Philip Noss emphasizes the role of creativeness in the production of a story. He asserts that:

> "The creation process begins with observation. The tale must first be thought of, and in thinking, the artist scans the world of events about him. The tale arises from human experience and is usually the result of some event that its creator has observed or experienced."28

From his insight into what goes into the production of a tale, Noss likens the arrangement of the episodes in a tale to a novelist's arrangement of chapters in such a way that a denouement consistent with the theme is arrived at - an analysis that is a big jump from Scheub's core-chiche obsession.

Following the contextual analytical approach, the Reverend John Mbiti, in his Akamba Stories[29], deals extensively with the background of the society that creates the stories and then analyses the stories in terms of structure and types before arriving at the conclusion that the stories are:

> "to a certain extent, the mirror of life: they reflect what the people do, what they think, how they live, and have lived, their values, their joys and their sorrows."[30]

This work represents an advancement on the works of the evolutionists and diffusionists. It looks at the stories from the angle of the cultural ecology that gave rise to them.

Ruth Finnegan is another scholar who has written quite extensively. Her works show a bend towards contextual analysis. Her Oral Literature in Africa[31] apart, she has also written Oral Poetry, Its Significance, Nature and Social Context[32] (1977) and Oral Poetry[33] (1978). Her incisive treatment of oral literature recommends her research approach. In Oral Literature

in Africa she states:

> "any analysis of African literature must take account of the social and historical context - never more so than in the case of oral literature."34

She then goes into a comprehensive study of the subject matter taking into account the linguistic, social and literary background. Enough attention is paid to poetry and prose though the balance tilts in favour of poetry. In spite of that, she gives prose an indepth analysis considering such elements as form, content, plot characterisation and function. She studies and analyses poetry under such generic headings as panegyric, elegaic, religious, work, hunting, topical etc. This holistic approach adequately justifies her earlier debunking of the views of the colonial theoreticians. Her analyses do not go deep enough largely because the book aims at providing a panoramic view of oral literature.

In Oral Poetry, Its Nature..., Finnegan makes her strongest case for a comprehensive analysis of oral literature. She soundly condemns the temptation to relegate oral literature to the background when issues about literature are being discussed. She contends that its being oral does not detract from its values or qualities. She writes:

> "Oral poetry is not an odd or aberrant phenomenon in human culture, nor a fossilized survival from the far past destined to wither away with increasing modernization. In fact,

it is of common occurrence in human society, literate as well as non-literate."[35]

The third category of work already done on oral literature, at least for the purposes of this study, is on the Nigerian scene. These studies pay detailed attention to oral literature in Nigeria perhaps because the scholars enjoy the advantage of first-hand information since most of them are indigenes. However, most of these studies have been on Yoruba oral tradition, with fewer studies coming from the east of the Niger and from the riverine cultural environment.

Among the Nigerian researchers, S.A. Babalola appears to have set an interesting pace with his studies in Yoruba Ijala, the spoken art of hunters practised all over Yorubaland in honour of Ogun, the god of iron. In the book, The Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala Babalola gives a historical account of the possible origin of Ijala chanting. He also surveys the genre and performance contexts, and also the aesthetics and criteria for assessing performance. What Babalola's approach to the study of Ijala demonstrates is that oral literature studies must take into account not just one aspect of the subject matter but the whole of it against the backdrop of the society that created it.

Ulli Beier has also done an extensive and impressive work on Yoruba oral art forms, especially poetry. In his brilliant work titled Yoruba Poetry[36], Beier shuns the earlier inhibiting theories. Operating from a deep

understanding of Yoruba language which he accepts as tonal, he is able to realize that "Nobody who attempts to translate Yoruba into English will doubt that poetry is what is left out in the translation. For the music inherent in this language is something no rendering, however clever, can attempt."[37]

East of the Niger, there is relative paucity of analytical studies of the oral literature of Igbo people. Early works by such pioneers as F.C. Ogbalu[38] did not transcend the level of collection of stories in vernacular. A deviation from this trend came in Umeasiegbu's The Way We Lived[39] which is a collection of stories translated into English. This collection has no analysis. A major flaw in the work is that the translation divorced the stories from their roots.

Attempts at analytical work on Igbo oral literature appear to have started in earnest after the publication of Poetic Heritage[40]. Despite its concentration on Igbo poetry, the book is a major shift from The Way We Lived in that the analysis takes into cognisance the lifeways of the people. The book may be faulted for its narrow coverage (the poems are from Udi and Owerri areas of Igboland) but it provides a good evidence of the appropriateness of contextual analysis of folkart.

While Egudu and Nwoga were interested in poetry, Ugochukwu and others focussed on folktales in their Omalinze: A Book of Igbo Folktales[41]. In an interesting

introduction to the book, Emenanjo gives an incisive background to the tales, tackling such issues as orthography, setting, narrative technique and characterization.

A major work from the riverine cultural environment is J.P. Clark's The Ozidi Saga[42] published in 1977, the book is the recording "of an actual performance of the Ijo epic drama of Ozidi, told and acted in seven nights to dance, music, mime and ritual."[43] After a detailed introduction in which he explains the myth of Ozidi, Clark gives a night by night verbal presentation of the drama. One thing that makes the work invaluable is that apart from its being rendered in Ijo and English side by side, the comments from members of the audience are also given. This aspect reduces the watering-down effect which attempts at writing down an oral performance have. For an oral performance which is composite and multi-faceted loses such intergral parts as music, dance, tone and costumes when it is reduced to writing.

Oral literature, in Aguata though, has not been given its deserved attention by literary reseachers. What one gets in a while are passing comments[44] or attempts that do not pierce the skin. The intention is to subject oral literature in Aguata to a literary analysis which will throw some light on the context, form, aesthetics and function.

Literature, mirrors life. Its subject matter is as wide as human experience. As such, any study of oral literature must be situated within the ambit of the human experience that gave it birth. This is why neither the approach of the historical-geographical diffusionists nor that of the structural-functionalists is adequate for a full understanding of oral literature in Aguata. They are too narrow for a study of this nature since they give a one-track approach to their analyses. Only a holistic framework which appreciates oral literature within its context of creation, production and performance - the approach adopted by Beier and Babalola in their studies on Yoruba oral art form is preferred in this study. This preference is based on the understanding that oral literature can only be fully appreciated if the psyche which created it is understood. This psyche is an amalgam of the world views and lifeways of its cultural ecology which, again is the end product of the anvil of human experience.

My data was collected in Aguata between January and December 1981. No research assistant was used. Rather, the extended family links were exploited. The collections were made in those towns in which female blood relations are married. This link became handy when the stories were being recorded. Without the help of these female relatives, it would not have been easy to record because story telling in Aguata is mostly a night affair. These women arranged for the performances.

The recordings were made at Achina, Amesi, Enugu Umuonyia, Umuchu and Umunze. As Umuchu was the base during the trips, more collections were made there. But the predominance of materials from Umuchu does not detract from the representative nature of the collection.

A portable cassette recorder was used. For the folktales, arrangements were usually made with the female relations in the towns so that at night there would be a gathering for story telling. The songs were recorded during Uku[45], New Yam, and Easter and Christmas festivals, though there was a recording during the farming season in April, 1981.

The choice of festivals for the recording of most of the songs was based on the understanding that during the festivals, the audience of these performances is largest and hence most demanding on the artist. The villages swell in population at this time as a result of an influx into them of indigenes sorjourning in urban centres. Recording during festivals has the added advantage that the performance will not be induced and, as such, will be more natural. An earlier attempt to induce performance for recording was an abyssmal failure, because once the tape recorder was brought out, singer, chorus and instrumentalists began a competition for decibel with the result that when the tape was played back, there were simultaneous solo efforts and not a group performance. One more point in favour of recording during festivals is that the groups tend to have most of their members around as those living in the urban centres return for the festival.

The materials were recorded in Igbo, and transcribed and translated into English by the researcher himself. These materials and the translations in English are given as appendices. However, copious reference to the materials will be made in the body of the work. The orthography used in the transcription is the official Onwu Orthography of 1961 which is as follows:

a b gb d e f g gh h i ị j k l m n ń o ọ p kp r s sh t
u ụ v w y z ch gw kw nw ny

ị as e in basket
ń as ng in working
ọ as or in order
ụ as u in around
kw as q in frequent
ny as nn in annual

In order to retain the dialect forms, however, some innovations have been made so as to retain the peculiarities of these dialects. Examples of these innovations are:

awhọ - wh as wh in when
ezhiokwu - zh as s in pleasure

The tones are not marked. The I.P.A. vowel representations of a, e, i, o, u together with the ones approved by the 1961 orthography being used are preferred.

These vowels apart, ideophones that defied any english rendering are left as they are. The translations were guided by the desire to be as faithful to the meanings of the

original materials as possible. Some names cannot be translated without mutilating their meanings. The way out has been to retain their original and explain them in the endnotes.

The transcriptions and translations are mere dry bones of the original. Writing is not the proper medium of presentation of oral literature. So, any attempt to reduce it to writing loses the spirit or essence which is in the performance. During this performance the artist, by a deft use of hands, head and feet, and by a virtuous application of tonal and facial inflections, gives life to the art form and merges the art, the audience and himself into an aesthetic force. When the technique of writing is introduced, this drama of oral literature is sacrificed. The eerie feeling created by the masquerade with its mask, esoteric music, guttural voice, rattles and other paramphenalia are gone.

Like most field studies, research into oral literature has its difficulties. Problems encountered bordered on performance. When the problem of performance context is solved, one discovers that one has to wait till the song is properly 'cooked' - till voices and instruments have marged into a symphony and the gates of poetic creation thrown open - before any meaningful recording can be done. The singers and those handling the instruments need to reach a certain height of excitement before their gates of creativity can open. This peak can be achieved more quickly with adequate entertainment with especially palmwine. In the case of

masquerades, one has to tread cautiously as there are many taboos about the cult. The penalties for breaking these taboos are very expensive (for example, if one desecrates a masquerade, for instance, goats, sheep and fowls in his vicinity are killed at sight, and the one has to pay for all the livestock so killed) and tradition does not draw a line between a researcher and an ordinary citizen.

Another problem comes at the actual recording. Even if the song is recorded when it is performed in its context, the acoustic results are not often satisfactory. During a masquerade performance, for instance, a song or dance may be performed while the performers run or dance over a wide area. There is always a lot of difficulty following their pace and movements with the microphone. Since this study of oral literature in Aguata assumes a holistic viewpoint, its approach to the subject matter will take cognisance of the peoples socio-cultural background.

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CHAPTER TWO

## SOCIOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND PERFORMANCE CONTEXT OF THE ART FORMS

Some understanding of the sociology of Aguata is essential to an appreciation of the oral art forms indigenous to the area. The peculiarities of the people - their cosmic perception and their aesthetic bend - give their literature its distinctive texture and colour. It is difficult to draw a line between the act of living among the people and literature. Everyday activities end up providing occasions for performance. A normal discussion is often spiced with and punctuated by proverbs; a religious ritual may dovetail into poetic chants; a farmer tending tendrils in his farm, a blacksmith or a matweaver often lessens the tedium of his work with songs.

The family is the strongest unit in Aguata society. A family in Aguata comprises two or more nuclear families living within the same walled compound. The head of the family is usually the father of all the grown up men in the compound, or at times their eldest brother who inherited the headship at their father's death.

Polygamy is widespread. Each married man provides for his nuclear family, though, as a sign of respect, the wives in the compound send food to the paterfamilias from time to time in his *obi*[1]. Headship among the womenfolk is fluid. Whereas the oldest wife, most often the mother of the men, is regarded as the head of the women, there are

cases of younger women becoming tacit heads because of their wealth, wisdom or enterprise.

Rivalry among wives is common in such a polygamous set up. Wives often jostle for the favour of their husbands. Many even go to the extent of employing underhand means to ensure that they are better loved than their co-wives. This aspect of a polygamous set up is encountered in the story of "How Leprosy Entered the World" (Appendix A3). In the story, a woman, jealous of the good fortunes of her co-wife Ogechi, sends her uncouth son to the farm at night to pick his flute that was (purposely) 'forgotten' there. The trip leads to disaster. The boy's lack of respect and his mother's greed lead him to select the bigger pot which, on being broken contrary to the instructions of the king of spirits, causes their death when all the abominable diseases locked up inside it flew out, killed them and dispersed in the world.

Another feature of family life we encounter in the stories is the maltreatment of orphans by step-mothers. When a woman dies leaving behind some children, and the man decides to remarry, the future of the orphans is bleak. The new wife usually neglects and maltreats them while ensuring that her own children are well catered for. The explanation often proffered for this is that the new wife is anxious to see that her children develop well so that, in the event of the man's death, they will inherit his wealth. In the story, "How a Motherless Child Got an Udala

Tree" (Appendix A2), the new wife takes good care of her children while virtually starving the orphan until a god mother comes to his rescue by giving him a magical udala seed. The seed germinates, grows and bears fruit on the same day it is sown. The fruits are so delicious and inexhaustible that the orphan becomes rich from the sales of the fruit.

Aguata people are fastidious about marriage. The women boast about their men and shun marriage offers from other places. In Egede (Appendix B6 lines 10 - 16) the persona recounts how Amaronu, after rejecting marriage offers from other places beamed with smiles immediately an indigene came, and adorned her costumes for a dance of joy. In B7, the persona pleads with a suitor not to reject her because of her squint eyes.

Extreme fastidiousness in the choice of a marriage partner is, however, discouraged not only because a girl's bloom is short-lived but also because she may end up marrying the wrong man, as evidenced in the story "How Skull Married the Most Beautiful Girl". In the story, the girl is so pretty that her parents named her "Sun". After rejecting well-meaning suitors around, she ends up marrying Skull - a patchwork of borrowed human parts. She ends her days as a sore-ridden leper in the market place.

Children are the gems of a marriage for an Aguata family. A male child is valued more because he can carry on the family name. A well-brought up child is the pride of the parents and an asset to the community. A bad child brings misfortune and shame to his family community. "The Pot of Life (Appendix A5) deals with the quest of a well-brought up virgin for God's home, through many obstacles and temptations. Her good nature and upbringing enable her to overcome her tasks and eventually accomplish her mission. In the end, she not only brings honour to herself but her parents are equally elevated. The community is saved the agony of the king's sickness. In the story, "How Leprosy Entered the World", two boys with contrasting characters are presented. The well-brought up boy goes to the farm in the dead of the night, encounters spirits and returns safely with riches because of his humility. The uncouth boy goes to the same farm at about the same time, encounters the same spirits, but goes home with calamity for his family and humanity.

Aguata people are highly religious. They are polytheists though they also believe in the existence of a supreme deity (Chi-ukwu,, the Great God) who lives on high. They see life as a continuum in which there is constant and continuous interaction between the living and the dead. The gods are omnipresent and have

anthropomorphic qualities, hence in Egede (B7) one hears

Ishigwu[2] atụchie ụzọ ya shi na mpio
Uchu[3] azhị Ogwugwu[4] enyi Ezekoro[5]

Ishigwu who takes trapdoor when hemmed in
Uchu, peer of Ogwugwu, friend of Ezekoro.

There is a strong belief among the people that these deities have formed strong alliances for the effective discharge of their duty of guarding the society. These deities apart, everybody is believed to have a personal god to whom he must offer sacrifices constantly. In "It Could Have Been Worse", when those who plan to ambush and kill the brave hunter and his son in the forest come to the hunter's house, they meet him offering a fowl to his personal god.

The Aguata world view centres on a complex three-dimensional world of the living, the dead and the unborn on the one hand, and the Chukwu, the gods and the spirits on the other. The gods are represented by either streams or mighty grooves in the forests. Uchu, Diawo and Ezekoro are stream deities while Ishigwu is an eerie groove. The lavish praises the people sing to these gods reflect the reverence and awe in which they hold them. One of the ways of discerning the wishes of the gods is oracular divination. In "The Pot of Life" the titled men have to consult the oracle twice before they can know what to do for their king to survive.

In "One Who Does Evil..." the new king has to consult the oracle to know the mystery behind the death of father and son.

The people also have faith in talismans. The efforts of christianity to destroy this faith altogether have failed. Occultists have scores of patrons. Some of these patrons go to reinforce themselves, especially before masquerade performances. The persona in "Rich man with Big Paunch" (Appendix B2) threatens to bewitch the headmaster, a symbol of christianity, if the headmaster obstructed him in the course of the performance. To emphasise his talismanic strength, he claims that five of his former colleagues who are dead keep preparing his talismans from the land of the dead while three of them living carry on with the masquerade.

Rivalry between christianity and traditional religion is strong, perhaps because of christianity's outright condemnation of traditional religion as pagan and devilish. This is why adherents of traditional religion seize every opportunity to caricature and embarrass christianity. In "Rich Man with Big Paunch", after threatening the headmaster, the masquerade calls the square where he is performing his altar - an attempt to trivialize a church altar. In "Ikpem (Appendix B11) by Icheoku[6], the headmaster is satirized because he, a christian, consults an oracle for divination. Such an ambivalent stance of a flag-bearer of christianity generates suspicion.

Farming is the major occupation of Aguata people with such tuberous crops as yams, cassava and cocoyam as the main products. Legumes and corn are also grown. Farming plays such an important role in the life of the people that their calendar depends on the cycle of farming activities. A man's wealth is measured not in terms of money but in terms of the size of his barn and his ability to sustain his family all the year round with the produce of his farm. A man is praised if he is a renowned farmer, as in the song "Mbaike" (Appendix B10). The young girls sing his praises as "The young man with ten columns[7] of yams in his barn". In "Mgbapujionunu" (B4) the age grade which uses the song as an anthem liken their speed on the farm to their speed at drinking sweet palm wine.

Farmlands are usually far from home. This distance from home is evidenced by the guests who shared palmwine with Ojembaenwilo in "How a Man Drank One Keg of Palm-wine for Seven Years" (Appendix A6). The hero's compound is situated on the road to the farm. Those who share the wine with him are all returning from the farm. When he meets them in their respective villages, he is quite far from home. The Story "How Leprosy Entered....." makes the distance even more ominous as the farm is situated where spirits hold nocturnal meetings.

Though farming is the main occupation, some engage in other occupations. There are those engaged in such other pursuits as pot making, mat weaving, blacksmithing and carving. There are also occultists and priests who are the mediums between man and the gods and the spirits. However, no matter what other occupation one is engaged in, one is bound to farm no matter on how small a scale.

The art forms recorded for this study reflect the people's view of themselves and their relationship with the world. They show the people's pride in their culture. In the song "Ijeregwu" (B1) the people claim to be the only experts in masquerade cult, while the masquerades from other neighbouring towns of Izuogu and Akokwa are anathema. The singers in Egede devote a greater portion of the song to lavish praises on their menfolk. For the girls, it is almost a calamity to be married to a man from another area. The masquerade occupies a very important place in the people's lives. In their view, a strong man is one who, apart from his other achievements, is also good at masquerading. Hence the statement in "Rich man with Big Paunch" that "Twice the wooden gong calls a young man. It calls him while alive and when he dies". The wooden gong calls a living person only when he is involved in masquerade performance. And the masquerade is seen as a link between the ancestors and their descendants.

The living and the dead are believed to be interacting always. Because of this constant presence of the dead, when a kolanut is broken, some bits are thrown outside for them. Palmwine cannot be taken without some libation being offered to them. It is also believed that spirits are always around. They are however, believed to react to a man according to his character. If one is wicked or greedy spirits are bound to punish him, while gentle and kind people are helped by these spirits. The humble boy in "How Leprosy Entered the World" is rewarded while his uncouth counterpart - his parallel - is punished. Powerful occultists claim the ability to bind spirits through protective charms. Ezhiokwubundu in "The Pot of Life" receives a mystic bone and stick with which she accomplishes the task set for her by spirits threshing palmnuts with their heads. Her journey back after collecting the pot from God is made easier by the use of the bone given to her by a spirit.

Most performances of the art forms take place during the dry months after harvest. During the farming season, performances are not frequent, except when a group is relaxing in the evening after working. The member on whose farm the group worked must entertain them in the evening with delicious food and plenty of palmwine. As the members relax, a performance usually takes place. Apart from this instance, performances are

uncommon during the farming period. The ground is usually wet because of the rains. People are also tired after working hard in the farm. Moreover, the weather is cold and the moonlight, which normally catalyses night entertainment, is pale because of the rain clouds. People tend to retire early to bed.

During the dry months of the harvest season and after, the situation changes. Farm work is less. People go to farm in the morning and return before noon. There is plenty to eat and drink, and enough time for relaxation. The moon is bright. Even when there is no moon, the sky is star-spangled. This is the period the children enjoy most because immediately after supper they can romp about in the village square or cluster round their mothers' huts for stories. There is always a reason to celebrate: perhaps a funeral rite that had been postponed because of the lean barns and the wet season; it is a period for title taking; it is also the time for major religious festivals.

Story telling in Aguata is mainly a night affair, once supper is over and utensils are stacked away in the rafters. The audience which comprises mainly children and women gathers either in front of the hut of the oldest woman in the compound or in front of the obi if the elders are not holding any serious discussions there. Staying in front of the obi affords the male adults the apportunity to oversee what members of the audience are doing. At times the audience sits in front of the

hut of the women who has more stories, or in front of the hut of the mother of the girl who equally has more stories.

No compound is a fixed venue for story telling. But where a compound has a large space, children from the neighbourhood are attracted to it. If members of the compound are hospitable, the venue gradually assumes a permanent status for stories and other pastimes. A good example is Ama Oti in Umuchu which has served as a playground for generations. It is common to hear very old people still talking about their days at Ama Oti.

The audience normally sits in a circle with the narrator in the middle. There is no rigid sitting order but the youngest often prefer to sit in front while the women sit at the back. Their position at the back affords them the chance of controlling the children should they become unruly. In addition, they may add one or two points to steer the story in the rightcourse if the narrator slips. Anybody who comes is welcome; no fees are charged. As a matter of fact, members of a compound take pride in hosting such audiences. It is not compulsory for all the children and women in the compound to be present. It is usual to see those who have pressing chores to attend to busy with their work while a story is going on. Children, however, detest being sent on errands when a story is about to start.

Scheub writes that among the Xhosa and Zulu,

> "There is a popular tradition... that, if a production takes place during daylight hours, the artist and her audience will grow horns."8

Aguata people have prescribed similar taboos. They frown at performances at a time when women and children should be going about their day's duties. An adult seen at such times engaging in story telling is ridiculed with the proverb "Onye ibe ye n'achu mgbada ya n'achu oke" - one whose mates hunt antelopes while he hunts rats. There are occasions, though, when daytime narrations are permissible. Children on their way to and from the farms, streams or bush to collect firewood often tell stories. When a woman is not fit enough to go to the farm, she can keep children together in the compound by telling them stories. Even adult males tell stories to explain a proverb during a discussion. The reason why night time is preferred for story telling is its appropriateness as the terminal part of the day when most of the serious activities of the day have been attended to. Moreover, darkness heightens the imagination and helps to concretise the imaginary world within which the stories are set.

Professional story tellers are non-existent in Aguata, nor are there families from whose lines performers usually come. In a story telling session, anybody who has a story can tell it. The composition of the audience is dynamic. Once a narrator ends a story, he merges with the audience while another member of the audience who has a story automatically becomes the narrator. That professional narrators do not exist does not mean that the art of story telling can be performed by anybody. Training, though on an informal scale, is essential. Narrators interviewed all agreed that they learnt their stories either from their elder sisters or from their mothers. Obiageli Eze who performed "The Pot of Life" added that for one to be a good narrator, one has to participate in story telling often. She said that as a small girl, she was always listening to stories either from her mother or in the neighbouring compounds. There is however, no formal coaching as obtains in a writing class. A narrator learns a story from others and remains faithful to the basic outline and theme. The plot is unchanged. Other embellishments become his media of imprinting his creativeness on the story. This is what actually makes each performance of the same story entirely new.

Costumes are not used to enhance effects. The onus lies with the narrator to tap his own imagination and apply such histrionics as mime, voice modulation and inflections of the face to transform the story into a fresh performance.

The narrator beings his story in a conventionalized pattern thus:

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you

Audience: Tell us

The narrator then sets the story in a vague time in the distant past. The setting establishes the antiquity of the story. Assured of his audience's attention and participation, the narrator then begins to give life to his story using any form of dramatization appropriate for his delivery. He imitates the characters in gait and voice.

If a story contains a song, the narrator usually says so. Where it is an entirely new song, the narrator teaches it before starting his performance. Members of the audience often prefer a story with a song as it enhances their sense of participation in the production of the story. The participation of the audience is vital to the performance for, as Priebe says:

> Literature is a shared experience - that is its very soul. This is of course a great deal more obvious in an oral, narrative situation where artist, audience and art merge into one explosion of creative energy in which creation is itself the art...[9]

It is usual for a member of the audience to cut in and supply a vital detail which a narrator has missed, or even raise objections when something extraneous to the original plot has been added. The narrator is expected to accept this in good faith as he is expected to satisfy the aesthetic as well as the entertainment interests of the audience. Most often the audience is not bothered whether the story has been heard before. For instance, in the story "Slow and Steady Wins the Race", the audience was not so much interested in the outcome of the race for that was already known. Its main interest was in the narrator's ability to imaginatively retell the story, act the Antelope, as well as the Tortoise. The narrator drew her greatest applause from her mimetic efforts when acting Tortoise singing "Mpalia gbashiben'ike, agham ije eme ihie ọzọ". As a tall girl, her efforts to shorten herself and hook her legs to approximate the height and gait of Tortoise was very amusing.

The relationship between the audience and the narrator is therefore personal and dynamic, unlike the impersonal static relationship between a novelist and his readers. A narrator influences and is influenced by the audience in the process of practising his art. The ability to generate rapport between audience and narrator is one of the signs of a good artist. His verbal dexterity is another. This verbal dexterity aids in the creation of characters, moods and settings. A narrator who spices

his narration with proverbs and idioms makes his rendition more interesting. When a narrator is not good, one of the signs is noise from the audience and such a performer may be asked to step down. Dozing among the audience is another bold testimony that the performance should wind up.

Whereas story telling is an essentially night activity, most song performances are held during the day. Song performance is a composite activity, a multi-faceted art whose other integral parts are auditory and visual. The stature of a song performance can be fully appreciated when its vocal and instrumental aspects are set side by side with the visual. The rhythmic movement of the body, the face changing from anger to happiness, exaggerated gestures, the hands extended in supplication and a considerable range of vocal dramatics all combine to produce a balanced performance.

Songs in Aguata can be broadly categorized into masquerade and non-masquerade songs. Masquerade songs are the preserve of men while the other category can be performed by all. No formal song performance is ever held without instruments. These instruments are of various categories and vary in their importance in a performance. The most important instruments are Arọ (giant metal gong), Ekwe (wooden drum), Ọja (flute), ogele (small metal gong), ọyọ (rattles), ekere (xylophone) and the twin metal gong. Some performances may require the use of ubọ, a metal xylophone played with the fingers like a guitar, udu, a pot with an opening around the neck and une, a lyre.

Egede performers in addition, use acha, a calabash with beads stringed around it. The aro and oja are central in most performances. The dancers are controlled by the flutist and the man on the aro. They dance to what those two instrumentalists play. These instrumentalists control the tempo and duration of a performance. In a masquerade performance, the flutist virtually 'pulls' the masquerade like a puppet. The understanding of the language of the flute and the other instruments is central in a masquerade performance.

The masquerade is a core cult in the area and its performances must be approached with care. The masquerade cult is a fall out of ancestor worship; the people believe masquerades are spirits of ancestors emerged from antholes within the community to oversee what their descendants are doing. This belief has conferred great powers and immunity on them. Penalty for desecration of a masquerade is heavy. They also act as policemen of the society enforcing regulations and exacting sanctions. If, for instance, a community decides that people should not go to farm but clean the market square, masquerades check for defaulters and exact the prescribed fines from them. Difficult land cases are adjudicated by them.

Song performance in Aguata is a formalized open air activity. There are many groups of performers. Age grades[10] or kindreds can decide to form groups. There are many families that have masquerade groups to which all

members must belong. Children form ad hoc groups when festivals are approaching. The membership of such groups is open. A child visiting his relations from another village may join the group provided the child can sing and dance well. Immediately after the festival, the group shares whatever gifts it received and disintergrates.

Unlike story telling in which performers learn the art in an informal way, songs are learnt after a period of pupillage. Even in an ad hoc group, members hold series of rehearsals to polish their steps and synchronize their voices. Before a child is allowed to join a formal group, such a child must have shown that he has the talent which can be developed by training. A fifteen year boy is ripe for knowing the secrets of the masquerade cult and is initiated. The initation qualifies him to follow a masquerade as one of the umu nkwu mmowu (servants of the masquerade) during its outings. This is the period when he learns by participation such masquerade performances as songs and dances. He also learns how to handle, make or repair all the accoutrements of a masquerade. Above all, he must learn the language of the instruments, especially the flute. Because of the secrecy surrounding the cult, the language used by masquerades is more or less coded and the neophyte must learn how to decipher the codes which are made more esoteric by the guttural voice of the masquerade. It is only when the boy has mastered these various aspects of the cult that he is allowed to 'call out'[11] a masquerade.

This period of training is not limited to masquerade cult alone. It extends to other song genres where the training is even more formal. A group which wants to learn a dance pattern or song hires a group that has specialized in that form to coach it. Each member of the host group accommodates a member from the guest group who plays the part or instrument he will study. In this way, the one who will handle the flute accommodates the guest flutist. This arrangement enables him to learn his part faster because his guest will be within easy reach and the coaching will not be limited to the normal practice sessions. In some cases, those who want to learn travel to the base of their would-be coaches, as happened in Egede (B7) lines 123 - 131.

When a group has learnt the new form, it begins to localize it by substituting the names that are foreign with the ones that reflect the locality. An example of this localization of a song occurred during the practice session of a group at Ekpaeke Umuchu on December 27, 1981. Members of the group had returned to the village from different urban centres for the Christmas. They were practising hard for Uku festival which was a week or so away. One of them had learnt a dirge into which they wanted to incorporate the name of their mentor, Ihezi Obiagwu, who had died earlier in the year. The original song went like this:

Ojereni bata
Anyammiri ekweheye ee
Mu ju,baniya kedu
M'anyammiri ekweheye ee
Ovuru akụkọ tọgbọ
Na Mgbeke anwụọna.

Translation: He walked in
Tears overpowered him
I asked him what happened
But tears overpowered him
He then dropped the news
That Mgbeke is dead.

The group's rendition of the dirge went thus:

Owere leta bata
Tie arụ emene ee
Mụ tọghaa leta gụọ
Whụ arụ emene ee
Mụ lee anya n'iro
Tie na nne anyị anwụọna
Elee ere anyị j'eme
N'Ihezi anwụọna.

Translation: He came in with a letter
And shouted calamity has struck
I opened the letter and read
And saw calamity has struck
I looked outside
And shouted our mother is dead
Then what shall we do
Because Ihezi is dead.

The tune is not original, as is the case with many musical compositions, but the ideas and theme are. It is only when a group has completely indigenized a new song that it performs it for the public.

This practice of groups learning from other groups has led to variants of a song or dance as evidenced in Egede and Mkpọkiti. Egede was started in about 1919 at Amihie Umuchu,[12] by a women named Nwọgaraku. It has now spread to almost all the parts of the old Onitsha Province. Likewise Mkpọkiti, an accrobatic dance which started at Umunze. After the group won the Golden Gong at the 1972 National Festival of Arts and Culture in Lagos, the dance spread like wildfire. Today, virtually all towns in Aguata have Mkpọkiti groups.

As in the tales, there are no professional musicians in Aguata. Each of them has a full-time occupation and plays music or engages in dancing as a pastime. The major difference between story tellers and the singers is that whereas story telling does not attract any material gains, singers and dancers get rewarded in cash or kind. A good singer or dancer is often rewarded on the spot by admirers who paste money on his face. A group may also be rewarded with gifts of fowls, yams and money by a host. At the end of the performance, the takings are lumped together, a part kept for the running of the group while the rest is shared among members.

Good singers and dancers are held in high esteem. They are regarded as the custodians of culture and the livewires of most festivals. In Aguata, especially in the Southerly parts of Umuchu, Achina, Enugu Umuonyia and Umuomaku, virtually every young man has been initiated into the masquerade. Once a boy has been initiated into the cult, he is looked upon as capable of keeping the secrets of the community. If he is good at performances, he is highly respected. This is different from what obtains among some Hausa communities as reported by Ames, who writes:

> ...though the Hausa like music, they do not respect the persons who produce it. Even famous musicians are not socially respected, though they may be admired for their artistry.... Musicians readily rank themselves low compared to most other Hausa.[13]

Nor do Aguata people denigrate verbal artists as Babalola reports of some Yoruba communities.[14] Artists in Aguata do not form any identifiable social group and none of them depends on his earnings from his art for his livelihood. This means that the type of professionalism that obtains among the Hausas, where a man lives on praising others, or the type among the Yorubas where there are the lowly Iya Ologun and Baba Ologun, does not exist.

A good singer in Igwata is respected if not for his artistry, for his other achievements in life. The social recognition accorded these artists encourages them to stay long in the art. It also encourages others, especially children of artists, to aspire to become artists too. This is different from what obtains among the Bala of Zaire. In his study of Bala music, Merriam noted that the society regards musicians as weak people who drink a lot and need others to work for them. In the words of one of his informants:

> "Musicians like to profit more than other people. They like money. They like to eat meat. They drink more. They anger quickly. They demand things. They look for trouble. They are lazy for other kinds of work."[15]

During festivals artists perform uninvited, their performances being part of the festival. At other times, they have to be invited through a formalized channel. If a man is, say, holding a funeral ceremony and wants to invite a group to entertain at the ceremony, he must follow this formalized channel if the group is to honour the invitation. His first step will be to approach the Nna Egwu (patron)[16] of the group with a keg of palmwine to broach the subject. The patron then invites the head of the group to join in the discussion. The agreements reached at the discussion will form the agenda for a meeting between the man and the entire group. At this meeting, all the modalities of the invitation and performance are ironed out.

Song performances are open air activities held mostly during the day. At festivals, the major performances are held at the village squares and such other arenas that are central and wide enough for a large audience. At Umuchu, such performances are held at Mbareke, Ama Oti and Ojukwu. The square at Umuomaku is Ama Mbecha. Female performers entertain from morning till the afternoon while masquerades perform in the late afternoon. It is usual to see such masquerades as Icheoku, Ogbamgbada and Ulaga performing at roadsides. The performers form a crescent while the audience surrounds them. Usually, there are volunteers who control the crowd by beating palm-fronds on the ground so that the arena is not made smaller by the surging crowd. In the course of the performance, anyone who feels appreciative can get into the centre to give the group some money.

The major mmọwu[17] performance called Egba Mmọwụ is unique. It is an all male affair. Women watch from a safe distance and dare not approach the square while egba mmọwụ is in progress. This event takes place when the sun's heat has started to mellow down. The square becomes a sea of people and masquerades. The masquerades sit or stand on one side while those who handle the instruments form a crescent at the other end of the square. The audience encircles them and the masquerades. The masquerades at first dance in twos and threes.

At the peak of the performance, a dancing contest begins among them. This is the time for solo dancing. Though no prizes are given, it is a thing of pride and social recognition to win such a competition. The winner is normally declared by the oldest masquerade who comes forward to embrace him. That signals the end of the performance.

The period immediately after the performance is full of fun as the masquerades chase people about. Often this takes the form of an athletics competition between the masquerades and the people. If a masquerade catches a person, such a person is booed by those watching. The masquerade either flogs him lightly or gives him a knock on the head. To avoid being caught, people u run into farms that have been harvested, and therefore, clear. Masquerades do not like running into such farms because the dry yam tendrils lying here and there often bring them down to the amusement of the audience.

At dusk, the masquerades return to their groups and head for home. The group first retires to the compound of its patron. There the masquerades 'go back' to the antholes from where they emerged. The group takes stock of its takings and hands them over to the patron. While the stock taking is going on, the patron refreshes the members with palmwine. Latter, the members take turns to host and entertain the group. This stage lasts into the small hours of the morning. As the entertainment continues, there is also singing accompanied by instruments.

Some general yardsticks exist in Aguata for assessing artists, and performances. The concept of a good performance is multi-faceted incorporating such elements as the handling of the instruments, the length of the song and the wisdom expressed in the contents. Mellowness of voice and how this merges with the instruments to achieve symphony also count. Members of the audience usually do not speak out their judgements on the spot, though ovation or lack of it is a tacit judgement. During discussions after the performance, such criteria as length and quality of repertoire, the cohesion of the group and the steps of the dancers are used to pass judgements.

One of the hallmarks of a good artist is his ability to play different roles. It is usual for each member of a group to specialize in one aspect of the production - say the flute, gong, singing or dancing. There are, however, some members who become perfect in many aspects and can be seen helping others in their parts during a performance. So, much as everyone specializes in an aspect of the total production, some people can still stand out in relief as the kingpins of the group. Anyadinanwa Njo has a mellow voice, sings and dances well, and can handle many instruments. In her Egede group, she stands out as the best. Likewise Mmaegbu Ohaegbu, a specialist in masquerades. He can dance and sing well for a long time without losing his voice. When he steps, the audience usually asks for more. Each artist strives for a situation

in which his absence would be felt in any performance. There have been many a flutist of whom it has been said, "oja ya n'emebi ihie", his fluting is blood-stirring. This is an assessment which attests to the high level of the flutist's performance.

Performances, however, have been on the decline both in finesse and regularity. One of the saddest aspects of the intrusion of christianity into Igboland is its iconoclasm. This has led to a near-violent and total destruction of the traditional ways of life and the foisting of Western life patterns on the people. Today many have been 'schooled' in the whiteman's ways which see Aguata culture as pagan and primitive. According to Ngugi, culture is:

> a way of life fashioned by a people in their collective endeavour to live and come to terms with their total environment. In the course of this creative struggle and progress through history, there evolves a body of material and spiritual values which endows that society with a unique ethos. Such values are often expressed through the people's songs, dances, folklore, drawing, sculpture, rites and ceremonies.18

When the material and spiritual values which endow the people with their unique ethos are distorted by an extraneous set of values, the ethos of the people also becomes distorted by the incorporation into it of the new values. This is the situation in Aguata today where the effects of christian teaching and education have threatened the survival of the people's culture and the art forms emanating therefrom.

It is difficult to get children sitting behind after supper for stories. They are either going for Block Rosary Crusade[19] or watching television or listening to the radio. The women do not seem to have time for the children because they, too, are engrossed in making money, since that is where the emphasis is now. The music that used to waft through the night sky from the various quarters of the society balming tired nerves as people rolled on their beds is now absent. The young boys and girls who used to make such music during their practices no longer practise the art. Many have drifted to urban centres and come to the villages only at Christmas and other festivals. Those still in the rural areas have 'outgrown' such cultural activities because they have 'gone to school'. The girls in their stilleto heeled shoes, the boys in their pencil jeans - negative fall outs of Western civilization - are more interested in discos and cinema houses.

This, however, is not saying that indigenous cultural activities have died out in Aguata. They are still alive

albeit on a scale that is a pale image of the past. Of recent, though, there has been a resurgence of interest in indigenous cultural activities. The civil war sent many people back to the villages. With no other place to escape to, people sought recourse in cultural lifeways. At the end of the war, the diarion call became "cultural revival". This seems to be yielding fruit as evidenced by the number of new dance groups emerging and the interest of male youths in masquerade cult. There is every evidence that if this new interest in our original ethos is galvanized and properly directed, there may be a recapturing of the past, if not entirely, at least to an appreciable extent.

## NOTES

1. Obi - a centrally located reception hut in a traditional Aguata compound.
2. Ishigwu - a deity.
3. Uchu - a stream goddess and supposed mother and protector of Umuchu.
4. Ogwugwu - a deity. The original location of this deity is unkown and there are many villages in Aguata that took their names after this god.
5. Ezekoro - a stream deity and protector of Achina.
6. Icheoku - a genre of masquerade whose only mode of entertainment is philosophical songs and satires.
7. Columns - yams are stacked in barns in columns with one column containing about four hundred tubers.
8. Harold Scheub, The Xhosa Ntsomi Oxford University Press (1975) p. 9
9. Richard Priebe, Introduction In: Artist and Audience: African Literature as a Shared Experience. Selected Proceedings from the 1977 African Literature Association Meeting. Three Continents Press (1979) p. 1

10. Age Grade: According to the age grade system, people born about the same period belong to the same age grade. People born within a three year period can belong to the same age grade. Members of and age grade see themselves as brothers and sisters. The system serves both economic and disciplinary functions.

11. Call out a masquerade - In Aguata, it tantamounts to desecration of the masquerade if one says that a man puts on the mask to become a masquerade. One can only call out a masquerade. He does not become one.

12. Interview with Nwanyiorie, aged about 75, on 29 December, 1981. She said there were so many deaths at the time because of what she called 'iferenza'. This I assume to be a corruption of 'influenza'. The date 1919 was arrived at because she said that Egede started one year after the epidemic.

13. D.W. Ames, "A Sociocultural View of Hausa Musical Activity" In The Traditional Artist in African Societies Warren L. d'Azevedo (Ed.) Indiana University Press (1973) p. 156

14. For a detailed reading on this see S.A. Babalola, Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala, Oxford University Press (1966)

15. Alan P. Merriam, "The Bala Musician" In The Traditional Artist in African Society, p. 267

16. Nna Egwu or Patron of a group is the man in whose compound the group is based.

17. Mmowu - This is the most important genre of masquerade. Mmowu together with Achikwu and Ayaka which perform at night only are the ones which women are forbidden to see.

18. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Homecoming: Essays on African and Carribean Literature, Culture and Politics. Heinemann Educational Books London (1972) p. 23

19. Block Rosary Crusade: This is a Roman Catholic Church movement which assembles people, especially adolescents and teenagers in the evenings to recite the rosary. The venue may be a particular compound or members may take turns to host the evening prayers.

# CHAPTER THREE

## ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE FOLKTALES

In analysing oral art forms from Aguata, we are faced with the question of content and form. The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics defines form as "the manner in which a poem is composed as distinct from what it is about - its substance or subject matter."[1] But Boulton Marjorie, in The Anatomy of Poetry[2], views as improper any attempt to establish a clear-cut demarcation between content and form, as they are complementary. Content and form are inseparable as form enhances the quality of content while content imbues form with significance.

Form in the performing arts of the Aguata people includes such elements as word play, refrain, music, dance, mime, repetition, dramatization, and all those elements which combine to give them gestalt - a stable unity that shows that the art forms are not accidental but represent the conscious efforts of the people to create art. Our understanding of these art forms as cultural practices that perform multiple functions, both latent and manifest, will help us to see them as devices for both social and civic acculturation in the society. The structure and form of these art forms, play a major role in this acculturation process.

Oral art forms are cultural expressions of lived experiences that become fully alive only in the process of performance, with the result that any analysis which fails to take cognisance of the social circumstances informing them will lead to inadequate understanding. The ultimate form of a song or tale depends on the expertise of the performer. And no two performers of the same tale or song can produce identical performances.

This notwithstanding, there are still some general characteristies observable in stories and songs on the basis of which one can attempt an analysis of form which here includes those aspects of a narration such as the opening which are relatively permanent, and which a narrator must adhere to in spite of his efforts to give the tale his own imprint.

Stories in Aguata have a conventionalised beginning. The narrator begins his story with the statement "chakpii", to which the audience replies with a "wọọ". The statement might mean nothing but its harranguing effect helps to capture the attention of the audience. The opening also affords the narrator the opportunity to impress on the audience his stature as a performer. For example, when an experienced performer such as Obiageli Eze was starting her performance of "The Pot of Life"[3] (A5), her rendering of chakpii was captivating.

Immediately she came to the centre of the audience, she yelled "cha cha cha chakpii!" This novelty sent the audience roaring in response. The way she clenched her fist and threw it as if beating the air was dramatic. This contrasted with the lack-lustre opening of "How Skull Married the Most Beautiful Girl" (A1) narrated by Ngọzi Ọkpala, a form two student at a Grammar School. Her opening was poor because she failed to adhere to the convention. Even when she was corrected and she decided to start properly, she merely mouthed the statement and did not dramatise it. So, much as there is a conventional pattern of opening stories, how interesting the opening is varies according to the skill of the narrator.

Folktales in Aguata do not have titles. But titles are used in this study for ease of identification of the stories. A narrator usually identifies a story by saying "I want to tell you a story about....", and then mentions the subject matter of the story to complete the sentence. For example, "I want to tell you the story of how leprosy entered the world." This statement of intention often follows immediately after the opening "chakpii".

More experienced narrators like Ugọchukwu Ezendu withhold the statement of intention till later. They increase the curiosity of the audience by the use of 'inverted repartees'. We call them inverted repartees because the replies of the audience to the narrator's

statements complement then rather than being retorts.

Narrator: Ihie egbe muru
What was sired by a kite

Audience: Aghaghi ivu okuko
Must not fail to prey on chicks.

Narrator: Nkita nyara akpa
If a dog slings his bag

Audience: Nshi agwu n'ohia
Faeces will be exhausted in the bush

Narrator: Ohia ibara vute ozu nza n'abo
The bush you enter and see two dead wrens.

Audience: Mara n'ihie n'egbu nza di ya
Know that what kills wrens is there.

Both the narrator's statement and the response by the audience make up one proverb. After making three or four such statements, the narrator then launches into his story by saying "I want to tell you...."

There are yet others like Nkeonyere Agbasiere who prefer tongue-twisters to whet the appetite of the audience. Ayodele Ogundipe describes tongue-twisters as:

> Words or phrases designed to test one's ability in rapid ennunciation... Tongue twisters are a sequence of intentionally constructed words and phrases, sometimes alliterative, and difficult to ennunciate quickly because of a multiple of similar consonantal sounds.[4]

These tongue twisters serve to arouse the interest of the audience before the narration itself. Nkeonyere used the following tongue twisters:

Pia mgbabe piakwasa mgbabe
Pia agbusi piakwasa agbusi.
Crush the white ant crush the white ant again
Crush the black ant crush the black ant again.

Ayi gara mgba n'Oba Oba bia mgba bayi
We went to wrestle at Oba Oba people came
to wrestle at our home town.

Nwanyi n'eri agwa n'aru agwa n'aboiri agwa
gja:n!ukwu
The woman who eats beans, grows beans and
adds soil to the root of beans.

These inverted repartees and tongue twisters contribute to the linguistic development of children who are gradually being introduced into their linguistic community. In order to develop the child's speech, the tongue twisters concentrate on such difficult consonant combinations as 'gb', 'kw' 'nw' 'gw'. Tongue twisters therefore help in speech training.

There is also a conventional way of ending a story. This closing pattern, though, is not an escape route for a narrator who gets stuck in the middle of a narration. The closing statement must come at the end of the story when the narrator is expected to say "Ihie akukoa n'egoshi ayi bu....", "what this story teaches us is...."

This is followed by the moral derivable from the story. The closing statement acts like the fall of the curtain in a theatre shutting the audience off the make-believe world of the story. Once a narrator has concluded a story any other person who has a story comes to the centre.

One of the factors that inhibited a full appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of oral tales was the view that they were naive tales of monsters and simplistic explanations of natural phenomena and the origin of things. The Western world in particular held the view that "good literature has dimension and depth while the African folktale lacks description and therefore dimension"[5]. Such a comparison is misleading because the basis of the assessment is written literature such as the novel, or short story. The folktale is an entirely different genre in which description is both aural and visual. With body movements, tonal and facial inflections, speech rhythm, a narrator describes character, setting and situation. Description is also achieved by the use of repetition, names, imagery, narrative description, exaggeration, proverbs and idioms.

When Obiageli Eze wanted to describe distance in "The Pot of Life", she said, "she trekked and trekked and trekked", or "she passed seven towns and seven wilds, seven towns and seven wilds, seven towns and seven wilds until she came to a place inhabited by skulls".

This repetition also suggests the weariness of the traveller as a result of the distance traversed.

Names of characters can also be descriptive in Aguata tales. At times they describe the themes of the stories. In "The Pot of Life" we have such names as "Onyemaechi", Who Knows Tomorrow, and "Ezhiokwubundu", Truth is Life. Onyemaechi's name describes his attitude to life, as is borne out in the story, while the heroine's name, Ezhiokwubundu, reflects her character and the moral of the story.

Equally in "How a Man Drank One Keg of Palmwine for Seven Years" (A6) a name is used to describe the theme of the story. Ọjembaenwilo, a Traveller Should not Have Enemies, the name of the hero synchronises with the message of the story. The name "Anyanwu", Sun, is given to the girl in "How Skull Married the Most Beautiful Girl" to describe her dazzling beauty, while "Ogechi", Gods Time is the Best, is the name of the good woman in "How Leprosy Entered the World" (A3). In all these cases, the outcome of the events confirms the general view expressed about such names.

In "How Leprosy Entered the World", for instance, the good woman, Ogechi, goes about her duties oblivious of her co-wife's jealously. She is satisfied with what she has and rejoices at other people's fortunes. At the right time she is rewarded with fortune and becomes rich while her jealous co-wife and her uncouth son are punished. The descriptive nature of the names apart from

enhancing description in the stories also teach children that names are given for effect and that people should try to live up to the names they bear.

Proverbs and idioms may also be descriptive. According to Obiechina,

> Proverbs are kernels which contain the wisdom of the traditional people. They are philosophical and moral expositions shrunk to a few words, and they form a mnemonic device in societies in which everything worth knowing and relevant to day-to-day life has to be committed to memory. Of their nature, they perform an ideological function by making available the ideas and values encapsulated in these memorable and easily reproduced forms.6

When a narrator uses proverbs, he is therefore merely invoking the collective imagination which "easily understands the link between the literal surface and the underlying allusive amplification which etches the experience in relief by justaposing it with another which bears a stamp of approval."[7]

In "The Pot of Life", when the head of the titled men arrives at the house of Onyemaechi, his host apologised that "Anyasu ataana oji", night has eaten kolanut. This literally means that the darkness of

the night has made it impossible to start looking for kolanut. This, however, is an idiomatic and polite way of apologizing to a guest for the fact that there is no kolanut - a symbol of hospitality in the culture of Aguata. The head of the titled men then brought down his mission which he broke like "Nsugbe coconut" - an idiom which shows that the speaker went straight to the point. Onyemaechi says to Ezhiokwubundu "I have neither yams nor cocoyams", which is a proverb used to remind the listener of the poverty of the speaker. In Aguata, the wealth of a man is measured in terms of the size of his yam barn. Ezhiokwubundu's mother blesses her by saying: ' "The sky will not trip you, nor will the earth trip you". This is a prayer for the safety of the traveller. The diviner talks to the titled men in proverbs. He first tells them: "What you are looking for in the ceiling rafter is in the floor rafter", which means that what they are searching for is not for from where they are. He also orders the head of the titled men to "raise his right leg", which implies that the girl they are looking for is very close to the man and can be found on the right hand side of his compound.

Other mnemonic devices abound in these stories. Mnemonic devices are pithy statements which act as memory aids either because of their figurative nature or because they rely on collective imagination.

The hero, Ojembaenwilo, gives weary wayfarers wine to "call down" their throats. This implies that the wayfarers are tired, thirsty and in need of drink. In "The Pot of Life", when the chief becomes seriously ill, the narrator describes the situation in two idiomatic ways. First she says: "It appeared as if death was pricing him". Then she says: "When he was at the mouth of death". The use of these idioms and proverbs in the stories help to train children in the art of spicing speeches with idioms and proverbs. Among the Aguata people, effective use of proverbs is a sign of wisdom and ability to speak well.

Some narrators use ideophones to make their stories more captivating. According to Philip Noss,

> The ideophone is a descriptive word that, unlike the adjective (which only describes an item), creates an emotion. It creates a picture; it is sensual, enabling the listener to identify a feeling, a sound, colour, texture, expression, movement or silence through his own senses.8

The narrator of "How Leprosy Entered the World" renders the staccato steps of the spirits as they dance to the tune of the boy's song while pleading with Ezedimuo thus: "Igbampitimpiti igbampiti". This has no meaning outside the sound which conjures the clumsy steps of the spirits as they rush to dance the boy's song.

The bad boy reacts to the overpowering stench from the spirits by making the sound "phun phun".

Narrators also resort to more conventional descriptions of character, setting and situation. In the story of "How Leprosy Entered the World", Ugochukwu began the story thus: "Once upon a time, a man married two wives. One of them was contented with what she had. The other one was a wicked woman to such an extent that her mates called her raw cocoyam or whitlow". Ngozi Okpala who performed "How Skull Married the Most Beautiful Girl", started with: "Once upon a time, there was a very beautiful girl in a village. She was so beautiful that her parents called her Sun". This type of descriptions sets the stage of the story. Narrative descriptions may make a story dull and aesthetically unsatisfactory, but when a narrator combines it with names, actions, and idéophones to present a composite whole, as happened when Nkeonyere Agbasiere performed "Slow and Steady Wins the Race" (..8), it adds to the overall beauty of the performance. After narratively setting the stage for the contest, and after creating the image of the tortoise as the underdog, she brightened the performance with her voice modulation to mimick Antelope taunting Tortoise: "Come on it is time for action. This is not felling Iroko trees with the tongue". After her demonstration of Antelope galloping, she bent down to act Tortoise's song; "Mpalia gbasibenike, agham ije eme ihie ozo".

The stories reflect Aguata society and its belief systems. A typical political structure is portrayed in "The Pot of Life". The characters include the chief, the diviner, and the titled men - the three tiers of Aguata political set up. The Ozo[9] titled men form what could be termed the council of elders who take important decisions for the society. Their leader is the one who has taken the third and highest title first. In the story, when the chief becomes seriously ill, the titled men meet to decide what to do. They decide to consult the oracle through the diviner who tells them what to do. Their leader goes immediately to Onyemaechi, the father of the girl who has been found worthy to run the errand. Because the titled men speak with the authority of the community, Onyemaechi cannot refuse his daughter's permission to run the errand.

We also encounter a typical day in the life of an Aguata family in "How Leprosy Entered the World". During the farming season, most of the day is spent in the farm, which is usually far from home. Once back from the farm, the family prepares and takes supper and retires for the day. Apart from showing the daily life of a typical family, the story also shows the structure of a polygamous home. The man builds a hut for each of the wives, and stays in his own hut often built directly behind the Obi[10]. Each woman fends for her children and is responsible for their upbringing.

Some of the stories are set in a fairy world in which facts become blurred with fiction and the supernatural become more predominant than the natural. Distance between God and man is only spatial and can be overcome, as we observe in "The Pot of Life". In these stories, Aguata people set up a world in which the living, the dead, gods, spirits and animals not only interact but also influence one another. This world is, in turn, partly a reflection of the Aguata world view with their strong belief in spirits, witches, magic, and communication with the gods and ancestors through divination. This belief is passed on to the growing generation through being constantly upheld in the stories.

So, in the tales, a variety of representatives of apparently different worlds meet. The category of these representatives consists of human beings who interact within a contemporary real environment with all the characteristics of the people's culture. A good example of this category is found in "It Could Have Been Worse" (A9). The hero has achieved fame because as a youth he represented what the community calls 'a good young man' - he is a brave warrior, hunter and wrestler. In spite of all these personal achievements, he is still a humble man who practises his religion with zeal, sacrificing to his personal god as appropriate. There is also the wicked chief in "You Reap What You Sow", who, living within his cultural environment, acts contrary

to the mores of the society and gets divine punishment. The human realm is also peopled by titled men, women, boys and girls - both good and bad. There are also beggars, princes, slaves and diviners.

A second category of these representatives is made up of supernatural creatures which are capable of miraculous feats only possible in a magical and fabulous world. Some of these supernatural beings are encountered in "How Leprosy Entered the World", and "The Pot of Life". In "How Leprosy Entered the World", Ezedimuo, the king of spirits gives the good boy a magical pot which, when broken, fills the compound with wealth. To the bad boy he gives an equally magical pot which brings diseases and death to the family and humanity when it is broken. In "The Pot of Life", the spirits who enjoy the heroine's beneficence give her some magical weapons that facilitate her quest. Among this group of characters we also encounter the great God, - Chiukwu- who lives on high with his servants. We also encounter personifications of human parts such as skull, leg, teeth who live independently and even marry wives as happens in "How Skull Married the Most Beautiful Girl". Spirits live in coffins as in "The Pot of Life" and hold meetings at nights as in "How Leprosy Entered the World".

A third group is the animal world in which animals are imbued with human qualities. They live and act like human beings. Tortoise in "The Basket of Wisdom" has

a wife capable of making the 'largest basket' in the world. The shrew in the same story is a winetapper. In "Slow and Steady Wins the Race", animals argue among themselves and even devise a competition to resolve an argument. They have a market called Orieụmụanụmanu. The antelope gallops and other animals clap for him. He even takes snuff.

Performers usually introduce the characters in the narrative by sex and age. They are either good or bad, wicked or kind. In the opening sentences narrators set their characters in their moulds. However, they do not only draw their character sketches verbally. They also use hands, and at times legs, to etch out the stature and structure of their characters. When there is a need to recapture the thundering voice of the great God, the growl of the lion, the childlike speech pattern of the tortoise or the nasal tone of spirits, narrators use voice modulation. They also employ other histrionics to bring these characters to life. Ọbiageli Eze used miming effectively to create the picture of the spirit freezing from cold in "The Pot of Life". She had to tuck in her stomach and almost bend double to paint the picture of the spirit dying of hunger. Ezinwanne Obiagwụ, in her performance of "How a Man Drank One Keg of Palmwine for Seven Years", demonstrated the movements of the weary men with whom Ojembaenwilo shared his wine. The eidetic quality of miming aids the imagination of the audience by vivifying the characters and scenes. It therefore enhances the

reality of the story, helps hold the interest of the audience and adds to the beauty of the overall performance. It also helps to facilitate the entertainment and acculturation functions of the stories.

Modulation was also employed by Obiageli Eze to show the thundering voice of God. When she came to the part of spirits, Ugochukwu Ezendu closed her nostrils with her fingers so that her voice would sound nasal as she performed the part of Ezedimuo in "How Leprosy Entered the World".

The limbs, especially the arms, also come in handy in characterisation. They are used to demonstrate size. The narrator of "The Basket of Wisdom" (A7) used her arms to show the size of the largest basket which the wife of Tortoise had made for him. The arms are also used to imitate the movements of animals. Nkeonyere used her arms to demonstrate the galloping of the Antelope and the slow and clumsy movements of the Tortoise in "Slow and Steady Wins the Race". Narrators also use other body gestures. At times strong emotions are reflected on the face while the eyes can be used to show anger. The visual demonstrations strengthen the verbal portraits of narrators.

The characters are part of the narrator's vehicle for commenting on the society. They are representatives of the human society who act out the human foibles in the stories. This is why animal characters have anthropomorphic qualities. Thus dressed in human garb,

they are presented as mirror-images of the human society. They demonstrate those traits and behaviour the society approves or disapproves of. Having presented the malefactors and their malficence in a grotesquely exaggerated manner, the narrator shows these characters outwitted, or ridiculed to such an extent that they are 'tamed' thereby pointing out to the audience the danger of following in their footsteps.

The usual namelessness of most of the characters indicates their representative nature. Stories achieve their objectives of educating while entertaining through the agency of these characters. These characters objectify the themes through their actions. Through these actions, and the rewards or punishments they get through them, they uphold the society's views of such actions or traits, thereby passing on such views to the children.

In "You Reap What You Sow" (A4), the chief represents wicked rulers who, perhaps because of their good circumstances, despise and maltreat the poor. He is stripped of all human qualities when he plots to eliminate the harmless beggar. His evil machinations boomerang. The viper kills his son instead, and he also dies heartbroken. The outcome of the events roundly condemns the trait which the chief represents, thereby discouraging the children from developing such anti-social traits.

The characters in "How Leprosy Entered the World" depict a typical polygamous setting with all the rivalry and jealously. Two women and their two sons are pitched in the struggle. The first group of Ogechi and her son is good while the other group is jealous and bad. Ogechi brings up her son properly. Her co-wife, who represents the stock of jealous co-wives, is wicked. Her character influences her son, who grows into an uncouth and greedy youth. These qualities lead mother and son to perdition. The humility and truthfulness of Ogechi's son lead him and his mother to good fortune, true to Ogechi's name which means "God's Time is the Best".

In "The Pot of Life", the heroine is an example of a good girl. Her sterling qualities qualify her for the task of travelling to God's home to bring the pot of life. She runs the errand successfully. In the end she is elevated from her position as the daughter of a poor winetapper to the wife of a prince. Her parents are equally elevated.

The plots in the stories are episodic with the hero or villain forming the main link between the episodes. However, much as the plots are episodic, each of the episodes reiterates the theme of the story. In "How a Man Drank One Keg of Palmwine for Seven Years", for instance, there are three episodes. The first episode shows the man doing good while the last two show

his rewards for his good deeds. Equally in "The Basket of Wisdom", there are three episodes. The first establishes the avarice and conceit of the Tortoise. The second episode puts his intelligence to a test, which he fails. The third deflates his pride and brings him to shame.

The first episode in "The Pot of Life" begins with the first visit to the oracle and culminates in the discovery of Ezhiokwubundu. The episode establishes the fact that good character is highly valued in the society. The next brief episode comprises the dialogues between Onyemaechi and the head of the titled men on the one hand, and Onyemaechi and Ezhiokwubundu on the other. This episode is important; Ezhiokwubundu's reply to her parents portrays her as a humble and obedient girl who is thus qualified to undertake the journey. Subsequent episodes expose the heroine to tests which she overcomes by virtue of her strength of character. The climactic episode occurs when she encounters the two spirits who emerge from coffins and ask her for her yam and cloth. She gives them what they ask for. They then reward her with the magical tools that facilitate her journey. The final episode is the recovery of the chief and the reward of the heroine and her parents. The story runs into ten episodes so structured that each contributes towards the advancement of the theme.

The themes from which the lessons and, indeed, the functions of these stories derive are often not stated but always revealed through the actions of the dramatis personnae. These themes may be domestic or social. On the domestic front we encounter the relationship that obtains in a polygamous home. We also encounter the harsh treatment meted out to orphans by their stepmothers. For example, in "How a Motherless Child Got an Udala Tree", we encounter an archetypal stepmother who ensures that her children are well-fed while the step child is virtually starved. She demonstrates the heartlessness characteristic of some stepmothers when she sends the orphan to go and collect fruit from his dead mother. As usual, the boy goes to his mother's grave to cry.

Social themes cover behaviour which the society approves of or abhors. The socialization function of the stories is thrust forward by the actions of the characters which are fundamental components of the tales.

"The Pot of Life" deals with the theme of the proper upbringing of children while also emphasizing the reward for being a good child. The story opens with the problem of the chief's illness which is compounded by the divination that only a humble, obedient and virgin girl can go to God's house to bring the pot of life which alone can make the chief recover. After a very long search, the right girl is found.

Her humble parents have brought her up well. In the course of her mission, her character is put to several tests which she overcomes. The first test she encounters is when, tired and hungry from long trekking, she reaches a place inhabited by skulls. One skull tests her for greed by asking her to eat up all the delicious dishes around since the owners were not at home. She rebuffs this temptation saying in a song, "I'll not eat food meant for another so that what should happen to another should not happen to me."

Her chastity is also tested by the comely young men who want her to sleep with them. They promise to make her the wife of their chief. She overcomes again. Her last and climactic test comes when two spirits ask for her yam and cloth. Her sympathy for the hungry and freezing spirits make her oblige. She is instantly rewarded with the magical tools that facilitate her mission. On accomplishing it, she becomes the wife of the prince while her parents are also amply rewarded. The message that good upbringing and strength of character are essential and often lead to a happy life is thus delivered effectively through the events in the story.

"You Reap What You Sow" (A4) and "It Could Have Been Worse" (A9), condemn wickedness and jealousy. The pattern is the same. The chief in "You Reap .. What You Sow" is first shown as wicked when he begins scheming to kill the harmless blind beggar. He executes his plan but it backfires causing the death of his only son.

He dies of heartbreak while the beggar lives on to continue with his song. In "It Could Have Been Worse" the brave hunter is saved from the evil plans of the three young men who are jealous of him. These men cut each other up in a fight that erupts among them when they suspect treachery among themselves, thereby proving that such negative emotions as jealousy, can be destructive.

Condemnation of pride and conceit is the theme of "Slow and Steady Wins the Race" and "The Basket of Wisdom" (A8). In "Slow and Steady Wins the Race", antelope is cocksure of victory in a race with the sluggish tortoise. To all spectators the result of the race is a foregone conclusion. Filled with pride, antelope stops for a rest along the way, convinced that tortoise is still far behind. After resting, he resumes his galloping towards the finishing point. There he is shocked to see tortoise acknowledging cheers from other animals and having the last laugh as the winner. "The Basket of Wisdom" opens with tortoise so conceited that he wants to collect all the wisdom in the world into what he calls the largest basket in the world. Satisfied that he has collected all the wisdom into the basket, tortoise sets off with the basket on a journey to a place where he will remain alone as the only wise being in the world so that he can cheat anyone he deals with. His conceit is shattered by the dimunitive shrew, who teaches him how to cross the fence with his basket. The message is rubbed home by shrew's sarcasm. "Our master tortoise, the wise one

why have you been fooling yourself for the past three markets?" The shrew follows up this sarcasm by giving tortoise the solution to his problem. Tortoise has no option but to accept that he still has something to learn. In these two stories irony has been used to directly condemn the anti-social traits.

A sub-theme that runs through some of the stories is divine intervention in the affairs of man. There are instances when the people have to seek recourse to oracles to know what steps to take. In "The Pot of Life", the oracle is consulted for direction. In "You Reap What You Sow", the new chief refuses to ascend the throne until he has consulted the oracle to know why son and father died. In each of the cases, the oracle proves a source of guidance. The girl who is appointed in "The Pot of Life" runs the errand well while in - "You Reap What You Sow", the secret behind the sudden deaths of son and father is revealed. This emphasis on the oracle being a source of direction is to induct the audience into one of the cardinal beliefs of the traditional religion - belief in the veracity of divinations.

These themes are part of the means through which these stories perform their dual function of entertainment and socialization. While being entertained, the audience is also being socialized or educated.

The two functions are carried out simultaneously. The songs, dramatics and other histrionics employed by the performer as well as the humorous aspects of some of the events in a story provide the entertainment. Poetic justice - evil punished and good rewarded - features often in the stories. The educational or socialization function hinges on this poetic justice. All the aspects of a performance which entertain help to sustain the interest of the audience. Around them is woven the mesh of plot and themes. These are the real actions of the stories, and these are what carry the messages through which the audience is educated. These actions stem from the functions of the dramatis personnae.

Propp describes function as "an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of action."[11] These actions of the characters are often structured in such a way that at the end of the story the message which performs the educational function is delivered. Viewed as a whole, therefore, the content and form of a story have a synergetic relationship. They combine in a unity of purpose which is to educate while entertaining. At the end of the story when the villain is punished and the good hero rewarded, the moral of the story, which is always the view upheld by the society, is passed on to the audience.

NOTES

1. The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics. Alex Preminger et al (Ed) Princeton University Press (1975) p. 286.
2. Boulton Margorie, The Anatomy of Poetry Roultege and Kegan Paul London (1953) p. 7.
3. Performance at Amesi on 20/12/81.
4. Ayodele Ogundipe, "Yoruba Tongue Twisters". In African Folklore. Richard Dorson (Ed) Indiana University Press, Bloomington (1972), p. 212.
5. Philip Noss, "Description in Gbaya Literary Art". In African Folklore. Richard Dorson (Ed), p. 73.
6. Emmanuel Obiechina, Culture, Tradition and Society in the West African Novel. Cambridge University Press, London (1975), p. 156.
7. Ibid.
8. Philip Noss, op cit, p. 75.
9. Ọzọ title is a title one takes as a sign of honest personal material achievements. Once a man takes ọzọ title, he becomes nze or a sacred person whose pattern of life should be above board.
10. Obi - a central reception hut in every compound. This is where many family discussions are held.
11. V. Propp, Morphology of the Folktale. University of Texas Press (1968), p. 21.

CHAPTER FOUR

## ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE SONGS

Songs presented in this study represent a tiny fragment of the Aguata folksongs. These songs constitute an important aspect of everyday life among the people. They perform various functions ranging from socialization, entertainment to social control. These songs perform their various functions through a unity of effect between their form and content.

Form here includes such elements as genre, repetition, versification, rhythm, stanzaic form and such other structural devices which the performer employs while executing his art. Since song performance in Aguata is often combined with instrumental music, such elements as chordal sequences, melodic patterns, and vocal tones all combine to give form to a complete song. It is, however, pertinent to state that the form of a song cannot be seen as rigid, as the eventual form of a song is determined by the performers. Form is the mould into which the artist or performer pours his material - subject matter or theme. In oral performance, this form is fluid. This notwithstanding, there are some general characteristics of the songs which will help in our analysis of form and content.

Some of the songs like Egede (B6-7) are rendered in a narrative form. The poets sing about serious issues in a series of solo declamations rounded off by.

refrains from the chorus. The poetic lines correspond to the breath pause of the performer. This, however, is fluid as the idea the poet wants to expound may influence the length of a line. Th order to keep within the general rhythm of the performance, the poet contracts some words and speaks the line faster.

"Mụ enye ghi ụbi" becomes "M'enye gh'ụbi". It is therefore correct to assume that the breath pauses of the poet adapts itself to the rhythmic needs of poetry and not vice versa.

The poets begin with invocation:

Ọra kam nna ọda egwu
Ọra kam naa ọda egwu
Public let me take permission for my song
Public let me take permission for my song

After the invocation the poet declares her credentials as a top performer and states her intention to sing about her exploits in music. The song is divided into three stanzas of unequal length. Their unequal length reflects of the stages of development of the performance. The first sixteen-line stanza is just the invocation and statement of intention. This is followed by the second stanza which is almost double the length (29 lines) of the first. By this time the bard is in top form and she declares:

Olum sara nye agbata[1]
Agbata leleerem si ọdi nma
Amaroṇu nw'Ahukaekwe
Ọnaha agbagote[2].

The voice I washed and showed to the audience
The audience heard it and said it was good
Amaronu, daughter of Ahukaekwe
It has started coming up gradually[3]

The third and concluding stanza runs into 101 lines and contains the essence of the performance. The second Egede (B6) follows the same three stanza pattern. The first stanza is 49 lines, the second 16 while the last is 68 lines. The end of a stanza is marked by a break during which the singer remains silent while those handling the instruments take over the stage. Each stanza begins with an invocation which helps the singer get back into the performance rhythm.

Some of the songs have a sustained non-stanzaic form. There are yet some in which there is antiphonal collaboration between cantor or soloist and the chorus - which Nketia calls "call and response"[4]. The structure of such songs derives from the alternation between the two.

The antiphonal call and response form features in "Ijeregwu" (B1). The cantor begins with:

Cantor: Welite olu na chi ejie iya
Raise your voices for night is falling

iya, and the chorus replies with "ijeregwu ijeregwum". This pattern continues till the end of the song when the chorus sings the refrain twice or more to signify the end of the song. The cantor repeats iya at the end of each song line. This serves two purposes. First, because a song line may be longer than others as a result of the idea(s) it is expressing, the expression helps the line to fall into the general rhythm of the song. Another is that it helps the chorus

to know when the cantor has ended his line so that he comes in appropriately to avoid discordance.

This call and response structure is also the pattern of "Rich man with Big Paunch" (B2). At the beginning, both cantor and chorus sing the refrain together. Then the cantor breaks off and sings three lines:

Nwata nwoke b'anyio
Nwata nwoke b'anyio
N'ekele kwem gi kele chim oo (B2, 3-5)

Young man of our town
Young man of our town
I salute you and salute my personal god

and the chorus responds with the refrain

K'anyi naa Ọgalanyatoloafọ k'anyi naa
Let's go rich man with big paunch
let's go.

The two examples cited above are all masquerade songs, and therefore, an all male affair. But their antiphonal structure is also observable in "Ikpem" (B8), a satire performed mainly by females. The solo opens the song with:

Agbọghọbia gara iza jiakwu
Chetekwe nkwa ikwere okoro (B8,1-2)

The young girl who stole cassava
Remember your promise to young men

and the chorus follows up with the single line "E-ee ee iyahee eee ee ee iyahee". These sounds may be uninspiring to the reader, and they literally mean nothing outside their ideophonic conotations. But they bring about a rhythmic balance in the song. Moreover, the vulgar conotation of a woman shamelessly opening her laps which "iyahee" conjures reinforces the aura of repugnance which the song aims at building around the behaviour being satirized.

Another feature prevalent in some of the songs especially in the two Icheoku songs is repetition and cross - linking. According to Hodza,

> Cross-linking is a structural principle which may be used to form a verse out of successive lines by the repetition at the beginning of a line an element found at the end of the line preceeding[5].

In Icheoku (B11) for instance this linking is evident. The satire is built around two statements between cantor and chorus:

Cantor: Anam eje
Chorus: Ibiara elem
Ilere mmọwụ ilere ikorobia
Cantor: Anam eje ụka (B11, 1-4)

Cantor: Do I go?
Chorus: If you come to watch me
You see masquerade and see youthfulness
Cantor: Do I go to church.

Both cantor and chorus alternately repeat their parts of the refrain while the cantor also knits in the lines that contain the message of the song. In this particular song, the lines of the chorus complete the sense of the lines of the cantor. In this way, the linking device helps to advance an idea by extending it.

While performers use these various forms for their songs, there are still some other devices which help to give a song performance its texture. Like a folktale narrator, a singer employs histrionics to give dimension to his performance. To give the aura of the voice of spirits, masquerades use mirlitons. A mirlitòn.1 is a membraphone that modifies the sound of the human voice. As the masquerade sings, the sympathetic vibrations of the membrane of the mirliton act as amplifiers and colour the tone with a buzzing nasal timbre, thereby giving the masquerade's voice an eerie guttural touch. Miming and bodily inflections also come handy. The rhythmic movement of the body in tune with the instruments and voice, hand clapping and feet stamping and use of language all contribute to the form and beauty of a song.

Language in Aguata songs is highly contrived and quite different from what obtains in everyday speech. This difference is essentially because the melody of the song imposes its own requirements on the language. There are also many words that appear meaningless when reduced to writing but whose mere sounds are ideophonic enough to suggest the ideas intended in the song.

Such suggestiveness gives a non-verbalized dimension to both the song and the overall performance.

The chorus Eee ee iyahee, eee ee ee iyahee which occurs in Ikpem (B8), as mentioned earlier, means nothing outside the context of the song. The song is a satire on sexual misdemeanor. While singing the refrain, a chorus of three girls or more would clap their hands, nod their heads up and down as a sign of accepting a man's passes, open their thighs from the knee and shake their waists as in sex act. These demonstrations reinforce the intension of "ee" which can mean yes in Igbo, and the "iyahee" which approximates a vulgar way of saying "open the laps". The combination of the refrain and dramatization emphasize how morally loose the object of the satire is.

Apart from dramatization which folktale narrators also use, singers use figurative language and apostrophization. Language in these songs is therefore lofty. In Egede, the singer uses simile while refering to a man as:

Oje ka polishi nw'iwe n'ewe (B6, 59)
One that walks like an angry policeman.

Apart from straight forward use of simile, there is constant comparing of one person to another. This type of comparison comes in the form of rhetorical questions, and is a device used when attempting to establish the superiority of the personality to whom

the singer is refering:

Oje adi ka Mbaike nw'Ezerkwu
Ude ayi.. n'ede na mba
Eje akpoya Ọkwamma nw'Akuana
Ude ayi n'ede na mba
Ude ndi egwuo efuom oo
Ije agbalikwe ka Mbelu be Nnanebe (B6 lines 18-23)

Would he have been like Mbaike son of Ezerkwu
Our fame resounds in other clans
Can he be called Ọkwamma (knife deflector)
son of Akụana
Our fame resounds in other clans
The fame of singers oo, I'm lost
Can you dance like Mbelu of Nnanebe's compound.

What the artist is doing is bringing low the competitor by juxtaposing his puniness with the unique physical and moral qualities of the village heroes which make them reference points, and objects of admiration.

In Egede(B7) there is a good use of metaphors. These come in long compound words which form the praise names of the village heroes:

Ọdonye egwu bọrọ bọrọ
Nwata ari n'ụzọ
Ọguejiọwhọ mma n'efe n'ute
Mma edere ede (B7 lines 78-81)

Ọdonye the slippery hill
(that) a child shouldn't climb early in the morning
Ọguejịọwhọ the comeliness that affects a bed mate.
The comeliness that's the hardwork of God.

These metaphors help the artist give dimension to the characters she has named as heroes.

The artist uses hyperbole to paint the picture of the effect of her performance on the audience:

Mbọshi m'gara Elugwu Ụmụọnyia
Ọkụ eshihi ite mma abaha ji (B7 lines 5-6)

The day I went to Elugwu Ụmụọnyia
Pot did not cook on fire, knife peeled no yams.

Mbọshi m'gara Achina Umurenne
Mmiri zobe (B7, lines 24-25)

The day I went to Achina my mother's clan
It started raining.

The rain here is not the natural rain. The artist is suggesting that the symphony of her performance is like the music of a steady rainfall. Moreover, she is implying that music was issuing out of her voice in the steady manner of a rain. This is why she earlier claimed that the people of Elugwu Ụmụọnyia were so enthralled that nobody remembered to put a pot on the fire or even peel yams. She even makes a more exaggerated assessment of her performance when she sings:

Mbọshi m gara Elugwu Ụmụọnyia
Olum n'aha ka ọja

Olu udu n'abọ datara shịshị ise
Ejerem Ibughubu Obuọhia
Ha sị je chọbam kanaka m'anọna
Nguchaa egwu n'Ibughubu Obuọhia
Ha were ọgụ ego ịtọ n'edukụom
Msị ha ejehem ewe
N'ihi ọgụ ego ịtọ awọtụhụ (lines 67-75)

The day I went to Elugwu Umụọnyia
My voice was sonorous like bangles
Two tunes from my pot[6] attracted five sixpenses
I went to Ibughubu Obuọhia
They insisted I should be brought from
wherever I was
After my performance at Ibughubu Obuọhia
They wanted to escort me home with three
pounds
I told them I will not take it
Because three pounds is not worth (my voice).

Other verbal devices feature in the songs. In the cultic masquerade songs like "mbem" (B3), "Ọgalanyatoloafọ" (B2) and "Ijeregwu" (B1), language is esoteric and full of symbols. This is because masquerade secrets should not be known to the uninitiated. The name "Ọgalanyatoloafọ", Rich man with big paunch, itself is symbolic. It denotes that the masquerade has so much talismanic powers that all efforts to bewitch him have only succeeded in giving him beg belly. That is why it boasts:

Okirikiri k'ana agba ukwu ose
Anaghi ari ukwu ose ari
Okụdaibube nwoke di ike
Nnukwu udu anaghi aghafucha mmiri
Okụda oke osisi ka ibeya
Na ndụ ma na mkpọ nnụnụ bi n'enu ya
Okụda ome nke afụlụ n'anya
Wel'ọsọ wel'ije
N'ife mbu n'isi n'arụgbum n'ọkụ (B2 34-42)

Round and round one goes a pepper plant
No one climbs a pepper plant
Okụdaibube brave man
The big pot that does not spill all its water
Okụda the tall tree that is greater than others
Alive or dead birds nest on it
Okụda the one that performs visible wonders
Run and walk at the same time
For what I'm carrying is unbearably hot.

These are idioms which found on the society's beliefs. The name "Okụdaibube" is borne only by strong medicine men. The full meaning is Okụdaibube ọfeke ananye ye aka, when ash covers the face of fire the naive will poke it with his fingers. This explains how dangerous the medicine man can be for just as the fire will burn off the finger of the naive, so will he destroy anyone who mistakes his simplicity for weakness. Reference to pepper plant is to demonstrate that all that people can do is to look at him as nobody in the audience is capable of causing him any harm.

The use of this type of language in cultic songs achieves one purpose. It strikes fear into the audience and increases the respect and awe in which masquerade is held. When the masquerade speaks in a language made incomprehensible by the guttural voice achieved by the use of nirlitons, the tendency is for the uninitiated to fear, especially when all that one hears are boasts about talismanic powers and dalliance with the dead.

These songs afford Aguata artists the opportunity to comment on life-styles - praising virtues, satirizing human foibles and immortalizing village heroes. They are also media for invoking ancestors and gods, and also for passing on communal beliefs to the younger generation. Morality, bravery, condemnation of treachery, hospitality, religion as well as being your brother's keeper form the main themes which Aguata poets explore in their songs.

Any discussion on religion in Aguata must include the masquerade cult which is an offshoot of ancestor worship. Unlike the Dinka of Sudan[7] who believe that their ancestors exist because their descendants of such ancestors take part in daily activities, Aguata people believe that their ancestors exist in their own realm where they can be reached through the appropriate medium, and from where they influence the living.

That is why Ogalanyatoloafọ boasts:

Isatọ ayị dịrị bido ngala
M'ọkwanụ ịtọ dị ndu ise nwụl'anwụ
Itọ dị ndụ n'ebu ngala
M'ọkwanụ ise nwụl'anwụ n'emel'anyi ife
(B2 15-18)

Eight of us started this masquerade
But three are alive while five are dead
The three living carry on with the masquerade
While the dead five strengthen our force vitale.

Masquerades are seen as spirits of ancestors emerged to oversee what their descendants are doing, hence their commanding of great respect and awe from all.

Another aspect of the people's religion manifested in the songs is their strong faith in magic and talismans as well as their polytheism. Ogalanyatoloafọ is rich in talismans and even threatens to bewitch the local headmaster should he stand on his way:

Hedimasịta bịanyịo
Gị sọpụlụkwamụ n'ilo igiligi
Maka ịnọchielum ụzọ akọọm gị nsi
Nkiri nkiri k'ana ekiri ikolo
Anagh eno ikolobia n'afọ
Onye ma nke nwa oji ya mee
Maka n'alikwasalugom n'enu ọlụtan (B2 49-55)

Headmaster of our town
Respect me during my performance
Because if you obstruct me I bewitch you
One can only look at a young man
One can never swallow a young man
He who knows what he can do should do it
Because I've ascended my altar.

This allusion to the church altar from where the priest conducts the service is part of the running battle between traditional religion and christianity. The masquerade calls the square where he is performing his altar so as to demean the altar. This friction between traditional religion and christianity is observable in Ikpem (B8). As happened in other parts of Igboland, and indeed most parts of Africa, christianity came to Aguata and condemned traditional religion as pagan and devilish. With the aid of schools which the missionaries established, it threatened the very existence, and survival of traditional religion as it recruited its membership mostly from the younger generation who formed the school pupils. Faced with the danger of extinction, it was only natural for adherents of traditional religion to view with suspicion every move of the christians, and to seize every opportunity to bring the new religion to ridicule and disrepute. In this exercise, the headmaster was always the ever ready target because he was the symbol of christianity in the community, and

the head of the greatest threat - the school.
Hence a headmaster who has gone to consult an oracle for divination is satirized for his ambivalence:

Hedimasita b'anyị ọkwa ndi nwa nwe ụka (B11 line 9)
Headmaster of our town is one of the owners
of the church

and then the masquerade adds

Ewere ụtụtụ jee ụka
Ewere anyasị gbaa afa (B11 19-20)

Morning is for church service
Night is for oracular divination.

The singer first admits he is not a christian but one who stands firm by the tenets of his own religion unlike the vacillating headmaster:

Anam eje
Ibiara elem
Ilere mmowu ilere ikorobia
Anam eje ụka
(B11 1-4)

Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade you see youthfulness
Do I go to church.

The singer of Egede (B7) pays tribute to the gods and goddesses:

Ishigwu atụchie ụzọ ya shi na mpio
Uchu azhi Ogwugwu enyi Ezekoro
Diawo Ọgaranya puru obi n'ịkpa nọrọ
(B7 34-36)

(To) Ishigwu who takes trapdoor when hemmed in
(To) Uchu peer of Ogwugwu friend of Ezekoro
(To) Diawo the richman that founded his compound in the wilderness.

Ishigwu, Uchu, Ogwugwu, Ezekoro and Diawo are the major deities of the people. There is a popular belief that they have formed an alliance for the effective protection of the society.

Apart from religious themes, the singers also deal with social issues. Egede (B6) echoes the fastidiousness of the girls in their choice of husbands, and their pride in their men and clan:

Amarọnụ ekee yie Uhuala ọjụ
Ekee je Oleọhia ọjụ
Ekee yie b'ayị okwechaa ọchi
Chiri mbenukwu chiri ịnwịrịnwa beị n'ukwu
Amara gbara egwu luọba
Amara gbara egwu luọba na mba
Gbara egwu luọba Amara
Ude ayị n'ede na mba (B6 10-17)

Amaronu refused marriage offers from Ụjuala
She refused offers from Olẹọhia
When an offer came from our town she beamed with smiles
She adorned her dance skirts and inwirinwa[8]
Amara dance homewards
Amara dance homewards to a clan
Dance homewards Amara
Our fame resounds in other clans.

A maiden afraid of losing a cherished home boy suitor pleads:

O Nwankwọ Ayara oi!
O Nwankwọ Ọbụhụ anya ego j'achụ
Amaha eri nma eri
Obụ emere k'ana eri
(B6 51-54)

O Nwankwọ Ayara oi!
O Nwankwọ squint eyes should not debar
(our marriage)
One does not eat beauty
Rather it's character one can eat

The girl is afraid the suitor may break the engagement because of her squint eyes. She therefore reminds him of the society's priority in the choice of a spouse - good character. Aguata girls prefer marriage offers from home, hence Amarọnu adorns her dance paramphenalia for a dance of joy once an offer came from home.

The singer then reels off the names of the heroes that justify her insistence on being married by a fellow clans man:

Ojo adị ka Mbaike nw'Ezeọ̀twu?
Ude ayị n'ede na mba
Eje akpọya Okwamma nw'Akụana?
Ude ayi n'ede na mba (B6 18-21)

Would he have been like Mbaike son of Ezeọ̀twu?
Our fame resounds in other clans
Can he be called "Knife Deflector" son of Akuana?
Our fame resounds in other clans.

The two Ẹgede texts are respledent with lavish praises for the menfolk. A man is praised as:

Azịza bụ nma ala Nw'Ezeukokwe
Igwurube gbara aji n'obi
Sị ọra bia leloe aji y'ọgbara n'obi
(B7 95-97)

Broom that is the beauty of the ground son of Ezeukokwe
He is the locust that grew hairs on his chest
And invited everyone to see the hairs on his chest

while another is:

Oguejiọwho nma n'efe n'ute

Oguejiọwho, comeliness that affects a bedmate

Outstanding women are also praised. One successful woman is referred to as:

Nwagbọribe ofu nnwajjnnu ọgbọ
Nwagbọ ofu nnwa gboro agụrụ nnwa
Nwagbọ ọkpọpụluọrọ nneye na nrọ
Nwagbọribe ofu nnwa eji eje nba
(B6 26-29)

Nwagbọribe the lone child that fills the square
Nwagbọ the lone child that satisfied the craving for children
Nwagbọribe the one that brings her mother back from dream
Nwagbọribe the lone child with whom one can go places.

Another is called "Shopụ ụluọ ego", "shop house of money".

It is not only the female singers that indulge in this lavish praise of the clan's heroes. Masquerades also indulge in it. They, like the female singers, praise their clan as the best in the vicinity. The song "Ijeregwu" (B1) is devoted to praising Umuchu and the famous masqueraders from there. The song insists that Umuchu men alone are expert masqueraders:

Ejechaanam ije rute Nnewi n'Ozubulụ iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ejechaanam ije bata Umuchu na Nnobi iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ebubedike di egwu dọọ naa ọ na chi ejie iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Imakwa nba bụ nba Ọbụ so Umuchu Neneni nmowu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
(B1 13-21)

I've travelled round and reached Nnewi and
Ozubulu iya
Ijeregwun ijeregwun
I've travelled round and entered Umuchu and
Nnobi iya
Ijeregwun ijeregwun
Frightful Ebubedike please come for night is
falling iya
Ijeregwun ijeregwun
Of all clans it's only Umuchu that knows much
about masquerades iya
Ijeregwun ijeregwun.

The singer then condemns the kind of masquerades in neighbouring Akokwa and Izuogu as anathema and then names some prominent masquerades in the cultural environment all of which come from Umuchu.

The people's pride in their family lines reflects in the manner singers identify people. The agnatic line is supreme. Even when a girl marries, she still maintains a strong link with her agnatic family. It is this pride in one's family that makes the girls very fastidious in their choice of a husband. The Egede singer proudly announces:

Mmaejionu nw'Odenigbo
Oya nun
(B6, 28-29)

Mmaejionu daughter of Odenigbo
She is my mother.

All through the two Egede songs, people are identified by their family lines. This insistence on identifying people by their family lines has the effect of making people endeavour to protect the family image.

Death in a family, especially of a male, is felt and mourned heavily. Because of the numerous deaths which occured during the influenza epidemic of 1918, - the period when Egede was started, the songs contain laments because of the deaths of beloved ones:

Ọnwụ gburu Judu nwa Lebehi
Omezugom ihie dum
Olu n'akaru Igbo nwa Njọnamma
Ọnwụ naaram ya
(B7, 117-120)

The death that killed Jude son of Lebehi
Has done everything (bad) to me
The voice that aptly talks about Igbo son
of Njonamma
Death has snatched him from me.

The themes of these songs are reflections of those traits and activities the society regards as good or bad. The way masquerades are praised shows that masquerading is one of those activities the society approves of. Farming is the major occupation of the people. Great farmers are held in high esteem as evidenced by the apostrophe "Mbaike" (B10).

The young man is called

Oji ọgụ aba ala ọgụ
Oji azụ eche anwụ na mmiri mgba
Dike n'agbanyeghi n'ọgụ bụ ọnwụ
Okorobia ọgbazụ n'eri
(B10 2-5)

The one who goes to battle against the soil with the hoe
The one who faces sun and rain in a wrestling with his back[9]
The brave man who does not bother that battle is death
The young man with ten columns[10] of yams in his barn.

The young man is praised for his stamina for farm work and bravery in battles. He battles the soil with his hoe while hoeing in the farm. In the process his back is exposed to rain and sun. This, of course, does not daunt his energy or craving for more work. He has demonstrated the value of hardwork by the size of his yam barn which contains ten columns of yams.

"Mgbapụjị ọ̄nụ̄nụ" (B4) equally extols stamina for farm work. The sentence Mgbapu ji ọ̄nụ̄nu may be difficult to translate as its literal English rendering means exactly the opposite of its intension. The literal English meaning is "pouring retards drinking" whereas the statement actually means "not pouring out the wine retards its consumption". The statement is idiomatic.

The group is merely likening farm work to drinking palmwine. They are boasting that the ease with which they consume palmwine is the ease with which they 'drink' all the work in a farm:

Kedi ife bu mgbapụjiọ̄nụ̄nụ?
Mgbapụ̀ji mgbapụ̀ji
Ọkwaya bụ nsụpụ ji ọrụrụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Agbaa n'elu gba n'ala ō̱nụ̄
Mgbapuji mgbapuji
Asụọ n'elu sụọ n'ala ọrụrụ
(B4 7-13)

What does slow pouring retards drinking mean?
Slow pouring slow pouring
It means slow clearing retards completion (of the farm)
If it is poured out in heaven or on earth it will be drunk
Slow pouring slow pouring
If it is cleared in heaven or earth it will be completed.

Egwu Icheoku (B9) extols the benefits of establishing friendly relations with people in other clans. Perhaps, because Aguata people are great travellers, emphasis is on expanding one's sphere of friendly relations as wide as possible so that in cases of emergency, the one would have a place of refuge. A proverb which underpins this approach to social relations states that

"a bird with a mid-way nest is not easily trapped". Limiting one's sphere friendship to the clan is discouraged.

Enyi ụlọ menta ihie onyeni g'ụtara g'iloo
Ije eme enyi
Enyi ụlọ menta ihie onyeni g'ọtụ g'ira
(B9,11-13)

At best home friend gives you foofoo to swallow
If you want to make friends
At best home friend gives you vagina to fuck

While this song encourages distant friendships, "Onyeaghananwannaya" (B5) warns against placing more emphasis on friendships than on blood relations. It encourages being one's brother's keeper and draws attention to how even the birds of the sky appreciate the importance of unity. In these lines:

Mgbe nd'enyi j'ala ịmarakwa uuum
Onye agana nwanneye oo!
Mgbe afụfụ ụwa j'abịa ịmarakwa uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
(B5, 7-10)

When friends shall desert you'll realize uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother
When life problems will arise you'll realize uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother.

It warns of the consequences of placing all one's trust in friends who are, of course, strangers and are limited in the scope of help they can render in very difficult situations,

especially those requiring the presence of blood relatives, Aguata people wrap up their view on this with the proverb "Ozu sibe nsi enyi ka nwanne alaa", when the corpse starts putrifying the friend that used to be more important than a brother will go. At such crucial moments, it is a relative who comes to perform the unpalatable tasks.

Traits considered unwholesome by the society also form subject matters of the songs. Such traits would attract ikpem or satire. Ikpem depends on a sense of human dignity shared by all in a homogenous society to succeed. For one to discover he has suddenly become an object of ridicule and finger-pointing can be a great punishment. The whole society is made aware of the malefactor's offence in songs that are quickly composed linking his or her name with the offence. The aim is to give the offender such sleepless nights and internal battles that he will be forced to change for the better.

One such trait that attracts ikpem easily is sexual perversion, especially on the part of a girl. Stealing also. The song, "Ikpem" (B8), is a satire on a wayward girl - a school teacher who shows signs of sophistication and cares less about marriage. In many cases the satirist exaggerates the offence or even adds some other offences the object of the satire is assumed capable of committing. The effort is to so emotionally punish him that he changes.

In B8, the satirist sings:

Agbọghọbịa gara ịza jịakwu
Chetekwe nkwa ikwere okoro
(B8, 1-2)

The young girl who went to steal cassava
Remember your promise to young man.

and then adds:

Agbọghọbia ọjiri pilo ne nnwa
Chetekwe n'oge n'aga kwa
(7-8)

The young girl who makes pillow her child
Remember time is passing.

The singer first reminds the miscreant of the tacit promise to young men to be of good behaviour to merit being married by fellow clans men, and then touches on those traits in modern girls the society frowns at:

Nwa misi jiri ụdọ hie ime
Chetekwa n'oge nka n'erukwe (12-13)

The lady teacher who tied up pregnancy with a rope
Remember old age is coming.

Ọtụrụna ogọbana omụrụna jide n'aka?

She is pregnant and you are rejoicing has she actually delivered the child?

The song captures the society's aversion for the fashion of lady teachers who wore gowns and put on belts. In the eyes of the people, these girls were tying up their

wombs against pregnancy. As mentioned earlier, the object of the satire may not commit all the offences mentioned in the song. The satire affords the opportunity of reaffirming the communal aversion for the traits mentioned so that potential deviants are warned and brought into line.

A man who is incapable of declaring for a standpoint is often viewed with suspicion. That is why the vacillating headmaster is a target of satire in B11. As the flagbearer of christianity, his decision to consult the oracle for divination tantamounts to lack of conviction in christianity. In a situation where interclan warswere rampant, such a man could be a security risk. Moreover, the running battle between christianity and traditional religion makes the headmaster's position highly suspect.

Our discussions on these songs have focussed on content and form. This approach has been dictated by the view that function is a product of content and form. The themes which make up the content may be communal while the form essentially is not. Form is the performer's medium of stamping the imprint of his individuality and creativeness on the performance. So, by a deft manipulation of form into which mould he pours his subject matter, the performer is able to achieve the ultimate goals of his art-socialization and entertainment. The entertainment aspect may be very obvious and this helps to hold audience attention while the socialization

or educational aspect is subtly achieved through the overall impact of the performance on the audience.

In these songs, the word or language is not merely a technique or simply a device for communication. It is the embodiment of the people's world view and therefore represents or dramatizes their modes of perception within their cultural environment. The singer, therefore, converts his feelings and intentions - to educate while entertaining into words and inflections and patterned movements.

The songs, therefore, reflect the background and social life of the community. The goal of each genre of song is predetermined - to educate while entertaining. The praise songs play an important part in Aguata social life. These praises are expressions of public opinion and afford a very good means of social control because most occasions when they are performed, they are for all to hear. In this way, they help educate because they not only act as incentives to and reward for socially approved actions, their performance reminds all present those qualities and conducts considered praiseworthy by the society.

In their educational and social control functions, the satires operate in the same way as the praise songs. The miscreant is placed in the full view of the society. His misdeed is no longer a secret. Since everybody wants a good image before the public, the malefactor suffers emotionally, and often socially too. Just as a praise

is a beacon to laudable traits and activities, so is a satire a red light to unwholesome deeds. The overall effect on the audience is to dissuade them from doing such things. It can then be said that these songs teach the audience those things they should and should not do. This moral upbringing apart, the performance of these songs affords the audience the opportunity of learning something about their society. By participating in the performances, one learns which instruments are for which rites and performances. Education in the societal controls on the usage of these instruments and the context of the various types of performances is achieved.

NOTES

1. B7 lines 1 - 2
2. B7 lines 42 - 45
3. The singer might have been finding extemporization difficulty initially but must have started overcoming the difficulty.
4. J.H.K. Nketia African Music in Ghana, Longmans Accra (1962), p. 28
5. Aaron C. Hodza, Shona Praise Poetry, Oxford University Press (1979), p. 102
6. Pot - This is a pot stringed with tiny beads which give a rattling sound when beaten. It is a central instrument in an Egede performance.
7. See Francis M. Deng, The Dinka and their Songs Oxford University Press (1973) p. 48
8. Inwirinwa - a traditional costume worn round the waist by dancers for its rattling sound.
9. The young man wrestles against sun and rain with his back because no matter the weather, he is bent working on his farm. The rain or sun may beat his back but these do not daunt his determination.
10. Column: This is a unit of measurement of yams stacked in a barn. A column contains about 400 yams. Ten columns would then be 4.000 yams, - a no mean achievement for a young man in a non-money economy.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## CONCLUSION

This study has emphasized the view that only a contextual approach to the study of oral literature can reveal the literary gems intrinsic in this genre of artistic creation. This is the point which early anthropologists and folklorists who studied the subject missed, hence their rushing into many ridiculous assumptions and conclusions.

Today, however, we know more about oral literature. It is a relevant material for sociological and historical analysis. It portrays the society as dynamic, responding to and equally resisting outside pressures that continue to impinge on it daily. It reflects the conflicts, the joys and sorrows of the society that creates it. Oral literature is not mere extemporization but a conscious effort of a non-literate society at entertainment and acculturation or socialization and even exercising social control. Its subject matters are the common issues which are essential to the existence and survival of the society. This means that oral literature subsists on the society's beliefs and yet adds to and refines these beliefs with the result that it is a significant force which ensures social homeostasis. Oral literature, therefore, forms a strong conduit line through which the society passes its 'soul' from the

older generation to the younger one. They contain the ingredients for traditional education, a process that derives from the people's belief systems and ways of life. It thus ensures that the younger generation develops the personality of the society.

Today, however, this pristine set up has been disturbed by christianity and its twin Western formal school system. Right from the onset, christianity has regarded traditional lifeways as pagan and devilish. Products of the formal school system have imbibed this erroneous belief and have always looked down upon their counterparts in the villages as 'bush' and primitive. The tragedy, however, is that those who have become 'schooled' metamorphose into total strangers to their traditional environment. They have missed the intellectual, moral, aesthetic, social, emotional and spiritual development available in their society and have embraced a cultural system that has deracinated them. But in the words of Smith Lester, education is:

> the culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are to be its successors, in order to qualify them for at least, keeping up, and if possible for raising, the level of improvement which has been achieved.1

The present Western system of education by implication, therefore, is deficient in that its products are highly incapable of becoming successors who will raise or improve the level of indigenous cultural achievements.

The emergence of such sophisticated contraptions as cinema and television has helped to reduce the number of those who participate in the folk art forms. The radio and cassette player have had their own toll. The ability of the radio to play on dry cell batteries makes it a handy entertainment tool with the result that in the farm or house, one is able to listen to programmes. This is also the case with the cassette recorder which the young generation finds very attractive and easy means of listening to any music other than the traditional ones. The Block Rosary movement is another distraction children encounter today.

This movement away from the oral art forms as means of entertainment and education should not be surprising. Oral art forms thrive in non-literate and homogenous societies. As literacy increases and the society becomes more complex as a result of the introduction of a money economy, dependence on them diminishes. This has generated the fear that oral literature will atrophy in present day society in which it is facing stiff competition for patronage from the electronic media.

This fear is not justified. Oral literature materials by their nature, have such intrinsic qualities that make them easily adaptable to the electronic media. They are oral. Some are also dramatic and so can fit into radio and television programmes. A video recording of a story telling performance can be a good programme for children. The Nigerian Television Authority Enugu

already has a programme in this direction titled "Tales Under the Moonlight" which is aired on national network slot on Sunday evenings. Stories are acted and recorded for the television screen. There is a similar and older programme from N.T.A. Jos under the title "Puppet Theatre". In this programme which is on the air on Sunday mornings, puppets act out episodes of a series whose underlying theme is drawn from a folktale. The popularity of these two programmes is a pointer to the potentialities of folklore materials for the television. The radio can equally benefit from oral literature materials in an effort to indigenize its programmes.

Our educational system can be made culturally richer, more rewarding and meaningful by a conscious national policy of integrating these oral art forms into the school curriculum as a part of a cultural revival policy. Our present educational system is culturally alienating. Apart from half-hearted exposure of children to stories, songs and other cultural materials in the early years of primary school, no other sustained effort is made thereafter to expose them to cultural activities within the school system. The vacuum created by this absence of our cultural activities is filled by foreign influences with which the children are bombarded from print and electronic media.

This trend can be reversed if as part of a national cultural revival policy, ample time is devoted to our folklore in primary and post primary tiers of education. Teachers can be encouraged to organise competitions as incentives during such open days as Speech Day or Founder's Day. Part of the way to encourage participation in our cultural activities can be making the vernacular of an area compulsory in the schools there. Courses of instruction in such a vernacular should then include the oral literature of the cultural environment. This will make education more relevant to the personality aspirations of our society.

The study of oral literature is coming of age. That it is a dynamic literary genre which responds to the vagaries of time and society is borne out by the number of political songs tumbling from the imagination of poets at the dawn of politics. The civil war in Nigeria provided an opportunity for creative minds to respond poetically. The contents of these songs demonstrate a reaction to basic realities of the day and the poetic acuity of the composers. So, instead of bemoaning an 'endangered specie', it is time for more comprehensive studies into oral literature so that its intrinsic qualities can be exploited to better our modern society.

1. W.O. Smith Lester, Education: An Introductory Survey, Pengium Books, (1957), p. 9

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2) "How Motherless Child Got Udala Tree" performed by Susanna Igwe, 13, on 28/12/81 at Umuchu

3) "How Leprosy Entered The World" performed by Ugochukwu Ezendu, 15, on 28/12/81 at Umuchu

4) "You Reap What you Sow" performed by Nneka Uchendu, 14, on 28/12/81 at Umuchu

5) "The Pot of Life" performed by Obiageli Eze, 32, on 20/12/81 at Amesi

6) "How One Man Drank One Keg of Palmwine for Seven Years" performed by Ezinwanne Obiagwu on 28/12/81 at Umuchu

7) "The Basket of Wisdom" performed by Nkeonyere Agbasiere, 42, on 29/12/81 at Achina

8) "Slow and Steady Wins The Race" performed by Nkeonyere Agbasiere, 42, on 29/12/81 at Achina.

9) "It Could Have Been Worse" performed by Nneka Uchendu on 28/12/81 at Umuchu

B. THE SONGS:

1) Ijeregwu" performed by a masquerade and his followers during New Yam Festival at Umuchu on 15/8/81.

2) "Richman With Big Paunch" performed by a masquerade and his group during Uku Festival at Umuchu on 5/1/81.

3) "Mbem" performed by a masquerade and his group during Uku Festival at Umuchu on 5/1/81.

4) "Mgbapu ji Onunu" recorded from an age-grade relaxing after group farm work on 2/4/81 at Umuchu.

5) "Let nobody forsake His Brother" recorded from an age-grade relaxing after group farm work on 6/4/81 at Umunze.

6) "Egede" recorded from Elizabeth Ezeoguego, 35, a mat maker at work on 20/12/81 at Umuchu

7) "Egede" recorded from Anyadinanwa Njo, 40, a mat maker at work on 19/12/81

8) "Ikpem" recorded while a female dance group was performing on 26/12/81 at Enugu Umuonyia

9) "Egwu Icheoku" recorded at Umunze on Easter day, 1981 while Icheoku was performing

10) "Mbaike" recorded at Umuchu on 25/12/81 while a group of teenage girls were performing.

11) "Ikpem" recorded at Umunze on Easter day, 1981 while Icheoku was performing.

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## APPENDIX A

### OTU OKPOKOROISHI SHIRI LU NWAGBOGHO KACHA IBEYE MMA

Place of collection: Achina

Date of Collection: 29/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Ngozi Okpala, aged 15

Narrator: Agam akọrọ unụ otu Okpokoroishi shiri lụta nwagbọghọ kacha ibeye mma.

Audience: Kọrọ ayi

Narrator: Oruru ofu oge aha, onwere ofu ngagbọghọ mara mma. Ọmachara mma nke na nneye na nnaya n'akpọ ya Anyanwụ. Oge oruru ije di, ndi eze na ndi nze nile abiara ya di, oju. Umu okorobia nile abiara ya di, oju. Ọna ewute nneye na nnaya etu oshi ajụ ndi di nile na abiara ya. Owere ru ofu mbọshi, Okpokoroishi jekwu ndi enyi ye gwa ha na ya chọrọ ije lụrụ nwagbọghọa. Ha nge ye ụkwụ, aka, nti, imi, anya, awhọ n'akụkụ ahu nile onwehe. Mgbe ha jizhichara ya ka mmadụ, Okpokoroishi je ńurukwuo efe n'akpụkpụ ụkwụ. Mgbe ojizhichara onwe ye, Okpokoroishi jee be nne na nna nwagbọghọa. Ezhigbo nwagbọghọa n'awhụ Okpokoroishi, ya gwa nne ye na nna ya na y'awhụna onye j'alụ ya. N'izhizhi, ha juru aḍu, ma mgbe nwagbọghọ gwara ha n'ọbụrụ na ha ḅụ, y'oje agbasọ nwoke aha agbasọ, he kwere, were kebe Okpokoroishi nwagbọghọ aha. Okpokoroishi na nwunye ye were laba

Ha puta be onye ọnụtara akwa n'akpụkpụ ụkwụ, o nyeghachi ye efe n'akpụkpụ ụkwụ. Nwantinti oge, onye nwe anya nagharaha ya anya ya. Nwunye ye duruzhie ye n'aga maka Okpokoroishi anazhihi awhụ ụzọ. N'ofu n'ofu ha nagharahachaa ya ihie nile ha nyere ye. Mgbe nwagbọghọ aha whụrụ na di ye bụ okpokoroishi n'akwụ n'ala, ya tie mkpu bido akwa. Ụkwụ pụta gbaa ya. Aka pụta maa ya ụra. Imi n'ọnụ pụta vụọ ya ụkwara n'ihu. Mgbe ọ dara n'ala n'ebe akwa, Eze pụta takarichaa ya ahụ. Ụra aha Aka mara ya bido baba ọnya. Ebe nile Eze tara ya arụ ghọọ ekpenta. Ya bekata bekata bekata ike akwa gwụ ya. Mgbe Okpokoroishi whụrụ n'ụdi ọdizhi, ya jụ ya chụchighaa ya azụ ka ọlakwuru ụdi be ha. Mgbe ọbataruru n'obodo ha, ihiere ekwehe ye ala be ha. Ọbụzhihi nwagbọghọ makariri ibe ye. Ihie ọbụzhi bụ onye ekpenta ọnya juru ahụ. Ya kwụshi n'ahia. Ebe aha k'ọnọ buruzhie ihie ụka ọchi were rukwee mgbe ọnwụrụ. Akụkọa n'egoshi na igbafe nhọ di ofe adihi mma.

# HOW A SKULL MARRIED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL

Place of collection: Achina

Date of collection : 19/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Ngozi Okpala, aged 15

Narrator: I will tell you how Skull married the most beautiful girl.

Audience: Tell us.

Narrator: Once upon a time, there was a very beautiful girl in one village. She was so beautiful that her parents called her Sun. When she was ripe for marriage, many kings and titled men came to marry her but she refused. All the young men in the village approached her but she refused. The parents became worried. Then one day, Skull went to his friends and told them of his intention to go and marry the girl. They lent him legs, hands, stomach, eyes, ears, nose and other parts of the body which he lacked. When he was assembled as a man, he also borrowed a pair of suits and shoes. When he was fully dressed, Skull went to meet her parents. Immediately the girl saw him, she told her parents that she has seen her hubband. The parents initially objected, but when the girl threatened to run away with the man, the parents agreed and handed her over to Skull. Skull set off for home with his wife. On the way, the owner of the pair of suits and shoes took them.

Shortly after the owner of eyes collected them. The girl had to lead Skull on as he could no longer see. One by one Skull gave back all the parts he had borrowed for the journey. When the girl saw that what she had for husband was a mere skull rolling on the ground, she screamed and cried. Leg came out and kicked her. Hand slapped her. Nose and mouth plastered her face with mucus. When she fell down, teeth crawled out and bit her. The weal left by the kicks and slaps turned into sores while the bites from teeth turned into leprosy. She cried and cried and cried until she had no strength to cry. When Skull saw her present condition, he rejected her and sent her back to her parents. When she got back to the village, she was too ashamed to go home. She was no longer the most beautiful girl but a leper full of sores. She remained in the market place, and there she lived as a laughing stock for the remainder of her life. This story shows the evils of being over-fastidious in choosing a husband.

APPENDIX A2

OTU NWA ENWE NNE SHIRI NWETE UKWU UDALA

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Susanna Igwe, aged 13

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woọ!

Narrator: Ihie ụnụ ga n'ekwerem bu Nda

Oruru ofu oge aha, ofu nwoke lụọ nwanyị. Nwanyị ya aha amutara ya sọsọ ofu nnwa were nwụọ. Maka ihi na nwokea chọrọ ọtụtụ ụmụ, ya lụọ nwanyi ọzọ. Nwanyị nke abụọ a amụtara ya ụmụ atọ. Ma nime ụmụ atọa, onwehe nke mara mma m'ọbu mara ihie ka nnwa nwanyi nke mbụ. Ya n'ewute nwanyị nke abụọ aha, owere bido imewu nnwa nwanyị nke izhizhi. Oshie nni, ya nye ụmụ ya ebe kacha mma were ebe adịhị mma nye nwa enwe nne. Ihiea mere ogologo oge. Sọsọ ihie nwa enwe nne n'emelipu bu ije n'ili nne ye n'ebe akwa. Owere ruo ofu mbọshị, nwanyịa ejee ahịa zụta ụdala. Ya kee ye ụmụ ya sọsọ. Mgbe nwa enwe nne bịara k'ọnara nke ye, nwanyịa bara ya mba sị ya k'ojekwuru nne ye k'onye ye. Nwata enwe nne a jekwa n'ili nne ye bebe akwa. K'obekatara akwa, ụra vuru ye. Mgbe obiliri, ya whụ ofu agadi nwanyị no ya n'akụkụ. Agadi nwanyị a aguguọ ya, nye ye ofu mkpụrụ ụdara na akwụkwọ oje ahịa ya tupu

ọkụọ ya, gwakwuo ye egwu oje agụ m'on'ạkụ ya. Mgbe nwa enwe nne laruru, ya kụọ mkpụrụ udala aha n'agụ: Udala m puo

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Udala m puo

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Puoro nw'enwe nne

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Puoro nw'enwe nna

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Nwunye nna m oo

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Gote ụdala n'ahịa

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Rachawọ nw'enwe nne

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Rachawọ nw'enwe nna

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Elu ụwa bụ ọrịrị

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Onye nọchaa ọlaba

Audience: Ndaaaa

Narrator: Mkpụrụ ụdala aha puo ozhigbo, nwata aha agụkwara egwu ozo: Udala m too

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Udalam too

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Too too too

Audience: Ndà

Narrator: Tooro nw'enwe nne

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Tooro nw'enye nna

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Nwunye nna m oo

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Gote ụdala n'ahịa

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Rachawọ nw'enwe nne

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Rachawọ nw'enwe nna

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Elu ụwa bụ ọrịrị

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Onye nọchaa ọlaba

Audience: Ndaaaa

Narrator: Oshishi ụdala aha too ozhigbo. Nwata aha gụọhara ya egwu k'ọhaa iwhuru mịa mkpụrụ. Oshishi a haa iwhuru mịa mkpụrụ. Nwata aha agụọhara y'egwu k'ọchaa. Ozhigbonje ụdala aha chaa. Mgbe ha chara, ha bido ịba. Ha were bụrụ ụdala tụọkarịchara n'ụwa nile. Shitezhie mbọshị aha, nne ụmụazhị atọa bido rịọba nw'enwe nne ụdala. Ukwu ụdala aha were mịba ihie nke na onwehe mgbe mkpụrụ kọrọya n'elu. Ndị chara acha n'ada nke na nwata aha rekatara mkpụrụ ụdara were bụrụzhie ọgaranya. Akụkọa na egeshi ayị n'onye ọbụna n'emegbu nw'ọgbenye marakwa n'ogbenye nwere ike ịba ọgaranya.

# HOW A MOTHERLESS CHILD GOT UDALA TREE

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Susanna Igwe, aged 13

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: The refrain is "Nda"

Onne upon a time, a man married one wife. This wife bore him only one child and died. Because the man wanted many children, he married another wife. This second wife bore him three children. But none of the three children was as beautiful and intelligent as the child of the first wife. The second wife was not happy about this and started to maltreat the child of the first wife. Whenever she cooked, she would give the choice parts to her own children and give the bad parts to the motherless child. This continued for a long time, All the motherless child could do was to go to her mother's grave to cry. Then one day the woman went to the market and bought some udala fruits. She shared them among her children only. When the motherless child came for some, the woman scolded her severely and told her to go to her mother for some. As usual, the child went to her mother's grave to cry. After crying for a long time, she fell asleep. When she woke up, an old woman was sitting besides her.

The old woman consoled her and gave her an udala seed. She also gave her some leaves to rub on the seed before planting it. She also taught her a song for the seed. When the motherless child reached home she planted the seed singing: "My udala germinate"

Audience: Nda

Narrator: My udala germinate

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Germinate germinate germinate

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Germinate for motherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Germinate for fatherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: My step-mother

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Bought udala from the market

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Denied it to motherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Denied it to fatherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Life is a sojournment

Audience: Nda

Narrator: When it sends one goes

Audience: Ndaaaa

Narrator: The udala seed germinated immediately and the child sang again: My udala grow

Audience: Nda

Narrator: My udala grow

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Grow grow grow

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Grow for motherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Grow for fatherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: My step-mother

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Bought udala from the market

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Denied it to motherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Denied it to fatherless child

Audience: Nda

Narrator: Life is a sojournment

Audience: Ndaaaa

Narrator: The tree grew immediately. The child repeated the song for the tree to flower and fruit. The tree flowered and fruited immediately. He again sang for the fruits to ripen and they ripened immediately. When the fruits were ripe, they began to fall. They were the sweetest udala fruits in the whole world. From that day, the mother of the three children started begging for udala fruits from the motherless child. The tree kept on fruiting without stopping and the ripe fruits kept on falling. The child sold so much that he became rich. This story warns us against maltreating the poor as a poor man may one day become rich.

## APPENDIX A3

### OTU EKPENTA SHIRI BATA N'UWA

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator: : Ugochukwu Ezendu, aged 15

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: Nkịta nyara akpa!

Audience: Nshị agwụ n'ọhịa!

Narrator: Onwere ofu akụkọ m g'akọrọ ụnụ

Audience: Kọọrọ anyị

Narrator: Ihie ụnụ ga n'ekwe bụ "Igbampitimpiti igbampiti (twice)

Oruru ofụ oge aha, ofu nwoke lụrụ ụmụ nwanyị abụọ. Ofu n'ime ha bụ ezhigbo mmadụ, nwee obi ọma, nwekwuo awho ojuju n'ihie ọbụna onwere. Nke ọzọ gbara obi ọjọọ nke na ibe ye n'akpọ ya ede ndụ m'ọbụ agbụ aka. Unụ ma etu agbụ aka shị adọ onye ọ n'eme mọbụ etu ede ndụ shi agbaka n'ahụ. Aha nke ezhigbo nwanyị aha bụ Ogechi. Umụ nwanyị abụọ a nwere sọsọ ofu nnwa nwoko ofu nnwa nwoke. Ogechi na agba mbọ ịzụlite nnwa ya ọfụma. Sọọsọ ihie nwanyị nke ọzọ n'eme agwụna ighu anyaọkụ. Ihie ọbụna Ogechi emene, oje agba mbọ mee ye. Obụrụbedi n'onwẹhe ego, ojee mbibi k'owere whụ n'ọchụghụdọrọ nwunye di ye. Oruo ofu mbọshị, Ogechi na nnwa ya jee ịkpa. Mgbe ha ruchara ọrụ laba, nnwa ya echewhuo ọja ya n'ukwu oshishi dị n'ịkpa. Mgbe ha richara nni anyasụ, nnwa ya chete ọja

ya were gwa nne ye na y'oje eje ịcho ọja aha n'anyasụ aha. Nne ye rịọ ya k'ọhapụ ma chi who, ma nwata aha ekwehe. Nne ye kwe ye nkwa ịzụtara ya ọja ọzọ, ma nwata aha ekwetọkwaha, n'ekwuleghi na y'oje eje ịchọ ọja aha n'anyasụ aha. Nne ye were sị ya ya gaba ni ma ya hubekwere onye ọbụna oje awhụ n'ụzọ ishi. Nwata nwokea were jebe, n'ime nderi aha. Oge ọ na abịakete ubi ha nso, ya nụ ushi ọjọọ ndị mmụọ, ma ọvụpụ hụ tụm. Mgbe ọbịaruru ubi, ọ whụ na ụmụ ndị mmụọ nọ nzụkọ ebe aha. Ezedimụọ baa mba, kpọọ ya juọ ya ihie ọbịara eme n'ubi n'anyasụ aha. Ujọ tụọ nwata nwoke aha, owere n'ekwe: Ezedimụọ biko gbagharam oo

Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti
Narrator: Ezedimuo biko gbagharam oo
Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti
Narrator: Ojam ka m bịara achọ
Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti
Narrator: Nnem sịkwa m'ejene
Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti
Narrator: Bike mee ebere hapụ ofu mkpụrụ nnwa
Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti

Narrator: Ezedimụọ meere nnwa aha ebere were goshi ya ọja ejiri igwe me. Nwata aha jụ sị n'obụhụ nke ye. Ezedimụọ goshi ye nke ejiri ọla ọcha me, ya jụ nke aha. Ogoshikwuo ye ọja eji ọla edo me, ma nwata aha si ya na nne ye na nna ya bụ ogbei, na ha ejehe egolipu ụdi ọja ahụ. Ezedimụọ werezhieweputere ye ọja nke ye. Nwata aha wulie elu, ñụria, kelee Ezedimụọ were nara ya ọja aha.

Ezedimụọ goshi ye udu n'abọ, ofu nke nnukwu na ofu nke obere si ya họrọ ofu. Nwata nwoke a họrọ nke obere. Ezedimụọ si ya vuru ite aha laa jee tiwaa ya n'ihu be nne ye. Nwata nwokea vuru itea laa mee etu agwara ya. Ozhigbonje, ego, akwa, igwe, eghu n'ọkụkọ jupute beha. Shitezhie mbọshi aha, ha buru zhie ndị bara ọgaranya. Udi ihie ọma a mere Ogechi na nnwa ya mere k'anyaọkụ nwunye di ye karịa. Ka chi gbahigere, ya gbaje ahịa je zụtara nnwa ya ọja. Chi who, ya dọlie ye jebe ịkpa, doọ ya aka na nti k'ọgbakwambọ hapụ oja aha n'ịkpa. Ka ha ruchara ọrụ laba, nwata aha tụtụrụ ọja ya. N'ụzọ, nne ye juọ ya ebe ọja dị, ya wepute ye goshi ye. Nne ye baara ya mba chụchighaaya azụ k'oje kwetọ ọja aha n'ịkpa. Nwata aha emee etu agwara ya, ha laa. Ozhigbo ha richara nni anyasụ, nne ye chụpụ ya k'ojee wete ọja n'ịkpa, ma nwata aha ekwehe eje. Ajọ nwanyịa kwapụ ya iro si na ojehe abata ụluọ m'ojeghi wete ọja n'ịkpa. Nwataa were obi ọjọọ n'iwe gaba. Mgbe ọ n'abịakete ubi ha, ya nụ ushi ndị mmụọ tie, "Phuu, phuu, ushi ọjọọ ndị mmụọ eshiwuom oo". Ofu ngalịnga ndị mmụọ puta ịjụ ya ihie ọ na achọ. Nwata aha za ya, "Taa puorom n'ụzọ maka anam ebe m n'eje. Achọhọm ngalịnga mmụọ ọbụna ịgwam okwu. I n'eshiwum n'ushi. Sọọsọ Ezedimuo ka m chọrọ iwhu." Nwa ndị mmụọ aha ọkpariri duru ye dugara Ezedimuo. Ezedimụọ wepute ọja ọla edo juọ ya m'ọbụ nke ye, nwata aha kwere. Ezedimụọ goshi ye ndu n'abọ, ofu nke nnukwu n'ofu nke obere si ya họrọ ofu. Nwata aha họrọ nke nnukwu. Ezedimụọ gwa ya k'otiwaa udu aha m'ihu ụluọ be nne ye. Tupu nwata nwokea nna eru ụluọ, nne ye nogwenerii n'ama n'eche ye. Ozhigbo ọwhụrụ udu ovu aluọta, ya gbapụ je

puhiọrọ ya udu aha vuru ye gbabaa n'imuluọ ha. Ya gwa nnwa ya k'ọkpshichaa ụzọ na ntapu n'ile dị be ha. Mgbe nwata nwokea kọrọ ya ihie Ezedimuọ kwuru, ya baara ya jụba ya m'ọchọrọ ka ndị ọzọ soro ha kete ihie ọma nke j'abịara ha. Ya tiwaa udu aha n'echekwube n'ego, akwa n'ihie ọma ndị ọzọ di iche iche j'abiakwute ha. Kama nkea, ekpenta, okpomila, ụkwaranta n'ọria ọjọọ ndị ọzọ fepute gbuo ha. Mgbe chi whoro, di nwanyịa echekata ka nva na nnwa ya puta, ma nkịtị. Ya kụkata aka n'ụzọ ha m'onwehe onye zara ya. Mgbe ọgbawazhiri ụzọ, ọria ọjọọ nile aha juputere n'ụluọ aha fepuishie feshaishia ụwa nile. Etua k'anyaọkụ ofu nwanyị n'anyaukwu nnwa ya nwoke shiri mee ọria ndịa bata n'ime ụwa. Ihie akụkọa n'akụzhiri ayị bụ ekworo n'anyaukwu adịhị mma.

puhiọrọ ya udu aha vuru ye gbabaa n'imuluọ ha. Ya gwa nnwa ya k'ọkpshichaa ụzọ na ntapu n'ile dị be ha. Mgbe nwata nwokea kọrọ ya ihie Ezedimuọ kwuru, ya baara ya jụba ya m'ọchọrọ ka ndị ọzọ soro ha kete ihie ọma nke j'abịara ha. Ya tiwaa udu aha n'echekwube n'ego, akwa n'ihie ọma ndị ọzọ di iche iche j'abịakwute ha. Kama nkea, ekpenta, okpomila, ụkwaranta n'oria ọjọọ ndị ọzọ fepute gbuo ha. Mgbe chi whoro, di nwanyịa echekata ka nva na nnwa ya puta, ma nkịtị. Ya kụkata aka n'ụzọ ha m'onwehe onye zara ya. Mgbe ọgbawazhiri ụzọ, oria ọjọọ nile aha juputere n'uluọ aha fepuishie feshaishia ụwa nile. Etua k'anyaọkụ ofu nwanyị n'anyaukwu nnwa ya nwoke shiri mee oria ndịa bata n'ime ụwa. Ihie akụkọa n'akụzhiri ayị bụ ekworo n'anyaukwu adịhị mma.

# HOW LEPROSY ENTERED THE WORLD

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Ugochukwu Ezendu, aged 15

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: If a dog slings his bag!

Audience: Feaces will be finished in the bush!

Narrator: There's a story I will tell you

Audience: Tell us

Narrator: The refrain will be "Igbampitimpiti igbampiti (twice)

Once upon a time, a man married two wives. One of them was a good woman, kind and contented with what she had. The other one was a wicked woman to such an extent that her mates called her raw cocoyam or whitlow. You all know how whitlow worries its patient or how irritating raw cocoyam can be on the skin. The good woman was called Ogechi. The two women had a son each. Ogechi made every effort to train her son well. The other woman was pre-occupied with jealousy. Whatever Ogechi did, she would quickly do. Even if she had no money to do so, she would borrow to make sure she equalled her co-wife. One day, Ogechi and her son went to the farm. When they finished their work and set for home, her son forgot his flute under a tree in the farm. After supper, the boy remembered his flute. He told his mother that he

forgot it in the farm and that he was going to the farm that night to look for it. His mother pleaded with him to leave it till morning but he refused. She even promised to buy him another flute but the boy still refused and insisted on going to the farm that night. The mother then allowed him to go but advised him to be humble and gentle to whoever he might meet in the farm. The boy set off for the farm in that dead of the night. As he was approaching the farm, he perceived the over-powering stench of spirits. He did not say a word. When he entered the farm, he discovered that spirits were already holding a meeting there. Ezedimuo (King of Spirits) growled and called him, and asked him what he came to do in the farm at that time of the night. The boy was frightened and sang:

Ezedimuo please forgive me"

Audience: "Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti"

Narrator: Ezedimuo please forgive me

Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti

Narrator: I came to look for my flute

Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti

Narrator: My mother warned me not to go

Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti

Narrator: Please have pity and spare a lone son

Audience: Igbampitimpiti igbampiti, igbampitimpiti igbampiti

Narrator: Ezedimuo had pity on the boy and showed him a flute made of iron. The boy refused the flute saying it was not his. Ezedimuo showed him a silver flute and

the boy also refused it. When the king of spirits showed him a golden flute, the boy said that his parents were poor and cannot afford such a flute. Then the king of spirits brought out the boy's flute. The boy jumped for joy and thanked Ezedimuo, and accepted the flute. Ezedimuo showed him two pots, one big and the other small and asked him to select one. The boy chose the small one. The king of spirits advised him to carry the pot home and break it in front of his mother's hut. The boy carried the pot home and did as he was told. Immediately, money, clothes, bicycles, goats and fowls filled their hut. From that day, they became wealthy people. This type of fortune that came to Ogechi and her son filled the other woman with jealousy. She quickly ran to the market and bought a flute for her son. The next day she dragged him to the farm, and warned him to ensure that he left the flute in the farm when they would be going home. When they were leaving the farm, the boy picked his flute. On the way, the woman asked him about the flute and he showed it to her. She scolded him and ordered him back to the farm to drop the flute. He did as he was ordered and they went home. After their supper, the wicked woman sent the boy out to the farm to fetch the flute. The boy resused. She pushed him out of the house threating that she would not allow him in unless he went to the farm to bring the flute. The boy went off to the farm in anger. When he got near the farm, he perceived the odour of spirits and shouted, "Phuu, phuu, I'm choking with the foul smell of spirits." One wry spirit came out and asked him what

he was looking for. The boy replied, "Taa move out of my way for I know where I'm going. I don't want any tiny spirit to talk to me. You are choking me with your odour. I want to see Ezedimuo only". The spirit he so insulted led him to Ezedimuo. Ezedimuo brought a golden flute and asked the boy whether it was his, and the boy said yes. Ezedimuo gave him the golden flute and showed him two pots, one big and the other small. The boy chose the bigger pot. Ezedimuo then advised him to carry the pot home and break it in front of his mother's hut. Before the boy reached home, the mother was already waiting for him at the gate. When she saw the pot he was carrying, she rushed to him and snatched it, ran into her room, and instructed the boy to lock all the doors and windows of the house. The boy told her of the instructions of Ezedimuo, but she scolded him and asked him whether he wanted others to share in the fortune that was soon to befall them. She broke the pot hoping to get money, clothes and other good things. Instead, leprosy, yaws, tuberculosis and other abominable diseases flew out of the pot and killed them. When day broke, the husband waited for the woman and her son to come out but in vain. He knocked at their door for a long time but nobody answered him. When he broke open the door, all the abominable diseases trapped in the house flew out and spread all over the world. That was how the jealosy of one woman and the agreed of her son brought these diseases into the world. This story teaches us that jealousy and greed are bad.

APPENDIX A4

OME NJO N'EMERE ONWEYE, OME MMA N'EMERE ONWEYE

Place of collection: Umuchu
Date of collection : 28/12/81
Situation : Children telling stories at night
Story teller : Nneka Uchendu, aged about 12

Story teller: Onwere ofu akụkọ m ga akọrọ unu
Audience : Koro ayi.

Oruru ofu oge aha, onwere ofu onye ishi. Onye ishia n'arịọ arịrịọ n'akpaghari. On'akpaghari ọn'agụ, "Ome njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye." Onye nyeye ihie, ọbukwa ofu ihia aha k'ọnasị "ome njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye." Onwekwereni ofu onyeze di n'obodo aha nwere obi ọjọọ nnukwu. Soọsọ ihie n'agụ ya bụ ịta umu ogbenye awhuwhu. Onyeishia din'eje b'onyezea irio arịrịọ. Mak'ihi n'onyeishi n'agụ egwu di ụtụọ, ofu nnwa nwoke onyezea mutara whụrụya n'anya nnukwu. Mgbe ọbụna onyeishia bịara na b'eze, nnwaya nwoke aha abiakwuteye nyanaya nọrọ n'akpa nkata. Evutereye nni, ya rieye elu elu vuru nke whọrọnụ vui onyeishi ya rie. Onyeishi richaa, ya si, "Ome njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye."

Otua onyeishi na nnwaya shi atụọ n'ewute onyeze nnukwu. Obido tụba aro ihie ojeme onyeishi. Oruo ofu mbọshị onyeishi bịaruru na b'eze ịrịọ arịrịọ ma nwaeze anọhọ n'ụluọ. Onyeze were akpa baa n'ime ọhịa nwuta ajuala. Mgbe ojiri ajuala aha bata, ya kpọọ onyeishi vui ye nni.

Ka onyeishi nọ n'eri nni, onyeze vuru akpaya, were nke aha ajụala dị na ya dọbaraya. Mgbe orichara nni, ya kelee onyeze si, "Ome njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye." Ya bilie koro akpa aha ajụala dị naya laba.

K'ọnala, ozute nwaeze k'ọnalụọta ebe ojere. Nwaeze kelee ye sị ya wete ihie ndị mmadụ nyereye dị n'akpa ka ya lee. Ozhigbonje ọmaịrị aka n'ime akpa aha, ajụala nnaya tiri n'imeye tụọ ya. Odaa n'ala tie mkpu. Ndị mmadụ gbakọọ vuruye vulara nnaya. Ka ha n'abata na b'eze, nwaeze ekubie, nwụọ. Oge ana eliye, onyeishi kụrụ mkparaya gụrụ egwuye n'aga sị, "Ore njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye.

Mgbe onyeze nụrụ egwu onyeishia, obi ebido pịaba ya ụtarị. Ochete n'ọya rụrụ arụrụala gburu nnwaya. Obi gbọwaa ya, ọnwụkwuo. Onyeze ọzọ bidozhie chịba obodo hha. Ma tupu ya rịkwashara n'ocheze, ovụru ụzọ jee n'afa ịjụpụta ihie nnwa na nnaya jiri nwụọ ofu mgbe. Afa gwaraya ihie mereni. Mgbe aha k'ọha n'eze jiri mata nsọala onyeze ha mbụ mere, ya na ihie egwu onye ishi n'agụ, "Ome njọ n'emere onweye, ome mma n'emere onweye" pụtara. Akụkọa goshiri n'ụgwọ dịara onye n'emegbu nw'ogbenye maka n'ehi n'enwehe odu nachi ye n'achụrụ ya ijiji

YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Nneka Uchendu, aged 14

Narrator; Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you

Audience: Tell us

Narrator: Once upon a time, there was one blind man. As he went round the town begging, he used to sing "he who does evil, does it for himself, he who does good does it for himself. Even if somebody gave him some alms, he would still say the same thing. There was also a chief in that town. This chief was very wicked. The only thing he enjoyed was punishing the poor. This blind man was always going to his palace to beg. Because he used to sing interesting songs, the only son of the chief loved him so much. Whenever the blind man came to the palace, his son would stay with him to chat. When food was brought, the prince would eat just a little and pass the rest to the blind begger. If he finishes eating, he would say, "he who does evil does it for himself, he who does good does it for himself. The friendship between his son and the blindman was displeasing to the chief. He started plotting how to deal with the blind man. Then one day,

the blind man came but the prince was away. The chief took a bag and went into the bush. He collected a live viper. When he came back, he called the blind man and gave him some food. While the blind man was eating, the chief swapped his bag with the one containing live viper. When he finished eating, he thanked the chief saying, "he who does evil does it for himself, he who does good, does it for himself. He got up, took the bag containing the viper and left. On his way, he met the prince coming back from his journey. The prince greeted him, and asked him to show him what people had given him. Immediately the prince dipped his hand into the blind man's bag, the viper struck him. He shouted and fell down. People gathered and carried him to his father. As they were entering the chief's compound, the prince died. During the burial, the blind man passed bye singing, "he who does evil does it for himself, he who does good does it for himself." When the chief heard the blind man's song, he was filled with remorse. He remembered that he was the architect of his son's death. He immediately died of heart break. Another chief started to rule the town. But before he ascended the throne, he first went to the oracle to find out why father and son died so mysteriously. The oracle revealed what had happened. It was then that the community realised the outrageous thing their former chied did and the meaning of the song of the blind man. This story shows us that there is a penalty for those who maltreat the poor because God chases flies away for a tail-less cow.

APPENDIX A5

ITE NDU

Place of collection: Amesi

Date of collection : 20/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Obiageli Eze, aged 32

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: Onwere ofu akụkọ m g'akọrọ ụnụ

Audience: Kọọrọ anyị

Narrator: Ihie ụnụ ga na ekwere m bụ zamịrị za

Oruru ofu oge aha, ofu obodo mwere ofu onye eze maara ihie nwekwuo obi ọma. Ndi obodo ye whụrụ ya n'anya nnukwu maka obi ọma na amaihie ye. Mgbe ọbụna ha ejene agha, ndị obodo ye n'emeri. Ezea nwere ọtụtụ akụ n'ụba nwekwuo ọtụtụ ụmụ. Onye ezea were daa ofu nnukwu ọrịa. Dibie elu gwọọ, nkịtị, dibie ala gwọọ, nkịtị. Ezea rịakata rịakata rịakata were nọdozhie k'agasị n'ọnwụ n'ekwe ye ọnụ. Oge ọ ha nọ n'ọnụ ọnwụ, ndi nze obodo ye jee n'afa ịchọpụta ihie ejeme k'owere dịhị. Afa gwa ha sị n'ọbụrụ n'onye eze ha j'adịhị, ha jee chọọ ofu ọgba nzịza nwagbọghọ dui na be Chukwu k'oje vute ite ndụ. Nwata nwagbọghọa je n'ekwu ezhiokwu, n'ehube ishi, nke ka nke bụ n'ojehe ama nwoke. Ọbụrụ n'ovuru ite ndụ a luọtarụo, etiwaa ya, eze j'adịhị. Ndi nze were dupu ụmụ odibo ha n'obodo nile gbara ha ereghede ka ha je chọọ ụdị nwagbọghọ agbara n'afa.

Ha chọkata chọkata chọkata mana onwehe ebe ha whụrụ ụdị nwataa afa kwuru j'ejelipu ndị ozhia. Ha chọchaa na be ndị eze ndị ọzọ nile mana onwehe onye ha whụrụ. Ka mgbe aha, ọria ji onye eze n'ejitu ye nnine nnnine. Ndị nze gaaha izu ọzọ chighaa n'afa. Mgbe ọgba afa chịlịri mkpụrụ afa ya bidọ yọba, ọyọọ ya yọkwa, ọyọọ ya yọkwa, ọyọọ ya yọkwa, ihie ọ na awhụ gbara ya gharịị. Ya yọkwa mkpụrụ afa ya ọzọ ma ihie ọna awhụ burịrị ofu ihie aha. Ya were gwa ndị nze si ha "Ihie ụnụ n'achọ n'uko elu dị n'uko ala. Unụ laruọ, gwanụ onye ishi ndị nze ya welie ụkwụ aka nni ye elu. Ndị nze nụrịa laa. Onye ishi ndị nze nwere ofu agbataobi bụ ọtẹ nkwụ anakpọ Onyemaechi. Onyemaechi na nwunye ye nwere sọsọ ofu nnwa nwanyị anakpọ Ezhiokwubụndụ. Ezhiokwubụndụ bụ nnọọ ihie ọnụ j'akpọ ezhigbo nwata. O na eje ozhi nnukwu h'ehubere ndị mmadu ishi. Nke kacha nke bụ n'ọmaha nwoke. Ozhigbo erichara nni anyasụ onye ishi ndị nze bata be Onyemaechi. Udị ije abalịa gbara Onyemaechi gharịị maka obuhụ ovueme. O kelee onye ọbịa ya rịọ ya n'anyasụ ataana ọjị. Onye ishi ndị nze sị ya y'esogbune were tọtuo ihie ojiri bịa were gbuo ye akị oyibo Nsugbe. Orịa onye eze bụ ihie onye ọbụna nọ na obodo aha ma. Onye ishi ndị nze zhie Onyemaechi n'afa sị n'ọbụ Ezhiokwubụndu je eje bụ Chukwu ivute ite ndụ k'onye eze were dịhị. Udị ozhia gbara Onyemaechi gharịị. Omaha m'ọ ya chịba ọchị mọbụ bebe akwa. Onwehe mgbe ọbatara ya n'uche n'ọbụ na be ye k'ejeshi whụ onye j'eje ụdị ozhia. Ya duọ na nchukuvu si "Onye ma echi". Onye ishi ndị nze gwakwuoye n'achọrọ ka Ezhiokwubụndu puọ echi ye bụ Nkwọ.

Mgbe ọlara, Onyemaechi kpọọ nwunye ye kọọrọ ya ihie ọ nụrụ. Ozhigbo nwunye ye rai aka n'ishi tie "Anwụọm, efuom oo! Chim ọbụ otune ka muna uwam shiri jee!" Obere akwa ogologo oge. Diye guguọya n'asị "Onye ma echi". Chi were who. Onyemaechi na nwunye ye kpọọ Ezhiokwubụndu kọọrọ ya ihie ọha obodo chọrọ k'omee. Ya za ha sị, "Nnem na nnam, ọbụrụ n'ọbụ uche ụnụ kam jee, agam eje. Oburu n'ijem j'eme k'onye eze dịhị, agam eje." Nna ya were duọ ya ọdụ sị, "Enwehem ji nke m ji enwe ede. Soọsọ ihie m n'enye ghị bụ ezhiokwu, obi ebere n'ịwhụnanya n'ebe mmadụ ibeghi nọ. Ka ị n'eje, kwụba akaghị ọtọ. Soọsọ ihie ije evu n'obi bụ ite ijeje ivute be Chukwu. Were ofu ogbe jia. Agụrụ guọ ghị, tabere ye were luo mkpọasụ." Nne ye si ya, "Nna ghị ekwutechagwene ihie nile. Ma soọsọ ofu ihie whọrọ bụ ịdọ ghị aka na ntị maka ụmụ nwoke. I n'eje, ele kwene h'anya. Dobe obighi soọsọ n'ite ijeje ivute. Elu ejehe akwa ghị nke ala jị akwa ghị. Ije eje n'udo luọta n'udo. Were ofu ukwu akwa a k'oje abụ oyi tụbaghi, i kpuo ye." Ezhiokwubụndu were puọ ije jide soọsọ ofu ogbe ji n'ofu ukwu akwa. O jeghudo jeghudo jeghudo, chaa ịkpa n'asaa mba n'asaa, ịkpa n'asaa mba n'asaa, ịkpa n'ạsaa mba n'asaa were pụta obodo soọsọ okpokoro ishi juru. Efere dị ebe aha bụ soọsọ azụ, jị awai na ede mbieri juru na ha. Ofu okpokoro ishi kpọọ ya sị ya:

Ezhiokwubundu lee umụ ihie ndịa rie. Amam n'agụrụ je n'agụghụ. Ndị nwe ha anọhọ n'ụluọ. Rie he ọsisọ tupu ghị gabaaha njem ghị." Ezhiokwubụndu zaa ya n'agụ "Agụrụ anaha agụm"

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: Agụrụ anaha agụm

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: Nnem na nnam nyerem ji m j'eri

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: Agụrụ n'agụbedim oo

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: Ejehem eri nni edobere onye ọzọ

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: K'ihie j'eme onye ọzọ ghara imem oo

Audience: Zamịrị za

Narrator: Ezhiokwubụndu bidoaha njem. Ya jekata jekata jekata were puta ebe enwere sọọsọ ụluọ elu ike were gwụ ya. Ndị bi n'ụluọ elu ndịaha bụ umụ okorobịa n'enwu ọcha bụ sọ mma. Ha kpọọ ya k'ọbịa rawhụ be ha. Ya jụ. Ha kweye nkwa na ha j'emeye nwunye onye eze ha ma ya juleghi, hapụ ha gaba ebe ọ n'eje. Ogaghudo were puta ebe umụ ndị mmuọ bi n'akpati ozu. Ofu ndị mmuọ shi n'ofu akpati ozu puta sị ya, "Biko agụrụ n'agụgbum, nyem ji aha iji". Ozọ aputakwa sị ya,"Biko oyi n'atụgbum, nyem akwagh'aha." Ebere umụ ndị mmụọ a juputere Ezhiokwubụndu obi. O nye nke agụrụ n'agụ ji, nye nke oyi n'atụ akwa. He kelee ye. Nke onyere ji enye ye ofu mkpirishi oshishi gwa ya k'ọkụọ ya ụgbọrọ atọ n'ala oge ọbụna ọwhụrụ ihie

ọjọọ ọbụna m'ọbụ egwu tụbara ya n'ụzọ. Nke o nyere akwa nye ye ofu mkpirishi ọkpụkpụ gwa ya n'buru n'ojechaa ebe ọ n'eje, ya tọgbọ ọkpụkpụa n'ala zọdoye ụkwụ oje evula ya be ha. Ezhiokwubụndu bidoaha njem. Ogaghudo gaghudo gaghudo puta ebe ndị mmụọ ji ishi asụ akwụ. Ndị mmụọ aha bara ya sị, "Taa nwa mmadụ, were ishi ghị sụchaa akwụ nile dị ebea m'ọbụghụ etuaha anyị egbuoghu." Ha baa n'ọhịa je vukuluọ akwa nile ha gburu k'owere ishi sụọ. Ozhigbo ọkụrụ oshishi ye ugboro atọ n'ikpo akwụ aha, asụchaa ha. Ndị mmụọ hapụ ya ọgafee. Owere rute ogige be Chukwu. Onụ egwu n'ada be Chukwu. Umụ odibo Chukwu juputere n'aṅụri maka na nkea bụ izhizhi mmadụ dị ndụ n'emeri onwụnwa nile di n'ụzọ were ruo be ha. Mgbe ọbatara na be Chukwu, Chukwu kpọọ ya, gọzhie ye were vui ye ite ndụ. Ya kelee Chukwu were vuru ite ndụ. Ozhigbo ọ n'aputahana iro, ya tọgbọ ọkpụkpụ ya aha n'ala zọkwasha ya ụkwụ. Kamgbene kamgbene ya wụchaa n'obi eze ha. Umu eze na ndị nze ha chicha ume n'aka n'eche ye. Ha duru ye baa n'ebe onye eze dine n'akwa ọrịa. Ozhigbo onye eze whụrụ nya na ite ovu, obi juputeye n'aṅụri. Mgbe etiwara itea, onye eze agbakee. Enwere oriri n'ọṅụṅụ izu n'asaa n'obodo aha. Mgbe oriri n'ọṅụṅụ gafechara, onye eze were kpọọ Onyemaechi na nwunye ye were kelee ha maka otu ha shiri zụ nnwa ha nwanyi. Ya kee obodo ye ụzọ abụọ nye Onyemaechi na nwunye ye ofu ụzọ ka ha chịba. Okpọọ dịọkwaraya gwa ya k'ọluba Ezhiokwubụndu. Shitezhie mbọshị aha, Onyemaechi buruzhie onye eze, make ihi ezhigbo ada ya. Ezhiokwubụndu abụrụ nwunye dịọkwara eze make ihi ezhigbo omume ye. Akụkọa goshiri ayi uru ọ n'aba bụ irubere nne na nna ayị ishi.

# THE POT OF LIFE

Place of collection: Amesi
Date of collection : 20/12/81
Situation : Story telling session at night
Narrator : Obiageli Eze, aged 32

Narrator: Chakpii!
Audience: Woo!
Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you
Audience: Tell us
Narrator: The refrain will be "Zamiri za".

Once upon a time, there was one town which had a very wise and benevolent chief. His subjects loved him very much because of his wisdom and kindness. Whenever there was a battle, his army always won. The chief had many children and was very rich. One time, this chief became sick. Many doctors came to cure him but failed. The chief ailed and ailed and ailed until it seemed as if death was 'pricing him'. When he was at the mouth of death, the titled men of his chiefdom went to the oracle to find out what to do so that the chief might recover. The oracle told them that if the chief was to recover, they should look for a damsel to send to God to bring back the pot of life. This damsel should be a virgin, truthful, humble to her parents and should be of exceptionally good behaviour. The titled men sent out their servants to all the surrounding towns in search of

this type of girl the oracle said could run such an errand. They sought and sought and sought, and went to all the neighbouring chiefdoms without success. By then, the chief's condition was worsening. The titled men met again and went back to the oracle. When the diviner splayed his strings, what he was seeing surprised him. He splayed again but still saw the same thing. At last he got up and said to his visitors, "What you are looking for in the ceiling rafter is in the floor rafter. When you get home, tell the head of the titled men to raise his right leg." The titled men rejoiced and went home. It happened that the head of the titled men had one neighbour who was a wine tapper. His name was Onyemaechi. Onyemaechi and his wife had only one daughter called Ezhiokwubundu. She was what could be described as a good girl. She ran errands with dispatch, was very obedient and humble, and above all, was a virgin. Immediately after the night meal the head of the titled men went to the house of Onyemaechi. This type of nocturnal visit surprised Onyemaechi because it was unusual. He greeted his visitor and apologised that 'night had eaten kolanut.' The head of the titled men told him not to worry and brought down his mission which he broke "like Nsugbe coconut." The chief's sickness was something everybody in the town knew about. The head of the titled men informed Onyemaechi that the oracle had said it was Ezhiokwubundu that should go to God's home to bring back the pot of life so that the chief would recover. This type of information surprised Onyemaechi. He did not know whether to cry or laugh. Never did it occur to him

that it would be from his house that the person who could run such an errand would come. He shrugged his shoulders and said "Onyemaechi", (who knows tomorrow). The head of the titled men further informed him that Ezhiokwubundu was required to set off on her journey the following day, Nkwo. When he left Onyemaechi called his wife and narrated to her what he had been told. She immediately clasped her head and wailed, "I'm dead, I'm lost oo! My God, is this how I have gone with my world." She cried for a long time. The husband consoled her saying, "who knows tomorrow". The day broke. Onyemaechi and his wife called Ezhiokwubundu and told her what the community said she should do. She replied them, "My mother and father, if it is your will that I go, I shall go. If my mission will save the chief, I shall go". Her father then advised her saying, "I have neither yams nor cocoyams. The only thing I'm giving you is truth, sympathy and love for your fellow human beings. As you go, keep your way upright. The only thing you should have in mind is the pot of life you are going to bring back from the home of God. Take this one yam. When you are hungry, eat part of it to swallow saliva". Her mother said, "Your father has said all that need be said. The only thing left is to warn you against men. Do not look at them as you go. Always focus your mind on the pot. The sky will not trip you, nor will the earth trip you. You will go in peace and return in peace. Take this cloth so that whenever you feel cold, you can cover yourself with it." Ezhiokwubundu set out on her journey with only

the yam and cloth. She walked and walked and walked, pased seven towns and seven wilds, seven towns and seven wilds, seven towns and seven wilds until she came to a place inhabited by skulls only. The plates in that place were filled with meat, fish, yam porridge, and cocoyam prepared with vegetables. One skull called her and said:

"Ezhiokwubundu, take these things and eat. I know you must be hungry. The owners are not at home. Eat them quickly before you continue on your journey."

Ezhiokwubundu replied him singing: "I'm not hungry"

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: I'm not hungry

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: My parents gave me yam to eat

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: Even if I were hungry

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: I'll not eat food meant for another

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: So that what should happen to another should not happen to me

Audience: Zamiri za

Narrator: Ezhiokwubundu once more continued on her journey. She trekked and trekked and trekked and came to a place where there were only storeyed buildings and became very tired. The inhabitants of those buildings were fair-skinned and comely young men. These young men invited

her to sleep in their place. She refused. They promised to make her the wife of their king but she still refused and left them to continue with her journey. She continued trekking until she came to a place where spirits lived in coffins. One spirit emerged from one of the coffins and said to her, "Please I'm dying of hunger, give me that yam you are holding." Another emerged and said to her, "Please I'm dying of cold, give me that cloth you have." Ezhiokwubundu was filled with pity for those spirits. She gave the one some yam and the other her cloth. They thanked her. The one she gave some yam gave her a piece of stick and told her to strike it thrice on the ground whenever she became afraid or came by anything frightful on her way. The other spirit gave her a piece of bone and told her to place it on the ground immediately she accomplished her task, and that immediately she stepped on it, she would be transported home. She continued again on her journey. She trekked and trekked, and trekked until she came to a place where spirits were treshing palmnuts with their heads. The spirits growled at her: "Taa, human child, use your head to tresh all the palmnuts here or else we shall kill you". They went into the bush and collected all the palmnuts they harvested for her to tresh. She struck her stick thrice on the heap and at once all the palmnuts were treshed. They let her pass. She then reached the outskirts of God's home. She could hear music coming from God's home. God's servants were rejoicing because that was the first time a living

human being had overcome all the tests along the road to reach their home. Immediately she entered God's palace, God called her, blessed her and gave her the pot of life. She thanked God and carried the pot. Immediately she went outside, she placed her bone on the ground and stepped on it. No sooner had she done this than she was transported into the chief's compound. The chief's children and the titled men were already anxiously waiting for her. They led her into the chief's sick-chamber. When he saw her with the pot, he was filled with joy. Immediately the pot was broken, he recovered. There was great joy in the chiefdom because of the chief's recovery. There was feasting for seven markets. After all the feasting, the chief called Onyemaechi and his wife, and praised them for the way they brought up their daughter. He divided his domain into two and gave them one part to rule. He then called his first son and asked him to marry Ezhiokwubundu. From that day Onyemaechi became a chief because of his good daughter while Ezhiokwubundu became the wife of the chief's son because of her good character. This story teaches us that it is rewarding to obey our parents.

APPENDIX A6

ETU OFU NWOKE SHIRI NU ITEOTU MMAI AWHO ASAA

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation ? Children telling stories at night

Story teller : Ezenwanne Obiagwu

Story teller: Chakpii!

Audience : Woọ!

Story teller: Chakpii!

Audience : Woọ!

Story teller: Onwere ofu akụkọ m ga akọrọ unụ

Audience : Kọọrọ anyị

Story teller: Agam akọrọ unụ etu ofu nwoke shiri ụ iteotu mmai awho asaa.

Onwere ofu nwoke anakpọ Ojembaenwilo. Nwokea nwere obioma nnukwu. Omaha etu eshi asi mmadụ mba ma arịọ ya ihie onwere. Be ye dishiri ụzọ ndị mmadụ shi echu iyi, m'ọbụ eje ịkpa n'ahịa.

Owere ruo ofu mbọshi ya lute ofu iteotu mmai nọrọ n'obi ye n'afụ ya. Mgbe ọtataharanna iko ọbụọ izhizhi ñụọ, oletia anya na nti ama were whụ ofu nwoke ọbụ n'abịa ka onye ike gwuchara. Omakwaha onye nwoke aha bụ maka ihi n'ọwhụghabeha ye mbụ. Ma ọkpọleghiri nwoke aha k'ọbata zuru ike. Mgbe nwokea batara, Ojembaenwilo tai ya iko mmai n'abọ k'owere kpọturu akpịrị. Nwokea ñuchaa, kelee ye nnukwu ekele laba. Nwantinti oge onye ọzọ agafetekwe,

ọkpọọ ya ka ọbụta were mmai kpọturu akpiri. Ihiene n'omeghudoro. Onye olere anya ọdiya k'ike ọgwụrụ, ọkpọtabaya n'obi ye tai ya mmai. Onye nya na ya gere ike mmai aha bụ onye nke asaa.

K'awhọ n'agbahigete, Ojembaenwilo were jee ije tere aka. Mgbe ọna aluọta, ozute ndi abalidegwu cheshiri ndi mmadụ n'uzọ. Ha choọ ịpụkọrọ ya ihie nile oji. Ofu olu mkpu otipuru, ofu nwoke shi n'ulụọ ya miri obejiri ye pụta. Mgbe ndi abalidegwua whụrụ onye ji obejiri abia, ha gbalaga. Ojembaenwilo kelee nwokea nnukwu ekele. Nwokea were za ya si, "Ekelezhinem. Otụtụ awhọ gara aga, izoputaram, ya ru n'awhọna, m zoputaghi." M'Ojembaenwilo echetezhihi otu oshiri zoputa nwokea. Ya were chetereye eshi y'oshi ebe tere aka aluọta ọkpọmatara ya n'obi tai ya mmai y'owere kpọturu akpiri. Okpọrọ Ojembaenwilo baa beye, nyeye nni na mmai, zhikwuoye ebe oje arawhụ ka chi were who.

Orukwa awhọ ọzọ, Ojembaenwilo biliaha njem. Opụta ofu obodo ọbụ ụkọ mmiri n'ọkọ nnukwu. Ike gwụchaaya, akpiri kpọkwuoye nkụ nnukwu. Ochekata ihie oje eme m'ochetehe. K'onọzhi n'ofu ukwu oshishi ezu ike k'ofu nwoke pụtara makuọya jubaya ihie obiara eme n'obodoha. Mgbe Ojembaenwilo kọwachara ya mkpaya, nwokea kpọrọ ya laa beye, nyeye mmiri oñuñu na nke oji ghụ ahụ, nyekwuoye nni na mmai nyana ebe oje edina ka chi were who. Mgbe orichara nni, Ojembaenwilo kelee nwokea nnukwu ekele. Ma nwokea zara si, "Ngi bu onye m jenekele makana ewepu iko maai n'abọ aha itairim eshi m shi ikpa aluọ, ejerehem alarulipu".

Otua k'Ojembaenwilo shiri n'awhụ ihieọma n'ọtụbaha anya ya were rukwee awhọ asaa ọnakpaghari k'ọwhụzuo ụwa gbara ya okirikiri. Ihie akụkọa n'akuzhiri ayi bụ na onwehe ihie ọma mmadụ mere n'elu ụwa lara n'iyi.

# HOW ONE MAN DRANK A KEG OF PALMWINE FOR SEVEN YEARS

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Story telling session at night

Narrator : Ezinwanne Obiagwu

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience Woo!

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you

Audience: Tell us

Narrator:

Once there lived a man called Ojembaenwilo (a traveller should not make enemies). This man was kind. He did not know how to refuse any request that was within his means. His compound was on the way to the stream, market and farm. One day he bought a keg of palmwine and sat in his obi to drink it. Hardly had he taken the first two cups than he saw a man who looked weary approaching his compound. He did not know the man because he had never met him before. But he still invited the man to come in and rest. When the man came in, Ojembaenwilo gave him two cups of wine to 'call down his throat.' The man drank, thanked him very much and went on his way. After a while another person came bye. Ojembaenwilo called him in and gave him of the wine to

call down his throat. This was what he kept doing. Any person he felt was weary, he would invite for some cups of wine with the result that it was the seventh person with whom he shared the dregs of the palmwine. After some years, Ojembaenwilo went on a long journey. On his way back, he encountered night marauders who wanted to kill him and take his belongings. Once he raised an alarm, one man came out from near by with a matchet. When the marauders saw the man with a matchet, they ran away. Ojembaenwilo thanked the man. This man replied him saying, "Stop thanking me. Many years ago you saved me, and this year I have saved you." But Ojembaenwilo could not recollect how he had saved the man once, until the man reminded him of the day he invited a weary man into his obi for some wine. The man took Ojembaenwilo to his house, gave him food and wine and showed him where to sleep. The following year, Ojembaenwilo went on another journey. He came to a town where there was scarcity of water. When he became very thirty and tired, he sat under a tree to think of what to do. As he was sitting under the tree, one man came out and embraced him, and asked him what he came to their town to do. When Ojembaenwilo explained his plight, the man took him home, gave him water to bathe, drink and some food to eat and wine to drink. He also showed him a place to sleep. When Ojembaenwilo had eaten, he thanked the man. But the man replied, "You are the person I should thank because but for the two cups of wine you gave me on the day I was

from the farm, I could not have got home." This was how Ojembaenwilo was getting good returns he least expected for the seven years he was travelling round to see the world around him. This story teaches us that whatever good one does on earth, he will surely get the reward.

APPENDIX A7

UKPA AMAMIHIE

Place of collection: Achina

Date of collection : 29/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator : Nkeonyere Agbasiere, aged 42

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: Onweré ofu akụkọ m gakọrọ unụ

Audience: Kọrọ anyị

Narrator:

Oruru ofu oge aha, Mbe chọrọ k'ọburu nani ya bụ onye mara ihie n'ụwa n'ile. Unụ ma na Mbe bụ onye aghụghọ n'onye anyaukwu. Mbe si nwunye ye ya kparaya ụkpa kacha ụkpa nile di n'ụwa. Nwunye ye kwe were bido kpaba ụkpa aha. Owere ye awhọ asaa iji kpacha ya. Mgbe nwunye Mbe kpachara ụkpani. Mbe were ye bido n'evukuluọ amamihie nile n'atụi. Mgbe ọdiya k'ọvukuluochaana amamihie nile di n'ụwa, ovuruzhie ye choọ ije ebe tere aka biri nani ya k'ọgabuzhi n'ọbụ nani ya ma ihie nke j'emezhi n'onye nya na ya emekọna ihie, ọ ghọwuo onye aha. Ovuru ụkpa aha gaghudo gaghudo gaghudo were puta ebe agbara ogige. Ovuru ụkpa aha nishi n'achọ irife ogige aha. Origobe rigobe rigoruo n'elu ogige, ụkpa shi ye n'ishi daa, amamihie nile di na ya aghawhuo n'ala.

Ya bidoaha n'ishi tutukuluobaha. Ihiea k'o n'eme were ruo izu an'ato. Nkapi nwekweren'ebe o na ete nkwu n'akuku ogige aha. O biakwan'ite nkwu, ya whu ka Mbe n'ukpa n'alu. Nkapi n'asi n'ime obi ye, 'Gini tinyere Mbe n'udi nzuzua.' K'oruru izu nke ato, ya kpoo Mbe si:

> 'Nna anyi Mbe, onye amamihie, ginidi k'in'ezuzu ka mgbe izu n'ato. Yabu imaha n'ishi n'okpuru mgbala vufee ukpaghi, inwezhiri ike rifee vuruaha ukpaghi?'

Mgbe Mbe mere otu Nkapi gwara ya, ya were nwee ike ivufe ukpa ya n'ogige. Nnukwu iwe wee ye. Ya tie mkpu si y'okpokwasi y'ovukuluochaana amamihie nile di n'uwa n'ukpa y'ovu. Ya were feshaishiaaha amamihie n'ile ovu n'ukpa. Akukoa n'egoghi na odihi mma ileli mmadu maka n'opere mpe. Onye ekwene ka obere ihie oma ju ye ishi maka n'uche bu akpa, onye obuna nya nke ye.

# THE BASKET OF WISDOM

Place of collection: Achina

Date of collection : 29/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator : Nkeonyere Agbasiere, aged 42

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you

Audience: Tell us

Narrator:

Once upon a time, Tortoise wanted to be the only wise being on earth. You all know Tortoise is a very crafty and greedy one. He called his wife and asked her to weave for him the largest basket in the world. His wife agreed and began to weave the basket. It took her seven years to complete the basket. When she completed the basket, which took her seven years, she gave it to her husband Tortoise. Tortoise began to collect all the wisdom in the world into the basket. When he felt he had collected all the wisdom in the world into the basket, he decided to carry it to a distant place and live alone so that he would be the only wise one, and be able to cheat anyone with whom he had any dealing. He carried the basket and travelled for a very long time until he came to a fence. With the basket on his head be started climbing the fence. Whenever he got to the top of the fence, the basket would fall and all the contents scat

He would come down and pick them up again. He kept doing this for three markets. Shrew had a palmtree he was tapping very close by. Each time he came to tap, he would see Tortoise struggling with the basket. Shrew said in his mind "What put Tortoise in this type of stupidity". In the third week, he called Tortoise and said to him:

> "Our master Tortoise, the wise one, why have you been fooling yourself for the past three markets. So in all your wisdom you do not know that one does not climb a fence with a load on the head. You should first push the basket across from under the fence and then climb over and carry your basket again."

When Tortoise did as Shrew told him, he was able to across the fence. He was highly annoyed. He moaned saying he though he had collected all the wisdom in the world into his basket. Out of anger and shame he scattered all the wisdom he was carrying in his basket. This story warns us against neglecting a person because he is small. Nobody should allow what he knows to make him proud because wisdom is like a bag, everybody carries him own.

APPENDIX A8

NWAYO BU IJE

Place of collection: Achina

Date of collection : 29/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator : Nkeonyere Agbasiere

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: Onwere ofu akụkọ m gakọrọ unụ

Audience: Kọọrọ anyị

Narrator:

Oruru ofu ogẹ aha, ụmụ anụmanụ azọ onye n'ime ha kacha eme nka, n'onye kacha agba ọsọ, Agụ puta sị n'ọbụ ya. Osa sị n'ọbụ ya. Enwe sị na mak'ihi na y'ojiri elu mere ala, ya kacha eme nka n'ime ụmụ anụmanụ nile. Osi na nke kacha nke by na ya nwere ike ishi n'ofu oshishi wufee n'ọzọ. Ele dapụ n'ọchị. Nganga ejupute ye ishi maka ọ ma n'ụmụ anụ nile ma na ya bụ onye ọsọ. Iwe wee Mbe. Owere sị ụmụ anụ ndị ọzọ: "Unụ amabekwenihi n'abụm onye ọsọ. Unụ echefuone na nna nnam ha nagara agbali ọsọ. N'aka ha kam shiri kete ụkwụ ọsọ." Umụ anụ ndịọzọ were sị ka Mbe n'Ele gbaa ọsọ. Ozhigbo ekwupuru nkea Ele si Mbe,"Ngwa, oruo n'omume. Nkea abụhụ iji onụ egbu ọjị." Mbọshị eyiri ọsọ were ruo, ngwa Agụ n'Ọdum ka ha je chere n'Orie Umụanụmanụ. Umụ anụ ndị ọzọ n'eche otu Mbe j'eshi meri Ele n'ọsọ.

Mbe n'Ele were pụ ọsọ. Maka ihi n'ụkwụ ya dị mkpụmkpụ, Mbe enwehe ike igbashi ike. O n'agba ọ n'agụ "Mpalịa gbashibenike, agbam ije eme ihie ọzọ". Ma sọsọ ọwụwụ ka Ele n'awụ. Sọsọ ọwụwụ n'abọ ọjọ awụ, ya wụfee Mbe. Ogbakata gbakata, ochighaa azụ n'ebe ebidoro ọsọ. Umụ anụ ndị ọzọ n'akụrụ ya aka. Obidoaha wụba wufekwa Mbe ọzọ k'ọn'adọkọi ọsọ. Mgbe ọwhọdụrụ nkekanke k'eruo Orie Umuanụmanụ, Ele kwụshi k'ọ kpọọ anwụrụ zukwuo ike. Ovu n'obi na Mbe ka nọ n'azụ nnukwu. K'ọ nọ n'ezu ike, ụra vuruye. Mgbe obiliri, obidokwa ịwụ ọsọ ọzọ. Ihie obụna anọshirineye ụzọ, ya wụfee ye. Ogbakata gbakata gbakata manaọwhụhụ Mbe n'ụzọ. Ya kpọsụ y'awụfegwene Mbe n'ụzọ kpọọ ya mkpirishi oshishi. Mgbe ọ n'awụbata n'Orie Umuanụmanụ, Ele whụ k'umụ anụ ndịọzọ n'ekele Mbe n'ekweye n'aka. Mbe chịa Ele nnukwu ọchị sị ya n'ofu ilu nna nnaya ha kụzhiereye bụ "Ihie eji ọnụ eme anaha arara ụnụazhi ahụ." Ihie akụkọa n'akọwa bụ na nganga bute ụzọ, ọdịda esoroye.

# SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE

Place ofcollection: Achina

Date of collection: 29/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator :

Narrator: Chakpii!

Audience: Woo!

Narrator: There's a story I want to tell you

Audience: Tell us

Narrator:

Once upon a time, animals were arguing which of them was the fastest and most agile. Tiger came out and claimed to be the fastest. So did Squirrel. Monkey said that because tree-tops were ground for him, he was the most agile among animals. He boasted that he could jump from one tree to another. Antelope burst out laughing. He was full of pride because other animals know he was a fast runner. Tortoise grew angry and said to other animals: "You are yet to know how fast I can run. Have you forgotten that my forefathers were great runners. I inherited my nimbleness from them."
All the other animals agreed that Tortoise and Antelope should run in a competition. Immediately this was arranged, Antelope said haughtily to Tortoise: "Come on it is time for action. This is not felling iroko trees with the tongue." On the appointed day, Tiger and Lion

were asked to go to Orie Umuanumanu, the farthest market to wait for the contestants. All the animals were wondering how Tortoise would beat Antelope. The race began. Because of his short legs, Tortoise could not run fast. As he ran he was singing:

"Mpalia run fast, I have nothing else to do but run.'

Antelope merely galloped. Twice he galloped and passed Tortoise. After running for a while, he would come back to the starting point. Other animals were cheering him. He would start again and pass Tortoise as he was hobbling along. When what was left to be covered was a short distance, Antelope stopped to snuff and rest for a while. He was sure Tortoise was still very far behind. As he was resting, he fell asleep. When he woke up, he started galloping once more. He would jump over any obstruction on his way. After galloping for a long time, he did not meet Tortoise. He felt he must have jumped over him on the way mistaking him for a tree stump. By the time he got to the target, he saw other animals cheering victorious Tortoise and shaking his hands. Tortoise laughed at Antelope and told him that one of the proverbs he learnt from his forefathers is that "It is very easy for children to make some achievements with their mouths but when time for real action comes they fail woefully." This story teaches us that pride goes before a fall.

APPENDIX A9

OBURU NA NKEA EMEGHI, NKE KA NJO JERE EME

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator : Nneka Uchendu, aged about 12

Oruru ofu oge aha, onwere ofu nwoke bi n'ofu obodo. Nwokea na nwunyeye bụ nọọ ezhigbo mmadụ. Ha anaha achọ okwu. Mmadụ chọrọgodu okwu choi ha n'ọkpa, ha shere ụkwụ ha. Ma ọbụkwaha na nwokea bụ onye ujo. Mgbe ọnọ n'okorobịa, ọn'anọ n'ihu ọgụ. Onwehe agha ejere ọna agba aka ishi aluọ. Obụ ọgbanta na ọgba ngba amara ahaya. Ike nilea m'ọbụ ihie nilea omegoroemehe nwokea k'ọburu onye nganga m'ọbụ onye okwu n'ụka.

Mana onwehe etu mmadụ j'eshi abụ ezhi mmadụ were ghar'inwe ndi iro. Ihie onyeọbuna je n'arịọ chiye bụ k'ọzọputaya n'aka ndi iro n'ọmaha. Owere ruo ofu oge, umụ dimkpa ato bido ghube nwokea anyaoku. Ha tuba alo otu ha j'eshi gbu ye. Oruo mbọshi nwokea kwadoro ikpọ nnwa ya nwoke eje nta, ha puta n'ụzọ, ofu ogbe ụkwa gbahioro dajie nnwaya aka. Ndi mmadụ gbakoọ n'eti mkpu maka ihie mereni, n'ekele ya na nnwa ya ndo. Nwokea zara ha si, "Oburu na nkea emeghi, nke ka njọ jere eme."

Mana nwokea amaha n'umụ dimkpa ato ndịa n'eghuye anyaoku echeneyari n'ụzọ oshi je eje nta k'ọgabụ ha puta, egbuo ha k'ọdika ọbụ umụ anụ ọhịa gburu ha. Mgbe umụ dimkpa ndịa chereye n'ime ọhịa chekatara chekata chekata, ike gwụ ha.

Ha were jebe beye ịchọpụta ihie kpatara ọjịzhihị ọjẹ nta. Ka ha ruru beye, ha whụ ya k'onegbu ọkụkọ n'ihu chiye. Ha juo ya ihie mereni, owere kọrọ ha otu ya shiri kwadobuo ije nta were puta n'uzọ ogbe ụkwa ghahịọrọ dajie nnwa ya nwoke aka. Ka ha n'achọ ikeleye ndo, ọsị ha hapụ ikeleye maka ọburu na nkeaha emeghi, nke kaya njọ jere eme. Onye ma anụ ọhịa ojere atawu ha m'ọbụ ndị ajọ mmadụ ojere echeshi ha n'uzọ gbuo ha. K'okwuharana nkea obi mapụ umụ dimkpa atọa maka ha kpọsụ n'ọmatara na ha cheshiburuye n'uzọ choọ igbu ya na nnwaya. Ha bilie laba.

Ka ha n'ala n'uzọ, ha bido takariba onweha, n'ataghari onweha ụta. Ha bido bode onweha ebubo onye gbaara nwokea ama. H'ato bido lụba ọgụ, were mma pekarichaa onweha ahụ were nwụchaa ebeaha. Maka ihi ebe ha nọrọ lụ ọgụ were gbuo onweha bụ uzọ ọhịa, onwehe onye whụrụ ozuha. Udele n'umụ anụ ọhịa ndị ọzọ rie anụha. Chi nwokea were gbaaraya ọtụtụ maka n'ọkwụbara akaya ọtọ. Chi umụ dimkpa ndịa were gbahapụha makana ha mwre ihie ala n'asọ. Akụkọa goshiri ayị na chi ezhigbo mmadụ n'agbara ya ọgụ oge ọbụna. Ihie ọjọọ mee mmadụ, y'echegbuzhine onwe ye maka n'ẹchi dị ime.

# IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 28/12/81

Situation : Children telling stories at night

Narrator : Nneka Uchendu aged about 12

There was that one time, one man living in one town. This man and his wife were very good people. They were not trouble makers. Even if someone found trouble up to their feet, they would withdraw their feet. But it did not mean that this man was a coward. When he was in his youth, he was always in the frontline of battle. There was never a battle from which he returned without a head. He was a renowned hunter and wrestler. All his strength and reputation did not make him a proud man or a troublesome person.

But there is no way a man could be such a good man who had no enemies. What everybody should pray to his personal god is to protect him from the enemies he did not know. Then at one time, some three young men became jealous of this man. They started planning how to kill him. On the day this man was going to hunt with his son, on the way, a breadfruit fell and broke his son's arm. People gathered shouting because of what happened, condoling him and his son. This man replied them saying, "If this one did not happen, a worse one could have happened."

But this man did not know that three young men who were jealous of him had laid ambush for him so that they would kill him and his son so that it would appear that a wild animal had done that. When these three young men who were lying in wait in the bush waited and waited and waited, they got tired. They went to the man's house to find out why he did not go for hunting again. When they got to his house, they met him offering a fowl to his personal god. They asked him what happened and he narrated to them how they were going for hunting when a breadfruit fell on his son and broke his hand. As they were about to condole him, he hushed them from conduling him saying, "If that one did not happen, a worse one could have happened. Who knew whether a wild animal would have killed them, or some bad people would have waylaid them in the bush, and killed them." Immediately the man said this, the three young men were frightened because they thought he already knew that they had ambushed him. They got up and left.

On their way going, they started blaming one another for the betrayal. The one would tell the other that he informed the man of their plan. A fight ensued among them, and with their matchets they out themselves up and died there. Because the scene of their fight was a forest path, nobody saw their corpses. Vultures and other wild animals ate them up. This man's god stood by him because his hands were upright, while the gods of those young men forsook them because they did what the earth forbade. This story teaches us that the personal god of a good man is always protecting him. Nobody should worry himself so much when a misfortune strikes because tomorrow is pregnant.

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ewoo mu na Onwụbariko iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Onwụbariko doo naa o na chi ejie iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ebubedike di egwu ọkwanị nd'ọbụ n'eme mmọwụ iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Izuọgụ amaghi nd'ọzọ n'eme mmọwụ iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

M'Ojiọnụ n'enwu ụzụ ọbụkwa Umuchu n'emenu ya iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Obiara akọm ọgwụ doo nha' o n'anyị alaa iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Obira egere udu doo naa n n'anyi alaa iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Vizenti doo naa o n'anyi alaa iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Obodo ạbụ obodo Umuchu n'awụnụ jio iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ebubedike di egwu mebe ọsisọ na chi ejie iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Obụ imaghị mmadụ ịnakwa onye bụ Okaomo iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Egede mụ na Produce Ndiawa iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Muna Omariko iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Omariko doo naa o na chi ejie iya

Ijeregwu ijeregwum
Ojionu n'enwu uzu okwadi Umuchu n'emenu ya iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Obu imaghi mmadu imakwa onye bu Okaome iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ebubedike di egwu okwadi ya bu Okaome iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ejechaanam ije rute Akokwa n'Izuogu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Izuogu amaghi ndiozo n'eme mmowu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
M'Ojionu n'enwuzu obukwa Umuchu n'emenu ya iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Anam afu aru n'Izuogu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ebubedike di egwu Ojonya agbaka mmowu mmowu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ogbuoturugo doo naa o na chi ejie iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ojonya doo naa o na chi ejie iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Achanko doo naa o na chi ejie iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Okudaibube doo naa o na chi ejie iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Ikpa Ekubo doo naa o na chi ejie iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Obodo ezumezu Umuchu n'emenu mmowu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

IJEREGWUM

Raise your voices for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Benedict son of Anyaegbu from the land of Uchu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Benedict son of Holy land that is Umuchu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Frightful Ebubedike please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
All clans do you know that Umuchu is eating yam iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ewoo I'm dancing in Uchuland iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
I've travelled round and reached Nnewi and Ozubulu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

I've travelled round and entered Umuchu and Nnobi iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Frightful Ebubedike please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Of all clans its only Umuchu that knows much about masquerades iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum
I'm shouting that night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ewoo I and Onwubariko iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Onwubariko please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Frightful Ebubedike is one of the masquerade experts iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Izuogu does not accept that others make masquerades iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

But the famous Ojionu it's Umuchu that makes it iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

He that came to bewitch me please do quickly for we're about to go iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

He that came to listen to music please do so quickly for we're about to go iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Vincent please come for we're about to go iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

All clans Umuchu is celebrating New Yam Festival iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Frightful Ebubedike hasten up for night is falling iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

If you don't know people don't you know Okaome iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

The day I performed at Ndiawa Produce Station iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

I and Omariko iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Omariko please come for night is falling iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

The famous Ojionu it's Umuchu that makes it iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

If you don't know people don't you know Okaome iya

Ijeregwum ijeregwum

Frightful Ebubedike it's he that is Okaome iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
I've travelled round and entered Akokwa and Izuogu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Izuogu does not accept others make masquerades iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
But the famous Ojionu it's Umuchu that makes it iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
I saw anathema at Izuogu iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Frightful Ebubedike Ojonya that moves not in vain
a proper masquerade iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ogbuoturugo please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ojonya please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Achanko please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Okudaibube please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ekeubo quarters please come for night is falling iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
All clans Umuchu makes masquerades iya
Ijeregwum ijeregwum
Ijeregwum ijeregwum

APPENDIX B2

OGALANYA TOLO AFO (Masquerade performance)

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 5/1/81

Context : Uku Festival

K'anyị naa, ọgalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa
K'anyị naa, ọgalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa
Nwata nwoke b'anyị o
Nwata nwoke b'anyị o
N'ekene kwem gị kene chim oo!
Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa
Kedi kamụ g'eme onwem oo!
Kedi kamụ g'eme onwe m oo!
N'ife m bu n'isi n'arụgbum n'ọkụ
Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa
Nkwu n'abọ ekwe n'akpọ ikolo
Nkwu n'abọ ekwe n'akpọ ikolo
Okpọọ ya n'andụ, ọkpọọ ya n'ọnwụ
Isatọ ayị dịrị bido ngala
Isatọ ayị dịrị bido ngala
M'ọkwanụ ịtọ dị ndụ ise nwụl''anwụ
Itọ dị ndụ n'ebu ngala
M'ọkwanụ ise nwụl'anwụ n'emel'anyị ife
Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa

Ejirọm ọgwụ ebu ngalam

Ejirọm ọgwụ ebu ngalam

N'ọbụ ikolo kam ịji eje mba naa

Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa

Okụdaibube nwoke ọma mụ

Okụdaibube nwoke ọma mụ

Ajọnwa sili owele ba nneye afọ

M'lotanụ gị obi esiem ike

Akpọchigidem ụzọ anaamu mịaja

Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa

Ezigbo dike anaghị akọ na mba

Ezigbo dike anaghị akọ na mba

Egbuo dike na mba ọzọ adịchie

Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa

Okirikiri k'anagba ụkwụ ose

Anaghị arị ukwu ose arị

Okụdaibube nwoke dị ike

Nnukwu udu anaghị aghafuche mmiri

Okụda oke osisi ka ibeya

Na ndụ ma na nkpọ nnụnụ bi n'enu ya

Okụda orme nke afụlụ n'anya

Wel'ọsọ wel'ije

N'ife m bu n'isi n'arụgbum n'ọkụ

Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa

Hedimasịta b'anyị o

Hedimasịta b'anyị o
Gị sọpulụkwamu n'ilo onyeọcha
M'inọchielum ụzọ etiem g'ife
Ogalanya tolo afọ k'anyị naa
Hedimasịta b'anyị o
Gị sọpulụkwamu n'ilo igiligi
Maka inọchielum ụzọ akọọm gị nsi
Nkiri nkiri k'ana ekiri ikolo
Anaghị eno ikolobia n'afọ
Onyema nke nwa ọna eme ya nee
Maka n'alikwasalụọm n'enu olutam

# RICH MAN WITH BIG PAUNCH

Let's go rich man with big paunch let's go
Let's go rich man with big paounch let's go
Young man of our town
Young man of our town
-
I salute you and salute my personal god
Rich man with big paunch let's go
How shall I do myself
How shall I do myself
What I'm carrying on my head is unbearably hot

Rich man with big paunch let's go
Twice the wooden gong calls a young man
Twice the wooden gong calls a young man
It calls him when alive and when he dies
Eight of us started this masquerade

Eight of us started this masquerade
But only three are alive while five are dead
The living three carry on with the masquerade
While the dead five strengthen our force vitale
Rich man with big paunch let's go

I don't use juju in my masquerade
I don't use juju in my masquerade
It's youthful vigour that takes me to and from places
Rich man with big paunch let's go
Okudaibube my handsome young man

Okudaibube my handsome young man
The enfant terrible that entered the womb from backdoor
When I remember you my morale rises
If I'm locked up I jump over the wall
Rich man with big paunch let's go

Real brave men are never extinct in a clan
Real brave men are never extinct in a clan
If a brave man is killed another takes his place
Rich man with big paunch let's go
Round and round one goes a pepper plant
No one climbs a pepper plant
Okudaibube brave man
The big pot that does not spill all its water
Okuda the tall tree that is greater than others
Alive or dead birds nest on it
Okuda the one that performs visible wonders
Run and walk at the same time
For what I'm carrying is unbearably hot
Rich man with big paunch let's go
Headmaster of our town
Headmaster of our town
Respect me on the whiteman's road
For if you obstruct me I flog you
Rich man with big paunch let's go
Headmaster of our town
Respect me during my performance
Because if you obstruct me I bewitch you
One can only look at a young man
One can never swallow a young man
He who knows what he can do should do it
Because I've ascended my altar.

APPENDIX B3

MBEM

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 5/1/81

Situation : Uku Festival

Singer : Masquerade

M'kobara ghi iburum kpaghariba
M'kobara ghi iburum kpaghariba
Ije abadi m'obi mara ihie m bu n'obi
M'kobara ghi iburum kpaghariba oo

Ogori nwanyi emegbune di gh oo
Ogori nwanyi emegbune di gh oo
Ogori megburu diye j'abu ajadu oo
Ogori megburu diye j'abu ajadu oo
O k'onadi n'alusi njo na mma

Oh o k'onadi n'alusi njo na mma
Ijee ijee jee ikpa nti gh'aka
Inaa naa naa ikpa nti gh'aka
Onye nti ike n'akpa nti y'aka
Ijee jee jee ikpa nti gh'aka

Nwata ejene Owerre oo
Nwata ejene Owerre oo
Nwata kachie nti jee Owerre
Nd'Owerre kachie nti tii ye aju n'anya
Mmaghi n'ebu ngala m oo

Oo k'onadi
Oh oo k'onadi n'alusi njo na mma
Agadi nwanyi daa nda n'abo aguo ihie
Aguo ihie obu n'ukpa onu o
Di ayi aguo ihie obu n'ukpa onu o

Oo k'onadi
Oh oo k'onadi n'alusi njo na mma.

MBEM (a solo performance)

If I tell you you carry my story around
If I tell you you carry my story around
Can you enter my mind and know what I have in mind
If I tell you you carry my story around

Woman don't maltreat your husband
Woman don't maltreat your husband
A woman who maltreats her husband will become a widow
Woman don't maltreat your husband
That's usually the case in festival of good and bad
Oh that's usually the case in festival of good and bad
If you go and go and go touch your ears
If you return and return and return touch your ears
One hard of hearing normally touches his ears
If you go and go and go you touch your ears

Child do not go to Owerre
Child do not go to Owerre
The child stubbornly went to Owerre
Owerre people stubbornly flogged hell out of his eyes
And yet I continue with my masquerade

Oh that's usually the case
Oh that's usually the case in festival of good and bad
If an old woman falls twice the contents of her basket are counted
What she is carrying in her basket are counted
My friend what she is carrying in her basket are counted

That's usually the case in festival of good and bad
Oh that's usually the case in festival of good and bad.

APPENDIX B4

MGBAPUJI ONUNU (Work Song)

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 2/4/81

Context : Age-grade members relaxing after group work in the farm

Mgbapụji Mgbapụji ai yem
Mgbapụji Mgbapụji ai yem
Kedi ndị bụ Mgbapụji ọńụńụ
Okwayị bụ Mgbapụji ọńụńụ
Mgbapụji Mgbapụji
Kedi ife bụ mgbapụji ọńụńụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Okwaya bụ nsupụ ji ọrụrụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Agbaa n'elu gbaa n'ala ọńụńụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Suọ n'elu suọ n'ala ọrụrụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Ole ndị bụ mgbapụji ọńụńụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Igu Nsiegbe mgbapụji ọńụńụ
Mgbapụji mgbapụji
Okụdaibube mgbapụji ọńụńụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji

Scorpion Dagger mgbapụji oñuñụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji

Ogwụna ndị bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji

Imagịkwe ndị bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji

Nwegbigwe mgbapụji oñuñụ

Otakagụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Oku na nsiegbe bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Oya l'ofeke bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Isikogwo bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji

Imatago ife bụ mgbapụji oñuñụ

Mgbapụji, mgbapụji ai yem

Egbuo n'elu gbuo n'ala ọrụrụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji ai yem mgbapụji

Agbaa n'elu gbaa n'ala oñuñụ

Mgbapụji mgbapụji ai yem mgbapụji mgbapụji

# SLOW POURING RETARDS DRINKING

Slow pouring, slow pouring ai yem

Slow pouring, slow pouring ai yem

Who are "Slow Pouring Retards Drinking"(of wine)

Slow pouring, slow pouring

We are Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

What does Slow Pouring Retards Drinking mean?

Slow pouring, slow pouring

It means slow clearing retards completion (of the farm)

Slow pouring, slow pouring

If it's poured out in the heavens or on earth it will be drunk

Slow pouring, slow pouring

If the farm is cleared in the heavens or on earth it must be completed

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Who make up Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Igu Nsiegbe is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Okudaibube is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Scorpion Dagger is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Are these all the members of Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Do you no longer know who make up Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Nwegbigwe is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Otakagu is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Oku na Nsiegbe is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Oya l'ọfeke is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Isikogwo is Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring

Do you now know the meaning of Slow Pouring Retards Drinking

Slow pouring, slow pouring ai yem

If the farm is cleared in the heavens or on earth it will be completed

Slow pouring, slow pouring

If the wine is poured out in heavens or on earth it will be drunk

Slow pouring, slow pouring ai yem, slow pouring,

Slow pouring.

APPENDIX B5

ONYE AGHANA NWANNEYE

Place of collection: Umunze

Date of collection : 6/4/81

Situation : Age-grade members relaxing after group farm work.

Uuum onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Uuum onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Imadikwa nnunu ofe na ng'igwe oo kuziri
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Imadikwa eburu ayị n'agụ egwu oo uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Mgbe nd'enyi j'ala imarakwa uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Mgbe afụfụ uwa j'abia imarakwa uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Imadikwa s'eburu ayị j'eme ife oo uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Imadikwa eburu ayị j'etuo etuo uuum
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!
Onyeaghana nwanneye oo!

LET NOBODY FORSAKE HIS BROTHER

Uuum let nobody forsake his brother oo!
Uuum let nobody forsake his brother oo!
Do you know that birds flying in the bowels of the sky teach uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother oo!

Do you know our age-grade sings and says oo uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother oo!
When friends shall desert you'll realize uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother oo!
When life's problems will arise you'll realize uuum

Let nobody forsake his brother oo!
Do you know our age-grade will do things uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother oo!
Do you know that our age-grade will one day grow up uuum
Let nobody forsake his brother oo!

Let nobody forsake his brother oo!

APPENDIX B6

EGEDE
(A)

Place of collection: Umuchu
Date of collection : 20/12/81
Situation : Mat maker at work
Singer Elizabeth Ezeogueqo

Ude ndi egwu eei!
Ude ndi egwu eei!
Orie nw'Amaronu kwee!
Ayi jedi agba k'Amaronu
S'ayi jedi agba ka Agunwa b'Ezeamama
Agunwa be Kamancha kwee!
Ayi jedi agbalikwe ka Mbelu be Nnanebe
Agunwa i gbabee acharido m'enyegh'ubi
Ejem achihagh'ubi k'iwere gbaba
Amaronu ekee ye Uhuala oju
Ekee ye Oleohia oju
Ekee ye b'ayi okwechaa ochi
Chiri mbenukwu chiri inwirinwa bei n'ukwu
Amara gbara egwu luoba
Amara gbara egwu luoba na mba
Gbara egwu luoba Amara
Ude ayi n'ede na mba
Ojo adi ka Mbaike nw'Ezenkwu
Ude ayi n'ede na mba

Eje akpoya Okwanna nwa Akuana
Ude ayi n'ede na mba
Ude ndi egwu oo, efuom oo!
Ije agbalikwe ka Mbelu be Nnanebe
Oo! Nwagboribe kwee eh! eh!

Nwagbo o kwa egbe bere ugo bere
Nwagboribe ofu nnwa juru ogbo
Nwagbo ofu nnwa gboro aguru nnwa
Nwagbo okpopuluoro nneye na nro
Nwagboribe ofu nnwa eji ege mba

Nwagbo igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi
Ejen enyegh'ubi iwere gbaba
Ayi kpona Keleb okwa egbe bere ugo bere
Ora kelerem ndi ora na ndi egede
M kpoya Nwagboribe onwu n'abia mberede

Onye j'adi k'Ochiora ekelen gi o!
Eforeugo igbabee acharido n'onyegh'ubi
Onye j'agba k'Oraeke be Nnameze
Oraeke igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi ah eh!
Ij'akpoya Agunwa be Kanaacha eh! eh!

Eleora igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi
Aluchara yochaa akpa be Nnameze
Akporoya okworo nna luo uwa m'omaha nnaya
Ayi na na Keleb bara nnwaya Obiageli
Obiam ij'adi k'Agunwa be Ezeanana ah! eh!

Op'ihu op'enyo nw'Ezeukokwe ah! eh!
Ekele kelerem ndiora na ndi egede
O kwa kelerem ha o ah! eh!
Obiara ngere uduoejihi udu ala
Atuana Nkwoigbo onye be nnam

O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo obuhu anyaego j'achu
Anaha eri nma eri

Obu emere k'ana eri
Ugooze ogbatara kei ora
Ugo igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi
Ije edi k'oje ka polishi nw'iwe n'ewe
Op'iru op'enyo ekeleren gi o!

Adagu emere k'ana eri
Ogbanuko igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi
Irugo opa nma eginidi n'eme n'uluo
Ije edi ka Mbelu be Nnanebe
Oraeke onye n kporo kpoturum ibeye

Oje ka nw'Okonkwo efuom oo!
O Nwankwo Ayara ei!
O Nwankwo Ayara ei!
O Nwankwo obuhu anyaego j'achu
Anaha eri nma eri

Anaha eri nma eri
Obu emere k'ana eri
Agbaeze be Nnaneze
Obu ginidi n'eme n'uluo
Oraeke abaam n'iwu etiri eti

Aka n'ikpere ala
Ka nwechu ji anu nneye ara
Iwumba nw'Egbeke
Iwumba ekelem unu ó!
O! ndiora ekeleem unu o!

Ajuom ere m jene na mba
Iwumba bia were
Iwumba kam n'akpo
Ekemma ekene iyoi ekene o
Ekemma ekene Ekemma iyoi

Elee Oyiriagu
Oyiriagu kamu n'akpo
Oraeke nw'Ukaghachi kamu n'akpo
Ije adi k'iru enyo nwata be nnam
Ij'akpoya Ogbanuko nnwa Ezenwanne

Ekene kene o! iyei ekene
Ogbanuko igbabee acharido n'enyegh'ubi
Ekene ekene o iyoi ekene
Efere m ji ori aku nwanne nkem
Ekene ekene iyoi ekene

Ij'akpoya Odaneze nwata nnam
Ekene ekene iyoi ekene
Ije adi k'Ugboigwe b'Udumaga
Ekene ekene o iyoi ekene
Ugboigwe igbabee acharido m'enyegh'ubi

Ekene ekene o iyoi ekene
Ij'akpoya Agbaeke aka eke nnwa
Shopu uluo ego ekeleren ri o iyoi
Ij'akpoya Agbaere onye ije ngala
Agbaere gini n'ene ghi

Agbaere bia were
Ayarugo kamu n'akpo
Agbaeke ruo oruo
Alam zodoro okpa ya ndenne ekele
Ekeleren ala were kelee elu

EGEDE

The fame of singers eei!
The fame of singers eei!
Orie, daughter of Amaronu join the chorus!
Can we dance like Amaronu
I ask can we dance like Agunwa of Ezeamama's household
Agunwa of Kamancha's household join the chorus!
Can we dance like Mbelu of Nnanebe's household
Agunwa if you break your acharido[17] I give you ubi[18]
I'll give you ubi to continue dancing
Amaronu refused marriage offers from Uhuala
She refused marriage offers from Oleohia
When an offer came from our town she beamed with smiles
She adorned herself with her dancing skirts and inwirinwa[19]
Amara dance homewards
Amara dance homewards to a clan
Dance homewards Amara
Our fame resounds in other clans
Would he have been like Mbaike son of Ezenkwu
Our fame resounds in others clans
Can he be called Knife Deflector son of Akuana
Our fame resounds in other clans
The fame of singers oo, I'm lost
Can you dance like Mbelu of Nnanebe's household
Oo! Nwagboribe join the chorus eh! eh!

Nwagbo it is live and let live that that is our motto
Nwagboribe the lone child that filled the arena
Nwagbo the lone child that satisfied the craving for children
Nwagbo the one that brings back her mother from dream
Nwagboribe the lone child with whom one can go places

Nwagbo if you cut your acharido I give you ubi
I'll give you ubi to continue dancing
Let's call Caleb and remind him that it's live and Let live
Let the audience salute the community and egede singers for me
I'll call and remind Nwagboribe that death comes suddenly

One who would be like Ochiora I salute you
Efereuno if you break your acharido I give you ubi
Who will dance like Oraeke of Nnameze's household
Oraeke if you cut your acharido I give you ubi eh eh!
Will you call him Agunwa of Kanancha's household eh! eh!

Ulaora if you cut your acharido I give you ubi
She for whose bride price purses were emptied daughter of Nnameze
She is called one who reincarnated because of her father but does not know her father
We know Caleb named his daughter Obiageli
Obian will you be like Agunwa of Ezeamena's household ah! eh!

The one who carried face and mirror, daughter of Ezeukokwe
Salutations to the audience and egede singers
I mean one should salute them for me ah! eh!
One who comes to listen to the pot does not go with the pot
Atuana of Nkwoigbo child of my father's household

O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo Ayara oi!
O Nwankwo squint eyes should not debar
One does not eat beauty

Rather it's character that one can eat
Ugoeze the dancer that shares his presents with audience
Ugo if your acharido cuts I give you ubi
Will you be like one that walks as an angry policeman
One who carries face and mirror I salute you o!

Adegu it's character that one can eat
Ogbanuko if your acharido cuts I give you ubi
Irugo Oparma what's happening at home
Will you be like Mbelu of Nnanebe's household
Oraeke whoever I salute should salute others for me

One who walks like Okonkwo's sons I'm lost oo!
O Nwankwo Ayara ei!
O Nwankwo Ayara ei!
O Nwankwo squint eyes should not debar (our marriage)
Beauty is not eaten

Beauty is not eaten
It's character that one can eat
Agbaeze of Nnameze's household
What's happening at home
Oraeke I now begin with enacted norms

It's with hands and knees on the ground
That a young goat sucks its mother
Iwumba son of Egbeke
Iwumba I salute all of you o!
O! audience I salute you all ɔ!

I ask how shall I do in a foreign clan
Iwumba come and take
It's Iwumba that I'm calling
Ekemma greetings iyoi greetings o
Ekemma greetings Ekemma iyoi

Where is Oyiriagu
It's Oyiriagu that I'm calling
Oraeke daughter of Ukaghachi I'm calling
Will you be like mirror face child of my father's household
Will you call him Ogbanuko son of Ezenwanne

Greetings oliyei greetings
Ogbanuko if your acharido cuts I give you ubi
Greetings greetings o iyei greetings
The plate from which I eat wealth my own sister
Greetings greetings iyoi greetings

Will you call her Odaneze child of my father
Greetings greetings iyei greetings
Will you be like Ugboigwe of Udumaga's household
Greetings greetings o iyoi greetings
Ugboigwe if your acharido cuts I give you ubi

Greetings greetings o iyoi greetings
Will you call her Agbaeke hand does not create children
Shop, house of money I salute you o iyoi
Will you call her Agbaere of proud gaits
Agbaere what's wrong with you

Agbaere come and take
It's Ayaruro that I'm calling
Agbaere come very near
The ground on which I stand I salute you
I salute the ground and salute the sky

Good things are often distant and not near

It's Ojiugo that I'm calling

Ojiugo ndenne

Ojiugo how shall I do

Okeaku and Amadieze I am calling

Okeaku if your acharido outs I give you ubi

Will you be like Iwumba son of Egbeke

It's Iwumba that I'm calling

Agu, Knife Deflector I salute you

Agu, Knife Deflector run homewards

The ant that stings both host and guest alike

It's Father's aura that protects the child that I'm calling

Ifeoma of God the creator come and take

One who dances like Oganigwe if your acharido cuts I give you ubi

Iyooi greetings o greetings iyooi greetings o

Omenine of Anameze's household greetings o

The plate with which I eat wealth, my own sister greetings iyei

Agunwa of Ochieze's household greetings iyei

It's Agunwa that I'm calling

Agunwa how shall I do

Agunwa come and take

It's Ochiora that I'm calling

Ochiora come and take

Greetings iyoi iyei greetings o iyoi greetings oo!

APPENDIX B7

EGEDE
(B)

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 19/12/81

Situation : Mat maker at work

Singer : Anyadinanwa Njo

Ora kam naa ọda egwu
Ora kam naa ọda egwu
Ono na mba mba na akwara akwa
Udo dikwa b'unụ
Mboshi m gara Elugwu Umuọnyia
Agam akọrọ ọra kam shiri je
Iwuọra gbara egwu luọba
N'egwu n'aram ahụ
Mbọshi m gara Elugwu Umuọnyia
Okụ eshihi ite mma abaha ji
Mgbori nwa Nnụmma olum ekwehariba
Mbọshi m gara Okporo nw'Ajala
Obodo ehiri ogwe n'ikpa Ekeubo
Egbegote ụzụluọ ụzụ Ikpaeke n'enwu
Eu nwannem hapụ akwa ụwa
Matayas nwa Njọnamma ọnwụ gburuye
Oo nwa Ekekwe o!
Oo nwa Ekekwe i!
Oo nwa Ekekwe o!

Oo nwa Ekekwe i!
Agam akọrọ ọra kam shiri je
Oo nwa Ekekwe o!
Oo nwa Ekekwe i!
Mbọshị m gara Achịna umurenne
Mmiri zobe
Achịna Idegwu Egbevuruọkụ
Obodo d'egwu
Mmaejiọnụ nw'Odenigbo
O ya mụm
Ekele kelee ọra
Kelee Arụkwe nw'amụrụ n'Ikpaeke
Kelerem Ogọama Anyadịnanwa
Okụkọ bu ishi akụ ogbenye n'akpa
Ishigwu atụchie ụzọ ya shi na mpio
Uchu azhị Ogwugwụ enyi Ezekoro
Diawo ọgaranya puru obi n'ikpa nọrọ
Ude waru ụzọ nkarụ eru n'ahụ
Ono na mba mba n'akwara akwa
Udo dikwa b'unụ
Mgbori potọkiripọ ije ka mma n'iro
Chiezendu nn'ego ọlum ekwechariba
Olum sara nye agbata
Agbata lelerem si odi mma
Amaronu nw'Ahukaekwe

Onaha agbagote
Ijuru nw'Ononigwe ajuju
Ejerem juru nw'Ononigwe n'egwu ayi o je abakwa
Ijuru nw'Ononigwe eh! eh!
Nnem ejerem juru nw'Ononigwe

M'Egwum oje abakwa
Ijuru nw'Ononigwe eh! eh!
Elemma nwa Njanshi eh! eh!
Elemma ana elere uke eh! eh!
Elemma bia were

Ewo inukwa mu na Ikediobi
Ikedi nwa Lebehi
Bia nuru iten
Inukwa Adukwuru agu n'uzo
Nya na Anyadinanwa

O kwa nne ji ha
Adukwuru agu n'uzo ajuo onye mu ya
Adukwuru n'Anyadinanwa o kwa nne ji ha
Adanne Ezegwu mniri gbgbe nnem
Okwani ya mum

O Nwude Ikebudu nwanne Otiakanabo
Oji agbogho ja nzu omenwa nw'Ugbala
Mboshi n gara Elugwu Umuonyia
Olum n'aha ka nja
Olu udu n'abo datara shishi ise

Ejerem Ibughubu Obuohia
Ha si chobam kanaka n'anona
M guchaa egwu n'Ibughubu Obuohia
Ha were ogu ego ito n'eduluom
M si ha ejehem ewe

N'ihi ọgụ ego ịtọ awọtụhụ
Obejiri ndaru Nwankwọ Ayara
Udonu Ezenwa bịa were
Odọnye ugwu boro boro
Nwata ari n'uzọ

Oguejiọwhọ mma n'efe n'ute
Mma edere ede
Ugbọ nkịrishịala aka eke mma
Efereugo nw'Ogbuọnyara
Gbara egwu luọba

Agbọgho baa g'eme ụgọro diriya
Okwuru echem ọkpa n'ejiye
Ukam puọ ama onye iro vurum eje
Ozonigwe Nnedimma idei vuru oyoba
Mbọshi m gara Nkpọr n'Umuoji

Mmiri zobe
Ogwara agbọgho k'ọdị ya laa chebe
Ejerem juru Elem m'egwune oje abakwa
Onunkwọ Elem m n'akpara imo ya na azọị
Mbọshi m gara Okporo nw'Ajala

Aziza bụ mma ala nw'Ezeukokwe
Igwurube gbara aji n'obi
Si ọra bịa lelee aji y'ọgbara n'obi
Agbovuiṅe Nnedimma nwunye Nnabugwu
Onwụ gburuye

Ude vuru uzọ nkaru eru n'egwu
Egbutu ugiri mma eligwe n'ada
Ono na mba mba n'akwara akwa
Udo dịkwa b'unụ
Uzumma Iche nw'ono n'ogwe arịọ agbọgho ngba

Agunwa be Kanancha gbara egwu luoba
Igbaa elu gbaa ala
Ije agba k'Efereugo nw'Ogbuonyara
Ije agba k'Anyadinanwa nw'Ezeanama
Ije adi k'Ucheaghanwa n'Onyenara

Nwazuora Egwu ina nke m n'ene
Oraeke nwa Mbareke olum ekwechariba
Iwuora nwa Mgbeke
Ezenwanyi nwa Nworaha
Bia nuru item

Ejerem oru jee Igbo
Oru ka Igbo nso
Onwu gburu Judu nwa Lebehi
Omezugom ihedum
Olu n'akaru Igbo nwa Njonanma

Onwu naram ya
Nna diri nnwa o n'agala
Nnem noro nnam norom ejem agala
Eshi m jeje amumu egwu
Nnem n'abaram nnam n'abaram

M si ha na m je ejeriri ije egwu
M jechaa ije egwu
Oghaghi ibaram uru
Egwu bu ohuogeri
Ona emeghari mmadu uche

M'onye were obi ndidi
Ojechaa obara ya uru
Mmuoka nw'Ezeibenne
Onwu gburuye
Mboshi m gara Umuinem Akpo

Mmiri n'ezo onwu n'amu
Ejerem ora obodo juo erem shi j'eje
Ha sim jebe
N'ijem di mma
N'obodo m'ejene

M'Ejehe akpo ahia
Ha sim n'egwum di mma
Ono na basikoro gbapu asu n'iro
Mbonu mechaa aku okpo nwaobocho ala
Aladi odupugere dimkpa puru ya egbeye

EGEDE

Public let me take permission for my song
Public let me take permission for my song
One in a foreign clan and the clan complains
Is there any peace in your home town

The day I went to Elugwu Umuonyia
I will narrate to the community how I went
Iwuora dance homewards
For music is difficult for me
The day I went to Elugwu Umuonyia

The pot did not cook on fire, knife peeled no yam
Mgbori child of Nnumma my voice is disgressing
The day I went to Okporo, offspring of Ajala
The village that is bridge between wilderness, Ekeubo
If you come up to uzuluo the fame of Ikpaeke vibrates

Eu my sister, leave bemoaning the misfortunes of life
Matthias son of Njonamma was killed by death
Oo son of Ekekwe o!
Oo son of Ekekwe i!
Oo son of Ekekwe o!

Oo son of Ekekwe i!
I will narrate to the community how I went
Oo son of Ekekwe o!
Oo son of Ekekwe i!
The day I went to Achina, my mother's clan

It started raining
Achina Idegwu Egbevuruoku
A wonderful town
Mmaejionu daughter of Odenigbo
She is my mother

Extend my salutation to the audience
And to Arukwe, child born at Ikpaeke
And to Ogoama Anyadinanwa
8 The hen that is the first capital of the poor
To Ishigwu who takes trapdoor when hemmed in

To Uchu, peer of Ogwugwu, friend of Ezekoro
To Diawo, the richman that founded his compound in wilderness
If fame comes first, caricatures are of no effect
One in a foreign clan and the clan complains
Is there peace in your home town

Mgbori potokiripo, at best while on the road
Chiezendu, mother of money my voice is digressing
The voice I washed and showed to the audience
The audience heard it and said it was good
Amaronu, daughter of Ihukaekwe

It has started coming up gradually
Did you inquire from daughter of Ononigwe
I went to inquire from daughter of Ononigwe to know if our performance will go ahead
Did you inquire from daughter of Ononigwe eh! eh!
My mother I went to inquire from daughter of Ononigwe

To know if our performance will go ahead
Did you inquire from daughter of Ononigwe eh! eh!
Elemma daughter of Njanshi eh! eh!
Elemma through whom people admire the creator eh! eh!
Elemma come and take

Ewo see me and Ikediobi
Ikedi son of Lebehi
Come and listen to my pot
Come and see 'If you meet tiger on the road'
He and Anyadinanwa

They are from the same mother
'If you meet tiger on the road' you ask who is the mother
He and Anyadinanwa come from the same mother
Adanne Ezeŋwu, reserved water in the house
She is my mother

O Nwude Ikebudu, brother of the one that beats
with both hands
The one who uses a damsel as play toy, pampered
son of Urbala
The day I went to Elugwu Umuonyia
My voice was as sonorous as bangles
Two tunes from my pot attracted five sixpences

I went to Ibughubu Obuohia
They insisted I should be brought from wherever I was
After my performance at Ibughubu Obuohia
They wanted to escort me home with three pounds
I told them I will not take it

Because three pounds was not worth my voice
Two edged sword, Nwankwo Ayara
Udonu Ezenwa come and take
Odonye the slippery hill
That a child shouldn't climb early in the morning

Oguejiowhor, the comeliness that affects a bedmate
The comeliness that's the handwork of God
The nkirishiala plate, beauty is not hand made
Eferugo, daughter of 'Killer of tiger'
Dance homewards

If a maiden threatens in vain shame is hers
Whoever stands waiting for me wastes her time
If my issue passes the compound gate detractors spread it
Ozonigwe Nnedimma, the flood that clears paths
The day I went to Nkpor and Umuoji

It started raining
A girl told her faults should go and think
I went to inquire from Elem if our performance will go ahead
Onunkwo Elem for whom I clear the dews for him to go forward
The day I went to Okporo offspring of Ajala

Broom that is beauty of ground/child of Ezeukokwe
He is the locust that grew hairs on his chest
And invited everyone to see the hairs on his chest
Agbovuine Nnedimma wife of Nnabugwu
Death killed her

If fame comes first caricature is powerless to music
If ugiri tree is smatcheted, the heavens resound
One in a foreign clan and the clan complains
Is there any peace in your home town
Uzumma Iche, the one that stands on a bridge to dare another to a wrestling

Agunwa son of Kamancha dance homewards
No motter how well you dance
Will you dance like Efereuzo daughter of
'Killer of tiger'
Will you dance like Anyadinanwa daughter of Ezeamama
Will you be like Uchea,hanwa and Onyemara

Nwazuoraegwu do you know what I can do
Croeke, Mbareke child, my voice is digressing
Iwuora son of Mgbeke
Ezenwanyi daughter of Nworaha
Come and hear my pot

I went to Oru, went to Igbo
Oru is nearer than Igbo
The death that killed Jude son of Lebehi
Has done everything bad to me
The voice that aptly talks about Igbo, son of Njonamma

Death has snatched him from me
When father is alive the son prides
If my mother is living and my father is living
I will pride
The day I was going to learn my song
My mother scolded me, my father scolded me

I defiantly told them I must go
That after learning my song
I must surely benefit by it
But music can be a dangerous pastime
That can distract one from other ventures

But if one has patience
One must eventually reap the benefits
Mmuoka son of Ezeibenne
Was killed by death
The day I went to Umuinem Akpo

It was raining and the sun was shining
I went to the people and asked how I should go
They told me to go ahead
That my journey had good omen
That wherever I might go

I shall never be of no value
They confirmed that my songs are good
One on a bicycle could spit on the road
After the bride price can Mbonu go with the maiden
Aladi the one that escorts out a young man only
to snatch his gun from him.

APPENDIX B8

IKPEM

Place of collection: Enugu Umuonyia

Date of collection : 26/12/81

Context : Girls dancing at Christmas

Agbọghọbịa gara ịza jịakwụ
Chetekwe nkwa ikwere okoro
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
Agbọghọbịa gara ịza jịakwụ
Chetekwe nkwa ikwere okoro
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
Agbọghọbịa ojiri pilo me nwa
Chetetwe n'oge n'aga kwa
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee

Oturuna ọgọbana ọmụrụna jide n'aka
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
Nwa misi jiri udọ hie ime
Chetekwe n'oge nka n'erukwe
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee

Iwhu ya m'ọkpaa ọtanjele
Imara n'oge ọpụpụ eruo
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
Oturuna ọgọbana ọmụrụna jide n'aka
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee

Agbọghọbịa gara ịza jịakwụ
Chetekwe nkwa ikwere okoro
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee

# IKPEM (SATIRE)

The young girl who stole cassava
Remember your promise to young men
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
The young girl who stole cassava
Remember your promise to young men
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
The young girl who makes pillow her child
Remember time is passing
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
She is pregnant and you are rejoicing has she actually delivered (the child)
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
The lady teacher who tied up pregnancy with a rope(belt)
Remember that old age is coming
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
When you see her applying otanjele
Know her time for going out has come
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
She is pregnant and you are rejoicjng has she actually delivered (the child)
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee
The young girl who stole cassava
Rembmber your promise to young men
Eee ee iyahee eee ee iyahee

APPENDIX B9

EGWU ICHEOKU

Place of collection: Umunze

Date of collection : Easter, 1981

Context : Merriment for Easter festival

Sh'onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa
Onye emene enyi n'ulo chaa chaa
Ije eme enyi
Sh'onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Onye mene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Ije eme enyi
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Ije eme enyi ijee na mba mere
Ije eme enyi
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Enyi ụlọ menta ihie onye ni g'ụtara g'eɬoo
Ije eme enyi
Enyi ụlọ menta ihie onyeni g'ọtụ g'araa
Ije eme enyi
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Ije eme enyi
Icheoku aguba nkenwa oji j'anwụ
Ije eme enyi
Ogelem adaba nkenwa oji j'awa
Ije eme enyi
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa
Onye emene enyi n'ụlọ chaa chaa

ICHEOKU SONG

Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
If you want to make friends
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
If you want to make friends
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
If you want friends go to another clan and make them
If you want to make friends
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
At best a home friend gives you foofoo to swallow
If you want to make friends
At best a home friend gives you vagina to fuck
If you want to make friends
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
If you want to make friends
Icheoku has started singing in a way that will bring about its death
If you want to make friends
My metal gong has started sounding in a manner that will lead to its breaking
If you want to make friends
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all
Let nobody ever make friends at home at all

APPENDIX B10

MBAIKE

Place of collection: Umuchu

Date of collection : 25/12/81

Situation : Teenage girls dancing at Christmas

Mbaike okwaghi bụ
Oji ọgụ aba ala ọgụ
Oji azụ eche anwụ na mmiri mgba
Dike n'agbanyeghi n'ọgụ b'ọnwụ

Okorobịa ọgbazụ n'eri
Ngwa goshi ayị ihie ịbụ
K'Agbomma oruọna ọvataim
K'Agbomma oruọna ọvataim
Ngwa ngwa goshi ayị goshi ayị

Okorobịa ọgụ ọgbazụ goshi ayị goshi ayị
Mbaike ngwa goshi ayị
K'Agbomma oruọna ọvataim.

MBAIKE (name of a village strong man)

Mbaike it is you who are
The one who goes to battle against the soil with the hoe
The one who faces sun and rain in a wrestling with
his back
The brave man who does not bother that battle is death

The young man with ten columns of yam in his barn
Now show us what you are
Or has Agbomma worked overtime
Or has Agbomma worked overtime
Now come on show us show us

Young man of twenty columns of yam in his barn show
us show us
Mbaike now show us
Or has Agbomma worked overtime.

APPENDIX B11

IKPEM (By Icheoku)

Place of collection: Ununze
Date of collection : Easter 1981
Situation : Merriment for Easter festival

Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
Anam eje uka

Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
anam eje
Hedimasita b'anyi okwa ndi uka unu

Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
Anam eje uka
Hedimasita b'anyi okwa ndinwa nwe uka

Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
Anam eje uka
Were ututu jee uka

Were anyasu gba afa
Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
Anam eje uka

Hedimasita b'anyi erosiben'anyi uka
Anam eje
I biara elem
I lere mmowu i lere ikorobia
Anam eje uka

IKPEM (By Icheoku)

Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go to church

Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go
Headmaster of our town is one of your church people

Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go to church
Headmaster of our town is one of the owners of church

Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go to church
Morning is for church service

Night is for oracular divination
Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go to church

Headmaster of our town is showing us the church
Do I go
If you come to watch me
You see masquerade, you see youthfulness
Do I go to church.