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Abstract

History is key in determining the bearing of growth and development in any society, arts and all areas of human activities/events. In all the societies of the world, musical practices, like other forms of artistic expression represent an integral part of the total cultural fabric of the people. It is so interwoven with work, play, social ceremonial and religious activities that to isolate one phase from its role in the total life of the people is difficult. The development of any society, depends largely on the level of peace, love and unity among its habitants. Music has been identified as one of the instruments that brings about peace love and unity in any society.

This paper explored the Igbo society in terms of its location in the nation's geopolitical zones, traced their descendant origin and history of some ancient cities. The history of Igbo-land, functions and usefulness of their music in everyday life and culture of the people, constitute the focus of this paper. The study is a qualitative one carried out within the framework of exploring literature, oral interview and direct participant observation.

Key Words: History, Ugwulangwu, Culture, Music, Igbo origin.

Introduction

The Igbos is one of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria, the others are Yorubas and Hausas. They occupy the South-east part of Nigeria. The main cultural areas of Igboland include Northern Igbo generally known as (Enugu Igbo), Southern Igbo (Owerri), North Eastern Igbo (Ebonyi), Eastern Igbo (Abia state) and Western Igbo (Onitsha Anambra). Their closest neighbours are the Ijaw and Ogoni in the South, the Yako, Ekoi and the Ibibio in the East, the Tiv, Idoma and Igala in the North, the Edo and Urhobo in the West (Akah 2007).

Map of Igboland



Source: Cable Reporters July 17 2023

The origin of the Igbos has been a contextual issue among scholars. Unlike the Yorubas who easily traced their legendary descent from Oduduwa, to the Igbos, it is a different ball-game. There have been diverse sources as regards the origin of the Igbos. According to Isichei (1973), Igbos are from the Benin Kingdom. She explained that the Igbos are the product of political unrest which broke up in the Benin kingdom in about 6th and 7th century. She further stated that the political unrest led to wave of migration toward the east of Benin. She opined that the people of Ossisa, Agbor, Owa, Mbiri, Onitsha, Ataneze, Ogidi etc are the product of the wave of migration. Akah (2007) disproves the idea with archaeological findings and linguistic evidence by Shaw and Onwuejeogwu which pointed to the existence of the Igbos half a millennium before the rise of the Benin kingdom. Afigbo (1986) described the Igbos as “the lost tribe of Israel”. This is in line with Equiano’s (1967) observation of some similarities between the Jewish culture and that of the Igbos. Such cultures as: Circumcision, Confining women for a

specific period after childbirth, Naming children after specific events etc. Equiano (1967) further explained that:

Like the Isrealites in their primitive state, our government was conducted by our chiefs, our judges, our wise men and elders, and the head of a family with us enjoyed a similar authority over his household with that ascribed to Abraham and other patriarchs. The law of retaliation obtained almost universally with us as with them... We had our sacrifices and burnt offerings, our washings and purifications on the same occasions as they had (p.25).

The trace of “Abia” in the lineage of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:7 which is a name of a State in Igbo-land, “Adah” to the wife of Lamech in Genesis 4: 23 which, without letter ‘h’ “Ada”, is also the name given to the first female child in every home in Igbo-land and the general conception that the word “Ibo” is a corrupt and contracted form of the word “Hebrew”, all goes far in supporting Afigbo’s philosophical school of thought as regard the origin of the Igbos.

Some Ancient Cities/Communities in Ebonyi State and (her mother State) Abia State that are worth recognition in Igboland

Igboland formally consist of two states, Anambra and Imo state till 1991 when Enugu state was created from a two-third of Anambra State and Abia State carved out of Imo State. The name Abia” is an acronym for the four of the state's densely populated regions Aba, Bende, Isuikwuato and Afikpo. It later gave birth to the newest of all the States in Igboland known as Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State was created on 1st October, 1996 with the capital in Abakaliki from the old Abakaliki Division of Enugu State and the old Afikpo Division of Abia State. Though Ebonyi State is considered to be relatively new and less privileged in education but in it lies the ancient cities that played vital role in the historical evolution of Igboland. The State is a fast growing one

in all ramification. Rapid development in Abakaliki the capital city, higher institution within the State, so many industries and agricultural investments attest to the above assertion. My choice of discussion on the cities within the State is as a result of less attention of scholars to the State when compared to the cities and communities of other states in Igboland.

Afikpo, Ebonyi State

Afikpo is located in the southern part of Ebonyi state. The first human settlement in Ehugbo (Afikpo) according to Mbey (2009) were the Egu and Nkalu, dated from 5000 – 3000 BC (Later Stone Age). This date according to Mbey is from the excavation carried out at Ezi Ukwu rock shelter by Professor D.D. Hattle in 1966. Though the information, he stated, “did not indicate the settlers but oral tradition has it that the Egu people inhabited Afikpo a very long-time ago, alongside Nkalu then a minority group Ebri”. The origin of Afikpo is also traced to a Hebrew man by name Igbo ukwu who according to Mbey (2009) is said to have set out from the east (Israel) in search of a conquest and settlement. He is said to have gotten into North Africa before he crossed to Nigeria and settled at Ikoyi, Lagos. He later moved to Calabar where he defeated the Ibibios, met with stiff opposition with the Akpa people, waged war with them and conquered. Agwu (2009) in support of the above story stated that “Igbo Ukwu is the acclaimed founder of Afikpo (Ehugbo) following his defeat of the original inhabitants” (p.1). But Afikpo culture and tradition owe their origin to Egu People (Mbey 2009).

Arochukwu, Abia State

Arochukwu is an ancient city in Abia State Eastern Igbo-land. Aro people are “cool-headed, humble, hospitable and peaceful. However, they are highly reserved and shrewd” (Mbey 2009 p.4), which is a vital and inevitable qualities of heroes. This is evident in the difficulty people face in extracting information of vital importance from them till date. The only information one can easily obtain from them are only the ones they consider to be beneficial to them.

Traits that lead Mbey (2009) describe them as “the most cunning of Igbo race” (p.4). All the qualities described above manifested when they heard of the arrival of Igbo Ukwu to Aro. They considered the fate of the Ibibios and Akpas in his hand and calmly surrendered, welcomed and accepted him as a leader, knowing full well that (*Obiara ije, nwe una*) a sojourner must one day take his leave. Till date, the Arochukwu people “still address themselves as ‘Aro Oke Igbo’ in recognition of their special relationship with Igbo ukwu dating centuries ago” (Mbey 2009 p. 4). While at Arochukwu, Igbo Ukwu had three sons namely: Ogbonnia Igbo Ukwu, Eseni Igbo and Okoro Igbo. Eseni Igbo later founded Ufu Eseni community at Edda and Okoro Igbo, Unwana community. His first son Ogbonnia remained with him. He adopted warrior Egwu Orochi as the commandant of his force.

Okposi Town, Ebonyi State

Okposi, a geographical entity located South-West Ebonyi State has varying opinions as regard her origin. Though Obaji (2009) stated that “all contributors agree that the founding father of Okposi is one Enechi Akuma” (p. 1), whose legendry descent is traceable to Idoma speaking people in the present Benue State. He was said to have arrived Abakaliki and settled in a village called Agala in Abakaliki north. There he lived and had many children and children’s children one of which is Elechi Ekuma who later moved to Ikwo before arriving at their present site. In support of the above story and in contribution to what lead to his first exodus, Obaji (2009) stated that:

the father of the clan, one Enechi Akuma was born in *Agala*, a place hazily described as lying in the north of Abakaliki division, and there, he grew to manhood. A brother of Enechi’s father quarrelled with a man, fought him and killed him and fled the country to escape retribution (p. 2).

To confirm where he fled to, he further stated that “Enechi Akuma left his family and eventually arrived Ikwo, to avoid being apprehended for a murder he committed.

The specific village he arrived in is called *Okpuru Nwajagbo Okpuitumo* in *Ikwo*". He further confirmed that Enechi, "who fled *Agala* with his family, separated from them completely and after wandering through Abakaliki grassland, arrived in *Okpuitumo Ikwo*. There, feeling safe from pursuit, he decided to settle." To further support the above story, Obaji (2009) listed some traceable evidence of idoma language in the present day Okposi when he said:

And to support the *Agala* theory, words reminiscent of Idoma language can still be found today in Okposi dialect. These include: *Uno-agana, Nweze-agana, Agada, Owu, Eke-Ekpa, Agba* and *Abakpa*. Also, Okposi's proverbial attachment to yam farming can probably be accounted for by the following statement: The importance of this crop in exchange transactions is reflected in Idoma word for market, *Olihi*, which literally means 'that which has yams (p. 2).

His choice of *Ikwo* as a place of refuge was traced to a maternal relationship between him and *Ikwo* people.

The name *Okposi* according to Obaji (2009) was actually given to them by *Ikwo* people as a result of some circumstances that took place while he sojourned there. It all happened that Enechi got married to an *Ikwo* woman, raised a family that grew into a hamlet. "His people were always in disagreement with the host village. This made the *Ikwo* to derisively call them '*Ndi Okposia*' meaning, literally, nullifiers (of decisions)" (Obaji 2009). The disagreement grew worse and eventually degenerated into a rift which led to a physical conflict that claimed lives. As a result, another exodus was the only solution and this time headed westwards to their present-day site. On arrival at the present site, Obaji added, "they settled at a place later known as '*Egu Okpuhu Ukpo*.' From there the group moved on to *Avu* where Enechi Akuma lived and died" (p. 2). The names like *Ukpo*, *Avu* as mentioned above further confirms that they were other occupants of the village before

his arrival. He took over the villages, named them after the group name given to them by *Ikwo* people "*Okposi*" and confined other existing names and those that came after him into a sub-village. This was further confirmed by Waddington's report in Obaji (2009) which claimed that "the stopping point (from *Ikwo*) was *Avu* and that the eight large villages (*Ezi*) were founded by the sons of Enechi Akuma" (p. 2). Settlement in *Okposi* was dated between 4000 and 3000 B.C. according to Obaji (2009). His claim he credited to an archaeological finding which established the date of *Ukpa* village in *Afikpo* as 3000 B.C. And it is on record that *Ukpa* was peopled by inhabitants of *Okposi* (p. 9). Enechi Akuma and his people settled and built a prosperous and commercial town. A market built a few yards from the founder's compound became so popular that it was named *Odenigbo*, which name it still retains today. Salt attracted Aro slave dealers from the south and Ekpototo horse dealers from the north to "*Odenigbo Enechi Akuma*."

Ugwulangwu Community in Ebonyi State.

Ugwulangwu is one of the largest community in Ohaozara local government area of Ebonyi State, Southeast Nigeria. Her visual splendours are a feast of endless variety, horizon-touched grasslands, seasonally snow-capped mountains, rain forests, jungles and green rice farms, the rich, bright colours of the people's every day clothes and ceremonial garments weave together a magnificent scene. They are enriched with diverse musical culture coupled with dramatic and poetic values. Their cultural heritage, ranges from "moveable cultural objects (works of arts), immovable cultural objects (monuments and sites), expressive activities (language, music, dance and drama) as well as intangible customs and traditions such as proverbs, rituals and intellectual norms" (Okpoko & Ezeadichie 2002).

Ugwulangwu community shares common boundaries with Okposi, Onicha, Oshiri, Ezza and Ukawu communities in Ohaozara local government area of Ebonyi state, Southeast, Nigeria. The founding of the

community is traced to one 'Ezeke Una'. According to oral history, Ezeke Una has many children with Ezeoke Chima and Ezza as the first and the last born respectively. The original place of abode of *Ezeke Una* is today known as *Ama-ndi*. located in the present day Ezza-North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Ama-ndi is occupied by *Ezeke Una's* last born as a result of rebellious act of the first born, which led to his being banished by his father. The banishment enabled him (*Ezeoke Chima*) cross Ebonyi river to a land of scenic beauty, full of opportunities, a veritable dream land full of hills and valleys. On arrival, he decided to ascend one of the hills for a clearer view of the astonishing landscape. Half-way into the expedition, he sighted an antelope having a free life and a pleasurable moment on top of the hill. Being a trained hunter, he congratulated himself for having a lucky day. he pursued and killed the antelope but had no utensils to process the meet. He decided to return to his father expecting a favourable reconsideration of his decision on sighting his big catch, but his father was determined. He only allowed him use his utensils to process the meet but ordered that he should process it alone, eat alone and have the leftover sold at Eke market, then use the proceed to acquire his own utensils and go back to his newly discovered home and never to return again. He obeyed, went back and started a new life as a professional hunter.

One day during his hunting expedition on the hills, the sun was so hot and he needed a place to lay his head for some rest. He ran down to the valleys in search of a shade. He found a tree known as 'ngwu' tree with one of its' roots laid down like a bench. He laid on it and had a good rest. So when he was to name the community, he remembered his experience on the first day on the hill and that with ngwu tree on a sunny day and so combined the two incidents to arrive at the name Ugwu-la-ngwu, 'ugwu' stand for hill 'la' stand for and, then 'ngwu' stand for 'ngwu' tree, put together, resulted 'Ugwulangwu'. He occupied the land, got married from a neighbouring community and had children two of which were

Umokocha and Nnamoke. Both of them also got married multiplied and grew into hamlets known today as Ufuotaru - Umokocha and Mgbom-eze - Nnamoke. The aforementioned are the occupants of the present day Ugwulangwu. The major occupations of the Ugwulangwu people are farming and palm wine taping (Iyoku 2012).

Meaning in Music

Music has long been a subject of philosophical interest among scholars, its concept usually begins with the idea that it is organized sound. But the fact remains that not all organized sound can be referred to as music, e.g. human speech and sounds emanating from animals and machines. Therefore, its meaning goes beyond mere organized sound. In attempt to fine tune this idea, philosophers came up with two necessary conditions; one of aesthetic properties or experience and appeal to tonality or essentially musical features such as pitch and rhythm (Kania 2011). One of the supporters of the former was Levinson (1990). He defined music as "sounds temporarily organized by a person for the purpose of enriching or intensifying experience through active engagement (e.g., listening, dancing, performing) with the sounds regarded primarily, or in significant measure, as sounds" (p. 273). The latter was supported by kania (2011). He opined that "music is any event intentionally produced or organized to be heard and to have some basic musical features, such as pitch or rhythm, or to be listened to for such features" (p. 12). Each of the above conditions or the combination of both is philosophically acceptable. The former condition or school of thought accepted John Cage's 4'33" as music but the latter does not because it was mere unanticipated indefinite sounds lacking such musical features as pitch and rhythm.

So far, we have dwelt on philosophical conception and general point of view of the term 'music'. What then is music in African point of view? Music is life. In African society, 'no music, no life' because music is an essential part of every facet of our daily activities/life. In support of this

idea, Vidal (2000) stated that, music is “one of the indispensable arts cultivated by man for the growth, nurture and transfer of his institutions and values to future generations”. He also added that it is “a play with sound, a paragon of the experiences and activities of man; a reflection of these experiences and activities as well as a model for both”. Warren (1970) did not make mistake when he said that “for the African man, music is not a luxury, but a part of the process of living itself” (p. 30). From conception, a mother in African society has a song for her baby in the womb. There are other songs and dances for celebrating the birth of the child, different kinds of songs and dances for different level of the child’s growth ranging from teeth growing to puberty/adolescent through adulthood, marriage and death. Institutional norms and values are inculcated to the younger ones through music. Her historical events, political and educational activities cannot be carried out without music. Warren (1970) summarized it all when he stated that “music follows the African through his entire day from early in the morning till late at night, and through all the changes of his life, from the time he came into this world until after he has left it” (p. 3).

Igbo Traditional Music

Music in Igbo land is one of the means of creative display of cultural heritage, and a tool for its preservation and transmission from one generation to the other. It has flourished in spite of grave danger of loss in view of the assault of foreign culture and sophistication of modern trends. From the above discourse, three major points come to mind and they include; creative display of cultural heritage, its preservation and transmission. It is obvious that all cultural activities in Igbo land have specific accompanying music attached to it which actually adds value to the events. This is in line with Vidal’s (2000) view when he opined that “in music there is culture and in culture there is music”. Oguoma (2012) in support of this view stated that human event in Igbo land is punctuated with a musical type. Before the advent of colonialism and literature, the Igbos has their cultural values

and norms preserved through music. Prior to the introduction of western education in Igbo-land by the colonial masters, the Igbos transmitted their cultural values and norms through folk songs and story-telling. This idea confirms Omojola’s (2002) opinion that “music is a viable means of educating and sensitizing the citizenry towards becoming a normal and useful member of the society”.

The music of the Igbos is strongly tied to extra-musical events, providing a means of expressing group solidarity and regarded as an integral part of social events. It constitutes a philosophy of life (Oguoma 2012). “It is an essential part of every facet of the daily life of the Igbo child” (Oguoma 2012). Traditional music (*Egwu odinala*) in Igbo land is the very music type that accompanies the Igbos in their day-to-day activities and from the time they were born till they join their ancestors. Its functional role in Igbo culture sustained it against the assault of colonialism. Its types fall within the three identified classes of music in an African society by Agu (2000) which include: Recreational Music, Occasional Music and Incidental Music.

Recreational Music: This, as its name suggests, includes all kinds of music found in the society that are used to accompany recreational activities, such as moonlight dance (*egwu onwa*), adolescent games and plays (*egwuregwu umu agbogho na umu okorobia*) with the accompanying hand clapping and stamping of the feet, wrestling competition (*mgba*), age-grade activities (*mmemme ndi ogbo*), etc. Music used for relaxation after a whole day’s work, as well, falls within this class.

Occasional Music: This refers to all kinds of music that accompanies the people’s occasions, such as ritual worship, initiation, puberty rite, chieftaincy or title taking, festival, celebration of life, funeral and ceremony like naming, birthday, marriage etc. Akpabot (1986) on this view opined that “one of the chief characteristics of African traditional music is its association with social and ritual ceremonies” (p. 1).

Incidental Music: This includes all music used for “the purpose of inducing, motivating and promoting physical

responses to work: farming, paddling the canoe, hunting and enterprises, including war” (Oguoma 2012). It also includes different kinds of music inevitably practically employed to energize one in the process of the above listed activities, which are highly imperative in facilitating effective and successful society.

Music in Igbo land – as stated earlier – constitutes a philosophy of life. Her dos and don'ts, cultural heritage, norms and general way of life are all incorporated into her music and as well preserved and transmitted from one generation to the other via the same medium. According to Omojola,(2002) “musical occasions provide a means of expressing group solidarity and transmitting traditional norms and beliefs from one generation to another”. It is also a vital tool in traditional information dissemination.

Igbo Art Music

Art music according to Euba qtd in Oikelome (2001) “is the music written by Nigerians for presentation in the concert hall following the same pattern similar to western music, from which the concert was derived” (p. 6). Art music in Igbo-land emerged as a result of composer's response to classical music alongside Christianity imposed on them by the colonists. “Traditional Igbo music was tagged pagan practices and so was not allowed to filter into Christian worship”. So “famous European Protestant hymn tunes became household melodies in Christian homes in Igbo land, except that they were sung to words in the vernacular” (Ekwueme 2004). The Igbo language itself like other African languages is tonal, such that the inadequacies of the European tunes in conveying the meanings of the words sung were soon made manifest. Take for instance this example as given by Ekwueme (2004) from the di-syllabic morpheme /a-kwa/. Four distinct and different words may be derived, depending on the intonation of the syllables.

/ákwá/ (high-high tones), sorrow, tears, crying, weeping;

/ákwà/ (high-low tones), cloth, clothes, dress; /ákwà/ (low-low tones), bed, bridge;

/àkwá/ (low-high tones), egg. Thus, a word (or group of words) must be properly intoned musically for the true meaning to be conveyed and understood. Igbo traditional tunes naturally follow the tonal inflexion of the language. When standard European hymn tunes are used to sing Igbo translations of the poems with which they are associated, unexpected tonal inflexions often occur in these hymns, giving rise to unintended meanings, especially as several different stanzas are sung to the same tune (p. 211-212).

The above stated problem led the already trained musicologist into making an attempt to compose original tunes to local lyrics following the tonal inflation of the language. The idea was accepted and was soon spread over the churches because by then the reformation in the Christian Church was geared toward making of worship more relevant to the masses of professed Christians. Art music in Igbo-land started and flourished in church and later spread to secular and traditional art as a result of its appreciation by the elites.

Igbo Instrumental music

Instrumental music in Igbo-land is attached to ceremonies festive occasions and social gatherings. To that effect, certain requirements became necessary to be able to play any of the instruments. One of which is initiation to the cult group in which the instrument in question is associated with. Their ritual ceremonies are to them a serious business so playing of instrument in such ceremonies requires full concentration and dedication knowing full well the consequences of making mistakes during such ceremonies and the resultant effect.



Ikpá-mgbóm Ensemble in Ugwulangwu Community.

In Ugwulangwu autonomous community, there is special instrumental music for burial of aged women though played by men and there is another instrumental ensemble for burial of titled men and aged traditionalists. It is known as ‘Owọ’. The ensemble performs three times during the burial ceremony. first time at the beginning of the ceremony in which all the titled men present are welcomed and those initiated into the ‘Owọ’ cult. Second time; when the corpse is being committed to the earth. The third performance takes place after the burial. While everybody is taking their leave, those that has sacrificed goat to the cult identify by dancing to the music. Participation at this time is restricted to those that has made goat sacrifice to the cult group.

Igbo instrumental music is highly functional and entertainment oriented and sometime contemplative depending on the type of ensemble and performance context/environment.

Igbo instrumental music – like that of other African societies – is highly repetitive and rhythmic. Specific rhythms are assigned to larger number of instruments in an ensemble, then melody to a few others which in many occasions, ranges from one to two instruments. The western idea of arranging orchestra according to instrumental families and interchanging melody and accompaniment from one family to the other does not exist to the best of my knowledge in Igbo instrumental music. Though Igbo musical instruments are classified into families, it is almost impossible to see an ensemble where all the families are represented. To buttress the above idea, Akpabot (1986) puts it this way:

One way to start looking at African instrumental music is perhaps to consider Einstein’s

evaluation of twentieth century music in which he described an orchestral work --- in a different way little else (than) shifting the melody from voice to voice – a sort instrumental monody with rhythmic accompaniment. This definition of strict twelve-tone style compositions takes in many of the qualities of traditional African instrumental music which is linear, repetitious and very rhythmic with a rather sparse use of two or three parts harmonies. (p. 9).

Musical Instruments

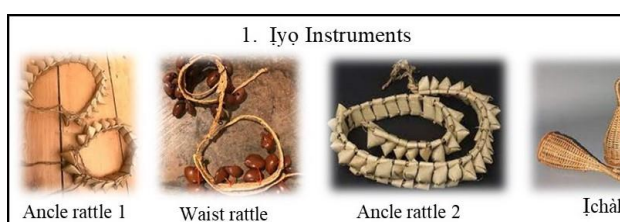
In Igbo traditional society, musical instruments appear in varieties and in diver’s form. It ranges from the ones made of wood only to the ones made of wood and animal skin. Others are made of animal horns, metals, bamboo tree, Banana trunk etc. They produce sound by striking, shaking, plucking and blowing and are classified according to their method of sound production and as well function in the society where they are found. Lo-Bamijoko (1987) on Igbo musical instrument classification stated as follows:

In Nigeria, and specifically among the Igbo speaking people, the classification of musical instruments takes two factors into consideration. The first focuses on the instrument *per se*, the second on the society in which the instrument is used. The first factor, in other words, deals with classification of the instruments based upon how they are played, and the second with the various functions of the instruments in the indigenous context (p. 19).

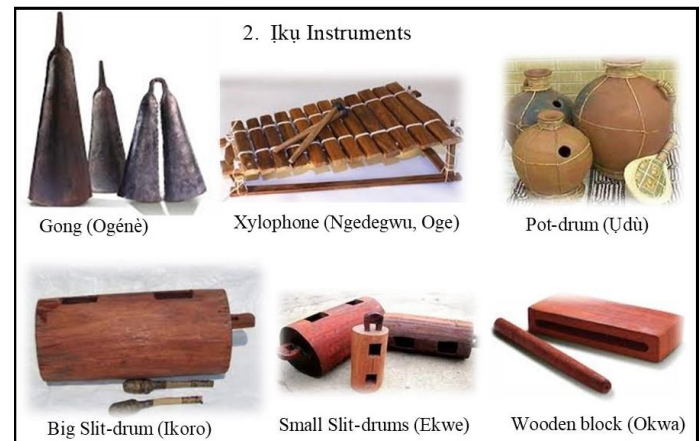
On method of sound production, he identified five classes. (1) ‘Iyo’ which means to shake. Instruments under this class include: ‘Ichaka’, (also known as ‘Oha’ in Ugwulangwu community) and other kinds of rattles that are usually tied on

the waist and ankles while dancing. (2) *'Iku'* This means to strike a hard surface with a beater or any other object as may be recommended by the instrument maker. Instruments under this class include: *'Ikoro'* or *'ekwe'* (wooden drum) which are of various sizes, (the *'Ikoro'* is called *'ukoro'* in Ugwulangwu community) *'Okwa'* (wooden block), *'Ogene'* (Gong) which are also of various sizes and sometimes in group of twos, threes etc as the instrument maker wishes. *'Ngedegwu'* (xylophone), *'Oge'* – as is better called in Ugwulangwu community – also appears in various sizes in Igbo-land depending on the number of slabs used by the instrument maker. (3) *'Iti'* this is the act of striking a membrane with hand, beater or any other object as may be recommended by the instrument maker. Instruments under this class include: *'Igba'* all kinds of membrane drums as found in Igbo society. (4) *'Ikpo'*, this means to play, pluck or bow. The instruments under this class include all string instruments found in Igbo-land namely: *'Ubo'* (Zithers), *'Une'* (musical bow), *'Ubo-Akwara'* (Lutes), and *'Ubo-aka'* (Thumb piano). (5) *'Ifu'* this means to blow. Instruments under this class are: *'Odu'* (Horn trumpet) *'Opi'* (Horn) *'Oja'* (Flute). Many of these Igbo musical instruments are constructed in High-medium-low pitch following the speech tone of Igbo language and as well that of the entire Africa. See pictural illustrations below.

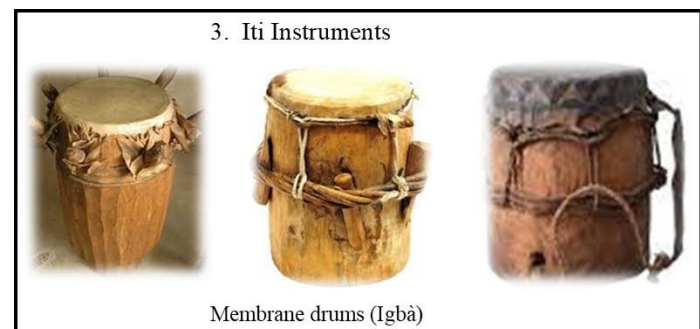
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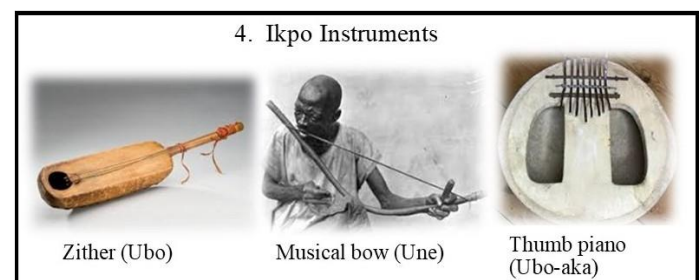
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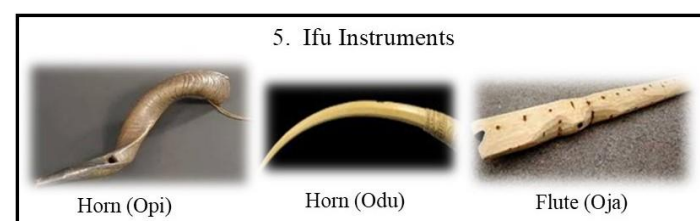
P3



P4



P5



Source images in P1 – 5; Google images Ensembles Structure in Igbo-land

Ensemble structure in Igbo land – like that of other African societies – has some common techniques with 20th century orchestration. Twentieth century composers – like the Igbos – did



Oge-Amaenu Ensemble group

not see the orchestra as a component of four families of musical instruments; rather they see each instrument based on its sonority and capability. The same idea is applied in their function and usage in the orchestra (ensemble). The twentieth century repetitive styles and ostinato are common features of Igbo instrumental music. These were obvious in the words of Akpabot (1986) when he said that:

Composers like the Hungarian Bartok, the German Schoenberg and the Russian Stravinsky in some of their works did not see the orchestra as being made up of separate divisions of string, woodwind and brass instruments as in the classical pattern of European music; but rather they view each instrument on the basis of its individual sonority and capability. This is analogous to African instrumental music where the sonority and capability of each instrument helps in some way to determine how it may be used in an ensemble. (p. 2)

Igbo instrumental music is structured in such a manner that the short/brisk rhythms assigned to majority of the instruments in the ensemble are sustained all through a variation. Any change introduced, brings about a complete change of pattern which gives rise to a new variation.

Conclusion

The paper established the descendant origin of the Igbos to a Hebrew man by name Igbo-ukwu. Historically traced the origin and development of some major cities in Igbo-land. Two necessary conditions for a definition of music to be philosophically acceptable were established. One of aesthetic properties or experience and appeal to tonality or essentially musical features such as pitch and rhythm. Each of the above conditions or the combination of both is established to be philosophically acceptable.

The paper identified some musical genres practiced in Igbo society to include traditional music (*Egwu odinala*) and Art music (*Egwu oso nto-ala ndi oyibo*). The instrumentation and ensemble structure in Igbo society were discussed and its similarities to 20th century orchestration and compositional techniques identified. Five classes of musical instruments were established based on their methods of playin

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