

MUSICAL PRACTICES AMONGST THE PEOPLE OF EDEM-ANI OGWUGWU COMMUNITY IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA IN ENUGU STATE: A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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Introduction

Musical practices in African society is said to be an inherent phenomenon in every African individual. Music is one of the core values in our society starting from the old. Edem community is not left out from the history. Edem is one of the communities in Nsukka local government area in Enugu state. It is an igbo community with a population of about 309,633 based on the national population census in 2006 (national population census conducted in 2006). Edem is divided into 4 zones/ communities which include, “Akpa-edem”, “Ozi-edem” Amenu-Edem and “Edem-Ani Ogwugwu. In each of these communities there are many villages and groups of kindred’s that make up these zones. For instance, Edem-Ani Ogwugwu is categorized or subdivided into communities which include, Umuchagwo, Umuchoke, Ogbodo-umuchagwo, Uwani-umuchoke, Ozara, Amaesumesu, Isu/Odojo, Nkofi, Owere-ugwu, Owere-agbo and Ubogidi. “Ozi-edem” is made up of Umuoko, Ukpara, Amankpume, Amaukpa, Amaukwa, Ikwe Ezike Amabunegu, Umueyi, Amauwena, Umuoji, and Obineguh. Amenu-Edem also known as Ugwunagbo-edem is made up of, Amenu, Amogu, Isu, and Odojo, finally “Akpa-edem” is made up of Owa-edem, Uwenu-obeke, Uwani-obeke, Dimunazu, Amankwa, Igoro-ugwu, Igoro-agbo, Amadimago, Isamani, Ama-oba, Okiti, Amadimba and Nkawushi. Ezema, (2018) and Nnanyelugo, (2024:23).

Edem like other communities in Nsukka local government area in Enugu State has some biological origins which suggests the names of the different villages stated above. Some of these names explain where and who founded and gave birth to the various villages they represent as well as the different musical cultural practices they perform. This study aimed at establishing the musical practises of Edem-Ani Ogwuwgu community and its components and makeup.

Musical Background of Edem Community

Edem community evidently are musically oriented and enjoys music like every other community. Music making in Edem varies in context amongst other communities and villages, for a typical Edem person, music is a responsibility that is looked out for and forward to attaining. The sonic materials and the language of creativity observed in the music of the Edem people distinguishes them from the other communities found in Nsukka local government area in Enugu state.

To be précised, Edem is one of the communities that make up Nsukka. Nsukka is a town with three communities namely Nkpunano, Nru and Ihe n’ower with also sub communities under them which includes, Nguru, Isiakpu, Echera and Umakashi. or Nkpunano, Iheagu, and Umoyo in Nru, Owere and Ihe also known as Ihe N’owere. (See www.nsukkapeda.com/con). There are other communities which surround Nsukka community which are also regarded as been part of Nsukka due to some cultural resemblances and attributes. These communities due to the interchanged and intertwined cultural heritage and values which is traced to have some bearing and origin from the descendants of the indigenous forefathers from Nsukka community, gave room to the zoning found in Nsukka presently. These as a result, led to the formation of the seven zones that make up Nsukka community and as well are the current local government areas in Nsukka community. These include, Igbo-Etiti LGA, Igbo-Eze North LGA, Igbo-Eze South LGA, Isi-Uzo LGA, Nsukka LGA. Udeni LGA, and Uzo-Uwni LGA. (Afigbo; 1997, Agu; 2009 and Success; 2014).

Evidently, Nsukka communities and the surrounding communities because of the resemblances as pointed earlier-on, practise and perform Ikorodo, Akunechenyi, Atiliogwu, and Adaba but with some slight differences depending on the philosophy behind the formation and according to the various communities. Whereas there are other indigenous musical practices which are peculiar to each community and are not found in every other community. For example, in Edem-ani Ogwugwu, one of the communities in Edem that is situated in the northern part of Edem in Nsukka Local Government Area in Enugu State, has a population of about 103,211 residents. This according to the national population census in 2006, from the general population ratio of the whole Edem community with 309,633 general population, (national population census conducted in 2006). These are known for some musical groups/ensembles such as Abangana, Egwu-Okpukpu, Egwu-Esato,

Agbamgbada, Ojorima Arichard, Igambu, Okanga, Ule, Ubo and the rest of them. Currently Ule, Ubo, Arichad, Igambu and Okanga are no longer in existence. Also, these musical ensemble/groups are not performed by all the villages in Eden-ani but are attributed to some villages in Edem-ani, like the Abamgbada which is peculiar to Amenu village, and Ojorima in Umuchioke village. This is also the case in every other community found both within and outside Nsukka community.

A General View of the Musical Practices of the People Edem Community and the Philosophy Guiding the Formations

There is a general philosophy guiding the making and composition of music in Edem. The philosophy of human existence and cohabitation which is one thing that guides the way and manner which one relates to his or her fellow humans especially the indigenous people of the community. This singular philosophy of life helps in shaping the activities in the community. It also helps in the communal, ceremonial, and musical lives of the individuals in the community. According to Esimone & Umezina (2013) and Esimone, (2015), music helps to organise the growth and positive development of the individual in the community. This notion supports the views and believe of this community as regards musical practices and formation.

Musical Group Formation in Edem

Music generally in Edem is formed with a particular intention. There are various intentions and ideas which gear the forming of musical ensembles in a Edem community. Some of which include joyful ceremonies like child birth, puberty, coronation, title taking, marriage ceremonies/rites, naming ceremonies, religious celebrations, harvest ceremonies and festivals. Nevertheless, situations like hardship, hard times, such as burials, war, banishment, and purification ritual also leads to the formation of music and musical groups in this community. The forming of any musical group/ensemble in Edem varies from age groups and depends on the intention of its formation as mention earlier. There are some musical groups meant for young men in the community, some for elderly men, some for married women, some for daughters of the community and some for children, young girls, and some for titled men and titled women like the Ozors and Lolos in the community.

Composition Techniques

The compositional techniques in the music creation in Edem, remains a thing of individualisation of the group/ensemble owing to the fact that each of them has one aim or two for forming them. Therefore have its stipulated way or method and technique of composing their musical repertoire which they use at any given time based on the occasions they feature in. Buttressing this, (Onwuekwe, 2013) suggests that it is a creative and artistic way and method of writing or making music that suits the performance presentational form. In this case, the method of producing music with particular reference to the form, and its formative structure informs its techniques.

With regards to this, the musical composition techniques in some of the musical ensembles in Edem is geared through experiences and events which make them generate a suiting song or tune to accompany the situation depending on the reason for the group's formation. It is believed that the creativity in most of their music making is mostly inspirational.

Costumes

The use of costumes by these musical groups in Edem depend on;

1. The group's interest and aesthetic power of the individuals in the group.
2. The concept of the doctrine behind the formation of the musical group.
3. The message of the musical group aimed at propagating.
4. The symbolism of the name of the musical ensemble/group.
5. The spiritual make up and representations of the musical group/ensemble

Recruitment / Training of New Members

Training and recruiting new members into the various musical ensembles in Edem, depends in the agreement of the musical group. Therefore, each musical group has its own unique way of accepting and training new member. There are instances whereby some items are required for one to present to the group before one is allowed into the group, and also there is a certain age one is supposed to attain or gender before being allowed into the group which varies amongst groups. Such item of acceptance includes, Kolanuts, Aligator pepper, carton (s) of beer drinks, minerals, packets of biscuits, bottle (s) of hot drinks some token/small amount of money for registration etc.

Performance and Performance Styles

Performance which is the specific contingencies of a particular piece of musical work that takes into considerations the intention and interest of the spectators and the audience as the case may be. Helps to actually

give in the best a composer or performer can give as well as factor the mental and emotional feelings of the targeted audience. Buttressing this, (Agu, 1999 in Onwuekwe; 2013 and Agu; 2021) have it that,

A composer sets out to compose a new song, he involves himself in two mental exercises which are based on two main lines of interdependent thought. One is creative, which is aroused by fantasy, imagination and inspiration. The second is method which is shaped and determined by the musical system of the society. Methodological thought is influenced by folk musical thought and rules. Therefore, it somehow appears to have some control over inspiration and fantasy...(p34)

Performances of these groups in Edem could also be attributed to the above performance skills whereby musical renditions are presented and performed depending on the occasion of the events. Following the lay down rules and regulations guiding the society and the community which the group represents in most cases, these rules and policy guiding each musical group are passed down from generation to generation (Ajaero, Umezina, & Nwamara, 2019). According to Blacking, (1976: 29) in Okpala, (2015), “the musical performances provide physical and spiritual well-being through mental, emotional and physical involvements in the performance activities” (19). The performance styles seen in the musical ensembles of Edem-Ani Ogwugwu include; vocal without instrumental accompaniment, dancing with vocal and instrumental accompaniment, instrumental and dancing, only instrumentation, and vocal with clapping and dancing.

Musical Instruments Used

Musical instruments used in this community vary in size and in relevance. Some groups make use of metal gongs, drums of various sizes, shakers, clapperless bells, bells, flutes, pot drums, clappers, slit drums and horns of various sizes. Some ensembles make use of 10-15 instruments, while others make use of fewer instrument, and some just one particular instrument like clappers or shakers as it is common with women ensembles/groups.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Music practices in Edem like every community is also patterned based on the cultural values of the community. It is this culture that the aim and philosophy of forming and practicing music in this community represent. Every music in a community factors the identity of the community it is representing. This is why there are music that are attributed to every community that cannot be found in another community. In the case of Edem community, musical practices such as Abangana, Egwu-Okpukpu, Egwu-Esato, Agbamgbada, Ojorima Arichard, Igambu, Okanga, Ule, Ubo and the rest of them are attributed to them regardless of the fact that some of these musical practices are going into extinction such like Ule, Ubo, Arichad, Igambu and Okanga and are no longer in existence.

This is also the case in most of our African communities in the recent times and state why it is very necessary to trace these musical practices of the various communities in our society to re-enkindle it and re-instate them for the purpose of preservation and cultural education. Therefore this paper recommends that, more focus should be given to some of these indigenous materials especially musical background and originality, bringing them to limelight for the purpose of knowledge, African music education and references especially for ethno-musicological studies. Like the saying “knowledge is power”

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