
*IGORU MUSIC IN OKPELAND: A STUDY OF ITS
FUNCTIONS AND COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES*

*Volume I: Chapters 1-6 & Volume II Chapters 7-8,
Appendices, Bibliography and CD*

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University of Pretoria etd, Idamoyibo O I (2006)

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Dedicated to:

All Igoru musicians in Okpe, and to the memory of my Parents,

Mr & Mrs Idamoyibo John Odafe

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is original except as acknowledged in the text. Although the study began at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, it was completed at the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa with written permission from the former University. In part or in whole, the thesis has not been submitted to any other institution for any degree.

Ovaborhene Idamoyibo

CERTIFICATION AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research study is the original work of Ovaborhene Isaac Idamoyibo under my supervision and that it meets the requirements for the award of the degree, Doctor of Music (DMus) of the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Prof. Meki Nzewi

Promoter.

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the functions of Igoru music in Okpe land. It also examined the compositional techniques of the music typology. The primary source for data collection was oral interview. Secondary sources include publications, and records. Unstructured research questions formed basis for the study. The texts of eighty seven (87) songs were transcribed and translated for this study. Fifty songs from this sample were further transcribed in staff notation, for analysis and discussion. At the end of the study, the following findings were made:

- Igoru musicians, in their foresight, investigate, evaluate, probe, counsel, warn, and foretell future events in Okpe, to avoid painful experiences, since in traditional Okpe society, life experiences are shared.
- Most of the themes in Igoru music are derived from the sense of realism than idealism. The songs being quite topical had to be realistic than idealistic in tendency. Various sound and speech elements are put together to make communication effective.
- Igoru music praises and commends deserving members, in order to encourage those who are doing well in the society to continue in their good deeds, as well as stimulate others to emulate them.
- The musicians defend their political system, their territorial land mass, traditional religion and themselves from various attacks.
- Igoru music represents the Okpe identity, thus it was selected amongst other music typologies of the culture to represent it, both in social and political-oriented activities in Lagos and elsewhere.

- Igoru music uses the hexatonic scale system. Almost all the songs were found to be composed in compound quadruple metre. The performers
-
- involve in two-part polyphonic singing. Consecutive parallel 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths are prevalent and melodic cadences resolve upwards than downwards. Shifts of tonal centre (key), according to the convenience of performers, as well as recycling of themes are also common features.

Key words: Igoru music, functions, compositional techniques, Okpe, ensemble-organization, poetry as songs, vocal forms, opening and closing-formulas, transcription and translation, meaning and intention.

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APPENDIX I
(Annexure to chapter 6)
IGORU POETRY

FIRST PERIOD (1170 – 1900)

1.	Ose omo yo ro doro [Father is greater]	A1 – 1
2.	Emwu Omuorhoja [They captured Omuorhoja]	A1 – 2
3.	Umogu osiye oghwa [Umogu is at home]	A1 – 4

SECOND PERIOD (1900 – 1945)

4.	Edion gbe simi ame [Edion, protect us]	A1 – 5
5.	Emru irimi 1 [Sin against ancestors]	A1 – 6
6.	Emru irimi 2 [Sin against ancestors]	A1 – 11
7.	Urhomu erhome eki rhom' ode [Good luck and good name]	A1 – 16
8.	Oka olaragha obuebun [Kinds of vagabond are numerous]	A1 – 17
9.	Unugbrogodo oso-ijoro [Unugbrogodo sings songs]	A1 – 19
10.	Ighwen re den rhe [As one is destined]	A1 – 21
11.	Orilele oma ye oforo [The white chick]	A1 – 22
12.	Okpiten [Innuendo communicator]	A1 – 23
13.	Aramoghwa ro jiri otore [An old rat]	A1 – 24
14.	Wewe n'obiruo [You're commended]	A1 – 25
15.	Uruemru ogbegbon [Evil attitude]	A1 – 27
16.	Ni ti ore osa [As that of the Kingfisher]	A1 – 29
17.	Ona' kpo oben eruo [World's difficult craftsmanship]	A1 – 31
18.	Abada oda inyo [Abada is drunk]	A1 – 32

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19.	Ne je r' ukpe e mamiwota [Like the mermaid's lamp]	A1 – 33
20.	Ada ovo oro l' omo [It's the outside world that stops a child]	A1 – 34
21.	Eghware ogba ne [The assembly is packed full]	A1 – 34
22.	Mi ne rie [I will go home]	A1 – 35
23.	Havbaren 1 [Specie of mangrove tree]	A1 – 36
24.	Havbaren 2 [Specie of mangrove tree]	A1 – 38
25.	Esiso eyen [A sack of sand]	A1 – 39
26.	Otu irhobo are ateran? [Do you associate with the Itsekiri?]	A1 – 40
27.	Ukiri Emereje [The Mereje ukiri]	A1 – 41
28.	Ogbeghele, Ariemurugbe [Philanthropist, Ariemurugbe]	A1 – 42
29.	Ikun Orichedje rhe Orogho [The story of Orichedje and Orogho]	A1 – 43
30.	Odarie [It hurt him/her]	A1 - 48

THIRD PERIOD (1945 – 1970)

31.	Obora ha ovren rue [What we do with a slave]	A1 – 48
32.	Ami vwo Orodje ne [We now have a king]	A1 – 52
33.	Me tare verhe [I predicted earlier]	A1 – 55
34.	We gbe akpoo [You're not like the world]	A1 – 56
35.	Ogbe afen gbe aramoo [She's neither a bird nor an animal]	A1 – 58
36.	Ohohe otoro [He/she is like a bird]	A1 – 59
37.	Iruo ame irhe ri [The job we've perfected]	A1 – 60
38.	Inuru ame oho [We're fed up with them]	A1 – 62
39.	Ehware o kpe omo [Sex killed a baby]	A1 – 62
40.	Oterhe [Public pond]	A1 – 67
41.	Ame ogodo [The water in the pit]	A1 – 68
42.	Obo wu ruru obi Sapele [What you did at Sapele]	A1 – 70
43.	Obi ehware [Orgasm power]	A1 – 71
44.	Ame ta rien [We advised her]	A1 – 72

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45.	'No j eve? [Would it not be exposed?]	A1 – 77
46.	Ase-Agerhe [Women bend]	A1 – 78
47.	Enyeren son [Wrongful living]	A1 – 82
48.	Onyobru [Mass movement]	A1 – 82
49.	Enana wu ne ruo? [Is this what you would do?]	A1 – 84
50.	Pilo-kesi obo ijoro Okpe [Pillow-case is a great singer]	A1 – 85
51.	Enana oye ororo [These were his considerations]	A1 – 86
52.	Owan ovwo bru udu-u [Let no one be afraid]	A1 - 87
53.	Me vbare otore Ijeddo [I acknowledge the God of Jeddo]	A1 – 88
54.	Irhorin Irhobo [The Itsekiri curse]	A1 – 90
55.	Irhorin Igoru [The Igoru curse]	A1 – 90
56.	Egbukpe re vbe ru [The year we do not farm]	A1 – 91
57.	Aphie omo igbe [A child deceived to dance]	A1 – 93
58.	Ofa ororo me [I was ashamed]	A1 – 94
59.	Oghwara [The impotent/barren]	A1 – 96
60.	Urhieme erhome eki rhom' ode [Good fate and good name]	A1 – 99
61.	Otu ra gbe Ikongo rhe Iboma [Love making with soldiers]	A1 – 101
62.	Igberadja iwwo orhan [Prostitutes had a deity]	A1 – 105
63.	Ikeru iphen ne [Focus had become clearer]	A1 – 109
64.	Eghwere me [My defensive medicine]	A1 – 109
65.	Ikiki of' omo ro hue e [Ikiki deserved not to die]	A1 – 112
66.	Aleluya [Hallelujah]	A1 – 113
67.	Erhomo Aleluya [Hallelujah prayers]	A1 – 116
68.	Uhu Orodje Okpe, Mebitaghan [The death of the king]	A1 – 118
69.	Ame ogbeva [Twice in the rain]	A1 – 125

FOURTH PERIOD (1970 – 2005)

70.	Otu re gba re, joro Orodje [Song of the king]	A1 – 126
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71.	Okakuro Ayomano rhe Orodje [Chief Ayomano & the king]	A1 – 132
72.	Ariromo [Be calm]	A1 – 138
73.	Adama emru [We try things out]	A1 - 140
74.	Orherhe ri se odin [Cricket does not fall odd]	A1 – 140
75.	Ekete oren o' vasa [Where the sun rises]	A1 – 141
76.	Eho ese [The goddess of the stream]	A1 – 143
77.	Ofi or' ukoko ne [It has become cigarette holder]	A1 – 143
78.	Iboma ihin Ikeja [No soldiers in Ikeja]	A1 – 145
79.	Wu se le amee [You can't send us packing]	A1 – 145
80.	Jehware vbo [Stop having sex]	A1 – 148
81.	Ede mi ne vbie omo [The day I'll have a child]	A1 – 148
82.	Emro otu ishoshi [The prophecy of the church]	A1 – 150
83.	Obeme Abada [Abada's abject poverty]	A1 – 151
84.	Rhurhu ubiobiomuo [Hide your ugliness]	A1 – 152
85.	Ti ewun nu oma [Pull off your shirt]	A1 – 156
86.	Otan [Squirrel]	A1 – 157
87.	Otu egboto [Young ladies]	A1 – 157
88.	Synthesis of proverbs in Igoru	A1 – 159

APPENDIX II CONTENT

[Igoru songs: Annexure to chapter 7]

FIRST PERIOD (1170 – 1900)

1.	Ose omo yo ro doro [Father is greater]	A2 – 1
2.	Umogu osiye oghwa [Umogu is at home]	A2 – 3

SECOND PERIOD (1900 – 1945)

3.	Edion gbe simi ame [Edion, protect us]	A2– 5
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4.	Emru irimi [Sin against ancestors]	A2 – 6
5.	Urhomu erhome eki rhom' ode [Good luck and good name]	A2 – 18
6.	Oka olaragha obuebun [Kinds of vagabond are numerous]	A2 – 19
7.	We n'obiruo [You're commended]	A2 – 21
8.	Ona' kpo oben eruo [World's difficult craftsmanship]	A2 – 22
9.	Abada oda inyo [Abada is drunk]	A2 – 31
10.	Ada ovo oro l' omo 1 [It's the outside world that stops a child]	A2 – 33
11.	Ada ovo oro l' omo 2 [It's the outside world that stops a child]	A2 – 34
12.	Eghware ogba ne [The assembly is packed full]	A2 – 35
13.	Havbaren [Specie of mangrove tree]	A2 – 37
14.	Otu irhobo are ateran? [Do you associate with the Itsekiri?]	A2 – 38
15.	Ogba eghele, Ariemurugbe [Philanthropist, Ariemurugbe]	A2 – 41
16.	Ikun Orichedje rhe Orogho [The story of Orichedje and Orogho]	A2 – 42
17.	Oda rie [It hurt him/her]	A2 - 47

THIRD PERIOD (1945 – 1970)

18.	Me tare verhe 1 [I predicted earlier]	A2 – 48
19.	Me tare verhe 2 [I predicted earlier]	A2 – 49
20.	Oterhe [Public pond]	A2 – 50
21.	Ame ogodo [The water in the pit]	A2 – 51
22.	Ame ta rien [We advised her]	A2 – 53
23.	'No j eve? [Would it not be exposed?]	A2 – 59
24.	Onyobru 1 [Mass movement]	A2 – 63
25.	Onyobru 2 [Mass movement]	A2 – 64
26.	Enana wu ne ruo? 1 [Is this what you would do?]	A2 – 73
27.	Enana wu ne ruo? 2 [Is this what you would do?]	A2 – 74
28.	Pilo-kesi obo ijoro Okpe [Pillow-case is a great singer]	A2 – 75
29.	Enana oye ororo [These were his considerations]	A2 – 77

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30.	Owan ovwo bru udu-u [Let no one be afraid]	A2 – 79
31.	Me vbare otore Ijeddo [I acknowledge the God of Jeddo]	A2 – 83
32.	Egbukpe re vbe ru [The year we do not farm]	A2 – 85
33.	Aphie omo igbe [A child deceived to dance]	A2 – 91
34.	Oghwara [The impotent/barren]	A2 – 93
35.	Otu ra gbe Ikongo [Love making with soldiers]	A2 – 103
36.	Erhomo Aleluya [Hallelujah prayers]	A2 – 107
37.	Uhu Orodje Okpe, Mebitaghan [The death of the king]	A2 – 109
38.	Ame ogbeva [Twice in the rain]	A2 – 118

FOURTH PERIOD (1970 – 2005)

39.	Ijoro Orodje [The song of the king]	A2 – 119
40.	Ariromo [Be calm]	A2 – 142
41.	Adama emru [We try things out]	A2 – 144
42.	Orherhe ri se odin [Cricket does not fall odd]	A2 – 145
43.	Iboma ihin Ikeja [No soldiers in Ikeja]	A2 – 146
44.	Ofi ore ukoko ne [It has become cigarette holder]	A2 – 147
45.	Wu se le amee [You can't send us packing]	A2 – 148
46.	Jehware vbo [Stop having sex]	A2 – 156
47.	Ede mi ne vbie omo [The day I'll have a child]	A2 – 157
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APPENDIX IV

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- Track 1. Ose omo yo ro doro (Father is greater)
- Track 2. Umogu osiye oghwa (Umogu is at home)
- Track 3. Edion gbe simi ame (Edion, protect us)
- Track 4. Emru irimi (Sin against ancestors)
- Track 5. Urhomu erhome eki rhom' ode (Good luck and good name)
- Track 6. Oka olaragha obuebun (Kinds of vagabond are numerous)
- Track 7. We n'obiruo (You're commended)
- Track 8. Ona'kpo oben eruo (World's difficult craftsmanship)
- Track 9. Abada oda inyo (Abada is drunk)
- Track 10. Ada ovo oro l' omo 1 (It's the outside world that stops a child)
- Track 11. Ada ovo oro l' omo 2 (It's the outside world that stops a child)
- Track 12. Eghware ogba ne (The assembly is packed full)
- Track 13. Havbaren (Specie of mangrove tree)
- Track 14. Otu irhobo are ateran? (Do you associate with the Itsekiri?)
- Track 15. Ogba eghele, Ariemurugbe (Philanthropist, Ariemurugbe)
- Track 16. Ikun Orichedje rhe Orogho (The story of Orichedje and Orogho)
- Track 17. Oda rie (It hurt him/her)
- Track 18. Me tare verhe 1 (I predicted earlier)
- Track 19. Me tare verhe 2 (I predicted earlier)
- Track 20. Oterhe (Public pond)
- Track 21. Ame ogodo (The water in the pit)
- Track 22. *Ame ta rien* and *iboma ihin Ikeja* (We advised her and Ikeja lacked soldiers)
- Track 23. 'No j' eve? (Would it not be exposed?)
- Track 24. Onyobru (Mass movement)

University of Pretoria etd, Idamoyibo O I (2006)

- Track 25. Enana wu ne ruo? (Is this what you would do?)
Track 26. Pilo-kesi obo ijoro Okpe (Pillow-case is a great Okpe singer)
Track 27. Enana oye ororo (These were his considerations)
Track 28. Ijoro Orodje (The song of the king)
Track 29. Uhu Orodje Okpe, Mebitaghan (The death of the king)
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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1. 1 Introduction

Igoru is a traditional music typology of the Okpẹ of Delta State, Nigeria. It is a satirical genre, which uses imagery to critique societal ills and expose any deviant member of the society, or ridicule leading members of another ensemble. In this way, it has played very significant roles in the ‘functioning of the society’ (Richard Okafor, 1990: 28). It is performed by adult men and women with a lead vocalist and is accompanied by *Ukiri* (short drum) *Azuzu* (manual fan) and *Abo* (clappers). There are Igoru ensembles of mixed sex as well as ensembles of only male or female.

Daniel Avorgbedor (1990: 219) argues that art does not only prescribe polite ways for saying impolite things, but provides ways for expressing the inexpressible and provides license for saying the abnormal and irritant truth, without fear or favour. He intimates two levels of *Ewe* songs (existing in a body of songs called *Halo*), which make direct reference to sexual organs and acts, as well as shower insults on specific persons among the audience, right in their

presence. He reports 'Factions engaging in the war of insults and music' (Avorgbedor, 2001: 17). He further explicates that:

There are two instances among the Ewe people where singing enables one to transcend social moral boundaries. The first instance involves song texts that are loaded with references to the genital or sexual acts. The other instance concerns a body of *halo* songs that contain insults directed at specific persons (p 218)... the song removes normal and immediate moral responsibilities from the singer, and consequently leaves the singer blameless because of the ontological ex-exemplification of the artistic phenomenon which is beyond functional analysis. The melody re-adjusts the tonal and rhythmic sequences of the words in a sensitive manner. The texts, full of sexual references, calumny, and insults, would have called into question the moral status of the singer if the words were spoken plainly rather than sung (p 220).

Meki Nzewi (1977: 376) however maintains that 'The type of licenses and distinguishing social irresponsibility allowable to expert musicians in some other societies is not the pattern in Igbo society'. Nwoga (1981: 76) implicitly discussed the performer (and audience relationship) in the town festival of Umueshi in Ideato Local Government Area of Imo State Nigeria. According to him, the young people who are in the performing group watch the behaviour of community members during the year, collect names and oral records of evildoers and set them to satirical music. On the Umueshi day, they employ an anthropomorphic being, 'spirit-manifest mis-termed masquerade' (Nzewi, 1997: 39) to present the satirical songs before the audience who later use the songs against the culprits as societal or social reprisal before the next festival. Perhaps, this is why Sam

Ekpe Akpabot (1986: 62) remarks that music is the common daily newspaper of the villagers.

Igoru in pre-colonial Nigeria functioned as a social tool for checking and maintaining socio-moral norms in the society. The themes centered on issues of good socio-moral balance, peaceful co-existence and patriotism. The Okpe hold it in very high esteem for its functionality, as “the songs maintain balance between the general good of the society whose ethos must be upheld and respect for law-abiding individual” (Ojaide, 2001: 45). Amukeye Okodide, a master Igoru performer, points to the fact that the Okpe society, including the musicians themselves, accepted the criticism that came their way through Igoru music, in as much as it helped to maintain the values and norms of the society and to shape the life style of the individual to conform to societal standards:

Igoru music means so much to us, because it helps us to maintain the socio-moral standards and values our forefathers handed over to us. When evil is perpetrated and it is not revealed or discovered; when grievous offences are committed and no one is able to point them to a strong or prominent personality-the culprit, or even one of the least (say boo to a goose), such malfeasances continue and we lose profitable cultural standards. Other Igoru musicians corrected my ills, as much as I corrected other members of the society through the music. Though the manner of its presentation, being public may hurt one’s feelings in a way, yet we saw it as part of the culture and as part of life to accept and uphold, provided the musician does not unnecessarily exaggerate to ridiculously pique the image of his subject (Amukeye Okodide, 2003: oral interview).

Nzewi (1977: 426) quotes his informant, Israel Anyahuru saying, 'Whoever is mentioned in a music performance-situation, let him not take offence for it is music that is being sung. The society would protect a musician from recriminations for what he said in music as long as what he said is true'. Igoru musical performance is actually one of the ways by which the Okpe philosophical thought on socio-moral, spiritual, economic life, etc, is expressed. Elders discourage trouble making a lot, yet would remark that "it is a good thing to have a troublesome person in one's family", because on a day of oppression or attack, his services would be needed for rescue. This can further be explained with our childhood experience. Among peers may exist one who assumes to be more powerful than others and would always attempt to oppress and infringe on the fundamental rights of the others. This may continue until one of the oppressed would summon courage to challenge him, resulting to a combat. The oppressed might beat the acclaimed powerful one and the moment this happens, his excesses are checked while other members of the peer group regain their freedom and rights.

Igoru didactic-satirical essence turned excessive in the late 1940s and 1950s leading to its diminution and transformation to a new genre. Before its transformation, Igoru themes focused on sex workers, hobos, drunkards, misers, gluttons, murderers, etc, and performers inserted real names of victims and pointed fingers at them if they were present at the scene of performance. This was assumed to be acceptable in the performance context meant to educate and correct ills; alas the severe criticism and absolute focus on sex trade however in latter period became offensive to the affected persons, since it aspersed their

reputation and honour. This made sorcerers to afflict lead vocalists with diverse ailments and the consequent transformation of Igoru. Although some kind of immunity for musicians exists in the society, there also exist limits to which this is taken as a license to abuse members of the society without propriety. The real reasons for the diminution and transformation of Igoru music are hypothetically examined and justified in this research.

There is need to examine why there was absolute focus and much fuss about sex trade in the early 1990s both in Lagos and at home in Okpe land. The fact, however, that the culture places premium on colleens' efforts in maintaining socio-moral sanctity, with emphasis on legitimate marriage already provides us a hypothesis for this investigation. We are aware also that certain music may transform into new typology at one time or the other, either as a result of new socio-economic development, new innovations in technology, or contact with new cultures. But there is need for this study to examine the factors that may enhance the continuity and sustainability of Igoru music in Okpe, for the purpose of keeping its original socio-cultural functions and compositional techniques.

1. 2 Statement of problem

The Okpe are one of the numerous minority groups in Nigeria whose musical culture has received very little attention in terms of research and publication. Apart from the partial comment made by Emurobome Idolor (1991: 4) on some Igoru records released by Iboyi Tebu of Djakpa Elume, no detailed study has been carried out on it, despite the fact that its performance went beyond the confines of Okpeland to the cosmopolitan city of Lagos. Even the writing of Idolor

does not contain as much fact as can be relied upon, because field investigation reveals that Iboyi Tebu was not an Igoru musician, but a promoter who sponsored some recording of Igoru artistes.

Little or nothing is documented about its origin, stages of development, functions, forms, compositional techniques as well as performance practice and even its exponents. Many records released by a few artistes are no longer available today and innumerable Igoru songs have been forgotten, though some community-folk still sing a number of them in new contexts such as working hours in the farm. There is therefore an urgent need for a documentary research to give some insight into its meaning, origin, performance practice, functions, forms and techniques, in order to further our knowledge of the genre.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study correspond with the common goals of African musicology, which are scholarly and humanistic as stated by Kwabena Nketia (1998: 14). The primary objective of the study is to investigate and document Igoru music of the Okpe, thereby contribute to the growing knowledge of music in Nigeria, Africa and the entire world. Specifically, the study will seek knowledge and understanding of the Okpe person as a music maker and user; Igoru music as a language or means of communication and an object of aesthetic interest in culture. Igoru literally means gold and connotes what is most precious and valued; the following questions readily come to mind: 'why is this music genre named Igoru? Is it as precious as gold to the Okpe people? Is it considered so in terms of its function, style, form, performance practice or anything else? Has it

any strong socio-musical interest that warranted its spread to some parts of Urhobo and Yoruba land? This research attempts to answer these questions in order to further our knowledge and understanding of the music type.

It examines its origin and development as well as its functions in the society and the compositional techniques. One principal objective of the study agrees with Keith Swanwick's (1988: 7) argument that 'theories are not the opposite of practice but its basis'. The study therefore attempts to identify and examine the traditional philosophy, theory and principles of the Okpe that form basis for poetic and musical resource in Igoru performances and compositions. The study investigates the value of Igoru music in Okpe community and discusses its usefulness as a medium of enlightenment and an instrument for fighting vices. It also highlights the implication of abuse in the use of satirical music, even when the initial intention of its uses is to educate and correct socio-moral vice. It critically views its functional vitality and satirical validity in modern Okpe society against the background of what it was, what it is and how it might end. This will no doubt form basis for further argument whether music in modern society should capitalize on 'permissible satire' to abuse people excessively or not. This objective is particularly important, because many musicians have suffered as a result of abuse in the use of satirical music in the society and results from this research might enhance our orientation as to how music can be used to foster development than to cause chaos.

Nzewi (1998: 456) argues that:

To introduce Africans to modern music learning and appreciation of European music thoughts, contents, practices and pedagogy is a radical, de-culturating process which continues to produce the crises of cultural inferiority, mental inadequacy, and pervasive, perverse cultural-human identity characterizing the modern African person in modern social, political, educational and cultural pursuits.

We have studied Western music so much that it influences our modern compositions than our traditional music does. This study aims to unfold the compositional resources and techniques of Igoru music for further exploitation in modern compositions. As Inge Mari'Burger (1987: 56) in her doctoral thesis observes that Khabi Mngoma's application of his knowledge of Zulu traditional music to his choral music composition and performance practice yielded great success, we aim to collect and study a good number of Igoru songs and further use its knowledge for further musical creativity. In consonance with this objective, Kenichi Tsukada (2002: 27) in retrospection unfolds the kind of fulfillment a scholar could have knowing about his culture:

My background was modern Western music, with little knowledge of Japanese musical traditions. As an undergraduate student of musicology at Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music..., I was particularly interested in the philosophy and aesthetics of music under the strong influence of German tradition...Fumio Koizumio, then a professor at Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, was without doubt the founder of ethnomusicology in Japan...His course in ethnomusicology was extremely appealing, since it included vivid descriptions, based on his own fieldwork, of various musical cultures...What I learned from this... was the importance of... the study of music, of

a researcher's own experience in the field and in performance...As a Japanese, I felt irrational to be ignorant of my own musical traditions, especially because I considered myself an ethnomusicologist.

1.4 Scope of the study

Igoru music in this study samples performing groups in eight out of fifteen divisions that make up Okpe. These include Ẹlume, Ọkọkporo, Mẹreje, Sapele, Ighwresa, Orerokpe, Amwokpe and Ugolo. For the avoidance of doubt it is important to state that several documents have misrepresented these divisions as communities, even to the time of this writing. In this study, however, we examine the Okpe word *ovberie*, meaning division, often used by elders to refer to this socio-political grouping. A division in Okpe consist several towns and villages, up to fifteen, more or less. There is relative homogeneity in the cultural belief, and shared customs including music and language with little differences amongst the Okpe people in these divisions. This makes it quite safe to generalize our argument in this study on the entire Okpe people.

The study surveys the sociological and religious beliefs and general background of the Okpe people, in order to gain insight into the cultural-musical context and rationalizations that inform the elements of music making in the land. It also examines the various concepts and implications of Igoru music from primordial times up to the year 2004. It investigates the factors that propelled its propagation, change, retention, and transfusion from Okpeland to Yorubaland (as practiced by the Okpe in Lagos). The scope includes an in-depth investigation of the specific factors that led to its decline and transformation to *Ighopha*. It further

includes transcription of text, voice and instrumental parts, followed by theoretical analysis and discourse.

1.5 Significance of the study

There is practically no literature on Igoru music, even though some literatures exist on Okpe music generally. As such this study is a pioneering work, which will contribute in-depth knowledge about Igoru music. In contemporary Nigeria, scholarly research interest and debate had continued to focus attention on peace, conflict management and resolution, due to the numerous community, ethnic, religious and social-political imbroglios that in recent times had occurred in Warri, Ugbukurusu, Ife, Kano, Kaduna, etc. This development, of course, has made some scholars in history to create a new unit of conflict and management studies at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria. Since the use of abusive music to critique leaders and subjects, as is evident in the socio-political scene, has turned problematic, understanding its implications as unveiled in this study is significant. John Kaemmer (1993: 1) argues that:

ALTHOUGH IT HAS PROBABLY NEVER [capital letters in original] occurred to most people that music can be dangerous, it is sometimes viewed that way for several reasons. Modern parents in the 1990s are concerned about the messages contained in the song lyrics of rock groups, fearing that listening to such ideas through a powerful medium like music will have a negative effect upon the value system and behaviour of their children... The Navajo people of the American Southwest consider the danger in music to be due to its supernatural power.

The argument of Kaemmer, though is about the lyrical content that might corrupt young listeners, it is not the intention of this research to query that concern. It is our intention however to examine the danger of music from a different perspective; the perspective of its use to critique leaders and subjects in society, as it may attract reactions since there is hardly anyone who is ready to listen to criticism, no matter how constructive it seems. This study highlights some of the reasons why satirical music is becoming a problem in modern society like Okpe. It also highlights how discreet use of constructive musical language can sustain societal values. Nwoga (1985; 197) observes that 'culture cannot be preserved; it can only be recreated'. This study will expose musicians and scholars to the elements of Igoru music, which could be useful in creating modern music typologies and in teaching African music composition in schools and tertiary institutions.

1.6 Methodology

This study adopts a multi-disciplinary approach, in that we attempt to seek comprehensive understanding of Igoru music by investigating the musical, religious, historical, sociological, anthropological, philosophical, linguistic, oral performance and communication arts aspects of the Okpe culture. Maundu (1995:32) suggests the following outline for any meaningful research work and this is found useful in this study:

- Statement of research goals and objectives
- Setting the area of operation and the scope of study
- Formulation of research questions and procedure for organization and analysis of data.

- Identifying the resource persons to interview
- Informing and sensitizing the informants
- Procuring and putting the required personnel and equipment in place.

Curt Sachs (1962: 45) divided ethno-musicological research work into two: Field work and Deskwork, while Reck, Slobin and Titon (1992: 18-19) preceded the former with library-work. The latter authors' segmentation of research work into three is worth accepting, but should library work actually come before fieldwork in an ethnographic study, particularly in an oral/unwritten culture? Gerhard Kubik (2002: 113) remarked:

As in my European travel, I did not have a preconceived program but relied on chance as my guide. Before my departure, I had read nothing about the African countries that I would visit; I said that reading would only make me prejudiced (Kubik, 2002: 113).

The researcher believes in observations in much the way the Okpe position is, as the best keys to understanding. Prior information and presupposition could create impressions that may not in the end be true. There is always the possibility of differences in the ways people see things; thus two may carry out enquiry on an object in the same field at same time, yet each could report different accounts. Although pre-field experience could sharpen the focus of a researcher, it is the field survey that determines the researchability of the subject matter and ensures that one is not given false impression from literatures to bias his mind and mislead his investigation. It is in this view that we consider in this study that

library work is a section that should go hand in hand with deskwork after field investigation.

Babchuck (1962: 6) refers to four classes of observers stated by Gold (1958), which include complete participant, complete observer, participant-as-observer, and observer-as-participant. He categorized these into two – participant observer and participant-as-observer. According to him, the former is an observer who formally joins the group(s) he studies and plays only official roles assigned to him, because his research aims are unknown to his subjects; while the latter is one who is recognized, invited or permitted to participate in the group as a researcher. Since the former approach could be disadvantageous to ethnomusicological research, in that the researcher may not feel free asking questions about the things he/she needs to know outside his unit of operation, the participant-as-observer approach is adopted in this study.

Reck, Slobin and Titon (1992: 444) argue that although we may travel to far away places to meet, see and relate with unfamiliar things and people, or search for marvelous treasures, 'the pot of gold is buried in one's own backyard'. They encourage researchers to seek out nearby musical cultures, which they can observe, understand and document, in order to contribute to the body of knowledge on musical activities generally. They offer counsel that during contact with the research subjects in the field, the researcher should advance research reasons and aims to them; observe protocols in the local system, avoid assuming the role of an expert; consider individual's differences and rights; take note or speak into tapes as activities may be changing; seek subjects' knowledge and

permission to start the interview, observation, recording, photographing; give them money, copies of photographs, tapes and finished report if demanded and poise as culture and music advocate who would help the music under study to flourish.

The researcher finds the above guide and the approach of purpose definition useful in this study. Explanation to the subjects that the University required the documentation, promotion and preservation of their musical culture indeed enhanced co-operation in the field. Agawu puts forth an argument that:

Not every writer is anxious about establishing his or her fieldwork credentials. After an initial visit in 1963, Simha Arom later spent four years in the Central Africa Republic, returning there subsequently. You would have to look hard, however, to find traces of anxiety about fieldwork anywhere in his publications. Fieldwork for him was a means to an end, and so emphasis was put on the end and not the means. And A. M. Jones, who spent over two decades in Zambia, does not introduce his magnum opus, *Studies in African Music*, by claiming near-authenticity based on length of time spent in the field. Thematizations of fieldwork are generally not pronounced in the work of African scholars. Nketia, Nzewi, Euba, Fiagbedzi, and Mensah rarely fret about doing time in the field. Anxiety over fieldwork therefore seems to be an outsider's problem (Agawu: 44).

For the purpose of this study, however, it is necessary to state a few experiences as evidence of field research. It should be noted that this is only a matter of necessity and not to justify our efforts. At the early stage of this study, we acquired and hired some recording and photographic materials such as portable

tape recorder; video recorder and photo camera and made several contact with resource persons in the various field locations. We found age mates quite approachable and used them as link to reach elderly Igoru musicians in the towns and villages. In most cases, they gave us directions and introduced us. At Ughwoton, for instance, Paul Eyagha, an Okpe Disco musician played this role significantly. All the times we visited the Ughwoton field, Paul hosted us for several hours and invited the Igoru musicians for interviews and performances. The use of key-informant interview, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, and unstructured research questions was adopted. A few Igoru records and tapes available in Record Stores were accessed. Since only two short-play records could be found in the record stores, we made special arrangements with some Igoru musicians to observe and record live performances for the purpose of this study. Ruth Stone (2002: 60) shares her field experiences as follows:

Of all the tools I used, field notes are the most basic and are indispensable. To record observations, recollections, and questions, I need no more than a notebook and a pen or pencil... Typically, ethnomusicologists share with their colleagues, and the larger public, only a very small portion of their field notes—a tip of the iceberg... I worked with a team of scholars, programmers, instructional developers, and graduate student assistants. One day I brought in some of these notes to help them better understand my conclusions and the theme of the project as I envisioned it. The team members found the notes very revealing and encouraged me to include them in the final product. Since space was not the issue that it is in conventional typesetting by a compositor, I was free to add them.

The use of field notes was minimal during our field investigation. This is so because of the present day advancement in technology and the approach of self-

reliance, where the researcher handles the recording device and photo camera to cover performances, in order to focus on major aspects of interest within the music-event.

We encountered some difficulty in the field as did Kofi Agawu (2003: 34). Agawu regards such experience as one of the nuisances of scholarly research work in Africa, stating that there is often assumption that the researcher might make much wealth out of the exercise and had to pay negotiated fees to obtain information. He argues as follows:

On a much similar scale are the Archives of Recorded sound at the Institute of African Studies, Legon, Ghana. This valuable resource, made up of field recordings dating back to the 1950s, as well as early recordings of popular music, existed in Legon for a number of years, underused to be sure, until Wolfgang Bender and his team managed to copy the entire collection and have it deposited at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany. Certainly working in Mainz is from the point of view of creature comforts and accessibility easier than working at Legon, where the archivist may not be seen for days, where the playback equipment, although visibly displayed, does not work, and where a request for a copy of this or that recording may be greeted by the suspicion that the scholar is going to make money with it. (How strange that the archivist and his staff have not sought to make money with these recordings all these years).

In our study, however, we expect Igoru musicians to benefit from researchers as much as possible, depending on the available resources. And while we rewarded the musicians to the limits of our economic power, we explained that the purpose

of this research is not commercial-oriented. This was necessary to ensure that this expectation and demand for negotiated fees from researchers does not pose much limitation for this study.

Ruth Stone (2002: 61) argues that song texts may be difficult to hear correctly from live or recorded performances:

Transcription and translation reveal rich use of language to express affect, communicate protest, and pass on moral mandates. But even as a fluent speaker of Kpelle, I have found that this work can be rough going at times. Ideally, I try to work initially with a research assistant to write down the text. Then we review the text, if at all possible, with the performers, correcting mishearings.

After every interview and discussion session with individuals and groups, we listened to the playback to determine issues that needed further clarification. Since the researcher was born and bread up in Ogiedi Elume, an Okpe village, the knowledge of the Okpe language and culture was very useful to the understanding of Igoru poetry. We found in the study that Igoru musicians have very good diction in their performances and this made transcriptions and understanding of text a bit easy. We visited the Libraries of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, the Delta State University, Abraka in Nigeria and the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa, as well as the National museum center, Onikan Lagos, Nigeria to review existing literature around the topic from books, journals, newspapers, magazines, reports and theses, while analysis and discussion of results were in progress.

1.7 Theoretical framework

Bruno Nettl (1975: 14-16) presents four schools of analytical models for gaining insight into musical structures as follows:

- Linguistic models: These treat the linguistics and basic transformational grammar of music
- Cantometrics, which focus on performance practice such as parameters of the use of voice and the interrelationships between musicians and ensemble members, with less emphasis on relationship between tones and scales, which have received much analysis.
- Specific method, which deals with specific style of classification for each culture based on its own perception and musical characteristics.
- Culture's own cognitive map, which considers recognized views of the culture in its classification, social function and other behaviour.

Ernest Brown (1992: 118) examines the relationship between African and African American musics by discussing two analytical models:

- The family resemblance models, which deal with the features that are common to two or more places and peoples which might not have been borrowed from one another.
- The diffusionist models, which deal with, the analysis of elements that have been transmitted from a specific source into another and with time diffused within the new location.

Kofi Agawu (2003: xvii) argues that postcolonial theory:

is committed to explicit thematization and theorization of the experiences of people whose identities are inflected by the metropolitan habits exported to Africa through British, French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonialism...encourages a new self-awareness, rewards the eagerness to lay bare the situatedness and precariousness of various frames of knowledge construction, and takes particular pleasure in relativizing and discentering European intellectual hegemony.

Contemporary consciousness abound, probably not with all African musicologists yet, in various attempts made by researchers to investigate African music as it is in culture; propounding theories according to the conceptualization, contextualization and thematization of the cultures under study. Some of these models are necessary to x-ray true cultural phenomena, particularly as some early writings have presented analysis of African music in erroneous terminologies (given more attention in chapter two) and theoretical construct. Basically, linguistic model and culture's own cognitive map models form the theoretical framework adopted for this study.

1.8 Literature review

The commonest terms often seem to be the most difficult concepts to define, thus had there been scholarly argument on what music could be considered traditional or popular music. The same problem arises in our discussion of Igoru

music, whether to refer to it as traditional or popular music of the Okpe. David Dachs (1968: 23) argues that playing of instruments, singing of songs, composing original songs, experimenting with new sounds, use of electronic equipment and shrewd entrepreneurship are common characteristics of (all) vocal popular music. John Blacking (1981: 9) purports that “There is good evidence that for over ninety-nine per cent of human history, and for ninety-seven per cent of the time since the emergence of our own species (*homo sapiens sapiens*) approximately 70,000 years ago, all music was popular, in so far as it was shared and enjoyed by all members of a society”. Mosunmola Omibiyi (1975: 45) defines popular music as ‘purposefully commercial and entertainment music’, widely accepted and commonly loved by the masses. Ashenafi Kebede (1982: 12), in his discussion of music in North Africa, argues that:

Traditional music is ordinarily performed by the common people, not by the professionally trained [literary] musicians; its repertory consists of material that has been passed down through the generations by means of oral tradition, by word of mouth.

He purports that popular or contemporary music is urban music, also described as neo-traditional or acculturated music, blending both interethnic and international styles, found in all urban localities of contemporary societies. The repertory does not consist of only songs handed down from past generations, but includes songs composed by men and women of the contemporary society. Igoru music is used for community entertainment and commercial purposes. It is performed both in the villages and in urban centres. Its instruments do not however include electronic equipment. It is performed essentially by the Okpe,

even when it was practiced in Lagos [Yoruba land]. Since it does not have elements of international or inter-ethnic musical characteristics, apart from the use of words and expressions imported from neighbouring ethnic groups, we consider Igoru music as Okpe traditional music. In consonance with Blacking's definition, it is a popularly known traditional music typology of the Okpe.

Ruth Stone (2002: 58) argues that a practical music-situation is an "Event as object" of ethnomusicological research study. Sharing her experience, she remarks: 'Throughout my career, I have focused my research on the musical event. Here I have found a conceptual place where sound and behaviour are created, appreciated, and critically evaluated. There is great scope for study within this focus'. We have argued that only few Igoru records are available, but live performances as practical music events formed the principal basis for this study and presented real conceptual experiences. Nissio Fiagbedzi (1989: 47, 49) argues the theory and philosophy of theory in ethnomusicology, stating that:

Theory may be conceptualized as an abstractive view in explanation of, and not merely descriptive of, a phenomenon. As such, theory takes cognizance of bare facts from which it differs and for which it accounts by relating them in a way that reveals the nature or character of that which it is an explanation of. Usually theory allows for further articulation, elaboration, modification, or specification (p47).

...the philosophy of theory in ethnomusicology, may be isolated and identified with the rigorous and systematic elaboration of concepts and propositions in terms of which all manner of theory and verbalization concerning music and musical experience are formulated including the

perspective(s) from which ethnomusicological explanation is made (p 49).

Theories are often derivatives of experiences that result from practical situations and philosophical explanations as well as scientific enquiry. To evaluate and offer explanations on the theories of Igoru music and its functions, we examined the philosophical concepts and thought patterns of the Okpe as they relate to the music practice. Akpabot (1986: 69) argues that an African musician, first and foremost, is a poet who unlike the Western poet does not write for different performers, but has his poems tied to special occasions where he reaches an audience:

His output can be seen as a commentary on life styles; praising, protesting and cursing human foibles and fads, reminiscing on the exploits of national heroes; invoking the might of ancestral gods; imparting knowledge; arousing emotions and making suggestion for the common good (Akpabot, 1986; 69).

In our study, Igoru music presents very rich cultural heritage in poetry and sounds. The activities and functions of Igoru musicians are seen as those of poets, journalists and philosophers in the Okpe culture. As a performing artiste/poet, the musicians are normally the first to perform their compositions, thereafter; any members of the society could perform them anywhere. It should be noted that it is not a matter of rule that the composer must be the first to perform his music. In an ensemble situation, if any other member of the group is found to have a more sonorous voice than the composer, or a wider voice range, he/she could be assigned to lead the song at performances. We find an example

of this in the Egboto Isini ensemble records. Ethnographic data from the field informs us that Gabriel Peru Edeyiometa is the leader of the group who also is one of the composers. But the songs are all led by a female member of the group while Peru provides the harmony part below. The nature of team work in Igoru music encourages this practice. Nzewi (1977: 428) presents an argument on the copyright nature of music in traditional society in his study of *Ukom* music and quotes his informant, a practitioner as follows:

If another group picks my tune or song and I hear them playing it, I will say to myself. 'These people are playing my music'. It will make me happy. But when next I play it, I will 'recompose it so that it will sound different'... Thus I make my style of playing it something fresh. There is no shame or offence about playing some one else's original composition. They do not even have to acknowledge me if I come around to where they are playing it. However, if Israel and I are playing our own original composition on *Ukom* 'which is very sweet'... and we see another *Ukom* player around we could deliberately play the music in a way that will puzzle him so that he would not grasp it at all. And the way we do it is this: We introduce the 'pleasant' tune, and use a common tune to develop it, bring it in again, and bring in a common tune again for further development and so on. We will thus confuse whoever is trying to grasp it. When Israel and I were playing *Ukom* it was very important to us that we were on top (Nzewi 1977: 428).

In traditional Okpe society, music copyright belongs to the community as we have argued elsewhere in this study. Any singer is free to perform any song(s) composed by any Igoru musician. David Harnish (2005: 5 & 6) discusses issues of change in traditional observances such as those arising from influences of religion and government in the *Lingsar* festival of Lombok, Indonesia and argues

that 'Due to shifting religious orientation, new performers among the *Sasak* have sometimes been hard to find. Musical priorities for both groups have been shuffled as the parties have redefined themselves over the last twenty years, thus clearly indicating individual agency in the reconstruction of culture'. Chernoff (1979: 37) shares his research experiences in Ghana and argues that music helps to objectify the philosophical, religious and moral systems of the society. He intimates that upon his introduction as a researcher, the priest was asked to inquire of the deities whether his heart was pure or not. He was perplexed as the divination slats were turning upward, indicating that he was a man with pure heart, who would not hurt any man. After this experience that made the people receive him wholeheartedly and hospitably, he concludes as follows:

Africans use music and the other arts to articulate and objectify their philosophical and moral systems, systems which they do not abstract but which they build into the music-making situation itself, systems which we can understand if we make an effort. African music is indeed different from what we ordinarily consider music to be, and as we examine the way African music becomes a focus for values as it mediates the life of a community, we will find that our assumptions about tribal communities are similarly challenged. Our history teaches us to consider the relationship of individual identity and communal unity to be a matter of common faith and common feelings, and we may be surprised to discover different conceptions concerning the nature of character and individuality, understanding and communication, participation and group involvement, and freedom and discipline.

Igoru music has indeed played a lot of roles in objectifying and unifying the philosophy and religious tenets of the Okpẹ. The musicians queried some

practices that came with new faith such as the Christian religion and projected the beliefs of the people. Healthy community life is of primary concern to the Igoru musicians, since life experiences are shared in the society. In some of the songs, the musicians participate in counseling and warning parents, children and wards against practices that could lead to bitter experiences, so that life could become more pleasant and meaningful in the community.

Elizabeth Oehrle and Lawrence Emeka (2003: 39, 40) argue the concept of African music making in relation to shared experiences as follows:

Notions of music making do not exist in a vacuum. They evolve from basic thought patterns of the culture from which they come... Thought processes out of Africa stem from the basic idea of *Ubuntu*: 'A person is a person by virtue of other people...' the concept of *Ubuntu* fosters the development of communal spirit (p 39)

Music is among the most common and most widely available cultural expressions in Africa, where its cultural definition includes organized sound, language arts, movement, mood and intercourse or sharing. Every element of this phenomenon is made to address the emotions and the personality of the indigenes of the host culture. The sound – plaintive or martial, lyrical, evocative or expressive, dramatic, soothing or inciting, coy or commanding – stirs the moods, expresses identity and talks the language of the souls (p 40).

An Okpe maxim is normally expressed that “*eye se aye rhe, ihworho*”; ‘go and invite them, it is people’. This means that whenever there is trouble or serious problem, there would be need to invite someone to help. And in such situations, when there is a cry to invite helpers or rescue team, it is the people around that

are to be invited. Igoru musicians believe that at one time or the other, members of the society would need one another to celebrate or to mourn with; to give assistance to or to receive help and care from. This is the reason why they are so concerned about the wellbeing of community members, particularly dwelling on issues that would enhance living in good health. Kebede (1982: 3 & 4) argues that:

Music, like language, is culturally patterned sound...Imagination and active listening will be required in order to understand and appreciate a few of the diverse musical languages of non-European cultures. A good listener is always an informed one. Cultural information and technical knowledge advance a better understanding of the feeling and significance conveyed by the sound of music. Active listening requires discipline and involvement...The greater our knowledge and involvement, the higher our awareness and the intensity of our experience...Music provides an excellent means for the presentation of words.

Igoru music presents a wealth of knowledge and stimulates learning experiences among its audiences. It is often well worded in proverbs, idioms, epigrams, etc, so that audiences are always given a food for thought. The composers also make use of parables to stimulate audiences' imagination in acquiring deductive meanings from the performance communication. Hugh Tracey (1970: 8) argues that the understanding of African music comes from our understanding of the setting from which the songs spring:

There is no doubt that our enjoyment of African music is greatly enhanced when we know what the songs are about and the setting from which they spring. It is almost impossible for foreigners to pick up the words of an African song as it is sung. I have not yet met one who could. We

have to get the singers to repeat the words to us at dictation speed and then ask them to sing the song over again. It is then much easier to follow. But beginners must be warned that there is a strict routine to be adhered to in this operation or else whole lines will be left out and lyrically important repeats omitted. The singers themselves often have difficulty in remembering exactly what they *do* sing unless they hum the song over to themselves from the beginning and find out just what the words were. But this is not uncommon: we do the same ourselves. It takes time and patience to be certain you have the poetry down correctly (Tracey 1970: 8).

The knowledge of the Okpe cultural value systems provides us the understanding to interpret Igoru songs and deduce full meanings from the communication experience. We observe in this study that Igoru musicians have very good memory of their songs. During our field investigation at Ughwoton, for instance, at the time to revalidate our data, the leader of the Igoru ensemble, Amukeye Okodide, could just easily pick up the poems and fix the words line by line without singing the songs over again nor humming them. Although she is not literate, there was evidence that she had all the poems in her memory as well as the background information to the songs. Tracey (1970: 4) further argues on the functions of the Chopi musicians that:

One can well imagine the forcefulness of the reprimand conveyed to a wrongdoer when he finds his misdeeds sung about by thirty to forty strapping young men before all the people of the village, or the blow to the pride of an everweening petty official who has to grin and bear it while the young men jeer to music at his pretentiousness. What better sanction could be brought to bear upon those who outrage the ethics of the community than to know that the

poets will have you pilloried in next composition. No law of libel would protect you from the condemnation conveyed by those concerted voices of the whole village set to full orchestra and danced in public for all to revel in.

Daniel Agbese (1989: 4) argues that 'music has always been the most visible attempt employed by ourselves to listen to ourselves. The Nigerian who would not drop whatever he is doing to rush to the village square or the stadium to watch drumming and dancing is not yet born'. Chernoff (1979:35, 36) reports the views of his Ghanaian interviewees that Ibrahim Abdulai said 'Music is something which does not conceal things about us, and so it adds to us' while others simply said, 'Music is essential to our [lives]' and that a village, which has no music or musicians, is said to be dead and is not a place where man can live. Igoru music in Okpe is a powerful medium of communication, by which human actions and reactions are expressed one to another. It provides a forum to mirror the society so that members could understand things better and learn more about life.

Kubik (1987: 51) intimates us that *Chinamwali* girls' initiation creates 'horror pictures' before the initiate as soon as she experiences her first menstruation: that she had 'killed her mother' and must undergo the initiation process. She had to be taken into an initiation hut, in a secluded place; threatened not to have contact with any male within the period, otherwise 'her mother would die'. This fear of losing her mother is created in her mind so that she would submit to the rules of the initiation rites:

Chinamwali teaches morality and expresses opposition to promiscuity. This is often not understood by the casual

observer. Through the use of colorful language, including the use of horrifying, descriptive texts, restraints are built into the psyche of the young individual (Kubik, 1987; 52).

In our study, we observe that Igoru music focuses much on the teaching of morality and building restraints into the psyche of the public as an indigenous psychological strategy to ensure that societal ethics and healthy living are kept. We have discussed this in chapter seven. Hester and Scowen (1999: 7), while quoting from the book *Music and the Mind*, draw a contrast between the effects of hearing and seeing as follows:

There is a closer relation between hearing and emotional arousal than there is between seeing and emotional arousal. Seeing a wounded animal or suffering person who is silent may produce little emotional response in the observer. But once they start to scream, the onlooker is usually powerfully moved (Hester and Scowen, 1999; 7).

Igoru music being more of a stage art stimulates both active and participatory listening. We have stated elsewhere in this study that the musicians point fingers at the members of the public whose wanton attitudes they critique, if they were present among the audience. This style of presentation heightens the sense of seeing and listening that together stimulates loud responses from the audience. The effect of this preponderates over the stimulus–response produced by the effect of listening to recorded music. Hugh Tracey (1970: 3), in his discourse on Chopi musicians, remarks:

High good humour is a very prominent feature of most of their poems. Sly digs at the pompous, outspoken condemnation of those who neglect their duties, protests

against the cruel and overbearing, outcries directed against social injustices as well as philosophy in the face of difficulties, are all to be found in our own dance songs and shared through their music and dancing.

Sam Ekpe Akpabot (1975; 98), discussing Mbopo music of the Ibibio puberty initiation ceremony for those about to wed, argues that if in the cause of the initiation period, when the colleen is kept in the 'fattening room' she became pregnant, the women folk make songs of insult and abuse to discredit and banish her. He adds that the music of the Ebre society maintains a 'continuity of virtuous living from puberty to old age' and exerts social control by 'exposing thieves and women of easy virtue to ridicule'. It is not our intention in this discourse to argue whether or not the term 'fattening room' suggests that the purpose of keeping the girl in the hut for instructions is to enable her gain weight. Our concern is rather about the manner Igoru music is used to critique, ridicule and discredit wrong doers in the society. We have argued in chapter seven that this approach is to enable the subjects and other members of the society to develop better attitude.

J. P. Martin (1995: 27) argues the empiricist theory that 'we understand music because its meaning is inherent in it, and so through our aural perception it is communicated to us' and that 'meaning of objects resides not in their ability to excite our senses but in the nature of the means which we have to perceive them'. He further reinvents Williams' (1978: 28) views that 'the truth about the natural world is hidden...in form of a mathematical structure which underlies sensible appearances...uncovered by systematic scientific enquiry and the use of the rational intellect'. Simon Akindes (2002: 86) intimates on how musicians

respond to issues of nationalistic conflict in identity and genealogy, through their creative artistic works:

In his track *Conflict a l'Quest* (Conflict in the West) released in early December 1999 on his album *Jahsso* (House of God) Fadal Day mentioned the conflict which has historically opposed the Bete and the Baule. The Guere and the Baule also clashed in the late 1990s. The song implores them not to fight and not to listen to politicians (Simon Akindes 2002: 90).

On his CD *Nationalite* (Nationality), Tiken Jah Fakoly traces the migration paths of various ethnic groups, and identifies the period when they settled in the present territory of Cote d'Ivoire. Being himself a Dyula from the northern town of Odiene, and from a group generally accused of being recent foreign immigrants, he responded to the historical distortions that give some Ivorians of Akan descent the right to believe that they are more Ivorian than others (Simon Akindes 2002: 94).

Igoru songs present a body of text that contains much information about the Okpe. They embody chronological facts and references which need little explanations to understand – an evidence of the significance of song texts. We have discussed details of this in chapter seven. Franklin Larey (2003: viii) argues that:

Throughout the world community of musicians, artists, educators, and all who find themselves grappling with the effects of challenging economic times, the question of music's relevance in our lives brings pause. Is music a luxury or a necessity? The task of attempting to answer this question is necessarily a difficult one, because beneath its deceptively simple formulation lie hidden many of the dilemmas facing our world: among them all the issues of

cultural identity, of north versus south, of east versus west, and of first world versus third (Franklin Larey 2003: viii).

We found in this study that Igoru music is an instrument of cultural identity. The musicians and the people of Okpe see it as a mark of ethnic distinction; thus it was selected by the Okpe in Lagos as a musical performance that truly represents the culture. We have discussed details of this in chapters four and seven. Blacking (1967: 22) discusses some moments and rewards of music making in Venda as follows:

Communal music is never performed without some kind of reward, either to the performers or to the organizers, so that in a lean year none but the more important items are played. If the country side resounds with music, especially at night when it is cool, it is a sign of good times. Venda communal music is not a substitute for happiness, but an expression of it... Above all, families who are related by marriage send each other gifts of beer, which generally give rise to singing and dancing: in the course of this, the in-laws sing a series of songs that express the solidarity and cleavages within the two families, and allow for friendly criticism. Even a ruler must take in good part criticism that is expressed in music (Blacking 1967: 22).

Igoru music provides entertainment to the public who in turn reward the musicians in different forms. Although the music criticizes deviant behaviours of some members of the public, amid this, it elevates and exhilarates the spirits of the audiences, creating and sustaining amusement. Ajirire and Alabi (1990: 23) intimate us of the acknowledgement given to Juju musicians by emotionally exhilarated fans in Yorubaland. They assert that the fans 'plaster the forehead of the performing musician with wads and wads of currency notes tagged spraying'

which in turn form the major reward of the musician than sales of recorded music. Ronnie Graham (1992: 18), discussing public appreciation of music and the artiste's rewards argues that:

Given the powers of the pirates, most modern Nigerian musicians have come to rely on live shows for income, not through gate fees but through the custom of "spraying" whereby a rich individual is mentioned in song and in return "sprays" the forehead of the musician with as much money as status demands.

In Igoru music, as in Okpe culture generally, the term "*oghwa*" means reward and its use is in the similitude of the term 'spray' employed by the authors above. It should be noted that the word has a homonym spelt same way, but pronounced in different intonations. The homonym means house and does not fall into the context of this discourse. The practice of *oghwa* [open reward in appreciation of good performance] is not stimulated by, or based on praise singing of prominent personalities in Igoru music. Since the music could openly criticize ill behaviours and commend worthy attitudes, whichever way it goes, it is the content of amusement contained in it that stimulates this kind of reward from the audience. It is not only the affluent that participate in rewarding Igoru performers in this manner, even the "poor" do the same since in the time past the musicians accepted anything that had value [cigarette, kola nuts, money, etc].

Meki (1977: 429) reports the views and claims of his informant concerning musicians' immunity as follows:

All musicians are 'sacrosant' [sacrosanct] ...People do not usually harass 'musicians'... whether at home or in another

land. If a musician is guilty of offending anybody his hosts would normally plead on his behalf.

A singer is not bound by any laws with respect to what he sings. If you tell a thief that he is a thief, or point out a poisoner, mentioning the occasion he did so, those are things you said in your music... Even if you expose a leader about a wrong thing he has done he would not do anything (to you). What cannot be said in ordinary conversation could be said or exposed in a song situation. There is a saying we have which goes as follows:

'Whoever is mentioned in a music performance-situation, let him not take offence for it is music that is being sung'. The society would protect a musician from recriminations for what he said in music as long as what he said is true (Nzewi 1977: 429).

Igoru musicians have immunity when they perform to expose the evil deeds of community members, thereby contribute to the shaping of the society. But it is observed in this study that some of the affected persons, who cannot openly confront the musicians, may go behind to use sorcery means to afflict them. Ajirire and Alabi (1990: 23) argue that professional disagreements were observed to beset the first generation of Juju musicians on issues of who could be considered best or 'kingpin' of Juju music in the 1940s and 1950s. The dissensions became incessant in the 1960s and 1970s, degenerating into battle and appalling rivalry among the artistes. Igoru musicians, from the 1950s to the 1960s had serious conflict with their subjects, due to the abuse of performance immunity that later came in vogue as discussed in chapter nine. Since the musicians sang to abuse one another as well as abusing other members of the public, the conflict could then occur between two or more musicians or between a musician and non-musician.

J. S. Roberts (1972: 9) argues African music forms as follows:

By far the most common form of group singing in most parts of Africa is the call-and-response style...different from the common European form of a verse of several lines followed (or not) by a chorus...European verse is complete in itself, while the African call by itself is only half of the equation; it needs the response before it is complete (Roberts, 1972: 9).

The use of call and response in Igoru music is seen as a performance style, non-comparable to the European verse form. It is more of a performance style than a structural form, because a solo performance of the same piece does not show incompleteness of any sort. It only shows the complementary phrasing of the song itself, which in a group performance may be presented in complementary call and response style for aesthetic and labour distribution purposes.

Brown (1989:128) quotes Wilson (1985: 10) and Foster (1987: 34) that Africans see music as a stimulus to dance and both as inseparable sister arts. John Miller Chernoff (1979: 48 & 49, 50) argues concerning African music making and its concomitant dance that:

Generally, in African musical idioms most of the notes seem to fall on what we would call the "off-beat"... Omitting the master drum part and the muted beats, we get a very simplified picture of the slow form of Agbekor, to which we might assign the time signature 12/8... The rhythm that might be considered the main beat of the music is not

emphasized. We can say that the musicians play “around” the beat, or that they play on the off-beat,... Recalling the African who could claim to understand a certain piece of music by knowing the dance that goes with it, we might begin to perceive a dancer’s feet, to which in fact there might be rattles attached, as a part of the music...The musicians themselves maintain an additional beat...by moving some part of their body while they play... Those people who have said that drummers dance while they play were right in the sense that the drummers keep the beat in this way so that their off-beat drumming will be precise...a Fanti master drummer and an expert of many different tribal styles, says that he always listens to or keeps in mind what he calls a “hidden rhythm” within his improvisations. (Chernoff, 1979: 50).

Igoru music is performed with dancing. The dance is however majestic as we discussed in chapter five. The instrumentalists also move their bodies to the melo-rhythmic stimulus of the drums and the vocal sections, while they play. Although this movement may influence balance and unity among the instruments, it is not what enables the drummers to keep the beat steady. It rather shows how much they enjoy their art, the same way the dancers and audience do.

Achinivu Kanu Achinivu (1985: 63) argues that in African traditional music, the key of a song is determined by the convenience of the cantor who starts it and other singers follow, continue or stop for him/her to start again, if the given key is too high or low; whereas, in art music, the key of the composition is predetermined for the signers. Igoru music is unwritten and any key is not predetermined for performers. The musicians have liberty to start songs on any

convenient pitch that eventually sets a tonal centre (key) for the performance. They also have liberty to move from one tonal centre to another, depending on convenience. The philosophy of the performance is that performers are not compelled to strain their voices in order to thrill their audiences, since that could lead to poor sound production and not yield any good results. The accompanying drums do not have problems blending with the changes that occur in the voice sections since they are not tuned in definite pitches.

Wyatt McGaffey (2002: 12) reports that:

Kongo musical instruments have many functions and significances besides that of making music... Music itself was and is thought to enable communication with the dead, often inducing spirit possession, "causing the spirit to descend". The presence of the spirit is recognized when everybody is carried away, having a good time. Parties and ritual events, which are often much the same thing, are enlivened by music, dancing, alcohol, ululation, and explosions of gun powder. The only instrument that, so far as I can tell, has no ritual connotation whatever is *diti*, the 'thumb piano' (McGaffey 2002: 12).

We find in Igoru music evidence of the belief in Okpe tradition that the dead live on and can spiritually query the living for any wrong doing. In some of the songs, the musicians say the evil that deeds against the ancestors would be punished by God. In song 28 (page A1 – 42) the composer/performer communicates explanations to the dead in defence of the community. Details of this have been discussed in chapter six.

CHAPTER 2

TERMINOLOGY FOR AFRICAN MUSIC

2.1 Need for defining and redefining African music terms

Numerous publications that contain great depth of knowledge on African music have made use of terminologies, some of which have generated controversy among scholars over the years. Some of the terms are borne out of misconception, misunderstanding, misinterpretation, misrepresentation and wrongful adaptation. The factors responsible for the malapropism often result from the background of some writers (researchers or scholars), from Europe, America or Africa. It may seem amazing that some Africans even misrepresent their own music, which, one would think and believe they are in the best position to interpret and represent. To foster proper understanding and further use of these terms in the context of this study on Igoru music, particularly the controversial ones, we need to re-examine them in order to avoid continuous use of terms that could misrepresent indigenous knowledge formulation. The first term to examine in this context is “African music,” since a number of scholars dispute its usage to generalize discourse where the authority of the writer might only be the study of a music typology of an ethnic group.

2.1.1 African Music

John Chernoff (1979: 28) writes that African music is an art form that results from a spontaneous and emotional creation [of African origin] that is an uninhibited

dynamic expression of vitality. Komla Amoaku (1985: 32) re-deriving from Francis Bebey (1969: vi) and Mbiti (1970: 87) discusses African music as principally a collective art and communal property, whose spiritual qualities are shared and experienced by all, as well as it is that aspect of tradition which provides the repertoires of its belief, ideas, wisdom and feelings in musical forms. In this regard, Agawu (2003: xiv) argues that:

African music is best understood not as a finite repertoire but as a potentiality. In terms of what now exists and has existed in the past, African music designates those numerous repertoires of song and instrumental music that originate in specific African communities, are performed regularly as part of play, ritual, and worship, and circulate mostly orally/aurally, within and across languages, ethnic, and cultural boundaries (Agawu 2003: xiv).

Given the above definitions, African music is simply any music that originates from any ethnic group or community in any African country; therefore, Igoru music, for example, like any other music of African origin, is African music. Much as diversity is inherent in the music of Africa from one culture area to another, there exist in its features greater amount of unity or similarities. Whether the term is adequate for describing all musics of Africa or not, depends on our focus on the similarity or on the dissimilarity that exists in various cultures. The adoption of the term "African music" for the discussion of Igoru music should then be understood for the fact that previous studies and current observations show much agreement in the characteristics of the musics of Africa.

2. 1 2 Background of foreign writers

Some of the early writers on African music were European explorers and scholars, who knew little or nothing about Africa or African music. They had much knowledge of their own musical cultures that were unfortunately not quite

applicable to African music in many respects. They got to the continent of Africa, whose culture was principally of oral tradition, and made efforts to represent and document the culture. The first misrepresentations by the explorers are found in the spelling of place names (towns and villages) that are yet to be corrected till date. The mis-spelling and mis-pronunciation of place names alter their indigenous meanings, as names and meanings in Africa have important cultural denotations and significance. In Ghana for example, the following places misspelt, "Aburi", "Dagomba" and "Ewe" by the foreign explorers are pronounced "Eburi", Dagbamgba and Eve by the indigenes.

In Okpe, Nigeria, misrepresentations in spelling make the official names of towns and villages meaningless to the people who are represented. The name Sapele for instance does not mean anything in Okpe, while *Urhiapele* means the River of *Apele* (*Apele* is the god of the River, worshipped by the inhabitants). Ogiedi means nothing too, but *Odjedi* (*Odje-Edi*) means the "goddess or king of oil palm" suggesting that the land was blessed and made fertile for oil palm production, thus attracting the inhabitants from their earlier settlement. Elume also means nothing, but *Unume* means "my mouth" suggesting the significance of taming one's tongue.

One of the Igoru records released by Gabriel Peru Edeyiomete and his *Egboto Isini* ensemble in the 1970s reveals this type of wrong representation. The song was a narrative on the mutual relationship that existed between Chief Edwin Ayomano, and his half brother, the then king (Orodje) of Okpe. They were both children of the same mother, but with different fathers. The lyrics narrate that Chief Ayomano was based in *Urhiapele* (Sapele). The listener who is not well informed about this and who is not an Okpe from Sapele Local Government Area

might think that *Urhiapẹlẹ* is an archaic or strange word that probably means something else. Another Igoru song refers to the same town of Sapeḷẹ in the following narration: “I passed through Adeje to Oorerokpẹ and I shall continue to Urhiapẹlẹ” (see song 58, page A1 – 94). Explorers found it very difficult to comprehend African music in much the same way as they could not understand the names and terminologies of the people. Thus the music often peeved them as they remarked in some of their writings. They found it completely strange and unpleasant; because they could make no sense of it and their judgment became biased. For example, Richard Lander, one of these early explorers writes:

On the morning of Thursday, the 12th, we left Chiadoo, followed by the chief and an immense crowd of both sexes, amongst whom were hundreds of children, the ladies enlivening us with songs at intervals, without regard to time, forming altogether a most barbarous concert of vocal and instrumental music, which continued to our great inconvenience and annoyance till we arrived at Matone, when they took leave of us. It would be difficult to detach singing and dancing from the character of an African, as to change the color of his skin... to deprive him of which would be indeed worse than death...the instruments of Africa are the rudest description. A large drum, made from the trunk of a tree, and covered with sheep-skin... Yet even on these instruments they perform most vilely, and produced a horribly discordant noise, (Lander: 1967: 1, 292).

An examination of the account above shows that from singing to dancing, and from the construction and sizes of the instruments to their playing, nothing about African music seemed pleasing to Richard Lander and Captain Clapperton. Igoru musicians may sing and dance in the day or at night to observe or celebrate rewarding observances that are often seen as communal responsibility as well as to entertain the public. The performances have several roles to play in the society

as we have discussed in chapter six. John Chernoff (1979: 1, 3, 5) expresses his lack of understanding for African music and how he felt one could just look for words that could describe it in his own cultural way:

African music does not require a theoretical representation or an explicitly interpretive understanding (p 1)... In such an investigation, we can learn as much about ourselves as about other people because we must see through our own eyes and we must find our own words to describe their world (p 3)... But I liked Dagomba music for a different reason: the drumming was completely incomprehensible to me. I could never hear where the beats were or how the different parts fit together. When I had a chance to listen to these drums, I would become lost and disoriented. In short, they were wonderful in subjective complexity, and I was attracted (p 5).

One would acknowledge that Chernoff is a very sound scholar, but he could not understand some things about the Dagomba music he studied. In his own opinion, he did not believe that African music requires any theoretical nor interpretive understanding. Although he could not comprehend the internal patterns of the Dagomba drumming, he was however able to discuss the playing techniques, which have similar features with those of Ikoru music. But one notes his remark “we must find our own words to describe their world”, as an approach that could lead to misrepresentation of the practitioners’ conceptualization in the culture. Ruth Stone who did her Doctoral research in Liberia, because her parents sojourned, gave birth to and brought her up there, argues as follows:

While the study object [of music] is the event, the locus of the interest in this event is the participants’ interaction. In focusing on the interaction with all its idiosyncrasies and incongruities, we are looking at musical meaning as “World

producing” rather than as simply a product of the nature of things [Berger and Luckmann 1966: 89]. Such recognition is profoundly important for it acknowledges the centrality of meaning created in interaction. The participants in music events include both the individuals producing music and the people experiencing the music performance as listeners or audience, and as the auditors’ meanings and interpretations are just as significant as those of the performers ([Stone 1982: 4] Stone 2002: 58-59).

True as the above statement may seem, meaning, as “World producing” is not without its limitations, bearing in mind that the peculiar meaning of musical events to the practitioners could differ from the understanding of outsiders or foreign observers and the interpretation they might give it. The interpretations of the researcher/observer, therefore must seek agreement with those of the performers. In the discussion of Igoru music, we look for the interpretations of the practitioners to found our theories. This approach will no doubt reduce the use of terminologies that could misrepresent the interest of the practitioners. Hugh Tracey (1970: 9) remarks as follows:

I must admit here that my knowledge of *Chichopi* is slight, and except for a working knowledge of *Chikaranga* and a little *Isizulu* I have had to rely to a large extent upon my interpreters. Whenever in doubt I checked and cross-checked by asking the same question in different contexts... It is quite impossible to adhere to the rhythm of the original without artificiality, and that would leave a wholly false impression. The original poems are crisp and full of the most unexpected rhythmic patterns which I find are not suggested at all in cold print, except, perhaps, in the division of the lines and verses... The Chopi, of course, have never visualized their songs in print. They only think of them aurally in terms of melody and dance rhythm (Tracey 1970: 9).

Tracey relied on his interpreters who might even have had their own difficulty of interpretation and translation, because it is not quite easy to translate from local patois to English language. Like John Chernoff, he could not understand the beats of the music and he simply consolidated his lack of understanding with the conclusion on the fact that the Chopi, after all, never conceived their music in print. The problem of perception is that some researchers channel their efforts toward comparison between African and Western music, with the primary aim to seek out the world of difference. Nzewi (1977: 8) observes:

On the other hand, it is rare to find literature of the folk music of the 'primitive' people by Euro-American ethnomusicologists and circumstantial musical commentators which does not imply or talk about 'them' and 'us'; 'theirs' and 'ours'. I know a few. But they are very few indeed. 'Them' and 'us' as a research attitude is inevitable, but it is the root of ethnocentrism. This is equally evident in the attitude of those who superficially condemn ethnocentric arrogance. My reaction on that score is that maybe the time is ripe for retroactive ethnocentrism up to a level that would concentrate attention on the need for reciprocal human respect for one another's culture, intelligence and skin pigmentation (Nzewi 1977: 8).

The attitude of comparison and ethnocentrism made some of these foreign writers to be subjective, degrading African music as if it were inferior to Western music. One of such subjective approaches includes the claim that African music cannot be well represented by use of the conventional staff notation. Individuals and groups of researchers began therefore to invent new and unconventional notation systems for transcribing African music. This is discussed under another heading below.

2. 1. 3 Background of African writers

The foregoing discussion is not an assumption that an African or indigene might represent his musical culture better than any foreign scholarly researcher. Thus it is necessary to equally examine the background that could influence any African in misrepresenting the music of his culture. Training and followership is a factor that has contributed to the issue of wrongful adaptation of terminologies in African music scholarship. By this, we mean the place of study, and the authorities under whom studies were carried out. Reflecting on the issue of training and followership, Agawu (2003: xvi) observes the following:

And so would a specific incident like that which unfolded in the pages of the journal *African Music* during the mid-1970s. Music theorist and composer Lazarus Ekwueme guest-edited a special issue of the journal to which he himself contributed an analytical essay. The essay included, among other things, an exhaustive intervallic account, invocations of Schenke, and a strategic playing down of matters of context. Ekwueme's thumb-in-your-face declaration that we want to know "*what* the African does musically, instead, merely, of *why* [*italics in the original*] he does it" provoked two strong reactions, one from Meki Nzewi, the other from Sam Akpabot. Nzewi found the analysis incomplete, and the suppression of context unacceptable. Akpabot complained about the skimpy citations of previous theoretical work (his own included, of course) and, more devastatingly, of the author's intellectual orientation. According to him, Ekwueme was trying to "think white", he, Akpabot, would prefer a white trying to "think black" any day (Agawu 2003: xvi).

Beside the above model, some authorities hold the somewhat colonial view of subjective humility, meaning that one must learn to accept everything his superior says or writes and continue to uphold it as a mark of loyalty. Another is the fear of where and who to publish one's works, if one's views are found

contrary to those of constituent or recognized authorities, who are even likely to be the publishers' assessors. This is followed by the constraints of following the conventions of sponsors.

In an oral interaction between Kwabena Nketia and the visiting postgraduate music and dance students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria in Ghana (1997), he reacted to a certain question as follows: 'Any shortcoming that may be observed in the book I authored, *Music of Africa*, would not be unexpected, because I had a commission in the US to write "for them" a publishable resource book on African music within six months. That book you see is an outcome of research and writing within the limited timeframe and one should expect inadequacies'. He who pays the piper dictates the tune, so we can see some of the reasons for the terminology adaptations. Another factor is the fear of prima facie assessment for promotion among scholars, some times believing that one is not an authority until he becomes a professor, otherwise professors who find his writings opposing [even in truth] would remark negatively about his promotion at some level.

2.2 Music as an art

In order to capture exactly what music means to the African, it is necessary to begin by taking a brief look at some existing definitions of music. Komla Amoaku (1985: 33, 35) examines various definitions of the term 'music' as follows:

"Music is organized sound." In fact, Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* (1973) defines music as "the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity." In contrast, Willi Apel (1969: 548) in defining music proposes that we accept Boethius' concept, describing it as "an all-embracing

'harmony of the world,' divided into *musica mundane* (harmony of the universe), *musica humana* (harmony of the human soul and body), and *musica instrumentalis* (music as actual sound)..." This perspective blends with Sowande's view that there are actually three tiers of music – (1) music of the cosmos or the gods, (2) the psychological and symbolical, and (3) mathematical or structural music... music among the Ewe is viewed as an expression of a psychological situation, which involves the visible as well as the invisible worlds. It envelops the society as a unit and music makers are not isolated individuals, but inseparable parts of that unitary whole.

The themes of Igoru music capture all spheres of community life including the total philosophical and belief systems of the Okpe. In several African cultures, there is hardly a single word found as equivalent to the word music, though the phenomenon and practice exist. Igoru musicians, like many others in Okpe do not have a word that is equivalent to the term music. But before we consider how the Igoru musicians discuss their musical practices or activities, we shall first examine how some other African peoples refer to it in their own cultures. Kubik (1994: 330) remarks that:

As is the case in most Bantu languages, there are no terms in those of eastern Angola whose semantic fields could be considered congruent with that of the Latin word *musica* and its derivatives in European languages, nor are there any words exactly equivalent to "dance" or "game". It is not easy to find a general term for "musical instruments" either, although native speakers sometimes construct one to satisfy translation needs or insistent questions by foreigners. The sound-producing utensils are normally called only by their specific designations (Kubik 1994: 330).

Agawu (2003: 62) quotes Charles Keil that the Tiv have no equivalent word for music. Laz Ekwueme (2004: 66) examines the terms that refer to "kinetic and audio-visual arts" (music, dance and drama), which are integrated

interdependently as conceptualized in the Igbo tradition and finds no equivalent to the word music as is defined in the Western tradition, but states the Igbo terms that express the arts as follows:

Ona-agu egwu	He is singing;
Ona-aku egwu (no italics in original)	He is playing music/musical instruments;
Ona-agba egwu	He is dancing;
Ona-egwu egwu	He is playing/joking;
Ona-ezi egwu	He is teaching (showing) a play/music/ a dance/dancing (Ekwueme 2004: 66).

Simha Arom (1991: 7) while quoting Senghor (1958 and 1964: 238) asserts that:

Art itself is simply one of many artisanal techniques, the one that is most effective for identifying with one's ancestor or for integrating with the vital force of God. For the latter is the source of *life* itself, which in Black Africa is the supreme good. Which is why the word *art* does not exist in the Negro-African languages – I do not mean the notion of art nor the word beauty. Because it is an *integral technique*, art is not divided against itself. More precisely, the arts in Black Africa are linked to each other, poetry to music, music to dance, dance to sculpture, and sculpture to painting.

The Okpe use the following terms to classify music and its associated art activities:

- *Ijoro* (song): e.g. *Ijoro ẹsuọ* (singing of songs); *Ijoro eroro* (composing songs); *Ame erie Ijoro ẹsuọ*, or *Ame aya suọ Ijoro* (We are going to sing or perform songs).
- *Ekporo* (playing or beating); e.g. *Igede ekporo* (playing of drums); *Eho ekporo* (Performing a spirit-manifest dance-music); *Ame eye kporo* (we are going to play or perform) or *Ame ivbo ukporo* (we have a performance)
- *Igbegbe* (Dance): e.g. *Ame ivbo igbegbe* (we have a dance); *Ame na ha Igbegbe phia* (we shall present a dance performance to the public); *Ame egbe Igbegbe* (We are dancing).
- *Iruẹn* (game, play, or musical event): This is the most general term the Okpẹ use in describing the holistic theatre e.g. *Ame na ha iruẹn phia* (We will present a performance); *Ame eru iruẹn* (We are performing) or *Ame ha vbọ iruẹn* (we are in a performance).

The foregoing reveals that Africans' concept of the term music, as in Igoru, is broader than the Western definition of it. While the West separate dance and drama from music and treat or perform them as separate arts, with the exception of Opera, Africa views and practices them as an integrated art where each is often considered incomplete without the others. Apart from the general classification models above, Igoru musicians (and the Okpe in general) further classify the various performances into two forms. The first category is called *Ijoro* (song), while the second is *Igbegbe* (dance). The former refers to the typologies of performance where music is the most focal feature, while dance and other associated arts are complementary to it. The latter refers to typologies, which emphasize focus on the dance and drama elements over all other associated arts.

In the context of the above, Igoru musicians often refer to the various typologies, for example, as *Ijoro Igoru* (Igoru music); *Ijoro Ighoḡpha* (Ighoḡpha music); *Igbegbe Ijurhi* (Ijurhi dance), etc. These classifications, notwithstanding, there is no performance of any music typology without the integration of the other arts. Likewise, the dance performances put music and dance, as well as some other arts almost at equal complementary levels. In the discussion of Igoru music, it should be borne in mind that the terms music and dance are used interchangeably to describe a holistic performance of both the music and dance, as is known in the Okpe tradition. Some Igoru musicians say they perform Igoru dance and others say they sing Igoru songs. Either of the above cases refers to the same manner of Igoru performance simply because they do not divorce the two aspects from one another. Although the accompanying dance of Igoru music is very mild, majestic and honourable, and though singing of narratives is given more prominence, several themes of the songs refer to the holistic performance as a dance.

This is evident in the performances of Igoru musicians like Idisi Adibo's satire directed to a certain man of Okwabude stating that Igoru dance, requires one to put on a shirt, but *Ohworho* dance requires one to put on only a singlet or no top, except the wrapper tied over the waist. The cue solo found in most Igoru songs, is another example which often refers, in the following text, to Igoru performance as simply a dance, though performance proper focuses more on the music aspect of the artistic communication:

Ame emuegbe Igoru ame r' ame ine gbe,
We are preparing to dance our Igoru,
otu igberadja n' aye a dje ame eghren
And the sex workers began to keep enmity with us.

2. 2. 1 Concept of composition

Willi Apel (1970: 189) *Harvard Dictionary of Music* writes that Guido Adla first used the term *componere* in c. 1030 in connection with the writing of melodies. He [Apel] then defines composition as “The process of creating musical work” by literally “putting together” various voice parts as it were in early polyphonic music, and in later complex consideration, includes putting together numerous and diversified elements just as much as voice parts. He further writes that “the term is highly appropriate for the twelve-tone technique and even more recent methods of creating music by putting together assorted sounds on a recording tape [*electronic music, *serial music]”. The definition, according to Apel, is no doubt the concept of composition in the Western world.

Percy Scholes (1991) writes that composition, etymologically and practically, is merely the ‘putting-together’ of materials such as words to make a poem, an essay, or a novel, and notes to make a waltz or a symphony [music]. He adds that “For all but most recent and relatively tiny fraction of the world’s history, musical composition has been entirely melodic and probably has been far more instinctive than reasoned”. Mitchel Strumpf, William Anku, Kondwani Phwandaphwanda and Ncebakazi Mnukwana (2003: 120) argue that;

It has been suggested that the culture is the composer, because the culture establishes the palette of agreeable sound elements to be put together and called music. A better term for the individual who selects items from the palette and uses these items in variation to create a composition might be ‘the arranger’. In Africa the individual who creates a new ‘style’ using the elements on the palette creatively is remembered and revered more. Creators of new musical compositions must in any case be well versed in the musical traditions of the culture.

The authors assert that in Zimbabwe, people think of a musician as 'a mediator, a dreamer' and some of the composers think of themselves as 'spiritual medium' and a man of old age, who receives creative tunes from ancestors through dreams. They finally define the concept of composition in Africa as a dynamic, changing sound creation; interplay between one or more individuals and the other people of the culture, using the agreements of sound usage established by the culture in primarily an oral, non-written creation based on the musical traditions of the culture. Kofi Agawu (2003: 4-5) writes that the concept of composition in Northern Ewe of Ghana is described as *hakpakpa*, the carving of songs while the composer is described as *hakpala*, a carver of songs. He discusses the individual and collaborative roles of individuals in the creative process, as well as the spiritual essence of these. He makes clear that:

The act of composition is therefore not aimed at some disembodied space 'out there'. Composition is more than the abstract manipulation of musical materials, more than the creation of beautiful melodies, harmonies, timbres, rhythms or messages. A composer means to say something edifying; he aims to deliver a spiritually relevant message. Composing with actual or imagined others, as if the composer were a plural rather than a singular subject.

Composition in Igoru music is seen as the process of putting together all musical elements such as text, melody and harmony in mentally oral form as is the tradition. The compositions are conceived first in text and thereafter melody at the individual level. This is similar to the idea of composition in the Shona culture of Zimbabwe where the composer thinks of the lyrics first and after, adds the melody (Mitchel Strumpf, William Anku, Kondwani Phwandaphwanda and Ncebakazi Mnukwana 2003: 120).

Igoru composition involves collaboration and collective contributions, and the harmony often derives from this experience, either at the compositional level or at rehearsal. What this means is that the composer would conceive both the text and melody mentally and orally, and at rehearsal he or any skilled part singer in the group creates the harmony that would go together with it. At this stage, the composer sings the song and another experienced performer-composer with good knowledge of the traditional harmony creates the second part simultaneously. Sometimes, the composer himself would teach members the melody and he creates the harmony part to the song simultaneously as they begin to sing together. When this is the case, he then has to teach both the melody and the harmony parts to the ensemble members at rehearsals. Satirical as Igoru is, Peter Etalo, a performer remarks that:

At the beginning, Igoru musicians assumed the special roles of edification, communicating the ethos concerning socio-moral behaviour to members of the society and thereby correct misdemeanor. Everyone accepted it as a way of life then, and it was like fun correcting one another in such an entertaining art. Even members who were identified for ill practices sang Igoru songs to deride and correct one another in functional manners and everyone smiled over it. But changing tides and changing values brought new dimensions to it.

The Igoru composer is known and well revered, particularly if he is remembered after the very songs he composed. We can also say that the Okpe see all musical compositions of Igoru and other typologies as products of the culture, owned collectively by the entire people. The creative works of an Igoru composer are simply acknowledged as invaluable contributions to the repertory of the culture. The composer may be applauded for his creative prowess, but the achievement is considered, both in his credit as well as of the culture and none is

placed above the other. Having acknowledged the composer, the entire community takes credit for the creation. Thus, Igoru musicians and members of the society would refer to all the repertoires as *Ijoro Igoru Okpe* (Igoru songs of Okpe) and any performer–composer could perform them creatively anywhere.

2. 2. 2 Syllabic and melismatic

Willi Apel (1970: 516) defines the term “melisma” as an expressive vocal passage sung to a syllable found mostly in Gregorian chants as opposed to “coloratura”, a virtuoso-like and frequently stereotyped style. Desmond Desai (1993: 17), in the discussion of the performance of South African Islamic music, *Ratiep* did not quite define the term, but observes the practice of melismatic singing in the vocal form. Simha Arom (1991: 28) remarks that:

The basic production of Central African vocal songs is like the natural production of sound: a full open voice without vibrato, with no attempt at refinement. The songs being syllabic, the singing voice has only to produce one note to each syllable, or sometimes, due to the nature of the language, two or three but never more. Song therefore is not melismatic, and the Central Africans do not cultivate the art of vocalization.

Igoru music is highly syllabic, in that each syllable is often assigned to a tone, with little use of slur expressions involving only two or three pitches to colour sustained tones or movements in the melody. The use of these slur expressions are primarily applied to link syllables, either at the beginning or at the end of phrases. So far, the syllabic feature of Igoru music is not attributed to the tonal nature of the Okpe language. Igoru musicians consider the language flexible and therefore treat the text as such in the melodic craftsmanship. The basic philosophy behind the syllabic treatment is to allow constant flow of

communication, since narratives require much use of words. This is discussed in more detail in chapter seven.

2. 2. 3 Influence of tone language

Simha Arom (1991: 11) suggests that music and language are very closely interconnected and that the phonemic structure of language has powerful constraining effect on the melodic structure of the songs. He writes that almost all the Central African vernacular languages are tonal and that in a tonal language, each vowel can be inflected with the same syllable carrying different meanings when uttered at different vocal pitches or registers. He quotes Thomas (1970: 8) that “The Ngbaka language, for instance, has three *level* tones (low, medium, high), to which are added four *gliding* tones (low-high, high-low, low-high-low, high-low-high)”.

He cites the language of Monzombo among others that resort to four level tones with more gliding tones that further impose more melodic combinations on her music (Simha Arom 1991: 22). Quoting Kirby (1930: 406), he states that the Bantu speech-tone does not only influence its melodies, but also directs the course of its polyphonic thought. Quite explicitly, he quotes Senghor (1958 and 1964) that word and music being intimately linked consubstantially, the tonal languages are themselves pregnant with meaning and each syllable has its own pitch, intensity and duration to which may be assigned a musical notation (pitch and note). He argues that:

It follows, if the words of a song are to keep their meaning and remain intelligible, that its melody must necessarily remain subservient to them and reproduce their tonal schema. Every change in the words of a given melody, if their tonal schema ever varies, inevitably entails a modification in the melodic line. There is every reason to

suppose that the essentially syllabic treatment of sung texts is attributable to these same linguistic constraints (Arom 1991:12-13).

Igoru musicians believe much in the interrelatedness of words that precede and follow each other to communicate thoughts and expressions. Although the language is tonal with some identifiable tone levels, low, medium, high and glides, words are set to melodies with a lot of flexibility. Igoru compositions and performances show that even the gliding tonal syllables in the language that naturally would have required slur expressions are treated normally like every other syllable. In speech the second syllable in the word *O-ro-dje* in song 70, page A1 – 126, has a glide, but this is ignored in the composition as the syllable is assigned to only one melodic tone without the use of slur or melisma. In the same song, the three-syllable word *mi-ne-gbe* would in speech sound high, low, high and one could have thought that the melody would go the same way, but the composer puts them on a monotone.

The signature tune formula of Igoru, labeled song 10, however, shows that syllables that glide in speech may also be melodically treated as such by use of two-tone slur expression. The word *ada* (outside) in the song, when spoken in the affirmative does not require a glide, but in the restrictive form would require a glide to duplicate the last vowel. For example, *Evbe le ɔmɔ ada-a* [you don't stop a child from going out] is restrictive and requires a glide to duplicate the last vowel as it is; but *Ada ɔyɔ ro le ɔmɔ* (it is the outside fearsomeness that stops a child from going out) is affirmative and does not require any glide. In this song, the restrictive case is given a slur expression thereby duplicating the last vowel accordingly to correspond with the glide. More attention is given to this in chapter seven.

2. 2. 4 Concept of performance:

Andrew V. Jones (2001:346) argues the concept of musical performance as virtually a universal human activity whose fundamental form is a private biological necessity of mothers singing to their babies and its most elevated form is a public property that plays pivotal functions in all human societies. He puts these views as follows:

Music-making is a virtually universal human activity. At its most fundamental, it is a form of private biological necessity (in that, for example, individual survival is assisted by being sung to as a baby by a birth mother). At its most elevated, musical performance is public property; it played a pivotal role in some of the earliest traces of elaborate Western Art, with the story of Orpheus, a pre-Homeric hero (thus now of at least some 3000 years' standing), possessing the legendary ability to tame wild animals and resist the sirens by singing and by playing the lyre. Across the ages and throughout world civilizations it is the actual, direct live experience of music that seems to have been integral to the human culture carried forward from its apparent European origins some 40,000 years ago to the modern world (Andrew Jones 2001: 346).

Jones' argument that musical performance is a live experience, integral to the human culture is true, but that it is an art with European origins is contestable in the context of Igoru music. This is because there was no contact between the Okpe and European cultures until the Portuguese exploration of the West African region in the fifteenth century (Agawu 2003 1), yet the concept of Igoru performance, according to renowned practitioners like Idisi Adibo, Amukeye Okodide, Peter Etalo and John Igvide is not traceable to any specific period in history. No one Igoru musician of the contemporary society can precisely state the time that Igoru musical performances began. Just as the Okpe elders who

are the repositories of the history of the land simply express that (*Okpe oma jiri ne*) Okpe was founded very long ago, so do Igoru musicians put the historical beginning of its performances. They all suggest that the concept and its performance practices probably came with Okpe, the founder of Okpe himself. Igoru performances are historical in a way as they focus on some historical issues such as the events that unfold in the society over time. Some Igoru performances have, thus served as documentary to these events. Several examples abound, which are given detailed discussion subsequently in chapter six.

Nollene Davies (1993: 12) in the discussion of *Maskaranda* writes about the performance integration of music and dance as follows:

The associated dance beat is an important and integral part of the music and must be present for a successful performance. This also applies in a solo performance where the beat is implied. It is not uncommon for a member of the audience to respond to a good performance by “realising” this beat, that is, dancing to the music. Perhaps the disappearance or waning popularity of some of the older *maskaranda* styles is due to the fact that these were not associated with a popular dance form.

Idolor (2002: 3) attempts to define the concept of musical performance as ‘the act of playing a musical instrument, singing, dancing, acting in a music drama or conducting/directing a group of performers’. Differentiating between Western and African perspectives, he writes that it ‘is the art of decoding, enacting, and interpreting the composer’s intentions’ from a music score and ‘a skill in presenting pre-rehearsed imaginations or aspirations to a listening audience without a written score’ respectively. In both cases, he identified the primary uses

of audio-visual instruments, which include the human voice, gestures, and appropriate scenic paraphernalia in the presentation.

The concept of Igoru performance, with regard to the number of performers, is often a group work of between seven principal members and about six supporting members enlarged by members of the audience to a limitless number. The performance does not require a conductor who stands before the group to beat time pulse. Cooperation required by team work manifests itself amongst performers who watch and listen to one another attentively to ensure perfect blend. Igoru music, more often than not, requires accompaniment by the *ukiri* drums and handclapping. The purpose of lyrical clarity might require performers to enact long vocal narratives with full chorus participation, first without accompaniment, before it comes to involve instrumental accompaniment in the second cycle. This is evident in *Egboto Isiniq* ensemble record. Unlike the Western concept where an individual's vocal singing accompanied by a pianist is regarded as a solo performance, in Igoru performance, though the lead composer-performer may be acknowledged for his excellence, the entire product of the performance, the singing and the accompaniment, is credited to all the performers of the group.

2. 2 5 Concept of timbre, pitch, and dynamic (volume):

Willi Apel (1970: 678, 852) writes that the term timbre is a French medieval name for 'tambourin', but also means tone colour. He defines the concept of pitch as a definite sound experienced by psychological sensation, assessed by the frequency of its vibration indicating whether it is high or low. He explains that:

The exact determination of pitch is by frequency (number of vibrations per second) of the sound...Pitch as a psychological sensation also depends to a small degree on

other factors (e.g., intensity), which are, however, negligible from the musical point of view...The absolute pitch of one specific note, standardized for the purpose of obtaining identical pitches on all instruments. The present – day standard of pitch is $a' = 440$ (double) vibrations (cycles) per second. This standard was universally adopted in 1939 by an international conference held in London under the auspices of the International Standards Association. It replaced the old standard of 435 that had been fixed by the Paris Academy in 1859 (*diapason normal*) and confirmed, under the term "international pitch", at a conference held in Vienna in 1885.

In Igoru musical performance, one finds no term equivalent to the word pitch. Discussions by the performers however show concepts related to the notion. In the discourse of the vocal sections, for instance, we could hear terms or expressions such as *uphele na ori erun phan* (the voice is too high), *ori erun te-e* (it is not high enough) or *ori otore phan* (it is too low). The instruments of Igoru music though possess two or more tones in melo-rhythm, do not in construction and in discussion show any idea of definite pitches. This is so because the Igoru *ukiri* (the drums) are constructed and tuned in manners that would have them blend naturally with the human voices, and at the same time be able to generate tones that are capable of spurring up the spirit of the performers and audiences. Igoru musicians at rehearsals and performances relate also to the notion of dynamics, loudness and softness as to pitch. For example, they would say *ha uphele ri otore so ijoro na*, bring your voice low and sing the song softly; *so ijoro ni unu*, sing the song out of your mouth (loudly), or simply *suę gbahon*, sing it loudly.

Simha Arom (1991: 28), while discussing issues relating to timbre, writes as follows:

However, in an attempt to differentiate vocal timbres, this 'natural' production is used in as many ways as possible. Thus, the men often have recourse to a 'falsetto'. Not infrequently, one hears a song sung entirely in a falsetto voice. One should also mention the ululations of the women, particularly in moments of joy. Besides these devices of production, the Central Africans, like people in many other countries, add special effects to their voices. So, for example, they produce a 'tremolo' by hitting the throat with the hand. Or on specific ritual occasions it happens that the singers disguise their voices: by pinching the nose, or hitting the throat, they evoke 'their ancestors' voices'.

Roger Kamien (2004: 6-7) simply defines the term dynamics as the degrees of loudness or softness in music, and pitch as the relative highness or lowness of sound determined by the frequency of its vibration and is measured in circles per second. Kebede (1982: 14) writes that the performance of *mwashshahat* music in Egypt avoids the use of narration, mood portrayal, musical painting, as well as dynamic variations. The term timbre also does not have its equivalent in Igoru music. Expressions that relate closely to the concept exist in certain appreciative or appraisal forms, more or less on voice sonority. In this regard, there are such expressions as the following:

- *Uphele na ophiṅ re*
The voice is clear and bristles
- *Uphele na oḱpovi*
The voice is straight and soothing
- *Uphele oḱmemerhe*
A sweet voice
- *Uphele na omerhe ijoro*
The voice is sweet-singing
- *Uphele oḱkokamo*

- A small and shrill voice
- *Uphele eghrēghrēn*
Voice modeling (a technique)
- *Qghrēghrēn uphele*
She is modeling her voice
- *Uphele oduado*
A big and deep voice
- *Ovbo uphele*
He/she has a sonorous voice
- *Ovbo uphele-e*
He/she does not have a sonorous voice

Falsetto singing is not a common feature in Okpe musical culture, except in Okpe Disco typology. Few male singers in Igoru performance are however capable of making smooth movement from high register to a lower one or a sudden leap from low to a higher range of pitches. Ululation exists in Okpe musical tradition as vocal formulas of encouragement and appreciation discussed in chapter five. Voice disguise of any kind, such as discussed by Simha Arom above, is not a practice in any music typology of the Okpe. The musicians prefer to perform as naturally as possible, using other dynamic techniques that can enhance good vocal behaviour.

2. 2. 6 Notation and transcription of African music

Ashenafi Kebede (1982:10, 26 & 27) writes that Egypt was one of the earliest societies to establish a system of writing around 3000 B. C. and one of the first to experiment a system of musical notation. The Egyptian notation used symbols, signs and letters and is no longer in use. Other notational systems include the Ethiopian notation invented by Yared in the reign of King Gebre Meskel that was

more developed than the Egyptian and used pneumatic signs such as curves, dots, dashes, and letters. Others are the Time Unit Box System (TUBS) developed by Philip Harland in 1962, the Cipher notation developed by Gerhard Kubik, tabulature notation advocated by Moses Serwadda and Hewitt Pantaleoni, circular representation made famous by David Rycroft, etc. Invention and reinvention are parts of life; therefore, it is not absurd to find new inventions of notational systems such as those listed above.

Discussing notation as a means of musical preservation, Bruno Nettl (1985: 16), in the article *The Concept of Preservation in Ethnomusicology*, argues as follows:

It seems to me that for the mere preservation of non-Western cultures, notations are now unnecessary. We have recordings; we have videotapes. We can preserve rather easily without the use of the printed page. Notation has, therefore, been liberated, as it were, to be a tool for research methods of a more sophisticated sort. Notations made by melographs are incredibly complicated and I think it is noteworthy that they have elicited only a relatively small number of studies. There has been no wholesale adoption of melographic notations in ethnomusicological literature. But it seems to me that those times when melographic materials have been used with success to solve specific problems, these were problems which the scholar could not solve readily by simply listening to the music. It seems, then, that melographic devices are essential helping hands in certain instances, but they are not central to the area of preservation by notation.

Some other researchers have also argued that the conventional Western notation system is inadequate for transcribing African music. Arom (1991: 169-170) reinvents the argument of Saussure (1916, 1971: 51-2) that “writing veils language; it disguises rather than clothes it”. He also quotes Senghor (1958, 1964: 238-9) that “Black Africa has had good fortune to ignore writing, even when

it was not aware of its existence”, because it impoverishes, crystallizes and freezes reality, which when properly alive is fluid and shapeless. He further presents the argument of Chailley (1967: 118) that writing, be it language or music, is responsible for “*immobilising reality in a univocal way* [italicized in original]” and that notation, until recent time, was only intended to transmit a fleshless indispensable skeleton of ‘note music’, which recipients ought to bring alive again according to their own sensitivity and intelligence. He summarizes the limits of staff notation thus:

As we have seen, the opposite procedure is followed in ethnomusicology: the investigator starts with a living musical reality produced by traditional performers. Through his notation, he tries to reveal the structural principles on which this reality is based. In this field, even Estreicher (1957: 91), himself a stickler for accuracy in musical transcription, recognises limits to written notation: ‘It should never be forgotten that a score is nothing but a projected shadow of the music itself, a flat and colourless silhouette of a living being’... All these observations lead to the same conclusion: in oral expression is life, of which writing is only a pale reflection... This has given rise to the question of whether the transcription should contain every possible elements. In other words, should it be a kind of photograph reflecting the acoustic reality as accurately as possible, or should it be like a sketch containing only the relevant features? We, of course, favour the latter alternative (Arom 1991: 170).

Agawu (2003: 66) however argues differently that “Notations are read by communities of readers, so in order to consolidate African practices that can eventually gain some institutional power, it makes sense to use the existing notation, however imperfect... Is there not, in any case, something suspicious about Westerners telling Africans to use new notations for their music? Beware when the Greeks bring you gifts (Agawu 2003: 66)”. No Igoru song has, so far,

been notated or transcribed before the time of this research. Since staff notation would enable readers follow our interpretations and analytical discourse more critically and since only listening would not be exclusively sufficient for this theoretical study we have adopted the use of the conventional staff notation for our transcriptions.

2.3 Concept of rhythm

The concept of rhythm has been a focal point of interest to explorers, researchers and scholars writing on African music. It has thus received a lot of analytical discussion of a very wide range that in turn has evolved numerous descriptive and analytical terms, some of which have also stirred queries and contention. Willi Apel (1970: 729) defines rhythm as “the whole feeling of movement in music, with a strong implication of both regularity and differentiation”. He explains that breathing (inhalation vs. exhalation), pulse (systole vs. diastole), and tides (ebbs vs. flow) are all examples of rhythm. He however distinguishes between rhythm and motion that the former means movements in time while the latter means movement in space (as in pitch). In common enthusiastic expressions on this concept, we find the following ideas in Chernoff’s (1979: 40) writing. He quotes Senghor :

...that rhythm is the basis of all African art, and regarding, music, (Jones writes), “rhythm is to the African what harmony is to the Europeans, and it is in the complex interweaving of contrasting rhythmic patterns that he finds his greatest aesthetic satisfaction”

If the rhythmic systems used by different African peoples are not the same (though they are often surprisingly similar), they at least have in common the fact that they are complex, and the greater complexity of West African rhythmic systems supplies us with a more thorough and intelligible analytical tool.

Agawu (2003: 57) examines the notion of rhythm viz a viz the emphasis so far laid on it in the discussion of African music. He observes A. M. Jones' (1994) remarks that "if anyone were to ask, 'What is the outstanding characteristic of African music?' The answer is, 'A highly developed rhythm...the African is far more skilled at drumming rhythms than we are – in fact our banal pom, pom, pom, on the drums is mere child's play compared with the complicated and delicate interplay of rhythms in African drumming". He further quotes Leopold Senghor that "in a set of guidelines for adjudicating music festivals in Africa, judges were told that "complexity of rhythm is often a fair guide to the authenticity of an African song" and argues conclusively as follows:

Allied to the retreat from comparison is a retreat from critical evaluation of African musical practice...these are acts of mystification designed to ensure that the discourse about African music continues to lack the one thing that would give it scientific and hence universal status, namely, a *critical* element...African rhythm, in short, is an invention, a construction, a fiction, a myth, ultimately a lie.

It seems remarkable that it never occurred to A. M. Jones...to ask his "native" informant, Mr Desmond Tay, whether the Ewe have a word for rhythm or a concept of rhythm. Had he done so, Jones might have met with a blank stare or a puzzled look... There is no single word for rhythm in Ewe language...although the equivalent of a single word meaning "rhythm" is not to be found in Ewe, related concepts of stress, duration and periodicity do in fact register in subtle ways in Ewe discourse (Agawu 2003: 63).

Igoru musicians have no single word equivalent to the term rhythm, although the concept of movement in time exists in their discourse of Igoru performances. The most significant term that relates to the concept of rhythm is *udje agwe* meaning the symbolic movement of a dance or walking pace. In rehearsals, remarks such as *kporo udj-agwe na omana* (beat the step this way) or *omana udj-agwe ye ose*

(this is how the step sounds – on the drum) are heard. The expression is also applied in relationship to tempo, being either fast or slow. In vocal music, Igoru musicians refer to the concept of rhythm as *onya* meaning movement, which is certainly in time. There are remarks such as *omana uphele na onya* (this is the way the voice moves). Stanley Sadie and Alison Latham (1988: 17) state that “The most basic element in music is *rhythm*” (italics in original) and some musical systems, in fact, use rhythm alone. While painting and architecture depend on space, music depends on time”. Although the above observation may be true of Western music, it is not applicable to Igoru music, because its performers do not consider this element in isolation from melody, harmony and even dance.

Nketia (1979: 125) remarks that “Since African music is predisposed towards percussion and percussive texture, there is an understandable emphasis on rhythm, for rhythmic interest often compensates for the absence of melody or the lack of melodic sophistication. The music of an instrument with a range of only two or three tones may be effective or aesthetically satisfying to its performers and their audience if it has sufficient rhythmic interest”. It needs to be stressed here that African music, Igoru in particular, does not lack melodic interest and sophistication as Nketia puts it. In Igoru music, the drums are not played alone as purely instrumental music, and the texture of the drums is not conceived in rhythm sense only. Thus in verbalization of the drum patterns, unintelligible texts are set to it melodically. This observation, notwithstanding, the vocal melodies do have melodic interest as well as in rhythm. Compared to Western melodies that may progress in stepwise motion with a few skips and leaps that adhere to conventions, Igoru melodies make use of continuous leaps upwards or downwards and more about this is given attention in chapter seven.

2.3.1 Additive and divisive rhythm

Nketia (1979: 128-131) writes that “*Divisive rhythms* are those that articulate the regular divisions of the time span, rhythms that follow the scheme of pulse structure in the grouping of notes. They may follow the duple, triple, or hemiola schemes”. He gave examples in simple duple time as 1+1; in triple time as 1+1+1 and in compound duple time as 3+3 or the hemiola scheme 2+2+2. He defines additive rhythms comparatively as follows:

While divisive rhythms follow the internal divisions of the time span, *additive rhythms* do not. The durational values of some notes may extend beyond the regular divisions within the time span. Instead of note groups or sections of the same length, different groups are combined within the time span. That is, instead of a phrase of twelve pulses being divided into 6+6, it may be divided onto 7+5 or 5+7...The use of additive rhythms in duple, triple, and hemiola patterns is the hallmark of rhythmic organization in African music, which finds its highest expression in percussion music.

Agawu (2003: 86) writes that additive rhythm “describes a pattern of organization in which nonidentical or irregular durational groups follow one another” and operates at two levels: within the bar and between bars or groups of bars. He illustrates that “a single 12/8 bar may be divided additively into 5+7 or 3+2+2+5 but *not* into 3+3+3+3. Thus, the so-called standard pattern or time line in Anlo-Ewe music...is sometimes counted (in eight notes) additively as 2+2+1+2+2+2+1, while *Gehu’s* time line... may be rendered with a sixteenth-note referent as 3+3+4+4+2. Similarly, at a larger level, an entire passage may display the metrical succession, 5/8+3/8+2/4+3/4. At both levels, the groups are irregular”.

In Igoru music, the idea of divisive rhythm involves regular division of beats such as we find in the vocal and instrumental sections. The pulse-mark instrument (*Qm̄* or Baby *Ukiri*) whose pattern is divided into 1+2+1+2+1+2+1+2 in twelve-eight (12/8) time presents an example of regular division of beats. Although this pattern suggests the pulse structure, it does not maintain the compound unit of beats such as 3+3+3+3. Other forms of division exist in regular patterns as discussed in chapter eight. One understands that the term additive literally suggests an addition to what already exists. In this study we did not find occasions where extra note values are added to normal units of beats or measures. Whether a dotted crotchet beat for instance is divided into three or four sub-units, all the sub-divisions last within the duration of the larger whole. Even glides occur and last within the beats where they appear.

2. 3. 2 Cross rhythm, inter-rhythm and staggered rhythm/entries

Chernoff (1979: 46) discusses the term cross rhythm as follows:

In Zhem, a lead dondon and any number of supporting dondons play two independent rhythms which are interlocked with great precision to make a tight and intriguing combination. Again, one could not try to play either rhythm by counting the music in a single meter: the rhythms do not meet at any point, and the lead dondon gives a feeling of $\frac{3}{4}$ time, while the supporting dondon plays to a count of four. In such music, the conflicting rhythmic patterns and accents are called cross-rhythm ... In something like Adzogbo or Zhem it is not easy to find any constant beat at all.

Chernoff (1979: 47) elaborates the concept of cross rhythm by adopting the term “staggered entries” to describe the independent rhythmic patterns of different instruments resulting from layers of entrance points; the concept earlier described by Robert Thompson as “apart – playing” meaning separation of parts.

Agawu (2003: 58) quotes A. M. Jones' remarks on the concept of cross rhythm as follows: "To call these "complex" is an understatement; the very thought of them makes one dizzy! Imagine two drummers playing together in cross rhythm, 3 against 2. Now stagger them so that they are out of phase. Now add two other drummers, and a singer, and clap accompaniment, all rhythmically at cross purposes and out of phase with one another".

Nzewi (1997: 36, 40) however argues that, in communal African team relationships, there exist no cross purposes, but inter-dependence for the collective achievement of success. He thus sees the relationship between two or more players who utilize triple motive against other motives as playing inter-rhythm and not cross rhythm. He stresses as follows that:

From point of view of enabling a student of African music to develop the right mental perception of the social-creative philosophy and structural principles implicit in African musical thoughts we have argued that the term "cross rhythm" is mis-informing and, therefore, inappropriate. African reasoning accrues in depth of argument (action oriented), rather than breath of argument ([maneuvering] or evasive). Rationalization of creativity thus accrues complexity and depth even in isolated, simple-appearing themes or motives (Example 2). What has been termed cross rhythm, hitherto, is an example of the unilineal relationships in African ensemble music structures. We have argued and illustrated elsewhere (1993b) that the theory of cross rhythm is strange to African creative philosophy.

It is noteworthy that Igoru musicians do not consider the relationship of drum patterns and singing as meeting at cross purposes. It is in fact absurd to think so, because Igoru musicians, drummers and singers, relate cooperatively in agreement of thoughts and patterns of melo-rhythm, melody and harmony. They

all aim at the same goal of communication and cross purposes would only lead to failure rather than success. To describe the various entries as “staggered” is indeed erroneous, since the notion of “staggeredness” often suggests unstable movements. The movements in Igoru music, both in time and space, are well organized, orderly and stable; otherwise it would be very difficult for the ensemble to coordinate itself in sounds and dance responses. There is what we may call equidistant entry, where each instrument and voice may come in at strategic entry points within the ensemble thematic cycle. This must be understood as systematic entries and not staggered, since staggering often connotes imbalance and confused movements.

2. 3. 3 Time line, bell rhythm, topoi, and phrasing-referent

Akpabot (1975; 1986; 1998) says the bell is always dominant with specific patterns and roles in almost all ensembles in Africa. Thus, its rhythmic pattern(s), although not always played in all ensembles, is often referred to as the bell pattern or bell rhythm. In every ensemble where it is present, it plays a rhythmic phrase or sentence which normally begins the instrumental section of any ensemble as a base established and upheld regularly, which other instruments and musicians of the ensemble refer to for all their entries (Okafor, 1998). Nketia (1979: 131-132) argues that

Because of the difficulty of keeping subjective metronomic time in this manner, African traditions facilitate this process by externalizing the basic pulse. As already noted, this may be shown through hand clapping or through the beats of a simple idiophone. The guideline which is related to the time span in this manner has come to be describe as a *time line*...Because the time line is sounded as part of the

music, it is regarded as an accompaniment rhythm and a means by which rhythmic motion is sustained. Hence, instead of a time line that represents simple regular beats reflecting the basic pulse, a more complex form may be used.

Nzewi (1997: 35) argues that the rhythmic figure so termed “time line” or “bell pattern” is often not played by the bell in some African ensembles, and sometimes, the bell assumes the role of a master instrument. Examining the concept of time in African ensemble performance, he states the notion of melorhythm and megarhythm in contrast to the Western conceived idea of percussion. He therefore refers to this important ensemble component as “phrasing referent” in the African ensemble composition thought. This coinage, though different, however agrees with Okafor’s observation that other instruments of the ensemble refer to it for all their entries. Nzewi (1998: 458, 460) again argues that ‘The Phrasing Referent role-theme is a unique theme played as non-variational and is reiterated for the duration of a piece or a significant section of it. Other performers playing different thematic layers of the significant ensemble sound (the Ensemble thematic gestalt) have varied degrees of freedom to develop their respective themes in and as per context’.

Andrew Tracey and Joshua Uzoigwe (2003: 79) quote Peter Seeger (1961) describing this concept, as the most important part in a steel band, using the term ‘perfect rhythm’. They however refer to it as ‘ensemble beat’ or ‘time-keeper’ in the African ensemble situation as follows:

Peter Seeger (1961), writing about steelband, says that ‘certainly the most important quality of a good steel band [is] PERFECT RHYTHM’ [capital in the original]... nothing less than perfect. To say that African musicians are rhythmically acute is no overstatement. There is only one

way to play, sing and move, and that is with total consciousness of ensemble beat. The structure and meaning of the music demand it. Learners therefore have to master the art of playing the simpler, time-keeper (and junior) parts or instruments before they are free to go on to other parts. Not only learners play these parts – simple parts involving clapping can be played by anybody who is not a music specialist, everyone to his own level of talent, as Berliner (1975/6) describes for instance in Shona *bira* ceremonies. But talent or no talent, no one may play without ensemble accuracy.

Agawu (2003: 73) prefers the term *topoi* [or *topos* in plural] to time line, bell pattern or phrasing referent in describing this “short, distinct, and often memorable rhythmic figure of modest duration (about a metric length or a single cycle), usually played by the bell or high-pitched instrument in the ensemble, and serves as a point of temporal reference”, held as ostinato throughout a performance session.

The kind of rhythmic figure often described as bell pattern or time line is played by the baby (*omo*) *ukiri*, which is high pitched in Igoru music. Although it is the simplest and most memorable pattern in the ensemble organization, it however does not seem to serve as the phrase referent figure as much as the mother (*izu*) *ukiri* does. In general ensemble perception and common phenomenon, as expressed by the practitioners, the phrase referent instrument normally begins to establish the base on which other instruments coming in after would make reference for their accurate entries. In Igoru performance practice, it is the mother *ukiri*, which has the deepest pitches that starts first and establishes the base on which reference is drawn for further entry of the other two *ukiri*. The baby *ukiri*, though after her entry, does maintain the basic pulse in her own

rhythmic pattern, this is considered supportive to keep the metrical structure and tempo steadily.

2. 3. 4 Polyrhythm and syncopation

Apel (1970: 687) states that the term polyrhythm is restricted to rhythmic variety of special effect often referred to as “cross rhythm” and described as the use of striking contrasted rhythm in simultaneous different parts of a musical fabric, a significant feature in a contrapuntal or polyphonic music. Arom (1991: 39) quotes Riemann (1931: 103) that polyrhythm is defined as the superimposition of multiple rhythms [different rhythms] in different voice parts. He further states that:

Rhythmic counterpoint (or polyrhythm) is to unpitched instruments as melodic counterpoint (or polyphony) is to voices and pitched instruments. In Black Africa, this kind of counterpoint is essentially made up of so-called ‘cross-rhythm’, i.e., of different rhythmic patterns interweaving with each other. The principle of *cross-rhythm* [italics in original] (a term apparently introduced by Percival Kirby (1934: 54), involves the combination of two or more rhythmic figures in such a way that they cross rather coincide with one another. There are nonetheless moments when the different figures correspond, but the overall ostinato pattern that is created emphasises their points of divergence or their oppositions rather than their points of connection (Arom 1991: 42).

One finds from the above explanation that the term polyrhythm is used almost in the same context as cross rhythm. They both refer to the notion of multiple rhythmic figures or patterns that play together simultaneously, probably beginning and ending at various points. The only sharp difference is that cross rhythm is often defined as the interplay of multiple rhythmic patterns that are at cross purposes, or rather unorganized, while polyrhythm is seen as such interplay of layers that interweave within the fabric.

Since in Igoru music, melo-rhythmic and polyphonic interplay between instrumentalists and singers are not conceived in vertical order as in Western hymns, but rather conceived horizontally, there is this idea of cooperating motives. But it should be understood that the practice is not in any way a confused multiple movement of parts. We can hear either the lead singer or one of the drummers at one time or the other during rehearsals and performances say *amoriɛn* hold it (together), *amoriɛn gbahon*, hold it firmly, or *dadɔnɛye more*, let each person hold his own part. These expressions all suggest that the performers are aware they are playing and singing together, using different melo-rhythmic, melodic and harmonic figures simultaneously that each performer needs to maintain his or her part inter-dependently to keep the ensemble together.

Don Randel (1986: 1002) writes that the term syncopation refers to the displacement of either the beat or the normal accent of a piece of music. He asserts that regular accent has been a regular feature of most music since about 1600, with recurring beats that group themselves irresistibly into twos and threes and the first of each group making itself felt as such by a slight extra stress. He explains that "If, [within] the feeling of regularity being thus established in the mind of the listener, irregularity is momentarily introduced, that is syncopation". Syncopation is noted to be a prominent feature in Igoru music. It is employed and explored as both compositional and performance style and this is given more analytical attention in chapter seven.

2. 3. 5 Melo-rhythm, mega-rhythm, hot rhythm and hocket technique

Janet Topp (1993: 134) adopts, though did not define, the term “hot rhythm” in the discussion of *Taarab* music of Zanzibar, Swahili. By description, she refers to the manifestation of a faster rhythm in a performance progression as follows:

In the performance of *kidumbak*, popular “ideal” *taarab* songs are played straight through adhering as closely to the original as the different instrumentation will allow. Once the song is completed, the musicians alter the pace of the piece by changing to a “hotter” rhythm and tempo. Again these rhythms are usually from local *ngoma*. These faster sections are designed to get the audience to dance.

There is no expression as such that signify “hotness” of rhythm in the performance of Igoru music. The notion of gradually increased tempo does exist, however in the performances. The practice is described as *udj-agwe ophophere* [fast step], *-okpokpata* (very fast), or *-otwatwa* (intensified). Although, psychologically, the term “hot” practically suggests things that can burn or cause one to perspire profusely, which the process of dancing, whether fast or slow, is also capable of doing, Igoru musicians do not consider the practice this way. Since Igoru music is highly narrative and is designed for a slow dance, it does not often require fast tempo. Sometimes, a gradual change may be observed and at other times, the same tempo is maintained throughout a section or a full length of a composition-performance. The perception of tempo in Igoru performance follows more the dimension of intensity, which has great influence on the melo-rhythmic texture and tempo together. In this discourse, we prefer to adopt the term “rhythmic intensity” to “hot rhythm”.

Nzewi (1997: 32-33) argues that rhythm, in African music context, is not played in isolation as a musical presentation, but as an integral part of a poetic perception

of motion that altogether make what he refers to as megarhythm. He also argues that the concept of “percussion’ is not African, because Africans conceive the drums and bells as having tones.

He states these as follows:

In the African musical thought the element which is regarded as rhythm is an integral not an integer. It is an integral of a poetic perception of motion, not a statistical calculation. Thus there is a composite sensibility about the movement of music in time which has temporal span, tonal depth, emotional quality. It is perceived by the senses in visual, sonic and psychedelic dimensions...The depth qualification of African musical motion concerns its tonal implications. Hence the term melorhythm captures more, the essence of the African’s approach to “rhythm” thought and production. The isolatable ensemble component in African musical expression which appears to be purely a statistical equation is the Phrasing Referent (bell) pattern, and that, for special ensemble reasons. The pattern is not developed in performance, and has no independent existence as a personal or public music-event.

The terms cross rhythm and polyrhythm have caused so much confusion that one cannot find a very clear cut between them. Most significantly in this context, we have examined definitions that portray the two terms as practices in African music that are incongruous. The philosophical thought of Igoru musicians concerning ensemble team work shows a perception of a kind of blossoming of simultaneously multiple melo-rhythmic parts that come together as a larger whole. This being the case, we shall in this context, adopt the term megarhythm instead of polyrhythm.

Arom (1991: 42) examines the concept and definition of hocket technique, in the light of earlier writings by Riemann (1931: 596), *Dict. Larousse* (1957: 1, 454) and Nketia (1962: 50 – 1) as follows: Hocket technique is a compositional device of the twelfth and thirteenth century polyphony in which each voice stops in turn and starts in rapid alternation. It is a technique that requires at least two voices, where the first voice may sing one or two notes and pause for the other voice to do the same alternately.

Although in Western art music of the Middle Ages, hocket seems to have been mainly a vocal technique, it is found in Africa, and particularly in the Central African Republic, essentially in instrumental music, where it is applied with extreme vigour. The device is in fact used there in music for groups of wind instruments where each instrument can produce only one sound, which is tuned to a specific pitch. The combination of the different instrumental parts necessarily produces a rhythmic counterpoint that is here the result of the purest hocketing. From their interweaving there results a polyrhythm with sounds of fixed pitch; i.e., a polyrhythm that is spread over the degrees of a perfectly defined scale...Each player must have a general awareness of the resultant, as well as the knack of coming in at the right moment (Arom 1991: 43)

The practice of alternate singing exists in Igoru performances, but not in a hocket style. The form of alternate singing that manifests between two singers in Igoru performance is discussed in chapter seven.

2. 3. 6 Inter-locking rhythm

Mantle Hood (1985: 23) writes that:

Only in the course of the past decade or so, however, have I really begun to appreciate the apparently unlimited number of ways and means by which different cultures may bring their music to a very high degree of cultivation

indeed. I mention, for example, the complexity of rhythm and tonal texture achieved in Ashanti, Ga, and Ijaw drumming ensembles; the sophistication of the singing bards (*jail*) of West Africa and the rhythmic intricacy of the *Kora* accompanying them; the extraordinary fluency of a master drum like the *iya ilu* of the Yoruba; the rhythmic inventiveness of the *didjeridu* of Australia and the remarkable cultivation of its sonic properties; the interlocking rhythms and tone color of the *amadinda* of Uganda or the Lobi xylophone of Ghana; the recognition and impeccable control of ten or more distinct voice qualities functioning in five different modes and two genres in traditional Hawaiian chant...

Mitchel Strumpf, William Anku, Kondwani Phwandaphwanda and Ncebakazi Mnukwana (2003: 131) describe the co-existing call and response vocal structure in three dimensions, adopting the following terms, adjacent, overlapping and interlocking. They describe the first as involving the response following immediately after the call section, as 'adjacent relationship' and the second situation where the call enters sooner than expected, over the ongoing response as overlapping. They describe the third, involving a continuous response with a counter solo passage over it, and acting as two separate songs concurrently, as interlocking.

The adjacent call and response relationship exists in Igoru performances, where the chorus waits for the soloist to finish his or her line before coming in. The overlapping kind of relationship occurs too, mainly between two soloists who prompt one another in the development of a narrative. The interlocking relationship seldom occurs between two soloists, where one weaves a florid melodic passage over the principal or leading part momentarily. We discuss these further in chapter seven.

2. 4 Concept of harmony

Percy Scholes (1991: 218) explains that while melody is the putting together of notes in succession, harmony, in the contrast, is the putting together of notes simultaneously and that the first notions of harmony date apparently only from the ninth century. James O'Brien (1994: 140) argues that in Asian cultures such as Chinese, harmony is almost incidental to musical development. He contends that "It occurs, but is not used to support a well-focused melody in the foreground. It occurs rather as a result of divergent pitches that *might* occur in two or more simultaneous but slightly different versions of the main melody (italic in original). This is known as *heterophony*, a texture that is largely Asian". He adds that heterophony is more lucid when there is a different timbre on each of the melodic lines with one sustained, another detached and the third elaborated through ornamentation, explaining further that: "When singing is accompanied by instruments, for example, they closely follow the voice, in both rhythm and melodic contour. This texture, foreign to Western thinking, is quite typical of most Asian music, particularly Chinese, Japanese, and Korean". Igoru musicians have the concept of harmony in the general organization of the music. They express concept of the harmonic part as *ogani* meaning a deep sonorous voice or part. This is discussed in chapter five.

2. 4. 1 Homophony, monophony and drone

Kebede (1982: 7) discusses the contrast between monophony and homophony, describing the former as a composition or performance with a single melody featuring, and the latter as one with a principal melody supported by other accompanying voices or instruments. He adds that the performance of *mwashshahat* composition in Egypt involves the use of monophonic texture. Arom (1991: 36, 37) quotes Riemann (1967: iii, 378) that homophony is

'progression through a series of chords in which all the voices move in a rhythmically identical way or nearly so'. Examining the characteristic features, he quotes Malm (1972: 248) that even if different voices of the multi-parts perform different tones, but have the idea of 'homorhythm' (the use of the same basic rhythm), the form is homophony.

Apel (1970: 390) defines homophony in contrast to polyphony as the music in which one voice leads melodically, while it is supported by an accompaniment in chordal or slightly more elaborate style. In other words, all parts contribute unequally to the musical fabric. There are some Igoru songs that are performed in a homophonic style, a practice where the chorus responds with the one and only melody, even singing it together with the lead singer as a note-by-note repeat of the solo line. The homophonic style is adopted in choruses that accompany narratives. In this form, we find principally two parts maintaining independent melodic parts, but identical rhythmic features simultaneously. These are discussed in chapter seven. Arom (1991: 36) argues that Fasquelle (1958: 1, 435) and Hornbostel (1909: 300) define drone as a continuous bass on a sustained and uninterrupted single note sung, or usually played by an instrument, which serves as a base for the principal melody; while according to the latter, Riemann (1967: iii, 118) adds that the practice is generally applied to the lower register of the instrument or voice in form of invariant notes. Drone is not a feature in Igoru performance practice.

2. 4. 2 Plurivocality, Polyphony, heterophony, reduplicative and pseudo- unison

According to Willi Apel (1970: 383), in the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, the term heterophony was earlier used by Plato and first adopted by Carl Stumpf to

describe a type of improvisational polyphony involving the use of slightly or elaborately modified simultaneous versions of the same melody by two or more performers; adding few extra tones or ornaments to the singer's melody. Geoffrey Hindley (1971: 20, 23) notes that musicologists and ethnomusicologists do disagree with the application of the term 'polyphony' to music of oral tradition, but that some prefer the term heterophony while they use the former narrowly for only Western written music. He however used the term 'polyphony' to discuss the music of the Bushmen and Pygmies of South Africa, and the Bororos and Baoule of Ivory Coast.

In this context, he uses the term to denote the simultaneous execution of several parts in their musical performances. He writes that the Baoule "music shows a predilection for a kind of 'diaphony' in parallel thirds", adding that the style is used for long melodies of unequal phrases punctuated by sustained notes linked to each other like garlands, with the chorus intervening massively and stopping at perfect consonances, producing a kind of struck chord. He concludes that "It has been suggested that the interval of the third is part of the musical heritage which Coastal Africa is believed to have assimilated from the Indonesian seafaring peoples".

Arom (1991: 20 & 34) discusses 'plurivocality' as an equivalent of the German term *Mehrstimmigkeit*, and of the term *multi-part singing* [italics in original] used by Anglo-Saxon musicologists. He says, to European musicologists, polyphony describes the technique of compositional practice that belongs to the Western world exclusively; the art which dates from the first one thousand years AD and blossomed in the school of Notre-Dame of Paris, particularly in the *organa* of Perotin around 1200. In this parochial view, he quotes one of the Western

writers, Pierre Boulez (1958: 584) who claimed that polyphony, an independent part movement with strong theoretical foundations, is a cultural phenomenon belonging to the civilization of Western Europe, and that in so-called exotic musics, there is frequent superimposition caused by simultaneous relationships in time, which do not mean independent movement of parts.

He nevertheless brings to bear Larousse's (1957: ii, 208) critique and position that the Western idea expressed above is ethnocentric, remarking that ethnomusicology had made known the fact that 'polyphony is found throughout primitive music' in a form that is different from classical and harmonic conception. He thus, defines polyphony as follows:

Polyphony is therefore defined as *any multi-part vocal or instrumental music whose heterorhythmic parts are, within the culture of its traditional performers, considered as the constituent elements of a single musical entity* [italics are in the original]. This definition is, by intention, limited in its application to vocal musics and music for instruments of fixed pitch. In the case of percussion instruments, more frequently of indeterminate pitch, the term *polyrhythm*, analogous to polyphony, is used. By this term should be understood *any multi-part arrangement based on the superimposition of different rhythmic figures whose interlacing results in a rhythmic polyphony* (Arom 1991: 38).

Arom (1991: 35) writes further that Guido Adler (1908:24) defined heterophony as an unorganized rudimentary plurivocality to be classified as a third stylistic category of homophony and polyphony. He states that heterophony 'consists of simultaneous intervals, consonant or dissonant, usually isolated, that occur at indeterminate points throughout a melody that is performed collectively and *conceived as monodic*' often in several unclear parts. He says this is common among the Islamised people of Central Africa whose vocal music is essentially

monodic. He quotes Andre Agide's (1928) description of overlapping that the end of each phrase by the soloist was normally lost in the response from the choir. He describes homophonic singing as a multi-part form in parallel third, fourth, fifth or octave movement; a plurivocal form described by some authors as *organum*, *harmony*, *parallel homophony*, or *tonally linked parallelism*, though he finds the last term most suitable for the form.

Arom (1991: 35) reinvents Nketia's (1972: 29) argument that "This type of organization is fundamentally linear rather than multilinear: occasional heterophony is to be considered as purely ornamental". Kebede (1982: 13), in his discussion, uses the term pseudo-unison as an equivalent of the word heterophony. Gerhard Kubik (1994: 279-280) argues the concept of reduplications as determinants of consonance effect in melodic configuration. He contends that where the reduplication of one note is followed by a reduplication of another which is in consonance relation to it, either in fourth or fifth, the reaction is to produce a kind of "mirror image" by using the same notes in the contrasting part, but in a melodically complementary shape. He purports that such passages are typical in *amadinda* music. To elucidate the point further, Kubik writes as follows:

In all musics there are kinds of melodic movement which we may call reduplicative. By this I mean continuous melodic progression in the same direction and (underlined in original) by the same interval...The simplest example is a steady progression to an equal tone, a series of primes. Another is movement from step to step in the scale (upwards or downwards)—in xylophone music to the next slat. This gives a ladder-type melody (Kubik 1994: 279-280).

Nzewi (1997: 45) asserts that the harmonic texture of African music is predominantly heterophonic, or otherwise possesses a unique feature of polyphony, which by unilineal principles is conceived more in horizontal and not vertical association of theme components. He argues that the unilineality, though accommodates the idiosyncratic creative decisions of individual musicians within the tradition's musical creative norms and idioms, coerces group co-operation. He thus adds that it generates and establishes the awareness and consciousness of one another's creative competence and existence amongst the performing musicians, as well as it enhances the need for agreement, co-operation, and stability in the bid to achieving musical humanistic objectives collectively. Not many vocal independent and interdependent melodic parts feature harmonically in Igoru music. Basically, we find two-part polyphonic singing and this is discussed in chapters six and eight under vocal organization and harmony respectively.

2.5 Concept of metre

Deidre Hansen (1993: 57) discusses the concept of metre and melody relationships in the songs of the Xhosa-Speaking Xhesibe *Indlavini* of South Africa as follows:

The basic metrical patterns of Xhesibe Walking Songs [capital case in original] are based on sequences of either duple (d) or triple (d.) beats, defined by walking movements, or by stick contact with ground...These two main physical activities, walking and stick-beating, express the basic meter and tempo of the music or at least indicate it.

In the walking songs, the coincidence of vocal melodic patterns and basic metrical (motional) patterns is characteristic of melody-meter relationships in Xhesibe music generally. The process is one in which the accents of

the vocal-melodic patterns establish a fairly systematic cross-rhythm with the main beats of the percussive accompanist (walking, stick-beating).

Igoru musicians often describe the dance of its performance as *igbegbe egolo* (the dance of a majestic walk). The walking movement is much demonstrated to the melo-rhythm of the accompanying instruments and of the melodic phrasing of the vocal section. The walking-pace dance steps and the movement of the hands then punctuate the metrical pulse as well as the melodic cadences. This has been discussed in chapter five. Arom (1991: 23) remarks that:

Africans are more concerned when adding another voice to preserve the scale – here pentatonic – than to produce a strict parallelism. Therefore, if they wanted to sing strictly fourths, they would have to modify the scale organization, which in this case would mean virtually creating another mode; the result would be a ‘polytonality’ with the following awkward consequences: (a) the concurrence of two pentatonic modes would entail the introduction of the semitone interval, which is so carefully avoided in all the scales, and therefore a rupture in the scale system; and (b) on account of the lack of tonal ‘attraction’ in pentatonic systems where there are neither ‘strong’ or ‘weak’ degrees, there would result a ‘modal’ unbalance, resulting from the ambiguity created by the two superimposed pentatonic modes.

Igoru polyphonic singing does not yield any polytonality. Although it could move through a series of fourths and occasional third and fifth and resolve on the consonance of a perfect fourth cadence, it retains a central tonality. While the upper melody may resolve from the submediant to the tonic, the lower part may resolve from the submediant to the dominant at a lower octave. See chapter seven for details.

2. 5. 1 Polymetre

Chernoff (1979: 47) writes that in spite of what the Westerners think that African music is often in 7/4 or 5/4 metre, he found that “most African music is in some common variety of duple or triple time (like 4/4 or 12/8). He adds that “Music in 7/4 time would be very difficult to dance to” and argues further that “If the drummers played in unison, there would, obviously, be no polymeter...the cardinal principle of African music is the clash and conflict of rhythms”. Chenoff’s observation about African music metre is right, except that we are yet to find any form of strict triple metre in Igoru music. All the transcriptions we have done, so far, are in compound quadruple and simple quadruple metre (12/8 and 4/4).

Nzewi (1997: 41-42) argues that “Traditional musics are rationalised mediation and transformation of nature, life and the people’s world view. Psychopaths are not recognised as producing culturally sensible or meaningful music. Polyrhythmicity and polymetricity impute irregular, psychopathic thoughts on the creative configurations of African musical systems which rely on certain structural indices to ensure regularity and symmetry”. This implies that the use of polymetre, if it were true in African music, would create irregular and unorganized performance product, which could also be intolerable, therefore unsustainable and unappreciable. He suggests that if we lose understanding of the fundamental principle of the pulse pattern that underlies a musical performance, we might speculate polymeter, and if we lose sight of melorhythm, we might speculate polyrhythm.

In Igoru music, the metric pulse and phrase referent instruments have been very significant in the sustainability of unity within the ensemble. These underlying patterns have also justified the use of a single metre within a composition as at

creation and performance. The composition, being orally and aurally conceived and reproduced first without the instruments, the composer normally conceives the basic instrumental patterns that suggest the metre in mind when creating the melody. Thus Amereka Emakpo would tap some rhythm with a match box as he is composing a song and those basic rhythmic figures could remind him of the tune later on. He describes this technique as composing the songs into the match box and this has been fully discussed in chapter six. What this implies is that Igoru musicians do not create their music in multiple metre that could be difficult to coordinate.

Agawu (2003: 79-80) writes that “polymer is the simultaneous use of more than one meter in an ensemble composition”, where each functional component of the texture exposes “a distinct rhythmic pattern within its own metric frame without any obvious regard for a larger coordinating mechanism”. He states further that “Constituent meters do not collapse into each other or into a larger meter, but persist into the background, creating a kind of metric dissonance or metric polyphony. Philosophically, polymer indexes coexistence, not (necessarily) cooperation”. He examines A. M. Jones’ analysis of Anlo-Ewe dance, which transcription shows the bell, rattle and hand clap in 12/8; the master drum in 5/8; support drums in 6/8; while the song, though not given any time signature by Jones, moves in series of measures that evince 7/8, 6/8, 4/8, and 3/8.

He finally states his position that the notion of polymer in discussing African music must be rejected for three reasons. The first being that the notion of polymer is probably an invention and imposition on African music, since the idea is not found in the discourses and pedagogical schemes of traditional African musicians. The second is that the analysis being on dance, the

choreographic supplement is an irreducible component of the rhythm which could culminate [with other components] into a compound rhythm expressed in a variety of internal articulation suggesting as Chernoff earlier observed, that music in irregular time signature would be difficult to dance to. The third reason is that “Polymeter fails to convey the true accentual structure of African music insofar as it erases the essential tension between a firm and stable background and a fluid foreground”.

There are no terms or references to such a phenomenon, polymetre in any discourse amongst Igoru musicians. Even in actual performance practice, we have not observed the use of polymetre where various instruments perform in different metres. It is therefore safe to conclude that there is no use of polymetre in Igoru music.

2. 5. 2 Measured, unmeasured, metronomic, non-metronomic, variable and movable bar

Arom (1991: 179) defines measured music as ‘music *comprised of durations with proportional values*’ (italics in original). He then writes as follows:

Let us recall that the distinction between measured and unmeasured music has a long history. It existed in the cultured music of the ancient Greeks, and in medieval musical theory, in the contrast between the *cantus mensuratu* (measured chant) and *cantus planus* (plain chant). Closer to our own times, it can be found in classical opera, where arias or measured pieces alternate with unmeasured *recitativo secco*. Measured music, sometimes referred to by the Italian expression, *tempo giusto*, is thus defined by contrast with unmeasured music. The latter is not governed by fixed quantities, i.e., the values of durations are not strictly proportional... In measured music, however, all durations are strictly proportional.

He further quotes Rousseau's (1768: 283) dictionary definition that the term *measured* corresponds with the Italian *a tempo* or *a batuta*, meaning proportional durations based on a reference unit; the smallest visible unit in Greek music was referred to as *a chronos protos* while in the West it meant the conductor's beat [equivalent of *batuta*]. He observes from Chailley's (1961: 255) writing that grouping of beats into measures only became possible in the seventeenth century 'when the use of bars invaded the written material of musical instruction (Arom, 1991: 183). He concludes, therefore, that most African music is still based on the principles of the medieval *tactus* with no use of the notion of matrices of regular contrasts of strong and weak beats. He puts this clearly that: "African music is thus based, not on measures in the sense of classical musical teaching, but on *pulsations*, i.e., on a sequence of isochronous temporal units which can be materialised as a beat".

Van Leeuwen (1999: 39) writes that "measured time divides the flow of time into measures which are of equal duration and which are marked off by a regularly occurring explicit pulse ('accent', 'stress', 'beat') which comes on the first syllable or note or other sound of each measure and is made more prominent than the surrounding sounds by means of increased loudness, pitch or duration, or some combination of some or all of these" (p 39). He explains that measured time is the time one can tap feet to while counting the metrical units, a practice which is not possible with unmeasured time (p 6); adding that two kinds of counting signifying two metre [duple and quadruple metre] have dominated the Western 'high art' music since the introduction of measured time system (p48).

He describes unmeasured time as a slow meditative time 'fluctuation' that creates absence of a regular pulse or beat (p 51). He argues that proper and regularly patterned dance as a physical reaction is possible to a measured music, while only a slow swaying of the body is possible to an unmeasured music. He further argues that:

The 'metronomic' system is more 'delicate' than the 'measurement' system: 'metronomic' and 'non-metronomic' time form a subdivision of 'measured time'. 'Metronomic time' is governed by the implacable regularity of the machine, whether or not a metronome (or a drum machine or stopwatch) is actually used. It is the time of the machine, or of soldiers on the march. 'Non-metronomic time' is also measured, but it subverts the regularity of the machine. It is the time of human speech and movement, or of Billie Holiday singing a slow blues while 'surfing on the beat' (Leeuwen 1999: 7).

The foregoing definitions and explications of the concept of measured, unmeasured, metronomic and non-metronomic sensibility show some measures of strict applications in musical practice. In Igoru performance, however, the composer/performer has some liberty slowing down the tempo or increasing it to enact climatic messages in narratives. This may appear in resemblance of unmeasured durations, but if the listener has the opportunity of watching or participating in the performance, it would be clear that the durations are still regular, only at a slower pace somewhat. If an Igoru musician performs singularly as a soloist, this character is persistent than when he is accompanied. The drums' punctuations of the main beats, as well as the syllabic accent reflecting on the vocal melody cumulatively regulate the whole performance into regular durations.

Although Igoru music is not written on scripts to formally structure its measures by use of bar lines, the putative conglomeration of the regular pulse and durations give it the character of a measured music, not visually conceived, but mentally perceived with the sensibility of body motor-impulse. So far, we have identified the dominance of the compound quadruple metre. Igoru musicians at no time in history used any mechanical means of keeping to strictly regimented tempo at any performance. The use of metronome, clock, stick or any other mechanical device was never practiced by Igoru musicians who enjoy the freedom of musical expression in sensitive and cooperative regularity of voices and instruments.

Deidre Hasen (1993: 59) adopts the term variable metre to describe a composition that has a free metrical organization, where the textual lines are unequal. She writes to buttress this point as follows:

Common to all is their delivery of lines of *ukubonga* (praising [phrasing?]) of different length, which occur successively. There appears to be no prescriptive meter in *izibongo*, as is the case in real songs, in which words are fitted against a specific metrical pattern of fixed length. When composing this walking song the unknown composer deliberately drew upon a basic structural feature of *izibongo* [not italicized in original], a non-musical oral tradition long associated with the institutions of kingship and chieftainship. This is the reason for the use of variable meter, i.e. varying lines of text (carrying melodies) of different length.

Chernoff (1979: 47) quotes S. D. Cudjoe using the term “movable bar” to describe the kind of rhythm that evolves from the performance extempore of a dexterous drummer as follows: “The changing configuration of Ewe drumming...is so well exploited by the greatest master–drummers that one gets

the notion of a movable bar contracting or expanding in time signature according to the inspiration of the moment”.

Igoru musicians do not conceive their poetic lines in writing, but follow the grammatical structure of the Okpe language to ensure that the lyrics of their songs make meaning poetically and melodically. Going through some of the poems, we find some lines having one or more syllables over the preceding or following line. They nonetheless suggest a common metre, following the accent of the language reflected in the lines. Some of the transcriptions show a line of eleven syllables followed by a line of ten. In this case, the first line is metrically treated in the melody with the last syllable given a longer duration to create a balance. Sometimes, we have a line of eight syllables followed by another line of seemingly seven syllables with the last syllabic vowel doubled in pronunciation. The last syllable is thus treated with a slur that links the sounds of the duplicated vowel. This eventually gives the melody its metrical balance. We also find lines that naturally balance with one another in six or more syllables in certain metrical patterns, but it should be understood that this is not as consistent as one would find in Western hymns. These features receive more attention in chapters six and eight. But it should be noted that the notion of variable metre and moveable bar are not found in the perception and discourse of Igoru musicians.

2.6 Form, genre, style and typology

These terms have often been used interchangeably by many writers to describe different types of music. Percy Scholes (1991: 218) defines form as an internal pattern of music organization, from the putting together of musical phrases into sentences, up to putting together of themes and long sections into movements of various sorts and putting together of movements into such cyclic forms as suites,

sonatas and symphonies. Willi Apel (1970: 326-327) argues that the term form has different meanings, depending on whether it refers to “form in music” or “forms of music”. He writes that the former refers to the orderly organization of the sounds of music with relationship to pitch, melody, rhythm, etc, while the latter refers to “the existence of certain schemes that govern the overall structure of a composition and were traditionally used in various periods of music history, e.g. the fugue or the sonata”. In other words, he writes that “the form *in* [italics in original] a composition is entirely dependent on its content” while “the form *of* a composition (if it has a ‘form’) is essentially independent of its content”. The various forms in Igoru music are discussed in chapter seven.

John Dowling (2001: 657) defines genre as a class, type or category of musical works or practices, based on the principle of repetition sanctioned by convention. In poetry and folk music, as it were in classical discourse, he states tragedy, comedy, epic, lyric, novel, ballad, legend, proverb, lyric folksong and absolute music as genres and that titles such as sonata, symphony and quartet marked the quest for autonomy within instrumental music. Tom Manoff (1982: 2) argues that “musical style may be thought of as the outer layer of musical experience” thus most people would recognize familiar musical styles such as classical, country, jazz, rock, as well as Bulgarian folk dance, Irish jig, American square dance and classical ballet as different from one another.

Lawrence Witzleben (2002: 91) uses the term genres of music to refer to categories of performances that include unaccompanied folk songs, instrumental music, narrative songs with instruments, and dimensions of music drama and religious ceremony. It seems that no dictionary of music has considered the definition of the common term typology, though several authors have used it at

different times to refer to the notion of music types. Arom (1991: 215), however, adopts the term typology to refer to the various characteristics of Central African music such as strict polyrhythmics, polyphony produced by hocket, polyphony produced by melodic instruments and vocal polyphony. In our discussion of Igoru music, we shall adopt the terms form and typology to refer to the internal structures of Igoru music and Igoru music as one of the various types of music practiced in Okpe respectively.

2. 6. 1 Antiphony, responsorial, call and response

Kebede (1982: 7) writes that 'responsorial' is a common style of singing amongst the sub-saharan cultures. It is a pattern of call and response that involves two or more singers, a solo or group response to the lead singer imitatively, duplicative or otherwise. He defines 'antiphony' or 'antiphonal singing' as the call and response form that involves two independent groups that respond to one another, or two performers from each group responding to each other. Deidre Hasen (1993: 58) describes the concept of antiphonal singing as a structure that comprises solo and chorus phrases with occasional overlapping. Arom (1991: 18) discusses these concepts as follows:

Antiphonal and responsorial structures are the dominant characteristics of traditional Central African music. In certain pieces in which the melodic material is more developed, the two techniques may appear alternately. But, very generally a soloist is contrasted with a choir made up of the whole of the audience. Musical repetition, in its simplest form, is responsorial or litanical. The soloist sings a series of phrases that the choir punctuates with a response, which is usually shorter than the solo utterance. This response, or consequent, is most often sung in unison, and could therefore in the last resort be provided by a single performer: sometimes it is sporadically in parallel intervals of fourths and fifths. The other kind of repetition

takes the antiphonal form. Unlike responsorial form, there is regular alternation between the two parts: each phrase, having been announced by the soloist, is immediately repeated note-for-note by the audience. In both forms, the solo and choral parts can overlap.

The definition of Arom seems more explicit, clearly distinguishing between responsorial and antiphonal styles. The former being call and response pattern involving a soloist and a chorus where the chorus response, whether imitative of the solo line or not, is shorter, and the latter involving a note by note repeat of the solo line by the chorus. In Igoru music, there are these forms of call and response patterns discussed in chapter seven. But the kind of group versus group call and response singing defined by Kebede as antiphony does not exist in Igoru performance practice.

2. 6. 2 Strophic and narrative

Apel (1970: 811) writes that strophic is a designation for a song, in which all stanzas of the text are sung to the same music, in contrast to through-composed which has a new music for each stanza. He also discusses strophic bass as a technique in 17thc monody where the same bass is applied to all stanzas of a song with varying melodies in its upper part. Kebede (1982: 6-7) states that when the same melody is repeated for every stanza or strophe of a song poem, it is said to be in strophic form. He remarks that the strophic form is often performed solo with or without accompaniment, observing that slight variations may exist between the verse lines and these are also set to fit into the standard repetitive melodic lines. Igoru music uses the various forms of call and response as well as through-composed forms in its narratives. If a song is short, the chorus may repeat it after the soloist, but a strophic form where verses of equal length are set

to one melody to be sung over and again is not commonly practiced by Igoru musicians.

2. 6. 3 Ensemble thematic cycle, soloist and receiver soloist

Nzewi (1997: 44) adopts the term “ensemble thematic cycle” to describe “the plan of an ensemble gestalt (gross durational content of differentiated instrumental thematic gestalt) which recurs in essentially the same shape and time but with continually changing sound quality”. He defines the concept as clearly as follows:

Within the scope of this discussion we define Ensemble Thematic Cycle (11) as the significant musical form or module by which a piece of African music is recognised. It is the aggregate sound of the layers of role-themes in an ensemble. Its length and significant content is the lowest common multiple of the unequal lengths cum differentiated contents of all the compositional themes assigned the various instruments of an ensemble for the purposes of the performance-composition of a piece on any performance occasion or session. The Ensemble Thematic Cycle is recycled within a fixed time frame but with varying qualitative affect in the course of a performance.

The ensemble thematic cycle in Igoru music is most recognized in the working together of the mother *ukiri*, varied *ukiri* and voices, whose characteristics are discussed in chapter five.

Kebede (1982: 6) examines various concepts of performance to include solo performance by only one person, duet by two persons, trio (three persons), quartet (four), quintet (five), sextet (six), septet (seven), octet (eight), nonet (nine) and chorus (more than nine). He asserts that most African and Asian vocal

groups number between ten and twenty five and their religious music is often performed a cappella. Uzoigwe (1998: 4) adopts the terms soloist and receiver soloist in the context of *ukom* performance to refer to a style where the principal soloist hands over to the second player who takes a turn playing another solo section. An Igoru musician may perform as a soloist, backed up by a chorus thereby involving a group. The standard Igoru performance, however, according to Udogu Olocho, Amukeye Okodide, Idisi Adibo, and the records of Egboto Isiniq ensemble involves principally four singers with a chorus.

The principal singers include the *Qbo ijoro* (the lead singer or soloist), *Ofru ijoro*, (receiver soloist) *Ohwe ijoro* (response singer) and *Ogani* (lower part singer). The *Qbo ijoro*, lead soloist normally hands over to the second who acts as the receiver soloist, while the chorus comes in together with the lower part singer. The terms *qbo* literally means a physician; often a spiritual-magical or spiritual-medical practitioner, while *ofru* means the one who picks up fast. In the context of Igoru performance practice, the *qbo ijoro* is more or less a spirit-filled powerful expert who is capable of configuring, concocting and performing music excellently. And the *ofru ijoro* is one who is capable of picking up or receiving the solo from the lead soloist to relieve him/her and to link up the chorus by giving the appropriate cues. In the discourse among Igoru performers at rehearsals and performances, as observed in Amukeye Okodide's ensemble, the lead soloist could be heard instructing the second soloist to receive the solo from her. She would often remark "*haye mie me*", meaning "receive it from me" or "*fru e mie me*" meaning "take it fast from me". This is given detail discussion in chapter five under vocal organization.

2. 6. 4 Improvisation, extemporization and performance composition

Apel (1970: 404) defines improvisation and extemporization as the art of performing music spontaneously without the aid of manuscript, sketches or memory, and may also mean an introduction of unprepared details into written compositions at the time of performance. Don Randel (1986: 395) argues that “music in oral tradition is normally composed by improvisation of a sort: the audible rendition of pieces (though usually without audience), whose components may then be altered and recombined and finally memorized”. He further argues that the performance of music in oral tradition, however, may or may not involve improvisation. In contrast, he adds that since Western art music is heavily dependent on notation for transmission, its notion of improvisation includes phenomena such as the addition of extemporized ornaments as well as special improvised genres.

The process of composition in Igoru music cannot be described as improvisation as Randel suggests. It is a process of constructive metaphysical, philosophical and sociological thought as Peter Etalo, Idisi Adibo and Udogu Olocho put it. The process of real composition of Igoru is to be understood as something quite different from the process of spontaneous creation or embellishment at performance. The real composition situation follows certain procedures as a grand preparation that precedes rehearsals and performances. The composition or the piece so composed, is stored in the memory of the composer in all its form, just as a piece of composition may be ‘stored’ in the manuscript in written cultures. At rehearsal or performance, the song is retrieved from memory by human efforts and recollection principles and is presented as prepared or pre-composed. Such a composition is by no means an improvisation.

Zabana Kongo and Jeffrey Robinson (2003: 95) define improvisation as the art of composing music as it is being performed, in forms of elaborating or modifying existing pre-composed material and in a free style where there are few or no parameters, conventions or rules to which it is required to fit. They further state that:

Improvisation is not exclusive to music, as the term refers to any act of spontaneous creation and is applicable to all of the performing arts. In its most general sense it means to 'make do' with whatever is immediately at hand, including what one brings into a situation by way of knowledge, skill and imagination...Improvisation in music is the equivalent of extemporization in verbal discourse. But while it would be ludicrous to call someone linguistically competent if he or she were unable to extemporize, many call themselves musicians though they are unable to improvise. Imagine not being able to speak beyond uttering words that have been worked out and written down in advance, usually by someone else! An important point regarding extemporization is that virtually everyone can do it. Some may do it better than others, but it is by no means a specialized behaviour demanding special inborn talent.

Improvisation as Kongo and Robinson present it is an essential ingredient required in oral performance. This is where the beauty and functionality of Igoru musical performances manifest a great deal. Even if a short song is introduced and repeated by the chorus, one cannot presume that it is ended or that continuity might be repetitive without variations. A skillful Igoru musician would improvise over the principal theme developmentally and only the chorus response may have to be repeated to punctuate or complement the solo sections. This is evident in song 25, page A2 – 63 which some Igoru musicians might perform only as an introductory formula, but was fully developed by Omaromuaye Igside and his ensemble members at a performance in Jeddo.

Arom (1991: 19) argues the concept and process of improvisation as follows;

Finally, improvisation, which I have described as the driving force behind melodic and rhythmic variations, plays an important part in every group. But there is no such thing as free improvisation, that is, improvisation that does not refer back to some precise and identifiable piece of music. It is always subordinate to the musical structure in which it appears, in respect of mode, metre and rhythm. Improvisation of text and melody are also closely linked: in any song with more than one verse, as soon as the words change, the melody too must be modified, to follow the language tones. Furthermore, even if the singer allows himself considerable freedom in the enunciation of the text phrases, he is nevertheless constrained, as Kubik has observed, by strict rules requiring a return to the principal phrase from time to time, and by respect for the meaning of the text.

We find in Igoru music that improvisation of text does modify both the rhythm and melody, in order to maintain clarity of meaning. That is, the new text may consist of more or less syllables than the former and would require a different pattern of durations and additional or reduction of pitches. Improvisations are usually executed within the existing scheme in metre, mode and phrasing.

Nzewi (1997: 67-68) adopts and defines the term performance-composition as “the situational re-composition of a known piece deriving from its significant formal-harmonic-thematic frameworks. It is further guided by the extra-musical contingencies of every performance occasion as well as the musical integrity of an alert master musician”. He distinguishes between improvisation and performance-composition, stating that the former is a spontaneous creation guided by the conventions of the music culture, type, piece, group, and audience sensitization; while the latter is “a mediation of continuity and conformity in a

creative situation". Meki Nzewi, Israel Anyahuru and Tom Ohiaumunna (2001: 99) and Andrew Tracey and Joshua Uzoigwe (2003: 87) use the term performance-composition subsequently to refer to the concept of spontaneous creation by a performing composer on the spur of a performance situation. Performance-composition is a feature in Igoru performance practice, a situation by which a performer creates spontaneously, using the immediate events around him/her in the performance arena.

2. 6. 5 Repetition, ostinato and tempo

The term repetition has been applied to the discussion of African music in both positive and negative manners. Earlier reports, out of intolerance and lack of respect for the creative thought of other races, applied the term negatively, but later studies examined the practice more objectively. Nketia (1970: 12) quotes one of the early explorers, Lt. Col. H. P. Northcoth's *Report on the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast* as follows:

Iteration and reiteration of the same airs never seem to weary the West African. His chief musical treat, however, is the tom-tom. In season and out of season, all day and all night, he is prepared to abandon himself to the delight of a noisy demonstration on this instrument of torture, and it is more often exhaustion on the part of the performers than boredom by the audience that puts a period to the deafening and monotonous noise (Nketia 1970: 12).

Repetitions result in recycling themes wherein developmental variations occur in Igoru music. They are not, particularly in the vocal section, strict repetitions

without variations in thematic module and style. Arom (1991: 17) argues while discussing formal musical structures as follows:

All musical pieces are characterized by cyclic structure that generates numerous improvised variations: *repetition* and *variation* [italics in original] is one of the most fundamental principles of all Central African music, as indeed of many other musics in Black Africa. This principle excludes the process of development, fundamental to European art music, but totally unknown in African musical thought. As Gilbert Rouget aptly remarked: 'There are indeed musics which find in repetition or variation – and consequently in non-development – their very accomplishment' (Rouget 1956: 133). It is upon extremely simple elements that a process of maximal elaboration is constructed, by using variations that exploit the basic material to the utmost.

Cyclic structure is one of the fundamental characteristics of Iguru music. It is an approach adopted for extensive thematic development of narratives. This, of course, presents several variations in the process as is found in song 39, page A2 – 116. Each versification in the solo section is a new idea in text and creates modification on the previous melodic line to suit the new text. The chorus response, similarly, presents a new idea in the text to complement the idea introduced by the lead soloist and so modify its own melodic line as well. The process produces a gradual building up of the narrative thought with series of variations resulting from the first solo and response motives.

Lara Allen (1993: 4) writes the following on the cyclical structure in a South African urban popular music typology known as *Kwela*, a good justification of African identity for which Africans must be unblushing, but be proud of this character:

The repetitive nature of *Kwela*, so complained of by elite critics, results from the style's cyclical structure. Not

surprisingly it is one of the most African aspects of *Kwela* and is greatly responsible for the style's popularity amongst the proletariat. However, as soon as the *Kwela* obtained the very international status desired by the black elite, pennywhistlers and their music received almost excessive positive publicity from the press. The black elite realised that their needs would be more easily fulfilled through the consolidation of identity along lines of race, rather than class.

Arom (1991: 40) examines the term *ostinato* from the background of previous literature written by Riemann (1931: 953), Bruno Nettl (1956: 87) and Rose Brandel (1965: 31; 1970: 20). He then writes:

Ostinato here means *the regular and uninterrupted repetition of a rhythmic or melodic-rhythmic figure, with an unvarying periodicity underlying it* (Italics in original). This definition, though intended as a description of traditional Central African music, does not conflict with Western musicological definitions of the term. Thus Riemann defines *ostinato* as 'a technical term that describes the continual return of a theme surrounded by ever-changing counterpoint...Many Central African musics correspond exactly to this definition. They are indeed musical pieces based on a short phrase, which reappears 'in all sorts of modified forms'...'The African *ostinato*, usually quite small in length and pitch range, may be continuous or intermittent, vocal or instrumental, and may appear above or below the main line. Frequently there is a multi-*ostinato*, two or more *ostinatos* moving contrapuntally, with or without a longer melodic line'.

In the instrumental section of Igoru music, bi-*ostinato* is found to exist between the mother and baby *ukiri*. The baby *ukiri* plays a simpler version while the mother *ukiri* plays a more complex one with syncopations. It should be noted; however, that in the height of performance spur the mother *ukiri* player could be

inspired to create a few variations of its fundamental thematic cycle to the limit it is allowed.

Apel (1970: 250) defines tempo as the speed of a composition or sections of it, as indicated by use of tempo marks such as *largo*, *adagio*, or more accurate metronome indications like crotchet = M. M. 100 meaning that a crotchet lasts for 1/100 of a minute. Arom (1991: 17) discusses the concept of tempo in Central African music as follows:

Finally, *tempo* [italics in original], or what Claudie Marcel-Dubois calls 'organic speed or movement' (1965: 204), is the only constant element in Central African musical discourse; all the others (melody, rhythm and instrumental patterns) may give rise to variations. But there is never, within the one piece of music, the slightest variation in *tempo*; it remains constant right to the end, without *accelerando*, *retardando*, *rubato* or *fermata* [italics in original]. If, for ritual reasons in particular, there are successive pieces of music with differing tempos (during a ceremony for instance) Central African musicians never create a transition from one piece to the next; they juxtapose them, preserving a clean break between the two. Furthermore, even when a piece is slow, the unit of the *tempo*, the 'beat', whether expressed or implicit, is never slow. The basic pulse underlying every piece of music is somewhere between 80 and 140 units per minute (approximately). Finally, it should be borne in mind that unintentional fluctuations in tempo in a musical performance are extremely slight.

In recorded Igoru music, we find a very strict and constant tempo maintained as in Egboto Isini's, perhaps an effect of the studio environment. In live performances, though a steady tempo may be sustained over a period of time, we observe freedom of expression wherein the performer could slow down the pace occasionally to enact a salient point in the narrative as stated earlier in this

discourse. Igoru musicians are skilled in connecting two or more songs together without a major break, particularly when they are under the imbuing influence of performance mania. Sometimes, in fact, if one does not carefully examine the subject of the pieces, he/she could conclude that two connected pieces are but one. Usually, a major break between two songs is often established by the return of the Igoru signature tune or any of the numerous closing formulas. If smooth connectivity is desired by the performer, either of these closing formulas is deliberately avoided in order for the next song to be introduced immediately. This is discussed further in chapter seven.

2.7 Drum and drumming

Don Randel (1986: 243) writes that drums are principally membrane instruments spread around the cultures of the world. He notes, however, that some idiophone categories of instruments are grouped or classified as some kinds of drum. Among these idiophone and membranophone instruments, he lists the following classification to include those struck (slit drums); those shaken (rattle drums); those rubbed (friction drums); those plucked (string drums); and those with tension ropes. The drums appear in various forms, sizes and shapes descriptively classified as bowl, cylinder, barrel, cone, hourglass and simple frames. The membrane drums essentially have one or two heads that are laced, nailed, glued or held by modern counter-hoops and bolts to their body. John Chernoff (1979: 43) discusses Ewe drums that are made like barrels, with a strong hide of a small bush antelope which serves as the drumhead sewn to a hoop around the rim of the mouth, leaving hoops of strings that fit into notched pegs driven into holes on the side of the drum secured by friction. The three *ukiri* used in Igoru performance are short single-headed cylindrical drums that appear

in various sizes. They are made from wood and animal hides, which have been discussed in-depth in chapter five.

About Drums ([author's names not in the article] www.danmcdrum.supanet.com 2005/05/18) discusses how drums are normally played. The writer states that the *Djembe* has a vast range of tones and is very responsive to three conventional strokes, in that slight change in positioning, pressure and accentuation of each stroke could create slightly different sound. He/she argues that non-existing touch or grace notes can be represented by gentle touch on the drum; whereas *Kpanlogo* drums like the *Djembe* have three conventional strokes, but with slap notes that involves a slap that rests on the skin rather than bouncing off it. *Sabar* drums, he/she adds, are played with palm and stick to generate sharp and penetrating sounds, but require a lot of carefulness to avoid bruising one's fingers as the drumhead is small.

Discover the Ngoma drum, East African drums, Engoma: Learn to play Ngoma King of the drums, East African drums ([author's names not in the article] www.experienceafrica.co.uk last updated on 1/12/2004) discusses the Ngoma drums of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and DR Congo as instruments made of wood and covered mainly with cow skin all around it, a group of seven or four may be found making an ensemble. The three big ones are beaten by hand while the small one among them is beaten with stick. In Igoru music, only two or three of the *ukiri* may form the instrumental accompaniment and they are all beaten with stick. Although the circumference of the drums is small and the player uses the left hand to manipulate some muting and tensioning, no Igoru drummer runs the risk of striking his fingers, because the left hand works only within a small space around the edge of the membrane.

Moreover, an experienced or expert drummer is not expected to bruise his finger at a performance.

Don Randel (1986: 243) remarks that “in *Africa, the *Near East, *South Asia [asterisk in the original], and elsewhere, the contrast of two or more higher and lower indefinite pitches on one, two, or more drums is a central feature of drumming” and this is achieved by application of various playing techniques. Nketia (1979: 89) writes that the techniques of playing by use of cupped hand, palm, palm and fingers, straight stick, curved or bent stick with or without knob on different positions of the drumhead determine the sonority of the drums. Chernoff (1979: 43) again discusses the playing technique of the Ewe drums, stating that the master drums are often beaten by hand or with one hand one stick and striking the drumhead freely so that the stick bounces off it gives a resonant and stressed beat in contrast to secondary notes that derive from “pressing the stick onto the drumhead to produce a muted beat several intervals higher than a free stick beat”. The mother and baby *ukiri* of Igoru music are played by application of the techniques identified by Chernoff above. The drummers strike loosely or freely so that the stick bounces off the membrane to produce deeper tones and press the stick against the drumhead to generate higher tones. This has been discussed in chapter five.

2. 7. 1 Talking drum and varied drum

Several articles have been published on the concept of “talking drum”, particularly in West Africa and we need to examine such a concept whether the drums actually speak the spoken language or some kind of coded language of communication within some limits before adopting it (the term) for discourses. Catherine Schmidt-Jones (2004: 1 [accessed on the internet]) differentiates

between message drums and talking drums, that the former are log drums that can be heard miles away with messages in some kind of code that may be based on spoken sentences; while the latter are a kind of drums referred to as “waisted drums” in Korea and India, but known as “talking drums” in West Africa. The talking drums found among the Ashanti of Ghana and Yoruba of Nigeria are referred to as ‘waisted drums’, because they have an hourglass shape with a ‘waist’ at the middle. In the article *Francis Awe and the Nigerian Talking Drum Ensemble*, the writer says that the drum *dundun* (meaning sweet sound) in Yoruba land is called talking drum, because it emulates the tonal quality of the Yoruba language ([author’s names not in the article] www.nitade.com 2005/05/18).

In the *Language of the Drum*, the article argues that the Yoruba talking drums were first invented for battle, thus they could mimic speech and warn warriors of impending attack across a distance before they became used later as musical instruments. And as musical instruments, if a drummer plays a wrong note at a ritual, it is believed he has caused the entire village ([author’s names not in the article] www.thehealingdrum.com 2005/05/18). In another article *How the Bata Drums Talk and What they Say*, the writer argues that “The bata drums speak. Not in a metaphorical sense, but they really can be used to speak the Yoruba language, and have been used traditionally to recite prayers, religious poetry, greetings, announcements, praises for leaders, and even jokes or teasing” ([author’s names not in the article] www.batadrums.com 2005/05/18). The *Instrument Encyclopedia on Talking Drum* states that talking drums are part of a family of hourglass shaped pressure drums, namely the *gangan* and *dundun* of Yoruba Nigeria. They have the ability to closely imitate the rhythm and

intonations of the spoken Yoruba language ([author's names not in the article] www.si.umich.edu 2005/05/18).

The Ngoma from Uganda is reported to have played very important roles in the lives of the people in communication and celebration even as a symbol of authority to the extent that an ethnic group in Uganda is called the “children of Ngoma”. Much as the roles of communication are associated with this instrument, the writer however did not claim that the people call it talking drum ([author's names not in the article] www.experienceafrica.co.uk last updated on 1/12/2004). Yaya Diallo and Mitchell Hall (1989: 93) argue as follows:

The *tama* is another popular drum in my culture. Americans call this a talking drum, but in my tribe we only play music on it. We are happy to talk with words and do not need drums for our conversations. The *tama* [not italicized in original this time] drum is small, carved from a tree trunk, and shaped like an hourglass, wider at both ends and narrow in the middle.

The *ukiri* and the *agogo* (bell) are normally used to announce messages in various Okpẹ communities, but as musical instruments, neither the *ukiri* nor the *agogo* are referred to as a talking drum or bell in the discourses of Igoru musicians. It should be noted that the bell is not a member of Igoru ensemble. We have mentioned it here, because it is a message instrument like the *ukiri*. The only instrument the Okpẹ musicians believe talks in a way, is *Ekperẹ* (Elephant tusk) used in *Ema* (royal and chieftain) music. Not everyone is able to decode the language texts it communicates. It is played in dialogue with an oral performer who understands its language and challenges it to go on praising. Igoru musicians, however, refer to the medium *ukiri* as a varied drum (*ukiri evwariẹn*), because it plays a lot of varied melo-rhythms over the ensemble thematic gestalt. It is the instrument among the three in the ensemble that has

more freedom to develop its motive extensively without any limitations. This is discussed further in chapter five.

2. 7. 2 Drum language and Voice masking

Kenichi Tsukada (2001: 150) argues that a system of oral transmission of instrumental music based on idiophonic principles has been well developed in Japan and many parts of Africa:

In Japan, the system was devised to indicate the playing techniques of an instrument, to aid memorization and even to substitute for actual performance in certain contexts. In African societies, it is sometimes employed in drum lessons “to bring out the duration of the drum beats and the tone contrasts” (Nketia 1963: 33) to aid memorization of patterns and playing techniques. This practice has normally been discussed under such designations as “nonsense syllables”, “oral mnemonics”, “oral notation” and “solmization” [so spelt in original]. These terms, however, have been more or less loaded with cultural biases related to Western musical practice. A more neutral, more universally applicable term is required for discussion, and I propose the term “verbal representation of instrumental sounds”. I use this term (hereafter abbreviated as VR).

Olaniyan (2001: 69) writes that the onomatopoeic statement *bo tan ma tun roko* meaning “if it ends, I shall return to the farm” is used to train children how to play the *gudugudu* drum. *Music of Sub-Saharan Africa* ([author’s names not in the article] www.sinc.sunvsb.edu 2005) illustrates the *atumpan* in its “speech mode,” drumming as if for a ceremonial occasion with possibilities of producing its rhythms and tones on the two drumheads following the Akan *Twi* language, which is tonal. The practice is sometimes referred to as “speech surrogation”. The drum plays in alternation with a translation of its speech and first greets those present, then recites verses in praise of a king and of the River *TanoGahu*,

one of several popular styles of social music and dance in Ewe communities. Igoru musicians use a kind of verbalization to represent the tones and melo-rhythms played on the *ukiri* drums. This is used as a means to enable a learner memorize the phrases and conceptualize the melo-rhythmic tonality of the drums. Although, the *ukiri* contributes to the entire communication system of the Igoru performance between it and the singers, dancers and audience, its language at this level is not considered near equivalent to the Okpè language itself. This is discussed further in chapter five.

Kebede (1982: 6) states that in most African and Asian vocal group performance, some singers mask their voices by singing through a musical instrument like horn or flute, which disguises the identity of the performer's voice. He asserts that "Wearing masks and voice masking are very common practices, particularly in the magicoreligious ceremonials throughout sub-Saharan Africa". It is important to state here that there is no voice masking of any kind in Igoru performance. Sonorous voices are recognized as naturally sonorous even though attempts are made to facilitate mellifluous voices in the performance practice. This is normally done before the performance proper as a kind of application of traditional medicine as discussed in chapter five.

2. 7. 3 Bass, tenor, tom tom, master, mother and baby drums

The above terms have often appeared in the discourse of African drums, and it would be necessary to examine how Africans, particularly Igoru musicians in this context, construct thoughts about them and how they name them in their local patois. John Blacking (1967: 21) discusses the performance practice of the Venda boys and girls' initiation ceremony musical instruments, adopting such

names as alto, tenor and bass drums. He writes that “The girls’ dance, **tshigombela** (bold in the original), and the boys’ reed-pipe dances are not sufficiently important to merit the use of the bass drum, which is reserved for the music of the **domba** initiation and the national dance. Similarly, only the tenor and alto drums are used in the girls’ initiation schools”. Kevin Brown (2005: 2 [Internet]) writes that Cymbals and tom tom came from China as addition to the earliest forms of [Western, mine] drum set. There is no drum in the Igoru ensemble called by such names used by Blacking above. The three drums that form the instrumental ensemble are called *Ukiri* as stated earlier, though each of them is further designated by representative names according to their roles in the ensemble.

Some writers use terms such as the following to discuss African drums and their players: James O’Brien (1994: 308) mother drum (*uta* of the Ibibio of Nigeria); Jan Ijzermans (1995: 259) master drummer; Nzewi (1977: 379) master musician; John Chernoff (1979: 43, 50) master drum, master drummer; Elizabeth Oehrle (1993: 116) talking drum; Kenichi Tsukada (2001: 159) master drummers; Nzewi (2003:31) master instrument; Elizabeth Oehrle and Lawrence Emeka (2003: 42) master instrument. Others include: Andrew Tracey and Joshua Uzoigwe (2003: 84, 88) master musician, and master drummer; Zabana Kongo and Jeffrey Robinson (2003: 105) master musician; Jerry Leake (*Modern Drummer Magazine*, December, 2004: 2), master drummers and master musicians; *Music of Sub-Saharan Africa* www.sinc.sunvsb.edu (2005 [author’s names not in the article]) *iya ilu* (“mother” drum) serving as the master drum, *omele ako* (small “male” drum), and *omele abo* (small “female” drum).

In Igoru music, as in several African cultures, the drum that has the deepest tones in the ensemble is called the mother drum (*izu ukiri*), while the second is called the baby drum (*omo ukiri*) and the third varied drum (*ukiri evwarien*). The concept derives from the philosophy that music is caring (motherly) for the human soul and general well-being. The drums, generally in the Okpe culture, as is also evident in several other African cultures, are considered sacred, being representative of the feminine gender and her invaluable productivity. This philosophical construct, further includes certain restrictions that a “mother-producer” should not sit upon or strike other “mother-producers”. Breaking these set of rules has spiritual implications that the offender could be punished by the ancestral spirits.

The palm tree, in Okpe, is considered to be feminine and is referred to as a productive mother (*omiomom*). For this cause, women are neither allowed to climb it, nor attempt to fell it by cutting it with strokes of the cutlass or axe and are not allowed to sit upon it when it falls. In the same way, women are not allowed to beat the drums in traditional Okpe culture; they could compose, sing and dance. In some of the other music typologies like *Ijurhi*, the master drummer sits on the drums to beat them and as the rule is, women are forbidden to sit upon or stroke the drums. Two Igoru female ensemble leaders, Amukeye Okodidę and Titi Qvřen confirmed that their ensembles comprise only female members (performers), but included male drummers for this reason.



Plate 2 – 1: Amukeye Okodide (left) and Titi Ovren (right) female ensemble leaders and Esther Eni, member

The name and records of the *Egboto isinio* Igoru ensemble provide more evidence. *Egboto* means ladies or women and all the singers including the lead vocalist are female with only one male voice functioning as the coordinator/facilitator that introduces the names and pieces of the ensemble and sings the lower part in harmony. The drummers were also men. If according to (lespercussionsdeguinee.com (Internet: author's names not in the article) "the first all-female Guinean percussion group, Amazones - Women Master Drummers of Guinea was officially created in 2002" [by reason of modernism,

mine], similar reasons as those of Iguru music might have precluded women from beating the drums earlier.

Silver Burdett (2005: 2) writes that "Drum ensembles are often led by a **master drummer** [bold in original] who plays solos against the overlapping patterns. The master drummer also leads the ensemble by playing signals that tell the other players to switch to a different section, change drum patterns, change the tempo, or end the piece. Drums within an ensemble may be called into a dialog with the master drummer in a call-and-response pattern. The master drummer also works with dancers to coordinate the dances and tempos".

Music of Sub-Saharan Africa (www.sinc.sunvsb.edu 2005 [author's names not in the article]) discusses *fontomfrom*, (royal) drum ensemble of Akan communities and *bata* drums ensemble of the Benin Yoruba. For the former, the double bell (*gankogui*), a second metal gong (*atoke*), the calabash rattle (*axatse*), and a higher-pitched drum (*kaganu*), provide the basic rhythmic reference for the others and the larger drums (*sogo*, *kidi*, and *gboba*) interlock with the *kaganu* to create a dense, four-part texture and all respond to the calls of the master drum, *atsimevu* (spelt this way in original), which enters last. Bata drums, of the latter ensemble, comprise two small ones called *omele ako* and *omele abo* that are played with sticks, and a somewhat larger one, called *eki*, that is played with the hands. Of these, the larger one, called *iya ilu* ("mother" drum), serves as the master drum of the ensemble, and interacts most closely with the smaller horizontal one, called *ako*. *Obo Addy: Master Drummer* (www.oboaddy.com 2005 [author's names not in the article]) quotes a remark on the master drum as follows: "The precision astounded me with the drums changing for each item, from the sharp sound of the Ewe master drum to the warm sound of the Ga master drum."

Many writers have described the mother drums of some African cultures as master drums for their roles in the ensemble. Some even avoid talking about it as mother drum and simply refer to it as master drum. In Igoru music, though the varied drum plays more varied melo-rhythmic patterns, the mother drum is considered a fundamental foreground, and thus lays the fundamental layer for the other two to build upon. To consider the roles of the varied drum, and the mother drum, one might begin to consider which of them could be called the master instrument. Although the varied *ukiri* has more variations than the mother *ukiri*, it is difficult to distinguish the most dominant among the two in the ensemble. While the varied *ukiri* seems to dominate in melo-rhythmic variations, the mother *ukiri* dominates in its deep tonal character. The concept of a master in gender relationships is often masculine and since Igoru musicians conceive the drums together as feminine and do not refer to either of them as “master drum”, we shall then prefer the use of the terms mother drum, varied drum and baby drum to describe the three drums in this discourse.

CHAPTER 3

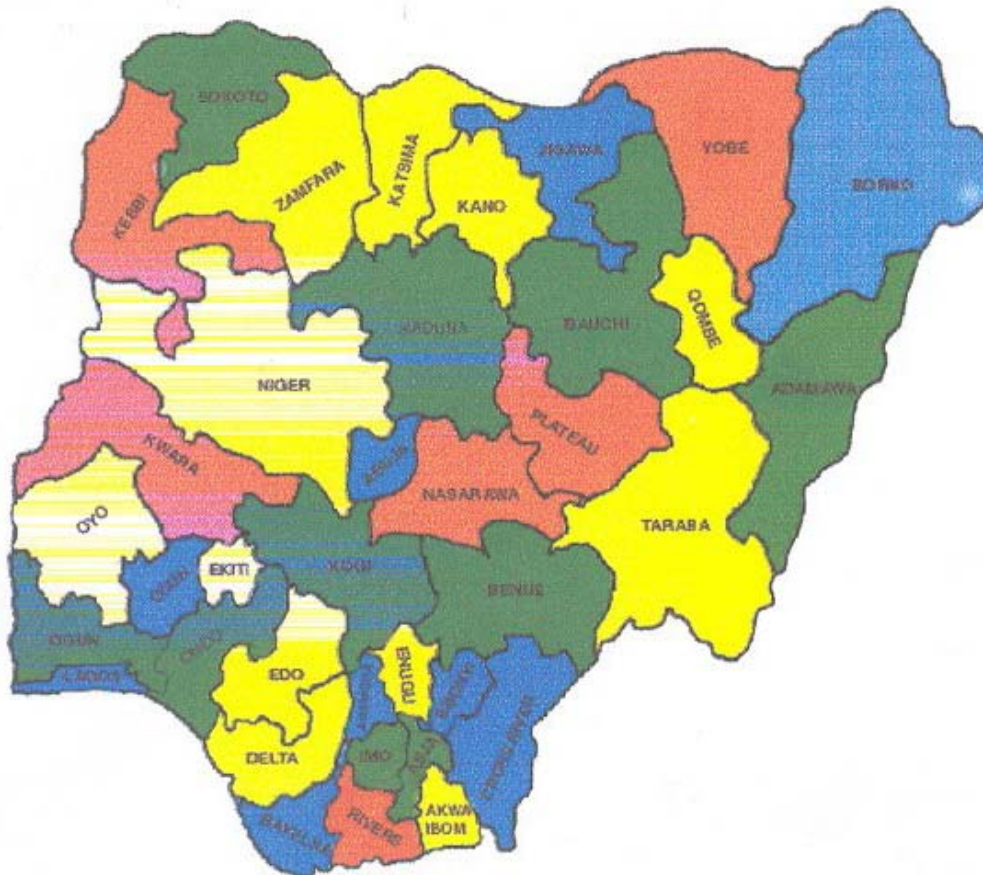
THE OKPE AND HER CULTURE

3. 1 Location and population

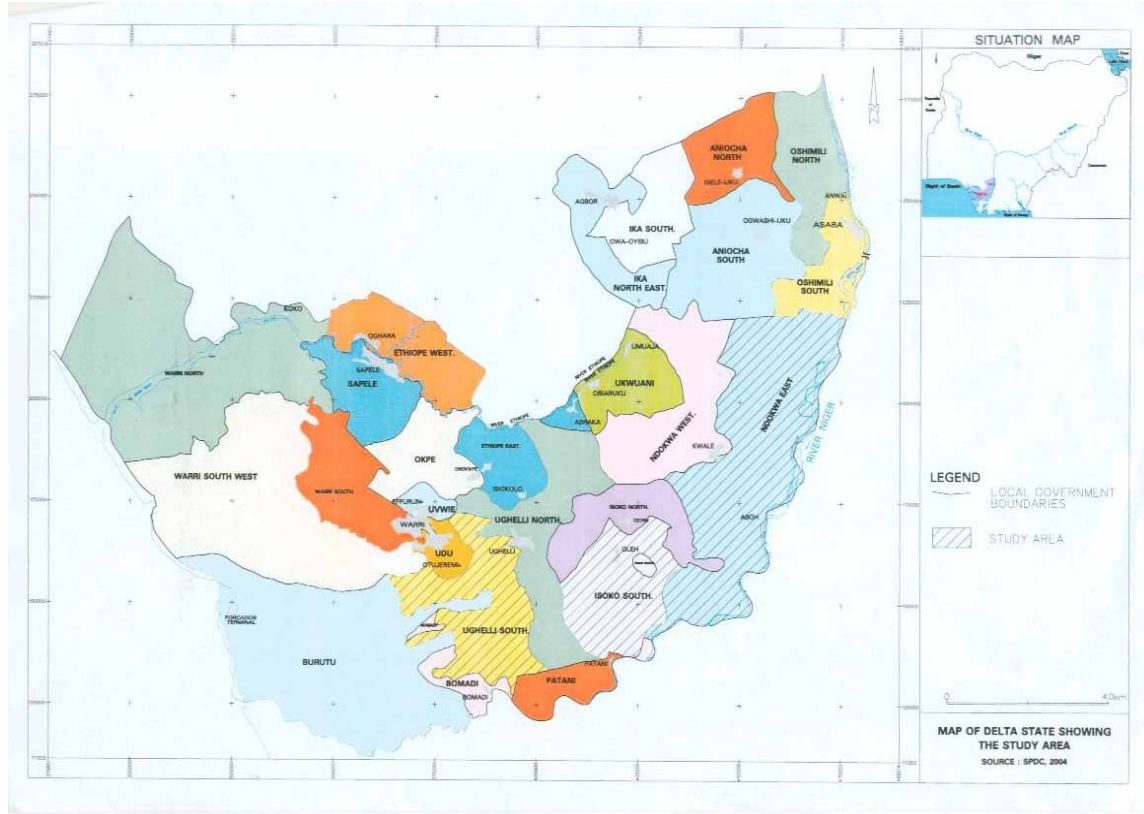
It is pertinent to give some ethnographical background of the Okpe, for the reasons that such ethnographical frameworks inform musical philosophy, creativity and practices and would therefore enhance our understanding of Ikoru music. The Okpe country is situated at the heart of Delta State of Nigeria within latitude 6° and 5° North and longitude 5° 50' and 6° 25' East (Onigu Otite, 1973: 4). It occupies a large expanse of landmass about 500sq kilometres of mainland, mangrove, swamp and rivers (Otite, 1982: 121). It is politically divided into Okpe and Sapele Local Government Areas of the state. Within the confines of this location, Okpe shares borders with Warri, Uvwie (Effurun), and Agbarho on the Southwest. On the Northeast axis, it has boundary with Oghara, Jesse, Benin and Agbon.

The Urhiapele River, Ethiope River and the Warri River mark its boundaries somewhat. It is one of the 374 ethnic groups in Nigeria (Otite, cited by David Dafinone, 2000: 8 [Internet]). Among the other ethnic groups in Delta State, the Okpe have the largest kingdom and highest population density up to 248, 314 in 1991/1992 census commission report (Onokerhoraye, 1995: 48).

It should be noted that some authors use the colonial political grouping that put the Okpe together with other Urhobo clans in the former Urhobo Division and discuss its population as such. Some of these authors therefore claim that “the Urhobo people are the 5th largest ethnic group in Nigeria and constitute the largest single ethnic group in Delta State (www.urhobo.org, author’s names not in the article), or claim that “In land area, Urhobo is larger than Switzerland (Dafinone, 2000: 3 [Internet]). See maps below:



Map 1: The Political Map of Nigeria showing thirty-six states.



Map 2: Map of Delta State showing Local Government Areas

3. 2 Geographical features

The Okpe terrain is made up of flat and low land with no hills, mountains and rocks. It however consists of mangrove swamp forest around several communities. In the hinterland of Aghalokpe, there exists a savannah belt. The land in Sapele area encompasses a forest reserve that is preserved and controlled by the state government. Apart from the Sapele forest reserve that is strictly under the government's monitoring guard tagged 'Forest Guard' – a paramilitary force, all other forests are accessible to inhabitants for game, farming, timbre and sawing operations. Several rivers and streams link up to each other and flow into major sources such as the three rivers earlier mentioned.

The Ethiope River, known for its shoal and crystal nature, runs through Urhiapele, Ikeresan, and Elume Rivers, to join Ugbokodo-Warri River. A creek breaks off around the Sapele reserved forest and runs through Ugberikoko, Ituru, Ugbibidaka and turns into shallow streams afterwards. Another creek turns off from the Ikeresan River, running through Okpakomedje to Elume River, thereby leaving an enclosed forest island. The Elume River runs through Ologho, Ekoko, Mereje and Ugbokodo Rivers. Some of the streams have waterways dredged to allow floating of timbre from the swamp forests into sawmills, which are often located by the riverbank, particularly in Sapele. The relief shows a promising fertile land further blessed with crude oil. There is a network of tarred and un-tarred roads linking towns and villages within and outside Okpe land. Some Igoru songs make reference to the road network, water spirits and fishing activities, as well as the farm landscape (See chapter six).

3. 3 Climate

The climatic condition of the Okpe land is temperate, being neither extremely cold, nor extremely hot. The dry season and the rainy season are further subdivided into four traditional seasons respectively. The subdivisions of the traditional seasons include the following:

A. The dry seasons

Season	Period	Feature
• <i>Okaka</i>	January-early March	Streams dry and fish ponds are depleted
• <i>Ororo</i>	Late March-early May	Oil palm productivity flourishes
• <i>Oriaren</i>	Late August-early Sept.	Trees denude and bear fresh leaves
• <i>Ohwahwa</i>	December-January	Harmattan wind blows

B. The rainy seasons

Season	Period	Feature
• <i>Qvon</i>	June	Intermittent rain fall
• <i>Ukude</i>	July-mid August	Flood and frog crowing
• <i>Ewe</i>	September	High volume of rain, thunder and lightening
• <i>Oya</i>	October	Some rain and much fishing success

It should be noted that little overlapping occurs in the above subdivisions. Within the first dry season called *okaka* between January and early March, the first rains of the year fall occasionally around mid-February and mid-March. The rains in late March

prepare the next season, *ororo*, and enable oil palm to get ripe for harvest. Towards the end of May, the clouds release some rain fall in preparation for the successive rainy seasons between June and October. It is pertinent to conclude that there is more rain falls than dry season periods in Okpe land. When Igoru musicians make reference to seasons in their songs, they however do not specify which of the subdivisions of rainy or dry season they mean. It could then be understood that any of the dry or rainy seasons apply.

3. 4 History

There is need to argue here that Okpẹ is a different ethnic group from Urhobo, though many reports and publications have often put them together. Hubbard (1948: 11) argues that 'Sobo' is a foreign word, an anglicized form of the name 'Urhobo' which in his writing was to be seen as a nonce word used to contrast the Urhobo, Okpẹ, Isoko, Erohwa and Uvwie whose languages have similarities, to the Ijaw, Itsekiri and Ibo whose languages are different. He explicitly remarks that 'it must be realized that although the 'Sobo' possess many customs in common, yet there is no such thing as the 'Sobo tribe' or 'Sobo nation'. Amaury Talbot (1926: 33) similarly argues that 'In the same way "Sobo," which is really an Anglicised form of "Uzobo," is given in this report to the sub-tribe of Edo, which embraces the two clans of Uzobo and Isoko'.

Apart from the above malapropos of the term 'Sobo' to lump these different ethnic groups together, the colonial administration, on its part, added the Okpẹ to the 'Sobo Division' for the sake of administrative convenience. Between 1934 and 1938 when the Okpẹ wanted to secede, her metropolis, Orerokpe was made the Headquarters of the Western Urhobo Native administration, in order to keep them together. Other reasons for the amalgamation of these ethnic groups include the observation of L. N.

Bowen, a European explorer who remarked that the Okpe were reputed to be the most progressive and best administered group through their native authority, the Orodje (king) of Okpe, and set a good example for the others in the whole of the Western Urhobo Council Area (Otite, 1973: 39). Confirming this political grouping, which clearly indicates that the Okpe and the Urhobo were not originally homogeneous people, Otite writes: 'Orerokpe the capital of Okpe kingdom, was the headquarters of the Western Urhobo District Council as from 1955 when Okpe kingdom was grouped with twelve other Urhobo polities (Otite, 1982: 132)'.

Chronologically, Yamu Numa (1950) as reported by Otite (1982: 23) speculated that the Okpe migrated from the ancient Egypt to Ile-Ife in 812 B. C; while Orororo (1994: 3) argues that the Okpe further migrated from Ile-Ife in 641 A. D. and arrived her permanent territorial metropolis, Orerokpe in 1170 A. D. According to C. I. Agino (1987: 2), the Egyptian king in the seventh century sent his heir apparent, the progenitor of Okpe away to avoid the cold hands of death during the warfare between Egypt and Israel. The point is however not clear whether the legendary Oduduwa of Ile-Ife was the Egyptian heir or not. But he argues that Obalufon, one of Oduduwa's sons gave birth to a son after a female child and named him Ope meaning 'it is (kinds of children are) complete' in Yoruba language. Born at Igbotakpa near Ile-Ife, Ope later to be spelt Okpe, grew strong and led a contingent from Ile-Ife to Benin.

He later founded a kingdom called Okpe Ikperhe where we have the Isoko people today and migrated further to found Okpe Olomu. It was not clear where exactly Okpe died, but before his death, he had four sons namely Orhue, Orhoru, Evbreke and Ezezi. The first son, Orhue, a nimrod, chased game through Ugo across Apele otherwise known as Ethiopie River at Ajaguoyibo, passing through Aghalokpe where he found a plantain, which bore edible fruits, an indication that the land was very fertile. He planted *ohimi*, a live tree there and named the place Orere-mo-kpe later to be shortened Orerokpe, meaning the city of Okpe ('s children). Having returned from

the hunting expedition, he led his brothers and a host of their descendants and followers to inhabit the new settlement, which expanded to what is known today as the Okpe nation. Oral interview at the Orodje's palace, Orokpe confirms the migration from Egypt through Ile-Ife and Benin, arriving the present location c 1100 A. D. Perkins Foss (2003: 16) remarks that 'Duarte Pacheco Pereira, one of the first explorers to chronicle the coast of the Niger Delta, noted in 1508 that the "subou" occupy the hinterland of the western delta, thus suggesting that at least parts of the country may have been occupied at this early date'. The earlier background above however indicates that the explorer's report only proves that the people had settled in the place, perhaps long before he (the explorer) arrived.

The supreme authority in the Okpe political system is the Orodje (king). The Orodje and his Chiefs constitute the Udogu Okpe (Okpe Supreme Council). When major decisions are to be taken and decrees are to be promulgated, the Orodje and his Chiefs meet with community representatives at a forum known as Okpe Assembly. Being a culture without written tradition, no chronicles exist on the early periods in Okpe until European influences surfaced. The reign of Ekperhi, one of the descendants of Esezi, was the first to be recorded by the British government and was gazette Esezi I. His reign between 1450 and 1480 attracted much attention because he was a despot, autocrat, dictator, and powerful tyrant, for which he was assassinated by his subjects. According to oral accounts, his *llotu* (*olotu*, singular), messengers on his instructions used to climb to the top of coconut trees to beat *Ozu* (a big mother drum) and announce his summons and decrees so that no one could claim ignorance. He often asked communities to present powerful representatives to break iron bars before him in order to examine the strength of his army. He decreed death sentences on those who failed the exercise.

He once invited the Ọkọkporo Division (communities) to present a representative for this exercise and the candidate was able to break the iron bar, for which the Division is christened Ọsía (Gorilla) to this day. Some oral sources claim that this great feat was performed successfully by aid of traditional medicine or spiritual powers

possessed by the Okokporo. Other oral accounts claim that one of the king's attendants who lived in the palace hailed from Okokporo and attempted to save his people by secretly sawing the iron bar and covering it with grease before the event. Oral tradition states further that the king often invited a group of people according to community quarters or Divisions and decreed that they should tie a rope on a palm tree at its top and pull it toward themselves to fell it. Many died in this process, and these led to the assassination of the king.

The theme of song 3 (page A1 – 4), in this study, suggests a warning to the Okpẹ on the plan to assassinate the king. Sadly enough the Okpẹ public did not take heed to the warning of the Igoru musicians. They assassinated the king, Esezi I (Ekperhi) and darkness fell upon the land for long. According to oral accounts, the king had some strange feelings by which his clairvoyance informed him that an evil was in place against him. But the omen was not as specific in his discernment as to what would happen to him. When he arrived at the scene of the Okpẹ assembly where the evil plan was to be executed against him, he attempted to withdraw because of the strange feelings. But his second in command, the then *Unu* (misrepresented as *Otota*) of Okpẹ (the chief who was the spokesman of the king and the Okpẹ) persuaded him to chair the meeting. And as he attempted to take up his seat, he fell into the pit where the tragedy finally took place (hot oil was poured on him in the pit). As soon as he fell into the pit, he knew his end had come, and he cursed the Okpẹ people that they would never have a king after him.

It is believed that traditional rulers are ordained and honoured by God. The sanction of the king upon the Okpẹ at the time of his assassination became a curse that had serious effects on the land for a very long time. The period of interregnum between his death and succession was extremely long that the Okpẹ felt ashamed for their inability to crown another king, particularly as their Itsekiri neighbours scorned them for not having a king during the period. Although the Okpẹ came together to confess and ask forgiveness from God, performed some rituals to enable them crown

another king in the 1940s, the effects of the curse from Ezezi I are still felt in the royal institution till this day. Ezezi II (Mebitaghan, popularly known as Osakpa) was successfully crowned in 1945. He died in March 26, 1966 and until December 30, 1972 Orhoro I could not be crowned (another six years of interregnum).

In the present era, Orhoro I died in May 2004 and elections for the succession to the throne was conducted in January 2005. According to the election results, Gen, Felix Mujakperuo and Air vice Marshall Frank Adjobena had a tie in the votes, and the chairman of the electoral committee, as a result, cast his vote to decide the winner. By this approach Gen. Mujakperuo emerged winner, while his opponent disputes the results, attempting to take the matter to court. All efforts made by Okpe leaders to appease Adjobena, appealing that he should accept the results to ensure peaceful transition have not succeeded to the time of this writing and therefore no king has been crowned. No one is certain how many years of interregnum it would take the Okpe again to crown another king. Igoru musicians composed several songs depicting the extremely long interregnum and the scolding from the Itsekiri, as well as the lamentation of the death of Ezezi I and the joy of his succession after another six-year interregnum (See chapter six).

3. 5 Okpe language phoneme

The Okpe speak a common language known as Okpe. It is tonal with homonyms distinguished by the speech intonations. Communication and social relationships among the Okpe are usually expressed in the Okpe language. Augusta Omamoh has developed a more scientific orthography for the language which over 90% of the literate Okpe population cannot read and understand. This study therefore, adopts the common orthography. Though, Idolor (2001: 8) says Okpe language uses only thirty-eight letters, this research has identified sixty-two alphabetical forms which are discussed under the following philology. The Okpe language phoneme is presented below with English words that suggest proper pronunciation. Each vowel, consonant or diphthong is given an English word to aid non-Okpe readers' pronunciation.

S/N	Vowel	Okpe	meaning	example in English
1	a	<i>Atan</i>	chewing stick	as in at
2	e	<i>Eti</i>	pig	as in eight
3	ẹ	<i>Ẹro</i>	eye	as in led
4	i	<i>Iroro</i>	wisdom	as in did
5	o	<i>Ololo</i>	bottle	as in oath
6	ọ	<i>Ọdafe</i>	affluent	as in on
7	u	<i>Udu</i>	chest	as in do

Diphthong:		Okpe	meaning	English
1.	ai	<i>Ekaigẹn</i>	a drum type	as in rite
2.	ia	<i>Ofian</i>	lie	as in fiat
3.	ie	<i>Rie</i>	go home	as in create
4.	iẹ	<i>Uvbiẹ</i>	birth	as in mien
5.	io	<i>Isiorin</i>	five	as in Tapioca
6.	iọ	<i>Irhiọke</i>	morning	as in Union
7.	oa	<i>Ọroa</i>	it goes deep	as in roar
8.	ọe	<i>Ọmọerhe</i>	young child	as in no equivalent
9.	ua	<i>Ọduado</i>	big	as in doer
10.	ue	<i>Uruemu</i>	behaviour	as in equate
11.	uẹ	<i>Iruẹn</i>	play	as in cruel
12.	ui	<i>Izuigede</i>	mother drum	as in ruin
13.	uo	<i>Iruo</i>	job	as in duo

The following single consonants sound ordinarily as they do in English.

Consonant	Okpe	example	meaning
1.	B	<i>Bo</i>	crow
2.	D	<i>Da</i>	drink
3.	F	<i>Fa</i>	flog

4.	G	<i>Ga</i>	serve
5.	H	<i>Ha</i>	take
6.	J	<i>Jọ</i>	lock
7.	K	<i>Ko</i>	sew
8.	L	<i>Lo</i>	shine
9.	M	<i>Mọ</i>	come
10.	N	<i>Ni</i>	look
11.	P	<i>Pẹ</i>	cluster
12.	R	<i>Rọ</i>	swallow
13.	S	<i>Se</i>	call
14.	T	<i>Ta</i>	say
15.	V	<i>Ve</i>	promise
16.	W	<i>Wọ</i>	bath
17.	Y	<i>Ya</i>	write
18.	Z	<i>Zẹ</i>	run

Double consonant: Note that *vb* and *vw* are used interchangeably. In this study however, the *vb* is adopted.

	Consonants		Okpe example	meaning
1.	<i>Br</i>	-	<i>Bru</i>	cut
2.	<i>Ch</i>	-	<i>Chẹ</i>	smile
3.	<i>Dj</i>	-	<i>Djẹ</i>	choose
4.	<i>Fr</i>	-	<i>Fro</i>	argue
5.	<i>Gb</i>	-	<i>gba</i>	tie
6.	<i>Gh</i>	-	<i>gha</i>	cross
7.	<i>Hr</i>	-	<i>hra</i>	scatter
8.	<i>Hw</i>	-	<i>hwa</i>	pay
9.	<i>Kp</i>	-	<i>kpọ</i>	control

10.	<i>Kr</i>	-	<i>Krun</i>	coil (around)
11.	<i>Kw</i>	-	<i>kwẹ</i>	quiet
12.	<i>Mw</i>	-	<i>mwa</i>	push
13.	<i>Ny</i>	-	<i>nya</i>	walk
14.	<i>Ph</i>	-	<i>pho</i>	jump
15.	<i>Rh</i>	-	<i>rhẹ</i>	sell
16.	<i>Sh</i>	-	<i>shẹ</i>	pill off
17.	<i>vb (or vw)</i>		<i>vba or vwa</i>	meet

Triple and Quadruple Consonants:		Okpe Example	meaning
1.	<i>Gbr</i> -	<i>Agbraran</i>	thunder
2.	<i>Ghr</i> -	<i>Eghrẹn</i>	enmity
3.	<i>Ghwr</i> -	<i>Ghwrọrọ</i>	slide
4.	<i>Hwr</i> -	<i>Ehwro</i>	hoe
5.	<i>Kpr</i> -	<i>Kprọ</i>	slip (of tongue)
6.	<i>Phr</i> -	<i>Ephrun</i>	pus
7.	<i>vbr or vwr</i> -	<i>Ẹvbro or Evwro</i>	kola nut

3.6 Religion

Prior to the advent of colonialism and missionary activities in Nigeria, the Okpe believed in the existence of the Supreme Being Osolobrughwẹ often abbreviated Osoghwẹ (God). They also refer to God as Ediọn, believing that the God of heaven rules in the affairs of human beings. Okpe Council Halls of meeting in each community are therefore named after Ediọn (e. g. Aghwẹlẹ Ediọn – Edion Hall).

Evidence of this is found in song 4; page A1 – 5 where the composer beseeches Ediṅ (God) to protect members of the community. The Okpẹ believe also in other Deities some of whom are discussed as follows. Oral tradition holds that some Deities live in the rivers, creeks and streams. Among them are Oloku (Merman), Ogberhagha otherwise known as Mamiwọta (Mermaid), Ogikporo (goddess of music) and Unukodo (god of depth). Oloku and Ogberhagha are often referred to as connubial partners in the rivers.

Ogikporo, which literally means, “it only plays but harmless”, is a goddess who appears in the form of a stream mallard (wild duck) called *Oko* that leads a school of fish, shoal of snake and other water animals in a processional music jamboree through a stream lane. Fishermen, at night put off their light, strike trees and give

loud ovation to stop the procession from heading towards them. Unukodo is a deity found at Deghele Elume. He has a deceptive hole of great depth like a crystal shoal and whoever slipped into it was lost. As reaction in the bid to secure the peace of his domain, he pulled and bound together the oil-search pipes sunk in the swamp by an oil company in 1974 and used wild mighty cocks to pursue an old man from the forest in 1985. Some of these deities are represented as spirit-manifests in festivals, but are given different names in the events. The single common name they are called is Eho. The Igoru composer of song 76, page A1 – 143, draws allusion from these beliefs and proverbially remarked that the water deities return home (to the waters) when dry season comes (see chapter six).

The Okpe also believe that some deities live in the woods, hence sacrifices are offered at the foot of certain trees. Okrobogboghwe, (one-armed one-legged being) also known as Ahwobisi lives in trees like Ahwobisi and Idjodjo. He kills all other

trees around the tree it inhabits, except *Uwara*. *Ẹdjokpa* is a deity believed to inhabit the most productive palm tree in any Okpẹ community. Once a palm tree has been identified as the most productive, normally at the outskirts close to a major road, it becomes known by the name of the deity (*Ẹdjokpa*). It is then regarded as the mother of all other palm trees in the community. Seasonally, it is dressed in white and red cloth from top to bottom and a dog is offered to it as sacrifice, with music and spirit-manifest performances. It is worshipped during *Ẹdjokpa* festival when men in the community are barred from harvesting oil palm for about three weeks. Once the festival is declared, a bumper harvest is expected. Each community in Okpe has a live tree often referred to as *otọre amwa*, representing the God or deity of the village or town, where sacrifices of worship are offered annually. The composer of song 79, page A1 – 145, draws experience from the relationship between Ahwobisi (the deity in the tree) and *Uwara* (specie of small tree with red liquid substance). In the same song, the composer makes reference to the relationship between the water deities (*Ehọ ame*) and human beings in Okpẹ. He/she philosophically adopts these experiences proverbially in the composition. These have been discussed in chapter six.

Other deities whose abodes are not known are often represented by carved images placed in shrines. *Ẹgba* is a war God whose shrine is in Ikeresan. In those days, it made loud cries to inform the community of impending danger during warfare. Through the chief priest, it informs and directs on how they should advance, encamp, attack and the kind of medicine to use so as to be impervious to bullets and arrows and be invisible to enemies. Others like *Adjugẹn*, *Umogun*, *Abasiumọ*, etc, are vengeance deities who maintain peace and defend truth in the community. When they kill offenders, all the deceased's properties are taken to their shrines; otherwise, they continue to kill members of the culprit's family. Another form of deity representation appears like medicine wrapped into a mat and hung over and across the road at the outskirts (entrance) of the community. This is called *Egbe*, believed to keep peace, stop any evil from making entry, and render the powers of enemies

ineffective as they go through it into the community. The composer of song 62, page A1 – 105, makes reference to Egbe as a deity worshipped by sex workers, from whom children were sought.

The Okpẹ operate a four-day week system, one of which is regarded as the sacred day for worship, sacrifice and festivals. The four days of the Okpẹ week are as follows:

Day	Activity	Market
<i>Ẹdẹghwọ</i> – sacred day	Worship	1 st day markets
<i>Asueghwọ</i>	Search for commodities	2 nd day markets
<i>Ẹderherhe</i>	Further gathering of wares	3 rd day markets
<i>Ẹdebi or Ẹdileyi</i>	Preparation for sales	4 th day markets

The first day is clearly understood as the sacred day for worship, while the second day literally means the night of searching. That is, the day traders go to farms, towns and villages to harvest or purchase products at wholesale level. The third day literally means the middle day of the week and further gathering of commodities and wares continues. The fourth day literally means traders' day. Traders tidy up and package their commodities and wares ready for the 1st market of the week. Markets in all Okpẹ Divisional Headquarters (*Otọre Amwa*) hold on the first day of the week. One of the early worship groups the spread around Okpẹ towns and villages was known as *evẹherhe*, *ovumeni* or *bidaka*. The composer of song 4; page A1 – 5, remarks ironically that members would go out to preach on Ẹdebi, the day preceding the sacred day of worship (See chapter six for details).

3. 6 Economy

Okpeland is blessed with species of cash crops such as palms, cherry, orange, mango and mahogany. Others include rubber, kola nut and cocoa. Major food crops cultivated in the land include cassava, plantain, cocoyam, maize, yam, pepper, melon, vegetable among other farm products. The land is further blessed with crude oil. The people produce *Amivi* (local body cream) and *Oza* (soap) which they sell and use at home. Individuals have large rubber plantations, which they either tap or hire out. Tapers sell the rubber produce to merchants in forms of rubber lumps and sheets. The merchants in turn sell to the factories where the products are refined. Few people engaged in cocoa production, while others are involved in crafts. Those who engage in cocoa farming harvest and dry the seeds for sale. Craftsmen weave *uḡen*, *akēde*, *ikidēn*, *aharō* (fishing tackles), *okalokpō* (basket), *atēte* (local tray), *ophorho* (garri filter), *ere*, *odjiko*, *abiba* (Variant mats) and *aga* (chair) for sale.

They also carve images, mortars and pestles, and produce musical instruments for sale. Some dwellers in the riverine areas engage in pottery making. Other men and their wives go on *Idjēde* (fishing expedition) for weeks or months. A number of fishermen combine this with hunting. They return with dried fish and meat for sale and family consumption. Both small and large scale fishers use either of the above fishing tackles and *eriri* (nets) to catch fishes and experiences of these expeditions are philosophically adopted in Igoru compositions. Songs 44, page A1 – 72 and 55, page A1 – 90 for instance make use of these experiences. The composer of the former says once fish nets get ruffled they become un-amendable, while the latter says the curse of the fish cages (*iḡen*) cannot kill the beer. These philosophical thoughts have been given detailed interpretations against the background of these fishing experiences in chapter six.

Trade and business ventures are essential parts of the Okpe. Many people trade in the local products while others trade in imported commodities and spare parts. Several workers have taken advantage of the forests and swampy mangroves, making supplies of timber to the African Timber and Ply-wood (A T & P) industry and numerous sawmills in Sapele and environ. Many others have also gained employment in government and private sectors. There are those who practice traditional medicine as a major occupation. The Okpe abhor begging and frown at the attitude, so even the handicapped struggle to be independent, requiring little support. The composer of song 56, page A1 – 91, captures the dividends of the subsistence farming that exists in the culture, remarking that there may be a year one did not farm, but there cannot be found a year one did not eat.

2. 7 Dynamism of social harmony

The Okpe believe much in good neighbourliness and community life. Successful sons are encouraged to build their houses within or around the plots of land wherein their fathers lived. This is to enable them and their nucleus families share experiences, at extended family level. Whenever a man receives visitors, he sends invitation to all the adults in his neighbourhood to join him in giving the visitors rousing reception. He waits a while for them to come in before presenting drinks, Kola nuts and money to his guest. Each invitee supports the presentation with some amount of money.

When a young lady is marriageable or betrothed, she is circumcised and allocated to a room for a period of two to three months. During this time, young girls in the neighbourhood voluntarily, though with due permission from their parents, leave their homes to live with the *Opha* (circumcised lady) as *ikopha* (attendants). The *opha* and *ikopha* dress in decorated attires and apply *ohwarha* or *ukpamara* red substance from can wood on their bodies. The attendants run errands as well as assist her and her mother both at home and in the farm throughout the period. Many neighbours

come to visit the maid from time to time. Customarily, young and old people of both sexes converge at her room to provide entertainment through folk tales and concomitant songs for some hours every night till the period is over. E. A Wilkie (www.stclements.edu) writes about this tradition as follows:

The case of the Okpe of Delta State who perform FGM [female genital mutilation] as a rite of passage can be cited to illustrate the procedure. “When an Okpe young female is age 12 and above, she could be circumcised if the parents [feel] she is matured enough at puberty and are financially alright. The celebrant in this case may be age 16 and 21 with or without her prior knowledge of the operation, though she would not object to it when the circumcisor eventually arrived because she believed it was time for her. The victims’ atimes (inverted comma in original) may be younger or older. And atimes pregnant for five month to six or seven months – a time during which pregnant women can be circumcised as tradition demands... The circumcised during this period ranging from one to three months is made special items exclusive to her only and sometimes the husband. She has a special beaded crown and clothes dyed with canwood (Ukpama) and laced with cowries and “pennies”. Young ones known as “Ukovhwa” minister to the celebrant (Ovhwa). The body of the celebrant (Ovhwa) would be rubbed with canwood – ukpama that gives her a “red appearance, which marks her as the one undergoing the rite...”

See the plate illustrating this tradition below:



Plate 3 – 1: Photograph of *oph*a (circumcised lady)

Burial ceremony is a great forum for social relationships in Okpe. In fact, the people see it as the greatest solidarity force that brings many from far and near. People who would not even come home for festivals might come to a burial ceremony, especially when death occurs in their families. Family and community members from different locations use this forum to introduce themselves and their young ones to one

another and also exchange addresses. Old friends and play mates who have lost contact for a long time often form a circle in re-union while the burial ceremony is in progress. All family members pay certain amount of money in order to assist the bereaved children, in some ways, to make the obsequies successful. Individuals also associate with the bereaved in cash and in moral support. The women folk often fetch a heap of firewood and sometimes contribute food stuff such as garri to assist the bereaved.



Plate 3 – 2: Cross section of old friends and relations at burial ceremony

Okpe tradition encourages teamwork a great deal. On the whole, five kinds of teamwork, which include free will, considered invitation, exchange, paid labour and community labour exist. If someone is gravely sick or bereaved, relations, neighbours, friends, guild or religious members could decide on their own volition to

work as a team in the person's farm. This can also be done to honour deserving members of the community. Special invitation could also be given to a group of people who then may come together to work in one's farm. The beneficiary, in this case, gives a particular date to all the people he/she has invited to enable them form a team and work collectively in the farm. Another approach to teamwork is that people who practice the same kind of farming (cropping or palm oil production) may agree to work in one's farm so that they go to each team member's farm on appointed dates to reciprocate. Groups of people are also employed to work in one's farm for a day and are paid according to negotiation. Another instance of teamwork occurs when all members of a given community come to clean the town, fell trees, build bridges or town hall.

2. 8 Okpe musical culture

The Okpe have a musical culture that is highly functional in all spheres of life. Several songs are performed during traditional worship, festivals and burials. *Egboto-uhuerimi* ensemble comprises married women who perform in burial ceremonies. The women according to custom must be younger than the deceased in age. The ensemble, which may have up to thirty-five members, makes use of *ekpeti* (a short piece of plank or box) and *abo* (pair of bamboo clappers) as accompanying instruments. All performers play, sing and dance around the *orimi* (corpse) and, or *agberen* (effigy) while on a catafalque. The women perform for about five consecutive nights in the room where the deceased is buried, before the final rites are performed. Their songs comment generally and freely on the socio-economic circumstances of the deceased, his children and relations and the passing away. In-laws have special roles to play in burial ceremonies. It behoves them to dig and cover the grave at the time of interment and they perform these rites with some songs that accompany them.

In Ighwruesa Division, when the oldest man in any of the three communities, Ugbokodo, Ughwoṭon and Jeddo dies, the communities take turns daily to perform

music dance in a procession through the streets of the deceased's town. *Esakpegodi* (2nd great grand children) of the deceased also have certain rites to perform during the burial and this requires a musical procession. The mother of the senior *esakpegodi* leads the procession to the funeral venue and throws pinches on ground *orhen* (kaolin chalk) on the crowd to wish them long life. Since the procession goes a long distance, two or more lead singers appear in the group to exchange the duty of leading solos among them. As a custom, the *esakpegodi* and their mother(s) usually do not sing, but dance. In other events such as when a young lady is circumcised, *isalẹkẹ* dance is performed to celebrate the beginning of the puberty rite. Folklore songs (*ijoro osia*) are also performed during this rite and at other times when folktales are narrated in family gathering.

Ijoro owian (work songs) are performed to accompany persons who are working. Work songs are contextual to the type of work they accompany. For fish pond depletion, the songs depict the stages of the work and the behaviour of team members. At the first stage, the songs appeal to the deity of the stream to allow the waters to be depleted from the pond, so that the team's efforts would not be fruitless. Other songs in this stage spur team members to work hard. Songs of the second stage are performed when the pond is almost depleted. The themes remind members of the team not to be greedy at the time to catch the fishes. Songs of the third stage are performed when it is time to share the fishes. The themes provide warning that members should not fight over the sharing. The fourth stage is normally marked by songs of derision which often remark that just a little cart fish (*orhuẹren*) separated relations. This is often performed if dispute arises from the sharing. Several other work songs are performed while working in the crop or oil palm farms.

Emā music is performed as a traditional rite to celebrate the affluence, greatness and royalty of distinguished titled men. The performance takes place in Chieftaincy ceremonies (burial or title taking) only. The dance is vigorous, involving the swinging and pulling of one's arms towards oneself. The movement of the arms indicates that

ema dancers wish to be rich by pulling wealth to themselves. The *ema* ensemble comprises three *ekaigən* (double edged conical membrane drums with aesthetic pointed sticks around the edges), *inawōri* (metal flute) which is no longer in use, *ōkro* (animal horn) and *ekperē* (Elephant tusk). *Iphri*, one of the oldest traditional music of the Okpe, is a slow dirge performed at the burial of warriors, heroes, elders and successful men. As the name implies, *iphri* means persistence in doing something; therefore, the performance goes on for several hours making commentaries on death. The philosophy of its performance is contrasted to that of *ema*, in that it signifies the chasing away of evil or misfortune. The ensemble comprises about six members only, and the instruments used are *ekpeti* (piece of plank), *abō* (Clappers), *agogo* (bells), *ozi* or *ozu* (mother drum) and *ōmigede* (baby drum). *Uroredjō* music is another dirge typology performed by skilled mourners. It is solemn and performed accapella. The music recounts the good deeds of the deceased during his life time.

Ighōpha is a traditional music typology which developed out of Igoru music. It is a narrative, accompanied by *ukiri* (short cylindrical drum) and, or *isorogun* (thumb piano) and *abō* (hand clapping). It is highly educative and is thus performed for commercial purposes in burial and other ceremonies (see chapter four for further detail). *Ikpeba*, also known as *payan* is a traditional music typology often performed by in-laws and community members for entertainment at burial ceremonies. It is accompanied by *ōmigede* (baby drum), *izuigede* (mother drum), *abēšē* (three-legged drum), *agogo* (bells) and *agba* (goblet shaped drum). *Ekugbokpē* and *Bidaka* cultural dance troupes are stylized traditional music typologies performed for commercial purposes. They are large groups that sprang up in the 1970s and 1980s in Sapele. They use many drums, *agogo* (bells) and *igede-ame* (water drums: a set of transverse calabashes in a box containing water). It should be noted that the earlier *bidaka* dance was performed in *evēherhē* traditional worship and this other *bidaka* dance is non-religious.

Maiden dances in Okpẹ include *igbegbe-egboto*, *ijurhi*, *akamaghwe*, *odjoboro*, and *udje*. They are performed according to age grades. *Kokoma* and sharp-sharp are highlife popular typologies which came in vogue in the late 1960s. They were modeled after the highlife that E. T. Mensah from Ghana introduced to Nigeria in the late 1950s. It should be noted however that sharp-sharp was introduced by an Okpẹ who sojourned in Ghana. The two typologies were performed in burials and concert halls and their themes focused on sexuality, married life, changing circumstances in life and so forth. Okpẹ disco is the most recent neo-traditional music typology in Okpẹ. It began in the late 1970s with the first band established at Ibada Elume by Ofokpẹ Ogorode in 1978. The music is accompanied by *ikise* (maracas), a set of graduated *agogo* (bells), two *isorogun* (thumb piano), two sets of conical drums, mouth organ and electric piano with amplification gadgets. The themes focus on issues of common interest, narrating experiences and educating, entertaining and eulogizing deserving members of the public.

CHAPTER 4

IGORU MUSIC AND ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Definition

The term Igoru, literally connotes something that is considered to be very precious and of high value. It later became associated with gold. That is many Okpe call gold *igoru*, though the commonest name for the ornament is *oro*. This is not to argue that Igoru music appeared or came in vogue about the time when the ornament gold flourished in the Okpe country during the sea route trade by batter which existed between the Portuguese and the Okpe around the Delta tributaries in the 16th century. It simply means that Igoru music is a typology the Okpe cherish immensely. However, to mark out the value of the typology, in accordance with the connotation, *Igoru* (gold ornaments) formed part of the costume for the dance. Since the ornament was not part of igoru performances from the beginning, the ornament as part of the dance paraphernalia was not made a strict requirement, but permissible to those who have it.

4. 2 Origin and historical development

Igoru is one of the oldest music in Okpeland. Oral accounts identify *iphri* as

the oldest music of the Okpe. The form and text of this typology is not influenced by any other neighbouring culture. Its performance is hereditary by right of primogeniture and as such only two related families have been known for its performance in Okpe. They are the families of Ode Isuanbo of Onyeke and Erhiorhodame Ojokolo of Okwokpokpo. Igoru music became the second

typology to evolve among the people. These two typologies are regarded as indigenous to Okpe heritage before, during and after their migrations. The third among the oldest typologies is *ema*, a royal music that the Okpe traditional council holds in high esteem. It was created for the socio-political activities concerning the people in the process of chieftaincy and kingship installations, as well as the burial of the titled personalities (Okpe Chiefs and rulers). The historical development of Igoru music, in this study, is divided into four periods as follows.

4. 2. 1 First period (c. 1100 – 1900)

This study attempts to discuss the development of Igoru music from the time the Okpe arrived their present settlement in the 12th century. This period seems long, but only little information is available since the culture is oral. Igoru music from this time was regarded as daily reporter and the musicians as broadcasters of current affairs in the society. Thus, its original idea focused on how to put wrong attitude into correctitude and to maintain social order. There was proliferation of Igoru ensembles around the Okpe nation, such that almost every Okpe town and village had Igoru ensemble. Members of these ensembles functioned as investigators, taking note of deviant activities in the communities. These discoveries were set to music and performed in public at appropriate occasions. So far, of the eighty seven songs collected from the

field, only three songs could be linked to this period. One of the three songs attempts to protect the Okpe political system and this is linked to the political imbroglio in the reign of Ezezi I, the despot king discussed earlier in chapter three. The second song philosophically examines the position of a father in the home, to firmly establish his leadership roles and the third song relates spiritual encounter associated with the belief on witchcraft activities.

4. 2. 2 Second period (1900 – 1945)

This period covers missionary and colonial activities in the Okpe nation up to the year Ezezi II was crowned (after the first interregnum). The themes of the

period focused on the protection of Okpe heritages. Some of the songs attempted to contest that the Okpe traditional religious system has more values to the people than the Christian religion introduced by the missionaries. Subsequent songs suggested efforts to protect the territorial inheritance of the Okpe from settlers who often laid claims of ownership to the portions of land the Okpe allowed them to inhabit over the years. Song 25, page A1 – 39 for instance refers to the Uvwie (Effurun) who share common boundary with Okpe. Oral tradition states that Okpe gave Uvwie the land they now occupy when they first migrated to the area. Years later, they naturalized and became neighbours, sharing common culture and paying homage to the Orodje of Okpe. Much later, they began to contend the ownership of the land with the Okpe. Nevertheless, the elders of Okpe remained accommodating in letting the Uvwie occupy the place, since their forefathers had accommodated them in the past. Some Igoru performers however argue that the same song

was performed as innuendo to caution the Itsekiri settlers who in the 1940s contended the ownership of Sapele land.

In the 1930s and 1940s, *Igoru* music became a social tool for fighting corruption, wickedness and moral decadence within and outside the Okpe country. The themes began to centre on individuals who contravene cultural norms. Miserly married women who starved their husbands; traditional and customary court chiefs who were corrupt and sex workers became the main focus. Other themes defended traditional ethos, commended members of the community who maintained moral uprightness and defended the music profession.

4. 2. 3 Transfusion to Yorubaland

The Okpe Union played a major role in the furtherance of Igoru musical performances in Lagos. Within the second period, beginning from the late 1920s to the 1930s, groups began to show concern and deliberated on the

election and installation of a new king, particularly as neighbouring communities were passing scornful innuendoes on the Okpe. This brought about the rise of Okpe Union that was formally inaugurated on May 16, 1930. The Union had branches in many major towns and cities around Nigeria and overseas, but had its headquarters at NO. 67, Moshalasi street Obalende Lagos. It soon became a formidable force that championed the Okpe political reforms, furtherance and preservation of Okpe cultural heritage, human and non-human development strategies among other issues of common interest. The Okpe Union, London branch, under the chairmanship of Chief Edison

Otemewo also contributed immensely to these issues of development in Okpe. Obaro Ikime (www.waado.org) argues that:

Throughout Nigeria, the 1930s and 1940s were the years which saw the rise of 'Progress Union.' The reorganization of the 1930s... was common to all of Southern Nigeria. Native Administration were required and encouraged to engage in developmental projects – the building of inter-village and inter-clan roads, dispensaries and maternity centres, schools and other works of public utility...'Progress Unions' developed alongside with village and clan councils of N. As [Native Administrations] to serve as forums for the coming together of a cross section of the populace, irrespective of traditional status and educational qualifications, to think about development projects and how to finance them; to serve when necessary as pressure groups of the N. As; to forge ethnic unity, to provide a supra – N. A. leadership. The fact that often branches of such unions sprang up in different parts of the country meant that even those not at 'home' could still contribute their views and means to the development of the 'homeland.'

The activities of Okpe Union in Yoruba land favoured Igoru musical performances in Lagos, as a socio-cultural tool for Okpe unification and propagation. There exist common oral accounts on how Igoru music became the much-needed instrument. Mebitaghan (2001: 21) writes about the formation of the Okpe Union and some of its objectives that include music as

follows:

Firstly, a rumour was current that the Itsekiris had decided to resuscitate their moribund Oluship with the intention of colonising the Urhobos. The need to form a Union to ward off any Itsekiri ambition became necessary.

Secondly, the Union came into being as a result of a sort of 'overlordship' by Uvwies, Okpes' neighbours. By the late 1930's [apostrophe in the original] the Okpes and Uvwies usually combined to organise dances especially during the Christmas season in Lagos. It came to be observed that only Uvwie songs and dance steps were employed during the combined dances resulting in the Uvwies collecting lion share of the proceeds. This made the Okpes to put a stop to this social combined songs and dances. This move... thought the time had come for Okpe Union to compose songs in Okpe [dialect], with accompanying dance steps.

Some oral accounts indeed claim that the Okpe and Uvwie conjointly organized dances at important seasons in Lagos between the late 1920s and 1930. During the events, only Uvwie songs and dances were performed and this made the Uvwie claim superiority over the Okpe. The insults that resulted from this experience made the Okpe to stop the joint performances and began to perform Igoru music of the Okpe in Lagos. The Uvwie thus challenged the Okpe Igoru ensemble to a contest which the Okpe won at Lagos in 1930.

Oral interview with Peter Etalo, a prominent Igoru musician who lived and performed Igoru music in Lagos in the late 1930s, however suggest that there was neither formal musical contest nor joint performances between the Okpe and the Uvwie in Lagos. According to him, a certain woman, Irhimirhuvwie Akalusi whose mother was Uvwie from Effurun and father Okpe from Mereje town, had a dispute with a wealthy Uvwie woman in Lagos around 1930. In the process of their dissension, they challenged one another to publicly show

what they worth and own. They fixed a competition for themselves and Irhimirhuvwie requested the Okpe Union in Lagos to be in her company so as to give her moral support during the event. In preparation for the event, her Okpe supporters met with her by night and rehearsed some music. The group chose *ema* music which songs, as at then, had mixture of the Edo and Okpe languages. The Uvwie woman and her supporters arrived at the venue of the competition at Luis Street by Gbamgbose, Obalende, Lagos. To display her wealth, the Uvwie woman changed her dress three times successively and received rousing ovation from the audience who admired her expensive dresses. On her third appearance, she paraded with a well-dressed beautiful pussycat.

When Irhimirhuvwie arrived at the venue with her *ema* ensemble, her supporters began to eulogize her by use of her father's praise names:

Praise name	Her response
• <i>Ekpekpere</i> (short, but strong);	<i>Ugben oghwe obra</i> (fat thigh of salmon fish)
• <i>Agbin</i> (the unshakeable);	<i>Mia sa ne</i> (I'm now coming)
• <i>Olorogun</i> (great warrior);	<i>Meme o</i> (I am she)

Irhimirhuvwie married one of the white men that constructed the North-West Nigeria Railways and had five mixed colour children with whom she came for the contest. The appearance of these well-dressed children in her entourage, caused heart attack for the Uvwie woman, because she was barren. Her supporters quickly took her away from the venue and this marked the end of the event. While the Okpe rejoiced with irhimirhuvwie, the aggrieved Uvwie supporters insulted the Okpe that they could never sing songs completely in their own language.



Plate 4 – 1: Peter Etalo of Mereje, Igoru performer

Some Okpe who heard these remarks presented the issue at the floor of the immediate General meeting of the Okpe Union. At the meeting, Egbikume Azano of Ughwoton, Ememo Iterminagi of Ugolo, Okiokio whose praise name is Igbeni of Egborode and Esanukpe of Amwokpe were charged with the responsibility to compose new songs in Okpe. This assignment yielded dividends, but the team this time decided to compose in Igoru forms. Song 13, page A1 – 24 became the first to be composed by this team of composers. They took a procedure whereby each member of the team provided at least a

sentence. They put the sentences together to form a simple statement which formed basis to the short composition.

Hugh Tracey (1970: 2 and 3) observes similar compositional procedures among the Chopi:

Their instruments and their songs and dances reflect great credit upon the abilities of the Chopi. When one remembers that not a note of their music has ever been written down, nor has anyone within their experience, they say, written or translated the words of their poems, it is remarkable to find that they compose new Ngodo with almost unfailing regularity every two years or so... A description of how Katini and Gomukomu set about composing a new orchestral dance will show how musically advanced these men are. Both of them say that the first thing they do is to find appropriate words for their song and compose the verses of the lyric before the music. The subject-matter may be gay, sad, or purely documentary. In every case it is highly topical and appropriate to the locality, so much so, in fact, that most of the allusions would be caught only by those in close touch with the villagers and the district. They are often highly critical of those in authority over them, white or black, and to a large degree it may be said that the poems reflect the attitude of the common people towards the conditions of their society.

Several rehearsals were held to master the new Igoru songs well in Lagos. Then the Okpe Union headquarters fixed date and invited the general public to an inaugural performance of the Igoru music. This event marked the beginning of Igoru performances by the Okpe in Lagos. Thereafter, the Union held annual performances of Igoru music from 1931 to 1944. Within this

period, several ensembles emerged amongst the Okpe in Lagos, particularly when the surge for commercial sex began to receive critical assessment. The Jeddo, Ughwoton, Mereje, Deghele, Ugborhen and Elume people had Igoru ensembles accordingly, in order to represent their community interest in Lagos. These ensembles and individuals began to watch out for one another's ill paths which made Igoru music become a genre of satire. By this time, performers often intrigued their audience by their courageous attitude in pointing fingers at offenders, if they were unfortunately present at the performance venue.

The first generation of *Igoru* musicians in Lagos includes Egbikume Azano of Ughwoton, Ememo Iteminagi of Ugolo, Okukushi Akpoto of Mereje, Okiokio of Egborode, Esanukpe of Amwokpe and the great Boyi Eyekaghe of Okwokpokpo Ugolo, the brave Okpe who led the protest against taxation and was consequently gunned down at Maciver, Sapele by the colonial masters in 1927. "The tax riots were in 1927 and payment began in 1928 (D. A. Obiomah, www.waado.org). Later generation of Igoru musicians include Igben Eghwughwuakpo and Peter Etalo of Mereje, Ohi Inikoro alias Olokpokpodjen of Ogirisen, James Osia, Jolly Agbinije, Idisi Adibo and Smart Ukiri of Onyeke, Udogu Olocho of Mereje, Esadjumi of Okwokpokpo, John Omaromwaye Igbide and Ohworerhine of Jeddo,

Some oral accounts claim that the Okpe women in Lagos also had their own Igoru ensembles. Identified members of these female ensembles include Agbadi Egbele of Onyeke, Emetiwuru Otemewo of Adeje, Enatomone, Takpevwiere, Atagbasha, Titi Oyibo, Afisi, Mene, Edafe and Enakorame,

some of whom were great and wealthy international business tycoon who also performed Igoru satires. The researcher however met Titi Oyibo at Adeje who remarked that though she lived in Lagos during the period under investigation, but did not perform Igoru music.

4. 2. 4 Third period (1945 – 1970)

The third period covers the reign of Esezi II, his death and the second interregnum. The period also marks the diminution of Igoru performances in Lagos as many Igoru musicians began to return to Okpe land to continue their living. The last Igoru performance of the Mereje in Lagos was around 1944, while that of Jeddo was in 1945. The musicians who returned home joined existing Igoru ensembles or formed new ones and continued their musical practice. Themes in this period declared the joy of the Okpe concerning the successful reformation of the Okpe political institution, with the installation of

Esezi II in 1945. One of the songs also presents a lamentation on the death of the king which occurred in 1966.

Other themes draw reference to the genealogy of children whose parents came to Okpe as slaves during the slave trades. The Okpe claim, according to oral accounts, that their forefathers never sold slaves, but bought from some neighbouring ethnic groups during the slave trade era. Any person dwelling in Okpe land who is not able to trace his genealogy to any of the four sons (or ruling quarters) of Okpe is therefore considered the descendant of a freed slave, who has no knowledge of his/her origin. Much attention during the period was focused on the activities of sex workers and the consequences of

the practice, as well as other wanton attitudes of community members. This period was characterized by attacks against Igoru musicians, for performing satire. Several themes reflect the conflict situation arising from the performances and the sorcery attacks.

4.2. 4. 1 Competitions back at home

The spirit of competition marks Igoru music. The understanding of the term competition, in this context, is in two dimensions. The one being that members of an ensemble would go back to more serious rehearsals, after watching the immediate performance of a rival group, and present a performance with efforts to beat the standard of the former and the other being that the two ensembles would perform one after the other before a panel of judges. The aim is to distinguish oneself as a greater composer, a better singer or ensemble. It further includes daring attempts to challenge a good performer, ensemble or community who in its previous performance had insulted one, to the contest of musical creativity.

Since Igoru musicians in this period focused their disparaging compositions on one another, and directly insulted and scandalized individuals who are

either members of particular ensembles or village, the competitions were characterized by retaliatory performances and patriotic community defense. That is, when an ensemble performs in its community and insults members of a neighbouring community, the ensemble of the insulted community composes and rehearses for a reprisal performance to insult the former. The second category of competition arises when a sponsor bids to take the best

ensemble to the studio for recording. In this form of competition, judges are appointed and two or more ensembles are invited to a neutral venue to perform one after the other before the judges who in the end decide the winning ensemble. These competitions strengthened Igoru ensembles and performances during the period.

4. 2. 4. 2 Cynosure to opposite sex

Music has a natural tendency to make performers popular in the society and enable them attract much attention from the public. In this way, greatly talented and excellent Igoru musicians became cynosure to members of the society and attracted much attention from the opposite sex. Young men desired to marry female singers and young ladies desired the great male singers for their artistry. Idisi Adibo of Onyeke after a brilliant performance at Aghalokpe had a young pretty lady who voluntarily followed him home and became his wife. Another experience is that of Amereka Emakpo of Okwovu Oduado. He sojourned at Oluwa, a village in former Ondo State, as an oil palm farmer. The task of processing palm oil manually was too enormous for him to single-handedly cope with. He therefore needed a spouse to assist him, but had no money to go through the customary process of marriage. He came to Sapele and found a beautiful young woman who hawked *Ogogoro*, locally brewed gin. He proposed to her unsuccessfully and by night, visited her with a relation and two friends. He then thrilled the lady with some songs, thus won her love and they got married.



Plate 4 – 2: Amereka Emakpo of Okwovu Oduado, Ikoru composer

4. 2. 4. 3 Appreciation, patronage and recompense

The masses enjoyed and valued Ikoru music so much in the society. This explains why there was always a great crowd of admirers who formed phalanx around Ikoru performers. As it was always so difficult for late comers among the audience to break through the phalanx, young men used to climb to the top of coconut trees in the surrounding, in order to have a good view of the performance. The audience normally claps hands to support the

accompaniment and raise very loud ovation in approval of good performances. They further spray the musicians with money, kola nut, cigarette, drink, etc. The peak of appreciation, patronage and recompense occasioned by excellent performance is the presentation of young ladies by their parents to the musicians as wives.

Kiki Ēȳenruja of Onyeke, for instance, had a pretty lady presented to him by her parents at Ujevwe, Urhobo town after a brilliant performance of Igoru music. The lady became his first wife and they had children together. Similarly, Idisi Adibo had a wife freely presented to him by her parents at Ekpan, Effurun in appreciation of his performance. Igoru musicians also had their rewards from payments made for negotiated performances. It is noted that when Igoru musicians are invited to entertain family guests and circumcised daughters at private homes, they may not necessarily sing Igoru songs, because a great number of them are satirical and would be out of context. They may rather perform any other form of entertainment music.



Plate 4 – 3: Idisi Adibo of Onyeke, Ikoru musician

4.3 Fourth period (1970 – 2005)

The fourth period covers the reign of Orhoro I to the present day. Although several oral accounts claim that the performance of Ikoru music ended in the

1940s, evidence from the field show that active performances of Igoru music continued till the late 1970s in some communities. In fact one of the Egboto Isini short playing records was released in 1973. Amukeye Okodide of Ughwoton, as at 2004 says her ensemble still performs whenever they are invited to any occasion by any member of the community. She however confirms that their recent performances were not necessarily Igoru songs and that they experience very limited invitations. Some themes in this period again focused on the Okpe political institution. Two of the songs available in our collection narrate the events that surround the coronation of Orhoro I and his mutual relationships with his brother and the chiefs. Attention on sex workers' activities reduced in this period, suggesting that the practice diminished. Themes focused more on the behaviour and condemnable acts of individuals in the society.

4. 3. 1 Sponsorship of short playing record albums:

Prior to the advent of long playing (LP) recording facilities, short play recording was available in Nigeria in the early 20th century when Igoru performance reached its height. Thus, almost all available Igoru records are in the short play form. The musicians had earnest desire to record their songs for the purpose of wider dissemination. Many of them however could not bear the cost, but depended on the well-meaning affluent for sponsorship. Some of the rich voluntarily sponsored a number of ensembles for recording. Amongst these eminent sponsors is Chief Ogbevo Okpenihwo, popularly known as Chief Omoraka of Sapele who sponsored Udogu Michael Olocho's recording.

Others include Boyi Tebu of Djakpa Elume who sponsored Ughwodjokporo Usumabo of Okwovu Oduado and Ukorudama Idimi of Ituru Elume who sponsored Amereka Emakpo of Okwovu Oduado. Other Igoru musicians like Egbikume Azano of Ughwoton and the Egboto Isini ensemble sponsored

their own recording. Majority of those who were sponsored had only one or two successful records, while those who were self-reliant had several records to their credit. Some of the records however carried wrong inscriptions that contained misinformation. Inscriptions such as *Ijurhi* or *Odjoboro* are found on some of them, whereas the music is Igoru. Other errors include omission of the artiste's names or entry of the ensemble's name without the names of the lead vocalist.

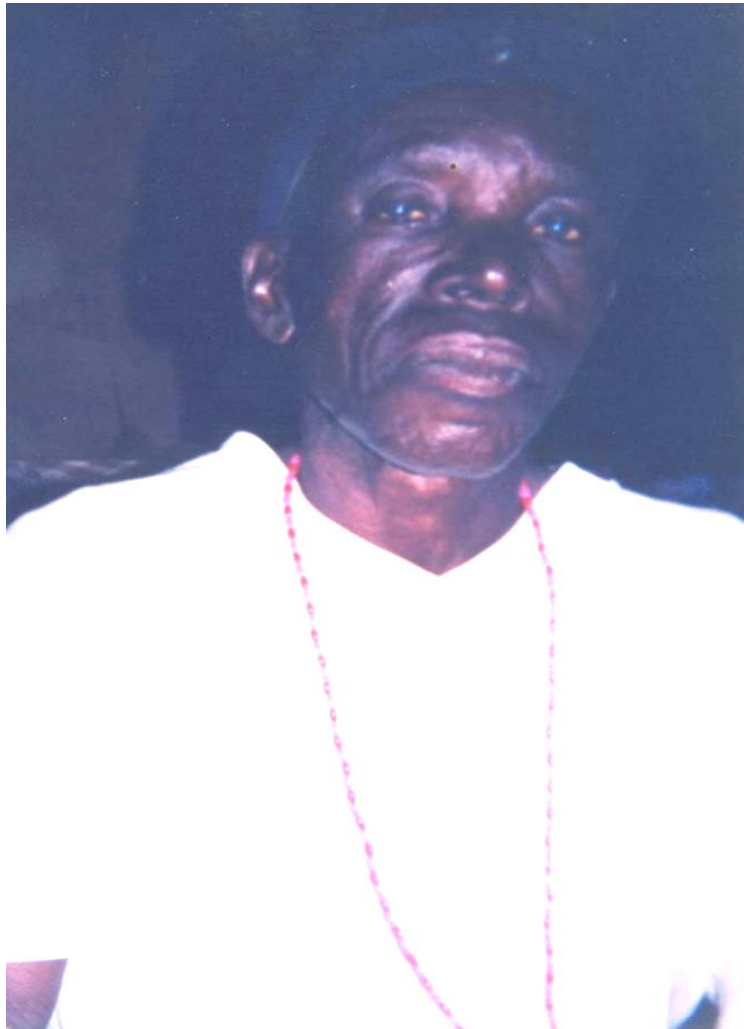


Plate 4 – 4: Udogu Michael Olocho

4. 3. 2 Transformation to a New Genre:

By the late 1940s and 1950s, many of the Lagos based Igoru musicians had retired home to Okpe land. Notable among them was Egbikume Azano who established a private chemist in Sapele. He trained many other Igoru singers during this period. He was recognized as the most talented, and productive Igoru and Ighoṣha composer in Okpe. As Igoru ensembles continued to deride members of the public through performances, some victims of the satire resorted to the use of traditional medicine and sorcery devices to afflict the musicians. Oral accounts testify that one Aghomiche Olosho mysteriously stood lifeless at a performance in Sapele in the 1940s. But some members of the performing ensemble who had spiritual powers encouraged members to keep the performance on while he was being resuscitated.

At a public performance, Titi Ukereti of Deghele Elume, the lead singer in her ensemble, opened her mouth to raise a song, but her voice suddenly failed. She could no longer talk, sing or hear, in spite of several efforts made by members of the ensemble. She was immediately taken to a great *Ọbo*, medicine man, in Deghele who had great spiritual healing powers. The process of her healing took quite some time, such that she had to live very close to the medicine man, Mr. Ukereti, who eventually became her husband. His efforts made her to be able to hear and talk faintly for the rest of her life.

Ebiaigbe Egbedi, at a public performance in Deghele, narrowly escaped death from similar attacks. This faithful day, someone in the crowd sprayed Ebiaigbe with a poisoned stick of cigarette. One of his brothers, Adjagba who was a medicine man with great spiritual powers was present at the performance scene. Adjagba forced his way through the crowd and attempted to pull his brother, Ebiaigbe away from the performance scene. But the phalanx of admirers disallowed him. Ebiaigbe himself was still under his

oruru, force of inspiration, and therefore pleaded with his brother to let him thrill his audience a little more. But Adjagba would not listen to persuasions. He announced to the audience that he was on a mission to rescue his brother from those who attempted to kill him. His explanations seemed incredible and untenable to the audience, for which they resisted him.

To prove his point, Adjagba picked up one stick of cigarette from the lot and challenged any doubting member of the audience to come and smoke it. No one dared to smoke it, but doubts persisted and he was asked to prove his point further. He demanded for a bowl of water, which was brought before him. He dropped all other sticks of cigarette and they melted and sank. Then, he picked up the one he had earlier identified as poisoned, dropped it into the water, and it remained afloat (not absorbing the water). This persuaded the audience and the crowd finally dispersed.

Many other Igoru singers, including Egbikume Azano, Idisi Adibo, etc, were also afflicted with refractory ailments that they suffered for many years. This trend brought Igoru music to gradual extinction between the 1960s and 1970s, and gave rise to a new typology known as *Ighopha*. This evolution was a result of Egbikume Azano's efforts to transform the utility of musical prowess from performing satire to the performance of educative music. The new typology therefore became highly contemplative and most appreciated by the Okpe elders. Upon this recognition, the Orodje of Okpe, Orhoro I invited him to the palace as mentioned earlier. He accommodated him in the palace at Orerokpe and gave him a free plot of land to develop. Egbikume had a good number of albums both of Igoru and *Ighopha* music to his credit. He died in 1947 and was buried at his hometown Ughwoton. Today, however, this *Ighopha* is being revived by Egodemuerin Osia (alia Iredio) of Okwetolo, an

Okpe Disco musician who has introduced modern instruments and sound equipment to its performance.



Plate 4 – 5: Egbikume Azano of Ughwoton

4. 3. 3 Ighopha music

It is pertinent to briefly discuss *Ighopha* music, in order to differentiate it from Igoru music, particularly as they both present similar lyrical themes. *Ighopha* music began with long narratives accompanied by use of hand clapping only.

The performer later introduced one *ukiri* drum and much later replaced it with a thumb piano (*isorogun*). Although it is not quite clear when the typology became separated from Igoru, the performer in one of his albums remarked that he began performances in 1931. Since 1931 falls into the early period of Igoru performances in Lagos, which he, Egbikume Azano contributed much to, it is believed that he meant both Igoru and *ighopha* music in the remark. Most *Ighopha* songs were through-composed. The lead singer sings it through and the chorus takes it over.



Plate 4 – 6: Egbikume Azano and some members of his ensemble

A lot of the songs were also homophonic and a few had one male voice that provides a harmony part. Some of the songs are antiphonal – they are presented in repeated/recycled call and response pattern. Others have very long solos with a two-line poetic chorus coming at the end of every verse. Their contemplative characters and long winded musical sentences differentiate it from Igoru. The themes had little attention on sex trade. They present biographies and some autobiographical remarks. Some of the themes also made reference to the Okpe political institution and the grouping of Okpe with Urhobo, suggesting the need for each ethnic group to maintain its own dignity. Most themes draw analogy on general issues that concern mutual understanding, application of wisdom to one's living, and patriotism. The following text is one example of analogical theme that comments on such general issues.

OBO RE ORHOMURUN ARHA MERE UKO

Ẹkpare: E, uvu obo r' orhomurun, arha mẹrẹ ukọ,
Owo no roro avbaye-e;
Gbe nighe ughwaro, r' oka obaro erhumu,
Avbaye ọrhọ mẹrẹ ikerawon re kpaanre;
Uvu avbaye na ọrhọ mẹrẹ ikẹro r' ituru,
Uvu ughwaro na,
Arha je ghene mẹrẹ ẹton ẹgban,
Ri din biomu;
Ughwaro re ghọrọkọ r' ame ejire na,
N' uvu avbaye arha mẹrẹ okan ubiobiomu,
Re ji fi onyapkọ, e!

Ehwe: Avba rha mẹrẹ ukọ, e!

Ẹkpare: Ọna omẹmẹ re roro akpọ,

Mi rhe rorie ri obaro hin,
Mi vbe rorie ri oberhumu;
Mi rhe rorie ri obo ọrhen hi,
Mi vbe rorie ri obohwere;
Akpọ oji ghini bẹn enyerẹn.
Arha same ọfọfọ da,
Ọvbọ dẹriẹ oma rhi ọdjodjẹrẹ;
Arha nya izede ọphophẹrẹ,
Ọvbọ dẹriẹ oma rhi oseseri.
Nighe ọkpan usaphẹ rode,
Osolobrughe ọma rhe uvu ephan,
Owan ovbo je ighwe ọwa-a,
Owan ọvbọ mẹrẹ ephan ọwa-a;
Ọran nẹ umwu usimi urhomu,
Ro simi t'ọbu t'ogbori.
Ọrieda ro kpokpo ọwan,
Yoro lele ọwan simi oma;
Ame ighroghro ọrhọ dẹriẹ oma rhi urhie oku,
Er' ọwọron na,
Arha dabo ghwo ọtọriẹ,
Ọkpan Ehọ rode ọrọ h'avbaye.
Uvu obo r' orhomuru arha mẹrẹ ukọ,
Otu inughe, ọwo no rho roro avbaye-e,
Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r' orhomuru,
Arha mẹrẹ ukọ.

Ekpare: Ghwo akpọ r' enyerẹn na,
Idadọneye yire nyeren;
Ohworho r' okoko idọlọ,

Idọlọ na irhe koko riẹn,
'Hworho roje ha emese,
Emese na irhe mevi riẹn,
Ohworho roji vbiẹ emọ,
Ọsoso emọ na irhe ji vi riẹn,
Nọye ọroi rh'akpọ nyeren.
Ọrọ rọ ghwọlọ eneyen, ọrọ mọrọn aye,
Erha ghrọrọ se,
N'ọrana itu akpọ a mẹn,
S'oro vboi rhe akpọ nyeren;
Uvu obo r'orhomurun, arha mẹn ukọ,
'Tu inughe, ọwo no rho roro avbaye-e.

Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r'orhomurun,
Arha mẹn ukọ.

Ẹkpare: Akpọna r'enyeren na,
Avbaran arha mẹn ọmọ ọdafe,
Ro nyeren akpọ djigbo djigbo,
Zighi zighi, pharhiẹn pharhiẹn,
Erhobo r'oso avbaye-e;
Uku r'ose ye ohu jovbo,
Ọvbọ ghwọghọ aye rh'urhomu hin;
'Mọ ọdafe ọvbọ dẹriẹ oma rhe ovbiogbere uvu ẹghware.
Ọrọ ha ọdafe wan oma,
Ọsoso ẹghware ne kumie eche;
N' odedede awan eburhun irhuen rọye urhomu,
Uvu ẹghware.
Uvu ọkp' egodo ọmiọmọ,
N'avbaran arha je mẹn aghen;

Rọvbọ sabu vbię ukorohu,
Erhobo r'ọso avbaye-e;
N'ehware ọravbọ ovbo brę,
Gbini erhirhię y'ovbo rhirhię?
Ikun ime wo na je męřę gbe r'onyakpọ uvu avbaye?
Uvu obo r'orhomurun arha męřę ukọ,
Otu inughe, ọwo no rho roro avbaye-e.

Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r'orhomurun,
Arha męřę ukọ.

Ękpare: Iyibo ri n'inọko rhe,
Mọ hwarhię akpọ r'ọwan nyeręn,
Aye rha bọn oghwa Isipito,
T'otu edafe t'ivbiogbere,
N'avbaran erhe simi oma ọphę,
Aye rha bọn Isukuru,
T'emọ edafe t'ivbiogbere,
N'avbaran erhe yono iwe ọphę;
Ọran n'ọkpęghęlę rode,
R'iyibo na iji kiki ru.
Ekete r'ọke ọhavbọ na,
Wo rha h'ọmọ ri 'Sukuru,
Avba gba esiso idọlọ mwu oma,
N'odedede ọye wa dję ufan,
Ake męřę osa wo na hwa;
Ọro kpomu ri Osipito,
Ọvbọ gba esiso idọlọ mwu oma,
N'odedede ọye wa dję ufan,
Ake męřę osa re wo na hwa;

- Uvu obo r'orhomurun arha mēre ukọ,
Otu inughe, owo no rho roro avbaye-e.
- Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r'orhomurun,
Arha mēre ukọ.
- Ẹkpare: 'Tu re hwrọ akpọ na rh'udo,
Raye dumẹ gudu gudu,
Ere kpare akpọ kpahen urhому,
Taghene aye na rhua akpọ rie,
Aghene Osolobrughwẹ ọgbọ ghwai se rhe,
Na ye rhọrọ;
Nighe oboro se ode Okpẹ,
Aye vba rhua ye ri obi Koko,
Ọmọ r'ole izie omerhẹn,
Marhẹ ọmọ na onoru merhẹn?
Uvu obo r'orhomurun arha mere ukọ,
'Tu inughe, ọwo no rho roro avbaye-e.
- Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r'orhomurun,
Arha mēre ukọ.
- Ẹkpare: 'Tu re gbobọ hi akpọ aye,
Sa me biomu akpọ awọrọ na,
'Hworho r'odo ghwẹ onyakpọ,
'Solobrughwẹ ọdo ghwẹ ọravbọ.
Ọbo orho ri ẹbo ekporo,
Orho simi ọwan,
Erhe hu ghelie,
Ọrhọ h'epha kpa otọre,
Ọvbọrhọ karorhọ ghwiẹ aye-e.

Omara Osolobughwe ono bru orhiẹn ọna,

Rẹ ọwan mẹrẹ.

Uvu obo r'orhomurun arha mẹrẹ ukọ,

'Tu inughe, ọwo no rho roro avbaye-e.

Ehwe: Ọye, uvu obo r'orhomurun,

Arha mẹrẹ ukọ.

IN WHAT IS GOOD, WE MAY FIND EVIL

Solo: Yea, in what is good, we find evil,

Let no one consider that;

See the face that is in front (of the human head),

There, it saw broken teeth;

There, it also saw eyes that were blind;

Still on the face,

We also saw beards,

That grew roughly;

This outstanding beautiful face that we commend,

In it, ugliness is found,

To insult human being.

Chorus: There, we find evil!

Solo: I take a deep thought of the world,

After I had thought it forward,

I come to think it backward;

After I had thought it to the right,

I come to think to the left;

The world is truly difficult.

When we drink cold water,

It changes temperature and becomes hot;

When we take a shortcut,
It turns to be very long way;
See the great padlock,
That God created inside the human belly,
We cannot open one another's door,
We cannot see one another's thought;
That is the protective medicine,
That keeps everyone safe.
The witch/wizard who afflicts one,
Is the same person who pretends to treat us;
The still water turned to a flowing river,
That is stormy;
If we investigate thoroughly,
It is a great deity that is there.
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience, do not consider that.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

Solo: This life that we live,
Each person lives his own way;
He/she who gathers wealth,
If the wealth holds together;
He who marries wives,
If the wives prosper and live with him,
He/she who bore children,
And all the children live,
Is the only great achiever;
He/she who finds his/her own and holds them,

And they slip off;
The world sees him/her,
As one who lived wrongly;
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience let no one consider that.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

Solo: In this world,
We found a rich man's child,
Who lived foolishly,
Roughly and carelessly,
We do not know the cause of that.
His/her inheritance after the father's death,
He/she lavishes all;
The son of the rich becomes a poor man in the assembly,
If he boasts of his wealth,
The assembly busts into laughter;
People use their noses to scorn him,
In the assembly.
Within the large family of a fruitful mother,
Is found a barren,
Who cannot even bear one child;
We do not know the cause of that.
Is it that the person does not sleep,
Or that she does not menstruate?
What story can you tell one about this?
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience let no one consider this.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

Solo: The whites, who came from overseas,
To make life more pleasant for us,
Built hospitals,
Where the rich and the poor,
Receive free medication;
They built schools,
Where children of the rich and the poor,
Receive free education;
That was a great gift (blessing),
The whites brought at first.
In the present time,
If you take your child to school,
You must have plenty of money on you;
You then give much bribe,
Before paying fees;
If anyone falls sick and goes to the hospital,
You must have much money on you;
You then give much bribe,
Before paying fees;
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience let no one consider that.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

Solo: Those who put the world into a mortar,
And crush it heavily,

Those who put the world on their heads,
And want to carry it home,
Say God should fall down at once,
So that they would pick him;
See, any good development that is due the Okpe,
They would take it to Koko,
The child who stops the mother from sleeping,
How would the child sleep?
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience let no one consider that.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

Solo: Those who lose focus of their lives,
And come to destroy the lives of other people,
One who is greater than the other,
God is greater than him/her.
If a medicine man goes to perform,
And he treats someone,
And the patient dies in his presence,
If he spreads his divination pellets,
He does not remember to pick them up.
This is how God will give this judgment,
For us to see.
In what is good, we find evil,
Audience let no one consider that.

Chorus: See, in what is good,
We find evil.

University of Pretoria etd, Idamoyibo O I (2006)

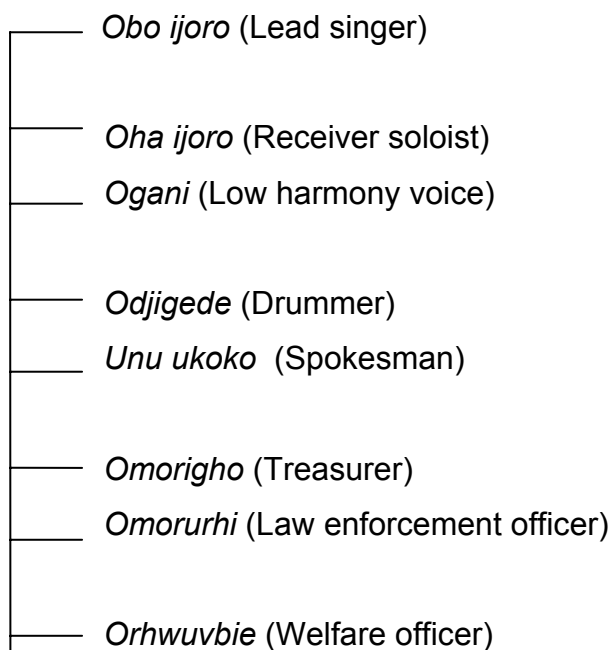
CHAPTER 5

IGORU ENSEMBLE: ORGANIZATION AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

5. 1 General and formational organization

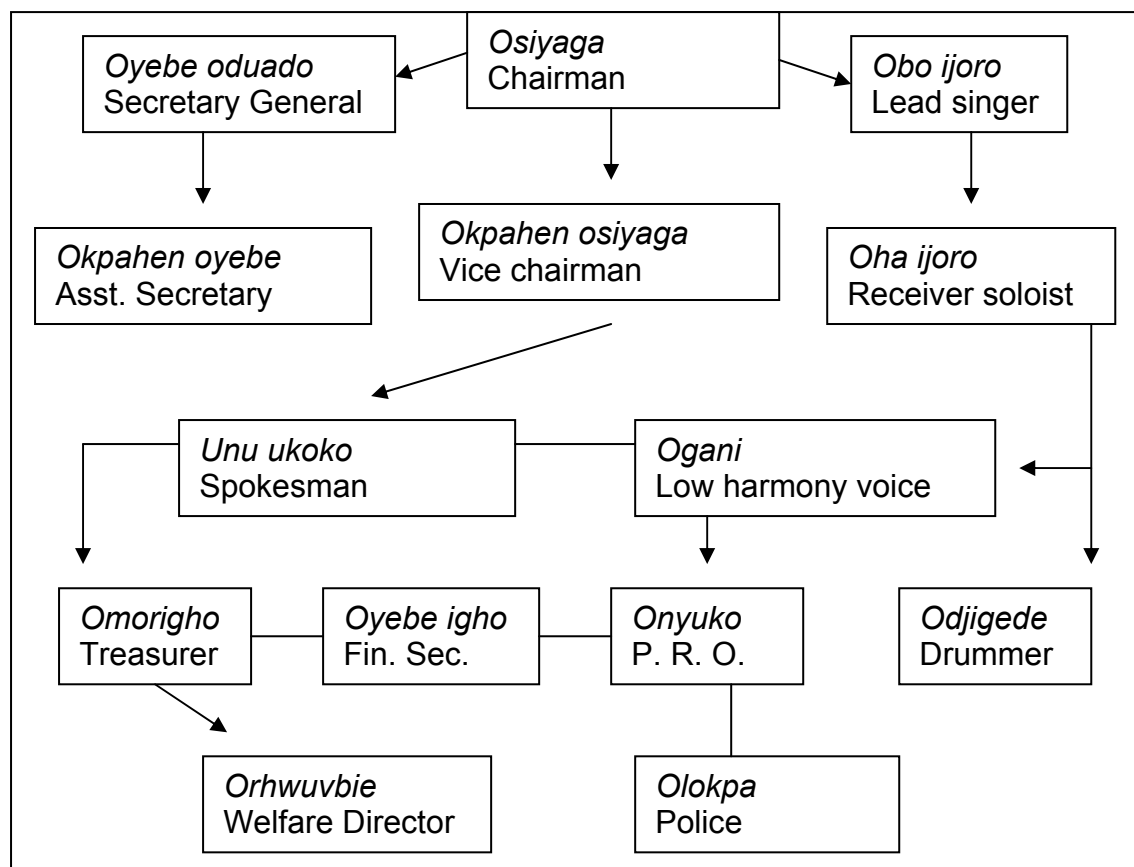
Igoru music is organized like a socio-cultural club. It comprises the administrative, vocal, instrumental and dance sections. The early Igoru ensembles had leadership positions that were held by the leading performers, with few positions to take care of the social and economic aspects. But the development in the 1930s and 1940s brought about two categories of leadership, the purely administrative and the musical. This started with Igoru ensembles that operated under the Okpe Union in Lagos, Sapele and elsewhere. The executive members of the Union take charge of general meetings and the entire affairs of the body, while the musical leaders are given the responsibility to take charge of rehearsal sessions and performances. The following tree of offices illustrates the early positions:

Figure 5 – 1: Tree of offices in rural Igoru ensembles



The lead singer is often seen as the overall leader who directs and moderates the affairs and activities of the ensemble, both at rehearsals and performances. He/she is supported by all other officers of the group. The last four positions are created to take care of the socio-economic and disciplinary aspects. In the urban centres where the ensembles functioned under the Okpe Union, the following organizational structure existed.

Figure 5 – 2: Organizational structure under Okpe Union



Song 62, page A1 – 105, captures the above organizational structure to describe the socio-cultural ensemble of fictitious sex workers in Lagos.

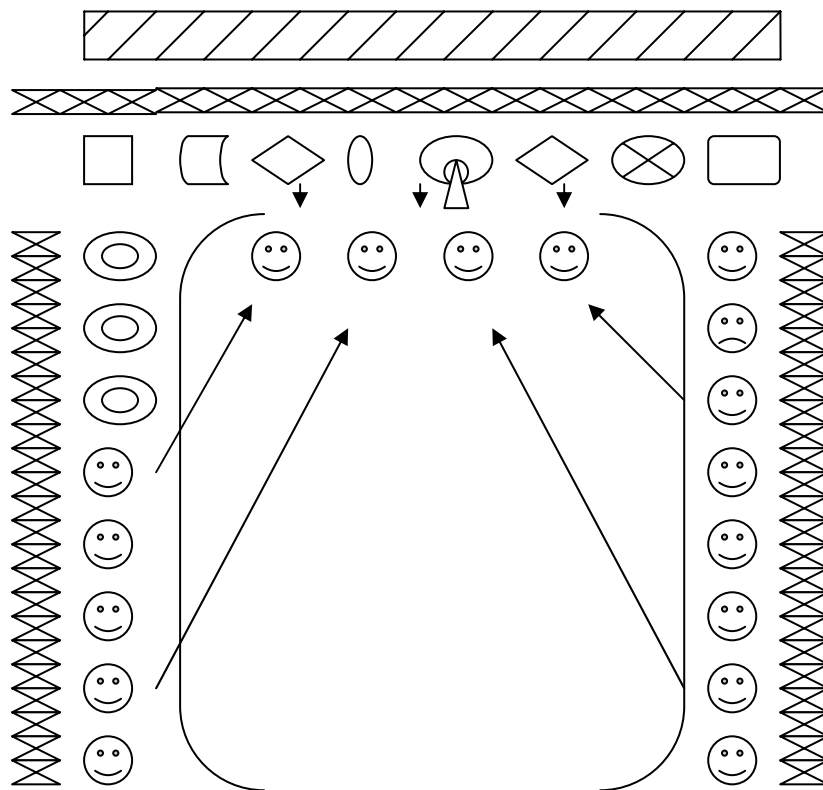
Although the composer did not mention all the above positions, the key offices in the administrative and musical roles were stated in the song. The composer, for instance, states that the chairperson took her seat and called the lead singer to sing a song. This suggests that the chairman could be different from the lead singer in the group. Depending on the group, the positions of patron and matron may or may not exist. But if they do exist, they function as father and mother to the group as is also found in Ezeagu Atilogwu [Etilogwu] of Enugu State, Nigeria (Okafor, 1998: 21). Both musical and non-musical criteria are considered for appropriate nominations and appointment of members into the various leadership positions. Some of the qualifications include musical capability, creative abilities, physical fitness, selflessness, socio-moral comportment and tolerance. The officers elect are accorded respect according to their designations and democratic principles prevail. Occasions where the lead singer is not the chairman of the group, he/she is given almost the same status in matters concerning musical rehearsals and performances.














Plate 5 – 1: Omaromwaye John Igbide (centre) and ensemble members of Jeddo

The structure above clearly indicates that the chairman or lead vocalist is the chief executive of the ensemble. He/she directs the secretary to convene meetings and rehearsals as well as to document proceedings and handle all correspondence on behalf of the group. He/she equally directs the vice chairman to deputize for him, while the assistant secretary may act for the Secretary General in his/her absence. The chief executive directs the spokesman to present and receive all negotiations, gifts, or charges on behalf of the body. The spokesman hands over all income received to the financial secretary who, after recording, hands over to the treasurer for safekeeping. The lead vocalist works directly with the receiver soloist, lower part singer (*ogani*), chorus members and drummers. All members of the ensemble participate in the singing, clapping and dancing. At rehearsals and performances, special seats are arranged for the leading vocalist and the drummers. Other supporting singers, administrative heads and some prominent members of the audience may then seat by the sides. The following is a typical performance formation in open arena.

Figure 5 – 4: Typical Igoru performance formation in open arena



Key

	<i>Obo iioro</i> (Lead singer)
	<i>Oha iioro</i> (Receiver soloist)
	<i>Ohwe iioro</i> (Chorus)
	<i>Ogani</i> (Low voice)
	<i>Odiigede</i> (Drummer)
	<i>Oghigheghe</i> (Dancer)
	<i>Unu ukoko</i> (Spokesman)
	<i>Orhwuvhie</i> : Welfare officer
	<i>Omorisho</i> (Treasurer)
	<i>Inughe</i> (Audience)
	<i>Oghwa</i> (House)

5.2 Instruments of Igoru music

Our discussion in this chapter will focus only on the membranophone class of instruments, since idiophone, aerophone and chordophone instruments are not required for Igoru performance. Although, several membrane drums exist in Okpe, only three *ukiri* are used for Igoru music. Some ensembles decidedly make use of only two or one in their performances. The *ukiri* is a short cylindrical drum which comes in different sizes, but there is no uniform standard of measurement for the construction. It is generally made from the trunk of some specially selected hard wood. The trunk is cut to the desired height or length and a cylindrical hole is borne through it from one end to the other. Thereafter, the builder carves the body, in order to sharpen it to an

expected form, such that the middle area is fairly larger than the top and bottom ends. Very often, at construction, it is carved as a three-legged

pedestal drum, though at the time of performance it does not stand on the ground. Few *Ikiri* (plural form of *ukiri*) are however constructed without legs.

Plate 5 – 2 The pedestal *ukiri*

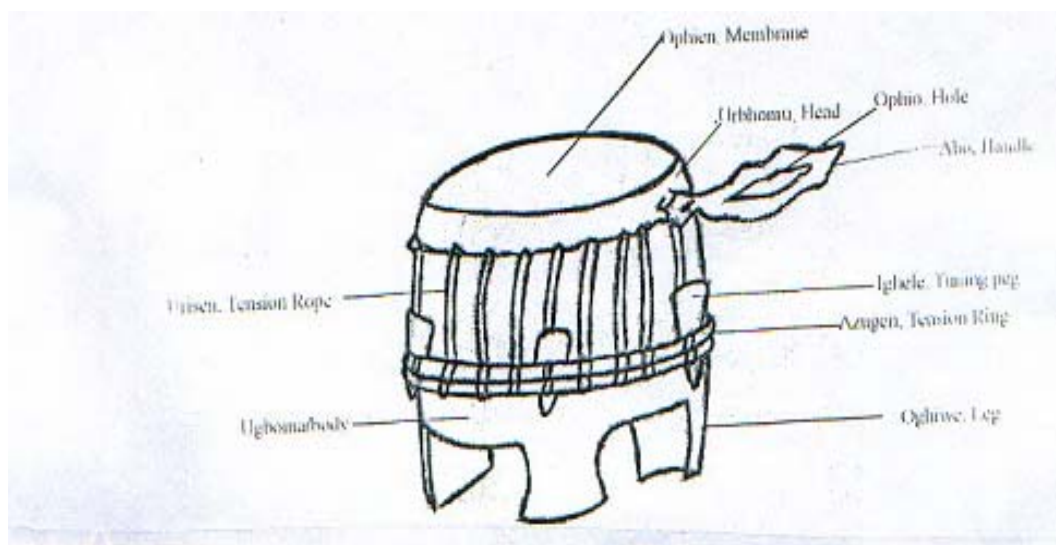


A piece of flexible thin stick is stripped of its bark and wound around the body of the drum slightly below the middle point. This is called *azugen* (tension ring). The membrane or animal skin (*ophien*) is cut to size, about 4cm wider than the upper circumference of the hollow wood. The cutting technically

provides a handle (*abo*) for the drum at an edge of the membrane. Then holes are borne around its edges and it is stretched over the hollow trunk at the top. *Irisen*, specie of flexible cane is smoothed to form flat ropes, which are vertically strung through the holes on the membrane to the tension rings. For the purpose of effective tensioning, the ropes are doubled at intervals around the drum and this adds to its aesthetic value. Finally, four pegs (*Ighele*)

shaped like the handle of a chisel are driven in-between the tension rings and the body of the instrument, to increase the tension of the ropes and the consequent tension of the membrane. The pegs serve as tuning device.

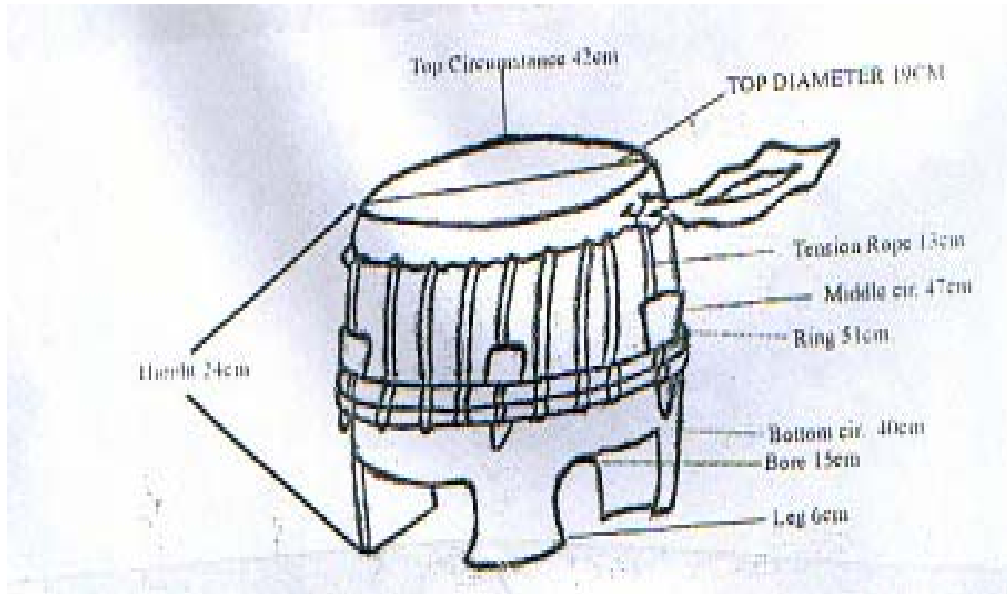
Figure 5 – 4: The structure of *ukiri*



5. 2. 1 The organization of *ukiri* ensemble

The standard *ukiri* ensemble comprises three-member drums of different sizes. This includes the mother *ukiri* (*izu ukiri*), baby *ukiri* (*omo ukiri*) and varied *ukiri* (*ukiri evbarien*). The drums are named by Igoru musicians according to their roles in the ensemble. The first two drums maintain their motifs constantly, with little or no variation, while the third drum named varied *ukiri* develops its theme with varied rhythmic patterns (see chapter two for definition). Two or more tones of varied degrees may be generated on each of the drums, depending on the playing technique adopted. The height of the baby drum is between 20 and 24cm, though no standard measure is fixed for it. The circumference is about 42cm at the top, 47 cm at the middle and 40cm at the bottom while its bore is about 36cm. See illustration below:

Figure 5 – 5: Approximated size of the baby ukiri



The varied drum has a moderate height of about 30-32 cm and a circumference of about 48cm at the top, 53cm at the middle and 432 cm at the bottom. The mother drum is the biggest of the three that form the ensemble. The height is about 40 cm and the circumference is about 62cm at the top, 68 cm at the middle and 58cm at the bottom. The two devices for the

turning of the drum are tensioning by striking the tuning pegs (*ekaren*) and tensioning by sunning or heating up (*ekarhe*). The first device involves the use of any heavy object to hit the sides of the membrane at the rim of the drum as well as to hit the tuning pegs one after the other, while the second device requires heat to dry up the humidified membrane of the drum to expand the skin and thereby raise the tone. Thus, in the dry seasons, the drum is placed

under the sun and beside the fire in wet season for about an hour or more before performance.



Plate 5 – 3: Tuning of *Ukiri*

The drum is normally trapped in the left armpit, the arm holding it firmly against the player's body. If the player sits down, his left lap may be used to

support the drum below. A short thin stick, about 23cm in length, is held in the right hand to beat the drum. A supple wrist is necessary for easy manipulation of the instrument. Nketia (1982: 111) argues:

Certain instruments function as lead or principal instruments, while others play a subordinate role as accompanying or ostinato instruments. Some instruments are used for enriching the texture of a piece of music or for increasing its intensity, while others emphasize its rhythmic aspects or articulate its pulse structure.

Nketia further discusses ensembles that consist exclusively of melodic instruments which could be mixed, such as flutes, trumpets, xylophones, lutes and lyres. He distinguishes between this and another category of ensembles that comprise instruments of homogeneous or mixed groups that are capable only of indefinite pitches such as drums, bells, rattles, clappers, etc. he adds that mixed ensembles of drums may be composed of a set of varying sonorities that may include a high-pitched drum, a medium-pitched drum, a tenor-pitched drum, and a low-pitched drum. Only two or three of the above combinations may form an ensemble, provided they show enough contrast in sonority for one to emerge as the principal instrument and the others as accompaniment. Generally, he concludes that, it is the lowest sounding drum that dominates the others as the principal instrument.

In Igoru ensemble, the mother *ukiri* produces the lowest tones; the baby *ukiri* provides the higher tones, while the varied *ukiri* supplies the medium tones. Igoru performance normally starts with vocal music. Then the mother *ukiri* comes first amongst the instruments, to be followed by the baby *ukiri*, while the varied *ukiri* comes last. These successive entries of the instruments in the ensemble, as a process, are quite systematic, such that the first is allowed to

play its melo-rhythmic sentence (about a measure) twice or thereabouts, before the next instrument makes entry. The mother *ukiri* generates two tones, here referred to as high and low tones. In the compound quadruple metre, the high tone (of the mother *ukiri*) appears on weak beats with syncopation, while the low tone comes on the strong beats. Where the low tone appears on a weak beat, it is used as an anticipation to further strengthen the strong beat that immediately follows, which is equally on the same low tone (see song 8, page A2 – 23).

The mother *ukiri* generally plays a sort of phrasing referent role and two patterns of it exist. Only one of the patterns is adopted at a time. The pattern found in song 8, page A2 – 23, and song 34, page A2 – 91 is the most common in Igoru performances. The second pattern appears in song 25, page A2 – 63. The baby *ukiri* keeps the basic pulse, a sub-phrasing referent role, and the varied *ukiri* plays complementary and colouring roles in the ensemble. The mother drum player normally provides the cadential cue that enables the ensemble to end the performance at once. In a situation where only two drums are used, the baby drum plays the roles of the varied drum together with its own role.

The varied drum is capable of generation two or more tones, but is required to play on a monotone, and to pay much attention to its varied rhythmic patterns and creative extempore. Its roles stimulate and activate dancers and audience participation. The drum establishes and develops its themes on a single measure or two-measure phrase as the case may be. The themes may then be repeated and recycled in several variations. A general overview of the varied drum patterns gives us a circle of theme and variations.

Plate 5 – 4: The *ukiri* ensemble



5. 2. 2 Vocal organization

Akpabot (1998: 40) argues that the Ibibio of Nigeria sometimes have another voice to accompany the cantor in a two-part harmony. He reveals also that the pygmies of East Africa and Hottentots of South Africa involve in contrapuntal singing. The feature of two-part harmony is prominent in Igoru music. Igoru musicians say that the performance requires four major voices, but these voices do not mean four parts. They are four major voices assigned with certain responsibilities, in order to distribute the tasks of presenting the narratives. The performers name the first two voices and describe the other two according to their roles. We have therefore coined the names for the two other voices from the terms used by the musicians in describing their roles.

The four voices are as follows:

- *Obo ijoro* (Lead singer)
- *Ogani* (Low harmony part singer)
- *Oha ijoro* (Receiver soloist)
- *Ohwe ijoro* (Chorus singer)

The *obo ijoro* is usually the most skilled singer, who leads the songs at rehearsals and performances. He/she takes all the major solo sections of the narratives. The *ogani* is also a very skilled singer, often a male singer, though few female singers possess the skill and voice range to provide the harmony part. Igoru musicians say only one person is designated as *obo ijoro* and *ogani* respectively in the ensemble. The musicians use three terms to discuss the roles of the receiver soloist. The lead singer, for instance, says to the receiver soloist '*haye* (receive it)', '*mie me* (take it from me)' or '*frui* (take it fast)'. While we have coined *oha ijoro* from the first term to describe the singer in this discourse, we have coined *efro* and *emie* from the two other terms to describe the role interchangeably in the textual transcriptions. The fourth part of the vocal organization comprises all other members of the ensemble who together sing the choruses as response to the solos and solo cues. The term *ehwe* means to answer a call and the musicians often remark *are ihwe ijoro* (you should answer songs). The vocal forms within this organization have been discussed in chapter seven.

5. 2. 3 Dance organization

Igoru music and dance are in slow pace, particularly because membership of the ensemble comprises elderly men and women. There are however moments of moderately increased tempo. The dance is not choreographed for specialized dancers; it is open to all members including excited members of the audience. Each dancer has liberty to change his/her dance steps at any

time, though they might occasionally maintain some level of uniformity in movement. In any case, because of the obvious attempts to perform some uniform dance steps, any change of step by one or two dancers on the row may influence the others. The chief vocalist is often in front pacing back and forth the stage in all directions and is supported by other members. Hugh Tracey (1970: 6 and 7) discusses the process of the Chopi Dgodo dance as follows:

The musical side is now completed in every essential, but the dance has yet to be composed and fitted to the music. The composer will call on one or two of his friends to help him play over his new work to the dance leader, who listens attentively and devises in his mind the dance routine to fit in. Then, with the plan of action clearly in his mind, the dance leader will try out his new steps and call upon the composer to give him a stipulated number of repeats of the basic sentence or phrase for each parts of the dance. Naturally there would be confusion if a clearly devised plan were not strictly adhered to by both dancers and orchestra. But the system works without the writing of a word or note on paper, and between them the whole movement takes shape. The singing of the words of the lyrics is part of the dance routine and is undertaken by the dancers. They sing as a rule in unison with occasional harmonic passages by their leader. The clear statement of the subject and counter-subjects by young male voices set against the percussion accompaniment of the mellow-toned *Timbila* makes stirring music.

Igoru dance is employed demonstratively to enact the oral narratives. The movements follow the singing as well as the drumming. The *azuzu* (manual fan) in the right hand and *agisifi* (handkerchief) in the left serve as extension of both hands and are often raised-up to mark major vocal cadences of the narratives.

This implies emphasis on the statements or points made in the narratives, in accord with the practice that the performers might point hands at their subjects.



Plate 5 – 5: Igoru performers marking major vocal cadence

The dancers form two rows on the stage, and from each of the rows come to the centre one after the other, in groups of twos or fours, to perform as illustrated in figure 5 – 3 above. The dance, when in progress involves the entire body, where the legs and hands may move alternately both in similar and contrary motions with the shoulders moving gracefully to add colour. In various patterns, the feet are moved forward one after the other. Both on the beat and off the beat, the two feet may pace a step, two steps, or four steps forward one after the other. Movement that suggests two steps with rhythmic body gesture may alternately be taken on the spot without necessarily moving forward or backward.

The balance between the legs and the hands is very systematic in the dance. The right hand may swing forward at the same time as the right leg moves a step forward and at other time may move in contrary motion.



Plate 5 – 6: Igoru dance performers at Ughwoton

Beautiful smile, of course, is an essential element that adds more values to the dance. Members of the ensemble and the audience spur the performance to climax with verbalized utterances that commend and encourage participants. Some of these are expressed as follows:

Wa do

An expression that means “You’ve performed well”

- *I----- iye*
Great, very great!
- *Aghwie abo*
Clap hands

5. 2. 4 Costume and paraphernalia

The costume and paraphernalia for Igoru performance vary for both sexes. The men tie a big wrapper, about six-yard measure (*egbru*) of any kind around their waist and put on short or long sleeve shirt (*ewun*), over a singlet (*ishimi*). The wrapper covers from the waist to the ankle and a light clothing material known as *okpogho* is chosen for the top, to avoid much perspiration. Any dancer, who eventually feels too hot in the course of the performance, may remove the shirt, leaving only the singlet. The performers wear silver bangle known as *iwuru* on their wrists. Some performers may also tie handkerchief on their wrists and muffler or scarf (*onerhon*) on their neck. The muffler is expected to extend downward like a tie. Another muffler is tied around their foreheads. The muffler is fastened to have two knot folds, one on each side, close to the ears and one or more beautiful feathers (*ulele*) are fixed to one of the folds. A cross-cultural similarity is found in Okafor’s discussion of the Ezeagu Etilogwu costume:

On the heads of the dancers, ...rest locally-made wigs shaped in oval forms. Two larger coloured ostrich or artificial fanciful feather/plumes are fastened to the front of these headgears and held down firmly on their heads with coloured scarfs tied over their fore heads. The outfit is attractive, cute and something to admire (Okafor, 1998; 46).

The female performers tie double wrapper of a kind (*oseba gbe aliku*), one slightly longer than the other, around their waist. The *aliku*, hereinafter referred to as the first wrapper, covers from the waist to the ankle, while the

oseba, the second wrapper, is tied over it from the waist to the shin. A strong fashionable rope (*umwaya*) often with a purse (*usumabe*) at the middle is tied over the first wrapper to hold it fast to the waist and keep money safely under the second wrapper which covers them (the rope and purse). During the performance, it is only the second wrapper that becomes adjustable when it becomes loose, since the first wrapper is securely held by the rope. The women put on blouse (*ewun*), over their bra and tuck it into the second wrapper and apply available cosmetics. They may either tie their traditional head tie, or use the knot muffler without a feather. Performers who have gold ornaments may also use them as necklace as stated earlier in chapter three.

5. 2. 5 Recruitment of members

Ka anyi mu nu Egwu” ([not italicized in original] Let us learn a Dance). With this invitation an individual can gather his/her ward members together – both young and old, male and female, for the purpose of forming an *Egwu Amala* group. Usually [,] the man or woman who takes this initiative is one who is competent in the performance... thus becomes the nucleus of the group when it is formed (Okwesa, 1988; 101).

As in the above observation from Aboh culture (Delta State, Nigeria), the initial recruitment in Igoru ensemble may begin in this manner. An open invitation is given by the chief organizer, who goes further to solicit the participation of skilled and talented members of the community at their various homes. When he/she has got a good number of willing members, a meeting is fixed to discuss modalities, appoint leaders, and commence rehearsals. Those who join the group at this stage, do so freely without paying fees. To enable the group take off effectively and be able to acquire the important needs of the ensemble, payment of dues may be introduced. The dues may be payable at weekly, bi-weekly or monthly rehearsals. New members are given the grace to join free during the first month, since some community

members would normally want to observe the group for sometime, to see whether it would survive or not; make meaningful progress, success and impact on the society or not, before they join its membership.

After the period of grace, the group introduces membership fees for those who may wish to join afterwards. Intending members were required to present a bottle of wine or locally brewed gin and certain sum of money to seek admission into the group. Any member of the community who is subsequently found to be talented could be encouraged to join the group with little or no cost. This was the case of Amereka Emakpọ in the Igoru ensemble of Ọkwovu Ọduado. Amereka Emakpọ (a.k.a *emro ekpako*, words of elders) was born twelve years before the first eclipse of the sun in 1947. He was about thirteen years when his musical talent became discovered. Around this period, one Collins Awọrejọ who was based in Warri felt the need to promote and sponsor any promising Igoru ensemble for recording. He therefore invited the Igoru ensembles of Jeddo and Ọkwovu Ọduado to a competition at Warri. He invited the Warri District officer who was a colonial master and a few other experts in music to form a panel of judges for the competition.

The ensemble from Jeddo performed first and received applause. But when the ensemble from Ọkwovu Ọduado ascended the stage to perform, there was an overwhelming ovation from the audience, which was a positive indication that they would win the competition. As the performance was in progress, a sudden heavy downpour arose and drenched the performers on stage. The performing group and some members of the audience believed that the Jeddo people were diabolically responsible for the rainfall, in order to disorganize the performance of their opponents. However, the assessment of the judges favoured the Ọkwovu Ọduado ensemble and it was declared winner. The members got home and spread the news around the community.

The boy, Amereka, heard this story and set it to Igoru music. On a certain day, his friend Idogho Odebala went with him on *Ifo* (exchange team work) to his father's palm oil processing farm, and as they were trampling the palm fruits in the canoe, he (Amereka) began to sing the narrative song. When they got home after the teamwork, the friend spread the news on how Amereka composed and sang this beautiful narrative of the competition experience. The elders who led the Ọkwovu Ọduado ensemble were intrigued by the news and felt the need to listen to the composition. Consequently, they met at elder Otegbikun Evaen's house by evening and sent for the boy, Amereka, to come and perform the song before them. Immediately after this performance, he was recruited into the Igoru ensemble without paying any admission fees. Whenever they had performances afterwards, the elders took him with them on a bicycle and gave him a fair share of the performance proceeds.

5. 2. 6 Training of members

Nzewi (1998: 460) argues that:

...training for expertise on master instruments, that play principal music and/or contextual roles in ensembles, is normally acquired intuitively by observing the experts. It is further consolidated with self-effort, basic to innate musical endowment or cultural ascription. Training for master musicianship roles demands mastership of the master musical instrument in the first instance. Additional requisite, is an understanding of the nature and variables of the programme of a context signified and directed by an event-music type... a gifted child would not normally need any special apprenticeship to become an expert. He/she simply graduates from a children's group or instrument species to a principal's role, once an opportunity occurs in an established adult ensemble, the performance dynamics of which he/she understands (Nzewi 1998: 460).

Peter Etalo (oral interview) argues that children learn from adult members of the community by observation and try their skills as they grow. The children

make use of any available opportunities such as beating the drums that are kept at their parents' homes and those they find at the scene of rehearsals. At adult level, when it becomes necessary to train any member of the ensemble, various techniques are employed. One of the first methods in the training process is that of conscious imitation often expressed as:

- *Kporie omana*

Play it like this

By this method, the instructor who is usually an expert takes the drum and sets the example to be followed. For the varied *ukiri* which has variations, the learning is done phrase by phrase or cycle by cycle. Thereafter, the learner attempts to put the phrases or variations together. Another technique is that of onomatopoeic verbalization of a melo-rhythmic phrases or structure in two distinctive tones. The instructor verbalizes the melo-rhythm of the instrument(s) and the learner is guided to reproduce it. Yemi Olaniyan (2001: 69) reports that the onomatopoeic statement *bo tan ma tun roko* meaning "if it ends, I shall return to the farm" is used to train children how to play the *gudugudu* drum in Yoruba land. In Igoru music, some of the onomatopoeia used to represent the melo-rhythm of the drums includes the following:

Kiki kōngigi kōgōn or *kiki kēngigi kēgēn* (for the mother *ukiri*)

Kikōn kikōn kikōn kikōn (for the baby *ukiri*)

Kēkēgēn, kēgēn kēgēn kēgēn (for varied *ukiri*)

The instructor may also teach the learner how to put the drum in proper playing position and how to place the left hand on the rim to depress the membrane and effect muting or stopping to generate higher tones. This may include a guide on how to use the drumstick to give strong and light strokes in order to generate two or more tones on the drum. When a certain level of mastery is achieved, the instructor or another instrumentalist in the group takes one other drum and tries to play together with the learner to give him

the experience of coordination. With a good deal of repetition during the training session, personal practice at other times and participation at general rehearsals, a higher level of mastery is gradually attained.

For a new member in the voice section, according to Udogu Michael Olocho, a practitioner of Igoru music:

His training begins with *uphele edamo* voice test. If the new members are more in number, the lead singer to handle their training sings a short song or phrase and instructs them to sing it after him. After some rounds, he/she allows those voices that are '*kpovi*' (sonorous) and are capable of reproducing tones accurately to keep quiet while others continue.

After this first step, the phrase by phrase method is applied in teaching a narrative song. The new member sings the phrases after the instructor. When the new member is a little sure of himself, the lead singer or old members sing with the learner, to enable him/her correct some of his/her mistakes without stopping the melodic flow. Sometimes the learner is required to sing together with the lower voice for the purpose of enhancing vocal group work which involves good aural perception.

Another level of training exists amongst lead singers. This is either by open invitation or observation approach. The first approach is taken when an ensemble, possibly a new one feels the need to be trained by a professional Igoru musician. What happens is that a special invitation is given to the desired artiste to leave his own town for the location of the host ensemble to train her lead singers over a period of time. He/she is well catered for and paid some honorarium at the end of the training. For example, Idisi Adibo of

Onyeke was invited to teach a group at Adagbrassa Amwokpe, Ajekakitie near Adagbrassa Amwokpe and Deghele Elume. Some of the lead singers he taught include Adarighofua of Aghalokpe, Johnson the blind of Adagbrassa Amwokpe and Ebiaigbe Egbedi of Deghele Elume. Udogu Olocho of Mereje was also invited to train lead singers at Deghele Elume. He remembers training Titi Ukereti and Odjugo Legos.

The second approach by observation occurs when a group of singers feel the need to acquire more skills and new songs without the knowledge of the model artiste(s). Sometimes this method may involve participation in the ensemble that is understudied. This approach was taken by Amukeye Okodide, Odjugo Legos and other lead singers in Ughwoton who travelled to Ugbitiñ Ekọkọ and sojourned there for three days, watching the rehearsals and performances of an Igoru ensemble.

5. 3 Medicine for voice sonority and courage

Igoru musicians practice what is called *uphele eghwe*, washing or clearing of the voice, to enable lead singers produce very clear tones and sing mellifluously. When the voice is hoarse, the singer may have to chew some *erhien*, commonly known as alligator pepper, to clear the voice. Some may chew some seeds of *erhien* with *ovben oluko*, young leaf of a plantain sucker while others may chew *ishawo okpokpo*, fresh okro, to clear the voice.

A special medicine may be prepared from a certain herb called *ehwẹromo*. The herb is collected, squashed and soused into a bowl of water and seven slices of ripe plantain are added to it. The lead singer then picks a slice of plantain in his right hand and puts it into his mouth. After chewing and swallowing it, he/she uses his bare left hand to take a sip from the liquid content of the medicine. He/she must start and end the action with the right hand, because it is considered significant for the efficacy of the medicine as the right hand is stronger than the left in majority of cases. The action of picking the slice and taking the water is repeated seven times, alternating the functions of the two hands successively. The number 3, 7 and 9 are very significant in Okpe traditional medicine practice. Whenever elders call on God, a deity or the spirit of an ancestor to give power to medicine or sacrifice, they would call three times, and remark that an elder must hear a report three times (before confirming it). The number, seven signifies gathering of power, in that the Okpe believe that the spirit of the dead lives on the earth for seven days to prepare for the journey to the wonderful world beyond. The number, nine signifies long life, because *irhirin* (9) and *rhiririn* (very long time or everlasting) are philosophically related homophones. By the time the singer finishes the seven slices, he would have also sipped from the liquid content seven times and this prepares and makes the voice very sonorous for musical performances.

The performance of Igoru music requires a lot of courage, because it is not easy to say 'boo to a goose', as the narratives make direct reference to names and images of personalities. Oral accounts testify that there were occasions when some of the subjects felt so humiliated, derided and demoralized by such performance expositions and they wept bitterly and openly at the scene of performance. For one to perform an oral narrative in songs to sanction a chief in his presence and point hand at him to reveal his identity to the audience without fear is something extraordinary. Thus, performers would prepare medicines to give them courage and protection. One of such medicines is called *uhaghwa*. The ensemble leader prepares and installs it somewhere in his house. Prior to any rehearsal or performance, he pours libation on it and says some incantations, requesting the powers that are behind it to defend them from any attacks. Each lead singer may also seek and possess powerful medicines for his/her own protection.

Apart from the courage to perform before the subjects, amongst whom may be sorcerers, the courage to overcome stage nervousness is also required. Some musicians therefore feel the need to prepare medicines that could make them bold. One of such medicines was administered to Amereka Emakpo during his first public performance. According to him, when the elders summoned him to elder Otegbikun Evaen's house to perform his Igoru composition on the competition earlier discussed, he was too shy and nervous to sing before the crowd, particularly, the women who stood by the door and window scared him most. He attempted to sing the song several times, but could not raise his voice to continue. Some of the people around thought that he had been charmed, or put under spell, but the great elder Unugbrogodo Ẹkure perceived that the little boy was simply nervous.

While others were trying to urge him on, Unugbrogodo, the most experienced Igoru musician of Ọkwovu Ọduado, quickly went home and came back with the courage-giving medicine. He then brought out a small *atẹtẹ*, woven tray, and *atita*, very small piece of stone. The tray had a red vertical line on its diameter, dividing the circumference into two semi-circles. The line is drawn with *ukpamaran*; red can wood substance, which equally covers one of the semi-circles, while the other semi-circle was painted white by use of kaolin chalk (*orhen*). The elder put the stone at the centre of the tray and poured some locally brewed gin on it with some incantations. He further took the stone and dabbed it on Amereka's chest saying "Ofa ọvbọ rua unye-e". Meaning "The housefly does not get ashamed". He dabbed it again on his back (*udu erhumu*) and uttered the same statement. Then he took the tray up, used it to fan Amereka's face. Thereafter, he instructed him to sing without shame or stage fright. He was then able to sing the song at once.

Some musicians also have what is called *ifuen*, medicine that is capable of stopping the effects of poison and uncontrollable performance mania (*oruru*). In the case of the former, whenever feelings strange of pain or ailment are experienced by any Igoru musician, if he/she has an *Ifuen*, he/she takes it and commands it to stop. For the latter, whenever it becomes necessary to have a short break or close a performance, and the musician's overflowing inspiration (*oruru*) has strong hold on him that he/she is unable to stop, the *ifuen* is administered to him/her. For some musicians like Amereka Emakpo, when the force of inspiration comes over him, his legs would begin to shake and vibrate and the songs would keep flowing from memory. According to him, his mother told him that he inherited the experience from one of her half brothers Esanukpe Itiyo who was a great traditional musician.

Esanukpe was said to have had great inspiration and also composed songs into a matchbox as Amereka does. Whenever the *oruru*, intractable inspiration, manifests in an Igoru performer, a coal-fire or lit cigarette is put into a cup of water and given to him to drink as *Ifuen*. The moment he takes a sip from the liquid, he becomes calm.

CHAPTER 6

POETIC ANALYSIS OF IGORU TEXT AND THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE THEMES

6.1 Transcription and translation of text:

The texts of eighty seven Igoru songs, amongst those so far collected, have been transcribed from recordings for the purpose of this study. The transcription follows a poetic pattern, as much as possible, since the composers have conceived them poetically for the songs. We have therefore structured them in some verse forms. In doing this, we tried to follow the sequence of thought that the composers assumed in constructing the poems. That is, within the train of thought that forms an entire length of any given poetic song, we looked for the lines that marked the end of a segment or sequence that establishes a portion of the message to map out the verses. Some of the songs that are short are, however, not versified, but considered to be a single verse poem, particularly if the thought pattern is punctuated with series of non-final ending phases with the period coming only at the end.

We have stated earlier that the songs were not all collected from the same source and as a result, songs collected from a single performer have been written in poetic verses without indicating the lines of solo and chorus. In other cases, the lines of the soloists and chorus refrain have played major roles in determining line length and poetic metre in the various verses and poems. The lines sung by the soloists and chorus in most of the poems have therefore been indicated as such. Most of the satirical themes attacked and referred to specific personalities who were represented in narratives with the real names of the victims. In all negative references, we have adopted fictitious names to replace the real names for ethical considerations. But where the composer refers to himself and some identified persons positively, we have chosen to retain the real

names, for historical purposes. In similar dimension, names that reflect the significance of names have been retained with some sort of modifications to disguise the real names. The modifications were carefully shaped, both in sound and length, and in meaning, leaving no room for readers to guess aright and easily identify the real persons involved. We have used Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1997) model of poetic analysis of text as primary model to explain the literary interests of Igoru music lyrics. Although this model helps us to analyse the various poetic aspects of the texts, interpretations of the texts derive from the Okpe culture and the Igoru musicians.

In consideration of the various events and historical development that characterise and influence Igoru music, past and present, the poems have been classified into four periods for this discourse. The first period c. 1100 – 1900 covers the time that the territory known as Okpe was first occupied by the founder and his subjects. It also covers the reign of Esezi I, the renowned despot Orodje (king) of Okpe who was assassinated as discussed in chapter three. The period includes the enlargement of the Okpe settlement, contact with neighbouring communities and first contacts with foreign explorers. The period seems large, but only a few songs could be memorably linked to it amongst the Igoru songs so far collected.

The second period 1900 – 1945 covers the period of interregnum in Okpe, slave trade, colonial and missionary activities in the area, World War II, land dispute between the Okpe and Itsekiri, and reformation processes through the activities of the Okpe Union in Lagos and London. The third period 1945 – 1970 covers the reign of Esezi II, the Orodje of Okpe (John Deveno Mebitaghan a. k. a. Osakpa).

The period also covers the Nigeria civil war and all the effects and influences of the two [World and Civil] wars, as well as the missionary activities. The fourth period 1970 – 2005 covers the reign of Orhoro I, the Orodje of Okpe (Dimingo Omojaele Ejinyerien) and the decline of Igoru performances. These periods have been discussed in some historical detail in chapter four.

6. 1. 1 Song as oral poetry and text; poetry as speech and song:

Song, text, speech and oral poetry are terms used often in the discussions of certain literary and oral communication arts. Song in its simplest definition is packaged information put together in various sound forms that involve a combination of sounds in melody, often with words that centrally dominate the communication role. Poetry as opposed to prose, is an organized form of communication whereby words are skillfully and wittily put together in manners that only few words may cleverly be used to express a body of ideas. Speech is normally an organized use of words in spoken language to communicate feelings to an audience. Words [without musical sounds] carefully put together in prose or poetry form to intimate an audience with a body of information, on the other hand, may generally be referred to as text. But more significantly in this context, text refers to the words that in a song communicate thoughts, expressions and experiences. There is however a link between these terms, (song, text, speech and poetry), because there is normally a combination of the forms and it may therefore be difficult to discuss one without the other. In Igoru music for instance, the performers sometimes open a performance with an introductory speech. The information in this speech is usually not sung to any melody, but spoken directly. It informs the audience about the background of the song or songs to be performed and prepares them toward the experience. This is evident in the *Egboto Isinio* ensemble performances.

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 63 and 64) present the concept of poetry both as speech and as song, arguing that:

Poetry as speech. Even when it is written down – printed on a page in a book – a poem is essentially an oral communication, spoken by the poet and heard by his audience. Often, indeed, poetry is *song*: words communicated musically (p 64)...Poetry is memorable in a way that prose is not. After we have read a novel, for example, we may well remember characters, incidents, descriptions of places, but we are unlikely to find that words or phrases or whole lines have lodged in our memories. After reading a poem, on the other hand, we often find that chunks of it have stuck in our minds. After repeated readings, we are often able to recite from memory most or all of the poem. In the truest sense of the expression, we have learnt it by heart, and with little trouble. And this memorable quality derives very largely from the fact that poetry has a firm shape – a *pattern* of sound – imposed upon it by its maker (pp63-64)...Remember always that poetry is speech, poetry is music – and its subject is life (p 72).

The foregoing indicates that poetry involves both elements of speech and of song. These elements make the songs memorable. Igoru songs, whether short or long, are memorable; thus several Igoru songs are performed by various practitioners in different parts of Okpe without distortion of coherence and meaning in the messages communicated through the songs. The variety we have found so far in some of these songs collected from different parts of the Okpe country are mere results of choice of words, where the performing musician/poet might insert new words that mean exactly the same as those they replace. The performer of song 5 (A1 – 6), for instance says “young lady, you’ve carried fever; young lady you’ve carried a bundle of wood; you’ve carried great trouble and dangerous uterine prolapse upon your head, you don’t know”.

In song 6 (A1 – 11), another performer of the same song says exactly the same thing, but swaps the first two lines, changing a word and adding brief information. While the first performer uses the word “*okere*,” the second uses “*ukọ*” for the expression of “great trouble” as in this context. The second performer adds that the subject took the trouble so expressed with him/her to Lagos, information that was not suggested by the first performer. Long as the song is, the poetic nature by use of strictly worded lines, sequence of thought and sound patterns make it memorable that other performers amongst the audience could easily memorize it and re-present or perform it with the content intact. Mark Booth (1981: 5) comparatively argues that:

A song consists of, for one thing, a-not-very-long stretch of music, which may or may not be strophically repeated but which does have a distinct closure after it sets a moderate number of lines of verse; and for the other, a certain quantity of song verse...Outside the borders and not bound to share the nature of song are words merely recited to music and words sung in recitative or in liturgical or other chant. More difficult to map is the important area where song verse and lyric poetry that is not song meet. (p 5)...Where the song properly exists, where it is words for the singing voice, it has possibilities not recognized among poems for reading (p 6)...The existence of songs in sound, in time, is the simplest distinction between them and written verse (p 7).

Since generally oral poetry in Okpe is not recited, except in story-telling forms, Igoru poetry does not exist as mere recitation, but in proper songs, structured into melodies for the singing voice to communicate. The songs are either short or long, in some thorough composed narrative and varied verse forms. The simplest Igoru songs are composed in very short melodic sentences. Often, these short songs serve as preambles, mere introduction of the idea to the narratives. Only handful short songs really exist. Thorough-composed songs of moderate length

are structured in not very short melodic forms. They are rather composed in series of melodic phrases that keep the narrative word-phrases moving till the last line is given the required period and perfect cadence. Single verse songs of nine to fourteen lines long are often composed in a melodic stretch that is continuous to the full length. An eight-line or fourteen-line song, for instance can be structured into two equal verses, where the melody is composed to the length of the first half and the second half is sung to the same melody. But this is not the case with songs of this length in Igoru music. Songs within this range of length are considered and structured into single melodic progression.

Ashenafi Kebede (1982: 6) discusses the relationship between text and music in oriental Africa, presenting an argument that:

The performer communicates ideas to his listeners through music. Purely instrumental music, because of its illusive and intangible nature, may be harder to comprehend than vocal music. Meaning in vocal music is often direct, as long as the text sung is constructed to convey ideas and it is directly integrated with the melody. Sometimes melodies are primarily used to convey the message of the text; in this case, the text is considered more important than the melodies. This applies to the vocal music of oriental Africa. *Vocables* are also set to melodies, in which case the melodies are considered more important than the text.

Igoru music is vocal form and not instrumental, though accompanied with some instruments already discussed in chapters four and five. It communicates to the audience through the texts or poetry enhanced by the use of mellifluous melody. The text and melody play complementary roles in the communication process. Neither Igoru musicians nor the audience consider the poetry more important than the melody, or the melody more important. When they speak of the messages of Igoru music, though principally conveyed by the poetry, they say

“the songs speak to us and teach us values” (Idisi Adibo, oral interview). This indicates that the two are considered equally important in communicating messages.

Mark Booth (1981: 16) further examines the similarity and difference that exist between song text and poetry; as well as the association between audience and performer. He then argues:

Notice that in the case of narrative song we do not identify with a character in the song, but with the teller, with his implicit attitudes or his projected state. Tear-jerking narrative song gives us the experience not of the suffering character but of the sympathizing teller (p 16). Song text is poetry; then again song is not poetry as we usually understand poetry, but rather a collateral descendant from a common ancestor. To examine and write about written text is suitable for the critic of poetry; the appropriateness of such an approach for the student of song is not so clear. Certainly to study song exactly as we study the superficially similar forms of written lyric poetry leads to gauche mistakes...What the modern reader most wants to find in poetry is the poet's personal encounter with reality, fixed with subtle rightness in a unique construction of language. It should be clear that songs almost never answer to this expectation. Songs give us, for matter, something we can recognize; they present it in language sparing of surprises, consisting for the most part of well-chosen phrases rather than well-chosen words (p 23-24).

Igoru composers give emphasis to good choice of words and wise sayings. Phrasing and word selection both play important roles in the songs. Words that have roots in human experiences, some of which the composer might have had personal encounter with, and others based on the experiences handed down from past generations provide basis for philosophical constructions. Proper understanding of Igoru music depends much on the poetic structures, use of

linguistical elements that all have bearings in the philosophical thought processes and wisdom embedded in the culture. Different forms of association between the audience, the performer and the narrative character exist in Igoru music, depending on the perspective. The narrative performer is normally not a sympathizer, but one who exposes the evil deeds of the characters derisively and satirically; judging and condemning unworthy acts. The songs provide the audience the experience of the character descriptively, in such a way that the audience could be stimulated to imagine what pleasure or pains the character goes through as a result of his/her deeds. If the events narrated are however pathetic, the audience could become sympathetic with the character, and if the narrative is of an abominable act, it has the propensity of stimulating the audience to want to dissociate from the subject in the society. The audience's association or identification with the performer mostly lies in relation to the entertainment and information he/she provides. The study of Igoru songs as poetry is illuminating to the content and context of the performances.

6. 1. 2 Language and language import:

The principal language of Igoru music is Okpe, but some Igoru poets briefly insert words from other languages like English, Urhobo and Itsekiri, known to the people, to create some effects and sensation. We refer to the use of these foreign words as language importation in the context of this discourse. In song 31 lines 28 to 33 (A1 – 48), for instance, the poet employs the Urhobo language to stimulate the sense of curiosity in listening to a different language for a moment, and in this connect various ideas together. He/she uses Urhobo and Okpe to complement one another. Within the few lines where this importation occurs, the poet-composer makes a short statement in Urhobo and expands it in Okpe before finally concluding the song in the home language. The poet in song 44

lines 11 and 12 (page A1 – 72) imports both English and Urhobo languages to contrast the Okpe language in expressing a point as follows:

- *Imoko re rie isi,*
Parrots that travel overseas,
- *Tetiyin avwa vuę inene,* (Urhobo)
Inform grand mother when you get there,
- *Ohoro mę ọbẹrẹ hin, ehware ikongo oma ọgbaye-e* (Okpe).
My vagina is torn, because love making with soldiers was beyond my strength.

In the first line, the poet uses only one English word ‘overseas’ represented as ‘isi’ while the second line contains entirely Urhobo language and the third Okpe. The combination of these languages together in expressing ideas that could be expressed in only one language, not only show the diversity of language exploitation skills of the poet-composer, but stimulate a sense of cultural integration and assimilation. In song No. 49 line 7 (A1 – 84) the poet imports an Urhobo epigram to complement an Okpe phrase in making his/her point. He/she expresses as follows:

- *Osi vwe mi sio* (Urhobo)
It pulls me and I pull it,
- *Rọ ha otọre na* (Okpe)
That is on ground.

The persona uses the above expression to describe a complex situation, suggesting that there is great trouble awaiting the subject. This does not however mean any danger, but implies that the problem on ground that demands resolution is not an easy one to cope with. In song No. 50 line 1 (page A1 – 85)

the poet imports the name of an inanimate object 'Pillow Case' from the English language and uses it as personification to represent the persona who is an Igoru musician. The Okpe name for pillow case is *owen osurhomu*, which syllables are not equivalent to the name in English. But the Okpelized version of the English name as in the beginning of verse two, 'ipilokesi' having being influenced by the local patois is only one syllable lesser than the Okpe name for the object. The one syllable difference could have been adjusted by use of elision and or truncation in linking the two parts of the name together to enable it fit into the melodic phrase perfectly. We can not then say the poet used the English name because of syllabic balance with melodic phrase. We therefore have to examine the concept of the name 'pillow case' in the first instance. The pillow case serves as a cover for the pillow itself and protects it from dirt, and considering the lines that follow, we then come to understand that the poet implies that though, the Igoru musician might seem to be powerless, he/she invokes the powers of the ancestral deities to give him/her protective cover to shield him/her from every evil attacks.

Tanure Ojaide (2001: 24) adopts the term neologism to describe the various coinages of words that have their roots in English language and other African languages:

Udje dance songs have impacted on the Urhobo language. As with every other language worldwide, poetry helps it to grow. There are neologisms such as "helimeti" (helmet), "sati" (sardines), and "chapini" (captain) from English...The neighboring Ijo also have their influence on the language. Many words are no longer in fashion, such as "babotu" (prostitute) and "ajakpa" (tortoise).

Igoru poets-composers have, in similar manners, adopted some other English and non-English words, apart from those already mentioned above, in new

coinage or neologism patterns. These coinages are only used for expressions that would create some kind of multi-lingual effects and excitement on the listeners and not that the Okpe do not have words equivalent to them in meaning. Some of these words include *prisi* (preach, song 4, page A1 – 5); *itisha* (teacher, song 8, page A1 – 17); *ukoba* (kobo, song 15, page A1 – 27); *ibangoro* (bangle, song 16, page A1 – 29), *ibriji* (bridge, song 18, page A1 – 32); *govumeti* and *imoto* (government and motor car, song 22, page A1 – 35); *imeba* (member, songs 23, 25, 44, 48, 66, 79); *ijita* (guitar, songs 27, 56); *iminiti* (minute, 34); *isodja* (soldier, song 39); *ibroda* and *ati* (brother and aunty, song 42); *ifoto* (photograph, song 43); *ipaseja*, *ishu meka*, *kapita*, *brasimeti*, *repiera*, *itiubu*, *ijini* and *aropleni* (passenger, shoe maker, carpenter, black smith, repairer, tube, engine and airplane, song 44); *pilo kesi* (pillow case, song 50); *ikipi*, *olokpa*, *paredi* and *ipoda* (chief, police, parade and powder, song 62); *aleluya*, *Amereka* (hallelujah and America, songs 66 and 67); *ipreya* and *blaki* (prayer and blacky song 67); *bagi* and *ofisi* (bank and office, song 68); *isini*, *yuni* (senior and union, song 70), and *ishoshi* (church, song 82).

Apart from the above Okpelized English words, Igoru musicians have names by which they refer to some of their neighbours and foreigners. These names are not in any way derogatory, but we are yet to see any members of the ethnic groups and race so represented by these names addressing themselves by the same names. These include *Ihwo* for the Ijaw, *Irhobo* for the Itsekiri and *Oyibo* for all whites. Others are those in a way Okpelized, like *Ephron* for Effurun and *Ausa* for Hausa.

In song 52 lines 2 and 3 (page A1 – 87) the poet uses the Urhobo language to complement Okpe, saying: "The alligator cries so loudly in the river; then how

would the crocodile in the river cry? Oh no, we members do not know". The expression is proverbial meaning that those who have gone out of the way of God, who would not be certain to gain his (God's) support, if they prepare medicines and believe in their efficacy, how much more would the Igoru musicians who believe in their functional roles that follow after the standards of God. This implies that most traditional medicines require the backing of God to become effective. In lines 11 and 12, the poet expresses a consultation of the powers of the God of their fathers. He/she says '*Adane Okpẹ, otọre Ijẹddo me vbaa re*' meaning *Adanẹ Okpẹ* and the land of Jẹddo, I consult you.' '*Ada ẹne Okpẹ*' is a representation of the four ancestral quarters and thereby the God of Okpẹ. The land of Jẹddo in this context also implies the God of Jẹddo community. We have discussed this concept of community worship in chapter three earlier.

The word '*ẹvbare*' conveys meaning beyond consultation in this context. It implies invocation of the powers to come into action, to kill those who would attempt to use medicines against the musicians. The poet in fact presents a reported dramatic dialogue that ensued between the persona and the imaginable assailants or subjects. He/she says the enemies said that the Igoru musicians should die in the rainy season and the persona objected to it, saying the earth would be too soft for burial and it would not be proper to die in such season. Then the enemies said they (the musicians) should die in the dry season and the persona replied, the earth would be too hard for burial, it would not again be a good time to die. The persona concludes that the enemies should please leave them alone, meaning no one wishes to die before the time destined for him/her. The use here is dramatic, because it establishes an argumentative wisdom based on the dialogue between an Igoru performer, representing other Igoru

musicians, and their enemies. By enemies, the poet means the victims of Igoru satirical narratives who wished and in fact practiced sorcery to ensure that some prominent Igoru musicians fall dead in the period when the tone of satire in Igoru music sounded most offensive.

In song 54 lines 3 and 4 (page A1 – 90) the poet imports the Itsekiri language to illustrate his/her point. The poet expresses that the Itsekiri have some curses they project on offenders, implying that some Okpe had begun to imitate them to invoke those curses. He/she represents the curses as they are invoked in the Itsekiri language. See appendix I for details. The poet of song 79 in line 3 (page A1 – 145) imports the phrase '*odje eya kpo*, one who sends wives packing' from Urhobo to succinctly make a point. The performer, Omaromwaye Igbide explained that the subject of the satire was a woman of authority who used to find faults and send her brothers' wives packing. This expression suggests that Igoru musicians in Lagos observed that this was not a healthy practice in the society. Every woman has rights in her husband's house and it is absurd for a fellow woman, a relation of the man, to intrude or obtrude to send any sisters-in-law packing from their matrimonial homes. It implies that though she had done that several times with her sisters-in-law, she certainly could not send Igoru musicians packing from Lagos because they performed a satire against her attitude.

6. 1. 3 The poet, composer, performer and persona:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 9) define the term 'persona' as a useful word that is employed to describe a narrator or a character who in a poem speaks in the first person. They argue that the persona is not the poet, but functions as a mask or disguise that the poet puts on for the purpose of enacting

a poem in a narrative form. The persona is a common and prominent feature in Igoru poetry. It appears in the first person pronoun such as 'I and we'. Igoru composers use either of these personas to narrate events that took place, as if they were right at the scene of the incidents, in order to make it look real and more effective at presentation.

In song 16 (page A1 – 29), Egbikume Azanọ uses the persona in two different forms to create various effects. He uses it in lines 1 and 2 to portray the narrator as an observer and reporter of an event that took place between two characters. In effect, he introduced the narrative in this disguise “I got to Ugbamugbose, yea, and I saw Takpevwiere lamenting greatly.” He continues the narrative with subtlety such that in line 4 he uses the third person pronoun ‘me’ to suggest and transform the character of the narrator from being an observer to being the protagonist who is involved in the encounter. In an ironical manner, he adopts the persona again in lines 8 and 16 to reinforce the latter role.

The composer of song 58 (page A1 – 94) also presents the narrative in the guise of the persona that changes roles. The opening line presents the narrator as an observer and reporter, but subsequently transforms to the protagonist who was narrating the story of her own experiences. This change of tone by which the narrator assumes the position of the protagonist in disguise, is a poetic technique adopted to create the mood and effect of a jeremiad being narrated by the affected person. It is often intended to arouse emotions that could stimulate sympathy, in order to make the message of the poem gain more ground or have more effect on the audience.

The composer of song 33 (page A1 – 55) also used the persona in a similar manner. In this song, the narrator presents a very painful incident as if it really happened to him. He states that he found a young lady to befriend as concubine and it was his blood relation that reported the bigamous activity of the lady to her husband. This implies, of course, that the moment his brother/sister had reported the young woman, he was already implicated, because he was involved in the ill act. He tries to evoke the kind of feelings one has when a very close relation does something grievous against him/her. The persona was employed here to show that it could have been less painful, if a neutral person in the community made the report, instead of a close relation. Omaromwaye Igbide, in song 43, also adopts the persona at the opening of the poem to represent the narrator who revealed himself/herself as a counsellor and an observer who encountered, discovered and is narrating the consequence of his/her client's disobedience. He establishes this position firmly between lines 1 and 8 saying: "Yea, I advised Ibebeka to return from Ikeja, and Ibebeka refused...On a certain day, I travelled to Ikeja, and I found Ibebeka fallen in the street; she was in pains and was very weak".

In rare cases, the poet uses the first person pronoun to refer to himself, both as the narrator and the poet. In Igoru music, this very often occurs when the poet wants to drive certain messages home, particularly when he is much involved in the context. In song 8 line 10 (page A1 – 17), Unugbrogodo Ekure uses 'I' to refer to himself directly, being involved in the very context of the song theme. He was in fact contesting the views of the community members concerning a musician. As an Igoru musician who had encountered some reactions from the public, he decided to be personal in this approach. He contends as follows, using the persona:

Unugbrogodo sings (performs), and the world, call him a
vagabond; yeah, you said so and we've heard you. But

what the eye sees, the mouth will say to the audience. How one becomes a vagabond is numerous; yes, public, I will educate you.

He states, in fact, his real name at the first line of the song poem to make clear that the subsequent first person pronoun refers to him as both the poet and narrator, as opposed to other cases where he might use the persona to represent the narrator while his role is understood simply as that of a poet and performer. In some Igoru songs, the composer changes the roles of the characters in the narratives. The song may start with the antagonist appearing to be the persona or narrator. Then it progresses to quote and present the speech of the protagonist or subject. In song 31 lines 28-30 (page A1 – 48), the narrator presents the subject's expression verbatim in quote instead of reported speech form. In the following songs, similar quotes were inserted into the narratives to distinguish the position of the performer from that of the subject. They include song 32 lines 17-21 (page A1 – 52) and song 47 lines 5, 10, 27-29, 33-34, 45 and 47-49 (page A1 – 78).

In song 32 (page A1 – 52), the quote is incomplete, but is consummated by a line that follows it in reported speech manner. The lines read: 'And he said, "you've got to accept my decision, and one thing that is left, I shall give you a rule; your tax this year is payable to the Orodje of Okpe; and any Itsekiri citizen who flouts this order," he said, should take up his boat and row to Lagos'. We have earlier pointed out that our translation in the appendix had not strictly followed the intricacies of expressions in the Okpe language. Reading the poems in the local patois therefore gives us more impressions of the manner in which these expressions are made. This is so, because we have considered the simple readability of the poems in the translations. In the above quotation, however, we

observe that the first part is presented in quote and the second part in reported speech form. This then presents a kind of swap between the position of the narration performer and the persona. While in the quote the performer assumes the position of the involved character, the unquote part of the statement represents the narrator as an observer only.

In song 46 (page A1 – 78), the quotes represent the changing characters involved in the narrative. The first quote represents the speech of the impostor who comes to invite the protagonist for a mission. The second represents the performer (not the persona) challenging the ensemble chorus and audience to respond to the song at appropriate entry points. The third represents the complaints and disagreements of the protagonist, having discovered the guile of the impostor. The fourth represents the lament of the protagonist and the fifth represents the speech of the intervener. These quotes all function in making the presentation dramatic, interspersing the narratives with dialogue.

In song 58 (page A1 – 94) the composer presents the topic sentence to suggest that the narrator is a witness who narrates an event he/she had witnessed and suddenly changes position to assume the role of the character involved. He/she narrates the whole story using reflective pronoun that all suggest he/she was deceived by his/her peer to separate from her spouse. One then wonders whether the satire is an attack against the narrator or the person who deceived him/her. The performer, however, interprets the mood and intention of the composer that the song is a satire against a lady customary chief who practiced socio-moral vice and led the protagonist regrettably into it.

6. 1. 4 Symbolic communication circle in poetry:

Nzewi (2002: 368) argues and examines the components that are interwoven into the internal frame of musical products as follows:

Music is the sonic perception of the methodical manipulation of certain mathematical and acoustical principles. The mathematical principle computes, in time dimension, the organisation and duration of beats/notes to plot the rhythm of a musical product...There are other constants in creativity which are needed to qualify a rationalized synthesis of rhythm and tones in music. Foremost is the human constant: music is the product of a humanly performed or intentioned activity. The second constant is an evidence of patterned rhythmic configurations in a single or multi-lineal plane. Thirdly, there also needs to be evidence of conscious selection and sequential manipulation of tones and pitches, or spectrum, thereof, (called notes) on a rhythmic base. And, fourthly, there has to be an acoustical medium designed and manipulated to resonate this union of rhythm and tone/pitch according to rationalised degrees of sonic intensity. The presence of these constants of a musical intention...are not music specific. But they are fundamental to a musical process.

Igoru composers undertake several processes of selecting and permutating different elements from the language and linguistic phenomenon of the Okpe culture, as well as those of music. These elements unify in the process and become a product that transmits several messages to the public in symbolic forms. Nissio Fiagbedzi (1985: 41-45) *On Singing and Symbolism in Music: The Evidence from among an African People*, re-visits the symbolic theory of interpreting music phenomenon advanced by Langer (1967) and reinvents the argument as follows:

She holds that the human brain, as a great transformer, continually converts sense-data into symbols; that these symbols are, in turn, our elementary ideas; and that symbol-making gives rise to speech, an observable human

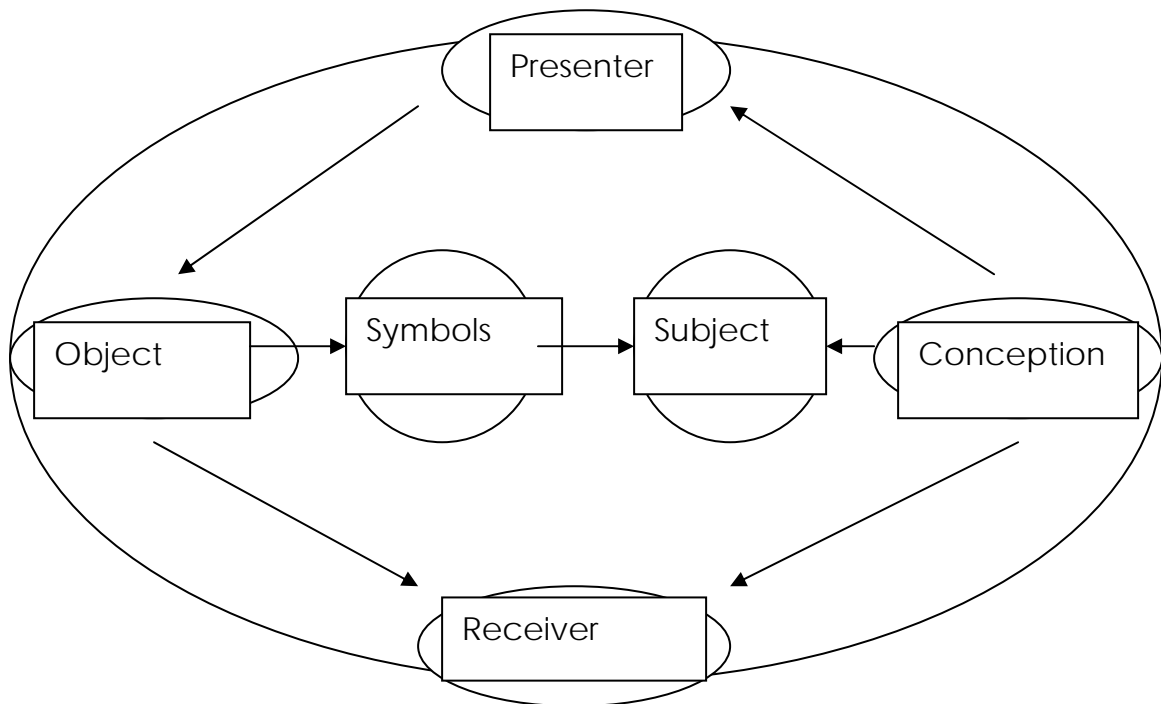
function whose main vehicle is language (p 41)...unlike language, music is an “unconsummated” symbol, which lacks denotative function. Therefore, music having no fixed conventional reference has import only as an articulate whole. Any significance may be assigned to music as long as it fits the logical image of the music...In signification, for instance, the relationship is a straightforward one. The sign induces the subject or individual to take direct and immediate account of the object or event it represents. Thus, on hearing a piece of music, a person may identify it as music and, from a previous experience, relate it to a specific musical type. Or he may place the performance within its sociocultural context (p 42)...It would seem, however, that there are other possible patterns of thought in using symbols. Three alternative sequences suggest themselves: first, that of subject → object → symbol → conception (p 44).

Purely instrumental music may be seen debateably as unconsummated or incomplete and imperfect symbol, but since Igoru music is vocal and word-based, it presents its symbols in skilled language that employs figures of speech, imagery and other poetic elements. It is the use of these language techniques put together in tones and tunes that assist in conveying the messages that make the songs symbolic. Messages may not therefore be presented directly and in such details demanded by speech. The messages are rather fragmentised and presented in manners that require the listener’s further reasoning in order to deduce the full meaning of the songs.

In the above argument, Fiagbedzi identifies the subject as the individual member of the audience, the object as the song he/she listens to, the symbol as the type of song [named], and conception the meaning derived from the song. In our discourse of the communication network in Igoru music, we shall adopt an alternative formula as follows: presenter → object → symbols → subject → conception → and receiver. In this alternative, presenter means the composer-

performer, object music or song, symbols the technical language it employs, subject the character in the narrative or the person who is attacked by the content of the song, conception the meaning of the song text and receiver the audience – her sensitivity and response.

Figure 6 – 1: Symbolic communication circle in poetry



The presenter, as in oral poetry, is often the poet and composer who poise the poems and songs at performances in the person of the persona to both the subject and the audience. The presenter, as composer, draws experience and knowledge from observation and deep philosophical thought to conceptualize the themes that form the object [poems and songs]. He/she represents the conception in symbols packaged in the object and presents it at performance. The object at presentation conveys the symbols to the subject and audience and the latter duo conceptualize the meaning therein. As the presenter derives his/her messages and meaning through conceptualization, so do the subject and audience, because the knowledge of truth is in part and in whole, depending on how it is conceived, deduced and presented. This implies that the composer may not set all details in the songs, but the fragments of information put together provide the subject and audience basis for further efforts to tap new knowledge intellectually.

These relationships are significant in Igoru music, because the songs are not just for purely entertainment purposes; but are directed to specific persons as well as the audience. Of course, the subject is sometimes a member of the audience, but in several cases, the subject may not be present at the scene of performance. If the subject is absent, it is sure any member of the general audience would get to inform him/her in the community after the performance. Whether the subject is present or not, does not really matter, since the symbols contained in the songs are not meant to communicate to the subjects alone, but to the entire audience. It is expected that every member of the audience should take in some lessons that would be relevant to him/her and others. In the traditional society, the roles of elders are expansive in such a way that all elders are responsible to train and pass the values of the society to younger ones through counselling during contacts in the community. Mark Booth (1981: 14) argues that:

As the flat eyes in a painting or the finger of Uncle Sam point at the observer, undirected spoken words direct themselves straight toward any listener...We have the same impulse with sung words, attending to them as if they were spoken, and spoken to us in particular...the song is not mistaken directly for a message to me, although it plays on my tendency to take it that way. It is a performance for me-and-fellows (p 14)...the singer's words are sung for us in that he says something that is also said somehow in extension *by* us, and we are drawn into the state, the pose, the attitude, the self offered by the song...The individual member of the audience enters into a common pattern of thought, attitude, emotion, and achieves by it concert with his society. When we hear song, we are the concert (p 15).

We have argued that Igoru songs are topical and are mostly directed to specific persons among the audience. There are but very few Igoru songs not directed to specific persons. The songs have the power to communicate reflectively to all members of the audience, whether they are directed to individuals or not. Even the ones directed to individuals possess instruction, information, and verdict that each member of the audience draws a lesson from, as applicable to him/her within context. The Okpe generally hold the view expressed proverbially that "where death snaps out life from one's mate, is where he/she examines him/herself". Where an Igoru song publicly condemns an evil act committed by a specific person named in it, other members of the audience would normally apply the situation to themselves and choose to refrain from similar acts to avoid public disgrace and flee from Igoru music.

6. 1. 5 Tone, diction, intention and meaning:

Meki Nzewi (1997: 28) argues that without the cognizance of musical intention any analytical conclusions about traditional musical manifestations would be an incomplete and unreliable of the nature and genius of the content or text of the musical creation. He further argues that:

Cultural phonic preferences, psychical tolerance and musical intention [italics in original] constitute the three crucial factors implicit in musical meaning. Any analyst or theorist needs to be aware of these in order to analyse with em-etic discernment any musical fact or musical context before attempting theoretical inferences. This is especially so in the African traditional music matrixes... *Musical meaning* is “central to theoretical and terminological propositions about African music. It could be regarded in part as the significance of a musical product not only in its own terms as a culturally approve-able phonofact (musical sense) but equally in terms of how it communicates or transacts and elicits para-musical notions and responses respectively. So, musical meaning starts with making musical sense and ends with effective and affective communication (presentation) i.e. achieved musical intention”([Nzewi 1993a] Nzewi 1997: 28).

Cultural sound preferences in tone and tune by use of poetic utterances and proper rationalization of these implicate the composer’s intention and meaning. Poets and composers of Igoru music use various sound forms and effects to communicate their messages. Sometimes the messages are presented proverbially or in parables and wide gaps are left for the audience to fill. That is to say that the composer may not present the messages directly or in full details. Therefore the audience has a part to play in deriving the intended meanings of the songs. Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 7), *African Poetry in English: an introduction to practical criticism* argues that:

In poetry, just as in everyday speech, *how* something is said is as important as *what* is said. *How* affects *what*. *How* is part of meaning... You must often have heard somebody say, ‘Oh, it wasn’t *what* he said that mattered, it was *how* he said it...’ In poetry, tone is not always a simple matter, but it is always necessary for the reader to ‘tune in’ to the poet’s tone of voice (the way in which the poet says what he says). Unless the reader is sensitive to the poet’s tone

he will misunderstand what the poet is saying and why he is saying it. The poet provides 'signals' to help the reader to understand his tone of voice, but he expects the reader to be alert. His signals are subtle: they are hints rather than obvious statements.

The poet's tone is very essential to the understanding of Igoru music. The tone and diction suggest the meaning of what the poet intends to communicate. The poetic content of song 28 (page A1 – 42), for instance, could puzzle the listener as to the intent of the composer. But a careful study of the poet's tone against the background of the context would however make the poet's intention a bit clear, yet not without an understanding of the traditional beliefs in the culture. The poet narrates:

The great philanthropist raised his voice, "I'm not your only beneficiary; the whole world was your beneficiary". It's a pity, Riemurugbe, great philanthropist. He died at outskirts bifurcation, and no one buried you. The women folk raised their voices; Riemurugbe raised his voice also. "I'm not your only beneficiary; the whole world was your beneficiary. It's a pity, Riemurugbe, great philanthropist. He died at outskirts bifurcation, and no one buried you.

The tone of the poet in the above song suggests a lamentation and defence. The tone at the beginning and the end of each verse cleverly states the defence of the living why the deceased could not be given a befitting burial. In the Okpe culture, an honourable burial is a rite that must be accorded to the dead adult, particularly those who are elderly and have children. If the deceased is considerably old and generous, his burial is expected to be well celebrated. The celebration culminates in burying him/her indoors in his house. Dishonourable burial, on the contrary, involve those buried outdoors and most dishonourable are those buried in the bush. The tone of the poet indubitably suggests that the dead, Ariemurugbe, was a philanthropist who was greatly and dearly loved by the

people of his community until his death. He was benevolent and had many beneficiaries, who would all have contributed to celebrate and conduct a befitting burial for him.

But the Okpe believe that human beings commit evil in various ways, either in the broad day or at night, in the physical world or in the spiritual world. A man might therefore seem honest and innocent in the real world, but might commit great havoc through spiritual means. The belief includes that a just man can never die in the bush, no matter what happens. If he dies in the forest, he is therefore suspected for grievous evil deeds that were unknown to men, but discovered by the ancestral spirits and God of the land who might have killed him/her or let him/her into the hands of danger unprotected in the bush. He must then be buried dishonourably in the bush, instead of a befitting burial in his home. It is also believed that if a man is not properly buried and given all the necessary rites, his soul does not depart the environment of his home for the actual home beyond.

The tone of the poet therefore suggests that the soul of the deceased hovers around; feels uncomfortably perturbed and thus disturbs the children and close associates and relations, for denying him/her the due burial rites that would enable him/her sail smoothly into the world beyond. This is evinced in the first line which remarks that 'The great philanthropist raised his voice,' implying a query from the dead. The tone from line 4 – 6 presents an explanation that the deceased's philanthropies were well acknowledged by the community, for which he would certainly have had a befitting burial. It further shows a lamentation that the place where he died and the belief surrounding such an event did not permit anybody to give him the expected honourable burial rites. The tone, as is

suggested in line 12, shows that the dead did not query only his children, but all those who benefited from his philanthropic scheme in the entire community. This included both men and women groups who now had to defend themselves before the dead. The tone implies a wishful response to the fact that the community would certainly have given the philanthropist a well-deserved honourable burial, but had constraints as a result of the spiritual implications of such violations as burying a man who died in the bush in the town.

Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1997: 11) offer counsel to their readers, here applicable to all poem lovers who would at one time or the other read or listen to poems, that frantic efforts are requisite for discovering the meaning of poems as is intended by the poet. They emphasize that we are to pay much attention to what the poet says and how he says it, in order to discover his intentions and share in what he says. In the same passage, they suggest that we are not concerned with whether the poet is right or wrong in his beliefs, but more significantly that we should situate our minds to tap from his intentions rather than attempt to read our own meanings to what we might assume he wants to say. In this study we attempt to draw meaning from the intention of Igoru composers by careful examination of their tone and diction in the various presentations. Ray Pratt (1990: 5) argues that:

It has long been a matter of debate whether the intentions expressed or “encoded” in any song are received by those hearing it. The ways any musical performance, song, or recording functions politically is a complex matter of analysis and attribution growing out of its essentially interactional character. The meaning of any song, indeed any artefact in popular culture, is determined by the multiplicity of uses it receives. Popular music speaks to wider publics who may experience the information, feelings, and situations in it as their own, may accept only

part of what they hear, or may reject or largely reinterpret the song to accord with their own belief systems...There is what Stuart Hall has termed a “double-stake” or dialectic in popular culture. On one side is an effort to contain the interpretation of meanings to those encoded into any element by its creators while simultaneously on the other side is an effort by those receiving it to invest that element with meaning that may “resist” that encoded by its creator.

Igoru musicians are very vast in the knowledge of the Okpe language. They make use of several figures of speech, forms of imagery, sound effects, idioms, parables and proverbs that require serious thinking and one’s vastness in the language to fully comprehend. As masters of the language and ideals of the Okpe culture, we actually have no problems with their thought patterns and beliefs, because they are not contrary to those of their forefathers. Igoru musicians, indeed, have drawn their poems from various spheres of life, reflecting the religious, economic, political, social and moral norms of the Okpe people. We have had to listen patiently to the poetic songs and some explanations of the poets themselves to enable us understand a lot of the messages they were passing across to the audience.

Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 26) comment on the use of tone and diction as they contribute to the implicit and explicit meanings of every word or a group of clustered words that a poet selects and puts to play in his/her poems. They argue that:

A poet chooses his words within strict disciplines imposed on him by form and length. He cannot waste words. His diction has to work hard, bearing a compressed weight of meaning and suggestion. He tries to trigger his reader’s imagination by combining absolute accuracy of diction with the associative power of language... The meaning of a word varies according to the context in which it is being used; again, a word may be employed either figuratively or literally... Words – especially in poetry – are often endowed with *associative force* [italics in original]. The poet

harnesses this force, packing his poems with multiple meanings and suggestive power.

In songs 23 and 24 (pages A1 – 36 and 38), we observe the careful use of figurative words with powerful associative meaning. The two poems belong to the same song as performed by two different Iguru musicians. They communicate the same meaning, but possess variation in poetic expression. Both refer indirectly to the Itsekiri who between 1941 and 1943 had land dispute with the Okpe in Sapele. The Itsekiri, in the history of their migration, came from Benin through the water ways to their present settlements, thus they occupy mainly the River sides. In the course of time, they migrated to various parts of Okpe like Sapele, Elume, Amwokpokpo, Elume, Ikeresan [Orhorhomu], Ugbukurusu [Ugbikurusu] and Obotie which are bounded by Rivers. The Okpe, in their usual magnanimity, allowed them to co-habit in these communities. But alas, the poets of the two songs present the subsequent developments figuratively that *Havbaren* called on Oloku to give it a place to occupy in the River, and when its roots became strong, it began to contend lordship with Oloku.

Havbaren is specie of mangrove tree that grows on the riverside. It is known to spread its roots wide to occupy a large space on the river bank, even into the water. It is also remarkable that as its roots spread, it could grow new stems over time. The Okpe, on the other hand, believe on a masculine deity who possesses the River and control most of the things that happen therein. This Deity is known as Oloku already discussed in chapter three. The poets suggest that the Itsekiri came to these Okpe communities as aliens and neighbours who needed, requested and probably acquired some pieces of land where they built, leased, rented, and lived. In procreation, they gave birth and grew in number. Not only

so, they had a son who worked closely with the colonial administration. Then they began to contend the ownership of the land of Sapele.

Since according to historical facts the Okpe, Urhobo and other ethnic groups in Nigeria resented sending their children to school in the colonial era, assuming their children would be mentally and morally enslaved by the colonial masters, the Itsekiri who did not mind such considerations had advantage receiving Western education early. This advantage also gave them the opportunity to be appointed leaders of some sort by the colonial leaders. Obaro Ikime (2005; www.urhobo.kinsfolk.com) intimates that the British began penetration into the Urhobo [and Okpe] region from 1896 and sought for assistance of persons who knew about the people and the land. "They found some of these among the Itsekiri who live at the coast," and who have had early contact with European explorers. "It was in this way that a few Itsekiri British-appointed political agents found their way into Urhoboland [and Okpeland] during the establishment of British colonial rule".

Ikime intimates further that Chief Dogho, an influential Itsekiri assisted the British who "mounted combined naval and military expedition" against the opposition of the famous Chief Nana of Itsekiri and defeated him in August 1894; for which he (Dogho) was given several appointments in appreciation. He was appointed as the President of the Benin River Native Court in 1896, British political agent in c1897, permanent president of the Warri native Courts of Appeal in 1914, and Native Authority for the Warri Divisional Province which included most of the Urhobo, Okpe, Isoko, Ijaw, Ukwuani and Aboh. Ikime adds the following vital information:

In 1908, the British colonial government acquired 510 acres of Sapele land. The lease which gave the land to the British was signed by Chief Dogho 'acting for and on behalf of the Chiefs and people of Sapele.' He signed similar lease for land acquired by the British in Warri. We do not know exactly why the British asked Dogho to sign these leases, especially that of Sapele, Sapele being decidedly Okpe land. The most obvious guess is that because Dogho was the British political agent, he was made to sign for the people. The British Government paid an annual rent of £100 for the Sapele land. The Sapele land owners took £60 and gave Dogho £40 --- evidence of the way in which Dogho and indeed all those who held office for the colonial regime in those early days flagrantly abused their offices and enriched themselves. Even if Dogho was the Orodje of Okpe and had signed the lease as such, he could not expect 40% of the annual rent for himself.

In the 1920s Dogho began to collect full rents for land plots in Agbassah [Urhobo]. And by 1925, the Urhobo of Agbassah in Warri took Dogho to court, challenging his rights for collecting rents in their own land, but lost the case. By extension of the same act, Chief Dogho instructed the Itsekiri in Sapele to stop paying rents to their land lords, arguing that Sapele land belonged to the Olu of Itsekiri whom he claimed to represent. Although Dogho died in 1932, the Sapele case went to court in 1941 and the Okpe won. The Itsekiri appealed to the West African Court of Appeal, where the Okpe again won the Sapele land case in 1943. This was exactly what the poets meant to imply with the figurative expression that the mangrove tree requested a small portion of the river from the Deity, and when its roots were strong, it began to contend lordship with him. The expression goes further to prove that they were contending with the true owners.

These figurative impressions created about the crafty attitude of the Itsekiri by Igoru musicians in the 1940s have remained true observation about their use of political powers in achieving selfish aims; the reason why they have consistently

fought wars with their hosts and neighbours, the Okpe, Urhobo and Ijaw who in the past gave them permission to co-habit in their territories within the Niger Delta region. For instance, Peter Ekeh (1999; www.waado.org) writes that:

“On June 4, 1999, there broke out a local fight between Urhobo and Itsekiri youths in Okere, Warri. It was immediately flashed, in the evening of that memorable day, in the influential and instantaneous medium of cyberspace as a joint operation between Ijaws and Urhobos in an effort to wipe out the Itsekiri. The Itsekiri Survival Movement, which had just made its first public appearances few days earlier, directly accused Urhobos of engaging in “genocide” and “ethnic cleansing” – two deadly and unforgivable sins of our international age... Ugbajo Itsekiri, an aristocratic club of the Itsekiri in the United States, released in the internet and cyberspace the text of a letter it had presented at a “Meeting at the State Department,” inviting the United States to intervene in the crisis in the western Niger Delta. Its account of the crisis completely misrepresented the status of Warri... We took advantage of the internet to work and ... sent ... the Urhobo response to the State Department.

This is why the composers of the above cited songs 23 conclude that it was the colonial administration (which in the present day includes the European pattern of administration) that gives the Itsekiri much liberty and boldness to contend for land that does not belong to them. The poets adopt the use of euphemism as a figure of speech, in lines 14 and 15, to express the point that the Itsekiri merely tried to take advantage of the colonial administration to rob the Okpe of their land. Reference to the colonial administration became an important issue to the poets, because the case was taken to the law court, instead of traditional courts or resort to warfare to prove one’s mettle, besides the Itsekiri leader’s position in the colonial administration.

6.2 Philosophical thought processes:

We find Bernth Lindfors's remark on Wole Soyinka's creative literary ability and function suitable for Igbo musicians, in terms of astute inventiveness and functionality of the creative essence. Bernth Lindfors (1999: 51) *The Blind Men and the Elephant: and other essays in biographical criticism*, writes:

Let me begin by stating that I regard Wole Soyinka as one of the greatest writers Africa has produced. His work is of consistently high quality, and he appears to be so abundantly gifted as to be able to achieve without visible effort virtually any literary effect he desires. Intense creative energy bristles beneath every page he writes, charging his words with the kind of intellectual electricity that only true genius generates. A high-voltage literary dynamo, he possesses magnificent power to shock, stimulate, agitate, ignite, activate, enlighten and all the while entertain his audience. He has got what it takes to move men and set them thinking.

Music as a product requires raw materials or elements of unity between it and other arts. Igbo music in its nature, practice and context, adopts the use of these elements that altogether become unified product and ability to co-ordinate these resources and to reform them into a holistic product is essential. Igbo musicians have shown remarkable virtue of vastness in poetic configurations and musical creative impulse, an import of creative power in employing language and sounds to stimulate, agitate, expose, ignite, remind, educate, enlighten, praise, shock and at the same time entertain audiences. David Elliott (1997: 10) examines music as a product and argues thus:

According to Reimer, the praxial philosophy denies and denigrates the existence of pieces, products, and works of music: "Music cannot be conceived to be a product, Elliott argues"...Elliott wants to "demonstrate that music is a process rather than a product...Reimer's claims are absurd. MM (*Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music*

Education) states clearly that musical products are central to the nature and significance of music..."each musical practice produces music in the sense of specific kinds of musical products, musical works, or listenables"...The blueprint I develop and diagram ...to investigate the nature of music *combines* musical practice, products, processes, and contexts.

Igoru music, more than being a process of social communication, is a product of the art itself. As a product, it exists to provide certain functions and as well serve as reference source in the society. There is a clear indication that Igoru shows remarkable interrelatedness of fields of learning such as Languages, linguistics, literature, religion, sociology, history, philosophy and music; where they meet and unite to fulfil certain functions in the society. These fields of social, moral and spiritual experiences influence the philosophical thought processes of Igoru musicians as they take cognisance of the cohesive art of communication. The knowledge of these various fields of learning embedded in the Okpe culture is therefore necessary for the understanding of Igoru songs as philosophical oral poetry.

6. 2. 1 Synthetic philosophy and concept of names:

Synthetic philosophy is the original and traditional method by which human beings reach the knowledge of truth through reasoning, often referred to as rationalism (Paul Ajah 2004:16). With some past experiences and synthetic approach, the older generations have passed down some values on the meaning of names in Okpe culture like in most other African cultures. Igoru musicians then follow and apply this synthetic philosophy in ascertaining truth about the meaning of names as they manifest in the lives of people in the society. In song 45 the narrator presents the stupid act of a subject and thereafter examines the meaning of the subject's name, raising some questions about it at the end of the

narrative. The name “Aseagerhe” means “women bend;” thus, the narrator remarks that the female subject had ‘bent’ [lost] wisdom in the streets of Ikoyi Lagos, an indication that the meaning of the name given her by her parents became manifest in her life.

The composer of song 56 (page A1 – 91) also examines the life of the subject in line with the meaning of her name. The narrator presents the name of the subject as “Ogophori” which means a low land. In the Okpe farming system no one really wants to farm on a low land where the experience often encountered in such areas in the Delta region is unpleasant. Anybody who cultivates on the low land must calculate the rainy seasons carefully in planning the planting and harvest seasons. Once the calculation is wrong the rains would flood the farm and destroy the crops when they are yet too tender to survive any flood. The composer begins this narrative with a kind of personification, and gradually transforms the figure to represent a physical human subject. He/she suggests that the subject got into the commercial sex business, ‘planting in low land’ where no yield turned out fruitfully.

In song 60 (page A1 – 99), the narrator also examines the events that unfold in the life of the subject against the background of the meaning of her names. He/she presents the name as “Akparukpe” meaning “The year is deferred”. The narrator expresses that the subject had an opportunity of living a comfortable life, but lost the chance; implying that she had been destined to live all her life in poverty, according to the names given her by her parents. In a form of hyperbole, the narrator then concludes that the subject had swallowed the year (of her prosperity). The composer of song 64 (page A1 – 109) also examines the life of the subject in accordance with the meaning of the name. We have disguised the

real name in the text so that nobody can decode the actual person; and we present only the meaning which is relevant to this discourse. The subject's real name means "We shall see a lot of amusement". The narrator presents this name at the beginning of the song and remarks that "the meaning of an evil name surely follows the bearer".

Another way by which Igoru musicians use names is by inserting their own names into the songs, particularly when they feel the content concerns them. The composer of song 8 composes the song about himself. The public had referred to him as a vagabond and he composed the song as a response to educate and enlighten the public. The composer did not clearly examine the concept of his names in the song, but implies it implicitly. Quite rightly he uses his real names, Unugbrogodo, meaning a wide mouth. And he says in the song that whatever the eyes see, the mouth must talk about it. This implies that since his parents had named him "A wide mouth" he is destined to perform journalistic roles in the society and he would not do any less than that function.

In song 67 line 11 (page A1 – 116), the composer inserts his name to reinforce the point he is trying to communicate to the audience. In the performance critique against the Christian church, the composer says, he Udogu had investigated to find that the church could not actually heal all manners of disease and affliction. We have discussed in chapter three the concept of 'Udogu' meaning Okpe Supreme Council. When the composer/poet says he (Udogu) had investigated the Christian faith, it is just as if the Okpe leadership had done so, given the meaning of his name.

6. 2. 2 Axiology:

There are several writings and discourses on values in traditional societies. Some questions have also been raised over and over again about who sets the values and the norms. These arguments stimulate further enquiry, in this context, into the values and norms that Igoru musicians have tried to protect through their journalistic musical performances. Paul Ajah (2004: 137) presents the following argument on axiology:

Axiology is the branch of philosophy that has to do with value or what is called valuation. Therefore, this branch of philosophy is normally referred to as “the theory of value”. Here, the concern is on how human beings place their values of this life...In this way, people are able to sacrifice the satisfaction of one need or another in order to pursue or satisfy the one they have chosen to pursue. This shows that there are some things which people, or an individual can value more than other things that may equally be important...However, I think that a person who does not have a sense of values cannot see any reason for life because it is value that makes you have or see the reason to live. Therefore, it is the sense of value that makes life meaningful to the given individual.

On how values are determined and who really determines it, AJah reinvents the views of Geisler and Feinberg (1980: 354 and 355) that “the person who has the power is the one who should decide the value, and whatever he decides, that is the value, there must be.” He presents another shade of argument by other philosophers who hold that “the community is the measuring rod; whatever value they attribute to a thing, that is the value for such a thing” while others contend that “man is the measure of all things” implying that every individual is capable of attributing value to the things that appeal or appear to be satisfactory to him/her (Ajah 2004: 144 and 145).

Igoru musicians follow after the philosophical thought that value is put in place by the Ultimate or Absolute, in the first place. The Ultimate is normally a supernatural power who determines what values are according to his/her position and satisfaction. Igoru musicians refer to the Ultimate in four ways: as *Osolobrugwe* (the Almighty God), *Ehọ* (Spirits and spirit-manifests), *Ọrhan* (powerful spirits represented in molten images) and *Irimi* (ancestors and ancestral spirits). These are all spiritual powers that cannot be questioned by anybody in the society. They decide what things could be done and what things could not be done; what things are satisfactorily right and what things are to be considered wrong in the society – things that require adherence. Igoru musicians believe that the values handed down by their predecessors have been fixed by the Ultimate beings. They therefore compose their songs to uphold these ethos already established and passed on from generation to generation as values that must not be breached, believing that such would have adverse effects not only on the culprits, but on the entire society. They would often conclude in some of the songs that the subject who is addressed has committed an offence against the Almighty God or ancestral spirits and they (the spirits) would therefore judge and punish the offender. They never referred to any offences or evils as being committed against the people or laws of the land as established by any political authority, like the king or community heads.

Alan Sinfield (1983: 60) whose study incidentally coincides with the third period of our Igoru study, the period after the Second World War – examining the aftermath effects of the war, argues:

As an institution the family has been jealously guarded; to suggest that something was inimical to family life was to condemn it. The family was seen as the indispensable unit for emotional stability, mature psychosexual development

and responsible citizenship; it helped to ensure the survival of all that was best in a culture, and was a powerful mainstay against the corruptions of the modern world... The far-reaching social, economic and ideological changes in which it participated after the war therefore aroused considerable alarm.

There were several main factors. A more open attitude to sexuality gradually developed; its enjoyment became more permissible... and there was some acknowledgement of female sexuality... There was an increase in the availability of contraception and contraceptive advice. Female chastity became less important, and fashion eroticized the body more explicitly. Divorce increased and in the process lost some of its stigma... More and more women were entering paid work. Teenage children acquired greater economic independence.

In Okpe culture, marriage is honourable and parents expect their female children to fulfil this social value that sustains some moral values in relation to sexuality. The values of sexual sanctity have long been established in the culture and they are checked by the ancestral spirits. If the spirits check and punish violations of these moral values that concern sexuality, then the values have great spiritual significance in the society. Igoru musicians note that the ethos of marriage and the question of morality are issues that concern both the human society and the spirits. They observe too that the white man's culture wrapped into the colonial administration offered inordinate freedom to people such that grownup children seek their own independence economically and socially from their parents improperly against the ethos of the land. It is not as if young adults do not have some level of independence from their parents in Okpe, but full independence begins when a man or woman enters into his/her marital institution properly according to the laws and customs of the land. Igoru musicians attempt therefore to condemn all contrary behaviours and acts that followed colonialism and the wars into the Okpe society. They note that the role of the family is very important

in implanting the values of the society into children and wards. This is evident in song 41 (page A1 – 68) where the composer-narrator communicates a query to the mother of the subject for allowing her daughter to get into the commercial sex trade seen as a taboo against the ethics of the Okpe society.

Tenure Ojaide (2001: 13) writing about the *Udje* dance songs of the Urhobo, discusses the poetic features and intimates as follows:

So also is flirtation of women. In this patriarchal society, men's flirtations seem to be largely overlooked... Breaking sexual taboos is a constant subject of songs. For instance, one should not make love with a blood relation. Among the Urhobo, incest is perhaps the most hideous offense that a man could commit. There is suggestion that Barakporhe in the song of that title committed incest, hence he is compared to a goat. Sex is also forbidden in the bush and even at home during the day...Men have been sung who dragged their wives to bed as soon as they came back from the farm to make love. This type of song attacks the couple's lack of self-control.

Men and women who are oversexed are also abused. One of the most poetic expressions...means "murderous sex man,"... However, women tend to be more abused when it comes to being oversexed. Ijiriemu is called a prostitute for making advances to men, rather than waiting to be courted or chased by men. Her case illuminates the fate of women's sex life in a patriarchy – after all, men compose the songs.

As Ojaide observes in Urhobo, the Okpe forbid sexual affairs between blood relations and near kins up to the third cousin or more, depending on the family head. It is very rare to find men and women breaking this taboo in the society. What could be sparingly found is love affair between first and second cousins and this is never approved by parents and family elders. Against this ethos (forbidden affairs between close relations) we have not found any critique of

Igoru music. This shows that it is not a common offense, because community members make conscious efforts to keep to the norms. Making love to a woman in the bush is also regarded as a sin against the ancestral deities in Okpe, and we have not also found any Igoru critique on this subject, meaning that it is a carefully avoided offense. There is no theme in Igoru music that suggests advances of women to men, though some of the songs suggest that some travelled to towns and cities where they could make themselves more attractive and easily accessible. There were however themes that centre on, and criticize the oversexed. The fate of women's status in abusive Igoru songs does not lie in the hands of male composers, because both male and female compose and perform Igoru songs. They all tried to follow the norms of the society in their compositions until the middle and late 20th century (cf. chapter 8).

6. 2. 3 Logic: deductive and inductive approach:

These three are all processes of reasoning philosophically. Deductive approach is a process of syllogism (sort of reasoning) that evolves a compelling proof or authentic truth in a conclusion reached through major and minor premises. Inductive approach is a form of argument that involves a scientific method and otherwise known as such. It follows the four laws of agreement, difference, joint and concomitant variations. This means that conclusions are to be drawn only when inquiry has established physical and practical evidence of a thing, its presence and effects (Paul Ajah 2004: 31). Paul Ajah (2004: 24) in the same writing argues that:

The study of logic gives one another fine opportunity to understand the nature of philosophy. Strictly speaking, logic is not one of the branches of philosophy in the sense in which epistemology, metaphysics, axiology and ethics are. Yet the study of logic is the study of philosophy itself. Logic is the method that philosophy uses and is, in fact, the

language of philosophy...Put simply, logic is the technique of reasoning. It is the study on how to reason correctly...logic instructs on how to really discover truth and combat falsehood.

Igoru musicians adopt both the deductive and inductive approaches under the domain of logic to construct their musical-poetic messages. The composer of song 1 (page A1 – 1) presents inductive theory based on a practical experiment that seems scientific. The persona of the narrative says that “when I call *nene* [grandmother], my lips do not touch one another, but when I call *baba* (father) my lips flap to hit one another; then I knew that father is greater”. Children in Okpe call their fathers *baba* and mothers *mama*. Grand father is called *ibaba oduado* and grand mother *imama oduado* or *inene*. In this inductive approach, the use of father and mother equivalents in Okpe would not have produced the proof the composer wanted to establish. He found that grand mother is mostly called *nene* than the long form *imama oduado*. Then he/she experiments the pronunciation of *baba* and *nene* and found difference in the movement of the lips and upon this established a theory to prove the long established patriarchal system valid.

Song 9 (page A1 – 19) presents the philosophical process of deductive reasoning. The song was originally composed by Unugbrogodo Ekure whose aims were to educate and enlighten the public about the erroneous views they hold about musicians. A female Igoru ensemble of Deghele adopted the song and performed it to fulfil the same functions in their own community. The deductive approach here derives from the two premises that the public call Unugbrogodo a vagabond, because he is an Igoru musician. Members of the ensemble are also Igoru musicians, therefore, they are also referred to as vagabonds and they had to defend their position as well.

6. 2. 4 Metaphysics:

We have discussed the God and deities the Okpe worship and revere in chapter three. Often times, man tries to ask questions about the beings that control the affairs of the universe and of human beings. These questions lead to deeper thoughts and philosophical reasoning in attempts to ascertain some truth about the belief system and practices of a people. This is not uncommon in Igoru music. Paul Ajah (2004: 89) argues that:

Metaphysics is normally captioned as “the theory of Being.” This means that all subjects of metaphysics are brought together and captioned as Being – the search for Being which interprets the meaning of life and existence...We can say that basically metaphysics does not deal directly with the physical universe but with the meaning behind it, whatever it is, and these meaning borders [bother] on the extra-physical. That is why the subject of metaphysics lends itself easily to religious thoughts and the use of extrasensory organs or powers to know or understand.

Igoru musicians adopt metaphysical approaches in getting to conclusions in the messages they communicate to their audiences. They attempt to examine the Being, particularly the existence and manifestations of the Ultimate through sensitivity to some features that characterize the appearances of the Being. Udogu Olocho, for example, examines in songs 66 and 67 (pages A1 – 133 and 116) the manifestations in the practices of the strange Christian religion, and compares such to those of the Okpe traditional religion systems. He observes and draws conclusions that the Ultimate Being (God) did not differ in character in both religions. Under various systems and operations, the Being leads the Okpe priests and oracles to sometimes speak in tongues as well as heal and cure diseases in the society through herbal and spiritual means.

The composer states that the Christian God is given the same characteristics and manifestations, that is, the converts speak in tongues too. As stated earlier in this discourse, the composer raises doubts about the ability of the Christian God to heal all manners of diseases. He reasoned beyond this limit that the features of spirit possession might not even exist in the Christian church in America from where the missionaries came to Okpe land. If indeed the God the Americans came to introduce was different from the Ultimate known to the Okpe the features should have been much different, the composer implies. He therefore sees the portrayal of Christian worship as the only worship of the Supreme God to be misleading and calls for admonition of the followers who have abandoned their traditional religious heritage.

6. 2. 5 Realism and idealism:

Paul Ajah (2004: 15 and 16) reinvents Plato and Aristotle's arguments that though the latter was a student of the former, they had diverse views to the issue of reality. While the former argues that the sense of reality stems out of idealism, the latter holds that the essence is realism. The first theory, idealism suggests that reality is the thing pictured by the mind before it is seen manifesting in real life situation. The second theory, realism, states that one must see a thing in life situation, before it can effectively appear in the mind.

Most of the themes in Igoru music are derived from the sense of realism than idealism. The songs being quite topical had to be realistic than idealistic in tendency. They are normally composed, more or less, as reactions or responses to the realities that unfold in the society from time to time. They therefore had to follow and reflect the things that had occurred, which the musicians had seen or heard. After they had been seen and or heard, they reflect in the mind and form

images and impressions that further stimulate reactions, leading to the compositions. This could be positive or negative. Amereka Emakpo's example quickly comes to mind. He was only a boy whose first composition "*Iruo ame irheri* (The job we have perfected)" shows the effectiveness of realism as a philosophical thought process. He heard about the events of a musical competition in which his community Igoru featured and emerged winners, and this experience reflected suddenly on his mind, resulting in this beautiful composition. We have discussed details of this elsewhere in this study.

6. 2. 6 Essentialism and progressivism:

In learning processes, the theory of essentialism (also known as fundamentalism) argues that the values that the adult society holds should be transferred to the learners; while the theory of progressivism contends that the learners be allowed to discover the values on their own (Ajah 2004: 20). In Okpe tradition, the two philosophical theories apply. There are some values in tradition that the child grows into. He does not need to be instructed formally about them, because they are regularly practiced ritually, religiously and socially in the society; and within the practices and observances certain values are expressed and established. The child learns some of these through observations, participation or by intuitive awareness and consequent enquiry for clarification.

There are however some very important knowledge of values that parents feel are essential to a grownup child and these would have to be passed to him/her by instruction. Igoru musicians believe that the adult member ought to have acquainted him/herself with the values of the society, but if there are failures in one or two individuals, it becomes therefore necessary to instruct such persons through music. Basic values that keep a community healthy and happy as well as

keep the individual and the society living without fear of plagues and untimely death become very essential subjects/themes that Igoru musicians focus upon, in order to edify members through musical instructions. It should be understood that musical instruction in this context does not refer to the training of musicians, but to the education and enlightenment of community members on societal values through musical compositions and performances.

6. 2. 7 Conceptual analyses of Igoru themes:

Paul Ajah (2004: 17) intimates that conceptual analysis is a more recent approach in philosophy, which deals with the use of words as concepts. The method focuses attention on given words and attempts to determine what they really mean to avoid ambiguity and vagueness. The comprehensive understanding of the concepts of words makes messages of statements very clear to listeners. Igoru musicians make use of words that are sometimes suggestive of double or multiple meaning and these conceptual words often form basis for the themes and sub-themes of the songs. Words that have multiple meaning normally assume their specific meanings in the context of their usage. We shall briefly examine the concepts of some words often used by Igoru musicians as basis for their themes. These words have been given conceptual analysis under the various headings where the themes have appeared in this chapter. We shall only give a skeletal analysis here as preparation to the details found in the latter discourse:

1. *Igberadja* (prostitute)
2. *Aleluya* (the Christian church)
3. *Qlaragha* (vagabond)
4. *Qrieda* (witch/wizard)
5. *Kongo/Boma* (Soldiers)

Oyibo (white person)

6. *Ọtokpen* (miser)
7. *Uhu* (death)
8. *Ọgbeghele* (great philanthropist)
9. *Orọmo* (marriage)
10. *Ọse* (concubinary partnership)
11. *imizu rephan* (blood relations)
12. *Erhumu Okpe* (Okpe progress)
13. *Okpe agbamwa eni* (Okpe, an elephant)
14. *Okpiten* (innuendo communicator)
15. *Orodje* (king)
16. *Osolobrugwe* (God)
17. *Irimi* (ancestors and ancestral deities)

When Igoru musicians present themes on prostitution, the question often comes to mind about who is a prostitute. And to understand this properly the concepts of marriage and concubinary partnerships need to be made clear according to Okpe tradition. The listener of audience of Igoru music would like to know whether any sexual affair outside marriage automatically represents an act of prostitution or not. As is customary in Okpe, levels of acceptable, honourable, permissible and tolerable marriages and partnerships exist in Okpe. The most honourable marriage is that which requires due payments of dowry and family/community celebration according to native laws and customs. Other acceptable marriage involves an agreement between two adults who wish to be partners of a kind; the one referred to as concubinary partnership (*use*). Family members and the public may know about it, but are not really involved. This operates at advanced adult age. The tolerable marriage is that which, among young adults, results from

premarital pregnancy leading to proper co-habiting of the couple. It then means that any young lady who does not associate in one of these forms, but involves in relationships with more than a partner at a time is regarded as prostitute. Although polygamy is allowed to the men, all the wives are expected to be properly married; that is the man must pay the dowry of them all. The man who goes about having temporary affairs with several women without putting them into the family way legitimately is also referred to as *ovbofarhien* or *igberadja* (a promiscuous person).

The concept of *olaragha* (vagabond) in Okpe generally refers to lazy persons who gallivant about the streets doing nothing profitable, particularly with reference to economic activities. The individual goes to public places to play games or play away time day by day, instead of engaging in any form of rewarding labour. This act of irresponsibility itself is known as *olaragha*; while the person who does so may also be referred to by the same term. When the term is therefore used in Igoru music, we would then want to know who is actually a vagrant, hobo or vagabond as the term suggests. The public up till early 20th century used the term to refer to Igoru musicians. This is not to say, however, that Igoru musicians in that period were truly vagabonds who did not engage in rewarding labour of some sort. One valid construction of thought amongst the people then was that a good standard of living depended on farming and a successful farmer could not afford to be performing music in various functions, particularly in the day when he/she is expected to be in the farm working. Although Idisi Adibo, remarks that Igoru musicians gained fame through their performances in that period, but were not greatly rewarded economically in the society, other evidence prove that the reason went beyond this.

Amereka Emakpo intimates us that some Igoru musicians were successful farmers, businessmen and women themselves. According to him, some Igoru musicians and the subjects who were satirised as prostitutes in Lagos were very successful business tycoon of local and international reputation. He adds that some of them travelled to several African and European countries for business adventures. Although many of them were not very rich, they were not altogether poor, but lived average lives according to the standards of their communities. When an Igoru musician is called a vagabond, we can then understand that it has more connotative than denotative meaning, as public reactions aimed at discouraging them from performing satires. Idisi Adibo's example is a good case evident in song 10 (page A1 – 21), the song composed by his ensemble members, stating that the public called him a vagabond and prostitute, because he is a renowned Igoru performer.

Qrieda (*erieda* pl.), meaning witch/wizard (witches/wizards) is a term that has multiple meaning and classes. The term indeed has two primary classes as follows. One who belongs to the spiritual secret cult instituted by those who possess powers to do extraordinary things from the spiritual world to control and affect the physical world (positively or negatively) is a witch/wizard. The second class includes all who seek and practice any form of wickedness against humanity in the physical world. The activities of the latter category could also be secret, but are all performed in the physical world. And though may invoke some spiritual powers to effect the evils intended, the person does not have to travel spiritually to acquire the powers. In the context of Igoru music, these two concepts apply. The term 'death [*uhu*]' in Okpe has dual meanings too; the death where human beings give up the ghost and stop breathing and the death which signifies that one is living wretchedly and hopelessly. The Igoru elegy (song 68,

page A1 – 118) on the death of the Orodje (king) of Okpe, Esezi II refers to the real death, while the death implied in song 77 (page A1 – 143) as “smoking away of one’s life as in the smoking away of cigarette in the holder” refers to the second meaning.

The terms *kongo* and *boma* are associated connotative words that represent the character of scamps, rascals and radicals who are very troublesome. The term *boma* has its roots traceable to the Pidgin English of Sapele. It is often used to refer to any members of the society whose activities are usually in forms of terrorism. The term suggests that the person so described is an inimical vermin who is fearsome. The origin of the term *kongo* is not so certain. But some Igoru musicians suggest that some of the soldiers who came to the Okpe country during the World War came from Congo Republic. The term represents oppressors and unquestionable cheats. But in the context of Igoru music, the two terms are used interchangeably to refer to soldiers whose activities in the society are seen as troublesome and fearsomely oppressive.

The term *oyibo* is used to describe or discuss any white person. The colonial masters in government and other sectors of Nigeria’s economy, before independence, were seen to be affluent that could make their followers great. But Igoru musicians present themes that suggest that even the young ladies who had affairs with the white people had made no remarkable profits. This is evident in song 34 (page A1 – 56) where the narrator raises questions such as “What had the white man done for you?” with the provided response from the subject that the white man had affair with her and gave her no money. Cathe (2003: 11 [Internet]) writes a similar account of undue advantages on young women in South Africa:

Saartjie Baartman was a twenty-one year old South African Griqua woman employed as a servant on a farm near Cape Town. She was already past the traditional age of marriage among her people, and had few, if any, prospects of improving her condition, when a visiting English surgeon, Dr. William Dunlop, promised her fame, fortune, and freedom in a far away land. Baartman readily accepted his offer, and travelled with him to London by ship in 1810.

...Fascinated by her elongated labia and large buttocks ...Dunlop chose to exhibit her in the nude in front of large crowds of Londoners, who paid one shilling each to gawk at the "Hottentot Venus" from Africa. Whether Baartman herself received any of the profits of her exploitation is doubtful. Without family or friends, or the linguistic and socio-cultural background that she needed to fend for herself in Europe, she later turned to prostitution in order to survive. When she died, abandoned and alone in France, only six years after leaving Cape Town, her body was dissected, her skeleton was removed, and her brain and genitals were pickled and displayed as curiosities in the *Musee de l'Homme* in Paris for the next 160 years ([Davies, 2002] Cathe 2003: 11).

Cathe (2003: 11) further re-invents Marquis (2003: A3) that there was a surge of publicity that accompanied an official request by then-President, Nelson Mandela, to have the remains of Saartjie Baartman returned to South Africa in 1994, remarking that her story might be the most notorious case of African trafficking with bitter experiences of recruitment by deception and cross-border transportation for sexual exploitation uncommon to millions of women and children worldwide. In the case of Igoru music, there is no record or evidence of trafficking and cross-border transportation of young Okpe women. All incidents accounted for in Igoru songs took place in Nigeria.

6. 2. 8 Proverbs: The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2001: 1136) states that proverb is "a short well-known statement that contains advice

about life generally.” Rose Brandel (1984: 49) writes on the use of proverbs in the music of Lokele of Belgian Congo as follows:

The messages used for telegraphy are really traditional sayings and proverbs, highly stylized for transmitting purposes and not characteristic of everyday speech. Such proverbs usually constitute the “classic literature” of the tribe, belonging to the treasured heritage of folklore, legend, and general accumulated wisdom that is passed on from generation to generation in a quite poetic medium. Unfortunately, some of this specialized language is dwindling today and going the way of all things acquiring the label of “archaistic.” Where the successes of modern civilization have penetrated the wild forest, new methods of telegraphy are rapidly gaining and replacing the older, more elemental ways.

The Okpe culture is richly vast in the use of proverbs both in speech and songs. Indeed the Okpe believe that an eloquent orator and musician is known and honoured for his use of proverbs, because in proverbs issues are raised and a multitude of counsel is given in brevity. Considering the use of proverbs as essential elements in communication, the Okpe have a saying that:

Uphrophro emro ata r' omuvbię,
It is half a statement that is said to a freeborn,
orho t' oghwa, nọ haye rhe ọsoso.
When he/she gets home, he/she turns it to a whole.

Avorgbedor (1990: 224) observes that:

Song texts are full of proverbs, proverbial sayings, riddles, gossips, euphemisms and personifications: endless examples can be cited to illustrate these linguistic manipulations and proliferations. Apart from being artistic and poetic devices, alliteration, assonance, and parallelism all help in creating pleasurable effects that are necessary in the comfortable and easy reception, recollection, and involuntary evocation of the text. These poetic devices are special forms of word and sound patternings, and, united

with the appropriate music and gesture, they appeal to and leave lasting impressions on the minds of the listeners.

In Igoru music, this belief has very high recognition and strong impact to the extent that some Igoru musicians establish a short theme and develop it with series of proverbs without making strict reference to the very issue that forms the bases of the theme. The implication is that listeners are expected to draw diverse, but contextual meanings from the proverbs through imagination and deep philosophical thought. Proverbs are normally very contextual in that they could mean different things in different situations. This means that the listener must relate and associate the proverbs to the context of the performance, and interpret them as applicable to the aspects where they affect him/her. We have synthesized all the proverbs found in the textual transcriptions in a list to enable readers go through at a glance (see page A1 – 159). The poet of song 48 (page A1 – 82) establishes its theme in the first two lines that become the recurring refrain. Over this thematic refrain, the lead singer weaves series of proverbs to which the refrain is a response.

Within this short song, we identify nine successive proverbs that can be interpreted in different ways. To give the poems meaning in the appendix, at least to enable readers make some meaning from them without having to read the analysis, we have translated them interpretively. But for this discourse to make sense, we give a kind of transliteration here to enable readers comprehend how the proverbs function in speech and songs. The first proverb in this song translates well (that the subject has stepped on excreta) and means that the subject, Onanughe, has deformed her image for going out of the socio-moral standards of the society. Literally, stepping on excreta is something repulsive to

human senses and proverbially in the context of this Igoru song the expression means that the person in question has lost her reputation.

The second proverb translates that 'the prostitutes lived and threw away,' implying that such a practice meant ruin and loss, in that the effects of it could lead to sexually transmitted diseases (STD), some abortion and consequent barrenness in which there is no gain. The third proverb would translate that 'Jeddo young men have lived and taken,' implying that they had led a morally disciplined life that is profitable. The fourth one translates that 'too much water does not kill a little fish.' This refers to the fact that the composers and performers were aware that their subjects get angry and imprecate curses upon them after performances of Igoru satire. It suggests therefore that they were not only used to such implications, but that they had confidence in the powers that protect them from evil attacks. Taking the world as a large sea, given the generations past, Igoru musicians believe that the living performers no matter how old they are in age are a young generation that remain under the sacrosanct protection of their ancestral Gods and therefore have no fears of the numerous spiritual attacks.

The fifth translates that 'Waka's peers have lived and passed over or lived and won (pass the test of life).' Waka in the first instance is a member of the ensemble and the word peers therefore refers to the entire membership of the ensemble. Living to win victory (overcome or living to pass the test of life) then suggests that members of the ensemble have conducted themselves in agreement with the ethos of the society; hence they had the guts to criticize the deviants. Beside this, the proverb means that a morally disciplined life gives one a non-blemished image in the society, and this is considered an achievement.

The sixth translates that 'much as the raffia palm is envied, it continues to yield its wine.' This suggests that Igoru musicians proved to be un-fearful, but assured themselves of continued performances irrespective of the anti-satire secret movement and attacks.

The seventh implies a meaning that is similar to that above, drawing from the practical experience that the goats normally feed on the leaves of the plantain sucker thus destroying it often, yet it grows to maturity and yields its fruits. This suggests again that Igoru musicians believe they would survive whatever sorcery attacks launched against them for performing Igoru satire, because their ancestral spirits who from time to time reinforce and lead the society to uphold socio-moral values would naturally protect them to ripe old age just as by nature the plantain sucker survives all attempts to destroy it. The eighth is a reinforcement of the first, to create further effect of repulse on the moral behaviour so criticized in the song. The ninth suggests that the commercial sex trade of the moral deviants yielded no financial dividends as expected. The poet implies and pre-empts that those who indulged in the ill-practice were influenced into it with raised hopes that they would make wealth out of it, and observes that such result had not been fulfilled. All these suggest that the poet intends to persuade any members of the audience who is into such a practice to turn away from it.

In song 7 lines 14 – 16 (page A1 – 16), the poet used a proverb common to the Okpe. He/she says 'the rattle that falls into water retains its pitch of vibration when it comes afloat from the depth. This proverb like many other proverbs is a short saying that is true to practical reality and analogous to other situations. *Ugherighen* is the smallest of all rattles, made of metal with very small seed

inside it. It is not of wood, membrane nor cotton material that could be badly affected if it drops into water, so if it is picked up from the pool of water it would certainly keep its pitch. This suggests that no matter what happens Igoru musicians would continue their performances unequivocally and more essentially unremittingly.

Another proverb comes as a counsel in song 10 lines 6 and 7 (page A1 – 21). The poet states that *omọ rọ chẹ oja akpọ ovbo te ẹdẹre-e* meaning, the child who reacts to the world's provocation never measures with his peers. The expression 'oja ẹchẹ' in Okpẹ can mean to avenge or to do something because one feels insulted, derided, humiliated directly or indirectly. Igoru musicians in their wealth of experience as those of other elders in the society raise observations that one who reacts to every sort of insult, derision or humiliation does not prosper in life, because some of the reactions could make one lavish his hard earning unnecessarily. In this context however, the poet counsels Idisi Adibo, the leader of their Igoru ensemble that, though the public call him a vagabond and a philanderer, he should not stop performing.

This implies that there are always people in the society who would try to provoke those who are making efforts to prosper, so that such provocation would cause distraction to them and make them lose focus of their lives, and consequently become failures. A child who is doing well and ranking well with his mates, if suddenly he loses focus and fails; he/she would come behind his/her peers eventually. The Igoru ensemble led by Idisi Adibo was doing very well in performances during the period when these accusations were leveled against him and the ensemble felt the need to encourage their leader by use of this proverb.

The poet of song 11 presents a proverb in lines 2 and 3 (page A1 – 22) that ‘the white chick does not hide from the hawk.’ This is a common literal experience that though the hawk captures both black and white chicks as prey the white one is likely to be more conspicuous to its view and therefore be more easily attacked. This literal meaning could be misleading if one examines it outside the context of its use with particular reference to all other words surrounding the expression in the song/poem. In the circumstance of attacks on Igoru musicians during the period, mid-twentieth century, one could misconstrue that Igoru musicians in public performances could not escape from those who sought after them. But this is however not what the poet means. He/she rather suggests that the public have much liking for Igoru music to the extent that whenever the drums and voices of the musicians sound the public would hasten to the scene to watch the performance. The expression ‘we have come again’ following the proverb immediately indicates that the performance was just beginning and the poet was announcing this to the audience expecting a large turn out.

Song 12 as in song 9 (page A1 – 23) uses nine identifiable proverbs. All nine proverbs could mean different things in different contexts, but in the context of Igoru music, particularly in this song, they all make innuendo to the Itsekiri who scorned the Okpe at the time of her long interregnum before Mebitaghan was crowned king in 1945. The first proverb refers to the Okpe belief in clairvoyance that if anything evil is about to happen, one who is sensitive in the spirit would be informed by his clairvoyance. The concept of clairvoyance in Okpe culture covers a number of patterns by which information about the coming event is known. To some people, seeing the double-headed snake connotes good or bad omen and to others seeing a rabbit in the day time, as well as the sound of certain birds or some unusual human feelings could give similar pre-science. The poet of this

song therefore implies that though the Itsekiri did not confrontationally scorn the Okpe, the Okpe got informed that the Itsekiri rejoiced somewhat that the Okpe could not crown a king for such a long time in history.

The second and third proverbs in this context mean the same thing, suggesting that the Okpe settled in the territory and had a king before the Itsekiri. While the second implies that the Okpe occupy a larger territory and have greater population and sense of organization from the beginning, the third suggests that they had rulers much earlier, but for the circumstances of the despot king's assassination. The intention of the poet is that it is no pride for a people who had their first king many years after their settlement to scorn another who had kings several years before. The fourth proverb suggests the scorner would certainly come to honour the scorned when eventually they come back to glory as was hoped. The fifth suggests that though the scorner could rejoice and be proud of her position at that time, the scorned was sure to recover and assume its rightful position eventually.

The sixth suggests that the Okpe as a people are empowered in unity, though the assassination of the king brought about some disagreements between the ruling quarter of the late king and the other three in Okpe. The poet implies that the unity that once marked the greatness of the Okpe was sure to be regained powerfully and a new king would be crowned. Like the fourth and fifth, the seventh suggests that the position of leadership that the Orodje of Okpe had had in the region was not contestable, in that as soon as a new king is crowned he would be accorded the same honour and position. Drawing allusion from the common experience that one can never build a fence against a river to stop it from flowing, the poet implies that no condition or circumstance could stop the

Okpe from having a king subsequently. The literal interpretation of the ninth proverb is that love potion does not stop one's mouth from attempting to woo a woman in confidence that he has a love potion that could perform the magic. In other words, one does not resist the use of his/her mouth in attempting to win the love of the opposite sex when it becomes necessary. The poet implies here that though the Okpe had no king at that time, it could not stop them from defending their political position and territory.

Song 13 (page A1 – 24) presents two other proverbs “The rat that lives long, cracks the head of the cat, and the needle punches only a hole and not two at a time”. These two proverbs were a reply to the innuendo of the Uvwie (Effurun) people in Lagos. According to Ikoru musicians, as already discussed in chapter four, the Uvwie insulted the Okpe in Lagos that they could not compose and sing songs in their language. This prompted the Okpe to compose this song with these proverbs that suggest that the Okpe had existed as a people for a very long time and therefore could not be assumed not to have songs or the concept of musical performance in their culture. The first proverb suggests that age matters in life as it yields a wealth of experience, which in this context does not exclude music. The second implies that Okpe musicians perform beautifully whenever performances are deemed necessary according to context.

Song 20 (page A1 – 34) is one of the short songs that Ikoru musicians perform as the figure of identity or what may be called signature tune that often begins and ends the performance of a long narrative or a circle of songs. This poem adopts a common Okpe proverb that ‘We do not stop a child from going out; rather it is the outside world that stops him/her.’ This simply means that if a child is going the wrong way to form any bad habit on the influence of peer groups and

if the child fails to accept counsel from home to stop associating with such bad friends, some day, he/she would live to rue the repercussions of those habits. In this context, the poet implies similar meaning, suggesting that any grown member of the society, male or female, who practices evil or imbibes very bad habits that have ill implications on him/her and the society, and fails to take counsel from the performances of Igoru musicians, would certainly live to regret in the end.

In song 21 lines 12 and 13 (page A1 – 34) the poet employs two proverbs to express his message. He/she says “Let the great rain maker place containers to gather the water, and the flower that goes on a procession does not get missing in it”. The first proverb tries to create awareness on evil doers and socio-moral deviants that such attitudes and practices do not go without their retributions. In this context, it implies that they should get ready to face the Igoru satire as a kind of social reprisal or retribution as well as to be ready to face the metaphysical consequences. The second one refers to the performer himself that he is fully prepared for the performance. This self-assured preparedness implies that he is sure of the powers, particularly of the ancestral spirits that are behind him for protection. The poet of song 25 (page A1 – 39) introduces it with three successive proverbs, then proceeds to a parable. We here discuss only the proverbs since the parables have been discussed under the appropriate heading in this chapter. The proverbs are “The eagle’s feather keeps it ever fresh; half of a canoe and the whole canoe are never equal; what do you think a chick can offer its mother hen?”

In chapter three we discussed the attributes of the Okpe in some detail, stating their level of unity and in this chapter we have seen several references made by

Igoru musicians to buttress the point. The first proverb above suggests again the Okpe unity, while making an indirect statement to the Itsekiri who scorned them during the protracted interregnum. The poet simply implies that as the eagle's feather does not let it fade, but ever renewed and refreshed, the unity of the Okpe would lead them far. The second suggests that when difficulty is experienced among a people, they could seek help from their neighbours. As Obaro Ikime (2005: www.waado.org) writes, Mukoro Imowe, the leader of the Urhobo in the 1940s assisted the Okpe at the time the Colonial administration attempted not to recognize the Okpe king who was crowned in 1945, while the Itsekiri scorned. We have discussed this in chapter four.

The poet of this song therefore implies that the Itsekiri are undependable people who even depend on the land of other peoples for survival. The third implies a similar meaning, suggesting that the people who are lesser in population could not be comparing themselves with those who have larger population as the case is between the Itsekiri and the Okpe. Song 31 is another poem directed to the Itsekiri not as an innuendo but an open statement employing only two proverbs as follows: "It's the sun that gives verdict to the water, and the butterfly briefly sharpens (knife), but never cuts".

The first proverb implies that it is the creator, the Almighty God that decides the fate of everyone and that if one wishes his neighbour perpetual failure or humiliation, God could decide otherwise. The second suggests that the Itsekiri are not a people to take seriously, even in trying moments. All these imply that eventually the Okpe had successfully crowned a king to break the late Orodje's (king's) curse that led to the interregnum as discussed in chapter three. In song

41 line 8 (page A1 – 68) the poet uses a proverb that ‘the water in the pit would indeed be sufficient for the frog to play in’. This implies that the subject had no body that could really instruct her properly and instill moral discipline in her. Other lines of the poem suggest that the subject’s mother did not bring her up together with her father. In other words, she was brought up in a broken home. This suggests that her mother met her father who according to the poet is an Igbo man, had pregnancy and gave birth to her without formally or finally living together with him in matrimony. The poet implies that a child with much liberty could do anything and could become a deviant, but the consequence of every bad habit he/she forms would certainly teach him/her a lesson.

In song 49 lines 9 to 11 (page A1 – 84) the composer/poet uses a proverb that ‘the thing that shakes the water, if it doesn’t leave the water, the water cannot be still. He/she addresses the song to a young lady who separated from her husband abruptly and travelled to sojourn in Lagos. As custom demands, she and her parents had to pay back her dowry and divorce claims to her husband. In this context the poet implies that if one is indebted he/she would not be free until he/she settles the debt. The composer of song 50 (page A1 – 85) makes use of three other proverbs to develop the theme in such a way that only those who can interpret them could comprehend the message completely. “Narrating the cripple’s medical-spiritual power is endlessly amazing; the white yam goes to barn with its head; and the smokes of burning bush do not kill *Egodi* (a bird of prey) are the proverbs.

Eghase is Okpe ethno-medicine with much spiritual powers, known for two or more actions. There are two kinds, the one that moves through the air and the one that moves through the earth. It is prepared and kept in front or behind the

house at the veranda to defend the owner and his/her family from spiritual attacks and return such attacks to the senders. It could also be used to send spiritual attacks to one's enemies. It normally goes by fire at night and could be seen moving through the sky in some kind of flames to drop at the residence of the victim it is directed to. Its movement is fast and brisk and when it drops downwards, it leaves no trace of movement and physical appearance. But as soon as it drops the victim would either fall dead or paralysed, except he/she has one that can return it to the sender or at least defend him/her from harm.

The cripple on the other hand is normally seen to be helpless, in the world of the able and disable persons who live together with unequal capabilities. The poet in this context therefore implies that the Igoru musicians are aware that their human powers are as limited as those of the helpless cripple when spiritual forces become used as sources of attack against them. As a result, they do not perform without the consciousness of consulting and requesting the ancestral powers to defend them from all spiritual attacks. This means that they prepare as much as possible to have protective powers behind them, because the victims of their satires were often offended and sought for avenues to strike as we have discussed in chapter five. The second and third proverbs follow to strengthen the point that the Igoru musicians were ever at home assured of the powers that shield them from all attacks, therefore all the curse and attacks their subjects would attempt invoking upon them could by no means kill them.

In songs 52 and 55 (pages A1 – 87 and 90) the composers present three proverbs each. The first proverb could literally be translated that 'all we labour to acquire in this world, we put them into the world,' meaning that everyone on the surface of the earth is a voyager who someday must depart to join the ancestors

taking nothing with him/her from this physical world. This implies that Igoru musicians could not yield to the fear of spiritual attacks and consequently death, at the expense of their social-moral obligations in the society. The second means that as a broken tree trunk would normally not fear the storms, Igoru musicians would not fear threats and intimidations that could limit their functional performances. The third proverb requires very careful examination, because it could mean many things in different contexts.

The term '*aghwala*' means either a seed rattle (pellets) or a piece of wrapper tied like a pair of knickers. The pellets might be used as body appendages in dance performances and could also serve as the principal divination apparatus of the oracle. In traditional Okpe culture, women are allowed to occasionally tie their wrapper in the verisimilitude of a pair of knickers to do very active jobs and games that require vigour and agility. But no woman plays the roles of '*obo epha*,' the divination oracle (priest) that uses the pellets to conduct inquiries, seeking information from God, deities and ancestors about the present and future events. This therefore suggests that the poet intends the second meaning for the use of the term in this context. It implies therefore that no one would be able to kill Igoru musicians who put their trust on the ancestral spirits for absolute protection. It implies further that beginners must learn to be careful in the performance of Igoru satire and not hasten into it, because of the imminent attacks. They could rather begin with forms such as those of elegy, epic, praise or common themes that would not stimulate strong reactions from the public/victims. It further implies that the experienced performers apply much wisdom in setting their poems, rather than unwary direct attacks against subjects.

The fourth proverb suggests a warning to young entrants into Igoru performances, that it does not only come with fame, but could attract spiritual attacks from enemies. The fifth proverb literally means that whatever happens in the absence of the barren, even if it affects her directly might never be reported to her. It merely complements the earlier proverb. Other lines surrounding it add to its meaning that fresh Igoru musicians may not be aware that their subjects take offence and design evil plans against them. The sixth proverb comes from a common experience drawn from fishing activities. There are various forms and sizes of fish cage that men and woman normally set for fishes in the streams. The bear is an animal that is warm and cold blooded like the frog and crocodile, able to adapt easily to land and water. It is carnivorous and feeds on fish as well as other animals. In the seasons when fishing flourishes as discussed in chapter three, the bear always seeks for fish cages that have caught fish. It tears them and eats up the fish. It is an experience that is always painful to the fisher, because it is disappointing to find that one had not only lost his/her catch, but had lost the fish cage, to buy and produce new ones or amend the torn cages.

In this circumstance the fisher would invoke curses upon the bear, but the bears are always there to repeat same destructive actions over again. They seem not to die as a result of the curses from the fishers. The bears have been created as carnivorous animals and as such must feed on some other animals or fish. The poet implies that since this is a normal order, the fisher's curses no longer have effects on bears, because the God who created them to be carnivorous would have to shield them. This therefore means that curses could never kill Igoru musicians, because their roles to expose mis-deeds in the society are natural, thus they are surer of supernatural protection.

In songs 57 line 4 and 58 lines 15 and 16 (pages A1 – 93 and 94), the composers/poets use a proverb each, that “It’s the cup that calls or identifies itself as cup, and if a piece of stone does not hit the bird, it would chase it from the plants”. The first proverb literally means that the moment the cup is not a piece of art work to serve the purpose of decoration alone in the home, it identifies itself as an object that anybody could use to drink water. This implies that the cup cannot limit the number of people that would use it to drink, but if it were an aesthetic object only, its use would be limited to the position where it is placed for appreciation and only a few persons [the owners] are likely to touch and move it to different positions occasionally. In this context, the poet implies that his/her subject voluntarily made herself available for commercial sex duties that gives several people the opportunity to come into her life, instead of being settled with a spouse in a home where the value of her services could be higher and better appreciated in the context of values within the Okpe traditional society.

The literal meaning of the second proverb is very clear. Common childhood experience proves that the stone that is slung or cast to kill a bird, if it does not strike it, it would certainly chase it away from its position on the plant. In the context of this Igoru song, the poet also made the meaning very clear in the lines that subsequently follow the expression. The poet narrates the story of a protagonist who was deceived by a lady customary chief. The deceived followed the deceiver into the practice of commercial sex work and the husband of the former had to divorce her at the law court. She had no money to pay the divorce claims and there was no one that could pay for her, thus she became ashamed and fled the village for the township through the bush paths. The poet therefore implies that though the divorce claims could not stop her from participating in the

commercial sex work, it made her to depart for a place where she would not be easily identified and scorned for the inability to pay the divorce claims.

In songs 59 lines 36 to 42; and 61 line 52 (pages A1 - 96 and A1 – 101) the poets present some proverbs: “It’s the tree nearby the stream that understands what the fishes say; if a man makes a box (safe), it’s the thief who steals it that sees the inside; it’s the greed of the squirrel that makes it build its nest by the roadside; and the river dried up, leaving the fishes bare”. The first proverb above means, in this context that everyone has problems, and these problems, either by nature or as consequences of some unhealthy practices, hurt one physically or emotionally. It also suggests that we all live together in the community, and with time we have come to discover and understand the problems of one another. It implies that if we have to expose and insult one another, there can be no one who would be free of blemish. The performer [not the poet] of this song remarked that she participated in one of the earlier performances of the song and they inserted names of one another into it. She said others pointed at something about her and she pointed at something about the others. The second proverb suggests that one could think no one sees what he/she does in the secret, but this may not be true, because someone might have seen him/her without his/her notice. It implies that one could be surprised when his/her ills are exposed, if he/she assumed earlier that he/she had no blemish.

The third one is a direct reference to someone who built his/her house by a small market called Eyeogbe near Ugbokodo. The place was a very small farm settlement where nobody built a permanent residence earlier. People went on voyage to the place on fishing expedition and lived in small temporary tents for a number of days/weeks or months and returned home to town. The poet therefore

implies that the person, perhaps the first to build a permanent residence in the place was greedy. The fourth proverb suggests that the subject followed the soldiers in commercial sex work, and she was not well recompensed. It suggests further that at the time of this composition, the soldiers had been drafted back to barracks after the war and the business had crumbled. It implies too that the subject contracted STD before this time and had cause to regret her participation in the sex commerce. The proverb finally suggests that the subject was already advanced in age, a disadvantage to marriage possibilities and child bearing.

Two proverbs found in song 70, lines 10 and 11 (page A1 – 126) and song 84, lines 44 and 45 (page A1 - 152) come from the experience in traditional religion. Several deities in Okpe forbid their followers from killing and eating the snail. Egba, the God of Ikeresan and Ugborhen, for instance, instructs the members and all followers, through the priest, that the snails are his children and are therefore to be protected as he protects them (his subjects). Other deities in Okpe forbid their followers from the snail too. It is therefore possible to pick the whelk and its young ones as meat, but never to pick the snail. The first proverb then suggests that the snail climbs the tree very gently unafraid, because it is peaceful in the first place and most people have also been forbidden from killing it. The opening theme that often begins the performances of the Egboto Isinio ensemble 'Entertainment, entertainment, gently, gently the snail climbs the tree' therefore marks the group's resolve, aimed at performing praises and positive information about people in carefulness to avoid the attacks against Igoru musicians in the 1950s to the 1970s. The second proverb suggests that no one would pick the young snail, but the young whelk has chances of being picked up. In the context of its usage, the poet implies that the subject the theme addresses was very ugly at infancy.

The proverb in song 71, lines 19 and 20 (page A1 – 132) suggests in the context of that Igoru song that the king (Orhoro I) and Chief Edwin Ayomano both possess good human qualities, thus they could work together with maximum cooperation. 'Night and day cannot meet' implies that an evil man cannot work successfully with a just person. The next proverb from the same song, at lines 28 and 29 provides the position of the ensemble that it is not the putting together of several compositions and performances that matter, but the application of wisdom in those performances to avoid causing chaos and uproar in the society. The same song, in lines 59 and 60 uses a metonymy, a part of the human body to represent human being, expressing the point that whoever wishes his neighbours well would certainly have things go well with him/her too. This implies that rather than working in opposition with constituted authorities, particularly those who are serving their people selflessly, one needs to give them support in order to gain similar support and success in his/her own time.

The next proverb found in song 72, lines 1 and 2 (page A1 – 138) suggests that since creation several things have happened, some before the present generation was born and others in the contemporary times. The strange and mysterious things that happened before the present generation, if they happen again after very long time, could be oblivious and the contemporary society could say they had never happened before. The poet therefore implies that whatever happens in contemporary times had happened in the past somewhat; thus any seeming strange and mysterious occurrence that is beyond the knowledge of the contemporary man, if it is claimed to be the first, then was probably not created by God. In the context of this discourse, the poet means that whatever reactions that might come from the public against Igoru performers would not be strange,

they might have happened in the past; thus they could not stop the performances.

The proverb in song 74, line 1 (page A1 – 140) is a form of expression found among the Jeddo in Ighwresa Division of Okpe. The expression ‘the cricket does not fall oddly or quietly’ simply means, in this context, that Igoru musicians would never come out without communicating important and meaningful messages to the audience. Three proverbs are found in song 75, lines 3, 7, 8, 20 and 21 (page A1 – 141), which imply that the older Igoru musicians relaxed performances to observe younger performers for a while, to re-surface later, still to maintain the standards. They all suggest that some of the latter performers soon fizzled out of the scene, while the older ones remained for a longer period, in spite of the attacks against them.

Two other proverbs found in the same song (lines 9, 10, 24 and 25) convey the same meanings, but were expressed in different ways that seem contrasting. One says the sun does not leave the place where it rises and the other says it remains right there. This suggests that the early Okpe might have attempted to study the nature of the sun, whether it moves from its spot, or some objects around it such as the earth move and make man assume that the sun does move. The two proverbs however literally mean that the sun does rise, from a constant position daily and imply that Igoru musicians remain unequivocal and their voices unremitting.

The next three proverbs in song 76, lines 4 and 5 (page A1 – 143); song 79, line 1 and 2 (page A1 – 145) and song 80, line 12 (page A1 – 148) are drawn from man’s religious experiences in the culture under investigation. The expression ‘when dry season comes, the stream deities return home’ suggests that the water

deities come to land to be nearer the people and depart for the streams/rivers when the temperature becomes hot in the dry season. The poet in this context however implies that when all the conditions surrounding a practice cease to exist, the practice itself has got to stop. That is, the practice of commercial sex that existed within the second and third periods under investigation was associated with the coming of the white colonialists/explorers on one hand, and the soldiers during and immediately after the Second World War and the Nigerian Civil War on the other hand. After Nigeria's independence and the Civil War, though some white men remained in the oil-rich Niger-Delta and the commercial City of Lagos; the soldiers had gone back to the barracks, though soon seized power and came into government. Igoru musicians expected commercial sex activities to come to a natural end during this period.

Ahwobisi, as discussed in chapter three, is a God that inhabits the body of a particular tree. He destroys every other tree and they dry up around it, except the small red-substance tree called *uwara*. The poet who employed this proverb implies that since curses are normally invoked by the names of God, deities and the ancestral spirits, God is trusted to protect Igoru musicians, particularly those who hold unto truth in their performances. They believe that God would draw them nearer for protection rather than respond to enemies' imprecations to kill them. The next proverb expressed that the water deities are ever exempted from curses, suggests that no human being dares invoke curses in the name of the water deities in vain. This follows the belief that the water deities cannot be taken for granted at any time. They are ever active and responsive in that if one does an evil and invokes the names of the water deities to pretentiously exonerate him/her, the deities would kill him/her. The poet therefore implies that even if the

ancestral spirits would kill anybody in the society, they would exempt Igoru musicians for the sake of their functions in helping to keep sanity among mortals.

The proverb from the oil palm farmer's experience suggests that whatever product man invents can always find replacement or substitution, but human beings as God's creation cannot be replaced by human efforts. In the context of the Igoru song, the poet implies that his/her subject was old and should have stopped taking part in strenuous activities such as copulation, but continued and often fainted in the process. The last proverb on the list literally means that the birds do not fly above the heavens, and though human beings on earth do not see their backs when they fly, God whose abode is higher sees their back. This implies that whatever evil anybody commits or plans against his neighbours would not be unknown to God; even if it is unknown to human beings.

In the context of the above song and proverbs, we need to examine the tone and meaning of the other lines of the poem to comprehend it properly. The persona says in the preceding lines that the day he/she would give birth, he/she alone knows the name to give to the baby. Following this assertion the persona adds that a certain woman had three children and each of them was a great dancer of '*panya*' music. This is another name for *ikpeba* music which we have discussed in chapter three. The dance is vigorous and not so amorous, but the poet employs the term here to suggest involvement in troublesome activities. In some families, we find parents giving very proverbial names to their children, and in Okpe tradition there is the belief that the meaning of names manifests in their lives when they grow. The poet suggests that the names of these three children do not mean anything relating to prosperous living. It implies that none of them lived well; they constituted nuisances to the society as the expression suggests.

The expression implies too that the children were from an honourable and responsible family, thus the experience is so pathetic. In the premise of this background the proverb then means that the evils of these three children were known to Igoru musicians.

Song 42 lines 3 and 4 (page A1 – 70) presents a proverb that addresses a subject who migrated from the village to Sapele town. The poet expresses that, the subject might assume he/she is far away from home and his/her deeds would not be easily known to his/her people. But the composer proverbially reminds him/her that ‘if someone dies, the earth would hear,’ meaning that Igoru musicians would get information about her subjects irrespective of distance. The short satire aims at a description of the subject’s practice in a manner that is shameful so that the audience could feel the sense of ridicule and avoid breaching societal standards.

7. 2. 9 Idioms/epigrammatises:

The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2001: 706) defines idiom as “a group of words with a meaning of its own that is different from the meanings of each separate word put together.” Epigrammatic saying is a dwarfish and concise statement that is very witty and though very short, contains a derivable full meaning. In song 7 line 1 (page A1 – 16), the composer uses an epigrammatic expression to suggest that the prospect and fame one achieves while on earth are manifestations of one’s destiny that had been decided from heaven. He states this as ‘*urhomu erhome eki rhom’ ode,*’ meaning ‘good luck comes before good name.’ Short as the statement is, it carries much meaning in the context of this song. The composer intends an implied meaning that the

subject refused a worthy offer, because he/she was destined not to live a comfortable life.

In song 17 line 2 (page A1 – 31), the poet/composer packaged a lot of information in an expression, saying '*ona akpo na no ghe ne be ruo* (summarized as *Onakpoberuo*), the craftsmanship of this world is very difficult.' This epigram is derived from two sources, an age-long proverb and a person's name. The proverb is normally expressed as *eghele akpo 'be ruo* meaning that help in this world could be a difficult thing to render, or *ona akpo obe ruo* which also means that it could be difficult to assist one do a thing, particularly on his/her behalf because where one thinks he/she had done well to help and please another person, could be where he/she displeases and dissatisfies him/her. In the context of this Igoru song, however, the poet named his subject by the short form of this epigram and used it to describe his/her unsuccessful sojourn in Lagos.

It implies that Lagos is a commercial city and a centre of attraction where many people think prosperity lies. This impression about Lagos exists to the present day. Many youths from rural communities often assume that whoever goes to live in Lagos could become wealthy through one sort of business or the other within a short period of time. The poet suggests that a sojourner needs to examine the opportunities that abound in a place he/she desires to sojourn in and assess his/her abilities and qualifications for the identified chances before embarking on the journey. He/she suggests further that one must equally evaluate or gather information about the cost of living in the place where he/she intends to sojourn before living his/her home. In those days and up to the present time, many Okpe including many Igoru musicians lived and still live in Lagos. A good number of the sojourners made progress and returned home to build houses in Okpe land. The

poet therefore implies that his/her subject did not look well before leaping, thus the plan to make wealth in Lagos and return to build a house at home failed. In line 9, the poet used another epigram '*akpo Eko no phieghi me*' meaning life in Lagos began to 'swing me' that is 'toss me about.' This latter epigram reinforces the former to drive the point home.

Another epigram appears in song 18, line 1 (page A1 – 32) where the poet expressed that '*Abada oda inyo biomu oma*' meaning 'Abada spoilt his/her [self] body with drunkenness.' The poet though went further in the short narrative to describe a particular incident where the subject became naked at Apapa Bridge, Lagos; he/she implies that drunkenness has adverse effects on human beings and these could bring about public disgrace. In song 38 line 2 the composer uses another epigrammatic idiom that more or less functions as euphemism. The expression takes its bearing from line 1 which is also idiomatic. The two idioms can make a simple sentence each, but they have together formed semi-compound structure. The first idiom says "Ukonbo wants to leave the town" while the second follows that "he sought for someone who could take his place." Denotative translation would mean that he sought for someone he would use "as exchange for himself." In traditional Okpe society, there is the practice where some people used ethno-medicine to ensure long life.

Two types of medicine existed. One is *osurhomu*, preserver of life and the other *owenurhomu*, exchanger of life. Some people prepare the former in a hurricane lamp or a trap and position it in or around the house where even if other persons see it, they might not understand the very function it plays. The one in a lamp, for instance could be kept in a man's room and it is constantly fuelled to ensure it never goes off. No matter how sick the man could be, if the lamp does not go off,

he/she would not breathe the last. Some people normally place the one of trap behind the house as if it were for any animal, but it is often positioned where even domestic animals might not easily get to interfere with it. If the owner of the medicine becomes gravely sick and he/she considers that his/her family has suffered much for his/her survival to no avail, he/she would finally instruct his children to put off the lamp or unset the trap so that he/she could breathe the last.

For the person who has the second medicine, he/she could use it to re-direct the death to someone else, usually one of his people who come close to look after him in the period of his/her sickness or whenever he/she has the signs of the death. The idioms used by the poet in this song therefore suggest that Ukonbo was about to die (expressed as 'about to leave the town') and he sought for someone he could re-direct the death to (expressed as 'one to take his place for an exchange'). The line following it suggests that the real subject of this song was the wife of the medicine man described above. It further implies that the man was sick at the point of death during the period and a sudden illness attacked the woman in that same period, an indication that the man wanted to have her die in his place, thus the transfer of illness. The question whether the two of them had the same kind of illness is unnecessary, because in tradition, it could never be the same. The more they are different, the less suspicious it becomes. In line 4 of the same song, the poet uses another idiom 'sacrifices have gone home'. This can be literally interpreted to mean that sacrifices were offered plentifully to have the woman spiritually redeemed to live, but to no avail.

The narrator of song 26 at lines 21 and 22 (page A1 – 40) presents an epigram, saying "If you follow fish and get missing in the creeks, it's nobody's fault." This

expression simply implies that the Okpe who harbour the Itsekiri in their communities better be careful so that they would not outrun them and take over their lands. In song 36 line 5 (page A1 – 59), the composer presents an epigram that lacks concise English translation. He says the subject presents him/herself in an erroneous manner, implying that he/she tends to attempt feats that are impossible for him/her to achieve. Song 51 line 8 (page A1 – 86) features an idiom saying the subject would ‘beat or kill sleep’. The words put together in this expression mean different things, but in this context imply that the subject would not be able to sleep well. The composer presents two idioms in song 30 at lines 7 and 34. The first says “*Edje ayi Mare na figidabo* – people of Mare’s category now raise their shoulders high. The key words employed by the composer mean different things. For example, *edje* means peers and *fi* means to throw; but the two terms come together to serve a single function of meaning in the context of the usage. The first refers to the subject directly and not to his/her peers; while the second ‘throwing shoulders (raising shoulders high)’ suggests he/she was very proud. The second idiom says ‘the Okpe did something with that one’, suggesting that they killed the person in question for committing a crime.

In song 52 line 8 (page A1 – 87) the poet uses an idiomatic expression that carries double meaning. ‘*Ari ghwere oma*’ simply means ‘you should prepare (or come out boldly) to prove your worth.’ In this context, the poet uses the expression to inspire the Jeddo Igoru musicians to prepare for performances without fear. The composer in song 67 line 12 (page A1 – 116) uses another idiomatic expression that ‘Hallelujah could neither kill a tsetse fly nor a house fly.’ The term ‘hallelujah’ in this context represents the Christian church. One of the early churches that found roots in Okpe was this ‘Full Gospel Ministry’ that became commonly known as ‘Hallelujah’ in the area. At the coming of this church

and her missionary activities, emphasis was laid on healing through prayers and laying on of hands. The narrator expresses that people with diverse health problems were taken to the church for healing and the cripple could not walk, the blind could not see, the impotent and the barren remained in their conditions. The poet therefore reacts to the prayer and missionary activities of the converts that their preaching and prayers day and night are mere disturbances to the community.

In song 77 line 1 (page A1 – 143) the poet uses another idiomatic expression that the commercial sex work had become cigarette holder. He/she adds another idiom to complement the first that his/her subject had ‘smoked his/her life away.’ The cigarette holder is a device that smokers use. The cigarette stick is inserted into it and the smoker draws in the smokes, exhales them through his/her mouth and nostrils and stub out the cigarette. The two idiomatic expressions then mean that commercial sex work is likened to the cigarette smoking experience, which consumes the cigarette stick by fire. This implies that the subject had lived a wasteful life, like a cigarette stubbed out, indulging in a practice that did not profit him/her.

6.3 Sound elements, rhythm and effects:

Sound effects in poetry arise from expressions made in certain organised order and clever use of words that would sound in some desired forms. The poet deliberately organizes words, syllables and lines in patterns that will generate similarity in sounds; create audile sensitivity and stimulate more curiosity and emotionality. He/she creates images in the imagination and minds of the audience by imitating and representing sounds of objects and characters so described in order to stimulate emotional responses from audiences. This is

achieved by use of some sound elements and verbal techniques that appear in various forms of repetition, parallelism, rhyme, etc, to enable the poet present his/her witty ideas with great effects on the listeners. The effects then make the poetry or songs more easily memorable, both to the performers and the audiences. Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 99) write that:

At an altogether higher level, we can all summon from our own experience couplets, quatrains, stanzas, whole poems which, after only one or two readings, have lodged for ever in our memory. We value the pieces that in the truest sense of the term we have learnt by heart, for their crisp and witty expression, their wisdom, their solace, their sheer beauty, or for a combination of these and other qualities; but it is their patterned structure that makes them readily and permanently memorable.

Poetry in Igoru music is usually packaged with these sorts of qualities that enhance the memorability of the songs. Since no one holds an individual copyright reserve to the songs, even if he/she composes a number of them, memorability enables Igoru musicians to perform some songs commonly in various locations of the Okpe society. To discuss these sound effects, we shall use the following excerpt from song 2 as example and make reference to some others subsequently:

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 10 | 'Muorhoja <i>ro mwu</i> Ireka,
'Reka <i>orho mwu</i> Omuorhoja;
'Muorhoja <i>ro mwu</i> Ireka,
'Reka <i>orho mwu</i> Omuorhoja | 'Muorhoja captured Ireka,
And 'Reka captured Omuorhoja,
'Muorhoja captured Ireka,
And 'Reka captured Omuorhoja, |
| 15 | <i>A' i mwu</i> Omuorhoja,
<i>Egbane, gbane ob' Egbeda,</i>
<i>Wu rhe t' ekete 'rhe kpe</i> Omuorhoja,
<i>Imeba, ono gb' are unu.</i> | They captured Omuorhoja,
And held her bound at the coven,
If you get to the scene where they
beat Omuorhoja,
Members, you would be astonished. |

The composer of the above song recycles the theme in order to fix both the names of the characters and the principal ideas firmly into the minds of the audience. The two names in the song end with the vowel 'a' to produce a masculine sound that would emphasize the theme of a dreadful capture. The names are interchanged within the lines. One name begins a line and the other ends it each time. While the names create internal rhymes within the lines, they also form end rhymes that make the lines sound similarly at the end. Sounds of words, when they are properly organized, create rhythm and accentuation that give strong effects in tone and movements. Laura Arntson (1998: 494) writes about sound effects and rhythm as follows:

Heightened speech, a primary characteristic of praise singing, involves rhythmic and dynamic elements that are not a part of everyday speech, whose primary function is communication. The poetic or musical qualities of speech that are out of the ordinary are self-conscious and performative in nature. The nonphonemic accentuation that occurs in such speech, rhythm and accentuation serve an aesthetic value over communicative function, and the use that "rhythmic impulse makes of language for its own ends" (Preminger et al. 1974: 669) is the subject of literary prosody. For "poetic" forms, then, the prosodic "structure" of speech becomes a subject of considerable interest.

In Igoru music, while the rhythm and dynamics of these sound elements play aesthetic roles, they also perform communicative function. No word is wasted in Igoru music; they are all aimed at communicating specific messages, proverbially, idiomatically or directly to the audience. Several sound elements that create sound effects in poetic music are discussed under various headings below.

6. 3. 1 Alliteration and assonance:

Alliteration is the use of two or more words in close succession, in order to repeat the sound of a particular consonant letter within a line of a poetic verse, while assonance is the use of same or corresponding vowel sound closely within a line. In line 10 of the above excerpt (*Muorhoja ro mwu Ireka*), the poet-composer creates alliteration by repeated use of the consonant “m” within the same line. While the first begins the name of the subject, the second begins the key-word of the verse. The name ought to start with vowel ‘o’ but the vowel is here omitted to realize the effect of the alliteration. The correspondence of consonant sound between the name and the key-word creates certain emotional mood that stimulates sympathy as the sound agreement enhances the expression that the subject is captured. The alliteration in line 15, created with the effect of double consonant ‘gb’ strengthens the expression that portrays the use of force against the captive who the persona says was being tied. The use of this alliteration and the interchange of the characters emphasize the power tussle between them until one supported by other members of the cult overcomes the other.

Line 11 (*'Reka orho mwu Omuorhoja*) presents visual and sound assonances with the vowels ‘u, o and a’. The five ‘o’ that appear in the line have the same sound except one. While the third ‘o’ has the sound of a dotted ‘o’, the others have the sound of an ordinary [undotted] vowel. Since the third has a vowel sound different from the others, when the poem becomes written, it creates visual agreement and a slight sound difference. But the others create a strong effect of assonance that shows where the stronger force lies in the contest between the two characters. It sensitizes the imagination of the audience to the feeling that, though Omuorhoja captured Ireka first, the powers of the latter and

his/her supporters seem stronger to overcome. Several other assonance and alliteration exist in the songs presented in appendix I.

6. 3. 2 Rhetoric questions:

One common technique in Igoru composition is the use of rhetoric questions. These questions are asked as a way of making statements, and answers are not expected from the audience. Sometimes, however, the questions change form and demand answers from the ensemble in solo and response order. We shall list some of these questions below and have a closer look at them:

- I say, who shall we call upon? (Song 3 line 11, page A1 – 4)
- How do I kill him? (Song 5 line 41, page A1 – 6)
- Is this the body by which you manifest witchcraft? (Song 5 line 64)
- What child [sex] had Meni? (Song 6 line 29, page A1 – 11)
- Who would contend the River with the Crocodile? (Song 12 line 15-16, page A1 – 23)
- Who builds a fence against a (flowing) River? (Song 12 line 18)
- What story has he to tell? (Song 12 line 19)
- What has he to say? (Song 12 line 20)
- Do you seek or want your husbands' demise? (Song 15 line 23, page A1 – 27)
- Can you imagine? (Song 16 line 5, page A1 – 29)
- Who would avenge this cause? (Song 23 line 12, page A1 – 36)
- What do you think a chick can offer to its mother hen? (Song 25 line 3-4, page A1 – 39)

- Who are the Itsekiri that you associate with? (Song 26 line 6, page A1 – 40)
- What is the matter with you? (Song 34 line 17, page A1 – 56)
- What have you come to do? (Song 39 line 7, page A1 – 62)
- Is it the pregnancy of Garri that you've conceived? (Song 39 line 40-41, page)
- Is this a frog? (Song 39 line 49)
- Where had she landed? (Song 42 line 6, page A1 – 70)
- Who is Aseagerhe to have sex with white men? (Song 46 line 2, page A1 – 78)
- Is this how you're beaten and striped naked here? (Song 46 line 45)
- What is "women bend"? (Song 46 line 53)
- Is this what you'd do to pay your husband's divorce claims? (Song 49 line 5-6, page A1 – 84)
- This "pull me I pull you" that lies there? (Song 49 line 7)
- I say, are you asleep? (Song 52 line 3, page A1 – 87)
- Would you perform this Igoru? (Song 52 line 4)
- How then would the Crocodile cry in the River? (Song 53 line 3, page A1 – 88)
- Or, public, can't we say so? (Song 53 line 23)
- How long can we mourn him? (Song 68 line 21, page A1 – 118)

Some of the questions receive their answers in the song as the narration progresses. When a question is raised in a line, the following line or lines may provide the answer either directly or indirectly by way of explanations. Sometimes the answers are also provided in proverbs or in some idiomatic

expressions. In the indirect order, the narrator goes ahead to narrate what happened next in the event and implicitly fix the answer therein. When an answer, on the other hand, is provided directly, particularly in solo and response style between the lead singer and the chorus, a dramatic effect is created with the dialogue. In some other cases, the persona asks these questions and provides the answers of the subject. This also is dramatic, because it stimulates the feeling of a conversation going on between two persons [cf. Appendix I].

6. 3. 3 Repetition:

Joshua Uzoigwe (1998: 20) examines the use of repetition in song texts and writes as follows:

As repetition of musical phrase is one of the most important compositional features in *ilulu nkwa*, it often serves as a useful means by which the soloist emphasizes and projects to the listening audience the principal idea or ideas of the particular song. Thus, in *ilulu nkwa* song-performance it is the phrasal idea or group of ideas with the greatest number of occurrence that usually constitutes as the main theme.

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 115-116) similarly write that repetition is a powerful, forceful, rhetorical and expressive device skilfully employed by poets to hammer key words home, in order to implant dominant emotions in listeners or readers' mind. In Igoru songs, repetitions often appear in forms of chorus refrain or a frequent return of the narration to the principal idea at strategic intervals (see song 8, page A1 – 17). There are two dominant ideas in

the above song. The ideas are expressed as labouring without being able to amass wealth and the description of one who fails economically as vagabond. The poet-composer builds climax gradually by mentioning the various professions that exist in the society and educating the audience that every unsuccessful professional in any field or occupation could then be called a vagabond, if he, an Igoru musician is so called a vagabond for the reason of low income. We have discussed details of this under educational function in this chapter. Our concern here is the repetition technique and the essence of it.

Kobo and ½ kobo are the least denominations that appear in coins in the Nigerian currency. They have been demonetized (no longer in use) unofficially in the present day Nigerian society, owing to the devaluation of the Naira in the international exchange market. Since economic success is measured by the amount of money one has in his safe, the poet reiterates the least denominations to depict the level of poverty that brings about derision in the public. The conception of the Okpe public then being that farming was the predominant occupation that could bring wealth; there were attempts to discourage Igoru musicians from performance to full-time farming. The emphasis given to the two principal ideas through the repetition technique helps to build the necessary defence that Igoru musicians would continue to perform with contentment. Musicians are known to be content with their resources; otherwise, this kind of value system where wealth determines one's personality in the society could lead to corrupt practices. But there had been no report of such practices among Igoru musicians.

In song 16 (page A1 – 29), the composer adopts this kind of special repetition where the dominant idea is expressed in the last two lines of each verse. The

poet-composer builds the narrative and its climax gradually. Each verse has a new development of the events that are narrated sequentially. But after each new development, there is a return to the principal idea that the subject had inflicted much distress or emotional pains on him, the persona. Song 26, verse 3 (page A1 – 40) also presents a chorus repetition that comes after every new line to emphasize the main idea or message intended for the audience. The composer cum narrator in verses 1 and 2 express the feelings of pity for the Okpe who keep relationships with the Itsekiri in fresh fish trade. But the third, which is the last verse, is given a one-line refrain that provides the principal reason why this close relationship is to be discouraged. This line becomes recurrent as response to every other line that comes after, in order to implant the dominant idea into the minds of the audience.

In song 4 line 5 the poet repeats an idea that seems very significant within the line, saying “Edion, please save us, save us”. This does not appear however to be the principal message in the song, but it helps to drive the main ideas home. In song 5 lines 27 and 28 a major idea “Meni became joyful” was repeated successively in the two lines. In song 6 lines 76 and 77, the poet uses a form of repetition where the noun that ends the preceding line begins the following line. He/she uses it as a simile in the preceding line and transforms it to a metaphor successively. In song 15 lines 28-31, the poet repeats every other line in which the statement expressed in two lines is repeated in the following two line to create not only phrasal balance, but to implant the idea of those key-words. In song 16, the composer uses repetition in a different form. The point that touches the poet most in the narrative is expressed in two lines that come to end each of the four verses in the song except the last verse that changes to a fable.

In song 21 (page A1 – 34), the principal idea is established in three lines and to begin the performance, the performer presents the theme repeatedly expanding it to six lines before the receiver soloist gives the call. The call comes in with new ideas stated in one or two lines each time, but the main idea in three lines only now forms the recurring refrain. In song 22 (page A1 – 35), the composer presents the major idea in line 1 to precede and of course form part of the topic sentence. He/she says “I’ll go home, I’ll go home; Government wrote to us that all goats suffering from dermphytosis should depart the city.” In song 28, the performer employs the technique of repetition in a cyclical order to present the narrative. An unwary listener would conclude that the performer repeats the same ideas. True, main ideas are repeated, but new information is introduced at one time or the other; thus the verses are unequal. While the first verse consists six lines, the second has five lines and the third seven.

In song 29 (page A1 – 43), the composer repeats the key word ‘*ikun* – story’ at the beginning of three successive lines coming immediately after the first line. This is a deliberate attempt to inform the audience that the story contained in the narrative is a very important one to pay attention to. It therefore prompts the audience to be more attentive. At a certain point in the narrative of song 31, line 55 (page A1 – 48) to be precise, the composer repeats an expression “This is great suffering, it is great suffering” to heighten the climax as it approaches the final cadence. The form of repetition that exists in song 32 lines 39-46 (page A1 – 52), is a kind of verbal remark often performed by a humorous member of a performing group or of the audience at the end of every impressive section of an on-going performance. Here, the poet employs it sarcastically with the use of neologism. The expression ‘do do do do’ in line 39 of the same song is a stimulating verbalisation that normally opens this brief performance. It normally

spurs the audience to give a rousing ovation that leads to a general dance session between performers and audience. In this context, the poet-performer employs it only to induce members of the ensemble to deride his/her subjects further in verbal codes.

In song 38 line 4 (page A1 – 62) the poet exchanges the key word in the expression with a new word to stimulate a fresh drive even in similar idea. The first word is *egbe* and the second in the next round of repetition is *amwèrhièn*. The first word in this context means ‘to practice’ while the second literally means ‘to press’ and derives the same meaning as the former connotatively in the context. This form of repetition occurs again in song 43 line 3 (page A1 – 71), but this time the composer uses two different words that also have different meanings. In the first round of the performance, he/she uses the word ‘singlet’ and in the second round introduces a new word ‘file.’ The two words though denote different things, however suggest the same idea the poet intends to pass to the audience. This form exists again in song 59 line 9 (page A1 – 96) where in the second round of the verse, the former words of that line are replaced with new ones. Instead of ‘a long mouth,’ we find ‘parrot’s claws.’ The general form of this song actually is recycling poetically. The melody spans within the range of five-line verse; but the composer-performer lengthens it to eight verses containing different information with the ninth verse concluding it in only four lines.

A common practice in Igoru music is observed in song 43 lines 11-12 and song 59 lines 35-37 (page A1 – 71) where the performer concludes the performance of the song by repeating the principal idea that marks the climax. Just as we have topic sentence that begins every paragraph in English grammar, this form

creates what we would in reverse order call closing thematic sentence in Igoru music. That is, the theme is established and developed; then the principal theme is reframed to mark a perfect cadence, and this is again repeated to reaffirm the theme and cadence. Song 42 would normally have ended at line 9, but this technique of restating the theme extends it by two lines. Song 59 would also have ended with line 35, but the closing thematic sentence extends it by the repeat of the last two lines. In song 44 beginning from line 50 to 66 (page A1 – 72), the composer presents a revolving idea, using different names and professions to illustrate the point and drive the message deep down into the minds of the audience (cf. appendix I for details). At the end of the long narrative, the composer turns the principal idea into a refrain in a new frame of language and gives the call subsequently in two lines every other time.

In song 53 (page A1 – 88) the composer repeats the main theme at different intervals. From line 5 to line 20, the key words ‘kill and die’ keep recurring to impress the idea into the psyche of the audience. In song 61 (page A1 – 101), the composer introduces the narrative with some form of repetition. The first four lines successively state a segment of the theme and the next four lines recycle the second segment to prepare the audience’s attentiveness before the actual commencement of the full content. Various kinds of repetition that contain recycling ideas are also presented in song 68 (page A1 – 118). The first pattern begins at line 18-30 where the theme is established after the introductory speech. The theme is repeated after the receiver-solo states the call in four lines. In the first pattern, the words contained in the verse, apart from the speech interjections, remain unchanged. But the second pattern uses similar melodic phrasing with changing words. In song 70 (page A1 – 126), the composer

presents the full narrative and adopts the last two lines to establish a refrain for the subsequent solo call that feature changing words that build up the climax.

6. 3. 4 Homophonic doubling of words:

This is another kind of repetition that occurs in a form wherein a word is doubled to express an idea. Homophonic doubling of words is a common feature in the Okpe language. It is often used to describe objects in negative manners, though some positive forms sparingly exist. In song 6 at line 73 (page A1 – 11), the composer uses this kind of expression. He says “*We rue urhumu hworhẹ hworhẹ* – with your bald head (like heaven’s piece of calabash.” The expression *hworhẹ hworhẹ* which either means bald or very clean will make a different meaning if the word is not repeated. One word *hworhẹ* will on its own be completely meaningless, or suggest another word that has a vowel elided from its beginning. Listeners could assume it is “*Ahworhẹ* (sponge)” with the ‘a’ omitted. Within the same line of this song, the narrator presents another form of this homophonic double word, “*kpeghẹ kpeghẹ*”. While the first form means ‘bald’, this other form means ‘flat’ or very old. In the context of this song, it however assumes the first meaning, describing the head of the subject as flat.

We find another pattern of this in a compound form in line 76 of the same song. Here the expression is used as a noun. The poet calls the subject *kurekure* meaning dwarf. In song 23 line 3 (page A1 – 36), the composer uses the double-word expression to describe the life of the subjects. The expression ‘*farhiẹn farhiẹn*’ can be interpreted to mean ‘rough and meaningless’. But only one word ‘*farhiẹn*’ would mean ‘going astray or absconding in disobedience’. The composer however intends the first meaning. The expression in song 48 line 1 (page A1 – 82) ‘*riẹriẹ*’ is another compound form of the double word phonemic. When compounded, it means smooth, but singularly ‘*riẹ*’ would suggest a

different meaning, 'go home' when the 'e' is undotted, and 'to him/her or straight' when the vowel is dotted as the case is in this example.

6. 3. 5 Parallelism:

Parallelism as opposed to repetition is the use of words that convey the same meaning within two or more successive lines, but are not strictly a repeat of the preceding line word for word. Tanure Ojaide (2001: 22[Internet]) comments on the use of repetition and parallelism as devices for memorability in *udje* songs of the Urhobo:

Mnemonic devices fill the songs so that the obo-ile [unitalicized in original] and other singers do not forget the details of their song...Repetition is the most frequent device used in the songs. The repetition is usually of "breath spaces," segments of the song, or the whole song. I am using "breath space" to indicate a poetic line, which in *udje* appears at a pause for breath...Closely related to repetition are parallelism and chiasmus, structural devices that add musicality to the songs and also help the singers in remembering their piece. In *udje* a breath space is a unit of sense.

The case in Igoru differs somewhat from that of the Urhobo *udje*, because repetition and parallelism do not seem to have significance tied to the memorability of the songs. Very long chronological narratives are composed with limited repetition and parallel devices. The performers have developed themselves as professionals and have acquired the skills that enhance the ability to memorise the songs. We have observed that shorter songs have larger repetition and recycling devices than long narratives. Parallelism features in several Igoru songs as observed in songs 6, 7, 10, 28, 32, 44, 52, and 64 among others, but we shall take only two examples. The following excerpt from song 28 (page A1 – 42) illustrates the use of parallelism as a device of the poetic

development that has some key ideas like 'The great philanthropist raised his voice, I'm not your only beneficiary; He died at outskirts bifurcation, and no one buried you' repeated in different words to convey similar or same meaning.

In the above example, parallelism occurs in the first two verses. Between lines 2 and 3 of the first verse, parallelism appears where the persona expresses that he/she is not the only beneficiary of the deceased, but the whole world. Line three is a recreation or recycling of line two, because the two lines invariably convey the same meaning. Since line two says the narrator is not the only beneficiary, it already implies that many more people had benefited. The third line adding that the whole world benefited only re-emphasizes the idea in different words. The second verse contains double parallelism that occurs between four successive lines where every other line is a recycling of the preceding one. The first of these parallelisms states the same idea of 'raising the voice to query' and changes only the characters in the two lines, to avoid strict repetition. While the first line says the women raised their voices to give the query, the following line says the dead 'Ariemurugbe' raised his voice to also query. The second form of parallelism in this second verse is the repeat of the parallelism presented earlier in verse one.

The second example is taken from song 44 (page A1 – 72) where key ideas like 'Night is already fallen over you; It's again dawn before you... The married abuses her husband, and the married denies her husband' recur. The expression occurring at lines 19 and 20 is a kind of parallelism. The two lines following one another express the concept of time in the life of human beings, specifically of the character in the narrative. The parallelism of the same idea is however presented in a kind of metonymy. The key words that suggest time in the two

lines 'night and dawn' appear to be contrary in meaning, but are used to make the same point and same meaning in the verse. The narrator simply means that the prime hey-day of the subject is past and only little luck is left. Lines 23 to 27 present series of parallelism, where all the lines use different words each to express the same point that is finally made more explicit in the last line. If the married abuses and denies her husband as well as practices adultery openly, it already suggests she is fed up with the marriage and wants a chance to be let free from the marriage bond. The composers present these forms of expressions to stimulate the audiences' philosophical use of syllogism to deduce full meaning from the themes.

6. 3. 6 *Ēgbaren emro*, similitude of spoonerism:

Mary Barber (1970: M35) writes that spoonerism is the accidental transposition of words that have same sound in a manner that allows a line rhyme with the preceding line word to word – a pattern named after Rev. W. A. Spooner. We call the pattern of this rhyme, which in Igoru music is not exactly as Spooner's scheme, *ēgbaren emro*. There are two sets of *ēgbaren* in the first verse of song 60. In the first two lines as in the excerpt above, only the first and last syllables differentiate the rhyme scheme that exists in sound and visual forms between the words. In the third and fourth lines, the first vowels beginning the first two lines which do not rhyme are elided so that only the last syllables differentiate the rhyme scheme. Between lines 5 and 8, we find the second set of *ēgbaren*. All the syllables between these four lines rhyme with one another, except two syllables towards the end. Another *ēgbaren* exists between lines 10 and 11 of song 68 (page A1 – 118). There are seven syllables in each line and only the second syllable falls short in the rhyme scheme. The reason is that when two vowels follow one another between two successive words, the sound of the latter vowel

normally dominates the former. In line 10 therefore, the words “*Ọga Okpẹ*” would then sound “*Ọg-Okpẹ*” (He served Okpẹ). We have not elided the ‘a’ of the first word in the appendix, because we consider easy reading and comprehension very important.

6. 3. 7 Foundation vowel, round-off and nasality:

Kenichi Tsukada (2001: 163) reinvents the following argument on the use and meaning of vowel and consonant sounds:

French’s survey of various experiments of sound symbolism (1977: 311-312) shows that the high-front-unround vowel /i/ is generally associated with what is bright, small, angular, hard, fast and light, in contrast to the back-rounded vowels /u/, /o/, /ɔ/, /a/, associated with dark, large, round and soft. Kobayashi (1976: 254) suggests the possibility of associating the consonant /m/ with something soft and round, /k/ with hard and angular, and /l/ or /r/ with smooth and fluid...Sound symbolism could be considered as the basis for the generation of phonaesthetic expressions and VR as their “extension”. The difficulty lies in the fact that since many studies on sound symbolism are based on data from the West, the findings of those studies cannot easily be applied to either the Japanese or the Fanti data. An exploration of the VR systems from a phonesthetic perspective must stand on culture-specific data from the particular society concerned.

The vowel ‘e’ plays a lot of roles in Igoru music. It serves as interjection or exclamation; affirmation, emphasis, round-off and as base. This is why we refer to it as a foundation vowel in this discourse. In several cases, we have not included it in our translation, particularly where it appears rapidly frequent within a verse. We have done this for two reasons; to allow the English version flow intelligibly, and to avoid monotony and boredom to the English reader. Those who would read it in Okpe, however, would enjoy the use of this foundation

vowel. In song 1 at line 1 (page A1 – 1), this vowel begins and ends the line. At the beginning, it functions affirmatively and at the end of the line it acts as interjection. The vowel is dominant in songs 4 (page A1 – 5) as follows:

<i>E, Ediḡon biko gbe simi ame,</i>	Oh Ediḡon, please protect us,
<i>E, ame h' urhomu ame r' Ediḡon more ne (oye);</i>	Yea, we've given ourselves to Ediḡon;
<i>E, ẹdebi ro sa na,</i>	The day preceding our next worship,
<i>Ami ne prisi lele amwao.</i>	We shall preach around the town.

In the above excerpt from song 4, the vowel plays a tripartite role. It functions in the first line as an interjection; at the second line as affirmation and in the third line as emphasis. In all cases above, the vowel begins the lines, setting foundation for each statement coming after it. More often than not the vowel attracts a slur of two or three notes in the melody. Since Igoru music is not melismatic, it does not require more than that length of slur. Most lines, verses or songs begin with this vowel in several other Igoru songs and this suggests that it has other roles different from those listed above. While we interpret it in the above light, we also observe that it serves as a test tone in some other cases. That is, when a voice raises a song that begins with this soothing vowel sound and it is hoarse, it would be evident that the voice is not yet ready for singing. Often, the performer would repeat the musical sentence to ensure that the voice produces sounds smoothly, before continuing the narrative. Let us examine the role the vowel plays in the excerpt from song 33 (page A1 – 55) below:

<i>E, me tare verhe o,</i>	Yea, I predicted earlier,
<i>Me mer' ugbahian re mi ne mwuo,</i>	I found a lady to befriend,
<i>Re me rh' oye gba su oma lalo,</i>	And we took blood covenant;
<i>Ẹ,</i>	Yes,
<i>Orho mer' obo ro no ru me, ọvbọ ta me,</i>	If she foresees evil, she informs me,

- 15 *E, vbi lele yo mi rhe ghwaren,* Yea, so that I would be cautiously wise;
 E, Yes,
 Ọwọ nọ nya ugbahia ero kpa 'e mẹẹ, Let no friend gossip me about,
 E, Yes,

The vowel again functions affirmatively in the first and sixth lines above, but in the seventh and ninth lines, it is rather an inducement to encourage or challenge the narrator to continue the narration onward. It appears like a truncated statement such as the following: “Yes, go ahead to give us more details”. It further makes the narrative dramatic, because it comes as a response from the ensemble chorus to the lead singer’s narration.

Round-offs are vowels most preferred to end phrases, lines, verses or songs. Apart from words or syllables that end nasally with the sound of the consonant ‘n’ coming after a vowel, Igoru musicians always chose to end phrases and lines with a vowel. Going through the eighty seven (87) songs, we find that only few lines end with the consonant sound ‘n’ and all others end with one vowel or the other, or even a group of vowels. Any vowel therefore can possibly end a line; but the vowels ‘o’ and ‘e’ are most preferred even when they do not belong to the last syllable. When the last letter or syllable in a line ends with a vowel, we find often that Igoru musicians would still add the ‘o’ or ‘e’ to round the sound up and this is the reason we describe it as round-off. In the use of the vowel ‘e’ at the end of a line, some Igoru musicians would prefix it with a consonant ‘n’ to emphasize it. We shall examine the following excerpts to illustrate this:

- Ọna nẹ (avwaran) otu Irhobo,* The (there) Itsekiri,
 Irhe dumu irhorin ne. Invoked a curse:
 “Ayelala gba mu o, “Eyelala will kill you,
 Ibrikimọ 'dumu ne”, Ibrikimọ will save you”.
 5 *Ọna n’odẹ irhorin ohu o,* This is a kind of curse,
 Ri ‘Rhobo ivwori o, The Itsekiri own,

Raye 'dumę ne.

And invoke.

The above is an excerpt from song 54 (page A1 – 90) wherein these features are evident. In line 1 the last syllable has the vowel 'o' and there was therefore no need duplicating it. It is a good round-off sound on its own, occurring naturally. Line two ends with the consonant 'n,' but a round-off sound is created after with the vowel 'e' prefixed with an 'n'. In spoken language, the line would have ended with the word 'irhorin'. The 'ne' round-off scheme appearing after it and again appears at lines 4 and 7 are only to provide the end of the lines with the round-off preference. Other lines end with the round-off 'o' even when the lines end with the vowels 'u' and 'i'. The next example is drawn from song 48 (page A1 – 82. In this example, we find more consistency of the use of the round-off sound. Almost every line has it. Where the round-off sound 'o' follows another vowel, the performers connect the sounds smoothly and if elision of the vowel preceding it would not create distortion of meaning, they would skip it to give emphasis to the round-off. In the case of words that end nasally as in line 27, the 'n' sound is avoided in order to connect the preceding vowel with the round-off.

6. 3. 8 Elision, truncation and word-link:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 116) defines the term linking in poetry as a variety of repetition in form of a word or phrase that ends a line and reappears at the beginning of the line following it. In Igoru poetry, we shall examine the term in relationship to elision and truncation. Elision is the process of eliding or leaving out a letter often a vowel in a word; while truncation is the process of shortening a thing, in this case a word. In Igoru music elision and truncation of words are techniques employed in developing poetic lines, in order to link sounds together meaningfully. These techniques take into account the

possibility of changing vowel sounds as they link to one another and of fusing two vowel sounds between two successive words to fit with a single melodic tone. The words so connected could exist within a given line or between two successive lines.

Deidre Hansen (1993: 57) asserts that singing in *xesibe* gives more emphasis to vocal sound effects at the expense of communicative meaning:

The singing is forceful, even explosive and nasal, and is in strong contrast to the forceful, but open-voice singing of the rest of the group. In *gwaba* singing the words of song-texts undergo distortion: the ultimate syllables of certain words are replaced by vocal sound, effect and contrast, and thus grammar and meaning are sacrificed so that a satisfactory musical and vibratory effect is achieved.

The Okpe language, to an extent, is nasal principally with the silent sound of the consonant 'n' which often is not fully sounded, particularly when it is necessary to link up a word that ends with it to another word that begins with a vowel. The attempt to link words together in order to realize certain sound effects does not in Igoru music undermined the meaning of the words that are connected. Words are elided, truncated or connected meaningfully in manners that create the desired effects and as well retain meaning. The lines in song 22 (page A1 – 35), explicitly illustrates this. The last vowel of the second line is connected to the first vowel of the third line in such a way that the sounds are linked up with a modification of the preceding vowel sound. The two words involved 'rhe' and 'otu' are independent of each other. But the link between the two vowel sounds changes the form to 'io' [*rhio*], modifying the sound from 'e – o' to 'i – o'.

The same pattern of word linkage occurs between lines 7 and 8 with some difference. This time the first vowel sound 'e' is simply elided for the second vowel 'o' to gain more emphasis. The first pattern of modification follows a form that is obsolete in spoken Okpe language. In the old fashion, elders could say 'aye rhi ne' (they have come) while in present day one would say 'ayi rhe ne' or 'aye rhe ne' (they have come). The statement in the song can therefore be reframed as 'oya iwe rhi ne' (he/she has written a letter to us) or in the modern form, *oya iwe rhe ne* meaning exactly the same. We note however that the former form cannot exist in simple past tense such as *oya iwe rhi* (he/she wrote a letter to us), because this will sound oblique and ambiguous; *oya iwe rhe* is proper. The modification in the song thus was necessary, to avoid distortion of meaning in the position where the words involved appear in the verse.

When a word ends with the vowel 'o' and the following word begins with the same vowel, and both have the same sound of an undotted 'o', the composer changes the sound form while linking them together. In song 16 line 8 (page A1 – 29) this feature occurs as follows: "Me ni 'bi emro r'-osoro me so Otebele – Just see the little dispute I had with Otebele." In fact, various forms of word-link exist in this statement. The second word is truncated from 'nighe' to 'ni' either forms meaning look at or see. The third word ought to have the vowel 'i' (*ibi*) as a prefix, but the vowel already exists in the preceding word, therefore it is elided. The fifth word should have been 're' but elision takes place again in order to link it with the following word. The conjunction 'so' and the noun *Otebele* appearing at the end of the line are linked with sound modification, because the connecting vowels are homophonic. The representation above is in readable form; it would otherwise be written thus 'su-Otebele' according to the sound modification in the word-link.

This is not however uncommon in spoken Okpe language. A village for instance is called 'oko' and when it becomes a name often compounded with the name of its founder, it changes form. This is also evident in Igoru music as we observe in song 37 at line 1 (page A1 – 60). The composer-performer presents a narrative about his village known as Okwovu. The name ordinarily would be 'Ọko Ovu – The village of Ovu,' but in well-connected pronunciation, it changes form to 'Ọkwovu.' This also appears in song 29 where the narrator refers to 'Ọko Ukpokpogri – the village of Ukpokpogri'. In the song we hear Ọkwukpokpogri. In this form of connection, the sound of the first vowel 'o' (in the link) changes to a modified consonant sound 'w' in order to differentiate between the two vowels. We say the consonant 'w' is modified in sound, because it is nearer the sound of 'u' than actual 'w'. In the first example, Ọkwovu could better be pronounced as Ọkuovu. But for uniformity, particularly for the sake of villages like the latter example that would create double 'u' if this form is adopted, all Okpe villages that have this form of connection are spelt with the 'w' replacing the elided 'o'.

In song 2 line 1 (page A1 – 2), the composer links up a bisyllabic word with a connecting monosyllabic vowel. As we argued elsewhere in this discourse, greater number of words and names in Okpe begin with vowel than consonant. The vowel 'i' then often serves the function of prefix to several other words. In this line, the composer says 'ayi mwu Ọmuorhoja – they captured Ọmuorhoja.' The first word is 'aye – they' and the vowel 'i' ought to be a prefix to the following word or better still, stay alone to connect the two words. The composer then elided the last vowel of the first word, replacing it with the connecting vowel. This is a common feature in several Igoru songs.

An example of truncation exists in song 12 at line 5 (page A1 – 23) in a form not shortening a word, but a statement is shortened to a phrase. Taking its root from line 4, the composer says ‘You’re only trying to destroy our image; he hears his clairvoyance.’ The above statement sounds as if something is missing. It does not seem to make a complete sense. But it does make sense, because the composer has merely truncated the statement. The two parts of the statement make a complete sentence each, and the composer expects the audience to deduce the missing link. He/she intends to imply, in the statement, that ‘the person whose image is piqued in an innuendo [indirect communication], gets informed by his clairvoyance.’

7. 3. 9 Onomatopoeia:

This refers to the use of words that imitate the sounds of things they are intended to represent, describe, express and suggest. In song 2 line 2 (page A1 – 2) the poet uses sounds both in repetition and continuity to imply a demonstration of sounds that could have resulted from the incident he/she narrates. Line 2 in this poem suggests two different meanings. The first is its literal meaning which takes bearing from line 1. The poet establishes that Omuorhoja was captured by the witches and wizards at the coven. The word *egba* means to tie, implying that the captive was tied after the apprehension. Line 2 itself ‘*Egbane gbane ob’ Egbeda*’, translates to mean ‘had been tied, had been tied at the coven’. The repetition and continuation of the ‘*gb* and *n*’ consonant sounds and the ‘*a*’ and ‘*e*’ vowel sounds create both the effect of the tying process as well as the imitation of the sounds that could have resulted from the anticipated struggle and the very act of beating. The poet employs this figure in sound representation to stimulate and heighten emotions amongst his/her audience, who by the process of listening to the representative sounds would be imbued to imagine the scene where an innocent

soul was being tortured. Ruth Stone (1998: 131) writes the following comments on the effect of onomatopoeia in music:

Key moments within the Woi epic use the ubiquitous Kpelle love for onomatopoeia. "Squirrel-Monkey has come out, *kil, kil, kil, kil*." Contrast that with Yelelawo moving to battle, "*va, va, va, va*", or "Woi's wife was pregnant, *kpung-kung*." These moments build on proverbs and extracts. Such nuggets, by their particular positioning, embody much, lead to many associations, and raise the audience to new heights.

In song 39 line 33 (page A1 – 62) the poet uses a sound to represent the screaming action he/she attempted to describe. He/she expressed that the stroke of a hard thrust and the excruciating pains of excitement that resulted from it made his/her subject to scream '*un*.' The poet of song 41 at lines 27 and 28 (page A1 – 68) expresses that his/her subject has an Igbo father, though her mother is Okpe. The subject speaks Okpe very well, but to reflect and inform the audience that a child belongs more to the father side according to the Okpe tradition, the poet suggests that the subject is more an Igbo than an Okpe. He/she therefore expresses that when the Igoru ensemble members greeted the subject, she responded in another language suggested by the applied onomatopoeia (*nwa nwa nu na nwa nu, nwa nwa nu n' okorobia*) to be Igbo. The Okpe do not begin any double consonant with '*n*,' but the Igbo do in a number of cases, thus the double consonant '*nw*' were predominantly employed by the poet to represent the language spoken by his/her subject.

In song 43 line 8 (page A1 – 71) the poet uses sounds that have resemblance with the intonation of the Itsekiri to mimic an expression. The poet says that orgasm stimulated the subject to scream in a strange language called Itsekiri instead of Okpe and this language was represented by the following

onomatopoeia '*oluku mi jolo gba mi to mi.*' In song 46 line 43 (page A1 – 78) the poet uses an interjection that in this context functions as onomatopoeia to create the sense of imaginative sight. The expression '*idedekuma*' suggests something that is bigger than expectation or larger than life. In Okpe language, the syllabic forms such as '*puma, tuma and kuma,*' all suggest and allude to things that are big, and the size so described might be imaginable from the context of its usage.

In song 64 lines 9 and 10 (page A1 – 109) the poet-composer uses onomatopoeia to create the imagery of incantation in order to represent the kind of tongues that divination priests and oracles recite in Okpe. The incantation is normally in tongues that the ordinary man cannot understand or interpret, except the oracle. The composer represents this as follows: "*Onana ohu orha, onana ohu oghori* – "Is it going to be well, or it's going to be ill?". The preceding lines in the song suggest that the oracle used divination pellets (seed rattles) to consult with the ancestral spirits. In Okpe the oracle normally has a long curved tooth of animal that he uses to strike the divination pellets on the floor as he makes consultations using incantation. He speaks his queries and directs his clients to do same into the animal tooth, then uses it to strike the pellets, as the process of communication between him and the ancestral spirits and reads the information provided by them from the surface of the pellets in the tongues so represented by the poet. Other lines of the poem suggest too that the poet means to imply that his subject had problems of impotence, thus consulted the oracle to seek assistance from the ancestral spirits. The narrator suggests that besides this consultation, the subject had a molten image by his earthen bedside, representing some deities to whom he offers sacrifices for long life, potency and power to procreate.

6. 3. 10 Structural poetic form, Scansion:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 76 and 77) write that the study of poetic forms could be divided into two branches viz a viz: scansion and versification under which we could have other sub-divisions. They further state that scansion “involves the division of lines into their component metrical units, known as ‘feet’...The basis of the scansion of poetry in English language is stress”. Each metrical unit or foot commonly contains at least one stressed syllable with arranged stressed and slack syllables into patterns (of metre). By this use “a poet achieves tautness in his lines – the tension that remains one principal means whereby poetry communicates to its audience an excitement that induces a ready response to the particular moods and emotions that the poet tries to evoke.

J. O. Hendry (1990:21 and 22) writes that the metre of a poetry line is named according to the type of unit or foot that is most prevalent in the line and the number of feet found making up the line. He identifies six types of feet and six types of metre respectively. Mary Barber (1970: M32) writes about a “choriambic” metre, which we add as the seventh form. And though she did not name it, we shall refer to it as heptameter in this discourse. The patterns of feet in lines are normally identified and marked with signs that indicate the stressed and unstressed syllables to show the feet-scheme. These include the following:

	Foot	Foot-Scheme	Metre
1.	Iambic	v /	Monometre
2.	Dactylic	/ v v	Bimetre
3.	Anapaestic	v v /	Trimetre
4.	Trochaic	/ v	Tetrametre
5.	Amphibrachic	v / v	Pentametre

6. Spondaic / / Hexametre
7. Choriambic / v v / Heptametre

Only a few samples of the Igoru songs have been taken for scansion in this study, in order to give us some insight into the placement of accent and unstressed beats in the compositions. Amongst the above foot scheme, we have found that Igoru musical culture favours choriambic, iambic, dactylic, and trochaic feet over the others. The following example from song 59 illustrates:

v / v v / / v

Abotete n' Oghwara, (choriambic and trochaic)

v / v v / v v / v / v

Igoru ame, 'na t' urhomemro ne, (dactylic and trochaic)

v / v / v / v v

Ame na suo Abotete, (amphibrabic)

v / v v / /

N' ekete ose rho, (choriambic)

v / v / v / v

5 *N'oran ami na ha ne* (iambic)

6. 3. 10. 1 Versification, strophe or prosody:

The three terms, versification, strophe and prosody are used interchangeably by different writers to refer to the arrangement of verse in songs. Mark Booth (1981: 8 and 9) argues that:

Song verse shares some of the characteristics of true oral poetry – and also differs from it in important ways. Song belongs to both nonliterate and literate cultures, having originated in the former and been naturalized in the latter. In a literate age songs are written down before they come to an audience. They are a species of script. Although

some song is composed today without writing, most is composed with its help; and even when no writing is directly involved, our songs are made by people who *can* write, a crucial distinction from “primary” orality (p 8)...Oral poetry has a relatively lower density of information per line than written poetry can have. The units are more familiar; or, to put it another way, they are larger: the audience recognizes phrases more often and less often cued by the subtle surprises of individual words (p 9).

We argue differently here, that oral poetry is not lesser in density of information than written poetry, with regard to the context of Igoru music. Following the philosophical thought processes of Igoru musicians, we find that words, images, proverbs and figurative expressions that may appear even in very small fragments are often pregnant with meanings. Only one or two lines can speak volumes when interpreted. In Okpe, not only the knowledge of language is required for the understanding of the Igoru poetry. The knowledge of the culture’s philosophy, religion, medicine, linguistics, and history, are all necessary for the understanding and interpretation of the songs. Booth’s latter argument corroborates that “The analytical understanding of it (song) promises cultural and psychological insight into the life in which a song has its place. Song text has a documentary value that has not been fully appreciated (Booth 1981: 26)”. This is the reason, as we argued earlier in chapter one, why chapter three of this study is devoted to the background of the Okpe culture to enable readers follow the discussion better.

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 88) argue that poetry is timeless and a poem could not be considered ‘better’ or ‘worse’ for being written in regular feet and stanzas nor could it be considered more or less ‘relevant’ for being written yesterday or today. “The form chosen by the poet succeeds not because it has

(or has not) an identifiable stanzaic pattern. It succeeds if it helps to communicate the poet's meaning and intention and if it persuades us to enter into the offered experience." They intimate two forms of verse, the regular and the free verse also known as *vers libre* and further argue that "The experiences offered by traditional verse and song remind the critic that poetry is a participatory art form, demanding an active response from its audience. To appreciate, we must join in, as traditional audiences have always done" (Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield 1979: 72).

In Igoru music, versification stems out of two premises. Verses may occur in refrain and solo forms or in strict narrative form. In the solo and refrain form, the lead singer presents the refrain and takes a solo then cues the chorus in to repeat the refrain. Some times the refrain is a recycle of the solo with use of some new words appearing within the versified development. If the subsequent solo verses do not differ much from the chorus, the soloist at liberty creates new ideas and adds more information to the verse scheme each time he/she takes a turn until satisfaction is achieved. Other times, the verses may be developed in call and response pattern with a cue solo of a shorter verse in-between the call and response verse. This form is evident in song 1, page A1 - 1. The opening is a short song that functions as one of Igoru signature tunes or formulae as discussed under vocal organization in chapter seven. This appears in a four-line verse. The song is presented after in call and response of eight lines followed by a cue-solo of three lines that returns the ensemble to the eight-line call and response.

Igoru favours the use of the free verse over regular verse form. Even when the sequence of thought can be equally grouped or divided into some regular

number of lines, the lines differ considerably in length and feet. Songs 8 and 58 appear to be the most strophic forms that follow same melodic structure. But even with this tendency of regularity, the numbers of syllables that form the various lines of the verses are still slightly unequal. In song 8 (page A1 – 17) for example, there are five verses with the scheme 6-4-6-6-4 lines each. In song 59 (page A1 – 96) we have nine verses of five lines each, except the concluding ninth verse that has four lines only. We shall further examine Igoru versification system under the following headings.

Single verse stanza:

Greater numbers of Igoru songs are composed in single verse form. The diversity of length ranges from three lines to fifteen; but of all these the nine-line single verse has the highest frequency, followed by the five-line verse often called limericks in poetry. Next to these are songs in only six, seven, ten and eleven lines that appear to have equal frequency. It should be noted that there are no fixed rules of length followed by Igoru musicians in composing their songs. But the frequency in which a pattern occurs informs us about the thought coordination and organization. See the table of distribution below:

Table 1: Length of single verse

Length	Frequency	Songs	Page (A1)
3 lines	1	78	145
4 lines	1	20	34

5 lines	3	36, 47 and 76	59, 82 and 120
6 lines	2	11 and 73	22 and 40
7 lines	2	54 and 57	90 and 93
9 lines	4	18, 63, 80 and 83	32, 109, 148 and 151
10 lines	2	38 and 51	62 and 86
11 lines	2	49 and 74	84 and 140
14 lines	1	52	87
15 lines	1	85	156
Total	19	19	19

Duple, triple and multiple verses:

Agawu (1984: 48) observes and remarks about the non-prosodic character of Akan and Ewe songs as follows:

In general, there are no strophic songs in either Akan or Ewe traditional music. The present instance uses strophic in a somewhat loose sense. The absence of strophic songs in traditional music is due to the fact that, given the ever-changing patterns in the sequence of speech tones, melodic construction presents enormous problems in matching these patterns with a single, unchanging melody.

It is actually difficult to group Igoru music into strophic or prosodic forms. The songs are composed in free style of continuous melodic flow that often runs through the entire length of the poetry. Apart from a few cases where a short song-sentence is transformed into a lengthy narrative such as in song 29 (page A1 – 43), most of the songs are elongated single verses. Duple and triple verses however exist in some forms of regular and irregular length. Some of these two to three verses bear the same number of lines, though the lines themselves may be unequal in length. In song 4 (page A1 – 5) for instance, the second verse is more a recycle of the first, thus the length equality is determined by the melodic length in slightly modified form. The slight modification is as a result of the modification in the second verse, since it has some syllables omitted and some phrases repeated as opposed to the first.

The two equal verses in song 7 (page A1 – 16) appear so only in thought, but according to the melodic flow, they run into one another without any perfect cadence between them. We have only followed the poetic line of thought and the pause between them to structure the writing into two verses. This is the factor we have also used in dividing songs 10, 17, 25 and 26 (pages A1 – 21, 31, 39 and 40) into two verses; otherwise, they are melodically single verse forms of different length respectively. The duple verse form in song 13 is quite unequal, though short and could have been a seven-line single verse. It is a short song of five-line sentence with a two-line solo-call that brings back the first five-line song as refrain. This kind of song normally turns to multiple verses as we observe in song 48 (page A1 – 82) where the song-sentence is established in only four lines and the lead singers develops it with series of two-line solo calls. The first four lines then serve as the refrain while every other two-line of new text forms new verses onward.

6. 3. 10. 2 Rhyme:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 89-90) argue that rhyme contributes to the effects of sound in poetry as well as it is a part of a poem's structure, helping in holding it together as powerful agent of communication. Mary Barber (1970: M26) argues that:

The poet's intensely individual music is played on the age-old instrument of metre and rhyme, and the better we understand the instrument, the keener will be our enjoyment of the poet's skill and genius. Even verse that cannot be called poetry—verse that is mechanical, uninspired, lacking that intensity of insight and expression that we recognise as poetic—even this mediocre verse can teach us something of the poet's instrument.

Rhyme is a device adopted by Ikoru composers to create powerful effects of sound within lines or between lines of a verse. It is a creation that brings words that have similar sounds close to one another for a sort of agreement that stimulates heightened sense of hearing (aural perception). There are different kinds of rhyme which include the internal, end, half and full rhymes. The internal rhyme occurs where two or more words that sound alike appear close to one another within the same line, while the end rhyme is the agreement of sounds between the words that end lines that are close to one another. The half rhyme is a partial agreement in sounds between two or more words that appear close to one another, either within the same line or between lines that are near one another. The full rhyme, on the other hand, occurs where words that sound perfectly alike come close in agreement within or between lines. Besides this classification, there are various kinds of rhyme under which we examine Ikoru poetry. The rhyme scheme is represented with letters that designate the various forms.

Couplet and internal rhymes:

Couplet rhyme appears in two forms, where the last word-sound of the first line agrees with that of the following line or the third line. The scheme is usually a-a-b-b. Couplets are not so common in the songs we have collected. Where some couplets appear in visual forms, the sounds could make a difference, since some of the vowels like 'e' and 'o' have two forms, the dotted and the undotted. The use of the round-off sound is often effective in realizing the effects of couplets and at the same time it could neutralize the effects of couplets. An example of this is found in song 18 (page A1 – 32) as follows:

E, Abada ɔd' inyo biom' oma, [a]

Qrhɔr' ohoro (Edele) yi o, [b]

'Vwo rho ru isara o, [b]
Osiye ibriji vw' Apapa, [a]
Otu Iwenemu ra nya sa, [a]
N' ughe ohoro yi, eno yi aye ene, [c]
Ado, 'Bada, se wu phoph' oma o, [b]
Omọ re Ibaba ovbiere, [d]
Okorebe ob' otore Eko. [b]

The scheme actually comprises two forms of rhyme, the couplet and alternate. The first four lines suggest alternate rhyme scheme, while lines two to five show clearly the couplet form, b, b, a, a. This appears in a kind of reverse order; instead of a, a, b, b, we have the retrograde version, because the first rhyme was interrupted by two lines coming in-between. An internal rhyme exists between lines four and five. The word '*isara*' that ends line three is given a round-off vowel that moves the word inwards in the line. When the rhyme following it '*Apapa*' then appeared at the end of line five, it no longer seems to rhyme vowel to vowel. This is described here as internal rhyme. Other forms of internal rhyme exist where the sound of the last word is repeated by use of similar words in the following line.

Quatrain or alternate rhyme:

The rhyme that occurs between two lines that have one or two non-rhyming lines in-between them is known as alternate rhyme. The scheme is a-b-a-b or a-b-b-a. Alternate rhymes exist in Igoru music; but this is not to say that the rhymes are set together for visual aesthetics as we some times find in written poetry. They are put together to stimulate and appeal more to the sense of hearing. The use of

word-link and round-offs assist to build the rhymes in the various verses. We shall examine the following quatrain in the excerpt from song 3, page A1 – 4:

Ba Umogu osiyẹ oghwa, [a]

Otu erieda irha ‘obọ ghwo liẹ, [b]

Umogu mi rhe vbo eda, [a]

Gbe me kpe mẹ, [b]

Ejo, mi rhe vboo, [c]

Gba nya ji mẹ vbo, [c]

E, ame imeba ‘me t’ọnana, [a]

There are two patterns of rhyme in this verse. The first form is quatrain appearing between lines 1 and 4, and we can clearly see the reason why this kind of rhyme is also called alternate. The rhyme scheme consists of alternation between the ‘a’ and the ‘b’ lines. That is, rather than line one to rhyme with line two, it rhymes with line three while line two rhymes with four. The rhyme scheme between lines four and seven can be described as an interrupted rhyme, because another rhyme form exists between it. Instead of a, b, a; a, c, c, a; or b, c, c, b, we find a, b, c, c, a. Either of the three forms appearing within that elongated scheme is interrupted. A different kind of alternate rhyme occurs in verse two of song 5 (page A1 – 6) as follows:

E, Ame ihrun ohuan Igoru ame, [a]

Kpahen otọre, [a]

Ọmọ r’ ohimi aro, [b]

Ọgbọ mọ kpa riẹ, [c]

En’ ame mẹrẹ, [c]

Ọriọmerhan r’ ojegbamudu, [d]

Ọro hi maro, [b]

Nọ yọ rọ kpa re rię o. [b]

This scheme a, a, b, c, c, d, b, b, is quite technical and unique, in that the alternating lines do not appear to create much contrast or interruption between the rhyme forms. It is therefore not an alternation between two different rhymes, but a variety of rhymes alternated with single varied lines. The third line marked 'b' is alternated by three successive lines before it receives its rhyme. And the line that rhymes with it has another line forming a rhyme immediately below it. We shall describe this as deceptive rhyme, because one would rather consider the last two as rhyme and not link the interrupted one to the others since the interval between them appears to be wide. One little puzzle none-Okpe readers may find is the difference between the set of rhymes labelled 'a' and 'c'; after all the two forms end with the letter 'e'. The reason why they are labelled separately is that the letters do not have the same sound in the two cases. The 'e' dotted sounds differently from the one undotted.

Triplet rhyme:

When three lines end with words that are homophonic it is called triplet rhyme. The scheme for this rhyme is a-a-a, b-b-b. In verse eight of song 5 we find a triplet rhyme existing in-between the first three lines. The last words in these three successive lines differ from one another in spelling, but possess the same vowel sound at the end. An example of triplet rhyme is found again in song 18 (page A1 – 32) presented below:

E, abọ Abada na ba ra, [a]

Ne ka męre ukpe re mamiwọta; [a]

Ọmọ rọ ghwọl' ada nya, [a]

Okuku orho mwu, ọvbọ ghwọl' ukpeę o, [b]

E, ari *dje Urhomu ri Apapa*; [a]

Abada ese, [c]

Meba, abada ese. [c]

Abada oko' baro hi ne, [c]

Okuku orho mwu, arha ghwol' ukpe re o. [b]

In the above example, the scheme is interrupted somewhat. Instead of a, a, a, b, b, b, we have a, a, a, b, a, c, c, c. The b and a coming in-between the proper rhyme scheme make the difference, but do not stop the existence and effects of the rhymes.

***Iserho ene* or quadruple rhyme:**

Some very short songs within the limits of their length contain this four-line rhyme scheme even more than the long narratives. This scheme that could have been impossible to achieve within songs of short length, is normally assisted with the use of the round-off occurring at the end of the lines. The example in verse one of song 21 is one assisted by use of the 'o' round-off sound. Without the round-off sound however, all the six lines of the verse would in fact have rhymed visually with one another. It would no longer have been a quadruple but a sextet. A careful examination of the lines again inform us that the six lines would still have been reduced lesser, to a four-line rhyme, because the sound of two 'e,' the letter that ends all the lines, is dotted while the others are not. In song 13 however, only one of the alternating lines is assisted with a round-off sound that eventually give the quadruple rhyme its character. See the excerpt from song 13 (page A1 – 24) as follows:

E, Aramoghwa r' ojiri otore,

Ovbọ gbẹrhiẹn urhomu Ologbo,

*Oromo ogi rhe o,
Okpe rhe ijoro,
R' aye na je so?*

***Iserhọ isiorin* or quintet rhyme:**

The term quintet suggests five, and all rhymes that exist between five successive lines would be described as such. In song 6 verse five (page A1 – 11), a quintet rhyme is found as in the excerpt below:

*Di die ọmọ Imeni ovbiẹ re? [a]
'Hworhare Imeni ovbiẹ re; [a]
Di die ọmọ Imeni ovbiẹ re? [a]
'Hworhare Imeni ovbiẹ re; [a]
Oma ọmerhe Imeni ne, [a]
Ọye ogi ji vbiẹ ọmọ, [b]
Ro no gbe Igoru; [c]
Ọriọmerhan ote avbaran, [d]
Do, vb' Ọkọkọ n' efian wa mọrọn, [b]
Ọmọ na otob' Igoru rẹ, [e]
Ọmọ mi na 'a re ikara, [d]
Egbukpe ọnana wo na meriẹ. [e]*

The quintet rhyme is created by use of the repetition and parallelism devices followed by a short complementary statement.

6.4 Imagery:

Imagery is a technique in poetry adopted to create pictures in the minds of the audience in order to stimulate their imagination of the objects and subjects described and represented, and to arouse their responses. Dorian Haarhoff (1998: 84 and 88) argues that:

Images are phrases or word clusters that reach our readers through the holes in their skulls, through their sense organs. They are word pictures, sound pictures, smell, taste and touch pictures. Images electrify the words an author uses so we see and smell the cluttered alley or the little finger of the lover they are describing. They stimulate our imaginations and allow our bodies to respond physically to a text...Images evoke an ongoing conversation (p 84).

Images are strongly related to the idea of voice in a text...When I use a metaphor in my writing, one I borrow from common speech, there is a sense in which I am at that point no longer writing in my own voice. I'm using packaged frozen vegetables. Someone else picked them and I get them from the writer's supermarket. I'm relying on convenience and perhaps being lazy too. I need to fresh pick my vegetables (p 88).

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 43) argue that imagery is often used in everyday speech both in common sayings and proverbial expressions to arouse the impressions of the various human senses. They clearly state that:

A poet strives to use language that is fresh, bright, new minted: language that conveys clear thought and delicate perceptions. The clichés of time-worn imagery are of little use to him. The vivid sense impressions that he seeks to arouse cannot be stirred by stale words and hackneyed comparisons... There are no 'rules' that the poet must obey. When considering a poet's images and the use that he makes of them, the only test that the reader should apply is the test of appropriateness (Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield 1979: 44).

In Iguru music, several images are created by the composers to act as symbols that represent the themes of the songs and how they feel about the characters they describe. Very careful study of the images is necessary to enable us tune our minds to the composer's intention and communication wavelength, in order to

enhance sensitive and balanced interpretation. We shall do this under the following headings.

6. 4. 1 Visual image:

This sort of imagery is such by which expressions are made to stimulate the sense of sight. In song 18 lines 5 and 6 (page A1 – 32), the poet uses such expressions that suggest the sense of sight to stimulate the listeners' imagination of the incident he/she tries to narrate. On the occasion where a drunkard became unconsciously naked, the poet says that 'the crafty passers-by began to look at the victim's nudity. The poet of song 19 (page A1 – 33) also uses expressions that evoke the sense of sight. He/she in this case says that Abada's hands were red enough to give light and that any child who wants to go out whenever it is dark needs not search or seek for a lamp, but could simply send a message to Abada in Apapa and the moment she comes in front, her hands would provide light.

Three senses of sight are implied here by the poet. The first is the normal physical sight of a scar on the hands of the victim; the second is the imaginative sight of a mermaid's lamp and the third is the kind of light provided by a lamp source. In song 26 (page A1 – 40) the poet creates the sense of sight saying 'when we see our children with fresh fish on the streets, we feel sorry for ourselves.' This expression carries a lot of meaning, suggesting the kind of relationship that grew amongst the Okpe and the Itsekiri between 1930s and 1940s. The former are mainly crop farmers as discussed in chapter three, while the latter are fish farmers.

Both in the period of trade by batter and in later periods when formal legal tender came in vogue, the two peoples have had inter-ethnic trade around the riverside villages and towns over the years. The poet however suggests that the people who pay kindness with evil are not a people to associate with. The expression 'seeing children with fresh fish' suggests the trade between the Itsekiri and the Okpe which the composer implies should be discouraged. The implications of this warning are discussed in chapter eight. In song 38 line 8 (page A1 – 62) the poet uses the expression '*oke otuero ose ruo jiri*' meaning 'the blind man's darkness blindfolded you too long' to stimulate the sense of vision as it implies in this context to poor or simulated civilization and its associated practices.

In song 39 line 22 (page A1 – 62) the poet uses another expression that evokes the sense of sight, but in a euphemistic manner. The poet states that no one had heard (known) that the subject had seen 'body,' but she (the subject) was already pregnant at the time of the incident persona narrates. The expression '*mere oma*' in the poetry can mean different things in different contexts. It can mean the meeting of two persons, to suffer retribution, or to see a body (nude). In Okpe, elders prefer the use of this expression to refer to sexual intercourse rather than use the direct word for the activity. The use of this image in this context therefore implies that her pregnancy was only beginning to develop that no one had observed it. Another visual image follows this closely in line 23 where the poet says a military boat arrived Apapa wharf, Lagos. Lines 26, 28 and 29 stimulate further sense of sight, where the poet says a soldier saw and proposed to the lady, became unclad ready to make love to her. He further describes the size of the soldier's penis as extra-large. All these arouse emotion and stir up the imagination and curiosity of the audience to begin to see the pictures of the scenes in the sequences of their manifestation.

In song 44 lines 6 to 8 (page A1 – 72), the poet evokes the sense of sight, describing an incident that he/she met as the persona at Ikeja Lagos. He/she states that the subject was fallen down in the street, so weak and in great pains. The expressions suggest how the subject looks in that condition, either in real life situation or in an imagination. In song 61 the poet creates several images to stimulate the sense of sight. The poet states that the personas travelled to Oshodi, Lagos and found twenty members of the commercial sex workers association at a meeting planning a musical performance. The narrator states that the personas entered Abada's compound, suggesting that she is the leader. He/she describes her (Abada's) attire as one tying a wrapper skirt and having feathers fixed to her headgear, sitting on a chair. The audience is stimulated by all these descriptions to imagine how the subject's compound, house and attire could look. The narrator went further to describe the category of people who were in the membership of the Association to spur listeners into further imagination. He/she says the group of followers like *Ọsọsọ* sat on one side; the learned, the chief and the spokesperson sat in various positions while the whips referred to as the police were parading on one side. He/she brought the visual imagery to climax saying that Abada took a set of pellets, (stimulating imagination of how the instrument looks) and gave instructions to her followers.

6. 4. 2 Audile or auditory image:

An audile image is that expression that evokes to the sense of hearing. In song 39 line 38 (page A1 – 62) the poet expresses that the team of people who were with the traditional mid-wife to assist the subject who was in labour expected the placenta to burst so that the baby could come out. The Okpe verb 'va' means to tear apart or explode as in fruits or elastic objects. In the case of fruit seeds that tear apart to disperse the seeds in reaction to climatic conditions, the explosion

normally produces sounds that are audible. The poet in this context however does not imply that the placenta could produce such loud sounds.

In song 42 lines 1 to 4 (page A1 – 70) the poet evokes the sense of hearing, expressing that members of the ensemble heard what his/her subject did at Sapele. Reinforcing this sense of hearing, the poet follows the expression with a proverb that ‘if someone dies the earth would hear.’ Outside this context the proverb would mean that if someone dies he would sure be buried in the earth, but in the context of this usage, it implies that Igoru musicians were all ears always to get information about hideous activities in the society, no matter the distance between where they reside and where such things happen. In song 44 lines 37 to 39 (page A1 – 72) the poet uses the expression ‘Ebibada got to the scene and burst into laughter, saying they thought they could emulate me. Is this the love we make and receive loud ovation?’ Two prominent words in the expression, ‘laughter and ovation’ relate with the production of sounds and thus stimulate the sense of hearing in the song-poem. The composer of song 46 at lines 25 and 32 (page A1 – 78) uses the expression ‘*obunu*’ meaning he/she raises alarm (crying out for help). This stimulates the sense of hearing that imbues imagination in the audience about what is happening to the character.

Song 62 (page A1 – 105) begins with several visual images and moves to audile images. The persona expresses that the chairperson of the Association of commercial sex workers discussed above, at a scheduled meeting, took a rattle and called Ogbotigoru to sing songs of divination so that she would offer sacrifices on behalf of the body. Taking up the rattle suggests that she shook or played it rhythmically to accompany the traditional worship songs. The audience is then stimulated to cultivate the sense of hearing the sounds of the rattle and of

the singing voices imaginatively. The persona did not only suggest that the group sang, he/she actually sang the very first song performed by the association, which became part of the narrative composition. He/she also imports a representation of the divination incantation in line 39 into the narration. The narrator of song 6 at line 63 presents an emotional expression that the protagonist cried out loudly and sorrowfully, having lost her young baby so mysteriously and suddenly. The image is capable of moving the audience to sympathize with the character.

In song 27 at line 4 (page A1 – 41) there is an image that practically heightens the sense of hearing. The composer expresses that ‘the world’ i.e. crowd of people, raised a loud ovation for the Mereje *Ukiri* (drum). That of course, is the use of a metonymy. *Ukiri* is the drum type that forms the instrumental section of Igoru ensemble. Rather than say the Mereje Igoru ensemble performs, the narrator says the Mereje *ukiri* sounds. The narrator’s remark that the audience raised a loud ovation for the performers, and the verbalization of the ovation ‘*ije*’ is intended to stimulate the imaginative sense of hearing the loudness of the ovation. The expression in song 32 lines 37-38 (page A1 – 52) is also capable of stimulating the sense of imaginative listening and hearing. The narrator says ‘The day you call the sons and daughters of Mereje, the great ancestral spirits will answer you.’ The audience could then imagine how loud and fearsome the voice of ancestral spirits would sound and where the voice(s) are likely to emanate.

6. 4. 3 Tactile and thermal images:

This involves the use of expressions that suggest the feeling and sense of touch, including those of temperature that arouse the sense of heat and cold known as thermal images. In song 5 line 6 (page A1 – 6), the narrator employs a tactile

image that describes Igoru repertoire as a well-packaged heavy load. He/she says “We have packaged our Igoru load and laid it on the ground; whoever is bold should come and carry it before our very eyes”. The image is presented as if Igoru songs could be felt by the sense of touch. The composer of song 30 at line 2 presents a thermal image. The narrator says “The fire of our Igoru has come upon us”. Fire is a hot substance, (often in flames) that produces heat and can burn. If one is cold and the heat is mild, getting close to the fire can provide comfortable warmth. But if the fire is wildly intensified, and one is too close to it, it has the tendency to burn. This imagery in this context suggests the inspirational force that comes upon Igoru performers during performances, a force that imbues them to perform limitlessly. What this implies is that the mania has taken possession of the performers and any community member who fails to conduct him/herself properly could then become the subject of attack during the performance without fear or favour.

At line 13 of the same song, the narrator creates another tactile image, complementary to the former. The persona has identified an offender, therefore changes the term from a general remark to address a specific person. He/she says if the subject puts a finger into the eyes of the ensemble members, he/she would suffer for it that year. Human eyes are very sensitive to any objects coming close to them. An imagination of a finger coming into one’s eyes could stimulate rapid and momentary blinking spontaneously. In song 39 lines 9 to 15 (page A1 – 62) the poet creates the sensation of a certain kind of touch. He/she presents these tactile images to suggest accidental knock of a foot against a stone or any other object. The term *kprọ* (knock against) however is more connotative in this context than the literal sense of it. The term ‘*Kọkọ*’ is a fictitious name often adopted to address a young woman in Okpe. Some people in those days gave it

as real name to their female children. But in the context of this Igoru song, the poet uses it as an equivalent of the English 'young lady'. The image so orchestrated above takes bearing from Okpe traditional belief that if one is going anywhere and incidentally strikes his/her right foot against an object before he/she gets there, it is an indication of blessing and positive results of the mission, while in the contrary, striking the left foot indicates unpleasant events or unsuccessful mission; more or less a bad omen.

The poet suggests that the story he/she narrates is an event that took place in Lagos, where the subject undertook a journey from the then Western Urhobo Division to Lagos. He/she suggests too that the lady and the host in Lagos were into a relationship at home before the man left for Lagos. The image then implies that the lady became pregnant and there was little doubt whether her partner in Lagos was responsible for it before he left Okpe land for Lagos or not. The poet suggests that the doubts raised were not founded on evidence, but warns that the ancestral deities do not tolerate adulterous living. As is evident in Okpe traditional society, the ancestral deities normally inflict refractory ailment on the woman or more often cause her to experience difficult labour so that such a helpless condition would force her to confess if she ever committed adultery, particularly in the period of her conception. The poet later suggests that Meni had encountered such a bitter experience earlier, hence the metaphoric example so stated in line 14 as warning for the present victim (the subject).

At lines 31 and 32 of the same song, the poet uses other tactile imagery. He/she suggests that the soldier who made love to the subject of the narrative had very big penis, that when he made a thrust the subject felt the strike at the waist. In lines 48, 49 and 53 the poet uses similar images that suggest the sense of touch.

The first two lines state that the mid-wife placed her hand on the belly of the woman in labour to feel the pulse of the womb and the following line adds that she angrily inserted her hand into the vagina to take hold of the baby inside. In song 43 lines 10 to 14 (page A1 – 71) the persona presents expressions that stimulate the sense of both physical and emotional touch. He/she states: “Yea, master, please, thrust it well for me; my brother, thrust it down for me; my aunty, please press it well for me”.

The sensation created by the expressions such as ‘thrusting and pressing down’ stimulate the sense of contact between two things that meet to give a kind of excitement. The poet suggests that the screaming and spluttering of these words were as a result of the contact created by the thrusting itself. In song 43 line 1 to 5 (page A1 – 71) the poet creates the sense of body contact, saying idiomatically that the subject’s genital organ ‘gets stuck to the male organ.’ The lines following this expression give more meaning to the information the poet intends to pass on. First, the poet raises an observation that a new file (device for sharpening knife) or a new singlet is often like a piece of photograph that stimulates one’s curiosity to want to behold it or make use of it at once. Second, he/she implies that the subject is very young and possesses the qualities that serve as attraction at a young age, but this by functional implication leaves caution behind for the subject.

In song 51 lines 1 and 2 (page A1 – 86), the poet uses an expression that suggests both thermal and motile images, sense of movement and touch. He/she says ‘the storm of Igoru arrived at the river side.’ Storm suggests a wild wind that brings cold with it and could in nature be destructive to lives and properties where and when it strikes. Riverside is also often very cold; thus strengthening the notion of low temperature, which touches on human flesh, could cause

uncomfortable feelings. Subsequent lines of the poem suggest further that Igoru performances created fear in the hearts of community members those days, just in the way the coming of storm would cause fear.

The poet expresses that such a fear gripped two members of the community when they gathered that Igoru performance was coming up and no longer could come out of their homes. He/she says that one of the two explained that, though he/she is handsome or beautiful, if Igoru musicians would perform a satire to describe him/her, he/she would not be able to sleep, meaning he/she would be emotionally distressed. This implies that Igoru performances built restraints in the psyche of community members, which functioned as a check on social-moral behaviours in the society. This does not mean that community members indeed were not coming out to watch Igoru performances, but that the satires made members to be more conscious and careful with all that they do in the society, so that Igoru musicians would not find reasons to perform satires on them.

6. 4. 4 Olfactory image:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1997: 59) define olfactory image as such an expression that arouses and refers to the sense of smell. The expression in line 9 of song 26 is an example of this image (see page A1 – 40). The narrator says “Ibobo burnt love portion and smeared [spread] it here”. Whenever a concoction of a kind is burnt, for medicine or other purposes, a certain kind of strong smell is expected to fill the air to be perceived, though the purpose of the burning is not for production of smell. In song 46 lines 16 and 17 (page A1 – 778), the poet creates similar imagery that stimulates the sense of smell. He/she says the subject had invitation from an Hausa man who played the character of a

middle man in the narrative, promising to take her to a white man to establish a relationship.

The subject, in preparation for the mission, then sent her maid to the market for shopping. The persona says that at the time they were ready to embark on the journey the Hausa man put 'kaolin chalk on himself.' Line 18 adds that they both applied the ornament. The term 'kaolin chalk' is a kind of understatement that suggests a perfume applied on their body for good fragrance. The reason for creating this image was later revealed by the persona, that the Hausa man did not actually mean to take the protagonist to a white man, but to deceive her to a quiet place where he could take advantage of her. This implies that he applied the perfume so that he could stimulate attraction through the senses of appealing fragrance. The protagonist applied the perfume in her own case so that she could attract the white man she hoped to meet.

7. 4. 5 Gustatory image:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1997: 59) write that gustatory image is that kind of expression that stimulates the sense of taste. In song 37 line 17 (page A1 – 60) the poet uses a figure that suggests the beauty of Igoru music as a thing that produces the sense of taste. He says 'we packaged Igoru and began to cook it.' The things that we cook normally are spiced to give them flavour and taste. The poet uses this figure to suggest how well their Igoru ensemble prepared for a competition they won at Warri as discussed in chapter five. The narrator of song 6 at lines 39 and 45 (page A1 – 11) presents an imagery of taste, expressing a vow to use the sister's new born baby as meat to eat *Akara* (beans cake). This does not mean that the Okpe are cannibals, but suggests the belief of the people about some spiritual activities of human beings in the society.

The idiomatic expression in song 7 line 8 (page A1 – 16) creates this kind of image, saying “You are licking the dirt on our body”. In this context, the expression simply means that whatever the public says and does against Igoru musicians would not matter to them; because they are resolved to continue with their performances irrespective of what the public calls them – vagabond or lazy men and women. The composer of song 13 at line 2 (page A1 – 24) presents a proverb expressed in a gustatory image. He/she says “The rat that lives long will crack the head of a cat”. We have discussed the meaning of this expression under proverbs in this chapter. We only wish to state here that cracking the head of a cat implies the sense of taste. Song 30 line 27 presents an expression that “Ogiso put his finger into his mouth” signifying a depth of anger and very bitter regret. Apart from the connotative meaning, whenever one puts a finger into his/her mouth, a sense of taste is stimulated.

The composer of song 44 at line 29 (page A1 – 72), in an idiomatic statement, says “You, children, suffering will touch your mouth”. This expression is presented as if we taste suffering or pains in our mouths. The term ‘suffering’ in this context is not connotative. It actually denotes real suffering which is an experience that often affects human emotions. The experience can be a kind of taste of life, but not the taste that is assessable in the mouth. The expression “You carried or took a year and ate it up” in song 60 at line 4 (page A1 – 99) is another image that stimulates the sense of taste. Here the narrator implies that the subject has wasted his/her years unprofitably. Details of this account are discussed under conceptual analysis of names above.

6. 4. 6 Motile or kinaesthetic image:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1997: 59) state that expressions, which appeal to the sense of movement, are motile or kinaesthetic images. And images of this kind are prevalent in Igoru music. The poet of song 5, in verse two, employs a motile image, earlier cited in this discourse, to describe the Igoru repertoire. He/she states in the verse that the Igoru ensemble had packaged her repertoire as a load and that whoever considered him/herself brave should attempt to carry it. In the Okpe culture, there are many things that constitute load, some of which include a basin loaded with cassava from the farm; a bundle of fire wood tied together, a pot, pale or large bowl of water, box of clothes, etc.

Whatever package is considered to be load arouses the concept of something weighty and heavy to lift up and the process of lifting a thing up itself is kinaesthetic involving movement of a sort. Often in cultural rhythm, one might not carry a package of load and remain in one spot with it. The process involves series of movement, from the ground to the shoulder or head where the load is often sustained in balance and taken from one location to another. In verse three, the poet reinforces the image with a categorical statement that Oriomerhan who was overbold to carry the Igoru load had dared to carry a bundle of fire wood. The poet implies through this imagery that anyone in the community who dares to carry out evil deeds had dared to challenge Igoru musicians to compose and perform satire.

The expression in song 17 line 9 (page A1 – 31) stimulates the sense of movement. The narrator says life in Lagos began to swing the subject about. Prior to the advent of modern day swinging equipment in recreation centres and schools, children in the villages used to climb big orange, cocoa, mango and

cherry trees in the neighbourhood to tie a rope on a branch at the top and tie a stick to the rope at the base. Then they take turns sitting on the stick, holding the rope firmly and other members of the peer group push to set the rope swinging for the game to begin. The expression though is figurative; a sense of swinging movement is suggested. By implication, however, the composer implies that the subject on certain condition either moved from location to location in search of job and accommodation or generally in search of greener pastures from one career engagement to another. It practically suggests both locomotive and economic instability.

The composer of song 31 at lines 23-24 (page A1 – 48) presents some motile image. He/she says the slave (the subject of the song) walked into the compound and passed by. Then he came backward and made some attempts to commit a vice. The expression that describes moving back and forth induces the audience to imagine the difficulty normally experienced in every attempt to do evil. Simply put, evil is not an easy thing to do. The proverb employed by the poet in song 21 line 13 (page A1 – 34) also arouses the sense of movement. The poet says 'the flower that goes on a procession does not get missing in it'. The expression itself is a personification describing the flower as if it were a person going on a procession. In the conceptualization of the performance practice that involves the fixing of feathers and flowers in performers' headgears in Okpe traditional society, the expression then suggest that the performer who carries beautiful flowers on his/her head (implying Ikoru musicians) cannot die or be harmed for performing Ikoru music. In song 22 (page A1 – 35) the poet employs several expressions to create the sense of movement. He/she says that government wrote a letter directing that every goat that suffers from dermatophytosis (ringworm) should leave the city. He/she expressed further that the category of Abada who

were well dressed, getting ready to board the van, and the category of Sisi who had packed their properties into the van began to sing as they drove on:

Yes, I'll return home, I'll return home,
Government wrote a letter to us,
That all the 'goats' suffering from dermphytosis,
Should leave the city.

The above expressions all suggest that even the government of that time was worried about sexual abuse as much as the society did worry about it. This is however a hyperbole, even though government could be worried about such things, there has been no written account that the Nigerian government in the period under investigation promulgated any laws or decrees to this effect. In song No. 39 lines 54 and 55 (page A1 – 62) the poet creates the sense of movement, suggesting that the mid-wife, having inserted her hand into the expectant woman's reproductive organ, began to pull the baby out. The act of pulling stimulates and arouses the sense of movement. The composer of song 40 (page A1 – 67) again creates the sense of movements, saying that a public pond arrived Ogbe Street, Obalende, Lagos and invites all commercial sex workers to come to deplete it. This poem makes clear that it is one of the songs performed by the Mereje Igoru musicians in Lagos.

Ogbe is a street in Mereje town of Okpe local government area of Delta State and there is no street called Ogbe, though Obalende is in Lagos. The term pond gives the impression that the arrival is that of a boat, the boat of the soldiers at the water side. Mereje is a town that has a river and a street by the water side called *Udumu Urhie* (Riverside Street). The Ogbe Street in Mereje is at the centre of the town, but with several roads leading to the community market by the

river side. To make clearer suggestions, the poet qualifies the pond to be the public pond of a market typology. This implies that the military boat arrived at the waterside in Victoria Island, Lagos, and all commercial sex workers in Obalende were attracted to the scene. In song 41 lines 1 and 2 (page A1 – 68), motile imagery exist in the expression that those who were travelling to Adeje should take a query to the mother of Abebe why she should allow her only daughter to go into commercial sex activities. It suggests movement of messengers or travellers from one location to another.

In song 45 lines 3 and 4 (page A1 – 77), the poet-composer employs a kinaesthetic imagery to describe the Igoru performance. He/she says that the subject should be informed that the boat of the ensemble's Igoru would soon arrive at his/her point. The image creates the sense of movement, but implies that the ensemble would soon compose the subject's satire. It serves as a warning to the subject that he/she should stop whatever ill practice he/she is involved in, otherwise the next performance of the ensemble would compose and present his/her satire. In song 58 verse 4 (page A1 – 94) the poet uses imagery of movements to create climax as follows:

	<i>Ohuan mę re kele ri,</i>	The divorce suite and claims against me,
	<i>Ole (ri) mę n' amwa;</i>	Chased me away from the town;
	<i>Are irhe te lęddo,</i>	If you get to Jęddo,
20	<i>Are a męre męę,</i>	And you don't find me there,
	<i>No b' ębęę mi na nya;</i>	I would go through the bush path,
	<i>Me nya ęr' ębęę fi Egborode,</i>	I shall go through the bush path to Egborode,
	<i>Me nya ęr' Adeje fi obo Orerokęę,</i>	I shall go through Adeje to Orerokęę,
	<i>Ob' Urhiapęę me na nya o.</i>	Then, I would go to Urhiapęę [Sapęę].

The poet uses the earlier road network in Okpe, alluding to them as bush paths to suggest that new roads by this time had been constructed and these former roads cut off, have become less functional. The imagery of movement from one

town to the other shows a gradual migration from the rural areas to the urban centres like Orerokpe and Sapele. The song attacks a specific lady chief in the 1940s. In Okpe tradition, Chieftaincy title is not given to anyone who does not meet with the socio-moral standards of the society. As discussed in chapter three, an intending chief must have a stable economy, good moral standing and a good reputation. This sense of judgement is transferred to every form of representation in government, that the customary chiefs, in the period under investigation, were expected to possess the charismatic comportment that corresponds with the norms of the Okpe society. The poet expresses a disappointment that a lady customary chief undertook a wrong practice and equally deceived a fellow woman to follow the same paths. He/she (the poet) presents the poem as expressions of disappointment from the deceived that is poetically represented in the song as the narrator.

In song 62 lines 4 to 6, earlier cited, the poet creates another motile imagery, saying visitors no longer met the subject at home, because he/she joined other business men and women who hastened to the scene where the military boat arrived. This imagery stimulates the audience's imagination to picture the boat that did set off some where, travelling some distance to arrive the scene he/she describes. The audience imagination goes further to picture the subject who likewise moved from home to the scene as well as his/her visitors who came several times to meet, but his/her absence.

6.5 Figures of speech:

Figures of speech refer to expressions that are made to describe persons and objects in manners that present connotative and suggestive meanings. The words used in these sorts of expression are often not direct, but they imply viable

information that could be deduced from them. Igoru musicians have used such figures of speech with great effects, to represent one thing as if it were another, and create greater stimulus to imagination amongst audience than use of common expressions would ordinarily do. These figures of speech have always been illuminating, though they are very crisp and short. They are expressed in brevity to prompt the audience to think beyond what is presented before them and derive all intended meanings from the short available framework. Often, they are used to create pictures in the minds of the audience in figurative styles that may be comparative or descriptive. They could appear in forms of understatement or overstatement, in order to heighten emotional excitement, contemplation and comfort. Heart-breaking information may then be presented in such ways that they appear mild, while trivial issues may be expressed in manners that make them look very serious. These figures of expression are discussed below under the following headings.

6. 5. 1 Simile:

Simile is a figure that likens one thing to the other in order to create certain effects. Tanure Ojaide (2001: 20) writes on rhetoric, allusion and simile figuration in *Udje* songs as follows:

There is a rhetorical piling up of comparisons in many songs. An example is “Echa Ekrabe” [unitalicized in original]. This is to effect a reinforcement of attributes. The subject of abuse is either linked to or directly described as something. The songs have many allusions to the fauna and flora of the Niger Delta area. There are comparisons to different types of birds, animals, and plants. The goat,

arthog, fowl, hawk, cat, mouse, leopard, lion, snake, tortoise, vulture, horse, monkey, gorilla, chimpanzee, parrot, iroko, and akpobrisi tree feature in the metaphoric milieu of udje dance songs (p 20)...Since udje dance songs are performed, the performance consideration affects their composition. The liveliness of the songs is reflected in the use of many rhetorical questions...The rhetorical questions establish a connection between the performing group and the audience.

Igoru musicians make use of simile, drawing images from the natural resources in the environment to describe their subjects in a number of cases. Egbikume Azano, the composer of song 16 uses simile in lines 19 and 20 (page A1 – 29) where in the narrative he remarks that the life of Takpevwiere is like that of the kingfisher (a kind of bird). He made an analogy that the subject was as helpless as the kingfisher that lost all its properties in the deep of the river and could only fly to perch on the root of mangrove observing the loss and could not dive into the water to redeem the perishing properties. In song 19 lines 1 and 2 (page A1 – 33), the poet uses simile to describe the scars on a victim's hands as the mermaid's lamp. The verse is indeed made up of two figures, simile and metaphor. In the former, the poet says Abada's hands give light like the mermaid's lamp, while in the latter he/she says that anyone who wishes to go out when it is dark should send for the victim and her hands would provide light for movement. We have discussed details of this earlier; our only concern here is figures used in the description.

The expression '*na bara*' in line 1 has dual meaning. The verb '*ebare*' from which the above phrase is derived can mean change in colour of fruits from green to yellow when it becomes ripe, or change of the human skin from dark to red or milk colour as a result of wounds. It can also mean lighting up in flames, of fire or

as in lamps. The first line of the poem in this context suggests the condition of the victim's hands now having scars after being burnt. This is quite literal as the Igoru performer (not the poet) explained that the victim in the early 1940s went to the salon to style her hair at the time hair driers came in vogue, and electricity fault resulted to flames that burnt her hands and left the scars. Latter lines however suggest that the poet intends to describe the cicatrices on the victim's hands as lamp light, thus using the figure of simile to liken it to the mermaid's lamp. The poet implies that African ladies need to be content with their natural hair and such African styles of plating and weaving, because they remain beautiful in their Africanness and do not need to attempt to transform their hairs to look like those of the white.

In song 27 line three (page A1 – 41), the poet uses another simile that the *Ukiri* (drum) of Mereje sounds at the outskirts like the guitar. This simply means that the Igoru musical instrument called *ukiri*, in performances, sounds very appreciable. The composer in the first verse of song 34 (page A1 – 56) uses a group of positive and negative simile to describe his subject. The phrases 'you are not like' is a negative case while 'you are like' is a positive case simile. The poet says his subject is neither like the world nor like the heaven, but like a carved image presented as sacrifice at a three-path junction. This suggests that the subject is neither beautiful nor ugly, but subsequent cluster of words used by the poet, imply that the subject was not attractive. Songs 34 and 35 are versions of the same song as performed by two different Igoru ensembles. While the first performing group employs the word such as 'the world and the heaven' the second uses 'bird and animal' to draw the figure of comparison.

6. 5. 2 Metaphor:

Metaphor is a figure of speech used to describe something as if it were indeed another. That is one thing is referred to by another name or is given an image which it is not in practical term. Keith Swanwick (1999: 9) re-invents the following argument:

Initially all metaphor contains an element of novelty arising from potentially dissonant relationships, though we can easily come to overlook such anomalies. For instance, when we say 'the wind is biting' we do not usually intend to suggest that the air has sharp teeth or a strong muscular jaw. What we are trying to do is to find a way of describing the distinctively painful kind of gripping coldness that we are experiencing... In ordinary conversation we may... speak of the 'legs' of a table, 'attacking' an argument or 'grasping an idea without any consciousness of the metaphorical history of these expressions (Mac Cormac c. 1985) p 10. A set of new relationships is created out of images we already thought we knew. The effect of bringing together different entities at the same time... (Koestler 1964). He does not use the term metaphor but calls the process *bisociation* and finds it at work humour, the sciences and the arts (p 11).

In traditional Okpe society, metaphor and some other figurative expressions indeed have become commonplace that we may not know their origin. But the association of words that describes incidents, persons and objects in extraordinary ways is still clearly understood as figurative. The composer of song 6, between lines 78 and 82 (page A1 – 11), uses a series of simile and concludes the harmony of descriptions with a metaphor. The poet maintains a sequence of counterpoint between the use of these simile and metaphor in the poem-song. He/she describes the subject's head like heaven's transverse piece of calabash and describes the length of his/her hands and legs as those of a dwarf.

Then he/she describes the subject further as one having sunk buttocks, suggesting that the shape of the buttocks protrudes heavily, leaving a deep spot of depression on the central upper part of it. In between the sequence of simile, the poet introduces metaphor to suggest that the subject was short enough to be considered a dwarf. The poet further describes the depression on the buttocks by use of technical metaphor that it had turned to a public pond that could contain water instead of calling it a pond at once. In the Okpe nation, species of dwarf are uncommon; we therefore understand these figures as some kind of hyperbole (exaggeration), though one of the Igoru musicians confirmed that the subject was actually very short.

In song 21 line 2 (page A1 – 34), the poet uses another metaphor to describe his subjects, saying '*eghware ogba r' ilebe ne*' meaning 'the assembly is packed full for the pigeons.' He implies that the audience had come together to listen to his Igoru performance, expecting to hear the latest news about the common subjects. Instead of a direct word for the category of people he refers to, he employed a metaphor to call them (the commercial sex workers) pigeons. The figure is not an easy one to understand, because the character of the pigeon is peaceful and diligent, except that they often sleep in cages outside the home in some few places where they may be found reared in Okpe. Deduction from the latter part of the pigeon's life style however corroborates the impression so suggested by the poet, because the Okpe often express with dismay that any grown man or lady who takes pleasure with women or men and not settle martially 'had gone out' of the standards established by the ancestors. This is often expressed as '*oro ada ne*' (he/she has gone out to the streets) or '*oro akpo ne*' (he/she has gone into the world).

In song 22 at line 3 (page A1 – 35), the composer uses a metaphor to describe his/her subjects as '*ekaragban*' meaning 'goats that suffer from dermatophytosis.' The name *akaragban* (singular) normally refers to any goat that has some kind of ringworms all over its body. While this, of course creates a sense of repulsive sight, the poet uses it to suggest that all acts of immorality are detestable in the society. To give the expression more effect, he/she uses the expression 'plagued goats' as if real goats were the true subjects he/she addresses. The composer in line 3 of song 49 (pages A1 – 84) used metaphorical expression to describe cake (*moi moi*) as meat (*aramo oyibo*). *Moi moi* is a kind of beans cake prepared with red palm oil in Nigeria, while *aramo oyibo* in Okpe may either mean 'pig' or the 'white man's meat.' This is not to say that pig is referred to as the white man's meat in Okpe. In this context, the poet simply describes the beans cake as a sort of meat, implying that the white man admires such light foods. Since the beans cake is not one of Okpe's original foods, the poet implies that it is a strange sort of food that the subject was selling in Lagos. Subsequent lines suggest that the poet wonders how much money one could make from such a business, considering the fact that the subject needed much money to pay her husband's divorce claims.

The composer of song 37 at line 24 (page A1 – 60) employs a metaphor to describe an event that took place in the past and the subsequent reaction from the subjects and concludes that the subjects are but chick that can do no harm to anyone, no matter how grieved it could be (cf. appendix I for details). In song 52 (page A1 – 87), the poet similarly uses a metaphor to describe the subjects of Igoru music as the storm that rages and threatens to cause destruction to the performers. He/she expresses that the storm rages and threatens the Jeddo Igoru ensemble members whether they could still perform music. He/she raises a

question if the Jeddo Igoru musicians were asleep amid the rage that was on. This implies that Igoru musicians were aware of the threats from their enemies and that the poet then encourages the members of the ensemble not to be afraid, but be courageous in the performances.

6. 5. 3 Metonymy:

Metonymy is a figure that uses an associated thing or name to describe or refer to another without mentioning real names directly. In songs 38 line 23 and 43 line 14 (pages A1 – 62 and 72), as well as several other songs, Igoru poets used metonymy to describe the soldiers. In the former, the poet uses the term *boma* and in the latter uses *kongo*. The origin and meaning of these two terms have been treated under conceptual analysis earlier in this chapter. In song 43 line 31, the poet uses an associated name to refer to the snake. In Okpe, instead of the direct name of the snake (*obodirin*), elders refer to it by names associated with it, particularly in the night or when one is eating. It is believed that the direct name of such a dangerous creature is not mentioned at night; otherwise one of its kinds could be invoked to come around. It may be called *ison* meaning excreta; *ojadana*, the careless thing, or *eghwobi*, crazy thing. In the tradition, any thing or being that inflicts sorrow and pains on human beings is given names such as these. In this song, the poet informs the audience that the husband of his/her subject had just passed on as a result of snake bite and shortly after the subject began to have indiscriminate affairs with other men within the community and subsequently in Lagos. He/she uses the term '*eghwobi*' to refer to the snake in this narrative.

6. 5. 4 Synecdoche:

Synecdoche is a figure that uses the name of a part of a thing to refer to its whole or the name of the whole to refer to its part as the case may be. In song 3 lines 12 and 13 (page A1 – 4), the poet proverbially uses a synecdoche to drive his/her message home. He/she says that *iti obo r'obọ 'soro, ye urhomu olele* meaning 'it is what the hand causes that the head follows.' The hand and the head are parts of the body employed to mean the entire body respectively. The poet implies that if a person (the hand) commits evil, he/she (the head) would certainly pay for it, most likely in death. The hand and the head represent the same person.

The poet of song 4 also employed the same figure of speech in line 2 of the poem. This was in reaction to the growth of Christianity in the Okpe area predominantly in the early 1990s. The poet says *Ame h' urhomu ame r' Edion more ne* meaning "We have giving our heads to *Edion* for safekeeping.' *Edion* is another name for God as already discussed in chapter three. The figurative expression, giving the head to God means that the entire people of the community have resolved to follow and trust the God of their forefathers who they believe is capable of giving them safety and protection.

Igoru musicians use the names of an area where an overhead bridge exists to refer to the bridge. It is normal for instance to refer to the bridge in Ikeja as Ikeja Bridge and to simply call it "Ikeja" would then be ambiguous. But Igoru musicians use the name of the whole area to represent the specific spot where the Bridge exists. This is not because there is no word equivalent to the English term "bridge" in Okpe. The Okpe word equivalent to it is *Agbarha* which the composer simply avoids as a technique to avoid cluster of words within line. One example of this expression is found in song 38 at line 2 (page A1 - 62) where the

composer omits the term bridge, but precedes the name Ikeja with the descriptive word *otore*. Here, the composer's intention and meaning induce the listener to cast his/her mind back to previous experience, without which, it could be difficult to comprehend the concept of the place described. This is so because the preceding word is a kind of pun that has double meaning. *Otore* can either mean 'land, under or meaning'. When the narrator says '*otore* Ikeja' it can then mean 'the land of Ikeja; the territory of Ikeja or under Ikeja'. But in the context of this Igoru song however, the composer means under Ikeja Bridge.

In song 58 line 1 (page A1 - 94), the composer uses a part of the subject's body to refer to her as a name. The name presented, Ogberaghwe means 'one with deformed legs'. The narrator says he/she saw 'the one whose legs are bent (deformed) getting lost in the streets'. The reason for this expression is that two distinguished characters are involved in the narrative, one a chief in the customary court and the other a follower. The composer simply wants to communicate to the two subjects indirectly. He/she cleverly did not use any real names, but the audience and the performers know those to whom the song is directed in the community. By the expression 'one with deformed legs,' the composer means the more reputable character that deceived the other into a vice. The act of following deceit foolishly is also suggested by the composer's use of the terms (deformed legs).

6. 5. 5 Personification:

Personification is a figure that represents an inanimate object as if it were a person. In song 15 at lines 9 – 11 (page A1 – 27), the poet uses a figure that is partially a personification saying: "These are men who spent their money to marry wives into the home". The word '*gbẹ*' in the song is a verb that literally

means to have sexual intercourse. Instead of saying the men used their money to marry women into the home, the composer expresses that they used their money to copulate the women into the home. In song 56 lines 5 and 9 (page A1 – 91), the poet uses another personification, drawing concepts from the farming experience as cited earlier. He/she says Ogophori cried out that we could refer to the year we do not farm, but there is no year that we do not eat food. The expression in lines 9 and 10 adds that Ogophori continually shook its head (signifying regrets). We have discussed *ogophori* as a low land that has a high level of flood risks, by which process crops planted in it could be destroyed.

In song 3 lines 8 – 11 (page A1 – 4), the narrator describes death as if it were a terrific human being. He/she says ‘Death that people see and run away, you seek it with your own hands, and when death comes, to whom would you cry for help?’ Death is believed to be an invisible spirit-being nobody can see. It does not approach or come in a physical manner like a fearsome human being from whom one can flee or cry for help. The expression above which represents death like a person therefore is regarded as personification. The narrator of song 5 figuratively at line 3 personifies the streets, saying it is only the streets that can stop a child from coming or going out. Parents and guardians normally do not feel comfortable when their children and wards go out to stay with their peers for almost the whole day, avoiding all jobs or profitable assignments they can do to help their parents and guardians or themselves at home or in the farms, shops, etc, as may be directed.

Parents get worried about the kind of friends they might meet outside and what kind of influences they might impact on their children and wards. For this cause they would often want to stop or restrain their children and wards from going out

frequently of for most parts of the day. But for stubborn children, no matter the efforts parents and guardians would make, only the troubles they subsequently encounter outside could often limit their desire to go out and mix with terrible peers. This normal experience of life in human society is inferred by the composer of this song. The streets here personified represent the troubles that may confront a child who would always leave home to spend most of his/her time with peers outside daily. The composer implies that no matter how much they perform to condemn the ill practices of some members of the society, and no matter how much counsel they give to them, the stubborn ones might not stop until they face the painful consequences of their deeds according to natural law of retribution.

Song 31 lines 36-37 (page A1 – 48) personify the cat like human. The Okpe believe that human beings decide their destiny with the creator before they are born, and live according to such destiny. This is not known to be a feature amongst animals. But the composer's expression "The destiny of the cat never came to life with it" suggests personification. It implies however that the subject has poor destiny to live an unprogressive and unprofitable life. The narrator in song 40 line 2 (page A1 – 67) personifies the sex trade. He/she says "A marketable public pond arrived" and the commerce oriented people ran to the scene. The narrator of song 65 at line 14 (page A1 – 11) personifies the heaven, expressing that "Heaven took him from us and killed him". While heaven here suggests death, it and both are abstract nouns; the effect it creates in the song is that of personification that is capable of stimulating imagination amongst the audience.

Song 26 line 6 (page A1 – 40) personifies water, expressing that “Water would soon swallow you” as if water has mouth to swallow. This personification, as we argued earlier, is so age-old that it has become a commonplace expression. It hardly now can be seen as personification, because it has become an everyday language in the society. Although there seem to be no other way swallowing by water can be expressed in Okpe language than this, and therefore the expression in all circumstances would then be seem as formal, in this very context, it functions as personification.

6. 5. 6 Paradox:

Paradox is a figure that expresses ideas in a manner that seems contradictory or absurd and requiring careful listening to comprehend its appropriateness. Song 3 line 2 makes use of such an expression as follows: *Otu erieda irha 'obọ ghwo liẹ*, the witches and wizards sought him/her with their hands, as if by grope action. There is a common conception among the Okpe that witches and wizards meet normally at the witchery grove by night. Normally too, if one searches a thing at night, he/she would likely grope with his/her hand in the dark. The poet employs this expression however as is commonly used in Okpe to imply and suggest that one unjustly troubling a peaceful man. It is believed that if one seeks to destroy someone who is peaceful, the ancestral deities would avenge and the culprit would be incurring the anger of God to his/her own doom. The poet, on a general note, was commenting on the various attempts made by some Okpe to dethrone the despot king whose tyrannical acts were discussed in chapter three.

The seeming contradiction was that the king who gave orders and issued death sentences on his subjects was still considered to be a peaceful man by the Igoru composer. The poet intends that a king in the perception of the Okpe is a ruler

who represents God, the deities and the ancestors. He mediates between them and his subjects, and therefore needs to be well revered and honoured in high esteem. This implies that attempting to fight with the king is like attempting to fight God and the ancestral spirits of the land, a battle one could never win. Our deduction from this figurative expression is that even if royal fathers punish the people they lead, it is believed it could be for the reason of their own transgressions against the ancestral spirits; thus the composer condemns the attempts made against the king and tried to exonerate himself.

In song 5 lines 59-62 (page A1 – 6), the composer presents an expression paradoxically. He/she says “O God, we do not kill people unjustly. Whether it’s Oriomerhan who killed my son, I do not know”. The expression literally means that the protagonist only suspects the person she names to be responsible for the death of her son. But the following lines prove that the expression is affirmative and not just speculative. It had been concluded that the subject was actually responsible for the death of the child. What the expression then means is that the protagonist does not have the right and power to execute the suspect, but implies that judgement and vengeance belong to God Almighty.

Song 60 (page A1 – 99) presents ideas in the figure of a paradox; ideas that seem to be contradictory to the conceptual context of Igoru music. The poet expresses that the subject went on in commercial sex practice, actually seeking for contemporary young men of her age grade. Then a man came from Warri who gave the subject money, soliciting for her companionship. The poet expresses further that the subject refused the offer, and describes the refusal to be the result of a destiny to poverty. Igoru music had criticised young women who follow men for the purpose of making money from them, and not for

legitimate marriages. There is little wonder why this Igoru musician should criticise this subject who had refused to follow a man that offered money to win her love cheaply. In Okpe, a man who had lost their wives at old age usually seeks to engage another woman who might also be a widow or a divorcee to have companionship with him, either as a wife or concubine, to help look after the welfare of his home. The theme presented by the poet then suggests that the man who came from Warri was an old man and the subject a very young lady. The poet seems to be defending an old tradition while the subject was reasoning along contemporary realities that such companionships would not depend on money only, but also on emotional satisfaction.

6. 5. 7 Antithesis and pun:

Antithesis is a figure of speech where two contrasting ideas are set together in a line of verse or line of thought. In song 44 lines 19 and 20 (page A1 – 72) the poet uses antithesis to address his/her subjects, saying ‘night is already fallen over you and it’s again dawn before you.’ The poet precedes this expression with a proverbial saying ‘if night doesn’t fall against a greedy person, rain would drench him/her in the farm’. The proverb is not antithetical, but it provides the audience a background to the understanding of the antithesis that follows. We have discussed this earlier. Pun is a figure that is used to express double meaning at the same time and in song 47 at line 2 (page A1 – 82) we find an expression of this kind, ‘the children yawn freely’. This expression would normally mean that the children are privileged somewhat and therefore live a free life unquestionably. The second meaning suggests that the children undertake certain practices without caution. In this context, the poet implies that the subjects lead an incautious life, because they have found a ready excuse to give should they fail and have serious problems in life. This means that since the

Okpe believe that evil forces exist and can cause failures for human beings on earth, some people no longer take simple and necessary precaution that they ought to take in like or seek to apply wisdom in their living. If in the cause of time a mischief happens, even as a result of the practices they indulged in, they would then blame it on the evil forces (the ready suspects). The five-line verse therefore contains hidden counsel that one should take necessary precautions and not practice those things that can naturally result to failure, pain and sorrow in life, taking for granted that the evil forces are always there to blame. It implies that this assumption would not profit the victim (accuser) either.

In song 59 (page A1 – 96), the poet uses the word '*oghwara*' as a pun. The term literally means 'castrated male.' But in the context of its use here, the poet employs it to refer to both the impotent male and the barren female. The poet further employs and develops the theme to include all failures, deformations and hideous offences that affect both male and female. It is a satire that briefly narrates and describes the problems of several personalities, suggesting that everyone has one kind of weakness or the other, irrespective of his/her sex. If the weakness is not deformity, it could be sickness or socio-moral behaviour. Verse two, for instance, alludes to long mouth; verse three sex in a community hall; verse four the behaviour associated to a community; verse five leprosy; verse six prolonged menstrual flow; verse seven multiple navels; verse eight stealing; and verse nine greed.

The expression in song 84 verse 1 (page A1 – 152) is a kind of pun in the images it evokes. The poet says his/her subject should cover his/her ugliness inside a box. Ugliness is an abstract noun treated as a concrete noun by the poet, in order to stimulate very high imagination of the subject's appearance. The images

created here are both of sight and of touch, though we can imagine or behold the appearance of persons, it is not possible to feel it by the sense of touch. Covering one's appearance, of beauty or ugliness, inside a box then seems to be contrasting. In song 29 line 19 (page A1 – 43) the expression “If it were to catch a child, Orichedje would have caught one for Orogho” has some possible interpretations. The word ‘catch’ has several connotations. It could mean to catch, as in catching animal or bird by use of traps; to catch fish by use of hook, line, net or cage; and to abduct a child as in covetousness. The expression, however, implies that it is impossible to abduct a child, since it is a taboo to do so in Okpe land. It further implies that to have children does not depend on human efforts, suggesting that the subject did his best attempting all that is humanly possible, yet could have no child.

Song 39 lines 40-41 (page A1 – 62) consists a pun in the following expression “Is it the pregnancy of garri you have?” Garri is a sort of West African staple food processed from cassava. Its equivalent in the South African society is pap (maize meal). The narrator presents the expression derogatorily that the subject ate much garri that made her belly swell. This statement literally means that the public doubt is the subject was truly pregnant. But the composer simply means that something was seriously wrong with the subject's inability to put to bed without the unbearable travail she went through. Song 80 line 6 (page A1 – 148) presents an expression with the word *kako* meaning wither. The narrator says that the subject's muscles had ‘withered’ signifying that the body tissues, veins and muscles now have become dysfunctional as a result of old age. But all these suggest that the body is now too weak to undertake any active physical activity.

6. 5. 8 Pathetic fallacy and allusion:

Pathetic fallacy is a figure that creates impressions that nature objects have feelings as human beings do. The expression *Akpọ na orhie unu firhọ ne*, the world has opened its mouth, in song 1 line 5 (page A1 – 1) is a kind of pathetic fallacy employed by the poet. It describes the world as if it were a living creature that has mouth like human beings. But it does not in any case stimulate any imagination to seeing this physical world as a living being that has a mouth to open, to eat, to swallow or to speak. It is rather to be understood as signification of a free world which gives everyone opportunities to develop and make advancements. It suggests further that though every adult member of the society has a considerable amount of freedom to live his/her life the way he/she wants and make as much progress as possible, it could still be very difficult for some people to prosper, due to many factors that determine success and prosperity. In this context, the poet intends to prove a point that children must learn to be obedient to their parents and pay particular attention to the counsel they give as this goes a long way to enhance their levels of wisdom and success in life.

Another proverb, appearing in song 12 line 6 (page A1 – 23) presents a similar pathetic fallacy. The expression “Lion contests growth with the Elephant” suggests an experience of a kind of feeling and attitude possessed by human beings. The Lion is known to be very strong and powerful; the Elephant is known to be mighty, big and strong too. But in growth the Lion would not measure as much as the Elephant. This fact does not however mean that the two animals could then challenge one another like human beings would do. And if they do, the Lion would certainly not contest growth but strength. Since they are non-human, they do not possess this human character. Details about the meaning of this expression have been discussed under proverbs below. The composer of

song 41 at line 6 presents a proverb that has a kind of figurative expression. Here the composer describes the earth as an object that hears information whenever human beings die.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001: 35) defines allusion as 'something that is said or written that brings attention to a particular subject in a way that is not direct.' In other words, it is a reference to other works or fields of knowledge, in order to make a point in another context. Igoru music draws several allusions to the Christian religion. References are made to the preaching and the prayer patterns of this new religion that were all strange and contrary to the Okpe traditional beliefs. In song 82 (page A1 – 150) for instance, the poet made allusion, quoting from the Holy Bible, and saying 'the prophecy of the church has come true, that the first shall become last.' The poet uses this allusion simply to draw a closer attention to the theme of the composition and not to give the passage its religious meaning. The composer expresses an experience where a very dear and close blood relation became the persona's greatest enemy, particularly in lines of envy and oppression as he/she suggests. The persona expresses that the blood relation he/she thought was very kind, who used to welcome and honour him/her warmly, turned around to do wicked things against him/her. The poet implies that such a pretentious brother/sister must be feared. In other words, deeper understandings of relationships come with experiences that unfold day by day.

In song 6 lines 42 and 55, (page A1 – 11) the poet uses a very short allusion to traditional religious practice, suggesting that the subject of his/her narrative did not delay attempting to execute her evil plans. He/she says '*Ọriọmerhan ọrhọ bọ ze re*' meaning that Ọriọmerhan did not dawdle. In traditional Okpe society, to

'bo' means to consult the oracle and to 'ze' is to sacrifice. The process of divination and sacrificing sure takes some pretty time, but this is not what the poet suggests in this song. It is rather an expression that when an evil doer has an evil plan to carry out, he/she would not delay in going about it.

6. 5. 9 Bathos and climax:

Bathos is a figure of speech that appears to be an anti-climax where a statement suddenly moves from a lofty height to a trivial thing, while climax is the building of figurative expressions that gradually rise from low to high. In other words, for the latter, each new line increases the tone and degree of expression higher than the preceding line. In song 1 lines 7 – 12 (page A1 – 1), the poet cleverly builds the climax of the song with a rising tone and experimental illustrations that prove a theory that is true to life. We have discussed this theory elsewhere in this chapter. In song 43 verses 6 and 7, the poet employs some techniques of repetition and sequence to build up climax. In lines 49 and 50 of the song, the poet repeats the name of the subject's audience in the following line to create effects of sound in beginning the building up of the climax. He/she systematically builds further with such technical names as the shoe maker, carpenter, and blacksmith and hits the climax with the bicycle repairer to conclude the point. In the last verse he/she uses importation of English words such as 'tube, tyre and airplane' to further heighten the climax. Metaphors and simile such as 'It's a tube, tyre and fish net;' 'it's like the engine of an airplane,' function complementarily to increase the climax and bring the narrative to a close.

6. 5. 10 Hyperbole:

Hyperbole is an expression that is deliberately used to exaggerate an idea or incident in order to create some desired effects on listeners. In song 5 line 51 (page A1 – 6), the poet uses an exaggeration that lacks an effective translation in English. He/she says the subject “Arose with bulged eyes” and went home to prepare for an evil deed. Since the narration says the subject attended a meeting with evil forces over the night, seeking for enabling powers to carry out the evil plan, this figure therefore implies that the subject’s eyes, though are wide open, are evident of restlessness and tiredness. It also suggests a kind of feeling of guilt about the evil he/she is about to execute. The expression in line 65 of the same song is an attempt to exaggerate the stature of the subject. We have translated it simply as “She’s short, with a very small body,” but the meaning goes a little beyond that. The bid for the exaggeration made the composer to employ a bi-lingual approach. He/she uses Urhobo and Okpe languages together, saying *Oma ye ọkrẹkrẹ kpẹbuẹbuẹ*. *Ọkrẹkrẹ* in Urhobo and *kpẹbuẹbuẹ* in Okpe mean but the same thing, “he/she is short, as in the former and “very short” as in the latter”.

Song 6 lines 75-77 (page A1 – 11), being the same song as song 5, performed variedly by different performers, presents the above figurative expression differently. This second performer rather than say the subject is short, puts it that his/her hands and legs have equal length and finally says he/she is a dwarf. In song 5 lines 69-73, the composer goes on to exaggerate as mentioned earlier that the dwarf’s upper buttocks have a deep depression like a pool that is capable of sustaining water over time. The narrator of this song did not state the duration of the pregnancy conceived by the protagonist of the narration. But the narrator in song 6 says the protagonist carried the pregnancy for three years

before the travail for birth (delivery). The narrator though subsequently suggests that the new born baby is the only male child, perhaps the first and only child of the protagonist, the hyperbole that the woman carried the pregnancy for three years strengthens the case that the antagonist had done a most grievous evil killing such a significant child.

Song 11 lines 4-6 (page A1 – 22) present another form of hyperbole saying that parents no longer recognize their children whenever the ensemble comes out to perform. It is understood from this expression that the composer means, as soon as the Igoru ensemble comes to stage for performance, there would be a massive turn out of audience. In song 15 lines 13-14 (page A1 – 27), the composer exaggerates that the subject is so miserly that he/she could neither buy anything worth half a kobo, nor anything worth one kobo; using the least Nigerian currency coins (denomination) to describe the level of the subject's value for money. We have discussed this narrative in detail elsewhere in this chapter.

Song 17 line 13 (page A1 – 31) presents another hyperbolic figure that the subject, owing to the economic situation in Lagos began to count years like months. This expression tells much about life in the city of Lagos in Nigeria. The city was the metropolis of Nigeria before the capital moved to Abuja in 1991. Lagos is a commercial city and a lot of people make wealth there. Those in the villages then think that the moment one enters and lives in the city he/she is sure to be economically successful. But the city life is like a coin with two sides. If one is lucky to find some job or business, he/she would profit and prosper much; otherwise he/she would not even be able to pay the expensive house rents. Some dwellers or sojourners might even have to lie under the overhead bridges

for a period of time, until they are able to find their feet. Contemporary popular musicians in Lagos still reveal this structure of Lagos life in their albums.

The composer of this Igoru song therefore suggests the kind of expectations the subject had and the subsequent disappointment he/she meets in Lagos. The narrator exaggerates that the subject did put on a skirt, and carried a bundle of clothes with her (see song 34 lines 15-16; page A1 – 56). The narrator states earlier that the subject was invited to Ikoyi Lagos for a sex job. The possibility that a young lady visiting a proposed lover she would have affair with for the first time would carry a bundle or bag of clothes with her is doubtful. But this is the kind of expression the narrator uses to suggest the excitement and hopes of the subject. In song 60 at line 24 (page A1 – 101), the composer exaggerates by use of a plural case to qualify a singular object; instead of 'genital organ,' the narrator says 'my genital organs'.

Song 71 lines 49-54 (page A1 – 132) feature another form of hyperbole. The narrator here says Chief Edwin Ayomano devoted all his time to assist the Orodje of Okpe to the extent that he could no longer remember his wives and relations. The persona emphasizes that he comes to the Orodje's palace by night and departs at dawn. Any man is expected to go about his business by day and at night be with his wife or wives. The impression created by the narrator is that the Chief goes about his business by day and goes to the king by night and therefore has no time for his wives. In true situation, no Okpe Chief would allow sense of commitment to push him into any such acts of irresponsibility to his family. Even the Orodje would call such a Chief to order, if it ever happens. Part of the requirements for traditional Chiefs in Okpe land is that an intending Chief must be well established, because he/she is not expected to farm or do any odd jobs

after installation. He/she must have full-time attention for royal activities and his/her family.

Song 74 (page A1 – 140) is short and in brevity expresses that the women who were going to the market and those going to their lovers, all have abandoned their primary missions, simply to watch Igoru performance. For the latter, it would seem possible, but for those going to the market, it is unheard of, because it seems more difficult to stop going to the market or farm when the family survival depends much on it. This expression is best understood, however, that the narrator simply means Igoru music has such power of attraction that whenever people hear sounds of the performance, they would turn out enmass to watch. In song 44 line 34 (page A1 – 72) the poet exaggerates that his/her subject's body had torn through. *Ebẹrẹfi* means torn from one end through to the other, particularly in the manner of a hole borne through an object. The poet however does not employ this expression in its literal sense, but suggestively to mean that the subject had a urinary tract infection leading to urine incontinence (condition of passing urine frequently).

6. 5. 11 Euphemism and Litotes or meiosis:

Euphemism is a mild or gentle expression employed instead of a more apposite, but harsh word or statement. Litotes and meiosis are interchangeable terms used for expressions made in form of an understatement rather than the use of the direct form. In song 18 lines 2 and 3 (page A1 – 32), the poet employs a euphemism to describe an incident. He/she says '*orhoror ohoro (edele) yi e ru isara*' meaning 'she took her genital organ (great thing) and offered it as sacrifice.' This figure derives from an Okpe idiom '*oha ohoro ru isara*' meaning 'she offers her genital organ as sacrifice.' The two expressions appear to be the

same, but they mean different things in different contexts. While the latter means that the subject gives in to any man that comes her way, the latter in the context of this Igoru song implies that the subject unconsciously exposed her nudity to onlookers. Two words particularly mark out the figure of euphemism in this expression. At a repeat of the verse, the poet chose the word in bracket '*edele*' meaning 'great thing' to replace the earlier word to avoid calling the vagina by its real name. The second word that functions as euphemism is '*isara*,' (sacrifice), which also avoids the use of a direct harsh word for public nakedness.

The expression in song 39 line 22 (page A1 – 62) is euphemistic. The narrator of the song, for example, puts the expression this way: When no one had discovered that she saw body...the day for delivery soon became fulfilled. The use of this expression is quite customary to the Okpe culture to speak of sex in such manners that do not mention the very act directly, but speak about them in some kind of understatement. All ethics concerning sexual activities and marriage are seen as sanctity in the culture, thus these kinds of understatements are formal. The Okpe would normally use terms like *oma emere* (seeing body); *omerhen* (sleeping) or *ughen* (a more advanced term) that refers to the sleeping together between husband and wife, without mentioning the act sexual intercourse directly. In all the above expressions the poet means that the partners involved had seen one another's nakedness (having had copulation together).

Song 14 line 3 (page A1 – 25) presents litotes. The narrator sends a message through some travellers to the Northern Nigeria (Hausa land), requesting them to 'congratulate' the subject who killed a relation before going to the North on a kind of self exile. The expression "Tell her, we congratulate you" is merely an

understatement, the meaning of which is but a curse. Lines 5-8 of the song suggest very clearly that the narrator feels bitter about the evil act. The narrator of song 44 at line 4 (page A1 – 72) presents another litotes which the Okpe normally use as an alternative to a direct statement that refers to sad events. Instead of the expression “Do you know what happened to her”, the narrator rather says “Do you know what touched her body?” The expression implies an event that most often could affect one’s emotions strongly. It can as well refer to what happens to one’s flesh, but in a broader sense it is more encompassing, since what happens to one’s life or his/her flesh would certainly have effects on his/her emotions.

In songs 5 and 6 (pages A1 – 6 and 11), the poets make use of litotes and meiosis in lines 34 – 35 and 39 – 40 respectively. In the former, the poet expresses that the witch remarked that the child she intended to kill would not get to perform Igoru music, but she would sacrifice him during the coming feast. The narrator of the first chose the understatement ‘sacrifice’ instead of using the word ‘kill.’ But the poet of the latter expresses the same concept by use of another form of understatement that the witch said she would use the child to eat *akara* (beans cake). To sacrifice any animal requires that it would be slaughtered; and to eat any sort of food with meat implies that the meat would have been slaughtered as well. In each of the above understatements, the point is made that the witch simply meant she would kill the child, though avoided the use of the direct word.

6. 5. 12 Innuendo, oxymoron and irony:

Innuendo is a figure used to address a person or thing that is not openly or directly stated. Irony, on the other hand, is an expression that means the direct

opposite of what is said, while oxymoron is the use of two contradictory words in an expression. In song 4 line 3 and 4 (page A1 – 5), the poet uses an ironical figure to suggest that the Christian proselytes were indulging in strange practices. He/she expresses this by saying that on the market day (*Edebi*) preceding the traditional worship day (*Edeghwo*), they (the worshippers of *Edion*) would go through the streets of the town preaching. In Okpe society, priests and followers of traditional religion do not preach to win new converts. It is believed that God knows how to get the people to follow him.

In real practical cases, deities can coerce children of their subjects to follow and worship them after the manner of their fore fathers. If a child refuses to follow and worship the God of his/her fathers, he/she could be afflicted with temporal insanity or refractory ailment. In several cases of insanity, the affected would be normal during the dry season, but become insane at every coming rainy season. This kind of condition that often resists various attempts of cure, and creates fear of future recrudescence and shame brings subjects to follow the God of their fathers in Okpe. The poet therefore implies that if the Christians are certain that their God is that powerful, they need not preach through the streets to win converts.

The poet of song 5 also uses irony in line 48 of the narrative (cf. page A1 – 6). He/she tells the story of a witch who sought to kill the only son of her friend and relation. The witches prepared a medicine for her and instructed her to put it into her mouth at the time she would visit the friend in pretext to congratulate her and to name the baby. Then she would name the child 'Akpoyovihine' meaning he has prospered already. But at this declaration, the opposite result was expected. That is the child was expected to die and not live or prosper. The narrative went

on, of course, to state that as soon as the witch named the baby after the manner prescribed by the evil forces, the child gave up on its mother's laps where it fed with water. The poet employs this ironical figure to express the pretentious attitude that wicked people normally put up as well-wishers in disguise.

Two versions of this poem appear in appendix I. It is the same song, but performed variously by two different Igoru performers in two different locations. The second performer developed the theme more than the first. The first five lines of the first version is a normal opening theme that Igoru musicians perform before beginning the real songs of the repertoire. The second performer did not start the same way, thus omitted the formal five-line opening theme. In spite of this, the first version records 80 lines, but without the first five lines would become 75 lines; whereas, the second, even without the formal five lines has the length of 84 lines. This indicates that it provides more information, one of which is the point expressed in lines 17 and 18 that the woman described as the witch was a close relation and friend to the other woman she killed her son. This detailed account was necessary to this poet, because it enables the listeners understand the level of pretence expressed by the above irony.

The composer of song 32 at line 33 (page A1 – 52) employs an oxymoron, the use of two contrasting ideas to describe an object/subject. The narrator says the subject became old at very young age. The contrasting ideas put together “young-old” do not actually describe an advanced old age. It merely suggests that incidentally the subject who is seen here as a young lady, possesses a certain feature associated with old age (that is she had lost some of her teeth). But beyond this meaning, the poet communicates an innuendo directed to a people not directly mentioned.

6. 6 Oral poetic form:

Oral poetic forms, in this context, refer to the various forms of narration in Igoru music; the forms of poetic-song composition and presentation, with reference to the sort of accounts the songs record, and transmit. As opposed to structural forms, these forms are about the length of the songs and the various images they employ in the art of communication. This concerns the manner of presentation as well as the kinds of characters and themes that the songs address.

6. 6. 1 Allegory and parable:

Mary Barber (1970: M36) writes that an allegory is “A description or story which has a second and deeper significance below the surface. The characters are really personifications, usually representing some vice or virtue”. In song 25 lines 8 to 14 (page A1 – 39), the poet makes use of a parable that they filled a sack with sand and the sack stood up erect to insult them later on. He/she says they would pour the sand out of the sack so that it falls down and rot. The Igoru performer (not the poet) interprets that the Okpe gave the Itsekiri land to inhabit and they became the people that were contending the ownership of the land with them as well as laughing them to scorn that they had a long interregnum. The expression that they would pour out the sand from the sack implies a warning that the scorners would be sent packing from the Okpe land if they continued to contend the ownership of the land. Another performer of the same song intimates that it refers to the Uvwie (Effurun) people as well.

In song 77 lines 7 to 12 (page A1 – 143), the poet quotes a parable from the Urhobo language and concludes it in Okpe language, saying: “We brought house help to look after a child. If the child dies, house help then leaves. Soldiers departed, and Arire still continues in sex trade”, The house help employed to look

after the baby in [University of Pretoria's Department of Oral \(2006\)](#) who the narrator suggests is a commercial sex worker. The death of the child signifies the return of the soldiers to the barracks after the Wars; while the departure of the house help suggests the implications that the subject should have stopped the commercial sex business afterwards. We have discussed earlier how the soldiers contributed or influenced the commercial sex business. They were real stake holders in the business and Igoru musicians generally had thought that their withdrawal to the barracks would mark the end of commercial sex trade, but to their greatest surprise it did not, at that time put an end. This is exactly the disappointment the composer expresses in the above parable. But apart from being an expression of disappointment, it provides advisory information to the subject, that she better realize it was time to stop the business.

6. 6. 2. Epic and biographical praise:

Mary Barber (1970: M36) defines epic as a very long narrative poem, usually consisting splendid deeds of some heroes of history or legend and often relate to warfare. Laura Arntson (1998: 488 and 489) writes:

Praise songs most often compliment an individual (or individuals) present at a performance; yet the vehicle for praise, and advice or challenges offered in the guise of praise, take the form of a song in praise of a historical or mythical person from past. Praise singing offers more than mere praise: it invokes the heritage of Manden and its lineages; in addition, it publicly musters social roles and expectations related to this heritage, and to contemporary contexts (p 488)...The texts of praise words include proverbs or references to proverbs; a brief narration or description of the current situation; commentary, advice or criticism; bits of text, drawn from a much longer narrative, to which the praise song alludes at that moment (p 489).

The poet of song 29 (page A1 – 43) narrates the biography of a couple. He/she tells the audience that Orichedje (male) hails from Okwukpokpogri and Ɔrogħo (female) is from Egborode, both of Mereje area. The two became legally married and for several years had no children. The poet tells the audience how much the

man felt concerned for the patience and love of his wife to the point that he would have been prepared to buy at least a child for the family in order to keep his wife comforted, if it were possible. In traditional Okpe society, as in other cultures, women are normally more worried about having children than men and often, other members of the community could easily persuade them to try elsewhere. This is often expressed as “trying one’s leg elsewhere” meaning that she should break off from the relationship to marry another man; perhaps she could have her children this way.

In this biography, the poet suggests that the woman’s husband was aware of all the possibilities of his wife breaking the marriage, leaving him alone, particularly if he were much older. But as she remained with him even in the face of emotional pains and distress that normally grip a barren couple, she had to be rewarded. A thought about the Okpe culture that gives the right of inheritance to one’s children at his death made the man become more worried that his inheritance would then fall to his relations since they had no child. In other words, if they had children together and their children inherit his properties, through the children the wife partakes, because she would direct her children and the properties together.

The poet mentions the villages where these partners come from for two reasons. The first is to prove the truth of his/her narrative and the second to suggest that women from the Egborode community are worth seeking for lasting marriage relationships. Prior the advent of Christianity in Okpe land, men used to conduct enquiries about the family and community where they or their sons intend to marry before getting involved in it. Elders in Okpe those days, even till date, particularly those who follow after the manner of their forefathers and their God,

normally have signs that informed them of their death before it occurs. The poet then suggests that the man had signs of his death, and assembled his family to lay down his will orally before his death occurs. He told the family members that his wife had suffered much with him and directed that all his debts (accruing from the *egbedi* loans he gave out) be given to his wife as inheritance.

Egbedi is a large container constructed of wood for storage of palm oil those days, prior to the advent of metal drums which now serve the purpose today. Great business tycoons who traded on oil palm products normally gave loans to the farmers who paid back in measures of the product. The poet therefore implies that the man gave out loans worth several (*egbedi*) large containers of palm oil in the period. About three days after presenting the will, the poet went on, the man died and according to the Okpe tradition, the wife was assigned to one of his relations in marriage. The wife objected and maintained that she could no longer marry another man after the death of her beloved husband. The poet concludes suggestively that the high moral discipline that marks the woman's attribute was well commended in the community, thus the Igoru musicians blessed her.

Song 70 (page A1 – 126) is a chronological biography of Oromo I and Julius his brother. The poet states the title of the song as '*Otu re gba re, Joro Orodje, Assembly, Song of the King*' and in lines 1 to 9 presents an opening speech that the *Egboto Isinio* ensemble did come to the studio to perform Igoru music in praise of Julius. The poem however expresses the mutual relationship that existed between the two brothers. In verse two, the narrator informs the audience that Julius and the king are brothers who lived in sweet harmony. The term '*imizu rephan*' means brothers or sisters of the same mother, who may or may not be of

the same father. In this context, the biological relationship between the King and Julius was that of same mother but not same father.

In Okpe several people, particularly women hold the view that half brothers or sisters who are of the same mother but not of the same father are of closer blood relation than those of same father and not same mother. Better understanding and mutual relationship is therefore expected from children of same mother than those of same father. Since sometimes brothers could still be envious of one another and seek for one another's failure in life, irrespective of birth relationship, the narrator then commends the subjects of the song for conducting themselves well as blood brothers. He/she says that Julius wished his brother Dimingo Mojale Ejinyerien well, thus he called an assembly of Okpe elders together and announced his aspiration to become king.

The elders accepted the presentation and Julius travelled to Lagos, then capital of Nigeria, taking the report to Okpe Union and the then Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, who also accepted the recommendation from the Okpe elders. Julius returned to Okpe land bringing reports to the elders that the Okpe Union and Gen. Gowon accepted the candidature of D. M. Ejinyerien; then the elders blessed Julius for taking all the trouble and going the whole hog to ensure that his brother was crowned king. The poet implies that such a good relationship between half brothers, existing without envy or hate was something to commend. He/she finally announces the blessings declared upon the two brothers that from everlasting to everlasting, criticism could not ruin them. The term criticism here implies that when people are into mutual relationships, some envious persons around them almost always want to interfere to see how they can break the tie through gossips. The poet implies that no one could put asunder between the two brothers.

Song 71 (page A1 – 132) is another biographical praise centred on Chief Edwin Ayomano and the king, Orhoro I. The speech introducing the song says that Edwin was very humble and dedicated to the king. The second verse, though shorter says ‘We raised alarm that Nigeria’s money has got to our hands; it’s joyful, for precious things would soon come to our hands.’ This statement is not directly related to the theme of the song. But it suggests that wealth played a great role in the relationship between the two subjects.

In verse three where the narrative actually began, the narrator informs the audience that Edwin lived in Urhiapele [Sapele] and of course all Okpe readers would understand that the king’s palace is in Orerokpe which is quite some distance apart. The poet means that Edwin was able work effectively with the king, frequenting the distance as often as required and necessitated by demands and responsibilities, because he was a rich man. It follows that the availability of money among the rich, and its proper channelling as Chief Edwin Ayomano had done would give rise to more development in Okpe. The narrator states that Edwin was always in the company of the king in the palace to assist him draw up plans for the development of the land. The poet concludes by wishing the principal subject, Edwin, more progress and prosperity in his own life. This was expressed proverbially that ‘the mouth (person) who seeks what is good, would certainly find goodness.’

Song 31 (page A1 – 48) is a chronological narrative that gives a biographical data of a subject. The narrator intimates that the subject did something that peeved the Igoru musicians, hence the narrative to expose him/her. The narrator states they had not forgotten the origin of the protagonist’s migration to Okpe land. He/she traces the history, how the father came as a slave to one Ogiso of

Okwabude and how unfaithful he was as servant who impregnated the master's wife and paid the price by execution. He/she adds that no one also knows how the mother of the subject came to Okpe, suggesting that she might have come with her husband as a slave too. The narrator stressed that the coming of the white missionaries and colonial rule in the area then, which abolished slave trade thereby freeing the slaves, had made the protagonist forget his/her history or origin, which to the African (particularly the Okpe) is very important to the question of identity and sense of belonging.

6. 6. 3 Elegy, ode and monody:

Mary Barber (1970: M36 and 37) writes that an elegy is a lyric poem of lamentation for the dead. Ode is equally a poem of lamentation, while monody is an ode sung by a single voice to mourn the dead. Song 64 is an elegy for Ikiki Eyenruja of Onyeke who was the leader of the Igoru ensemble that existed in the community during his life time around the 1920s and 1940s. The poet says the subject lay dead and Isodje his brother began to weep, and he called him, but the deceased could no longer hear his voice. He/she expresses that 'heaven is too deep' otherwise Ikiki was a man who deserved not to die. The narrator expresses further that Ikiki departed and left them, the Igoru performances behind and hit the climax with a rhetoric question 'what can we do?'

The poet's expressions suggest that the subject was a very nice fellow among them, both in the Igoru ensemble and in the community. They wished he lived longer, but death struck and they became helpless. The expression that 'heaven is too deep' implies that death and the home of the dead are too mysterious to contend with. The poet implies that though the Okpe believe that the dead live around us and see the living; and can do anything for and to the living, the living

cannot see nor do anything to bring them back to life once death has taken them away. In other words, the poet means exactly that if the dead, for instance, are grieved by the evil deeds of close relations, they can cause the culprit's immediate death so that he/she comes over to join them in the great beyond. But the living, if they desire that worthy fellows should not depart the earth so soon, cannot do anything to resurrect them.

Song 68 (page A1 – 118) is an elegy for the king, Ezezi II who reigned from 1945 to 1972. The song begins with an opening speech, where the narrator expresses that the Orodje (king) served Okpe very well, thus his death was equally very painful to the people. The narrator assumes the position of representation where he/she expresses the lamentation on behalf of the ensemble and the entire Okpe people. The first verse of the main song (verse three of the entire poem) expresses that there was no amount of lamentation that could be enough to evince the depth of grief the king's death caused the Okpe. The interjection inserted by a voice in spoken language, saying 'he is not dead, he is still living' implies that the king's works would certainly be remembered after him. The following verse is an expression in a thermal imagery created from a climatic experience. The narrator says 'these issues on ground are real hamattan that has lasted three months, oh, when will it end?'

In traditional Okpe society when someone so dear to one's heart dies, particularly in a sudden manner, the grief is expressed as something very cold. The affected persons (close associates) would normally say '*uhu na ọkpa eririn*' meaning 'this death caused much cold.' The poet implies therefore that the death of the king had caused the sorrow that would last a very long time in the land. The expression goes further that he would ever be remembered, because in all

the occasions and places where he used to be found, he would no longer be there. The poet alludes to the Okpe assembly and council meetings; the visit of the Oba of Benin and other dignitaries to the palace, as well as visits to the homes of his close associates where he used to be found. All these point to the fact that there were many events that could remind the people of the king's death for long. These expressions reinforce the earlier rhetoric question; 'for how long can we mourn the king?'

The poet concludes the elegy with a counsel to the chief mourner of the king, Chief Biokoro, the *Unu* (often misrepresented as *Qota*, spokesman) of Okpe. This is not to say that the Okpe do not recognize the position of the king's wife as the first lady of the land, but the poet in this context represents Okpe and of a necessity addresses the second in command in the traditional institution. He/she counsels that death is not a taboo, but a necessary end; therefore the spokesman should mourn awhile and comport himself to carry on the leadership responsibilities that now befall him, pending the election and installation of a new king.

6. 6. 4 Fable and memoir:

Fable is a very brief story designed to teach some moral lessons. The characters of the story are often animals, birds, or insects, which converse like human beings. Song 23 (page A1 – 36) is a fable directed to the Itsekiri as discussed under innuendo in this chapter. Our concern about it here as a fable is to examine how the poet employs nature object and supernatural beings to display human attitudes, engaging in some conversation and developing some kind of relationships as if they were real human. The poet represents the Itsekiri with specie of mangrove tree called *havbaren* and represents the Okpe with the

supernatural being, Oloku (Merman). The fable contains some lessons for, not only the Itsekiri, but the whole audience, that if a kind fellow or group of people accommodates one; one should not seek to rob the benefactor. Another fable is found in song 25 (page A1 – 39) where the narrator uses personification to describe nature object such as sand inside a sack like a human being. He/she says they filled the sack with sand and it arose, standing upright to insult them. The sack of sand conversing and insulting the men that empowered it to stand represents a people we have discussed earlier.

Memoir is a record of events of which the author has some personal experiences (Mary Barber 1970: M37). Song 16 is both a memoir and a fable, more or less; it combines these two poetic elements together. Greater part of the poem is a memoir telling a story in which the narrator seems to have had a personal experience. It takes only careful study to understand whether the poet actually narrates his personal experience or not, because the composer sets the poem with great wisdom. We find three characters involved in the narrative. The topic sentence at the beginning of the song tells us that the narrator met Takpevwiere lamenting at Ugbamugboshe, Lagos. He thereafter personalized the story as if he was Takpevwiere, the one directly involved in the case. He claimed, taking the place of the protagonist (Takpevwiere), to have had dispute with Otebele.

The narration suggests that Ufo is the wife of Otebele who had just come with pregnancy from Urhobo land. She was then probably persuaded by the narrator's enemy, to allege that he was responsible for the pregnancy. He became a victim of circumstance who spent all his earning to exonerate himself from the law suit. The story suggests further that the lady, Ufo was simply used to fabricate a lie about the pregnancy, in order to commit the victim because of the dispute he had

with his enemy earlier. The concluding part progresses to use the kingfisher (bird)

to illustrate how much pain the victim grinned and bore. He expresses that the kingfisher took all 'his' belongings into the rowboat, rowed to the middle of the river and had it capsize. The kingfisher flew and perched on the root of a mangrove (tree) to gaze at the deep, and could only shudder, shaking 'his' head helplessly. To determine the significance of the song, the narrator began the memoir and fable with an advice that might have come at the end of the song. He says to the entire Okpe that one should not be interested or involved in disputes, because they could wreck one's life.

6. 6. 5 Satire and lampoon:

Satire is a poem or prose that attacks "folly and vice" (Mary Barber 1970: M38) in the attitude and deeds of human beings in the society. Lampoon similarly is a short satire that attacks an individual. Songs 14, 17, 18 and 19 are lampoons. The first attacks someone suggested to have possibly confessed the killing of a relation before travelling on a kind of self exile. We have discussed details of this satire earlier. The second and third songs attack an unsuccessful sojourner and a drunk in Lagos respectively; while the fourth attacks one who had fire accident in the hair dressing salon. Song 22 (page A1 – 35) attacks all Okpe commercial sex workers resident in Lagos, inserting the names of individuals one after the other. Song 85 (page A1 – 156) is a lampoon that attacks a subject directly, in that it mentions real names (here substituted with a fictitious name), but gives only a figurative description leaving the audience to imagine much more than is contained in the song. The composer remarks that his/her subject earlier challenged the Igoru ensemble of his/her community to prepare and hold the broom of *Ohworho*, another typology of Okpe traditional music.

The 'broom' symbolises the music typology, because in its performances, the performers hold a small bundle of broom each, while in Igoru performance, members hold either a fan or handkerchief. The poet announces that the Onyeke (his community) Igoru ensemble had come to confront the subject for the challenge he dared to utter. He refers the subject to the performance practices of the two typologies, that male performers put on shirt when they perform Igoru, but remove it or wear only singlet when performing *Ohworho*. He therefore challenged him to remove his shirt for the contest in the performance of the latter typology. He implies that the subject's body has skin diseases and therefore look rough and repulsive, that he would be ashamed to leave his body uncovered before the public.

Song 83 (page A1 – 151) is another lampoon focused on the same subject, but expressed in idioms. The poet describes the subject as one who is wrecked in abject poverty. The first idiom expresses that the subject's poverty had begotten a grand child, while the second says if he finds anyone to cut his hair, that would be the hat he has found to wear whenever he travels. The first idiom actually builds upon the second as a kind of summary of the message intended to be communicated to the audience. The hat is one of the cheapest things to buy as part of a man's dressing in Okpe. It implies that if a man cannot buy a hat, then of course we do not expect that he would be able to buy wrapper, shirts, walking sticks and shoes or other forms of wears. The expression that his poverty now has a grand child is to suggest that he is greatly impoverished.

Songs 34 and 35 (page A1 – 56 and 58) are lampoons that attack certain individuals. They employ metaphorical descriptions using animal, bird and this physical world as well as the spiritual world to discredit the being of the assailed

subjects. The two songs are actually the same song as performed variedly by different performers. Song 42 and 43 (page A1 – 70 and 71) are also lampoons attacking an oversexed individual, describing the emotional excitement and verbal response stimulated by the act he/she had taken pleasure in. Song 49 (page A1 – 84) is a derisive lampoon directed to a subject who separated from her spouse and travelled to sojourn in Lagos. We have discussed the details of these songs elsewhere in this chapter.

Song 57 (page A1 – 93) is a very short one that attacks a subject, reminding him/her how stupid he/she had been that a friend could deceive him/her into a vice. The composer, though did not mention any specific vice, suggests it as the reason that exposed the subject to this lampoon. The suggestion is subtle, because one could think that the expression “Ukorewa has deceived you into Igoru” means the subject was deceived to perform Igoru music. The poet employs a personification in a proverbial manner, saying “It is the cup that calls itself cup” as if the cup were a human being that could identify itself. Song 63 and 76 (page A1 – 109 and 143) are other lampoons already discussed.

Song 79 (page A1 – 145) is a lampoon that attacks a specific person, employing the images of supernatural beings, the deity that inhabits a tree and the deity that inhabits the waters. The song approaches the narration of a vice very succinctly; details of which have been discussed elsewhere in this chapter. Song 38 (page A1 – 62) is a short one that attacks two individuals whose names are specifically mentioned. The poet describes the state in which he/she met the subjects under Ikeja Bridge in Lagos. The narrator’s reaction in the poetic expression suggests that the appearance of the subjects, which is a portrayal of the vice they are

involved in, is repulsive or detestable. Song 44 (page A1 – 72) though is not quite short, is one of the most serious attacks on an individual subject amongst the Igoru songs so far collected for analysis. The poet suggests in very clear terms that they counselled the subject earlier and she failed to take heed; thus the satire was necessary, particularly as the subject now suffers the consequences of the vice as implied in the song.

6.7 Thematic use and function:

Alan Merriam (1964: 210) draws a line of difference between uses and functions of music. He argues that the two terms, though have been used interchangeably in discourses, do not mean exactly the same thing:

When we speak of the uses of music, we are referring to the ways in which music is employed in human society, to the habitual practice or customary exercise of music either as a thing in itself or in conjunction with other activities. The song sung by a lover to his love is being used in a certain way, as is a sung invocation to the gods or a musical invitation to animals to come and be killed. Music is *used* in certain situations and becomes a part of them, but may or may not also have a deeper *function*. If the lover uses song to woo his love, the function of such music may be analyzed as the continuity and perpetuation of the biological group. When the supplicant uses music to approach his god, he is employing a particular mechanism in conjunction with other mechanisms such as dance, prayer, organized ritual, and ceremonial acts... "Use" then, refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action; "function" concerns the reason for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves [*italics in the original*].

Igoru music has served several functions in the Okpe society, ranging from social to moral, and religious to political. It has functioned so much in entertainment as

most members of the society were normally intrigued to watch the performances. We have discussed in chapter five how much the audience was often excited to watch the performances that even some young people take much risk in climbing a coconut tree around the performance venue just to be able to view the event properly. It has served the purpose of correction, education, counselling, enlightenment, etc.

Donald Reiman and Sharon Powers (1977: 485) re-invent Shelly's defence of poetry arguing that:

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other bond of connexion than time, place, circumstance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature.

Igoru songs, though they have historical facts connected to time, place, events, vice and effects, are not just narratives of detached facts that are functionally ephemeral. They are songs whose poetry focus on, and employ nature and metaphysical imagery, as well as wise sayings and inveterate philosophical wisdom of common experiences to the Okpe in particular and other cultures that are capable of fixing congruous ideas into the minds of listeners. Laura Arntson (1998: 503) comments on the functions of music in the society, arguing that:

Performance as entertainment can make people happy. Songs in the *tulon bolo* repertory "can make people forget about death and fighting"; ...Others will enjoy hearing the

bala and the words because it reminds them of past times and of other occasions for praise singing... Because, in part, praise singing occurs during parties, celebrations, or other events that call for entertainment, a *jeli* carries a certain immunity from blame, and can therefore criticize and advise others, all in the guise of praise.

Igoru music does not aim at providing just temporary happiness in entertainment. It does not give momentary joy that makes people forget about realities of life. It rather presents issues of the moment and provides stimulus to re-thinking about behaviours that are contrary to the norms of the society and such vice that could even be dangerous to those who indulge in them and the society. It prompts members of the society to examine and address facts about reality. Igoru music deals with frank issues of life, and there is no hiding in its practice. When the composer-performer means to criticize, he/she does so directly and when it becomes necessary to praise he/she does so frankly. We have not found in this study that Igoru music could make people forget about the reality of death, and as such take to be trivial. We have not also found criticism under the guise of praise. Maurice Djenda (1996: 18) argues as follows:

My second point concerns music as a medium for achieving a change in the state of consciousness. In our ethnic group, Mpyemö, the music has two functions: the primary function is recreative, entertaining, but a more momentous function of music is to be found in ceremonies during which one tries to reach another, enhanced state of consciousness, for example in one ceremony called *gbana*. By playing music intensively one can reach another state, such as trance. For some musicologists this is difficult to experience.

Igoru music is capable of elevating the spirit of the performers, as well as taking the audience to higher levels of consciousness about societal values. Although we argued earlier that performance inspiration force could come upon the

performer and he/she could feel like performing endlessly, it is not a practice in Igoru performance that any performers in the group are expected to be possessed and fall into trance as may be found in other traditional music typology.

6. 7. 1 Education and enlightenment:

Where one's mate dies is where he/she thinks of him/herself (Okpe proverb).

The above proverb implies that where an Igoru satire or lampoon focuses on a particular subject, is where other members of the society are enlightened and educated, as many take the opportunity to learn from the experiences so expressed before them. Igoru musicians have played significant roles in educating and enlightening the Okpe public through their musical performances. Most Igoru themes are educative either by use of direct statements or by use of idioms, epigrammatise and proverbs that are poetically structured to stimulate further reasoning and realization of meaning through deduction. The theme of the song, 'father is greater', for instance, is proverbially educative. It implies that though the world is free one, one needs to thread carefully and peacefully in it, applying the wisdom of hard work and good planning in order to be successful living in it. The real meaning of the song does not follow the literal suggestion that appears to be a logical attempt to prove a theory that 'fathers are greater than mothers' in patriarchal societies. The theory, however, stirs a debate on gender issues which is not part of this discourse.

In song 5 and 6 (page A1 – 6 and 11), the poet adjudges an incident where a subject killed the first son of her sister and friend by use of evil powers. Though

the narrator did not inform the audience how he/she knew that the subject was responsible for the sudden death of the child, the discussion in chapter three informs us that such culprits are often dealt with by the ancestral spirits and they are forced to confess their evil deeds with their own mouths, without any human pre-emption and coercion. The poet did not, in this case suggest that the subject had faced the retribution for God, but reminds him/her that even the Almighty God was certainly going to pay her for her evil. By this verdict, the poet builds up a lesson for his audience, who are to learn not to incur the wrath of God in their life time, but be careful to avoid doing evil against their neighbours.

Song 8 (page A1 – 17) provides enlightenment to the general public about the perception they had on Igoru musicians in the society. The poet, Unugbrogodo Ekure, categorically states he would educate the public that Igoru musicians are not the only category of people in the society that could be regarded as poor. He understood that the perception of the people that Igoru musicians are vagabonds arose from the fact that many Igoru musicians those days and even in his time were not rich. He educated the public that whoever could not amass wealth through his profession, whatever the profession, is poor and if poor musicians are regarded as vagabonds, then all other poor people in the society are equally vagabonds. He gave the audience food for thought, so that each person would examine him/herself whether he/she is rich or not and draw conclusions whether he/she would consider him/herself a vagabond as a result. Yaya Diallo and Mitchell Hall (1989: 94) write the following:

You do not have to perform acts of charity to benefit your society. Become yourself one less problem to your parents and neighbors, and this will be your greatest gift.” Naturally, the translation cannot reproduce the rhythms, rhymes, and plays on words of the original. The important point here is that in my culture art is allied with morality.

There is much wisdom in the above statement, yet not everyone may know that when he/she is no problem to his/her parents and neighbours he/she is already contributing much toward the development of the society. This is where the role of public enlightenment and education is very important to Igoru musicians. Song 45 provides enlightenment to the public concerning the giving of names to children. Being a direct satire to a specific person, we have replaced the name with another that gives the same meaning as the real names to enable readers comprehend the discussion. The subject's name, Ase-agerhe, literally means 'female bend,' which in the context of its use in this song means that female act stupidly. The narrator informs the audience how the subject was easily deceived and made to look really stupid in Lagos, because she could not reason properly to know that the invitation she received was not authentic. It should be noted that the Okpe do not consider their daughters stupid. In fact they believe that they take care of parents at old age more than male children.

The narrator then enlightens parents who are still procreating to always examine the names they give to their children, because the meaning of names can determine how a child lives when he/she grows. Song 47 (page A1 – 82) also provides enlightenment to the young adults in an implied manner. It says the children (youth) had lived unprofitable lives and they have come back to blame it on the evil forces. The poet intends to enlighten the young adults that they need to be careful and focused in their day to day living, in order to be successful; because the moment they succeed and prosper, they would have no need to put blames on anyone. This enlightenment is significant in the society, because very often, it is parents who suffer the blame and consequent attacks from their children and wards.

Song 60 has didactic significance, though it is a satire not directed to any specific person. The poet presents an analogy that anything made by man is replaceable if it becomes spoilt, but the things that are of nature (God's creation), particularly the human body, cannot be replaced. This analogy stimulates further reasoning amongst the audience so that each person takes caution on how to use his body in any form of work. Even farmers have a lesson to learn from this, because those who work in the farm daily, from early morning till late at evening (some till night), could fall gravely sick or pass on untimely.

6. 7. 2 Caution and counselling:

Mitchel Strumpf (1999:119 and 120) writes about the function of music in warning members of the society:

Mganda songs generally focus on relationships between men and women of the community. One popular *mganda* song, "Chidindo cha Jombo" (footprints of boots), tells of a jealous husband, suspicious of his wife, who demands to know the identity of the man who left footprints around his house. He believes this man is going about with his wife although she says the footprints were merely from a visitor searching for beer (p 119)...Songs accompanying *chimtali* are frequently directed toward a specific individual. One, for example, talks about a girl named Nasiwelo whose manfriend, the people of the community are warned, is a traitor to the state (p 120).

Igoru musicians warned and counselled their audiences against some wanton attitude and practices that could result in painful experiences. Some of the warnings and counsel are directed to individuals, communities and the entire Okpe nation. In traditional Okpe society, life experiences are shared, whether sweet or bitter, painful or joyful. Things that are capable of causing pains and grief to families and communities are therefore issues of concern to the

musicians. Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 11) re-invent the ideas of a poet as follows:

Wilfred Owen, an English poet who was killed in the First World War, wrote: 'All a poet can do today is warn.' Our second reading of R. E. G. Armattoe's poem showed us that we were faced with a warning by an African poet – a warning addressed to his fellow Africans. We realised that he was trying to awaken his own countrymen to dangers that were threatening their society. He believed that some of his countrymen were forgetting their high ideals, and his love of his country commanded him to speak uncomfortable truths to his people.

In the theme of song 3 (page A1 – 4), we find a warning from the poet to Okpe citizens. He/she expresses that some people were seeking to do evil against the royal father and certainly the ancestral spirits would avenge fearsomely. The poet therefore warns proverbially that 'it is what the hand causes that the head pays for.' The warning is clear that the penalty in doing evil against the king is death, and members ought to take precaution. The theme of song 25 (page A1 – 39) suggests another warning concerning the Itsekiri who contended the Sapele land with the Okpe in the 1940s. The poet says 'we shall pour out sand from the sack that we filled, which turned to insult us, so that it falls and rot there.' This decisive position of the poet appears to be a persuasive warning, calling on the leadership of the Okpe to order that the Itsekiri be dispossessed of all Okpe land they inhabit before they come back in warfare to contest the ownership again.

Song 26 (page A1 – 40) is also a warning to the Okpe who harbour the same people in various communities, and continue to have trade with them in the riverine areas. The poet queries 'do you associate with the Itsekiri?' and warns that 'the water would swallow' the hosts, if they do not take caution. The

implications of these warnings that manifested several years after are discussed in chapter nine. The theme of song 40 suggests that the subject and her mother were counselled concerning the paths the subject was following morally. In community life, Igoru musicians take part like any other members of the society in counselling clients and the reactions or results form bases for subsequent compositions. Other cases are where some other members give the counsel and in informal discussions inform the musicians about the outcome.

Ken Goodwin (1982: 44-45) *Understanding African Poetry: A Study of Ten Poets*, analyzes the poems of Christopher Okigbo in which counsel is offered as follows:

‘Elegy for Slit-drum’ and ‘Elegy for Alto’ are companion pieces, one in imitation of the chief African instrument, the other in imitation of the jazz orchestra (the alto saxophone). Both have Okigbo as poet (‘mythmaker’) and citizen within them... But even in ‘Elegy for Slit-drum’ the imagery is of melancholy import. ‘One tongue full of fire/one tongue full of stone’ balances enthusiasm for a new political spirit against the bleak political conservatism of the old order. The ‘panther’ of the coup has delivered only ‘a hare’ in the administration of General Aguiyi-Ironsi. The ‘elephant’ of the old order has been supplanted by the ‘mortars’ of the new military regime, which will presumably be more independent of British imperialism (Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa having been a close friend of the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson). But Okigbo is fearful of reprisals, of old scores that may yet be settled, so the motif throughout is ‘Condolences’ and he ends with advice to forget the details of the coup and be merciful.

Parents and guardians in the Okpe society normally send messages to instruct their children and wards to return home if they hear ill reports about their activities wherever they sojourn. This happens because of the concern they have for them, wanting them to prosper in their struggles and not involve in riotous

living or suffer under certain ill conditions. They believe somewhat that if they are close to them at home, they might be able to control their excesses and render some forms of assistance. In song 44 (page A1 – 72) the narrator presents a report that they counselled the subject earlier to return from Lagos and she refused. The narrator implies that if the subject had taken heed to the counsel and returned home life would have been better for him/her. He concludes that the subject continued in unhealthy practices and contacted a painful disease that had to be cured stressfully.

Song 67 (page A1 – 116) provides a warning to the Christian converts who began to transform the manifestations and characteristics of traditional worship into Christianity in new forms. The poet drives the criticism to a frantic point, arguing and recommending that a letter be sent to the missionaries in America to find out if the God they brought to Africa does possess them in similar manner in their land. He stresses the argument that whatever comes to us strangely as a new phenomenon or practice, if it over-thrills us, we need to examine it very well before taking it seriously. At the first instance the poet's criticism and caution suggests that the converts were trying to practice two religions together, implying that they had abandoned their own God, but could not leave out some of the usual practices of the traditional worship. He contends that they were leading themselves and others astray and had to warn them against such.

Song 80 (page A1 – 148) gives a counsel to the subject of the song-poem. The poet suggests that the subject was old and needed to have stopped meeting with any man. In the traditional society, when a woman loses her husband at old age, she could decide to remain in her husband's property or return to her parent's home. If she remains in her husband's residence, she continues with the

marriage bond and no man would find it easy coming around her, except the man's relations, particularly the one assigned to look after her welfare. But if she returns to her parent's home, she could then decide to have a concubinary partner if any comes around. The poet suggests that the subject was in the latter category and she was counselled to be conscious of her age and the resulting weakness in strength, but failed to take heed. The subject was found to often faint as a result of this strenuous exercise she ought to have stopped. The poet therefore implies that failure to accept counsel would always lead to painful and often shameful results and experiences.

Song 84 (page A1 – 152) is a warning to a subject who challenged an Igoru ensemble to a performance contest. The poet then suggests that one needs to examine him/herself carefully before throwing up challenges to others. According to the poet, the subject was not a handsome man, and such a challenge to prompt the opposing ensemble to compose a satire on his physical appearance in a manner that would deride him was seen to be funny. The warning provides a general provision from which others could learn quite a number of lessons. Those who are weak in physical strength, for instance, do not have to challenge those who are stronger to a fight, and those who are poor need not attempt to challenge the affluent, but hide their weaknesses in peaceful quietness.

The Onyeke Igoru ensemble in song 10 (page A1 – 21) counselled Idisi Adibo not to be worried about the criticism and accusations that were levelled against him as a musician. Members of the ensemble understood that those unkind critique and accusations were attempts to discourage the lead singer from Igoru musical performances and to defame him in the society. The ensemble, in this performance, stated that the lead singer performs music and the world calls him

a vagabond and philanderer. They had to counsel him proverbially that anybody who is destined to be great need not mind critiques and accusations, because enemies of progress are always there to bring up such inglorious issues that are capable of bringing one's downfall. The performer, Idisi Adibo, informed the researcher that this solidarity composition and public performance that offered counsel and encouragement really soothed his heart in those days of trials and he was indeed encouraged to keep up the spirit of Igoru musical performances.

6. 7. 3 Criticism and correction:

Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 10) remark that "In all countries – African, European, American, Far Eastern, alike – most poets are idealists. Their idealism makes them sensitive to the faults that they see in their own nation and quick to condemn those faults. They resent bitterly any failure to achieve the high standards that they value." Alan Waterman (1998: 483) writes on Fela Anikulapo Kuti referring to music as a socio-political weapon:

Fela's early recordings included love songs ("Lover"), risqué songs in pidgin English ("Na Poi"), and Yoruba songs based on proverbs and tales ("Alujon jon ki jon"). In the mid-1970s, Fela composed increasingly strident lyrics, attacking the excesses of foreign capitalism and Nigerian leaders. It was then that the textual content of Afro-Beat clearly separated from the mainstream of Yoruba popular music. Fela's political goals – shouted by his trademark slogan, "Music is a weapon" – led him to compose more in pidgin English, to reach a wider international audience.

Igoru musicians believe that everything that any human being does requires moderation, even if it is permissible within the ethos of the land, thus they made efforts through their compositions and performances to criticise and correct some excesses of some community members. The habit of drunkenness was criticised in song 18, page A1 – 32). In Okpe, though the locally brewed gin plays a major

role in both ritual and social activities, one is expected to drink moderately and remain conscious. To correct and build restraints into the psyche of the audience regarding excess intake of alcohol, the poet structured the poem in a repulsive description.

Deidre Hansen (1993: 55-56) examines a satirical music typology in the Southern Africa and argues that:

Xesibe *indlavini* groups had a reputation for wildness and elusiveness, and for their general disrespect for tribal elders, which was often expressed in songs of ridicule and protest. Certain xesibe headmen and sub-headmen were however, tolerated by xesibe *indlavini* groups, and it was due largely to their co-operation and basic goodwill that the district proved to be one of the most productive areas, research-wise... Even community members who were the targets for many of their songs... admitted to me (albeit grudgingly) that *indlavini* were great (*-khulu*) musicians (*abavumi*)... A broad sampling of common themes includes: financial problems, (e. g. the obligatory control of *indlavini* wages by tribal elders); difficulty in obtaining girls; problems with raising bridewealth; grievances about the abuse of power by persons in authority... Songs with these themes were aimed at deflecting changes in the behaviour of 'erring' persons, at alleviating and even removing perceived social injustices, and even crystallizing demands which might bring about such changes.

Igoru musicians were frank in their criticism, but there is no evidence that they were disrespectful to authorities. Oral accounts available to us reveal however that they turned out their critique without fear or favour, thus amongst the customary court chiefs of the 1940s to 1960s, only a few who performed well in accord with the societal ethos of justice and equity to fundamental human rights were exonerated from Igoru satire. We discussed earlier in this chapter one of

the songs composed as a satire of a lady customary chief whose activities were found falling short of the societal values as an example.

Deidre Hansen (1993: 59) writes about the critique of Christian religious activities by African musicians:

The following walking song is an example of their effective use of *-gwaba*. It is titled *Sambulal' ugogo* (Let's kill grandmother), the same words constituting the full text of the song. Major targets for ridicule and even lampooning included Roman Catholic missionaries and matriarchal elders, notably grandmothers (*omakhulu*), who were regarded by *indlavini* with contempt. A major occupation of *indlavini* was looking for girls. Within the *indlavini* groups, sexual attachments were strictly controlled by laws (*imithetbho*) which were made known to all members on joining the group... This was not being strictly observed, nor was it being enforced, since the girl friends of *indlavini* rebelled against the custom. They also rebelled against the traditional physical examination by older women – usually of grandmother status – to ascertain whether or not virginity was intact, after *imitshotsho* dance parties.

Song 4 (page A1 – 5) is a criticism of the Christians, particularly those of the Kingdom Hall Society, who go about on Sundays preaching from street to street and house to house. Rather than approach the critique in a direct manner, the poet took an indirect approach saying that they had given themselves to Ediḡ, the God of the land and would preach this through the streets the day before the traditional worship. The poet could have said they would preach on the traditional worship day, but according to Okpe tradition, it is a holy day and worshippers are not expected to go to farm nor loiter about in the streets but be present at the worship arena. This implies that preaching through the streets does not conform

to the available practice in the culture, and therefore seems absurd, thus the critique.

In song 41 line 7 the poet uses the name of a town in its correct form. As already stated in chapter two, Sapele was originally, and is still known by the indigenes, as Urhiapele, but wrongly spelt by the colonial masters who did not understand how to represent the Okpe double consonant 'rh' sound in writing. This usage in effect serves as a sort of correction for the Okpe audience, particularly the young ones who might not know the correct name of the town and its meaning.

6. 7. 4 Chronological reference:

Ruth Stone (1998: 133) writes her views and those of Dale Eickelman (1977:44) concerning chronological references in Africa, where events are mainly linked with earlier natural events:

Fundamentally, the activities of the agricultural cycle may impinge. During periods of heavy work, events are less frequent. Around harvesttime [not separated in original] in many African communities, after the work is completed, events proliferate... The latter situation becomes more tied to the calendar and less to the social activities that serve to anchor life ... Events are sometimes remembered as occurring "before the sunset (prayer)," "at dawn," or "just before the market," but they are not ordered in a more abstract chronological sequence. Events like "Almed's death," "the famine," "the day the airplanes chased us," "before the Mahzen (government) came," "the sunup," "Hammu's wedding," and when Sharef was small" are...largely unintelligible to outsiders since they can be translated only awkwardly into lineal concepts of time (Ruth Stone 1998: 133).

Our discussion does not follow the first part of the above argument, but the latter part of it. The Okpe oral tradition calls events to remembrance by referring to

other natural events that happened around the same time. Chronological references are therefore made to death, eclipse, marriage, birth, war, etc, whenever events and histories are traced in Okpe. In Igoru, there are direct and indirect chronological references. The direct ones refer to specific events that evoked certain reactions, while the indirect references refer to such events without mentioning them. The Igoru song 'Edion, save us' is an example of indirect chronological reference. The composer merely remarked that they had given themselves to the God of the land for protection and the day before the next traditional worship they would go about preaching through the streets of the town. Since preaching through the streets is not customary to the Okpe traditional religion system, one deduces the reference chronologically to the 19thc period [around 1852] and early 20thc when Christianity came to Okpe land and converts were sought through door to door preaching. Deidre Hansen (1993: 76) argues that:

In the absence of written sources, and given the potential fickleness or bias of individual informants, lyrics are thought to provide reliable insights into the doings and concerns of rural people, since these lyrics are likely to be retained only "if they express popular attitudes and opinions" (Harries 1987: 95)... To isolate lyrics as sources of "true" historical data – about opposition to domination, for example – is thus to deny both their embeddedness within the performance context and the capacity of performance itself to alter, influence between text and context... Writers like Clifford (1988) and Barber and de Moraes Farais (1989) accuse some such studies of limiting their idea of context too much to the microdynamics of performance situations and to the immediate conditions surrounding such situations, and thus of ignoring the broader socio-historical conditions within which performances are embedded (pp 76-77).

The various songs that made reference to the conception of the Okpe people about Igoru musicians are found to be indirect chronology, since they inform later generations that some years ago, musicians were generally considered to be vagabonds and lazy people. The short profiles of some Igoru musicians who composed and performed these songs and the song texts provide us with information that this conception lasted awhile for reasons we have discussed earlier in this chapter. Some of the songs that made references to the coming of the Itsekiri to sojourn in some parts of Okpe land and the subsequent contention for the land of Sapele are all chronological. They inform the younger generation that the Itsekiri are aliens in Okpe land, particularly with reference to the Sapele land case that was won by the Okpe in 1943. Igoru songs also refer to the period of the extremely long Okpe interregnum and the consequent scorning from the Itsekiri neighbours.

Other chronological references are made to the political processes and subsequent crowning of Ezezi II in 1945 and his death in 1970. The process that brought Chief Dimingo Ejinyerien to the Orodje (king) stool in 1972 was also referred to by Igoru musicians, as well as the cooperation he enjoyed among his relations and chiefs. Igoru musicians drew references to the Second World War and the Nigerian Civil War which occurred in the 1940s and 1960s respectively. They inform the audiences about the misdemeanour that came in vogue during and after the wars, as they were contrary to the Okpe ethos. In one of the songs, the poet drew reference to taxation which was introduced in Nigeria in 1927. The poet though did not mention the advent of tax payments and the people's reactions to it, the idea and memory of its dread in history is alluded as he/she remarks that the Okpe now have a king and the scorners would have to pay their tax to the Okpe king that year. Igoru music also made references to the

sojourning of several Okpe in Lagos from the 1920s to the 1950s. References were also drawn to the reactions of the public to Igoru satire in the 1950s and 1960s.

Song 37 (page A1 – 60) consists of a historical account on the period around 1917 when the Okwovu Oduado community Igoru ensemble won an Igoru music competition over the Jeddo at Warri. This history is remarkable, because the narrator remarks that Jeddo had been known to have had great masters of Igoru music. The poet expresses that ‘We have been hearing the fame of Jeddo that they own Igoru music,’ meaning that they have had the greatest masters of the music typology. It therefore meant so much to this community that at this time in history they won Igoru competition over the great masters of Jeddo community. Song 74 (page A1 – 140) is a short one collected from Jeddo, where the narrator acclaims that the Jeddo Igoru attracts great audience at all times. The narration employs a metaphor drawing allusion from the experience of nature that the cricket does not fall down quietly; it must cry and people would hear. Although this assertion seems to be self-esteem, it corroborates the acknowledgement of the Okwovu community cited above. This therefore suggests that at certain time in history, the Jeddo community was known to have produced the ‘best’ Igoru musicians in Okpe. We note in this study, however, that the Mereje and Elume Igoru musicians as well as Ughwoton, Okokporo and Ugborhen Igoru musicians were also very skilled performers.

Song 39 (page A1 – 62) is in two folds. In the eleven-verse song, the narrator performed two narratives together. The two have similar theme and therefore link one another. The narrator presents the first narrative in the first two verses and uses the third to introduce the next. The narrator’s expression, “We have finished

this narration, we are now going to sing of Nabutete” suggests the historical practice of Igoru music that Onabutete had just come in sight, arriving the scene of performance. We have discussed earlier that Igoru musicians focus on subjects who are present or absent at the performance venue and where the subjects are present, they point fingers to identify them amid the crowd. The narrator, in this performance, gives a historical account that Onabutete was pregnant for Ovbravbra’s son of Obalende Lagos and when nobody had been aware that she was pregnant, a military ship landed Apapa wharf Lagos and Onabutete ran to the scene. One soldier then proposed to have a relationship with her and she agreed.

The narrator goes on with the story and finally suggests that the ancestral spirits were angry with the adulterous practice; thus made Onabutete to experience very difficult labour at the time of delivery. In Okpe culture as stated under tactile imagery above, if a woman commits adultery before or during pregnancy, the ancestral spirits would cause her to die in labour or cause the baby to die in her womb before or during hard labour. And if she dies during delivery, she had to be buried dishonourably in the bush at the outskirts of the town. The narrator here suggests that the baby died in the womb of the subject; thus the expression “As much sex as you had that killed the baby in your womb, come to confess it”. The historical value of this narrative is that it addresses and documents an event in the life of a particular person and lays bare before younger generations that ancestral spirits react fearsomely to such vice in the Okpe culture.

6. 7. 5 Entertainment, restraint and drive:

Deidre Hansen (1993: 59) argues that xesibe *indlavini* protest songs are not intended to have any entertainment value. This is contrary to what happens in

Igoru music. Even when the songs are satirical, the composers still consider the value of entertainment very important. They ensure that the text of the songs and all other musical and extra-musical elements that are capable of stimulating a good sense of humour are contained in the songs. Listening to some of the songs could make one, even a researcher, suddenly burst into laughter at some points when the performance is in progress. This is possible because of the witty wording of the songs in manners that create some great fun, though jesting. It is indeed evident in track 22 of the attached audio CD where the researcher and some members of the audience and performing group burst into laughter at a point during the narration. Mary Barber (1970: M18) writes:

There is no short cut to the enjoyment of poetry. The only approach is an attentive reading, [and listening, mine] poem by poem, remembering always that the poet is attempting to express personal *feeling* through a pattern of words, in which their order, their associations, and their verbal music are all of the utmost significance...the artist's task is to translate the inarticulate cry into significant images, patterns and forms which convey their import with precision and beauty...We must remember first and foremost that poet normally uses words not literally, but with a figurative meaning. He loves to speak of one thing as if it were another.

Igoru musicians use several figures of speech, imagery and sound effects as discussed earlier in this chapter to thrill their audiences. Even the very critical critiques of socio-moral behaviour directed to specific persons were well received as forms of entertainment to the audience, because though real names could be used, some imagery were normally created to criticise one thing as if it were another. It was this aspect of the entertainment that charged the audience to always come together to enjoy themselves in the satirical oral narratives. Until the abuse of the true use of satire which later brought about conflict between

innocent victims and Igoru musicians, both performers and audiences used to be joyful finding real entertainment in the performances of Igoru. As we have stated earlier, this entertainment essence made young men to climb to the top of palm and coconut trees to view Igoru performances. Holroyd Burton and C. J. Chacksfield (1979: 70) remark that:

Traditional poems and songs in all countries tell stirring stories, or express strong emotions such as love, hate or jealousy, or depict intense states of mind such as adoration, ecstasy or despair. The strong rhythms of the verses are most effective in communicating experiences of this nature. Excited by the insistent and reiterated beat, the hearers are receptive to the tense atmosphere that is created. They enter eagerly into the world opened up by the poem.

Igoru music tells stories of political development, love affairs, dedication, faithfulness, drunkenness, envy and miserly activities to stir up emotions and despair among the audience. The derisive aspect of the performances, entertaining as they seem, built two kinds of restraints in the audience later on, particularly when the use of Igoru satire became abused. The first level of restraint was positive in that members led a wary life to avoid getting involved in those behaviours that go contrary to the ideals of the society, and to avoid becoming a subject of Igoru public satire.

The second level is the restraint that comes with fear of being an incidental victim of the satire in situations where one might be derided for the things he/she knows nothing about, or on the features of his/her appearance. This kind of restraint was revealed in song 51 (page A1 – 86) as the poet narrates that two subjects were worried about the satire and could not come out of their rooms. The poet states that one of the subjects complained that, though he is handsome, if Igoru

musicians perform a satire against him, he would not be able to sleep. Igoru narratives as stated earlier are always a report of events that unfold in the society, therefore, this song gives the audience information about the dread of the satires. This aspect of the restraints was unhealthy to the emotional balance of community members. Norbert Nowotny (1993: 105) writes that:

The soul music of Aretha Franklin and Percy Sledge which reached South Africa in about 1967 was experienced spiritually and understood as a “glorification of (the) unique musical and social qualities of Black people”. A performance by the Inne Laws at Baragwanath Hospital “sent the audience sprawling on the ground, some sat shaking on the floor, some lay prostrate on the floor and shook violently, some stood still with tears streaming down their cheeks when they played their popular *Soweto Soul Music* [italics in original].”

There are oral accounts that the severity of Igoru satire pricked the emotions of some victims sharply that they wept openly in the public during the performances. Others went to their homes downhearted, ruminating over the satires that were composed and performed about them. All these made members of the communities to be careful not to do funny things that go against the values of the society. Alan Merriam (1964: 190 and 193) examines the use of song texts, particularly those with vulgar tendencies, in driving zeal and will in human beings by creating some kind of fear in the psyche of the listeners who are expected to take certain actions:

Margret Green reports for the Nigerian Ibo that the women of the village occasionally come together in order to judge a woman suspected of stealing from another member of the group. In doing so, they gather at the home of the accused; Green notes that in order to summon all the women to the judging the group sang a song on a particular occasion she witnessed: “Women who will not come out in this place, let millipede go into her sex organs, let earthworm go into her

sex organs.” Green comments that “such things would be said on no ordinary occasion to a woman, but were used here to induce the women strongly to turn out in force” (p 190). What is important in all the cases cited above is that song itself gives the freedom to express thoughts, ideas, and comments which cannot be stated baldly in the normal language situation. It appears, then, that song texts, because of the special kind of license that singing apparently gives, afford an extremely useful means for obtaining kinds of information which are not otherwise easily accessible (p 193).

Images in Igoru music as discussed under imagery have assisted the composers in building fear and restraints into the psyche of their audiences to give them increased sense of consciousness about the ideals that must be kept in the society. To some degree, human beings need some kind of forceful approach to check their excesses, thus the idea of satire is a relevant feature in human societies and in Igoru musical culture in particular. Some inimical activities that people often get involved in, particularly for selfish reasons at the expense of others require a check, in order to keep a safe and healthy society in place. Ordinary words of counsel are never sufficient for some people to draw lessons from, but when they see that expository public reproach is attached to it they could be forced to stop getting involved in them. Igoru music has been a useful instrument in this form.

6. 7. 6 Praise and commendation:

Alvin Peterson (1993: 121) writes that: “The tradition of praise singing is an important one in many African states, most notably, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Niger (Nketia 1975: 199) and South Africa. They are oral [praise singers] historians, the preservers of culture”. Igoru music performs the functions of praise and commendation to deserving members, in order to encourage such persons

who are doing well in the society to continue in their good deeds, as well as stimulate others to emulate them. Igoru musicians from various quarters of Okpe comment that all the traditional and customary court chiefs who were perverse in deciding cases that were brought before them were criticised through Igoru performances, while the few who did well were commended, though only few of the praise songs could be remembered today. Okro Okobabala of Ugbibidaka, for instance, was said to be most kind, generous and straightforward among the chiefs in Elume Division that Igoru musicians in that area, particularly Unugbrogodo Ekure, sang to praise him and exempt him from the satires. The researcher demanded for this song and the present day performers could not remember it.

The narrative on Orichedje and Orogho, which we have discussed earlier in this chapter is however a good example of commendation in Igoru music. The composer commends the marital faithfulness of Orogho to her husband throughout his life time, in spite of the fact that they did not have any children. The poet did not only praise her, but blessed her with good wishes that in her next world, in the line of reincarnation, she would re-marry the same husband who cherished her love and faithfulness and they would have nine children. In song 28, we also find a posthumous acknowledgement of a generous indigene of Mereje, Ariemurugbe, who unfortunately died mysteriously. The poet states that the man was philanthropic to many members of the community and it was therefore sad that he died in a manner that prevented his beneficiaries from giving him a befitting burial. Another posthumous commendation is found in song 64 where an Igoru musician, Ikiki Eyerunja of Onyeke was acknowledged for his kindness to both members of his ensemble and other members of the society.

The composer remarked that, because of his generosity, he deserved to live perpetually and not to die.

Songs 70 and 71 (pages A1 – 126 and 132) are also songs of praise and commendation. The first is a commendation to Julius, the brother of Orhoro I (the Orodje of Okpe) who selflessly stood for him, Chief Dimingo Ejinyerien to become king. The poet narrates how he laboured, travelling to places to see, inform and persuade all the people that matter in the process of king making in the Okpe culture and the Nigerian political setting. This acknowledgement was considered necessary by the musician, because some brothers would not run around their relations who aspire to great heights, but would seek to work against them and ensure they fail. The second was a praise song dedicated to Chief Edwin Ayomano of Sapele who was also very supportive to the king (Orhoro I). The poet narrates how the subject was always in the company of the Orodje, both in planning and in execution of plans, as well as travelling around to ensure success in the administration. Song 68 (page A1 – 118), though a dirge, is also a posthumous praise stating that the king (Esezi II) who died in 1966 served Okpe very well that his death was therefore lamentable, while the memory of his good works would last indelibly a long time.

6. 7. 7 Defence and immunity:

Commenting on some functions of music in the society, Laura Arntson (1998: 503) argues:

Performance as entertainment can make people happy...Others will enjoy hearing the *bala* and the words because it reminds them of past times and of other occasions for praise singing... Because, in part, praise singing occurs during parties, celebrations, or other events that call for entertainment, a *jeli* carries a certain immunity

from blame, and can therefore criticize and advise others, all in the guise of praise.

Igoru musicians, in their performances, defended their political system, their territorial land mass, traditional religion and themselves from various attacks. Many Igoru songs make reference to the political institution, where the issue of the traditional ruler [the king] was central. In the first period of Igoru music, the musicians did not support the assassination of the king, though he was reported to be a great terror even to his own subjects. This is evident in song 3 where the poet sought to exonerate him/herself while defending the king in his rights. The composer states that the king was peaceful in his palace while the forces sought to do evil against him. The expression 'witches and wizards' can be understood here to mean all who planned any evil against the king, physically or otherwise.

We recall that the activities of the Okpe Union in Lagos, a Union which had all the Igoru musicians who were resident in Lagos as members, were channelled toward the process of reinstating the Okpe political system that collapsed as a result of the assassination of the despot king who reigned centuries ago. One of the ethnic groups around the Okpe area, the Itsekiri, scorned the Okpe for not having a king for a long period of time. Igoru musicians and others took the matter seriously and finally when a new king was crowned in 1972, the musicians celebrated and performed a rejoinder to inform the scorners that the Okpe now have a king. Igoru musicians were also much concerned about their cultural status and survival amongst their neighbours. The performers took up the challenge of the Uvwie (Effurun) who remarked in Lagos that the Okpe had no musical culture. Igoru musicians came together to compose and stage several performances in Lagos from the 1920s to the 1940s; those resident at home and those who returned from Lagos later sustained the performances.

Igoru musicians also kept the spirit of defence in relation to the issues of their landed properties. The musicians reacted to the Itsekiri invasion of Sapele in the early 1940s. They composed songs that reminded the invaders how they were ushered into the land in magnanimity and how unfaithful they were becoming to their hosts. We also find the musicians defending the Okpe traditional religion through their performances. The composition earlier discussed which calls on Edion to protect his people and those that condemned the prayer and preaching practices of the Christian worship all evince reactions in defence of the traditional religion. The musicians tried to suggest how effective, powerful and dependable their God and ancestral spirits are in the various songs that make reference to these features. Deidre Hansen (1993: 59) argues that;

The use of *ukugwaba* was not for purely musical reasons, as I had previously concluded. It served to intensify the musical expression of protest and criticism, levelled at such an eminent personage-the Xesibe Paramount Chief. To have lodged a formal, spoken protest with the Chief would have been to invite his anger and that of his councillors, and also incur a heavy fine. By singing their protest, the *indlavivni* were able to voice it in a most effective way without incurring Royal wrath and punishment. And the use of *ukugwaba* was also a very expressive and effective means of sharply criticising an important person, without actually articulating those criticisms in so many intelligible words. It is for such reason that the Xesibe *indlavini* employed *-gwaba* for virtually all their songs of protest, ridicule and even insult.

Igoru musicians also defended themselves in several ways, particularly when they were regarded as vagabonds in the early period. We have not found any account of direct physical attack or confrontation against Igoru musicians for performing satire. The evidence before us is referent to spiritual attacks instead and to this Igoru musicians provided defence in their songs. Unugbrogodo Ekure,

for instance, composed a song to defend himself as a musician. The women Igoru ensemble of Deghele Elume also adopted this song (see song 9, page A1 - 19) to defend the music profession. Just as the composer puts it, they reiterate that, though the public call the great Igoru composer/performer, Unugbrogodo Ekure, vagabond, they had all heard that description, but would not stop telling the world about the things they had seen going wrong in the society. In the context of that performance, the named musician represents all the Igoru musicians in Okpe, thus the defence becomes general. The same ensemble composed and performed song 7 (page A1 – 16) in proverbial themes to defend the Igoru music profession, stating that the Igoru musicians are talented people who brought their gifts with them from heaven and would surely survive, irrespective of envy and contempt from the public. They blessed Unugbrogodo and themselves, implying they blessed all Igoru musicians to prosper in their performances, thereby encouraging them to be undaunted keeping up the profession.

6. 7. 8 Socio-Cultural identities:

Lara Allen (1993: 1) writes that people living through periods of fundamental social change generally suffer deep crises of identity. “Their search for a way of making sense of their existence manifests in cultural forms such as musical style”. Music generally as an aspect of culture, functions in identifying cultural and ethnic groups, and in the spirit of performers-audience participation creates the sense of belonging to an identified group. This is not an exception in Igoru music. In fact, the Okpe in Lagos took Igoru music as mark of Okpe ethnic identity, thus it was selected amongst other music typologies of the culture to represent it, both in social and political-oriented activities. Historically as in chapter four, at the time the Uvwie abused the Okpe that they had no songs they

could perform in their language, the challenge brought Igoru music to foreground in marking the identity of the Okpe people in Lagos.

Lara Allen (1996: 54) remarks further on similar roles of South African *kwela* music as follows:

For its creators, *kwela* was also an expression of personal and collective identity. Prior to Spokes Mashiyane's recording success, pennywhistling generally fell into John Storm Robert's category of 'personal music, in which one or maybe two people play largely for their own self-expression and amusement'. Occasionally musicians attempted an expose of their social circumstances: typically this took the form of short cameos in spoken introductions, or in titles reflecting aspects of township life (P 54)...

However, the most interesting relationship between *kwela* and identity developed in retrospect. As part of the political mobilisation of the eighties, 'the people's roots' once again became primarily important... *Kwela* was re-articulated with this romanticised view, and the pennywhistle became, not only "one of the symbols of black South African music", but an emblem for the whole decade and all its idealised possibilities (p 58).

Both in the corporate activities of the Okpe Union in Lagos, Sapele and elsewhere, and in individual efforts towards identity, Igoru music served as a vessel for expressing the feelings of common quest and interest. The characteristics of the music enabled it function in enhancing assimilation of human relationships and objectified goals. Association with one another to identify with the needs, problems, aspirations and prospects of every member was an achievement in Igoru functional essence within the ensembles and the Unions under which some of the ensembles operated in the urban centres. Robin Wells (1996: 67 and 69) in his investigation of the relationships between styles of music and the notion of identity writes:

I wish to explore some of the shifts in the styles of Sesotho music-making that have occurred in recent years and to study the way in which modern identities are reflected in current modes of musical expression. It is my contention that style is inextricably linked to notions of identity and is mobilised as a means of objectifying values in form or performance. As such, the study of musical style can provide a valuable insight into the aspirations and values of a social group. (p 67).

...The train then became assimilated into the repertoire of the song-subjects, and assimilated in a manner typical of Sesotho poetry, that is, through analogy with the natural world (p 67)...Music then is a vessel in which we invest experiential values and aspirations. As such, it is a constantly transforming means by which we define our equally transforming social identities (p 69).

Igoru music does not only seek to identify the people's culture, it further upholds and checks the socio-moral values that identify the society and the people. The themes centre on issues of socio-cultural practices and events that manifest around them.

CHAPTER 7

COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND THEORIES

7.1 Annexure

We have attached appendices II and IV as an annexure to this chapter. It contains the scores of igoru songs and we shall, in this analytical discourse refer readers to it for details. This approach is to control the volume of the chapter as well as to make room for flowing reading un-intercepted by excerpts. A total of eighty eight igoru songs have been collected from the field as already stated in chapter seven. While we transcribed the text of all the songs for poetic and functional analysis, we have selectively transcribed fifty songs out of the above number in staff notation for this theoretical analysis. Factors such as historical periods and content, structural forms in melody and harmony, vocal and instrumental organization as well as length have guided us in choosing the songs so far transcribed. Appendix IV is an Audio CD containing thirty three tracks selected from the fifty songs transcribed in staff notation. Since song 43 (page A2 – 146) is normally a very short opening/closing formula, we have dubbed it together with song 22 (A2 – 53), which it precedes and follows, to enable listeners have idea of the link between the formulas and the songs. Songs 22 and 43 therefore form track 22 in the CD. This means that we have thirty four of the fifty songs in Appendix II represented in the CD. We followed the serial

numbers of appendix II from 1 - 27. Song 39 is now track 28 while song 37 is track 29.

7. 1. 1 Transcription method

Attempts and efforts were made earlier to find an easy way of using computer software to automatically transcribe the songs from sound waves to notation. We got the songs transferred from sound to wave by use of electronics media, but could not readily find suitable software to convert them to notation. This software alternative to manual transcription was to be taken to facilitate accuracy and speed in this aspect of the study. But since it yielded no expected results, due to some technical problems, we therefore resorted to manual transcription. We took some time out to listen to the songs over and again, in order to get ourselves more familiar with them and learn to sing a number of them before beginning the transcription exercise. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that the songs are notated accurately, perhaps with only minute limitation for the accuracy of the melodic glides. In the course of our listening, however, we noted that there were shifts in vocal register, which appear like shifts of tonal centre at liberty within several songs and certain melodic intervals recurred in the various registers. The similarity in the appearance and resolutions of melodic figures within two successive registers that are a semitone or some other intervals apart sounded as if they were repetition. But we observed they were cycles whose changes could be difficult to define accurately only by aural perception.

Since it could be easy to recognize these shifts in tonality, but not so easy to establish their actual intervals and definite pitches from the earlier register, we resorted to the use of the piano as a guide to certify our aural perception, particularly at the points of shifting. For the purpose of identifying the intervallic relationships more clearly, we did not at the beginning fix any key signature on some of the hand written scores. We used accidentals wherever they occurred.

Having achieved this aspect of manual transcription, we got Finale 2003 to input the notation into the computer and at this stage analytically fixed suitable key signatures. For the purpose of easy reading and analysis, we have chosen the keys of C, G and F major only for all the transcriptions.

In a few cases, we have retained accidentals without necessarily fixing any key signature at the beginning of the staff, even when it appears that the song is not in C major. It should be noted that Igoru musicians do not compose or perform their songs on predetermined keys. We have argued earlier in chapter one that they sing in any convenient keys at any performance. It should be noted that changes in register at liberty in Igoru music is not equivalent to modulation in Western music. Although the shifts are not predetermined, the performers are not unconscious of it. We argue this further under the appropriate heading.

We used the playback menu of the software to listen to all the songs after inputting them and found them sounding as the original collected from the field. Some of the vocal glides on the songs whose pitches are a little definite have been represented by use of 1/16 notes (semiquaver). Others whose pitches are

indefinite have been represented with the glissando sign, while those that are close to some definite pitches are represented by use of the x note head. For the drums, at this stage, we selected the tones of the Tom toms in the Finale 2003 software to represent *Izu ukiri* (the mother *ukiri*), Quint toms for the *omo ukiri* (baby *ukiri*), Conga drums for *ukiri evbarien* (the varied *ukiri*) and bongo drums for *Abo* (hand clapping). Although we have labeled the drums as they are called in Okpe igoru ensembles, we selected the above drum tones of the software for the listening pleasure of curious readers who would want to listen to the songs by use of the software's playback menu. Within the range provided for these

instruments on the software, we have found the intervals so far selected slightly suitable to represent the sounds of the various *ukiri* drums and *abo*. This implies that the intervals used in the drum notation are not strictly representative of the actual *ukiri* drum tones (cf. chapter five).

7.2 Scale

The Okpe scale system is hexatonic, using seven notes. This standard scale system is equivalent to the diatonic scale and has the frequency of 32 out of 50, making 64% in this study. Within this system, Igoru musicians select any number of tones that is suitable for any performance-composition. Readers are to refer to appendix II (page A2 – 163) where the Okpe scale system and a number of the tone selection/combination is provided. In some songs, we observe the use of five tones and six tones often referred to as pentatonic and hexatonic scales by some authors. The following table however illustrates some tone selections observed within the Okpe scale system in this study. Three primary forms of selection are found so far in this study of Igoru music, though there could be

more varied selections. The heptatonic selection appears in two forms in the table. In the list of songs where these forms are found in the table, we have placed the (+) sign against one to differentiate it from the other.

Table 7 – 1: Selection of tones within Okpe scale system

Scale	Frequency	Total	Percentage	Songs
Pentatonic				
d r f s l	1			10
d r m s l	1	2	4%	11
Heptatonic				
d r m f s l+	12			6+, 7+, 12, 14+, 15+,
d r m s l t	4	16	32%	17+, 18+, 20+, 26+, 27+, 29+, 30+, 34+, 38, 43 & 49
Hexatonic				
d r m f s l t	32	32	64%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39,

				40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47,
				8 & 50
Total	50	50	100%	50

7. 2. 1 Metre, regular durational groups and tempo

Willie Anku (2005; societymusictheory.org), in his writing reinvents the assertions of Ladzekpo (1995) on the perception of metre, note or beat grouping, measure and accents in Anlo Ewe music as follows:

The recurrent grouping of the main beats normally creates a fixed musical period or measure. While it is possible to create several measure schemes by varied groupings of the main beats, two types of such groupings are the most frequent in the development of Anlo-Ewe dance-drumming. The first most useful measure scheme consists of four

main beats with each main beat measuring off three equal pulsations as its distinctive feature. The next most useful

measure scheme consists of four main beats with each main beat flavored by measuring off four equal pulsations. These beat schemes are roughly equivalent to 12/8 time and 4/4 time in Western music.

In contrast to the Western measure concept of accenting the first beat of each measure, the Anlo-Ewe concept maintains regular accents on all the main beats... However, the first pulse of a group of four is understood as the end (as opposed to the beginning) of many musical phrases.

Igoru music is composed in the compound quadruple metre. Out of the fifty songs transcribed, only one (song 17, page A2 – 47) is in simple quadruple time. We did transcribe this song in the simple quadruple metre to make interpretation of the music a bit easy, owing to the divisibility method found in the melodic rhythm. It could otherwise be notated in a compound quadruple metre as well. Most of the songs give each of the dotted crotchet beats regular division into three units of quaver. This regular division is sustained even at cadential points.

Division into quaver + crotchet or vice versa is also a common feature. Only once did we find an even division of the dotted crotchet beat into four equal dotted semiquavers at measure 1 of song 26 (page A2 – 72). Use of equivalent rest to durational values ranging from the dotted semibreve to semiquaver is also combined with the notes in the compositions. We note that the fourth beat of the measure is almost as strong as the other beats, except beat one which appears stronger particularly on the instruments. It is for this accentuation equilibrium that Igoru songs often resolve the cadence on beat four instead of beat one regularly.

Kubik (1994: 292 – 293) adopts the term ‘nuclear patterns’ to describe music which possesses equal spaced series of notes, each note covering three pulses, and having regular cycle numbers. He argues that an average speed of 200 M. M. per note in the nuclear patterns, ‘condenses the vocal theme into a equal-spaced note series in unison relation with it’, with pronounced tendency towards ‘divisive inner rhythmic structure’ and one note that tends to recur regularly. ‘I propose to call it the “guide note”. This note is of utmost importance to the composition rule’. In Igoru music, either in the melody or harmony, as well as

preparation towards shifts in tonality, there is no specific note that may be called the guiding note, though certain notes may serve as pivot notes to facilitate change of registers. The general tempo for Igoru music is between M. M. dotted crotchet = 90 and 100. As observed in the transcriptions, using the Finale 2003 playback menu, dotted crotchet = 100 seems to be too fast for some of the songs, even though that seems to be nearer the common speed of Igoru performances.

7. 2. 2 Pickup measure, anacrusis and syncopation

Anacrusis and pickup measure mean almost the same thing. In the context of this discussion, anacrusis refers to a melodic pickup from the up beat at the beginning of a song, while pickup measure refers to beginning on any beat other than the down beat of the opening measure. Song 1 (page A2 – 1), for instance, begins on the last quaver of the second beat. In song 3 (page A2 -5), there is a pick up from the up beat with $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ notes. Throughout this study, we found no song beginning on beat one. They all begin with certain forms of pickup from any beat of the first measure. Syncopation, as already defined in chapter two refers to any displacement of accent in songs. The use of rests and tones sustained from one beat to the beginning of the succeeding beat creates effects of syncopation although Igoru songs.

7. 3 Text, tone and melody relationships

Agawu (1988: 127) examines the traditional generative model explained by A. M. Jones; later followed by Lazarus Ekwueme and Marius Schneider. This model proposes that 'In tonal languages the tone must *as far as possible* [italics in original] agree with the rise and fall of the speech tone'. He then argues that

'Tone is operative on a number of levels within the syntagmatic chain: on the level of syllable, word, phrase and sentence. Furthermore, a number of constraints – syntactic, intonational or natural factors – influence the disposition of speech tones'. He further argues that 'parallelism between speech tone and melody is a weak and perhaps untenable premise for analysing Northern Ewe music' (p. 128). He refers to Richards' (1972) statistical tabulation and draws reference from his own study to conclude as follows:

Calculations for the repeated phrase given in example 1 show that of the twenty-five speech tones, fourteen correspond to musical direction while eleven do not; in other words 56 per cent of the tune is 'correct' from the point of view of the words, while 44 per cent is 'wrong'... If we ask, for example, whether in the 'wrong' phrases there is any ambiguity about the meaning of the words, the answer is decidedly no... The listener surely has no trouble understanding the word even though its speech tone descends melodically instead of staying on the same pitch... This is not to deny that the phonological qualities of a given text may have an influence on melodic structure... (Agawu 1988: 131).

In the study of Igoru music, we observe that the Okpe language, though tonal, is flexible when the words are set to music. The composer has liberty of setting the words with consideration of melodic beauty as well as communication objectives. The melodic contour of song 1 (page A2 – 1), as in many others, follows the tonal

inflection of the Okpe language considerably, but with some level of flexibility. The word *avbaran*, meaning 'there', in measure two would in speech sound high, middle, high or high, low middle; but the composer uses melodic tones that move

on middle, high, middle. This does not in any way distort the meaning of the text. It only shows how flexible the language can be, in spite of its tonal nature and how much freedom the composer has in manipulating the language in his melodic crafting. Every attentive Okpe listener would understand the content of the song text, in spite of the flexibility in setting it to the melody.

In measures 1 and 2 of song 3 (page A2 – 5), we find further evidence of the language flexibility to melodic configuration. The word *ame*, meaning we, has a homonym *ame*, meaning water. The first word would be toned low and middle, while the second would be pronounced with high and low tones. In measure 1, the melodic contour has an upward movement from the first to the second syllable, and in measure 2, there is a downward movement. While the second could have meant ‘water’ because of the tonal downslide in the melody, the word retains its meaning in the song with reference to the adjoining words and the context of use.

In song 6, at measures 1 and 2, the word ‘*are*’ is used in different forms of word link, *areo* and *vba re*. The vowel in the first instance belongs to another word, while the ‘*vb*’ in the second case is only a prefix as discussed in chapter six. The word ‘*are*’, depending on its context of use and tonal inflection could mean ‘you’ – in the plural case, or a statement ‘we should eat’. Although the downward melodic progression could make the word mean the latter, the composer implies the former meaning and it is understood as such in the context of the song. In song 7 (page A2 – 21), at measure 3, the word ‘*wewẹ*’ is a homophone, pronounced the same way and assumes its meaning from the context of use. It

can mean 'you' in the singular case and 'wetting' - by gradual absorption of water or any other liquid. Irrespective of the melodic progression set to the two syllables in the song, the composer/performer means 'you' in the singular case and it is understood as such by the audience.

At measure 6 of song 8 (page A2 – 22), the word '*oghwa*' has two possible pronunciations and meanings. One form of pronunciation from high to low tone with un-dotted vowel is homophonic in linguistic tone and can mean either of two things: sailing on board [in a row boat] or proceeds from appreciative reward to performers (tagged spraying). The other form of pronunciation from the low to the middle tone means 'a house'. In this composition, however, neither the upward nor the downward progression is given to the word. The two syllables that make up the word are assigned to the same melodic tone, which by implication could be meaningless. But the surrounding words in the context of the composition suggest that the composer/performer means 'a house' and this does not suggest any ambiguity. Some words derive their meanings not only from the tonal inflections, but from the use of the dotted vowel sounds. Many Okpe homonyms have the same spelling, but are pronounced differently, depending on whether the vowels in such words are dotted or not.

Examples of such homonyms are found in song 16 (page A2 – 42), measure 73 and song 25 (page A2 – 63), at measure 65. In the former, the word *owo* with only one dot (under the second vowel), pronounced from the low to the middle tone could mean 'canoe, boat, coffin or casket'. But with the two vowels dotted and a pronunciation from the high to the middle tone, the word would mean 'he/she is bathing'. When only the first vowel is dotted and it is pronounced from high to low tone, it means a parcel (normally wrapped in some form, often as a gift). The word *ogoro* without any dot, pronounced in low, low, high tones would

mean frog; while a pronunciation, with all the vowels dotted, in high, low, low tones would mean 'palm or up wine'. Although the first vowel of the word *owọ* is connected to the last syllable of the preceding word, the melodic progression moves downward and this could have altered its meaning, particularly if the first vowel were dotted. The melodic progression for the second word *ogoro* downward and upward by an interval of a major second could also have altered its meaning. But the sounds of the non-dotted vowels in the first example *owo* and the sounds of the dotted vowels in the second *ogoro*, in addition to other words that surround them give them their intended meanings.

A word like *ororo* in song 29 (page A2 – 76), at measure 8 can have its meaning determined by its intonation. When pronounced in high, low, low tones, with undotted vowels, it could mean a season of oil palm harvest, while pronunciation in middle, low, middle tones would mean 'he/she thinks'. And though the melodic progression for the word in the song moves on high, low, low tones, which would then mean the harvest season, the composer, performers and audience, understand, from the context of its use, that the word means he/she ponders.

7. 3. 1 Foundation vowel, doubling of vowel, glide and slur

Igoru music is highly syllabic, in that each melodic tone is assigned to a syllable in the text with very scanty slurs expected. So far, in this study, we have observed that the few slurs found in all the songs so transcribed are influenced by the use of glide, doubling of vowel at the end of a phrase or sentence and the use of the foundation vowel 'e' which we discussed in detail in chapter six (page 6 – 81). The slurs in song 1 at the pickup measure, song 2 (page A2 – 3) at

measures 5 and 19; song 3 (page A2 – 5) at the pickup measure, measures 2, 5, 7, 11, and 12; song 4 (page A2 – 6) at the pickup measure, measures 76, 88 and 110; song 5 (page A2 – 19) at the pickup measure; song 7 (page A2 – 22) at the

pickup measure and song 8 (page A2 – 23) at the pickup measure are all influenced by the foundation vowel. Indeed the foundation vowel begins very many (almost all) Igoru songs. If it does not begin the song, it is likely to appear somewhere to possibly begin a section or link sections/ideas together. And almost all the times it is used, it is given a slur in order to begin the song/section colourfully.

Doubling of vowels at the end of phrases or sentences also has very great influence on the melodic progression. In the Okpe language, affirmative statements and question forms are made with the ending vowel of the verb not doubled. If a verb ending with a single vowel comes at the end of a phrase or sentence, it is often not glided and thus does not attract any slur in Igoru melodies. But when a statement is presented in the negative form, it often has the last vowel in the verb doubled and this has much influence on Igoru melodies. For the statement to be understood in its negative form, a slur connects the sounds of the duplicated vowel set to two different pitches.

The doubled vowel is sometimes given two notes on the same pitch. In some cases, we place the slur marks, though each note is assigned to each of the vowels. The slur mark is sometimes not fixed to the notes; but the performers connect them as if they are slurred. For example, the statement *mi rhe vbo-o* in

song 2 at measure 4 on page A2 – 3 means ‘if I do not have’. The statement, without the last vowel would mean ‘if I have’. Other examples are as follows:

- *Ovborho se r’ame ero o* – ‘we do not forget it’, while omission of the last vowel would mean ‘don’t we forget it?’ (Song 7 at measure 16; page A2 – 22)
- *Evbe le omo ada a* – ‘we don’t stop a child from going out’: omission of the last vowel means ‘don’t we stop a child from going out?’ (Song 10 at measure 2, page A2 – 33 and song 11 at measures 1 and 6 – 7 page A2 – 34)

- *Emro owa a* – ‘it’s nobody’s fault’: omission of the last vowel means ‘it’s someone’s fault’ (Song 14 at measure 23, page A2 – 39)
- *Okaro rho Okpe e* – ‘he/she did not remember Okpe’: omission of the last vowel means ‘he/she remembered Okpe’ (Song 14 at measure 35, page A2 – 40)

One other form of slur found in Igoru music is that which arises from word-link. In song 31 at measure 4, page A2 – 81, the composer attempts to link two words ‘enu’ (loud cry) and ‘urhie’ (River) together. Since the first word ends with the vowel ‘u’ and the second word begins with the same vowel, the composer then tries to link the two words with a slur for smooth connection. Although we placed the slur mark over the two notes, we also wrote the vowel twice to practically demonstrate that it belongs to both words and its omission from one could create confusion (only to readers but not to listeners). Quick glide to definite and indefinite pitches also influence the use of slurs. Some of the glides are not given

any melodic emphasis and are therefore not strikingly independent of the principal note where they have their bearing.

7. 3. 2 Variable metre, melodic phrasing and the theory of complementary dualism

The variableness of the poetic lines in the song texts, influence the melodic phrases in Igoru songs (variable metre was defined in chapter two, page 2 - 48). In song 1, the foundation vowel is phrased together with the first poetic line from the third beat of the pickup measure to the third beat of measure 1. This antecedent phrase is approximately 1½ measure while its consequent phrase is one measure and one beat long. The phrasing of the foundation vowel together with the antecedent phrase creates balance between it and the consequent phrase. Beginning from measure three, the inequality of the poetic lines is more defined and well managed in the phrasing patterns. Although the poetic lines in measures 3 and 4 have eight and ten syllables respectively, they have been given one measure phrase each as antecedent and consequent.

The short line of five syllables in measure 5 and the following ten-syllable line in measure 6 are given half measure and full measure phrasing by the composer. Although the soloist sings the half measure phrase as antecedent to the chorus full measure consequent phrase, the two can be seen as sub-phrases, make a longer antecedent phrase followed by two such sub-phrases appearing between measures 7 and 8. The short sentence in section B is composed in some kind of sequence. Measure 12 is given two tone sequences in the interval of thirds and seconds while measure 13 is given two beat sub-phrase sequences. The recycling of section A followed the same phrasing patterns, except that the foundation vowel phrase at this time is left out. The entire length of this song at

the time of this performance is 25 measures, though it could be more with further recycling.

In song 2 (page A2 – 3), we find equal and unequal phrasing, but they all balance with one another as the melody progresses. We refer to this as the theory of complementary dualism, which follows natural principles that two persons or things of a kind could be taller or longer than one another, and yet work together perfectly. The opening phrase of the above song is two measures long with two sub-divisions, a measure each. Although the sub-phrases are presented as solo and chorus, together, they melodically form the antecedent phrase. The consequent phrase is two times as long as the antecedent phrase with three unequal sub-divisions from measures 2 beat 2 to 6 beat 1. The next antecedent

and consequent phrases appear to be equal with two measures each from 6 to 10. Each of them also has two sub-divisions of about one measure each. Coming

after is a two-measure phrase to conclude the first section. This phrase has three short sub-phrases, which are neither antecedent nor consequent, but complement one another as well as the previous phrases. Section B is just about two-measure sentence with three sub-phrases from 12 beat 1, to 14 beat 1. This serves as a cue and link to the recycling of the earlier theme. The whole of section A is restated, but with some changes of interval in the melodic progression.

Song 3 opens with 1½ measure antecedent phrase followed by a 2-measure consequent phrase. The two phrases begin with the foundation vowel, which are given two-note and three-note slurs respectively. Together with the foundation vowels, the first phrase has nine syllables while the second has twelve. On a

general note, Igoru songs are phrased in manners that the linguistic sentences in the language serve as a guide to the balance in melodic phrase construction.

7.4 Melodic interval, progression and contour

In song 1, the melody begins and ends on the tonic in section A. In section B, it begins on the leading note and progresses downward a major 3rd, with absence of semitonic movement and ends the section on the mediant. The recycling of section A begins on the submediant and ends on the tonic. The composition has the melodic intervals of 2nds, 3rds and of course keeping of common tones

together. Between sections A and B, these intervals have the highest frequency of occurrence. The frequency of the 2nd is 39, common tones 31, 3rd 28, 4th 8, 6th 4, while 7th and 8^{ve} occurred only once for very special uses. The interval of a 7th occurring between the end of section A and the beginning of section B at measures 11 and 12 is seen as a method of swapping from the lower to the higher register for convenience to continue with a melody that progresses downward.

7. 4. 1 Harmonic interval and general progression

Unison, octave and the intervals of 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th are used interchangeably in Igoru harmony. An interval may change immediately after its first use, or otherwise after a successive parallel motion. It could appear in two, three, four or more successive parallel progression before it is alternated. In song 11 (page A2 – 34), we find two schemes of progression that are similar; approached from a minor interval to a perfect interval to resolve on the same minor. The first appears at measure 2 with minor 3rd → perfect 5th → minor 3rd and the second at measure 7 with minor 7th → perfect 8^{ve} → minor 7th. In song

13 (page A2 – 37), beginning at measure 5, the lower voice simultaneously creates a harmony part stimulated by the message the soloist is passing across to the audience; thus the snappy entry (interjection) he makes before the soloist continues further. This brief entry is predominated by perfect 4th harmonic interval alternated by minor 3rd and minor 2nd.

In song 25 (page A2 – 64), the chorus is recycled several times in response to the alternated solo fragmental development. That is, the lead soloist and the receiver soloist take turns in alternation to develop the theme while the chorus provides the response to each solo sentence. From measure 10 to 32, the three-measure chorus recurs with same harmonic intervals. But from measure 33 where there is change of register in performance, the harmonic intervals changed. The harmonic scheme of the chorus is predominated also by the interval of perfect 4th.

7. 4. 2 Parallel harmonic progression

The use of parallel perfect 4th and perfect 5th is common feature in igoru music. These intervals may appear in two or more successive progressions. The parallel perfect 4th may be approached from a minor 3rd and resolve to a minor 7th or by any other intervals. We observe further that the parallel perfect 5th progression

either progresses onwards to a perfect 4th as in measures 4 and 45 or to a major 2nd as in measures 10 and 19 of song 4 (page A2 – 6). Parallel major 2nd and minor 3rd are also found in the harmony. The parallel major 2nd may progress to a minor 3rd as in measures 10 and 24 or any other intervals like perfect 4th, unison and major 3rd as in measures 60, 64 and 96 of the same song. The consecutive

minor 3rd does not progress to any particular interval. It could move to unison, major 2nd, minor 2nd and perfect 4th. At measures 14, 19, 73 and 74 of the same song 4, we find consecutive unison progression. The multiple progressions in

unison is often approached or preceded by a major 3rd or minor 3rd and quitted to a major 2nd. It could also be approached by major 2nd and resolved to major 3rd or major 2nd respectively. Consecutive use of parallel minor 7th is also found between measures 7 and 8 of this song 9. This is approached from unison and resolved on a diminished 5th.

7. 4. 3 Alternate parallelism

The term alternate parallelism refers to the progression from certain parallel interval to another parallel interval. In this category, we find parallel major 2nd alternated with parallel major 3rd and parallel perfect 4th between measures 5 and 7 of song 30 (page A2 – 78). Sometimes the performers break the flow of certain parallel intervals by introducing a different interval between them. The chorus in song 31 (page A2 – 81) for instance, presents this scheme of alternate parallel harmonic motions. In this scheme, we find a perfect 5th coming between consecutive minor 7ths, a major 6th coming between the minor 7ths and perfect 4ths, and major 3rd coming between perfect 4ths and 5ths.

7. 4. 4 Intervallic preferences

Kubik (1994: 266), in his discussion of Kiganda music, argues as follows: '[On] the other hand there are two typical intervals that seem to govern the scene.

These are the Kiganda fourth and fifth. Obviously the preference for these intervals causes the overall effect of consonance. Though tempered, Kiganda fourths and fifths have a markedly consonant quality in contrast to Kiganda

seconds and sevenths'. The harmonic intervals used in Igoru music include almost all intervals, from unison to the ninth (9th) or compound second (2nd). The use of diminished and augmented intervals is very sparing. Only diminished 4th and 5th are found with very minute frequency in this study. The only augmented interval found occurring in Igoru harmony is the 4th. It occurs with very limited frequency.

On a general note, so far in this study, there are harmonic features in sixteen (16) songs out of the fifty (50) Igoru songs that have been transcribed. The other songs were performed by individuals and few persons who sang in unison. Within these sixteen songs, a total of two thousand and eighty one (2, 081) harmonic progressions are found. And out of this number, the perfect 4th has the highest frequency of eight hundred and thirty six (836), making 40. 17%. This is followed by the interval of perfect 5th with two hundred and fifty one (251), making 12. 06%. The third place interval is the major 3rd with one hundred and ninety (190), making 9. 13%. This is followed closely by the minor 3rd with one hundred and seventy two (172), making 8. 27%. Next to this is unison which has one hundred and seventy one (171), making 8. 22%.

The sixth place interval is the minor 7th with one hundred and thirty five (135), making 6. 49%. Following closely is the major 2nd with one hundred and thirty (130), making 6. 25%. After the seventh place interval of major 2nd comes a great fall in the use of other intervals. The first in this category is the major 6th with seventy one (71), making 3. 41%. This is followed by the minor 6th with fifty seven (57), making 2. 74%. Next to this is the perfect 8ve with twenty two (22), making 1. 06%. All others have less than 1% occurrence. The least of all are the

diminished 4th and minor 9th, which have 0.05% each. The perfect 4th, perfect 5th, major and minor 3rds are, in Igoru music, consonant intervals and this explains why they are used in higher frequency than other intervals. The table below, however, illustrates further the frequency at which these intervals are used in Igoru music.

Table 7 -2: Frequency and percentage of harmonic intervals

Songs	Uni	Maj 2nd	Min 2nd	Maj 3rd	Min 3rd	Perf 4th	Aug 4 th	Dim 4 th	Perf 5th	Dim 5th	Maj 6th	Min 6th	Ma 7th
4	41	60	5	42	51	103	0	0	52	0	5	4	2
8	9	11	1	5	7	19	0	0	13	0	2	9	2
9	4	3	3	3	6	25	0	0	9	2	4	0	2
11	0	1	0	2	2	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	4	53	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
13	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
23	0	1	0	0	16	89	0	0	4	0	1	0	0
25	13	13	0	31	0	90	0	0	10	0	5	5	0
30	9	13	0	9	10	45	0	0	16	0	5	9	0
31	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
32	5	3	2	1	3	91	0	0	4	0	1	1	0
33	6	2	0	2	14	24	0	0	11	0	0	8	0
37	20	11	3	17	24	100	2	1	36	6	17	11	1
39	40	7	1	59	20	92	0	0	71	1	25	1	2
40	8	4	0	5	1	2	1	0	3	0	2	0	0
45	16	1	3	14	13	82	0	0	17	0	3	7	0
Total	171	130	19	190	172	836	3	1	251	9	71	57	9
Perc.	8. 22%	6. 25%	0. 91%	9. 13%	8. 27%	40. 17%	0. 14%	0. 05%	12. 06%	0. 43%	3. 41%	2. 74%	0. 4

7. 4. 5 Part crossing

Kubik (1994: 281-282) writes about interlocking in his study as follows:

Melodic movement in descending seconds in amadinda music is regularly matched, in the contrasting part, with the upper Kiganda fourth, which starts one pulse later. Thus a parallel movement in Kiganda fourths is produced. The consonance effect of this is comparable to that of singing in parallel fourths with the difference that Kiganda consonance is interlocking. We call this multi-part structure “interlocking parallelism in fourths”.

Occasional part crossing in a 2nd or 3rd occurs between the two parts in Igoru music, particularly when a cadence is approached. At measures 15 and 20 of song 4 (pages A2 – 7 and 8), parts crossing in the above intervals occur. The first occurrence at measure 15 is incidental, resulting from the contrary motion with a leap between the two parts. While the upper melody progresses downward by a major 7th, the lower voice moves upward by a major second and this brings about part crossing. At measure 20, the concordant part crossing in a 3rd occurred while the two voices are trying to resolve according to Okpe harmony convention. Melodically as argued under melodic cadence, Igoru melodies (as other songs in Okpe) have the propensity of resolving from the submediant to the tonic, while the lower voice often tends to resolve from the submediant to the dominant degree. Since the upper voice is resolving upward, it has to work its way downward to provide an anticipatory upward movement to the tonic from the submediant, so that the following resolution would create that firm feeling that a

meaningful sentence has been made. The lower voice similarly moves upward to prepare for its resolution downward to the dominant.

In the same song, we find more part crossing at measures 51 and 77. At measure 51, the part crossing by a 2nd occurs by influence of the cadential

progression as above. The part crossing that occurs at measure 77 is overlapping resulting from the counterpoint the two voices create to complement one another phrase after phrase. That is, the lower voice enters shortly before the upper voice finishes a statement or vice versa. At measure 24 in song 8 (page A2 – 23), part crossing in a minor 3rd is created as the two parts move towards unison. To approach this contrapuntal section dynamically, the two voices create contrast between the earlier form of simultaneous harmony (of vertical intervals) to move independently awhile, responding to one another's phrase. More part crossing occur in song 30, at measures 5, 18 and 20 (page A2 – 78). They appear in major 2nds and minor 3rd respectively.

7. 4. 6 Overlapping and creation of triads

At the end of the second and third choruses at measures 18 and 22 of song 9 (page A2 – 31), the overlapping solo entry comes together with the cadence of the two-part chorus to form a sort of triad. The triad at measure 18 consists of a perfect 4th between the chorus parts and a perfect 8ve between the lower voice (*ogani*) and the solo voice (*obo ijoro*); while at measure 22, the triad is a minor 7th over a perfect 4th. In song 23, the recycling of the chorus keeps a common harmonic structure with the overlapping solo coming to form various kinds of triads at the end of each chorus. At measures 11 and 15, the triads formed are

perfect 8ve over a perfect 4th and perfect 5th over a perfect 4th respectively. At measures 19 and 23, the triads are a perfect 4th over a minor third and a perfect 8ve over a perfect 4th. At measures 27, 31 and 39, the triads formed are, but one; a perfect 5th over a perfect 4th. At measures 43, 47 and 51, the triads include a major 6th over a perfect 4th and a perfect 4th over a minor 3rd.

In song 30, at measure 3 (page A2 – 78), there is an overlapping that forms a triad of a perfect 5th over a major 3rd. At measures 50, 58, 89, 95, 98 and 103 of

song 39, overlapping creates other forms of triads. They include perfect 4th over a major 3rd; perfect 8ve over a perfect 5th; perfect 5th over a major 3rd; perfect 5th over a perfect 4th; minor 7th over a perfect 4th; major 6th over a perfect 4th; major 9th over a perfect 4th and perfect 8ve over a major 3rd. In song 45, at measures 26 and 38, we find a recurrence of the triad that consist a minor 7th over a perfect 4th. Since in Igoru music, three or more parts harmony is not really conceived as a practice in the compositions and performances, these occasional triads arising from the overlapping of voices form basis for experiments in chord invention for creative African composers.

7. 4. 7 Melodic and harmonic motions: The theory of earth orientation, longevity and heaven-ward focus

Agawu (1984: 42) asserts, from a study of an Akan folk tale song, that ‘The melody begins on its highest note, ... and descends, first by leap ... and then by step ... after which it stays around the terminal pitch’. In another argument, he presents the following:

In its simplest and most direct form, then, a song will begin with or around its highest note and then work its way downwards... If we scan other Northern Ewe expressive forms in search of similar patterning, we find at least two that provide corroboration by analogy for melodic descent. The first is the overall earth-orientation in Northern Ewe culture; the second is the intonational contour of speech.

A good deal of Northern Ewe symbolic expression is earth-oriented. Most dances involve elaborate movement of the feet, bending at the waist, looking towards the ground, and squatting. The ubiquitous art of pouring libation, which accompanies practically every ritual...is earth-oriented...It is true that in a basically agricultural society, the earth is an important life-giving source, and not only symbolically, but it is equally true that in dance and myth, as well as in

physical gesture and ordinary verbal discourse, there is much less emphasis on, or even conceptualization of, things above that are not wedded to or coterminous with the earth (the sky, the moon, the stars) than of things below, where of course we bury the dead (Agawu 1990: 222).

Almost all Igoru songs begin and move upward, particularly by use of the foundation vowel, before they continue to move around other directions. We have argued as is evident in the transcriptions that Igoru songs begin almost all the time with the foundation vowel and the vowel has a propensity of always moving upwards. From our analysis, we also find that the approach to cadences is more from below upwards than from above downwards. Although earth-orientation exists in Okpe culture where libations are also poured to the ground and the earth cultivated, the high frequency of upward movement at the beginning of Igoru music and at the cadences can be philosophically argued as the general principle that one must of a necessity consult the creator of the heaven and the

earth before he/she begins whatever obligation he/she has at hand. For instance, the lobe of kola nut and glass of wine are held slightly upward before they are laid and poured down during libations in Okpe. The priest looks up to heaven calling on God and the ancestral spirits to accept the offering (or sacrifice). Then he pours the drink on the earth and invites the spirits to drink. The heaven is considered to be greater than the earth, being the everlasting abode of the Almighty God and the dead. Upward melodic progressions and cadential resolutions can therefore be seen in the light of well focused attention on the heavenly powers and everlasting life.

The concept of death and interment of the dead in the earth is a fact that is viewed from the recycle perception. Even though members of the society are sure to die some day and be buried in the earth, death is not flippantly verbalized, because elders believe that the human tongue has much power to

evoke manifestations of whatever it says and confesses. Thus in traditional Okpe society, if a young person scratches or assists someone to rub his back, to assuage his/her pains, elders would educate him/her to stop the action at the upper part of the body. And if he/she had stopped downwards earlier, he/she is instructed to draw a line with his/her finger upwards at the back of the person whose back he/she rubbed. Elders explain this theory that rubbing one's back downwards signifies death and burial in the earth, while rubbing it upwards signifies long life. The frequent resolution of melodies and cadences upwards can also be argued in line with this theory that human beings wish always to live long.

7. 4. 8 Liberty of tonality adjustment and the theory of relativism

It is possible for any Igoru song to start on any pitch and shift slightly upwards or downwards according to the convenience of singers' voices. In song 1 (page A2 – 1), between section A and B we observe free movement from one register to another in the performance-composition. Although we have represented the whole song in one key, the change of registers influenced the entire tonality and tone colour of the performance. The shift to actualize change of register normally works within related tonality sometimes enhanced by use of enharmonic tones. This use of enharmonic tones in the process of these shifts is described in this study as the theory of relativism.

The shift of register observed in song 3 is seen as a device to recycle the earlier theme and make it sound a bit different from the former. What this implies is that Igoru performers always try to make every repetition of themes sound differently. If Igoru musician performs a short phrase or song two or more times, it cannot be the same. He/she could shift the register or tonal centre as many times as

possible and make the theme sound differently each time it re-appears. We argue this as the theory of liberty in tonality adjustment, which gives room for creative performance-composition.

7. 5 Melodic non-final cadence

In song 1, section A, four non-final cadences preceded the final cadence that comes at its end. The first appears at the last beat of measure 2, resolving from the dominant to the subdominant degree with a glide to the super-tonic. The

second at the last beat of measure 4 distinctly resolves from the dominant again to the subdominant without any glide. The third at measure 6 resolves from the supertonic to the subdominant and the fourth occurring between the end of measure 8 and the beginning of measure 9 again resolves from the dominant to the subdominant with a glide to the supertonic. The non-final cadences at measures 1 beat 4 and 5 beat 4 resolve from supertonic to mediant and tonic to supertonic respectively. The next groups of non-final cadences occur at measures 7 and 9, resolving from supertonic to mediant and from submediant to tonic. The half close cadence at measures 1 and 4 resolves from supertonic to subdominant and dominant to submediant respectively.

We have found several other forms of half non-final cadences that include the following:

- Submediant to dominant (major 2nd) in song 2, at measure 3
- Tonic downward to dominant (perfect 4th) in song 2, at measure 4
- Submediant to dominant (major 2nd) in song 3, at measure 14
- Mediant downward to submediant (perfect 5th) in song 3, measure 16
- Tonic downward to submediant (minor 3rd) in song 6, at measure 10
- Tonic rising to subdominant (perfect 4th) in song 16, measure 12 -13
-
-
-
- Supertonic rising to mediant (major 2nd) in song 16, at measure 28
- Mediant falling to supertonic (major 2nd) in song 16, at measure 55
- Tonic rising to mediant (major 3rd) in song 16, at measure 61
- Supertonic rising to subdominant (minor 3rd) in song 16, measure 66
- Supertonic rising to dominant (perfect 4th) in song 16, measure 80

- Subdominant rising to dominant (major 2nd) in song 16, measure 82
- Supertonic falling to tonic (major 2nd) in song 16, at measure 91
- Dominant falling to subdominant (major 2nd) in song 16, measure 93

Many non-final cadences in Igoru music fall within the above schemes. In song 15 (page A2 – 41), at measure 8, we however find a non-final cadence that resolves from the lowered mediant to the subdominant. All other half close cadences occurring in this song, at measures 3, 11 and 19, resolve upward from the supertonic to the subdominant]. This informs us that the rising of the lowered mediant to the subdominant is therefore a variation of the same cadence. This variation could have been the mediant rising to the subdominant. But since that resolution would result to a minor 2nd which is often avoided in melodic progression, the composer/performer had to lower the pitch of the mediant to achieve a major 2nd interval. The non-final cadences that have the same scheme of resolution as any final cadence like submediant to tonic, supertonic to tonic, tonic to supertonic, or any other, are determined principally by the punctuation in the text.

7. 5. 1 Melodic final cadence

The final cadence at the end of section A in song 1 resolves from the supertonic to the tonic. The three-bar middle section (B) which links the two A sections together presents its own final cadence with a resolution from the supertonic to

the mediant. The last cadence of the recycled section A resolves from the supertonic to the tonic with anticipation from measure 24 to 25. The full close

cadence coming at measure 11 of song 2 resolves from submediant to tonic. It is noted that the preceding non-final cadence at measure 9 resolve with the same notes in similar manner. We then want to find out what makes the former sound as non-final while the later sounds final. The non-final cadence at measure 9 is preceded by series of supertonic to prepare the minds of listeners for a non-final ending; while the full close cadence at measure 11 is preceded by series of submediant to tonic to make the final cadence emphatic.

The cadential progression from the lowered leading note to the tonic is also found in some Igoru songs (as in several other songs in Okpe). We observe that this formula is used in substitution for the submediant to tonic resolution. Both formulas appear to be in use to avoid the use of a semitonic progression from the leading note to the tonic. So far in this study, we have found that Igoru musicians avoid melodic progressions by semitones; thus the leading tone is never found rising to the tonic. If it had to rise to the tonic, as in this cadential formula, it had to be lowered to from a major 2nd in the progression, rather than a minor 2nd. Other cadences resolving a major 2nd upward, using other notes of the scale also exist and the table below illustrates these further.

Table 7 – 3: Frequency and percentage of melodic final cadence

Cadence	Frequency	Percentage	Songs
Scheme A r → d [l r d & m r d]	13	26%	1, 4, 11, 12, 14, 22, 23, 31, 32, 33, 34, 42, 44
Scheme B l → d [r l d]	26	52%	2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 20, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50
Scheme C ta → d	3	6%	19, 21, 36
Scheme D d → r	4	8%	15, 18, 37, 47
Scheme E s → l	2	4%	28, 48
Scheme F m → s	1	2%	3
Scheme G l → t	1	2%	25
Total	50	100%	50

The table above illustrates only the full close cadences used at the end of the songs, though some other forms of full close cadence might have occurred at the end of melodic sentences and sections of the songs. We chose to use only the final cadences of the songs, because all other final cadences within the songs fall into these cadential frameworks. The exceptions are found in songs 20 and 48

where resolution occurred from the dominant downward to the tonic (a perfect 5th), and dominant to the subdominant (major 2nd).

The above table, however, shows that the cadential scheme B, resolving from the submediant to the tonic has the highest frequency of use in Igoru compositions. It makes a total of 26 out of 50, forming 52%. This is followed by scheme A, resolving from the supertonic to the tonic. It has the frequency of 13 out of 50, making 26%. The major 2nd resolution from tonic to supertonic in scheme D occurs four times with 8% and in scheme C, lowered leading note to the tonic occurs three times making 6%. Another major 2nd resolution from the dominant to the submediant in scheme E, occurs only twice making only 4% of all the full close cadences. The minor 3rd resolution of the mediant rising to the dominant and the major 2nd resolutions from the submediant to the leading note in schemes F and G, have the frequency of one (1) each out of fifty (50), making 2% each.

7. 5. 2 Harmonic non-final cadence

The non-final melodic cadence that resolves from the submediant to the tonic has two possible harmonic approaches. They include the resolution in the lower voice from the dominant to submediant and a resolution from subdominant to the dominant as in song 4 at measure 26. Where the upper cadence is approached from the supertonic to the submediant to resolve on the tonic, the lower voice is harmonized with submediant, dominant, dominant, as in song 4 at measure 49. And when the melody resolves with anticipation in the upper voice, the lower

voice is harmonized with submediant, subdominant, dominant, as in song 4 at measure 65. The melodic resolution from the tonic to the supertonic is

harmonized in various ways. The most common of all is the progression from the leading note to the submediant, as in song 4 at measure 103, song 9 at measure 3, song 32 at measure 3 and song 39 at measure 9.

The melodic resolution from supertonic to the mediant is harmonized in the lower voice from the tonic to the submediant as in song 4 at measure 8. The progression is also harmonized with the submediant resolving to the tonic as in song 4 at measures 24 and 99. The melodic resolution with anticipation supertonic, mediant, mediant is harmonized in different forms. It could be harmonized with supertonic, submediant, tonic as in song 4 at measure 28; submediant, supertonic, tonic as in song 4 at measures 31 and 85, or supertonic, supertonic, tonic as in song 8 at measure 9.

There are several melodic cadences approached from the dominant degree and these have their forms of harmony. The progression from dominant to the submediant is harmonized with submediant to leading note as in song 23 at measure 9, or with subdominant to mediant as in song 37 at measure 27-28. The progression dominant to dominant is harmonized with tonic to supertonic as in song 4 at measure 107 and the melodic resolution from dominant to subdominant is harmonized with supertonic to tonic as in song 8 at measure 2 – 3 and song 25 at measure 11. When the progression resolves with anticipation in the following scheme dominant, subdominant, subdominant, it is harmonized with supertonic, supertonic, as in song 33 at measure 3. The melodic resolution from the

dominant to the mediant is harmonized with supertonic to supertonic or supertonic to tonic as in song 8 measures 17 and 21 respectively. The progression from the dominant to the supertonic is harmonized with submediant to submediant as in song 11 at measure 7, or supertonic falling to the dominant as in song 30 at measure 6.

7. 5. 3 Harmonic final cadence

Various forms of harmonic final cadences are found in Igoru music. The commonest melodic resolution from the submediant to the tonic normally requires the harmonic resolution from the submediant to the dominant in the lower voice. The harmonic resolution scheme is unison to a perfect 4th. Examples of this are found in song 4, measures 5, 68 and 80; song 8, measure 8; song 30 measures 11 and 24; song 37 measure 31, to mention a few. The melodic cadential progression supertonic to submediant, resolving upward to the tonic is harmonized in different forms. The lower voice, in this case, may assume the submediant, dominant, dominant progression as in song 4 measure 20; submediant, subdominant, dominant as in measure 36 of the same song; submediant, mediant, dominant as in song 32 measure 6 and submediant, submediant, dominant, as in song 45 measure 45.

The melodic cadence resolved from the supertonic to the tonic is predominantly harmonized with the submediant falling to the dominant forming the harmonic interval of a parallel perfect 4th as is found in song 11 measure 4 – 5; song 12 measures 13 – 14 and 26 and song 23, measure 55. The melodic progression submediant, supertonic, tonic is found to have two possible harmonic forms. These include dominant, submediant, dominant as in song 4 at measure 12 and

submediant, submediant, dominant as in song 33 measures 7 and 16. Cadences with anticipation such as submediant, tonic, and tonic could be harmonized with submediant, submediant, dominant as in song 4 at measure 109 and song 45 at measure 11, or leading note, submediant, dominant as in song 8 at measure 13 and song 9 at measure 19.

7. 5. 4 Cadential beat, position and anticipation

Cadences in Igoru music resolve more on the second and last beats of the closing measure. Although the cadences land on these beats which are considered weak beats in Western music, the beats do not seem to be so weak in Igoru music, because they anticipate the strong beat which comes immediately after. In most cases, the songs end on the last division of these beats, which gives no gap before the anticipated strong beat falls on the sustained cadential note(s). Other cadences fall on beats 1 and 3 which are considered strong in character. The table below illustrates the frequency and percentage of the positions where the cadences occur.

Table 7 – 4: Frequency and percentage of cadential position

Position	Frequency	Percentage	Songs
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Beat 1	12	24%	1, 6, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 33, 37, 39, 41, 42,
Beat 2	13	26%	9, 13, 14, 15, 18, 31, 32, 35, 36, 44, 46, 47, 50
Beat 3	6	12%	22, 23, 27, 28, 38, 43,
Beat 4	19	38%	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 20, 25, 26, 29, 30, 34, 40, 45, 48, 49
Total	50	100%	50

From the table above, we observe that Igoru cadences are actually preferred at (a) beats 2 and (b) beats 4 to anticipate the down or strong beat coming after it. Cadences on beat 4 have the highest frequency of 19 out of 50, making 38%. This is followed by cadences occurring at beat 2 with the frequency of 13 out of 50, making 26%. Others are cadences at beat 1, which has the total frequency of 12 out of 50, making 24% and those at beat 3, which has the frequency of 6 out of 50, making 12% only. The reason for this could be that the instruments of accompaniment are normally accentuated at every recurring strong beat, particularly at beat 1, and all the instruments almost always land on the beat at once. This can possibly swallow up the last word(s) of the text, or make it sound obscure. But when the voices end before the strong beat, the instruments come shortly after to strengthen it. Thus at the final cadence of nearly all the songs accompanied, the voices land on their cadence before the instruments land on

the down beat as in song 8 at measure 29, page A2 – 30, song 25 at measure 88 – 89, page A2 – 71, song 34 at measure 33 – 34, page A2 – 99, song 45 at measure 45 – 46, page A2 - 148.

7. 6 Voice range

The range for male voices is approximately a compound augmented 2nd, while female voices sing up to compound minor 3rd. The table below illustrates the various melodic ranges found in the songs so far transcribed in this study:

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Table 7 – 5: Frequency and percentage of voice range

Upper voice	Song	Freq.	Perc. (%)	Lower voice	Song	Freq. (%)	Perc.
Comp. Aug. 2 nd	1, 25	2	4%	Comp. Aug 2nd	33	1	7. 14%
Comp. Maj. 2 nd	18, 19, 23, 24, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 49	11	22%	Comp. Maj. 2nd	4, 30	2	14. 29%
Comp. min. 2 nd	15	1	2	Comp. Min. 2nd	–	–	–
Aug. 3 rd	12	1	2%	Aug. 3rd	–	–	–
Comp. Maj. 3 rd	37, 48	2	4%	Comp. Maj. 3rd	37	1	7. 14%
Comp. Min. 3 rd	2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 14, 21, 29, 32, 34, 39, 40, 45, 50	14	28%	Comp. Min. 3rd	–	–	–
Comp. Perf. 4 th	8, 9, 13, 28, 30, 31, 33,	7	14%	Comp. Perf. 4th	8, 9, 32	3	21. 44%
Comp. Dim. 4 th	26, 27, 35,	3	6%	Comp. Dim. 4th	–	–	–
Perf. 5 th	–	–	–	Perf. 5th	11, 12,	4	28. 57%

					23, 31		
Comp. Perf. 5 th	3, 16, 22	3	6%	Comp. Perf. 5 th	–	–	–
Maj. 6 th	–	–	–	Maj. 6 th	39	1	7. 14%
Aug. 6 th	–	–	–	Aug. 6 th	25	1	7. 14%
Maj. 7 th	47	1	2%	Maj. 7 th	–	–	–
Perf. 8ve	7, 11, 17, 20, 36	5	10%	Perf. 8ve	45	1	7. 14%
Total	50	50	100%	Total	14	14	100%

From the above table we observe that the commonest voice range for lead singers cover a compound minor 3rd, which has the frequency of 14 out of 50, making 28%. Next to this is the compound major 2nd with 11 frequency and 22%. This is followed by the perfect octave with the frequency of 5, making 10%. The widest range found in this study is the compound perfect 5th which has the frequency of 3, making 6%. Next to this is the compound perfect 4th which frequency is 7, making 14%. The range for the lower voice is a little restricted, because the intervals between it and the upper voice do not have to be so wide. We have argued under harmonic intervals that the upper voice and the lower voice do not sing beyond the perfect octave apart. The two voices indeed sparingly sing an octave apart. This is due to the fact that very wide intervals between only two voices could sound hollow. In this study, the perfect 5th is found to have the highest frequency of 4 out of 14, making 28.57%. This is not to argue that the lower voice performer can only perform within this short range. The range, as we argued earlier, is limited by the fact that very wide intervals are not expected to occur between the two voices. Some of the lower voice singers, if they have to perform as the lead singer, could cover compound intervals such as those in the table above.

To buttress this point further we find that the second place interval on the lower voice is the compound perfect 4th, which has the frequency of 3 out of 14, making 21.44%. This interval is this wide, because the lower voice sometimes performs as the receiver soloist. The intervals between the upper and lower voices in the chorus sections, in this case, still do not exceed the perfect octave. But within the moments when the lower voice takes over solo from the lead singer, the voice could reach higher or lower pitches than could be found in the harmony sections. This is found to be exactly the case with all the compound intervals identified in the lower voice. The compound intervals covered by the lower voice in this study, apart from the compound perfect 4th, include the compound augmented 2nd, major 2nd and the minor 3rd. The compound augmented 2nd has the frequency of 1, making only 7.14%. The compound major 2nd appears with the frequency of 2 to make 14.29%, while the compound major 3rd occurs only once with 7.14%.

7.6.1 Responsorial and antiphonal forms

Several forms of responsorial and antiphonal singing exist in Igoru performances. We are discussing all the sub-forms under these two broad forms together because a number of them are normally combined to compose or present the performance of any songs. There is the form we describe as solo and punctuation chorus response, where the soloist takes a fairly long passage in the narrative/song and the chorus comes in occasionally with the foundation vowel or two-word statement in only two-note phrase. In song 47 (page A2 – 150), two forms are used by the performers. At the beginning, the lead singer and the chorus complement one another with one-measure phrase each. While the lead singer sings a solo statement within the first three beats of the measure, the chorus completes the measure with the last beat, using the foundation vowel to

attain textual and semantic significance. As we have argued in chapter six, the foundation vowel here means 'yes, go on'. After this brief section in two measures, the chorus joins the lead singer to perform the remaining part of the first section in unison. The receiver soloist then comes in with a three-measure phrase and the chorus responds to it in only one-measure phrase. The whole ensemble thereafter sings the remaining part of the song once again in unison. Song 48 (page A2 – 152) is another example of this form.

One other form is the solo and chorus recycle adopted for some short songs. The lead singer in this form presents the song twice to establish it firmly and the receiver soloist provides the cue statement for the chorus to recycle the song after. We call this form solo and chorus recycles because what seems to be continuous repetition of the theme by the chorus sometimes encounters variations in shift of register and tonality, as well as entry beat or melodic modification. The lead soloist and receiver soloist alternate, to recycle several receiver solo statements to develop the theme as the performance progresses. Song 25 (page A2 – 64) is a very good example of this form, where a three-measure song is presented and developed to eighty nine (89) measures performance length.

Complementary counterpoint is another form of responsorial performance found in Igoru music. In this form, the lead soloist and the lower part singer perform complementary roles to one another interdependently. The lead soloist introduces each statement and is joined by the lower voice and chorus to complete it. Parts of the statements taken by the soloist are often shorter than the parts taken together by the whole ensemble. This form is in song 4 (page A2 – 6) where the lead soloist introduces the statement that exposes the theme in only one measure and the chorus join to develop it to four measures. The lead

singer begins the next statement in only three beats of a single measure and the lower voice and chorus counterpoint comes in again for five and half measures to complete the statement. This order of presentation continues up to measure 72 and the form changes to the second aspect of it (the form) which is contrapuntal in nature. Measures 74 to 81 present the contrapuntal section where the lead singer and the lower voice prompt one another to complement or recycle each other's statement to develop the theme further. The complementary counterpoint is also found in song 32, page A2 – 85.

7. 6. 2 Strophic form

We have argued in chapter six that strict strophic form is not found in Igoru music. Since the verses always have unequal lines, the tendency is for the melody to keep changing from verse to verse. Two songs were referred to in the

early discussion of strophic form, though with particular focus on the text. It is therefore necessary to have a closer look at the form, with reference to the scores in appendix II. Verses 1 and 2 of song 34 on page A2 – 93 are set to the same melody, but have different approaches at the cadence. Verses 2 and 3 follow the melody strictly, except that verse three has a syllable set to the tie at the cadence. This is acceptable in strophic forms. Verses 4 and 5 follow the melody strictly in the same manner. As in verses 2 and 3, verse 5 also has a syllable for the last note where the tie is not observed. Verse 2 therefore is a match for verse 4, while verse 3 is a match for verse 5, but where performed in the order shown in the score. Verses 6, 7, 8, and 9 assume independent forms of modification on the principal melody. The modifications were necessitated by the variable metre of the text, where some lines have more syllables than others.

While the earlier verses begin with the second unit of beat 4, verse 6 begins with the third unit of beat 3; verse 7 with the first unit of beat 3; verse 8 with the first unit of beat 3, and verse 9 with the second unit of beat 2. This arrangement alters the strict strophic structure.

7. 6. 4 Narratives

Narratives in Igoru music can be classified broadly into three, segmental narrative; incremental cycle and multiple recycle forms. The segmental narratives may have four sections, though not strictly as follows. The four sub-sections derive from the terms used by Igoru musicians and other Okpe traditional musicians to discuss sections of vocal forms:

- The *ekpare*, introduction
- The *ekele*, development
- The *evbarien*, recapitulation
- The *efuen*, coda

7. 6. 4. 1 Segmental narrative form

In segmental narratives themes are lyrically developed to enact a story. The story is built into segments that assume different forms. Each segment often introduces a new idea, though might be related to the former. It could start with a solo statement and move to chorus, to conclude with strict antiphony. Song 22 (page A2 – 53) is an example of this form. The section marked A from measure 1 to 20 is the introduction of the narrative. The soloist presents textual-melodic statements to firmly establish the theme of the narrative. Sections B and C (measure 21 to 62) form segments of the narrative development. Within these sections, we find recycling of the rhythmic and melodic themes recurring with

variations as new lyrics are continually being introduced. Section D from measure 63 to 87 has the highest form of recycling where the composer/performer sets different poetic lines to the same thematic idea, with little variations determined by the variable metre of the texts. The poet re-counts the events he/she narrates in stages (what the musicians call *ekele*). Section E from measure 88 to the end at measure 108 marks the conclusion of the narrative, presented in a recycled solo and chorus responsorial style.

Song 36 (page A2 – 107) is an example of short narratives in this form. It has a form that can be put into three clear sections. When we consider the length between the cadence of the second section and the beginning of the third, we find that they are well linked up together: the text informs us that they are separate sections, one being longer than the other. The text and melodic development of the song suggest a ternary form of ABA as marked in the score. The first section from measure 1 to 9 is the introductory textual-melodic theme. The section marked B from beat 4 of measure 9 is the development of the theme, while the section marked A2 is a recapitulation of the introduction which concludes the song.

The long narrative, song 37 (page A2 – 109), is in three segments. The first segment is marked A from measure 1 to 21. This segment presents the statement of the theme by the lead soloist, while the receiver soloist takes over from her to build up more suspense in the text. Then the lead soloist restates the theme as before, with the lower voice coming in to provide the harmony in complementary style. The second segment marked B from measure 22 to 39 is presented in a responsorial style between the lead soloist and the lower voice

only. This is the development of the theme. Between measures 40 and 43, the receiver soloist restates the rhetoric question that earlier established the suspense, to provide a link between this segment and the following segment. The third segment is the recycling of the first two segments, with the full chorus coming in. Although it looks like repetition, it is not an exact repetition. It is recycled in such a way that the new section A is not as the first. The first was without chorus back up, while the recycling in the third segment has a heavier texture with the entire chorus participation.

Song 39 (page A2 – 119) presents similar segments. The first section marked A from measure 1 to 5 is an introductory statement by the lead soloist, which announces the appearance of the ensemble for the performance (in a studio setting). The section marked B from measure 6 to 41 is the presentation and development of the theme in a responsorial style between the lead soloist and the lower voice only. The second segment begins at measure 42 with the receiver soloist stating the position of the ensemble concerning Igoru performances, in order to bring in the lead singer with the recycle. The lead soloist comes in immediately to restate the theme of the song and develop it without delay. This time, the full chorus performs in responsorial style with the lead singer. While the first segment is performed accapella, the second segment is performed with instrumental accompaniment.

7. 6. 4. 2 Incremental recycle form

Incremental recycle forms are those whose sections build up phrases in similar melodic fragmentation: in antecedent and consequent phrase forms. The lyrical theme is stated and developed in series of recycles, which contain several

variations in the melody, depending on the variable metre presented by the text. The development of the theme involves changes both in motif and tonal centre. Song 4 (page A2 – 6) is a long narrative which is composed in this form. We have divided it into four sections plus a coda. The first section marked A from measure 1 to 22 is the introduction of the theme, exposing both the rhythmic and melodic themes as well as the topical theme. In sections B and C, (measure 23 to 94), the composer presents the development of the narrative. The sections are developed in a complementary manner between the lead singer and the chorus. This gradually builds up the climax of the composition/performance, as the recycling brings up new ideas in the rhythm, melody and more essentially in the text. This is why we call the form incremental recycling. Section D from measure 95 to 110 presents the conclusion of the narrative, while the coda from measure 110, beat 4 restates theme in summary.

Song 16 (page A2 – 42) is another example of incremental recycle form. Its first section marked A from measure 1 to 10 is the statement of the theme, introducing both the topic of the narrative and the melody. Section B, from measure 11 to 70, recycles the themes over and again in series of variations. The narrative is fully developed in this long section, which towards its end made a shift to the parallel tonal centre at performance. Section C, from measure 71 to the end at measure 96, presents the conclusion of the narrative. It uses varieties of the earlier themes and brings the narrative to a close.

7. 6. 4. 3 Multiple recycle form

Multiple recycle form refers to the solo and chorus form, where the chorus is constant and the solos keep developing the theme further. This form occurs when the narrative theme that forms the first melodic sentence is relatively short. The lead singer often goes through it once or twice, depending on its initial length, and the receiver soloist provides the cue on which the entire song is recycled. If the song is recycled several times, the lead soloist and receiver soloist inter-change the solo statements for each recycle. Each soloist would feed in developmental statement twice and hand over to the other, while the chorus keeps the response going. It is this method of presentation that normally determines the entire length of any Igoru composition in this form.

Song 1 (page A2 – 1) is an example of this form. The first section marked A from measure 1 to 11 presents the whole narrative, while section B from measure 12 to 14 serves as the solo cue that prepares the lead singer and the chorus to recycle the narrative. The B section, in this case is not strictly a part of this composition; it could serve the same purpose for recycling many other Igoru songs. As many times as the performers wish to recycle the narrative determine how many solo statements that are used to develop the theme. The form is a little different in song 21 where the narrative is presented in responsorial style from measure 1 to 10. The difference here is that the first section is not as fully developed as the recycling coming after the receiver solo from measure 13 to the end at measure 35. In the recycle, additional information is provided in the lyrics, which increases the length and variations of the melody.

Song 32 presents a perfect example of the form, how recycling can turn a short narrative into a long one at performance. The narrative is stated twice between measures 1 and 14. In this introductory section, the lead singer and the lower

voice play complementary roles to one another. From measure 15 to 16, the lower voice plays the role of the receiver soloist and the lead singer takes up the leadership role again reinventing the entire narrative with the chorus. At the end of this cycle at measure 23, the lead singer plays the role of the receiver soloist while the lower voice takes up the leadership role to reinvent the narrative for another cycle, but hands over leadership role to the lead singer subsequently. This order recurs to the end with the full chorus support.

7. 6. 5 Opening formulas/signature tune

Gerhard Kubik (1987: 57) writes about Malawian story tellers' opening formula practice as follows: 'Nthano are told during leisure hours. A story teller begins with an opening formula, usually "panangokhala" (this is what has happened), or "panangotele" (this is what they told)'. The concept of opening formula for oral performances is much evident in the Okpe culture. While story telling has its own opening formula in a declamatory form, other music and dance typologies use musical statements as well as declamations. Igoru music, not exception, has what we call opening formula for its performances. It is normally a short melodic statement performed in a responsorial style. Although some writers call this signature tune, in this discourse, we adopt the term opening formula, because it is closer to the concept found in Okpe culture.

The opening formulas may be performed with the lower voice providing harmony. Some of them are composed proverbially to communicate pieces of advice in very short and witty statement. Others are to announce the appearance of the performing ensemble and to invite the general public to the scene of performance. Whether its form is a witty advice or an announcement, the

opening performance creates some suspense amongst the audience and makes them very curious and expectant of what is to come during the performance. The

performance opening formula also enables Igoru musicians to exercise their voices briefly before the performance begins. They, more often than not, present one of these short songs before beginning the performance of the major songs prepared for the performance proper. Once the opening formula is taken, other songs could come after in circles.

The most popular among the Igoru opening formulas is song 10 and 11. The two are but one song as performed by different ensembles. We have several recordings of the same song from many Igoru musicians, out of which we have selected only these two presentations for transcription. While the first one, as several others, is performed in unison and is only six-measure long, the second is in two-part harmony, developed to ten measures. It is the most used and some Igoru musicians also use it as a closing formula. The texts have been discussed in chapter six and our primary concern here is about the music and its place in Igoru music presentations. Since the text has much to do with the opening formula, we have translated some of them below, while readers are referred to the scores in appendix II to see the music.

Song 10 (page A2 – 33): *E, ughe, vbe l'omo ada a Atio,*

O, you see, no one stops a child from going out, Aunty,

Ada ovo oro l'omo;

It's what he/she encounters outside that stops him/her

Ugho, vbo b' Urhobo are na nya,

You see, you'll go to Urhobo land,
Omotuvie otob' igoru reo.
Omotuvie do not get to (perform) Igoru.

- Song 11 [page A2 – 34]: *Ijo, ijo, 'vbe l'omo ada ao ijo,*

No, oh no, no one stops a child from going out,
Ada ovo oro l'omo;
Only what he/she encounters outside stops him/her;
Se obo Urhobo wo na nyao,
Whether you're to go to Urhobo land,
Ogbotuvie ovabo igoru u.
Ogbotuvie, did not escape Igoru.
E, nighe, nigheo, vbe l'omo ada ao ijo,
Oh see, see, no one stops a child from going out,
Ada ovo oro l'omo;
Only what he/she encounters outside stops him/her;
E, se obo Urhobo wo na nyao,
Oh, whether you're to go to Urhobo land,
Ogbotuvieo wu vbei rhe e.
Ogbotuvie, you do not know.

Song 12 is also an opening formula. Although the copyright owner fixed his names to the song, other performers do not mind retaining his names, but imply that Ohworerhine (the composer), in any performance situation, is the present performer(s) who is on stage. While some performers may develop the theme to

about 14 measures only, others could develop it up to 27 measures, using the receiver solo statements alternately as in this example.

- Song 12 (page A2 – 35): *Orho gba ne, Ohworerhine,*
It is once again packed full, Ohworerhine,
Eghware ogba r' ilebe ne,
The assembly is packed full for the pigeon,
Ok' ore unu me no ya he rhe.

They are waiting for what I'll say.

The Egboto Isinio ensemble has an opening formula associated to their performances. It announces the appearance of the ensemble at any given performance and states how careful and conscious the group is about the use of words. This is found below:

- Song 39, measure 1 – 4 (page A2 – 119): *Ughe, ughe,*
Entertainment, entertainment,
'gboto isinio ero afi ne;
Egboto Isinio performers have come out;
E yeghe yeghe, usekpe omwu orhao.
Gently, gently the snail climbs the tree.

7. 6. 5. 1 Closing formulas and closing thematic sentence

Closing formula refers to the short songs used by Igoru musicians to mark the final end of very long narratives or performance sessions, while closing thematic sentence refers to the conclusive part of any narrative, repeated to re-emphasize

the end firmly. Songs 4 and 35, for instance, adopt this approach by repeating the conclusive statement of the narratives:

- Song 4, measure 110 – 113 (page A2 – 6): *E, omo Imeni wu kperi,*
Oh, for Meni's son that you killed,
'Solobrugwe ono hw'osaye we.
God will pay you.

- Song 35, measure 56 – 62 (page A2 – 103):
E, s' urhie omwo ji 'rherin vbo,
Oh, the River dried and left the fishes bare,
'Chekete r'oke avbo na,

And now,
Rhe se ame ovieo, vbarha mere e.
They seek tears and find none.

Song 38 (page A2 – 115) and a part of song 5 are used both as opening and closing formulas. Igoru musicians use them this way because their texts fit into both positions (beginning and ending) of the performance. We have notated the closing formula in song 5 together with the song to show how such formulas are linked to the songs they follow. It could otherwise be a separate song, since it is a formula that can be linked to any other song to mark the end of a song circle. To show how short any opening or closing formula can be, we have on the other hand notated the other example as an independent song.

- Song 5, measure 12 – 18 (page A2 – 19):
E, igoru eghwemese oro afen hine,

Yea, the women have come out with their Igoru,
Onyobruo nene,
Mass movement, grand mother,
Omo ro rhonri ogbomo nughe ameo.
Anyone who hears should come to watch our performance.

- Song 38 (page A2 – 118): *Erhio, Enakoboneo,*
Oppression, Enakobone,
Ame ogbeva okpa eririo,
Twice successively in the rain causes cold,
Enakoboneo, wu vbei rhe e.
Enakobone, you do not know.

Igoru musicians also use a closing formula presented in a declamatory style. It is performed responsorial as half song half speech. This closing formula has some kind of rhythmic interest, but consists of indefinite pitches. We have attempted to notate this together with song 26, one of the songs it followed in one of the recorded performances. Song 43 is a very short song that is used as a closing formula to emphasize the possibilities of disappointments that could come over deviants who go after selfish interest than following legitimate social order.

- Song 26, measure 11 – 15 (page A2 – 72): *'Gberadja chuen, chuen;*
Sex workers are smart, they are smart;
Ona du we, present sir;
This had affairs with me, present sir;

Ona ji duo, present sir.

That also did, present sir.

- Song 43 (page A2 – 139): *Ukpe ri Pita okele ohuao*,
The year Peter took his divorce claims,
Iboma irhe hin Ikeja;
There was lack of soldiers in Ikeja;
E, emru meo n'omana orhirhie.
Oh, this is how my things always end.

7. 6. 5. 2 Receiver solo statement

Receiver solo statements are very short songs that are used to connect the lead solo sections with the chorus or link the end of a song (chorus) to its recycle. They are composed to be so short in order for them to fit into the internal part of any songs at performances. Over the years many receiver solo songs have been composed for Igoru performance. Performers therefore have a wide range of variety to choose from during performances. Lead soloists and receiver soloists

sometimes use the receiver solo statements alternately to develop the themes of very short songs and thereby lengthen the duration of the performance. Although some of them have been composed to be in context with certain songs, many of them are composed in free manners that enable them fit into several songs in different Igoru performance contexts. The example from song 37 at measure 9 – 12, among the list below is composed to express the loss of the Orodje of Okpe, Esezi II. It cannot therefore be used in any other song, except songs that narrate sorrowful events. The others can fit into several circles of related songs. Readers

may take a look at the variety of receiver solo statements below and possibly see the melodies in appendix II.

- Song 1, measure 12 – 14 (page A2 – 1): *Nene, neneo, oso ijoro oso hine*,
Grand mother, grand mother, the singer has performed,
Orho vbo erere ro terie e.
And has got no profit.

- Song 2, measure 12 – 13 (page A2 – 3): *Oshewereo, inene*,
It has begun, grand mother,
Ame rha t'ona ari ne seyi efian.
If we say this, you'll call it a lie.

- Song 7, at measure 9 – 10 (page A2 – 22): *Oshewereo, ejo*,
It has begun, oh no!
Ba mi rhe hu, mi t' Erimi re.
Truly if I die, I won't get to heaven.

- Song 9, measure 9 – 11 (page A2 – 32):
E, inene, ukperi igoru ovbo rho kpe ame e
Oh, grand mother, Igoru blames do not kill us.

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- Song 12, measure 8 – 11 (page A2 – 35): *E, ododo 'rie udje 'vbo vre*
rh'udje e.
Yea, the flower doesn't get missing in a procession.

- Song 12, measure 18 – 20 (page A2 – 36): *Ogba ro ti oso, ogbo ha emru herhie.*
Let the great rain maker place container to gather the water.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Whenever an animal that was once caught in a trap, and fought hard to escape, sees a stick bent in the likeness of another trap, it must take extra caution – An Okpe adage.

8. 1 Out-come of Igoru counsel and warnings

As in all human cultures, Okpe not an exception, musicians perform prophetically, foretelling future consequences of certain actions taken by men and women in the society. Igoru musicians, in their foresight, investigate, evaluate, probe and foretell future events in Okpe. We argued earlier in chapter six that in traditional Okpe society, life experiences are shared, whether they are sweet or bitter, painful or joyful. Things that are capable of causing pains and grief to families and communities are therefore issues of primary concern to the Igoru musicians. It was therefore necessary for them to warn and counsel their audiences against some wanton attitude and practices that could result in painful experiences. Some warnings and counsel from Igoru musicians, as discussed in chapter six, were directed to individuals, communities and the entire Okpe nation. We shall discuss these further under the following sub-headings.

8. 1. 1 Succession to the Orodje's (king's) stool

The theme of song 3 in appendix I, for instance, provided a warning from the poet to Okpe citizens in general. The poet, in the first instance, revealed an evil plan that was underway to dethrone the king by means of assassination and thereupon warned against the execution of the plan. The poet implied in his/her warning that any evil against the royal father by his subjects would offend the ancestral spirits who would certainly avenge fearsomely. The poet puts this proverbially that 'it is what the hand causes that the head pays for'. Death, as is known in Okpe culture does not always mean the physical demise and departure from the earth. But also means 'life without direction' and 'life of irreversible conditions of hopelessness and shame' that are associated with evil offences the sufferer partook of. Thus, if a murderer for instance becomes insane subsequently in his/her life time, the public would say he/she is dead alive. Or, if a refractory decease puts an offender of the ancestral spirits into a helpless and shameful condition where, for instance, he/she begins to pass out waste in the house for a long time before his/her actual death, members of the society would say he/she died alive. We argued in chapter three that Ezezi I at the time of his assassination cursed the Okpe, that they would not have a king after him. Since then the people have had two interregnums and are currently having some difficulty crowning another king after the death of Orhoro I in 2004. All these experiences prove that warning from musicians is very important to every living society. If the warning from Igoru musicians concerning the assassination of Ezezi I was heeded, perhaps there would have been much stability in the succession to the Orodje stool.

8. 1. 2 Commercial sex trade and STD

Earlier in chapter six we discussed the themes of song 40 (A1 – 67) and song 43 (page A1 – 71) which suggest that the subjects were counselled and warned concerning the paths they took morally. The composers narrate the consequent events that followed the failure of the subjects to heed the counsel and warning. Since in community life, Igoru musicians kindled societal conscience, they offered these sort of counsel and warning to community members about some dangers ahead. These performances create more awareness about the possibility of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STD) through promiscuity and the consciousness to avoid it.

8. 1. 3 Itsekiri and Ugbukurusu wars

Song 23 (page A1 – 36) and song 24 (page A1 – 38) inform the audience that the Okpe gave land to the Itsekiri to inhabit (not to possess) and when they had lived in the land for long, began to contend the ownership in order to possess it. The theme of song 25 (page A1 – 38) says ‘we shall pour out sand from the sack that we filled, which turned to insult us, so that it falls and rot.’ This was a call on the leadership of Okpe to order that the Itsekiri be dispossessed of all Okpe land they inhabit before they come back in warfare to contest the ownership as they did contend Sapele land in the 1940s. Song 26 (page A1 – 39) contains similar warning to the Okpe who harbour the same people in various communities, saying ‘the water would swallow’ the hosts, if they do not take caution.

In the early 1990s, farmland dispute ensued between some members of Ugbukurusu and Obotie communities. Both communities are in Okpe land by the river side. By 1997 the land dispute degenerated and an Itsekiri inhabitant of Obotie killed an Okpe of Ugbukurusu in the farm. The Okpe regarded this to be mere land dispute between families and allowed it to be treated as such. By 2001 the land dispute degenerated further and enlarged into community clashes. The Itsekiri of Obotie attacked the Ugbukurusu, killing and burning houses of the Okpe. And the Okpe launched a reprisal attack that levelled Obotie community that year.

The recent crisis in Warri and environs, principally between the Ijaw and Itsekiri, reaching its heights from 1997 to 2003, with massive killing and burning of Itsekiri settlements by their warring opponents, the Itsekiri shifted their attention to the Okpe. To capitalize upon the 2001 conflict, the Itsekiri planned a fresh attack to seize, not only Ugbukurusu from the Okpe, but to invade all Okpe communities around the riversides. On January 17, 2004 the Itsekiri invaded Ugbukurusu during a night burial, at about 4.00 a. m. and carried out massive killing and burning of houses. Their plan being to capture all the Okpe communities around the riverside and take possession of them because the Ijaw had rendered most of them homeless, they invaded Ugborhen, Ikeresan and Igbeku by the following day January 18, 2004 with their weapons of warfare and fuel to burn the communities to ashes. Although the Ugborhen youth mounted a very strong resistance and defence that delivered other Okpe communities, the musicians' prophecies were fulfilled in these events.

8. 1. 4 Christianity, traditional ethos and philosophy of healing

In song 65 (page 112), the poet provides a warning to the Christian converts who were transforming some manifestations and characteristics of traditional worship into the Christian faith. In song 66 (page 115) the same composer and performer queries some aspects of the Christian faith. He poetically remarked that he, Udogu Olocho had investigated the Christian church and found that Hallelujah (God Almighty) heals people; but that Hallelujah (now referring to the priests) neither could kill a tsetse fly nor a house fly. He gives meaning to the parable by adding that the cripple was taken to the Church and could not rise to walk. Likewise the blind was taken there, but could not see; those with swollen scrotum could not be healed and those seeking for children still could not give birth.

It is noted that the composer does not mean to dispute the fact that God can heal. He in fact acknowledged that in the opening lines of the song. What he intends to communicate to the audience is that God had provided human beings with the herbs and other sources of healing. And that healing divinely must be in consonance with the will of God, according to his time and wise purpose. Thus, healing sometimes could be gradual and at other times be instantaneous. The composer must have observed that all the times people were taken to the Christian worship ground for healing, not all the people received healing at once. This means further that no one can actually force the hands of God to do the immediate things human beings desire.

8. 2 Dividends of Igoru music

The composer of song 87 (page A1 – 157) proclaimed that the young ladies in Okpe were at liberty to live profitable lives. Stating further that those children who know the rules do not break them; and that only those who do

would be punished through Igoru satire. He/she suggests that Igoru musicians are only doing their best to help mould character and moral standards in the society and in doing this must be wary not to let things go out of hands. The composer implies that when discipline is too severe (non-commensurate with or) for offences, children could become more hardened to continue with the same offences for which they have been punished. He/she therefore remarks that he who extinguishes fire does not have to hold palm nut shafts (fuel) in his hand.

From the late 1980s to the early 2000s in Nigeria, media reports have pointed out that some young ladies travel to other countries to engage in commercial sex business. Some of the recent reports state that some of them have been repatriated back home, and the ethnic groups from which they come are sometimes mentioned. www.iss.org.za provides the following:

Yet although smuggling is illegal, it is not criminal. However, the Nigerian diaspora is also involved in organized crime. This appears to be the result of factors such as endemic local corruption, which facilitates illicit trafficking; the Biafra civil war, which contributed to a proliferation of firearms; the oil boom of the 1970s, which led to the embezzlement of public funds; and the economic crisis of the 1980s, which was accompanied by a rise in robberies. The expansion of the Nigerian diaspora and organized crime went hand in hand. Global migration boosted prostitution, drug trafficking and fraud, the three main activities of Nigerian syndicates. The smuggling of Nigerian sex workers became a whole industry that now extends from Switzerland to France and Italy (where black prostitutes are called “fireflies”), and has even reached the prudish kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from which 1,000 women are said to be deported every month by the authorities.

Although young ladies from the Okpe culture have not been mentioned clearly in these recent reports of commercial sex trade in foreign countries, with the current vogue in civilization that has de-emphasized the sanctity of virginity; some young ladies have fallen pregnant out of marriage. In such incidents, the ladies and young men responsible for such pregnancies are encouraged and supported to get married and look after the welfare of the children. We observe generally that Igoru musicians have played significant roles in the moderation of moral standards in the Okpe society.

8. 3 Reasons for the fall of Igoru music

Some elders, some of whom are not Igoru musicians, have argued that the fall and transformation of Igoru music to Ighopha music was due to the fact that the musicians were attacked by means of sorcery. At the same time, elders acknowledge that Igoru music was very entertaining and functional in Okpe. Peter Etalo, a well known Igoru musician from Mereje however remarks that the fall of Igoru music was due to its misuse by some new entrants into Igoru performance. According to him, some trivial faults found with some persons were exaggerated out of proportion, while some offences that were not committed were also fixed into these latter Igoru performances and they were found to be offensive. He expresses this as follows:

Some later Igoru musicians did not do well in their performances. Some of them formulated unhealthy narratives against those who at one time or the other offended them personally. Others changed facts in their narratives. For example, as three of us are together in this house, if Mr A does expel gas from his/her bowel in a funny manner, some Igoru musicians would set it to music with exaggerating features and rather than refer to Mr A, they would insert the names of Mr B who was never present at the scene (Peter Etalo; oral interview).

8. 4 Summary of Igoru functions

We argued that Igoru musicians have played significant roles in educating and enlightening the Okpe public through their musical performances. Most Igoru themes are educative either by use of direct statements or by use of idioms, epigrammatise and proverbs that are poetically structured to stimulate further reasoning and realization of deductive meaning. Igoru musicians warned and counselled their audiences against some wanton attitude and practices that could result in painful experiences. They made efforts through their compositions and performances to criticise and correct some excesses of some community members in the belief that everything any human being does requires moderation, even if it is permissible in the society. We found in this study direct and indirect chronological references. The direct ones refer to specific events that are responsible for certain responses, while the indirect references refer to such events without mentioning them. Even when the songs are satirical, the composers still consider the value of entertainment very important. They ensure that the text of the songs and all other musical and extra-musical elements that are capable of stimulating a good sense of humour are contained in the songs.

Igoru music performs the functions of praise and commendation to deserving members, in order to encourage such persons who are doing well in the society to continue in their good deeds, as well as stimulate others to emulate them. In performances, the musicians defended their political system, their territorial land mass, traditional religion and themselves from various attacks. Many Igoru songs make reference to the political institution, where the issue of the traditional ruler (the king) was central. In fact, the Okpe in Lagos took Igoru music as a mark of

Okpe ethnic identity, thus it was selected amongst other music typologies of the culture to represent it, both in social and political-oriented activities.

8. 4. 1 Summary of poetic properties

The principal language of Igoru music is Okpe, but some Igoru poets briefly insert words from other languages like English, Urhobo and Itsekiri, known to the people, to create some effects and sensation. We refer to the use of these foreign words as language importation in the context of this discourse. The persona is also a common and prominent feature in Igoru poetry. It appears in the first person pronoun such as 'I and we'. Igoru composers use either of these personas to narrate events that took place, as if they were right at the scene of the incidents, in order to make it look real and more effective at presentation. Igoru composers undertake several processes of selecting and permutating different elements from the language and linguistic phenomenon of the Okpe culture, as well as those of music. These elements unify in the process and become a product that transmits several messages to the public in symbolic forms.

In Igoru music, the performers some times open a performance with an introductory speech. Spoken introduction informs the audience about the background of the song or songs to be performed and prepares them (the audience) toward the experience; an indication that the poetry of Igoru music involves both elements of speech and song. We also found variety in the choice of words, where the performing musicians/poets might insert new words that mean exactly the same as those used earlier or as those they replace. Since generally oral poetry in Okpe is not recited, except in story-telling forms, Igoru poetry does not exist as mere recitation, but in proper songs, structured into

melodies for the singing voice to communicate. The songs are either short or long, in some thorough composed narrative and varied verse forms. The simplest Igoru songs are composed in very short melodic sentences. Often, these short songs serve as preambles or introduction to the narratives. Igoru composers give emphasis to good choice of words and wise sayings. Phrasing and word selection both play important roles in the songs. Expressions that have roots in human experiences, some of which the composer might have had personal encounter and others based on the experiences handed down from past generations provide basis for philosophical constructions.

We argued that Igoru musicians follow and apply philosophical approach in interpreting the meaning of names as they manifest in the lives of people in the society. They also follow after the philosophical axiology (theory) that value is put in place by the Ultimate or Absolute, in the belief that the values handed down by their predecessors have been fixed by the Ultimate being(s). They therefore compose their songs to uphold these ethos already established and passed on from generation to generation as values that must not be breached, believing that such would have adverse effects not only on the culprits, but on the entire society. They adopt both the deductive and inductive approaches under the domain of logic to construct their musical-poetic messages as well as metaphysical approaches in getting to conclusions in the messages they communicate to their audiences. Most of the themes in Igoru music are derived from the sense of realism than idealism. The songs being quite topical had to be realistic than idealistic in tendency. The theory of essentialism and progressivism is also upheld in Igoru music, believing that the adult member ought to acquaint him/herself with the values of the society, but if there are failures in one or two individuals, it becomes necessary to instruct them through music.

Igoru musicians make use of words that are sometimes suggestive of double or multiple meaning and these conceptual words often form basis for the themes and sub-themes of the songs. The poets deliberately organize words, syllables and lines in patterns that will generate similarity in sounds; create audile sensitivity and stimulate more curiosity and emotionality. They create images in the imagination and minds of the audience by imitating and representing sounds of objects and characters so described, in order to stimulate emotional responses from audiences. We observed the use of sound elements such as alliteration and assonance; rhetoric questions and repetition; homophonic doubling of words and parallelism; *emro egbaren* – similitude of spoonerism; foundation vowel, round-off and nasality; elision, truncation, word-link and onomatopoeia.

Amongst several poetic foot schemes, we found that Igoru musical culture favours choriambic, iambic, dactylic, and trochaic feet. Versification in the songs is in free-strophic and strict narrative forms. Greater numbers of Igoru songs are composed in single verse form. The diversity of length ranges from three lines to fifteen; but of all these the nine-line single verse has the highest frequency, followed by the five-line verse often called limericks in poetry. Next to these are songs in only six, seven, ten and eleven lines that appear to have equal frequency. It is actually difficult to group Igoru music into strophic or prosodic forms, because they are composed in free style of continuous melodic flow that often runs through the entire length of the poetry. We found that rhyme is a device adopted by Igoru composers to create aesthetic effects of sound within lines or between lines of a verse. It is a creation that brings words that have similar sounds close to one another for a sort of agreement that stimulates

heightened aural perception. End and internal rhymes; couplet, quatrain or alternate rhyme, triplet rhyme and other rhyme forms were found in the study.

In Igoru music, several images are created by the composers to represent the themes of the songs and how they feel about the characters they describe. Visual image; audile or auditory image; tactile and thermal images; olfactory image and gustatory image; motile or kinaesthetic image were all found in the study. Figures of speech used for expressions that are made to describe persons and objects in manners that present connotative and suggestive meanings were also found. These include simile and metaphor; metonymy and synecdoche; personification and paradox; antithesis and pun; pathetic fallacy and allusion; bathos and climax; hyperbole and euphemism; litotes or meiosis; innuendo, oxymoron and irony. Oral poetic forms such as allegory and parable; epic and biographical praise; elegy, ode and monody; fable and memoir; satire and lampoon were also found as forms of narration in Igoru music.

8.5 Summary of compositional techniques

We observe in the present study that the Okpe culture uses hexatonic (seven-note) scale system, out of which any number of tones may be selected for Igoru musical compositions. Igoru music is composed mostly in the compound quadruple metre, though the simple quadruple time is also in use. The songs could begin anywhere in the opening measure, in forms of anacrusis. We observe that the Okpe language, though tonal, is flexible when the words are set to music. The composers have liberty of setting the words with consideration of melodic beauty as well as communication objectives. Igoru music is highly

syllabic, in that each melodic tone is assigned to a syllable in the text with very scanty slurs expected. So far, we observed that the few slurs found in all the songs transcribed are influenced by the use of glide, doubling of vowel at the end of a phrase or sentence and the use of the foundation vowel 'e' which has the tendency to attract slurs.

Variable poetic metre, where the poetry presents unequal lines of text, and consequently unequal melodic phrases that in the theory of complementary dualism balance with one another, is a common feature in the songs. We observe conscious melodic configurations with absence of semitones in melodic progression as in Okpe musical tradition. The interval of an octave is used sparingly in the harmony. Consecutive parallel 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and 7ths are found in the music. The perfect 4th, perfect 5th, major and minor 3rds are, in Igoru music, consonant intervals and this explains why they are used in higher frequency than other harmonic intervals. Occasional part crossing in a 2nd or 3rd occurs between the two parts in Igoru music, particularly when a final cadence is approached. At the entry of the lead singer with a solo that overlaps with the cadence of the two-part harmony some forms of triad are formed.

Almost all Igoru songs begin and move upward, particularly by use of the foundation vowel, before they continue to move around several other directions according to the theories of earth orientation, longevity and heaven-ward focus. Basically, the melodies resolve upwards from the submediant to the tonic at final cadences, though a few other forms of resolution exist. Cadences in Igoru music resolve more on the second and last beats of the closing measure. Liberty to change vocal register and often tonality adjustment are found in the theory of relativism where songs could begin at any tonal level and move to other tonal

centres, depending on the convenience of the performers. We observe too that the commonest voice range for lead singers cover a compound minor 3rd, while the widest range found in the study is the compound perfect 5th.

Responsorial and antiphonal vocal forms; strophic form; segmental narrative form; incremental recycle form and multiple recycle form are found in Igoru music. The concept of opening formula for oral performances is much evident in the songs as in the Okpe culture. While story telling has its own opening formula in a declamatory form, other music and dance typologies use musical statements as well as declamations. Closing formulas were also found in forms of short songs used by Igoru musicians to mark the final end of a very long narrative or a performance session. Receiver solo cues are used to connect the lead solo sections with the chorus or link the end of a song to its recycle.

8. 6 Recommendations

Since this is a pioneering study on Igoru music in Okpe, we do not claim to have exhausted the study of the typology. Although we have focused on its functions and compositional techniques in this study, we hereby recommend the following:

- Although we have collected large samples for this study, we do not claim to have covered all Igoru songs in Okpe. More songs could then be collected for further studies.
- Enquiry into the roles of women in Igoru musical performances is very significant in further researches.

- Traditional and popular musicians, particularly in Okpe culture, should avoid misuse and abuse of satire in future performances, since such practices are capable of creating conflict that override the essence of musical functions in the society.
- The promotion and preservation of valuable musical cultures that represent the identity of peoples and nations are significant to the human race. The leaders of Okpe, government of Delta State and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, particularly the ministry of information and culture, are therefore encouraged to sponsor future researches that aim to seek, promote and preserve indigenous musical knowledge.
- NGOs and research foundations are also encouraged to provide sponsorship for further researches in Okpe generally, because the culture is still a virgin land in terms of musical research and publication.
- Leaders and peoples of Okpe and other cultural groups are encouraged to pay attention to, and take counsel and warning from musicians seriously in the society.

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Line No.

APPENDIX I
(Annexure to chapter 6)

IGORU POETRY
SONGS OF THE FIRST PERIOD (1170 – 1900)

No. 1 ỌSE ỌMỌ YỌ RỌ DORO

Ẹkpare: E, Oshewere, Eritekone o e!

Ehwe: Ame ọgbeva,
 Ọkpa eriri o,
 'Ritekone o, wu vbe i rhe-e.

5 Ẹkpare: Akpọ na orhie unu firhọ ne,
 Ehwe: Ekete avwaran vbọ rhọ bẹ enyeren (vwariẹn),

 Ẹkpare: Ọki mie se inene,
 Ehwe: Ovberẹ Ugbunu owwo rho t' unu-u,

 Ẹkpare: Ki mie se ibaba,
10 Ehwe: Ovberẹ ugbunu n' ofome ọgbunu o,

 Ẹkpare: Ekete avbaran me nya rhe,

	Ehwe:	Ọsẹ ro vwiẹ ọmọ n' ọye ọr' ọdoro.
15	Efro:	Nene o, nene o, Ọso ijoro ọso hi ne, Orho vbo erere r' ote rie-e.
	Ẹkpare:	Akpọ na orhie unu firho ne,
	Ehwe:	Ekete avbaran vbo rho bẹ enyerẹn (vwariẹn)
	Ẹkpare:	Ọki mie se inene,
20	Ehwe:	Ovweṛẹ ugbonu ovbo rho t' unu-u,
	Ẹkpare:	Ki mie se ibaba,
	Ehwe:	Ovbere ugbonu n' ofomeṛ ugbonu o,
	Ẹkpare:	Ekete avbaran me nya rhe,
Line No.	Ehwe:	Ọsẹ ro vbiẹ ọmọ n' ọye ọr' ọdoro. FATHER IS GREATER...
	Solo:	Yes, Eritekone, it has begun!
	Response:	Twice consecutively in the rain [or water], Causes cold, 'Ritekone, you're not aware.

- 5 Solo: The world has opened its mouth (ie. it is free),
Response: Yet, it could be difficult to prosper in it;
Solo: When I call grand mother,
Response: The two lips do not touch one another,
Solo: When I call father,
10 Response: The lips begin to hit one another;
Solo: Then I came to realise,
Response: That father is greater.
- R-solo: Grand mother, grand mother,
The singer has performed,
15 But made no profit.
- Solo: The world has opened its mouth (ie. it is free),
Response: Yet, it could be difficult to prosper in it;
Solo: When I call grand mother,
Response: The two lips do not touch one another,
20 Solo: When I call father,
Response: The lips begin to hit one another;
Solo: Then I came to realise,

Response: That father is greater.

No. 2 EMWU ỌMUORHOJA

Line No.

5

E, ayi mwu Ọmuorhoja,
Egbane gbane, ob' Egbeda o,
Wu rhe t'ekete 'rhe kpe Ọmuorhoja,
Imeba, ono gb' are unu o.
Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja,
Inene,
Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja,
Ibaba,
Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja.

10

'Muorhoja ro mwu Ireka o,
'Reka orho mwu Ọmuorhoja;
'Muorhoja ro mwu Ireka o,
'Reka orho mwu Ọmuorhoja.

15

Ayi mwu Ọmuorhoja,
Egbane, gbane ob' Egbeda o,
Wu rhe t' ekete 'rhe kpe Ọmuorhoja,

Imeba, ono gb' are unu o.

THEY CAPTURED ỌMUORHOJA

Oh, they captured Ọmuorhoja,
And held him/her bound at the coven;
If you get to the scene where they beat Ọmuorhoja,
Members, you would be astonished.

5 Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja,
Grand mother,
Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja,
Father,
Ọmuorhoja, 'Muorhoja;

10 'Muorhoja captured Ireka,
And 'Reka captured Ọmuorhoja,
'Muorhoja captured Ireka,
And 'Reka captured Ọmuorhoja,

Line No.
15

They captured Ọmuorhoja,
And held him/her bound at the coven,
If you get to the scene where they beat Ọmuorhoja,

Members, you would be astonished.

No. 3 UMOGU OSIYẸ OGHWA

- 5
- Ẹkpare: Ba Umogu osiyẹ oghwa,
Ehwe: Otu erieda irha 'obo ghwole,
Ẹkpare: Umogu mi rhe vbo eda,
Ehwe: Gbe me kpe mẹ,
Ejo, mi rhe vbo-o,
Gba nya ji mẹ vbo,
E, ame imeba ame t' onana,
- 10
- Ẹkpare: Uhu r'awa mẹrẹ zẹ,
Ehwe: Are ọvo ah' obọ ghwołọ uhu,
Ọke r' uhu n'orhọ rhe ne o,
Gghwu s'omo ene kperi se?
- Ẹkpare: Iti obo r'obọ 'soro,
Ehwe: Ghwu s'orana y'urhomu olele o.
- 15
- Efro: Oshewere o,
Inene o, ame rha t'ona o,
Ari ne seyi efian (Ẹvbariẹn).

UMOGU WAS AT HOME

Solo: Umogu was at home,
Response: And the witches looked for his trouble,
Solo: Umogu, if I possess the witchery power,
Solo: Kill me,
5 But if I do not have it,
Then leave me alone,
Yes, we, members say so,

Line No. Solo: Death that people run away from,
10 Response: You're looking for death yourselves,
And when the death comes,
To whom would you cry?
Solo: The evil the hand causes,
Response: Is what the head follows [pays for].
15 R-solo: It has begun,
Grand mother, if we say this,
You (plural) might call it guile (Repeat).

SECOND PERIOD (1900 – 1945)

No. 4 EDIQN GBE SIMI AME

Ẹkpare: E, Ediṣon biko gbe simi ame,
E, ame h' urhomu ame r' Ediṣon mọre ne (ọ'i ye);
E, ẹdebi rọ sa na,
Ehwe: Ami ne prisi lele amwa o.

5 Ẹkpare: E, Ediṣon biko gbe simi ame, igbe sim' ame,
Ame h' urhomu ame r' Ediṣon mọre;
E, ẹdebi rọ sa na,
Response: Ami ne prisi lele amwa o.

EDIṢON, PROTECT US

Solo: Oh Ediṣon, please protect us,
Yea, we've given our heads [lives] to Ediṣon;
The day preceding our next worship,
Response: We shall preach around the town.

5 Solo: Oh Ediṣon, please protect us, protect us,
We've given our heads [lives] to Ediṣon;
The day preceding our next worship,
Response: We shall preach around the town.

Line No.

No. 5 EMRU IRIMI 1

- 5 Ẹkpare: Ughe, Ughe,
 Evbe le ọmọ ada-a, wado,
 Ehwe: Ada ọvo yoro le ọmọ,
 Ẹkpare: E, se ob' Urhobo wu na nya o,
 Ehwe: Ọgbọtuvie, wu vbe i' rhe-e.
- 10 Ẹkpare: E, Ame ihrun ohuan Igoru ame,
 Kpahen otọre,
 Ehwe: Ọmọ re ohimi aro,
 Ọgbọ mọ kpa riẹ,
 En' ame mẹrẹ,
 Ẹkpare: Ọriọmerhan r' odjegbamudu,
 Ehwe: Ọr' ohimi aro,
 N' ọye ọrọ kpare riẹ o.
- 15 Ẹkpare: Avbaran imeba irhe seyi,
 Ehwe: Se wu rhe ohuan re wu rhua re na?
 Kọkọ, wo kpare isibe o,
 Kọkọ, wo kpar' edin erhan,
 Wo kpar' ọkẹre,
 Rhe ibe eje, kpahen urhomu o,
20 Wu vwe i rhe re.

	Èkpare:	Imèni ọrhọ djẹ ọse ohu,
	Ehwe:	Ọriọmerhan ọvbọ rhọ gbẹ ọse ra o, 'Riọmerhan aghene ọr' ote-e, Imèni ọrhọ mẹrẹ ephan,
25		Kere kere obalo vbiẹ omo na, Ọmọ na n' ọhwohare or' Imèni ovbiẹ re o, Oma ọmerhe Imèni ne, Oma ọmerhe Imèni ne, A' ọye ogi vbiẹ ọmọ, R' ono gbe Igoru.
30		'Riọmerhan orho te avbaran, N' avbara efian wa mọrọ, Ọmọ na ote ob' Igoru rẹ, 'Mọ re ọy' ọnọ ọ bẹr' ẹfa,
35		Ègbukpe ọnana re ọsa me te na o.
	Èkpare:	Èduhwẹdẹ r' ote ri o,
	Ehwe:	Ọriọmerhan orho ri' Ègbeda; Ọyọ n' iyẹrẹn r' otu erieda, Ọmọ r' Imèni' ovbiẹ re, R' ọye ọtare a ọye ọnọ-ọ bẹr' ẹfa,
40		

“Ne ma r̄h̄e mi ne ru kpe yi?”

Otu erieda ezoma koko,
‘Na n’ ẹghware,
R’ aye idumu riẹ,
45 Aye ha riẹ r’ Ọriọmerhan,
“Kọkọ, fi ẹbe na rh’ unu,
Wu ye mwu ode rẹ ọmọ na,
Seyi Akpọyovihine,
Ọra ọmọ na ohu hi ne,
50 Se ọra urhomu ọmọ na ote ruo ‘bọ.

Ẹkpare: Ikẹro ọrana ni kpehwerhe,
Ehwe: Oveṛeren, ọrhọ nyarhen rie,
Mẹni ọkpare ọmọ rhọ aghwe,
R’ ọha ame da o,
55. Udo avbaran r’ ọmọ na ọda,
R’ ọmọ na orho hu o,
Mẹni ose ugoviẹ ro afen,
Orho se Osolobughwe o,
E, Ọmọmohwo,
60. E, evbe rhe kpe ọwan ọre rhi rẹ,

Line No.		S' Ọriọmerhan ọro kpe ọmọ mę na, Mie rhe yi rẹ.
	Ẹkpare:	Omamerhi orho se yi,
	Ehwe:	S' ọna n' oma ru we yir' azen?
65		'Ma ye ọkrẹkrẹ kpebuẹbuẹ, We ru urhomu hworhẹ hworhẹ, E, jire okaka ovbele Erimi, Ọnana oma ru we yir' azen?
70		We ru ikebe ri se verhẹ, Jiri ekete, R' ọmọ 'kpagha ọghala se bru, Ob' Ọbalade, T' ọke na ame ọverhe rię o. Emru irimi wu ruru o,
80		Osolobughwe ọno hwa osa ye we o.

SIN AGAINST ANCESTORS

Entertainment, entertainment!
You don't stop a child from going out,
The things that confront him outside stop him.
Yes, whether it is Urhoboland you'll go,

5 Ogbotuvie, you don't yet know.

Yes, we packaged our load of Igoru,
And laid it on the ground,
"Let the child who is daring,
Come to carry it,
In our presence".

10 It is Oriomerhan who is overbold,
That became so daring,
To carry it.

15
Line No. Then members called her,
"Do you know the load you've carried?"
Young lady, you've carried fever,
Young lady, you've carried a bundle of wood,
You have carried great trouble,
And a dangerous uterine prolapse upon your head,
20 (If) you do not know.

Meni had one concubinary partner,
And Oriomerhan began to have affairs with him.
'Riomerhan said that wasn't enough,

25 Məni became pregnant,
And when she would put to bed,
Məni delivered a baby boy.
Məni became joyful,
Məni became joyful,
30 That she too had a son,
Who would perform Igoru.

35. 'Riḡmerhan got there,
And said "you're deceiving yourself,"
This child would not get to perform Igoru,
She would sacrifice it at feast,
The coming year.

40. On a certain day,
Ḡriḡmerhan went to witchcraft grove,
She went to inform the witches and wizards,
That the child Məni bore,
She had vowed to sacrifice it at feast,
"How do I kill him?"

Then the witches and wizards came together,

45
Line No.

And at this meeting,
Prepared a charm for her;
They gave it to ȐriȐmerhan,
“Young lady, put this charm in your mouth,
Then, go to name the baby,
Call him AkpȐyovihine (He’s prospered already),
And the child would be dead,
That is, you’ve got the child’s head in your hand.”

50

Then with her bulgy eyes,
She got up and went home;
MȐni laid the child on her laps,
Feeding him with water,
And as the child drank,
He (the child) died;

55

Then MȐni came out crying,
She called on God,
Oh, creator of mankind!
Oh, one is not killed unjustly,
Whether it is ȐriȐmerhan who killed my child,
I do not know.

60

65 Omamerhi called her (Ọriọmerhan),
Is this the body by which you manifest witchcraft?
She's short, and very short,
'With your bald shiny head,
Like a piece of heaven's calabash,
Is this the body by which you manifest witchcraft?
70 With your buttocks that have sunk deep inside,
Like the place,
Where Okpagma's son fell,
At Ọbalẹnde,
Till now, it is a pool of water,
80 The sin you committed against the ancestors,
God will mete it to you in recompense.

Line No.

No. 6 **EMRU IRIMI 2**
Ekpere: Meba ihrun ohuan Igoru aye,
Kpahen otọre,
Ehwe: Ọmọ r' ohimi aro,
Ọgbọ mọ kpa riẹ,
5 Ni meba emeriẹ,
Ekpere: Ọriọmerhan r' odjegbamudu,

- Ehwe: Ohimi aro,
Y' ọrọ kpa re rię ne.
- 10 Ẹkpare: Ame imeba irhe seyi,
Ehwe: "Se wu rhe ohuan re wu rhua re na"?
Kọkọ, wo kpar' edin erhan,
Kọkọ wo kpare isibę,
Wo kpar' ukọ rhi ibe eje,
Re wo rh' ọye o egba ny' usun ri' Eko na.
- 15 Ẹkpare: Ọriọmerhan rh' Imęni o,
Ehwe: Aye awava re ny' usun ri' Eko;
Aye awava n' imizu,
Aye awava n' ugbehian;
'Bo r' ugbahia oru ugbehia,
20 Are otu akpọ, are gba kerhọ.
- 25 Ọse r' Imęni ọdjere,
Vw' Ọriọmerha omie rie ọse na dję,
Aghene ọran' oteri rę,
Imęni ọrhọ męrę ephan,
Vbę gbukpe 'sa ovbo rho vb' uvbię-ę,

Erhọ ri rhorin ame ẹmro,
Imẹni ọsan uvbiẹ vb' Ebute Metta;
Age je mẹrẹ orhere ro vbiẹ riẹ o.

Line No.

30

Di die ọmọ Imẹni ovbiẹ riẹ?

'Hworhare Imẹni ovbiẹ re;

Di die ọmọ Imẹni ovbiẹ re?

'Hworhare Imẹni ovbiẹ re;

Oma ọmerhe Imẹni ne,

Ọye ogi ji vwiẹ ọmọ,

35

Ro no gbe Igoru;

Ọriọmerhan ote avbaran,

Do, vb' ọkọkọ n' efian wa mọrọ,

Ọmọ na ote ob' Igoru rẹ,

Ọmọ mi na 'a re ikara,

40

Ẹgbukpe ọnana, wo na mẹriẹ.

Ọna n' ọke ro seri o,

Ọriọmerhan vb' ọbo ze rẹ,

Ehwe:

Ọvẹrẹ re orho ri ob' Ẹgbeda.

Ọmọ r' Imẹni' ovbiẹ re,

45

Re me tare o me na 'a re ikara o,

50 “Ma r̄h̄e mi ne ru kpe yi?”
Ēgbeda es’ oma koko,
Ọna n’ ọbe na r’ ayi dumurun,
Mọmẹ ọke wu t’ obora,
Ne wu fi ọbe na rh’ unu o,
Ne wu mwu ode r’ ọmọ na,
Wu seyi Akpoyovihine,
Ọran urhomu ọmọ na ote ruo ‘bọ.

55 Ọna n’ ọki(e) ro rhie ri o,
Ọriọmerhan ovb’ ọrhọọ bọ ze rẹ,
Ọkọkọ, fi ẹbe na rh’ unu,
Orho mwu ode r’ ọmọ na,
Oserie Akpoyovihine,
Ote ruo ‘bọ.

60 M̄eni ọkpare ọmọ rh’ obọ,
Line No. R’ ọha ame da,
Udo ame o r’ ọmọ na orho hu o;
M̄eni ose ugovie ro afen,
65 Vb’ Osolobroghwẹ,
Ọmọnọmohwo,

Erhe kpe ọwan erhierhi rẹ,
Orhi' Ọriọmerhan' ro kpe ọmọ mẹ,
Mi vbei rhe rẹ.

- 70 Ọkokamo ot' avbara,
Ọkokamo orho s' Ọriọmerhan,
Oma ye ọkrẹkrẹ kpebuẹbuẹ,
Ọnan' oma we yiren azen?
We ru urhomu hworhẹ hworhẹ (kpeghẹ kpeghẹ),
Je r' okak' ovbele erimi,
- 75 Wo rh' abọ rh' aghwe 'dẹre o,
Jiri kurekure,
Kurekure ami se ruo,
We ru ikebe ri se verhẹ,
Jir' ekete,
80. Rẹ ọmọ Avaje oghala se bru,
Obe Ọbalade,
Ọghwẹriẹ oma re otẹrhe ne;
Ọmọ Imeni wu kpe ri o,
Osolobughwe ọno hwa osa 'e we o.

SIN AGAINST ANCESTORS

	Solo:	Members prepared their Igoru load, And laid it on the floor,
	Response:	Let any daring child, Come to carry it, Before our presence,
5	Call:	Ọriọmerhan who is overbold,
	Response:	Dared, And carried it.
	Call:	We, members, called her,
10	Response:	“Do you know the load you’ve carried”? Lady, you carried a bundle of fire wood, Lady, you carried fever, You carried trouble and deadly uterine prolapse, With you to Lagos.
	Call:	Ọriọmerhan and Mẹni,
15	Response:	Left for Lagos in company; They are sisters, And they are friends; What a friend did to a friend,
20		Public, listen to it.

25 Mēni had a concubinary partner,
And ȐriȐmerhan craftily took him over,
She said that wasn't enough,
Mēni became pregnant,
The pregnancy she carried for three years;
Then we got information,
Mēni was in labour at Ebute Metta;
Luckily, they found a mid-wife.

30 What child had Mēni?
Mēni had a baby boy;
What child had Mēni?
Mēni had a baby boy;
Mēni began to rejoice,
That she now had a son,
35 Who would perform Igoru;
ȐriȐmerhan got there,
Saying Lady, you're a liar;
This child wouldn't get to perform Igoru,
40 For it's the meat for my Akara,
As you'll see this year.

Line No.

At night,
Qriqmerhan took a chance without delay,
She went to the witchery grove.
“This Məni’s son,
45 I’ve vowed to have him as meat for Akara,
How do I kill him?”
The witches reasoned together,
And they prepared a medicine,
“My daughter, when you get there,
50 Put this medicine into your mouth,
And name the child,
Call him ‘He has prospered’,
And you would have his head”.

At dawn,
55 Qriqmerhan made haste without delay,
The lady put the medicine in her mouth,
And named the boy,
She named him “Prosper”,
You really got him!

60 Məni bore her child at arm,
Feeding him with water,
And the child died in the process;
Məni cried out,
'Oh God,
65 Creator of mankind,
We don't kill unjustly,
Wether it's Qriqmerhan who killed my son,
I do not know'.
Qkokamo got there,
70 And Qkokamo called Qriqmerhan,
She's very short and chubby,
Is this the body by which you manifest witchcraft?
With your bald head (flat head),
Like heaven's broken calabash,
75 Your hands and legs are just equal,
Like a dwarf,
We call you a dwarf;
With the depression on your buttocks,
Like the place,
80 Where Avaje's son fell,
At Qbalənde,

It has turned into a public pond;
You killed Mēni's child,
And God will pay you for it.

No. 7 URHOMU ERHOME EKI RHOM' ODE

	Ẹkpare:	E, urhomu erhome eki rhom' ode o,
	Ehwe:	Are otu akpo, Owo vbo hwihwiwi owa-a o,
5	Ẹkpare:	Ẹvbe orho kpe omọ Oluko,
	Ehwe:	Ni da ro Ẹvbe r'omọ Oluko orhọ dua,
	Ẹkpare:	Ehwihwiwi ogoro,
	Ehwe:	Ogoro oji ghwe, E, otele oma me are alalo,
10	Ẹkpare:	Igoru r'ame egbe na,
	Ehwe:	N'ob' odjuwu ame rha rhua ye rhe o, Orhi uvu akpo na, ami rhe yo nie re o.
	Ẹkpare:	Orhomu r'eghwemese,
	Ehwe:	Oji rhomu r'Unugbrogodo,
	Ẹkpare:	Ugherighen ro se rh' ame,
15	Ehwe:	Oke r'ova rhe, N' unu ohu ovo no y' oji kporo.

Line No.

GOOD LUCK BEFORE GOOD NAME

- Solo: Yeah, one requires good luck to become reputable,
Response: Public,
Do not be envious of one another;
Solo: If the Goat destroys a plantain sucker,
5 Response: The sucker surely shall grow to maturity in its presence;
Solo: Even when they envy the rafia palm,
Response: The palm continue to yield its wine;
Yeah, you're only licking the dirt on our body.
- Solo: This Igoru that we perform,
10 Response: We brought it from heaven,
We did not learn it on this earth;
Solo: May it be well with the women,
Response: May it also be well with Unugbrogodo,
Solo: The rattle that falls into water,
15 Response: When it floats from the deep,
It retains its pitch at vibration.

No. 8 OKA LARAGHA OBUEBUN Unugbrogodo kur
Unugbrogodo sua ijoro,

5	Are otu akpọ ese yi ọlaragha, E, are ta re, ami rhon ri, Obo r' ukẹro ọmẹrẹ re, Unu ọnọ ta, 'Obọ re gba re o ('Gbeva).
10	Obo re rhi ọlaragha, Oka ye obuẹbun ne. E, are otu akpọ, Mi ne dje r' are. Ohworho ro kpe irherin, Okperi ovb' ukọbọ-ọ, N' ọlaragha ese yi; Ohworho r' ovoro ele, Ovoro ri ovb' ukọbọ rẹ, N' ọlaragha ese yi.
15	
20	Ohworho r' ọbẹl' edi o, Ọbẹlẹ re ovb' ukọbọ rẹ, N' ọlaragha ese yi. Itisha ro yono emọ, Oyono ri, ovb' epini rẹ o,

E, n' ɔlaragha ye se yi,

Ọnẹ mẹ orhi 'ato mẹ rẹ-ẹ.

Otu akpọ ari jime vbo;

25

Obo re rhi ri o,

Nọ ye enyerẹn o.

KINDS OF VAGABOND ARE NUMEROUS

Unugbrogodo Ẹkure

Unugbrogodo sings (performs),

And the world call him a vagabond;

Yeah, you said so and we've heard you.

But what the eye sees,

5

The mouth will say,

To the audience (twice).

How one becomes a vagabond,

Is numerous;

Yes, public,

10

I will educate you.

The fisher,

Who fished and owns no kobo [money],

Line No.

15 Is called a vagabond;
The cultivator of yam,
Who sowed, but has no kobo,
Is also called a vagabond.

20 The oil palm farmer,
Who harvests, but has no kobo,
Is called a vagabond;
And the teacher who teaches children,
If he taught, and lacks a penny,
Yes, he is also called a vagabond.

25 I'm not the first to be seen in the above light;
Puplic, leave me alone.
As one is destined,
So he lives.

No. 9 UNOGBROGODO OSUA IJORO

Ẹkpare: Unugbrogodo osu' ijoro,
Ehwe: Otu akpọ ese yi ọlaragha,
Obo are tare,
Ami rhon ri,

- 5 Obo r' ukęro ọmęre re,
Unu ọnọ ta r' obọregbare.
- Emie: E, inene,
Ukperi Igoru,
Okp' ame urhomu re.
- 10 Ẹkpare: Unugbrogodo osu-ijoro,
Ehwe: 'Tu akpọ ese yi ọlaragha,
E, are tare,
Ami rhon ri,
Obo r' ukęro omęre re,
Unu ọnọ ta r' obọregbare.
- Line No.
15
- Emie: E, inene,
Ekete r' Ichakpa ọdote
Ba Ichakpa ọrhọ je samo re.
- 20 Ẹkpare: Unugbrogodo ọsu ijoro,
Ehwe: 'Tu akpọ ese yi ọloragha,
E, are tare,
Ami rhon ri,

Obo r' ukero omere re,
Unu ono ta r' oboregbare.

- 25 Ekpare: E, Igoru eghwemese oro ofafi ne o,
Onyobru o, nene,
Ehwe: Omọ ro rhon ri,
Ogbomo nughe ame o.

UNOGBROGODO SINGS SONGS

- Solo: Unugbrogodo sings songs,
Response: And the world call him a vagabond,
What you said,
We heard,
5 But what the eye had seen,
The mouth would say it to the audience.
- R-solo: O, grand mother,
Igoru criticism,
Cannot kill us.
- 10 Solo: Unugbrogodo sings songs,
Response: And the world call him a vagabond,

Line No.		
15		Yea, you said so, And we heard, But what the eye had seen, The mouth would say to the audience.
	R-solo:	O, grand mother, Grown as Ichakpa is, Ichakpa is yet to be circumcised.
20	Solo:	Unugbrogodo sings songs,
	Response:	And the world call him a vagabond, Yea, you said so, And we heard, But what the eye had seen, The mouth would say to the audience.
25	Solo:	Yea, the women Igoru has come to the public, Mass movement, grand mother;
	Response:	Everyone who hears about it, Must come to watch our performance.

No. 10 IGHWEN RE DEN RHE

5
Idisi ọmọ Adibọ,
Olori ame o,
Dabu mevi,
Ne gbe igoru ame,
Wa da me rho unu akpọ-ọ;
Ọmọ rọ chẹ oja 'kpọ,
Ọmọ ra ovbo t' ẹdẹre-e.

10
Idisi r' ame edje na,
Itu akpọ (are) irhe mwu ode riẹn.
Ọye ọvo ghwa igberadja o,
Ọye ọvo ghwa ọlaragha,
Ọmọ r' ọghwọlọ akpọ nyeren,
'Ghene ephan ye ọ' merhe onyakpọ-ọ,
15
Idisi o, biko romo,
Ighwẹn re den rhe o,
Ọye 'nyeren

AS ONE IS DESTINED

Idisi, son of Adibọ,
Our leader,
Stand firmly,

- 5 For us to perform our Igoru,
Don't mind what the world says,
The child who reacts to the world's provocation,
Never measures with his peers.
- 10 This Idisi we are talking about,
Was named by the public;
He alone is a philanderer,
He alone is a vagabond;
The child who attempts to live a worthy life,
People are never pleased with him, is the saying;
Idisi, please hold your peace,
15 As one is destined,
So he lives.
- No. 11** **ỌRILELE OMA YE ỌFORO** Unugbrogodo Ẹkure
Ame rhere,
E, ọmọ ọrilele r' oma ye ọforo,
Ovbo rhiri oma r' ọkpare re
- 5 Ame rha rhe ne;
Ọro vbo ọmọ,

Ovbo phrurhe ọmọ rẹ.

Line No.

5

THE WHITE CHICK Unugbrogodo Ẹkure

We have come,
Yeah, the white chick,
Can never hide from the hawk.
We have come again,
He who has a child,
No longer recognizes him/her.

No. 12

5

OKPITẸN

E, otu re kpe itẹn s' ame,
Ami rhon ne,
Okpitẹn,
Nu wa mai kpe odẹ ame,
Orho ji rhon er' oma.

Ẹkpen rh' Eni esimẹ ọdo,
Ọn' ugheghen;
Ijọpha rh' oro vbo rie,

10	'Vbe rhi ẹdẹre-e, Ọrọ fa Emechẹ rhe ọnọ fa yi rie.
15	Ibi Afen otọre ogi kporo, Aghene Ikelike ọrọ rhua Ehọ rie; Akpọ i rho rin ame Okpẹ, agbamwa, Eni, S' ọrọmo, Ono lele Edjere simi Urhie? Urhie ọr' Edjere o, Ọmo ọgba ọgba hẹrẹ Urhie?
20	E, me ono gbe ikun? Me ọnọ (suọ) ta o? Inehweri, Ovbo mw' unurẹ o.
Line No.	INNUENDO COMMUNICATOR Yes, those who make innuendoes against us, We've now heard; Innuendo communitator, You're only trying to destroy our image, The derided hears through his clairvoyance.
5	

- 10 The Lion and the Elephant contest growth and size,
This is ignorance;
Mortgage and the mortgagor [owner],
Are not equal.
He who brings a disabled person will take him home.
- 15 The small spirit-manifest might perform well,
Yet it's the tallest that takes the spirits home.
The world had heard that we, the Okpẹ, a people,
Are an Elephant.
- 20 Who is he,
That would contend the river with the crocodile?
The River is the crocodile's;
Or who builds a fence against the (flowing) river?
Yes, what story has he to tell?
What has he to (sing) say?
Love portion (or charm),
Doesn't keep the mouth shut.

No. 13 AROMOGHWA RO JIRI OTỌRE

E, Aramoghwa r' ojiri otọre,
Ọvbo gbẹrhiẹn urhomu Ologbo,
Ọrọmo ogi rhe o,
Ta Okpẹ rh' ijoro,
R' aye na je so?

5.
Line No.

Efro: Unu ohu, eghwede odumẹ,
Ovbo dumẹ unu eva-a.

AN OLD RAT

Yes, the rat tha lives long,
Cracks the head of a cat;
Who ever knew,
That Okpẹ have songs,
To sing [perform]?

5

Call: The Needle punches only a hole,
It does not punch two (at once).

No. 14 WẸWẸ N'OBIRUO

Ẹkpare: Are otu re rie Urhobo,
Ari t' obora 'ri dje Enyaberọbe,

- 5 E, wẹwẹ n' obiruo,
Ejokokodo re wu kpe ri o wu ki rie Ausa,
Ọvbọ rhọ sẹrẹ ami ẹro-o ('shewere),
Egbukpe igoru orho te ne,
Enyabẹrọbe o wo na mẹrẹ ughe.
- 10 Ẹkpare: E, vbare otu re rie Urhobo,
Ehwe: 'Ri t'obora o dj' Enyabẹrọbe;
Wẹwẹ n' obiruo,
Ẹkpare: 'Jokokodo re wu kpe ri o,
Wu ki rie Ausa;
Ughe, ọvbọ rhọ sẹrẹ ame ẹro-o,
Ẹkpare: 'Gbukpe igoru orho te ne o,
15 Ehwe: Enyabẹrọbe o wo na mẹrẹ ughe.
- Efro: Oshewere o,
Ejo ba mi rhe hu o,
Mi t' erimi rẹ.
- Line No. 20 Ẹkpare: Are otu re rie Urhobo,
Ehwe: Ari t' obora o dje Enyabẹrọbe,
Wẹwẹ n' obiruo,
Ẹkpare: Ejokokodo re wu kpe ri o,

- Ehwe: Wu ki rie Ausa,
Qvbọ rhọ sẹrẹ ami ẹro-o ('shewere),
25 Ẹkpare: 'Gbukpe igoru orho te ne o,
Ehwe: Enyabẹrọbe o wo na mẹrẹ ughe.

YOU'RE COMMENDED

- Solo: You who are travelling to Urhobo land,
Inform Enyabẹrọbe when you get there,
That he/she is commended.
Ejokokodo that you killed before travelling to Hausa land,
5 Hasn't eluded our memory;
Igoru season is here again,
Enyabẹrọbe, you'll see [yourself].

- Call: You who are travelling to Urhobo land,
Response: Inform Enyabẹrọbe when you get there,
10 That he/she is commended.
Call: Ejokokodo that you killed,
Response: Before you travelled to Hausa land,
Hasn't eluded our memory;
Call: Igoru season is here again,
15 Response: Enyabẹrọbe, you'll see [yourself].

- R/Solo: It has begun,
No, if I die,
I won't get to heaven.
- 20 Call: You who are travelling to Urhobo land,
Response: Inform Enyaberobe when you get there,
That he/she is commended.
- Line No. 25 Call: Ejokokodo that you killed,
Response: Before you travelled to Hausa land,
Hasn't eluded our memory;
- Call: Igoru season is here again,
Response: Enyaberobe, you'll see [yourself].
- No. 15 URUEMRU OGBEGBON**
Are emese ra romo ebeledi,
Ame na suo are,
N' ari rhe ghwanre o;
Arha jekpen Osolobrugwe ne o,
Erhe dje omu urhому,
5 Omu 'rho nya ye,
Ovbo rho fięghwo-o,

Biko, are gba djobo ame o.

10 Ena n' ehworhare,
Re rhoro igho aye,
Gbẹ omase rh' oghwa.
Isi omase oke tokpen o,
'Himi demru epini re o,
I dede ni ob' ukoba re o.

15 Emarhe ehworhare,
Erhoro ephephan erie idi ebele o,
Imeba ame ata oran obo,
Esa omase on' okpa rhe ne;
20 Ta kpo amere ipherhiyen,
Hwro rhe otore,
'Sa me gba ma ri o,
On' ote emare or' inyenana o".

Line No. Uhu esa are, are aghwolo?
25 Otu ra tokpen, are gba ta r' ame;
Esa omase orho kpome,
Orho ji hu re,

30 J' omase odje esa ye,
Aghene esa ye na orho hu o,
Omizie onana oye onon ha o;
Aghene esa ye na orho hu o,
Omizie onana oye onon ha.

35 E, onana uruemru ogbegbon,
R' emese ivbori,
Aye fikie ruon ogbiruo na,
Erhi me, nene o,
'Solobrughwon gbe biko,
Idolon obon onan,
Ovbo rho kpe onan-an.

EVIL ATTITUDE

5 You, women who are married to oil palm farmers,
We'll sing to satirize you,
So that you become wise;
Having honoured God,
If a child is sent on errand,
And the child runs it,
It does not lead to dissension;

Please, leave us alone.

10 These are men,
 Who spent their money,
 To marry wives into the home;
 And the women began to be miserly;
 She cannot buy anything worth half a penny,
 Not to talk about one a penny (1k).

15 These men,
 Went to harvest oil palm without food?
 Members, while we're talking about that,
 The woman's husband returned from farm.
 Provided Tapioca was found,
20 She served it at table:
 “My husband, come and eat,
 This is enough food for today”.

Line No.

25 Is it your husband's demise you want?
 Those who are miserly, tell us.
 If the woman's spouse is sick,
 Even when he is not dead,
 The woman is already choosing her husband.

30 She says, if her husband dies,
She would marry that his relation.
She says, if her husband dies,
She would marry that his relation.

35 Yes, this is the evil attitude,
Of women,
That makes them misbehave;
Oh my soul, grand mother,
God, please,
One's own money,
Doesn't kill him.

No. 16 **NI TI ỌR' ỌSA** **Egbikumẹ Azano**
Ugbamugboshe mi te ri o,
E, me mẹrẹ Etakpovbiẹre,
Ro bele oma,
Ari me nughe ojoja r' ufo oruru mẹ o,
5 Ghwu si are amẹrẹ ughe? ('Gbeva)

Ọwọ vbọ ghwọlọ ẹmro-o,
Are em' Okpẹ;

Line No.

10

Me ni bi ẹmro rọ soro mẹ so Otebele,
Ufo ọmẹr' ephan idẹbolo,
Nẹ Urhobo rhe o,
E, Ufo 'rho ti ufi ẹmro na gba le mẹ oma,
Ari me nighe ojoja r' Ufo oruru mẹ,
Ghwu si are amẹrẹ ughe?

15

Ekete rẹ ọda re mẹ oma ẹmro na o,
E, ni bangoro Igoru mẹ mi dumurun;
E, me ha riẹ rhẹ Ijọpha me t' ọke na;
Ari me n' ojoja r' Ufo ruru mẹ,
Ghwu si are amẹrẹ Ughe?

20

Enyerẹn Takpevbịere,
Ni ti ọr' ọsa;
E, ọsa ọrhọ r' enyerẹn ye,
Hwrọ rhe uvu owọ,
E, ọsa ọghwa te rherhe odo,
Owọ orho rhue ọsa,
25 Ọsa ọdan mwu aghwe Igba,
Ọkpare aro n' odo,
N' urhurhomu ọsa okpogho.

AS THAT OF THE KING FISHER Egbikume Azano

5 I got to Ugbamugbose,
Yea, and I saw Takpevbiere,
Lamenting greatly;
See how much pain Ufo inflicted on me,
Can you imagine?

Line No.
10 Never seek for trouble,
Children of Okpe;
Just see the tiff I had with Otebele,
Ufo had an evil pregnancy,
From Urhobo land.
Yes, and Ufo wound the cord around me.
See how much pain Ufo inflicted on me,
Can you imagine?

15 The part that hurt me most in this case,
Is my Igoru bangle that I made,
Oh, I mortgaged it till this day;
See how much pain Ufo inflicted on me,
Can you imagine?

20 The life of Takpevbịere,
Is likened to that of the kingfisher,
Yes, the kingfisher packed all his possession,
Into a row boat.
Yes, the kingfisher rowed to the deepest point of the river,
And the row boat capsized.
25 Kingfisher flew, perched on the root of a mangrove tree,
It took a view of the depth,
And continued to shudder its head.

No. 17 ONA KPỌ QBẸN ERUO

E, owẹwẹ rẹ Onakpọberuo,
Ona akpọ na nọ ghene be ruo,
Iroro me djẹ n' oghwa rhe,
Mi rhe t' Eko,
5. Ẹgbukpe orho hin o,
E, ni mie rie ob Urhobo,
Nya ya Kanr' oghwa o.

Ke re mi t' obo Eko ne,
Akp' Eko no phiegghi mẹ,

10. Ni mie rho bo r' oma oru mę-ę o,
Are otu re rie ob' Urhobo,
Line No. Are ite oboran nare idje inene,
Me ghwe rię Egbukpe rhex ibiamo,
Ri mie kele uvu otore Eko.

15 Emro: Dumu, dumu.

THIS WORLD'S CRAFTSMANSHIP IS DIFFICULT

Oh, difficult craftsmanship,
The world's craftsmanship is truly difficult;
I had a plan from home,
That when I get to Eko (Lagos),
5. I would at the end of the year,
Return to Urhobo land,
To build a house.

But when I got to Lagos,
Life in Lagos began to toss me about;
10 And I could not understand, myself.
You who are returning to Urhobo land,
When you get there, tell (my) grand mother,

That I've changed years to months,
That I so count in Lagos.

15 Interjection: Pears through, pears through!

No. 18 ABADA ỌDA INYO

E, Abada ọd' inyo biom' oma,
Ọrhọr' ohoro (Edele) yi o,
'Vbo rho ru isara o,
Osiyẹ ibriji vb' Apapa,
Otu Iwẹnemu ra nya sa,
Nẹ ughe ohoro yi, enọ yi aye enẹ,
Ado, 'Bada, se wu phoph' oma o,
Ọmọ r' Ibaba ovbiere,
Ọkọrẹbe ob' otọre Eko.

5.

Line No.

ABADA IS DRUNK

Oh, Abada ruined herself in drunkenness,
She took up her vagina (great thing),
And offered it as a sacrifice,
While sitting on Apapa bridge;
The crafty passersby,

5.

Began to glimpse her vagina;
Yes, 'Bada, you've disgraced yourself,
The daughter of a father,
Is mad under Eko bridge.

No. 19 NE JER' UKPE EMAMIWỌTA

- Ẹkpare: E, abọ Abada n'abara,
Ehwe: Ne ka mẹnẹ Ukpẹ re mamiwọta;
Ẹkpare: Ọmọ rọ ghwọl' ada nya,
Ehwe: Okuku orho mwu, ọvbọ ghwọl' ukpẹ-ẹ o,
5 Ẹkpare: E, ari dje Urhomu ri Apapa;
Ehwe: Abada ese,
Meba, abada ese.
Ẹkpare: Abada ọko' baro hi ne,
Ehwe: Okuku orho mwu, arha ghwọl' ukpẹ rẹ o.
10 Efro: E, Imẹni, ekete r'Ichakpa ọdu [o] te,
Ba Ichakpa ọrhọ je samo-o.

LIKE THE MERMAID'S LAMP

- Solo: Yea, Abada's hands are reddish,
Response: Like the Marmmaid's lamp;

- Line No. 5
- Solo: Any child (one) who wants to go out,
Response: When it is dark, does not need a lamp,
Solo: Yes, just send a message to Apapa,
Response: To invite Abada,
Members, just invite Abada,
Solo: Once Abada is in front,
Response: In the dark, we no more need a lamp.
- 10
- Call: Oh, Mēni, as old as Ichakpa,
Ichakpa is ye to be circumcised.
- No. 20 ADA ỌVO ỌRO L' ỌMỌ**
- Ẹkpare: Nighe, nighe 'vbe l' ọmọ ada-a o ijo,
Ewhe: Ada ọvo ọyọ ro l' ọmọ;
Ẹkpare: S' ob Urhobo wu na nya o,
Ewhe: Ọgbọtuvie ọvab' igoru-u.
- IT'S THE OUTSIDE WORLD THAT STOPS A CHILD**
- Solo: Look, look, we don't stop a child from going out,
Response: It's the outside world that stops him/her;
Solo: Whether you would go to Urhobo land,
Response: Ọgbọtuvie cannot escape Igoru.

No. 21 ẸGHWARE ỌGBA NE

Ẹkpare: E, ọrhọ vẹ ne Ohworerhinẹ o,
Ẹghware ọgba r' ilebe ne o,
Ọkọ r'unu mẹ o, nọy' are aherhẹ o.
E, ọrhọ vẹ ne Ohworerhinẹ o,
5 Ẹghware ọgba r' ilebe ne o,
Ọkọ r'unu mẹ o, e.

Efro: E, vb'ododo ri'udje
Ovbo vrẹ rh' udje-e,

Ehwe: Ọrhọ vẹ ne Ohworerhinẹ o,
10 Ẹghware ọgba r' ilebe ne o,
Ọkọ r'unu mẹ o, nọy' are aherhẹ o.

Line No.

Efro: Ọgba ro ti oso 'gbọ he mru rherhiẹ (Ehwe)
E, vb'ododo ri'udje ovbo vre rh' udje-e (Ehwe),

THE ASSEMBLY IS PACKED FULL

Solo: Yea, Ohworerhine, it is spread out again,
The assembly is packed full for the pigeon,

- 5
And you're waiting for my remarks.
Yea, Ohworerhine, the news is spread out again,
The assembly is packed full for the pigeon,
And you're waiting for my remarks.
- R-solo: Yea, the flower that goes on a procession,
Doesn't get missing in the procession.
- 10
Response: Ohworerhine, the news is spread out again,
The assembly is packed full for the pigeon,
And you're waiting for my remarks.
- R-solo: Let the great rain-maker place containers for it (chorus),
Yea, flower doesn't get missing in a procession (chorus),
- No. 22 MI NE RIE**
Ekpere: E, mi ne rie, mi ne rie,
Gɔvumɛti ɔya iwe rhe,
Otu Ekaragban,
Ime no amwa na (Gbeva).
- 5 Efro: Otu aye Isisi,

Erhọ rọ ewhwahwa rhua rhi moto,
Ọghwa te ugbo izede,
Ọ kpare Ijoro rọ,

10
Line No. | Ehwe: | E, mi ne rie, mi ne rie,
| | Gọvumẹti ọya iwe rhe,
| | Otu Ekaragban,
| | Ime no amwa na

15 | Efro: | Otu aye Abada re hwrọ oseme rọ,
| | Aye asa ma ruọ imoto,
| | Aye rha kpare Igoru so (Ehwe).

I WILL GO HOME

Solo: | Yes, I'll return home, I'll return home,
| Government wrote a letter to us,
| That all the 'goats' suffering from dermpytosis,
| Should leave the city (twice).

5 | Call I: | All people in the category of Sisi,
| Packed their properties into a van,
| And as they drove on,

They began to sing.

10 Response: Yes, I'll return home, I'll return home,
Government wrote a letter to us,
That all the 'goats' suffering from dermpytosis,
Should leave the city

15 Solo: People like Abada who dressed well,
Were about to board the van,
And they began to sing Igoru (Refrain).

No. 23 HAVBAREN 1

5 E, are otu imeba,
Akpọ i havbaren,
Ne farhię farhię,
Enya ye t' ęde uhue,
Akpọ ye orho rhi będe-ę.

Line No.

Avbaye orho se Oloku,
Oloku, ye mę ibi ekete,
Ni mi rhirhię uv' urhie na;
Oghwę i havbaren omwu otọre,

10 Ọrhe Oloku ne gbe simi odo.

Ọna oja, irimi ride,
Ọmo ọno che oja ọna?
Idodo, orho rhi emro are re!
Akpọ iyibo,

15 Nọ ye are a ghoghọ.

HAVBAREN, SPECIE OF MANGROVE TREE

Yes, members (listen),
The life of Havbaren [mangrove],
Is rough and meaningless,
To its death.

5 Its life is no longer perpetual.

It called on Oloku (the water god),
Oloku, give me a small place,
To inhabit in the river;
And when Havbaren's roots became strong,
10. It began to contend lordship with Oloku.

This is offensive, great ancestors,

15. Who would avenge this cause?
What a pity, it's not your fault!
It is white man's administration,
That has given you joy (Liberty).

Line No.

No. 24

HAVBAREN 2

- 5 E, akp'u havbaren,
Ne farhiẹn, farhiẹn,
E bẹmẹdẹ nya ye t' ẹdẹ uhue,
E, vbavbara orho s' Oloku, (oja),
Oloku yẹ mẹ ibiekete,
Re mi ne rhirhiẹ otọre na,
- 10 Aghw'uhavbare omwu otọre,
Nọ rh' Oloku er' agba vbavb' urhie,
Ọnivbiẹ,
Irimi ride, are na ch'oja na,
Akpọ oyibo rọ rhe re,
Ọlẹrhi meba nya fi igidabọ.

HAVBAREN, SPECIE OF MANGROVE TREE

5 Yea, the life of havbaren [mangrove],
Is rough and meaningless,
Till its death,
And it called on the water god (Oloku),
Oloku, god, give me a small portion,
To occupy in this land.

10 And when its roots became strong in the soil,
It began to measure the river with the god,
This is painful,
Great ancestors, you would avenge,
The modern life instituted by the whites,
Makes members to be arrogant.

Line No.

No. 25

ESISO EYEN

E, are otu imeba,

5. Ulele Ugo ovbo je ugo tẹ-ẹ;
Ni me are iroro ri,
Ọmọ ọrilele ono ru rẹ izie?
E, bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
Ovberẹ owọ ọrh' ọsoso owọ,
Aye awanva erhi ẹdẹre rẹ.

10. Are otu imeba, nighe esiso,
Rẹ ame ihwọ eyẹn rọ,
Rẹ ovẹrẹn mevi,
Ọrha rhumu rhe,
Ghini n' ọrana yọ ro himi ame;
Ame ine tu eyẹn ni esiso no se bru otọre,
Vbi neneyo ni ogbon rh' avbaran.

A SACK OF SAND

5. Yes, members,
The Eagle's feather keeps it ever fresh;
What do you think,
A chick can offer its mother hen?
Yes, from everlasting to everlasting,
Half of a canoe and a whole canoe,

The two of them are never equal.

10. Members, see the sack,
That we filled with sand,
Which now stands erect;
It turned events,
And came back to insult us;
We shall pour out the sand so that it falls down,
And rot there.

Line No.

No. 26

OTU IRHOBO ARE ATERAN?

5 Ame rha m̄er' em̄o ame re ha orere,
Rh' irherin ekpokp̄o,
Aru oma 'me ɔvb̄o rh̄o d̄on ami kpe ɔ;
Ọr̄omo ese otu Irhobo,
Vbare ateran? Ughe!
Ame ɔs̄om̄o r̄o are ɔ,
Ari vbe rhe-e;
Ame ɔrh' ɔs̄om̄o r̄o are.

10 Aghene Ibobo otorh̄e inehweri,
'Ha rīe tan ra ɔ,

'Karo rh' Okpẹ rẹ o;
Emọ Okpẹ rari ekpokpo,
Ẹmr' Okpẹ ọrhọ rhe ne o, Ughe !
Are re na K'obaro-ẹ.

15 'Mro-e Mẹrẹje ọrhọ rhe ne o, ughe!
Are re na k'obaro-ẹ;
Ẹmro Ekọkọ 'rhọ rhe ne o, mọmẹ,
Are re na k' obaro-ẹ,
'Rherin Ikuta r' ari akọn, ughe,

20 Are re na k'obaro-ẹ;
Ari rhe lele usun irherin vru rh' ekpara o,
Orhi ẹmro ọwa rẹ.

DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE ITSEKIRI?

When we see our children on the streets,
With fresh fish,
We feel sorry for ourselves;
Who are the Itsekiri,
5 That you associate with? A wonder!
You would soon be drowned,
(If) you do not know.

Line No.

You would indeed be drowned.

10

We were informed that Ibobo prepared a love portion;
And spread it here,
But did not remember Okpẹ;
The Okpẹ that you trouble,
Their issue has come up again;
And you are the ones in front (leading it).

15

The Mẹrẹje issue has come again,
And you are in front leading it;
The Ekọkọ issue has come again,
And you're in front leading it;

20

The fish you catch from the pond,
And you're ever in front leading it;
If follow fishing expedition and get lost in the creeks,
It is nobody's fault.

No. 27

UKIRI EMẸẸJE

E, Ukiri e Mẹrẹje,
Ose ughere,
Ne jẹrẹ ijita o,

5
Itu akpọ irhe kumie, 'iye'
Izu ọmọ orho ri eyi,
Ọrhọ d' emru rhe,
Oma n' ọmerh' ọmọ.

Efro: Ekete r' ọren ọrhọ va sa,
Gbe nigh' ọren ovbo n' avba ra-a o.

THE MẸRẸJE UKIRI

Yes, the Mẹrẹje Ukiri,
Sounds at the outskirts,
Like Guitar,
And the world gives ovation 'fine!'
If a mother goes to the market,
And brings a gift home,
Her child rejoices.

Line No.

5

Call: The place where the sun rises,
It does not set there.

No. 28 ỌGBẸGHẸLE [ARIEMURUGBE]

Ẹkpare: Ọgbẹghẹle ọrhọ kpare unu o,

- 5 Ehwe: Rhi omeme ovo wu ru ri-e o,
'kpọ ephia nọye wu ru ri ne o;
Ọde-e Ariemurugbe, r'ogbẹghẹ, Orho hu rh' adesa;
Orho vbo ọro sin ruo-o.
- 10 Ẹkpare: E, Riemurugbe, orhi omeme ovo wu ru ri-e,
'kpọ ephia nọye wu ru ri ne o;
Ehwe: Ọde-e Ariemurugbe, r'ogbẹghẹ,
Orho hu rh' adesa,
Orho vbo ọro sin ruo-o.
- 15 Ẹkpare; Ẹghwemese o rha kpa r'unu o,
Riemurugbe ọrhọ kpa r'unu o,
Rh' omeme ovo wu ru ri-e,
'Kpọ ephian nọye wu ru ri ne o;
Ehwe: Ọde-e 'Riemurugbe, r'ogbẹghẹ,
Orho hu rh' adesa,
Orho vbo ọro sin ruo-o.

PHILANTHROPIST [ARIEMURUGBE]

Solo: The great philanthropist raised his voice,

Line No.		I'm not your only beneficiary, The whole world was your beneficiary.
5	Response:	It's a pity, Riemurugbe, philanthropist, He died at outskirts bifurcation, And no one buried you.
	Solo:	O, Riemurugbe, I'm not your only beneficiary, The whole world was your beneficiary.
10	Response:	It's a pity, Riemurugbe, philanthropist, He died at outskirts bifurcation, And no one buried you.
	Solo:	The women folk raised their voices, Riemurugbe raised his voice, I'm not your only beneficiary, The whole world was your beneficiary.
15	Response:	It's a pity, Riemurugbe, philanthropist, He died at outskirts bifurcation, And no one buried you.
	No. 29	IKUN ORICHĒDJĒ RHĒ ỌROGHO Obọ re gba re are kerhọ,

5 Iku-o re ami asa me gbe na o,
Ikun r' ami asa me gbe,
Iku- Orichedje orh'ore Orogbo vbo;
Obọ re gba re are kerhọ,
Ami gbikun r'are,
Ikun r' ami asa me gbe,
Ikun Orichedje orh' ore Orogbo vbo.

10 Vb' aye awava erha vb' oma,
Na n' oromo aye awava aromo;
Aye awava e ghwoło omọ,
Bemeđe, ovbo 'tore re;
Vb'aye awava emer' oma,
Vb'ona n' oromo ay' awava 'romo,
Vb'aye awava e ghwoło 'mọ,
Bemeđe, ovbo 'tore re;

Line No.
15

20 Orho rhi obo r'ade omọ,
Ma n' Orichedje oderie r' Orogbo,
Orho rhi obo re mwu omọ,
Mani Orichedje omwu rien r' Orogbo ne;
'Richedje re dje na,

25 Ọko Ukpokpogri o enọye amwa ye o,
 Ọrogho r' ami edje na
 'Gborode o, nọye arha haye;
 'Richẹdje re dje na,
 Ọko Ukpokpogri o enọye amwa ye o,
 'Rogho r' ami edje na,
 'Gborode o, nọye arha haye.

30 Eđuhwẹde r'oteri o,
 Orichẹdje vb'orho s' ikru-ien,
 Ọrogho nyer' akpọ yi fughwe,
 'Gbedi ọfugbon r'ọha ada,
 Vb' aghene ọyọ ha riẹ r' Ọrogho.
 Ọje gba vb' odasa-a,
35 Vb' Orichẹdje vb'orho s' imizie,
 Ọrogho sun oma fughwe pha ne,
 'Gbedi ọfugbon r'ọha ada,
 Vb' aghene ọye ọha riẹ r' Ọrogho;

40 Ọje gba vb' odasa-a,
 Vb' Orichẹdje n'ọye ọr' ohu ru o,
 Ker' aghale Ọrogho,

45
Line No.

Aye rha ghalię ri Temareti,
Ọje gba vb' odasa-a,
Vb' Orichędję n'oye ọr' ohu ru o,
Iker' aghal' Ọrogho,
Aye rha ghalię ri Temareti vbọ,
Gbe nigh' Ọrogho ọrhọ kpa r'unu o se otu re gba re;
Hworho ro mwueghumu owọ
Vb' orho se rh' ame,
50 Owọ na n' obeghe,
Orichędję ohu hine,
Ọye rh' ọwọrọ evb' orọmo rẹ;
Gbe nigh' Ọrogho ọrhọ kpar'unu o se otu re gba re;
Hworho ro mwueghumu owọ,
55 Vb' orho se rh' ame,
Owọ na n' obeghe,
Orichędję ohu hine,
Ọye rh' ọwọrọ evb' orọmo rẹ.

60

Ọrogho ro vẹrẹn re o,
Egborode o n'obora ọnya re;
Itu re ri' Egborode,
Ari t'oran nya ye dje Ọrogho,

65 Ọrogbo gba nẹrhomo, Ọrogbo gba nẹrhomo-ọ;
 'Kpọ r'edọrọ wo na rhiọ,
 Wu rh' Orochẹdjẹ ena rọmọ,
 Are awava ena rọmọ,
 Emọ aw' irhiri o nọ ya ri ne vbiẹ.

THE STORY OF ORICHẸDJẸ AND ỌROGHO

5 Assembly, listen,
 To the story we're about to narrate;
 The subject of our narrative,
 Is 'Orichẹdjẹ and Ọrogbo'.
 Assembly listen,
 And let us tell you a story;
 The subject of our narrative,
 Is 'Orichẹdjẹ and Ọrogbo'.

Line No.

10 They both met,
 And were married;
 They sought for children,
 And never had.
 They both met,
 And were married;

- 15 They sought for children,
 And never had.
- If it were possible to buy a child,
 Orichedje would have bought for Orogbo;
 If it were to catch a child,
20 Orichedje would have caught one for Orogbo.
 This Orichedje,
 Hails from Ukpokpogri,
 And Orogbo,
 Was taken, in marriage, from Egborode;
- 25 This Orichedje,
 Hails from Ukpokpogri,
 And Orogbo,
 Was taken, in marriage, from Egborode.
- 30 On a certain day,
 Orichedje assembled his family,
 'Orogbo has sacrificed her life',
 The large container of palm oil with his debtors,
 He gives it to Orogbo [as inheritance].
 Not quite three days after,

35 Orichędję assembled his relations,
Orogho has sacrificed so much,
The large container of palm oil with his debtors,
He gives it to Orogho;

Line No. |
40 | Not quite three days after,
Orichędję died,
And when Orogho was re-assigned in marriage,
She was given to Temareti,
Not yet three days after,
Orichędję died,
45 | And when Orogho was re-assigned,
They gave her to Temareti,
And Orogho told the gathering;
The man who controls the rowboat at the back,
If he falls into the water,
50 | The rowboat loses control,
Orichędję is dead,
And she couldn't be married to another man;
But Orogho said to the gathering,
The person who controls the rowboat behind,

55 If he/she falls into the water,
The rowboat loses control,
Orichędję is dead,
And she couldn't marry another man.

60 Ọrogho arose,
And departed for Egborode;
Those who are going to Egborode,
When you get there, inform Ọrogho,
Ọrogho then pray, Ọrogho then pray;
When next you come to this world,
65 You'll be married to Orochędję,
Both of you will marry again,
And you'll have nine children.

Line No.

No. 30

ỌDA RIĘ

E, obo 'ruru na ọda rię,
Ędę rę uloho ono ghwie,
Ana męre ughe,

Ana męę otęę.

IT HURT HIM/HER

Oh, what he/she did hurt him/her so much,
The day *Uloho* tree will fall,
We shall see what will happen,
We shall see the result.

THIRD PERIOD (1945 – 1970)

No. 31

OBORA HA ỌVREN RUĘ

Mare, ghwugba kęę oma, ęgbukpe ọnana,
Erharen Igoru ame,
Odi ra mi bru ne;
Ada vre na vre, iroro,
5 Mare, wu rhe t' avbaran,
Akp' oyibo r'ọhere,
Edje ayi mare na f' igidabo,
E, ọse ro vbię Mare re se Ęzuke o,
Ami erhe rh' izede r'ọnya fi Okpe re o;
10 Okpe ghene agbamwa Eni o,
Ame rha ha'ye ba nyeręn.

Ọn' izu ro vbię Imare,

15	Mare, wu rhe dumu obọ rh' imeba ẹro, Egbukpe ọnana wuna mẹnẹ akpọ; 'Ti obo r'obọ ọnya fi Okpẹ o, Imare, gbe me dje isẹ ye o. Ọrh' ọsẹr' ame ẹro rẹ o, Nighe ọlẹ r'ofomu phia, Ighwu s'ọye ọvo ọrọ h'oma r'uvo kpe. 20 E, y'ose ro vbiẹ Imare re se Eẗukẹ o, Ibi ọvrẹn Ogiso r'ọnya 'Ọkwabude, Otu ame ẹdẹre, ame rha zẹ rhe; Ọrhọ nya vrẹn t'egodo, 25 Ọvrẹn ọrhọ 'erhumu rhe, Ane Ogiso n'ọye ọghwọnọ gbẹ o, Ọvb' ọ rhọ gbẹ ye mẹnẹ ephan. Ogiso 'fi obọ rh' unu, "Emru ọna osọnọ, Idama Ọkwabude, n' are rhe mọ gba o, 30 Me mẹn' emru igbe m'unu o".
	Eghware ọgbane, Iti obo ra h'ọvrẹn ruẹ ob' Urhobo, Ighwu s'omara emọ Okpẹ ine ruo;

- 35 Em' Okpẹ 'rha h'oran ru emru.
Rhiririn mo t'inyena,
Urhieme Ologbo,
Orhi Ologho rhe-e.
Mare wu rhe rhi ohworho r'ovb' iroro,
E, ma n' owẹwẹ rh' usun ẹdẹre rẹ o.
- 40 Mare, wu rhe nye r' akpọ,
Ji ti ọr' Eyayughe.
- 45 "Mo no sh' irhe vbo bo yi o?"
Omẹ vbẹ r' Eyayughe;
Die mu wọ cha vb'irhe ru?
Irhe mi vbo chere emu;
Die mu wọ cha vb 'emu ru o?
Emu me vbọ ghẹrẹ imọ;
Emọ ison ọgo wu vbiere wu na ghẹrẹ o?
Owẹwẹ ri Mare, gbe rhi me djise ye o.
- Line No.
50 Mare, wu rhe nyeren akpọ jir' Adjumirhe,
Gbe ri uvu ikebi o nya ya gbe erhan rhe;
'Djumirhe on' erhan rhi ne o,

55 Kpare edin erhan fi rh 'oghwa,
N'imibara Adjumirhe ọmerhẹn;
Ọni vbiẹ, onivbiẹ o,
E, s' akpọ idiokpo yi Mare onyerẹn?
Otu ame na so ijoro i Mare ọro otafi ne o!

WHAT WE DO WITH A SLAVE

5 Mare, be careful this year,
The fire of our Igoru,
Has come upon us;
If we overcome this by wisdom,
Mare, if you get there,
The coming of the white man's regime,
Makes people like Mare to puff up;
Yes, Ẹzuke, Mare's father,
We do not know how he became an Okpẹ.
10 Okpẹ, as a community, is indeed an Elephant.
So we took him along with us.

This is Mare's mother,
Mare, if you put your finger into members' eyes,
This year, you will suffer for it.

15	Your Okpẹ genealogy, Mare, come to trace it; We haven't forgotten, See, it is the yam seedling that sprouts over the soil level, That gives itself to the sun to scotch.
20	Ẹzuke, Mare's father, Was Ogiso's slave who walked about in Ọkwabude. We, peers, ran out (to see him); He walked passed and came back to the compound. Then the slave secretly,
25	Sought to sleep with Ogiso's wife; And he impregnated her; Ogiso put his finger into his mouth, "This is very painful, Young men of Ọkwabude, come together.
30	I have seen a terrible thing". They had all assembled, How the slave is treated in Urhobo land, Is the way we, the Okpẹ, shall treat him; And the Okpẹ used him (executed him).

35 Till the present day,
The destiny of the cat,
Never came to life with it;
Mare, if you had wisdom,
You would not have joined your peers;
40 Mare, you lead a life,
Like Eyayughe.

“Who fetches fire wood there?
I am, Eyayughe;
What would you do with fire wood?
45 To cook food;
What would you do with food?
To feed my children;
What worthless children have you to feed?
Look, Mare, come to explain it.

50 Mare, you just live like Adjumirhe,
Went to the farm to fetch fire wood home;
Heaped the fire wood inside the house,
And Adjumirhe began to pass the night on the veranda;
This is great suffering, it is great suffering,

Line No.

- 55 Yes, what life is Mare living?
We shall sing of Mare this year,
It is already out!
- No. 32 AMI VBO ORODJE NE**
- 5 E, are otu Irhobo,
Gbe ni ghe uvo yoro bru orhiẹn ame;
Emro Orodje ro se rhe vb' ẹdiyẹde,
Otu Irhobo e n' aye achẹ ame o,
Sa me i ne gi vbo Orodje.
- 10 Uch'ekete r' ọke ọhavbo na,
Ame Okpe, ami vb' Orodje ne;
Irhobo i hoho Abaka,
'Baka ọkpuriẹ o,
Ọvbo rho fia-a o.
- 15 E, ẹduhwẹde r'ote ri,
Gbe nighe Idi orho rie i Warri o,
'Ghware Irhobo yoye ọrhere;
Ọke rẹ Idi ote oboran,
Se otu Irhobo,

Aghene ẹghware mẹ nọye wo na ha o;
Emro ohu r'ọhẹhẹre o,
Igbe nighẹ urhi o mi ne je r'are.

20

Osa urhomu r'are na hwa vb' ẹgbukpe ọnana,
Orodje Okpẹ are na hwa 'e riẹn,
Onye Irhobo rọ fro rọye,
A ọgbọ rọrọ owọ n'oghwa ri Eko;
Nene o, nene, vbi nene,
Aghene 'se-se mi si nene,
I nene mẹ, ọre adawon,
Inene mẹ, ọre umerin.

25
Line No.

30

Ekẹrẹkẹtẹ y'ovbẹ dogbo,
Vb' ẹrheri r'ohwo y'ohwo ta,
R'ọke r' oni mẹ vbọ mr'evu mẹ,
Uvbo r'omoko vbo n'umu da,
Ọnẹ rh'unu mẹ vbọ t' ijoro,
Obi ku r'ovbọ ki tie avbọ dia.

'Die metẹ daghwo,
Wu rhi ọke ẹgbọtọ kpanre awon,

35 Wu ghwe rię oma rhi ọmare o,
Irherin ekpokpo noye wa więn,
E, ęde wu s'omọ e Męreje,
Ebo irimi Okpe ine hwe nu węn (Vbarięn)

Efro: Dọ dọ dọ dọ, Igberadja chuen,
40 Ehwe: Chuen,
Efro: Igberadja nwain,
Ehwe: Nwain;
Efro: Ọna du vbe,
Ehwe: Present sir;
45 Efro: Ọna ji duọ,
Ehwe: Present twice.

WE NOW HAVE A KING

Yes, you the Itsekiri,
You see, it is the sun that gives verdict to the water;
The issue of King sometime ago,
Made the Itsekiri to scorn us,
5 That we would no longer have a king.

In the present day,

Line No.	We, the Okpẹ, now have a king; The Itsẹkiri are like a butterfly, The butterfly briefly sharpens knife, But never cuts.
10	
	Yes, on a certain day, Idi travelled to Warri, To attend Itsẹkiri meeting; And when idi got there, He addressed the Itsẹkiri, And said 'You've got to accept my decision', But one thing is left, I shall give you a rule':
15	
	Your tax this year, Is payable to the Orodje of Okpẹ; And any Itsẹkiri man who flouts this order, Should take his boat and row to Lagos; Grand mother, grand mother, oh grand mother! I call grand mother repeatedly, For salt, it is my grand mother, For catalyst, it is my grand mother.
20	
25	

30 The Antelope is smart any day,
One is talking to his peers;
When my mother conceived my pregnancy,
She drank medicine of parrots' beak,
It makes my voice to sing unequivocally,
And so shall I ever live.

35 At young age, you became an old woman,
As a young lady, your teeth are already broken,
You turned to an old woman,
Chewing only fresh fish;
The day you'll invite M̄ereje's son or daughter,
The ancestral deities of Okpe will answer you.

Line No.

40 Call: Yea, yea, yea, yea, sex workers run away,
Response: Run away;
Call: Sex workers, be smart,
Response: Be smart.
Call: This slept with me,
Response: Present, sir;

45 Call: That also slept with me,
Response: Present twice.

No. 33 ME TARE VEHRĒ

Ēkpare: E, metare verhe o,
Me rha mer' ugbahian re mi ne mwuo,
Re me rh' oye so oma lalọ, ọ'ena;
Ọwa ọ'nya ugbahia ero kpa he me re o, ọ'ena,
5 Nighe ọse ohu re me dje re obi Djemeta;
Nighe esa ye ovbo ji rho-o,
Omizu repha ọro gborhirie o;
Agba che ru iruen kpekpa o n'oye ahavbọ,
Orho t'otọre epha-a o.

10 Ēkpare: E, metare verhe o,
Me mer' ugbahian re mi ne mwuo,
Re me rh' oye o gba su oma lalọ,
Ehwe: E;
Ēkpare: Ọrhọ mer' obo r'ono ru me, ọvbọ ta me,
15 E, vbi lele yo mi rhe ghwaren,
Ehwe: E;
Ēkpare: Ọw'ọnọ nya ugbahia ero kpa 'e me-e,

20 Line No.	Ehwe: E, Eḱpare: Ọmase ohu o re me gbe re o vb'ediyede; Nighe 'sa ye ovbo ji rho-o, Mizu repha ọro gborhiri me;
	Ehwe: Agi che ru iruen kpekpa o n'ọye age havbo, Orho t'otore epha-a o.
	I PREDICTED EARLIER
5	Solo: Yea, I predicted earlier, I found a lady to befriend, With whom I took blood covenant; here it is, Let no friend gossip me about; here it is, Here's a concubine I had at Idjemeteta, Her husband hadn't discovered it, It was a brother who reported it. We might smile and crack jokes together, But it doesn't get down to the heart.
10	Solo: Yea, I predicted earlier, I found a lady to befriend, And we took blood covenant; Response: Yes,

- 15 Solo: If she foresees evil, she informs me,
So that I would be cautiously wise;
Response: Yes,
Let no friend gossip me about,
Response: Yes,
Solo: I slept with a certain concubine years ago,
20 Her husband was yet to discover it,
But a brother reported it.
Response: We might smile and crack jokes together,
But it doesn't get down to the heart.

No. 34 WE GBE AKPO-Ọ Egbikume Azanọ

Line No.

5

E, vb' Ọtotagha, we gb' akpo-ọ,
We gb' erimi re,
E, vb' Ọtotagha ọrhọ hohọ ọleyi,
Ra jara re o zizobo rh' adesa;
Ọtotagha ọrhọ hohọ ọleyi,
Ra jara re o zizobo rh' adesa;
E, vb' Ọtotagha, we gb' akpo-ọ we gb' erimi re,
Wa ge ghwoło ehware iyibo re wu ne bruo.
Ibi ọmọ ony' Igbo,
10 'Se rie vb' oyibo vb'ob' Ikoyi o,

Obi ehware rode omwu rie nya rhen,
Oyibo 'rh-Ọtotagha gbe ri oberun,
Ọgbare iminiti re,
Nigh' oyibo le rie ro otore.

15 Me mer' Ọtotagha rh' ibuluku,
Kugb' edin ewen,
Ami rhe s' Ọtotagha ghwu si diokpo oyi wu rhorin?
Ọtotagha orho kpa r' ovię,
Orhode-ę meba,
20 Oyibo ọgbę re mę hi o,
Orhi or' ukoba-a,
Mi bru ehware mę fughwe ne.

YOU'RE NOT LIKE THE WORLD Egbikumę Azano

Ọtotagha, you're neither like the world,
Nor are you like the heavens;
Ọtotagha is just like a carved image,
Presented as sacrifice at a three-path junction;
5 Ọtotagha is like a carved image,
Presented as sacrifice at a three-path junction;
Ọtotagha, you're neither like the world, nor the heavens,

Yet, you seek sleep with the white.

10
Line No.

A young Igbo fellow,
Invited her to a white man at Ikoyi,
Strong amorous sensasion took her there;
The white man and Ọtotagha went up,
But not quite a minute,
The white man sent her down stairs.

15

And I saw Ọtotagha in her skirt,
With a heap of clothes,
Then we asked Ọtotagha: 'what is the matter with you'?
And Ọtotagha began to weep,
Members, it's no joke,
The white man slept with me,
And gave me no penny,
I slept for nothing.

20

No. 35 **OGBE AFEN GBE ARAMO-O** **Egbikume Ọzanọ**

Ọtotagha ọrhọ họt' ọleyi r'ajarare,
Ye ze izobo rẹ adesa (Gbeva);
"Ọtotagha, we gbe afe-en,

- 5 We gbe aramo rẹ o;
Ọre wa ge ghwọlọ iyibo,
Re wu na gbẹ”.
- 10 Ọmọ onye Ihwo,
Ose rie vbe oyibo obo Ikoyi o;
Aghene obo Ikọtun, oboran ana nya.
Ọtotagha ọrhẹ oyibo i gbe rie oberun,
Ọghwẹ i miniti rẹ,
Oyibo ole rie zẹ ro otọre.
- 15 Me mẹrẹ Ọtotagha,
“Ghwu si ni diokpo oyibo oru wẹn?”
Ọtotagha ọrhọ wẹnẹ unu,
“E, ọdẹ-ẹ mọmẹ, e, oyibo ọgbẹ re mẹ hi ne,
Ogbe ọrẹ ukọbọ-ọ,
Ne mi bru ehware mẹ fughwẹ ne o”.

Line No.

SHE’S NIETHER A BIRD NOR AN ANIMAL

Egbikumẹ zanọ

Ọtotagha is just like a carved image,
Offered as sacrifice at a three-path junction;
“Ọtotagha, you are neither a bird,

5 Nor an animal;
Yet, you seek after white men,
For copulation.”

10 A young Ijaw fellow,
Invited her to a white man at Ikoyi;
And they decided going to Ikotun.
Ọtotagha and the white man went up,
And not quite a minute,
The white man sent her down stairs.

15 Then, I saw Ọtotagha,
“What did the white man do for you?” I asked,
And Ọtotagha retorted,
“Oh, it’s serious, my son,
He slept with me and gave me no penny;
I slept unprofitably.”

No. 36

ỌHỌHỌ OTORO

Oteteme ọrhọ họhọ otoro,
Egbukpe orho te;
Otoro ọha oma herhe ukpe ne o.

Efro: Igoru obo ame rẹ ame egbe,
Oteteme ọha oma mwu egbegbe.

HE IS LIKE OTORO (A kind of Bird)

Oteteme is like otoro,
At the beginning of each year,
Otoro presents itself.

Call: We perform our Igoru,
And Oteteme came to disgrace him/herself.

No. 37 IRUO AME IRHE RI Amereka Emakpo

Emo Okwovu irhe te ekete,
Re aye arha won oma,
Are otu akpo,
Are i hwe yi r' ame,
Ona n' iruo r' ame irheri;
Uvu oghwa obo ame vbe r' ame eha vbo,
E, vb' Aworedjo orho ni Warri rhe.
Aghene ami me gbe Igoru.

Oke re ame ite oboran,
N' emo ljeddo ere ame vba re;

Line No.

5

10

15 Ame erhon usi emọ ljeđdo avba agba rhe,
Aghene emọ ljeđdo aye ri vbo lgoru.
Ame rhe aye na damo 'ma o.
Emọ ljeđdo e so hi ne,
Emọ, ljeđdo ayi rhe siye;
Emọ Okwovu i kpogho oma,
Ọnana ne lgoru r' ame hwrọ se re o;
E, oyibo ọrhọ kpare eche.

20 Oyibo ọkpare ebe rhe,
'Ghene emọ Okwovu aye re kpare obọ;
Ephan ri biomu ljeđdo,
Ọna ne ukposo vberẹ aye itiri o;
Erhio, are emọ ljeđdo,
25 Ọmọ ọrilele ame ise r' are,
Ephan ri biomu ọrilele,
Ọrilele osihin ẹvbe kpe-e.

Line No.

THE JOB WE'VE PERFECTED Amereka Emakpo

When the Okwovu people get to a place,
And they boast,
Public,

5 Agree with us,
For this is the job we have perfected;
We were in our home(s),
And Awọrẹdjo came from Warri,
Inviting us to perform Igoru.

10 When we got there,
We met the Jẹddo people;
For a long time, we'd heard the fame of the Jẹddo,
That Igoru music belonged to them [the Jẹddo];
We shall contest with them.

15 The Jẹddo performed,
And the Jẹddo sat down;
The Okwovu shook their bodies,
And we began to cook Igoru;
Then the white man smiled.

20 The white man brought his record book,
And declared the Okwovu winners;
The Jẹddo got peeved,
And they invoked a heavy down pour;

25 Oppression, Jęddo,
 We thus call you, but a chick;
 The fowl got angry,
 But could not trample the Goat to death.

Line No. **No. 38** **INURU AME ỌHỌ**
 E, ame irha nya męřę otu Ekele rħę Akpikeke,
 Ob' otęre Ikeja,
 Ekaragban irhe nu ame ọhọ;
 Ghwu sę omana awa egbe aye (amwęrhien aye),
5 Oma ọrhọ merhe awan,
 Rhua aye rię obo Urhobo?
 Akpọ are ọrhọ ghwę omana-a,
 Ọke otuęro ose ruo jiri o,
 Otu Ekele o,
10 Wu vbe i rhe rę o.

WE ARE FED UP WITH THEM

Yes, we saw Ekele and Akpikeke,

5 Under Ikeja (bridge),
And we became fed up with the plagued goats;
Is this the way others practice love,
That people are pleased,
To take them to Urhobo land in marriage?
You worth , but nothing,
The blind man's darkness blindfolded you too long,
Ekele,
10 You do not know.

No. 39 EHWARE O KPE ỌMỌ Idisi Adibọ

5 E, Ukonbọ ọsa me no amwa,
Ọghwọlọ ohworho r'ono o wene oma,
Kolorogho ọrhọ ghwa i rhe;
Are otu imeba, egagọ i rie ri o,
Ukolorogho ose virherie,
Are imeba, are nọ ye o,
“Nighe Idiokpo wu rhi me ruo?”

Line No.

Orho rhi omam' oromo ye wo rhe re,
Kọkọ, ọna omamọ oghwe,

- 10 Wo kpọ nẹ Urhobo rhe;
Orho rhi ephan igberadja ye wo ha rhe,
Oghwẹ ọdandan,
'Kpọ nẹ Urhobo rhe;
'Ti oghwẹ ri Meni ọkpọ re.
- 15 Ame ephan ti Ukolorogho,
'Tu re nughe, e, are itu emọ na 'a Eko na,
'Dere ọmọ r'orhon ẹmro ọwan,
Ame i gbikun ọran hi ne,
Nabutete ame na suọ.
- 20 Enabutete ọrọ mẹrẹ ephan,
R' ọmọ Ọvbravbra Ọbalade;
Eji rhon ta ọmẹrẹ oma-a o,
Owọ Iboma orho du mu Apapa;
Nabutete ọrọ zẹ nya rhen.
- 25 Isodja ohu r'ọmẹre riẹ,
A ọye ọnọ gbẹ ye ọsoso ọgba irhirin,
Ozighẹ na ọrọ ghwa i hwe;
Isodja na ọban firhọ,
Wo rha mẹriẹn rhe ugben osiọ ye,

30

Ofen akpọ ono mwu ari kpe.

Edumu rie rhọ ye ohoro,

N'obo agban ọkro 'rho rhon ẹmro osiọ na,

Ọjada na orho hwe irhime "un";

"Ete oghwa ta", ọna nẹ ode Ọnabutete;

35

Iti obo wu bru ehwari te kpe ọmọ rh'ephan,

Gbe me dje isẹ ye.

Line No.

E, ẹde uvbiẹ ọmọ ote otọri ne,

Aherhẹ ekpọmọ r'ọnọ va,

Ame imeba 'rha mẹnẹ-ẹ;

40

"N' ephan Igari o,

Nọye wo mẹnẹ re?"

Nabutete orho se i Mẹni o,

Biko ye se orhere rhe,

Ephan mẹn orhi ọ' Igari-i,

45

Aye i vẹren re o,

Ne Emanukẹ nọy' ayi nya ye se.

Emamukẹ ote avba ran,
Ọna nẹ obọ ofi kpahen ephana,
Ọnana ọguro?
50 Ghene t' ọmọ t' eyẹre ne ghwa usun,
Ọmọ na a ọye ovbo lele eyẹre-e.

Ephan n'obiomu Emanukẹ,
Ọna n' obọ odumu rẹ ohoro;
Ọsa rẹ ọmọ rẹ ọlọrọ,
55 Jiri tu Ihwo ra lọrọ ugbugba,
Ọmọ na orho bru ze ephan.
Ete oghwa ta,
Ọna nẹ ode Enabutete;
Iti obo wu bru ehwari te,
60 Kpe ọmọ rhe ephan,
Gbe me djẹ isẹ ye.

SEX KILLED A BABY **Idisi Adibọ**

Yea, Ukonbọ was about to leave the town,
And as he sought for who would replace him,
Ukolorogho arrived,
Members, sacrifices are (over) gone;

Line No.

5

Ukolorogho fell down on his/her back, facing up,
Members, ask him/her;
“What have you come to do?

10

If indeed you’ve come to marry,
Young lady, it’s a good leg,
You struck from Urhobo [land];
But if you’ve come with an illegitimate pregnancy,
It is a very bad leg,
You struck from Urhobo;
Just the kind of leg that Meni struck.”

15

All of us, and Ukolorogho,
The audience and our children in Lagos,
For an obedient child,
We’ve ended that narrative;
We’re now going to sing of Nabutete.

20

Nabutete became pregnant,
For Qvbravbra’s son at Qbalende,
When no one had known that she knew a man,
A military ship arrived Apapa,

And Nabutete ran to the scene.

25 One soldier that saw her,
Proposed to have nine-round sleeping with her,
And the mad lady agreed at once;
When the soldier became nude,
30 If you see him and his strong genital organ,
You would be afraid to live;

It was thrust into her,
And she felt the thrust at her waist,
The careless thing screamed “un,”
Line No. “Report when you get home,” turned Qnabutete’s name;”
35 The amount of affairs that killed the baby in your womb,
Come to confess it”.

Yes, the day of delivery came,
We waited for the placenta to give way,
And we, members did not see it happen;
40 “Is it the pregnancy of Garri,
That you conceived?”

45 Nabutete called Meni,
“Please, invite a mid-wife,
My pregnancy is not of Garri;”
They arose,
And invited Emanuke.

50 When Emanuke got there,
She placed her hand upon the belly,
“Is this a mighty frog?”
Let the baby and the flowing liquid come together;”
But the baby said it wouldn’t follow the flowing liquid.

55 Emanuke became peeved,
And she thrust her hand in;
She began to pull the baby,
Like the Ijaw who are pulling a fish net,
And the baby’s part cut, leaving it still in the womb.

60 “Report when you get home,”
(This) is the name of Enabutete;
The amount of affairs you had,
That killed the baby in your womb,

Come to confess it.

Line No.

No. 40

OTẸRHE

Ẹkpare: Udumu Ogbe ob' Ọbalade,
Oṭẹrhe eyi ro dumu run;
Igberadja ro vbo aharo,
'Rhe mọ nya fi o,
Na fẹn oṭẹrhe na o.

5

Efro: Urhirhi ọ'sa ọmọ,
Ọmọ no ghwere oma.

Ehwe: Udumu Ogbe ob' Ọbalade,
Oṭẹrhe eyi ro dumu run;
Igberadja ro vbo aharo,
'Rhe mọ nya fi o,
Na fẹn oṭẹrhe na o.

10

PUBLIC POND

Solo: Ogbe Street, Ọbalende [Lagos],
A marketable pond arrived;
Any sex worker who has fish tackles,

- 5 Should come out,
And let's deplete the pond.
- Call: If an ant bites a child,
He/she must shake the body.
- Response: Ogbe Street, Qbalende,
A marketable pond arrived;
10 Any sex worker who has fish tackles,
Should come out,
And let's deplete the pond.

- Line No. **No. 41** **AME OGODO**
- Ekpere: E, are otu re rie Adeje,
Ehwe: 'Ri te obora n' ari dje Abẹbẹ o,
Izu ro vbiẹ Qbẹbẹ Odibo;
- Ekpere: Ukoro omọ hu wu vbiẹ re,
5 Ehwe: Wu rha fọ riẹn no rie igberadja,
Akpọ ye n' ọrẹ osogoro,
Ekpere: Oshewere o, vb' Qbẹbẹ Odibo,

- 10 Ehwe: Ame ọgọdọ ono t' ogoro gbe,
Ekpere: Izede ophẹn firhọ wẹ ne o,
Ehwe: Igberadja o, gba nya ye gbe.
- Efro: Oshewere, ame rha so,
Ne vb' iroro so.
- 15 Ekpere: Are otu re rie Adeje,
Ehwe: 'Ri te obora n' ari dje Abẹbẹ o,
Izu ro vbiẹ Ọbẹbẹ Odibo;
Ekpere: Ukoro ọmọ hu wu vbiẹ re o,
Ehwe: Wo rha fọ riẹn rie igberadja.;
Akpọ ye n' ọr' osoghoru,
Ekpere: Wẹwẹ r' Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
20 Ehwe: Ame ọgọdọ ono t' ogoro gbe,
Ekpere: Izede ophẹn firhọ wẹ ne o,
Ehwe: 'Gberadja o, nya ye gbe.
Ekpere: Me mẹn Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
Ehwe: Am' imeba 'me rha mromra ye,
25 Ekpere: 'Bẹbẹ Odibo 'mromra 'me o,
Ehwe: Amie rhe rh' amwa vbe r'odjẹ re ẹ,
Nwa nwa nu na nwa nu o,

- Line No. 30
- Ekpare: Nwa nwa nu n' okorobia;
Wewę r' Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
Ehwe: Kete re wu f' ọmọ te,
N' ọmọ 'ny- Igbon nọye vbię ruọ rię o,
Avbaye orho biomu rẹ,
Obo re rhiri okere t' akpọ,
Nọye nyeren.
- THE WATER IN THE PIT**
- 5
- Solo: Yea, you who are going to Adeje,
Response: When you get there, inform Abẹbẹ,
The mother of Ọbẹbẹ Odibo;
Solo: You had only one child,
Response: And you allowed her to practice sex trade;
Now she lives a prodigal life,
Solo: It has begun, Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
Response: The water in the pit is enough for frog's play,
Solo: The way is now open to you,
10 Response: Continue the sex trade.
- R-solo: It has begun, but when we sing,
We shall sing with wisdom.

15 Solo: You who are going to Adeje,
Response: When you get there, inform Abẹbẹ,
The mother of Ọbẹbẹ Odibo;
Solo: You had only one child,
Response: And you allowed her to practice sex trade;
Now she lives a prodigal life,
Solo: It has begun, Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
20 Response: The water in the pit is enough for frog's play,
Solo: The way is now open to you,
Response: Continue the sex trade.

25 Solo: We saw Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
Response: And we, members, greeted her,
Solo: 'Bebe Odibo greeted us,
Response: And we couldn't understand her tongue,
Nwa nwa nu na nwa nuo,
Nwa nwa nu n' okorobia;
Solo: You Ọbẹbẹ Odibo,
30 Response: Beautiful as you are,
Your father is an Igbo,
That's not bad at all,

Line No.

It's according to one's destiny,
That he/she lives.

No. 42 OBO WU RURU OBI SAPELE

5 Egbọtitoka, obo ruru obi Sapele,
Otu ame imeba, ami rho riẹn rh'erho;
Orho rhi ohworho ro hu ru,
Otọre orhon,
Akpọ mẹ, meba,
Ghwu s'obogo emwu rie se rho ne?

10 Egbọtitoka okpa r' igberadja ri ob' Urhiapele,
Orh' Etukereku ere gba djẹ ose ne,
Aye gb'ikun ru irue ne,
Obi ehware okpe Egbọtitoka,
Egbọtitoka orho wene unu,
"E, oga biko, dabo djọ 'e mẹ,
Ibroda mẹ dabo hien ye mẹ,
Anti mẹ, biko, dabo djọ 'e mẹ ne.

15 Efro: E, ukperi o,
Mome, otu igberadja o,

'Na h' urhomu die ne.

WHAT YOU DID AT SAPELE

Egbotitoka, what you did at Sapele,

We, members, heard it in our ear;

If someone dies,

The ground hears;

My life, members,

Where had she landed?

Egbotitoka travelled to Sapele for sex trade,

She began a concubinary partnership with Etukereku;

They were gisting and having foreplay,

Then ogasm held Egbotitoka bound,

And Egbotitoka began to speak:

"Yea, my master, please, thrust it well for me;

My brother, thrust it down for me;

My aunty, please press it well for me".

Line No.

5

10

15

Call:

Yea, blame,

My child, the sex workers,

Will pay with their heads.

No. 43 OBI EHWARE Amukeye Okodide

Ohoro Apuma,
R'otamwu osiọ,
Ishimi [ileme] ọkpokpo,
Ni foto,
5 Ro mwu ọwan gele.

'Vbaran 'sama gbẹ Apuma,
Na vbaran Akpuma ọrhọ djẹ Irhobo, ta:
"Oluku mi, jọlọ gba mi to mi"
Mọmẹ, obi ehware omwu rie gele,
10 Oti unu n' Okpẹ, n' Irhobo ọdjẹ ne.

Efro: E, obi ehware omwu rie gele,

Ehwe: 'Ti unu n'Okpẹ, n' Irhobo ọdjẹ.

Line No.

ORGASM POWER Amukeye Okodide

Apuma's cunt,
Sticks to genital organ;
A new singlet [or new file],

5 Is a photograph;
That thrills one excessively.

Apuma was to sleep with a man,
And Apuma began to speak Itsekiri, saying:
“Do it well and thrust it down,”
My son or daughter, orgasm power held her bound,
10 And she left Okpe to speak Itsekiri.

Call: Yeah, orgasm power held her bound,

Response: And she left Okpe to speak Itsekiri.

No. 44 AME TA RIEN Omaromwaye Igbide

Ekpare: E, ghwo me ta r' lbebeka o no n' lkeja rhe,
lbebeka 'ghene oye oteren,
Are imeba re gbare o,
S' are irhobo r'ote rie oma o.

5 Vb' eduhwede r'oteri o, mi rie lkeja,
Me me r' lbebeka o ro se rh' unu ada o,
Neghwa ovbięvbię;
Oma ye ni toloko,

10 Ghw' օrhօ mօrօ ipaseja vbe ra nya vrօn օ,
'Vbo dje ay' urhomu;
Imoko re rie Isi,
Te tiyin avba vuօ inene,
Ohorօ mօ օbere hi օ,
'Hware ikongo, oma օgba ye-e.

Line No.

15 Ghwo mi rhe roro emօ ame ra lah'oma,
Igberadja aghene idօlօ n'oye are aghwօlօ,
օke ose օvbuphele-e,
Oso vbo kpe yi օ fi rh' uvu ikebi;
20 Ghwu օke ose r'are hine,
օke օke r' are hine օ,
Are emօ na օ, ari vbei rhe-e.
'Hware ikongo r'ose rhe օ,
Vb'oro vb' esa, օphօphօ esa ye,
Vb'օro vb' esa, օvbօ ten օneye;
25 օrօ vbօ sa bo te օneye,
'Hware igota n' օye obrօ lele amwa,
N' esa m'ole mօ rie,
Mi ye bru ehware ikongo,

S' are emọ na, oja ono te are unu o.

30

Ti ọr' Ibebeka obruru o,
Ọna n' esa ye o r'eghwobi okperi;
K' Ibebeka overeren,
Ehware igota n'ọye obre lele amwa;
E, ghw' oma ye oberere fi ne,
35 Ghwu orho rhi efian mia mọro,
Ebibada o n'ọye oseri ame o.

40

Ebibada ot' avbaran vb'orho kpar' eche,
Ayi ta d' omeme,
Vb'on' ehware r' ame ebre r'ovbo ku mie,
40 Ọro vb' ukobo ovbo fi r' ame,
N'oyi we biome;
Orhi ọr' okoro wo ha rhi yo me mere obo,
Ugbu me oyoro;
'Rhi ọr' emevi wu ha rhe yo me mere r' obo,
45 Ugbu me oyeghe;
Vb' oma ovbo ru jeren,
Iti ọr' Ebibada obruru o bere ohoro,
N' oyi we si me o.

Line No.

- 50 Ibebeka oṣẹrẹre o, orho s' Ọgbada,
Wẹwẹ r' Ọgbada, ohoro mẹ, vbe r' ọbẹrẹ re o,
Me ha riẹ ri' obi shu meka,
Vb' ishū meka, oko rie koko,
Mo t' ọke na, orho kugbe-e,
Me ha rie ri' obi kapita o,
- 55 Vbi kapita, ọvbia rie dede, ọkanre riẹ,
Ovbọ kugbe-e,
Me ha riẹ vb' ibrasimeti o,
Brasimeti, odumu-dumu,
Mo t' ọke na, orho kugbe-e;
- 60 Yoro me ha riẹ ri' obi shu meka yo,
Vbi shu meka, oko rie koko,
Mo t' ọke na, orho kugbe-e,
Me ha riẹ ri' obi repiẹra o,
Vbi repiẹra, ọrhọ kpa r' unu,
- 65 Ophiarọ ohoro r'orhurhu ohoro,
Ọbẹrẹ fi do ovbo rho j' eko'ẹ yo meba,
- Ehwe: Ina tiubu o, asikova r'ọbẹrẹ hi o,
Ina tiubu o.

70 Ẹkpare: E, ẹriri ọtagha hi ne,
Ovbo rho j' eko 'ẹ yo meba (Ehwe),
'Kofan ne yagha-yagha,
Jiri gini aropleni o meba (Ehwe),
Ooro ọtagha hi ne,
Ovbo rho j' eko 'ẹ yo meba (Ehwe).

Line No.

Solo: **WE ADVISED HER** **Omaromwaye Igbide**
Yea, I advised Ibebeka to return from Ikeja,
And Ibebeka refused,
Members, who have assembled,
Do you know what happened to her?

5 On a certain day, I travelled to Ikeja,
And I found Ibebeka fallen in the street,
She was in pains;
She was very weak,
Whenever she saw passersby,
10 She sent then on errand;

Parrots that are travelling overseas,
Inform grand mother when you get there,
My private part is completely torn,
Affairs with soldiers, got beyond my strength.

15 If I think of our children who trouble themselves,
That in sex trade, you look for money,
If night doesn't fall against the greedy man,
Rain would drench him in the farm;
Night is already fallen over you,
20 It's again dawn before you,
And you, children, do not know.
Affairs with soldiers came in vogue,
The married would then abuse her husband,
And the married would deny her husband;
25 Any one who couldn't deny hers,
Practices gutter-side love making,
So that my husband sends me packing,
And I go for soldiers' affairs,
Daughters, you'll suffer greatly.

Line No.

30

As Ibebeka did,
Here's a husband who died of snake bite;
And Ibebeka arose,
To practice gutter love in town;
Her part is now torn open,

35

If you doubt us,
Ebibada is our witness.

40

Ebibada got to the scene and laughed,
They thought they could emulate me,
Is this the affair for which we receive loud ovation,
And those who have money would throw to reward us,
That you're spoiling?

45

If it were squatting style, I'm prepared,
My path is pleasant;
If it were standing style, I'm prepared,
My path is a strong trap;
And the body vibrates in reaction,
Not as Ebibada has torn her part,
Which you now treat.

Ibebeka arose and invited Ogbada,

50 Ogbada, my part is torn,
 And I took it to the shoe maker,
 The shoe maker tried to mend it,
 And up till now, it couldn't come together;
 Then I took it to the carpenter,
55 The carpenter plained and nailed it,
 Yet, it couldn't come together;
 I took it to the blacksmith,
 The blacksmith tried to mould it several times,
 And up till now, it couldn't come together;
60 Yes, I took it to the shoe maker,
 The shoe maker made several efforts to mend it,
Line No. And up till now, it couldn't come together;
 Then I took it to the [bicycle] repairer,
 And the repairer concluded,
65 That if the skin covering the part,
 Is torn, it can't be sewn, members.
 Response: It's a tube, once tyre is torn,
 It's a tube.
 Solo: Once fish net is ruffled,
70 Members, it becomes unamendable (chorus),

The part is now so rough,
Members, like the engine of an aircraft (chorus),
The part is ruffled,
Members, it's unamendable (chorus).

No. 45 **'NO JẸ VẸ?** **Omaromwaye Igbide**

Ẹkpare: E, 'no jẹ vẹ,
Eye dje Oorerẹḍe o,
Owọ igoru ame,
Ọsọmọ ghwa dumue;
5 Iye iye, 'no jẹ vẹ o,
Eye dje Oorerẹḍe o,
'Wọ igoru ame,
Ọsọmọ ghwa dumue.

Efro: Ododo ri'udje ovbo vrẹ rh' udje-e (Ehwe),

10 Ehwe: Iye iye, 'no jẹ vẹ o,
Eye dje Oorerẹḍe o,
'Wọ igoru ame,
Ọsọmọ ghwa dumue.

15
Line No.

Efro: Ọgba ro ti oso ‘gbọ h’emru rherhie (Ehwe)
Ododo ri’udje ovbo vrẹ rh’ udje-e (Ehwe),
E, ame ọdophan, vbo kp’ ọmọ eheri-in (Ehwe)
Orhomo o’kp-ọmọ ‘mọ no ghwere oma (Ehwe)
E, urhirhi ọsa ọmọ, ‘mọ no ghwere oma (Ehwe).

WOULD IT NOT BE EXPOSED? Omaromwaye Igbide

5

Solo: Yea, won’t it be exposed?
Go, inform Orerẹde,
That our Igoru row boat,
Would soon row to him/her;
Yea, yea, won’t it be exposed?
Go, inform Orerẹde,
That our Igoru row boat,
Would soon row to him/her.

10

R-solo: Flower doesn’t get missing in a procession (chorus),
Response: Yea, yea, won’t it be exposed?
Go, inform Orerẹde,
That our Igoru row boat,
Would soon row to him/her.

15 R-solo: Let the great rain maker place containers for it (chorus)
Flower doesn't get missing in a procession (chorus),
Yea, too much water doesn't kill little fish (chorus)
If a child is hungry, it must give a sign (chorus)
If an ant bites a child, he must shake the body (chorus).

No. 47 ASEAGERHE Idisi Adibo

5 E, akpo Eko oghene gbahon pha noye so rie,
Oromo ese Aseagerhe roge gbeyibo?
Eduhwede re oteri,
Omọ onye Ausa orho se Aseagerhe,
"Mi na ha rie obeyibo."

Line No.

10

Aseagerhe oghogho ne,
Oye onogb' oyibo inyena,
Itie obo oye ovbo mere de,
Omere rie, oma n' omerhien.
"Biko, are so ijoro me."

Avbaran orho se Ibara,
Ma ya de ehwahwa vbe me;
Wu rhe te obo eyi,

- 15 Inene yo wo dẹ ibrukutu,
Mọmẹ, wo dẹ ẹvbro rhọ ye.
- E, Ibara orhe ne, aye rha hwro inyo rẹ otore;
Ọmọ onye Ausa ogbe ọrhen rh' oma ne o,
Ayi gbe hi ne o,
Ti ọke r'ayi vẹren re o,
20 N' ob' Ikoyi, noye aye nyaren.
- E, ọke r' ayi t' Ikoyi,
'Mọ onye Ausa ose Aseagerhe,
Orhie oyibo me ha ruọ phe-e,
'Ghene omẹmẹ era na gbọ;
25 Aseagerhe obunu ne,
Emro ọnana ọye ohwe rhọye-e,
"Wo phiẹ re mẹ n' oghwa rhe,
Aghene oyibo ye wa ha mẹ vbe,
'Mro ọna, mie hwe rhọye-e."
30 E, ephan 'i biomi onye Ausa,
Ghwiẹ Aseagerhe se bru otọre,
Ọran Aseagerhe obunu.
Ọna n' ososọnọ!

35	Ekpe ri mę ban fi rhọ, Udo avba ye na, ọmọ 'yibo ọrhọ nya rhe, Ọrhọ ha orhę ye se Ọseba ọ; Ọseba orho lele rhe, Ọseba orho t' avbaran ọ, Aseagerhe oghwurhie otọre, 40 Ọyi gifi, ọban firhọ, 'Kpemru rode, Gbe me unu" Idedekuma, Ode ohoro Aseagerhe.
45	"Ọnọ re kpe ruo ban firho ekete aran?" Orodje ohoro yi ọrhọ salọphia; "Kọkọ biko ha owen rhuon, Inene yo wo nyarhen rie; Ukero ọmẹre ogbe mẹre-ẹ. 50 Wo doro, Aseagerhe, E, are izu emọ re vbię, Ari n' ode ji mwu r'emọ are, Idiokpo ese Aseagerhe? Aseagerhe ọgerhe iroro izede lkoyi ọ.

WOMEN BEND (ARE NOT FIRM)

Oh, life in Lagos is indeed too difficult,
Who is Aseagerhe to sleep with white men?
On a certain day,
An Hausa man invited Aseagerhe,
5 "I'll take you to a white man."

And Aseagerhe rejoiced,
That she would sleep with a white man that day;
What she'd never experienced,
She found the opportunity and rejoiced,
10 "Please, sing the song."

Then, she called Ibara,
"Go and buy something for me.
When you get to the market,
Buy a big jar of wine,
15 My daughter, buy kola nuts, in addition."

Yea, Ibara returned and they presented the drinks;
The Hausa man rubbed kaolin chalk on his body;

Line No.

15

20 And after they'd applied all cosmetics,
They arose,
And went to Ikoyi.

25 Yea, when they arrived at Ikoyi,
The Hausa man called Aseagerhe,
"I haven't brought you to any white man,
Rather, I'm the one to sleep with you,"
Aseagerhe cried aloud;
She disagreed with this proposal.
"You deceived me from home,
That you were bringing me to a white man;
I disagree with this proposal."
30 Yes, the Hausa man got angry,
And knocked Aseagerhe down,
While Aseagerhe cried aloud.

35 "What a painful experience!
I'm beaten and striped naked."
As they were there, white man's son/daughter came in,
And ran to call Qseba;
Qseba hastened,

40	And Ọseba arrived at the scene; Aseagerhe was screaming on the floor. Shabbily, she was naked; What a terrible event, So confounding;" Big and thick, Is the name f Aseagerhe's part.
45	"Is this how you're beaten and striped naked here?" The king of her part budged out, "Young lady, please, tie a wrapper, And go home; The eyes would not (want to) see rubbish.
50	"You're respectable, Aseagerhe;" "Yea, you, mothers who are still procreating, Be careful how you name your children. What is 'women bend?' Women bend has bent her thought (wisdom) at Ikoyi.
No. 47	ENYEREN SON E, akpo orho nu me oho,

Odedede emọ ne bru ahwerhe;
Emọ na i nyeren sọn hine o,
Nẹ otu erieda aye 'kperẹ.
Efro: E, ọke mia mẹrẹ Emanukẹ!

WRONGFUL LIVING

Yes, I became fed up with life,
The children freely yawn;
The children have failed in life, for wrong leading;
They now blame it on the witches and wizards.
Call: Oh, when I see Emanukẹ!

No. 48 ONYOBURU

Ẹkpare: E, oma riẹrẹ, onyobru o,
Urhe r' imoko iye;
Ghwo oma riẹrẹ, onyobru o,
Urhe r' imoko iye;

Line No.

5

Efro: Iye, iye, Ọnanughe onyeren sọn hi ne o,
Meba do ughe;

Ehwe: Oma rięrię, onyobru o,
Urhe r' imoko iye;

10 Ekpere/Efro: Ọnanughe osi h' ison hi ne o,
'Meba do ughe (Ehwe);
E, otu igberadja inyeren hwrọ fughwe ne o,
Meba do ughe o, e (Ehwe);
E, otu igberadja isihi' son hine o,
Are imeba do ughe o (Ehwe);
15 E, idam' ljeđdo inyeren ha hine o,
Imeba do ughe me o (Ehwe);
E, idam' ljeđdo inyeren ha hine o,
Imeba do meba o (Ehwe);
20 E, ame odophan ovbo kp' omọ erhirin re,
Ghele do ughe o (Ehwe);
E, ti ayi Waka onyeren vren hine o,
Imeba do, ughe me o (Ehwe);
E, whiwhiwi ogoro, or' ogoro 'ghwe o,
Are imeba do ughe o (Ehwe);
25 E, 'kp' omọ 'luko vb-or' oluko odua yo,
Vba 'ri meba do ughe o (Ehwe);
Iye iye, orilele osoro 'kotọ hi o,

30 Meba do ughe o (Ehwe);
E, ọka ọchẹ vb'ogberhagha,
Mo t' ọke na ovbo mwu ọmọ yo (Ehwe).

MASS MOVEMENT

Line No. Solo: Yea, smooth sail and mass movement,
To the tree of parrots;
I say, smooth sail and mass movement,
To the tree of parrots;

5 R-solo: Yea, Ọnanughe lived poorly,
Members, you see;
Refrain: Smooth sail and mass movement,
To the tree of parrots.

10 Solo: Ọnanughe has stepped on excreta,
'Members, see (refrain);
The sex workers lived wastfully,
Members, see (refrain);
The sex workers have stepped on excreta,
Members, see (refrain);

15 Jẹddo young men have lived profitably,

Members, see (refrain);
Yea, Jèddo young men have lived profitably,
Members, see (refrain);
Too much water doesn't kill little fish,
20 Youths, see (refrain);
Waka has lived prosperously,
Members, see with me (refrain);
Amid envy, the raffia palm yields its wine,
Members, see (refrain);
25 Amid destruction, the plaintain sucker grows,
Members, see (refrain);
Yea, the fowl ate excreta,
Members, see (refrain);
Yea, the maize flowered,
30 But couldn't yield grains till today (refrain).

No. 49 ENANA WU NE RUO?

Èkpare: E, Imèni ogbobọ hi akara,

Ehwe: Ni maimai r' ekpo,

Aramo 'yibo nọy' Imèni ọrhe (shewere);

Oghoro lele otọre Eko,

Line No.

5

Èkpare: Ghwu s'enana wu ne ruo,

- Wo na hw'osa ohuan?
Ehwe: Osi vbe mi sio r'a otore na?
Imeni Osotebọbọrọ,
Ekpere: Uch' obo ro kpogho vb' ame,
10 Ehwe: On' ame re,
Vb' ame ọvbọ fọ-ọ.

IS THIS WHAT YOU WOULD DO?

- Solo: Meni forsook Akara,
Response: It's moimoi of palm oil,
This white man's meat that Meni now sells,
She hawks it through the streets of Lagos.
5 Solo: Is this what you'd do,
To pay your husband's divorce claim?
Response: This "pull me, I pull you" that lies there?
Meni Osoteboboro,
Solo: The thing that shakes the water,
10 Response: If it doesn't leave the water,
The water cannot be still.

No. 50 PILO KESI ỌBO IJORO OKPE

- Ekpere: E, Pilo kesi n'obo ijoro 'kpẹ o,

5 Erhio imeba o rh'igoru Osolobrugwẹ;
Egbiku eghwase ukpolo ɔn' oriridje,
Ughe, omam' ɔlẹ ɔrh' urhomue igbe ri-edun o;
E 'phirhi otuato ivbe kp'egodi rẹ o,
Vb' igberadja o ame soro are o.

Efro: Inene inene o,
Ọdẹ vborẹ vb' Ikọbọti o ame soro are o.

Line No. 10 Ehwe: Ipilo kesi n' ọbo ijoro 'kpẹ,
Erhio imeba o Igoru Osolobrugwẹ;
Egbiku eghwase ukpolo ɔn' oriridje,
Omam' ɔlẹ ɔrh' urhmue irigbe rie 'du o;
E, iphirhi otuato ivbe kp' egodi rẹ o,
Igberadja o ame soro are o.

PILO CASE IS A GREAT SINGER IN OKPE

5 Solo: Yea, Pilo case is a lead singer in Okpe,
Opression, members, in this God-given Igoru;
Narrating a crible's sorcery power is endlessly amazing,
The white yam goes to barn with its head,
Yea, smokes of burning bush kill not *Egodi* [birds of prey],

We sing your satire, sex workers.

Call: Grand mother, grand mother,
Great, sex workers, we sing your satire.

10 Solo: Yea, Pilo case is a lead singer in Okpe,
Opression, members, in this God-given Igoru;
Narrating a cripple's sorcery power is endlessly amazing,
The white yam goes to barn with its head,
Yea, smokes of burning bush do not kill *Egodi*,
We sing your satire, sex workers.

No. 51 ENANA OYE ORORO

5 Ogiribo Igoru r'odumurun,
Obo udumu urhie,
Okukumevi rh' Ekurierhabo,
Vb'aye wava irhe bele oma o,
Olukumevi orho kpar' unu,
Ona uchkete r'oye orhomu te,
Idama Igoru, vb'aye rha so oye,
Vb'oye ono kpe omerhen o,
Enana oye ororo,

Line No.

10

Vb'obo ada ẹnya ovbo rho mwu ọye-e.

THESE WERE HIS CONSIDERATIONS

Igoru performance stormed,
The street by the River side,
Okukumevi and Ekurierhabo,
Both became troubled,
5 Then, Okukumevi said,
As handsome as he is,
If Igoru young men [musicians] sing his satire,
He would have sleepless nights;
These were the considerations,
10 That discouraged him from going out.

No. 52

ỌWAN OVBO BRU UDU-U

5

E, Ogiribo odume,
E, Idama Ijẹddo,
Ghwu si are amerhen?
E, s' are ine gbe Igoru na, e?
Uvu akpo enyeren akpo hwrọ rho,
Idama Ijẹddo;
Ọwo vbo bru udu re o,

10 Biko, are igbe ghwere oma o;
Unuotemro oyeyan se ame,
Ami rho rin,
Orhan re okru eroro,
E, 'vborho zofen apherere-e o;
'Kete omase orho fi aghwala,
Unuotemro, gbe me djeyi me o.

LET NO ONE BE AFRAID

Line No. 5 Oh, the storm rages!
Yes, young men of Jeddoo,
Are you asleep?
And would you perform this Ikoru?
Our living in the world ends therein.
Young men of Jeddoo,
Let no one be afraid;
But please, prepare,
10 Unuotemro threatens to attack us,
We'd heard it,
The tree trunk whose top is already broken,
Doesn't fear the storm;
Where a woman throws the oracle pellets,

Unuotemro, come and prove it to us.

No. 53 ME VBARE OTỌRE IJEDDO Omaromwaye Igbide

Ekpare: Do mọmẹ ughe o e,
Eṣvaye ohwenu urhie,
E, edjere urhie, ke mavọ ohwenu wan?
Ehwe: Ado, ami meba 'mi vbei rhe-e.

5 Ekpare: E, vbe kpe yo, yo, yo, do,
Vb' ọdẹ Gbide;
Ọro dumu ọbe se ame imeba,
Vb' ekpe,
10 Ọro dumu ọbe se ame imeba,
Vb' ekpe,
Adane Okpẹ o me vbare,
E, otọre Ijeddo me vbare.

15 Otu ivbighrẹn 'rha kpare unu,
Aghe ne ami hu ọke uvo na,
Ghwo 'tọre na ọgbahon phan,
Mesa bu huẹ ọke uvo na-a;
Ivbighrẹn erha kpare unu,

Line No.
20

Aghene ami hu ọke oso na,
Ghwo 'tọre na ọlọhọ phan,
Me sa bu huẹ ọke oso na-a.

E, biko, are nya j' ami vbo,
E, ghwo me tariẹ t'omana, meba,
Gbini avba t'omana-a vb' are otu akpọ?
Ehwe: Ọwo no brudu-u n'obobaro e, e.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THE GOD OF JẸDDO

Omaromwaye Igbide

Solo: My son/daughter, it's amazing,
The Alligator cries so loudly in the River,
Then how would the Crocodile cry?

Response: Thanks, we, members do not know.

5

Narrative: Yea, kill him...
Gbide, it's great!
Whoever prepares charms against us [members],
Kill...

10

Whoever prepares charms against us [members],
Kill...

Adane [dieties of] Okpẹ, I acknowledge you,

15 The land [God] of Jèddo, I acknowledge you;
Our enemies raised their voices,
Saying we should die in this dry season,
And I said the ground is too strong,
We can't die in this dry season;
Our enemies again raised their voices,
Saying we should die in this rainy season,
And I said the ground is too soft,
20 We can't die in this rainy season,
Please, leave us alone.
Members, I negotiated it this way,
Or, public, can't we say so?

Line No. Response: Fear not, forward ever, yea.

No. 54

IRHORIN IRHOBO

5 Ọna ne (avbaran) otu Irhobo,
Irhe dumu irhorin ne.
“Ayelala gba mu o,
Ibrikimọ 'dumu ne”,
Ọna n'odẹ irhorin ohu o,
Ri 'Rhobo ivbori o,
R'aye 'dume ne.

THE ITSEKIRI CURSE

The Itsekiri,
Invoked a curse:
“Ayelala will kill you,
Ibrikimọ will save you”.
5 This is a kind of curse,
The Itsekiri own,
And invoke.

No. 55 IRHORIN IGORU

E, ọpha ọrhọ rhe amwa,
Ọna n’ ukoroghwe ohu o n’oye ọpha ọkpara;
E Lebọsi ọrhe i Deghele,
Udj ’aghw ẹ igoru na n’oye ọkpara ri ne (Gbeva).

5 Igoru r’ame egbe na,
Re ’roro ni ọ’akpọ ephian,
Ezẹko adjẹ ame eghren,
Oberhumu agẹn ọvbọ t’or age-ẹn ne (Gbeva).

10 Ghwu s’are age mai ruẹ,
Irhodin igẹn ọsa bu kp’ ọya-a;

Bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
Irhodin Igoru na okpi Lebosi-i ne (Gbeva).

Line No.

Efro:

E, Ukperi o,
Otu igberadja,
Are na mẹrẹ ughe.

15

THE IGORU CURSE

Yea, when a stranger arrives any town,
The stranger walks on only one leg;
But Lebọs came to Deghele,
And took the step [began] to perform Igoru (twice).

5

This Igoru that we perform,
That is thought to be for everyone in the world,
Some people do keep enemty with us;
The barren's absence reports no events to her.

10

I say you might try to hurt us,
But the curse of the fish cage cannot kill the Beer;
From everlasting to everlasting,
The curse of Igoru cannot kill Lebọs (twice).

15 Call: Yea, great blame;
Sex workers,
You would see what is ahead.

No. 56 ÈGBUKPE RE VBE RU

Èkpare: E, evbe le ọmọ ada-a o,

Ehwe: Ada ọvo ọro le ọmọ;

Èkpare: S' ob' Urhobo wona nya,

Ehwe: Ọgbọtuvie o wu vbe i rhe-e.

5 Èkpare: E, Ogophori okperẹ ne,
Ehwe: Ègbukpe re vbe ru o,
Ovbo vb' ègbukpe ra vba re emare-e,
Akpọ ekaragban re rhe re na,
Igberadja rẹ Ogophori o,
Nẹ urhurhomu o n'ọye okpogho.

Line No.

10

Efro: Inene o, ukperi lgoru okpe ame urhomu-u.

Èkpare: E, Ogophori okperẹ ne,

Ehwe: Ègbukpe re vbe ru o,

Ovbo vb' ègbukpe ra vba re emare-e,

- 15 Akpọ ekaragban re rhe re na,
Igberadja re Ogophori o,
Ne urhurhomu o n'oye okpogho.
- Efro: Inene o, iti ọr' Igita o n'oye ame ekporo.
- 20 Ẹkpare: E, Ogophori okperẹ ne,
Ehwe: Ẹgbukpe re vbe ru o,
Ovbo vb' ẹgbukpe ra vba re emare-e,
Akpọ ekaragban re rhe re na,
Igberadja re Ogophori o,
Ne urhurhomu o n'oye okpogho.
- 25 Efuen: E, ughe, ughe, evb le ọmọ ada-a wado,
Ehwe: Ada ọvo y'oro le ọmọ;
Ẹkpare: E, s' ob' Urhobo ye wu na nya o,
Ehwe: Ọgbọtuvie o wu vbe i rhe-e.

THE YEAR WE DO NOT FARM

- Solo: Yea, we don't stop a child from going out,
Response: It's what he experiences outside that stops him;
Solo: Whether it's Urhoboland you would go,

	Response:	Ogbotuvie [celebrated lady], you don't know.
5	Solo:	Yea, Ogophori [the low farm land] cries,
	Response:	There could be the year we do not farm, But there's never a year we do not eat food. The life style of pleagued goats that came in vogue, The sex trade of Ogophori [the low farm land], He/she [it] continues to shake his/her [its] head.
10		
	R-solo:	Grand mother, the blames of Igoru cannot kill us.
	Solo:	Yea, Ogophori cries,
	Response:	There could be the year we do not farm, But there's never a year we do not eat food. The life style of pleagued goats that came in vogue, The sex trade of Ogophori, He/she [it] continues to shake his/her [its] head.
15		
	R-solo:	Grand mother, like the Guitar, we play.
	Solo:	Yea, Ogophori cries,
20	Response:	There could be the year we do not farm,

But there's never a year we do not eat food.
The life style of plagued goats that came in vogue,
The sex trade of Ogophori,
He/she [it] continues to shake his/her [its] head.

- 25 Solo: Yea, we don't stop a child from going out,
Response: It's what he experiences outside that stops him;
Solo: Whether it's Urhobo land you would go,
Response: Ọgbotuvie [celebrated lady], you don't know.

No. 57 APHIĘ ỌMỌ IGBE

E, owẹwẹ r' Imemineruo,
Aphię ọmọ igbe,
Ukorẹwa ọphię ruọ rhe Igoru (ne),
Uko ọvo ọye ose ọma ye uko,
No wẹwẹ ọvo ere valọ oma phia,
Uchekete rẹ ọke avbọ na,
"Kono djuvbẹ o?" n'ọyi we kperẹ (pherhe).

5.

Line No.

A CHILD DECEIVED TO DANCE

Yea, you Imemineruo,
A child deceived to dance,

5. Ukorewa has deceived you into Igoru [performance].
It's only the cup that identifies itself as cup,
You've brought yourself to the open;
And in the present moment,
"Who sent me?" is your cry [or complaint].

No. 58 OFA ỌRORO MẸ

- 5 E, ni mia meren Ogberaghwe,
Ro vre ne uza o,
Edere oghini phie me fi rho akpo ne,
Ikipi omase oyibo oto gbẹ,
Yoro phie re me rho na;
Se mi na ha kpahen usun aye ri rho-oma o,
Semi na mere ohworho
R'onọ hwa ohuan me.
- 10 Otu idama emere ughwaro me o,
Ohuan me orhom' aye ehwa-a;
Esa me okele ohuan me fi rho uvu eghware,
Edẹ eghware, r'oteri ene rie eghware,
Epini dede, mia meren hwa-a,
Ofa emru onana ororo me

15 Ukpokpo ote Afe-en,
'Le rie n'etu.

20
Line No.

Ohuan mę re kele ri,
Ole (ri) mę n' amwa;
Are irhe te ljęddo,
Are a męre mę-ę,
N'obo ọbẹlẹ mi na nya;
Me nya ọr' ọbẹlẹ fi Egborode,
Me nya ọr' Adeje fi obo Orerokpẹ,
Ob' Urhiapelẹ me na nya o.

I WAS ASHAMED

5

Yea, I see one with deformed legs,
Getting lost in the street,
My peer really deceived me and ruined my life;
It was the first lady chief to have affairs with a white man,
That deceived me this way;
Whether I would follow those of them, who are pretty,
If I might find someone,
To pay my husband's divorce claims.

10 The young men saw my face (appearance),
And they were not delighted to pay for me;
My husband put forth his divorce claims at the law court,
On the appointed day to appear in the court,
Even half kobo I hadn't to pay;
I was ashamed of this.

15 Even if a piece of stone did not strike a bird,
It chased it away from the plants.

20 The divorce suite and claims against me,
Chased me away from the town;
If you get to Jeddo,
And you don't find me there,
I would go through the bush path,
I shall go through the bush path to Egborode,
I shall go through Adeje to Orerokpe,
Then, I would go to Urhiapẹlẹ [Sapele].

Line No.

No. 59

OGHWARA

Ẹkpare:

Abotete n' Oghwara,

Ehwe:

Igoru ame, 'na t' urhomemro ne,

- 5
Ekpere: Ame na suo Abotete,
Ehwe: N' ekete ose rḥo,
N'oran ami na ha ne (ogbeva).
- 10
Qromaido n'oghwara,
Igoru ame, 'na t' urhomemro ne,
Ame na suo Qromaido,
Unu roro (ehwoghwe omoko)
Yoro gbe ri rie (ogbeva).
- 15
Utiaberēn n'oghwara,
Igoru ame, 'na t' urhomemro ne,
Ame na suo utiaberēn,
Uvu oghwa eghware,
Oraga orho gbē ye ne (ogbeva).
- 20
Berurierian n'oghwara,
Igoru ame' na t' urhomemro ne,
Ame na suo Oberurierian,
Qr' Ugbokodo,
Yoro gbe ri rie (ogbeva).

25 Barusele n' oghwara,
Igoru ame 'na t' urhomemro ne,
Egbukpe r'ame so rie,
Egbukpe orana,
Okpomu ukeribo ne (ogbeva).

Line No. 30 Irhomune obunu (okpere) ne,
Are otu imeba, are ze bru me rhe,
Akidi ro rirhie re,
Egbukpe isiorin,
Ovbo rho vbo ewo-o ne (ogbeva).

35 Isese n' oghwara,
Igoru ame na t' urhomemro,
Ame na suo Isese,
Urhure irhirin o,
Yeri gbe ri rie (ogbeva).

Orhan r'okerere ese,
Oyo ro rh'obo eri rherin ata;
Ohworho ro kanre 'kpeti,
Ohi ro so rie,

40 Y'orọ merẹ uvue ne (ogbeva).

Ọyi ufi uphele okpokpo ọtan,
Ọlẹhẹ ọtan b'oghwa rh' izede,
Ufi uphele okpokpo Isese,
Ọlẹhẹ Isese b'oghwa rh' Ẹyeogbe (ogbeva).

THE IMPOTENT/BARREN

Abotete is impotent [barren],
Our Igoru will speak the truth;
We shall sing of Abotete,
Wherever it ends,
5 We shall accept it (twice).

Ọromaido is impotent [barren],
Our Igoru will speak the truth;
We shall sing of Ọromaido,
It's a long mouth (or parrot's claws),
10 That he/she has (twice).

Line No.

Utiaberẹn is impotent [barren],

15 Our Igoru will speak the truth;
We shall sing of Utiaberẹn,
It was in the council hall,
That Oragha slept with her (twice).

20 'Berurierian is impotent [barren],
Our Igoru will speak the truth;
We shall sing of Oberurierian,
It is the attitude of Ugbokodo,
That he/she has (twice).

25 Barusele is impotent [barren],
Our Igoru shall speak the truth;
The year we sang of him/her,
That year,
He/she was leprous (twice).

30 Irhomune cried aloud,
"Members, come to me"
Akidi had been under menstruation,
For five years,
And the menstrual flow had not stopped (twice).

35 Isese is impotent [barren],
Our Igoru will speak the truth,
We shall sing of Isese,
For it's nine navels,
That he/she has (twice).

Line No.
40

It's the tree nearby the stream,
That understands the language of the fishes;
When a man makes a box [safe],
It's the thief, who steals it,
That sees the inside (twice).

It is the greed of the squerrel,
That makes it build its nest by the road side;
Isese is greedy,
Hence he/she built a house at Ēyeogbe (twice).

No. 60 URHIEME ERHOME EKI RHOM' ODE

Ēkpare: E, Urhieme erhome,

Ehwe: Eki rhom' ode,

Owēwe r' Akparukpe,

- 5 Wo kpar' ukpe re,
 Wu vbe i rhe rẹ o;
 Ękpare: Ọra n' urhieme ovbiogbere,
 Ehwe: Ro rhi Akparukpe,
 Ękpare: Ugherughen ro se rh' ame,
 Ehwe: Ọke r'ova rhe,
10 N'unu ohu o,
 N'oyo ji kporo.
- Ękpare: Akparukpe ọkpa r' igberadja,
 Ehwe: Iti ọr' edje yi n'oyoye ọghwọlọ,
 Ękpare: I-Tomosi ro ni Warri rhe,
15 Ehwe: Ọhi kpayin esa r' Akparukpe,
 Nọ n'ogbo ha o,
 Nosi yẹ kẹriẹ o,
 Ękpare: Ọmọmẹ, erhi Akparukpe,
 Ehwe: Erhi Akparukpe ọghwọlọ idọlọ-ọ.
- 20 Emie: E, Imeni o,
 Ekete r' Ichakpa odote,
 Ba Ichakpa ọrhọ je samo rẹ o.

Line No.	Èkpare:	Urhieme erhome,
	Ehwe:	Eki rhom' ode,
25		Owe r' Akparukpe, Wo kpar' ukpe re, Wu vbe i rhe re o;
	Èkpare:	I-Tomosi ro ni Warri rhe,
	Ehwe:	Ohworo ikpayin esa, Ha r' Akparukpe, Aghen' ogbo ha o, No siye kerio o,
30		
	Èkpare:	Mome, erhi Akparukpe,
	Ehwe:	Erhi Akparukpe oghworo ukobo re o.
35		
	Efro:	E, mome, Erhi Akparukpe,
	Ehwe:	Erhi Akparukpe oghworo idolo-o.
		IT IS GOOD FATE BEFORE GOOD NAME
	Solo:	Yea, good fate is required,
	Response:	To gain good reputation,

		You Akparukpe, You've eaten up the year, If you do not know;
5	Solo:	That was the fate of poverty,
	Response:	Inherent in Akparukpe,
	Solo:	The rattle that falls into the water,
	Response:	When it comes afloat,
10		It's the same pitch, It vibrates.
	Solo:	Akparukpe went on sex trade expedition,
	Response:	She was then looking for her age mate,
	Solo:	Thomas, who just came from Warri,
Line No. 15	Response:	Gave Akparukpe six Naira, That she should have that, And co-habit with him,
	Solo:	My son/daughter Akparukpe's fate,
	Response:	Akparukpe's fate didn't want money.
20	R-solo:	O Męni, Grown as Ichakpa, Ichakpa is yet to b circumcised.

- 25 Solo: Good fate is required,
Response: To gain good reputation,
You Akparukpe,
You've eaten up the year,
If you do not know;
- 30 Solo: Thomas, who just came from Warri,
Response: Packaged six Naira,
And gave to Akparukpe,
That she should have that,
And co-habit with him,
Solo: My son/daughter, Akparukpe's fate,
Response: Akparukpe's fate does not want even a Kobo.
- 35 R-solo: O, my son/daughter,
Akparukpe's fate,
Response: Akparukpe's fate doesn't want money.

No. 61 OTU RA GBẸ IKONGO RHẸ IBOMA

E, are ọvo 'tu ra gbẹ ikongo,
Are ọvo 'tu ra gbẹ iboma,
'Re ọvo 'tu ra gbẹ ikongo,

5	'Re ọvo 'tu ra gbẹ iboma; Orho rhi ọre pini rẹ o, Orho rhi ọri kọbọ rẹ; Orho rhi ọre pini rẹ, Orho rhi ọri kọbọ rẹ.
10	Ọna n' obo r'are erhie unu ohoro, Jeka mẹrẹ obo r' oyibo ruru; Obo r' oyibo ruru vb'orho ghwoghwo, Vbe na dẹ ọrọrọ, Avba mēr' ukofan dẹ-ẹ, Ghwu s' eyi ro vb' erere, 15 Ghwu s'orana n'oye ony' akpọ sua, Avba su' eyi r'okpe ọwa-a;
20	Gberadja r'are amẹrẹ na, Erere 'va n'oye ọrọ 'a vbiẹ, Wu rhe gbe yi gbe gbe gbe ikanghwe efu-u, Ophiarọ ohoro ọ'bẹrẹ fi unuson, E, wu ne simie t' ẹduhu; Are otu re rie Urhobo,

25 'Ri t'obora na ri dj' inene,
Ihoro mę 'bęrihi o,
Hware ikongo
Oma ęgbaye-e o.

E, ijovbo ęjo,
Mi rhe hu o mi t' erimi rę.

30 'Re ọvo 'tu ra gbę ikongo,
Are ọvo 'tu ra gbę iboma,
'Re ọvo 'tu ra gbę ikongo,
'Re ọvo 'tu ra gbę iboma;
Orho rhi ọre pini rę o,
Orho rhi ọri kọbọ rę;
35 Orho rhi ọre pini rę o,
Orho rhi ọri kọbọ rę.

Line No.

40 Ọna n' obo rare erhie unu ohoro,
Jeka męrę obo r' oyibo ruru;
Obo r' oyibo ruru, vb'ọrhọ ghwọghwọ,
Vbe na dę ọrọrọ,
E, ghwu s'avba męr' ukọfan dę-ę,

45 Urhому eyi ro vb' erere,
Ghwu s'orana n'oye ony' akpo sua,
Avba sua eyi r'ose kp'owa-a;
Gberadja ra re amere na,
N' erere 'va n'oye oro 'a uvuen,
Wu rhe gbe yi gbe gbe gbe ikanghwe efu-u,
Ophiaro' horo obero fi unuson,
E, wu ne simie t' eduhu;

50 Are otu re rie Urhobo,
Ari t'obora na ri dj' inene,
Urhie omwo j' irherin vbo,
Chekete r' oke oteri na,
Mie s'ame ovie o, 'rha mere-e.

55 E, s' urhie omwo j' irherin vbo,
Chekete r' oke oteri na,
Mie sa me ovie o,
'Rha mere-e.

THOSE WHO HAVE AFFAIRS WITH SOLDIERS

You have affairs with soldiers,

5
Line No. | And you have affairs with scamps,
You have affairs with soldiers,
And you have affairs with scamps;
You don't gain half a Kobo,
And you don't gain a Kobo;
You don't gain half a Kobo,
And you don't gain a Kobo.

10 | See how you open your part,
Like a wite man's artifact;
If the white man's product gets spoilt,
We then buy another one to replace it;
But one can't find the human part to buy,
It is a profitable market,
15 | That one should trade on,
We don't trade unprofitably;

20 | Sex trade as you see it,
Has two profits,
If you practice it for long, your legs might swell,
Your skin might cut through to the anus,
And you'll treat yourself till death;

25 Those who are going to Urhobo land,
Inform grad mother when you get there,
My part is torn through,
Affairs with soldiers,
Got beyond my strength.

Yea, stop and you say no,
If I die, I'll not get to heaven.

30 You have affairs with soldiers,
And you have affairs with scamps,
You have affairs with soldiers,
And you have affairs with scamps;
You don't gain half a Kobo,
You don't gain a Kobo;
35 You don't gain half a Kobo,
You don't gain a Kobo.

Line No.

40 Is this how you're opening your part,
Like a white man's artifact;
Anything manufactured by the white man,
If it gets destroyed,
We simply buy another,

45 But we can't find human parts to buy,
It's only a profitable trade,
That one gets involved in,
We don't trade to our destruction;

50 Sex trade as you see it,
Has but two profits,
If you practice it for long, your legs might swell,
Or your part might be torn to the anus,
And you'll treat yourself till death;

55 Those of you going to Urhobo,
Inform grand mother when you get there,
The River dried up, leaving the fishes bare,
At the moment,
I seek tears and find none.

Yea, the River dried up, leaving the fishes,
And at the moment,
I seek for tears,
And find none.

No. 62 IGBERADJA IVBO ỌRHAN

Ẹkpare: Otu igberadja irhe vbo ọrhan ohu o r'ese Egbe,
Ẹgbukpe orho te,
Ọro vbo ọrhan,
Ọberẹ ẹfa r'ọrhan ye o.

Line No.

5

Ẹduhwẹde r'oteri, vb' otu ame imeba eri vẹren re,
N'ọran ob' Oshodi oboran 'me nyare o;
Aghene otu aye i rhe koko,
E ra djẹ iroro iruẹn ay' ine ruon.

10

Ame ite oboran,
Egodo Abada ọye ame vberię ri o;
Abada, ọh' i buluku rhuon,
Ọsoro ulele orho siyẹ aga.

15

Ẹkpare: Otu aye Ọsọsọn r'emọrhan,
Ehwe: Otu ay' Ọsọsọn irhe siyẹ ohuobọ;
Ẹkpare: Ẹdibidaka r'akowe,
Ehwe: Ẹibidaka orho siyẹ ohuobọ.

	Ẹkpare:	Ekekeke ri kipi,
	Ehwe:	Ekekeke orho siyẹ ohuobọ;
	Ẹkpare:	‘Gbọtigoru re ọtota,
20	Ehwe:	Ọgbọtigoru orho siyẹ ohuobọ.
	Ẹkpare:	Otu ayi Ledi r’elọkpa,
	Ehwe:	Era pardi o irhe siyẹ ohuobọ ne o ‘Dogun;
	Ẹkpare:	Mi rhe kele aye,
	Ehwe:	Otuotu aye, ene ghwa uze.
25	Ẹkpare:	Abada ọrho kpare unu se Ọgbọtigoru,
	Ehwe:	“Gba so ijoro ẹbo; Vbi neneyo me bẹrẹ ẹfa r’are”
	Ẹkpare:	Ọgbọtiguru overen re o,
	Ehwe:	Ni joro ẹbo n’oye ọkparare o.
30	Ẹkpare:	Egbe, aye rhe akpọ, Ayi rhe vbiẹ-ẹ yo, Egbe. Egbe, ayi rhe akpọ, Ayirhe vbiẹ-ẹ yo, Egbe.
Line No.	Efro:	Egbe, at’ijoro ipoda yi mia ghwoḷo,

- 35 Ehwe: Egbe, ayi rha rhe akpọ,
Ayi rhe vbiẹ-ẹ yo, Egbe.
- Ẹkpare: Abada ọrhọọ Aghwala,
N'ẹmromra ẹbo noy'omromra re;
“Ẹbo hian iya, otu je ije,
40 Ame igberadja,
Otu ikorovan,
Orhi ẹdẹ ukporo ipoda do,
N'orana oye mia ghwoḷo”.

THE SEX WORKERS HAD A DEITY

The sex workers had a deity called Egbe.
Each year that comes,
He who has a deity,
Offers sacrifices to him.

- 5 On a certain day, we, members, arose,
And journeyed to Oshodi;
We gathered that their group had converged,
Drawing a plan for a musical performance.

When we arrived there,

10 We negotiated into Abada's compound;
Abada tied a skirt wrapper around her waist,
She fixed a feather on her headgear and sat on a chair.

Solo: The category of Ọsoson who were followers,

Responses: The Ọsoson category sat on one side;

15 Solo: Ẹdibidaka who is an elite [the secretary],

Responses: Ẹdibidaka sat on one side.

Line No. Solo: Ekekeke who is a chief,

Responses: Ekekeke sat on one side;

20 Solo: 'Gbọtigoru, the spokesman,

Responses: Ọgbọtigoru, sat on one side.

Solo: The category of Ledi who are police,

Responses: Who were on parade, sat on one side, 'Dogun;

Solo: When I counted them,

Responses: They were altogether twenty.

25 Solo: Then Abada called on Ọgbọtigoru,

Responses: "Now, sing divination songs,

So that I offer the sacrifice on your behalf;"

Solo: Ogbotigoru arose,

Responses: And sang a traditional worship song:

30 Solo: Oh, Egbe, they came into the world,
And had no children, Egbe;
Egbe, they came into the world,
And had no children, Egbe.

Call: Egbe, I desire such as powder song,

35 Responses: Egbe, they came into the world,
And had no children, Egbe.

Solo: Abada picked a rattle,

And greeted after the divination manner;

“We greet you great deity, please tell us what the fate is,”

40 We, the sex workers,
A category of barren people;
Even if it's on powder worship day, please,
That is even the type we desire.

Line No.

No. 63

IKERO IPHEN NE

A1 - 167

5 Otu ri rhe Obiebi,
Otu ri rh' Obiebi,
Are i gbe ye dje yi;
Aghene owọ Ema ọghwa dumu,
Aye rha phẹrhe ne,
Aye i vbe rhe t' oghwa vba Obiebi re o;
Obiebi, Ikẹro iphenre,
Ru wa ke ghwoḷo ọmọ,
Ada uvbie ovbo otore re o.

FOCUS BECAME CLEARER

5 Those who know Obiebi,
Those who know Obiebi,
Go and inform him/her,
That the military ship has arrived,
And that they have gone there again,
They no longer meet 'Biebi at home;
Obiebi, your focus became clearer,
Before you began to seek a child,
It's no longer possible for you to give birth.

No. 64 EGHWERE ME

5	Anamẹruvo, e da ibe ode, Ọrh' ode agba nya, Anamẹruvo vbo i rhe-e; Anamẹruvo, r'oghine rhe ne, E, otu irhen ye, ayi vbiẹ hine, Ghwonọ ghwonọ, ọvbọrhọ mẹrẹ-ẹ, Ni ob' ọbo-epha nọ r'oye ọnyare (vbariẹn).
10 Line No.	N'avbaran ọbo na orho fomu riẹn, "Ọnana ohu ọrha, Ọnana ohu oghori", S' Anamẹruvo, ... Bẹmẹde ri bẹmẹde, "Ode o nene, 'Vbiẹ orho vbo otọre-e." 15 Anamẹruvo ọvorhọn ọrhan, Rhe ukoro ẹbiukpe ne; E, ọke ọrhọ ke, Ovbo ze igbo riẹn, R'ọzen otomi nie o, 20 Eghwere mẹ, Ji mẹ mẹrẹ ọmọ ne o (vbariẹn).

- 25 Eghwere, ghwere gb' oyoyo,
Mo nughe,
Egwere, ghwere gb' oyoyo,
Mo nughe;
Efro: Eghwere ghwere gb' oyoyo,
Mo nughe,
Ehwe: Eghwere ghwere gb' oyoyo,
Mo nughe.
- 30 Efro: Eghwere omọ,
Ehwe: Gb' oyoyo;
Efro: Eghwere otome,
Ehwe: Gb' oyoyo,
Efro: Eghwere osiq,
35 Ehwe: Gb' oyoyo.

MY DEFENSIVE MEDICINE

Anameruvo, a terrible name,
Manifests it meaning in the bearer's life,
But Anameruvo doesn't know;
Anameruvo who had now come,

5 Line No.	Yea, his mates have all given birth, He sought for long and found not; Then he went to consult the oracle (repeat).
10	And the oracle inquired on his/her behalf: “Is it going to be well? Or, it’s going to be ill? Would Anameruvo, ...? Forever and ever, What a pity, grand mother, No more room for birth”.
15	Then Anameruvo moulded an image, Just by the moulded bed, Yea, at dawn, He/she offered money to it as sacrifice, To ensure long life;
20	‘My defensive medicine, Let me find have a child’ (twice).
	Defensive medicine, defensive medicine is efficacious, Come and see;

25 Defensive medicine, defensive medicine is efficacious,
Come and see;
Call: Defensive medicine, defensive medicine is efficacious,
Come and see;
Response: defensive medicine, defensive medicine is efficacious,
Come and see.

30 Call: Medicine for child bearing,
Response: Is efficacious;
Call: Medicine for long life,
Response: Is efficacious;
Call: Medicine for male potency,
Response: Is efficacious

35
Line No.

No. 65 IKIKI OFO ỌMỌ RO HUE-Ę

Ękpare: E, Ikiki ohu kpa hen otọre,
Isodje ọrhọ kpare ovie,
Isodje, orho se yi o,
Ikiki ovbo rho rho-on;
Erimi okodo phan,
Ma ne Ikiki of' ọmọ ro hue-ẹ.

5

Ehwe: Ọda re ame o,

- 10 Ẹkpare: Ikiki ohu j' ame vbo,
 Idie ami ne ruo?
 Uhu ọnana, ọda r' ame o,
 Ikiki ohu j' ame vbo,
 Nighe, Igoru o ame vbo.
- 15 Emie: Ikiki rẹ olori ame o,
 Erimi omie r' ami kpe ne,
15 Ehwe: Ọdare ame o,
 Ikiki rẹ olori ame,
 Ọnuru ame obọ,
 Ache ọja ye-e.
- IKIKI DESERVED NOT TO DIE**
- 5 Solo: Oh, Ikiki lay dead,
 Isodje began to weep,
 And Isodje called him,
 But Ikiki no longer could hear;
5 Heaven is too deep,
 Otherwise, Ikiki deserved no death.
- Response: It is painful to us,

		Ikiki died and left us, What do we do?
10	Solo:	This death is painful to us, Ikiki died and left us, See, he left our Igoru too.
	R-solo:	Ikiki, our leader, Heaven took him from us and killed him;
15	Refrain:	It is painful to us, Ikiki, our leader, Is out of our hands It's unavengeable [irredeemable].
	No. 66	ALELUYA Udogun Olocho
5		E, Aleluya oghene ta, Ari gbe ti obo n' odadan, Vbi leleyo ne ru orhorhomu o, Ba efian are moron re. Ghwu s'obo re ru rie rian, Ebemede avba sabu je vbo-o. Kemru kemru r' ote r'ame obo,

10 Orho mwu ame gele,
Are i meba, vb' are dabu nie;
Aleluya ọrọ rhe ne,
Shọshi ame harię roro,
N'ọye sorie ame rha nya o.

15 Ọrọ ghwẹrię rhe,
Aleluya ọghwẹrię oma rhię Umogun,
R'omw' Irheren,
Do otọre Okpẹ o;
Erhi ọke ọna ghwọghwu aye o,
Na yi j'uvbevru ọna vbo.

20
Line No. Otu ame re rie ob' ada,
Re rhon emro ada,
'Me rha ta r'are;
Aleluya r'orhere,
Ishọshi ame harię roro,
25 Ọrọ ghwẹrię rhe,
Aleluya ọghwẹrię oma rhe umogun,
R'omw' Irheren,
Do otọre Okpẹ;

Erhi ọke ọna ghwoghwu aye o,
Na yi j' uruemru ọna vbo.

30 Otu ame re rie ob' ada,
Re rhon ẹmro ada,
'Me rha ta r'are,
Aya iwe ri Amereka,
Naya n'otu ri vbo rie,
35 Dọre, dọre, dọre, dọre,
Kadaga kodogo,
Kodogo kadaga,
Belebo, shewere,
Vb' Aleluya o r'iyibo e rhua rhe,
40 Is 'oji mw' orheren ob' inoko?

HALLELUYAH

Udogun Ọlocho

Yes, halleluyah [the church] truly said,
That you should turn away from evil,
And let's begin to do good,
But you're just liars;
5 Because habits that are inveterate,
Are forever unavoidable.

10
Line No.

Whatever gets to us,
If it over-thrills us,
You members, examine it;
Hallelujah has come again,
We thought it was a church,
Hence, we joined its membership.

15

In its change of event,
Hallelujah transformed to *Umogun* (a God),
That possesses priests,
In Okpeland;
Let us reprimand them now,
To stop going astray.

20

Those of us, who go out,
And hear what people say outside,
Apprised you,
That this Hallelujah that came,
We supposed it was a church,
Hence, we joined its membership;

25

But in its change of event,

Hallelujah transformed to Umogun,
That possesses priests in Okpeland;
Let us reprimand them now,
To stop this behaviour.

30

Those of us, who go out,
And hear what people say outside,
Requested you,
To write queries to America,
To inquire of those who own it,

35

Dore, dore, dore, dore,
Kadaga kodogo,
Kodogo kadaga,
Belebo 'shewere,
The Hallelujah brought by the white (missionaries),

40

Does it possess the priests abroad?

Line No.

No. 67

ẸRHOMO ALELUYA

Udogun Ọlocho

E, ọke ose ighwoghwo,
Ọke ọkia vbọ n'ẹrhomo,
Ẹrhomo ọr' Aleluya,
Oj 'ame nya 'vu otọre Okpe-ẹ;

5 E, ọke ose ighwoghwo,
Ọke ọkia vbọ n'ẹrhomo,
Ẹrhomo ọr' Aleluya,
Oj 'ame nya 'vu otọre Okpe-ẹ.

10 Aleluya r'orhere,
Aleluya osim' ihworho;
Udogun ọrhọ ghwọlọ otọriẹ,
Orho kpe ọden kpe unye-e;
Ame rha ghwọlọ otọriẹ,
Orho kpe ọden kpe unye-e.

15 Akpa r' ukpolo nya ye,
Nene o, ukpolo 'vbo vẹrẹ-ẹn;
Akpa r'otuẹro nya ye,
Ikẹro ivbe hwe rhie-e;
Ere fu ivisiọ enya re,
20 Ivisiọ ivbe hwe muo rẹ o;
Ere fu ivi sio enya re,
Ivisiọ ivbe hwe muo rẹ o;
'Tu ra ghwọlọ emọ enyare,
T' ọkena ayi vbe vbiẹ-ẹ o;

25 Emọ Okpẹ eghwẹriẹ rhe Alufa,
Edegbe irhiọke, n'ọye riẹ i preya;
Ọke ọkia 'yi ghwoghwo,
Ọke ose 'vbo n'ẹrhomo;
Erhomo r' Aleluya,
30 Oj 'ame nya-a otọre Okpẹ-ẹ o.

Line No.

E, Emọtobone ọ blaki,
Ame ọgbeva,
Ọkpa eririn,
Emọtobone wu vbe irhe-e.
35 Oshewere ọ, Emọtobone ọ e,
Ame Ọgbeva,
Ọkpa eririn,
Emọtobone, wu vbe irhe-e.

HALLELUJAH PRAYERS

Udogun Ọlocho

5 Yea, at night, they preach,
At dawn, they pray,
The prayer activities of Hallelujah,
Disturb our movements [peace] in Okpeland;
Yea, at night, they preach,

At dawn, they pray,
The prayer activities of Hallelujah,
Disturb our movements in Okpeland.

10 Hallelujah that came,
Hallelujah heals people;
Udogun investigated it,
It neither kills a tsetse fly nor a house fly;
We investigated it,
It neither kills a tsetse fly nor a house fly.

15 The cripple was taken there,
Grand mother, the cripple couldn't rise to feet;
The blind was taken there,
The eyes refused to open;
Those with swollen scrotum went there,
20 The scrotums refused to reduce;
Those with swollen scrotums went there,
The scrotums refused to reduce;
Those seeking for children went there,
Till now, they haven't given birth.

Line No.

25 Sons and daughters of Okpe have become Muslims,
So early in the morning, they go for prayers,
At dawn, they preach,
At night, they pray,
The prayers of Hallelujah,
30 Disturb our movements in Okpeland.
Oh, Emotobone, Blaki,
Twice consecutively in water,
Causes cold,
Emotobone, you're not aware;
35 Yeah, It has begin, Emotobone,
Twice consecutively in water,
Causes cold,
Emotobone, you're not aware.

No. 69 UHU ORODJE OKPE, MEBITAGHAN (ESEZI II)

Gabrel Peru Edeyiometa and Egboto Isinio

Emro: Ona Orodje Okpe r'ohu ru,
Ijoro yi,
Oye Egboto i sini,
Asa ma suoy inyena na;
5 Are 'kerho obo r'egboto isinio,

		Ena suọ inyena na; Ọna ijoro, ami vbori, Ame 'avbiẹ jiri ne.
10		Orodje Okpẹ r'ohuru na, Ọga Okpẹ omamọ, Ọda r'ame omamọ, Gebreḽ Peru, Y'ose egbọtọ i siniọ rhe aran, Ma so ijoro;
15		Kpare ijoro na rhọ, We j' udu bruo-o, Aha ijoro jiri ne.
	Ẹkpare:	Imebitaghan r' Orodje ame, Oghine hu ne,
20		E, emru ọdoro; Etego ana viẹ ye te?
	Ẹtarho:	Ovbo ekete ana sai viẹ te rẹ,
	Solo:	Ghwu s'etego ana viẹ ye te?
25		Ẹdẹrẹ emọ Okpẹ ena gba, Ghwọlọ Orodje, Arha mẹrẹ-ẹ,

- 30 Etarho: Oji hu-u,
 Ehwe: E !
 Etarho: Oje 'avbię,
 Ehwe: E, emru ọdoro.
- Emie: 'Mru enana r'a otọre na o,
 Ghwu ne ghwa ohwahwa,
 I r'oserhe ibiamo esa,
 I se dęgo ọnọghwię o?
- 35 Efro: Imebitaghan r' Orodje ame,
 Ehwe: Oghine hu ne,
 E, emru ọdoro;
 Etęgo ana vię ye te?
 Ghwu s'etęgo ana vię ye te?
- 40 Ederę emọ Okpę ena gba,
 Ghwọlọ Orodje,
 Arha męre-ę,
 E, e, emru ọdoro.

Line No.

Ekele: Otu re rie idumu i Bagi,

- 45 Ehwe: E, ari t' obo ran,
Nya ye dje emokpe;
Ekele: Uhu ovbo rhi aghwa-a,
Ehwe: E, Bikoro,
E, gba vie ibiesuon wu romo.
- 50 Ekele: 'De wu ne rie ibada,
Ehwe: E, aghwolo Orodje,
Vbarha mere-e;
Ekele: Vbede re Oba Aka onorhi,
Ehwe: E (ado), vba ghwolo Orodje,
55 Vb'arha mere-e.
- Ekele: 'ki ekpako re na gba,
Ehwe: E, aghwolo Orodje,
Vbarha mere-e o;
Ekele: Wu t' obo ofisi,
60 Ehwe: E, aghwolo Orodje,
Vba rha mere-e.
- Ekele: Wu t' egodo Umueya,
Ehwe: E, aghwolo Orodje,

		Vba rha męřę-ę o;
65	Ekele:	Wu t' egodo Orodje,
	Ehwe:	E, wa nekpę Orodje, Wo vba męřę-ę.
	Ekele:	Iviki ose i Biokoro,
	Ehwe:	E, wa rha vię-ę,
70		Vię ibiesuon wu romo.
	Emie:	Onana rōha otōre na o, Ne ghwa ohwahwa; I r' ose rhe ibiamo esa o, E ne dęgo onō ghwię?
Line No.	75	Efro: I Mebitaghan re Orodje ame, Ehwe: Oghine hu ne, E, emru odorō; E tęgo ana vię yi te? Ghwu se tęgo ana vię yi te?
80		Ędę rę emō Okpę ena gba, Ghwōlō Orodje, A rha męřę-ę o, E, e, emru odorō.

- 85 Ekele: Itu re rie idumu i Bagi,
Ehwe: E, ari t' obora,
Nya ye dje 'mọ Okpẹ;
Ekele: Uhu orho rhię aghwa-a,
Ehwe: I Biokoro,
E gba vię ibiesuon wu romo.
- 90 Ekele: Ke wu ne rie ibada o,
Ehwe: E, aghwọlọ Orodje,
Wo vba męř-ę o;
Ekele: Eđę wu ne rie Aka o,
Ehwe: E, vba ghwọlọ Orodje,
95 Vba rha męř-ę.
- Ekele: Kere Oba Aka ono rhiọ,
Ehwe: E, wa ghwọlọ Orodje,
Wo rha męř-ę o;
Ekele: Kere wu t' obo ofisi o,
100 Ehwe: Vba ghwọlọ Orodje,
Vba rha męř-ę.
- Ekele: Wu t' egodo Umueya,

Line No.	Ehwe:	Ya ghwọlọ Orodje, Wo vba merẹ-ẹ o;
105	Ekele:	Wu t' egodo Orodje,
	Ehwe:	Wa nekpe Orodje, Wo vba merẹ-ẹ;
	Ekele:	Iviki ose i Biokoro,
110	Ehwe:	E, wa rha viẹ rẹ, E, viẹ ibiesuon wu romo.

THE DEATH OF THE ORODJE OF OKPE, MEBITAGHAN (ESEZI II)

Gabrel Peru Edeyiometa and Egboto Isinio

5	Speech:	This is the late Orodje of Okpe, His song, Is what Egboto Isinio, Are about to perform today; Listen to what Egboto Isinio, Will sing today; This is our song, We've been in it [performance] for long.
10		This Orodje of Okpe who just passed on, Served Okpe a lot,

15 His death is very painful to us;
It's Gabrel Peru,
Who invited Egboto Isiniq here,
To sing songs;
Begin the song,
Be not afraid,
We've been in it for long.

20 Solo: Mebitaghan, our king,
Is really dead,
Oh, it's serious;
How long can we mourn him?

Line No. Interjection: There's no end to this mourning;
Solo: I say, how long can we mourn him?
25 The day Okpe sons and daughters will assemble,
Look for the king,
And not find him;

Interjection: He's not dead yet,
Response: Oh!

30 Interjection: He's still alive;
Response: Oh, it's serious!

- R-solo: These issues on ground,
I say, are real hamattan,
That has lasted three months;
Oh, when will it end?
- 35 Solo: Mebitaghan, our king,
Response: Is really dead,
Oh, it's serious;
How long can we mourn him?
I say, how long can we mourn him?
- 40 The day Okpe sons and daughters would assemble,
Look for the king,
And not find him;
Oh, oh, it's serious!
- Solo: Those who are going to Bagi street,
45 Response: Oh, when you get there,
Inform Okpe sons and daughters,
Solo; Death is not a taboo;
Response: Oh, Biokoro,
Just mourn a little and stop.

- 50 Solo: The day you'd go to Ibada,
Response: Oh, the king would be sought,
And not be found;
- Line No. Solo: The day the Oba of Benin would visit,
Response: Oh, the king would be sought,
55 And not be found.
- Solo: When the elders would assemble,
Response: Oh, the king would be sought,
And not be found;
- 60 Solo: Even if you get to the office,
Response: Oh, the king would be sought,
And not be found.
- Solo: And if you go to Umueya's compound,
Response: Oh, the king would be sought,
And not be found;
- 65 Solo: Even if you go to the king's palace,
Response: You would ask after the king,
And you wouldn't find him;
- Solo: Vic. [Victoria] called Biokoro,
Response: Oh weep no more,

- 70 Mourn only a little and stop.
- R-solo: These issues on ground,
I say, are real hamattan,
That has lasted three months;
Oh, when will it end?
- 75 Solo: Mebitaghan, our king,
Response: Is really dead,
Oh, it's serious;
How long can we mourn him?
I say, how long can we mourn him?
- 80 The day Okpe sons and daughters would assemble,
Look for the king,
And not find him;
Oh, oh, it's serious!
- Line No. Solo: Those who are going to Bagi street,
85 Response: Oh, when you get there,
Inform Okpe sons and daughters,
Solo; Death is not a taboo;
Response: Oh, Biokoro,
Just mourn a little and stop.

90 Solo: The day you'd go to Ibada,
Oh, the king would be sought,
And you wouldn't find him;
The day you would visit Benin,
Oh, the king would be sought,
95 And not be found.
When the Oba of Benin would visit,
Oh, you would seek the king,
And not find him;
When you get to the office,
100 Oh, the king would be sought,
And not be found.

Even if you go to Umueya's compound,
To seek the king,
You wouldn't find him;
105 Even when you get to the king's palace,
You ask after the king,
And not find him;
Vic. [Victoria] called Biokoro,
'Oh, weep no more,
110 Mourn only a little and stop.

Line No.

No. 69 **AME OGBEVA**
Erhio, Enakobone,
Ame ogbeva okpa eririn,
Enakobone wu vbei rhe-e.

TWICE IN THE RAIN

Opression, Enakobone,
Twice in the rain causes cold;
Enakobone you do not know.

FOURTH PERIOD (1970 – 2005)

No. 70 **OTU RE GBA RE, JORO ORODJE**
[IJULIŌSI RHE IDINIGO] Gabrel Peru Edeyiŋmeta

Emro: Ame egbotŋ isiniŋ,
Ye rhe eketaran,
Ma ha ijoro so Ijuliŋsi inyenana;
Uruemu r'oruru,
R' orhomurun,
R' ophiŋ re,
Ono se i sun Okpe,
Me kpare ijoro na rho,

5

Igoru.

- 10 Ẹkpare: Ughe, ughe,
 'Gboto isiniọ ero afi ne,
 Ehwe: Eyeghe yeghe o,
 Usekpe omwu orhan o;
 Ẹtarho: Ono sun Urhobo ephian toto.
- 15 Ẹkpare: Otu re gba re, vbare gba kerho,
 Oye ikun Orodje,
 N'oye ame inegbe,
 Ehwe: Are dabo kerho ye;
 Ẹkpare: Ijuliosi re orhe Orodje,
20 Ehwe: Aye wanva n' imizu rephan,
 Mizu rephan n' omiemie o.
 Ẹkpare: Ijuliosi ro veren re,
 Ehwe: Ona n' eghware vbe n'oyi oseri,
Line No. Idinigo onọ re Orodje;
- 25 Ẹkpare: Otu ekpako erha kpare unu,
 Ehwe: Oy' Idinigo noye aye ha re,
 Idinigo onọ re Orodje.

- 30 Ẹkpare: Ijuliṣi ro ẹrẹn re,
 Ehwe: Vb'ona n' obo Eko n'oye oye onyanre,
 Ọne iyẹrẹn ri Gowṣni o;
 Ẹkpare: Igowṣni ọrhọ kpare unu,
 Ehwe: Ọy' Idinigo vbe r'oye ọhare,
 Idinigo ọnọ re Orodje (ona).
- 35 Ẹkpare: Ijuliṣi ro ẹrẹren,
 Ehwe: N' otọre Urhobo vbe n'oye ọrhere,
 Ọnẹ Iyẹrẹn rẹ otu ekpako;
 Ẹkpare: Otu ekpako erha kpare unu,
 Ehwe: Vb' ona n' ẹrhomo vbe r'aye nẹre,
 Ẹkpare: Obore wu mevi rẹ Idinigo,
40 Ya re Orodje,
 Adane Okpẹ gbe biko,
 Ehwe: E bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
 Aghene ukperi ovbo rho kpare-e.
- 45 Emie: Edele, de oseghwune,
 Amae wia-a,
 Me vb'iroro so.
- Ẹkpare: Otu re gba re, vb' are gba kerhọ,

- 50 Ehwe: Ọye ikun Orodje,
N'oy' ame ine gbe,
Are dabo kerhọ ye;
Ekpere: Ijuliọsi re ọrhe Orodje,
Ehwe: Aye wanva n' imizu rephan,
Mizu rephan n' ọmiemie o.
- Line No. 55 Ekpere: Ijuliọsi ro veren re,
Ehwe: Ọna n' eghware vbe n'oyi ose ri,
Idinigo ọnọ re Orodje;
Ekpere: Otu ekpako erha kpere unu,
Ehwe: Ọy' Idinigo noye aye ha re,
Idinigo ọnọ re Orodje.
- 60 Ekpere: Ijuliọsi ro veren re,
Ehwe: Vb'ona n' obo Eko noye oye ọnyanre,
Ọn' iyeren ri Gowoni o;
Ekpere: Igowoni ọrhe kpere unu,
Ehwe: Ọy' Idinigo vbe r'oye ọhare,
65 Idinigo ọnọ re Orodje.
- Ekpere: Ijuliọsi ro veren re,

- Ehwe: N' otore Okpe vbe noye orhere,
Ono Iyeren re otu ekpako;
- 70 Ekpere: Otu ekpako erha kpere unu,
Ehwe: Vb' ona n' erhomo vbe r'aye nere,
Ekpere: Obore wu mevi r' Idinigo,
Ya re Orodje,
Adane Okpe gbe biko,
- 75 Ehwe: E bemeđe ri bemeđe,
Aghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e.
- Emie: Ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e,
Aghene, ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e,
- Efro: E bemeđe ri bemeđe,
- 80 Ehwe: (A)ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e;
Ekele: E, evb' ekpako evba n' erhomo
Ehwe: E bemeđe ri bemeđe,
(A)ghene ukperi ovborho kp' are-e;
- Ekele: E, vb' eghwa emese evba rha n' erhomo
- Line No. 85 Ehwe: E bemeđe ri bemeđe,
(A)ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e;
Ekele: Okpe Unioni evba rha n' erhomo,
Ehwe: E bemeđe ri bemeđe,

- (A)ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e;
Ekele: E, vb' ekakuro evba rha n' ẹrhomo,
90 Ehwe: E bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
(A)ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp'are-e;
Emie: Bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
'Ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e;
Ekele: Okpe Unioni evba rha n' ẹrhomo,
95 Ehwe: E bẹmẹdẹ ri bẹmẹdẹ,
'Ghene ukperi ovbo rho kp' are-e.

ASSEMBLY, SONG OF THE KING

[JULIUS AND DIMINGO] Gabrel Peru Ẹdeyiọmeta

- Speech: We're the Egboto Isinio,
Who have come here,
To sing the praise of Julius today;
For his deed,
5 That is worthy;
That is straightforward.
He is indeed capable of leading Okpe,
I begin the song;
It is Igoru.

- 10 Solo: Entertainment, entertainment,
Egboto Isiniq has come out,
Gently, Gently,
The snail climbs the tree;
Interjection: He will rule the whole of Urhobo.
- 15 Solo: Assembly, listen,
It is the story of the king,
That we shall narrate,
Line No. Response: Listen to it attentively;
Solo: Julius and the king,
20 Response: Are brothers of same mother,
Brothers in sweet harmony.
- Solo: Then Julius arose,
Response: And called an assembly together,
Presenting Dimingo to be king,
25 Solo: The elders raised their voices and said,
'He, Dimingo, is accepted,
Dimingo will be sworn king'.
Solo: Julius again arose,

- 30 Response: And travelled to Lagos,
He reported to Gowon;
Solo: Gowon lifted his voice saying,
Response: He accepts Dimingo;
Dimingo will become (this) king.
- 35 Solo: Julius arose,
Response: Returned to Urhobo land,
And reported to the elders [of Okpe];
Solo: The elders in a loud voice,
Said the following prayer:
40 As you stood for Dimingo,
To become king,
Adane-Okpe, please,
From everlasting to everlasting,
Let not criticism ruin you.
- 45 R-solo: Great, It has begun,
Not by hard work,
But singing with wisdom.

Line No.

Solo: Assembly, listen,

- It is the story of the king,
That we shall narrate,
- 50 Response: Listen to it attentively;
Solo: Julius and the king,
Response: Are brothers of same mother,
Brothers in sweet harmony.
- Solo: Then Julius arose,
55 Response: And called an assembly together,
Presenting Dimingo to be king,
Solo: The elders raised their voices and said,
Response: They accept Dimingo,
Dimingo will be sworn king.
- 60 Solo: Julius again arose,
Response: And travelled to Lagos,
He reported to Gowon;
Solo: Gowon lifted his voice saying,
Response: He accepts Dimingo;
65 Dimingo will become (this) king.
Solo: Julius arose,
Response: Returned to Urhobo land,

And reported to the elders;

70 Solo: The elders in a loud voice,
Response: Said the following prayer:
Solo: As you stood for Dimingo,
To become king,
Adane-Okpe, please,

75 Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you.

R-solo: That criticism cannot ruin you,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

Line No. Call: From everlasting to everlasting,

80 Response: That criticism cannot ruin you;
Solo: Yea, the elders prayed;
Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

Solo: Yea, the women prayed;

85 Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;
Solo: The Okpe Union prayed,
Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

90 Solo: Yea, the chiefs prayed,
Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

R-solo: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

95 Solo: The Okpe Union prayed,
Response: From everlasting to everlasting,
That criticism cannot ruin you;

No. 71 ỌKAKURO ẸDIWINI AYOMANỌ RHE ORODJE
Gabrel Peru Ẹdeyiometa and Egboto Isiniọ

5 Emro: Ame Egboto Isiniọ,
Ye rhe eketaran,
Ma h' ijoro so Ẹdiwini omọ Ayomanọ;
Uruemru orhorhomu,
Ovbo kpahen Orodje;
Ọh' oma rie otore riẹn omamọ;
Are gba kerhọ ijoro yi.

Ẹkpare: Ughe, ughe,
Gboto isiniọ ero afi ne;

10 Ehwe: Eyeghe, yeghe,

Line No.		Usekpe omwu orhan o.
15	Èkpare:	Ekperi ne, Idọlọ i Naijiria, Ote r' ame obọ ne, Aghọghọ, Obo r' irhomuru o, Osomo t' ame obọ.
20	Emie:	Edele, e, vb' oseghwu ne, Vb' ason rhẹ uvo, Enya mẹrẹ oma-a o.
25	Èkpare: Ehwe:	E, ekperi ne, Idọlọ i Naijiria, Ote r' ame obọ ne, Aghọghọ, Obo r' irhomuru o, Osomo t' ame obọ.
30	Emie: Èkpare:	Edele, de vbo seghwu ne, Amai wia-an, Me vbo iroro so. E, ekperi ne,

35	Ehwe:	Idọlọ i Naijiria, Oteri ame obọ ne, Aghoghọ, Obo ri rhomurun, Osomo t' ame obọ.
	Ẹkpare:	Ẹdiwini ọmọ Ayomanọ,
	Ehwe:	E, ẹkpẹkpẹmẹ ame na kpẹmiẹ, Userhumu wa yẹ Orodje;
40	Ẹkpare:	Ẹdiwini are a mẹrẹ na,
	Ehwe:	Ọye Urhiapẹlẹ vbe n'ọye orhirhiẹ, Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ;
	Ẹkpare:	Orodje ọsa mo ri' ekete,
45	Ehwe:	E, vb' ọrh' ọye ne ghwa usun, Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ;
	Ẹkpare:	Orodje osa ma djẹ iroro, Uvu oghwa ye,
	Ehwe:	(Ado,) E, vb' ọrh' ọye ne ghwa usun, Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ
50	Ẹkpare:	Oye emẹse ri gberi rie,
	Ehwe:	Ọvbọ rhọ karo rh' aye-e,

- Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ;
Ekpere: Ọye imizu ri gberi rie,
Ehwe: Ọvbọ rhọ karo rh' aye-e,
Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ;
55 Ekpere: Ọke orho se n'osa o,
Ehwe: E, ọke ọrhọ ke n'orie,
Ekpere: Otu ezẹko na nọ ame,
Ehwe: Ghwu s' idiokpo vbe ame eruẹ o;
Ekpere: Unu r'ọghwọlọ erhumu,
60 Ehwe: Ghwu n' erhumu ọravbọ ọmẹrẹ o.

Efro: Edele se vb' oseghwune,
Vb'ason rẹ uvo,
Enya mẹrẹ oma-a o.

Ekpere: Eḍiwini ọmọ Ayomanọ,
65 Ehwe: E, ẹkpẹkpẹmẹ ame na kpẹmịẹ,
Userhumu wa yẹ Orodje;
Ekpere: Eḍiwini are a mẹrẹ na,
Ehwe: Ọye Urhiapẹlẹ vbe nọye orhirhiẹ,
Erhumu Okpẹ nọye ọghwọlọ;
70 Ekpere: Orodje ọsa mo ri' ekete,

	Ehwe:	E, vb' օrh' օye ne ghwa usun, Erhumu Okpẹ nօye օghwօlօ;
	Ẹkpare:	Orodje օsa ma djẹ iroro, Uvu oghwa ye,
Line No.		
75	Ehwe:	(Ado,) E, vb' օrh' օye ne ghwa usun, Erhumu Okpẹ nօye օghwօlօ.
	Ẹkpare:	Օye emẹse ri gberi rie,
	Ehwe:	Օvbօ rhօ karo rh' aye-e, Erhumu Okpẹ nօye օghwօlօ;
80	Ẹkpare:	Օye imizu ri gberi rie,
	Ehwe:	Օvbօ rhօ karo rh' aye, Erhumu Okpẹ nօye օghwօlօ;
	Ẹkpare:	Օke orho se no sa օ,
	Ehwe:	E, օke օrhօ ke n'orie,
85	Ẹkpare:	Otu ezẹko na nօ ame,
	Ehwe:	Ghwu s' idiokpo vbe ame eruẹ օ;
	Ẹkpare:	Unu r'օghwօlօ erhumu օ,
	Ehwe:	Ghwu ne erhumu օravbօ օmẹrẹ օ.

CHIEF EDWIN AYOMANՕ AND THE KING

Gabrel Peru Ẹdeyiօmeta and Egbօtօ Isiniօ

Speech: We're Egbօtօ Isiniօ,

5		Who have come here, To sing of Edwin, son of Ayomanọ, For his good attitude, Towards the Orodje; He humbled himself before him a lot; Listen to his song.
10	Solo:	Entertainment, entertainment, Egbọtọ Isiniọ has come out; Gently, gently, The snail climbs the tree.
15	Solo: Response:	We've raised alarm, That Nigeria's money, Has got to our hands; It is joyful, More precious things, Would soon get to our hands.
20	R-solo:	Great, yea, it has begun, Night and day, Never come to meet.

- 25 Solo: We've raised alarm,
Response: That Nigeria's money,
Has got to our hands;
It is joyful,
More precious things,
Would soon get to our hands.
- R-solo: Great, it has begun,
Not by hardwork,
But singing with wisdom.
- 30 Solo: Yea, we've raised alarm,
Response: That Nigeria's money,
Has got to our hands;
It's joyful,
More precious things,
35 Would soon get to our hands.
- Solo: Edwin [son of] Ayomanḡ,
Response: Yes, we shall always thank him,
For the assistance you give the Orodje;
Solo: This Edwin you see,

40 Response: Lives at Urhiapele (Sapele),
He wants the progress of Okpe;
Solo: Whenever the King travels,
Response: Yea, he's just in his company,
He wants the progress of Okpe;
55 Solo: The king wants to draw a plan,
In his palace,
Response: Yea, he's just in his company,
He wants the progress of Okpe.
Solo: His wives,
50 Response: He no longer remembers,
He wants the progress of Okpe;
Solo: His relations,
Response: He no longer remembers,
He wants the progress of Okpe;
55 Solo: At night, he comes,
Response: Yea, at dawn, he returns home,
Solo: Some people began to ask us,
Response: 'What are you doing'?
60 The mouth that seeks (speaks) progress,
I say, he surely finds progress.

R-solo: Great, it has begun,
Night and day,
Never come to meet.

65 Solo: Edwin [son of] Ayomano,
Response: Yes, we shall always thank him,
For the assistance you give the Orodje;

Solo: This Edwin you see,
Response: Lives at Urhiapele (Sapele),
He wants the progress of Okpe;

70 Solo: Whenever the King travels,
Response: Yea, he's just in his company,
He wants the progress of Okpe;

Solo: The king wants to draw a plan,
In his palace,
Line No. 75 Response: Yea, he's just in his company,
He wants the progress of Okpe.

Solo: His wives,
Response: He no longer remembers,
He wants the progress of Okpe;

- 80 Solo: His relations,
Response: He no longer remembers,
He wants the progress of Okpẹ;
Solo: At night, he comes,
Response: Yea, at dawn, he returns home,
85 Solo: Some people began to ask us,
Response: 'What are you doing'?
The mouth that seeks (speaks) progress,
I say, he surely finds progress.

No. 72 ARI ROMO

- Ẹkpare: Ar'i romo, obo r'ukẹro ọvbọ mẹrẹ,
Osolobroghwẹ ọvbọ ma'e-e;
E, ar'i romo, obo r'ukẹro ọvbọ mẹrẹ,
'Solobrugghwẹ ọvbọ ma'e-e.
- 5 Emie: Ame emwegbe igoru ame r'ami ne gbe,
Nighe, otu igberadja n'aye a dj'ame eghrẹn;
Ehwe: Ari romo, obo r'ukẹro ọvbọ mẹrẹ,
Solobrugghwẹ ọvbọ ma'e-e;
- Efro: Ame emwegbe igoru ame r'ami ne gbe o,

10		E, otu igberadja n'aye adj'ame eghren;
	Ehwe:	Ari romo, obo r'ukero ɔvbɔ mɛrɛ o, 'Solobrughwɛ ɔvbɔ ma'e-e.
	Ẹkpare:	Ar'i romo, obo r' ukero ɔvbɔ mɛrɛ o,
	Ogani:	(Ebɛmɛdɛ ri bɛmɛdɛ, ame yi vb'ijoro), 'Solobrughwɛ ɔvbɔ ma'e-e; ('mɔ na i rhonri Urhobo ughe o), Ari romo, obor' ukero ɔvbɔ mɛrɛ o; 'Solobrughwɛ ɔvbɔ ma'e-e.
15 Line No.		
20	Efro:	Ame em' Okpɛ ame egbe igoru, Otu igberadja are ne bru ame urhe;
	Ehwe:	Ari romo, obo r' ukero ɔvbɔ mɛrɛ o; 'Solobrughwɛ ɔvbɔ ma'e-e.
		BE CALM
	Solo:	Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen, Is not created by God; Yea, just be calm, whatever eyes have not seen, Is not created by God.
5	Call:	We're preparing to dance (perform) our Igoru,

And the sex workers began to keep enmity with us.

Response: Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen,
Is not created by God.

10 Call: We're preparing to dance (perform) our Igoru,
And the sex workers began to keep enmity with us.

Response: Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen,
Is not created by God.

15 Solo: Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen,
Lower voice: (Forever and ever, I own the song),
Is not created by God;
(The children heard in Urhobo land, you know);
Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen,
Is not created by God.

20
Line No. Call: We, the Okpẹ are dancing Igoru,
And the sex workers began to advise us;
Response: Be calm, whatever eyes have not seen,
Is not created by God.

No. 73 ADAMA EMRU

5 Ghwu s' ẹdẹdamo adam 'emru,
Ame na dam 'Igoru,
Egbukpe ọnana o,
Ododo ro ri udje,
Ododo ro ri udje
Ovbo vrẹ, rh 'udje-e.

WE TRY THINGS OUT

5 I say, we keep trying things out,
So shall we try Igoru performance,
This year;
The flower that goes on a procession,
The flower that goes on a procession,
Does not get lost in the procession.

No. 74 ORHERHE RI SE ODIN

5 Ekpere: E, ghu orherhe ri s' odin,
Ode igoru em' ljeđdo;
Imeba se n' are amerhe o?
Ukpe orho t'otore ne vbo,
Onyobru o ughe na,
Eghwemese re ri' eyi do,

- Ehwe: Vb' ayi nya j' eyi vbo ne;
Eḱpare: 'Mḱese re rie 'hware ebro,
Ehwe: Aye nya j'ehwari vbo;
10 Eḱpare: Ughe imeba 'ri rhi mo no,
Ehwe: Onyobru o e, ughe ami o ono t' are ni o.

Line No.

- CRICKET DOES NOT FALL ODD**
- 5 Solo: Yea, I say cricket doesn't fall odd [quietly],
This is the name of Jḱddo's Igoru;
Members, are you asleep?
A new year has begun,
Come enmass, here's entertainment.
Women who are going to market,
Response: Have stopped going to the market;
Solo: Women, who are going to their lovers,
Response: Have stopped going to them;
10 Solo: You've all come to watch members,
Response: Come enmass, you'll be satisfied with us.

No. 75 EKETE ỌREN Ọ' VASA

Ẹkpare: Otu re gbe igoru irhe bunpha ne o,
Ubeku o, e nọye sorię ami erhe zikęn o;
E, nighe ugbenu r'ami mevi r'ami erhe nughe are o,
E, ucekete r'ari ne gbe te,
5 Ọ'e na;
Ami e Męreje ri vb' igoru o,
E, owọ ro ri'odo,
N'odo rhe-e;
E, ucekete r' ọren ọrhọ vasa o,
10 N'avbara ọren ọhavbọ.

Efro: Inen' inene,
Ọde vborę Ikọboti o,
Ame so r'are o.

Ẹkpare: E, otu re gbe igoru irhe bunpha ne o,
15 E, nọye sorię ami rhe zikęn,

Ehwe: E (ọ'ena);

Ẹkpare: Ami mevi ugbenu r'ami e nughe are o,
Ucekete ari ne gbe te,

Ehwe: E;

Line No.

- 20 Ḙkpare: E, aghwa urhie ri' odo,
 Eni odo rhe-e,
 Ehwe: E;
 Ḙkpare: Ami e Mèrèje o rivb' igoru o,
 Ehwe: E, uchekete r' ọren ọrhọ vasa o,
25 Oren ovbo n' avbaye-e.

WHERE THE SUN RISES

- Solo: Igoru performers are too many now,
 Ubeku, this is why we have relaxed;
 Yea, we're watching you from the mountain top,
 To see how well you would perform.
5 See,
 We, of Mèrèje, own this Igoru,
 Yea, the canoe that rowed to the River depth,
 Never returned;
 Where the sun rises,
10 It does not leave [set] there.
- Call: Grand mother, grand mother,
 What a pity, Uboreti,
 We sing your satire.

- 15 Solo: Yea, Igoru performers are too many now,
And this is why we have relaxed;
Response: Yes [here it is],
We're watching you from the mountain top,
To see how well you would perform.
- 20 Response: Yes,
Solo: Yea, we rowed canoe to the River depth,
And never returned;
Response: Yes,
Solo: We, of Mereje own this Igoru,
Response: Where the sun rises,
It does not leave there.

Line No.

No. 76 **EHO ẸSẸ**
Ughe o (oja o) Biamudo,
Wẹwẹ ehọ r'ẹsẹ,
Ọke uvo 'rho te,
Ọke uvo 'rho te,
Ehọ r' ẹsẹ ne rie.

THE GODDESS OF THE STREAM

See (regrettably), Biamudo,
You are a stream goddess,
When the dry season comes,
When the dry season comes,
The stream goddess returns to its abode.

No. 77 OFI ỌR'UKOKO NE

5 Egbe igberadja na fi ọr'ukoko ne,
Arire phopho akpọ 'i fughwe
Are emọ na o, ari vbe rhe-e;
Egb' igberadja na fi ọr'ikitibe ne,
Arire phopho akpọ 'i fughwe,
Are emọ na o, ari vbe rhe-e.

10 Otu agbado irhe bru ise,
N' is' ọrana nọye ami ne bruo,
Otu agbado irhe bru ise,
N' is' ọrana nọye ami ne bruo,
Areyọ ọmọ rhe rọ yọrọ ọmọ k' ohwo,
Ọmọ de ghwu nu o, ọyọr' ọmọ ko kpo;
Iboma irie ne, Arire oji ha igberadja, 'Rire,

Line No.

15

Egb' igberadja na fi ọ'ukoko ne,
Arire phoph' akpọ 'i fughwe,
Are emọ na o, ari vbe rhe-e;
Egb' igberadja na fi ọ'ikitibe ne,
Arire phoph' akpọ 'i fughwe,
Are emọ na o, ari vbe rhe-e.

20

Otu agbado irhe bru ise,
N' is' ọrana nọy' ami ne bruo,
Otu agbado irhe bru ise,
N' is' orana nọy' ami ne bruo,
Arey' ọmọ rhe rọ yọ'ọmọ k' ohwo,
Ọmọ de ghwu nu o, ọyọ' ọmọ ko kpo;
Iboma irie ne, Arire ọji 'a igberadja, 'Rire,

25

Egb' igberadja na fi ọ'ukoko ne,
Arire phoph' akpọ 'i fughwe,
Are emọ na o, ari vbe rhe-e.

IT HAS BECOME CIGARETTE HOLDER

They've turned sex trade to a cigarette holder,
Arire smoked [blew] her life away,

5 Children, you don't know yet;
This sex trade has turned to cigarette holder,
Arire smoke [blew] her life away,
Children, you don't know yet.

10 The Urhobo have an adage,
It's that adage I want to restate,
The Urhobo have an adage,
It's that adage we want to restate,
House help was brought to look after a child,
If the child dies, the house help then leaves,
Soldiers have departed, yet Arire is in sex trade, 'Rire,

Line No.
15 This sex trade has become cigarette holder;
Arire smoked [blew] her life away,
Children, you don't yet know;
This sex trade has become cigarette holder;
Arire smoked [blew] her life away,
Children, you don't yet know.

20 The Urhobo have an adage,
It's that adage I want to restate,

25

The Urhobo have an adage,
It's that adage we want to restate,
House help was brought to look after a child,
If the child dies, the house help then leaves,
Soldiers have departed, yet Arire is in sex trade, 'Rire,

This sex trade has become cigarette holder;
Arire smoked [blew] her life away,
Children, you don't yet know;

No. 78 IBOMA IHIN IKEJA

Èkpare: Ukpe ri Pita okel' ohuan,
 Ibom' irhe hin Ikeja;

Ehwe: E, emru mę o, no mana orhirhię.

NO SOLDIERS IN IKEJA

Solo: The year Peter divorced his wife,
 There were no more soldiers in Ikeja;

Response: Yea, this is how my things always end.

No. 79 WU SE LE AME-E

Èkpare: E, vb' ar' imeba re gbare,

Line No.	
5	S' ari rh' odę o re se Onanuvi, Onanuvi n' odjeyakpo; Ahwobisi ro kpe 'rhan, Vbe bęmędę ovbo kp' uwara-a, E, ọvbọ h' uwara b' oma; Nighe vbe dumu dumu, Evbe ti ehọ r' ami nie, Wu rhe l' ene imizuo rie, 10 Wo sa bu l' ami meba n' Eko.
	Ękpare: Emi Jeddo re gbare, Ehwe: S' ari rh' odę o re se Onanuvi, Onanuvi n' odjeyakpo;
15	Ękpare: Ahwobisi ro kpe 'rhan, Ehwe: Vbe bęmędę ovbo kp' uwara-a, E, ọvbọ h' uwara b' oma;
	Ękpare: Nighe vbe dumu dumu, Ehwe: Evbe ti ehọ r' ami nie, Wu rhe l' ene imizuo rie, 20 Wo sa bu l' ami meba n' Eko.
	Ękpare: E, ọdę o, e vb' ame ọdopha,

Vbo kp' omọ erheri-in,
[E, vb' are imeba re gba re];

- 25 Ekpere: Emi Jẹddo re gbare,
 Ehwe: S' ari rh' odẹ o re se Ọnanuvi,
 Ọnanuvi n' odjeyakpo;
 Ekpere: Ahwobisi ro kpe 'rhan,
 Ehwe: Vbe bẹmẹdẹ ovbo kp' uwara-a,
 E, ọvbọ h' uwara b' oma;
- 30 Ekpere: Nighe vbe dumu dumu,
 Ehwe: Evbe ti ehọ r' ami nie,
 Wu rhe l' ene imizuo rie,
 Wo sa bu l' ami meba n' Eko.

Line No.

- 5 Solo: **YOU CAN'T SEND US PACKING**
 Members, who are gathered,
 Do you know who is called Ọnanuvi?
 Ọnanuvi, the one who sends wives packing;
 Ahwobisi [the deity] that kills trees,
 Never kills *uwara* [specie of tree],
 Yea, it rather associates *uwara* with itself;

30
Line No.

Qnanuvi, the one who sends wives packing;
Solo: *Ahwobisi* that kills trees,
Response: Never kills *uwara*,
It rather associates *uwara* with itself;
Solo: See, even in much imprecation,
Response: The water deity is exempted,
Though, you send your brothers' wives packing,
You can't send us [members] packing from Lagos.

No. 80

J'EHWARE VBO

Qberokpa orho n' ifi,
Om' orho lohie vb' ino wen' aye,
Onyakpo ovbo wen' oma-a;
Ame ta r' Qtibekpe gbe j' ehwari vbo,
Aghene oy' oteren,
Irie oma ye kako ne,
Lel' usun ilelivbeghwru,
Vru rh' ikebi,
O'rhi emro ame-e.

STOP HAVING AFFAIRS WITH MEN

If an oil palm farmer examines his ropes,

5

5 And they're weak, he changes them;
But human beings don't change body parts.
We counselled Ọtibekpe to stop having affairs,
And she refused to heed advice,
She no longer has strength,
If you follow the deceitful bird,
And get lost in the farm,
It's not our fault.

No. 81 ẸDẸ MI NE VBIẸ ỌMỌ

Ẹkpare: Ẹdẹre mi ne vbiẹ ọmọ,

Ehwe: E,

Ẹkpare: Ẹdẹ re mi ne vbiẹ ọmọ,

Ehwe: E,

5 Omẹmẹ ọvo ye ri rh' ode,
Mi ne se ọmọ mẹ,
E, ọmọ mẹ aghwanritoma,
Amwa e Mẹreje o,
Ikun akpọ ovbo je gbe-e.

Line No.

10 Ẹkpare: Emọ awasa izu ọmọ vbiẹ re o,
Tena tena olori 'paya o,

Osolobroghwẹ ọmẹr' ukon afen,

15 Ehwe: Ẹdẹ mi ne vbiẹ ọmọ,
Omẹmẹ ọvo ye ri rh' ode
Mi ne se ọmọ mẹ,
Nighe ọmọ mẹ aghwanritoma,
Amwa e Mẹreje o,
Ikun akpọ ovbo je gbe-e.

THE DAY I'LL HAVE A CHILD

Solo: The day I'll have a child,
Response: Yes,
Solo: The day I'll have a child,
Response: Yes,
5 I alone know the name,
I'll give to my child,
Look, my child is 'Be full of wisdom',
Mẹreje community,
Experiences are unpleasant to narrate.

10 Solo: A woman had three children,
Each of them was a great *Payan* dancer,

God sees the back of the bird.

Response: The day I'll have a child,
I alone know the name,
I'll give to my child,
Look, my child is 'Be full of wisdom',
Mereje community,
Experiences are unpleasant to narrate.

15

Line No.

No. 82

EMRO OTU ISHOSHI

Amukeye Okodide

Emro r' itu ishoshi e tare,
Oghini se ne,
Ohworho ro k'obaro, ono k'erhumu o;
Ona omizu me,
Ro teti me bi,
Oro ghwerie oma ru me.

5

Omizu onana,
N'oyarhe ro re owan,
Oy ' ovo n' aramoghwa,
R' onyom 'owan;

10

Orho nyomu hine,
'Vbo rho phoph ' ɔwan.

15

Ofen omizu ɔna omwuru me,
E, ukpe wu ne kekime,
Ghwa i le me,
E, ne mi ghwa i rh' orhe re mi na ze;
Eɣayen ɔvo ɔro fi oma rh' otore,
Are itu akpo igbe me kpe.

THE PROPHECY OF THE CHURCH

Amukeye Okodide

5

The prophecy of the Church,
Has come to pass,
The first shall become last;
Here's my relation,
Who used to honour me,
That now turned to do evil against me.

Line No.

This brother,
Is but a floor worm that sucks one's blood,
He is also a rat,

- 10 That bites one;
 After biting,
 It blows to cool the spot.
- I'm afraid of this brother,
 Please, rather than oppress me,
15 Send me packing;
 Yea, so that I know how to run,
 It's only the crocodile that submits,
 That man should come to kill it.

No. 83

ỌBẸMẸ ABADA

- E, ekpako eghini ta o,
E, ọbẹmẹ Abada,
Omwu ovbrọmọ ne o;
E, awan irhe ri-ekete,
5 Awan irhe tughe erhu,
 Ọr' Abada ovbo mara-a;
 Abada orho ri-ekete,
 Ọrhọ, mẹn ọrọ da riẹ urhому o,
 Ọran, n' erhu rẹ Abada otughe re o.

ABADA'S ABJECT POVERTY

Yes, elders actually said,
That Abada's poverty,
Has gotten a grand child;
Yea, when people attend occasions,
And they put on their hats,
Abada's case is different;
If Abada goes to a place,
And he finds anyone who cuts his hair,
That is the hat that Abada has worn.

5

Line No.

No. 84

RHURHU UBIOBOMUO

E, Ibobori, rhurh' ubiobiomuo,
Rh' ekpeti;
E, wo rha ghwoḷo ne gi rhie yi,
Ne wo ta,
Ozighẹ na orho hwe r' ame.

5

Ameṛẹ ephan Ibobori,
Ibiamo irhirin,
Ḷmase ọmeṛẹ ephan,
Eḷe ye ọrhọ gba,

10

N' omase ovbię.

Egbukpe esa,

Ọye amę' ephan Ibobori,

Izu Ibobori okomię aro ne o,

Ọna nę orhere er' ayi se ri,

15

I kugbe obo-epha o.

Ọna n' epha r' aye bọ re,

Ibobori a n'oye ọsa rę o,

Aghene ọye ọhomo,

No b' odjuwu rhe,

20

Ubiobiomu okpe rie oma hu o

Abọ rę awan evbo,

'Ghene ọye ovbo yi-i,

Ọra na oji ọye rhi akpọ-ọ.

Orhere ọrhọ kpare unu,

25

'Rho se Ibobori.

Wu rhe burhun abọ kugbe aghwę,

Wo rhe, aye na ha,

E, Ibobori ọrhọ kpare unu,

Ubiobiomu are amęrę na,

Line No.

- 30 Ovbo ekete r' ọba.
Aghene ọneye na,
Oba ekete-e,
Se ọye ọrhọ rhe akpọ
S'omo 'no ru riẹn re?
- 35 Orho rhi omaran,
Agba ye ye ọvrẹn,
Ọna nẹ ibi ọvrẹn ohu,
Iyi se r' Ibobori o,
Ibobori ọro otọri ne,
40 Otu re gba avbaran,
Aye irhe kumie eche,
Aghene 'odidi uj' amwa eni,'
Orho mi rien ta ghene ọye ọrhi akpọ-ọ.
- 45 A kpa ri fughwe,
Ode ọmọ oragha o,
Egbegbe rhorie o,
Ọran ode ọmọ Akikọn;
Aye rha wọ Ibobori,
Firhọ avbaran.

50 E, adjasa oje gba-a,
Ovren orho ni oma ye,
Orho ni oma Ibobori,
E si oye rhi ovren onana,
Omo oro fo ovren?

55 Ephan ni bio mi rie o,
Ovren na orho ze rie o,
Akpọ Ibobori ne okporon edi o,
Ibobori osemerhen ukpe,
N' ororo akpo,
Line No. 60 E, n' izede uhu ororo mere,
Ona ne ekete re onya rie uhi eso, e.

HIDE YOUR UGLINESS

Oh, Ibobori, hide your ugliness,
Inside the box,
Yea, if you however want it opened,
Then say so,
5 And the mad man gave us his consent.

Ibobori was conceived,

10 It's for nine months,
That a woman carries pregnancy,
When the days are complete,
She puts to bed.

15 It was for three years,
That Ibobori was conceived,
Iborori's mother began to put up agonized face,
Then they invited a mid-wife,
And an oracle.

20 This is what the oracle found:
Ibobori said he wouldn't come,
He said he is a leper,
From heaven,
He added that ugliness had ruined him,
Hands that people have,
He doesn't have,
For this cause, he wouldn't come to this world.

25 The mid-wife raised her voice,
And called Ibobori,

Line No.	“Even if your arms and legs are broken, Come,” and they would accept you. Oh, Ibobori raised his voice, “Ugliness, as you see it, 30 Has limits” But that his own, Does not have limits, And that if he comes into the world, Who would labour to feed him?
35	For this reason, He demanded for a slave, Here is one little slave, That was invited to serve Ibobori; Ibobori now came out (of the womb), 40 The crowd there, Burst into laughter, And remarked: terrific, community is an elephant, No wonder he said he wouldn’t come to this world.
45	Throw it away, Is the name of the young snail,

Manageably picked up,
Is the name of the young Whelk;
So, they washed Ibobori,
And laid him there.

50 Yes, before he was three months old,
The slave examined himself,
And examined Ibobori's body,
He said, he and this slave,
Who is more suitable to be a slave?

55 He became angry,
And the slave ran away for his home;
Ibobori's life is the tool for pulling palm fruits,
Ibobori lied on the bed,
And began to think over his life,
60 He then thought of death,
This is what led him to robbery.

Line No.

No. 85

TI EWUN NU OMA

E, oma rọ merhe Abada,
Abada ọrhọ ta ẹmro ohu,
Avbaran ẹdiyẹde,

5 Aghene erhe gbe Igoru bẹn,
Ghene n' agha Ohworho,
Y'ana ọrọn (ya na mọrọn).
Abada, gba hẹrhe ame,
Emọ Onyeke,
Ibru ruo vba ne,
10 Wu rha ha Owhorho roro Igoru,
Ru we gbe,
Ru we ku i shẹti rọ,
E, Owhorho oghwọlọ erana-a,
Abada, ti ewun nu oma,
15 Wu gbe Owhorho.

PULL OFF YOUR SHIRT

Yea, the pride of Abada,
Abada said something,
There sometime ago,
That after performing Igoru for a season,
5 It's *Owhorho* broom,
That we shall prepare [hold],
Abada, now wait for us,
The sons and daughters of Onyeke,

10		Have come to meet you; If you think that <i>Ohworho</i> is Igoru, Which you dance, While wearing a shirt, Yea, <i>Ohworho</i> doesn't want that, Abada, pull off your shirt, And dance <i>Ohworho</i> .
15		
	No. 86	ỌTAN
	Ẹkpare:	E, ọtan, ọtan ọrhọ rhọmọ urhiọke, Rhie ẹro eva ya mẹrẹ egbọlọ [ọgbeva].
	Efro:	Igoru obọ ame vberẹ ame egbe, Isisi Odibo ọrhọ ro ukọ rhọye.
5	Ehwe:	Ọtan, ọtan ọrhọ rhọmọ urhiọke, Rhie ẹro eva ya mẹrẹ egbọlọ
	Efro:	Igoru obọ ame vberẹ ame egbe, Isisi Odibo ọrhọ ro ukọ rhọye.
10	Ehwe:	Ọtan, ọtan ọrhọ rhọmọ urhiọke, Rhie ẹro eva ya mẹrẹ egbọlọ.
		SQUIRREL
	Solo:	Oh, the squirrel, the squirrel woke up at dawn,

- Opened its two eyes and saw bullets [twice].
- R-solo: We're performing our igoru,
And Isisi Odibo came to put obstacles.
- 5 Chorus: The squirrel, the squirrel woke up at dawn,
Opened its two eyes and saw bullets.
- R-solo: We're performing our igoru,
And Isisi Odibo came to put obstacles.
- Chorus: The squirrel, the squirrel woke up at dawn,
10 Opened its two eyes and saw bullets.

No. 87 OTU EGBỌTỌ

E, are otu egbọtọ,
Omafuvbe nọye are havbọ;
Ame na suọ otu igberadja,
Are egbọtọ n'are irhe ghwaren;
Ọmọ ro rhe urhi,
Vb'ọmọ ran, ọvbọrhọ sua urhi-i;
Ofurhierharen,
Ọvbọrhọ ha obọ mọrọ erhedi-i.

YOUNG LADIES

Yea, young ladies,

Line No.
5

5

You're at peace [liberty];
We shall sing of the sex workers,
That you ladies would be wise;
The child who knows the rules,
Does not break them ;
The fire fighter,
Does not hold palm nut shafts [fuel] in his hand.

SYNTHESIS OF PROVERBS IN IGORU

Songs 12 [page A1 – 23]

1. *Ọre kpitẹn se oji rhon er' oma.*

One who is indirectly spoken of [referred to] hears of him/herself.

2. *Ẹkpẹn rh' Eni esimi ọdo, ughẹghẹn*

It is stupidity for the lion to contend growth [or size] with the Elephant

3. *Ijọpha rhe ọro vbo rie vbe rhi ẹdẹre-e,*

Mortgage and the mortgagor are never equal

4. *Ọrọ fa Emechẹ rhe ọnọ fa yi rie.*

He who brings a disabled person will take him/her home

5. *Ibi Afen otọre ogi kporo, Ikelike ọrọ rhua Ehọ rie*

The short spirit-manifest may perform well; but the tallest leads them home

6. *Okpẹ, agbamwa Eni,*

Okpe, a community is an Elephant

7. *Ọmo ono lele Edjere simi Urhie?*

Who would contend the River with the Crocodile?

8. *Ọmo ọgba ogba hẹrhe Urhie?*

Who builds a fence against the river?

9. *Inehweri ovbo mwẹ unu-u.*

Love portion does not seal the mouth

Song 13 [page A1 – 24]

10. *Aramoghwa ro jiri otọre, ọvbọ gbẹrhiẹn urhomu ologbo*

The rat that lives long, cracks the head of the cat

11. *Unu ohu eghwede odumẹ ovbo dumẹ unu eva-a*

The needle punches only a hole and not two at a time

Song 21 lines 12 and 13 [page A1 – 34]

12. *Ọgba ro ti oso ọgbọ ha emru hẹrhiẹ*

Let the great rain maker place containers to gather it

13. *Ododo ro rie udje ovbo vrẹ rh' udje-e*

The flower doesn't get missing in a procession

Song 25 [page A1 – 39]

14. *Ulele ugo ovbo j' ugo tẹ-ẹ*

The eagle's feather keeps it ever fresh

15. *Me are iroro ri ọmọ ọrilele ono ru r' izie?*

What do you think a chick can offer its mother hen?

16. *Ovvere owọ ọrh' ọsoso owọ erhi ẹdẹre-e*

Half of a canoe and a whole canoe are never equal.

Song 32 [page A1 – 52]

17. *Uvo yọ ro bru orhiẹn ame*

It's the sun that gives verdict to the water

18. *Abaka ọkpuriẹn ọvbọ fia-an.*

The butterfly briefly sharpens [knife], but never cuts.

Song 48 [page A1 – 82]

19. *Ọnanughe osi h' isọn hi ne,*

Ọnanughe has stepped on excreta,

20. *Otu igberadja inyerẹn hwrọ fughwe ne,*

The sex workers lived wastefully,

21. *E, idam' Ijẹddo inyerẹn ha hine,*

Jeddo young men have lived well,

22. *Ame ọdophan ovbo kpe ọmọ erhiri-in,*

Too much water doesn't kill little fish,

23. *Iti ayi Waka onyerẹn vrẹn hine o,*

One like Waka has lived prosperously,

24. *Ewhiwhiwi ọgọrọ, ọ' ọgọrọ oghwe*

Amid envy, the raffia palm yields its wine,

25. *Ekpe ọmọ oluko vb'ora oluko ọdua yo,*

Amid destruction, the plantain sucker grows,

26. *Ọrilele ọsọrọ ọkọtọ hin,*

Yea, the fowl ate excreta,

27. *Ọka ọdẹbru ogberhagha, me t' ọke na ovbo mwu ọmọ-ọ yo*

Yea, the maize flowered, but couldn't yield grains till today

Song 50 [page A1 – 85]

28. *Egbikun eghwase ukpolo, oriridje*

Narrating the cripple's medical-spiritual power is endlessly amazing

29. *Omamo ole rhe urhomue igbe rie edun*

The white yam goes to barn with its head

30. *Iphirhi otuatu ivwe kpe egodi re*

The smokes of burning bush do not kill *Egodi* [a bird of prey].

Songs 52 [page A1 – 87] and song 55 [page A1 – 90]

31. *Uvu akpo enyeren akpo whrorho* [song 52, line 5]

Our living in the world ends therein

32. *Orhan ro kru eroro ovwo zofen apheree* [song 52, line 11 and 12]

The tree trunk whose top is already broken does not fear the storms

33. *Omase ovwo fi aghwalaa* [song 52, line 13]

No woman plays the oracle's pellets

34. *Opha orho rhe amwa ukoroghwe ohu noye okpara* [song 55, line 1 and 2]

If a stranger comes to town, he/she raises or walks on only one leg

35. *Oberhumu agen ovwo ta re ageen* [song 55, line 8]

The barren's absence reports no events to her

36. *Irhorin igen osabu kpe oyaa* [song 55, line 10]

The curse of the fish cage cannot kill the beer

Songs 57 line 4 [page A1 – 93] and 58 lines 15 and 16 [page A1 – 94]

37. *Uko ovo yo se oma ye uko*

It's the cup that calls or identifies itself as cup

38. *Ukpokpo ote afeen, ole rie ne etu.*

If a piece of stone does not hit the bird, it would chase it from the plants.

Songs 59 lines 36 to 42 [page A1 – 96]; 61 lines 41 to 42 and song 61 line 52 [page A1 – 101]

39. *Orhan ro kere ese yo rhon bo irherin ata* [song 59, line 36 and 37]

It's the tree nearby the stream that understands what the fishes say

40. *Owhorho ro kanre ekpeti, ohi ro so rie yo mere uvue* [song 59; 38 and 39]

If a man makes a box [safe], it's the thief who steals it that sees the inside

41. *Ufi uphele okpokpo otan, olehe otan bon oghwa rhe izede* [ng 59; 41-42]

It's the greed of the squirrel that makes it build its nest by the roadside

42. *Urhie omwo je irherin vwo* [song 60, line 52]

The river dried up, leaving the fishes bare

Songs 70 [page A1 – 126], 70, 73

43. *Yeghe yeghe Usekpe omwu orhan* [song 70, line 10 and 11]

Gently, gently, the snail climbs the tree

44. *Kpare fughwe ode omo oragha* [song. 82, lines 44 and 45]

Throw it away is the name of the young snail

45. *Ason rhe uvo evwa nya mere omaa* [song. 70, line 19 and 20]

Night and day do not meet

46. *Amai wiaa, me vwo iroro so* [song. 70, line 28 and 29]

Not by hard work, but by singing in wisdom

47. *Unu ro ghwolo erhumu, ne rhumu oravwo omere* [song 70: 59 & 60]

The mouth that seeks blessings, shall surely receive blessings

48. *Obo re ukero ovwo mere, Osolobrughe oma yee* [song. 72, lines 1 and 2, page A1 – 138]

Whatever the eye hasn't seen was not created by God

49. *Orherhe ri se odin [orherhe ovwo se odiin]* song 74: 1, page A1 – 140

The cricket doesn't fall oddly or quietly

50. *Ugbenu ame erhe nughe are* [song 75, line 3, page A1 – 141]

We are on the mountain observing you

51. *Owo ro rie odo one odo rhee* [song 75, lines 7 and 8]

- The boat the sailed to the middle of the sea did not return
52. *Agwa urhie rie odo, ene odo rhee* [song 75, lines 20 and 21]
We rowed the boat to the middle of the river and did not return
53. *Ekete oren orho vasa, ne avwran oren ohavwo* [song 53, lines 9 & 10]
Where the sun rises, that is where it remains
54. *Ekete oren orho va sa, oren ovwo ne avwayee* [song 75, lines 24 & 25]
Where the sun rises, it does not leave there
55. *Oke uvo orho te, eho ese ne rie* [song 76, lines 4 & 5, page A1 – 143]
When it is dry season, the stream Gods return home
56. *Ahwobisi ro kpe erhan, ovwo kpe uwaraa* [song 79, lines 4 and 5, page A1 – 145]
Ahwobisi that kills trees does not kill uwara
57. *Edumu dumu, evwe tie ho ame nie* [song 79, lines 7 and 8]
When we invoke curses, we always exempt the stream Gods
58. *Oma orholoho ifi, oberokpa no wene aye* [song 80, line 1 and 2, page A1 – 148]
When ropes become weak, the oil palm farmer changes them
59. *Osolobrugwe omere ukon afen* [song 81, line 12, page A1 – 148]
God sees the back of the bird

APPENDIX III

**University of Pretoria
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music
Pretoria 0002, Republic of South Africa**

UNSTRUCTURED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

IGORU MUSIC IN OKPE LAND: A STUDY OF ITS FUNCTIONS AND COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Dear Respondent,

The researcher is a doctoral degree student in music, of the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa; conducting research work on the above subject.

In pursuance of the study, the researcher sincerely requests you to provide true and honest answers to the following questions orally.

Your sincere answers are needed and would be treated in absolute confidence, please.

Yours truly,

Ovaborhene Isaac Idamoyibo
Department of Music
Delta State University
Abraka, Nigeria.

QUESTIONS FOR IGORU MUSICIANS AND ELDERS IN OKPE

1. Are you an Igoru performer?
2. For how long have you been performing Igoru music?
3. Does gender have anything to do with Igoru performance?
4. Where do you perform your music?
5. Did you at any time perform in Lagos and elsewhere?
6. Where you involved in the training of other Igoru musicians?
7. What procedures do you adopt for training others?
8. What would you say about the uses of Igoru music?
9. What roles does Igoru music play in the society?
10. How do you approach a composition?
11. What constitute an Igoru ensemble?
12. What constitute the vocal organization?
13. What instruments and how many constitute the accompaniment?
14. What are your sources of inspiration?
15. How do you set texts to music?
16. Does the language intonation dictate the tune?
17. How do you use expressions to create special communication effects?
18. What is the principal language of Igoru music?
19. Do you sometimes use words or expressions from other languages?
20. If you do, how do you refer to the practice?
21. How old is Igoru music in Okpe?
22. Does it have anything to do with ethnic identity?

23. At what time did Igoru music flourish most?
24. What factors were responsible for its proliferation?
25. When did the performances begin to decline?
26. What factors are responsible for the decline?
27. Why did Egbikume transform Igoru to Ighopha music?
28. What differences are there between the two?
29. Are the differences in the musical structures or in the texts only?
30. Have you any albums, if yes, how many?