

Oral Poems of Igbo People in Nigeria: Categories and Functions

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ABSTRACT: *The oral tradition of Igbo poetry is as old as the history of the Igbo people. They have anonymous authorship and are composed to depict and express the lives of those engaged in different human activities. They also express deep emotions and denote profound and didactic ideas. Oral forms of poetry have suffered neglect and are not formally documented, even though these oral poems reveal the great verbal mystery of their composers and convey profound philosophies of life. One, therefore, feels obliged to contribute to the development of Igbo oral poems. This paper revealed that there are many categories of Igbo oral poems and their functions, which include abuakwamozu (death poems) or abu iru uju (songs for general mourning), abu nwa (birth poems), and abu ofufe (worship poems), among others. This is survey research. The theory adopted was the New Historicisms. It was concluded that this research will help reawaken people's interest in oral poems, because these poems deeply reflect the Igbo people's way of life.*

KEYWORDS: *Igbo People, Nigeria, Oral Poems, Categories, Functions*

INTRODUCTION

Poetry is a universal form of artistic self-expression. Through it, man articulates his thoughts and feelings for public sharing and experience. Poetry is an elevated expression of thought or feeling in rhythmic language. According to Akparobaro(2007:204), "Poetry is the most propitious for the expression of mood, thoughts and emotions, in a conscious and psychologically satisfying form". Every society has its forms of poetry irrespective of its state of economic development. There are the determinations of cultural milieu, by the linguistic resources of the language in which they are performed, by the socio-geographical environment, and by the habits and occupation in terms of which everyday life is conducted. Initially, Igbo poetry was not written; instead, it was passed down orally from one generation to the next. The Igbo people are a group of people who reside in the eastern part of Nigeria. Their language is called the Igbo language. Emenanjo (1980:2) says that the Igbo poetry "is divided into two: the oral and modern/written Igbo poetry".

Oral poetry of African artistic sensibilities emanates from a primary vision of life. Oral poetry also includes chant, songs, and incantations, which are transferred from one person to another through word of mouth. The oral poetry is in oral form, transmitted and preserved through oral and performative skills of the presenters, with no awareness of script or print. Obviously, before the emergence of writing and the printing press,

human beings, especially the Igbo people, enjoyed their literature through oral means. Stories were passed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Okoh (2008:72), in Nnyigide (2014:64), says "that oral literature is transmitted orally and appreciated aurally from one generation to the other". It was observed that the two major devices that enable the early presenter to remember and memorize their poem were rhythm and rhyme. The traditional concept of poetry is that it consists of those utterances which are chanted, recited, or sung. Such utterance is prosaic, and the audience keeps the beat by clapping hands as the poet performs. An oral poem is short, repetitive, and has a central thematic image. The repetition can be words, a stanza, or an individual line. According to Okezie (2007:51), in oral poetry, "the poet composes as he performs so that there is no time-gap between composition and performance as in written language". Thus, the oral artist is the performer and composer simultaneously. Oral Poetry is occasional and purposeful, hence, there are songs for all occasions.

According to Akparobaro (2007:305), in oral poetry, "each poem has its own points of interest, relevance, and meaning in its environment. Each one expresses a specific idea formulated through local imagery, symbolism, animals, trees, spirits, households, and emotions such as love, grief, and sorrow, which form the fabric of people's lives. Oral poetry can be sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments such as guitar, gong, and lute. Its subject matter is often of a very personal nature and is usually expressed in a language full of emotion.

Genres of oral poetry vary from society to society, from environment to environment. There is, in a real sense, a socio-cultural context from which the evaluation of oral poetry must be based, and it is derived from the society in which these poetic forms emanate. Igbo oral poetry has evolved into modern written Igbo poetry. Unlike Igbo oral poetry, contemporary Igbo poetry is written on paper, making it easily accessible for purchase and reading. Modern Igbo poetry can be presented on natural phenomena, social, or political events. Some modern Igbo poetry could also be historical, philosophical, satirical, narrative, didactic, and hortatory. Oral and Modern poetry have some differences, including the fact that oral poetry is rendered from one person to another through word of mouth, while modern poetry is written in books. Oral poetry, because of its nature, can be easily forgotten. Still, modern or written poetry cannot be overlooked because it is written down, and the purpose of writing it down is for easy remembrance. Nwadike (1992:19) states that oral poetry is changeable; its form can be altered by the first person who renders it. When people learn that song, the mode of delivery begins to change; it will continue to change from the second person who sings the song to the third person, and so on. But modern poetry cannot be altered by anyone except the author in a subsequent edition. Oral poetry is invisible, but modern poetry is visible in the sense that you can see it and touch it.

NEW HISTORICISM

New historians have traditionally been concerned with determining what happened at a given time and place. They worked to establish the factual accuracy of the stories that make up the record of the human past so that they could verify, with as much certainty

as possible, that the account they rendered was a valid delineation of what had happened. According to Dobie (2009:175-176), maintaining an objective stance—a position of distance from the scene of action that would allow them to see and state the truth about people and events—was successful; they would, by extension, manage to capture the essence of an entire age. They could find the essence of a period, the worldview that would unlock the meaning of that period's Literature, art, politics, social behavior, and the rest. In examining the broad sweep of history, they viewed the narratives as being linked in a causal sequence that, it was assumed, would carry the world forward in a positive, progressive manner.

CATEGORIES OF IGBO ORAL POETRY

In the classification of Igbo oral poetry, many authors have classified it in their own ways. For example, according to Egundu and Nwoga(1971), they classified oral poetry into eight; they are as follows:praise poem(abu otito), innovation song(abu mkpokpu) recitation(ngugo) song (uri) folk poem (abu ifo), satiric poem(abu ikpe maobu nkocha) song of grief(abu akwariri) na abu nwa(birth poem). In the recommendation of the Igbo standardization committee (1985:30). In this book, oral poetry was classified into three, these classifications are based on their mode of delivery, occasion of delivery, and rhetorical mode". This study will be based on the classification made by Nwadike (1982:72), who classified oral poetry into twelve. They are folk poem (abu ifo), praise poem (abu otito), satiric poem(abu ikpe) , burial poem (abu akwamozu), birth poem (abu nwa) ,worship poem(abu ofufe), occupational poem (abu oru), social poem(abu oha),war poem (abu agha) philosophical poem (abu echiche miri emi),natural phenomenon poem(abu ekere) and love poem(abu ihunanya).

FOLK POEM (ABU IFO)

Folk poems are songs by a group of people with a community of interest. At the same time, music, according to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary(10th edition)is 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 and having seen that these poems cannot be discussed outside music, because a true singer cannot compose without the sublime inspiration that comes from musical impulse. The folks who sing the song could be men, children, educated, illiterate, religious groups, cult members, etc. The music of every folk genre reflects its spirit, mood, or state of being, and has a fixed structure; it is easily memorized and reproduced on demand. Poems cover the entire life cycle in the traditional life of society, from birth to death. No wonder Egundu (2002:3) says in Okoye (2007:) "that we sing when we fight, we sing when we work, we sing when we love, we sing when we hate, we sing when a child is born, we sing when death occurs. They are also celebrated when we hunt, wrestle, get married, and so on. We equally have masquerade and moonlight poems. There are songs for every activity of life, both socially and culturally. At times, a particular song changes slightly, depending on the tradition and folk that produce it.

A thing that is very real about songs and oral literature is that during celebration, two parties must be involved. One is the audience that will observe and benefit from the performance, as shown below.

Nwa Nnunu Were Isi Kwe M Ekele

Nwa nnunu were isi kwe m ekele
 Nwa nnunu were isi kwe m ekele
 Nwa nnunu kwe nke m na-ekwu
 Nwa nnunu kedu ebe I na-eje?
 Nwa nnunu nye m ihe di n' akpa gi
 Nwa nnunu kwe kwe kwe
 Nwa nnunu kwee.

Translation

Small bird salute me with your head
 Small bird salute me with your head
 Small bird consent to what I am saying
 Small bird where are you going to?
 Small bird gives me what is in your pocket
 Small bird consent consent consent consent
 Small bird consent

PRAISE POEM (ABU OTITO)

A Praise poem is the expression of approval of one's achievements and qualities. Many media could be used when achieving this. One of which is song. Praise could be directed to something to herald his achievements or good qualities. According to The Mapanje (1993), Awoonor(1975) and Finnegan(1970) in Okoye(2009:38), "amongst other scholars assert that the purpose of praise poems or songs is to eulogize the characters and the achievements of chiefs and kings in their various courts and palaces to receive patronage". The people chiefly praised are those who make inclusive and impressive achievements in town, as well as the heroes of war. Praise songs could also be used for personal friends, wives, brothers, etc., as exemplified below.

Ogbukaagu

Sunday Nweke
 Ogbukaagu
 Ufodu gara ugwu Awusa ichu ego
 Ufodu gara obodo oyibo ichu ego
 Ma o nweghi ebe I gara
 I sin a ego di ebe niile
 Naani egbe ka I bu baa ohia
 Buru nchi na mgbada na-alota
 Buru adaka na ezi ohia na-alota

Anu ndi a I na-ere ka I ji enwe ego
 Ego I nwetere n'anu ndi a ka I ji chie ozo
 I gburu ehi asaa n'ozo
 Gbuo mkpi asaa
 Gbuo ebule asaa
 Sunday Ogbukaagu
 Ebe o bu na I gbuola agu
 Anyi ga-akpozi gi ogbu agu
 Sunday ogba n'ufe
 I na-egbu egbe na-eke n'elu
 Ndi ike jere bata obodo anyi
 Egbe gi ana-agba ka ukpaka kara n'uguru
 Kawararam-kawararam!
 Sunday dike
 Ajo anu
 Nwa gaagaanogwu
 Egwu anyi na-ekele gi
 Ndi egwu Umuuto na-ekelegi.

Translation

Sunday Nweke

Sunday Ogbukaagu
 Some went to the north to make money
 Some went oversea to make money
 You refused going anywhere
 Saying that money is everywhere
 With only your gun you entered into the bush
 And came out with grass cutters and antelopes
 Chimpanzees and bush pigs
 From their sales you made your money
 From their sales you got your ozo tittle
 You slaughtered seven cows
 Slaughtered seven he-goats
 Slaughtered seven rams
 Sunday Ogbukaagu
 Now that you have killed a tiger
 We shall be calling you tiger-killer
 Because a hunter should not kill ten
 Tigers before he qualifies of a name
 Sunday, you killed flying birds while they are on air
 Your gun brings eagles down from the air
 Your gun hawks down from the air
 When armed robbers enter our town

Your gun cries like harmattan oil-bean pod
 Kawararam-kawararam!
 Sunday the great
 The people's lion
 The small wood that heats an oven
 Our songs greets you
 Umuuto dancing group greets you .By Okoye (2009:42-43)

The following is an example of a praise poem to praise goodness.

To Ngene, the River Goddess.
 Brass and parrot feathers
 On a velvet skin
 White cowry shells
 On back buttocks
 Her eyes sparkley in the forest
 Like the sun of the river
 She is wisdom of the forest
 She is wisdom of the river
 Where the doctor failed
 She cured with cool water.
 (By Akparobaro 2007:26).

SATIRE (ABU IKPE)

Like other oral poetry, there is no specific time when satire began; instead, it started when Igbo land existed. In Nigeria, these authors Emenanjo, Chinue Achebe, and Soyinka have practiced satire in their work. Emenanjo, in his poem called Uko n' Uju, satirizes Nigeria's wealth. Chinua Achebe, in his novel A Man of the People, satirizes the attitudes of those in power. In The Lion and the Jewel, Soyinka, through the character of Sidi, satirizes Bale by laughing at him. The reason for satire is to fight crime. Nwadike (2003:109) says, "in Igbo land, masquerades satirize, especially those that normally came out at night. In Umueshi, in Ideato Local Government Areas in Imo state, on the Umueshi day, their masquerade called 'Okorosha' criticizes all the atrocities people committed during the year. Mike Ejeagha, Seven seven, Oliver de coque, etc., also criticize people's attitudes in their poems. Proverbs, onomatopoeia, simile, etc., are used to bring out the beauty of the satire.

In satire, the name of the person being criticized is often hidden, but the examples provided by the critic will reveal who they are referring to. Example

Nigeria jaga jaga a

Nigeria jaga jaga a
 Everything scatters scatter
 Poor man de suffer suffer

Kpozaa kpozaa
 Gun shot on the air
 Armed robber came to your house
 He no take money
 He went straight to your bedside
 Kpozaa
 Six feet down the ground
 Which armed robber no want money
 Which armed robber no want jolly
 Na political armed robber be that
 Na wetin de kill Nigeria o

Nigeria jaga jaga a
 Everything scather scather
 Poor man de suffer suffer
 Kpozaa kpozaa
 Gun shot on the air

Africa!
 If you love your land
 Africa!
 Is our motherland
 We de grow
 We de grow
 They steal them all

NEPA is irregular
 419 for Nigeria
 Agege to Ikeja na hundred naira
 Fuel scarcity na popular
 Action firm for Nigeria. By Okoye (2007)

The six stanzas harp on the nation's ills. The first and fourth stanzas, which are the refrains, fired the first shot at corruption in Nigeria.

BIRTH SONG (ABU NWA)

When a new child arrives, friends and relations troop in to welcome him or her. Throughout the period of rest by the mother (omugwo) friends and well-wishers would be visiting with gifts, both to the child and the mother. The period of rest lasts for about two or three months, depending on the town or locality. According to Okoye (2007:169) "omugwo is to enable the nursing mother to regain the blood lost during birth. After omugwo comes the outing ceremony (child outing). In child-outing, relations, well-wishers, groups and association are invited to join in the ceremony. During the cerebation, happiness is expressed through oral poetry. The songs, dances, and chants

offer a glimpse into the world of women in relation to childbirth. Children may join in the dance. The women dance in a circle or individually, while others stand or sit and sing.

According to Ogbalu (1974: viii) "the birth poems also contain advice as to childcare, duties of mother and father, thanks to God, rejoicing for the blessing on the family and village". All are filled with expressions of a happy mood and are accompanied by musical instruments such as the udu, ichaka, and ogene. For instance;

Erimeri

Erimeri di anyi mma Erimeri o-o
 Erimeri di anyi mma Erimeri o-o
 Onwu egbula nwaanyi n'afọ ime
 Erimeri di anyi mma Erimeri o-o Okezie (2007:77)

Translation

We like feasting
 Feasting o-o
 We like feasting
 Feasting o-o
 May woman not die in pregnancy?

LULLABY

Lullaby is a birth poem. This genre of children's song is sung by mothers and nurses to coax their babies to sleep. Lullaby or'egwu okuko nwa'(cradle song or song for babysitting) is very popular amongst the Igbo people inhabiting the southeast, south west, and south geo-political zones of Nigeria is a form of baby-talk because, it is the adults or persons, much older than the

Lullaby

Kwusi Akwa Kwusi Akwa
 kwusi akwa

 kwusi akwa
 Kwusi akwa ka nne gi lota
 kwusi akwa
 Kwusi akwa ka nna gi lota
 kwusi akwa
 Zutara gi nwa ite nwa oma
 kwusi akwa
 Zutara gi nwa ite nwa oma
 kwusi akwa
 Were ya siere nwoke nri
 kwusi akwa
 Were ya siere nwanyi nri
 kwusi akwa

Nwoke si na nri ajoka
kwusi akwa
Nwanyi si na nri amaka
kwusi akwa
Nwoke buru tufuo
kwusi akwa
Nwanyi gbaje tuturu
kwusi akwa
Umununu racha aka
kwusi akwa
Uno nje megbuo ha
kwusi akwa
Leekwa ya ka odi n'ite
kwusi akwa
Ori ihe nwa ijiji be kwa ya n'onu
kwusi akwa
Ori ihe nwa ijiji be kwa ya n'onu
kwusi akwa

Translation

Stop crying so that your mother will come back
stop Crying
Stop crying so that your father will come back
stop Crying
She will buy beautiful pot for you
stop Crying
He will buy beautiful pot for you
stop Crying
Which will be used to cook for man
stop Crying
Which will be used to cook for woman
stop Crying
Man said that food is bad
top Crying
Woman said that food is delicious
stop Crying
The man threw away food
stop Crying
The woman went and picked the food
stop Crying
Little birds have something to eat
stop Crying

O kuwara n'ike
Okuwara na gbo-o

Translation

The mirror is broken, it is broken
Beautiful mirror is broken
It is broken by force
It is broken too soon.

This song indicates the grief at the suddenness of death especially of young people on whose service depend on the development and progress of their friends, families and communities. The mourners feel the exist of the dead is too premature, hence it is said that death has come by force to snatch the person from life.

OCCUPATIONAL POEM (ABU ORU)

people sing different song while doing their work. In occupational poem, each poem will tell you the nature of the work that is taking place. The type of work may be hunting, harvesting of farm products, etcetera.

The following is the example of a poem by a hunter who saw an animal

Edi (Poem 1)

Edi oo! Edi oo! Edi oo!
Gbuonu ya n'azu ulo Elendu oo
(By Okebalama, 1986:4)

Translation

Bush pig o-o
Bush pig o-o
Kill it at the of Elendu

This type of poem is for the pounding of palm fruit by a group of people.

Okoroida (poem 2)

Enyi m Okoroida
Enyi m Okoroida
A si m gi suwa akwu
I naghi asuli akwu
Asi gi riwe nri
Ike adinu gi

Okoroida
Okoroida
Okoroida
Okoroida
Okoroida
Okoroida
Okoroida

By Okebalama

(1986) .

Translation

My friend Okoroida
I told you to pound Okoroida
You are lazy Okoroida

When I told you to eat Okoroida
 Then you will be hardworking Okoroida
 For farming purpose, this song can be used for digging ridges.

Ede mara mma(poem3)

Onye na-ako ede
 Ede mara mma
 Okuko
 Ada na ako ede
 Ede mara mma
 Okuko.

Translation

Who is planting cocoyam
 Cocoyam is good
 Ada is planting cocoyam
 Cocoyam is good

WAR POEM (ABU AGHA)

In the olden days, in Igbo land, this song is singing when people are going to war can also be rendered when they won a war. In some places like Bende and Ohafia, this song is sing at the burial ceremony of a hero.

Examples of this poem are.

Poem1 Onye akpala agu aka n'odu
 Ma odi ndu ma o nwuru anwu
 Onye akpala nwa agu aka n'odu.

Translation

Do not touch lions' tail
 Whether it is dead or alive

Poem 2 Nzogbu Nzogbu!-Enyi mba enyi

Nzogbu nwoke-Enyi mba enyi
 Nzogbu nwaanyi-Enyi mba enyi
 Kwenu nzogbu- Enyi mba enyi
 Ihe ayi jiri ka mba-Nzogbu
 Ihe ayi jiri ka mba-Nzogbu
 Zogbuo onye ukwu-Enyi mba enyi
 Nzogbu!Nzogbu!-Enyi mba enyi
 Okoro rewe-Enyi mba enyi
 Ayi ezi ya ibe ya-Enyi mba enyi
 Agbogho rewe-Enyi mba enyi
 Ayi ezi ya ibe ya-Enyi mba enyi
 Nzogbu Nzogbu-Enyi mba,enyi

Translation

Trample!Trample!	-The elephants of the town, elephant
Trample on the man	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Trample on the woman	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Greater than others	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Trample on the big/adult	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Small/young	-The elephant of the town, elephant
If the young man boasts	-The elephant of the town, elephant
If the maiden boasts,	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Fellow maidens	-The elephant of the town, elephant
Trample!Trample!	-The elephant of the town, elephant.

LOVE POEM (ABU LHUNANYA)

Love or erotic poetry is common among the people of Ewe in Ghana takes place at night especially moonlight nights. Young men and women fall in love during the performance. According to Okezie(2007) "in some parts of Igboland, young men and women sing and dance on moonlight nights. They take a lot of liberty in songs that border on the bawdy and ribald. Such songs help to eliminate embarrassment and bashfulness from young people by open reference to the love act". They also establish rapport between love ones through flirtatious reference to the girl's beauty by extolling and exaggerating her virtues and those of her lineage.

Mekwa onye di mma enyi o-e

Mekwa onye di mma enyi o-e
 Chika,mekwa onye di mma enyi
 Chika, mekwa onye di mma enyi
 Ada,mekwa onye di mma enyi
 Ada,mekwa onye di mma enyi
 Ina eme enyi,mekwa onye di nma enyi maka olulu

Translation

Be friend a good person o-e	
Be friend a good person o-e	
	Chika, be friend a good person
Chika, be friend a good person	
Ada,be friend a good person	
Ada,be friend a good person	

In this poem Okezie(2007:83) says "that single girls are advised to be careful in the choice of boyfriends. They should make good choice in case the relationship results in marriage". This poem is also a warning to the girls to ensure that her boyfriend is financially capable of taking care of her if they have to marry.

SOCIAL POEM ABU OHA)

Social poems are those in which the poet renders the poem, and the people respond by saying the chorus. Marriage songs, and title poems fall into this category.

Marriage poem (Abu Alumalu)

These are poems which are usually sings by girls when they rejoice with the bride and bridegroom. The girls lead the bride to her life's abode which is her husband's place. Ogbalu (1974: viii) says "the girls sing from the house of the bride's parents, walking all the way carrying gifts and presents, to the bridegroom's house". There they sing, eat and drink, dance and rejoice the whole evening or night. The songs include pieces of advice to the new couple, consolation to the bride's parent for losing their daughters and congratulations to the family of the bridegroom for winning such a precious gem. Example

Chinye ya kii
Chinye ya kii
Na O lotala
Chinye ya kii
Chinye ya kii
Na O lotala

Translation

Give her the key
Give her the key
She has returned
Give her the key
Give her the key
She has returned

The above poem is celebrated when the married girl first steps into her husband's house. The song signifies that the true owner of the house has arrived, and not only will the doors be unlocked for her, but all the keys of the house will be handed to her immediately.

TITLE POEM (ABU ECHICHI)

These are poems of praise used during title taking ceremonies. They praise the man, his wife and family, including the Umunna and village. The poems are usually pompous and pretentions- usual flatteries. For instance,

Eze ozo eze ozo
I lee
Eze ozo na nwunye ya
I lee
Gburu ehi nye m odu ya
I lee
Si mu na-eri mu na-agu
I lee

Eriwe m aguwa m
 Egwu ozo egwu ozo kwala jamayam
 Egwu ozo egwu ozo kwala jamayam
 O buru mmadu ise kwalajamayam
 O buru mmadu iri kwalajamayam. By Ogbalu(1974:154)

WORSHIP POEM (ABU OFUFE)

This form of poem is towards the purpose of bringing about a derived state of affairs. The subject of the worship may be believed to have some magical power. The poem may be recited along with the performance of the ritual. The poet's which may be to procure a cure for an illness, to overcome an enemy and to achieve success in some endeavor. The subject of the worship may be God, god or goddess. The following is the example of a worship poem to God.

I bu chi n'eligwe
 I bu chi n' uwaa
 I bu chi n'ebe niile
 Uwa so tuuru

Translation

You are God in heaven
 You are God on earth
 . You are God everywhere
 Even where the world ends.

The following is the example of praise poem to praise goddess
 To Ngene, the River Goddess.

Brass and parrot feathers
 On a velvet skin
 White cowry shells
 On back buttocks
 Her eyes sparkley in the forest
 Like the sun of the river
 She is wisdom of the forest
 She is wisdom of the river
 Where the doctor failed
 She cured with cool water.
 (By Akparobaro 2007:26).

PHILOSOPHICAL POEM (ABU ECHICHE MIRI EMI)

Philosophical poem searches for knowledge especially the nature and meaning of existence, the study of the principles underlying actions and behaviors of men. Okediadi (2004:257) "noted that philosophical poems provoke feeling and deep thoughts". Example;

Onwu

Onwu olee ebe ike gi di?
Olee ebe I bi?
Gini mere na I dighi ana ego?

Translation

Death

Death where is your power?
Where do you live?
Why is it that you do not take money?

As noted above, this poem described nature and their influence on human beings.

NATURAL PHENOMENON POEM (ABU EKERE)

In this poet, one think about other creatures created by God in order to show appreciation, fear, hate and uncertainty. Examples of these creatures are; sleep (ura), moon (onwa), water (mmiri) etc. For instance

URA

Ura bu nwanne onwu
Ha abuo achoghi mmeghari abuo
Ha achoghi isape anya
Ha achoghi oke oru
Ha abuo na-anapu uche

Ura na-aghori mmadu
Na- ewepu uche na nsogbu
O na-azunye mmadu ugboala
Na-achotara mmadu odi ya n'obi
N'ikpeazu, porokoto aburu ihe efu. By Anozie(2007:72)

Translation

Sleep

Sleep related to death
Both of them does not like body movement
They do not like eye opening
They do not like stress
Both of them makes people to be absent minded

Sleep is a deceiver
You removed people's mind in problems
You bought cars for people
You find concubine for someone

At last, everything is false.

In this poem, the poet described what will happen to someone while sleeping.

CONCLUSION

Every society has its form of poetry irrespective of its stages in economic development. But poetic forms are not determining a priori, theoretically. They are the determinations of a cultural milieu, by the linguistic resources of the language in which they are performed, by socio-cultural forms of life, by the socio-geographical environment, and by the habits and occupations in terms of which everyday life is conducted other words, genres of oral poetry vary from society to society, from environment to environment. They are in a real sense socio-culturally bound. From this perspective, critical standards for the evaluation of Africa oral poetry must be based upon and derived from the society in which these poetic forms emanate. There is no single classification that is generally accepted in Igbo oral poetry, for example, a praise poem can fall into different categories, and different authors can place any poem anywhere in the classification of Igbo oral poetry.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR

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