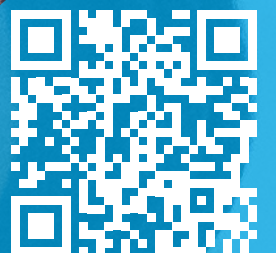


A portrait of Dr. Okey Ndibe, a middle-aged Black man with short hair, smiling and wearing a black polo shirt. He is standing in front of a light-colored wall with a window or door frame visible in the background.

**DR. OKEY  
NDIBE**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
ISA CONFERENCE  
MILWAUKEE 2015**

*Okey Ndibe is the author of the novels **Foreign Gods, Inc.** and **Arrows of Rain**, and co-editor (with Zimbabwean writer Chenjerai Hove) of **Writers Writing on Conflicts and Wars in Africa**. Janet Maslin of the **New York Times** as well as **Philadelphia Inquirer**, **Cleveland Plain Dealer**, and **Mosaic** magazine named **Foreign Gods, Inc.** one of the 10 best books of 2014. The novel was also included in National Public Radio's list of best books of 2014.*



# WELCOME TO MILWAUKEE 2015



MILWAUKEE SKYLINE

PHOTO BY: LAYOVERGUIDE.COM

## 2015 ISA CONFERENCE HOLDING AT MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, USA



**Chima J. Korie, PhD**

*President, Igbo Studies Association*

Dear ISA Members and Conference participants:

Greetings and welcome to the New Year. We are getting closer to the 2015 ISA conference holding at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. I would like to bring you some important information and updates.

1. **CONFERENCE INFORMATION:** You can find updated information including abstracts and names of conference participants on the ISA website: <http://igbostudiesassociation.org/index.php/15-2015/28-call-for-paper-wisconsin-2015>.
2. **ACCOMMODATION:** The Ambassador Inn at Marquette will be the conference hotel, at an available event rate of \$89 per night for selected rooms (single or double occupancy). Available booking dates are the nights of April 8-12. You can book by calling the Hotel +1 (414) 342-0000 or online at <https://bookings.ihotelier.com/Ambassador-Inn-atMarquette/bookings.jsp?groupID=1336667&hotelID=74203>. To get the special conference rate, please mention the following code when you are making your reservation (MU-IGBO Studies). The hotel is located at 2501 W Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53233.
3. **COMPLETED CONFERENCE PAPER:** Note that it is extremely important that you submit a fully completed conference paper following the guidelines/style recommended by Dr Raph Njoku. Inclusion in the final conference program is contingent on the submission of the full paper. We would appreciate the submission of papers that have been fully written and edited, between 22-25 pages in length and includes full bibliographical references and citations. Selected papers will be included in the Igbo Studies Review or in an edited collection. Send your paper directly to the conference chair.
4. **AIR TRANSPORTATION:** (a) Air: Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport (MKE) is serviced by major US airlines. You may book your flight so that you arrive in Milwaukee. (b) You may fly into Chicago airports but remember that Milwaukee is an hour and half from Chicago airport and it will cost about \$50 extra. This is not the recommended option unless you get a cheaper flight to Chicago.
5. **GROUND TRANSPORTATION:** There is an airport shuttle from the airport to the hotel. The company is called Go Riteway airport shuttle service. The fare is \$14 per each way. You may book in advance of when you arrive at the airport. The website for the airport shuttle is <http://goairportshuttle.com/city/mke1>. Taxi will cost you about \$30.00. Please see your complete transportation options on the conference website.
6. **KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** We are happy to announce that Prof. Okey Ndibe will be this year's keynote speaker. Ndibe earned MFA and PhD degrees from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and has taught at Brown University in Providence, RI, Trinity College in Hartford, CT (where the student newspaper named him one of 15 professors students should take classes with before graduating), Simon's Rock College in Great Barrington, MA (where he won a new faculty teaching award), Connecticut College in New London, CT (where the student newspaper included him on a list of "five outstanding professors"), and the University of Lagos (as a Fulbright scholar). Okey Ndibe is the author of the novels *Foreign Gods, Inc.* and *Arrows of Rain*, and co-editor (with Zimbabwean writer Chenjerai Hove) of *Writers Writing on Conflicts and Wars in Africa*. Janet Maslin of the New York Times as well as Philadelphia Inquirer, Cleveland Plain Dealer, and Mosaic magazine named *Foreign Gods, Inc.* one of the 10 best books of 2014. The novel was also included in National Public Radio's list of best books of 2014.
7. **CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT:** We are encouraged by the number of participants who have completed their pre-registration from Nigeria. Endeavor to pay yours if you submitted an abstract and have not paid. This will help plan effectively and cut down waste as has been the case in the past.
8. **CONFERENCE BROCHURE:** You have an opportunity to advertise your business, your book(s) or send a goodwill message to the Igbo Studies Association for a small fee. Please contact me or the conference chair regarding this opportunity.
9. **VISA RELATED ISSUES:** Kindly inform me and the conference chair when you obtain your visa or if you encounter any problem in the process. Remember to take a copy of your paper to the visa interview. It is wise to take a copy of your hotel reservation to the American embassy if you are attending a visa interview. They have asked for such evidence in the past.
10. **IGBO STUDIES NEWSLETTER:** The PRO of ISA is accepting submissions for Volume 2, No. 2 of the ISA Newsletter. Please check the ISA website for submission guidelines.

Let me know if there is any way I can be of help as you plan your trip.



**In Collaboration With Her Partners Invites You To A Leadership Training Workshop For Igbo Youth Leaders As Part Of The 13th Annual Conference Of The IGBO STUDIES ASSOCIATION.**

# IGBO YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



The Institute aims to engage selected youth in several key areas of community change, including political participation, leadership, youth philanthropy, and civic engagement.

Selected participants will acquire practical experience and develop the skills to become effective leaders in their communities and as agent of change.

We invite university/college student union leaders, leaders of youth associations, groups, civic organizations or clubs etc., who may be sponsored by their organizations, to apply to participate in the workshop.

## APRIL 9-11, 2015

The final selection of participants will be based on a successful completion of an application, a screening exercise and/or interview will take place in Owerri in December 2014 for applicants from West Africa. Applicants from Asia, Australia, Europe, South America and US will undergo phone interviews.

All selected participants will be responsible for the full cost of their attendance, including travel and accommodation in the United States for the duration of the institute.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
PROFESSOR CHIMA J. KORIEH**  
[paternoster.academy@gmail.com](mailto:paternoster.academy@gmail.com)

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## RESEARCH NOTE

### IGBO STILL LACKS A SIGNIFICANT CORPUS. WELL, ARGUABLY!

**Kelechi Isiodu**

*London, United Kingdom*

One of the more fascinating things I found myself doing along the language-development front in recent times was to translate and/or interpret summary-style manifestos of the two main stream Nigerian political parties into Igbo Language. My employer and sponsor, the CDD (Centre for Democracy and Development, an NGO with offices in Lagos, London and Abuja) had searched among its contacts but could find none willing or able to undertake to deliver the project in the required time-frame (one week). The English-Igbo translation engines and algorithms on Google's translation service; these still being in nascent and constant development themselves were unsuitable and therefore direct human agency proved the way to go for them.

Many writers complain still that in early 2015 (the Igbo language has such a poor corpus of standard or standardised 'texts' in existence) when compared with other native Nigerian languages, Yoruba and Hausa are often cited as examples. It is through the work of translators and/or interpreters that such a gap will be bridged (if it so be that Igbo must 'catch-up'). Often one finds that there is a dearth of such translation work, being undertaken. The perennial reasons given are lack of funding and sponsorship for such projects. Others cite the problem of Igbo not having texts of significant enough importance to be translated into the Igbo language.

The text of the 'Ahiara declaration' or perhaps a creative work of such significance and importance as Professor Achebe's 'Things Fall Apart' qualify in my view to merit translation; the first document for the place it bears in the imaginations of many Igbo, coming out of their shared histories of the recent past; the other book is arguably Africa's greatest novel by one of her greatest novelists which won for the Igbo a place in the spot-light as no other popular creative work has done, again, arguably.

Luckily I was paid (I haven't seen the money; just that a firm offer was made). My efforts may be viewed and reviewed <http://ngmanifesto.org/sectors> on the CDD-maintained websites, where my resulting corpus lies alongside (and may be compared) with similar efforts in the Yoruba and Hausa languages.

Not that trying to execute the CDD's brief was easy. There are still so many English words and borrowings from other languages which cannot be found straight one-to-one correspondences in Igbo. One system used by past workers has been to transliterate (and to igbonise as F. C. Ogbalu might urge). It is also this method that has by and large been tacitly recommended by existing meta-language books. (See *Ọkàsụsụ* Volume 1 edited by now Professor E. Nọlue Emenanjo, I. A. O. Umeh and J. U. Ugoji for instance). That guide book was compiled as a kind of advanced dictionary around 1991, I think, and Igbonises freely.

Akụjụọobi's recommendations and advice given in his book for the formation of a standardisation committee for the Igbo language among many other things have not been followed. And nascent dictionary projects within the language community are still so poorly funded and supported.

#### Other Reading and References:

*Ọkàsụsụ* Volume 1, edited by now Professor E. Nọlue Emenanjo, I. A. O. Umeh and J. U. Ugoji; University Press Limited ©1990, ISBN 9782491136.

*Towards An Igbo Literary Standard*, by P Akụjụọobi Nwachukwu; for Kegan Paul International London, Boston and Melbourne, ©1983. International African Institute, ISBN 07103045X.

# EDITORIAL



ISA CONFERENCE, CHICAGO 2014

## NDI IGBO, EKELE!



**CHIDI N. IGWE, PhD**

Assistant Professor of French  
University of Regina, Canada  
[www.igboradio.com](http://www.igboradio.com)

PRO, Igbo Studies Association  
Editor, ISA Newsletter

**E**kele dirị unu. O buru mu onwe m nnukwute ihe obi anuri iweputere unu agba nke abuo nke akwukwo mgbasa ozi ndi Igbo Studies Association (ISA).

Mgbe m na-akwado iga Chicago n'afọ 2014, ebum n'uche nke m bu iga sonye na ntughari uche na nrurita uka, nke umu Igbo ndi guru akwukwo. Ihe m jiri ga Chicago bu igwa oha neze ihe ndi okachamara na-ekwu gbasara asusu Igbo. A gara m Chicago igwa oha neze otutu ihe nnyocha m na-eme, yana mbo di iche iche nke m na-agba iji hu nasusu Igbo anwughi anwu. Ihe ndi ahụ gunyere Igbo Radio ([www.igboradio.com](http://www.igboradio.com)), ILC ([www.igboschool.org](http://www.igboschool.org)), yana Igbo Cartoon ([www.igbocartoon.com](http://www.igbocartoon.com)).

E nweghi mgbe m jiri tuwa anya na ndi Igbo Studies Association ga-eji obi oma nabata m, ya foduzikwee ime m otu n'ime ndi na-achị ogbako a. ISA bu ogbako ndi ma ihe ofuma, ndi gutara akwukwo ofuma, ndi ihe gbasara agam n'ihu ala Igbo na-anu oku nobi. Ebe ogbako di otu a lechara m, mee m otu n'ime ha, mee m onu na-ekwuru ha okwu, mkpebi nke m bu nani iwepute obi lusie olu ike. A ga m eji obi oma jee ozi niile nke diiri m dika otu n'ime ndi na-achị ISA.

N'afọ 2014, anyi hiwere usoro ibipute akwukwo mgbasa ozi nke anyi kporo ISA Newsletter na bekee. E bum nobi ya bu inye ndi ISA otutu uzọ di iche iche ga-eme ka oha neze mata ntola, atumatu, na nnyocha ha na-eme na mahadum, yana ebe ndi ozọ di iche iche ha na-alu olu. Ekele m na-agara mmadu niile gbara mbo maka ihu n'anyi wetere unu agba nke mbu nke akwukwo mgbasa ozi a, nonwa Novemba afọ 2014.

M na-eme ka oha neze mata nebun nobi anyi bu ina-ebipute akwukwo a ugboro ato n'afọ: n'uguru, n'udu mmiri, na nokochi. I nwere ike izitere anyi edemede gi na bekee, mo bu nasusu Igbo.

Obi di m utọ ibipute unu agba nke izizi ISA Newsletter nke afọ 2015. N'agba nke mbu a, unu na-enwete udiri ozi di iche iche. Anyi wetere unu ozi maka akwukwo di iche iche ndi otu anyi bipute oheru. Unu ga-agu edemede maka atumatu, yana ihe nnyocha di iche iche ndi otu anyi na-eme nebe di iche iche. E nwere ihe E.C. Ejiogu dere maka otu ochichi Mohammadu Buhari siri megbu ndi Igbo. Jonathan Chimakonam dere maka ochichi nala Igbo. Kelechi Isiodu na-akowa mkpa o di ina-ebipute akwukwo mo bu ina-edeghari akwukwo nasusu Igbo. Victor Williamson dere maka nyocha o na-eme banyere iji Igbo na Yoruba ede ihe nama saiba.

Ugbu a, ndi Igbo, lee nu agba nke mbu nke ISA Newsletter nke afọ 2015. Guo nu ya! Kesaa nu ya! Koo nu akuko maka ya! Tulee nu, tugharia nu uche, kwuo nu ihe unu matara/ chere/ choputara gbasara edemede ndi akwukwo mgbasa ozi a na-ewetere unu!

Ya dikwara ndi Igbo mma! Ndeewo nu!

## FEATURED ARTICLE



OHANONYENDU

PHOTO FROM: WINDOWS, MICROSOFT

## IGBOISM AS A MANIFESTO: REINVENTING OCHICHI, FROM OHA N'EZE TO OHA N'ONYE NDU NDIGBO - [Part 1]



**Jonathan O. Chimakonam, PhD**  
 Department of Philosophy  
 University of Calabar, Nigeria  
 jchimakonam@unical.edu.ng

The main undoing of the Igbo at the apex ethnic level since the end of the Civil War (1968-1970) is the dearth of leaders (*ndi* or *onye ndu*). That the Igbo recognize leaders and not rulers (*ndi* or *onye ochichi*) is axiomatic. *Oha n'eze* characterizes a political philosophy of a people and their rulers. This has not been well-received by the Igbo people who are naturally averse to rulers and as such the wide gap between the *oha* and the *eze*. In this essay, we return to the drawing board to set things right by reinventing *ochichi* as *ndu* in the context of Igboism. We recommend the transformation from the political philosophy of *oha n'eze* to that of *oha n'onye ndu ndi Igbo* i.e. from the dictatorial kings and power mongers to the conscientious leaders. This remains the last piece of the puzzle in Igbo disheveled political organization. Igboism therefore, is the spirit of ethnic nationalism that confers on every Igbo (*oha* and *onye ndu*) the sacred and solemn duty of ethnic love, interest, unity, progress and survival.

### Igboism: A Manifesto

It was one of the foremost Igbo historians, Adiele Afigbo, who declared: "Only the Igbo can build for themselves the ideology and image which will keep them afloat in the rough and turbulent sea of the contemporary world. Such

ideology and image must be made of the sterner stuff of an authentic and meaningfully interpreted past" (1981:x). I coin and conceptualize Igboism as a racial (not racism) ideology for the Igbo-speaking peoples of the world whose ancestral home is the eastern part of Nigeria but who live at every corner in the world. It outlines the basic principles of tribal and ethnic (ethnicity, not ethnicism) survival, unity, contemporary relevance and prosperity in a world replete with all forms of racial discrimination, segregation, exclusion, regular pogroms and sometimes, genocidal threats. These are various evils which the Igbo people have, and are still suffering especially in the modern history of mankind (Achebe: 2013). Igboism also encapsulates the reconstruction of Igbo identity in a time identity crisis has bedeviled much of postcolonial Africa (Masolo 1994). Who are the Igbo? What is the place of the Igbo in the current globalized world? Is the Igbo a tribe, ethnic group or a race? These are some of the questions we shall take up in this essay which is an exercise in igbocentrism and by a similar measure, an Igbo renaissance.

Igboism is an ideology of Igbo renaissance in the contemporary world. Igbocentrism on the other hand is a term I have coined to characterize ideas that form the centre-piece of Igbo renaissance. These ideas could be psychological in which they cover what ought to be the psycho-social orientations, thought patterns and behavioral motivations for the Igbo in these dire times. The ideas could also be empirical in which case they remark the new physical cultures, transformational actions, initiatives and projects that can announce the Igbo relevance to the current world civilization. In doing this, the Igbo language is an important aspect of Igbo life-world which must be revived and placed on a path of continuous growth—the speaking, writing and promotion of Igbo language must be given official and unofficial attention by all Igbo at home and in Diaspora. This also entails that even the speaking and writing of foreign languages; the

practice of foreign religions and the explication of foreign thoughts by the Igbo literati have to be adequately igbonized to reveal the shining soul of the Igbo race. We recognize the dominance of foreign languages and methodologies in the postcolonial scheme of things; we acknowledge not only the difficulty of dethroning the foreign order but, also acknowledge its now very obvious relevance in the current globalized dynamics; hence, Igboism advocates the igbonization of these foreign languages and methodologies where appropriate. This is because, and of course, in certainty that the languages and methodologies that would bear forth Igbo truth if they yet remain foreign would emerge from the ruins of the ones that bore foreign truth.

Igboism also aims at cultural renaissance. It is a call to the building of what may be called a neo-Igbo culture from the fusion of the "relevant past" and the "unavoidable modernity". Some scholars have harped on the fact that not all of the Africa's past is moribund to modern life. In this way, Janheinz Jahn talks of "the valuable past" (1961:16) while Bogumil Jewsiewicki talks of "the usable past" (1989:76). But we also recognize that not all of modernity is valuable or usable for the Igbo renaissance. For this apparent dichotomy, Igboism aims to build the neo-Igbo culture through a delicate fusion of the two cultures which has as its ultimate purpose: the realization of the Universal Igbo Dream (UID)—the elevation of the Igbo race as a major player in the formation of the emerging world history and civilization.

The concluding part of the manifesto of Igboism is that a new sense of Igbo consciousness is in the air, a consciousness to strengthen the Igbo bond of unity, to discern a course for the future, to prioritize quality education for the young, to instill the consciousness of innovation, creativity and originality in the art and humanities, in the social and management sciences, in the natural and medical sciences, and indeed, in all area of human endeavour—to nurture

future champions in a one-fell swoop of all hands on the deck remarking the age-long Igbo clarion call of "Onye aghana nwanne ya". The motto of Igboism shall therefore be: "Obere azu kpata obere nku, nnukwu azu kpata nnukwu nku". This is the consciousness of everyone striving to excel wherever he is. The future history of humankind holds a great promise in Africa for the nationalities that attain distinction. There is a crown hovering and seeking who will lead Africa out of squalor and this crown will settle on a people most prepared. At the present stage of world history and from the studies of different African peoples, it seems now quite obvious that the Igbo race represent the most intellectually advanced dark-skinned people in the world. Igboism is at once an ideology and a strategy to maximize this privilege.

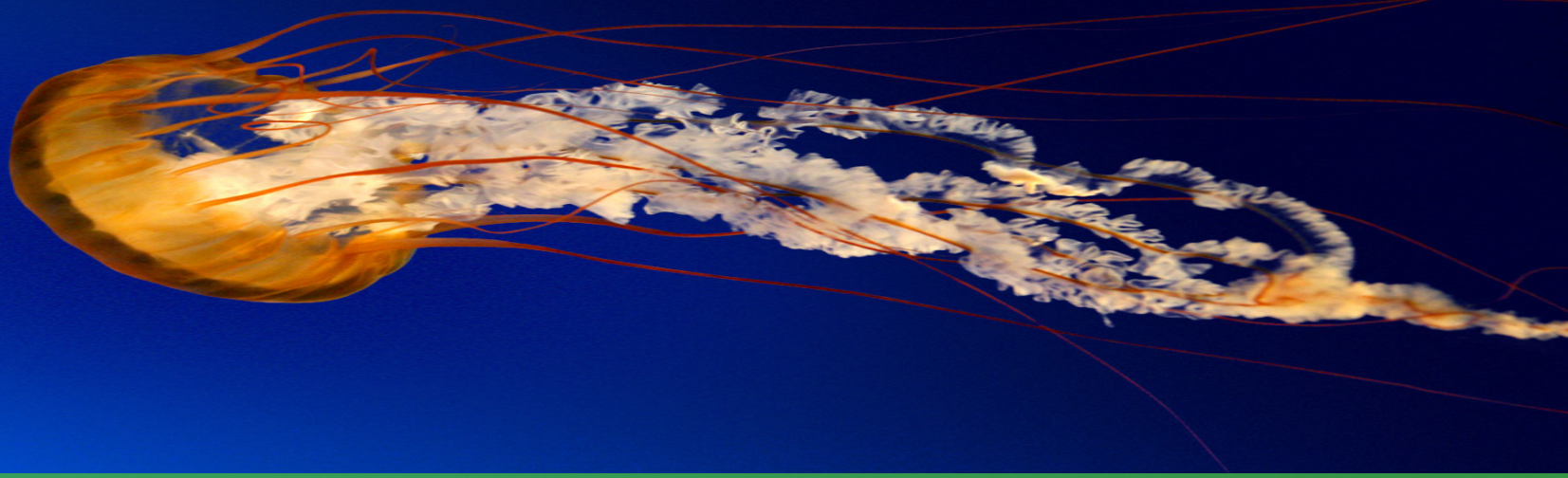
### The Igbo Race

It would be helpful to begin with some explanations on whom the Igbo are. Onunwa says the Igbo are found in South-eastern Nigeria, one of the largest ethnic groups in the West African sub-region. The Igbo provide efficiently broad-based data for an in-depth analysis. Assertiveness, a "republican" outlook, egalitarianism, willingness to travel and involvement in community development projects have led to the establishment of large Igbo communities in many parts of Africa and the New World (1994:249). C. C. Ekwealor on his part says that the Igbo are the people who occupy the Igbo culture area and have the Igbo language as their mother tongue (1990:29). However, it was Onwuejeogwu who gave a more geographic definition stating that:

*The Igbo culture area may be defined as an area enclosed by an imaginary line running outside of the settlements of Agbor, Kwalla (West Niger Igbo), Ahoada, Diobu, Umuabayi (Port Harcourt), Arochukwu, Afikpo, Isiagu (Abakaliki Area), Enugwu-Ezike (Nsukka Area), Abo (West Niger Igbo) (1980:8).*

[To be continued with list of references in Volume 2, Number 2, Summer 2015]

# FEATURED ARTICLE



JELLY FISH

PHOTO BY: WINDOWS, MICROSOFT

## SEARCHABLE YORUBA AND IGBO ONLINE DICTIONARY FOR THE WEB

**Victor Williamson**

*victorw05@aim.com*

*Candidate for PhD in Computer Science*

*UW-Milwaukee*

This paper presents original research on integrating Yoruba and Igbo language orthography, literature and dictionaries into Web pages. The primary goal is to ease the process of searching for and writing words in Yoruba and Igbo by mapping Latin characters to similar Yoruba and Igbo characters that use diacritics. Similar work is ongoing. These include African Languages Technology Initiative's (Alt-i) auto diacritic conversion tool for the Yoruba language, and GhanaThink Foundation's Kasahorow, an African languages documentation Web platform. The current work differs from existing work by providing inline suggestions of Yoruba and Igbo words directly within Web pages as users type, and by integrating Yoruba and Igbo dictionaries and Bibles already published online so that words can clearly be seen used within context via a wealth of sentence examples. As a native English speaker, these efforts are to learn how to read, write and speak Yoruba and Igbo to develop the skills necessary to further native language integration with online multimedia, particularly multimedia related to subtitling multilingual Afrocentric children's cartoons.

### 2 Design

#### 2.1 Web Application

##### 2.1.1 Front-end

The front-end of the Web site is a work in progress. Selected words will display as dictionary entries and scriptures. In short, all letters with diacritics can be easily mapped to the same letter without diacritics. For e.g. è becomes e, ì becomes i, becomes s, becomes n and so forth. If the user searches for ebun emi mimo, this will map to è b̀n È mí Mímó and display Acts 2:38 in Yoruba, Igbo and English as follows:

Peteru dá ẁn lóh̀n pé, “È ronupiwada, kí á e ìrìb̀mi f̀n ẹ̀nikò ò kan ỳn ní orúkọ Kristi. A óo sì d̀ari è è ỳn j̀i ỳn, ẹ̀ óo ẁa gba è b̀n È mí Mímó .

Pita we si ha, Chègharianu, ka eme kwa unu nile baptism nòtù nòtù n'aha Jisus Kraist, ka ewe b aghara nmehie nile unu; unu g̀anata kwa onyinye a, bú M̀Ọ Nso.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

As another example, if the user searches for yun and selects ỳn he will see dictionary entries from L.O. Adéwólé's Yoruba monosyllabic dictionary as follows:

ỳn  
1 go  
Ó ỳn ibe le e me ta  
He went there thrice

2 pregnant  
Obinrin yi ti ỳn  
This woman is pregnant

3 scratch  
Ó ỳn ibi ti e fon ti je e le se  
He scratched the mosquito bite on his leg

4 rub  
Ó ỳn ibi ti e fon ti je e  
He rubbed the mosquito bite

5 itch  
Gbogbo ale ni eti re fi n ỳn un  
His ear itched all night

As an Igbo example, let's say a user searches ko oko, the most relevant entry is from Kay Williamson's Onicha Igbo, -kọ ọkọ, and will display as follows:

-kọ ọkọ  
1 itch

2 irritate  
Anyà nà-àkọ m ọkọ  
My eye itches

##### 2.1.2 Database

The tables are indexed to handle scripture lookup by book, chapter and verse. All dictionary words and entries are searchable to handle dictionaries that support translation from one language, but not vice versa. These are then mapped to sentence examples, which may also be searched directly themselves. It is important to note that information in any of the three languages of Yoruba, Igbo and English can be searched to accommodate students coming from every possible angle of study, whether reading, writing, speaking or listening.

### 3 Challenges

#### 3.1 Full Text Indexing

MySQL provides the ability to innately index large amounts of transcript. By default, words must be at least 4 characters long, and this setting cannot be changed on a hosted platform, but it can be circumvented by adding an underscore ( \_ ) to fill out words to 4 characters after diacritics have been removed. Word suggestions are provided by taking text typed by a user and using MySQL's match on rows with scriptures, sentences and dictionary entries. The matched rows also contain fields to hold the fully annotated Yoruba and Igbo text with diacritics, which are then displayed to the user as suggestions.

#### 3.2 Parsing Content

The most difficult part of this effort is parsing online content. It is a multi-step process. For bible.com, we use a JavaScript script to take advantage of the fact that chapters are individually accessible and available within selectable portions of the HTML DOM. We then used a standalone program in Java to parse the text into individual scriptures, where we must handle inconsistencies between versions. These are then exported to CSV files and uploaded to the database. To date, all 31,101 verses of the KJV, Bibeli Mimo and Bible Nso are fully loaded into the database, while many verses yet remain unaccounted for in the NIV, Ekiti and Yoruba translated NIV versions of the Bible. Roger Blench's Onicha

Igbo revision was the most difficult dictionary to parse and even after many sophisticated transformations to handle diacritics still required manually editing hundreds of entries to parse correctly.

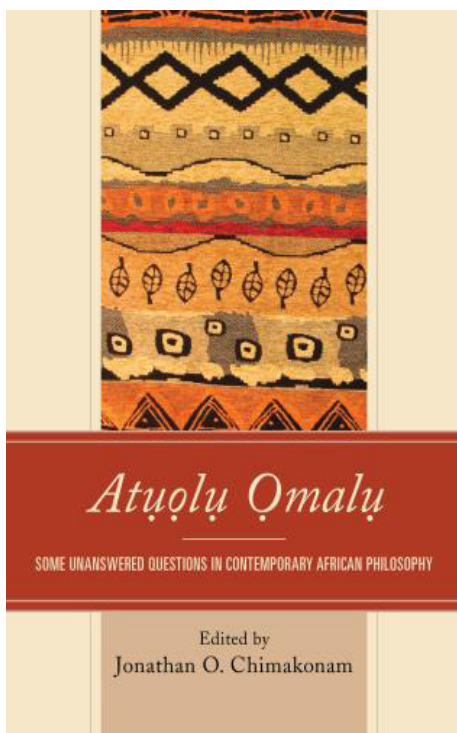
### 4 Conclusion

In this paper we have presented original research into a searchable online dictionary for the Yoruba and Igbo languages of West Africa. Our primary contribution is to have created a full text indexed database of Yoruba and Igbo scriptures and dictionary entries that can be searched using regular English and Latin characters, so that word suggestions from the Yoruba and Igbo languages can be provided. The goal is to build literacy in native African languages to tackle the tendency to incorporate excessive English vernacular into native African language speech. Faster rates of literacy can be achieved by making it easier and faster to access Yoruba and Igbo words and to see their usage within context by viewing usage examples in simple sentences, scriptures, dictionaries, proverbs and literature. Please feel free to reach out to me to provide constructive input on this effort. Updates are forthcoming on our Web site at [www.agaan.com](http://www.agaan.com).

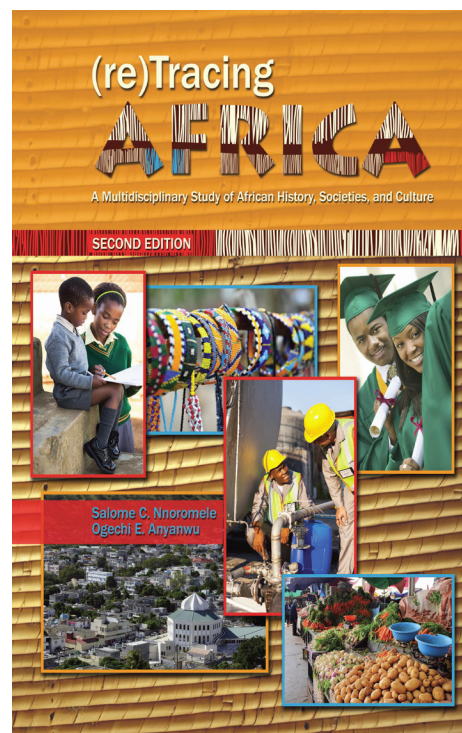
# MEMBER PUBLICATIONS



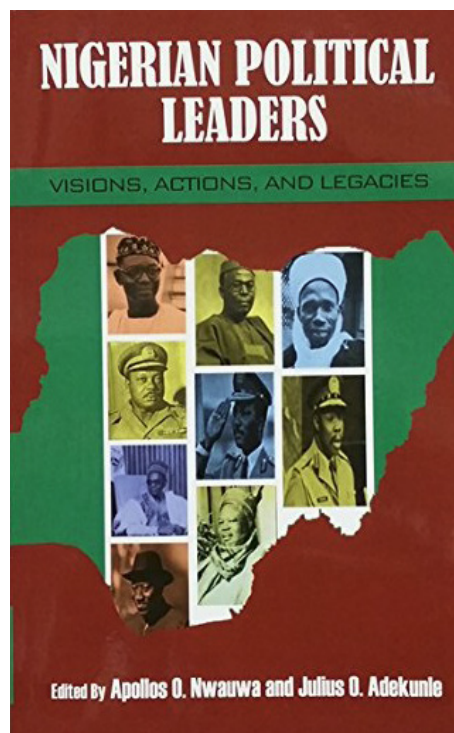
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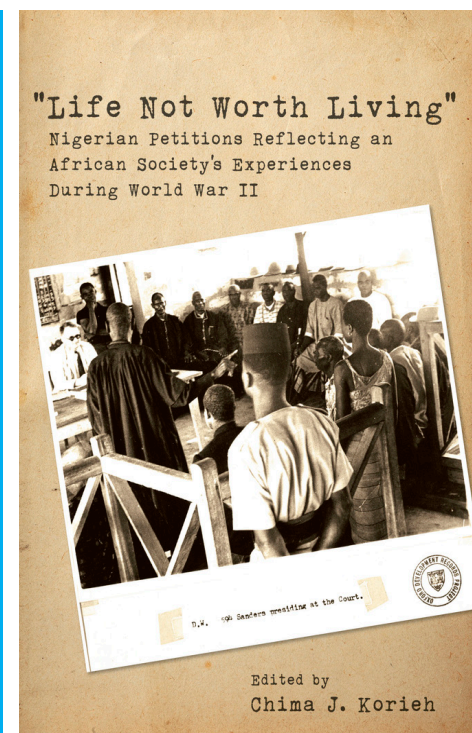
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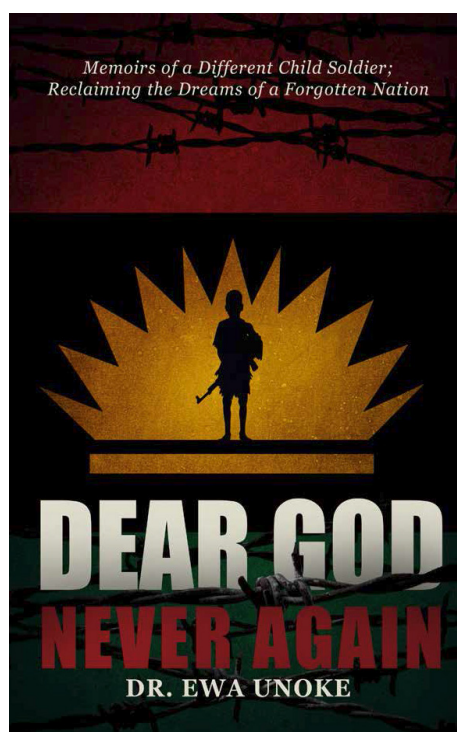
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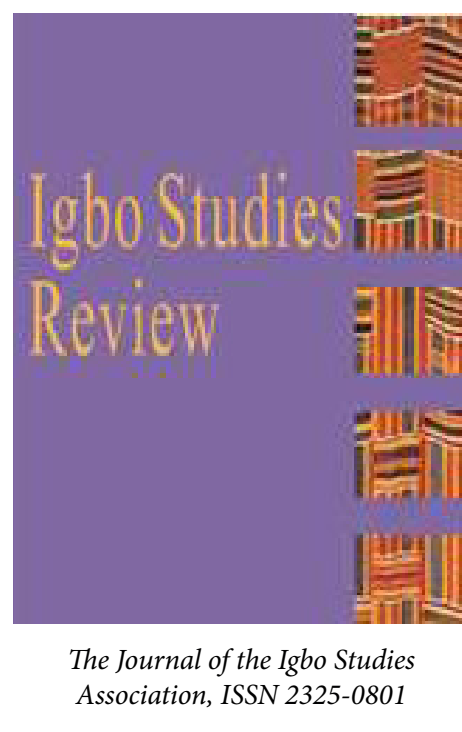
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Ewa Unoke  
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## ANNOUNCEMENT

ISA NEWSLETTER VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2, 2015 CALL

The Igbo Studies Association is seeking submissions from members for the ISA Newsletter Volume 2, Number 2, Summer 2015. You may submit the following types of item:

- Short research notes of between 500 and 1000 words.
- Academic events such as conferences and workshops that will be of interest to members.
- Vacancies.
- Recent publications such as monographs or edited collections with full publication information including a high resolution image of the cover.
- Other events that will be of interest to members.

We plan to have the second issue published by the end of August 2015. All submissions must reach Dr Chidi Igwe via the editor's coordinates by August 5, 2015.

ISA NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
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# FEATURED ARTICLE



ISA CONFERENCE, CHICAGO 2014

## NRI CULTURE, TRADITION AND HISTORY: A TALE OF AN ANCIENT IGBO AND WORLD CIVILIZATION - [Part 1]

**Prince Paschal N. Mebuge-Obaa II,**

CEO, Museum Piece International  
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UW-Milwaukee

**T**he ancient kingdom of Nri is one of the few surviving ancient civilizations of the Igbo people of Southeastern Nigeria. Nri culture and civilization is steeped in history/tradition. Nri civilization is as old as other industrialized and civilized nations of the world. Today Nri is a town in Anaocha Local Government Area of Anambra state.

Nri civilization influenced the northern and western neighbors of the Igbo in Nigeria and also in the Diaspora; The influence of Nri extends to the British colonies in the New World including Jamaica and Saint Dominique (Haiti) in the Caribbean and Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia in North America. Because of the dramatic scale of the transatlantic slave trade from Igboland (Southeastern Nigeria), with some 1.5million captives (forced migration) taken from the mid-17th to the mid 19th centuries, and includes the contemporary extensive modern migration of Igbo-Nigerians to the US and UK. Nri civilization measure creditably shoulder to shoulder with those nations that first occupied American frontier during the era of slave trade.

However, as so many things have been written and said about Nri, some have speculated that Nri civilization is an offshoot of the Semitic tribes of the Jews; others have linked Nri civilization with the Arabs, Egyptians, and Sudanese etc. However, these are speculations for there is no concrete evidence to support these claims. Many uniformed theories are mere speculations based on cultural similarities that do not have real value and meaning within Nri civilization.

Professor Michael Angulu Onwuejeogwu, Nigeria's foremost anthropologist and Vice Chancellor of Tansi University, Anambra State

until his demise on 31st March, 2008, warned in his book *Osili Factor in the Cultural History of Enugu-ukwu* about such unfounded speculations:

*The present revival of Hebrew origin of Eri which was in vogue in the beginning of the twentieth century should be handled with care and scientific rigour to avoid ridiculous conclusion. As far as this work is concern, the Eri of Aguleri terminates at A.D 884. The history of Eri beyond this period involves doing more archeological research at Aguleri and beyond wherever indications point to. This is yet to be done. We have nothing to do with conjectural history in Igbo studies (Onwuejeogwu, 2007: 20)*

To this day, the Igbo people and some self-styled scholars have not heeded to this expert advice. In this paper, the author will call on another voice corroborating Professor Onwuejeogwu on the history of the Igbo people of Nigeria. Chief Douglas B. Chambers made an assertion in April 8 - 9, 2011 at Howard University, Washington D.C., USA at the 9th International Conference on Igbo Studies, organized by Igbo Studies Association (ISA) USA, themed: "Nkeiruka: Shaping the Future of Igbo Nation". In the introductory part of his paper, Professor Chambers cited a quotation from major prophet Isaiah of the Old Testament who prophesied on the state of Israel and what will become of them in times to come.

*And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*

*And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.*

*The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly (Isaiah: 32:2-4, KJV)*

Professor Chambers went even further to say that:

*The Old Testament Prophet Isaiah, who died ca. 698 BCE, prophesied the*

*enslavement of the ancient Hebrews and anticipated their Babylonian exile. Though the Igbo were mostly certainly not Hebrews in any historical sense—contrary to some of today's rash, self proclaimed prophets who see much and know little, Igbo were enslaved by hundred of thousand, winding up exile to their own many Babylons in the Americas. One such site of captivity, one corner of their transatlantic Babylonian exile, was Virginia. Unlike the Hebrews in Babylon, however, the Igbo in Virginia were largely forgotten. Their history was obscured, their historical legacies largely lost from collective memory, victims of a curious amnesia from which historians and other interested scholars labor to recover. In fact, the history of the Igbo presence in America (USA) remains largely hidden still, a covert presence, though it is a presence hidden largely in plain view (Chambers, 2011)*

Who is this 21st century prophet of the Igbo people likened to Prophet Isaiah? Professor Chief Douglas B. Chambers is an American from the State of Virginia. A prolific writer and associate professor of history at the University of Southern Mississippi, USA. He teaches history and world civilization including Nri culture and civilization. In pursuit of his professional career as a researcher, he has visited Nigeria and Nri severally since 2000 where he lived at various times and has traveled to over 15 countries of the world. Last year, he presented two (2) of his new epic books to Nri Progress Union Enugu at the Enugu Campus of University of Nigeria, coordinated by Museum Piece International (MPI). In 2005, he accomplished a historical feat when he was adopted into the royalty of Umu Nri Royal Family (Eze Nri NriBuife legendry dynasty) Obeagu Nri and consequently made a lineage chief of the legendry dynasty of Eze Nri NriBuife as Okwulu Nri Oka-omee. He is a regular visitor to Odinani Museum Nri and friend to so many elders and important chiefs including late Pa Chief Wilson Alike Abana (1900-2006). He knows late Ichie Anago Okoye and all the past Eze Nri by reputation. Worthy of particular mention is that, in 2005, he was invited to deliver the guest of

honor address: "Nwa Nri: from Oyibo to Igbo chieftaincy" during the 2005 inauguration of Igbo community Association of Mississippi at E-Center, Jackson State University, Jackson, Miss. 15th October, 2005. In 2008, he was invited to deliver the keynote address "The Future of our Past: Restoring the Odinani Museum" by Nri Progress Union-USA at the Biennial Gala Meeting, Dallas, TX. 30 August 2008.

Civilization, is define according to Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary 2004, as human society with its highly developed social organization, or the culture and way of life of a society or country at a particular period in time. The dictionary proceeds to define the word civilized as a society, or country that has a highly developed system of government and culture, and a way of life and that treats its people fairly. From the above background, Nri emerges as a highly developed system of government based on aged long EzeNri kingship institution and its well established strategic governance appurtenances and apparatus like Adama Institution, Oru Nze n'Ino and Nze mabuo (24 and 12 councils of cabinet chief), AkkaNri/AkkaEze (dwarf palace official) IgbaEze (royal dance). Social institutions like age grade system (otu ogbo), Umuokpu/Umuada (committees of daughters of various lineages), Iyom di (committee of married women of various lineages), masquerades societies, and other groups such as Ogu madu ito (women taskforce on discipline and public conduct). Nri culture and her expressive material culture include Igbo Ichi (Nri country marks), Ichi Ozo (ozo title taken), ichi Oba (Oba society), Igba Odu (Iyom society), mortuary rites (Ajadu) and funerals. Above all, her spiritual philosophy and mythology of creation is indeed an exceptional quality. [To be continued with list of references in Volume 2, Number 2, Summer 2015]

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## MUHAMMADU BUHARI: THE PORTRAIT OF ANOTHER GENOCIDIST

**E. C. Ejiogu**

*Author: The Roots of Political Instability in Nigeria: Political Evolution and Development in the Niger Basin (Ashgate, 2011)*

As the Igbo, amongst whom democratic approach to the course of daily existence is the norm often posit, irrespective of the fame and standing in society, whenever a deity becomes way too restless, the proper way to call it out is to reveal to it the choice of wood, which it was carved from. That exactly, is what I have resolved to do here in this piece about General Muhammadu Buhari. Any honest observer of the political scene in the Nigeria project would not dispute the fact that Buhari's restlessness has become most irksome, and as a result, needs to be addressed.

### Vital Rehash

For everyone whose knowledge of Buhari's antecedents is sparse—that, for the benefit of the doubt includes someone like former Lagos State governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, and the rest of his Yoruba compatriots who have elected to bring Buhari back to power through their Alliance for Progressive Congress (APC)—rehashing how he cut his teeth on public affairs and sordid antecedents in the Nigeria project is absolutely vital.

Muhammadu Buhari was one of the substantial number of young secondary school leavers from the upper Niger who were spurred by Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and then premier of the Northern Region and his fellow chieftains of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) in a spirited campaign to join the army. That was towards the end of de facto colonial rule as the Nigeria colonial army officer corps was undergoing the so-called Nigerianization process, which the imminent departure of the predominantly British personnel in the corps elicited. The quota system regime, which had been put in place by the NPC federal minister for defense, Alhaji Inuwa Wada, in the period 1958-1966 to guide the recruitment of candidate cadets into the corps had significantly altered its composition as a result in favor of the nationalities that inhabit the upper Niger. For full disclosure, Inuwa Wada was the maternal cousin of Murtala Muhammed, a beneficiary of that quota system, who subsequently played one of the ignominiously perverse roles in the chequered history of the Nigeria project

that still festers even today.

It is not only that young Buhari was a beneficiary of that lopsided affirmative action policy that allotted 50% of all cadet recruitments into the corps to the Northern Region by de-emphasizing a uniform merit-based academic accomplishment application process in favor of individuals from the nationalities that inhabit the upper Niger to disadvantage their lower Niger counterparts. He was also one of the 'primary beneficiaries of the promotion exercise in the junior ranks' of the corps by the incipient Aguiyi-Ironsi headed regime in May 1966 'to dilute discontents in the army' (Siollun2009: 92). That measure 'backfired and exacerbated disillusion amongst southern and northern rank and file' (Siollun2009: 92) soldiers due to the poisoned atmosphere in the Nigeria project, about, which this piece would not engage on due to space and time constraint. Going by recent revelations about Buhari's certificate, it is evidently clearer now that Buhari was flat out unqualified to enlist in the corps. That makes him a usurper.

In any case, second-lieutenant Buhari was promoted to the rank of substantive lieutenant alongside the many soldiers from the upper Niger who predominated the non-commissioned officer (NCO) ranks and also, the junior ranks of the officer corps. Those beneficiaries included Paul Tarfa, Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, Ibrahim Bako, Abdullahi Shelleng, Garba Dada who was nick-named 'Paiko' and Mohammadu Jega (Siollun 2009). These individuals named here will subsequently become fixtures in the roll of infamy with specific regard to the persecution of the Igbo in the Nigeria project. The reason being that all of them cut their teeth in public affairs by participating in the wanton spillage of innocent Igbo blood in 1966 and 1967. As if those were insufficient, they consolidated that ignominious feat with their ruthless roles in the genocidal war, which Nigeria levied on the Igbo in Biafra. Since the shooting phase of their war ended in January 1970, they have unrelentingly sustained their persecution of the Igbo using the structures and power of the Nigerian supra-national state, which they usurped and still control. Buhari's relentless quest to once again capture the helms of state power as president is in line with their mindset to keep the Igbo in their place in the project. What that means is that the Hausa-Fulani grand project of controlling the Igbo and stalling their recovery from the genocide is still 'a task

that must be done'.

When the research for this piece began more than three months ago, this writer felt that it would amount to a digression to delve into certain accompanying details in the story of Buhari's involvement in the Igbo genocide. Notable experts on genocide have long determined that the pogroms of the Igbo that elicited their declaration of the Republic of Biafra, and Nigeria's execution of the war against Biafra amount to genocidal acts—see Ted Robert Gurr (2015: 224); EC Ejiogu (2013); Chima J. Korieh (2012 and 2013), P. Bartrop (2012), Barbara Harff (2003, and 2005). But as the research progressed and the drafting of the story progressed, recent developments have made it necessary to bring in those details.

Some of those details relate specifically to the May 1966 promotions in the army: According to Max Siollun, "Under normal circumstances those promotions would not have raised eyebrows. Moreover (sic) they could be justified on the basis of merit and correcting the anomaly of deserving officers that had been passed over for promotion in the past" (Siollun2009: 92). The predominance of Igbo in the rank of majors entailed that 18 out of the 21 who were promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel were 'Igbo speaking'. The perception especially amongst mischief makers and soldiers from the upper Niger was "that their superior officers were murdered in January with the deliberate intention to create vacancies for Igbo officers to fill" (Siollun2009: 91). No one cared to objectively recall that merit underscored every factor that entailed the preponderance of Igbo in the rank of major. In the main, it was mostly the Igbo who possessed the requisite educational qualification for enlistment in the officer corps when the approach of self-rule opened up the corps for the recruitment of indigenous men given that the all British face of the corps was about to change.

Furthermore, there were two other factors in play, and both of them were also underscored by merit. As Siollun put it: "In fact (sic) two things happened: several majors were promoted acting Lt-colonel and others were promoted substantive Lt-colonels. The latter group included several officers who before the coup were already acting Lt-colonels, and simply had their temporary/acting ranks confirmed" (Siollun2009: 91). Hear Siollun again: "Several of those promoted had been passed over for promotion in the past. For

example (sic) Majors Patrick Anwunah, Mike Okwechime, Tony Eze and Alex Madiebo were [Yakubu] Gowon's course mates at Sandhurst. However, while Gowon had been promoted to Lt-colonel in 1964, by mid-1966 the three men were still majors and were now junior to their former course mate, Gowon, even though they were no less capable than him" (Siollun2009: 92).

Noteworthy: As Siollun rightly puts it: "Conversely, most junior officers and NCOs were Northern and the primary beneficiaries of the promotion exercise in the junior ranks were logically also Northern...Strangely (sic) there were no complaints about the preponderance of Northern promotions in this category. All eyes remained focused on the Igbo majors promoted to Lt-colonel. A group of Northern air force cadets were also dismissed due to their underwhelming educational achievements. The exercise seemed to be part of a broader leaning by Aguiyi-Ironsi away from quota towards a merit based system. Increased emphasis on academic achievement would indirectly discriminate against Northern soldiers" (Siollun2009: 92).

But in the actual fact, one would not rightly talk about discrimination in this case given that on the merit factor of prerequisite educational qualifications, those individuals from the nationalities that inhabit the upper Niger were flat out unqualified to even show at the enlistment centers. Knowing what we know today, Aguiyi-Ironsi did not even touch the tip of the matter talk less going any meaningful far. If he did, one like Buhari and many others from the upper Niger should not have been in the corps at all. The true reason being that unlike their counterparts from the lower Niger, they lacked the requisite educational qualification. The appeasement of one's natural enemy hardly helps matters in the one's overall interests at all.

Elsewhere in the true world, Buhari should not have the effrontery and characteristic arrogance to stride around the way he does in public affairs in the Nigeria project. I will cite a quick example to further underscore my immediate assertion above. Some years ago in the US, there was a certain naval officer who committed suicide for the simple reason that it was revealed in the Press that he wore a medal of achievement and merit that was not awarded to him. Rather than face a disciplinary panel, that officer walked to the back of his office in

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the Navy yard in southeast Washington, DC one fine spring morning and blew out his brains with his service revolver. That's a gentleman officer right there!

## A Parade of Genocidists—Buhari Is Implicated

Even in the light of concrete and irrefutable evidence that the January 15, 1966 majors' led coup d'état was neither planned, nor executed to singularly target upper Niger politicians and military officers, every commissioned officer, NCO, and rank and file soldier from the upper Niger relied on speculation and sectional prejudice against the Igbo, and circumstantial evidence to convince themselves and believe otherwise. Thus, their justification of their resolve to systematically plot, target and eliminate their Igbo colleagues.

Across the board, the conspiracy and planning involved all officers and rank and file soldier from the upper Niger: "Although senior Northern officers were involved in the planning, most of the spade work...would be carried out by Northern NCOs and lieutenants many of whom had little interest in methodical planning or leniency" (Siollun 2009: 98). Even some of their wives got involved and "consulted charms, herbalist and native doctors to assess the most auspicious time of retaliating" (Siollun 2009: 98). "[T]he de facto leader and co-ordinator...was the Inspector of Signals Lt-Colonel Murtala Muhammed, ably assisted by Majors Martin Adamu and Theophilus Danjuma" (Siollun 2009: 92).

Their coverage of their planning was wholesome, and no army formation was left out. Joseph Garba, then a captain opened up his house on 4, Lugard Avenue in Ikoyi as a regular meeting venue. The more 'prominent plotters' according to Garba, in the south are as follows: 'Lagos: Joe Garba, Murtala Muhammed, Yakubu Danjuma, Martin Adamu, Muhammadu Buhari, Paul Tarfa, William Walbe, John Lougboem, Musa Usman, and Shittu Alao... Ibadan: Jerry Useni, Ibrahim Bako and Garba Dada; Enugu: Lieutenant Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, Abeokuta: Lieutenant Pam Mwadkan' (Siollun 2009: 99).

There were many more. Years later, Garba gloated and admitted that "virtually all other northern officers serving in Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ikeja and Lagos became involved...in one way or another" (Siollun 2009: 99-100). They included Lieutenants Malami Nassarawa and Nuhu Nathan in Lagos, Abdullahi Shelleng and I. S. Umar, and Adjutant Garba Dada in Abeokuta (Siollun 2009: 100). Ibrahim Babangida admitted to an interviewer in the 1990s that one "Captain Ahamadu Yakubu acted

as a messenger by driving all the way from Lagos to Kaduna in order to update Northern soldiers in Kaduna" (Siollun 2009: 99).

After the successful and wholesome massacre of Igbo officers and men began in Abeokuta July 28 night, it spread to Lagos when some of the forerunners of the orgy in Abeokuta arrived Ikeja in the morning of July 29 to ignite the operation, which was swiftly commenced there "by Lieutenants Nathan and Nassarawa, who managed affairs until their superiors Lt-Colonel Murtala Muhammed, Majors Martin Adamu, Shittu Allao, and Musa Usman arrived" (Siollun 2009: 104). Siollun points out that the "Other active participants in Lagos included Lieutenant Muhammadu Buhari of 2 brigade transport company, Lieutenant John Longboem, Captains Ibrahim Taiwo and Alfred Gom, Lieutenant Tokkida of the LGO [Lagos Garrison Organization], and a notoriously violent sergeant from the Idoma ethnic group named Paul Dickson" Siollun 2009: 104).

A few samplers of some of the heart wrenching acts of massacre committed by this horde and the soldiers they commanded against their Igbo colleagues in just Lagos alone where Buhari operated are necessary at this point to underscore the gravity of this genocide: "Igbo soldiers were shot dead in their quarters, some as they rose in the morning, others as they reported for physical training. Northern soldiers had pre-selected Igbo soldiers for elimination. The casualties in Ikeja included Lieutenant Pius Onyeneho [he happened to be from my town, Onicha in Ezinihite in the now Imo State] and the unit education officer Captain John Chukwueke, who was shot in the presence of his wife, children and mother in-law. Lieutenant John Odigwe attempted to rescue Onyeneho but was unable to do so after he too came under heavy fire. Ironically Onyeneho was a former classmate of one of the mutineers, Nuhu Nathan. Lieutenant Godson Mbabie and his wife were both shot, along with Mbabie's brother in-law (a school boy). Mbabie's wife survived her wounds. Captain Kevin Megwa and his wife hid in their wardrobe while their young nanny went around the barracks weeping, carrying their two-month-old baby girl, pretending they had been killed.

"The Ikeja airport in Lagos also turned into an execution ground under the command of the fearsome Sergeant Paul Dickson. Captain Okoye (from Ojukwu's hometown Nnewi) who was passing through Ikeja airport, was captured, tied to an iron cross, beaten, whipped and left to die an agonizing death in the guardroom in what bore the

appearance of a ritual murder. Some of the Igbo survivors (military and civilian) at the airport were flogged on Dickson's orders. Dickson stayed on as head of security at the airport for several years and somehow bagged himself and automatic promotion to Captain in the process (and later again to major). The air force officer that had been briefed to fly to Calabar to release Chief Awolowo from prison (Major Nzegwu) was also killed.

"Ironically (sic) many of the Igbo officers attacked in Lagos were the same officers who played prominent roles in putting down the January coup. Two examples illustrate this. In January (sic) Captain Ugoala had actually interrogated the coup detainees. His anti-coup role in January was forgotten and he was killed by the Northern mutineers. The house of the 2nd battalion's commander Lt-Colonel Henry Igbo was also targeted even though he was one of the officers that were instrumental in putting down the January coup and had been accused of meting out brutal treatment to January detainees. Northern soldiers surrounded Igbo's house but Igbo managed to escape and shelter at the police college Ikeja" (Siollun 2009: 104).

## Igbophobes and Islamists: Murtala and Buhari Joined at the Hips

The relationship, which young Buhari and the other young genocidists that included Martin Adamu, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, Baba Usman, et al struck with Murtala Muhammed at the expense of innocent Igbo blood that they spilled evolved during the course of the war against Biafra and endured thereafter. Buhari's lack of respect for superior authority and his characteristic ruthlessness were no doubt forged at the time. He witnessed firsthand, his idol, Murtala Muhammed's characteristic disdain for and "little respect for authority" (Ibrahim Haruna in Siollun 2009: 165) throughout his time as warfront commander in Benin, Asaba, and during his three-time ill-fated attempts to invade Onitsha from across the River Niger. He witnessed and probably participated in the war atrocities that Murtala ordered in Benin, and Asaba.

The apparent unity of purpose that prevailed amongst all the genocidists from the upper Niger before, and during the massacre of their Igbo colleagues and their prosecution of the war against Biafra began to fray and give way at the seams a little after the war ended. Murtala Muhammed's disdain and rivalry with Gowon grew, and "Muslim soldiers from the far north such as Lt-Colonels Muhammadu Buhari, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua and Ibrahim Babangida" were at the top of the list of those who

lined up support for Murtala Muhammed against Gowon. They—"Colonels Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, Ibrahim Taiwo, Abdullahi Muhammed, Ibrahim Babangida, the director of supply and transport Muhammadu Buhari" (Siollun 2009: 176) spear-headed the plot that removed Gowon and installed Murtala Muhammed head of junta in 1975. Their coup d'état against Gowon "was a watershed in that it was the first time in Nigeria's history that executors of a coup apportioned political appointments between themselves" (Siollun 2009: 185). They have not left the scene ever since. The Nigeria project, indeed the Igbo have been worse off for it.

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## CHICAGO 2014



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*The Igbo Studies Association (ISA) was founded on November 8, 1999 to promote and encourage research and scholarship on Igbo history, culture, social movements, linguistic, literary and artistic expressions, science and technology; to forge intellectual links and network with scholars, policy makers, and activists inside and outside Nigeria; to participate actively and collaboratively in continental and global debates with interested organizations in Nigeria, the U.S.A. and other countries on issues specifically relevant and correlated to Igbo studies; and to work proactively for the promotion of Igbo language with interested organizations and/ or institutions in diverse regions of the world.*



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