

Minstrels And Reconstruction Of Society: A Review Of Minstrel Ibealoke's "Ife Na-Eme N'opa Iweka" (Atrocities Are Being Committed At Upper Iweka) A.K.A Perikomo

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Abstract: *Minstrels are found in all parts of the world. They perform similar functions in their various societies. They are the custodian of the people's history, entertainers, educationists, advisers and reconstructionists. The secret behind their success in their roles in the society lies in their ability to impress the audience during their performance. Performance plays an indispensable role in full actualization of the story being told as a full aesthetic experience. In this paper, the writer x-rays the roles of both performance and the context of the play in reconstruction of the society especially in Upper Iweka area of Onitsha town.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Awareness of the importance of quality management, excellence and its role as a systematic and systematic activity in

When one talks of Minstrels, it means those people Dijiril, Tamsir, Naine in Okpewho (1990:23) Calls "carriers of tradition," as against professional musicians who live on the back of others. Naine asserts that many of these professionals do perform in the recording studios of Dakar, Abidjan and other capitals and they consider themselves as "stars" whose most trifling utterances must be rewarded with cash. Okpewho, in support of the above claim asserts,

..... through such groits (minstrels) do prosper unscrupulously in the cities of modern Africa, they certainly are not authentic representatives of old groit tradition of Western Sudan. However, this authentic tradition has fortunately not yet completely disappeared from the villages and cities of Western Sudan.

This point made by Naine and Okpewho applies to Nigeria. In Nigeria, there are traditional minstrels who live in villages and the professionals musicians who live in urban areas. With the growing wind of modernization, most of traditional minstrels can be found in urban areas and in big cities. Some of them incorporate modern musical instrument for their effective performance. Example of such minstrel is Minstrel Ibealoke Chukwukaoziri. He is a native of Achi in Oji Rivers Local Government Areas of Enugu State.

One of the outstanding characteristics of Minstrels throughout the world is the claim of spiritual origin of their art. For instance Okpewho (1990.7) asserts:

In my fieldwork among Aniocha story tellers in Bendel State, Nigeria, I encountered one who claimed that his box-harp (Opanda) had a spiritual origin. In my reading of the Sunjata story collected from the Gambian Mandinka, I find a narrator who claims his Guitar (Kora) has a spiritual origin. In my reading of ancient Greek Heroic narratives, I find Hesoid claiming that the muse gave him a wand (Skeptron) for use in singing heroic songs likewise Minstrel Ibealoke claims that the composition of his song was revealed to him in dreams.

As a young man in his fifties, he believes that life is full of struggles and that man must struggle in order to accomplish what he is destined to be in life. He asserts:

The act of choosing a career depends on ones, destiny. One must continue searching for his destiny until he finds it. When one develops interest, people then say "egwu di ya n'obara" meaning music is in his blood – He is a born musician.

Ibealoke agrees with Wordsworth in Butler and Fowler (1971:7) where he sees the art of composition as "spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling" meaning that musician composes as he sings. The art of composition can equally come in one's relaxed moment.

Having tried various professions and failed, and succeeded with music, he then believes that hardwork and interest matter a lot for the success of minstrels. He acknowledges thus:

*I never force any of my children into music profession, rather, I watch to see if any of them has interest.
If I notice such interest in a child, I then help him to develop the skill.*

Minstrel Ibealoke has waxed more than forty albums. He is currently living in Nkpor in Ideamili Local Government of the state. It was from there that he performed live for the researcher at Mungai inn at Nkpor. Among his numerous albums is “Ife na-eme n’Opa Iweka” a.k.a Perikomo”. In this album, he exposes atrocities being committed at Upper Iweka in Onitsha. This album is the most popular amongst his numerous albums. This album also endeared him to numerous fans.

2. UPPER IWEKA

Upper Iweka axis in Onitsha is the busiest part of the commercial city of Onitsha. Its motor park is bustling with life throughout the twenty-four hours of the day. This is so, because this area is the gate-way for both travelers and vehicles from eastern part of the country going to other states in the federation. Travelers from other parts of the country equally converge at Upper Iweka before going to their various destinations in eastern states.

Because of the busy nature of this area, Upper Iweka becomes the melting point for people of various characters – criminals, kidnappers, pick-pockets, fake drug sellers, corrupt government official etcetera. There are equally innocent traders and travelers who are going about their normal businesses. It is this Upper Iweka that Minstrel Ibealoke sings about in his song “Ife na-eme n’Opa Iweka” He exposes the atrocities that are being committed against innocent citizens.

3. THE SONG “IFE NA-EME N’OPA IWEKA” A.K.A PERIKOMO

The song is divided into four parts. Each of them opens with greetings thus:

Diayi deeme, deje nu

Ekene kwaa m unu

Ife onye chili ya zelu

Meaning:

Hello, greetings, greetings to you all

I am greeting all of you

I greet you by your various titles

He started thus because in Igbo traditional society, respect is highly valued and greeting is one of the signs of respect. This device sets the audience in the right humour to receive the performance of the minstrel.

The first part of the song is the introduction. He gives the general advice on one’s conduct in the society.

He sings

I na-akuja akuja?

Akujazikwanalu fa akuja

akujazikwanalu fa akuja

maka na o buru na na i na-emelu fa nkuja

A choputa na i na-eme nkuja

A batazia n’obodo a na-ewo gi ewo

Meaning

Are you scared?

Are you easily scared?

Don’t be easily scared

Don’t be easily scared

Because if people notice that

You are easily scared

They will be finding fault with you

He further prepares the audience mind for the reception of his story by hinting to them that small towns are generally very powerful and are not easily conquered in battle. He uses the people of Isreal as an example:

The second part of the story is the description of Upper Iweka, the minstrel’s encounter with the tax-drivers, and the tax driver’s encounter with Perikomo. The minstrel sings

I jenugokwa Opa Iweka?

I jenugokwa Opa Iweka?

Ebe e nwelu fulaj ova

Moto na-agba n’enu, na-agba n’ana

*Diayi ife na-eme n' Opa Iweka
Mgbe ufodu e kee mmadu teenu
Mgbe ufodu e kechie mmadu naabo
Mgbe ufodu akutuo fa ma dimkpa
Mgbe ufodu osọ na-agba n' Opa Iweka
Mgbe ufodu osọ na-agba n' Opa Iweka
I maara na obere obodo na-eshi ajo onwu
Ife emee, ife emeenu – e*

Meaning

*Have you been to Upper Iweka?
Have you been to Upper Iweka?
Where there is flyover
With motors plying above and beneath
Hello atrocities are being committed at Upper Iweka
Terrible things are happening at Upper Iweka
In some cases ten people are tied together and taken to
unknown destination
In some cases two people are tied together
In some cases a healthy man is knocked down
In some cases there is stampede
Small towns are generally resistant in wars
Terrible things are happening, terrible things*

The minstrel then gives account of his own experience in the hands of tax drivers as he was at Upper Iweka on his way to Lagos. The tax drivers rudely stopped him, asking him to produce his tax receipt. As he could not produce any receipt. They took him to their office. At their office, the minstrel saw a well learned man who was also caught for the same offence. The encounter between this man and the tax drivers made the minstrel value education very much. He sings:

*Do you know my savior in that office?
There was a man also held by them in the office
The man is well read
Man, education is very important
Woman education is very important
Because a well educated man challenges them
As they talk, he challenges them
When they talk about one thing,
He challenges them
When they talk of another thing,
He challenges them
Do you know, his constant challenges
made the tax officials forget about my presence
The tax officials forget that I am there
I gently watch them, watch them
Friend, the little chance I had, then
Brother, I have to tell you I ran away ...*

He was able to cross the busy Upper Iweka express and ran into 'Chisko' bus. His pursuers could not enter the bus to take him away for fear of being beaten up by the bus workers so they turned and left. The minstrel then gives the story of a powerful medicine man from Ndizogu's encounter with the tax officials at another time. The man is called Perikomo. The minstrel sings:

*Have you been to Ndizogu
You know that Ndizogu and Itheme are powerful
Hello have you been to Ndizogu
There is a man called Perikomo
If you see Perikomo, he walks gently
He walks gently
People trouble him
They trouble him in order to frighten him
In order to know whether he easily frightened*

*Perikomo was returning from Lagos
At Upper Iweka
Just to find vehicle to his town
Motor that will take him to Ndizogu
Just to cross the main road
Five hefty men were pursuing him.*

These people blocked his movement so that he could neither move forward nor backwards nor even side ways. Perikomo enquired from them why they were blocking his movements. They told him to produce his three years tax receipts. Perikomo then cautioned them against their action, for blocking his view is not the best way to collect tax receipt from people. He warned them to stop harassing innocent people at Upper Iweka. At the juncture, they searched him and removed all the money he had. Then told him to move away. Perikomo insisted that they must return all the money they removed from him before he moves away. Then they asked him to go to their office. He refused. It was at this point that they carried him to their office. It was at their office that the tax officials realized the dilemma they were into. They could neither raise Perikomo up nor bring him down and he is too heavy for them.

The tax officials cried and wailed for people to come and help them. Crowd gathered. It was then that somebody from the crowd recognized Perikomo. He then told the tax officials that they should beg Perikomo because he is a powerful dibia from Ndizogu. Other people from the crowd joined in the begging, until Perikomo gave them condition for his release thus: They have to bring one small he goat, one big ram, a chick, a fowl and a cock, a carton of St Remi wine, five cartons of stout drink and all the money they removed from him. They have to monetize the items and give him a total of fifty thousand naira. The crowd pitied the tax collectors for their plight and so started donating money to Perikomo until the amount is fifty thousand naira. Then he asked them to set him down. They brought Perikomo down after learning a bitter lesson. From that moment the carrying of innocent people and the intimidation of innocent citizens at Upper Iweka by tax officials stopped.

The rest of this section was devoted to new yam festivals in Nnewi and in Achi the minstrel's home town. The new yam festival in Nnewi is called "Afja olu" while it is called Nneche ji" in Achi. In these towns, masquerade displays entertain people during the festival.

In conclusion, the minstrel advises thus:

*I jenugokwa Opa Iweka?
Diayi kpachapukwanu anya gi n'obodo
O buru na i na-eje Opa Iweka
Diayi, o buru na i na-eje n'Opa Iweka
Ajagaradakwem, ebenebe, gburu
Ebenebe gburu, ebenebe gburu
Ngwa anu. Ayeee, ajagaradakwem
Ebenebe gburu, ebenebe gburu
Mmonwu Ndizogu!*

Meaning:

*Have you been to Upper Iweka?
Friend, be careful in your activities in town
Why, if you are going to Upper Iweka
Ajagaradakwem terrible
Come along, ayeee, ajagaradakwem
Terrible, terrible, terrible
Ndizogu masquerades!*

4. PERFORMANCE OF MINSTREL IBEALOKE

A careful observation of Minstrel Ibealoke's performing session portrays him as a minstrel that knows how to deliver the 'the goods' to his audience. He was able to hold his audience throughout the long period of his performance. Nobody is ready to move out of the scene and he is never tired of entertaining his audience. Apronti (1978:77) giving reason for this to be that "the distinction between the performer and the audience is blurred, thus making audience participation a condition for successful realization of the type". This means that performance plays an indispensable role in full realization of the text as an aesthetic experience. Hymes (1962:8) sees performance as "something transcendent of the ordinary creative". In this performance, minstrel Ibealoke uses much more intricate devices to make his audience participate and understand the message he wishes to send across to them. In this performance, the minstrel's voice modulation, his facial expression, his body movements and the audience participation matters a lot. Ascribing to this view Finnegan (1970:3) asserts:

The significance of performance in literature goes beyond a mere matter of definition. For the nature of performance itself can make an important contribution to the impact of the particular literary ... form

being exhibited ... the actual enactment of the poem also involves emotional situation of a funeral, the singer's beauty of voice, her sobs, facial expression vocal expressiveness and body movements ... in fact all the variegated aspects we can think of as contributing to the effectiveness of the performance.

The assertion above shows the advantage of oral performance over the printed text towards full realization of its aesthetic experience. In performance the audience is able to make use of their three senses of appreciation – mental, visual and auditory senses. The short lines of the songs and its regular rhythm make for easy “call” and “response” technique of the song. The minstrel sings, his mates respond thus:

Diayi deemee ... ayeee
Ife onye chili ya zelu ... ayeee
Diayi, o nwere ife m je-agwa unu ... aye

Meaning:

Friend, well done ... ayeee
I greet you through your title name ... ayeee
Friend, I have some thing to tell you ayeee
Have you been to Uppper Iweka ... ayeee
Have you been to Upper Iweka ... ayeee

The constant use of rhetoric question and allusions to small towns being powerful are used both to create excitement and suspense in the audience and also prepare their minds for the reception of the story the minstrel is about to tell. Again the minstrel made extensive use of verbal arts which includes repetition. Referring to repetition, Murphy (1972:520) says “it is common in ordinary speech, in song and poetry. It is used for emphasis to express emotions and merely to give pleasure to the ear” it is not therefore surprising that the minstrel made extensive use of this device, for example, he says:

I na-akuja akuja?
Akujazikwanalu fa akuja
Akujazikwanalau fa akuja

Meaning

Are you frightened?
Do not be frightened
Do not be frightened

This device is used to stress a point. At the climax of the performance, the minstrel diverts to the use of chants. The minstrel dramatizes, dances as he sings. At this juncture, response from the mates stop and the music is at its highest peak. His dancing step increases. There is clapping of hands and ululation from the audience. Some people spray money on the minstrel. This makes him burst out in auto most excitement and he shouts ayeee e, a y e e e

eke etie, eke ebee, mɔ̀ba
chi ejie, Anaedeonu-ò!

This simply shows that he is greatly excited with his performance. Anaedeonu being his name, is mentioned to express his happiness over his successful performance. The music then gradually returns to its normal tempo with normal call and response pattern. This brings the performance to abrupt end.

The incorporation of some modern musical instrument in the existing traditional musical instrument greatly enriched his performance thus winning public attraction to himself. Today “Perikomo/Ife na-eme n’Opa Iweka” is a popular song not only in Anambra State but also in various parts of the country.

5. IGBO WORLD VIEW IN THE SONG

i. The Brother’s Keeper

One should not be surprised at the way the crowd was helping the corrupt tax officials in alleviating their suffering because according to Ogbalu (n.d:8) every Igbo man helps those in difficulty. It is expected that after helping him out of his difficulty, that people will ask about the offence that leads to his suffering. He then can be punished. Ogbalu (2009:156) has a story of how the birds lent tortoise wings with which he flew to heaven for a feasting invitation with them. There, tortoise answered the name ‘unu niile’ ‘all of you’. When food was brought to them in heaven, tortoise quickly asked them “who owns the food.” The reply was “unu niile” (all of you) since that is the tortoise name, he took the food and ate without giving any to the birds. The birds got annoyed and took back their wings from the tortoise and left. Tortoise became stranded. He fell from the heaven to the ground and his shell broke to pieces. He begged the snail to patch it for him. The snail was aware of what the tortoise did to other animals, yet he helped him by patching his shell.

In like manner, every Igbo man or woman is bound to help his fellow human being whenever the person is in trouble.

6. MAGICAL POWER

The action of Perikomo clearly supports the view in Achebe (1958:10) where he aligns that:

Umụofia was feared by all his neighbours. It was powerful in war and in magic, and its priests and medicine men were feared in all the surrounding country. Its most potent war medicine was as old as the clan itself. Nobody knew how old. But on one point, there was general agreement – the active principle in that medicine had been an old woman with one leg ... And so the neighbouring clans who naturally knew of these things feared Umụofia, and would not go to war against it without first trying on peaceful settlement. And in fairness to Umụofia, it should be recorded that it never went to war unless its case was clear and just and was accepted as such by its oracle.

In like manner, the minstrel mentions Ndizogu and IHEME, Perikomo's town as very powerful. Ndizogu is feared and respected by the neighbouring clans. It uses this power as a last resort after all peaceful settlement with its opponent had failed. Perikomo was very calm and gentle with the tax officials. He allows himself to be searched by the tax officials. They removed all the money with him and ordered him to move away. It was at this point that he asked them to return his money they removed from him. He also refused going to their office unless his money is returned to him. They carried him to the office and that begins their ordeals. He did not resist their action. At their office, they realized what they were in for. They could neither bring him down nor raise him higher. It was through the intervention of the crowd who begged Perikomo to forgive them, that Perikomo agreed after fulfilling all the conditions Perikomo set for them, he asked them to release him. He then warned them to stop harassing people at Upper Iweka. This lesson is not only for the tax officials but also to the general public. One should be fair and just in dealing with his fellow human being.

7. IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

On page 6 the minstrel highlights the importance of education to the Igbo people. Education brightens individual and makes him know his rights in the society. The minstrel sings:

*O nwere nwoke e jikwu n'ofiso
Di man jere akwukwọ tuu mochọ
Nwoke ije akwukwọ na ọ dị mkpa-o
I buru nwaanyi ije akwukwọ na ọ dị mkpa-o
Maka nwoke jere akwukwọ tu mocha-o
Ọ na-atụ f chalenji*

Meaning

*The was a man also held by them in that office
The man is well read
Man acquiring education is important
Because a well educated man challenges them
Here the minstrel is urging every member of the society to acquire education so as to enable one know his right in the society.*

8. MORAL BEHAVIOUR

Igbo people believe in retributive justice. This means that whatever one does in the society, one is surely going to receive the reward for his action. A good action is normally rewarded with fortune and long life while bad action is rewarded with sufferings. This belief is highlighted in the song by the suffering of the tax officials. Those that helped to see that they are freed are then to be rewarded with fortune by the creator.

This belief makes every member of the society aspire to do good always.

9. NEW YAM FESTIVAL

New yam festival is one of the cultural and social activities which the minstrel highlighted in his song on page 13. New yam festival is organized in Igbo land to thank the earth goddess for giving his people plentiful harvest. This is annual festival throughout Igbo land. The minstrel sings:

*Achi na-emebe Nneche ji
Nneche ji oriri ayi ji eri ji
M siwe ezi nkenwa, ọ buru sọnsọ mmọnwu
M siwe ezi nkenwa, ọ buru sọnsọ mmọnwu*

Meaning

*Achị was having their Nneche festival
Nneche ji, their new yam festival
On taking this direction
It is filled with masquerades
On talking this direction
It is filled with masquerades
On taking this direction,
It is filled with masquerades
Here the minstrel has shown that*

New yam festival has different names in different parts of Igbo land. For example, in Nnewi, it is called Afia Olu, in Achị, it is called Nneche ji. During the new yam festival, there are many masquerade displays which entertain the people in their village squares and in other selected places.

10. THE ROLE OF MINSTREL IN RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SOCIETY

- i. **Advisory role:** In the text, one can see the minstrel advising Igbo people and the entire Nigerians to acquire education in order to know their rights the society and also stand firm in what is their rights.
- ii. **Corrective role:** The minstrel exposes the evil in the society. For example the atrocities taking place at the Upper Iweka in Onitsha is exposed by the minstrel. This makes both the government and law enforcement agency to sit up to correct the evils in the society. For example, since Minstrel Ibealoke's song on Upper Iweka, the government of Anambra State has paid attention to this part of Onitsha. More police post had been built and more law enforcement agencies had been drafted to the area to keep vigilance in the area throughout the twenty-four hours of the day. Peace and security has returned to this area. The government has modernized the area. Parks are constructed for travelers relaxation. Electric lights are every where so that one can move about even at nights without fear of harassment by anyone.
- iii. **Custodian of the people's culture:** Minstrels are custodian of the people's culture and world-view. They project such to the outside world, for example, when the tax officials were pursuing, Ibealoke, he ran into the 'Chisko' bus and the tax officials turned back. They know that it is not customary for them to go inside the bus to drag their victim out. The workers in the bus are bound to protect their passengers. Masquerading is another aspect of Igbo culture. It is not only in Igbo land that masquerades are found. Masquerades are found throughout Africa and beyond. Mvula in Okpewho (1990:80) states that Gule Wamkulu performance in Malawi should be seen as a mystery play as well as ritual drama, in which masks and animal structures represent ancestral spirits. Animals of the forest temporarily come from the bush to the village to associate with human beings. Ahmed Yerima in *Iba* (2003:8) acknowledges that "Traditional festivals are therefore still very much alive today in many parts of African continent" and masquerades entertain during these festivals. When the minstrel sings about festivals and masquerades that feature in them, the minstrel is thus projecting this culture to outside world. The minstrel is also preserving the culture of his people.
- iv. **Custodian of the people's history:** Minstrels are the custodian of the people's history. For example on page the minstrel gives account of the town Ndizogu and its neighboring town Iheme and says that though they are small in population but they are generally powerful. They are powerful because of their charms and medicine. This accounts for the reason why people fear and respect the people from these two towns.

Mbanugo (2000:54) asserts that "the traditional music of a people reflects the values of the society". This music of minstrel Ibealoke had been analyzed in line with the recommended format for music from other parts of the world and found out that the traditional music possesses those qualities which foreign music is noted for. It is rhythmic, didactic, melodious and possesses aesthetic qualities. The minstrels in their performance play advisory role, corrective role, educational role in the society. Through these means they, play reconstruction role in the society. They are also the custodian of both the people's culture, world-view and history. The role of traditional minstrels in the society is effective they educate the society through their music as they entertain the audience.

The songs of minstrels play an indispensable role in the reconstruction of the society. From the study or Ibealoke song – Perikomo/Ife na-eme n'Opa Iweka (Atrocities are being committed at Upper Iweka),

11. THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS WERE MADE:

- i. People were so interested in the song because the song touches the biting problem of the society.
- ii. The song can be heard in radio, television, commercial buses in shops and in markets. The objective of the spread of this music is to educate both members of the society and the government and make the government to be alive to their responsibilities.
- iii. This has led to the government reconstruction of live at Upper Iweka in the following ways:
 - a. More law enforcement agencies are now drafted to the area
 - b. More police posts are built in the area

- c. Bushes in the area have been cleared and parks are constructed for travelers relaxation.
- d. Electric light is every where. It is on throughout the night. Security is now very tight in the area.
- iv. Travelers are now free to move about in the area without fear of being molested by anyone or without fear of their luggage being snatched away from them by the hoodlums. Upper Iweka is now the most peaceful part of Onitsha. This is so because of the exposure of the minstrel Ibealoke to the general public and to the outside world.

12. RECOMMENDATION

In view of the present role of the minstrel in the reconstruction of the society, the following recommendations were made:

- i. The minstrel should be asked to compose another song that will portray the present status of Upper Iweka. The government should sponsor this production.
- ii. The minstrels should look in wards for their composition of their songs and include those materials that will enhance the standard of living of the members of the public just as minstrel Ibealoke had done.
- iii. Many well to do members of the society should sponsor the minstrel's performance and outing. This will help them in their transportation of their musical instruments and in their waxing of their albums.
- iv. The government and other organizations should organize competitions for the minstrels. They should be rewarded according to their position in that composition. This will make them be serious in their composition.
- v. Minstrels should be invited to an important ceremony of the government and that of individuals. This will expose the minstrels and more people will join in their patronage.

13. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As we have seen from the song of Minstrel Ibealoke, the minstrels play an indispensable role in the reconstruction of the society. In like manner, other minstrels in other parts of the country equally play such indispensable role in the reconstruction of their various societies since their songs contain materials from their society. They all play advisory role, educative role, and corrective role. They are all custodian of the people's culture and history. Their roles are effective because the message is delivered through their music which the audiences are enjoying.

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APPENDIX

Atrocities at Upper Iweka/Perikomo

Aayeee ... ajagaradakwe m

Terrible ... a y e e e

Ajagaradakwem ... terrible

Hello, thank you, thank you ... a y e e e

I greet you all ... a y e e e

Accept my greetings through your title ... a y e e e

Are you close? ... a y e e e

Are you frightened ... a y e e e

Don't be frightened at their sight ... a y e e e

5

In the community, trouble will be coming to you ... You will even be beaten up Or stories will be thrown to you Stones will be thrown to you, If you are frightened	10 15
Don't be frightened at their sight ... a y e e e Terrible, terrible, alright ... a y e e e Ajagaradakwem ... terrible Hello, I have something to tell you ... a y e e e You ought to know that small towns are persistent	 20
Brother, small towns are persistent ... a y e e e Do you know that small towns are always small When you ask the elders, they will tell you why ... You will be told ... a y e e e Are you close? ... a y e e e	 25
When you ask the elders, you will be told stories ... You will be told stories why they are always small As they tell you, just agree with them ... a y e e e As they tell you, they can tell some lies They tell you lies in the community, you agree with them	 30
If you don't agree, where you there when it happened? There are people called Isrealites ... a y e e e Do you know that white people run away from them? Igbo people, we run away from them ... a y e e e Why? Because the Isrealities know how to fight with guns	 35
Brother, the isre Alites are very powerful They are close to God ... a y e e e God the creator is always to them That is why people run away from them Hello, the Isrealites are very powerful ... a y e e e You ought to know that small towns are stubborn ...	 40
Hei, ajagaradakwem, terrible Wonderful, come along ... w e have started Ajagaradakwem, wonderful Hello, the money in my pocket The money in my pocket falls into Mmam	 45
Terrible, wonderful Come along ... a y e e e Ajagaradakwem ... wonderful Do you know that ciga in my pocket Ciga in my pocket is falling into Mmam	 50
Terrible, terrible, wonderful Come along ... a y e e e Ajagaradakwem, wonderful Hello thank you ... a y e e e	 55
Accept my greetings through your titles Accept it through your initiation title I have something to tell you ... a y e e e I have something to tell you ... a y e e e Have you been to Upper Iweka? ... a y e e e Have you been to Upper Iweka? ... a y e e e	 60
Where there is flyover ... a y e e e Motors ply on top and beneath ... a y e e e Hello something is happening at Upper Iweka ... a y e e e At times ten people will be tied together ... a y e e e Sometimes two people will be tied ... a y e e e	 65

Sometimes a young man will be knocked down ... a y e e e	
Sometimes there will be stampede at Upper Iweka ... a y e e e	
You know that small towns are stubborn ... a y e e e	70
Something is happening, something is happening ... a y e e e	
Something is happening, again something is happening ... a y e e e	
There was once I went to Lagos ... a y e e e	
At Upper Iweka ... a y e e e	
While looking for vehicle to Lagos ... a y e e e	75
On crossing the main road ... a y e e e	
Four hefty men ran after me ... a y e e e	
They pursued me, this one blocked my front ... a y e e e	
I turned another direction, they blocked it ... a y e e e	80
I turned another direction, again they blocked it ... a y e e e	
I asked them, what is happening? a y e e e	
What have I done to you ... a y e e e	
I was told to produce my tax papers ... a y e e e	
I should produce my rate papers ... a y e e e	
Three, three, three years ... a y e e e	85
I checked the money in my pocket ... a y e e e	
It was only my transport money, ... a y e e e	
And my feeding money ... a y e e e	
I considered this, then determined ... a y e e e	
I told them I have not even a kobo with me ... a y e e e	90
Take me where you like ... a y e e e	
They said, I must go to their office ... a y e e e	
Friend, you must touch our office ... a y e e e	
I replied, alright, let me go to your office ... a y e e e	
Let me go to that your office ... a y e e e	95
Brethren we went into the office ... a y e e e	
Do you know my savior in that office? ... a y e e e	
There was a man also held with me in that office ... a y e e e	
That man was well educated ... a y e e e	
Man, education is very important ... we have started	100
Woman, education is very important ... a y e e e	
Brother, education is very important ... a y e e e	
Because a well educated man ... a y e e e	
Challenged them ... a y e e e	
As they talk, he challenged them ... a y e e e	105
When they talk in this direction,	
He challenged them ... a y e e e	
Do you know his constant challenge ... a y e e e	
Made them forgot my presence ... a y e e e	
The tax officials forgot my presence ...	110
I secretly watched them, watched them ... a y e e e	
Watched them, watched them ... a y e e e	
Friend, the little chance I had then ... a y e e e	
Brother, I have to tell you, I ran away ... a y e e e	
I ran mweghe, weghe mweghe nkwe ... a y e e e	115
Till I crossed, the main road ... a y e e e	
I ran inside 'Chisko' bus a y e e e	
I raised my hand out of the window ... a y e e e	
Said 'waka' to tax officials ... a y e e e	
The idiots 'waka' ... a y e e e	120
Wild animals, you are looking for your father's money	
Come on, pursue me ... a y e e e	
They looked at me, turned their backs ... a y e e e	

They knew that if they chased me inside Chisko’s bus ... a y e e e	
Their workers would deal with them	
The workers there would beat them mercilessly	125
The vehicle moved away to Lagos ... a y e e e	
.....	
Terrible, wonderful, come along ... a y e e e	
Ayio, ayio ... a y e e e	
It is wonderful, darkness has fallen ... a y e e e	
Come and see Anaedonu-o... we have started	140
Ajaradakwem, wonderful ... a y e e e	
Ajaradakwem, wonderful ... a y e e e	
Friend, have you gone to Upper Iweka? ... a y e e e	
My man, things are happening at Upper Iweka ... a y e e e	
Have you been to Ndizogu? ... a y e e e	145
You know that Ndizogu and Iheme are powerful	
Hello, have you been to Ndizogu? ... a y e e e	
There is a man called Perikomo ... a y e e e	
If you see Perikomo ... a y e e e	
If you see Perikomo, he walks gently ... a y e e e	150
He walks gently ... a y e e e	
People find trouble with him ... a y e e e	
They find trouble with him in order to scare him	
To know whether he is easily scared	
Perikomo was returning from Lagos ... a y e e e	155
At Uper Iweka ... a y e e e	
Just to board a vehicle to his town	
Motor that will take him to Ndizogu... ayeee	
Motor to cross the main road ... a y e e e	
Just to cross the main road ... a y e e e	
Five lefty men pursue him ... a y e e e	
Pursue him, this one blocked him in front ... a y e e e	160
On taking this direction they blocked it	
On turning to another direction, they blocked it	
On turning to another direction, they blocked it	
On moving backwards, they blocked it ...	
He asked them, hello, what is it? ... a y e e e	165
Hellow, what is it ... a y e e e	
They asked him, produce your tax receipt ... a y e e e	
Produce ‘rate’ receipt ... a y e e e	
Three, three, three years	
Yes we ask you so ... a y e e e	170
Perikomo calls the tax collector ... a y e e e	
This is how you treat people here ... a y e e e	
This is how you harass people here ... a y e e e	
I thought robbers were pursuing them ... a y e e e	
They replied, master, are you angry with us? ... a y e e e	
Answer, master, are you angry with us? ... a y e e e	
But they did not know he is Perikomo ... a y e e e	
Immediately one person carried him by the leg	
This person searched his bag, searched his bag	180
This person searched every thing ... a y e e e	
After searching Perikomo ... we have started	
They asked him to move away ... a y e e e	
Come on, our master, move away ... a y e e e	
Perikomo called them ... a y e e e	185
Friend, you are telling me to get away ... a y e e e	

You have taken all my money and said get away
After searching me, you ask me to get away
I think you said you are tax drivers ... a y e e e 190
Please give me back my money ... a y e e e
But they did not know he is Perikomo ... a y e e e
They looked at the situation ... a y e e e
The three hefty men were scolding him ... a y e e e
They replied, our master were you accusing us to theft
For this, you must reach the office ... a y e e e 105
Nothing will stop you from reaching our office ... a y e e e
Our master, you must reach the office ... a y e e e
He told them, he is going no where ... a y e e e
Unless they return the money they took from him
This one carry him by the leg ... a y e e e 200
Immediately the three hefty men
I am telling you ... a y e e e
The three hefty young men ... we have started 205
Perikomo just kept quiet ... we have started
And they carried him to their office ... a y e e e
Do you know they carried him to their office ... a y e e e
The leader was just looking at them ... a y e e e
Looking at them, to ascertain who they were carrying
Looking at them, who that person is ... a y e e e 210
As they arrived with Perikomo ... a y e e e
To release their hends from Perikomo ... a y e e e
They could not bring him down ... a y e e e
To lift him higher, ... a y e e e
They could not do so ... a y e e e 215
The three men carrying Perikomo ... a y e e e
They carried him, he became difficult for them ... a y e e e
As they carried him, sweat filled their bodies – we have started
Brother, they carried him, sweat filled their bodies ... a y e e e
They were shouting and crying ... we have started 220
Please people come and help me ... a y e e e
Come and help me, please come and help me ... a y e e e
This man is very heavy, very heavy for me ... a y e e e
This man is very heavy for me ... a y e e e
Please, please come and help me ... a y e e e 225
Crowd gathered there at Upper Iweka ... a y e e e
Looking at Perikomo ... a y e e e
One man recognized perikomo ... a y e e e
Said, this man must be from Izuogu ... a y e e e
This person is among the Ndizogus masquerades ... a y e e e 230
He approached the leader of tax drivers ... a y e e e
Touched the leader ... we have started
Our master, are you aware of the man you are holding?
He is called the masquard from Ndizogu ... a y e e e 235
This person is called Perikomo ... a y e e e
Bad child that entered the mothers womb from the rear
Izogu and Itheme are very powerful ... a y e e e
Please go and beg him ... a y e e e
Let me tell you, you have carried some this today 240
Alright you have seen something today ... a y e e e
Hello, Perikomo was being begged ... a y e e e
He was begged, begged, begged ... a y e e e
People who knew him became too many ... a y e e e

He called the tax collectors ... a y e e e	245
Go and get for me a paper and writing materials	
Hello, they brought paper and writing materials ... a y e e e	
He was writing for them, writing for them	
What they would bring for him ... a y e e e	
Small he gpoat, you have to buy it ... a y e e e	250
Big ram, you have to buy it ... a y e e e	
A chick, you have to buy it ... a y e e e	
A fowl, cock, you have to buy them ... a y e e e	
You buy saint Remi wine ... a y e e e	
Buy one carton of it ... a y e e e	255
Bring staut drink ... a y e e e	
Buy five cartons of it ... a y e e e	
All the money you removed from me ... a y e e e	
My money is five thousand ... a y e e e	
It is fifty thousand ... a y e e e	260
The total amount is fifty thousand ... a y e e e	
You check everything, give money equivalent ... a y e e e	
People were bringing out money from their pockets	
They were giving out money and spreading it on him ... a y e e e	
Throwing money to him ... a y e e e	
Until fifty thousand naira is completed ... a y e e e	
He then called the tax officials ... a y e e e	
It is not anyone you find here that you pursue ... a y e e e	270
Whatever he said, they replied 'yes sir' ... a y e e e	
He called them idiot, they replied, yes sir ... a y e e e	
He called them evil men, they replied 'yes sir' ... a y e e e	
He called them thieves, they replied, yes sir' ... a y e e e	275
He told them, alright bring Nwokoye down ... a y e e e	
Perikomo was brought down ... a y e e e	
The three hefty men that carried him ... a y e e e	
They stood at a corner panting ... a y e e e	
They all went to a corner panting ... a y e e e	
Hee ee, he is too heavy ... a y e e e	280
Oh! This man is too heavy for me ... we have started	
Hello, this man is too heavy ... we have started	
Oh! My neck is painful ... a y e e e	
From that period I am talking about ... a y e e e	
Whenever one comes to Upper Iweka ... a y e e e	
Before the tax collectors start pursuing you ... a y e e e	
First of all they have to make sure ... a y e e e	
Whether this person is Perikomo ... a y e e e	290
Hello, do you ask me to pursue him? ... a y e e e	
No if you would not, go and pursue him ... a y e e e	
Why? Because Perikomo is too heavy ... a y e e e	
Terrible, wonderful, come along	
... a y e e e ... a y e e e ... a y e e e	
Python cried, python cried, cow, darkness	300
has fallen! Anaedeonu –o... we have started	
ijagaradakwem wonderful wonderful, wonderful come along	
We have started performing ... a y e e e	305
Ijagaradakwem, wonderful	
There was a day I went to Nnewi ... a y e e e	
When I came to Nkwo Nnewi ... a y e e e	
Nnewi were having their Afia Olu festival ...	
Afia Olu, new yam festival ... a y e e e	

On taking this way, it was filled with masquerades I take the way to Amichi, it was filled with masquerades I take the way to Otolo, it was filled with masquerades I take the way to Ekwusigo, it was filled with masquerades Do you know that all those masquerades were about falling into river Mmam Wonderful, terrible, come along ... a y e e e Ijagaradakwem, wonderful	315
Hellow there was a day I went to our town Achi At Ekegbo Achi ... a y e e e It is daily market ... a y e e e Achi was having Nneche yam festival ... a y e e e Nneche, their new yam festival While at Nkwo Onuigbo ... a y e e e	320
It place where we normally gather in our town ... a y e e e It was filled with masquerades ... a y e e e I take another direction, it was filled with masquerades I take another direction, it was filled with masquerades Do you know that all those masquerades were about Falling into river Mmam Terrible, wonderful, come along I have greeted you all Ajaragadakwem, wonderful Young lady that cooks stock fish Young lady that cools stockfish	330
Do you know that stock fish dries blood? Terrible, wonderful, some along Mornings you cook stock fish ... a y e e e Afternoons you cook stock fish ... a y e e e At night you cook stock fish ... a y e e e Don't you know that stock fish dries blood ... a y e e e Friend, Ndizogu perform difficult task ... a y e e e Have you been to Upper Iweka? Friend, be careful in the town ... a y e e e If you are going to Upper Iweka ... a y e e e Why? if you are going to Upper Iweka ... a y e e e Friend, if you are going to Upper Iweka ... a y e e e Ee ee eehe ... a y e e e	335
Ajaradakwem, wonderful ... a y e e e Terrible, wonderful, come along Aee, ijagaradakwem, wonderful ... a y e e e Terrible, wonderful Ndizogu masquerades	340
	350
	350