

## Abstract

The phenomenal increase in the rate of societal ills and degenerations in a flawed social structure and the shabby conditions of living has led to frustrations, predicaments and destabilization in the society. It is this phenomenon that has attracted the attention of this study. Literary artists have continued to use poetry to throw light on the evil, negative issues and oppressive tendencies as a way of playing their roles in the re-education, re-orientation and re-direction of their societies. The objective of this study therefore is to critically highlight the societal vices and faults arising from a debased society as seen in the selected poems under review. To do a thorough work in this regard, the study adopted the Survey Research Method. These eighteen selected Igbo poems were analyzed: -‘**Ọrụ Ugbo**’ (Agriculture), ‘**Ndu**’ (Life), ‘**E Nwela M n’Ozu**’ (Don’t Own Me at Death), ‘**O Wutere M**’ (I am Grieved), ‘**Achomọrụ**’ (Job Hunting), ‘**Mahadum**’ (University), ‘**Naijiria Ọma**’ (Reputable Nigeria), ‘**Nwaanyi**’ (Womenfolk), ‘**Obodo Ọnicha**’ (The City of Onitsha), ‘**Akwa Ala Igbo na-ebe**’ (The Cries of the Igboland), ‘**Uwa Ka Onye Njọ**’? (Whose has the worst condition of life), ‘**Ime Ime Obodo**’ (Rural Village), ‘**Puta n’Uzo Ọchichi**’ (Out from the Seat of Authority), ‘**Uwa Ọjọọ nke a**’ (This Terrible World), ‘**Ọchichi**’ (Leadership), ‘**Obodo M**’ (My Country) and ‘**Ajo Akwa Mmiri**’ (Bad Water Bridges) and **Uko n’Uju** (Scarcity in the midst of plenty) These were analyzed to find out where these societal vices were critically revealed by the literary Igbo poets. The research is based on the sociological theory of Karl Marx. Some of the findings of this research show that the society is plagued with such vices like unfair and uncaring treatments towards the suffering masses, total neglect in the agricultural sector, lack of brotherly love, oppression of the poor masses and no freedom of speech or expressions, the atrocities or secret cults in the Universities failure of government and good leadership, laments over our highly educated Igbo people migrating to other countries (Brain drain), refusal to leave the seat of authority when due, suppression of the less privileged in the society, the neglect of the villages and development only in the cities, the atrocious activities going on in this era, lack of the government to tame the lawlessness and robbery activities in Onitsha, the lack of employment of our youths today, the lack of concern for the aged and handicapped in our midst today. The study also identifies the language and figurative expressions in the poems. The study was concluded with some recommendations given. It is hoped that the measures offered can go a long way towards reducing the societal ills, to help reform reposition and transform the debased society.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

A writer has not yet started to write when he does not believe he has a socially realistic and relevant message to give out to society. The utter most concern of the poet is to carry alongside his voice and the voice of society, to help address the societal ills. Many literary works especially through poetry, criticize, lament and satirize the flawed social structure of society in order to awaken the consciousness of the masses against the plight of servitude exploitations and dehumanizing tendencies from the leaders. Their writings are charged with indignation at the deplorable social conditions surrounding us, as they write to create awareness in consideration of the plight of the abandoned or neglected issues in the society. We live in a society and must treat one another accordingly. This is the mission of the poet as a social critic, and to make careful judgment about how we might act with greater decency, generosity and fairness to one another; they write for a primary reason – for the emancipation of the common man.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Most literary Igbo poets are burdened with the prominent issues that affect the trends of life as in the political, social cultural, environmental and economical system in the society. Poetry as a genre in literature has always been the communicative means to express and unfold their feelings toward any ugly dispositions or startling discovery in society. The poet focuses his attention on the pressing issues especially as it relates to what is wrong and what can be done to change or improve situation on any given society. Achebe (1972: 8) notes that what one does as a writer depends on the state of one's society. Poets depend on the social settings for their visions in democratizing literature. These perceived social realities are made available in works of art in order to help promote positive

changes in the society's norms and values. The beneficiaries of any development and social progress in society are the humans of a given society. If a nation attains growth and progressive successes members of the society are raised to greater heights but when the need of the people are not fulfilled, they suffer in poverty, fear and exploitative tendencies. It is the concern and burden of the nation to meet the needs of their populace. In the context of this study, it is important to outline the aims and what the nation hopes to build or integrate to her citizens. In other words, the nation's ideal needs for the society as stated in the national objectives of Nigeria in the second national development plan are to build

- a. A free democratic society.
- b. A just and egalitarian society.
- c. A united, strong and self - reliant nation.
- d. A great and dynamic economy
- e. A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens

The pertinent question is how many of these stated national objectives are being achieved today in a country with so much bad governance, injustice, divisions, bad economy and unemployment? How can we achieve these stated objectives?

Essentially, poetry as an activity of the consciousness and like other works of art, aims to awaken in the listener or reader, emotions and implies to action or opposition (Stephen 2009:83) Poetry cannot change the world, but it can contribute to changing the consciousness and drives of the man and woman who could change the world. The poet like other literary artistes reacts to social changes in the society. The poet is known for social criticism, and re-orientation. He takes a passionate look on issues with the aim of stimulating, thinking, raising fundamental questions and aspires to elevate people's thinking (Uche 2009:75). As a duty, the poet strives for a form of social integration aimed at liberating the people in order to build a better society, through the literary works. The poet performs a social function. He interprets the soul of society; he mirrors the current social situations of society where he lives. It is a disservice to the poet's intellectual potentials if he fails to enlighten, educate, or create the necessary

awareness to the struggling and suffering masses because of the fear of being scorned or disillusioned.

According to Ikeokwu (2002:167), the artist regards himself as duty bound to sensitize his people to the burning socio-cultural issues, created or recreated, formulated or reformulated through his spokespersonship. These functions can be effectively performed if these Igbo poets keenly observe, expose, criticize and condemn the frustrating societal vices that paralyse the social conditions of the citizens for a consensual revolution. It is towards this direction that the present study is focused.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

The deplorable and malicious conditions in the contemporary society, the unfair and uncaring treatment towards the less privileged and suffering masses, has led to agonies, poverty and deprivations. This has further led to chaos and failure in the system of governance, violence in the society, strikes and oppression. It has created the condition that allows a mob to act. Our excellent brains are moving out of the country, reducing our economic and technological benefits. It has also metamorphosed into kidnappings, armed robbery, terrorism, and bombings and projected a bizarre image of the country. This is the problem of the study.

## **1.3 Purpose of Study**

The current flawed social structure, agonies, injustice, victimizations, lawlessness and atrocities observed in the socio-economic and political system of the society today has become a subject of concern to all and sundry. For this, the purpose of the study is to highlight and analyze critically the selected poems of Ezeuko & Anowai, Nwadike, Okediadi, Anozie, Olebara, Onuoha, Mbah, Echebina, Ugwunkwo, Nwaozuzu, Ikeokwu, Obienyem and Okoro selected, as it concerns the social aspects of the nation. The study will also look at the criticism as they concern people's well being, how these flaws affect the nation's economy, morals,

educational and the agricultural related issues in the country. It will also seek to find out:

1. The social criticism or vices in the Igbo poetry that would awaken society's slumber from her socio-political, health, agricultural, moral, educational and economic stagnations and neglect.
2. How Igbo poetry study could help create awareness and enhance people's understanding of the socio-political, economic and agricultural issues of life.

#### **1.4 Scope of Study**

The scope of this study is the examination of the Igbo poets social critics as reflected in the eighteen selected works of contemporary Igbo poets. The selected works are Ezeuko and Anowai's 'Ndu', Anozie's 'Oru Ugbo', Olebara's 'E Nwela M N'ozu', Ugwunkwo's 'O Wutere m', Okediadi's 'Mahadum' and 'Obodo Onicha', Nwaozuzu's 'Nwaanyi', Obienyem's 'Akwa Ala Igbo na-ebe', Mbah's 'Uwa Ka Onye Njo?', Nwadike's 'Naijiria Oma' and 'Uwa Ojoo Nke A', Okoro's 'Puta N'Uzo Ochichi', Echebina's 'Ime-Ime Obodo' and 'Ajo Akwa Mmiri', Oleru's 'Ochichi', Onuoha's 'Achomoru', and Ikeokwu's 'Obodo M'. The poems were selected from different Igbo texts – *Echiche* by Ezeuko & Anowai, *Uche Bu Akpa* by Anozie, C. C., *Akonuche* by Nwadike, I., *Akpa Uche* by Ekechukwu, R. M., *Ako Na Uche* by Echebina, G. N. Efforts would be made to review other related literature to this study.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

In most schools today, students applying to study Igbo literature especially Igbo poetry are few in number. This implies that only the few that study this subject courses will be awakened to the wisdom from the poetry study. This study will provide information on what students and people ought to know about the socio-political, economic, moral and health issues of the country, provide vital

recommendation on how to improve the quality and well being of the people. It will provide some clues on how to work on the collapsed morality of the modern people; help address the issues concerning agriculture; which is an antidote to the nation's unemployment saga: how to tackle the atrocities or secret cult activities on the campuses/university. It would provide some information to the politicians in office on how to make life better for the less privileged in the society.

## 1.6 Research Questions

To carry out this research, the following research questions will be answered:

- i. Will the study of Igbo poetry as a course help to reshape and reform the societal ills in society today?
- ii. Will the study of Igbo poetry encourage critical thinking and reflections on the issues of life concerning the economic, socio-political, moral, educational, agricultural aspects of society, amongst students?
- iii. Will Igbo poetry as a study, help increase and instill in the students, the love of reading/discussion and practice/develop in them the skills and strategies of good writers?
- iv. How can the study of Igbo poetry enhance the spirit of patriotism among students?

## 1.7 Limitations of Study

Most poems were not easy to translate, some figurative expressions posed problems. Some of the poets could not be reached. More so, some of the poets when interviewed seem to have forgotten some of the things they wrote.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

**Alliteration:** Alliteration is a repetition especially of initial consonant sounds in words occurring in close proximity. Papa pita patara popo panye papa pol. Repeating the 'p' sound.

**Assonance:** Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds to create internal rhyming within phrases or sentences. Example: Anya azu ahu amaka. Repeating 'a' vowel sounds.

- Diction:** This is the choice of words by authors in the course of writing. Diction equally determines the style or way of a written work.
- Flash back:** This is the literary technique involving the recalling of an earlier scene, an action, or event which sheds further light on what is currently happening.
- Hyperbole:** It is a figure of speech which uses an extravagant or exaggerated phrase to express strong feelings. Example: O nyere m elu na ala. (He gave me heaven and earth)
- Idiom:** This is an expression that has figurative meaning unrelated to the literal meaning of the phrase. Example: You are the apple of my eyes. (A hụrụ m gị n'anya.)
- Irony:** A method of expression in which the ordinary meaning of a word is opposite in the thought in the speaker's mind. Example: Nigeria is a corrupt free country. (While Nigeria is a country full of corruption).
- Kleptocracy:** Kleptocracy is a form of government corruption where the government exists to increase the personal wealth and political power of its official and the ruling class at the expense of the under masses population, often with the pretence of honest service. This type of government corruption is often achieved by the embezzlement of the state funds.
- Metaphor:** This is a figure of speech in which two essential things are shown to have a type of resemblance of a new image. The similarities between the objects being compared may be implied rather than directly stated. Example: O bụ mbe (A cunning person).
- Onomatopoeia:** This is a word designed to be an imitation of a sound. Example: Ntutu isi ya di yorii (Smooth)
- Oxymoron:** It is a figure in which a pair of opposite or contradictory terms are used together for example: O mara mma, joo njọ. (She is fine and ugly.)
- Personification:** This is an attribution of a personal nature or character to inanimate object or abstract notions, especially as a rhetorical figure. Example: Agụụ na-apia m ụtari. (I am so hungry)

**Poetic licence:** A term used to explain the poet's liberty and freedom, especially as it concerns his diction, grammar and pronunciation.

**Repetition:** Repetition as a stylistic device is a direct successor of repetition. It is an expressive language means, which serves in emphasizing certain statements of the speaker, and so possess considerable emotive force.

**Simile:** Direct comparison between two things usually delivered with the word 'like' and 'as'. When, in a poem, something is said to be 'like' another, it means that the poet is using simile to convey his feelings by comparing it with something. Example: *O dika Udele: He looks like a vulture.*

**Symbol:** The fiction writer can use a word, an object, an action, or a character in the story to suggest or mean something other than its dictionary or literal meaning. For instance, a cross can represent Christianity.

**Theme:** This is what the poem is all about. The theme of the poem is the central idea that the poet wants to convey.

**Tone:** As a literary term, tone refers to the writer's attitude towards the subject of a literary work as indicated in the work itself. A poem's tone may indicate an attitude of joy, sadness, solemnity, silliness, frustration, anger, puzzlement etc.

**Rhetorical Question:**

Rhetorical question presents a statement in the form of a question. The question appealing to the reader for an answer is emphatic and mobilizes the attention of the reader even when the latter is not supposed to answer anything. Example: *Onye ma echi? (Who knows tomorrow?).*

**There are four basic literary styles used in writing**

1. **Expository Style:** This is a subject oriented style. The focus of the writer is to tell the readers about a specific subject or topic and in the end the author leaves out his own opinion about that topic.
2. **Descriptive Style:** The writer focuses on describing a thing or place or event in detail. Descriptive style is poetic in nature. Usually it incorporates sensory details,



delightful scenes whether nature, painting, pleasures of the imagination. This style visualizes with images so that the readers could visualize in their own minds as if it is actually happening.

3. **Persuasive Style:** In this category of style, the writer tries to give reasons and justification to make readers believe his point of view. This style aims at persuading and convincing the readers.
4. **Narrative Style:** This type of writing style narrates a story. It includes short stories, novels, poetry. The poet uses dialogues, disputes, actions and events in a sequence.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Preamble**

The related literature of this work is reviewed under two sub-headings: The theoretical review where information from text books, are obtained and the empirical review where information from researched text like journals, newspapers, thesis, projects are obtained.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The role of the critic is to analyse, appreciate and evaluate literature, using the critical approaches like – sociological, formalistic or structural, historical, biographical or psychological, mythical, Marxist and so forth. Part of the work of the critic of literature is to find the approach that would best lead to a better and just appreciation of a particular work of art.

Social criticism locates the reasons for malicious conditions in a society considered to be in a flawed social structure. It may also refer to people adhering to a social critic's aim at practical solution by way of specific measures, either for consensual reform or powerful revolution (Wikipedia, 2014). It is a term used to refer to the area that deals with the exposure of faults in various aspects of the society and analyses social structure which are seen as flaws and aims at practical solutions to help make the world a better place.

One cannot engage successfully in the assessment of individual works of literature without at some point, discussing the principles on which they base their judgment, and similarly it is difficult to inquire into the nature and values of literature without occasionally illustrating your theory by concrete examples. With reference to sociology theory, of which this research is based, our value judgments are transferred from the kind of society, to the literary work itself. Marxist literary theory is developed from the writings of Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) and Fredrich Engel (1820 – 1895). Their theories of literature oppose all kinds of literary formalism where one is required to account for the author's use of

language which reduces literature to a mere aesthetic genre and robs it of its historical significance. The Marxist theory advocates that literature should create some kind of revolutionary change, make them see more clearly, alert to nuances and cause the oppressed masses to date a new era in their lives from the reading. This would ceaselessly effect a positive transformational and radical change for freedom from the scorching of the bourgeois. Marxist critics focus on the ideological contents of a work-its explicit and implicit assumptions and values about matters such as culture, race, class and power.

Sociological theory of Karl Marx emphasizes more specifically on the nature and effect of the social forces that shape power relationship between groups or classes of people. Marxist generally view literature, not as works created in accordance with timeless, artistic criteria, but as products of the economic and ideological determinants specific to that era (Abrams 1999), Writers focus and blend their works to the needs, demands, directions and sufferings of the poor masses with a vision to help redefine, remould and institute a new ideal social order, to balance the scale of social inequality. Sociological theory endeavors to explain the content of the works of literature with reference to the social context and to enable us to see their literary qualities more clearly by showing us how they reflect the writers looking at the world (Daiches 1956).

The sociological approach of Karl Marx is considered appropriate for adoption in analysing the Igbo literary poems selected for this study. As Asika (2012:188) posits that literary artists, who embrace the philosophy of Marxism and blend their works to such direction, seek to redefine the social order of the production and control of labour and wealth. In this regard, Marxist's writers seek to join hands in instituting anew consciousness in social, cultural, economic and political relations. The Marxist as a theory is used in the critical analysis of the economics, sociology, and history and later found applicable to literary theory. Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Fredrich Engels (1820-1895) ideologies agree that it is only through struggles that the proletariat can liberate themselves from their capitalist oppressors. For this awareness, revolutionary writers ought to produce works that

awaken the masses with enthusiasm in an effort to transform and change their environment and propel history forward. The Marxist engineers his society for a ceaseless revolution to freedom and call on the poor masses, the working class and the exploited to stand in the face of the capitalist exploiters and demand what is rightfully theirs. Marxist has its roots in class struggle and class consciousness and demand above all, equality and dignity of labour irrespective of economic and social status.

Marxists studies generally and typically aim at not only reavelling and clarifying ideological issues but also correcting social injustice (Meyer, 1993: 2008). In other words, the sociological criticism analyzes literature in the socio-political and economic contexts in which it is written; for art is not created in a vacuum. It seeks to find remedy to situations.

It is pertinent to note here that literature is a social reality and represents life. This approach regards literature as playing a vital role in the understanding of the society and knows that the writer is a member of the society. The analysis of these societal ills and vices in the poetry works under review are social phenomenon hence the adoption of the sociological theory.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

The importance of literature in the development of the society cannot be over-emphasized. It shows and gives insights to a vast reservoir of human experience. Literature is a reflection of life; it is a social truth where human beings are regarded as objects of literary creation. It is a creative work that exposes the expenses and conceptions of the writer about life in a society where he lives. Literature does not lend itself to a single tidy definition. Ngugi (1981:24) writes;

*Literature is a means of reflection, exposing society's economic structure, class formation, conflict and contradictions, class power, political and cultural struggle arising from the antagonism between those that are dying and those that are pointing to the future.*

This implies that literature serves as a mirror through which any society views its socio-economic class and political struggles between the ruling class and the down trodden in a bid to liberate themselves from the oppressors.

Lostraco & Wilkerson (1979) note that literature distills life and condenses human experiences. It offers us with a concentrated, imaginative vision of ourselves and the world in which we live. In other words, literature ought to be relevant and functionally committed to its society. A writer depends on the social realities and visions prevalent in a given society to make his work receive considerable attention, for as Achebe (1972) notes, that what one does as a writer depends on the state of one's society.

Summing up the views, literature can be referred to as the ability to express the life style of a given society be it social, political or economical with the aim of helping to understand or reshape the norms and values of the society.

Poetry to Wordsworth is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility". It can be viewed as man's charged utterances when he is emotionally excited (Maduakor, 1991). Kuo Mojo, the Chinese poet says that poetry is the music invoked from men's heart by the age in which they live. Nwachukwu Agbada (2009) remarks that poetry is an attempt by a committed individual to articulate a vision of the people via a compressed use of language in a manner which engages the senses and liberates the soul for a unique perception of life. Uche (2009) asserts that poetry is a genre in literature with high aesthetic and code of ways of communicating and expressing the beauty of the use of tense language which is condensed, compressed, complex and exoteric... which could serve as informative, expressive, emotive, persuasive and directive in purpose.

Poems can change, shape and sharpen the consciousness, thoughts and drives of people. Uche (2009) points that poetry as an aspect or branch of literature has a functional role of complimenting the literary and artistic expressions of the African beauty of native, social reality and philosophy of life. A poet remains one of the shapers of the whole intellectual tradition of civilization. In the words of

Ezejideaku (1996) a poet is a visionary, a reformer, a political watchdog, a satirist, a praise singer, a chronicler of events, a teacher and the people's spokesman.

A sensitive appreciation in poetry works increases and adds to a greater understanding of the poem. Poetry whether oral or written, plays vital roles in the society. It mirrors life and sensitizes the people on what is happening around them in the hope to affect a desired positive change. It can also be an instrument that serves as a systematic rediscovery of man in order to realize and sharpen up his potentials.

Literary artists through their poems give us a slice of life as they see it. Literature, especially poetry has been used in the history of social upheavals to mobilize people either to destroy tyranny or to build evolutions and revolutions. For instance, Augustine Neto used his poetry for this purpose in Angola while leading the nationalistic struggle. The influence of literature effected certain important legislations in England through the touching stories of Charles Dickens.

Most of the expressions from the poets focus on the issues affecting the people and the attitude of the people living in a given society. Literature, most especially poetry, awakens the readers' consciousness through the slow process of appeal and persuasion to impulses and action, especially as it exposes and criticizes such exploitative tendencies in intimidations, injustice, unjust oppressions, maltreatment, bribery & corruptions, self centeredness, opportunistic behaviors, violations of law, criminal and dubious behavior, unequal distribution of wealth/power, political unrests/rivalry, moral laxity, deceits/dishonesty . All these are geared towards a positive re-evaluation and transformation of actions.

There are different categories of poems:

- Philosophical poem
- Satirical poem
- Natural poem
- Political poem
- Lamentative poem
- Prophetic poem
- Praise poem

**Philosophical poem:** It aims to emphasize the quest for truth. It can mean love of wisdom or interest in knowledge. It exercises reason and logic in an attempt to understand reality and answer fundamental questions about knowledge, life, morality and human nature. A true philosopher is also a visionary. For example is Onyekaonwu's "*Ka ndu m buuru ndi ozọ ihe*" (1989) (May my life be as light for others) this poem teaches that good name is better than money and that one should live life worthy of emulation.

**Satirical poem:** This area of poem condemns and criticizes the vices, follies and evil tendencies in the society. It is designed to scorn or ridicule the ills in man and the society and the intention is for amendments and change for the better. E.g. Onyekaonwu's "*Osisi Nwere Uji*" (1989) "Trees with hollows". The poem stresses that man is deceptive and cannot be trusted, for all that glitters is not gold.

**Prophetic Poem:** In this aspect of poem, the poet seems to predict what will happen in the future and prophesizes about the future. The revelation is aimed at bringing reformations, improvements and transformational changes in the society. Example – In Ogunjifor's "*O di nọọ ka m buru nnunu*" (1975), the poet correctly foresees that mankind would be in chains and bound by many restrictions in the society. The poet's theme is freedom. Fourty years after the poem, the country becomes a reflection of the poem.

**Political poem:** In this type of poem, the poet criticizes the poor leadership and attitude of those in power. The poet uses direct or indirect ways to say whatever he sees that are not going well in the socio-economic aspect of the government. For example in Onyekaonwu's poem "*Obodo m*", He uses eight proverbs to describe the ugly state of affairs in the country.

**Praise poem:** This is a situation where the poet praises someone or something because of the good or admirable qualities seen. It can be praises for God, humans or

other adorable objects. For example: Echebina's "*Kpakpando*" (2001) the poet showers praises on the star for being a guide in the darkness.

**Natural poem:** These types of poems are concerned about natural things in our environment. These resources in our environment are important to man. E.g. Nzeako's poem "*Nkwu*" where he points out the many benefits of palm tree in our life.

**Lamentation poem:** This is a type of poem that expresses sorrow or death over a loved one or tragedy of life or regret over a sad event or depressing situation. E.g. Olebara's '*Akwa Ariri*'.

Nwadike (2006: 241) in the poem '**Mahadum Naijiria**' (Nigerian University) condemns the wickedness of the lecturers in the campus who pull down the image of one another, and wickedly stop the promotions of others and refers to them as '*umu ogwumagala*', '*umu ikwiikwii*', '*umu usu*' - chameleons, owls and bats meaning witches, deceptive and cunning people looking saintly but dangerous. Hence Stanza 3, line 2 - 3)

Lee ha ndi ochieze	Look at them, deceptive smiles
Ndi na-akwada ibe ha n'ala	Those who pull one another down
Leekwa ha ndi eziokwu koru nonu	Look at them, liars
Ndi ochichiri buuru ihe uto	Those who glory at wrongs
Leekwa ha, ogwumagalaba	Look at them, chameleons,
Umu ikwiikwii, umuusu	Owls and bats

Onyekonwu (1989: 18) in the poem '**Ahja Onicha**' criticizes the state of lawlessness coupled with the robbery attempts observed in the Onitsha market every now and then. Hence:-

N'otu akuku I ga-anu:-	At a corner one would hear
Onye ahja m, I chorole?	Customer how many do you want?
N'akuku ozo,	By the other side you would hear.
Holam ! Holam !!	Catch him! Catch him!!
O bu onye ohi o (Stanza 3, line 8-12)	He is a thief oh!



Anozie (2005) in the poem 'Ndorondoro Najjiria' (Nigerian Politics) condemns the attitude of Nigerians who engage in all sorts of atrocities in order to win election like ritual killings, bribing women by sharing clothes, money, salt to make them vote them in. These politicians owe workers yet they share people's money. These deceptive men are liars for they use the radio and television media to deceive the masses, promising that they would construct roads, produce pipe borne water, wire electricity, build hospital and pay workers without wasting time. Nigerian politics today has too many people coming out to contest for election. Every Tom, Dick and Harry wants to rule. Their posters are everywhere, contesting and struggling for one post or the other. Politics and the desire to rule have become the quest for all and sundry. Hence; (Stanza 3, line 1 -12; Stanza 4, line 1 -5)

Mmadu ka e ji agwo ogwu	People are used for rituals
Maka mmeri na ndorondoro	To win elections
Izuru umunwaanyi abada	They buy clothes for women
Ike ha nnu na ego	Share them money and salt
Akwughi ndi oru ugwo	They do not pay workers
Ntu na aghughu	Lies and deceptions
Redio na-agara ha ozi	The radio is their means
A na-aru uzọ na redio	They construct roads in the radio
Agbapu mmiri na redio	Construct water boreholes in the radio
Etinye oku na latriiki	Plant electricity supply
Arupu ulogwu n'ike n'ike	Build hospitals rapidly
A kwupu ndi oru ugwo n'egbughi oge	Pay workers fast
Onuogu ndi ndorondoro adila egwu	The number of contesters are many
Onye obula chorọ ichi	Everybody wants to rule
Ndi otu ndorondoro ejula ala a	Political contesters are everywhere
Ndorondoro ife ala nna ha	Contesting to rule their fatherland
A na-azọ oru uzọ?	Is leadership meant for struggle?

Ifechelobi (2012) writes that most often the governed trust their leaders that they will honor their utterances. In terms of being truthful in their speeches, many regard our leaders as 'pure liars' and so view their utterance with disbelief. The populace is tired of their using language to intimidate, frustrate, confuse, trick, oppress and make merchandise of the people they are supposed to serve.

Ubesie(1975) in the prose ‘*Mmiri Oku E ji Egbu Mbe*’ presents Enyi, a professional armed robber, who wasted his life stealing and later spent five years in prison, came back and remembering the land his father gave him, went to the village, cleared it and started farming on it. Finally the farming business blossomed and he became a well-known wealthy farmer through agriculture. This shows that Agriculture is a sure way to success.

Onyekaonwu (1987:12) in the drama, ‘**Oku Ghara Ite**’, condemns people who are desperate to get wealth overnight and the craving for materialism, enter into cults and secret societies, ritual murders, and then sacrifice their loved ones stupidly.

Akubue: Ka o bu m chetara gi na o bu naani iba n’otu Oduma bu nzoputa...Onye  
choro aku na uba?

Akubue: Or you want me to remind you that only in being an Oduma cult member  
would be a savior to any that wants to be wealthy

Krisagbedo (2009) in the novel **Ogwu** - (thorn) satirizes and condemns the life that is lived in our country Nigeria and sees them as “thorns.

Ezeuko & Anowai’s poem – ‘**Ime Mpu**’ (1985: 15) for example criticizes the incessant increase in bribery and corruption especially encountered by the unemployed in order to be offered an employment. The teeming numbers of young unemployed graduates roam aimlessly year by year in search of jobs that never exist. Hence:

I na –achọ oru	Are you seeking for employment
I gbaghi tochi	Without giving bribe
I gaghị enweta ya	You can never get it
...Ndi Obodo anyi	Our people
Kwusi ime mpu	Stop living in corruption
Obodo na-eme mpu	A nation living in corrupt practices
Ga-anogide n’isi	Will never progress (Stanza 1 & 2)

Nwaozuzu (2006:94) in the poem, ‘**Chara m ka m kpaa Ego**’, criticizes the youths of today on their inert desire to acquire wealth fast by all means even if through ritual killing of the mother, father or siblings. Hence, (Stanza 4, line 4-6):

Ego ka a choro	Money is what is wanted
Etu o huru ya si bia	Let it come anyhow
Onye choro i ma?	Who wants to know?
O buru udele si ghoo	One can even turn to a vulture
O buru nkakwu si buru	One can even turn to a shrew
Ma si ego zobe ka mmiri	But let money rain like waters

The economic crunch and hardship experienced in the contemporary society influences writers of literature. People can go to extremes to acquire wealth in order to belong to the wealthy class and step out of poverty. Nigerians are either victims of unemployment, retrenchment, underpayment in the working class, diseases, hunger & starvation. One can visualize the high value placed on wealth and riches. A man is worth nothing without riches. This explains why the society is filled with all forms of evil in the name of making money – ritual killers, armed robbers, bribery, kidnappings, looters, adulterated drug dealers and drug peddlers.

Ezeuchegbu (2006:126) in the poem, ‘**Oje uka ago mmuo**’ decries and condemns the attitude of people who worship both God and devil, advising that they desist from such act. Hence:

<i>I buru oje uka n'utu</i>	<i>If you go to church in the morning</i>
<i>Oje be dibia n'abali</i>	<i>And go to the native doctor at night</i>
<i>Sepu aka enwe n'ofe</i>	<i>Desist from such (Stanza 2, line 1-3)</i>

Ubesie (1981) in the prose, ‘**Ukpaka Mijiri Onye Ubiam**’, condemns the attitude of most fathers in the society who are blindfolded by greed and the love for money and as a result force their daughters to accept marriage from old rich and affluent men instead of making their own choice of a man. They marry rich men, old enough to be their fathers in order to satisfy their fathers. It does not matter if she is the third, fourth or fifth wife, as far as wealth is there, age is no barrier.

In Onyekaoonwu’s *Eriri Mara Ngwugwu* (1985), the playwright condemns the attitude of the corrupt nurse in the hospital who collaborates with Uduaku desperately in need of a male child and accepts bribe, in Act 2 Scene 2:-

**Uduaku:**

Biko nọọsu, nwanyi ibe m nyerenụ m aka.  
 Obi ga-atụwa m,  
 Ma a lụkpo m nwanyi ọzọ n'ụlọ a.  
 Biko i mara ihe ọ ga-eri, kwuo,  
 Ihe m chọrọ bụ nwa nwoke.  
 Ụzọ ọbụla ụzọ gwa m ihe ọ ga-ewe m.  
 Ọ buru nwoke, enyeghachila m ihe ọ bụla.  
 Biko nyere m aka...  
 (Ya abalaa n'ime ụlọ, buru ngwugwu ego  
 bunyewe nọọsu)

**Nọọsu:**

Mba jidegodu...  
 Ego ahụ i ji ọ dị ego ole?

**Uduaku:**

Ọ dị fọọ hundred  
 Ihe gachaa nke ọma

**Nọọsu:**

I matara na ọrụ a bụ ọrụ dị egwu...  
 Ọ dị mma, ka anyị nwaa,  
 (Ọ nara ya ego).

**Uduaku:**

Nurse, I beg you please, my fellow woman help me  
 It would break my heart  
 If another woman is married into this house  
 Please, whatever it would take, tell me,  
 What I want is a male child.  
 Any how, tell me what it would cost  
 If I give birth to a male, don't give me back anything  
 Please help me...  
 (She entered into the room and brought out a  
 bundle of money)

**Nurse:**

No, hold it.  
 That money you have, how much is it?

**Uduaku:**

It is Four hundred  
 If it works out well.

**Nurse:**

You know that this job is risky...  
 Well, let us try,  
 (She collects the money from her) Pg. 50

In exchange for a male child and acted without conscience. This is an unfair treatment in the life of the new child who was exchanged and the rightful parents of the child would never get to know the biological child, and the child would never know the true parents too. In the Nigeria contemporary society, some nurses and doctors collect bribe to exchange male children for desperate parents who need them. The nurse in the drama later exchanged Uduaku's female child with a male child, but in future, both the nurse and Uduaku, suffered terribly. Bribery and corruption are deadly syndromes that have paralyzed all sectors of the society. Nigeria is a very fertile land for bribery. Most policemen, public servants, teachers etc. collect bribe to perform one illegal activity or the other.

In '*Ọkụ Ụzụ Daa Ibube*' (1982), Onyekaonwu criticizes the political struggles and man's desire to selfishly acquire power. Mr. Ugonna made so much effort to see that he was crowned the king. He made empty promises to deceive the community to vote him into power.

**Mazi Ugonna:**

Anọ m ebe a na-ekwe unu nkwa na tupu mgbe a ga-eme nghọputa a aga m aruru unu nnukwu ụlọogwu, mee ka e wetara unu ọkụ eletrik na mmiri pọmpu, aga m ewegharakwa ikwuru umuntakiri ha dum nọ n'ụlọ akwukwo di elu n'ala bekee maobu ebe obula, ugwo akwukwo. Naani ihe m na-ario n'aka unu bu ihoputa m dika eze unu mgbe oge ruru. Unu mee

nkea, hapuzienu okwu. Ala Isuebu ga-aghozi ala bekee. O dikwaghi utu obula unu ga na-atu. Pg. 58

**Mazi Ugonna:**

(I am here promising you that before elections, I will build a gigantic hospital, provide electricity supply and pipe-borne water, I will take over the payment of school fees for your children in higher institution both those schooling abroad or anywhere. What I am pleading from you is to elect me as your king, when the time comes. If you do this, leave the rest for me .The Isiebu community will be like oversea nobody will pay tax). Pg. 59 (Act 2 Scene 3 Pg 58)

These are cheap lies by politicians used as bait, to trap the masses, to vote them into power. Not only that, most politicians are capable of eliminating any opposing candidate that poses as a threat to their desired political position, as seen in the text. (Act 2 Scene 2 Pg. 51)

**Ugboaku:** I hapu nwata nwoke a ndu i ga-eji anya gi hu nti gi. Gbuo ya bunye m obara ya, a ga m anu. Onwu ya, onwu ya ka m chorog ugbua, ugbua osog osog. Pg. 51.

**Ugboaku:** (If you allow this young man to live, you would put yourself in danger. Kill him and give me his blood, I shall drink it. His death, his death is all I want now, now and fast). Pg51.

That is the bad advice given to Mr. Ugonna by his wife Ugboaku to murder his political opponent Mr. Ezenwa, over the kingship tussle because he sees Mr. Ezenwa as a heavy stumbling block capable of stopping him from becoming the King. Mr. Ugonna made plans to assassinate Mr. Ezenwa, his political opponent but he failed. At last, it was Mr Ezenwa, Eze Omaliko's son who later became the king of Isiebu. Today, politicians make false promises to deceive masses and the political opponents attack one another as we see with the PDP and APC struggling and abusing one another and can kill just to be in power.

In Nwadike's *Onye Kpaa Nku Ahuhu* (1989), he condemns the attitude of some males who abandon or reject their lovers when put in the family way to cater as single mothers for themselves and their unborn child, with the emotional trauma of being rejected devastatedly in heart break by a loved one. Most times however, the man in question is usually revisited with the retributive justice of the law of karma.

In Ude Odilorah's *Okpa Aku Eri Eri* (1996), the author condemns Akubuuzo's attitude as a man desperate never to part with any of his wealth, he becomes a miser and was very conscious, to retain his riches. He starves his house boys,

measures his yam, makes his pap watery for economic measures, takes chicken meat once in a month, and never gives the chicken to the houseboys because for him ‘ e jighi ntanta azu umuaka’ (Children are not given meat anyhow). Akubuzo never buys cloths for his house boys. They have only one church cloth made with ‘khaki’. Once they come back from church on Sundays they remove it and hang it for the coming Sunday and go about naked. The houseboys are made to work in the farm all the time and sleep less. Akubuzo starves them, gives them little food, vegetables and less yam with a lot of pepper so that when they eat the surplus pepper, they drink more water. This makes their stomach full. Akubuzo flogs them often and the marks of lashes of cane on their body show it all. The teachers in Akubuzo’s school, are unfairly treated, he never allows them to pluck mangoes or fruits in the school premises, he alone benefits from all the vegetables and fruit trees grown in the school compound as if the school is his personal property. The helpless children suffer in the hands of their oppressive and wicked guardians.

When adults keep using physical and such verbal abuses like “you are a good for nothing, ‘a fool’, such verbal attacks give a child emotional scars that will last a life time. Enyi was abused and called ‘thief’, this hatred hardened Enyi’s mind for he later became a notorious armed robber in future. The society today is plagued with armed robbers and kidnappers, majority of whom are mostly children not well catered and taken care of, abused and oppressed children with poor parental upbringing. The number of robbers in the society can be controlled when parent/guardian treat their children/wards with love and care.

In Pita Nwana’s *Omenuko* (1933), the author criticizes the attitude of Omenuko, who could never accept to be subjected as a poor man when he lost all his wealth during a flood disaster; he therefore sold his ward as slaves for money in order to maintain his status in the society as the affluent and rich. Hence;

Omenuko were resie umu ntakiri ahụ, ndi na-amu izu na ire ahia, reekwa ufođu n’ime ndi ibu ya, ndi bu umu okorobia, reekwa otu nwanna ya nwoke. Pg. 6  
Omenuko sold all his apprentices and some that are his potters and one of his kinsmen.

The rights of the poor are denied. People care less for the helpless and needy. Omenuko committed a grave crime to humanity by selling these young apprentices as slaves.

In Ubesie's *Isi Akwụ Dara N'ala (1975)*, the author condemns Ada's behavior who because of the gnawing economic predicament witnessed during the war, maltreats her husband. Hence,

Otu ihe kpatara ihe ahụ bụ na ọ bụ Ada na-eweta ego nri. Ọ bụ ya na- azụta anụ, ọ bụ ya na-esi. Pg. 85

The reason behind all these is that Ada is now the breadwinner. She buys everything and cooks

So when the husband asked her specially to prepare fufu-fufu for him instead of garri, she snapped;

“I wetara ego garri, ka ọ bụ ego akpụ ka I wetara”? Pg85.

“Did you provide money for fufu or garri?”

It is a pity how Ada turned cruel towards Chike because when the going was good, Chike provided everything she needed. She maltreated and looked down on her husband Chike because he lost almost everything he had during the war.

Again Chike says,

“Otu ụbọchị ọgụ ga-ebi ... ị maara nkeoma na e nwere m ego ... ihe m nwere n'ụlọ bankị dī icheiche n'obodo bekee karịrị pụkụ naira anọ. Ọ bụrụ na i nwee ndidi ọgụ bie anyị amalite kporie ndụ” Pg86.

**Translation:**“You are very much aware that I am wealthy I have more than four thousand in my foreign account. If you exercise patience, when the war ends, we shall enjoy life financial. Pg86.

Ada is not concerned about future promises. She damns Chike because currently, the man could not provide and in our society, a man is absolutely taken as nothing if he cannot adequately cater for his family, financially. He is insulted and regarded as a failure, and to sum it all Ada yells and says to him:-

“Di gbakwaa ọkụ, asị m di bụrụ ụdị nke mụ na gị no ebe a na-alụ, di gbakwaa ọkụ”. Pg 87.

**Translation:**“Let husbands go to blazes, if marriage is what two of us are doing here, let husbands go to blazes”.

Many marriages just like Ada's own breaks down because of the inability of the man to shoulder his responsibilities as the provider in the family. This should not be, in times of difficulty, the men should be helped by the women and not insulted, intimidated, taken for granted and made to look like a fool like Ada did to her husband.

In Olebara's poem; '**M ga-abụ Udele**', he criticizes the uncaring and selfish attitude of people in the society where we live. We live in a world and a society full of cares, worries, no freedom of movement, injustices, inequalities, discriminations, racial oppressions, envy and a world where no one cares about one another. That is why the poet wants and seeks for freedom to be free and left alone like the vulture, which nobody cares to hunt or eat as they hunt other birds because it eats rotten and dead things.

Mgbe m ga-abia ụwa ọzọ	When I shall come in the next world
M ga-abụ udele	I would be a vulture
Mmadu m bu na-ewe m iwe	I am angry, being a human being
Agaghị m abụ ọkọkọ	I would not be a fowl,
Omụ nwa erighi akụ nwa	Left without any child
Onye nwe ya hụrụ ya n'anya	Whom the owner loves
Ubochị oriri daa, o gbufuo ya rie	But slaughtered on any festive period
Ihunanya ụwa nke a enweghị isi	Love from man, means nothing.

The 'fowl' (ọkọkọ) in the poem is loved by its owner because it provides meat for him. The love man claims to have towards his fellow human being is at most times false. The love is just after the gains or benefits derived from the so called friend. It is selfish and deceptive. The poet therefore dislikes that kind of callous/cunning love and wishes to be left alone.

In '**Afrika Enwerela Onwe Ya**', Olebara criticizes the political oppressions suffered by some parts of African countries who are not yet free from their political masters. They are unfairly treated, even in their own fatherland, brutalized and colonized by their fellow Africans and treated as slaves, especially in South Africa, where the blacks are inferior to the whites and subjected to all forms of degradations and sanctions because of the colour of their skin.

Ebe ọtụtụ ụmụ Afrika bu ọbia n'ala ha  
 ...chuga ha ebe ala kporo nku (stanza 2: line 3 & 5)  
 While many Africans are strangers in their land  
 ...Chased out to a dry land

In '**Nne Anyị Afrika**', Maduekwe also comments and laments on the African countries that were greatly suppressed, oppressed and badly treated by the whites. They were colonized, sold into slavery and labeled as animals and inferiors during



the slave trade era. Up till now, most blacks in South Africa are suffering from racial discriminations, humiliations and are trodden upon, even in their own native land.

A chowa ala hujuru anya n'aka uwa	The most oppressed country in the world
A gbata, kpolite ndi ala Afrika	We call upon you, Africans
Ala ndi isi ojii, ala anwu na-acha baa	Land of the blacks, a Sunshine Continent
Ihujuru anya n'aka ndi ocha chara tototo	You saw hell in the hands of the whites
Ha kporo gi aha ojoo, bie gi aka ojoo	They labeled you evil, handled you badly
Ndi ocha meruchara gi, gbaa gi oto	The whites dealt with you and stripped you

naked.

In *O ji Ihe Nwata* (2006), by Okoro & Epuchie the play-wright condemns the quest and struggle of the rich, to overthrow the poor and take over the throne. In the drama, Okparaku, the wealthy man made contributions towards the growth and progress of the community. These contributions made the people in the community to desire him as their new king, as against the elderly and rightful heir – Isiguzo. Most people refused him because of his poverty. Okparaku later became the king of Umuoma community; this later spelt doom and nemesis on the community because there was a two-year hardship of drought, famine and starvation in the village of Umuoma. Eventually Okparaku was struck dead by the gods.

**Nze Ozuome:** Ndi obodo Umuoma ji maka ego, na-ekewo okenye oke. Gini bu akunuba, Umuoma ji maka ya echi Okparaku eze ma hapu Isiguzo; nna m ha gwara m na o bu ezi ha bu isi ma burukwa oji ofo obodo a.

**Nze Ozuome:** Because of wealth, Umuoma community denied an elder his rights. What is wealth, that Umuoma community will crown Okparaku the king, and deny Isiguzo his right; my forefathers told me that the Isiguzo family as the head holds the symbol of authority in this community. (Act 1 scene 2)

This is a class struggle between the upper class (Okparaku) who fights to remain at the top and the poor (Isiguzo) who struggles to rise to the top but was suppressed. Today, people do not care about the character and credibility of an individual before electing him to an elevated position. What they care about is the wealth. This should not be because justice and equality remain the sure ways of achieving a stable and peaceful society.

In Chukuezi's *Udo Ka Mma* (1974), the playwright condemns the intimidations by the rich on the poor over land issues and peace which remain the only way to move forward. In the drama, Obiekwe, the Igwe intimidates Maduka who challenged him over the land.

**Obiekwe:** O ka onye ka Chi ya                      He who is greater than one is greater than his god  
 O bu mu ka Maduka                      I am greater than Maduka  
 Abu m oke oha ruchiri ulo              I am the great forest that grows over the houses)  
 (Act 1 Scene 1)

He prides and boasts that he is the king, that the land belongs to him, that he will squeeze Maduka and take over the land. The land dispute brought enmity between the two villages. They fought and killed one another. At last, Obiekwe's kinsmen told him (Obiekwe) the bitter truth – that the land belongs to Maduka. He did not listen to them. Maduka, the poor man kept insisting that he will never allow the wicked and selfish Obiekwe to take over the land from him. Maduka kept lamenting over his poverty: as seen in act 2 scene 1:-

**Maduka:** O bu ahuhu uwa                      It is a world of hardship  
 Ogbenyi enweghi                      The poor has nothing  
 Ogbenye agaghi ebi                      Is not allowed to live  
 O bu mmegbu Pg. 30                      It is maltreatment

**Maduka:** Chukwu, lekwa aka m  
 Ahapula onye na-emegbu onye ogbenye. Pg 32  
 (God, see my hands.  
 Never ignore those that oppress the poor)

It was the intervention of the Umunna and the marriage between Maduka's daughter Ego and Obiekwe's son, Dike, that later brought peace between Obiekwe and Maduka, before Obiekwe accepted to leave the land for Maduka. The perception of social injustice stems from the belief that all people are not equal; that is why the king boasts and intimidates Maduka, because he is poor. Agwuna (2004:37) in the poem *Idi Ocha* (Cleanliness) condemns the dirtiness in our ways of life and the environment which is the order of the day in our personal and daily living and urges all and sundry to remember that cleanliness is next to godliness. A healthy nation is a wealthy nation. Help keep ourselves and the environment for cleanliness will promote good health and make us live healthy lives.

Dowe onwe gi na gburugburu gi ọcha  
 Makana mmadu abughi anu ọhia (Stanza 3, line 3-4)  
 Keep yourself and the environment clean  
 Because humans are not animals

Anozie (2005) in the poem ‘Ekwentị’ (Phone), stresses and condemns more on the disadvantages of hand phone to humanity (though there are many benefits). For instance, People use expensive phones to pride about and boost their ego, phone takes away so much money from people, causes accidents on the road as people drive and answer calls. Hence:

A na m amị ego ha ka anwunta si amị ọbara  
 A na m ebutere ha ihe mberede okporoꝣo  
 I suck their money as mosquitoes sucks blood  
 I cause accidents for them on high ways (stanza 7, line 2)

The realism is that the poor even wastes money and pride about with the phone. Even a shoe shiner, barrow pusher, street beggar has a phone. They waste money loading airtime in the phones daily.

Ofomata (2006:23) in the poem ‘Ije Ndu’ (Journey to life) criticizes the hostilities, wars, bitterness, wickedness, shootings and bombings that have taken over the entire lives of the people and demand that they should be replaced with what would make life worth living like smiles, happiness, living peacefully amongst ourselves, less strife, stress, showing kindness and love towards all. All these virtues are to be extolled for they are what makes life a worthwhile place to live in. Hence:

Wusa uta ọgu (Stanza 1, line 4)	Stop wars
Kwafuo mmiri ọjọo (Stanza 1, line 8)	Pour away dirty waters
Were imicha onu toọ ute (Stanza 2, line 6)	Embrace love and kisses
Sugbuo na tigbuo mie ala (stanza 2, line 9)	Damn shootings and killings
Ibioma na nsusuonu ewere onodu (Stanza 2, line 10)	Replace them with hugs and kisses

Today, the society is plagued with bombings and attacks of the kidnappers and the dreaded Boko Haram sect. It is an ugly and horrifying situation that has defied all solution but the poet hopefully asks for all and sundry to show love, care and concern for these are the qualities that makes life a happy place to live in.

Onyekaonwu’s *Nwata Rie Awọ* (1989) condemns how most women are badly treated by their husbands. In the drama, when Aworo won the wrestling contest

against Akatoosi, Obioma left her betrothed husband and ran after Aworo. They lived together before he reluctantly decided to marry her traditionally. When Obioma gave birth to a female child as the first issue, Aworo developed an intense hatred for her and planned all abominable things just to send her packing. Aworo kept telling all and sundry that he was tired of the marriage because there was never a time he ever wanted to marry Obioma, also that she gave birth to a female child as the first issue.

Aworo treated Obioma like a slave and rained curses and abuses on her on daily basis. He hated her and falsely accused her of trying to poison him. Aworo invited his kinsmen to the case and one of them said:

Ihe nwaanyi a mere bu aru ocha nke bu na ahuhu kwesiri ya bu igbu ya egbu ma o bu irefu ya erefu. Pg. 57.

(This woman committed the worst abomination. The punishment most suitable for her is death or selling her off). Pg. 57

Later, she was banished disgracefully from the village together with her daughter and was not given any opportunity to defend herself. Aworo maltreated his wife like a slave, set her up and denied her a fair hearing. After fifteen years, Aworo married and could not get any child. The native doctor whom he consulted told him to find the wife he sold fifteen years ago. Nemesis caught up with him when he later found out from the wife that the woman he was married to was his daughter whom he banished with the mother, fifteen years ago, That was incest So he killed himself. It was not Obioma's fault that she had a female issue; rather it is Aworo's fault. The male carry the XY chromosomes that produce the male babies and not females. The desire for male children is predominant among the black men. This is because of the prominent role the males play in the cultural life of the Igbo people. The males bear the family name not females. Today, most families break up when the wives do not produce any male.

Clark (1976: 137) in the poem, 'Casualties' writes

We are all casualties  
All sagging as are  
The cases celebrated for kwashiorkor

Clark's poem is an example of what is happening today. The poet considers Nigerian victims as victims of unemployment, insecurity, retrenchment, diseases, hunger and starvation, hardship, health problems, under payments in the working class. Several years after the war, people are still suffering severely such that Ubaezuonu (2002: 217) notes by stressing that nobody has the time anymore to joke with the austerity because it is very well with us. Some politicians call it 'Ọta n'isi', today it is 'Ọta n'afọ'. Kwashiorkor is gradually returning. Parents and children are suffering untold hardship. To sum it all, today, most men find it difficult to meet up with the family responsibilities.

Ikeokwu (2006) in the poem 'Ala Bekee' (Overseas) condemns the attitude of the people who travel to overseas countries to make money by all ugly means; some are even fraudsters. Some are prostitutes and on coming home are infested with HIV. Hence (stanza 5, line 1 -5)

Ginị ka I nyere ha?	What did you give to them?
Izuohi na igba ashawo	Stealing and prostitution
Ọrịa obirinajaọcha	HIV/AIDS diseases
Ginịkwa ka ha na-echekwa?	What else are they waiting for?
Naanị ọnwụ naanị ọnwụ	Only death, only death

Echebina (2001) in the poem 'Ego' (money) criticizes the rate at which people can do all sorts of things in order to acquire wealth. People place so much emphasis on money such that they can betray, sell, kidnap, kill their friends, tell all sorts of lies, just to make money and become rich. Thus,

O mere ka nwanne ree nwanne ya	Because of you, brothers sell one another
Mee ka enyi gbuo enyi ya	Friends kill one another
O mere ka ọcha dị oji	Turn truth to lies
Mee ka oji dị ọcha	And turn lies to truth (Stanza 6, line 1 -4)

Nwaozuzu (2006) in the poem 'Ebewu Naijiria' criticizes the falling standards in Nigeria's socio-political and economical aspects. Even after independence, the country is still struggling to survive. Many African countries that depended on Nigeria many years back, are today better than Nigeria. Thus:-

Naijiria	Nigeria
Nara ji rie	Take yam and eat
Ị sị ha chere gị?	Did you tell them to wait for you?
Ndị ị bụ ụzọ gbawa ọsọ	Those that formerly surpassed
Sịzị gị bīasiwe ike	Are now telling you to push on
Naijiria,	Nigeria
Nara ji rie	Take yam and eat

Ossai (2006) in the poem ‘Agumakwukwo Sanduwichi’ (Sandwich Education programme) condemns the sub-standard, hurry type and full packed type of learning obtained during the Sandwich learning programme in our educational sector. Here, the lecturers suffer to teach without rest in order to meet up with the scheme of work for the semester. In the same vein, students are over labored and never allowed any rest till they slump or even die while in the pursuit of teaching and learning. Hence:-

Umakwukwo na-enwe uru na oghom  
I mere onye nkuzi o kwuo oto awa iri  
Nwa akwukwo na-ada, nwuo pii n’ihi gi  
(Stanza 2, line 2 -4)  
Students are advantaged and disadvantaged  
You made a teacher stand for ten good hours  
Students slump and die because of you

Agwuna’s **Ije Ego** (2011) condemns how most unemployed people in the society open up prayer houses acting as fake prophets, misleading the vulnerable masses just to make ends meet.

Thus: “O bu ka Ucheyaweh putachara na Mahadum ka o chokatarara oru oyibo ma o hughi o ji mepee obere ulouka, wee baa ya- JAA JEHOVA CHURCH”.

**Eng:** It was when Ucheyaweh graduated from the university and searched endlessly for a job but could not secure one that he opened up a small church and named it JAA JEHOVA CHURCH. pg 1.

### 2.3 Empirical Review

Social critics focus on the ‘ugly realities of contemporary life and sympathize with working class people, particularly the poor. It refers to work of creative arts that draws attention to the everyday conditions of the working classes and the poor who are critical of the social structures that maintain these conditions; it arouses concern for the urban poor, keeping a keen eye on current events and era’s social and political rhetoric. Literary works should therefore be created to inspire readers to stand up for revolution with a burning righteous mind. Social critics criticize situations where people are routinely discriminated against and in some cases, out rightly abused neglected & despised because they cannot stand up or speak up for themselves. These ills can be seen in the unfair and uncaring treatments towards the less privileged, child abuse, violations on women rights,

failure of governance and good leadership, ethnic, religious & economic discriminations, molestations, victimization, degenerations, traumatic conditions of workers etc.

These vices dominate almost every spheres of the society. The poets, through their works show concern and discourage possible deviants from such unaccepted behaviors in a bid to positively reshape the society.

The contemporary society has a lot of challenges that are socially relevant, these provide materials for the literary works because functional literature stresses on and reflects on what is prevalent in the society.

Nwaozuzu (2007) noted that the traditional woman is a helpless and exploited victim of societal injustice based on male chauvinism. This goes to show that the Igbo traditional woman is merely a victim of the prejudice arising from the war of the sexes and her being portrayed as a villain as proclaimed by an all male jury in the folktales. This is also derived from her condition as a victim of biased value judgment in a set up that is a man's world.

This is similar to this research in terms of the exploitations and intimidation on the helpless female gender by the male, observed in the Igbo poem under review. The only difference is that these maltreatments are on folktales while this research is on poems.

Ogbalu (2013) also writes that in the Igbo and mostly African tradition, when it comes to decision-making in the family, the traditional Igbo woman is regarded as lacking in sound judgment, and in terms of status, she is inferior to her male counterpart, her rightful place remains the kitchen; also that a woman should only be seen and not heard. But from what is seen in Ofomata's prose; *Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afọ*, it clearly shows that women are endowed with wisdom and sound judgment, just like their male counterparts and are capable of doing great things which men cannot do. In this study too, it x-rays the dehumanizing treatment and negative roles ascribed to the Igbo traditional woman.

Epuchie (2013) notes that deceptive promises made by politicians to the masses, can breed bitterness and conclude that politician should make only promises they can keep in order to achieve political stability. The work delved on political issues where politicians make false promises to the masses with sugar coated tongues only to be voted in power and abandon them to enrich themselves.

Ogbuagu (2010) enumerates some of these social injustices in the society, as well as criticize these societal ills in the society. These ills include – discriminations, social operations, selfishness and deceptions, the lack of love and concern towards fellow human beings, slavery in the society and all these make the poet to weep.

Abiodun (2015) reports that in 1982, Mpagi Edward a Ugandan taxi driver was sentenced to death for the brutal murder of his neighbour but not only was Edward an innocent man, there had not even been a murder. Edward had been framed after a land dispute between families in the village. He spent the next 20years in Kampala notorious prison and was only released when his family proved that the dead man had been hiding out in another part of the world. Both works reviews the wickedness, unkind treatment and abominable things that go on in this unjust world we are living in- man's inhumanity to man.

Ikeokwu (2007) in a research on functional literature observes that in modern times, writers and critics insists that a literary work should primarily concern itself with the social forces operating in the society so as to articulate existing problems. The research works are concerned mainly on the socio – economic, political, agricultural and moral problems witnessed in the contemporary society.

Olaboludele (2012) in his work on the leadership in the country criticizes the state of hardship that has taken over the land due to lack of sensitive leadership. Both the rich and poor are in tears crying, screaming because our collective sorrow is more than we can bear. Both research works review situations where the poor masses are suffering in the society and the leaders are enjoying in affluence.

Nwachukwu – Agbada (2009:13) in a study on Ezenwa – Ohaeto's poetic crafts, observes that his artistic aim was to use his poetry to propel his Nigerian people



out of their inertia in a world that has left them behind, particularly in the domain of National development. Because the poet's objective is to criticize or mock society for failing to rise to the occasion of lifting itself out of the morass of underdevelopment. Also to attack social anomalies, bad leaders and bad followers this is perhaps the role of the poet in national development. This is similar to the work under review because they both seek to address the bad governance in the country with the aim to amend situations.

Ogbuagu (2010) enumerates and criticizes the societal ills in the society observed in the poems of Olebara. These ills like suppressions, selfishness, deceptions, the lack of love and concern towards fellow human beings, slavery are what prevail in the society and all these make the poet to criticize and weep for the society. Obi (2012:181) observes that Emenanjo in his poem titled "**Uko n'uju**" criticizes as well as laments over endless difficulties which the poor masses are going through in the midst of plenty in the country. The two works stresses on the sufferings of the poverty stricken in a society, filled with abundant human resources.

Epuchie (2013:24) in a study on Okoye's drama, '**O kpotuwala**', observes that the play exposes and criticizes the frequency of military intervention in political leadership in Nigeria, in the pretext of saving the system from incompetent and corrupt politicians who are incapable of offering the masses, the basic necessities of life. It also cajoles & exposes the joy with which the masses welcome such military intervention only to discover that the military is worse, as their level of corruption is uncontrollable and beyond imagination. In the same vein, this research work deals on works that condemns the corruptions, looting, embezzlement practiced by our leaders in the government.

Ujummadu (2014: 19) laments that the Awka Rehabilitation centre for the old, disabled and Tramps requires the attention of good spirited Nigerians to ensure the sustenance of the physically challenged people whose lives depend on the mercy of donors. There are also the problems of taking care of the medical needs of the inmates and providing facilities with the basic needs of life because of the

belief that there is ability in disability. In the country today, the physically challenged people get worse treatment over their disabilities. It reviewed cases of neglect for the aged and physically challenged.

Adeleye (2014:30) points that it is however true that in moment of exuberance at political rallies, leaders often talk glibly and make promises which are often forgotten immediately after elections. The act of keeping promises by politicians is not the same as the art of making them. Politicians should talk less about their lofty ideas but keep their promises. Issues on the false deceptive promises used by politicians to get masses to vote them in power, have become a wide spread tactics therefore the citizens should only vote for people with credibility and good character.

Udegbe (2013: 3) points that as a nation we must go back to agriculture and relentlessly follow an agriculture and agribusiness development. This would make more sense to Nigerians if these would put more food on their table and more money in their pockets. There is growing youth apathy towards farming and farm business. More and more of them continue to drift to township in search of employment and white collar jobs. The advantage of gainful employment of our youth is one good way to curb crime and restiveness among our youths if it keeps them engaged in money yielding ventures in the farming world. The two works champions agriculture as a sure means for this nation to stand successfully again because if we neglect agriculture, the citizens will remain hungry.

Omorotionmwan (2014:19) writes that the press is constantly there for the people, educating them on their rights and obligations under the law. In essence, the media must stay awake in order that the rest of the society can sleep... Despite the fundamental importance of free speech and free press in a democracy, some people still believe that speech should be free only for those who agree with them. The ideas in both researches stress and seek to promote freedom of speech and expression by so doing all and sundry can air their views in the democratic society.

In a study carried out by Asika (2012:189) on Iyayi's work, '**Violence**' (1979), it is observed that the writer with keen perception, critically delved into the situational structure of the Nigerian society to expose the rotten, decayed, repugnant, pathetic and nauseating practices and vices that have bedeviled the nation. Some of the works here expose issues which the people engage in lust: amoral activities, debased behaviors, abnormal indulgence in wickedness, heartlessness and lack of concern for one another.

Ifechelobi (2012:261) on the research concerning achieving good governance, shows that Nigeria populace has in various ways reacted to poor leadership, high level of corruption and the flagrant use of position to amass personal wealth but it seems some of our leaders are insensitive to the opinions, pleas, criticism of the governed.

Agwuna (2014: 168) in a research on the satirical poems of Onyekaonwu (1989) observes that poets are naturally sensitive on how things stand in the society where they live, the attitudes of people, their frustrations, concerns, protests: through their criticism, such moral cancers like hypocrisy, pride, materialism, cruelty and vanity are exposed to protect the society from abuse as writers are known to play significant roles in the re-education, re-orientation and re-direction of their societies. Likewise the work under review condemns mostly the vices in the society, its shortcomings, set backs, flaws and seeks for possible ways in order to reposition the society.

Agwuna, (2009: 40) in a research on the prophetic poem of Onyekaonwu – '**Obodo m**', observes that many years after the poet's prophetic echoes, Nigeria leaders still neglect many important issues like construction of roads, water supply, electricity, agricultural, educational, health, irrigational developments, creating jobs, tackling the menace of oil spill and other environmental and socio-economic problems, security problems, improving the lives of people and eradicating poverty, only to chase frivolous things and waste time on unimportant issues. This is comparable to the research under review for both works seek to mirror the deplorable state of affairs in our society.

Oragwu & Ikemefuna (2013: 59) in a research on the poem '*Uwa Ojoo Nke A*' (This horrible world) points that there is a high rate of price increase and virtually all commodities and services and the individual or family income does not seem to match these increases (Financial scarcity). Also there is health and security challenges, high incidence of female nudity even in the church of God, sexual promiscuity, bribery and corruption are rampant. Both works express concern over the rate of immoralities prevalent in the society today where youths are exposed to immorality, rapes with dogs, goats, gay/lesbian activities such that the biblical Sodom & Gomorrah becomes a child's play.

Adetiba (2016:13) writes that Nigeria has retrogressed in all the core indices of nationhood including moral values. Almost sixty years of pumping oil and we cannot even have a smooth hundred kilometre drive anywhere in the country. Industries are dwindling, health and educational facilities are dwindling, employment is dwindling. The nation is poor; its people are poor. And because of this, crime is rising, militancy is rising, terrorism is rising. This is related to the research because they both address the rate at which poverty, lack, unemployment decline in all sectors of social facilities are increasing daily in the society.

Igata (2016: 38) writes that the Inyaba-Amagunze Belly Bridge in Enugu State constructed with wood in the 70's, wobbles at the impact of weight even as it has shown pronounced signs of caving in. This is related to the research because they both address the rate at which the dilapidated and collapsing water bridges in our society desperately needs repair.

In the same vein, Igata (2014:6) writes that the prevailing unemployment situation in Enugu State has primed the teeming unemployed youths in the State as willing tools for thuggery and political praise singing ahead of the 2015 general election. A visit to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) secretariat in the metropolis revealed that many of these youths lay siege on politicians who visit the party office to sing their praises and collect money from them. Armed with trumpets, wooden gongs and other musical instruments, the youths swoop on anybody

coming into the secretariat calling them all sorts of flattery names. The politicians are subjected to so much stress that they end up parting with some money to free themselves from the crowd. However, each time any politician throws some cash at the crowd, they abandon the politician to fight over the money. The rate of youth unemployment in the country is alarming. In a chat with one of these youths, he disclosed that he formed the band group to cash-in on the political activities at the moment to make brisk money. That is why we anchor here daily waiting to sing praise to them to get them drop money for us. The praises are not genuine at all. Politicians love praises and that is the only way we can get something from them. This is analogous to the work under review where the issue of youth unemployment is gradually becoming a big headache in the country.

Adetiba (2016 : 21) points that Nigerians not only destroyed the dreams of its forefathers and those who agitated for independence, it also destroyed the dreams of their offsprings. Many of those who went abroad for the golden fleece in the 60's and 70's were so anxious to return home immediately after their studies to contribute their quota to the country's growth. Many abandoned their dreams and went with the tide when they realized the reality of the Nigerian system: they neither found accommodation nor recognition at home. The epileptic state of Nigerian economy forces many good brains to leave the country. This is related to the research under review where people leave the country for overseas in search of greener pastures (Brain drain).

From the literature reviewed, one can see that the nature of leadership in the country is so porous that oppression, exploitation, injustice among many inhuman treatments still thrives in many quarters of our human affairs. This glaring anomaly is part of the factors that militate against the equitable growth of a nation and its people, thus much is expected of the writer who has to raise the consciousness of the people in order to free them from the tight grip of corruption, mismanagement and class exploitation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 A Research design

The design of study adopted for this research is the descriptive survey method research design. The design was adopted because there are so many Igbo poetry texts that criticize social vices.

#### 3.2 Sampling Technique

Purposive technique was adopted in the study. Through this technique, homogenous sampling which aims at achieving a homogenous sample was used. This will help the researcher to identify a sample whose units share similar characteristics or traits that need to be studied.

#### 3.3 Population and Sample

The population of this study is made up of Igbo literary poems: Eighteen Igbo poems with social criticisms were selected from six different Igbo poetry texts.

Examples are:

1. Ezeuko & Anowai (1989) Echiche (Elite) - NDU
2. Anozie, C.C (2006) Uche Bụ Akpa (Varsity) - ỌRỤ UGBO
3. Olebara, N.C (1975) Akpa Uche (University press) – E NWELA M N’OZU
4. Ugwunkwo , E.U (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) – O WUTERE M
5. Onuoha, J.A (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) –ACHOMORU
6. Okediadi, A. N. (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) – OBODO ONİCHA & MAHADUM
7. Nwadike, I.U (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) - NAIJIRIA OMA & UWA OJOO NKE A
8. Nwaozuzu, G.I (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) – NWAANYI
9. Obienyem, J.C (1975) Akpa Uche (University Press) – AKWA ALA IGBO NA-EBE
10. Mbah, B.M. (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) - UWA KA ONYE NJO?
11. Echebima, G.N (2001) Akọ na Uche (Evans) – IME IME OBODO & AJỌ AKWA MMIRI
12. Okoro, L.C (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) - PỤTA N’ỤZỌ ỌCHỊCHỊ
13. Oleru ,H. (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) - ỌCHỊCHỊ
14. Ikeokwu (2006) Akonuche (Pacific) – OBODO M
15. Emenanjo (1979) Utara Nti (Evan) – UKO N’ UJU

### **3.4 Procedure for Data Collection**

The researcher made use of the library and consulted many works on the three genres of literature: prose, drama and poetry. The internet was extensively used. The research recognizes the contributions of Nwadike (2006) and many others. The researcher was compelled to choose any poem that related to the topic in question whether written by a male or a female. Seventeen poems were selected for the study.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis**

The poems selected for this study were read and analyzed using Karl Marx sociological approach. The themes of the poems were given and the poems were translated in English since they are written in Igbo. This is followed by analyzing the Igbo poems critically in a social realism. In addition, the poet's styles of writing the poems were also examined. Furthermore, the information obtained from other books, encyclopedias, journals, and internet were used in juxtaposition while the findings and recommendations were made based on the facts and points that were discovered.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Preamble

In this chapter, attempt is made to examine the societal ills and vices in a flawed social structure as they are portrayed in the eighteen selected poems used for this study. The texts are :- Anozie's 'Ọrụ Ugbo', Ezeuko & Anowai's 'Ndu', Olebara's 'E Nwela m N'ozu', Ugwunkwo's 'O Wutere m, Onuoha's 'Achomoru', Okediadi's 'Mahadum' and 'Obodo Onicha', Nwadike's 'Naijiria Oma' and 'Uwa Ojoo Nke A', Okoro's 'Puta N'uzo Ochichi', Echebina's 'Ime Ime Obodo' and 'Ajo Akwa Mmiri', Oleru's 'Ochichi', Ikeokwu's 'Obodo M'and Emenanjo's Uko N'Uju.

#### 4.1 ỌRỤ UGBO

O mere dike maara ihe o chiri aja  
Dike maara ihe jiri aka chiri aja  
Jiri aka pikoba aja  
Jiri umeala na nrube isi pikoba aja

Maka nri  
Nri ji na ede  
Nri maka afọ  
Afọ ekweghi ukwu zuru ike

Abakeleke nwe ji  
Adani nwe osikapa  
Leeja na Nsuka nwe akidi  
Anam nwe azu  
Mgbowo nwe nkwelu  
Enugwu Ezike na Ohodo na-enyere ha aka

Ndi ogbara ohuru na-akwuba mbọ  
Mbọ nkoga  
Ogologo mbọ  
Mbọ Udele  
Mbọ edetu aja  
Yiri akpoola n'ukwu

#### FARMING

You made the wise Hero to collect sand.  
A wise Hero collected sand  
Moulding the sand with hands  
Moulding the sand in humility and respect

For the sake of food  
Yam and cocoyam  
Food for the stomach  
The stomach never allows rest for the leg.

Yam is obtained from Abakeleke  
Rice is obtained from Adani  
Leeja and Nsukka owns Beans  
Anam owns fishes  
Mgbowo owns Palm wine  
Enugwu Ezike and ohodo help them.

This new generation keeps their nails  
Nails of arrogance  
Long nails  
Vulture Nails  
Nails that never touch the soil  
Wearing high heels



Ije segem segem  
Ukwu n'akukū n'akukū  
Ije bụ egwu  
Egwu n'agụ

Walking elegantly  
With waist side by side  
Walking is dancing  
Dancing with hunger

Ngana ajọka  
Ngana kpuchie ute  
Aguu ekpuchee ya  
Ughere-ah-ah-ah-haa  
Onu eghere oghe  
Onu aguu

Idleness is bad  
When idleness covers the mat  
Hunger will unveils it  
Yawning! Ah ah ah haa  
The mouth opens  
Mouth of hunger

Aguu na-ebute ohi  
Ohi ji bu nsọala  
Ihe soro onye na-eme n'ụwa  
Ohi kacha njo  
Aka niile gaba n'aja  
Aka niile gburibe aja  
Aka aja aja  
Onu mmanu mmanu  
Afo juru eju  
Na-enye ume  
Ume di n'afu  
Ka awo ji ekwe egwu

Hunger breeds stealing  
Stealing yam is abominable  
Do whatever one does on the earth on earth  
Stealing is the worst.  
Let all hands soil  
Let all hand cultivate sand  
The hand that toils  
Shall eat  
The satisfied stomach  
Produces strength  
The Energy in the stomach  
Enables the frog to chorus

Hoo-hoo-hoo n'akukū mmiri  
Mmadu na awo  
Onye ka mara ihe?  
Mmadu ka o bu awo?  
Awo?  
Mmadu

Hooo! Hooo!! Hooo!!! Near the water  
Humans and frogs  
Who is wiser?  
Human or frogs?  
Frogs?  
Human beings

### **Anozie C. (Uche Bụ Akpa 2006)**

The poem has ten stanzas. C. The poet condemns the attitude of this new generation that has arrogantly refused to indulge in agriculture or farming ventures because of pride and laziness. He advises against these, and encouraged all and sundry to embrace agriculture, for only those who work shall eat.

Some of the themes in the poem point to these:

- a. Be humble and embrace Agriculture
- b. Idleness breeds hunger and stealing
- c. He that works shall eat.

In this poem ‘**Oru Ugbo**’, the poet criticizes the attitude of our youths who seem too proud and arrogant to work in the farm, stressing that man must work in order to eat. The poet points out that yam is obtained from Abakeleke, rice from Adani, Anam have fishes, Mgbowo produces palm wine together with Enugwu-Ezike and Ohodo. All these stem from hard work. People who pride about walking about elegantly, refusing to bend down and work, will end up in hunger, the youths of this present age feel so big to farm or engage in any agricultural activity. They walk elegantly, swaying their waist but with empty stomachs as the poet points out:

Ije bu egwu	Walking is dancing
Egwu n’agwu	Dancing in hunger (Stanza 5, 4-5)

Majority of the teeming unemployed youths would go hungry rather than work as farmers. They have long well manicured nails and would arrogantly never indulge in farm work as the poet points out.

Ndi ogbara oheru na-akwuba mbo	This new generation erect their nails
Mbo nkoga	Nails of arrogance
Ogologo mbo	Long Nails
Mbo Udele	Vulture’s nails
Mbo edetu aja	Nails that never touch the sand.

The youth of the new generation do not like to indulge in Agriculture because young people perceive agriculture as a profession of intense labour not profitable enough to support ones livelihood and cannot afford them to enjoy the pleasures of owning fast cars, beautiful homes, and latest gadgets. In the mind of the young people they think that farming means living a very hard life in the village and working with hoe and matches. People place great emphasis and encourage their children to study to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants. Farming or a career in agriculture is frowned upon as a poor man’s business and taken as a career of little importance by almost everyone while other courses like medicine, law are appreciated and held with high esteem. This diminishes the morale to study agriculture let alone practise it.

It takes longer time to achieve success in the field of agriculture than it would normally take for those in politics, banking or oil. There is also a shortage of individual workers who have attained agricultural successes which the youth may look upon as mentors or compellers, and provide career guidance and advice to agriculture. However the poet knows that the importance of agriculture cannot be over-emphasized and beckons on all to go back to the farm because agriculture is the main source of livelihood to many people and the back bone of the economic system of a given country. Hence:

Aka niile gaba n'aja	Let all hand go to the sand
Aka niile gburibe aja	Let hands cultivate the sand
Aka aja aja	The hands that toils
Ọnụ mmanụ mmanụ	Shall eat (Stanza 8)

This is the primary message of the poem; for all hands to cultivate ground. For decades agriculture has been associated with the production of essential food crops. At present agriculture above and beyond farming includes poultry, bee keeping, piggery, fishery, snail keeping, and rearing grass-cutters e.t.c

Today, processing, marketing and distribution of crops and livestock products are all acknowledged as part of ardent agriculture. Agriculture plays a vital role in the entire life of a given economy. Many people directly rely on agriculture as a means of living. In most developing countries, agriculture is the main source of national income. A stable agriculture sector ensures a nation of food security. Food sector prevents malnourishment that has traditionally been believed to be one of the major problems facing the developing countries. Remember, if one had a meal today, he or she should thank a farmer. Agriculture provides fodder for domestic animals and cows provide people with milk which is a form of protective food. Moreover livestock also meets people food requirements. It provides medicinal and herbal drugs. If there is a smooth development practice of agriculture, imports are reduced while export increases considerably. The main source of raw materials to major industries like cotton, cocoa, and tobacco, edible and non-edible oils stems from agricultural products.

Agriculture produces more employment opportunities for the labour force and so reduces high rate of unemployment in developing countries caused by the fast growing population. Since agriculture employs many people like the farm work processors, machine operators, construction of irrigation schemes, drainage system etc, it contributes to economic development. As a result, the national income level as well as people's standard of living is improved.

Many poets point out the benefits of indulging in agriculture because it is a sure way to wealth. For example in an aspect of agriculture – growing palm trees, 'Nkwu' can help the teeming unemployed youths to address unemployment. Ubesie (1975:30) in the poem 'Nkwu', Mmaduekwe (1975:24) in 'Osisi na-amị Ego', Nzeakor (1975:16) in 'Nkwu' have similar views on the abundant wealth that can be tapped in agriculture by growing palm trees – palm kernels, palm oil baskets, pomades, soaps, firewood, ropes etc. These can help alleviate poverty, encourage self reliance and ensure that youth energy is positively channelled into productive use.

Ogunjiofor (1975:53) in "Osisi na Ndu anyi" reveals that agriculture through plants can solve both financial and health problems:

Ndu na umu ya bi n'ohia.	Life and her children reside in the forest.
Onye choro ha, o bawa ohia.	Who desires them, enters the forest
Onye aguu ji chowa nri	He who is hungry shall look for food
Nri o na-achọ bu osisi.	The food he is searching for are plants
Onye oria ji chowa ogwu.	The sick one should look for medicine
Ogwu o na-achọ bu osisi	The medicine he is looking for are plants.

Agriculture will put food on the table, give good health through healings and medications from the herbs and forest fruits, to live healthy life and produce wealth. Ofomata (2000:12) in 'Inine' (vegetables) points at the benefit of farming on vegetables stressing that when one indulges in vegetable plantation, hunger is banished because the outcomes would wipe away the tears of poverty from the person's eyes and becomes a source for wealth production at old age or retirement. Hence:

Inine	Vegetables
E leta ya anya	When cared for

O hichaa onye nwe ya anyammiri	Would wipe away tears from its owner
E gboro ya mkpa ya	If properly taken care of
Ọ kpaara onye nwe ya	Will become source of provision
Nkụ udu mmiri (Stanza 1, line 6-9)	In time of want and need (Stanza 1, Line 6-9)

Finally, Ezeuko & Anowai (1989:34) in ‘Ụzọ Adighi’, stresses on the urgent need for every individual to work and invest in Agriculture pointing that if one rejects or neglects farming, the source or means of abundant food supply will close. Hence;

“Mgbe Ị jụrụ na Ị gaghị akoputa nri n’onwe gi,  
 Ụzọ mbubata ihe oriri chiri echi” (stanza 3, lines 3-4)  
 When you refuse to cultivate food by yourself,  
 Your means of food supply will close.

In summary, the poet from the poem “**Oru Ugbo**” criticizes the youths in our society who pride about, roaming around in idleness and hunger looking for what to steal and admonishes them to be wise, humble themselves, embrace hard work and return to farming, stressing that through agriculture, they will be fulfilled and satisfied. The country is at a great loss if agriculture is neglected, as Udegbe (2013:3) points out that agriculture cannot be pushed at the back corner if we will avoid critical hunger, poverty and the restiveness that will follow.

Agriculture can reduce poverty, generate incomes, create employment for the teeming unemployed youths, revive the economy, feed the poor masses and minimize the frustrations and agony of going to bed on empty stomach as observed in society today. (See **Appendix II. Picture 1. Pg, 172**)

## 4.2 NDU

Ndu abughị oriri na onunụ  
Ndu abughị ole akụ na ụba i nwere  
Ndu abughị onye afọ ukwu  
Ndu abughị onye ihe na-agara nke oma

Ndu dị ụzọ abụọ  
Ndu ụwa na ndu eluigwe  
Aja a churụ maka ndu eluṅwa a  
Bụ ya na-eduba na ndu eluigwe  
Gini ka ndu bu?  
Noro dozie ụzọ.

N'ichọ ụzọ i nyere mmadu aka ka ndu di  
Ihunanya na eziumume na-enye ndu  
Nsopuru na ime ihe di mma  
N'ihu Chineke na mmadu na-enye ndu  
O bu ihe ndi a na-eme ka ndu too ogologo  
Ma dikwa utọ

N'ogige ahijia ndu ka ndu di  
Ebe ekworo na anya ụfu  
Gara njem alota alota  
Ebe udo na ihunanya na-asọ isi  
Ebe ahụ ka ndu nke mmuọ malitere.

## LIFE

Life is not about eating and drinking  
Life is not about how wealthy you are  
Life is not one with a big belly  
Life is not about one who is successful.

There are types of life  
Life on earth and life in the kingdom  
Sacrifice offered for life on earth  
Is what takes one to life eternity  
What then is life?  
Stay and amend ways.

There is life in seeking for ways to help others.  
Love and Goodness gives life  
Respect and good works  
Before God and man gives life  
These are what prolong life  
Meaningful and happy

In the place of foliage, there is life  
Where strife and Jealousy  
Journeyed never to come back  
Where peace and love are blindfolded  
That is where life in the spirit starts.

**Ezeuko & Anowai (Echiche 1989)**

This poem of four stanzas written by Ezeuko & Anowai is a didactic poem that instructs and reveals the true meaning of life. Life is not all about food and wealth. The essence of living is in making life better for others, improving the quality of life by helping other people and providing laws for the pursuit of well being of others. Love, goodness, kindness, all these virtues prolong life, make life meaningful for human existence on earth till eternity.

Some of the themes in the poem point to these:

- a. Neglect in the welfare of the masses
- b. Giving help to the needy
- c. Elimination, selfishness, strife and Jealousy
- d. The meaning of the true living.

The mission of the poet as a critic in the poem ‘**Ndu**’ directs our attention to the neglected social welfare of the helpless masses. In society today, so many important issues and amendments are neglected and abandoned, especially as it concerns the poor masses, the down trodden, the aged and the less-privileged. We live in a society where leaders do not care or show concern to the basic needs of the people. They are self-centred and selfish, amassing wealth without any interest of the populace in mind, as Acholonu (2000:13) observes.

Our collective predicament is both caused and compounded by our societal ills as many Nigerian leaders seem to care less about the welfare of the ruled majority. Many developmental problems facing Nigeria today include the fact of a disintegrated bourgeoisie or middle-class, the near collapse of our socio-cultural and political system and structures, seriously weakened, by the role of many of our incompetent, dishonest, corrupt, selfish and unpatriotic leaders.

Almost all the systems or structures in the society are about to collapse; the poor quality of education, non-maintenance of roads, poor electricity supply, poor drainage system, low quality of medical services, lack of security, poor water supply, lack of control on fake or adulterated drugs, lack of control in bribery and corruption, constant killings of innocent citizens due to lack of adequate security, lack of employment of the teeming youths, lawlessness, lack of quality food and starvation, political or religious rivalry, neglecting to keep the surroundings clean and tidy, the way we treat life- not caring for man and having no value for life and for the good of all, neglect to taking vaccines, not caring to avoid smoking cigarettes and consuming hard drugs, diseases like HIV, Ebola, not accepting one another for what we are, intimidating and dominating people by kidnapping, witchcraft, Boko Haram, lack of prison reforms and tribal or ethnic disintegration, increase in poverty and diseases, neglect in our environment by allowing pollutions, deforestations and not planting more trees, neglecting to harness and develop our God-given talent e.t.c. The depressing and pathetic thing is that those

in authority have no vision or wisdom on how best to tackle these turbulent issues. Their primary target is on eating, drinking, lavish spending and amassing in looted wealth, which should not be, as the poet points out:

Ndụ abughị oriri na oñụñụ  
Ndụ abughị ole akụ na ụba i nwere  
Ndụ abughị onye afo ukwu  
Ndụ abughị onye ihe na-agara nke oma.

Life is not about eating and drinking  
Life is not about how wealthy you are  
Life is not a pot-bellied one  
Life is not who is successful. (Stanza 1, 1- 4)

The message of the poet, to the visionless leaders, to the affluent, to the people, living in a society with traumatic and paralyzing social dislocations and a deep state of despair, is not to sit aimlessly in the mundane pursuit of eating and drinking but to “amend ways” for that is the meaningful purpose of living. Hence:-

Gịni ka ndụ bu?      What is life?  
Noro dozie ụzo      Stay and amend the ways.

The ignored and neglected societal structure seen in almost all sectors in the country need reconstruction, reorientation, rebranding, reeducating, rebuilding and reorganizing in order to update and improve the quality and standard of the living condition of the people. The new direction in vision and thought will stress the importance of people merging their collective efforts in what should be beneficial to the general society. For example amending and improving on the welfare of the masses, revisiting the educational, socio-political, economic, health agricultural and environmental sectors, researching, improving and developing on our technology for the emancipation of the common man.

The future must not be underrated but must be properly protected; therefore there should be a change for the better. In the moral aspect, people go to church in great



numbers, in millions but their actions are never that of Christians. Today, even in the church, what is happening – atrocities, there are criminals, witches, wizards, ritual murderers, adulterers, wicked people, looters, all going to church. The only way out is change, amend ways and accept the word of God and never harden the heart to the word of God. The poets also reveal other answers to the meaning of ‘life’. Hence:

N’icho ụzọ inyere mmadu aka ka ndu di  
Ihunanya na eziumume na-enye ndu (*Stanza 3, line 1-2*)

There is life in seeking for ways to help others  
Love and goodness gives life.

The society is filled with greedy, covetous, selfish and self-centred people who do not help the poor and less –privileged but amass in their personal wealth through embezzling the public fund. Giving is living. Givers never lack, only those who share are truly free. The poets extol the act of reaching out to help and give out to those in need for that is the true essence of living. Ugwueye (2009:20) says that giving and sharing what we have with the less-privileged can certainly change the face of poverty and Joshua (2000) points that if we share what we have with others, the country and the world at large will not be as they are today. Some people have more than enough to eat, even as others eat from dustbins. One of the major destroyers of human destinies is the spirit of greed and covetousness. People increase and flourish when they share and not when money is hoarded. Money is not meant to be hoarded, it is life’s manure; if it is hoarded it smells but when it is spread it makes everything around it to grow and blossom. Nothing comes into a clenched fist only an open palm can receive (Okuma, 2009:66). What is life if not to do well and contribute to the welfare of others? The greatest joy of life is not amassing wealth or materials but in transforming and enriching the lives of people through helping and giving, investing in the lives of the poor, the less-privileged through scholarships, sponsorship, donations, grants etc. One becomes great when the welfare and well being of others matter to one and the

willingness to help is expressed. Greatness cannot be measured by how much a person has but in the measure of his or her influence and impact on the lives of other people. Living for others is the true definition of greatness. The memories of those who live for themselves die with them but the memories of those who live for others continue to live long after death. Winston Churchill says, “*you make a living by what you get, you make a life by what you give (online)*” The biggest and best investment one can ever make therefore, is in other human beings.

The society is plagued with so many people who cannot afford the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, water, clothes. There are lunatics and street beggars, prisoners, destitute, the orphanage homes, disabled people, people begging for aid to do a heart or kidney transplant, displaced people from homes due to flood disaster, insurgency from Boko Haram attacks, lepers, widows, the deaf and dumb, refugees, the blind and partially sighted, the aged, people living with cancer and HIV.

In the anguish of the suffering mankind, the primary concern should be how to put smiles on the faces of those less-privileged, how to show kindness in order to remove hunger, thirst, poverty, homelessness, disease and starvation and help make the world a better place for them to live in. **(See Picture 2. Pg 173)**

In a land full of corruption, itching palms and selfish heart, it seems like not many people care. There is no much concern for human lives as we see these less-privileged roaming the streets day by day, begging for alms for survival.

The need to plant love and goodness by giving financial help to the less-privileged in society makes life meaningful, to promote peace, concord and selfless service to humanity.

However, the poet’s intention in the poem ‘Ndu’ as critics is to draw attention to the various social-political and economic issues that need amendments and improvements. These challenges if not checked and corrected, breed stagnation and retard progress in any developing society. For instance, Nigeria produced and

planted rice before but today rice is imported in large quantities. Nigeria used to have good medicines but today most tablets are nothing but chalk. We used to enjoy peace but today, kidnappings, terrorism, especially Boko Haram has set in. Ghanaians used to troop to Nigeria in search of means of livelihood, today, Nigerians are trooping into Ghana for quality education and standard living. Roads are built today, next month they develop potholes. These are problems in society, if they are not checked and corrected; society will keep dwindling and falling backwards.

In today's economic and competitive environment, in our everyday living, the poets' vision is for all to make life a better place to live in by improving on the standards, day by day and not allow it to retard. More so, one must not forget to help the less-privileged in society. All these make life meaningful, prolonging lives and matching towards a more dynamic and progressive society.

### 4.3 ENWELA M N'OZU

Ugbu a, a kuchi dere m igbe ozu  
Ka unu chetara na m bu mmadu  
Ugbu a, ka unu cherara na m bu onye nke unu  
Ugbu a, ka o soro unu ikwu okwu oma banyere m

Mgbe m di ndu n'owa  
Adi m ka nwa okuko nne hapuru n'ike  
Adi m ka nwa nkita na-asaghi anya  
Nne ya anwuo.  
Abu m onye di na nsogbu, mkpa n'ahuhu  
Onye chi ya were ehiehie jie  
Onye mutara oku n'ala ndi mmuo

Puta n'ala ndi mmadu ya anyuo  
Oge niile m na-akwa akwa  
O nweghi onye siri m ndo  
Ka o na-enwe onye juru ihe na-esogbu m  
Oge niile agu na-agu m,  
Naani echiche ka m jiri mee nri  
Ebe na-enweghi onye nyere m rie

Oge niile na ndu m ka uwa juru m  
Uwa nke m edeputa m n'uzo sonyuo oku  
M buru onye a juru aju  
Onye na-enweghi ihe oma a ga-ekwu maka ya

Ugbu a anwuola m  
Taa ka m matara ihe ndi uwa a bu  
Unu ndi na-acho ezumike oru  
Onwu m ebuterela unu ya taa.  
Taa ka ndi okwu na-adi mma n'onu  
Ga-ekwu ihe di ha n'onu banyere m  
Taa ka unu ga-akpo m ome mma  
Taa ka unu ga-akpo m nkita nwaanyi zuru  
Ma o bu onye ezi omume

Ugbu a, a na-acho ikpochide m aja,  
Ka umu nne m na ndi enyi m ga-aputa  
Kee ihu di ka onwu gburu m  
Ugbu a, ka onye o bu la ga-acho  
Ikwu ihe di ya n'onu  
Ugbua a, ka ndi mmadu ga-asij  
Ewoo! Chineke nara mkpuru obi ya  
Maka na o tara ahuhu n'owa a.

### DO NOT OWN ME AT DEATH

Now that I have been sealed in a coffin  
That you remember that I am a human being  
Now you know I relate to you  
Now, you like to will talk good about me.

When I was living on earth  
I was like a hen abandoned by the mother  
I'm like a puppy that has not yet its eyes  
When the mothers die  
I am one troubled with wants and sufferings.  
One whose night fell in the day  
One that got fire from the spirit world

On entering into the world, the light extinguishing  
All the time I have been crying.  
Nobody pitied me  
Or asked what was wrong with me.  
All the time I have hungry.  
Only thinking became my food  
Since no one gave me to eat

Throughout my life, the world abandoned me.  
Life led me to where light went off.  
I become abandoned  
He who knows nothing will talk about him

Now, I am dead  
Today I know what the people are  
You that desire rest from work  
My death has brought it for you  
Today, those who like to talk  
Will say what are on their list  
Today you will call me a good one.  
Whether he has good behaviour  
Or one possessing in a good behavior

Now that I am about to be buried  
My brothers and friends will come  
Looking sad as the death that killed me  
Now everybody will want  
To talk whatever is on his lips  
Now, that the people can say  
Alias! May God receive his soul  
Because he suffered on earth

Mgbe ahụ ka ha ga-ebido  
Wụkwasi kwa ego n'elu igbe ozu m.  
Uru gini ka ego a baara m?  
Ugbu a ejeruola m ebe m na-eje  
Ihe o soro unu werenu ozu m mee  
Ndi onwe mmadu n'ozu  
Otu aka unu si enwe mmadu

Ugbu a, a donyela m n'ili,  
Ugbu a, unu na-asị m gaa n'udo,  
Ebe m na-enweghi udo n'uwa.  
Geenu nti ihe aja na-ada n'elu m  
Aja ka ha na-ekpochide m  
Ugbu a, ha na-azọ ukwu n'elu ili m.

Ugbu a, elisiala m, mmadu niile laa,  
Laa n'ulo ha, na-eri, na-anu  
Chefuo na echi di ime  
Ugbu a, o nweghi onye na-echeta m  
Obi di m mma na nkita erighi ozu  
Ogbenye di ka m  
Ma unu ndi di ndu amaghi ebe unu  
Ga-anọ anwu, ma a ga-elikwa unu?  
Unu amaghi ma enyi m udele ga-eri eriri afọ unu?

Otu a ka amamiihie unu di  
Ndi onwe ozu!

That is when they will start  
Pouring money on my casket  
Of what gain is that money to me?  
Now I have reached my destination  
Whatever you like, do with my corpse  
Those who own people at death  
That is how you own people

Now, that I am lowered in the grave  
Now, you are telling me to go in peace  
When I had no peace on earth  
Listen to the sound of sand poured on me  
They are pouring sand on me  
Now, they are trampling my grave.

Now I have been have buried and all has gone  
Gone to their houses eating and drinking  
Forgetting that no one knows tomorrow  
Now, no one remembers me  
I am happy that dogs did not eat my corpse  
A poor person like me  
But you who are living, do not know where you are  
Where you will die or whether you will be buri  
You do not know whether my friend the vulture will eat your  
intestine?  
This is how your wisdom looks like  
Owners of corps

#### **Nnamdi Olebara (Akpa Uche 1975)**

This is a lamentation poem with nine stanzas, written by Nnamdi Olebara. The poet condemns the attitude of people who neglect their aged relative when they are living but when they die; they spend lavishly on the burial ceremony. Some of the themes in the poem are:

- A. Neglect of the aged ones
- B. Selfishness
- C. Reckless spending
- D. Maltreatments

The poet as a social critic criticizes the attitude of people who heartlessly abandon their relatives, friends, aged ones without taking care of them. They are left all alone and not catered for. No house helps to cook the meals, keep their clothes and environment clean or even take care of their health by taking them to the hospitals or giving them medications when sick. They are recklessly neglected

and left to their fate. They are abandoned to go without food, weeping in solitary anguish with none to show concern or sympathy. **(See Picture 3. Pg 174)** Usually these agonizing maltreatments send the elderly to regrets and depression, more especially when they are sick or disabled. Most times, they wish and long to end it all and be free from the pains of neglect and abandonment. When they die, thousands of money is spent on the burial ceremony. The food and drinks flow. People who never cared for them when they were living come and speak good concerning them. These concern and care should have been showered on them when they were alive not when they are gone.

It is sad to note that this generation does not care for the aged. There is no compassion and love shown on these vulnerable old ones who have contributed their quota to the development of society. If the younger ones cater for them they would age with dignity. Most times when aging comes, the aged people are bed-ridden and suffer from diseases or debility. Some suffer mental illness, amnesia or terminal illness; whatever the challenge, they should be supported and not abandoned to suffer in anguished loneliness for no one knows tomorrow. As the poet points out:-

Ugbu a, e lisiàla m, mmadu niile laa,  
Laa n'ùlò ha, na-eri, na-anụ  
Chefuo na echi di ime

Now they have buried me and have all gone  
Gone to their houses, eating and drinking  
Forgetting that no one knows tomorrow (Stanza 9, Line 1-3)

We live in a society where nobody cares, everybody solving his or her problems, forgetting to take care of the old ones. One should be touched by the sufferings of the old. It is everybody's prayer to live long to old age. Even the government subjects the aged pensioners to pains before they pay pension to retired workers. There are also no standard old peoples homes well equipped to take care of the elderly. However, in most cultures throughout the world, elder care is a responsibility that falls on the shoulders of the family. As people age, they need

care-giving, lack of caretaker is a serious problem for the older people who have chronic conditions or limitations in their ability to care for themselves and their homes.

In summary, the poet's vision is for all and sundry to take proper care of the aged so that they will not feel forgotten. As Mother Theresa said, being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat (online quote).

This is in line with the sociological approach of Karl Marx that has its roots in class struggle and demand above all, equality, fairness and a class less society that alleviates and betters the lives of the common people.

#### 4.4 O WUTERE M

Ala Naijirĩa  
Olulu mmiri na-asụ wuruwuru  
Buzi ala kporo nkụ kpokiririm  
O wutere m  
Onye wuru gidigidi  
Ka o dara ogbi  
A nuzikwaghi kpim  
Ala Naijirĩa  
Olee umu  
Ha na-erikwa nri?  
Ha o na-agakwa akwukwo?

O wutere m  
Ala Naijirĩa  
Akunauba gi niile  
Ka e bufusiri mba Ofesi

Cheta na akụ ruo ulo  
A mara onye kpara ya  
Bullata ego gi n'ulo  
Ka ndi ogbenye keta oke

Akajiaku na uba gi  
Oji aku nwata welie aka ya elu  
Aka jiwe ya, o wedata aka ala  
Aku fechaa, o daara awo.

#### I AM GRIEVED

Land of Nigeria  
Deep water gushing with might  
But now a land as dry as bone  
I am grieved  
A mighty statue  
Has fallen  
Not a sound is heard from her again  
Land of Nigeria  
Where are your off springs?  
Do they feed at all?  
Do they attend schools?

I am grieved  
Land of Nigeria  
All your wealth  
Have been carted to overseas

Remember that when wealth comes home  
The owner will be acknowledged  
Bring home all your wealth  
That the poor will get their share

The wealthy and your wealth  
He that takes a child's wealth up  
When he becomes tired, he will bring down his hand  
For whatever goes up must come down

Ugwunkwo, E. (Akonuche 2006)

The poem has five stanzas, written by Ugwunkwo, E. It is a lamentative poem, lamenting and criticizing the attitude of the corrupt leaders that loot and steal the nation's treasure and hide it in overseas bank while the poor masses suffer in abject poverty. The poet wonders in grief and lamentation and wonders if the citizens still feed and attend school because of the amount of money being diverted to the foreign account. The themes are:

- A. Looting and embezzlement of funds
- B. Corrupt or selfish leadership
- C. Lack of concern for the poor masses

The poet is grieved over the corrupt looters we have as leaders in the country who divert public funds for their selfish use. Nigeria was formally a great country but today everything seems to be crumbling, crashing and almost everything is falling apart and the center cannot hold as the poet writes.

Na Naijiria	Land of Nigeria
Olulu mmiri na-asu wuruwuru	Deep waters gushing with might
Buzi ala kporo nku kporirim	Is now a land as dry as bone
O wutere m	I am grieved (stanza 1, line 1-4)

The country, Nigeria, used to be a pride and the giant nation in Africa. Businesses bloomed, education soared, peace reigned, but today, the mighty nation is dry with poverty, the agricultural sector that used to export the pyramid of groundnut has disappeared, tin ore, cocoa, due to the over dependence on oil, now imports everything including toothpick. The country that once lived in peace is battling with bombings, shooting of innocent citizens by the dreaded Boko Haram sect and sending the entire nation into tears, bloodshed and disasters. The nation that once had good electricity supply now has an epileptic supply of light. International investors and business men that engaged in business transactions are now running for their lives because of the kidnappings, abductions, insurgencies and bombings all over the country. The educational sector is degrading as most students and pupils are taught under the trees for lack of infrastructure and poor funding, strikes in the educational and health sectors every now and then. Our people now abuse strikes as if they are at war with members of the public. These recurring strikes deal devastating blows more on ordinary Nigerians who in those days in the early 60's graduates are employed immediately they graduate from school but



today, no job exists and millions of graduates, masters degree and PhD holders roam about the street, searching for jobs that never exist. In those good old days in the aviation sector, we hardly ever hear of plane crash but today, rickety brand of planes are dumped at the airport to transport passengers to the next world. Plane crash's horrifying scenes are on the newspapers and media almost every month. And it seems nobody cares, what the leaders do is to battle over who occupies the seat of authority and who is smarter enough to steal the highest amount of the country's treasure and hoard it overseas, while the poor masses and the younger generations waste away in want and poverty. Hence,

O wutere m	I am grieved
Ala Naijiria	Land of Nigeria
Akụnụba gị niile	All your wealth
Ka e bupusiri mba ofesi	Have been carted overseas (Stanza 3, line 1-4)

There are lots of scandals daily on Nigerian politicians stealing money that is to surplus for them to use or need. They spare no funds, assets or public accounts because they are morally depraved and ethically bankrupt. They steal so much that no matter how lavish their life styles within the country become, they can only use a fraction of their loot in their life times. Most times their looted funds are hidden in foreign accounts, especially Switzerland because home is not safe. Nigerians lose the fund because the foreign countries thieves hosting the funds blackmail their families and Nigerians at their deaths. The ultimate loser is the ordinary Nigerian in the street. So when will Nigerian leaders stop looting the funds they cannot use. When will they start realizing that the public at home and their foreign deposit countries do not even like them, but love only what they bring to them, at the expense of their own people.

The US government recently proves about N483, 000 million looted by the former Nigerian dictator – Late Sanni Abacha, in the largest kleptocracy forfeiture action ever brought in US (online). **(See Picture 4 Pg 175)** The culture of looting public funds in our country is alarming. The past and the present Nigerian politicians compete on who builds the best marble houses on hilltops overseas with looted

funds, while the looting continues, the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions are in shambles, the universities are shut for months, no good quality roads, no quality pipe borne water. The health system remains so rotten that almost all the kleptocrats pride themselves in accessing health facilities abroad in their lavishly funded campaign. So when will Nigerian leaders start to realize that the Nigerians are losing a lot to these greedy western banks and countries? Kumolu (2009:39) laments those past leaders who have access to the nations treasury between 1960 and 2006 are believed to have stolen about \$20 trillion; that amount, however was six times the amount required to re-fix Europe from the ruins of World War II.

Such alarming greed by leaders is shocking. If these fraudulent leaders invested a half of the money on industries, unemployment could have been a thing of the past. When will African or Nigerian leaders start copying some of the great leaders in some African countries that came into power with a positive mission to accomplish, selflessly and for the liberation of the poor and oppressed in society? The likes of Nelson Mandela of South Africa – A freedom fighter who never looted a dime but was ready to give up his life for the liberation of his country and freedom of the black people in South Africa, the Tanzanian President Julius Nwalimu (Teacher) Kambaraji Nyerere, Mzee (Chief) Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya revolution, Nkwame Nkuruma of Ghana, Late Odimegwu Ikemba Ojukwu – who fought for the liberation of the Igbo people in Nigeria, during the Biafran war, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia (Kk), Captain J.J. Rawlings of Ghana, the back bone of Ghana's economic recovery which is still improved today.

These men of courage, selflessly served their fatherland and had the interest and welfare of the masses at heart, changed and effected positive changes in their different countries unlike some of their African counterparts and most of the corrupt military and civilian rulers in our country whose primary role is to loot and embezzle the economy of their country, to the detriment of the suffering poor masses in society. The poet urges them to bring back those looted wealth home and share them to the poor. Hence;

Cheta na akụ ruo ụlọ.

Remember that when wealth is brought home.

A mara onye kpara ya.	The owner will be acknowledged.
Bulata ego gi n'ulo.	Bring home all your wealth
Ka ndi ogbenye keta oke.	That the poor will get their shares. (Stanza 4 lines 1-4).

Nigeria has what it takes to be a great nation especially with her human and natural endowment, but with the diversions of funds, looting and embezzlements the common man suffers because most of the impoverished structures and shabby infrastructure which are in defect and mostly used by the poor masses.

The public or government schools, government hospitals, pipe-borne water etc. The looted funds could have been used to revive these failing sectors for the ordinary masses. The leaders travel to developed countries for better medical treatments, send their children to the best schools overseas and neglect the suffering people in our country.

This aligns with the sociological criticism of Karl Marx that talks about the relevance of literature in our daily struggle for the right of a people to the products of their sweat. In other words, the masses should survive with the wealth of their nation where they toil and work as against the rulers of our country that siphon the country's wealth selfishly to overseas while the poor starve in poverty.

## 4.5 ACHOMORU

## JOB HUNTING

Chai!

Kee ihe m ga-akoro chi m  
Na umu mmadu na-agaghari n'uzo  
Ka aturu enweghi onye ozuzu  
Tufiakwa!

Achomoru

I ruola ala  
I na-eweda mmadu n'ala  
Na-ebute obara mgbali elu.

Achomoru

Onye dabara n'onya gi atola  
Ndi mahadum na-aputa chowa oru  
Ndi sekondiri na-aputa na-akwughari.  
Amaghi onye bu onye

Awful!

What am I to tell my God  
That people are roaming the streets  
Like sheep without shepherds  
God forbid!

Job hunting

You have committed abomination  
You reduce people  
And inflict High Blood Pressure

Job Hunting

One in your trap is finished  
Graduates from universities seek for employment  
Secondary school leavers roam about,  
We do not know who is who,

Ufodu lekata ihe i na-eme ha.  
Ha etinye isi n'azumahia

Some who cannot endure these  
Enter into trading.

Achomoru  
I meelanu ufodu abanye oru abalidiegwu  
Ufodu na-aga na dibia  
Ka ha nweta oru

Job Hunting  
You have turned some to robbers  
Some consult native doctors  
To get employed

Achomoru  
I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo  
Akwokwu anya mbu  
I mere dimkpa o na-anata mkpari n'aka ndi o toro  
I mere ka mmadu ree ugu ya  
Chi! aru emeela.  
Umụ Naijiria bilienụ.

Job Hunting  
You reduced a graduate to seem as if  
He had never seen a school  
You made a full grown man receive insults from his inferiors  
You made man to reduce prestige  
Abominable!  
Nigerians arise

Butenu mma na egbe unu  
Ka anyi chuiwa ya  
Ka anyi nwudo onye iro  
Gbuo ya  
Lie ya.

Come along with your matchets and guns  
For us to chase him  
And arrest this enemy  
And kill it  
And bury it

Joy Onuoha (Akponuche 2006)

This is a poem of six stanzas written by Onuoha, J. It is a lamentation poem that laments and condemns the rate at which unemployment is increasing in society.

The themes are:

- A. The high rate of unemployment.
- B. Hardship for the job seekers
- C. Humiliations and insults resulting from job hunting.
- D. A solution to unemployment.

Unemployment is a serious problem facing the country which no-one really knows what the solution can be. The poet is touched by the plight of these university and secondary school leavers who roam about the street like sheep without shepherds, looking for jobs that never exist. Most times, these job seekers lose motivation and focus after countless rejections, such that they would not like to continue because they do not want to look like a nuisance. Searching for jobs day after day with no success is a very hard experience. All these can lead to depression, pessimism, low self esteem, stress, anxiety, insecurity, sickness, as the poet says,

I na-ebute obara mgbalielu

You give high blood pressure (Stanza 2 line 4)

The frustrations and humiliations and worries associated with these can bring high blood pressure, loss of personal identity. People need a job to support and sustain themselves, have a home, food, decent clothing, access to a doctor, have a sense of pride and self-worth, for their survival and to stop boredom. Many people, both the graduates and secondary school leavers, are desperately seeking for jobs but cannot secure any. (See **Picture 5 Pg 176**) In a highly stressful situation, these job-hunters opt for anything available to do like trading or other business in order to put some food on the table. Some of these unemployed, because they are unable to earn money and meet financial obligations, go to the extent of consulting native doctors or joining armed robbery in order to survive. Unemployment, lack of financial resources and social responsibility may push unemployed workers to take job that do not fit their skills or allow them to use their talents as the poet points out:-

Achomoru

I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo

Akwukwo anya mbu

I mere dimkpa o na-anata mkpari n'aka ndi o toro

I mere ka mmadu ree ugwu ya

(Stanza 5 line 1-5)

Job Hunting

You reduced a graduate to seem as if

He had not seen a school before

You made a full grown man receive insults from his inferiors

You made man to reduce prestige

In the society today, so many graduates of Law, Medical Laboratory Science, Geology, Nursing, and Petroleum Engineering are looking for jobs! It is heart breaking, humiliating and insulting to go on and on desperately seeking for a job and never getting one. This scarcity of job is also connected to crimes as people are finding alternative ways of obtaining money for survival. It can even cause suicide. People constantly get manipulated trying to earn something for a living. Today these qualified graduates, drive commercial keke tricycle, motorcycles, learn tailoring, carpentry, open up restaurants and eating places, in order to survive in this country. It is distressful and annoying. The poet calls on all and sundry in the country to arise so that they can chase, arrest, kill and bury the biting scourge of unemployment, ravaging the society today.

It is however sad to point out that jobs exist only for the privileged few, jobs exist for the sons and daughters of the elites, the high class people, the affluent, the ruling class. These rich classes of people use their high connection to place and get their children or wards in high places or offices. Most parents fervently wish their children to enjoy the same gratifications that they have been fortunate enough to receive from their own rich business or careers. They therefore help them strive to get accomplished but the poor are mostly the victims of unemployment. To get rid of unemployment is just like trying to pass a cow through the eye of a needle. Animasaun (2014:7) writes that during the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) job recruitment exercise, over nine million people applied for 4,500 posts and to make matters worse, they also had to pay N1, 000 each for processing the form. The department raked in over N6 billion in the year 2014. It is disturbing and unethical that such unscrupulous people are cashing in on other peoples miseries, knowing that these people are unemployed. In the process, so many of the applicants lost their lives during the stampede as applicants rushed through the gate of the stadium. President Jonathan gave the directive that he has directed that families of all those who lost their lives would be given instant employment. It is not a good way of solving a badly managed disaster or a deeply flawed culture that sweeps corruption and man slaughter under the carpet. Life is cheap in Nigeria. The poor and young seem to bear the brunt of the administration incompetence.

Omoni (2013) warns that any society that fails to guarantee and maintain a steady means of livelihood is laying a foundation for insecurity which manifests itself in violence, war, rape, robbery, youth, restiveness, terrorism, wanton destruction of lives and property, examination malpractice, stealing, abduction, prostitution and thuggery. In conclusion, the nation should however, get up from slumber and address the ugly situation for a better tomorrow.

This is in line with the sociological theory of Karl Marx which pays attention to class struggle in society and draws attention to the unfair and exploitative conditions, seeking to reverse the system and entrust a greater portion of society's

wealth in the hands of its producers. Marxist therefore, encourages a revolutionary spirit as the only reasonable way to change history and achieve posterity.

## 4.6 MAHADUM

Aha oma nke a!  
A kporo gi mara ha dum.  
Ma ka m juo:  
Gini na gini ka a siru gi mara?  
O buhi imara ezi ihe,  
Inweta ezigbo mmota  
N'agumakwukwo na akparamaagwa?  
Ma gini ka i bu taa,  
Ebe agumakwukwo ka o bu ebe otu nzuzo,  
Ebe ihe ojo na-ari ibe ya elu?  
Ndi nkuzi na umakwukwo,  
A maghi onye a ga-eze ghara ibe ya.  
Ebe ndi Bukania, Pireti, Obejiri Ojii  
Na ndi ozo na-azo onye ka ibe ya.

Umụ anyi ndi nwaanyi na-ere ugwu ha  
Ka ha we gafee n'uleakwukwo.  
Ndi nwoke atufuela ndu ha ma kwere onwu.  
Ha chee onye nkuzi egbe n'ihu,  
Ha gafee n'uloakwukwo.  
Ka m juokwa ozo!  
O bu nke a bu mahadum?

Ihe ojo akpaala nkata na mahadum ala a  
Otutu ndi nkuzi na-abanye aja n'ukwu  
N'otutu ihe ojo wakporo mahadum ala a.  
Oji akwa aghu ahu mara onwe ya.  
Otu ubochi agwo ga-agbo ihe o loro.  
O teela e kwebara Eluigwe ga-akwu ugwo  
O ruela ka ala ga-akwu ugwo ihe o ji.  
Ka anyi naputa mahadum anyi  
Pua n'aka mpu na aghughu di icheiche.

## UNIVERSITY

This good name  
You were called, know it all.  
But let me ask you,  
What and what do they say you know  
Is it not to be knowledgeable of things?  
Acquiring sound education  
In character and learning  
But what are you today?  
A place of learning or a place of secret cults  
Where evil deeds trample one another  
Teachers and students  
Are not sure of whom to avoid  
Where Bukania, pirates and black spears  
And others struggle to outwit one another

Our girls sell their prestige  
To pass in their exams  
The boys have risked their lives  
They point guns at their teachers  
Still they pass through school  
May I ask you again  
Is this the University?

Atrocities have overtaken the university  
Many lecturers are deeply supporting atrocities  
To these evils that have befallen our universities  
Let those who are associated with these evils be warned  
One day the offender will be punished  
People have also said that heaven shall pay debts  
This is the time the earth pays its debts  
Let us redeem our universities  
From its numerous corruption and evils

**Okediadi (Akponuche 2006)**

This is a poem of three stanzas written by Okediadi, N.A. It is a satirical poem that exposes scorns and criticizes the atrocious activities in the universities of our nation. The themes are:

- A. Secret cults on the campuses
- B. Lecturers/female students' relationships
- C. Many evils of the lecturers.

The poet deeply touched by many atrocities committed in the higher school of learning, questions whether 'universities' are really places to acquire sound learning and good conduct or a place where so much evil and abominable activities trample upon one another. (See **Picture 6 Pg. 177**) This is because they indulge in secret cult activities like 'Bukania', 'Pirate', Black spears. These secret cults are a danger and threat in our educational system and have remained a problem for tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It is really worrisome to have children on campuses. Several measures have been adopted to halt cultism. These cultists modify in killings. Cultists have wrecked havocs on campuses. Academic programmes and calendars of many universities have had to be disrupted at the fault of the mayhem by secret cults. They generate a lot of fear, tension to life and property leading to closure of schools. The secret cults carry out their activities on campuses in secret. They operate at night. They do not make public their time, date and place of meetings. Some names of these cults are frightening. For instance; Pirate Confraternity (sea dog), Buccaneers, Gentlemen's Club, Black Beret, Black Mamba, Red Skin, Dragons, Black Axe, Temple of Eden, Mafioso, Brother hood of Blood (BB), Mafia etc. The girls are not left out. Some of their secret cult names are Amazons, Daughters of Jezebel, White Angels, etc. All these cults operate on the campuses and cause havocs as the poet points out;

Ndị nkuzi na ụmụakwụkwọ,	Teachers and students
A maghị onye a ga-eze ghara ibe ya.	No one is sure of whom to avoid
Ebe ndị Bukania, Pireti, Obejiri Ojii	Where Bukania, Pirates and Black spears
Na ndị ọzọ na-azọ onye ka ibe ya.	And others struggle to outwit the other

Apart from the secret cult that cause fear on the campuses, girls sell their prestige in order to pass the exams. Some treacherous lecturers demand sex from female students for academic favours. The girls in question are harassed during exams or failed outright when they refuse to give in to their demands. The poet continues to reveal that in the universities;



Ha chee onye nkuzi egbe n'ihu,  
Ha gafee n' uloakwukwo  
Ka m juokwa ozo  
O bu nke a bu mahadum?

They attack lecturers at guns points  
Still they pass through school  
May I ask you  
Is this a university?

Students especially those in the secret cult terrorize both students and lecturers. Audu (2014:201) observes that the new rising waves in cult related activities in Nigerian tertiary institutions have brought so much apprehension to teachers or lecturers to the extent that assessments and awards of grades have been compromised. In fact, lecturers have been cowed into awarding undeserving grades to suspected or established cult members as a way of avoiding attack while Abart, Mohammed and Gbenu (2008:168) observe that the impact of cultism on the life of the Nigerian universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education is so serious that citizens have been forced to cry out against the nefarious acts in virtually all tiers of the school systems. Then the poet continues that:

“N’otutu ihe ojoo wakporo Mahadum ala a  
The university system is filled up with evils.

In our universities today, the teachers go on strikes for six months and students become willing tools for various conflicts and crises which are detrimental to the security of the nation.

Secondly many lecturers hardly ever read students’ answer scripts let alone assignments due to indolence. As a result of over bloated number of students and unrealistic deadlines by university authorities for submission of results, marks are awarded arbitrarily. One can then, imagine the quality of graduates such lecturers will produce. This explains why some graduate in English language cannot write ordinary letters for employment. Some lecturers “sell” marks for cash and compel students to buy course materials (handouts) with inflated prices and create the impression that students who fail to buy would likely fail the examination. This type of trick makes the students to buy the sub-standard handout or texts in order to pass.

In most of the government owned universities, some lecturers commence lectures about a month after the commencement of each semester, probably because they

are secretly teaching in private universities or are engaged in their businesses of various kinds. The quality of supervision and assessment of undergraduate long essays or dissertations for the award of master's and doctorate degrees has gone down considerably to the extent that the standard of literacy presentation is appalling. Some lecturers do not study the thesis before the assessment of external experts. They merely skim through the essays. These are partly responsible for half baked graduates.

Apart from these, lecturers are their own worst enemies, some heads of departments and deans or provosts deliberately slow down the upward mobility of certain lecturers so that their favourites are promoted. These lecturers are given accelerated promotions above their superiors and more knowledgeable academics. Some brilliant and dedicated lecturers are in the same academic positions for years whereas their less knowledgeable colleagues are promoted rapidly because they have god fathers. Unfortunately, when such lecturers eventually assume positions of authority in the universities, they would recycle mediocrity within the system because they do not want genuinely brilliant colleagues to expose their intellectual hollowness or outshine them. Some lecturers waste most lecture periods talking irrelevant things, telling stupid stories of their activities while studying abroad or boasting about their encounters with prominent individuals within or outside the country to boost their ego. The helpless students do nothing but listen to these academically unrewarding and boring tales. These lecturers are not devoted to the pursuit of knowledge. The level of treachery, hatred, insincerity, lack of concern and capacity to do evil by some university teachers is heart wrenching. For all these ills and evils the poet concluded by strongly advocating for a restructuring, reorganization of the debased campuses for the general good of all.

In summary, these are what are prevalent in our universities today and they align with the sociological theory of Karl Marx which believes that awareness should

be created among the masses in order to awaken and raise their consciousness for the purpose of promoting an organized society. The poet in “**Mahadum**” laments and alarms the people of the recklessness caused by the secret cults, the degrading activities of the lecturers and students. These if not checked and readdressed, would continue to be a threat to the educational social order and drag down the quality of education in the society. Education is central to human existence and development. It is through education that our core values are transmitted across generations, if we neglect it, the future of our children is doomed. The rich and affluent in the society care less because they send their children to study overseas. In view of this, there is an urgent need for all and sundry to reorganize, replan, reorientate and readjust our university education system for the overall good of the common man.

## 4.7 NAIJIRIA QMA

Mgbe m chetara na abụ m onye Naijiria,  
Iwe agaghị ewe m ma ọchị agaghị atọ m.  
M cheta ihe ọjọọ na-aga n'obodo m Naijiria,  
Iwe na ọnuma eju m obi,  
Anyammiri eju m anya.  
M wee na-ajụ Chineke ihe kpatara  
O jiri kpochapụ Sodom na Gomora,  
Ndị njoyo ha di ferefere  
Ma hapụ Naijiria njoyo ya di nyafunyafu

Njoyo Sodom na Gomora o ruru ka nke Naijiria?  
Njoyo Sodom na Gomora bukari njoyo akwamiiko  
Mana Akwamiiko Naijiria kpụ ọkụ n'onye  
Na-ada ụda ka ikoro Bende.  
Naijiria anoye n'elu ya juputa na mpụ amakaako:  
Ntụ, aghugho, anyaukwu na anyaufu,  
Egbummadu, mmegbu, ohi na ama,

Agwomogwu ego, ikpe mkpeku, ntụ na mpunara,  
419, jibiti, ojoro na magomago,  
Mgbaokpuru na akwa nnanwurede,  
Nleremonye na onye n'igu amughị mma.  
Ekworo na a hu ekwughị.

Iwe na-ewere m ndi Naijiria  
N'ihu na ha bu oheru uzọ sowe oha,  
Ndị oheru ara nne ha nwa akpu osisi,  
Ndị oheru nkwa, kwawa nkwa n'obi  
Ndị onye na mmiri jiri aso akwo aka,  
Ndị onye n'iyi agu miri na-agugbu,  
Ndị okwuru ozọ eme ozọ,  
Ndị na-ezuchaa onwe ha ohi juwa onye zuru ha ohi,  
Ndị oso mmuo egbu, soro mmadu eje mgbaru.

Chineke,  
I maghikwa ndi Naijiria bu?  
I chefuola na ndi Naijiria  
Na-egbubi eriri oku eletriki ha ji ahụ uzọ?  
Na-abo paipu mmiri na-ewetara ha mmiri?  
Na-eji nne ha agwo ogwu ego?  
Na-eji choochi na baibul emeto aha gi?  
Na-atọ igbeozu nwaanyi na-achọ najra na kobo?  
Na-agho udele iji nweta dola na paundu?  
Na-eburu ozu enyi n'isi, were okpa akpi abuzu?  
Chineke, I chefuola?

## REPUTABLE NIGERIA

When I remember that I am a Nigerian,  
I will neither be angry nor happy.  
When I remember all the ills in my country Nigeria  
My heart will be filled with anger and bitterness  
Tears will fill my eyes  
Then, I am asking God why?  
He wiped away Sodom and Gomorah  
Whose sins are minor  
And condone Nigeria whose sins are enormous.

Are Sodom and Gomorah's sin more atrocious than Nigeria's sins?  
Sodom and Gomorah's sin was only adultery.  
But Nigeria's type of adultery is alarming  
That sounds like the Bende trumpet  
Upon that Nigerians are filled with abominable characters  
Lies, deceits, greed and hatred  
Killing, oppressions, robbery and false accusations

Ritual money making, false accusers, suppressions  
419, fake drugs, cheatings, fraudsters  
Betrayals and hypocrisies  
Gossips and slanderers  
Envy, strife and slow poisons

I am totally annoyed with Nigerians because.  
They have eyes but cannot see.  
Those that see the light but prefer to wallow in darkness.  
Those that neglect their duties and chase after useless things.  
Those that are blessed but suffer in lack.  
Those that have plenty water but are thirsty.  
Those that are in oceans but no water to bath  
Those that say one thing and do the other  
Those that steal from themselves and ask for the thief.  
They kill and follow suit for the burial

God,  
You don't know who these Nigerians are  
Have you forgotten that these Nigerians  
Cut electric cables for the lights  
Vandalize the pipe for the water supply?  
Use their mother for ritual moneymaking?  
Use Church and The bible to misuse your name?  
Open up women's coffin looking for money?  
Change to vultures just for dollar & pound?  
Attain the highest and still craves for the crumbs?  
God have you forgotten?

Chineke, Eze bi n'elu, ogaranya ngada,  
M wee na-ajụ gi si o:  
Olee ihe i jiri laa Sodom na Gomorah  
N'iyi n'ihì obere njọ ha  
Ma hapu Naijiria njọ ha na-akwụ anwụrụ  
Ka ha na-ekuru ikuku ndụ?

Ọ bughị maka oke njọ ha  
Ka Maria ji ebepụta ọbara n'anya,  
Na-echu Aope, Umunya, Nsugbe na Ikenanzizi  
Ka a na-echu mmiri?  
Chineke, I chere na I tọsighi iriọ  
Sodom na Gomora mgbaghara,  
Riọ ha Apọlọji?

God, living on high, the wealthy man  
And I am still asking and saying:  
Why did you destroy Sodom and Gomorrah  
For their minor sin  
And forget Nigeria with their atrocious sins  
And allow them to breathe fresh air

Is it not because of their abominable sins?  
That made Maria cry out blood from her eyes  
In Aokpe, Umunya, Nsugbe and Ikenanzizi  
As if water is gushing  
God don't you think you are supposed to apologize  
To Sodom and Gomorrah  
And ask for forgiveness

**Nwadike (Akọnuche 2006)**

This is a poem of five stanzas written by Nwadike, I. U. The satirical poem exposes and condemns all the alarming atrocities going on in Nigeria. The poet stands by and ironically calls Nigeria good while in the right sense the content of the poem has nothing good to say about Nigeria. The poet engages himself in a dialogue with God whom he asks several questions but no reply was given. He questions God in soliloquy about the atrocities in Nigeria but cannot get any reply from God. The themes are:

- A. Regret for being a Nigerian
- B. Sin of Sodom and Gomorrah as minor to the sins in Nigeria
- C. The numerous atrocious sins of Nigerians
- D. The nation's blindness to their numerous blessings
- E. Nigeria better to be destroyed and not Sodom and Gomorrah.

Marxist criticism recognizes literature as a reflection of its environment; it views literature as a mirror through which the people see themselves as they are. This will awaken the masses with enthusiasm to effect a transformable change in the environment. In view of this, the poet in 'Naijiria ọma' mirrors the country and distastefully bares his mind to the alarming rate of sins committed in the country. In the first stanza, he expresses sadness, anger, bitterness and tearfully regrets

being a Nigerian because they are filled with all abominable sins like killing, oppression, adultery, greed, ritual murder, lies, deceits, hatred, fornication, frauds, hypocrisy, slander, gossip, wickedness, etc. Those atrocious sins are the reason why the stature of Virgin Mary was crying and gushing out blood at Aokpe, Umunya, Nsugbe and Ikenanzizi and people trooping in large number to witness the alarming picture.( Stanza 7 vs 1-4) also (**See Picture 7 Pg. 178**). Even outside the country, a Nigerian citizen is seen as criminally minded and even treated as one.

To the poet, Sodom and Gomorrah's sins are nothing to write home about compared to the sins in Nigeria today. Sodom and Gomorrah's sins centred more on homosexuality (Gen. 18-19). That is how the term 'Sodomy' came to be used to refer to anal sex between two men. Although, Sodom and Gomorrah were guilty of many other sins like inhospitality, not helping the poor and needy, arrogantly overfed but homosexuality was the reason God poured fiery sulphur on the cities completely destroying them and all their inhabitants. To this day, the area where Sodom and Gomorrah were located remains a desolate waste land. Sodom and Gomorrah, serve as a powerful example of how God sees sin in general and homosexuality specifically. The poet engages himself with God in a dialogue, questioning him :-

Njọ Sodom na Gomorrah, o ruru ka nke Naijiria?  
Njọ Sodom na Gomorrah bụkarị njọ akwamiiko  
Mana akwamiiko Naijiria kpụ okụ n'ọny (Stanza 2 line 1-3)  
Are Sodom and Gomorrah sins more atrocious than Nigerians?  
Sodom Gomorrah sins were mainly adultery  
But Nigeria's types of adultery is alarming

In Nigeria today, there are so many homosexuals, lesbians and rapists but the worst now is that people now engage in sexual immoralities with goats and chicken as seen in the National Vanguard.

Ogwuda (2014: 16) writes "Pastor accused of putting a church member in a family way as 14yr old allegedly rapes goat". Johnson (2014: 6) writes that "A 19 year old apprentice welder was caught making love to a hen". The fowl reportedly died

during the act. The suspect had committed the same taboo with a goat in his home town Afo in Ose Council Area of Akure. Onozure (2014: 6) reports that the Enugu State Police Command has arrested a 22-year-old security guard, for raping a 9-year old girl to death... Ogwuda (2014: 26) reports that an 18-year old boy was caught having sex with a dog. Davis (2014: 1) writes that in 160 days of the Chibok girls' abduction, the girls were raped every-day, week after week. One girl was raped every-day, some times seven times a day by groups of men. Some did not survive the ordeal. These detestable and horrendous sins in Nigeria today are actually worse than the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is disgusting for the nation to wallow in such grievous and debased type of moral laxity and expect blessings from God. Apart from their sexual abominations, the poet angrily describes them thus;-

“N’ihi na ha bu ọhuru ọzọ sowe ọhịa.

Ndi ọhuru ara nne ha, ñuwa akpu osisi”.

Because they see the road and followed the bush

They see the light but prefer to wallow in dark. (Stanza 3 line 2-3)

A typical example today is the fact that the Boko-Haram insurgency is killing and bombing Nigeria but the leaders are busy struggling for leadership position. The governor of Akwa Ibom squandered millions building stadium while the masses go hungry and naked.

The poet's objective is to mock the society for failing to rise to greater heights, despite all the abundant natural resources she is blessed with. There are many things that can be done to fetch money. There are large spaces of land uncultivated yet most of the citizens go hungry and suffer starvation. Every human being is endowed with talent but they are never harnessed, developed for use for our benefits, as Udegbe (2014:16) points out “every youth has an inbuilt unique potential which should be developed and exploited in one way or the other to benefit and develop Nigerian youth for the growth of the nation. The poem is replete with lines which bemoan the sad state of things where the country possesses virtually everything necessary to make her stand and be one of the best

countries but stagnations and limitations keeps them static and under developed.

Hence:

Ndị ọnọ na mmiri jiri asọ akwọ aka  
Ndi ọnọ n'iyi agụụ mmiri na-agugbu  
Ndi ọnọ n'anyim ahụghi mmiri ịsa ahụ”.  
They are blessed but suffer in lack  
They have plenty waters but are thirsty  
They are in the ocean but no water to bathe”

In Nigeria, with all her oil, wealth, national economic output per head has virtually stood still since independence. The negative growth imposes a deteriorating standard of life on the masses. The natural abundance of natural resources abundance may imbue people with a false sense of security and lead government to lose the sight of the need for good and growth-friendly economic management. Incentives to create wealth tend to become too blunted by the ability to extract wealth from the soil or the sea. It is not the existence of natural wealth that seems to be the problem, but rather the failure of government to avert the dangers that accompany the gifts of nature. Good policies can turn abundant natural resources into numerous blessings.

The poet continues to remind God that Nigerians are notorious criminals who vandalize the electric wires and pipelines for water supply, use their mothers for ritual money making, use fake prophets to ridicule God, engage in all forms of atrocities in order to make money, and finally questions God on why He should destroy Sodom and Gomorrah instead of Nigeria that has the greater sins. For this, the poet humorously asks that God should write an apology to Sodom and Gomorrah.

In conclusion, with these numerous sins in our society today, there is a need for a change for “Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach”. Without repentance from all these vices, the society cannot move forward but with a positive retransformation, society will purge itself from these horrible sins that



weigh man down and then usher us to the good things that God has in stock for us for the benefit and good of the common man.

#### 4.8 NWAANYI

Nwaanyi  
A mụọ gi,  
Ihu agbarụọ onye iberiibe  
Ọ sị na a mụrụ amaonyeọzọ  
Ndị ma gi nke oma na-eto gi  
Ndị na-eleda gi anya bu ndi onwe ha gburu  
I bu ibu-anyi-danda  
Oji nwayọọ, garuru igwe

Nwaanyi,  
I bu ama onye ọzọ?  
Lebara onwe gi anya.  
I nochitere anya obodo gi,  
Bịakwa were ọnọdu na mba ọzọ.  
I na-amuba mba nabatara gi,  
Buru ihe onu nye ala nna gi.

Nwaanyi  
I bu ugwu mba.  
I nwere ulo abuo,  
Otu n'ulo, otu na mba.  
O dighi nke I jighi kporo ihe.  
O mee n'ulo, i no ya.  
O mee na mba, i so ya.

Nwaanyi,  
Aha gi ọzọ bu udo.  
Ulo i noghi na ya,  
Bu naani tigbuo zogbuo.  
I si na be nna gi buru udo,  
Were ya wusara ndi be di gi.  
Onye o soro ya tuturu;  
Onye o soghi, nke ahụ gbasara ya.

#### WOMEN FOLK

Woman  
When you are born.  
The stupid will frown their face  
Saying that another compound is born  
Those who know you well enough, praise you  
Those that depise you are those fed up with themselves  
You are a tireless worker  
Slow but steady

Woman,  
Are you someone's own?  
Look within you  
You represent your home town  
And represent also another town  
You procreate wherever you are accepted  
And a pride to your father's hometown

Woman  
You are the pride of a nation  
You have two homes  
One in the house, another in another land  
You never neglect two of them  
If it happens at home you are present  
If at another town, you are there.

Woman,  
Your other name is peace,  
Any home where you are missing  
Only quarelling and fighting  
From your father's house you are peace  
You took it to your husband's household  
Anyone who wishes picks it up  
Any who does not want, that is his/her business

This is a poem of six stanzas, written by Nwaozuzu, G.I. It is a praise poem that extols and praises woman highlighting the different dignifying roles and benefits of the womenfolk. The themes are:

- A. Only stupid people frown at the birth of a female child.
- B. Woman as steady and tireless workers
- C. Women as the procreators
- D. Women as agents of peace
- E. Women as a pride and home makers.

We live in the society where most people frown at the birth of a female child. The poet refers to this type of people in the poem as ‘Onye iberibe’ (A stupid person) and people who are fed up with themselves, hence’

“Ndi na-eleda gi anya bu ndi onwe ha gburu”

People who look down on you are fed up with themselves” (stanza 1, line 5)

The status of women, in traditional Igbo society is painted in a negative side. They are viewed as “villains”, “lacking in sound judgment...” The woman is still placed in situations where she is rejected, despised”... The traditional Igbo society knows that the position in which it has placed women is untenable, oppressive and slave-like. But the Igbo traditional society presents the male as faultless hence the saying, “Nwoke anaghi ajo njo” (A male is never bad). All evils come from the female and to support this, an Igbo adage says “Nwaanyi bu njo ala” (Woman is the originator of all evils) Nwaozuzu (2007:32).

The superiority of men over women in Igbo society is beyond question. Maybe because she does not perpetuate family name, the women’s status in traditional society is low. African societies are not fair to women. Osuji (2004) explains that for women, it is a tough life, everywhere, the woman is in chains socially, religiously, traditionally, economically, even in matrimony, she experiences all

round and compulsory restrictions. We live in a male-dominated society where men with their characteristic nature play down on the excellent qualities of women in order to place them in their “proper” places where society places them, whether deserved or not wise. Now, times have changed. The adage that women are to be seen not heard gradually fades away. Ogunde (2006) writes that the Nigerian society like any other society is dynamic, continually changing in response to social realities and expectation. Today, a woman’s place is no longer primarily in the kitchen. Women emancipation remains one of the greatest achievements of the women’s struggle globally. African women are making meaningful progress and contributions towards national development. The poet refers to the womenfolk as “Ibu anyị danda” – “tireless worker”. (Stanza 1 vs 7)

The African women toil all her life, in bearing a subsistence burden to make sure that her children survive. **(See picture 8 Pg. 179)**. They work as traders, farmers, factory workers, cleaners in order to survive. Today equipped with education, resilience and the will to survive, the females can scale and even soar over irokos trees, placing no limitations on their capabilities. Mezu (1994)

Education has offered women a place in society far above the traditional roles and claws of male dominance and economic control, taken away the financial dependency on man thus setting the women on independent financial footing. Nigerian men feel secured when women are glued to them in terms of solving their economic problems. It gives them better opportunity to exercise control and authority over the women through intermittent denials, Mba (2009:322). No wonder the poet extols women and writes,

Nwaanyị, I bụ ugwu mba

Woman, you are the pride of the nation. (Stanza 3, line 2)

Women today are professors, governors, ministers, commissioners, university vice chancellors. Some go to the moon, pilot aero planes. There was a time in history

when women were unable to voice their opinions in politics, being unable to cast a vote or run for offices but now there is more than one woman, running in the presidential campaign. Today, some of the countries have women as the presidents like Helen Sirleaf Johnson of Liberia, Michele Bachelet of Chile, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner of Argentina and Joyce Hilda Banda of Malawi. Surely, the hands that rock the cradle, rules the world. Upon all these burdens on her head, the poet points out that she never neglects her home and her father's household whenever she is needed. She is an epitome of beauty, peace and procreators, feeds the family and is beneficial in numerous ways. To buttress this, Boutrus Ghali culled from Osuji (2004) says "without progress in the situation of women, there can be no social development". Human rights are not worthy of the name if they exclude the female half of humanity. The struggle for women's equality is part of the struggle for a better world for all human beings.

The African societies are traditionally patriarchal in structure (a system run by males rather than females). The cultural and religious paradigms played in the life of the female, account for the male dominance and the corresponding female subjugations in the spheres of life. That is why the poet started the poem by pointing out the discriminating and unfair attitudes of people on the news of the birth of a female child. Today, women are bread winners and they help men with the upkeep of the family.

The poem is in line with the sociological theory of Karl Marx which advocates for liberation from oppression of any kind and seek for fairness, and equality among all. They advocate for one to stand in the face of oppression and demand for what is rightfully theirs.

## 4.9 OBODO ỌNỊCHA

Obodo Chukwu chọrọ mma.  
Obodo a gọziri agozi.  
Were ụloahia a ma ama  
Chọọ ya mma.  
Obodo ndị ọbịa juputara  
Ma karịa ndị nwe ala.  
Obodo nwere akụ nke ụwa.  
Ogaranya na ogbenye,  
Ihe ọma na ihe ọjọọ.  
Ma cherekwa!  
Gịnị bụ olu a m na-anụ n'ime obodo a?

Obodo Ọnicha!  
Obodo ndị abalịdaegwu  
Ji abalị mere ehie  
Ma were ehie mere abalị.  
Ụlọ ọbụla ha wakwutere  
Egbe na mma ana-ada.  
Anyanwụ mmiri ejuputa anyanwụ ọbụla.  
Obi a na-eti kpim! Kpim! Kpim!  
Mkpụ enweghị ike ịputa n'ọnu  
N'ihu iwu ndị abalịdegwu na-enye.  
Ewo! Ihe mmadụ ka  
A na-apụnara ya n'ike  
Ndị uweojii na ndị agha  
Agbaala mbọ ikpochapụ  
Ndị omekome a n'obodo a  
Ma ihe na-ebe ka na-ebe.

Ọ bụ gịnị ka mmadụ mere  
Mmadụ ibe ya n'ụwa a?  
Mmadụ ejighị anyanwụ ọma  
Ahụ nwanne ya.  
Ihe mmadụ nwere na-abụ  
Anyanwụ nye onye ọzọ.  
Ekwo na anyaukwu juru ụwa.

Ma cherekwa!  
Ụgwọ ọrụ onye mmehie bụ ọnwụ.  
Onyinye amara nke Chineke bụ ndụ ebebe.  
Ọtụtụ mgbe ka a na-egosị  
N'ihu onyonyo ebe a gbagburu  
Ndị abalịdegwu a  
Mana ọnwụ ga-egbu nwankita

## THE CITY OF ONITSHA

A city God blesses  
A blessed city  
With this well-known market  
God beautifies the city.  
A city filled with foreigners  
More than the owners  
A city with the wealth of life  
The rich and poor  
Good and bad things  
But wait?  
What voice do I hear in this city?

The city of Onitsha  
A city where robbers  
Turned night to day time  
And day time into night  
Any house they storm into  
Sounds of gun and machetes fill everywhere  
Tears fill the eyes of all  
And the people's heart will be beating fast  
They cannot shout  
Because of the rules the robbers give  
Hei, snatching people's things  
In intimidation  
The police and the army  
Have tried to wipe out  
These hoodlums in this city  
But to no avail

What has man done to you  
Your fellow humans in this world?  
People do not communicate effectively in good faith  
With his brothers  
One's possession is usually  
A source for envy for others  
Strife and jealousy is everywhere.

But wait!  
The wages of sin is death  
God special gift is eternal life  
Most times they are shown  
On television where these  
Criminals are shot  
But he the gods want to destroy

Anaghị ekwe ya anụ isi nsị.  
Ọtụtụ n’ime ha ka na-aga n’iru.  
Ụbọchị niile bụ nke onye ohi  
Ma otu ụbọchị bụ nke onye nwe ụlọ.

They first make mad  
Majority continues to strive  
Everyday is for the thief  
But one day is for the owner.

Obodo Onitsha!  
Ị ghaghị ịgbosị ndị ojọ a  
Ka ọnya ha siri matara ha onwe ha.  
Chekweba ndị ezigbo mmadụ nọ n’ime gị  
Ka ha kụọ ezigbo mkpuru  
Nke ga-atọpụta ọtụtụ ezigbo ihe  
Buru ngozi na uru nye ndị bi na ya .  
N’ihi ezi omume na-ebuli obodo elu  
Ma ajọ omume bụ nkọcha nye obodo.  
Ka anyị dum tinye aka  
Ma mee ka obodo Onitsha  
Buru ngozi na uru nye ndị bi na ya

City of Onitsha!  
You must purge these evil people  
So that they fall into their own traps  
Protect the good in Onitsha  
And plant good seeds  
That will usher in good  
A blessing and gain for the inhabitant  
For righteousness extols a nation,  
But sin is a reproach  
Let us all join hands  
And make the city of Onitsha  
A blessing and gain for the inhabitants

**Okediadi A.N (Akọnuche 2006)**

This is a satirical poem of five stanzas, written by Okediadi, N.A. The poet condemns the robbery activities going on in the city of Onitsha, a city blessed by God.

The themes are:

- A. Commotion and robbery activities in Onitsha.
- B. Lack of contentment among the people
- C. Insecurity in Onitsha.

The poet portrays the picture of what is happening in Onitsha every day. Onitsha is a city, with the biggest market in West Africa, people come to Onitsha from different parts of the world to buy or sell from the market. Most of the people in Onitsha are business people and traders who are not natives of Onitsha but are living in Onitsha, striving and seeking to survive in a difficult world where one must struggle to survive. The city of Onitsha is a place of commerce and industry, booming with people every blessed day. People from Cameroon, China, Indonesians, Taiwanese are some of the foreigners who troop into Onitsha market

because they have one business or another to do with these Onitsha traders. The busy nature of the market, all day attracts all kinds of people, good and bad, rich and poor into the market, in search of what to do in order to earn a living. The poet describes it as:

Obodo nwere akụ nke ụwa	A city with the wealth of life
Ọgaranya na ogbenye	The rich and the poor
Ihe ọma na ihe ọjọọ	Good and bad things (Stanza 1, line 7-9).

The commercial city of Onitsha has so many markets – the Onitsha Main Market, Ose, Ochanja, Relief Market, Electronics Dealers, housing Construction Equipment Market, Ọgbọ Efere (Plates and Ceramics), Ọgbọ ọgwụ (Medications and drugs) etc. In this city, one can buy virtually any commodity wanted, both genuine and fake. The bustle and hustle of this city makes the city lively because business booms everyday; cash, sales, business transactions go on in these markets daily. Because of all the markets in this commercial city, we see all kinds of people in search of daily bread – touts, job seekers, unemployed graduates and secondary school leavers, pick pockets, hoodlums, school drop-outs, apprentices, sales girls and boys, hawkers, beggars both refugees from Nigeria, Chad, Hausas, the Blind, other physically challenged persons, money doublers, street fighters, advertisers, on lookers, Ọkada riders, keke riders, bus drivers, barrow pushers. **(See Picture 8 Pg. 180)** All of these roam the streets of the commercial city of Onitsha, in a chaotic and disorganized manner trying their very best on virtually anything in order to survive the hard economy and put food on their table. Some of these sets of people have metamorphosed to criminals who rob people day and night. The poet describes the confusions and the recklessness and shootings of the robbers as this;

Egbe na mma ana ada.	Shootings of guns and clinging of machetes fill everywhere
Anyị mmiri ejuputa anyị	Tears fill our eyes
Obi a na-eti, kpim! Kpim!	And the people's heart will be beating fast
Mkpụ enweghị ike ịpụta n'ọnu	They cannot shout
N'ihị iwu ndị abalidiegwu na-enye	Because of the orders the robbers give (stanza 2, line 5-7)

The city of Onitsha is known for lawlessness and recklessness because many people come with huge sum of money to buy, sell and make business transactions. Robbers, gunmen and criminals of all sorts are all over the place attacking traders, tenants, and pedestrians in the streets and even writing letters to inform tenants that they are coming. Most times these robbers order them not to shout or they would be gunned down. The police and army patrol have used several security agents to curb the menace but to no avail. ‘The Massob’, ‘The Bakassi Boys’, ‘Cobra Squad’, ‘Vigilante’, ‘Operation Mkpochapu’, ‘Fire for Fire’; all these security groups have been used to comb out crime rates in Onitsha still, criminals operate daily in Onitsha. The new government recently, staged war with the touts operating at Upper Iweka Road, Onitsha, and cleared all the motor parks to ease traffic congestion and destabilize the great number of touts operating in those garages. It would not take a long time; these touts will come back in a different way to seek for another means of survival. It is an uphill task to wipe out criminals from the commercial city of Onitsha, though certain measures have been used for the eradication but it never seemed to work. As the poet points out;

Ndị uweojii na ndị agha	The police and the army
Agbaala mbọ ikpochapu	Have tried to wipe out
Ndị omekome a n’obodo a	These robbers from the town
Ma ihe na – ebe ka na – ebe	But to no avail (Stanza 2 line 13 – 16)

The poet points out that these criminals are hard nuts to track down and cannot be stopped. That means that there are security lapses in the state. People’s lives are in danger especially the poor who these robbers attack in their homes or streets. The rich in society have security outfit that are armed either following them as escorts or standing at the entrance of their gates, twenty four hours daily, so they are not always perturbed.

The poet sees all these quests for money as greed and jealousy that prevail amongst people in that society. When people are jealous, they try and get what- ever they want anyhow, so they indulge in robbery. Most times these robbers are caught and



exposed to on the television and even killed. This should serve as a lesson for them but because they have been mapped out for destruction, they harden their ears for ‘whomever the gods wants to destroy they first make mad’. At last the poet is hopeful for change to a better living and urges all to join hands to make the city to be a blessing and gain to all her inhabitants for righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach.

The city of Onitsha is a chaotic and disorganized society where nothing really works in the real sense. Due to the unemployment ravaging the nation’s economy, everyone comes to the city trying his or her hands on virtually anything in order to survive. The poverty in the society and lack of meaningful livelihood, the get-rich-quick syndrome has turned people into frustrations. Criminals disguise as to revenue, tax, NEPA bills, and levy collectors; chasing, harassing poor people and intimidating the helpless masses in the streets and at home. Many people are dissatisfied with their lives as they roam about searching for one thing or the other in order to make a daily living. With that hopelessness about what tomorrow shall bring and not knowing and not being sure of where the next meal shall come from, people wallow around in misery and poverty. The dishonest cheats carry guns, put on uniforms and scare people, extort money from them as the poet calls it;

Obodo Onicha	City of Onitsha
Obodo ndi abalidiegwu	City of robbers (stanza 2, line 1- 2)

The suffering masses of this city continue to toil only for them to be stolen away while those in the helm of authority who are supposed to do their work and protect the lives of the citizens do nothing serious but sit back and watch.

#### 4.10 AKWA ALA IGBO NA-EBE THE CRIES OF THE IGBOLAND

A zuru unu n'isu oha  
Ma unu noro na-ele m anya ocha  
Umụ m, olee ihe m mere unu?  
Amamihe unu na-anyu osu (di omimi)  
Unu jiri ha etere ndi ozofe  
Mgbe unu hapuru m n'ida ajo oha  
Ndi m, olee ihe m mere unu?

You were trained in clearing the bush  
But you stay there looking widely at me  
My children, what wrong have I done to you?  
Your wisdom is futile  
And you apply your wisdom to helping others  
When you abandoned me in the evil forest  
My people, what did I do to you?

**Obienyem, J. C. (Akpa Uche 1975)**

This is a one-stanza political poem by Obienyem. The poet condemns the Igbo people who are naturally gifted in dense ways, skilled and known as enterprising in all spheres of their endeavors. They are strong sets of hard workers who toil and labour, draw waters, hew wood, clear grass and construct for survival. The themes of the poem are

- A. The enterprising Igbo people
- B. Brain drain
- C. Lack of wisdom

God created the Igbo people as hard workers. However how small an Igbo is, man or woman, they are success-oriented people who have a penchant for hard work. They are resourceful and possess entrepreneurial prowess all over the world. This earns them respect because they always have something to show for their hard work. Omatesye (2012) writes on what Chinua Achebe says, I have written in my small book entitled 'The Trouble with Nigeria', that Nigerians will probably achieve consensus on no other matter than their common resentment of the Igbo, he wrote under the heading, 'A history of ethnic tension and resentment'. He traced the origin of "the national resentment of the Igbo," to its culture that "gave the Igbo man an unquestioned advantage over his compatriots in security credentials for advancement in Nigerian colonial society".

He observed that the Igbo culture's emphasis on change, individualism and competitiveness gave his ethnic group an edge over the Hausa or Fulani man who was hindered by a "wary religion" and the Yoruba man who was hampered by traditional hierarchies". He narrated the earlier advantage of Yoruba as contingent on their location or the coastline, but once the missionaries crossed the Niger, the Igbo took advantage of the opportunity and overtook the Yoruba. The increase was so exponential in such a short time that within three short decades, the Igbo had closed the gap and quickly moved ahead as the group with the highest literacy rate, the highest standard of living and the greatest of citizens with post secondary education in Nigeria."

He said that Nigerian leadership should have taken advantage of the Igbo talent and this failure was partly responsible for the failure of the Nigerian state, explaining further that competitive individualism and the adventurous spirit of the Igbo was a boon Nigeria's leaders failed to recognize and harness for modernization. "Nigeria's pathetic attempt to crush these idiosyncrasies (Igbo) rather than celebrate them is one of the fundamental reasons the country has not developed as it should and has emerged as a laughing stock." Achebe however, saved some criticism for his kinsmen. He criticized them for what he described as "hubris, overweening pride and thoughtlessness." What Achebe was hampering on is that the Igbo men or women are highly educated, highly civilized, innovative, intellectual and enterprising, as the poet observes;

'A zuru unu n'isu ohia'

You were trained in cutting grasses.

The expression "Isu Ohia" portrays workers, pace setters, leaders, people who show others the good way, producers, adventurers and initiators. Achebe describes the Igbo as "the group with the highest standard of living" with the highest literacy rate, the greatest citizens with post secondary education in Nigeria." For this reason, other ethnic groups resent them and try "to crush them rather than celebrate

them.” This can be observed in Obienyem’s poem. “Ha Gaara Eji Mma Gbutuo Nnukwu Oji (1975), the poet writes that they (Nigerians) could have cut off the mighty iroko tree (Igbos) just because they are hard-working and highly successful.

Makana ha dī uchu na-agakarīcha n’ihu  
Because they are highly industrious and enterprising. (Stanza 4, line 3 – 4).

Achebe also did not spare the Igbo man pointing out that his flaw lies in “overweening pride and thoughtlessness.” “Thoughtlessness” here refers to lack of wisdom. As the poet observes a similar thing in Akwa ala Igbo na-ebe” that – “Amamihe unu na-anyū oşu                      Your wisdom is futile.” (Stanza 1 line 3).

So of all the enterprising spirit, highest in intellect, hardworking and knowledgeable, it makes absolutely no sense when they fail to use that their intellectual and entrepreneurial wisdom, skilled invocative brains to develop Igbo land. Hence:

Amamiihe unu na-anyū oşu  
Unu jiri ha etere ndī ozo ofe  
Mgbe unu hapuru m n’ida ajo oħia (Stanza 1, line 3 – 5)

Your wisdom is futile  
You apply your wisdom in helping others  
When you abandoned me in the evil forest

These highly gifted Igbo people leave for overseas and become so prominent that they utilize their brain for the development of their country, technologically, educationally, scientifically to the advancement of other countries, leaving behind their own country impoverished, underscored and underdeveloped when they have the potentials that can make them rise to her glory. **(See Picture 10 Pg. 181)** If all talented nurses and doctors migrate to overseas, who would operate our hospitals? We keep diminishing our intellectual capital. When persons of ‘extraordinary ability’ and the best and brightest are hired for example, the best musicians, our top writers, the soccer stars, the best technologists and scientists all live overseas, it will be impossible to achieve a renaissance without the contributions of the talented. Phillip Emeagwali, a native of Onitsha, living in Washington D.C, is the

brain behind the internet. He won the 1989 Gordon, Bell Prize which has been called supercomputing's Nobel prize, for inventing a formula that allow computers to perform their fastest computations - A discovery that inspired the reinvention of supercomputers. He was extolled by the then U.S president Bill Clinton as "one of the great minds of the information Age" and described by CNN as "Father of the internet. He is the most sought-for scientist on the internet (online).

Secondly, during the Nigerian civil war, Ben Nwosu from Ozubulu and other scientists – Ugah Aguata, Engineer Roy Umenyi, Godian Ezekwe, Sam Orji, Felix Oragwu, etc invented a bomb known as 'Ogbunigwe used to execute the war on Biafra side. "Necessity is the mother of invention. The dare necessity to survive the civil war compelled the Igbo scientists to discover and invent the "Ogbunigwe Bomb. These Igbo engineers and scientists that manufactured these war ammunition should have been assembled together in a technology village where their knowledge should have been harnessed for the growth of the country rather to disperse. The Igbo geniuses that carried out these awe-inspiring inventions were allowed to disperse.

The civilians were provided opportunity for the country to have developed technologically but the opportunity was lost. Late professor Ikejiani from Agu-Ukwu based in Canada pronounced that tuberculosis is a curable disease and developed a life-saving vaccine for the treatment of tuberculosis. Emeka Anyaoku from Obosi was the former Secretary General of the Commonwealth in London.

These highly gifted geniuses abandoned home and left to another land where their brains were used up to transform and develop other people's continent. This makes us unwise and makes our "wisdom futile," as we apply our wisdom in helping others as the poet says "unu ji amamiihe unu etere ndi ọzọ ofe."

For this, the poet is not happy but laments at the state of the Igbo people neglected in the 'evil forests' which connotes – 'backwardness', 'lack of civilization, underdevelopment, 'still in the dark' and 'forgotten'. The point here is that we as

the Igbo people have so many underdeveloped social structures and amenities to put in place. The future of our children is at stake and there is no hope for tomorrow. We need help; people are starving, unemployment and lack of medical facilities. The poor in our midst are plenty but the highly gifted sons and daughters of Igbo land are busy in overseas, helping others. Charity they say begins at home, the Igbo man says it thus: (Ebe onye bi ka ọ na-awachi). The Igbo people abroad should think home. East or West, home is the best. If they do not come back home today, they may come back tomorrow to see the evil forest they have left behind. Marxist sociology of literature, succinctly explains not only what was seen and what we now see in the social relations and the meaning of an artist's work, but what these social relations ought to be. Being social critics, these gifted geniuses of our land should "think home" then develop their father land first for as Achebe points out, that the flaws of the Igbo people are "overweening pride and thoughtlessness." This is the message; for the Igbo to be wise and humble enough to go back home to their ancient fatherland and develop it with the potentials applied in helping others and rebuild their own for East or West, home is the best.

#### 4.11 UWA KA ONYE NJỌ?

#### WHOSE LIFE CONDITION IS WORST?

Mgbe ahụ, naanị echi gara aga  
 Mgbe ibe hụrụ ibe n'anya  
 Mgbe ọha na-ejere eze ozi  
 Maka nche eze chere ọha  
 E nwere ọha na eze

In those days, long time ago  
 When brotherly love existed  
 When the masses ran errands for the king  
 For the king protected his subjects  
 There was the ruled and the ruler.

Mgbe ahụ  
 Ọnwa na-eti kwa abalị  
 Site n'uchichi bọọ chi  
 Eze nwere eze ụgaama  
 Eze anaghị atagbu mmadụ  
 N'etiti iwu o kpudoro  
 Iwu e deghị ede  
 Mana e dere ya ede

That time  
 The moon shines every night  
 From night till dawn  
 The king has a teeth of an axe  
 The king does not devours others  
 In the laws turned upside down  
 Laws not written  
 But are written down

Taa, ibe m  
Uwa jiri ututu kaa nka  
Onwa na-aguzi oge obibia  
Eze eze bu oha zere  
Ebe egbe na mgbo kwu oha n'ihu  
Oha huru ahuru  
Kpoo ya ikuku uguru  
Maka na eziokwu bu onwu  
Otutu nwulara n'ututu

Ulo ikpe; nke eze  
Ulo akuko; nke ya  
Ndi odee; ndi eze  
N'onuegbe, nkiti luru oha di  
Na nkiti, aru kpapa  
N'okoofu nwa ogbenye

Uwa, uwa mmebi  
Mmadu ahula uwa  
Gbaa nkiti n'uju  
Okwu bu onwu  
Onwu e zitere  
N'igirigi ndu  
Mgbe aka nne no n'ite ofe

Eligwe na-agu m  
Mana onwu na-atu m egwu  
Njem a enweghi ntapi  
Njem ila azu adighi  
Aga m ekpuchi onu  
Na nreto anyi?

Today my brethren,  
The society is aged early  
The moon appears in irregularity  
Avoid the king's wrath  
Where guns and bullets faces the masses  
The masses saw farthings  
And termed it harmattan wind  
For truth is death  
Many died earlier

Law court, for the ruler  
Media houses for him  
The writers, for the ruler  
In the gun muzzles, the masses are silenced  
In silence, atrocities prevailed  
On the sweat of the poor

Life, corrupt life  
People have seen life  
And kept silence in peace  
Words are death  
Death sent  
In the prime of life  
When life is exciting

I hunger for heaven  
But I am afraid of death  
There's no end to this journey  
The journey is no turning back  
Will I shut my mouth  
Amidst all these atrocities?

**Mbah, B. (Akonuche 2006)**

This is a poem of six stanzas written by Mbah, B. It is a satirical poem that criticizes the intimidations, violence and killings of journalists and activists who suffer and are killed because they opposed the government's bad leadership.

The themes are:

- A. Leaders are dictators
- B. No freedom of speech

### C. Intimidations and suppression from rulers

In the olden days, rulers and the subjects lived in peace with brotherly love and the ruler protected his people but today, the rulers are hostile, they turn the laws upside down, take over the law courts, the media houses and silence the masses when they speak to protest against many ills and impunities of theirs. An attempt or effort by bold citizens, activists or journalists to promote or direct social, political, economic or environmental change, or any story reported to the media with the potentiality to embarrass the government; may possibly bring assassination and any special probe would serve no useful purpose. This is usually seen during military rule where rulers are dictators.

The poet expresses grief on the state of killings of people who expressed their views as he points out;

Mmadu ahula uwa	People have seen things in life
Gbaa nkiti n'uju	And kept silent in peace
Okwu bu onwu	Words are death
Onwu e zitere	Death sent
N'igirigi ndu	In the prime of life (Stanza 5, line 1 – 6)

'Words are death' in a society where one speaks against the government and they believe the person was in 'the way of some powerful forces. The Late Dele Giwa (1947 – 1986) a Nigerian journalist, editor and founder of News Watch magazine, was killed by a mail bomb in his home on 19<sup>th</sup> Oct, 1986. The assassination occurred two days after he had been interviewed by state security service officials (SSS). (See Picture 11 Pg. 182)

Secondly, Kobo (2012:85) writes that Ken Saro Wiwa, a novelist, playwright, TV producer and human rights activist, lost his life while fighting for the rights of the Ogoni people who were protesting against the extensive environmental damage being wrought on their homeland as a result of the extraction of oil. He was a spokesman of the Ogoni people who advocated increased autonomy for the Ogoni people; a fair share of the proceeds of oil extraction and remediation of



environmental damage to Ogoni land. He criticized Nigeria and the military government which failed to enforce environmental regulations on the petroleum companies. He was killed under the dictatorship of Late Gen Sani Abacha in 1994. In our society, everyone has the right to the freedom of opinion and expression because it is a cornerstone of democratic rights and freedom. It enables democracy to work and public participation in decision making. Freedom of expression is not only important for individual dignity but also to participation, accountability and democracy, violations of freedom of expression often go hand in hand with other violations. Thus, in a society with the misrule and total collapse of all facets of life, how can one be silent? To stand with the weak and perhaps share in the misery, one should express one's opinions to make the society better. The poet finally asks:

Njem ìla azu adìghì	A journey of no return
Aga m ekpuchi ọnu	Will I shut my mouth
Na nreto anyi?	Amidst all the atrocities? (Stanza 6, line 3 - 5)

The poet expresses concern explaining that he can never shut his mouth and watch all the impunities and atrocities going on in society for fear of being assassinated. Nevertheless, in freedom of speech, there may be certain extreme forms of expression which need to be curtailed for the protection of other human rights. There may be some views which may incite intolerance or hatred among groups. Such "hate speech" should be restricted or banned; for instance, using the mass media to promote genocide or racially-motivated attacks. However, these should be banned:

Censorship: Suppression of publications considered obscene or politically unacceptable. Defamation should be avoided that is injuring of a person's good name or reputation. The masses need to speak up for their right and opinions for this is what the sociological theory of Marx advocates.

## 4.12 IME IME OBODO

Enyi m. I kpọ m aga olee?  
O bu na nnukwu obodo mepere emepe?  
Iga kirie otu ulọ siri kwọrọ ibe ha n'azụ  
Ma too karija nkwu na ngwọ;  
Ebe ufodu ha na-enwekwa nku  
Na-achọ ife efe  
Ndi ọzọ na-adikwa egwu, na-adị ebube  
Na-achọ ilo onye kwu na-ele ha.

I na-achọ igosi m?  
Ebe aja na uzuzu adighi,  
Ebe okporouzo mara mma di larii  
Na-egbu bam bam ka ugegbe;  
Ebe umu mmadu na ugbọ ala  
Na-akwo nchi na-azọ ụzọ ụzoro?

Enyi m, i na-achọ igosi m?  
Ebe umu mmadu enweghi ezumike  
Ma n'ututu, ma n'ehihe, ma n'abali;  
Oge o bua o buru wom wom wom  
Kwam kwam kwam  
Vim vim vim  
Pim pim pim –  
Uzu na mkpotu na-agbawa isi  
E zughị ike, a raghi ume

I kpọ m aga olee?  
O bu ebe mmadu amaghi ibe ya?  
Ebe onye o bua bu obia  
Enweghi nwanne, enweghi nwanna  
Enweghi ikwu, enweghi ibe  
Soso haloo haloo.  
O bu haloo haloo ka m ga-eri?

Biko hapu m, enyi m,  
Hapu m aka  
Ka m noro n'ime ime obodo  
Ka m diri ndu  
Ime ime obodo  
Ebe ikuku ndu na-eku  
Na-eme obi utu;  
Ebe osisi juputara  
Na-amị mkpuru oma;

## THE VILLAGE

My friend, where are you taking me to?  
Is it in the developed city?  
To behold the advancement in learning of different type  
The sky-crappers taller than the palm trees  
Where some have wings  
And are about to fly off  
Others are excitingly marvelous  
About to swallow up the un-lookers

Do you intend to show me  
Where sand and dust never exists  
Where the roads are smoothly built  
Sparkling like the mirror  
Where people and cars  
Are all over struggling for the road

My friend, do you intend to show me  
Where people never rest  
In the morning, after noon and night  
All the time, hustling and bustling  
The shattering noise of machine  
The locomotive noise  
The car horns of vehicles  
Too many exploding noise  
Never ever resting and calming down

Where are you taking me to?  
Is it where none knows one another?  
Where all is a stranger  
Without a brother or a sister  
Without a kindred or a towns man  
Only hello, hello  
Will I survive with hello hello?

Please leave me, my friend  
Leave me alone  
Let me stay in the village  
So I can live  
The village  
Where fresh air blows  
Giving happiness  
Where there are lots of trees  
With blooming fruits

Ebe ihe okuku na-aba uba  
Na-enyeju mmadu afo;  
Ebe obere mmiri na-achi achi  
Na-egbu bam bam

Where poultry farm increases  
And feeds the people fully  
Where little streams flourish  
Sparkling brightly.

Na-adi juu, na-akuju obi  
Onye no n'oru  
Mgbe ubochi di oku

With cool and calming effect  
One at work  
When the weather is hot

Ee, leenu otu umu nnunu  
Na-efeghari na-egwughari egwu  
Na-eti pio, piroo piroo  
Na-abatacha n'ime ulo  
Ihe obi utu

Yes, look at the birds  
Flying and playing freely  
Whistling, loudly  
Even entering into the house  
All for joy

Leenu otu ebe niile si di juu  
Mmadu aburu ezi mmadu  
Chineke kere  
N'abughi ihe a kpuru akpu  
Na-enweghi ohere  
Ichere onwe ya echiche.  
Mmadu aburukwa ezi nwanne ibe ya  
Ha ezigbo onye agbata obi ibe ya  
Ihe ndi a ka m choru.  
Ha kara mma mma  
Karija ola ocha na ola edo niile  
Nke juputara na nnukwu obodo

See how the atmosphere is serene  
People are goodly natured  
God created  
And not statutes  
That has no time,  
To ponder for themselves  
Relating well with the relations  
And good neighborhood  
All these are my desire  
They are much more precious  
Than all the gold and silver  
That is filled in city life

Biko, hapu m n'ime ime obodo  
Ka m diri ndu m  
Na-enwere obi utu m.

Please leave me alone in the village  
So I can live  
And enjoy continuous happiness

**Echebima, G. N. (Akọ Na Uche 2001)**

This is a poem of nine stanzas written by Echebima. It is a praise poem that extols the life in the rural area and criticizes the life in the city. The themes are:

- A. Therapy in the quietness of rural life
- B. Tranquility amidst the strife of life
- C. Rural poverty
- D. Desire to be free

The state of the society where we live is that of chaos, noise, too many struggles, conflicts and confusions. These are what the city life is all about. With all these development – the sky scrapers, the tall magnificent buildings, the tarred roads, the fleet of cars and busy people every where struggling without rest, morning, afternoon and night. The poet dislikes the noisy commotions observed in the city life stressing also that these people in the city have no time for brotherly or neighbourly friendship and relationship. Saying hello is just enough.

The poet is in love with life in the village because of the fresh, unpolluted air as against the polluted and smoky air in the city. Trees fill everywhere, providing fresh air and quietness, as against the deforestation carried out in the city, leaving the environment open and without shades. The cool village streams and springs that refresh and cool the weather during hot seasons, the peace, harmony and quietness of life as against the stampede, turmoil, bombings/ shootings, confusion, hustle and bustle, struggles, intimidations, jealousy and oppressions observed in the city life where everybody is struggling hard to survive, and selfishly never caring about the welfare of his neighbour. The fresh fruits, the natural spring waters to drink, the beauty of God’s creations and the natural beauties all around the rural setting, the love shared among brethren. All these re-juvenate and make the poet never wanting to dwell in the city where there is no rest, **Hence:**

Enyi m, i na-achọ igosi m  
Ebe ụmụ mmadu enweghi ezumike  
Ma n’utuṭu, ma n’ehihe, ma n’abalị (Stanza 3, line 1 – 3)

For all the pyramids of magnificent buildings, the tarred roads and the fleet of posh cars, the poet prefers the rural village which he says is most valuable to him than silver and gold. Hence:

Ha kara maa mma  
Karija ọla ọcha na ọla edo niile  
Nke juputara na nnukwu obodo (Stanza 8 line 3 – 5)  
They are more valuable  
Than silver and gold

That is filled in the big cities

The message of the poet is clear. For all to de-congest people from the many populated cities and re-locate to the rural area where food, water, health, peace, joy and happiness reside, it is of great necessity to develop the home of the poor man whom society has forgotten. Rural development of a country is the best way to get farm products quickly and economically. Fresh foods are essential to health.

A society whose people live in poverty and ignorance is a country that is destined to wither on the vine. To ignore the rural development in the community means wasting our natural resources, the talents and giftedness of our people. There are so many untapped natural and human resources and potentials wasting away in the rural community. These rural dwellers wallow in rot and underdevelopment as against the dwellers in the city that have good roads and other social amenities. **(See Picture 12 Pg. 183)**. Equal opportunities should exist with “liberty and justice for all”. Rural development can attract tourism and recreation if government harness and organize the cultural artifacts in the rural community. Rural development improves the quality of life and economic well-being of the people. It can generate jobs through agricultural and domestic farming and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in the economy. The poet concludes with an appeal to be left alone, to be in peace in the village where he finds peace, joy and happiness to live his life in full satisfaction.

Thus:

Biko hapu m n’ime ime obodo  
Ka m diri ndu m  
Na-enwere obi uto m  
Please leave me alone in the village  
So that I can live my life  
And enjoy continual happiness (Stanza 9, line 1 - 3)

There is nothing like peace of mind. There is therapy in the quietness of life.

The village life offers a kind of refuge for the poor, weak or sick; a hiding place for people who cannot withstand the competitive harsh condition of bustling and hustling experienced daily by city dwellers.

Life is much better in the village especially for the poor because they do not have to pay rents as tenants or be chased about by the landlord because they live in their village house. There are no bombing, shootings, stampede, strife and commotions that can warrant high blood pressure and stress because the village life is peaceful and restorative. There is no place like home; East or West, home is the best. However, because the cities are highly developed while the rural village is undeveloped, a big gap is created between the rich and the poor while the rich are living in comfort, the poor live in poverty, eking out a living in what ever way they can. This aligns with the Karl Marx ideology that explains and draws attention to the class struggle; the political, social and economic gap between the upper class and the lower class encapsulates the glaring injustice and seeks to address these imbalances.

#### **4.13 PỤTA N'ỤZỌ ỌCHỊCHỊ**

#### **COME OUT OF THE SEAT OF LEADERSHIP**

Achizila anyị,  
Gị nwoke oma chụwara  
Mgbe ụwa nna anyị ha nọ  
Hapuru onye ozọ ka o ritu  
Ka I che na ụwa bu nke naanị gi

Stop ruling us  
You good man that ruled  
Since the days of our forefathers  
Allow another person to benefit  
Or do you think that the world is yours alone

Anyị maara na i bu mgborogwu osisi  
So n'uzọ ka i na-anochiri mmadu  
Ma anyi arigala gi ka i puo  
Ma o bu anyi eji iwe  
Were mma na anyike gbuo gi  
N'ihina o bughị so gi ka oche ahụ dirila

We know that you are the roots of trees  
Only blocking other people's ways  
But we have appealed to you to leave  
Or we will angrily use  
Knives and axes to eliminate you  
Because you are not the only one the seat is meant for

Puta n'uzọ ochichi  
Gi bujurula akpa gi,  
Nye ndi ozọ efe ka ha butu

Come out of the seat of leadership  
You that have filled your pockets  
Allow others to benefit too

N'ihì na ọ bughì ọzọ nna gị,  
Nke i jì abụta ya n'ụbụ ahịa

Because it is not your father's title  
Neither did you attain it by struggle

**Okoro L. (Akọnuche 2006)**

The poem is a political poem of three stanzas, written by Lawrence Okoro. It laments and condemns the bad attitude of the leaders in society who refuse to leave the seat of authority. The themes are:

- A. Refusal to leave the seat of authority
- B. Selfishness amongst the leaders
- C. Bad government and corruption

The leaders in Africa do terrible jobs, kill so many, step on people's toes, ruin so many economies, the only way they can stay alive is by staying in power. *Nelson Mandela* is the one exception. They disproportionately want to hold positions of power till the next generation. The likes of Idi Amin of Uganda, Jean Bedel Bokaise of Central Africa Republic, Mobutu Sese Seko declared themselves president for life. Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe said he would remain President for life. Today, still in power, battling with old age, at 92 years he is seen falling down at one of the airports in Zimbabwe due to old age and refusal to leave the seat of authority. **(See Picture 13 Pg 184)**. Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria wanted a third term in office after staying in power for two terms.

Furthermore, the poet explains how the leaders occupy political seats as if it were their property and inheritance without allowing another person to occupy the seat. Since Nigeria is practising democracy, everybody should bear in mind that leadership is not their personal belonging and should not be a one-sided game. Sani Abacha is an instance where his unprincipled behavior was an eye opener to Nigerians.

Social services and the economy of Nigeria during this regime were in a state of epilepsy. He was finally knocked into the deepest coma. His regime became more inventive in finding ways of silencing his opponents through imprisonment, black mailing, intimidation and murder. These are never what the society needs from their leaders. The leaders should plant good seeds for the masses. The poet writes that;

Ma anyị ariọla gị ka ị pụọ  
Maọbụ anyị eji iwe  
Were mma na anyịke gbuo gị  
But we have appealed to you to leave  
Or we shall angrily use  
Knife and axe to kill you (Stanza 2, line 5 - 6)

When leaders taste the sweetness of power, they do not want to let go. For example: Obasanjo wanted a third term tenure in office and wanted to amend the constitution but was stopped. At present Atiku and Buhari who are old leaders that are supposed to retire and rest are still eyeing the Presidential seat in Nigeria, They are still longing and fighting for the seat they have left. The control, respect, dignity, economic and security control makes a leader stay in power longer than his performance. It seems our leaders stand to lose so much if they leave office. There is a realistic attempt by the poet to confront the political tyranny in the country and to unveil the destructive tendencies of authoritarianism on the society. The poet makes effort to draw the attention of the masses to the predominant ills in society and at the same time creates political awareness in the consciousness of the masses.



## 4.14 UWA OJOO NKE A

A gaara si na m nwere nku  
Agaara m efeli  
Feli, feba n'ime igwe  
Ebe Chineke bi  
Gbuo ikpere n'ala, kooro ya  
Ihe umuwa mere uwa

Uwa nke a di ka egwu  
O di egwu, nwanne m.  
O na-eyi m egwu.  
O gwoto agwoto  
O pitoro apito.

Chineke Nna,  
I na-ahukwa ihe umuwa na-eme?  
I na-anukwa ihe umuwa na-ekwu?  
Na-emeto uwa oma I kere,  
Jiri ya na-agba boolu,  
Jiri ya na-eti epele.

I ma na umuwa nwee ike,  
Ha gaara ama gi ura,  
Kwatuo gi n'ala,  
Ma juo gi i bu onye,  
Si gi bia ka gi na ha nwalee,  
Si gi ka a matakene n'etiti gi na ha  
Mbe naabo nke bu oke

Maka na o na-abu nwanza rijuo afo,  
O kwe Chi ya mgbu:  
Maka na o na-abu dibia nujuo afo,  
O buo mgborogwu n'ajo ohia.

Mana umuwa chefuru na otu ubochi  
Onweuwa azochie n'ebube  
Mee nke o ji buru Chi  
Mgbe ahụ onye chere na ya bu anwanwu  
Echeli ihu n'elu,  
Ghasa ukwu, ghasa aka  
Mechie anya, mechie onu  
Togboro ka ogwe osisi  
Iji kuziere umuwa  
Na uwa bu ihe efu

## THIS EVIL WORLD

Had it being I had wings  
I would have flown up  
Fly up and fly into heaven  
Where God dwells  
Kneel down and narrate to him  
What man has turned the world into

This world is terribly evil  
So terrible my brother  
It baffles me  
It is horribly evil  
So very horribly evil

God the father  
Do you see the actions of man?  
Do you hear what they utter?  
Staining the good world you created  
Playing it like football  
Making fun of it

Do you know that if men had the power  
They would have slapped you  
Pushed you down on the floor  
And ask you "who are you"?  
Asking that you come and compete with them  
Saying, "let us know between you and them  
Who is stronger?"

For when the weak  
Challenges its god to wrestling  
When the herbalist fills his stomach  
He fetches herbs from the evil forest

But the men have forgotten that one day,  
The owner of the world will come in glory.  
Perform what makes him God  
Then, he who thinks that he can never die  
Faces up,  
Stretch out legs and hands  
Closes eye and closes mouth  
Lying like a log of wood  
In order to teach men  
That the world is vanity

The poem has six stanzas, written by Nwadike, I.U. It is a lamentation poem that decries the state of the wicked, the ugly and terrible state of living in this desperately wicked world we are living in. There are very many atrocious and abominable activities going on in the face of the world. The poet is so concerned that he is burdened and engages on a dialogue with God, asking God whether He is aware of all these horrible activities going on in this world. The themes are:

- A. Desire for freedom from life's troubles
- B. Atrocious activities in this era
- C. The vanity of life

The societal evils witnessed in the day-to-day livings seem to increase and take a higher alarming dimension. The evils people indulge in, in this present age is becoming alarming, such that most poets are speaking from the same voice. The quest and desire to be free from all the commotions and evils of this life. Hence, the poet writes:-

A gaara si na m nwere nku	Had it been I had wings
A gara m efeli	I would had flown up
Felie, feba n'ime igwe	Fly up and fly into heaven
Ebe Chineke bi"	Where God dwells (Stanza 1 line 1-4)

Man is entangled with so much challenges and difficulties in society, so the wishing and longing to be free is quite understanding. Olebara (1975) in the poem '**M ga-abu udele**' wishes to be a vulture so that he can be left alone by himself. The vulture is a bird that virtually, nobody wants or hunts so that it is free. Onyekaonwu (1989) in the poem "**Aga m abu ikuku**", the air is free at ease with all things. Nobody troubles the air. Every living being depends on air to survive. Ogunjiofor (1975) in "**O di m nọọ ka m buru nnunu**" wishes to be a bird that flies and sings freely in the air undisturbed. The society is troubled with so many vices like:- Kidnappings, lack of freedom to move, lack of freedom to air ones opinion or expression, assassinations, bombings, shootings, genocide, Boko

Haram attacks, political or religious strife, suppressions, bribery and corruption, suicide bombers. All the sufferings and hardships cause fears and anxiety that the poet wants freedom. He expresses with a heavy heart, the rate of evil in the world. A lot of atrocities and evil deeds are going on in our societies today; wickedness, sacrileges, abomination, iniquities, immoralities e t c. All these represent and cause harm, destruction and misfortune. (See **Picture 14 Pg. 185**) The bible records that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and is desperately wicked, who can know it? (Jere. 17:9) when the poet writes,

Chineke nna,  
Ị na-ahụkwa ihe ụmụụwa na-eme?  
Ị na-ahụkwa ihe ụmụụwa na-ekwu?  
Na-emetọ ụwa ọma ị kere  
Jiri ya na-agba bọọlụ  
Jiri ya na-eti epele

God the father,  
Do you see the actions of men?  
Do you hear what they utter?  
Staining the good world you created,  
Playing football with it  
Making fun with it? (Stanza 3 line 1-5)

The actions of people these days are alarming. People do whatever they like, forgetting that no single sin goes unpunished and that we reap whatever we sow, sooner than later. Uzoigwe and Ogbu (2014:1) write that there was a standstill at 3 – 3 Junction at Nkwelle Ezunaka and different parts of Onitsha metropolis when thousands of Anglicans took to the streets protesting the destruction of Ebenezer Anglican Church Oyolu Oze by some people...the vandals who were said to be more than one hundred, allegedly drove into the church compound with about three caterpillars and one bulldozer and pulled down the church structure. They reduced the church building to mere rubbles and debris on the ground. One may ask, what would lead any sane individual to contemplate destroying God's temple? Who will authorize the destruction of the temple of God? Is he not afraid of the wrath of God? This generation is going down to an alarming behaviour and provoking God to wrath.

Kwakpovwe (2014) writes that, a 30 years old man, Nwado Chukwudi Awam, was paraded openly for beheading his father, Michael Awam, 56 and eating the father's neck and head. When the police went for him, he was waving the mactchet which he had used to cut his father's head and threatened to kill anybody that got close to him. He was however, overpowered and arrested. On interrogation he confirmed that he had heard a voice telling him to go to the village and kill his father. It is greatly alarming, at the rate of evil activities, done by people in this wicked generation.

Rotimi (2014:19) writes that a slave camp was discovered in Ibadan, this is a shrine where captives were randomly raped and offered up for rituals after vital organs have been taken out of their body. These ritual killers, pick their victims in broad daylight, push people into the vehicle and carry them away in the presence of eager on lookers without anyone asking questions. Since certain categories of Nigerians such as security men are thought to be above the law, they can do as they please in public. They can arrest or shoot other citizens at will. Ritualists now disguise themselves as law enforcement agents and with this trick, carry people into slavery for rituals and keep them for months without anyone knowing. This is how some people found themselves at the Ibadan slave camp. These criminal and unbelievable operations take place in the Nigerian society. Human lives are wasted without consequences. The poet continues to lament thus:-

Ị ma na ụmụụwa nwee ike,  
Ha gaara ama gị ụra  
Kwatuo gị n'ala  
Ma jọọ gị Ị bụ onye"? (Stanza 4 line 1-4)  
Do you know that if human beings had the power  
They would have slapped you  
Pushed you down on the floor  
And ask you who you are"?

In our society today, a lot of atrocities are committed daily everywhere. Okolie (2012:8) writes that a woman who has often pretended to be insane was caught with a human head. The woman wears rags to create the impression that she has a mental problem. She was caught by some commercial motorcycle riders in the

area. According to the reports, the woman while perambulating with a bag around a busy area, went to a corner, brought out a phone and made calls. She was immediately trailed by a motorcycle rider who pretended to be easing himself. He overheard the woman asking the recipient of her call to come and pick this thing because it was ‘smelling’. The motorcycle rider quickly alerted his colleagues and they caught the woman, searched the bag and discovered the head. She was then handed over to the police. These are the evil inherent in society. From the actions of evil men, they seem to be asking God the questions as expressed by the poet; *“Do you know that if men had the power, they would have slapped you?”* (Stanza 4, line 1-2)

The deeds of evil men today show that they do not fear God at all. Killings and murders are no more news but the order of the day. What do our leaders do? They are busy looting the nation’s treasury, using verbal violence and battling over power. The ACP – Action Congress Party and PDP – Peoples Democratic Party are busy fighting one another, over who will be the next president. They are busy discharging tear gas at the vulnerable masses at random whenever they attempt to protest. The world is not full of evil because of those who do wrong. It is full of evil because of those who do nothing. A lot of evil go on in this terrible world.

Kwakpovwe (2013) writes that in Northern Nigeria, a middle aged man who attempted to sell his six month old daughter at six million naira was arrested. When questioned, the man admitted committing the offence but confessed to doing it due to poverty.

Amaize (2016: 7) writes that three men, aged 70years, 65years and 58years respectively and severally raped and defiled a 15 year old girl. When old grandfathers indulge in amoral behaviour with a 15year old girl, is that not mental disorder? Today, gay marriages and lesbian relationships are no more abominations. People do anything they like and never consider that we reap whatever we sow. Of all the things God created, He regretted creating only man

because man is evil and does abominable things not thinking of what or how God will punish him for the evil done.

Dayo (2014) writes that a man allegedly killed his wife in Ondo State after an argument over sharing a bag of garri (cassava flour). He hit her on the head with a plank and she died. There is general collapse of morality among people of all nations. The moral failure in the modern society is quite alarming. This generation claims to be Christians, so many people attend churches but they have rejected God's commandments and God's counsel. When one rejects God's words, we draw God's wrath and it is a fearful thing to fall into the wrath of God.

The poet concludes by reminding men that God is still the owner of the universe and that one day he will come and judge the world over these evils and teach them that the world is vanity.

Our society has become so morally, socially, educationally, politically leprous that nobody knows how to remedy the situation. The leaders themselves do not know which way to go and everything is going down and it seems we are the architects of our doom.

Agbakwuru (2014:45) described the level of development in the country as abysmal. It is sad that at 55, Nigeria is still a toddler and unfortunately, we are still being fed like a baby. The situation of things in the country is going down and when things turn bad the poor masses suffer more than the rich. In this light, all citizens should try as much as possible to desist from evil, to be free from punishment, for no sinner goes unpunished, no nation saddled with atrocities shall go unpunished. Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach.

The poem is in line with Karl Marx's ideology which generally encourages some revolutionary measures in whatever form in order to usher in a new order, a new society to re-direct and re-define the social order.

## 4.15 ỌCHỊCHỊ

Aga m aga n'elu gaa biri  
Ndi bi n'ala ahujuola anya  
Ide awaala ala niile  
Wakasija ya ka a wara ibe ji  
Ana m ebere ama nna m akwa  
N'ih i onodu ide debere ya  
Mmadu ahuzighi ebe a ga-azonye ukwu  
Ka a na-ahu ebe ugbo si aga.  
A ga-ebu ugboala n'isi  
Ka a ga-akpu ya n'onu?  
Ndi ochichi ga-aza nke a.

Aga m aga n'elu gaa biri  
Ndi bi n'ala ahujuola anya  
Tunyere m vootu, tunyere m vootu  
Aga m enye unu oku, mmiri,  
Ezigbo uzọ, gi tunyere ha, ha merie, n'ikpe azu  
Eju olee nne gi, kukororo.  
Nrugbu gbaa afo onye a na-arugbu amara  
Mmadu o na-emegbu dibia na-agwo ya?  
Ndi ochichi ga-aza nke a.

Aga m aga n'elu gaa biri  
Ujo uwa atugbuola m  
Umụ mmadu ofufu ofufu  
Ego nri, i huru n'abee?  
Oku mpinyumponyu  
A guo akwukwo taa, onwa ano a gubeghi ozo  
Nke noro n'elu, o na-agba ndi no n'ala  
ukwu  
Onye ga-achuru Mbieri ndi ara?  
Ndi ochichi ga-aza nke a.

Aga m aga n'elu gaa biri  
Ndi bi n'ala ahujuola anya  
Nkwa di kwere nwaanyi n'ute  
A nagh i emezu ya emezu  
Ka m gaa n'elu gaa biri  
Ebe onwa ga-agbara m abali niile  
Anwu achaara m ehie niile  
M rjo otu ihe enye m ihe asaa.  
Obi eruo m ala buru m shuga shuga  
M were ndu m mere ihe.

## LEADERSHIP

I will go up and reside  
Those living on earth have suffered  
Erosion has broken all the land  
Broken up as pieces of yam  
I weep for my father's land  
Because of the havoc caused by erosion  
No way for people to walk on  
Neither is there part ways for vehicles  
Will vehicles be carried on the head?  
Or shall it be carried with the mouth?  
The leaders have this to answer

I would go up and live  
Those living on earth have suffered  
Vote me in, vote me in  
I will give you electricity, water  
Good roads, when you vote for them and they win, at last  
The story will change  
When deception lasts for a year, the deceived knows  
Can someone maltreat the doctor that cures him?  
The leaders have this to answer

I will go up and live  
I am afraid of the world  
People's children missing and missing  
Where did you see money for food?  
There is no light  
If there is school today, there is none again for four months  
Those on top kick at those at the bottom with their feet  
Who will chase away the mad from Mbieri?  
The leaders have this to answer.

I will go up and live  
Those living on earth have suffered.  
Promise made to a woman by the husband on the mat  
Is never fulfilled  
Let me go up and live  
Where the moon will shine for me all night  
And the sun will shine for me all afternoon.  
When I ask for one thing it will be given to me seven times  
My heart will relax and be glad  
And I will be comfortable and be fulfilled with my life

**Oleru H. (Akonuche 2006)**

This is a poem of four stanzas, written by Oleru, Harriet. It is a political poem which condemns leaders that use empty promises to be voted in to power only to neglect all those promises at last.

The themes are:

- A. Erosion menace in the nation
- B. Lack of social infrastructure
- C. Deceptive promises of leaders

Hornby (2006) defines leadership as “the leaders of the party or group”. It is a development of a clear and complete system of expectations in order to identify, evoke and use the strengths of all resources in the organization, the most important of which is people.

Leadership influences process that ensure managers to get their people to do willingly what must be done and do well what ought to be done. Leadership involves establishing a clear vision, sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly, providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision co-ordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stake holders. It is an act of inspiring subordinates to perform and engage in achieving a goal.

The first stanza points out on how erosion has destroyed the country terribly. Hence:

Ide awaala ala niile	Erosion has cleared all the land
Wakasia ya ka awara ibe ji”	Broken it up like pieces of yam (Stanza 1, line 3-4)

Erosion is the process by which soil and rock are removed from the earth’s surface by exogenic process such as wind and water flow and the transported and deposited in other location. The poet says that excessive erosion has caused problems to our country to the extent that there are desertification, decrease in Agricultural productivity due to land degradation, sedimentation in waterway and ecological collapse. Globally, erosion has damaged the roads such that people and vehicles find



it difficult to move about freely. A typical example is the Agulu-Nanka erosion in Nigeria. Erosion is a big scare that has destroyed land and property. Millions of acres of farm land are ruined by soil erosions. Surprisingly, no government has succeeded in solving this erosion problem permanently.

In stanza two, the poet explores the election promises made to the public by politicians who are canvassing to win an election only for the promise to be broken once the politician is in the office. Election promises are part of an election platform, but platforms also contain vague ideals and generalities as well as specific promises. They are essential elements in getting people to vote for a candidate. For example, a promise such as to cut taxes, build roads, offer employments, to introduce new social programmes may appeal to voters.

The public perceive that a great number of election promises are broken, many regard this as a severe issue that disaffects people from the entire political process, increasing apathy and lowering the turnout of voters. The writer of this poem says that election promises have been broken for as long as election have been held and this is likely to continue. Hence;

Ndị bi n'ala ahụjuọla anya  
Tunyere m vootu, tunyere m vootu  
Aga m enye unu oku, mmiri  
Ezigbo ụzọ, gị tunyere ha, ha  
Merie, n'ikpeazu, eju olu nne gị

Those living on earth are suffering  
Vote me in, vote me in  
I will give you electricity, water  
Good roads, when you vote for them and they win, at last  
The story will change

There are strong pressures on politicians to make promises which they cannot keep. A party that does not make exaggerated promises might appear blind, unambitious and uninteresting to voters compared to the empty promise of the politicians. The poet likens the promises of these sugar-coated politicians as “Nkwa di kwere nwaanyị n'ute a naghị emezu emezu”.

Nigeria has no leadership because those at the helm of affairs are not sincere in their various roles. The leadership failed to show commitment to Nigerians, it has failed to fulfill the mandate it got from the masses and there is no way the country will develop if the leadership is concerned about its selfish interest. Their primary

concern is on the bulk of money, contracts and funds to be looted. The poor masses continually suffer. All the promises made during the political campaign are lies which can never be accomplished. Instead of them to provide solutions for the country, they are voted into power to create more problems for society. Wealth meant to be shared with the less privileged is hoarded by the politicians. So the rich grows richer and richer.

Ezeuko and Anowai (1989) in ‘**Ndọrọndọrọ**’ (politics) portray politicians as empty boasts pointing out that their promises are false and only the foolish ones will now be deceived. Also Emenanjọ (1979) in *Arịrịo* (pleading) begs the sugar – coated politicians that what the masses want is speaking and acting. – Ekwueme.

When the poet says;

Aga m aga n’elu gaa biri	I would go up and live
Ujọ ụwa atugbuola m	I am afraid of this world
Umụ mmadụ ofufu ofufu	Peoples’ children missing and missing (Stanza 3 line 1-3)

These are the evil inherent in society. Occultists are everywhere, killing and taking human parts for rituals. People are missing everyday up till today, the Chibok girls are still missing. **(See Picture 15 Pg. 186)** Dead bodies are being found in lonely places, with the private parts or eyes, ears, etc cut off. All these are for the desire to acquire wealth and be free from the poverty chains.

Indeed those in the positions of authority have so many questions to answer. Millions of families live in poverty, the workers are not paid, teachers are on strike, many people are kidnapped, no good road, no electricity.

When the leadership of a nation persistently fails to achieve its primary obligation of providing security and order within its territory and borders, such a leadership becomes a threat to itself and the nations. The poet due to frustration and the sufferings encountered wants to leave the country for another place up in the sky where perhaps, he hopes to be given all that he ever wanted in this life. Hence:

Ka m gaa n’elu gaa biri	Let me go up and live
Ebe ọnwa ga-agbara m abali niile	When the moon will shine for me all night
Anwụ achaara m ehihie niile	And the sun will shine for me all the afternoon (Stanza 4, line 5-7)

The truth is that there is no place to hide from the leadership of this life. The poet however wishes to go up and live, so that whatever he wants may be given to him seven times. One may ask, “Where on earth can one ask and receive all that he ever wants if not in heaven”? Illustratively, the poet is warning the leaders to adjust positively in order to satisfy the yearnings of the people. It is poor leadership that allows a leader to feel unconcerned on the plight of his subjects. The sociological criticism generally view literary works as products of the economic and ideological determinants prevalent at that time. In other words, writers are members of society whose writings are conditioned by what is happening around them whether politically, economically or socially. The poem “Ọchịchị”, is a reflection of our present society.

## 4.16 OBODO M

Obodo M Chineke gòziri agozi  
Nke nwere ala akumaakubi  
Nke nwere ntukwasiobi  
Tosiri imiputara  
Mmadu niile no n'ime ya ego  
Ego i na-amiputa bu maka ogaranya  
O bughị maka ogbenye

Obodo m, nke na-amiputa  
Mmanụ na mmiriaraehi  
Gini kpatara na ogbenye  
Na-ebe akwa ariri, ubochi niile  
Ebe ogaranya na-amuchari?

Obodo m, o nweghi ozo di ka gi n' Afrika  
Bu nke mmanu ya na gaasi ya  
Juputara n'uzo itunyere gi  
Obodo m,  
I bu ogaranya ogutaobie n' Afrika

Obodo m,  
Ogaranya na-abawanye  
Ebe ogbenye na-adawanye  
Otutu mkpuruobi na-anwu kwa ubochi  
N' ihi agu na ihe isi ike  
N' obodo oma a

Ufodu ka onodu a na-ewute  
Ma o gbasaghi ndi ozo  
Ndi no na mwute na-aju si  
Kedu mgbe onodu a ga-ebi  
Mgbe ogbenye ga-esoro  
Rachaa ma michaakwa aka n'olileanya?

## MY COUNTRY

My country that God blessed  
With available land  
Full of hope  
Expected to yield  
Every citizen money  
The money you yield is for the rich  
Not for the poor

My country that produces  
Milk and honey  
Why are the poor  
Crying everyday  
While the rich are laughing

My country, there is none like you in Africa  
Your oil and gas  
Are filled everywhere  
My country  
You are so richly endowed in Africa

My country  
The rich get richer  
While the poor get poorer  
Many souls die daily  
For hunger and hardship  
In this good country

This situation saddens some people  
While others care less  
Those saddened about this asks  
When will this present condition end  
When the poor will join  
Hopefully in eating and drinking?

**Ikeokwu, E. (Akonuche 2006)**

This poem of five stanzas was written by Ikeokwu Enyinnaya. It is a political poem on the economic inequalities witnessed in the country as the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The themes in the poem are:

- A. Socio-political and economic inequality in the nation
- B. The poor get poorer, the rich get richer
- C. A nation blessed with oil and gas but still suffers hunger

The poet critically presents the country as a nation that is tremendously blessed with agricultural goodies, gas and oil endowment but still it seems only the rich gather everything while the poor remain in hunger. Karl Marx calls this the law of increasing poverty. For this, the humble members of the society have a right to complain of these injustices, especially in a land flowing with milk and honey and so richly endowed with oil and gas. People are not supposed to suffer if the leaders manage these natural gifts effectively. The poet laments that;

Ogaranya na-abawanye	The rich get richer
Ebe ogbenye na-adawanye	While the poor get poorer
Otutu mkpuruobi na-anwu kwa ubochi	Many souls die daily
N'ihia aguu na ihe isi ike	Due to hunger and hardship

The phrase, 'The rich get richer while the poor get poorer' resembles the bible verse – 'For whosoever hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath'.

The gnawing poverty that have taken over the people in society is a great concern and source of worry to many people. Most poets, in an attempt to create awareness for possible solutions continue to cry out through their works. Example; Onyekaonwu(1989:32) in the poem 'Akwa Nwa Ogbenye' (Cry of The Poverty stricken), laments that the poor has nobody to cater or take care of him for that he has become a laughing stock and treated like a nobody and consoles the poor to look unto God, for only Him, knows all the pains and worries he is passing through. Ogunjiofor (1975) in the poem 'Akuko Nwa Ogbenye' (Story of The Poor Child) laments on how the poor and orphans are maltreated and are made to experience the harsh and stark realities of life but also was consoled by God Who answered his

prayers and turned things around. Chukuezi (1979) in the poem 'Akwa Onye Ngworo' (Cry of The Crippled) laments that the poor and crippled is in trouble for he calls for help but none to help despite all his pleas and shouts for mercy. Ezeuko and Anowai (1989) in 'Nhusi Anya' (Hardship), lament of all the hardship, suffering and woes encountered in this hard life. These sufferings especially on the poor are so severe that only God would save him from any possible destructive tendencies.

Hence:

Mgbe Chineke bu Chi umu ogbenye  
Nchekwube m nwere na Chi m ga-azoputa m  
(Stanza 3, line 1-3)

When God is God of the poverty stricken  
My hope in God will save me

The poor are suffering in this country. Most people beg for food, some go without medical treatment due to lack of money. Most people do not go to school, some live in uncompleted buildings. There are pictures of hunger, sickness and poverty and death written over all the faces of the people and it seems nobody cares. (**See Picture 16 Pg. 187**) Even the leaders care less; they selfishly embezzle the public funds living the poor even poorer. Marxist theory and principle are of the view that literally writers have to devote their works to the course of the proletariat and support the poor masses who are being oppressed by the capitalist and industrialists in the society. In order to help, we must re-mould and reposition the masses to propel the society forward.

## 4.17 AJỌ AKWA MMIRI

Ugwu ojọọ nọ gị n'iru  
Ugwu ojọọ nọ gị n'azụ  
Ndagwurugwu ojọọ nọ n'aka nri gị  
Ndagwurugwu ojọọ nọ n'aka ekpe gị  
N'okpuru gị mmiri na-efe efe  
Na-achị wom wom, wom wom;  
N'okpuru mmiri ahụ okwute ebulie isi ha elu  
Ya na eze ha na-aghọ nko  
Ka mma agụba  
Na-achọ onye ga-akpowa  
Onye ha ga-atagbu

Olee ihe ụmụ mmadụ mere?  
Onye ukwu leehee anya ya  
Ya adakpuo n'ime mmiri tawam  
Onye inyinnya igwe leehee anya ya  
Ya awunye n'ime ya tawom  
Onye ụgbọ ala leehee anya ya  
Ya amakpuo n'ime ya tajum

Akwa mmiri a  
Ike agwula!  
Ị gwubilatala ụmụ mmadụ  
Ọ bụ gini?  
Anyị mere gini?  
Ọ bụ na Mgbeke amaghị ala  
Ka ọ bụ mma agụba adighi nko  
Gwa m

Ọ bụrụ na ajọ agbara bi n'ime gị  
Kwuo ya  
Ọ bụrụ na aja ka ị choro  
Akwa na ewu na okuku  
Kwuputa ya  
Ka anyị wee dirị ndu  
Na-agafe n'elu akwa mmiri a

Ụmụ mmadụ ataala afufu n'ihi gị  
Akwa mmiri ojọọ

## RICKETY WATER BRIDGE

Rickety mountain situates in front  
Rickety mountain is situated at your back  
Wretched valley lies at your right hand  
Wretched valley lies at your left hand  
Beneath you waters are flying  
Wobbling greatly  
Under the waters rocks raise their heads up high  
With their teeth so sharp  
As a razor  
Seeking for whom to destroy  
One to devour

What has man done to you?  
When the mighty beholds you  
They would fall into the water  
When the bicycle rider beholds you  
He would fall into you  
When the car driver beholds you  
He would fall into it

This water bridge  
We are tired  
You have reduced people in number  
What is it?  
What have we done?  
Is it that we are not capable  
Or that her knife are blunt?  
Tell me

If an evil goddess lives in you  
Say it  
If you demand for a sacrifice  
Cloth, goat and fowl.  
Say it out  
So we can lead our lives  
And pass over this water bridge

People have suffered greatly because of you  
Bad water bridge

Ndị nwurū anwū anwuola  
Ndị furu efu efuola  
Ma taa, mee ka anyị dirị ndụ  
Anyị bụkwanụ ụmụ mmadụ

Those who have died have gone  
Those missing are lost  
But today, make us to live  
We are people's children

Ọ dị mwute  
Na anyi ga-anoro ebe a  
Na-ele gi  
Ị na-ewe ụmụ otu otu  
Na-akpola ha ụwa n'ike  
Biko, nwaanyi oma  
Hapu anyi ka anyi biri  
Anyi bu ụmụ Chineke kere  
O nweghi ihe anyi mere gi

It is painful  
That we shall be here  
And look at you  
While you swallow people one by one  
Taking people's lives in a sudden  
Please fine woman  
Allow us to live  
We are God's creation  
We have done nothing to you

**Echebima, G.N (Akọ na Uche 2001)**

The themes of this poem are:

- a. The neglect of water bridges in the society.
- b. Many lives lost in the neglected water bridge.

The poet points at the deteriorating water bridges. Most of these water bridges, both the local and state bridges are structurally deficient. The bridges are often times overlooked. **(See Picture 17 Pg. 188)** As the weather changes and the bridges age, the infrastructures continues to be neglected, they become fragile and unpredictable. The drivers too become frustrated with the abysmal road conditions and add more money to the transportation cost as a way of fixing or repairing the vehicles on the rickety bridges. The poet points that the waters under the bridges wobble and raise their heads up high with sharpened teeth that devour man to destruction should they attempt to fall into the raging waters, underneath those wretched bridges. They are traps seeking for man to devour and therefore should be repaired instantly because innocent lives are being wasted. Most of the water bridges have outlived their life span and desperately need maintenance. Most of them were constructed earlier before the Nigerian civil war about sixty or more years back. They need to be tremendously upgraded in order to modernize it. The water bridge needs a



sustainable funding solution to make the nation safer and meet our transport needs. The poet laments that these crumbling and aged water bridges are posing a serious threat to the lives of people because the passers-by, bicycle and car drivers mostly fall into the water due to the poor dilapidating state of these water bridges. Hence:

Olee ihe ụmụ mmadụ mere	What has man done to you?
Onye ukwu leehee anya ya	When the mighty behold you
Ya adakpuo n'ime mmiri tawam	They would fall into the water
Onye inyinya igwe leehee anya ya	When the bicycle rider beholds you
Ya awunye n'ime ya tawom	He would fall into you
Onye ụgbọala leehee anya ya	When the car driver beholds you
Ya amakpuo n'ime ya tajum	He would fall into it (stanza 2, line 1-7)

The water bridge is in such bad neglected shape that the poet pleads with the waters, to stop taking people's lives just like that and offers to sacrifice some goats, money or cloths, in order to appease them and make them to stop swallowing people up. The poet therefore appeals to the water bridges to be merciful on human beings because it is painful how people's lives end suddenly because of the rickety and highly neglected water bridges in society today.

The government seems to have totally forgotten these deficient and deteriorating water bridges that need attention in the communities; but because our leaders travel mostly on air, they never get to experience what the poor masses suffer as they cross through these very dangerous water bridges. The masses are suffering, losing lives daily as people drown in these shabby water bridges that are death traps to people in our society, especially the poor masses that mostly travel on water bridges with their bicycles and cars.

The poet's points create awareness to let the people and government know of the shabby conditions of these water bridges because they desperately need maintenance as poor masses die daily while crossing these bridges. These align with the Marxist approach which believes that the people are the true source of literature and to create work of art, writers must observe and study the people and their lives' struggle and

then create works of art out of real life situation in an effort to help transform the society positively.

#### 4.18 UKO N'UJU

Keduzi ka a ga-esi n'odu n'anyim  
Were aso na-akwo aka?  
Kedu kwanu ka a ga-esi n'odu n'iyi,  
Kwere ncha o baa anyi n'anya?

Nkenu bi n'ala na-apita mmanu  
Karia osa bito n'elu!

Koro m ihe kpatara na  
Mmadu ga-enwe mgbuli,  
Ma mgbuli ana-agu ya?

Ego a,  
A si na anyi nwere n'ijeli ijeli  
Bu n'ikuku ka o di  
Ego a,  
A si anyi na o bughu ya bu okwu  
Bu naani n'akwukwo ka o di

Koro m ihe kpatara na  
Mmadu ga-enwe egbugbere  
Ma anwu ana-ama ya n'eze?

Nri a,  
A si anyi na o bu aturu tawa,  
Ezughu aturu ga-ata,  
Nke o na-afoduru mmadu.

Ugbu a,  
Mmiri na-afabanyezi anyi n'eze  
Ebe anyi na-achọ mmiri a ga-anu,  
Anyi na-elozu ukwara taa  
Na-atuzi anya erimeri nwanne echi

#### SCARCITY IN THE MIDST OF PLENTY

Why should one be at the ocean side  
And wash hands with spittle.  
Why should one be at the river side  
And allow soap foam enter the eyes?

All I and resources yields oil  
More than the bats living upwards

Explain to me why  
Humans have food in abundance  
And still wallow in hunger?

The money  
People say we possess in billions  
Exist on the airs  
The money  
That we are told that it is not a problem  
They are only in notes.

Explain to me why  
People will possess lips  
And the teeth would be exposed for the sun?

The food  
We are told that it is in abundance  
Is not enough for the sheep to eat  
Not to talk of remaining for the people

Now  
We are facing great danger  
Where we are searching for water to drink  
We are swallowing up cough  
Expecting food next tomorrow

**Emenanjo, E.N (Utara Nti 1979)**

This poem of five stanzas written by Emenanjo points to the sad states of things in a country so richly endowed with many natural resources but are poverty stricken in hunger, starvation, malnutrition, diseases and unemployment. Nigeria is blessed with so many natural resources like coal, tin-ore, crude oil, vegetative lands, good weather but the management of the resources has been awfully and embarrassingly dismal. These have stalled development and created such grinding poverty and socio-economic exclusions which have brought crime and kidnappings. The poet in utmost disappointment asks such questions like:

Keduzi ka a ga-esi noḍu n’anyim were aso na-akwo aka?  
Kedū kwanu ka a ga-esi noḍu n ‘anyim kwere ncha o baa anyi n’anya (Stanza 1)

Why should one be at the ocean side and wash hands with spittle?  
Why should one be at the riverside and allow soap foam to enter the eyes?

That Nigeria is naturally endowed is not in doubt. The question is what has stopped us from making the natural endowment to work for our people? Though Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources, it is regrettable that from independence to date, Nigeria has increasingly been dependent on oil and gas as the chief export and source of revenue. We as a nation have failed to diversify and develop our economy which has led to many social crises today. Five decades of our independence yet our economy has been on its knee, the health and educational sectors have collapsed, there is no quality education, no food, poor equipped hospitals, no security, poverty and corruption keeps rising on daily basis.

The poet continues to lament and says that,  
Ego a,  
A si na anyi nwere n’ijeli ijeli  
Bu n’ikuku ka o di

The Money  
They said we possess in billions exists on the air

Though Nigeria has the largest economy in the African continent, ironically, the country also harbors some of the poorest people in the world with as many as 69% of the population living below the poverty line. The high rate of poverty in the midst of plenty has been linked to the endemic corruption in the country. It is said that Nigeria possess money in billions but there is no evidence of the wealth. Looters, reckless expenditure and public fund embezzlers in high places of authority, siphon the money to their own private use, neglecting the suffering masses. The poet laments that,

“People will possess lips  
And the teeth would be exposed to the sun” (stanza 3 line 1-3)  
Mmadu ga-enwe ebugbere  
Ma anwu ana-ama ya n’eze?

This is because with all the numerous available natural resources, they never make good use of them. Nigeria is known as the giant of Africa but most of the people go to bed hungry. The popular proverb says that, “ **Nkụ dī na mba na-eghere mba nri**”. Meaning that we should make good use of what we have as a nation to solve our problems. The society is stocked with many resources which if properly harnessed and projected will go a long way towards a positive transformation of the society. Our leaders lack direction that is why the economy is depressed. Malaysia has developed a knowledge – based economy and has led the world production of palm-oil, the seedlings of which they got from Nigeria a few decade back. Nigerians enjoy chocolates but fail to process the cocoa we are blessed with, they enjoy good clothes but cannot process our cotton, they enjoy good shoes but neglect the hides and skin we are endowed with. Nigeria is too potentially rich to be poor, not to talk of wallowing in poverty. There is a need to employ new skills to harness and improve on all the natural resources in order to help bring back to life, the dwindling economy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE POETS' STYLE OF PRESENTING THE SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE SELECTED POEMS

#### 5.0 Preamble

Crystal and Davy (1969) refer to style as the language associated with literature as characteristics of 'good', 'effective' and 'beautiful writing'. Style is the way something is said, done, expressed or performed, a style of speech or writing. All figures of speech fall within the domain of style. There are a lot of poetic devices adopted by poets of the works of this study. The poets are Ezeuko and Anowai, the writers of 'Ọru Ugbo', 'E nwela m N'ozu' – Olebara, 'Mahadum' and 'Obodo Onicha' by Okediadi, 'O wutere m' by Ugwunkwọ, 'Achomoru' by Onuegbu, 'Nwaanyi' by Nwaozuzu, 'Uwa Ka Onye Njọ'? by Mbah, 'Ime Ime Obodo' and 'Ajo Akwa Mmiri' by Echebima, 'Akwa Ala Igbo na-ebe' by Obienyem, 'Ochichi' by Oleru, 'Puta n'uzo ochichi' by Okoro, 'Obodo M' by Ikeokwu, 'Uwa Ojoo Nke a' and Naijiria oma by Nwadike.

#### 5.1 The Poet's Style of Writing in 'Ọru Ugbo'

In this poem, the poet adopted different poetic devices to criticize the state of the society. Examples of such styles are:-

**Exposition:** In the expository style, the writer tells the readers about a specific subject. The poet uses such phrases like the

'O chiri aja, jiri aka pikoba aja' (Stanza 1, line 1-4)

To gather and mould sand

To expose the subject matter or topic of discussion through this, readers are made to understand the importance of cultivating the sand which infers agriculture. Moreover, with

the idioms like ‘Ogbara ohuru na-akwuba mbọ’ (stanza 3, line 1-5) - The generation that shows off their nails, ‘Mbọ edetu aja’- the nails that never touch the sand, ‘Onu eghere oghe, onu aguu - Mouth open, mouth of hunger. From these the readers understand the pride and haughtiness of these present generation that have refused to humble themselves and go back to agriculture.

**Diction:** The language of the poem is not very easy. One needs to read it twice or thrice to understand the idiomatic expressions or proverbs used to illustrate farming or agriculture. The meanings were hidden also in the use of onomatopoeia to expose the pride in the youths as they walk about in arrogance, refusing to work in the farm. The poet says, ‘Ije segem segem’ meaning a stylish type of walking that connotes pride in movement. To depict hunger, he chose to expose it in sounds of yawning, ‘Ughere –ah- ah – ah – haaa’ (stanza 6, line 4). The yawning sound simply means hunger showing a lazy and proud person who refuses to work, to till the ground, ends up in hunger.

**Tone:** The poet’s tone can be said to be satirical because he mocks and criticizes and choose words that are scornful to portray and condemn the youths who have refused to farm.

**Figurative language:** Some of the figurative language in the poem are:-

**Idioms:** for example

- i. O mere dike maara ihe o chiri aja (stanza1) – That made the wise man to collect sand. ‘O chiri aja’ means to work with sand, to till the ground.
- ii. Jiri aka pikoba aja (stanza 1) – Moulding sand with hand. ‘Pikoba aja’ means to cultivate, to farm the land.
- iii. Ndi ogbara ohuru na-akwuba mbo (stanza 4, line 1) – This generation shows off nails. ‘Na-akwuba mbọ means to pride about refusing to work with the hands.

The author uses the idiomatic expressions to make the reader to think twice and thrice before he or she deciphers the meaning.

### **Metaphor:**

- i. Ohi ji bu nsọala (Stanza 7, line 2)
- ii. Ije bu egwu (Stanza 5, line 4)
- iii. Ngana ajọka (Stanza 6, line 1)

### **Proverbs:**

- i. Ngana kpuchie ute, agụụ ekpughe ya (Stanza 6, line 2 – 4) – When laziness covers the mat, hunger uncovers it.
- ii. Aka aja aja na-ebute ọnụ mmanụ mmanụ - He who works shall eat.

The use of proverbs deepens the meaning.

### **Personification:**

- i. Afọ ekweghi ụkwụ zuru ike (stanza 1, line 4) – The stomach never allows one’s legs to rest.

The poet uses this to portray that everyone must work hard before he or she eats. The use of personification helps compress a lot of meaning into a few words.

### **Onomatopoeia:**

- i. Ije segem segem – Stylish way of walking
- ii. Ughere –ah- ah – ah – haa – Yawning sound
- iii. Họọọ - hỌọọ - hỌọọ n’akụkụ mmiri – Croakings by the waterside.

These walking, yawning and croaking sounds make the poem seem real.

### **Symbols:**

- i. Afọ ekweghi ụkwụ zuru ike (Stanza 1, line 4) ‘Afọ’ (stomach) represents hunger while ‘ụkwụ’ represents toils or hardwork. This means that for one to be fully satisfied and fed, he or she must work hard.
- ii. Aka niile gaba n’aja (Stanza 8, line 1) – Let all hands go to the sand. Aja (sand) represents farming or agriculture.

The use of symbols adds colour and interest and awakens imagination in artistic works.

### **Repetition:**

- i. O mere dike maara ihe o chiri aja.

Dike maara ihe o jiri aka chiri aja'

Jiri aka pikoba aja

Jiri umeala na nrube isi pikoba aja (stanza 1)

Constantly repeating – 'chiri aja', 'jiri', 'pikoba aja'. This gives the poem a musical effect.

ii. Abakeleke nwe ji

Adani nwe osikapa

Leeja na Nsuka nwe akidi

Anam nwe azu

Mgbowo nwe nkwuelu (stanza 3)

iii. Aka niile gaba n'aja

Aka niile gburibe aja (Stanza 8)

The constant repetition of the 'nwe' and 'Aka niile' word make the poem to sound like music making it pleasurable.

## 5.2 The poet's style of writing 'Ndu'

In this poem, the poet adopted different poetic devices to criticize the lack of concern for the welfare of the masses in the society. Examples of such styles are:-

**Persuasive style:** This style of writing tries to give reasons, to make the reader believe his point of view. It aims to persuade or convince the readers. In the poem 'Ndu, the poet tries to convince what life (Ndu) is and what it should be. The real essence of life should be a life lived to help others and to keep improving, re-organizing and restructuring our standard of life a better form.

**Diction:** The language of the poem is very simple and easy to understand. It flows as the reader goes through the lines. The choice of words depicts concern, care and eagerness for the reader to understand and be convinced in the message of the poem.

**Tone:** The tone of the poem is convincing and appealing. With humility the poet teaches what life (Ndu) truly means;



Figurative language:

**Personification:**

- i. Ebe ekworo na anyaufu gara njem alota alota – Where strife and jealousy are on a journey of never to return
- ii. Ebe udo na ihunanya na-aso isi (Stanza 4) – Where peace and love are blindfolded  
This means that there is peace and love. The personification twists the meaning but makes the reader to ponder and ponder in order to make out the meaning.

**Metaphor:**

- i. O bu ihe ndi a na-eme ka ndu too ogologo (Stanza 3, line 4) – All these prolong life
- ii. N’ogige ahija ka ndu di (Stanza 4, line 1)

**Repetition:**

- i. Ndu abughi oriri na onunu  
Ndu abughi ole aku...  
Ndu abughi onye afo ukwu  
Ndu abughi onye ihe na-agara... (Stanza 1, line 1-4)

The continual repetition of ‘Ndu abughi’ makes it musical.

- ii. Ebe ekworo na anyaufu  
Ebe udo na ihunanya...  
Ebe ahụ ka ndu...

The continual repetition of ‘Ebe’ also creates a musical effect.

**Assonance:**

- i. Ebe ekworo na anya ufu gara njem alota alota

Continual repetitions of vowel sounds ‘a, e’, makes it sound musical.

### 5.3 The poet’s style of writing ‘Enwela M N’ozu’

**Narrative style:** This type of writing tells or narrates a story in the poem. He uses dialogues, actions and events in a sequence. The poet extends and fits himself into the poem to enable the reader feel with him on what he writes, we get to hear and see what is going on

with the poet. The point of view is based on his personal experiences and values as he convinces the reader on how cruel and callous people can be over the neglect on the old, aged forgotten, sick and abandoned relatives. The poet incorporates himself into the poem to make the reader reason with him, in persuasion, to enable us see through his point of view and get the reader totally convinced in what he is saying. This is referred to as the first person's point of view.

**Diction:** The poet carefully selected the words to express how hurtful and sad he is over the neglect of the aged while living and spending lavishly during burial. The choice of the topic – 'E nwela m n'ozu – Do not own me at death and some of the sad expressions in the poem show that the poet is resentful and lamentation. For example:

'Geenu ntị ihe aja na-ada n'elu m

Aja ka ha na-ekpochiche m (Stanza 3, line 4 - 5)

Listen to the sand poured on me

They are pouring sand on me

**Tone:** The tone of the poet indicates sadness, regret and lament.

Figurative language: Some of the figures of speech formed in the poem are:

### **Simile**

- i. Adị m ka nwa ọkụkọ nne hapuru n'ike  
I am like a hen separated early from its mother
- ii. Ogbenye dị ka m  
A poverty stricken like me (Stanza 9, line 6)

### **Metaphor:**

- i. Chefue na echi dị ime (Stanza 9, line 3)  
Forgetting that tomorrow is unpredictable
- ii. Unu chetara ma m bu onye nke unu (Stanza 1, line 3)  
You remember that I am your relation

The poet uses the simile and metaphor to convey ideas, and create vivid sight.

### **Idiom:**

- i. Onye chi ya were ehihie jie (Stanza 2, line 6)  
One whom doom has befallen
- ii. Onye mụtara ọkụ n’ala ndị mmụọ (Stanza 2, line 7)  
One that got fire from the spirit world
- iii. Echiche ka m jiri mere nri (Stanza 3, line 7)  
I soaked myself in deep thoughts, lost in thoughts
- iv. Taa ka unu ga-akpọ m nkịta nwaanyi zụrụ (Stanza 5, line 8)  
Today you will refer to me as a spoilt child

The poet uses this device to make the reader think more carefully, in order to decipher the meaning.

### **Rhetorical question**

- i. Uru gịni ka ego a baara m? (Stanza 7, line 3)
- ii. Unu amaghị ma enyi m udele ga-eri eriri afọ anụ? (Stanza 9, line 10)

### **Alliteration:**

- i. Oge niile m na-akwa akwa (Stanza 3, line 2) ‘kw’ sounds
- ii. ...e lisiala m, mmadu niile laa,  
Laa n’ulo ha... (stanza 9, line 1- 2) ‘L’ sounds
- iii. Ma unu ndi di ndu... (stanza 9, line 7) ‘d’ sounds

The poet uses alliteration for a visual and aural function. That is to say that the repeated sounds allow the syllable to amplify as each word is pronounced. This is used to emphasize the beauty of the language being used.

### **Assonance**

- i. Ma ọ bu nwa nkita na-asaghi ana (Stanza 2, line 3) ‘a’ sounds repeated
- ii. Ebe na-enweghi onu e nyere m rie (Stanza 3, line 7) ‘e’ sounds repeated
- iii. E jeruola m ebe m na-eje (stanza 7, line 4) ‘e’ sounds repeated

### **Repetition**

- i. Ugbu a, a kuchidere m... (stanza 1, line 1)

Ugbu a ka unu chetara na... (stanza 1, line 3)

Ugbu a ka o soro unu ikwu... (stanza 1, line 4)

Ugbu a, anwuola m (stanza 5, line 1)

Ugbu a, a na-achọ ikpochide... (stanza 6, line 1)

Ugbu a, ka ndị mmadụ... (stanza 6, line 6)

Ugbu a ejeruola m ebe... (Stanza 7, line 3)

Ugbu a, a donyela m n'ili (Stanza 8, line 1)

Ugbu a, e lisiala m ... (stanza 6, line 1)

Ugbu a ka ndị mmadụ ga-asị (stanza 6, line 6)

The poet continually repeats 'Ugbu a' on almost the beginning of all the stanzas. This makes the poem sound musical.

ii. 'Taa ka ndị okwu na-adi'... (Stanza 5, line 2)

Taa ka unu ga-akpọ m... (Stanza 5, line 7)

Taa ka unu ga-akpọ m nkita nwaanyi zuru (Stanza 5, line 8)

Taa ka m matara ihe ndi uwa bu (Stanza 5, line 1)

The repetition of 'Taa' makes it musical, pleasurable and more persuasive.

## 5.4 The poet's style of writing in 'O Wutere m'

**Persuasive Style:** The poet uses persuasive expressions to make the readers think, reason and feel the way she does. She involves herself in the poem to express the sadness, bitterness, grief and lament on the leaders who cart our money to overseas, while the poor go hungry. Hence the topic, 'O wutere m' – I am grieved. 'Bulata ego gi n'ulo (stanza 4, line 3) – Bring home all your wealth. She beckons on Nigerians to bring home their wealth. This is an appeal expressed to persuade the reader to feel and reason with her in what she is saying.

**Diction:** The poet's choice of words is easy to understand in a simple language of sorrow and grief. The poet beckons and appeals to our leaders to bring back our looted treasures overseas.

**Tone:** The tone is passionate, appealing and full of pleadings.

**Figurative Language:** Some of the figures of speech found in the poem are:

**Proverbs:**

- i. Akụ ruo ụlọ, a mara onye kpara ya (Stanza 4, line 1-2)  
When one's wealth comes home, the owner will be acknowledged.
- ii. Oji akụ nwata welie aka ya elu  
Aka jiwe ya, o wedata aka ala (Stanza 5, line 2-3)  
He who takes a child's wealth, up  
Will bring back to him when he is tired
- iii. Akụ fechaa, ọ daara awọ (Stanza 5, line 4)  
What goes up must surely come down

The poet uses the proverbs to deepen the meaning thereby making the reader think twice.

**Onomatopoeia:**

- i. Olulu mmiri na-asụ wuruwuru (Stanza 1, line 2)  
Deep waters gushing mightily
- ii. Buzi ala kporo nkụ kpokirim (Stanza 1, line 3)  
Now a land dry as bone
- iii. Onye wuru gidigidi – A mighty statue
- iv. A nughizikwa kpim – Not a sound from her again

The poet uses these sounds as words to depict meanings like; 'wuruwuru' (gushing waters), 'kpokirim' (dryness, desolate land), 'gidigidi' (mighty in statue), 'kpim' (nothingness).

From the sounds, one can depict the meaning immediately.

The use of onomatopoeia appeals to the imagination, makes the writing vivid.

**Rhetorical question**

- i. Ala Naijiria, olee umu gi?  
Ha na-erikwa nri?  
Ha na-agakwa akwukwo? (Stanza 2, line 1- 4)

**Repetitions**

- i. Ala Naijiria (stanza 1, line 1)

Ala Naijiria (Stanza 2, line 1)

Ala Naijiria (Stanza 3, line 2)

The poet's continual repetition of 'Ala Naijiria' creates emphasis on who she is addressing and equally makes the poem sound poetic.

### **Personification:**

i. Ala Naijiria, olee ụmụ gị?

Land of Nigeria, where are your children?

Nigeria is addressed here as a human being.

ii. O wutere m. Ala Naijiria – I am grieved, land of Nigeria. The poet is talking to Nigeria as if Nigeria is a person.

This figure of speech provides freshness of expression which appeals to the imagination.

## **5.5 The poet's style of writing 'Achomoru'**

**Persuasive Style:** The poet tries to make the reader feel what she feels and reason the way she does. She expresses her opinions by involving herself in the poem hence: -

Kee ihe m ga-akoro chi m

Na ụmụ mmadu na-agaghari n'uzo

Ka aturu enweghi onye ozuzu?

What will I tell my God

That people are roaming the streets

Like sheep without a shepherd (Stanza 1, line 1-4)

The poet narrates or expresses herself in such a manner that the reader is compelled to consider her point of view or opinions. The poet employs the first person's point of view which involves the pronouns, 'I' or 'We' to express her inner feelings.

**Diction:** The language of the poet is simple and easily understood. She uses straight to the point expressions to show concern over the plight of the numerous unemployed youths roaming about. The choice of words shows deep care, concern and sympathy for the unemployed. At the end of the poem, the poet shows how perturbed she is over this menace that she pleads and prays for solution over this ugly condition of lack of job.

**Tone:** The poet's tone is pleading, sympathetic and appealing.

**Figurative Language:** Some of the figures of speech found in the poem are:

**Simile:**

- i. Ka aturu enweghi onye ozuzu  
Like a sheep without a shepherd (Stanza 1, line 4)
- ii. I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo akwukwo (Stanza 5, line 2)  
You made a graduate seem as if he had never seen a school

**Personification:**

- i. Achomoro, i ruola ala (Stanza 2, line 1-2)  
Job hunting, you have committed abomination
- ii. Achomoru, onye dabara n'olu gi atola (Stanza 3, line 1-2)  
Job hunting, one under your trap is finished
- iii. Butenu mma na egbe unu  
Ka anyi chwa ya (stanza 6, line 1)  
Bring your matchets and guns  
Let us chase him

The poet addresses 'Achomoru' (Job hunting) as if it were a human being and beckons on all to chase it away with matchets and guns. The poet uses this figure of speech to make an abstraction clearer and more real to the reader.

**Repetitions**

- i. Achomoru, (Stanza 2, line 1)  
Achomoru (Stanza 3, line 1)  
Achomoru (Stanza 4, line 1)  
Achomoru (Stanza 5, line 1)
- ii. Ndi Mahadum na-aputa chwa oru  
Ndi sekondiri na-aputa na-akwughari (Stanza 3, line 3-4)
- iii. Ka anyi chwa ya  
Ka anyi nwudo onye... (Stanza 6, line 2-3)

The constant repetitions of 'Achomoru', 'Ndi', 'ka anyi', gives the poem a musical effect.

**Assonance:**

- i. Achomoru  
I ruola ala
- ii. Achomoru,  
Onye dabara n'onya gi atola

There is a continual repetitions of the vowel sounds 'a' 'o' which provide rhythm.

**Symbol:**

- i. 'Butenu egbe na mma unu ka anyi chüwa ya'.

'Egbe' na 'mma' = Knife and gun represents solutions, remedy or something that would be used to fight unemployment.

**5.6 The Poet's Style of Writing 'Mahadum'**

**Exposition:** Through the expository style of the poet, she was able to expose and convey the central idea or theme across to the readers effectively. Such phrases like:

'Ebe ihe ojoo na-ari ibe ya elu' (stanza 1, line 10)

Ebe ndi Bukania, Pireti, Obejiri ojii

Na ndi ozọ na-azọ onye ka ibe ya (Stanza 1, line 13 – 14)

Ha chee onyenkuzi egbe n'ihu,

Ha gafee n'uloakwukwo (Stanza 2, line 4 – 5)

Where evil deeds trample on one another

Where Bukanias, Pirates and black spears,

And others struggle on who the greatest is

They attack lecturers with intimidation armed with gun

From these the poet exposes the ugly activities going on in the campus which the readers never know. For most of what the poet says is based on personal experiences as a lecturer in a university.



**Diction:** The poet's choice of words can be easily understood. This makes it easy to grasp and comprehend without much difficulty.

**Tone:** The poet's attitude toward the subject, indicated puzzle, alarm and warnings so that we should be aware of the alarming activities going on in the campus.

**Figurative Language:** Some of the figures of speech found in the poem are:

**Idioms:**

- i. Ihe ojọọ akpaala nkata na Mahadum ala a (Stanza 3, line 1)  
Evil activities are all over the campus
- ii. Ọtutụ ndị nkuzi na-abanye aja n'ukwu (Stanza 3, Line 2)  
Lecturers are deeply rooted in those evils
- iii. O ji akwa aghụ ahụ mara onwe ya  
Otu ụbọchị agwọ ga-agbọ ihe o loro (Stanza 3. Line 4-5)  
Let the evil doers be warned  
One day they shall be exposed

The poet uses these idioms to add colour and interest and awaken the reader's imagination to think twice.

**Metaphor:**

- i. Ụmụ anyị ndị nwaanyị na-ere ugwu ha (Stanza 2, line 1)  
Our girls sell their prestige

**Rhetorical Question**

- i. Gịni na gịni ka a sị gị mara? (Stanza 1, line 4)  
What and what did they say you should know?
- ii. Ebe ihe ojọọ na – arị ibe ya elu?  
Where evil deeds trample one another?
- iii. Ọ bụ nke a bụ Mahadum? (Stanza 2, line 7)  
Is this the University?

**Alliterations:**

- i. Na ndị ọzọ na-azọ onye... (stanza 1, line 14)
- ii. ...E kwubere eluigwe ga-akwụ ụgwọ (stanza 3, line 6)

The repeated consonant sounds ‘z’, ‘gw’, ‘kw’, provide an alternative rhythm making it sound good.

**Assonance:**

- i. O ruela ka ala ga-akwu ugwo... (Stanza 3, line 7)
- ii. Puo n’aka mpu na aghugho di... (stanza 3, line 9)

The arrangement of the vowel sounds ‘a’, ‘u’.

**Repetitions:**

- i. Ebe agumakwukwo ka o bu... (Stanza 1, line 9)
- ii. Ebe ihe ojojo na-ari... (Stanza 1, line 10)
- iii. Ebe ndi Bukania, pireti... (Stanza 1, line 13)

Continually repeating ‘Ebe’ to create a musical effect

## 5.7 The Style of Writing ‘Naijiria Oma’

**Narrative Style:** The poet tells us what he observes and engages in a kind of dialogue with God about the societal vices going on in the country. From the poet’s point of view, he allows us to see how he feels about Nigeria. Although he got no reply from God whom he asked several questions. These styles are applied skillfully to emphasize his point of view in such a way that the reader sees and reasons with him. When the poet says,

Chineke, I maghikwa ndi ndi Naijiria bu (Stanza 4, line 2)

Chineke I chefuola? (Stanza 4, line 1-4)

God, you don’t know who these Nigerians are

God have you forgotten?

Chineke, ... m wee na-aju gi si o

God almighty, ... I am asking you saying (stanza 5, line 2)

The poet is involved in the poem as he questions God as if they are in a dialogue and uses biblical instance of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah as small when compared with the sins of Nigeria.

**Diction:** The choice of words are not easy because one has to ponder twice to decipher the meanings of the numerous idiomatic expressions as he tries to describe Nigeria as a country that wallows in total poverty in the midst of plenty. Thus;

Ndị ọ nọ n'anyịm, ahụghị mmiri ịsa ahụ

Those living in oceans yet lack water to bathe

The words are satirical, abusive and rather too insulting. He uses the words to criticize Nigeria.

**Tone:** The tone of the poem is harsh, critical, condemning and disrespectful.

**Figures of Speech:** Some of the figures of speech seen in the poem are:

**Irony:**

i. Naijiria Ọma – Reputable Nigeria

The poet says one thing but the opposite is the actual intention. The topic is ironical. The poet uses contradictory terms, cajoles the country which is never reputable but horrible and atrocious thereby using 'Naijiria Ọma', an irony of what Nigeria is. The poet's use of irony incites laughter, and creates a sense of complicity between the author and the reader.

**Rhetorical Question:**

i. Njọ Sodom na Gomorra, o ruru ka nke Nigeria? (Stanza 2, line 1)

Is Sodom and Gomorrah's sin more atrocious Nigeria's sins?

ii. Chineke, ị maghikwa ndị ndị Naijiria bụ? (Stanza 5, line 1 - 2)

God, You don't know who these Nigerians are

iii. I chefuola na ndị Naijiria

Na-egbubi eriri oku eletrik ha ji ahụ ụzọ? (Stanza 5, line 3 - 4)

Have you forgotten that these Nigerians

Cut electric cables for light?

- iv. Na-eji nne ha agwọ ọgwụ ego? (Stanza 5, line 6)  
And use their mother for ritual money making?
- v. Na-aghọ udele iji nweta dọla na paundu? (Stanza 5, line 9)  
And change to vultures just for dollars and pounds?
- vi. Na-eburu ozu enyi n'isi, were ọkpa akpị abụzụ? (Stanza 5, line 10)  
Attain the highest and still craves for the crumbs?

### **Oxymoron:**

- i. Iwe agaghị ewe m ma ọchị agaghị atọ m (Stanza 1, line 3)  
I will not be sad but I will not be happy

The contradiction creates a paradoxical image in the reader's mind that generates a new meaning.

### **Idioms**

- i. Mana akwamiiko Naijiria kpụ ọkụ n'ọnụ (Stanza 2, line 3)  
The adulterous sins in Nigeria is greater,
- ii. N'ihia na ha bụ ọhụrụ ụzọ sowe ọhia (stanza 4)  
They have eyes but are blindfolded
- iii. Ndị ọnọ na mmiri jiri asọ akwọ aka (Stanza 3, line 5)
- iv. Ndị ọnọ n'iyi agụụ mmiri na-agugbu (Stanza 3, line 6)
- v. Ndị ọhụrụ ara nne ha nwa akpu osisi (Stanza 4, line 3)  
A land blessed with all natural resources but suffers in lack.

Idioms usually compels the reader to make use of imaginations and think deeper in order to find the meaning.

### **Onomatopoeia**

- i. Ndị njo ha di fereferere (Stanza 1, line 8)
- ii. Ma hapu Naijiria njo ya di nyafunyafu (stanza 1, line 9)  
'Fereferere' (Light), 'nyafu nyafu' (plenteous)

### **Repetition**

- i. The continual repetitions of 'Ndị' (From line 3 – 8 in stanza 3)

Ndị ọhụrụ ara...  
Ndị ọhapụrụ ụkwa...  
Ndị ọnọ na mmiri...  
Ndị ọnọ n'iyi agu  
Ndị ọnọ n'anyim...  
Ndị okwuru ọzọ...  
Ndị na-ezuchaa...  
Ndị ọsọ mmụọ egbu...

ii. Repeating 'Na' from line 4 – 10 in stanza 4

Na- egbubi eriri...  
Na-abọ paipu...  
Na-eji nne ha...  
Na-eji chọochi...  
Na-atọ igbeozu...  
Na-aghọ udele...

The repetition makes the poem persuasive and effective.

### **Symbol:**

- i. 'Sodom na Gomorra' represents a city destroyed because of the sins committed there (Homosexuality)
  - ii. Na-eji Chọochi na Baibul emetọ aha gi. 'Chọochi and Baibul represent Christianity.
- The poet's use of symbols make the poem feel so real to the reader.

### **Simile:**

- i. Na-ada ụda ka ikoro Bende (Stanza 2, line 4)

Sounding like the ikoro Bende

### **Assonance:**

- i. Ntu, aghughọ, anyaukwu na anyaufu (Stanza 2, line 6).

There is a repetition of vowel sounds 'a' to create internal rhyming, and direct attention to particular words making them stand out.

### **Alliteration:**

- i. Ndi ọ hapuru nkwa, kwawa nkwa n’obi. Repetition of consonant sounds ‘kw’.
- ii. Ka ha na-ekuru ikuku ndu. ‘k’ sounds repeated.

## 5.8 The Style of Writing ‘Nwaanyi’

**Persuasive Style:** The poet tries to convince the readers on the worth of women to those who think that women do not worth it. Some expressions are given to illustrate the importance of women in order to convince the reader:-

Nwaanyi bu ibu anyi danda (Stanza 1, line 7) – You work tirelessly

I na-amuba mba nabatara gi (Stanza 2, line 6) – You procreate

**Diction:** The poem is easily understood. The poet’s choices of words are mainly praises used to describe and extol the womenfolk.

**Tone:** The tone of the poem is convincing and teachable as the poet tries to inform the readers, the usefulness of the womenfolk.

Figurative Language: Some of the figures of speech used in the poem are:-

### Metaphor:

- i. I bu ibu anyi danda (Stanza 1, line 7)
- ii. I bu ugwu mba (Stanza 3, line 1) – The pride of a nation.
- iii. Aha gi ozo bu udo (Stanza 4, line ) – Your other name is peace
- iv. I bu okwu a kpụ n’onu (Stanza 6, line 6)

### Personification:

- i. I si na be nna gi buru udo (Stanza 4, line 5)  
From your father’s house you bring peace

### Onomatopoeia:

- i. I jiri di pune pune (Stanza 5, line 4) – You are fragile

### Repetition:

- i. O mee n’ulo...  
O mee na mba... (Stanza 3, line 6-7)
- ii. Onye o soro ya...  
Onye o soghi ... (Stanza 4, line 8-9)

- iii. I jụ itu ime...  
I jụ isi nri... (stanza 5, line 3-4)
- iv. Continally repeats, ‘ Nwaanyi’ on every first line in a stanza to make the sounds to rhyme.

**Rhyme:**

- i. Kwashiọkọ awuchie (Stanza 5, line 6-7)
- ii. Imi na anya azachie

The last words rhymed – ‘awuchie’, ‘azachie’. The poet uses this in order to create rhythm and make the poem sound musical

**Oxymoron:**

- i. I mere ụlọ ọ bụrụ mba (Stanza 5, line 7-8)  
Mee mba ọ bụrụ ụlọ

The poet deliberately employs this artistic style to create a paradoxical image in the listener’s mind.

## 5.9 The Writer’s Style of Writing in ‘Obodo Onicha’

**Exposition:** The poet tries to expose the ills going on in the commercial city of Onitsha to convey his message across to the reader in a way that all the vices are illustrated vividly to be understood by the readers.

**Diction:** The words are easily understood. The words connote lawlessness, commotion and disorder, used to destroy the robbers’ activities in the city of Onitsha. For example;

Ụlọ ọbụla ha wakwutere

Egbe na mma a na-ada

Anyan mmiri ejuputa onye ọbụla

Obi a na-eti, kpim, kpim, kpim (Stanza 2, line 5 - 8)

Any house they storm into

Sounds of guns and machets fill everywhere

And the peoples' heart will be beating fast

Tears fill the heart of all

The words used in this poem depicts a chaotic environment

**Tone:** The tone of the poet registers disgust as the poem describes the lawlessness in the city of Onitsha.

**Figurative Expression:** Some of the figurative expressions in the poems are:

**Metaphor:**

- i. Ugwọ ọrụ onye mmehie bụ ọnwụ (stanza 4, line 2)  
The wages of sin is death
- ii. Onyinye amara nke Chineke bụ ndị ebeebe (stanza 4, line 3)
- iii. Ma ajọ omume bụ nkọcha nye obodo  
Sin is a reproach to a nation. (Stanza 5, line 4-5)

**Rhetorical Question:**

- i. Gịni bụ olu a m na-anụ n'ime obodo a?  
What voice do I hear in this city?
- ii. Ọ bụ gịni ka mmadụ mere  
Mmadụ ibe ya n'ụwa a? (Stanza 3, line 1-2)  
What has man done  
To his fellow humans in this world?

**Ideophone:**

- i. Obi ana-eti kpim, kpim kpim – People's heart will be beating fast
- The poet's use of ideophone creates a vivid representation of an idea in a sound.

**Repetition:**

- i. Obodo Chukwu... (Stanza 1, line 1)  
Obodo a goziri... (Stanza 1, line 2)  
Obodo nwere akụ... (Stanza 1, line 7)  
Obodo Onitsha... (Stanza 2, line 1)  
Obodo ndị abalidiegwu... (Stanza 2, line 2)



The continual repetition of ‘Obodo’ creates emphasis on the poem and makes it sound musical.

**Proverbs:**

- i. Mana ọnwụ ga-egbu nwa nkịta  
Anaghị ekwe ya anụ isi nsị (Stanza 4, line 7-8)  
But whoever the gods want to kill, they first destroy.

**Oxymoron:**

- i. Ji abalị mere ehie  
Ma were ehie mere abalị (Stanza 2, line 3-4)

The poet’s use of two contradictory sentences causes the reader to think twice and thrice.

### **5.10 The Poet’s Style of Writing in ‘Akwa Ala Igbo na-ebe’**

**Exposition:** The poet exposes what is happening today in society where the Igbo people use their gifted brains to go to service other countries overseas and uses up their technological and scientific endowment to develop other countries while their own nation suffers lacks.

Hence:-

Unu ji amamihe unu etere ndị ọzọ ofe (Stanza 1, line 5)

**Diction:** The choice of words are easily understood, the words depict laments and sadness as he condemns the attitudes of Nigerians, who waste their potentials to other countries.

**Tone:** The tone of the poem shows regret.

**Figurative Expressions:** Some of the figures of speech used in the poems are

**Idioms:**

- i. A zuru unu n’isụ ọhịa (Stanza 1, line 1)  
Trained to be highly industrious and enterprising
- ii. Amamihe unu na-anyu ọsụ (Stanza 1, line 4)  
Your wisdom is futile
- iii. Unu ji ya etere ndị ọzọ ofe (Stanza 1, line 5)  
You apply your wisdom to help other and neglect your own interest
- iv. Mgbe unu hapuru m n’ida ajo ọhịa (Stanza 1, line 6)

Abandoned in un-civilization, under development or archaism

**Rhetorical Question & Repetition:**

- i.     Ụmụ m, olee ihe m mere unu? (Stanza 1, line 3)  
      My children, what wrong have I done to you?
- ii.    Ndị m, olee ihe m mere unu? (Stanza 1, line 7)  
      My people, what did I do to you?

**5.11 The Style of Writing in Ụwa Ka Onye Njọ?**

**Exposition:** The poet in grief exposes and condemns the societies where injustice, oppressions, lacks of brotherly love, fighting, censorships of speech or expression exists. People are expected to keep silent or be assassinated. The poet presents these vices and wonders why the masses should keep quiet.

**Flashback:** To shed more light on what is currently happening in the country, the poet recalls the situation of things in the ancient uncivilized days when brotherly love prevail and kings ruled with love and unity. Thus:

Mgbe ahụ, naanị echi gara aga  
Mgbe ibe hụrụ ibe n’anya (Stanza 1 line 1-2)

But today, things have fallen apart. It is no longer as it used to be. If you open your mouth and say any negative thing the leaders have done, you will be gunned down. Hence,

Taa ibe m...  
Eziokwu bụ ọnwụ’ (Stanza 3 line 1 and 8.)

The use of this technique takes the reader’s mind back to the old times and helps the reader to compare the situation of things in the ancient times and that of this contemporary times

**Diction:** The choice of words are revolting and expresses a zeal to move for action. It is not easy to understand the meaning because one has to read it three or four times to understand most of the twisted idioms and hard expressions used to express the societal flaws.

**Tone:** The tone is satirical. It condemns in regrets and depression.

**Figurative Expressions:** Some of the figures of speech used in the poems are

**Idioms:**

- i.     Ụwa jiri ụtụtụ kaa (Stanza 1, line 2)  
          The world grows old early
- ii.    Ọtụtụ nwụlara n'ụtụtụ (Stanza 3, line 9)  
          Some died much earlier
- iii.    Na nkịtị, arụ kpara (Stanza 4, line 5)  
          In keeping silent, abominable things occur
- iv.     Mgbe aka nne nọ n'ite ofe (Stanza 5, line 7)  
          When life is exciting

With the idioms, the expressions appeal to imaginations and help us to think more carefully on the subject.

**Metaphor:**

- i.     Okwu bụ ọnwụ - Words are death (Stanza 5, line)
- ii.    Makana eziokwu bụ ọnwụ - For truth is death (Stanza 3, line 8)

The poet uses metaphor to create mental picture and makes the writing vivid and interesting.

**Personification:**

- i.     Ebe egbe na mbọ kwụ ọha n'ihu
- ii.    Maka na eziokwu bụ ọnwụ (Stanza 3, line 8)
- iii.    Eluigwe na-agụ m

The poet uses personification to bring ideas to life.

**Rhetorical questions:**

- i.     Ụwa ka onye njọ?
- ii.    Aga m ekpuchi ọnu  
          Na nretọ anyị? (Stanza 6, line 5-6)

**Repetition:**

- i.     Mgbe ahụ naanị...  
          Mgbe ibe hụrụ...

Mgbe ọha na-ejere... (Stanza 1, line 1-3)

Mgbe ahụ... (Stanza 2, line 1)

Mgbe aka nne... (Stanza 5, line 7)

Repeating 'mgbe' constantly

ii. Uwa, uwa mmebi

Mmadu ahula uwa (Stanza 5, line 1-2)

Repeating 'uwa' and 'mgbe' constantly. The poet uses repetitions to draw attention to a particular theme. Some poems repeat the same word in every single line while others repeat it only in a few stanzas or only twice in the entire poem.

### **Symbol:**

i. N'okpoofu nwa ogbenye (Stanza 3, line 6)

'Okpoofu' represents 'toils', sufferings

The poet's use of symbols hides the true meaning and encourages the reader to expand his/her thoughts in order to find the true meaning

### **Oxymoron:**

i. Iwu e degi ede                      Laws not written  
    Mana e dere ya ede              But are written down

Laws cannot be written and at the same time be written

ii. Eze nwere eze ugama              The king has a teeth of an axe  
    Eze anaghi atagbu mmadu      The king that never devours others (Stanza 2, line 4-5)

There are two opposing things. The king cannot have sharp teeth like an axe and never uses it to harm. The poet uses oxymoron to challenge or cause the reader to think.

### **Alliteration:**

i. Eze eze bu ọha zere (Stanza 3, line 4) Repeating 'z' sounds

ii. Ọha huru ahuru (Stanza 3, line 6) Repeating 'h' sounds.

The poet's use of alliteration and assonance directs readers' attention to certain sounds to establish rhythm within a poem. This makes poems memorable.

### **Assonance:**

i. Ọtutu nwulara n'ututu. Repetition of vowel sound 'u'

## 5.12 The Style of Writing in ‘Ime Ime Obodo’

**Descriptive Style:** The poet focuses on describing the rural village setting, the natural tranquility and serenity found in the quiet village environment. He describes it in detail and compels the reader to visualize it in their own minds as if it is actually taking place. For instance:

Ee leenu otu nnunu

Na-efeghari na-egwughari egwu

Na-eti piọ, piọọ, piọọ (Stanza 6, line 1-3)

Yes, look at the birds

Flying and playing freely

Whistling loudly piọ, piọọ, piọọ

The poet gives visualization, feelings, and descriptions of a rural village and describes the birds that sing happily and freely, such that the reader captures it immediately. For the city life, the poet describes as a place of stampede and commotions.

**Diction:** The choice of words used by the poet indicates, total joy and satisfaction for the life in the rural village but frustrations and chaos for life in the city.

**Tone:** The poet indicates peace, rest and tranquility in describing village life but confusions for the hustle and bustle in city life.

**Figurative Language:** The figures of speech used in the poems are:-

**Personification:**

- i. Iga kirie otu ọlọ siri kwọrọ ibe ha n’azu  
Buildings of skyscrapers seen in cities
- ii. Ebe obere mmiri na-achị achị (Stanza 5, line 12)  
Where streams flow freely

The poet uses this to give greater interest on the object.

**Simile:**

- i. Na-egbu bam bam ka ugegbe (Stanza 2, line 4)  
Reflecting like the mirror
- ii. Ma too karià nkwụ na ngwọ (Stanza 1, line 5)

**Metaphor:**

- i. Ebe onye ọ bụla bụ ọbịa (Stanza 4, line 3)  
Where everybody is a stranger

The use of simile and metaphor helps to describe and convey ideas effectively which makes writing more interesting.

**Rhetorical Question:**

- i. Enyi m ìkpọ m aga olee? My friend, where are you taking me to?
- ii. Enyi m, ì na-achọ igosi m ebe okporoụzọ mara mma dị larịi?  
Do you intend to show me where the roads are smoothly built (Stanza 2, line 3-4)
- iii. Enyi m, ì na-achọ igosi m?  
Ebe ụmụ mmadụ enweghị ezumike? (Stanza 3, line 1-2)  
My friend, do you intend to show me  
Where people never rest
- iv. Ọ bụ haloo haloo ka m ga-eri? Will I survive with hello hello? (Stanza 4: Line 7)

**Onomatopoeia:**

- i. Ebe okporo ụzọ mara mma dị larịi - Smooth road
- ii. Na-adị jụụ - Cool (Stanza 5, line 14)
- iii. Leenu otu ebe niile si dị jụụ (coolness) (Stanza 7, line 1)

The use of this device makes poems polished, impressive. The sound effect used also makes for clearer understanding.

**Repetition:**

- i. Ma n'ụtụtụ, ma n'ehihie, ma n'abalị (Stanza 3, line 3)
- ii. Enweghị nwanne, enweghị nnanna  
Enweghị ikwu, enweghị ibe (Stanza 4, line 5-6)
- iii. Mmadụ abụrụ ezi mmadụ (Stanza 7, line 2) – Continually repeating – ‘ma’, ‘enweghị’, ‘mmadụ’.

The poet uses repetition to emphasize a particular point and makes the poem easier to memorize.

**Assonance:**

- i. Na-efeghari, na-egwughari egwu. Continual occurrence of vowel sound ‘e’
- ii. N’abughị ihe a kpuru akpu (Stanza 7, line 4) Repeat of vowel sound ‘a’

**Ideophone:**

- i. Oge obula o buru wom wom wom (Stanza 3, line 4)
- ii. Na-egbu bam bam ka ugegbe (Stanza 3, line 4)
- iii. Kwam kwam  
Vim vim vim  
Pim pim pim (Stanza 3, line 5- 7)
- iv. Na-eti pio, piroo, piroo (Stanza 6, line 3)

The sound ‘wom wom’ depicting hustles and bustles, ‘kwam kwam’, ‘vim vim’, ‘pim pim’, all depicting noise of vehicles. ‘Pio, piroo, piroo’ for the birds that sing. The use of ideophone evokes an idea in sound often a vivid impression of certain sensation or sensory perception eg. sound, movement or action. This makes the poem seem real.

**Poetic License:**

- i. Soso haloo haloo (Stanza 4, line 6)  
English borrowed word – Hello, hello

The poet’s use of poetic license creates beauty and uniqueness when the poet uses traditional versification as seen here – Haloo (Instead of ‘Hello’). This makes the poem much real.

### 5.13: The Style of Writing in ‘Puta n’uzo ochichi’

**Persuasion:** The poet in his poem tries to make readers see the reason why old leaders should leave and vacate their seats of authority. To make the readers see his point of view, he writes: -

N’ihi na o bughị naanị gị ka oche ahụ dịrịla

The seat is not meant only for you

Not only that, if he refuses to leave, only he would be killed.

**Diction:** The choices of words are very easy to understand. The words depict scorn and insults as he seems to talk without respect to someone who has refused to vacate the seat of authority to another.

**Tone:** The tone is harsh, rude and insulting.

**Figure of Speech:** The figures of speech used in the poem are:

#### **Irony:**

i. Achizila anyị Stop ruling us

Gị nwoke oma chụwara... You good man that ruled (Stanza 1, line 1-2)

‘Nwoke oma’ is used instead of ‘nwoke ojoo’ – ‘Bad man’ because he is hated for refusing to leave the seat of authority. The poet uses irony to create humour and provokes the reader into thinking harder and analyzing a situation.

#### **Hyperbole:**

i. Gị nwoke oma chụwara You good man that ruled

Mgbe uwa nna anyị ha nọ Since our forefathers began (Stanza 1, line 1-3)

Hyperboles are mostly used for comic relief and amusing the readers because it exaggerates a point.

#### **Metaphor:**

i. Anyị maara na ị bụ mgboroḡwụ osisi (Stanza 2, line 1)

We know that you are the roots

#### **Rhetorical question:**

i. I chee na uwa bụ nke naanị gị? (Stanza 1, line 5)

Do you think that the world is yours alone?



**Assonance:**

Achizila anyị (Stanza 1, line 1) Repeating vowel ‘a’ sound

**Repetition:**

i. Gi nwoke oma chụwara (Stanza 1, line 2)

Gi bujurula akpa gi (Stanza 3, line 2)

ii. Ma anyị ariọla gi ka i puo

Ma o bu anyị iwe

Repeating ‘gi’ and ‘ma’ making it sound musical and interesting.

**Idiom:**

i. Gi bujurula akpa gi (Stanza 3, line 2)

You have gathered your economic gains

## 5.14 The Style of Writing in ‘Uwa Ojoo Nke A’

**Exposition:** The poet tries to convey the specific subjects across to the reader in such a way that the reader instantly believes that there are too many vices, prevalent in society and uses such sentences like

‘Uwa nke a dikwa egwu’ This world is terribly evil

O di egwu, nwanne m So terrible my brother

O na-eyi m egwu It baffles me

O gwoto agwoto It is horribly evil

O pitoto apito So very horribly evil

These show or depict pictures of rottenness, decay, debasement – ‘Gwoto agwoto’, ‘pitoto apito’.

**Diction:** The choice of words are not that easy to understand because of the constant use of proverbs which are hard to understand until you think twice and thrice before one can decipher the meaning.

**Tone:** The tone is lamentative, condemning and scornful as he criticizes the atrocities and decay observed in the society today.

**Figurative Language:** The language of the poem is easy and the poet uses figurative expressions which add flavour to the poem.

**Nsinụda (Onomatopoeia)**

- i. O gwọtoro agwo (stanza 2, line 4)
- ii. O pitoro apito (stanza 2, line 5)

These are sounds of decay, rottenness, hopeless situation

**Repetition**

- i. O di egwu, nwanne m (Stanza 2, line 2)                      So terrible my brother  
O na-eyi egwu    It baffles me  
O gwọtoro agwo (stanza 2, line 4)                                      It is horribly evil  
O pitoro apito (stanza 2, line 5)                                      So very terribly evil
  
- ii. I na-ahukwa ihe umuwa na-eme (Stanza 3, line 2)              Do you see the actions of men?  
I na-ahukwa ihe umuwa na-ekwu (Stanza 3, line 3)              Do you hear what they utter?
- iii. Jiri ya na-agba boolu (Stanza 3, line 5)                              Playing it like football  
Jiri ya na-eti epele (Stanza 3, line 6)                                  Making fun of it
- iv. Si gi bia ka gi na ha nwalee (Stanza 3, line 10)                  Asking that you compete with their  
Si gi bia ka a makatene (Stanza 3, line 10)                          Saying let us know

Repetition of ‘i’, ‘o’, ‘Jiri ya’, ‘Si gi bia’, makes the poem sound musical.

**Proverb:**

- i. Nwanza rijuo afo      When the weak/small eats to his full  
O kwe chi ya mgba      He stages a fight with his god (Stanza 3, line 16 & 17)
- ii. Dibia njuo afo  
O buo mgboorogwu n’ajo ohia (Stanza 3, line 19 & 20)

Proverbs are words of wisdom that makes the reader think twice and thrice in order to figure out the meanings. The expressions adorn words and make the writing artistic.

**Idioms:**

- i. Jiri ya na-agba boolu

Jiri ya na-eti epele – Making fun of something

ii. Echiele ihu n'elu (Meaning to die)

Ghasa ukwu, ghasa aka (Meaning not to be alive again)

Mechie onu, mechie anya – Depicts the mortality of man

**Simile:**

Togboro ka ogwe osisi      Lying like a log of wood (Stanza 4, line 8)

**Assonance:**

i.      Q gwotoro agwoto

ii.     Q pitoro apito

iii.    Echiele ihu n' elu

iv.     Q buo mgborogwu n'ajo ohia

v.      Ha gaara ama gi ura

vi.     Maka na o na - abu

vii.    Ghasa ukwu, ghasa aka

The repetitions of these vowel sounds, o, e, a, make the poem musical.

**Alliteration:**

i.      Fele feba n'ime igwe

ii.     Q gwotoro agwoto

iii.    Q pitoro apito

iv.     I na-anukwa ihe umuuwa na-ekwu

v.      Ghasa ukwu, ghasa aka

### 5.15: The Poet's Style of Writing in 'Ochichi'

**Exposition:** The poet tries to convey his message in a way that makes the reader grasp and believe that the leaders promise the masses, what they never get to fulfill. For instance, he exposes them by saying:

Tunyere m vootu, Tunyere m vootu

Vote me in, vote me in

Aga m enye unu oku mmiri

I will give you electricity, water

...N'ikpeazu

...At last

Eju olee nne gi (Stanza 2, line 1-4)

The story will change

**Diction:** The choice of word is not that easy to understand. There are some twisted proverbs.

**Tone:** The tone is condemning and regretful because our leaders have disappointed the masses.

**Figurative Language:** Some figures of speech used in the poem are:

**Personification:**

i. Ide awaala ala niile Erosion has broken all the land

Wakasịa ya ka a wara ibe ji Broken up as pieces of yam (Stanza 1, line 2-3)

This means that the erosion has successfully divided the land like bits of yam. The poet uses personification to make the meaning clearer.

**Proverb:**

i. Nrugbu gbaa afọ onye a arugbu amara (Stanza 2, line 7-8)

When deception lasts for a year, the deceived one know

ii. Nkwa di kwere nwaanyi n'ute

Anaghị emezu ya emezu (Stanza 4, line 3-4)

Promise made to a woman by the husband on the mat

Is never fulfilled

**Repetition**

i. Aga m aga n'elu gaa biri – (Repeated on every first line in a new stanza eg Stanza 1 line 1, stanza 2 line 1, Stanza 3, line 1, Stanza 4, line1)

ii. Ndị bī n'ala ahujoula anya – (repeated on every 2<sup>nd</sup> line In a new stanza eg. Stanza 1 line 2, stanza 2, stanza 2, line 2, Stanza 3 line 2, stanza 4 line 2)

iii. Ndị ọchịchị ga-aza nke a– (repeated on Stanza 1 line 11, stanza 2 line 9, stanza 3 line 9)

**Rhetorical question:**

i. A ga-ebu ugboala n'isi Will the vehicle be carried on the head?

Ka a ga-akpu ya n'onu? Or shall it be carried with the mouth? (Stanza 1, line 10 -11)

ii. Mmadu o na-emegbu dibia na-agwo ya? (Stanza 2, line 8)

Can someone maltreat the doctor that cures him?

iii. Ego nri, i huru n'abee? Where did you see money for food? (Stanza 3, line 4)

iv. Onye ga-achoru Mbieri ndi ara?

Who will chase away the mad from Mbieri? (Stanza 3, line 8)

### **Simile:**

i. Wakasia ya ka awara ibe ji - Broken up as pieces of yam

### **Onomatopoeia:**

i. Oku mpinyumpinyu (Stanza 3, line 5)

The poet uses this figure of speech in order to make the scene more vivid.

### **Poetic License:**

i. Obi eruo m ala buru shuga shuga  
(English word – Sugar sugar)

ii. Tunyere m vootu, tunyere m vootu  
(English word – 'Vote')

## **5.16 The Style of Writing 'Obodo M'**

**Exposition:** The poet draws the attention of the readers to the plight of the poor in a society so richly endowed and gifted by God. He focuses our mind to sentences used to portray the poverty of the poor like;

Otutu mkpuruobi na-anwu kwa ubochi Many souls die daily

N' ihi aguu na ihe I si ike Because of hunger and hardship

N'obodo oma a In this reputable country

These sentences vividly show how much the poor are neglected to die in want in a country blessed by God. The poems are a kind of eye opener to our leaders who forsake the poor in our midst. It is a call for all concerned in the society, to seek for ways to help the sick and the needy in society in order to put smiles on their faces.

**Diction:** The choice of words used in this poem is appealing, pleading, and passionate because the poet is feeling for the poor in the society.

**Tone:** The poet is solemn and sad because of the suffering in this country.

Figurative language: The figures of speech used in the poem are:

**Metaphor:**

- i. I bụ ọgaranya ọfutaobie n’Afrika (Stanza 3, line 5)

**Rhetorical question:**

- i. Gịni kpatara na ogbenye                      Why are the poor  
Na-ebe akwa ariri, ubochi niile              Lamenting  
Ebe ọgaranya na-amuchari?                  While the rich are laughing? (Stanza 2, line 3 – 5)
- ii. Kedu mgbe onodu a ga-ebi                  When will this present condition end  
Mgbe ogbenye ga-esoro                      When the poor will join  
Rachaa ma michaakwa aka n’olileanya?      Hopefully in eating and drinking? (Stanza 5, line 4 -6)

The poet uses the rhetorical device to speak directly to the object or the person concerned.

**Repetition:**

- i. Ọgaranya na-abawanye  
Ogbenye na-adawanye (Stanza 4, line 2 - 3)
- ii. Rachaa ma michaakwa (Stanza 5, line 6)

Repeating ‘wanye’ and ‘chaa’.

## 5.17 The Style of Writing ‘Ajo Akwa mmiri’

**Exposition:** The poet brings to lime light, the water bridges that seem to be forgotten by all and especially the government whose duty it is to develop and amend the deteriorating social structures in the society. With the phrases, he makes us aware of these poor water bridges that take away the lives of some of the people who tragically fall into the water due to the old and rickety nature. Hence:

Umụ mmadu ataala afufu n’ihi gi  
Akwa mmiri ojoo  
Ndi nwuru anwu anwula

Ndi furu efu efuola... (stanza 5, line 1-4)

And the second one says:

O di mwute

Na anyi ga-anoro ebe a

Na-ele gi

I na-ewe umu uwa otu otu

From these stanzas people are alerted on the dangers posed by the poorly neglected water bridges. This in effect will attract solution or remedy.

**Diction:** The choice of words used by the poet is that of appeal. He humbly pleads that the water bridges should stop taking people's lives away in sudden situations.

**Tone:** The poet uses a compassionate voice of appeal full of humility.

Figurative language: The figures of speech used are:

**Simile:**

- i. Ka mma aguba (stanza 1, line 9)

**Onomatopoeia:**

- i. Na-achi wom, wom, wom (wobbling sounds of water)
- ii. Ya adakpu n'ime mmiri tawam (drowning sounds of water)
- iii. Ya awunye n'ime ya tawom (sounds of water)
- iv. Ya amakpuo n'ime ya tajum (drowning sounds of water)

The poet uses this device to appeal to the imagination, create a mental picture and make the writing vivid and interesting.

**Repetition**

- i. Ugwu ojoo...  
Ugwu ojoo... (Stanza 1, line 1&2)
- ii. Ndagwurugwu ojoo  
Ndagwurugwu ojoo (stanza 1, line 3 & 4)
- iii. Onye ukwu leehee anya ya  
Onye inyinya igwe leehee anya ya  
Onye ugboala leehee anya ya (stanza 2, line 2-5)

The poet uses this device to make the work more persuasive and effective.

## Personification

- i. N’okpuru mmiri ahụ okwute ebulie isi ya elu  
Waters raise their heads up

This means that the water under the bridge is fearfully gushing.

- ii. Ya na eze ha na-aghọ nkọ

The teeth of waters are sharp like razor – As if waters are human beings. This means that the water under the bridge is mighty. The poet uses this device to make his expressions clearer and vivid.

## Rhetorical question

- i. Ọ bụ gini? – What is it? (Stanza 3, line 4)
- ii. Olee ihe ụmụ mmadụ mere? – What has man done to you? (Stanza 2, line 1)
- iii. Ọ bụ na mgbeke amaghị ala – Is it that we are not capable

Ka ọ bụ na mma agụba adighi nkọ? – Or that our knives are blunt? (Stanza 3, line 6 - 7)

The poet uses the rhetorical question not for the sake of getting an answer but for asserting something.

## Metaphor

- i. Anyị bụ ụmụ Chineke kere (Stanza 6, line 8)

## 5.18 Style of Writing in “Ụkọ N’uju”

**Exposition:** The poet in grief and sadness exposes a society where so many natural resources exist but are not utilized and tapped for the benefit of the common man. The inability of the masses to open their eyes on the great recourses they have makes him sad.

**Diction:** The choice of words are not easy because of the many idioms that are difficult to analyze.

**Tone:** The tone is regretful, sad and depressed.

**Figurative expression:** Some figurative expressions used in the poems are; Rhetorical question.

Kedu zi ka a ga-esi nọdụ n’anyịm  
Were asọ na-akwọ aka?

Why should one be at the ocean side  
And wash hands with spittle.



Kedu kwanu ka a ga-esi nodu n'iyi,  
Kwere ncha o baa anyi n'anya?

Why should one be at the river side  
And allow soap foam enter the eyes?

Mmadu ga-enwe ebugbere  
Ma anwu ana-ama ya n'eze?

People will possess lips  
And the teeth would be exposed for the sun?

The poet uses these rhetorical questions which are also idiomatic expressions to express his intense concern on the plight of the nation so blessed with natural resources but wallow in poverty.

**Metaphor:**

i. Nri a,  
A si anyi na o bu aturu tawa,

The food  
Said to be in abundance

ii. Ego a,  
A si na anyi nwere n'ijeli ijeli  
Bu n'ikuku ka o di

The money  
People say we possess in billions  
Exist on the air

**Idiom:** i. A si anyi na o bu aturu tawa,  
(Meaning abundance)

Said to be in abundance (Stanza 4)

ii. Mmiri na-afabanyezi anyi n'eze

We are facing great danger (Stanza 5 line 2)

iii. Anyi na-elozu ukwara taa

We are swallowing up cough (Stanza 5 line 4)

(Meaning that we are now in danger and facing shame of hunger)

**Repetition:** The poet kept repeating 'Ego a', making the poem sound musical.

## CHAPTER 6

### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 6.0 Preamble

The basic themes that are critically exposed in all the poems point on the flawed social structure of the society. The writers aim at not only revealing and clarifying ideological issues but also correcting social injustice. They also agree that it is only through struggle that the poor exploited masses can liberate themselves from their exploiters. In view of this, awareness should be created among the masses to awaken consciousness towards the injustice and sufferings.

#### 6.1 Findings and Recommendations

- a. From the poem ‘Ndu’, the lack of concern for the welfare of the masses is criticized. This calls for the attention of the state government whose obligation is to take care of the less privilege, physically challenged, the aged, street beggars, the destitute. Philanthropists should also help to make life meaningfully better by giving scholarships to the poor. Certain shabby conditions should be reformed in the medical, educational, environmental, political, prison, security sectors, schools be made to improve and develop the standards of the living for the poor. Such strife, commotions and rivalry amongst people, religion and politics are totally avoided for peace and unity to reign. No act of kindness is ever wasted. Our prime purpose in life is to help others. Life’s most difficult task is ‘to have no burden to carry’. We have two hands. The first is to help ourselves and the second is to help others. One has to do something for somebody everyday for which he or she does not get paid for. For if we light a lamp for somebody, we will also brighten our path. We should spread our nest and shelter others. Kwakpovwe (2014:109) quotes Brian Tracy, ‘Successful people are always looking for opportunity to help others’. Unsuccessful people are always asking, ‘What’s in it for me’? Ray Kroc dropped this diamond, ‘the more I help others to succeed, the more I succeed and Martin Luther King Jnr. quipped with

this question, 'Life's most urgent question is, what are you doing for others'? Let our fortune help others. People helping people make the world a better place.

- b. From the poem, '**Oru Ugbo**, the total neglect in the agricultural sector is criticized. There is an urgent need for the nation to go back to agriculture and relentlessly follow an agricultural and agro agric-business development. Youths can involve themselves solely on such agricultural productions like banana, plantain, palm trees, cocoyam, and cassava plantations. The advantages of gainful employment of the youth will help curb crimes and restiveness among our youths if it keeps them engaged in money yielding ventures in the farming world.
  
- c. The poem '**Mahadum**' condemns the atrocities and the horrifying secret cults in the universities today. Stake holders with the help of the governments and security operatives should wipe out the secret societies by enforcing stringent rules to curb the menace. There should be expulsion of the cultists caught and outright ban of cultism on campuses. It is also necessary for schools to carry out well organized orientation programmes for new students so that cult members will no longer take advantage of the ignorance of the new students and make them join secret cults. Curriculum planners should add more courses in the university's scheme of work to make them have many things to do both practical and field work assignments. There should be an inevitable better monitoring team on the lecturer's behavior and some punitive measures administered to the culprits. The success of every economy lies on the strength of its education.
  
- d. The poem '**Naijiria Oma**' criticizes the general collapse of morality among the people, atrocities and lawlessness in the society. This calls for a re-orientation in our moral values, especially from homes at the early stages of their lives. Moral education starting from the nursery section to the tertiary institution should be

enforced in the schools to tackle all forms of morality. A society that lacks morals is a problem itself. The abominable pornographic films our young children watch these days should be controlled. Government should create a truly law governed society by making laws and enforcing them. Unruly behavior should be disciplined. The real essence of the law is not in its making but in its enforcement.

- e. The poem '**Akwa ala Igbo na-ebe**', laments on the attitude of our intelligent, talented, creative and highly trained Igbo people who move to another country because of lack of opportunities at home. Many Igbo people, who were failures at home but on travelling overseas, became champions in other countries. To reverse this trend, there should be capacity development by creating dignified job opportunities that are global class and highly competitive, raising income and generating disciplined, efficient workforces that have in turn provided a platform for economic growth. Taking action to improve the regulatory system. Programmes should be organized to encourage skilled scientists and technological experts to remain in the nation and work on international projects.
  
- f. In '**Puta N'Uzo Ochi**', the poet condemns leaders who refuse to leave the seats of authority for others because of the gains they derive from them. It is recommended that true democratic practice anchored on dialogue, social justice, good leadership, accountability, transparency must be enthroned in the Nigerian nation. Also the use of money to hijack powers should stop.
  
- g. In '**Uwa Ka Onye Njo**'?, the poet scorns the wrongs in the society – fightings, bombings, injustices, oppressions, fear of being assassinated when one airs his or her opinions. To curb these menaces, there is an urgent need for government to restore law and order, protect unarmed civilians from the massive killings and wanton

destruction of property and resolve on war against crime and all forms of criminality. Also tribalism, political discriminations, killing of innocent citizens, intimidation should stop in order to attain equity, unity and peace.

- h. The poet in the poem '**Obodo Onicha**' criticizes the lawlessness and robbery activities in Onitsha. It is recommended that leaders should learn from the exemplary leadership style of people like Mandela who saw the people as more important than self interest. Leaders should work towards solving the people's problem and challenges and introduce people oriented program that will eliminate unemployment, insecurity, illiteracy, for the welfare of the masses.
- i. The poet in the poem '**Nwaanyi**' criticizes those who frown at the birth of a girl child. For this reason, women are advised to embrace education because it is the passport to good life. A pretty face gets you no where, proper education and hard work channels one to a great destiny for women are the back bone of every society. Educating women is very important because the totality of national development can never be achieved without that. You educate aman. You educate a man; you educate a woman, you educate a generation.
- j. In '**Ime Ime Obodo**', the poet condemns the rural poverty as against the highly developed cities. To reverse this trend, the rural communities need to have social infrastructures and facilities like power, water and other necessities for communication, transportation and health. The government is government of the people, for the people and by the people; therefore not only the cities or township will be developed, the rural communities should be developed too. They are as important as the people in the cities and should never be overlooked.

- k. The poet in ‘**E Nwela M N’Ozu**’ criticizes the lack of concern for the aged and handicapped in the society. To reverse this trend, it is vital that we maintain feelings of family support with the elderly because this improves the quality of life of older people. For example helping with house chores, providing simple companionship, family visits or attention. This is important so that the elderly will not fall into depression or feel all alone. A big part of any elder care program is to give emotional support. This can improve life expectancy by several years and create a more positive and optimistic environment for the aged. We need to care and show compassion to the less privileged and those who are victims of unjust oppression. Christians and government can do a lot to change the face of hunger in the society like visiting hospitals, orphanages, rural schools, herbal homes. Some have no food, water, clothes, houses, roads. Some are malnourished; some people live with open wounds for years without treatments. We need to open our eyes to the plight of the poor and needy and offer help to them so that there will not be such a huge gap between the poor and the rich. Good health is life therefore the citizens should be made to be aware of the need to go for free tests on health issues like prostate, cervical cancer screening exercises in order to reduce the mortality rate in the society. Smokers should always be warned of the highly addictive and cancerous inducing substances contained in cigarettes to avoid smoking. Early vaccines or immunizations should be given to children and pregnant mothers to avoid any deadly illness. Government should help by regular de-worming of children and adults to reduce high rate of worm infection amongst people; for prevention is better than cure. The government should also learn from other countries and pay pensions to retired workers without hassles. The present system of screening pensioners is creating sufferings for our aged parents. Many have died waiting for their pensions. All these measures can help rescue man from the ashes of rejection and reject. For as Mother Theresa says:- ‘Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat’.

- l. The poet in ‘**O Wutere M**’, criticizes the corrupt and selfish leaders who loot and cart away the countries treasures to overseas while the poor masses suffer in poverty. It is recommended that the high level of corruption and the flagrant use of position to amass personal wealth should stop. Leaders must realize that they owe the populace a lot and their words must reflect honesty, integrity, love and concern.
  
- m. The poet, in the poem ‘**Achomoru**’ criticizes the inability of the government to provide jobs for the youths. It is therefore recommended that as Babatunde (2014) says that we should consider agriculture as a vehicle for inclusive and sustainable economic transformation for eradicating poverty and hunger. At the moment we are importing food worth about 40 billion dollars into Africa every year, yet we have the potential to grow food not only for ourselves but also for exportation around the world. Agriculture can be a real driving force for youth and improvement in the life and majority of the people.
  
- n. The poet in ‘**Ochichi**’, criticizes the deceptive promises of the leaders and recommends that the views of the minority should be taken into account. Everybody should be carried along. The voices of the most vulnerable in the society should be considered in decision making. Leaders should be truthful in the speeches or utterances so that when they get into offices, one would not hear that some of their utterances were merely election promises.
  
- o. In the poem “**Uwa Ojoo Nke a**”, the poet criticizes the evil and terrible things perpetuated in the society today. This calls for change and repentance from the decay and atrocities that has filled the world. People should desist from evil for sin destroys destinies and careers. Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach, also no sin committed by a person ever goes unpunished. God made all things but regretted

creating only man. Man is filled with evil. People should be careful with the way they behave for we shall surely reap what we sow.

- p. In the poem '**Obodo M**', the poet condemns the miserable state of poverty witnessed among the poor. It is therefore recommended that both leaders and the led should apply themselves scientifically and objectively to our problems of poverty, ignorance and disease. People want good and honest leadership from the leaders. There must be among the leaders a desire and determination to serve alongside and in complete identification with the masses. Leaders should help build a self reliant nation whether individuals obtain education whether formal or informal. This would be with a purpose to transmit accumulated wisdom and knowledge of society to prepare the young people for their future membership of society. In this regard, vocational skills should be encouraged to be taught at school or at home for self reliance: - Carpentry, mechanical work, tailoring, catering, hair making, farming, poultry etc. We have to create a society where there is equality and respect for human dignity, sharing of resources which are produced by our efforts and work done by everyone and exploitation by none. Most often of all, our government and people have stressed the equality of all citizens, and our determination that economic, political and social policies shall be deliberately designed to make a reality of that equality in all spheres of life. We are in other words committed to a socialist future and one in which the people will themselves determine the policies pursued by a government which is responsible for them. These improvements however will not come automatically but gradually.
- q. In **Ajọ Akwa Mmiri**, the water bridges we fail to repair today will have to be rebuilt tomorrow at many times the cost. We need to find a long term solution to our nation's unsafe water bridges. Just as we have the Educational Trust Fund (ETF) that



was created to intervene in the failing educational standard, trust funds on water bridges should also be established to help fund, renovate and uplift the falling standard of our water bridges. This may be called ‘Water Bridge Trust Fund’ to help modernize, rebuild and re-fix the crumbling structurally deficient and aging water bridges in the society in order to build better communities.

- r. In the poem **Ụkọ N’uju**, one can see that the future of the country requires strategic leadership with vision, planning, and discipline. This therefore calls for change. Only people with known records of integrity, honesty, character and accountability should be allowed to hold high positions in authority in order to ensure that criminals do not find access to leadership positions. For the country to come out from her economic woes, agriculture holds the key to the economic transformation and job creation. Such livestock keeping like; Bee keeping, Piggery, fishery, snail keeping, and rearing grass-cutters should be highly encouraged to help reduce hunger and unemployment in the society. Made in Nigerian products should be greatly encouraged. For instance locally processed rice from Abakiliki and Adaani should be expanded. Aba made shoes and native wears should be technologically improved. Local fruits like Mango, paw-paw, guava, and pineapple, orange can be processed as fruits juice; palm oil can be processed and exported. All these will generate pride and employment while saving foreign exchange. More so, importation must be discouraged to force Nigerians to patronize our local products.

## **6.2 Summary**

In the contemporary world, there are societal vices and ills in the country. These attract the attention of many Igbo poets. However, seventeen selected poems are used for this study. Chapter one is the introduction of the study. It deals with the purpose and statement of study, the significance, scope of study. Chapter two centres on literature review. This is to look into what other scholars have done so far with

reference to the criticism of the flawed societal structure in the society. The third chapter concentrates on the research methodology.

Chapter four is the data analysis which presents the themes of the various poetry and also interpretes the poem as it makes an exposition, critically on the societal issues in the contemporary society. The various poets' style of presenting the social critical issues in the selected poems were discussed in Chapter Five. This is done to ensure clarity and easy understanding for the readers. In Chapter six, findings and recommendations were offered by the researcher. Lastly, summary was done and the conclusions given.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

With the expositions from these selected poems, the masses' consciousness is raised to the anomalous situations prevalent in society, as leaders are unconcerned to the plight of the people. This will to a great extent mobilize them to fight and free themselves from the tight grips of corruption, bad leadership, exploitations and neglects in the society. These glaring anomalies are part of the factor that militates against the equitable growth of a nation and its people. Thus, much is expected of the poet, like a preacher and other patriots not to turn away their faces from such anomalous situation but to raise the consciousness and mobilize the people until the society is to a greater extent free. It is also hoped that the recommended measures will help create and usher in a new order that can positively, reposition the society.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INTERVIEW WITH SOME OF THE POETS

#### **IKEOKWU, E. S. (OBODO M)**

**Question:** What prompted you to write the poem ‘Obodo M’?

**Answer:** In my country, many souls are hungry and poverty stricken while some live in luxury. Most people are suffering in the midst of plenty. The message is for all and sundry to participate fully in form of leadership. Let us all be part and parcel of the so called democracy in order to end the sufferings of the masses.

The poet stressed also that the move by President Buhari to bring back most of the Nations treasures, hoarded in foreign banks through the help of the foreign leaders is a welcome idea because this would help ease the sufferings of the poor masses.

#### **ANOZIE, C. C. (ORU UGBO)**

**Question:** What prompted you to write the poem ‘Oru Ugbo’?

**Answer:** People are neglecting Agriculture which is our source of survival in this country filled with hunger. He calls on all and sundry to embrace and join farming for that would be a remedy to our problems.

#### **MBAH, B (Uwa Ka Onye Njo?)**

**Question:** What message do you want to convey to the people from the poem ‘Uwa Ka Onye Njo’?

**Answer:** For those who oppress people, one day they must face judgement from above.

## **OKEDIADI, A. N (AHỊA ỌNỊCHA AND MAHADUM)**

**Question:** What prompted you to write the poem ‘Ahia Onicha’?

**Answer:** When I was much younger, I used to help my mother with her trade in the Onitsha market. There I observed all the lawlessness and recklessness associated with the markets and the city of Onitsha. It is necessary for the government to introduce programmes that will eliminate unemployment and insecurity in the country for the welfare of the masses.

In the poem ‘Mahadum’, my work as a lecturer exposed me to these atrocities going on in the universities. It is important to monitor and address these activities because the success of every nation lies in the strength of its education.

## **NWADIKE, I. U. (Naijiria Oma)**

**Question:** Why did you write the poem ‘Uwa Ojoo Nke a’?

**Answer:** The evil that go on in today’s world is very alarming. People no longer fear God.

**Question:** Why did you write the poem ‘Naijiria Oma’?

**Answer:** There are so many atrocious activities in the society today. There is a great need to put things in order. In Nigeria today, there is no type of evil they can not indulge in as far as it fetches them money. There is great need to put things in order in this evil society we are living in.

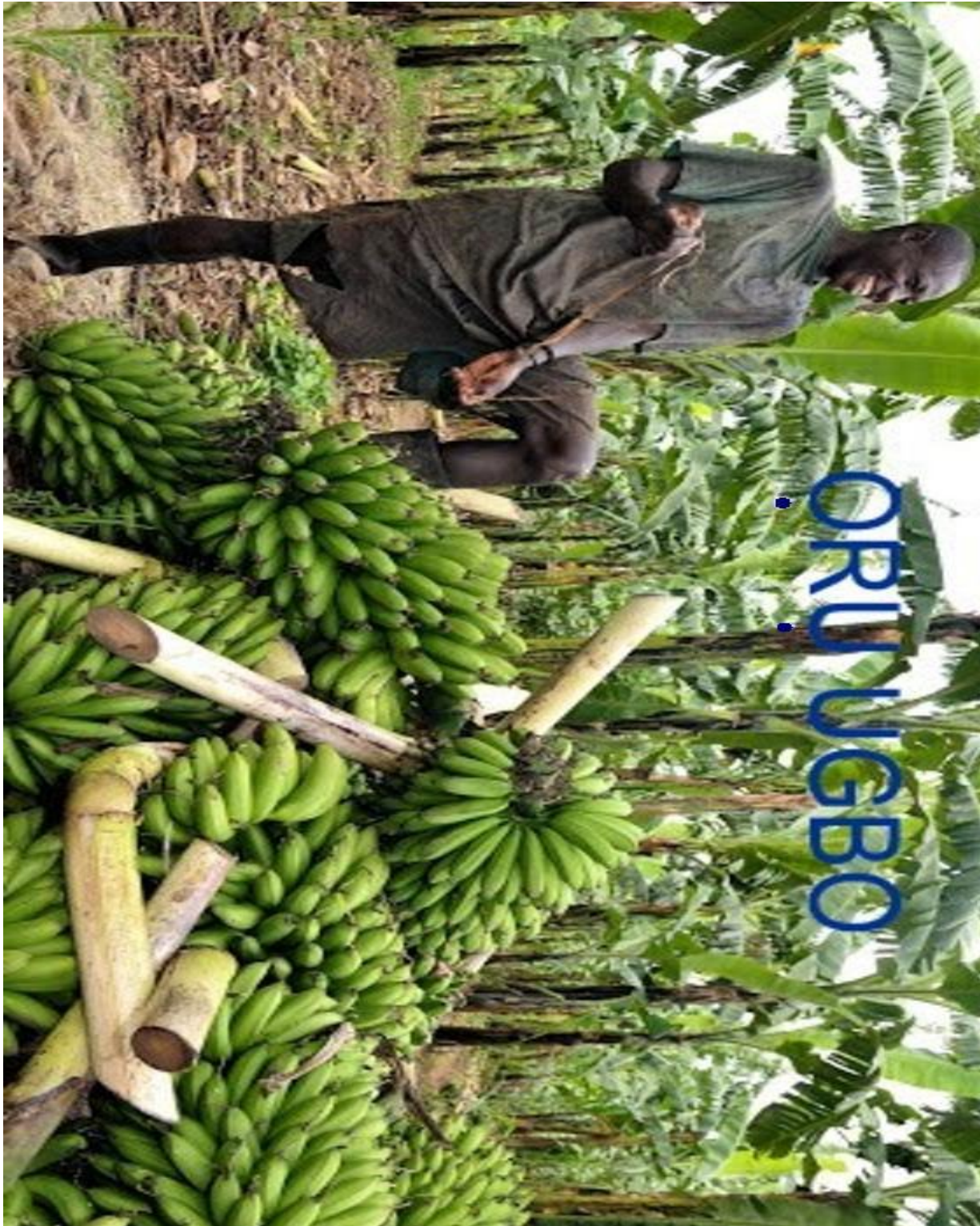
## **NWAOZUZU, G. I. (Nwaanyi)**

**Question:** What prompted you to write the poem ‘Nwaanyi’?

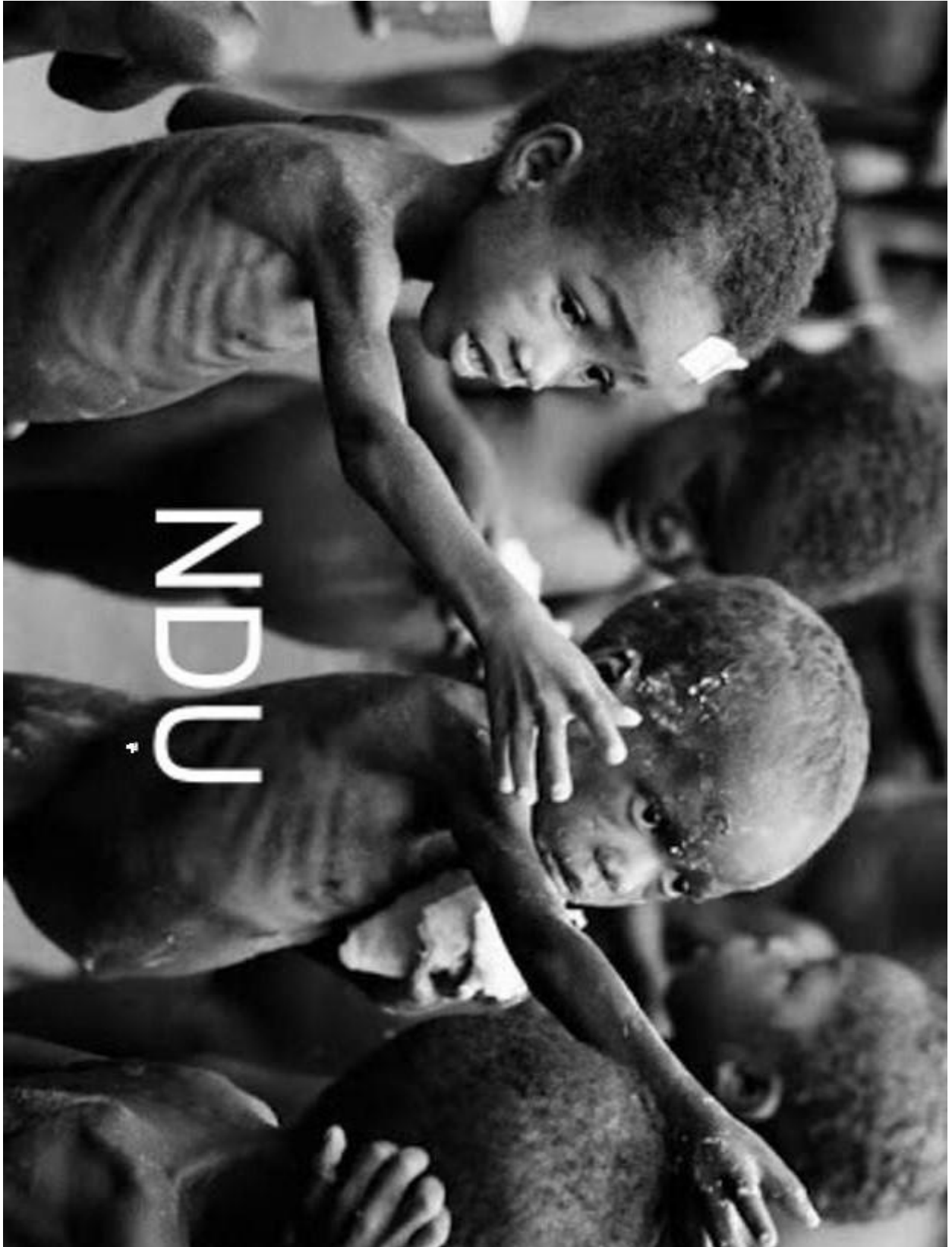
**Answer:** Women are great species. They work hard in life both in procreating and helping in the family but somehow the society does not seem to notice their usefulness and importance.

## APPENDIX II (PICTURES)

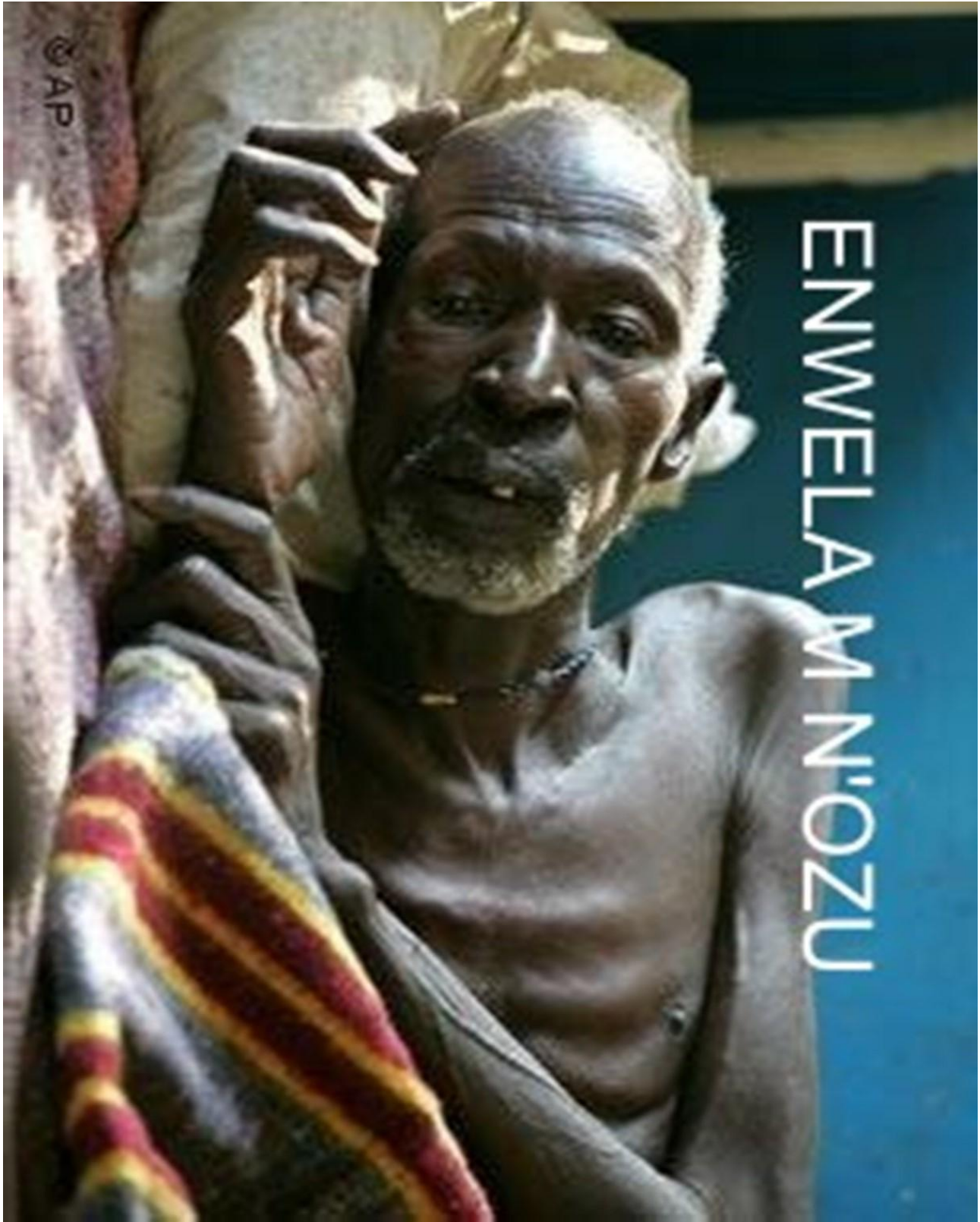
### PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



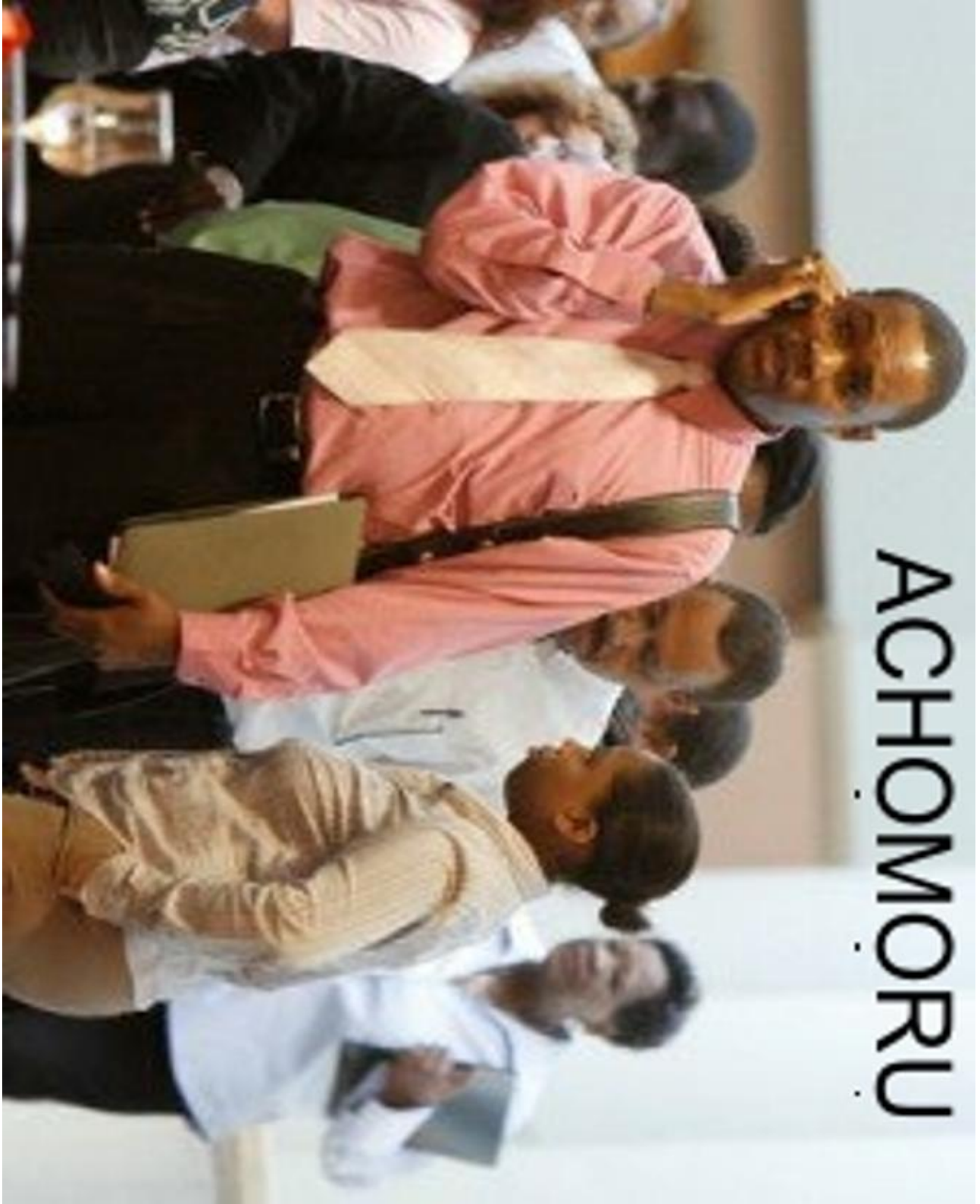
PICTURE 3



PICTURE 4



**PICTURE 5**

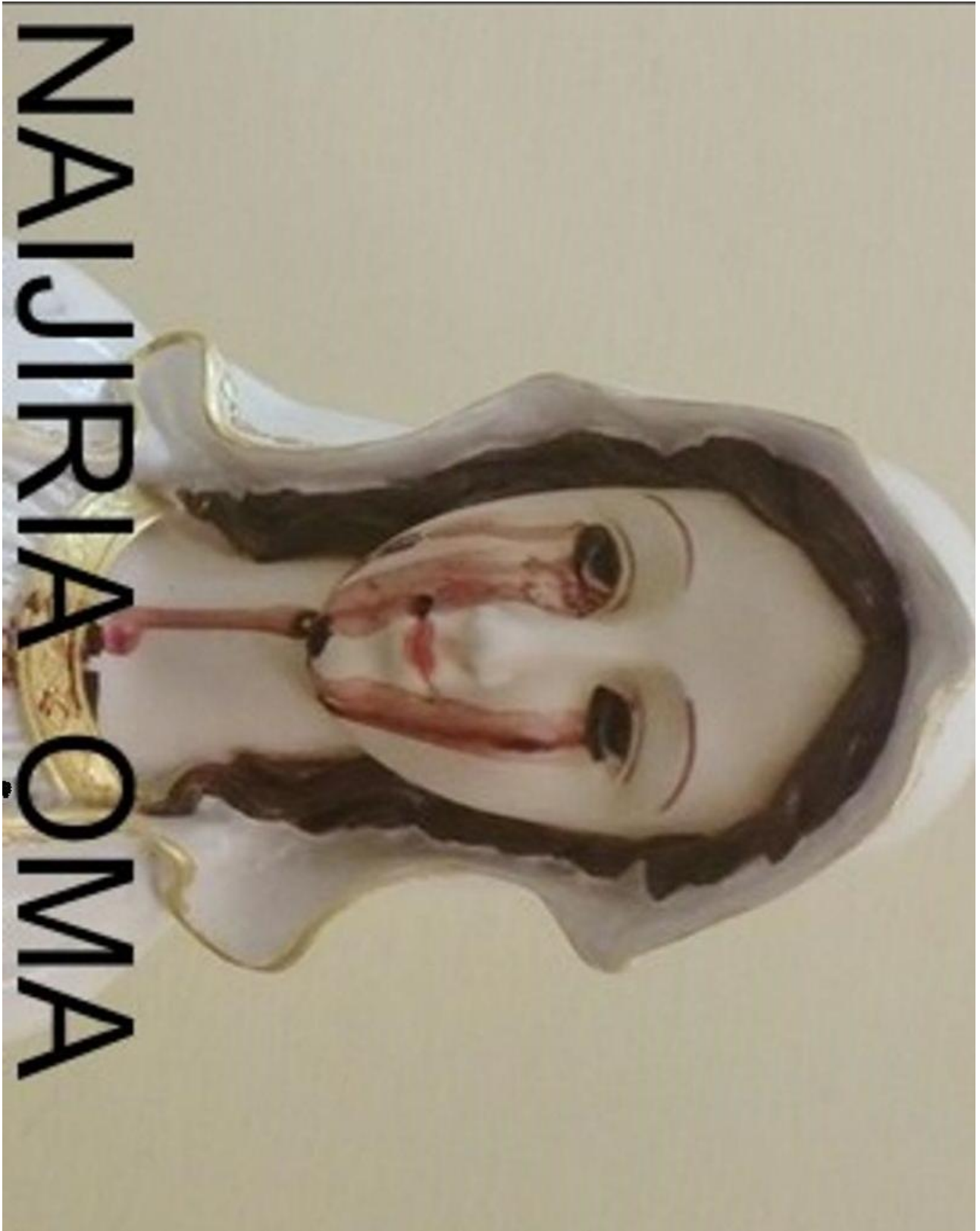




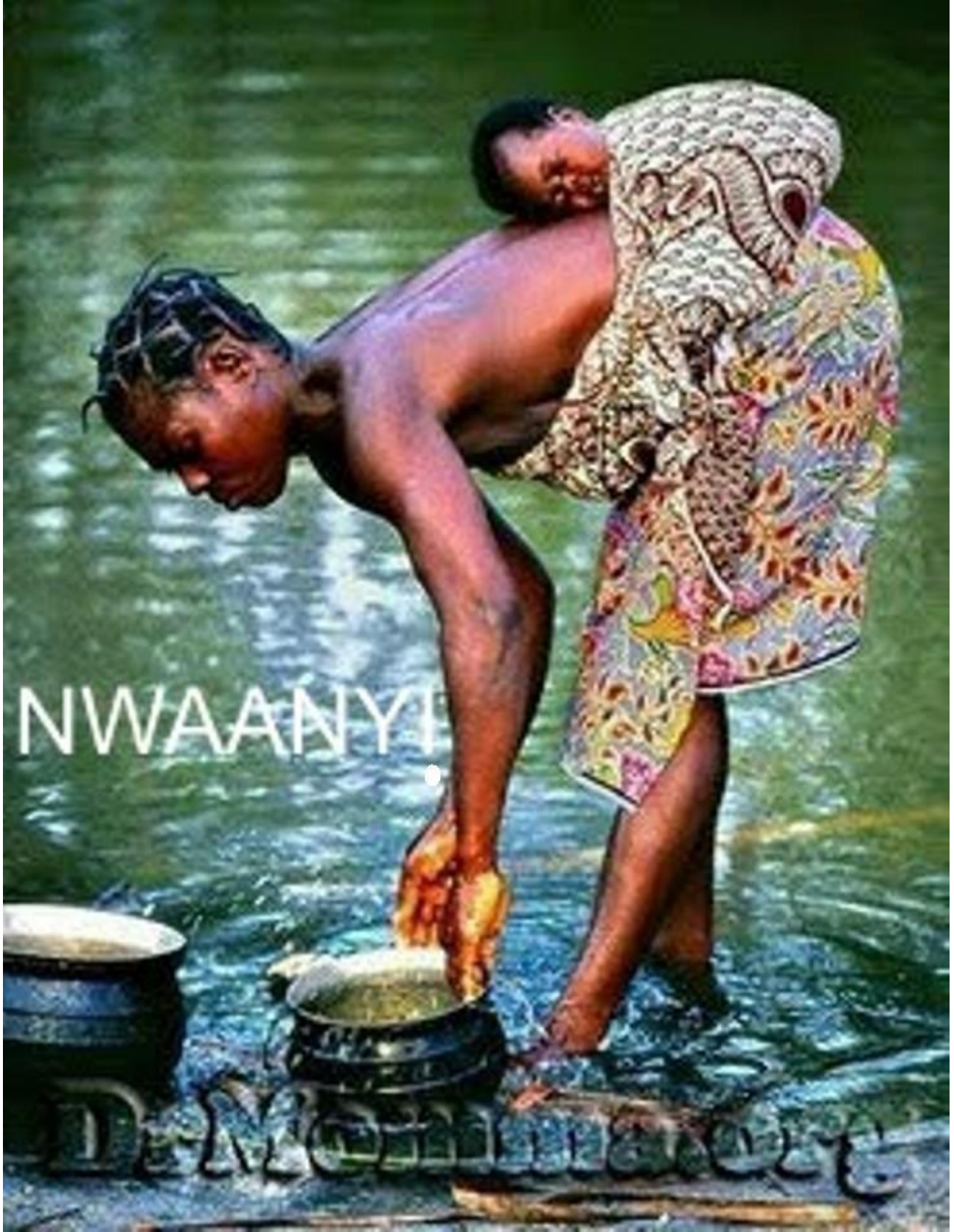
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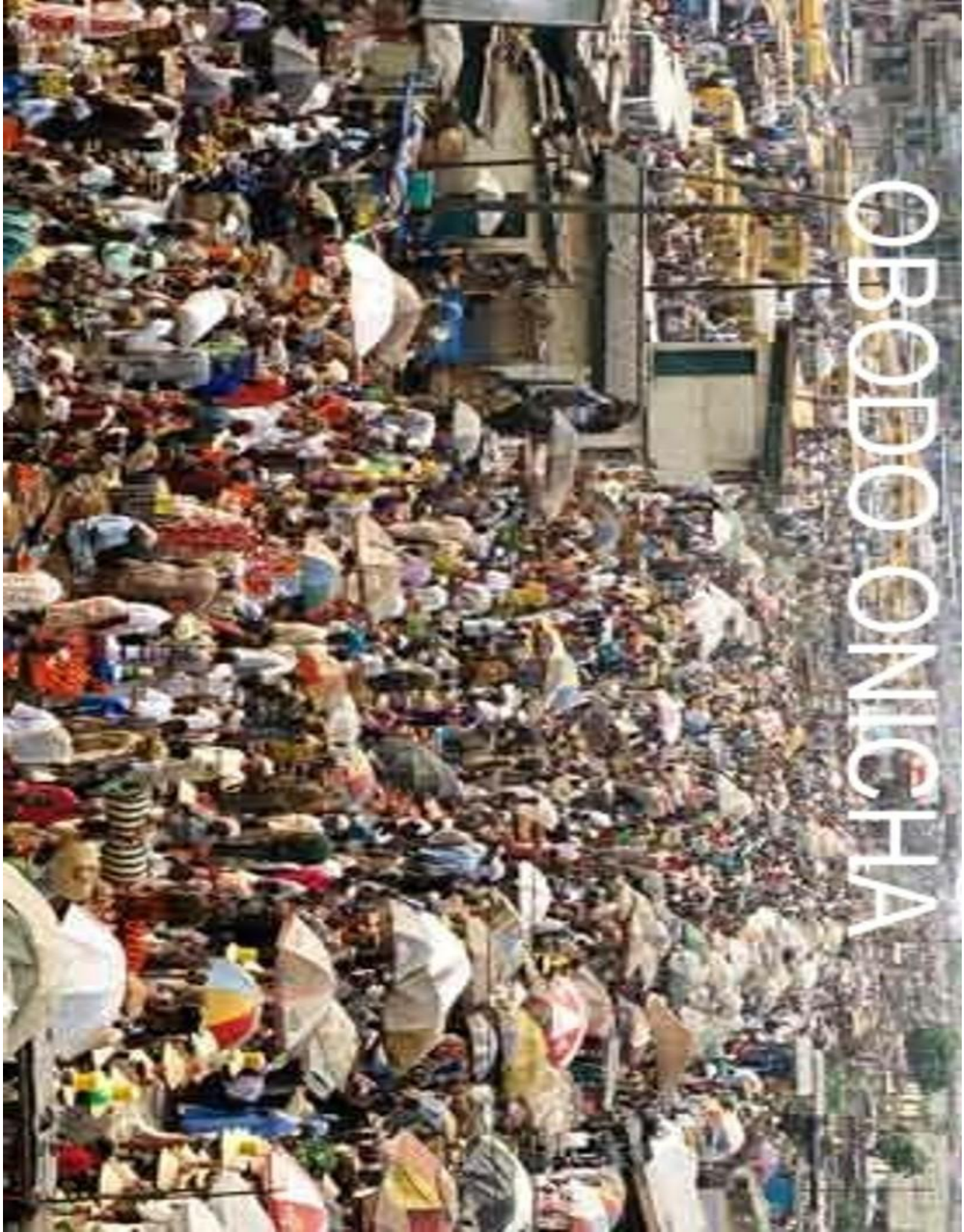
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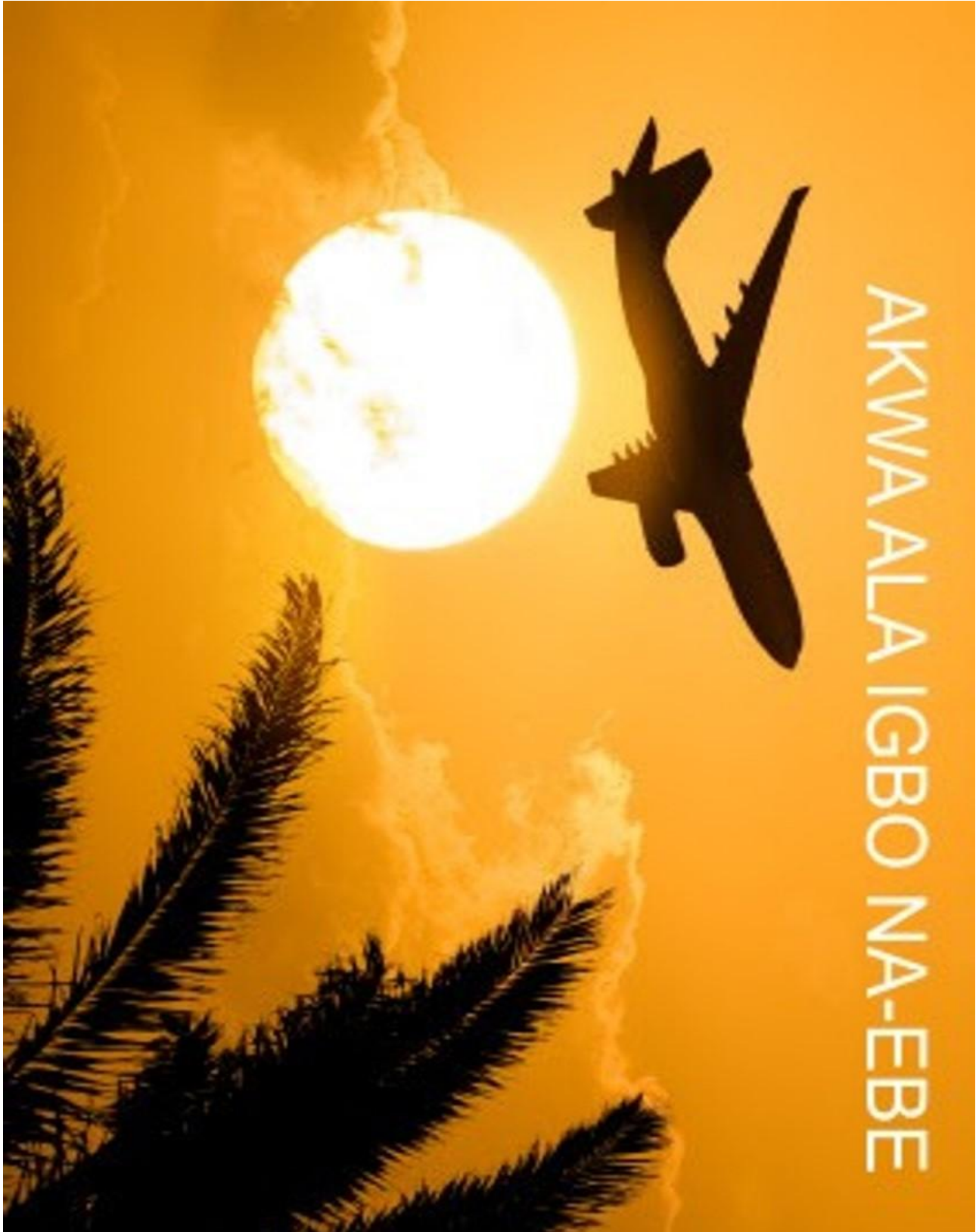
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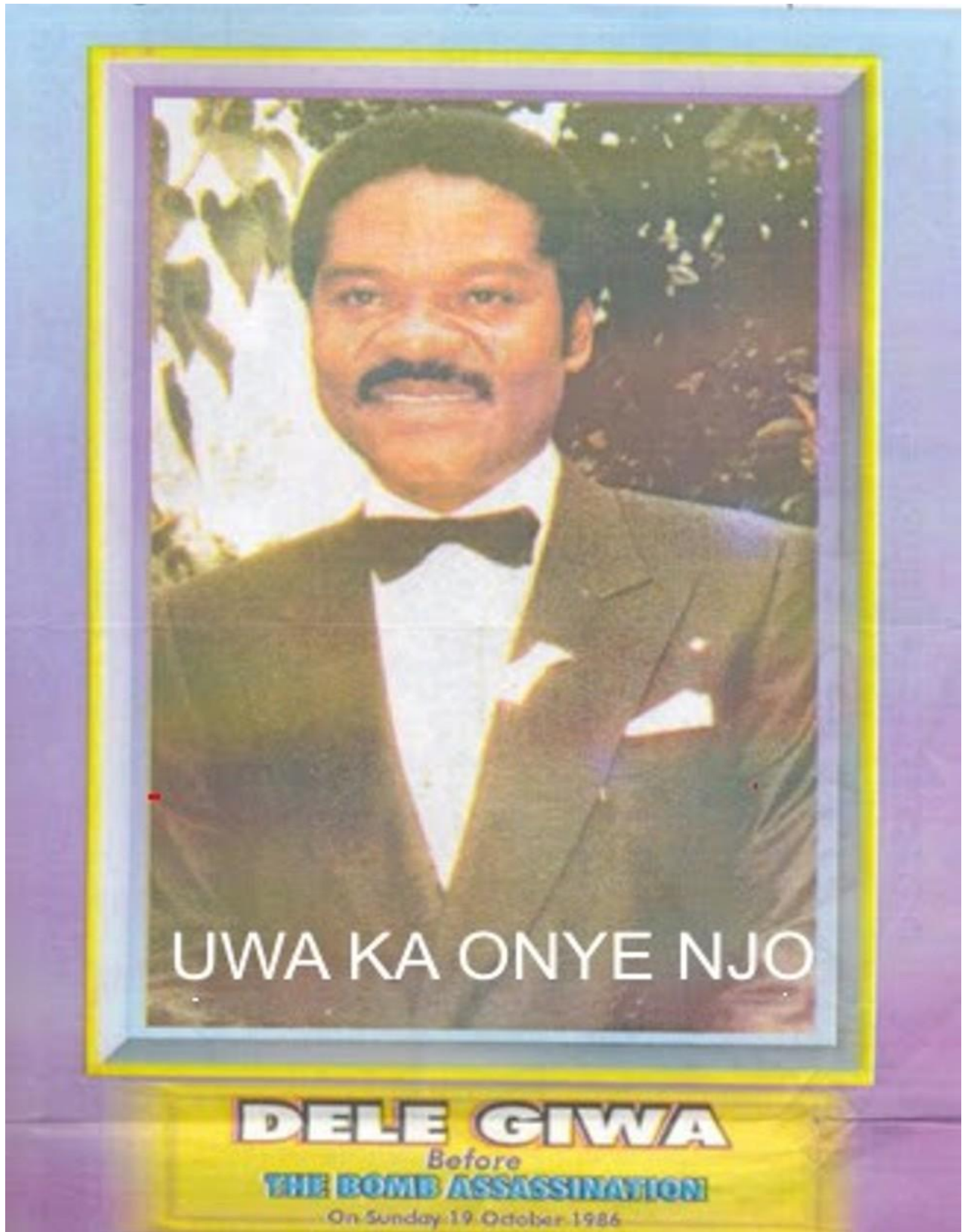
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**PICTURE 10**



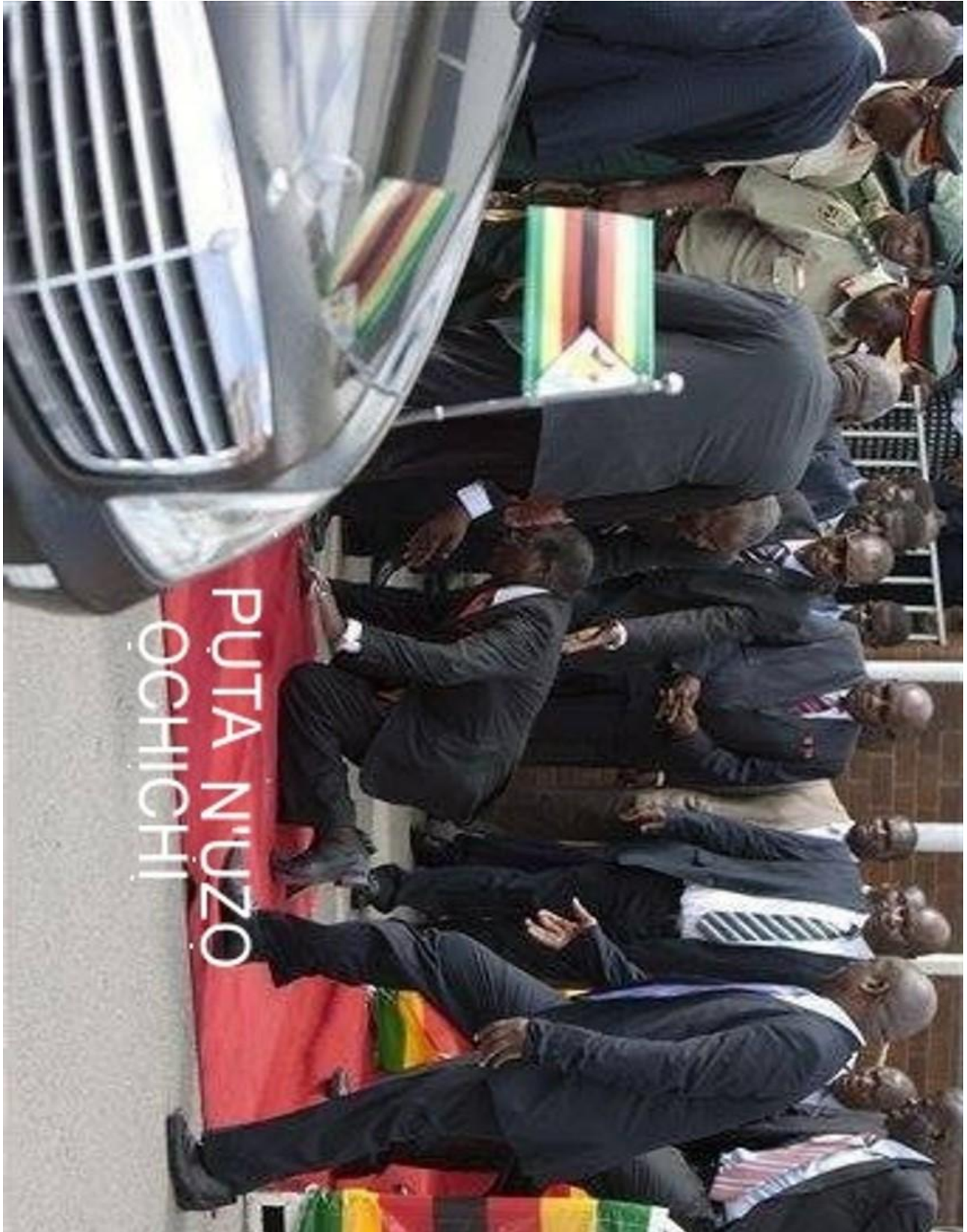
PICTURE 11



PICTURE 12



PICTURE 13





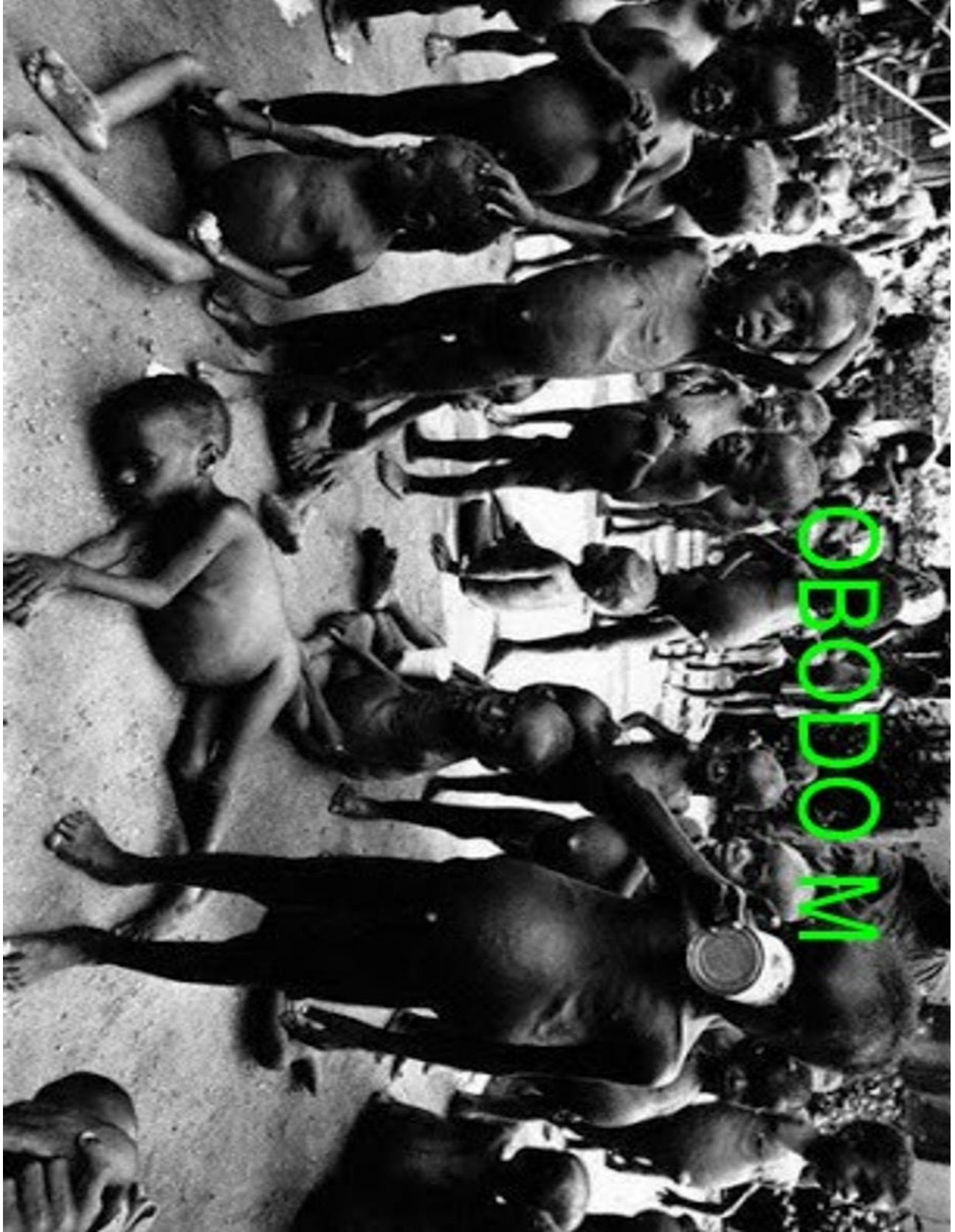
PICTURE 14



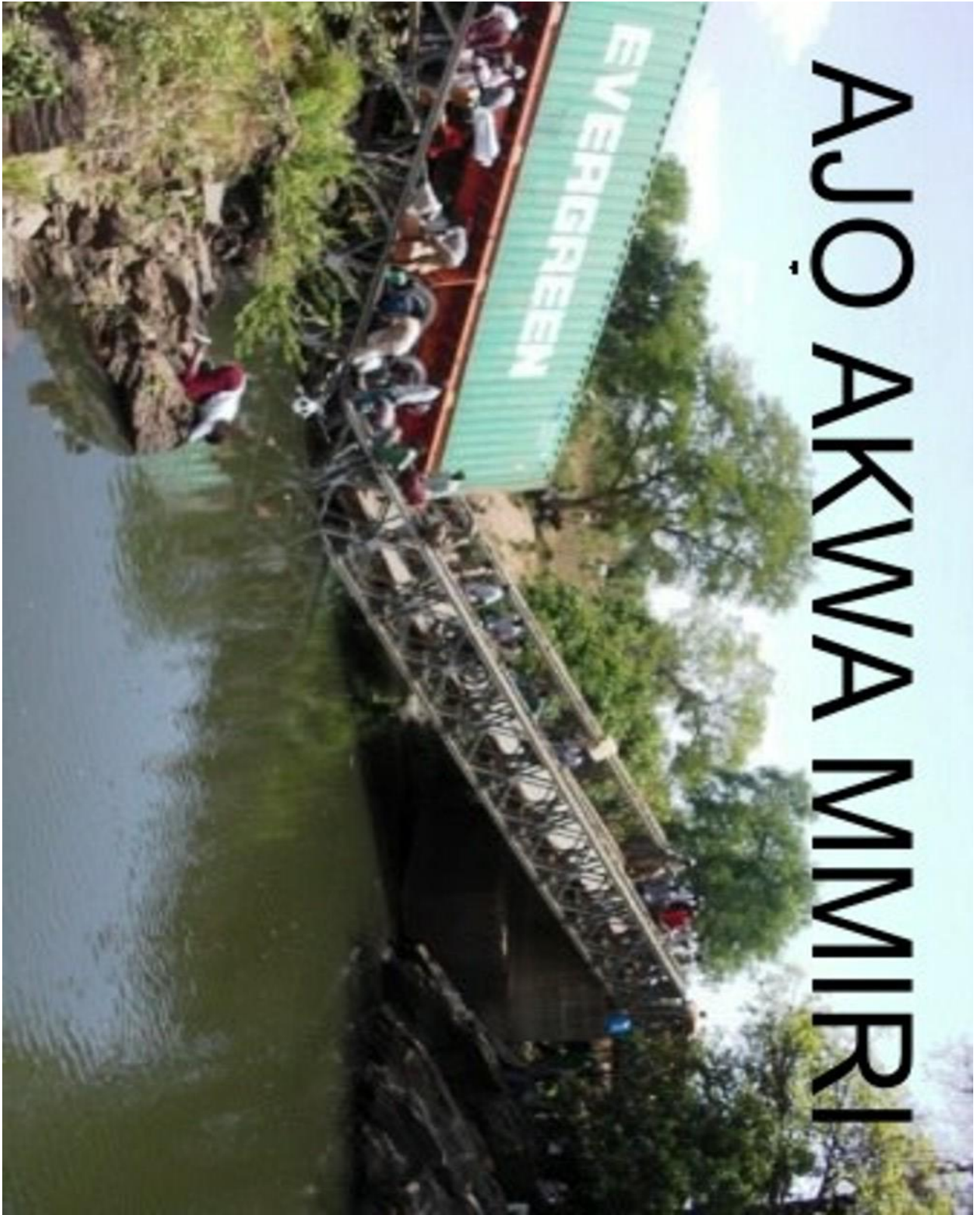
PICTURE 15



PICTURE 16



PICTURE 17



AJO AKWA MIMIRI