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Uncensor the Minstrel, Uncage Human Rights- A Case for the Actualization of Human Rights through Music Genre in Igboland - Nigeria

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Abstract

Human rights realisation and protection require diverse strategies of achieving its protection and enhancement. Global and regional law instruments aimed at achieving realisation of fundamental rights abound. Such rights as they pertain to freedom of information, liberty and thought are well protected. This paper argues that before the emergence of human rights instruments, the traditional African society had used minstrels to promote human rights. Minstrelsy provides a platform for musical creativity and social education, through traditional and oral literatures, the folktales, songs, proverbs, myths and legends were the prime repository of the wit and wisdom of the society. In recent years minstrelsy in Igboland has undergone drastic transformations due to censorship by the government and globalization. This paper examines the censored state of minstrelsy in Igboland Nigeria and the art's contribution to the advancement of human rights.

1.1 Introduction

It may even be suggested that the whole essence of music censorship is for artists to censor their own creativity and produce works that rather subvert their own creativity by propagating messages that conform to tastes and trends defined by forces beyond them (Akpan, 2006).

Music censorship has been implemented by states, religions, educational systems, families, retailers and lobbying groups – and in most cases they violate international conventions of human rights (Korpe & Rešov, 2004)

Most African cultural productions, especially literature and music, have remained political even in the post-colonial era because of the dismal socio-political and economic conditions of the African people. Thus, African literature and music are not only very indicating, they have become media for artists to express their discontent over the failure of independence and Africa's permanent state of transition (Ogaga, 2007).

Ministry provides a platform for musical creativity and social education, for the starting point of the conscious effort to understand the Igbos in his traditional and oral literatures, the folktales, songs, proverbs, myths and legends which are the prime repository of the wit and wisdom of his society. In recent years, ministry in Igboland has undergone some transformations due to censorship by the government and globalization. If these changes are looked at from a modern Western point of view, ethnocentric judgments can be made as to whether they are on the whole favourable or unfavourable. But it must be remembered that the folk literatures or participating in its oral literature have completely different standards from those of their interpreters.

Human rights is said to be that basic right that accrues to an individual for the very basic reason of being human. (Donnelly, 1982) In the early existence of the African continent, basic respect of individual rights as well as violations existed (Ejioke, 1999). However, in the recent past, the issue of human rights in Africa, and particularly Nigeria, is traceable to the issue of poor governance. Generally, governance in Africa has remained pathetic over the years. Since the departure of the colonial masters in the early 1960s, most African countries experienced turbulent governance. Governance and democracy are both an expression and expansion of man's freedom; they have become synonymous to man's progress (Linn and Venter, 1994). Interestingly, most governments in post-colonial Africa have employed several means of keeping up appearances to meet the world standard of good governance (Adedoye, 1999).

As already argued, the travails of democratization in Africa came off the insatiable desire of the military to take over and continue in power (Pulley, 1994). Military coups and counter coups and emergency decrees began in many of the countries, beginning with Congo in 1965 and by 1985, more than half of African states had come under one kind of dictatorship or another. The issue of human rights violation grew a lot weighty with the entrenchment of bad governance (Nwankwelu, 2004). While there grew the curbing of rights like freedom of speech and association (O'Rourke, 2006), freedom to hold and disseminate opinion, (African Centre

Human and Peoples' Rights, (ACHPR), article 9 and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, article 18 & 19), and the rights to economic, social and cultural development (ACHPR, article 22, UDHR article 27).

The Igbo's are one of the three major tribes in Nigeria, spread among six of the states that comprise the 36 states of Nigeria. The Igbo are skilled in arts and various kinds of indigenous knowledge in the areas of economics, medicine and agriculture (Nwonwu, 2011). With strong extended family units (Oraegbunam, 2009) among the Igbos, the use of folklore, minstrels, and proverbs was common in the dissemination of knowledge. Achebe captures the importance of folklore and minstrelsy thus: "Among the Igbo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (Achebe, 1958). In several Igbo communities, kingship is divine and appointment to kingship was patriarchal and hereditary. However, the traditional Igbo society had a well-entrenched means of checks and balances in the activity that took place either in the Igwe's Council or in Village meetings. (Litvack, 1998). A popular feature of the Igbo society was the role of the village minstrel, who recounted the deeds (good or bad) of the ruling class and other prominent members of the society.

In the traditional Igbo setting, all forms of crimes had attendant punishments. Public ridicule was one such means of discouraging theft in the community. Banishment that could span seven years in case of murder (see this concept in the banishment of Okonkwo in Achebe's, *Things fall Apart*, 1958). Excommunication from village meetings and associations was another means of punishment for an individual found wanting in the Igbo society. (Ejidiike, 1999). Naming and shaming via folklore was also used to ridicule people perceived to be evil in the community. A combination of all these means of social control put the minstrel in a central position, as music was the core means of information dissemination in the Igbo society.

This paper examines the censored state of minstrelsy in Igboland, Nigeria and advocates for its emancipation in line with the human rights law. It subsequently examined the role the Igbo minstrel plays in the promotion of human rights from a non-legal perspective especially with the tyranny unleashed by poor governance in Nigeria.

1.2 Minstrelsy in Igboland Conceptualized

The Igbo seem to have no generic term for minstrels but the Anambra Igbo call them, the *Egwu Ekpili* musicians:

Egwu Ekpili takes its name from *ekpili*, a rattle made of large pods of *Uko* tree, strung together on a rope about a foot long, which features as the main instrument in this kind of music common in Anambra divisions of Igboland, among the people of such towns as Achala, Aguleri, Awkuzu, Nando, Nteje, Oba, Ugbene, Ukwulu and Onitsha. According to legend, it is these people who received music from the song bird and took it to the rest of Igboland. (Ekwueme, and Nnanyelu, 1977)

A soloist and a responding chorus often perform minstrel music. Minstrelsy is used to entertain, to accompany dances, plays, and religious ceremonies, and to mark such events as puberty rites, marriage and death. There are minstrel songs that eulogize and satirize. Many are genealogical. The minstrel speaks for the community and draws from the collective wisdom. He can also be a pathfinder and a visionary helping to blaze new trails and to reveal pointers to the future (Okafor, 1998).

Minstrelsy in Igboland draws from the social milieu. In texts of minstrel songs are references for the rewards of high morals ethics, philanthropic gestures, judgement on the actions of people and reflections on the world as it should be. Minstrelsy is most times laden with human rights ideals. Minstrelsy falls under the genre of folk music which was defined by Karpeles in Okafor as:

The product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are (i) continuity, which links the present with the past (ii) variations, which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group (Okafor, 2005).

Minstrelsy is the Igboman's unique way of expression but is part of the universal language which is called music. According to Nketia, our indigenous music and folklore are not relics of a forgotten or abandoned past, as most folklore seems to be in some parts of the industrialized world, but are living traditions cultivated and practiced actively in traditional contexts by the majority of our people as an integral part of their community life. (Nketia, 1999).

In the traditional setting, the minstrel is an itinerant musician. The process of composition is viewed as a process of conception which can be

compared to the gender role of women in child birth and the 'intuitive creative management of life' (Nzewi, 2012). Consequently, the minstrel in Igbo land is not one that is gender specific as both women and men all had different roles to play. It is, however, understood that the woman as minstrel was limited. Women minstrels were however used for other societal functions like correcting an erring wife or girl and performing other political roles that women played via the *Umu Ada*. (Ezeigbo, 1990).

The more one listens to Igbo minstrel music, while attempting to be reminded of values that are aimed towards respect for one another, the more one is conscious of its vital power. It touches the persons' soul and stirs the musical instincts. Minstrelsy demands a lot of creativity and ingenuity on the part of the performers and is passionately absorbed by the society to the point of active participation. Minstrels use novelty to create relevance. One has seen men and women pass into a completely dazed condition, oblivious of their immediate environment while performing. This is because through minstrelsy, we enter the realm of poetry in our culture. The minstrel is a poet who constructs his poem spontaneously as he sings.

A good minstrel performs with ease, applying expressions at liberty. He composes at will to meet specific occasions; he eventually becomes prolific in musical composition. He is an improvised dancer and an instrumentalist and is often regarded as the oracle of the gods. A good minstrel makes good use of suspense; he evokes images in the mind of his audience, and through his barrage of pyrotechnics, involves his audience to take active part in his rendition. The concept of communalism is very strong in African cosmology hence audience involvement is highly cherished by artistes; accordingly, the African audience behaves not as consumers (entertained patrons) but also as a contingent (Adegbite, 1989).

The minstrel achieves his aim by satirizing or eulogizing members of his society in his shows. Those ridiculed by minstrels are those who violated the cultural norms by stealing, committing adultery, having teenage pregnancy, ill-treating others and other social vices. In the art of minstrelsy, textual construction is very important, the audience who are artists themselves listen for the construction of the music, the twists of the words, the heightened speech and the quality of the voice.

Statements by minstrels are often masked in contextual melodic pronouncements while in some cases, one is left with no doubt as to whom the aspersions are directed to because minstrels visit the home of the culprits with specific tale renditions warning people of dangers. (Bersselaar, 2006; Okafor, 1980). Music and dance are integral to Nigerian culture, and each ethnic group

has its own specialties. Minstrelsy is used to celebrate rulers and to accompany public assemblies, weddings and funerals, festivals, and storytelling. It is also used as an agent of change, x-raying social ills and warning perpetrators while being laced with admonitions. Notable minstrels and their origin include Ozoemena Igbo (Ozoemena Nsugbe), Afam Ogbuoribo, Ekeghale Anyanwa, Okonkwo Asa AKA-7-7, Ononenyi S. M Ikpeazu, George Udengha, Akurwafor Ezigbo Obiligbo, etc.

2.1 The Minstrel as a Watch-Dog Cum Whistle Blower

A watch dog literally means a dog kept to watch property. Also, the concept of whistle blowing is that of a person who tells the public or someone in authority about alleged dishonest or illegal activities (misconduct) occurring in a government department, a public or private organization, or a company. The alleged misconduct may be a violation of a law, rule, regulation, and/or a direct threat to public interest, such as fraud, health/safety violations, and corruption. For this paper, a watch-dog refers to one that guards against loss, waste, theft or undesirable practices.

In a scenario where citizens are oppressed, elections rigged and the country's rich economic resources are enjoyed by a small percentage of the populace, the musician has proved to be an important watch dog. He speaks for the community and draws from the collective wisdom. He can also be a pathfinder, a visionary, helping to blaze new trails and to reveal pointers to the future (Okonkwo, 2005). Minstrels in Igboland draw the theme of their songs from the social milieu. By using allusions, images, proverbs, historical data and sometimes anecdotes, the musician can satirize and eulogize. Incidents that cannot be talked about in normal situations can be turned into satirical songs as a means of social control.

Consequently, the minstrel, most times, is seen as an agent to ensure that justice is done in the traditional Igbo society. It must be underscored that the Igbo society had its machinery for justice which individuals had the liberty to appear before (Oraegbunam, 2009). The elders involved in the adjudicating process (Litvack, 1998) were weary of the minstrel.

Language was an important aspect of Igbo music because of the importance attached to the lyrics which usually contained social or political criticism. Music performed in the villages was important in exposing wrongs in the community and criticising some individuals, while praising others, thereby providing more than mere entertainment.

In addition, the minstrel played roles that preceded the banishing of individuals that have been found to have committed sacrilege in the traditional

Igbo society. Consequently, the control of social vices in the traditional Igbo society entailed the dissemination of such violations and the attendant threats. This situation is however, taking a turn for the worse as the future of customary law is bleak in majority of African states (Oba, 2011). The minstrel's reliance on satires enriched its impact on the Igbo society.

Writing on the use of satire by musicians, Asigbo, stated:

Offences like minor stealing, lying or other such pardonable misbehaviours are within the ambience of satire to handle. Satire is conceived as a highly functional and utilitarian activity. Thus, not only does it serve as an avenue for poking mild fun at social deviants, it also ensures the release of otherwise harmful libidinous energies (Asigbo, A. 2005).

2.2 Excerpts of Some Minstrels' Songs

i. **POWER TO NIGERIAN JEWS (Ozoemena Nsugbe) (Ozoemena Nsugbe, 'Power To Nigerian Jews' Olumo Records PSQL 015, 1973)**

In this song, Ozoemena highlighted the achievements of the Igbo and called them nation builders. This song is a political song. It is also rich in historical and educational facts. Ozoemena drew an analogy between the widely travelled Jews and the Igbo with the following words, *ibiwe uwa n'ile iga afulili ndigbo*: 'The Igbo reside in every part of the globe'. Trading, local crafts, and wage labour are also important in the Igbo economy, and a high literacy rate has also helped many Igbo to become civil servants and business entrepreneurs in the decades after Nigeria gained Independence. It is notable that Igbo women engage in trade and are influential in local politics. The Igbo are reputed for their ability to transform an inhabitable environment to a viable one. References were made in the song of semi-desert areas (*Sabongeri*) of Northern Nigerian cities like Zaria, Kaduna and Kano where the Igbo have transformed arid areas of the aforementioned towns to big commercial and attractive cities. The rocky plains of Jos a city in North central Nigeria called Jenta has also, according to Ozoemena received the Midas touch of the Igbo tribe. The story is the same for Alaba International Market, arguably the largest electronics market in the West African sub-region which was single-handedly built by the Igbo. Interestingly, the areas mentioned were given to the itinerant Igbo with the intention to test their ability but they made a success of the venture. Notable achievers of Igbo descent were mentioned and their roles highlighted in this song. These include Prof. Eni Njoku, a leading figure in the production of anti-cholera vaccine;

Philip Emeagwali, the Onitsha born computer engineer; Political stalwart Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who was at the vanguard of Nigeria struggle for independence and Sir L.P Ojukwu, a frontline millionaire and industrialist who volunteered the use of his car to the Queen of England during the Independence celebration in 1960. After enumerating the successes of Igbo people, Ozocmena suggested that the Igbo be allowed to rule Nigeria. He has the conviction that with the same ingenuity used to transform fallow grounds into viable entities, the Igbo can transform Nigeria to one of the best nations in the world. He summed up his song by declaring the Igbo as Nation Builders.

ii. **DEMOCRACY (PATTY OBASI)** (Obassey, Patty- Ubanese. Sower, Evergreen Production R.P 102, 2006)
Patty took a swipe at the ruling class in the pursuit of honour, fame and justice.

Democracy n'akwa ariri, - ----- Democracy is sobbing
Obiara Nigeria, adara ya kua ya isi aba okpu - He came to Nigeria and was
given a thorough beating

Tribalism bu onye buru uzo wa anya - Tribalism was first to be entrenched.
Buru ya kuo ya isi aba okpu- It took democracy and gave it a big
bashing.

Ochichi amakekwu n'eme ihe dia nma - Obnoxious leadership reigns.
Mmadu kwue ihe ohuru, ewere ya gba ball - an outspoken person is tossed
about like a ball.

E treatie ya ka ekpenta----- And treated like a person afflicted with
leprosy.

Patty used personification to paint a true picture of our nascent democracy. A country blessed with abundant natural resources but can hardly take care of her citizens. Medical care is neglected, security of lives and property cannot be guaranteed, prices of our greatest export - crude oil - are juggled at will, election malpractices are wide-spread and corruption is endemic. A state of the federation even has her slogan as "**Born to Rule**" and Patty sang - *Born to rule mentality is so dangerous and is the cause of tribal wars.*

The texts of minstrels reflect the social aspirations and conventions of the Nigerian community. The musician has a role in the society, which is to instruct while entertaining. Songs are composed according to the social, cultural and political needs of the society. "Power to Nigerian Jews" and "Democracy" were obtained from materials derived from the yearnings of the masses. The musical composition of a folk is derived from the societal happenings; the composer merely establishes the sound elements put together

called music. A competent musician is expected to have a large repertoire of songs and expressions to suite the wealth of his social environment. He is expected to inform, correct, counsel, praise as well as entertain the community where he belongs. The musician must be listened to for democracy to thrive. He often times expresses the wishes of the masses.

iii. **MR PRESIDENT-** (Chinagorom Onuoha (African China), 45 Records/ Globedisk Music, 2005)

African China's most controversial album is *Mr. President*, which attracted the anger of then President of Nigeria, Chief Olusgeun Obasanjo. The song x-rayed the poor governance prevalent in Nigeria.

Food e no dey	There is no food
Brother eh water no dey	and there is no water
And our country no good oh!	And our country is bad
Every day for the thief	Every day for the thief
One day for owner oh	one day for the owner
Poor man wey thief magi	A poor man who steals magi cube
Omo na him dem go show him face	for crime fighter Is usually tried and
	jailed
Rich man wey thief money	A rich man who steals money
Omo we no dey see dem face for crime fighter	goes unquestioned
Mr. President	Mr President
Lead us well	lead us well
If you be governor	If you are governor
Govern us well	Govern the people well
If you be senator	if you are a Senator
Senate am well	Do your job properly
If you be police	if you are a police officer
Police well well	Do you job very well
no dey take bribe.	Do not take bribes

African China adopts a technique of rendition which is characteristically his. He contracts historical events which have become postcolonial indices with which to determine the growth of the individual as against that of the nation. His music enables an interface between the personal and the nation. In the perpetually evolving dialectics of human affairs there are numerous ways through which the experiences of the people dialogue with national experiences. The song above captures the inequity in the rule of law

Uncensor the Minstrel, Uncease Human Rights: A Call for the Actualization of Human Rights
in the Nigerian nation. (Okuyade, O. 2004) and calls for the enforcement of the human rights principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination.

Other minstrels that speak of human rights norms in Igbo society include Oliver de Coque (1995) who speaks about tolerance among people and calls for peaceful existence and Mike Ejiagha (1982) who sings of social vices such as stealing and corruption

3.1 Human Rights Awareness and Education: Minstrelsy as an Agent

A study of human rights invariably seeks alternatives that ensure those rights are advanced and sustained. Human rights had existed among the native Igbo community in Nigeria. The minstrel was a major agent in the dissemination of human rights norms. The common avenue for this was during the moon light plays, age grade meetings and several dance or hunting expeditions.

Major themes include the respect for life and other values of equality and tolerance. This provided an opportunity for the minstrel to elucidate on those practices that were deemed not to be satisfactory. For instance, the Igbo had respect for life and tried as much as they could to ensure that this right was not violated. Thus, in most circumstances when someone committed murder, the individual was either banished or made to pay some form of compensation (Ejidiye, 1999). Another common example of the retribution which followed such acts was the stigma that followed a lineage that is involved in one crime or another. According to Oragebunam, this is captured in a proverb which says that a finger stained by oil, stains the others (Oraegbunam, 2009).

Another major aspect of human rights in the Igbo society was that of fair hearing. In this sense, every individual had a means of airing his grievances. Dimitri suggests that this level of openness was an attraction for the early Europeans that visited the South Eastern Nigeria, as they sought to investigate the well-entrenched democracy. (Bersselaar, 2006). It is also noted that despite the existence of minstrels in Igbo land, some obnoxious cultural practices existed such as discrimination and violence against women (Onuora-Oguno, 2010). However, despite this short coming, it is argued in this paper that the role of the minstrel remains crucial especially in the realisation of human rights. The above position is adopted because minstrelsy was a major means of disseminating human rights norms. This was achieved greatly through the 'egwu onwa' moon light medium, besides the already discussed minstrel performance.

Onwa is an Igbo word for the moon. 'Egwu' literally means 'play' in Igbo. The word connotes all recreational activities associated with the moonlight in Igboland. Moonlight plays are common during the harvest season when the community uses the opportunity offered by the moon to have some relaxation from the rigours of a hectic farming season. Wrestling contests are organized among clans, peer groups organize themselves into play categories, folk songs evolve spontaneously, epics are recounted, suitors use the forum to seek their spouses, and communal solidarity is engendered. The arena of the *egwu-onwa* becomes the centre of social activities within the community.

The elders act as arbiters in contests; the middle aged are actively involved in the activities, while the children have their own activities. The *egwu-onwa* takes place in the village arena called the *ama-egwu*, or the *ilo* depending on the dialect of the local community. The village square was kept very clean and sacred. Nobody defecates around it while beautiful designs are inscribed on the wall around the arena. It is the theatre and town centre of the Igbo society. The moonlight play was part of the traditional Igbo life. It was done not as a mere abstraction, not only as entertainment but also as a way of life. During these periods values are communicated to children on such subjects as respect for persons, tolerance and avoidance of wicked acts such as torture of children. Peaceful coexistence is also advocated and norms are passed on to the children on how to lead lives worthy of emulation. During the 'egwu onwa' vices like stealing, rape, abuse, gender violence are all eschewed as positive attributes are lauded. Songs of *egwu-onwa* are not only entertaining but have didactic values as well. They are means of enhancing societal values, which to the authors had human rights laden values.

As already stated minstrel music evokes many feelings, brings to the surface memories and creates new ones. The music of a people gives them an identity as well as educating other countries about their cultures. Music also provides for a sense of knowledge. Music can be a tool for relaxation, stimulation and communication but at the same time it can be a tool for resistance (Okusun, 1977). Usually, during *egwu onwa*, youths are motivated to embark on self-determination against oppressive rulers. In the words of Nzewi "African traditional music contains all that are needed in philosophy, theoretical content and principles of practice for culturally meaningful and independent modern education of any disciplinary specialization at any level in Africa and perhaps, elsewhere" (Nzewi, 1997).

Adeogun also asserted that music is inextricably woven into the fabric of life in the traditional African society, he wrote: "Music is learnt socially, in

respect and dignity. The two folk songs are strong indicators of the role of the minstrel in advocating a society that knows the value of respect and mutual existence which is the bedrock of human rights theory. In this way music provides a basis for criticism for unjust treatment of persons in the society.

3.2 Music Censorship in Nigeria

The censorship and control of broadcast contents in Nigeria is regulated by two bodies. (The National Film Video Censors Board (NFVCB), (National Film Act, 2004) and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), (National Broadcasting Commission (Amendment) 2004). While the NFVCB is empowered by law to classify all films and videos whether imported or produced locally, the NBC controls the establishment of media houses. Both laws were made during the military era with aims not far from ensuring that social comments were indeed well checked and monitored.

Most times musical concerts are banned at the last minute if the government is uncertain about the lyrical messages going to be sent to the audience. In Northern Nigeria, music concerts have suffered a great deal from censorship. For instance it was reported that a music performance sponsored by the French Embassy in Kano, Nigeria, was banned and the reason given by Abubakar Rabo Abdulkarim, head of the film censorship board in the northern region was, "We have banned the music festival for the reason that we were not notified and our permission was not sought" (Olorunyomi, 2010).

It is our contention that these regulatory bodies have been used as negative tools instead of the positive agencies they were set out to be. Governments in recent times have used the agency as tools to hunt artists not in their good books and those seen as anti-government. (Jean-Christophe, 2003). The position and effect of a censored minstrel is subsequently examined.

3.3 The Censored Minstrels

At the height of military dictatorship in Nigeria, many musicians were censored and incarcerated. The late Fela Anikulapo-Kuti sang *Unknown Soldier* (Afrika 70, 1977), - a direct attack on those who killed his mother. He even dared to mention names of the late Musa Yaradua and ex-president Obasanjo. The same Fela sang- *International Thief Thief* (1980)- a satire on the communication outfit ITT owned by the late politician Moshood_Abiola. Sony Okosun sang *Papa's Land* (1979)- a satire on the then apartheid regime in South Africa. When the late attorney general and commissioner of Justice in the Federal Republic of Nigeria Bola Ige was murdered, it was attributed to

unknown assassins; unknown people burnt public utilities in Anambra State in 2006; unknown Bakassi Militants killed Prophet Eddy Okeke (Eddy Newgwu). Ozoemena Nsugbe asked rhetorically in his album "Ikemba Awaka" - everything in Nigeria is attributed to the "unknown- unknown". Arson and extra judicial killings reign supreme in our democracy. Panel of iniquities are constituted each time and the reports are left unused.

In traditional African societies, court musicians were part of family households; the rulers listened to them, appraised their satires and restructured their style of leadership. The musician must not be viewed with suspicion or censored but should be appreciated. Songs of minstrels are not only entertaining but have didactic values as well. Music can be a tool for relaxation, stimulation and communication but at the same time it can be a tool for resistance. Consequently, censoring the minstrel curtails the choices that he provides through his art.

4.1 Conclusion

It is certain from the foregoing that minstrelsy in Igbo land provides a means of social control of both the people and the government. It ensures that the rights of the masses, where and when violated, are not silently swept away but rather, brought to the limelight.

In addition, through various means especially the *egwuregwu* period in the Igbo community, minstrels have acted as means of disseminating information geared at molding the attitude of children and elders. Songs sung by minstrels during the period are rich in human rights values. While admonishing erring individuals it also chastises all, making a subtle case for the development of mutual co-existence of individuals.

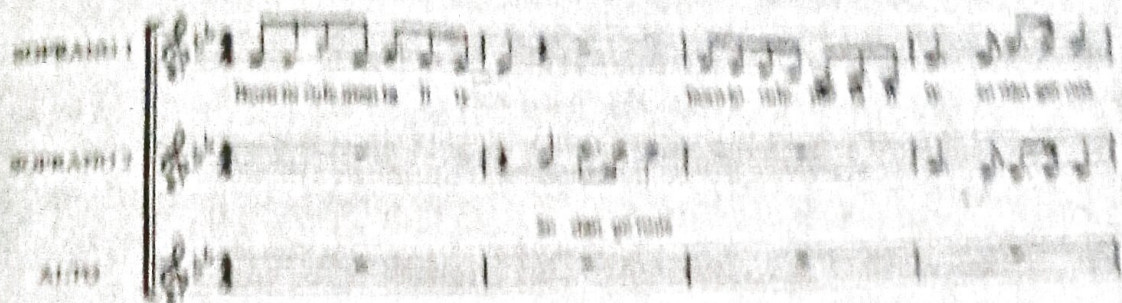
Another conclusion drawn is that the village square scenario in which the *egwuregwu* is situated is a modern day arena of legislative forum. Each individual has his opinion aired. It promotes dignity of the human person and ensures freedom of speech and association.

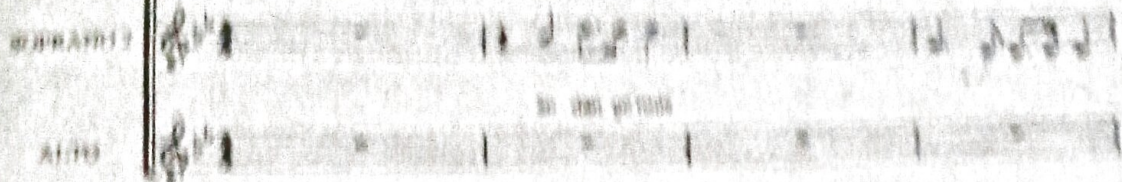
Consequently, a caged minstrel is a caged society. It is a society that is disenfranchised from its rights of association, freedom and liberty. Thus, all attempts that have been made by the government and other social institutions like the church to cage the minstrel violate basic human rights and must therefore be stopped. Finally, human rights can be further entrenched in the masses where the art of minstrelsy is adopted. This will increase awareness from the masses.

Notation of some Music discussed above.

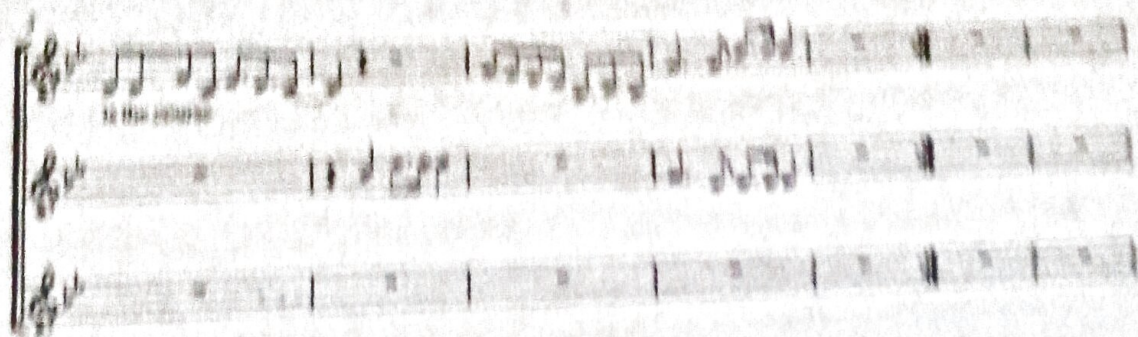
Born To Rule Mentality

Part 1 (Chorus)

CHORUS 1: 

CHORUS 2: 

ALTO: 



Epiphany the Minstrel, Orange Human Rights - A Case for the Actualization of Human Rights

Chorus

SOLO: 
SOLO: 
ALSO: 













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