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Welcome Back
to CHICAGO!





Chima Korieh, PhD
Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

From the President

Dear Colleagues,

I want to warmly welcome all of you to 2016 and the upcoming 2016 Annual Conference taking place at Dominican University. It has been a very exciting year for the association and I am proud of what we have achieved together as a group. The association is stronger, our numbers have increased and the 2016 conference promises to be an even more exciting one, thanks to the work of the 2016 conference committee chaired by Dr Ogechi Anyanwu.

In the Foreword to African World History Project: "The Preliminary Challenge John Henrik Clark wrote as follow...."History is a clock that people use to tell their political time of day. It is also a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography. History tells a people where they have been and what they have been. It also tells a people where they are and what they are. Most importantly, history tells a people where they still must go and what they still must be." The theme for the 2016 Conference NDI IGBO IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT offers opportunity for use to reflect on the Igbo and their place in the world in historical perspectives.

Like the history of many parts of the non-western world, the history of the Igbo has been an endeavor as marginalized as the continent's history. Yet the Igbo past is truly a global tale in many respects. What would the Americas or the New World look like today without the African presence? What would early new world cultures be without the African input? What would it be without the presence of thousands of Igbo people who were enslaved in the infamous Atlantic commerce? The Igbo is a very important part of this "out of Africa" migration story. Just as they did in transforming the early African environment, the Igbo were a visible and permanent presence in the slave holding societies of the New World.

Africans resisted the colonial encounter in varied ways: diplomatic, violent, etc. What is important now is the fact that the hegemonic features of imperial Europe was overwhelming in reshaping African societies. But many African societies as reflected in the case of the Igbo were not perceived as recipients of change. Although the Igbo resisted like many others did, there were unique differences in the outcomes, differences that forced the British to rethink its colonial policy and ideology. Understanding this past from a global perspective provides an opportunity to rethink the part played by the Igbo in the past as it has been told through the traditionally Eurocentric narrative.

I look forward to these discussions. I must thank other members of the conference committee, our hosts at Dominican and other associates in Chicago for the work they have done to prepare for the 2016 conference. On behalf of the executive committee and the conference committee, I look forward to welcoming you all in Chicago.

Welcome back to **Chicago!**



ISA Conference 2016
Dominican University
Chicago

Colleagues,

Thank you for your interest in the 14th Annual Conference of the Igbo Studies Association. We have completed all arrangements for the conference. The final program for the 2016 conference is available on our website.

This year's Ihechukwu Madubuike Annual Keynote Lecture, titled "The Future of Ndi Igbo: Osondu Agwu Ike," will be delivered by Professor Thomas Onuoha Chukwujike Ndubizu, a distinguished Professor of Agriculture and Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Vice-Chancellor, Imo State University, Owerri.

As you get ready to attend the conference in Chicago, ISA Executive Committee and the 2016 Conference Organizing Committee happily welcome you to Dominican University, Illinois, and urge you to keep the following in mind:

1. We used the arrival dates and times you sent to schedule your shuttle pick up times from O'Hare airport. You will be picked up from Entrance number 3 in front of Hilton. Pick up times for participants arriving on Tuesday, May 10 are: 10:30AM and 6:30PM. Those arriving on Wednesday, May 11 will be picked up at 10:30AM, 11:30AM, 12:30PM, 1:30PM, 4:00PM, 5:30PM, 6:30PM, and 11:00PM. For participants arriving on Thursday, May 12, shuttle will pick you up at 7:00AM, 10:00AM, 11:30AM, 12:30PM, 1:30PM, 4:00PM, and 6:30PM. If you find your wait at the airport too long, you can take a taxi to the hotel. It will not cost you more than \$20.


2. In order to participate fully at the conference, you will have to register by paying your fees and obtaining your name badge, conference program, conference bag, pen, writing pad, etc., from the registration desk. We also require guests to register for the conference.

3. To facilitate the process of registration, please print and fill the registration form sent to you by email and bring it to the registration desk. For those arriving on Wednesday, May 11, conference pre-registration will be held at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites meeting room between 4:00PM and 6:00PM. Please join us and pick up your conference materials early.

4. Welcome reception will immediately follow the pre-registration at the same venue from 6:00PM to 8:00PM. Drinks and food will be served. We will be serving dinner at the same venue on Thursday and



Ogechi E. Anyanwu, PhD
2016 Conference Chair
ISA Secretary



Friday from 6:00PM.

5. Be sure to keep your name tag with you at all times as this is your pass to everything concerning the conference.

6. Opening session begins at 9:30AM on Thursday at Parmer 108, Dominican University. The shuttle will take participants from the hotel to Dominican University between 7:00AM and 9:00AM. To join the shuttle, you are therefore encouraged to wake up early and enjoy your breakfast at the hotel which is served from 6:30AM to 9:30AM.

7. Our banquet on Saturday begins at 7:00PM at Parmer Atrium, Dominican University. You must present your conference name tag for admittance to the banquet. We encourage you to attend the banquet as we will be giving away door prices this year.

8. The weather in Chicago during the conference will be around 70 degree. For participants coming from Nigeria, this may be a little cold. Please pack a couple of warm clothes with comfortable shoes.

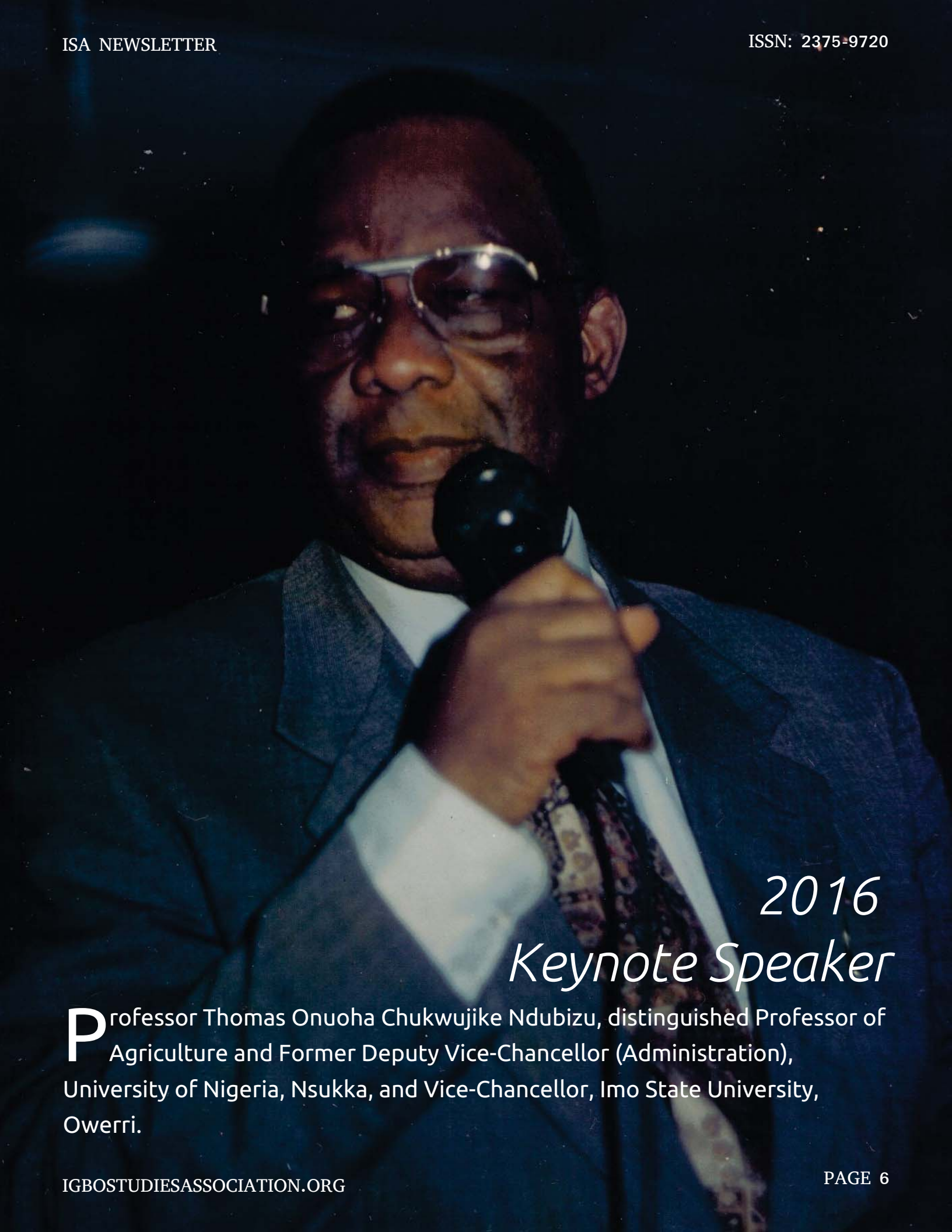
9. If you want to participate in a planned tour of Chicago vicinity on Saturday, May 14, please send an email to Kanayo Odenuga at kkolisa@gmail.com. Contact him too if you wish to purchase a sim card to make telephone calls while you are in the U.S.

Expected at this year's conference are 169 scholars from universities and tertiary institutions, leaders from community organizations, independent scholars, clergy/religious, and professionals from the United States, Nigeria, and Europe. There will be 139 papers to be presented split between 28 panels. At this year's conference, 36 higher educational institutions in Nigeria are represented; 14 higher institutions in the US; and scholars from 24 various institutes, government ministries, religious organizations, and the private sector.

It was a pleasure working with you all. Have a safe trip—and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Regards,

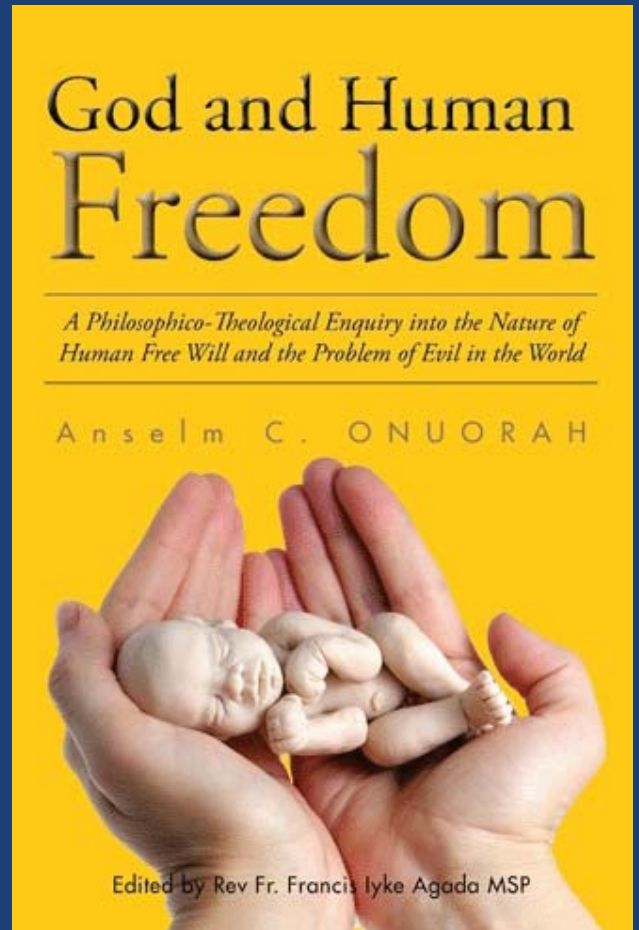
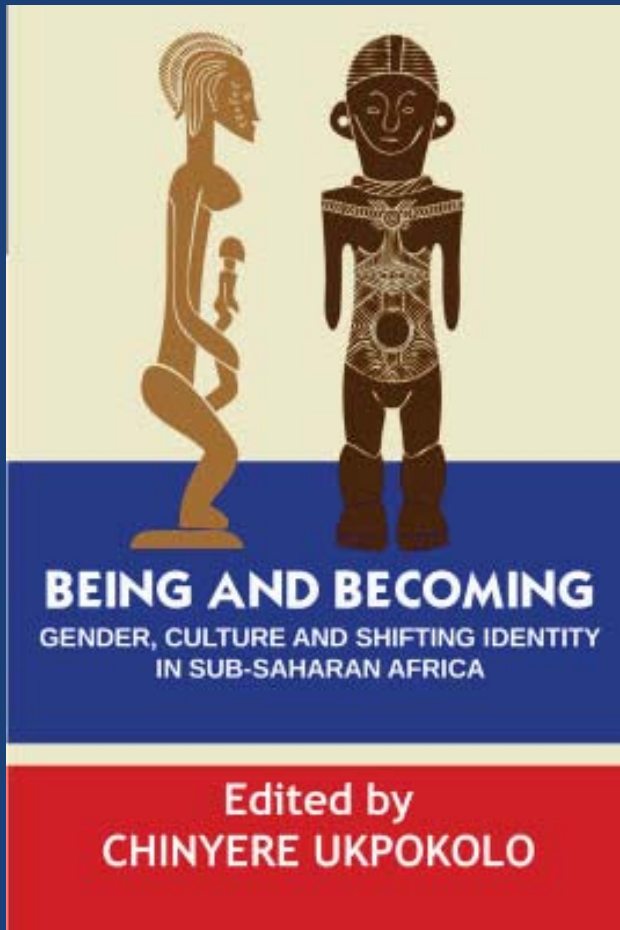
Ogechi E. Anyanwu
2016 Conference Chair
ISA Secretary



2016
Keynote Speaker

Professor Thomas Onuoha Chukwujike Ndubizu, distinguished Professor of Agriculture and Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Vice-Chancellor, Imo State University, Owerri.

Member Publication



ISA NEWSLETTER CALL FOR SUBMISSION

The Igbo Studies Association is seeking submissions from members for the Summer 2016 issue of the ISA Newsletter. 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 publish the summer issue in August 2016. All submissions must reach Dr. Chidi Igwe via the editor's coordinates below by July 31, 2016.

Email: chidi.igwe@gmail.com.

Home: www.igbostudiesassociation.org.

EFURU BY FLORA NWAPA: CELEBRATING THE PRIDE AND PLACE OF NDI-IGBO, NIGERIA AND ITS CITIZENS, AFRICA AND ITS PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

According to Kenule Saro-Wiwa, a renown activist and environmentalist, at the funeral of Prof. Flora Nwapa in 1993, "Flora is gone and we all have to say aduie. But she left behind an indelible mark. No one will ever write about Nigeria literature-in-English without mentioning her. She will always be the departure point for female writing in Africa. And African publishing will forever owe her a debt. But above all, her contribution to the development of women in Nigeria, nay in Africa, and throughout the world is what she will be best remembered for."

BACKGROUND

Ogbuefi Professor Florence Nwanzuruahu Nkiru Nwapa was the first woman novelist to write about a Nigerian woman *Efuru* (Heinemann, 1966) and the first Anglophone African woman writer to publish a novel in London and Nigeria.

She was born on January 13th, 1931 in a small colonial West African village, Oguta, in the present day Oguta Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria. She was the first of six children of humble, wealthy, and influential parents, Chief Sir Christopher Ijeoma Nwapa, who was a great trading merchant with the United Africa Company (UAC) and Lady Martha Nwapa, a school teacher at Oguta, who taught drama and classics before Nigeria got her independence in 1960.

Flora Nwapa's uncle, Barr. A.C. Nwapa, Nigeria's first Minister of Commerce and Industry (1951-1953), and her immediate younger brother, Hon. C.I. Nwapa Jnr. all influenced what Flora later became in life.

Flora attended Oguta CMS Central School, Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School, Elelenwo, Rivers State; CMS Girls Grammar School, Lagos, and the prestigious Queens College, Yaba, Lagos in 1951-52. She then proceeded to the University College Ibadan (University of Ibadan) in 1953 where she graduated excellently with a Bachelor's Degree in Arts in 1957. The following year, she went to the University of Edinburgh, Scotland and finished with a Diploma in education.

Upon her return to Nigeria in 1959, her initial work experience started as an educational officer in Calabar, Cross River State. Later, she went to Queens School, Enugu, where she taught English and Geography. Between 1962-1964, she became the Assistant Registrar (Public Relations) at the University of Lagos. In 1965, she went into professional career in writing which projected her and Igbo women in international scene when her first novel *Efuru* was initially published in 1966.

When the Nigerian Civil War broke out, Flora and her family fled Lagos for East Central State and from 1970-1971, she was appointed the first female Commissioner for Health and Social Welfare for the East Central State under the leadership of Ajie



Ukpabi Aska (1970-1976). With that position, she was the first Nigerian woman to be so appointed. General Gowon had a post-war policy of reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Flora was known for her governmental work in post-war reconstruction, rehabilitation and resettlement of orphans, lost children and refugees that were displaced during the war. It is on record that about 2000 Biafran kids who were made orphans due to the Nigerian civil war were reunited with their families within record time.

Between 1971 and 1975, she was again appointed Commissioner for Lands, Survey and Urban Development. Between 1974-1977, she founded Tana Press (Tana was a name she adopted from River Tana in Tanzania, East Africa) and the Flora Nwapa publishing company for publishing her own

adult and children's literature as well as works by other writers. Also, she wanted to make her books and other works affordable and accessible to Nigerians and Africans.

Today, Flora's books are almost extinct in Nigerian schools and libraries.

Conversely, schools abroad like Oberlin College, Southern Connecticut State College, etc., have them in their curricula. In the words of Professor Wole Soyinka in his book *The Gods Are Not To Blame*, "coconut last long in the mouth of those who value it most." Also in Igbo, a similar adage has it that "when the owner of a gourd bowl discards it, neighbours will use it to evacuate ash."

What a shame!

Nigerian curriculum designers have not done well in this regard and therefore need a change of heart.



In 1978, Oguta community conferred on her the Ogbuefi title (the Cow killer) of Oguta in appreciation of her numerous roles in both governance and private life. In 1982, she received a distinguished Alumni award from the University of Ibadan. In 1983, the Second Republic Executive President of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari honoured her with the sixth highest national honour in Nigeria, the Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON). Later in 1984, she received a certificate of participation from the IOWA University School of Letters International Writing Programme and in 1985, she received the merit award for authorship and publishing at Ife Book Fair of the University of Ife now (Obafemi Awolowo University).



As a career writer, she has served as a distinguished member of PEN International, the Commonwealth Writers Awards Committee as well as President of Association of Nigeria Authors (ANA). At various times, she taught at Trinity College, New York University, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota and University of Ilorin. She was an adjunct professor of creative writing at the University of Maiduguri and remained so till her death on October 16th, 1993.



Until her death, she had over five novels, three short stories/poems, six children's books and one unpublished novel, "The Lake Goddess," and a biography in honour of her parents.

Many of today's writers are inspired by Flora's works, which include African-Americans and Americans like Marie Linton Umeh, and Douglas B. Chambers. There are also Europeans such as Sabine Jell-Bahlsen and Nigerians like Obioma Nnaemeka, Ifi Amadiume, Tess Onwueme, Njideka Nwapa-Ibuaku, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Buchi Emecheta,

Rosemary Esehagu, Karen King-Aribisola, Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani, Tiwo Odubiyi, Ifeoma Okoye, Chinelo Okparanta, Ukamaka Olisakwe, Helen Ovibiagele, Lola Shoneyin, Adaora Lily Ulasi and so many others.

The admiration for Flora Nwapa has given rise to the formation of the Flora Nwapa Society in New York, which we hope will contribute to transforming our youth towards imbibing reading as a habit.

Flora was married to Gogo Nwakuche with whom she had three children all of whom are accomplished in their own rites: Ejine, Uzoma and Amede, in order of seniority.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The major initiator of the 50th Anniversary of the Efuru Celebration Project, Dr. Marie Umeh and the founding members of the Flora Nwapa Society (FN Society) wish to use the Anniversary Celebration Project to enunciate further on the significance of Nwapa's literary works.

PURPOSE

The purposes of the 50th Anniversary of the Efuru Celebration Project are many but all are geared towards one goal. Firstly, it will underscore the deep rooted ingenuity in the novel especially the role of culture in the socio-cultural, economic and educational wellbeing of the people. It will also isolate and re-enact the

salient qualities of the author, her life and times, philosophy, ideals and values, and her impassioned plea for womanhood and women empowerment globally. It will create a system to celebrate our icons and legends while they are alive and remain an inspiration to upcoming literary artists, as well as immortalize them after they have passed on.

IMPACT

The impact of the celebration project of 50th Anniversary of Efuru cannot be underemphasized in a number of ways. It will enable the group of great admirers of Flora Nwapa in New York City, Germany, Enugu, Oguta and beyond to continue in their leadership role within the Igbo Cultural Studies, Feminism, African Cultural Heritage of Igbo Africans in America and African Americans, who will be attending this benchmark 50th Anniversary of Efuru.

The physical attendance of the great admirers of Flora Nwapa from USA and Germany will exert significant influence on those with similar kindred spirit in Nigeria to do more like their contemporaries all over the world. As well, soft and hard copies, tangible and intangible materials generated and gathered in the one week celebration of 50th Anniversary of Efuru would directly support a book on Flora Nwapa's life and times.



Off to *Chicago!*

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Materials for writing this kind of book are better supported by speeches, comments, remarks, papers and essays and the 2016 50th Anniversary of Efurū is a splendid opportunity. Enugu is where Flora Nwapa lived and worked and Oguta is not very far from Enugu. They are both within the same cultural and geo-political zone of southeast Nigeria. Therefore, Enugu deserves to be the centre of the Nigerian celebration of Efurū.

OVERALL GOAL

In the spirit of preserving and promoting African cultures and presenting excellence in arts and literature, the Flora Nwapa Society hopes to inaugurate a Flora Nwapa Nigerian prize for arts and literature in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This is not only to uphold and sustain Flora Nwapa's legacies in social and academic domains, but to particularly reignite the reading culture among youth and students in Nigeria. A lot is needed to run this programme and project in terms of accommodation, transportation, man-power and operational funds.

However, the Flora Nwapa Society needs the support of Government and government agencies at all levels in Nigeria. Also non-governmental organizations, co-operate bodies, private sectors, policy makers, captains of industries, respected individuals and groups in the society, lovers and promoters of education around the world are invited to support this noble project.

CONCLUSION

As we prepare to celebrate the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the initial publication of Efurū and 23rd memorial of the death of Flora Nwapa, let's pursue peace, unity and progress among Ndi-Igbo, Nigeria and its citizens, Africa and its people at all cost, especially in this 21st century.



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